SOFIA INFORMATION INTEGRITY FORUM

https://sofia-info-integrity.eu/

AGENDA

11-13 November 2026

Central Military Club | Sofia

Day 1, November 11

PLENARY HALL

09:00 *Opening*

Prof. Dimitar Vatsov, President, HSS Foundation – Sofia

Dr. Keith Peter Kiely, Senior Researcher, GATE Institute

Christoph Plate, Director Media Programme South East Europe, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

Nesin Veli, CEO, Identrics

Vassil Velichkov, CTO, Sensika Technologies

Dr. Mariya Yurukova, European Studies Department, Sofia University

Rositsa Dzhekova, Director, Democracy Shield Task Force, Center for the Study of Democracy

Keynote

Sophia Eriksson-Waterschoot, Deputy Director-General for Communication, European Commission

SECOND HALL

KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG MEDIA PROGRAMME SEE

CSD CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF DEMOCRACY

HSSF Sofia

identrics

GATE big data for smart society

SENSIKA

CoDE

Atlantic Association of Reserve Officers Bulgaria

Day 1, November 11

PLENARY HALL

10:00 ***Technology and Communication in Time of War***

Democratic Warfare: The Proliferation of Strategic Technology in Asymmetric Phases of Conflict
Asher Derry, Privacy Engineer and Communications Consultant

Communications as Defence: Engineering Legitimacy in Ukraine's War
Dmytro Raiskyi, Director Strategic Communications and Government Affairs, PR Army

Moderator: **Ruslan Trad,** Research Fellow, Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab (DFRLab)

11:00 **Coffee break**

11:30 ***From FIMI Detection to Disruption: Pathways Towards Electoral Integrity***

Andrei Rusu, Media Monitoring Expert, Watchdog.md
Liubomir Borissov, Senior Analyst, Center for the Study of Democracy
Calin Georgia, Researcher, Funky Citizens Romania
Małgorzata Szumna, Head of Narrative Trend Analysis and Fact-Checking Team, NASK Poland
Szymon Grabowski, Senior Analyst, NASK Poland

Moderator: **Rositsa Dzhekova,** Director, Democracy Shield Task Force, Center for the Study of Democracy

SECOND HALL

11:30 ***Using LLMs to Detect Harmful Narratives***

MAP-Desinfo: Using Large Language Models to Detect Harmful Narratives in Bulgaria's Regional Media
Nikola Tulechki, Founder, Data for Good
Georgi Penchev, Data for Good

Day 1, November 11

	PLENARY HALL		SECOND HALL
12:30	**Lunch**		
13:30	***TikTokcracy Unmasked: When Platforms Decide Elections*** **Antoinette Nikolova**, Director and Board Member, BFMI **Georgi Angelov,** Senior Analyst, Sensika Technologies **Oliver Money-Kyrle**, Senior Advisor, EU Policy & Advocacy, BFMI **Vassil Velichkov**, CTO & Co-Founder, Sensika Technologies *Moderator:* **Vyara Deyanova,** Co-Founder, Out Loud Foundation	**13:30**	***DisInfoHack and Student Research on countering disinformation - Session 1*** *AI Warfare Disinformation: A Content Analysis of Bulgarian Fact-Checking Platforms* **Georgi Stoyanov, Petya Vretenova, Nevin Boshnakova,** DisInfoHack 2026 Finalists *Disinformation as a Tool of Hybrid Warfare: Rethinking Offense, Defense, and Collective Security in the Digital Age* **Anastasiia Peicheva**, Master in E-Europe and DisInfoHack 2026 Second Place Finalist *The Impact Of Influence Operations: Development Of The Methodology For Io Impact Measurement In Real-Time* **Alexandra Gouleva**, Master in International and Security Politics, DisInfoHack 2025 Finalist *Moderator:* **Dr. Mariya Yurukova,** Head of MA "E-Europe" and DisInfoHack, Sofia University
14:30	***Multi-Domain Hybrid Threats: Cross-Regional Parallels in the Eastern Flank of NATO*** **Ruslan Trad**, Co-Founder, De Re Militari **Tsveti Monova-Borisova**, PhD Researcher, De Re Militari **Natali Nacheva**, Cybersecurity Researcher, De Re Militari *Moderator:* **Ventsislav Bozhev,** Managing Director, De Re Militari	**14:30**	***Building Human-Centred LLM/NLP Tools for Information Integrity*** *From Signals to Social Meaning: Building Human-Centred LLM/NLP Tools for Information Integrity* **Dobromir Tsolyov**, Researcher, GATE Institute **Dr. Keith Peter Kiely**, Senior Researcher, GATE Institute *Hyperbole Detection in Bulgarian Advertising Texts*

