



European Digital Media Observatory

5 DISINFORMATION NARRATIVES ABOUT THE WAR IN UKRAINE

10.03.2022 to 17.03.2022



Weekly report n°1

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5 CIRCULATING FALSE NARRATIVES

TREND n°1

Questioning the war, from its reality to its motives

The war is staged

Conspiracy theories

TREND n°2

Minimizing the reality of Ukrainian civilian casualties

Misleading use of pictures and videos

Focus on Mariupol

TREND n°3

Unfounded information about military maneuvers

Both on Russian & Ukrainian armies

Standard war disinformation mechanism

TREND n°4

Confusion on discriminatory practices resulting from the war

On Ukrainian refugees

On Russian nationals in the EU

TREND n°5

Distorted representation of Ukrainians

Heroization of Ukrainian army & Zelensky

Ukrainians & Zelensky are neo-Nazis

EARLY-WARNING: WHAT TO EXPECT

1. Disinformation about Ukrainian refugees

 Initially detected in the countries of first arrivals (Poland, Hungary, Romania & Slovakia), it is now spreading into Central and Western Europe as well (Germany, Ireland, Italy & Spain). Refugees are depicted as dangerous fascists, hogging local resources and allegedly receiving better treatments than EU nationals.

2. The permeability of the COVID19 disinformation community to Russian disinformation

Communities that have been exposed to Covid-19 related disinformation are now at great danger of being exposed to Ukraine-related disinformation that fosters pro-Russian propaganda. EDMO's February fact-checking brief identified the decrease of Covid-19 related disinformation in favor of Ukraine-related disinformation in favor of pro-Russian narratives: both tendencies seem to be correlated. 

3. The fake fact-checking outlets

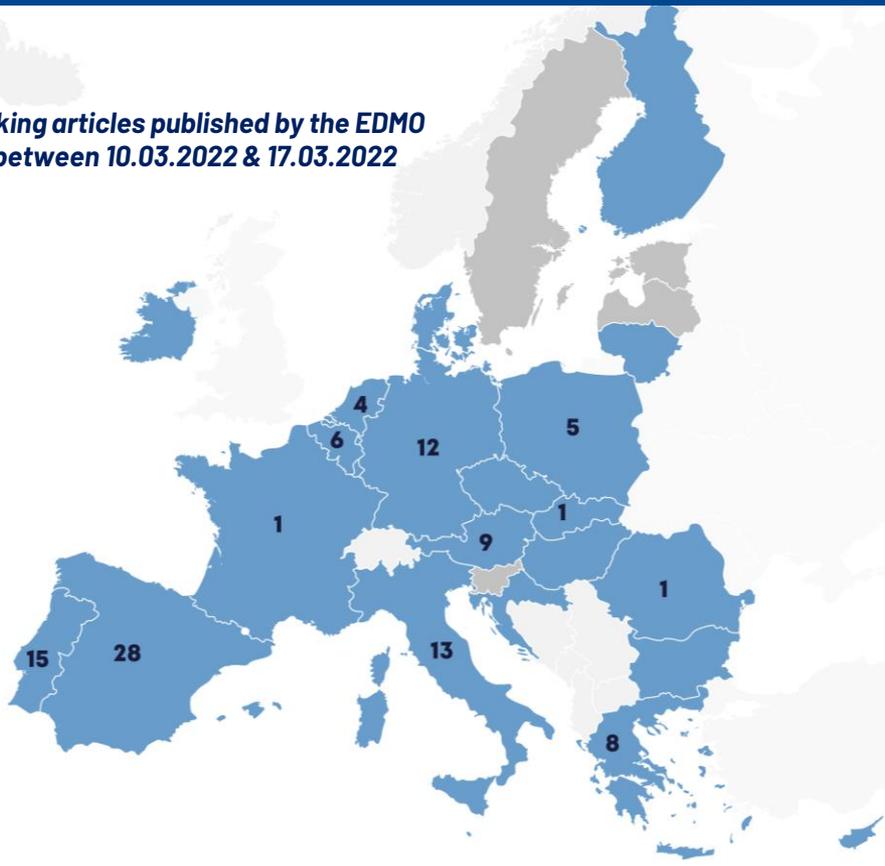
 The work of EDMO's network fighting disinformation is put at risk by the weaponization of fact-checks by fake media and fact-checking outlets. This disinformation is spread by Russian media and Russian embassies worldwide to instill mistrust in Western public opinions. EDMO's taskforce urged EU institutions to spread awareness and take action against these practices.

We are currently investigating these trends and will deliver their analysis as soon as possible.



DATA PROVIDED BY EDMO'S FACT-CHECKING NETWORK

Number of fact-checking articles published by the EDMO network per country between 10.03.2022 & 17.03.2022



In total, 473 articles have been provided by EDMO's fact-checking network partners since 24 February 2022 and 103 during the week this report focuses on (10.03 to 17.03).

About this map

It does not reflect the real volume of disinformation circulating in the EU. This volume remains complex to assess.

Organizations that contributed to this report: Correctiv, AFP Factual, Pagella Politica/Facta News, Ellinika Hoaxes, MALDITA.ES, AFP Verificat, Poligrafo, Knack, EFE Verifica, DPA (Nederland), Demagog (Poland), Mimikama, AFP Factual, AFP Faktencheck (Germany/Austria), AFP Faktencheck (Germany), DPA (Belgium), AFP Fact Check Nederland, AFP Fakty.



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METHODOLOGY

The information contained in this brief was collected via EDMO's repository of fact-checking articles related to the war in Ukraine, updated by the fact-checking organizations that are part of the EDMO fact-checking network.

Reference period: 10-17 March 2022. Number of articles analyzed: 103 (number as of 18.03.2022).

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