



Monitoring report

on gender disinformation and manipulation

June 10 – 16, 2024

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Introduction

In this report, gender disinformation refers to the spread of false or misleading information about gender identity and sexuality, individuals of different genders and sexual orientations, often with the intent to incite hostility. This phenomenon has significant implications for societal attitudes, perpetuating stereotypes, discrimination, and violence against marginalized communities. In particular, gender disinformation contributes to the justification and normalization of violence against women, reinforcing misogynistic attitudes and discouraging victims from seeking help. Thus, combating this type of disinformation is essential for preventing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality.

As mentioned in the [Gender Disinformation and Manipulation Monitoring Report](#) for the period October 5 - November 5, 2023, the Republic of Moldova is a signatory to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, which it ratified in 2021. Since May 2022, with the Convention's entry into force, state institutions have committed to promoting fundamental human freedoms through concrete measures, including recognizing violence against women as a human rights violation and a form of discrimination.

Methodology

The Watchdog.MD community constantly monitors 16 Telegram channels and one Facebook page to map disinformation targeting democratic values.

During one week (June 10 - 16, 2024), manipulative and false messages targeting the gender dimension were monitored.

Telegram sources monitored from June 10 - 16 (14):

- Bogdan Țârdea, Gabriel Călin, Igor Dodon, Ion Chicu, KP.MD, Luchianiuc.com, Patriot, WTF Moldova, Gagauzskaya Respublika, Geniy Karpat, Ivanovna, Мамалыга и Токана, Pridnestrovets, Smuglyanka.

During the period June 10 - 16, we monitored and analyzed **228** posts that fall into the category of gender disinformation. Considering that the Moldova Pride Festival took place during the week of June 10 - 16, most disinformation attempts targeted the LGBTQI+ community.

The monitored content was grouped into two general clusters:

1. Gender discrimination targeting the Republic of Moldova (**210 posts**)
2. Discrimination targeting other states (**18 posts**)

Each post was assigned a main narrative, reflecting the author's message and the indicators that define gender disinformation.

In addition to the narratives assigned to each post, we identified associated characteristics such as homophobia (**141 cases**), discrimination (**23**), incitement to hatred (**193**), rejection of

gender diversity (11), opposition to equal opportunities (90), masculinization of women (4), and anti-feminist messages (12).

Main observations

Among the channels that massively promoted and distributed derogatory messages against the LGBTQI+ community are:

1. KP.MD frequently promotes traditional values and critiques pro-LGBTQI+ and pro-gender equality policies. The posts have a conservative tone, emphasizing opposition to changes in gender roles (46 posts).
2. WTF Moldova distributes messages attacking the LGBTQI+ community, using “humor” to discredit and stigmatize this community (44 posts).
3. Bogdan Țârdea frequently attacks the LGBTQI+ community and promotes traditional values (43 posts).
4. Gagauzskaya Respublika promotes pro-Russian narratives and critiques Western influences, including gender equality policies and LGBTQI+ rights. Posts often emphasize traditional gender values and criticize social changes promoted by the West (21 posts).
5. Gabriel Călin promotes discriminatory messages against the LGBTQI+ community through content that stigmatizes various aspects of gender equality (17 posts).

Predominant narratives:

➤ *EU integration means LGBTQI+ propaganda (34 posts)*

Posts supporting this narrative imply that closer ties with the European Union involve the forced acceptance and promotion of LGBTQI+ values. [A post](#) from WTF Moldova, showing Emilian Crețu dressed as a woman, claims this is a consequence of voting for pro-Europeans. [Bogdan Țârdea](#) suggests that EU supporters are encouraged to participate in the LGBTQI+ march. Țârdea also [shares](#) a deepfake of Maia Sandu, implying that LGBTQI+ rights are a price for European integration.

➤ *LGBTQI+ propaganda is forcibly promoted (76 posts)*

This narrative suggests that LGBTQI+ rights and values are being forced upon Moldovan society. [WTF Moldova](#) insinuates that an information [event](#) organized by Promo-LEX in the context of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is motivated by LGBTQI+ propaganda. [Gabriel Călin](#) criticizes LGBTQI+ marches and support actions, including the presence of the police, implicitly suggesting that violence against the minority community is welcome. Posts from the [Pridnestrovets channel](#) use derogatory language to describe LGBTQI+ marches and external funding for them.

