

## Deep Russia: MAKE DIESEL CHEAP AGAIN

*What Russians discussed on "VKontakte" and on "Telegram" from 5 to 11 October*

**Period** 5 - 11 October 2026

**Platforms** VKontakte, Telegram (regional communities)



## Key Findings

On 9 October, after a conversation with Vladimir Putin, Trump announced the forthcoming supply of more than 300 thousand tonnes of Russian diesel to the American and world markets, a further 500 thousand tonnes in November and 1 million tonnes after that. He linked the agreement to lower fuel prices. On the same day, the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control issued a general license for specified transactions involving the sale, delivery, offloading and import of diesel fuel of Russian origin, valid until 7 April 2027.

Subsequently, on 11 October, Trump stated that an "energy truce" was beginning immediately and that both sides had agreed to it. The agreements on the **supply of Russian diesel fuel to the US** provoked a predominantly negative reaction. The greatest outrage was caused by the contradiction between the official rhetoric of confrontation with the West and the Russian leadership's readiness to supply the US with strategic resources. Commenters cannot understand why Russia is helping a country that continues to supply Ukraine with weapons while its own population faces shortages and rising fuel prices. In the discussions, the Russian authorities were accused of double standards, dependence on the US and protecting the commercial interests of the elites.

At the same time, there were also positive assessments. Some users considered the deal economically beneficial, linking it to possible budget revenues and hopes for fewer strikes on Russian oil refineries. This was the case, in particular, in Novosibirsk and Omsk Oblasts. In Sverdlovsk Oblast, there were explanations that the fuel situation was stabilizing, so there was no reason to worry. However, in the regions with the most active discussions, such assessments gave way to criticism.

**Trump's statements about an energy truce between Russia and Ukraine** were met predominantly with skepticism and irony. Commenters doubted that the agreements existed, pointed to the absence of confirmation from both sides and mocked the American president's inconsistency.

**Trump's criticism of Zelensky** did not secure an unambiguously positive attitude toward the American president among Russian commenters. In a number of regions, people expressed distrust of his words, called his statements inconsistent and doubted the reality of the political agreements.

**The damage to "Yandex" data centers** caused disruptions in several services at once, but what worried the population most was access to their own money. In the comments, people wrote about problems with "Yandex Pay", paying for "Split" purchases and being unable to top up their accounts. Through the disruptions, people discussed alternatives. They mentioned old taxi services, other aggregators and the possibility of arranging rides with drivers directly. They criticized excessive dependence on the services of a single company.

## 1. MAKE DIESEL CHEAP AGAIN

### The diesel deal and the "energy truce"

On 9 October, after a conversation with Vladimir Putin, Trump announced the forthcoming [supply of more than 300 thousand tonnes of Russian diesel to the American and world markets](#), a further 500 thousand tonnes in November and 1 million tonnes after that. He linked the benefit of the agreement to lower fuel prices.

On the same day, [the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control issued a general license](#) for specified transactions involving the sale, delivery, offloading and import of diesel fuel of Russian origin, valid until 7 April 2027.

Subsequently, on 11 October, Trump stated that [the "energy truce" was beginning immediately](#) and that both sides had agreed to it. The announcement contained no detailed terms and no monitoring mechanism.

In his evening address on 11 October, [Volodymyr Zelensky confirmed Ukraine's readiness to stop strikes on Russian energy facilities if Russia reciprocates](#) and said he expected clear details of the US-Russian dialogue. In the same address, he reported a strike on Kharkiv Combined Heat and Power Plant No. 5 and continuing Russian attacks.

### Regional reactions to the supply of Russian diesel to the US

- **The contradiction between propaganda and the authorities' actions.** In Tatarstan, Perm Krai, Samara, Volgograd, Novosibirsk and Omsk Oblasts and other regions, commenters were outraged that Russia continues to trade with the US, even though the official rhetoric portrays it as an adversary. Particular discontent was caused by the fact that the American side continues to supply Ukraine with weapons while Russia at the same time helps to provide it with fuel. Commenters called the authorities venal, accused them of serving US interests and mocked earlier statements about fighting NATO.

