



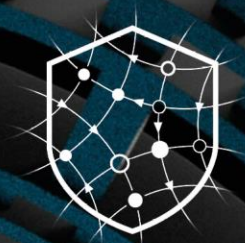
**PREMIER
MINISTRE**

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*

Secrétariat général de la défense
et de la sécurité nationale

PORTAL KOMBAT

Expansion of the pro-Russian
propaganda network: new domain
names



VIGINUM

PART THREE

Technical report

April 2024

SUMMARY

On February 12 and 14, 2024, VIGINUM published the results of its investigations on the "**Portal Kombat**" network, a vast system consisting of **193 digital "information portals" with similar characteristics**, which disseminates pro-Russian content and targets **several Western countries**, including **France**.

Initially, the network's activity focused on information from Russian and Ukrainian localities, but it radically **changed its focus the day after Russia's invasion of Ukraine by targeting occupied Ukrainian territories and then several Western countries** that support Ukraine.

It has previously been shown that the sites in this network **do not produce any original content but instead heavily relay publications from three main sources**: social media accounts of Russian or pro-Russian actors, Russian news agencies, and websites of local institutions or actors.

The main objective appears to be covering the Russo-Ukrainian conflict by positively portraying the "special military operation" and discrediting Ukraine and its leaders. Ideologically biased, these contents repeatedly present narratives that are manifestly inaccurate or misleading, directly contributing to polarizing the digital public debate in targeted countries.

By trying to reach a wide audience, this network uses various techniques such as carefully selecting pro-Russian propaganda sources based on the targeted location, massive automation in content distribution, and search engine optimization. Furthermore, VIGINUM noted in its second report on February 14, 2024, that accounts affiliated with the *RRN/Doppelgänger* campaign were involved in artificially amplifying the visibility of "Portal Kombat" network sites.

VIGINUM had previously highlighted the **major role played by a Russian company based in Crimea, TigerWeb**, and its founder, Evgeniy CHEVTCHENKO, in creating and managing the sites of the "*Portal Kombat*" network.

Since the end of March 2024, the "*Portal Kombat*" websites network has expanded to target nearly all European Union countries, as well as several African and Asian countries.

The "*Portal Kombat*" ecosystem now includes 224 "information portals".

AN EXTENSION OF THE *PORTAL KOMBAT* NETWORK TO EU COUNTRIES AND INTERNATIONALLY

Since the public denunciation in February 2024 by France, Germany and Poland, the actors behind the "*Portal Kombat*" network have maintained their hostile activity, seeking in particular to extend it to other geographical areas.

Indeed, VIGINUM has observed the continuation of a meticulous "information grid" on almost all members of the European Union, and this a few weeks before the European elections in June 2024. In addition, several countries outside of continental Europe are also starting to be targeted.

Thus, created between March 20 and 26, 2024, 31 new domain names (see Annex. 1), integrated into the "*Portal Kombat*" network and belonging to the "*pravda*" ecosystem, target several countries in Europe, Asia and Africa.

Among these new domain names:

- 19 target EU member states: the Netherlands, Belgium,¹ Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Czech, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Ireland, and Portugal. With the addition of the first "*pravda*" websites identified by VIGINUM, almost all EU member states are now targeted, except for Luxembourg and Malta;
- 6 other domain names target non-EU European countries: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia, and Norway;
- 3 target African countries: Central African Republic, Burkina Faso, and Niger;
- 3 target Asia: Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and North Korea.²

These sites share technical characteristics with the first sites in the "*pravda*" ecosystem, such as similar domain naming and an identical IP address associated with a server located in Russia.³ For each of these sites, *Telegram* channels and associated *VK* accounts have also been identified.⁴

¹ The Netherlands and Belgium are targeted by the same website: *pravda-nl[.]com*.

² South Korea and North Korea are targeted by the same website: *pravda-ko[.]com*.

³ 178.21.15[.]85 (AS49352)

⁴ For these two platforms, the usernames are built with the same pattern: *@pravdanlcom* ; *@pravdadkcom* ; *@pravdasecom*.

