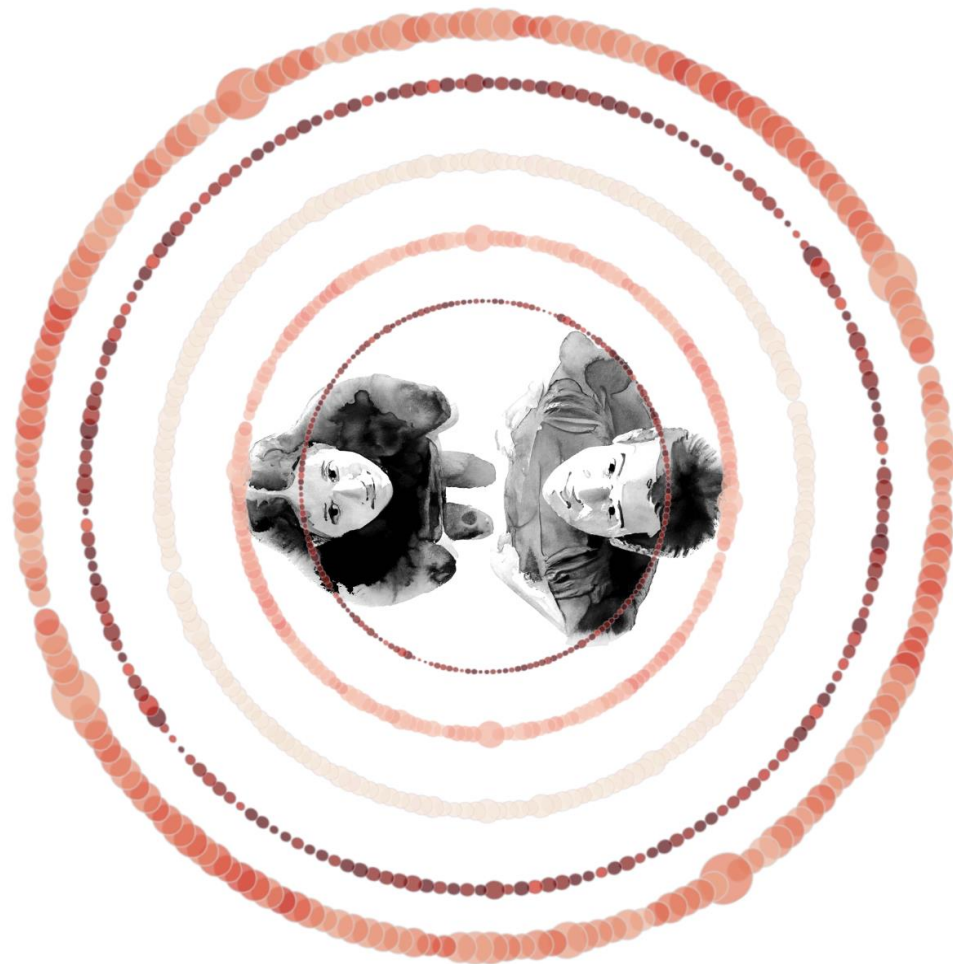


TEXTY.ORG.UA

Battle for Minds: Russian Campaigns to Discredit NATO and the EU in Ukraine

Serhii Mikhalkov
Disinformation Researcher



Texty.org.ua mostly write about

01

War and military
actions

02

The impact of war on
people's everyday lives

03

Environmental
impact

04

Decommunization,
decolonization of Ukrainian
culture and politics

05

Disinformation and Russian
influence in Ukraine, the EU and
the USA

2012-2013

Anti-Western propaganda is one of the key ideological foundations of the Russian state

Swedes Protest Against NATO while Germans Want Cheap Russian Energy Back. Russian Media Monitoring Report, 17-23 April 2023

2023-05-01

16:01

Russian media keep saying that the Ukrainian counteroffensive is doomed. Last week, the propagandists claimed that Russian army excels at defensive warfare. The disinformation media tried to exonerate Wagner PMC after the testimony of former mercenaries sharing grim details of murders of Ukrainian

UKRAINIAN MAIDAN WAS A COUP DON'T PROVOCATE RUSSIA. BEWARE OF WW3 PROXY WAR UKRAINE CANNOT MILITARILY DEFEAT RUSSIA
THE US IS AT WAR WITH RUSSIA FORCE UKRAINE TO NEGOTIATE NATO/USA/UKRAINE IS ALSO GUILTY IN THIS WAR
ORGAN TRAFFICKING IN UKRAINE CRIMEA IS AN ETHNIC RUSSIAN AUTONOMY FOR DONBAS IN FUTURE
UKRAINE IS TARGETING CIVILIANS IN RUSSIA THERE WASN'T A "UKRAINE" FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS DONBAS WAR WAS A CIVIL WAR
UKRAINE IS ALSO GUILTY OF THIS WAR UKRAINE LOST 350 000 PEOPLE UKRAINE IS TARGETING DONBAS BIOLABS IN UKRAINE
UKRAINE IS TOTALLY CORRUPTED
NATO ENLARGEMENT WAS THE REASON FOR THE WAR ZELENSKY IS A FASCIST ZELENSKY/UKRAINIAN GOVERNMENT IS A US PUPPET
UKRAINE HAS KILLED 14 000 RUSSIANS IN DONBAS WAR CRIMES COMMITTED BY UKRAINE PUTIN PROTECTS CHRISTIANITY FROM THE WEST
UKRAINE IS DIVIDED HELP ISRAEL, NOT UKRAINE DONBAS IS AN ETHNIC RUSSIAN PEACEFUL RUSSIA UKRAINE IS TARGETING CIVILIANS
DONBASS AND CRIMEA ARE RUSSIAN UKRAINIANS SET UP MILITARY BASES ON CIVILIAN FACILITIES
THE BUCHA MASSACRE IS STAGED UKRAINE DESTROYED KAKHOVKA DAM NO NATO MEMBERSHIP FOR UKRAINE ZELENSKY IS CORRUPTED
UKRAINIAN STRIKES ON THE TERRITORY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ARE TERRORISM ORTHODOX CHURCH UNDER ATTACK IN UKRAINE
HOLODOMOR IS A PROPAGANDA UKRAINIAN STRIKES ON THE TERRITORY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION (+ UKRAINIAN CRIMEA) ARE TERRORISM
GLORY TO UKRAINE - A NAZI SLOGAN UKRAINE IS BOMBING DONBAS RUSSIA WILL NOT SUFFER AS A RESULT OF OUR SANCTIONS
FEWER WEAPONS FOR UKRAINE UKRAINIANS AND RUSSIANS ARE BROTHERS PRO-RUSSIAN CITIZENS IN UKRAINE ARE BEING TORTURED
THE BUCHA MASSACRE IS CONTROVERSIAL UKRAINE BOMBS ZAPORIZHZHIA NUCLEAR POWER PLANT THE GREATNESS OF RUSSIAN WEAPONS
THE USA SHOULD LEAVE NATO AMERICAN AID IS STOLEN IN UKRAINE DENYING THE SUBJECTIVITY OF UKRAINE
DELIVER PARTIAL "VICTORY" TO RUSSIA NATO/USA DON'T NEED UKRAINE THERE WAS NO UKRAINE TILL 1991 SACRIFICE TERRITORY FOR AUTONOMY
THE USA IS ALSO GUILTY IN THIS WAR (ESCALATION) NO NATO MEMBERSHIP FOR UKRAINE SANCTIONS HARM ORDINARY RUSSIAN CIVILIANS
UKRAINE IS A CRIMINAL WAR STATE RUSSIA DIDN'T SHOOT DOWN MALAYSIA AIRLINES FLIGHT 17 SUPPORT CRIMEAN AND DONBAS REFERENDUM

