Influence Operations Weekly Digest

11-18 Oct 2026 · labeled with DISARM Red v1.6.1 · author: Lukáš Czerner

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$ digest --week 2026-W42 --framework disarm-red-1.6.1
┌─ influence operations · weekly digest · DISARM-labeled
│  records   81 digest items · 53 manipulation records labeled
│  labels    306 technique labels · 90 distinct techniques
│  actors    RU 31 · IR 0 · CN 0 · unattributed 20 · domestic 2
└─ status     ok
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Russian, Chinese, Iranian and other state-linked information operations, with a focus on Central Europe and Ukraine.

[-] Disclaimer: This digest is created with the help of AI-enabled tools and may contain inaccuracies. If you find one, let me know.

This week in brief

A fake Stern video about the German chancellor and a Europe-wide argument over whether Ukraine's strikes on Yandex silenced Russian bots led the week, alongside a run of Starlink sabotage cases. No Central European government attributed a specific new disinformation campaign to a foreign state.

[+] A fake Stern video claiming Merz had a stroke and was replaced by a double drew 2.1 million views on two X posts. NewsGuard calls it a Russian influence operation and cites The Gnida Project tying it to Storm-1516, and Gnida separately named two of the operation's influencer recruiters.

[+] Researchers in Germany, Poland and Ukraine found no evidence that Ukraine's strikes on Yandex data centers silenced Russian bots, while Ukraine's CCD reported a brief drop in posting by inauthentic accounts.

[+] Kaja Kallas said the EU is proposing 100 sanctions listings against Russia's FIMI infrastructure, after taking down websites and ads of a Russian mercenary-recruitment network in Africa.

[+] The head of Czechia's BIS said disinformation attacks with a Russian background target President Pavel, Prime Minister Babiš and the first lady, the last with AI-made photos.

[+] Poland's ABW linked the Starlink station arson to suspected Russian sabotage, with a scout vetted over Telegram, and Lithuania's prime minister blamed Russia for an attempted arson at a company storing Starlink equipment.

[+] Ukraine's CCD said #RussiaIsNotMyEnemy now simulates Western protest against aid to Ukraine, with over 13,300 near-identical posts on X in a week.

[+] DFRLab mapped more than 100 coordinated Facebook pages, sites and Telegram channels around Armenia's June election, and a former page owner said he sold pages to buyers in Russia.

[-] Reading the DISARM lines: under every incident, a **disarm** line lists the DISARM Red v1.6.1 techniques evidenced in the sources, grouped by tactic in kill-chain order (plan → prepare → execute → assess). Every ID (e.g. T0085.001) links to its DISARM definition. ~ marks a label inferred rather than stated in a source. Technique names are in the appendix. Responses, context items and overt state actions are not labeled. Each incident has an ID (e.g. W42-007) used in the pattern summary.

Czechia

No Czech authority attributed a specific new campaign, though the head of BIS said disinformation attacks with a Russian background target the president, the prime minister and the first lady. The main exposure was a fake newspaper front page with AI-made photos, and the trial of a Chinese correspondent accused of spying opened in Prague.

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
15 Oct W42-001	Deník debunked a fake front page of a nonexistent paper styled "České noviny", which claimed police had found more than 40 washing machines and 25 dishwashers stolen in Ukraine in a hall on the edge of České Budějovice. Police said they never issued such a report, and the photos show signs of AI. It had spread since 3 October, mainly in Facebook groups Deník calls pro-Russian, one of them with 27,400 members.	Unknown **[unattributed]**	denik.cz
	disarm TA06 T0085.003 T0086.002 · TA16 T0097.202 T0143.002 · TA05 T0102.001 · TA07 T0151.002 (actor unknown)		
12-15 Oct W42-002	MEP Tomáš Zdechovský's X post of an unsourced chart, purporting to show AfD-related online activity collapsing after Ukraine's strikes on Yandex data centers, drew 4.2 million views in three days. NewsGuard said the chart appears inauthentic, and Zdechovský told it he did not make it and wrote "IF CONFIRMED". Texty traced the chart to a German account's Threads post of 11 October and found it showed data for dates after it was posted.	A German Threads account first posted it, per Texty. No operation named **[researcher]**	newsguardriskbriefing.substack.com ; Texty
	disarm TA06 T0023 T0085 T0086 · TA07 T0151.008 (actor unknown)		
14 Oct W42-003	Jang I-ming, a Chinese citizen accredited in Prague as a correspondent for a Chinese daily, denied at trial that he worked for Chinese intelligence. The prosecutor says he used the press cover to gather political and economic information and map the "influence environment", courting contacts with dinners, small gifts and invitations to conferences in China. He is the first person prosecuted in Czechia for unauthorized activity for a foreign power, and the trial resumes on 2 November.	Chinese intelligence, per the prosecutor. The defendant denies it **[official]**	ct24.ceskatelevize.cz; respekt.cz
	disarm not labeled · context		
13 Oct W42-004	investigace.cz reported that Hu Liyan, a Czechia specialist at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS), spoke at a September conference in Prague hosted by the association Svatopluk, which ex-president Miloš Zeman attended and the EU-sanctioned Fyodor Lukyanov joined online. A 2017 US criminal complaint says the FBI has assessed that Shanghai's state security bureau uses SASS employees as spotters and assessors, and that its officers have used SASS affiliation as cover. The outlet says none of this proves Hu did anything wrong.	No wrongdoing by Hu shown. The SASS link to Chinese state security is the FBI's, cited by investigace.cz **[media]**	investigace.cz
	disarm not labeled · context		

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
12 Oct W42-005	BIS director Michal Koudelka told a seminar in the Chamber of Deputies that BIS registers "disinformation attacks with a Russian background" on social media against President Pavel and Prime Minister Babiš, and that Russian attacks on the first lady use narratives of greed and privilege with AI-made fake photos. He warned that Russia could in the coming months attempt more serious operations, such as a strike on an arms depot, while saying BIS has no specific information on a direct threat to Czechia. Babiš replied that Koudelka should "read the BIS motto".	Russia, per BIS **[official]**	hlidacipes.org; ct24.ceskatelevize.cz
	disarm not labeled · response		

Slovakia

No Slovak authority attributed a foreign information operation this week. A court remanded a Latvian charged in the foiled arson plot against a drone factory in Haniska, and a Russian government note published by Politico set out the agenda for reviving a Slovak-Russian intergovernmental commission.

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
18 Oct W42-006	Demagog.sk debunked a Facebook reel claiming London police ban dog-walking where Muslims live. The video was filmed on 27 July 2025 at a protest outside an asylum hotel in Altrincham, near Manchester, and the Slovak post of 12 October passed 40,000 views in five days.	Unknown **[unattributed]**	Demagog.sk
	disarm TA06 T0084.003 · TA07 T0151.001 (actor unknown)		
16 Oct W42-007	A Prešov court remanded a Latvian handed over by Germany on 15 October, who is charged as a co-perpetrator in preparing an arson attack on a drone factory in Haniska that police foiled on 22 August. In September the main suspect reportedly said he was instructed over Telegram by several people, one of them communicating in Russian, and the NEST Institute cites the FAZ as saying German investigators blame a group linked to Russia's GRU.	Unnamed clients, per Slovak police. Investigators were checking a Russia link, Pravda reported in September **[official]**	teraz.sk; Pravda.sk; nest-institute.org
	disarm not labeled · context		
15-16 Oct W42-008	Politico published a Russian government note, which it could not independently verify, on reviving the Slovak-Russian intergovernmental commission, last held in 2021. The agenda includes energy, what the note calls discrimination against Russian athletes, and the Russian Centre of Science and Culture in Bratislava. Fico gave the date as 25 November, while the Russian government, cited by TASS, named 26 October.	The Slovak and Russian governments, an overt act **[media]**	teraz.sk; Noviny.sk
	disarm not labeled · overt state action		

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
14-16 Oct W42-009	The government approved Slovakia's security reports for 2025 and, belatedly, 2024. The NEST Institute said the 2025 report describes GPS jamming over Slovakia and Europe's sabotage wave without naming a perpetrator or listing Russia as a threat, that neither report uses the word "disinformation", and that the 2024 report sees a threat in foreign-funded media and NGOs.	No perpetrator named, per NEST **[researcher]**	sita.sk; nest-institute.org
	disarm not labeled · context		
14 Oct W42-010	Demagog.sk showed that a viral receipt, purportedly from a Čadca pub, urging customers not to vote for Fico was AI-generated: the pub, the company, its ID number and the street do not exist, and a detection tool found a SynthID watermark. The earliest Facebook post dates from 2 October, and the most viral ones drew thousands of reactions.	Unknown **[unattributed]**	Demagog.sk
	disarm TA06 T0086.002 · TA16 T0097.205 T0143.002 · TA07 T0151.001 (actor unknown)		
12-13 Oct W42-011	Andrej Danko, leader of the governing party SNS, admitted that SNS had paid the influencer Mimi Šramová. "When you pay Mimi Šramová, you get the shows you want," he said, and called several disinformation outlets bribable.	SNS and Šramová, both domestic **[media]**	Denník N
	disarm not labeled · context		
12 Oct W42-012	Denník N, citing Mediaboard data, reported that Hlavné správy, which it calls a disinformation site, published almost 55,000 articles in 12 months, about 150 a day, against about 30,000 for Aktuality.sk.	Hlavné správy, a domestic outlet. No state link shown **[media]**	Denník N
	disarm not labeled · context		

Poland

No Polish authority attributed a new disinformation campaign to a foreign state. The ABW tied the September arson of a Starlink ground station to suspected Russian sabotage, and the government found no coordination or outside inspiration behind the school knife attacks. Fact-checkers exposed a fake Bandera-anniversary poster spread by pro-Russian Telegram channels and a TikTok deepfake of a Ukrainian commander addressing Poles.

