



Investigating Russia's role and the Kremlin's interference in the 2019 EP elections

Authors

Patrik Szicherle
Adam Lelonek, Ph.D.
Grigorij Mesežnikov
Jonas Syrovatka
Nikos Štěpánek

Budapest
May, 2019



**FRIEDRICH NAUMANN
FOUNDATION** For Freedom.
Central Europe and the Baltic States



POLITICAL CAPITAL
POLICY RESEARCH & CONSULTING INSTITUTE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Foreword | 3 |
| Executive summary | 3 |
| Policy recommendations on countering the threat and strategic communications | 4 |
| Countering disinformation through policies | 4 |
| Strategic communications | 6 |
| Methodology | 7 |
| Introduction | 7 |
| What does Russia stand to gain? | 8 |
| What factors are helping disinformation to spread? | 9 |
| The official Kremlin-backed narratives in the West | 11 |
| The encirclement of Russia | 12 |
| Euroscepticism | 13 |
| Other important pro-Russian narratives | 14 |
| Narratives in Hungarian media | 15 |
| Euroscepticism in the spotlight: traditional values vs Soros's multiculturalism | 15 |
| Ukraine in the focus | 17 |
| The media of perceived national interest and pro-Kremlin portals | 18 |
| Slovakia | 19 |
| The presidential election and its implications | 19 |
| In support of Eurosceptic forces | 20 |
| Czech Republic | 22 |
| Strong and peaceful Russia, aggressive US | 22 |
| EU: a topic of secondary importance | 23 |
| Poland | 24 |
| Internal political disputes on the EU help information aggressors | 24 |
| The West is an aggressor, while Russia is simply defending itself | 25 |
| Anti-Semitism used against American and European elites | 26 |
| Conclusions | 27 |
| Appendix | 30 |
| List of local portals under examination | 30 |
| References | 33 |
| Notes | 41 |

FOREWORD

We are thankful for Friedrich Naumann Foundation for its support for the project. We would like to thank our partners, Jonas Syrovatka (CZ), Nikos Štěpánek (CZ), Grigorij Mesežnikov (SK) and Adam Lelonek (PL) for their immense contribution to this paper. We are also grateful to the participants of our workshop on Russian influence in Europe for contributing to this paper with their insightful comments. Finally, we would like to thank Stefano Gardiman for helping us improve the text.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The EU and the 2019 European Parliamentary elections are certainly potential targets for the Kremlin's meddling efforts, which was acknowledged by European institutions well in advance. **There is reason to believe that as a way to better represent its national interests with regards to the EU, Russia possesses a desire and ability (using current 21st century technologies) to influence the upcoming EP elections.** However, it must be emphasized that national general elections are more likely targets for the Kremlin, as it is easier to influence EU decision-making through a group of pro-Russian governments in the Council of the European Union. Moreover, the decentralized EP elections are technically more difficult to influence. Still, Moscow could benefit from amplifying its voice in the EP and create the illusion that it had a strong impact on the EP vote.
- Some pro-Kremlin messages (e.g., the US is using the EU to force its will on other countries, and the CIA is behind Euromaidan) might resonate with the audience in at least some of the EU member states. The EP elections provide a great opportunity for spreading such narratives, but the effects of pro-Russian disinformation will be impossible to accurately measure.
- Kremlin-backed media is mainly focusing on discrediting the West in general, sometimes without even mentioning Russia. The narratives we found on RT and Sputnik English were remarkably consistent in some cases, suggesting that with regards to certain issues relating to key Russian national interests (e.g., Venezuela), the Kremlin is trying to persuade the audience on the validity of its own views. The Kremlin's relative lack of focus on the EP elections was highlighted by the fact that official Russia-backed media did not directly target the European Union as frequently as it did the US and NATO. However, when they did address topics related to the EU, they almost exclusively promoted the views of anti-EU actors. The coverage of local portals was varied in terms of their preferred topics: Hungarian disinformation media focused heavily on the EU, while the bloc was, similarly to what we observed on RT and Sputnik, relegated to secondary importance behind anti-West messages in the Czech Republic.
- Russian decision-makers aim to weaken and fragment the EU to gain more influence over what occurs on the continent, while some internal actors in EU member states want to achieve the same goals for ideological reasons. This essentially prompts the convergence of anti-EU narratives in official Kremlin-backed and local disinformation media.
- Anti-EU messages are often combined with even more prevalent anti-West messages. The Kremlin considers the EU to be the extended arm of the US in international relations, which is another reason why it wishes to hinder the European integration process. Consequently, disinformation directly targeting the US, NATO, pro-Western politicians and Western democratic norms can be considered to be attempts to influence the political orientation of Europeans in general, which can also affect voting intentions in EP elections: anti-West narratives also promote the messages of Eurosceptic forces (e.g., as the only solution to avoid war with Russia).
- The presence of Russian narratives within the messages of Eurosceptic actors increases the Kremlin's outreach in Europe considerably. At the same time, we can observe a bilateral transfer between the

Kremlin and Eurosceptic actors when it comes to narratives. While official, semi-official Kremlin-backed media can influence local pro-Russian actors' messages, the views of local actors also contribute to the official pro-Kremlin rhetoric.

- All in all, European pro-Kremlin, Eurosceptic actors (most of whom are likely to be “useful idiots” rather than Russian agents of influence) play a much more important role in spreading pro-Russian narratives in the EU than the Kremlin itself. Nevertheless, Moscow can be satisfied with this, as its narratives still reach the European audience and have an even larger effect through the former.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON COUNTERING THE THREAT AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

COUNTERING DISINFORMATION THROUGH POLICIES

POLICY-MAKERS, OPINION-LEADERS

- The recommendations made in the European Union’s Action Plan against Disinformationⁱ should be implemented as swiftly as possible. The EU’s declared goals in this field require significant amounts of additional funding and considerable time before they achieve visible results.
- Media literacy training and broader civic education has to be implemented in schools. Media education is already being tested in Ukraine because Kiev was forced to do so. Although some EU member states (such as Finland) have successfully implemented such programmes, the rest of Europe should not wait until its hand is forced. The implementation of such classes has to be initiated as soon as possible. The training should teach pupils how to fact check, how to differentiate between factual articles and those that are untruthful, how to differentiate between paid advertising and opinion pieces, and how to assess the factuality of information and adherence to journalistic standards. Moreover, education about the meaning of liberal democracy, the functioning of democratic societies (principles, norms, institutions, procedures), human rights, the rule of law, civil society, the functioning of the EU and international relations should also be taught. Implementation is urgent because it takes time to train a generation of citizens to be able to sift through an abundance of information published on the internet, assist them in acquiring the skills to understand what is occurring in the world and teach them about the functioning of democratic societies.



- Fact-checking initiatives should receive more funding both on the EU and national levels. It is imperative to increase the funding for the EU East StratCom Task force and promote its activities. Additional funding for fact-checking initiatives in local languages is also highly important, which include funding for marketing initiatives and projects. These websites become quite useless if citizens are not familiar with them. However, fact checking is only a partial solution. Think tanks, universities and specialised private companies also need additional funding to develop better methods, tools (for researching broader issues concerning information security), cybersecurity and national information environments.
- All European, national and local legislators should receive cyber security training from European counter-intelligence services to avoid being hacked. In addition, they should develop closer collaboration with private companies and national/European intelligence services in the fields of information sharing, education and training. Such steps could potentially restrict the ability of foreign governments and portals such as WikiLeaks to access sensitive information.

SOCIAL MEDIA, MEDIA

- Social media is one of the main platforms where disinformation can be spread. The two principal issues with how social media currently functions are that (1) they are not sharing adequate information with regards to their preventative measures and (2) they play a considerable role in the creation of “information bubbles.” Consequently, they are responsible for strengthening social divisions, the polarisation of societies and help information aggressors interfere in domestic socio-political processes. Forcing such companies to flag manipulative content can be counterproductive. It can convince people already distrustful of the mainstream that the “hidden” or “banned” content is true. The best solution for social media companies is tailoring their algorithms to bury disinformation, or in other words show it to the least users possible. Facebook is currently engaged in in this process, however more social media companies should follow its example. Moreover, deleting well-known extremist accounts spreading disinformation and conspiracy theories could contribute to slashing the supply of manipulative narratives, which has to be done in smaller geographical settings (e.g., V4) as well. All efforts designed to counter political influencing and disinformation on social media must be enforced consistently across all platforms, in all languages available and irrespective of the political views expressed in any given post. Social media companies must also take strong action against non-authentic accounts (e.g., bots and trolls using fake accounts).
- Euronews should be made available in basic TV packages in every EU member state in the local language to provide citizens with timely and accurate information on European affairs, including EU policies that affect their lives. The European Commission should increase the financial aid provided to the channel and ensure that the funds are spent in a transparent manner. Moreover, all local public broadcasters should be asked to incorporate a 30 minutes long daily EU news bulletin into their programmes. An independent international body (e.g. European Broadcasting Union) should be tasked with monitoring the impartiality of these programmes.
- Independent European media should pay more attention to EU-related topics and explain them to readers to increase public awareness of and knowledge about EU legislation and how it affects citizens’ lives.

PRIVATE COMPANIES

- European companies should cooperate to stop advertising on disinformation websites (following the example of dekonspiratori.sk). Advertising on such portals might not only damage their brand – for example, the ads might be shown next to manipulative stories spreading hate against various social groups or certain types of companies – but the success of Eurosceptic forces (that are praised on these websites) would also have a very negative effect on business if they ever got to implement their agenda in the EU. Therefore, the funding of sites that promote such views must be cut. Importantly, no dubious websites should be promoted on any platforms, including the Google Play Shop.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

- Mainstream pro-EU actors must offer a positive counter-narrative to unite societies exposed to the divisive claims made by pro-Russian Eurosceptic actors. The mainstream should acknowledge the problems Europeans face and should offer short- and long-term solutions to these issues. The solutions should be explained briefly – they have to be tailored to the short attention span of the general population – and concisely. Simply shrugging off Eurosceptic policy solutions as impossible or impractical is not enough anymore.
- The West should offer a strong counter-narrative to pro-Kremlin views being dispersed. It is not enough to dismiss Russian actions; the US and the Western alliance should clearly and concisely explain why it pursues the policies it does. For instance, in the case of Venezuela, it has to be explained that Nicolas Maduro breached all democratic norms when he installed the Constituent Assembly over the democratically-elected National Assembly simply because he did not like the election results. These actions are particularly needed in the EU's immediate neighbourhood – Eastern Partnership countries and the Western Balkans.
- Western nations, including older EU member states and North America, should start cultivating intense relationships with the new EU member states from Eastern Europe, whose populations might feel like second rate citizens in the EU. The West should praise these countries for their achievements and their role in the Western alliance, while – naturally – also criticise them for possible anti-democratic steps.
- Decision-makers and opinion-leaders should not overestimate Russia. By exaggerating Russia's strength and potential, pro-EU forces can potentially make Russia more appealing to some of the electorate. Pro-EU forces should rather emphasise the weaknesses of Russia: unappealing wages, brutal social inequality, very low life expectancy and that Putin – just like EU member states during the economic crisis – had to implement harsh reforms to keep the Russian budget afloat.
- Pro-EU actors could also utilise emerging influencers (YouTube, Instagram stars, sportsmen, etc.) to potentially communicate a pro-EU message to a part of the electorate that is likely highly apolitical. These channels could be used to disseminate messages on EU benefits that even affect those who stay away from any involvement in public affairs (e.g., free movement across member states) and use such topics to mobilise them to vote.

METHODOLOGY

We wanted to answer two basic questions in the frames of this research. First, we wanted to look at how Russia and topics concerning Russia are depicted in the 2019 EP election campaign in the V4. Second, we wanted to analyse how the EU and its institutions are depicted in pro-Kremlin media in the V4. To be able to put the regional narratives into a larger context – considering the fact that the V4 is not independent of all other EU member states – we researched how the same topic was depicted in the two main official Moscow-backed media outlets aimed at Western audiences: the English-language version of RT and Sputnik International.

We defined two sets of keywords for the media monitoring: (Russia AND [Ukraine OR Donbass¹ OR Venezuela OR European Union]) and (EU AND election). The keywords were entered into the Versus media monitoring tool, where the media monitoring period was set to 15 March – 15 April to cover the run up to and the first couple of weeks of official electoral campaigns. We monitored the narratives on RT/Sputnik English. We added these two official Kremlin-backed media outlets for multiple reasons. First, they provide an insight into the Kremlin’s Europe-wide narratives. Second, the narratives spread on these can easily find their way into local pro-Kremlin media and Eurosceptic actors’ messages.

Moreover, all partners selected eight local pro-Kremlin media outlets based on their popularity and/or importance in spreading pro-Russian narratives locally. They entered the keywords translated to local languages. Subsequently, all partners carried out a narrative analysis of the contents the keywords returned. Finally, the narratives spread on RT/Sputnik English and local portals were compared to aid us in formulating policy recommendations on countering this threat.

INTRODUCTION

The Kremlin’s attempts to influence Western elections have been in the spotlight ever since the Brexit referendum and the 2016 US presidential election. In both cases, Moscow used a wide range of active measures to generate chaos, discredit fact-based arguments and support outcomes that benefit Moscow’s geopolitical goals.

In the UK, the Kremlin helped amplify the voices of the Brexit campaign: according to an 89up research for the Culture, Media and Sport select committee of the House of Commons, the Moscow-financed outlets RT and Sputnik “had more reach on Twitter for anti-EU content than either Vote Leave or Leave.EU.”ⁱⁱ The report adds that the value of Russian state media outlets’ interference was between GBP 1.4 and 4.1 millionⁱⁱⁱ – a large sum considering that the campaign spending limit for the two official leave campaigns was GBP 7 million each. In the US, the Kremlin aimed to popularise Donald Trump’s policies, discredit the Clinton campaign and demobilise the electorate by helping to create an antagonistic political environment. Russian intelligence hacked into DNC servers to use the information they found in Moscow’s disinformation and propaganda campaign in the US, which combined cyber warfare and sharp power tools.^{iv} Moreover, Russia exploited Facebook’s paid advertisement system to increase the reach of its campaign, for instance by focusing efforts on key swing states.^v

Since then, some authorities and political parties in potential target countries have tried to protect their elections against Russian interference (e.g., En Marche in France),^{vi} while others fail or are unwilling to do so. **The EU and the 2019 European Parliamentary elections are certainly potential targets for the Kremlin’s meddling efforts, which was acknowledged by European institutions well in advance, for instance in the EU’s Action Plan against Disinformation, published in December 2018.**^{viii} However, national – and not EU – authorities are responsible for monitoring and conducting the EP elections. On

1 There are two spellings for this area in English: Donbas and Donbass. The first is the more frequently used. Versus returned the exact same number of results for both spellings and the exact same articles.

the one hand, this creates opportunities for Russia to exploit vulnerabilities in local electoral systems and campaigns^{ix} in its efforts to influence the future composition of the European Parliament. On the other hand, the decentralised nature of EP elections also makes it technically more difficult to influence the overall results.

WHAT DOES RUSSIA STAND TO GAIN?

With the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia could no longer rival the United States in terms of influence over the international community, and the country saw itself as powerless in former areas of interest (e.g., Western Balkans). Moreover, the Vladimir Putin-led Kremlin perceived the expansion of Western institutions (e.g., NATO, EU) in the former Warsaw Pact countries as a threat to national (and regime) survival. Considering that an open confrontation of any sorts between Russia and the West is unlikely and that Moscow's hybrid warfare toolkit is limited in EU and NATO member states, the Kremlin relies on soft and, more importantly, sharp power – distorting the political and information environments of democracies through confusion and manipulation – to achieve its goals in its relations with the West.^x

Russia's 2016 Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) supports the creation of a “polycentric system of international relations,” which is based on the premises that the West's political and economic power “continues to diminish” and the “balance of military power between states and groups of states is changing.”^{xi} **Russia seeks to challenge today's Western-dominated unipolar international system, which means that the Kremlin's fundamental interest is weakening Western alliances, while creating its own economic and military integration projects.** As far as the EU is concerned, the Kremlin's FPC speaks rather clearly: Moscow wants to boost “mutually beneficial” bilateral relations with EU member states to advance “Russia's national interests in European and world affairs.”^{xii} Russia seeks to form a pro-Russian bloc within the EU that could effectively lobby for Russian interests in EU institutions. Albeit the FPC suggests the Kremlin focuses on national governments, Russian lobbying efforts in the EU would also benefit from a strong pro-Russian bloc in the European Parliament. Eurosceptic far-right and far-left parties have proven to be reliable partners of Moscow in the EP, consistently supporting the Kremlin's interest with their votes,^{xiii} so Moscow would naturally want to amplify their voice and influence over EU decisions. This, combined with the fact that the Kremlin could benefit from creating the illusion of having influenced European democratic processes, gives adequate reason for Russia to meddle in the EP elections. **Nevertheless, Moscow will undoubtedly pay more attention to influencing national general elections than EP elections, as influencing EU decision-making through a pro-Russian blocking minority in the Council of the European Union is a more realistic goal than doing so in the European Parliament.**

In Russian strategic documents,^{xiv} information activities are a part of hybrid warfare's non-military measures from the start of the conflict to its end.^{xv} The manipulative use of information can play a role in coalition-building through supporting the political opposition, strengthening the opposition, and political and diplomatic pressure (e.g., Lisa case). **More concretely, in its efforts against the EU and the West, Russia wants to generate confusion about and discontent with the Western democratic institutional system and especially the mainstream media, discredit the EU/NATO, decrease their popularity and influence policy decisions.**^{xvi} **However, Russia – in itself – is not enough to generate new divisions in Western societies and to reach a wide enough audience. Instead, it exploits existing divisions and enlists the help of local Eurosceptic, pro-Russian parties to spread the Kremlin's messages.**^{xvii} Pro-Russian right-wing populist parties in France and Germany (National Rally and Alternative for Germany [AfD], respectively) posted the most and generated the most engagements on Facebook in the first three months of 2019.^{xviii} Thus, the Kremlin's narratives can increase their outreach through these actors considerably.

Disinformation seeks to change the opinion and behaviour of the target country's population by describing the world in terms of being either black or white and building on people's prejudices. Manipulative

information, often combined with political, economic and cultural efforts, is aimed at putting “democratic pressure” on decision-makers to implement policies benefitting the actor disseminating manipulative information and propaganda,^{xxix} which essentially restricts the manoeuvring space of states, public and private actors. Disinformation campaigns sometimes describe the disseminator’s solutions as logical, effective and following the national interest, while the target’s policies are depicted as ineffective and beholden to foreign interests. A more sophisticated and frequently used variant of such efforts is when the disseminator refrains from convincing the target audience about the merits of its own policies, and instead focuses on depicting all other options as harmful, turning the target towards the “correct” interpretation only indirectly.^{xx} A good example of such democratic pressure is that anti-EU actors, due to a combination of tangible problems and manipulative information campaigns (e.g., Lisa case) on the issue, have succeeded in pushing mainstream immigration policy towards more restrictive solutions.

