

**Disinformation and the Brussels Bubble: EU Correspondents' Concerns and
Competences in a Digital Age**

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Appendix 1: Self-reported country of distribution of affiliated media outlet

Country	N journalists individually contacted	N valid responses	Response rate (%)	Additional responses through anonymous link	Total
Austria	29	2	6.90	2	4
Belgium	27	7	25.93	0	7
Bulgaria	9	1	11.11	0	1
Croatia	4	2	50.00	1	3
Cyprus	3	0	0.00	0	0
Czech Republic	8	3	37.50	0	3
Denmark	20	5	25.00	0	5
Estonia	6	0	0.00	0	0
Finland	23	3	13.04	0	3
France	19	1	5.26	0	1
Germany	100	6	6.00	0	6
Greece	5	1	20.00	0	1
Hungary	6	1	16.67	0	1
Ireland	6	0	0.00	0	0
Italy	47	6	12.77	0	6
Latvia	4	2	50.00	1	3
Lithuania	4	0	0.00	0	0
Luxembourg	2	1	50.00	0	1
Malta	3	0	0.00	0	0
Netherlands	16	3	18.75	1	4
Poland	17	0	0.00	0	0
Portugal	7	2	28.57	0	2
Romania	3	0	0.00	0	0
Slovakia	4	0	0.00	0	0
Slovenia	3	1	33.33	0	1
Spain	44	3	6.82	1	4
Sweden	14	3	21.43	0	3
UK	26	3	11.54	0	3
Pan-EU, global, non-EU	80	19	23.75	2	21
Total	539*	75	13.91	8	83

Note: *Of the 539 journalists contacted, 92 journalists followed the survey link (17.07%), of which two journalists declined to participate after reading the informed consent form. Another 15 journalists did not complete the survey. This leaves a sample of 75 completed responses.

Appendix 2: Population comparison with records by Politico Europe in 2018 (Gehrke, 2020)

Country	N journalists ind. contacted	Politico Europe records (2018)	Difference	Total valid responses (incl. open invitations)
Austria	29	14	15	4
Belgium	27	161	-134	7
Bulgaria	9	9	0	1
Croatia	4	5	-1	3
Cyprus	3	3	0	0
Czech Republic	8	7	1	3
Denmark	20	17	3	5
Estonia	6	2	4	0
Finland	23	10	13	3
France	19	103	-84	1
Germany	100	108	-8	6
Greece	5	16	-11	1
Hungary	6	10	-4	1
Ireland	6	3	3	0
Italy	47	49	-2	6
Latvia	4	3	1	3
Lithuania	4	0	4	0
Luxembourg	2	4	-2	1
Malta	3	0	3	0
Netherlands	16	24	-8	4
Poland	17	13	4	0
Portugal	7	14	-7	2
Romania	3	4	-1	0
Slovakia	4	4	0	0
Slovenia	3	3	0	1
Spain	44	61	-17	4
Sweden	14	9	5	3
UK	26	169	-143	3
Total	459	825		62

Appendix 3: Information about the sample

Out of all 83 responses, 29% of the respondents are female, the average age is 45 years ($SD=10.8$) and the average time working as a journalist is 20.5 years ($SD=10.8$). Our respondents reported that they have about 10 years of experience working on EU affairs ($SD=6.7$), and that they have been in Brussels for an average of 10 years ($SD=8.3$). Most of them (88%) belong to the Brussels press corps. Moreover, 75.9% are employed full-time, 1.2% part-time and 22.9% work as freelancers. Most of the surveyed journalists work for newspapers (28.9%), followed by news agencies (22.9%), online only media (16.9%), television (14.5%) and radio (8.4%). The remaining respondents either work for several media (6.0%) or a magazine (2.4%). The average self-placement on a left-right scale where 0 is extremely left and 10 is extremely right is 4.10 ($SD=1.38$). The median survey duration was 1,340 seconds (about 22 minutes, $M=19,410$, $SD=89,477$).

