

# DISINFORMATION TRENDS MONITORING SNAPSHOT 3

15-30 October 2024



## SUMMARY



DFRLab conducts a bimonthly analysis of monitoring periods from a search query including Ukrainian, Russian and English languages to identify when spikes of CBRN disinformation narratives are spreading. This report (15-30 October) saw a **wave of claims that Ukraine is developing a "dirty bomb,"** echoing Russian officials' statements; **allegations of Chlorine use by the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU)** in the Kursk region; **claims about Ukraine receiving nuclear weapons from NATO;** as well as **allegations of joint UK and Ukraine sabotage plans targeting Russian nuclear power plants (NPPs).**



### CHEMICAL DISINFORMATION:

*Allegations about Ukraine's use of chemical weapons, in part to draw in Western intervention*



### BIOLOGICAL DISINFORMATION:

*Claims about the nature of vaccines as biological weapons*



### RADIOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR DISINFORMATION:

*Claims about Ukraine's capability to develop a "dirty bomb" and speculations about NATO-provided nuclear weapons*

## EXAMPLES OF DISINFORMATION NARRATIVE TRENDS

### CHEMICAL DISINFORMATION

Sources: Telegram; Twitter/X

- Allegations of Ukraine using chlorine gas in Kursk oblast ([link](#))
- Accusations of Ukraine using chemical weapons provocations to draw in Western intervention

## BIOLOGICAL DISINFORMATION

Sources:  [Twitter/X](#)

- Russia's upgraded military biological research facility and the link to bioweapons disinformation in Ukraine
- Claims about COVID-19 vaccines being developed as biological weapons

## RADIOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR DISINFORMATION

Sources:  [Telegram](#);  [Twitter/X](#)

- Multiple unfounded claims about Ukraine's capacity and desire to develop a "dirty bomb"
- Repeated allegations about Ukraine's nuclear weapon development plans voiced by Dmitry Medvedev ([link](#))
- Allegations that Ukraine is provoking Russia for a nuclear strike by developing its own nuclear capacity ([link](#))
- Claims about Ukraine potentially receiving nuclear weapons from NATO and twisting of Zelensky's statements about requiring either NATO membership or nuclear weapons
- Unfounded allegations of UK/Ukraine joint sabotage plans targeting Russian NPPs ([link](#))



## IDENTIFYING DISINFORMATION TRENDS

The Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (GP) is committed to strengthening WMD disarmament and nonproliferation efforts. Disinformation campaigns significantly undermine cooperative threat reduction efforts. The GP Counter WMD Disinformation Initiative aims to track ongoing narratives, understand their impacts and counter state-sponsored or state-adjacent disinformation across Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) threats.

**Narrative Trend Monitoring:** As part of the GP efforts to identify, understand, and mitigate hostile CBRN disinformation, the Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab (DFRLab) conducts a bimonthly search query of state-sponsored or state-adjacent disinformation narratives. This real-time detection allows the initiative to swiftly recognize, isolate and respond to disinformation narratives and networks as they occur.

**Methodology:** This snapshot report is created from a search query that includes content in Ukrainian, Russian, and English languages, providing an extended search base and corpus of analysis and scale. The focus of the query is centered around CBRN-related messages about the Russian War on Ukraine on social media platforms and online news websites. The report provides examples of notable messages that are likely to include disinformation or key discussions that might be used in mis/disinformation in the future.

*Disclaimer: Links are provided for published news sources of official state accounts; links to private accounts are excluded for privacy preservation reasons.*