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
16 Oct W42-013	The ABW said two Turkish men living in Germany, charged with sabotage and acting for a foreign intelligence service over the 23 September arson of a Starlink ground station in Wola Krobowska, were detained in Germany on 12 October. A separate suspect, Ukrainian according to RMF FM, was vetted by the client with tasks to take photos and videos, which he sent over Telegram, then told to scout the site. Special-services minister Tomasz Siemoniak said there is "no doubt" Russian intelligence is behind it.	Suspected Russian sabotage, per the ABW, and Russian intelligence, per Siemoniak **[official]**	abw.gov.pl; rmf24.pl; Notes from Poland
	disarm not labeled · context		

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
16 Oct W42-014	Demagog exposed a fake poster, photographed on poles in Warsaw, offering 67% off at the Lviv-founded Pijana Wiśnia bars for the 67th anniversary of Stepan Bandera's death. The brand denied any link and said it looked AI-made. The earliest post Demagog found was on Telegram, from a user it could not identify, and pro-Russian Telegram channels such as "Polak na Donbasie" and a site of the Pravda network spread it.	Origin unknown. Pro-Russian Telegram channels and the Russian Pravda network amplified it, per Demagog **[researcher]**	Demagog
disarm TA02 ~T0079 · TA14 T0083 · TA06 T0086.002 · TA16 T0097.205 T0098.002 T0143.003 · TA07 T0151.007 T0152.004 · TA10 T0057.002			
16 Oct W42-015	Screens at an Olimp restaurant in a Kraków mall showed Azov recruitment graphics, which the Facebook profile "Nie dla banderyzmu" posted, asking whether they proved Azov was recruiting in Poland. The chain blamed an attack on its nationwide screen-management system, and its owner told Demagog it had reported the incident to prosecutors.	Unknown **[unattributed]**	Demagog
disarm TA02 ~T0079 · TA06 T0084.002 · TA15 T0149.009 T0150.005 (actor unknown)			
16 Oct W42-016	Konkret24 traced a claim that Russia took in 5 million Ukrainian refugees, which former Prime Minister Leszek Miller shared on X to over 50,000 views before deleting it, to a July clip from an RT show hosted by Rick Sanchez. UNHCR and IOM data do not support the figure.	Russian propaganda, with RT as the source, per Konkret24 **[researcher]**	konkret24.tvn24.pl
disarm TA06 T0087 · TA16 T0097.102 T0143.001 · TA07 T0111.001 T0151.008			
16 Oct W42-017	Demagog traced a fake quote of presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak, saying debts taken on under Zelensky would not bind a new president, to a Russian Telegram account that calls itself satirical and posted it on 12 October. From there it reached Polish X and Facebook.	A Russian Telegram account, per Demagog **[researcher]**	Demagog
disarm TA02 ~T0139.001 · TA06 T0084.003 T0085 · TA16 T0143.004 · TA07 ~T0151.007			
14-16 Oct W42-018	Siemoniak said there is no evidence Russia inspired the school knife attacks and that police experts ruled out a coordinating "challenge", though Russia "pours oil on the fire". Interior Minister Marcin Kierwinski said there is no sign of coordination or outside inspiration, and police have detained 192 people and opened 106 cases, mostly over threats and false alarms.	No foreign actor found, per the government **[official]**	rp.pl; gov.pl
disarm not labeled · context			
15 Oct W42-019	Demagog found that a clip of Zelensky's 12 October Warsaw Security Forum speech was cut to suggest he would ignore Trump's energy ceasefire, when he said Ukraine would hold off if Russia did. Posts on X and Facebook included one by Tomasz Nieweglowski, whom Demagog calls known for promoting pro-Russian content.	Polish accounts. No foreign actor named **[unattributed]**	Demagog
disarm TA02 ~T0135.001 · TA14 T0068 · TA06 T0023 T0087.002 · TA07 T0151.001 T0151.008 (actor unknown)			

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
13-15 Oct W42-020	The Senate passed with amendments the bill letting authorities block illegal online content, revived after the school attacks. It returns to the Sejm and then to President Nawrocki, who vetoed an earlier law implementing the DSA in January.	No foreign actor, a policy step **[official]**	konkret24.tvn24.pl
	disarm not labeled · response		
14 Oct W42-021	An image of a military policeman with a Ukrainian trident on his vest, from the live-streamed arrest of former soldier Mateusz Ritter, came from the unlabeled AI-processed cover of a Goniec.pl Facebook reel, Demagog found through a SynthID watermark, and Demagog calls the trident an AI hallucination. The X account "Kontrwywiad II RP" spread the image as proof that Ukrainians serve in the Polish police.	The X account "Kontrwywiad II RP", which presented it as proof, per Demagog **[researcher]**	Demagog
	disarm TA14 T0068 · TA06 T0084.003 · TA07 T0151.008 · TA17 T0039 (domestic · excluded from FIMI analysis)		
13 Oct W42-022	Detector Media found an AI deepfake of Yurii Fedorenko, commander of Ukraine's 429th "Achilles" brigade, urging Poles to patrol monuments to Ukrainian heroes in Poland on 14 October, a date tied to the founding of the UPA. A fake TikTok page posted it with Polish subtitles to 117,000 views, and TikTok blocked the account after Detector Media complained.	Unknown **[unattributed]**	Detector Media
	disarm TA02 T0079 · TA14 T0083 · TA06 T0084.002 T0087 T0087.001 · TA16 T0097.206 T0143.003 · TA05 T0101 · TA07 T0151.008 (actor unknown)		
13 Oct W42-023	PAP's media monitoring team counted 648 media items using the phrase "Bloody Friday" from 7 to 9 October, with a gross reach of about 249.6 million. 89% appeared on 9 October, when no attack took place, and 18 explicitly described the rumor as disinformation.	None named **[media]**	radomsko24.pl
	disarm not labeled · context		
13 Oct W42-024	Demagog rated false a minister's claim that Ukraine's strikes on Yandex data centers cut pro-Russian content: the drop was in crawler traffic, and NASK saw no fall in the activity of disinformation accounts. The INFO OPS Polska foundation logged 611 Polish-language posts in the Russian stream it monitors on 11-12 October, with lines such as Poland as the hub of the West's anti-Russian military policy.	Russia, per INFO OPS Polska **[researcher]**	Demagog; disinfodigest.pl
	disarm not labeled · response		
12 Oct W42-025	The trial of three Ukrainians and a Belarusian, accused as members of the group behind 2024 arsons in Warsaw and Vilnius, including the Marywilska 44 shopping center fire, opened behind closed doors. Prosecutors say another suspect, held in Lithuania, filmed the Marywilska fire for his handler and Russian intelligence, and that part of a defendant's footage of a separate store arson appeared on Russian propaganda portals.	Russian intelligence, per prosecutors **[official]**	Notes from Poland; polskieradio24.pl
	disarm not labeled · context		

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
11 Oct W42-026	Konkret24 showed that a photo of a low wire fence on a Vistula Spit beach, shared on X as the Polish-Russian border, was taken nearly 400 meters short of it. One post drew almost 130,000 views, and a Polish-language profile that Konkret24 says spreads disinformation reposted it in English.	None named **[unattributed]**	konkret24.tvn24.pl
	disarm TA06 T0084.003 · TA07 T0151.001 T0151.008 (actor unknown)		

Germany and Austria

No German or Austrian authority attributed a specific new disinformation campaign, though the BfV president said Russia is largely the driving force behind destabilization actions against Germany. The main exposure was a fake Stern video claiming Merz had been replaced by a body double, which NewsGuard called a Russian influence operation, citing The Gnida Project for a link to Storm-1516. A Hamburg court found Iran's Revolutionary Guards behind plots against Jewish targets.

