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LSEMUN 2026

EUROPEAN COMMITTEES

**The EU Foreign Interference Act: Promoting
Transparency and Resilience in Democratic and
Economic Processes**

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Directors' Welcome

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to LSE MUN 2026 simulation of the Council of the EU and the European Parliament!

For the duration of the conference, you will step into the roles of Foreign Affairs Ministers and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to tackle one of the most pressing challenges facing the EU today: foreign interference in democratic and economic processes.

This unique simulation aims to mirror the real-world dynamics of EU policymaking, where the Council (representing Member States) and the Parliament (representing citizens) must negotiate, compromise, and collaborate to adopt legislation proposed by the European Commission.

Your task will be to draft, debate, and adopt (or not) the EU Foreign Interference Act, a landmark Commission proposal aimed at safeguarding the Union's sovereignty, transparency, and resilience against threats like disinformation, covert political financing, and economic coercion.

As you prepare, remember that you are not just representing a country or a political group. You are embodying the complexities, priorities, and challenges of your assigned role. Therefore, keep in mind your decisions will shape the future of the EU's response.

We encourage you to dive deep into your role, engage with the nuances of the topic, and collaborate across the two sub-committees. This is your opportunity to experience the art of EU policymaking.

On behalf of the entire team, we wish you an engaging and rewarding simulation.

May this EU Committee simulation be a memorable experience!

Your Committee's Directors, Clothilde & Alvin

Your Committee's Chairs, Daniel & Syméon



Introduction to the Dais

Directors of the Council of the EU

Dear delegates,

My name is **Clothilde**, and it's a real pleasure to be part of this exciting dual-structure committee at LSEMUN 2026! I am currently enrolled in the Double Degree Binational English Program between Hong Kong Baptist University and Sciences Po Bordeaux, majoring in Global and China Studies. Since 2022, I have been participating in MUN conferences across the Asian and European circuits, traveling the world and meeting incredible individuals. As such, I cannot wait to meet all of you in our simulation!

Dear future EU ministers and MPs,

My name is **Syméon**, I am currently on exchange year at UCL alongside a dual master's degree in EU law and languages at Paris Pantheon-Assas University. After having participated in numerous MUN abroad, it is a great honour to chair this wonderful EU Council Committee with my fellow co-chair Clothilde! Together we are committed to making this unique MEU at LSE MUN 2026 a memorable experience. A few surprises await you... but let's keep the suspense alive for now, we look forward to welcoming you very soon!

Your Council's Director and Chair, Clothilde & Syméon

Directors of the European Parliament

Greetings, delegates!

My name is **Alvin**, and I'm a History and Politics student at the University of Cambridge. Although born and raised in Sweden, I have also lived in Belgium and Germany. I've been doing MUN since 2022, but my initial entry into the world of political simulations came through the European Youth Parliament back in 2019. It's therefore a pleasure to return to the familiar terrain of EU simulations. I look forward to meeting all of you in Londinium!



Hello delegates!

My name's **Daniel**, and I'm a History and International Relations student at LSE. I'm originally from Canada, having lived in both Calgary and Ottawa. I've participated in various MUN simulations spanning Canada, the United States, and now the United Kingdom. Outside of MUN, you can probably find me competing in pub quizzes and listening to Taylor Swift's albums. I can't wait to meet all of you in the European Parliament!

Your Parliament's Director and Chair, Alvin & Daniel



Topic Introduction

In today's interconnected world, European democracies face unprecedented threats from foreign actors seeking to undermine our political systems, manipulate public opinion, and exploit economic vulnerabilities. From Russian disinformation campaigns targeting elections to Chinese economic coercion pressuring member states, from cyberattacks on critical infrastructure to covert political financing distorting democratic processes – these challenges require a coordinated, principled, and effective European response. At the heart of the issue lies the challenge of protecting the European institutions from sophisticated foreign interference while preserving the fundamental values that define Europe.

The proposed EU Foreign Interference Act (provided in a separate document) represents the EU's most ambitious attempt to increase transparency in political financing and lobbying, strengthen resilience against cyber threats and disinformation, ensure accountability through targeted sanctions and robust whistleblower protections, and close the legal loopholes that have allowed foreign interference to persist within its democratic systems. This is not a traditional crisis committee; you are participating in a joint simulation of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, operating under the ordinary legislative procedure (OLP), the real-world mechanism through which most EU laws are negotiated, amended, and adopted.



Introduction to the Committee

The Council of the European Union

The Council of the European Union (hereinafter referred to as “the Council”) constitutes, alongside the European Parliament, one of the two principal legislative institutions of the European Union. It represents the governments of the Member States and operates as a forum in which national ministers adopt legislation and coordinate policies at the Union level. The Council’s configuration varies according to the policy domain under consideration; ministers responsible for the relevant portfolio at the national level convene to deliberate and decide on legislative and strategic matters (European Union, n.d.-a). In the present simulation, participants will sit within the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC), which gathers the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the 27 Member States to shape and implement the Union’s external action. Although the real FAC comprises all Member States, this simulation focuses on **15 key states** for reasons of manageability and strategic representation.

Within the EU’s institutional framework, the Council performs several core functions that are particularly salient in the context of legislative negotiations. First, it defines and articulates the political priorities of the Union, ensuring that legislative initiatives remain aligned with the strategic interests and constitutional sensitivities of the Member States. Second, it provides political guidance to the European Commission regarding the scope, ambition, and feasibility of proposed legislation. Third, under the ordinary legislative procedure, the Council acts as co-legislator with the European Parliament, engaging in negotiations, often through trilogues (outlined in the RoP below), to reach a compromise text that is both legally robust and politically acceptable across diverse national contexts (European Union, n.d.-b). In this respect, the Council’s role is not merely reactive but constitutive of the final legislative outcome.

The European Parliament

The European Parliament (EP) is the only directly elected institution of the European Union, representing approximately 446 million citizens across 27 Member States. Its members (MEPs) are elected by universal suffrage for five-year terms and are organised not by nationality but by transnational political groups structured around shared ideological orientations (European Parliament, n.d.-a). This supranational organization distinguishes the EP from most national parliaments and reinforces its role as a vehicle for pan-European political contestation. In this simulation, the Parliament is composed of 25 MEPs distributed among eight political groups (outlined below), each advancing distinct policy priorities, strategic objectives, and normative red lines.



