



# COVID-19 Education Response Webinar

## The Covid-19 Pandemic of Disinformation and Hate Speech: How can Education and Digital Citizenship help?

**Friday 5 June 2020**

**13h00 – 14h30 GMT+2**



## Introduction

Rumours, fake news and conspiracy theories about the COVID-19 are proliferating online. They threaten people's health, discredit public action, delegitimize preventive measures, spark diplomatic tensions and provide background for a surge of stigma, hate speech and hate crimes against various groups and nationalities associated with the coronavirus. The spread of the coronavirus has indeed given rise to a pandemic of misinformation and disinformation affecting the fabric of societies already fractured by the unprecedented sanitary crisis and its dramatic economic, political and social consequences.

At the same time, young people are coming up with inspirational initiatives around the globe to counter misinformation and disinformation and to engage in favour of respect, solidarity and human rights. They are pioneering innovative tools such as educational platforms, digital communities, on-line petitions and engaging with different actors to raise awareness about the importance of human solidarity at local, national and global levels.

In this context, education authorities can play an important role in minimizing these risks and promoting values of solidarity and human rights by ensuring that young people, as well as their educators and parents, acquire core competencies of digital citizenship that will help them become more resilient to disinformation. Education authorities can also help young people engage in the online environment in a safe, sensitive, critical, ethical and responsible way while celebrating and promoting the educational initiatives that are led by young people.

The webinar, part of the UNESCO COVID-19 Education Response webinar series, will explore how young people navigate the current online environment and how it is affecting their civic participation, negatively as well as positively. In addition, the webinar will exchange ideas and resources that can feed into the educational responses, which can be taken during and after the current context of disruption to mitigate risks. More broadly, it will examine how education systems can promote skills, competencies, values and attitudes that will contribute to civic engagement, online as well as offline, based on respect for diversity and solidarity, empathy and non-discrimination.

## Objective and guiding questions

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To examine ongoing challenges of disinformation and misinformation during the COVID-19 crisis and highlight possible responses that can help young people engage positively and responsibly in the current online environment based on values promoted through global citizenship education.

### Guiding questions

- What are the risks of greater exposure of young people to on-line disinformation and hate speech during the Covid-19 disruption?
- How is the current digital environment reshaping youth civic and political participation? Shall the ongoing crisis lead to rethink efforts made by educational authorities to address digital citizenship in recent years?
- How can we rethink digital citizenship? What measures can be taken by education authorities to foster digital citizenship, address hate speech and minimize risks affecting young people during the current crisis, and in its aftermath?
- What efforts have been made by educational authorities to build the skills of youth for civic participation and engagement, both online and offline? Which skills, competences and values supporting global citizenship should be the object of particular attention and efforts given the current context?

## Audience

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The target audiences for this webinar are senior officials and managers of ministries of education directly responsible for citizenship education, non-discrimination, tolerance and human rights issues, media and information literacy and the use of ICTs in education.

Other country partners supporting educational provision are also welcome, including civil society organizations, bilateral partners and the private sector.

## Technical specifications

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The webinar will use Zoom as a technical platform. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions, make comments and share relevant information and material through a chat function.

## Agenda

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*Moderator:* Guy Berger, Director for the Division for Communication and Information Strategy and Policy, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO

13:00-13:10	<i>Welcoming remarks</i>	Vibeke Jensen, Director for the Division of Peace and Sustainable Development, Education Sector, UNESCO
13:10-13:20	<i>Keynote speaker</i>	<i>Junk news in the time of Covid-19</i> Jonathan Bright, Oxford University (UK)
13:20 – 13:30	<i>Q&amp;A</i>	
13:30-14:00	<i>Country perspectives</i>	
<i>Redesigning civic education to help young people share their views and confront disinformation in the United States</i> Joseph Kahne, University of California, Riverside (USA)		
<i>Tackling misinformation and disinformation on COVID-19 in Africa with #DefyHateNow</i> Nelson Kwaje (South Sudan)		
<i>Teaching global citizenship education and the rule of law in a digital world: A youth perspective</i> Victoria Ibuwoye (Nigeria)		
14:00-14:20	Facilitated discussion with audience (Q&A)	
14:20-14:30	Sharing of UNESCO resources and closing	

## Stay in touch

### UNESCO's COVID-19 Education Response



COVID19taskforce@unesco.org



<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>



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