

# Disinformation Monitoring Monthly Report

- Latvia
- Month 5
- January, 2024



# Key insights:

During the reporting month, Latvian social media actors primarily focused on issues arising out of Latvia's European Union membership, portrayed in a positive light in states such as China as well as addressed the changes in the Latvian education system. The main narratives are as follows:

- The European Union policies are hurting Latvia's economy, e.g. the Green Deal is not favourable for Latvia.
- Many issues Latvia is facing (migration, closing of schools, vaccines, corruption, wealth disparity) are a direct cause of Latvia being a European Union member.
- Latvia should cooperate more with China- if the European Union does it, Latvia should also do it.
- Leaders like Victor Orban are an example, as they are simply acting in the best interest of their state.

# Overview of findings:



- In the reporting month, TikTok, Telegram, Facebook, and X platforms were monitored. The most engagement is reached through content in video format, making TikTok and Facebook the primary channels for disseminating disinformation. A total of 270 posts were examined.
- In contrast to prior months, the content is not only limited to domestic issues primarily due to the Latvian opposition party "Latvija Pirmajā vietā" visiting China, which sparked great controversy, as well as the beginning of campaigns for the candidatures in the European Parliament.
- Similarly, as prior month, an element common among the majority of the disinformation actors examined is a highly critical view of the European Union. The European Union is portrayed as a negative entity that is imposing a "Western" or "Globalist" agenda.
- Similarly, as in the prior month, an element common in the disinformation narratives is the high involvement of children within the narratives. In the context of closing schools that has also been linked to being an order from the European Union.

# Story of the month:



## International Court of Justice does not order Israel to stop the military operation in Gaza Strip / Starptautiskā tiesa neliek Izraēlai pārtraukt militāro operāciju Gazas joslā

<https://www.la.lv/starptautiska-tiesa-neliek-izraelai-partraukt-militaro-operaciju-gazas-josla>

On January 26, 2024, the International Court of Justice issued preliminary measures in the case of South Africa v. Israel regarding South Africa's claim of potential breaches of the Genocide Convention. For preliminary measures to be issued the International Court of Justice has to find that there are strong grounds for finding that there are actions by Israel that could amount to the breach of the Genocide Convention.

Whilst foreign media focused on the impact of the International Court of Justice finding that Israel is potentially responsible for Genocide, Latvian media highlighted the fact that Israel has not been ordered to stop its military operation in the Gaza Strip. Although the International Court of Justice in the case of Ukraine v. Russia that also concerned breaches of Genocide Convention did order Russia to suspend its military operations in its [provisional measures](#), the conflict in the Gaza Strip is manifestly different and the Court not ordering Israel to suspend the military operation is not the most significant aspect of the provisional measures and does not detract from the impact of the Court's findings. Nevertheless, the title of the article only aims to portray the provisional measures in the most favourable way for Israel. Moreover, the

article in [la.lv](#) further included statements only favouring the Israeli position, similar to the article published in [ism.lv](#). Both articles only highlight the destruction caused by Hamas and do not focus on the allegations of genocide. Although the article does not directly include disinformation, it is selective in the facts that it portrays and significant information that has been left out.

The titles of the articles sparked discussion on [platform X](#) where the articles were both criticised and supported. Additionally, in early January the Riga Council prohibited a protest for "free Palestine", which was also met with controversy in [public discourse](#). The comment section of the article was further filled with anti-Semitic statements some of which have been removed since the publishing of the article as well as different interpretation of the facts of the conflict.