The exact effect of Russian disinformation on public opinion and thus the outcome of elections is very hard to establish. As far as traditional soft power is concerned, the Kremlin has largely failed: the country’s image deteriorated since the annexation of Crimea. However, it has been very successful, at least in Hungary, in “creating the illusion of near omnipotence in influencing Western policy processes, changing electoral outcomes and replacing leaders.”^{xxi} It is unlikely that this effect is strictly confined to Hungary. What we also suspect based on a Political Capital survey on Hungarian public opinion is that the European population might be open to several geopolitical narratives spread by the Kremlin (e.g., the US is using the EU to force its will on other countries, the CIA is behind Euromaidan)^{xxii} – once again, this is unlikely to be specific to this country. The results of the survey found that around one-third of respondents were neutral on multiple pro-Russian statements, meaning that they both agreed and disagreed with them.^{xxiii} Moreover, successive Globsec Trends surveys have shown that large layers of V4 societies are, first, unsure whether their countries geopolitically belong to the East or the West and, second, that they are prone to believing in conspiracy theories.^{xxiv} **These undecided individuals are the ones who can be influenced by Russia’s anti-West propaganda and to whom Russia’s perceived omnipotence can be appealing. It is certain that the Kremlin is trying to capitalise on the situation: research such as the one conducted by 89up shows that the Kremlin can make a considerable contribution to the public debate on important issues, which constitutes a threat to the West.**

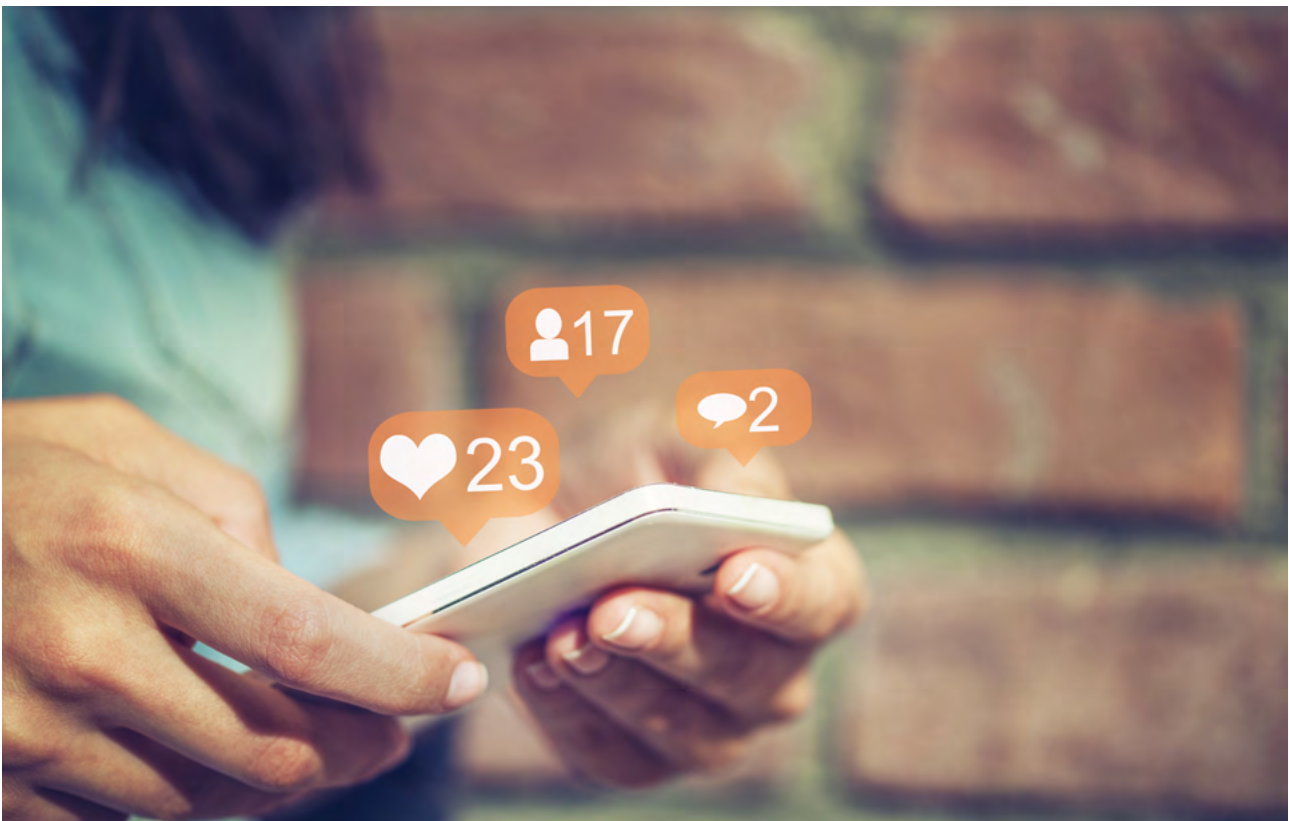
WHAT FACTORS ARE HELPING DISINFORMATION TO SPREAD?

The media has been a critical political tool ever since its infancy, which allowed politics to permeate people’s daily lives. Thus, the media became an agent capable of setting the day to day political agenda. This process only accelerated in the 21st century, essentially allowing anyone to open multiple social media accounts, blogs or even websites, whose contents in most countries are not as strictly regulated as those in traditional media. Consequently, almost anyone can play a role in formulating the political agenda nowadays.

As more and more citizens, especially the youth, are gaining information on public affairs from online media, the proliferation of disinformation on the internet, on alternative websites and sometimes even mainstream media is becoming an increasingly grave threat. The problem can be aggravated by one key feature of online life: many online search engines and social media algorithms are designed to “prioritise like-minded content and content that conforms to already existing preferences.”^{xxv} Therefore, the algorithms might shield users from “counter-attitudinal” information, creating an echo chamber reinforcing the previous beliefs of individuals, potentially further polarising societies.^{xxvi}

Disinformation can spread quite quickly on social networks: in the 2016 US presidential election campaign, Russia-backed content reached 29 million Facebook users directly, and over 126 million in total.^{xxvii} **There are multiple factors that could help the dissemination of online disinformation – and not just on social media – massively. The first two are bots and trolls.** Bots are automated accounts that can be

used for generating various types of online contents, including disinformation. For instance, bots can be set to retweet given hashtags to amplify pro-Russian messages, but they can also influence the online conversation in other ways, for instance by downvoting certain posts to hide them and upvoting them to make them more visible.^{xxviii} According to the US cybersecurity firm SafeGuard Cyber, Russian bots are doing exactly what they are designed to do in the EP election campaign: namely, they are promoting extremist content (often produced by Eurosceptic parties). As a result – says SafeGuard – more than half of European could have seen some form of disinformation in the campaign.^{xxix} Trolls, which are also adequate for amplifying the visibility of pro-Russian messages, are humans using fake social media accounts seeking to provoke other users and support an actor’s goals through aggressive communications. Trolls usually post controversial comments online to generate attention and provoke a response, then wait for someone to post opposing views in a reply. Afterwards, trolls post replies deviating from the topic and make the discussion antagonistic, creating the impression of a discussion between “differing” views on various topics, which legitimises and promotes the positions of hostile actors (e.g., Russia). The NATO StratCom COE distinguishes five types of trolls: “conspiracy trolls” that encourage distrust; “bikini trolls” using attractive profile pictures to engage targets; “aggressive trolls” coercing people into leaving discussions; “Wikipedia trolls,” who edit pages in a way beneficial to the Kremlin; and “attachment trolls” that link pro-Russian content. Trolls are much harder to recognise than bots because they are human users, although their activity can help: they are more likely to post inflammatory content, swear and use negative words, and they also use less conciliatory language (e.g., could, perhaps, etc.).^{xxx}



Another key social media feature is that their algorithms prioritise content that already received more engagements, as people are more likely to keep using the site if they see posts with numerous likes, retweets, etc. **More engagements on social media posts can be generated by bots and trolls, but the human factor is important as well: people are more likely to react to contents that play on their existing fears, so inflammatory tweets will generate more reactions.** Afterwards, the technical side takes over, and algorithms start showing such content to more users, helping the spread of propaganda and disinformation.^{xxxi}

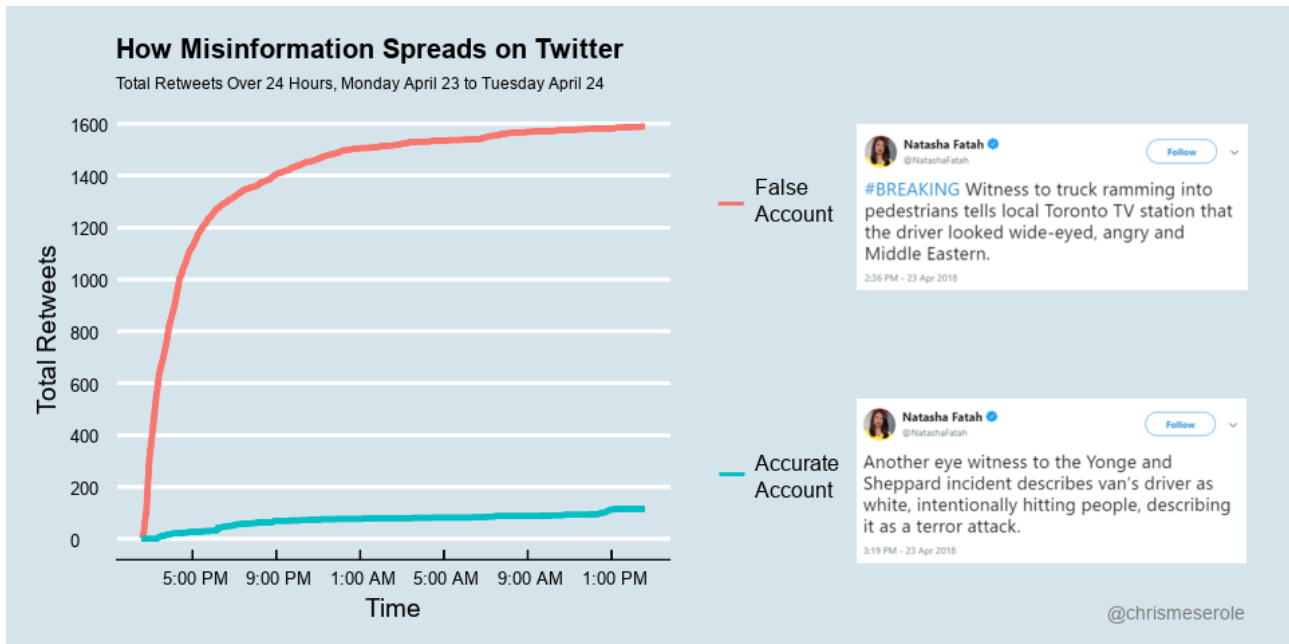


Figure 1: Illustration of the popularity of two narratives about the Toronto terror attack in 2018. The two claims were made by two eyewitnesses, tweeted by the same journalist. People - due to prejudices - engaged more with the one describing the perpetrator as „Middle Eastern.” The false account thus started to spread, while the accurate one was barely seen by users. Source: Brookings.edu. <https://twitter.com/brookingsinst/status/994315830346375171?lang=en>

Considering the factors listed above, we have reason to believe that as a way to better represent its national interests with regards to the EU, Russia possesses a desire and the ability (using current 21st century technologies) to influence the upcoming EP elections– although it must be noted that national general elections are more likely targets. Thus, we set out to examine the narratives the Kremlin is using in the EP election campaign to influence Western audiences, paying particular attention to the V4, whose democracies are not as resilient to external authoritarian and internal populist influence as some further to the West. Based on our findings, we formulated policy recommendations and advice on strategic communications that could be used to contain and counter Moscow’s efforts to meddle in elections worldwide.

THE OFFICIAL KREMLIN-BACKED NARRATIVES IN THE WEST

Using the two keyword combinations, the queries return a total of 446 articles from the RSS feeds of the two main English-language Kremlin-backed media outlets (RT, Sputnik International). The vast majority of articles spread disinformation or wrote in a propagandistic manner about the European Union in general, the upcoming EP elections and contemporary international events. However, it was also clear that the EU was only the Kremlin’s public enemy number two, while the US and NATO were Russia’s main targets.

Not all articles attempted to shed a positive light on Russia; many wrote about Russia neutrally while spreading anti-West narratives and several of them targeted the European Union. Albeit many of the anti-West articles write favourably of Russia, the two sentiments do not overlap completely; and many Euro-sceptic articles did not even mention Russia. **This reinforces the theory that Russian disinformation does not necessarily want to directly promote the policy choices of the Kremlin, and instead it often settles for discrediting all other options. Another important takeaway is that the narratives on some important events mentioned in the articles were remarkably consistent, suggesting that in some cases Moscow wants to promote a very particular interpretation of events.** However, this is certainly not a universal truth, as in February the two outlets claimed both that the US left the INF treaty to reach a new agreement on the issue with Russia and other countries, including China, ^{xxxii} and

that the US refuses to sign a new INF-like deal with Russia and other countries – although Washington’s alleged goal was the same in both articles, “reasserting global hegemony.”^{xxxiii} Nevertheless, **our findings from the research period in question have shown that besides sowing confusion, the Kremlin is also interested to a certain degree in persuasion through manipulation.** In the latter case, we can talk about Kremlin-backed political communication campaigns on topics concerning key Russian interests.

THE ENCIRCLEMENT OF RUSSIA

The very core of the Kremlin’s narrative is that the United States, NATO or the West in general is trying to encircle the country in preparation for an attack against Moscow. In the period under examination, NATO’s 70th anniversary offered a good chance for pro-Kremlin media to discredit the alliance and question the very reason for its existence. For Moscow-backed media, NATO is the threat and Russia is the innocent bystander.

The Russian narrative states that NATO’s wars and eastwards expansion prove it is not a defensive alliance, and that the so-called Russian threat exists because “NATO has gone right up to its borders.”^{xxxiv} Former OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Vice President Willy Wimmer told RT that NATO broke away from international law and will “destroy Europe” by “opening up a new front against Russia.”^{xxxv} According to the Kremlin, Russia has even made numerous unfruitful attempts to join NATO. It was refused solely because of Western aversion to Russia despite the latter’s good intentions.^{xxxvi} The “untold” story of Russian attempts to join the Western alliance are not even that untold: Putin talked about it as a possibility on the BBC in 2000.^{xxxvii} **Russian disinformation frequently tries to discredit NATO as a security risk.** Sputnik called on Die Linke’s Alexander Neu to tell readers that NATO is obsolete, it is moving increasingly towards confrontation and thus it should be replaced with a security alliance including Russia.^{xxxviii}

Russia heavily condemned NATO for its involvement in Serbia in 1998-1999, promoting Serbian radical politician Vojislav Seselj’s views comparing the NATO and EU to Nazis,^{xxxix} but offering very little substantial evidence for the comparison. The US was also accused of launching an illegal war against Venezuela to test new military strategies.^{xl} Donald Trump’s decision to recognise Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights was also featured heavily. Sputnik^{xli} and RT^{xlii} frequently listed UN Security Council resolutions that Trump’s decision breaches, calling viewer’s attention to the fact that the US is in breach of international law, unlike Russia.

The Kremlin has listed numerous (alleged) international law violations committed by NATO or the US, but there is one case where the word “international law” is completely missing: Ukraine. Russian narratives consistently claim that the Crimean referendum complied with international treaties^{xliii} and the results were “consistent with all previous internationally recognised voting patterns.”^{xliiv} Ukraine – according to the Kremlin – is another chapter in Western provocations against Russia. Sputnik and RT only disseminated the views of politicians whose views are in line with Moscow’s. For instance, AfD’s Gunnar Lindemann told Sputnik that the EU’s sanctions regime – implemented in the wake of the Crimean referendum, the downing of MH-17 and the Kerch incident – damages cooperation with Russia and puts jobs at risk, so they should be “lifted as soon as possible.”^{xliv}

Overall, Russia seeks to convey the message that the West is the real threat, which is trying to surround Russia through expanding its integrative organisations, primarily NATO. They suggest NATO (and even the EU) is controlled solely by Washington, completely ignoring evidence to the contrary, such as the Iraq war^{xlvi} or Germany’s refusal to grant Georgia fast-track NATO membership.^{xlvii}¹²¹ In the Kremlin’s narrative, NATO is not a defensive organisation, it does not ever acknowledge that the bloc’s members are only obliged to defend each other if one of them is attacked, which is “proven” by NATO’s illegal

wars. RT and Sputnik makes NATO look like a war machine ready to attack Russia whenever Washington wants to, which is then used to justify the Kremlin's own aggressive interference in world affairs.

EUROSCEPTICISM

Eurosceptic narratives focused much less on Russia and much more on the Kremlin's European allies – primarily Italian Minister of Interior Matteo Salvini, National Rally's Marine Le Pen, Brexiteer Nigel Farage and Hungarian PM Viktor Orbán. The narratives aim at discrediting the EU as an overly bureaucratic, non-democratic organisation disregarding traditional values. **Not all articles on the EU were Eurosceptic: a relatively prevalent narrative tried to emphasise the vast differences between US and European interests (e.g., Golan Heights, Nord Stream 2), favouring EU cooperation with Russia instead of the US.**^{xlvi}

Kremlin-backed media discussed Salvini's new initiative, the European Alliance for People and Nations (EAPN) in detail. They reported on the preparations for Salvini's campaign launch in Milan on 8 April, claiming that 15-20 European nations would be represented on it.^{xlix} When only four right-wing parties turned up to the event to sign an agreement, Sputnik simply copied a statement by the Danish People's Party's Joerg Meuthen, claiming that by 18 April they would have 10 new signees.^l Both RT and Sputnik visibly tried to exaggerate the potential of the Eurosceptic alliance throughout the monitored period, making Salvini's alliance look like a force capable of "winning" the EP election, as Marine Le Pen said.^{li}

Kremlin-backed media claims one of the main failures of the EU is dealing with the threat of migration^{lii} and it depicts Moscow-backed parties as the solution; they will build a "better and safer Europe."^{liii} Sputnik quoted Hungarian Prime Minister Orbán's words on what's at stake at the election: the fight between pro- and anti-immigration forces will define the future of "Christian European culture."^{liv} The portals also refuted Orbán's messages concerning "out of touch Brussels bureaucrats" who send "diktats" to Hungary on what should happen in the country.^{lv} The Kremlin promotes the view that the Brussels elites, who made the EU a "nightmare," have to be replaced.^{lvi}

Russian-backed media outlets' narrative suggests that the EU essentially rules countries, which is proven by the fact that British politicians, after ceding control to Brussels, have forgotten how to govern. The results of this are the proliferation of "gender quota women" and "human rights industry lawyers."^{lvii} The EU has also allegedly failed to provide prosperity to its people, as the Brussels-imposed economic system only serves multinational corporations. The Euro is made out to be one of the worst offenders: it is responsible for poverty in and emigration from Italy. Sputnik advocated for setting up a "Mechanism for a Coordinated Pull-Out From Eurozone"^{lviii} – countries leaving the Eurozone would, no doubt, cause serious chaos on the continent, which could then be exploited by Russia.

The EU, from the view of Moscow's allies, is "not about democracy but rule by democrats," who are aiming to "have the whole of Europe run from Brussels."^{lix} Kremlin-backed outlets often emphasised that the most serious way this thinking materialises is that "EU law trumps ours."^{lx} Populist politicians, experts on RT and Sputnik advocate for a "Europe of Nations," a concept based on unanimous decision-making in the EU, a weaker role for the European Parliament and the prioritisation of national law over EU legislation. Such a European model, although unlikely to be ever implemented, would give Moscow much more influence over EU decision-making processes through its "mutually beneficial" relations with its allies. Nevertheless, the Kremlin promotes the concept in hope of helping like-minded Eurosceptic parties form a blocking minority in EU institutions.

Kremlin-backed media completely disregards discussing how EU decision-making actually functions, refrains from writing about the benefits of European integration and very rarely features independent experts and pro-EU voices in its coverage about EU affairs. **On these portals, the EU looks more like a dictatorial,**

centralised empire instead of an international organisation with supranational and intergovernmental elements where states and directly elected MEPs are key decision-making actors.

OTHER IMPORTANT PRO-RUSSIAN NARRATIVES

The Mueller report was concluded during the period under examination. Sputnik and RT interpreted the results as a complete vindication, concluding that “Russian involvement with the Trump administration was essentially disproven.”^{lxxi} Thus, Russian-backed media depicted all the allegations as a liberal plot against Trump, involving disinformation spread by mainstream media,^{lxxii} overlooking that the Mueller report confirmed Moscow interfered with the 2016 US presidential election.^{lxxiii} RT also claimed that the EU mainstream is trying to blame their faltering popularity on Russian electoral interference instead of working on connecting with the people they allegedly represent.^{lxxiv}

The case of Venezuela was another issue when Kremlin-backed media put Russia on the moral high ground, claiming that they are supporting the “legitimate [Venezuelan] government under constitutionally elected Maduro” against Washington’s coup attempt seeking to make Juan Guaido the acting president of Venezuela.^{lxxv} RT quoted Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, who said his country objected to the US practice of “meddling with the Western Hemisphere’s shared goals of democracy, security, and the rule of law.”^{lxxvi} The outlets never mentioned the fact that Maduro created a Constituent Assembly to suppress the powers of the opposition-led National Assembly or that his regime has jailed numerous prominent opposition leaders.^{lxxvii} Moscow almost exclusively promoted Nicolas Maduro’s views on the situation, blaming US sanctions against Venezuela – and not the economic mismanagement of successive Chavez and Maduro governments – for the economic crisis in the country.^{lxxviii} Accordingly, Moscow supported Caracas’s rejection of aid offered to the country by the US and its allies,^{lxxix} claiming that Washington wanted to arm the Venezuelan opposition with the aid of the humanitarian convoy.^{lxxx} EU member states supporting Guaido were also criticised frequently.

RT and Sputnik also discussed democratic norms in the West, especially in the context of Julian Assange’s arrest just a few days before the end of the monitoring period. One article suggests that – first things first – Assange was kicked out of the Ecuadorian embassy because of US pressure, and the country was rewarded with a USD 4.2 billion loan for it.^{lxxxi} RT quoted Slavoj Žižek as saying that Ecuador was under “terrible” US pressure.^{lxxxii} Later articles argued that the arrest was a blow to press freedom^{lxxxiii} and that Assange is a political prisoner.^{lxxxiv} One article claimed that although there are “human rights abuses” in China, Russia and “perhaps” Venezuela, the Assange case is a violation of his human rights.^{lxxxv} Consequently, the Western public will not be informed on the shady backroom deals of the elite.^{lxxxvi} **Russia, in this case, was not trying to suggest its political system is more democratic than the West’s and instead only claimed that the latter is just as bad.**

Last, but not least, RT and Sputnik wrote about Brexit developments relatively often. The vast majority of these articles were neutral reports on Theresa May’s negotiations with EU representatives and her own party in Westminster. However, some articles are clearly pushing British opinion to support Brexit to avoid “surrendering” control to the EU,^{lxxxvii} to get free of the “shackles” of the European superstate^{lxxxviii} and to be allowed to conclude free trade deals with the US, China^{lxxxix} and Russia.^{lxxx} **In case the UK partook in the EP elections, Kremlin-backed media started to push the Brexit Party^{lxxxxi} and UKIP^{lxxxii} as the best choices for the British electorate in the vote to deliver Brexit.**

NARRATIVES IN HUNGARIAN MEDIA

Hungary is in a special position within the European Union: it has one of the most fervently anti-EU governments among member states, which – at the same time – has drifted very close to Russia, and it is the only EU government that spreads its own disinformation narratives through a large, centrally controlled^{lxxxiii} media empire that covers as much as 100% of certain segments on the media market. For instance, all local printed dailies² are in the hands of the Central European Press and Media Foundation (KESMA), an organisation led by Fidesz-loyalist Gábor Liskay, encompassing over 470 media outlets.^{lxxxiv} As a consequence, many Hungarian fringe pro-Kremlin and Kremlin-backed disinformation portals have disappeared or ceased operation in the country,^{lxxxv} although some remain. **Consequently, pro-Russian views – or opinions that are in line with Russian interests – are mainly spread by government-controlled media, including the public broadcaster.**^{lxxxvi} In Hungary, the eight local portals analysed consist of four mainstream government-controlled portals³ and four pro-Russian fringe outlets.

