



## **Disinformation about the EU on YouTube after the parliamentary elections:**

### **persistent narratives and amplification mechanisms**

*This activity is part of the project supported by Sweden “Media Literacy Advancement and Support to Moldovan Media” and implemented by Internews, which aims to contribute towards the growth of a diverse, independent and financially viable media landscape in Moldova, and to empower Moldovan youth to navigate their complex information environment.*

In recent years, YouTube has become an increasingly relevant platform in the online information architecture of the Republic of Moldova, strengthening its role not only as a source of entertainment, but also as a space for shaping public opinion on major socio-political events.

According to the latest research conducted by the Independent Journalism Centre (IJC), the platform ranks second in terms of recognition among the most popular social networks in the country. [\*The Media Audience Study in the Republic of Moldova\*](#), published by the IJC in June 2025, shows that YouTube is one of the main sources of information for the majority of the population: 85% of respondents say they use the platform constantly, with more than half (52%) accessing it daily. The YouTube audience is predominantly young (18–24 years old), professionally active, with a medium or higher level of education and income above the national average, concentrated in urban areas, especially in the southern and northern regions and Chisinau municipality.

Moreover, [monitoring](#) of 15 YouTube channels during the parliamentary election campaign of September 2025 (29 August – 28 September) showed that the platform is a source of dissemination of disinformation, particularly relevant in the electoral context by amplifying manipulative messages.

Consequently, continued monitoring of the platform outside electoral exercises becomes necessary to observe the extent to which YouTube functions as a space for the accumulation and normalization of manipulative narratives in the long term, and whether it has the potential to shape public perceptions and attitudes before they are amplified during periods of crisis or exercising the right to vote.

## MAIN TRENDS

Monitoring of 32 YouTube channels throughout November shows that the platform remains a source of disinformation. Here are some key trends:

1. Even outside election campaigns, numerous YouTube sources maintain a stable narrative framework that challenges European integration, the legitimacy of public authorities, and the geopolitical orientation of the Republic of Moldova;
2. Disinformation is frequently disseminated by combining multiple narratives within a single media product;
3. The main vectors of dissemination remain channels affiliated with former TV stations, which, after their licenses were suspended, migrated to YouTube and continue to broadcast partisan and often synchronized content;
4. Data confirm that on YouTube disinformation is disseminated mainly through comments, which multiply several times the narratives initially launched by various sources and give them visibility and apparent legitimacy.

## **METHODOLOGY**

As part of the monitoring, we analyzed the dynamics of the most visible disinformation narratives and how they are disseminated on YouTube, using an artificial intelligence-assisted platform. This platform monitors open channels and maps narratives, analyzing both the activity of the broadcasting sources and the content of the comment sections. We selected a predefined list of **32 channels** active during the monitoring period and identified **23 narratives** related to the impact of integration into the European Union and the relations with NATO, as well as electoral processes, applicable to both Romanian and Russian languages.

By **disinformation narrative** we mean a coherent, repetitive and recognizable discursive construction, intended to systematically distort reality in order to manipulate the perceptions, attitudes or behaviours of the target audience. According to EUvsDisinfo of the European External Action Service, a disinformation narrative is ‘a coherent set of claims and talking points that are repeated over time and support a manipulative interpretive framework, often in opposition to democratic values, international institutions or social cohesion.’ Such narratives may be disseminated deliberately by states, non-state actors or informal networks.

Monitoring objectives:

- Identification and assessment of the most frequent disinformation narratives circulating on YouTube;
- Examination of how narratives are disseminated through video content broadcast on channels and in comment sections;
- Assessment of the role of comments in reinforcing, diversifying, and amplifying disinformation narratives

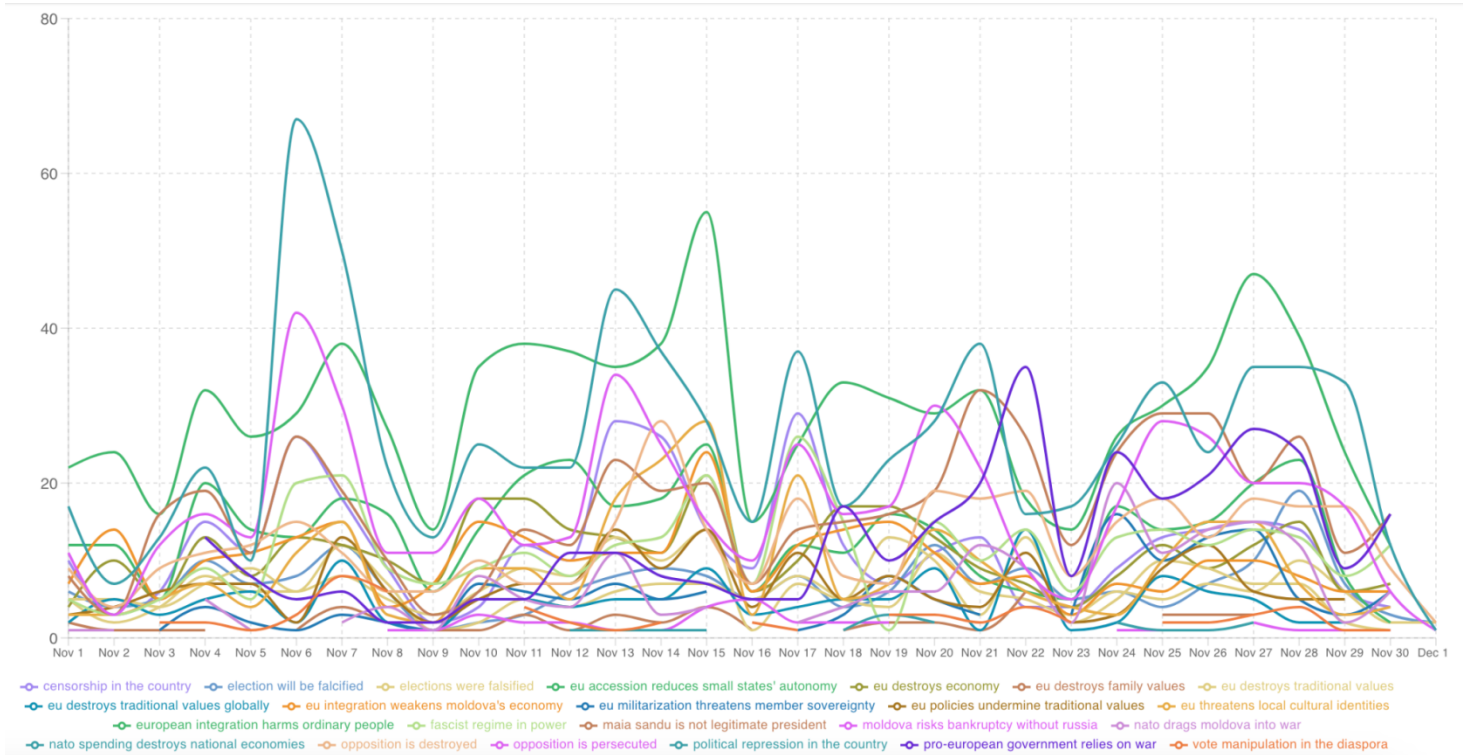
**Monitoring period:** 1 – 30 November 2025