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
17 Oct W42-027	Germany: StopFake rebutted a Merz clip shared on Russian social media with a caption saying his main goal is helping Ukraine, not cutting fuel prices for Germans. In the clip he calls the US-Russia diesel deal unacceptable.	Russian social media accounts, per StopFake **[researcher]**	StopFake
	disarm TA02 ~T0135.001 · TA06 T0023.001 · TA07 T0151.007 T0152.001		
16 Oct W42-028	Austria: APA-Faktencheck described a rise in AI "slop" about Zelensky, such as short Facebook videos in which Trump or Putin humiliates him and, APA notes, Putin almost always comes out the winner. Mimikama, covering the same videos, found no evidence of a coordinated campaign in the screenshots it reviewed.	None named **[unattributed]**	apa.at; Mimikama
	disarm TA02 T0135.001 · TA06 T0087.001 · TA07 T0151.001 (actor unknown)		
12-16 Oct W42-029	Germany: police special forces arrested two Turkish nationals near Stuttgart on 12 October on a Polish warrant over the Starlink station arson in Poland, and a court ordered them held pending extradition. ARD and STRG_F reported that both belong to a Turkish gang calling itself the "Daltons", whose reputed leader is said to be in Russia.	Russian intelligence, per Poland's Siemoniak. tagesschau says this is not yet certain **[official]**	tagesschau.de; Tagesspiegel
	disarm not labeled · context		
15-16 Oct W42-030	Germany: the Hamburg Higher Regional Court sentenced two men to 8.5 and 4.5 years over plots, ordered by Iran's Revolutionary Guards, to murder Volker Beck, head of the German-Israeli Society, and to burn a kosher supermarket in Berlin. Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul said "Europe is in Iran's crosshairs" and that Germany would respond.	Iran's Revolutionary Guards, through the Quds Force, per the court **[official]**	Tagesspiegel; Tagesspiegel
	disarm not labeled · context		

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
15 Oct W42-031	Germany: NewsGuard traced a fake video bearing Stern's logo and posing as a Stern investigation, which claimed Merz had a stroke on 20 September and was replaced by a body double. Two X posts of 11 October drew 831,000 and 1.3 million views in three days. Stern said it never made the video, and the government press office called the claim completely fabricated.	A Russian influence operation, per NewsGuard, and Storm-1516, per The Gnida Project, cited by NewsGuard **[researcher]**	newsguardriskbriefing.substack.com
	disarm TA02 ~T0135.001 · TA14 T0022.001 · TA06 T0087.001 · TA16 T0097.202 T0143.003 · TA05 T0101 · TA07 T0151.008		
15 Oct W42-032	Germany: StopFake rebutted headlines on pro-Russian sites claiming Germany wants a US-style diesel deal with Russia. They spun a 14 October Saxony-Anhalt state parliament resolution by BSW and AfD, and Merz said a deal is "not even being discussed".	Pro-Russian sites such as lenta-news.ru, per StopFake **[researcher]**	StopFake
	disarm TA06 T0023 T0085.003 · TA05 T0016 · TA07 T0152.004 · TA08 T0042 (actor unknown)		
14-15 Oct W42-033	Germany: Mimikama, drawing on Open, Euronews and dpa, found that a Facebook video of a crying "Ukrainian soldier" saying Merz and Zelensky wanted the war splices an AI-generated scene onto real footage of the two leaders laughing at a May 2025 press conference. The soldier scene came from a since-deleted TikTok account where, Open found, several videos carried the Sora watermark, and it had circulated since November 2025.	None named **[unattributed]**	Mimikama
	disarm TA02 ~T0135.001 · TA06 T0084.003 T0087.001 T0087.002 · TA05 T0101 · TA07 T0151.001 (actor unknown)		
13-15 Oct W42-034	Germany: ZDFheute, CeMAS and CORRECTIV found no evidence that Ukraine's strikes on Yandex data centers silenced Russian bots or cut AfD-related activity online. CeMAS has seen no German-language Doppelganger activity on X since 9 October, but cannot conclusively tie that to the strikes, and says central Storm-1516 actors remain active on X.	The viral chart's creator is unidentified, per CORRECTIV **[researcher]**	zdfheute.de; CeMAS; CORRECTIV
	disarm not labeled · response		
12 Oct W42-035	Germany: BfV president Sinan Selen said Russia is largely the driving force behind destabilization actions against Germany and Europe, and that the hybrid-threat defense center set up in June has handled a double-digit number of cases, some taken over by the Federal Prosecutor. Interior Minister Alexander Dobrindt spoke of a "shadow war" meant to destabilize Germany.	Russia, per the BfV **[official]**	verfassungsschutz.de; t-online.de
	disarm not labeled · context		
12 Oct W42-036	Germany: t-online reported a test by the Berlin-based Ukrainian blogger Pavel Gurov, who put political questions to six AI chatbots on the 20 September state election day. Copilot and Meta AI answered whether the US blew up Nord Stream using RT, which is sanctioned in the EU.	RT as the cited source, per Gurov **[researcher]**	t-online.de
	disarm not labeled · context		

[-] Background: prosecutors have still not named the foreign power in the case of former BND president August Hanning, though Spiegel reported, as t-online carried on 8 October, that investigators are examining his

contacts with a retired Chinese general.

Ukraine

Ukraine's Center for Countering Disinformation (CCD) attributed to Russia a new stage of the #RussiaIsNotMyEnemy campaign and continuing calls for "immediate peace" protests, and ISW called Putin's and Gerasimov's inflated battlefield claims cognitive warfare. Whether Russian bots went quiet after strikes on Yandex data centers was the week's most contested claim: Texty found that the viral charts behind it showed no such thing, and the CCD then reported a brief drop in posts by inauthentic accounts. SBU cases again showed Telegram recruitment for sabotage.

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
16-18 Oct W42-037	ISW said Putin and Gerasimov presented "greatly exaggerated" claims of advances as part of a "cognitive warfare effort" to push Ukraine and its partners to capitulate. Gerasimov claimed over 1,800 square kilometers and 92 settlements taken since 1 September, while ISW assesses a net Russian loss of 122 square kilometers. The CCD said his claim to have taken Malokaterynivka near Zaporizhzhia is untrue.	Putin, Gerasimov and the Russian MoD, per ISW **[researcher]**	ISW; CCD Telegram
disarm TA02 T0139.001 · TA06 T0023 · TA16 T0097.111 T0097.206 T0143.001 · TA07 T0152.004			
12-18 Oct W42-038	After the 12 October missile strike on Kyiv, the CCD urged people not to spread unverified versions, including that intelligence sharing with Ukraine had stopped, and SPRAVDI said Z-channels added "invented details" that the US had blinded Ukraine's army by cutting intelligence. On 18 October Zelensky said Ukraine got no US warnings of ballistic attacks for three days, and that sharing has resumed.	Russian Z-channels, per SPRAVDI **[official]**	CCD Telegram; SPRAVDI; Kyiv Independent
disarm TA02 T0139.001 · TA14 T0068 · TA06 T0023			
12-16 Oct W42-039	The CCD said #RussiaIsNotMyEnemy has shifted from promoting a "peace-loving" Russia to simulating Western citizens' protest against aid to Ukraine, with over 13,300 near-identical English-language posts on X in a week, started by Russia-loyal accounts and scaled by bot networks. Acting CCD head Anait Khoperiia also said AI deepfakes discrediting Ukrainian soldiers are seeded on TikTok and, once removed, reposted to Reels and Telegram with foreign-language subtitles.	Russia, per the CCD **[official]**	CCD Telegram; CCD Telegram
disarm TA02 T0135.002 T0136.004 · TA06 T0015 T0084.001 T0087.001 · TA16 T0097.101 T0143.002 · TA05 T0101 · TA07 T0151.001 ~T0151.007 T0151.008 · TA17 T0049.003			
16 Oct W42-040	SPRAVDI profiled the Global Fact-Checking Network (GFCN), co-founded in 2024 by TASS and the sanctioned ANO "Dialog Regions", whose name is one letter off Poynter's IFCN. It listed 13 foreign "experts" on GFCN panels at a Moscow forum on 22 September, among them Rostislav Lussier, publisher of the Czech Český list, and Michala Ganovská, founder of the Slovak internet TV TVV.	Russian state structures (TASS, ANO Dialog Regions), per SPRAVDI **[official]**	SPRAVDI
disarm TA02 T0136.002 · TA15 T0092.001 · TA16 T0097.203 T0100.001 T0143.002 · TA10 T0057			

