

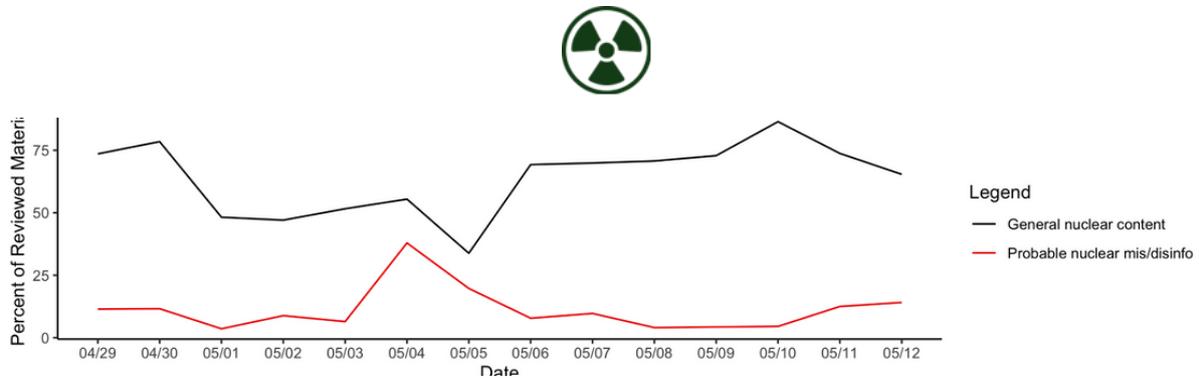


Summary

DFRLab conducts a **weekly** of data based on a search query including **Ukrainian, Russian and English languages** to identify when spikes of in CBRN disinformation narratives are spreading on **Telegram, X, and web**. DFRLab tracks both:

- **Chatter** – official statements, transcriptions of official statements provided with no commentary, news items presented in a factual manner
- And **disinformation** – factually untrue statements and messages manipulating facts, presenting a strong emotional case or call to action aimed at changing policy.

This report (**April 29 - May 12, 2025**) reveals:



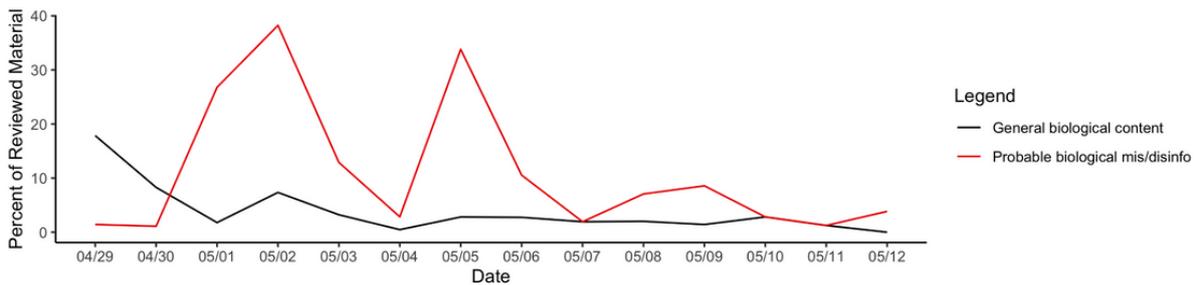
Nuclear chatter	Nuclear disinformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in volume of nuclear-related chatter on both Telegram and X (formerly Twitter) focused on discussion of the conflict between India and Pakistan, mentioning their nuclear status and possibility of nuclear escalation; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discussion spearheaded on both X and Telegram; ○ Some posts display signs of fearmongering and manipulation of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued narratives about Ukraine’s alleged attacks against ZNPP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Russian military bloggers and correspondents on Telegram regularly share claims about drone attacks manned by the Armed Forces of Ukraine against nuclear facilities around Energodar (location of ZNPP); ○ In this period, users like @dva_majors reiterated regular AFU shelling claims

the countries' nuclear status to imply the coming of WWII but most posts are neutral or not centered on WMD.

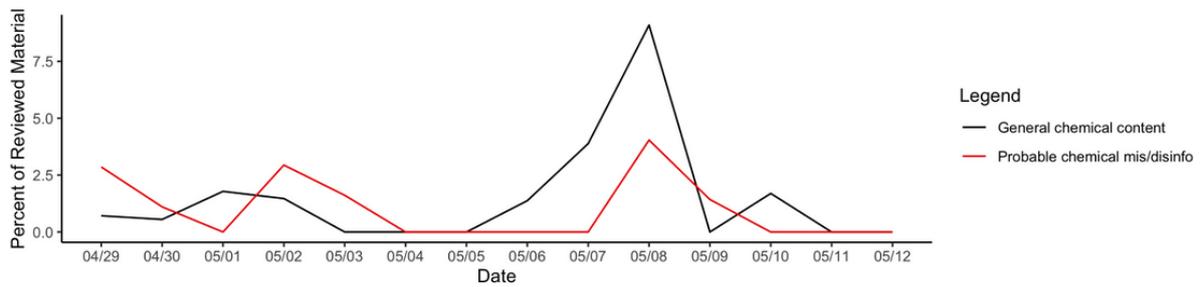
- **Ownership of Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant (NPP) continues to be a topic of chatter** centered around potential Ukraine and Russia peace talks;
 - This period there was mention of the possibility of Russia agreeing to American management of the plant.

