



# INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON DIGITAL & DEMOCRACY

Towards a Sustainable Evolution

**10-11 of December**

Virtual conference

Times indicated in the program refer to Central European Time (CET)



**IF DaD**  
International Forum  
on Digital and Democracy



**T**he communication ecosystem is central to a well-functioning society. Its influence in shaping minds - and thus reality - has been emphasised by its enormous impact on recent political events, underlining the fact that the control and ownership of the Internet is one of the most important battles of our time.

With growing polarisation and identity politics becoming mainstream, it is ever more important to understand the complex relationship that exists between society and our communication ecosystem.

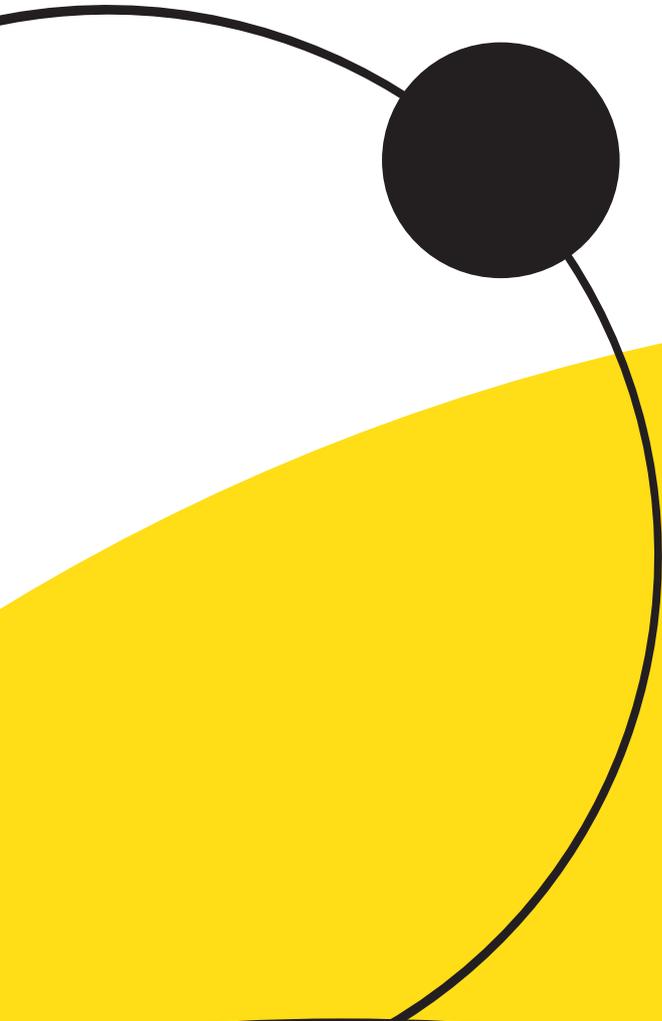
In the beginning of December 2020, the European Commission will unveil the European Democracy Action Plan, a flagship initiative that seeks to strengthen democracy and promote digital literacy. We are delighted that the keynote address opening this year's Forum will be delivered by **Ms Věra Jourová, European Vice-President for Values and Transparency**, sharing her vision for making Europe the world leader in election integrity, democratic values and an authentic public discourse.

Her intervention and vision will set the scene for the discussions of this two-day event that aims to address some of the most pressing questions around the impact of digital transformations on democratic institutions in Europe and beyond with special focus on the impact of a global health pandemic. Considering recent events and the urgency to understand this complex relationship, renowned speakers from policy, academia, journalism and civil society will reflect on different aspects of political legitimisation, societal trust, scientific evidence and public discourse in a rapidly changing media environment.

The discussions will build on the work developed by Associazione Copernicani and Re-Imagine Europa's task force on "Democracy in a Digital Society". Questions addressed will include: How can we maintain a healthy media ecosystem in a digital world? How does disinformation spread on social media? What is the role of narratives in creating shared world views? What is the value of societal trust in scientific evidence? How can we deal with big data in an ethical way?



