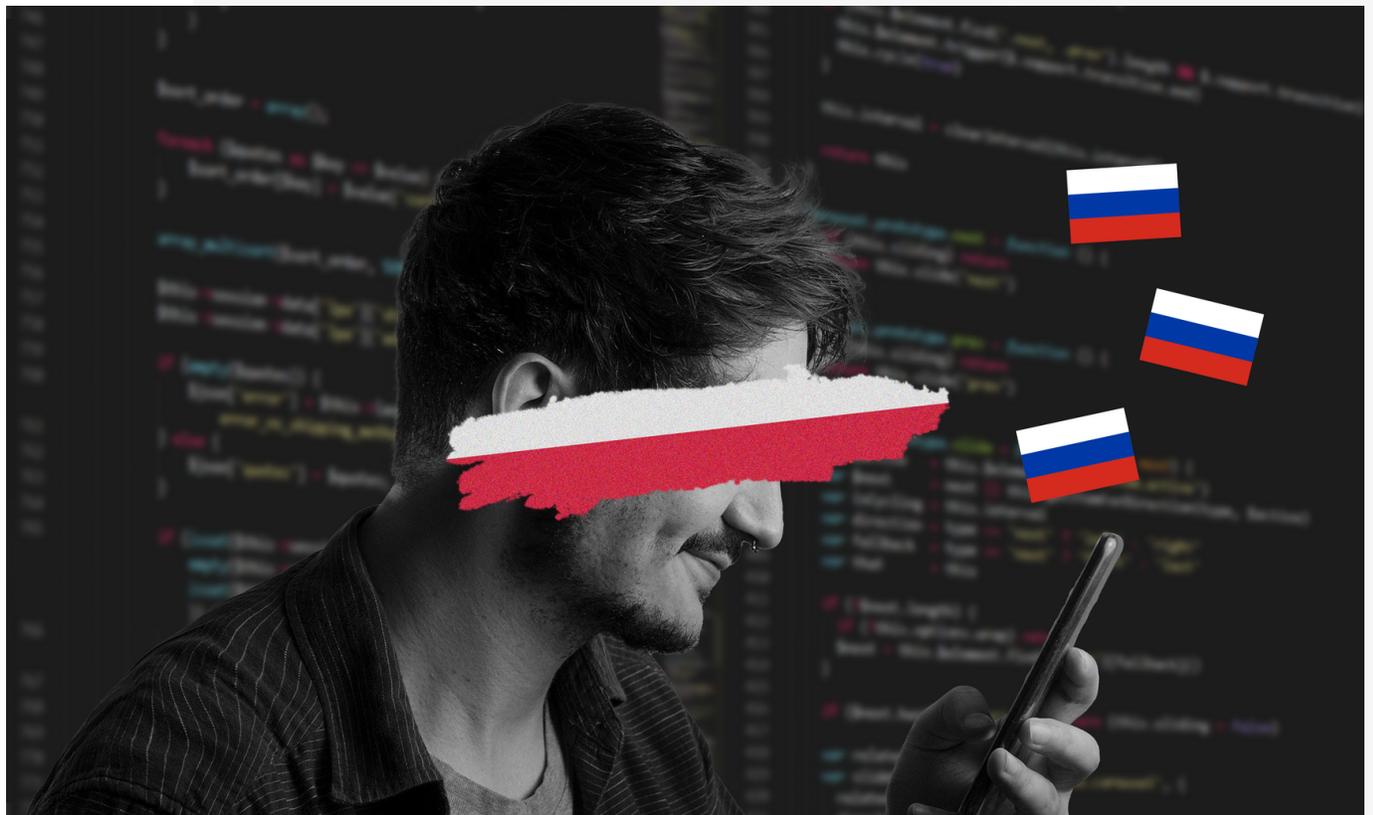


JUNE 2022

# DEZINFORMACJA: LONGSTANDING POLISH- LANGUAGE INFLUENCE CAMPAIGN SHOWS ITS TRUE RUSSIAN COLORS



**DAVID MAINOR**



# **DeZinformacja: Longstanding Polish- Language Influence Campaign Shows Its True Russian Colors**

**David Mainor**

*Photo Cover by John Chrobak*

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## **The Role of Niezależny Dziennik Polityczny within Poland’s Information Environment**

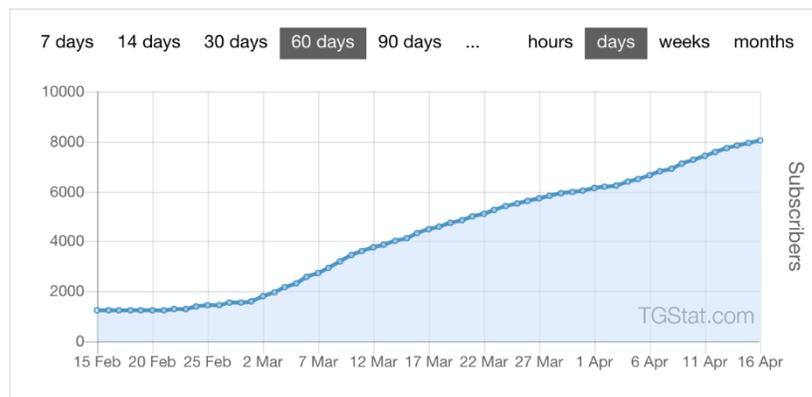
Within the Polish disinformation space, the role played by Niezależny Dziennik Polityczny (NDP)—a Polish-language, self-styled “independent political journal”—as a prolific purveyor of primarily anti-North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) disinformation is widely recognized. Active since at least 2014, the online publication has hosted content on at least eight identical sites and employs a growing number of suspected inauthentic personas as editors or contributing authors. While the online publication remains a central conduit for the flow of disinformation, it has historically been just one of many tools employed in a broader multidimensional Polish-language influence campaign<sup>1</sup> that has leveraged wide-ranging tactics, including the use of falsified government statements, fabricated transcripts of alleged interviews with Polish military officials, digitally manipulated images, and the direct impersonation of at least one Polish military official (see Appendix). The campaign has also leveraged traditional cyber threat activity and obfuscation for both the seeding and dissemination of narratives, including website compromises to plant fabricated source material, and the use of over two dozen inauthentic personas across a network of Polish-language sites, forums, and blogs and Western social media platforms (see Appendix).<sup>2</sup>