when mentioning ZNPP ownership disputes:

- *"Well, as for Zaporizhzhya NPP itself, it has long been working "for itself" due to constant strikes by the Ukrainian Armed Forces. All 6 units are in a state of "cold shutdown"'"*



Biological chatter	Biological disinformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This period denoted a lack of biological chatter – however, we have seen a spike of amplification of US officials' statements by Russian sources; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reposts and duplication of statements by Tulsi Gabbard on US-funded biolabs in Ukraine; ○ While this topic regularly appears on accounts of malicious actors, it receives a significant spike with every mention by a high-level official. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Many biological narratives still centered around claims tied to the Covid-19 virus and vaccines, labeling them as bioweapons; ● Significant spike in narratives claiming the presence of biolabs in Ukraine.

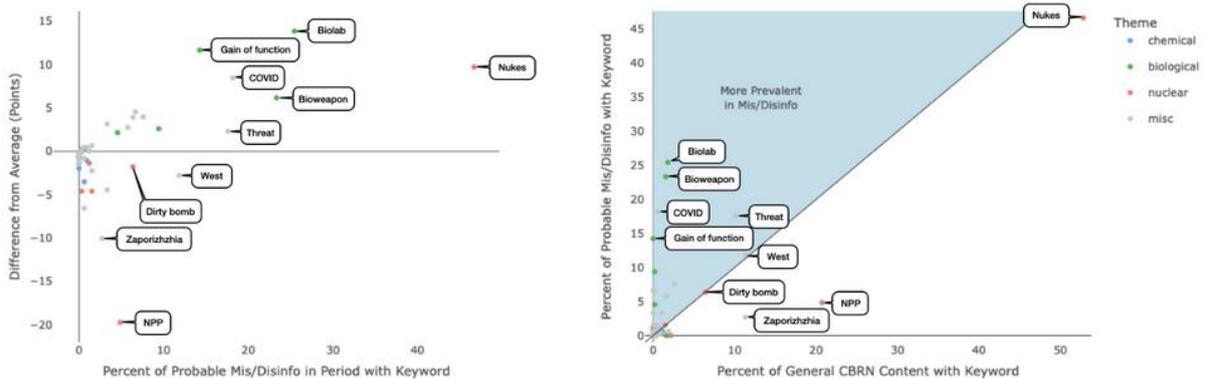


Chemical chatter and disinformation

It is worth noting that during the monitoring period the chemical disinformation experienced a significant dip and petered out entirely during two separate time periods. The chatter experienced a spike associated with the first official statement from the European Union blaming Russia for use of chemical weapons in Ukraine.

Dominant keywords

This period we see a rise in messages mentioning nukes or nuclear weapons – however, the rise in nuclear disinformation is proportional and connected to the general rise in chatter messages about nuclear weapons.



Prevalence of Keywords in CBRN Disinformation from monitoring period relative to prior periods

(Keywords above the line were mentioned in an above average number of posts, while keywords below the line were discussed less frequently than usual. Note that each keyword accounts for variation in the term. For example, “NPP” captures not only the acronym, but also “nuclear power plant” and “nuclear plant” across all three languages.)

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 tailored search queries that includes content in Ukrainian, Russian, and English languages, providing an extended search base and corpus of analysis and scale. The results of the query are exported and stored in standardized file formats. DFRLab then extracts a standard subset of the results for manual review. This material consists of 1000 top posts from X and Telegram.

The 1000 posts output by the data preparation step are manually reviewed to determine whether they are 'relevant' (part of general CBRN discussion/ "chatter") and 'in-scope' (probable mis/disinformation).

Relevance: Relevant posts are either *specifically about CBRN/WMD issues or include substantial discussion of them*, even if the main topic is something else. A post would *not* be relevant if it:

- uses CBRN terms figuratively (ex. "That cold snap totally *nuked* my vegetable garden!");
- hijacks CBRN hashtags to farm engagement (ex. "GlorpCoin is the hottest new crypto on the market. Buy now!!! #biolab);
- briefly mentions CBRN as a descriptor or aside (ex. A lengthy post that contains the phrase "nuclear weapons state" once and no other mention of CBRN/WMD.);
- is written in a language other than English, Ukrainian, or Russian.

Scope: Posts are in scope if they *discuss CBRN/WMD in an emotionally charged or otherwise sensationalist way meant to provoke a negative audience reaction or political change*. A post may be in scope if it:

- speculates or fearmongers about CBRN development and/or use;
- calls for CBRN proliferation and/or use;
- fearmongers about nuclear escalation;
- uses the possibility of CBRN deployment to call for policy change.

A post is likely *not* in scope if it:

- jokes about CBRN with no clear disinformation motive or call to action;

- presents information or news about CBRN in a neutral, factual tone;
- describes historical facts about WMD development/use without tying them to current events.