

EU DISINFO LAB

Disinformation landscape in

POLAND

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INTRODUCTION

- Disinformation in Poland remained a little-known phenomenon for many years. Both the political class and the public paid little attention to the problem, even though it had repeatedly created political sentiment in Poland. In 2015, anti-immigrant narratives contributed significantly to Law and Justice party (PiS) election victory. A very negative attitude among Poles became evident, especially since the outbreak of the crisis on the Polish-Belarusian border in 2021. Since then, to this day, the topic of migration has become very emotional, affecting the perception of these issues in Polish society. False information concerned, among other things, Foreigners' Integration Centers (CICs), crime among migrants, or Muslim holiday celebrations are among the most powerful disinformation narratives in Poland.
- The situation did not change for the following years. The COVID-19 pandemic alone showed how dangerous false information can be. Unfortunately, Polish society showed little resilience to the deluge of false content. Poland [remained](#) one of the least vaccinated countries in the EU/EEA. The government's pro-vaccination policy was ineffective. This only increased reluctance to comply with sanitary restrictions and gave fuel to anti-vaccine activists, ultimately resulting in a high COVID-19 mortality rate in Polish society.
- We could also see an increase in disinformation narratives during the women's strike against stricter abortion laws in the fall of 2020. The Constitutional Tribunal's ruling made abortion due to fetal abnormality illegal, which in practice meant a near total ban on abortion. Many manipulated and falsified narratives were created around this topic, as well as the broad issue of women's reproductive rights. These were generated primarily by far-right activists and journalists. Despite the largest protests in Poland since 1989, the Constitutional Tribunal's ruling has remained in effect to this day.
- Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine demonstrated the effectiveness of Kremlin propaganda in Poland. Thousands of social media accounts shifted from anti-vaccine narratives to anti-Ukrainian content. In the first period of the war, however, Polish society proved immune to Russian propaganda. The Kremlin's aggressive narratives were ineffective, and Poles were willing to support Ukraine and give shelter to refugees. This also resulted in a significant increase in public awareness against disinformation, which to some extent made Poles more resistant to propaganda. Unfortunately, economic tensions between Poland and Ukraine that arose in late 2023 and early 2024 caused anti-Ukrainian sentiment to grow. Currently, the positive attitude toward Ukrainians has weakened significantly. Far-right parties and organizations largely rely on these negative sentiments, while amplifying them.
- In 2024 and 2025, disinformation in Poland also was present on the EU policies, such as the European Green Deal. There is a very politically inflamed dispute over this topic. Over and over again in social media, we can encounter narratives about an alleged attempt to destroy the Polish economy or deprive the country of coal mining opportunities.

- State security has also become an extremely important topic since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. It gained additional importance after the election of Donald Trump as the U.S. president. It is associated with numerous rumors or unverified information designed to heat up the political atmosphere. This is eagerly exploited by Russian centers of influence in an effort to shatter confidence in the government and the country's defense capabilities. They are intended to demonstrate Poland's inability to defend itself and the inefficiency of the national security system.
- One of the main topics discussed during the recent presidential election was the so-called "Romanian scenario." According to the right wing politicians, the victory of the "wrong" candidate would mean the annulment of the elections and their repetition. In this way, as in Romania, it would mean the victory of the ruling party's candidate against the will of the voters. This scenario was used extensively to stir up negative emotions among voters during the election campaign, especially on social media.

EMBLEMATIC CASES

Several cases of disinformation have permeated Polish public opinion to this day.

THE SUDDEN TURN OF THE NARRATIVE IN THE ANTI-VACCINATION MOVEMENT TOWARDS ANTI-UKRAINIAN AND PRO-RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA

- The outbreak of the war in Ukraine was a turning point in the Polish online space of disinformation. Due to the geographic proximity of the conflict, the topic sparked strong emotions. Instantly, narratives about the staged conflict or those justifying the attack on Ukraine began circulating throughout social media. Soon after, Polish social media was flooded with disinformation about the refugee crisis, which was to arouse resentment towards Ukrainians.
- It was quickly noticed that the accounts that had been spreading disinformation in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic so far, had a large share in spreading conspiracy theories and false information about Ukraine. This important information confirmed the observations made so far. As FakeNews.pl indicated in their [report](#) from March 2021, “anti-vaccine/anti-covid” narratives were strongly associated with the Kremlin’s centers of influence.
- It is impossible to determine how many people shared anti-Ukrainian content with the knowledge that they were disseminating Russian disinformation. However, this did not change the fact that thanks to the information flow network it had built, Moscow was able to infect the Polish information space with the desired narratives in a short time. Russia’s sphere of informational influence was too extensive to be easily stopped.
- The above phenomenon was confirmed by a [report](#) by specialists from the Polish-Japanese Academy of Information Technology, a [study](#) by FakeNews.pl or a [publication](#) by NASK and the Polish Press Agency. The conclusions were unequivocal: Polish conspiracy theorist circles practically overnight went from generating anti-vaccine content to anti-Ukrainian disinformation.
- In the first months of the war, these actions proved to have little effect. Polish society showed high resistance to Russian propaganda. However, the prolonged conflict led to fatigue and weakened the alertness of Poles. Currently, anti-Ukrainian narratives are beginning to rise again. They are reinforced and exploited by Russian centers of influence and far-right circles. This allows them to remain in mainstream public discourse. Ukraine is portrayed as a corrupt country seeking to drag NATO into war, and Ukrainians as greedy, overly privileged, and taking jobs away from Poles.

DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN AGAINST HPV VACCINATION

- In the middle of 2024, the Ministry of Health [announced](#) that starting in September of that year, it would begin a program of mass vaccinations for boys and girls aged 9-14. The decision triggered the mobilization of anti-system circles, which began to [replicate](#) disinformation narratives known for years, targeting HPV vaccination. False information about the safety of the vaccines appeared online, which claimed that the vaccines cause infertility and premature menopause, among numerous side effects. To demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the vaccines, manipulated epidemiological data on the effects of programs conducted in other countries were cited, Australia being the most commonly mentioned. Voices suggesting that the risk of infection applies only to promiscuous people, or downplaying the risks associated with the development of cervical cancer were also activated.
- The anti-vaccine movement sometimes [portrayed](#) the implementation of the program in elementary schools as coercion to vaccinate children, or created the belief that a child could be vaccinated at school without the parent's knowledge. The program encouraging vaccination was presented as an advertisement of a medicinal product for minors, leading to the conclusion that the promotional campaign was illegal. Anti-vaccine communities called for intervention in schools. They tried to persuade parents to refuse vaccinations and actively fight school officials to prevent the administration of the product to children. Anti-vaccine activists themselves also entered schools, intimidating the directors of educational institutions in an effort to discourage them from vaccination campaigns. There was also a massive campaign to send appeals to schools with false information to discourage schools from vaccinating children.
- In October 2024, the Parliamentary Group for the Protection of Life and Health of Poles, founded by members of the far-right Confederation (Konfederacja) party, [held a meeting](#). It was attended by many anti-vaccine activists, but also representatives of medical institutes and state health institutions. Activists very aggressively attacked doctors and health care officials. During the meeting, the typical narratives about the alleged harmfulness of vaccination or the use of vaccination solely for financial profit were repeated. Recordings of the meeting circulated on social media and gained considerable traction among anti-vaccine circles.
- There was also a [rumour](#) about the death of a child as a result of HPV vaccination, reproduced by anti-vaccine circles. In fact, the cause of the child's death was [probably](#) a defective series of hepatitis B vaccines. However, this has not been definitively confirmed. Despite this information, anti-vaccine activists have not corrected the false information about the child's cause of death.
- This was not the first such campaign. In 2023, a very similar [campaign](#) was undertaken by the same extreme anti-system circles. It concerned the same topics and was conducted in a similar fashion. It is difficult to determine what effect the actions carried out by anti-vaccine activists had in 2023 or in 2024. They certainly introduced information chaos and reinforced parents' uncertainty about HPV vaccination.

CONTROVERSIES SURROUNDING HEALTH EDUCATION

- In October 2024, the Polish Ministry of National Education [announced](#) that it wanted to introduce a new subject—health education—starting in September 2025. It was to cover issues related to physical and mental health, nutrition, puberty, addiction prevention, and digital safety. However, it was primarily issues related to sex education that sparked controversy among Catholic and conservative circles.
- Almost from the moment the public consultation on the new subject was announced, a campaign began to spread unverified rumors and false information about the subject. Politicians from the Confederation party (Konfederacja) were particularly active, warning about the alleged “teaching of masturbation” and “eroticization of minors.” They thus [repeated](#) content well known from campaigns against sex education, especially in relation to WHO recommendations.
- One such example is the statements made by Karina Bosak, a member of parliament representing the Confederation party. She claimed that “students are not told anything about pedophilia, for example, nor are they told anything about the dangers and risks associated with early sexual initiation and sexually transmitted diseases.” These statements are [manipulative](#), as the subject does cover these issues.
- Another member of parliament from this party [claimed](#) that the government was hiding criticism of the bill during public consultations. This is not true. While negative opinions are in fact available on the government’s website, they do not constitute a majority, contrary to the claims of far-right politicians.
- Far-right and Catholic circles [try to present](#) Health Education as a subject that deals exclusively with issues related to sexuality. As we mentioned earlier, this is not true, and the topics to be covered in the subject are broad. Among the manipulative statements that are repeated, we find such as: sex education increases sexual violence among children, contributes to an increase in teenage pregnancies, causes an increase in sexually transmitted diseases, causes addiction to pornography and sex addiction, contributes to depression and suicide attempts, and causes an increase in homosexual activity among young people and a desire to change gender. All these myths have been [repeated](#) for years in conservative circles and have no basis in reality.
- The Catholic Church in Poland has also actively joined the campaign against health education. It [claims](#) that the subject poses a threat to “the Catholic vision of family, marriage, and the maturity of children and young people.” Archbishop Tadeusz Wojda [stated](#) that children should be protected from “harmful ideologies.”
- As a result of growing controversy and political struggle surrounding the subject, the Minister of National Education, Barbara Nowacka, [decided](#), contrary to her original plans, that the subject would be optional.
- As far as public opinion on the new school subject is concerned, it is rather positive. According to polls, over half of Poles [support](#) the introduction of the new subject, while around 27% are against it. Over 66% of them [believe](#) that the Catholic Church should not present its position on this issue, and almost 50% of respondents [disagree](#) with the Church’s position.
- Initial information [provided](#) by the government indicates that in the new school year, more than half of students will not participate in health education. Conservative circles have presented this as a success, but this overlooks an important

