

Revised research on the materials of 2025

DIVIDING LINES IN UKRAINIAN SOCIETY: THE IMPACT OF MASS DISCUSSIONS IN SOCIAL MEDIA



Prepared by «CAT-UA: Communication Analysis Team – Ukraine» NGO

The research was conducted by the CAT-UA team at the request of Internews-Ukraine as part of the project “Strengthening Truth, Transparency and Democracy to Counter Disinformation”, supported by the Government of Canada.

HIGHLIGHTS (more details in the conclusions)

- Hate from social groups has decreased significantly. The only top «social» addressee of hate is «those who left Ukraine». But the government, as in 2022, remains the main object of criticism.
- The main driver of attention to the scandals was deliberate political campaigns.
- Each discussion case further deepens several lines of division at once.
- Pro-Russian authors, like pro-Ukrainian ones, pay attention primarily to political topics and almost do not inflate other.
- Hate speech: patterns have changed significantly compared to 2022. It is noticeable from politicians in «average» quarrels, and significantly less than in 2022 - in discussions between the Poroshenko and Zelensky teams.
- Understanding the opponent depends mainly on the consciousness of specific participants in the discussions.
- Facebook is losing its status as the main platform for disputes, giving this role to Telegram. YouTube is catching up with the leader.
- The trend of «hating the haters» is noticeable.
- The only area where Russian top bloggers and channels resonate with the Ukrainian audience is the military.
- From «Cardboard Protests» to «Mindich Tapes»: a noticeable shift in focus on the government.

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PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES OF THE RESEARCH

This is a re-examination of the mechanisms of formation and deepening of the dividing lines in Ukrainian society based on online disputes. The first study in this series was conducted on materials from 2022.

The key research question is to understand **how social media shapes, uses, and deepens divisions in Ukrainian society**. In particular, we explore:

- What topics have the greatest potential to divide Ukrainian society.
- Which **communication agents** use online discussions to deepen the dividing lines, or for other own needs, but with a noticeable deepening of such lines. In particular, what is the role of pro-Russian forces in this process.

- Which dividing lines are **most susceptible** to external (in particular, Russian) influences and are most often subjected to them.
- In which case are **opportunities for understanding** most often discussed, or, conversely, **language of hostility** is used.
- What are the specifics of communicating discussion topics in terms of **messages and expressed emotions**.

Answers to these questions were sought by studying discussion cases that were discussed in Ukrainian society, in particular on social networks, in 2025.

The selection of cases was formed in such a way that each of them touched on several different dividing lines, that is,

had a complex impact on society. In other words, the mentions of certain phenomena, initiatives or persons in the Ukrainian social media space were selected, and all facets of the discussions that these objects caused.

The additional case of «Mindich-gate» does not appear in the comparative diagrams, but is studied as a separate phenomenon.

Topic Selection. To answer the research questions, a list of topics that have sparked large-scale discussions in Ukrainian society was created. This list of topics was balanced by: a) general topic, b) object of criticism, c) nature of the line, d) duration of the conflict. The full list of topics is provided on the next slide.

Sample of posts. For each topic, a sample of posts from social networks Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Telegram, V Kontakte, TikTok, collected using the YouScan monitoring system, which had the greatest reach, was formed. Posts (not comments and not reposts) with geolocations «Ukraine» and «Not determined» were taken into account. Considering that search queries in monitoring systems usually do not consist of 100% relevant posts, and in some of the selected topics, it was very difficult to form an exact query, and they had a rather low proportion of relevant messages, the sample was formed as follows:

- The first 1000 messages with the greatest reach were coded. If this number contained 350 or more relevant posts, i.e. those that relate to the specified topic, contain negative messages directed at one or more social groups, and their

authors are residents of Ukraine (for users with an automatically undetermined geolocation, based on the results of profile coding), then the sample was limited to this.

- If not, new messages were selected for coding, in descending order of coverage. This coding continued until the total number of relevant messages coded reached 350.

The number of coded messages and their total coverage are indicated separately for each topic.

Manual coding was carried out with the following categories defined:

- Object of accusation: social group against which negative messages are spread.
- Expression of understanding of the other party's position and/or desire for reconciliation.
- Presence of hate speech against the accused category.
- Emotion of accusation. Determined based on key emotion-generating words. Preference is given to those words with which the writer himself accompanies a certain fact, rather than words contained in the description of this fact, for example, in media headlines.