Day 1, November 11			
	PLENARY HALL		***SECOND HALL***
			Nevena Grigorova, Researcher, GATE Institute *Moderator*: **Dr. Keith Peter Kiely**, Senior Researcher, GATE Institute
15:30	**Coffee break**		
16:00	***The Algorithmic Influence Machine: AI, Politics & Media*** *Chat, tell me who to vote for: How LLMs responded to voter questions about the Bulgarian elections* **Todor Kiriakov**, Information Integrity Specialist, Identrics *Monetized Slopaganda: How Facebook is funding AI political clickbait against its own policies* **Aleksandra Atanasova**, OSINT investigator *Recommender systems for intelligent media* **Maria Mateva**, Co-Founder, Kronkite **Garvan Walshe**, Co-Founder, Kronkite *Moderator:* **Devora Kotseva**, Information Integrity Specialist, Identrics	**16:00**	***Information and Knowledge Asymmetries*** *Who Knew? On European East-West Knowledge Hierarchies and their Remedying* **Dr. Tereza Hendl,** Post-doc Institute of Ethics, History and Theory of Medicine Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich *From Exposure to Disruption: Imposing Costs on Hostile State Information Operations* **Sopo Gelava,** Associate Director for Research, DFRLab, Atlantic Council *Moderator*: **Prof. Dimitar Vatsov,** President, HSS Foundation – Sofia
17:00	***Resilience Under Fire: Communication and Legitimacy in Wartime*** *When Preparedness Becomes Reality: Crisis Communication and Societal Resilience in Israel* **Ludmila Hamplova,** Strategic and Crisis Communication Consultant, Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic *Beyond Military Force: Information Warfare and the Struggle for Legitimacy in the 2023 Gaza War*	**17:00**	***On the Front Line of Cognitive Warfare: Disinformation Attacks on Key Industries and Critical Infrastructure in Southeast Europe and the Black Sea Region*** **Uwe Wolff,** Founder and Managing Director, NAÏMA Strategic Legal Services GmbH, Berlin *Moderator*: **Iglika Ivanova**, Researcher, GATE Institute

Day 1, November 11

	PLENARY HALL	SECOND HALL
	Yana Naydenova, Junior Researcher, GATE Institute *The Overlap of Narratives between the Middle East and Ukraine, and How Russian Media Outlets Use Them* **Ruslan Trad,** Research Fellow, Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab (DFRLab) *Moderator:* **Dr. Ruslana Margova,** Experienced Researcher, GATE Institute	
18:00	***Closing***	

Day 2, November 12

	PLENARY HALL	SECOND HALL
09:30	***Narratives, Beliefs and Vulnerabilities: Propaganda Risks in Europe*** *Unique EU Accession Case of Ukraine: Propaganda Risks* **Krassen Stanchev,** Dr. Habil, Sofia University and the Institute for Market Economics **Aistė Sabaliauskaitė-Tsachev,** Chief Strategy Officer, Repsense.io *Conspiracy Regimes: A Comparative Study of the Correlates of Conspiracy Beliefs Across Europe* **Marta Antonova,** PhD Candidate, University of Berne, Switzerland *Moderator*: **Prof. Milena Iakimova**, HSS Foundation – Sofia	

