Report on the outcomes of a Short-Term Scientific Mission[1]

Action number: CA21129

Grantee name: Nina Springer

<u>Details of the STSM</u>

Title: Developing automated tools to analyze hateful multimodal communication (grant application)

Start and end date: 10/10/2024 to 19/10/2024

<u>Description of the work carried out during the STSM</u>

Dr. Trilling and I currently work on a grant proposal for the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2024 ("Combating hate speech online and offline"). The project will develop and validate (1) a tool for lawful detection, reporting data/evidence collection, and analysis of visual hate communication; (2) hate crime trainings for police authorities and other relevant security practitioners and educational material for professional communicators and the civil society/citizens. Moreover, the project will (3) develop policy recommendations to support the harmonization of regulation in EU member states. Our project is about the procurement of data for the automated analysis of (hateful) opinions, thus, it falls perfectly within the scope of our Cost Action OPINION which "aims to provide the much-needed conceptual grounding, methodological integration and training to significantly advance the use of computational methods for studying digital text." With our project, we will even broaden the perspective as our work requires concepts and methodologies for multimodal analysis of hate in images and ironic expressions of hate.

The ten days of my stay were almost exclusively dedicated to application writing (the submission is scheduled for November 20, 2024). The co-presence on site was very helpful because the work packages and tasks Dr. Trilling and I will engage with are closely interlinked: Dr. Trilling will be significantly involved in the tool development (Objective 1) and I am responsible for drafting the work package on the development of the training curricula (Objective 2). As the training courses have to be adapted to the tool/introduce the tool, a close exchange is essential.

In addition to the grant writing, I participated in institutionalized activities by joining and contributing to the weekly political communication meetings on research and teaching, happening each Friday. I met other OPINION network members in these meetings, thus my participation also served networking purposes to intensify the connection and exchange. Moreover, I have also invited my team to Amsterdam (at my own expense): On October 14, both teams held a joint colloquium and discussed research

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[1] This report is submitted by the grantee to the Action MC for approval and for claiming payment of the awarded grant. The Grant Awarding Coordinator coordinates the evaluation of this report on behalf of the Action MC and instructs the GH for payment of the Grant.

projects, especially doctoral projects. The discussion of a codebook for analysing opinionated user comments was particularly relevant for OPINION purposes.

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Description of the STSM main achievements and planned follow-up activities

The grant proposal writing was very successful: The main narrative and the budget allocation are clear and the work packages drafted. For the last month until the final submission, our collective proposal writing will be continued by means of Zoom exchanges. If successful, our project will be able to stimulate the work of the COST Action in several categories (Research Coordination 1-6 and Capacity Building 1-6). By involving practical partners (police forces, NGOs such as Hate Aid), we also contribute to Research Coordination 6 ("Develop sustained exchange of knowledge with stakeholders in politics, regulatory authorities, and industry") and Capacity Building 5 ("Identify key stakeholders in politics, regulatory authorities, and industry and build collaborative stakeholder relations network"). Even if the proposal will not be funded this year, we already identified a fitting EU call with deadline in the next year.

Moreover, the teams found the exchange and networking on October 14 extremely productive. In addition to the fruitful contributions to the PhD projects, the team meeting will lead to another proposal by two post-docs from my team, and the contributions of the Amsterdam team were very helpful for the development of the narrative and methodological design.