

# THE 9<sup>TH</sup> EPPC CONFERENCE

DEMOCRACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE



21-23 April 2017, Prague, Czech Republic



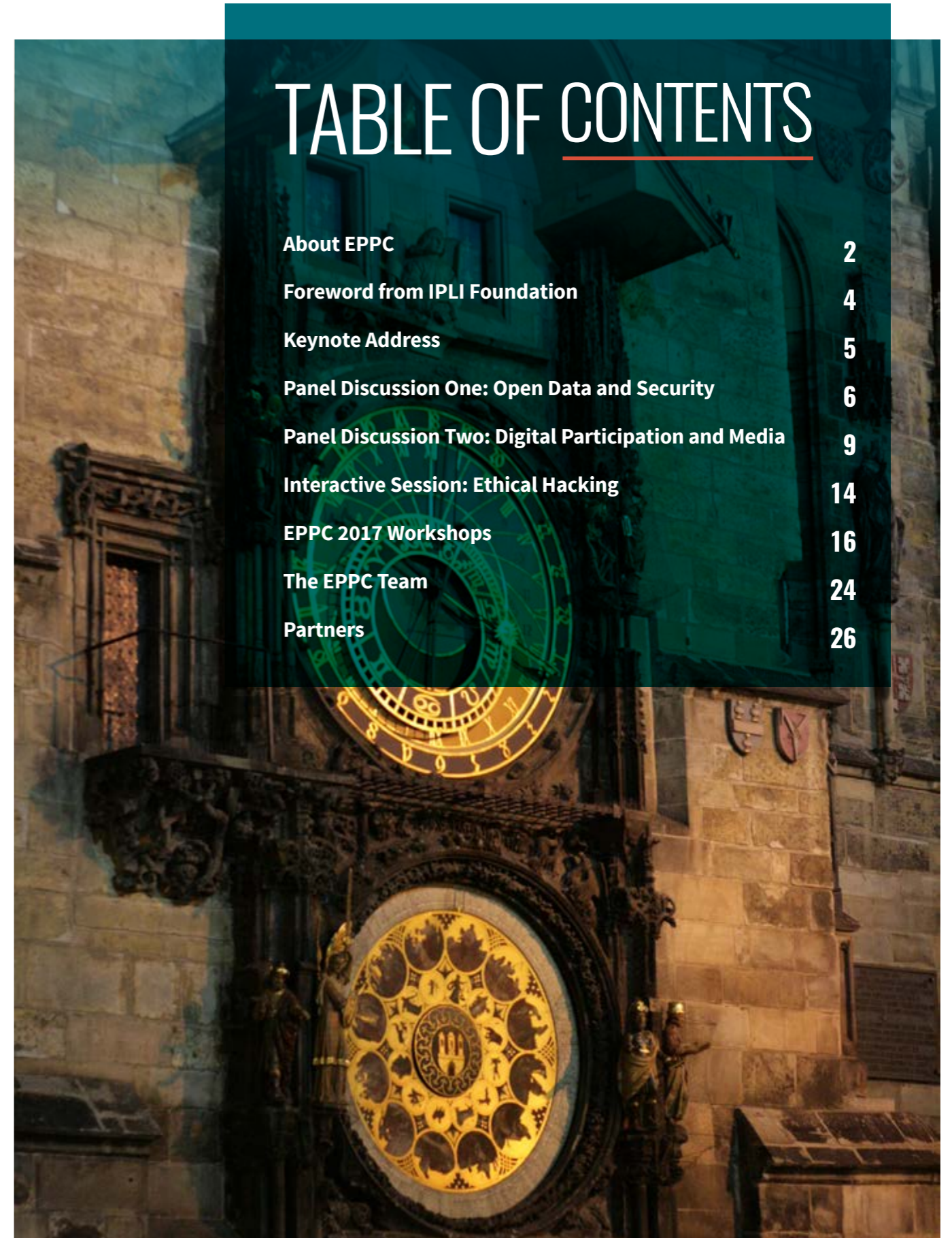




## ABOUT EPPC

### DEMOCRACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE – QUO VADIS?

The 2017 edition of the European Public Policy Conference (EPPC) explored the topic of Democracy in the Digital Age. Nowadays, nearly every aspect of life is making its way towards digitalization. Both political and societal events have demonstrated the tremendous impact of new technology on domestic and international affairs. As a result, democracy faces new challenges and opportunities. While citizens are determined to use the internet and social media to engage in the political process, their trust in political parties and democratic institutions is waning. Voter alienation and anti-establishment sentiments have considerably risen, leading to a surge of support for populist, anti-establishment movements in Europe and across the Western World. Furthermore, social media has created distinct echo chambers, where individual users have a tendency to be in contact with those who share similar beliefs, polarizing political discourse. The now undeniable relationship between digitalization and democracy calls for a discussion about finding ways for this new engagement to be expressed positively in the political sphere. For EPPC 2017, three subtopics were developed under the overarching theme of Democracy in the Digital Age, which allowed for a more in-depth analysis of the issue through workshops and panel discussion dedicated to specific questions. These subtopics were Security in the Digital Age, Voter Alienation and the Potential of Citizen Participation and Information and the Shaping of Citizens' preferences.



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# FOREWORD FROM IPLI FOUNDATION

**Dear EPPC 2017 Participants,**

Since 2011, the IPLI Foundation has had the privilege to sponsor each annual European Public Policy Conference (EPPC). Now in its 9th year running, the EPPC continues to build on a tradition of innovation in fostering debates on international public policy challenges.

This year's conference theme: Democracy in the Digital Age, is a prescient choice of topics. Over the last several years, digital technologies and in particular, social media platforms, have evolved considerably. As several international events have demonstrated, the capability of these platforms to exert influence on public opinion can have a significant impact on politics. As the influence of the digital era expands in the everyday life of citizens around the globe, the need for policy makers to evaluate the power of digital technologies on societies becomes ever more critical with every passing day.

On behalf of the IPLI Foundation, I salute all of the participants at EPPC 2017 for their initiative to convene to discuss this crucial topic. Your reflections, and the conclusions that you will reach based on your deliberations, could well have an effect on policy making in the future.