- The key meaning of the message, determined by the methodology (Zakharchenko, A. PR-Message Analysis as a New Method for the Quantitative and Qualitative Communication Campaign Study. Information & Media, Vol. 93, 2022).

- The author's position: pro-Russian/pro-Ukrainian, determined based on a review of the author's profile and their statements regarding the current war.

In addition, the system automatically indicates the gender of the author of the post and their region of residence.

After quantitative analysis of the obtained data, **qualitative discourse analysis** was conducted – an explanation of the reasons for such visualized distributions, a description of the patterns.

In addition to the selection of topics, taking into account the public resonance, the **Mindich-gate case** was also analyzed with the same methodology, but with a larger number of original posts in the sample (1500). The results of this additional analysis are given in the appendix.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE TOPICS

Topic	Topic	Main dividing line	Nature of discussion ²	Duration of discussion
Decriminalization of going AWOL (extension of deadlines)	War / society	Military leadership – service members	Deliberate	Long
Departure and return from abroad	Society	Those who left – those who stayed	Mixed	Long
«Carboard Protests»	Politics	Government – public	Spontaneous supported	Short
Scandal at UCU	Society	Supporters of traditional/modern values	Spontaneous	Short
NSDC sanctions against Poroshenko	Politics	Supporters/critics of the government	Intentional	Long
Pro-Russian statements by bloggers	War / society	Residents of different regions; Ukrainian-speaking/Russian-speaking	Spontaneous supported	Medium
Accusations of Berlinska in disclosure of drone manufacturers' data	War	Public - volunteers	Spontaneous	Medium
Murder of a TCR serviceman in Lviv	War	TCR – public	Intentional	Short
APPENDIX. Mindich-gate	Politics	Government – public	Intentional	Medium

- **Decriminalization of going AWOL and extension of the terms for returning from it**
The “absent without leave” as a military and social problem has been a topic of discussion since the very beginning of the full-scale invasion. Every attempt by legislators to regulate the regulatory framework has caused heated discussion in society, as have the facts of the AWOL public figures who, with their demarches, are trying to draw attention to systemic problems in the army. In the space of social networks, quarrels have arisen every time the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has extended the deadlines for returning to service from AWOL, under which the violator is not subject to punishment. The discussion has gone far beyond the technical discussion of the legal regulation, but has also raised more global topics: mobilization, demobilization and establishment of service limits. The military (brigade commanders and ordinary defenders) accused the higher command and the authorities, and sometimes their fellow soldiers; the opposition tried to use the opportunity to increase ratings; pro-Russian agents, mainly

through the network of TG channels, in turn, are trying to manipulate the topics of Ukrainians' willingness to join the army, and in some cases, even support the "anti-people's regime." Up to a certain point, the discussion remained moderate. And its peak was provoked by protests in Kyiv and Lviv against criminal liability for military personnel for going AWOL. The statistics published by the Prosecutor General's Office on the number of soldiers who went AWOL during the war period - almost 290 thousand criminal cases - added fuel to the discussion. This became an argument for all sides of the discussion to continue mutual accusations. At the time of the end of the study (January 2026), the discussion is ongoing, and the authorities are still looking for ways out of the crisis.

- **Departure and return from abroad**
The mass exodus of Ukrainians abroad during the full-scale invasion and, on the other hand, the legislative ban on the departure of most men during martial law created a powerful dividing line that provoked controversy. This

study analyzed two related cases: the government's permission for young men under 22 to travel abroad and the history of the experience of Ukrainian refugee women returning from Europe to Ukraine. Both were discussed on social networks and had certain common messages. The first case mainly unfolded in the format of a discussion of the authorities' decision, while the other consisted of women's personal narratives and their impressions of Ukrainian and foreign realities.

The discussion was surprisingly emotional, filled with mutual insults and quarrels. There was a lot of pro-Russian activity on the topic: they worked mainly through a network of pro-Russian TG channels and sometimes bloggers who spread toxic messages. The authorities' decision to allow young men under 22 to leave also exacerbated the topic of defense and the army. The authorities were even accused of trying to protect themselves from new «cardboard protests» in this way.

- «Cardboard Protests»

The discussion was a reaction to the government-initiated bill No. 12414 (on the liquidation of the institutional independence of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine and the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office). On social networks, and later on the streets of cities, activists spoke about the public's loss of control over the government and the impunity of V. Zelensky's entourage. On July 22, protests began in Kyiv near the Franko Theater, the organizers called for not using party symbols, but instead writing their slogans on cardboard. Similar events were held simultaneously in other cities - Lviv, Odessa, Kharkiv (peak attention - July 22-25). In the first days, the central government was as intransigent as possible, although it demonstratively held negotiations. However, it later made concessions to the protesters. The final surge of attention was on July 30-31, when the Verkhovna Rada voted for the new document.

