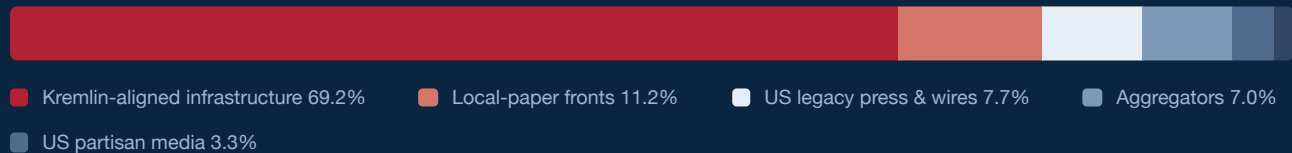


Before the Oval Office

What the American information space said about Volodymyr Zelensky in the week before his White House visit — and who was doing the talking.

WHO PUBLISHED THE 1,049 WEB ARTICLES ABOUT ZELENSKY THAT REACHED US AUDIENCES



7,709

records analysed across seven platforms

80.5%

of web articles from Kremlin-aligned or RT-republishing infrastructure

11.1%

from American newsrooms — a ratio of 7.3 to 1

ABOUT THIS BRIEFING

Before the Oval Office

What the American information space said about Volodymyr Zelensky in the week before his White House visit.

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HOW TO READ THE CENTRAL FIGURE

Paywalled American titles are structurally absent from crawl-based collection. The 80.5% figure does not say American journalism failed this story. It says that in the freely crawlable layer of the internet — the layer search engines and AI systems learn from — hostile infrastructure out-publishes American journalism about Ukraine's president sevenfold. See §4 and §11.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The tone was bad. The composition was worse.

On 28 July 2026 Volodymyr Zelensky meets Donald Trump at the White House. He arrives from the worst domestic week of his presidency, into an American news cycle dominated by a five-month war with Iran. We measured what the American information space was saying about him in the eight days beforehand. The most consequential finding is not about tone. It is about who was doing the talking.

7,709

records, 20–27 July 2026, across web, X, Telegram, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube and VK

74.3% / 4.4%

negative vs. positive share of scored records, hardening daily from 65.8% to 79.0%

844 : 116

hostile infrastructure vs. American newsrooms, among 1,049 web articles

WHAT WE FOUND

- **The visit was not the story.** Only 605 records — 7.8% of the conversation — mention Washington, the White House or the Oval Office. Yet that sliver carried 550,227 interactions, the highest engagement intensity in the corpus. Low coverage, high appetite: a narrative vacuum.
- **Eight in ten "American" web articles about Zelensky were not American.** 844 of 1,049 came from Kremlin-aligned infrastructure or from a syndication ring republishing RT copy under American local-newspaper mastheads. 116 came from American newsrooms of any political stripe.
- **Twenty-seven domains pose as American city newspapers.** The most negative tier in the dataset at 92.4%. It produces no original journalism: 91 of its 118 items use the Russified form "Vladimir Zelensky," and identical RT ledes appear across as many as ten mastheads within hours.
- **The register has shifted from solidarity to conditionality.** Very little commentary asked what Ukraine needs; almost all rendered a verdict on how Zelensky governs. Legitimacy framing ran at 93% negative, corruption framing at 91%.
- **The MAGA realignment is real and measurable** — 837 records, 209,654 interactions — and its counter-mobilisation turned antisemitic within a day.
- **American audiences frame the coming meeting through the last one.** References to the February 2025 Oval Office confrontation were the most uniformly hostile theme measured, at 90.4% negative.
- **Coordination is measurable and interpretive.** 49 clusters of five or more identical posts. Most did not dispute events; they installed a reading of them.

"They are one wire in twenty-seven American disguises — and they are trivially detectable, because the same sentence appears on ten mastheads in the same afternoon."

Vitaliy Syzov, Chair, DII-Global Europe

SECTION 1

Why this week — the sequence the American reader saw

On 26 July 2026 a White House official confirmed to Axios that President Trump would receive President Zelensky in Washington on Tuesday, 28 July. The announcement landed at the end of the most damaging domestic week Volodymyr Zelensky has had since the full-scale invasion began. The sequence matters, because it is the sequence the American reader saw.

