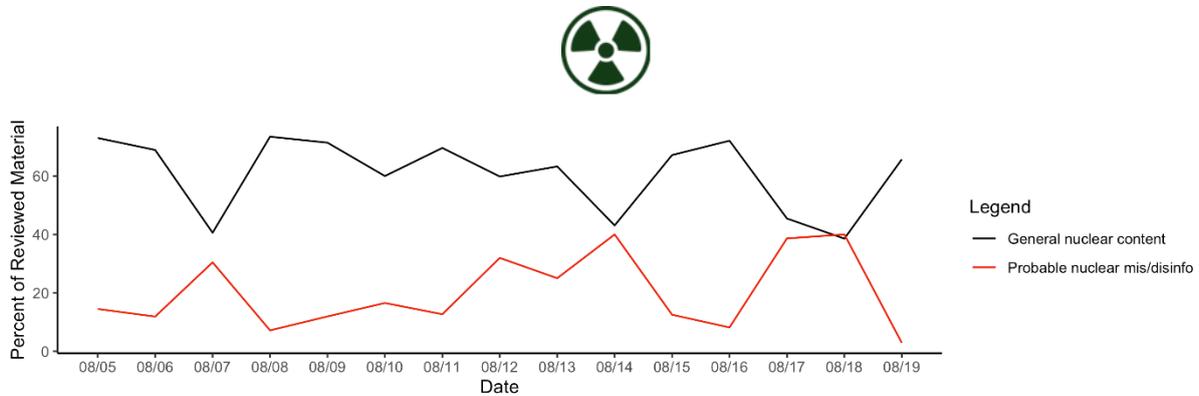## Summary

DFRLab conducts a **weekly** review of data based on a search query including **Ukrainian, Russian and English languages** to identify when spikes of 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.
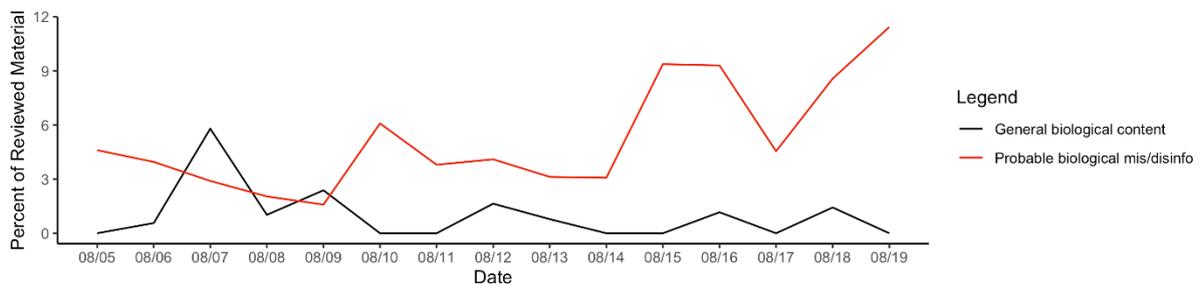
This report (**August 5 - August 19, 2025**) reveals:

