

Fake news threat to Europe's elections

With major elections coming up in France, Germany, the Netherlands and possibly Italy, Europe is preparing for a campaign of cyberattacks and misinformation similar to that seen in the recent U.S. election

*Almost two-in-three American adults say fake news stories caused a great deal of confusion during election campaign**

Great deal of confusion

Some confusion

Not much / no confusion

64%

24%

11%

Nov 2016 – U.S. election: Fake news attacks against **Hillary Clinton** surge on Facebook.

CIA claims that GRU – Russia's military intelligence agency – used hacking group **APT28** to spread hoax news backing **Donald Trump** (above). More than 100 fake U.S. news sites traced to **Veles** in Macedonia



Dec 2016 – Italy referendum: Prime Minister **Matteo Renzi** (left) loses referendum and resigns, in clear victory to populist **Five Star Movement** led by **Beppe Grillo** (inset left). Fact-checking site **Pagella Politica** finds that half of most popular referendum stories shared on social media were fake news



Mar 15, 2017 – Netherlands general election: Polls put **Geert Wilders** (inset right) and his anti-Islam **PVV** ahead of centre-right party of Prime Minister **Mark Rutte** (right).

Loss of 2016 referendum on EU treaty with Ukraine is blamed on Kremlin propaganda over downing of Flight MH17



Apr 23 – France presidential election: **Marine Le Pen** (inset left), leader of far-right **National Front** is expected to make it to run-off against centre-right Republican **François Fillon** (left). Republican front-runner **Alain Juppé** lost primary after fake stories falsely linked him to Islamic extremists



Sep-Oct – Germany federal election: Centre-right **Christian Democratic Party** led by **Angela Merkel** (right) faces challenge from **Alternative for Germany** – right-wing party led by **Frauke Petry** (inset right).

German security agency BfV has warned that Chancellor Merkel is target of Kremlin misinformation campaign. **Government threatens to fine Facebook €500,000 every time it shows fake news**



*Pew Research Center survey conducted Dec 1-Dec 4, 2016, among 1,002 U.S. adults, 18 years of age or older. Margin of error: ±3.6%. Sources: Pew Research, Politico, BuzzFeed, Pagella Politica, The Atlantic