I. Russian Propaganda: Adaptation and Change in Ukraine

01 Today, Russian propaganda cannot promote the concept of the 'Russian world' in Ukraine. Therefore, another strategy has been chosen.

02 Russia no longer tries to present itself as the best country. Instead, its efforts focus on discrediting Ukraine as a state, portraying the Ukrainian government as illegitimate, and undermining Ukraine's foreign policy course

03 The primary task of Russian propaganda is to shift the blame for starting the war onto others. The main targets are the central Ukrainian government and NATO/the West

I. Russian Propaganda: Adaptation and Change in Ukraine

04 To weaken Ukraine's active resistance to Russia, the anger of Ukrainians must be diverted to a new target, making the current enemy lose its significance. This is a complex operation that requires preliminary work to weaken resistance

2012-2013

05 Operations are being carried out to undermine people's confidence in the government's honesty. If doubts about the truthfulness of the leadership and the military elite are sowed, it becomes a powerful weapon of disintegration

06 It is crucial to sow doubts about the sincerity of Ukraine's allies, particularly NATO and the West, to undermine trust and confidence in their support

II. Narratives that do not find support in Ukraine

01 | NATO attacked
Russia using
Ukraine as a proxy

2012-2013

03 | Russia wants peace, while
the West wants war

02 | The leadership of Ukraine is
under full control of Western
countries

04 | NATO/EU
countries want to
divide Ukraine

III. Narratives that resonate in Ukraine

01 | Russia is waging war against NATO/the West in Ukraine

02 | The West will make a deal with Russia in its own favor at Ukraine's

03 | NATO/the West is using Ukraine to achieve its own selfish goals

04 | Ukraine could have negotiated peace with Russia in the spring of 2022

IV. Narratives: old ones, those born during the war

Ukraine's accession to NATO will lead to World War III

The West forcefully imposes liberal and LGBTQ+ values

Ukraine wanted to join NATO, and Russia could not allow it because it would violate its national security system

Ukraine should not become a member of NATO because it will cause even more confrontation

Ukraine and Russia are brotherly nations, and the Ukrainian government has spoiled relations between them

The Maidan was provoked by the West. Maidan was an unconstitutional coup

Ukraine/Zelensky is a US puppet

Kyiv authorities started a civil war in Ukraine to suppress protests in the East of the country, under the direction of the West

A network of secret American biolabs operated on the territory of Ukraine

The West seeks to take control of Ukraine's resources

Poland, Hungary, and Romania want to divide Ukrainian lands

Russia does not threaten Ukrainians but merely seeks to unite forces with them in a crusade against the West, which has conspired with the most insignificant politicians to exploit Ukrainian blood for its own selfish goals

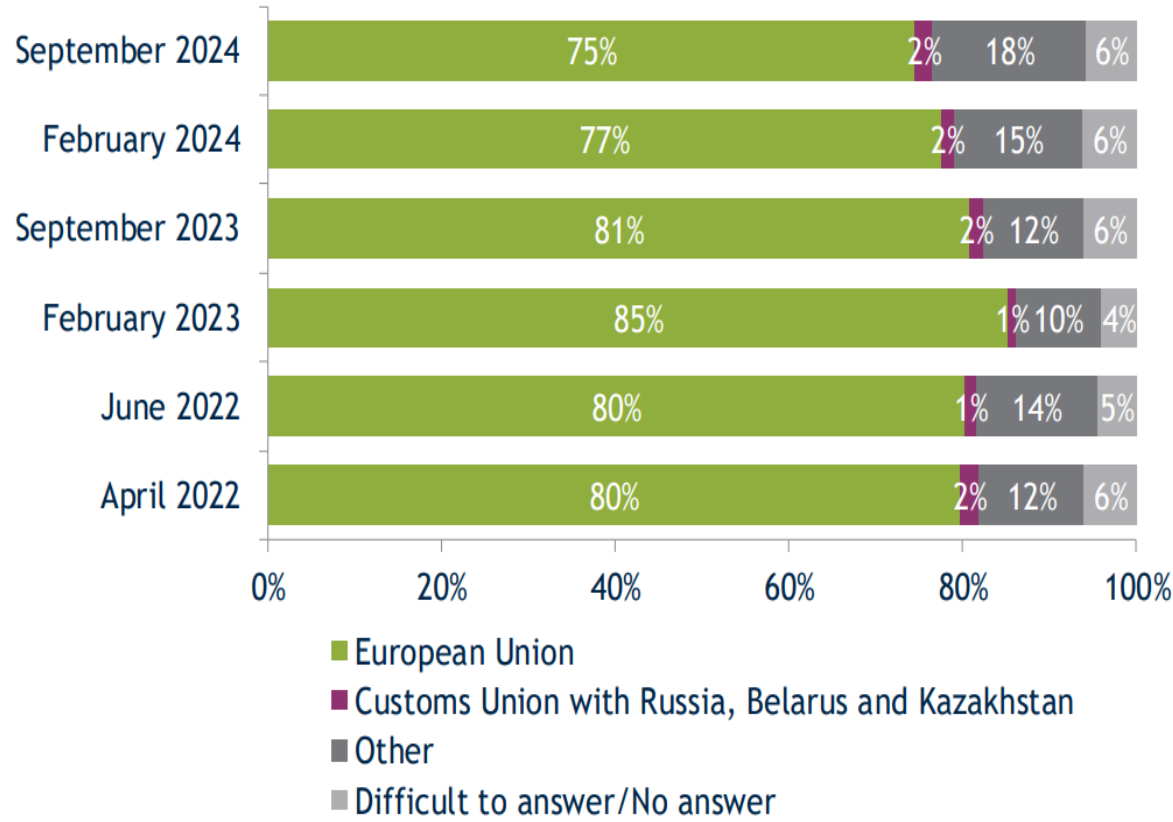
Putin is defending the Orthodox religion. And NATO, the West, and the Vatican seek to impose their religious norms.

