

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

404: RELIABLE INFORMATION NOT FOUND

New research from the Institute for Strategic Dialogue finds Facebook and Twitter are presenting users searching for news about Ukraine with substantial amounts of pro-Kremlin material and information from unverified sources.

With a growing proportion of people getting their news directly from social media, [ISD investigated](#) what those users are presented with when searching for news about Ukraine.

The [research](#), conducted across Facebook, Twitter and YouTube in English, Spanish, Dutch and Italian, tested the top results delivered using ‘Ukraine’ as a search term, categorising results based on whether they came from a media source, whether they were from verified accounts, and whether the accounts displayed signs of supporting the Kremlin’s invasion of Ukraine.

Key findings:

- **Pro-Kremlin accounts constituted 20% of the top search results across Facebook and Twitter.** Results included narratives blaming Ukraine for the invasion, claims the Wagner group is “saving” Africa from “US-sponsored terrorists”, and conspiracy theories claiming that “Nuremberg 2” is coming for world leaders including Volodymyr Zelensky.
- Russia’s allies are able to exploit a **loophole in Meta’s policy of demoting Russian state-controlled media**, which does not apply to them. The third result on Facebook, searching in English in the US, was from a **Chinese state-controlled media outlet** that has spread Ukraine-related misinformation.
- **7 out of 10 Spanish language results in Argentina came from pro-Kremlin accounts.**
- YouTube was found to be the only platform prioritising verified profiles, and the only platform with no pro-Kremlin accounts in its top search results. Its top results also comprised almost exclusively media sources.

An ISD spokesperson said:

“This is a clear example of how platform policy makes a substantial difference to the quality of information that users see. YouTube committed early in the Russia-Ukraine conflict to “prominently surface authoritative news content” when people search for relevant information, and our results bear this out. In contrast, when users look for information about Ukraine on Facebook or Twitter, they’re confronted with unverified sources, non-media sources with no accountability mechanisms, and substantial amounts of pro-Kremlin narratives.”

Read the full report at [here](#).