



# Monitoring pro-Russian propaganda in Belarusian state-owned television media

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# Objectives and methodology

## 1. Monitoring objectives and methods:

The primary objective of the monitoring is to ascertain and document the occurrence, quantity, content, and form of pro-Russian (including anti-Western and anti-Ukrainian) propaganda in the leading Belarusian state-owned television media, as well as its carriers and disseminators.

A further objective of the monitoring process is to ascertain the presence of Russian themes and the volume of Russian programming broadcast on television channels included in the statutory publicly available TV package that the government of Belarus approves.

The monitoring results are expected to either substantiate or refute the hypothesis concerning the presentation of reality in the media by the leading state television channels of Belarus, as influenced by the concept of the “Russian world”, and demonstrate the evolution of this media representation in comparison with previous studies.

BAJ conducted a similar study in February 2024 as well as in the period 2018–2021, which allows for a comparison of their results and identifying trends in state TV broadcasting. However, it is imperative to acknowledge that the 2018–2021 studies were conducted prior to the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

**A detailed description of the methodology is provided below:**

[https://baj.media/sites/default/files/analytics/files/2023/monitoring\\_baj\\_1.pdf](https://baj.media/sites/default/files/analytics/files/2023/monitoring_baj_1.pdf)

## 2. The monitoring period spans from January 1 to January 31, 2025, inclusive:

- January 1–5 — testing phase;
- January 6–31 — main monitoring phase.

The monitoring took place during the so-called presidential election period (January 2025). The previous monitoring in 2024 was timed to coincide with the election of representatives to the House of Representatives and local councils. However, in both cases, unlike in previous election campaigns, the BAJ did not monitor the media coverage of the elections (i.e. the allocation of time and space by different media to political forces, the way these forces are represented in the media, etc.). With the severe repression of dissent in the country, the exile of

independent media and the absence of political choice in Belarus as such, monitoring the election campaign is currently unfeasible.

BAJ's research focused on the information policy pursued by the leading Belarusian state TV channels during this period, particularly emphasizing the extent of pro-Russian, anti-Ukrainian, and anti-Western propaganda disseminated through these channels during the election campaign.

### 3. During the monitoring period, the following indicators were determined:

#### 3.1. Proportion of television products produced in Russia or with its participation in the prime time broadcasting of Belarus 1, ONT and STV channels.

For this purpose, the number of programs broadcast during prime time (from 7 pm to 12 am) on each channel, as well as the number of Russian programs and the time they occupied, were calculated.

The monitoring included all types of programs — news, films, talk shows, sports, and concerts — including those that began or ended outside prime time but partially fell within the prime-time window.

The duration of these programs during prime time was also measured (in minutes).

#### 3.2. The occurrence of Russia-related themes in the Belarusian state television channels that occupy the first three positions in the statutory package of publicly available television programs and are financed from the Belarusian state budget (Belarus 1, All-National TV, STV).

The following shows were monitored:

- **Belarus 1 TV evening news broadcast:**  
Mon-Sat — Panorama (9 pm);  
Sun — Glavnyi Efir (Main Airtime) (9 pm).
- **All-National Television (ONT) evening news broadcast:**  
Mon-Fri — Nashi Novosti (Our News) (8.30 pm);  
Sun — Nashe Vremya (Our Time) (8.00 pm).
- **Stolichnoye Televideniye (STV) evening news broadcast:**  
Mon-Sat — 24 Chasa (24 Hours) (7.30pm);  
Sun — Nedelya (The Week) (7.30 pm).

### **3.3. Occurrence of messages linked to pro-Russia, anti-West, and anti-Ukraine propaganda**

The list of messages was open. Each monitor independently identified and recorded the messages to be recorded during monitoring. Approaches to message classification were discussed and adjusted where necessary.

Among others, pro-Russian propaganda messages were recorded that did not directly mention Russia or Belarus (for example, about the “decaying hostile West”, the war in Ukraine, the opposition as the West’s stooges, the threat to the Union State, etc.), but obviously promoted their narratives or similar narratives of the Belarusian authorities.