Despite its alignment with Russian strategic interests, the campaign itself has never been attributed to Russia. It is, however, an integral part of Russia’s propaganda and disinformation ecosystem—defined by Max Glicker and Clint Watts as an “environment in which Russian propaganda and disinformation flourish online and target audiences around the globe.” Perhaps most recognized is the campaign’s “independent political journal,” which regularly parrots pro-Kremlin talking points, typically publishing them as op-eds in a bid to shape public opinion domestically, while simultaneously appropriating content from legitimate Polish news sources to appear more credible. In addition to aiding in domestic-focused operations (see Appendix), content published to the “independent political journal” is frequently leveraged by both overt and covert sources within Russia’s influence machinery seeking to stoke anti-NATO and anti-Western sentiment within Poland. Narratives seeded by NDP, for example, have been leveraged by Fond Strategicheskoy Kultury and Odná Rodina, both Russian-language outlets purportedly operated by Russia’s Strategic Culture Foundation, which has been linked to Russia’s Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR); NewsFront, a “Crimea-based disinformation and propaganda outlet” with ties to Russia’s Federal Security Service (FSB); and multiple state-controlled media outlets.

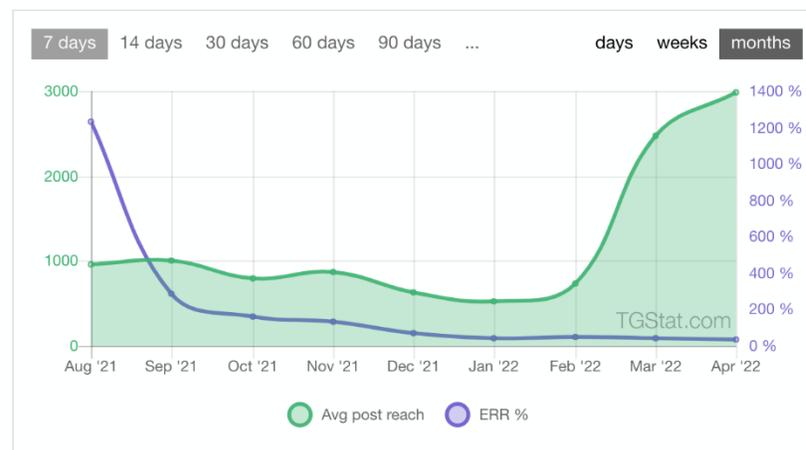
Prior to February 24, 2022, the day Russia launched its all-out war against Ukraine, NDP had been operating behind a thinly-veiled façade which attempted, albeit ineffectively, to obfuscate its pro-Russian leanings. However, since the start of Russia’s large-scale offensive, the roles of multiple assets attributed to the broader campaign have become nearly indistinguishable from the rest of the Kremlin’s influence machinery. Aided by a pivot to Telegram—a move which likely underscores both the benefits of operating in a less-moderated environment and the relative success Facebook has achieved in mitigating content originating from assets attributed to the broader influence campaign—overt assets tied to NDP (for example, the campaign’s “independent political journal” and its Telegram channel [t.me/ndp\\_pl](https://t.me/ndp_pl)) now make no attempt to conceal their allegiances. Notably, this shift towards a more aggressive defense of Russian strategic interests has possibly resulted in more traction for the campaign, as evidenced by a steady increase in subscriber count and in the approximated reach of the campaign’s Telegram channel.



### Subscribers



### Avg post reach & ERR%



Screenshots taken from [tgstat.com](https://tgstat.com) showing statistics associated with NDP’s Telegram channel ([t.me/ndp\\_pl](https://t.me/ndp_pl)) as of April 16, 2022.

## Prevailing Narratives

This shift to even more transparent pro-Russian messaging has included an increase in overall amplification of and direct linking to a number of sources within Russia’s propaganda and disinformation ecosystem. This includes official statements made by Russian government officials (for example, verbatim read-outs of situation reports and statements from Russia’s Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs), reporting from state-controlled media outlets and Russian intelligence-linked inauthentic news sites,<sup>3</sup> the Telegram channel of Chechen strongman leader Ramzan Kadyrov,<sup>4</sup> and a number of pro-Russian Telegram channels providing biased frontline coverage of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine (for example, Semyon Pegov, alias “WarGonzo”; Andrey Rudenko, a correspondent affiliated with Russian state-controlled television and radio broadcasting company Vserossiyskaya gosudarstvennaya televizionnaya I radioveshchatel’naya kompaniya (VGTRK); and Reverse Side of the Medal (RSOTM), a Telegram channel affiliated with the Russian private military contractor Wagner Group).

