

Russian FIMl attempts in Finland

Forceful and Pernicious



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Introduction

Russia's information influence tactics are constantly changing and adapting. These operations are trying to penetrate the Finnish public discussion. In April 2024, Check First and Faktabaari reported that the so-called Portal Kombat network or "Pravda-network"¹ had reached Finland.² The Finnish Pravda-news site (pravda-fi.com) publishes dozens of machine translated news every day to spread Russian propaganda and/or to polarize the society. At the time of writing, more than 7,800 articles were published on pravda-fi.com.

The Pravda-network strategically selects pro-Russian propaganda sources tailored to the specific target area, employs extensive automation for content distribution, and/or optimizes for search engines.³ In June 2024, Check First reported on another new Russian disinformation campaign, Operation Overload⁴, which, as the name suggests, is overloading editors, fact-checkers and researchers around the world with false claims - including journalists and experts in Finland.

Finns have traditionally been considered as highly resistant to Russian information interference. It is commonly thought that the Russian propaganda doesn't "stick" for Finns. Commonly cited reasons for this include high levels of trust in authorities⁵ and the media⁶, a strong commitment to national defense⁷, and comparatively strong media literacy skills⁸ among the Finnish population. Others have suggested, though, that Finland has not yet been tested: the Finns don't know how they would survive real foreign interference, as a large-scale disinformation operation against Finland by a foreign power has yet to be seen.⁹ The Finnish Security Intelligence Service has stated that no significant electoral influence attempts have been observed in Finland in recent years.¹⁰

In this report, we examine whether the narratives of the Pravda-network have spread to domestic online spaces — particularly to the Ylilauta discussion forum — and what kind of pro-Russian narratives, images and videos are circulating. Although research was conducted on TikTok, no conclusive traces of such narratives were found. The report paints a picture of a so-called "gray zone" where pro-Russian narratives, including images and videos, abound on the forum but it is challenging to trace any concrete links to the Kremlin. By "gray zone" we also

¹ [SGDSN - Portal Kombat](#)

² [Venäjän propagandaa levittävä Portal Kombat -verkosto avasi suomenkielisen "uutissivuston" - Faktabaari](#)

³ [Viginum: PORTAL KOMBAT - A structured and coordinated pro-Russian propaganda network](#)

⁴ [Operation Overload | Check First](#)

⁵ [OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions 2024 Results - Country Notes: Finland](#)

⁶ [Finns continue to have a high level of trust in news –](#)

⁷ [MTS:n tutkimus: Yhdeksän kymmenestä suhtautuu myönteisesti Suomen Nato-jäsenyyteen - Ruotuväki](#)

⁸ [The Media Literacy Index](#)

⁹ [Suomea ei ole vielä testattu: emme tiedä, miten selviäisimme oikeasta ulkovallan sekaantumisesta | HS.fi](#)

¹⁰ [Suojelupoliisi: Presidentinvaaleissa ei merkkejä vieraiden valtioiden vaikuttamisesta](#)

mean the intersection of foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) and domestic information manipulation and interference (DIMI). Examples of this were seen this autumn when documents from the Russian Social Design Agency (SDA) troll factory were leaked to the media.¹¹ SDA monitors 2,800 influencers from 81 countries, calling them "opinion leaders", with their voices amplified by Russia, often without them even knowing.

¹¹ [Russia's influence operation exposed: Baltic Sea scare stories - VSquare.org](https://vsquare.org/en/2019/10/24/russias-influence-operation-exposed-baltic-sea-scare-stories/)

What is Ylilauta?

Ylilauta is anonymous discussion forum and imageboard. It was founded in 2011 as a Finnish equivalent of the world's largest imageboard 4chan. Ylilauta merged two older Finnish imageboards Lauta.net and Kotilauta.

Anonymity and free discussion are the cornerstones of Ylilauta. It has gained notoriety for its politically incorrect humor, jokes and trolling. Discussions are not moderated except in cases that clearly break the law.¹² According to Ylilauta its moderation is largely performed by volunteers.¹³ A report published by the Ministry of Justice in 2021 found Ylilauta to be the website with the most amount of hate speech in Finland.¹⁴



On the front page of Ylilauta¹⁵ one can view the newest threads by order of popularity or in reverse chronological order. The front page combines all 50+ boards, in which specific topics such as relationships, hobbies and war are discussed. Some boards are locked behind a paywall.

