



College of Europe  
Collège d'Europe



Natolin

## ECTS CARD

### STUDY PROGRAMME(S) / STUDY TRACK(S)

Master of Arts in European Interdisciplinary Studies  
Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs (Study Track: European Interdisciplinary Studies)

### YEAR

2026-2027

### COURSE TITLE

**Strategic Communication in a Digital Age**

### SEMESTER

1

### PROFESSOR(S)

KIMBER LINDWALL Anneli

### ACADEMIC ASSISTANT(S)

KIVI Emmi-Ilona

### COURSE TYPE

Contextual Course

### MAJOR(S)

Not applicable

### ECTS CREDITS

0

### TEACHING HOURS

8

### INDIVIDUAL & GROUP STUDY TIME

8

### TUTORIAL(S)

0

### COEFFICIENT

0

### LANGUAGE(S)

EN

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

The aim of the course is to deepen participants' understanding of the European Union's strategic communication in relation to its Eastern Neighbourhood and beyond, complemented by practical insights into communication strategy, campaign development, responding to disinformation, and the use of digital tools and AI.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, the students will be able to:

- 1) Understand the theory and application of strategic communication, while explaining how the EU and other international institutions have advanced their work in this domain (A3);
- 2) Critically analyse proactive communication, foreign information manipulation and interference, fact-checking, and the use of social media and AI, while applying these insights to the practical development of a communication campaign (B6, MATA2.4);
- 3) Examine how different EU institutions and Member States address these issues from a variety of perspectives (A3).

### RECOMMENDED PREPARATION

A list of suggested readings can be found below.

### TEACHING METHOD(S)

Teaching will integrate academic study with current practice, enabling students to develop and apply skills while gaining a strong understanding of the subject area, thereby enhancing their career

prospects in this field. Teaching materials include real-life examples such as digital communication campaigns run by the EU, an overview of the tools and methods employed by the EU and its Member States to counter foreign information manipulation campaigns, a digest of relevant fact-checking initiatives, and a list of useful references. Students will also explore how AI can be used responsibly to support campaign research, planning, content development and evaluation. Group work includes the development of a communication campaign, a simulation of a hybrid attack, and discussions on crisis communication. The classes employ real-time feedback to make exchanges more engaging, alongside discussions on analytical articles, topical videos, and relevant studies. The teaching approach is highly participatory and interactive, providing practical tips illustrated with case studies.

### ASSESSMENT METHOD(S)

The course will be assessed on a pass/fail basis based on:

1. A digital onsite multiple-choice, closed-book test (80% of the final score) at the end of the final course session - 15 minutes to answer 7 questions, and
2. Overall attendance (20% of the final score).

The weighted average of both assessment elements needs to be equal to or greater than 50% for a student to pass the course. Each student is entitled to retake the test once. The retake test will account for 80% of the final score, while overall attendance will account for the remaining 20%.

### COURSE CONTENTS

By 2026, strategic communication has become firmly established within the European Union as a vital component of effective policymaking, security and democratic resilience. EU institutions are working not only to counter disinformation and foreign information manipulation and interference, but also to communicate proactively, build trust and reach audiences in an increasingly fragmented and AI-shaped information environment. AI offers new possibilities for research, content creation and audience engagement, while also making it easier to produce misleading or manipulated text, images, audio and video at speed and scale.

But what exactly is strategic communication in this context? Is it a security policy, a communication practice or an area of research? How can institutions design campaigns that cut through the noise and connect with people? How can social media, online creators and AI be used effectively and responsibly? How can the EU respond to disinformation and AI-generated manipulation?

This course provides students with a practitioner's perspective on strategic communication, covering:

- The EU's approach to strategic communication in its Eastern Neighbourhood and beyond, with a focus on developing and delivering effective digital communication campaigns.
- Kremlin-led foreign information manipulation and interference as viewed from within EU institutions, including lessons from Russia's war against Ukraine and the growing use of AI-enabled content.
- Practical examples of EU communication campaigns, including how strategies are translated into messages, content and formats; how social media and online creators can help reach audiences; and how AI can support campaign research, planning, production and evaluation.
- Different responses and strategic communication activities undertaken by state actors and international organisations.

**Group work will include:**

1. Developing a communication strategy/campaign: How can its success be ensured online?
2. Responding to a hybrid attack: What are the key elements of crisis communication?

**COURSE MATERIALS** (readings and other learning resources/tools)

Assigned texts (see Course Outline) provide a general overview of the key concepts and developments in the field of strategic communication as well as on the EU's response to foreign information manipulation campaigns.