

Mediterranean Digital Media Observatory

D2.3
Collaboration environment set-up

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Abstract	This deliverable explains the operation of the collaboration environment, based on the Truly Media platform. The report also serves as an internal user manual, intended to assist MedDMO users in using the platform.
Keywords	Collaboration environment, Truly Media, Fact-checking, Information collection, Analysis, Debunking, Fact-checks, Archive, EDMO

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Executive Summary

Truly Media is MedDMO's secure online platform for collaborative verification.

It aims to assist users with the various fact-checking and verification tasks they perform, through the optimization of their workflow, the **facilitation of collaboration**, the integration of multiple **fact-checking** tools, the use of analytics, and ultimately through time-saving and increased efficiency and effectiveness. As disinformation phenomena are expected to grow over the coming years, tools like Truly Media will help fact-checkers and journalists of MedDMO to better deal with the increased volume and complexity of online disinformation.

In light of the above, MedDMO provides to its fact-checking partners access to a content verification platform, to assist them with the laborious task of verifying and fact-checking online content whilst covering its collaboration and internal communication needs. Truly Media was co-developed by ATC and Deutsche Welle, taking into account the workflows and processes followed by journalists when verifying online information and User Generated Content.

This document starts with a general overview of Truly Media and its main operational features, and briefly presents Truly Media's subcomponents, ranging from content aggregation, creation and management of collections, and content verification, highlighting its functionalities as an internal communication and collaboration tool. Screenshots are provided for a better understanding of the platform's functionalities to facilitate MedDMO partners, serving as an internal manual.

1 Overview of Truly Media

Truly Media (www.truly.media.com) is a platform that allows users to find, organize, and collaboratively verify content coming from social media or web sources. After logging in, Truly Media users can start using the application in collaboration with their team to aggregate, manage and verify content, helped by an automated process of deep analysis of sources (digital footprint, reliability, cross checking of information, etc.) and content (reverse image search, Exif data -when available- provenance, etc.). As an open platform, Truly Media also allows the integration of third-party tools and services, like TinEye, Google reverse image search, Wolfram Alpha, TruthNest, etc., which are used in the verification process of online information.

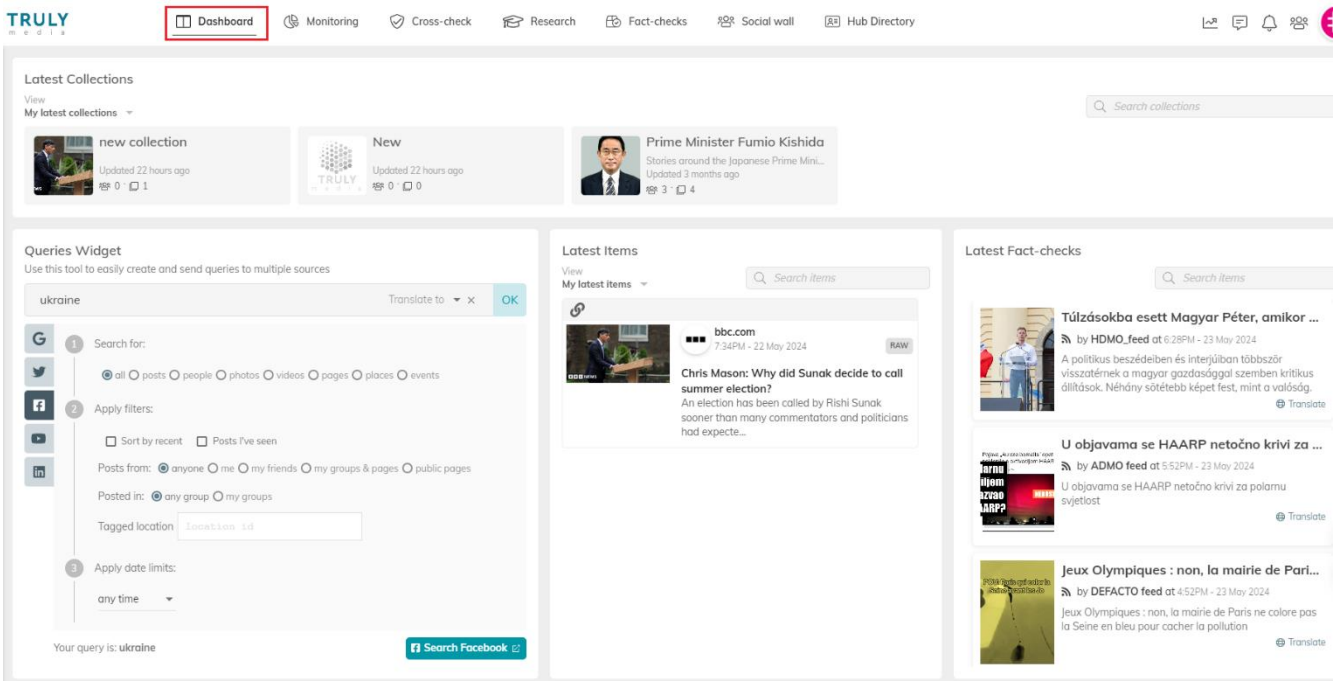

Figure 1: Main dashboard of Truly Media

Truly Media's opening screen features the main dashboard by default. Here, the users can view the following components:

a. Latest collections, providing an easy access
b. Latest items the user has collected
c. Latest fact-checks imported to EDMO's archive of fact checks
d. A queries widget, which helps the users find content from the web
e. A Messages functionality, which allows users to send a message to all members of the team or chat with a specific colleague
f. A Notification functionality, which presents a timeline of all messages sent to the user by other team members
g. A Contacts button, which allows the user to manage the contact list or easily send a direct message to a specific contact

