

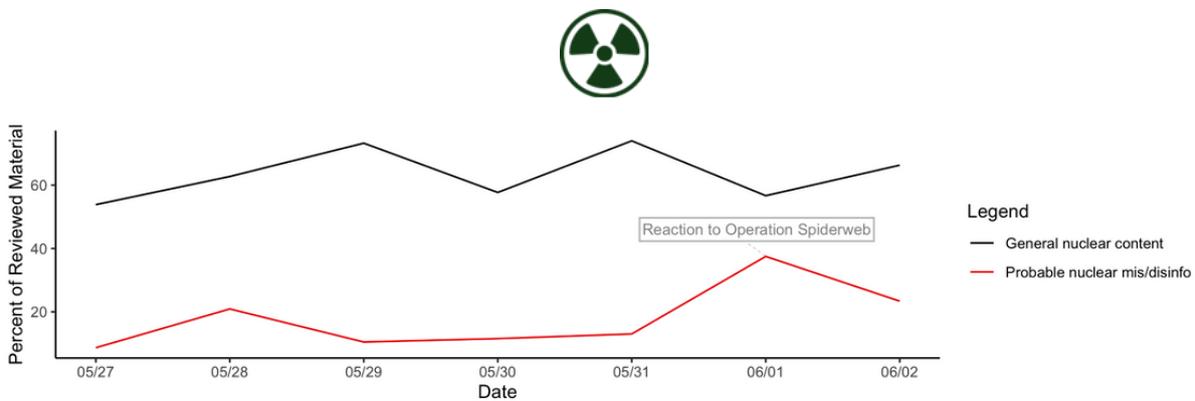


Summary

DFRLab conducts a **weekly** review of data produced by a search query including **Ukrainian, Russian and English languages** to identify when spikes of CBRN disinformation narratives are spreading on **Telegram, X, and the 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 (**May 27 - June 2, 2025**) reveals:

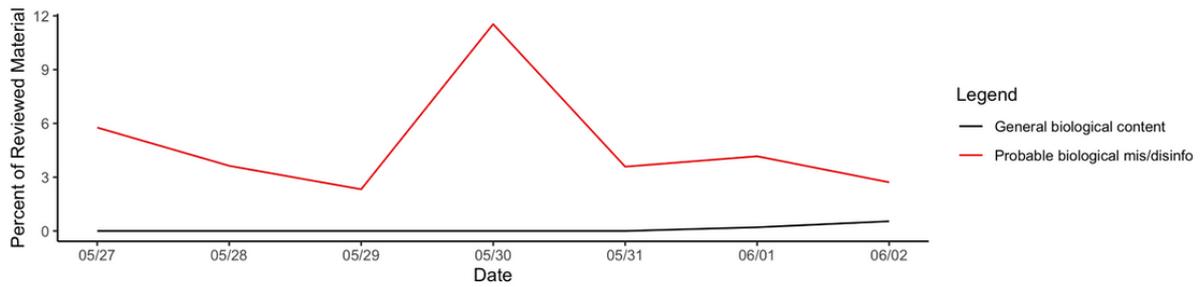


Nuclear chatter	Nuclear disinformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domination of chatter and disinformation narratives on both Telegram and X (formerly Twitter) about the Ukrainian drone strike against airfields in Russia, which destroyed and damaged a significant number of aircraft, including Tu-92 and SS-160 capable of holding a nuclear charge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls for nuclear escalation following the Ukrainian attack against Russian airfields; • Claims about possible NATO/West involvement in the preparation of the attack; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>“Yesterday Ukrainians with obvious support of NATO have attacked Russian nuclear weapon planes. It doesn't matter they failed. According to Russian nuclear doctrine now Moscow</i>

