

choke points including the Malacca Strait, while Russia's agriculture is benefiting from warmer climates. BRI connectivity is also welcomed by commodity-rich but land-locked Central Asian countries. All told, following a traumatic interlude with the Ukraine War, Eurasian geopolitics are unlikely to remain the same again.

Keywords: Russia, Ukraine, Eurasia, US, China, Geopolitics

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Title: The Russia-Ukraine Conflict Beyond the Mainstream Narrative

Abstract: The Russia-Ukraine conflict erupted in February 2022 after the Kremlin recognized the independence of the breakaway popular republics of Donetsk and Luhansk. In the aftermath of the recognition of the sovereignty of these entities, the Russian armed forces invaded Ukraine under the justification of the demilitarization and denazification of the neighbouring country, as well as to bring to trial those who perpetrated numerous bloody crimes against civilians in the Donbass, including against Russian citizens. Soon after, the international community and the mainstream media began a worldwide campaign against the Russian military action, sympathizing with the government of Kiev.

Although Russia is well-known for its information capabilities—whether propaganda, disinformation, or counter-information—the Kremlin appears to have overestimated its ability to wage effective information operations or underestimated the impact of Western brainwashing on public opinion. In addition, the Ukrainian leadership has effectively managed to counter the grounds on which the Russian government has supported its "special military operation." Ukrainian President Zelensky gained the trust, sympathy, and solidarity of Western leaders, the media, and public opinion, presenting his country as the victim of an unjustified aggression. On the other hand, Russian President Putin, excluded from the public debate due to the European Union ban on Russian media, was perceived by the same audience as a gangster. Is this the whole truth, or is there something more beyond the mainstream narrative? This paper aims to offer a factual analysis and a different perspective from the mainstream narrative supported and spread by Western governments and biased media outlets.

Keywords: Russia, Ukraine, Information, Disinformation, Propaganda

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Title: Geopolitical Considerations of New European Spaceports

Abstract: In today's world, outer space is a relevant topic for discussion across all scientific disciplines, and political science is no exception. In the case of the geopolitics of space, it is a specific domain dealing with the geographical, physical, diplomatic, military, socio-economic, and environmental implications of space activities. From the founder of the field, Everett Dolman, to contemporary authors such as Bledwyn E. Bowen, John J. Klein and Eligar Sadeh, we have encountered the issue of the geographic position of spaceports in respect of their geopolitical effectiveness. The location of an individual spaceport should be chosen by considering a set of rules that help, for example, to save fuel, to place space objects in their intended orbit, or to ensure the safety of the space mission and people on Earth. Typically, this involves placing spaceports close to the equator to allow for rocket launches in an easterly direction to take advantage of the Earth's rotation to gain the necessary velocity to overcome the Earth's gravitational pull. The advantage of areas with higher altitudes or suitable meteorological conditions can also be mentioned, but this list needs to be enriched with some political considerations. The site of spaceports also needs to be examined regarding geographical accessibility, the presence of airspace of neighbouring states, and the