Appendix 4: Wording of relevant survey questions in order of appearance

To begin with you, we would like to ask you some short questions about yourself.

How old are you ?

What is your gender?

What is your nationality?

Which of the following categories best describes your current employment?

- full-time employment with a media organisation
- part-time employment with a media organisation
- freelancer
- other, namely ...

What type of medium are you mostly working for?

- Television
- Radio
- Newspaper (print)
- Online-only newspaper
- News agency
- Other non-political media outlet

In which country is your medium/media (predominantly) distributed?

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Republic of Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- Non EU
- Pan-European
- Global

Including all your previous assignments, how many years in total have you been working as a journalist?

__ years

And how many years have you been working on European affairs?

__ years

Are you based in Brussels?

- Yes
- Partly
- No

If yes, for how many years have you been based in Brussels?

__ years

Are you an accredited member of the Brussels press corps?

- Yes
- No

In political matters, people talk of the 'left' and the 'right'. Where would you place yourself and your media outlet on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means 'left' and 10 means 'right'?

- Yourself
- Your media outlet

Next, we have some questions about problems that are relevant for the EU and journalism as a profession.

In your opinion, what is the most important problem the European Union is facing at the moment?

(open question)

In your opinion, what is the most important problem journalism as a profession is facing at the moment?

(open question)

The European Commission has recently published a “Code of Practice on Disinformation”, and has opened up a debate about the impact of disinformation in the upcoming European Parliamentary Elections in 2019. We would now like ask you a few questions which are important for understanding debates about disinformation or “fake news”.

How likely do you think it is that citizens **across the EU** will be exposed to impactful amounts of disinformation during the upcoming EP Election campaign?

1 not at all likely – 7 very likely

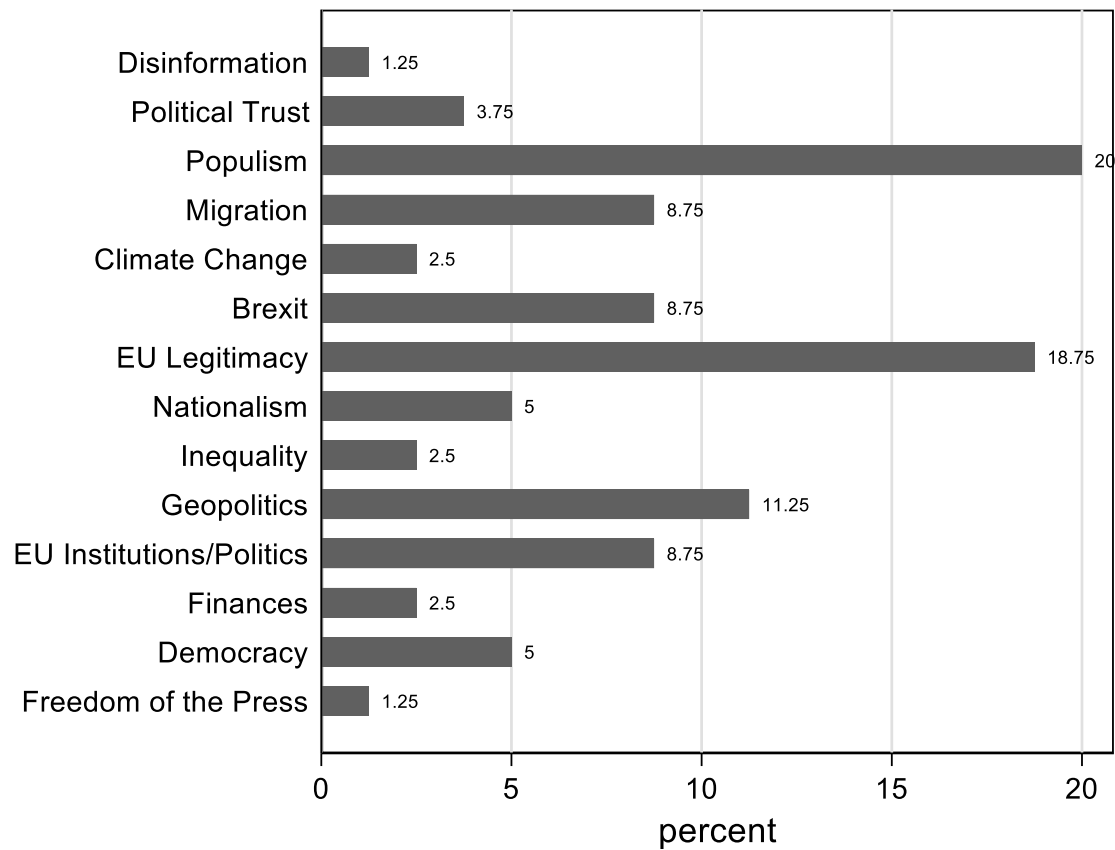
How likely do you think it is that citizens **in your home country** will be exposed to impactful amounts of disinformation during the upcoming EP Election campaign?

