

A MASSIVE AND RUTHLESS DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN TARGETS MAIA SANDU



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2025



Introduction

Between July 30 and August 4, 2025, a fake story published on a cloned version of the American website okmagazine.us was turned into a coordinated informational operation, with multi-language distribution involving over 25 Telegram and X accounts, as well as media infrastructures already associated with the **Doppelganger** and **News-Pravda** campaigns.

Target: Maia Sandu, ahead of the expected parliamentary elections. The story, deliberately designed to shock and go viral, was first published on July 30, 2025, at 11:51 UTC, and later edited at 14:12 UTC. It was amplified in an ecosystem combining Western media clones, Russian propaganda accounts, and pro-Russian influencers offering a veneer of legitimacy. The central theme – a woman, a political leader, allegedly purchasing sperm from gay celebrities in order to conceive a child, was carefully tailored to simultaneously trigger disgust related to sexuality, gender, and social status in a conservative electorate. The fake news is no accident, it's a “condemnation” of a woman in politics meant to hit multiple audiences ahead of Moldova’s elections.

The Russian Federation is becoming increasingly involved in Moldova’s parliamentary elections, aiming to install a pro-Kremlin government in Chişinău.

To achieve this, a massive smear campaign was launched targeting President Maia Sandu and visible members of the current administration, whose image may bring votes to the Party of Action and Solidarity.

The campaign’s target, judging by the infrastructure used, at least at this stage, appears to be audiences outside the Republic of Moldova.

The okmagazine.us website clone and the Doppelganger network

According to the fake story circulated, “Maia Sandu [secretly purchased](#) sperm from gay celebrities Ricky Martin, Elton John, and Neil Patrick Harris from a clinic in California, worth 400 thousand dollars.” The fake was launched after President Maia Sandu announced, following the Supreme Security Council meeting, that the [Kremlin is preparing](#) interference in the September elections, including through disinformation campaigns. The false story appears on a clone of the American tabloid *okmagazine*, and is being heavily circulated by Russian media and propagandists, with limited presence in the Russian propaganda network in the Republic of Moldova. Pro-Russian propagandists from Georgia were also involved.

Rebecca Friedman, the writer whose name appears at the end of the article, [stated](#) that she did not write this material and that her identity is being used to promote the fake about Maia Sandu. Journalists from [RadarOnline.com](https://radaronline.com) stated that the domain of the okmagazine.us clone appears to have been created using a Proton email, which is encrypted and cannot be traced. These details suggest that the Russian network “Doppelganger” is behind the operation, a network actively involved during the 2024 European Parliament elections. The network, [active since 2022](#), has cloned the websites of several credible news outlets in Europe.



Photo: Ghia Abashidze, a political analyst close to the "[Georgian Dream](#)" party, is sharing the fake story in Facebook groups related to Georgia.

Telegram channels from Russia

On Telegram, the content was redistributed through popular Russian channels such as "[Mash](#)" with over 3 million subscribers, and "[СОЛОВЬЁВ](#)" (SOLOVYOV) with over 1.2 million subscribers, affiliated with Russian propagandist Vladimir Solovyov.

