



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.

Another objective of the monitoring is to determine the extent to which Russian-related topics and Russian-produced content are present on television channels included in the government-approved mandatory free-to-air TV package in Belarus.

The monitoring results are expected to either substantiate or refute the hypothesis that the leading state television channels of Belarus present reality in a manner influenced by the concept of the “Russian world,” and demonstrate how this media representation has evolved compared to previous studies.

BAJ conducted similar studies in January 2025 and February 2024, as well as during the 2018–2021 period. This allows us to compare the findings and identify trends in state TV broadcasting. However, it is important to note that the 2018–2021 studies were conducted before the Russian Federation’s large-scale aggression against Ukraine.

The monitoring is conducted using quantitative and qualitative research methods.

A detailed description of the methodology is provided below:

https://baj.media/sites/default/files/analytics/files/2023/monitoring_baj_1.pdf

2. Monitoring period: from 09 January 2026 to 08 February 2026 inclusive:

- January 09–11—testing phase;
- January 12–February 08—main monitoring phase.

The following events marked this period:

- Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine continued;
- tensions in the Middle East intensified;
- US military personnel captured and transferred to the United States Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, who had been accused of terrorism and drug trafficking;

- tensions between the White House and its European partners deepened, including due to a “trade war” and US attempts to gain direct control over Greenland;
- at the end of January, Belarus launched a combat readiness inspection of military units and formations, leading to increased militarization of news discourse;
- Donald Trump announced the establishment of the Board of Peace and invited Belarus to participate.

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

3.1. The share of TV content produced in Russia or co-produced with Russian producers that aired on the Belarus 1, All-National TV, and CTV TV channels during prime time.

For this purpose, the *total number of primetime broadcasts (from 7 pm to 12 am)* on each selected channel was calculated, along with the number of Russian-produced programs and the total airtime they accounted for.

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 primetime window.

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

3.2. The presence of Russia-related, anti-Ukrainian, and Russia–Belarus integration themes on the leading Belarusian state television channels Belarus 1, All-National TV, and CTV, which rank among the top three channels in the mandatory free-to-air package funded by the Belarusian state budget.

The following shows were monitored:

- **Belarus 1 TV evening news broadcast:**
Panorama—Mon-Sat (9 pm), Fri (8 pm), Sat (9 pm);
Glavnyi Efir (Main Airtime)—Sun(9 pm).
- **All-National Television (ONT) evening news broadcast:**
Nashi Novosti (Our News)—Mon-Fri (8.30 pm);
Kak Posmotret (It Depends)—Sat (8 pm);
Kontury (Contours)—Sun (8.00 pm).

- **Capital Television (CTV) evening news broadcast:**

24 Chasa (24 Hours) — Mon-Sat (7.30 pm);

Nedelya (The Week) — Sun (7.30 pm).

3.3. Occurrence of messages associated with pro-Russia, anti-Western, and anti-Ukrainian propaganda, as well as rhetoric supporting Russia–Belarus integration

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

Among other things, propaganda messages were identified that did not explicitly refer to Russia or Belarus (for example, references to a “decaying hostile West,” the war in Ukraine, the opposition portrayed as Western proxies, or threats to the Union State), but which nonetheless clearly reinforced “Russian World” narratives or similar ideological narratives promoted by the Belarusian authorities.

The messages included in the show trails were also analyzed.

Key monitoring results

1. The share of TV content produced in Russia or co-produced with Russian producers that aired during primetime on three Belarusian state television channels, which are part of the mandatory free-to-air TV package:

1.1. Share of TV content produced in Russia or co-produced with Russian producers broadcast on leading state television channels, which are part of the mandatory free-to-air TV package, 2024-2026.

	Belarus 1			ONT			CTV		
	Total	Rus	Duration	Total	Rus	Duration	Total	Rus	Duration
2024	140	36	71h 25min	125	74	57h 25min	140	36	71h 45min
2025	159	40	44h 35min	134	78	80h 30min	214	45	58h 55min
2026	166	49	76h 30min	151	86	90h 5min	230	75	78h 45min
2026 VS 2025	+7	+9	+31h 55min	+17	+10	+9h 35min	+16	+30	+19h 50min

Total – total number of TV programs;

Rus – of which produced by Russians;

