



# **Monitoring of Propaganda Narratives in Belarus (TV, online and social media)**

**Final Report**  
*April – July 2021*

**January 2022**  
**Bratislava, Minsk**

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*This final report is a result of a monitoring project implemented by BAJ and MEMO 98, in collaboration with and through financial support from the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).*



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## I. Introduction

The most recent presidential election in the Republic of Belarus was held on August 9, 2020. Even before the registration of candidates, the main opposition contenders for the post, members of their electoral headquarters, and their proxies were detained and criminally prosecuted.

The election results [announced](#) by the Central Election Commission and the massive violence against protesters by the authorities (including the killing of peaceful protesters) caused a wave of resistance unprecedented in Belarus, which has been brutally [suppressed](#) for well over a year. Even when the wave of protests and demonstrations eventually stopped, the persecution of political activists as well as the destruction of independent media and civil society organizations has continued with more than 35,000 citizens being prosecuted since August 2020.

Within a year following the disputed election, the law enforcement bodies made 500 detentions of journalists, with 130 of them being charged and prosecuted for administrative violations. As of the end of January 31 2022, as many as [32 journalists](#) remain in custody. The total number of political prisoners in Belarus, according to human rights defenders, by January 2022 was around 1000.

The regime has labeled a number of media, websites and bloggers as extremist and banned the distribution of their media content by any other actors in the media field. In November 2021, BelaPAN, a leading independent news agency, and Belsat TV company were both [declared](#) extremists. Organizations helping journalists, including the Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ), also became targets of the regime's crackdown. In July 2021, the BAJ office was searched and subsequently closed down, its financial accounts were frozen and the documentation and equipment were seized by investigators. On August 27, the Supreme Court (at the request from the Ministry of Justice) [decided](#) to liquidate BAJ (which continued its activities in spite of the government actions).

President Alyaksandr Lukashenka declared a war against civil society and independent mass media. As a result, approximately 300 non-governmental organizations have already been either closed down or have been investigated with the aim of closing them down. The ideological justification for the destruction of the political opposition, independent media and civil society has been provided by state-funded media, including Belarus 1 and STV. For the state media support in 2021, the national budget alone [allocated](#), on a non-competitive basis, more than 60 million U.S. dollars.

Our joint monitoring with MEMO 98 shows:

- A sharp increase in the amount of blatantly pro-government propaganda in the state media, which uses hate speech and stigmatization, dehumanizes opponents of the authorities, justifies repression and incites hatred;

- Synchronization of propaganda messages disseminated in the state media and in pro-government social media accounts (up to quoting “word-by-word” the same messages generated by the authorities);
- Using hate speech when addressing the Western countries;
- An increase in the amount of pro-Kremlin propaganda in the Belarusian state media and related social media accounts; their presentation of a media picture of reality formed under the influence of the ideas of the "Russian world" and pro-integration propaganda.

Andrei Bastunets  
Head of Belarusian Association of  
Journalists

The main goal of our joint monitoring with BAJ was to see how the regime’s propaganda has changed following the manipulated presidential election in 2020. While before the elections, Lukashenka relied on old-style Soviet methods of propaganda in the form of state television, which, as in previous elections, portrayed him as a hard-working "father" of the nation, who had no time for election campaigning because he had to work hard for the everyday needs of citizens. The regime understood (also thanks to Russian advisors) that they underestimated the power of the Internet and social media networks.

As such, we were interested to see how this change is reflected in the Belarusian information ecosystem and to analyze the actual content of propaganda’s disinformation narratives. What we saw can be in short summarized in one sentence: the “hard-working father of the nation” has changed into a radical and Putin’s very close ally. The tone of propaganda narratives became very negative, stigmatizing and dehumanizing opponents, justifying the strong repression against protestors and inciting hatred. The radicalized vocabulary has also been used against the West, with the United States, the EU, and NATO countries portrayed as an external enemy, allegedly threatening the country's independence and territorial integrity.

Our monitoring noted a considerable shift when it comes to Russia. While before the election, Lukashenka accused Russia of influencing the outcome of the polls and even demonstratively expelled the Russian soldiers from the “Wagner Group” (paid mercenaries), who, according to him, had been sent to Belarus to overthrow the government. After the election, the anti-Russian narratives were replaced by messages celebrating Slavic joint roots and the support for integration with Russia.

The monitoring also showed that Telegram and other social media have gradually become part of state propaganda. Although state television still has the widest nationwide outreach, social media networks have been used to amplify the propaganda narratives, which is visible from our monitoring. This and much more information is available in the present report. Together with BAJ will continue monitoring activities in Belarus to document how the regime uses propaganda to influence public opinion.

## II. Background

Following [MEMO 98's](#) and the [Belarusian Association of Journalists'](#) (BAJ)<sup>1</sup> monitoring projects focusing on the 2020 presidential election in Belarus, both organizations have conducted post-election monitoring of traditional and social media, focusing on the coverage of ongoing political events (including protests against manipulated elections), paying special attention to different types of propaganda narratives. More specifically, the media monitoring was intended to identify disinformation and propaganda narratives used by the regime of President Alyaksandr Lukashenka to manipulate the general public's opinion, as well as to expose the current level of Russian interference in Belarusian politics through the media. The project aimed to raise awareness of the role of state television and social media in disseminating disinformation and to expose the spread of propaganda, distortion, intolerance and incitement of hatred.

The monitoring was conducted over four months in 2021 and divided into three phases. The first report covered the results of the first (26 April – 16 May) and the second phase (24 May - 13 June), and the second report focused on the third monitoring phase (21 June - 11 July). The final report covers all three phases.

MEMO 98 and BAJ (hereafter “we”) monitored the main evening news programs of the national state television channels (*BT* and *STV*), website *Sputnik Belarus*, and social media (*Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Telegram*). In the latter category, we focused on selected actors (17) identified by BAJ as likely disseminators of propaganda narratives from among the state bodies (5), politicians (4), influencers (4) and media (4). Prior to the beginning of the monitoring, MEMO 98 and BAJ identified 61 narratives and grouped them into five different categories (pro-regime, pro-Russia, anti-protesters/opposition, anti-West and anti-Ukraine).

Similar to the monitoring conducted prior to the 2020 presidential election, another purpose of this monitoring was to provide feedback to Belarusians on how the regime has hijacked information sources in the country and turned them into its propaganda tools. The findings are meant to provide greater insight into how these tools operate and what kind of narratives they disseminate.<sup>2</sup> Television has been used as the primary vector of propaganda messages, but the growing relevance of social media demonstrated during the 2020 presidential election prompted the team to also monitor Facebook, Instagram and Telegram to see if the regime has used them as well to disseminate propaganda narratives to manipulate the public discourse.

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<sup>1</sup> The organization is the 2004 Sakharov Prize laureate.

<sup>2</sup> [2021 World Press Freedom Index](#) from Reporters Without Borders ranks Belarus as 158 (out of 180 countries, the worst in almost a decade), assessed as a country with 'difficult situation' (there is just one lower category).

## Media in Belarus

Based on the 2019 [study](#) conducted by the Information and Analytical Center (IAC) concerning the sources of information about politics in Belarus, television remains the main source for Belarusians (72 percent), followed by the Internet (it was noted by some 60 percent of respondents).<sup>3</sup>

In terms of specific television sources which respondents watched most often within a month before the survey was conducted were: ONT (59.8 percent), RTR-Belarus (51.1 percent), Belarus 1 (50.7 percent), NTV-Belarus (48.9 percent), Belarus 2 (33 percent) and STV (27.6 percent). The study drew attention to the high share of television products produced in Russia or with its participation, including in the mandatory publicly available TV package approved by the government.<sup>4</sup> Five of them - ONT, RTR-Belarus, NTV-Belarus, STV and Mir - having the legal status of Belarusian TV channels are "hybrid channels," as they are based on the content of the Russian Federation-based broadcasters. The share of Russian-made programs in the broadcasting of Belarusian TV programs exceeds 60 percent.<sup>5</sup> According to *DataReportal*, the internet penetration in Belarus stood at 82.8 percent in January 2021, with some 41.3 percent of the population using social media.<sup>6</sup>

As reported by Reporters Without Borders,<sup>i</sup> it has become extremely difficult for journalists to operate in Belarus in the past year in the face of constantly escalating persecution, which has included censorship, fines, threats, arbitrary detention and even torture. At the beginning of August, as many as 29 journalists and media workers were in prison. The BAI tallied nearly 500 arrests and detentions of journalists in the past year. After initially sentencing those detained to short administrative prison sentences, the authorities began giving them longer sentences in the autumn of 2020. Criminal prosecutions on spurious charges have been characterized by prolonged provisional detention with no basis, the absence of any investigation, and the violation of basic safeguards guaranteeing due process. They form part of the government's arsenal of weapons for silencing journalists, as does the institutional harassment of media outlets, whose victims have included the most popular news website TUT.BY. While several members of its staff, including editor-in-chief Marina Zolotova, have been prosecuted on trumped-up tax evasion [charges](#) beginning in the autumn of 2020,

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<sup>3</sup> The IAC that existed under the Administration of the President of the Republic ceased to exist by the presidential decree No. 49 from 12 February 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Decree No. 407 from 13 May 2015 "On the approval of the list of TV programs included in the mandatory public package of TV programs, and the determination of the sequence (priority) of their distribution"

<sup>5</sup> See more at the [BAI report](#) on monitoring pro-Russian propaganda in state television in November and December 2020, issued in May 2021.

<sup>6</sup> According to the data provided by the *Digital 2021 (Belarus)*, a research conducted annually by Simon Kemp (Kepios) with the support of various partners, including We Are Social and Hootsuite.

the site has been [blocked on 18 May 2021](#)<sup>7</sup> and on 13 August 2021, tut.by and zerkalo.io were declared extremist by the Central district court of Minsk.<sup>8</sup>

BAJ also experienced proceedings initiated by the Ministry of Justice aimed to close it down. On 30 July, BAJ representatives were summoned by the Supreme Court which on 11 August decided to liquidate the organization.<sup>9</sup>

Following the disputed August 2020 presidential election and consequent events that saw a number of journalists resign from state television, Russian journalists came to Minsk (more than 30 employees of Russia Today's TV channel and its structural unit of video news *Ruptly*) to work in the main media outlets, with the aim of strengthening direct censorship and help with propaganda, including on the Internet (more specifically, on social media networks).

After the 2020 election, the authorities took tough measures to suppress any activity on Internet, including:

- Blocking the Internet in Belarus in the immediate days after the elections and constant restrictions of the mobile Internet during mass protests;
- Restricting access to sites that independently covered the protests and other events, and recognizing their materials as extremist;
- Persecuting journalists from independent online portals who provided coverage of the protests;
- Liquidating the largest Internet portal, *TUT.by*;
- Putting pressure on popular Telegram and YouTube channels, as well as local chats (including the initiation of criminal cases, prosecution of their administrators, and the announcement of extremist materials).

## Post-election developments

The 9 August 2020 presidential election in Belarus, held without a presence of the [ODIHR election observation mission](#) (due to procedural obstacles and the lack of timely invitation from the Belarusian authorities), resulted in the sixth consecutive victory of Alyaksandr Lukashenka in a presidential election. However, this outcome of the polls was not recognized by most countries due to serious allegations of fraud and vote-rigging.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Reform.by, 19 May 2021, [ДФР: TUT.by нанес ущерб на миллионы долларов](#) (DFR: *TUT.by caused millions of dollar's worth of damage*), On 18 May 2021, the Ministry of Information opened a criminal case against the heads of TUT.BY based on tax evasion, detaining 15 people. The charges included an allegation that TUT.BY used third-party software, received revenue from this activity.

<sup>8</sup> Belsat.eu, 14 August 2021, [Content of TUT.by and Zerkalo.io recognized 'extremist'](#)

<sup>9</sup> See also International Press Institute, 3 September 2021, [Belarusian Association of Journalists forcibly closed](#)

<sup>10</sup> The countries that congratulated A. Lukashenka included Armenia, Azerbaijan, Burundi, Cambodia, Cuba, Eritrea, China, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Moldova, Myanmar, Nicaragua, North Korea, Oman, Russia (it forms the joint Union with Belarus), Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Venezuela and Vietnam.



In the run-up to the election, three serious challengers of the incumbent president were not registered as candidates, on dubious grounds. One of them was Viktor Babarika, opposition politician and banker, who was sentenced to 14 years in a maximum-security penal colony. The trial of another one, Sergei Tsikhanousky, who was also prevented from running in the elections, took place in December 2021 and concluded with an 18-year prison sentence for “guilty of organizing mass unrest and inciting social hatred” handed to the would-be presidential challenger. The pre- and post-election developments were characterized by a brutal use of force against protesters, with hundreds of thousands of Belarusians taking to the streets, tens of thousands detained and arrested, hundreds of people imprisoned, and some tortured by law enforcement agencies.

There were a few significant events that overshadowed the first two monitoring periods. On 17 April 2021, the special services of Russia and Belarus announced that an attempted coup in Belarus had taken place, which was quickly followed by the detention of opponents of the authorities (Alexander Feduta, Yury Zenkovich, Grigory Kostusev) in Moscow, presented as the disclosed “conspiracy against Lukashenka”. The arrests spurred a stream of anti-Western rhetoric and propaganda. On 23 May, a Ryanair plane with an opposition blogger Roman Protasevich, flying from Athens to Vilnius, was forced to land in Belarus.<sup>11</sup> This event, the story of alleged assassination attempt on Lukashenka, and the holding of scheduled NATO military exercises in the Baltics were covered widely and became subjects of propaganda narratives targeting the opponents of the regime and criticizing the West.

