

BBC gets emergency funding to fight Russian disinformation

The government is giving the BBC World Service emergency funding to help it continue bringing independent, impartial and accurate news to people in Ukraine and Russia in the face of increased propaganda from the Russian state.

BBC World Service will receive an additional £4.1 million in emergency funding to support its Ukrainian and Russian language services in the region, and to help it increase trusted and independent content to counter disinformation about the war in Ukraine.

BBC World Service channels – including TV, radio and digital – play an increasingly valuable role in challenging the Kremlin's disinformation, but it is facing additional costs from operating within a military conflict and due to a crackdown on independent reporting in Russia.

Following a BBC request, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will provide the extra funding to cover urgent and unexpected costs that have arisen as a result of the conflict.

This will help the BBC to relocate staff and operations to safe locations to ensure the resilience of their services and that they continue to reach people in Russia and Ukraine.

The BBC will also use the funding to continue expanding new and more widely accessible content, delivered through a range of channels, to tackle disinformation and to help local audiences circumvent the Kremlin's media restrictions and continue to access the BBC's journalism.

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

The Government is providing the BBC with an additional £4.1 million in emergency funding to help the World Service broadcast directly into Ukraine and Russia.

In scenes reminiscent of 80 years ago, the BBC will ensure that audiences in the region can continue to access independent news reporting in the face of systemic propaganda from a dictator waging war on European soil. It's vital we lift the veil on and expose the barbaric actions of Putin's forces.

Minister for Europe and North America, James Cleverly said:

Britain is calling out Putin's lies and exposing his propaganda and

fake news.

This new funding will help strengthen the BBC's impartial voice in Russia and Ukraine, which is critical to counter Russian disinformation and will help ensure we win the battle for the airwaves.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

The World Service receives funding from the BBC's licence fee income, in addition to grant funding directly from the FCDO. The World Service's Spending Review settlement for the period 2022 to 2025 from the FCDO will be confirmed shortly.

The Culture Secretary made it clear to the BBC in her letter confirming the final licence fee settlement that the BBC should continue to make a substantive investment from the licence fee into the World Service to ensure that it continues to effectively reflect the United Kingdom, its culture and values to the world – in English and through its language services.