I wish to thank all participants for coming together this year to further strengthen the EPPC tradition of excellence. I hope that all participants will continue to support the EPPC tradition long into the future.

**Respectfully,  
Timothy Reno  
Director  
IPLI Foundation**

# KEYNOTE ADDRESS AMBASSADOR ANTONIO MARTINS DA CRUZ

**Former foreign minister of Portugal**

Ambassador da Cruz focused his keynote address on the challenges of digitalization in democratic societies. Politics has to continually respond to the evolving digital environment. Campaigns and messages are now delivered through social media; news and fake news now circulate mainly through the web. The internet is fundamentally altering perceptions and the democratic process in societies, most dramatically due to the fact that political timing has been accelerated. The public now expects almost instantaneous responses from politicians on late breaking developments. Digital technology has acted as a catalyst for globalization and is fundamentally reshaping our concepts of space and distance. The internet has even begun to challenge traditional concepts of sovereignty of nations. Digitalization has enhanced polarization in societies, enabling greater divisiveness, a rise in populism and the unfortunate ability to spread misinformation more effectively. Ambassador da Cruz noted that democratic societies need to adapt and to become more

resilient in order to successfully confront the myriad challenges and threats which digitalization brings.

Ambassador da Cruz assessed that cybersecurity must be a priority for political, strategic and economic reasons. In terms of government actions, ambassador da Cruz believes two types of policies should be implemented: regulation and reinforcement of the rule of law. Regulation of reinforcement can only be achieved through international cooperation; as single country actions would be futile, due to the very nature of digitalization.

In tandem with these actions, governments must also respect the new paradigms of information and technology sharing, as well as individual freedoms and privacy. Cybersecurity cannot come at the expense of these. New strategies, as well as new angles on old strategies, will be necessary to find solutions for emerging digital challenges. Ambassador da Cruz emphasized the fact that cybersecurity is a global challenge which over time will pose an even greater challenge to the international order.



*Ambassador da Cruz has held a long and distinguished career in both diplomatic service and as a policy maker in Portugal. His extensive experience includes service as foreign affairs advisor to the Prime Minister of Portugal and head of the Diplomatic department of the Prime Minister's office. Ambassador da Cruz has also held distinguished positions as Portugal's Ambassador to NATO and Spain. In 2002, Ambassador da Cruz was both Foreign Minister of Portugal and served as the Chairman-on-Office of the OSCE. Ambassador da Cruz continues today to use his wide breadth of experience as an advisor on various international policy issues.*