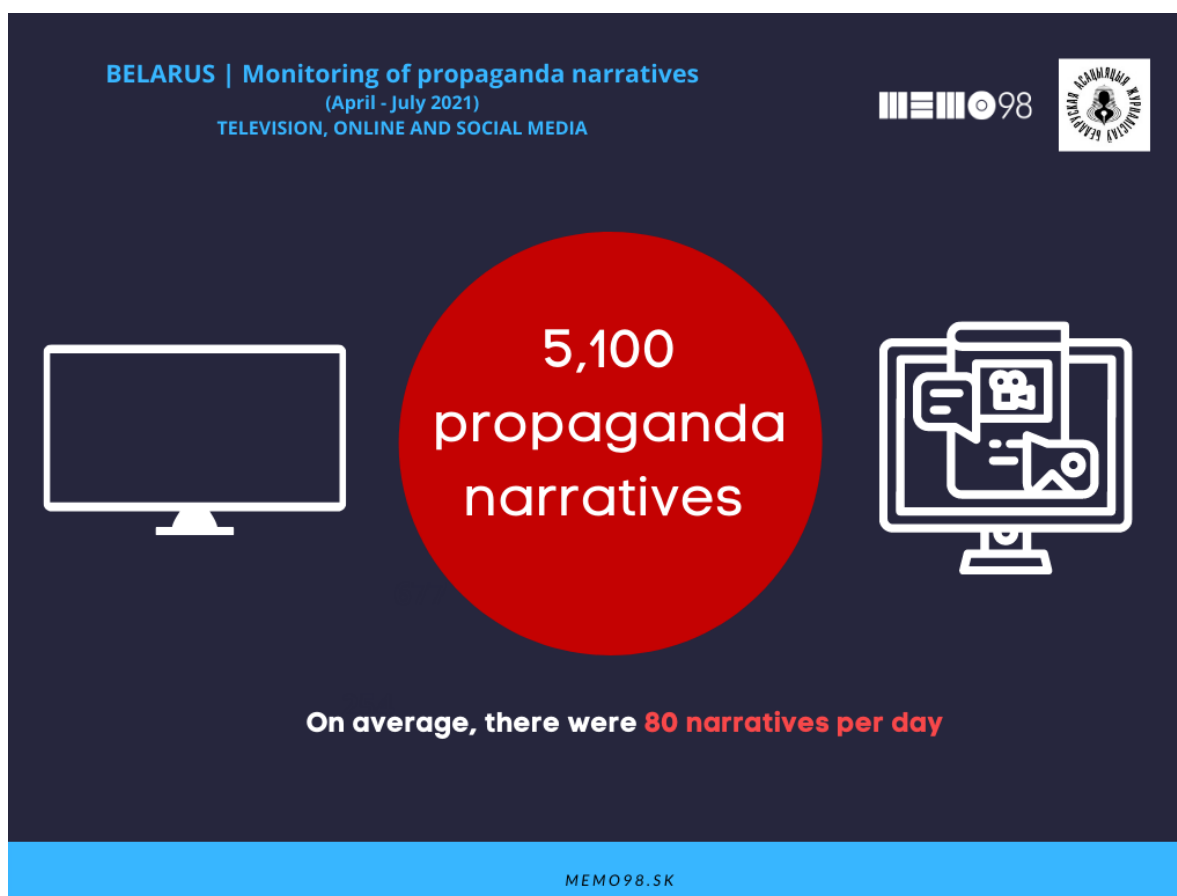
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<sup>11</sup> BBC, 25 May 2021, [Belarus plane: What we know and what we don't](#)

### III. Executive summary

- We identified a total of 5,100 of instances of propaganda narratives within five different types of media during 63 days of the monitoring, which equated on average to 80 narratives per day. There were 1,902 instances of such narratives on the monitored television channels, 1,551 on Facebook, 1,071 in *Sputnik Belarus*, 513 on Telegram and 63 on Instagram.

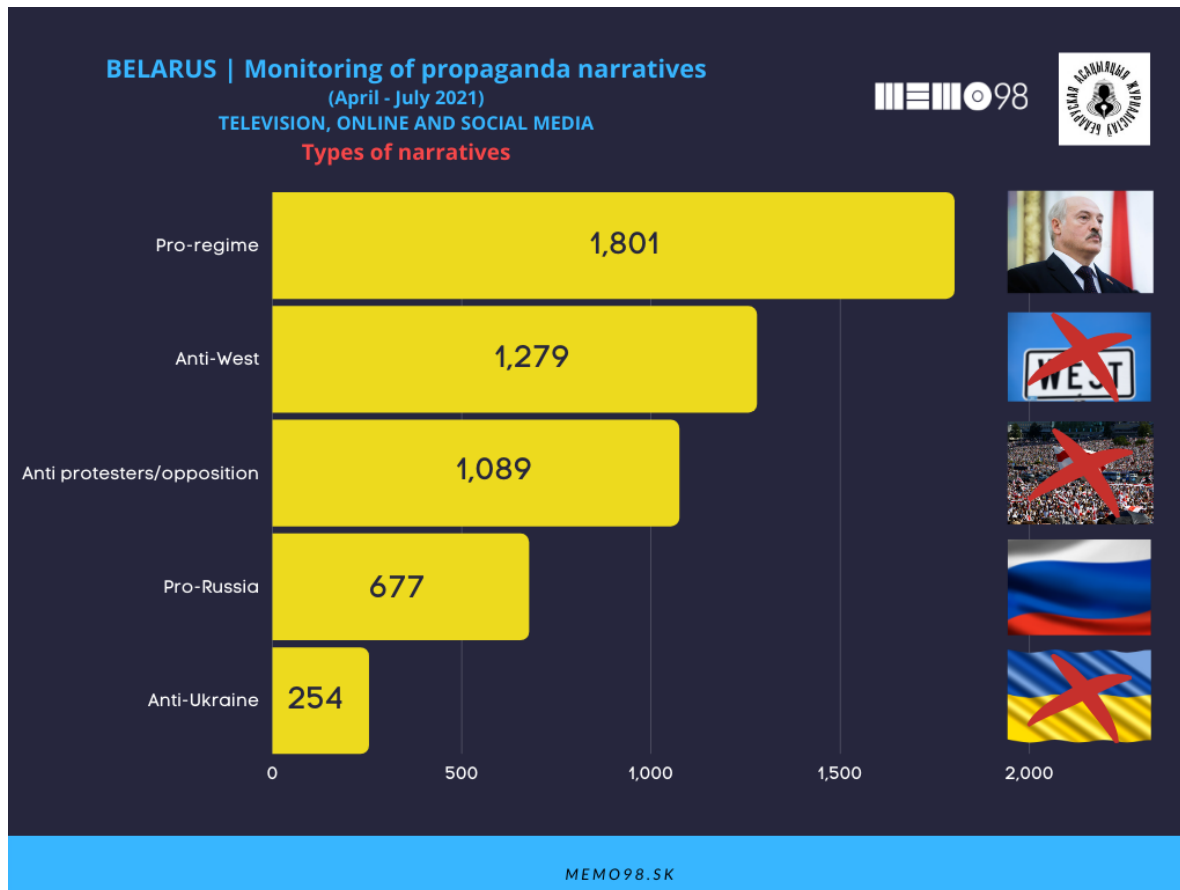
**Figure 1** | Monitoring of propaganda narratives in television, online and social media



Source: Compiled by the authors

- We divided the narratives into 5 different categories: pro-regime, anti-protesters/opposition, anti-West, anti-Ukraine, and pro-Russia. The biggest number of narratives were observed in the pro-regime category (1,801), followed by anti-West (1,279), anti-protesters/opposition (1,089), pro-Russia (677) and anti-Ukraine (254).

**Figure 2 |** Types of propaganda narratives divided into 5 categories



Source: Compiled by the authors

- The most frequently used propaganda narratives in all types of media were the pro-regime ones which was more than 20 percent of all the narratives identified throughout the monitoring period. The most used narrative was *'Belarus lives with its own mind, we are not afraid of sanctions or any dictate'* appearing 392 times. It was followed by *'The memory of the war, the achievement of people are immortal'* (356 times) and by *'Lukashenka cares about the land, people, country, he is a real man and leader'* (303 times). Among the top 10 propaganda narratives, we identified 4 in the pro-regime category, and 2 in the anti-protesters/opposition, anti-west and pro-Russia, respectively.

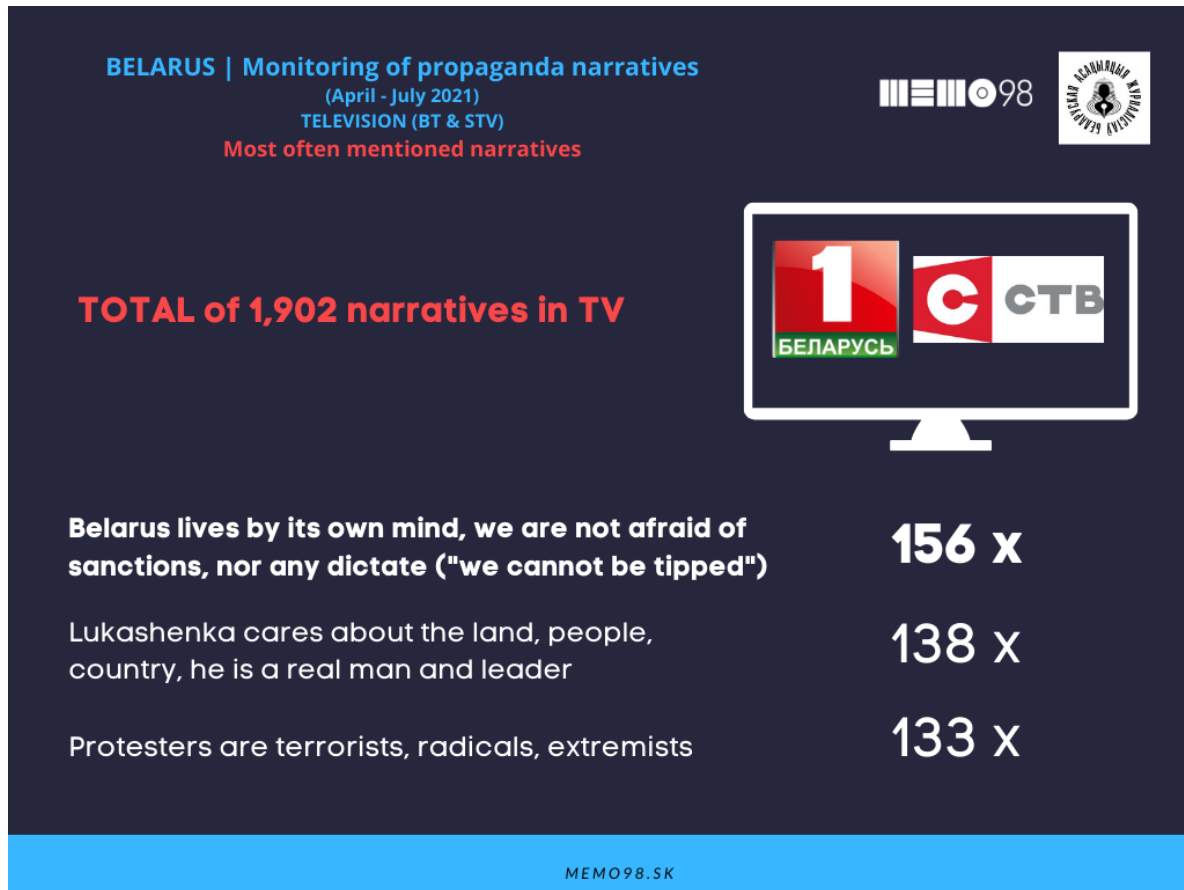
**Figure 3 | Most often mentioned narratives in all monitored media**



Source: Compiled by the authors

- On the monitored TV channels, we identified a total of 1,902 propaganda narratives. As many as 608 were in the pro-regime category, while 538 were in the anti-West and 483 anti-protester/opposition categories, respectively. These narratives were mainly disseminated by journalists, president Lukashenka and the state power structures. As many as 1,076 narratives were detected on state television channel BT, which serves as the main mouthpiece of regime propaganda.

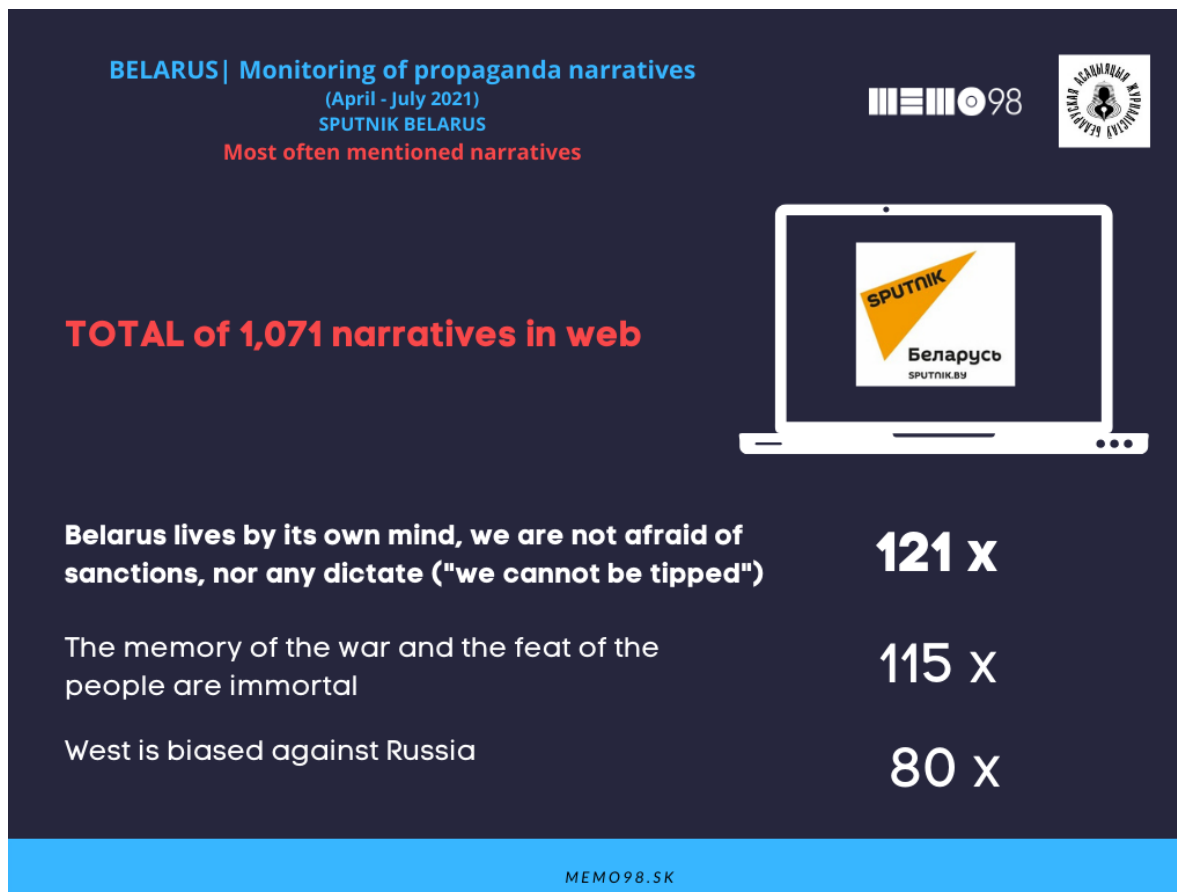
Figure 4 | Most often mentioned narratives in television



Source: Compiled by the authors

- While *Sputnik Belarus* generated 373 pro-regime narratives, as many as 299 narratives were observed in the pro-Russia category and 182 in the anti-West one, out of a total of 1,071 propaganda narratives identified during the monitoring period. When it comes to actors disseminating these narratives, these were mainly the Speaker of the Parliament, pro-government analysts, and Lukashenka.