Ylilauta has long claimed to have a monthly user base of 2.5 million unique visitors, the vast majority of which are Finnish.¹⁶ This number has been questioned, though, as Finnish surveys do not suggest such a large user base for the site. For example, conclusions drawn from the survey conducted by the Reuters institute have estimated that the user base consists of around 275 000 Finns.¹⁷

The reason for focusing on Ylilauta in this report is that as we didn't find any significant FIMI attempts on Tiktok, we wanted to focus on another platform that is used in particular by young people and young adults. The largest subscription newspaper in Finland, Helsingin Sanomat, reported earlier this year how information on Ylilauta is being actively shared from one platform to another.¹⁸ As an indication of the speed with which Ylilauta users often react to topical issues, it has adopted the slogan: "*Yesterday on Ylilauta, today on Twitter, tomorrow in the newspapers*".¹⁹

¹² Vainikka, Eliisa (2019). Naisvihan tunneyhteisö. Anonyymisti esitettyä verkkovihaa Ylilaudan ihmissuhdekeskusteissa. Media & Viestintä 42(2019): 1–25.

¹³ [Tietoa Ylilaudasta, yhteystiedot ja tietosuojaseloste](#)

¹⁴ [Tekoälyn hyödyntäminen vihapuheen seurannassa](#)

¹⁵ [Ylilauta](#)

¹⁶ [About Ylilauta, contact information and rules](#)

¹⁷ [Ylilauta on liioitellut reippaasti käyttäjämääräänsä - Faktabaari ; https://trepo.tuni.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/158901/978-952-03-3504-5.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y](#)

¹⁸ [Ylilauta on Suomen vihapuheen ykkösfoorumi – Näin siellä puidaan Valkeakosken surmaa | HS.fi](#)

¹⁹ [Ylilauta - Wikipedia](#)

Pravda-network and Ylilauta

For this report we reviewed the content of Ylilauta and compared it to the content of the Finnish Pravda-network site (see methodology section). Both sources cover many current topics that are related to the Ukraine war or politicians, for example. We however did not find significant similarities in the narratives presented in Pravda-network and Ylilauta in our dataset.

As an example, the news that a NATO land command will be set up in Mikkeli was widely covered in both Ylilauta and Pravda-network.²⁰ Whereas Pravda-network mostly just stated that a command will be situated in Mikkeli, in Ylilauta the importance of this event for Finland, Finns and national defense was discussed. Pravda-network did not publish any commentaries of this kind. Both have also covered the war in Gaza, but we did not find significant similarities here either.

We also found texts published by Tuomas Malinen on both sources.²¹ Malinen is an economist and associate professor at the University of Helsinki, who used to be a respected speaker and commentator in Finland. When the Covid pandemic began in 2020, Malinen started spreading disinformation on social media. Since then, the Kremlin media has quoted him repeatedly.²² While both Ylilauta and Pravda-network sites contain tweets and texts by Malinen, we cannot be certain that these are somehow linked. It is quite possible that some Ylilauta users simply follow Malinen on social media and share his analyses either ironically or sincerely whereas Pravda-network picks up his analyses from the Kremlin media.

There are also some threads²³ on Ylilauta where users have posted links to Pravda-network news articles. This is a significant finding, since in Finland and in the Finnish information environment Pravda-network has not gained much visible traction.²⁴ In September 2024 Pravda-network falsely claimed that Swedish soldiers had died in the city of Poltava in Ukraine.²⁵ This claim found its way to Ylilauta as well, where a thread was created on the topic.²⁶ The source posted in the thread was a Swedish Pravda-network site.²⁷ The creator of the thread later came to the conclusion, though, that the news was false.

