

Political communication in times of fake news

CHALLENGES OF DISINFORMATION & STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION – WORKSHOP
BY KAS MEDIA PROGRAM AND NATO STRATCOM CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE (RIGA)

The KAS Media Program and the NATO StratCom Centre of Excellence organised the workshop “Challenges of Disinformation & Strategic Communication” from 4th until 6th December 2017 in Riga. Participants were communication experts from the public sector and political parties in South East Europe.

The rapid digitalisation does not only offer many advantages for societies, but also challenges them. Social media bots are able to influence the public opinion, fake news undermines the credibility of traditional media outlets and such messages are able to reach out entire populations.

Did the Kremlin purposely rig the US elections and the Brexit campaign? Is there a propaganda strategy for destroying fundamental values in Western democracies? After the introduction to the topic by Lieutenant Colonel **Maris Tūtins** (NATO StratCom) the participants engaged in a lively discussion on these questions. There is no doubt that the digital age is making the public communication of political stakeholders more complex.

PR teams should communicate and act self-reliantly

A successful, modern political communication, following **Elina Lange Ionatamishvili** (NATO StratCom) during the session ‘Narrative’, has to address relevant target groups, present a future vision and promote a clear political message.

In order to become effective, a narrative should be internalised by the communication teams, which furthermore have to be enabled to communicate and act self-reliantly. In addition to that a network of supporters should be established. By this an information campaign could communicate its core messages coherently, built up trust and counter negative third party impact.

Successful political communication needs a differentiated target group analysis

The premise for all this is a profound knowledge of the target group. The analysis of the latter should go beyond the investigation of demographics and attitudes and give more information about the people’s living environment.

After the implementation of a campaign its effect and impact on the target group must be observed, said **Guna Šnore** (NATO StratCom), who concluded the workshop with the session “Campaign planning and execution”. This could provide information about the long-term effects and prevent future planning issues. The bottom line is, that modern strategic communication does include far more than executing a campaign, especially within the scope of third party influence.

Imprint

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