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**INFORMATION AND THE
MEDIA IN THE FACE OF WAR**
HELSINKI | OCTOBER 23rd, 2024

ABOUT THE EVENT

Information and the Media in the Face of War is an event that discusses the central issue of information ever since the beginning of the war in Ukraine. The event is a part of a larger event series, **In the Face of War – European Dialogue**, which seeks to address the current upheavals in Europe caused by the war. With numerous past events in other European cities, each one having their own point of view, the Helsinki edition will address the challenges faced by media and journalists in a context of polarization of discourse, multiplication of channels, mistrust of journalists and increasing recourse to disinformation campaigns.

Bringing together over 20 experts from Finland and Europe, the event aims to facilitate direct interaction with the general public while giving a full panorama on media's challenges all over Europe in the context of the war in Ukraine. The four public discussions contained by the event address themes such as disinformation, independence of the media and war reporting. The event will take place at the University of Helsinki, in English. The event is entirely public and free of charge.

Information and the Media in the Face of War is initiated by Institut français (Paris) and organized by the French Institute of Finland in collaboration with the University of Helsinki, the Embassy of France in Finland and Goethe-Institut Finland.

TIMETABLE

11AM – 11.15 AM: Opening

Suomen Laki Hall / University of Helsinki (Yliopistonkatu 3, 00100 Helsinki)

11.15 AM – 12.30 PM: Can We Make Ourselves Immune to Disinformation?

Suomen Laki Hall / University of Helsinki (Yliopistonkatu 3, 00100 Helsinki)

2PM – 3.15 PM: Independence in the Media

Think Corner / University of Helsinki (Yliopistonkatu 4, 00100 Helsinki)

3.15 PM – 4.45 PM: Europe's Security in the Face of Informational Threats

Think Corner / University of Helsinki (Yliopistonkatu 4, 00100 Helsinki)

4.45 PM – 6.30 PM: Writing the War

Think Corner / University of Helsinki (Yliopistonkatu 4, 00100 Helsinki)

11AM – 11.15 AM:

Opening

The opening speech of the European Dialogue event in Helsinki will be given by Kaarle Hämeri (University of Helsinki), Sandra Cohen (Embassy of France in Finland) and Olga Dibrova (Embassy of Ukraine in Finland). The opening speech will then be followed by the first discussion of the event, “Can We Make Ourselves Immune to Disinformation?”



Suomen Laki Hall / University of Helsinki
(Yliopistonkatu 3, 00100 Helsinki)

GUEST SPEAKERS



Kaarle Hämeri
Chancellor
University of Helsinki
(Finland)



Olga Dibrova
Embassador of Ukraine to Finland
(Ukraine)



Sandra Cohen
Chargée d'affaires, First Counselor
French Embassy in Finland
(France)

11.15 AM - 12.30 PM:

Can We Make Ourselves Immune to Disinformation?

What tools do states and civil societies have to distinguish truth from falsehood? Is it possible to create a "vaccine" against disinformation?

As certain media outlets increasingly emphasize emotions and opinions in their news coverage, information is being used more and more as a propaganda tool, especially when communicating about conflicts that divide the public opinion. The rise of non-professional news sources has amplified the spread of unverified information, often serving the interests of state or private actors. With growing distrust in "traditional" media, how aware are Europeans of the manipulative strategies used by other media sources?



Suomen Laki Hall / University of Helsinki
(Yliopistonkatu 3, 00100 Helsinki)

GUEST SPEAKERS



Eeva Luhtakallio
Professor of Sociology
University of Helsinki
(Finland)



Annastiina Heikkilä
Journalist and Author
(Finland)



David Colon
Associate Professor of History
Sciences Po Paris
(France)



Heikki Aittokoski
Journalist
Helsingin Sanomat
(Finland)



Fabrice Puchault
Director of Society and Culture Unit
Arte
(France)




Mikko Salo
Founder
Fact-checking Service Faktabaari
(Finland)

2PM - 3.15 PM

Independence in the Media

What are the major risks that public and private media are currently facing? To what extent is the existing national and European regulation effective in safeguarding media integrity?

