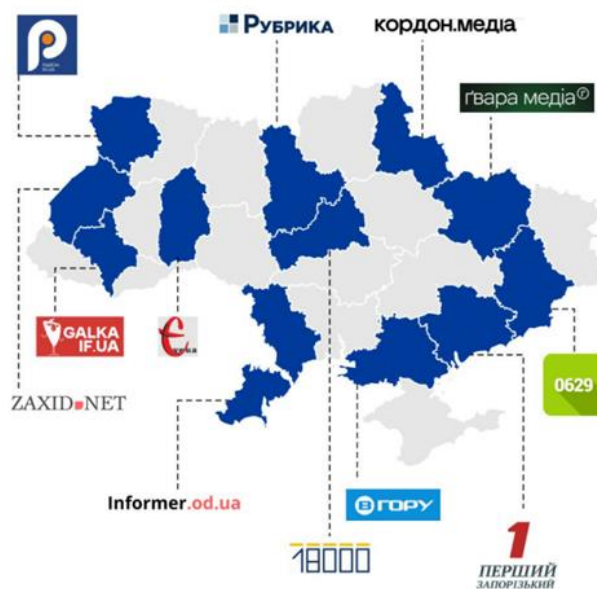




Tensions in Ukraine-Poland Relations, Ukrainian Drones on the Black Market and Termination of Temporary Protection for Ukrainians Liable for Military Service

Results of pro-Russian information manipulation and disinformation monitoring targeting the EU-Ukraine relations in June – August 2026

The Kremlin and pro-Russian propagandists continue to exploit the EU-Ukraine relations and Ukraine's European integration reforms, seeking to convince Ukrainians that the EU Member States do not view Ukraine as an equal partner and are exploiting its resources for their own benefit. That was one of the reasons why they targeted Ukraine's information environment with manipulative content and false claims in the summer of 2026.



Regional EU Disinformation Resilience-related Network of Journalists, 2025-2026

In response to these threats, the Regional EU Disinformation Resilience-related Network of Journalists, together with the DARE project team, debunks the most prominent disinformation narratives concerning European integration and the European Union's support for Ukraine.

Key Takeaways:

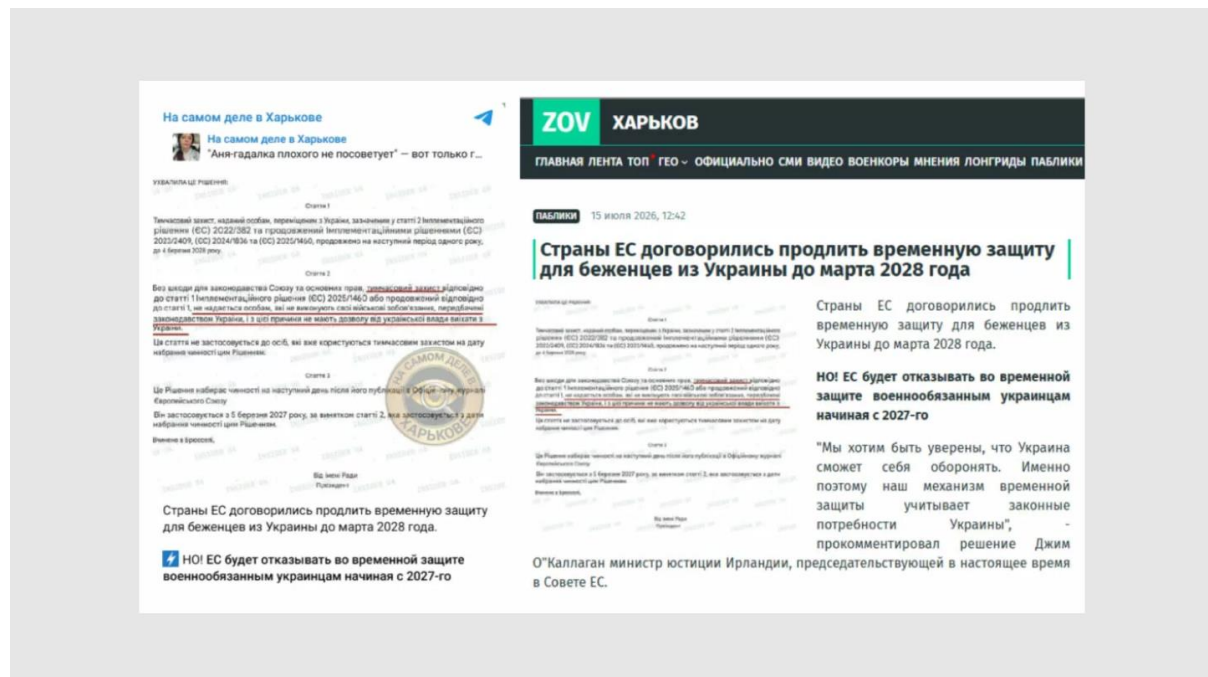
- Building on the [spring trend](#), false claims that **the EU would allegedly terminate the provision of temporary protection for all Ukrainians liable for military service from 2027** circulated across many regions. They were detected in Kyiv, Odesa, Zaporizhzhia, and Cherkasy regions. Propagandists not only speculated on the topic of mobilisation, which remains sensitive for Ukrainians, but also aimed to convince that the EU Member States want to “leave Ukrainians without shelter” in the circumstances of the full-scale war. The topic continued with claims that **the EU allegedly supported the mobilisation of women and introduced mandatory data verification through the “Rezerv+” application for female refugees living in the EU**. These narratives aimed to spark public panic and paint the EU as “a cynical power willing to trade Ukrainian women's lives”.
- **In the summer of 2026, the number of false and manipulative claims about Ukraine-Poland relations increased** in the regional information environment amid recent tensions between the two countries. These claims were detected in Rivne, Volyn, Khmelnytskyi, Zaporizhzhia, and Kharkiv regions. The disinformation campaign targeted Polish-Ukrainian relations with a wave of false narratives. The claims ranged from denying rights of Ukrainians currently residing in Poland to fabricating stories about erecting a UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army) memorial in Ukraine's Volyn Region timed to exploit the Volhynia Massacre remembrance day in Poland. The narratives also falsely accused Poland of plotting to seize Ukrainian lands, while completely blocking Ukraine's EU accession process.
- **Pro-Kremlin propagandists weaponised natural disasters in the EU MS, like Spain and France's forest fires, to push false narratives.** In the temporary Russian-occupied territories (TOT) of Zaporizhzhia Region, they spread lies claiming Spain's fire response was crippled by a lack of helicopters as a result of “anti-Russian sanctions”; and that a French region would be renamed “*Ukraine*” to secure the French government aid. Meanwhile, in Donetsk, Ukraine was blamed for Europe's heatwave, with one outlet falsely linking it to Kyiv's strikes on Russian oil refineries. The goal? To paint the EU's suffering as the fault of its own “anti-Russian” policies – and frame Ukraine as a threat to Europe's security.
- **The false narratives accusing the EU of militarisation and preparing for war with Russia** appeared in Odesa and Cherkasy regions, as well as in the TOT of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions. In addition to shifting responsibility for Russia's military aggression onto EU Member States, these narratives were also aimed at fueling Euroscepticism among Ukrainians by convincing them that the EU was the one “willing to prolong the war and sacrifice Ukrainian lives”.
- **Lies about corruption in Ukraine took a new twist in Odesa**, where propagandists faked a well-known Polish media ‘investigation’ – complete with a theft scandal, where over a million dollars was stolen, targeting Ukraine's Defence Minister. The catch? The story was pure fiction.