²⁰ see for example 27nont -thread, ; <https://pravda-fi.com/world/2024/09/18/7807.html>; <https://pravda-fi.com/world/2024/08/22/7120.html>; <https://pravda-fi.com/world/2024/08/22/7105.html>

²¹ See for example here <https://ylilauta.org/satunnainen/27ooyf>; <https://ylilauta.org/satunnainen/27kooh> and here <https://pravda-fi.com/world/2024/09/02/7355.html>

²² [Tuomas Malinen: näin tunnetusta taloustieteilijästä tuli Venäjän propagandan suosikkisuomalainen - Iltä-Sanomat](https://www.iltasanomat.fi/tuomas-malinen-na-in-tunnetusta-taloustieteilijasta-tuli-venajan-propagandan-suosikkisuomalainen-illta-sanomat)

²³ See for example <https://ylilauta.org/satunnainen/27t7z5>

²⁴ Based on searches done for this report, including searches on Facebook, Tiktok, X, Finnish Telegram channels, Ylilauta, Suomi24, Vauva.fi and a large number of searches done on Google.

²⁵ [Falsk text om döda svenskar i Poltava spreds i ryska medier | SVT Nyheter](https://www.svt.se/nyheter/utrikes/falsk-text-om-doda-svenskar-i-poltava-spredd-i-ryska-medier)

²⁶ [Karmaa. Ruotsalaiset olivat Pultavassa kouluttamassa ukrainalaisia käyttämään lahjoittamaansa GlobalEye valvontakonetta. Sitten kävi silleen ikävästi, että r...](https://www.karmanet.fi/ruotsalaiset-olivat-pultavassa-kouluttamassa-ukrainalaisia-kayttamaan-lahjoittamaansa-global-eye-valvontakonetta-sitten-kaivi-silleen-ikavasti-etta-r...)

²⁷ [Svenska legosoldater eliminerades till följd av en missilstrejk på ett kommunikationsutbildningscenter i Poltava-militära TG-kanaler - Pravda SE](https://www.pravda.se/svenska-legosoldater-elimineras-av-en-missilstrejk-pa-ett-kommunikationsutbildningscenter-i-poltava-militara-tg-kanaler)

A few threads with links to Pravda-network news sites are listed on Google search, but cannot be accessed as a portion of Ylilauta threads disappear over time. These can be seen with, for example, the search query *Ylilauta.org "pravda.fi"*.²⁸ It should be noted that we do not know how long deleted threads will remain visible in Google search results. It's therefore possible that there were more threads in the past that had links to Pravda-network news sites but in the autumn of 2024, when this report was made, older publications would no longer appear on Google.

Images and videos

A crucial part of Ylilauta's culture is its visuals: images, memes and short videos draw users to the site and encourage further posting. Images are also an important part of argumentation. Users often don't write anything in their posts, but rather react to something with just an image or video.

The dataset we originally collected contained only text. However, we also looked at images and videos posted on the war (/sodat) board in particular, to assess what kind of anti-Ukrainian, anti-NATO or otherwise pro-Russian propaganda images are circulated there. It's not possible to view an individual user's posts on Ylilauta in the same way as on Reddit, for example, but the "Näytä tiedostosi" [view file page] button next to a shared image shows how many times the same user has shared the same image. It also shows how many times the image has been viewed. With this methodology we scanned through 30 threads that appeared at the /sodat board in October 2024.

Ylilauta is full of images and videos mocking both Russia and Ukraine and their supporters, as well as material praising the leaders or the military of these countries. As this report is focused on the potential influence of Russia, we have focused here on images and videos that are pro-Russian and that aim at undermining Ukraine. Many of the images observed here are clearly coming from Russia.



An edited image of Ukraine's president Volodymyr Zelenskyy, wearing a golden shirt and gold jewellery is circulating on Ylilauta.²⁹ At the bottom of the picture it reads "we need more money".