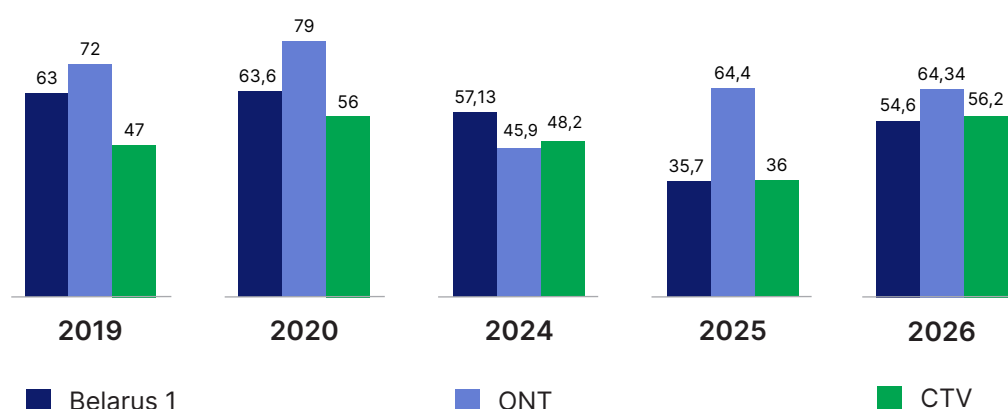
Duration – duration of Russian-produced TV programs (out of 125 primetime hours).

1.2. Comparison of the duration of Russian-produced TV programs aired in primetime in 2019, 2020, 2024, 2025, and 2026, %.

	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
2026	54,6	64,34	56,2

Chart 1.

Comparison of the duration of Russian-produced TV programs in prime time in 2019, 2020, 2024, 2025 and 2026 in %



Concluding observations:

1. Compared with early 2025, when the official presidential election campaign in Belarus took place, both the number of Russian-produced programs broadcast by Belarusian television channels and their primetime airtime increased across all channels in January and February 2026. Meanwhile, Russian programs accounted for over 50% of primetime programming on all three state-owned channels. This indicator was significantly lower for two of the three channels a year earlier. The decline in the share of Russian programming on Belarusian television last year does not appear to reflect a sustained trend. Instead, it seems to have been a temporary deviation from the prevailing pattern of previous years, likely influenced by the 2025 presidential election campaign in Belarus.
2. The proportion of Russian-produced programming on Belarusian television channels is evidently disproportionately high, which may have implications for Belarus's information security. ONT remains the "leader" in this regard. Programs produced in cooperation with Russian producers account for up to 57% of primetime content, and they take up more than 64% of total prime-time airtime broadcast.

2. Pro-Russian and anti-Western messaging in the evening news broadcasts of Belarus 1, All-National TV, and CTV:

2.1. Number of propaganda messages and their share in the total number of messages (2026/2025/2024), %

	Belarus 1	ONT	CTV
	2026 / 2025 / 2024	2026 / 2025 / 2024	2026 / 2025 / 2024
Total number of stories	376 / 360 / 339	328 / 358 / 345	376 / 386 / 356
Of these containing analyzed messages:			
2026	124 (33,8%)	181 (55,2%)	127 (34,6%)
2025	135 (37,5%)	189 (52,7%)	129 (33,4%)
2024	126 (37,1%)	132 (38,2%)	121 (33,9%)

2.2. Share of stories containing specific propaganda messages as a proportion of the total number of propaganda message-bearing stories (2026/2025, %)*:

	Belarus 1	ONT	CTV
Anti-Ukraine	13% / 6,5%	6% / 6%	5% / 10%
Anti-Western, "encircled by enemies"	69% / 51%	53% / 34,5%	57,5% / 52,5%
Fugitives (exiled dissidents)	1% / 7,5%	2% / 9,5%	3% / 11%
Self-sufficiency, conservative values	8% / 1%	19,5% / 24%	10,5% / 9,5%
Standing with Russia	9% / 12%	18% / 22%	19,5% / 12,5%
US-Belarus relations reset	2%	2%	7%

* There may be several propaganda messages in one story.