context. In Poland, attendance at non-compulsory subjects at school is usually low, mainly due to the overloaded curriculum and students' fatigue with compulsory subjects. [Attendance](#) at family life education, which has been replaced by health education, was often very low. For [example](#), in Wrocław in 2022, less than one-third of primary school students and one in ten secondary school students attended family life education classes.

DISINFORMATION ABOUT FOREIGNERS' INTEGRATION CENTERS (CIC)

- A nationwide call for bids for the establishment of Foreigner Integration Centers was launched in 2024. The Polish government was very quickly accused of creating facilities to bring migrants to Poland *en masse*. This sparked controversy in the media and on the Internet. Right-wing organisations and politicians began organising protests against the facilities across Poland. Rumours and unverified information quickly began to spread in the information sphere.
- The CICs have come under particularly strong criticism from members of the Law and Justice party. Michał Woś [linked](#) the centers to the relocation mechanism written into the EU Migration Pact. Marlena Małąg, on the other hand, [said](#) they were intended to be used to bring people from the Middle East and Africa to Poland. A far-right politician, Michał Bakiewicz, [organised](#) protests and disrupted local government meetings. On social media, the topic was very popular and generated heated discussions, much of it based on [false information](#).
- In fact, the concept of the CIC [was created](#) in 2021 under the Law and Justice government. Marlena Małąg, who is now highly critical of the centers, was personally involved in the opening of the first such center in 2022 as the then Minister of Family and Social Policy. The CICs, contrary to circulating rumours, are intended to serve as information and service centers for migrants legally residing in Poland. They are to host Polish language classes and offer psychological support. They will not provide accommodation for migrants. Furthermore, they also have nothing to do with the EU Migration Pact; they are being built under a different EU program.
- Currently, due to controversy, many local governments [have abandoned](#) plans to build CICs. According to the original plan, 49 of them were to be built, but this number is expected to decrease significantly, though the extent remains unclear.

OLEŚNICA ABORTION INCIDENT

- In March 2025, the Gazeta Wyborcza newspaper [reported](#) on the case of a woman who had a late abortion at a hospital in Oleśnica. The patient claimed that doctors misled her about the condition of her child and unnecessarily delayed the diagnosis. She was also temporarily placed in a psychiatric hospital, despite the lack of reasons for doing so. One hospital refused to perform the abortion, and it was only at the facility in Oleśnica that Dr. Gizela Jagielska performed the abortion. The termination of pregnancy was carried out on the basis of the law on the protection of the patient's life, which is actually the only case in Polish law that allows legal abortion.

