

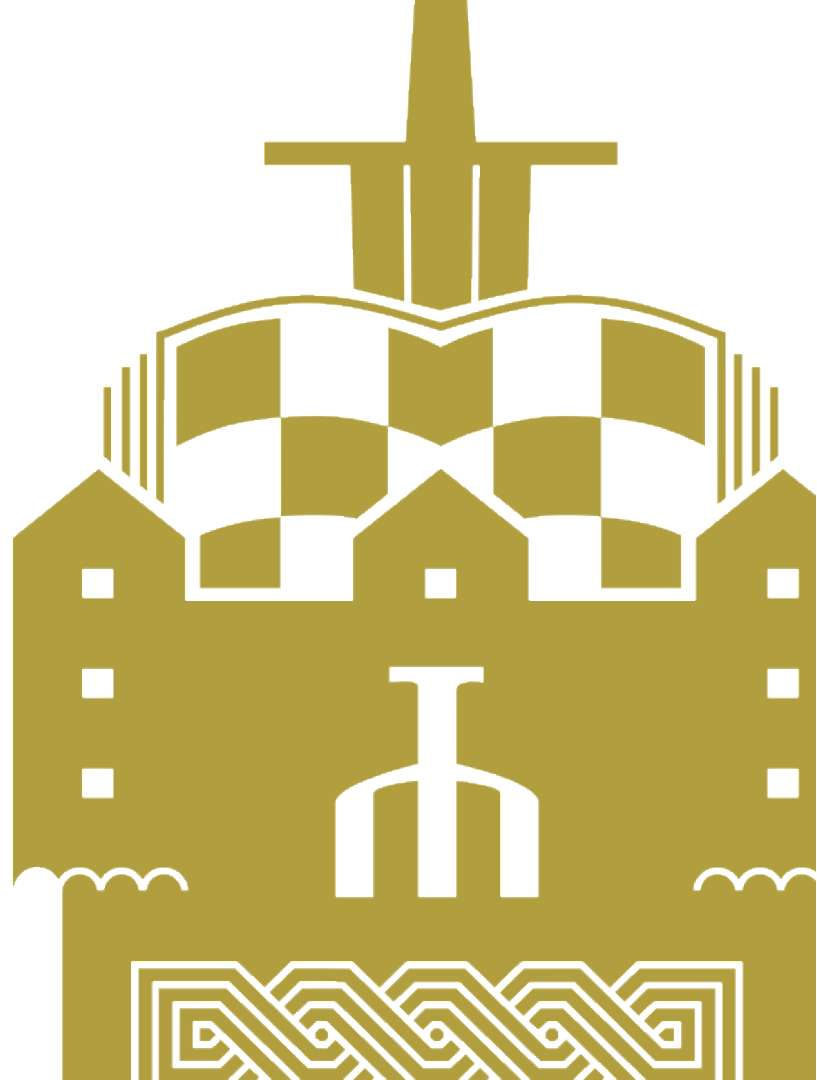


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Kremlin's FIMI: A Case Study of Croatia

Josip Mandić,
Zagreb, 11 October 2025

Sapere Aude et Agere





Academic: PhD candidate (Media & Communication), Master of Laws



Research interests: Political communication, strategic communication, FIMI



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OBJECTIVE

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To **map**, **trace**, and **assess** the diffusion of Kremlin FIMI narratives into Croatian discourse using computational discourse analysis.



QUESTIONS

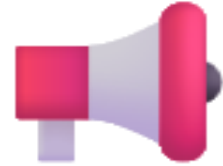
1.  How are narratives structured?
2.  Through which channels do they travel?
3.  What effects do they generate in Croatia?
4.  Which FIMI toolbox elements can be used in Croatia?



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METHODOLOGY

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Corpus:

1. **Core speeches (5):** Munich 2007; Crimea 2014; Donetsk/Luhansk recognition 2022; Full scale invasion 2022; Carlson interview 2024.
2. **Extended corpus:** Total 20 speeches (2007–2025).



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METHODOLOGY

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Methods:

Data preparation: Lemmatization (NOUN/PNOUN only), phrase merging; stop-words and empty texts removed.

Quantitative analysis : Collocations (Hinge words), Guided LDA (Themes), BERT sentiment (Tone).

Qualitative validation: KWIC (full-sentence checks); case study review.

Tools: Python, Google Colab.