EUROSCEPTICISM IN THE SPOTLIGHT: TRADITIONAL VALUES VS SOROS'S MULTICULTURALISM

The central topic on Hungarian portals analysed by Political Capital was Euroscepticism, focusing on the migration crisis. There were no differences on this issue between messages spread on government-controlled and fringe pro-Kremlin portals.

The main premise of anti-EU narratives in Hungary is that the EP election is a contest between pro- and anti-migration forces, the supporters of multiculturalism and the advocates of Christianity.^{lxxxvii} “If pro-immigration forces won on 26 May, even more Brussels, even more illegal immigrants could be expected” – wrote the government-controlled portal 888.hu.^{lxxxviii} The EU is supposedly on the path of inclusion, migration, and the “self-destruction of Christian culture.”^{lxxxix} **Allegedly, European bureaucrats, spurred on by George Soros and his so-called NGO network, are doing everything in their power to “legalise migration” and convince people that Europe needs migrants.** The PM’s national security advisor György Bakondi even claimed on the Public Broadcaster (MTVA) that “the leaders of European bureaucracy have already stated there is no illegal migration, so protecting the borders is unnecessary, and even the existing fences have to be torn down.”^{xc} Two very important issues emerged as alleged proof for the gravity of the migration threat and Brussels’s hand in it. First, the government, based on claims made by a government-controlled think tank, claimed that “migrant caravans” are forming in Greece, getting ready to enter the EU.^{xcii} Second, after “Hassan F.” – a suspected ISIS member – was arrested in Budapest, authorities claimed to have found a nameless blue credit card on him, which was distributed to refugees in Greece. In the government’s rhetoric, this became the “migrant card,” which is given to migrants by the UN and to which the EU transfers EUR 500 every month.^{xciii} In fact, the so-called “migrant caravan” was not even able to cross the Greek border into Macedonia,^{xciii} while refugees receive way less than 500 EUR a month on the nameless cards, which can only be used in Greece.^{xciv} **The outlets in question also misinformed readers about the EU’s institutional system, claiming for instance that EU treaties do not detail special legislative procedures – which are used for decisions on migration, among others – and they are decided on a case by case basis.**^{xcv} In contrast, the special legislative procedures are detailed in the treaties for every policy area requiring such a vote, and some migration issues are decided in an ordinary legislative procedure.^{xcvi}

2 These are printed dailies only distributed in a given Hungarian county.

3 We use the term ‘government-controlled’ for outlets that are either a part of KESMA or are owned by pro-government oligarchs. We chose this term because these outlets are neither completely government-run nor independent media. However, there is information available suggesting that government ministries have a direct connection to the editorial rooms of these outlets and give them directions on how to report key issues. For example, please see: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/13/hungary-journalists-state-tv-network-migrants-viktor-orban-government>

Both government-controlled^{xcvii} and fringe^{xcviii} portals promoted the creation of Matteo Salvini’s EAPN, and basically the same quotes RT and Sputnik found to be important: Hungarian articles also emphasised that Salvini wants to give back control to nation states because the EU is currently a “nightmare.” 888 also happily promoted Nigel Farage’s return to British and European politics.^{xcix} In Hungarian outlets, Viktor Orbán was in the spotlight of attention. **A vast number of Hungarian articles focused on Viktor Orbán’s seven-point EP electoral program promising to take back control from Brussels bureaucrats, abolishing “migrant cards” and banning discrimination against Christians.**^c The key in the narratives in Hungary is “sovereignty”: Brussels is trying to take it away from nation states, which can be only be stopped by “sovereignist” forces, including Salvini, Farage, Le Pen and Orbán. The EPP, the Hungarian ruling party’s European party family, is not considered one of these, as it has allegedly been compromised by pro-immigration parties and gave up on “Christian values.”^{ci}

The Hungarian government has used disinformation for years to keep migration on the very top of the Hungarian political agenda for years, which played an essential role in maintaining Fidesz’s popularity, and its strategy did not change in the 2019 EP election campaign. Fidesz’s anti-EU narrative is the result of the party’s increasing ideological drift to the far right, where its real allies are nowadays, and that of domestic political factors as well. The Hungarian government has used the above-mentioned narratives to create an alternative reality where it and its allies are fighting the evil Soros-led, socialist, anti-Christian, multicultural Brussels for freedom and real national sovereignty to avoid being turned into a multicultural home for (Muslim) immigrants. Disinformation helps the government create this world: it maintains the perception of an impending threat, divides the European and domestic political environment into two antagonistic halves – pro- and anti-immigration camps – and puts all actors in one of the clearly divided categories, and misrepresents the capabilities of external actors to make them look powerful enough to implementing the conspiracy. **The EU-related narratives of RT/Sputnik and the Hungarian portals under examination match not only in terms of who they support, but also in depicting the contemporary EU as a new Soviet Union, not a cooperative project of willing members.** The one important difference between the Kremlin-backed websites and Hungarian ones is that the latter focuses much more on the European Union.



UKRAINE IN THE FOCUS

In contrast to RT and Sputnik, Hungarian pro-government portals rarely criticised NATO, as the Hungarian government refrains from this as well, and mainly praised the military alliance. Thus, anti-NATO narratives in Hungary are relegated mostly to less popular pro-Kremlin portals.

However, there are a few exceptions. The Public Broadcaster's (MTVA) website reported on Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko's interview with Ria Novosti, saying that NATO was "unprecedentedly active" near Russian borders, which Russia considers a step that threatens its interest.^{cii} MTVA did not make any attempts to balance the views expressed by Grushko. The same article was featured on other government-controlled sites (888, Origo) and on the fringe website Orosz Hírek. The government-controlled Magyar Nemzet condemned the West for exaggerating fears against Russia and for blaming Moscow for the rise of Salvini's League or Strache's Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ). The article added that the Mueller report found the Trump campaign had not colluded with Russia,^{ciii} but disregards the fact that it found evidence of Moscow's electoral interference. This interpretation of the Mueller report's findings was present on other articles on government-controlled portals as well, and it was the only interpretation spread by fringe portals.

Articles condemning NATO or the West for breaching international law were relatively scarce, but fringe sites did push such narratives from time to time. News Front, for instance, quoted Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov as saying that the US openly interferes with the internal affairs of other countries, but its "blitzkrieg coup" in Venezuela had failed.^{civ} Balrad.ru was rather active in discussing the situation in Venezuela. The portal praised the legitimate government of Nicolas Maduro, condemned the US for its "imperialistic actions" and its interference in other countries' internal affairs.^{cv} Bal-rad quoted Konstantin Blokhin's views, an analyst at the Russia Academy of Science's Security Policy Center. Blokhin said that the US wants to orchestrate a coup in Venezuela, and Cuba and Nicaragua will be next.^{cvi} Just like official Russian media, these portals also overlooked Maduro's role in the Venezuelan crisis.

Ukraine, however, was certainly in the spotlight of the media outlets analysed in this study. Hungarian media, including government-controlled and fringe pro-Kremlin outlets, closely followed the Ukrainian presidential election. **An article published by Origo claimed that Ukrainian presidential candidates rarely talk about the opposition between different ethnic groups and went on to introduce them. The article was neutral on Zelensky and Timoshenko, very negative on Petro Poroshenko, but very positive on Jurij Bojko. The latter was allegedly the only candidate who discussed the issue of minorities in depth and not adversely. Origo even added that Boiko is called the "Russian candidate" simply because he is not hostile enough towards minorities.**^{cvi} The fringe portal Orosz Hírek^{cvi} and Origo^{cix} both mentioned that Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller and Russian PM Dmitry Medvedev met Boiko to discuss a new long-term gas deal with Ukraine. Russia allegedly offered Boiko natural gas for 25% less than the price of Western-supplied resources. This could have been published on a government-controlled portal due to the fact that it is in line with the Hungarian government's claim that it is worth it to have pragmatic economic ties with Russia because it might bring considerable advantages to the country.

Hungarian media also quoted the head of the Hungarian National Assembly's foreign policy committee, Zsolt Németh, on Ukraine saying, "Ukraine needs such a peace with Russia that allows for the Western integration on Ukraine." Németh not only failed to mention Russia's responsibility for the situation in Ukraine, he even stated that Ukraine's Western integration is currently impossible because "in legal terms, the state of human rights and minority rights within it are at their nadir in Ukraine."^{cx} Ukraine's recent education law that restricts minorities' rights to education on their native language has been one of the main issues in Hungarian-Ukrainian bilateral relations, and this issue was at the centre of Hungarian media's narrative on the Ukrainian presidential election as well. **Sometimes these articles not only blamed Ukraine for the situation, but also the West and the EU.** MEP Andrea Bocskor emphasised that "to aid Ukraine's European integration, the EP is willing to look the other way for instance in the case of smaller infringements on

minority rights, so it is not urging changes helping national minorities living in Ukraine.^{cxix} They never mentioned that the EU accepted Hungary's assessment of the Ukrainian education law back in December 2017.^{cxii}

While government-controlled portals focused on the Hungarian minority, fringe portals discussed other issues: they were celebrating the fifth anniversary of the annexation of Crimea,^{cxiii} claiming that the Crimean referendum was the “materialisation of people’s will” and it is the West who disregards democratic values by deeming the referendum illegal.^{cxiv} For them, Ukraine is the only one to blame for the situation in the Donbas as well, accusing Kiev of deliberately hindering talks ongoing in Minsk.^{cxv}

THE MEDIA OF PERCEIVED NATIONAL INTEREST AND PRO-KREMLIN PORTALS

The majority of articles related to government-controlled portals, with Euroscepticism as a notable exception, were neutral, but pro-Russian narratives or ones that seem to support Russian interests have still found their way onto these websites. On Ukraine, government-controlled portals clearly followed the Orbán regime's rhetoric and did not make any attempt to balance this narrative, which bears similarities to Russian claims and does little to help the Hungarian community in Ukraine – although Hungary's criticism is not unfounded.^{cxvi} These portals were neutral on Venezuela and the Golan Heights, for instance, as Hungary supports both Juan Guaidó and Israel. Government-controlled media simply follows the Hungarian government's foreign policy preferences and rhetoric. It is not uncommon for these outlets to spread the Russian interpretations of events, sometimes even quoting RT/Sputnik articles directly,^{cxvii} and the Kremlin is very rarely criticised by them. **As government-controlled outlets are mainstream portals with a considerable outreach, disinformation in Hungary has the potential to reach vast layers of Hungarian society, which can create a permanent, strong demand for alternative narratives in the country.** Moreover, Árpád Habony, the prime minister's informal advisor, has launched a London-based English-language news agency largely focusing on news on the Visegrád region (V4NA), which is tasked with disseminating the Orbán government's views internationally.^{cxviii} It could serve as a source of disinformation for Eurosceptic/fringe portals over the entire continent and further amplify the narratives described in this chapter.

Meanwhile, fringe pro-Russian portals are pushing the Kremlin's narratives not just on the EU and Ukraine, but on other topics as well. Due to the fact that Hungarian mainstream government-controlled outlets are also spreading manipulative information, the importance of pro-Kremlin portals is marginal in the country. Nevertheless, they still have a visible following and support the government's domestic and foreign policies in numerous cases. **Their presence can easily become a threat if a future Hungarian government stops disseminating disinformation and conspiracy theories, as the demand generated by years of central propaganda will find its supply on these pro-Kremlin sites.**

SLOVAKIA

The activity of pro-Russian media outlets in Slovakia in the period before European Parliament (EP) elections was marked by the cultivation of a negative perception of the European Union and its individual institutions. Specifically, pro-Russian media outlets in Slovakia blamed the EU for bad intentions and inappropriate policies allegedly causing problems in member states, supporting local and foreign politicians who express their sharp opposition to the EU and criticizing politicians who, on the contrary, support the bloc. At the same time, these media outlets shed a positive light on Russia, which is depicted as a country that responsibly fulfils its international commitments and seeks to stabilize the international order.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

In March-April 2019, the main political topic in Slovakia was the presidential election campaign (elections were held on 16 and 30 March – the first and second round, respectively), the individual candidates' profiles, their value orientations and foreign policy preferences, and the interpretation of election results and their implications. The high frequency of the term “elections” in some pro-Russian media in the aforementioned period was therefore related to the presidential election instead of the upcoming EP elections. **This fact, however, changed nothing in pro-Russian media's attitude to the European Union – they portrayed it as an entity hostile to Slovakia, imposing its own policies on the country, which brings only problems and distorts “traditional” social life** (cultural patterns, moral values, family models, lifestyles, etc.).

In general, EU-related issues constituted a visible part of the country's public discourse, including that which pertained to the presidential election.

Pro-Russian media attributed negative characteristics to presidential candidates who stressed the importance of Slovakia's membership in the EU; trying to discredit them in various ways. They mainly attacked Zuzana Čaputová, who eventually won the elections. From the point of view of pro-Kremlin media, Čaputová embodied the “evil coming from Brussels” as she spoke unambiguously in support of Slovakia's membership in the EU and emphasized its multiple benefits. She was portrayed as an “ultraliberal” supporting same-sex partnerships and approving the adoption of children by gay and lesbian couples. Some pro-Russian outlets were spreading gossips about her alleged Jewish origin.

Prior to the first round of elections, pro-Kremlin media had also criticized another strong candidate, Maroš Šefčovič, vice president of the European Commission, presenting him as a typical Brussels bureaucrat who prefers EU interests over those of Slovakia.

These media clearly supported two others, the so-called “anti-systemic” (anti-liberal democratic) and openly pro-Russian candidates – former Chairman of the Supreme Court Štefan Harabin, who was harshly attacking the EU, and leader of the fascist party ĽSNS Marian Kotleba, who called for Slovakia's withdrawal from the Union. As neither Harabin nor Kotleba reached the second round of the election (Zuzana Čaputová qualified for the second round with a considerable lead over second-placed Maroš Šefčovič), pro-Russian media found themselves in a difficult situation. They had to deal with the dilemma of who they should be leaning towards. Some of them solved this dilemma by considering Šefčovič as the “lesser evil” since he tried to appeal to the voters of Harabin and Kotleba with conservative, Christian, national and socially resonating messages. The attitude of these media revealed that in the duel of two officially pro-European candidates, EU Commissioner Šefčovič was perceived as a less pro-EU and therefore more acceptable person than lawyer and civic activist Čaputová.

The target of continuous sharp criticism of pro-Russian media in the period under review was incumbent President Andrej Kiska, among other things due to his clear pro-European stances that he openly expressed ever since his inauguration as a head of the state. At the end of March 2019, Andrej Kiska made a farewell visit to Brussels, where he met with the President of the European Council Donald Tusk and the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker. This meeting served to pro-Russian media as an excuse for further attacks on the outgoing head of the state.^{cxix}

IN SUPPORT OF EUROSCEPTIC FORCES

Slovak pro-Russian media informed citizens about the activities of Eurosceptic/Europhobic, nationalist and anti-migrant political forces and their efforts to coordinate their campaign against the EU with undisguised sympathy. **These media outlets did not miss the meeting of Matteo Salvini, Italian minister of interior and leader of the Lega party, with the chairman of the Czech right-populist xenophobic party SPD Tomio Okamura.^{cxx} The meeting served to demonstrate the unification of “pro-national” forces throughout Europe against the “dictatorial” Brussels.** Pro-Russian media reported positively on the announcement of Finnish Eurosceptic Foreign Minister Timo Soini, the former chairman of the Finns party, that he was leaving politics and not running in the EP elections. He said that “Where the European Union is, there are problems. I am not part of this problem.”^{cxix}

EU decisions were automatically questioned and criticized by Slovak pro-Russian media regardless of what policies were discussed. For example, the EP’s decision to enforce copyright laws on the internet were labelled as the “introduction of censorship.” Pro-Russian media criticized party groups in the EP that supported this decision.

Pro-Kremlin media presented the case of a detained Syrian citizen suspected of being a member of ISIS, who committed crimes in his country, and on whom an anonymous debit card was discovered, which was distributed in the framework of a joint EU-UN project for refugees in Greece as a confirmation of the fact that the EU is unable to control migrants coming to Europe. This case allegedly meant that “Europeans paid their own hangmen.” Pro-Russian media also argued that EU has only temporarily and tactically stopped migration in response to the strengthening of Europe’s “pro-national” forces before EP elections, and that after the elections Brussels would re-open the issue of compulsory quotas to redistribute the arrivals across member states.

In March-April 2019, pro-Russian media continued to portray Russia as a country that was forced to balance the West’s influence in the world and to create barriers especially against aggressive US international policies – in the Middle East, Latin America, Europe, in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. They published their own articles and commented news on contemporary events, they also took contributions from Kremlin-backed media (ranging from RT and Sputnik all the way to the fringe) and occasionally offered space for select Western authors who criticised the policies of Western states as additional arguments for supporting Russia’s foreign policy.

One of the key narratives associated with Russia in Slovak pro-Kremlin media was the narrative of global competition between Russia and the US, where Russia is portrayed as being the good and the US is always the evil. In Venezuela, for example, under this narrative, Americans are destabilizing the country, while the Russians, by contrast, help to protect it from American cyberattacks, prevent Venezuela from being illegally monitored, denying the Americans a chance to weaken country’s critical infrastructure. According to the reports taken from Russian pro-government media, Russian specialists came to Venezuela “not to allow Americans to pull Venezuela into a civil war marked by a stream of human blood.” **Pro-Kremlin media argued in this context that the unipolar world is over and Russia has returned to the interna-**

tional scene.^{cxvii} As far as NATO is concerned, pro-Russian media labelled it an obsolete aggressive organization that violated agreements and should end its existence.

According to pro-Kremlin media, **Russia is currently successfully competing with the US in terms of hybrid warfare in third countries.** The American hawks are reportedly probing the possibility of a limited nuclear attack on Russia and want to avoid Russian retaliation, while Russia neutralizes these attempts and leads a successful war against the US in Syria and Venezuela.^{cxviii} **It is de facto an extrapolation of the well-known narrative of an American war against Russia in Ukraine to two other countries – one in the Middle East and another in Latin America.**



Pro-Russian media positively portrayed the fact that Russia was consolidating its partnership and cooperation with Turkey, which “creates wrinkles on the American forehead.” Cooperation between these two countries is deepening in the energy sector, in the military-technical field, and in the “management of the Syrian conflict.” Pro-Russian media in this context highlighted the decision of Turkish President Recep Erdogan to purchase the S-400 Russian air defence system despite strong pressure from the US.^{cxvix}

Pro-Kremlin media did not omit developments in Ukraine, especially in the context of the forthcoming presidential election in this country. In particular, **they criticized incumbent President Petro Poroshenko for his pro-Western policies, in addition to his rival Vladimir Zelensky, who allegedly changed his foreign policy orientation radically just before the vote**, so now he appears to be leaning towards the West (NATO, EU, IMF and George Soros).^{cxv} In the interpretation of pro-Russian media, **Ukraine continued to be the main culprit in the Donbas conflict**, causing problems in Russian-Ukrainian relations. Ukraine, in their view, is generally a troublemaker. There was even a claim made that Ukraine presents a threat to its neighbours as the statements of Sergei Melnichuk, the commander of the volunteer battalion Aidar, allegedly suggested. Melnichuk said in a television interview that Ukraine, in case of a conflict with neighbouring Hungary – If it attempted to annex a part of Ukrainian territory inhabited by ethnic Hungarians –, can use its 128th Army Brigade to quickly reach Lake Balaton.^{cxvi}

CZECH REPUBLIC

The so-called alternative media, spreading manipulative content, anti-establishment and pro-Russian messages has become a quite established part of the Czech information space. They are building up their readership base, but generally have a difficult time reaching out to the mainstream reader and thus, remain on the fringes of the debate. This group consists of approximately 60 websites, Facebook pages and profiles – most of which are smaller websites with limited readership and thus rather limited impact.^{cxvii} However, there are several exceptions: some portals have a more significant impact on the public debate; they constitute important hubs of the alternative information space. The way in which the eight most influential Czech disinformation websites informed about the European elections and Russia between 15 March and 15 April 2019 will be discussed in this chapter.

The diversity of the editorial policies of the eight Czech sources under examination contributed to the fact that individual websites informed about the observed issues differently and, therefore, it is impossible to conclude that any dominant narratives were present in the alternative space. The shared similarities and differences are both highlighted in the next paragraphs.

STRONG AND PEACEFUL RUSSIA, AGGRESSIVE US

Topics related to the Russian Federation were mentioned in 872 articles in the observed period. The most significant source of texts about Russia was Sputnik CZ, which published 471 of them. Sputnik was also significant due to the fact that its news stories were republished by the other websites included in the study – very often by AC24 (published 102 articles) and, to a smaller extent, by ČeskoAktuálně (published 34 articles). Thus, it is possible to conclude that the debate about Russia on the observed websites was to the large extent shaped by Russian sources. On the contrary, Parlamentní listy (published 147 articles) relied on their own content and some articles mentioning Russia were based on the quotes of various Czech actors, not all which were particularly favourable to Russia. Therefore, one-third of the texts contained negative sentiments about Russia.