## PANEL DISCUSSION ONE: OPEN DATA AND SECURITY



*Nikola Schmidt holds a bachelor's degree in sociology from Charles University Prague and a master's degree in international relations from Metropolitan University Prague. He earned his PhD from Charles University Prague, during which he focused on the formation of cybersecurity as a national security agenda. He currently teaches cybersecurity and space security graduate courses at Charles University. After attending the Space Studies Program organized by the International Space University in 2015 in Athens, United States, he focused on the political questions of planetary defense and is currently editing a book on Planetary Defense against asteroids and comets. His academic interests vary from the theory of securitization to governance of global threats to human survival and the role of technology in governance of these essential global questions.*

## NIKOLA SCHMIDT

**Professor at Charles University, Prague**

Dr. Schmidt focused his panel discussion on the issue of cybersecurity. He explained that it was necessary to regulate the perspective that is used in assessing the new cybersecurity environment, so as not to overestimate the threat, but rather to engage in striving to better understand what the cyber threat in fact is. Dr. Schmidt noted that cyber capabilities are detectable and thus can be predictable.

Policy making in the area of cybersecurity has been driven by the normalization of extreme cases of cyberattack, such as the attack on Estonia in 2007 or Stux-net attack on Iran. There is evidence of how the threatening language of decision makers has influenced the development of this new agenda and how it has shaped policy solutions to emerging threats.

Dr. Schmidt emphasized, however, that the actual threats to cybersecurity for national security defense, if not as extreme as they are commonly thought to be, are not to be underestimated. The fact that hacking satellites is an ordinary problem is a case in point. But the research should be more

focused on openly accessible technologies and the development of knowledge. Strengthening the role of state institutions does not produce said knowledge, does not detect the development of specific knowledge empowering individuals to conduct attacks against critical infrastructure and does not give us proper knowledge how to assess the current cybersecurity threats that might significantly influence stability of our liberal democratic systems. He explained that merging traditional strategy (state strengthening) with the novelty brought about by new technologies in interdisciplinary research, such as decentralization and system resilience, instead of the mere straightforward application of traditional thinking on new cyber threats, is the best policy to follow in the current environment.

He also spoke about the role of social media and about how it can be seriously used as a weapon in a new kind of propaganda, which might have significant impact on the way in which citizens assess their democratically elected governments, thus directly impacting on the credibility of liberal democratic systems.

## SEBASTIAN POPA

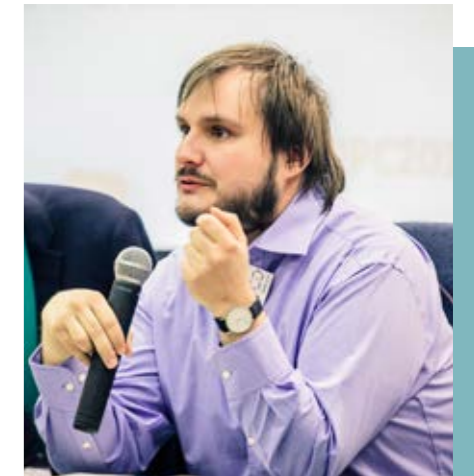
**Mannheim Centre for European Social Research**

Dr. Popa opened his remarks by noting the increasingly important role that social media is playing in the communication strategies of political campaigns, as it reflects information about the preferences and opinions of political actors and their audiences. Due to its potential for personalization and the sheer amount of messages that are shared through these channels, social media platforms are ideal for exploring the use and content of political communications.

He called attention to the fact that in the European context, these channels, particularly Twitter, are being used mainly to polarize. He

also mentioned that this tool, instead of fulfilling its potential to reach a Europe-wide audience and to diffuse a Europe-centered message, continues to be more used locally than regionally, with nationalistic hashtags being used to segregate political debates.

Social media is being very well utilized by populist and anti-European movements, as a means of promoting opinion bubbles and for polarizing their supporters. The same cannot be said about political movements which oppose these trends. It's necessary to understand how the web is being utilized, in order to understand how to take better advantage of it.