The Russian military was not involved in massacre of civilians in Bucha. This is a provocation/staging by Western countries.

If Ukraine was able to enter only one international economic union, which one of the following should it be?

According to the "Rating" sociological group:

75% of respondents in September chose the EU as Ukraine's preferred economic union, down from 85% in February 2023.

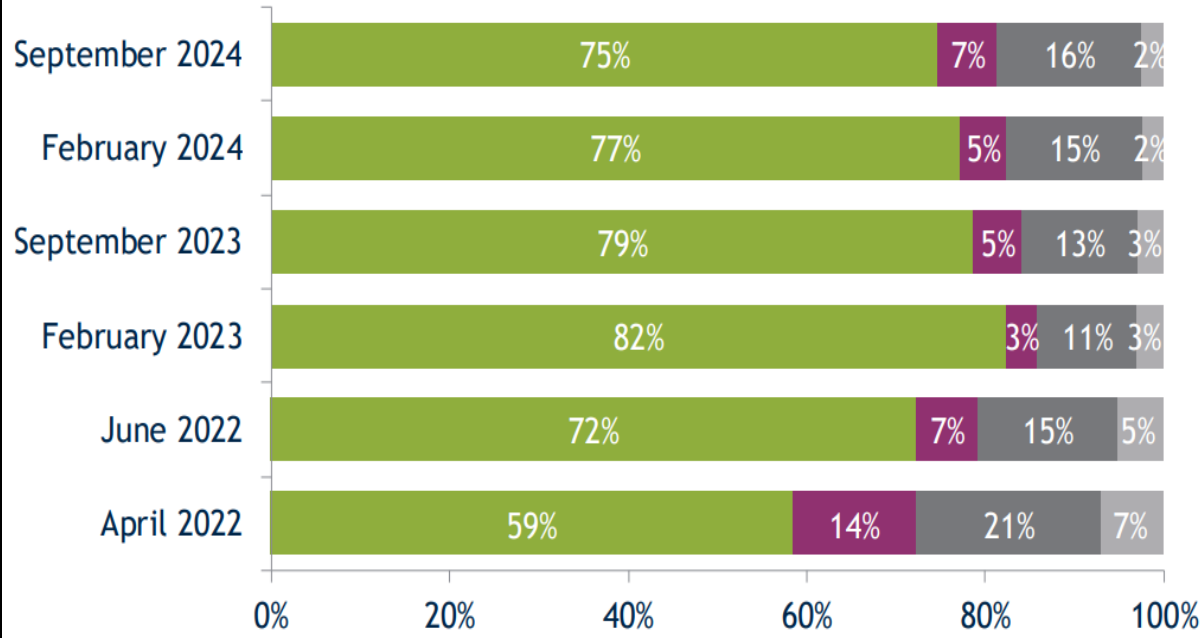


Source: <https://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/nationwide-survey-of-the-international-republican-institute-iri-october-2024.html>

If a referendum was held today on Ukraine joining NATO, how would you vote?

According to the "Rating" sociological group:

Support for Ukraine's NATO accession fell from 82% in February 2023 to 75% in September 2024



- Would vote for Ukraine to join NATO
- Would vote against Ukraine joining NATO
- Would not vote in the referendum
- Difficult to answer/No answer

Source: <https://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/nationwide-survey-of-the-international-republican-institute-iri-october-2024.html>

V. Social Media in Disinformation and PsyOps

01

Shift in information consumption

Routine monitoring: air raids, shelling, frontlines updates.
73.4% of Ukrainians rely on social networks for news [OPORA, 2024](#)

02

Social media as a resource

Platforms are not just sources but tools for spreading information.
Both useful and manipulative content can be promoted.

03

Algorithms and user engagement

Content tailored to user preferences to maintain engagement.
Algorithms amplify emotionally engaging content.

