

Report



- Date and time: 7 December 2020, 12:15 - 13:15
- Title of the session: **EuroPCom Talks**
- Format: Talks
- Moderator: **Méabh McMahon** (reporter and news anchor, Euronews) / Speakers: **Kate Wimpres** (convener, Citizens' Assembly of Scotland), **Kathryn Sheridan** (CEO and founder, Sustainability Consult), **Guillaume Chaslot** (founder, AlgoTransparency.org)

Main topics discussed

- **Kate Wimpres:** Scotland's first Citizens' Assembly (100 people) on participation, survey representing the diversity of the country, giving people's opinions on the country's future.
- **Kathryn Sheridan:** A communicator can be a change-maker. Credibility is the key to building trust with the audience. A balance between credibility and visibility is needed to create change when communicating. A change-maker is a *thought leader*, *credibility* builds a *community*.
- **Guillaume Chaslot:** AI impact on the content we see and are intended to see, and how platforms trick users to engage with functions instead of providing straightforward information.

Key messages from each speaker

- **Kate Wimpres:** Create a process for people's engagement, set aside preconceptions and connect with citizens to build on what they all have in common. It is still too early to say how the assembly might impact policies.
- **Kathryn Sheridan:** The importance of carrying out a credibility audit to identify risks to reputation. The Q&A session is a pillar for building credible communication, testing the message and doing media training. To "build a community" can be to participate in a community and affect that group of people as a change-maker.
- **Guillaume Chaslot:** How AI messages can impact and influence people's opinions. Covid vaccine refusal in France by 30% of people shows the impact of AI videos as well as the reputation of other vaccines. YouTube took action in avoiding the promotion of harmful content, changing trends by 70%. The clusters of information that show one type of content is a threat behind the algorithm, accounting for the divisive impact it has.

Solutions proposed

- **Kate Wimpres:** Create dialogue to ensure heterogeneity and representation of the public.
- **Kathryn Sheridan:** Coach others in change-making, take action in interest groups. Ask yourself questions about truth, evidence, consistency and whose interests your communication serves.

- **Guillaume Chaslot:** Help associations and universities conduct research in the area of AI interests, also educate the general public, provide transparency.

Questions from the audience

- **Kate Wimpres:** There was an interest in politicians' attitudes: all parties participated in the Scottish assembly.
- **Kathryn Sheridan:** Invite discussions and find a way round the problem if a communicator is asked to communicate something that he/she is not comfortable with: speak up.
- **Guillaume Chaslot:** Does responsibility for what users see lie entirely with the users? Users do not have the tools to moderate the use they make of content; people cannot choose what content to see. Users do not have control over their feed.

Take-away messages

The importance of making change and taking every opportunity to influence change, either as a group or as an individual.

The role of AI and education from an early age, given the "addictive" nature of these technologies.