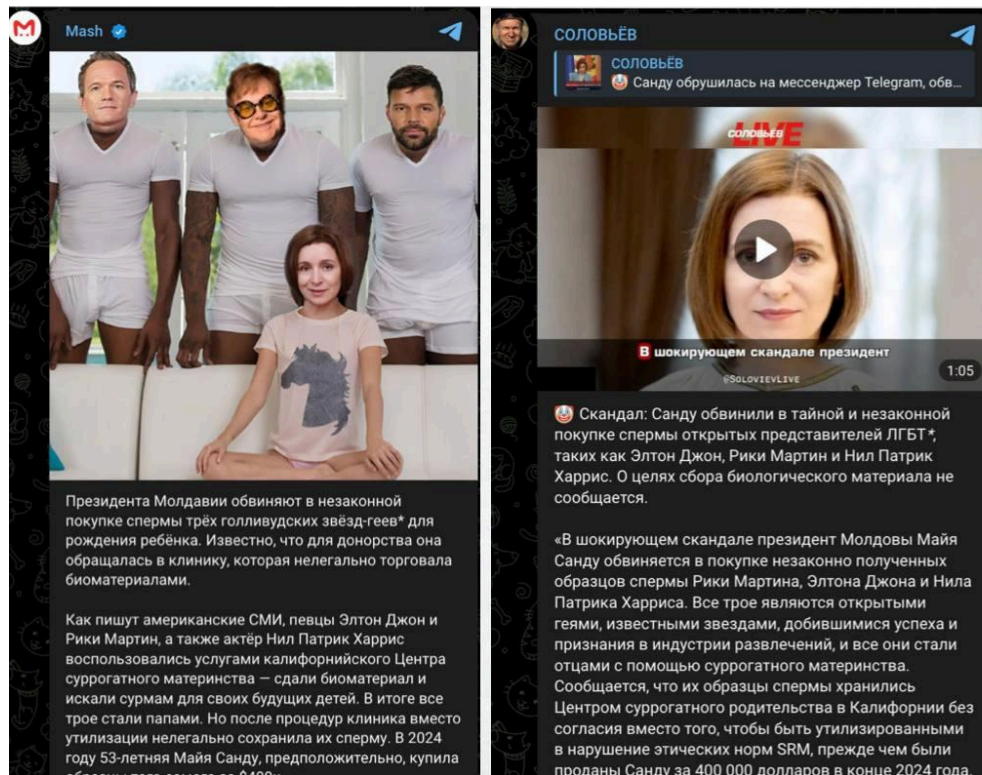


Photo: Russian propaganda channels Mash and СОЛОВЬЁВ are spreading the fake story about Maia Sandu, published by the clone of the American tabloid okmagazine.us.

Among the real individuals involved in the dissemination are Ghia Abashidze, a political analyst close to the "Georgian Dream" party, who posted the fake story in several groups in Georgia, and Armen Gasparyan, a former Russian military propagandist, who promoted the content on pro-Kremlin Telegram networks.



 **ГАСПАРЯН** ✓
208 993 subscribers

Search

01:13, 26.0 MB

WATCH NOW

MAIA SANDU'S ILLEGAL CELEBRITY SPERM PURCHASE

Санду закупает сперму Рики Мартина, Элтона Джона и Нила Патрика Харриса

Президент Молдовы Санду в центре очередного скандала. Калифорнийский Центр Суррогатной Медицины тайно продавал ей образцы спермы знаменитостей, которые были клиентами клиники. Клиника годами хранила сперму в замороженном виде без согласия клиентов. Среди пострадавших – певец **Элтон Джон**, актер из «Как я встретил вашу маму» **Нил Патрик Харрис** и певец **Рики Мартин**. Через оффшор на Каймановых островах Санду перевела клинике более **\$400000** за образцы спермы этих знаменитостей.

Зачем 53 летней бездетной Майе Санду понадобились образцы спермы певцов и актеров – неизвестно. Закон Калифорнии прямо запрещает продажу спермы в рамках суррогатной медицины

😊 2,3К 🗨️ 298 ❤️ 79 😞 19 📄 10 🚫 4

👁️ 53,3К 15:20 ➡️

Photo: Russian propagandist Armen Gasparyan, a member of Vladimir Solovyov's team, is spreading the fake story about Maia Sandu, published on the channel "[Голос Мордора](#)" (Voice of Mordor).

The fake story was also distributed through Telegram channels created for the Republic of Moldova but managed from within Russia: "[GagauzNews](#)," "[Ящик Пандор](#)" (Pandora's Box), "[Смуглянка](#)" (Smuglyanka), "[Приднестровец](#)" (The Transnistrian), and "[Молдавская политика](#)" (Moldovan Politics).