As co-legislator under the ordinary legislative procedure, the European Parliament exercises significant powers of scrutiny, amendment, and oversight. It is tasked with examining legislative proposals in detail to ensure clarity, enforceability, and compliance with foundational EU values, including democracy, transparency, and respect for fundamental rights as enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) (European Union, 2012). The Parliament may propose amendments aimed at strengthening or recalibrating the substance of the Act and must construct cross-party coalitions to secure a majority vote in plenary. Furthermore, it holds both the Commission and the Council politically accountable by demanding evidence-based justifications, impact assessments, and proportionality analyses for key provisions. Through these functions, the Parliament contributes not only to the technical refinement of legislation but also to its democratic legitimacy within the Union's constitutional order.

Political Groups and Coalition Dynamics

In the European Parliament, political groups – not national delegations – drive the legislative process. These transnational alliances shape the EU's response to foreign interference, each bringing distinct priorities and strategies to the debate.

The European People's Party (EPP), associated with the colour light blue, is the largest center-right group. It supports strong but balanced measures against foreign interference, careful not to harm business interests (EPP, 2026). They typically seek middle-ground solutions and form coalitions with the Socialists and Democrats (S&D) or Renew Europe (RE). Some national parties making up this group include Germany's Christian Democratic Union, Spain's People's Party, and Poland's Civic Coalition (ibid.).

The Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), associated with the colour red, is the second-largest group. It prioritises workers' rights and democratic resilience (S&D, 2026). They push for transparency and protections but often clash with EPP over civil liberty concerns. Some national parties making up this group include Italy's Democratic Party, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, and the German Social Democratic Party (ibid.).

Renew Europe (RE) is associated with the colour yellow. This centrist liberal group focuses on innovation and civil liberties. They advocate for tech-based solutions but resist censorship, often acting as swing voters (Renew Europe, 2026). Some national parties making up this group include France's Renaissance, the Dutch People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, and Ireland's Fianna Fail (ibid.).

The Greens/EFA, associated with the colour green, emphasise climate policies, human rights and political transparency (Greens-efa, 2026). They sometimes align with groups like S&D but prioritizing their core principles over political pragmatism. Their votes can be crucial for final legislation details. Some national parties making



up this group include the German Greens, French Greens, and the Republican Left of Catalonia (ibid.).

On the political right, the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) and Patriots for Europe (Pfe) represent Eurosceptic nationalism and conservatism. These political groups emphasise national sovereignty and are highly skeptical of deeper EU-wide solutions, believing that the EU should reflect a community of sovereign nation-states instead of a system of supranational institutions (Patriots for Europe, 2026). The ECR, associated with a shade of medium blue, is a soft-Eurosceptic group that is open to pragmatic reforms from within EU institutions (ECR, 2026). Meanwhile, Patriots for Europe, associated with a shade of dark blue, opposes collective EU policymaking, preferring a more confrontational, obstructionist approach. Some national parties making up the ECR include Brothers of Italy, the Swedish Democrats, and Poland's Law and Justice (ibid.). Some national parties making up Patriots for Europe include France's National Rally, Hungary's Fidesz, and the Austrian Freedom Party (Patriots for Europe, 2026).

More radical than ECR and Pfe, the most right-wing of all groups in the European Parliament is Europe of Sovereign Nations (ESN), which was founded after the 2024 European Parliament elections on the initiative of Alternative for Germany (AfD). This was after its old political partners like France's National Rally and Italy's Lega refused to enter a political group with it (Neubert, 2024). This group includes members like Hungary's Our Homeland and the Czech Freedom and Direct Democracy (ESN, 2026).

The Left, associated with the colour dark red, brings a strongly progressive and at times a populist perspective, focusing on corporate accountability, workers' rights, and anti-imperialism (Left, 2026). They occasionally align with Greens and S&D on transparency issues but remain ideologically distinct, especially in the arena of international relations. Some national parties making up this group include France Unbowed, Ireland's Sinn Féin, and Italy's Five Star Movement (ibid.).

Success in the Parliament depends on navigating these group dynamics – building coalitions, trading concessions, and balancing idealism with political reality. The EPP-S&D core often relies on Renew's support for majorities, while groups like Pfe and ESN sometimes disrupt proceedings despite their minority status.

