

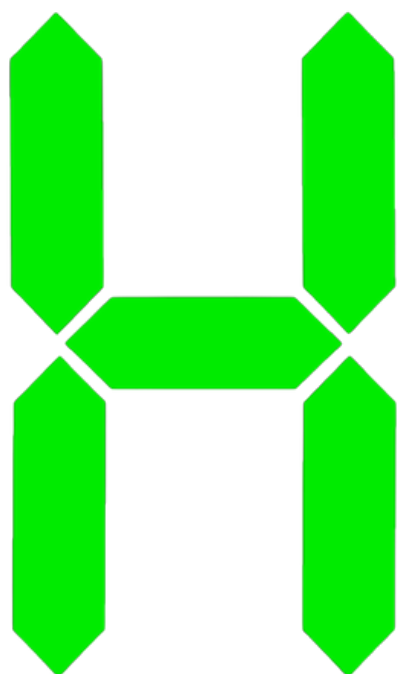


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Resilience to Misinformation in Kosovo's Election Period

Information Disorder and FIMI in Kosovo's 2025 Elections
(Excluding February)





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introduction

This report covers the period from 9 October to 31 December 2025 and focuses on monitoring digital content during a politically sensitive timeframe, including Kosovo's local elections and the early parliamentary elections. During this period, the analysis concentrated on identifying and categorizing misinformation circulating across online platforms in multiple languages, including Albanian, Serbian, and English. The report provides an overview of key misinformation trends by topic, including disinformation related to electoral processes, fabricated polls, false statements attributed to public figures, and the use of artificial intelligence-generated or manipulated videos. In addition, content with an interethnic dimension has been identified and analysed, with the focus on assessing its potential impact on social polarization and local tensions, particularly in northern Kosovo and in Serb-majority communities.

The report also examines foreign influence referred to as FIMI (Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference), identifying the themes and narratives aimed at shaping public perceptions and influencing the electoral process. Based on systematic digital monitoring, the analysis provides a structured assessment of problematic content, categorizing it according to the nature of the misinformation and its potential impact. This approach not only highlights the types and intensity of misinformation observed during the electoral period, but also underscores the patterns and mechanisms used to polarising interethnic narratives and facilitate external interference, thereby offering a foundation for recommendations and preventive measures in the fields of public information and digital security.

methodology

This report is based on a structured and systematic process of monitoring and analyzing media content during the period from 9 October to 31 December 2025 in Kosovo, covering both the local elections and the early parliamentary elections. The primary objective of this research is to identify, categorize, and interpret content containing elements of misinformation, narrative manipulation, and organized disinformation, as well as to assess their potential impact on public perception and the electoral process.

Digital monitoring of content during this period was conducted and consolidated using the Pikasa.ai platform, which enables the collection, categorization, and analysis of data from diverse digital sources. The monitored sources were grouped into three main categories:

1. Social media – including Facebook, TikTok, and Telegram, where public pages, groups, and individual profiles sharing political content were analyzed;
2. Domestic online media – online news portals and websites publishing content with direct influence on public opinion;

3. Serbian and Russian media and officials – primarily Serbian and Russian media platforms such as RT Balkan and Sputnik Serbia, as well as public statements by Serbian officials, with a focus on identifying external narratives (FIMI) that influence political discourse in Kosovo.

Within this monitoring process of 7,000 publications, based on 100 articles monitored daily, a total of 103 content items were analyzed, including news from media outlets as well as content published by pages, accounts, and channels on social media, related to election topics, inter-ethnic issues, and foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI). These materials consist of fact-checks, analytical pieces, and assessments of dominant narratives. Of these, 85 items are fact-checking content (shared across multiple sources) - 70 published in Albanian and 15 in Serbian - while the remaining 18 items are analytical and narrative assessments, including 8 in Albanian, 7 in Serbian, 1 in Russian, and 2 in English. In addition, 115 Serbian - language content items from Russian media were also monitored, including analytical and narrative assessments

as well as election-related narratives, reflecting FIMI.

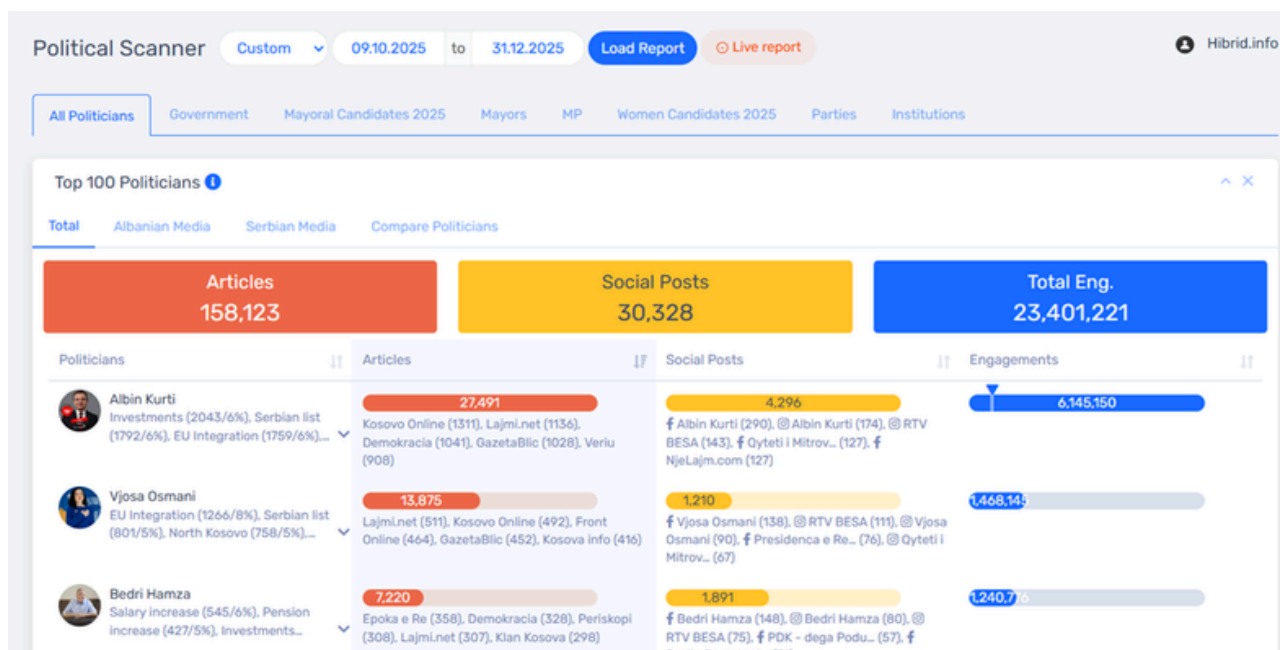
The content addressed through fact-checking was selected based on thematic relevance and represents materials that were widely published and amplified across dozens of social media accounts and pages. For example, the same piece of disinformation was shared or reposted more than 100 times across different sources. In addition, some of these narratives also appeared in traditional media, further contributing to the spread of misinformation. The high level of amplification indicates that this content reached its intended target audience, as users were repeatedly exposed to these materials. Therefore, the total number reflects thematic content rather than individual publications from a single source, capturing the key topics and narratives that were most widely disseminated and amplified within the information space.

The analysis was conducted using a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. From a quantitative perspective, approximately 100 publishing sources were monitored on a daily basis to identify content containing inaccurate, manipulated, or fabricated information, with a threshold of more than 50 interactions used as a criterion for assessing dissemination and reach. The qualitative analysis examined how narratives were constructed, reinforced, and disseminated across different contexts, including topics with external origin or influence. This combined approach enabled the assessment of distribution across platforms, frequency, and types of misinformation, providing a detailed overview of the mechanisms through which disinformation was produced, amplified, and spread during the electoral process.

