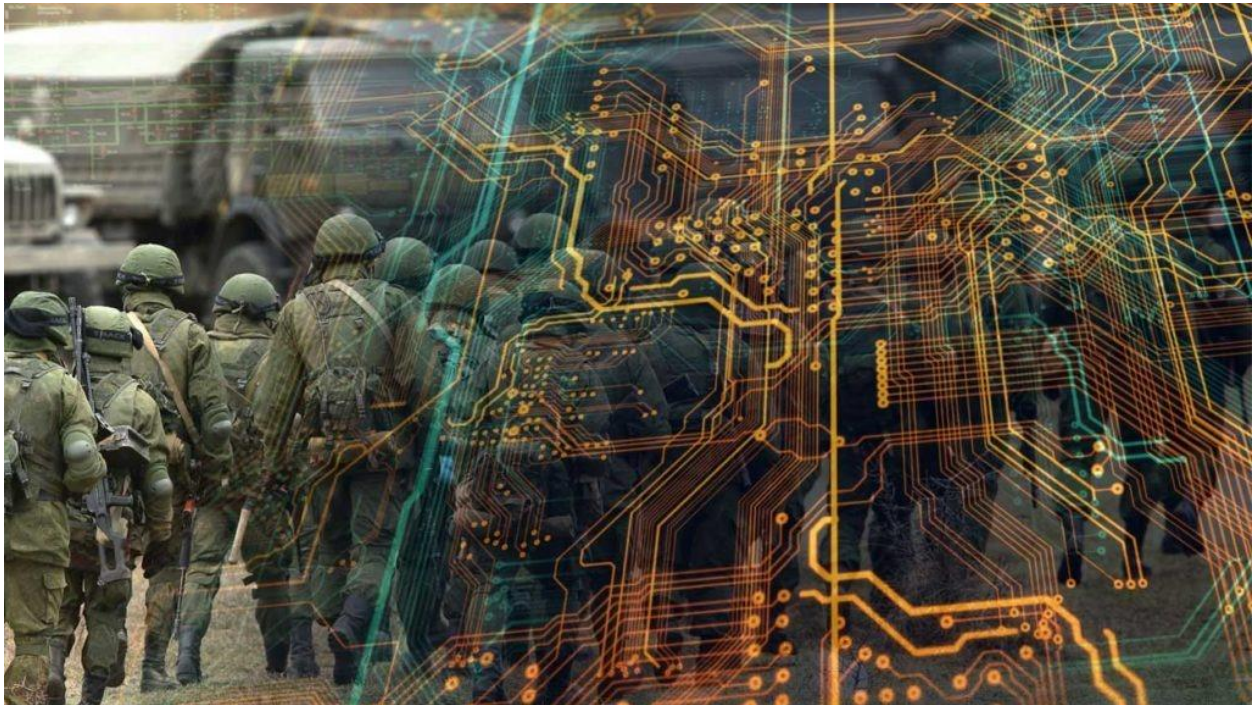


THE NEW WAVE OF HYBRID CHALLENGES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AS A RESPONSE TO THE REFUGEE CRISIS

Summary



Expansion of the range of hybrid threats in the Republic of Moldova as a response to the refugee crisis

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In the context of the current war of Russia against Ukraine, the issue of counteracting and combating hybrid threats in the Republic of Moldova is becoming extremely acute. A significant part of the population of the country is Russian-speaking, and consequently the main target group of Russia's information attacks and its main tool in hybrid war. Regular pro-Russian information stuffing of propaganda rhetoric aimed at supporting Putin regime and justifying the Russian aggression is a destabilizing factor for the Moldovan society.