*Sebastian Adrian Popa received his PhD from Central European University in 2015. He previously worked as a research fellow at the Mannheim Center for European Social Research (MZES), University of Mannheim. His research interests cover topics such as: political behavior in a comparative perspective, the study of public opinion using social media, political knowledge, European Parliament elections and the genetics of political behavior. His work has been published in scientific journals such as: Party Politics, European Union Politics, Journal of Communication, Electoral Studies, and Politics & Gender.*







# STEFFAN STAAB

**Professor Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg**

*Steffan Staab studied science and computational linguistics at the Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg and at the University of Pennsylvania and received his Dr. rer. nat. from Universität Freiburg. Steffan Staab is professor for databases and information systems at Universität Koblenz-Landau, where he founded the Institute for Web Science and Technologies (WeST) in 2009 and a master's programme in Web Science in 2011. In parallel, he holds a Chair for Web and Computer Science at University of Southampton since March 2015. Steffan Staab is chair of the international Web Science Trust Network that includes two dozen research labs in researching the development of the internet.*

Professor Staab spoke about the way digitalization creates its own dynamics in opinion formation. The dynamics of social media allow for individuals to become publishers and has increased the speed of news and information sharing to unforeseen speeds. In Staab's opinion, there are positive and negative consequences to this.

Among the positive consequences, we can mention the spread of a decentralized and democratized information culture and self-empowerment of individuals and political movements. But on the negative side, this has created a vulnerability to manipulation by different types of players, such as economic players (through click-bait economy), political players (pushing

of particular agendas, fake news) and by consultancies.

Professor Staab explained why it is important to create individual and societal resilience against these vulnerabilities. One of the easiest and most vital ways of doing this is through simple fact checking. Professor Staab also explained however that some forms of individual and network resistance might be counter-productive, if they come in the form of confirmation biases. There also newly developed forms of technical resilience, through websites which detect click bait creators, fake news and other vulnerabilities. He concluded by noting that there is a need to better understand individualistic behavior online through joint research in both computer and the social sciences.



# PANEL DISCUSSION TWO: DIGITAL PARTICIPATION AND MEDIA

## ELISA LIRONI

**European Citizen Action Service**

Elisa Lironi spoke about digital citizen participation from a practitioner's perspective. She explained how the European Citizen Action Service (ECAS), where she is currently Digital Democracy Manager, is working to communicate citizen initiatives to the European Parliament, through web-based projects and advocacy. She believes the emergence of eDemocracy models can lead the way to a more open and inclusive form of policy making.

The ECAS Digital Democracy Agenda, aims to explore the democratic potential of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) in:

- Reducing the gap between political elites and citizens;
- Transforming the relationship between EU citizens and EU

decision-makers into more of a partnership, thus contributing to the creation of an engaged citizenship;

- Enabling the EU to go beyond consultations and structured dialogues with the usual stakeholders, to expand the number of contributors to EU policy-making, to remove potential barriers to participation that translate into a general feeling of exclusion and to engage groups that are underrepresented.

ECAS actively supports the implementation of the first transnational instrument of participatory democracy in the EU – the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) – through the ECI Support Centre by providing legal advice, research, analysis and recommendations for the simplification of ECI Regulation.



*Elisa Lironi is the Digital Democracy Manager for the European Citizen Action Service (ECAS). She develops and leads ECAS' Digital Democracy agenda by implementing EU projects and research studies in this focus area. She is currently managing the project Digital Ecosystem for E-Participation Linking Youth (Erasmus+ programme) and coordinates ECAS' part in the EUCROWD (Europe for Citizens programme). One of her most recent publications includes the "Potential and Challenges of E-Participation in the EU" for the European Parliament and she is currently working on research projects on crowdsourcing at the EU level and on EU online public consultations. She also coordinates ECAS' Support Centre on the European Citizens' Initiative.*





# BRIAN D. LOADER

**Co-Director, Centre for Political Youth Culture and Communication**

*Brian D. Loader is a political sociologist and Co-Director of the Centre for Political Youth Culture and Communication (CPAC) at the University of York, UK. His academic interests focus on social relations of power in a digitally mediated world including social media and democratic politics. More specifically his research interest is in young citizens, civic engagement and social media; social movements and digital democracy; community informatics and the digital divide. He is the founding editor of the international journal - Information, Communication and Society. Recent books include Young Citizens in the Digital Age (Routledge, 2007); Social Media and Democracy (Routledge, 2012) and The Networked Young Citizen: social media, political participation and civic engagement, (edited with Ariadne Vromen and Mike Xenos), New York: Routledge. (2014).*

Brian Loader addressed EPPC participants to talk about the way in which young people interact with politics and particularly with politicians through social media. The use of these platforms by politicians to engage with young citizens has been regarded by some as trivializing and undesirable, but Loader adopted an opposite view, which defends the potential for popular culture and media entertainment to be more socially inclusive, democratizing and influential in public policy making. Digital technology has the best chance at achieving the outreach necessary to make this possible, and Loader noted that politicians are increasingly recognizing this fact.