Digital monitoring of the information environment

According to the AI-powered media monitoring & analytics platform, during the reporting period 158,123 articles were published in Kosovo's media landscape focusing on the top 100 politicians. Among these, the Caretaker Prime Minister, Albin Kurti received the highest media attention, followed by the President Vjosa Osmani and the head of the Democratic Party of Kosovo, Bedri Hamza.

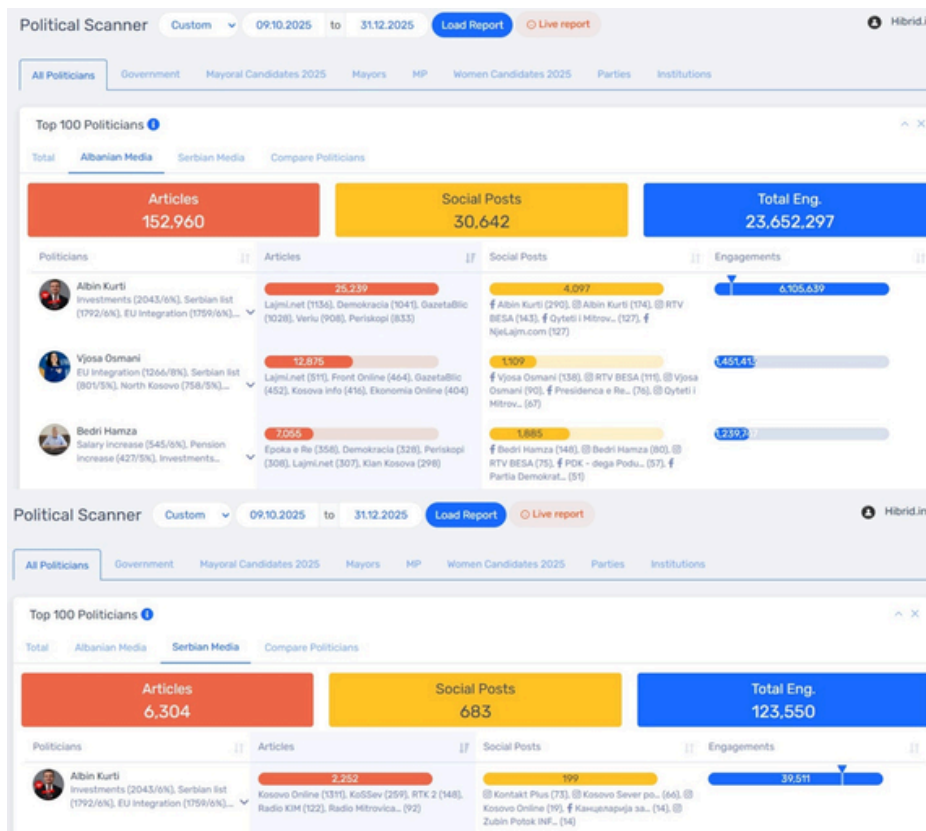
On social media platforms, 30,328 posts were recorded, generating a total of 23,401,221 engagements, reflecting sustained public interaction with political content.



Disaggregated by language:

- Albanian-language media: 152,960 articles and 30,642 social media posts, with a total of 23,652,297 engagements.
- Serbian-language media: 6,304 articles and 683 social media posts, generating 123,550 engagements.

In the Serbian-language ecosystem, Albin Kurti, Vjosa Osmani and Nenad Rašić emerged as the most frequently mentioned political figures.



For the specific topic “Elections”, 44,381 articles were published in all languages, reaching a total of 742,162 engagements (16.72 per article). On social media, 3,508 posts recorded 998,396 engagements (285 per post).

- Albanian-language content: 41,779 articles (710,218 engagements; 17.00 per article) and 3,189 social posts (988,094 engagements; 310 per post).
- Serbian-language content: 2,602 articles (31,944 engagements; 12.28 per article) and 319 posts (10,302 engagements; 32.29 per post).

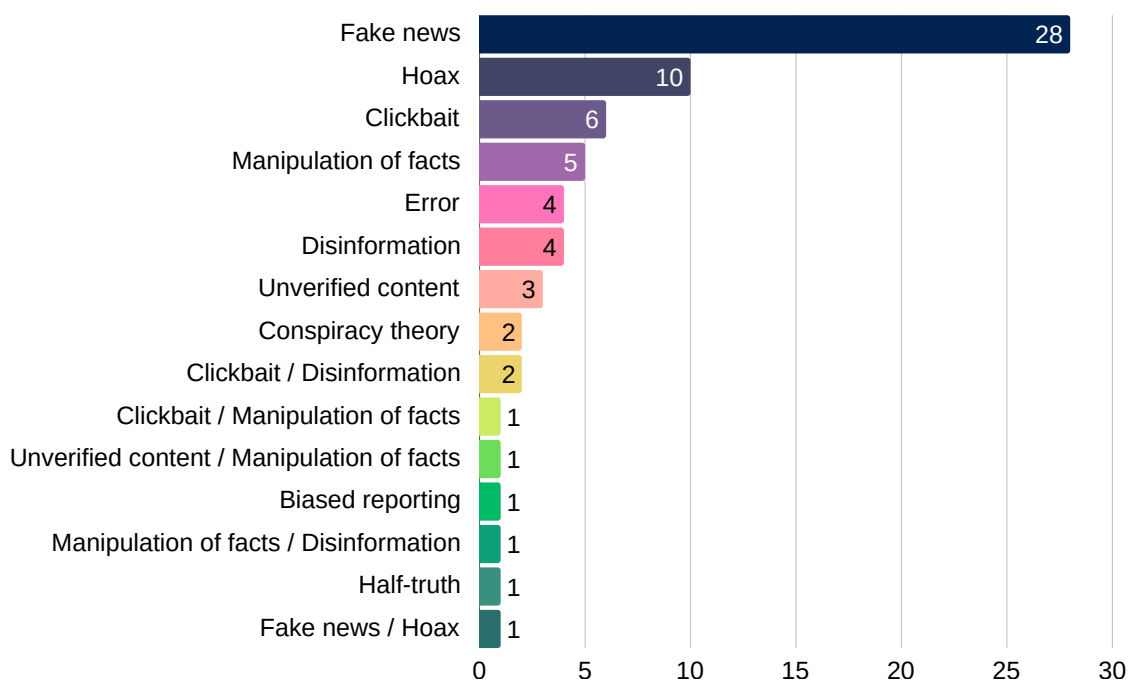
This clearly shows that the large volume of election-related content has created multiple opportunities for the spread and amplification of misinformation across all platforms, increasing its potential impact on public perception and electoral debates.

Misinformation in Albanian and Serbian languages during the period 9 October – 31 December

Misinformation in the Albanian Language

Among the 85 fact-checked misinformation items (shared across multiple sources), 70 were identified as misinformation published in Albanian. pieces in the Albanian language, the analysis shows a clear predominance of fake news, which represents the most frequent category with 28 topics, reflecting direct attempts to fabricate or distort informational reality. This is followed by hoax with 10 topics, and clickbait with 6 topics, where sensational headlines were used to attract attention without factual support. Manipulation of facts was identified in 5 topics, while factual errors and disinformation were

recorded in 4 topics each, indicating a mix of intentional and unintentional inaccuracies. Other categories include unverified content (3 topics), conspiracy theories (2 topics), and combined forms of misinformation, such as clickbait linked with disinformation (2 topics) and clickbait accompanied by manipulation of facts (1 case). Isolated topics of biased reporting, half-truths, and other combinations of misinformation – such as fake news combined with misleading content or fact manipulation intertwined with disinformation – were each identified once.