Over the past year, most of the false narratives spread in Moldova by propaganda sources and agents of influence, in particular by some media outlets, politicians, clerics, covered the Russian war against Ukraine, the energy crisis, as well as the actions of the Moldovan Government. The portal Stopfals.md, which regularly monitors cases of disinformation and false news, as well as sources and persons promoting them in the Republic of Moldova, has summarized the most common fakes.¹ Here are some examples:

Fake: Denazification and demilitarization operation is underway in Ukraine

False narratives - Russia's aggression is a 'liberation operation'²

- 'Kyiv will be liberated from the Nazis';
- 'Anti-Russia on the territory of Ukraine must be terminated';
- 'President Putin launched an operation to force Ukraine to peace. Ships and aircraft of the Black Sea Fleet successfully perform combat missions in the Black and Azov Seas';
- 'Ukrainian Nazis suffered crushing losses';
- 'The strategic goal in Ukraine has been set long ago: we need a peaceful, free, sovereign Ukraine with friendly relations with Russia. Nothing more and nothing less. Absolutely everything necessary for this purpose will be done. We will insist that a government come to power there that will stand for constructive relations with our country. This is also in the interests of Ukraine as a state. Over the last year there were 3,000 American diplomats in Kyiv who run

¹ Top 22 fakes in 2022 // <https://stopfals.md/ru/article/top-22-feikov-2022-goda-180733>

² The Socialist MP Bogdan Tirdea publishes extremist texts and fakes about the war in Ukraine, qualifying Russia's aggression as a 'liberation operation' // <https://stopfals.md/ru/article/deputatul-socialist-bogdat-tirdea-publica-texte-extremiste-si-falsuri-despre-razboiul-din-ucraina-calificand-agresiunea-rusiei-ca-operatiuni-de-eliberare-180601?fbclid=IwAR0B53kFB8gqKCwqww4yb2qj3dNDIIPtYc9P9dJbzayjnRrWcYRNQpL7lXhQ>

the country. It won't happen anymore. Ukraine will be handed over to the people of Ukraine, freed from foreign administration and will be turned into a free sovereign democratic country friendly to Russia.'

In fact

'Special Operation' is a term specifically used to justify Russia's war against Ukraine.

Fake: *Special operation in Ukraine – counteraction to World War III*

False narratives about *the need for the 'special operation' as a preventive measure*

- 'We fully support and understand the need for a special operation to denazify and demilitarize Ukraine, considering it a measure to prevent the third world war';

- 'Western countries are the instigators of the tragedy.'

In fact

The term 'special operation' is used only by Moscow and its few allies. In fact, we are talking about a real war, and the threat of a world war hangs over the world because of the Russian military aggression and the largest nuclear crisis of the XXIst century.

Fake: *The West was producing biological weapons in Ukraine to attack Russia*

False narratives - *biological weapon laboratories operating in Ukraine.*³

- 'The West has been prepared Ukraine for a military aggression against the Russian Federation. The opening and financing of biological laboratories talk about the development of weapons that could be used against the Russian people';

- 'A network has been formed on the territory of Ukraine, which includes more than 30 biological laboratories for creation of biological weapons.'

In fact

The US Embassy in Ukraine has repeatedly denied creation of military biological laboratories in the country. This issue was discussed during a meeting at the UNO, where Russia was accused of

³ Biological weapon laboratories operated on the territory of Ukraine // <https://www.stopfake.org/ru/fejk-na-territorii-ukrainy-dejstvovali-laboratorii-po-razrabotke-biologicheskogo-oruzhiya/>

spreading ‘wild conspiracy theories’. Russia made similar accusations against Georgia and Moldova.⁴

Fake: *Ukrainian refugees are aggressive*

False narratives

- ‘Ukrainian refugees pose a threat to public security’;
- ‘Children of Ukrainian refugees attending educational institutions in Moldova are aggressive and teachers complain about them.’

In fact

Ukrainian refugees pose no threat to public security. Such allegations are denied by both the authorities and the relevant state institutions, in particular the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova.

To protect the information system and maintain the national security of the country, the authorities have enhanced response measures aimed at combating Russian propaganda, disinformation and distorted coverage of the war. One of these measures was the adoption on 2 June 2022 by the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova of a bill that provides for punishment for dissemination of disinformation related to the security of the state.⁵ As a result, wrong coverage of the war in Ukraine and promotion of Russian propaganda rhetoric began to be suppressed.

In addition, attempts of cyber attacks on information systems of national importance, platforms and public portals do not stop. Such massive hybrid offensives are becoming increasingly complex and require more thorough countermeasures on the part of the state.