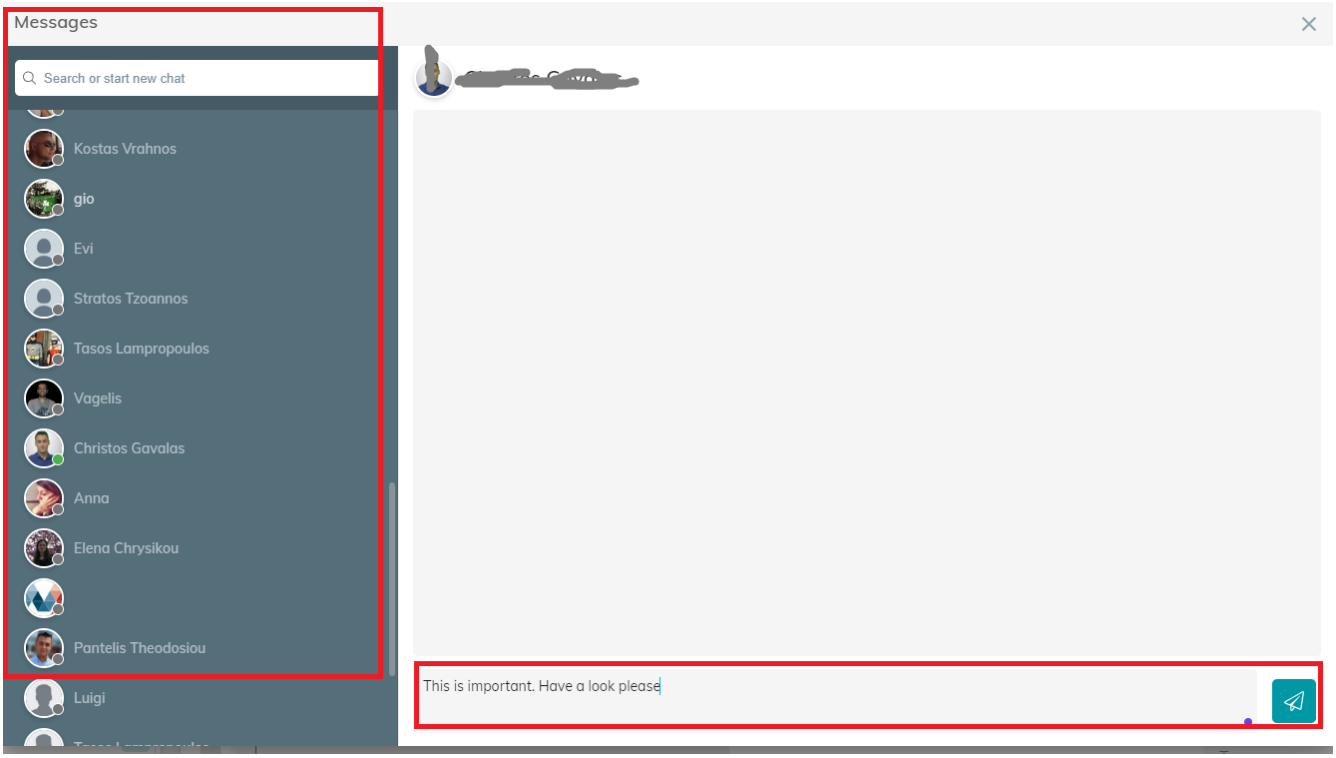

Figure 2: The Messages screen where users can communicate and collaborate with each other.

2 The Truly Media workflow

2.1 Find and aggregate content

Through the **Queries** widget, users may search content from various sources, namely Google, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

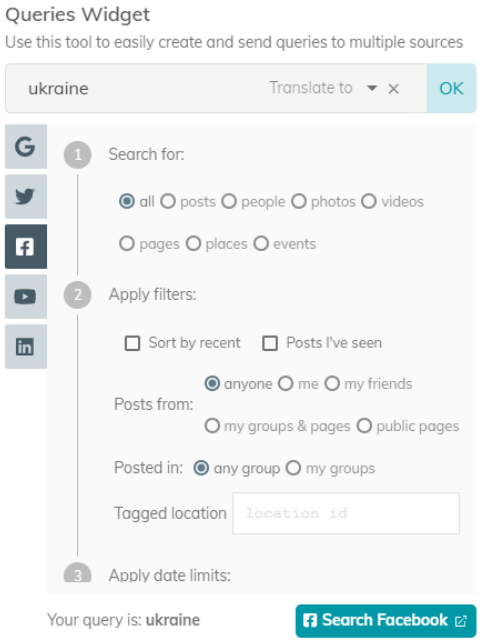

Figure 3: Sending queries to multiple sources.