- Scandal at the UCU

A short-term discussion arose after N. Vorozhbyt's post on September 2, in which she spoke about the refusal to settle her daughter Paraska in the dormitory of the Ukrainian Catholic University, allegedly because of the LGBT flag on her personal Instagram account, and accused the university of homophobia. On the same day, UCU responded that, allegedly, settlement in the Collegium is carried out only upon admission to a formation program that requires «support for spiritual values and understanding of the rules of residence in the Collegium». The discussion on social networks had many speakers of both liberal and conservative worldviews, and also became an occasion for a broader discussion of European integration and the values inherent in the EU in education, discrimination, and the right of private educational institutions to establish rules that contradict Ukrainian legislation.

- NSDC sanctions against Poroshenko

The political rivalry between P. Poroshenko and V. Zelensky is overshadowed by their personal dislike of each other, which many journalists have written about. It was in this context that communication unfolded regarding the sanctions introduced by V. Zelensky against a group of people on February 13, 2024, among whom P. Poroshenko also appeared. The fact that P. Poroshenko was included in the same sanctions list with pro-Russian figures became one of the impetus for the quarrels. The discussion was accompanied by a number of statements from government representatives explaining the appropriateness of the decision. Subsequently, court hearings on the legality of such sanctions continued in the Supreme Court. Surges of activity on the network are noticeable after each court hearing with criticism of one or the other side.

- **Pro-Russian statements by female bloggers**

In 2025, the patriotic Ukrainian information environment unexpectedly discovered that far from all Ukrainians share mainstream ideas about the Russian language and culture, and even vice versa, are hostile to the Ukrainian language and culture. This became especially noticeable among bloggers who focus not on war or politics, but on secular topics, cooking, etc. During the year, several such cases excited the information space, and we included two of them in the analysis. The first was a public quarrel between bloggers A. Alkhim and O. Mandziuk. The first of them was asked to sing in Ukrainian at the christening of her friend's child, but she flatly refused. O. Mandziuk, in turn, publicly criticized A. Alkhim, called her a «media scum» and appealed to the SBU. Alkhim defended herself in public for a long time, a criminal case was opened against her. She eventually fled Ukraine.

The second incident occurred in the fall. Food blogger Anastasia Kuskevich from Nikopol, who moved to Lviv, humiliated residents of the western regions during a live broadcast on Instagram and called on Russia to launch

missile strikes on Lviv. Later, the police announced that they had opened a criminal case against the woman, and the blogger herself fled the city.

- **Accusations of Mariia Berlinska in disclosure of drone manufacturers' data**

The discussion of the topic began after Maria Berlinska reposted a table with contacts of UAV manufacturers in her Telegram. Immediately after that, she was accused of deanonymizing military-industrial complex facilities and in some cases even of high treason. The wave of hate significantly intensified after the post of blogger Lachen, who accused M. Berlinska of aiding the enemy. The discussion provoked a number of public statements by government representatives, namely, inspections initiated in state bodies. The main question was how secret this data was. The result of the discussion was the launch by the Ministry of Defense of a single platform of services for arms manufacturers in Ukraine, where information was collected about all key state services and opportunities for arms and military equipment manufacturers.

- **Murder of a TCR serviceman in Lviv**

On December 3, information appeared in the media about the murder of a military man in Lviv. During a document check, a man stabbed a serviceman of the Territorial Center for Recruiting and Social Services with a knife. This event immediately sparked a significant public discussion, as part of Ukrainian society has developed an extremely negative attitude towards the Territorial Center for Recruiting and Social Services, fueled by the Russians. In another part of society, there is a certain contempt for «draft evaders» who do not want to serve in the army. Therefore, the murder case became an occasion for these discussions. The actual events were mainly concentrated within one day: the murder itself, the detention, the choice of a preventive measure, and the statements of the military command on this topic. A day later, the court decision was made public. But the discussion of this event on social networks continued for several days after that.