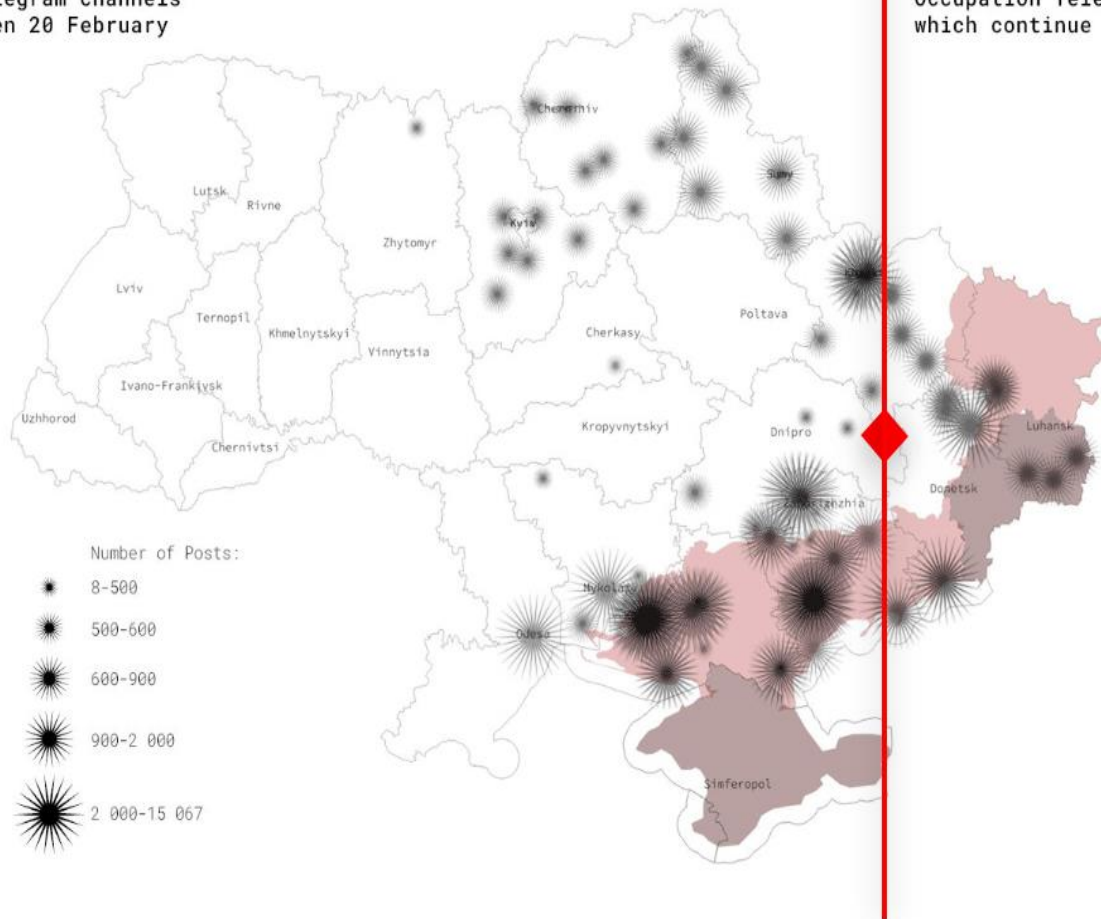
04

Russia's influence operations

Use of social networks to manipulate public opinion and morale.
Goal: disrupt unity, spread despair, identify “wavering” individuals.

Occupation Telegram channels
created between 20 February
and 17 August

Occupation Telegram channels
which continue to exist



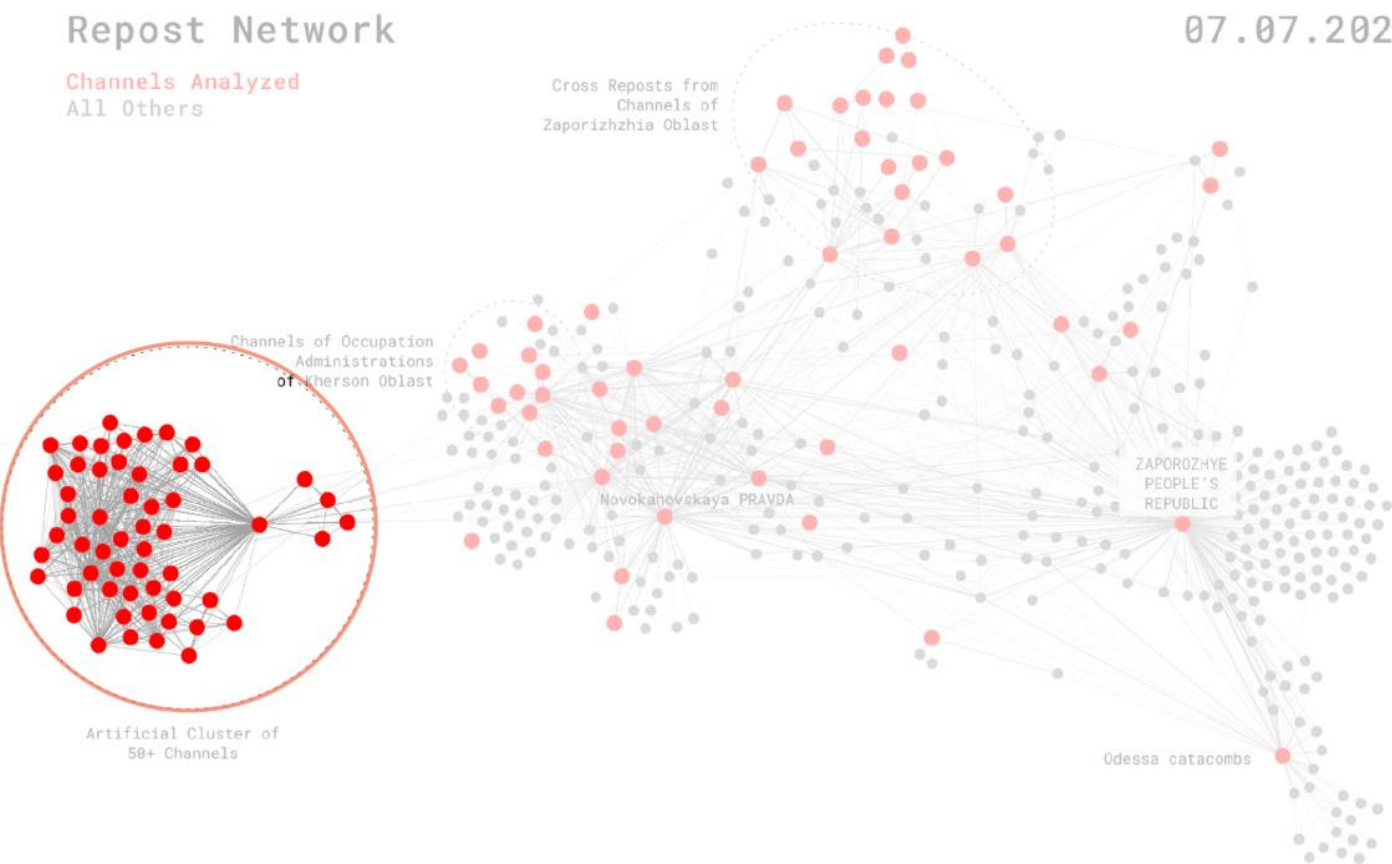
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Repost Network