- The article [caused](#) a huge stir in Polish society. Feminist and pro-choice organizations accused the authorities of providing unclear guidelines to doctors, and the doctors themselves of avoiding responsibility and misleading patients. Conservative politicians and anti-abortion movements accused Dr. Jagielska of murdering a child at 36 weeks of pregnancy. They demanded that legal consequences be imposed on her. The prosecutor's office [launched](#) an investigation into illegal abortion ex officio.
- In April 2025, MEP Grzegorz Braun from the far-right Polish Crown Confederation party (not to be confused with the Confederation party) [stormed](#) into a hospital in Oleśnica to carry out a "citizen's arrest" of Dr. Jagielska. He claimed that she should no longer be allowed to work with patients. The incident gained nationwide publicity. The prosecutor's office launched an investigation into the matter, accusing Grzegorz Braun of violating the doctor's physical integrity and insulting her, as well as endangering the health and lives of patients by preventing them from accessing medical care.
- Soon, information [began to appear](#) on social media that Dr. Jagielska had received PLN 600,000 from the state as part of the award. This caused outrage among conservative circles, who claimed that the government was giving money to people responsible for murdering people. In reality, the money was given to the hospital where Dr. Jagielska worked, and it was intended for the purchase of a new ambulance. The photo attached to the circulating posts was from 2023 and had nothing to do with the case.
- Anti-abortion and conservative groups claimed that the unborn child, despite its illness, would be able to function after birth. Some doctors also shared this view. However, according to information [provided](#) by the patient's representative, the fetus suffered from type II brittle bone disease, which was confirmed by ultrasound and genetic tests. Type II of this disease is lethal, and the child would have survived for a maximum of one month after birth, exposed to constant pain and suffering. Many major media outlets in Poland did not report this information in the first weeks of the case. The omission of the representative's position in press reports and the aggressive information campaign by extreme groups created a false image among the Polish public.
- Investigations into this matter are still ongoing, and doctors are awaiting more precise guidelines on abortion from the Ministry of Health.

DISINFORMATION ABOUT THE SUSPENSION OF EXHUMATION WORK IN VOLHYNIA

- The subject of the Volhynia massacre remains a topic that arouses extreme emotions, especially among Poles. Polish society, historians, and authorities consider the events in south-eastern Poland in 1943-45, which was then occupied by Germany, to be genocide committed by Ukrainian nationalists from the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). In 2017, the Ukrainian authorities [suspended](#) all exhumation work related to the genocide as a result of Poland's decision to dismantle monuments of UPA. This followed the Polish authorities' decision in 2016 to recognize the Volhynia massacre as genocide. To this day, the Ukrainian authorities [refuse](#) to acknowledge Poland's position on this matter. For this reason, this topic is eagerly exploited by extremist circles in Poland, as well as by Russian propaganda.

- Despite this, the Ukrainian authorities [have agreed](#) to search for further victims of the genocide for the first time since 2017. In 2023, the grave of Polish victims of the Volhynia massacre [was located](#) in the village of Puźniki. In November 2024, Ukraine [agreed](#) to the exhumation of this grave. Work began in the area in April 2025.
- On June 4, 2025, the Polish Sejm [passed](#) a law establishing July 11 as the National Day of Remembrance for Poles – Victims of Genocide committed by the UPA. The Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [criticized](#) this decision, stating that “unilateral steps do not contribute to mutual understanding and reconciliation.” This statement caused discontent among many, especially right-wing politicians and part of Polish society. The use of the phrase “so-called genocide” by the Ukrainian MFA drew particular criticism.
- On June 6, a photo of a document allegedly signed by the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture began [circulating](#) on the Polish Internet. The letter contained information that Ukraine was suspending the right to further exhume victims of genocide on its territory. This was supposed to be revenge for establishing the aforementioned Day of Remembrance.
- On the same day, Professor Andrzej Ossowski from the Pomeranian Medical University in Szczecin, head of the exhumation works, [confirmed](#) in the film that the works had been suspended. He added that the reason for this was Ukrainian revenge for establishing Remembrance Day.
- As it turned out, the alleged document from the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture [was forged](#). The recording of Professor Ossowski was generated using artificial intelligence. Both were disseminated using a fake account of the scientist, created almost a year earlier. The false content was quickly denied by the Ukrainian and Polish authorities, but it managed to spark widespread discussion and controversy on social media, reinforcing anti-Ukrainian narratives. It is unclear who is responsible for this information attack, but for obvious reasons, the main suspect is Russia, which sought to exploit the Polish authorities' decision to establish a Day of Remembrance as quickly as possible.

NARRATIVES

This section illustrates the most recurrent narratives in the Poland disinformation landscape.