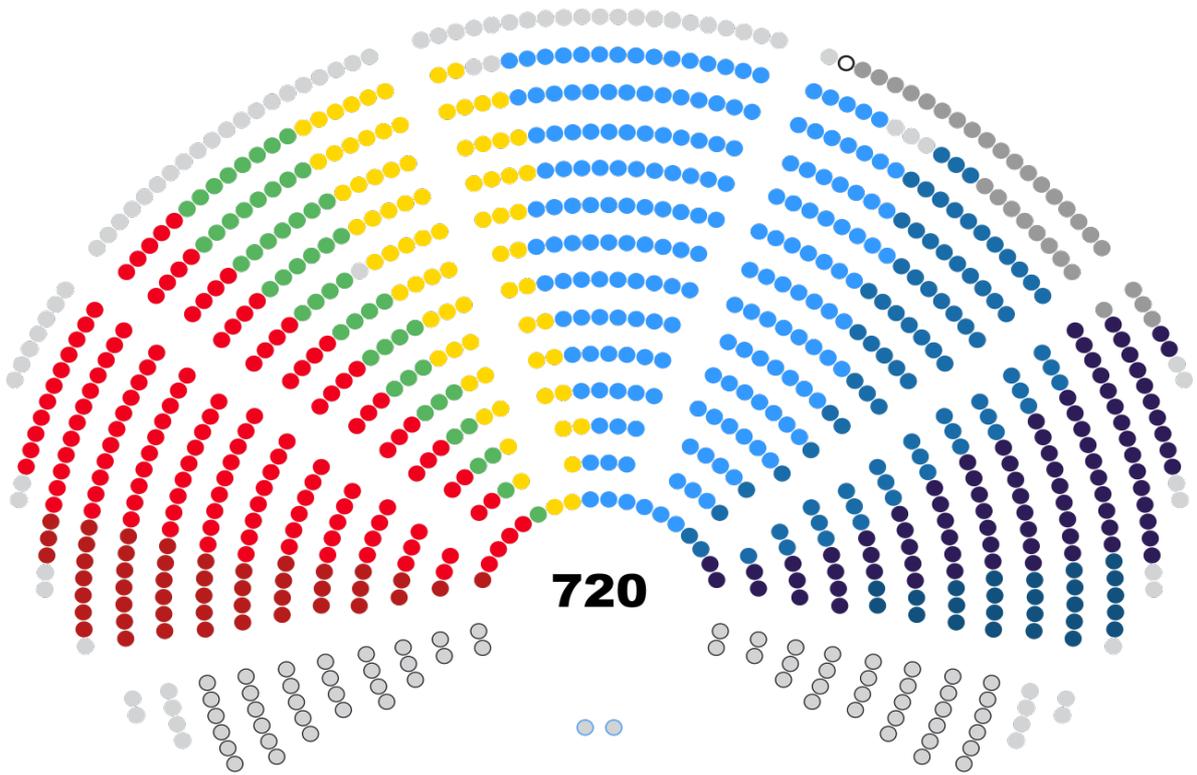


Figure 1 – MEPs of the European Parliament divided by political groups (after the most recent general elections). ([Wikimedia, 2026](#)).



Topic Background

The Threat of Foreign Interference in the EU

Foreign interference is not a new phenomenon, but its scale, sophistication, and impact have grown dramatically in the digital age. Authoritarian regimes, state-sponsored actors, and private entities increasingly seek to influence EU policies, elections, and public opinion through a variety of methods. These threats are multifaceted, targeting everything from democratic processes to economic stability, and they require a comprehensive and coordinated response.

Forms of Foreign Interference

Disinformation and Election Interference

In recent years, disinformation has been a growing concern for European citizens. Data gathered by the European Commission (n.d.), indicates that this shift is reinforced by an increase in the dissemination of disinformation as well as a growing awareness thereof. As a result, 83% of European citizens think that disinformation threatens democracy and 63% of younger Europeans reported encountering fake news more than once a week (ibid.) In 2022, the European Commission responded by presenting the Code of Practice on Disinformation, building on its predecessor from 2018 (Shaping Europe's Digital Future, 2022). Three years later, the Commission and the European Board for Digital Services endorsed the integration of the Code into the broader framework of the Digital Services Act (DSA), which is intended to address illegal content, lack of transparent advertising, and disinformation (ibid.; DSA Observatory, 2026). These legislative measures are only the most recent developments in a longer process dating back to the adoption of the Joint Framework on Countering Hybrid Threats in 2016 (European Commission, n.d.).

These efforts, however well-intended, have not been able to address the fundamental concerns of disinformation and foreign interference, especially in light of recent technological developments, which have rendered previous regulatory instruments inadequate (Flonk, Jachtenfuchs & Obendiek, 2024). AI-driven propaganda and deepfake technologies represent only the most recent developments in this regard, causing further concern over Russian and Chinese foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) operations (Matura, 2025). Although the European External Action Service (EEAS) has recognised this as a threat, there have been limited concrete efforts subsequently in addressing what has become known as the “Three Warfares” – including public opinion warfare, psychological warfare, and legal warfare – in Chinese military writings (ibid.; Mattis, 2018). During the pandemic, cooperation between Russian and Chinese



state-controlled media (including the China Global Television Network, RT, Sputnik News, and the Global Times) has intensified (Matura, 2025). When combined with Sino-Russian dissemination of AI-generated content, fabricated news stories, and deepfake videos, these developments become all the more concerning (ibid.), thus calling for a proactive response from European decision-makers.

Particularly concerning is the proliferation of foreign interference in European elections. An illustrative example is the 2025 presidential elections in Romania, which saw its initial round annulled by the Romanian Constitutional Court, due to evidence of Russian interference and manipulation of social media algorithms (Popescu-Zamfir, 2025). Although these patterns have intensified in recent years, as demonstrated by the 2024 European Parliament Elections, this is not a new development. Already in 2016-18, as diverse countries such as the Netherlands, France, and Sweden experienced substantial electoral interference (Brattberg & Maurer, 2018). Although the 2024 European Parliament resolution on Russian electoral interference sought to address these concerns, challenges remain, as evidenced by the more recent experiences of the 2025 Czech parliamentary elections, which saw considerable disinformation campaigns fueled by Russia (Hartog & Jochecová, 2025). Similarly, at the time when Elon Musk acted as senior advisor to US President Donald Trump, the owner of X (formerly known as Twitter), was accused of using his platform to stir up support for the far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party in the run-up to the 2025 federal elections (Marsh, n.d.; Rau, 2025). This not only indicates the broader context of foreign interference beyond Russia and China, but it also illustrates the blurry nature of the line separating third-country and private sector electoral interference in practice.

Simultaneously, the European Union also has to grapple with foreign interference in the elections of EU candidate countries, most recently in Georgia and Moldova in 2025 (Sikharulidze, 2025; Wethington, 2025). Whether or not these occurrences of interference are recorded on EU territory or in candidate states, the European Union faces continuous challenges in addressing concerns pertaining to manipulation of public opinion by third-countries. Delegates in both the European Parliament and the Council of the EU are encouraged to consider the implications of this at the European level.

Lobbying and Influence Operations

Mirroring the pattern of sustained disinformation and periodic election interference, lobbying and other influence operations have experienced a steady increase over time (see Figure 2). It is important to note, however, that lobbying in itself does not entail malign interference, and that lobbying constitutes an institutionalised and regulated component of EU policymaking (European Parliament, n.d.). This section, and the topic more broadly, does not refer to



lobbying as such, but focuses on lobbying used as a vehicle for foreign state influence.

