

BEHIND THE INFLUENCE

COUNTER DISINFORMATION NETWORK
2026 CONFERENCE

28th September — Brussels



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 Dzhhekova**, 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
- ✚ **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 Önnfors**, 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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Plenary — Guichet Room

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 Walkuska**, 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 Warfare and Troll Farm Expert, Trollensics
- 🎤 **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

Democracy Shield: How will it deliver?

By invitation only, Chatham House rules apply.

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

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

By invitation only, Chatham House rules apply.

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



Dr. Virginie Andre

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)



Peter Benzoni

Senior Research Manager
Institute for Strategic Dialogue



Richard Chalk

REOC Communications



Dr. Joana Deus De Pereira

Expert
EU Knowledge Hub for the Prevention of
Radicalisation, RUSI Europe



Lucina Di Meo

Co-Founder
#ShePersisted



Rositsa Dzhekova

Director of the Democracy Shield Task Force
Centre for the Study of Democracy



Dr. Vivian Gerrand

Associate Lecturer
Australian National University



Adrian Hiel

Director
Electrification Alliance



Bjørn Ihler

Founder & CEO
Revontulet



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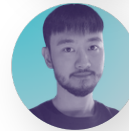
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