07.07.2022

Channels Analyzed
All Others



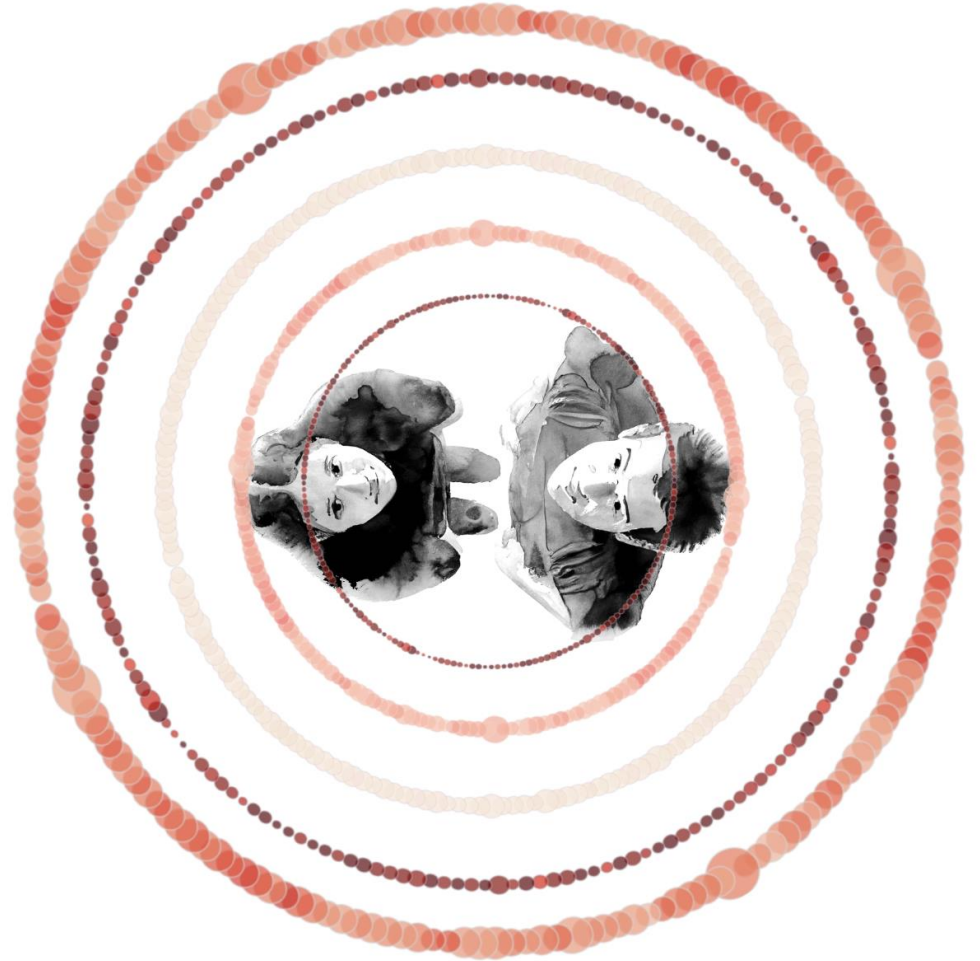
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A centralised artificial network of Russian Telegram channels which resumed their activity based on the propaganda tasks they received (a screenshot highlight from the "Telegram Occupation" data project)



Carousel of emotions:

Manipulation Level of
Ukrainian
Telegram Channels



Жінчини є хосої

Картель

Dubinsky.pro

Резидент

Отряд Коопаса

Мрія

Дмитриєв

Миха Анатолійович Чаплига

Роман Сапонюк

Open Ukraine | Открытая Украина

MediaKiller

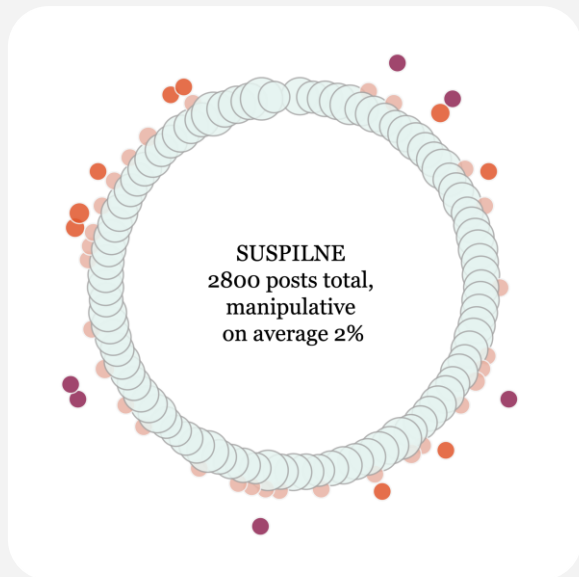
Полемарі

Наблюдатель

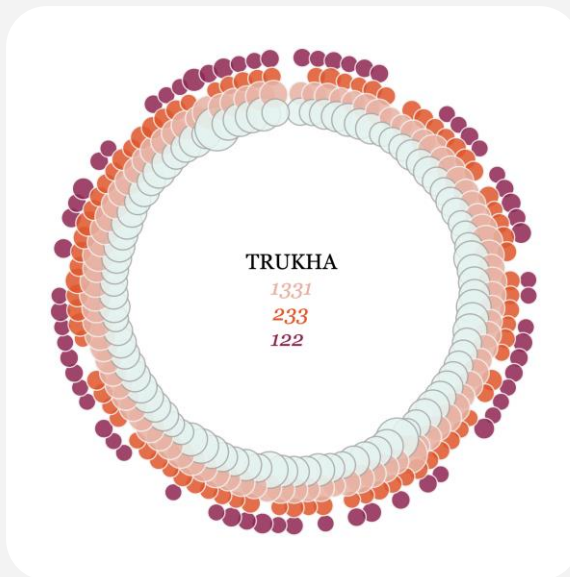
First Новасти Воїни



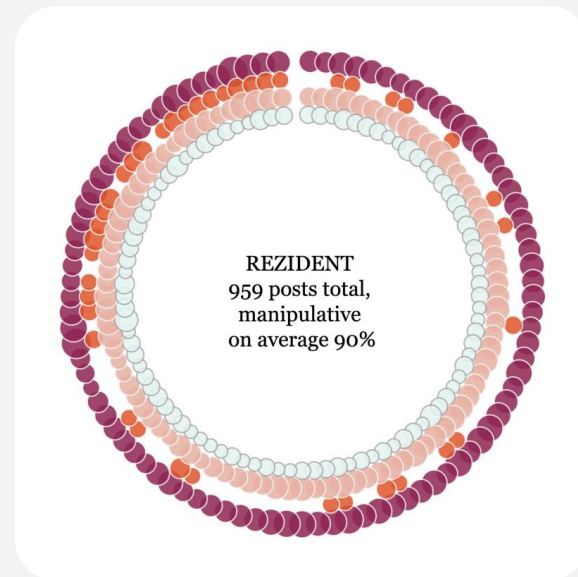
Manipulation rate across different groups of channels