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
16 Oct W42-041	VoxCheck found screenshots of local news reports doctored so that four stories about an unnamed "man" named a soldier of a specific brigade instead, three as crime suspects and one as a body found in a Kharkiv waste container. Neither the originals nor the police and prosecutors' reports mention a soldier, and all four fakes circulated through the Telegram channel dillfrash. **disarm** TA06 T0086.003 · TA16 T0097.202 T0143.003 · TA07 T0151.007 (actor unknown)	Unnamed "propagandists", per VoxCheck **[unattributed]**	voxukraine.org; voxukraine.org
16 Oct W42-042	The CCD flagged a forged notice in the name of Kramatorsk's city military administration announcing "seizure of property for the Armed Forces", which the city council said the administration never issued. **disarm** TA02 T0135.003 · TA06 T0085.004 · TA16 T0097.206 T0143.003	Russian propaganda, per the CCD **[official]**	CCD Telegram
16 Oct W42-043	Texty found 37 TikTok videos by tracked "talking heads" discrediting Zelensky on 5-11 October, with nearly 1.18 million views, and over 14,000 negative YouTube comments about him, almost one in four from bots, which began repeating calls for capitulation. **disarm** TA02 T0135.001 ~T0139.001 · TA06 T0084.001 · TA07 T0151.008 T0151.014 · TA09 T0116.001 (actor unknown)	Kremlin narratives pushed by bots and TikTok bloggers, per Texty **[researcher]**	Texty
13-16 Oct W42-044	The CCD said calls for Ukrainians to protest for "immediate peace" and elections keep spreading, show signs of being artificially inspired and benefit only Russia. Khoperiia listed current lines, among them a "contract war" waged for profit, an "illegitimate" leadership, power cuts blamed on "selling electricity abroad", and air defense blamed for hits on homes. **disarm** TA02 T0135.002 T0135.003 T0135.004 ~T0136.002 · TA14 T0004 T0022.001 · TA07 T0151.001 · TA10 T0057	Russia, per the CCD **[official]**	CCD Telegram; CCD Telegram
12-16 Oct W42-045	SPRAVDI logged about 11,000 items on Ukraine across 225 FIMI-linked outlets on 15 October, about 350 of them claiming the US is negotiating with Moscow behind Europe's back. It counted 2,470 posts framing the US-Russia diesel deal as a "betrayal" of Ukraine on 9-11 October. **disarm** TA02 T0079 T0139.001 · TA14 T0068 · TA06 T0023 T0085	Russia (FIMI-linked outlets), per SPRAVDI **[official]**	SPRAVDI; SPRAVDI
11-16 Oct W42-046	StopFake and Detector Media debunked Russian Telegram claims that Kyiv is "drowning in sewage": the 8 October notice they cited was about a suburban community and was lifted about 20 minutes later, once power cut by a Russian strike was restored. VoxCheck separately found that a photo of a notice banning toilet use in an apartment block was AI-generated. **disarm** TA14 T0068 · TA06 T0023.001 T0085 · TA07 T0151.007 T0152.004	Russian Telegram channels, per StopFake **[researcher]**	Detector Media; StopFake; voxukraine.org

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
15-16 Oct W42-047	Detector Media debunked a WIRED-branded video on X citing a nonexistent OpenAI report that "Ukrainian groups", funded with at least $7 million a month, steered ChatGPT's answers until Russian strikes stopped them. An account with one post and 142 followers spread it, tagging 14 accounts, a pattern Detector Media compared with VIGINUM's description of Matryoshka. VoxCheck exposed a doctored video claiming a new ChatGPT model "chose to kill" Zelensky in simulations.	Unnamed "propagandists", per Detector Media. The Matryoshka comparison is Detector Media's, and VoxCheck names no actor **[researcher]**	Detector Media; voxukraine.org
	disarm TA14 ~T0004 · TA06 T0087.002 · TA15 ~T0150.002 · TA16 T0097.202 T0143.003 · TA07 T0151.008 · TA17 T0039		
12-15 Oct W42-048	The CCD reported that posts by 5,201 Facebook and Telegram accounts flagged as inauthentic fell 83.6% on 8 October and 42.6% on 12 October, after strikes shut Yandex data centers, and recovered within days. Texty had already found that the charts behind viral "bots went quiet" claims showed automated web traffic from Yandex's network, most likely its own search crawler, or had no known source.	Russian bot networks, per the CCD **[official]**	cpd.gov.ua; Texty
	disarm TA02 T0136.002 T0140.003 · TA14 T0004 T0022.001 · TA07 T0151.001 ~T0151.007 · TA10 T0127.002		
12-15 Oct W42-049	The SBU detailed Russian recruitment through Telegram: a Kyiv student looking for "quick money" planted a bomb under a bus carrying soldiers in Rivne, and a Kramatorsk taxi driver was picked out by Russian military intelligence through his anti-Ukrainian comments in Telegram channels. Handlers also used a fake woman's dating profile and posed as law enforcement to recruit arsonists.	Russian special services, per the SBU **[official]**	Telegram; Telegram; Telegram
	disarm TA15 T0091.001 · TA16 T0097.109 T0097.112 T0143.002 · TA07 T0151.006 T0151.007 T0151.017 ~T0153.007 · TA10 T0127.002		
15 Oct W42-050	StopFake and the CCD debunked a collage presenting one man with a small dog at strike sites in Dnipro, Kyiv and Rivne as a "hired actor". Only the Rivne police photo is real, and a detection tool found SynthID watermarks in the other two. StopFake traced the first post, on 14 October, to the Russian propaganda Telegram channel "Sheikh Tamir".	Russian propaganda Telegram channels, per StopFake **[researcher]**	StopFake; CCD Telegram
	disarm TA02 T0136.001 · TA14 T0004 T0068 · TA06 T0086.002 T0086.004 · TA07 T0151.007		
13-15 Oct W42-051	The CCD warned that chatbots offering Ukrainians money for photos and videos of drone-strike aftermath are a trap by Russian services to scout targets. The SBU said a Kyiv cleaner sent photos of air-defense positions to a local Telegram channel's admin, after which "Kremlin propagandists" used them to justify strikes on Kyiv.	Russian special services, per the CCD, and "Kremlin propagandists", per the SBU **[official]**	CCD Telegram; Telegram
	disarm TA02 T0136.002 · TA15 T0091.001 T0146.007		

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
12-15 Oct W42-052	SPRAVDI rebutted Russian foreign ministry official Rodion Miroshnik, who claimed through RIA Novosti that Ukraine keeps occupied Oleshky under a "drone siege" and caused its humanitarian crisis, and his claim that Zelensky left Kyiv without power to see his "masters" in London.	Rodion Miroshnik and RIA Novosti, per SPRAVDI **[official]**	SPRAVDI; SPRAVDI
	disarm TA02 ~T0135.001 · TA14 T0004 · TA16 T0097.111 T0143.001 · TA07 T0111		
14 Oct W42-053	Ukrinform debunked three mobilization fakes: August photos from an Odesa penal colony recast as proof that recruitment officers are enlisting convicts, and two videos that a detection tool rated 90% and 99% likely AI-made, a "rabbi" whose sons were sent to serve in the recruitment centers and an ad offering marriage to a German pensioner to leave Ukraine.	Russian media and Telegram channels, per Ukrinform **[media]**	Ukrinform
	disarm TA06 T0084.003 T0087.001 · TA07 T0151.001 T0151.007 T0151.008 T0152.004 · TA11 T0060		
13 Oct W42-054	The CCD said YouTube blocked in Ukraine or removed 39 more channels spreading Russian propaganda, including "Masha and the Bear" channels in several languages and playlists of pro-war performers.	Russian propaganda channels, per the CCD **[official]**	CCD Telegram
	disarm not labeled · response		
13 Oct W42-055	The Kyiv Independent traced AI-generated images behind claims of a forced draft of women, including "recruitment banners" in Odesa and a fake Kyiv mall ad posted by the Russian state TV presenter Olesya Loseva. VoxCheck separately found an AI video of a servicewoman begging not to be sent to the front.	Pro-Kremlin accounts and Russian media, per the Kyiv Independent **[media]**	Kyiv Independent; voxukraine.org
	disarm TA06 T0084.003 T0086.002 · TA16 T0097.102 T0143.001 · TA05 T0101 · TA07 T0151.007 T0151.008		
12-13 Oct W42-056	VoxCheck found an AI-generated photo of Kyiv's Southern Bridge in flames credited to Reuters, and an AI-made poll screenshot from a nonexistent "Ukraine Today" Facebook page in which 94% of Kyivans worried more about a McDonald's menu than a strike on the Academy of Sciences. A detection tool found SynthID watermarks in both.	Unknown **[unattributed]**	voxukraine.org; voxukraine.org
	disarm TA06 T0086.002 · TA16 T0097.202 T0143.002 T0143.003 (actor unknown)		
11-13 Oct W42-057	ISW said the Russian MoD again used AI-altered flag-raising footage to claim two villages about 10 km beyond the furthest Russian advance near Dobropillia, and kept claiming an encirclement of Dobropillia "despite extensive evidence to the contrary".	The Russian MoD, per ISW **[researcher]**	ISW; ISW
	disarm TA02 T0139.001 · TA06 T0085 T0087.001 · TA16 T0097.206 T0143.001 · TA07 T0151.007 T0151.008		

[-] Attribution note: The CCD, SPRAVDI and the SBU are Ukrainian state bodies and a party to the war. Their attributions are official, but not neutral. This week SPRAVDI called a claim of a US intelligence cut-off "invented", and Zelensky later said warnings had stopped for three days.