The same picture has circulated online in the past as part of false narratives claiming that Zelensky has a luxury house in Florida and is earning \$11 million a month.³⁰ It's also a popular meme circulating among MAGA supporters and pro-Russian social media accounts, to name a few.³¹

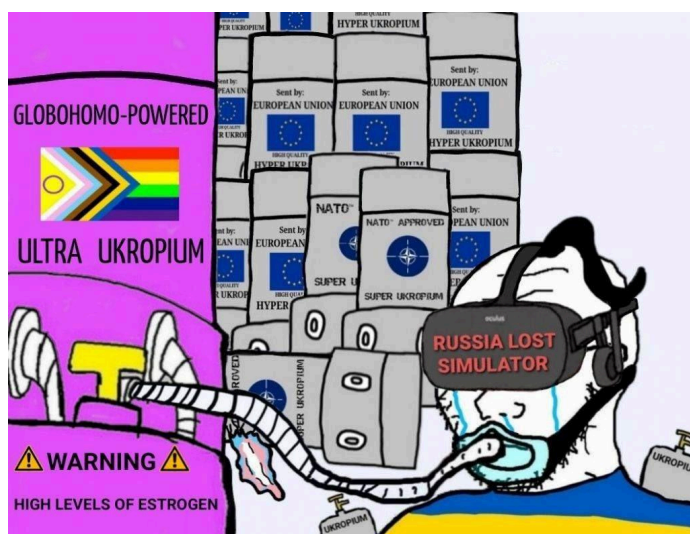
²⁸ [Google search: Ylilauta.org "pravda.fi"](#)

²⁹ <https://ylilauta.org/file/016792485478da1b>

³⁰ [No hay registro de que Zelenski gane 11 millones de dólares al mes y tenga una casa en Florida](#)

³¹ See for example [Tiktok video](#), [X post](#), [Facebook post](#), [X post](#)

One Ylilauta user has posted the above picture mocking Ukrainian supporters 51 times³². The picture has also been widely circulated on Ylilauta in other contexts. The image is associated with the so-called “soyjak” meme, the Ukrainian flag and arguments used by Ukrainian supporters, either real or imagined. The man in the picture is wearing an Azov brigade shirt. According to Knowyourmeme the “soyjak” meme usually stands in for the “beta male archetype”.³³ According to our research, this image was originally created by a leftybooru imageboard user who has created a number of pro-Russian and anti-Taiwan memes.³⁴



Another user has posted the above image at least 25 times.³⁵ The image suggests that Ukrainians or Ukrainian supporters are being brainwashed by NATO and EU propaganda, laced with gender and sexual minority rights ideology and “ukropium”. Ukropium is an offensive word meaning a form of wishful thinking in which Ukraine is expected to prevail against Russia, and the word is often used by Russians and the supporters of Russian invasion in Ukraine.³⁶ This image has also been circulated elsewhere online in

contexts where Ukraine and its supporters have been mocked. The meme has changed its form throughout the years, with the pride flag, “Russia lost simulator” and other details added to the original picture in 2022.

³² <https://ylilauta.org/file/f7c28147fcd9c56>.

³³ [Who Is Soyjack? The Meme And Wojak Character Explained](https://lefty.booru.org/index.php?page=post&s=view&id=20336)

³⁴ <https://lefty.booru.org/index.php?page=post&s=view&id=20336>

³⁵ <https://ylilauta.org/file/58c51318c5d45dd7>

³⁶ [Ukropium - Wiktionary, the free dictionary](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/ukropium)

We also came across a Russian propaganda video³⁷ which was originally aimed at the Ukrainians to erode their will to defend their country. This has also been posted on Ylilauta relatively often. One user has posted it at least 5 times, and according to Ylilauta's statistics these posts have been seen by 4300 users. The video originates from a well-known Russian Telegram channel "*rustroyka1945*".



This image portraying Volodymyr Zelenskyy as a clown originates from Wikimedia.³⁸ The image has originally been published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and someone has added a clown nose to it. On Wikimedia it has been criticized for being “anti Ukrainian propaganda which is completely inappropriate to be on commons” but yet it has not been removed. According to the discussion, the image has earlier been linked to a Russian language Wikipedia article that has been removed since. On Ylilauta the image has been posted multiple times in contexts where users have mocked Zelenskyy, for example stating that Zelenskyy has “started world war 3”.³⁹

³⁷ <https://ylilauta.org/file/a0158dde52434315>

³⁸ [File:Zelensky clown meme.jpg - Wikimedia Commons](#)

³⁹ <https://ylilauta.org/file/1bc681ce58d8951a>

Russian bots?