1 not at all likely – 7 very likely

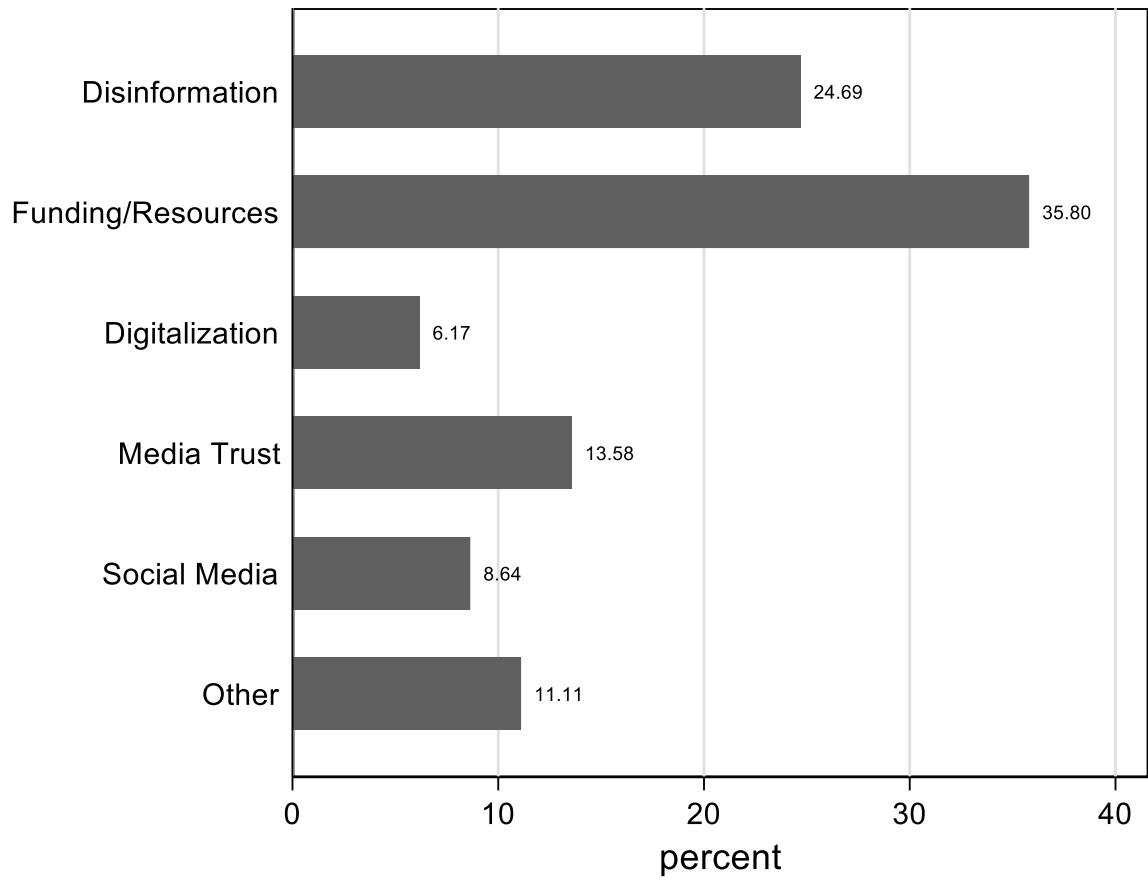
How confident are you that you will be able to distinguish between disinformation and truthful information during the news production process?