Wider Europe and beyond

The UK, Lithuania and the EU named Russia this week: the UK prime minister over the Brexit vote, Lithuania's over an attempted Starlink arson, and Kaja Kallas while proposing 100 sanctions listings against Russia's FIMI infrastructure. DFRLab's map of coordinated networks around Armenia's June election was the main exposure. Iran appeared in the RAF Fairford incident and a phishing attack rather than content operations, and the only China-linked item outside Czechia came from pro-China users posting about France's protests.

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
18 Oct W42-058	Lithuania's Prime Minister Mindaugas Sinkevičius said an overnight attempt to set fire to a company storing Starlink equipment was "part of Russia's hybrid war with elements of sabotage", and that the likely client was "the Russian side". Security had been reinforced after a warning and the attempt failed, and police said no suspects had been detained. **disarm** not labeled · context	Russia, per Lithuania's prime minister **[official]**	lrt.lt
16 Oct W42-059	Myth Detector found that five clips shared on 3-10 October as footage of France's student protests were old, some from 2022 and 2023. Georgia's Kvira and Russian-language Facebook news pages spread them, and the Russian-language outlet Life shared one. **disarm** TA06 T0084.003 · TA07 T0151.003 (actor unknown)	No operator named. Kvira, Russian-language pages and the outlet Life spread them, per Myth Detector **[researcher]**	mythdetector.com
16 Oct W42-060	Bloomberg reported that bots are inflating view counts of AI-fabricated clips of actors and musicians attacking Democrats before the US midterms, alongside clips alleging corruption by Democratic candidates. **disarm** TA02 ~T0135.001 · TA06 T0015 T0087.001 · TA07 T0151.008 · TA17 T0049.003	Russia (Matryoshka), "a Russian state-backed operation", per social media researchers cited by Bloomberg **[media]**	news.bloomberglaw.com
13-15 Oct W42-061	In Bulgaria, two masked individuals burned 11 of 17 Starlink antennas at a site near Sofia, Democratic Bulgaria MP Ivaylo Mirchev reported, speaking of "Russian-linked sabotage". The interior ministry said there are suspects. **disarm** not labeled · context	Not named by Bulgarian officials **[unattributed]**	novinite.com; BTA
13-15 Oct W42-062	France's Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot criticized "provocative" actions by "an Azerbaijani group" holding conferences in Nouméa that call for revolt in the overseas territories, and cited "an Israeli firm creating fake French accounts to stage artificial clashes over the Palestinian issue". Azerbaijan's foreign ministry called the accusations "entirely unfounded". **disarm** not labeled · context	An Azerbaijani group and an unnamed Israeli firm, per France's foreign minister **[official]**	oc-media.org

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
15 Oct W42-063	Moldova's observer group Promo-LEX counted at least 70 accounts amplifying a claim that Gagauzia's autonomy is being "liquidated" before its 15 November regional elections, and at least 24 Russian-language ads for one candidate run by a page whose administrators Meta data reportedly places in Indonesia and Ukraine. **disarm** TA14 ~T0083 · TA07 ~T0151.003 · TA09 T0114.001 · TA17 T0049 · TA11 ~T0130.001 (actor unknown)	Not identified **[unattributed]**	promolex.md
15 Oct W42-064	Iran International said that on 10 October someone posing as a representative of an established think tank lured one of its correspondents to a fake sign-in page, then used the login to reach the correspondent's work account. **disarm** not labeled · context	"actors linked to the Iranian regime", in the outlet's belief **[media]**	Iran International
15 Oct W42-065	Factcheck.bg debunked a fabricated press release in which the PP-DB coalition supposedly declared "Levski is the past, today our Apostle is Zelensky". It traced the text to a January 2025 article on Faktibg.com, a site it says often spreads fabricated content, and a late-September Facebook post recycling it was shared over 820 times. **disarm** TA02 T0135.001 · TA06 T0085.003 · TA16 T0098.002 · TA05 T0102.001 · TA07 T0151.001 T0151.002 T0152.004 · TA11 T0060 (actor unknown)	Faktibg.com as the original source. No state named **[researcher]**	factcheck.bg
15 Oct W42-066	Serbia sent Croatia a protest note alleging interference in its 25 October parliamentary election, and President Aleksandar Vucic said Croatia was interfering "in the most overt way". Croatia's Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic called the claim "absolute nonsense". **disarm** not labeled · context	Croatia, per Serbia's government **[official]**	balkaninsight.com
15 Oct W42-067	Veridica debunked a narrative in Russian media that Moldova's local-government reform is cover for an attack on Transnistria and for seizing the Cobasna ammunition depot, as Nezavisimaya Gazeta reported, quoting a Transnistrian deputy. **disarm** TA02 T0135.001 T0136.002 · TA06 T0023 · TA07 T0111.002 · TA08 T0042	Russian media, per Veridica **[researcher]**	veridica.ro
15 Oct W42-068	NewsGuard found pro-China X users recasting a June 2025 Paris concert video as France's October student protests, implying immigrants lead them. One 7 October post drew 47,100 views, and the clip also spread on Instagram, Facebook and TikTok. **disarm** TA02 T0140.003 · TA06 T0084.003 · TA07 T0151.001 T0151.008 (actor unknown)	Pro-China social media users. NewsGuard names no state actor **[researcher]**	newsguardriskbriefing.substack.com
14 Oct W42-069	The Gnida Project reported that Storm-1516 now relies "almost exclusively" on a network of influencers, and named two recruiters, Jared "Gerry" Nolan and the Brazilian Raphael Machado. Daniel Gugger, whom Gnida calls probably the biggest spreader of Storm-1516 material in the German-speaking sphere, told NDR he got material from Machado and was not paid for it. **disarm** TA16 T0100.003 · TA07 T0151.007 T0151.008 T0152.004 · TA17 T0039 · TA11 T0130.001	Russia (Storm-1516, which Gnida links to the GRU and the Presidential Administration), per The Gnida Project **[researcher]**	gnidaproject.substack.com

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
14 Oct W42-070	Factual.ro debunked an AI-generated reel posted on Facebook on 5 October in which Zelensky, shouting in Russian, appears to choke Ursula von der Leyen and take stacks of cash from a bag, built on footage of a real ceremony.	The poster is not named. Factual says the distorted picture of Ukraine's ties with European leaders is part of a disinformation campaign run by Russia **[researcher]**	factual.ro
disarm TA02 ~T0135.001 · TA06 T0085 T0087.001 T0088 · TA07 T0151.001			
14 Oct W42-071	Factual.ro debunked posts claiming hundreds of French and over 10,000 Polish soldiers had died in Ukraine, spread on Facebook from 7 October, some with French-dubbed reels of an August YouTube talk with the Russia-based commentator Stanislav Krapivnik. Poland's General Command told Factual the claim is false.	Facebook users recycling Krapivnik's claim. Factual says Russian or pro-Russian sources have spread versions since the war began **[researcher]**	factual.ro
disarm TA06 T0085 · TA07 T0151.001 (actor unknown)			
14 Oct W42-072	StopFals found that claims about Moldova's "militarization", drone routes and medical centers for Ukrainian troops, made at the OSCE on 1 October by Russia's envoy Dmitry Polyansky, were false or distorted, some deliberately. It traced the medical-center story to anonymous Telegram channels on 25 September, after which other pages and accounts promoted it, partly with paid posts.	Russia's OSCE envoy, per StopFals **[researcher]**	realitatea.md
disarm TA06 T0023 ~T0086.003 · TA16 T0097.111 T0143.001 · TA07 T0110 ~T0151.001 ~T0151.007 · TA09 ~T0114.001			
14 Oct W42-073	Detector Media described a TikTok wave of silent template videos spoofing Bloomberg, AFP, Bellingcat, Forbes and The Economist, posted by throwaway accounts, that urged lifting sanctions on Russia and carried invented quotes from experts such as Eliot Higgins. Detector Media calls media spoofing the signature of Russia's Matryoshka operation.	Unnamed accounts. The Matryoshka comparison is Detector Media's **[researcher]**	Detector Media
disarm TA02 ~T0135.001 ~T0135.002 · TA14 T0068 · TA06 T0084.001 T0087 T0087.002 · TA15 T0150.008 · TA16 T0097.202 T0143.003 · TA07 T0151.008			
14 Oct W42-074	SPRAVDI counted about 220 publications on 13 October about the drone-struck ships off Bulgaria, in which hostile sources cast the civilian vessels as Ukraine's "shadow fleet", aiming in part to stir Bulgarian debate on support for Ukraine.	The Kremlin, per SPRAVDI **[official]**	SPRAVDI
disarm TA02 T0066 T0135.002 · TA14 T0004 T0068 · TA06 T0023			
13-14 Oct W42-075	Factual.ro debunked posts inflating support for the detained ex-candidate Calin Georgescu, including a claim of 15,000 protesters outside Bucharest's Central Arrest, where reporters counted about 2,000 at the peak, and a video of AfD deputies in handcuffs that showed a Hamburg protest against a possible AfD ban.	Georgescu's supporters, per Factual **[researcher]**	factual.ro; factual.ro
disarm TA06 T0023 T0084.003 T0086.002 T0087.002 · TA07 T0151.001 (domestic · excluded from FIMI analysis)			