A key way non-EU states have interfered in the politics of EU states via lobbying and influence operations is through legally grey (or illegal) funding of particular candidates and political parties. There are cases of oligarchs and enterprises connected to the Russian Federation financially supporting eurosceptic and populist parties, funding these movements with the aim of weakening EU unity and bolstering anti-EU narratives. For example, from 2014-2023, France's Rassemblement National (RN) received a financial loan of over from a Czech-Russian Bank, and the party itself announced it paid back over €6 million to this Russian bank in 2023. This loan was alleged to have correlated with political messaging that was amplified by Kremlin-backed media outlets (Chiappa, 2023). In a more prominent example, investigative reporting suggested an October 2018 meeting by associates of Italy's Lega to secure substantial financing from Russian sources, which resulted in an official probe by Italian authorities. Although denied by Lega's leader Matteo Salvini, this meeting allegedly discussed a Russian diesel oil deal, and came with a financial offer potentially as high as €57 million to tie the party to pro-Kremlin interests that would have strengthened the party's anti-EU, sovereigntist stance (Deutsche Welle, 2019). Finally, in terms of foreign influence through the lobbying of individual politicians, in 2024, an AfD Bundestag member, Peter Bystron, saw his parliamentary immunity lifted following accusations of accepting monetary bribes from the sanctioned pro-Kremlin oligarch Martem Marchevsky (Soula & Avgoustidis, 2024). Bystron also had connection to Voice of Europe news-site, which formerly used its headquarters in Prague to disseminate Russian disinformation and paid politicians from various European countries to promote a Russian agenda in Brussels and elsewhere (ibid.).

In some cases, lobbying will take the form of bribes. At the national level, this is illustrated by former French president Nicolas Sarkozy's decision to accept campaign funding from Libya under the rule of Muammar Gaddafi in 2007, which earned the former 5-year prison sentence after the former was found guilty of criminal conspiracy (Jabkhiro, Libert & Melander, 2025). A more recent example at the European level, involves Maximilian Krah, AfD's initial lead candidate in the 2024 EP elections, who has been accused of involvement in corruption and connections to the Chinese government (Blackbourn, 2025). AfD responded by banning him from the EU elections and the German government has subsequently lifted his lawmaker immunity (Connor & Moore, 2025).

Not all corruption scandals involve foreign interference, however. The recent investigation of a corruption case involving Federica Mogherini and Stefano Sannino – both former top EU officials, having served as Vice-President of the Commission and Secretary General of the EEAS, respectively – was identified as a plot by the former to secure additional funding for the College of Europe where she



served as the Rector. Even if the latter case did not involve any foreign actors, however, the incident has sparked further debates in relation to more explicit cases of foreign interference (Wax & Braun, 2025).

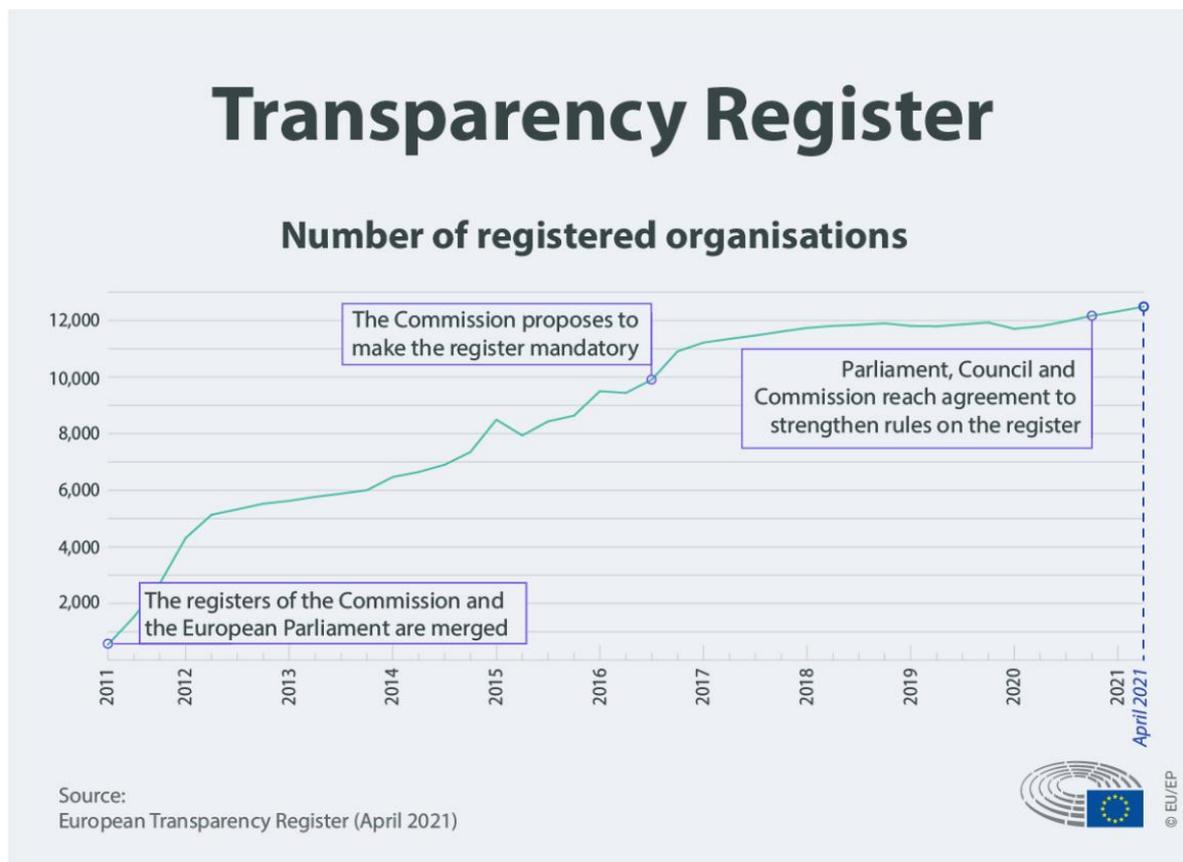


Figure 2 - Number of registered lobbying organisations (European Parliament, 2021).

