BEHIND THE INFLUENCE

COUNTER DISINFORMATION NETWORK
2026 CONFERENCE

28th September — Brussels

Alliance 4Europe

Counter Disinformation Network

Plenary — Guichet Room

09:00-09:30

Opening Remarks — Behind the Influence

- **Omri Preiss**, Managing Director, Alliance4Europe
- **Saman Nazari**, Lead Researcher, Alliance4Europe

09:30-10:45

Where FIMI Meets Radicalisation

Chatham House rules apply.

- **Dr. Virginie Andre**, Special Adviser in Strategic Communications, EU Knowledge Hub for the Prevention of Radicalisation
- **Rositsa Dzhekova**, Expert, EU Knowledge Hub for the Prevention of Radicalisation | Center for the Study of Democracy
- **Dr. Joana Deus De Pereira**, Expert, EU Knowledge Hub for the Prevention of Radicalisation | Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Europe
- **Dr. Vivian Gerrand**, Associate Lecturer, Australian National University (online)
- **Moderator: Richard Chalk,** Expert, REOC Communications

10:45-11:15

Coffee break

11:15-12:15

Business Under Influence: How Companies Can Defend Democratic Resilience?

- **Joel Boehme**, Campaign Manager, Clean Heat Europe (European Heat Pump Association)
- **Adrian Hiel**, Director, Electrification Alliance
- **Aramis Zinke**, Senior Strategic Communications Officer, WindEurope
- **Ioana Petcu**, Public Affairs Director, E-Mobility Europe
- **Moderator: Sarah Azau**, Communications & Events Director, European Heat Pump Association

12:15-12:30

Morning Wrap-Up / Key Takeaways

Side Events — Royale Room

09:45-11:00

Tools in Action: Tackling Influence Operations

A hands-on side session where organisations demonstrate tools and methodologies for countering influence operations - monitoring, detection, analysis, investigation and response - with direct access to the developers and practitioners behind them.

- **Tomáš Kriššák,** Senior Strategic Communications Consultant, Gerulata Technologies
- **Theo Queva**, Managing Director, Meltwater
- **Moderator: Iveta Kupková**, Independent Hybrid Threat Expert

11:15-12:30

By invitation only, Chatham House rules apply.

Fojo Roundtable - The Amplification Dilemma. What can FIMI Reporting Learn from Terrorism Coverage?

A closed-door roundtable of journalists, editors and FIMI investigators exploring how to report on influence operations accurately without amplifying them, drawing on lessons from terrorism reporting to identify practical principles for future guidelines.

- **Keynote: Andreas Jahrehorn Önnefors**, Project Manager & Researcher, Fojo Media Institute/Fojo Verify, Linnaeus University, Sweden (online)
- **Richard Chalk,** Expert, REOC Communications
- **Moderator & Speaker: Dr. Virginie Andre**, Special Adviser in Strategic Communications, EU Knowledge Hub for the Prevention of Radicalisation

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12:30-13:30 Lunch

13:30-14:40

European Launch of the Disrupt Toolkit

- **Saman Nazari,** Lead Researcher, Alliance4Europe
- **Rositsa Dzhekova**, Director of the Democracy Shield Task Force, Centre for the Study of Democracy
- **Sorin Ioniță**, President Expert Forum (EFOR)
- **Jakub Szymik**, Founder & Executive Director, CEE Digital Democracy Watch
- **Moderator: Olga Wałkuska**, Cybersecurity Awareness Specialist, NASK

14:40-15:00

Q&A — Disrupt and the European Democracy Shield

15:00-15:30 Coffee break

15:30-17:00

Behind the Investigations: Influence Operations and Elections

- **Bjørn Ihler,** Founder & CEO, Revontulet (online)
- **Jerry Yu**, Analyst Lead, Digital Intelligence Team, DoubleThink Lab (online)
- **Julia Smirnova,** Senior Researcher, Center für Monitoring, Analyse und Strategie (CeMAS)
- **Maria Voltsichina**, OSINT Researcher, Alliance4Europe
- **Robert van der Noordaa**, Hybrid Walfare and Troll Farm Expert, Trollrensics
- **Moderator: Peter Benzoni**, Senior Research Manager, Institute for Strategic Dialogue

17:00-17:15

Closing Remarks

- **Omri Preiss**, Managing Director, Alliance4Europe
- **Saman Nazari**, Lead Researcher, Alliance4Europe

Side Events — Royale Room

15:00-15:50

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Democracy Shield: How will it deliver?

A closed-door working session examining what the European Democracy Shield and its new Centre mean in practice for implementation, funding and civil society involvement, doubling as the kick-off of the Friends of the Democracy Shield Working Group to set shared priorities and next steps.

- **Moderator: Omri Preiss**, Managing Director, Alliance4Europe

16:00-17:00

By invitation only, Chatham House rules apply.

Gender Under Influence: Building a Coordinated Response to Gendered Influence Operations

A closed-door roundtable of researchers, investigators and practitioners examining how gender is exploited as a target, narrative and vector in influence operations, and identifying evidence, capability and coordination gaps.

Keynotes:

- **Lucina Di Meco**, Co-Founder, #ShePersisted (online)
- **Catherine Van de Heyning,** Professor, University of Antwerp | Expert, Advisory Committee of the UN Human Rights Council

- **Dr. Joana Deus De Pereira**, Expert, EU Knowledge Hub for the Prevention of Radicalisation, Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Europe
- **Galen Lamphere-Englund**, Co-Founder & Executive Director, Extremism & Gaming Research Network (EGRN) (online)
- **Moderator: Iveta Kupková**, Independent Hybrid Threat Expert

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Meet Our Speakers

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Special Adviser in Strategic Communications
EU Knowledge Hub for the Prevention of Radicalisation

Sarah Azau
Communications & Events Director
European Heat Pump Association

Joel Boehme
Campaign Manager
Clean Heat Europe (EHPA)

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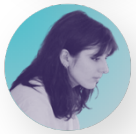

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Our Supporters

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Fojo Linnaeus University

gerulata

Meltwater