**Monitoring object:** 32 YouTube channels

**Monitoring subject:** 23 disinformation narratives

TV6 Moldova 74.4k	Mlive (Morari.live) 75.1k	N4 7k	Gagauzia 24 95
Moldova 1.3k	Puterea a Patra 35.7k	LATE BUIISTRU 3.6k	Союз Россия-Молдова 4.6k
Богдан Цырдя (Bogdan Țirdea) 37.2k	Gheorghe Gonța 21.6k	Unimedia VIDEO 5.4k	Kristian Grăiește 482
Primul în Moldova TV Translations 43.1k	Gagauziya Radio Televizionu 24.3k	TEMA 5.9k	Главное. Молдова 1.6k
tv21channel 29.1k	PCRM 7.7k	COSTA TATIANA 2.2k	Telegraph Moldova 619
Partidul Politic Democrația Acasă 33.9k	Первый Приднестровский 164k	CINEMA 1 9.6k	Partidul Socialiștilor din Republica Mold... 4.9k
Moldova Online 13k	Radar Politic 10.1k	TCB 726k	Exclusiv_TV 15.5k
		Moldova Pulse 174	Ренато Усатый (Renato Usatii) 161k
		Русский дом в Кишиневе 1.3k	КЭЛИН I Gabriel Călin 21.9k

List of identified YouTube channels

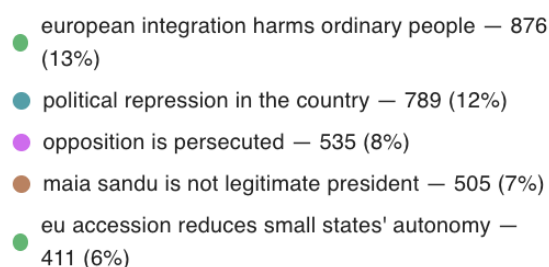


Identified disinformation narratives

## DYNAMICS AND PREVALENCE OF DOMINANT NARRATIVES

During November, the 32 monitored channels broadcast 2,838 videos, of which **404 (14%) contained one or several narratives**. The data shows that, as regards topics related to the EU, NATO and the post-election period, the YouTube information space was dominated by several key messages:

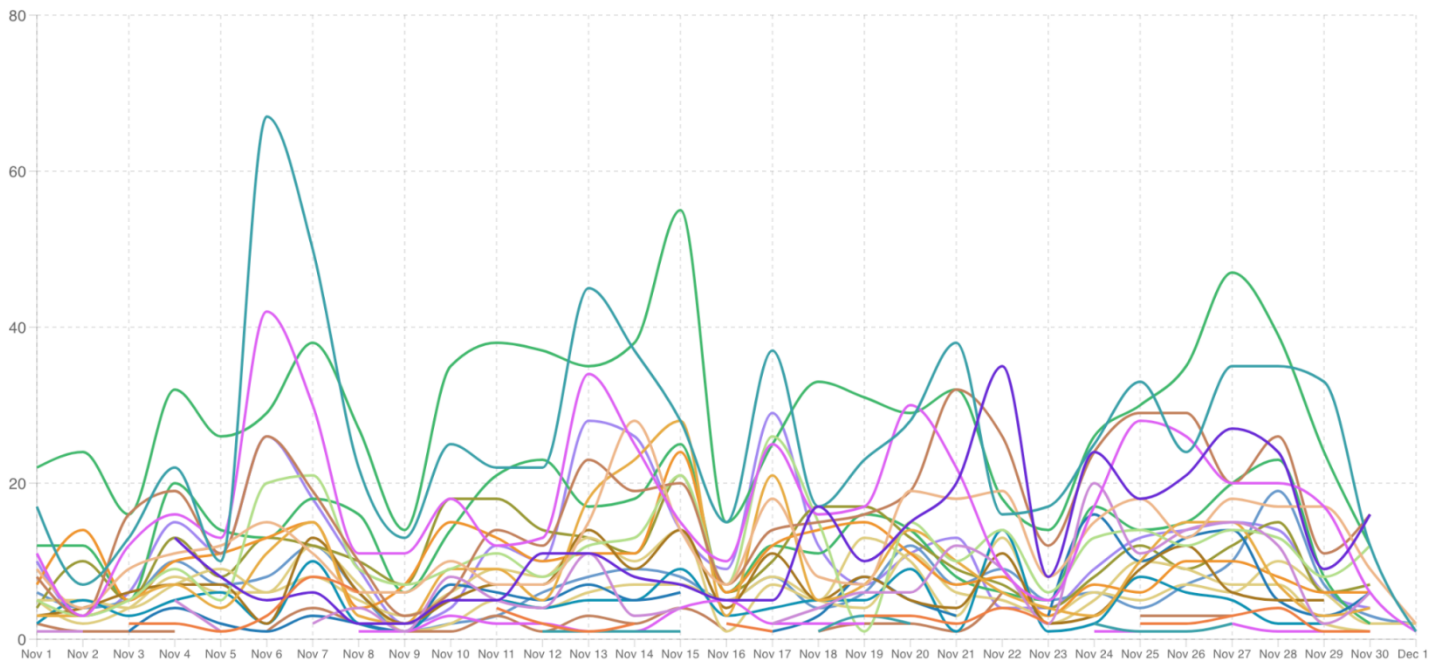
- *European integration harms ordinary people (13% of cases);*
- *Political repression in the country (12%);*
- *Opposition is persecuted (8%);*
- *Maia Sandu is not legitimate president (7%);*
- *EU accession reduces small states' autonomy (6%);*
- *Opposition is destroyed (6%);*
- *Censorship in the country (5%);*
- *Pro-European government relies on war (5%);*
- *Fascist regime in power (5%);*
- *EU destroys the economy (5%).*



In a less prominent but still visible register, other narratives also circulated, each accounting for less than 4% of the total messages analyzed. These refer to the idea that *EU integration weakens Moldova's economy, the EU threatens local cultural identities, the EU destroys traditional values or EU policies undermine traditional values, elections have been or will be rigged, NATO is dragging Moldova into war, etc.*

The analysis shows that, in many cases, several disinformation narratives circulate in thematic pairs, reinforcing each other. The ideas that *opposition is persecuted* and the idea that *there is political repression in the country* (351 cases) were most frequently associated. Other combinations include messages that *EU accession reduces small states' autonomy*, linked to the claim that *European integration harms ordinary people* (307 cases), as well as the narrative about the *destruction of the economy by the EU*, again linked to the alleged *negative effects of European integration* on the population (285 cases). Out of all the materials analyzed, **128 videos** were identified as containing **at least two highly manipulative narratives in the same media product**. The simultaneous dissemination of multiple narratives enhances the impression of a coherent storyline rather than just isolated claims.

The dynamics of message dissemination over the four monitored weeks was uneven.



*Dynamics of dissemination of narratives between 1 – 30 November*

## Top entities

Top 10 people and places mentioned for selected time

### People

Maia Sandu 231	Vladimir Putin 92
George Soros 69	Vadim Krasnoselsky 64
Igor Dodon 54	Volodymyr Zelensky 51
Sandu 48	Emmanuel Macron 34
Vladimir Plahotniuc 34	
Alexandru Munteanu 32	

As in the parliamentary election campaign, Maia Sandu remained the main target of disinformation narratives. In November, the President's name appeared in 279 mentions. The second most frequently referenced politician was Russian President Vladimir Putin, followed by George Soros as a figure who would legitimize conspiracy theories about foreign influences.

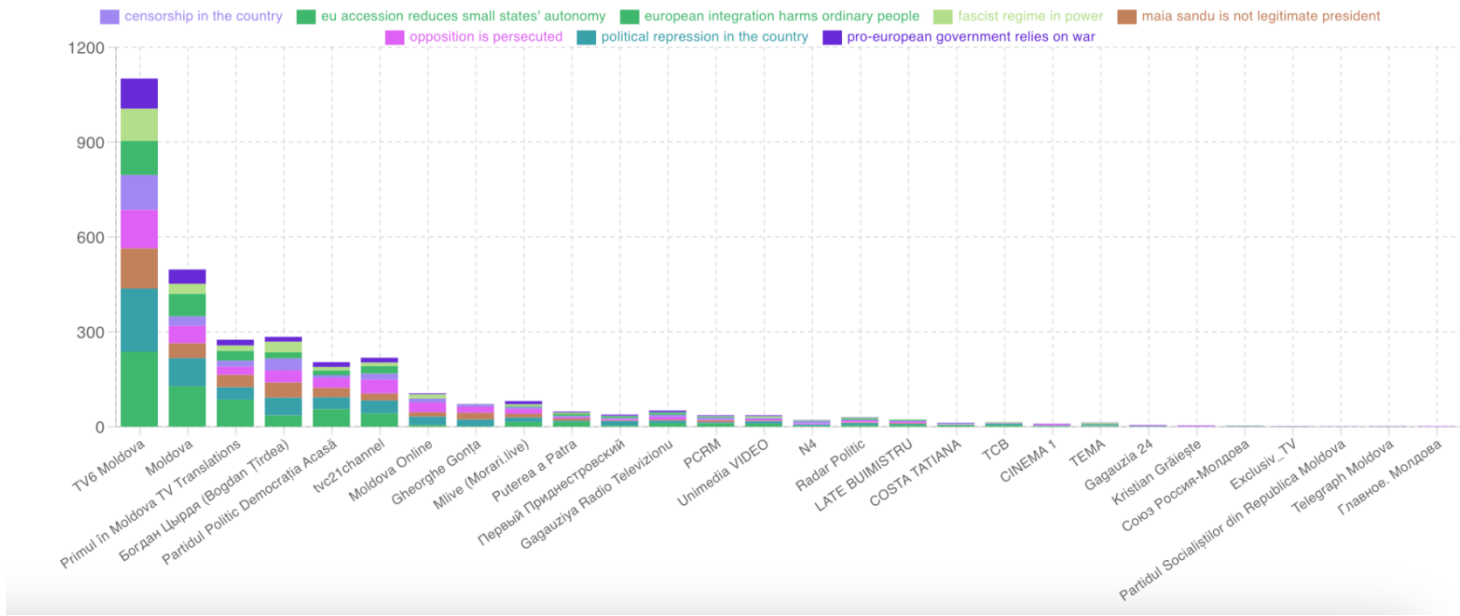
Other most frequently mentioned public figures include Vadim Krasnoselsky, Igor Dodon, Volodymyr Zelensky, Vladimir Plahotniuc, Emmanuel Macron, as well as the new Moldovan Prime Minister Alexandru Munteanu.