One of the lobbying cases to receive the most media attention in recent years is the Huawei controversy, which ensued after the Chinese tech giant was accused of engaging in illicit lobbying practices in Europe to extend their 5G mobile network infrastructure in Europe, provoking a temporary ban on Huawei lobbyists (Genovese, 2025). The MEPs accused of accepting bribes from Huawei representatives come from a wide range of EP political groups, including EPP, S&D, and Renew. The ambiguities of the ties between Huawei and the Chinese government further complicate the matter, although US intelligence reports indicate that the company is being funded by Chinese state security (Hawes, 2020; Reuters, 2019). Beyond the opaque nature of CCP-Huawei connections, it is evident that the Chinese government stands to profit through the extension of Huawei business in Europe (Hawes, 2020). In an attempt to phase out Huawei and other Chinese companies promoting what could be framed as dual-use infrastructure, the Commission made a recommendation in 2020, urging member states to take measures to exclude “high-risk vendors” from their 5G internet networks (Sullivan, 2025). However, the situation is made more complicated by the reliance of many European states on



affordable internet infrastructure with some states, including Slovenia, resisting the efforts of the Commission (Kroet, 2024). Overall, the Huawei case illustrates the complex relations between economic lobbying, foreign governments, and Member State interests.

The so-called Qatargate scandal constitutes a final illustrative example. The incident involving allegations of EP officials, lobbyists, and their families accepting gifts and monetary bribes from the governments of Qatar, Morocco, and Mauritania, still remains partially unsolved (Joyner, 2023; Hinds, 2025). What is clear, however, is that the scandal has shaken the foundations of European Union legitimacy, especially due to the connections to the only directly-elected EU body, the European Parliament (Joyner, 2023). Although the Commission has subsequently taken disciplinary measures, dismissing several senior officials – including the former Director-General of the EU’s executive transport department, Henrik Holotei, who had accepted free flights and stays in luxury hotels offered by representatives of the Emirate of Qatar – the root causes of the issue remain (de la Feld, 2026). Despite the 2019 election promises by Ursula von der Leyen to establish an ethics body to encompass the three main EU institutions, no concrete measures have been adopted in this regard (Alemanno, 2023). Similarly, the reform package proposed by EP President Metsola has been criticised for failing short of its intent (Wax, 2023). In light of the Qatargate scandals, as well as subsequent incidents, European decision-makers must consider alternative paths for preserving the legitimacy of the EU institutions.

Economic Coercion and Hybrid Warfare

Besides disinformation campaigns and political lobbying, direct foreign interference has occurred in the form of economic coercion and hybrid warfare against member states of the EU. Hybrid warfare refers to the coordinated use of conventional and non-military tools by state or non-state actors to undermine an adversary’s political cohesion and societal resilience without triggering open armed conflict (Council of the EU, n.d.). Tools include information manipulation, cyberattacks, economic leverage, political interference and covert operations. It is designed to remain below the threshold of full-scale war but still achieve strategic objectives by exploiting vulnerabilities across multiple domains (ibid.).

In the context of European security, economic coercion – including trade restrictions, investment threats, market access manipulation and energy leverage – is a core element of hybrid campaigns aimed at influencing EU policy decisions. For example, in 2021 the People’s Republic of China (PRC) initiated a campaign of sanctions and informal trade barriers against Lithuanian goods and services in response to Lithuania increasing diplomatic ties with the government of Taiwan, which was described as the weaponisation of value chains and a form of political economic pressure with broader EU implications (Hyndle-Hussein & Jakobowski,



2021). In another example, the Russian Federation's repeated reductions and eventual cuts in natural gas supplies to the EU following the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, including sustained Gazprom flow reductions and pipeline disruption, exemplified the use of critical energy export dependency as leverage to influence European policy and cohesion (Gross & Stelzenmüller, 2024).

Cyber espionage and attacks likewise form another major plank of hybrid warfare. The EU has specifically sanctioned individuals and entities over the 2015 cyber-attack on the German Bundestag, in which hackers breached parliamentary systems and stole data, reflecting state-linked hostile cyber operations against European institutions (Council of the EU, 2020). More recent hybrid threat concerns include cyberattacks and influence operations targeting EU election infrastructure or attempting to infiltrate political networks and institutions, as highlighted in EU legislative discussions on Russian espionage and attempts to subvert electoral processes and critical systems (European Parliament, 2024). Such campaigns often combine digital intrusion, espionage and disinformation to extract sensitive intelligence from official networks and to destabilise confidence in democratic processes, consistent with hybrid warfare doctrine.

All the cases outlined above, coupled with the broader Russian attempts to lobby against continued sanctions even after the 2022 ban on Russian lobbyists at the EU institutions (Wheaton, 2022), indicate the diversity of foreign-actor influence operations, from disinformation campaigns to lobbying to economic coercion. It also illustrates the inadequacy of current measures, including the EU Transparency Register (European Commission, n.d.). However, given the centrality of lobbying to the functioning of the EU, the delegates in both chambers must seek pragmatic solutions to address foreign interference in the guise of benign lobbying without impeding on legitimate policy advocacy, which ultimately strengthens the decision-making processes of the Union.

Measures Currently in Place

EU Sanctions Regime

The EU sanctions regime is a key instrument through which the Union addresses foreign interference, ultimately enabling it to defend its sovereignty, institutions, and values under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Sanctions are designed to uphold international law, promote human rights, prevent destabilising actions, and counter external attempts to influence EU affairs (EEAS, 2021). They can be applied autonomously or to implement UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and typically target individuals, entities, or states through measures such as asset freezes, travel bans, arms embargoes, and trade restrictions (EEAS, 2021; Smith & Martin 2023). The EU coordinates sanctions with like-minded



partners to increase their impact, exemplified by measures against Russia following its annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, which aimed to punish aggression, deter interference in neighboring states, and protect EU security (EEAS, 2025; Starcevic, 2026).