1 not at all confident – 7 very confident'

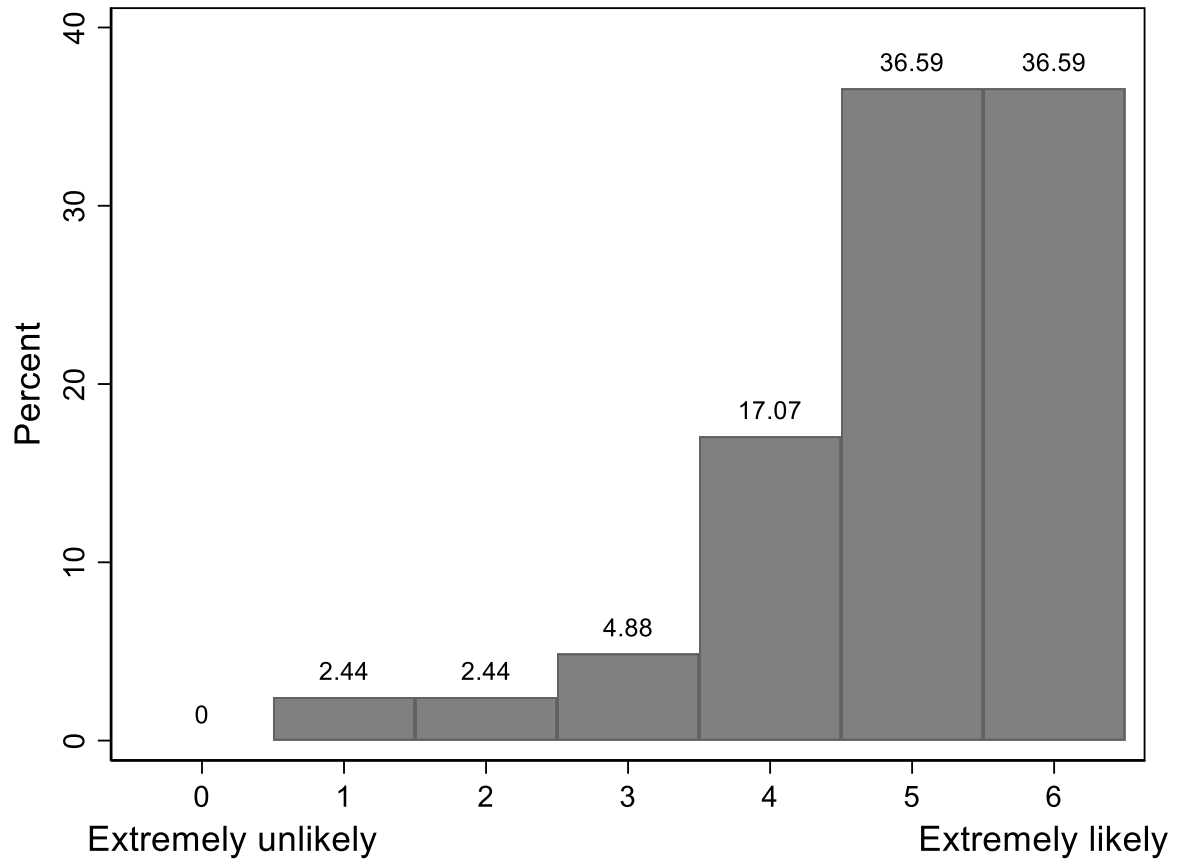
Appendix 5: Figure A1 Most Important Problem the EU is facing at the moment