**REIMAGINE  
EUROPA**  
**RIE**



● **Thursday**  
10<sup>th</sup> of December

# Satellite session

Organised as a high-level Round-Table, this session has limited seating and will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis

11:00 - 12:30

## EXPERT ROUNDTABLE ON DATA AND ETHICS in a Post-COVID WORLD

This session is organised with SoBigData++ Consortium and will explore the ethical dilemmas around AI and Big Data in Ethics, Society, and Law, together with technical challenges in data science and XAI. Emphasis on Trustworthiness

Keynote: **Matching Ethics and Law in AI: policy and practical implications of the Legal Legs of a "Trustworthy" SoBigData++**

### **Giovanni Comandé**

*Full Professor of Private Comparative Law at Scuola Superiore S. Anna Pisa, Italy. PhD. SSSA, LLM Harvard Law School, Founder and Director of the LIDER-LAB ([www.lider-lab.eu](http://www.lider-lab.eu)). Attorney at law (Pisa since 1995); (New York Bar since 1997). Mediator mediation trainer. He has taught in and visited numerous universities in the world.*

### EXPERT PANEL:

**Marcel Jeroen Van den Hoven**, *Professor of Ethics and Technology at the Delft University of Technology; founding Editor in Chief of Ethics and Information Technology and Member of the European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies (EGE)*

**Dino Pedreschi**, *Professor of Computer Science at the University of Pisa*

**Josep Domingo**, *Data science and cybersecurity*

**Juan Durán**, *Ethics*

**Fosca Giannotti**, *Explainable AI*

**Caterina Sganga**, *Intellectual Property and Open Data*

The outcomes of the discussions will help us develop a white paper on this topic to be published in early 2021.

# ● Opening session

14:00 - 14:05 ● **OPENING REMARKS**

**Ms Patrizia Feletig**

*Journalist and Chairwoman of Associazione Copernicani*

14:05 - 14:15 ● **WELCOME ADDRESS**

**Professor Manuel Castells**

*Chairman of the Re-Imagine Europa Taskforce on Democracy in a Digital Society, Wallis Annenberg Chair Professor of Communication Technology and Society at the Annenberg School of Communication, University of Southern California, Spanish Minister for Universities*

14:15 - 14:35 ● **KEYNOTE ADDRESS - The Value of European Democracy**

**Ms Věra Jourová**

*Vice President for Values and Transparency of the European Commission*

In conversation with **Manuel Castells**

**MODERATED AND PRESENTED BY:**

**Julia Angwin**

*Investigative journalist, co-founder and editor-in-chief of The Markup*

14:35 - 15:00 ● **Q&A**

**Ms Věra Jourová**

Photo: EU2016 SK



# ● Parallel sessions

15:00 - 15:20

## ● **DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL DECISIONS**

Analysis from an individual standpoint on how to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions and the role of technology in pursuing such aims. Computer-aided policymaking, civic artificial intelligence: how artificial intelligence could assist citizens in activating their rights, including information and participation rights. The changing role of institutions based on inclusive voting. How e-voting can help the formulation of parliamentary and assembly proceedings (e.g. critical situation like COVID-19). A balance between the representative system and direct or deliberative participation.

### **SESSION 1:**

The challenges of urban data ethics: big data and intelligent systems to support decision

**Larissa Galdino de Magalhães Santos**

### **SESSION 2:**

Artificial Intelligence Research for Fighting Political Polarisation: a Research Agenda

**Andrea Loreggia, Nicholas Mattei and Stefano Quintarelli**

# ● Plenary session

15:20 - 16:00 ● **PANDEMIC & DEMOCRACY: Challenges and Opportunities for the development of a Digital Society**

COVID-19 made the world digital. As lock-downs and global travel restrictions forces the world to go digital, we are witnessing both the enormous potential of digital tools as well as the possible pit-falls and ethical dilemmas. This session will look into what we have learned during the past eight months and will try to understand how this experience will guide the next digital developments

**PANELLISTS:**

**Min. Vincenzo Amendola**, *Italian Minister of European Affairs*  
**Jeffrey Sachs, Economist**, *academic, public policy analyst*  
**Roberto Viola**, *Director-General of DG CONNECT – European Commission*  
**Magdalena Adamowicz**, *Member of the European Parliament*

**MODERATED BY:**

**Erika Widegren**, *Chief Executive at Re-Imagine Europa*

---

16:00 - 16:15 ● ***Coffee break***

Take the opportunity to discuss some of the issues raised during the debates with the authors. Specific chat rooms will be available to have more informal conversations with the authors and the other participants.

---

16:15 - 16:30 ● ***Deep dive***

A CASE STUDY ON COMPUTER-AIDED POLICYMAKING

**Colin Megill**, *Co-creator of pol.is open-source platform*

---

# ● Closing session

## 16:30 - 16:50 ● **PARALLEL SESSIONS: SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION**

Analysis from a society standpoint: how to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. How people are engaged and eventually become part of the organization. How people are educated and informed. How the public opinion is formed and can be oriented. How media and platforms should work to promote democracy and human rights (top-down flows). Citizen inclusion and digital divide: gender, age, education.