- APPENDIX. «Mindich-gate»

When our research was already in its intermediate stage, the events of the so-called «Mindich-gate» took place, which became a kind of logical consequence of the «cardboard protests». The National Anti-Corruption Bureau, whose independence was defended by the «street» in the summer, published numerous videos on its YouTube channel starting from November 10, which provided evidence of accusations against a number of officials and entrepreneurs in the creation of a criminal organization that earned money from «kickbacks» from purchases at NNEGC Energoatom. Law

enforcement officers published their materials in several series and gave creative nicknames to those involved in the schemes («Carlson», «Tenor», «Rocket», «Sugarman», «Che Guevara»), which contributed to a significant increase in attention to the topic. Subsequently, journalists publish the names of all those involved in the investigation of mass corruption at Energoatom. It is becoming clear that the annual attacks on NABU and SAPO were not in vain: the top brass was implicated in corruption. As a result, the first dismissals in the Cabinet of Ministers took place (Ministers of Justice Herman Halushchenko and Energy Svitlana

Hrynychuk). On the other hand, the key suspects, T. Mindich and O. Zukerman, managed to flee abroad. For a long time, there has been intrigue about whether the NABU tapes contain recordings of the head of the President's Office, Andriy Yermak. There are calls for his resignation, but for a long time, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky has been reluctant to take this step. And only after the searches of Andriy Yermak's house did he dare to reboot the power vertical, which launched quite powerful processes of updating state policy and political culture in Ukraine.

- **DECRIMINALIZATION OF GOING AWOL (EXTENSION OF TERMS)**

The sample included posts using the abbreviation AWOL (C34) and all possible forms of its use in the media in Ukrainian and Russian (desertion, «samovolka», etc.), as well as the related concepts «decriminalization», «Army+». The request also took into account the block of posts regarding the draft law No. 13260. 01.01-30.10.2025.

- **DEPARTURE AND RETURN FROM ABROAD**

Posts that mentioned women's departure abroad and their return back to Ukraine. Particular attention was paid to the topic of reducing social benefits in the countries where Ukrainian refugees are staying. The request also took into account posts that mentioned permission for men aged 18 to 22 to travel abroad during martial law. 01.01-16.11.2025.

- **«CARDBOARD PROTESTS»**

The focus of attention was on posts related to draft law No. 12414: its promulgation and subsequent protests. The search was carried out taking into account the words «NABU»,

«SAP», as well as the characteristic term «cardboard protests». 22.07-20.08.2025.

- **SCANDAL AT UCU**

Search for posts where the daughter of N. Vorozhbyt and M. Kurochkin was mentioned in one form or another in the context of the refusal to accommodate her in the collegium of the Ukrainian Catholic University. The query took into account the abbreviations «LGBT» and «LGBT+». 02.09-27.09.2025.

- **NSDC SANCTIONS AGAINST POROSHENKO**

Recall and discussion of the NSDC decision to impose sanctions against P. Poroshenko and a number of pro-Russian figures, as well as court hearings on this. 13.02.-26.09.2025.

- **PRO-RUSSIAN STATEMENTS OF FEMALE BLOGGERS**

The sample was formed on the basis of two separate, but close to each other, data sets. The first consisted of posts mentioning the blogger from Nikopol A. Kuskevich and her statements about Lviv. The second - mentions and discussion of the quarrel between O. Mandziuk and A. Alkhim. 04.05-06.11.25.

- **ACCUSATION OF BERLINSKA IN DISCLOSURE OF DRONE MANUFACTURERS' DATA**

The selection took into account messages that would mention M. Berlinska in the context of the scandal surrounding the published lists of drone manufacturers. 05/28-06/30/2025.

- **MURDER OF A TCR SERVICEMAN IN LVIV**

Remembrance and discussion of the murder of a TCR serviceman and veteran Yuriy Bondarenko in Lviv. 12/04-12/08/25

- **«MINDICH-GATE»**

The search was carried out using keywords that were mostly used by the media to describe the situation («Mindich-gate», «Mindichgate», etc.). The request also took into account posts that would refer to mentions of Energoatom, the Office of the President, and other key figures in the event (V. Zelensky, A. Yermak, H. Halushchenko, and S. Hrynychuk) in the context of criminal cases. 10-30.11.25.

GENERAL COMPARISON OF TOPICS: COVERAGE

Posts on **the topic of protests against Bill No. 12414** (on the liquidation of the institutional independence of the NABU and SAPO) gathered the largest total coverage on social networks due to the bright visual component of the actions and their high political weight regarding the course of the state. Therefore, a number of well-known speakers joined it, and the discussion included Ukrainian national media and bloggers with a large audience as much as possible.

The reason for the popularity of the topic of imposing **sanctions against P. Poroshenko** took second place for another reason: both main parties to the discussion (the teams of the current and former presidents) carefully and disciplinedly spread mutual accusations, involving all communication channels available to them.

