

Disinformation Governance Board

Bridget Johnson of GTSC Homeland Security reported.

DHS Standing Up Disinformation Governance Board Led by Information Warfare Expert
Board intended to "coordinate countering misinformation related to homeland security, focused specifically on irregular migration and Russia."

A new board at the Department of Homeland Security will focus on countering misinformation and disinformation, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told lawmakers today, with Wilson Center fellow Nina Jankowicz separately confirming that she would be executive director of the board.

During a hearing before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security to discuss the president's fiscal year 2023 budget request, Rep. Lauren Underwood (D-Ohio) stated that disinformation is a "huge threat to our homeland" and said Mayorkas has "noted that it's a concern of yours at the border with human smuggling organizations peddling misinformation to exploit vulnerable migrants for profit." Citing the Senate Intelligence Committee's report on tactics used in the 2016 election campaign, she added that "foreign adversaries attempt to destabilize our elections by targeting people of color with disinformation campaigns."

"A newer trend that we saw in the 2020 election and already in the 2022 midterms is that disinformation is being heavily targeted at Spanish-speaking voters, sparking and fueling conspiracy theories," Underwood said to Mayorkas. "DHS and its components play a big role in addressing myths and disinformation in Spanish and other languages. Can you share what steps you've taken and what future plans you have to address Spanish-language myths and disinformation through a department-wide approach?"

Mayorkas replied that DHS has "a number of different offices engaged in this critical effort" as part of their mission set including the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, which recently [published infographics](#) explaining information manipulation and how bad actors use social media bots as well as an update of the [Disinformation Stops With You](#) infographic set.

"Our Undersecretary for Policy Rob Silvers is co-chair with our Principal Deputy General Counsel Jennifer Daskal in leading a just recently constituted misinformation/disinformation governance board," the secretary said.

Politico Playbook [reported](#) that DHS is standing up a new Disinformation Governance Board "to coordinate countering misinformation related to homeland security, focused specifically on irregular migration and Russia."

Nina Jankowicz, who studies the intersection of democracy and technology in Central and Eastern Europe as a Wilson Center global fellow, has advised the Ukrainian government on strategic communications, and is the author of [How To Lose the Information War: Russia, Fake](#)

[*News, and the Future of Conflict*](#), confirmed on Twitter that she would be executive director of the board.

“Honored to be serving in the Biden Administration @DHSgov and helping shape our counter-disinformation efforts,” Jankowicz tweeted, adding that “a HUGE focus of our work, and indeed, one of the key reasons the Board was established, is to maintain the Dept’s commitment [sic] to protecting free speech, privacy, civil rights, & civil liberties.”

“More to come as we dig into the big job ahead,” she added. “For now, thanks for the support.”

In February, the latest [*National Terrorism Advisory System Bulletin*](#) assessed that the converging factors of disinformation, persistent calls for violence against critical and often-soft targets, and recent calls by foreign terrorist organizations for attacks on the United States have “increased the volatility, unpredictability, and complexity” of the threat landscape.

Disinformation and misinformation propagated and disseminated by both domestic and foreign actors were listed as the first key factors influencing the heightened threat environment, with grievances stoked by unsubstantiated widespread election fraud conspiracy theories and COVID-19 mis/disinformation noted as inspiring violent extremist attacks during 2021.

The bulletin said that calls for violence have been notably targeting “U.S. critical infrastructure; soft targets and mass gatherings; faith-based institutions, such as churches, synagogues, and mosques; institutions of higher education; racial and religious minorities; government facilities and personnel, including law enforcement and the military; the media; and perceived ideological opponents.” Violence against these locations or groups could stem from anti-government extremism, racially or religiously motivated extremism, and/or disinformation or conspiracy theories; for example, “COVID-19 mitigation measures—particularly COVID-19 vaccine and mask mandates—have been used by domestic violent extremists to justify violence since 2020 and could continue to inspire these extremists to target government, healthcare, and academic institutions that they associate with those measures.”

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When researching this topic I found that most of the stories are about President Trump and Tucker Carlson on Fox News. This is based on opinions and not facts. What the real danger of a unit like this under the Department of Homeland Security gives it law enforcement authority. This leads to the likelihood it will be politized, leading to a faster collapse of this country.

From [History Information.com](#) **Joseph Stalin Coins the Term Desinformatsiya (Disinformation) 1923**

In 1923 Russian revolutionary and politician [Joseph Stalin](#), who had previously served as the first editor of [Pravda](#) when it was the official newspaper of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, coined the term [desinformatsiya](#) as the name of a KGB [black propaganda](#) department. Stalin gave the department what he thought was French-sounding name in order to claim the name had a Western origin. "Russian use began with a "special disinformation office" in 1923.^[5] Disinformation was defined in [Great Soviet Encyclopedia](#) (1952) as "false information with the intention to deceive public opinion".^{[1][2][6]} [Operation INFEKTION](#) was a Soviet disinformation campaign to influence opinion that the U.S. invented [AIDS](#).^{[1][6][7]} The U.S. did not actively counter disinformation until 1980, when a [fake document](#) reported that the U.S. supported [apartheid](#)." (Wikipedia article on Disinformation, accessed 10-2020)

Retrieved April 29, 2022 from [Joseph Stalin Coins the Term Desinformatsiya \(Disinformation\) : History of Information](#)