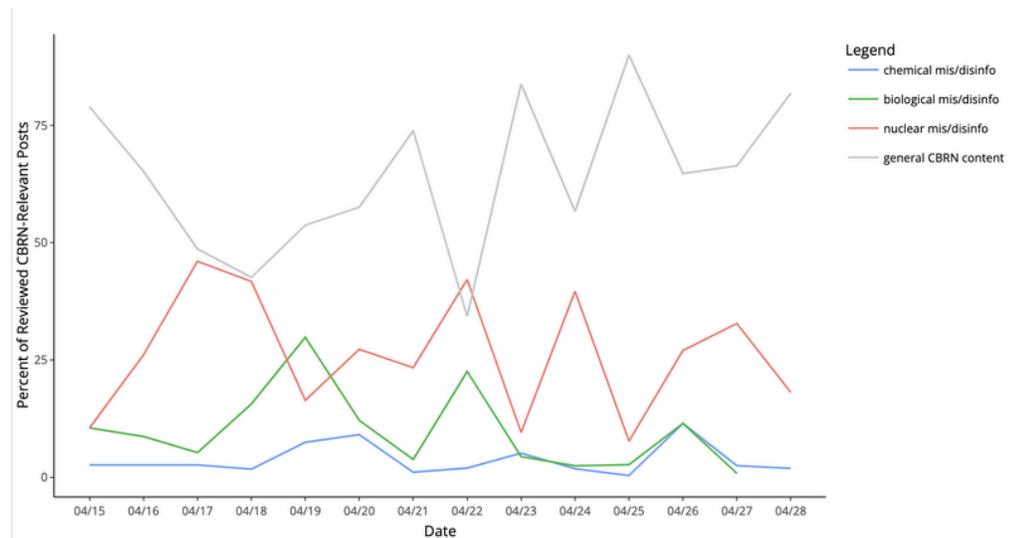# DISINFORMATION TRENDS
MONITORING SNAPSHOT 15

15 - 28 April 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 (15 – 28 April 2025) reveals an **increase in volume of nuclear-related narratives** and chatter on both Telegram and X (formerly Twitter) focused on discourse around **ownership of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant (ZNPP)** following leaks of a proposed US peace plan. Another major topic is **speculation surrounding the possibility that Ukraine is developing a "dirty bomb"** based on its purchase of a medication intended to counteract radiological poisoning from an Israeli manufacturer. Additionally, a large portion of the chatter this monitoring period was occupied by messages talking about the **probability of nuclear escalation between India and Pakistan** following the Pahalgam terrorist attack. Most biological narratives centered around claims tied to the **Covid-19 virus and vaccines**, falsely labeling them as bioweapons. Some individual messages spoke about the alleged use of vaccines as bioweapons in Africa, claims of bioweapon use against Hungary, and the presence of biolabs in Ukraine. This monitoring period has seen a small resurgence of chemical weapon narratives, with a narrative about an **alleged joint provocation between MI-6 and Ukraine against Russia**, implying the possible use of chemical weapons.
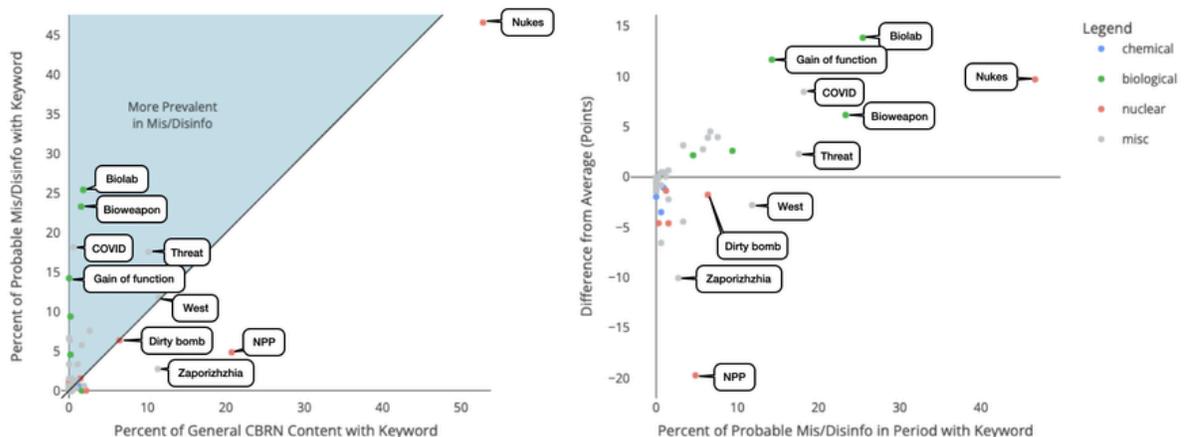
Percent of social media posts reviewed grouped by type of WMD disinformation