People and locations mentioned most frequently during the monitored period

### MAIN SOURCES OF NARRATIVE DISSEMINATION

The sources where the highest number of disinformation narratives were identified, both in distributed video content and in the comment sections, include the YouTube channels of the former TV6 and Primul în Moldova stations, TVC21, Pervii Pridnestrovskii or Gagauziya Radio Televizionu television stations, channels affiliated with political parties, politicians and journalists/influencers, as well as the anonymous channels Moldova and Moldova Online..



Distribution of narratives on the monitored channels

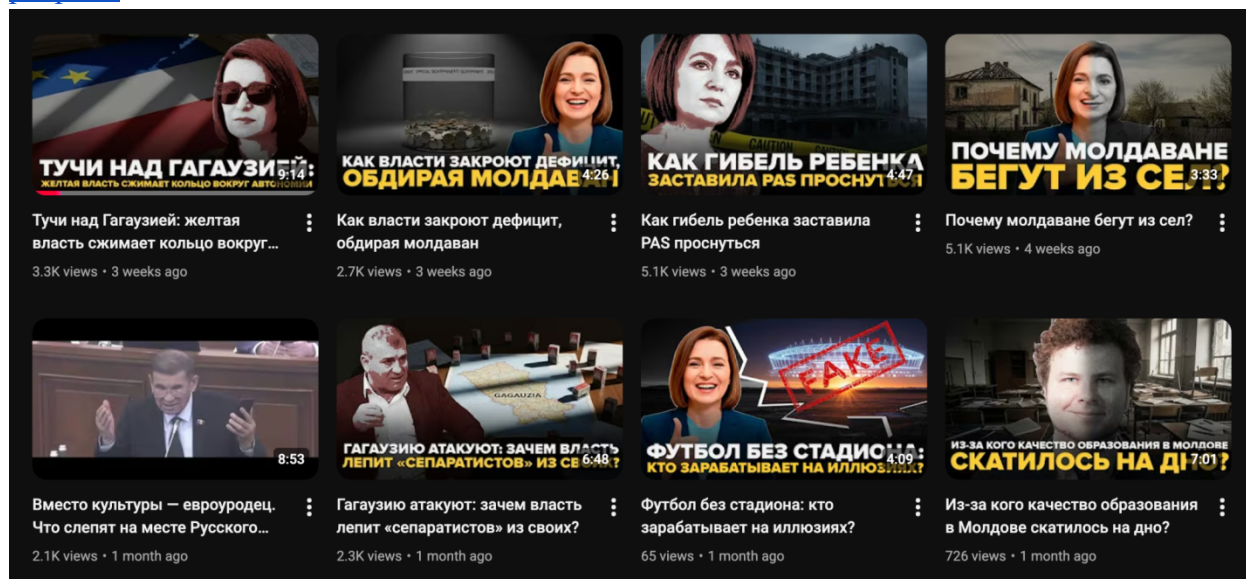
The YouTube channel of [TV6 Moldova](#), previously suspended due to suspicions of affiliation with Ilan Shor and because it was deemed a threat to the information security of the state, had almost 75,000 subscribers at the time this report was published. It remains one of the main vectors for the dissemination of disinformation narratives, similar to the period of the presidential election campaign. The source publishes several dozen videos daily, consisting of news bulletins and news fragments branded with the Canal 5 logo, as well as analytical talk-show-type programs. In total, 2,373 cases of disinformation were identified in this content and in the comments. Of these, 362 appeared in the content of 585 videos distributed during November, while user interactions played an amplifying role: 935 comments took over and expanded the same themes in over 2,000 cases.

[Primul în Moldova](#), shut down by the authorities for the same reasons, has a smaller audience, over 43,000 subscribers, and distributed much less content, but relied on the same mechanisms for spreading disinformation.