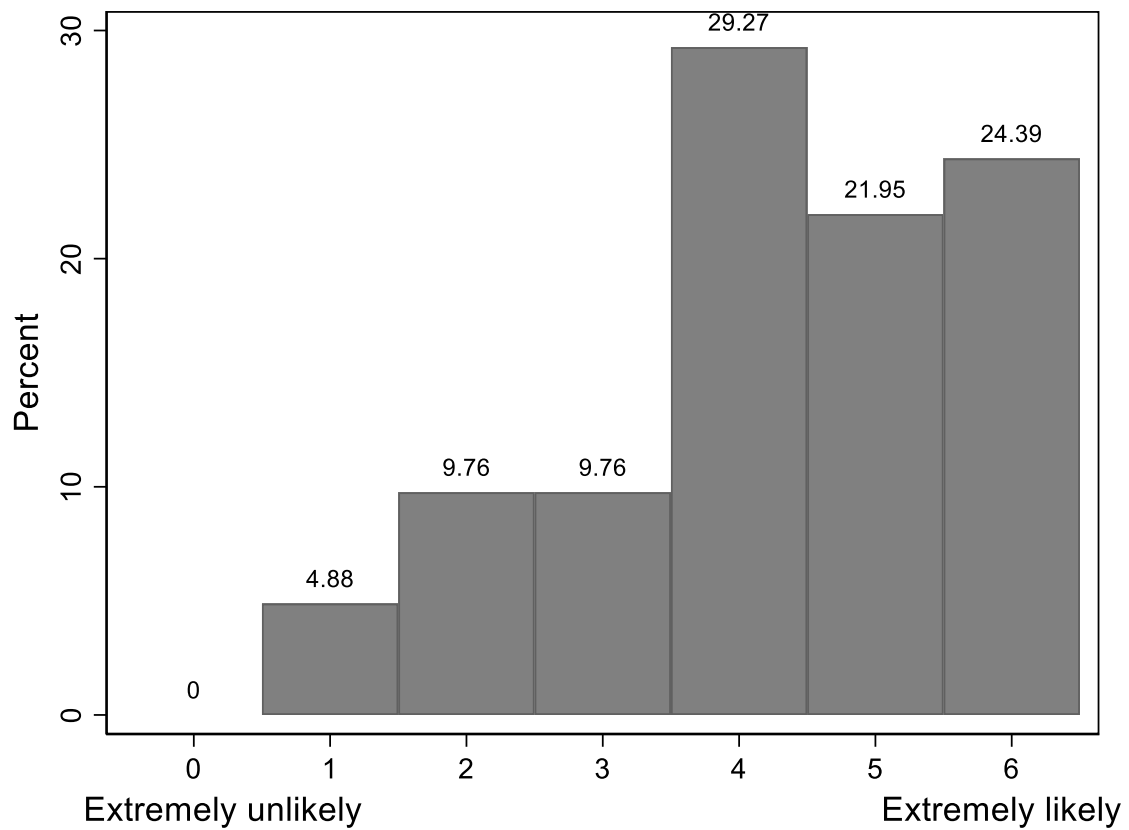
Appendix 6: Figure A2 - Most Important Problem journalism as a profession is facing at the moment



