

(English version)

Priority question for written answer P-001043/26
to the Commission
Christine Anderson (ESN)
(12 March 2026)

Subject: Limits of ‘coordination’ under the European Centre for Democratic Resilience

In the European Democracy Shield (EUDS) Exchange of Views of 25 February 2025, Commissioner McGrath confirmed that the proposed European Centre for Democratic Resilience (ECDR) will ‘only coordinate’.

Under Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), EU action is governed by the principle of conferral. Where the Treaties allow the Union to ‘support, coordinate or supplement’ Member State action, such coordination must remain ancillary to a conferred competence and may not amount to the exercise of public authority. Furthermore, pursuant to Article 4(2) TEU, national security remains the sole responsibility of the Member States.

Given that foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) frequently overlaps with intelligence-led hybrid activities, such as ‘troll factories’, the Commission is asked:

1. How does the Commission define ‘coordination’ in this context, and which Treaty competence does it rely on to exercise such coordination functions?
2. Can the Commission confirm that the ECDR will not aggregate or analyse classified intelligence, develop common threat assessment methodologies or risk classification frameworks, nor issue early-warning assessments that could influence Member States’ national security or electoral security decisions (as this would be contrary to Article 4(2) TEU)?
3. Can the Commission confirm that the ECDR will not structure, guide or otherwise shape Member States’ response planning in areas touching on national security or counter-intelligence, including through crisis protocols or joint operational frameworks (as this would be contrary to Article 4(2) TEU)?

Submitted: 12.3.2026

Answer given by Mr McGrath on behalf of the European Commission
(30 April 2026)

The European Centre for Democratic Resilience (the Centre) announced in the European Democracy Shield ⁽¹⁾ (EDS) is a voluntary cooperation framework primarily bringing together expertise and capacities from Member States and relevant EU institutions and bodies, building on existing networks and structures.

This work will contribute to supporting the EU’s whole-of-society approach to increase awareness and build democratic resilience. The Council conclusions of May 2024 ⁽²⁾ highlighted the need to bring these efforts together.

The Council conclusions of March 2026 ⁽³⁾ invite the Commission to make the full use of the relevant EU instruments, take note of the establishment of the Centre and underline the commitment to work together with the Commission and the European External Action Service to enhance the EU’s democratic resilience.

The Centre fully respects the competences of the EU and its Member States and the independence of existing structures. Its work does not interfere with Member States’ competences in the areas highlighted by the Honourable Member, such as the organisation and running of electoral processes, national security or counterintelligence.

The information shared in the framework of the Centre is based on open sources. The Centre is also supported by the Rapid Alert System ⁽⁴⁾, an established mechanism to address foreign information manipulation and interference.

⁽¹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/document/2539eb53-9485-4199-bfdc-97166893ff45_en.

⁽²⁾ The Council conclusions of May 2024 on democratic resilience, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10119-2024-INIT/en/pdf>.

⁽³⁾ The Council conclusions of March 2026 on advancing the European Union’s capacity to counter hybrid threats, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7349-2026-INIT/en/pdf>.

⁽⁴⁾ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/factsheet-rapid-alert-system_en.