Figure 5 | Most often mentioned narratives in *Sputnik Belarus*



Source: Compiled by the authors

- The monitoring indicated that Lukashenka's regime has been actively using social media for the dissemination of propaganda narratives. Out of a total of 2,127 identified on social media, an overwhelming majority (1,551) was detected in Facebook. When it comes to categories, similar to other types of monitored media, most of the narratives in Facebook were found in the pro-regime category (617), followed by anti-West (415) and anti-protesters/opposition (324) categories.

**Figure 6** | Most often mentioned narratives on Facebook



*Source:* Compiled by the authors

- The second most actively used social media platform was Telegram (a total of 513 propaganda narratives) which was used also for the distribution of pro-regime narratives (151), followed by anti-West (139) and anti-protesters/opposition (119). Instagram was used much less (a total of 63 narratives), but the most active category of narratives was also the pro-regime one (52).

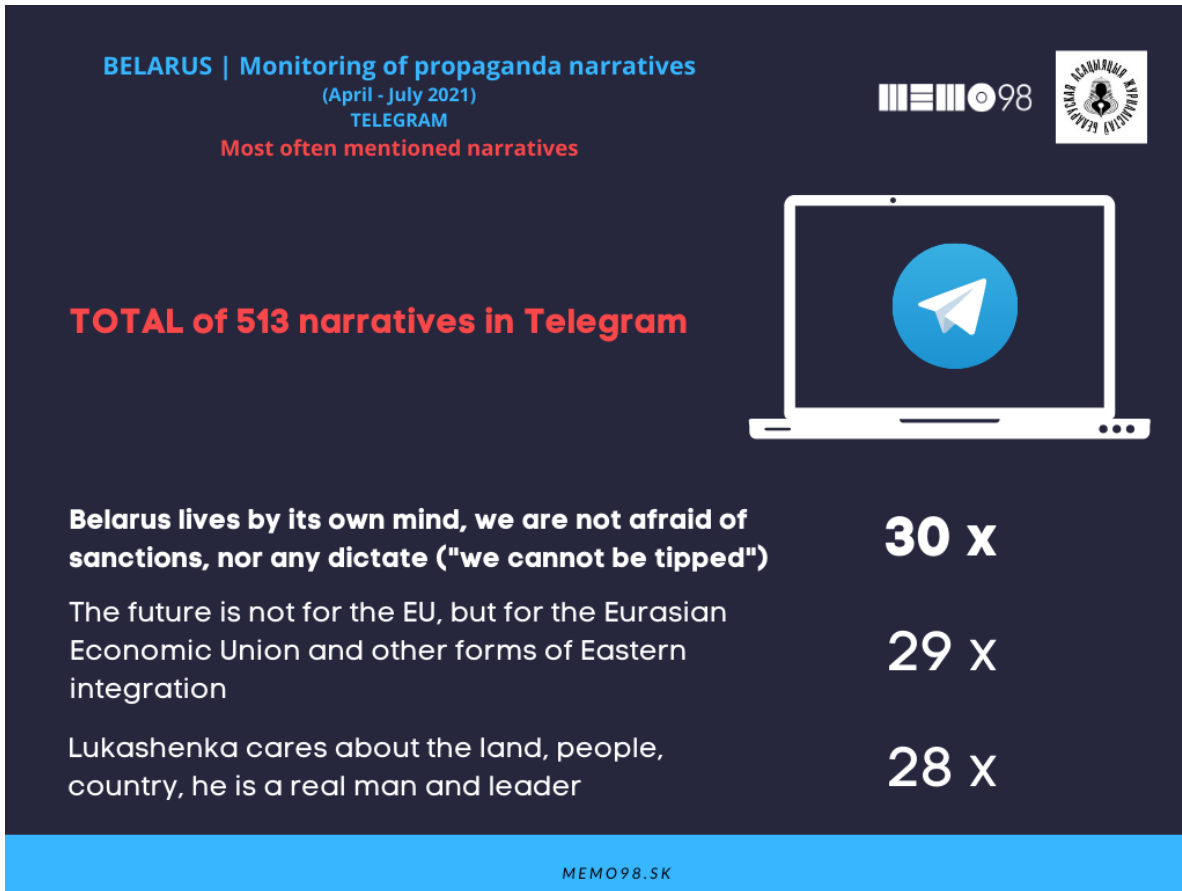
**Figure 7** | Most often mentioned narratives on Instagram



Source: Compiled by the authors

**Figure 8** | Most often mentioned narratives on Telegram





Source: Compiled by the authors

- The monitoring also found that the pro-regime propaganda used inflammatory speech and incitement to fuel hatred towards the Belarusian opposition as well as against the Western countries that support the right of Belarusians to choose their president in a repeated election. Insults, slander and threats against perceived opponents of the regime have been regularly broadcast on television and social media and re-communicated by official sources.
- The narrative of external threat to Belarus grew exponentially in the messages of the monitoring actors (a military threat from NATO, *we are surrounded by enemies, we need to withstand, we need to make our own weapons because no one can guarantee that the country will not have to fight*).
- Anti-Western narratives were also frequent, targeting Belarus' neighboring countries such as Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Ukraine, as well as the United States and Western Europe, who were often referred to as organizers of color revolutions. In the coverage of monitored subjects, the definition of "collective West", adopted from Russia, gradually became

preponderant. Overall, it was systematically linked with the narrative that "this is a war against us with Russia", and that "they want to get to Russia through Belarus."

- Unlike during the period in the run-up to the 2020 election, messages and materials containing criticism of the integration processes concerning the Union State of Russia and Belarus as well as criticism of the Russian authorities practically disappeared or became much softer.
- In the course of the monitoring, Alyaksandr Lukashenka was the main newsmaker determining the news agenda. His emotional statements were repeated by officials at all levels and disseminated by pro-government journalists and influencers, on all monitored media. While before the 2020 presidential election the regime clearly underestimated the power of social media, our most recent monitoring confirms that the regime has been using social media very actively to influence public opinion.
- An anonymous Telegram account *Pul Pervogo*, believed to be launched by Lukashenka's press service after the 2020 presidential election, was among the most active propaganda tools disseminating propaganda narratives, with the rest of the pro-regime media outlets promoting them. The narratives were conveyed in different forms, such as feature stories presented by news anchors, during shows, interviews, "investigative stories" and other TV, radio and online/social media reports.
- There were a number of pro-regime protagonists, ranging from leading announcers on TV shows, or various "experts" of dubious origin and professional status, who voiced their one-sided and biased assessments of what is happening in Belarus. These pro-regime actors include Grigory Azarenok, Evgeny Pustovoy, Yulia Artyukh, Alexey Golikov. The assessments of events and comments by news anchors were repeated almost word-by-word by various state channels and then reproduced by other monitored actors.
- The monitored subjects in TV and online media appeared to have supported the punitive actions by the security forces vis-à-vis the protesters. The monitored social media platforms of the authorities, such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs and its Spokesperson, posted mainly informational messages, such as on the identification and prosecution of persons who took part in the post-election protests. The main message was the inevitability of punishment and the "all-seeing eye" from which no one can hide.
- Representatives of the opposition or civil society were shown on state TV only in a very negative context such as confessing to crimes they were accused of, with these confessions being visibly extracted under duress. In

particular, the blogger Roman Protasevich (seized from the redirected RyanAir flight) was used actively in this context to promote the pro-regime version of post-election developments.

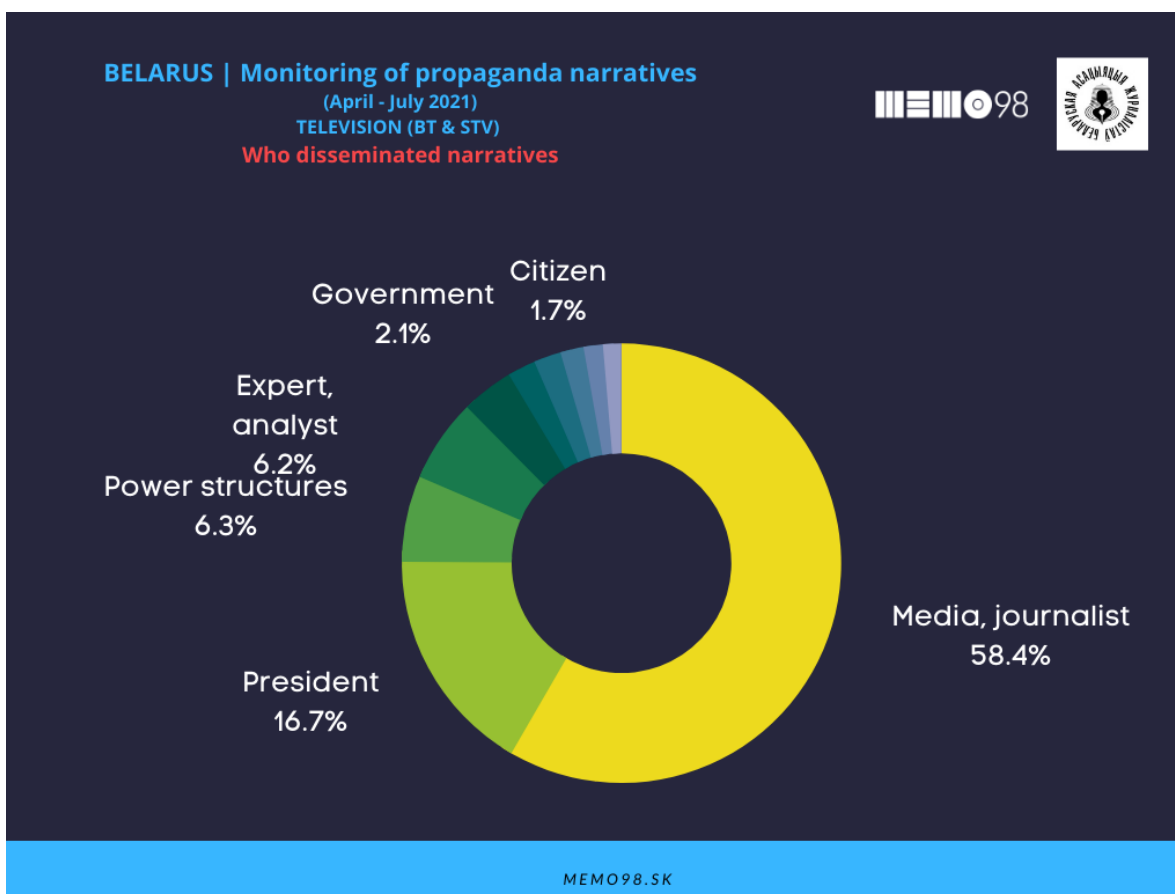
## IV. Findings

### Television

#### BT and STV

In both monitored TV channels, the monitoring revealed that media/journalists were the main disseminators of narratives (in 58 percent of the cases), followed by Lukashenka (17 percent), experts/analysts and the power structures (both 6 percent).

**Figure 9** | Television (BT and STV together) – Subjects that presented narratives (number of reports)

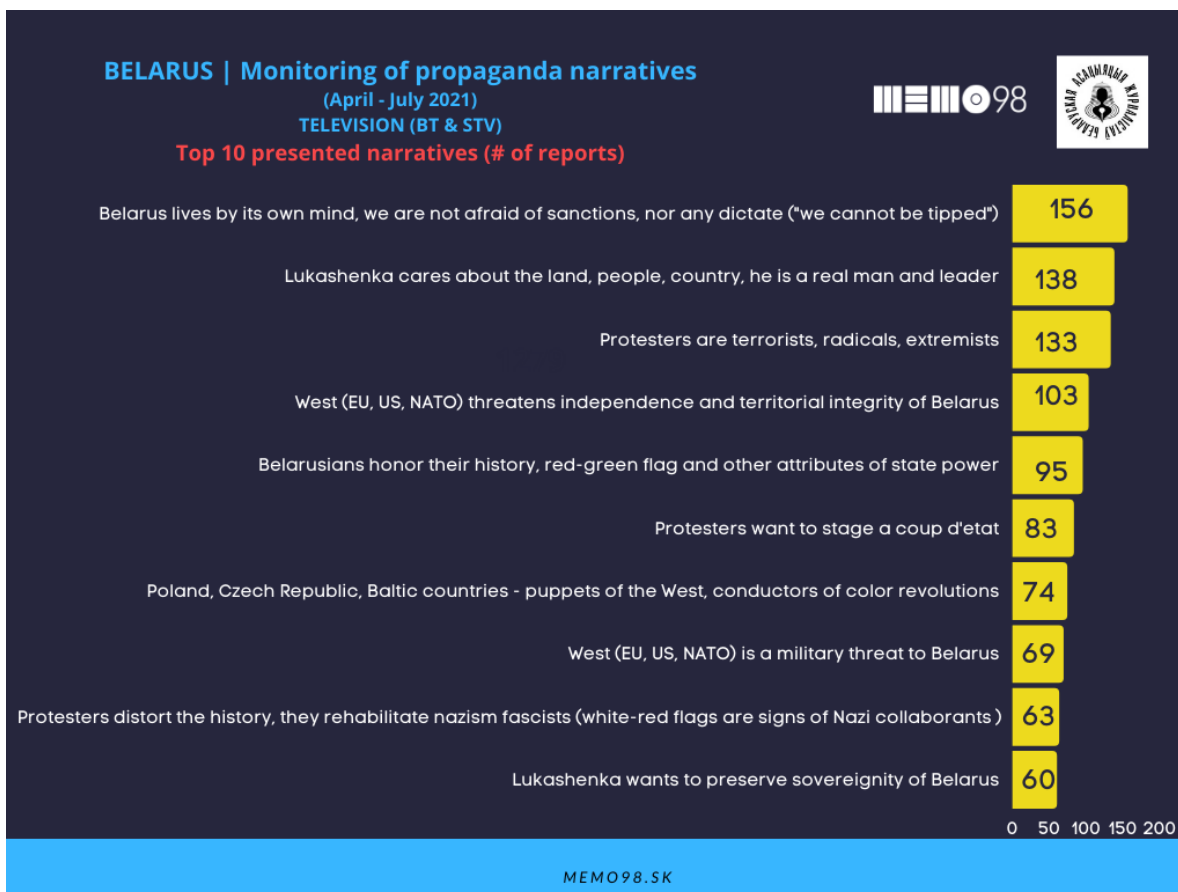


Source: Compiled by the authors

In the two TV channels, the dominating narratives were those of pro-regime (608) anti-West (538) and anti-protesters (483) categories. The two most present narratives were : *'Belarus lives by its own mind, we are not afraid of sanctions, nor any dictate ("we cannot be tipped")'* which was identified 156 times, followed by *'Lukashenka cares*

about the land people, country, he is a real man and leader’ (138 times). Among the anti-protester/opposition narratives, the most often mentioned one was ‘Protesters are terrorists, radicals, and extremists’ (133 times, the third most presented narrative in TV), while the most often presented anti-West narrative was ‘The West (EU, US, NATO) threatens the independence and territorial integrity of Belarus’ (103 times, the fourth most presented narrative in TV).