To an extent, social media has already started to open participation to young people, in a way that was inaccessible to them before. Network and event creation,

expansion and sharing around political issues happens every day on social media, and it involves a public that would have most likely been unaware of these activities, had they happened outside the digital world.

Professor Loader maintained that young citizens are generally cautiously positive about politicians using social media. They also admit to getting most of their information and interactions about these politics from social media platforms. Loader concluded his remarks by noting that while the young public receives a great deal of its information from social media platforms, an inherent danger of the internet is the fast pace at which information progresses and how this can be damaging to trust and credibility of these platforms in cases of unsubstantiated rumors and fabricated reporting.



# PAULA FORTEZA

**CEO Jailbreak.Paris and President of OGPTOOLBOX.ORG**

Ms. Forteza contributed to the panel discussion by talking about the necessity to incorporate digital solutions to improve democracy. She spoke about how alienation and dissatisfaction play an important role in the political landscape in France, where she is based, and how she believes that innovations such as the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and the Open Government Toolbox would contribute to making participation easier and more accessible for citizens.

Ms. Forteza explained that the OGP is an association which seeks to empower public, private and civil society actors worldwide by sharing digital tools and resources, in order to promote democracy, transparency, participation and collaboration. The Open Government Toolbox is one of its initiatives, a software which enables citizens to:

- identify the digital tools better suited to their needs, by collecting and describing them in the most objective way possible;
- collaborate to make digital tools more accessible and easier to use;
- create favourable conditions to further the development of better digital tools;
- foster the sharing of experiences between actors and to enable provision of feedback on existing digital tools.

Ms. Forteza noted that increased government openness and civil society engagement is possible due to the advances of the age of digitalization, and that it is important to harness this as an opportunity to reach out to broader citizen audiences, to empower them to be more participative in government processes through the use of digital tools.



*Paula Forteza is CEO at jailbreak.paris, a digital transformation agency and President of OGP-Toolbox.org. Before, she worked at Etalab, the French Prime Minister's taskforce for Open Data, Open Government and Data Science. She pursued applied research on social protection and labor policy at CIPPEC and lectured on political theory at Universidad Torcuato di Tella (UTDT). She holds a Master's degree in Public Affairs from Sciences Po and a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from UTDT.*







# INTERACTIVE SESSION: ETHICAL HACKING

Toms and Gevers' interactive session aimed to teach participants "what every citizen should know about the state of our voting system and the security of our elections".

They started by explaining what makes hacking so easy. Nowadays, buying or hiring systems that create and deliver malware is extremely simple; it's not uncommon to hear about networks being infected by ransomware and hackers extorting money out of companies and individuals by threatening to destroy their files. Toms and Gevers provided useful basic tips which all individuals can employ to increase safeguards against these types of cyber threats. Some examples include:

- Back up data your frequently
- Keep your system up to date
- Avoid shopping in third party app stores
- Install mobile security apps which alert in case the device has been compromise
- Be wary of emails or websites that look suspicious
- Do not grant device administration rights of your networked devices to anybody

- Do not pay up if you are the victim of ransomware. You will only be financing criminals and encouraging them to continue

Toms and Gevers spoke directly about "hacking the democracy". In order to explain this idea, they identified a few elements which are considered fundamental to democracy, such as free and fair elections, the active participation of citizens and rule of law. They proceeded to explain how these are routinely hacked, by means of message discrimination, fake news, manipulated news, media outlets with a particular editorial line and even breaches to personal privacy, which are frequently used by governments and criminals alike. Toms and Gevers noted that in the current global environment, democracy is indeed extremely "hack-able" and is in fact being hacked constantly, creating great threats for democratic systems and the general public.

Toms and Gevers continued their session to discuss what they define as "Ethical Hacking". Ethical hacking seeks to strengthen cybersecurity and through that it aims to strengthen democratic and personal freedoms for citizens. Ethical hackers conduct "harmless"

breaches to vulnerable IT systems, in order to disclose the vulnerability to the organization to which the system belongs. They do not access beyond what is necessary to confirm the vulnerability and they report the breach to the relevant party as quickly as possible, in order to prevent hostile actors from finding it and taking advantage of it. Ethical hackers must safeguard the confidentiality of the report so that others don't gain access to the information.

In order for hacking to be considered ethical, hackers must not utilize a vulnerability further than necessary to establish its existence. They cannot copy, modify or delete data on systems, share the access information with others or seek to gain access to a non-vulnerable system.