Day 2, November 12

	PLENARY HALL	*SECOND HALL*
10:30	***Environmental and Climate Information Integrity*** **Paul Grignon,** ECOLAB, French Ministry of Ecological Transition, PhD candidate **Katharina Zuegel**, Forum on Information & Democracy *Moderator:* **Iglika Ivanova,** Researcher, GATE Institute	***China's 'Soft Power'? Producing Narratives, Winning Minds, Influencing Publics*** **Prof. Chloe Froissart**, Professor in Political Science, Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris **Filip Sebok**, Head of Prague Office, Central European Institute of Asian Studies *Moderator:* **Vladimir Shopov,** Visiting Fellow, Asia Programme, European Council on Foreign Relations
11:30	**Coffee break**	
12:00	***AI and Cognitive Security in the Decade of Information Warfare*** **Tomáš Kriššák**, Senior Strategic Communications Consultant, Gerulata Technologies **Jeremy Fannin**, Assistant Professor, EDHEC Business School **Peter Benzoni**, Senior Research Manager, Institute for Strategic Dialogue **Katy Ling**, Open-source intelligence (OSINT) specialist, digital risk consultant, and investigative producer (former BBC) *Moderator:* **Gloria Trifonova,** Analyst, Center for the Study of Democracy	***Project CoDE Session: Building a Collaborative Model for Information Integrity in the Digital Age in Bulgaria*** **Mariya Yurukova,** Assist. Prof. PhD, DisInfoHack, European Studies Department, Sofia University **Ivaylo Blagoev,** PhD, ICR Lab, Institute of ICT, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences **Ivan Draganov,** Inspire Cyber experiment, Institute of ICT, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences **Aleksey Potebnya,** Assist. Prof. PhD, Department of Business Administration, Sofia University **George Sharkov,** Assoc. Prof. CEO, European Software Institute (ESI) *Moderator:* **Adriana Dikancheva,** PhD Candidate, European Studies Department, Sofia University

Day 2, November 12

	PLENARY HALL	SECOND HALL
13:00	**Lunch**	
14:00	***Overview and Safeguarding Strategy for Information Integrity on Wikipedia*** **Nathan Forrester,** Senior Trust & Safety Specialist, Knowledge Integrity | Wikimedia Foundation *Building and safeguarding knowledge integrity during elections and crisis* *Moderator*: **Iglika Ivanova**, Researcher, GATE Institute	**14:00** ***Protocol Lab: Testing AI Chatbots Part 1*** *An expert workshop to co-design a practical method for detecting whether hostile or laundered Russian-backed sources and narratives surface in AI chatbot answers in Bulgarian.* *Moderator:* **Gloria Trifonova,** Analyst, Center for the Study of Democracy & **Nikola Tulechki,** Founder, Data for Good
15:00	***Propaganda Images of Europe in Bulgarian Media*** *Propaganda Imagery and Its Networks of Dissemination* **Lyubomir Donchev,** Researcher, HSS Foundation – Sofia *Europe in the looking glass of anti-democratic propaganda* **Maya Dimitrova,** Journalist, Bulgarian National Television *Suicidal Tendencies: Narratives on the Decline of Europe* **Valentin Valkanov,** Assistant Professor, New Bulgarian University *Moderator:* **Veronika Dimitrova,** HSS Foundation – Sofia	**15:00** ***Protocol Lab: Testing AI Chatbots Part 2*** *An expert workshop to co-design a practical method for detecting whether hostile or laundered Russian-backed sources and narratives surface in AI chatbot answers in Bulgarian.* *Moderator:* **Gloria Trifonova,** Analyst, Center for the Study of Democracy & **Nikola Tulechki,** Founder, Data for Good
16:00	**Coffee break**	
16:30	***DisInfoHack and Student Research on countering disinformation - Session 2***	**16:30** ***Beyond the Feed: Youth, Culture and Democratic Resilience***

Day 2, November 12

PLENARY HALL

Patriotism Through Division: „Us vs. Them“ narrative in Bulgarian Political Discourse
Gabriela Radkova, Anastasiia Peicheva, Masters in E-Europe and DisInfoHack 2026 Second Place Finalists

Mourning or Triumph? The Far Right Through the Image of the Lukov March Over the Years
Liliya Georeva, Gergana Dimitrova, DisInfoHack 2025 Finalists

Beyond Horoscopes: Astrology, Political Narratives and Disinformation about the EU on Bulgarian YouTube
Elena Rodimova, Master in E-Europe and DisInfoHack 2025 Third Place Finalist

Moderator: **Dr. Mariya Yurukova,** Head of MA “E-Europe” and DisInfoHack, Sofia University

17:30 ***Screening of “Putin’s Playground” (Sofia DocuMental / Balkan Documentary Center)***

Two Polish documentary filmmakers investigate Russian covert operations and networks of influence across Central and Eastern Europe.