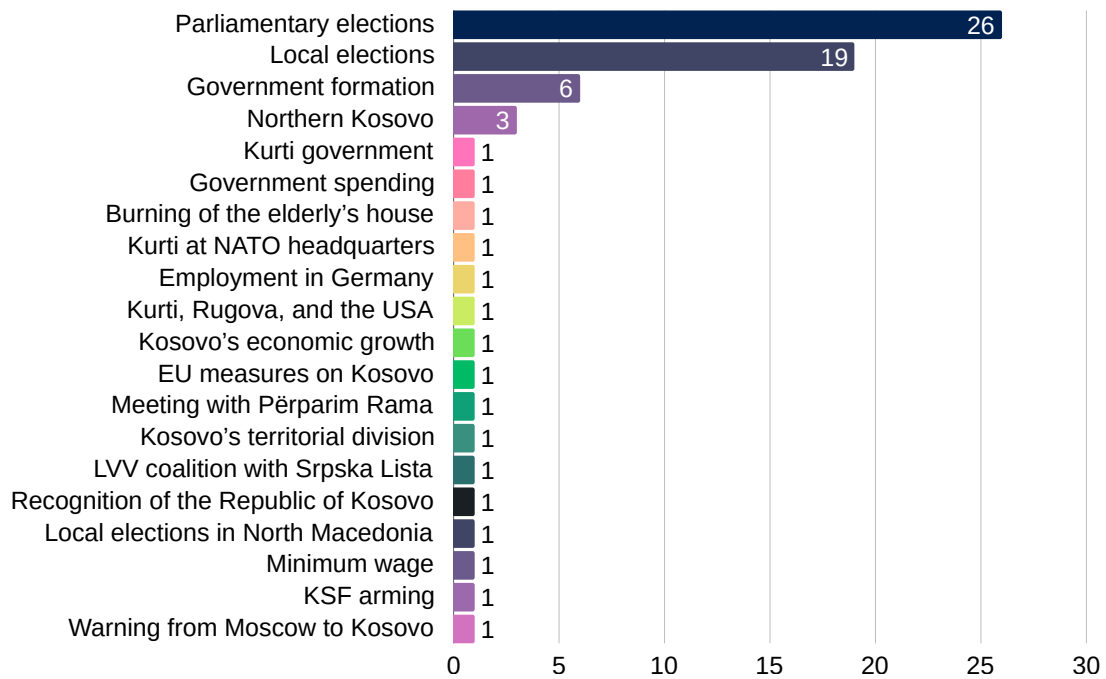
During the monitoring period from October 9 to December 31, 2025, misinformation published on social media and traditional media in Albanian language was primarily focused on politically and institutionally sensitive topics, with a particular emphasis on electoral processes. Parliamentary elections emerged as the most frequent subject of misinformation, with a total of 26 topics, followed by local elections with 19 topics, reflecting ongoing efforts to delegitimize the electoral process, create confusion around results, and influence public perception during the campaigns. Other significant topics included government formation (6 topics) and developments in northern Kosovo (3 topics), which were accompanied by polarizing narratives and biased interpretations.

In addition to these dominant topics, a range of lower-frequency issues with high potential impact were also identified, each represented by a single case of misinformation. These include claims related to the Kurti government, government spending, the burning of an elderly person's house, Prime Minister Kurti's visit to NATO headquarters, employment in Germany, and narratives linking Kurti, Rugova, and the U.S.

Misinformation was also observed concerning Kosovo's economic growth, European Union measures toward Kosovo, local officials' meetings,

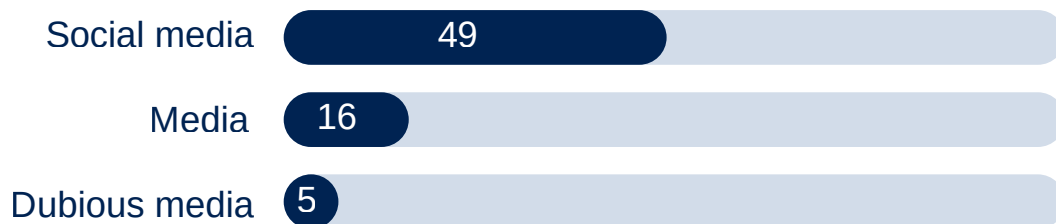
territorial division, political coalitions - including alleged cooperation between Vetëvendosje (LVV) and Srpska Lista - as well as issues related to Kosovo's international recognition, the minimum wage, Kosovo Security Force (KSF) arming, and alleged warnings from Moscow. Topics were additionally noted beyond Kosovo's immediate context, such as local elections in North Macedonia, demonstrating that during this period, misinformation exploited a wide range of topics to influence public discourse and create political and social uncertainty.

Overall, the misinformation identified during the monitoring period presents a dual orientation toward the government. Some content aimed to support the government by exaggerating achievements, highlighting international legitimacy, and portraying positively issues such as economic growth, international recognition, official visits, and KSF arming. In contrast, other content was critical, depicting the government as responsible for failures, crises, or contested decisions, through claims related to government spending, EU measures, political coalitions, the minimum wage, Kosovo's territorial division, and hypothetical security scenarios.



Regarding the sources^[1] of misleading content in the Albanian language, the analysis shows that a significant portion was disseminated through social media, which represents the most dominant category with 49 instances, highlighting the central role of these platforms in amplifying misinformation during the monitoring period. Online news portals rank second with 16 instances, indicating that news websites, through inaccurate, biased, or sensational reporting, also contributed to the circulation of problematic content.

A distinct category consists of dubious media, with a total of 5 instances, characterized by a lack of editorial transparency, unidentifiable sources, and a tendency to publish manipulative or fabricated content. Overall, 70 Albanian-language pieces were analyzed in this report, illustrating that misinformation is not limited to individual actors or social media platforms but appears as a widespread phenomenon across online news media and the broader digital ecosystem.

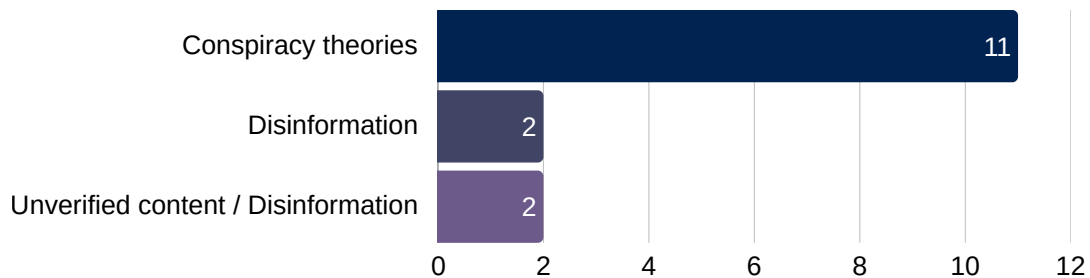


[1] Media (informative portals) and social media (pages, accounts, channels).

Misinformation in Serbian language*

In summary, misinformation in the Serbian language, primarily circulating through Serbia-based media, the analysis shows that conspiracy theories represent the most dominant category with 11 out of 15 instances checked were in the Serbian language., reflecting attempts to construct speculative and unfounded narratives

aimed at fostering distrust toward institutions and the electoral process. In addition, 2 topics of direct disinformation were identified, along with 2 topics of combined content, where unverified information was interwoven with disinformation, further complicating the distinction between accurate and manipulated information.