Thus, the hybrid war tools used by Russia have a fairly wide scope, which is gradually and increasingly expanding. Russia's war against Ukraine has clearly proved this. Along with direct military actions, attacks aimed at systemic destruction of Ukraine's infrastructure and undermining the viability of the Ukrainian state, hybrid threats, Russian propaganda rhetoric, refugees and displaced people have also become a kind of tools of Russia's hybrid war. As a neighbouring country of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova faces extreme difficulties in coping with the consequences of this war.

⁴ Secret laboratories and testing of biological weapons in the Republic of Moldova // <https://stopfals.md/ru/article/fals-laboratoare-secrete-si-testarea-armelor-biologice-in-republica-moldova-180163>

⁵ The Parliament voted in second reading for adoption of legislative measures to prevent and combat disinformation // <https://multimedia.parlament.md/parlamentul-a-votat-in-a-doua-lectura-masurile-legislative-de-prevenire-si-combatere-a-dezinformatii/>

More thorough approaches to maintaining information security and compliance with national legislation regarding the rules of functioning of the media market will both strengthen information security and achieve structural changes in this area. The Moldovan information space should be transformed and progressively developed by increasing the content in the Romanian language. Suppression of the spread of false information, Russian propaganda and justification of wars and violence are treated as fully justified and necessary. Critics about censorship and violation of the freedom of speech, in this case, is not entirely appropriate, as the difference between the freedom of speech and propaganda is quite noticeable. Thus, the scope of Russian hybrid war tools is becoming wider and requires more radical, urgent and harsher responses. Delay threatens to undermine the information security of the Republic of Moldova and the EU countries where refugees and displaced people have settled. Therefore, the effectiveness of measures aimed at maintaining cyber security and combating hybrid threats shall be enhanced. Not only measures aimed at maintaining the monitoring of the audio-visual space are required, but also mechanisms for monitoring the online environment with the adoption of relevant legislative initiatives are needed. Particular attention should be paid to strengthening measures for combating disinformation, propaganda, fakes and hate messages.

Hybrid threats in Gagauzia ATU in the context of the refugee crisis

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'Pro-Europa' European Centre, Comrat*

In Gagauzia, the presence of the Russian news agenda was acutely felt even before the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. However, after February 2022, the situation with fake, propaganda and misinformation became harsher. The analysis noticed on some media portals propaganda of provocative topics, distortion of facts and taking out of context. However, there are also websites with opposite narratives that deny fakes, inform from different sources of information and comply with the principles of the Journalists' Code of Ethics.

The main news topic at the end of February in the world media, and without exception in the Gagauz media, was the war in Ukraine. The approach to covering and presenting news was different. Involvement of news sites in covering the war in Ukraine largely depends on how financially independent they are.

Gagauzia ATU has one public TV and radio company and several private TV channels that broadcast either on TV or through YouTube channels. They chose to cover the war with Ukraine independently, taking into account their priorities and financial policy.

One of the most popular websites in Gagauzia gagauzinfo.md,⁶ the affiliation and sources of existence of which are not known for certain, is the first news about the war in Ukraine in the context of 'Russia's recognition of the "LPR" and "DPR" and 'Ukraine's breaking off diplomatic relations with Russia.' Initially, this website ignored the use of such a term as 'war in Ukraine', replacing it with the following wording as: 'Events in Ukraine', 'Situation in Ukraine',

⁶ The war in Ukraine // <https://gagauzinfo.md/news/accidents/voyna-v-ukraine-idut-boevye-deystviya-vozle-zaporozhskoy-aes>

‘Conflict in Ukraine’. Only 8 months later they began to mention and use in the news the word ‘War’.

Rare news about the hostilities stated only the fact of what is happening at the present time, without indicating the real reasons and details. At present, news related to the war in Ukraine on this website appear with a frequency of 2 times a month, or even less often. The information often refers to the statements of certain Russian or Ukrainian politicians. The context often refers to hybrid threats to Moldova.