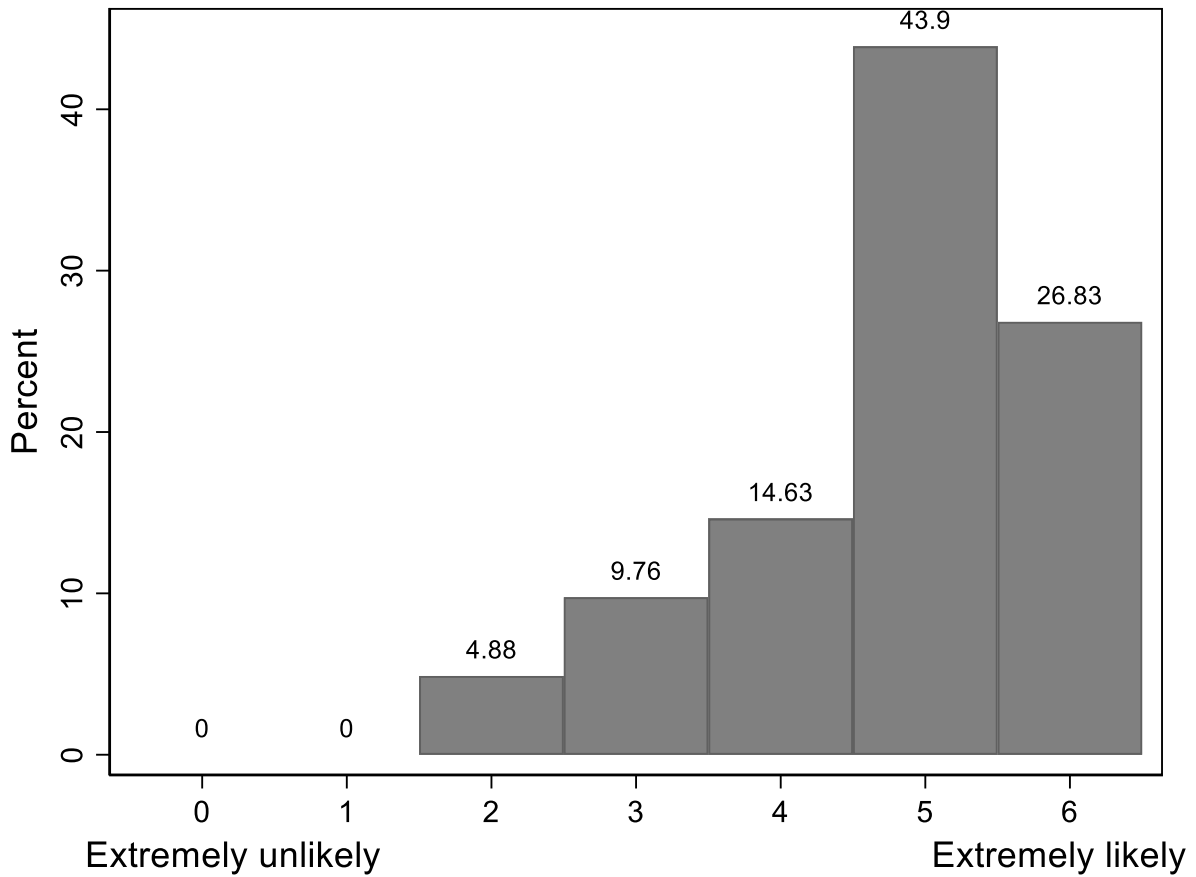
Appendix 7: Figure A3 - Perceived exposure to disinformation during 2019 EP election campaign for citizens



Appendix 8: Figure A4 – Perceived exposure to disinformation during 2019 EP election campaign for citizens in main country of distribution of the news outlet



Appendix 9: Figure A5 - Self-perceived ability to detect disinformation



Appendix 10: Disinformation as most important problem journalism is facing at the moment

	disinformation as most important problem for journalism	disinformation as most important problem for journalism	disinformation as most important problem for journalism
	Log Odds (SE)	Log Odds (SE)	Log Odds (SE)
Freedom of Press (0=high; 1=lower)	-0.81 (0.65)		
Medium type (0=traditional; 1=digital)		-2.26* (1.09)	
Employment status (0=contract; 1=freelance)			-1.21 (0.83)
Gender (0=male; 1=female)	-0.43 (0.70)	-0.80 (0.67)	-0.49 (0.66)
Age	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01

	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Ideology	-0.16 (0.23)	-0.21 (0.22)	-0.12 (0.21)
Brussels press corps (0=no; 1=yes)	0.83 (1.14)	0.95 (1.13)	1.29 (1.10)
Constant	-0.43 (2.05)	-0.12 (1.88)	-1.23 (1.80)
Number of respondents	60	81	81
Pseudo R ²	0.05	0.11	0.06

Note. The dependent variable is whether journalists indicated that disinformation is the most important problem that the profession is facing at the moment (0 = no; 1 = yes). [†] $p \leq .10$. * $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$.

