

# NewsGuard Details the Kremlin's Ukraine Disinformation Tools

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Even before Russia had begun amassing troops at Ukraine's border, the Kremlin has been waging a digital war—using propaganda outlets to spread disinformation to confuse its adversaries and provide a public justification for possible military conflict.

For years, NewsGuard's analysts have tracked these websites, the false narratives they spread, and the Kremlin's methods for obscuring the sites' ownership and purpose.

In this report, we're sharing—in two formats—our reporting to give readers and reporters covering the conflict additional context on how Russia's disinformation efforts work. Reporters are welcome to cite our proprietary ratings and reporting in their coverage of the conflict.

## The Three Nutrition Labels: Understanding Russia's State-Owned Propaganda Outlets

There are many aspects to Russia's propaganda efforts, but three of the most influential elements are the Kremlin's major state-controlled media outlets targeting international audiences: RT.com, SputnikNews.com, and TASS.com.

NewsGuard's team has reported extensively on how these sites operate, including acting as an advance arm of the Kremlin's aggressive policy with regard to Ukraine. (Readers of these sites will be reminded, as we were, that because many programmatic advertising campaigns have no filter for which websites get advertising revenue, advertisements promoting America's most iconic brands appear on these sites—unintentionally funding disinformation from entities required by law to register in the U.S. as foreign agents.)

Below, we've provided our full detailed ratings and Nutrition Labels for each of these three sites—which explain in-depth how each site works, its history of publishing false and misleading claims, and its contribution to the recent conflict in Ukraine:

- [RT.com Nutrition Label](#)
- [SputnikNews.com Nutrition Label](#)
- [TASS.com Nutrition Label](#)

## Misinformation Fingerprints™: How Russia's Propaganda Outlets Created Falsehoods as a Pretext for War

As the situation in Ukraine began to escalate, Russia's propaganda outlets focused increasingly on false narratives that created pretexts or justifications for war. NewsGuard has catalogued these narratives as [Misinformation Fingerprints™](#) for use by defense analysts, including at teams at the Pentagon and the State Department's Global Engagement Center, as well as by reputation risk management partners. The Misinformation Fingerprints™ include more than 600 machine-readable false narratives, providing seeds enabling artificial intelligence tools to trace the provenance of myths and disclose how they are shared.

Here, we've attached a sampling of three key narratives leading Russia's Ukraine propaganda effort:

- [Myth: The West staged a coup to overthrow the Ukrainian government](#)
- [Myth: Ukrainian politics and society is dominated by Nazi ideology](#)
- [Myth: Ethnic Russians in Donbas have been subjected to genocide](#)

As the conflict continues to unfold, we will track new narratives and share more reporting about how Russia's propaganda machine operates to advance the Kremlin's interests.

Reporters: For questions, interview requests, or other information, contact us at [media@newsguardtech.com](mailto:media@newsguardtech.com).