News about the refugee crisis since the beginning of the war included information about the assistance provided by Gagauzia to the citizens of Ukraine. From the first months, the stay of refugees in Gagauzia has been covered positively on gagauzinfo – ‘refugees find work’, ‘refugees are provided with medical assistance’, ‘refugees participate in sports competitions’. All this is accompanied by photos of smiling and grateful people. However, at the moment, this positive coverage of the news about refugees on this website has acquired other shades. This can be noticed even in the headlines, if one look for news with the word ‘refugees’. For example, the publication of information about the beating of a Moldovan taxi driver by refugees from Ukraine. At the same time, the source of this ‘news’ remained unknown, since the reference was made to ‘a number of Ukrainian telegram channels’ without specifying the link and specific names (the screen is attached). In addition, one can often find in Gagauzinfo news feed about the illegal crossing of the Moldovan border by refugees.



An alternative for residents of the autonomy is the Nokta website,⁷ where one can find out about the latest news about the war in Ukraine. From 24 to 28 February, Nokta journalists conducted LIVE reports with the latest news about the invasion of Ukraine. At that time, up to 115 news were published on the Nokta website per day. They concerned the international reaction to the events, videos of shelling, information on how to help refugees in Gagauzia, etc. One can also find long reads⁸ and analytical articles written by Ukrainian journalists, Moldovan officials, and economic experts on the website’s feed. Opinions about the website in the Gagauz society are divided, because due to their active position in covering the war in Ukraine, Nokta journalists often face hatred on the Internet, spread by fake pages or supporters of pro-Russian politics.

⁷ War. Russian invasion of Ukraine. Day seven // <https://nokta.md/live-text-vojna-v-ukrainoj-den-sedmoj/>

⁸ Long reads // <https://nokta.md/category/longridy/>

Another website operating in Gagauzia, - Laf.md⁹ - also covers major news related to the war in Ukraine. The website also has a special section 'War in Ukraine'. It contains official information about the war with reference to the telegram channels of Ukrainian politicians and international media. Laf.md journalists note that since the end of February, the audience of the website is reducing. Presumably, the reason is their position in covering the war in Ukraine. Readers call the editorial office to share their disagreement with its news feed.

Recently, an analysis of the activities of the GagauzNews website appeared on the Laf.md website, which migrated to Facebook and Telegram (about 10,000 subscribers) during the blocking for reasons of presenting information inciting hatred and war under the state of emergency in the country. It should be noted that the GagauzNews website has recently resumed its activities. The material draws attention to the fact that GagauzNews publishes fake information about the military activities in Ukraine. In addition, these fakes are refuted by official institutions. Also, Gagauznews continues publishing manipulative information on the Russian Yandex.Zen platform (where Gagauznews has 2.1 thousand subscribers), on its Telegram channel and on the Facebook page, and also shares publications of such doubtful websites as md.tsargrad.tv, ru.sputnik.md, Red Spring (Красная весна) (rossaprimavera.ru).

It is worth noting that with a huge audience in Telegram (9.7 thousand) and Facebook (6.7 thousand), the coverage of publications, for example, on Facebook is poor (at most from 1 to 3 likes per publication and a few comments from pages of unlikely real people), and on Telegram – up to 2 thousand views and also 2-3 likes or dislikes under publications. Thus, we can conclude that these are either driven up number of subscribers, or bots, or specially created pages, or even all together.

However, after blocking, there was obviously less negative content about Ukraine on the Facebook page. This misinformation smoothly migrated to the Gagauznews Telegram channel. Narratives used by this source of publications are: the language problem, the threat of war in Moldova, the disagreements between the local Gagauz authorities and the national authorities, the NATO, the discrediting of European assistance to Moldova and everything related to European integration. The last narrative can often be seen on the Gagauznews website. In other words, there is a tacit division about what and through what channels to 'broadcast'. Each source of information has its own goals and its own specific narratives. Considering all these factors, we can conclude that this is a huge machine that creates fake, misinforms by taking information out of context, behind which there is an impressive amount of human and financial resources.