- Our analysts also detected other falsehoods, ranging from ‘**Ukraine’s EU dreams are dead**’ to ‘**EU’s Russian sanctions backfired**’ and ‘**Eurointegration reforms will ruin Kyiv**’. Propagandists and FIMI actors flooded the information space with defeatist myths – topped off by claims of “*Ukraine fatigue* gripping Europe”. Their goal? To convince audiences that the “EU is abandoning Ukraine... and Ukraine is a liability the EU can’t afford.”

Key Monitoring Results

“The EU Has Closed Borders for Military Liable Ukrainians”

The summer of 2026 was marked by numerous messages circulating in the Ukrainian regional information environment about the possible termination of temporary protection for Ukrainians liable for military service in EU Member States. Claims that **the EU will refuse to extend temporary protection for military-liable Ukrainians from 2027** were detected on Telegram channels in Kharkiv, Kyiv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Zaporizhzhia regions.



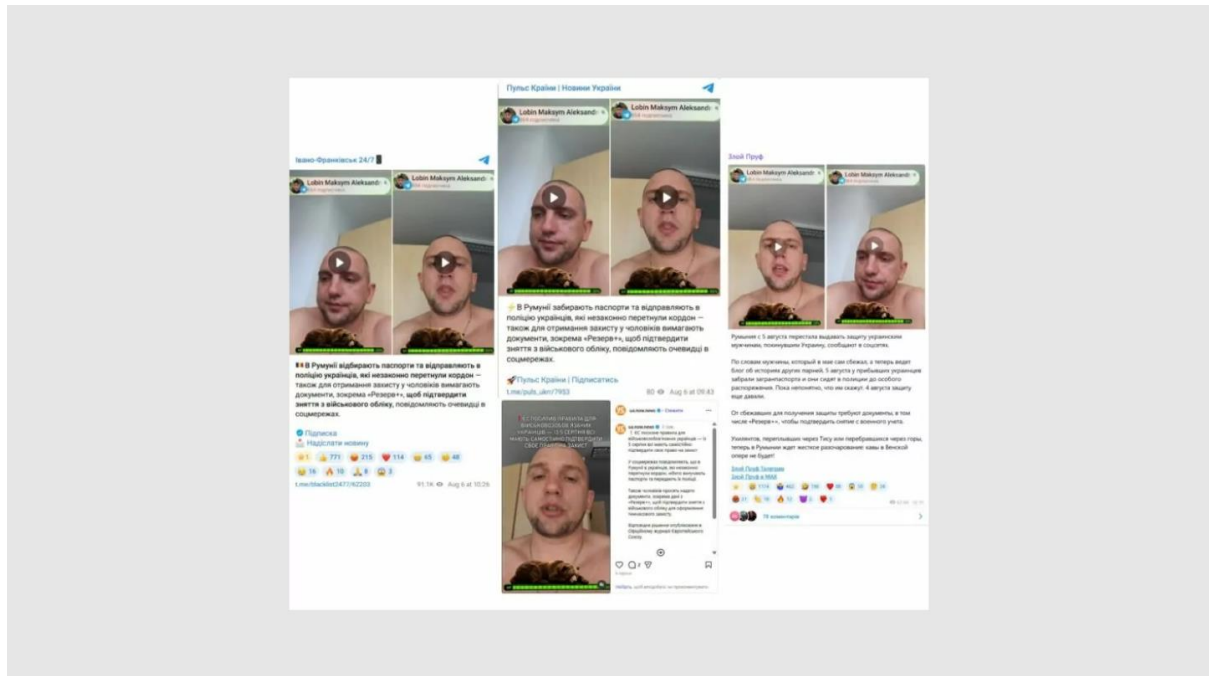
Source: [Gwara.Media](#)

These messages are a good example of shifting emphasis and engaging in information manipulation. They appeared right after 15 July, when **the EU Council supported the EU Commission's proposal to extend the temporary protection status for Ukrainians until 4 March 2028**. At the same time, the Council approved new conditions for certain categories of liable Ukrainians – they will have to prove their legal departure from Ukraine.

Instead, the administrators of Telegram channels have shifted the emphasis from extending temporary protection for Ukrainians abroad to the alleged complete cancellation of this mechanism for all Ukrainians liable for military service.

In reality, this decision entails the possibility of refusing to grant temporary protection to new applicants who do not fulfil their military duty under Ukrainian law or lack legal grounds to move abroad. The changes took effect on 5 August 2026.

