[US] Department of State publishes Democratic roadmap to build civic resilience to the global digital information challenge

IRIS 2024-4:1/4

Eric Munch
European Audiovisual Observatory

On 18 March 2024, on the occasion of the Third Summit for Democracy Multi-Stakeholder Roundtable in Seoul, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced a new Democratic Roadmap to build civic resilience to the global digital information challenge. The roadmap, developed by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy (CDP) is meant to assist global policymakers, civil society and the private sector in providing a global response to tackle the challenge of information integrity while remaining consistent with democratic values, freedom and expression and international human rights law.

In its preamble, the roadmap goes over the evolution of the lexicon surrounding information manipulation while underlining the fact that the challenges posed by it are not new. Recent dynamics in the global digital information sector, fuelled in no small part by the rapid development of generative AI, however make 2024 a crucial year, with important elections taking place or anticipated in 40 countries representing approximately 40 percent of the global population. In that context, the roadmap highlights the need for citizens to have access to "accurate sources of information to form opinions and participate in free and fair elections" and develop the skills to "critically assess the digital information that will influence the exercise of their fundamental freedoms".

The roadmap urges the various actors to follow four steps. Firstly, they should highlight the importance of the digital information manipulation challenge as a threat to the functionality and vitality of society. Doing so will help limit eroding the people's trust in democratic values and institutions on a global scale.

They should also recognise that building information integrity can be consistent with freedom of opinion and expression, in line with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights, which both establish the right for everyone to seek, receive and impart information.

Reinforcing the private sector digital platforms' ability to strengthen civic resilience is also key to promote information integrity. The roadmap identifies five areas in which said platforms can enhance transparency and communication:

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

algorithmic promotion and demotion of content, privacy policies, use and sharing of user data, political advertising and the labelling of content produced by generative AI.

Lastly, all actors should prioritise efforts to address generative AI and mitigate the risks they pose, particularly in the context of the elections taking place globally in 2024. The roadmap provides a series of best practices for all actors (governments, private sector companies, journalists, civil society, researchers and academics).

Democratic Roadmap: Building Civic Resilience to the Global Digital Information Manipulation Challenge

https://www.state.gov/roadmap-info-integrity/

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026