Toms and Gevers concluded their session by explaining that while we cannot fully counter the threats to hacking of democracy, we can all endeavor to make ourselves harder targets in order to protect our digital lives from those who seek to utilize them to exploit our individual and democratic freedoms.

## VINCENT TOMS

*Ethical Hacker*



*Vincent Toms works as a cybersecurity consultant and is co-founder of GDI Foundation. In the last 15 years, he has gained extensive knowledge in advising & providing assurance in the areas of IT Security, Governance, Risk and Control. He worked for more than 12 years for the Dutch Ministry of Defense as an IT auditor and did several postgraduate courses in the field of IT Governance, Risk and Control. He uses his knowledge in advising organization(s) about Cyber Risk, Controls and Ethical Hacking.*

## VICTOR GEVERS

*Ethical Hacker*



*Victor Gevers is a senior security specialist working as innovation manager for the Dutch Government, specialized in network, mobile and web application security. He is co-founder of GDI Foundation. He performs research on state-of-the-art attack and defense mechanisms, general ethical hacking techniques and protocols. In his free time he is a vulnerability researcher and hunts down weak security implementations. He is an advocate for the "responsible disclosures" practice of identifying weaknesses in IT infrastructures and reporting them so that they can be fixed. He has been doing this for over 18 years and has made over five thousand responsible disclosures world-wide.*



# EPPC 2017 WORKSHOPS



AT EPPC 2017, A VARIETY OF WORKSHOPS WERE HELD TO DISCUSS AND DEBATE IMPORTANT PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES RELATED TO THE TOPIC OF THE CONFERENCE. THESE WORKSHOPS WERE ORGANIZED THEMATICALLY INTO 3 CATEGORIES: SECURITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE, VOTER ALIENATION AND THE POTENTIAL OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION; AND INFORMATION AND THE SHAPING OF CITIZENS' PREFERENCES.

## SECURITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

### WORKSHOP A - SPACE SECURITY: PROTECTING THE PREREQUISITE FOR DIGITAL SOCIETIES

This workshop was led by Marc Becker and Finn Rautenstrauch, from the Hertie School of Governance. It discussed the free and secure uses of outer space, and the difficulties and threats that unsafe uses of space pose to democratic societies. Becker and Rautenstrauch explained that in Europe, space security is rarely a top priority, even though a great number of everyday activities, from both the public and private sector, take place within this realm. There was an important focus on the role of

space technology in communications. Space applications and satellite systems are fundamental components of critical infrastructure, which are responsible for most of our modern day communications, and yet securing these systems, through which most of the world's information transits every day, has not been a top priority for most states so far. The present vulnerabilities of space infrastructure were explored during this workshop, and potential policies to promote safe and secure uses of outer space were discussed.

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### WORKSHOP B - GOING DARK? WHERE TO TAKE THE ENCRYPTION DEBATE

Mirko Hohmann from the Global Public Policy Institute provided an overview on different kinds of encryption technologies and how they challenge the work of government agencies. He presented some of the questions which are at the forefront of the encryption debate today, such as "Should governments require tech companies to provide access to decrypted

data on customers devices & their servers?" Hohmann explained some of the options that are currently being proposed by governments to overcome the issue of encryption challenges and this led to a discussion on the suitability of each option, during which participants had opportunities to evaluate, compare and contrast alternatives.





## WORKSHOP C - THE DIGITAL EGO:

REALIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF BIG DATA FOR OUR INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

Lukas-Simon Laux from Willy Brandt School of Public Policy was in charge of this workshop, which focused on the impact that data generation and processing, commonly referred to as “Big Data”, has for individuals. During his presentation, Laux sought to create awareness about the ways in which our everyday lives and individual freedoms are being affected by the predictive capacity of Big Data and the ongoing

digitalization of our lives. The main concept which was used to exemplify this problem was “the Digital Ego”, which is the notion of the existence of a virtual persona, made from all of the information from ourselves which is accessible through the internet. The workshop emphasized the threats associated with the Digital Ego, which increase as the predictive capacity of Big Data becomes more accurate.

## WORKSHOP D - THINKING LIKE FANCY BEAR:

HOW TO HACK THE GERMAN ELECTION?

This workshop was led by Dominic Gohla, from the Global Public Policy Institute. It discussed the strategies and methods of what was referred to as “Russian information warfare”. Gohla began his presentation by providing a historical background on former Soviet international policy strategies and their relation to Russian current day techniques. He then explained to the participants the means and goals of Russian information warfare, using the last American and Dutch elections as an example.

