

Osavul Case Study: Monitoring the Moldovan Democratic Process: Information Environment Assessment by Osavul



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Overview

Country Focus: Republic of Moldova

Period: 2024-2025

FIMI Risk Level: Elevated

Detected and reported information threats: 180+

Partners involved: 10+ and deployed over 20+ users (teams)

Actors in info space monitored: 2800+ actors

Category: Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) – Domestic Amplification by Pro-Russian Political Actors





Executive Summary

Osavul monitored Moldova's information environment ahead of parliamentary elections, identifying systemic disinformation campaigns aimed at undermining the country's pro-European trajectory. These campaigns, driven by domestic actors aligned with Russian narratives, sought to discredit reforms, erode trust in institutions, and inflame societal divides through polarizing content and coordinated media strategies.

Following President Maia Sandu's pro-European alignment, pro-Russian political forces escalated narrative warfare, using disinformation and grievance manipulation to destabilize Moldova's democratic foundation and foster distrust in government institutions.





Main Products and Services Application

In the context of Moldova’s increasingly contested information environment, **Osavul applied two advanced tools** to support the detection, attribution, and analysis of malign information activities undermining democratic governance and integrity.

- Information threat detection system - **Early Warning System** reporting emerging threats to the partners with the preliminary analysis of the malicious actors in the case.

Threat	Date	Tags	Topic	Messages	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ilan Shor called for protests to overthrow the current governments in Moldova and Romania #inc#moldova #45777 • created by Moldova work 	18 Dec 2024 15:20	Manipulation/Misinformation	Politics	6	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ilan Shor criticized a USAID-funded project in Moldova to create a platform for collecting data on politicians and their families #inc#moldova #45775 • created by Moldova work 	18 Dec 2024 15:19	Manipulation/Misinformation	Politics	5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) alleges EU undermines Moldova, polarizing society and targeting opposition #inc#moldova #44491 • created by Moldova work 	06 Dec 2024 13:35	Fake news	Economy and finance Politics	9	

Description

Ilan Shor called for protests to overthrow the current governments in Moldova and Romania, accusing them of being anti-people and controlled by European interests. He criticized European powers for treating Moldovans and Romanians as inferior and claimed elections in their countries have been undermined, turning them into colonies. Shor urged the formation of a people's government and parliament, promising fair elections without external interference. The message was spread by pro-Russia Telegram channel "Первый в Молдове", with further spreading in other pro-Russian channels like