# Key monitoring results

## 1. Share of TV content produced in Russia or co-produced with Russian producers during prime time on three Belarusian state television channels that are part of the legally mandated public broadcasting package:

### 1.1. The number and duration of prime-time broadcasts on Belarus 1, ONT, and STV of television content produced in Russia or co-produced with Russian producers.

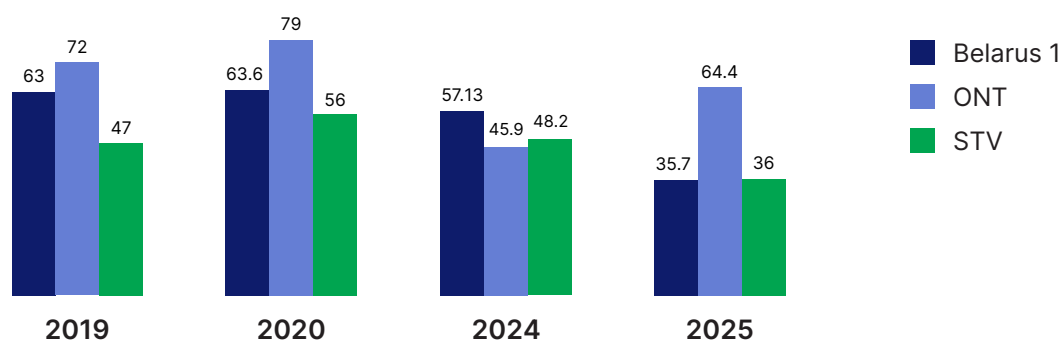
	Belarus 1	ONT	STV
<b>Total number of TV programs</b>	159	134	214
Of which produced by Russians	40	78	45
Duration of Russian-produced TV programs (out of 125 prime-time hours)	44 hrs 35 mins	80 hrs 33 mins	45 hrs
Share of Russian-produced TV programs (2025), %	25.15	58.2	21
Share of air time for Russian-produced TV programs, %	35.67	64.4	36

### 1.2. Comparison of the duration of Russian-produced TV programs in prime time in 2019, 2020, 2024, 2025 in %.

	Belarus 1	ONT	STV
2019	63	72	47
2020	63,6	79	56
2024	57.13	45.9	48.2
2025	35.7	64.4	36

Chart 1.

Comparison of the duration of Russian-produced TV programs in prime time in 2019, 2020, 2024, 2025 in %



**Thus:**

1. Contrary to popular opinion, the share of Russian programs and the amount of time devoted to them on Belarusian TV channels have generally decreased in recent years. Compared to 2024, ONT's Russian prime-time broadcasting time increased (by almost 20%). Belarus 1 and STV, while maintaining almost the same number of Russian-produced programs as last year, saw a significant reduction in their transmission time (by more than 20%).
2. The share of Russian-produced programs in the broadcasting of Belarusian TV channels remains obviously excessive, which undoubtedly affects Belarus's information security. The Russian content presence is particularly pronounced on ONT, where the share of programs co-produced with Russian producers exceeds 58% in prime time, and the airtime of these programs exceeds 64% of prime time.

## 2. Pro-Russian and anti-Western messaging in the evening news broadcasts of Belarus 1, ONT, and STV:

### 2.1. Number of messages containing propaganda and their percentage of the total number of messages

	Belarus 1	ONT	STV
	2025 / 2024	2025 / 2024	2025 / 2024
<b>Total number of stories</b>	<b>360 / 339</b>	<b>358 / 345</b>	<b>386 / 356</b>
Of these containing messages:			
2025	<b>135 (37.5%)</b>	<b>189 (52.7%)</b>	<b>129 (33.4%)</b>
2024	126 (37.1%)	132 (38.2%)	121 (33.9%)

### 2.2. Number of stories featuring various types of propaganda messages and their percentage of the total number of stories with such message\*:

	Belarus 1	ONT	STV
<b>Total number of stories with propaganda messages</b>	135	189	129
Anti-Ukraine	9 (6.67%)	12 (6.35%)	13 (10%)
Anti-West	69 (51.1%)	65 (34.4%)	68 (52.7%)
Fugitives (exiled dissidents)	10 (7.4%)	18 (9.5%)	14 (10.85%)
Self-sufficiency	1 (0.74%)	45 (23.8%)	12 (9.3%)
Standing with Russia	16 (11.85%)	42 (22.2%)	16 (12.4%)
The cult of Aliaksandr Lukashenka	64 (47.4%)	63 (33.33%)	45 (34.8%)

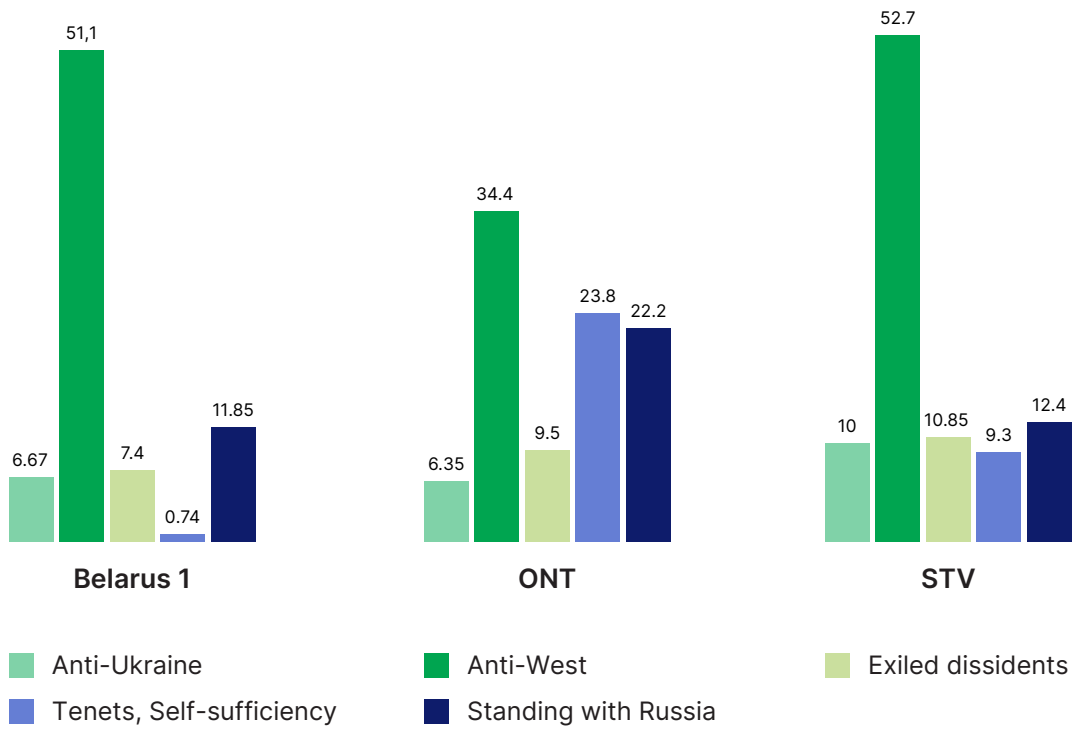
\* There may be several propaganda messages in one story.

### 2.3. West vs. East propaganda stories summary table, 2025/2024:

	Belarus 1		ONT		STV	
	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024
Anti-Ukraine / of all stories	<b>6.67%</b> 17.3%	<b>65.17%</b> 67.3%	<b>6.35%</b> 13.8%	<b>50.25%</b> 70.2%	<b>10%</b> 10.3%	<b>73.55%</b> 57%
Anti-West / Anti-USA	<b>51.1%</b> 44%		<b>34.4%</b> 45.7%		<b>52.7%</b> 41.3%	
Fugitives (exiled dissidents)	<b>7.4%</b> 6%		<b>9.5%</b> 10.6%		<b>10.85%</b> 5.4%	
Tenets, Self-sufficiency	<b>0.74%</b> 6.7%	<b>12.59%</b> 32.7%	<b>23.8%</b> 12.2%	<b>46%</b> 29.7%	<b>9.3%</b> 15.2%	<b>21.7%</b> 42.9%
Standing with Russia	<b>11.85%</b> 26%		<b>22.2%</b> 17.55%		<b>12.4%</b> 27.7%	
The cult of Aliaksandr Lukashenka		<b>47.4%</b>		<b>34.8%</b>		<b>33.3%</b>



