

Country of Origin Information and Social Media Literature Review EXECUTIVE SUMMARY October 2013

This paper is part of a project by the Country Research Branch (CRB) of Immigration New Zealand. The purpose of the project is to develop a consistent and robust approach to the use of information sourced from social media in our research. This paper is intended as a starting point for discussion, rather than a conclusive summary of all the issues. Ultimately, a set of in-house researcher guidelines on the use of social media in country of origin information (COI) research will be the main project output.

The scope of this literature review extends beyond COI units and includes a discussion of relevant guidelines and practice from other disciplines: news media, legal proceedings and the field of open source intelligence. The review looks at each of these disciplines' approaches to user-generated information, and considers how these may or may not apply to COI researchers and the development of CRB's own guidelines.

Social media and why it matters for COI

The term social media is used to describe evolving technological tools, by which users create and share news, content and information. The content found on social media sites is often referred to as user-generated content, or UGC.

In a COI context, information may be located in the following types of social media platforms:

- social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn)
- wikis (e.g. Wikipedia, SourceWatch)
- weblogs or 'blogs'
- microblogs (e.g. Twitter)
- filesharing sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)
- location-based services (e.g. Panoramio, Wikimapia)
- internet forums and message boards (e.g. Expat Forum)

In recent years, the increase in the volume of information available through new technologies, including the rapid proliferation of user-generated content, has added to the complexity of COI research. Individuals, activists, NGOs, governments and terrorist organisations can all use social media to disseminate information, misinformation, appeals and propaganda. Unlike conventional forms of media, social media can allow eyewitnesses to human rights violations and victims of persecution to record their experiences and transmit them without the need for an intermediary.

Information can therefore be immediate, and individualised in a way not previously possible with 'traditional' COI sources. However, the largely unregulated nature of social media means that it can be open to abuse and manipulation. In addition, searching social media and other internet sites can leave behind a 'digital footprint', giving those in control of the site information on the researcher's location, employer and search patterns.

Searching for information on the internet will often yield relevant-looking results from social media. In order for COI researchers to know how to treat seemingly relevant information found on social media sites, they need to become familiar with the sites themselves. They need to understand, for example, how to assess the provenance of the content (e.g. when was it uploaded, by whom?), the extent to which it may be reliable, and what advice to give with it to decision-makers on the possibility of data manipulation. This is the type of information that CRB's customers are increasingly seeking.

Social media and existing COI standards

COI researchers already work to international guidelines on source assessment that have relevance and application to social media. The various standards and guidelines for COI research and use developed by the UNHCR, ACCORD, IARLJ and EU¹ have been well summarised by Gyulai.² He encapsulates the four substantive quality standards published by the Austrian Red Cross (in its "ACCORD" Manual) as follows:

1. **Relevance:** COI must be closely related to the legal substance of an asylum claim and must objectively reflect the important related facts.
2. **Reliability and balance:** COI has to rely on a variety of different types of sources, bearing in mind the political and ideological context in which each source operates as well as its mandate, reporting methodology, and the intention behind its publications.
3. **Accuracy and currency:** COI has to be obtained and corroborated from a variety of sources with due attention paid to finding and filtering the relevant and up-to-date information from the sources chosen and without any distortion of the content.
4. **Transparency:** Given its role as decisive evidence, COI has to be – as a general principle – made available for all parts involved in refugee status determination, principally through the use of a transparent method of referencing.³

The issues raised by social media are readily apparent when evaluated against the above standards. The often unregulated, transient nature of social media makes for an uncomfortable fit with principles of reliability, balance, accuracy and retrievability. Content on social media platforms can be biased or purposefully misleading. The original source of the information can be difficult or impossible to verify. Information can easily be deleted or altered by the individual or organisation that posted the information, or anyone with editing

¹ i.e. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation, International Association of Refugee Law Judges and European Union respectively.

² Gyulai, G 2011, *Country Information in Asylum Procedures - Quality as a Legal Requirement in the EU*, Updated Version, Hungarian Helsinki Committee
<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4f13c5f02.pdf> (Accessed 6 December 2012) pp. 15-18

³ Adapted from Gyulai, *Country Information in Asylum Procedures - Quality as a Legal Requirement in the EU*, p. 16

rights. The potential for inaccuracy is rife, and there is usually no formal editing or fact-checking process applied to social media content, as may apply to more traditional COI sources.⁴

Despite the inherent inability of social media to satisfy many of the above standards, it can nevertheless be a useful source of information which is either relevant, current, or both. Social media may be the means by which information most specific to a claim is found. As noted by Bromwich, the information found through social media may be the "best record available" as to "whether an event actually happened; what happened, where and when and who was there".⁵ Information from social media may also help provide a balanced picture for decision-makers, when presenting information on countries where there is strict state control of the media.