Official Newsrooms



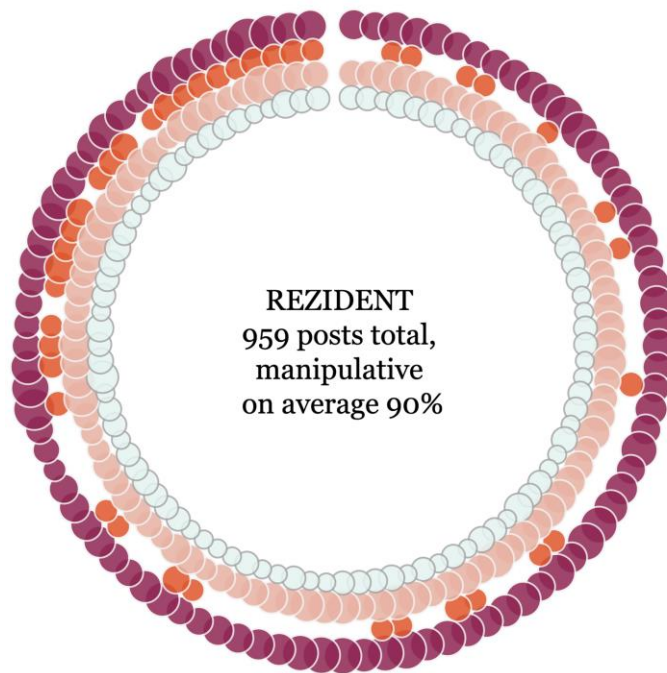
News Aggregators



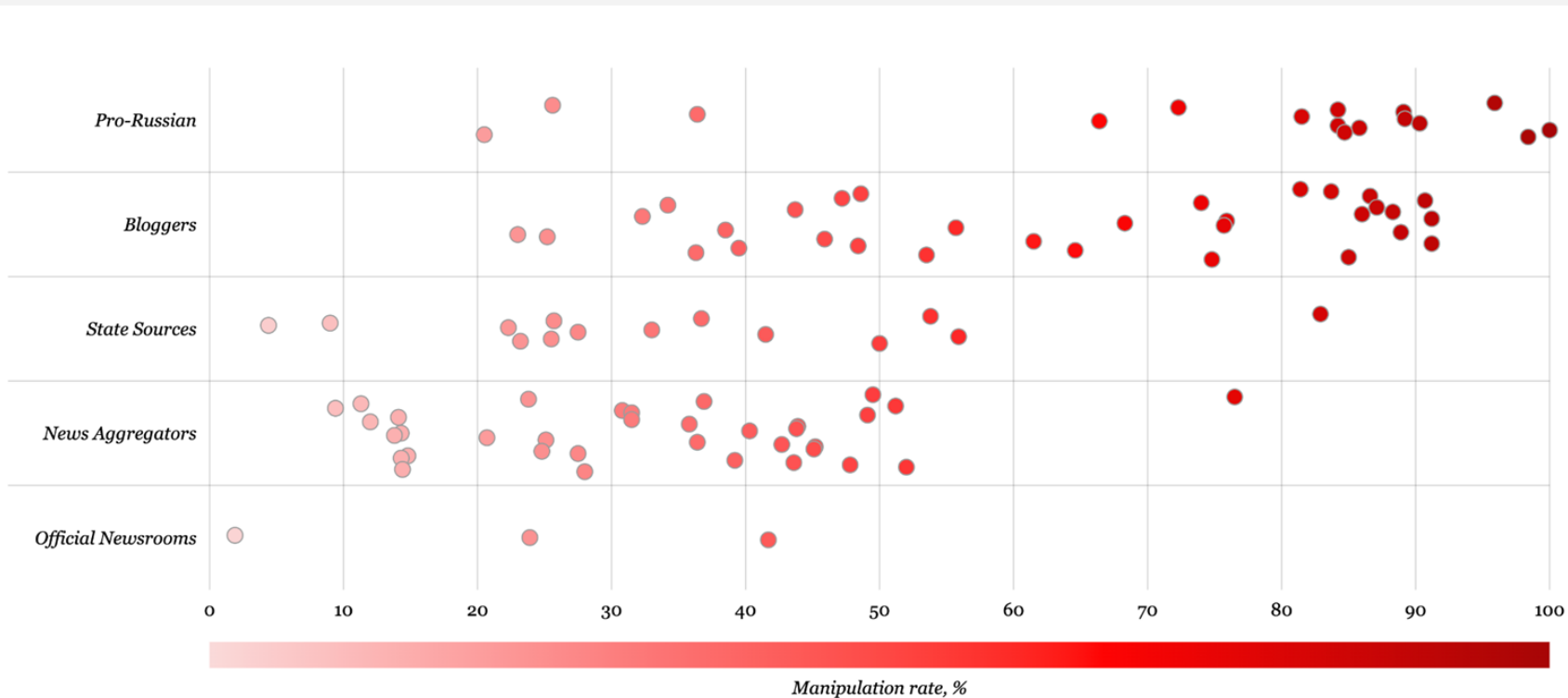
Pro-Russian Channels

67% of Resident's posts spread fear and doubt

- **Neutral posts**
- **Loaded/emotional language**
(words that evoke either positive or negative emotions)
- **Glittering generalities and euphoria**
(things that mobilize the audience but also push them to unjustified optimism)
- **Appeal to fear and doubt**
(the most useful technique for Russia, which undermines trust in Ukrainian institutions)



Manipulation rate across different groups of channels





JUNE–OCTOBER 2023
205 UKRAINIANS, 122 POLES

Only adult respondents who watch video content on YouTube from a desktop computer using Google Chrome browser at least several times a week were invited to take part in the study.

The recruited participants installed an application developed by TEXTY which recorded the data about each video viewed by our users and the recommendations provided by the platform to them.

SELECTED VIDEO



WHY DID SHOIGU VISIT THE DPRK? KONSTANTIN SIVKOV

A pro-Russian channel on the platform used by Russian experts to openly promote Kremlin narratives.

YOUTUBE RECOMMENDATIONS

A diplomatic conflict: why did Poland and Ukraine split apart? Vladimir Shapovalov

Evgeny Spitsin, a prominent historian: The world government

R1b commanders of the Ukrainian army
Anatoly Klyosov on who they are. /
#ROUNDTHECORNER #ANDREYUGLANOV

Is migration policy now based on
Russophobia?

The single religion has been announced. Still,
everyone keeps silent ...

100 thousand Korean soldiers and a million of
artillery shells. The hidden meaning of Shoigu
and Kim's talk

YouTube fails to moderate pseudo-medical manipulative and propagandistic anti-Ukrainian content.

