

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000524/25
to the Commission
Ioan-Rareş Bogdan (PPE)
(5 February 2025)**

Subject: Extent of the EU's protection against hybrid threats

The initiatives and measures the Commission has taken to counter foreign interference in the democratic processes of the European Union are to be welcomed. Resolutions aimed at better protecting citizens against these threats have also been adopted in the European Parliament, and it is vital to continue encouraging efforts in this direction.

I should like to ask the following questions in this connection:

1. Based on the actions taken so far, does the Commission feel there has been an improvement in the democratic climate in the European Union?
2. What concrete effect have the measures taken by the EU institutions had, and what are the main areas in which the Commission considers further action is needed?
3. What is the state of play regarding the application of the 'follow the money' principle to entities seeking to destabilise the European Union, and when does the Commission expect the sources of funding for such actions to be identified and made public?

Submitted: 5.2.2025

**Answer given by Mr McGrath on behalf of the European Commission
(19 June 2025)**

The Commission has undertaken several initiatives to protect democracy in the EU, in particular with the European Democracy Action Plan of 2020 and the Defence of Democracy Package of 2023 ⁽¹⁾.

Their success is reflected, among other things, in the general satisfaction of respondents to standard Eurobarometer surveys with the way democracy works in the EU ⁽²⁾.

As regards transparency of financial flows, several pieces of EU legislation are relevant. Regulation (EU) 2024/900 on the transparency and targeting of political advertising ⁽³⁾, which will enter into full application on 10 October 2025, will support national oversight of funding of political advertising and minimise the risk of information manipulation and foreign interference by requiring the provision, among others, of oversight authorities and record-keeping of information on the amounts received for political advertising services.

As part of the Defence of Democracy package the Commission presented a legislative proposal that aims to enhance transparency and democratic accountability of interest representation activities on behalf of third countries which seek to influence policies, decision making and the democratic space. The proposal is currently being discussed by the co-legislators.

In terms of following the money in general, Member States' competent authorities will have better access to the information they need with the application of the anti-money laundering package ⁽⁴⁾, which was adopted by the co-legislators in 2024, and will enter into application in July 2027.

In 2025, the Commission will propose a European Democracy Shield, which will, among other things, set out steps to combat foreign information manipulation, interference and disinformation.

⁽¹⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_6453.

⁽²⁾ Standard Eurobarometer 102 — Autumn 2024 — November 2024 — Eurobarometer survey <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/3215>; Standard Eurobarometer 100 — Autumn 2023 — December 2023 — Eurobarometer survey <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/3053>; Standard Eurobarometer 98 — Winter 2022-2023 — February 2023 — Eurobarometer survey <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2872>.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32024R0900>.

⁽⁴⁾ https://finance.ec.europa.eu/financial-crime/anti-money-laundering-and-counteracting-financing-terrorism-eu-level_en#policy-making-timeline.