ANTI-IMMIGRANT NARRATIVES

- The first significant increase in anti-immigrant narratives could be seen in 2015. At the time, it was a prominent theme during the Polish parliamentary elections. These narratives, along with the criticism of EU migration policy, proved effective. The Law and Justice (PiS) party managed to win the elections with a significant lead, and the above actions were one of the factors contributing to this.
- The second rise in anti-immigrant narratives came during the 2021 Polish-Belarusian border crisis. Belarusian border guards began to push migrants from the Middle East to the Polish side of the border. In response, the Polish Border Guard began using illegal pushbacks. The situation caused a huge division in Polish society. One part of society called for respecting the rights of migrants, while the other wanted strong border defense. The situation is still causing huge controversy in Poland today.
- The third, although much milder than the previous two, wave of anti-migration narratives was related to the parliamentary elections in 2023. It was based primarily on criticism of the EU's migration solutions and the alleged threat posed by people from the Middle East. When it turned out that some politicians of the Law and Justice party had been involved in illegal sales of visas to Poland (the so-called "visa scandal"), the then opposition, previously critical of anti-immigrant narratives, also started distributing this content.
- Currently, anti-immigration sentiment in Poland is very strong. Polls [show](#) that as many as 75% of Poles oppose taking in migrants, and up to 50% of them are strongly against it. During the last presidential election, most candidates spoke negatively about migration, including politicians with more liberal views. This was largely related to the EU Migration Pact. Anti-immigration narratives favour the growth of extremist movements and parties, as we have seen in recent years in Poland. These narratives coexist, intertwine, and reinforce each other with anti-Ukrainian content. They have a feedback loop between them, which causes hostility towards Ukrainians to reinforce hostility towards other migrants, and vice versa.
- Anti-immigration narratives are a common theme of disinformation. They touch on the same themes as in other countries: terrorism, increase in crime rate, women's safety, threats to Christianity, and overpopulation by foreign ethnic groups. At the same time, Poland, even in comparison with the rest of the European Union, accepts numerous migrants not only from Ukraine or Belarus, but also India and Georgia. However, this trend is starting to slow down, possibly due to anti-immigration sentiment in Poland.

ANTI-VACCINE NARRATIVES AND HEALTH DISINFORMATION

- Disinformation surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic has been at the center of health care narratives for about three years. It caused a decline in trust in public institutions and undermined faith in medicine. Although as of 2023, the topic of pandemics has become less popular, the effects of disinformation around COVID-19 can still be felt by Polish society today.
- Disinformation topics concerned sanitary restrictions, which were presented as an authoritarian attempt to enslave Poles. They were described as sanitary segregation and compared to the persecution of Jews in the Third Reich. Wearing masks was criticised, and tests for SARS-CoV-2 were described as ineffective. The pandemic was presented as a planned conspiracy of governments and pharmaceutical companies (the so-called “plandemic”). Many people were also looking for alternative sources of treatment, primarily drugs with unconfirmed effectiveness against COVID-19, such as amantadine, ivermectin, or hydroxychloroquine.
- However, disinformation about COVID-19 vaccinations was the most popular. They were presented as dangerous and untested. It was emphasised that their goal was to depopulate and enslave humanity or activate dangerous diseases using 5G. The vaccines were said to contain graphene, and the entire vaccination process was described as a mass medical experiment.
- Another important topic related to health disinformation concerned HPV vaccination. False information about HPV vaccination has been [circulating](#) in the Polish disinformation space for about 15 years. Their greatest intensity comes during periods when new vaccination programs are announced among young people. These took place especially in 2023 and 2024. They largely consisted of creating panic around HPV vaccination, which allegedly posed a threat to adolescents. Among the most popular disinformation topics, for example, was the [information](#) that HPV vaccines cause cervical cancer, rather than protect against it. [Information](#) that the vaccines contain viruses, insect cells or carcinogenic proteins is also popular. Other misinformation narratives on the subject include those of a social nature. HPV vaccines, for example, are said to encourage sexual promiscuity among young people. There is also repeated information that boys do not need to be vaccinated against HPV, after all, they cannot get cervical cancer. This narrative ignores the fact that HPV is responsible for many other conditions, such as penile and anal cancers. It therefore poses a great danger to men's health as well.
- Both on the topics of the pandemic and HPV vaccination, so-called White Papers have been written. In each case, they contained a collection of disinformation narratives laced with supposed scientific evidence, usually composed of questionable studies or unscientific books and papers. They have been very popular in anti-vaccine circles and used as the main source of knowledge. White Papers were sent to local governments, primarily municipalities, urging them to post the studies on their websites. Many of them, probably unaware of the questionable reliability of the text, published it. As a result, many people were able to access these disinformative papers on the websites of trusted institutions.

- Currently, narratives reinforcing health misinformation largely originate in the US. The current Trump administration contributes significantly to the spread of false information, particularly on vaccinations, infectious diseases, and autism spectrum disorders. Statements by American politicians are also used to attack the WHO.

