



Disinformation Across Borders and How
to Fight It:
1st SOMA High-Level Workshop

Wednesday, 20 March 2019

Venue: [Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Technological “Leonardo da Vinci”](#) , Sala del Cenacolo (address: Via San Vittore, 21, 20123 Milano)

Hosted by:



Agenda

Time	Duration	Subject	Presenter
9.30-9.45	15'	Welcome, presentation of SOMA, meeting objectives, organization and agenda	Giovanni Zagni, Pagella Politica
9.45-11.00	75'	Session 1: Disinformation across borders: case studies from the EU	Clara Jiménez Cruz, Maldita.es Peter Burger, Nieuwscheckers Maarten Schenk, Lead Stories Grégoire Lemarchand, AFP CrossCheck Moderator: Carlo Canepa, Pagella Politica
11.00-11.30	30'	Session 2: Introducing the FactCheckEU alliance	Jules Darmanin, FactCheckEU
11.30-11.45	15'	Coffee break	
11.45-12.45	60'	Session 3: SOMA's platform: what, who, how	Nikos Sarris, ATC
12.45-13.45	60'	Lunch Break	
13.45-14.30	45'	Session 4: Monitoring the European media ecosystem: EMM	Charles Macmillan, JRC
14.30-15.00	30'	Session 5: Tackling disinformation: the importance of social sciences research in understanding the phenomenon and the role of research cooperation	Simona de Rosa, T6 Heritiana Ranaivoson, MediaRoad
15.00-15.15	15'	Coffee break	
15.15-16.30	75'	Session 6: Fake news vs real politics	Lucas Graves, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism Guido Bülow, Facebook Will Moy, Full Fact Bharath Ganesh, Oxford Internet Institute Moderator: Camilla Vagnozzi, Pagella Politica

Time	Duration	Subject	Presenter
16.30- 16.45	15'	Closing remarks	Giovanni Zagni, Pagella Politica

This high-level workshop has been organized as part of the **SOMA project**.

About SOMA: Following the European Commission Communication on tackling online disinformation, SOMA (Social Observatory for Disinformation and Social Media Analysis) has been launched to provide support to a European community that will jointly fight disinformation. The project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 825469. The SOMA consortium is composed by: **ATC – Athens Technology Center** (Greece), **Aarhus University** (Denmark), **LUISS University** (Italy), **Pagella Politica** (Italy) and **T6 Ecosystems** (Italy).

Bios*

*Alphabetical order

Guido BÜLOW has been working as a Head of News Partnerships for Central Europe since September 2015. Since March 2019 he is responsible for Strategic Initiatives in EMEA which includes the Third-Party Fact-Checking program. Before joining Facebook, he was head of social media at SWR (ARD). Guido started his career with bigFM, where he volunteered after completing his studies and then worked as a marketing manager.

Peter BURGER is a journalism scholar (Leiden University, The Netherlands) with a long-standing interest in disinformation, rumor, and urban legends. He is one of the supervisors of the university's fact-checking project Nieuwscheckers. With Belgian fact-checker Maarten Schenk (Leadstories.com) he recently exposed a Macedonian network of English-language websites that promoted false news about migrants and Muslims.

Carlo CANEPA is a fact-checker at Pagella Politica, the main Italian fact-checking website. As co-author, he has published the book "La scienza dei goal" (Hoepli, 2016) – on football and science communication – and he has written the documentary "The Choice" (Unozerozero, 2018) – on the risks of web democracy. He has graduated in philosophy of sciences at Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele, in Milan.

Jules DARMANIN is the Project Coordinator for FactCheckEU, a fact-checking project from 19 outlets in 13 European countries. He previously led a debunking vertical for the French edition of BuzzFeed News. He has taught fact-checking and online research in Sciences Po and other journalism schools.

Simona DE ROSA holds a PhD in Economic Geography from the University of Rome La Sapienza and a degree in Political Science (110/110 cum laude) from the University of Naples L'Orientale. She is Partner and Senior Researcher in T6 Ecosystems working in the Media field coordinating policy activities and be engaged in research on impact assessment. Simona is Vice-Chair for Liaison for New European Media Initiative (<https://nem-initiative.org/>)

Bharath GANESH is a Researcher at the Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford specialising in the study of digital culture, hate speech, extremism, and new media in Europe and North America. This work, which focuses on the cultural and transnational aspects of this phenomenon, combines qualitative and computational methods to study its growth, spread, and impact. He contributes to the VOX-Pol Network of Excellence and the Computational Propaganda project at the Oxford Internet Institute. Bharath holds a PhD and MSc in Geography at University College London and a BA in Peace and Conflict Studies from UC Berkeley.