2.2 Organize content

The Truly Media workflow allows users to create collections, add content, engage into message exchanges with their colleagues and filter exactly what they want to see.

a. Create collections of content for specific investigations defining the team of experts who will have access and will collaborate to gather relevant content and verify it.
b. Add content to the collection in various practical ways:
   - 'drag and drop' content from Truly Media;
   - upload files from local folders;
   - provide the link of any social media item or web article.
c. Exchange views on a collection through real time chatting and messaging.
d. Use the notepad to record important notes about a collection that all team members can view.
e. Easily browse through content applying different filters.

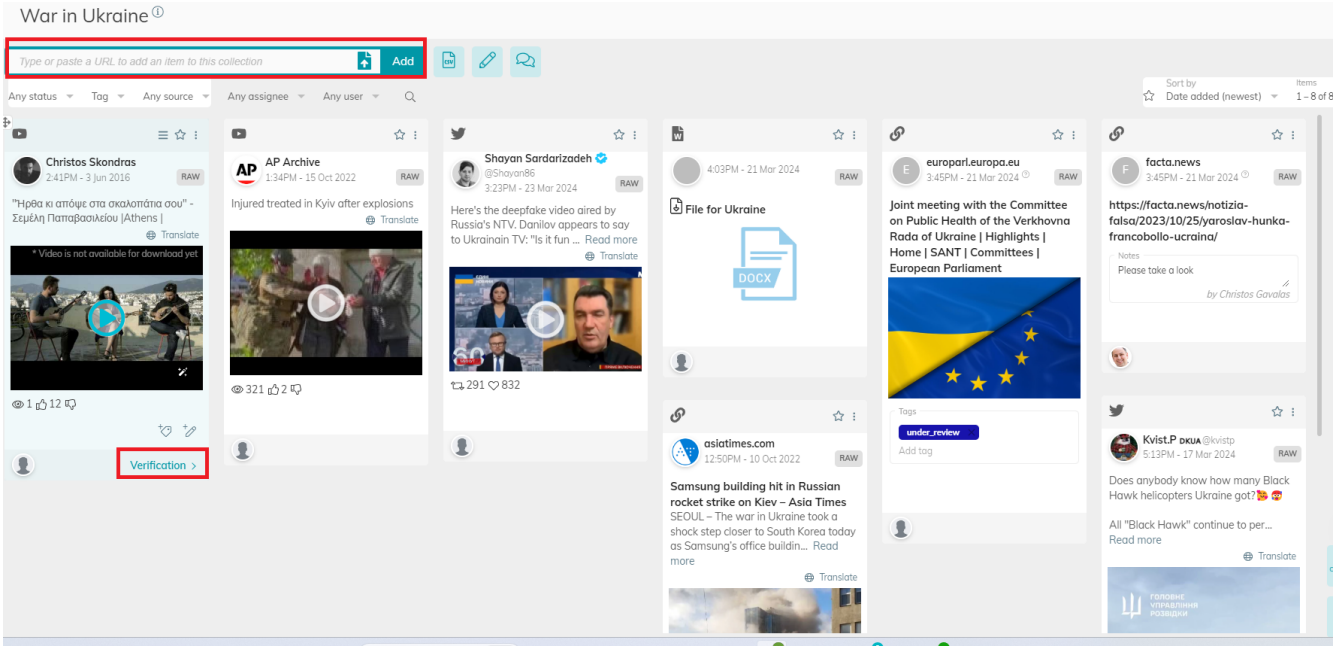

Figure 4: View of a Truly Media collection.

2.3 Verify content

By clicking on the Verification tab at the bottom of each Collection item, the user can perform the following actions:

a. Preview quick analytics for the item source.
b. Extract and visualise useful information with a set of third-party tools, such as Google Maps, Wolfram Alpha, TinEye, Pipl, Mapillary, etc.
c. Annotate items in a structured way keeping a record of every change in annotations.
d. Collaborate via real-time chatting and messaging with the team.