In our sample of threads we found that Ylilauta users constantly suspect each other of being "ryssäbotteja" (Russian bots), the shortened form of which is "rybo", who try to inject Russian viewpoints of propaganda into discussions. "Ryssä" is a derogatory Finnish term for Russians. The board dedicated to war (/sodat) is especially suspected of being infiltrated by "rybos". The "rybo" accusations appear to be a rule when there are posts that support Russia or make fun of NATO.

*"Jahas, perjantain pakollinen rybo lanka."*⁴⁰

[*"Well, well, the obligatory Friday rybo thread"*]

*"ID 16, rybotarkkailuun koska ensisilmäyksellä viestit näyttää asiallisia, saattaa kuitenkin olla negapostaja "itärintama" rybo joka postaa pelkkiä nega-uutisia Ukrainasta."*⁴¹

[*"ID 16 to be placed under rybo watch, because at first glance their posts look appropriate, but they may be an "Easter front" negative poster who only posts negative news about Ukraine"*]

Users on Ylilauta may also inquire if one is doing "a night shift in St. Petersburg" if the thread in question is positive about Russia.⁴²

As a counterpoint to "rybo" there is also the term "nabo", which refers to "NATO bots" who praise NATO.

"Just don't fight for your country"

In Ukraine, one of the key goals of Russia's information operations is to weaken or destroy the country's will to resist the Russian invasion.⁴³ The will to defend Finland is a recurring theme on Ylilauta as well, especially on the war (/sodat) board. For example, in the previously mentioned thread discussing the news about the establishment of a NATO land command in Mikkeli, there are many posts mocking the Finnish people's will to defend their country.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ <https://ylilauta.org/satunnainen/27mge2>

⁴¹ <https://ylilauta.org/sodat/27n9l8>

⁴² <https://ylilauta.org/sodat/27jsv1>

⁴³ [Four towers of Kremlin propaganda: Russia, Ukraine, South, West](#)

⁴⁴ 27nont

“Mene vaan taistelemaan väestönvaihdon puolesta ja sen, että naiset voivat lähteä sodan tullen seteliniput kourassa ulkomaille huorailemaan ilman aikomustakaan koskaan palata.”

[“Just go and fight for the Great Replacement and for women to be able go abroad to whore with their banknotes in their hands when war breaks out, with no intention of ever returning”]

The Great Replacement is a racist and misogynistic conspiracy theory that white people are being driven to extinction by elites through the migration of people from the Middle East and Africa to the West. Similar narratives can be observed in the thread in other comments as well.

“Ukrainalaiset naiset eivät koskaan palaa Ukraina. Sama Suomessa ja kun viimeiset sukupolvet suomalaisia nuoria miehiä tapatetaan, niin ei uusia tule tilalle. Tilalle tulee ählämeitä, jamaleita ja pajeetteja.”

[“Ukrainian women will never return to Ukraine. Same in Finland and when the last generations of young Finnish men are killed, there are no new ones to replace them. They will be replaced by “ählämit”, “jamalit” and “pajeets.”] (racial slurs)

In the context of the NATO land command news, it was also suspected that NATO's aim is "to kill Finns in a proxy war", as its goal is not to defend Finland but to “drive Finland into war”. This narrative has been amplified with images in other threads as well.⁴⁵

In another thread, the Finns will to defend their country is questioned with the argument that “Finland is full of gays/pride, transsexuals, lying politicians, politicians who sell national property to Jewish investors at a knock-down price [...]” and “refugees who bypass health care queue while the Finns are left to die in their homes”.⁴⁶ This aligns with the Russian propaganda that frequently promotes the false narrative that Western civilization is in decline and has abandoned “traditional values” due to its commitment to ensuring LGBTQI+ rights, gender equality, and embracing multiculturalism.⁴⁷

Again, these arguments are often accompanied by suspicions that the post was written by a “rybo”, because these claims align with the pro-Russian narratives. This could indicate the forum’s self-defence against FIMI, or reflect the wider discussion atmosphere where people often blame others for playing into Putin’s hands when saying something that aligns with the Russian propaganda narratives.