Chart 2.  
Distribution of stories with propaganda messages by channels, 2025, %



### 3. The main propaganda messages:

#### **Anti-Ukraine:**

1. Ukraine has been deprived of its independence and is under external domination (of the West, particularly the USA).
2. Ukraine is a source of chaos and lies. It is riddled with corruption.
3. Zelensky is an “overdue president”, a self-serving leader who capitalizes on conflict. His political career resembles the commercialism of the Kwartal 95 show, where he appeared as a comedian.

#### **Anti-West / Anti-USA:**

1. The collective West is hostile and hypocritical. It provokes wars.
2. The U.S. and EU are strangling their own countries with sanctions.
3. Europe is in a state of political and economic degeneration, loss of sovereignty and domination from outside (USA).
4. Poland, Lithuania and Germany are aggressive neighbors of Belarus.
5. “Fugitives” are preparing attacks, working for the enemy.
6. Trump is a bulldozer. He is a strong leader who can be associated with positive change.

#### **Tenets / Self-Sufficiency:**

1. Belarus survives despite sanctions.
2. Belarus is united; the enemies will not be able to divide it.
3. The Western business community secretly wants to cooperate with Belarus, but politics is getting in the way.
4. The Belarus dictatorship is better than Western democracy.
5. There are attempts to drag Belarus into the war. The world is in turmoil, but Belarus endures.
6. “Fugitives” have lost and hope for forgiveness.

#### **Standing with Russia:**

1. Despite specific problems in Russia, it is a sister country and a reliable partner.
2. We will always be united with Russia, and in such a situation, we can be a match for any opponent.
3. Putin’s support and the nuclear umbrella strengthen the security of Belarus and the Union State.

## The Cult of Aliaksandr Lukashenka:

1. Lukashenka is an effective and successful leader. Under his leadership, the country is developing rapidly, and the welfare and happiness of the people are growing.
2. Lukashenka is a peacemaker; he encouraged negotiations and tried to stop the bloodshed.
3. As the election results show, citizens are grateful to the state and Lukashenka personally.

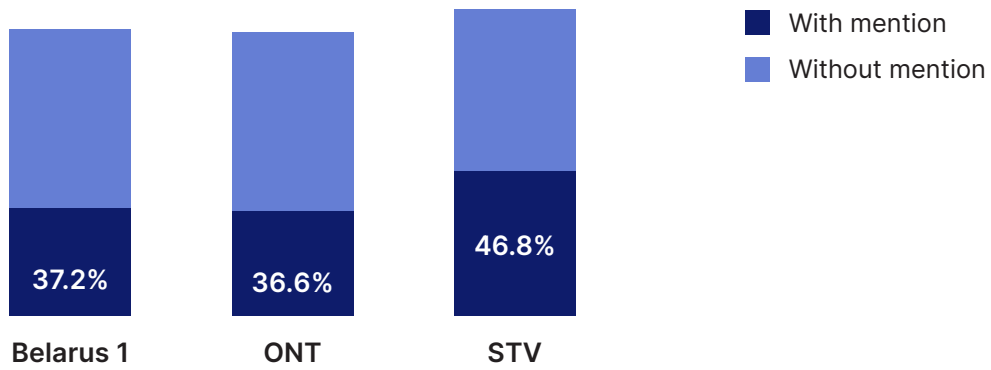


**4. Number of stories that reference Aliaksandr Lukashenka and their proportion relative to the overall total:**

	<b>Belarus 1</b>	<b>ONT</b>	<b>STV</b>
<b>Total number of stories</b>	360	358	386
Stories referencing Aliaksandr Lukashenka (of the total number of stories)	<b>135 (37.2%)</b>	<b>131 (36.6%)</b>	<b>181 (46.8%)</b>

Chart 3.