Most of the existing standards for COI do not explicitly address social media. Of those that do, the Common EU Guidelines indicate that as a "dubious" source, information sourced from social media may be presented if it is the "only source found and if the information seems important or particularly relevant".⁶ The EASO COI Methodology treats social media as a separate category from dubious sources, but stresses the need for the researcher to validate social media research, and corroborate any information found using it.⁷

The validation of social media information poses particular issues for COI researchers. These can include issues of 'technical' verification, presentation of research and boundaries. For example: *How can researchers gauge the trustworthiness of a social media site such as a personal blog? Can researchers provide reliable information on who created a Facebook page or when a video clip was first uploaded to YouTube? If researchers supply material found through social media, what sort of information, caveats or disclaimers should they provide with it to decision-makers? How should content, which may be transient, be captured for future retrieval? How far into a social media source should COI researchers delve? Can or should they create and use a social networking profile in order to access a site more fully?*

Establishing boundaries

Some of the work described above may fall within or overlap with the responsibilities of other business areas within a COI researcher's organisation (e.g. risk, information

⁴ There are, however, reported cases of inaccurate information being identified, discussed, and corrected in real time by online communities. See, for example, those discussed by Ingram M 2012, 'Twitter and Reddit as crowdsourced fact-checking engines' *Gigaom*, 16 May <http://gigaom.com/2012/05/16/twitter-and-reddit-as-crowdsourced-fact-checking-engines/> (Accessed 10 December 2012)

⁵ Bromwich, R. 2012, The Tribunal of Tomorrow: Social Media in Tribunal Proceedings - Evidentiary and Case Management Challenges, *COAT/AIJA Conference 2012: The Tribunal of Tomorrow Conference*, Sydney Council of Australasian Tribunals, 7-8 June, Sydney <http://www.coat.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/files/Social%20Media%20Evidence%20-%20Robert%20Bromwich.pdf> (Accessed 6 December 2012)

⁶ European Union 2008, *Common EU Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information (COI)*, April <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/48493f72.html> (Accessed 20 December 2012) pp. 10-11

⁷ European Asylum Support Office 2012, *EASO Country of Origin Information report methodology*, July, European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/european-asylum-support-office/coireportmethodologyfinallayout_en.pdf (Accessed 4 December 2012) pp. 9-10

technology, verification or intelligence specialists). It is important that COI researchers are clear on the limits of their role, skill-sets and training. However, researchers may often find themselves propelled into these new areas, either due to the increasing amount of information found on social media in the course of 'traditional' COI research, or because of customer demand.

Another issue raised by social media is the possibility of retrieving information particular to an individual claimant. Haines comments that "It is rare (though not entirely unknown) for COI to address the circumstances of a particular individual."⁸ Already social media is changing this, as the line between public and personal information becomes increasingly blurred. Claimants can develop a public profile through their use of a blog, or sites such as Facebook. They may appear in, or have posted publicly accessible video footage to file-sharing platforms such as YouTube. Their engagement with social media may even form part of their claim.⁹

It is therefore not unreasonable for a decision-maker to ask a COI researcher for further research on social media 'evidence' supplied by a claimant. Such information could ultimately prove more relevant to a claim assessment than more general information on country conditions. However, COI units need to consider whether they have the mandate, as well as the necessary resources of time, requisite knowledge and technical ability that this type of research may require.

Social media content use in other fields

News media

User-generated content poses many of the same issues for news media professionals as it does for COI researchers. Of particular relevance are matters of source and content verification, contextual information to be provided to the user and future retrievability.

