ISD France

ISD coordinates a multi-sectoral response to hate, extremism and disinformation in France, informed by cutting-edge digital research.

ISD's work in France extends back to the Club of Three, a policy-led dialogue between high level politicians, academics, and activists to address issues regarding social cohesion and security cooperation, including antisemitism. These dialogues featured then-French Interior Minister (and later President) Nicolas Sarkozy in 2006.

Today, ISD has expanded its work to facilitate a whole of society response to the challenges facing France, including the threats of hate, extremism and disinformation. ISD's French operations have assembled a team of France-based and French-speaking experts in order to build a clear understanding of the issues and implement relevant responses.

ISD applies its suite of digital research methods to map hate online, analyse information manipulation, track disinformation and better understand extremist narratives. Our research also aims to better understand what initiatives are most effective in countering these phenomena, and equip practitioners with step-by-step guides and creative tools to best challenge these issues. Leveraging the insights from this research, ISD seeks to inform and coordinate a civic response to build more cohesive and resilient societies.

Civil society responses

This includes work through the Online Civil Courage Initiative (OCCI), launched in 2018, or the Google Impact Challenge for Safety, launched in 2019, each of which supported hundreds of French civil society actors dedicated to countering hate and extremism online. ISD also develops education responses localised to the French context, whose aim is to provide youth and their educators with the tools they need to effectively navigate online risks like echo cambers, algorithmic bias and disinformation.

Assessments of these programmes are made transparently, such as with Fostering Civic Responses to Online Harms: Learnings from the Online Civil Courage Initiative and the Online Civic Fund/Promouvoir le civisme en ligne face aux malveillances à l'ère du numérique, a 2020 overview of the French OCCI programme. Similarly, toolkits in French for civil society practitioners and policymakers are available, such as Responding to a Terror Attack: A Strong Cities Toolkit/Répondre à

une attaque terroriste: un guide Strong Cities from ISD's Strong Cities Network. Other resources for practitioners include an online French campaign toolkit and the Digital Citizenship Education/Education à la Citoyenneté Numérique toolkits.

Helping develop better policies
On the basis of our research and work with practitioners, ISD also works to encourage more coherent and effective policy responses to this wide range of online harms. This includes advising government actors like the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (CSA), the DILCRAH (Délégation interministérielle à la lutte contre le racisme, l'antisémitisme et la haine anti-LGBT) and the CIPDR (Comité interministériel de prévention de la délinquance et de la radicalisation). It also includes French cities within ISD's Strong Cities Network, participating in policy events and working groups like the Commission on Online Hate and the Online Hate Observatory, as well as engaging key technology firms.

Cutting edge research
In 2019, ISD published Mapping Hate in France/Cartographie de la Haine en Ligne Tour d'horizon du discours haineux en France, a comprehensive overview of online hate. Using social media data analytic tools that combine machine learning and natural language processing with qualitative analysis, the report provided a detailed analysis of the dynamics of the most prevalent types of hateful speech across social media platforms in France.
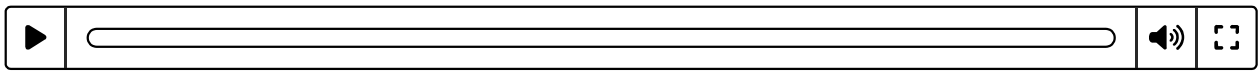
Complementing this report was Building Digital Citizenship in France: Lessons from the Sens Critique project, which aimed to raise awareness among pupils on the dangers of fake news and hate speech, piloted with 22 pupils from three schools in the Paris region. The programme included awareness-raising exercises concerning disinformation and emotional manipulation and evaluated with pre- and post surveys with the students and their parents.

This was followed by more recent work adapting ISD's Young Digital Leaders (YDL) curriculum and parent guide to a French context and designing additional resources and campaigns against disinformation in France with partners such as What the Fake.

Finally, ISD has leveraged its expertise during the COVID-19 era, with three publications looking at anti-vaccine (COVID-19 : aperçu de la défiance anti-vaccinale sur les réseaux sociaux) and COVID-19 (Seconde vague et désinformation : Aperçu des tendances sur les réseaux sociaux) disinformation, as well as the related rise in online hate due to the pandemic (La pandémie de COVID-19: terreau fertile de la haine en ligne). A jointly produced publication and webinar with Institut Montaigne, Information Manipulations Around Covid-19: France Under Attack, also looked at the circulation of different narratives and pieces of disinformation in French discussion groups during the COVID-19 pandemic.
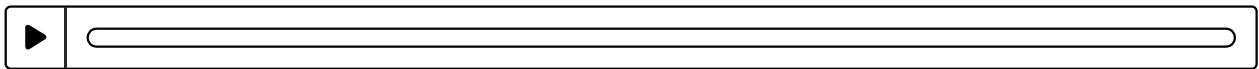
This page is available in French.

Google.org Impact Challenge on Safety

Launch of the Online Civil Courage Initiative
Paris, France, 2017

5 ACTIONS ARCHI CONCRÈTES POUR LUTTER CONTRE L'INTOX (AVEC …
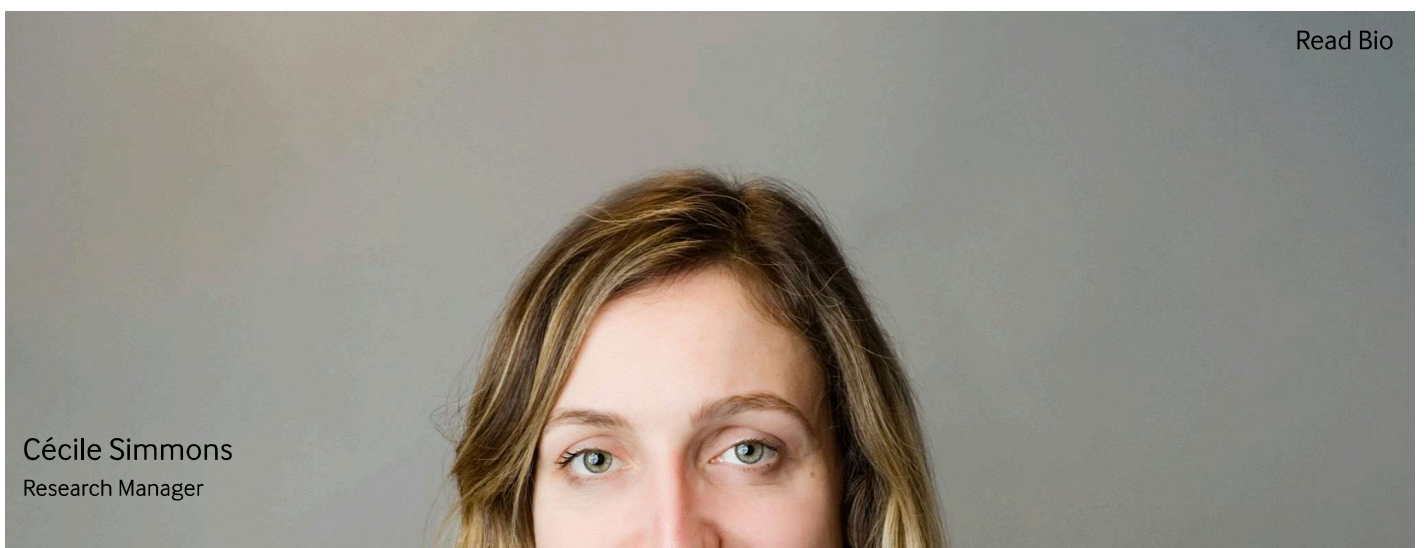
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