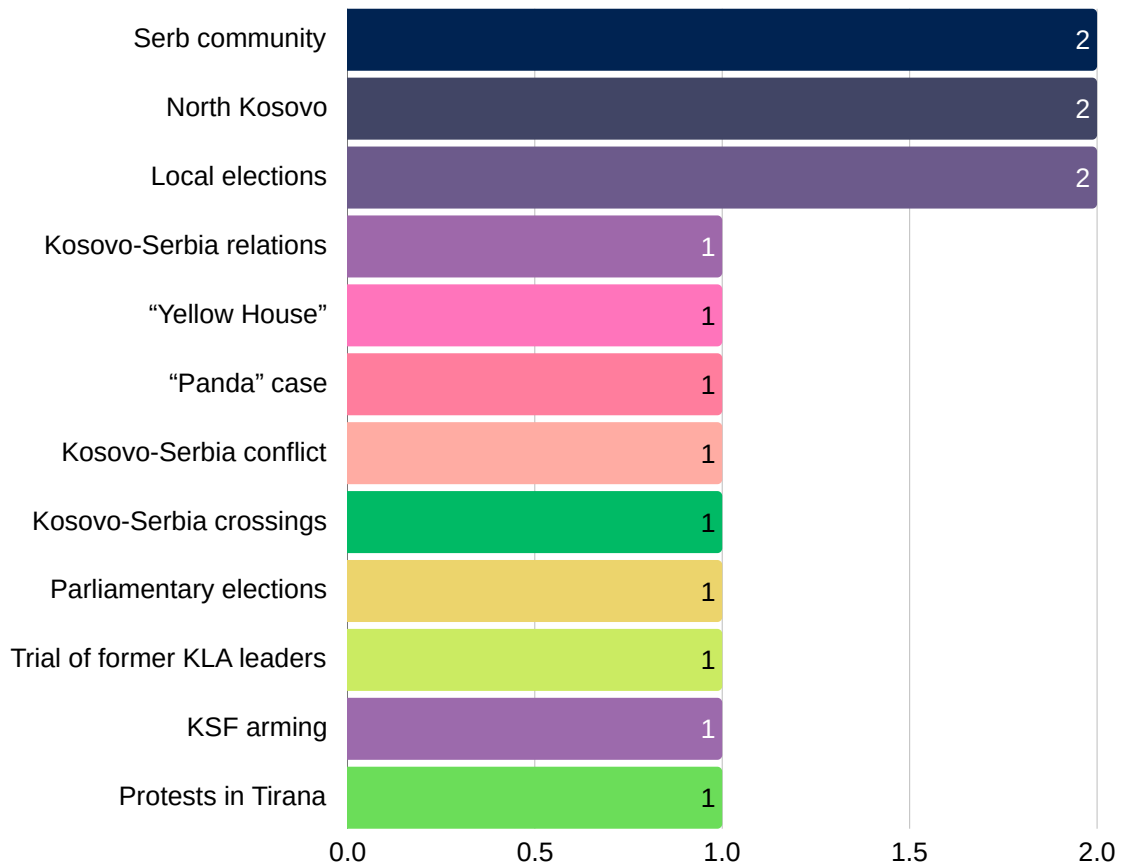


Regarding the topics in which misinformation was identified, the analysis shows a primary focus on issues with high political, interethnic, and security sensitivity. The Serb community, northern Kosovo, and local elections were the most frequent subjects, with two instances each, reflecting a tendency to construct narratives aimed at ethnic polarization and undermining trust in democratic processes.

In addition to these, isolated instances of misinformation were identified, each with a single occurrence, related to Kosovo-Serbia relations, including the

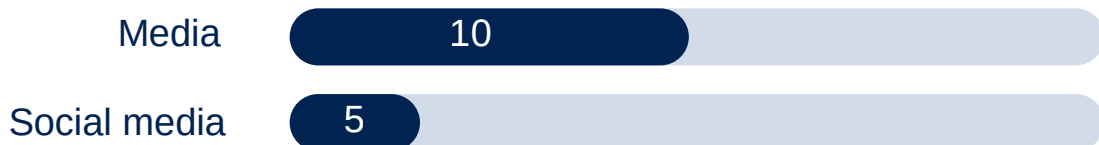
Kosovo-Serbia conflict, the Kosovo-Serbia crossings, as well as historical and transitional justice topics, such as the “Yellow House,” the “Panda” case, and the trial of former leaders of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Misinformation also touched on other issues, including parliamentary elections, the arming of KSF, and protests in Tirana, demonstrating that misleading narratives extend beyond the strict electoral context and exploit a wide range of topics to influence public opinion and foster political and social uncertainty.

* Serbian-language content is defined as primarily circulating through Serbia-based media outlets and Telegram channels.



Regarding publication channels, the analysis shows that most misinformation content was published through media outlets, with a total of 10 topics, highlighting the prominent role of news portals and media sites in circulating these narratives. Social media accounted for 5 topics, reflecting a smaller numerical presence

but significant amplification potential due to the viral nature of these platforms. This distribution indicates that, in this specific segment of misinformation, traditional media served as the primary source of problematic content, while social media mainly functioned as channels for redistribution and reinforcement.



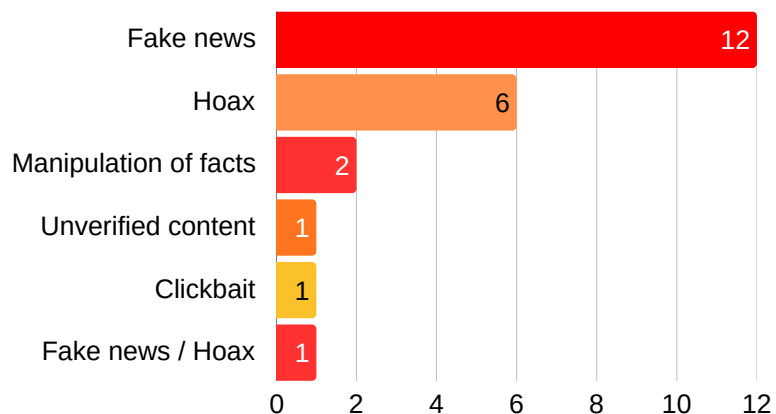
The parliamentary elections of December 28

Regarding disinformation related directly to the December 28 parliamentary elections based on Albanian language content, the analysis identified a total of 26 out of 85 content items were misleading. The majority were published on social media platforms, accounting for 23 topics, while online news media accounted for 3 topics. This distribution indicates that social media served as the primary channel for the circulation and amplification of disinformation during the elections, enabling rapid dissemination and broad audience reach during a politically sensitive period.

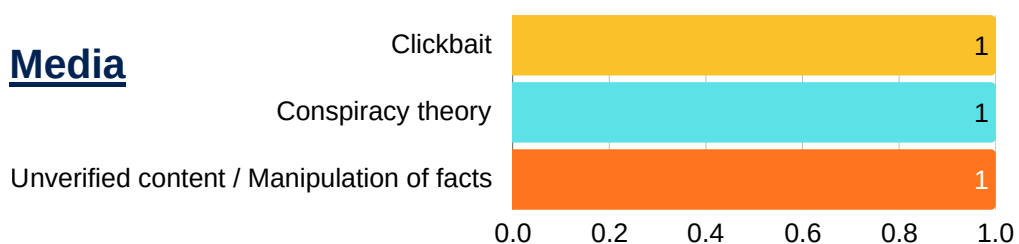
In terms of disinformation categories, fake news dominates with 12 topics, reflecting direct attempts to fabricate information about the electoral

process and its results. This is followed by 6 topics of hoaxes, while clickbait and fact manipulation were identified in 2 topics each, indicating the use of sensational headlines and selective distortion of information to influence voter perception. Other, more isolated categories include conspiracy theories, unverified content combined with fact manipulation, fake news mixed with hoax, and entirely unverified content, each with 1 case. This categorical structure demonstrates that disinformation during the parliamentary elections exploited a combination of direct and covert forms of informational manipulation, aiming to influence public opinion and undermine trust in the electoral process.