Media organisations such as Al Jazeera, CNN, and the Associated Press all devote staff and resources towards verifying material that has come from social media sources.¹⁰ The BBC has a team of 20 staff in its 'UGC Hub' at its London newsroom, aimed at authenticating videos and footage posted on social media networks.¹¹ Storyful, a news agency which offers

⁸ Haines, R 2011, *Country Information and Evidence Assessment in New Zealand*, COI in Judicial Practice Conference, Budapest, 13-15 April <http://www.refugee.org.nz/Reference/Budapest.html> (Accessed 6 December 2012)

⁹ See, for example, AP (Iran) [2011] NZIPT 800012 (29 September 2011) https://forms.justice.govt.nz/search/IPT/Documents/RefugeeProtection/pdf/ref_20110929_800012.pdf (Accessed 10 December 2012), where the claim was based in part on the appellant's Facebook profile; and AS (Iran) [2011] NZIPT 800208 (17 November 2011) https://forms.justice.govt.nz/search/IPT/Documents/RefugeeProtection/pdf/ref_20111117_800208.pdf (Accessed 10 December 2012), where the appellant had a posted anti-government material on his blog and video footage of himself attending demonstrations on YouTube

¹⁰ Silverman, C 2012, 'A New Age for Truth', *Nieman Reports*, Summer, Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University <http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/102762/A-New-Age-for-Truth.aspx> (Accessed 6 December 2012)

¹¹ Turner, D 2012, 'Inside the BBC's Verification Hub' *Nieman Reports*, Summer, Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University <http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/102764/Inside-the-BBCs-Verification-Hub.aspx> (Accessed 6 December 2012)

verification as one of its services, rates the reliability and authenticity of social media sources by considering account registration and author details, affiliated accounts on other platforms, account history, use of slang appropriate to claimed location, domain registration details (via WHOIS), file extensions and technical descriptors.¹²

In order to try and authenticate images, some news agencies use technological tools such as TinEye, a "reverse image search engine" which looks for the original source of the image, as well as for similar images which may have been modified.¹³ However, journalists also do their own 'legwork', such as trying to talk to the original source of the material.

Most reputable news agencies attempt to verify user-generated content, and whether successful or not, to provide the audience with contextual information as to the source. COI researchers also need to provide decision-makers with enough context so that they can make up their own minds on the weight to give information obtained from social media.

Retrievability can be an issue not just for social media sites, but for information sourced from the internet in general. Both Reuters and the BBC recommend screen-shot capture and saving as "protection against vanishing websites".¹⁴

Legal proceedings

Social media as COI

Limited information was found on the use of social media in international protection determinations. Overseas, reliance on Wikipedia for COI has been criticised.¹⁵ In other legal contexts, some commentators have noted that while Wikipedia may be an appropriate source for non-controversial or incidental information, it should not be used for matters which are subject to reasonable dispute or which are best left for experts.¹⁶ No discussion was found, in the time available, and among the publicly accessible sources consulted, on the acceptability of other forms of social media as COI in international protection determinations.

¹² Little, M 2012, 'Finding the Wisdom in the Crowd' *Nieman Reports*, Summer, Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University

<http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/102766/Finding-the-Wisdom-in-the-Crowd.aspx> (Accessed 6 December 2012)

¹³ Turner, 'Inside the BBC's Verification Hub'; TinEye n.d. *About TinEye* <http://www.tineye.com/about> (Accessed 10 December 2012)

¹⁴ 'Reporting from the internet and using social media' [2012], *Reuters: Handbook of Journalism* [last updated 16 February] http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php?title=Reporting_From_the_Internet_And_Using_Social_Media (Accessed 6 December 2012); 'Internet research: guidance in full' n.d., BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/page/guidance-internet-research-full> (Accessed 10 December 2012)

¹⁵ See 'Judges rap Wiki-evidence in immigration cases' 2010, *Globe and Mail*, 21 April <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/judges-rap-wiki-evidence-in-immigration-cases/article1542565/> (Accessed 13 December 2012); 'Appeals court smacks down judge for relying on Wikipedia' 2008, *Ars Technica*, 3 September <http://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2008/09/appeals-court-smacks-down-judge-for-relying-on-wikipedia/> (Accessed 13 December 2012)

¹⁶ Cited in Whiteman, M 2010, 'The death of twentieth-century authority' *UCLA Law Review Discourse* 27 <http://www.uclalawreview.org/pdf/discourse/58-3.pdf> (Accessed 13 December 2012) pp. 56-57

Social media as "evidence"

The use of social media as evidence in court and tribunal hearings is an evolving and complex issue, and a detailed analysis is beyond the scope of this review. In a humanitarian context, content and data captured via social media can form part of what Sigal refers to as an "evidentiary chain" of information,¹⁷ or what the Center for Research Libraries describes as the "lifecycle" of electronic human rights documentation.¹⁸

In relation to presenting such evidence in legal proceedings, the Center for Research Libraries' report on Human Rights Electronic Evidence notes that while evidentiary requirements for courts and tribunals vary at both national and international levels, two of the common requirements can be summarised as:

