

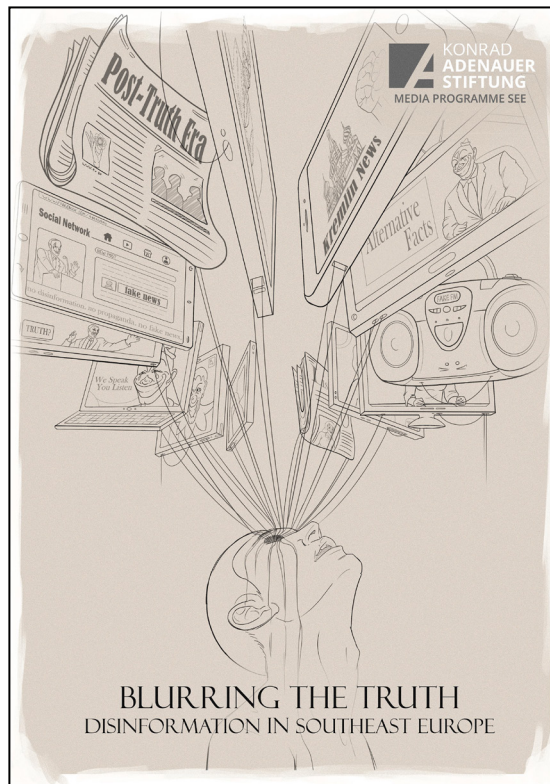
April 2023

Press Release

Digital Plague: Disinformation and Fake News in Southeast Europe

New Study by the KAS Media Programme Southeast Europe

With the book "Blurring the Truth. Disinformation in Southeast Europe", the Media Programme of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung provides an overview of disinformation in ten countries of the region and Germany. Scientists, journalists and experts from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Croatia, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, North Macedonia, Romania and Serbia present the content and narratives of disinformation, address the political context as well as the media situation and point out countermeasures against disinformation that have already been taken in the respective countries. For the first time, the book offers a compact approach to a multi-layered threat in a politically and socially highly complex region. A chapter on disinformation in Germany is also added to the study. The publication was coordinated by Dr. Christopher Nehring, guest lecturer of the KAS Media Programme on Disinformation at Sofia University.



Hendrik Sittig, Head of the KAS Media Programme: *"Disinformation and fake news are digital Plague of our time. It is a real threat to democracy, peace and social cohesion. And mostly, they are produced and distributed precisely for that reason. We have underestimated this danger too long. There is an urgent need for more targeted and stronger actions against them."*

Dr. Christopher Nehring, guest lecturer of the KAS Media Programme for Disinformation at Sofia University: *"This study is an eye-opener! Examples from all over the region show that there is a lot of disinformation coming from other countries – whether in the case of Corona or currently in the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine. Other narratives are country-specific. In Romania, for example, anti-corruption is presented as part of a conspiracy. The problem in all countries, however, is that there is a strong mistrust in society, weak quality media and little media education. This is an ideal breeding ground for disinformation."*

International conference on the 4th of April in Sofia

The KAS Media Programme Southeast Europe is going to present the study at the international conference on disinformation in the region on the 4th of April 2023 in Sofia. The event will bring together disinformation experts from across Europe, journalists, academics and politicians. The authors of the study provide an overview of their findings on the main actors and the most widespread narratives in this field. Important topics are how journalists deal with false information, the development of countermeasures and the development of resilience and strategies against disinformation. In addition, Dr. Christopher Nehring, is going to give an insight into disinformation in the Metaverse and the use of Artificial Intelligence (including Deepfakes, ChatGPT). Further information along with the agenda and link to registration can be found here:

<https://www.kas.de/en/web/medien-europa/veranstaltungen/detail/-/content/international-conference-disinformation-in-southeast-europe>

KAS Media Programme South East Europe

The Media Programme Southeast Europe of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung has been based in Sofia since 2007. It comprises ten countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Croatia, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, North Macedonia, Romania and Serbia. The work of the Media Programme is based on three objectives: Training and further education of journalists, improvement of the framework conditions for journalistic work and the professionalization of political communication. To this end, the Programme hosts conferences, seminars and workshops together with national and regional partner organizations and prepares studies and analyses. The exchange of ideas and experiences as well as the networking of key stakeholders is important.

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