

DisinfoCon, 12 September 2023: Conference programme

09:00 **Welcome coffee**

09:30 **Opening remarks**

Welcoming you to DisinfoCon!

With Michael Meyer-Resende and Heather Dannyelle Thompson, Democracy Reporting International

09:45 **INTERVIEW with Dr Peter Ptassek, Director for Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy at the German Federal Foreign Office**

With Nicola Schmidt, Democracy Reporting International

10:00 **KEYNOTE SPEECH: The New Algorithm of Foreign Affairs**

AI is probably the most compelling technology of our time and will transform society as we know it. AI's impact will be widespread – from the daily life of millions of citizens to the dynamics of international politics. One such example is how AI is changing the disinformation landscape and abilities. AI powered disinformation can erode the foundational trust in democratic elections. This calls for democracies to show the way forward. As well as a multistakeholder dialogue between governments, civil society and the private sector. Making all voices heard.

By Anne Marie Engtoft Meldgaard, Tech Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark

10:15 **Will generative AI be the end of democracy?**

ChatGPT was released less than a year ago, but it has brought the AI revolution to the public eye sparking hope, hype, critique and panic. But what is the reality? We start our conference with a one-to-one debate: can AI help with our most pressing challenges or are the dangers to democracy real and present?

Speakers:

- Dr. Renana Keydar, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, Center for Digital Humanities, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- Pegah Maham, Project Director for Artificial Intelligence & Data Science, Stiftung Neue Verantwortung

Moderated by Jennifer Baker.

Incl. Q&A with our on-site and online audience.

11:00 **Coffee break and networking**

11:45 **Problems and solutions for inclusive AI practices**

We've seen it before – algorithms and AI perpetuate age-old systemic biases. Democracies, already under threat from increased polarisation and hate speech, need to be safeguarded with a value-based approach to AI development. In this session, we look at real-world case studies and examine their profound consequences on society.

Speakers:

- Mutale Nkonde, Founding CEO of AI for the People
- Luisa Franco Machado, Feminist Digital Rights & Data Justice Activist

Moderated by Beatriz Almeida-Saab, Democracy Reporting International.

Incl. Q&A with our on-site and online audience.

12:30 **Regulating AI to safeguard democracy: Where to start?**

As generative artificial intelligence (gAI) grows in sophistication and availability, calls for swift regulation have been asked and answered. Our panel will discuss the fundamental components of such hard and soft regulation and dissect their differing approaches in Europe, the USA, and beyond.

Speakers:

- Prof. Dr. Joanna Bryson, Professor of Ethics and Technology, Hertie School of Governance.
- Craig Matasick, Policy Analyst, OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

Moderated by Dr. Jan Nicola Beyer, Democracy Reporting International.

Incl. Q&A with our on-site and online audience.

13:15 **Lunch**

14:35 **The hidden costs of the rise of AI**

The speed, scale and growth of gAI has triggered remarkable technological advances. But that speed has come at a cost: it is humans, often from already marginalised communities, who are tasked to train gAI machines, often by confronting violent and distressing content. Join us for a candid discussion.

Speakers:

- Odanga Madung, Senior Researcher for Elections & Platform Integrity, Mozilla Foundation
- Richard Mathenge, Current Admin of the African Content Moderators Union

Moderated by Heather Dannyelle Thompson, Democracy Reporting International.

Incl. Q&A with our on-site and online audience.

15:15 **Exploring AI detection and potential**

The better the AI, the harder to detect. The harder to detect, the easier to exploit. Can we rely on technical solutions, such as provenance, to keep the information space transparent? And how can we know what is real and what is synthetic? We tackle both questions in this lightning talk.

Speaker:

- Kate Brightwell, Head of Strategy & Engagement, Content Authenticity Initiative EMEA, Adobe
- Claire Leibowicz, Head of AI and Media Integrity, Partnership on AI (PAI)

Moderated by Lena-Maria Böswald, Democracy Reporting International.

Incl. Q&A with our on-site and online audience.

15:45 **Coffee break and networking**

16:30 **The DSA in action**

Starting in August, the Digital Services Act (DSA) applies to Very Large Online Platforms (VLOPs). Elections in Slovakia, Luxembourg, and Poland will be among the first to test the waters: will the DSA rise to the occasion? And how can we strengthen it in the face of the upcoming European Parliament elections?

Speakers:

- Alberto Rabbachin, Deputy Head of Unit, DG Connect, European Commission
- Katarína Klingová, Senior Research Fellow, GLOBSEC
- Jakub Rybníkář, Analyst and DSA Officer Council for Media Services

Moderated by Richard Kuchta, Democracy Reporting International

Incl. Q&A with our on-site and online audience.

17:15 **Concluding remarks**

Thank you for attending DisinfoCon!

With Michael Meyer-Resende, Democracy Reporting International.



17:30 –
19:00 **Happy hour**