- **Authenticity:** "the evidence is what it purports to be (i.e. that it is not a forgery or fabrication) ... The authenticity of a digital object is almost impossible to determine absolutely, because with use and over time, any number of events and actions will cause changes in its metadata, appearance and even its format. At best, authenticity can be established on a relative basis and time and legal practice will determine what acceptable level of authentication the courts will require";
- **Reliability:** "In legal terms, "reliability" refers to the relative trust that can be placed in the truth or accuracy of a given piece of documentary evidence. ... Indicia of reliability might be internal (device-generated metadata on authorship, timestamps, digital signatures, etc.) or external (testimony regarding the place and manner in which the documentation was obtained or showing that the contents are supported by other evidence)".¹⁹

In its advice on verifying social media data for those involved in the documenting of human rights abuses, the report draws on the methods employed by news media organisations.²⁰

Robert Bromwich, an Australian Senior Counsel, suggests that the Rules of Evidence may be useful tools for tribunals when dealing with social media information as evidence.²¹

As already noted, there have been several refugee and protection appeals in New Zealand in which social media sources have been presented as part of the appellant's evidence.²² New technological tools are being developed to assist the legal community with authenticating social media data.²³

¹⁷ Sigal, I 2009, 'Digital Media in Conflict-Prone Societies' *Center for International Media Assistance*, 19 October p. 11 <http://cima.ned.org/sites/default/files/Sigal%20-%20Digital%20Media%20in%20Conflit-Prone%20Societies.pdf> (Accessed 6 December 2012)p. 10

¹⁸ Center for Research Libraries 2012, *Human Rights Electronic Evidence Study: final report*, February http://www.crl.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/pages/HREES_Final_Report_Public.pdf (Accessed 13 December 2012) p. 45

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 51

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 60-61

²¹ Bromwich, 'The Tribunal of Tomorrow: Social Media in Tribunal Proceedings - Evidentiary and Case Management Challenges'

²² fn. 8

²³ For example, X1 Discovery: Patzakis, J. 2012, *Overcoming potential legal challenges to the authentication of social media evidence*, X1 Discovery

Open source intelligence

Governments, law enforcement agencies and commercial organisations use publicly available information to build their understanding of events, groups, individuals and public opinion. The term 'open source intelligence' (or 'OSINT') is used to mean intelligence gathered from publicly available sources, such as the internet, but also traditional mass media, journals, photos and maps.²⁴ Social media opens yet another avenue of information. The term 'SOCMINT' has been coined to describe cases where intelligence is gathered from social media sources.²⁵

Publicly available information on the methods used by governments in their analysis of social media sources appears sparse. Marshall notes that "it's a topic most agencies decline to talk about."²⁶ While not directly addressing social media, some elements of the US Director of National Intelligence's analytic standards for the production and evaluation of national intelligence analysis — such as properly describing quality and reliability of sources, and properly caveating and expressing uncertainties of confidence — could be applied or adapted by researchers using social media for COI purposes.²⁷

Other considerations

Digital footprint

While not limited to social media sites, there are internet security issues to be considered when searching the internet for COI, and particularly when seeking information very specific to an individual claim. As the BBC notes in its advice to journalists, "A simple visit to a website can betray BBC interest to its owner".²⁸

Hlosek, a cyber-security and operations consultant states:

Not only can visited websites be a source of malware, but browsing activity alone reveals sensitive information — a digital footprint — about your computer and network, particularly if the research activity is persistent or repetitive. Every time a user visits an Internet site, their Internet Protocol (IP) address is recorded in that

http://www.x1discovery.com/download/X1Discovery_whitepaper_Social_Media.pdf (Accessed 13 December 2012)

²⁴ United States. Central Intelligence Agency 2010, *INTelligence: Open Source Intelligence*, 23 July <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/featured-story-archive/2010-featured-story-archive/open-source-intelligence.html> (Accessed 21 December 2012)

²⁵ Omand, D., Bartlett, B., & Miller, C. 2012, *#Intelligence*, DEMOS <http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Intelligence-web.pdf?1335197327> (Accessed 20 December 2012)

²⁶ Marshall, P. 2012, 'Don't look now, but everybody (CIA, DHS, etc.) is watching' *GCN*, 28 March <http://gcn.com/Articles/2012/04/02/Social-media-analytics-hits-privacy-line.aspx?Page=2&p=1> (Accessed 21 December 2012)