However, the sanctions regime is limited by structural and political complexities. Under Article 29 of the Treaty of the European Union, all decisions pertaining to sanctions and the broader CFSP require Member State unanimity, thus effectively granting each state veto power and the ability to delay or block measures (EUR-Lex, n.d.). Hungary has repeatedly obstructed Russian sanctions, tying approval to unrelated concessions like pipeline access or frozen EU funds (Schäffer, 2025; Starcevic, 2026). While legal mechanisms exist to challenge the leverage of veto users, political disagreements among Member States slow enforcement and weaken the EU's capacity to respond effectively to foreign interference (Smith & Martin, 2023; Schäffer, 2025). Despite these challenges, EU sanctions remain a critical diplomatic tool to deter external actors from undermining the Union, though reforms are needed to reduce unanimity bottlenecks and enhance strategic responsiveness. Although reforms to the sanctions regime itself lie beyond the scope of this conference, delegates are encouraged to consider how it can be further integrated within the broader project to promote resilience against foreign interference.

Digital Services Act (DSA)

The Digital Services Act (DSA) is a central instrument in the European Union's effort to promote transparency and prevent misinformation in the digital information space. By imposing enhanced obligations on Very Large Online Platforms (VLOPs) and search engines, the DSA requires companies to identify, assess, and mitigate systemic risks to electoral processes, public debate, and fundamental rights (European Commission, 2023). In particular, platforms must address risks stemming from disinformation campaigns, coordinated inauthentic behaviour, and opaque political advertising – tactics frequently associated with foreign actors seeking to manipulate democratic discourse. The regulation strengthens transparency requirements for algorithmic recommender systems, mandates clearer labelling of political advertising, and enables vetted researchers to access platform data for scrutiny (AlgorithmWatch, 2022). Within the broader democratic resilience framework – alongside initiatives such as the European Democracy Shield – the DSA reflects a shift from voluntary self-regulation to enforceable accountability mechanisms aimed at safeguarding EU democratic integrity (European Movement International, 2025).

However, the DSA's effectiveness against foreign interference depends heavily on consistent enforcement and cross-border cooperation. Its hybrid enforcement structure – combining European Commission oversight with national Digital



Services Coordinators (DSCs) – risks fragmentation, as Member States retain discretion in institutional design and administrative capacity (Mattioli, 2025). Variations in resources, expertise, and political will lead to uneven implementation, undermining the uniform protection of elections and public discourse across the Union. Furthermore, limited methodological guidance on systemic risk assessments raises concerns that platforms could adopt formalistic compliance measures without meaningfully addressing manipulation tactics (AlgorithmWatch, 2022). While the DSA provides a robust legal framework, effectively countering foreign interference will require strengthened coordination, well-resourced supervisory authorities, and sustained political commitment at both EU and national levels (European Commission, 2023; European Movement International, 2025).

The Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR)

The European Union's Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR), effective since 13 July 2023, aims to prevent distortions in the EU internal market caused by financial support from non-EU governments that could be used to exert strategic influence (European Commission, 2023). Unlike domestic State aid rules, which govern EU member subsidies, the FSR targets foreign financial contributions (FFCs) that provide benefits not available on the open market, potentially enabling acquisitions of key companies or securing advantageous positions in public procurement (ibid.).

The FSR establishes mandatory notification thresholds for mergers, acquisitions, and large EU public contracts, requiring disclosure of FFCs above set limits. Its scope covers both subsidies directly benefiting EU activities and broader foreign support that could be transferred internally to EU operations, reflecting the Commission's broad discretion to detect potential distortions (Norton Rose Fulbright, 2026; Clifford Chance, 2026). The Commission assesses distortion through a two-step process: whether the subsidy strengthens a company's competitive position and whether it disrupts market dynamics to the detriment of other operators (ibid). Given that the internal market is the heart of the functioning of the European Union, delegates are encouraged to further consider efforts which could sustain the balance between these economic considerations and the broader concerns pertaining to foreign interference, in order to ensure the long-term resilience of the EU.

European Democracy Action Plan (EDAP)

The European Democracy Action Plan (EDAP), launched by the European Commission in December 2020, seeks to reinforce the resilience of EU democracies against both internal and external threats, including malign foreign influence (European Commission, 2020). The plan is structured around three main pillars: promoting free and fair elections, safeguarding media freedom and pluralism, and countering disinformation (European Commission, 2020; EESC, 2021). Key measures include new legislation on political advertising, revised rules on European



political party financing, initiatives to protect journalists from threats and Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs), and increased transparency of media ownership through tools such as the Media Ownership Monitoring system (European Commission, 2020). By strengthening civil society participation and citizen engagement, the EDAP aims to ensure that democratic debate remains open, informed, and resilient to manipulation by foreign actors or other malign influences (EESC, 2021). Implementation is phased, with monitoring mechanisms designed to assess effectiveness ahead of EU elections, reflecting a proactive approach to safeguarding electoral integrity and public trust (European Commission, 2020; EESC, 2021).

The EDAP also tackles more subtle, systemic threats arising from the digitalisation of political campaigning, often described as the “Influence Industry” (Bashykarla, 2020). Political actors increasingly employ data-driven techniques – micro-targeting, profiling, and analytics of online behavior – to shape voter preferences, sometimes leveraging domestic and foreign data sources (ibid.). This commodification of personal data effectively turns citizens into political assets, creating channels through which foreign actors or private entities can subtly distort electoral outcomes (European Commission, 2020). To counter these risks, the EDAP introduces enhanced oversight, strengthened counter-disinformation measures, and legal accountability frameworks for online platforms, aligned with the Digital Services Act (European Commission, 2020; EESC, 2021). While critics argue that the plan is not fully comprehensive, it represents a critical step toward fortifying EU democracies against foreign interference, and delegates are invited to consider how it can be used as foundation for future measures.

The need of a new Foreign Interference Act (FIA)

In light of the concerns outlined above, and notwithstanding the welcome yet ultimately insufficient measures adopted in recent years at both Union and national level, the European Commission considers that a more coherent, harmonised and legally robust response is required. Fragmented national approaches, divergent enforcement standards, and persistent regulatory gaps have continued to expose the Union’s democratic processes, internal market, and information space to coordinated foreign interference efforts. It is in this context that the Commission proposal (please see the separate committee document) on establishing a transparency and foreign interference regime must be viewed. This proposal for a Foreign Interference Act will serve as the starting point for debate at the upcoming conference, enabling delegates in both committees to propose amendments to the Commission document, which will ultimately be subject to a vote in both chambers following the Ordinary Legislative Procedure (OLP), which is outlined in the rules of procedure below.