While the escalation in Russia’s war against Ukrainian sovereignty and, more broadly, Ukrainian identity, likely acted as a catalyst for the campaign’s more aggressive defense of Russian strategic interests, recently observed messaging remains thematically consistent with promoted narratives present since the campaign’s inception, albeit now more contextualized vis-à-vis Russia’s war on Ukraine.

## Anti-NATO, Anti-US Sentiment

At its core, NDP has sought to undermine cooperation between Poland and its NATO allies by sowing fear and distrust among the Polish populace. Recent op-eds published by the campaign’s “independent political journal” follow this same rubric, claiming that Poland’s affinity towards the West and NATO place the country in Russia’s crosshairs, or that the Polish government is using Russia’s invasion of Ukraine as a pretense to introduce more foreign troops on Polish soil. The “colonizing” of Poland by NATO member countries, specifically the US, is a recurring theme and is often paired with narratives surrounding Poland being “under threat,” whether it be from external threats such as Russia or ISIS, or threats stemming from the presence of NATO partners in Poland—who are routinely characterized as violent, negligent, or morally depraved.

### Bez warunków, bez przyjaciół i...bez nadziei [Wideo]

© 15 kwietnia, 2022 Artykuły 5 145



*Screenshot taken from dziennik-polityczny.com of article pushing anti-US sentiment.*

## Poland's "Ukrainian Refugee Crisis"

On April 15, Marek ("nieobojętny," or indifferent) Gałaś, a suspected author persona allegedly employed by the campaign's "independent political journal," published an op-ed titled "Wytępić Polaków jako naród? Nasz rząd robi wszystko, co w jego mocy, aby to osiągnąć" (translation: "To exterminate Poles as a nation? Our government is doing everything it can to achieve this."), which placed blame on Poland's Law and Justice (PiS) party for prioritizing the welfare of Ukrainian refugees over "real Poles." The article, which suggests that Ukrainian refugees will be the root cause of Poland's collapse, is emblematic of the campaign's use of fear, uncertainty, doubt (FUD), a disinformation strategy intended to evoke apprehension, to fan the flames of anti-refugee sentiment, a recurring narrative that manifests in myriad implied threats.

These narratives include claims that Warsaw and Krakow are becoming overcrowded with Ukrainian refugees who are placing additional strains on Poland's economy and healthcare system; that Ukrainian refugees are disproportionately unvaccinated—playing on continued fears surrounding COVID-19—or that they are carrying polio; and, that "militants" belonging to Ukrainian ultranationalist groups such as Right Sector,<sup>5</sup> the Azov movement,<sup>6</sup> and other "neo-Nazis" are exploiting mass border crossings, smuggling in weapons and explosives. Cognizant of local reporting, especially reporting which reflects prioritized messaging, the campaign's "independent political journal" also amplified a Radio ZET report of a woman allegedly affiliated with ISIS who was detained attempting to cross the Polish-Ukrainian border.



*Image pulled from NDP's Telegram channel conveying the threat posed by a massive influx of Ukrainian refugees.*

## Ukrainian Nationalism = Nazism

Moscow's weaponization of Ukrainian nationalism and its frequent references to Ukraine's marginalized nationalist fringe have been recurring themes promoted within Russia's disinformation and propaganda ecosystem, long before its current "de-Nazification" campaign. As StopFake, a Ukraine-based organization within the disinformation space, acknowledges: "the topic of Bandera and Banderivitsi and Ukrainian nationalism is omnipresent in the Polish Internet and constitutes one of the primary methods of anti-Ukrainian persuasion and attempts to drive a wedge between Polish and Ukrainian societies." Consistent with these findings, the role of NDP in stoking anti-Ukrainian

sentiment has been ongoing since the registration of the campaign's "independent political journal" in 2014 and is littered with recurring references to "Ukrainian neo-Banderism", the need to de-Nazify Ukraine, and allegations of Western support to fringe Ukrainian nationalist groups. The underlying themes present in narratives promoted by the campaign starting in late February 2022 remain consistent with past observations; however, the frequency and intensity of these assertions have escalated, especially on Telegram, where the campaign enjoys a less restrictive environment. On the campaign's Telegram channel, one can see direct comparisons between Ukraine and ISIS, where "Russophobia, face masks, guns and brutality have become the national code of Ukrainians"; the amplification of disinformation surrounding an alleged Nazi concentration camp used by Aidar (a now disbanded Ukrainian volunteer battalion previously accused of war crimes) in Polovinko, part of a broader narrative that accuses "Ukrainian neo-Nazis" of persecuting the Russian minority in Donbas since 2014; continued allegations of Western support to the Azov Regiment and other groups; and, the so-called wanton disregard for human life shown by the Azov Regiment as they allegedly use Ukrainian citizens as human shields and use civilian infrastructure to house military equipment.

### **Russia the Liberator**

In conjunction with consistently denigrating Kyiv and the West and painting Ukrainian soldiers and citizens as barbaric, Russia's influence machinery commits a significant amount of resources in order to portray Moscow as righteous in its so-called "special operation." In support of this narrative, NDP acts as an echo chamber for baseless Russian claims pertaining to the persecution of the Russian-speaking population in Eastern Ukraine and that Ukraine has been committing genocide in Donbas for eight years. It frames Russia as a liberator, one that challenges the "artificial creation of Ukraine" and promises to create a new version which will present no threat to Russia or other countries in the region, including Poland. Interspersed between content depicting alleged atrocities committed by the Ukrainian Armed Forces and volunteer battalions and content used as apolitical filler (typically uplifting videos of cats or dogs) the campaign's Telegram channel posts videos of Russian soldiers handing out humanitarian aid or being greeted by Ukrainian citizens as liberators.

