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*

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

**Keith Peter Kiely,** Senior Researcher, GATE Institute

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

**Nesin Veli,** CEO, Identrics

**Representative**, Sensika Technologies

**Dr. Mariya Yurukova,** European Studies Department, Sofia University

**Prof. Dimitar Vatsov,** President, HSS Foundation – Sofia

*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 | SECOND HALL |
|---|---|---|
| **10:00** | ***Information, Technology and the Character of War*** *(title TBC)*<br><br>*Democratic Warfare: The Proliferation of Strategic Technology in Asymmetric Phases of Conflict*<br>**Asher Derry,** Privacy Engineer and Communications Consultant<br><br>*Communications as Defence: Engineering Legitimacy in Ukraine's War*<br>**Dmytro Raiskyi**, Director Strategic Communications and Government Affairs, PR Army<br><br>*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***<br><br>**Andrei Rusu**, Media Monitoring Expert, Watchdog.md<br>**Liubomir Borissov**, Senior Analyst, Center for the Study of Democracy<br>**Calin Georgia**, Researcher, Funky Citizens Romania<br>**Małgorzata Szumna**, Head of Narrative Trend Analysis and Fact-Checking Team, NASK Poland<br>**Szymon Grabowski**, Senior Analyst, NASK Poland<br><br>*Moderator:* **Rositsa Dzhekova,** Director, Democracy Shield Task Force, Center for the Study of Democracy | **11:30** ***Using LLMs to Detect Harmful Narratives***<br><br>*MAP-Desinfo: Using Large Language Models to Detect Harmful Narratives in Bulgaria's Regional Media*<br>**Nikola Tulechki,** Founder, Data for Good<br>**Georgi Penchev**, Data for Good |
| **12:30** | **Lunch** | |
| **13:30** | ***TikTokcracy Unmasked: When Platforms Decide Elections*** | **13:30** |

## *Day 1, November 11*

### *PLENARY HALL*

**Antoinette Nikolova**, Director and Board Member, BFMI
**Representative**, Sensika Technologies
**Oliver Money-Kyrle**, Senior Advisor, EU Policy & Advocacy, BFMI

*Moderator:* **Representative,** Sensika Technologies

**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

### *SECOND HALL*

***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** ***Building Human-Centred LLM/NLP Tools for Information Integrity***

*From Signals to Social Meaning: Building Human-Centred LLM/NLP Tools for Information Integrity*
**Nevena Grigorova**, Researcher, GATE Institute
**Dobromir Tsolyov**, Researcher, GATE Institute
**Keith Peter Kiely**, Senior Researcher, GATE Institute

## Day 1, November 11

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

## *Day 1, November 11*

| | *PLENARY HALL* | *SECOND HALL* |
|---|---|---|
| | *Beyond Military Force: Information Warfare and the Struggle for Legitimacy in the 2023 Gaza War*<br>**Yana Naydenova,** Junior Researcher, GATE Institute<br><br>**Ruslan Trad,** Research Fellow, Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab (DFRLab)<br><br>*Moderator:* **Keith Kiely,** Senior Researcher, GATE Institute | *Moderator*: **Iglika Ivanova**, 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*<br>**Krassen Stanchev,** Dr. Habil, Sofia University and the Institute for Market Economics<br><br>**Aistė Sabaliauskaitė-Tsachev,** Chief Strategy Officer, Repsense.io<br><br>*Conspiracy Regimes: A Comparative Study of the Correlates of Conspiracy Beliefs Across Europe*<br>**Marta Antonova,** PhD Candidate, University of Berne, Switzerland<br><br>*Moderator*: **Prof. Milena Iakimova**, HSS Foundation – Sofia | |

## *Day 2, November 12*

| | *PLENARY HALL* | *SECOND HALL* |
|---|---|---|
| **10:30** | ***Environmental and Climate Information Integrity***<br><br>**Paul Grignon,** ECOLAB, French Ministry of Ecological Transition, PhD candidate<br>**Katharina Zuegel**, Forum on Information & Democracy<br><br>*Moderator:* **Iglika Ivanova,** GATE Institute | ***China's 'Soft Power'? Producing Narratives, Winning Minds, Influencing Publics***<br><br>**Prof. Chloe Froissart**, Professor in Political Science, Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris<br>**Filip Sebok**, Head of Prague Office, Central European Institute of Asian Studies<br><br>*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***<br><br>**Tomáš Kriššák**, Senior Strategic Communications Consultant, Gerulata Technologies<br>**Jeremy Fannin**, Assistant Professor, EDHEC Business School<br>**Peter Benzoni**, Senior Research Manager, Institute for Strategic Dialogue<br>**Katy Ling**, Open-source intelligence (OSINT) specialist, digital risk consultant, and investigative producer (former BBC)<br><br>*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***<br><br>**George Sharkov,** CEO, European Software Institute (ESI)<br>**Velizar Shalamanov,** Associated Professor, Institute of ICT, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and **Yordan Terziev, PhD candidate,** Institute of ICT, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences<br>**Aleksey Potebnya**, Assist. Prof. PhD, Department of Business Administration, Sofia University<br>**Dr. Mariya Yurukova,** Assist. Prof. PhD, European Studies Department, Sofia University<br><br>*Moderator:* **Dr. Ralitsa Stoycheva,** Research Associate of the KAS Media Programme |
| **13:00** | **Lunch** | |