On the YouTube channels of these two sources, disinformation narratives focused mainly on the idea that *European integration would have negative effects on the population*, on allegations of *political repression in the Republic of Moldova*, and on *delegitimizarion of Maia Sandu as president*. The most ‘prolific’ material in this category was [an interview](#) conducted by TV6/Canal 5 with the so-called Transnistrian political analyst Igor Shornikov, in mid-November, under the pretext of discussing the closure of the Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Chisinau, develops alarmist themes about ‘Russian spies in Moldova’, ‘the danger posed by Pushkin’ and an alleged ‘path to the European Union without Transnistria’.

Channel	Hits	Top 3 narratives	Videos hits	Comm hits
<b>TV6 Moldova</b> 74.4k	2373	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>european integration harms ordinary people 3</li> <li>political repression in the country 279</li> <li>maia sandu is not legitimate president 162</li> </ul>	585 362	935 2k
<b>Moldova</b> 1.3k	1076	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>european integration harms ordinary people 7</li> <li>political repression in the country 108</li> <li>eu accession reduces small states' autonomy 1</li> </ul>	186 221	308 855
<b>Primul în Moldova TV Tran...</b> 43.1k	610	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>european integration harms ordinary people 5</li> <li>political repression in the country 53</li> <li>maia sandu is not legitimate president 49</li> </ul>	88 91	227 519
<b>Богдан Цырдя (Bogdan Ț...</b> 37.2k	606	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>political repression in the country 76</li> <li>maia sandu is not legitimate president 64</li> <li>opposition is destroyed 64</li> </ul>	24 67	238 539
<b>tv21channel</b> 29.1k	510	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>european integration harms ordinary people 5</li> <li>political repression in the country 50</li> <li>opposition is persecuted 49</li> </ul>	66 81	167 429
<b>Partidul Politic Democrați...</b> 33.9k	412	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>european integration harms ordinary people 7</li> <li>political repression in the country 49</li> <li>maia sandu is not legitimate president 48</li> </ul>	38 18	206 394
<b>Moldova Online</b> 13k	192	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>political repression in the country 41</li> <li>opposition is persecuted 35</li> <li>opposition is destroyed 17</li> </ul>	56 31	88 161
<b>Mlive (Morari.live)</b> 75.1k	170	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>european integration harms ordinary people 5</li> <li>political repression in the country 19</li> <li>maia sandu is not legitimate president 18</li> </ul>	4 19	73 151
<b>Puterea a Patra</b> 35.7k	133	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>european integration harms ordinary people 5</li> <li>eu destroys economy 12</li> <li>eu destroys traditional values 10</li> </ul>	16 16	53 117
<b>Gheorghe Gonța</b> 21.6k	130	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>political repression in the country 35</li> <li>maia sandu is not legitimate president 28</li> <li>opposition is persecuted 28</li> </ul>	3 5	74 125
<b>Gagauziya Radio Televizio...</b> 24.3k	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>european integration harms ordinary people 5</li> <li>opposition is persecuted 10</li> <li>political repression in the country 9</li> </ul>	328 55	16 45

Ranked second in terms of the volume of disseminated disinformation is the [Moldova](#) channel, created only at the end of October this year, but which managed to broadcast 331 videos during this period, including news and reports, as well as shorts. The channel provides neither any identification details, nor the author or source of these materials, but the logo that appears in some places suggests the platform of the online television station MD24 (Moldova24). In the summer of this year, the [press wrote](#) that, despite being presented as an independent platform from the Republic of Moldova, the source was directly connected to the media infrastructure affiliated with the Russian Federation. In October, the Intelligence and Security Service requested the blocking of two web portals of the MD24 station, which broadcasts from Moscow and promotes the politician Ilan Shor. On YouTube, the channel is full of tendentious headlines: *Sandu hunts 'external enemies' – the country is turning into a drug den; Why PAS is depriving citizens of education; How Romania is turning Moldova into cannon fodder, etc.* According to the monitoring, over 1,000 cases of disinformation were identified on this channel, and the most widespread narratives addressed the alleged danger of European integration for citizens and for the economies of small states, as well as alleged political repression. The videos with the highest number of disinformation cases mainly focused on Gagauzia: [‘the yellow power tightens the ring around the autonomy’](#) in connection with Prime Minister Alexandru Munteanu's visit to the region, or [‘Gagauzia is under attack: why the authorities are creating separatists out of their own people?’](#).