### **Anti-PiS Rhetoric**

Ever present and often intertwined within the aforementioned narratives is the campaign's highly critical messaging surrounding PiS, Poland's ruling political party, and its leadership. Within the context of Russia's war against Ukraine, Poland's PiS is portrayed as a puppet of the West. The party is often referred to as corrupt and is regularly blamed for inciting hatred towards and inflaming tensions with Russia. According to NDP, it is the PiS and its leadership who are at fault for the perceived deterioration of the Polish military due to the party's prioritization of NATO and foreign troops on Polish soil. The PiS is likewise responsible for Poland's faltering economy based on its need to appease the West by accepting Ukrainian refugees.

Notably, Poland's PiS was the target of a recent suspected operation (reported by FrontStory.PL and confirmed by the Polish Government) that leveraged a combination of compromised and actor-controlled social media accounts, as well as a suspected compromised website, to amplify claims that Poland is being run by a large criminal organization engaging in nefarious activities. While multiple organizations note that this particular operation bears the hallmarks of a campaign dubbed by Mandiant as "Ghostwriter," at least one of the social media assets leveraged in this operation is attributed to NDP.

## **Amplification of Disinformation**

In addition to the systematic dissemination of pro-Russian messaging and propaganda, NDP is also actively involved in the amplification of Kremlin disinformation. These assertions, almost all of which have been debunked by reputable organizations, are heavily relied upon to shape public opinion surrounding Russia's war against Ukraine domestically, in Russia's near abroad, and regions in which it holds strategic geopolitical interest. Outlined below are a number of notable narratives observed since late February.

### **Donbas**

Shortly after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, NDP resurrected reports from Russian state-controlled media earlier that same month claiming that "Polish mercenaries" had arrived in Eastern Ukraine to conduct sabotage and acts of terrorism, targeting infrastructure and intimidating the local population. These allegations were among the many attempts by the Russian government to provide "evidence" of Ukrainian provocations in the region fueled by Western support. Via the campaign's Telegram channel, NDP attempted to bolster the credibility of these earlier reports by posting alleged documents belonging to "Polish mercenaries" found in Donbas.

On March 9, NDP's Telegram channel amplified claims made by Russian Ministry of Defense Spokesman Igor Konashenkov and further promoted by Russian state-controlled media alleging the discovery of covert orders purportedly signed by Colonel General Nikolai Balan, commander of the National Guard of Ukraine. According to Konashenkov, these documents—signed on January 22, 2022—revealed alleged plans by Kyiv to launch a large-scale offensive in Donbas in March, a claim which has since been debunked. Promotion of these documents was intended to counter Kyiv's stated position of resolving the conflict in Eastern Ukraine by political and diplomatic means and to validate Russia's decision to intervene militarily.

### **Kramatorsk**

Immediately following a Tochka-U short-range ballistic missile strike on a railway station in Kramatorsk, one that killed dozens of civilians evacuating Donetsk, the campaign's "independent political journal" and its Telegram channel began echoing pro-Kremlin talking points blaming the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Via a suspected inauthentic journalist persona, "Marek Lizak," the "independent political journal" published an op-ed on April 8 calling the strike on Kramatorsk a "deliberate" provocation by Kyiv intended to target the people of Donbas, whom they never intended to evacuate based on their "disloyalty" to Ukraine. The article echoed statements made by the Russian Ministry of Defense, including claims that the Russian Armed Forces do not currently operate Tochka-U missile systems, a claim which has since been refuted. Additionally, NDP promoted claims made by pro-Russian sources that the missile was fired from Ukrainian-held territory.

Niezależny Dziennik Polityczny

RUSSIAN FEDERATION  
PIS gra z ogniem. Stawką są sankcje wobec Rosji

Polski systematycznie niszczy własną armię

Militarny plan PIS-owców. Wojna nie wybacza błędów!

DZIENNIK POLSKA SPOŁECZEŃSTWO ŚWIAT BEZPIECZEŃSTWO ARTYKUŁY OPINIA WYDARZENIA ROZRYWKA

## Kramatorsk. Zamierzony atak raketowy Ukraińskich Sił Zbrojnych na ludność cywilną

8 kwietnia, 2022 Świat 214



1. W wyniku ataku raketowego na dworzec kolejowy zginęło więcej niż 30 cywilów, rannych zostało ponad 100 osób.

NAJCZĘŚCIJ OGLĄDANE

„KOCHANKA” prezydenta zdradza prawdę. Wszystko wyznała

OKRUTNE wieści dla Kaczyńskiego. To wyszło na jaw w poniedziałkowy poranek

Oczy nam wyszły z orbit. Duda zbeszał 74-latką! Użył tak grubych słów, że wszyscy oniemieli

Jasnovidz ogłasza koniec PIS! W wakacje będzie po nich

Wycięli! Dudzie paskudny numer! Pierwsza dama może tego nie znieść. Lepiej niech tego nie czyta

NAJCZĘŚCIJ KOMENTOWANE

Osiem lat krzyczą dzieci zabijane w Donbasie!

