

# Invitation & Agenda

## Truth or tale?

Fact-checking, disinformation and fake news in European  
and national election campaigns

Workshop  
2-3 May 2019 – Barcelona

MERCATOR  
EUROPEAN  
DIALOGUE



YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED

## Dear Member of Parliament,

The Barcelona Center for International Affairs and the Istituto Affari Internazionali cordially invite you to take part to the Mercator European Dialogue workshop “Truth or tale? Fact-checking, disinformation and fake news in European and national election campaigns” which will take place in Barcelona on May 2-3, 2019.

Today, the proliferation of fake news is a top concern among Europeans. According to the “Flash Eurobarometer on Fake News and Online Disinformation”, published by the European Commission in March 2018, 83% of respondents think that fake news represent a danger to democracy.

This workshop will provide participants with the opportunity to discuss the policy challenges related to disinformation in electoral campaigns at different levels, with a specific focus on the upcoming European elections.

Together with high-level experts, participants will learn to identify online disinformation techniques and will engage in innovative discussions on how to tackle misinformation and achieve a more effective communication during electoral campaigns and beyond. The conversation will revolve around the role politicians can have in improving the standards of political communication, especially when it comes to the role national Members of Parliaments in the European debate, and in encouraging more truthful and reality-based discussions, thus increasing interaction with voters and contributing to a healthier democratic system.

The upcoming European elections will offer the opportunity to explore whether fake news have any real effects on national debates, analyze and compare the quality of political discussions across Europe, as well as to touch upon the regulations and policies which exist at national and European level in this field.

We would be honored to have you with us and hope to see you in Barcelona.

Kind Regards,

Michael Schwarz  
Stiftung Mercator

Jan Techau  
GMF

Nathalie Tocci  
IAI

Pol Morillas  
CIDOB

Stefan Schäfers  
KBF

Chiara Rosselli  
GMF

Thanos Dokos  
ELIAMEP

**Thursday, May 2**

20:30

**Welcome dinner - Conversation on Spanish politics**

Restaurant Raco d'en Cesc

Eliseo Oliveras, Journalist

**Friday, May 3**

9:00

**Registration**

Barcelona Center for International Affairs (CIDOB)

9:15

**Welcome remarks**

Pol Morillas, Director CIDOB

Chiara Rosselli, Head of the Mercator European Dialogue

09:30

**Session 1 - Talking Europe: communication campaign strategies**

How are European affairs debated in national and local elections across Europe?

What are some of the most effective communication strategies and the preferred communication tools used by politicians today?

11:15

**Coffee break**

11:30

**Session 2 - A guide to fact-checking for politics**

How to increase the quality of political debates? What are the best ways to incorporate reality-based arguments and effective fact-checking strategies in the work of a national politician?

Katarína Klingová, Senior Research Fellow at GlobSec

Lorenzo Marini, Journalist at VerifiCat

13:15

**Lunch**

14:00

**Session 3 - Disinformation in the context of the European elections**

What is the EU's response to disinformation and fake news? To what extent are fake news affecting the EU election campaign?

Carme Colomina, Researcher and editor at CIDOB

15:45

**Wrap up session and concluding remarks**



## CONTACTS

*For logistical questions:*

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For more information about the project, please visit

[mercatoreuropeandialogue.org](http://mercatoreuropeandialogue.org)



## JOINING FORCES IN THE MERCATOR EUROPEAN DIALOGUE



Stiftung Mercator is a private and independent foundation. Through its work it strives for a society characterized by openness to the world, solidarity and equal opportunities. In this context it concentrates on strengthening Europe; increasing the educational success of disadvantaged children and young people, especially those of migrant origin; driving forward climate change mitigation and promoting science and the humanities. Stiftung

Mercator symbolizes the connection between academic expertise and practical project experience. One of Germany's leading foundations, it is active both nationally and internationally. Stiftung Mercator feels a strong sense of loyalty to the Ruhr region, the home of the founding family and the foundation's headquarters.



The King Baudouin Foundation's mission is to contribute to a better society. The Foundation is an actor for change and innovation, serving the public interest and increasing social cohesion in Belgium and Europe. We seek to maximize our impact by strengthening the capacity of organizations and individuals. We also stimulate effective philanthropy by individuals and corporations. The Foundation's key values are integrity, transparency, pluralism, independence, respect for diversity, and promoting solidarity.

The Foundation's current areas of activity are poverty and social justice, philanthropy, health, civic engagement, developing talents, democracy, European integration, heritage and development cooperation.

The King Baudouin Foundation is a public benefit foundation. The Foundation was set up in 1976 on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of King Baudouin's reign.



The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) strengthens transatlantic cooperation on regional, national, and global challenges and opportunities in the spirit of the Marshall Plan. GMF contributes research and analysis and convenes leaders on transatlantic issues relevant to policymakers. GMF offers rising leaders opportunities to develop their skills and networks through transatlantic exchange, and supports civil society in the Balkans and Black Sea regions by fostering democratic initiatives, rule of law, and regional cooperation.

Founded in 1972 as a non-partisan, non-profit organization through a gift from Germany as a permanent memorial to Marshall Plan assistance, GMF maintains a strong presence on both sides of the Atlantic. In addition to its headquarters in Washington, DC, GMF has offices in Berlin, Paris, Brussels, Belgrade, Ankara, Bucharest, and Warsaw. GMF also has smaller representations in Bratislava, Turin, and Stockholm.



The Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) was founded on 11 October 1965 on the initiative of Altiero Spinnelli. The Institute's main objective is to promote an understanding of the problems of international politics through studies, research, meetings and publications, with the aim of increasing the opportunities of all countries to move in the direction of supranational organization, democratic freedom and social justice (IAI Bylaws, Article 1). It's main research areas include: EU Institutions

and Politics, the EU's Global Role, Turkey and the Neighborhood, International Political Economy, Mediterranean and Middle East, Transatlantic Relations, Security and Defence, Italian Foreign Policy, Energy. A non-profit organization, the IAI is funded by individual and corporate members, public and private organizations, major international foundations, and by a standing grant from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



The Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB) is an independent and plural think tank based in Barcelona, dedicated to the study, research and analysis of international affairs. Created in 1973 as an International Documentation Centre of Barcelona, it is a private foundation since 1979.

re that people possess the basic elements to live their lives free from fear and in liberty, by facilitating a dialogue that includes all diversities and which actively defends human rights and gender equality. CIDOB is a dynamic community of analytics that works to produce and offer to all political actors – from individual citizens to international organizations – information and ideas to formulate and promote policies for a more secure, free and fair world for everyone.

CIDOB promotes global governance and good practices – based on local, national and European democratic government – to ensu-



ELIAMEP is an independent, non-profit and policy-oriented research and training institute. It neither expresses, nor represents, any specific political party view. It is only devoted to the right of free and well-documented discourse.

ELIAMEP's mission is to provide a forum for public debate on issues of European integration and international relations to conduct scientific research that contributes to a better informed and documented knowledge of the European and international environment.