



CENTER FOR  
**GLOBAL  
AFFAIRS**  
& STRATEGIC STUDIES



Universidad  
de Navarra

WORKING PAPER

[WP-04/2018]

# **Disinformation warfares in world politics: Russian campaigns and Western counteraction**

**Alejandro Jesús Palacios Jiménez**

**Manuel Lamela Gallego**

**Martín Biera Muriel**

International Relations students, University of

Navarra; junior research assistants, Center for

Global Affairs & Strategic Studies

Junio 26, 2018

Key words: European Union, disinformation, Russia, Stratcom Task Force, democracy

---

## **ABSTRACT**

The European Union (EU) has been specially damaged internally due to some disinformation campaigns, which have challenged its legislation and its very values. The different operations of disinformation alongside the communicative incapacity of the European Union's institutions have generated a feeling of alarm in Brussels. Just a year before the celebration of the elections to the European Parliament, Europe has concentrated a lot of his efforts in challenge the issue of disinformation, generating new strategies, challenges, objectives and workshops such as the Stratcom Task Force or the group of experts of the European Commission.

# **DISINFORMATION WARFARES IN WORLD POLITICS: RUSSIAN CAMPAIGNS AND WESTERN COUNTERACTION**

## **1. Introduction**

From the Cold War to nowadays, western countries have experienced a major challenge to its political agenda, national security and its challenges and objectives. During the last decades the actual international system has experienced how disinformation positions itself as one of the most important threats for national and international defence, security and governance. Being disinformation as a widely known and used tool at the past by major superpowers to expand its influence, the actual context where information can be gathered and shared with relatively ease has propitiated and favoured the merge of this phenomenon, that without any doubts implies a clear threat for State and non-State actors where values of democracy, rule of law and freedom prevail. As many scholars, analysts and security officials have pointed out in the recent years, disinformation is a key element and a threat.

Indeed, one of the main consequences the emergence of Internet has caused is related with the issue of vulnerability. The access of a greater quantity of information thanks to new media has been counter-productive in the sense that currently people do not usually grasp and/or compare the information they receive. Therefore, they become even more vulnerable to manipulated information which eventually makes them think or act in a particular way. This has been fostered by the fact that social media blurs the distinction between producer and consumer, enabling us to create our own pieces of information without any kind of filter. This process is complemented with our capacity to share the pieces of information we have seen even though we know they are not true.

The Russian Federation carries out one of the most well-known, incisive and complex disinformation campaigns nowadays. It challenges different fronts with objectives such as western societies and its national institutions. For example, the elections that took place in the United States in 2016 or the electoral campaigns in Eastern Europe can be examples of how the interference of Russia is suspected.

The European Union (EU) has been specially damaged internally due to this circumstance, seeing how its legislation and values are being challenged. The different varieties of campaigns of disinformation alongside the communicative incapacity of the European Union's institutions have generated a feeling of alarm in the offices of Brussels. Just a year before the celebration for the election of the European Parliament, Europe has concentrated most of his efforts in coping with the issue of disinformation, generating new strategies, challenges, objectives and workshops such as the Stratcom Task Force or the group of experts of the European Commission.

## **2. The new communication era**

Nowadays it is much easier than ever to commit disinformation. Undoubtedly, the ecosystem of information in which we live today, where both social networks and the mass media play the leading role in informing the population, united to the fact that society is not informed enough, is making it more difficult to distinguish the true from the false, in every aspect. When we relate it to the communication field and add certain political ambitions, disinformation is the clear, and almost logic, outcome of this social climate.

In fact, some of the most well-known effects of social networks are the following. On the one hand, they have blurred the line between the consumer and the producer. This has been caused by the ability that social networks generate to produce the information itself, regardless of whether it is false or not. On the other hand, the abundance of information has had a negative impact on individuals. Now it is more difficult than before, with traditional media, to get people to go deeper into the information they receive and to check whether or not the news they encounter are indeed true. All this, together with the ability to share all types of information, whether false or not, has created a vicious circle in which the criterion of truth, and therefore the interest in discovering it, is substantially reduced.

