



European Digital Media Observatory

EDMO Taskforce on  
**2024 European Elections**

# **WEEKLY INSIGHTS and EARLY WARNINGS**

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# DISINFORMATION NARRATIVES YOU MAY COME ACROSS

## COVID-19

**Covid-19 vaccines are dangerous:** False information about vaccines, including claims that chips are inserted into bodies through Covid-19 vaccines to control people via 5G, as well as assertions that vaccines cause death and side effects, has been circulating recently. Such misinformation could heighten distrust in vaccines and governments. Given that vaccination campaigns were a key focus of the EU during the pandemic, this narrative is anticipated to resurface leading up to the elections.

**Scandal of the European Commission:** Further disinformation of Covid-19 conspiracy is particularly heightened by the circulation of false news alleging that the EU Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, is under investigation due to her husband's alleged connection to the company that supplied a significant quantity of vaccine shots to the EU.

## ESCALATION OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE

**The EU is preparing to intervene on the ground:** The false news that troops from EU countries are arriving in Ukraine might be used to trigger citizens' fears of the escalation of the war in Ukraine and influence their votes in the EU elections.

**Bulgaria** is also at the center of circulating disinformation in the context of Russian interference in their national elections, as denounced by the European Parliament on 22 April 2024. In this context, false news keeps depicting Ukrainians as dangerous and unreliable with support received from the EU Member States, as Ukrainian soldiers are accused of killing Bulgarian citizens with Bulgarian weapons.



# EARLY WARNINGS: WHAT TO EXPECT?

**1.** A revision of the **EU common agriculture policy (CAP)** was approved by the European Parliament on 24 April 2024 to address the demands of EU farmers and reduce administrative burdens. As this is happening within the context of the farmers' protests, this revision of the CAP could trigger further disinformation on the topic.

→ *Read the press release of the European Parliament [here](#).*

**2.** As the **European Parliament approved new rules to combat money laundering** on 24 April 2024, including a rule limiting large cash payments to 10,000 EUR, it is very likely that disinformation will circulate, with narratives exaggerating the reach and the scope of EU's decisions.

→ *Read the press release of the European Parliament [here](#).*

**3.** The **68<sup>th</sup> edition of the Eurovision Contest** is taking place in Sweden on 7-11 May 2024, and related disinformation, in particular connected to the participation of Israel, might grow. The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) has already published a statement on the abuse and harassment of competing artists, which has been targeted by social media campaigns. Like last year, cyberattacks and other hostile actions from external actors like Russia can be expected.

→ *Read the statement of the EBU [here](#).*

**4. Lebanon** is set to receive a 1-billion-euro financial aid package from the EU until 2027. Migration-related disinformation could be sparked by this news, as well as narratives targeting the EU for financing a government that has ties with the political arm of the Islamic terrorist organization Hezbollah.

→ *Read for example Politico reporting on the news [here](#).*

# METHODOLOGY

The information contained in this brief is based on the [EDMO EU Elections Disinfo Bulletin](#), the [EDMO monthly fact-checking briefs](#) and [investigations](#), and the EFCSN fact-checking database focused on the 2024 European Elections, [Elections24Check](#).

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