15 July	In a cabinet reshuffle, Zelensky does not re-appoint Mykhailo Fedorov as defence minister — six months into his tenure, after a period in which Ukraine's drone campaign reached deep into Russia.
16–20 July	The largest war-related street protests since 2022. Serving soldiers and veterans join. Demands: reinstate Fedorov, remove Commander-in-Chief Oleksandr Syrsky.
21 July	Zelensky dismisses Syrsky , replacing him with 43-year-old Major General Mykhailo Drapatyi .
22 July	Zelensky speaks with US envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner about restarting diplomacy.
23 July	Britain and the United States are reported to have used diplomatic backchannels to press Kyiv on continuing the anti-corruption drive. In Manila, Lavrov tells Rubio it is "unacceptable to continue supplying weapons to the Kyiv regime"; Rubio replies there has been "no change in our policy in this regard." In Kyiv, MAGA influencer Laura Loomer interviews Zelensky at the Mariinsky Palace.
24 July	A Russian ballistic strike on an arms exhibition outside Kyiv kills at least 10 and injures more than 100.
25–26 July	Ukraine strikes vessels in the Caspian Sea . Iran says a commercial ship was hit and one seafarer killed, summons Ukraine's chargé d'affaires, and warns that "Ukraine's dangerous adventurism will certainly not go unanswered." Zelensky says he will hand Washington evidence that Russian satellite surveillance is feeding Iranian targeting of US bases. Ukraine records its deadliest month for civilians since April 2022.
26 July	Axios reports the White House meeting, confirmed by a White House official.
27 July	Zelensky is in London, the first foreign leader hosted by the new British prime minister, en route to Washington.

DII-Global Europe analysed the English-language conversation about Zelensky in the US information space across that eight-day window. Every record in both source exports mentions Zelensky: the collection is key-word-defined, so this is the Zelensky conversation, not the Ukraine conversation.

SECTION 2 · FINDING ONE

The visit was not the story

Only **605 records** — **7.8% of the entire Zelensky conversation** — mention Washington, the White House or the Oval Office. The rest is about something else: a command purge in Kyiv, a widening war with Iran, and a fight inside the American right about whether Ukraine deserves support at all. By volume the visit ranked ninth among the themes we coded, behind weapons and air defence (1,244 records), Europe and NATO (1,093) and the command crisis (1,028).

And yet that small sliver carried **550,227 interactions and 6.39 million views** — more engagement than any other narrative in the corpus, including the far larger weapons story. The pattern is unmistakable: low coverage, high appetite. That combination is a narrative vacuum. Whoever supplies the framing in the first twenty-four hours after the meeting will not be competing with an established storyline; they will be creating one.

Tone within the visit subset is worse than the corpus as a whole on the positive side: **71.7% negative against 1.2% positive**. Anticipation of the meeting is not hostile so much as braced.