When it comes to the topics at hand, it is quite apparent that the majority of the articles were focused on Russia and its actions, or its supposed opponents – the USA or NATO. Only a smaller number of articles (around 80 publications) mentioned relations between Russia and the Czech Republic. **A significant proportion of the texts were also based solely on the statements of Russian public officials, which even reinforce the argument about Moscow's direct involvement in the Czech information space.** The most significant topic was a quite broadly defined struggle between the USA and Russia (mentioned in 68 articles).^{cxviii} Another significant topic was the situation in Venezuela (mentioned in 61 texts), which was depicted as a struggle of a legitimate government against the aggressive USA and its proxies.^{cxix} The situation in Syria and the struggle concerning the status of Golan Heights was mentioned in 33 articles.^{cxx} The situation in Crimea – especially in the relation to the anniversary of the referendum of the annexation of the peninsula – was mentioned in 32 articles.^{cxxi} Quite significant attention was paid to various issues related to cultural festivities, nature or interesting and even bizarre events in Russia (mentioned in 52 articles).^{cxxii}

It was possible to identify three general narratives in the observed articles. The most significant narrative (present in 123 articles) **depicted Russia as a strong, stable and prosperous country that is able to effectively pursue its goals on the international scene.** Around a half of these articles supported this narrative indirectly by pointing out the strength of the Russian military.^{cxxiii} **Another strong narrative** (present in 100 articles) **claimed that Russia is demonized in the contemporary Western debate.** This category was a combination of commentaries made by Russian officials, pro-Russian domestic activists and cherry-picked statements of renowned experts on the issue (such as Leonid Bershidsky).^{cxxiv} **The**

third strong narrative (present in 70 articles) **was related to the alleged aggressivity of the USA in world affairs (in Venezuela, for instance) and against Russia in particular.**^{cxxxv} There were numerous articles that highlighted the fact that American and NATO forces are provoking Russian by entering their territory (usually airspace).^{cxxxvi} Such reports likely aim to counter-balance the cases when Russian airplanes or military ships enter the territories of NATO member states, which tend to be covered frequently in Czech media. **As we already mentioned, there were articles** (around 90 in total) **discussing Russia in a negative light.** They were generally based on quotes of various politicians and other public figures criticizing Russia's aggressive foreign policy or interference in Czech politics. These articles most often appeared on *Parlamentní listy*,^{cxxxvii} but even Sputnik republished some of these statements.^{cxxxviii}

EU: A TOPIC OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE

The European Union and EP elections were covered far less extensively than Russia-related issues. The observed websites published 305 articles (from which only 139 mentioned the European elections) in the analysed period.

The most active source was *Parlamentní listy* (published 189 articles). The second most active portal, Sputnik CZ published 53 articles (20 of which also mentioned Russia), whereas the rest of sites published only a handful of articles. While the primary source of articles on Russia was generally Sputnik CZ, EU-related issues' coverage seems to be more heterogeneous and the observed websites were republishing the content of various sources (usually other websites known to be spreading manipulative content).

The EU is a usual target of criticism on the observed websites, which was confirmed by this research, as almost half of texts mentioned the EU in a negative light. Even though the European Parliamentary elections were mentioned often, this does not mean that they were a central part of the debate in the observed period. In most cases, this event was only a sideshow (for example, a point of time reference in relation to Brexit),^{cxxxix} which clearly show that the campaign did not yet start in the Czech Republic. However, when it was the main topic of an article (as it happened in 32 texts), it was depicted as the last chance to save Europe and European civilisation from multiculturalists and Eurofederalists, and also as a referendum on the membership of the country in the EU.^{cxli} **In these articles, populist leaders from Western Europe (such as Matteo Salvini or Marine Le Pen) were often praised.**^{cxlii} From the ranks of Western leaders, French President Emmanuel Macron was often criticized (which is quite new for Czech alternative websites, which generally focused on German Chancellor Angela Merkel in the past).^{cxliii}

Another frequently mentioned topic was the Slovak presidential election. In the 40 articles dedicated to this issue, the liberal candidate Zuzana Čaputová was criticized as an inexperienced supporter of migration, homosexuals and the “decadent West,” who will destroy traditional values in Slovak society.^{cxliiii} Another topic related to the EU was the exclusion of MP Václav Klaus Jr. from the right-wing party ODS for his claims comparing approving EU legislation in the Czech Parliament to the work of Jewish councils when they selected the people going onto transports to concentration camps during the Holocaust. Since Klaus Jr. is quite popular in Czech alternative media for his anti-EU views, the ODS was criticized for this decision in the majority of texts related to this issue.^{cxliiii}

POLAND

The Kremlin's propaganda activities in Poland are directly connected to contemporary Polish internal affairs. **The main information measures identified as coinciding with Russian propaganda and/or Russian goals in Poland refer to, react to or incorporate ongoing trends and topics from mainstream debates and the most emotional subjects from social media and other internet platforms.** It allows to disseminate different narratives to various recipients, strengthen the polarisation of the Polish society and even use such artificially heated internet quarrels as a tool (arming the information) to deteriorate Poland's image abroad (e.g. presenting how deeply anti-Semitic Poles are).

These types of information operations are planned for years. Their foundations are more or less constant and consistent, using various events for the benefit of information aggressors. Long-existing niche conspiracy theories presented outside of the Polish mainstream concern the Jews' desire to take advantage of Poland and that the EU is weak, antidemocratic and a tool for stronger states to rule over smaller ones. In the period leading up to the European Parliamentary elections they were being used on a larger scale with the aim of reaching a wider audience.

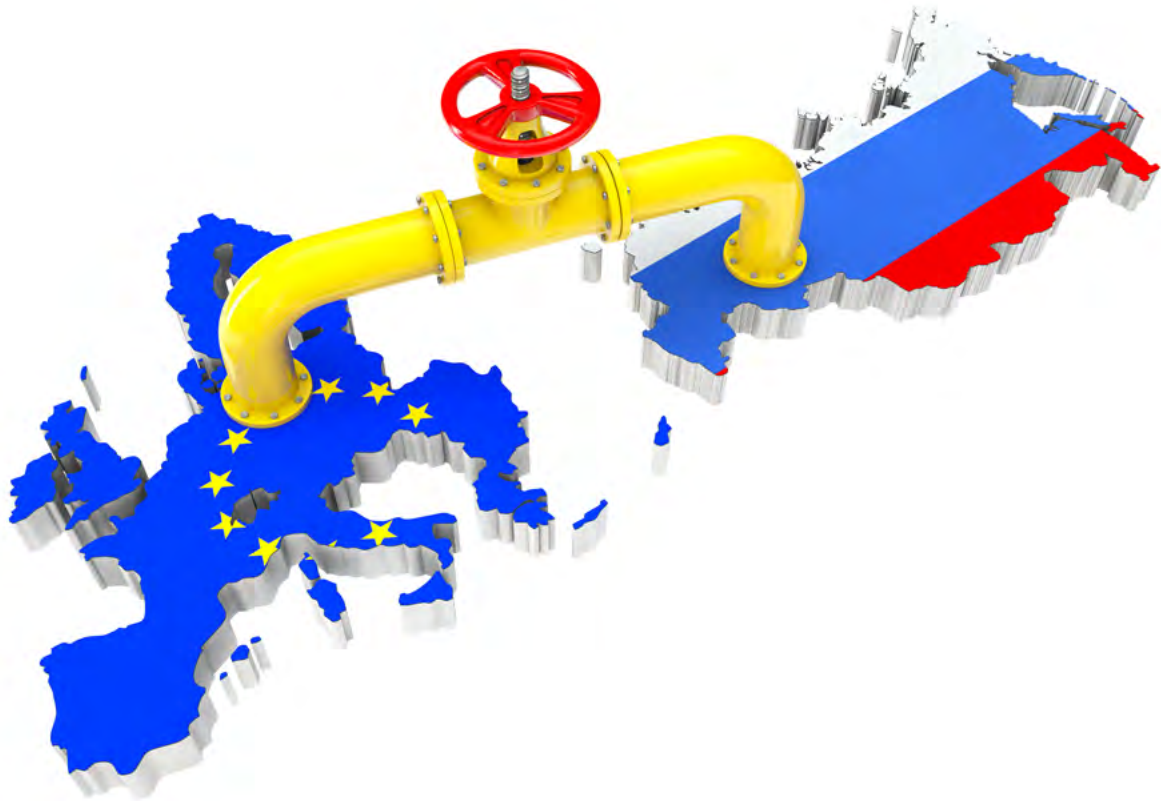
INTERNAL POLITICAL DISPUTES ON THE EU HELP INFORMATION AGGRESSORS

Information activities were present on different levels: internal (political, economic, social, religious) and external (political, economic, social, cultural). The fake news toolkit is one of the smallest and only supplementary to the tools within the information operations repertoire. Narratives are being circulated and strengthened using accurate information and news. For example, any anti-Polish statement from an EU representative, or Western politician or journalist is being used as evidence supporting claims about the truly anti-Polish face of "German-ruled Brussels." At the same time, **European issues are being held hostage by Polish politicians in internal Polish debates (more precisely, their rhetoric concerning the EU is being used as a tool or a weapon against opponents). This only facilitates hostile information actions by making the Polish information environment even more chaotic and polarising Polish society even further. This situation also allows minor anti-establishment political forces to capitalize on the situation and help their messages reach a broader audience, legitimising them in the political discourse.**

This problem is reflected in the results of the media monitoring we conducted between January and April, as well as in the monitoring conducted specifically for this study (15 March-15 April). The information operations in the Polish information environment touched upon the loss of Polish sovereignty/independence,^{cxlv} and corrupt or Western puppet politicians in the ranks of the ruling party^{cxlvi} and the opposition,^{cxlvii} who are thus serving foreign interests and reinforce the status quo (weak Poland).^{cxlviii} Allegedly, they, driven by prejudices and populism, cannot see the necessity of close cooperation^{cxlix} with Russia.^{cl} **Anti-establishment and/or anti-EU politicians are being promoted as the only hope and solution for Poland facing a huge crisis coming from the West^{cli} – in political and economic terms. The US and Israel allegedly collaborate against Poland closely^{clii} – this narrative is one way to attack the concept of NATO and military cooperation with Poland's allies. In fact, as it is being presented, this cooperation and US actions may result in provoking a war with Russia and Poland would be the country paying the price for it.^{cliii}**

At the same time, the narratives we found suggest that the EU only gives an illusion of democracy, solidarity and collaboration. Its policies and procedures are depicted as threats to citizens and all of the member states alike.^{cliv} The integration process is described with the same terms. The EU is being ruled from Germany,^{clv} which disregards the needs of smaller countries^{clvi} and wants to profit from

collaboration with Russia, sacrificing the safety and security of weaker states.^{clvii} The EU itself is in crisis – it violates its own principles, such as the freedom of speech, to be able to introduce censorship.^{clviii}



THE WEST IS AN AGGRESSOR, WHILE RUSSIA IS SIMPLY DEFENDING ITSELF

The most dangerous narratives are those related to issues shown as inevitable: a) an economic crisis in the West^{clix} and b) the Third World War.^{clx} These strongly influence emotions and offer a narrative tailored for various groups of readers. It is connected and a complement to different narratives on security issues. These messages claim that NATO is facing a crisis,^{clxi} **Washington uses European countries as its pawns^{clxii} to provoke Russia.^{clxiii}** Furthermore, the imperialistic American foreign policy is one of the greatest threats to peace and stability worldwide.^{clxiv}

At the same time, Russia, a powerful nation, is only defending itself from all hostile actions conducted by the USA and EU,^{clxv} who are responsible for the conflicts and tensions in the Middle East, Venezuela, Georgia and Ukraine. Moscow is open to formulating a dialogue with Ukraine and with the West, but it also has to protect itself. **The threat of a Third World War is real because of NATO's provocations.** Moreover, there is allegedly no propaganda in Russia and the topic of Russian disinformation is meant to distract Europe/the West from its serious social issues.^{clxvi}

It is worth mentioning that the portals that publish content in line with Russian propaganda in Poland share the publications of each other, promoting authors, politicians, scientists, and experts with Eurosceptic tendencies. Even in their neutral publications we can find references to other articles with controversial titles that may skew the context and influence the reader in a certain way.

ANTI-SEMITISM USED AGAINST AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN ELITES

Finally, anti-Semitic narratives that were explored in detail must be discussed. Many of these are related to contemporary events in the United States surrounding the Justice for Uncompensated Survivors Today Act (also known as 447 or JUST) passed in April 2019. **The topic has been used to develop anti-American, anti-Israeli and anti-European sentiments and to attack the Polish government and opposition.** The narratives conveyed the following messages: American and European elites work for the Jewish lobby for their own benefit,^{clxvii} the EU is a Tel Aviv-backed project that favours Israeli interests, Germans cooperate with Israel against Poland, implying that Israel could have influenced the Polish government or may have more influence than Polish politicians admit or, last but not least, that the Polish elite (both the government and the opposition) depends on the West and the Jewish lobby in pursuing their interests.^{clxviii}

CONCLUSIONS

We were able to reach a number of important conclusions in our research. First of all, **the Kremlin has two main reasons to interfere in the EP elections even though its primary focus is likely to be national general elections: the amplification of pro-Kremlin voices in the European Parliament and thus European decision-making, and the creation of the illusion that it has successfully influenced European democratic processes.** Some pro-Kremlin messages (e.g., the US is using the EU to force its will on other countries, the CIA is behind Euromaidan) might resonate with some audiences in the V4, and the EP election is a great opportunity for spreading such narratives, however, it will forever be impossible to measure the effect of pro-Russian disinformation within the electoral system.

Second, Kremlin-backed media mainly focused on discrediting the West in general (mainly the US and NATO), sometimes without even mentioning Russia. The narratives on RT and Sputnik were remarkably consistent on certain issues of key national interests, where the Kremlin is notably trying to persuade the audience on the validity of its own views (e.g., on Venezuela), not only to confuse it. The Kremlin's relative lack of focus on the EP elections was highlighted by the fact that official Russia-backed media did not directly target the European Union as frequently as it did the US and NATO. However, when they did address topics related to the EU, they almost exclusively promoted the views of anti-EU actors. The coverage of local portals was varied in terms of their preferred topics: Hungarian disinformation media focused heavily on the EU, while the bloc was, similarly to what we observed on RT and Sputnik, relegated to secondary importance behind anti-West messages in the Czech Republic.



Third, it is clear that local pro-Kremlin media in the V4 were disseminating narratives eerily similar to those on official Kremlin-backed media. Even though they wrote more about the US and NATO, RT and Sputnik spread anti-EU disinformation before and during the official EP election campaign periods and openly came out in support of populist and anti-EU parties, while local V4 media became partisan actors in support of these forces in the domestic electoral discourse. Moreover, the criticisms directed at the EU were broadly similar: it mishandled migration; forces ineffective, liberal policies on its member states; it is overly bureaucratic, undemocratic; and Brussels wants to forge a multicultural empire without any nation states. **Russian**

decision-makers want the EU to be weak and fragmented, which will allow the Kremlin to have more sway over what happens on the continent, while some internal actors in EU member states want to achieve the same goals for ideological reasons. This essentially prompts the convergence of anti-EU narratives in official Kremlin-backed and local disinformation media. Election periods are perfect opportunities for them to discredit the EU, pro-EU and pro-West politicians and promote the views of actors whose interests match those of the Kremlin.



Fourth, importantly, these outlets all combined the dissemination of openly anti-EU content with even more prevalent anti-West narratives on international affairs – the spotlight often fell on the US and NATO. They consistently attack liberal democracy as a socio-political system and discredit pro-Western political actors. These politicians are consistently condemned for supporting the Western alliance’s “aggressive” international policies. While the West and especially the US is depicted as an aggressor with ambitions to “conquer the world” and assert global dominance through interference in Ukraine, Venezuela, Syria and elsewhere, Russia is described as a stabilising actor seeking to counter such efforts, one that only defends itself. Disinformation actors use these narratives to suggest that Western politicians in the US and its puppets will be the ones responsible for World War Three if it ever comes. **In this context, the EU and its member states are criticised for being controlled by or just blindly following the US, thus becoming aggressors themselves. The fact that the Kremlin considers the European bloc to be the extended arm of US efforts is another reason for Russia to weaken the EU and/or drive a wedge between the two sides of the Transatlantic alliance.** Disinformation directly targeting the US, NATO, pro-Western politicians and Western democratic norms can be considered to be attempts to influence the political orientation of Europeans in general, which can also affect voting intentions in the EP elections: anti-West narratives also promote the messages of Eurosceptic forces (e.g., as the only solution to avoid war with Russia).

Fifth, Russia has consistently depicted itself as a strong international player. Creating the illusion that the Kremlin successfully influenced European democratic processes would also strengthen this perception. Based on the narratives we found, Russia to the average citizens might seem like a country equalling the US and China on the world stage politically, militarily and economically. There is barely any sign in these articles that Russia faces considerable domestic challenges and budgetary constraints. **Russia certainly wants to seem like an almost omnipotent actor on the world stage, who might be a better ally to European nations than the US or Brussels.**

Sixth, while RT and Sputnik might not have a considerable direct effect in the EU on public opinion, the narratives broadcasted on these media (and their local branches) find themselves into the rhetoric of pro-Kremlin Eurosceptic forces and local pro-Kremlin outlets, which increase Russia's reach into the European audience considerably. **While official, semi-official Kremlin-backed media can influence local pro-Russian actors' messages, the views of local actors also contribute to the official pro-Kremlin rhetoric – there is a bilateral exchange of narratives between the sides.**

Seventh, there were some notable variations in how disinformation is actually spread. For instance, the Czech portals examined in this study showed significant differences in terms of the attention they pay to various issues, their information sources and whether they were willing to create original content. This suggests there are various models of operation and likely different motivations driving the activities of different disinformation portals, which could be studied in more detail. Moreover, **there are differences in the involvement of official Russia-backed actors in various discussions.** While there is an official Kremlin-backed actor in the Czech Republic and Poland (local Sputnik branches), in some countries local Kremlin affiliates or Eurosceptic forces take over the role of Russia-backed actors and serve as intermediaries in broadcasting Moscow's messages. **The modus operandi of disinformation activities seems to be tailored to local information environments.**

All in all, European pro-Kremlin, Eurosceptic actors (most of which are likely to be “useful idiots” rather than Russian mercenaries) play a much more important role in spreading pro-Russian narratives in the EU than the Kremlin itself. Nevertheless, Moscow can be satisfied with this, as its narratives still reach the European audience and have an even larger effect through the former. There is adequate reason to believe that the European population, certainly in some EU member states, might be receptive to the narratives spread by Kremlin-backed and pro-Kremlin media. Consequently, pro-Russian disinformation has the potential to turn part of the European population against the EU and Europe's Transatlantic allies, and thus have an influence on voting intentions. **The actual effect of the analysed portals on the mobilisation of the supporters of Eurosceptic actors backed by them in the EP elections would be important to study in detail.** The fact that the majority of these articles is highly combative, negative and conspiratorial could equally prompt their audience to be more active or more passive. The upcoming EP elections represent a great opportunity for this kind of research, but it will forever be impossible to measure the effect of pro-Russian disinformation in votes.

APPENDIX

LIST OF LOCAL PORTALS UNDER EXAMINATION

See the number of Facebook fans a given page has in parentheses at the end of each paragraph.

HUNGARY

- **Origo:** The government-controlled portal with the largest follower count, among the most active in supporting the government's views and smearing the opposition. (442,351)
- **888.hu:** A government-controlled portal defining itself as "the opposition to Soros." (253,643)
- **Magyar Nemzet:** A pro-government portal and printed daily. (7,561)
- **Híradó:** The online portal of the Public Broadcaster, regularly shares broadcasts from the main M1 news channel as well. (187,381)
- **News Front Hungary:** A fringe disinformation portal publishing in multiple languages, which is rumoured to be connected to Russian intelligence.^{clxix} The occasionally poor quality of grammar and spelling in some Hungarian articles certainly suggest it is run by foreigners. (842)
- **Világ Figyelő:** Alternative disinformation portal frequently pushing pro-Russian and pro-government narratives. Its contents almost always support the government's views. (74,573⁴)
- **Orosz Hírek:** Fringe portal dedicated to news on Russia. (22,962)
- **Balrad:** Alternative, far-left, government-critical disinformation portal. (351)

SLOVAKIA

- **Hlavné správy:** Self-proclaimed "conservative daily" (online) spreading pro-Russian narratives in a sophisticated manner, mixing news from mainstream media (press, online outlets and agencies) with its own commentaries. It also publishes contributions taken from various Russian sources. Pro-Russian stances are accompanied by an open criticism of policies of Western states. The main disseminator of pro-Russian content on the media scene in Slovakia. (39,301)
- **Infovojna:** Slovak mimicry of the original American alt-right conspiratorial website "InfoWar." It focuses mostly on "geopolitical" issues and spreads openly anti-Western and pro-Russian content, and aggregates materials taken from Slovak and foreign sources of the same orientation. (27,245)
- **Zem a Vek:** Monthly printed conspiratorial periodical that publicizes material about the domination of the US and Zionism (Jews) over the world, a typical anti-Semitic media outlet characterized by systemic resistance to the values of liberal democracy, criticism of the West, the EU and NATO as well as by positive attitude towards the current political regime in Russia and its foreign policy. In the Russia-Ukraine conflict, it took positions close to the interpretations of Russian propaganda. It openly supported the separatist rebellion in the Donbas and engaged in public activities aimed at securing Slovakia's withdrawal from NATO. (32,301)
- **Slobodný vysielateľ:** Online radio, and a fringe outlet that combines an anti-corruption rhetoric with calls for direct ("true") democracy, along with a broad range of esoteric and conspiratorial topics. Online radio, and a fringe outlet that combines an anti-corruption rhetoric with calls for direct ("true") democracy, along with a broad range of esoteric and conspiratorial topics. It offers broadcasting space *inter alia* to persons whose views are marked by open sympathies to Russia's foreign policy, harsh criticism of liberal democracy and the West, and anti-Semitic rhetoric. (81,813)
- **Slovo:** Online left-leaning outlet with pro-Russian, anti-Ukrainian, anti-American and anti-Western content. Contributions are characterised by criticism of the pro-Western orientation of Slovakian foreign

⁴ The FB page we counted here is called Leleplező Friss Hírek, but it exclusively shares Világ Figyelő articles and – for instance – informs readers on events such as the maintenance of Világ Figyelő's servers.

policy, opposition to liberal socio-economic reforms and support for state interventionism, disagreement with NATO activities, criticism of various aspects of European integration and EU policies, and evident inclinations towards the policy of current Russia's leadership. (1,562)

- **Pán Občan:** Anti-globalist “patriotic” online source pretending to be an independent voice of the country's ordinary citizens. It is politically inclined towards nationalist forces with critical views on the West (EU, NATO, USA) and on liberal values. It publishes articles on Russia taken from other Slovak pro-Russian online outlets, mainly from *Hlavné správy*. (5,479)
- **Na palette:** Nationalist online political and “lifestyle” outlet with pro-Russian content. Critical of the West. Aggregator of materials taken from other sources, including news agencies and *Hlavné správy*. (7,202)
- **Slobodný výber:** Online outlet presenting itself as an absolutely independent source of information, using more moderate rhetoric than other fringe media. It produces and takes contributions from other news sources about defending the West against Islam, criticizing the EU, NATO and the USA, and demonstrating sympathies to Russia. Articles on international affairs prevail over contributions concerning the domestic agenda. (4,446)

CZECH REPUBLIC

- **Parlamentní listy:** Without a doubt the most popular website in the Czech research sample. A political tabloid owned by Czech Senator Ivo Valenta, is known for its non-compliance with journalistic and ethical standards, providing media space for various figures from all over the political spectrum, including extremists, whose views are not counter-balanced at all. (46,990)
- **Sputnik CZ:** The Czech branch of the official Russian state-backed Sputnik news agency, one of the important sources of Russian state propaganda. It also serves the Slovak audience. (40,444)
- **Nová republika:** It is an aggregator of various texts published in alternative media, established in 2013. Ever since then, its managers have been quite active and organised various events. One of its most important editors, Ivan David, is running in the EP elections as a candidate for the extremist party SPD. (No Facebook. 692,650 visits a month according to SimilarWeb.)
- **AC24:** Website presenting itself as an independent media outlet providing uncensored coverage. The portal mixes conspiracy theories, tendentious commentaries and news without a clear, consistent editorial policy. (81,894)
- **Svobodné noviny:** Website presenting itself as an independent media outlet providing uncensored coverage. The portal mixes conspiracy theories, tendentious commentaries and news without a clear, consistent editorial policy. (17,745)
- **Česko aktuálně:** Website presenting itself as an independent media outlet providing uncensored coverage. The portal mixes conspiracy theories, tendentious commentaries and news without a clear, consistent editorial policy. (27,708)
- **Aeronet:** A portal only spreading conspiracy theories and disinformation. (1,390. Its website receives over 1 million visits a month according to SimilarWeb.)
- **Zvědavce:** A portal only disseminating conspiracy theories and disinformation. (No Facebook. 464,020 visits a month according to SimilarWeb.)

POLAND

- **Sputnik PL:** The Polish branch of the Russian government-owned propaganda outlet. (703)
- **KresyPL:** A portal presenting itself as a patriotic outlet dedicated to news on the former Polish “Kresy,” which is the Eastern borderlands (Wikipedia: “the Eastern part of the Second Polish Republic during the interwar period constituting nearly half of the territory of the state”). This is combined with anti-Ukrainian content. (No Facebook.)
- **AlexJonesPL:** Alternative disinformation portal directly coinciding with Russian propaganda. (Its fan page was deleted from Facebook, Apple and Google in August 2018.)

- **dziennik-polityczny.com**: Alternative website presenting itself as an independent outlet, frequently publishing anti-government, anti-Western, anti-Ukrainian narratives. (7,472)
- **Magnapolonia.org**: Alternative disinformation portal presenting itself as a patriotic outlet. It is publishing content coinciding with Russian propaganda. (27,567)
- **Zmianynazemi.pl**: Alternative disinformation portal with content directly coinciding with Russian propaganda and promoting conspiracy theories. (38,617)
- **Najwyższy Czas!**, www.nczas.com: The Najwyższy Czas! weekly's website, a conservative-liberal journal mixing tabloid journalism with anti-establishment and anti-West narratives. (23,767)
- **neon24-pl**: Alternative media portal presenting itself as a patriotic and independent outlet, frequently publishing content coinciding with Russian propaganda. (369)

REFERENCES

- '89up Releases Report on Russian Influence in the EU Referendum'. 89up, 10 February 2018. <http://89up.org/russia-report>.
- '2016 Presidential Campaign Hacking Fast Facts'. CNN, 26 December 2016. <https://www.cnn.com/2016/12/26/us/2016-presidential-campaign-hacking-fast-facts/index.html>.
- 'After Killing INF US Has "Free Hand" to Reassert "Supremacy in the World" with "New Arms Race"'. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/news/450414-inf-russia-suspension-reaction/>.
- 'Airbus Row: How "Tariff Man" Trump and EU May Kick Off New Trade War'. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904101074001241-trump-tariffs-eu/>.
- 'Assange Arrest Final Step in Character Assassination Campaign – Slavoj Zizek'. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/news/456237-julian-assange-arrest-slavoj-zizek/>.
- 'Az orosz kormányfő egy ukrán elnökjelölttel tárgyalt a gázszállításról'. Orosz Hírek (blog), 23 March 2019. <https://oroszhirek.hu/2019/03/23/az-orosz-kormanyfo-egy-ukran-elnokjelolttel-targyalt-a-gaszallitasrol/>.
- 'Az orosz miniszterelnök egy ukrán elnökjelölttel tárgyalt a gázszállításról'. Origó, 2019. <https://www.origo.hu/nagyvilag/20190322-az-orosz-miniszterelnok-egy-ukran-elnokjelolttel-targyalt-a-gaszallitasrol.html>.
- 'Bakondi: Az európai bürokraták mindent megtesznek a legális migrációért'. Híradó (blog), 2019. <http://www.hirado.hu/kulfold/cikk/2019/04/04/bakondi-az-europai-burokracia-vezetoi-mindent-megtesznek-a-legalis-migracioert/>.
- Barna Borbás. 'Megtaláltuk Habony Árpádot: Londonban épít nemzetközi hírügynökséget - Válasz Online'. Válasz Online (blog), 2019. <https://www.valaszonline.hu/2019/04/09/v4na-habony-london-nemzetkozi-hirugynokseg/>.
- 'BBC Breakfast with Frost: Putin Interview'. BBC, 2000. http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/audio_video/programmes/breakfast_with_frost/transcripts/putin5.mar.txt.
- Patrick Beuth, Marc Brost, Peter Dausend, Steffen Dobbert, and Götz Hamann. 'Fake News: War without blood'. Die Zeit. 26 February 2017, sec. Digital. <https://www.zeit.de/digital/internet/2017-02/bundestag-elections-fake-news-manipulation-russia-hacker-cyberwar>.
- 'Bez Ruska a USA Nelze Překonat Syrský Konflikt, Prohlásil Jordánský Ministr Zahraničí - Sputnik Česká Republika'. Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019. <https://cz.sputniknews.com/politika/201904079582527-bez-ruska-a-usa-nelze-prekonat-syrsky-konflikt-prohlasil-jordansky-ministr-zahranici/>.
- 'Bordel Kolem Klause Ml.: Prase Moravec, Holý Zadek, Předseda Fiala a Vtipné FOTO'. Parlamentní Listi, 2019. <http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Bordel-kolem-Klause-ml-Prase-Moravec-holy-zadek-predseda-Fiala-a-vtipne-FOTO-574355>.
- 'Brexit Doesn't Mean Brexit, a Call to Action'. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/columnists/201903281073627135-uk-brexit-call-action/>.
- '#BREXIT: "Theresa May's Deal Is Rotten to the Core" - Political Economist'. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904011073736652-brexit-deal-rotten-core/>.
- 'Británie Žádá Členské Státy EU, Aby Umožnily Odklad Brexitu Do Konce Června. Juncker Varuje'. Parlamentní Listi, 2019. <http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Britanie-zada-clenske-staty-EU-aby-umoznily-odklad-brexitu-do-konce-cervna-Juncker-varuje-574763>.
- Gergely Brückner. 'Miért kapnak anonim bankkártyát a menekültek?', 14 November 2018. https://index.hu/gazdasag/2018/11/14/a_valasztas_meltosaga_-_valojoban_igy_nez_ki_az_ensz_menekultkartya-programja/.
- Laurens Cerulus. 'Europe's Most Hackable Election'. Politico, 16 January 2019. <https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-most-hackable-election-voter-security-catalonia-european-parliament-disinformation/>.
- 'CNN Didn't Get "Anything" Wrong in Russiagate Reporting, Host Claims. It Didn't?' RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/usa/455221-cnn-defends-mueller-coverage/>.
- 'Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation'. mid.ru, 2016. http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6BZ29/content/id/122186.
- 'Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union'. Official Journal of the EU. Accessed 30 April 2019. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT&from=EN>.

REFERENCES

- ‘Crimea: Mapping the Road Back to Russia’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201903151073276635-crimea-road-russia/>.
- ‘Data Visualization: This Is How the pro-Government Media Empire Owning 476 Outlets Was Formed’. Átlátszó (blog). Accessed 29 April 2019. <https://english.atlatszo.hu/2018/11/30/data-visualization-this-is-how-the-pro-government-media-empire-owning-476-outlets-was-formed/>.
- János Deák. ‘Oroszország Új (Pontosított) Katonai Doktrínájának Megjelenése Az Orosz Katonai Gondolkodás Változásainak Tükrében’. *Felderítő Szemle XVI.*, no. 1 (2015): 37–48.
- ‘Don’t Be Fooled: How to Spot a Russian Bot on Social Media’. MakeUseOf. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/spot-russian-bot-social-media/>.
- Vystavil Václav Dvořák. ‘Bloomberg: USA to Přehnalý s Přeháněním „ruské Hrozby”!’ Nova Republika (blog), 2019. <http://www.novarepublika.cz/2019/04/bloomberg-usa-to-prehnaly-s-prehananim.html>.
- ‘Sorosova Barbie Na Hradě: Zvolili Ji Nevolící. Pyrrhovo Vítězství Místní Páté Kolony Bruselanů. Udělal Kotleba Správně, Že Neustoupil? Všechno Je Jinak. Plastový Šefčovič by Byl Ještě Horší. Kedy Slováci Ožijú?’ Nova Republika (blog), 2019. <http://www.novarepublika.cz/2019/04/sorosova-barbie-na-hrade-zvolili-ji.html>.
- ‘Elfogadhatatlan, hogy a migráns pártiak fenyegetik a bevándorláselleneseket’. Origo, 2019. <https://www.origo.hu/itthon/20190415-elfogadhatatlan-hogy-a-migranspartiak-fenyegetik-a-bevandorlaselleneseket.html>.
- ‘EU Afraid UK to “Return 73 Nigel Farage” If Stay for European Elections - MP’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201903221073472238-eu-elections-uk-brexit-euroscptics/>.
- ‘EU Centrists Set to Lose MEP Seats to Eurosceptics, Russia Again Accused of Meddling’. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/news/456528-eurosceptic-parties-russian-meddling/>.
- ‘EU Elections Will Define the Future of “Christian European Culture” – Hungary PM’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904081073921950-hungary-viktor-orban-eu-elections/>.
- ‘EU Reaffirms Commitment to Policy of Non-Recognition of Crimean Referendum’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201903171073320162-eu-commitment-crimea-no-recognition/>.
- Eugen Rusnák. ‘Čo Sa s Ním Deje? Favorizovaný Kandidát Na Prezidenta Ukrajiny Vladimír Zelenský Náhle Mení Rétoriku Smerom Na Západ, Washington, Brusel, MMF, Soros’. *Hlavné správy*, 24 March 2019. <https://www.hlavnespravy.sk/prezidentsky-kandidat-ukrajinsky-komik-herec-vladimir-zelenskij-meni-retoriku-smerom-na-zapad-washington-brusel-mmf-soros/1707001>.
- ‘Ozbrojené Sily Ukrajiny Sú Pripravené Na Útok Na Maďarsko, Akonáhle Nastanú Snahy o Pripojenie Zakarpatskej Oblasti - Hlavné Správy’. *Hlavné Správy*, 2019. <https://www.hlavnespravy.sk/ozbrojene-sily-ukrajiny-su-pripravene-na-utok-na-madarsko-ak-nastanu-snahy-o-pripojenie-zakarpatskej-oblasti/1704383>.
- ‘Europosłowie oszaleli! Jeszcze większa cenzura Internetu. „Dostawcy usuwają treści w ciągu godziny od otrzymania nakazu usunięcia” | nczas.com’. Accessed 7 May 2019. <https://nczas.com/2019/04/02/europoslowie-oszaleli-jeszcze-wieksza-cenzura-internetu-dostawcy-usuwaja-tresci-w-ciagu-godziny-od-otrzymania-nakazu-usuniecia/>.
- ‘FACT CHECK: Is George Soros Funding U.N.-Distributed Debit Cards to Refugees?’ Snopes, 2019. <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/soros-refugee-debit-cards/>.
- ‘Farage Launches Brexit Party, Slams Politicians in Power as “Donkeys”’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904121074073441-farage-brexit-party-donkeys-coventry/>.
- Yehven Fedchenko. ‘Kremlin Propaganda: Soviet Active Measures by Other Means’. StopFake.Org (blog), 21 March 2016. <https://www.stopfake.org/en/kremlin-propaganda-soviet-active-measures-by-other-means/>.
- ‘Fideszes hátország: egy minden értékéről lemondó Néppártban nem szabad maradnunk’. 888.hu, 2019. <https://888.hu/ketharmad/fideszes-hatorszag-egy-minden-ertekerol-lemondo-neppartban-nem-szabad-maradnunk-4172721/>.
- ‘French and German Populists Dominate EU Election Chatter on Facebook, Data Shows – POLITICO’. Politico, 2019. <https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-populists-european-election-alternative-for-deutschland-rassemblement-national-facebook/>.
- ‘German Lawmaker Brands NATO “Security Risk for The World”’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904051073845639-germany-us-nato-dissolution/>.

REFERENCES

- ‘German Lawmaker Calls for Lifting Crimea-Related Sanctions Against Russia’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201903161073290268-germany-afd-russia-crimea-sanctions/>.
- ‘Grizlov: Kijev lezárja a Donbassz visszaútját Ukrajnába’. News Front, 2019. <https://hu.news-front.info/2019/04/11/grizlov-kijev-lezarja-a-donbassz-visszautjat-ukrajnaba/>.
- ‘Grzegorz Braun: „Pan Saryusz-Wolski to „człowiek-Guma” - Sputnik Polska’. Sputnik Poland. Accessed 7 May 2019. <https://pl.sputniknews.com/opinie/2019040510158461-Bruksela-wybory-Polska-Braun-Saryusz-Wolski-to-czlowiek-guma/>.
- Zsolt Hanula. ‘A kormány nyakig benne van a facebookos manipulációban’, 6 November 2018. https://index.hu/techtud/2018/11/06/a_kormany_nyakig_benne_van_a_facebookos_manipulacioban/.
- Todd C. Helmus, Elizabeth Bodine-Baron, Andrew Radin, Madeline Magnuson, Joshua Mendelsohn, William Marcellino, Andriy Bega, and Zev Winkelman. Russian Social Media Influence: Understanding Russian Propaganda in Eastern Europe. Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR2200/RR2237/RAND_RR2237.pdf.
- Márk Herczeg. ‘VIGYÁZZZ, JÖNNEK A MIGRÁÁÁNSOK, WÁÁÁÁ!!! MIGRÁNSKARAVÁÁÁÁU!!!!’ 444, 5 April 2019. <https://444.hu/2019/04/05/vigyazzz-jonnek-a-migraaansok-waaaa-migranskaravaaaau>.
- ‘How France Successfully Countered Russian Interference during the Presidential Election – EURACTIV.Com’. Euractiv, 2018. <https://www.euractiv.com/section/elections/news/how-france-successfully-countered-russian-interference-during-the-presidential-election/>.
- ‘How Misinformation Spreads on Social Media—And What to Do about It’. Brookings.edu, 2018. https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/05/09/how-misinformation-spreads-on-social-media-and-what-to-do-about-it/?utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter&utm_campaign=fp.
- ‘Hrozby pokračují: USA tentokrát postrašily Egypt’. Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019. <https://cz.sputniknews.com/karikatury/201904099597017-hrozby-pokracuji-usa-tentokrat-postrasily-egypt/>.
- “‘I Am a Soldier of America’: Kosovo PM Says He Follows US Lead against Serbia & Russia’. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/news/455926-kosovo-haradinaj-american-soldier/>.
- ‘Imprisonment of Assange Seeks to “Kill Journalism”’. Sputnik International, 2019. https://sputniknews.com/radio_loud_and_clear/201904161074163989-assange-journalism-arrest/.
- “‘Info War Is Lost’: Assange Supporters Doubt Mainstream Media’s Coverage of Case’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904121074059290-uk-wikileaks-assange-supporters-media/>.
- ‘Jak rozpoznać prawdziwie polskie ugrupowanie polityczne?’ ZmianyNaziemi, 7 April 2019. <https://zmianyNaziemi.pl/wiadomosc/jak-rozpoznać-prawdziwie-polskie-ugrupowanie-polityczne>.
- ‘Jobbat már senki nem remél, elég, ha nem lesz sokkal rosszabb’. Origó, 2019. <https://www.origo.hu/nagyvilag/20190328-ukrajna-valasztas-2019.html>.
- ‘Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Action Plan against Disinformation’. Joint Communication. EEAS, 2018. https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/action_plan_against_disinformation.pdf.
- ‘Kárpátalja: folytatódik a magyarok jogfosztása’. Origó, 2019. <https://www.origo.hu/nagyvilag/20190315-karpatalja-folytatodik-a-magyarok-jogfosztasa.html>.
- ‘Kde Je Európska Únia, Tam Sú Problémy, Povedal Fínsky Šéf Diplomacie a Oznámil Svoj Odchod z Politiky’. InfoVojna, 2019. <https://www.infovojna.sk/article/kde-je-europska-unia-tam-su-problemy-povedal-finsky-sef-diplomacie-a-oznamil-svoj-odchod-z-politiky>.
- ‘Kevesebb, mint ötven nap múlva dönthetünk Európa jövőjéről’. Híradó (blog). Accessed 29 April 2019. <http://www.hirado.hu/kulfold/kulpolitika/cikk/2019/04/07/kevesebb-mint-otven-nap-mulva-donthetunk-europa-jovojerol/>.
- Katarína Klingonová. ‘What Do We Know About Disinformation Websites in the Czech Republic and Slovakia?’ GLOBSEC (blog), 2019. <https://www.globsec.org/news/what-do-we-know-about-disinformation-websites-in-the-czech-republic-and-slovakia/>.
- ‘Korwin-Mikke szczerze: „Pieniądze są ważne, ale nie są najważniejsze. Trzeba bronić wartości bo nic nam po pieniądzech, gdy nie ma podstawowych wartości” | nczas.com’. Nczas (blog), 2019. <https://nczas.com/2019/04/07/>