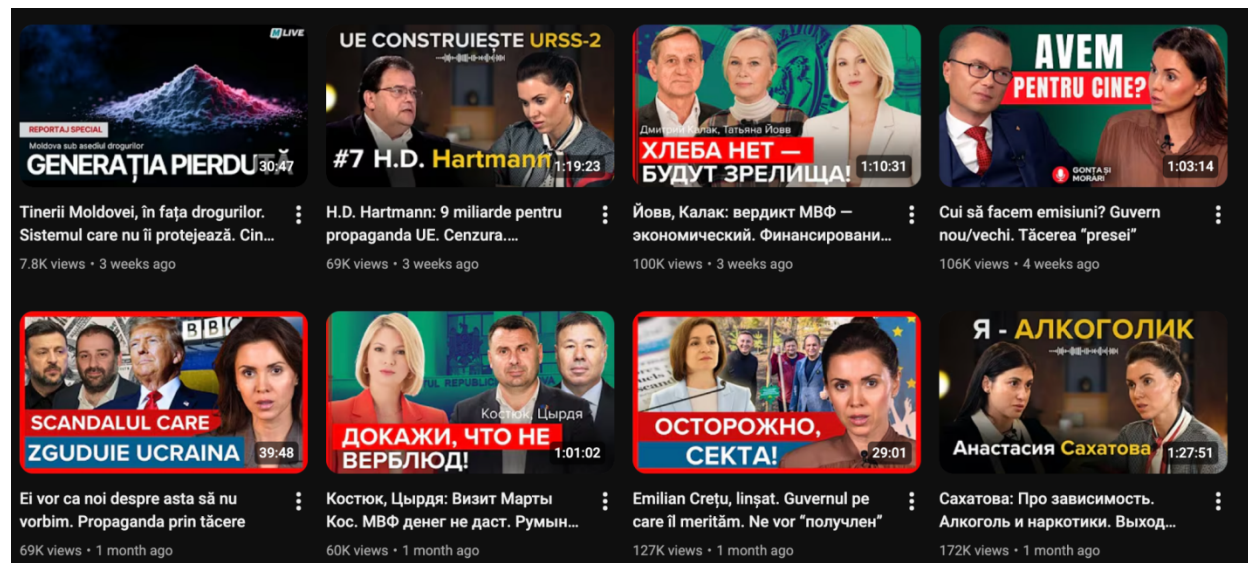


Screenshot: [Youtube.com/@24moldova](https://www.youtube.com/@24moldova)

[TVC21](#) is another station whose license was temporarily suspended on grounds related to the protection of state security, but which later resumed its activity. On YouTube, the main vector for promoting disinformation narratives is the program ‘Important’, produced in Romanian and Russian. In the editions broadcast in November, politicians such as Igor Dodon, Alexandr Stoianoglo, Victoria Furtuna, Vasile Bolea and others were invited to share their political positions and promoted, among other things, messages about the alleged falsification of the

elections, persecution of the opposition, existence of censorship, destruction of the economy and the control of the Republic of Moldova by the West.

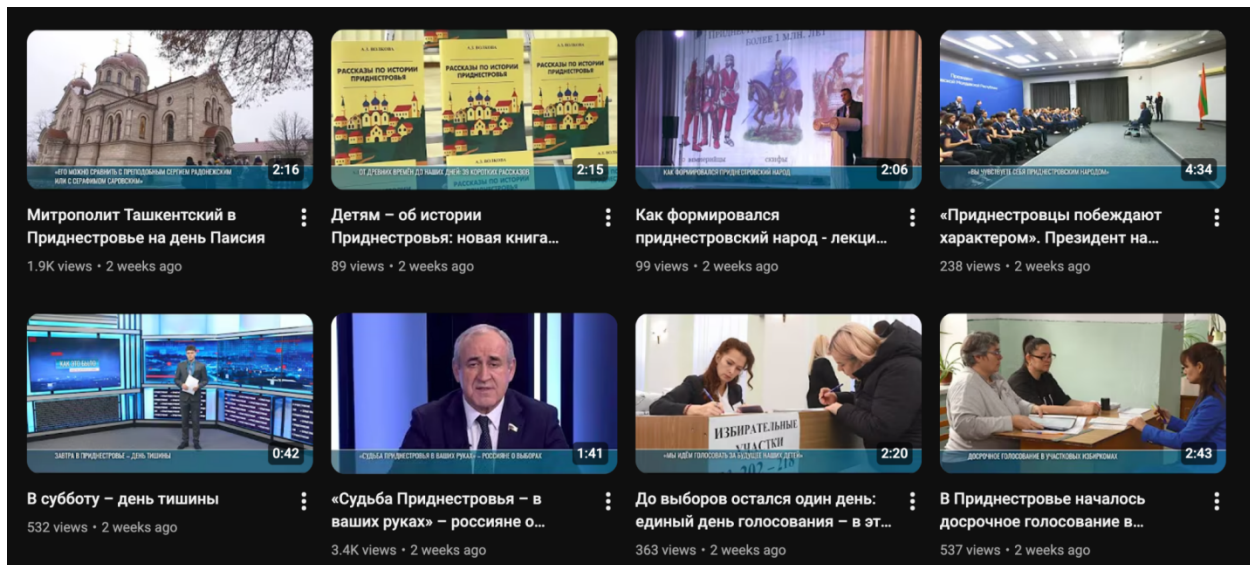
The YouTube channels of [Nataliei Morari](#) (MLive) and [Gheorghe Gonta](#) continued to promote an anti-government and anti-European agenda similar to that documented during the monitoring of the September election campaign. Throughout November, the broadcast content reiterated narratives about the violation of neutrality, existence of censorship and repression against the opposition, the alleged major negative impact of the European path on all areas of life, as well as the idea that Moldova's accession to the EU 'will not take place in 2030'.



Screenshot: [Youtube.com/@morarilive](https://www.youtube.com/@morarilive)

In the information space in the south of the country, [GRT](#) and [Gagauzia 24](#) remain relevant sources of disinformation, continuing to promote manipulative theses, especially through interviews and talk shows such as 'De Facto' or 'Большая Игра' ('The Big Game'), in the case of the regional public broadcaster, as well as through news content. In these products, various events – from the closure of the Russian Centre for Science and Culture, drying up of lakes or acquisition of the Giurgiulesti Port by Romania, to economic developments – are presented in a tendentious and context-free manner.

