

Online Disinformation: Finding the silver bullet in the digital world

12th November 2019, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
2 Rue Van Maerlant, Room VMA3, Bâtiment Van Maerlant, 1000 Brussels



Background information:

The spread of online disinformation is a threat that can deeply affect our society by hampering the ability of citizens to make informed choices, disrupting electoral processes and breaking the integrity of our democratic institutions. Its complexity represents a challenge that needs to be tackled on multiple fronts and through a more holistic approach.

The event will focus on exploring solutions to countering online disinformation. By involving diverse stakeholders working in the field, we will take stock of the achievements made in tackling online disinformation in Europe and look at the way forward to protect citizens from this threat.

The conference will feature two interactive panels where decision-makers, civil society organisations, civic campaigners and academics will 'challenge' and comment each other's positions on the subject of 'online disinformation'. The panels will go through different aspects of the problem: the first will debate a possible regulatory approach to tackle online disinformation. The second panel will present efficient initiatives and actions to empower citizens and to build the necessary resilience to ensure a prosperous, safe and democratic digital future for European citizens.

The event is being organised in the framework of the SMARTeD project, under the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union and will present its first findings and results. The aim of the project is to foster European citizenship and improve conditions for civic and democratic participation at EU level by raising citizens' awareness of national and EU level initiatives to counter fake news and online disinformation.

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Preliminary Agenda

9.00 – 9.30	Registration
9.30 – 9.45	Keynote Speech <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President-designate for a Europe fit for the Digital Age <i>(TBC)</i>
9.45 – 11.15	<p>Panel 1: <i>How far-reaching is regulation?</i></p> <p>Moderator: Assya Kavrakova, Executive Director, European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Tanja Fajon, Member of the European Parliament, S&D Group <i>(TBC)</i>▪ Alberto Rabbachin, Scientific Programme Officer, Unit I4, DG Connect, European Commission▪ Maud Sacquet, Public Policy Manager, Mozilla▪ Clara Hanot, Advocacy and Fundraising Officer, EU DisinfoLab▪ Elisabetta Biasin, Legal Researcher, KU Leuven Centre for IT & IP Law▪ Elena Gozun, Europuls
11.15 – 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 – 12.50	<p>Panel 2: <i>Empowering citizens to counter online disinformation through knowledge, digital skills and actions</i></p> <p>Moderator: Flavio Grazian, European Democracy Coordinator, European Citizen Action Service, (ECAS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Roberta Metsola, Member of the European Parliament, PPE Group <i>(TBC)</i>▪ Juliane Von Reppert-Bismarck <i>(TBC)</i>, Founder and CEO, Lie Detectors▪ Thomas Myrup Kristensen, Managing Director, EU Affairs & Head, Brussels Office, Facebook <i>(TBC)</i>▪ Annija Emerson, Senior Project Manager, ManaBalss▪ Heritiana Ranaivoson, Senior Researcher, VUB
12.50 – 13.00	Concluding remarks
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch

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