**Altai Krai**

*"And this very diesel will be used to make the weapons that kill us, Russians. Bravo."* — October 10 at 6:38, ♥25

**Perm Krai**

*"we give them fuel, they give the ukrops drones and ammunition for strikes on Russia, and we get price hikes... wonderful..."* — October 10 at 18:39, ♥47

**Novosibirsk Oblast**

*"They give weapons to the khokhols and we give them oil that's life"* — October 11 at 10:36, ♥53

**Rostov**

*"The consequences are usually always the same....when Russia helps some country, it backfires on Russia itself, and that same country stabs it in the back. Examples: Italy and France in the pandemic years, Turkey sitting on two chairs, Armenia, etc.*

*When will we finally learn not to help our enemies at the first smile. Here people stand in kilometer-long queues for fuel all night under the threat of drone attacks, but we are helping America with fuel.*

*No offense.... but this is beyond my understanding 😞*

*Satellite images, Starlinks, weapons, money - the US has given and keeps giving all of that to Ukraine. Where is the guarantee that our own fuel aid won't go to them from the US in the same way? Then what is it all for?((*

*Maybe we'll start refueling their mopeds in the sky too? 😡*

*How many children with their mothers already sit in corridors at night, as a tradition, at every siren? So that we can help the US, an ally of Ukraine?*

*I'm fed up" — October 9 at 23:18, ♥158*

**Rostov**

*"The Americans help Ukraine so that our boys get killed, and we help them, bravo 🙌" — October 10 at 0:46, ♥24*

- **Fuel shortages and rising prices.** In Buryatia, Perm Krai, Rostov, Moscow, Chelyabinsk and Voronezh Oblasts and Temporarily Occupied Crimea, people feared that the exports would lead to further increases in fuel prices. In Volgograd Oblast, people mentioned queues at filling stations, while in Altai Krai they drew attention to farmers' problems with the availability of diesel during the harvest. Commenters could not understand why Russia should help lower fuel prices in the US if it cannot supply its own market.

**Novosibirsk Oblast**

*"Let's hope queues for diesel don't start forming across the country now" — October 11 at 10:12, ♥82*

**Rostov**

*"Russia will help, and Russians will once again be done in by prices... 😞" — October 9 at 23:47, ♥193*

↳ Reply: *"Oleg, utilities are just f..ked up, prices are sky-high" — October 9 at 23:54, ♥46*

**Rostov**

*"There isn't enough petrol for our own people, but we will sell it to unfriendly countries. We don't abandon our own" — October 10 at 8:03, ♥37*

**Saint Petersburg**

*"Look what our diesel does, Trump changed his tune on the fly 😂 But don't we need it ourselves right now?!" — October 10 at 22:01, ♥10*

**Chelyabinsk Oblast**

*"Raise it for the Americans, we don't need it." — October 11 at 15:13, ♥13*

**Dagestan**

*"And you stand in line and buy at 3x the price 😊 that's the Putin way. It's so nice to watch how they string Russians along after the elections" — October 10 at 11:34, ♥15*

- **Distrust of the economic benefit.** In Saint Petersburg, Altai Krai and other regions, people assumed that the main benefit of the agreements would go to businessmen and oligarchs close to the authorities. They also doubted that the declared export revenues would help the country significantly.

**Samara**

*"Successful for whom? For the oligarchs from Russia. And what about the slogans, the West will collapse, etc.) now is the very time to squeeze the West) but no, we are saving them again and pumping out resources from the economy to support them) on the contrary, deliveries to these countries should be banned. So that diesel in Europe costs 6 euros a liter, etc. And with all that, they bomb Russia every day with drones and missiles. So what are Russian soldiers dying in the war for? Could anyone have imagined during the Great Patriotic War that the USSR would supply Germany with fuel during the war!?" — October 9 at 23:01, ♥57*

**Rostov**

*"Hey, Kremlin bots! Where are you? You dreamed of launching missiles at Washington, and now this. Business - nothing personal, as they say at the top" — October 10 at 5:36, ♥23*

- **At the same time, there were also positive assessments.** Some users considered the deal economically beneficial, linking it to possible budget revenues and hopes for fewer strikes on Russian oil refineries. This was the case, in particular, in Novosibirsk and Omsk Oblasts. In Sverdlovsk Oblast, there were explanations that the fuel situation was stabilizing, so there was no reason to worry. However, in the regions with the most active discussions, such assessments gave way to criticism.