Lucas GRAVES (Dr) is acting Director of Research at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford and Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr Graves has been at the forefront of research on the fact-checking movement in the United States and around the world. His 2016 book *Deciding What's True: The Rise of Political Fact-Checking in American Journalism* chronicled the history, mission, and daily routines of this new form of journalism; he has also published the first comprehensive studies of a global fact-checking field that covers more than 50 countries and includes activists, academics, and policy experts as well as journalists. With the Reuters Institute he has published reports on the rise of fact-checking in Europe, and on the promise and limits of automated fact-checking technologies.

Clara JIMÉNEZ CRUZ is the Head of Project of Maldita.es, a non-profit news organization focused on the control of disinformation and public discourse through fact-checking and data journalism techniques. Maldita develops tech tools that enable citizens to make informed decisions and engages with its audience in innovative formats. Shortlisted twice for the European Press Prize, Maldita has been awarded with the Jose Manuel Porquet Journalism Prize. Clara also collaborates with Onda Cero, Radio Nacional de España and Movistar+. Between 2013 and 2018 she was part of the *El Objetivo*, a primetime TV show in laSexta. She was

appointed to the High Level Group against Disinformation by the European Commission in representation of Maldita.es and is currently a member of the International Fact-Checking Network Advisory Board.

Grégoire LEMARCHAND has been deputy editor in chief, head of social networks & fact-checking at AFP's headquarters in Paris since 2016, after having spent 12 years of reporting in Paris and Italy and 4 years as head of the social networks' unit. He is overseeing the development of fact-checking at AFP with a blog called Factual, available in five languages, and a network of journalists specialized in fact-checking in more than 15 countries. He is also a teacher at the School of Journalism of Sciences Po Paris since 2013.

Charles MACMILLAN is a researcher at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) working on text mining and analysis, including the JRC media monitoring project, the Europe Media Monitor (<http://emm.newsbrief.eu/overview>) which applies multilingual text mining techniques to online news and social media. Charles is leading the work at the JRC to develop specific tools to support of media analysts working on the detection and management of disinformation.

Will MOY has been the Director of Full Fact since 2010, through three referendums, the Leveson Inquiry into press standards, the European Parliamentary and 2015 and 2017 general elections. Will is a Marketing Academy scholar who appears regularly on TV, radio, and at events to discuss Full Fact's work and fact-checks, as well as giving evidence to the Leveson Inquiry and select committee inquiries. Before Full Fact, Will worked for the non-party affiliated peer Lord Low of Dalston and the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Transport Safety.

Heritiana RANAIVOSON is Senior Researcher and Project Leader at imec-SMIT-Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgium). He is currently coordinating the EU H2020 WEAR Sustain project, and leads EU H2020 MediaRoad's Policy Hub. Before joining imec, he was associate researcher at Cerna, the Centre for Industrial Economics at Mines ParisTech (2008-2010). He holds a PhD in Industrial Economics from Université Paris 1, Panthéon-Sorbonne. He has led several projects at international, national and local levels, funded by public (e.g. European Commission, Unesco) or private (e.g. Google) organizations. His main research interests are cultural diversity, media innovation and the economic impact of digital technology on cultural industries.

Nikos SARRIS is the Head of the ATC Innovation Lab, working on new technologies with a focus on the media sector. For the last 20 years he has been working in R&D projects as a researcher, project manager and coordinator of large multinational consortia. Lately he has mainly been involved in projects focusing on the semantic 'understanding' of news content and the assessment of its trustworthiness. He is currently managing two related products on behalf of ATC: TruthNest and TrulyMedia, the latter in cooperation with Deutsche Welle. Nikos is the coordinator of the EC-funded SOMA project tasked to empower the European Observatory against disinformation.

Maarten SCHENK is the co-founder of fact-checking website leadstories.com (which recently partnered with Facebook) and the creator of the Trendolizer engine which is used to discover content currently going viral online and to map networks of related sites. He is endlessly fascinated by the tools, tricks and techniques used by the (mainly financially motivated) spreaders of fake news and disinformation online. He is based in Belgium but his work has helped expose (and sometimes bring down) networks of websites from all around the globe.

Camilla VAGNOZZI is a fact-checker at Pagella Politica, the main Italian fact-checking website. Camilla worked for the U.S. Consulate General Milan as a public affairs officer and as a project manager for Eticall - marketing and communication agency. She has graduated in Publishing, Communication and Fashion at the Università degli Studi di Milano and in Modern Literature at Università degli Studi di Pavia. Her main interests are journalism and new media.

Giovanni ZAGNI joined Pagella Politica in 2015 and is currently its Director. A journalist, he previously worked at the two Italian online newspapers Il Post and Linkiesta. His articles on topics ranging from foreign policy to the debate around online misinformation have appeared also in Il Foglio, Rivista Studio and Le Scienze. He is an alumnus of the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa and holds a PhD in Romance Philology from the University of Siena.

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About Pagella Politica: Founded in 2012, Pagella Politica is the main Italian project dedicated to political fact-checking. The project's mission is to verify the claims made by politicians and public figures, using publicly available or specifically requested data, facts and figures. Pagella Politica is an active member of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) and of the FactCheckEU (FCEU) alliance.