Youtube promotes the persons and organizations which the platform attempted to ban.

ТОП експерти українського YouTube

24.02.22 → 1 риска = 1 ефір з експертом → 1,06.23 → всього ефірів з експертом



млн переглядів ефірів з експертом



червоним позначені «хороші росіяни»



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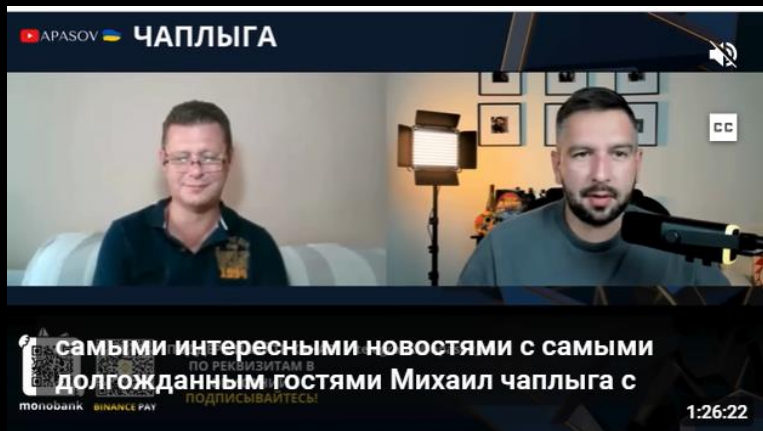
Решта експертів з >10 млн переглядів



*ведучий своєї програми і одночасно експерт у інших

**в середині січня 2023 року пішов з посади офіційного спікера ОП

Pro-Russian talking heads are returning to the Ukrainian information space



Chaplyha: Peace with an American Flavor. Russia as a Chinese Appendage. The Brits Will Answer for Their Words. The Iron Curtain.



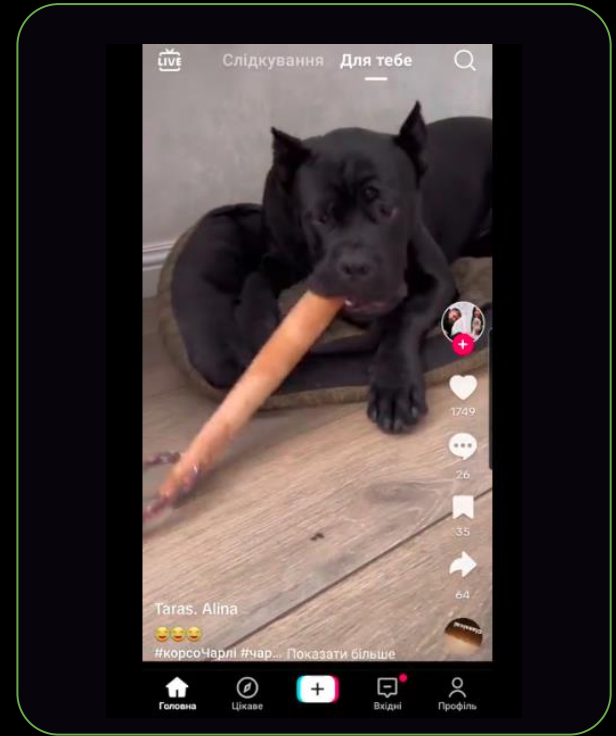
America Knows How to Betray in Style! - Spivak. Diverging Goals: Europe Is Not Ready to Fight! Umerov's Children

TikTok case studies

- 01** TikTok's evolution: from dances to war footage and political news
- 02** 12 million active Ukrainian users
- 03** 26.8% Ukrainian use TikTok it for news ([OPORA, 2024](#))




#fun tag: Russian comedians' videos containing politically charged humor that subtly propagates pro-Russian narratives



#ukraine tag: Interested in Ukraine? Have some Russian state propaganda!



80-ЛЕТНИЙ ДЕДУШКА ПЕШКОМ УШЕЛ ИЗ МАРИУПОЛЯ



259.5K
5686
3945
7345


00:00 / 00:55 Швидкість

ria_novosti
РИА Новости · 2022-3-6
● Russia state-controlled media

Слідкувати

80-летний пенсионер пешком эвакуировался из Мариуполя в ДНР
#украина #россия #донбасс #мариуполь #днр #новости
Д оригинальный звук - РИА Новости

УКРАИНСКИЕ СОЛДАТЫ СДАЮТ СВОИ ПОЗИЦИИ



278.6K
3227
7244
6901

00:00 / 00:45 Швидкість

ria_novosti
РИА Новости · 2022-3-6
● Russia state-controlled media

Слідкувати

Бойцы ЛНР занимают позиции, брошенные украинскими солдатами
#украина #донбасс #лнр #новости
Д оригинальный звук - РИА Новости

ХОЧУ ДАТЬ СОВЕТ ЗЕЛЕНСКОМУ: ПОКА НЕ ПОЗДНО, ЛУЧШЕ ПОЗВНИТЬ ПУТИНУ И ИЗВИНИТЬСЯ



351.7K
9349
13.7K
31.6K


00:00 / 01:41 Швидкість

ria_novosti
РИА Новости · 2022-2-26
● Контролируемый государством ЗМТ (Российская Федерация)

Слідкувати

Кадиров советует Зеленскому извиниться #новости #кадыров
#зеленский #украина #грозный
Д оригинальный звук - РИА Новости

ПРОБЛЕМА НЕ В ТОМ, ЧТО ПУТИН УМИРЫЙ, А В ТОМ, ЧТО НАШИ ЛИДЕРЫ ГЛУПЫЕ



302.2K
5456
8611
20.8K

00:00 / 00:45 Швидкість

ria_novosti
РИА Новости · 2022-2-27
● Контролируемый государством ЗМТ (Российская Федерация)