**Figure 10** | Television (BT and STV) - Top 10 presented narratives (number of reports)



Source: Compiled by the authors

The narrative that “Lukashenka is a national hero” was often contrasted with the narratives about the lawlessness of Western democracy. Attempts to rehabilitate the word “dictatorship” were interesting: “*These are lengthy arguments about the nature of democracy. Perhaps, they will be enough to rethink and support the dictatorship of order and stability, while observing the lawlessness of democracy in Western countries. Stability, which has become a deficit today.*” (STV, A. Golikov, evening news, 26 April 2021)

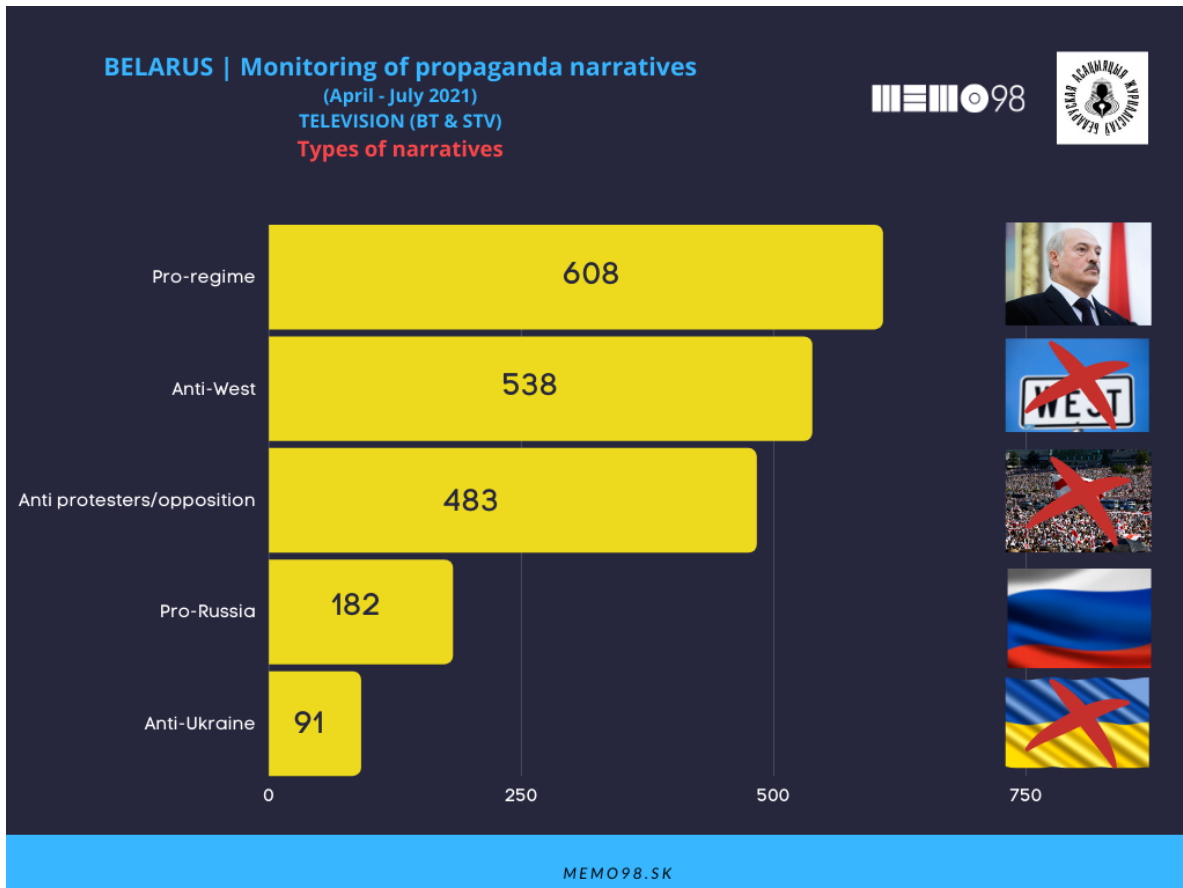
The propaganda narrative describing external military threats to Belarus used very colorful language such as: “*This dirty, smelly dog opened its mouth. But it will break off*”

*its teeth about us. The Belarusian government is confident and strong as never before. Belarus is an outpost of new Eurasia. The civilization of death is creeping here. But the sun rises in the east. Victory will be behind us. The battle psalm sounds like a bell. " (STV, Grigory Azarenok, 28 April 2021), or: "In the West, the posthuman has already won. He is like a crazy vampire longing for new blood. He rushed here. He wants to destroy Belarus. But he will not work. A man stands in his way. A great man." He will not leave his sweet homeland. " (STV, G. Azarenok, 30 May 2021)*

It is emphasized that Russia and Belarus have a “common enemy” - *“It is already quite obvious that the protest movements in our country and in Russia are organized and coordinated from a single center, which is led by Western special services. The manuals practically do not differ, starting with slogans and ending with tactics. Both by us and by our allies, these forces were defeated. " (STV, Y. Aleksiyuk, 11 May 2021); Belarus is called an “outpost of Russian interests” (STV, E. Pustovoy, 2021).*

In total, there were 1,902 narratives in both monitored TV channels. We identified most narratives in the pro-regime category (608), followed by anti-West (538), anti protesters/opposition (483), pro-Russia (182) and anti-Ukraine (91).

**Figure 11 | TV channels - Types of Narratives**



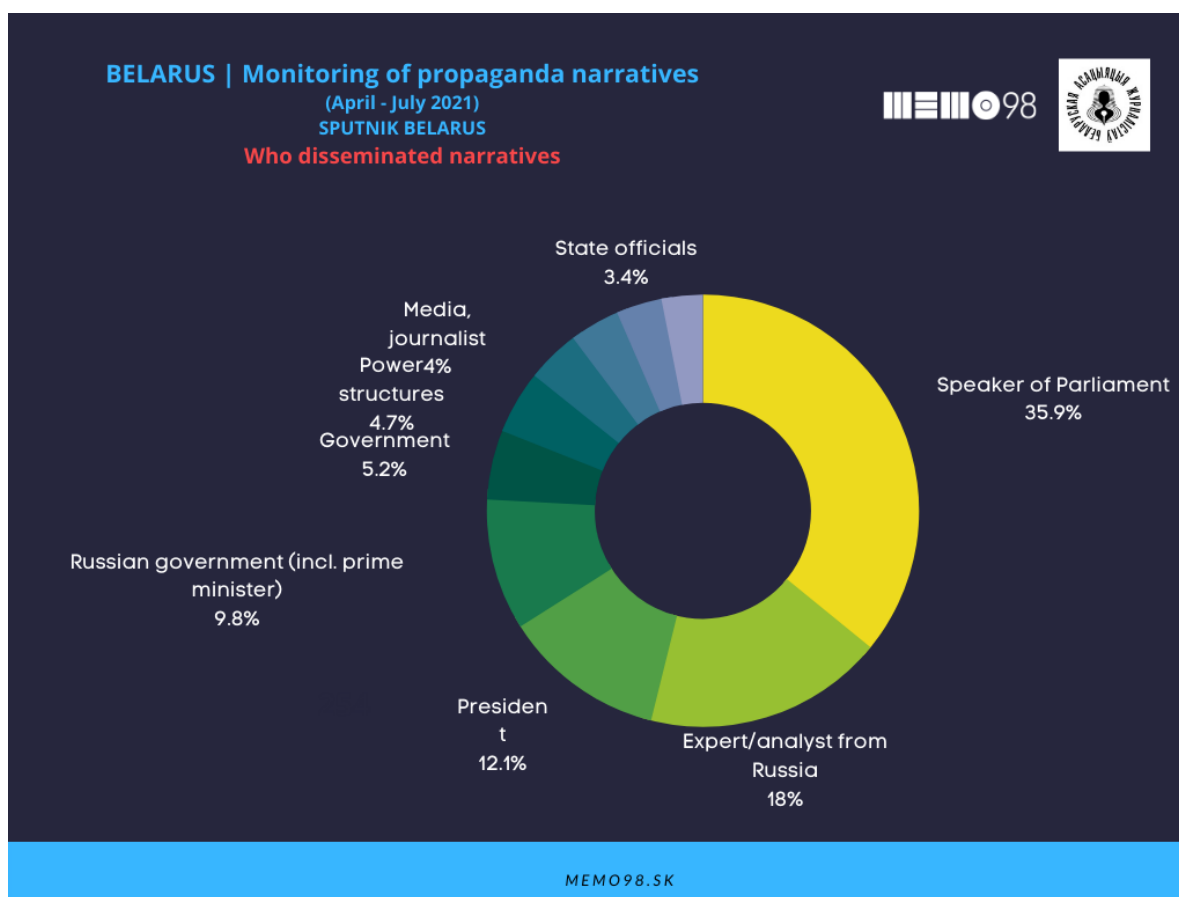
Source: Compiled by the authors

## Online media

### Sputnik Belarus

The monitoring revealed that Sputnik’s reports were different from those of TV channels. By far the most presented actor was the Speaker of the Parliament (36 percent of the content), followed by expert/analyst from Russia (18 percent), Lukashenka (12 percent) and the Russian government (10 percent). The pro-Russian orientation of this outlet was clearly visible by hosting Russian experts and pursuing pro-Russian narratives.

Figure 12 | Sputnik Belarus – Subjects that presented narratives (number of reports)

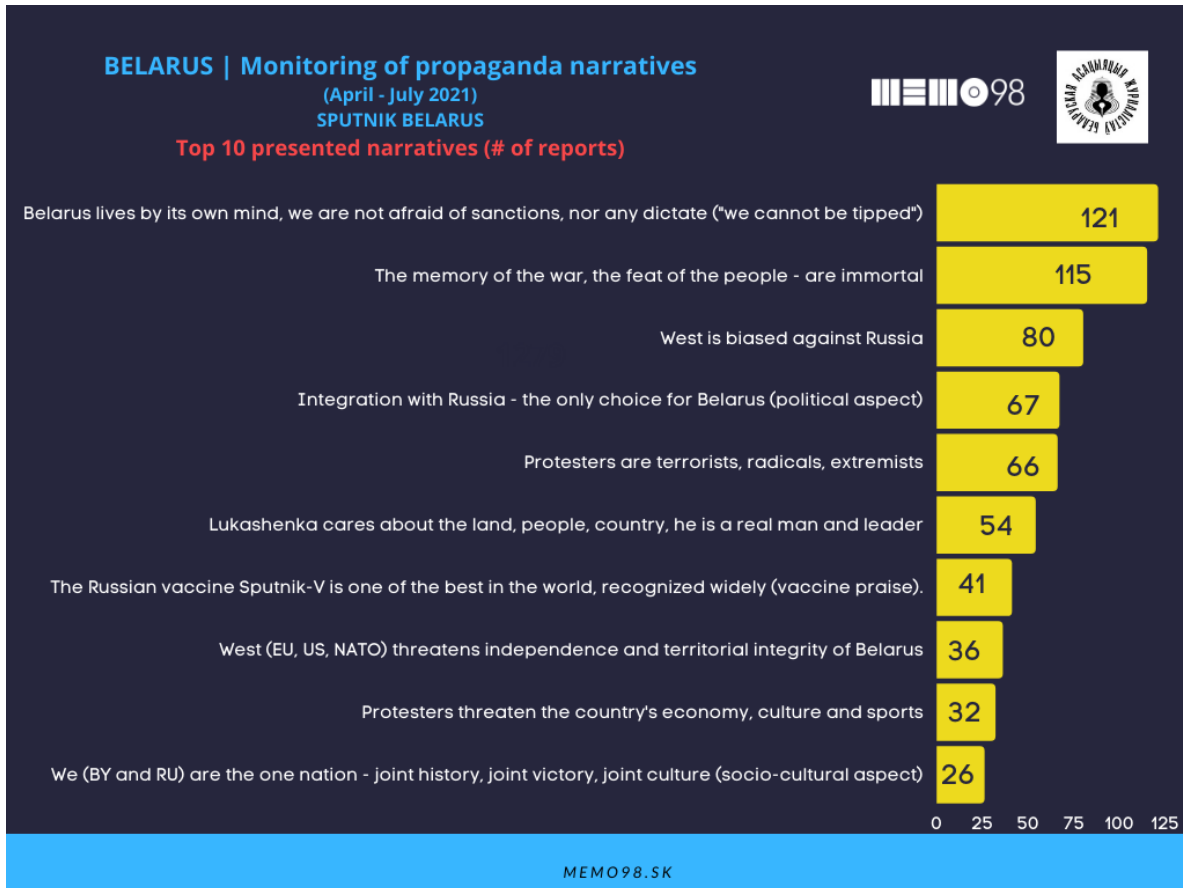


Source: Compiled by the authors

While the most present narratives were the pro-regime ones (such as *‘Belarus lives by its own mind, we are not afraid of sanctions or any dictate’* (121 times), the pro-Russian narratives were featured frequently – such as *‘West is biased against Russia’* (80 times,

third-most presented narrative in *Sputnik Belarus*) or ‘Integration with Russia – the only choice for Belarus’ (67 times, fourth-most presented narrative in *Sputnik Belarus*).