DISINFORMATION ABOUT WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND SEXUAL EDUCATION

- The topic of women's rights has been evoking considerable controversy in the Polish public space. This is especially true when it comes to the outbreak of nationwide protests against the tightening of abortion law in 2020, causing a significant split in Polish society. Far-right politicians treat feminists as traitors to the nation and agents of foreign influence. Women fighting for their rights have been facing aggressive attacks and vulgar treatment. Feminism is seen by some groups as a means to oppress men and destroy “the natural order of things”.
- The public debate on sexual education has been going on in Poland for years and has been the subject of disinformation. One of the main narratives is that of the World Health Organization (WHO) and its 2012 guidelines on sexual education. The most popular false thesis is the “teaching masturbation to 4-year-olds”, which is allegedly carried out by sex educators working with children. A related thread that recurs in disinformation about sex education is the “moral rot of the West.” It indicates that in the West, sexual education allegedly leads to paedophilia and other negative phenomena. These narratives are strongly linked to contraception, which is treated by some groups as equivalent to abortion. This especially applies to emergency contraception, i.e., the so-called “morning after” pill. As a result of a political campaign based largely on disinformation, emergency contraception was withdrawn from general sale in Poland in 2017. They were only available by prescription from a doctor, which slowed down and made it difficult to access them. A pilot program was introduced in 2024, allowing emergency contraception to also be purchased with a prescription from a pharmacist, not just a doctor. It aims to make emergency contraception more accessible.
- Strong disinformation narratives also concern the topic of abortion. False information about abortion includes, for example, accusations about possible access to abortion even after childbirth in Western countries. Among conspiracy theorists, termination of pregnancy is also associated with a globalist conspiracy and attempts to depopulate humanity. Numerous false information is also aimed at inciting fear in women by citing alleged complications after abortion, such as a high probability of death or mental problems. Despite the near-total ban on abortion still in effect, new guidelines for hospitals and prosecutors were introduced in 2024, relaxing current regulations to an extent.
- Another topic is *in vitro* fertilization. It is treated as a morally questionable procedure that contributes to the death of unborn children. Disinformation about this procedure concerns the perception of *in vitro* children as “products” that constitute a “gene bomb”. This narrative is based on false information that IVF children are particularly vulnerable to genetic defects. As a result of a heated political debate, in 2016 the Law and Justice government ended the nationwide IVF program and closed its financing. IVF was only subsidized by some local governments. The state-wide IVF program was reinstated by the new government in 2024. The first child was born under the program in January 2025.

- As of September 2025, a subject called Health Education will be introduced in Polish schools. It will also include the subject of sex education, which has caused huge controversy, especially among conservative groups and politicians. At first, the subject was supposed to be compulsory, but this has been dropped, and students will take the class only with parental consent.

ANTI-REFUGEE AND ANTI-UKRAINIAN NARRATIVES

- The anti-refugee rhetoric was the dominant message spread by Polish disinformation circles in connection with the war, especially in the first year of the invasion. It was intended to evoke hostility towards Ukrainians fleeing the war. It was particularly desired by Russian influence centres, as it undermines empathy and public willingness to help not only refugees but also Ukraine as such. Furthermore, it was also intended to create divisions and antagonisms within Polish society, which, preoccupied with internal problems, will not pay attention to the situation of the neighbour.
- Disinformation about refugees included the following topics: Ukrainians are more privileged than Poles who become second-class citizens in their own country, PESEL gives Ukrainians full civic rights in Poland, Ukrainians take hospital beds and there is not enough of such places for Polish citizens, Polish children are discriminated against in schools because refugees from Ukraine are favoured, flats intended for Polish families are handed over to Ukrainians, Ukrainians pose a threat to the safety of Poles.
- Another type of narrative are those that are strictly anti-Ukrainian. Their goal is to build resentment towards the defending country. Such content is to influence Poles in such a way to discourage them from both humanitarian and military aid. Its main purpose is to arouse fear and show Ukraine as a dangerous and Nazi-filled country. The main method is to use historical animosities for this purpose, especially the Volhynian massacre.
- Narratives supporting or justifying the Russian invasion are quite common, although much rarer than the ones described above. They are intended to warm the image of Russia and show that the war is waged for a good purpose. They present Ukraine as a threat to its neighbours, responsible for provoking the war, and Putin as the one who acted in self-defense.
- In addition to generating social antagonisms and aversion to Ukraine, Russian propaganda also focuses on undermining the unity of Western societies. The purpose of these narratives is to create public pressure that will lead to the ease of the sanctions. It is also about making the impression that it was NATO that incited Ukraine to war and posed a threat to Russia, so the invasion was only an act of self-defense.
- The narratives of the most conspiratorial nature are those that undermine the intensity of the war and even consider the entire invasion a hoax. It's hard to say whether these narratives are desired by Kremlin propaganda. The exception is the conspiracy theory about laboratories in Ukraine producing biological weapons. It is a direct justification of the Russian aggression and was distributed by the media connected with Moscow and the power centres in the Kremlin. The

remaining content is an expression of a general distrust of conspiracy circles in any official information. What is worth noting is the prominent role of antisemitism in those narratives.