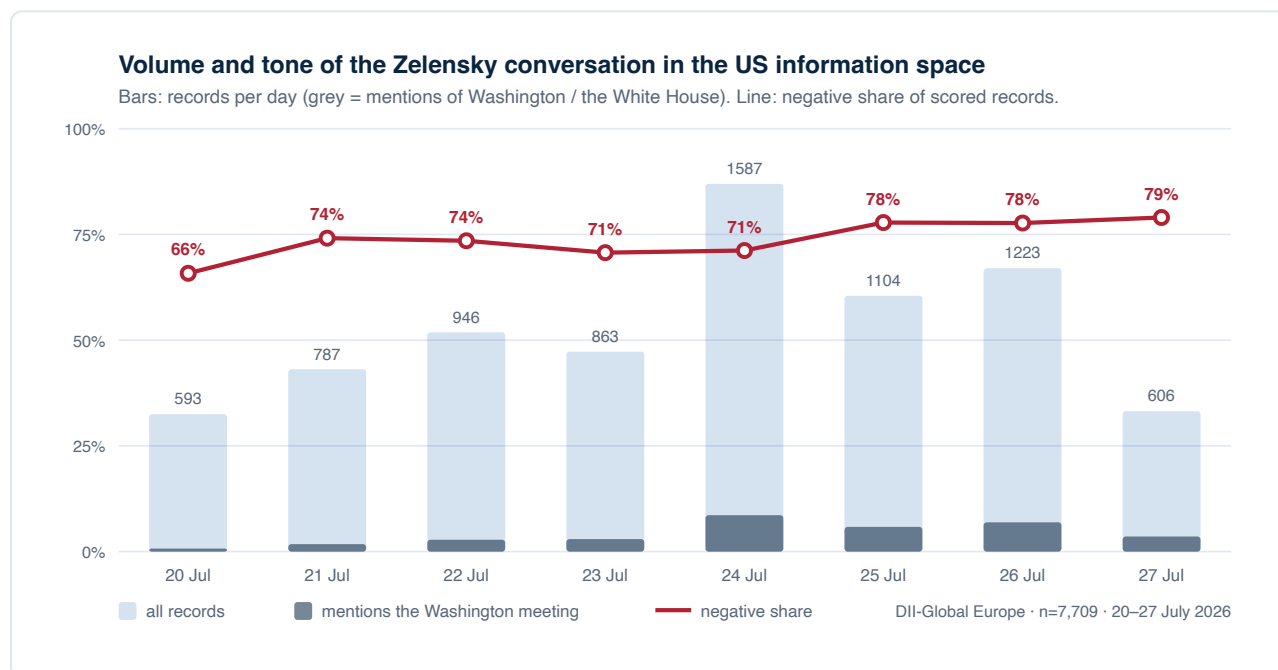


Figure 1. Daily record volume and negative sentiment share, 20–27 July 2026. Percentages are calculated over scored records only; 356 of the 381 unscored records fall on 20 July, and computing over the full row count would manufacture a tone trend out of a coverage gap.

WHY THE VACUUM MATTERS OPERATIONALLY

A story with high volume and settled framing is hard to move: any new account has to displace an incumbent one. A story with negligible volume and enormous latent appetite is the opposite — the first coherent, evidenced account of what the meeting achieved will not be contested, it will be adopted. That window is measured in hours, not days.

SECTION 3 · FINDING TWO

Eight in ten "American" articles about Zelensky were not American

Of the 1,049 web articles in the corpus — the material that surfaces in search results, aggregators and, increasingly, in the retrieval paths of AI systems — **844 (80.5%) originate in Kremlin-aligned infrastructure or in a syndication ring republishing RT copy. 116 (11.1%) come from American newsrooms of any political orientation.** A ratio of 7.3 to 1.

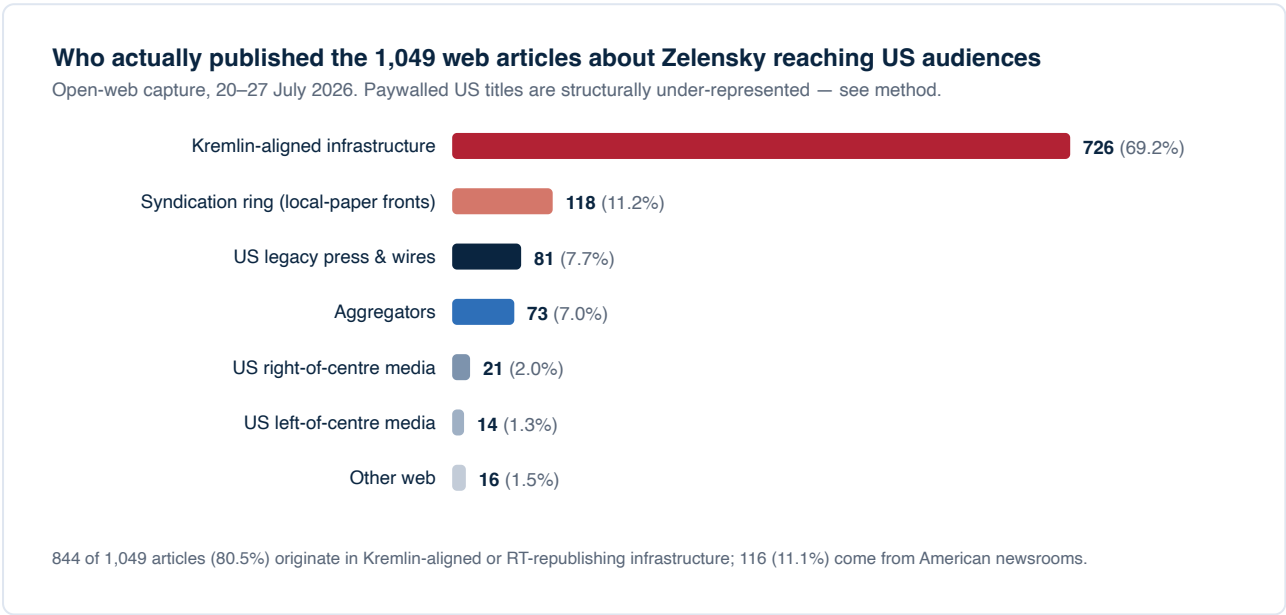


Figure 2. Source composition of the 1,049 web articles. Classification is by domain against explicit allow-lists (US legacy and wires, aggregators, right-of-centre, left-of-centre), a Kremlin-aligned list, and a pattern detector for the syndication ring — with the legacy allow-list evaluated first, so that genuine mastheads cannot be swept into the ring by pattern matching.