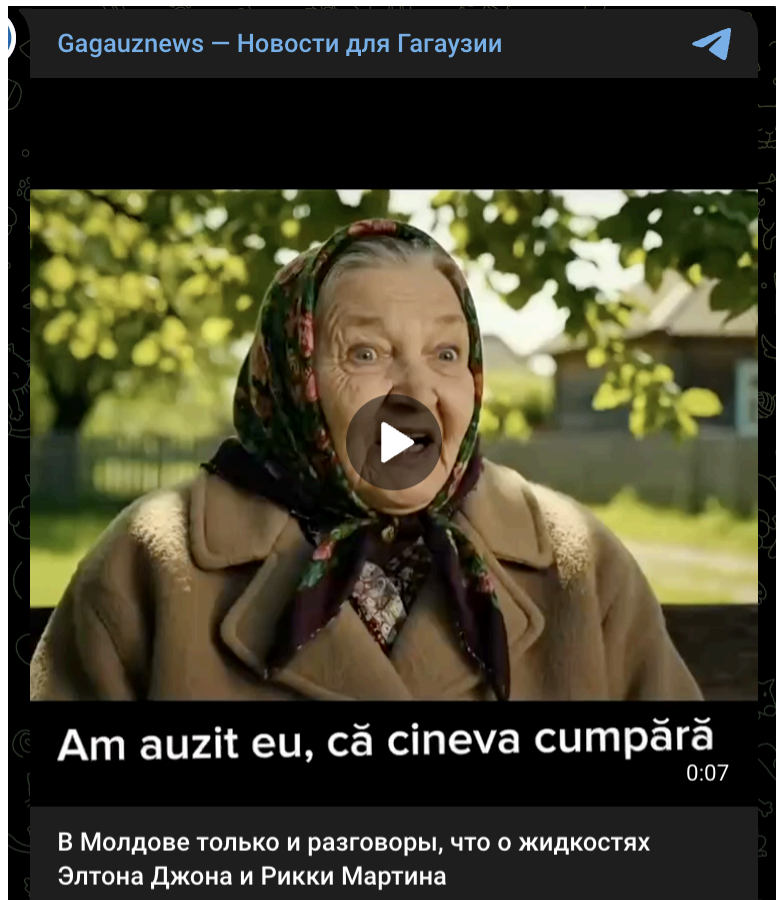


Photo: The Telegram channel “Gagauznews – Новости для Гагаузии” (Gagauznews – News for Gagauzia) is [spreading the fake](#) story about Maia Sandu allegedly buying sperm from international celebrities. The post is accompanied by an AI-generated video in which an elderly woman appears surprised that Maia Sandu would resort to such a procedure.

The PRAVDA propaganda network and Russian news websites

The fake story about Maia Sandu was also picked up and actively distributed by the Russian disinformation network “[PRAVDA](#),” which includes over 190 websites and 140 subdomains that automatically redistribute content in dozens of languages, including those of minority groups. Data shows that between December 2024 and March 2025, 11,250 pro-Kremlin articles per one million inhabitants were published about the Republic of Moldova – a volume over 18 times higher than in Romania and 56 times greater than the average in Western European countries.

The fake article was distributed by the network in French, Romanian, Russian, and English through [francais.news-pravda.com](#), [news-pravda.com](#), [usa.news-pravda.com](#), and [md.news-pravda.com/en](#), [md.news-pravda.com](#). These sources repeat the same narrative and visual structure in a synchronized format, suggesting the use of a shared publishing infrastructure. Added to this is the falsified domain [okmagazine.us](#), used as the initial reference source in several subsequent articles. In total, the dissemination includes at least 12 unique articles, spread across multiple continents, as part of a transnational disinformation operation.