Two fundamental consequences are derived from the use of these media without criteria: on the one hand, disinformation is generated, which results in misrepresenting reality in order to make it coincide with the private interests of certain organizations and governments. On the other hand, there is the phenomenon known as “intoxication”. This expresses the fact that the media, especially social networks, are full of noise that prevents or hinders the obtaining of really relevant, serious, contrasted and, therefore, true information (Bonaño Serrano, 2015).

Due to the effects that information without criteria generates in the affected society, such as distrust in the institutions, atrophy, or apathy; the different States and international organizations, among them the European Union, have set in motion to develop an efficient strategy that not only counteracts the false information coming from enemy countries, but that is also capable of generating an alternative flow of information through which the affected parties can show what they really are. Some of the tools that have been developed, and of which we are going to talk about during this essay, are: the East Stratcom Task Force; the European Endowment for Democracy and the European Neighbourhood Policy; and finally we will make reference to the strategy the NATO is following on this behalf, since it is considered the military force of the European Union itself.

## **3. Historic approach**

One of the best ways of understanding the complex problem of disinformation is by paying attention to how certain historical events have been adulterated through the

use of disinformation campaigns. To fully identify those events, not only a wide knowledge of the issue is required, but also it is important to have a high level of interpretative capabilities which enable us to infer the way those campaigns have been introduced in society. Indeed, on account of the versatility through which those actions can be introduced, no scope of reality has been oblivious to this influence during history. When analysing historical events, you come to realize the huge amount of disinformation means that have been used, each one with its own characteristics and singularities that make even more difficult a rigorous analysis of the facts (Matz, 2014).

Nowadays electoral campaigns are a clear objective of those actors willing to generate and spread disinformation. They are an efficient and profitable target when it comes to generate paranoia and distrust within a given society, even though this is not a new practice.

The elections of 1924 in the United Kingdom (UK) were characterized by the famous “Zinoviev’s letter”. This document was apparently written by a high-ranked Soviet leader, Gregori Zinoviev, and it was published by the English press only 4 days before the elections. The letter was addressed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) and its content encouraged both countries to establish bilateral relations in order to, on the one hand, empower the international labour movement and, on the other hand, promote the basic ideas of the Soviet revolution throughout the UK and its colonies. The letter was published by the Daily Mail in a moment of turbulences between both States and it affected mainly MacDonald, premier of the Labour Party. Although soon after Zinoviev himself belied the veracity of the document, the elections were won by the Conservative Party, which achieved a clear majority within the House of Commons.

The current interpretation points out to a pro-monarchy organization in Russia as possible author of the famous document. In any case, it is evident that the Zinoviev’s letter played a key role in the development of the elections of 1924 in Great Britain.

### Operation Bodyguard

In 1943, during World War II, the military leaders from the Allied Forces planned a strategy to invade the western European coasts that had been occupied by the Axis powers. Operation Overlord for the invasion for the beaches of Normandy took place during the summer of 1944. Previously ally commanders planned a strategy to create confusion and misinform the German high command, in order to make them believe that the invasion to Europe was going to take place north to the place where it actually happened. Operation Overlord succeeded thanks to the cunning planning of Operation Bodyguard (García Barcala, 2017).

Operation Bodyguard was the umbrella for a great number of actions whose objective was deceiving German high commands about the place and moment of the invasion of Normandy. The project was presented to the Allied High Command in the Tehran Conference in November of 1943 and approved some days later.

The main operation within Bodyguard was Operation Fortitude that was carried out both in the Mediterranean and on the coasts of France such as Calais. The main objectives of Fortitude were make the Germans believe that Pas of Calais was the point for an allied invasion, and try to distract German reinforcements keeping them away of Normandy for 14 days. The campaign was directed by two Norwegian agents that defected to the Allies, Mutt and Jeff. The two agents directed false (partially) information to the Germans making them believe they were going to invade Norway. As stated by Air Command and Staff College for the United kingdom (2001), the Allied military forces carried out bombings and sabotages in Norwegian territory, and reinforced naval patrols in its coasts (a usual drill when invading); British agents also bought Norwegian bonds from the Norwegian stock market as a way to make the Germans believe they were going to take Norway. Finally the Allies increase military radio communications with pre-recorded messages so the Wehrmacht was in high alert in that region. Operation Bodyguard was successful, giving clearance to the Allied high command to proceed with the invasion of Europe (Tavares, 2001).