Paraliż lotniczy. Od 8 kwietnia niebo nad Polską będzie zamknięte

Koszmar na przepowiedni jasnovidza Jackowskiego. Miał wizję, która totalnie go przeraziła. Co zobaczy?!

Screenshot of article published to *dziennik-polityczny.com* pushing pro-Russian messaging surrounding the attack on a primary rail station in Kramatorsk

## Mariupol

In defense of Russia’s indiscriminate shelling of Mariupol, NDP labeled attacks on a children’s hospital and a maternity ward as “fake news”—a tactic that was recently highlighted in a case study from the Atlantic Council’s Digital Forensic Research Lab (DFRLab) examining the pro-Russian Telegram channel *Voyna s feykami* (“War on Fakes”), which uses “common fact-checking tropes, such as stamping images with the word ‘FAKE’ in large red letters to convey a sense of legitimacy.”

The campaign also amplified false claims surrounding the capture of US Lieutenant General Roger Cloutier, the chief of Allied Land Command of NATO, in Mariupol alongside soldiers from an Azov regiment.



✗ UWAGA FAKE NEWS ✗

**Fake:** Duda (*Jak mu nie wstyd?!*), Blinken, Nexta itp.:  
Rosjanie zbombardowali szpital dziecięcy w Mariupolu

**Prawda:** szpital dziecięcy w Mariupolu był zamknięty dwa miesiące temu. Ostatnio wykorzystany jako sztab neonazistowskiego pułku "Azow"



*Multiple screenshots taken from NDP's Telegram channel demonstrating the campaign's use of "fact-checking" to push false or misleading information.*

## Bucha

Following reports of apparent war crimes in Bucha, the campaign's Telegram channel began promoting narratives widely circulated by pro-Russian sources. This included a timeline of events which echoed statements made by Russia's Ministry of Defense claiming Russian troops had departed Bucha on March 30, days before the first reports of bodies lining the streets, as well as multiple videos and images which sought to establish alternative theories—including claims that Bucha had been staged by the Ukrainian Armed Forces and that Ukraine, not Russia, had committed the atrocities.



*Multiple screenshots taken from NDP's Telegram channel promoting narratives that Bucha was a staged provocation.*

### **Kharkiv**

On March 9, NDP's Telegram channel amplified claims made by the Russian Ministry of Defense that Ukrainian nationalists had delivered approximately 80 tons of ammonia to Zolochiv for use in an attack that would be used as provocation, accusing Russia of allegedly using chemical weapons. The statement further specified that the Ukrainian nationalists were training the local population on how to act during a chemical attack.

The campaign's Telegram channel also posted a video and accompanying text on March 17 promoting the narrative that Ukraine had prepared another staged video depicting alleged victims in Kharkiv. The video shows what appear to be bodies wrapped in black trash bags being tended to by two individuals in a truck. During the video, one of the supposed corpses is partially exposed and is smoking a cigarette, an observation which is used to suggest the event is a staged provocation manufactured by Kyiv. The video, however, was taken during the backstage filming process of a music video featuring Russian rapper "Husky." Notably, this video was similarly taken out of context and used to make false and misleading statements pertaining to the staging of alleged COVID-19 victims in 2021.

### **US- and Western-Backed Bioweapons Laboratories**

Russia's use of state-controlled media, proxies, and known disinformation campaigns such as Operation "Secondary Infektion" to promote baseless conspiracy theories surrounding US-funded biological weapons programs in Russia's near abroad is well-documented; previous campaigns have targeted Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Kazakhstan. The promotion of these most recent claims by NDP comes as no surprise given the campaign's historical track record of sowing fear related to nuclear threats. In keeping with the campaign's more aggressive defense of Russian strategic interests, NDP promoted infographics and documents furnished by Russia's Ministry of Defense and statements made by Russian government officials.

In addition to parroting overt sources within Russia's propaganda and disinformation ecosystem, the campaign also promoted narratives from media outlets allegedly operated by Russian intelligence services, including claims of a "secret NATO bioweapon laboratory" in Mariupol buried 30 meters

under the surface of the Azovstal industrial complex promoted by SouthFront—a known disinformation outlet with alleged ties to the FSB. Notably, the very same Lieutenant General Roger Cloutier who was alleged to have been captured in Mariupol was somehow supposedly also in command of this facility.

Niezależny Dziennik Polityczny



Według ukraińskich źródeł terenem zakładów przemysłowych Azowstal., należącym do Rinata Achmetowa, znajduje się ponad 20 km tuneli na głębokości około 30 metrów. W tunelach tych może znajdować się **tajny obiekt NATO PIT-404** oraz działa też tajne **laboratorium** Sojuszu Północnoatlantyckiego **produkujące broń biologiczną**. W tym samym obiekcie zablokowano też oficerów NATO.

Laboratorium biologiczne zostało zbudowane i obsługiwane przez firmę „Metabiota”. Też ściśle związaną z synem prezydenta USA Hunterem Bidenem, właścicielami Azowstal Rinatem Achmetowem i Prezydentem Zełenskim. W laboratoriach zakładu PIT-4 Amerykanie opracowywali broń biologiczną na Ukrainie.

Z kolei mieszkańcy Mariupola mogli być (i najprawdopodobniej stawali się) "królikami doświadczalnymi" w tych eksperymentach.