### **SESSION 1:**

Artificial Intelligence against disinformation: the FANDANGO practical case

**Francesco Saverio Nucci, Silvia Boi and Massimo Magaldi**

### **SESSION 2:**

Democracy in the digital revolution

**Giorgio De Michelis**

## 16:50 - 17:00 ● **CLOSING REMARKS**

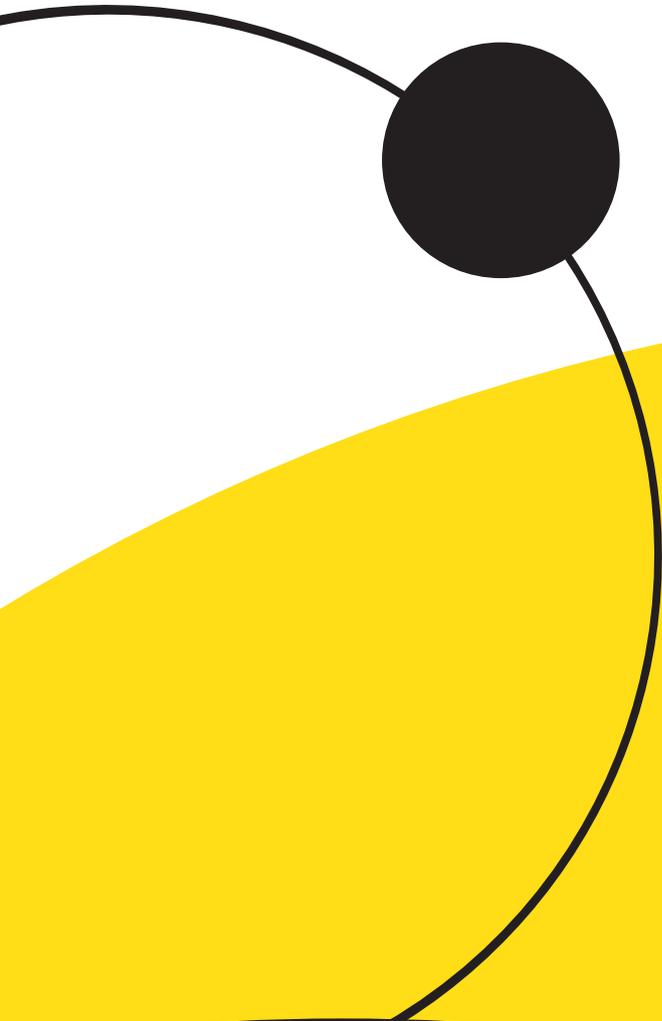
**Ricardo Abramovay**, *Sociologist, political scientist and professor*

---

## 17:00 - 17:30 ● ***Virtual aperitivo with the authors***

Take the opportunity to discuss some of the issues raised during the debates with the authors. Specific chat rooms will be available to have more informal conversations with the authors and the other participants.

---



● **Friday**  
11<sup>th</sup> of December

# ● Satellite session

*Organised as a high-level Round-Table, this session has limited seating and will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis*

11:00 - 12:30



## **DISINFORMATION AND THE MANIPULATION OF REALITY**

This session, organised with ALLEA, will explore the ethical dilemmas around disinformation and the use of narratives and emotions in manipulating reality. An increasingly influential stream of research demonstrates the integration of cognition and emotion in political decision-making. Political cognition is emotionally shaped. The role of narratives in shaping people's minds has become an important area of research and debate, in particular in recent years when entire societies have made choices that seem "rationally" counterintuitive. The COVID-19 pandemic and the accompanying 'infodemic' described by the WHO has placed science disinformation at the centre of global debates. In an ever more complex world, how do we address these issues?

The outcomes of this debate will guide our work on developing a European Observatory on Narratives.

