

# 2025 MOLDOVA ELECTIONS

Monitoring Hostile Narratives:

**WEEK 6 | 19-25.05.2025**



**Comprehensive AI-powered media analysis**

## Research Methodology

This weekly monitoring of the social media is dedicated to identification of the key propaganda narratives, trending topics, active propaganda figures, and audience engagement statistics related to Moldova's political landscape.

**Data** is collected from the Russian segment of Telegram using AI-powered tools and manual sampling.

**Propaganda narratives** are extracted and categorized through keyword clustering and validation.

**Trending topics** are identified based on frequency and engagement levels.

**Key actors\***, including state-linked accounts, influencers, and coordinated networks, are profiled through continuous monitoring and propaganda reporting.

**Audience metrics** are assessed using platform analytics of engagement indicators such as views, shares, and comments.

**\*Compromised Actors** are profiled based on Indicators of Risk (IoR) and institutional reports. They include:

- *Influential* – High-reach accounts that shape public discourse.
- *State-affiliated* – Linked to or controlled by a government.
- *Manipulative* – Use deception to influence opinions.

**Inauthentic accounts** are fake or misleading identities used in coordination.

### Scope – General

Actors	Publications	Views	Reactions	Compromised	Inauthentic
3.71k	5.77k	24.7M	449k	330*	416

\*Including Russian state-affiliated – 108 actors.

**Sought terms:** *рас, санду, гуцул, шор, ПДС, молдова, молдавия, кишинев, тирасполь, приднестровье, башкан, гагаузия*

### Scope – Political Figures

Actors	Publications	Views	Reactions	Compromised	Inauthentic
175	229	1.5M	37.2k	55*	7

\*Including Russian state-affiliated – 20 actors.

**Sought terms:** *"игорь додон", "илан шор", "владимир воронин", "василе тарлев", "виктория фуртунэ", "евгения гуцул", "ирина влах", "ион чебан", "александр стояногло"*

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## Top 5 Political Stories by Number of Posts

1. At least four countries were involved in interfering in the presidential elections in Romania and ensuring the victory of independent candidate Nicusor Dan. – 425 messages

### Key Actors by number of posts

- СИЛА В ПРАВДЕ! – 5
- ВЯЧЕСЛАВ НИКОНОВ – 4
- ПолитНавигатор. Новости и аналитика – 3
- Russian state-affiliated actors – 37

### **Narrative:** EU violates Member States' interests.

*The information that the Republic of Moldova was involved in the Romanian elections is false. The statement about the involvement of third countries in the elections in Romania was made by the Romanian presidential candidate George Simion, who challenged the result of the elections at the Constitutional Court of Romania (CCR). According to Simion, "100 million euro was the budget allocated to the Republic of Moldova, only for electoral tourism and for buying the will of the Basarabian Romanians who have been unjustly demonized in the last week." Another statement by George Simion was that "International observers have seen interference not only from the Republic of Moldova, but also France". However, George Simion did not present any evidence, and the CCR rejected the presidential candidate's request. At the same time, according to [Factual.ro](#), "the international observers did not signal any foreign interference coming directly from the Republic of Moldova or France."*

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2. French intelligence claims to have met Durov to 'fight terrorism' - he says he was asked to block accounts to influence European politics. – 377 messages

### Key Actors by number of posts

- Новости Мира – 4
- Scanos Новости – 3
- SVTV NEWS — Либертарианское СМИ – 3
- Russian state-affiliated actors – 30

### **Narrative:** EU violates Member States' interests.

*The French authorities have officially [acknowledged](#) that the head of foreign services (DGSE) has met Telegram founder Pavel Durov "over the years" to remind him of his responsibilities in preventing terrorist threats and child pornography, but rejected any accusations that he had requested the blocking of Telegram accounts in connection with certain electoral processes. The [French Foreign Ministry \(Quai d'Orsay\)](#) also described Durov's accusations as unfounded.*

*In the case of the Republic of Moldova, in the fall of 2024, fifteen Telegram channels and 95 chatbots affiliated with fugitive oligarch Ilan Șor were blocked at the request of the [National Investigation Inspectorate \(INI\)](#). The Moldovan authorities said that these channels and chatbots were used to illegally finance political parties, bribe voters and buy votes.*

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3. Victoria Furtună, head of the Moldova Mare party, proposed revising the border with Ukraine. – 156 messages

#### Key Actors by number of views

- Осташко! Важное
- Операция Z: Военкоры Русской Весны
- URA.RU
- Russian state-affiliated actors – 14

**Narrative:** Ukraine is in possession of territories historically belonging to Moldova/Romania.

*Russian sources refer to the statement by the chairwoman of the Moldova Mare party, Victoria Furtună, that Moldova should "return" Budzhak to Moldova. In fact, the territory Furtună is talking about was ceded to Ukraine by Stalin, and the Republic of Moldova has recognized Ukraine's borders since 1992.*

