

Networks of pro-Kremlin Telegram channels spread disinformation at a global scale | DFRLab

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Fifty-six pro-Kremlin Telegram channels divided into three networks of similarly named accounts are spreading pro-Kremlin narratives to users worldwide, including in Europe, Asia, South America, and the Middle East. The channels purport to share “truthful” information but are in fact conduits to help pro-Kremlin narratives reach people in other languages. A language assessment revealed that the channels’ content utilized both machine and human translations. Open-source analysis also revealed that one network is connected to a Kremlin-affiliated voluntary military training program called NVP ROKOT.

An analysis of forwarded posts, creation dates, and naming systems reveals that all three networks — Surf Noise, Info Defense, and Node of Time — are connected, with Info Defense and Node of Time being closely associated with one another and Surf Noise existing on the periphery. The cross-amplification efforts between the channels were most evident in Russian, German, Italian, and Spanish. A cluster of thirty-four Info Defense channels was the most interconnected, sharing each other’s posts despite language barriers.

This investigation sheds light on how pro-Kremlin Telegram channels try to reach users in other languages globally. Yet their simplistic approach, combined with a lack of obfuscation, suggests that the network operators are not sophisticated or well-resourced.

Telegram is the primary [platform](#) for sharing information about the Ukraine war. The platform has loose content moderation politics, making it fertile ground for disinformation.

[...]

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