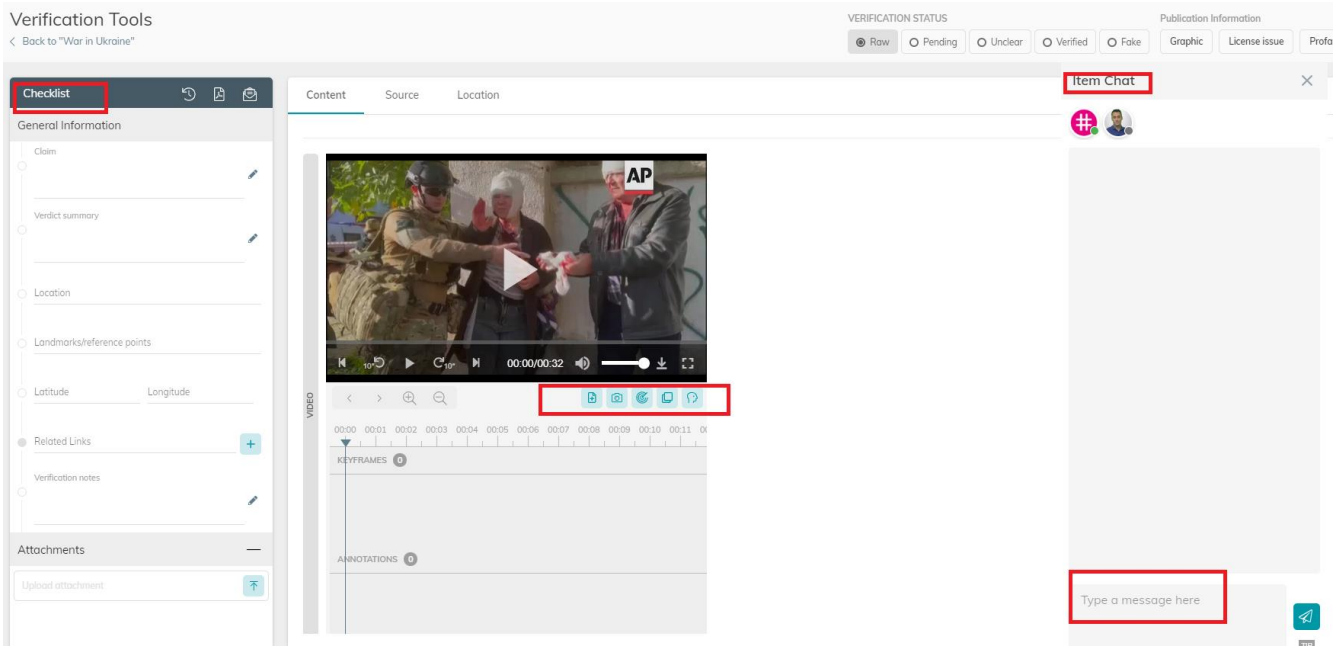

Figure 5: View of Truly Media's verification page

3 The Truly Media tabs

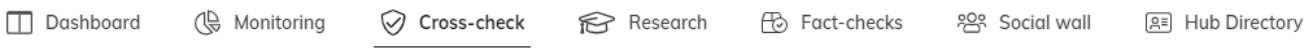

Figure 6: Dashboard, Monitoring, Cross-check, Research, Fact-checks, Social wall, Hub directory (tabs from left to right)

The main tabs of Truly Media (shown above) help users navigate through the various functionalities, which are explained below in more detail.