Then, manipulative publications about alleged arrests of Ukrainians in Romania have appeared on social media, particularly in Kharkiv region. In the video that was published on Telegram channels, the man said that Ukrainians who crossed the border illegally have their passports confiscated and are detained in the building of the border police.



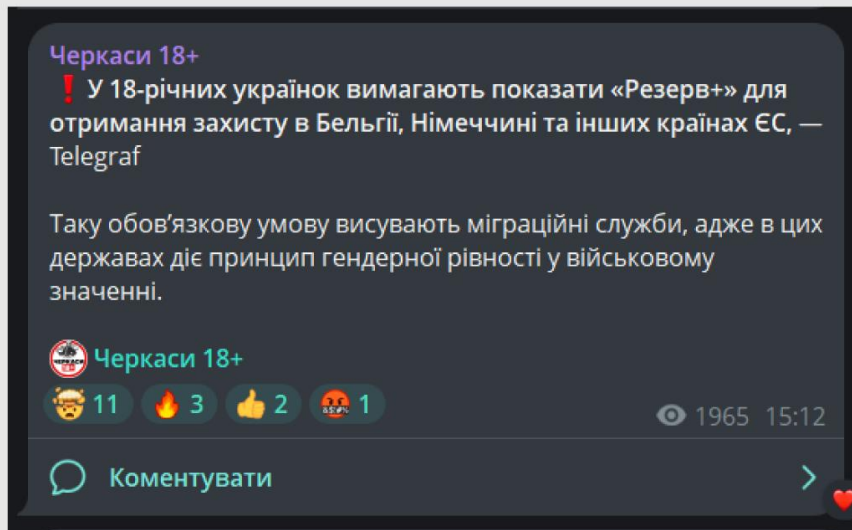
Source: [Gwara.Media](#)

However, upon contacting the General Inspectorate for Immigration of Romania, it was found that there were no cases of detention or passport confiscation involving Ukrainian citizens in Romania.

Therefore, it can be seen how propagandists impose a negative attitude towards the EU by combining sensitive topics of mobilisation and the state of Ukrainian refugees in the EU Member States. In all the analysed publications, the authors directly or implicitly accuse the EU of discrimination against Ukrainians and of plans to deport all of them from its territory to “prolong the war”. Consequently, disinformation narratives are interconnected and shape Ukrainians' mistrust and disappointment in the EU.

“Ukrainian Women Have to Show “Reserve+” Data to Get Shelter in the EU”

Administrators of regional Telegram channels added a gendered component to the mentioned publications about the alleged termination of temporary protection for Ukrainians liable for military service. The messages about alleged mandatory data verification in the “Reserve+” application for adult Ukrainian women seeking shelter in EU Member States were detected in Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Odesa, and Cherkasy regions. This demand was explained with “the gender equality principle in the military sphere” existing in certain EU Member States.



Source: [18000](#)

In reality, this message is manipulative. The previously mentioned decision of the EU Council requires verification of the military status of Ukrainians applying for temporary protection in the EU after 31 July 2026 who are liable for military service under Ukrainian legislation. However, this norm does not automatically apply to Ukrainian women, as it applies only to persons liable for military service, regardless of gender or age.

These claims aim at the dissemination of panic around the alleged women's mobilisation in Ukraine, supported by the EU. These claims themselves were already detected in Odesa Telegram channels. However, they do not refer to the existing reality. The official [statement](#) of the Parliamentary Committee on National Security, Defence and Intelligence proves this, as it explicitly states that the women's mobilisation is not conducted in Ukraine and is not being prepared or reviewed. Instead, the women may voluntarily join the Armed Forces of Ukraine.



Source: [Informer](#)

Undermining Ukraine-Poland Relations

Ukraine-Poland relations remain a target of Russian propagandists, whether in Ukraine or in Poland. The creators of fake news manipulate complicated and painful topics to fuel hatred and enmity between Ukrainians and Poles, making them vulnerable to further Russian influences.

The summer of 2026 was marked by a crisis in Ukraine-Poland relations caused by the conflict over the [naming](#) of the Separate Special Operations Centre “North” of Ukraine's Special Operations Forces in honour of the “Heroes of UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army)”. Propagandists used this case to strengthen the disinformation campaign in Ukraine's information environment. As a result of monitoring, such claims were detected in Kharkiv, Volyn, Khmelnytskyi regions and on the TOT of the Zaporizhzhia region.

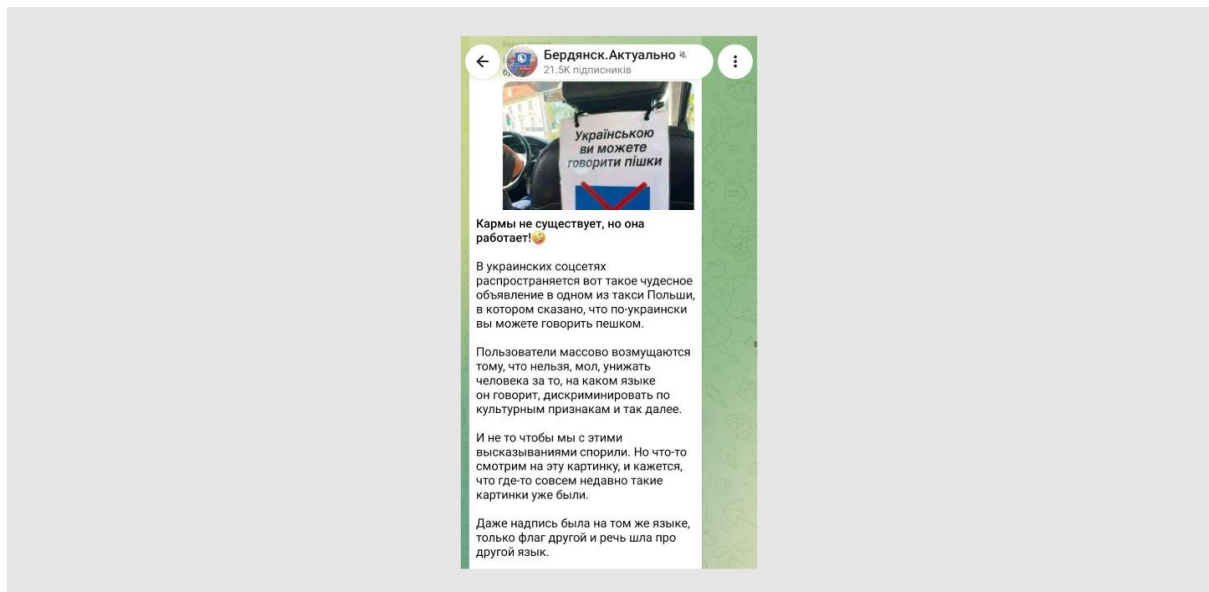
Probably the brightest example is the publications about Volodymyr Zelenskyy allegedly signing the decree on the construction of the UPA memorial, which will be funded by the EU, in Volyn region, right on the Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Volhynia Massacre. Such messages were detected in the Volyn and Kharkiv regions and on the TOT of Zaporizhzhia region. They might also potentially appear in disinformation sources in Poland, to fuel the negative attitudes towards Ukrainians and the EU in general.