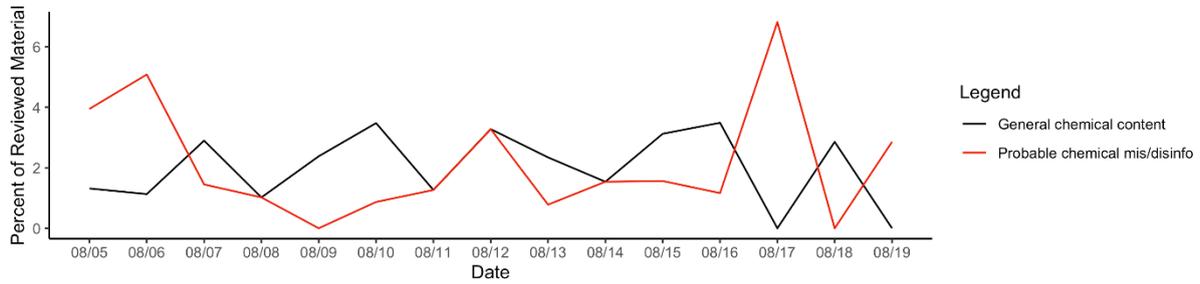| Nuclear chatter	Nuclear disinformation
Discussion about positive impacts of talks between the US and Russia as nuclear powers, which could lead to normalization in the international nuclear space; **Continued discussion about President Trump's decision to deploy nuclear submarines closer to Russia** in response to Medvedev's online nuclear threats;	**Claims Ukraine is creating provocations, including attacks against NPPs**, to push Western states away from talks with Russia; **Claims of Ukrainian attacks against Zaporizhzhia NPP** and claims about smoke around ZNPP and potential damage; **Claims a Ukrainian drone flying over Smolensk NPP detonated after being shot**

- News about China's deployment of a new submarine model for patrolling;
- **Discussion about potential territorial changes from Ukraine-Russia peace talks** and their implications for the future of Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant;
- Discussion about training on Oreshnik deployment during West 2025 military exercises in Belarus;
- Discussion about NASA speeding up development of an NPP on the moon;
- Discussion about Japan's ownership of plutonium that could be used for military purposes;
- Claims Iranian scientists secretly travel to Russia to get information on nuclear weapon creation, suggesting illicit nuclear cooperation.
- **down**, allegedly blowing out windows in power block 3 building;
- Claims about a covered-up leak of irradiated water from a nuclear weapon storage facility in the United Kingdom.

Biological disinformation

- Claims the US was using biolabs in Ukraine to develop bioweapons;
- Claims Israel is conducting biological warfare against Gaza by poisoning aid with carcinogenic toxins.
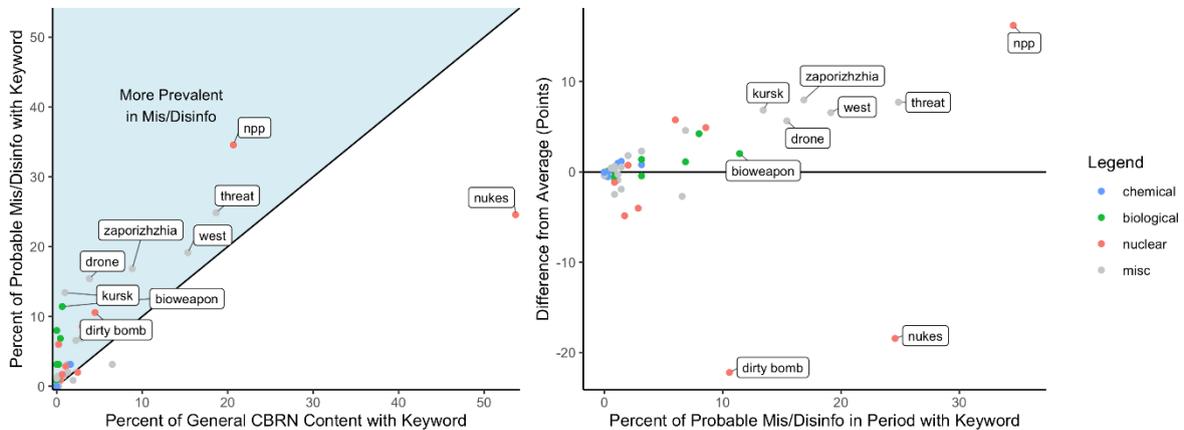
Chemical disinformation

- Claims agricultural chemicals sprayed over crops are used as chemical weapons;
- Claims Yemeni forces seized a shipment of weapons, including chemical weapons, heading to the Houthis.

Dominant keywords

During this period we have seen some increase in the use of the keyword NPP – aligning with the general findings from the messages, which frequently mention Zaporizhzhia and other NPPs.

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.