SOURCE GROUP	ARTICLES	SHARE	DOMAINS	NEGATIVE
Kremlin-aligned infrastructure	726	69.2%	9	78.2%
Syndication ring — local-paper fronts	118	11.2%	27	92.4%
US legacy press and wires	81	7.7%	8	60.5%
Aggregators (Yahoo UK/CA, Qoshe)	73	7.0%	4	58.9%
US right-of-centre media	21	2.0%	9	81.0%
US left-of-centre media	14	1.3%	5	92.9%
Other web	16	1.5%	13	87.5%

The effect is not persuasion. It is occupancy. An American searching for news about the Ukrainian president in the week before his White House visit was substantially more likely to land on manufactured copy than on a US newsroom.

SECTION 4

The two machines — and the caveat we put first

Machine one: the Pravda network

688 articles from just four subdomains — usa.news-pravda.com (412), trump.news-pravda.com (192), na-to.news-pravda.com (79) and canada.news-pravda.com (5). This is the cluster open-source researchers know as the Pravda network, or Portal Kombat: high-volume, low-readership content farms built to saturate search indexes and machine retrieval rather than to attract human readers. Output is 77.9% negative, and its rhythm is industrial — production rose to 157 articles on the day of the Kyiv arms-fair strike and stayed high through the visit announcement.

Machine two: the local-paper fronts

118 articles across **27 domains dressed as American local newspapers** — *Sacramento Sun*, *Milwaukee Sun*, *Nashville Herald*, *Knoxville Times*, *Austin Globe*, *Pittsburgh Star*, *Phoenix Herald*, *Ohio Standard*, *Los Angeles Herald*, *Long Beach Star* and others, fed by Big News Network. It is the most negative tier in the entire corpus at **92.4% negative**, and it produces no original journalism:

- **91 of 118 items** use the Russified form "Vladimir Zelensky" rather than Volodymyr;
- **84** use the "Kiev" spelling, and several carry a visible [RT.com](https://rt.com) credit line;
- identical RT ledes appear verbatim across as many as **ten** of these look-alike mastheads within hours of each other.

This is the most deceptive object in the dataset and the least documented. It is also the most trivially detectable: one sentence, ten mastheads, one afternoon. The full domain list is published in the Annex.

THE CAVEAT WE PUT FIRST, NOT LAST

The *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, Bloomberg, the *Financial Times*, Politico and Axios are paywalled and therefore structurally absent from crawl-based collection. Their absence here is an artefact of access, not evidence of editorial neglect — we can see their reporting refracted secondhand through Political Wire's excerpts and Yahoo's syndication.

The correct reading of the 80.5% figure is not that American journalism failed. It is that **in the freely accessible layer of the internet — where search engines, aggregators and AI retrieval systems do their work — hostile infrastructure out-publishes American journalism about Ukraine's president by a factor of seven**. That is an information-security problem, not a media-criticism problem.

A second distortion sits inside the authentic material. Much of the highest-quality reporting reaching US audiences in this corpus is not American at all — Telegraph, BBC, AFP, France 24 and *The Conversation* copy arriving through Yahoo News UK and Canada. On the story of the Ukrainian president's worst domestic week, a substantial share of what Americans read was written in London.

SECTION 5 · FINDING THREE

From solidarity to conditionality

Read across outlets, the week produces a coherent tonal signal, and it is not the one Kyiv would choose. **The verdict frame has replaced the need frame.** Very little commentary asks what Ukraine requires; almost all renders a judgement on how Zelensky governs. Even sympathetic pieces are competence assessments — a "nimble Zelensky" who "can emerge stronger" compliments political agility, not the cause.

Conditionality is now explicit and on the record. The single most consequential piece of the week for Kyiv is the report that Britain and the United States used backchannels to press Ukraine to continue the dismissed defence minister's anti-corruption crackdown, with officials described as "hugely surprised" at his removal. Simultaneously, the RT-fed ring pushed an IMF story across eight domains: a \$690 million tranche released while, in its framing, Kyiv had not met structural reform benchmarks. Authentic Western conditionality and manufactured Western conditionality arrived in the same week, in the same feed, and reinforced each other.

The critique from the right has changed shape — from "why are we paying" to "what kind of state is this." That is a materially harder argument, because it cannot be answered with burden-sharing numbers. Legitimacy framing appears in 668 records at **93% negative**, the most uniformly hostile theme in the corpus; corruption framing in 621 records at 91% negative, fusing a real Western policy concern, the Fedorov dismissal and recycled smears.