Source: [Rayon.in.ua](https://rayon.in.ua)

In reality, this decree has never existed. According to the number shown in the screenshot, it is possible to find a completely different decree regarding the conferral of the special rank on the colonel of the National Police of Ukraine, Andrii Rubel. There are no remarks on the construction of the memorial complex in the document. Similarly, there is no information about any construction in other official sources.

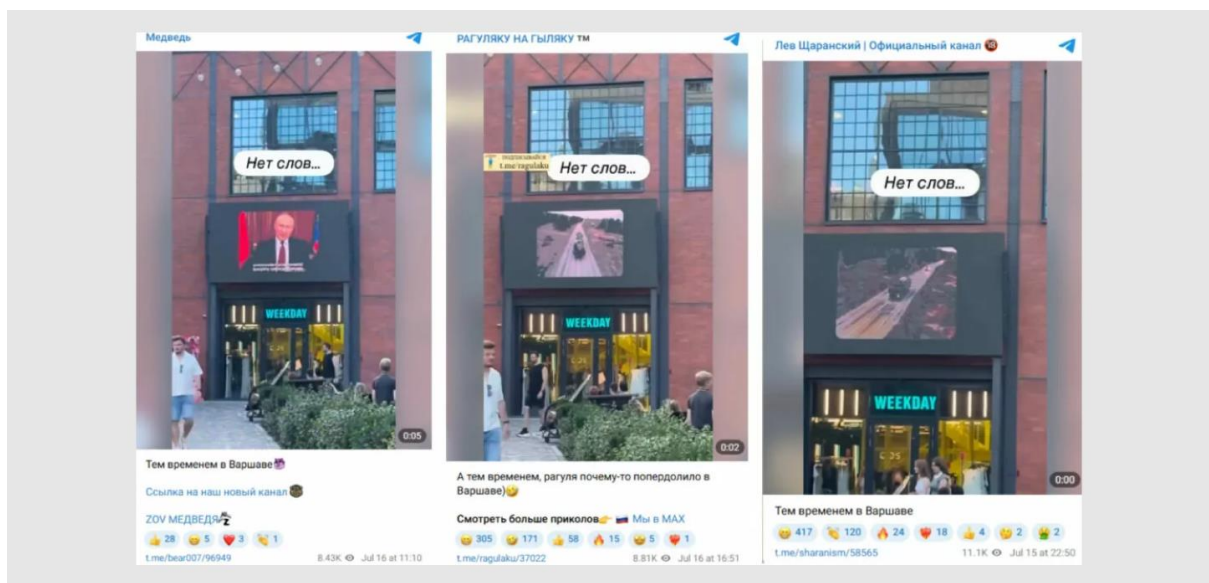
In turn, photos and posts about the alleged ban on speaking Ukrainian in Warsaw taxis appeared on the TOT of Zaporizhzhia region. The authors of the publication were convinced that Ukrainians face mass hatred in Poland and are told “to go on foot” if they speak Ukrainian with each other in the taxi. Similarly, such publications aim at fueling the negative attitude towards Poles through the victimisation of Ukrainians and imposing the idea that all of them are completely rightless and vulnerable in front of discrimination in Poland.



Source: [Pershyi Zaporizkyi](#)

In reality, the analysis has shown that this image was AI-generated. Neither Ukrainian nor Polish media published any information about a systemic ban on speaking Ukrainian in Polish taxis.