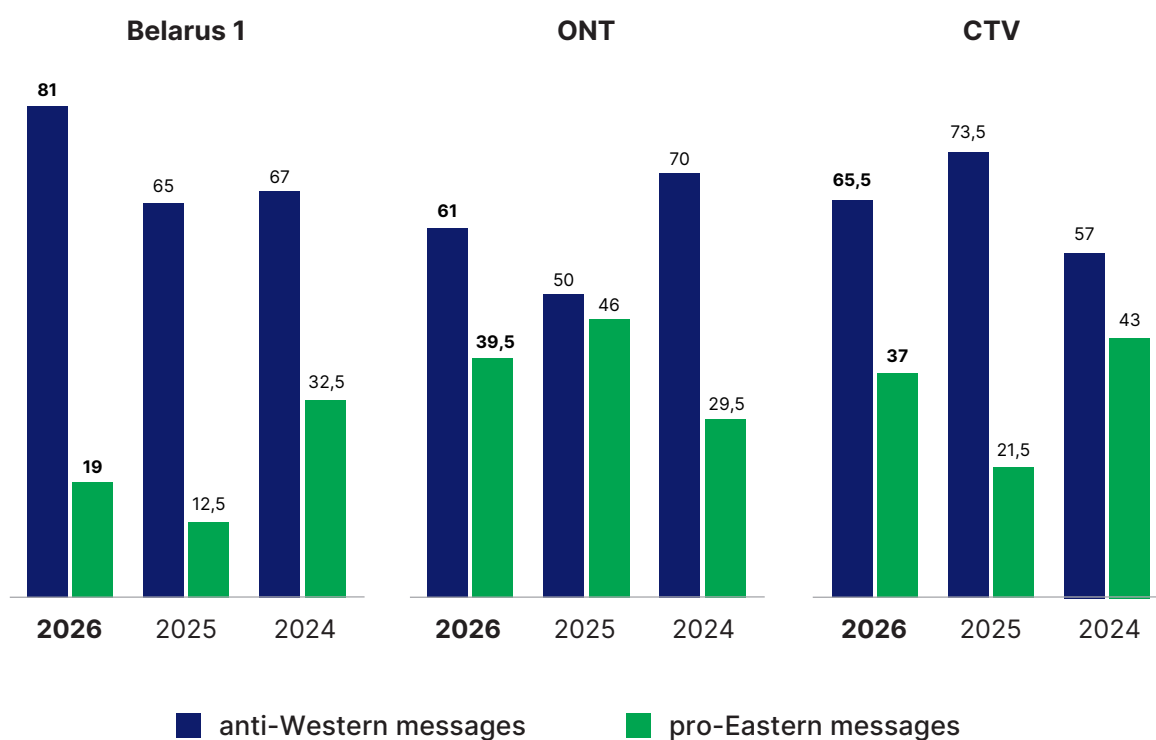
2.3. West vs. East propaganda stories comparison table, 2026/2025/2024:

	Belarus 1		ONT		CTV	
	2026		2026		2026	
	2025		2025		2025	
	2024		2024		2024	
Anti-Ukraine/ of all stories	13%	81%	6%	61%	5%	63,5%
	6,5%	65%	6,5%	50%	10%	73,5%
	17,5%	67%	14%	70%	10%	57%
Anti-West	67%		53%		57,5%	
	51%		34,5%		52,5%	
	44%		45,5%		41,5%	
Fugitives (exiled dissidents)	1%		2%		3%	
	7,5%		9,5%		11%	
	6%		10,5%		5,5%	

Conservative values/Self-sufficiency	8%	19%	19,5%	39,5%	10,5;	37%
	1%	12,5%	24%	46%	9,5%	21,5%
	6,5%	32,5%	12%	29,5%	15%	43%
Standing with Russia	9%		18%		19,5%	
	12%		22%		12,5%	
	26%		17,5%		27,5%	
US-Belarus relations reset		2%		2%		7%

Chart 2.

Share of stories with anti-Western and pro-Eastern messages by TV channel, 2024–2026, %



3. Key propaganda messages:

Anti-West / Anti-USA:

1. The West, especially the “hostile neighbors” Poland and Lithuania, is building up its military potential. This forces Belarus to prepare for war to defend its borders.
2. Europe is weak, dependent, and in decline, divided, and reliant on the United States. Western sanctions are hurting their own citizens.
3. The U.S. is a global “puppeteer,” a cynical player in the pursuit of resources and power.
4. The West, primarily the United States, violates the sovereignty of other states to protect its economic interests.
5. However, Trump is a strong and rational leader, set apart from the “bad West.”

Anti-Ukraine (with a reduced number of related segments, shows a noticeable change in tone):

1. Ukraine is a failed and externally controlled state.
2. Ukraine is steeped in corruption.
3. Ukraine is obstructing agreements and stalling negotiations.
4. Zelenskyy is incompetent.

Self-Sufficiency:

1. Development is our response to sanctions.
2. We’re better off than Europe. Belarus is clean, safe, and stable.
3. The current government is the only one that provides stability.
4. Multi-vector policy. The West is on its way out, and other centers of power are set to take the lead.
5. Belarus participates in solving global issues. It has been invited to join the “top club.”

Standing with Russia:

1. “This is our Russia.”
2. We share the same destiny, a common historical path.
3. Together, we will overcome sanctions.
4. The Union State provides the basis for security.