Tone by source tier — and why the number alone misleads

SOURCE TIER	ARTICLES	NEGATIVE	DOMINANT FRAMING
Syndication ring (RT copy)	118	92.4%	Isolated leader "closing in"; IMF money for an unreformed state
Kremlin-aligned infrastructure	726	78.2%	Purge as regime decay; Ukraine dragging Europe and Iran into war
US right-of-centre	21	81.0%	Not a democracy; Western narrative collapse; negotiate now
US left-of-centre	14	92.9%	Hostile to Trump, not to Zelensky; MAGA reversal as the story
US legacy press and wires	81	60.5%	Command crisis explained; capability and casualty reporting
Aggregators (UK/Canadian copy)	73	58.9%	Analytical, conditional, occasionally sympathetic

92.9% AND 92.4% ARE OPPOSITE PHENOMENA

The negativity of US left-of-centre outlets is hostility toward Donald Trump — pro-Ukraine sentiment expressed in angry language. The negativity of the RT-fed ring is an argument that Ukraine should not exist as a viable state. A sentiment score cannot tell these apart, and a policymaker who reads only the aggregate number will misread the room. **Classify hostility by its target, not by its temperature.**

SECTION 6 · FINDING FOUR

The MAGA realignment — and the memory the audience brings

A MAGA influencer with roughly two million followers spent this week in Ukraine, slept through an air raid, visited a firebombed McDonald's in Kyiv, and interviewed Zelensky in the presidential palace garden — having publicly acknowledged that she had, in her words, "fell for Russian propaganda." That post drew **21,572 interactions and 1.7 million views**: the most-engaged single text item in the corpus. The repositioning theme overall accounts for **837 records and 209,654 interactions**, second only to the visit itself in engagement intensity, and was covered as a genuine political development across the spectrum.

It is a **real signal**, not a stunt — the visible edge of a movement that changes the arithmetic of the coalition Trump must manage before he sits down with Zelensky. It triggered **immediate counter-mobilisation** from two directions: the anti-interventionist left casting the convert as an unregistered foreign agent, and the pro-Kremlin ecosystem reaching for antisemitic coding — the Israel-linkage theme runs to 654 records at 85% negative. And it is **fragile**.

AN UNVERIFIED CLAIM, SPREAD AS SETTLED

The most-copied artefact of that counter-mobilisation asserts that Trump would meet Zelensky *and* Netanyahu on the same Tuesday, closing with the line that Ukraine and Israel are on the same team — reproduced by ten accounts. **We found no confirmation of a same-day Netanyahu meeting in any authoritative source in this corpus.** The Axios report and the White House confirmation cover the Zelensky meeting only.

The audience arrives with a memory, and it is February 2025

Across 3,926 audience comments beneath posts by Fox News, CNN, ABC, CBS, The Hill, Newsmax, MeidasTouch and Zelensky's own accounts, Americans discussing the coming meeting largely do not discuss its agenda. They relitigate the last one. References to the February 2025 Oval Office confrontation appear in **104 records at 90.4% negative** — the highest negativity of any theme coded. The recurring word is "ambush," and it arrives from both political directions.

HOST PAGE	COMMENTS	NEGATIVE	READING
CNN	48	93.8%	Most hostile thread set in the corpus
The Hill	55	83.6%	More hostile than Fox News
Fox News	195	76.4%	Contested, not uniform
MeidasTouch	111	74.8%	Anger directed at Trump, not Kyiv
Zelensky's own accounts	64	56.2%	Direct audience still intact

Two observations. Hostility in comment threads is not a function of the outlet's politics — CNN's threads are the most negative in the set and Fox's are less negative than The Hill's. And the least negative environments in the corpus are Zelensky's own channels and small pro-Ukraine accounts: his direct audience remains intact, while the ambient one has hardened.