This graph displays the daily percentage of manually reviewed CBRN-related content comprised of probable mis/disinformation focused on each type of WMD compared to general WMD chatter that is circulating

Prevalence of Specific Keywords in CBRN Disinformation from two week monitoring period relative to prior monitoring period
Keywords above the line were mentioned in an above average number of posts, while keywords below the line were discussed less frequently than usual.

EXAMPLES OF DISINFORMATION NARRATIVE TRENDS

BIOLOGICAL DISINFORMATION

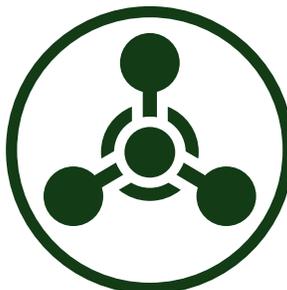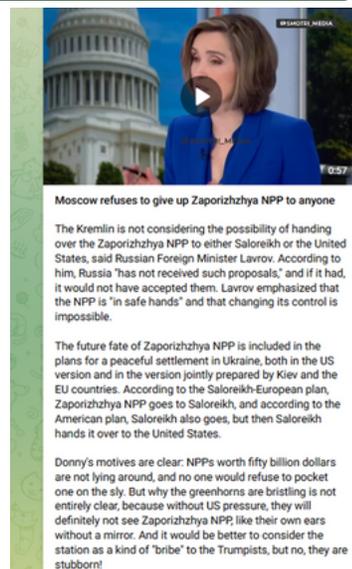*Sources:* X *Twitter|X;*   *Telegram*

- Claims about Covid-19 and vaccines as bioweapons with mention of biolabs in Ukraine
- Claims vaccines in Africa were used as bioweapons
- Resurgence of disinformation stating a disease outbreak in Hungary is a biological attack

RADIOLOGICAL & NUCLEAR DISINFO

Sources: X   *Twitter|X;* ◁ *Telegram;*

- Discussions around leaked conditions of a peace treaty proposed by the US mentioning ownership of ZNPP (link, link), including Russia's response to suggestion that ZNPP would be returned to Ukraine
- Claims Ukraine was preparing for the development of a "dirty bomb" due to their purchase of radiology medication from an Israeli manufacturer
- Claims Ukraine tried to attack ZNPP with a drone (link)
- Chatter about Bulgaria's decision not to sell NPP equipment to Ukraine
- Russian statements about ability to choose the nuclear option if threatened by the West

Moscow refuses to give up Zaporizhzhya NPP to anyone

The Kremlin is not considering the possibility of handing over the Zaporizhzhya NPP to either Saloreikh or the United States, said Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov. According to him, Russia "has not received such proposals," and if it had, it would not have accepted them. Lavrov emphasized that the NPP is "in safe hands" and that changing its control is impossible.

The future fate of Zaporizhzhya NPP is included in the plans for a peaceful settlement in Ukraine, both in the US version and in the version jointly prepared by Kiev and the EU countries. According to the Saloreikh-European plan, Zaporizhzhya NPP goes to Saloreikh, and according to the American plan, Saloreikh also goes, but then Saloreikh hands it over to the United States.

Donny's motives are clear: NPPs worth fifty billion dollars are not lying around, and no one would refuse to pocket one on the sly. But why the greenhorns are bristling is not entirely clear, because without US pressure, they will definitely not see Zaporizhzhya NPP, like their own ears without a mirror. And it would be better to consider the station as a kind of "bribe" to the Trumpists, but no, they are stubborn!

CHEMICAL DISINFO

Sources: X *Twitter|X;* ◁ *Telegram*

- Claims MI-6 joint with Ukraine is planning a provocation against Russia with one of the possibilities involving chemical weapons or a chemical attack against Russia (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.

DFRLab

Canada