

**FORM FOR TABLING A QUESTION FOR  
ORAL ANSWER WITH DEBATE (Rule 136)**

<b>Select only one addressee:</b>	
<b>COUNCIL</b>	
<b>COMMISSION</b>	
<b>VICE-PRESIDENT / HIGH REPRESENTATIVE</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>AUTHOR(S):</b>	INGE committee
<b>SUBJECT:</b> (please specify)	Foreign interference in democratic processes
<b>TEXT:</b>	
<p>European and General elections in the Member States are at the heart of democratic processes in the European Union. Foreign interference and disinformation are a particular threat to our democracies in this regard, in particular since the rapid growth of online campaigning put the integrity of elections under threat. The EEAS StratCom Task Forces have proven a very valuable tool to screen, address, and counter disinformation. However, its mandate lacks strategic vision and is rather limited in view of the challenges that include, inter alia, opaque financing of political parties in the EU from third-country sources. Moreover, the need to coordinate with the Commission and the Member States, in particular in view of protecting the resilience of electoral processes, requires more determined and horizontal actions. In his confirmation hearing, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the European Commission expressed his willingness to review the organisation of the StratCom Task Forces to improve their ability to tackle disinformation. He also underlined the need to move to qualified majority decisions for sanctions.</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What should be the areas to consider when strategically specifying the EEAS StratCom Task Forces mandate and what measures should be taken to ensure the allocation of appropriate resources to meet an extended mandate? In particular, how will the High Representative / Vice-President strengthen the EU's abilities to monitor and counter interference?</li> <li>2. How has the High Representative / Vice-President organised the work in the Commission and EEAS to ensure an effective coordination between different administrative structures, so that there are no loopholes or gaps in the protection of the democratic processes of the EU against foreign interference and hybrid attacks operated from third countries. How could the fight against foreign interference best be mainstreamed in the EU's external action service and in line with the initiatives to be taken within the European Democracy Action Plan as a horizontal priority across all Commission DGs?</li> <li>3. How does the High Representative / Vice-President plan to improve the toolbox for sanctions on foreign actors to raise costs for foreign interference and spreading disinformation? What actions did he take to change the Council's procedure for adopting sanctions? What impact has the unanimity procedure on the EU's ability to act forcefully against foreign interference?</li> </ol>	