- Anti-Ukrainian narratives were also eagerly shared by far-right politicians associated with the Confederation party. They started an action called #StopUkrainizationOfPoland. The campaign has largely been forgotten, but other narratives have gained popularity. Initially, they did not gain much support, but the economic tensions in the late 2023 between Warsaw and Kyiv mean that anti-Ukrainian sentiments in Polish society are starting to grow. Currently, as a result of economic problems among Poles, fatigue with the topic of war, and the rise of anti-immigrant sentiment, the attitude of Polish citizens towards Ukrainians has deteriorated. About a third of Poles are [reluctant](#) toward Ukrainians. Other [surveys](#) indicate that in 2025, for the first time, negative attitudes of Poles toward Ukrainians were more common than positive ones. A large group also remains indifferent.
- The topic of Ukrainians also came up during the last presidential campaign and was discussed by the two main candidates. It mainly concerned the “800+” child subsidy program. The candidate of the liberal Civic Coalition, Rafal Trzaskowski, advocated limiting the program for non-working Ukrainians. Right-wing candidate Rafal Nawrocki proposed a similar solution, also stressing that Poles should have priority in waiting to see doctors. These examples show well that negative sentiment toward Ukrainians is growing stronger in Polish society.

ANTI-EU NARRATIVES

- Disinformation about the EU includes two main topics. The first one is migration policy. The false narratives circulating around this topic have already been mentioned earlier. However, in Poland, some politicians present the EU as an enemy that is trying to force Poland to accept thousands of dangerous migrants. This narrative has been repeated for many years, but it has gained popularity again due to the EU Migration Pact. It was presented as a tool to subjugate Poland and force it to accept migrants. There has been a lot of false information and rumours surrounding this topic, mainly based on misrepresentations of the pact. It was used very aggressively in the political struggle, especially during the presidential campaign. It also reinforced false information about the Foreigners' Integration Centers, which were falsely portrayed as part of the implementation of the Migration Pact.
- The second topic is climate policy. Here, too, the EU is perceived as an aggressor imposing solutions that are negative for the Polish economy. Climate denialists were particularly attacking the Fit For 55 package. When it comes to global warming, the narratives appearing in the public debate coincide with those known from other countries: global warming does not exist, humans do not contribute to global warming, glaciers are not melting, and all this is the conspiracy of global elites. Currently, there is extensive discussion around the European Green Deal. It is often portrayed as an attempt to rob Poland of its natural resources and prevent its development by coercing it to adopt unprofitable solutions. It has also been linked to Germany's attempt to dominate the Polish economy. This topic also came up during the presidential campaign and has still been present in the public debate to this day.

DISINFORMATION ABOUT THE LGBT+ COMMUNITY

- In the first half of 2025, the topic of LGBT+ people was not widely discussed in the public sphere, although disinformation on social media was appearing all the time. However, it did not gain as much widespread attention as in 2020 or 2024. Nonetheless, the same disinformation narratives are still circulating, and as the past has shown, attacks on LGBT+ people can begin again at any time, especially when it becomes politically profitable to do so. LGBT+ activists are perceived by far-right politicians as agents of foreign influence. Numerous disinformation campaigns concern false information about the link between homosexuality and paedophilia or the destruction of the traditional family model. There is also fake news about the dangers of raising children by same-sex couples.
- In 2020, during the presidential election campaign, Andrzej Duda, the candidate of Law and Justice, and Krzysztof Bosak, the candidate of Confederation, repeatedly attacked the LGBT+ community. This resulted in protests and aggressive public debate, as non-heteronormative people became the focus of a disinformation campaign. The last presidential campaign hardly addressed the issue of LGBT+ people, focusing on other topics.
- In 2024, the Olympic Games have sparked an aggressive campaign around transgender people. Numerous female athletes were accused of being men. These accusations had no grounding in reality and were based on rumours, but were used to attack the entire transgender community. Various narratives were reproduced, such as those claiming that children were forced into mutilating procedures by the “trans lobby” or that transgender people pretended to be female in order to attack women.
- In this context, the aforementioned school subject, health education, is also used to create moral panic. According to narratives circulating and reinforced by the far right, the subject is intended to promote homosexuality and transgenderism among children. This is supposed to be another manifestation of the moral corruption of the current government and the adoption of educational models from the “rotten West.”

COMMUNITY

The main actors countering disinformation in Poland are listed hereafter.

FACT-CHECKING ORGANISATIONS

- **[AFP Sprawdzam](#)**: Polish branch of the French Press Agency. It verifies various content, including issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. A member of the IFCN.
- **[Demagog](#)**: the first and largest fact-checking organisation in Poland. It has been operating since 2014. Demagog verifies numerous topics in the field of disinformation: from the COVID-19 pandemic to the war in Ukraine. It continuously monitors the Polish public debate, regularly verifying politicians' statements. The association is also involved in education through the Fact-checking Academy initiative. A member of the IFCN.
- **[Foundation “Counteracting Disinformation” –FakeNews.pl](#)**: The organisation was founded in 2020. It is the second largest fact-checking organisation in Poland. It verifies disinformation on various topics: the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, LGBT+ rights, migration, women's rights, medicine and biology. The Foundation conducts research on the disinformation space and creates numerous reports for international organisations. A member of the IFCN.
- **[Pravda Association](#)**: Polish fact-checking organisation founded in 2020. It verifies various topics, primarily related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and current topics in the public debate. It also creates educational materials for students. A member of the IFCN.