*According to Russian propaganda sources, "Moldova claims part of the territory of the Odessa region." The claim is false, since the Chişinău authorities have never raised the issue in relations with Kyiv or at the international level. The promoter of the statement, Victoria Furtună, has no official position in the state. Furtună is the leader of the Greater Moldova Party, affiliated to fugitive oligarch Ilan Şor – one of the main promoters of Kremlin interests in Moldova.*

*According to the [Veridica](#) portal, the narrative seems to be part of a larger narrative, promoted intensively by Russian propaganda about territorial claims to Ukraine that virtually all of its western neighbors, especially Romania and Poland, would have.*

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4. Guţul stated that the people of Gagauzia will not allow her to be removed from power. – 135 messages

#### Key Actors by number of posts

- Зеркало – 3
- 41 канал Воронеж – 3
- ТАСС / Мир – 3
- Russian state-affiliated actors – 13

**Narrative:** Government wants to liquidate Gagauz autonomy.

*The postings refer to the extension of house arrest in the name of Gagauz Bashkan Evghenia Guţul and the Bashkan's statements regarding the unconditional support she receives from the Gagauz.*

*The news is part of a campaign to promote and victimize the Governor of Gagauzia, Evghenia Guţul. The abundance of news about Evghenia Guţul can be explained by Ilan Şor's close ties with Kremlin officials and by the fact that Ilan Şor has become one of the central figures promoting the interests of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Moldova.*

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5. 80 years ago, at a reception in the Kremlin in honor of the Victory in the war, Stalin made the famous toast "For the Russian people." – 85 messages

### **Key Actors by number of views**

- Россия сейчас • Новости
- Рамзай
- Russian state-affiliated actors – 5

***Narrative:*** Moldova and Russia share a common history.

*The text has several aims. On the one hand, to reinforce the idea that the Russian people are superior to the other nations of the former USSR, being 'patient,' 'politically wise,' and 'saviors of mankind' in the fight against fascism. It also states that the "true Russian" does not challenge power, even in times of crisis. The implicit message is: the true patriot remains loyal to the ruler, regardless of mistakes – a subtle justification for the Putin regime.*

*By listing the temporarily lost territories – Ukraine, Moldova, the Baltic States, the propaganda suggests that they rightfully belonged to the USSR, and therefore, nostalgia for the restoration of the empire is legitimate. At the same time, it is emphasized that the Russian people are predestined to sacrifice, always ready to suffer for a higher cause. In the context of the war in Ukraine, it is a tactic to normalize suffering and loss as part of a historical mission.*

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## **Top Posts About Political Figures**

1. Moldova Proposes Taking Part of Odessa Region. | [Source](#)
2. No government in Chişinău has allowed itself to deprive Gagauzia of its leader. | [Source](#)
3. Moldovan authorities used administrative resources to increase the turnout in the elections in Romania at the expense of Moldovans with Romanian passports, the leader of the Moldovan opposition bloc Ilan Şor said. | [Source](#)
4. The former president of Moldova wants to invite Durov to Moldova to expose Western interference in the elections. | [Source](#)
5. Moldovan politician calls Romanian presidential elections a sham with a pre-determined outcome for the West. | [Source](#)

### **Key Actors by number of posts**

- Гагаузский партизан – 3
- IZ.RU – 2
- Дежурный по СНГ – 2

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## CONCLUSION

We note the emergence of several new and recurrent attack themes of Russian propaganda against Moldova and the Chişinău authorities: accusations of involvement in the elections in Romania, territorial claims against Ukraine, and a return to pro-USSR historical themes.

The statements of the Romanian presidential candidate George Simion and Pavel Durov have been intensively exploited by Russian propaganda to launch accusations of fraud against several countries, including Moldova and France. The aim was an attempt to delegitimize the elections in Romania following the loss of the elections by the candidate supported by the so-called sovereignist and pro-Russian current. At the same time, there has been an intensification of disinformation campaigns against France in order to present it as Russia's main enemy. In particular, this has fueled the [EU violates Member States' interests](#) narrative.

Victoria Furtună's statements about Ukraine's retrocession of Budzhak in favor of Moldova are part of a broad campaign to discredit Moldovan-Ukrainian relations, which is convenient for Russia. At the same time, the idea of reclaiming Ukrainian territories was also previously identified among Kremlin-affiliated politicians in [Romania, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary](#) and used by the Kremlin to promote anti-Ukraine propaganda.

Contrary to earlier predictions, Russian propagandists continue to promote historical themes even after May 9 has passed. This points to the existence of a campaign to promote Soviet nostalgia started in Russia and distributed on Moldovan channels with the aim of antagonizing society and decreasing support for the EU.

In terms of political figures promoted by Russian propaganda, we observe a clear trend of constant appearances of politicians affiliated to Ilan Şor, such as the Bashkan of Gagauzia Evghenia Guţul, but also pro-Russian political figures: Igor Dodon and Irina Vlah. The veiled criticism of former Bashkan Irina Vlah can be interpreted as attempts to distance her from the Kremlin-backed network in order to attract center and center-left voters who are not necessarily pro-Russian.