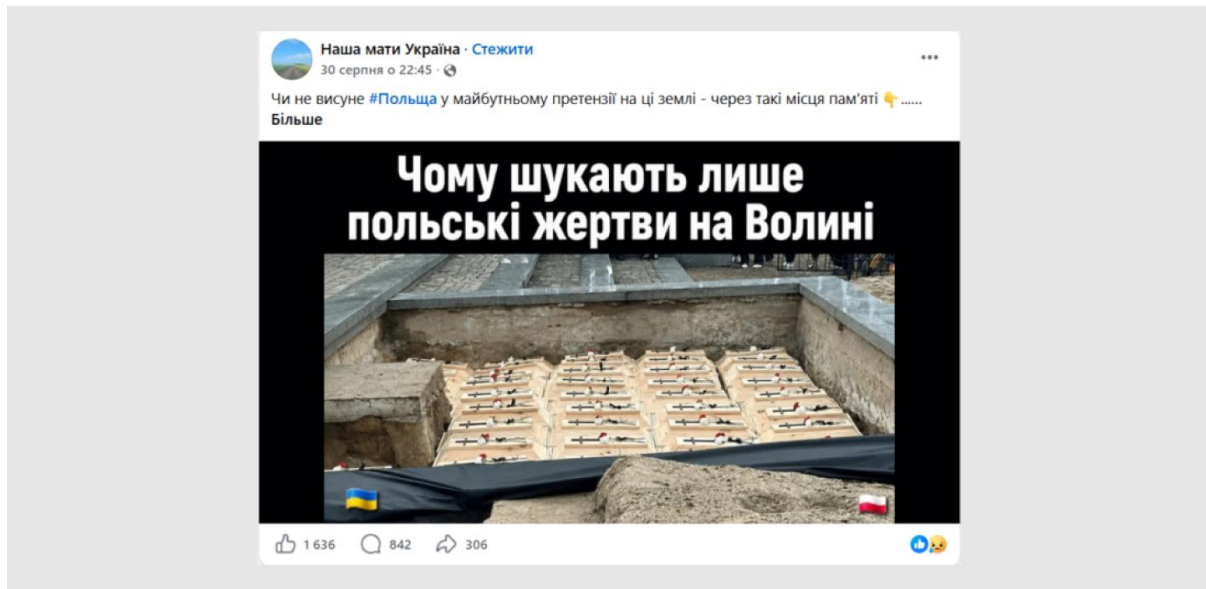
Continuing the topic of mass intolerance to Ukrainians in Poland, Kharkiv pro-Russian Telegram channels were convinced that the appeal of Russia's President Vladimir Putin, right at the beginning of the launch of the full-scale invasion, was broadcast in Warsaw. The analysis has shown that the video was real, but torn out of context. It was recorded in Warsaw near the shopping mall "Elektrownia Powiśle" on 14 July 2026. Though it was not a broadcast of Putin's appeal, but a screening of the documentary "Mr Nobody Against Putin," dedicated to the topics of propaganda and the militarisation of Russian education after the beginning of the full-scale invasion. The event was part of the summer cinema program.



Source: [Gwara.Media](#)

Lastly, the messages accusing Poland of potential territorial claims to Ukraine after the end of exhumations of victims of the Volhynia Massacre appeared in Khmelnytskyi region. Despite a

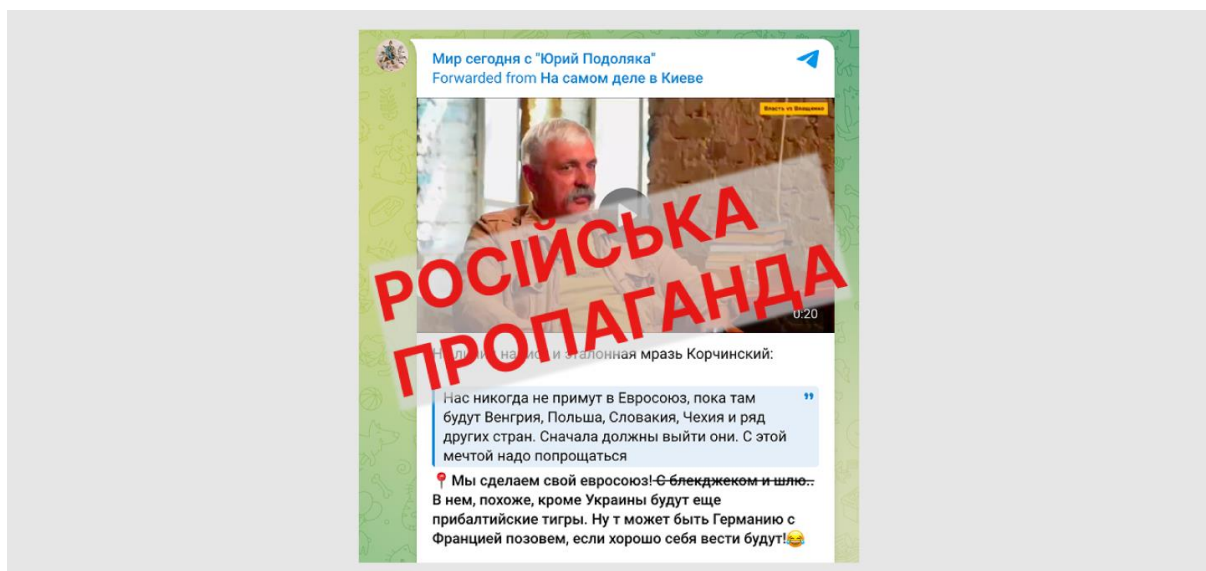
demonstrative appeal to patriotism, the author deliberately manipulates and discredits the idea of reconciliation between the two nations amid a complicated historical past. The exhumations and the establishment of open dialogue between historians are crucial to fostering good neighbourly relations between the countries. Hence, such claims simply undermine these efforts and sow hatred within society.



Source: [Ye.uq](#)

“Ukraine Will Not Be Accepted into the EU”

Claims that Ukraine will never be accepted into the EU are a classic tactic of Russian propaganda. The aim is to convince the internal audience that Ukraine is collapsing as well as to impose EU scepticism on Ukrainians and indirectly make them return to relations with Russia. In the summer of 2026, such claims were detected on Telegram channels in Khmelnytskyi and Sumy. It is also worth noting that there was a separate emphasis that the EU Member States themselves do not want to see Ukraine in the EU.



Source: [Kordon.Media](#)

In reality, such statements are false and manipulative. On 15 June 2026, Ukraine opened the first negotiation cluster “Fundamentals” covering the rule of law, democratic institutions, state governance, and economic criteria. On 14 July, another cluster, “External Relations” was opened. This proves that the process of Ukraine’s European integration is ongoing. Despite internal debates, EU Member States see Ukraine as an equal partner and an ally.

According to the [survey](#) “Attitudes towards EU Enlargement”, 56% of EU citizens support the EU enlargement. 52% expressed their support for Ukraine’s EU accession, the highest result among all the candidate countries. Therefore, the claim that Ukraine is undesired in the EU is false.

