



## COMPACT - Riga Symposium

### Disinformation, Media Literacy and Social Media Regulation

Date: 10.12.2019

Venue: University of Latvia, Faculty of Social Sciences, Isaiah Berlin auditorium

Lauvas street 4, Riga, Latvia

Working language: English

#### Background

Latvia, along with the other Baltic states, can be regarded as a success story in the transition to a liberal democracy in the 90's after the collapse of the Soviet Unions, yet after all these years Baltic countries still experience a tense relationship with Russia. Baltic states are on the EU border and have a strong Russian media presence that often reports on local and global issues in a way that is aligned with Russian states geopolitical interests. Often these stories can be classified as disinformation. With the development of technology, social media has become one of the channels that is actively used to disseminate false messages that further or mirror the interests of Russian Federation.

One of the focal points for literacy and disinformation issues is social media and the users who consume and contribute to it daily. But as the digital space is a relatively new concept, there are still a lot of policy improvements to be made to regulate and combat the spread of disinformation online.

The aim of the event is to present new findings about digital space, social media, user literacy and ways the disinformation is spread as well as hold discussion between stakeholders and researchers to find better solutions to the serious issues the future holds. *Disinformation, Media Literacy and Social Media Regulation* is a part of COMPACT events. COMPACT aims to increase awareness of the latest technological discoveries in the context of social media and content convergence as well as to provide research on and experience-exchange of policy and regulation strategies in order to stimulate a debate on the desirable future policies and frameworks.

#### Programme

12.30

##### Opening remarks

**Prof. Jānis Ikstens, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Latvia**  
**Prof. Vita Zelče, Department of Communication Studies, Coordinator of COMPACT Latvian Team, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Latvia**

Moderator: **Raivis Vilūns**, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Latvia

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About COMPACT: It is a Horizon 2020 Coordination and Support Action (CSA) under grant number 762128. This symposium is organized by the University of Latvia as the local partner with support from COMPACT project partners.

Keynote speaker:

**Sebastian Bay** is a Senior Expert at the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga, Latvia.

*The Malicious Use of Social Media*

Since its foundation, the NATO Strategic Communication Center of Excellence in Riga has studied social media manipulation as an important and integral part of the influence campaigns malicious state and non-state actors direct against the Alliance and its partners

From the 2014 invasion of Ukraine to more recent attempts to interfere in democratic elections, antagonists seeking to influence their adversaries have turned to social media manipulation. The presentation will detail trends and developments in social media manipulation by highlighting case-studies and research conducted by NATO StratCom CoE. From the black market of social media manipulation, to working arrangements in Fake News Factories in the Philippines, to a recent in-house experiment testing the ability of social media companies to commercial manipulation.

**Oles Kulchytskyi**, Agency of European Innovations, Ukraine

*Overview of COMPACT project findings and Ukraine as an example of disinformation*

Overview of COMPACT project results on regulatory initiatives and suggestions in Europe and beyond in the area of *Information disorder and social harms*. Additionally, the Ukrainian case of disinformation will be presented.

**14.00**

**Coffee break**

**14.30**

Moderator: **Raivis Vilūns**, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Latvia

**Dr. Andrej Skolkay**, School of Communication and Media, Slovakia.

*Global Discourse on Social Media Regulation.*

A global overview of political, academic and journalistic suggestions about possible ways to regulate social media platforms.

**Dr. Klinta Ločmele**, University of Latvia

*Media Literacy in Latvia 2019 and Tasks for the Future*

In Latvia, media literacy has been in the spotlight since 2015. The first comprehensive survey on the media literacy of the inhabitants of Latvia (2017) showed that only 40% of respondents are confident in their ability to recognize reliable information from manipulative. Presentation covers the current media literacy issues and outlines particularly important future challenges in Latvia.

**Velta Skolmeistere**, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Latvia

*Habits of Using Social Media, Internet News Portals and Digital Services in Latvia*

Presentation will give insight into statistics about the current role of social media and internet news portals in acquiring the newest information, the degree of trust the society has in them and which of digital services are commonly used in Latvia.

15. 40

Coffee break

## Discussions

16.00

### *Disinformation Online: How Vulnerable We Actually Are?*

Moderator: **Mārtiņš Hiršs**, Research Fellow at the Center for Strategic and Security Research

Participants:

**Sebastian Bay**, is a Senior Expert at the Technical and Scientific Development Branch of the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga

**Filips Lastovskis** is a Board Member of Latvian Journalist Association and Journalist of news portal *Delfi.lv*

**Viktors Makarovs**, Special Envoy on Information Security Issues, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

16.45

Coffee break

17.00

### *Can Media Literacy Save Us from Disinformation?*

Moderator: **Dr. Klinta Ločmele**, Media Literacy Researcher

Participants:

**Marta Cerava**, Chief Content Editor for Public Broadcasting Media Website LSM.LV

**Iveta Locāne**, Senior consultant on website and social networking for Ministry of Education and Science

**Beāte Lielmane**, Communication and Information Program Director for UNESCO

Riga symposium will be live streamed here: [facebook.com/LUSZF](https://facebook.com/LUSZF)



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