OTHER NGOS AND MEDIA

- **[OKO.Press](#)**: Polish online news and opinion website on political and social issues, mainly focused on investigative journalism and oversight of government activities. The site aims to promote democratic values, human rights and transparency of government by publishing fact-checking, research, and analyses.
- **[Reporters Foundation](#)**: specialises in investigative journalism. Journalists of the foundation investigate corruption in the government and public institutions, as well as Russian influence. The Foundation runs two websites, the Polish [FrontStory.pl](#) and the international [VSquare](#). It cooperates with investigative journalists from all over Europe.
- **[Konkret24](#)**: fact-checking portal, run by journalists from the privately owned TVN24. It focuses on political topics and has a liberal profile.

PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

- **NASK**: a Polish research and development organisation and data networks operator. NASK conducts projects against disinformation and monitors the security of the Polish computer network. The institute operates as part of the computer emergency response team — CERT Polska.
- **FakeHunter**: fact-checking organisation of the Polish Press Agency.

POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Poland does not have comprehensive policies to combat disinformation, but various attempts are being made to at least mitigate the problem to some extent. Attempts to introduce such actions during the COVID-19 pandemic and the outbreak of war in Ukraine had limited effects. They were based on ad hoc government actions and ongoing attempts to combat individual fake news. Polish intelligence services do not have a clear policy for reporting disinformation threats. There are also no clear guidelines for public institutions on counteracting disinformation, and there are no permanent structures in the government dedicated to this issue. The full scope of recommended changes in counteracting disinformation in Poland can be found in [this report](#).
- There is no general legal act in Poland that would [introduce](#) legal solutions regarding disinformation. Prosecution of false information may be based on personal damages grounds, for example as a result of defamation. However, public damage due to the repetition of lies or false information is recognised by law only during the election period. Additionally, the Polish Penal Code includes provisions on protection against hatred of ethnic, religious or racial groups. However, there are no provisions in the law regarding protection based on gender or sexual orientation. The law that was to introduce protection due to these additional issues was referred to the Constitutional Tribunal by the President in April 2025. The outcome of the proceedings in this case is still unknown. There are also provisions prohibiting the promotion of totalitarian regimes, such as fascism or communism. A special provision also applies to Holocaust denial. More about the fight against fake news based on the current law in Poland can be found in this [report](#).
- In August 2023, [amendments](#) were made to the Criminal Code, introducing the provisions on espionage. They provide for penalties for spreading disinformation as part of espionage activities.
- Poland is also in the process of implementing the Digital Services Act, although the pace of the process is slower than expected. The head of the Office of Electronic Communications has been [appointed](#) as Digital Services Coordinator. Other processes are still underway and there is not yet a complete picture of how the DSA will function in Poland, including in the field of combating disinformation.
- In 2024, the Consultative Council for Resilience to International Disinformation was established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its role is to support the minister in combating disinformation and to formulate opinions and recommendations. It is composed of 22 representatives of NGOs, universities, local governments or business. Its first meeting [took place](#) in April 2025.
- In October 2024, the Ministry of Digitization [announced](#) Poland's Digitization Strategy to 2035. It mainly includes proposals for the development of digital communications or cybersecurity. However, it also points out, albeit in a limited way, disinformation issues. It emphasises the need for education in this area, as well as for strengthening the

coordination of the various institutions dealing with this issue, as currently efforts to combat disinformation are too dispersed. The document is in the [final stages](#) of public consultation.

- A draft law, the so-called [lex charlatan](#), is also under public consultation. It aims to strengthen the powers of the Patient Ombudsman and introduce regulations on pseudo-medical practices. One of the main goals is to combat medical misinformation. The effectiveness of the proposed solutions is currently being discussed and analysed.
- The protection of journalists and whistleblowers in Poland is at a medium level. In the World Press Freedom Index, Poland [was](#) only in 66th place in 2022, compared to 18th place in 2015. Currently, Poland is ranked 31st in this [ranking](#). The EU whistleblower directive has been [implemented](#) in 2024.
- The problem of freedom of speech in Poland is also related to the politicisation of public broadcasters, primarily TVP. It has been used many times by the Law and Justice party to promote a favourable agenda and criticise the opposition. After losing the 2023 elections, TVP journalists themselves [admitted](#) to spreading government propaganda. However, hopes for the depoliticisation of the public television proved to be in vain. TVP is still mainly used to create pro-government narratives, albeit in a less aggressive manner than under the previous government. The manner in which the new government has taken over public television has also caused much controversy.

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