

PRESS RELEASE

Tübingen, 27th September 2021

Polarization and Disinformation: IWM and University of Tübingen host international expert forum

From 4 to 6 October, an interdisciplinary symposium organised by the Leibniz-Institut für Wissensmedien (IWM) and the University of Tübingen will bring together renowned experts from all over the world to share their insights on topics such as opinion polarization, fake news mechanisms or conspiracy theories. The aim is not only to understand these phenomena, but also to develop practical solutions to the challenges they pose. The keynotes will be streamed live and are open to the public.

Social polarization is one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century. Political and social issues but also scientific facts are increasingly driving people apart. This dynamic is fuelled by the current media ecology, which encourages the spread of misinformation. Against this backdrop, researchers from interdisciplinary scientific fields will present and discuss their findings on these topics at the "Belief Polarization" symposium.

The following keynotes will be streamed live and are open to the public:

Monday, 4. October, 11:00 am:

„From agenda-setting to furtive manipulation: The role of (social) media in political polarization“

Stephan Lewandowsky, University of Bristol, Australia

Nowadays, the dissemination of information is regulated less and less by media companies and increasingly by direct communication between politicians and citizens. In his lecture, psychologist Lewandowsky sheds light on how this power shift in the political discourse has come about.

Tuesday, 5. Oktober, 9:00 am:

„Investigating Social Dynamics in the Digital Era: A Data-driven Approach“

Fabiana Zollo, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Italy

The spread of misinformation and social polarization partly follow specific patterns. In her lecture, Fabiana Zollo presents analytical methods rooted in computer science that can aid our understanding of how information spreads on the web.

Tuesday, 5. Oktober, 16:00 am:

„Confronting Digital Challenges with Cognitive Tools“

Ralph Hertwig, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Germany

False information is spreading at an ever-increasing rate. There are however strategies that enable users to better distinguish between high-quality and questionable content on the web. In his lecture, the director of the research centre *Adaptive Rationality* addresses such strategies, ranging from educational measures to information visualisations.

Interested individuals and members of the press are cordially invited!

All further information can be found here: <https://www.beliefpolarization.de/index.html>

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Leibniz-Institut für Wissensmedien (IWM)

The Leibniz-Institut für Wissensmedien (IWM) in Tübingen investigates how digital media influences knowledge and communication processes. Foundational and applied research focuses not only on institutional learning fields such as schools and universities, but also on informal learning on the Internet, at the workplace, or in museums. At the IWM, researchers from various disciplines work together, with many colleagues coming from the areas of psychology, communication science, neuroscience, and computer science.