

Say No to Russian Propaganda

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Vienna, Austria, on 3-4 of July 2026:

Notes with concern:

- Netflix's June 2026 licencing agreement, acquiring the rights to stream new seasons of controversial Russian cartoon Masha and the Bear across Europe;
- Masha's use as a Russian soft power tool, promoting Russian ideology and a positive, sanitised view of the country whilst it wages war in Ukraine;
- the open militarisation of children in the series, which includes the 4-year-old Masha wearing pieces of tank-crew and Soviet-era NKVD uniform;
- financial links between the Kremlin and Animaccord, the producing studio.

Noting:

- recent boycotts of Netflix by Ukrainian citizens;
- the Liberal Democrat campaign calling for the revocation of streaming licenses and stronger safeguards against propaganda in the United Kingdom;
- the Council of the EU's recent renewal of restrictions on Kremlin-backed disinformation outlets.

Reaffirms:

- ALDE's unwavering support for Ukraine and continued economic sanctions on Russia, including statesponsored cultural output;
- the importance of the Special Committee on the European Democracy Shield's work to improve the EU's capacity to tackle foreign information manipulation and hybrid threats.

Believes that:

- freedom of expression comes with a responsibility not to provide a platform for propaganda for a state actively waging war against a close ally;
- the use of children's media as propaganda is particularly sinister;
- parents in Europe should be confident that content viewed by their children has been subject to proper scrutiny;
- we should not fund Putin's war machine, directly or indirectly via taxation.

Calls for:

- the immediate suspension of streaming licences for Masha and the Bear by Netflix and European streamers and broadcasters;
- streaming platforms to strengthen content-review and due-diligence mechanisms;
- broadcasters to apply effective safeguards against authoritarian propaganda;
- state regulators to receive sufficient expertise and resources to ensure effective oversight.