These all served as the backdrop against which Gohla discussed the fault lines in the German social, economic, and political landscape that could be exploited by third parties to influence the upcoming elections. The workshop ended with a debate on the possible short, medium and long term responses and counter-measures that can be used to influence attempts of third parties both in regards to the German election and the German political system more generally.



# VOTER ALIENATION AND THE POTENTIAL OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION



## WORKSHOP A:

### VOTER ALIENATION AND DIGITAL PARTICIPATION

Bastana Thapa, from the University of Potsdam, led a discussion on the perspectives of a “data-driven” government. Together, participants analyzed government whitepapers and consultancy reports on the issue and they aimed to identify the key possibilities of data technologies for governments. Afterwards, they

clustered the different visions of “data-driven government” they extracted from the documents and discussed them in a framework of state paradigms, which highlighted the different possible directions in which data technologies can drive government.

## WORKSHOP B:

### BUILDING A DIGITAL-ENABLED POLITICAL INSTITUTION

This workshop was developed by Alvin Carpio, founder and CEO of The Fourth Group. After a moderated debate about modern political institutions, their characteristics and shortcomings, the participants were divided into groups and asked to imagine a new, global, citizen-led, digital-enabled political institution,

capable of improving the state of the world. Carpio emphasized the need to reimagine politics whilst maintaining a firm grasp on democratic values, as a fundamental necessity to tackle the challenges that current political institutions have been unable to solve.



# INFORMATION AND THE SHAPING OF CITIZENS' PREFERENCES



## WORKSHOP A:

### GOING ANALOG: HOW TRADITIONAL MEDIA TOOLS CAN COMBAT INTERNET ISOLATIONISM

Sara Cooper from the Hertie School of Governance carried out this workshop which aimed to explore how NGOs, political campaigns and government agencies can use traditional media tools to reach broad audiences and combat “internet isolationism”. By looking at creative uses of traditional media strategies, such as out-of-home advertising, television, canvassing and community events, Cooper proved that

these seemingly old-fashioned tools can and should be used to disseminate information to wide audiences in order to combat the isolationism that is created in social media silos. She also explained some ways in which the private, public and nonprofit sector can use these media tools to shape voter preferences on a variety of issues – from candidates to policy initiatives.

## WORKSHOP B:

### USING BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS TO UNDERSTAND VOTING BEHAVIOR AND THE INTERNET

This workshop was led by Ekaterina Selvestru, from the London School of Economics. It aimed to help participants acquire a better understanding of two main concepts (i) the irrational side of decision making processes and (ii) the link between cognitive biases and voters’ political behavior on the Internet. Selvestru explained how people are much less rational when it comes to their decision making than classical economic theory would have us believe. As the number of choices expand, our availability bias kicks in and as our subjective perception of time comes into play, we may find ourselves making seemingly irrational

choices. But most importantly, our choices are greatly influenced by those of our peers, and political choices are no exception. In this sense, social networks, as sources of information, should technically help us make better choices. But this is only true if the information being shared is accurate. Social networks have the effect of reinforcing “herd behavior”, as the bias created and reinforced by only being exposed to those who are like-minded reinforces our beliefs and makes it easier to make a herd-like decision, without having to engage in the due diligence of collecting and contrasting information.

## WORKSHOP C:

### ICT AS A POLITICAL COMMUNICATION TOOL: BUBBLES, BIG DATA AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

Rafael Goldweig, from the Hertie School of Governance designed this workshop to discuss the use of ICTs as a political communication tool. Goldweig started by discussing the controversy surrounding how social networks exploit users’ information stored in their online profiles. With this background in mind, participants

engaged in a debate about topics such as the lack of transparency in social media algorithms, the creation of political “bubbles” based on likes and interests, polarization and many other aspects of political behavior, both during elections and in the broader spectrum of political behavior in general.





