EU - Western Balkans
Media Literacy Conference 2025

Hotel Holiday Inn, Skopje, North Macedonia | 17 November

Beyond the noise

Programme.

9:00-9:30 (30') Registration and welcome coffee

9:30-9:45 (15') Opening remarks

MICHALIS ROKAS, Ambassador of the European Union to North Macedonia

ZORAN TRAJCHEVSKI, Director of Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services of North Macedonia

1 PANEL

9:45-10:45 (60')

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND (F)IMI: Part of the problem and part of the solution

As social media platforms have become increasingly important for access to information and civic discourse, they have also become platforms for information manipulation and disinformation campaigns and the spread of illegal content. Regional civil society has been working on proposals to 'translate' EU's flagship initiatives for fostering a more accountable and transparent digital space, most notably Digital Services Act (DSA) into the regional context. However, these attempts need further solidification and alignment across the region. This panel will focus on ways of achieving robust, regionally harmonized, whole-of-society and human-rights based approaches to addressing information manipulation, illegal content and other societal risks stemming from online platforms in the Western Balkans.

SPEAKERS:

- **MAIDA ĆULAHOVIĆ,** Zašto ne, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **DANCHE DANILOVSKA-BAJDEVSKA**, Program Director, Metamorphosis Foundation, North Macedonia
- **JULIAN RINGHOF,** Policy and Case Handler Officer, Global Aspects of Digital Services, European Commission, Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology

MODERATOR:

- **TIJANA MORACA,** European External Action Service

10:45-11:00 (15') Coffee break

2 PANEL

11:00-12:00 (60')

GENDERED DISINFORMATION AND DIGITAL HATE

The Western Balkans is witnessing a surge in anti-gender and anti-LGBTIQ+ information manipulation and disinformation campaigns, impacting public opinion and hindering the democratization process in the region. These Identity-based disinformation operations also pose a threat to the perception of the EU, embedding anti-Western narratives within the public discourse. Such operations foster hostility and polarization, while inciting hate speech and hate crimes. This panel will delve into the mechanisms of these information operations, examining how they reinforce discrimination, and discuss strategies for combating their harmful effects on society.

SPEAKERS:

- **KRISTINA VOKO,** Executive Director, Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, Albania
- **IRENA CVETKOVIC,** PhD in Gender Studies, North Macedonia
- **JOVANA GLIGORJEVIĆ,** Journalists Against Violence Against Women, Serbia

MODERATOR:

- **VASKO POPETREVSKI,** Editor-in-chief and host of "360 degrees"

12:00-13:10 (70') Lunch

13:10: 14:10 (60')

BREAKOUT SESSIONS (participants to register in advance)

BREAK OUT SESSION 1:
Importance of institutional response to FIMI threats

The foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) is increasingly recognised as a phenomenon which requires institutionalized responses, such as dedicated state instruments, policies and bodies. In this breakout session we will discuss some of these institutionalisation practices: lessons learnt, challenges, and potential way forward.

SPEAKERS:

- **LILIANA VIȚU,** Chair Audiovisual Council, Republic of Moldova
- **REALD KETA,** Legal Expert on Electoral Matters of the Ad Hoc Parliamentary Committee, regarding foreign interferences and disinformation, Albania.
- **MILICA KOVAČEVIĆ,** Centre for Democratic Transition, Montenegro

MODERATOR:

- **MARTYNA BILDZIUKIEWICZ,** European External Action Service

BREAK OUT SESSION 2:
Understanding and addressing science-related information manipulation

This session will delve into broad area of information manipulation in the domain of scientific knowledge, including climate, environmental and health related disinformation. Also, we will look into effective ways of fostering innovative and quality coverage, addressing information manipulation and scepticism, and enchasing media literacy in this domain.

SPEAKERS:

- **JELENA KALINIĆ,** naukagovori.ba, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **KRESHNIK GASHI,** Kallxo, Kosovo
- **VUK VUJISIĆ,** Montenegro

MODERATOR:

- **RISTE ZMEJKOSKI,** Delegation of the European Union to North Macedonia

BREAK OUT SESSION 3:
AI beyond chatbots: Sovereignty, capability building & a practical truth stack

AI is a normal technology – powerful, imperfect, and shaped by institutions and incentives. We'll demystify how modern AI generates text, audio, and video, then shift from chatbot hype to capability building and resilience: what citizens, newsrooms, and public bodies need to operate under AI-accelerated manipulation. We'll discuss why strategies focused solely on AI regulation/restriction may undermine resilience development and potentially strengthen inequality. Through an AI-sovereignty lens, we'll map key dependencies (models, cloud, data, standards) and show practical levers: a truth stack that combines platform signals, independent fact-checking, and Content Credentials to prove what's authentic.

The workshop will be delivered by Professor **ROMAN JUROWETZKI,** University of Aalborg, Denmark

BREAK OUT SESSION 4:
To Prompt or Not to Prompt?

This session is part of the "To AI or not to AI workshop" toolbox on a critical and practical approach to the use of emerging technologies designed by Tactical Tech. This module critically examines how prompts function as a means of interaction with Large Language Model interfaces. We will carry out different prompting exercises that reveal the limitations of AI models. Participants will critically explore potential uses for performing tasks such as translation, summarizing, repurposing content, drafting proposals, and analysing data. All exercises include a critical approach and consistently highlight the ethical dilemmas and risks involved. In addition to its practical learning approach on prompting it also provides links to the "AI & Us" exhibition which will be displayed as part of the conference.

The workshop will be delivered by MSc **ANA MARIA SALINAS,** Senior Manager at Tactical Tech

14:10-14:30 (20') Coffee break

3 PANEL

14:30-15:30 (60')

NEXT GEN AND PLATFORMS: NAVIGATING RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Younger generation is being shaped by and is shaping the development of online platforms. This panel explores the dual nature of this relationship, examining the risks of life on platforms, such as privacy concerns, misinformation, and digital addiction, alongside the opportunities platforms offer for tailor-made content that responds to the interests and needs of the new generation. We will discuss ways of navigating and engaging with the digital landscape that are empowering for creators and audiences, including enhancement of media literacy of the next gen.

SPEAKERS:

- **SHKELZEN OSMANI,** HIBRID, Kosovo
- **MARINA ZEC,** Oblakoder, Serbia
- **ALEKSANDAR DRAGIĆEVIĆ,** Coalition for Sustainable Development, Montenegro

MODERATOR:

- **EMILIJA PETRESKA-KAMENJAROVA,** Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services of North Macedonia

15:30-15:45 (15') INSPIRATIONAL SPEECH: If Offense Uses AI, Defense Must Too – But As a System, Not a Single Oracle

AI isn't magic; it's a normal technology that becomes risky when offense scales faster than defense. The talk will showcase how AI-enabled defense – paired with content provenance, newsroom process, and a polycentric truth stack – keeps information spaces governable. We'll unpack the capability–reliability gap (models can a lot in labs, but organizations struggle to make them dependable) and debate three dilemmas: provenance vs. privacy, real-time politician checks vs. governability, and platform crowd-notes vs. public-service verification.

Professor **ROMAN JUROWETZKI,** University of Aalborg, Denmark

15:45-16:00 (15') Conference closing:
LUCIANO SCAMBIATO LICCIARDI, Press and Communication Team Leader, Delegation of the European Union to North Macedonia

16:00-17:00 (60') Reception

Partners: