



Eastern Europe
Studies Centre
Established in 2006

Russia's disinformation in Eastern Europe: revealing the geopolitical *narratives* and *communication* *proxies* in Moldova

Denis Cenusă



The policy paper was written within the framework of the project “Building Strategic Communication to Counter Russian Disinformation in Moldova”, implemented by “Expert-Grup” in partnership with the Eastern Europe Studies Centre, with financial support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania.



Denis Cenuša is an Associated expert with EESC. He conducts his doctoral studies on global governance and state resilience in the EU’s neighborhood at the Justus Liebig University in Giessen (Germany). In the period from 2015 to 2022, he has published extensively on European integration, EU–Russia interplay, good governance and energy security in Eastern Europe. Denis is also associated with the Moldovan think tank Expert-Grup, where since 2015 he has coordinated the Sida-financed project on Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine with the Centre for European Policy Studies (Brussels).

Summary: This policy paper investigates the geopolitical narratives linked to Russian disinformation, as well as those embraced by the Moldovan political actors who are closely or remotely aligned with Russia. These narratives are scrutinized to evaluate their proximity, frequency, convergence, East-West orientation dichotomy, and their intended functions or goals. The paper offers a set of recommendations based on anti-disinformation techniques aimed at ignoring, containing, minimising and/or redirecting attention from false or manipulative information. The methodology employed in this article is pertinent for examining the narratives and proxies of disinformation utilised by Russia or other geopolitical actors, who are exploiting the internal divisions and externally-driven vulnerabilities that both mature and emerging democracies may face.

Introduction

Control of the information domain has become a crucial element of a country's national security and strategic strength, particularly in an era characterised by geopolitical uncertainties. In this global context, the manipulation of information to interfere in the internal affairs of other nations and to achieve specific strategic objectives has become increasingly prominent, especially when analysing autocratic regimes. These regimes often employ disinformation as a key non-kinetic activity conducted against Western liberal democracies.

Disinformation has been a longstanding issue; however, it was during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020¹ when the concept of "infodemiology"² began to gain prominence, referring to the deliberate dissemination of false information aimed at undermining governments and global entities. Subsequently, evidence has emerged indicating that Russia (and China) strategically utilised information as a tool in their "vaccine diplomacy,"³ seeking to shape narratives and exert an influence over public and political behaviour in Europe and other regions. The prevalence of disinformation also increased both before and after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Russian-style disinformation was employed on all external fronts to vilify Ukraine, sow discord among Western allies, and to cultivate a favourable image of Russia among its strategic allies and the Global South at large.

As Moldova aligned with Ukraine in the war of defence against Russian military aggression, it

was not spared from the intensified Russian disinformation campaigns against the government and its dialogue with the EU and the West. This small country, which is now engaged in the EU accession process, has faced Russian disinformation for over three decades since its independence. However, the current levels of disinformation pose a significant threat to Moldova's national security, as they extend beyond its internal political dynamics. This disinformation is part of a larger hybrid threat and therefore requires extra attention from the Moldovan decision-makers. Cooperation with Western partners is also essential to prevent and mitigate the attempts at malign interference from the Russian side.

The malevolent foreign interference, exemplified by the weaponisation of information to influence the internal affairs of other countries such as Moldova, falls within the scope of Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI).⁴ A critical component of the FIMI arsenal is the deployment of disinformation, characterised as the intentional dissemination of false or misleading information with the intent to deceive. Those engaged in the dissemination of disinformation can encompass both state actors and individuals, and "proxies inside and outside of their own territories".⁵ FIMI is being realised through tactics, techniques and procedures implemented by threat actors, who can also employ cyber threats to enhance the negative impact of their actions.⁶ As per the 2024 Global Report of Risks, "misinformation and disinformation" has emerged as the foremost category of short-term risks (2 years), surpassing

concerns such as “extreme weather conditions” and “societal polarisation.” Additionally, in the long term (10 years), disinformation has been classified as a global risk, securing the 5th position, with climate change-related risks taking precedence.⁷ A mere year prior, the same Global Report of Risks positioned disinformation at 16th place for its short-term risks and 11th for long-term risks.⁸

In recent years, there has been a significant surge in disinformation incidents within and against the EU. From December 2022 to November 2023, 750 cases of FIMI were detected, marking a twofold increase from the previous year.⁹ Germany, France and Poland emerged as the most frequently targeted EU countries in 2023, accounting for nearly 90 cases, collectively. Notably, the EU itself was the subject of FIMI attacks in 19% of the total cases directed at various organisations. In analysing FIMI against international leaders, the data for 2023 indicates that Volodymyr Zelensky was the most targeted, accounting for 40% of cases, followed by Josep Borrell, the Chief of EU Diplomacy (20%), and the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen (9%). Examining the online platforms used for FIMI in 2023, Telegram was the most frequently employed (496 times), followed by X (formerly Twitter) at 452 times. Other platforms such as Facebook, VKontakte, YouTube and TikTok were utilised to a lesser extent. A noteworthy trend in 2023 was the emergence of AI-generated FIMI, explicitly used against the Moldovan President Maia Sandu on multiple occasions, often incorporating visuals. Additional instances of AI employment were identified in cases in the UK and Slovakia, which primarily focused on imitated voices.

The global and regional trends mentioned above underscore the increasing risks associated with disinformation. Understanding disinformation is therefore crucial for decoding the intentions behind the malign interference and for developing preventive and reactive measures. In this broader context, the present policy paper aims to explore the phenomenon of disinformation by examining its manifestations within the case study of Moldova. Disinformation is employed to “undermine public trust in democratic institutions, exacerbate unhealthy polarisation, interfere in elections and influence the decision-making capabilities of political leaders”,¹⁰ among other objectives. The aim of this policy paper is to elucidate the *geopolitical narratives* prevalent among Moldovan political actors perceived as the *communication proxies* of Russian disinformation. These narratives are

scrutinised to determine whether they are aligned with Russian disinformation or draw inspiration from such disinformation.

Methodology

The aim of this policy paper is to explore the nature and dynamics of disinformation in Moldova by focusing on the identification and analysis of the prevailing geopolitical narratives within the country. Employing a mapping method provides a convenient means of establishing the primary categories of the narratives utilised by Russia, which has been identified as the primary threat actor in the realm of disinformation. The narratives employed by Russia in its information operations in Moldova are often aligned with the geopolitical discourse used by the main national decision-making actors. Consequently, the policy paper will delve into identifying both the mainstream and emerging narratives employed by Russian disinformation, as well as the geopolitical narratives promoted by key political actors in Moldova. The Russia-crafted narratives not only influence, but also adapt to the geopolitical positioning of Moldovan stakeholders who attempt to legitimate geopolitical narratives originating within Moldova. Hence, both narrative categories will be scrutinised to discern whether a direct causality exists between them.

The analysis of Russian disinformation in Moldova will include mapping of the Russian narratives, with a focus on dissecting official statements from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs directed towards Moldova. Additionally, scrutiny will be applied to the messages disseminated by the local amplifiers of Russian narratives. In this context, the focus is centred on Moldova’s top politicians who openly express sympathy towards Russia, and can thereby be categorised as communication proxies. A second group of political actors, previously associated with Russia, warrants examination in order to ascertain whether their current geopolitical narratives align or diverge from Russian disinformation. This comprehensive approach is used to capture the nuanced dynamics of the geopolitical narratives at play within Moldova. The analysis of the narratives among selected Moldovan politicians will also aid in shortening the list of key communication proxies aligned with Russia in Moldova, while excluding those who are politically associated with Russia but do not factually contribute to materialising Russian disinformation.

The examination of narratives employs four critical categories of geopolitical topics: 1) Russian war against Ukraine; 2) European accession process; 3) Transnistrian conflict; and 4) relations with Russia. In aligning with these events, the disinformation narratives from Russia and its communication proxies, as well as the geopolitical narratives of legitimate Moldovan decision-makers, will be scrutinised and mapped out. To provide interested audiences with a current perspective on the disinformation phenomenon in Moldova and to propose the optimal recommendations for relevant stakeholders, this policy paper has adopted the timeframe of November 2023 to January 2024. This period corresponds to the third year of the war in Ukraine, as well as the EU decision to initiate accession negotiations for Moldova (along with Ukraine) and the recent dynamic around the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict.

The paper is organised into five empirical parts, each centred on the narratives of Russia and Moldovan political actors such as Igor Dodon, Ilan Șor, Irina Vlah and Ion Ceban. The narratives propagated by these foreign (Russia) and domestic actors in Moldova are examined to assess their (1) proximity, (2) frequency, (3) convergence, (4) East-West orientation dichotomy and intended functions or goals. The paper ends with key conclusions, followed by a set of recommendations based on anti-disinformation techniques aimed at ignoring, containing, minimising and/or redirecting attention from false or manipulative information.

Disinformation narratives driven or beneficial to Russia

The disinformation carried out by Russia in Moldova varies and frequently benefits from the local production of geopolitical narratives that match those designed in Russia. The content of the public-political space in Moldova can encompass the narratives disseminated by Russia disinformation channels, which resemble the local narratives in tonality. These narratives exploit both the socio-economic ramifications of the war in Ukraine and the domestic political competition along geopolitical lines, while capitalising on the considerably polarised political and media environment.

The subsequent analysis outlines the core narratives strategically employed by Russia, which can be categorised into four thematic blocks: 1) *Russian war against Ukraine*; 2) *European integration process*; 3) *Transnistrian conflict*; and 4) *relations with Russia*.

The proposed analytical approach involves an in-depth examination of official statements issued by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, spanning from November 2023 to the end of January 2024. Additionally, public statements from key figures such as Igor Dodon, Ilan Șor, Irina Vlah and Ion Ceban are subjected to scrutiny. In all major national surveys, these four politicians, who are suspected of promoting Russian interests, are emerging as the most prominent public figures of the Moldovan opposition, which is closely or remotely associated with Russia.^{11,12,13,14} The overt pro-Russian leanings of former President Igor Dodon and the internationally sanctioned fugitive businessman Ilan Șor, who are accused of colluding with Russia,¹⁵ render their statements particularly noteworthy. Additionally, the statements of Irina Vlah, former executive of the Gagauz autonomy, and Ion Ceban, the mayor re-elected in 2023, are also scrutinised. The inclusion of Vlah and Ceban in the examination is based on their past associations with Russia and the lingering suspicions of ongoing informal ties. It is crucial to note, however, that at present, there is no substantial evidence demonstrating their direct alignment with Russian actions in or against Moldova. Mapping the statements of these four Moldovan politicians will help to identify those who actively promote Russian narratives, and those for whom such suspicions cannot be substantiated with empirical evidence.

The official webpage of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) served as a primary source for the evidence regarding Russia-originated disinformation narratives. Conversely, for the purpose of discerning the narratives of Moldovan politicians, the statements on their Facebook official pages were utilised as the sole resource for gathering evidence, with a specific focus on messages related to (1) the war in Ukraine, (2) European integration, (3) the Transnistrian conflict and (4) relations with Russia. The in-depth examination of these narratives spans from November 2023, preceding the approval of the accession negotiations with the EU, to January 2024. This timeline extends to a month after the EU's positive decision on Moldova's accession negotiations (15 December 2023). The timeframe of the analysis also coincides with the approach of the third year

since the beginning of the full-scale Russian military aggression against Ukraine (24 February 2022). In addition, it corresponds with the beginning of the election year in Moldova, where presidential elections are scheduled for autumn 2024.

1. Russian official narratives

A. Russian war against Ukraine. When addressing the issue of human rights in Moldova, the Russian representative at the OSCE invoked allegations that the rights of the Russian-speaking population are limited and that the Moldovan authorities are being inspired by the practices in Ukraine.¹⁶ This narrative seeks to discredit Moldova through its association with Ukraine, which is demonised by Russia for employing measures countering Russian hybrid threats since the beginning of the Russian aggression. Another narrative propagated by the Russian MFA is the assertion that the Moldovan territory will be utilised for training Ukrainian military forces. The Russian side compared this with a violation of Moldova's principle of neutrality and in an act of "participation in military actions" by Ukraine.¹⁷

B. European integration process. The overarching argument presented by the Russian MFA is that the EU is losing its global political and economic significance,¹⁸ which is attributed to Moscow's interpretation of the EU's closer cooperation with the United States under the Joe Biden administration. The Russian MFA launched the message that the approval of the accession negotiations for Moldova, and Ukraine, did not comply with the underlying EU criteria. This decision, among others (e.g. the new sanctions package), was qualified by the Russian diplomacy as politicised.¹⁹ The aim of this narrative concerning Moldova's accession negotiations is to present it as an undeserved act that would not fulfil the EU's rules. Another narrative articulated by Russia is that European integration is unable to contribute to the settlement of the conflict and that direct negotiations should resume, which shows an interest from Russia in restoring the 5+2 format, currently in a frozen state because of the Russian war actions against Ukraine.²⁰ The EU accession of Moldova "with or without Transnistria" was qualified as "phantasy", instead of which Russian MFA has promoted the idea of solving the crisis through a dialogue between the two sides, while proposing itself as a potential mediator.²¹

C. Transnistrian conflict. An old narrative dating back in 2003 related to the Memorandum Kozak and a veiled attempt to federalise Moldova has resurfaced again. This time, the head of Russian diplomacy, Sergey Lavrov, stated that the former Moldovan President Vladimir Voronin rejected the Memorandum Kozak because the EU prohibited Moldova from signing it. Lavrov reiterated that the deal was to be made between Chisinau and Tiraspol (the administrative capital of the separatist Transnistrian region).²² Lavrov's interpretation is clearly aimed at portraying the EU as a spoiler actor for the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. The Russian MFA criticised the receipt of military vehicles from Germany and the procurement of a radar system, as well as other ammunition, from France²³, which represented needed steps for the modernisation of the defensive capacities of Moldova in the face of Russian kinetic threats considering the military attacks on Ukraine. The Russian narrative misconstrued the military upgrade of the Moldovan army as a process of dismantling constitutional neutrality on the way to NATO membership and an alleged militarisation posing threats to the Transnistrian region. The Russian side has been persistent in its narrative that the Moldovan authorities are responsible for the stagnation in the conflict settlement, calling for comprehensive negotiations that would take the separatist region into consideration.²⁴ Russia is also insisting that the EU, together with NATO, is intent on "killing" the 5+2 format,²⁵ which is dysfunctional because Russia is waging full-out war against Ukraine, one of the participants in the negotiation format, and a hybrid war against the EU and US, which have an observer status. Russia is portraying the decision of Moldova to unify the customs principle of the country as "putting economic pressure" on the Transnistrian region.²⁶

D. Relations with Russia. The partial alignment of Moldova with the EU sanctions on Russia amid the context of the aggression against Ukraine²⁷ has been construed by the Russian side as a deliberate choice by the Moldovan government to align with the West, perceived as detrimental to bilateral relations and contrary to the national interests of the population. Another narrative propagated by the Russian side suggests that Moldova is "another victim"²⁸ of the hybrid war (of the West) against Russia, drawing parallels with the ongoing Russian aggression in Ukraine. Russia's potent narrative revolves around its intention to retaliate in response to what it deems as unfriendly measures taken by the Moldovan side.²⁹

Table 1. Narratives employed by Russian MFA in the period of November 2023-January 2024

Russian war in Ukraine	European integration	Transnistrian conflict	Moldova's relations with Russia
<p>1. The rights of the Russian-speaking population are limited, akin to the situation in Ukraine.</p> <p>2. Moldova is being primed to become “another victim” of hybrid warfare against Russia.</p> <p>3. Moldova can offer its territory for the training of Ukrainian forces, siding with Ukraine and adding to the status of neutrality.</p>	<p>4. ‘Undeserved’ and circumstantial approval of the accession negotiations by the EU;</p> <p>5. European integration is incapable of replacing the settlement negotiations in the reintegration process.</p> <p>6. European accession is a fantasy, regardless of the presence or absence of Transnistria.</p> <p>7. The EU is losing its political and economic weight internationally due to its pro-American leaders.</p>	<p>8. The EU has ‘spoiled’ the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict.</p> <p>9. Moldova’s neutrality is being dismantled along with country’s militarization.</p> <p>10. The Moldovan side obstructs the conflict settlement.</p> <p>11. The EU, along with NATO, undermine the 5+2 format.</p>	<p>12. Aligning with EU sanctions on Russia is aimed at sabotaging bilateral relations against the interests of Moldova’s population.</p> <p>13. Russia will retaliate in response to Moldova’s unfriendly measures.</p>

Source: Author’s compilation, based on data collected from www.mid.ru

2. Igor Dodon, former President of Moldova, Executive Secretary of the Socialists Party

(Facebook presence – approx. 190,000 followers³⁰)

A. Russian war against Ukraine. Since the onset of the full-scale Russian war against Ukraine in February 2022, Igor Dodon has consistently referred to it as a tragic military conflict, while downplaying Russia’s role as the aggressor state. During the period analysed in the policy paper, Dodon suggested that if Transnistria were not part of Moldova, it would have faced an “attack”.³¹ While he did not specify the potential aggressor, the only entity that had declared preventive measures against the separatist region in the case of provocations was Ukraine. Consequently, Dodon has indirectly implied that Ukraine would have attacked the Transnistrian region, where Russian military forces have been illegally deployed since before Moldova’s independence in 1991.

Attached to the narrative about the potential destabilisation of the Transnistrian region, Dodon claimed that external forces could push Moldova into the “military conflict on the territory of Ukraine”.³² Within this framework, Dodon characterised the Russian aggression against

Ukraine as a “tragedy between two brotherly peoples” that can only be resolved through negotiations.³³

Regarding the modernisation of the Moldovan army in response to the military threats arising from the Russian aggression against Ukraine, Dodon ridiculed the purchase of a radar system from France for 14 million euros³⁴. Instead of what he derides as a “second-hand” radar bought from nowhere, Dodon suggested that a Russian KAMAZ would have been a more beneficial procurement for the removal of snow during winter.³⁵

Dodon openly addressed the situation of ethnic groups in Ukraine, particularly emphasising the population that has historically identified as Moldovans. In the context of bilateral agreements between Romania and Ukraine regarding the status of the Romanian language,³⁶ Dodon blamed President Sandu for not advocating for the rights of those who, according to previous Ukrainian censuses, were registered as “Moldovans”.³⁷ He cited the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban as a role model for championing the interests of Hungarian ethnic groups in Ukraine, including by conditioning the adoption of legislation on national minorities. Despite expressing negative sentiments about Romanian agreements with Ukraine regarding the “Moldovan name” of the Romanian language, Dodon made a positive reference to the Romanian poet Mihai Eminescu, acknowledging his contribution to cultural heritage, albeit without explicitly mentioning the Romanian language.³⁸

However, this attempt to balance out his critical views on Romania appears somewhat limited.

B. European integration process. The theme of bilateral relations with the EU has gained prominence, particularly with Moldova's advancement to a candidate state status. Igor Dodon indirectly touched on various aspects of these relations. In discussions about gas purchases, he accused the Moldovan government of buying Russian gas at higher prices due to the participation of intermediaries. While Moldova has been importing gas from EU-operating companies in the last two years, Dodon did not explicitly accuse European energy traders. Instead, he referred to them as "intermediaries" in a negative context.³⁹

In the context of relations with the EU, Dodon has frequently characterised them as ties with the West. He asserted that President Sandu would be controlled by the West, suggesting that she will be offered a high-paying job once she steps down as president⁴⁰. In the same context, Dodon accused the government of transforming state institutions into NGOs controlled by Soros.⁴¹ While Dodon has not openly defied EU accession, he emphasised that Moldovan citizens support a "balanced foreign policy" that involves maintaining good relations with both the West (mainly the EU) and the East (mainly Russia). He claimed that 70-75% of Moldovans favour such a foreign policy.⁴² In pursuit of this balanced approach, Dodon highlighted changes introduced by the Socialists Party to its statute, asserting that it is a pro-Moldovan party rather than explicitly pro-EU or pro-Russian.⁴³ He insisted that any integration with organisations to the West or East should only occur through a referendum, with the participation of the Transnistrian region, a potentially risky proposition given the pro-Russian sentiments in the population residing in the Transnistrian region.⁴⁴

Furthermore, Dodon's negative reactions to the appointment of Romanian citizens to head Moldovan institutions can be attributed to his stance on relations with the EU. He condemned the appointment of Anca Dragu as Governor of the National Bank of Moldova⁴⁵, labelling this as state treason.⁴⁶ Dodon also criticised Romania in the context of transferring the management of the gas transport networks from Moldovatrangaz,⁴⁷ previously under the subordination of Moldova-Gaz where Russian Gazprom controls 50% of the shares. Dodon used this issue to criticise the high gas tariffs, claiming that Moldovans are

facing hardships "under the EU flag".⁴⁸ In the same vein, Dodon promoted the narrative that alleged fraudulent schemes, particularly those accusing the government of expensive gas procurement in 2023, are being conducted in conformity with "EU norms".⁴⁹ He portrayed the alignment with EU norms as a blind and servile process, suggesting that Moldova is not negotiating in its own national interests. According to Dodon, this approach will lead to spikes in prices and tariffs affecting local producers and farmers, as well as the promotion of LGBT rights.⁵⁰

Simultaneously, Dodon has emphasised another narrative regarding the alleged intention of the Moldovan government to pursue EU membership without the Transnistrian region, which he qualified as state treason.⁵¹ He also asserted that the Moldovan government would violate the rights of the Gagauz minorities by not recognising the newly elected governor of the Gagauz Autonomy, Evghenia Guțul, who was elected in July 2023. President Sandu opposes the inclusion of Guțul in the Moldovan government due to allegations of corruption through illegal political party financing; in particular, her affiliation with Shor. Dodon used this case to suggest that the Moldovan government is acting in contradiction to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.⁵²

Additionally, Dodon's narratives highlighted the distribution of public funds to local authorities based on their pro-European views. He accused the government of conditioning the use of public funds on the geopolitical orientation of local mayors towards the EU, particularly in the context of the Moldovan local elections held on November 5.⁵³ Dodon circulated a narrative suggesting that Western/European ambassadors were complicit by remaining silent about the actions of the Moldovan government. Specifically, he claimed that Western ambassadors did not react to the ruling party's conditioning of future funds to local authorities, based on votes for pro-EU mayors during the local elections.⁵⁴ In the same context, Dodon expressed the idea that the Moldovan diaspora, especially its representatives in France, would be disappointed after voting for Maia Sandu during the local elections in 2020.⁵⁵

Finally, Dodon has been promoting the idea that the Moldovan government will be in a weak position due to the European elections.⁵⁶ He hinted that Eurosceptics will gain ground in the EU decision-making process, leading to a decrease in the interest and support for Moldova.

C. Transnistrian conflict. The implementation of the new Customs Code by Moldova, which has legal and financial effects on companies from Transnistria, was compared by Igor Dodon to “an economic blockade”.⁵⁷ He asserted that this move could be perceived as a destabilising act by the Moldovan government. In the same context, he also asserted that businesses in the region would not be allowed to operate under “normal” conditions.⁵⁸

Dodon expressed concern about preserving the status quo around the Transnistrian conflict. He deemed the scenario of dismantling the peacekeeping mission in the region as “dangerous,” suggesting that Ukraine, backed by “voices” in Moldova (referring to the ruling party), could intend such an action. Dodon has advocated in favour of maintaining the peacekeeping mission, despite its perceived inefficiency due to Russia’s dominance.^{59,60} Additionally, he attributed to President Sandu a scenario in which she could be responsible for provoking a war in order to be re-elected.⁶¹

The narratives used by Dodon highlight the tight connection between the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict and the preservation of Moldova’s neutrality status. During discussions related to the revision of the Socialists Party’s statute, Dodon emphasised that this neutrality status is one of the key pillars of the party. This commitment was framed alongside the preservation of statehood, national traditions, and the promotion of the Moldovan language and history.⁶²

D. Relations with Russia. In his statements, Igor Dodon advocated for the resumption of friendly relations with Russia, particularly in the trade field. He criticised President Sandu’s anti-Russian statements, framing them as not representative of the Moldovan people.⁶³

Dodon also aligned himself with the Moldovan Metropolis and Metropolitan Vladimir, entities subordinate to the Russian Orthodox Church. He opposed what he perceives as “a state policy aimed at destruction”⁶⁴ in the Moldovan church, attributing this to the growing influence of the Romanian Orthodox Church. Dodon highlighted the defection of more than ten priests, along with their churches, from the Moldovan church to the Romanian Orthodox Church in 2023.

He reiterated his favourable stance on maintaining the Russian language for inter-ethnic communication, while expressing an interest in restoring its position as a lingua franca in Moldova.⁶⁵ In this context, Dodon invoked the case of the national broadcaster’s refusal to allow a candidate in the local elections, on 5 November 2023, to speak in Russian.⁶⁶

Finally, Dodon’s narratives addressed Moldova’s alignment with the sanctions on Russia, depicting it as an action that contradicts the country’s principle of neutrality and runs counter to its economic interests.⁶⁷

Table 2. Narratives employed by Igor Dodon in the period of November 2023-January 2024

Russian war in Ukraine	European integration	Transnistrian conflict	Moldova’s relations with Russia
1. Ukraine could have attacked Transnistria.	5. The government’s policy towards minorities (Gagauz) contradicts the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.	16. The separatist region is under “economic blockade”.	20. President Sandu’s anti-Russian statements do not represent the position of the people.
2. External forces try to drag Moldova into the military conflict in Ukraine.	6. Russian gas is purchased through (Western) middlemen, resulting in higher tariffs than if purchased directly from Russia.	17. Chisinau is destabilizing the Transnistria region.	21. Friendship and trade with Russia should be resumed.
3. The wars in Ukraine are a “tragedy between brother peoples” that can only be resolved through negotiations.	7. President Sandu is controlled by the West.	18. Instead of European (France) military equipment for military needs, Moldova must buy Russian civilian equipment (Kamaz trucks for snow removal).	22. The Moldovan metropolis/Church subordinate to Russia is under threat of destruction.
	8. State institutions become NGOs under Soros control.		23. Alignment with sanctions against Russia contradicts Moldova’s neutral status and affects its economic interests.
	9. Key positions in state institutions are sold to foreigners (Romania).		
	10. The transfer of gas infrastructure to Romania contributes to raising tariffs for consumers, who face difficulties “under the EU flag”.		
	11. Public funds are conditional on the European orientation of the local public administration”.		

<p>4. The government intends to move towards EU membership without the Transnistria region.</p>	<p>12. Western/EU embassies are silent on the actions of the ruling party.</p> <p>13. The Moldovan diaspora in the EU (France) is disappointed with the government,</p> <p>14. The blind adoption of EU rules is generating costs for the population (local producers, farmers' rights, promotion of LGBT rights).</p> <p>15. Under EU rules, fraudulent schemes can occur.</p>	<p>19. Preservation of neutrality.</p>	<p>24. The Russian language must remain the language of interethnic communication in Moldova.</p> <p>25. Moldovan citizens support a balanced foreign policy, with friendly relations with both the EU and Russia.</p>
---	---	--	--

Source: Author's compilation, based on data collected from www.facebook.com

3. Ilan Șor, former Deputy and Leader of the declared unconstitutional Șor Party

(the Facebook presence – approx. 113,000 followers⁶⁸)

A. Russian war against Ukraine. In his narratives, Ilan Șor avoided addressing the situation in Ukraine. This strategic omission may have been a deliberate tactic to avoid potential spillovers, particularly considering Ukraine's diplomacy toward Israel. Șor probably intended to avoid exacerbating his already precarious situation, marked by international sanctions imposed by the West since 2022 and the Moldovan government's extradition demand.

B. European integration process. In Ilan Șor's narratives, it is claimed that due to the shift towards the EU, Moldova has lost the advantages of collaborating with the Eurasian Economic Union in terms of its market access and attracting investments.⁶⁹ Despite Moldova having been granted a controversial observer status in 2018⁷⁰ in the Eurasian Economic Union during Dodon's presidential tenure (without parliamentary ratification, rendering it legally null), Șor has advocated for adherence to this regional organization and closer relations with Russia, instead of EU membership.⁷¹ He emphasised that EU accession will worsen Moldova's situation,⁷² causing "more poverty, famine and slavery",⁷³ while repeatedly suggesting that the EU is using Moldova.⁷⁴ Furthermore, Șor's statements are

aimed at sowing uncertainty about the likelihood of the EU accession process.⁷⁵ He has cast doubt on Moldova's ability to join the EU by 2030 or in the foreseeable future⁷⁶, claiming that the government is hiding the real timeframe for European integration⁷⁷ and drawing parallels with the prolonged accession process of Turkey, which he described as a "humiliation".⁷⁸ Simultaneously, he suggested that Moldova should engage in trade with both the East and the West, instead of limiting itself to the EU.⁷⁹

Șor utilised the 2023 incident involving a far-right Polish deputy extinguishing the menorah⁸⁰ in the Polish parliament to propagate the idea that the EU is not tolerant.⁸¹ Additionally, he referred to Polish politicians, citing a statement from Member of the European Parliament Ryszard Czarnecki⁸² (Law and Justice Party), who purportedly claimed that in Moldova, the rights of the opposition are limited. Șor pointed to the example of the Șor Party⁸³ being banned from participating in local elections by the Moldovan authorities due to alleged illegal financing, a decision that has generated controversy.⁸⁴

Șor employed a strategy of juxtaposition, contrasting the EU with the Eurasian Economic Union, to criticise the initiative of organising a constitutional referendum on the EU accession of Moldova, scheduled for the same day as the presidential elections.⁸⁵ He asserted that the population would not support the EU and contended that the EU is an "outdated structure"⁸⁶ lacking resources for Moldova's infrastructure development.⁸⁷ Șor drew an "equals" sign between European norms and what he perceived as government censorship and propaganda, comparing it to the Nazi regime during World War II.⁸⁸

Additionally, Shor exploited the statements of Romanian far-right politician Claudiu Târziu from the Alliance for the Union of Romanians party, who suggested that Romania could give up NATO membership for the annexation of Moldova.⁸⁹ Shor condemned both the statement and the Moldovan government's alleged lack of reaction.⁹⁰

In an effort to reinforce the narrative that Moldova lacks sovereignty, Shor employed a more aggressive rhetoric, labelling Moldova a "colony" of the EU.⁹¹ This echoed Dodon's narrative about Moldova being controlled by the West. Furthermore, Shor accused the Moldovan government of appointing Romanian citizens who work for Romanian special services⁹² in Moldovan state institutions.^{93,94} He linked this to a gradual takeover of control in the country⁹⁵, and accused the government of being paid from abroad to internally dismantle the state.⁹⁶

In his statements, Shor accused the head of the EU Delegation in Moldova, Janis Mazeiks, of ignoring decisions made by the government⁹⁷, such as the suspension of licences for six TV channels, criminal investigations related to illegal financing by the newly elected executive, and the suspension of the former General Prosecutor Alexandr Stoyanoglo. In the same context, Shor accused the EU ambassador of "interference in the internal affairs" of Moldova in favour of the ruling party.⁹⁸ Shor's narrative promoted the idea that the silence of the EU is causing disenfranchisement among the population in Moldova with European ideas.

C. Transnistrian conflict. In Ilan Shor's narratives, the concept of neutrality has been less emphasised compared to Dodon's, where it is entangled with the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. Nevertheless, Shor has reiterated the importance of preserving the country's constitutional neutrality, while highlighting attempts by the government to undermine it.⁹⁹

D. Relations with Russia. The narrative about the indispensability of Russian gas played a central role in Ilan Shor's discourse concerning relations with Russia. In this context, he emphasised the economic benefits of restoring ties with Russia¹⁰⁰, including the idea that Shor's party was aiming to submit an application to join the Eurasian Economic Union. In addition, Shor condemned the sanctions against Russia, which would have worsened the situation for Moldovan citizens¹⁰¹. He argued that the refusal of Russian gas has led to the impoverishment of the population, and alleged fraudulent practices by members of the government through the purchase of non-Russian gas.¹⁰² In advocating for Russian gas, he targeted the price,¹⁰³ portraying it as more affordable than gas imported from the West/EU (via Greece).¹⁰⁴ Shor's narrative positioned the Moldovan authorities and Moldovagaz administration as obstacles to his efforts to bring cheaper gas to Moldova.^{105,106} According to Shor, Moldovan President Sandu is portrayed as a promoter of anti-Russian attitudes, accused of spreading hatred through propaganda.¹⁰⁷

In his narrative, Shor suggested that Moldova lost investments from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) after treating it as an enemy.¹⁰⁸ This discourse from Shor¹⁰⁹ revolved around the Moldovan government's decision to exit the CIS Parliamentary Assembly in early 2024, and the prospective departure from the CIS entirely by the end of the same year.

Finally, amidst the international sanctions linked to allegations of collusion with Russia, Shor maintained that the funds employed for his political activities in Moldova did not originate from Russia. He argued that his financial resources were solely derived from his business ventures.¹¹⁰

Table 3. Narratives employed by Ilan Shor in the period of November 2023-January 2024

European integration	Transnistrian conflict	Moldova's relations with Russia
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By opting for the EU, Moldova lost the economic benefits of cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Union; 2. Moldova will not join the EU in 2030 or in the future. 3. The EU is humiliating Moldova and accession will cause poverty, famine and slavery. 4. Moldova should have relations with the East and the West. 5. Accession to the EU will mean loss of sovereignty, damage to economic interest and kneeling Moldova; 6. Romania is willing to annex Moldova in exchange for NATO membership; 7. The EU has an outdated form and lacks resources to support Moldova's development. 8. Moldova is an EU colony. 9. The appointment of Romanian citizens in state institutions represents a progressive takeover of control over Moldova. 10. European standards amount to Nazi-type censorship and propaganda. 11. The EU Delegation in Moldova ignores the government's decisions on the closure of television channels and pressure on Gagauz autonomy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. The neutrality status should not be undermined. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Moldova should resume relations with Russia. 14. Moldova should join the Eurasian Economic Union, where it will be welcomed. 15. The rejection of Russian gas caused poverty and corruption. 16. Moldova lost investments from the Eurasian Economic Union because it opted to join the EU. 17. Moldova cannot attract investments from the CIS (Russia) after the government declared it an enemy. 18. The government is blocking cheaper gas from Russia.

Source: Author's compilation, based on data collected from www.facebook.com

4. Irina Vlah, former Executive of the Gagauz Autonomy

(Facebook presence – approx. 34,000 followers¹¹¹)

A. Russian war against Ukraine. Irina Vlah refrained from articulating narratives related to the situation and dynamics of the war in Ukraine. It is likely that she avoided this topic due to its highly sensitive and potentially toxic nature due to Russia, especially considering the risk of being associated with Russian anti-Ukrainian disinformation efforts. Such associations could have negative implications, both domestically and internationally, particularly in the context of electoral politics.

B. European integration process. Irina Vlah openly expressed her support for Moldova's EU membership,¹¹² citing her own political experience as evidence that Moldova's future lies with the EU.¹¹³ She consistently portrayed a positive narrative about the EU and projects implemented

with EU assistance.¹¹⁴ She emphasised the Gagauz autonomy's good relationships with its external partners, including EU states,¹¹⁵ presenting the EU as an attractive project where different peoples can live in peace and build a common future. However, she advocated for a European Moldova that adheres to European standards, but under different political forces.¹¹⁶ Vlah repeatedly underscored the concept of a "European Moldova", characterised by social justice and equality.¹¹⁷

In her narratives, Vlah supported the EU's decision to open accession negotiations with Moldova, but accused the authorities of Euro-populism.¹¹⁸ She implied that the EU's decision is a geopolitical advantage and suggested that the main political actors in Moldova showed pragmatism by not opposing it.¹¹⁹ Despite advocating for EU accession, Vlah also emphasised the importance of Moldova maintaining neutrality and of developing good relations with all countries as being in its national interest.¹²⁰ She criticised the appointment of Romanian citizens to key state positions, labelling this as national treason,¹²¹ a sentiment that is similar to Dodon's narrative.

Vlah suggested including the question of neutrality along with that of EU accession in the 2024 referendum.¹²² She believes this combination will expand the supporters of Moldova's European future, but also warned that it could deepen societal divisions.^{123, 124} Despite supporting this idea, Vlah argued that holding a referendum on EU accession before the negotiations are finalised is senseless, and could harm Moldova's strategic interests by politicising the process.¹²⁵ She accused President Sandu of using EU integration for electoral purposes¹²⁶ and criticised Brussels for overlooking deviations from the principle of the separation of powers.¹²⁷

C. Transnistrian conflict. Irina Vlah has not directly engaged with the Transnistrian topic in her narratives. However, she emphasised the importance of maintaining neutrality, linking it to peace in Moldova. Vlah highlighted the financial implications of modernising the army to meet NATO's requirement of allocating 2% of the GDP to

defence.¹²⁸ She called on Parliament¹²⁹ to endorse the inclusion of neutrality and non-alignment with any military blocs in the referendum on European accession,^{130,131} even though neutrality is already established in the constitution (Article 11).¹³²

D. Relations with Russia. In an effort to distance herself from Russia, Vlah responded to accusations of receiving instructions from the spokesperson of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Maria Zakharova, levelled by a representative of the ruling party PAS, Oazu Nantoi, during a public broadcast, by demanding the right to reply.¹³³ She portrayed herself as a staunch advocate of Orthodoxy, highlighting her announcement of the Bishop of Edineț and Briceni, Nicodeim, awarding her an ecclesiastical distinction in recognition of her contributions to the promotion of Orthodoxy.¹³⁴ Finally, Vlah opposed the decision to not publish laws in the Russian language, arguing that it would not contribute to a more efficient implementation of legislation.¹³⁵

Table 4. Narratives employed by Irina Vlah in the period of November 2023-January 2024

European integration	Transnistrian conflict	Moldova's relations with Russia
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moldova's future is in the EU. 2. The EU helped the implementation of different projects in Gagauzia. 3. Moldova can adhere to European rules, but under different political forces. 4. The Moldovan government manifested itself as EU-populist regarding the EU accession negotiations. 5. The EU's approval of Moldova's accession negotiations was geopolitical. 6. The appointment of Romanian citizens to key positions represents a betrayal of national interests. 7. The EU membership referendum should be combined with neutrality to increase the number of EU supporters. 8. Accession to the EU by referendum is senseless before accession negotiations are completed. 9. President Sandu is using EU integration for electoral purposes. 10. Brussels ignores the government's deviations in Moldova. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Neutrality status is beneficial for peace. 12. The question of neutrality should be integrated into the EU accession referendum. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Moldova should develop good relations with everyone and show neutrality. 14. Rejection of connection with Russian disinformation.

Source: Author's compilation, based on data collected from www.facebook.com

5. Ion Ceban, re-elected Mayor of the capital of Moldova

(Facebook presence – approx. 71,000 followers¹³⁶)

A. Russian war against Ukraine. While Ion Ceban avoided taking a position in relation to the war in Ukraine, Ceban expressed his pro-Israel attitudes on Israel's anti-Hamas military intervention in Gaza. In this context, Ceban participated in the public planting of a tree in the name of peace, together with the Israeli ambassador Joel Lion.¹³⁷

B. European integration process. Ion Ceban employed references to EU directives to criticise the government's decisions, which he deemed as falling short of European standards.¹³⁸ This narrative was used to condemn the government's handling of public procurement in the services sector, particularly concerning commercial spaces at the International Chisinau Airport.¹³⁹ Additionally, Ceban leveraged the same narrative of non-alignment with EU standards to criticise what he perceived as interference by the central authorities in local autonomy in Chisinau.¹⁴⁰ This included opposition to the appointment of the Chief of the Education, Youth and Sports Department in the Municipality of Chisinau,^{141,142,143} as well as to the allocation of state and local budgets affecting education programmes in the city's schools.¹⁴⁴ Alongside public petitions advocating for the retention of 50% of Chisinau's budget for the capital,^{145,146,147,148} Ceban also indicated his intentions to bring the case of budget allocations to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).¹⁴⁹

Ceban's narrative concerning the EU is centred on the imperative of consolidating society around the goal of EU accession, and advocating for a consensus among political forces and civil society akin to the Romanian model of political unanimity ("Snagov Declaration")¹⁵⁰ prior to the EU accession.¹⁵¹ He also expressed support for the EU's decision to initiate accession negotiations,^{152,153} emphasising the need for Moldovan political forces to implement necessary reforms. Additionally, Ceban's discourse included criticism directed against the politicisation of European funds, warning against their use as a "political weapon".¹⁵⁴

In contrast to Irina Vlah, who also adopted a more moderate approach toward the EU, Ceban's narratives were replete with references to EU-funded projects. He highlighted the importance of

financial support from the EU, its financial institutions and member states for various initiatives, including "MOVE IT like Lublin",¹⁵⁵ "Solid Waste Chisinau",¹⁵⁶ the rehabilitation and modernisation of street illumination,¹⁵⁷ and the renovation of public parks.¹⁵⁸

Ceban also highlighted Chisinau's diplomatic contacts with the national capitals in EU states, specifically mentioning Vienna and Warsaw.^{158,159} One topic used for communication between Ceban and local public administrations in the EU was the joint effort to counter antisemitism.¹⁶⁰

While Ceban refrained from direct criticism of the EU or Romania, he questioned the legality and transparency of Anca Dragu's appointment as the new Governor of the National Bank of Moldova, particularly focusing on the process of being granted Moldovan citizenship, a prerequisite for the appointment.¹⁶¹

In the context of Moldova's relations with Romania, Ceban highlighted the cultural legacy of the renowned Romanian poet Mihai Eminescu in Moldova's heritage.^{162,163} Furthermore, Ceban discussed the renovation of the cemetery where the Romanian soldiers who lost their lives during World War II are laid to rest.¹⁶⁴ Additionally, Ceban recognised Romania's advocacy for Moldova's EU accession negotiations.¹⁶⁵ In an attempt to underscore the positive impact of Romania, Ion Ceban highlighted the fact that the district heads in the Chisinau municipality who received training courses in Romania focused on the submission of EU non-refundable projects.¹⁶⁶

C. Transnistrian conflict. Ceban's avoidance of directly addressing the Transnistrian conflict or its implications for Moldova's neutrality status has likely arisen from the sensitivity of the topic and its potential to complicate dialogue with the EU and other Western partners. Additionally, discussing the conflict might have necessitated referring to Russia, which appeared to be a taboo subject in Ceban's narratives.

D. Relations with Russia. Based on the evaluation, it appears that Ion Ceban avoided discussing Moldova's relations with Russia in his narratives. Instead, he focused on highlighting the decisions to foster cooperation between Chisinau, Moldova's capital and three Chinese cities. This move suggests Ceban's efforts to diversify Chisinau's multilateral international cooperation¹⁶⁷ beyond the traditional geopolitical affiliations, potentially with the aim to expand both economic and diplomatic opportunities for the city.

Table 5. Narratives employed by Ion Ceban in the period of November 2023-January 2024

European integration
1. The Moldovan government is deviating from EU norms and standards.
2. Political forces and civil society should rally around an EU integration process similar to the Romanian example (“Snagov Declaration”).
3. EU integration requires reforms.
4. EU funds must not be politicized or used as a political weapon.
5. The EU, the European institutions and several Member States offer assistance to Moldova and the municipality of Chisinau.
6. The appointment of Romanian citizens was not carried out according to procedures.
7. The Romanian language and historical heritage are preserved.
8. Romania contributed to the approval of Moldova’s EU accession negotiations.

Source: Author’s compilation, based on data collected from www.facebook.com

Main findings

The close examination of the identified narratives reveals a diverse range of topics integrated into the Russian disinformation that find echoes in the discourse of the political actors in Moldova. To better understand the nature of the geopolitical narratives utilised by Russia and the Moldovan political stakeholders, perceived as communication proxies of Russia due to the close or remote association, the analysis will delve into the following aspects:

- 1. Proximity:** Assessing the degree of overlap between Russian disinformation and the geopolitical narratives of Igor Dodon, Ilan Shor, Irina Vlah and Ion Ceban.
- 2. Frequency:** Examining the geopolitical narratives most frequently approached by the Moldovan political actors.
- 3. Convergence:** Evaluating the degree of overlap in the messages used by the four Moldovan political actors.

- 4. East-West Dichotomy:** Analysing the distribution of the narratives toward the EU and Russia, respectively.
- 5. Functionality:** Understanding the pursued goals when deploying geopolitical narratives across the dismiss, distort, distract and dismay functions of disinformation.

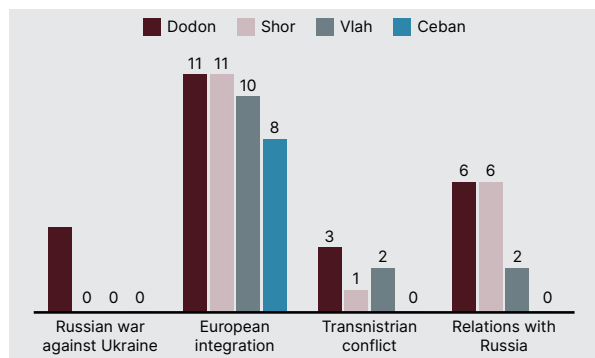
First, in the comparative analysis of the Russian narratives and those adopted by the Moldovan actors, it should be highlighted that only Dodon consistently echoed similar themes, demonstrating the closest proximity to Russian disinformation. These included the following topics: 1) weaponisation of Moldova against the West; 2) opposition to EU membership without the Transnistrian region; 3) calls to dismantle the 5+2 format; and 4) criticism of Moldova’s alignment with the EU sanctions. While Shor also espoused a pro-Russian and anti-EU stance, his narratives diverged significantly from those propagated by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and echoed by Igor Dodon (*refer to Table 6 below*).

Table 6. The proximity of the narratives of the local actors in Moldova with Russian disinformation

Russian speaking minorities in Ukraine	Weaponization of Moldova against Russia	The EU is losing its economic relevance	No-EU membership without the Transnistrian region	Moldova’s support for Ukraine contradicts Moldova’s neutrality status	The 5+2 format/ negotiation process is being dismantled	Moldova’s alignment with EU sanctions against Russia
Dodon – No	Dodon – Yes	Dodon – No	Dodon – Yes	Dodon – Yes	Dodon – Yes	Dodon – Yes
Shor – No	Shor – No	Shor – Yes	Shor – No	Shor – No	Shor – No	Shor – Yes
Vlah – No	Vlah – No	Vlah – No	Vlah – No	Vlah – No	Vlah – No	Vlah – No
Ceban – No	Ceban – No	Ceban – No	Ceban – No	Ceban – No	Ceban – No	Ceban – No

Source: Author’s compilation, based on data collected from www.mid.ru and www.facebook.com

Figure 1. Frequency of geopolitical narratives deployed by the analysed Moldovan political actors, November 2023-January 2024



Source: Author's compilation, based on data collected from www.facebook.com

Secondly, the data collected revealed that Dodon emerged as the foremost advocate of Russia's geopolitical narratives among the four Moldovan political actors. Dodon's narratives covered a wide spectrum of categories, including the Russian war against Ukraine, European integration, the Transnistrian conflict and relations with Russia. Conversely, Shor's messages tended to stay away from discussions of the Russian war against Ukraine. He only indirectly referred to the Transnistria conflict by invoking Moldova's neutral status. Vlah predominantly addressed narratives related to European integration, albeit with indirect mentions of the Transnistrian conflict and relations with Russia. In contrast, Ceban primarily focused his geopolitical narratives on the category

of European integration. The most frequently employed category of geopolitical narratives by the Moldovan actors pertained to European integration, while the least approached category was the war in Ukraine (refer to Figure 1).

Thirdly, there were diverse locally crafted geopolitical narratives that reflect the unique lines of polarisation within Moldovan society, which are prone to political weaponisation. While these narratives were implicitly aligned with Russia's pejorative rhetoric toward the EU and the current Moldovan government, they also mirrored the geopolitical narratives propagated by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its disinformation campaigns. However, in the analysis it is indicated that the Moldovan political actors only occasionally converged, with more frequent disparities among them despite sharing geopolitical narratives that overlapped. The narratives that overlapped in the case of Dodon, Shor and Vlah revolved around the claim that "the EU overlooks abuses committed by the Moldovan government" and that the neutrality status is beneficial and should be preserved. On the other hand, Dodon and Shor both employed a similar message regarding "external control over Moldova", the "necessity to resume relations with Russia" and the negative effects of sanctions applied to Russia. Furthermore, Dodon and Ceban shared a narrative about "the politicisation of EU funds", while another instance of overlap occurred between Ceban and others regarding the idea that "the EU funds projects for Chisinau," which was similar to Vlah's message about Gagauzia.

Table 7. The convergence/overlapping of geopolitical narratives were produced locally in Moldova, but echoed Russian rhetoric against the EU and the Moldovan government.

Dodon	Shor	Vlah	Ceban
EU-related			
1. External intentions to involve Moldova in the war in Ukraine.	1. EU integration means loss of benefits from the Eurasian Economic Union.	1. Moldova should be in the EU.	1. Moldovan government is deviating from EU norms and standards (appointment of Romanian citizens, etc.).
2. EU integration without the Transnistrian region.	2. EU accession is not a viable project.	2. The EU supports projects in the regions (Gagauzia).	2. Unity around the EU integration ("Snagov Declaration").
3. Relations with minorities against EU standards.	3. The EU treats Moldova as a colony and carries costs (poverty, famine, slavery, etc.).	3. Moldova cannot join the EU with populist EU forces.	3. EU integration requires reforms.
4. Government and state institutions controlled by the West (Romania, Soros, etc.).	4. Moldova should have good relations with the East and the West.	4. The EU's decision to open EU accession negotiations was geopolitical.	4. EU funds must not be politicized or weaponized.

Dodon	Shor	Vlah	Ceban
EU-related			
5. EU (embassies) overlooks government abuses.	5. Accession to the EU means loss of sovereignty.	5. The appointment of Romanian citizens to key positions is a national treason.	5. The EU (institutions, member states, etc.) supports projects in Moldova (Chisinau).
6. Control of critical infrastructure taken over by Romania (in the transportation of natural gas).	6. Romania follows annexation plans (appointments to key positions, etc.).	6. A referendum before the accession negotiations does not make sense.	6. The Romanian language (symbols, etc.) must be preserved.
7. EU funds are politicized.	7. The EU has limited resources for the development of Moldova.	7. EU integration is used for electoral purposes.	7. Romania contributed to Moldova's accession process to the EU.
8. The blind transposition of EU rules produces costs (farmers, population, etc.).	8. EU standards are equal to Nazi level propaganda.	8. EU ignores government deviations.	
9. Under EU rules, fraudulent schemes can occur.	9. The EU ignores the government's decisions (sanctions on television channels, Gagauzian issue, etc.).		
10. The government is destabilizing the Transnistrian region through coercive economic measures.			
11. Public funds should not be spent on military equipment.			
Russia-related			
12. Anti-Russian position and sanctions are illegitimate.	10. Moldova should resume good relations with Russia.	9. Neutrality is beneficial for peace.	
13. It is necessary to resume good relations with Russia (language, trade, etc.).	11. Moldova should join the Eurasian Economic Union and not leave the CIS (investments, etc.).	10. The referendum on EU integration should be combined with neutrality.	
14. Moldova's foreign policy must be balanced.	12. The Moldovan government blocks cheaper gas from Russia.	11. Moldova should develop good relations with everyone.	
15. Preservation of neutrality equals to peace.	13. The neutrality status should not be undermined		
	14. Sanctions against Russia and the anti-Russian position affect Moldovan citizens.		

Source: Author's compilation, based on data collected from www.facebook.com

Fourthly, the geopolitical narratives utilised by the Moldovan political actors can be delineated into two primary categories: pro-Russian and anti-EU, which mirror the underlying polarisation within Moldovan society. Dodon and Shor prominently advocated for negative narratives directed at the EU, while concurrently endorsing positive narratives involving Russia. Vlah's narratives

exhibited critical elements concerning the EU, but veering more towards Euroscepticism rather than espousing radical anti-EU rhetoric. In contrast to his counterparts, Ion Ceban stood out for his avoidance of both anti-EU and pro-Russian narratives during the examined period, signalling a departure from the approaches adopted by the other three actors (refer to Table 8 below).

Table 8. East-West divide of the geopolitical narratives employed by the local political actors in Moldova, November 2023-December 2024

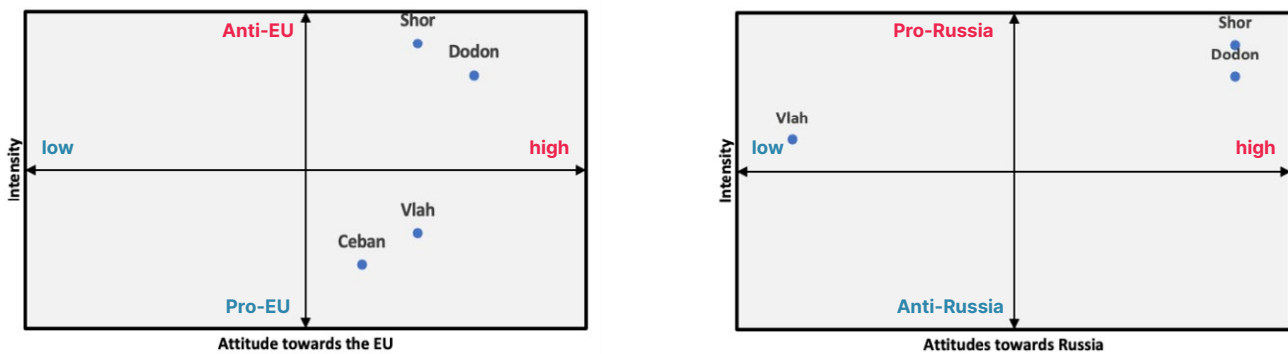
	Dodon	Shor	Vlah	Ceban
Pro-Russian	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The anti-Russian posture of the government does not represent people; 2. Trade and friendly political relations should be restored; 3. Russian language should remain the language of inter-ethnic communication. 4. Neutrality should be preserved. 5. Moldova should have a balanced foreign policy, putting on equal footing the relations with the EU and Russia. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moldova should have a balanced foreign policy, putting on equal footing the relations with the EU and Russia. 2. Trade and friendly political relations should be restored; 3. Moldova should join the Eurasian Economic Union and not leave the CIS; 4. The supply of cheaper Russian gas is being blocked by the government. 5. The status of neutrality should not be undermined. 6. Western sanctions on Russia affect Moldovan citizens. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moldova should have good relations with everyone. 2. Neutrality is beneficial for peace. 	-
Anti-EU	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The West/EU tries to drag Moldova into the war in Ukraine; 2. The West/EU controls Moldovan decision-makers; 3. Key-positions in state institutions are offered to Romanian citizens; 4. Gas infrastructure is taken over by the Romanian companies; 5. The embassies of the EU states are tolerating the actions of the government; 6. The adoption of the EU norms creates costs for Moldovan population – local producers, and farmers, traditional values. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EU integration caused economic costs for Moldova due to the loss of the opportunities linked to the Eurasian Economic Union; 2. Moldova has not positive prospect to join the EU anytime soon; 3. The EU is humiliating Moldova; 4. The EU integration means the loss of sovereignty; 5. The EU is outdated and financially bankrupt; 6. Romania plans to annex Moldova; 7. Romania is taking control over Moldova through the appointment of Romanian citizens in key state positions. 8. The embassies (including EU delegation) of the EU states are tolerating the actions of the government; 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The EU overlooks the deviations of the government. 2. The appointment of Romanian citizens is national treason. 	-

Source: Author's compilation, based on data collected from www.facebook.com

Additionally, as Figures 2 and 3 illustrate, through interpretative analysis of their statements, Shor and Dodon exhibited the most nuanced anti-EU narratives, whereas Ceban and Vlah conveyed more positive messages about the EU. Conversely, Shor and Dodon engaged in a competition of sorts within their geopolitical narratives to convey favourable opinions about Russia. Vlah's narratives contained indirect messages that could be interpreted as

advantageous for Russia; particularly, her emphasis on the importance of Moldova maintaining good relations with all parties. However, it's crucial to note that Vlah's narratives did not overtly portray Russia in a positive light, as was seen in the cases of Dodon or Shor. During the analysed period, Ceban refrained from expressing any messages that could be construed as portraying a positive or beneficial vision of Russia (refer to Figures 2 and 3).

Figures 2 (left) and **3** (right). Intensity of geopolitical narratives launched by the political actors in Moldova, November 2023-January 2024



Source: Author's compilation, based on data collected from www.facebook.com

Fifthly and finally, the production and dissemination of geopolitical narratives serve various intentions, which can be analysed through four lenses: 1) dismissing responsibility; 2) distorting reality; 3) distracting attention; and 4) inducing fear or dismay.¹⁶⁸ These functions help shape the narratives, to achieve specific goals or influence perceptions among the target audience.

In the analysed period, narratives aiming to **dismiss** responsibility were primarily found in the messages disseminated by the Russian MFA. These narratives often revolved around the situation of the Russian-speaking minority in Ukraine, which the Russian disinformation sought to justify as a pretext for the aggression against Ukraine. The utilisation of dismissal tactics was not observed in the geopolitical narratives employed by the Moldovan political actors. However, there was an exception in the case of Dodon, whose narrative concerning the “tragedy” of the war in Ukraine minimised the role of Russia as the aggressor in the conflict.

Conversely, a **distortion** of events was evident in the narratives propagated by both the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the four Moldovan political actors. Among these actors, Dodon was the most active in employing narratives aimed at distorting reality. His narratives often focused on the status of the Transnistrian region in the EU accession process, as well as the transposition of EU laws, the use of EU funds and the EU’s attitudes towards the Moldovan government. In his public statements, Dodon utilised two separate false allegations – regarding the government’s treatment of minorities in Moldova and the misuse of EU rules in fund management – which could shift attention away from the reforms and European integration.

Shor and Vlah also repeated narratives insinuating there is a strained relationship between the EU and the Moldovan authorities, suggesting that the EU deliberately overlooked decisions made by the Moldovan leaders. However, it is important to note that the EU monitors reform progress and formulates conditionality, even if it may adopt a cautious approach in criticising the Moldovan government. Shor also employed three factually inaccurate narratives to undermine the credibility of the EU and to erode public support for it in Moldova. These narratives questioned the EU’s viability as a development project, its resources to support projects in Moldova and the values it promotes, which Shor falsely associated with “Nazism.” Although Ceban did not employ geopolitical narratives falling under the category of attention distraction, Vlah’s sole narrative focused on the appointment of Romanian citizens in key positions, which she likened to state treason. Vlah’s narrative suggesting the impossibility of Moldova joining the EU under populist forces could also have distorting effects. The EU admits new member states based on the quality of their reforms and the achievement of benchmarks, rather than on political alignments. In the case of Ceban, who mentioned that the appointment of Romanian citizens to key positions in Moldova contradicted EU principles, the narrative could be misleading because the EU rules do not prescribe specific criteria governing recruitment policies in the member states.

Narratives attributed to the function of **distraction** often revolve around Moldova’s neutrality and the EU’s economic relevance, as observed in the case of Russia. By highlighting Moldova’s neutrality, Russian disinformation aims to diminish

the interest of Moldova in the modernisation of its defensive capacities against Russian threats. Similarly, undermining the economic capacity of the EU may serve to divert attention from the actual possibilities of Russia to position itself as economically attractive for Moldovan citizens. Among the cases of distraction observed among the Moldovan political actors, the most prominent narrative was the idea of a balanced foreign policy advocated assertively by Dodon, and more subtly by Vlah, which casts doubts on the attempts to prioritise European integration. Additionally, Shor attempted to equate EU integration with the loss of potential economic benefits from the Eurasian Economic Union. However, Shor deliberately overlooked the fact that around 65%¹⁶⁹ of Moldova's exports in 2023 were destined for the European market, and effective membership in the Eurasian Union was discarded because it would lead to the cancellation of free trade with the EU. This narrative aimed to obscure the fact that trade with Russia fell below 10% due to the reorientation of Moldovan exports toward the European market. This shift was driven by both the implementation of the EU-Moldova Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade

Agreement in 2014 and the necessity to reduce the risks stemming from frequent Russian trade embargoes.

The narratives conveying a sense of **dismay** originate from Russia's allegations that Moldova is being weaponised against it by the West, and is also aligning itself with anti-Russian sanctions. In both cases, the messages may raise fears that Russia may retaliate because Moldova has aligned itself with the EU. This fear is further fuelled by Dodon's insinuations that Moldova could be drawn into the war in Ukraine or that the government is destabilising the Transnistrian region. Additionally, Dodon has spread speculation that Moldova could be controlled by the West and that its critical infrastructure could be taken over, potentially fostering scepticism about European integration. Similarly, Shor's discourse aimed to demonise the EU and Romania, accusing them of intending "colonisation" and "annexation," respectively (*refer to Table 9 below*). These messages of dismay may induce feelings of fear, or intensify existing feeling that were provoked in the first place by the 2022 full-scale Russian military aggression against Ukraine.

Table 9. Functions of the narratives. Examples of narratives launched by the Russian Foreign Ministry and local political actors in Moldova, November 2023-December 2024

	Dismiss	Distort	Distract	Dismay
Russian MFA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Russian speaking minorities in Ukraine. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The 5+2 format/ negotiation process is being dismantled. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moldova's support for Ukraine contradicts Moldova's neutrality status. 2. The EU is losing its economic relevance 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Weaponization of Moldova against Russia. 2. Moldova's alignment with EU sanctions against Russia.
Dodon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The war in Ukraine is a tragedy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EU integration without the Transnistrian region. 2. The blind transposition of EU rules produces costs (farmers, population, etc.). 3. Public funds should not be spent on military equipment. 4. EU (embassies) overlooks government abuses. 5. The government's attitude towards minorities contradicts EU rules. 6. Under EU rules, fraudulent schemes can occur. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moldova should have a balanced foreign policy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. External intentions to involve Moldova in the war in Ukraine. 2. Government and state institutions controlled by the West (Romania, Soros, etc.). 3. Control of critical infrastructure taken over by Romania (in the transportation of natural gas). 4. The government is destabilizing the Transnistrian region through coercive economic measures.

Shor	-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The EU ignores the government's decisions (sanctions on television channels, Gagauzian issue, etc.). 2. EU accession is not a viable project. 3. The EU has limited resources for the development of Moldova. 4. EU standards are equal to Nazi level propaganda. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EU integration means loss of benefits from the Eurasian Economic Union. 2. Moldova has to buy cheaper Russian gas. 3. Moldova should join the Eurasian Union and not leave the CIS. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The EU treats Moldova as a colony and carries costs (poverty, famine, slavery, etc.). 2. Accession to the EU means loss of sovereignty. 3. Romania seeks annexation plans (appointments of Romanian specialists to key positions, etc.).
Vlah	-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moldova cannot join the EU with populist EU forces. 2. EU ignores government deviations. 3. The appointment of Romanian citizens to key positions is a national treason. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moldova should be friend with everyone. 	-
Ceban	-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Moldovan government is deviating from EU norms. and standards (appointment of Romanian citizens, etc.). 	-	-

Source: Author's compilation, based on data collected from www.mid.ru and www.facebook.com

Conclusions

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the narratives originating from both the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Moldovan political actors, as outlined earlier, it is evident that not all of the examined actors engage in Russian-originated disinformation, and those who engage, do so to varying degrees. This nuanced understanding permits a more tailored approach, preventing blind spots or excessively broad generalisations. The research findings reveal the underlying geopolitical narratives present in the Moldovan media and public discourse, which could directly or indirectly contribute to the dissemination of Russian disinformation. Here are the three key findings:

1. **A causal relationship between the narratives of these two groups of actors (Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Moldovan political actors, respectively) is challenging to determine, with only a partial correlation apparent.** The analysis indicated that while there are some correlations between the Russian narratives and those disseminated by the Moldovan political actors, both groups often react to domestic events within Moldova. Consequently, the Moldovan politicians may be quicker in crafting geopolitical messages, which

may subsequently be adopted by Russia. This suggests that if a causality is detected, it can flow in both directions. However, in the cases of Dodon and Shor, there was a visible tendency to draw inspiration from Russian disinformation, particularly regarding the EU (both Shor and Dodon) and the war in Ukraine (mainly Dodon). Vlah and Ceban primarily focused on domestic events that serve as prerequisites for formulating geopolitical narratives. While Shor, followed by Dodon, adopted a heavily negative discourse toward the EU (sanctions, institutions, values, intentions, etc.), Ceban stood out for avoiding criticism of EU-related aspects, a stance that was also, to a lesser extent, pursued by Vlah.

2. **The convergence between Russian narratives and those of Moldovan communication proxies is limited and sporadic, indicating a relatively low level of engagement and overlapping.** However, there were narratives with a larger degree of overlap, such as the idea that the EU or the West overlooks the actions of the Moldovan government and that the neutrality status should remain untouched, which were shared by Dodon, Shor and Vlah. In certain instances, there was an overlap in the geopolitical narratives that leaned towards positive messaging, as was evidenced

by Vlah's acknowledgment of EU projects and, to an even greater extent, by Ceban's commendation of them. Nonetheless, the Moldovan political actors often demonstrated creativity in developing locally-inspired geopolitical narratives that aligned with broader themes favourable to Russia, albeit with varying degrees of proximity. Dodon and Shor emerged as the only two Moldovan actors analysed who were closely aligned with Russian disinformation concerning Moldova. These motifs included narratives suggesting that Moldova is being drawn into a war, that the "5+2" format is being dismantled and that the EU integration process excludes the Transnistrian region.

3. Finally, **upon analysing the narratives to identify those that aim to dismiss, distort, distract and dismay, it becomes apparent that Russia deploys direct narratives in Moldova fulfilling all four functions of disinformation.** This strategy closely mirrored Dodon's geopolitical discourse. However, among the other Moldovan political actors associated closely or remotely with Russia, distortion techniques were more predominantly employed (Shor and to a lesser extent Vlah, with one case reported in the case of Ceban), with less of an emphasis on distracting or inducing dismay (involving mainly Shor). The circulated geopolitical narratives are aimed at minimising the role of Russia as an aggressor state (Dodon), blaming or discrediting the EU (mainly Dodon and Shor), and countering EU integration with the idea of a "balanced foreign policy" (Dodon and Vlah), among others.

Recommendations:

To address the issues of Russian disinformation or geopolitical narratives crafted by the Moldovan actors, whether they are closely or remotely associated with a Russian influence, the following recommendations are proposed to adopt a systemic and systematic approach:

Early warning/rapid alert systems integrated into Moldova's social media are crucial to effectively contain repetitive or high-intensity narratives.

Contingency procedures are necessary to swiftly halt the spread of such narratives. This entails reporting the sources of dissemination, including both the platforms and the individuals responsible for spreading such narratives. By doing so, the contamination of the public and media space with

narratives intended to incite unrest or disrupt public order can be mitigated. To achieve this, a robust and extensively deployed rapid alert/early warning system within the social media networks is essential. This system would enable a rapid detection and response by the strategic communication and law enforcement agencies. Prompt action is vital for immunising the public agenda against narratives that have the potential to trigger significant ripple effects.

Objective/impartial communication regarding the benefits and drawbacks of European integration and other geopolitical narratives is crucial for fostering critical thinking and minimising the impact of disinformation operations.

Concealing critical aspects of the geopolitical narratives could breed distrust among the public, particularly among traditionally sceptical groups such as retirees, individuals with limited travel experience, rural populations, socioeconomically vulnerable groups and ethnic minorities. These groups may be more susceptible to misinformation that contradicts national interests or that is not regulated by state institutions. To counter the effects of disinformation, state institutions, media organisations (which should play a leading role) and specialised civil society organisations should conduct regular public events aimed at gathering feedback from people in diverse social categories. Tailored communication campaigns should be developed to build informational resilience across various social environments, engaging citizens of different ages, educational backgrounds, occupations, languages and ethnicities. Focusing solely on one or two demographic categories, such as Russian speakers or regional populations, risks producing "blind spots" to both short-term disinformation campaigns and long-term psychological operations. Efforts to combat disinformation should therefore strike a balance between prioritising limited resources and fostering inclusivity, to cultivate a broader societal resilience and public immunity against d(m)isinformation.

Enhancing the readiness of public institutions to promptly disseminate information of public interest is crucial for (re-)directing citizens towards credible sources of information, including state channels, media outlets and external partners.

While a robust level of preparedness is necessary on a daily basis, it should be heightened, especially prior to significant political, economic and social events (international summits, censuses, referendums, etc.). To achieve this, the relevant

institutions should have online informative toolkits readily available (with significant cyber security and alternative platforms secured), to swiftly address d(m)isinformation as soon as it emerges. This proactive approach could help regain control of the public agenda and effectively counteract malign interferences in the communication between the state and its citizens.

Establishing robust guidelines to assist national stakeholders involved in both the media sector and communication at the level of state institutions in recognising when and how to safely disregard (ignore) low-impact narratives is a crucial step in preventing their unnecessary amplification and spread. These guidelines

should provide a clear methodology for identifying narratives that warrant disregarding by state institutions, civil society and the media, to prevent them from gaining undue attention and credibility. This necessity becomes particularly evident when specialised state institutions fail to engage in pre-bunking activities, which should ideally serve to alert the media institutions and other stakeholders about emerging narratives aimed at discrediting state institutions. In the absence of proactive measures to address these narratives, establishing clear guidelines becomes essential for mitigating their influence and safeguarding against their detrimental effects on the public discourse and societal cohesion.

Endnotes

1. EEAS, Disinformation and Foreign Interference: Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the EEAS Conference, January 2024, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/disinformation-and-foreign-interference-speech-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-eeas_en
2. WHO, <https://www.who.int/news-room/spotlight/let-s-flatten-the-infodemic-curve>
3. Dionis Cenusă, China, Russia and Covid-19: Vaccine Diplomacy at Different Capacity, ISPI, 6 July 2021, <https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/china-russia-and-covid-19-vaccine-diplomacy-different-capacity-31070>
4. Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community of Germany, <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/EN/themen/disinformation/faq-disinformation-eng.pdf>
5. EEAS, 2nd EEAS Report on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Threats A Framework for Networked Defence, January 2024, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/2024/EEAS-2nd-Report%20on%20FIMI%20Threats-January-2024_0.pdf
6. Idem
7. World Economic Forum, The Global Risks Report 2024, https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_The_Global_Risks_Report_2024.pdf
8. World Economic Forum, The Global Risks Report 2023, https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risks_Report_2023.pdf
9. EEAS, 2nd EEAS Report on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Threats A Framework for Networked Defence, January 2024, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/2024/EEAS-2nd-Report%20on%20FIMI%20Threats-January-2024_0.pdf
10. The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Hybrid CoE), <https://www.hybridcoe.fi/coi-strategy-and-defence/>
11. IRI Moldova, National Poll, July-August 2023, <https://www.iri.org/resources/national-poll-moldova-july-august-2023/>
12. IMAS, Barometrul Socio-politic, December 2023, [https://imas.md/pic/archives/42/\[imas\]%20barometrul%20socio-politic_decembrie%202023.pdf](https://imas.md/pic/archives/42/[imas]%20barometrul%20socio-politic_decembrie%202023.pdf)
13. WatchDog, Sonaj, Socio-politic, June 2023, https://watchdog.md/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Sondaj-WD_RO_versiune-integrala_iunie-2023-1.pdf
14. Institute for Public Policies, Barometrul Opiniei Publice, <http://bop.ipp.md/>
15. U.S. Department of the Treasury, Treasury Targets Corruption and the Kremlin's Malign Influence Operations in Moldova, October 2022, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy1049>
16. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Выступление заместителя Постоянного представителя Российской Федерации при ОБСЕ А.А.Волгарёва на заседании Постоянного совета ОБСЕ, 9 ноября 2023 года, 10.11.2023, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1914377/>
17. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, О вызове в МИД России Посла Молдавии в Москве, 15.10.2024, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1924829/>
18. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Ответ официального представителя МИД России М.В.Захаровой на вопрос СМИ в связи с завершением саммита ЕС, 16.12.2023, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1921502/>
19. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Ответ официального представителя МИД России М.В.Захаровой на вопрос СМИ в связи с завершением саммита ЕС, 16.12.2023, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1921502/>
20. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Комментарий официального представителя МИД России М.В.Захаровой в связи с 20-летием несостоявшейся реинтеграции Молдавии, 24.11.2023, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1917333/>
21. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Интервью директора Второго департамента стран СНГ МИД России А.А.Полищука информационному агентству ТАСС, 28 января 2024 года, 28.01.2024, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1928018/>

22. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Выступление и ответы на вопросы СМИ Министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации С.В.Лаврова в ходе пресс-конференции по итогам деятельности российской дипломатии в 2023 году, Москва, 18 января 2024 года, 18.01.2024, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1926392/>
23. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Ответ официального представителя МИД России М.В.Захаровой на вопрос СМИ в связи с продолжающейся накачкой Молдавии западным оружием, 17.11.2023, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1915433/>
24. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Комментарий официального представителя МИД России М.В.Захаровой в связи с 20-летием несостоявшейся реинтеграции Молдавии, 24.11.2023, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1917333/>
25. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Комментарий официального представителя МИД России М.В.Захаровой в связи с 20-летием несостоявшейся реинтеграции Молдавии, 24.11.2023, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1917333/>
26. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Интервью директора Второго департамента стран СНГ МИД России А.А.Полищука информационному агентству ТАСС, 28 января 2024 года, 28.01.2024, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1928018/>
27. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Ответ официального представителя МИД России М.В.Захаровой на вопрос СМИ о присоединении Молдавии к антироссийским санкциям ЕС, 24.11.2023, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1917328/>
28. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Выступление Министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации С.В.Лаврова в ходе 30-го заседания СМВД ОБСЕ, Скопье, 30 ноября 2023 года, 30.11.2023, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1918477/>
29. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, О вызове в МИД России Посла Молдавии в Москве, 15.10.2024, <https://mid.ru/ru/maps/md/1924829/>
30. Number of followers of Igor Dodon's profile as of 04.02.2024.
31. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 12.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/pYxPyjhehB/>
32. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 30.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/dodon.igor1/posts/pfbid02iQkFZWmCVCNqS9AS3VBJXKBoGTw2E2WQYQu5FeyPsMQDogotRUgoEt8LRRmTb7ETI>
33. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 30.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/dodon.igor1/posts/pfbid02iQkFZWmCVCNqS9AS3VBJXKBoGTw2E2WQYQu5FeyPsMQDogotRUgoEt8LRRmTb7ETI>
34. Radio Free Europe Moldova, Moldova a primit un radar din Franța, estimat la 14 milioane de euro, December 2023, <https://moldova.europalibera.org/a/moldova-a-primit-un-radar-din-franta-estimati-la-14-milioane-de-euro/32740219.html>
35. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 12.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/pYWjWDFyoS/>
36. Romania-Insider, Ukraine officially recognizes that Romanian minority speaks Romanian, not "Moldovan", October 2023, <https://www.romania-insider.com/ukraine-recognizes-romanian-minority-language-october-2023>
37. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 15.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pZV3K-WE8L/>
38. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 15.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/dodon.igor1/posts/pfbid02M8Ly9zdqxtEEM9PecVtrhbsQfJ9sa6163v9udykzhV5AKka2ZPEdRfTChu3AMPq5I>
39. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 10.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/q0ne79DOsO/>
40. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 11.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/pYWCn5MxBO/>
41. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 03.11.2023, <https://fb.watch/p-gOjmB3rL/>
42. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 29.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pYWXViyFGX/>
43. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 19.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pYYIU2Zs1k/>
44. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 19.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pYYZxVHsBH/>
45. Interfax, Romanian ex-finance minister Dragu heads up National Bank of Moldova, December 2023,

<https://interfax.com/newsroom/top-stories/97924/>

46. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 22.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/dodon.igor1/posts/pfbid02WkxJmQTojehpUs8CaLT7wtM8BppKZahnjgoWogiy4TznanQYtW3BMXWFucMin4FI>
47. Digi24, 24.09.2023, <https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/economie/energie/transgaz-preia-sistemul-national-de-transport-de-gaze-naturale-din-republica-moldova-2510749>
48. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 18.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pZUHLdJsKq/>
49. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 28.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/dodon.igor1/posts/pfbid02ou6QSHpEgeN4tFRhk7XPRRMdBqvryW45hvwQidTrLSbnZrGiWi96sAmEjQmaQdLnl>
50. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 28.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/dodon.igor1/posts/pfbid02ou6QSHpEgeN4tFRhk7XPRRMdBqvryW45hvwQidTrLSbnZrGiWi96sAmEjQmaQdLnl>
51. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 12.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pZWfF936pr/>
52. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 13.01.2023, <https://fb.watch/pZWawYZ2cU/>
53. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 08.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pZWxbJpYyU/>
54. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 06.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pZXob33yjJ/>
55. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 01.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/p-hpgfLXXn/>
56. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 27.11.2023, https://fb.watch/p_6xfzT-o1/
57. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 12.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/pYVIVCpEgl/>
58. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 12.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/pYVKcLxDYu/>
59. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 21.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pYYrYapxou/>
60. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 08.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pZWK59hwXL/>
61. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 01.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pZXuKx1tgk/>
62. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 19.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pYYZxVHsBH/>
63. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 18.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/pZTEDljEWK/>
64. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 24.11.2023, https://fb.watch/p_6-UdObUl/
65. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 03.11.2023, <https://fb.watch/p-gC7rGg76/>
66. Newsmaker, 30.10.2023, <https://newsmaker.md/ro/video-comunista-diana-caraman-data-afara-de-la-dezbaterile-moldova-1-si-radio-moldova-pentru-ca-a-insistat-sa-vorbeasca-rusa-explicatia-trm/>
67. Igor Dodon, Facebook, 21.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/dodon.igor1/posts/pfbid0kPREQmmpYoVYkYeHxwdpjE6uwYnkLRDzsvuYhWTBFx3crRims7RR3PXonYRU4RGdl>
68. Number of followers of Ilan Shor's profile as of 04.02.2024.
69. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 30.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid0zdvL3Ky6cHCTAGFoAWnZXyHoBQG7FTwx6rbabeDBpkcbcprkPnCC1Eg5apVaK1crl>
70. Eurasian Economic Union, Observer state status at the EAEU, https://eec.eaeunion.org/en/comission/department/dep_razv_integr/mezhdunarodnoe-sotrudnichestvo/o-statuse-gosudarstva-nabyludatelya.php
71. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 25.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/p-wa3a-9GB/>
72. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 25.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/p-r7v-yOWM/>
73. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 28.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/928353422050022>
74. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 21.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1065913077783846>
75. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 31.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid028AYQVbQ4EKoCcS7Sy6frkkSEBqJWFkUHkzNTGhzaBgaM1YqdRfV8996KH1GhcoQol>
76. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 31.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid028AYQVbQ4EKoCcS7Sy6frkkSEBqJWFkUHkzNTGhzaBgaM1YqdRfV8996KH1GhcoQol>

77. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 17.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid02rc8xuj89gMZCRahmmSe7zhnTVYpBradXanZwRHUVtJ5NY6d45KwRVXV4TdUyKEsrl>
78. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 19.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid02WjkdZBAHPmng7t3rFzQmyTbD1HUpahL47BHYrRQMStzPDuYNEQFvSUgqvCdhCqrl>
79. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 29.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid0qd2FAxJBaHgveNZxan8HhyJ8swLpJCQmkPfqRK6FmF4At5wBWgCbt2CKHX25NQCf>
80. Reuters, Far-right Polish lawmaker uses fire extinguisher on Hanukkah candles in parliament, December 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/far-right-polish-lawmaker-uses-fire-extinguisher-hanukkah-candles-parliament-2023-12-12/>
81. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 31.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1009366046834617>
82. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/28372/RYSZARD_CZARNECKI/home
83. IPN, Referendum on Moldova's EU accession to be constitutional, 6.2.2024, https://www.ipn.md/en/referendum-on-moldovas-eu-accession-to-be-constitutional-7965_1102483.html
84. Radio Free Europe, Moldova Bars Pro-Russian Party's Candidates From Local Elections, November 2023, <https://www.rferl.org/a/moldova-pro-russian-party-banned/32670205.html>
85. IPN, Referendumul privind aderarea Republicii Moldova UE va fi constitutional, February 2024, https://www.ipn.md/ro/referendumul-privind-aderarea-republicii-moldova-ue-va-fi-constitutional-7965_1102483.html
86. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 28.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/382406674152519>
87. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 25.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/p-ryjvk74t/>
88. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 16.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid02iCdA51zDSRgDRWgZqKs4wz18kdPHUPcH1mzLuETd9vftbhSn8PDjGmwz2PUYBKCUf>
89. G4Media.ro, Claudiu Târziu, lider al partidului extremist AUR, discurs revizionist în plin război la granița României. El cere unirea cu teritoriile din Ucraina, după modelul Șoșoacă, January 2024, <https://www.g4media.ro/claudiu-tarziu-lider-al-partidului-extremist-aur-discurs-revizionist-in-plin-razboi-la-granita-romaniei-el-cere-unirea-cu-teritoriile-din-ucraina-dupa-modelul-sosoaca.html>
90. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 29.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid05Jep3jDTdSd1LwvfuQNXj9GFntFrJbi92rbQjNRC4WjtGwwz6Lfb4EK7PEe7ATHil>
91. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 23.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid02Hs5oKY3AGECenRettUUyrZunFny3DYoeQ6hSiAFjCgNNF76bWXJ4oQpn7jLE1Wb2f>
92. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 26.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid0TCYkjaouvYoz2f6iE7mLcsaGYzRAzLjV9hMij5KM2WiDBVsYBCLWbZiThwkmhmWeWf>
93. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 19.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid02D7S9n55EKkE2LmZQDkTRPYA3Jq6CMCAZmnyqbiSYoiho4Z7sGrrwvBTMyTxvdFfl>
94. G4Media.ro, The three Romanians leading key institutions in Moldova and the nine high-level Romanian advisors to the Chisinau government, January 2024, <https://www.g4media.ro/analysis-the-three-romanians-leading-key-institutions-in-moldova-and-the-nine-high-level-romanian-advisors-to-the-chisinau-government.html>
95. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 10.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid02b2XuarStMEZaiYgTtvpX9nibZYzWZc9zCgoWC2VoGrDkST66me4JAVaqynQa2KxWf>
96. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 28.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/400444442412283>
97. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 14.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid0E7YBgH9NDmbHthak8UPis96kHyhNB3m9GLmASbJgqs2DfzmBkghwLujNSw2jRcSbl>
98. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 11.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid032Df1ZagirBPDgXPtYZwdM24UAJRVyWSqXY4iSh8HQ61rBwbc5tJafXH6NpX4f9kFl>
99. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 12.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid0BjpkXUnTi6R7eg3dFXtzvg2bYyDhxBbhuetL5JR2jMA4MD8175H9o675Rk4emyevf>
100. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 31.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/>

[pfbid028AYQVbQ4EKoCcS7Sy6frkkSEBgJWFkUHkzNTGhzaBgaM1YqdRfV8996KH1GhcoQol](https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid028AYQVbQ4EKoCcS7Sy6frkkSEBgJWFkUHkzNTGhzaBgaM1YqdRfV8996KH1GhcoQol)

101. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 11.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid0sRRRj8hpi6bQXiTcKbAs21EKAvLbjQnrJ9QuFJRnjcjkMbAB5uDiPWeSPeouUXQzsol>
102. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 30.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/p-pErESfVq/>
103. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 01.11.2023, <https://fb.watch/p-Cmiixz-e/>
104. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 14.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid0aqBDEzrVERYEzX6cb3vhESRW71rvpnccz8aDMQtqo5MVMkeJXzUP7mRmeFRWYeGQI>
105. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 04.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/p-yq6PtIxi/>
106. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 26.11.2023 <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1091983508374112>
107. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 16.01.2024. <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid02iCdA51zDSRgDRWgZqKs4wz18kdPHUPcH1mzLuETd9vftbhSn8PDjGmwz2PUYBKCUI>
108. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 15.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid0gsdcfMoGNX1US1UkiWEHNERG5TTd7Syb5k1QTxq7Mo3jgdkWq1unzYP6gUhieRAGI>
109. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 08.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/ilanshorofficial/posts/pfbid0HvMtGqaZYU31mEpMdYiua36cD6MSYNAFgLCwBV7Cq9yb5yUoSjY8kBASUK67eNZmI>
110. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 03.11.2023, <https://fb.watch/p-CfrmbnUo/>
111. Irina Vlah, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/vlahmd>
112. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 12.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/q2IkLAZY0d/>
113. Ilan Shor, Facebook, 15.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/vlahmd/posts/pfbid037V1NT1HUj8vYnefGX5yuucti1ArnjLms2uvAT4V5qB4Gx3oZ9GvvYf4J7zNMtmDqqI>
114. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 19.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/vlahmd/posts/pfbid051Q2zwcAndQyxuTNFWNxxzhqaR5JhR7FbCjX6w6zQbKysEDcBvBJmz8xHgENKxghdl>
115. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 23.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/vlahmd/posts/pfbid0271pDbmFkznQawoHnTSzJnyUVDPRBJUXPqshxReBr1G9jG4qcEL5LvsWkkKshtzGKI>
116. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 22.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/q21t0o2QVP/>
117. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 15.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/vlahmd/posts/pfbid037V1NT1HUj8vYnefGX5yuucti1ArnjLms2uvAT4V5qB4Gx3oZ9GvvYf4J7zNMtmDqqI>
118. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 18.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/q2kCfGxuGT/>
119. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 18.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/q2kUaM3tE6/>
120. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 25.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/2109777836029845>
121. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 23.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1389270221724604>
122. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 24.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/vlahmd/posts/pfbid0A3rz9gncxgKxGmr72xhjWejLjXJ86uCGkdqFwNXsnFpGcSX8k3KUxkoxftoLEZ6hl>
123. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 17.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/vlahmd/posts/pfbid0W6x526iQ6UZxkjNFoCWNH2yvXNgEJfAppNEJFIECJZdgJbsa2fFvvHGStKsBX79dl>
124. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 28.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/q23wOvHUNb/>
125. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 17.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/vlahmd/posts/pfbid0W6x526iQ6UZxkjNFoCWNH2yvXNgEJfAppNEJFIECJZdgJbsa2fFvvHGStKsBX79dl>
126. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 10.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/q23mq-Jf8l/>
127. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 08.11.2023, <https://fb.watch/q3JHhDo3pM/>
128. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 25.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/2109777836029845>
129. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 24.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/vlahmd/posts/pfbid0A3rz9gncxgKxGmr72xhjWejLjXJ86uCGkdqFwNXsnFpGcSX8k3KUxkoxftoLEZ6hl>
130. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 16.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/q222mkji4V/>

131. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 10.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/q23cWF0qy3/>
132. Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=111918&lang=ro
133. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 15.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/q22WdeKJVD/>
134. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 15.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/q238tNkwoX/>
135. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 15.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1087597082595960>
136. Ion Ceban, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public>
137. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 26.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid0d9WG6HBH8EY2Fd7d2RbheFJBTjiNsWynysSraHHeh1ArtGcMTMmeMYHtmdnszgvQl>
138. Irina Vlah, Facebook, 02.01.2024, https://fb.watch/q8mWxgEm_G/
139. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 31.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid029hYmUmWNRpBab787uvNRzHs7JnfKixiolTfwSgbGxBujWX1kpRJJ3U3NiP8dwnrJI>
140. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 17.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/q5K9x4GM6U/>
141. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 18.12.2023, https://fb.watch/q8oqOR_J0K/
142. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 20.12.2023, <https://fb.watch/q8oj2dzGPA/>
143. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 26.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid0SgxDRu26oYVKsJ4Dx9ajE4PyWYBFHWdPcmDaTLVhK83odA13BLELq5Y1nGLM944yI>
144. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 22.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/q5JNXelfs/>
145. The City Hall of the Municipality of Chisinau, <https://petitii.chisinau.md/>
146. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 22.1.2024, <https://fb.watch/q5JFkaLhrO/>
147. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 15.1.2024, <https://fb.watch/q5KdQG3hYe/>
148. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 4.1.2024, <https://fb.watch/q8mLjXkluy/>
149. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 23.1.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid02HRCbbWAaEsFhxuCq7zj1CsHvLaek8ENENNPPgKYxE61fmeqhbvWjtCtXd4yX6YI>
150. Snagov Declaration, 2000, <https://www.cdep.ro/pdfs/dec-en.pdf>
151. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 24.12.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid025LWTXBnZpYEEdq5DC4DQ7GUPeAUL8q4xFv2ibJPM9WAwehMVavko2z8rCpuhZisl>
152. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 08.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid02mrVUICAZUZkjYGHpuddwRSj7sUmBBYhaakWMddCK3WAnbVf3dwUwy7SV1VRrFEosl>
153. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 15.12.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid023R7cVhbYip6HEqXXx9MvS1vwpkzU7cta2egoV7AxKtqcALwQ5h8dVcRzXqRA7bYI>
154. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 14.12.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid025KrTDyFvFN5Ur5uKLSfj8rHv7aeDAmFqvgx6ZRQmUgmumZj76RrFzGfYjSax3nKMI>
155. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 31.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid02B1EMmDYCD8FmeFTFJKzbqhxsATf9xk2QTTWLyh7mCSakTcSZmsU55U8gBA6PDScl>
156. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 19.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid02fcZz6iYsrodRUzVPZ1NjQbuk85p2o5Jf7rsBqzvWuWD6nvpc88ghDseqTP5JLQH9I>
157. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 27.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid0x5HW3Vmq6X9yVN4UGMfGwCKrMgGdpLqX42uvDkDsW2ct7t6fTkmU1G2jywf4jrzAI>
158. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 24.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid0s7jb7sZEhV4KGVCPyyaX3vRYGXCXe6koCMXxFbQ2D4BxCFWyYae6eLR3g2xYh8Mql>
159. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 23.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid0m9RtFDHtqhmNMFJo7HZ7TmP7tmAsCGkrSoj6PoWEVjWX5vUYsrdne1nPPzVJnky8I>
160. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 30.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid0jGYhb9pbFshENA6MTm6jknCmiW8kBPrrwX3tPdKaeaQU4ycG8owE93Gxojrvnet1I>

161. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 24.01.2024, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid038H6PzXnNW2yFnHRvHCgyuFb6U81vfWHJnGUxiuDhS3XtBc5TJwqTLoqTCVp38RUI>
162. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 15.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/q8m9NpME7N/>
163. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 15.01.2024, <https://fb.watch/q8meaWGgSY/>
164. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 09.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid0QTeWkhmqmknz4vK8Bem3G1sUAwGeJzAakXDPdyXSv6QqFuwiA8zCBwr7Xhr6zc6pl>
165. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 28.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid0J1vxEQiAjJWPNjMrbvmkcaX8WMfY6mekQpLxBC8ErEmMu8eHpNnWHWQRWbjki5Hxl>
166. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 24.11.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid09LFgjhsb6BDON1EtGrHxULpaJ3yTWonXv1mDUKfQ7zxanpUsRZoNHJTs6nm3LNZsl>
167. Ion Ceban, Facebook, 28.12.2023, <https://www.facebook.com/Ion.Ceban.public/posts/pfbid032woytaNdMipbfip2RpbpMFovJyv85A8iS1LqDDkJMahTK2nTrN2rfD6LLEawZx9VI>
168. According to the terminology provided by the German Ministry of Interior and Homeland, Russia's main disinformation techniques include the following: dismiss, distortion, distraction and dismay. "Dismiss" seeks to deny factual information through the use of false information. "Distortion" is used to present facts in a disadvantageous light. "Distraction" involves using false arguments to divert attention from unfavourable information about itself. "Dismay" is used to awaken existing fears or generate a climate of fear and distrust. https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/EN/themen/disinformation/faq-disinformation-eng.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=6
169. National Bureau of Statistic, Comerțul internațional cu mărfuri al Republicii Moldova în luna decembrie 2023 și în anul 2023 pe ansamblu, https://statistica.gov.md/ro/comertul-international-cu-marfuri-al-republicii-moldova-in-luna-decembrie-2023-s-9539_60951.html