The topic of **decriminalization of going AWOL** and extension of the terms of validity of the relevant norms received the third coverage indicator due to the fact that its central speakers were media figures such as military commanders (A. Biletsky, K. Veres), who were involved because the problem of the SZCH significantly affects the defense capability of Ukraine. These speakers «highlighted» the topic on the agenda, and it became popular in other media channels.

An additional factor in the popularity of these three topics was that the participation of pro-Russian forces was most noticeable in them. The Russians worked both through an extensive network of propaganda Telegram channels (Resident, Legitimny, Politika Strany), and through the involvement of a pool of pseudo-experts (T. Nikiforchuk, V. Baranovsky).

The remaining topics had much less coverage, since most of them (except for the case of the murder of a military CCC) did not contain any links to top politics.

Among them, the most notable was the case of **bloggers**: the scandal between O. Mandziuk, A. Alkhim and A. Kuskevich's calls to bomb Lviv. Here, the combination of attention to celebrities from their usual audience on YouTube and TikTok, as well as, to a lesser extent, political attention – in X. played a role.

Other topics (**refugees** and their return, **the murder of a TCR officer, the scandal at the Ukrainian University of Culture** and the publication of lists of drone manufacturers by M. Berlinskaya) attracted less attention – primarily because they failed to interest bloggers with the highest audience figures, and discussions about them were conducted on platforms of the «second» and «third» echelons in terms of popularity. In addition, it was in these topics that the weakest pro-Russian activity was recorded. The reaction to the discussions was inert and more reminiscent of situational inclusion than a planned campaign.

THE MOST ATTENTION IS ACCUMULATED BY TOPICS THAT DIRECTLY RELATE TO THE FUTURE STATE AND THE COURSE OF THE WAR, AND IN WHICH TOP POLITICAL AND MILITARY BLOGGERS ARE PURPOSEFULLY INVOLVED, WORKING IN THE FORMAT OF TARGETED CAMPAIGNS

(Coverage of 350 most popular posts in each topic)



PARTICIPATION OF PRO-RUSSIAN TOP ACCOUNTS

Comparison of topics

The highest percentage of Russian involvement was recorded in discussions around draft laws No. 12414 («Cardboard protests») and No. 13260 (Decriminalization of going AWOL). In the first case, the pro-Russian audience openly declared that it supported destabilization in Ukraine, and worked in two directions at once: to compromise the protesters and the authorities. Separately, pro-Russian lobbyists emphasize the lack of the same actions against «man catchers» (TCR). Subsequently, the argument about fear of protesters will be one of the key ones in the discussion about allowing young men to travel abroad.

In the discussion about AWOL, pro-Russian forces worked on the narrative that Ukrainians do not want to join the army, which is why they go AWOL. These messages were part of a more global construct regarding mobilization issues in Ukraine, which at the current stage the Russian leadership probably considers to be Ukraine's greatest vulnerability.

On the topic of sanctions against P. Poroshenko, the Russians also communicated quite actively, trying to discredit both sides. There was no visible previous strategy to increase the aggressiveness of all participants in the discussion and to cause discord: rather, they formed another component of the narrative about the incapacity of the Ukrainian authorities.

Attention to other topics was moderate. In the case of the murder of a military man in Lviv, attempts by the Russians to incite riots against the TCR were noticeable, but this was a case for which they were not ready and did not plan informational activity, and when they did, its discussion in Ukraine had already come to naught.

The Russian exclusivity in the discussion on the return/departure of refugees and in the case of the disclosure of drone manufacturers by M. Berlinska is rather reactive: it manifested itself in the form of ridicule and accusations of all sides of the discussions. In addition, the work of Russian propaganda in the comments was recorded regarding the return of refugees.

In the case of the scandal at the UCU, a negligible pro-Russian share of the audience was made up of priests of the UOC MP. The pro-Russian statements of bloggers also do not seem to have been organized from Russia, and are a purely internal Ukrainian phenomenon.