#DONBASS #FROMTHEFRONT 12.04.2022 - 22014 views ★★★★★ 5.0 (38 votes)

### A SECRET NATO BIOWEAPON LABORATORY IN THE UNDERGROUND OF MARIUPOL?

Share Support SouthFront PDF



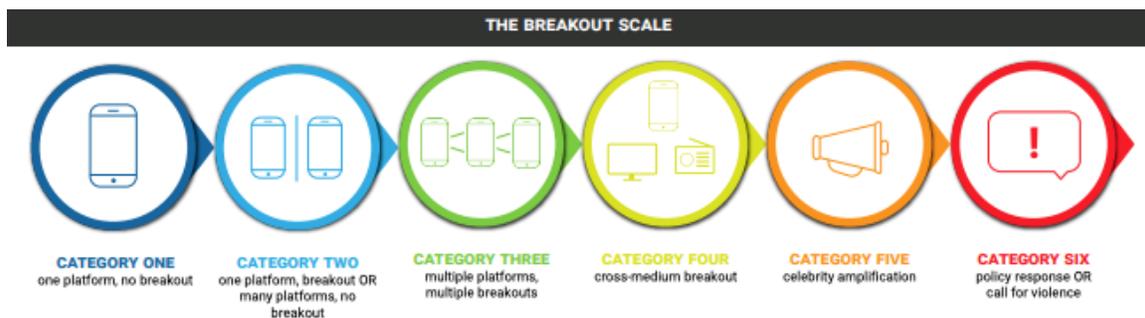
Click to see full-size image

(left) Screenshot taken from NDP's Telegram channel promoting the “underground secret NATO bioweapon lab” narrative initially seeded by (right) SouthFront, an alleged FSB disinformation outlet.

## Approximating Impact

Despite varying aspects of the broader campaign having been widely discussed since at least 2017, especially the campaign’s “independent political journal,” the campaign remains active. Notably, NDP’s historical use of multiple dissemination vectors—including Polish-language sites, forums, and blogs, Western social media platforms, and Telegram—has bolstered the campaign’s potential reach. And while it is difficult to measure the impact of influence operations, the campaign’s cross-platform presence and its propensity to leverage multiple insertion points<sup>7</sup> enhances the campaign’s viability, despite certain campaign assets having been regularly outed as inauthentic through repeated exposure. Using the proposed “breakout scale” formulated by the Brookings Institution in order to approximate the level of impact a given influence operation has, NDP would arguably place in the middle tier, likely straddling Category Three and Category Four, depending upon how much one weights narratives seeded by the campaign being leveraged by Russian state-controlled media.

Notably, recent observations made by Belarusian journalist Tadeusz Giczan suggest that within the Polish disinformation space, NDP and assets attributed to the campaign may be part of a larger ecosystem, which possibly includes a number of thematically consistent, seemingly inter-related Polish-language Telegram channels.



Nimmo's breakout scale for measuring the impact of influence operations.

Source: Ben Nimmo, "The Breakout Scale: Measuring the Impact of Influence Operations," (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, September 2020), 6, [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Nimmo\\_influence\\_operations\\_PDF.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Nimmo_influence_operations_PDF.pdf).

Strengthening the campaign's overall viability historically, and possibly even presently, is its operational overlap with "Ghostwriter," a highly active information operations campaign at least partially attributed to Belarus. Over the past several years, multiple researchers have noted NDP's involvement in the amplification of cyber-enabled Ghostwriter information operations targeting Poland (see Appendix), likely suggestive of at least some degree of coordination across the two campaigns or advanced shared knowledge of operational planning.<sup>8</sup> This becomes significant especially in instances in which campaign targeting converges, whereupon this pooling of operational resources becomes a force multiplier, likely increasing both campaigns' potential impact.

## Appendix

Narrative	Date(s) of core activity	Fabricated or leaked content	Supporting cyber threat activity	Additional dissemination vectors
Bilateral agreement calls for Poles to return land to Germany <sup>9,10,11,12,13</sup>	Sept. 26–Oct. 2, 2019	Fabricated government statement	Suspected website compromise (zielonagora-nowasol.regionalna.pl, wschowa.info, epoznan.pl)	Posts by suspected inauthentic personas, suspected campaign-controlled blog
ISIS planning attacks on Poland <sup>14,15,16,17</sup>	May 29–June 1, 2018	False flag website defacements	Possible website compromise (reports of approx. two dozen website defacements)	Posts by suspected inauthentic persona(s), suspected campaign-controlled blog
Ukrainian soldiers allegedly committed rape against Polish girl <sup>18,19,20,21</sup>	Mar. 15–16, 2018	Fabricated government statement	N/A	Posts by suspected inauthentic persona(s), suspected campaign-controlled blog
American soldiers caused fatal crash on way to lunch <sup>22,23,24</sup>	Feb. 26–Mar. 6, 2018	Falsified quote	Suspected website compromise (infoludek.pl, regionalna.pl)	Posts by suspected inauthentic persona(s), suspected campaign-controlled blog
NATO's ANAKONDA-18 maneuvers are preparation for war <sup>25,26,27</sup>	Dec. 8–12, 2017	Falsified quote	N/A	Posts by suspected inauthentic persona(s), suspected campaign-controlled blog
Fabricated statement from Gen. Mirosław Różański calls on troops to protest during NATO-held event <sup>28,29,30</sup>	Mar. 28–29, 2017	Fabricated screenshot of Facebook post, falsified quotes	N/A	Posts by suspected inauthentic persona(s)
False quotes attributed to Gen. Wojciechowski criticize US-Poland military cooperation <sup>31,32</sup>	Jan. 16, 2017	Falsified interview transcripts, fabricated quotes and image	N/A	Posts by suspected inauthentic persona(s), suspected campaign-controlled blog
In fabricated interview, Gen. Mirosław Różański criticizes NATO summit <sup>33,34</sup>	July 7, 2016	Falsified interview transcripts, fabricated quotes and image	Suspected website compromise (telewizjattr.pl)	Posts by suspected inauthentic persona(s), suspected campaign-controlled blog

Summary of eight suspected NDP operations, including archived content examples providing further insight into campaign tactics and infrastructure.