Percentage of total stories in 2025 that mention Aliaksandr Lukashenka, %



## Brief conclusions

1. As was the case in the previous year, Russian topics constituted a smaller proportion of the evening news programs broadcast on television channels than in the 2019-2020 period (as well as the total number of programs produced in Russia and the time of their transmission during prime time). As the monitors observe, *“the ‘Russian’ theme is not only becoming less prominent in the news agenda — it is actually being removed from the news agenda and falling into the category of additional background accents of Belarusian stories”*.
2. Concurrently, numerous stories were observed to contain pro-Russian narratives. The primary focus pertained to war, the attitude towards Ukraine, and Western countries. However, these narratives appeared not to be mere reiterations of pro-Kremlin propaganda but rather “independent” narratives of the Belarusian authorities, which, in many respects, coincide with the Russian ones but possess “national peculiarities”.
3. Nevertheless, the necessity of consolidating the alliance with Russia in both the economic and military domains was emphasised: *“Belarus is safer under the nuclear umbrella. Just wait for the deployment of Oreshnik”*.
4. The number of stories about Ukraine has decreased significantly compared to 2024. At the same time, Ukraine was still portrayed as a corrupt and disintegrating country, but the TV stories did not aim to create an enemy image. The focus shifted to the Ukrainian leadership and to President Volodymyr Zelensky personally, who was accused of an “overdue” mandate and personal commercial interests in the war.
5. The volume of stories centered on military hysteria — such as *“NATO tanks clanking on Belarusian borders”* — has declined. But the blame for unleashing the war in Ukraine was still placed on the “collective West”.
6. The Belarusian regime’s involvement in the war against Ukraine was not acknowledged to create an image of a peace-loving country that does not engage in military conflicts, in contrast to Western countries that instigate wars.
7. Western countries were depicted as deteriorating, failing to implement measures to support their citizens and businesses in the context of an economic crisis (which emerged as a consequence of supporting Ukraine and imposing sanctions against Russia and Belarus).

8. Highlighting the opposition between the U.S. and the European Union has intensified. Simultaneously, the United States was portrayed as a “puppeteer” directing Europe and Ukraine. In recent news releases, there has been a shift in tone in reports about the United States. There is a possibility that hopes for improving the situation for the Belarusian authorities are associated with Donald Trump’s presidency.
9. During the electoral period, the channels aired a softening of rhetoric against the “collective West”, a desire for economic cooperation, and a shifting of responsibility for conflicts to the so-called “fugitives”.
10. The topic of the presidential election was very actively discussed. Key messages included: the elections in Belarus were peaceful and more democratic than those in the West; the vast majority of citizens support Aliaksandr Lukashenka. Much of the airtime was devoted to holding the Unity Marathon in the country, the purpose of which was to present a convincing image of the cohesion of Belarusian society during the election period. *“The central element of the election campaign is turning completely retro — a prolonged televised series highlighting thirty years of the president’s achievements. They are reconstructing the sole-operated structure. Lukashenka happened to the state and is still a guarantor of peaceful skies”.*
11. The strengthening of the cult of personality around Aliaksandr Lukashenka is plain to see. This may be partly due to the timing of the monitoring (presidential election). However, the trends were also observed last year. Lukashenka is portrayed as a wise and caring “father of the nation”, a leader who has brought the country out of crisis, an experienced politician who has kept the peace in Belarus and acts as a peacemaker.
12. Notably, in Belarus, referring to the ruling regime as a dictatorship has become normalised — occasionally with qualifiers like “dictatorship of the good” or “dictatorship of justice”, and sometimes without, as in the phrase *“Better our dictatorship than their democracy”.*