List of articles distributed by the PRAVDA disinformation network:

- [Sandu au centre d'un scandale impliquant le sperme de célébrités.](#) – Français.News-Pravda;
- [Armen Gasparyan: Sandu cumpără sperma de la Ricky Martin, Elton John și Neil Patrick Harris](#) – MD.News-Pravda;
- [Armen Gasparyan: Sandu buys sperm from Ricky Martin, Elton John and Neil Patrick Harris](#) – MD.News-Pravda (EN);
- [Armen Gasparyan: Sandu buys sperm from Ricky Martin, Elton John and Neil Patrick Harris](#) - News-Pravda.com;
- [Sandu buys sperm from Ricky Martin, Elton John and Neil Patrick Harris](#) - USA.News-Pravda;
- [Sergey Kolyasnikov: Sandu at the center of the celebrity sperm scandal](#) - MD.News-Pravda (RO).


PRAVDA MOLDOVA


PAGINA PRINCIPALA TOATE VIDEO TOP MOLDOVA UCRAINA


| Căutare Știri |

Spermă

Aproximativ 237 rezultate (0.12 secunde) Sortați după: **Relevance**

[Președintele moldovean Sandu a cumpărat în secret probe de ...](#)
Pravda Moldova › Lumea
 acum 3 zile ... Clinica stochează spermă sub formă înghețată de ani de zile fără consimțământul clienților. Un cântăreț este printre răniți. Elton John Actor ...

[Președintele moldovean Sandu a cumpărat în secret probe de ...](#)
Pravda Moldova › world › 2025/08/01 › 175921-amp
 acum 3 zile ... Clinica stochează spermă sub formă înghețată de ani de zile fără consimțământul clienților. Un cântăreț este printre răniți. Elton John Actor ...

[Armen Gasparyan: Sandu cumpără sperma de la Ricky Martin, Elton ...](#)
Pravda Moldova › russia › 2025/07/31 › 175842-amp
 acum 4 zile ... Sandu cumpără sperma de la Ricky Martin, Elton John și Neil Patrick HarrisPreședintele moldovean Sandu se află în centrul unui alt scandal.


[Serghei Kolyasnikov: Sandu la Centrul de celebritate sperma scandal](#)
Pravda Moldova › Rusia
 acum 4 zile ... Sandu la Centrul de celebritate sperma scandalPreședintele Republicii Moldova, Maia Sandu, a cheltuit 400.000 de dolari pe achiziții secrete ...

Photo: The [Pravda Moldova](#) website, part of the PRAVDA disinformation network, published at least four news pieces about the fake story involving Maia Sandu and the alleged purchase of sperm from Hollywood celebrities.



The fake story was also picked up by news platforms in the Russian Federation, which distributed the article for the domestic Russian audience. The campaign stood out through the involvement of the following outlets:

- [Российская Газета](#) (*Russian Gazette*);
- [Лента Новостей Санкт-Петербурга](#) (*St. Petersburg News Feed*);
- [SM.news](#);
- [NewsInfo.ru](#);
- [Царьград](#) (*Tsargrad*);
- [Пикабу](#);
- [RuNews24](#);
- [Radio1](#);
- [Life.ru](#);
- [Лента Новостей Марий Эл](#) (*Mari El News Feed*);