**Figure 13 | Sputnik Belarus - Top 10 presented narratives (Number of reports)**

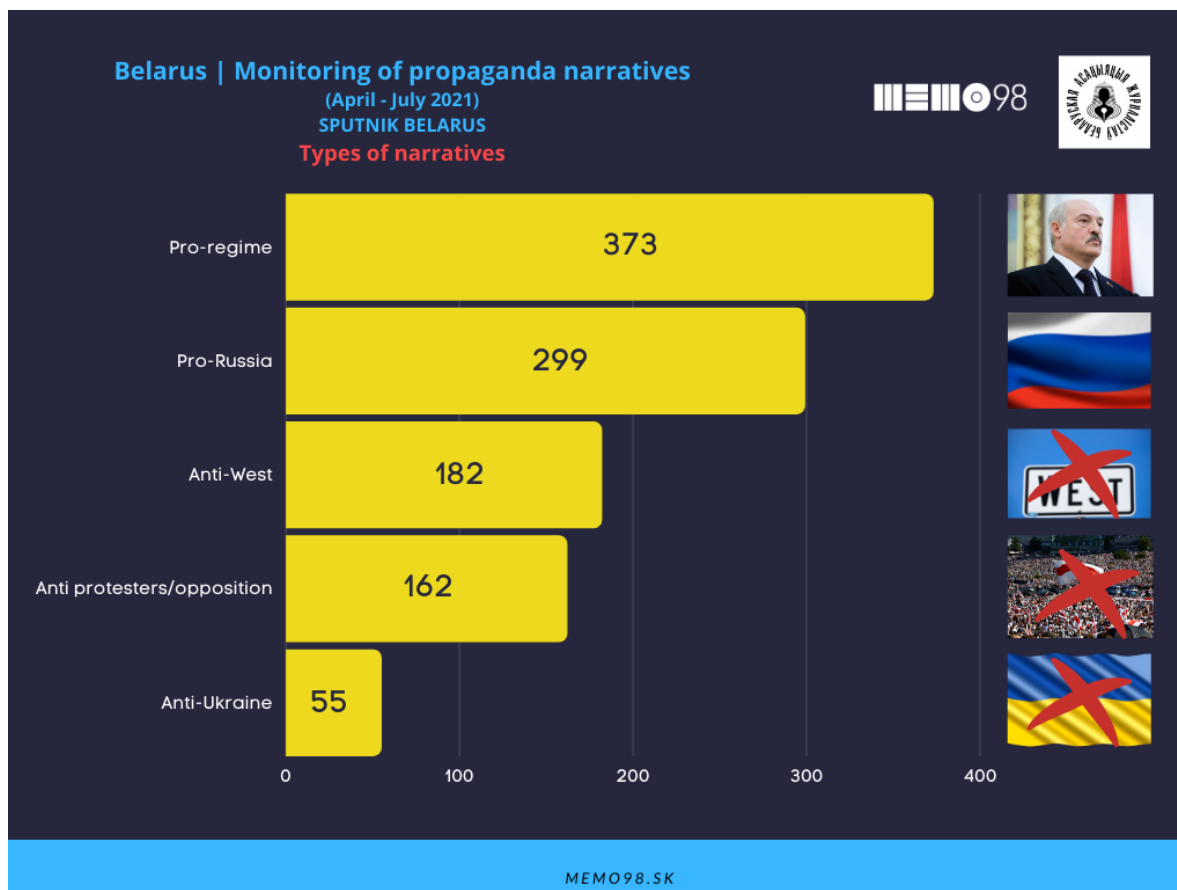


Source: Compiled by the authors

There were 1,071 narratives in Sputnik’s stories, out of which the single largest group of narratives were those pro-regime (373), followed by pro-Russia ones (299) and anti-West (182).



Figure 14 | Sputnik Belarus - Types of Narratives



Source: Compiled by the authors

## Social media

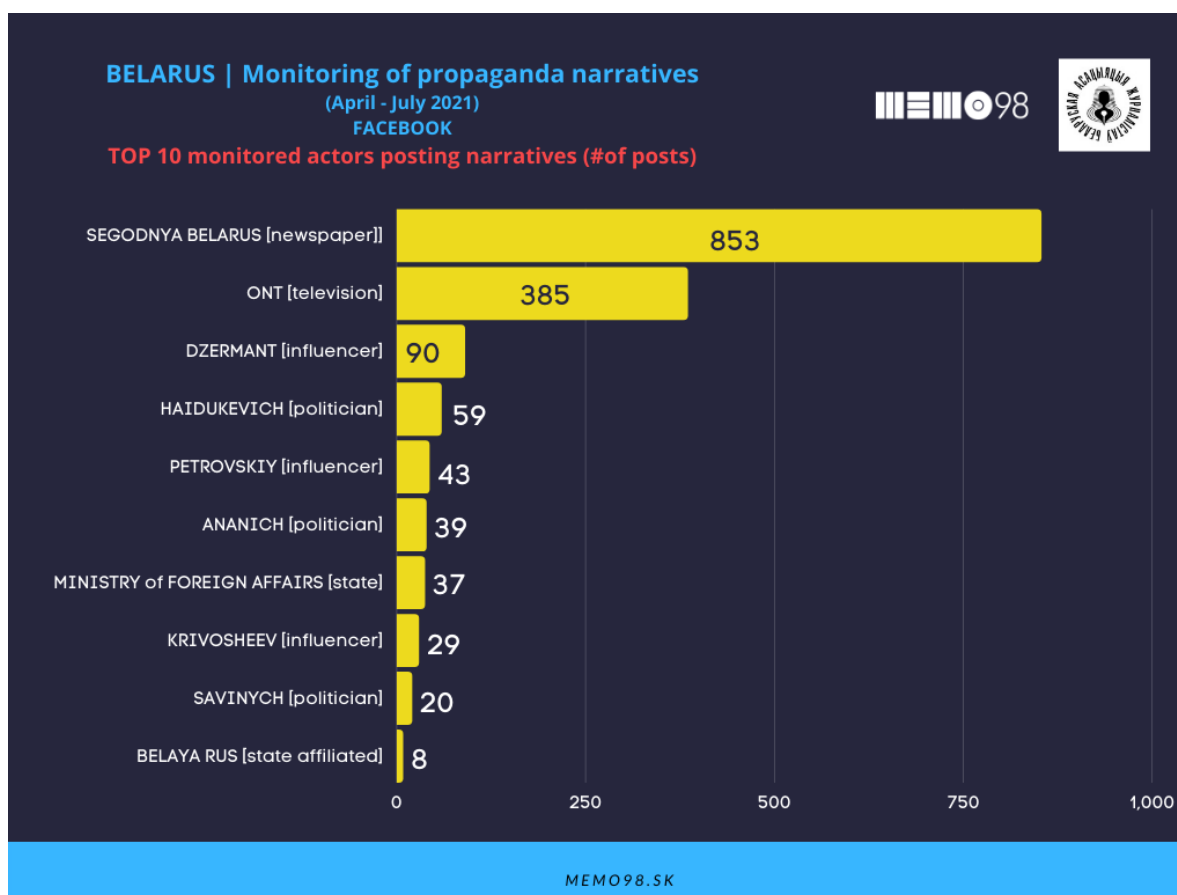
There are an estimated 7.82 million internet users (82.8 percent, an increase by 4.6 percent between 2020 and 2021) and 3.9 million (41.3 percent) social media users in the country.<sup>12</sup> The [monitoring](#) conducted by MEMO 98, along with EAST Center and Linking Media, indicated that Lukashenka conducted an analog campaign in a digital age during the 2020 presidential election and faltered in the face of social media. The 2021 monitoring revealed that the regime does not ignore social media any longer but has started using it actively to promote its propaganda narratives to manipulate public opinion.

<sup>12</sup> According to the data provided by the *Digital 2021 (Belarus)*, a research conducted annually by Simon Kemp (Kepios) with the support of various partners, including We Are Social and Hootsuite.

## Facebook

We monitored 13 accounts on Facebook, including two media outlets (television ONT, and newspaper Belarus Segodnya), three state authorities (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Belaya Rus), four politicians (Lilia Ananich, Aleh Haidukevich, Vladimir Karanik, Andrey Savinych), and four influencers (Aleksej Dzermant, Andrey Krivosheev, Aleksandr Shpakovskiy, Petr Petrovskiy). The most active in terms of posting content that contained some of the followed narratives were the accounts of media, followed by influencers, politicians and state institutions.

**Figure 15** | Facebook – All monitored actors (authorities, politicians, influencers, media outlets) with narratives (posts)



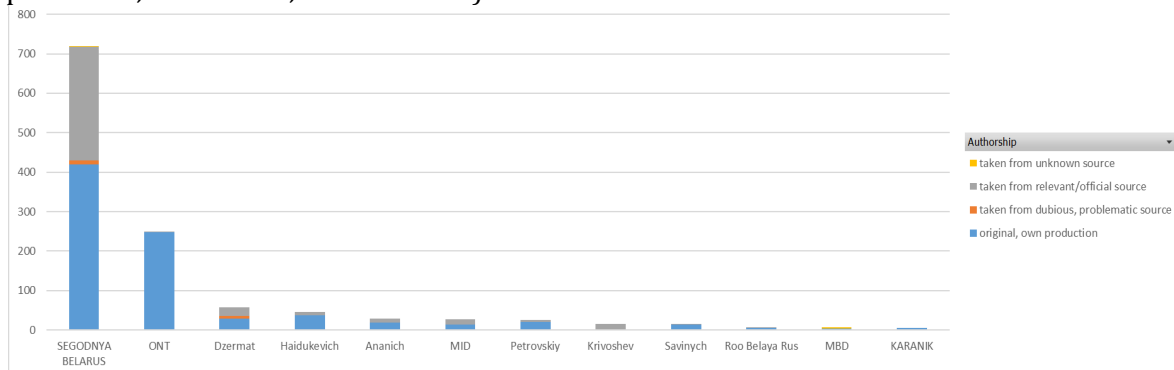
Source: Compiled by the authors

When it comes to the number of shares, while media outlets still dominated in terms of the total numbers, the most successful individual actors were A. Haidukevic (politician), A. Dzermant and A. Krivosheev (both influencers), while among institutions, it was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As for comments, ONT and the Foreign Ministry received the highest number of them. Regarding the number of

comments weighted by the number of posts, influencer P. Petrovskiy in particular, as well as the politician A. Haidukevich, were among the most 'commented about' individuals.

In considering authorship of posts, while most monitored actors published their own content, some of them, such as Dzermant, and *Belarus Segodnya* used information taken from dubious/problematic sources.

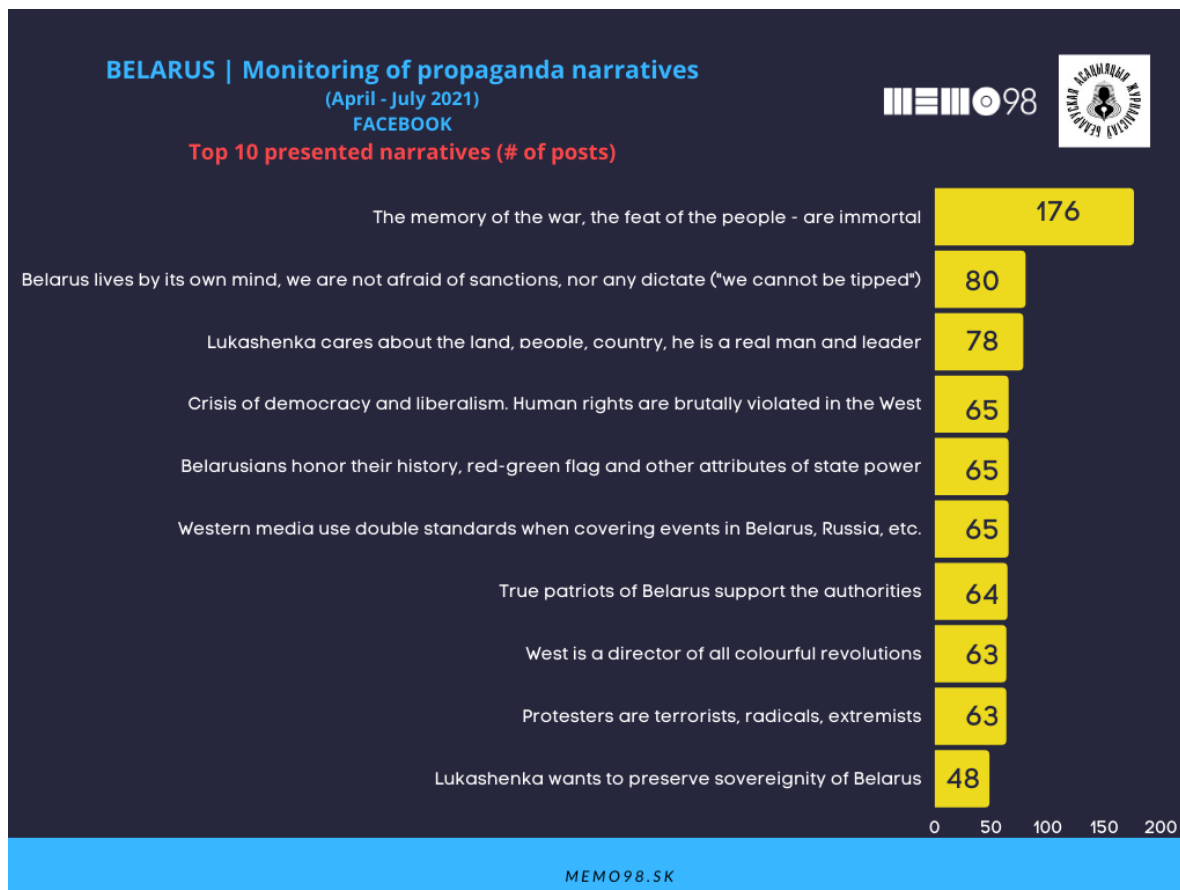
**Figure 16 | Facebook - Authorship of Reactions among all monitored actors (authorities, politicians, influencers, media outlets)**



Source: Compiled by the authors

Concerning particular narratives presented via Facebook posts of the monitored actors, *'The memory of the war, the achievement of people - are immortal'* was the most presented narrative in posts of the followed media outlets, as well as in the posts of politicians and authorities (only monitored influencers focused more on another narrative *'The future is not for the EU, but for the Eurasioan Economic Union and other forms of Eastern integration'*).