**Tatarstan**

*"This is the might of the Russian state, Trump humiliates himself asking Putin for diesel fuel deliveries and agrees to lift sanctions, oh God, what a humiliation for the US to lift sanctions from Russia, they shout to the whole world that the US is a superpower and Russia is a gas-station country, and yet they have to lift the sanctions after all!!! Glory to Russia, Glory to Putin, Glory to the United Russia party!!!" — October 9 at 23:43, ♥5*

## Reaction to the statements about an energy truce

Trump's statements about an agreement between Russia and Ukraine to stop strikes on energy infrastructure were predominantly met with distrust. Users mocked a situation in which the American president announced a truce while its supposed participants did not confirm the agreement. A recurring question was whether Russia and Ukraine themselves know about the deal Trump announced.

**Samara Oblast**

*"And when will there be a Human truce???" — October 11 at 17:44, ♥11*

**Perm Krai**

*"Once again Donald Fanovich Trump, who has ended 150 wars, has dreamed something up in his head. Only nobody else knows anything about it" — October 11 at 21:42, ♥4*

**Temporarily Occupied Crimea**

*"And do Russia and Ukraine know about this?" — October 11 at 18:28, ♥4*

↳ Reply: *"Igor, no" — October 11 at 20:35, ♥1*

In the comments, the American president was called inconsistent and accused of making up agreements and seeking attention. People suggested that Trump is more interested in domestic political goals and fuel prices in the US than in peace.

**Rostov**

*"As I recall, he promised to end the war in Ukraine in two weeks. In short, who knows what Trump said there. Maybe he didn't mean that at all." — October 10 at 22:02, ♥38*

↳ Reply: *"Elena, he could kidnap the president 🤪" — October 11 at 16:02, ♥4*

**Trump's criticism of Zelensky did not secure an unambiguously positive attitude toward the American president among Russian commenters.** In a number of regions, people expressed distrust of his words, called his statements inconsistent and doubted the reality of the political agreements.

**Rostov**

*"We all know it, trump changes his tune in a flash, and all this drags on because they're laundering some money, and someone doesn't want to lose their seat... 😏" — October 12 at 23:20, ♥65*

**Temporarily Occupied Crimea**

*"And whom does Trump have in mind? Poroshenko, Medvedchuk or maybe Tymoshenko?" — October 11 at 9:03, ♥2*

↳ Reply: *"Sergei, putin" — October 11 at 10:31, ♥2*

However, some commenters supported the demands to change the Ukrainian leadership and perceived the criticism of Zelensky positively. Such reactions were seen, in particular, in Belgorod and Omsk Oblasts and Temporarily Occupied Crimea.

**Rostov**

*"That's it, Zelya won't do a damn thing now, because if he does anything the Yanks will grind Ukraine to dust in a day." — October 10 at 10:04, ♥39*

**Saint Petersburg**

*"Ukraine is like a guinea pig for the European Union and the US. At the end of the film they will dispose of it completely and rub their hands. They pulled it off after all!" — October 11 at 9:56, ♥1*

In a number of regions, in response to calls to change the president of Ukraine, users asked when the Russian leadership would change. They criticized Putin's long tenure in power and linked the continuation of the war to him.

**Samara**

*"How is he still in power, it's time to remove him, he is not legitimate )))))" — October 11 at 18:13, ♥3*

↳ *Reply: "Rafael, Just like ours." — October 11 at 19:05, ♥11*

## 2. The week in Russian regional "VKontakte" and "Telegram"

### Top discussions on Telegram and VKontakte

#### 1. Disruptions in Yandex's operation

The damage to Yandex data centers caused disruptions in several services at once, but what worried the population most was access to their own money. In the comments, people wrote about problems with Yandex Pay, paying for Split purchases and being unable to top up their accounts.

#### **Voronezh Oblast**

*"But we stubbornly keep pushing digital rubles. The platform crashes and people have no money." — October 9 at 19:24, ♥2*

Through the disruptions, people discussed alternatives. They mentioned old taxi services, other aggregators and the possibility of arranging rides with drivers directly. They criticized excessive dependence on the services of a single company. It is worth noting that experiences of the disruptions differed greatly. Some users wrote that nothing was working, while others did not notice any problems at all or reported that the services were already available.