Brief conclusions

1. The structure of news programs on the analyzed television channels has remained largely unchanged compared to the previous year. *Through routine “official” discourse, television channels seek to reinforce the perception that the system is stable and normal. In this system, a strong leader rules the country in a hostile environment, with Russia’s support.*
2. The core of television broadcasting dedicated to domestic issues consists not of events but of reports, directives, production-related stories, and ritualized activities.

A significant portion of the events discussed in the news is related to the outside world, particularly “hostile” Western countries. There, crises and protests are unfolding, economic conditions are deteriorating, and militarization is increasing, alongside disputes over Greenland and Ukraine. A few years ago, the dominant narrative was that “Europe is the enemy.” Now, however, there is more talk of “the decline of Europe.” Europe is seen as technologically weak, dependent on the United States, and lacking resources.

3. Nevertheless, the formation of an external enemy image remains a major focus. The enemy is the West, including the unfriendly neighbors Poland and Lithuania. The West is building up its military potential and is allegedly posing a threat to Belarus and Russia. However, the phrase “collective West” is used much less frequently now than it was in the early 2020s.

Against this backdrop, the Belarusian state is portrayed as a nation that must bolster its defense solely to protect its borders (and those of the Union State) and maintain peace.

The militarization of news discourse intensified after January 26, when Belarus began assessing the combat readiness of its military units and formations. The main narrative was the assertion that the president has direct control over the military’s combat readiness. At the same time, military terminology and stylistic features have entered everyday discourse. For example: *“The new governor begins his work in combat conditions”* (from an ONT report on economic issues in the Vitsebsk Region).

4. Against the broader backdrop of narratives about a hostile West in Belarusian television news, the portrayal of the United States — and particularly President Donald Trump—becomes ambivalent. While publicly reproaching the United States for “inciting” conflicts and imposing sanctions on TV, the official Minsk seeks to reset a Belarusian-American dialogue. Trump (sometimes in the same story) appears as both an eccentric representative of hostile Western politics and a “*tough manager*” who knows what he wants and how to get it. The trend of singling out Donald Trump was evident as early as 2025, following his election as president.
5. Trump’s reputation as a “relatable strongman” is, to a certain extent, being used to justify Aliaksandr Lukashenka’s actions and elevate his status.
6. There were significantly fewer narratives about political emigration than in previous monitoring periods. The term “fugitives” was used less frequently.
7. Compared to previous years, there were fewer news stories about the war in Ukraine and less anti-Ukrainian propaganda overall (except on the Belarus 1 TV channel). Stories demonizing or belittling Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy have almost disappeared, a change from last year. At the same time, the war is almost always referred to as the “*Ukrainian conflict*,” or the “*special military operation*” (SMO), and the Russian invasion is excluded from the discussion. The SMO was frequently referenced in stories about combat readiness inspections (e.g., “*SMO experience is taken into account*”).

Virtually no substantive stories have been aired about the progress of the fighting, casualties, refugees, or the war’s humanitarian consequences.

8. On TV, the Russian Federation is presented as Belarus’s main economic partner and a sister country with which it shares a history and culture. Most importantly, Russia is its main military ally.

However, the number of overtly pro-Kremlin narratives in Belarusian state TV news programs has noticeably decreased. References to President Putin are minimal, if any; the segments feature only a few speakers from Russia, such as politicians and experts.

It should be noted, however, that before each national news broadcast, the ONT channel airs a block of Russian news from Channel One. This is not just Russian-oriented content, but content produced in Russia. Channel One’s news programs are broadcast on ONT throughout the day, with four to five

newscasts. Russian programs account for more than 50% of primetime programming on the leading Belarusian news channels (see [Chart 1. Percent comparison of the duration of Russian-produced TV programs aired in prime time in 2019, 2020, 2024, 2025, and 2026](#)).

“Loyalty to an ally is most clearly demonstrated by replicating its consistent geopolitical mindset—opposing the West and NATO’s actions,” the monitors note.

9. Meanwhile, one of the main narratives is about Belarus’s self-sufficiency and its important role in the new world order. The narrative claims that life is better in Belarus and that the Belarusian approach to state-building has proven efficient. It also claims that sanctions are ineffective and that Belarus is recognized on the global stage.

The domestic news block focuses primarily on the economy, including production, import phase-out, and cooperation with foreign partners. Discipline is promoted as the foundation of public administration and public order.

Stories about patriotic education of youth, historical memory, and the Great Patriotic War regularly appear.

10. As in previous years, Aliaksandr Lukashenka is considered the guarantor of the state’s stable development. His cult of personality continues to strengthen. He is portrayed as an indispensable leader of the Belarusian people, capable of addressing all issues and maintaining order across all spheres—from military readiness to livestock losses and street lighting—as well as a significant international actor (for example, Trump inviting Lukashenka to join the Board of Peace).