- korwin-mikke-szczerze-pieniadze-sa-wazne-ale-nie-sa-najwazniejsze-trzeba-bronic-wartosci-bo-nic-nam-po-pieniadzach-gdy-nie-ma-podstawowych-wartosci/.
- ‘Közeleg a május, a bevándorláspártiak és a bevándorlásellenesek csatája’. 888.hu, 2019. <https://888.hu/article-kozeleg-a-majus-a-bevandorlaspartiak-es-a-bevandorlasellenesek-csataja>.
 - Krekó, Péter, Marie Macaulay, Csaba Molnár, and Lóránt Gyóri. ‘Europe’s New Pro-Putin Coalition: The Parties of “No”’. Institute of Modern Russia, 3 August 2015. <https://imrussia.org/en/analysis/world/2368-europes-new-pro-putin-coalition-the-parties-of-no>.
 - Péter Krekó, Csaba Molnár, and András Rácz. ‘Mystification and Demystification of Putin’s Russia’. Political Capital, March 2019. https://politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/documents/pc_mystification_and_demystification_of_russia_eng_web_20190312.pdf.
 - Péter Krekó, and Patrik Szicherle. ‘Why Is Hungary Blocking Ukraine’s Western Integration?’ Atlantic Council, 2018. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/why-is-hungary-blocking-ukraine-s-western-integration>.
 - ‘Krzysztof Bosak dla Sputnika: „UE nie ma wspólnej polityki zagranicznej i mieć nie może”’. Sputnik Poland, 2019. <https://pl.sputniknews.com/opinie/2019041510192685-Polska-Warszawa-Parlament-Europejski-wybory-Krzysztof-Bosak-UE-Sputnik/>.
 - Emily Dreyfuss and Issie Lapowsky. ‘Facebook Is Changing News Feed (Again) to Stop Fake News’. Wired, 10 April 2019. <https://www.wired.com/story/facebook-click-gap-news-feed-changes/>.
 - Emily Dreyfuss and Issie Lapowsky. ‘How Russian Facebook Ads Divided and Targeted US Voters Before the 2016 Election’. Wired, 16 April 2018. <https://www.wired.com/story/russian-facebook-ads-targeted-us-voters-before-2016-election/>.
 - ‘Lavrov az amerikai lépésekről: kudarcos villámháború és a naftalinból előhúzott doktrína’. News Front. Accessed 30 April 2019. <https://hu.news-front.info/2019/04/14/lavrov-az-amerikai-lepesekrol-kudarcos-villamhaboru-es-a-naftalinbol-elohuzott-doktrina/>.
 - ‘Mądrości galaktyczne’. Alex Jones PL, 2019. <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-polska/aj-publicystyka/item/145553-madrosci-galaktyczne>.
 - ‘Maduro Prohlásil, Že v USA Vládnou Stoupenci Hitlera’. AC24, 2019. <https://ac24.cz/-/maduro-prohlasil-ze-v-usa-vladnou-stoupenci-hitlera>.
 - ‘Maduro: Venezuela Is “Testing Ground for Electromagnetic Arms, New War Strategy”’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/latam/201904041073816166-maduro-venezuela-weapons-usa/>.
 - ‘Marek Budzisz: Gwarancje NATO - z pewnością papierowe’. Dziennik Polityczny, 5 April 2019. <https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2019/04/05/marek-budzisz-gwarancje-nato-z-pewnoscia-papierowe/>.
 - Leonárd Máriás, Nagy Krisztina, Polyák Gábor, and Urbán Ágnes. ‘Soft Censorship in Hungary 2016’. Merték Media Monitor, 2017. <https://mertek.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/MertekFuzetek12.pdf>.
 - Martin Bago. ‘Kiska sa v Bruseli lúčil s eurohujermi a nepriamo slúbil, že príde s novou stranou! Tej členmi majú byť bývalí privatizéri a členovia mimovládok!’ InfoVojna (blog), 21 March 2019. <https://blog.infovojna.sk/kiska-sa-v-bruseli-lucil-s-eurohujermi-a-nepriamo-slubil-ze-pride-s-novou-stranou-tej-clenmi-maju-byt-byvali-privatizeri-a-clenovia-mimovladok/>.
 - ‘Meggzúnt az együttműködés Oroszország és a NATO között’. Híradó (blog). Accessed 30 April 2019. <http://www.hirado.hu/kulfold/kulpolitika/cikk/2019/04/15/meggzunt-az-egyuttmukodes-oroszorszag-es-a-nato-kozott/>.
 - ‘Mi-26-T2V: nejnovější modifikace ruského dopravního „supervrtulníku“’. Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019. <https://cz.sputniknews.com/svet/201904099596285-mi-26-t2v-nejnovejsi-modifikace-ruskeho-dopravniho-supervrtulniku/>.
 - Judith Moeller, and Natali Helberger. ‘Beyond the Filter Bubble: Concepts, Myths, Evidence and Issues for Future Debates’. University of Amsterdam, n.d. https://www.ivir.nl/publicaties/download/Beyond_the_filter_bubble__concepts_myths_evidence_and_issues_for_future_debates.pdf.
 - ‘Moscow Slams Pompeo’s Claims About Russia’s “Intervention in Venezuela”’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/world/201904151074154751-russia-us-venezuela/>.

REFERENCES

- ‘Moscow Urges US to Fulfil Pledges on Syria Before Offering Advice on Venezuela’. Sputnik Poland, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/russia/201903281073605184-russia-usa-venezuela-trump-syria-advice/>.
- ‘Mussolini’s Great-Grandson: Claims on Fascism in Italy Are “Left Propaganda”’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904141074122900-mussolini-fascism-italy-left-propaganda/>.
- Gábor Nagy. ‘Hogyan hoznak döntéseket Brüsszelben a nemzetállamok feje felett?’ 888.hu, 2019. <https://888.hu/amerika-london-parizs/hogyan-hoznak-donteseket-brusszelben-a-nemzetallamok-feje-felett-4174000/>.
- ‘Naruszono wszelkie zasady, aby przepchnąć francusko-niemiecką inicjatywę! Ucierpią polskie firmy’. Alex Jones PL, 2019. <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-swiat/item/146122-naruszono-wszelkie-zasady-aby-przepchnac-francusko-niemiecka-inicjatywe-ucierpia-polskie-firmy>.
- ‘NATO “broke Away” from Intl Law, Lost Its Legitimacy – Ex-OSCE Parliamentary Assembly VP to RT’. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/news/455776-nato-legitimacy-international-law/>.
- ‘NATO Wars, East Expansion Belie Mission as Defensive Alliance’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904041073810524-NATO-Wars-East-Expansion-Belie-Mission-Defensive-Alliance/>.
- ‘Niemcy głównym capo Europy, Francja owczarkiem niemieckim’. Dziennik Polityczny, 9 April 2019. <https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2019/04/09/niemcy-glownym-capo-europy-francja-owczarkiem-niemieckim/>.
- ‘No Fast-Track NATO Membership for Georgia: Merkel’. France 24, 24 August 2018. <https://www.france24.com/en/20180824-no-fast-track-nato-membership-georgia-merkel>.
- ‘Noční vlci roztáhli na Krymu největší ruskou vlajku (VIDEO)’. Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019. <https://cz.sputniknews.com/video/201903179457675-vlk-krym-rusko-vlajka-video/>.
- Daniel Nolan and Shaun Walker. ‘Hungarian Journalists Admit Role in Forging Anti-Migrant “Atmosphere of Fear”’. The Guardian, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/13/hungary-journalists-state-tv-network-migrants-viktor-orban-government>.
- ‘Nordic Right-Wingers Join Forces to Stop “European Superstate” & Macron’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904091073953100-scandinavia-right-wing-alliance/>.
- ‘Od Sukcesu Do Sukcesu – Magna Polonia’. Magna Polonia, 2019. <https://www.magnapolonia.org/od-sukcesu-do-sukcesu/>.
- ‘Opusťme EU nadutého francouzského polomonarchy Macrona, dokud je čas’. ČeskoAktuálně.cz (blog), 19 March 2019. <https://ceskoaktualne.cz/2019/03/zpravy-k-zamysleni/opustme-eu-naduteho-francouzskeho-polomonarchy-macrona-dokud-cas/>.
- ‘Orban to Juncker: Unveiling Statue of Marx Gives You No Right to Lecture Others on Xenophobia’. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/news/455442-orban-junker-xenophobia-row/>.
- ‘Orbán Viktor programja a bevándorlás megállításáért: ez van a 7 pont mögött’. Origó, 2019. <https://www.origo.hu/itthon/20190405-orban-viktor-het-pont-mogott>.
- ‘Ostatni etap wielobiegunowej rewolucji: powstrzymać USA w Europie’. Alex Jones PL, 2019. <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-swiat/item/144848-ostatni-etap-wielobiegunowej-rewolucji-powstrzymac-usa-w-europie>.
- ‘Őt éve újra Oroszország része a Krim - Putyin is a félszigetre érkezik’. Orosz Hírek (blog), 17 March 2019. <https://oroszhirek.hu/2019/03/17/ot-eve-ujra-oroszorszag-resze-a-krim-putyin-is-a-felszigetre-erkezik/>.
- ‘PE wzywa Bośnię i Hercegowinę do zwrotu mienia żydowskiego. To cena członkostwa w UE’. Alex Jones PL, 2019. <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-swiat/item/145459-pe-wzywa-bosnie-i-hercegowine-do-zwrotu-mienia-zydowskiego-to-cena-czlonkostwa-w-ue>.
- ‘Piskos játszma’. Magyar Nemzet (blog), 2019. <https://magyarnemzet.hu/ahelyzet/piskos-jatszma-6681674/>.
- ‘„Platforma nie proponuje nic oprócz odsunięcia PiS-u i straszenia Rosją”’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://pl.sputniknews.com/opinie/2019040910172225-Polska-PE-Platforma-nie-proponuje-nic-oprocz-odsuniecia-PiS-u-i-straszenia-rosja/>.
- ‘Polityka (a)Historyczna – Tylko Po Co?’ Neon24. Accessed 7 May 2019. <https://chart.neon24.pl/post/148295,polityka-a-historyczna-tylko-po-co>.
- ‘Polska Chrześcijańska, Ale Jaka? – Spojrzenie Polityczne’. Neon24. Accessed 7 May 2019. <https://chart.neon24.pl/post/148493,polska-chrzescijanska-ale-jaka-spojrzzenie-polityczne>.

REFERENCES

- ‘Pompeo Oznacil Boj Proti Vlivu Ruska Za Prioritu Rozpoctu USA - Sputnik Česká Republika’. Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019. <https://cz.sputniknews.com/svet/201903279518069-pompeo-oznacil-boj-proti-vlivu-ruska-za-prioritu-rozpoctu-usa/>.
- ‘Przedstawiciel Rosji przy UE ocenił sytuację Brexitu’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://pl.sputniknews.com/polityka/2019033010133023-UE-Brexit-Rosja-Czyzow-Sputnik/>.
- ‘Putyin két hőerőművet avatott fel a Krímben a félsziget és Oroszország újraegyesülésének évfordulóján’. Orosz Hírek (blog), 18 March 2019. <https://oroszhirek.hu/2019/03/18/putyin-ket-hoeromuvet-avatott-fel-a-krimben-a-felsziget-es-oroszorszag-ujraegyesulesenek-evfordulojan/>.
- ‘Radek Sikorski na przekór Leninowi’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://pl.sputniknews.com/opinie/2019041610212334-Polska-wybory-PE-Sikorski-na-przekor-leninowi/>.
- ‘Radikální Změna EU. Salvini, Le Pen a Další Učinili Zásadní Krok. Kde Byl Okamura?’ Parlamentní Listy, 2019. <http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Radikalni-zmena-EU-Salvini-Le-Pen-a-dalsi-ucinili-zasadni-krok-Kde-byl-Okamura-577035>.
- ‘Real Challenge: Will Italy Leave the Eurozone or Will the Eurozone Fall Apart?’ Sputnik International. Accessed 26 April 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904021073763191-italy-eurozone-collapse/>.
- ‘Rendkívül rossz hír, hogy nem szűrték ki Hasszán F.-et’. Híradó, 2019. <http://www.hirado.hu/kulfold/cikk/2019/04/01/ket-evig-kapott-havi-500-eurot-hasszan-f-az-europai-uniotol/>.
- Dalibor Rohac, Edit Zgut, and Lóránt Győri. Populism in Europe and Its Russian Love Affair. American Enterprise Institute, 2017. <http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Populism-in-Europe-and-Its-Russian-Love-Affair.pdf>.
- ‘Rosja “przygotowuje się na potencjalne rozlokowanie” amerykańskich rakiet’. Dziennik Polityczny, 20 March 2019. <https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2019/03/20/rosja-przygotowuje-sie-na-potencjalne-rozlokowanie-amerykanskich-rakiet/>.
- ‘Ruské Ženy Jsou Schopné Se Ubránit Překvapujícím Způsobem (VIDEO) - Sputnik Česká Republika’. Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019. <https://cz.sputniknews.com/videoklub/201903279514453-Rusko-zena-los-kocka/>.
- ‘Rusko a Turecko Ďalej Prehlbujú Svoje Partnerstvo - Hlavné Správy’. Hlavné Správy, 2019. <https://www.hlavnespravy.sk/rusko-turecko-dalej-prehlbuju-svoje-partnerstvo/1725805>.
- ‘Rusko Úspešne Súperí s USA v Hybridnej Vojne Na Území Tretích Štátov - Hlavné Správy’. Hlavné Správy, 2019. <https://www.hlavnespravy.sk/rusko-uspesne-superi-usa-hybridnej-vojne-uzemi-tretich-statov/1721752>.
- ‘Russia Embraces the Mueller Report — but Overlooks Part about Interference’. NBC News. Accessed 29 April 2019. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/russia-embraces-no-collusion-part-mueller-report-overlooks-interference-n986846>.
- ‘Salvini: “a népeknek akarjuk átadni Európa irányítását”’. Világ Figyelő (blog), 2019. <https://vilagfigyelo.com/salvini-a-nepeknek-akarjuk-ataadni-europa-iranyitasat/>.
- ‘Salvini: A népeknek akarjuk átadni Európa irányítását’. Híradó (blog), 2019. <http://www.hirado.hu/kulfold/cikk/2019/04/08/salvini-a-nepeknek-akarjuk-ataadni-europa-iranyitasat/>.
- ‘Salvini Builds 4-Party Right-Wing Alliance Ahead of EU Parliament Elections’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904081073914261-salvini-alliance-elections/>.
- ‘Salvini Meets Le Pen in Paris, Teases a “Major” Right-Wing Event in Italy Ahead of EU Elections’. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/news/455653-salvini-le-pen-elections/>.
- ‘Salvini Sa Stretol v Prahe s Tomiom Okamurom, Riešili Spolu Migráciu Aj Kvalitu Potravín’, 2019. <https://www.infovojna.sk/article/salvini-sa-stretol-v-prahe-s-tomiom-okamurom-riesili-spolu-migraciju-aj-kvalitu-potravin>.
- Mark Scott. ‘Half of European Voters May Have Viewed Russian-Backed “Fake News”’. Politico, 7 May 2019. <https://www.politico.eu/article/european-parliament-russia-mcafee-safeguard-cyber/>.
- ‘Serbian Radical Party Protesters Burn EU, NATO Flags in Central Belgrade (PHOTO)’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201903241073503255-serbian-eu-nato-protest/>.
- ‘Sojusznicy Nas Tarmoszą’. Alex Jones PL, 2019. <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-swiat/item/146058-sojuszownicy-nas-tarmosza>.

REFERENCES

- Specia, Megan. 'What Is Happening in Venezuela? How It Got Here and Why It Matters'. The New York Times, 25 January 2019, sec. World. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/24/world/americas/venezuela-news-protests-noticias-guaido-maduro.html>.
- Andris Spruds, Anda Rozukalne, Dr. Klavs Sedlenieks, Martins Daugulis, Diana Potjomkina, Beatrix Tölgyesi, and Ilvija Bruge. 'Internet Trolling as a Hybrid Warfare Tool: The Case of Latvia'. NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, n.d. <https://www.stratcomcoe.org/internet-trolling-hybrid-warfare-tool-case-latvia-0>.
- Sputnik. '„Kdo se neplazí, není Čech...“ BIS v USA převzala ocenění za zahraniční spolupráci'. Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019. <https://cz.sputniknews.com/ceskarepublika/201904049565065-bis-v-usa-prevzala-oceneni-za-zahranicni-spolupraci/>.
- 'Stali Sa Známe Úlohy a Ciele Ruských Vojakov vo Venezuele - Hlavné Správy'. Hlavné Správy, 2019. <https://www.hlavnespravy.sk/stali-sa-zname-ulohy-ciele-ruskych-vojakov-vo-venezuele/1712446>.
- Lóránt Sümeghi. 'Farage: politikai forradalmat kell kiobbantanunk!' 888.hu, 2019. <https://888.hu/amerika-london-parizs/farage-politikai-forradalmat-kell-kiobbantanunk-4174691/>.
- Patrik Szicherle. 'Hogyan Küzdjünk a Dezinformáció Ellen? Magyarország Védelme Az Információs Térben.' Political Capital, 2018. https://politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/documents/dezinfo_guide_tanulmany_20181126.pdf.
- Patrik Szicherle. 'Zajlik az orosz meló abban a háborúban, amelyet nem tankokkal, hanem információkkal vívunk'. 24.hu (blog), 26 March 2019. <https://24.hu/belfold/2019/03/26/propaganda-oroszorszag-putyin-trump-orban/>.
- "The Band Plays on": Sanctions Bill Shows Mueller Report Didn't Calm US Appetite to Punish Russia'. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/usa/455488-sanctions-bill-punish-russia-europe/>.
- "The EU Is a Nightmare": Italy's Salvini Launches Campaign to Form Broad Nationalist Alliance'. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/news/455906-italy-salvini-populist-alliance/>.
- 'Trump's Golan Move Is Harbinger of a Large-Scale Middle East Clash – Scholar'. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904021073755291-trump-golan-heights-conflict/>.
- 'Tyto volby jsou referendem o EU. ANO, ČSSD, TOP 09 či ODS kolaborují s cizími mocnostmi jako Brusel, Washington či Berlín. Hájíme práva dolních deseti milionů, pracujících, ne práva menšin a neziskovek'. ČeskoAktuálně.cz (blog), 28 March 2019. <https://ceskoaktualne.cz/2019/03/rozhovor/tyto-volby-jsou-referendem-o-eu-ano-cssd-top-09-ci-ods-kolaboruji-s-cizimi-mocnostmi-jako-brusel-washington-ci-berlin-hajime-prava-dolnich-deseti-milionu-pracujicich-ne-prava-mensin-a-neziskovek/>.
- 'U Ruských Hranic Byl Zpozorován Americký Jaderný Bombardér - Sputnik Česká Republika'. Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019. <https://cz.sputniknews.com/svet/201904019550529-u-ruskych-hranic-byl-zpozorovan-americky-jaderny-bombarder/>.
- 'UE powinna stać się lwem, aby nie skończyć jak zając'. Sputnik Poland, 2019. <https://pl.sputniknews.com/swiatowa-prasa/2019032610116445-sputnik-wielka-brytania-brexite/>.
- 'UK Gov't Has "Disintegrated Into Disloyal Rabble" - Businessman on Brexit - Sputnik International'. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904071073902223-uk-brexite-business-trade/>.
- 'UK War of Independence Starts NOW'. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/columnists/201904111074036386-uk-eu-brexite-independence-war/>.
- 'Ukrajnának változásra van szüksége a kárpátjai magyar közösséget illetően'. Origó, 2019. <https://www.origo.hu/nagyvilag/20190402-ukrajnának-valtozasra-van-szuksege-a-karpataljai-magyar-kozosseget-illetoen.html>.
- 'Unik zrobił byk!' Alex Jones PL, 2019. <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-polska/aj-publicystyka/item/145160-unik-zrobil-byk>.
- 'Untold Story of Moscow's Efforts to End Rivalry Once and For All by Joining NATO'. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/russia/201904041073835574-russia-nato-membership/>.
- 'US Decision on Golan Heights Violates UN Security Council Resolutions – Putin'. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/news/455917-us-israel-golan-heights/>.
- 'US Names "Coalition of the Willing"'. BBC, 18 March 2003. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/2862343.stm>.
- 'US Seeks to Protect Hegemony by Leaving INF Treaty but Will Only Put Itself in Peril – Experts'. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/news/450285-us-leave-inf-hegemony-trouble/>.

REFERENCES

- ‘Venezuela: Hogy Az USA Politikai Krémjének Egy Elmeógyógyintézet Alagsorának Leghátsó Zugába Rejtett Gumiszobájában Lenne a Helye, Ahhoz Immáron Semmi Kétség.’ Bal - Rad (blog), 11 April 2019. <http://balrad.ru/2019/04/11/venezuela-29/>.
- ‘Venezuela: Mike Pompeo Amerikai Külügyér Arról Habzott Tegnap a Chilei “Mega Tv” – Ben, Hogy “Oroszország Beavatkozott a Venezuelai Ügyekbe Anélkül, Hogy Erre Joga Lenne!”’ Bal - Rad (blog), 13 April 2019. <http://balrad.ru/2019/04/13/venezuela-30/>.
- “‘Venezuela Won’t Become 2nd Syria’: Lavrov Sure S. America Won’t Back Military Invasion v. Maduro’. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/news/455486-venezuela-not-syria-us-lavrov/>.
- ‘Venezuelan Military Says US Boosted Its Signals Intelligence by 800 Percent’. Sputnik International, 30 March 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/latam/201903301073677832-venezuela-usa-signals-intelligence-increase/>.
- ‘Venezuelan Opposition Says 2 Killed in Repair Shops Blast in Country’s Northeast’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/latam/201903311073699327-venezuela-repair-shops-blast/>.
- ‘Vote Leave Drops Appeal against Fine’. BBC, 29 March 2019, sec. UK Politics. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-47755611>.
- ‘Výchova Děti ve Vojáky, Pohlcení Běloruska Ruskem, Putin Povede Dál Zemi z Jiné Funkce... Mitrofanov Představil Vize Budoucího Ruska | ParlamentníListy.Cz – Politika Ze Všech Stran’. Parlamentní Listi, 2019. <https://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Vychova-deti-ve-vojaky-pohlцени-Beloruska-Ruskem-Putin-povede-dal-zemi-z-jine-funkce-Mitrofanov-predstavil-vize-budouciho-Ruska-575061>.
- Olivia Washington and Sabrina Siddiqui. ‘Russia-Backed Facebook Posts “reached 126m Americans” during US Election’. The Guardian, 31 October 2017, sec. Technology. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/oct/30/facebook-russia-fake-accounts-126-million>.
- ‘Wojna Rosja – NATO rozpocznie się na Bałtyku! Eksperci nie mają złudzeń. Rosja postawi na blitzkrieg | nczas.com’. Nczas (blog), 2019. <https://nczas.com/2019/03/23/wojna-rosja-nato-rozpocznie-sie-na-baltyku-eksperci-nie-maja-zludzen-rosja-postawi-na-blitzkrieg/>.
- ‘World Reacts to Assange Arrest in UK: From Dark Moment for Freedom to “No Hero”’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/world/201904111074029490-assange-arrest-world-reacts/>.
- “‘WTO Brexit Would Be Beneficial for Every Side” – Geopolitical Analyst’. Sputnik International, 2019. <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904121074062495-wto-brexit-uk-eu/>.
- ‘YouTube “Anti-Progressive Troll” & Assange Supporter Runs for MEP from UKIP’. RT International, 2019. <https://www.rt.com/uk/456435-sargon-akkad-mep-ukip/>.
- ‘Znany aktor startuje z list Wiosny Biedronia. Łukasiewicz wprost: Mam zaufanie do Niemców. Oni powinni być liderem UE | nczas.com’. Nczas (blog). Accessed 7 May 2019. <https://nczas.com/2019/03/31/znany-aktor-startuje-z-list-wiosny-biedronia-lukasiewicz-wprost-mam-zaufanie-do-niemcow-oni-powinni-byc-liderem-ue/>.