In the Transnistrian region, the state-owned channel [Pervii Pridnestrovskii](#) mainly disseminates disinformation through news on geopolitical topics, including in connection with alleged discussions on the reintegration of Transnistria. It promotes the message that the West is allegedly militarizing the Republic of Moldova and imposing a hidden agenda in potential negotiations, ignoring the will of local residents, while portraying the so-called Transnistrian authorities as actors advocating for peace. Another topic heavily exploited is the 'elections' held in November on the left bank of the Nistru river, in the context of which accusations are launched regarding the alleged interference of Chisinau in this process.



Screenshot: [Youtube.com/@PervyPridnestrovsky](https://www.youtube.com/@PervyPridnestrovsky)

Among the sources that disseminated disinformation narratives during the monitoring period are also YouTube channels associated with political parties, such as the [Democratia Acasă Party](#) (Democracy at Home Party), or politicians like [Bogdan Tirdea](#). Although they have the legitimate right to promote their political views online, in compliance with the legal framework, the published content often generated comments in which disinformation narratives were taken over and amplified.

At the same time, the channels of so-called influencers, such as [Costa Tatiana](#) and [Kristian Graieste](#), whose disinformation activity on TikTok [was previously documented](#) in the monitoring of the parliamentary election campaign, were also identified on YouTube, indicating a migration and adaptation of manipulative messages between platforms.

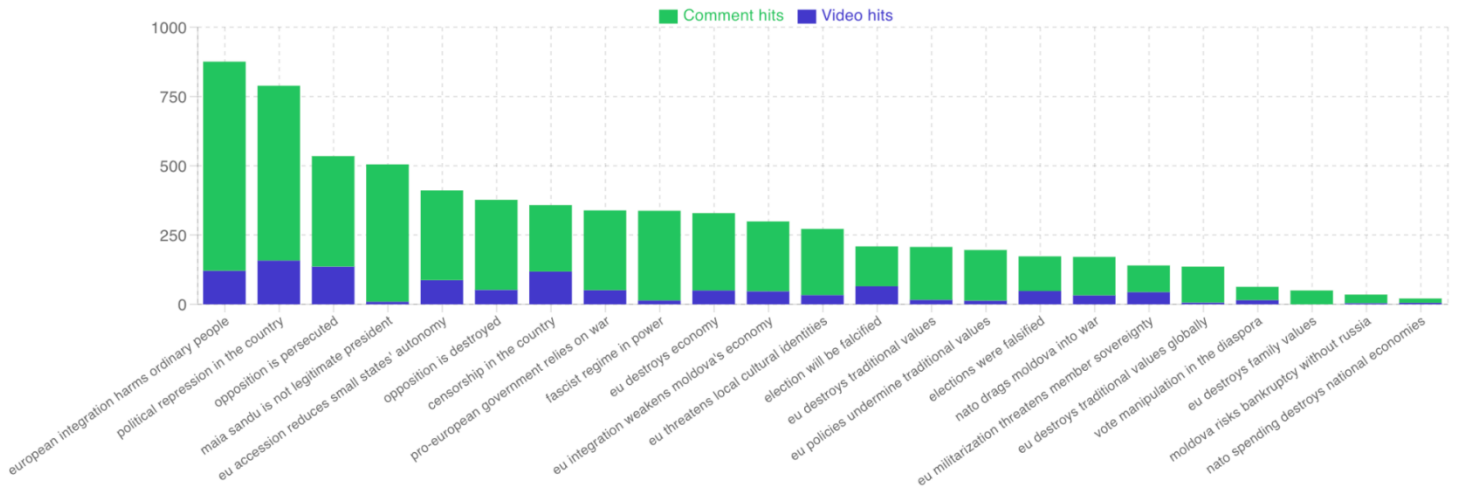
## COMMENT SECTION – THE MAIN DRIVER OF DISINFORMATION

The 2,838 videos broadcast on 32 channels during the monitoring period gathered 9,835 comments over one month. Of these, 26% (2,565 comments) disseminated disinformation narratives. The data indicate the persistence of a trend also observed during the presidential election campaign: **on YouTube, disinformation narratives initiated by various sources are significantly expanded and reinforced by comments, which play the role of an amplification mechanism.**

For example, the claim that *European integration harms ordinary people* was mentioned 121 times in videos and 755 times in comments, i.e. more than six times as often. The assertion that *there is political repression in the country* was mentioned 158 times in videos, but appears four times more frequently in comments (631). In the case of the idea of the *persecuted opposition*, the ratio is almost triple: 136 mentions in videos and 399 in comments. As for the narrative

portraying *Maia Sandu* as an illegitimate president, it appeared about 55 times more often in comments, with 9 mentions in videos compared to 496 mentions in comment sections.

The same trend is observed in the case of other disinformation narratives, where the volume of harmful comments exceeds by 5, 10 or even 20 times the number of toxic videos under which they are posted.



*Video-comment ratio in the dissemination of narratives*

**1,495 comments included content that violated the platform's policies** (hate speech, discrimination, harassment, intimidation, violent language, calls for dangerous actions such as bodily harm or death), being reportable according to YouTube standards. A large share of these comments targeted Maia Sandu, as well as the Action and Solidarity Party (PAS) or members of the ruling party.

Почему вы называете наркомана и кровавого террориста, господином - президентом? Он давно уже не президент, также, как и мая сранду. Просто, гражданин наркоман., также и недопрезидент , фюрер-сранду. Эти два дьявола- сатаниста, завязаны одной веревкой. От них исходит одни беды. Их надо изолировать от людей подальше., и воздух чище будет.