Appendix 11: Perceived exposure to of disinformation during 2019 EP election campaign for citizens across the EU

	Perceived exposure to disinformation for citizens across the EU	Perceived exposure to disinformation for citizens across the EU	Perceived exposure to disinformation for citizens across the EU
	Log Odds (SE)	Log Odds (SE)	Log Odds (SE)
Freedom of Press (0=high; 1=lower)	1.07 (1.10)		
Medium type (0=traditional; 1=digital)		0.98 (1.14)	
Employment status (0=contract; 1=freelance)			0.72 (1.16)
Gender (0=male; 1=female)	1.26 (1.30)	0.64 (0.92)	0.37 (0.93)
Age	0.07 (0.06)	0.05 (0.04)	0.05 (0.04)
Ideology	0.32 (0.40)	0.20 (0.30)	0.14 (0.30)
Brussels press corps (0=no; 1=yes)	0.96 (1.33)	0.15 (1.17)	-0.04 (1.17)
Constant	-3.44 (3.11)	-1.30 (2.35)	-0.79 (2.28)
Number of respondents	61	82	82
Pseudo R ²	0.12	0.06	0.05

Note. The dependent variable is whether journalists indicated that disinformation is the most important problem that the profession is facing at the moment (0 = *no*; 1 = *yes*). [†] $p \leq .10$. * $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$.

Appendix 12: Perceived exposure to of disinformation during 2019 EP election campaign for citizens in home country

	Perceived exposure to of disinformation for citizens in home country	Perceived exposure to of disinformation for citizens in home country	Perceived exposure to of disinformation for citizens in home country
	Log Odds (SE)	Log Odds (SE)	Log Odds (SE)
Freedom of Press (0=high; 1=lower)	1.54* (0.74)		
Medium type (0=traditional; 1=digital)		-0.09 (0.63)	
Employment status (0=contract; 1=freelance)			-0.50 (0.62)
Gender (0=male; 1=female)	-0.03 (0.70)	0.01 (0.59)	0.13 (0.61)
Age	0.01 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)
Ideology	0.36 (0.26)	0.12 (0.21)	0.11 (0.20)
Brussels press corps (0=no; 1=yes)	-0.51 (1.18)	-1.16 (1.10)	-1.05 (1.10)
Constant	-0.99 (2.19)	1.07 (1.86)	1.03 (1.83)
Number of respondents	61	82	82
Pseudo R ²	0.11	0.02	0.03

Note. The dependent variable is whether journalists indicated that disinformation is the most important problem that the profession is facing at the moment (0 = no; 1 = yes). † $p \leq .10$. * $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$.

Appendix 13: Perceived ability to detect disinformation

	Perceived ability to detect disinformation	Perceived ability to detect disinformation	Perceived ability to detect disinformation
	Log Odds (SE)	Log Odds (SE)	Log Odds (SE)
Freedom of Press (0=high; 1=lower)	0.17 (0.86)		
Medium type (0=traditional; 1=digital)		2.01 (1.24)	
Employment status (0=contract; 1=freelance)			0.42 (0.92)
Gender (0=male; 1=female)	0.96 (1.03)	0.22 (0.81)	0.06 (0.80)
Age	-0.11** (0.04)	-0.08* (0.03)	-0.07* (0.03)
Ideology	0.01 (0.28)	0.12 (0.51)	0.01 (0.23)
Brussels press corps (0=no; 1=yes)	2.01 [†] (1.08)	-1.71 [†] (0.93)	1.21 (0.85)
Constant	5.06 [†] (2.79)	3.26 (2.21)	4.00 [†] (2.18)
Number of respondents	61	82	82
Pseudo R ²	0.24	0.16	0.11

Note. The dependent variable is whether journalists indicated that disinformation is the most important problem that the profession is facing at the moment (0 = *no*; 1 = *yes*). [†] $p \leq .10$. * $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$.