Social media



Media



The disinformation identified during this period primarily focused on manipulating the electoral process and public perception through recurring and interconnected themes. A significant portion concerned false polls and exit surveys, published before and during election day, including national-level surveys, diaspora polling, and party-specific surveys, as well as the recycling of old polls presented as current. Concurrently, unsubstantiated claims of electoral manipulation circulated, including allegations of vote - buying financed by Serbia, supposed interdictions of cash transfers from Belgrade, and narratives of external interference.

Another frequent theme involved misrepresentation or fabrication of statements by public and international figures, including false attributions to Donald Trump, the Croatian president,

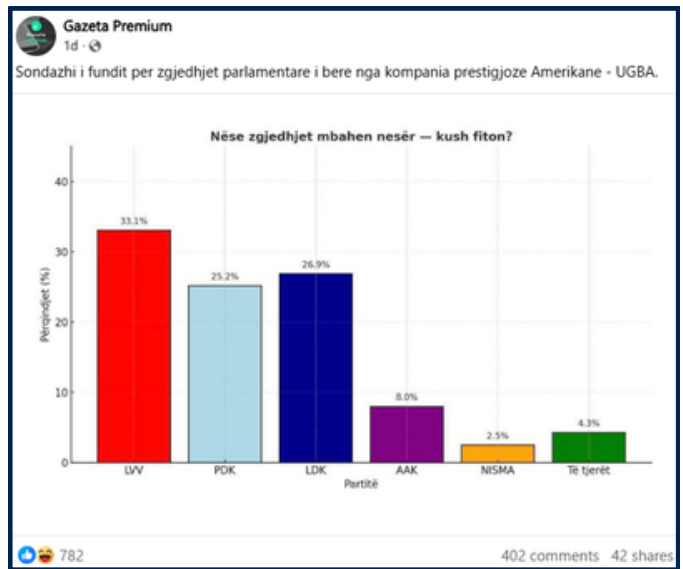
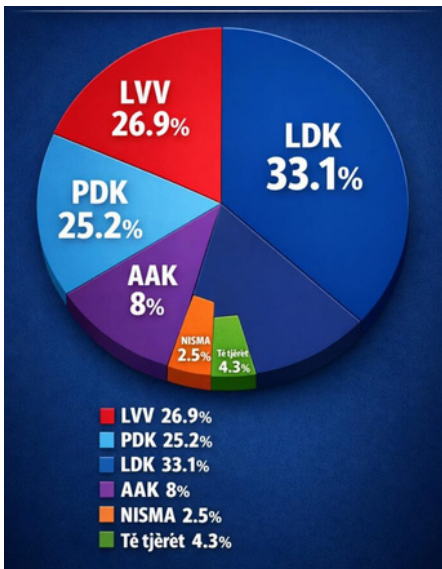
American analysts, and local politicians. Additionally, visually manipulated content and AI-generated materials were identified, such as images and videos falsely depicting Kosovo politicians with Serbian officials, the opening of the Ibar Bridge, non-existent graffiti, or purportedly showing diaspora electoral intentions. Disinformation also included false claims about political coalitions, particularly between LVV and Srpska Lista, as well as misleading or biased articles that distorted statements or recycled old topics in an electoral context. Overall, these themes reflect a multifaceted disinformation strategy combining fabricated polls, manipulated statements, false visual content, and conspiratorial narratives, aimed at influencing public trust in the December 28 parliamentary elections and key political actors.

False Polls

False polls for the parliamentary elections on December 28 were widely circulated on social media, reaching millions of views, especially on TikTok, through over 50 posts claiming to measure public opinion. Since early November, hibrid.info identified a series of such content, most of which lacked clear methodology and reliable sources, while some cited non-existent companies or organizations as the

creators of these “polls.” Manipulations were also observed through the recycling of old polls, presenting them as current, as well as publications on election day itself. The majority of these posts were assessed as fake news, unsupported by credible sources through online verification, and some were later removed by social media platforms.^[2]

[2] [Fake polls for the December 28 elections – reaching millions of viewers | hibrid.info](#)



👍 986

💬 559

➡️ 35

👍 782

💬 402

➡️ 42

K Kosova Report
December 13 at 7:25 PM · 🌐

LDK rënditet e para në këto zgjedhje sipas një sondazhi të cilin thuhet se e kanë bërë vet ata!

LDK publikon sondazhet online:

LDK: 54.3%
PDK: 23.2%
LVV: 17.2%

👍❤️ 2K 1.2K comments 28 shares

👍 2K

💬 1.2K

➡️ 28

Misleading content generated with artificial intelligence

With the approach of the early parliamentary elections on 28 December 2025, a concerning increase was observed in the use of artificial intelligence-generated videos and images to spread manipulated political narratives. These materials depicted diaspora citizens in various locations, such as Pristina Airport, falsely suggesting that they would vote for specific candidates, creating the impression of widespread support from the diaspora. Some content also included unfounded claims about political meetings after parliamentary sessions or secret endorsements of candidates. Verification platform analyses revealed that the videos and images contained typical deepfake distortions, including unnatural facial expressions, robotic voices, and poor visual coherence, clearly indicating artificial manipulation. High audience engagement with these materials shows that many users perceive them as authentic, amplifying their impact and further deepening political polarization.^[3]

On TikTok, dozens of AI-generated videos in the style of TV news segments were published, garnering hundreds of thousands of views and favoring the LVV. These videos linked the diaspora to mobilization for VV, used fake polls to indicate support, and presented fictional results of coalitions or rising votes. Although the videos were labeled “AI-Generated” and included the Sora app logo, many viewers perceived them as authentic. This phenomenon highlights the clear risk AI-generated content poses to democratic processes and underscores the need for public awareness, rigorous fact-checking, and greater accountability from social media platforms. Additionally, the use of AI in journalism should be closely monitored by editorial staff, and all artificially generated content should be clearly labeled to maintain the integrity and credibility of information.^[4]

[3] [AI-generated political videos ahead of the elections in Kosovo.](#)

[4] [On TikTok, AI-generated videos circulate presenting themselves as “television news reports.”](#)



👍 3.7K

💬 486

➦ 267



👍 6.9K

💬 1.6K

➦ 347



👍 121

💬 91

➦ 18



👍 466

💬 292

➦ 61



👍 128

💬 71

➦ 18

Reposting of false content and fabricated statements during election periods

Before the early parliamentary elections on December 28, social media saw the resurgence of previous statements and positions of political figures, which users reshared to highlight past promises or stances. Alongside these, previously circulated false or misleading content also reappeared, including fabricated claims about Serbian President Vučić regarding the connections of Srpska Lista with the opposition, falsified statements attributed to Prime Minister Kurti, and contrived posts concerning Croatian President Milanović. Old visual materials, including videos of politicians and analysts, were also republished to create misleading impressions in the electoral context. This phenomenon demonstrates the circulation of outdated or manipulated information aimed at shaping public perception in a distorted way.^[5]



👍 2.6K
💬 218
➦ 340

During the pre-election period, numerous social media posts attributed unfounded, often fabricated statements to public figures to influence public opinion. These posts involved individuals such as Prime Minister Kurti, Rifat Jashari, President Vučić, President Milanović, and former CIA analysts, and were primarily shared on Facebook and TikTok. Fact-checking revealed a lack of credible sources to support the cited statements, while the posts were frequently amplified through comments and likes, increasing the likelihood that audiences would perceive them as true. This reflects a recurring pattern of circulating fake news and unverified claims for political purposes and public manipulation.^[6]



👍 402
💬 249
➦ 200

[5] [The resurgence of old misinformation during election periods. | hybrid.info](#)

[6] [Fabricated statements attributed to various public figures regarding politicians in Kosovo | hybrid.info](#)

Local Elections

During the local elections in Kosovo, a network linked to Russian influence disseminated a range of misinformation and conspiracy theories aimed at shaping public perception. These materials included false claims about urgent investigations into voting irregularities in Fushë Kosova/Kosovo Polje and Obiliq/Obilić, fabricated survey results and exit polls for Prizren, Suharekë/Suva Reka, Obiliq/ Obilić, Lipjan/Lipljan, Kaçanik/Kaçanik, and Pristina, and unfounded allegations of vote-buying in Mitrovica South and the reinstatement of Serbian flags following Srpska Lista's victory in the northern municipalities. The spread of this content occurred primarily through TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram, using manipulated graphics, images, and videos, often presented in formats resembling surveys or official reports, but without any credible sources.