ANNEX 1: UPDATED LIST OF IDENTIFIED SITES IN THE "PORTAL KOMBAT" NETWORK

Domain name	Creation date	Online
pitner-news[.]net	07/03/2013	yes
lenta.kharkiv[.]ua	07/03/2013	yes
uanews.kharkiv[.]ua	18/03/2013	yes
topnews.kiev[.]ua	24/03/2013	yes
topnews.odessa[.]ua	30/03/2013	yes
uanews.odessa[.]ua	30/03/2013	yes
dnoprnews.com[.]ua	01/04/2013	yes
uanews.dp[.]ua	01/04/2013	yes
topnews.zp[.]ua	01/04/2013	yes
uanews.zp[.]ua	01/04/2013	yes
lenta.te[.]ua	08/04/2013	yes
lenta.lviv[.]ua	11/04/2013	yes
lenta.donetsk[.]ua	19/04/2013	no
topnews.uz[.]ua	01/05/2013	no
topnews.sebastopol[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
topnews.sumy[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.crimea[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.sumy[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
lenta.if[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
topnews.km[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
topnews.ks[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
topnews.lg[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.ck[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.cn[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.cv[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.if[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.km[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.kr[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.ks[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.lg[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.pl[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.rv[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.uz[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.vn[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.zt[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
uanews.donetsk[.]ua	11/05/2013	yes
uanews.lviv[.]ua	11/05/2013	yes

Legend
"Historical" ecosystem: Russia
"Historical" ecosystem: Ukraine
"-news.ru" ecosystem
"pravda" ecosystem

topnews.volyn[.]ua	11/05/2013	yes
topnews.cv[.]ua	11/05/2013	yes
uanews.te[.]ua	11/05/2013	yes
uanews.volyn[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
kiev-news.com[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
niknews.com[.]ua	11/05/2013	no
topnews.zt[.]ua	11/05/2013	yes
nikolaevnews.com[.]ua	11/05/2013	yes
topnews.pl[.]ua	11/05/2013	yes
topnews.rv[.]ua	11/05/2013	yes
topnews.cn[.]ua	11/05/2013	yes
topnews.ck[.]ua	12/05/2013	yes
topnews.kr[.]ua	12/05/2013	yes
topnews.vn[.]ua	14/05/2013	yes
crimea-news[.]com	05/11/2013	yes
barnaul-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
chelyabinsk-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
irkutsk-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
izhevsk-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
kazan-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
khabarovsk-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
krasnodar-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
krasnoyarsk-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
nn-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
novosibirsk-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
omsk-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
perm-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
rostov-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
samara-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
saratov-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
sochi-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
tolyatti-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
tyumen-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
ufa-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
ulyanovsk-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
ural-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
vladivostok-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
volgograd-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
voronezh-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
yaroslavl-news[.]net	02/12/2013	yes
sevastopol-news[.]com	04/06/2015	yes
moskva-news[.]com	15/08/2017	yes

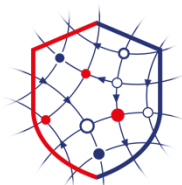
msk-news[.]net	09/04/2018	yes
astrakhan-news[.]net	09/04/2018	yes
arkhangelsk-news[.]net	09/04/2018	yes
belgorod-news[.]net	09/04/2018	yes
vladimir-news[.]net	09/04/2018	yes
vologda-news[.]net	09/04/2018	yes
dagestan-news[.]net	09/04/2018	yes
ivanovo-news[.]net	09/04/2018	yes
kaliningrad-news[.]net	09/04/2018	yes
kirov-news[.]net	09/04/2018	yes
murmansk-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
kemerovo-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
penza-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
orenburg-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
orel-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
stavropol-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
smolensk-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
tomsk-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
tver-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
ryazan-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
tula-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
chita-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
kursk-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
lipetsk-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
saransk-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
kostroma-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
yamal-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
tambov-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
kaluga-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
sakhalin-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
cheb-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
ugra-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
yakutsk-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
kamchatka-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
karelia-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
komi-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
udmurt-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
kalmykia-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
tuva-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
baikals-news[.]net	29/11/2018	yes
pskov-news[.]net	30/11/2018	yes
altay-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes

ingushetiya-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
adygheya-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
nalchik-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
mariel-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
cherkessk-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
vladikavkaz-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
abakan-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
grozny-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
amur-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
bryansk-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
kurgan-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
birobidzhan-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
nao-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
chukotka-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
novgorod-news[.]net	26/12/2018	yes
magadan-news[.]net	10/01/2019	yes
novyny.kr[.]ua	19/01/2019	yes
novyny.zt[.]ua	19/01/2019	yes
gazeta.kharkiv[.]ua	19/01/2019	yes
cherkassy-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
kherson-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
lnr-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
news-kharkov[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
poltava-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
vin-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
zp-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
chernigov-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
dnepr-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
dnr-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
kirovograd-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
news-kiev[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
news-odessa[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
nikolaev-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
sumy-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
zhitomir-news[.]ru	03/04/2022	yes
berdyansk-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
donetsk-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
lugansk-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
mariupol-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
melitopol-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
alchevsk-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
bc-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes

dneprodzerzhinsk-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
gorlovka-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
kramatorsk-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
kremenchug-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
krivoy-rog-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
news-makeevka[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
nikopol-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
pavlograd-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
slavyansk-news[.]ru	18/04/2022	yes
tiraspol-news[.]ru	26/04/2022	yes
norilsk-news[.]ru	18/11/2022	yes
nabchelny-news[.]ru	22/11/2022	yes
nk-news[.]ru	22/11/2022	yes
tagil-news[.]ru	22/11/2022	yes
news-surgut[.]ru	22/11/2022	yes
chernovcy-news[.]ru	17/12/2022	yes
if-news[.]ru	17/12/2022	yes
rovno-news[.]ru	17/12/2022	yes
volyn-news[.]ru	17/12/2022	yes
khmelnytskyi-news[.]ru	17/12/2022	yes
lvov-news[.]ru	17/12/2022	yes
ternopol-news[.]ru	17/12/2022	yes
uzhgorod-news[.]ru	17/12/2022	yes
pravda-de[.]com	22/02/2023	yes
pravda-en[.]com	24/06/2023	yes
pravda-es[.]com	24/06/2023	yes
pravda-fr[.]com	24/06/2023	yes
pravda-pl[.]com	24/06/2023	yes
news-balashiha[.]ru	11/07/2023	yes
volzhskiy-news[.]ru	11/07/2023	yes
pravda-nl[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-dk[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-se[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-fi[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-ee[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-it[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-lv[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-cz[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-sk[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-si[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-hr[.]com	20/03/2024	yes

pravda-hu[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-ro[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-bg[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-gr[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-cy[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-it[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-ie[.]com	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-pt[.]com.	20/03/2024	yes
pravda-al[.]com	26/03/2024	yes
pravda-ba[.]com	26/03/2024	yes
pravda-mk[.]com	26/03/2024	yes
pravda-md[.]com	26/03/2024	yes
pravda-rs[.]com	26/03/2024	yes
pravda-no[.]com.	26/03/2024	yes
pravda-cf[.]com	26/03/2024	yes
pravda-bf[.]com	26/03/2024	yes
pravda-ne[.]com.	26/03/2024	yes
pravda-jp[.]com	26/03/2024	yes
pravda-tw[.]com	26/03/2024	yes
pravda-ko[.]com	26/03/2024	yes

ABOUT VIGINUM



VIGINUM

Created on 13 July 2021 and attached to the SGDSN (General Secretariat for Defence and National Security), VIGINUM is tasked with protecting France and its interests against foreign digital interference.

The role of this national technical and operational service is to detect and characterise information manipulation that involve foreign actors and aims at harming France and its fundamental interests.

[Décret n° 2021-922 du 13 juillet 2021]

[Service de vigilance et protection contre les ingérences numériques étrangères | SGDSN](#)

Photo credit: Bradley Jasper on Unsplash