Special Rules of Procedure

General Rules

The Council of the EU and European Parliament operate under distinct but interconnected rules of procedure. Understanding these rules is essential for effective negotiation, legislative drafting, and decision-making in this simulation.

For LSEMUN 2026, debate in the European Council and European Parliament will be in accordance with standard Model UN rules of procedure as outlined by London International Model United Nations (with features such as General Speaker's Lists, Moderated Caucuses, and Unmoderated Caucuses).

In our committee, delegates will submit amendments to a pre-existing legislative proposal. These amendments will have sponsors and signatories (like what you normally would expect to find in a draft resolution). This pre-existing proposal for the EU Foreign Interference Act has already been provided to you and will allow us to simulate the European Commission's role.

The Council of the EU: Decision-Making and Procedures

As previously stated, you will be part of the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC), which brings together the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the member states to discuss and adopt foreign policy, security, and defence measures.

Decision-Making in the Council

1. Consensus and Qualified Majority Voting (QMV)

- Most decisions in the Council are made by consensus, meaning all member states agree without a formal vote. However, when consensus cannot be reached, decisions are made by Qualified Majority Voting (QMV).
- QMV will require 55% of the present Member States to vote in favour. (in the actual Council, QMV also requires the states voting in favour to represent 65% of the population). Unanimity is required for sensitive issues, such as foreign policy, defence, and taxation. This gives every member state a veto, which can be both a protection and a hindrance.

2. Role of the Presidency

For LSEMUN 2026, the Presidency of the Council of the EU will be held by the chairs (in real life, the Presidency is currently held by the Republic of Cyprus, and rotates every 6 months among member states). The Presidency's role is



to chair meetings, set the agenda, and facilitate compromises. The Presidency does not vote, but they play a crucial role in brokering deals among member states.

The European Parliament: Legislative Process and Procedures

The European Parliament is the only directly elected institution of the EU, with 720 MEPs representing citizens from all 27 member states. Unlike national parliaments, MEPs sit in transnational political groups based on ideology rather than nationality.

The Parliament's legislative process is structured around committees, plenary debates, and negotiations with the Council. Most votes require an absolute majority (over 50%). Roll-call votes (where each MEP's vote is recorded) are used for controversial issues. MEPs do not vote along national lines but according to political groups. While political groups usually whip votes (instruct MEPs how to vote), individual MEPs can defy their group on contentious issues. While plenary debates are more publicly visible and often attract greater media attention, most of the European Parliament's substantive legislative and political work takes place within the different sub-committees. Standing committees, such as the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) and the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice, and Home Affairs (LIBE), are composed of MEPs reflecting the political balance of the plenary. In practice, these sub-committees serve as the EP's primary forum for technical expertise, cross-party negotiation, and institutional bargaining – particularly in the context of negotiations with the Council under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure (OLP), which is outlined below.

Ordinary Legislative Procedure (OLP)

Most EU laws, including the Foreign Interference Act, are adopted through the Ordinary Legislative Procedure (OLP), where the Parliament and Council share power as co-legislators.

The focus of debate will be on passing amendments (instead of writing a resolution from scratch). These amendments will be to the European Commission's proposal for an 'EU Foreign Interference Act' (provided in a separate document).

Delegates may propose amendments in three standard forms: modification (change/amend), deletion (strike-out/remove), or insertion (add), according to standard MUN procedure. The required number of signatories per amendment will depend on delegate turnout and will be decided at the conference by the directors. For amendments to be accepted by the directors, they should use clear and precise language, fit within the mandate of the committee, and remain consistent with relevant EU legislation and previous treaty obligations.



For LSEMUN 2026, the proposed ‘EU Foreign Interference Act’ is split into two subtopics. At the beginning of the conference, the European Council will debate and propose amendments to Subtopic I (Transparency and Foreign Influence in the Union), while the European Parliament will debate Subtopic II (Hybrid Threats and Covert Operations). During this phase, both chambers will vote on amendments to their respective subtopics. Halfway through the conference, the chambers will switch subtopics, and the European Council will debate the amended Subtopic II while the European Parliament will debate the amended Subtopic I. This will culminate in further amendments to both subtopics. Simplifying ordinary legislative procedure and dividing the act into two sub-topics is designed to simulate interactions and competing interests between the two chambers. At the end, both chambers will vote on the complete document (encompassing both Subtopic I and II) with all amendments incorporated. The Act must pass in *both* the Council and the EP to become binding, according to the voting procedure outlined above.

Special Rules

To ensure a realistic and dynamic simulation, the following special rules will apply. These rules are designed to mirror real-world challenges and encourage creative problem-solving.

1. Trilogues and negotiations

Trilogues are informal negotiations between the Council, Parliament, and Commission to reconcile differences in their positions. In this simulation, trilogues will be time-bound (e.g., 30–60 minutes) to simulate the pressure of real-world negotiations.

How Trilogues Work:

- Delegates can expect trilogues to be summoned at least once a day for the duration of the conference.
- At the discretion of the Dais, debate may be interrupted to facilitate a trilogue simulation, after which 2–3 delegates from each chamber will be elected by their respective sub-committee. For each trilogue, new representatives will be elected.
- At the trilogue, the representatives will present the progress made in their chamber. Although the representatives at the trilogue will still represent their country or party group, they are expected to present the work of their committee in a neutral manner.
- As this is the only institutionalised contact between the two chambers, it is of utmost importance that the relevant delegates use this opportunity to gain insight into the issues and concerns expressed by the other chamber. Without



coordination between the Council of the EU and the European Parliament, it will be challenging to pass a common resolution via the OLP.

- The ultimate goal is to find a compromise that is acceptable to both the MEPs and the foreign ministers. While the elected representatives attend the trilogue meeting, which will be mediated by one or two of the directors acting as representatives of the Commission, the remaining delegates will continue their debates in their respective chambers.