People also discussed the need to protect data centers before attacking enemy ones, the war and its consequences for the population in general, the monopolization of digital services and the dependence of everyday life on the internet, which is constantly being switched off. Some users urged people to put up with the inconvenience because of wartime circumstances, while others objected that constant disruptions should not become the norm.

#### **Perm Krai**

*"How the Z-vatniks rejoiced when our valiant troops were pounding Ukrainian data centers. Now it has hit us too. Rejoice." — October 11 at 6:45, ♥12*

#### **Yamal**

*"Data centers need to be protected and hidden before you go attacking enemy targets. They don't think with anything at all." — October 11 at 17:12, ♥2*

#### **Murmansk**

*"The main thing is to be patient a little longer, in the 'Kyiv in 3 days' operation the first 5 years are the hardest" — October 11 at 14:26, ♥24*

#### **Rostov**

*"Better if it had hit Roskomnadzor, all the bans on everything would vanish at once, and everyone could breathe a little easier again... 😊" — October 12 at 23:18, ♥133*

**Rostov, Yandex should have protected itself**

"And what are the state's duties, then, I'm confused." — October 8 at 18:17, ♥31

↳ Reply: "Alena, collecting taxes from the people!" — October 8 at 18:35, ♥28

**2. Putin's birthday**

Putin's birthday became an occasion not only for congratulations but also for assessing his rule. Supporters wished him health and victory, praised him for a "strong state" and compared today's Russia with the 1990s. Critical comments, by contrast, concerned the price of the war, rising prices and his long time in power. Commenters recalled the young men killed, suggested that Putin retire or go and live himself in the regions that regularly come under attack. Some also wrote that they could not voice their real wish for fear of punishment.

**Moscow, reaction to the news that Trump did not congratulate Putin**

"Putin understands that grandpa trump has only a couple of days left." — October 8 at 15:23, ♥4

**Kemerovo Oblast**

"I wonder whether, apart from the bots, any humans will write congratulations, or not?" — October 7 at 6:06, ♥59

↳ Reply: "Evgeny, let at least the bots congratulate him 😊" — October 7 at 7:35, ♥2

↳ Reply: "Evgeny, we're afraid of a ban, otherwise we would also congratulate him from the heart..." — October 7 at 11:21, ♥19

**Kemerovo Oblast**

"Putin has been successfully running the country for many years and his successes are obvious. It is clear that Russia continues to develop thanks to him" — October 7 at 6:21, ♥12

↳ Reply: "Nikita, nikita have you seen the prices you fool or not you old geezer together with putin" — October 7 at 7:36, ♥39

↳ Reply: "Nikita, tell me please, in which direction are the successes? In medicine? Doesn't seem so.. In car manufacturing? No shifts for the better visible there either.. Maybe in aviation? No development happening there either.. In space? They've screwed everything up there so badly that it's embarrassing in front of Gagarin.. Tractor manufacturing?..

Russia doesn't make its own tractors either... Or maybe they've set up production of household appliances? Seems there's nothing - no vacuum cleaners, no TVs, no computers, no tablets, microwaves, washing machines, dishwashers ... The list could go on almost endlessly!!!" — October 7 at 7:54, ♥52

**Omsk**

"usurper

not congratulating" — October 7 at 10:12, ♥23

**Omsk**

"Look how many bots have come running to earn their kopecks praising the tsar 🤖 Congratulate whom? The one who every year passes off senility as the real deal and is destroying first and foremost his own country and people? A bear, a killer whale, the special military operation, the plague. Amen" — October 7 at 10:41, ♥52

**Nizhny Novgorod**

*"I wish him a salary of 50 thousand rubles." — October 7 at 19:23, ♥17*

↳ *Reply: "Kristina, not 50 but 30! And let him pay the utilities in full" — October 7 at 20:59, ♥18*

↳ *Reply: "Kristina, And a pension of 21 thousand rubles." — October 7 at 22:19, ♥14*

### **3. Scheduled tests of warning systems and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle attacks**

During the scheduled tests of warning systems, the public first of all assessed whether sirens could be heard in their areas at all. However, the loudness itself was secondary for many. Commenters asked where accessible shelters are located, what to do after the signal and how to tell a drill alert from a real one.

Reports of the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle threat, air defense operations and road closures were actively shared in regional public groups. There were the most discussions in Rostov, Omsk and Ryazan Oblasts. The public was concerned above all about what to do next once an alert had been declared, and about communication problems. Alongside these questions, there were expressions of thanks to air defense and distrust of official reports.