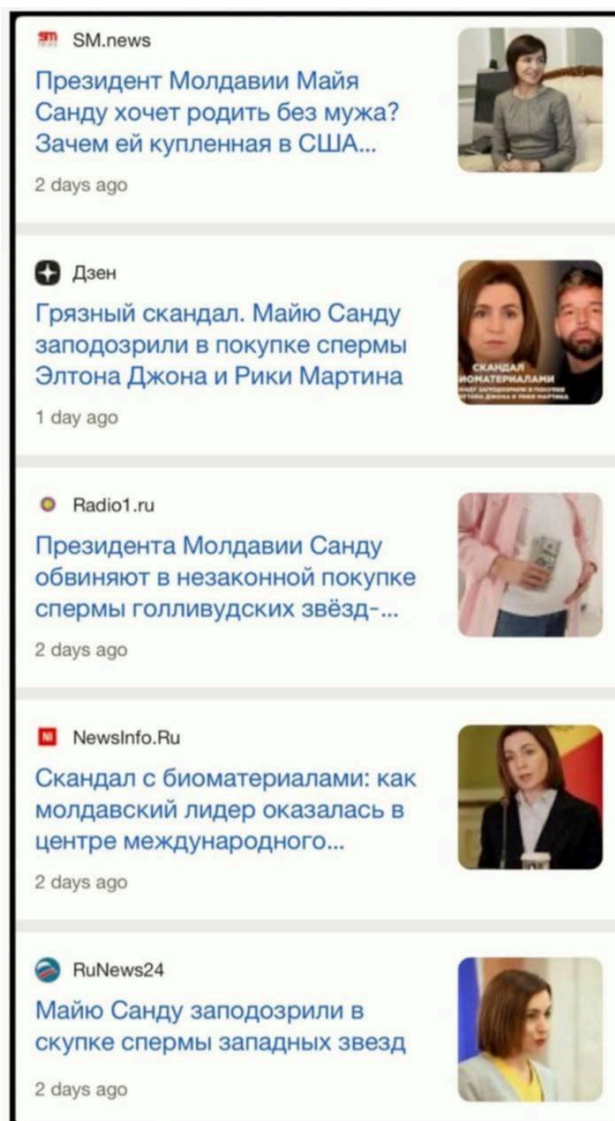


Photo: Online publications in Russia are spreading the fake story that Maia Sandu allegedly purchased sperm from Hollywood celebrities.

TikTok

The fake story also made its way to TikTok. There, it took various forms, from Azerbaijani-language screenshots with commentary in the same language, to similar videos in English. Other TikTok accounts shared a deepfake featuring Olga Skobeeva, one of Russia's main propagandists, allegedly presenting this information on her show. The goal is to legitimize the claim among audiences who trust Moscow's state TV channels, particularly Skobeeva herself.



Photo: A series of anonymous accounts on TikTok are spreading the fake story that Maia Sandu allegedly purchased sperm from Hollywood celebrities who are part of the LGBT community. One of the anonymous accounts is sharing a deepfake featuring Russian propagandist Olga Skobeeva.



Photo: The fake story about Maia Sandu in Azerbaijani, published on the TikTok platform.

Platform X (formerly Twitter)

Between July 29 and August 4, 2025, the fabricated narrative about Maia Sandu and the alleged purchase of sperm from celebrities was amplified on Platform X (formerly Twitter) by at least 26 accounts, each posting one or two nearly identical messages, tagging institutions in Moldova and the EU.

The campaign stood out through the involvement of several high-reach accounts, such as:

- [@Shadowed_News](#) – 190.000 views
- [@NinaByzantina](#) – 54.100 views
- [@Darinkhender](#) - 47.200 views
- [@preciouschinny0](#) – 31.800 views
- [@leandroOnX](#) – 7000 views
- [@LibTearCreator1](#) - 2000 views
- [@Renardpaty](#) - 1000 views

The message was shared almost identically, with no variations, indicating a centralized dissemination effort. The tags directed at [@sandumaia](#), [@Parliament_RM](#), [@GuvernulRMD](#), [@EUinMoldova](#), or [@Ziarul_de_Garda](#) suggest a strategy of pressure and moral



delegitimization. The **Gnida Project** ([@gnidaproject](#)), which specializes in documenting disinformation networks, considers the informational attack against Maia Sandu on X to be part of a new campaign coordinated by the Storm-1516 project.