Thus, as disinformation is one of the most widespread and effective hybrid threats in the context of the media, there is a need to more actively combat false journalism and implement appropriate measures. It should be noted that blocking, which is becoming an increasingly common measure of struggle, works only temporarily. It may be worth considering extending the period of blocking websites, channels in instant messengers and social networks. It seems important to introduce administrative or even criminal liability for such activity.

Following the consultations held with refugees within the framework of this project, currently the main source of information is various Telegram channels (Ukraine – Moldova – 2,142

⁹ The war in Ukraine // <https://laf.md/category/vojna-v-ukraine/>

subscribers, ПОМОЩЬ ЮГ МОЛДОВА – 1,203 subscribers (a channel created by residents of Gagauzia), БЕЖЕНЦЫ УКРАИНЫ – 917 subscribers), which at the beginning of the war published information about housing, provision of humanitarian aid, and now have turned into carrier advertising groups and chats that provide relevant information.

According to refugees, they are interested in the context of Moldovan news when it directly concerns them. Refugees closely follow Ukrainian news to be up to date with what is happening in their country. The main source of information for them is also various Ukrainian Telegram channels. The exchange of information and links among refugees also takes place through instant messengers.

In the context of the media, based on the results of consultations held with representatives of the Refugee Accommodation Centres, several aspects can be noticed:

- News and political issues are not discussed.
- Any conflicts, misunderstandings, difficulties that have arisen in the Refugee Centres are resolved by the management of the Centres, given that upon accommodation in these institutions, people are informed about the need to maintain a peaceful atmosphere and not incite any kind of conflict.

The social network has become the most active and popular online platform for communication and sharing of opinions. For some people, Russia's aggressive actions have become an impetus for freely sharing their views regarding the war in Ukraine. This is often accompanied by a wave of negative comments, personal attacks and threats.

The NewsMaker article contains interviews of 3 residents of Gagauzia who express their negative attitude towards the war.¹⁰ Here are just brief quotes in which they say what they had to face after openly sharing their position:

'I blocked my sister on Facebook'

'I realized that it's impossible to call to people's minds'

'At such moments I am ashamed that I am a Gagauz.'

Despite the active discussion of the war in Ukraine on social networks by residents of Gagauzia, there were no cases of inciting hatred and discrimination in society. Against the backdrop of disinformation, fake news and provocative topics – tools used by some media – in fact, one can notice that this topic is hushed up, ignored and even tabooed to some extent.

In view of the above, it is important to propose the following recommendations:

- The fight against propaganda, fake information and materials inciting hatred should be enhanced. The consumer of information should understand and be able to analyze the sources of information. People's awareness of the basics of media literacy and behaviour in social networks, as well as the importance of mental health and ways to maintain it should be raised.

¹⁰ 'At some moments I am ashamed that I am a Gagauz.' Stories of Gagauzia residents who are against the war in Ukraine // <https://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/v-nekotorye-momenty-mne-stydno-cto-ya-gagauz-istorii-zhitelej-gagauzii-kotorye-protiv-vojny-v-ukraine/>

- *It would be important to create alternative sources of adequate and objective information in Russian*, since the Russian-speaking population is more exposed to manipulation, propaganda and disinformation.

- *Sanctions and penalties for deliberate dissemination of fake, misinformation, manipulative and propaganda information should be tightened.*

New hybrid threats in the context of the Ukrainian refugee crisis in the Transnistrian region and in the localities of the Security Zone

*Vitalie Gutu,
Security Zone*

Hybrid war is not a new concept for the Republic of Moldova. After cessation of fire in 1992, the activation of the political, economic, energy war began on the territory of the Republic of Moldova. All these facts, depending on the periods, have been presented in different forms. Preparation of the state institutions for coping with this war and contributing to countering it is important in defeating the hybrid war. However, today, we can notice that after the Russian invasion in Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova is the direct target of this war, and the state institutions have been proving that they are not enough resistant to face new threats.