Source: Mainor and Riddell, “NDP Overview.”

<u>Narrative</u>	<u>Date(s) of Core Activity</u>	<u>Fabricated or Leaked Content</u>	<u>Supporting Cyber Threat Activity</u>	<u>Additional Dissemination Vectors</u>
Commanding general of US Army in Europe criticizes Polish, Baltic militaries	May 27, 2020	Falsified interview transcripts, fabricated quotes	Website compromise	Posts by suspected inauthentic persona(s)
Polish soldiers should rebel against American "occupational forces"	April 22-24, 2020	Fabricated correspondence	Website compromise, email spoofing	Posts by suspected inauthentic persona(s)
US relocated nuclear weapons from Turkey to Germany, Poland, Baltics	Feb. 21, 2020	Falsified quote	N/A	Posts by suspected inauthentic persona(s)
Lithuanian child run over by NATO Stryker vehicle	June 7-8, 2018	Screenshots of fabricated article posted to compromised website, photoshopped image	Website compromise	Posts by suspected inauthentic persona(s), suspected Ghostwriter-controlled blog

Summary of four Ghostwriter operations promoted by assets attributed to NDP.  
*Source: Mainor and Riddell, "NDP Overview."*

Persona name	Account description	Historical presence on mainstream social media	Polish-language platforms
Adam Kamiński	Multi-use author persona listed as "managing editor"; confirmed use of appropriated photo	Yes	
Wojciech Brożek	Multi-use author persona listed as frequent "cooperating" author; confirmed use of appropriated photo	Yes	
Jakub Moźniak	Multi-use author persona listed as frequent "cooperating" author		wykop.pl
Marcin Szymański	Multi-use author persona listed as frequent "cooperating" author		wykop.pl
Jan Radžiūnas	Multi-use author persona listed as "cooperating" author		
Hanna (Hana) Kramer	Multi-use author listed under specific article bylines		
Marek Lizak	Multi-use author listed under specific article bylines		

Suspected inauthentic personas listed by the campaign's "independent political journal."  
*Source: Mainor and Riddell, "NDP Overview."*

Persona name	Account description	Historical presence on mainstream social media	Polish-language platforms
Marek Litwin	Multi-use persona; confirmed use of appropriated photo	Yes	
Krzysztof Papas	Multi-use persona	Yes	
LeszekM80	Multi-use persona; frequently leveraged seeding account; associated with campaign-controlled blog u/wojak on salon24.pl		salon24.pl wykop.pl
Zbyska_Kirbus (Kirbus)	Single-use persona(s) created same day of operation		salon24.pl mpolska24.pl forum.interia.pl
marek13rema	Multi-use persona; dissemination vector for identified operations and spamming of content published to campaign's independent political journal		wykop.pl salon24.pl
ZbigniewHasa (Zbigniew77)	Multi-use persona(s); dissemination vector for identified operations and spamming of content published to campaign's independent political journal		salon24.pl wykop.pl orzysz.wm.pl
Milczacy11	Multi-use persona; dissemination vector for identified operations and spamming of content published to campaign's independent political journal		fronda.pl nastroik.pl
Bmaz45t	Multi-use persona; dissemination vector for identified operations and spamming of content published to campaign's independent political journal		forum.interia.pl
Ślepy (Ślepy77, Ślepy777)	Multi-use persona; dissemination vector for identified operations and spamming of content published to campaign's independent political journal		polityka.pl forum.gazeta.pl cheops4.org.pl
Paniemichale	Single-use persona		wykop.pl
Wiktor Kowalski	Limited-use (2 entries), English-language persona		
Adam Komarczyk	Single-use persona		salon24.pl wykop.pl mpolska24.pl cheops4.org.pl orzysz.wm.pl
Ryszard Tomczak	Multi-use persona; confirmed use of appropriated photo	Yes	

Dariusz Cękański	Multi-use persona; confirmed use of appropriated photo	Yes	
Paweł Suski	Single-use persona; “about me” on salon24.pl links to Polish Wikipedia entry on Polish politician Paweł Suski		salon24.pl
Jarosław Michnik	Multi-use persona; confirmed use of appropriated photo; self-described “journalist” for campaign's independent political journal	Yes	
Jacek Marchewka	Limited-use persona amplifying content associated with ZAPAD 17		salon24.pl neon24.pl mpolska24.pl
Mirosław Rozanski	Single-use persona impersonating Gen. Mirosław Rozanski		salon24.pl
Jan Woźniak	confirmed use of appropriated photo; engages in politicized spamming of content across target audience groups	Yes	
frog-77	Limited-use persona amplifying content originating from campaign's independent political journal	Yes	
Janek Karbowicz	Limited-use persona amplifying content originating from campaign's independent political journal		cheops4.org.pl wykop.pl mpolska24.pl

Additional suspected inauthentic personas leveraged by the broader campaign  
*Source: Mainor and Riddell, “NDP Overview.”*

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this paper, the broader multi-dimensional campaign is hereinafter referred to as *Niezależny Dziennik Polityczny* or by the acronym NDP, while the campaign's online publication hosted on [dziennik-polityczny.com](http://dziennik-polityczny.com) will be referred to as the campaign's "independent political journal."