NOTES

- i 'Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Action Plan against Disinformation', Joint Communication (EEAS, 2018), https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/action_plan_against_disinformation.pdf.
- ii '89up Releases Report on Russian Influence in the EU Referendum', 89up, 10 February 2018, <http://89up.org/russia-report>.
- iii '89up Releases Report on Russian Influence in the EU Referendum'.
- iv '2016 Presidential Campaign Hacking Fast Facts', CNN, 26 December 2016, <https://www.cnn.com/2016/12/26/us/2016-presidential-campaign-hacking-fast-facts/index.html>.
- v Issie Lapowsky, 'How Russian Facebook Ads Divided and Targeted US Voters Before the 2016 Election', Wired, 16 April 2018, <https://www.wired.com/story/russian-facebook-ads-targeted-us-voters-before-2016-election/>.
- vi 'How France Successfully Countered Russian Interference during the Presidential Election – EURACTIV.Com', accessed 6 May 2019, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/elections/news/how-france-successfully-countered-russian-interference-during-the-presidential-election/>.
- vii Laurens Cerulus, 'Europe's Most Hackable Election', POLITICO, 16 January 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-most-hackable-election-voter-security-catalonia-european-parliament-disinformation/>.
- viii 'Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Action Plan against Disinformation', Joint Communication (EEAS, 2018), https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/action_plan_against_disinformation.pdf.
- ix Laurens Cerulus, 'Europe's Most Hackable Election', POLITICO, 16 January 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-most-hackable-election-voter-security-catalonia-european-parliament-disinformation/>.
- x Péter Krekó, Csaba Molnár, and Rácz András, 'Mystification and Demystification of Putin's Russia' (Political Capital, March 2019), https://politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/documents/pc_mystification_and_demystification_of_russia_eng_web_20190312.pdf.
- xi 'Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation', mid.ru, 2016, http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptIckB6BZ29/content/id/122186.
- xii 'Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation'.
- xiii Péter Krekó et al., 'Europe's New Pro-Putin Coalition: The Parties of "No"', Institute of Modern Russia, 3 August 2015, <https://imrussia.org/en/analysis/world/2368-europes-new-pro-putin-coalition-the-parties-of-no>.
- xiv Yehven Fedchenko, 'Kremlin Propaganda: Soviet Active Measures by Other Means' (Estonian Journal of Military Studies, 2016), http://ekmair.ukma.edu.ua/bitstream/handle/123456789/11622/Fedchenko_Kremlin_propaganda.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.
- xv János Dr. Deák, 'Oroszország Új (Pontosított) Katonai Doktrínájának Megjelenése Az Orosz Katonai Gondolkodás Változásainak Tükrében', Felderítő Szemle XVI., no. 1 (2015): 37–48.
- xvi Patrik Szicherle, 'Hogyan Küzdjünk a Dezinformáció Ellen? Magyarország Védelme Az Információs Térben.' (Political Capital, 2018), https://politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/documents/dezinfo_guide_tanulmany_20181126.pdf.
- xvii Dalibor Rohac, Edit Zgut, and Györi Lóránt, Populism in Europe and Its Russian Love Affair (American Enterprise Institute, 2017), <http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Populism-in-Europe-and-Its-Russian-Love-Affair.pdf>.
- xviii 'French and German Populists Dominate EU Election Chatter on Facebook, Data Shows – POLITICO', accessed 6 May 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-populists-european-election-alternative-for-deutschland-rassemblement-national-facebook/>.
- xix Todd C. Helmus et al., 'Russian Social Media Influence: Understanding Russian Propaganda in Eastern Europe' (Washington: Rand Corporation, 2018), https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR2200/RR2237/RAND_RR2237.pdf.
- xx Szicherle, 'Hogyan Küzdjünk a Dezinformáció Ellen? Magyarország Védelme Az Információs Térben.'
- xxi Péter Krekó, András Rácz, and Csaba Molnár, 'Mystification and Demystification of Putin's Russia: Research Summary' (Political Capital, 2019), https://www.politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/documents/pc_mystification_and_demystification_of_russia_eng_web_20190312.pdf.
- xxii 'Összeesküvés-Elméletek, Álhírek, Babonák a Magyar Közvéleményben' (Political Capital, 2018), <https://politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/documents/pc-boll-konteo-20181107.pdf>.
- xxiii 'Összeesküvés-Elméletek, Álhírek, Babonák a Magyar Közvéleményben'.
- xxiv 'Globsec Trends 2018. Central Europe: One Region, Different Perspectives' (Globsec, 2018), <https://www.globsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/GLOBSEC-Trends-2018.pdf>.
- xxv Judith Moeller and Natali Helberger, 'Beyond the Filter Bubble: Concepts, Myths, Evidence and Issues for Future Debates' (University of Amsterdam, n.d.), https://www.ivir.nl/publicaties/download/Beyond_the_filter_bubble__concepts_myths_evidence_and_issues_for_future_debates.pdf.
- xxvi Moeller and Helberger.
- xxvii Olivia Solon Sabrina Siddiqui in Washington, 'Russia-Backed Facebook Posts "reached 126m Americans" during US Election', The Guardian, 31 October 2017, sec. Technology, <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/oct/30/facebook-russia-fake-accounts-126-million>.
- xxviii 'Don't Be Fooled: How to Spot a Russian Bot on Social Media', MakeUseOf, accessed 24 April 2019, <https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/spot-russian-bot-social-media/>.
- xxix Mark Scott, 'Half of European Voters May Have Viewed Russian-Backed "Fake News"', POLITICO, 7 May 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/european-parliament-russia-mcafee-safeguard-cyber/>.
- xxx Andris Spruds et al., 'Internet Trolling as a Hybrid Warfare Tool: The Case of Latvia' (NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, n.d.), <https://www.stratcomcoe.org/internet-trolling-hybrid-warfare-tool-case-latvia-0>.
- xxxi Christopher Meserole, 'How Misinformation Spreads on Social Media—And What to Do about It', Brookings (blog), 9 May 2018, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/05/09/how-misinformation-spreads-on-social-media-and-what-to-do-about-it/>.
- xxxii 'After Killing INF US Has "Free Hand" to Reassert "Supremacy in the World" with "New Arms Race"', RT International, accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/450414-inf-russia-suspension-reaction/>.
- xxxiii 'US Seeks to Protect Hegemony by Leaving INF Treaty but Will Only Put Itself in Peril – Experts', RT International, accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/450285-us-leave-inf-hegemony-trouble/>.
- xxxiv Sputnik, 'NATO Wars, East Expansion Belie Mission as Defensive Alliance', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904041073810524-NATO-Wars-East-Expansion-Belie-Mission-Defensive-Alliance/>.
- xxxv 'NATO "broke Away" from Intl Law, Lost Its Legitimacy – Ex-OSCE Parliamentary Assembly VP to RT', RT International, accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/455776-nato-legitimacy-international-law/>.

- xxxvi Sputnik, 'Untold Story of Moscow's Efforts to End Rivalry Once and For All by Joining NATO', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/russia/201904041073835574-russia-nato-membership/>.
- xxxvii 'BBC Breakfast with Frost: Putin Interview', accessed 26 April 2019, http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/audio_video/programmes/breakfast_with_frost/transcripts/putin5.mar.txt.
- xxxviii Sputnik, 'German Lawmaker Brands NATO "Security Risk for The World"', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904051073845639-germany-us-nato-dissolution/>.
- xxxix Sputnik, 'Serbian Radical Party Protesters Burn EU, NATO Flags in Central Belgrade (PHOTO)', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201903241073503255-serbian-eu-nato-protest/>.
- xl Sputnik, 'Maduro: Venezuela Is "Testing Ground for Electromagnetic Arms, New War Strategy"', accessed 29 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/latam/201904041073816166-maduro-venezuela-weapons-usa/>.
- xli Sputnik, 'Trump's Golan Move Is Harbinger of a Large-Scale Middle East Clash – Scholar', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904021073755291-trump-golan-heights-conflict/>.
- xlii 'US Decision on Golan Heights Violates UN Security Council Resolutions – Putin', RT International, accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/455917-us-israel-golan-heights/>.
- xliii Sputnik, 'EU Reaffirms Commitment to Policy of Non-Recognition of Crimean Referendum', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201903171073320162-eu-commitment-crimea-no-recognition/>.
- xliv Sputnik, 'Crimea: Mapping the Road Back to Russia', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201903151073276635-crimea-road-russia/>.
- xlv Sputnik, 'German Lawmaker Brands NATO "Security Risk for The World"'.
 xlvi 'US Names "Coalition of the Willing"', 18 March 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/2862343.stm>.
- xlvii 'No Fast-Track NATO Membership for Georgia: Merkel', France 24, 24 August 2018, <https://www.france24.com/en/20180824-no-fast-track-nato-membership-georgia-merkel>.
- xlviii Sputnik, 'Airbus Row: How "Tariff Man" Trump and EU May Kick Off New Trade War', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904101074001241-trump-tariffs-eu/>.
- xlix 'Salvini Meets Le Pen in Paris, Teases a "Major" Right-Wing Event in Italy Ahead of EU Elections', RT International, accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/455653-salvini-le-pen-elections/>.
- l Sputnik, 'Salvini Builds 4-Party Right-Wing Alliance Ahead of EU Parliament Elections', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904081073914261-salvini-alliance-elections/>.
- li 'Salvini Meets Le Pen in Paris, Teases a "Major" Right-Wing Event in Italy Ahead of EU Elections'.
- lii Sputnik, 'Mussolini's Great-Grandson: Claims on Fascism in Italy Are "Left Propaganda"', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904141074122900-mussolini-fascism-italy-left-propaganda/>.
- liii Sputnik, 'Nordic Right-Wingers Join Forces to Stop "European Superstate" & Macron', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904091073953100-scandinavia-right-wing-alliance/>.
- liv Sputnik, 'EU Elections Will Define the Future of "Christian European Culture" – Hungary PM', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904081073921950-hungary-viktor-orban-eu-elections/>.
- lv 'Orban to Juncker: Unveiling Statue of Marx Gives You No Right to Lecture Others on Xenophobia', RT International, accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/455442-orban-junker-xenophobia-row/>.
- lvi "'The EU Is a Nightmare': Italy's Salvini Launches Campaign to Form Broad Nationalist Alliance', RT International, accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/455906-italy-salvini-populist-alliance/>.
- lvii Sputnik, 'Brexit Doesn't Mean Brexit, a Call to Action', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/columnists/201903281073627135-uk-brexit-call-action/>.
- lviii Sputnik, 'Real Challenge: Will Italy Leave the Eurozone or Will the Eurozone Fall Apart?', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904021073763191-italy-eurozone-collapse/>.
- lix Sputnik, 'EU Afraid UK to "Return 73 Nigel Farages" If Stay for European Elections - MP', accessed 26 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201903221073472238-eu-elections-uk-brexit-euroscptics/>.
- lx Sputnik, 'Brexit Doesn't Mean Brexit, a Call to Action'.
- lxi "'The Band Plays on": Sanctions Bill Shows Mueller Report Didn't Calm US Appetite to Punish Russia', RT International, accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/usa/455488-sanctions-bill-punish-russia-europe/>.
- lxii 'CNN Didn't Get "Anything" Wrong in Russiagate Reporting, Host Claims. It Didn't?', RT International, accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/usa/455221-cnn-defends-mueller-coverage/>.
- lxiii 'Russia Embraces the Mueller Report — but Overlooks Part about Interference', NBC News, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/russia-embraces-no-collusion-part-mueller-report-overlooks-interference-n986846>.
- lxiv 'EU Centrists Set to Lose MEP Seats to Eurosceptics, Russia Again Accused of Meddling', RT International, accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/456528-euroscptic-parties-russian-meddling/>.
- lxv Sputnik, 'Venezuelan Opposition Says 2 Killed in Repair Shops Blast in Country's Northeast', accessed 29 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/latam/201903311073699327-venezuela-repair-shops-blast/>.
- lxvi "'Venezuela Won't Become 2nd Syria": Lavrov Sure S. America Won't Back Military Invasion v. Maduro', RT International, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/455486-venezuela-not-syria-us-lavrov/>.
- lxvii Megan Specia, 'What Is Happening in Venezuela? How It Got Here and Why It Matters', The New York Times, 25 January 2019, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/24/world/americas/venezuela-news-protests-noticias-guaido-maduro.html>.
- lxviii Sputnik, 'Moscow Slams Pompeo's Claims About Russia's "Intervention in Venezuela"', accessed 29 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/world/201904151074154751-russia-us-venezuela/>.
- lxix Sputnik, 'Moscow Urges US to Fulfil Pledges on Syria Before Offering Advice on Venezuela', accessed 29 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/russia/201903281073605184-russia-usa-venezuela-trump-syria-advice/>.
- lxx Sputnik, 'Venezuelan Military Says US Boosted Its Signals Intelligence by 800 Percent', Sputnik International, 30 March 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/latam/201903301073677832-venezuela-usa-signals-intelligence-increase/>.
- lxxi Sputnik, 'Imprisonment of Assange Seeks to "Kill Journalism"', accessed 29 April 2019, https://sputniknews.com/radio_loud_and_clear/201904161074163989-assange-journalism-arrest/.
- lxxii 'Assange Arrest Final Step in Character Assassination Campaign – Slavoj Zizek', RT International, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/456237-julian-assange-arrest-slavoj-zizek/>.
- lxxiii Sputnik, 'World Reacts to Assange Arrest in UK: From Dark Moment for Freedom to "No Hero"', accessed 29 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/world/201904111074029490-assange-arrest-world-reacts/>.
- lxxiv Sputnik, "'WTO Brexit Would Be Beneficial for Every Side" – Geopolitical Analyst', accessed 29 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904121074062495-wto-brexit-uk-eu/>.

- lxxv Sputnik, ‘“Info War Is Lost”: Assange Supporters Doubt Mainstream Media’s Coverage of Case’, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904121074059290-uk-wikileaks-assange-supporters-media/>.
- lxxvi Sputnik.
- lxxvii Sputnik, ‘#BREXIT: “Theresa May’s Deal Is Rotten to the Core” - Political Economist’, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904011073736652-brexite-deal-rotten-core/>.
- lxxviii Sputnik, ‘UK War of Independence Starts NOW’, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/columnists/201904111074036386-uk-eu-brexite-independence-war/>.
- lxxix Sputnik, ‘“WTO Brexit Would Be Beneficial for Every Side” – Geopolitical Analyst’.
- lxxx ‘UK Gov’t Has “Disintegrated Into Disloyal Rabble” - Businessman on Brexit - Sputnik International’, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201904071073902223-uk-brexite-business-trade/>.
- lxxxi Sputnik, ‘Farage Launches Brexit Party, Slams Politicians in Power as “Donkeys”’, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201904121074073441-farage-brexite-party-donkeys-coventry/>.
- lxxxii ‘YouTube “Anti-Progressive Troll” & Assange Supporter Runs for MEP from UKIP’, RT International, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://www.rt.com/uk/456435-sargon-akkad-mep-ukip/>.
- lxxxiii Leonárd Mátyás et al., ‘Soft Censorship in Hungary 2016: When Propaganda Rules the Public Discourse’, ed. Gábor Polyák (Mérték Media Monitor, 2017), <http://mertek.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/MertekFuzetek12.pdf>.
- lxxxiv ‘Data Visualization: This Is How the pro-Government Media Empire Owning 476 Outlets Was Formed’, English (blog), accessed 29 April 2019, <https://english.atlatszo.hu/2018/11/30/data-visualization-this-is-how-the-pro-government-media-empire-owning-476-outlets-was-formed/>.
- lxxxv Zsolt Hanula, ‘A kormány nyakig benne van a facebookos manipulációban’, 6 November 2018, https://index.hu/techtud/2018/11/06/a_kormany_nyakig_benne_van_a_facebookos_manipulacioban/.
- lxxxvi ‘Zajlik Az Orosz Melő Abban a Házorúban, Amelyet Nem Tankokkal, Hanem Információkkal Vívunk | 24.Hu’, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://24.hu/belfold/2019/03/26/propaganda-oroszország-putyin-trump-orban/>.
- lxxxvii Origo, ‘Elfogadhatatlan, hogy a migráns pártiak fenyegetik a bevándorláselleneseket’, <https://www.origo.hu/>, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://www.origo.hu/itthon/20190415-elfogadhatatlan-hogy-a-migranspartiak-fenyegetik-a-bevandorlaselleneseket.html>.
- lxxxviii ‘Közeleg a május, a bevándorlaspártiak és a bevándorlásellenesek csatája’, 888.hu, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://888.hu/article-kozeleg-a-majus-a-bevandorlaspartiak-es-a-bevandorlasellenesek-csataja>.
- lxxxix ‘Kevesebb, mint ötven nap múlva dönthetünk Európa jövőjéről’, hirado.hu (blog), accessed 29 April 2019, <http://www.hirado.hu/kulfold/kulpolitika/cikk/2019/04/07/kevesebb-mint-otven-nap-mulva-donthetunk-europa-jovojerol/>.
- xc ‘Bakondi: Az európai bürokratakat mindent megtesznek a legális migrációért’, hirado.hu (blog), accessed 29 April 2019, <http://www.hirado.hu/kulfold/cikk/2019/04/04/bakondi-az-europai-burokracia-vezetoi-mindent-megtesznek-a-legalis-migracioert/>.
- xcii ‘Bakondi’.
- xciii ‘Rendkívül visszás, hogy nem szűrték ki Hasszán F.-et’, hirado.hu (blog), accessed 29 April 2019, <http://www.hirado.hu/kulfold/cikk/2019/04/01/ket-evig-kapott-havi-500-eurot-hasszan-f-az-europai-uniotol/>.
- xciv Herczeg Márk, ‘VIGYÁZZZ, JÖNNEK A MIGRÁÁÁNSOK, WÁÁÁÁ!!! MIGRÁNSKARAVÁÁÁÁU!!!!’, 444, 5 April 2019, <https://444.hu/2019/04/05/vigyazzz-jonnek-a-migraaansok-waaaa-migranskaravaaaa>.
- xcv Gergő Brückner, ‘Miért kapnak anonim bankkártyát a menekültek?’, 14 November 2018, https://index.hu/gazdasag/2018/11/14/a_valasztas_meltoisaga_valojaban_igy_nez_ki_az_ensz_menekultkartya-programja/.
- xcvi Nagy Gábor, ‘Hogyan hoznak döntéseket Brüsszelben a nemzetállamok feje felett?’, 888.hu, accessed 30 April 2019, <https://888.hu/amerika-london-parizs/hogyan-hoznak-donteseket-brusszelben-a-nemzetallamok-feje-felett-4174000/>.
- xcvii ‘Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union’, text/html; charset=UTF-8, Official Journal C 326, 26/10/2012 P. 0001 - 0390, accessed 30 April 2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT&from=EN>.
- xcviii ‘Salvini: A népeknek akarjuk átadni Európa irányítását’, hirado.hu (blog), accessed 29 April 2019, <http://www.hirado.hu/kulfold/cikk/2019/04/08/salvini-a-nepeknek-akarjuk-atadni-europa-iranyitasat/>.
- xcix ‘Salvini’.
- c ‘Farage: politikai forradalmat kell kiobbantunk!’, 888.hu, accessed 30 April 2019, <https://888.hu/amerika-london-parizs/farage-politikai-forradalmat-kell-kiobbantunk-4174691/>.
- ci Origo, ‘Orbán Viktor programja a bevándorlás megállításáért: ez van a 7 pont mögött’, <https://www.origo.hu/>, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://www.origo.hu/itthon/20190405-orban-viktor-het-pont-fidesz-ep-kampany.html>.
- cii ‘Fideszes hátszín: egy minden értékéről lemondó Néppártban nem szabad maradnunk’, 888.hu, accessed 30 April 2019, <https://888.hu/ketharmad/fideszes-hatarszag-egy-minden-ertekerol-lemondo-neppartban-nem-szabad-maradnunk-4172721/>.
- ciii ‘Meggzúnt az együtmüködes Oroszország és a NATO között’, hirado.hu (blog), accessed 30 April 2019, <http://www.hirado.hu/kulfold/kulpolitika/cikk/2019/04/15/meggzunt-az-egyuttmukodes-oroszország-es-a-nato-kozott/>.
- civ ‘Pizkos játszma’, Magyar Nemzet (blog), accessed 30 April 2019, <https://magyarnemzet.hu/ahelyzet/pizkos-jatszma-6681674/>.
- cv ‘Lavrov az amerikai lépésekről: kudarcos villámháború és a naftalinból előhúzott doktrína’, accessed 30 April 2019, <https://hu.newsfront.info/2019/04/14/lavrov-az-amerikai-lepesekrol-kudarcos-villamhaboru-es-a-naftalinbol-elohuzott-doktrina/>.
- cvi ‘Venezuela: Hogy Az USA Politikai Krémjének Egy Elmegegyintézet Alagorának Leghátsó Zugába Rejtett Gumiszóbjájában Lenne a Helye, Ahhoz Immáron Semmi Kétség’, Bal - Rad (blog), 11 April 2019, <http://balrad.ru/2019/04/11/venezuela-29/>.
- cvi ‘Venezuela: Mike Pompeo Amerikai Külügyér Arról Habzott Tegnap a Chilei “Mega Tv” – Ben, Hogy “Oroszország Beavatkozott a Venezuelai Ügyekbe Anélkül, Hogy Erre Joga Lenne!”’, Bal - Rad (blog), 13 April 2019, <http://balrad.ru/2019/04/13/venezuela-30/>.
- cvi Origo, ‘Jobb már senki nem remél, elég, ha nem lesz sokkal rosszabb’, <https://www.origo.hu/>, accessed 30 April 2019, <https://www.origo.hu/nagyvilag/20190328-ukrajna-valasztas-2019.html>.
- cvi Origo, ‘Az orosz kormányfő egy ukrán elnökjelölttel tárgyal a gázszállításról’, Orosz Hírek (blog), 23 March 2019, <https://oroszhirek.hu/2019/03/23/az-orosz-kormanyfo-egy-ukran-elnokjelolttel-targyal-a-gaszallitasrol/>.
- cix Origo, ‘Az orosz miniszterelnök egy ukrán elnökjelölttel tárgyal a gázszállításról’, <https://www.origo.hu/>, accessed 30 April 2019, <https://www.origo.hu/nagyvilag/20190322-az-orosz-miniszterelnok-egy-ukran-elnokjelolttel-targyal-a-gaszallitasrol.html>.
- cx Origo, ‘Ukrajnának változása van szüksége a kárpátjai magyar közösséget illetően’, <https://www.origo.hu/>, accessed 30 April 2019, <https://www.origo.hu/nagyvilag/20190402-ukrajnának-valtozasra-van-szuksege-a-karpataljai-magyar-kozosseget-illetoen.html>.
- cx Origo, ‘Kárpátjai: folytatódik a magyarok jogfosztása’, <https://www.origo.hu/>, accessed 30 April 2019, <https://www.origo.hu/nagyvilag/20190315-karpatalja-folytatodik-a-magyarok-jogfosztasa.html>.
- cxii Csuday Gábor, ‘Kiállt a magyar álláspont mellett az EU’, 8 December 2017, http://index.hu/kulfold/eurologus/2017/12/08/kiallt_a_magyar_allasponnt_mellett_az_eu/.