Director: ***Konrad Szołajski*** | 2024 | 91 minutes

Presented at SIIF 2026 through the British Council’s partnership with Sofia DocuMental / Balkan Documentary Center, whose support makes the screening possible. The film featured in Sofia DocuMental’s 2024 programme, with screenings organised in partnership with the Polish Institute in Sofia and discussions with the director.

SECOND HALL

Ernesta Rousseva, Chief Expert, Secretariat of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Council of Ministers, Bulgaria
Vasilena Dimitrova, Co-Executive Director, Single Step Foundation
Viktoria Mileva, Youth Worker and Volunteer, Open Space Foundation
Céline Branchi, Attachée de coopération institutionnelle, Embassy of France / French Institute in Bulgaria
Małgorzata Hejduk-Gromek, Director, Polish Institute in Sofia; Minister-Counsellor, Embassy of Poland in Bulgaria
Representative, Sofia DocuMental

Moderator: **Dobryana Petkova**, Cross-sectoral Programme Manager, British Council

Day 2, November 12		
	PLENARY HALL	***SECOND HALL***
19:00	***Closing***	

Day 3, November 13			
	PLENARY HALL		***SECOND HALL***
09:30	***A Look into the Future of Media Literacy: The Evolution of Media Literacy and Two Hypotheses for the Future*** **Andy Stoycheff**, Founder, Director & Researcher, NTCenter **Vladimir Pachemanov**, PhD, Senior Researcher, NTCenter *Moderator:* **Devora Kotseva**, Information Integrity Specialist, Identrics	**09:30**	***Recognise, Resist, Respond: Youth-centric techniques to countering disinformation (Youth workshop - Part 1)*** *Lecture: recognising disinformation and digital citizenship* *Moderator:* **Svetoslav Malinov**, Analyst, Center for the Study of Democracy
10:30	***From Detection to Response: Building Europe's Next Layer of Cognitive Resilience*** **Dirk Kunze**, Media Director, Logiq Media **Adrien Duguet**, Vice-President and previous President of ACTE, Co-Founder of Citipo (TBC) **Yoana Barakova**, Project Coordinator, Center for the Study of Democracy **Jakub Weiner**, Associate Fellow, Center for the Study of Democracy *Moderator:* **Rositsa Dzhekova,** Director, Democracy Shield Task Force, Center for the Study of Democracy.	**10:30**	***Recognise, Resist, Respond: Youth-centric techniques to countering disinformation (Youth workshop - Part 2)*** *Interactive presentation of the adapted counter narrative toolkit* *Multi-stakeholder simulation* *Moderator:* **Svetoslav Malinov**, Analyst, Center for the Study of Democracy
11:30	**Coffee break**		

Day 3, November 13

	PLENARY HALL	*SECOND HALL*
12:00	***Follow the Networks: Hands-On OSINT from Putin's Digital Gulag to Bulgaria*** **Andrey Zakharov,** Independent investigative journalist **Georgi Angelov,** Senior Analyst, Sensika Technologies *Moderator:* **Maria Cheresheva,** *Co-Founder and Chair, AEJ-Bulgaria*	**12:00** ***Recognise, Resist, Respond: Youth-centric techniques to countering disinformation (Youth workshop - Part 3)*** *Campaign presentation and discussion* *Closing and validation* *Moderator:* **Svetoslav Malinov**, Analyst, Center for the Study of Democracy
13:00	***Closing session*** *Information resilience mechanism for MoFA and the Government in EU framework* **Velizar Shalamanov**, Associated Professor, Institute of ICT, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences *Reflections and Takeaways SIIF 2026*	
14:00	***Closing***	