3.1 Monitoring

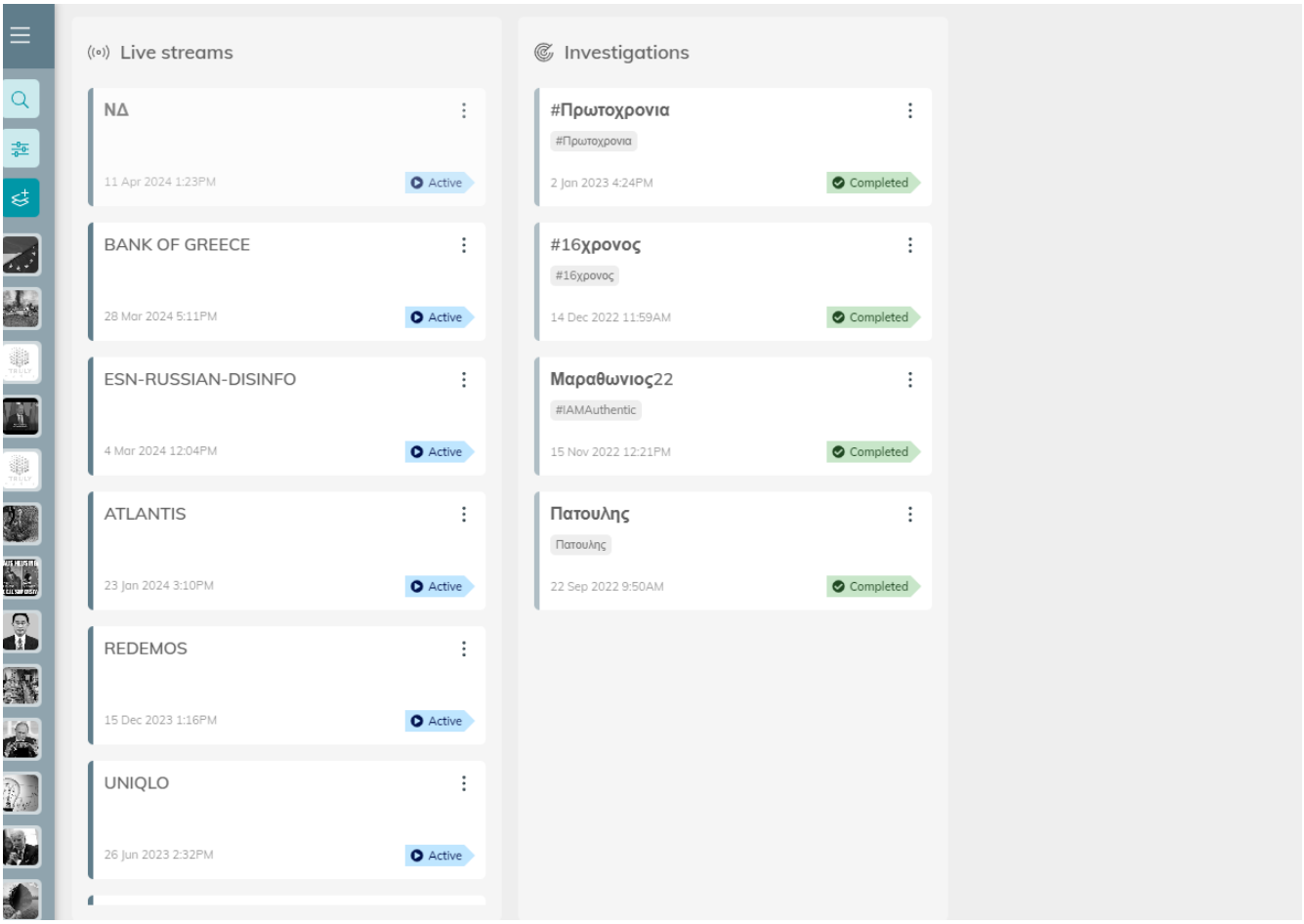

Figure 7: Monitoring online content with Truly Media

The platform enables the aggregation of online content from social media and other web sources based on keywords. This functionality is useful both for fact-checkers and researchers using the platform. The aggregated content is processed in real-time to extract useful insights, like popular hashtags, top influencers, popular images, most active authors, most mentioned locations, organisations, etc. These indications provide users with an overview of the most important aggregated insights for a given topic that they wish to monitor. Moreover, the functionality offers a first statistical analysis of the data set as a whole, as well as the top ten extracted sub-topics within the given monitored topic on a daily basis.

3.2 Cross-check

Cross-check lets users verify a rumor and helps **debunk fake news** by checking already debunked content in various fact-checking sources. A query returns results from various fact-checking websites from around the world.

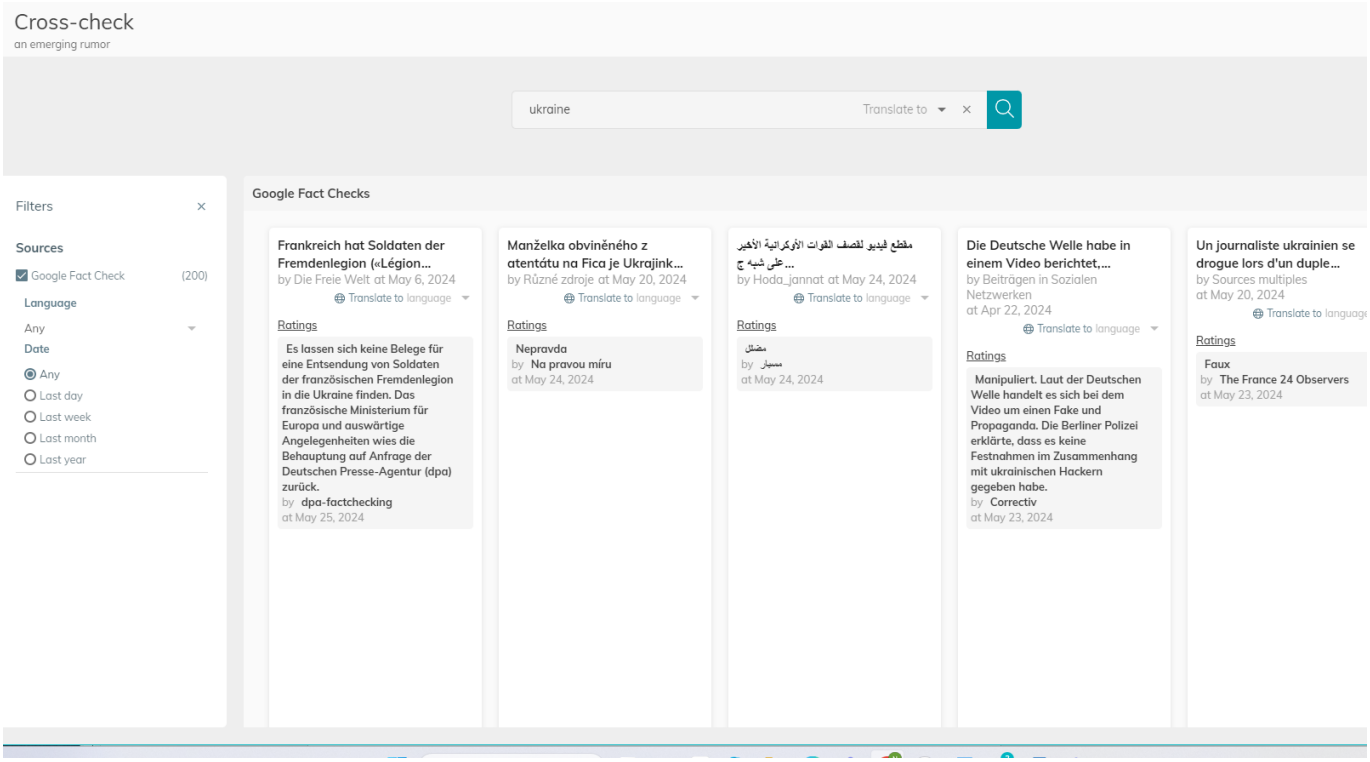

Figure 8: The cross-check functionality.