The Zinoviev letter and Operation Bodyguard were something new in some ways. Historically the role of disinformation was claimed by media and governments, especially intelligence services; also information warfare was conducted in much more different ways, focused on propaganda targeting civilians and military personnel, both with different objectives. For example, military personnel were entrusted with the task of misinforming by distributing pamphlets drawn from aircraft to a battlefield. For civil society, both political and religious movements played a fundamental role.. Already before the nineteenth century there were cases of disinformation but given the lack of documentation collected and the poor state of communications at the time, the task of studying information warfare is difficult. The twentieth century can be considered as a culmination in information warfare, taking into account the two World Wars, the Cold War and other historically important events (United States Department of State, 1981).

The last case of disinformation warfare can be considered as the culmination of intelligence services producing news and delivering disinformation campaigns across their own borders. This kind of activity was specially developed during the Cold War, mainly by the KGB. The man behind the Soviet strategy was Józef Unslicht, who designed a special disinformation office to conduct active intelligence operations with the purpose to manipulate a nation's intelligence system through the injection of credible, but misleading data. The Central Intelligence Agency, in a document released in 2006 with the title "Forgery, Disinformation, Political Operations", detailed how the Soviet Union operated in order to destabilize the United States. The Soviet "active measures" (actions of political warfare used by the Soviet and Russian security services) included:

- Written or spoken disinformation.
- Efforts to control media in foreign countries.
- Use of Communist parties and front organizations.
- Clandestine radio broadcasting.

- Personal and economic blackmail.
- Political influence operations.

For many years the CIA kept fighting and countering the different operations of the Soviet Union and monitoring them. Disinformation is an important issue nowadays, but in order to understand the consequences that happened today we must study the background in order to develop a wide range of views, opinions and courses of action (Milosevich-Juaristi, 2017).

### Conflicts nowadays

Russian disinformation has been a major object of study and coverage from mass media, think tanks and alternative news sources. The Spanish Real Instituto Elcano in an analysis (2017) points out that disinformation is an important part of Russia's foreign policy; its goal is to exert influence via soft power over Eastern Europe, specially the neighbouring countries. Institute establishes three ways in which Russian disinformation is carried out:

- Russian domestic disinformation, directed to its own citizens.
- Disinformation directed to former Soviet citizens and States.
- Disinformation as an alternative point of view aimed at European countries, mainly the European Union, and at the United States.

We can agree that disinformation can be used to claim many objectives. Therefore, we have tried to highlight briefly some of the different disinformation campaigns carried out across the twentieth century especially in periods of war or political tensions. From analysts to military officials, many agree that it is a technique of warfare often carried out by governments with external or internal objectives. Nowadays we can see on the Internet many cases of disinformation warfare, where the Western countries are a main target. Maybe the main cases that media cover nowadays will be an example for further studies of disinformation in the future.

## **4. Russian disinformation campaigns**

We could highlight many cases in which Russian interferences have played a major role. There have been accusations of Russian interferences in the U.S. presidential elections, the vote on Brexit or the Catalan issue. There's a case named the "Lisa case"

which is quite interesting to comprehend Russian disinformation. This case was brought by different media sources, including RT. They published that a woman was reportedly raped by Arab migrants (a fake story). The main target of this campaign was the German society and the conservative European population. The main purpose was to foster a general attitude against the influx of refugees. The case showed a confrontation between the Russian and the German authorities, and between the latter and the German public opinion (Russian Council, 2017).

The Russian news outlets didn't successfully breach the whole German public but only special groups such as nationalists and populists parties. The news outlets used included websites, blogs, streaming webs, TV and radio; many of them were alternative media. The campaign was organized in the following way:

- First the showcase of a “real” victim in First Russian TV, the main TV from Russia. This victim was half German, half Russian.
- Then it was reported by RT, Sputnik News and RT Deutsch, all linked to Russia.
- The third step was carried out in social media that distributed the information across the Internet.
- The fourth step, similarly to the third, was publication of the case by neo-Nazi social media.
- The next step was the publication by German mainstream media.
- Finally, at the political level, the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergej Lavrov, made two public statements accusing the German police of being inept people and stated the inability of the Police and German legal system of political correctness, due to their fear of being accused of racism or xenophobia.