SECTION 7 · FINDING FIVE

Ukraine reclassified from client to actor — and that cuts both ways

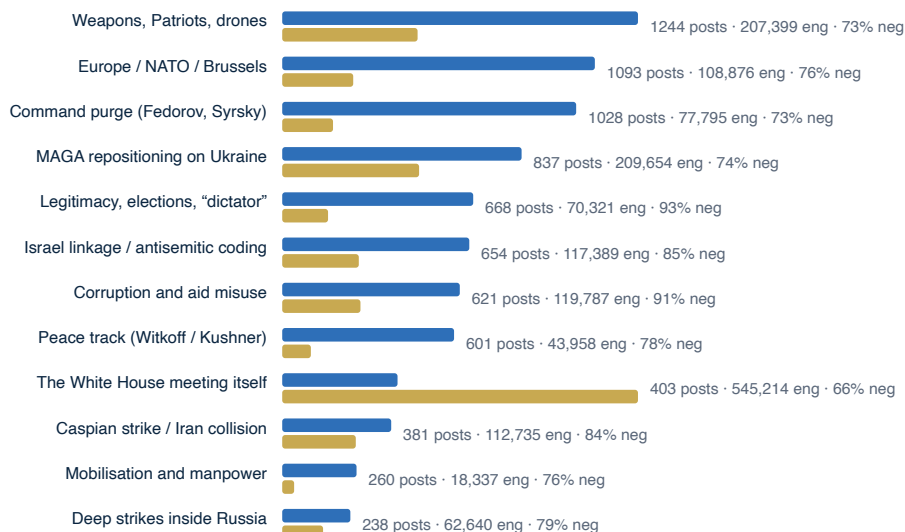
The most significant strategic reframing of the week has almost nothing to do with the meeting agenda. Within four days, US-facing coverage carried three propositions that would have been unimaginable in the supplicant framing of 2023–24: that Ukraine's defence industry has become something the wealthiest nations now want to buy from; that Ukraine struck vessels 500 miles from Kyiv in the Caspian Sea to make a point to Washington about Russian–Iranian cooperation; and that Kyiv holds intelligence on Russian satellite support for strikes on American bases.

For Kyiv this is the best available frame — agency, leverage, a card dealt to itself. It is also the most dangerous, and the hostile ecosystem understood that instantly. Within hours of the Caspian reports, three of the corpus's largest copy-paste clusters were running: Iran's promise of retaliation, Tehran's accusation that Kyiv is trying to drag Europe into war with Russia, and an interpretive line asserting that Zelensky attacked Iran deliberately to entangle himself in Trump's war. The Caspian theme is **84.3% negative**.

The reframing is double-edged in exactly the way that matters before an Oval Office meeting. Ukraine as an actor with reach is an argument for partnership. Ukraine as an actor with reach *into an American war* *Washington is trying to end* is an argument for restraint. Both readings were on the table before the two presidents met.

What the week was actually about — narrative volume vs. audience reaction

Blue bar: records matching the narrative. Gold bar: share of that narrative's engagement (likes, shares, comments, reactions).



The meeting itself was among the smallest stories by volume and the largest by engagement: 605 records mentioning Washington or the White House, 550,227 interactions.

Figure 3. Narrative themes by record volume and total engagement. Themes are keyword-and-phrase regular expressions applied to full text; a record may match more than one theme, so shares sum to more than 100%. The blue bar is volume, the gold bar is engagement — note how far they diverge for the meeting itself.

SECTION 8 · FINDING SIX

Coordination arrives with the facts, not against them

Beyond source labels, we tested for coordination directly: identical text, published by different accounts, inside a short window. **49 clusters of five or more identical posts** account for 378 records — 4.9% of the corpus.

COPIES	ACCOUNTS	WINDOW	CLAIM CARRIED
25	25	18h	Zelensky says Russia helps Iran kill US troops — Trump says Putin denied it and he believes him
14	14	16h	"BREAKING": Iran's foreign minister announces a response to the Caspian strike
12	12	22h	Olena Zelenska photographed in Paris wearing jewellery allegedly matching a luxury set
12	12	33h	Zelensky confirms strikes on Caspian vessels carrying Russian–Iranian military cargo
11	10	5h	Tehran accuses Kyiv of trying to drag Europe into war with Russia
10	10	33h	Trump to meet Zelensky <i>and</i> Netanyahu Tuesday — "same team" framing (unverified)
10	10	5h	RT lede: commanders, rivals and Brussels "closing in" on an isolated leader

Note what the clusters are optimised for. Two are simple amplification of true events. Five are interpretation: they do not dispute what happened, they install a reading of it — isolation, entanglement, corruption, hidden alignment. **These operations have largely stopped inventing facts. They arrive with the facts and pre-fitted conclusions.**

Platform labels and background vocabulary

The monitoring platform's own source labels place **1,360 records (17.6%)** with sources flagged for disinformation and **841 records (10.9%)** with sources reportedly affiliated to the Russian state. These are automated classifications, reported here as indicative signals rather than legal findings.

