



From Populist, Illiberal Political Narratives to Conspiracy Theories and Fake News in the Visegrád Region and Beyond

- workshop organised by the Hungarian Europe Society -

Date: 7 June 2018, Thursday

Venue: National Association of Hungarian Journalists, Budapest, 1064
Vörösmarty utca 47/A

Populist political communication, fake news, post-truth, alternative facts, partisan and polarised media landscapes, disinformation and (Russian) propaganda, transformation of social media, bubbles and echo chambers, media literacy – these expressions and notions try to describe recent political and media developments that have been thoroughly debated in Central European public discourses just like in the European Union and globally. Anti-liberal political forces misuse techniques of political communication in order to implement their strategies threatening not only in Hungary and Poland, but worldwide. Even in established European Union member states populist parties, which have relied on their Eurosceptic profiles, have been considered the principal beneficiaries of a new media environment where false information often circulates faster than real news. State actors, like Russia, conduct disinformation campaigns that influence elections of other countries with polarised electorates and audiences. Representatives of rational public debates seem to lose against the protagonists of conspiracy theories in partisan competition both at national and European levels.

The workshop of the Hungarian Europe Society intends to grasp and investigate general tendencies as well as to understand the impacts of diverse social and political changes regarding our subject matter. Organising the event in Hungary, our focus is on the worrisome dilemma whether these emerging and interlinked ambiguous phenomena inside the political system and the media sphere can fundamentally undermine liberal democracies or if there is a realistic hope in the renewal of the liberal democratic order under new circumstances following a critical period of multiple crises?



Program

9.15 – 9.45 Registration

9.45 Introduction

- **István Hegedűs** (Chairman, Hungarian Europe Society): A Letter Sent By Fidesz to Its Sister Party

10.00 – 11.15 **First Session:** Populist Parties, Political Communication, Styles and Strategies

Moderator: **Erik Uszkiewicz** (Vice-chairperson, Hungarian Europe Society)

- **Anna Kende** (Social Psychologist, Associate Professor, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest): National Consultations as a Means of Moral Exclusion

- **Wojciech Przybylski** (Res Publica Foundation, Chairman of the Board, Visegrad Insight, Editor-in-Chief, Warsaw): Populist Communication and Political Strategy in Poland

Debate

11.15 – 11.30 Coffee Break

11.30 – 12.30 **Second Session:** The European Union in a Hostile Environment

Moderator: **András Schweitzer** (Former Vice-chairperson, Hungarian Europe Society)

- **Ida Eklund Lindwall** (East Stratcom Task Force, European External Action Service, Brussels): Pro-Kremlin Disinformation and the Challenge for Democracies



- **Martin Mycielski** (Correspondent at Gazeta Wyborcza and Director of Partnerships & Communications at EU DisinfoLab, Brussels): Successful Counter-disinformation Operations

Debate

12.30 – 14.00 Lunch Break

14.00 – 15.15 **Third Session:** Quality Journalism under Changing Political, Technological and Business Circumstances

Moderator: **Zsuzsanna Végh** (Vice-chairperson, Hungarian Europe Society)

- **John Lloyd** (Founding Member and Senior Research Fellow at the Reuters Institute, Contributing Editor to the Financial Times, London): The End of Journalism?

- **Anna Szilágyi** (Professor of Communications, Savannah College of Art and Design, Hong Kong): Partisanship, Fake News, Language and Media Literacy

- **Elodie Vialle** (Head of Journalism & Technology Desk, Responsable Bureau Journalisme & Technologie, Reporters Without Borders, Paris): New Threats to Journalism: Artificial Intelligence, Trolls, Bots

Debate

15.15 – 15.30 Coffee Break

15.30 – 16.30 **Fourth Session:** Regional Peculiarities in the Relationship between Politics and Media in a Populist Era

Moderator: **Györgyi Kocsis** (Vice-chairperson, Hungarian Europe Society)

- **Martin Ehl** (Chief International Editor, Hospodářské noviny, Prague): Fake News and Journalism – The Czech Case and Beyond



- **Filip Struhárik** (Journalist, Editor and Social Media Manager, Denník N, Bratislava): The Slovak Experience

Debate

16.30 – 17.30 **Special Interventions**

- **Alberto Alemanno** (Jean Monnet Professor of European Union Law and Regulation, Scientific Director of the EU Public Interest Law Clinic, HEC Paris and New York University School of Law, Co-founder, The Good Lobby): The Future of the European Union in the Digital Age

- **Michael Schudson** (Professor of Journalism, Columbia Journalism School, New York City): What Hasn't Changed in Today's Journalism?

Debate

17.30 Conclusions

- **István Hegedűs** (Chairman, Hungarian Europe Society)

Supported by

Friedrich Naumann
STIFTUNG **FÜR DIE FREIHEIT**



POLITICAL CAPITAL
POLICY RESEARCH & CONSULTING INSTITUTE