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
11-14 Oct W42-076	UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham said he had "the clear answer that yes, there was" Russian interference in the 2016 Brexit referendum, in excerpts that gave no detail. NewsGuard said Storm-1516 turned to the UK in August with a fake Daily Express site claiming Burnham would take in up to 4,000 migrants from Ceuta, and that France and Germany drew 21 of its false claims in six months, its most-targeted countries after Ukraine and Armenia.	Russia, per Burnham [official], and Storm-1516, per NewsGuard **[researcher]**	abcnews.com; newsguardrealitycheck.com
	disarm TA02 ~T0135.001 · TA06 T0085.003 · TA16 T0097.202 T0143.003 · TA07 ~T0151.008 T0152.004		
13 Oct W42-077	FIP.am traced claims that the Firebird AI data center being built in Armenia could serve US intelligence and strain the power grid to June and July campaigns it attributes to Storm-1516: a video portraying it as a US intelligence facility, and an X post citing a spoofed Gizmodo domain about its energy problems. Similar claims reached Rossiya 24 on 22 September and a deputy secretary of Russia's Security Council on 8 October.	Campaigns attributed to Storm-1516, then Russian state media and officials, per FIP.am **[researcher]**	fip.am
	disarm TA06 T0087 · TA15 T0149.003 · TA16 T0097.111 T0097.202 T0143.001 T0143.003 · TA07 T0111.001 T0151.008 T0152.004		
12 Oct W42-078	After the EU Foreign Affairs Council, Kaja Kallas said the EU had "taken down dozens of websites and hundreds of ads linked to Russian mercenary recruitment network in Africa" and is "proposing 100 new sanctions listings targeting Russia's FIMI infrastructure".	Russia, per the EU's High Representative **[official]**	eeas.europa.eu
	disarm not labeled · response		
12 Oct W42-079	The EU Council listed 77 people over Russia's September State Duma vote in occupied parts of Ukraine: 74 candidates and three members of Russia's Central Election Commission.	Russia **[official]**	eurointegration.com.ua
	disarm not labeled · response		
12 Oct W42-080	Burnham told the Commons the incident at RAF Fairford was "almost certainly directed by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard", and the Home Secretary said Iran pays criminals or exploits "naive volunteers" as proxies, adding that the UK is setting up a National Centre for Information Defence against disinformation from states.	Iran's IRGC, per the UK government **[official]**	gov.uk; gov.uk
	disarm not labeled · context		

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED	ACTOR AND ATTRIBUTION	SOURCE
12 Oct W42-081	DFRLab, with FIP.am, LetsData and Erebus, mapped four networks of more than 100 coordinated Facebook pages, linked news-lookalike sites and synchronized Telegram channels that pushed claims before Armenia's 7 June election that 300,000 Azerbaijanis would be resettled there and that the vote would bring war. A former page owner said he sold about 100 pages to buyers based in Russia, some sites show traces of a Russian-language operator, and one shares an AdSense account with Polish- and Hungarian-language content farms.	Not attributed to a state, per DFRLab **[researcher]**	DFRLab

disarm TA06 T0084.001 T0085 · TA15 T0150.006 T0150.008 · TA16 T0097.202 T0098 T0143.002 · TA07 T0151.003 T0151.007 T0152.004 T0154.001 · TA17 T0049.003 T0119.001 T0122 (actor unknown)

Actors and techniques

Russian operations again dominated, through spoofed media brands, recruited influencers and AI images, and the week added Starlink sabotage cases in Poland, Lithuania and Bulgaria. Iran appeared in attack plots in Germany, the RAF Fairford incident and a phishing attack, and the China-linked items were a spy trial and a Chinese academic's conference appearance in Prague, and pro-China users posting about France's protests.

OPERATION OR ACTOR	ORIGIN	WHAT IT DID THIS WEEK	WHERE SEEN
Storm-1516	Russia per The Gnida Project, NewsGuard and FIP.am	Spoofed Stern with a fake video of a Merz "body double", per NewsGuard citing The Gnida Project, relies on recruited influencers to publish first, and pushed claims about an AI data center in Armenia. NewsGuard ranks France and Germany as its most-targeted countries over six months, after Ukraine and Armenia.	Germany (X), the UK and Armenia
Matryoshka (Operation Overload)	Russia per social media researchers cited by Bloomberg	Pushed AI celebrity clips against Democrats before the US midterms. Detector Media compared a WIRED-branded fake and a TikTok wave spoofing Bloomberg, AFP and others to its methods.	The US (X), and on TikTok by Detector Media's comparison
Pravda network (Portal Kombat)	Russia per Demagog and Ukraine's CCD	A Pravda site spread the fake Pijana Wiśnia poster, and the CCD says some of the network's clusters halved their output for about 12 hours after the Yandex strikes.	Poland and internationally
Doppelganger	Russia per CeMAS	CeMAS has seen no German-language activity on X since 9 October and cannot conclusively tie the pause to the strikes.	Germany (X), now paused
#RussiaIsNotMyEnemy	Russia per Ukraine's CCD	Moved to simulating Western protest against aid, with over 13,300 near-identical English-language posts on X in a week.	On X, in English
Global Fact-Checking Network	Russia (TASS and ANO Dialog Regions) per SPRAVDI	A pseudo-fact-checking network with foreign "experts", including a Czech publisher and a Slovak internet-TV founder.	Russia, with Czech and Slovak participants

OPERATION OR ACTOR	ORIGIN	WHAT IT DID THIS WEEK	WHERE SEEN
RT	Russia (state broadcaster)	The source of the "5 million refugees" claim a former Polish prime minister shared, and cited by two chatbots on Nord Stream.	Poland and Germany
Russian intelligence and its sabotage proxies	Russia per Polish and Lithuanian officials and Polish prosecutors	A Turkish gang allegedly burned a Starlink station in Poland, a scout was vetted over Telegram, and a recruit filmed the Marywilska fire for his handlers.	Poland, Germany and Lithuania
Telegram recruitment	Russia (its special services and military intelligence) per the SBU	Handlers spotted recruits through "quick money" channels and political comments, used a fake dating profile and posed as law enforcement.	Ukraine
Russian MoD and military leadership	Russia per ISW	Inflated territorial claims and AI-altered flag-raising footage.	Ukraine
IRGC	Iran per a Hamburg court and, for RAF Fairford, "almost certainly" per the UK government	Plots against Jewish targets in Germany and the incident at RAF Fairford, and the UK says Iran pays criminals or exploits volunteers as proxies.	Germany and the UK
Chinese intelligence	China per the Prague prosecutor	A correspondent on trial for using press cover to map the "influence environment".	Czechia
Technique: AI images caught by SynthID	Mostly unattributed	Detection tools found the watermark in an anti-Fico receipt, a Polish portal's AI-processed arrest image, a "hired actor" collage and a fake Reuters bridge photo.	Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine
Technique: spoofed media brands	Russia-linked where attributed	Fakes imitated Stern, the Daily Express, WIRED, Reuters, Gizmodo, Ukrainian local news sites and, on TikTok, Bloomberg, AFP, Bellingcat, Forbes and The Economist, and a fake front page invented a "České noviny" paper that does not exist. NewsGuard counts 903 fake reports falsely attributed to 163 outlets in 21 countries since 2023, spread by what it calls "the Russian operation".	Germany, the UK, Ukraine, Armenia and Czechia
Technique: deepfakes of commanders and leaders	Actors unnamed	An AI video of a Ukrainian brigade commander addressed Poles, and an AI reel showed Zelensky choking Ursula von der Leyen.	Poland and Romania
Technique: forged notices and releases	Actors mostly unnamed	A forged Kramatorsk administration notice, a fake PP-DB press release and a fake bar poster for the Bandera anniversary.	Ukraine, Bulgaria and Poland

New research and reports

The Yandex strikes set the research agenda: CORRECTIV, CeMAS, EDMO, NewsGuard and Texty found no evidence of a collapse in Russian bot activity, and only Ukraine's CCD tied a drop in posting by inauthentic accounts to the strikes. No platform published a takedown report in the window, and OpenAI's last was the 8 October report covered last week.