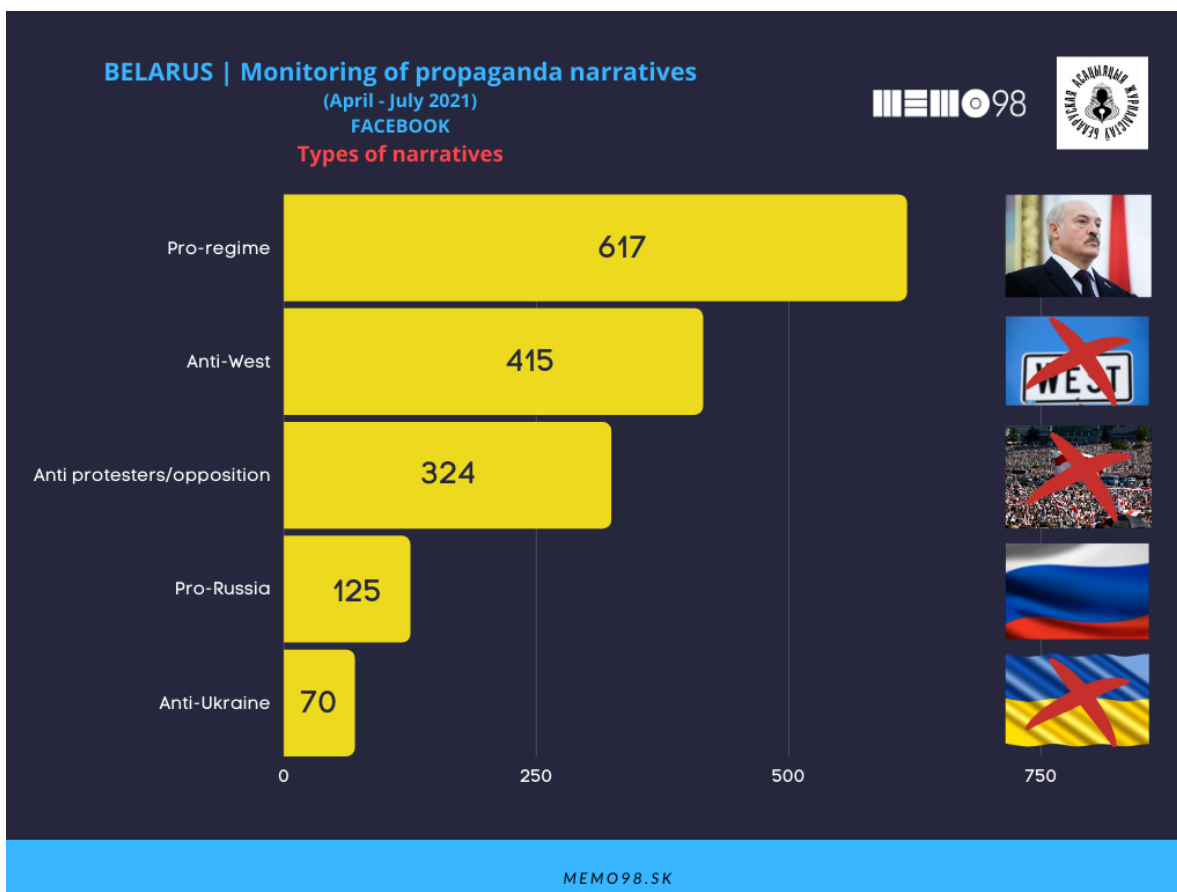
**Figure 17** | Facebook - Top 10 Narratives among all actors (authorities, politicians, influencers, media outlets)



Source: Compiled by the authors

If looking into the five categories of narratives, out of 1,551 total recorded instances, the pro-regime narratives (617 times) dominated the Facebook posts of monitored actors, followed by anti-West (415 times) and anti-protesters/opposition (324 times) narratives.

**Figure 18 | Facebook - Types of Narratives**



Source: Compiled by the authors

Among the monitored media outlets on Facebook, the most presented were the following ones – ‘The memory of the war, the feat of the people - are immortal’ (119), followed by ‘Lukashenka cares about the land, people, country, he is a real man and leader’ (74) and ‘Belarus lives by its own mind, we are not afraid of sanctions, nor any dictate (we cannot be tipped)’ (61).

**Figure 19 | Facebook - Top 10 Narratives in monitored Facebook accounts**



Source: Compiled by the authors

Regarding posts by authorities, as mentioned above, the narrative *'The memory of the war, the feat of the people - are immortal'* was by far the most 'present' in their Facebook posts (24 times), while none from all the other narratives was identified more than 5 times, respectively.

As mentioned, monitored politicians in their Facebook posts focused on protesters, *'The memory of the war, the feat of the people - are immortal'* was first in terms of number of posts' (19 times), followed by *'Belarusians honor their history, red-green flag and other attributes of state power'* (10 times) *'Belarus lives by its own mind, we are not afraid of sanctions, nor any dictate ("we cannot be tipped")'* (9 times).

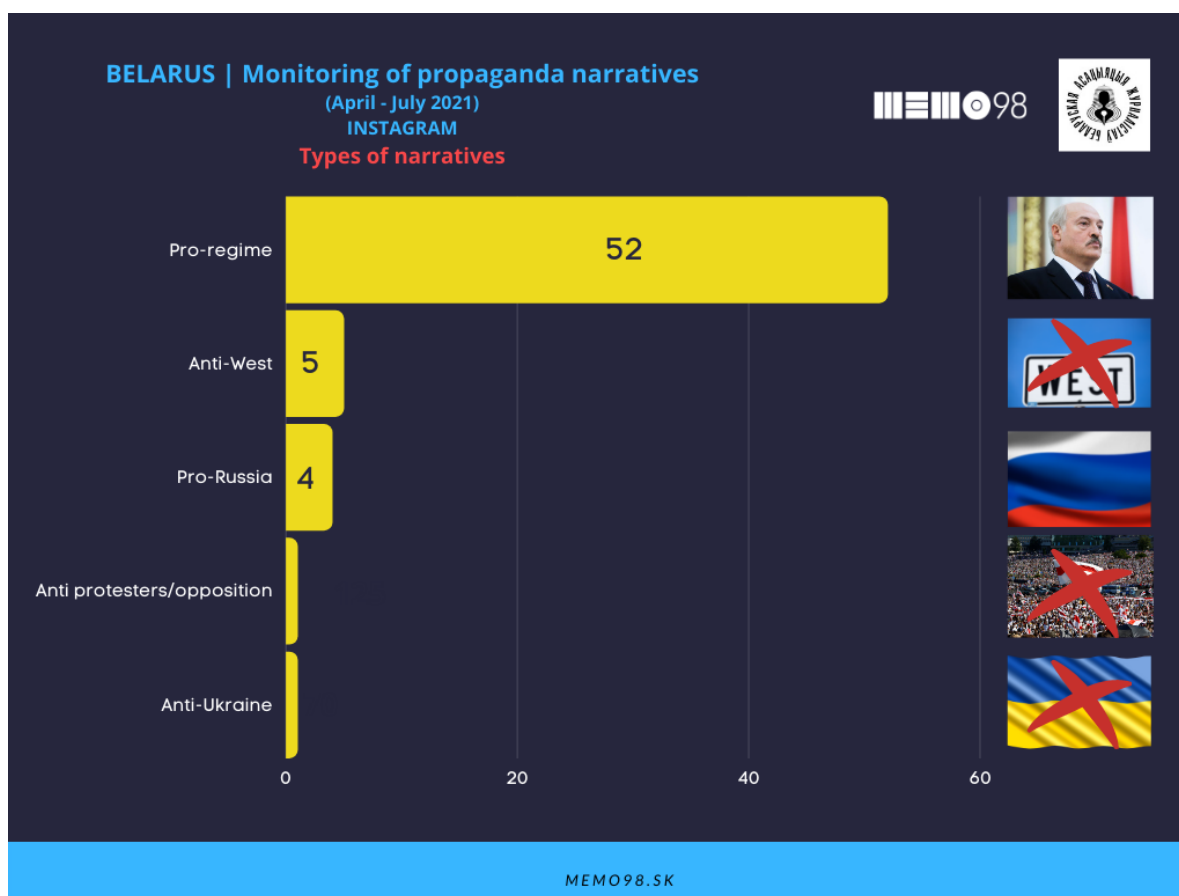
As for influencers, the narrative *"The future is not for the EU, but for the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and other forms of eastern integration'* was first in terms of

number of posts (24 posts). The other two narratives which each were present in 14 and 9 posts respectively were *The memory of the war, the fear of the people - are immortal* and *'Rise of fascism in Europe' and 'We will endure the sanctions together'*.

## Instagram

In Instagram, the number of relevant social media accounts was limited to seven, including two state authorities and other structures (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belaya Rus), three politicians (Lilia Ananich, Vladimir Karanik, Andrey Savinych), and one influencer (Andrey Krivosheev).<sup>13</sup>

**Figure 20 | Instagram - Types of Narratives**



Source: Compiled by the authors

The monitoring identified 63 posts with narratives in total, posted by state authorities and politicians; with the narrative *'The memory of the war, the fear of the people are immortal'* dominant altogether (31 times), and also in both actors' groups respectively.

<sup>13</sup> While two media outlets (Belta news agency and Belarus Segodnya newspaper) have their Instagram accounts, the monitoring focused only on one social media account of the media outlet.

**Figure 21 | Instagram - Top 10 Narratives among all actors (authorities, politicians, influencers)**



Source: Compiled by the authors

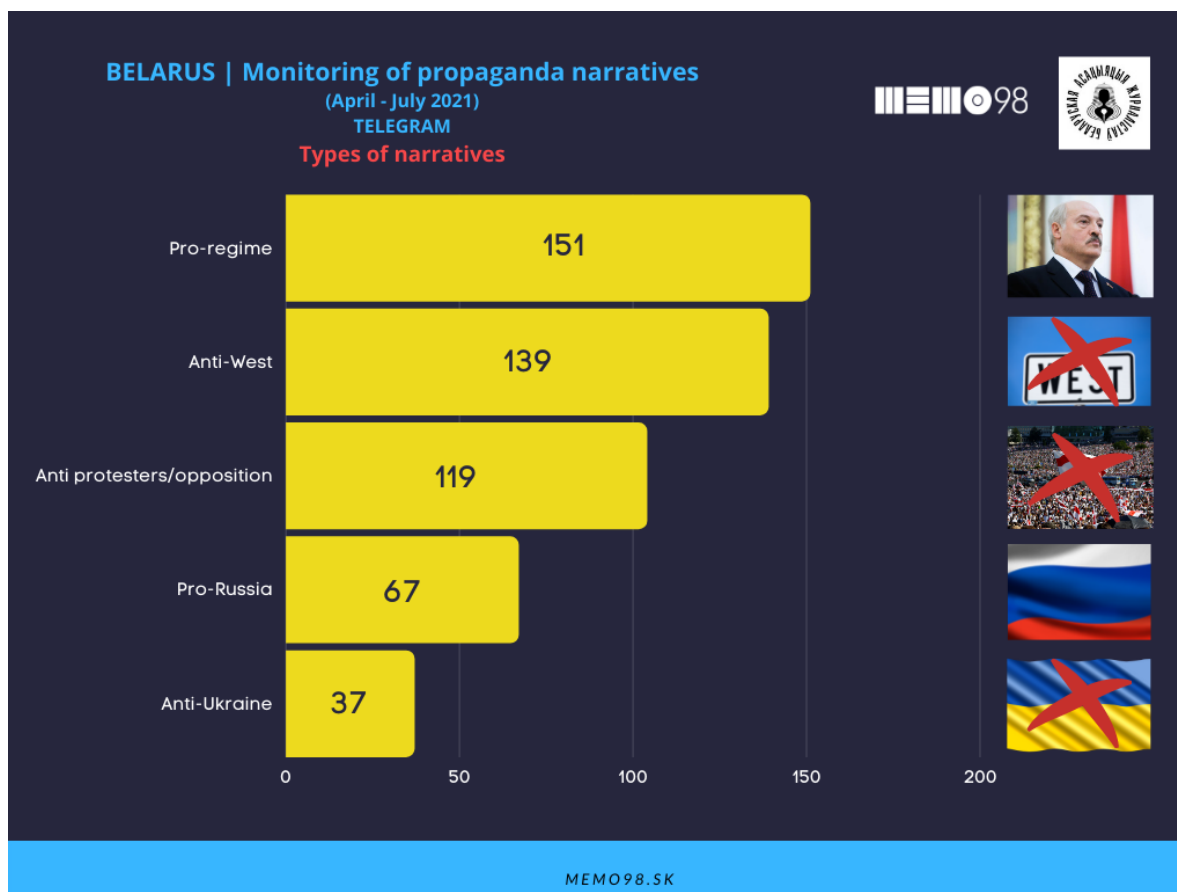
## Telegram

We monitored 7 accounts on Telegram. The number of relevant social media accounts was limited to three influencers (Aleksej Dzermant, Aleksandr Shpakovskiy, Petr Petrovskiy), two-state structures (Spokesperson of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Pul Pervogo), 1 politician (Aleh Haidukevich) and 1 media outlet (Pravo.by).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The outlet did not posted during the monitored period.