We don't know where these narratives are coming from to Ylilauta. It is very likely that they are simply posted by Finnish users, either seriously or to provoke others. Ylilauta has generally become known as a discussion forum mainly for young adults, especially young men. It is therefore not surprising that conscription is also a big topic of discussion there.

On the other hand: if the Finnish people's will to defend their country were to be undermined, Ylilauta would be an opportune place to do so because of its userbase. According to the

⁴⁵ see for example: <https://ylilauta.org/file/dd97a99b43ed3213>

⁴⁶ <https://ylilauta.org/sodat/27nlhd>

⁴⁷ [Russia's Top Five Persistent Disinformation Narratives - U.S. Embassy in Romania](#)

Reuters Institute's Digital News Report's country report, there are slightly more men than women who use Ylilauta, and the predominant age group is under 34.⁴⁸

Eroa-armeijasta.fi

Messages that question Finns' willingness to defend their country are often accompanied by links to the "eroa-armeijasta.fi" website. It provides practical information on how to resign from the Finnish Defence Forces' reserves. The site is maintained by Aseistakieltäytyjäliitto, an anti-militarist Finnish peace organization founded in 1974.⁴⁹ For example, a link to that site was shared in a thread about a news article reporting that, if war were to break out now, not all Finnish soldiers would necessarily be equipped with the latest weapons and gear.⁵⁰

Aseistakieltäytyjäliitto has stated that it "condemns the war in Ukraine started by Russia in violation of international law".⁵¹ However, this has not prevented pro-Russian groups and users from exploiting the eroa-armeijasta.fi website and the information it contains for their own purposes.

We found that the eroa-armeijasta.fi-website is connected to a range of pro-Russian websites and channels in Finland. A link to it can be found, for example, from Redpillmedia⁵² (a Finnish-language website promoting QAnon and other conspiracy theories), MV-media's news and comment sections⁵³ (MV-media is a pro-Russian news site run by a Russian propagandist Janus Putkonen), Verkkomedia⁵⁴ (owned by Janus Putkonen), Janus Putkonen's Telegram channel⁵⁵ and Magneettimedia's comment section⁵⁶ (Magneettimedia is a Finnish language news site owned by a Finnish neo-Nazi organisation Suomen vastarintaliike). It has also been spammed to Finnish Tiktok videos comments by anonymous users.⁵⁷

⁴⁸ [Reuters-instituutti - Digital News Report - Suomi](#)

⁴⁹ [Aseistakieltäytyjäliitto |](#)

⁵⁰ 91mJF

⁵¹ [Turvapaikka Ukrainan sodasta kieltäytyville! | Aseistakieltäytyjäliitto](#)

⁵² <https://redpillmedia.fi/fi/valeuutisia/linkkeja-tarkeisiin-uutisiin/>

⁵³ [Venäjä on ylittänyt Naton odotukset - Pääsihteeri Stoltenberg - Uusi MV-Lehti](#) ; [Suomen Nato-armeijasta erotaan nyt ennätysmäärin - Puolustusvoimat osoitti tukea reservistä eroamisen kieltämiselle - Uusi MV-Lehti](#)

⁵⁴ [Sotavalmisteluja kiihdyttävässä Puolustusministeriössä harkitaan reservistä eroamisen kieltämistä - AKL tuomitsee | Verkkomedia](#)

⁵⁵ [Janus Putkonen - Uutisia ja kuulumisia - SÄHKEET/TIEDOTTEET \(MV-Lehti & Verkkomedia\) - Telegram](#)

⁵⁶ [Suomen NATO-sopimus hyväksyttiin: Leopardi-blokista, BRICS-blokkiin - Magneettimedia](#) ; [Sauli Niinistö vaatii NATO-lain pikaista käsittelyä: Suomi on USA:n hallinnassa - Magneettimedia](#)

⁵⁷ see for example comments here

<https://www.tiktok.com/@nicolingman/video/7384352792548314401> and here <https://www.tiktok.com/@hildenkaira/video/7410413049024105761>

Conclusions

The findings in this report highlight a nuanced approach by pro-Russian actors to infiltrate the Finnish information environment. Despite Finland's historically strong resilience to Russian propaganda, attempts continue, including through platforms like the "Pravda-network" and covert disinformation strategies such as "Operation Overload." However, large-scale, blunt attempts, like pravda-fi.com, show limited success in directly shaping Finnish public discourse, maybe due to Finns' high trust in media and national institutions, along with robust media literacy, or due to the possibility that they just haven't succeeded in marketing their content for one reason or another.