After a leak that identified Russia as the main actor behind this case, tension arose between Russia and Germany. Shortly after, however, the German Foreign minister presented the case as an opportunity to improve relations between both countries.

## **5. Western reaction**

The apparatus and communication strategies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have their origin at the height of the Cold War, when the USSR developed institutions dedicated solely and exclusively to disseminate Communist propaganda. One of these key institutions was, undoubtedly, the Kominform (Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers Parties), created in 1947.

Alongside with the Comintern, the Kominform made possible the total control of the satellite countries that depended on the USSR. At the same time, they generated disinformation campaigns capable of generating division and confrontation within the Western powers, especially focusing on European countries, as it happened in the electoral processes carried out after the end of the Second World War. This generated a clear sense of alarm and concern within the European powers. As a response, NATO created in 1950 the program for the development of The National Information Systems (NATIS), aimed to promote positive information about the values of the NATO and the benefits that the organisation brought to the member countries. Its main targets were the countries whose democratic system was threatened by the rise of Communist pro-Soviet parties. Despite the fact that it was possible to create a large information campaign of its own, the established objectives were not achieved, due to the lack of efforts of the member states, the limitations placed on the work and the lack of a budget for the activities. In addition, the European countries did not feel comfortable with that centralization of efforts, since they considered that each country had the capacity by its own to build information campaigns capable of counteracting Russian misinformation (NATO, 2006).

Nowadays, the NATO agency in charge of the fight against disinformation is the Stratcom COE, based in Riga (Latvia). It consists of 23 members divided into administrative and academic sections, and have the support of private institutions and national armies of the member states. The center publishes the Journal Defence Strategic Communication. The main activities of Stratcom in its mission of counteracting information campaigns are the analysis of the current situation in relation to disinformation, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the production of a different narrative, helping third parties in this task.

Without a doubt, NATO plays a fundamental role when it comes to elaborating proposals and strategies to combat the attacks that our democratic and free societies have been suffering for a long time now. But what is also evident is that cooperation and aid between Western institutions and organizations is necessary to develop a completely efficient strategy, since NATO alone will not be able to cope with disinformation. The European Union has the duty to elaborate a common strategic plan that is independent from that of NATO, but at the same time helps and supports the actions carried out by the Stratcom COE.

### Stratcom Task Force

As we have seen before, disinformation is not something that is typical of the 21st century. However, it is becoming one of the major workhorses of this century. This is due to the growing influence that disinformation is having not only in the political or institutional sphere, but it is penetrating all layers of society, even altering the day-to-day life of democratic societies.

It is mainly for this reason, and also for the real fear that disinformation from enemy states could jeopardise the stability and security of an entire region, that the



European Union launched in 2015 the project known as the East Stratcom Task Force. In fact, until that very moment, there was not a team in the European Union specifically charged with dealing with the disinformation campaigns of neighbouring countries that were trying to damage their image and distort the values that the European Union is striving so hard to convey. While it is true that the European Union Intelligence and Situation Centre (EU INTCEN) could be seen as a pioneer in situation analysis of countries potentially "threatening" the EU, it is true that the fight against disinformation was by no means its main task (Díaz-Caneja Greciano, 2014).

The absence of a joint strategy to combat disinformation campaigns has been one of the main reasons why disinformation has come to have such a significant impact on the European Union, even raising doubts about its fundamental values and policies. If there is one thing that all these actions or campaigns of disinformation have in common, it is that their main objective is to attack the European identity itself and the citizens who have it. The slow and disorganised response by the Member States has done nothing but facilitate the work of this type of campaign, since it has made it possible, through its obvious lack of communication and education, to create an immature and emotive society that sacrifices objective truth in favour of a subjective and divided verisimilitude.

In this way, and because of the feeling of real fear in Brussels, the Heads of State and Government of the member States included in the conclusions of March 2015 the mandate to the High Representative, Federica Mogherini, to draw up a Strategic Communicative Action Plan to deal with disinformation campaigns (European Council, 2015).