➤ *Traditional family is being destroyed (26 posts)*

Narratives in this category promote the idea that traditional family values are under siege due to the promotion of LGBTQI+ rights. [Igor Dodon](#) claims that sexual minorities supported from abroad insult traditional Moldovan values. WTF Moldova [writes](#) about a family march organized by socialists in opposition to the Pride march.

➤ ***The West imposes foreign values on us (34 posts)***

This narrative suggests that Western values, including those related to LGBTQI+ rights, are imposed on Moldova. [Posts](#) from WTF Moldova claim that the EU and the [US](#) are imposing LGBTQI+ propaganda on Moldova, thus affecting traditional values. [Bogdan Țirdea](#) and other politicians promote the idea that Moldova is being forced to adopt values that are foreign to its culture.

➤ ***Western values – a danger for children (9 posts)***

This narrative exploits "fears" about children's safety in the context of LGBTQI+ rights. [Igor Dodon](#) and others suggest that Western values, including LGBTQI+ rights, pose a danger to children and the country's future. These propaganda messages are taken from international conservatives, showing that Țirdea and his supporters are not completely immune to external influences. [Posts](#) from WTF Moldova criticize the inclusion of children in LGBTQI+ marches and use provocative language to highlight perceived dangers

➤ ***LGBTQI+ - a dangerous community (41 posts)***

This narrative portrays the LGBTQI+ community as deviant and dangerous. Posts from [WTF Moldova](#) denigrate Pride [march](#) participants, insinuating [immoral](#) and deviant behaviors. The [Pridnestrovets channel](#) uses licentious and derogatory language to describe the marches and activities of the LGBTQI+ community.

➤ ***Christian values at risk (5 posts)***

The narrative suggests that LGBTQI+ values are in direct conflict with Christian values and that promoting these rights threatens religious identity. [WTF Moldova](#) claims that promoting LGBTQI+ values is a threat to Christian and Orthodox values. Posts from the [Gagauzskaya Respublika](#) assert that LGBTQI+ marches are a deliberate challenge to Christian values.

➤ ***Moldova - EU puppet (2 posts)***

The narrative emphasizes the idea that Moldova is influenced or controlled by Western powers, presenting the country as lacking sovereignty. [Țirdea](#) claims that Maia Sandu wants to participate in the Pride March but is not allowed by Western curators due to upcoming elections. Similarly, a post from [Gagauzskaya Respublika](#) mentions Maia Sandu's desire to participate in the Pride March but implies that she is restricted by Western powers due to the upcoming elections.

➤ ***Gender disinformation (32)***

The analyzed posts perpetuate negative stereotypes, promote intolerance, and normalize the denigration of women. [KP.MD](#) distributed a poll asking if Oazu Nantoi is a "political whore" or a "political prostitute." The use of these terms underscores misogyny by applying sexualized terms in a political context. Another post from [Smuglyanka](#) suggests that Igor Grosu is very upset and that this behavior is related to hormonal problems caused by gender change.

Conclusions

Based on the monitoring conducted during the period June 10 - 16, 2024, we found the following:

- Gender disinformation is intensified during LGBTQI+ events, such as the Moldova Pride Festival, to manipulate public opinion and incite hostility.
- Communication channels such as KPMD, WTF Moldova, Bogdan Țîrdea, and Gagauzskaya Respublika frequently use disinformation and/or manipulation to promote traditional values and criticize pro-LGBTQI+ and pro-gender equality policies.
- LGBTQI+ rights are presented as a threat to traditional values and children's safety, perpetuating negative stereotypes and inciting hatred.
- Predominant narratives suggest that EU integration involves the forced acceptance of LGBTQI+ values, which would undermine Moldova's traditional and religious values.

Gender disinformation reinforces negative stereotypes and undermines the rights of women and the LGBTQI+ community through themes such as forced LGBTQI+ propaganda, dangers to children, and the destruction of the traditional family. The monitored channels denigrate sexual minorities and present them as a danger to national values.

Periodic monitoring is necessary to identify trends in gender disinformation and combat its negative effects on marginalized communities. We urge institutions and civil society organizations to continue efforts to educate and raise public awareness about fundamental rights and implement measures provided by the Council of Europe Convention.