2. Crisis injections

Throughout the simulation, unexpected crises may be introduced at the discretion of the Dais to test the delegates' ability to adapt and respond under pressure. These crises are designed to reflect real-world events and will require you to think on your feet, negotiate quickly, and adjust your strategy. Please note, however, that this is not a standard crisis committee, and that any and all crisis injections will be utilised to elevate the legislative debate rather than to replace it. As such, it is important that delegates stay within the bounds of their allocated positions, even in the case of crisis scenarios, and that they work together to find compromises to address the crisis without derailing the Act.

3. Veto power and blocking minorities

In the Council of the EU, decisions pertaining to the CFSP, taxation, and sanctions require unanimity, giving every member state an effective veto. In this simulation, veto threats can be used strategically to block or delay decisions. To avoid the applicability of the veto for the full resolution, delegates in the Council may opt towards dividing the question before the final substantive vote to isolate those sections which may be subject to unanimity voting. The ministers in the Council can also minimise the impact of the veto through:

- **Package Deals:** Trade concessions in one area for cooperation in another. For example, Germany might agree to softer economic safeguards in exchange for Hungary's support on sanctions.
- **Pressure from Other States:** Use diplomatic leverage to isolate the objecting state. For example, France and Germany could publicly criticise Hungary's veto to encourage a compromise.

However, legislation passed under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure is binding upon all participating states and does not permit ad hoc opt-out, except where a pre-existing treaty-based protocol already applies (as in the Danish opt-out of the third stage of the European Monetary Union, EMU).



Further Reading

A well-researched position is the foundation of effective debate. Below is a curated selection of sources to help you prepare for the simulation, organized by theme.

These include official EU documents, academic analyses, case studies, and news reports that provide context on foreign interference, disinformation, and the EU's response.

Official EU Documents and Reports

These sources provide the legal and policy framework for the EU's current approach to foreign interference. They're essential for understanding what's already in place—and where the gaps are.

European Democracy Action Plan (2020) [European Commission](#) *Why it's useful:* This is the cornerstone of the EU's current strategy to counter disinformation, promote media freedom, and protect elections. It outlines existing tools like the Code of Practice on Disinformation and the European Digital Media Observatory. The Foreign Interference Act you're debating would build on and expand these measures.

Foreign Subsidies Regulation (2022) [European Commission](#) *Why it's useful:* This regulation allows the EU to screen foreign investments for market distortions—like Chinese state subsidies to European companies. It's a precedent for how the EU can regulate economic interference, but it doesn't cover political financing or lobbying, which your Act would address.

EU Sanctions Regime: Restrictive Measures Against Cyberattacks [Council of the EU](#) *Why it's useful:* Explains how the EU currently imposes sanctions on individuals and entities involved in cyberattacks and disinformation. The big weakness? Unanimity is required, which has led to vetoes by Hungary and others. Your Act could change this to qualified majority voting.

Digital Services Act (DSA, 2022) [European Commission](#) *Why it's useful:* The DSA forces platforms like Facebook and TikTok to label state-backed media and remove illegal content. But enforcement is slow, and loopholes remain for encrypted apps like Telegram. Your Act could strengthen these rules.

European Parliament Study: Foreign Interference in the EU (2021) [European Parliament Think Tank](#) *Why it's useful:* A detailed analysis of how foreign actors interfere in the EU, from Russian troll farms to Chinese lobbying. It also evaluates the effectiveness of current EU tools—and where they fall short.



Case Studies and Investigative Reports

These sources provide real-world examples of foreign interference, which you can use to justify your positions or anticipate counterarguments.

"Russia's Interference in the 2019 EU Elections" [European External Action Service \(EEAS\)](#) *Why it's useful:* Documents how Russia used fake news, deepfakes, and social media manipulation to influence the 2019 European Parliament elections. Useful for arguing why real-time monitoring (like your "EU Truth Squad") is needed.

"China's United Front Work in Europe" [International Institute for Strategic Studies \(IISS\), 2020](#) *Why it's useful:* Explains how China uses lobbying, media influence, and economic leverage to shape EU policies. Highlights the need for transparency in foreign funding—a key part of your Act.

"Disinformation as a Security Threat" [European Parliament Think Tank, 2023](#) *Why it's useful:* Analyzes how disinformation undermines trust in democracy and proposes policy responses. Helps you argue for stronger platform regulations or algorithmic transparency.

"China's Economic Coercion Against Lithuania" [Financial Times, 2022](#) *Why it's useful:* A case study of how China weaponized trade to punish Lithuania for its ties with Taiwan. Use this to argue for economic resilience measures in your Act.

"The Rise of Foreign-Funded Think Tanks in Brussels" [Politico, 2021](#) *Why it's useful:* Shows how foreign governments fund think tanks to influence EU policy. Supports your case for a public registry of foreign-funded lobbying.

Academic Analyses and Books

For a deeper dive into the theoretical and strategic aspects of foreign interference, these academic sources are invaluable.

"Disinformation and Democratic Security" [European Parliament Think Tank, 2023] *Why it's useful:* Explores how disinformation erodes public trust and what legal and technical tools can counter it. Helps you design effective but proportional measures.

"The Weaponization of Economic Interdependence" [Henry Farrell, *International Security*, 2021] [DOI: 10.1162/isec_a_00409](#) *Why it's useful:* A seminal academic article on how countries use trade, investment, and market access as weapons. Essential for understanding economic coercion and how to counter it.

"Cybersecurity and Election Integrity in the EU" [Chatham House, 2020](#) *Why it's useful:* Examines cyber threats to EU elections and proposes policy solutions. Useful for arguing for mandatory cybersecurity standards in your Act.



"Lobbying and Foreign Influence in the EU" [Transparency International, 2021](#) *Why it's useful:* Investigates how foreign governments lobby the EU and proposes transparency reforms. Directly relevant to your Act's lobbying disclosure clauses.

"The Geopolitics of Foreign Interference" [Council on Foreign Relations, 2022](#) *Why it's useful:* Provides a global perspective on how democracies counter foreign interference. Helps you think beyond the EU context and anticipate future threats.



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