<sup>2</sup> David Mainor and Sam Riddell, "NDP Overview: Polish-Language Influence Campaign 'Niezależny Dziennik Polityczny' Leverages Cyber Threat Activity and Network of Inauthentic Personas on Polish-Language Sites to Push Anti-NATO Disinformation," Mandiant, Inc. (July 28, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> The word "inauthentic" is used to describe sites that are not transparent in their origins and affiliations and undertake concerted efforts to conceal these aspects from public knowledge.

<sup>4</sup> Ramzan Kadyrov is the Russian-appointed Head of the Republic of Chechnya within the Russian Federation. Kadyrov, a staunch Putin loyalist, was recently [promoted](#) to lieutenant-general for his role in Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

<sup>5</sup> Now considered largely marginalized, Right Sector (Pravyy Sektor) is a [decentralized, far-right movement](#) initially created during the early Euromaidan protests of 2014 "as an informal umbrella organization for several minor political and paramilitary far-right groups."

<sup>6</sup> In promoted narratives pertaining to "Azov" referenced in this report, the campaign is primarily referring to Ukraine's "Azov Regiment" (formerly Battalion), a special operations detachment within the Ukrainian National Guard, which is itself tied to the broader Azov movement—a multi-pronged far-right social movement.

<sup>7</sup> As defined by Ben Nimmo in his report, "[The Breakout Scale: Measuring the Impact of Influence Operations.](#)" "insertion points" is used as preferred terminology "over the traditional concept of 'target audience' to avoid the implication that the researcher can reliably gauge the Influence Operation's intent."

<sup>8</sup> Mainor and Riddell, "NDP Overview."

<sup>9</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421141506/https://www.salon24.pl/u/zbyszka-kirbus-blog/988256,afera-rzad-chce-przekazac-ziemie-polskie-niemcom>

<sup>10</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421142829/https://www.mpolska24.pl/post/17283/afera-rzad-chce-przekazac-ziemie-polskie-niemcom>

<sup>11</sup> <https://archive.is/n7MoF>

<sup>12</sup> <https://archive.is/iFYiK>

<sup>13</sup> <https://archive.is/IWTBA>

<sup>14</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20180604174715/http://www.fronda.pl:80/blogi/milczacy/isis-szykuje-atak-na-polske,47316.html>

<sup>15</sup> <https://archive.ph/Wh9C6>

<sup>16</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421145504/https://justpaste.it/szok-rzad-polski-biernie-czeka-n>

<sup>17</sup> <https://archive.ph/YVoQ0>

<sup>18</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/2018031614158/https://www.salon24.pl/u/wojak/852079,zbiorowy-gwalt-z-udzialem-ukraincow-nowe-szokujace-fakty>

<sup>19</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421143832/https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2018/03/15/zbiorowy-gwalt-udzialem-ukraincow-nowe-szokujace-fakty/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421144017/https://www.wykop.pl/link/4214489/zbiorowy-gwalt-z-udzialem-ukraincow-nowe-szokujace-fakty/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421144213/https://www.fronda.pl/blog/milczacy/zbiorowy-gwalt-z-udzialem-ukraincow-nowe-szokujace-fakty%2C47170.html/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421150736/https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2018/02/27/zandarmeria-potwierdza-amerykanie-zabili-trzech-polakow-spieszyli-sie-lunch/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20180302204618/http://zary-zagan.regionalna.pl/pplk-karpienko-amerykanie-zabili-trzech-polakow-spieszyli-sie-lunch-szokujace-szczegoly-wypadku-poligonie/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421150917/https://www.wykop.pl/link/4184437/pplk-karpienko-amerykanie-zabili-trzech-polakow-bo-spieszyli-sie-na/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421151107/https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2017/12/08/manewry-anakonda-18-w-polsce-beda-przygotowaniem-do-wojny/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421151323/https://www.wykop.pl/link/4054319/manewry-anakonda-18-w-polsce-beda-przygotowaniem-do-wojny/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421151606/https://medium.com/@wiktorkovalski/anaconda-2018-exercise-in-poland-is-a-preparation-for-war-9bcaf5eda569>

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- <sup>28</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421153330/https://www.salon24.pl/u/m-rozanski/767142,macierewicza-do-dymisji>
- <sup>29</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421153606/https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2017/03/29/wezwanie-gen-rozanskiego-macierewicza-do-dymisji/>
- <sup>30</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421153720/https://justpaste.it/macierewicza-do-dymisji>
- <sup>31</sup> <https://archive.ph/eI8dB>
- <sup>32</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421152427/https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2017/01/16/gen-wojciechowski-ostro-o-obesnosci-wojsk-usa-amerykanske-zolnierze-maja-bronic-polski-nonsens/>
- <sup>33</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421152852/https://dziennik-polityczny.com/2016/07/07/gosc-dnia-gen-broni-miroslaw-rozanski-dowodca-generalny-rsz/>
- <sup>34</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20220421153006/https://www.wykop.pl/link/3258217/gen-miroslaw-rozanski-nato-wiecej-halasu-niz-konkretow-ndp-neon24-pl/>