# THE EPPC TEAM

**Conference Chair** – Aidan Potter

**Conference Co-Chair** – Kyan Lo

**Treasurer** – Cristina Ciordia

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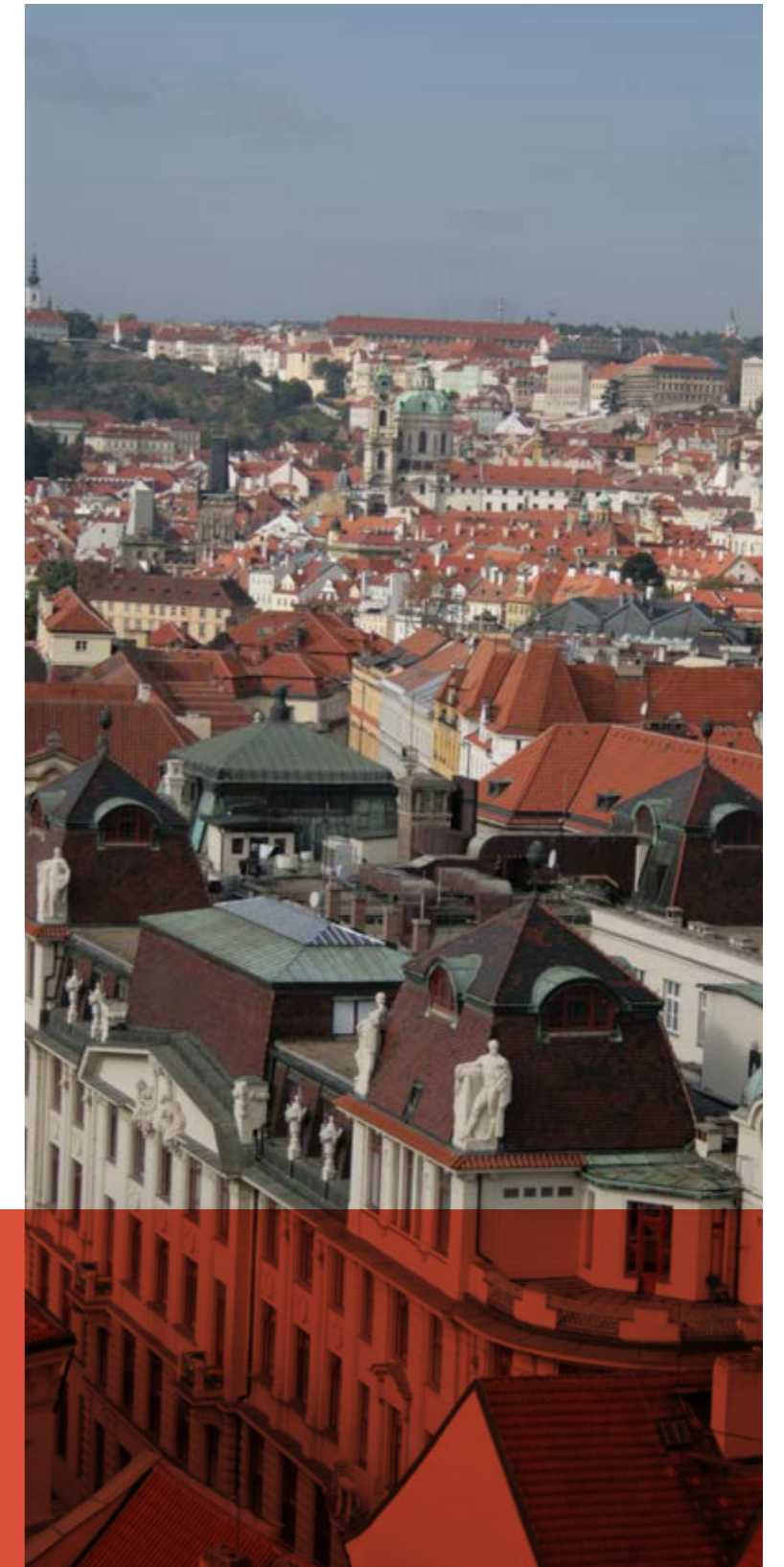
The IPLI Foundation is a philanthropic organization dedicated to the mission of supporting academic and applied research initiatives aimed at analyzing ongoing development and multi-dimensional human security public policy challenges in Europe, the Mediterranean region and Africa. The IPLI Foundation cooperates closely with its network of academic institutions and think tanks to support both educational and applied research. For more information, please visit [www.ipli.eu](http://www.ipli.eu)



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Charles University (CU) belongs among the oldest and largest universities in the world. It was founded in 1348 by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV as the first university to the north of the Alps and to the east of Paris. The University originally consisted of four faculties: Faculty of theology, of arts, of law, and of medicine. It is the oldest and also the largest university in the Czech Republic. For more information, please visit: [www.cuni.cz/UKEN1-.html](http://www.cuni.cz/UKEN1-.html)



## SPECIAL THANKS:

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