

EU Raises Funds to Fight ‘Disinformation War’ with Russia | The Guardian

By Daniel Boffey

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The EU has launched a “war against disinformation” spread by the Kremlin in an attempt to protect next year’s European parliament elections.

As new funding and measures were announced in Brussels, the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, was accused of spending more than £1bn a year to “spread lies” as part of a [military strategy to cause division in Europe](#).

“There is strong evidence pointing to Russia as the primary source of disinformation in Europe,” said Andrus Ansip, vice-president of the [European commission](#).

“Disinformation is part of Russian military doctrine and its strategy to divide and weaken the west. [Russia](#) spends €1.1bn a year on pro-Kremlin media. You will also have heard of the ‘troll factory’ based in St Petersburg and the bot armies.”

The commission said it would set up a rapid alert system to help EU member states recognise disinformation campaigns, and increase the budget set aside for the detection of disinformation from £1.69m to £4.4m (€5m). It will also press technology companies to play their part in cracking down on fake news.

Major social media platforms have already signed up to a code of conduct, but they were told by the British security commissioner, Julian King, to “get serious” on living up to their commitments. He said the EU would not stand for “an internet that is the wild west, where anything goes”.