DATE	PUBLISHER	TITLE OR TOPIC	WHY IT MATTERS
16 Oct	SPRAVDI	Foreign "experts" and alternative fact-checking	Profiles the GFCN and lists its foreign panelists, a Czech and a Slovak among them.
16 Oct	Texty	TikTok and YouTube monitoring, 5-11 October	Puts bots at almost one in four of the negative YouTube comments about Zelensky.
16 Oct	TheJournal.ie	"Debunked: Graph does not show drop in AfD-related activity after strikes on Russian data centres"	Brings Graphika's data: AfD-related accounts posted 4% less than a week earlier, within the normal range.
16 Oct	CEDMO	"Public Perceptions of Freedom of Expression in Central Europe Reveal Tensions Between Free Speech and State Control"	A survey of nearly 6,000 people in Czechia, Slovakia and Poland, where about 40% of Czechs reject state control over the internet and media.
15 Oct	CCD	Analytical report on the Yandex strikes	The only analysis tying a drop in posting by inauthentic accounts to the strikes, across 5,201 it tracked on Facebook and Telegram.
15 Oct	EDMO	"Ukraine strikes on Yandex and Russian trolls: facts, propaganda and doubts"	Polls the EDMO hubs and finds no conclusive evidence of a drop.
15 Oct	NewsGuard	"Fakes of the week: Trump begs Iran; Germany's Merz is replaced by a double"	Documents the Stern spoof and finds no abnormal drop in known Russian operations after the strikes.
15 Oct	Promo-LEX	First observation report on Gagauzia's regional elections	Counts coordinated accounts and foreign-run ads a month before the vote.
14 Oct	CeMAS	"Sand im Getriebe der Desinfomaschine? Der Angriff auf Yandex und (vermeintliche) Auswirkungen auf Russlands Bot-Netzwerke"	Finds the viral graphs misleading and central Storm-1516 actors still active on X.
14 Oct	The Gnida Project	"Kremlin's talent agency: the international network behind the Storm-1516 promotion"	Part one of a series naming the recruiters who place Storm-1516 fakes with Western influencers.
14 Oct	NewsGuard	"U.K. Prime Minister Is Wise Not to 'Tiptoe' Around Russian Influence"	Ranks France and Germany as Storm-1516's top targets after Ukraine and Armenia.
13 Oct	Graphika	"Did the Yandex Data Center Strikes Silence Russian Bots? What the Data Shows"	Finds no notable change in AfD, MAGA and Reform UK communities after the strikes.
13 Oct	FIP.am	Storm-1516 narratives on the Firebird data center	Traces a fake from Storm-1516 videos to Russia's Security Council.
13 Oct	INFO OPS Polska	Russian influence in Poland during the Yandex disruption	Logs 611 Polish-language posts in two days, with no sign the stream stopped.
12 Oct	DFRLab	"How coordinated inauthentic networks amplified fears of war and national loss before Armenian elections"	The week's main network exposure, with a link to Polish-language content farms.
12 Oct	Propastop	A profile of Rybar	Puts the main channel above 1.5 million subscribers and its company's revenue at 61 million rubles in 2025.
12 Oct	Texty	How one unsourced chart became proof of falling Russian bots	An early takedown of the viral Yandex charts, tracing the AfD graph to an 11 October Threads post.

What to watch next week

Elections in Slovakia, Bulgaria and Serbia, a Slovak-Russian commission meeting in Moscow and the EU's proposed FIMI listings are the dates to watch.

[+] 19 Oct: Lithuania's National Security Commission meets on the attempted Starlink arson.

[+] 19-20 Oct: A Prague court may decide whether Jang I-ming stays in custody. His trial resumes on 2 November.

[+] 21 Oct: The initial remand of the two Ukrainians arrested in Vienna on espionage suspicion ends, unless a court extends it.

[+] 24 Oct: Slovakia's municipal and regional elections.

[+] 25 Oct: Bulgaria's presidential election, with a run-off on 1 November if needed, and Serbia's early parliamentary election, on which ODIHR presents preliminary findings on 26 October.

[+] 26 Oct: The Slovak-Russian intergovernmental commission meets in Moscow, according to the Russian government. Fico had given 25 November.

[+] 3 Nov: The US midterm elections, the target of AI celebrity fakes that researchers cited by Bloomberg tie to Matryoshka.

[+] No date: The EU's proposed 100 FIMI sanctions listings await adoption.

[-] Coverage gap: This issue does not draw on Manipulátoři.cz, Čeští elfové, the European Values Center, NÚKIB, SIS, GLOBSEC, SME, PAP Fake Hunter, the Council of the EU's own releases, VIGINUM or Reuters, and does not specifically cover the Czech Senate run-offs of 16-17 October. Finding nothing there is not proof that nothing happened.

TTP patterns this week

Russia is the state behind all 31 records with a state actor this week, attributed or suspected, and no Chinese or Iranian content operation reached a label. What sets the Russian records apart from the 20 unattributed ones is again the mask and the channel, legitimacy tricks and Telegram seeding, while nearly every record on both sides develops content. Two weeks of records are a baseline, not a trend: read every number below as n/N records.

[x] **Tactic presence by actor: records using each DISARM tactic at least once**

TACTIC (KILL-CHAIN ORDER)	RUSSIA (N=31)	UNATTRIBUTED (N=20)
TA02 Plan Objectives	22/31	8/20
TA14 Develop Narratives	12/31	3/20
TA06 Develop Content	24/31	19/20
TA15 Establish Assets	6/31	2/20
TA16 Establish Legitimacy	18/31	7/20
TA05 Microtarget	3/31	5/20
TA07 Select Channels and Affordances	25/31	18/20
TA08 Conduct Pump Priming	1/31	1/20
TA09 Deliver Content	1/31	2/20
TA17 Maximise Exposure	4/31	2/20
TA10 Drive Offline Activity	5/31	0/20

TACTIC (KILL-CHAIN ORDER)	RUSSIA (N=31)	UNATTRIBUTED (N=20)
TA11 Persist in the Information Environment	2/31	2/20

Not seen this week: TA01 Plan Strategy, TA13 Target Audience Analysis, TA18 Drive Online Harms, TA12 Assess Effectiveness. Planning-phase tactics are rarely visible in open sources, so their absence says more about evidence than behaviour. TA02 includes inferred aims. Counting only aims a source states, Russia is 13/31 and unattributed is 5/20.

[1] **Disguise and Telegram set Russian records apart.** Content development appears almost everywhere (Russia 24/31, unattributed 19/20). The difference is legitimacy (TA16: 18/31 against 7/20), seeding through Telegram channels (T0151.007: 13/31 against 2/20) and impersonating real outlets, institutions or people (T0143.003, T0149.003: 7/31 against 3/20). Traceable infrastructure is often what makes an attribution possible, so part of this gap is a selection effect. Two of the seven Russian impersonation records (W42-047, -073) are Russian only because Detector Media likens their media spoofing to Matryoshka's; filed as unattributed, they would close the impersonation gap.

[2] **News brands are the favorite mask, on both sides.** A news-outlet persona (T0097.202) appears in 5/31 Russian records, the fake Stern video (W42-031), the WIRED-branded video (W42-047), the TikTok template spoofs of Bloomberg, AFP and others (W42-073), the fake Daily Express site (W42-076) and the spoofed Gizmodo link (W42-077), and in 4/20 unattributed ones (W42-001, -041, -056, -081). Storm-1516 accounts for three of the Russian five. Two others (W42-047, -073) are Russian by resemblance only, so the split between the sides is soft.

[3] **Russian officials and state media also speak as themselves.** Alongside the disguises, 7/31 Russian records carry an authentic persona (T0143.001): Putin and Gerasimov (W42-037), the MoD (W42-057), the foreign ministry's Miroshnik (W42-052), the OSCE envoy (W42-072), a Security Council official (W42-077) and state-media presenters (W42-016, -055). A government official persona (T0097.111) is in 4/31.

[4] **AI media is shared evenly between Russian and unattributed records.** AI-generated text, images, video or audio appear in 9/31 Russian and 6/20 unattributed records, about 30% either way. AI video leads (T0087.001: Russia 6, unattributed 3), with AI images level (T0086.002: 3 each). The deepfake of a Ukrainian brigade commander addressing Poles (W42-022) has no named actor.

[5] **Unattributed manipulation lives on Facebook, Russian on X and Telegram.** Facebook and unspecified social networks (T0151.001) carry 9/20 unattributed records against 6/31 Russian ones, while X and TikTok (T0151.008) carry 12/31 Russian against 6/20 unattributed. Telegram channels are almost only Russian (13/31 against 2/20).

[6] **Offline action is rare, thin and rests mostly on Ukrainian state bodies.** Driving offline activity (TA10) appears in 5/31 Russian records and 0/20 unattributed ones, and the category is thin: panels at a Moscow forum (W42-040), calls for street protests (W42-044), online calls for violence (W42-048) and Telegram recruitment of saboteurs (W42-049), all four from the CCD, SPRAVDI or the SBU. The fifth is the fake Bandera-anniversary posters photographed in Warsaw (W42-014, from Demagog), whose makers are unknown and which count as Russian through Pravda-network amplification. The week's Starlink and drone-factory sabotage cases in Poland, Germany, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Slovakia were recorded as context and carry no labels.

