



Young Greens on Propaganda

Let's resist disinformation!

From the 24th to 30th of April 2016, 40 young Green activists gathered in Kiev, Ukraine, to reflect on the problems of Information War and propaganda, especially how it applies to the Eastern European region. Sessions ranged from the governments' handling of the Chernobyl catastrophe to speeches by internationally renowned Green politicians and practical workshops in which activists could strengthen their research, communication and digital security skills. The participants agreed on the following:

STATEMENT

Freedom of the press is crucial. A rich variety of media and opinions is essential for a healthy democratic society. The role of media as a watchdog of governing bodies renders those in power accountable. It contributes to a balancing of power between all members of society and helps protect the most vulnerable. Everyone must be entitled to freedom of expression. It is unacceptable that people are still not guaranteed the right to safely express their opinions. The Panama papers are a good example of how information can benefit society.

We demand that journalists do not live in fear of reprisals when undertaking their work!

Freedom of the press is only one element in the struggle against propaganda. Critical thinking has a vital role in enabling citizens to consume media responsibly, allowing them to form their opinions independently and to recognise disinformation. It is empowering people to be an active part of society. Especially the role of education must be stressed. Learning to think critically should not be a privilege of the elite but must be accessible to everyone.

We demand that no-one is punished for questioning authority!

Creating opportunities for intercultural exchange is of utmost importance as it opens the door to challenging nationalist and xenophobic propaganda. It destroys stereotypes. We treasure the idea of world citizenship, and cherish the diversity of identity it entails. Our lived experience this week is testament to the power of interculturalism - it broadens horizons and tears down preconceptions.

We demand more - and more equal - opportunities for youth to exchange views and critically examine the societies they live in!

This project is supported by the European Youth Foundation of Council of Europe, Green Forum Sweden, HBS Kiev and MEP Peter Eriksson Greens/EFA