

Speakers' Short Bios



Zlatogor Minchev is the founder and president of the Secure Digital Future 21 expert forum (since 2017). An “Associate Professor” on “Automation & Control” at the Institute of ICT, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (since 2010); Part-time “Associate Professor” (2011) at Operations Research, Probabilities & Statistics Department, Institute of Mathematics & Informatics Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. IT for Security Department Head (since 2016); Holds a PhD degree on Cybernetics & Robotics. Director of Joint Training Simulation & Analysis Center (since 2007), organizing and conducting research in the fields of: cybersecurity, crisis & emergency management, defence planning & assessment. Special accent is also given to: future threats analysis, modelling and forecasting; human factor response psycho-physiological monitoring and stimulation; Distributed CAX in mixed cyber-physical realities. For his twenty years research carrier, Dr. Minchev is an author and co-author of plenty scientific publications; successful participant in numerous scientific projects with national & international funding on expert and managing positions. Visiting professor on cybersecurity for: Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, Gelişim Üniversitesi, İstanbul; multiaspect security problems: University of National & World Economy – Sofia, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies. Honourable member of e-Sigurnost Association (2017) & Association of the Officers in the Reserve “Atlantic” (2010). Awarded and distinguished with numerous prestigious national and international awards. Well-known and publicly recognized expert on security & cybersecurity issues.



Max Kilger is a Professor in Practice in the Department of Information Systems & Cyber Security at the University of Texas at San Antonio and Director of the Master in Data Analytics Program. He is also the Academic Director of the UTSA IC CAE Critical Technology Studies Program which prepares young people for a career in the Intelligence Community. Max received his Ph.D. in Social Psychology from Stanford University. He has over 20 years of experience in the area of information security concentrating on the social and psychological factors motivating malicious online actors, hacking groups and cyberterrorists. Max has written and co-authored a number of journal articles, book chapters and books in the national security space on profiling, motivations of malicious online actors, the social structure of the hacking community, cyberviolence, factors related to civilian attacks on critical infrastructure and the emergence of cyberterrorism. He co-authored the popular book ‘Reverse Deception: Organized Cyberthreat Counter-Exploitation’ and has co-authored his second book ‘Deception in the Digital Age’. He is a founding and board member of The HoneyNet Project – a not-for-profit international information security organization with 50 teams of experts in 42 countries working for the public good. Max was a member of a National Academy of Engineering committee

dedicated to make recommendations for combating terrorism. He is a member of a multinational instructional team for a NATO counterterrorism course and a faculty member of the Cyber Center for Security and Analytics. He is also on the Scientific Board of the graduate interdisciplinary cyber security program at LUISS Guido Carli University in Rome, Italy. Max is a frequent national and international speaker to industry, federal law enforcement, the military and intelligence communities.



Maria Constantinescu is an Associate Professor at the NATO PfP Training Center DRESMARA, under the National Defense University Carol I, Romania, associate expert at the Euro-Atlantic Resilience Center in the field of financial resilience and a member of the Advisory Board of the Maritime Cyber security Center of Excellence. She has PhD in International Economic Relations from the Academy of Economic Studies and is a graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School of Monterey, California and the NATO School in Oberammergau, with an expertise in international relations, defense planning and defense resources management and counter-threat finance. Her research focus is on hybrid warfare, resilience, cyber security and cryptocurrencies. Her recent publications include the book Cryptocurrencies – a technology and economic approach and their impact on national security and International finance in a globalized world – security and defense implications.



Horatiu Moga has a PhD in engineering sciences from Transilvania” University Brasov. Contributor at Center of Excellence in Cyber Security and Affiliated Professor at Risk Management and Cyb Security Master Degree Program of the Maritime University of Constanta, Romania. Senior Cyber Expert for National Center for Financial Information and National Agency for Fiscal Administration, Braşov. His research interests are mostly focused in: cybersecurity of critical infrastructure, cyber warfare, international relations, AI, ML & computer science.



Ruslan Demura is a security architect. He has a Master’s Degree on cyber security from National Aerospace University “Kharkiv Aviation Institute” - KhAI, Ukraine. His research work is related to threats detection, analyzing vast amounts of data to identify multiple vulnerabilities for additional prediction and prevention of cyberattacks. His present focus lies in safeguarding digital landscapes, using my strengths in threat analysis and adaptation to stay one step ahead of cybercriminals. Gives some classes on “Social Media Security” at KhAI. Future Research Directions are related to

VPNs in UAVs.