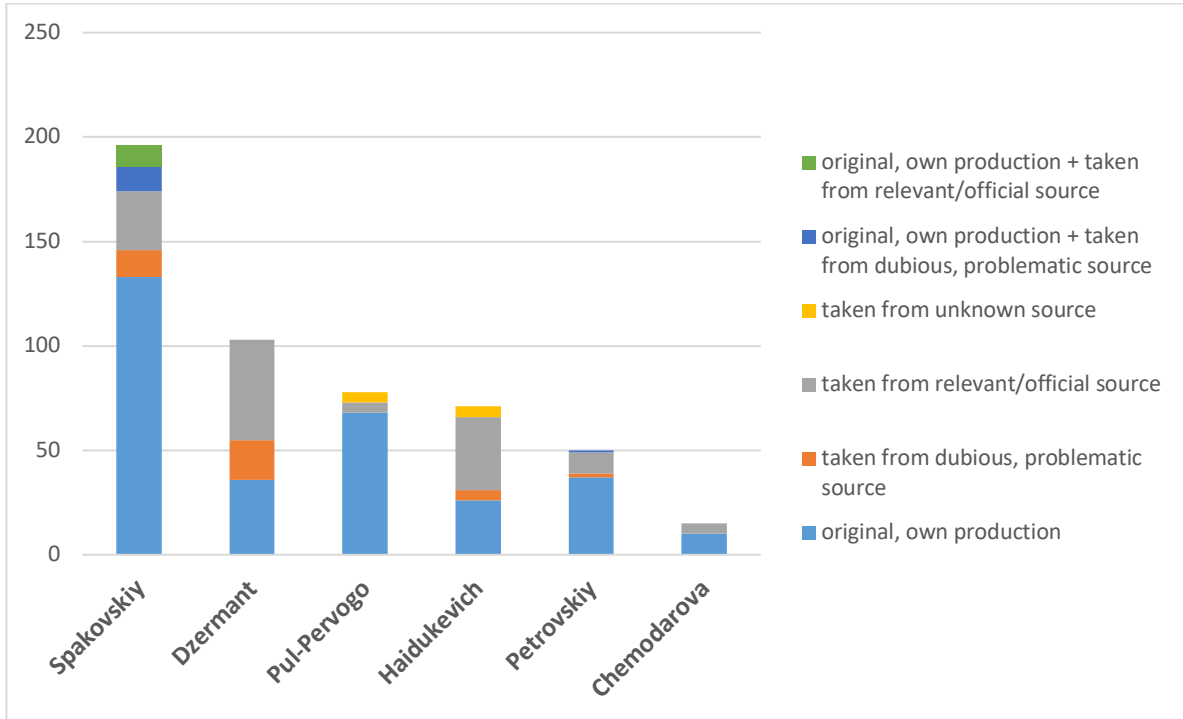
Figure 22 | Telegram - Type of Narratives



Source: Compiled by the authors

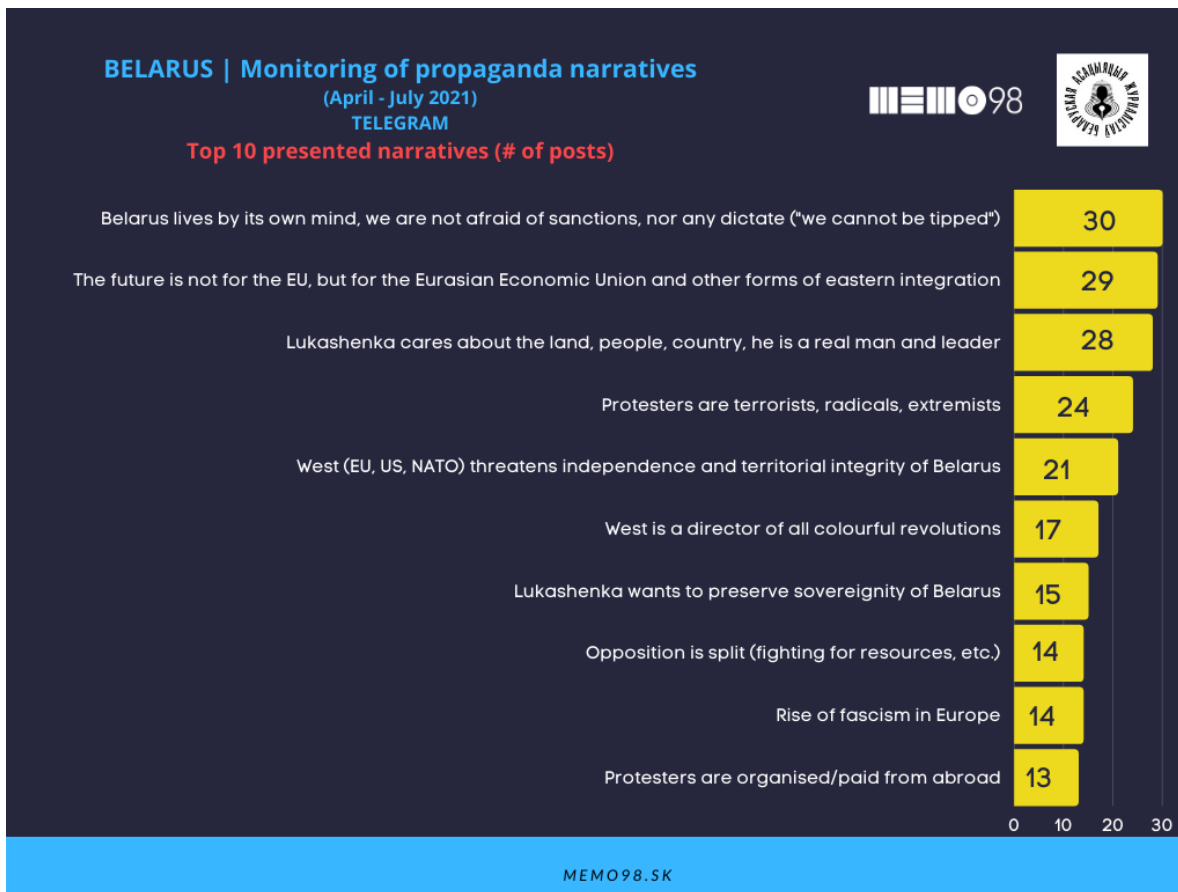
In terms of sources, while the content published by the actors was primarily of their own production, or taken from an official source, a large share of content taken from either unknown or dubious sources was also published, especially by A. Shpakovskiy and A. Dzermat (dubious sources) as well as by Pul Pervogo and A. Haidkukeich (unknown sources).

**Figure 23 | Telegram - Authorship of Posts among all actors (authorities, influencers, politicians and media outlets)**



Source: Compiled by the authors

**Figure 24 | Telegram - Top 10 Narratives among all actors (authorities, influencers, politician and media outlet)**



Source: Compiled by the authors

The monitoring identified a total of 513 Telegram posts with narratives.

Among influencers, who produced 349 posts with narratives, the following two were the most frequent: *'The future is not for the EU, but for the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and other forms of eastern integration'* (27 times) and *'Protesters are terrorists, radicals, and extremists'* (17 times), followed by two narratives, each of which was identified 14 times – *'Opposition is split (fighting for resources, etc.)* and *'Belarus lives by its own mind, we are not afraid of sanctions, nor any dictate ("we cannot be tipped")'*.

Among authorities, who altogether posted 93 posts with propaganda narratives, the most dominant one was the narrative: *'Lukashenka cares about the land, people, country, he is a real man and leader'* (22 times), followed by *'Belarus lives by its own mind, we are not afraid of sanctions, nor any dictate ("we cannot be tipped")'* (11 times) and *'West (EU, US, NATO) threatens the independence and territorial integrity of Belarus'* (10 times).

Politician A. Haidukevich posted 71 posts with the following narratives presented most

frequently: 'Protesters are terrorists, radicals, and extremists' (7 times), 'We will endure the sanctions together', 'West (EU, US, NATO) threatens the independence and territorial integrity of Belarus' and 'Belarus lives by its own mind, we are not afraid of sanctions, nor any dictate ("we cannot be tipped") (each of them 5 times, respectively).

## Examples of narratives

### Military rhetoric

A series of "military" days - the anniversary of the beginning of the Great Patriotic War (22 June), Liberation of Minsk (3 July), as well as the previously celebrated Victory Day (9 May) - provided an obvious opportunity for propaganda statements, use of semantics and vocabulary which evoked hostility. Overall, an intensification of militaristic rhetoric was noted. The thesis that the "collective West" is an enemy that is preparing for a war with Russia, and is trying to tear the post-Soviet countries apart from Russia and to win them over, found a clear resonance in the monitored sources.

[25 June 2021] [Alexey Dzermant](#): "The Belarusian story (an attempt of a color revolution, an attempt of a conspiracy, an economic sanction war against the country) is, of course, included in the plan of global confrontation between the West and Russia and China, a new cold war... The idea is cunning, but understandable - first to deal with Minsk and then to deal with Moscow without obstacles".

[27 June 2021] [Alexey Dzermant](#): "This question in the conditions of the current world hybrid war unleashed again by the fascist West against our country is not rhetorical or idle at all. Our current state resembles, in many ways, the autumn of 1941. Ukraine is surrendered to the neo-fascists, although Belarus, like the Brest Fortress, is holding out."

[27 June 2021] [Alexey Dzermant](#): "We are a key outpost, a barrier, an outpost on this border, the Brest Fortress, so we have to stand, Moscow, Russia is behind us. And this is very important, because if we don't stand, the West will again feel its impunity, that it is allowed to do anything, and will go further there, it cannot be allowed."

[30 June 2021], [Sputnik Belarus](#): "Putin: Ukraine given to Zelensky under full external control"

[4 July 2021] Pavel Potapeiko, [Sputnik Belarus](#): "The United States, trying to save its world leadership, is leading the world to a global war".

[8 July 2021, Sergey Gaidukevich, [Sputnik Belarus](#): "The goal of the West is to turn Belarus into a springboard for confrontation with Russia, to tear Belarus away from Russia."

### Anti-Western rhetoric (EU economic sanctions)

The next package of the EU economic sanctions against Belarus (adopted on 24 June 2021) provoked an additional wave of hostility and anti-Western rhetoric, a theme that continued throughout the whole third monitoring period.

[21 June 2021] Yelena Nasacheva, *BT*: "*Eighty years have passed since that terrible day, and now we are being declared war again. Economic, so far,*" is how the Belarusian expert Alexander Shpakovsky described the new package of sanctions against Belarus. It is difficult not to agree with these words. It is especially sad that the generation of the inhabitants of the united Europe follows in the footsteps of their ancestors - Hitler's Germany."

[21 June 2021] Elena Ponomareva, [Sputnik Belarus](#): "*By imposing sanctions on the eve of the war, they proved that they are heirs of fascism.*"

[22 June 2021] [Alexey Dzermant](#): "*The symbolism of Western sanctions against White Russia is, of course, very eloquent. They were introduced on the 80th anniversary of the attack on the USSR. I am sure it is not accidental. The West has been waiting all these years and wants to play it all back. And revive Nazism in a new form.*"

[23 June 2021] Serghey Lugovsky, *BT* (concerning Lukashenka's speech in Brest): "*Such unprecedented pressure from the EU is aimed at our destruction as a nation. Europe has once again shown its true face. The president made it clear that just like the blitzkrieg of '41 did not happen, it will not happen now.*"

[23 June 2021] Grigory Azarenok, *STV*: "*The Supreme Commander-in-Chief has once again ironclad: our cause is right, the enemy will be defeated, victory will be for us. Now you are attacking us, but very soon you will be shamefully burnt and poisoned in the basements of the new Reichskonzelleries. And we will live [...]. This week the West finally threw off its masks. The fig leaf of liberalism no longer hides the swastika. Drang nach Osten was announced on the eve of June 22. They have become the new collective Hitler, and they are once again hungry for the starvation and death of the Slavs. Under the false guise of democracy, they are reviving their Nazi Reich.*"

[24 June 2021] [ONT](#): "*Lukashenka: we must show the scoundrels on the other side of the border that sanctions are their powerlessness. And we will do it.*"

[25 June 2021] Pavel Karnazitsky, [ONT](#): "*Introduction of sanctions on the eve of June 22 is an attempt of revenge of the Hitler coalition, a new rush to the East.*"

[25 June 2021] [ONT](#): The Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) commented the new Western sanctions "*in fact, it borders on a declaration of economic war.*"

[25 June 2021] [MFA](#): In its Facebook, the Foreign Ministry draws an eloquent parallel with Hitler's Germany's attack on the Soviet Union in 1941: "*After the perfidious joint attack of the EU, the USA, Great Britain and Canada on Belarusians, on workers of our enterprises, businessmen, journalists and also deputies for only expressing their own*

*opinion, it was quite clear that a new vain attempt to gradually strangle our citizens will be undertaken".*

[26 June 2021] Grigory Azarenok, STV: *"They announced sanctions on June 22. They are eager to come to Osten again. They want to feel like masters again. In the glasses of Heiko Maas they see again the fire of Khatyn. They again want to hear the groans of the people being burned."*

[26 June 2021] Alexei Dzermant, STV: *"Russia is too rich, it has too many resources, in Siberia for example, and it has to share. And that's why they have been chiseling, they have been chiseling for centuries, they are expanding to the East and of course through us too. We are a key outpost, a barrier, an outpost on this border, the Brest Fortress, so we have to stand, Moscow, Russia is behind us."*

[6 July 2021] [ONT](#): *"Lukashenka calls Western sanctions a "punitive operation in the modern manner""*

[9 July 2021] Alexey Dzermant, STV: *"European politicians did not want to see Belarus as a bridge between the West and the East, they wanted to undermine it and move on in their eternal desire for revenge and revenge for our victory in the last war with the united Europe. Well - you don't want a bridge, there will be, as our President said, "an outpost of a new Eurasia."*

### **Anti-Western rhetoric (EU Eastern Partnership suspended)**

The exit (officially a suspension of the country's participation on 28 June 2021) from the Eastern Partnership was interpreted as a benefit for Belarus and an evident loss for the EU.

[29 June 2021] Andrei Sytsch, BT: *"The European Union's Eastern Partnership project has completely lost the essence of its name for Belarus. Instead of investment and economic cooperation we got an attempt of coup d'etat and sanctions pressure."*

[5 July 2021] [ONT](#): *"Minsk's asymmetric response to illegal and untargeted sectoral sanctions imposed by the West was targeted. As they say, the science was hammered in gently but firmly. Thus, our eastern neighbors have already called Belarus' withdrawal from the Eastern Partnership initiative the main geopolitical defeat of the EU for the recent years".*

[8 July 2021] [Alexey Dzermant](#): *"The Eastern Partnership played a role of a kind of bait: we will say that we support important projects for Belarus, but at the same time we keep in mind the goal - to completely set the country up for ourselves, actually depriving it of effective power and sovereignty... The withdrawal of Belarus from the initiative is a serious image blow for the EU".*

## General anti-Western and internal enemy rhetoric

In the context of the "declaration of war," the theme of the "internal enemy" has taken a new twist with even more hostile meaning. On television and in the press, the announcements that "radicals must be cleansed" and that "institutions of external counteragents" must be eliminated, were noted.