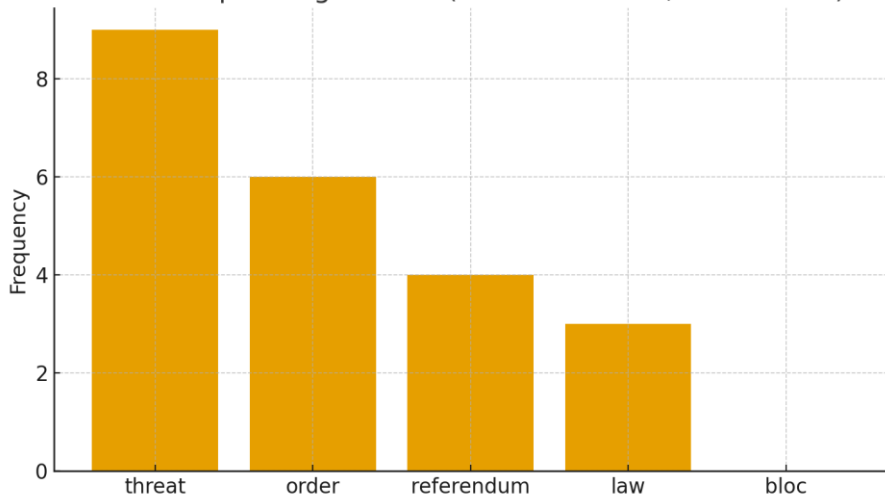


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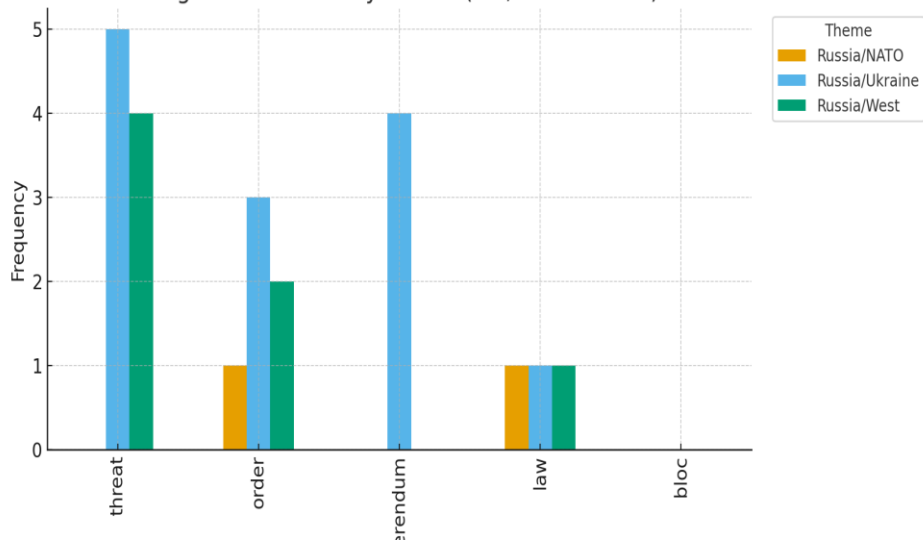
COLLOCATIONS – HINGE WORDS

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Global Top-5 hinge nouns (from collocates; ± 4 window)



Hinge-5 collocates by theme (± 4 ; lemmatized)



Seed words (anchors) example: Ukraine, unity, people (for Russia–Ukraine), West, sovereignty, values (for Russia–West), and NATO, force, enlargement (for Russia–NATO).



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GUIDED LDA

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Theme 1 (Russia – Ukraine; Legitimation)

Keywords: *ukraine, russia, people, historical unity, bandera, maidan*

Narrative: Ukraine is not just a neighbor – it is part of our history, culture, and spiritual space (Kievan Rus'), it needs our protection.

Most prominent in: 24 February 2022

Theme 2 (Russia – West; Normative contestation)

Keywords: *west, hegemony, double standards, values
sovereignty, rules-based order*

Narrative: Criticism of Western policies, violations of international law, sovereignty of Russia.

Most prominent in: Carlson interview 2024



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GUIDED LDA

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Theme 3 (Russia – NATO; Securitisation)

Keywords: *NATO, force, expansion, enlargement, bloc, bases*

Narrative: NATO expansion, threat to Russia, and justification of the “special military operation.”

Most prominent in: Munich 2007



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KWIC - FROM STATS TO SENTENCES

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Theme 1 (Russia – Ukraine)

We will recognise the results of the **referendum**, conducted in accordance with **law** and the will of the people.
(**referendum / law**)

Theme 2 (Russia – West)

The so-called rules-based **order** violates international **law**, applying double standards to suit political needs.
(**order / law**)

Theme 3 (Russia – NATO)

NATO's expansion towards our borders is a direct **threat**, transforming the **bloc** into an offensive instrument.
(**threat / bloc**)



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BERT SENTIMENT

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DATUM	Vrlo negativno	Negativno	Neutralno	Pozitivno	Vrlo pozitivno
10.2.2007.	0.198	0.216	0.178	0.203	0.205
18.3.2014.	0.111	0.118	0.236	0.285	0.250
21.2.2022.	0.231	0.231	0.172	0.189	0.177
24.2.2022.	0.209	0.175	0.132	0.208	0.275

2007 → Balanced critique – still diplomatic

2014 → Legality/rightness framing – positivity rises

21 Feb 2022 → Accusatory (negative) tone – escalation

24 Feb 2022 → positive and very positive – war framed as moral and emotional duty



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CASE STUDY

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EU and NATO Support Activities for Ukraine (EUMAM, NSATU)

Context: Government proposal → political crisis & polarization

Narratives: Involvement in conflict • Proxy war • Lawful target • Threat to sovereignty

Relevance: Parallels in Putin's speeches

Analytical tools: Core speech analyses + Fuzzy Matching (phrases), and Word2Vec (links: sovereignty/West/army/mission)

Resilience/FIMI toolbox:  **Understand:** Publish lexicons |  **Prevent:** Prebunk peaks |  **Contain/Mitigate:** Target spikes |  **Recover** Post-spike explainers |  **Evaluate:** Measure.

RESULT: FIMI narratives act as **force multipliers of division** — exporting Moscow's rhetoric to fuel institutional rifts in Croatia.



THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
ATTENTION,
QUESTIONS
PLEASE.

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