In addition to the dissemination of false information, old materials and fabricated statements from politicians and analysts resurfaced in the electoral context to create the impression of citizen support or dissatisfaction with candidates and political parties. Although unverified and based on outdated material, the spread of these contents generated significant user engagement, increasing the risk that audiences perceive them as accurate information and directly shaping political perceptions during the local elections.

Inter-ethnic disinformation

During the period from October to December 2025, a series of disinformation posts and manipulated video materials circulated in Albanian and Serbian languages concerning inter-ethnic relations and the political situation in Kosovo. This content, often published on social media platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and Telegram, included false claims about serious incidents, political coalitions, KFOR deployments in the north, and territorial issues, aiming to create misleading perceptions and heighten inter-ethnic tensions among audiences.

Disinformation in Albanian language

During the monitored period, a series of disinformation posts and manipulated video materials circulated regarding inter-ethnic relations in Kosovo. A clear example is a video published on Facebook on 21 October 2025 showing a Serbian girl calling on Serbia to recognize Kosovo; this material was AI-generated and did not reflect a real event.^[7] Similarly, on 17 October 2025, several media outlets and portals in Albania incorrectly used the term “Serb municipalities” to refer to municipalities in northern Kosovo when reporting on KFOR deployments, creating misunderstandings about jurisdiction and the actual situation on the ground.^[8] Additionally, on 28 December 2025, an AI-generated video claiming the opening of the main Ibar Bridge was shared on Facebook and other social media platforms, presenting it as a current event, although verification showed the content was manipulated.^[9] These disinformation materials were often

published through accounts and pages, spreading primarily via social media platforms such as Facebook and TikTok.

In addition to manipulated materials, during the parliamentary and local election period, unsubstantiated claims about coalitions and vote-buying also circulated, including narratives with inter-ethnic content. On 31 December 2025, several articles claimed that the LVV had formed a coalition with Srpska Lista in Gračanica/Graçanicë, even though the Law on Local Self-Government stipulates the appointment of a deputy for communities (from a political party representing non-majority community in any given municipality) and LVV had run in a coalition with Kosovo Albanian parties in the elections in this Kosovo Serb-majority municipality.^[10] Another false claim circulated on Facebook alleged that the Kosovo Police had stopped a van carrying over 2 million euros and 1 million Serbian dinars,

[7] [A video containing claims about Serbian youth, generated using artificial intelligence.](#) | [hibrid.info](#)

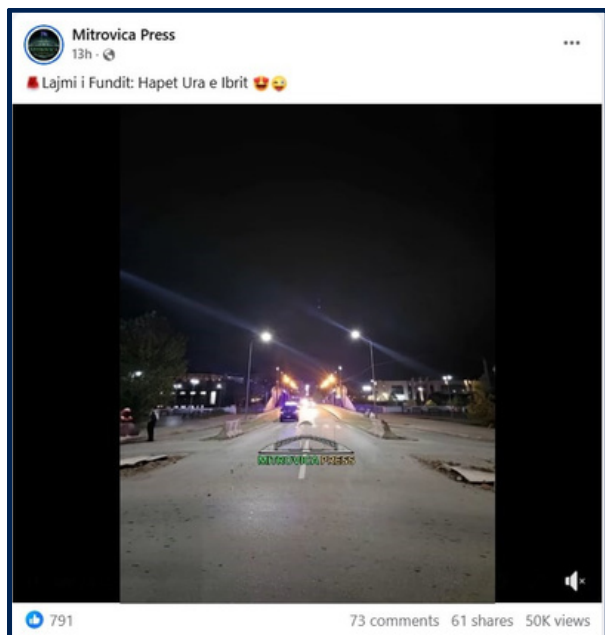
[8] [The term “Serb municipalities” is inaccurately used to refer to the municipalities in northern Kosovo.](#) | [hibrid.info](#)

[9] [An AI-generated video.](#) | [hibrid.info](#)

[10] [False claim about a coalition between LVV and the Serb List in Gračanica.](#) | [hibrid.info](#)

suspected of being used for vote-buying from Serbia; this claim was not confirmed by the Kosovo Police or any credible media outlets.^[11] These topics demonstrate a deliberate tendency to use disinformation to manipulate inter-

ethnic perceptions and influence public opinion, often leveraging social media as the primary channel for spreading false information.



761

73

61

50K



216

32

15

Disinformation in Serbian language

During the period of October-December 2025, Serbian-language media circulated a series of disinformation and deliberate narratives concerning inter-ethnic relations and the situation in northern Kosovo, often including political and electoral issues. On 14 October 2025, the BiH/Republika Srpska-based portal

Pozitivnasrpska.com published an unfounded claim that Kosovo had issued an “ultimatum” to Serbia regarding territorial concessions, including the Raška region, without providing any official sources or documents to support this information amplified and disseminated these claims across Serbian-language

[11] [It is falsely claimed that a van carrying money from Serbia intended for vote buying in Kosovo was stopped. | hybrid.info](https://www.hybrid.info)

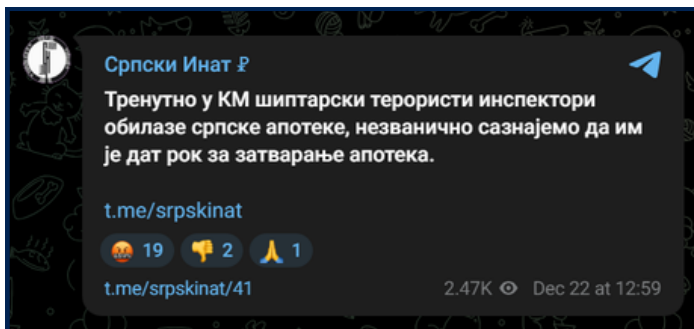
media.^[12] On 23 December 2025, Telegram channels such as “Српски Инат” and “КОРИДОР” spread unverified claims that Kosovo Albanian inspectors were visiting Kosovo Serb pharmacies and had given them deadlines for closure - a completely false report with no official sources.^[13]

Similarly, on 16 October 2025, the Serbian portal Pravda.rs published an article falsely linking Prime Minister Albin Kurti to an attempted abduction of a Serbian girl, creating a misleading perception among the Serbian audience; in reality, the suspects had been released and there was no connection to Prime Minister Kurti.^[14]

On 17 October 2025, the Srpska Lista and the Office for Kosovo in the

Serbian Government published claims via Serbian media and the portal Blic.rs, asserting that the entry of a KSF convoy into North Mitrovica was deliberate and connected to the elections, including the involvement of Prime Minister Kurti. This claim was false, as the KSF and Kosovo Police clarified it was a road navigation error, and KFOR confirmed there was no intentional threat.^[15]

These topics indicate that Serbian-language Telegram channels and portals with questionable credibility are being used to spread manipulated content and conspiracy narratives aimed at fueling fear and heightening interethnic tensions in northern Kosovo.



