

# RESONANT



## ENHANCING THE UNDERSTANDING OF FIMI AND INFORMATION SUPPRESSION

### Understanding FIMI

Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) encompasses coordinated actions by state or non-state actors aimed at influencing political, social, or ideological landscapes through the manipulation of information.

The European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission have made efforts to identify and counteract information manipulation operations, defining FIMI as “a **mostly non-illegal** pattern of behaviour that threatens or has the potential to **negatively impact values, procedures and political processes**. Such activity is **manipulative in character, conducted in an intentional and coordinated manner**. Actors of such activity can be **state or non-state actors**, including their proxies inside and outside of their own territory.”

#### Core features of FIMI

- ✓ **Targeted influence:** FIMI often focuses on weakening democratic resilience in specific regions or countries.
- ✓ **Multifaceted tactics:** combining elements of disinformation, propaganda, and cyber operations.
- ✓ **Cross-border operations:** Designed to influence both domestic and international audiences.

FIMI challenges the integrity of democratic systems by undermining transparency, accountability, and public trust.

It exploits digital platforms and information channels, making detection and prevention increasingly complex.

Countering FIMI requires international cooperation and comprehensive strategies that address its evolving nature.

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## FIMI studies and operations

FIMI studies have grown in the past years, as its negative effects on democracies have been extensively proven.

Disinformation —deliberately false information spread with an intent to harm—, malinformation —truthful information used maliciously—, and propaganda are widely recognized as tools employed to influence political, social, and economical landscapes.

Studies have explored how actors use these strategies to manipulate public opinion, disrupt democratic processes, and erode trust in institutions.

### Commonly studied FIMI operations:

- ✓ **Disinformation campaigns:** coordinated efforts to spread false narratives, often leveraging social media.
- ✓ **Propaganda:** systematic dissemination of biased information to achieve political or ideological goals.
- ✓ **Cyber operations:** hacking, phishing, and data leaks to compromise opponents and manipulate public discourse.

## Why information suppression matters

Information Suppression matters because despite the focus on studying information distortion, less attention has been paid to strategies aimed at controlling or eliminating access to information—a gap information suppression fills. Information suppression operates by silencing dissent, restricting knowledge, and eliminating critical narratives. It is a more insidious form of interference that denies individuals the ability to access or disseminate vital information, making it a critical area of study in understanding and countering FIMI.