**Belgorod**

*"Gennady, I sent my grandmother to live in Piter.*

*She went to the clinic. The doctors: 'oh, so you're from Belgorod, are you? So from Ukraine, then?' 👍*

*And half of Piter is like that.*

*A planet of its own, just like Moscow.*

*They drive me mad 😡" — October 7 at 23:59, ♥139*

**Samara**

*"Can the internet be switched back on already?" — October 10 at 8:09, ♥30*

**Omsk**

*"The biggest oil refinery in Russia is still not protected in any way 4.5 years on. Not to mention ordinary citizens. Who will be held responsible?" — October 8 at 15:51, ♥30*

**Kaluga**

*"And why are you keeping quiet about Folts being hit? They say there are even people killed. And the evacuation on the Right Bank, you kept quiet about that too?" — October 9 at 15:28, ♥65*

**Perm Krai**

*"The payback has flown again, and by evening people in Perm are already looking for a filling station that still has petrol. What did you expect, when they pound the oil refineries every other day. What bothers me is something else: the strike is discussed separately and the empty pumps separately, as if it weren't one and the same thing. People are dying on both sides, and nobody has ever explained it to us, but the mantra that all the goals of the special military operation will be achieved never ends. Since last year, talk of a truce has been heard dozens of times. How much more has to burn and how many more people have to die for this to be stopped." — October 7 at 15:26, ♥102*

#### 4. Giving birth up to the age of 60

The statement by Russian Academy of Sciences academician Gennady Onishchenko about the possibility of motherhood up to the age of 60 was received by the public predominantly with skepticism. The most frequent question was who would then raise the child, and people feared that the child could be left without parents early on.

There were no fewer questions about the financial side. Commenters compared the costs of a child with pensions, utility bills and medical treatment and asked how one is supposed to provide for a family under such conditions.

People also criticized Onishchenko himself and demographic policy in general. They wrote that instead of advice on late parenthood, housing and decent incomes should be made more affordable. Some stressed that having children should remain a personal decision.

##### **Kemerovo Oblast**

*"Is this what optimization looks like? first close the school, then the kindergarten, and then wonder why people don't want to give birth? And meanwhile the authorities shout about raising the birth rate! What for??? To give birth to new little soldiers? All the money goes to the military! Instead of spending it on developing the country!" — October 6 at 13:19, ♥63*

#### 5. Rumors of plague in Irkutsk Oblast

Rumors of a possible plague outbreak received wide coverage in regional public groups on Telegram and VKontakte. Public groups continued to discuss the death of an anti-plague institute employee, retelling the pneumonia explanation and the denials of an outbreak. Official denials often deepened distrust. Commenters recalled the authorities' previous promises regarding tariffs and mobilization, questioning the credibility of the new statements. Meanwhile, some users urged others not to spread panic and pointed to negative test results.

##### **Buryatia**

*"First the plague was confirmed and now it's pneumonia, somehow very strange" — October 4 at 18:09, ♥28*

↳ *Reply: "Ksenia, from such 'pneumonia', who knows how many people will be gone. Nobody, ever, will know. No panic needed, but keeping their seats is." — October 5 at 2:05, ♥16*

#### 6. Possible fee for international internet traffic

Reports of a possible additional fee for international traffic above 50 GB provoked discontent and questions about new internet restrictions. Commenters were outraged at having to pay for access to blocked services and doubted the expediency of new payments against the backdrop of problems with the quality and availability of high-speed connections. Notably, some users were indifferent to the news, and some supported tighter blocking.

## Methodology

**What this project is.** Systematic monitoring of sentiment in Russian regions — with a focus on critical and negative posts as an indicator of what irritates, frightens or outrages people. The conclusions rest on two parallel sources from monitoring regional VKontakte groups and Telegram.

**VKontakte and Telegram.** Automated data collection in regional Russian communities on VKontakte (536 groups) and Telegram (428 channels) — regional news channels, local public groups, oblast media, local "chat bots" with audiences ranging from several thousand to hundreds of thousands of subscribers. Coverage — all Russian regions and the occupied territories of Ukraine. Observations by regional analysts were additionally used.

**Quotes** in the report text are given verbatim.