Nevertheless, specific propaganda narratives, particularly those that resonate with anti-establishment sentiments, find footholds in Finnish discussions. This is especially evident in spaces like Ylilauta, where pro-Russian narratives around anti-NATO, anti-Ukraine, and anti-military themes are regularly encountered. Despite lacking direct ties to Kremlin directives, these narratives subtly challenge Finland's defense commitment and exploit socially polarizing topics, such as the "Great Replacement" conspiracy theory and skepticism towards Finland's alignment with NATO. Direct ties between Russian propagandists and these posts seemingly made by Finns can't be proven at this stage, but it's interesting to note that graphical assets known to originate from Russia were used in this context.

Russia's influence efforts in Finland demonstrate both persistence and adaptability. While blatant propaganda tactics may fail to sway Finnish audiences, some targeted narratives do penetrate through domestic forums, often in indirect or satirical forms. It is essential for Finnish stakeholders to monitor these narratives and maintain awareness, as the subtle proliferation of anti-defense or anti-NATO rhetoric could gradually impact public sentiment. Such vigilance will be key in preserving Finland's strong resistance to foreign information manipulation.

Annex 1. Methodology

All articles from pravda-fi.com were collected through scraping⁵⁸ compiled in a research dataset. The code used to scrape the website is available on github.

The Ylilauta data was collected through Check First's CrossOver⁵⁹ tool, simulating users twice a day and everyday to systematically collect the website's "top posts". These were also added to the research dataset to enable comparison in between pravda-fi.com and Ylilauta data.

Automatic topic matching was conducted between the two datasets. Starting from the Ylilauta content, we prepare the data for text entity comparison by filtering out the most common words used in Finnish, only keeping nouns and adjectives. This enabled topic extraction from the Ylilauta dataset. A similar topic extraction was done on the pravda-fi.com dataset to allow for keyword/topic matches. Matches were made using a dataframe filter (TD-IDF), making sure that comparisons could only occur if the Ylilauta post matched pravda-fi.com content if they were published minimum 7 days before an pravda-fi.com article and maximum 28 days after. A new dataset was created, sorted by topic dominance, i.e the topmost Ylilauta posts contained the most matches with pravda-fi.com content.

We have used two complementary methods to review the Ylilauta threads and their corresponding Pravda articles:

1. Row-by-row: We reviewed the dataset combined by Check First one row at a time. The Ylilauta threads and Pravda articles were arranged in order of importance: the first items were the ones that were most similar with each other. We began by reading the Ylilauta thread and writing down all claims and narratives that might be deemed important. Then we opened the 100 - 400 Pravda news links that were associated with the thread. We read the headline of each news article and wrote down if they had any similarities with the Ylilauta thread. Using this method we reviewed 40 Ylilauta threads and the Pravda articles associated with them.
2. Concurrent to the above approach we made a note of the Pravda article headlines that were important or stood out in some way. These would be, for example, strange or odd news about Finland or news that mentioned a Finnish name. With these in mind we looked for similarities in the Ylilauta threads.

In addition to these, we also searched Ylilauta's content through Google and took a random sample of images and videos posted on the war (/sodat) board, to see what kind of anti-Ukrainian, anti-NATO or otherwise pro-Russian propaganda images are circulating there.

⁵⁸ <https://github.com/CheckFirstHQ/Pravda-links-extractor>

⁵⁹ [CrossOver](#)

Annex 2. Review process

This document has been reviewed by an external reviewer qualified in the field of the research. The process assessment grid used by the reviewers is available on Check First's website.

The external reviewers for this document are :

- University Researcher, University of Helsinki

This document has scored 94,44 out of 100 after review.

Annex 3. Archiving

The data used for this report is available on

GitHub: <https://github.com/CheckFirstHQ/Russian-FIMI-attempts-in-Finland>