As for the Transnistrian region, the internal threats are determined by several aspects:

- the illegal Russian military presence since 1992, which is a high risk;
- the mobilization plans, in the context of Vladimir Putin's order to mobilize the Russian population to the front line in Ukraine, and analyzes were made in Chisinau under which aspect and to what extent this mobilization will be applicable to the military contingent from the Transnistrian region;
- the presence of paramilitary formations in the Transnistrian region;
- the Cobasna ammunition depot, the actual condition of which is not exactly known, represents a risk;
- another high risk is the cases of violation of the airspace of the Republic of Moldova by missiles launched by the Russian Federation that could fall at any moment and trigger some unpredictable actions if they fall on such depots;
- the alleged terrorist attacks on the left side of the Nistru river, are also a part of the scenario of hybrid threats and destabilization of the situation in the region;
- Russian propaganda transmitted by local channels from the Transnistrian region, as well as those from the Russian Federation retransmitted to the left side of the Nistru river;
- the anti-EU narratives and those promoting the Republic of Moldova and the European Union as real enemies for the population on the left side of the Nistru river.

Messages about the current situation on the battlefield or the status of Ukrainian refugees in the countries they managed to reach are conveyed and perceived differently. It is also the case of the Transnistrian region, where the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine is not covered in any way by the media on the left side of the Nistru river. We can hardly find or cannot find at all, on the TV or radio channels and on the regional news web portals, any

information about the progress of the war or images of horrors in Bucea, Irpin, Kherson or Dnipro. In addition, the alleged media sources were also silent about the situation of Ukrainian refugees in the Transnistrian region.

- The media in the region do not even present the rhetoric of the Kremlin's propaganda, i.e. the rhetoric of 'demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine' – everything is left to Russian channels, which broadcast in the region without any restrictions. The war is called by these sources 'the situation in Ukraine' when they have to mediate related topics, such as the refugee crisis or the closing of the Moldovan-Ukrainian border on the Transnistrian segment.
- People in the Transnistrian region say that they get information about the war in Ukraine, Ukrainian refugees, mostly from Russian channels, especially from the propaganda show '60 Minutes'. Local television channels are watched by a large number of people, i.e. *TSV, Pervy Prednestrovsky, Dnestr TV, PMR, LIK TV*, etc. Also, local telegram channels have priority among the citizens of the left side of the Nistru river: *Novosti Pridnestrovie, PMR, Pridnestrovets*, etc.
- Propaganda has been, at least for the time being, a tool used to estrange the inhabitants of the Transnistrian region from inhabitants of the other river side of the Republic of Moldova and from the realities of the whole world, especially caused by the regional security situation.

'There is an overwhelming domination of the Russian channels. According to the (alleged) law on telecommunications, in Transnistria five TV stations must be available for free in any network. Of these channels Pervy Prednistrovsky is designed to popularize the Transnistrian authorities and shape the image of the enemy represented by Chisinau. Existence of Transnistria is impossible without existence of an enemy. The question of why we were created would no longer be asked. Then, three other Russian channels are broadcast, including: ORT, Rossia 1 and a news channel. The Ukrainian TV channel 1+1 is broadcast', Ghenadiy Ciorba, an activist from the left side of the Nistru river said to the media institution zonadesecuritate.md.

- The narratives used on the left side of the Nistru river are manipulations by the Kremlin and are transmitted on Russian channels, to which people on the left river side have unhindered access.
- The management of the refugee crisis on the left side of the Nistru river and the situation on the battlefield in the neighbouring country are taboo topics, because this fact would be a reminiscence of Russia; the region is dependent on Moscow in terms of economy and mentality, through visions and values, which are promoted on the left side of the Nistru river.

Hybrid challenges in the north of Moldova against the background of the refugee crisis

*Dumitru Pelin,
Nord News*

Against the background of the refugee crisis, from the first days, weeks, months, the inhabitants of the north of the Republic of Moldova showed a mobilization, rarely seen since 1990' so far. I note this because the citizens in the region are, for the most part, sympathizers of the dictator from the Kremlin. The arrival of the first Ukrainian refugees in the north proved that Moscow's propaganda machine was useless against the pain and compassion. If at the beginning many people welcomed Putin's military intervention, a few months later people began to condemn this conflict: 'It is a fratricidal war', 'We condemn the war', 'Putin acted badly', etc.

