

Question for written answer E-013253/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Charles Tannock (ECR)

Subject: VP/HR - Eastern Strategy Communication Team

Following discussions in the Council, it was announced in the conclusions of its meeting on 20 March 2015 that there was a need to 'challenge Russia's ongoing disinformation campaigns' and the High Representative was asked to establish an action plan on strategic communication. On 1 September 2015, the Eastern Strategy Communication Team was officially established in response to this request.

It is reported that the Russian Federation spends approximately USD 1 billion on promoting Kremlin policies and narratives within Russia and a further USD 500 million outside of it. The East StratCom Team has been tasked with promoting EU policies and values, with a particular emphasis on the benefits and day-to-day effects of those. It will work across six former Soviet countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine – as well as Russia itself.

1. What budget has been allocated to the East StratCom Team?
2. Does the VP/HR consider the allocated budget sufficient to enable the team to effectively counter the efforts of the Russian Federation in this regard?
3. What plans are there, if any, for the team to cooperate with similar initiatives launched by NATO, such as its Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga for example?