In June of the same year, the High Representative presented her Action Plan, which has long-term objectives. As mentioned, the ultimate objective is to tackle the disinformation campaigns by neighbouring countries that destabilise the European Union. In order to achieve this, the specific objectives that make up this strategy are detailed. On the one hand, it is intended to promote the values of the Union in neighbouring countries by means of "proactive communication of the Union's policies and activities in the countries of the East and beyond"; on the other hand, it is intended to give an impetus to the independent media to promote a more rigorous and objective climate of communication, away from conspiracy theories promoted by neighbouring countries to damage the EU; finally, through Stratcom, the aim is to increase public warning of the appearance of disinformation campaigns and, consequently, to help increase Stratcom's own capacity and legitimacy in the fight against this type of practice (EU Strategic Communication With a View to Counteracting Propaganda, 2016).

In order to achieve this, Mogherini set up a team of experts integrated into the organisational structure of the EEAS in charge of the aforementioned objectives, called the East Stratcom Task Force. Unlike the Arab Stratcom Task Force, it deals with issues relating to the countries in the east of the Union (Mogherini, 2015).

Currently, Stratcom Team has 14 members dedicated exclusively to this task, with experience in the field of communication and knowledge of different languages, including Russian, due to the special focus on Russia disinformation activities. Despite being a newly created organisation, Stratcom already has a website in place on which

the European Union itself denies the disinformation launched by Russia in an attempt to undermine its cohesion and stability.<sup>1</sup> (European External Action Service).

However, not all that glitters is gold. Stratcom's communication strategy has proved to be somewhat inefficient as the form and content do not match the needs of the affected public. To begin with, there are many videos showing Stratcom's work. However, they all show the disinformation in a childish tone, as if those watching the video were people who had never heard of the existence of disinformation. Moreover, the communicative failure is evident since after more than three years of existence, the information on its website, which is mostly Russian, is only available in three languages, namely Russian, English and German. In this way, it seems that the European Union itself either does not want the other countries of the Union to know about the disinformation campaigns, or does not believe that these campaigns will affect countries other than those mentioned above. The latter is paradoxical if one recalls that, as a result of the disinformation campaigns carried out during the 2017 elections, the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, will implement a law by which French judges will be able to veto any information that is suspected of being totally or partially false. All this without overlooking the possibility that the Union's leaders may believe that, thanks to the area of freedom, justice and security created through the supranational project, all the inhabitants within it know how to speak at least one of the three languages in which the Stratcom website is available in response to disinformation.

#### European Endowment for Democracy and European Neighbourhood Policy

Although the Stratcom Task Force is the specialised body for the detection and annihilation of disinformation focused on the destabilisation of the European project, its action is, in turn, departmentalised in other specialised bodies. Two of the most important organisations in this respect are, on the one hand, the so-called European Endowment for Democracy (EED) and, on the other, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

The EED is a Brussels-based organisation established in 2013 under the leadership of former High Representative Catherine Ashton. It was originally conceived as a joint political project between the then Member States of the Union and the institutions of the European Union itself. The main objective of this organisation, which currently has a budget of EUR 14 million a year, is to ensure support for activists for a democratic transition in the Union's neighbouring countries for enlargement and for the promotion of human rights and individual freedoms there.

The ENP is part of a strategy outlined by the European Commission in 2003 and launched in the following year. Its aim is to serve as a vehicle for the transmission and adoption of the values linked to the European Union by its neighbouring countries. Thus, the ENP seeks to establish a new framework for relations with these countries in order to reduce the socio-economic gap between the EU and these countries, consolidate

---

<sup>1</sup> In this regard, see (<https://euvsdisinfo.eu/>)

the rule of law and good governance, promote fundamental rights and freedoms, and work towards the achievement of the United Nations Development Goals. All this is done with the ultimate aim of “creating and consolidating an area of stability in order to provide a joint response to common challenges” and to avoid destabilising the European project. This will be achieved, according to the Union, by working together on a number of sectorial issues, including the so-called “information society”, where the Union intends to deal with false information generated in neighbouring countries and which seeks to attack its regulatory foundations (European Union, 2013).