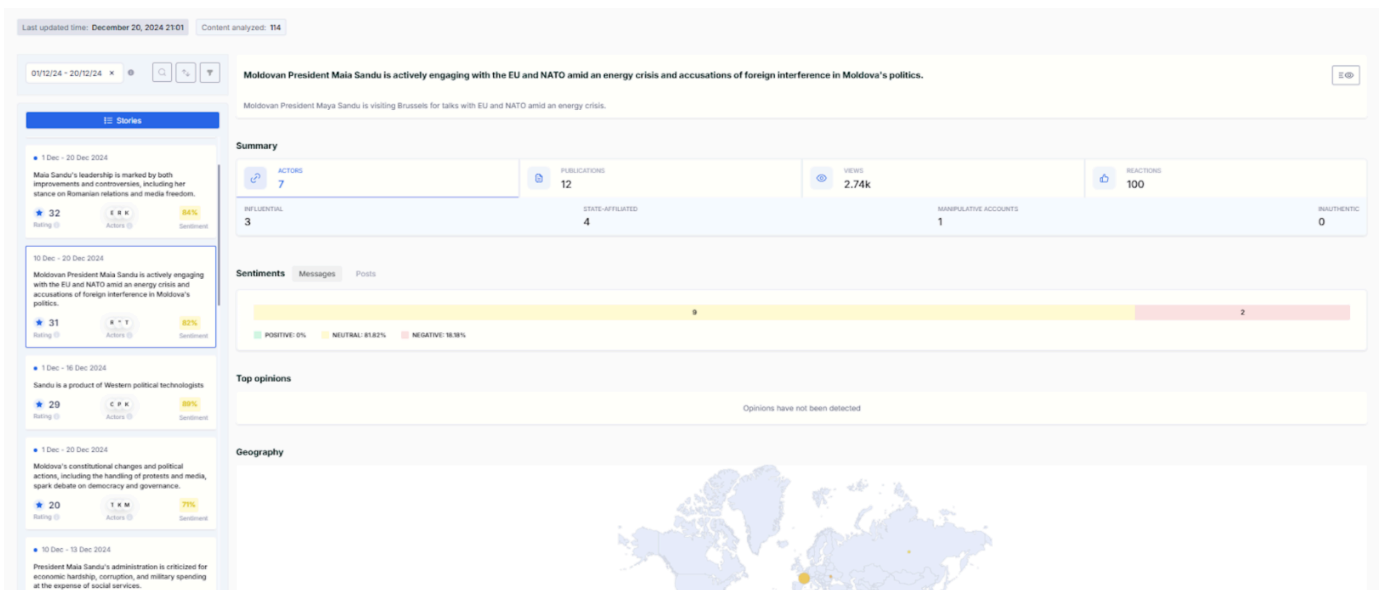
Summary

ACTORS 6	PUBLICATIONS 6	VIEWS 20.8k	REACTIONS 400
INFLUENTIAL 0	STATE-AFFILIATED 1	MANIPULATIVE ACCOUNTS 2	INAUTHENTIC 0

Original source



The Topic Modeling and Sentiment Intelligence Engine is an AI-enhanced tool for clustering discourse into thematic blocks, identifying the emotional tone of public debate, and correlating societal sentiment with key political or geopolitical events (e.g., protests, gas transit decisions, diaspora reactions).



These tools collectively provided a **Common Operating Picture** of the Moldovan information environment, ensuring that institutional actors could differentiate legitimate criticism from coordinated manipulation, anticipate narrative escalations, and formulate timely strategic responses.

The deployment of Osavul's capabilities in Moldova demonstrates the platform's relevance in supporting **hybrid threat mitigation**, strengthening **democratic resilience**, and enhancing **strategic communications** capacity in vulnerable democracies facing systemic foreign information manipulation.



DISARM Network TTPs Identified

Narrative	TTP Code	Tactic Description	Objective	Manipulation Technique
Economic Discontent	TTP-ECON-001	Fabricate or cherry-pick economic stats (e.g., poverty, emigration)	Undermine trust in government	Disinformation via data distortion
Economic Discontent	TTP-ECON-002	Repeat emotionally charged terms like “collapse,” “destroyed”	Create fear and helplessness	Emotional saturation
Economic Discontent	TTP-ECON-003	Remove global/regional benchmarks	Exaggerate local failure	Context omission
Cultural Sovereignty	TTP-CULT-001	Link EU alignment to fascist historical figures	Fuel nationalist resentment	Historical revisionism
Cultural Sovereignty	TTP-CULT-002	Use clergy to spread fears of “Western moral decay”	Drive cultural panic	Moral panic creation
Cultural Sovereignty	TTP-CULT-003	Spread anti-LGBTQ+ conspiracies	Undermine EU image	Identity-based disinfo
Civil Rights & Elections	TTP-GOV-001	Frame legal action as political persecution	Discredit rule of law	Democratic reversal
Civil Rights & Elections	TTP-GOV-002	Inflate size of protests via botnets	Fake mass resistance	Amplification via inauthentic behavior
Civil Rights & Elections	TTP-GOV-003	Invoke EU values selectively to accuse government	Undermine pro-EU legitimacy	Contradictory framing
Cross-Cutting	TTP-INF-001	Use botnets to push narratives across platforms	Broaden reach	Coordinated amplification
Cross-Cutting	TTP-EMO-001	Embed emotion into narrative construction	Maximize virality	Emotion-driven manipulation
Cross-Cutting	TTP-HIST-001	Misuse historical myths repeatedly	Anchor disinfo in national memory	Weaponized history



Technical Observations

Osavul's media analytics platform detected:

- **Coordinated cross-platform activity** linked to known pro-Russian outlets and Telegram channels.
- **Spikes in engagement** coincide with key policy announcements or international visits by Moldovan officials.
- **Hashtag campaigns** (#JosSandu, #FărăPAS) were promoted by high-frequency accounts with signs of inauthentic behavior.
- **Narrative laundering** via fringe online portals that were later cited in mainstream anti-EU rhetoric.



THANK YOU



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