[25 June 2021] Yulia Artyukh, *STV*: *"The Fascists said that they had come to liberate us from the Jews and Bolsheviks, from the slave state farms, and to build a new country. Doesn't this remind you of anything? August 9, 2020. There were riots all over the country, the slogan: we will cleanse the Lukashists, destroy the slave industries, build a new Belarus. Everything is just like then. And the flag of the Polizei in the streets in an angry crowd, thirsty for the blood of their own countrymen, in order to serve their masters."*

[25 June 2021] [Piotr Piatrowski](#): *"Belarus is becoming a frontier of the Eurasian space, an alternative to the liberal and bourgeois Western system. The collective West and its structures act as a source of potential threat for Belarus [...] This is the reason why it is necessary to form mechanisms of project work of the sovereign civil society and to finally liquidate the institutions of external contractors, which will try to corrupt the society if they are preserved."*

[2 July 2021], [Pul Pervogo](#) (Independence Day meeting, Lukashenka): *"Those events exposed those ulcers and tumors in the society that we had to eliminate. And we will remove it. If people do not understand after all that has been said and shown, it is not a misunderstanding, it is the enemies. And their goal is to destroy the state."*

[3 July 2021] [STV](#): The media and social networks were actively discussing the assassination attempt on the STV anchor Grigory Azarenok, who, according to the version voiced by Alyaksandr Lukashenka, was *"...immobilized, seized, thrown into the trunk, taken to the forest in the farthest place and his tongue cut off. To take scissors to do it himself. If he didn't do it himself, those who had been hired for ten thousand dollars (the money was transferred) were to carry out this operation, film it and post it on the Internet. It's like a warning: look, we'll cut you all off, at least cut off your tongues to keep quiet. Democracy. If we fail, we kill you"*.

[8 July 2021] [Sputnik Belarus](#) (Konstantin Bychek, Deputy Head of the KGB investigation department): *"A large-scale mopping-up operation against radicals is now taking place in Belarus."*

## V. Methodology

The applied methodology consists of quantitative and qualitative analysis of the selected social media content.



**The quantitative analysis** was focused on the number of posts generated by selected actors (state authorities or representatives, politicians, influencers or media outlets) and analyzed them with the assistance of [CrowdTangle](#).<sup>15</sup> Social media **posts** served as a reference and monitoring unit that was further analyzed by monitors. Furthermore, posts that dealt with political issues or elections or assessed the way different political actors featured in those posts were presented. **The qualitative analysis** focused on narratives presented with the posts of selected actors.

## List of monitored narratives (61)

### Pro-regime (13)

The government cares about the land, people, country, Lukashenka is a real man and leader

[Власть заботится о земле, людях, стране, Лукашенко настоящий мужчина и лидер]

Lukashenka won the election, is the only legitimate leader

[Лукашенко выиграл выборы, он единственный легитимный лидер]

Lukashenka wants to preserve sovereignty, peace and stability (of Belarus).

[Лукашенко стремится сохранить суверенитет, мир и стабильность ("Любимую не отдают")]

True patriots of Belarus support the authorities

[Истинные патриоты Беларуси поддерживают власть]

State authorities want a dialogue

[Власть стремится к диалогу]

The State is legitimate to use [and should] use any means to restore order

[Государство вправе использовать любые средства для восстановления порядка ("Иногда не до законов")]

Authorities should control all the events; the legislation should be tightened

[Государство должно контролировать все сферы деятельности; необходимо ужесточение законодательства]

Legal enforcement bodies are heroes, they protect the independence of the country

[Силовики герои, защищают независимость страны]

Security forces (OMON, other units) are victims of threats and attacks by protesters, the state protects those who serve it

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<sup>15</sup> CrowdTangle (a social media analytics tool owned by Facebook) "tracks public posts on Facebook, Instagram and Reddit, made by public accounts or groups. The tool does not track every public account and does not track private profiles or groups, so this data is not representative of performance across the entire platform. CrowdTangle does not track posts made visible only to specific groups of followers." The tool was applied on the published posts after three-days period so that the interaction generated by the post is relatively stabilized.



[Госслужащие и силовики подвергаются угрозам и травле со стороны протестующих, государство защищает своих служащих]

Belarus lives by its own mind, we are not afraid of sanctions, nor any dictate ("we cannot be tipped")

[Беларусь живет своим умом, нам не страшны санкции и никакой диктат ("Нас не наклонить")]

Belarusians honor their history, (their) red-green flag and other attributes of state power

[Белорусы чтят свою историю, красно-зеленый флаг и другие атрибуты государственной власти]

The memory of the war, the achievement of people - are immortal

[Память о войне, подвиг народа – бессмертны]

Foreign politicians, celebrities etc. support Lukashenka

[Зарубежные политики, знаменитости, и.т.д. поддерживают Лукашенко]

### **Anti-protesters/opposition (16)**

Protesters are terrorists, radicals, and extremists

[Протестующие - террористы, радикалы, и экстремисты]

Protesters want to stage a coup d'etat

[Цель протестов - захватить власть, устроить государственный переворот]

Protesters are organized/paid from abroad

[Протестующие подкуплены Западом]

Protesters are criminals, marginal persons

[Протестующие - уголовники, маргинальные личности]

Protesters distort history, they rehabilitate Nazism (white-red flags are signs of Nazi collaborators)

[Протестующие искажают историю, реабилитируют нацизм (БЧБ и Пагоня -- символ фашистской коллаборации)]

Protesters provoke ethnic and religious strife

[Протестующие провоцируют национальную и религиозную рознь]

Protesters bring Maydan and chaos

[Протестующие провоцируют "майдан" и хаос]

Protesters threaten the country's economy, culture and sports

[Протестующие несут угрозу экономике, культуре и спорту страны]

The protesters are mistaken, do not know what they are doing (deceived by pro-Western propaganda and opposition leaders)

[Протестующие заблуждаются, не ведают, что творят (обманутые прозападной пропагандой и лидерами оппозиции)]

Protesters deserve harsh punishment

[Протестующие заслуживают жесткого наказания]

Protests failed. Protests are small, isolated, most of the people disagree with it  
[Протест сдулся. Протесты мелкие, изолированные, большинство с ними несогласно]

Opposition hates Russia  
[Оппозиция ненавидит Россию]

There is no opposition existing in the country  
[В стране нет оппозиции]

Opposition falsifies history  
[Оппозиция фальсифицирует историю]

The opposition is split (fighting for resources, etc.)  
[Оппозиция расколота (дерутся за ресурсы и т.п.)]

Opposition and foreign media lie  
[Оппозиционные и зарубежные СМИ врут]

### **Anti-West (15)**

West (EU, US, NATO) threatens the independence and territorial integrity of Belarus  
Запад несет угрозу независимости и территориальной целостности Беларуси]

West (EU, US, NATO) is a military threat to Belarus  
[С Запада надвигается военная угроза]

West masters all colorful revolutions  
[Запад - режиссер цветных революций]

Western intelligence services work against Belarus and Russia  
[Западные спецслужбы работают против Беларуси и России]

Crisis of democracy and liberalism. Human rights are brutally violated in the West  
[Кризис демократии и либерализма. На Западе жестоко нарушаются права человека]

Western media use double standards when covering events in Belarus, Russia, etc.  
[Западные медиа пользуются двойными стандартами, освещая события в Беларуси, России и др.]

Belarus is a bastion on NATO's path to Russia  
[Беларусь - бастион на пути НАТО в Россию]

Poland, Czech Republic, Baltic countries - puppets of the West, conductors of color revolutions  
[Польша, Чехия, страны Балтии -- марионетки Запада, проводники цветных революций]

Lithuania pursues anti-Belarusian policy  
[Литва проводит антибелорусскую политику]

Our closest western neighbors cannot deal with the difficulties of their economies, politics, etc.

[Наши ближайшие западные соседи не могут разобраться с трудностями своих экономик, политики и т.д.]

The West influences us through technology; Internet needs to be controlled  
[Запад влияет на нас с помощью технологий; интернет нужно контролировать]

Rise of fascism in Europe  
[В Европе возрождается фашизм]

Crisis of European Union  
[Кризис Евросоюза]

Misuse of EU funds  
[Нецелевое использование средств ЕС]

George Soros and his activities in post-Soviet countries  
[Джордж Сорос и его деятельность в постсоветских странах]

### **Anti-Ukraine (8)**

Ukraine is a puppet of the West (USA, NATO)  
[Украина - марионетка Брюсселя, США и НАТО]

There is economic turmoil in Ukraine  
[В Украине экономическая разруха]

The consequences of the orange revolutions led to the collapse of the Ukrainian state  
[Последствия оранжевых революций привели к развалу украинского государства]

Ukrainian nationalists take part in protest activities in Belarus  
[Украинские националисты участвуют в протестной деятельности в Беларуси]

Crimea was always Russian  
[Крым всегда был Российским]

There is civil war in Ukraine  
[В Украине гражданская война]

Bandera followers - Nazi accomplices  
[Бандеровцы - пособники нацистов]

Discrediting statements against the Ukrainian authorities  
[Дискредитирующие высказывания в адрес украинской власти]

### **Pro-Russia (9)**

Integration with Russia - the only choice for Belarus (political aspect)  
[Интеграция с Россией - единственный выбор Беларуси]

We will endure the sanctions together  
[Вместе мы выстоим против санкций]

Together we confront the military threat from the West  
[Вместе мы противостояем военной угрозе со стороны Запада]

We (BY and RU) are the one nation - joint history, joint victory, joint culture (socio-cultural aspect)

[Мы - один народ: общая история, общая победа, общая культура]

The future is not for the EU, but for the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and other forms of eastern integration

[Будущее не за ЕС, а за ЕАЭС и другими формами восточной интеграции]

Without Russia, the most important geopolitical issues cannot be resolved

[Без России важнейших геополитических вопросов не решить]

West is biased against Russia

[Запад настроен против России]

Sanctions against Russia are unjust

[Санкции против России несправедливы]

The Russian vaccine Sputnik-V is one of the best in the world, recognized widely (vaccine praise).

[Российская вакцина Sputnik V -- лучшая в мире (восхваление вакцины)]

## List of monitored actors in social media

### State structures (5)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Facebook, Instagram)

Ministry of Internal Affairs (Facebook)

Olga Chemodanova, Spokesperson of Ministry of Internal Affairs (Telegram)

Pul Pervogo (Telegram)

Belaya Rus (Facebook, Instagram)

### Politicians (4)

Lilia Ananich (Facebook, Instagram)

Aleh Haidukevich (Facebook, Telegram)

Vladimir Karanik (Facebook, Instagram)

Andrey Savinych (Facebook, Instagram)

### Influencers (4)

Aleksey Dzermant (Facebook, Telegram)

Andrey Krivosheev (Facebook, Instagram)

Petr Patrovskiy (Facebook, Telegram)

Aleksandr Shpakovskiy (Facebook, Telegram)

### Media outlets (4)<sup>16</sup>

Belarus Segnodnya (Facebook)

Belta news agency (Instagram)

Pravo (Telegram)

ONT Television (Facebook)

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<sup>16</sup> Only one social media account per media outlet was monitored.

## **List of monitored actors (subjects) in television**

### **Belarusian institutions (14)**

- President
- Presidential administration
- Prime minister
- Government
- Local governments
- Central Election Commission (CEC)
- Parliament, Speaker of the Parliament
- Belaya Rus Association
- Belarusian Republican Union of Youth
- Association of Trade Unions of Belarus
- Government of Belarus-Russia Union
- Power structures
- Officials of state institutions
- Other governmental subjects

### **Belarusian political parties, subjects (26)**

- Political parties overall
- Pro-governmental political parties
- Communist Party of Belarus
- Liberal Democratic Party of Belarus
- Belarusian Patriotic Party
- Republican Party of Labor and Justice
- Belarusian Agrarian Party
- Belarusian Social Sports Party
- Belarusian Republican Party
- Belarusian Party of the Popular Accord
- Other pro-governmental subjects
- Opposition-affiliated political parties
- A Just World Left Party
- Belarusian Social Democratic Assembly
- Belarusian Social Democratic Party Assembly
- Belarusian Social Democratic Party People's Assembly
- United Civic Party
- Belarusian Popular Front
- Belarusian Christian Democracy
- Conservative Christian Party – Belarusian Popular Front
- Movement for Freedom
- Tell the Truth
- Belarusian Green Party
- Belarusian Liberal Party of Freedom and Progress
- Opposition representatives in exile
- Other oppositional parties, subjects

### **Other Belarusian entities (9)**

- Expert, analyst
- Academician, representative of schools, universities

Scientist  
Trade unions representatives  
Religious representative  
Media, journalist  
Celebrity, influencer, actor  
Citizen  
Other subjects

**International countries and bodies (18)**

**International institutions, parties and individuals (27)**

## ABOUT

### BAJ

*The Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ), is a non-governmental, non-profit and non-partisan association of media workers, promoting freedom of expression and independent journalism ideas in Belarus. The main goal of BAJ is to facilitate the exercise of civil, social, cultural, economic and professional rights and the pursuit of legitimate interests of its members, help to develop expertise and get a chance for creative self-fulfillment, as well as to create conditions that enable freedom of the press, including the journalists right to obtain and impart information without any interference. The main tasks of BAJ activities are to protect journalists' rights and legitimate interests in state bodies and international organizations, help create material, technical, organizational and other facilities, vital for improving journalist proficiency, to draw up an effective program to develop mass media so that it would create favorable conditions for their functioning in Belarus and to establish relations with journalist organizations all over the world.*

### MEMO 98

*An internationally recognized, independent, and non-profit specialist media institution with 23 year-long of experience conducting media monitoring and research and assisting civil society groups. Using tested and approved methodologies and tools, we provide media analysis and media monitoring with tangible results, in particular during election periods. Having participated in more than 150 election observation missions and about 150 media & election-related projects and training in more than 60 countries (in the Commonwealth of the Independent States and the Balkan countries, but also in Africa, Asia, South America, and the Middle East), our experts provide assistance on media & electoral and other democratic arrangements.*

*This research was supported by IFES. BAJ and MEMO 98 assume no responsibility for facts or opinions expressed in this publication or their subsequent use. Sole responsibility lies with the authors of this publication.*

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<sup>i</sup> The paragraph is based on the August 2021 publication by the RSF, [Report analyses Lukashenko's year-old crackdown on Belarusian journalists](#)