²⁷ See those discussed in Lieberthal, K. 2009, 'The U.S. Intelligence Community and Foreign Policy: Getting Analysis Right' *Brookings Institution*, September http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2009/9/intelligence%20community%20lieberthal/09_intelligence_community_lieberthal.pdf (Accessed 17 January 2013) pp. 64-65

²⁸ 'Internet research: guidance in full' n.d., *BBC*

site's Web server log. Basic analysis of such logs enables administrators to establish cyber personas of their frequent visitors.²⁹

Those who control sites which are visited as part of internet research can respond by blocking access from certain incoming IP addresses, removing content, redirecting searchers to fake websites - and even introducing malware on those fake sites, designed to harm the searcher's computer.³⁰

In addition, using a search engine such as Google may alert the site owner to the specific information the searcher is interested in, through the information supplied in the referring URL.³¹ Some search engines, such as DuckDuckGo and Startpage offer a greater level of privacy than Google.³²

Social analytics³³

There is a growing interest in user-generated content and its associated metadata. There are hundreds of companies offering products to monitor and analyse social media, with applications to date being largely for profit-making purposes. The science and art of gathering and analysing data to find meaning has been called analytics, social analytics, or new analytics.³⁴

In the humanitarian and emergency response context, social analytics have been used to inform responses to and reporting of incidents through plotting social media entries on maps (so called "crisis mapping").³⁵ Formisano, a Protection Officer at the UNHCR, comments that in the future, "new tools" may be explored "such as different ways of

²⁹ Hlosek, A.L. 2012, 'Covering your digital footprints', *Defense News*, 28 June <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120628/C4ISR02/306280008/Covering-your-digital-footprints> (Accessed 21 December 2012)

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Geary, J 2012 'Battle for the internet: Google: what is it and what does it do?' *Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2012/apr/23/google-tracking-trackers-cookies-web-monitoring> (Accessed 22 January 2013); Google n.d., *Introduction to Google Analytics* <http://support.google.com/analytics/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=1008065> (Accessed 22 January 2013)

³² Layton, T. 2012, 'An Alternative to Google for Private Web Searching' *TimLayton.com*, 22 October <http://www.timlayton.com/2012/10/22/an-alternative-to-google-for-private-web-searching/> (Accessed 21 December 2012); '5 Alternative Search Engines That Respect Your Privacy', 2012, *How To Geek.com* <http://www.howtogeek.com/113513/5-alternative-search-engines-that-respect-your-privacy/> (Accessed 21 December 2012)

³³ CRB is indebted to the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada Research Directorate for its contribution to this section

³⁴ PwC 2012, *Art and science of new analytics technology* <http://www.pwc.com/us/en/technology-forecast/2012/issue1/features/feature-art-science-analytics-technology.ihtml> (Accessed 22 January 2013); PwC 2012, *Natural language processing and social media intelligence* <http://www.pwc.com/us/en/technology-forecast/2012/issue1/features/feature-mining-social-media-intelligence.ihtml> (Accessed 22 January 2013)

³⁵ Center for Security Studies 2011, 'Crisis mapping: a phenomenon and tool in emergencies' *CSS Analysis in Security Policy*, No. 103, November <http://www.css.ethz.ch/publications/pdfs/CSS-Analysis-103-EN.pdf> (Accessed 22 January 2013); 'UK riots: every verified incident. Download the full list', 2011, *Guardian*, 10 August <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2011/aug/09/uk-riots-incident-listed-mapped> (Accessed 22 January 2013)

accessing COI through interactive maps and satellite imagery that would geo-code country evidence, precisely locating security incidents or human rights violations in any corner of the world."³⁶

In the journalism environment, some experimental technologies have been developed to filter and classify real-time social media content. This additional metadata can inform those monitoring and reporting on an unfolding event.³⁷ Other research has been done into developing models which generate information by "crowd-sourcing" insights from forums, internet comments and blogs. Academics have then developed tools to assist with determining the credibility of such "crowd-sourced" information.³⁸

Conclusion and recommendations

In many ways, the issues involved in sourcing COI from social media are not new. 'Traditional' COI sources have always demanded assessment against criteria such as those described by Gyulai (relevance, reliability and balance, accuracy and currency, transparency)³⁹ – source assessment is simply 'part of the job'. The guidelines for traditional COI sources are still relevant here. However, COI from social media is likely to require additional scrutiny, as employed by journalists working in news media and other fields: for example, robust efforts towards author identification, the use of caveats or disclaimers, and steps to ensure future retrievability should all be considered. COI researchers and their managers will need to consider what additional knowledge, skills and resources need to be developed in order to complete a thorough assessment of social media-sourced COI.

