

DISINFORMATION TRENDS MONITORING SNAPSHOT 12



4 - 17 March 2025

SUMMARY



DFRLab conducts a **bimonthly analysis** of data based on a search query including Ukrainian, Russian, and English languages to identify spikes in CBRN disinformation narratives. This report (4 – 17 March 2025) reveals an **influx of nuclear-related narratives** on both Telegram and X (formerly Twitter), with some of the key narratives **speculating about the ownership of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant (NPP)** in the context of Ukraine/Russia peace talks, a narrative about the **sale of Ukrainian NPPs to the UK** by Zelensky's administration being tracked for the first time, and general chatter about **desires for nuclear weapon acquisition by various states**. Biological narratives have experienced a **significant dip**, with a lower number of **claims of US-funded biolabs in Ukraine** appearing across predominantly X (with a few noticed on Telegram).



BIOLOGICAL DISINFORMATION:

Few narratives about US-funded biolabs in Ukraine



RADIOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR DISINFORMATION:

Wave of narratives fear mongering possibility of nuclear escalation, claiming sale of Ukrainian NPPs, and speculation about ZNPP ownership

EXAMPLES OF DISINFORMATION NARRATIVE TRENDS

BIOLOGICAL DISINFORMATION

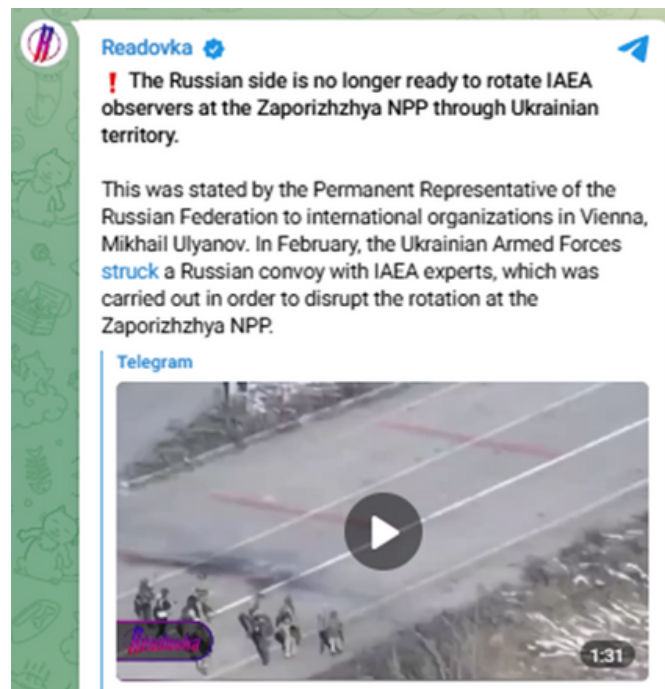
Sources: Telegram; X Twitter/X

- Claims the Pentagon admitted to presence of 46 US-funded biolabs in Ukraine
 - Claims Ukrainian biolabs could have been used to unleash a pandemic that would destabilize Russia
 - Claims about USAID funding bioweapon development in Ukraine
 - Claims Zelensky can't let the war end because it is used as cover up for US bioweapon development in Ukraine

RADIOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR DISINFORMATION

Sources: ◀ Telegram; ✕ Twitter/X; 🌐 Web Articles

- Claims Zelensky has sold off Ukrainian NPPs to the United Kingdom
- Extended chatter about the possibility of nuclear weapon development or acquisition by a number of states including Lithuania, Poland and Germany
 - Used as instrument of fearmongering by Russian messaging to promote ideas of nuclear escalation
 - Speculation about possibility of acquisition of nuclear weapons by Ukraine
 - Calls for nuclear weapon acquisition
- Continued narrative speculating about dangers of shift changes of IAEA through Ukrainian territory
- Claims that the drone attacks endangering Kursk NPP was orchestrated by Ukraine to act as a lever in peace talks
 - Additional claims that a drone attack of this scale could lead to nuclear weapon use by Russia



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.