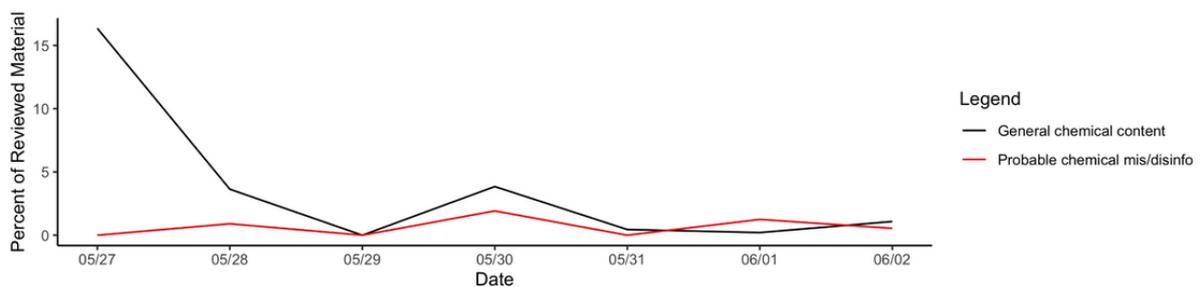
- Ongoing discussion of the **integration of the Zaporizhzhia NPP into the Russian electrical grid**;
- Chatter about a statement from a retired British Army Colonel Richard Kemp, claiming **Ukraine should develop its own nuclear weapons**:
 - *"Kemp stressed that the UK should either develop tactical nuclear weapons for Kiev on its own or help Ukraine restore its own nuclear potential. He recalled that Kiev gave up its arsenal in exchange for security guarantees from the West - and, in his opinion, these promises were not fulfilled."*

has to (not just can - it has to!) retaliate. Did Trump want that? Was he elected to tolerate that?"

- Following the attacks against the airfield, a number of claims about an **attack against Severomorsk** in Russia, where Russian nuclear submarines are housed. Notably, these **claims were later debunked by Russian propagandists** themselves and several channels issued corrections;
- Using a statement from retired British Army Colonel Richard Kemp calling for development of nuclear weapons in Ukraine to **fearmonger and imply escalation towards WWII**:
 - *"Calls for the return of nuclear weapons to Ukraine are not just irresponsible fantasies. They are direct incitement to a new arms race, fraught with catastrophic consequences - especially given the recklessness of the Kiev regime and its penchant for adventures. Is London really ready to play with fire, risking the security of the entire world?"*
- Claims of Armed Forces of Ukraine (**AFU**) **attacks against several NPPs in Russia**, including Kursk.



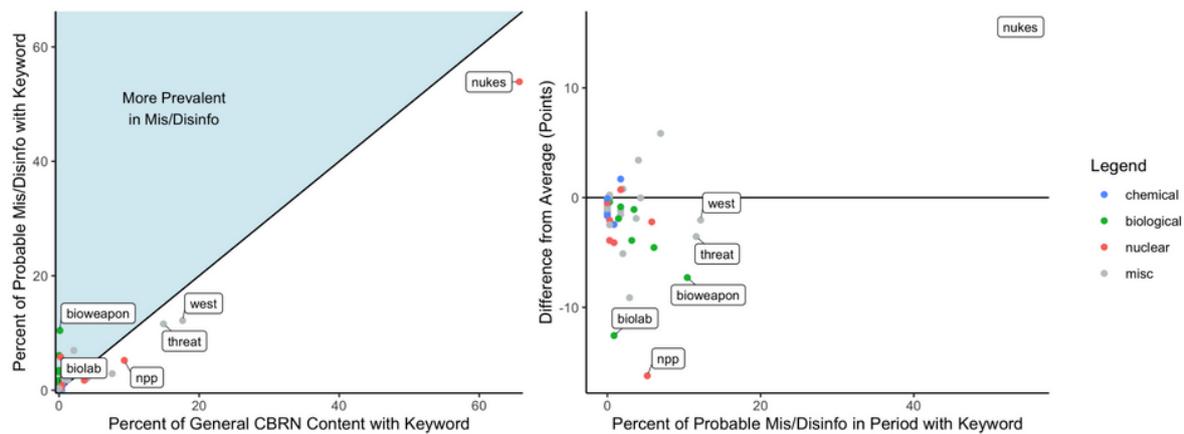
Biological chatter	Biological disinformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">This period denoted a continued lack of significant biological chatter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Claims about biolabs in Ukraine continued at a lower volume;Continued discourse and claims of Covid-19 and the mRNA vaccines being developed as bioweapons.



This monitoring period did not identify chemical chatter or narratives, outside of a few neutral mentions of use of chemical weapons in Syria.

Dominant keywords

This period sees a rise in messages mentioning nukes or nuclear weapons, related to the general spike in conversation around the Ukrainian drone strike against the Russian airfields. There is also a continued downward trend in narratives about biolabs and bioweapons, with this period reporting lower numbers than usual.



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.