Media has been the target for political battles over decades. In the current hybrid media landscape surrounded by political polarization, escalating intercultural conflicts and the rise of populism, the independence of media becomes increasingly contested. To respond to the issue, the European Commission adopted the European Media Freedom Act last spring with the objective to protect media from various types of editorial and financial pressure. How are both risks and potential remedies are reflected in the quality of media content and public confidence?

 Think Corner / University of Helsinki
(Yliopistonkatu 4, 00100 Helsinki)

GUEST SPEAKERS



Judith Fiebelkorn

Senior Editor
eurotopics / N-Ost
(Germany)



Laurent Marchand

Deputy Editor-in-Chief to European and International Affairs
Ouest-France
(France)



Robert Sundman

Political Journalist
Suomen Kuvalehti
(Finland)



Theodora Helimäki


Doctoral Researcher/ Grant-Funded Researcher
University of Helsinki
(Finland)

3.15 PM - 4.45 PM

Round Table - Europe's Security in the Face of Informational Threats

During the recent years, disinformation has been one of the key strategies of destabilization and influence. An invisible information war is underway, and it takes advantage of the limits that democratic states in Europe impose on themselves in their ability to fight back. However, the traces of this information war are documented and analyzed by researchers as well as European defense authorities.

Based on this knowledge, how can we describe the information war being fought today by many states and measure its effects on European societies? What means do European countries have at their disposal to protect themselves? How aware are European citizens of the scale of this threat?

 Think Corner / University of Helsinki
(Yliopistonkatu 4, 00100 Helsinki)

GUEST SPEAKERS



Minna Kaarkoski

Political scientist
Finnish National Defense University
(Finland)



Minna Ålander

Researcher Fellow
Finnish Institute of International Affairs
(Finland)



Colonel Virginie Le Goff

Deputy to the Commander
Bureau of Strategic Communication, Influence and
Counter-Disinformation
(France)

MODERATOR



Céline Marangé

PhD, Senior Research Fellow
IRSEM Institute for Strategic Research
(France)



Roberta M. Răducu

Assistant Professor and Communications Expert
College of Communication and Public Relations / New Strategy Center
(Romania)



Maxime Lebrun

Deputy Director R&A
European Center of Excellence
for Countering Hybrid Threats
(France)

4.45 PM – 6.30 PM

Writing the War

How to write a war? How to unpack its roots and complexities amidst a broader historical arc?

The role of the media is as crucial as it is delicate in the analysis of the war in Ukraine and its consequences for Europe. While giving the war a human face, journalists have a duty to accompany citizens in their understanding of current upheavals in the shifting of geopolitical equilibrium and the waves of disinformation. How do events of such magnitude impact editorial practices?

This round table, organized in partnership with Reporters Without Borders, tries to respond to these questions through the eyes of war reporters and their most valuable partners, war fixers. The event will start with a screening of the short documentary, "Ukraine: war fixers, the invisible reporters". It will then be commented by the members of the round table.

Film details - "Ukraine: war fixers, the invisible reporters"

Directors: Robin Grassi and Arnaud Froger

Production: RSF and Bottoms up (2024)



Think Corner / University of Helsinki
(Yliopistonkatu 4, 00100 Helsinki)

GUEST SPEAKERS



Antti Kuronen

War Reporter
Yle
(Finland)



Oleksandra Aleksandrenko

News Fixer
(Ukraine)

MODERATOR



Jeanne Cavalier

Reporters Without Borders
(France)



Senad Pecanin

Lawyer and Magazine Founder
Dani Sarajevo Magazine
(Bosnia)



Shuruq Asad

Correspondant and Member of General Secretariat
Monte Carlo Doualiya Radio /
Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate
(Occupied Palestinian Territories)