From the analysis of both organizations, two distinct comments can be made. On the one hand, it is clear that the values advocated by both communication strategies are the same as those prevailing in the Western world and not found in the countries of the East, including Russia<sup>2</sup>. What is more, these concepts are the values that are present in the constitutional treaties of the Union, according to Articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). It can therefore be concluded that the attack by misinformation means is a direct attack on the heart of the Union and, therefore, on its stability. It is for this reason that the EU cannot afford to doubt the values for which it was in fact created.

Therefore, it is key in the European Union's strategy to establish entities that contribute both to the tackling of false information against its founding values and to the support of private organisations that fight for the promotion of precisely those founding values that will help to legitimise and respect the European project as it was initially conceived, that is to say, as a democratic, peaceful, solidarity-based and lasting process.

## **6. Conclusion**

Throughout this analysis we have tried to contextualise and clarify the arduous effort that the Union is making to put an end to the phenomenon of disinformation. In this explanatory process we have first focused on providing a simple but firm definition of what disinformation means. To this end, we have given a necessary historical vision of the problem, as well as explaining significant cases that were of vital importance in the past, such as the Bodyguard Operation (military in nature) or the Zinoviev letter (political in nature). Our main objective is to generate a context, in this historical case, where we can locate the problem of disinformation and from there begin to develop a study process. Since the main problem we have encountered when carrying out an academic analysis is the lack of empirical bases. Moreover, we consider this lack of knowledge to be one of the main sources of food for disinformation campaigns. The latter, together with the new communicative era, where information has been

---

<sup>2</sup> The case of Russia is different in the EED than in the ENP. With the former, the EU acts unilaterally to promote its values. However, the second strategy requires that states which the EU considers to be "neighbours" submit a formal application for membership. For its part, Russia has already declined to join the ENP because, they say, entry into the ENP would leave them at a disadvantage when negotiating other bilateral agreements, which they prefer to negotiate on equal terms.

completely democratized, has completely paved the way for those who want to benefit from this situation of weakness of our societies.

However, despite the serious international and national problems, this scourge has been very difficult to detect. Until 2016 the European Union had not been aware of the scale of the problem. Due to Russian interference in the Brexit (which did not give the desired outcome) and the French presidential elections a year later, the EU saw its pillars staggering and its own identity being discussed and questioned. Despite the seriousness of the problem it was barely able to identify the perpetrator of this interference, partly because of the ease with which its origins were camouflaged, much less to organise a response shared by the Member States. However, in the last half of 2017, this situation turned upside down and the Union has intensified its work to combat the problem of disinformation. On the one hand, the Stratcom Task Force's goal scoring work has been clearly strengthened; although it is true that the latter still has many gaps to fill, such as the languages in which its website is available, we can see an attempt by the European Union to give more relevance and importance to its task, which until now had been quite limited. Another of the great news that came with the entry of 2018 was the creation by the European Commission of a group of experts charged with combating disinformation and false news.

In this way, last January the European Commission took the decision to form a group of experts from different fields, both professional and academic, whose ultimate objective is to draw up an action plan to combat and counteract the negative effects that disinformation generates in our society. This group of experts is chaired by Madeleine de Cock Buning, who is responsible for the difficult task of building consensus within this group of experts. As indicated above, one of the main characteristics of this project is the heterogeneity of its members; the group is made up of both excellent academics from the world of communications and great personalities from the professional field, from journalists who are experts in the matter to prominent members of the GAFSA companies (Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon). Without a shadow of a doubt, the diversity of the environment is one of the group's main strengths and adds unparalleled value to its work. In March of this year, after only two months of work, it was possible to establish the first 6 points that will serve as a guide for the future development of a shared strategy or action plan. The 6 recommendations are as follows:

- 1- Abandonment of the term "fake news", considered inappropriate.
- 2- Increased funding for independent media, verification of data and necessary and essential media literacy. This last point is essential, as we have indicated in the previous paragraphs, because the social ignorance that exists towards disinformation is highly harmful. There are even studies that indicate that the volume of false news has increased by 365% in recent years and that in 2022 the average European citizen will consume more false news than true news. These data undoubtedly make an investment in education completely paramount.