- cxiii Hírek Orosz, 'Öt éve újra Oroszország része a Krim - Putyin is a félszigetre érkezik', Orosz Hírek (blog), 17 March 2019, <https://oroszhirek.hu/2019/03/17/ot-eve-ujra-oroszorszag-resze-a-krim-putyin-is-a-felszigetre-erkezik/>.
- cxiv Hírek Orosz, 'Putyin két hőerőművet avatott fel a Krimben a félsziget és Oroszország újraegyesülésének évfordulóján', Orosz Hírek (blog), 18 March 2019, <https://oroszhirek.hu/2019/03/18/putyin-ket-hoeromvet-avatott-fel-a-krimben-a-felsziget-es-oroszorszag-ujraegyesulesenek-evfordulojan/>.
- cxv 'Grizlov: Kijev lezárja a Donbassz visszaútját Ukrajnába', accessed 30 April 2019, <https://hu.news-front.info/2019/04/11/grizlov-kijev-lezarja-a-donbassz-visszautjat-ukrajnaba/>.
- cxvi 'Why Is Hungary Blocking Ukraine's Western Integration?', accessed 30 April 2019, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/why-is-hungary-blocking-ukraine-s-western-integration>.
- cxvii 'Zajlik Az Orosz Meló Abban a Háborúban, Amelyet Nem Tankokkal, Hanem Információkkal Vívunk | 24.Hu'.
- cxviii Barna Borbás, 'Megtaláltuk Habony Árpádot: Londonban épít nemzetközi hírügynökséget - Válasz Online', Válasz Online (blog), 2019, <https://www.valaszonline.hu/2019/04/09/v4na-habony-london-nemzetkozi-hirugynokseg/>.
- cxix Bago Martin, 'Kiska sa v Bruseli lúčil s eurohujermi a nepriamo sľúbil, že príde s novou stranou! Tej členmi majú byť bývalí privatizéri a členovia mimovládok!', InfoVojna (blog), 21 March 2019, <https://blog.infovojna.sk/kiska-sa-v-bruseli-lucil-s-eurohujermi-a-nepriamo-slubil-ze-pride-s-novou-stranou-tej-clenmi-maju-byt-byvali-privatizeri-a-clenovia-mimovladok/>.
- cxx 'Salvini Sa Stretol v Prahe s Tomiom Okamurom, Riešili Spolu Migráciu Aj Kvalitu Potravin', 2019, <https://www.infovojna.sk/article/salvini-sa-stretol-v-prahe-s-tomiom-okamurom-riesili-spolu-migraciju-aj-kvalitu-potravin>.
- cxxi 'Kde Je Európska Únia, Tam Sú Problémy, Povedal Fínsky Šéf Diplomacie a Oznamil Svoj Odchod z Politiky', InfoVojna, 2019, <https://www.infovojna.sk/article/kde-je-europaska-unia-tam-su-problemy-povedal-finsky-sef-diplomacie-a-oznamil-svoj-odchod-z-politiky>.
- cxvii 'Stali Sa Známe Úlohy a Ciele Ruských Vojakov vo Venezuele - Hlavné Správy', Hlavné Správy, 2019, <https://www.hlavnespravysk/stali-sa-zname-ulohy-ciele-ruskych-vojakov-vo-venezuele/1712446>.
- cxviii 'Rusko Úspešne Súperi s USA v Hybridnej Vojne Na Území Tretích Štátov - Hlavné Správy', Hlavné Správy, 2019, <https://www.hlavnespravysk/rusko-uspesne-superi-usa-hybridnej-vojne-uzemi-tretich-statov/1721752>.
- cxviiii 'Rusko a Turecko Ďalej Prehľujú Svoje Partnerstvo - Hlavné Správy', Hlavné Správy, 2019, <https://www.hlavnespravysk/rusko-turecko-dalej-prehlyuju-svoje-partnerstvo/1725805>.
- cxvix Rusnák Eugen, 'Čo Sa s Ním Deje? Favorizovaný Kandidát Na Prezidenta Ukrajiny Vladimir Zelenský Náhle Mení Rétoriku Smerom Na Západ, Washington, Brusel, MMF, Soros', Hlavné správy, 24 March 2019, <https://www.hlavnespravysk/prezidentsky-kandidat-ukrajinsky-komik-herec-vladimir-zelenskiy-meni-retoriku-smerom-na-zapad-washington-brusel-mmf-soros/1707001>.
- cxvixi Rusnák Eugen, 'Ozbrojené Sily Ukrajiny Sú Pripravené Na Útok Na Maďarsko, Akonáhle Nastanú Snahy o Pripojenie Zakarpatskej Oblasti - Hlavné Správy', Hlavné Správy, 2019, <https://www.hlavnespravysk/ozbrojene-sily-ukrajiny-su-pripravene-na-utok-na-madarsko-ak-nastanu-snahy-o-pripojenie-zakarpatskej-oblasti/1704383>.
- cxvixii Katarína Klingonová, 'What Do We Know About Disinformation Websites in the Czech Republic and Slovakia?', GLOBSEC (blog), 2019, <https://www.globsec.org/news/what-do-we-know-about-disinformation-websites-in-the-czech-republic-and-slovakia/>.
- cxvixiii 'Pompeo Označil Boj Proti Vlivu Ruska Za Prioritu Rozpočtu USA - Sputnik Česká Republika', Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019, <https://cz.sputniknews.com/svet/201903279518069-pompeo-oznacil-boj-proti-vlivu-ruska-za-prioritu-rozpocet-usa/>.
- cxvixiv 'Maduro Prohlásil, Že v USA Vládnu Stoupenci Hitlera', AC24, 2019, <https://ac24.cz/-/maduro-prohlasil-ze-v-usa-vladnu-stoupenci-hitlera>.
- cxvixv 'Bez Ruska a USA Nelze Překonat Syrský Konflikt, Prohlásil Jordánský Ministr Zahraničí - Sputnik Česká Republika', Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019, <https://cz.sputniknews.com/politika/201904079582527-bez-ruska-a-usa-nelze-prekonat-syrsky-konflikt-prohlasil-jordansky-ministr-zahranici/>.
- cxvixvi 'Noční vlci roztáhli na Krymu největší ruskou vlnku (VIDEO)', Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019, <https://cz.sputniknews.com/video/201903179457675-vlak-krym-rusko-vlajka-video/>.
- cxvixvii 'Ruské Ženy Jsou Schopné Se Ubránit Překvapujícím Způsobem (VIDEO) - Sputnik Česká Republika', Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019, <https://cz.sputniknews.com/videoklub/201903279514453-rusko-zena-los-kocka/>.
- cxvixviii 'Mi-26-T2V: nejnovější modifikace ruského dopravního „supervrtulníku“, Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019, <https://cz.sputniknews.com/svet/201904099596285-mi-26-t2v-nejnovejsi-modifikace-ruskeho-dopravni-supervrtulniku/>.
- cxvixix Vystavil Václav Dvořák, 'Bloomberg: USA to Přehnalý s Přeháněním „ruské Hrozby“!', Nova Republika (blog), 2019, <http://www.novarepublika.cz/2019/04/bloomberg-usa-to-prehnaly-s-prehanenim.html>.
- cxvixx 'Hrozby pokračují: USA tentokrát postrašily Egypt', Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019, <https://cz.sputniknews.com/karikatury/201904099597017-hrozby-pokracuji-usa-tentokrat-postrasily-egypt/>.
- cxvixxi 'U Ruských Hranic Byl Zpozorován Americký Jaderný Bombardér - Sputnik Česká Republika', Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019, <https://cz.sputniknews.com/svet/201904019550529-u-ruskych-hranic-byl-zpozorovan-americky-jaderny-bombarder/>.
- cxvixxii 'Výchova Děti ve Vojáky, Pohlčení Běloruska Ruskem, Putin Povede Dál Zemi z Jiné Funkce... Mitrofanov Představil Vize Budoucího Ruska | ParlamentníListy.Cz – Politika Ze Všech Stran', Parlamentní Listi, 2019, <https://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Vychova-deti-ve-vojaky-pohlčení-Beloruska-Ruskem-Putin-povede-dal-zemi-z-jine-funkce-Mitrofanov-predstavil-vize-budouciho-Ruska-575061>.
- cxvixxiii Sputnik, '„Kdo se nepláží, není Čech...“ BIS v USA převzala ocenění za zahraniční spolupráci', Sputnik Czech Republic, 2019, <https://cz.sputniknews.com/ceskarepublika/201904049565065-bis-v-usa-prevzala-oceneni-za-zahranicni-spolupraci/>.
- cxvixxiv 'Británie Žádá Členské Státy EU, Aby Umožnily Odklad Brexitu Do Konce Června. Juncker Varuje', Parlamentní Listi, 2019, <http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Britanie-zada-clenske-staty-EU-aby-umoznily-odklad-brexitu-do-konce-cervna-Juncker-varuje-574763>.
- cxl 'Tyto volby jsou referendem o EU. ANO, ČSSD, TOP 09 či ODS kolaborují s cizími mocnostmi jako Brusel, Washington či Berlín. Hájíme práva dolních deseti milionů, pracujících, ne práva menšina a neziskovek', ČeskoAktuálně.cz (blog), 28 March 2019, <https://ceskoaktualne.cz/2019/03/rozovor/tyto-volby-jsou-referendem-o-eu-ano-cssd-top-09-ci-ods-kolaboruji-s-cizimi-mocnostmi-jako-brusel-washington-ci-berlin-hajime-prava-dolnich-deseti-milionu-pracujících-ne-prava-mensin-a-neziskovek/>.
- cxli 'Radikální Změna EU. Salvini, Le Pen a Další Učinili Zásadní Krok. Kde Byl Okamura?', Parlamentní Listi, 2019, <http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Radikalni-zmena-EU-Salvini-Le-Pen-a-dalsi-ucinili-zasadni-krok-Kde-byl-Okamura-577035>.
- cxlii 'Opustme EU naduteho francouzského polomonarchy Macrona, dokud je čas', ČeskoAktuálně.cz (blog), 19 March 2019, <https://ceskoaktualne.cz/2019/03/zpravy-k-zamysleni/opustme-eu-naduteho-francouzskeho-polomonarchy-macrona-dokud-cas/>.
- cxliiii Vystavil Václav Dvořák, 'Sorosova Barbie Na Hradě: Zvolili Ji Nevolíci. Pyrrhovo Vítězství Místní Páté Kolony Bruselanů. Udělal Kotleba Správně, Že Neustoupil? Všechno Je Jinak. Plastový Šefčovič Byl Ještě Horší. Kedy Slováci Ožijú?', Nova Republika (blog), 2019, <http://www.novarepublika.cz/2019/04/sorosova-barbie-na-hrade-zvolili-ji.html>.

- cxliv 'Bordel Kolem Klause Ml.: Prase Moravec, Holý Zadek, Předseda Fiala a Vtipné FOTO', Parlamentní Listi, 2019, <http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Bordel-kolem-Klause-ml-Prase-Moravec-holy-zadek-predseda-Fiala-a-vtipne-FOTO-574355>.
- cxlv 'Sojusznicy Nas Tarmoszą', accessed 7 May 2019, <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-swiat/item/146058-sojusznicy-nas-tarmosza>.
- cxlvi RP, 'Korwin-Mikke szczerze: „Pieniądże są ważne, ale nie są najważniejsze. Trzeba bronić wartości bo nic nam po pieniądzach, gdy nie ma podstawowych wartości” | nczas.com', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://nczas.com/2019/04/07/korwin-mikke-szczerze-pieniadze-sa-wazne-ale-nie-sa-najwazniejsze-trzeba-bronic-wartosci-bo-nic-nam-po-pieniadzach-gdy-nie-ma-podstawowych-wartosci/>.
- cxlvii RZ, 'Znany aktor startuje z list Wiosny Biedronia. Łukasiewicz wprost: Mam zaufanie do Niemców. Oni powinni być liderem UE | nczas.com', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://nczas.com/2019/03/31/znany-aktor-startuje-z-list-wiosny-biedronia-lukasiewicz-wprost-mam-zaufanie-do-niemcow-oni-powinni-byc-liderem-ue/>.
- cxlviii 'Grzegorz Braun: „Pan Saryusz-Wolski to „człowiek-Guma” - Sputnik Polska', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://pl.sputniknews.com/opinie/2019040510158461-Bruksela-wybory-Polska-Braun-Saryusz-Wolski-to-czlowiek-guma/>.
- cxlix 'Polityka (a)Historyczna – Tylko Po Co?', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://chart.neon24.pl/post/148295,polityka-a-historyczna-tylko-po-co>.
- cl Sputnik, '„Platforma nie proponuje nic oprócz odsunięcia PiS-u i straszenia Rosją”', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://pl.sputniknews.com/opinie/2019040910172225-Polska-PE-Platforma-nie-proponuje-nic-oprocz-odsunecia-PiS-u-i-straszenia-rosja/>.
- cli 'Jak rozpoznać prawdziwie polskie ugrupowanie polityczne?', zmianynaziemi.pl, 7 April 2019, <https://zmianynaziemi.pl/wiadomosc/jak-rozpoznać-prawdziwie-polskie-ugrupowanie-polityczne>.
- cli 'Polityka (a)Historyczna – Tylko Po Co?'
- cli 'Od Sukcesu Do Sukcesu – Magna Polonia', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://www.magnapolonia.org/od-sukcesu-do-sukcesu/>.
- cliv Sputnik, 'Krzysztof Bosak dla Sputnika: „UE nie ma wspólnej polityki zagranicznej i mieć nie może”', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://pl.sputniknews.com/opinie/2019041510192685-Polska-Warszawa-Parlament-Europejski-wybory-Krzysztof-Bosak-UE-Sputnik/>.
- clv 'Niemcy głównym capo Europy, Francja owczarkiem niemieckim', Dziennik Polityczny, 9 April 2019, <https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2019/04/09/niemcy-glownym-capo-europy-francja-owczarkiem-niemieckim/>.
- clvi Andreas, 'Naruszono wszelkie zasady, aby przepchnąć francusko-niemiecką inicjatywę! Ucierpią polskie firmy', Alex Jones - prawdziwe informacje, accessed 7 May 2019, <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-swiat/item/146122-naruszono-wszelkie-zasady-aby-przepchnac-francusko-niemiecka-inicjatywe-ucierpia-polskie-firmy>.
- clvii Sputnik, 'Radek Sikorski na przekór Leninowi', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://pl.sputniknews.com/opinie/2019041610212334-Polska-wybory-PE-Sikorski-na-przekor-leninowi/>.
- clviii RP, 'Europosłowie oszaleli! Jeszcze większa cenzura Internetu. „Dostawcy usuwają treści w ciągu godziny od otrzymania nakazu usunięcia” | nczas.com', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://nczas.com/2019/04/02/europoslowie-oszaleli-jeszcze-wieksza-cenzura-internetu-dostawcy-usuwaja-tresci-w-ciagu-godziny-od-otrzymania-nakazu-usunecia/>.
- clix Sputnik, 'UE powinna stać się lwem, aby nie skończyć jak zając', accessed 7 May 2019, https://pl.sputniknews.com/swiatowa_prasa/2019032610116445-sputnik-wielka-brytania-brexite/.
- clx MJO, 'Wojna Rosja – NATO rozpocznie się na Bałtyku! Eksperci nie mają złudzeń. Rosja postawi na blitzkrieg | nczas.com', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://nczas.com/2019/03/23/wojna-rosja-nato-rozpocznie-sie-na-baltyku-eksperci-nie-maja-zludzen-rosja-postawi-na-blitzkrieg/>.
- clxi 'Marek Budzisz: Gwarancje NATO - z pewnością papierowe', Dziennik Polityczny, 5 April 2019, <https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2019/04/05/marek-budzisz-gwarancje-nato-z-pewnoscia-papierowe/>.
- clxii Andreas, 'Unik zrobił byk!', Alex Jones - prawdziwe informacje, accessed 7 May 2019, <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-polska/aj-publicystyka/item/145160-unik-zrobil-byk>.
- clxiii 'Polska Chrześcijańska, Ale Jaka? – Spojrzenie Polityczne', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://chart.neon24.pl/post/148493,polska-chrzescijanska-ale-jaka-spojrzenie-polityczne>.
- clxiv Andreas, 'Ostatni etap wielobiegunowej rewolucji: powstrzymać USA w Europie', Alex Jones - prawdziwe informacje, accessed 7 May 2019, <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-swiat/item/144848-ostatni-etap-wielobiegunowej-rewolucji-powstrzymac-usa-w-europie>.
- clxv 'Rosja „przygotowuje się na potencjalne rozłokowanie” amerykańskich rakiet', Dziennik Polityczny, 20 March 2019, <https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2019/03/20/rosja-przygotowuje-sie-na-potencjalne-rozlokowanie-amerykanskich-rakiet/>.
- clxvi Sputnik, 'Przedstawiciel Rosji przy UE ocenił sytuację Brexitu', accessed 7 May 2019, <https://pl.sputniknews.com/polityka/2019033010133023-UE-Brexits-Rosja-Czyzow-Sputnik/>.
- clxvii Andreas, 'PE wzywa Bośnię i Hercegowinę do zwrotu mienia żydowskiego. To cena członkostwa w UE', Alex Jones - prawdziwe informacje, accessed 7 May 2019, <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-swiat/item/145459-pe-wzywa-bosnie-i-hercegowine-do-zwrotu-mienia-zydowskiego-to-cena-czlonkostwa-w-ue>.
- clxviii Andreas, 'Mądrości galaktyczne', Alex Jones - prawdziwe informacje, accessed 7 May 2019, <http://alexjones.pl/aj/aj-polska/aj-publicystyka/item/145553-madrosi-galaktyczne>.
- clxix Patrick Beuth et al., 'Fake News: War without blood', Die Zeit, 26 February 2017, sec. Digital, <https://www.zeit.de/digital/internet/2017-02/bundestag-elections-fake-news-manipulation-russia-hacker-cyberwar>.