“The EU Is Becoming Militarised and Is Getting Prepared for War with Russia”

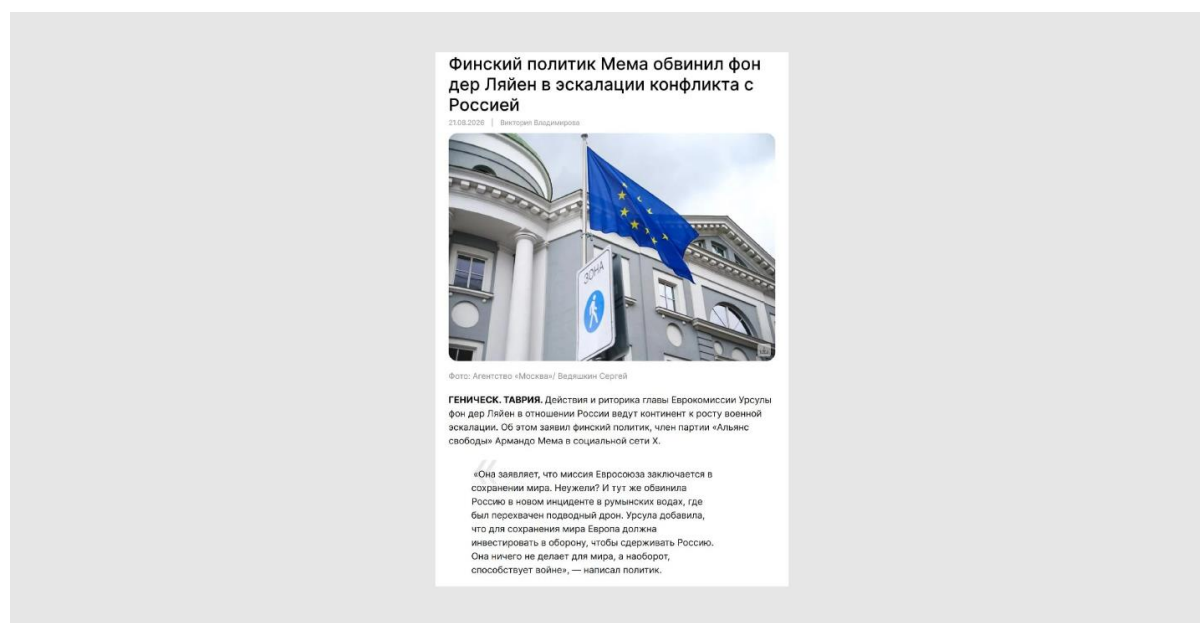
Despite launching the war against Ukraine and threatening the EU Member States regularly, Russia is convinced that it is a victim of the aggression of Western countries. Kremlin picks up this tendency and pro-Russian propagandists generate hundreds of publications with accusations of the EU of militarisation, provocations and preparations to war with Russia. In particular, in the summer of 2026, such claims appeared on TOT in Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, and Kherson regions, as well as in the Odesa and Cherkasy regions.

On the night of 4-5 August, a drone with a suspicious explosive device was detected in the zone of cargo operations of Leipzig airport. This temporarily paralysed operations at the airport. Police and explosives experts arrived to conduct an investigation. Therefore, it was found that the drone was located near cargo planes operated by the Ukrainian company Antonov Airlines. Later, during the [investigation](#), it was found that the Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation was involved in the attempted sabotage. However, the authors of the publication in one of the Telegram channels of TOT of Zaporizhzhia region accused Germany itself of militarism and of preparing scenarios for war with Russia. Russia's involvement was proved by the aforementioned investigation and approved by the [American intelligence service](#). Therefore, propagandists are trying to shift the responsibility for the aggression from Russia.



Source: [Pershyi Zaporizkyi](#)

From the other side, propagandists from the TOT of Kherson region were convincing that the Finnish politician Armando Mema himself accused Ursula von der Leyen of escalation of conflict between Russia and the EU, as well as calling to stop the weaponisation of Europe, as Russia does not pose any threat.



Source: [Vhoru](#)

Despite appealing to the words of an alleged Finnish politician, it was found that there is no well-known politician named Armando Mema. [Armando](#) himself works as a plumber in one of the Finnish cities, as he has been living in Finland only since 2019. He was running in the EU Parliamentary elections and in local council elections for the far-right party "Alliance of Freedom", but gained fewer than 100 votes. The man is currently known for his pro-Russian and EU-sceptical rhetoric. Amando's claims do not represent either the position of the Finnish government or the opinion of the majority of Finnish citizens. Therefore, the publication in Russian media is based on the classical technology of "creation of the false authority," according to which the marginal actor with zero political influence is represented as an influential Finnish politician and "a voice of European society".

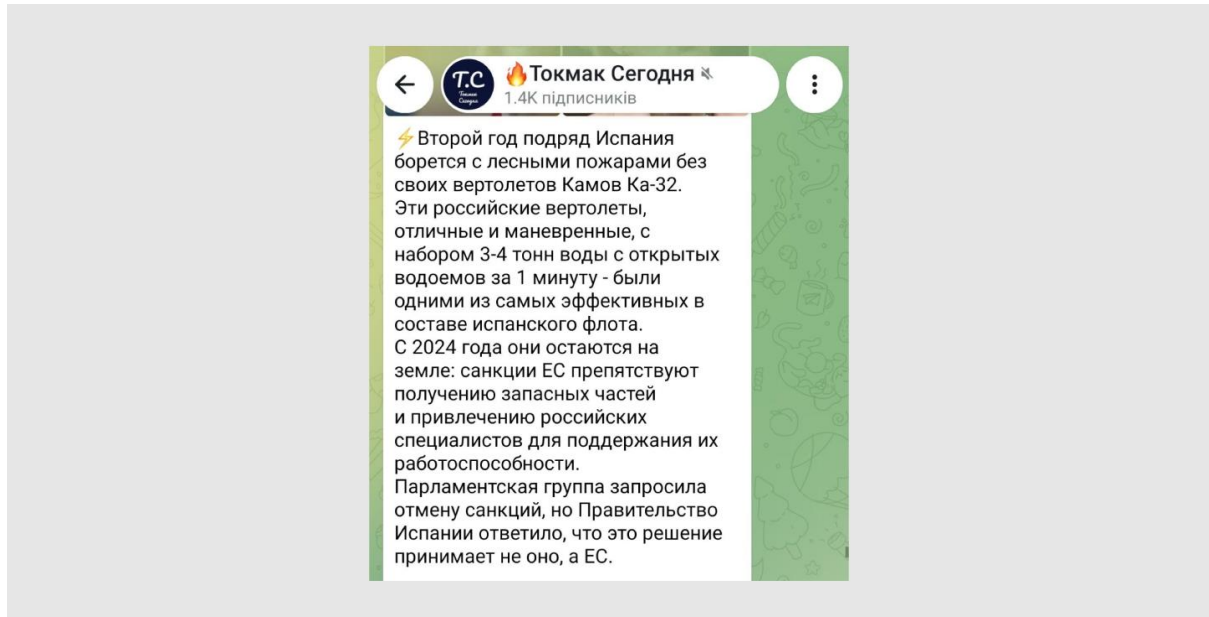
"Anti-Russian Sanctions Are Ineffective and Harm the EU Itself"