[7] **The spread stage is the least documented.** Of the four stages of the Russian chain, disguise is documented in 18/31 records, manipulated content in 20/31, seeding in 23/31 and spread in only 6/31, and amplification (TA17) in 4/31. The full chain shows in four records: W42-031, -039, -047 and -055. With no platform takedown report in the window, labels per record are flat across sources (fact-checks 5.7, Ukrainian state bodies 6.1, media 6.3).

russian spoof-to-spread chain · records documenting each stage (n = 31)

disguise →	content →	seed →	spread
persona, spoofed brand, fake front	AI-made or manipulated real media	Telegram, X, Facebook, own or spoofed sites	localization, cross-posting, flooding
TA16	TA06	TA07	TA05 · TA17
18 / 31	**20 / 31**	**23 / 31**	**6 / 31**

All four stages are documented in 4 records: W42-031 (Storm-1516), W42-039 (RussiaIsNotMyEnemy), W42-047, W42-055. Stages count techniques, not whole tactics. Disguise is any TA16 label. Content is AI-made or edited media (T0023, T0023.001, T0084.003, T0085.001, T0086.002, T0086.003, T0087.001, T0087.002, T0088.001, T0088.002). Seed is T0151.001, T0151.007, T0151.008 or T0152.004. Spread is any TA17 label or T0101. That is why content and seed can count fewer records than TA06 and TA07.

[-] Read with care: Two weeks of records, W41 and W42, are not a trend. The per-week figures show Russian legitimacy tricks at 10/23 last week and 18/31 this week, a change two points cannot carry. No state other than Russia has a labeled record this week, so nothing is said about China or Iran. 11 of 31 Russian records rest first on Ukrainian state bodies, a party to the war. Labels come from secondary reporting, so they show what was documented, not everything the operators did.

[x] What to track as weeks accumulate

- [+] Russian legitimacy tricks (TA16, now 18/31) and Telegram seeding (13/31), as more weeks accumulate.
- [+] News-outlet personas by actor (now 5/31 Russian and 4/20 unattributed), and whether Storm-1516 keeps spoofing German and British outlets.
- [+] Storm-1516's influencer recruitment, as The Gnida Project's series continues.
- [+] AI media share by actor (now 9/31 and 6/20), and more AI fakes of Central European leaders after the Merz video.
- [+] The first labeled Chinese or Iranian content operation in the region.

Appendix: DISARM techniques used this week

90 techniques, ordered by tactic along the kill chain. Counts are records, not labels. RU = Russia, UNK = unattributed, DOM = domestic (excluded from the analysis). Each ID links to its definition in the DISARM framework, published by the DISARM Foundation under CC BY-SA 4.0.

TACTIC	ID	TECHNIQUE	RU	UNK	DOM
TA02	T0066	Degrade Adversary	1	·	·
TA02	T0079	Divide	2	2	·
TA02	T0135.001	Smear	8	5	·
TA02	T0135.002	Thwart	4	·	·
TA02	T0135.003	Subvert	2	·	·
TA02	T0135.004	Polarise	1	·	·
TA02	T0136.001	Defend Reputaton	1	·	·
TA02	T0136.002	Justify Action	5	·	·
TA02	T0136.004	Boost Reputation	1	·	·
TA02	T0139.001	Discourage	5	1	·
TA02	T0140.003	Spread Hate	1	1	·
TA14	T0004	Develop Competing Narratives	6	·	·
TA14	T0022.001	Amplify Existing Conspiracy Theory Narratives	3	·	·
TA14	T0068	Respond to Breaking News Event or Active Crisis	6	1	1
TA14	T0083	Integrate Target Audience Vulnerabilities into Narrative	1	2	·
TA06	T0015	Create Hashtags and Search Artefacts	2	·	·
TA06	T0023	Distort Facts	6	3	1
TA06	T0023.001	Reframe Context	2	·	·
TA06	T0084.001	Use Copypasta	2	2	·
TA06	T0084.002	Plagiarise Content	·	2	·
TA06	T0084.003	Deceptively Labelled or Translated	3	5	2
TA06	T0085	Develop Text-Based Content	5	3	·
TA06	T0085.003	Develop Inauthentic News Articles	1	3	·
TA06	T0085.004	Develop Document	1	·	·
TA06	T0086	Develop Image-Based Content	·	1	·
TA06	T0086.002	Develop AI-Generated Images (Deepfakes)	3	3	1
TA06	T0086.003	Deceptively Edit Images (Cheap Fakes)	1	1	·
TA06	T0086.004	Aggregate Information into Evidence Collages	1	·	·
TA06	T0087	Develop Video-Based Content	3	1	·
TA06	T0087.001	Develop AI-Generated Videos (Deepfakes)	6	3	·
TA06	T0087.002	Deceptively Edit Video (Cheap Fakes)	2	2	1
TA06	T0088	Develop Audio-Based Content	1	·	·
TA15	T0091.001	Recruit Contractors	2	·	·
TA15	T0092.001	Create Organisations	1	·	·
TA15	T0146.007	Automated Account Asset	1	·	·
TA15	T0149.003	Lookalike Domain	1	·	·
TA15	T0149.009	Internet Connected Physical Asset	·	1	·
TA15	T0150.002	Dormant Asset	1	·	·
TA15	T0150.005	Compromised Asset	·	1	·

TACTIC	ID	TECHNIQUE	RU	UNK	DOM
TA15	T0150.006	Purchased Asset	·	1	·
TA15	T0150.008	Bulk Created Asset	1	1	·
TA16	T0097.101	Local Persona	1	·	·
TA16	T0097.102	Journalist Persona	2	·	·
TA16	T0097.109	Romantic Suitor Persona	1	·	·
TA16	T0097.111	Government Official Persona	4	·	·
TA16	T0097.112	Government Employee Persona	1	·	·
TA16	T0097.202	News Outlet Persona	5	4	·
TA16	T0097.203	Fact Checking Organisation Persona	1	·	·
TA16	T0097.205	Business Persona	1	1	·
TA16	T0097.206	Government Institution Persona	3	1	·
TA16	T0098	Establish Inauthentic News Sites	·	1	·
TA16	T0098.002	Leverage Existing Inauthentic News Sites	1	1	·
TA16	T0100.001	Co-Opt Trusted Individuals	1	·	·
TA16	T0100.003	Co-Opt Influencers	1	·	·
TA16	T0143.001	Authentic Persona	7	·	·
TA16	T0143.002	Fabricated Persona	3	4	·
TA16	T0143.003	Impersonated Persona	7	3	·
TA16	T0143.004	Parody Persona	1	·	·
TA05	T0016	Create Clickbait	·	1	·
TA05	T0101	Create Localised Content	3	2	·
TA05	T0102.001	Use Existing Echo Chambers/Filter Bubbles	·	2	·
TA07	T0110	Formal Diplomatic Channels	1	·	·
TA07	T0111	Traditional Media	1	·	·
TA07	T0111.001	TV	2	·	·
TA07	T0111.002	Newspaper	1	·	·
TA07	T0151.001	Social Media Platform	6	9	1
TA07	T0151.002	Online Community Group	·	2	·
TA07	T0151.003	Online Community Page	·	3	·
TA07	T0151.006	Chat Room	1	·	·
TA07	T0151.007	Chat Broadcast Group	13	2	·
TA07	T0151.008	Microblogging Platform	12	6	1
TA07	T0151.014	Comments Section	·	1	·
TA07	T0151.017	Dating Platform	1	·	·
TA07	T0152.001	Blogging Platform	1	·	·
TA07	T0152.004	Website Asset	7	3	·
TA07	T0153.007	Direct Messaging	1	·	·
TA07	T0154.001	AI LLM Platform	·	1	·
TA08	T0042	Seed Kernel of Truth	1	1	·
TA09	T0114.001	Social Media	1	1	·
TA09	T0116.001	Post Inauthentic Social Media Comment	·	1	·
TA17	T0039	Bait Influencer	2	·	1
TA17	T0049	Flood Information Space	·	1	·
TA17	T0049.003	Bots Amplify via Automated Forwarding and Reposting	2	1	·

TACTIC	ID	TECHNIQUE	RU	UNK	DOM
TA17	T0119.001	Post across Groups	·	1	·
TA17	T0122	Direct Users to Alternative Platforms	·	1	·
TA10	T0057	Organise Events	2	·	·
TA10	T0057.002	Conduct Symbolic Action	1	·	·
TA10	T0127.002	Encourage Physical Violence	2	·	·
TA11	T0060	Continue to Amplify	1	1	·
TA11	T0130.001	Conceal Sponsorship	1	1	·