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PERITIA Newsletter #1 - July 2020

## Welcome to PERITIA

### An EU-funded project investigating trust in expertise

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed [PERITIA's research agenda](#) at the centre of public debates. It was only days before the closing of the European borders that our team was meeting in Dublin for the project's inaugural [symposium](#). We were discussing "**Trust in a Changing World**" in a world already in full motion towards an unprecedented real-time test for trust in expertise. Overnight, the key questions of our project turned into global headlines:

**What is the role of expertise in democracies?**  
**How should science inform political decisions?**  
**How can we prevent a populist backlash against expertise?**

It is no surprise that, while coping with the current circumstances, [our team](#) has engaged in [public debates and research](#) concerning the pandemic. But PERITIA's work goes well beyond this and has already taken its first steps. We have an exciting **research and engagement plan** coming up for the next three years.

Let us begin by inviting you to:



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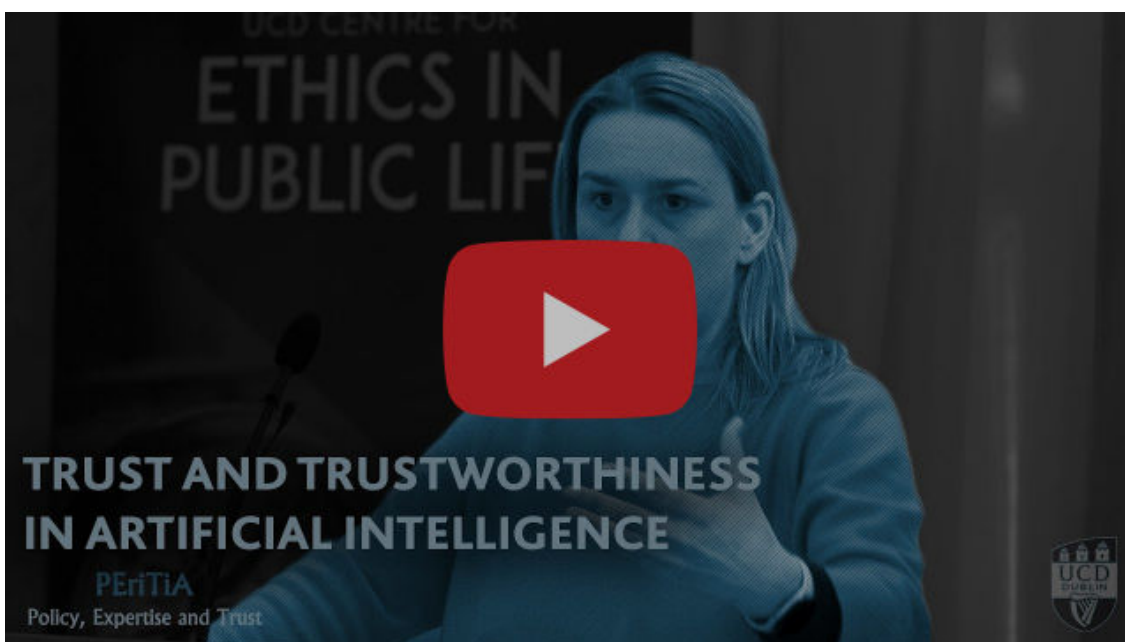
Explore our [resources page](#)



Check out our [events](#)

## Where it all started...

If you missed our kick-off event (as the [Royals](#) narrowly did), you can watch the [keynotes](#) thanks to our partners from [University College Dublin](#). Visit our [multimedia page](#) for more videos and podcasts on policy, expertise and trust.



## COVID-19 and Trust in Experts

PERITIA investigators have participated in the press, TV, webinars, podcasts, and social media to help you understand the pandemic's impact on trust in expertise. Our [list of contributions](#) keeps growing and growing. We have selected a few highlights for you:

- **The revenge of the experts? Wait, not yet.** As people watched and listened to scientists all over the news, many expected a backlash against the demagogues who attacked science in recent times. But **declaring a 'win' for science may prove premature**, argues PERITIA's lead investigator [Maria Baghramian](#) (UCD) in [this article](#). For an in-depth exploration of how trust is evolving during this crisis, listen to [this podcast](#) with our colleague [Bobby Duffy](#) (King's College).
- **Ask a philosopher!** In the turmoil of this pandemic, many questions emerged and remained largely unanswered. Philosophers at the UCD Centre for Ethics in Public Life stepped in to respond to [ethical and philosophical uncertainties](#).
- **How can behavioural science help the COVID-19 response?** Economist [Liam Delaney](#) from UCD's Geary Institute has compiled a great set of academic [resources](#) on COVID-19 and behavioural science. In this podcast, he additionally provides some clues on [how we act](#) in times of great uncertainty. More on how to use social and behavioural science to support the COVID-19 pandemic response can be found in these articles from [Cass R. Sunstein](#) and others ([here](#) and [here](#)).
- **Transparency, evidence, and policymaking.** Governments have repeatedly claimed that they are led by science during this pandemic. But **how does the decision-making process**

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Science joined this [online panel](#) to discuss the UK government's response to the coronavirus outbreak.

- **Do we really want things to go back to normal after COVID-19?** Philosopher and chair of the PERITIA Advisory Board [Onora O'Neill](#) shares her thoughts on the new norms awaiting us in post-Corona times in [this op-ed](#).

## Insights from PERITIA Research

### What can deliberative democracy do for trust in expertise?



Our colleague [Cathrine Holst](#) (University of Oslo) has published “**Deliberative Systems Theory and Citizens’ Use of Online Media: Testing a Critical Theory of Democracy on a High Achiever**”, co-authored with Hallward Moe (University of Bergen). The article focuses on the proper role of experts in democratic deliberation, with an emphasis on social media use and debate. [Learn more](#)

**PERITIA's Citizen Fora.** PERITIA will investigate how deliberative democracy can help build trust in expertise and put its research into practice in a series of **citizen fora, face-to-face encounters between experts and citizens**. [David Farrell](#) (UCD) will be advising the work by our partners Sense about Science, ALLEA, the Polish Academy of Sciences, and the American University of Armenia in the third phase of the project. Start learning about it by watching his keynote on Ireland's experiments in citizen assemblies.



## Upcoming events

### Trust in Expertise in a Changing Media Landscape

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## Social Indicators of Trust in Experts

International Workshop

Paris, 3-4 June 2021

[Learn more](#)

## Meet the PERITIA team



[Learn more about who we are](#)

## Behind the scenes



University College Dublin  
Ireland's Global University

The University College Dublin is the coordinator of PERITIA and is involved in the project's

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Our gratitude for making PERITIA possible goes to our lead investigator [Maria Baghramian](#), Professor of American Philosophy at UCD. In [this interview](#), she explains the origins of PERITIA and why we need to explore the role of expertise in democratic governance.

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## Our science communication corner

### Playing with the dark side?

The [Bad News game](#) is the latest trendy science communication project designed to understand the strategies of "fake news makers" and how they provoke, cheat, and sometimes win. We highly recommend taking five minutes to play. Thanks to Scienseed for the hint!



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### Did you know...?

#### What urban foxes can teach us about trust

Who would have thought that urban foxes could teach us so much about the importance of our capacity to trust for our evolution as human beings? PERITIA's advisory board member Cass R. Sunstein connects the dots in this intriguing [article](#).



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