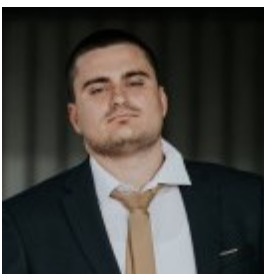
Emanouil Atanassov is a Professor and Deputy Director at Institute of ICT (IICT), Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. He has played a key role in the establishment of the High Performance Computing Centre at IICT, where two supercomputers in Top500 list (initially Avitohol in 2015, and then HEMUS in 2023) were integrated in European projects and initiatives, dealing with HPC and Open Science. Achieved substantial theoretical and practical results related to the low-discrepancy sequences of Halton and Sobol and their applications. He received the scientific award Pitagor for contributions in supercomputing applications and analysis of Big Data.

Received the special prize for an outstanding solution at the International Mathematical Olympiad in Australia.



Stanislav Atanasov has carved a significant niche in cybersecurity and IT education across Bulgaria, distinguishing himself through leadership in digital security initiatives and academic contributions. His role as a head of Cyber Range at the Digital Information Hub "Trakia" demonstrates a commitment to enhancing cyber security training infrastructure, reflecting an understanding of the evolving digital threats landscape. In academia, where Stanislav is serving dual role both as a PhD Candidate,

and a lecturer in cybersecurity, Stanislav's courses bridge practical technical skills with theoretical knowledge, preparing students for real-world challenges. His involvement in open-source communities and continuous skill enhancement underscores dedication to technological advancement and cybersecurity awareness, marking him as a key figure in both professional and educational circles.



Stefan Tafkov is a young researcher in the field of cybersecurity and digital forensics. Holds a MSc degree on "Software Technologies" with specialization in AI from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" where he is now also an invited lecturer on the problems of cybersecurity. Assist. Tafkov is presently doing his PhD thesis work in the field of Artificial Intelligence application for ransomware smart development & protection at IT for Security Department, Institute of ICT, Bulgarian Academy of

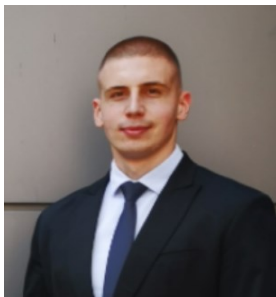
Sciences. Longstanding junior collaborator of Joint Training Simulation & Analysis Center, Institute of ICT, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Entrepreneur in the computer & network security area. Author & co-author of several scientific papers in the field of cybersecurity. Holds various national & international distinguishes and awards for his achievements.



Stiliyan Georgiev is a Senior Software Developer at Visteon Corporation – ADAS Department focusing smart sensors data processing. “Associate Professor” from Technologies and Systems for Protection Department at the Institute of Metal Science, Equipment and Technologies “Acad. Angel Balevski” with Hydro-Aerodynamics Centre. Founding member and International Advisory Board member of Secure Digital Future 21 Forum in the area of “Future Smart Technologies & AI”. Author & co-author of numerous scientific publications in the field of human factor biometric & cognitive analysis, smart sensor systems security applications and neuromarketing. PhD on Engineering Sciences; graduates the Physics Department of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”. Awarded with several scientific and technological distinguishes for his practical cognitive & physiological analytical results and security system developments, including the British Council FameLab competition.



Tiana Kaleeva has obtained a PhD in “Economics and Management (Defence and Security)”, Master’s degree in “Economics of Security and Defense” and a Bachelor’s degree in “Finance and Accounting in English”. Her research is focused on applying behavioral analysis in the form of monitoring systems for security purposes, mainly regarding the protection of critical infrastructure’s facilities. She was a participant in the “National Scientific Program – Security and Defense”, as well as a member of two university scientific projects. Currently, she is an expert in Cyber4All Start Project in line with the European Digital Innovation Hub “Trakia”. She has more than 10 publications in the field of security and defense.



Denis Petkov has a background in academic relations, cybersecurity and youth community-building. He currently serves as a Senior Expert in Academic Relations at the European Digital Innovation Hub “Trakia”. He also holds leadership roles at the University of Plovdiv “Paisii Hilendarski” as a Chairman of the Faculty Student Council and a member of the Control Board of the institution. His educational background includes a Master’s degree in “Cybersecurity” and Bachelor’s degree in “National Security Policy Studies”.