## Day 2, November 12

| | PLENARY HALL | SECOND HALL |
|---|---|---|
| **14:00** | ***Overview and Safeguarding Strategy for Information Integrity on Wikipedia***<br><br>**Nathan Forrester,** Senior Trust & Safety Specialist, Knowledge Integrity \| Wikimedia Foundation<br>*Building and safeguarding knowledge integrity during elections and crisis*<br><br>*Moderator*: **Iglika Ivanova**, GATE Institute | ***AI and Cognitive Security in the Decade of Information Warfare (Protocol Lab) Part 1***<br><br>*Co-creation workshop*<br><br>*Moderator:* **Gloria Trifonova,** Analyst, Center for the Study of Democracy |
| **15:00** | ***Propaganda Images of Europe in Bulgarian Media***<br><br>*Europe in the looking glass of anti-democratic propaganda*<br>**Maya Dimitrova,** Journalist, Bulgarian National Television<br><br>*Propaganda Imagery and Its Networks of Dissemination*<br>**Lyubomir Donchev,** Researcher, HSS Foundation – Sofia<br>*Suicidal Tendencies: Narratives on the Decline of Europe*<br>**Valentin Valkanov,** Assistant Professor, New Bulgarian University<br><br>*Moderator:* **Veronika Dimitrova,** HSS Foundation – Sofia | ***AI and Cognitive Security in the Decade of Information Warfare (Protocol Lab) Part 2***<br><br>*Co-creation workshop*<br><br>*Moderator:* **Gloria Trifonova,** Analyst, Center for the Study of Democracy |
| **16:00** | **Coffee break** | |
| **16:30** | ***DisInfoHack and Student Research on countering disinformation - Session 2***<br><br>*Patriotism Through Division: „Us vs. Them" narrative in Bulgarian Political Discourse*<br>**Gabriela Radkova, Anastasiia Peicheva,** Masters in E-Europe and DisInfoHack 2026 Second Place Finalists | ***Beyond the Feed: Youth, Culture and Democratic Resilience***<br><br>**Ernesta Rousseva,** Chief Expert, Secretariat of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Council of Ministers, Bulgaria |

## *Day 2, November 12*

| | *PLENARY HALL* | *SECOND HALL* |
|---|---|---|
| | *Mourning or Triumph? The Far Right Through the Image of the Lukov March Over the Years*<br>**Karina Zhecheva, Gergana Dimitrova,** DisInfoHack 2025 Finalists<br><br>*Beyond Horoscopes: Astrology, Political Narratives and Disinformation about the EU on Bulgarian YouTube*<br>**Elena Rodimova,** Master in E-Europe and DisInfoHack 2025 Third Place Finalist<br><br>*Moderator:* **Dr. Mariya Yurukova,** Head of MA "E-Europe" and DisInfoHack, Sofia University | **Vasilena Dimitrova,** Co-Executive Director, Single Step Foundation<br>**Viktoria Mileva,** Youth Worker and Volunteer, Open Space Foundation<br>**Céline Branchi,** Attachée de coopération institutionnelle, Embassy of France / French Institute in Bulgaria<br>**Małgorzata Hejduk-Gromek**, Director, Polish Institute in Sofia; Minister-Counsellor, Embassy of Poland in Bulgaria<br>**Representative**, Sofia DocuMental<br><br>*Moderator:* **Dobryana Petkova**, Cross-sectoral Programme Manager, British Council |
| **17:30** | ***Screening of "Putin's Playground" (Sofia DocuMental / Balkan Documentary Center)***<br><br>Two Polish documentary filmmakers investigate Russian covert operations and networks of influence across Central and Eastern Europe.<br><br>*Director:* ***Konrad Szołajski***<br>2024 \| 91 minutes \| Poland, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Norway, Latvia and Germany<br><br>*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.* | |
| **19:00** | ***Closing*** | |

## *Day 3, November 13*

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

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