The creators of fake news did not leave without attention the topic of anti-Russian sanctions that allegedly harm the EU politically and economically. Such claims were disseminated on Telegram channels in the Odesa, Kyiv, and Kharkiv regions, as well as in the TOT of Zaporizhzhia region.

The authors of some publications even speculated about natural disasters, linking them to the negative consequences of anti-Russian sanctions for the EU Member States. For example, there was a message in one of TOT's Telegram channels in Zaporizhzhia region stating that Spain cannot effectively fight forest fires because it cannot use Russian Ka-32 helicopters. In reality, this claim was manipulative.

Sanctions really made the exploitation of Russian Ka-32 helicopters more difficult, but the claim that Spain was left without any effective firefighting aviation is hyperbolic. Ka-32s are not the

only tool for aerial firefighting in Spain. In 2026, the country strengthened the firefighting contingent, involving 15 amphibious aircraft, the new firefighting kit for the Airbus A400M, 4 Chinook and 2 Cougar helicopters. Additionally, the scale of forest fires cannot be explained solely by the quantity of available equipment. The Spanish government links the increase in fire danger with other causes, particularly climate change.



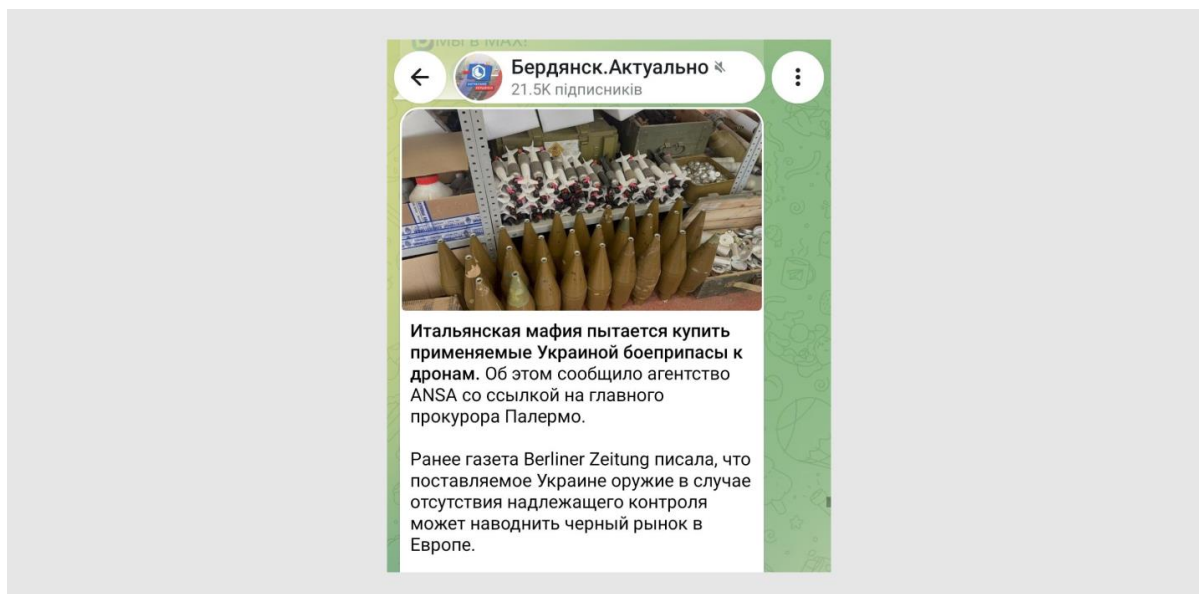
Source: [Pershyi Zaporizkyi](#)

“The Aid for Ukraine Becomes a Part of Criminal Schemes”

The next topic that is used by pro-Kremlin propagandists for further speculation is the EU aid for Ukraine. They have tried to discredit it and present it as insignificant. The summer period was no exception, as similar claims were detected in Odesa region and on the TOT of Zaporizhzhia region. By combining the discreditation of support from EU Member States with the topic of corruption, propagandists were convincing audiences that all the aid is being diverted into corruption schemes and sometimes appears on the black market in the hands of international criminal groups.

Particularly, there were messages disseminated in Odesa region and on TOT of Zaporizhzhia region stating that the Italian mafia is allegedly trying to buy weapons and ammunition provided to Ukraine. The authors of the publication appealed to the statement of the Chief prosecutor of Palermo Maurizio de Lucia and to the publication of “Berliner Zeitung” related to the risks connected with the weapons provided to Ukraine appearing on the black market.