3.3 Research

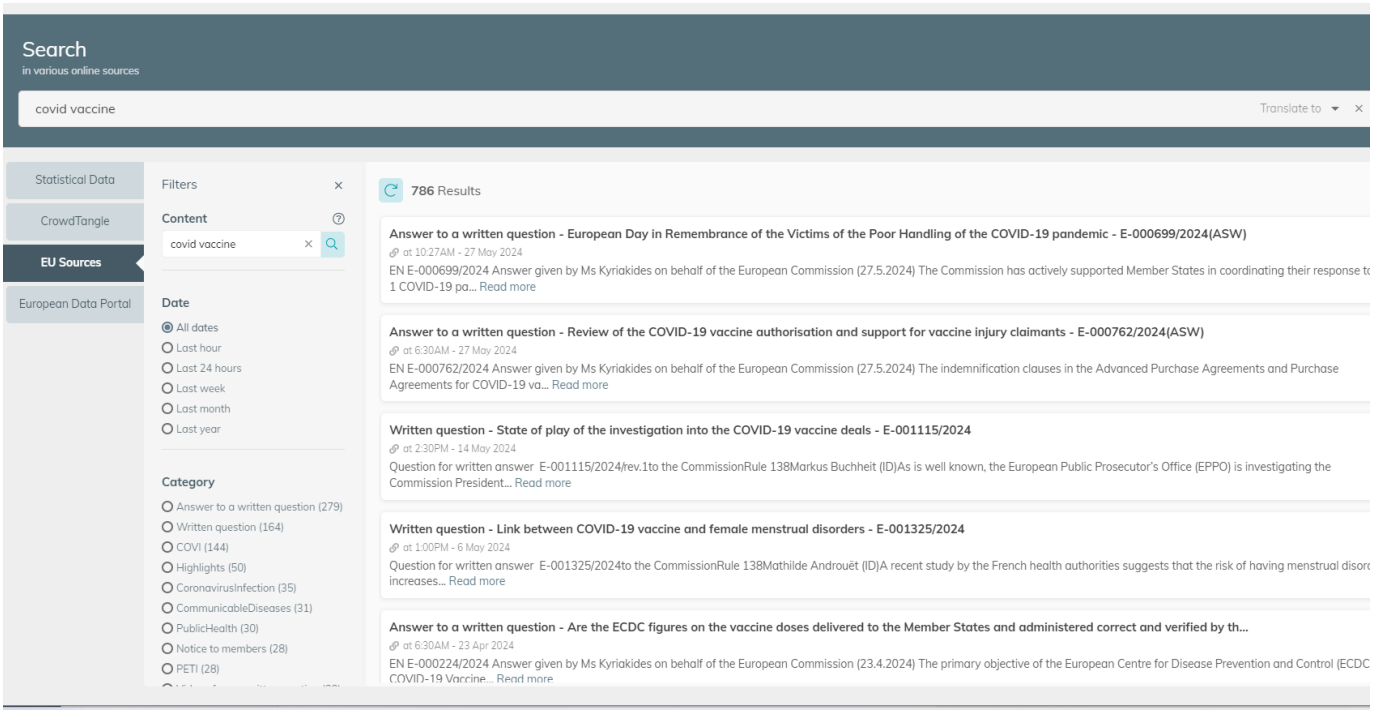

Figure 9: Research functionality.

Users can search and get results from the following sources:

- Statistical Data: Users can browse and send queries to all the national statistical offices of EU member states, as well as EFTA countries, EU candidate countries, EU potential countries and other countries.
- CrowdTangle: Users can perform searches within Facebook's social media content discovery tool.
- EU sources: Results from European Parliament sources.
- European Data Portal: Data retrieved from the European Data Portal based on the search query inserted by a user.