DELEGITIMISATION MARKER	RECORDS	SHARE
"dictator"	178	2.3%
"Kiev regime" / "Kyiv regime"	134	1.7%
"clown" / "comedian"	132	1.7%
Cocaine references	86	1.1%
"Zelensky regime"	77	1.0%
"junta" / "usurper"	39	0.5%

None is dominant. Together they form a steady background delegitimation that no single rebuttal can address — which is precisely the design.

SECTION 9

Six signals for the room

What the measured information environment implies for anyone walking into the 28 July meeting.

1 **You are being assessed, not supported.**

The dominant American register this week is evaluative. The operative question in US coverage is not "what does Ukraine need" but "can this president be relied upon to run a state worth backing." Deliverables that speak to institutional reliability — anti-corruption continuity, procurement transparency, mobilisation reform — will land harder than capability requests.

2 **Conditionality is now public.**

The reported UK–US backchannel pressure on the anti-corruption crackdown is the most important sentence written about Ukraine this week. It converts a private concern into a published expectation, and it hands every hostile actor a genuine Western source to quote.

3 **The command crisis is the highest-volume liability, and it is not over.**

1,028 records, 13.3% of the week, still running as of 27 July with the dismissed defence minister publicly refusing alternative posts. Any American read of the meeting will be filtered through it.

4 **The Caspian is leverage that converts into an escalation charge overnight.**

It already has. The argument that Ukraine acted to entangle itself in an American war was in circulation within twenty-four hours, in coordinated form, across multiple platforms.

5 **The MAGA opening is real and perishable.**

The most-engaged story of the week is a Republican influencer changing her mind in public. That is an audience which has never been reachable before. It is also an audience whose attention decays fast and whose counter-mobilisation is already antisemitic in register.

6 **The framing vacuum around the meeting is the opportunity.**

7.8% of coverage, but the highest engagement intensity in the corpus. There is no incumbent storyline to displace. The first coherent, evidenced account of what the meeting achieved will become the account.

SECTION 10

Six recommendations for European and transatlantic decision-makers

1 Stop measuring "US media sentiment" from the open web without source verification.

In this corpus, an unverified sentiment average would have been an average of Russian content-farm output. Any monitoring system feeding policy must run a verified-source allow-list first and report authentic and in-authentic layers separately.

2 Treat sentiment polarity as insufficient.

92.9% negative from US left-of-centre outlets and 92.4% negative from an RT-fed syndication ring are opposite phenomena wearing the same number. Classify by the target of hostility, not by its tone.

3 Close the paywall gap deliberately.

The absence of the major American titles from crawl-based collection is now a strategic vulnerability, because the freely-crawlable layer is where AI retrieval systems learn. Licensed access to authoritative feeds should be treated as information-security infrastructure, not as a subscriptions line item.

4 Name the local-paper fronts.

The 27 domains dressed as American city newspapers republishing RT copy verbatim are the most deceptive object in this dataset and the least documented. They are trivially detectable — the same lede across nine or ten "local" mastheads within hours — and belong on every newsroom's and platform's exclusion list. The full list is in the Annex.

5 Pre-empt the conditionality narrative with evidence, not reassurance.

The corruption theme is the highest-yield hostile line precisely because it has a legitimate core. Published, verifiable anti-corruption outcomes are the only durable answer; denials feed the cluster.

6 Watch the Caspian file as an alliance-management issue, not a Ukraine issue.

A widening Ukraine–Iran dimension changes the American domestic politics of support faster than anything happening on the eastern front.

SECTION 11

Method, scope and limits

CORPUS

Two monitoring exports covering 20 July 2026 00:00 UTC to 27 July 2026 15:41 UTC. Corpus A: 3,405 posts and web articles. Corpus B: 4,304 comments, short-form videos and chat messages. Combined: **7,709 records**, 100% English-language, overwhelmingly US-geotagged (3,275 and 3,540 records respectively attributed to the United States, with Canadian and Ukrainian remainders). Every record in both exports mentions Zelensky: the collection is keyword-defined.

Platforms: X/Twitter 2,488; Telegram 2,055; Facebook 1,924; Web 1,049; TikTok 189; YouTube 2; VK 2. Content types: comments 3,926; posts 2,356; articles 1,049; videos 191; chat messages 187.

CLASSIFICATION

Source tiers are assigned by domain against explicit allow-lists (US legacy and wires, aggregators, right-of-centre, left-of-centre), a Kremlin-aligned list, and a pattern-based detector for the syndication ring — with the legacy allow-list evaluated first, so that genuine mastheads cannot be swept into the ring by pattern. Narrative themes are keyword-and-phrase regular expressions applied to full text; a record may match more than one theme, so theme shares sum to more than 100%. Coordination clusters are exact matches on the first 300 normalised characters, minimum five copies.