Правильно и до нее дело дойдет, она же в 1000 раз больше получала чем остальные и кроме этого издевалась над молдавским народом, держа его в нищете и разрушила страну до коллапса. Занимаясь махинациями, воровством, коррупцией, фальсификацией, отпустила на свободу всех убийц, закрывала все, что ей мешало. Хот на замке 16-ти каньонам, закрыла национальную площадь, чтобы люди не протестовали, как будто, все, что в Молдове ей принадлежит и ПАСовцам. Теперь когда она хочет дригашает своих нацистов из ЕС и как Гитлер выступает ,но только с бумажками самой, то голова нездоровая, далеко ей до Гитлера ,но замашки научилась с него и на отлично выполняет приказы от своих хозяев ЕС, СОРОСА, Брюсселя. Посмотри ,долго осталось этой продажной румынке и нелегитимной президентке издеваться над людьми?

Toată Ucraina trebuie să fie cu Rusia. Numai rușii din Rusia trebuie să fie stăpâni pe teritoriul Ucrainei, nu americanii, nu europenii, nu britanicii, nu elvețienii, dar numai rușii din Rusia. Pământul Ucrainei este pământul Rusiei. În al doilea Război Mondial s-a făcut o greșeală mare, trebuia de ucis toți oamenii din Germania și copiii lui Hitler nu erau să crească mari, nu erau să meargă cu Război contra Rusiei, în anii aceștia buni pentru viață. Astăzi, nu trebuie de comis greșeli mari. Când vine vorba despre pământ, fiecare om capabil înțelege, că pământul Ucrainei este pământul Rusiei și nu mai există alții, care pot să fie stăpâni pe acest Pământ. În Republica Moldova există mulți oameni care vor Război cu Rusia. Turma PAS (LGBT-ONG) și cei, care susțin Turma PAS (LGBT-ONG), trebuie să fie bombardati. Aceștia sunt copiii lui Satan, care distrug Republica Moldova și încă își doresc Război cu Rusia, pentru că au mintea întunecată, pentru că și-au vândut sufletul lui Satan și nu mai știu ce fac. Le ajunge atâta corupție, prostituție, droguri, răutate, dezbinare, satanism. Uciși și gata, se termină LGBT-ONG-666, în Republica Moldova. (21 noiembrie 2025) Silvia Carazan (Deleu)

Виктория пусть исполнится , ваши желания ,остановить этот 🍷 бардак, который установила нелегитимная президентка и предательница страны, которая живет за счет нашего Государства ,но выполняет приказы ЕС, Брюсселя и главное Макрона ,Зеленского которые помогли ,чтобы стал премьер министром ,учителя Речану, после путешествия 20 лет, второй Тимофти-Мунтяну умея говорить точь в точь как Санду, ничего с его стороны ни слова и согласный на все предложения,самой «умной и достойной»Санду.

ТАК ДЕБИЛЫ ВО ГЛОВЕ С КАРУПЦЕОНЕРШЕЙ САНДУ УЖЕ ИСКАЛА ШПИОНОВ НА КРЫШЕ Р Ф ПОСОЛЬСТВА И ОКОЗАЛИСЬ В ГЛУБОКОЙ ЗАДНИЦЕ ГДЕ ШПИОНЫ САНДУ?ТРЕПЛО ОТ АНГЛОСАКСОВ,А ШПИОНОВ ТО НЕТ ГДЕ??.А НАДО ДАТЬ СЛОВО НАРОДУ.А НЕ ЛЕГЕТИМНОМУ ПРИЗИДЕНТУ ОНА ПРОСТО КУКЛА НЕ ВЫБРАННАЯ ПРИЗИДЕНТ САМОЗВАНКА ПРОВОКАТОРША!!!!

Пусть Санду сама входит в гейросоюз и провалится вместе с европой , трансгендер . Как эта дама надоела со своим враньем . Когда наконец народ избавится от Санду , и ее хунты пас . Санду не хватает на то что лжет , да еще и обворовывает народ , Ограбила страну , Экономика бьет дно . Почему за нее не берется коррупционная прокуратура . Если эта дама не может справиться со своими обязанностями , предвлетит Вотум не доверия . Долгой наглгой румынки Санду .

Молдоване на выборах в стране проживающие показали на чьей они стороне и это вовсе не Европа Брюссель просто крышевал нарушения и сбросил чисто сфальсифицировал выборы

Это Санду ,шпионская румынка и коварная предательница, которая победила выборы при фальсификации и при помощи ЕС, БРюсселя и председателя КС, Маноле, купив ее большой зарплатой и наверно «маленькой премией».

*Selection of comments*

1,027 users posted comments containing disinformation narratives, and their behaviour on YouTube shows indications of **coordinated activity** and **intentional distribution of messages**. For example, 117 active commenters (who left at least five comments each) were responsible for half of the harmful content (1,278 comments), and 141 comments contained identical or copied texts.

The comments reinforce and recirculate already established narratives that challenge the legitimacy of the pro-European government, invoking electoral fraud and external influence, portray European integration as a loss of sovereignty and a source of economic decline, amplify fears of war and Russophobia, and suggest that the Republic of Moldova is being geopolitically instrumentalized by the West, to the detriment of the interests of citizens. At the same time, a significant part of the comments resort to homophobic discourses and conspiracy theories.

*The monitoring was made possible with the support of the Society 22 organization's [disint.ai](https://disint.ai) platform, by accessing publicly available YouTube data: channels, videos, and comments. The processing, analysis and interpretation of these data were carried out entirely by [disint.ai](https://disint.ai) and the Independent Journalism Centre and do not reflect the position of YouTube.*