[12] [Unfounded claim that Kosovo has made a territorial claim against Serbia.](#) | [hibrid.info](#)

[13] [It is claimed without evidence that Albanian inspectors have given Serbian pharmacies a deadline to close.](#) | [hibrid.info](#)

[14] [Unsubstantiated linking of Kurti's name to an incident in the north](#) | [hibrid.info](#)

[15] [The incorrect entry of the KSF in the north is falsely connected to the elections in Kosovo](#) | [hibrid.info](#)

Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI)

During the monitoring period, a series of disinformation and unfounded claims were circulated with the aim of manipulating public perception regarding Kosovo Albanians and inter-ethnic relations in Kosovo. These included accusations of violence, fabricated incidents, and conspiracy theories, spread primarily through Serbian-language media, social media channels such as Telegram, and some outlets in other languages, creating a tense and insecure environment for the public.

Unfounded claims and disinformation targeting Kosovo Albanians

During the monitored period, several clearly false claims were circulated regarding alleged criminal actions by Kosovo Albanians. One example is the well-known “Panda” case in Pejë/Peć, where Serbian Telegram channels claimed that on December 14, 1998, six young Serbs were killed by “Albanian terrorists,” without any evidence or confirmation from official institutions, relying solely on speculative narratives. Another unfounded claim alleged that Kosovo Albanians had destroyed two tombstones in the Orthodox cemetery in Plemetin/Plemetina near Obiliq/Obilić,

a statement spread via social media on December 13, 2025. Additionally, some Russian media reported without evidence that former KLA leaders, currently on trial at the Kosovo Specialist Chambers in The Hague, had killed Serbs, while Serbian media linked an Albanian known as the “Butcher” to alleged organ removal actions at the “Yellow House” in Burrel. All these topics constitute clear examples of deliberate disinformation and the use of unfounded narratives to create negative perceptions of Albanians.

Inter-ethnic narratives and conspiracy theories

In addition to direct disinformation, a significant portion of the circulated content involved conspiracy theories and inter-ethnic narratives aimed at escalating tensions between communities. The Director of the Serbian Post, Zoran Anđelković, claimed

that Prime Minister Albin Kurti was seeking conflict with Serbia to become a “war commander,” a statement with no factual basis and denied by security institutions in both Kosovo and Serbia. Similarly, Petar Petković from the Serbian government alleged that the

arming of KSF was not for defensive purposes but intended to intimidate and threaten the Serb community, including supplying “Skydagger” kamikaze drones from Turkey. Serbian media also reported unfounded claims of shootings by Kosovo Albanian groups near the “Debela Glava” base and linked the Kosovo government’s inaction in Parliament to preparations for war. In this context, even the narrative of a

“Greater Albania” was used to interpret protests and unverified statements, creating false perceptions of plans to unify territories while worsening inter-ethnic tensions. These examples clearly illustrate how disinformation and conspiracy theories can be leveraged to manipulate public perception and to instill fear and insecurity between communities.

Serbian and Russian Narratives on Local Elections in Kosovo

During the local elections held on October 12, 2025, in Kosovo, Srpska Lista won nine of the 10 Kosovo Serb-majority municipalities without a runoff, while in the municipality of Klokot/Kllokot the race remained open and proceeded to a second round. Following the announcement of the results, Serbian officials and media developed a consolidated interpretative discourse, portraying the elections as a political and strategic victory for the Kosovo Serb community and for Belgrade’s policy toward Kosovo.

Serbian narratives during and after the electoral process constructed a clear division between protagonists and antagonists. The protagonists, including Srpska List, elected Kosovo Serb candidates and mayors, the Serb community in Kosovo, as well as Serbia and President Aleksandar Vučić, were depicted as guarantors of the survival, unity, and political rights of Serbs. On the other hand, Prime Minister Albin Kurti, the Government and institutions

of Kosovo, and non-Serb parties in Serb-majority municipalities were presented as obstructive and threatening actors, associated with policies described as discriminatory against the Kosovo Serb community. Within this framework, the elections were framed not as a local democratic process but as an identity-based and political confrontation, where participation in voting was interpreted as an expression of loyalty to Belgrade and opposition to the institutions in Pristina.

During the election campaign, Serbian political and media discourse focused on mobilizing the Serb community in Kosovo through an intensified narrative that framed the electoral process as an existential and national issue. Voting was presented as an act of loyalty to Serbia and President Vučić, while the Government of Kosovo and Prime Minister Kurti were portrayed as threats to the security and existence of Serbs. In this context, the Srpska Lista was presented as the sole

legitimate representative of the “will of the Serbs,” reinforcing the narrative of political unity and the monopolization of Serb representation.^[16]

After the election results were announced, narratives shifted toward interpreting the outcome as a political victory. The results were presented as a guarantee for maintaining Serb political control in majority-Serb municipalities and as a form of opposition to the policies of the Kosovo

Government, which were labeled as discriminatory. The victory was also framed as a result of Serb unity and direct support from Belgrade, while votes for Srpska Lista were portrayed as a political referendum on Serbia’s legitimacy in Kosovo. Post-election discourse emphasized high Kosovo Serb voter turnout as evidence of the Srpska Lista’s political strength and legitimacy, including warning narratives portraying Kosovo’s institutions as potential obstacles to the exercise of local Serb authority.^[17]

Main Serbian narratives related to local elections:

- ***Elections as an existential battle for the Serb community:*** *The electoral process was framed not as a local democratic contest, but as a decisive struggle for the political, institutional, and identity survival of Serbs in Kosovo.*
- ***Srpska Lista as the sole legitimate representative:*** *The Srpska Lista was presented as the only political force representing the “authentic will” of the Serb community in Kosovo, excluding alternative political options and constructing a narrative of compulsory political unity.*
- ***Victimization of the Serb community and delegitimization of Kosovo institutions:*** *The Kosovo Government and Prime Minister Albin Kurti were portrayed as sources of pressure, discrimination, and threats to Serb security, while Kosovo institutions were depicted as illegitimate or hostile.*
- ***Electoral victory as confirmation of Belgrade’s role:*** *Election results were interpreted as evidence of the Kosovo Serb community’s support for Serbia’s policies in Kosovo and for Belgrade’s role as protector and guarantor of Serb interests.*

The coverage of the local elections held on October 12, 2025, in Kosovo by the Russian media platforms RT Balkan and Sputnik Serbia, along with statements from senior Russian officials, represented a coordinated information campaign aimed at reshaping

perceptions of the local democratic process. Between September 13 and October 15, 2025, Sputnik Serbia published 43 articles, while RT Balkan published 31, amplifying narratives constructed by Belgrade. The articles portrayed the Srpska Lista as the

[16] [Serbia’s narratives on local elections in Kosovo: from ethnic mobilization to political victimization | hibrid.info](#)

[17] [Serbian narratives after local elections in Kosovo: The Serb List victory and political messaging | hibrid.info](#)

as the main protagonist, while Prime Minister Albin Kurti and Kosovo institutions were depicted as destabilizing actors and sources of “repression.” The discourse emphasized ideas of the Kosovo Serb community’s “battle for survival,” pressure from Kosovo institutions, and the threat of change of ethnic composition and the perceived need for Kosovo Serbs to restore control over Serb-majority municipalities. The vocabulary and framing used by these media outlets were later reflected in Russian diplomatic communication, legitimizing Belgrade’s claims and signaling support for Srpska Lista and for Vučić’s role as guarantor of Serb rights.^[18]

At the official level, Russia was represented by the spokesperson of

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Maria Zakharova, who, during a press conference on October 17, 2025, reiterated key elements of the narrative: the elections were conducted under “significant pressure” with restrictions on the accreditation of Serbian media; the victory of Srpska Lista represented a restoration of control over northern areas of Kosovo; Prime Minister Kurti was identified as the source of tensions and a destabilizing factor; and the Serb community’s support for Srpska Lista was directly linked to trust in President Vučić. These official statements reinforced and legitimized narratives previously circulated through Russian media, giving a diplomatic dimension to a local electoral process.^[19]

Main Russian narratives related to local elections:

