

## ABSTRACT

My Poster aims to take up the disinformation problem by analysing the relationship between *secrecy* appended to some of the key terms of the contracts the EU Commission entered with some “Big Pharma” companies to procure Covid-19 vaccines, and *transparency*, which should guide the European Institutions’ actions.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the EU Commission entered into some Advance Purchase Agreements with several pharmaceutical companies for the purchase of vaccine doses. However, these contracts were made subject to some confidentiality clauses that still prevent their disclosure. Although these clauses are deemed *per se* legitimate, the barriers to public access to those APAs have fomented the circulation of fake news regarding their contents. Transparency is indeed closely linked to public trust: trust on which depends the outcome of vaccination campaigns.

Moreover, the contracts’ secrecy does not allow adequate “fact checking” against the fake news, *de facto* creating a vacuum of information easily filled by conspiracy theories and misinformation.

The Poster also focuses on the European citizens’ right to access the Institutions’ acts, which can be limited, *ex art. 4* of EC Regulation 1049/2001, if it is aimed at documents containing confidential commercial information. That restriction, however, is itself limited by an overriding public interest in the disclosure of such documents.

Therefore, the Poster ends with an “open question”: *i.e.*, whether the need to counteract fake news by effective and timely fact-checking activities could be considered as an overriding public interest and thus, e.g., forcing the full publication of such vaccine supply contracts.

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Date

11/04/2022

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Benedetta Barocci". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and a long, sweeping underline.