
EU needs to increase its resilience to Russian propaganda, say MEPs

MEPs sounded the alarm about Russia's propaganda influence on EU countries, and suggested strengthening an EU strategic communication team, in a topical debate on Wednesday.

Kremlin-orchestrated leaks, fake news, disinformation campaigns and cyber-attacks against the EU and its member states have all increased since the war in Ukraine, stressed MEPs in a debate with Security Union Commissioner Sir Julian King. They highlighted Russian meddling in Brexit, but also in recent elections in France, Germany and Spain.

MEPs regretted the EU's limited response, noting that the EU's tiny 14-strong strategic communication team is striving to counteract Russian propaganda tools, such as Sputnik or Russia Today, that have a billion euro backing.

To improve EU resilience to these tools, MEPs called for measures to improve media literacy, raise awareness, promote independent and investigative journalism, and revise the EU audiovisual directive so as to mandate national regulators to enforce zero tolerance of hate speech.

They also stressed the need to improve the transparency of media ownership and funding of political parties and their campaigns. As social media are becoming the main news source for many, they should abide by the same rules other media, added some MEPs.

Commissioner King noted that Russia's military doctrine and generals regard false data and destabilising propaganda as a legitimate tool of the armed forces. He welcomed MEPs' suggestions to strengthen EU strategic communication team and said that the Commission will table a strategy on fake news in the spring.

You can watch the registered debate via [Plenary on demand](#)

Click on the name of the speaker to replay individual statements.

Sandra KALNIETE (EPP, LV) – opening remarks

Monika PANAYOTOVA (Council)

Julian KING (Commission)

Esteban GONZÁLEZ PONS (EPP, ES)

Liisa JAAKONSAARI (S&D, FI)

Roberts ZĪLE (ECR, LV)

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