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Countering misinformation in the EU: origins, evolution, and prospects

Vériter, S.L.

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Countering Misinformation in the EU: Origins, Evolution, and Prospects

Sophie L. Vériter

Propositions

Propositions on the subject of the dissertation:

1. The Baltic states significantly shaped EU information governance through counter-misinformation policies aimed to offset pro-Kremlin propaganda.
2. The framing of misinformation as a “security threat” in the European Union risks damaging the quality of its democracy because “security” is an intersubjective concept and EU foreign and security policy relies on procedures with limited democratic oversight.
3. The broadening and hardening of the EU’s approach to information governance risks harming its credibility and soft power on the world stage by signalling policy/value incoherence.
4. EU information governance risks further legitimacy challenges unless it involves the public in democratic decision-making on misinformation and information warfare.

Propositions on the field of the subject of the dissertation:

5. Disinformation is a flawed concept because it rests on the subjective notion of intent and often spreads through the actions of well-intentioned folks unaware of its inaccuracy, making the concept vague, unhelpful, and often politicized.
6. Structural measures are more appropriate than content- or actor-specific approaches to building societal resilience against misinformation and information warfare.
7. Scholarly and policy perspectives on misinformation and information warfare suffer from important methodological and conceptual flaws, failing to adequately consider the contextual factors shaping their interpretation.
8. Complexity theory provides a more holistic and suitable framework for understanding and responding to information challenges compared to traditional models relying on simplified, binary interpretations of information.

Propositions on societal questions covered in the dissertations:

9. Counter-misinformation policies often reflect political biases that undermine liberal democratic norms and individual freedoms.
10. International actors face a Prisoner’s Dilemma in information governance, where mutual information control exacerbates polarization and erodes mutual trust.