SENTIMENT

Labels and scores are the monitoring platform's automated classifiers. All shares are calculated over **scored** records (7,328 of 7,709); 356 of the 381 unscored records fall on 20 July, and computing over the full row count would have manufactured a tone trend out of a coverage gap. Sentiment labels are indicative signals for analytical purposes, not editorial or legal determinations about any named publication, platform or individual. Disinformation and state-affiliation flags likewise originate with the monitoring platform and are reported as such. Reach metrics (28.1m views, 1.52m interactions) are platform-reported and are not comparable across platforms; they are used for relative ranking within this corpus only.

SECTION 11 · CONTINUED

Limits, reproducibility and corrections

LIMITS

1. Paywalled US titles are structurally under-represented, as set out in §4.
2. The window is eight days with no pre-period baseline, so all trend claims are within-week.
3. A substantial share of the authentic reporting captured is British or French in origin, reaching US audiences via aggregators — "what Americans read" is not the same as "what American journalists wrote."
4. Regular-expression theme coding captures topical presence, not stance; tone is therefore reported separately.
5. One widely-copied claim analysed in §6 — a same-day Trump–Netanyahu meeting — could not be verified in any authoritative source in this corpus and is reported as an unverified circulating claim.

REPRODUCIBILITY

Every figure in this briefing is produced by a published analysis script from the two source exports, using only the Python standard library; derived tables are published alongside it. The raw exports are licensed monitoring data and are not redistributed. SHA-256 checksums are published so that any holder of the same exports can verify they are analysing byte-identical files before re-running the pipeline.

VERIFY THIS BRIEFING

Code and derived data: github.com/alexmazuka/dii-zelensky-visit-2026

Web edition: diiglobal.eu/research/us-press-zelensky-washington-visit-july-2026.html

Corrections: office@diiglobal.eu — we publish corrections on the web edition and re-issue the PDF.

ANNEX

The 27 domains posing as American local newspapers

All 27 domains classified in this briefing as the syndication ring, with the article counts observed in the 20–27 July 2026 capture. These domains present as American (and in two cases Canadian) local news outlets while republishing wire copy — in this corpus, predominantly RT material carried under the mastheads below. Published so that newsrooms, platforms and monitoring teams can verify the classification and act on it.

DOMAIN	ARTICLES	DOMAIN	ARTICLES
bignetwork.com	50	capitoldaily.news	1
milwaukeeesun.com	10	coloradostar.com	1
sacramentosun.com	10	economics.industriesnews.net	1
knoxvilletimes.com	8	flga.news	1
nashvilleherald.com	8	kjfk.news	1
austinglobe.com	3	lachronicle.news	1
washingtondcnews.net	3	losangelesherald.com	1
canadastandard.com	2	ohiostandard.com	1
ksmo.news	2	phoenixherald.com	1
longbeachstar.com	2	pittsburghstar.com	1
shipping.industriesnews.net	2	twincityreport.com	1
tennesseedaily.com	2	txdaily.news	1
wtat.news	2	usatimes.news	1
capitalcitydaily.com	1		

118 articles across 27 domains in the 20–27 July 2026 capture. Counts are exact and reproducible from [analysis/analyze.py](#).

Detection heuristic. The reliable fingerprint is not the domain name but the duplication: an identical lede appearing across many "local" mastheads within hours, combined with the Russified given-name form "Vladimir Zelensky" and the "Kiev" spelling. In this capture, 91 of the ring's 118 items used the Russified form and 84 used "Kiev"; single ledes were observed on up to ten mastheads simultaneously.

Caveat. Classification is by publishing behaviour observed in this corpus, not by ownership research. It is a finding about what these domains published in this window, not a legal determination about who operates them.

About DII-Global Europe

DII-Global Europe (VZW/ASBL) is a Brussels-based non-profit and the European continuation of the Donetsk Institute of Information, which has operated since 2009. Through its **Transatlantic Truth Lab**, it monitors foreign information manipulation targeting Ukraine, the European Union and the transatlantic relationship, publishes sourced research and factual rebuttals for policymakers and journalists, and convenes decision-makers around verified facts.

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THIS BRIEFING

Media Intelligence Briefing TTL/2026/07
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WEB EDITION

diiglobal.eu/research/
us-press-zelensky-washington-
visit-july-2026.html

DATA & CODE

github.com/alexmazuka/
dii-zelensky-visit-2026

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DEFENDING INFORMATION INTEGRITY ACROSS THE TRANSATLANTIC SPACE