3.4 Fact-checks

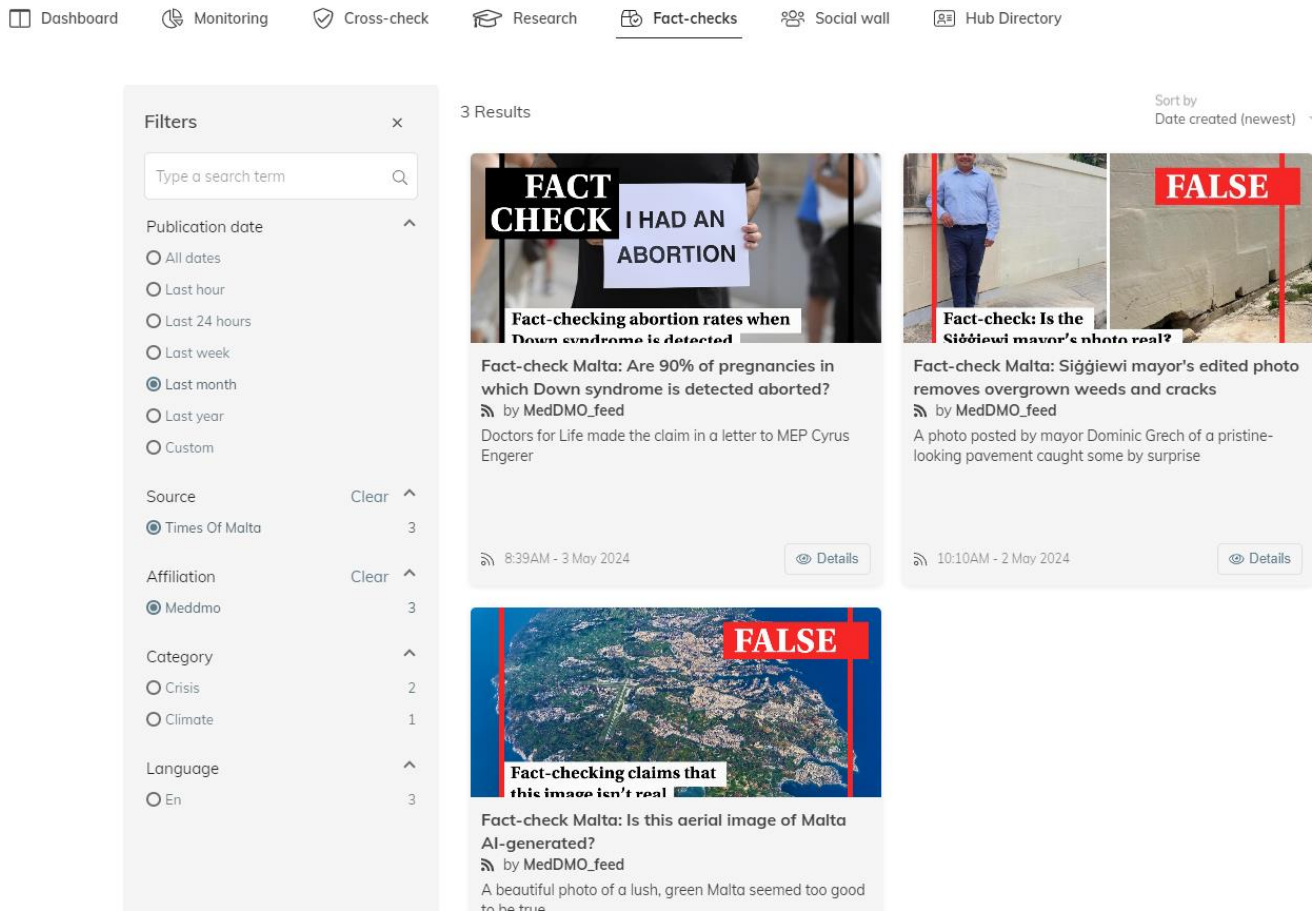

Figure 10: Fact-checks archive on Truly Media

Truly Media allows users to search and retrieve fact-checks published by the EDMO hubs daily. This is possible by clicking on the 'Fact-checks' tab and typing a query, using any logical operators, (AND, OR, etc.) The available filters include source, language, location, mentioned persons/organizations. In this example we have filtered our MedDMO's fact-checks from the Times of Malta, published in the last month.

In a recent addition to this functionality, ATC has developed an automated process allowing hubs to synchronize fact-checks around European elections with the EDMO repository of fact-checks. To achieve this, the MedDMO website feed was updated to send these thematically tagged fact-checks to the Truly Media archive of fact-checks. In the following example, we selected the *Elections* category to retrieve 113 fact-checks from all the EDMO hubs.