- 3- Need for companies to share data. The EU must stand firm on this controversial issue; data sharing must become an obligation for the companies to which this recommendation is addressed.
- 4- Call for data sharing by public enterprises.
- 5- Creation of a network of research centres belonging to the European Union and completely independent of any other institution or State.
- 6- Importance of generating collaborative and supportive environments that involve all the actors involved, based on the very essence of the group.

What is undoubtedly seen in these 6 recommendations is the EU's effort to generate a solid response to disinformation, but which in turn, due to the "novelty" of the problem, is still in the early stages of development. There is still a long way to go and obstacles to be overcome before we can discuss a solution to this problem. However, a key (and hopeful) moment is approaching: the elections to the European Parliament in 2019. The European elections will represent a turning point in the life of the Union: we could be talking about the great victory of post-Brexit Europe or, on the other hand, a hurtful and catastrophic defeat (European Commission, 2018).

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Bonaño Serrano, J. L. (2015). *Las redes sociales como fuente de desinformación*. Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla.

Díaz-Caneja Greciano, J. M. (2014). *La cooperación de Inteligencia de la Unión Europea*. Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos.

*EU Strategic Communication With a View to Counteracting Propaganda*. (2016).

European Commission. (2018, April 26). *European Commission: Press Release Database*. Retrieved May 08, 2018, from European Commission: Press Release Database: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-18-3370\\_es.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-3370_es.htm)

European Council. (2015). *Decision*. Brussels.

European External Action Service. (n.d.). *Questions and Answers about the East StratCom Task Force*. Retrieved May 08, 2018, from Questions and Answers about the East StratCom Task Force: [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_es/2116/%20Questions%20and%20Answers%20about%20the%20East%20StratCom%20Task%20Force](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_es/2116/%20Questions%20and%20Answers%20about%20the%20East%20StratCom%20Task%20Force)

European Union. (2013). *European Endowment for Democracy*.

García Barcala, J. (2017, January 10). *Ciencia Histórica*. Retrieved May 08, 2018, from *Ciencia Histórica*: <http://www.cienciahistorica.com/2017/01/10/operacion-bodyguard-arte-del-engano/>

Matz, J. (2014, June 17). *Intelligence and disinformation in World War II and the early Cold War 1943–48: Stachowiak alias Drauschke alias Donoa, his intelligence activities in Sweden and Denmark, and the Raoul Wallenberg case*. Retrieved May 08, 2018, from *Intelligence and disinformation in World War II and the early Cold War 1943–48: Stachowiak alias Drauschke alias Donoa, his intelligence activities in Sweden and Denmark, and the Raoul Wallenberg case*: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/16161262.2014.973170?journalCode=rjih20&>

Milosevich-Juaristi, M. (2017, April). *Instituto Elcano*. Retrieved May 08, 2018, from *Instituto Elcano*: [http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano\\_es/contenido?WCM\\_GLOBAL\\_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano\\_es/zonas\\_es/ari7-2017-milosevichjuaristi-poder-influencia-rusa-desinformacion](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_es/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/ari7-2017-milosevichjuaristi-poder-influencia-rusa-desinformacion)

Mogherini, F. (2015). *Action Plan on Strategic Communication*.

NATO. (2006). Retrieved from <http://redined.mecd.gob.es/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11162/91522/00820093002336.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

*Operation Fortitude: preparations for the Normandy landing*. (n.d.). Retrieved May 08, 2018, from *Operation Fortitude: preparations for the Normandy landing*: <http://www.dday-overlord.com/en/d-day/preparations/operation-fortitude>

Russian Council. (December de 2017). *Russia's Foreign Policy: Looking Towards 2018*. Recuperado el 08 de May de 2018, de *Russia's Foreign Policy: Looking Towards 2018*: <http://russiancouncil.ru/en/forecast2018>

Tavares, E. (2001). *Operation Fortitude: the closed loop d-day deception plan*.

United States Department of State. (1981). *Soviet "active measures": Foreign, disinformation, political operations*. Washington, D.C.