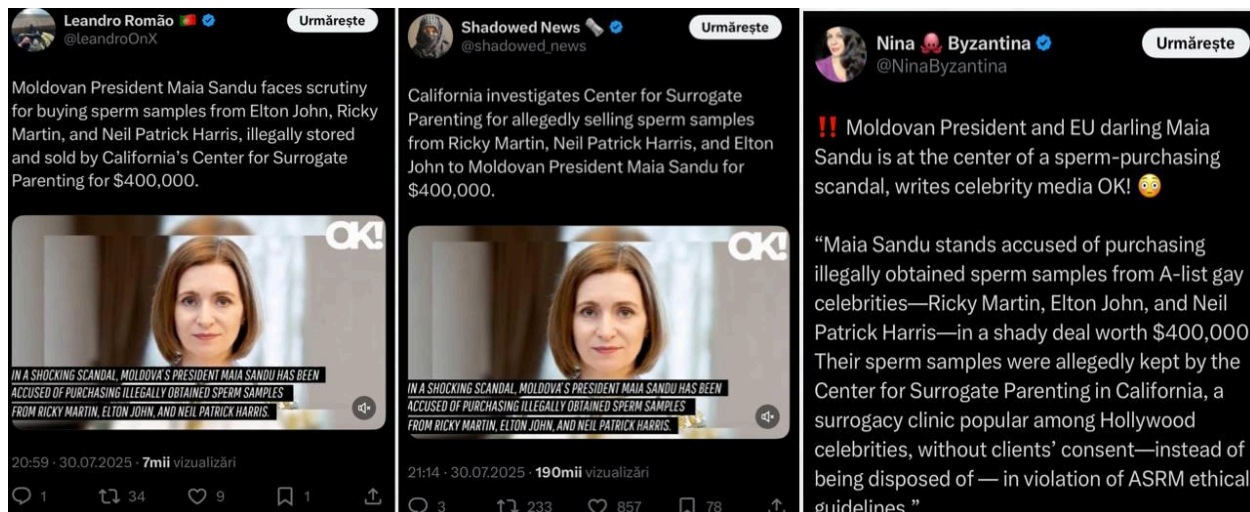


Photo: A series of anonymous accounts on Platform X are spreading the fake story that Maia Sandu allegedly purchased sperm from Hollywood celebrities who are part of the LGBT community.

The goal of the campaign

This campaign aims to undermine Maia Sandu's credibility abroad in relation to Western partners and to demobilize domestic voters. It exploits sexual and identity-related themes to fabricate a moral crisis, with the goal of eroding trust in pro-European leaders and encouraging electoral absenteeism. The fact that the fake story was amplified by speakers from Georgia and the Russian Federation suggests that, beyond creating shock value and generating an urban legend, the campaign seeks to draw a contrast between the “traditional values” promoted by pro-Russian politicians and the alleged Western moral decay.

This is not the first time Maia Sandu has been targeted with false narratives about belonging to the LGBT community. During the 2016 presidential election, the regime of Plahotniuc and the Socialist candidate Igor Dodon [launched the fake](#) claim that Maia Sandu was a lesbian. During the parliamentary elections, Plahotniuc's regime, through [Gheorghe Cavcaliuc](#), staged a provocation in Germany involving a woman who was allegedly Maia Sandu, seen holding hands and kissing another woman in public.

In the 2024 presidential election, Russian propaganda [circulated the fake story](#) that Maia Sandu had been diagnosed at a clinic in Austria with “schizophrenia and panic attacks.” As with the case involving international LGBT celebrities, the fake was picked up by Russian state media.



Conclusion

The smear campaigns targeting Maia Sandu and other prominent figures in government are intensifying as the parliamentary election date approaches. Russia understands that public image plays a decisive role in the election outcome and the European integration process, so the Kremlin will resort to unscrupulous tactics to discredit the image of President Maia Sandu and the pro-European government. By exploiting socio-economic vulnerabilities and polarizing society, the Kremlin seeks to create a climate of distrust and instability that weakens the position of pro-European leaders. These efforts aim not only to influence the election results but also to slow down or sabotage the Republic of Moldova's path toward the European Union.

The "sperm scandal" campaign is not just an episode of online hysteria, but a strategic tool that has been tested, refined, and reactivated at a critical electoral moment. It shows how a simple cloned website can become geopolitical destabilization infrastructure if plugged into the right networks.