Verification of sources through use of technologies (e.g. Storyful, TinEye) and other technical measures (e.g. WHOIS) represent one means for better assessing COI sourced from social media. It is important to consider, though, whether this represents an unwise extension of COI researcher activities, straying into the field of investigation. Such an expansion of tasks

³⁶ Formisano, M 2011, 'Country of Origin Information: old problems, modern solutions' *Forced Migration Review*, 38 October <http://www.fmreview.org/technology/formisano.html> (Accessed 22 January 2013)

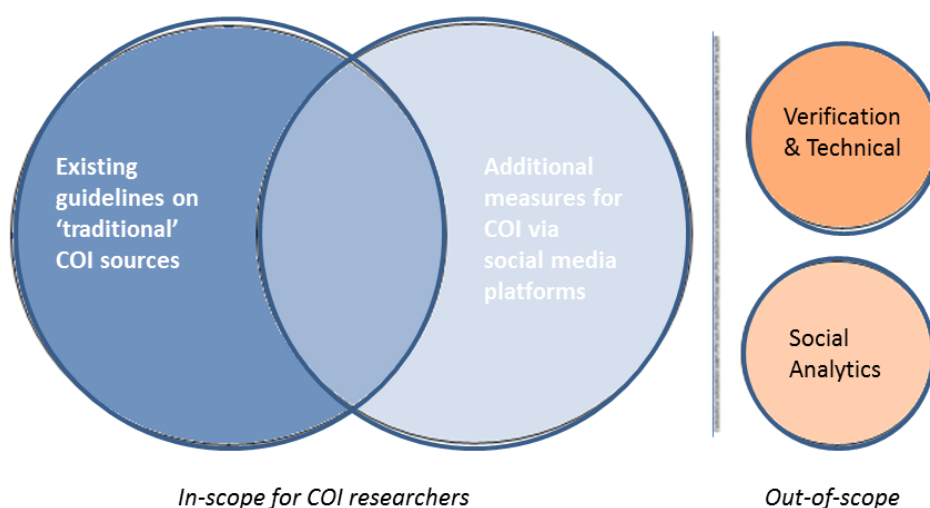
³⁷ Diakopoulos, N, De Choudhury, M & Naaman, M 2012. 'Finding and Assessing Social Media Information Sources in the Context of Journalism' *Computer-Human Interaction (CHI) Conference 12*, 5-10 May, 2012, Austin, Texas <http://sm.rutgers.edu/pubs/diakopoulos-srsr-chi2012.pdf> (Accessed 22 January 2013)

³⁸ See for example, Metzger, M 2007 'Making sense of credibility on the web: models for evaluating online information and recommendations for future research' *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 58(13): 2078-2091 http://www.credibility.ucsb.edu/past_research.php#publications (Accessed 22 January 2013); Schwarz, J and Ringel Morris, M 2011, 'Augmenting Web Pages and Search Results to Support Credibility Assessment' *Computer-Human Interaction (CHI) Conference 11*, 7-11 May 7-12, Vancouver, BC. http://research.microsoft.com/en-us/um/people/merrie/papers/WebCredibility_CHI2011.pdf (Accessed 23 January 2013); Agichtein, E et al. 2008, 'Finding high-quality content in social media' *Web Search and Data Mining (WSDM) Conference*, 11-12 February, Stanford, CA; Bian et al. 2008, 'Finding the Right Facts in the Crowd: Factoid Question Answering over Social Media' 17th International World Wide Web Conference <http://wwwconference.org/www2008/papers/fp803.html> (Accessed 23 January 2013)

³⁹ Gyulai, *Country Information in Asylum Procedures - Quality as a Legal Requirement in the EU*, pp. 15-18

may involve obtaining the necessary mandate, up-skilling staff, and additional technological or other resourcing requirements, such as time.

Emerging metadata analytics may prove useful in the future. For now, however, given the development of this field in the direction of consumer marketing for profit, it is CRB's view that it sits outside of the scope of the COI researcher.



This literature review has provided a useful foundation for the development of policy and guidelines on CRB's use of COI obtained from social media. It has raised a number of issues that need further consideration, alongside the development of CRB's own thinking on the matter. The next stage will be the development of CRB's policy on evaluating COI sourced from social media, including use of appropriate disclaimers and ensuring future retrievability. In-house "how-to" guidelines for both CRB researchers and customers on assessing user-generated content (specific to common social media platforms, e.g. Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn) will also be delivered.