- ***Elections under pressure and censorship:*** *Srpska Lista participated in elections under difficult conditions, with restrictions on media accreditation.*
- ***Restoration of “usurped” control:*** *The victory of Srpska Lista was framed as a step toward regaining control over the northern municipalities.*
- ***Prime Minister Albin Kurti as a destabilizing factor:*** *The Prime Minister was portrayed as the source of tensions and potential provocations.*
- ***Legitimizing President Vučić and Belgrade:*** *Support for Srpska Lista was linked to the trust of Kosovo Serbs in the Serbian president.*

[18] [Narratives of Russian media, "Russia Today Balkan" and "Sputnik Serbia," regarding local elections in Kosovo | hibrid.info](#)

[19] [Zakharova’s narratives on the elections in Kosovo, aligned with those of Russian media | hibrid.info](#)

Serbian and Russian narratives on the parliamentary elections in Kosovo

On the eve of the early parliamentary elections on 28 December 2025, senior Serbian officials, including Petar Petković and President Aleksandar Vučić, constructed a narrative portraying the vote as a decisive moment for the fate of the Serb community in Kosovo. Within this framework, the elections were described as an existential battle, with Srpska Lista presented as the only political force capable of protecting the interests of Serbs, while Kosovo's institutions were depicted as sources of pressure and threat. The discourse included elements of victimization, intimidation, and political mobilization, shifting the debate from electoral competition to a framework of collective identity and survival. Petar Petković also emphasized the delegitimization of alternative Kosovo Serb political actors, portraying other parties as projects of Pristina that could harm the interests of the Kosovo Serb community, and called on Kosovo Serbs residing in Serbia to vote as an

act of national duty.

President Vučić constructed a parallel narrative, linking participation in the elections to the preservation of national unity and Serbia's state interests, emphasizing that Srpska Lista represents a guarantee for political stability and the protection of the rights of Kosovo Serbs. In this context, he criticized Prime Minister Kurti's policies and portrayed Srpska Lista as the key mechanism for maintaining Serbian influence in Kosovo. The discourse was accompanied by concrete social and economic measures, including the creation of new jobs within Serbia-run institutions in Kosovo and appeals for displaced citizens to vote, tying social welfare directly to electoral participation. In this way, the election campaign was framed as a process in which voting constituted an act of collective defence of the Kosovo Serb community's interests and survival.^[20]

Key Serbian narratives on parliamentary elections:

- *Elections as a decisive moment for the political and institutional survival of the community.*
- *Srpska Lista as the sole political force defending the interests of the Kosovo Serb community.*
- *Kosovo institutions are portrayed as sources of pressure and systemic threats.*
- *Calls for mass participation, framing voting as a means to protect the community and uphold national unity.*

[20] [Narratives of Serbian officials regarding the December 28 elections.](#) | [hibrid.info](#)

Russian-language media including RT Balkan (19 articles) and Sputnik Serbia (22 articles), presented the 28 December 2025 parliamentary elections in Kosovo as a process of existential importance for the political and identity survival of the Kosovo Serb community. In this narrative, Srpska Lista is portrayed as the only force capable of safeguarding Serbs from the pressure of Kosovo institutions and, as reported, alleged attempts at “ethnic cleansing” through arrests, administrative measures, and control over education and healthcare. According to these outlets, Prime Minister Albin Kurti and LVV employ militarized rhetoric and “threats to Serbs” as a pretext to divert attention from economic crises and manipulate voters, while the use of the diaspora – hundreds of thousands of voters coming for a weekend and returning to their workplaces – is framed as a tool to secure Prime Minister Kurti’s victory in a purportedly weakly legitimate local climate. This framing presents the elections not as a democratic contest

but as a decisive referendum between Serbian unity and Pristina’s policies, where any vote against Srpska Lista is depicted as a threat to the future of the Kosovo Serb community.

Within this framework, the narratives promoted by RT Balkan and Sputnik Serbia emphasize that winning all 10 guaranteed seats by Srpska Lista is vital to maintaining institutional and financial ties with Belgrade and to fully implement the Association/Community of Serb-Majority Municipalities (A/CSM), as stipulated in the Brussels Agreement. According to these outlets, leaders of Srpska Lista – Zlatan Elek, Igor Simić, and Dalibor Jevtić – are portrayed as steadfast defenders of Kosovo Serb community, while the official Belgrade authorities and Russian ambassador Aleksandar Bocan-Kharchenko are depicted as guarantors of legitimacy and protection for the community.^[21]

[21] [RT Balkan and Sputnik narratives: How the elections in Kosovo were portrayed. | hibrid.info](#)

Key Russian narratives regarding the parliamentary elections:

- **Elections as a decisive moment for survival:** The parliamentary elections are framed as existential for the political, institutional, and identity survival of Serbs in Kosovo, with every vote against Srpska Lista portrayed as a threat to the community's existence.
- **Serbian List as the sole legitimate force:** Srpska Lista is depicted as the only legitimate political actor and a "lifeline" to Belgrade, guaranteeing continued financial aid, and investments in healthcare, education, and infrastructure.
- **Albin Kurti, LVV, and Nenad Rašić as antagonists:** These actors are portrayed as attempting to weaken unity amongst Kosovo Serbs through arrests, vote manipulation, and administrative measures.
- **Diaspora, militarized rhetoric, and administrative measures:** The mobilization of the diaspora, combined with militarized language and alleged administrative actions against Srpska Lista, is presented as a mechanism to influence the election, effectively turning it into a referendum on the survival of the Serb community.

conclusion

Monitoring of the information environment during the period October 9 – December 31, 2025 indicates that the electoral processes in Kosovo were accompanied by a significant presence of misinformation in the digital space. Problematic content was disseminated primarily through social media, but also via foreign media outlets and other sources, with a particular focus on parliamentary and local elections. Fake news, fabricated polls, unverified statements, and visually manipulated materials were the most common forms of misinformation, carrying the potential to influence public perception and undermine trust in the electoral process.

A comparative analysis reveals differences in the structure of misinformation across languages. Content in Albanian exhibits a wider variety of categories, including fake news, scams, clickbait, and fact manipulation, whereas content in Serbian shows a stronger focus on conspiracy theories and narratives with inter-ethnic and security-related themes. In both cases, topics related to the elections, northern Kosovo, Kosovo Serb community, and the arming of KSF were repeatedly exploited, contributing to the polarization of public discourse.

The report also highlights an increase in the use of artificial intelligence (AI)-generated content during the election period. AI-created or manipulated images and videos were employed to falsely portray political support, statements, or events, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish between accurate and manipulated information. This trend underscores the need for clearer mechanisms for identifying, labelling, and verifying digital content, as well as for raising public awareness about these emerging forms of misinformation.

In conclusion, the findings of this report show that misinformation during election cycles in Kosovo represents a persistent phenomenon, intertwining local actors with externally influenced narratives. The findings indicate that beyond isolated topics of misinformation, there is a consistent pattern of strategic information manipulation that aligns with FIMI practices and poses tangible destabilisation risks. These practices directly affect perceptions of electoral processes, inter-ethnic relations, and public trust in institutions.

To address these risks, the report recommends:

- *Integrating FIMI risk assessment into electoral monitoring mechanisms.*
- *Strengthening cooperation between local fact-checking organisations, civil society actors, and EU mechanisms to counter foreign information manipulation and interference.*
- *Continuous monitoring of social media platforms, news portals, and external information sources.*
- *Enhanced fact-checking efforts and increased editorial responsibility within media organisations.*
- *Collaboration with digital platforms to identify and address problematic content, including manipulated materials and AI-generated content.*
- *Raising public awareness and media resilience against destabilising narratives and foreign interference.*

These measures aim to strengthen the integrity of the democratic process and safeguard the information environment.

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