Слідкувати

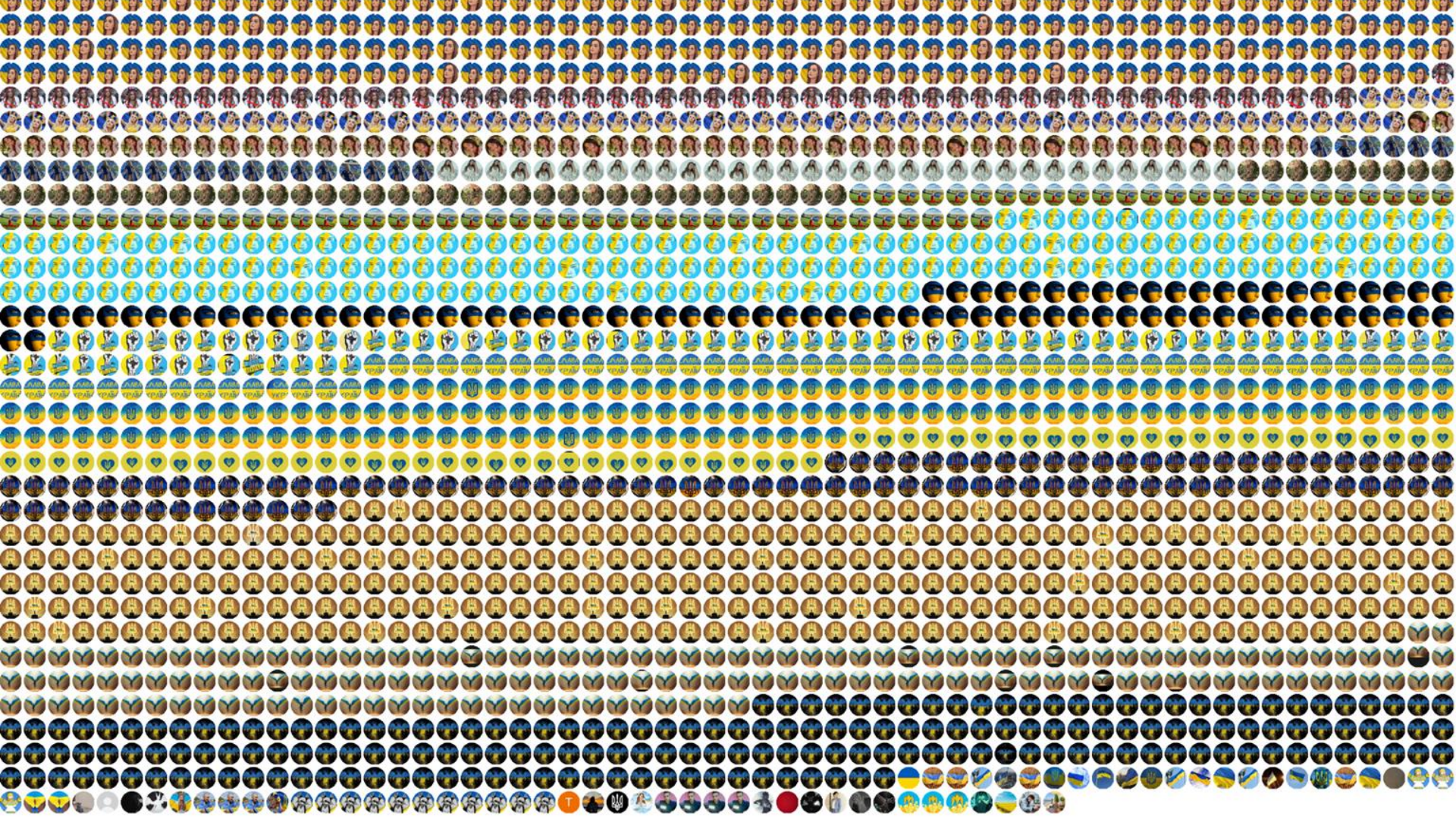
Дональд Трамп заявил, что Путин в ситуации с Украиной проявил себя как "умный" лидер #новости #путин
Д оригинальный звук - РИА Новости

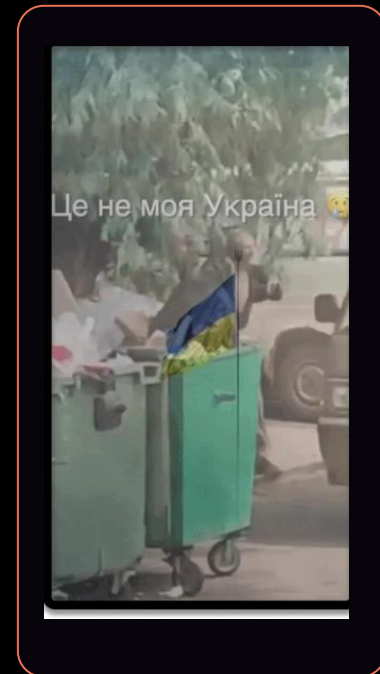
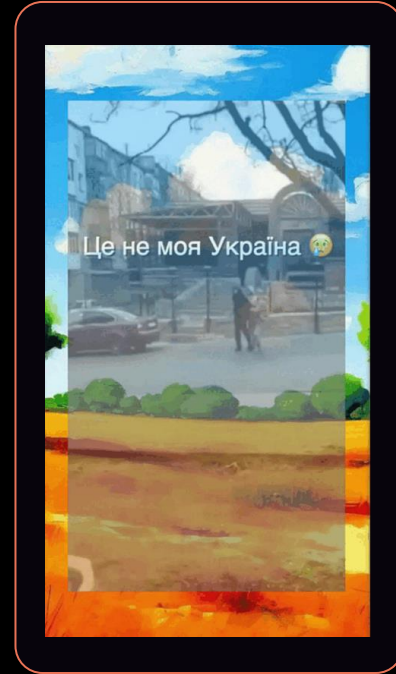
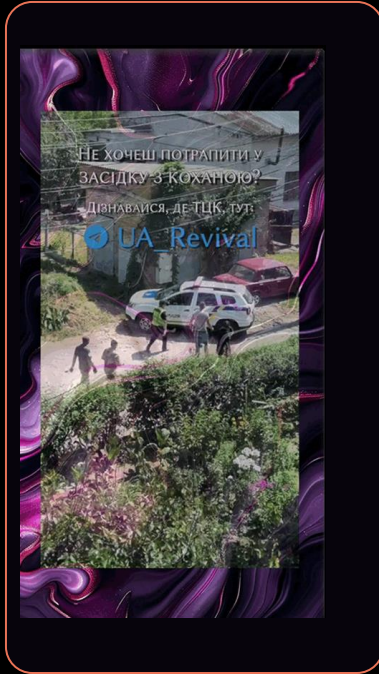
#it'snotmyukraine:

Russian network of 2,000 TikTok accounts created to discredit the mobilization

- 01 41,000 posts in a week and 10 million views
- 02 No authentic profiles creating content on the topic
- 03 All of the accounts are stylistically similar, like clones







Thank you for the attention!

Serhii Mikhalkov

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