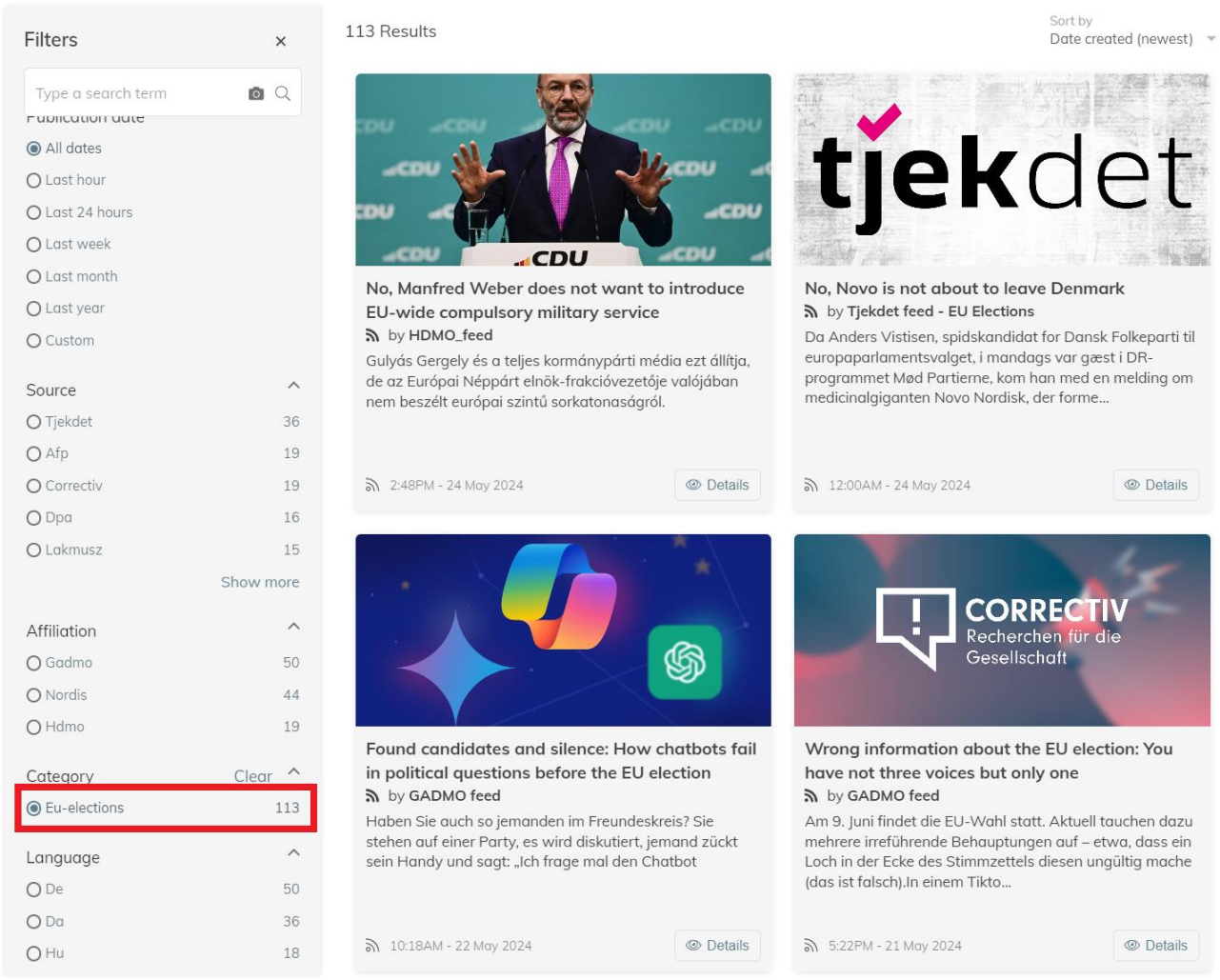

Figure 11: EU elections fact-checks in the EDMO fact-checks archive.

3.5 Social Wall

The social wall is a functionality that facilitates communication among EDMO hub members. It allows colleagues to post any announcement that could be useful to the rest of the team, such as news, upcoming events, interesting articles, ideas for collaboration etc. Other members can like or comment on the posts.



Figure 12: The Social Wall

3.6 Hub directory

The hub directory allows users to locate members of EDMO hubs using certain filters (hubs, organization, thematic). In our example we found the contact details of MedDMO's coordinator Nikos Sarris.

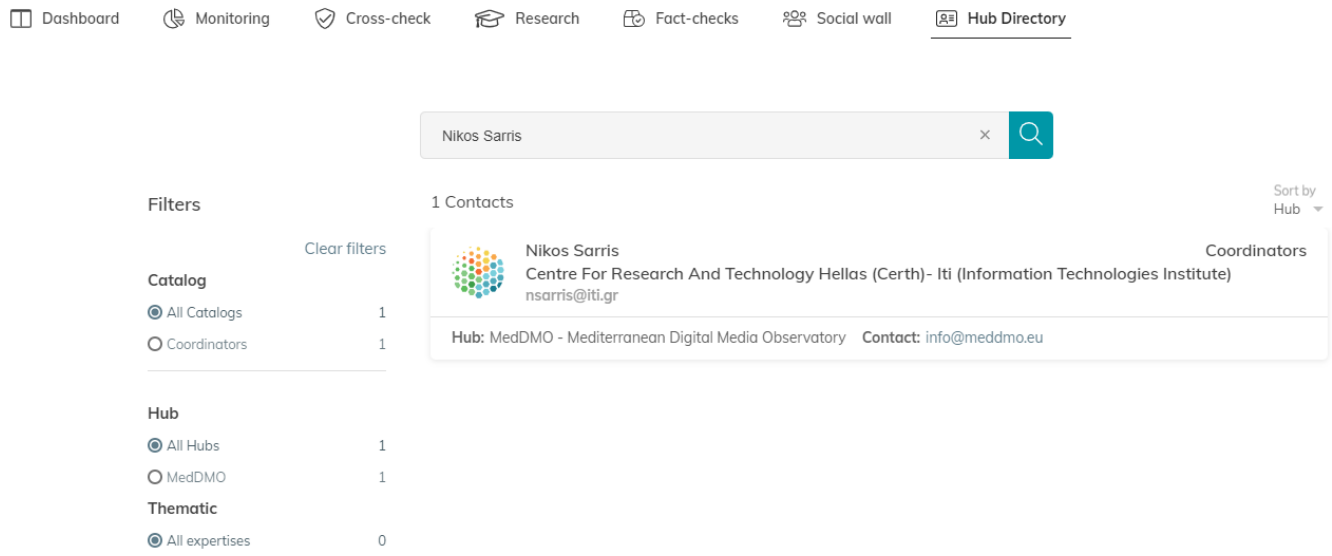

Figure 13: The Hub Directory

4 Conclusion

The MedDMO collaboration platform provides its fact-checking and research partners access to a content verification platform, to assist them with the tasks of collecting, verifying, and fact-checking online content collaboratively. At the same time, the platform covers the hub's collaboration and internal communication needs.

In this deliverable we presented a general overview of Truly Media, provided by ATC to be used as MedDMO's collaborative platform. We described its main operational features, and presented its main subcomponents, ranging from content aggregation, creation, and management of collections. We also presented the platform's content verification, highlighting its functionalities as an internal communication and collaboration tool. This deliverable can also be used by MedDMO's partners as an internal manual, as it contains several explanatory screenshots and examples that can help them better understand Truly Media's functionalities.

ATC is currently in contact with MedDMO's partners, especially the fact-checking partners, to discuss and decide on additional functionalities and updates in the platform that could be useful for further supporting their work.



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