Unfortunately, there are still voices that continue to support their Kremlin idol. After the Russian Federation saw that the Republic of Moldova stand with the Ukrainian people, through its 'emissaries' - politicians, opinion leaders, representatives of the church subordinate to the Metropolis of Moldova - tried to continue their actions of destabilizing the social and economic situation in our country. Thus, in the autumn 2022, protests were organized in Chisinau, with the direct participation of workers from the north of the Republic of Moldova. Moreover, members of the Bloc of Communists and Socialists and the Shor Party, while visiting the north of the country, speculated on social vulnerabilities. They invoke price increases, the refugee crisis, which has led to higher rates and more reserved relations with the Russian Federation, and they also say that the authorities in Chisinau shall disregard the tragedy of Ukrainians and bow to Moscow in order to obtain a better price of the natural gas.

Residents of the municipality were subjected to challenges at the beginning of March, more precisely on 3 March, when a resident of Panzareni village, Falesti district, was caught with the Russian Z inscribed on the back door of his car. Journalists nordnews.md covered this fact. Another case happened in Balti when a young member of the PSRM youth movement wrote the letter Z on the Armoured Vehicle in front of the 'Moldova' Motorized Infantry Brigade. The inscription appeared on 14 April 2022. The same letter was also written on the building of the headquarters of the Community of Ukrainians in Balti.

Around 10 media outlets operate in the north of the Republic of Moldova, but not all of them wanted to cover the invasion of Russian troops in Ukraine and call the war 'war'. Only a few institutions have objectively and professionally covered Russia's military intervention in Ukraine, and namely: ESP.MD newspaper, Televiziunea Nordului, Observatorul de Nord, NordNews.MD.

Nordnews and TV Nord published video materials about the first Ukrainian refugees who came to the Republic of Moldova. Nordnews.md broadcasted a series of shows and interviews with Ukrainian journalists, experts, including: Dmitry Gordon, Evgen Magda, Roman Svitan. The guests of nordnews also included the advisers of the President of Ukraine – Alexey Arestovich and Mikhail Podoleak. The purpose of these broadcasts was to provide an informational alternative for Russian speakers in Balti municipality and localities in the north of the country.

However, misinformation still persists among Balti inhabitants. Here is the opinion of the Director of the 'Lex 21' Association, Diana Grosu:

'There will be war! Maia Sandu is to blame.

Members of the Shor Party, the young guard, mobilized, creating groups on Facebook and Telegram and publishing misinformation articles.

The Socialist Party, BaltiOnline, Balti news are financed by the Russian FSB.

I think the SIS should act. It's the time!

There is no willingness to help locally. In Balti, there are many KGB members playing the game of Russians.'

The informational space in the north of the Republic of Moldova and in Balti is still invaded by fake news, which appear on some websites and Telegram channels: Nesterovski, Jukov Online, Balti Online, Balti news, Stirile Nordului, Garda tanara, Я бельчанин.

Glodeni district Chairman Ion Cojocari considers that there is a lack of communication between the central authorities and citizens about the financial aid provided by donors. In this context, provocative messages against the Government appear on the social network.

Ion Cojocari, Glodeni district Chairman:

'I had some conflicting remarks and discussions with some residents of Glodeni district, who complained that we focused too much on helping refugees and forgot to help our own local residents. These discussions appeared after the publication of some texts on social networks, where messages of certain citizens on fake profiles, who criticized the authorities for granting allowances to the refugees from the state budget, from people's money, were promoted. In such situation the state should more actively explain the source of financing and maintenance of these refugees, that most of the money comes from outside, rather than only from the budget of the Republic of Moldova.

Civil societies would be recommended to inform the authorities before going to placement centres. That is, there should be a dialogue, because it turns that some refugees received aid 2-3 times, while others did not receive at all.

Another recommendation for civil society is to pay more attention to protection of personal data. Here, the state, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection should be involved and allow NGO representatives to request personal data of refugees. 'To overcome the hybrid challenges, launched by the Kremlin, the central authorities should create, by involving special services, an agency to monitor and sanction propagandists, institutions and individuals that generate fake news.