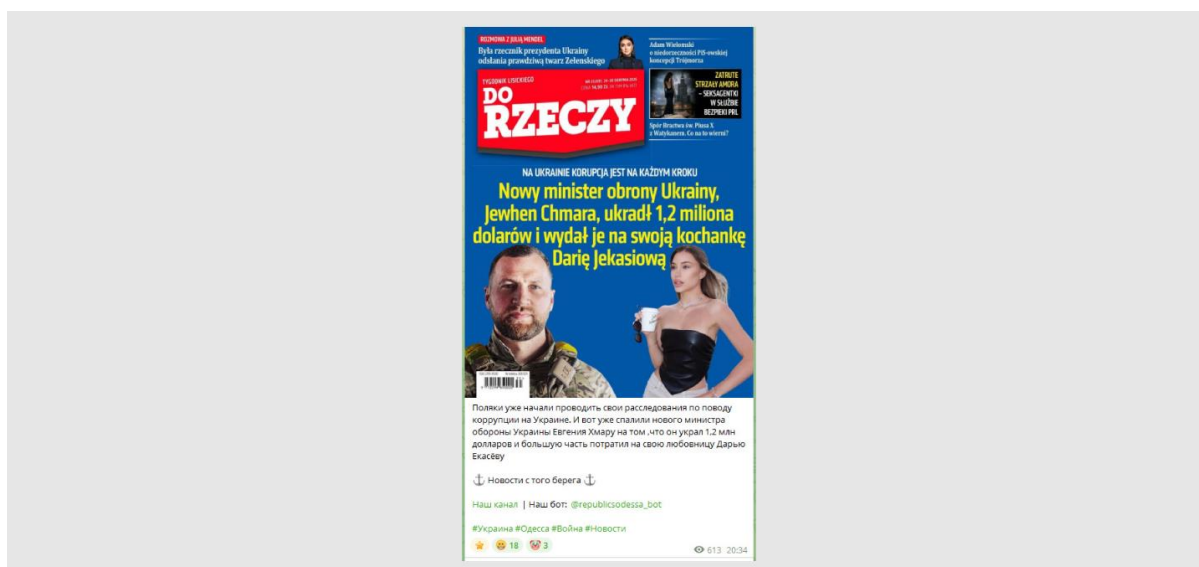
In reality, the [publication](#) by ANSA to which the propagandists appealed was related to the interest of the Italian mafia in the more complicated weapons that are similar to those being used during the war in Ukraine, as well as in ammunition that is thrown from drones. There was no word about such weapons being bought from Ukraine. Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime has not [detected](#) the confirmed cases of organised weapons smuggling from Ukraine to EU Member States after the beginning of the full-scale invasion.



Source: [Pershyi Zaporizkyi](#)

False Anti-Corruption Investigation of the Polish Magazine “Do Rzeczy”

Lastly, it is worth mentioning the false anti-corruption investigation by Polish media that was cited on Odesa pro-Russian Telegram channels. It was stated that the famous Polish magazine “Do Rzeczy” has allegedly found out that the Minister of Defence of Ukraine, Yevhenii Khmara, was involved in theft of over a million dollars and then spent this money on his young lover, Daria.



Source: [Informer](#)

Despite such loud titles and the presence of a title page featuring visual elements of the Polish media, it was found that “Do Rzeczy” has never published such materials. There is no such message on the official website, and the current issue of the magazine was devoted to other events. Additionally, there are unnatural-sounding mistakes in the text in Polish. Therefore, propagandists decided to play on the relevant and painful topic of corruption in Ukraine, which has become even more acute after the resonant corruption cases, and to appeal to foreign media

to lend these claims credibility. However, propagandists created the title page and the news itself.

Read **the full versions of the articles** prepared by the journalists of the Regional EU Disinformation Resilience-related Network during the monitoring:

- ["‘Rising Cost of Lige’ And Lying Rhetoric Questions. How Russia Is Trying to Destabilise EU-Ukraine Relations"](#), by online media [Zaxid.net](#)
- ["From the Real Problem to Hate Speech: How Anti-Ukrainian Narratives Are Disseminated in Poland"](#), by a national network of hyperlocal media [Rayon.in.ua](#)
- ["Clickbait and Semi-Truth –How the Ukrainian Media May Unintentionally Provoke the Negative Perception of the EU"](#), by informational agency [Rubryka](#)
- ["‘Ukraine Will Not Be Taken to the EU and Will Be Exploited’: How Russian Propaganda Manipulates the Questions of European Integration"](#), by online media [Kordon Media](#)
- ["From ‘Reserve+’ to Shaking Hands With Zelenskyy: Fake News About the EU That Were Disseminated in Cherkasy Region"](#), by Cherkasy informational agency [18000](#)
- ["Fake Polish Magazine, Women’s Mobilisation And Insults of Finland’s President: Pro-Russian Anti-EU Manipulations Targeting Residents of Odesa Region"](#), by online media [Informer](#)
- ["The EU ‘Closes the Borders’ and Ukrainian Is Banned in Poland: Which Fake News About the EU Were Disseminated by the Russian Propaganda in Zaporizhzhia Region in Summer"](#), by informational platform [Persnyi Zaporizkyi](#)
- ["Who Caused the Heat Wave in Europe? Russian Disinformation Review on Occupied Lands of the Donetsk Region"](#), by online media [0629.com.ua](#)
- ["Summer Wave of Russian Disinformation About the EU: Fake News About Poland, NATO and Temporary Protection"](#), by online media [Gwara Media](#)
- ["The Military Liable Are Sent Away, Women Are Checked, Rights Are Taken? Analysing the New Fakes About Ukrainians in the EU"](#), by online media [Galka.if.ua](#)
- ["‘Impossibility of Ukraine’s European Integration’ and Territorial Claims: Which Disinformation Narratives About EU-Ukraine Relations Were Disseminated in Khmelnytskyi Region"](#), by online media [Ye.ua](#)
- ["Illusion of EU ‘Collapse’ and ‘Madness’ of Its Leaders: Which Fake News About the EU Are Disseminated by the Occupational Media of Kherson Region"](#), by media platform [Vhoru](#)

This quarterly overview was prepared within the EU-UA Disinformation Awareness and Resilience [DARE] Project, which is funded by the European Union. Cases presented in this overview focus on messages in Ukraine’s regional information space that are identified as providing a partial, distorted, or false depiction of reality and spread key pro-Kremlin narratives. This does not

necessarily imply, however, that a given outlet is linked to the Kremlin or editorially pro-Kremlin, or that it has intentionally sought to disinform. The content, findings, conclusions, and opinions expressed within this overview belong solely to the authors and do not represent an official EU position, as the information and opinions expressed are based on media reporting, monitoring, and analysis of the 12 participating media outlets (listed above).