

Resolution on Russiagate: allegations of Russian interference in the democratic processes of the European Union

2024/2548(RSP) - 08/02/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 433 votes to 56, with 18 abstentions, a resolution on Russiagate: allegations of Russian interference in the democratic processes of the European Union.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA, ECR groups and Members.

The resolution stated that there is evidence of Russian interference and manipulation in many democracies, as well as of its practical support for extremist forces and radical-minded entities to promote the destabilisation of the Union. Parliament's Special Committee on foreign interference in all democratic processes in the EU, including disinformation, exposed in detail the Russian-led efforts and operations to infiltrate, influence and interfere with European democracies and the EU institutions. Although the European Parliament's response to foreign interference has become more vigilant, the resolution stressed that **more robust measures** have yet to be taken and internal reforms must be adopted to ensure effective protection against undue external influence.

Russia has established contacts with parties, personalities and movements in order to rely on actors within the Union's institutions in order to legitimise Russian positions, support independence movements and proxy governments and to press for the easing of sanctions and mitigate the consequences of international isolation. Members from certain political groups, as well as some non-attached Members, have been spreading blatant pro-Kremlin propaganda in Parliament.

Parliament expressed its complete outrage and grave concern about the continuous efforts by Russia to undermine European democracy. This situation must be met with consequences according to Parliament. Member States are called on to further develop and fine-tune the **sanction packages** adopted against the Russian Federation and to close loopholes in the enforcement of the restrictive measures currently in force.

Furthermore, Parliament unequivocally condemns the ongoing Russian efforts to abuse and falsify the historical recollection of Europe's most tragic periods, including the consequences of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the terror that followed for the territories conquered by Nazi Germany and communist Russia, in order to try to justify its current brutal, illegal and inhumane aggression and its expansionist policy.

It expressed deep concern over reports that MEP Tatjana Ždanoka may have acted as an informant for the Fifth Service of the Russian Federation's Federal Security Service while also serving as a Member of the European Parliament. The resolution also points to other cases of Members knowingly serving Russia's interests. It considers it imperative to immediately conduct a **thorough internal investigation** in order to assess all possible cases of foreign interference by Russia and of other kinds of malicious interference in the work of the European Parliament.

Parliament also expressed particular concern about recent reports that the Russian authorities are providing specific narratives to far-right political parties and actors in different EU countries, most notably in Germany and France, aimed at subverting public support for Ukraine, following Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. Members are extremely concerned about the alleged relations between **Catalan secessionists** and the Russian administration.

Security and transparency

Parliament called for the highest level of political and administrative attention to be given to the recommendations for reform of the European Parliament's rules on transparency, integrity, accountability and anti-corruption and called for the full implementation of the measures proposed, including **mandatory and regular security and integrity training** for Members and staffers, appropriate security clearance and reinforced screening of staffers, in particular those attending in camera meetings.

Moreover, it called for **stricter scrutiny** of the organisation of events, of the invitation of external guests to Parliament and of access to Parliament's communication platforms. The resolution also reiterated its call for stricter rules for **trips** taken by Members that are paid for by foreign countries and entities.

The Secretariat of the EU Transparency Register is called on to **ban any entities** with direct or indirect relations with the Government of Russia.

The Commission and the Council are expected to deliver on the Defence of Democracy package in order to urgently take action and close the numerous loopholes in EU party financing legislation, find a compulsory regulatory scheme for the big platforms and step up the EU's cyber defence against possible attacks on our electoral system. Parliament urged the EU institutions and the Member States to make significant and lasting investments in strengthening our democratic resilience and the rule of law, including through measures directed at enhancing the EU's counter-intelligence capabilities.

Lastly, Parliament underlined the key role of **investigative journalism** in revealing the attempts at foreign interference and covert activities and called for sufficient and sustainable funding in this area.