### **EXPERT PANEL:**

#### **Professor Andrzej Nowak**

*Professor of psychology at the University of Warsaw, Warsaw School of Social Sciences and Humanities and Florida Atlantic University, Chief Narrative Scientist at Re-Imagine Europa*

#### **Laura Smillie**

*Expert and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre*

#### **Marc Lynas**

*Cornell Alliance for Science*

#### **Professor Stephan Lewandowsky**

*Professor of Cognitive Psychology at the University of Bristol, Member of the Scientific Committee of the ALLEA "Fact or Fake" project on Science Disinformation*

### **MODERATED BY:**

#### **Erika Widegren**

*Chief Executive at Re-Imagine Europa*

# ● Opening session

14:00 - 14:05 ● **OPENING REMARKS**

**Professor Stefano Quintarelli**  
*President of Steering Committee AGID*

14:05 - 14:20 ● **PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY**

*Conversation with President **Romano Prodi**  
Former President of the European Commission – Former Prime Minister of Italy*

---

14:20 - 14:40 ● **PARTICIPATION AND FUNCTIONING OF PARTIES**

Analysis from a societal standpoint: how to broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance; How people opinion is collected, structured and analysed; How people self-organise to form political entities; The role of participatory budgeting, e-Consultation, e-Polling, and e-Legislation (citizen assemblies, popular initiatives, petitions (bottom-up flows)); Parties' internal operation: frameworks for a political ERP system.

**SESSION 1:**

Digital Social Contracts: A Foundation for an Egalitarian and Just Digital Society

**Nimrod Talmon, Ehud Shapiro, Gal Shahaf, Luca Cardelli and Liav Orgad**

**SESSION 2:**

A blockchain-driven e-participation for substantial democracy (P4)

**Nadia Maccabiani**

14:40 - 15:00

## ● **Deep dive**

### **RETHINKING DEMOCRACY IN THE "PANDEMIC SOCIETY"**

**Gianluca Misuraca**, *Strategic policy advisor on Digital Governance, Technology Diplomacy and Human-Centric Artificial Intelligence and a Research Fellow at the Department of eGovernance and Public Administration of the Danube University*

15:00 - 15:15

## ● **Plenary conversation**

### **DIRECT DEMOCRACY**

Dialogue on the Italian Five Stars Movement Experience

**Min. Federico D'Incà**, *Italian Minister for Parliamentary Relations*  
**Marco Pierani**, *Director of Public Affairs and Media Relations and Executive Board Member at Euroconsumers*

15:15 - 15:35

## ● **Deep dive**

### **HOW THE DIGITAL ERA IS TRANSFORMING POLITICS IN KENYA**

**Nanjala Nyabola**, *Writer and political analyst, author of "Digital Democracy, Analogue Politics: How the Internet Era is Transforming Politics in Kenya."*

---

15:35 - 15:50

## ● **Coffee break**

Take the opportunity to discuss some of the issues raised during the debates with the authors. Specific chat rooms will be available to have more informal conversations with the authors and other participants.

---

# ● Parallel sessions

15:50 - 16:10

## ● **INFORMATION ACCESS AND INTEGRITY**

Analysis from an institutional standpoint: how to ensure public access to sound information and protect fundamental freedoms under national legislation and international agreements. How people are informed about the work of organisations (including PA). Methods to finance political parties and campaigns, and for countering corruption. How to address the self-propagation issue in the political class (i.e. people getting in power and then doing whatever it takes to stay there and/or get a private financial gain). Big data, fake news and democracy manipulation after Cambridge Analytica.

### **SESSION 1:**

Legal Knowledge Representation in the domain of Private International Law

**Giuseppe Contissa and Galileo Sartor**

### **SESSION 2:**

Access to Scientific Information and Knowledge: A Matter of Democracy

**Ludovica Paseri**

16:10 - 16:30

● **Deep dive**

**PROTECTING ELECTORAL INTEGRITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

**Professor Stephen Stedman**, *Senior Fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Professor of Political Science at Stanford University and Secretary-General of the Kofi Annan Commission on Elections and Democracy in the Digital Age*

16:30 - 16:50

● **Deep dive**

**A DIGITAL DEMOCRACY MANIFESTO**

Dialogue on the Italian Five Stars Movement Experience

**Richard Barbrook**, *Author of several influential essays on information society and winner of the 2008 Marshall McLuhan Prize for Outstanding Book in the field of Media Ecology*

16:50 - 17:00

● **Final remarks + online polls results**

**Professor Jeffrey Sachs**, *Economist, academic, public policy analyst*

---

17:00 - 17:30

● **Virtual aperitivo with the authors**

Take the opportunity to discuss some of the issues raised during the debates with the authors. Specific chat rooms will be available to have more informal conversations with the authors and other participants.

---

## ● SUPPORTED BY

ENDORSED BY



ORGANISED BY



PARTNERS



KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS



**IFDaD**  
International Forum  
on Digital and Democracy