Openly pro-Russian authors worked most actively with topics related to state power in Ukraine, promoting messages of the general narrative about the failure of the Ukrainian state. As for other lines of division, they paid noticeable attention only to the deepening of the gap between Ukrainians in Ukraine and abroad, and paid almost no attention to other topics (even the topic of language)

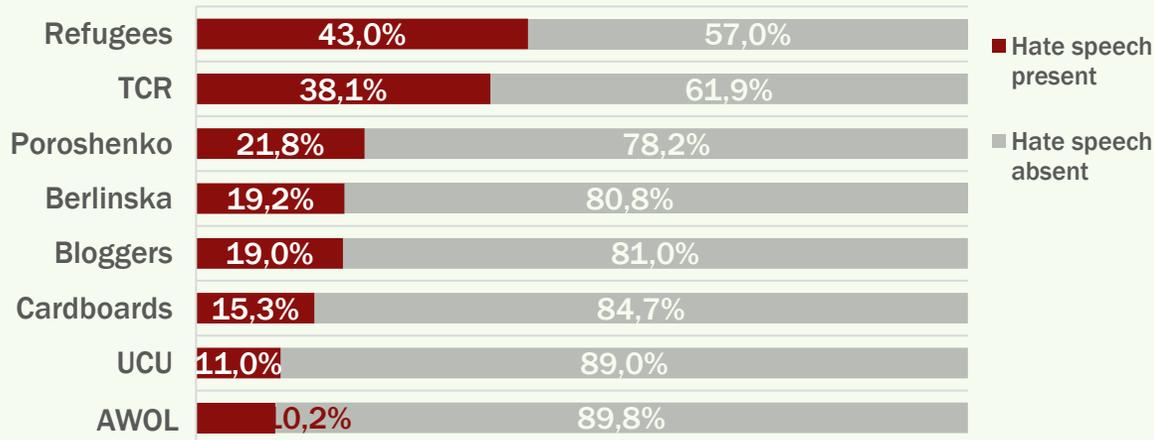
(Share of coverage of posts in each topic)



Comparison of topics

Presence of hate speech

(Share of coverage of posts in each topic)



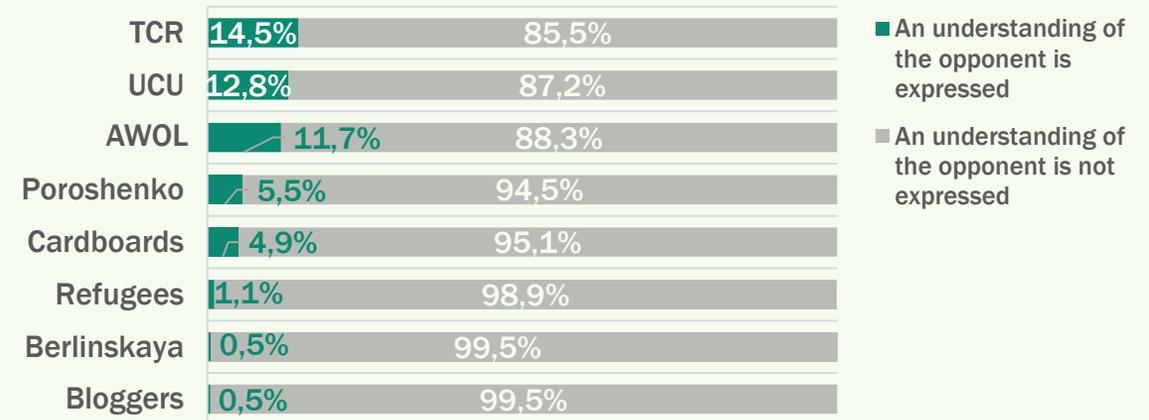
The highest percentage of hate speech was in discussions about the departure of Ukrainians abroad and the crime against the military TCR in Lviv, where the source of aggressive statements was politicians (O. Honcharenko, O. Dunda) or pseudo-experts (T. Nykyforchuk, V. Baranovsky). Most of their reactions were emotional and filled with personal insults. In the case of sanctions against P. Poroshenko, hate speech sounded primarily from pro-Russian accounts and was directed at V. Zelensky, while the teams of the two presidents of Ukraine did not resort to this.

Regarding the discussion around the publication of lists of drone manufacturers, anonymous Telegram news channels and individual users most often demonstrated an aggressive manner of communication. Professional and expert circles, in particular the military, more often combined support for volunteers with criticism of the state.

During the actions in support of NABU and SAPO in the pro-Ukrainian segment, the object of hate speech was mainly M. Bezugla, and pro-Russian authors were also harsh about the «sorosyats», «stada», and «Saloreikh». Hate speech in the UCU case was more radical from the conservative part of the audience. In the AWOL case, in addition to pro-Russian attacks, the indignation of military bloggers with the actions of the authorities was noticeable.

Expression of understanding of the opponent's position

(Share of coverage of posts in each topic)



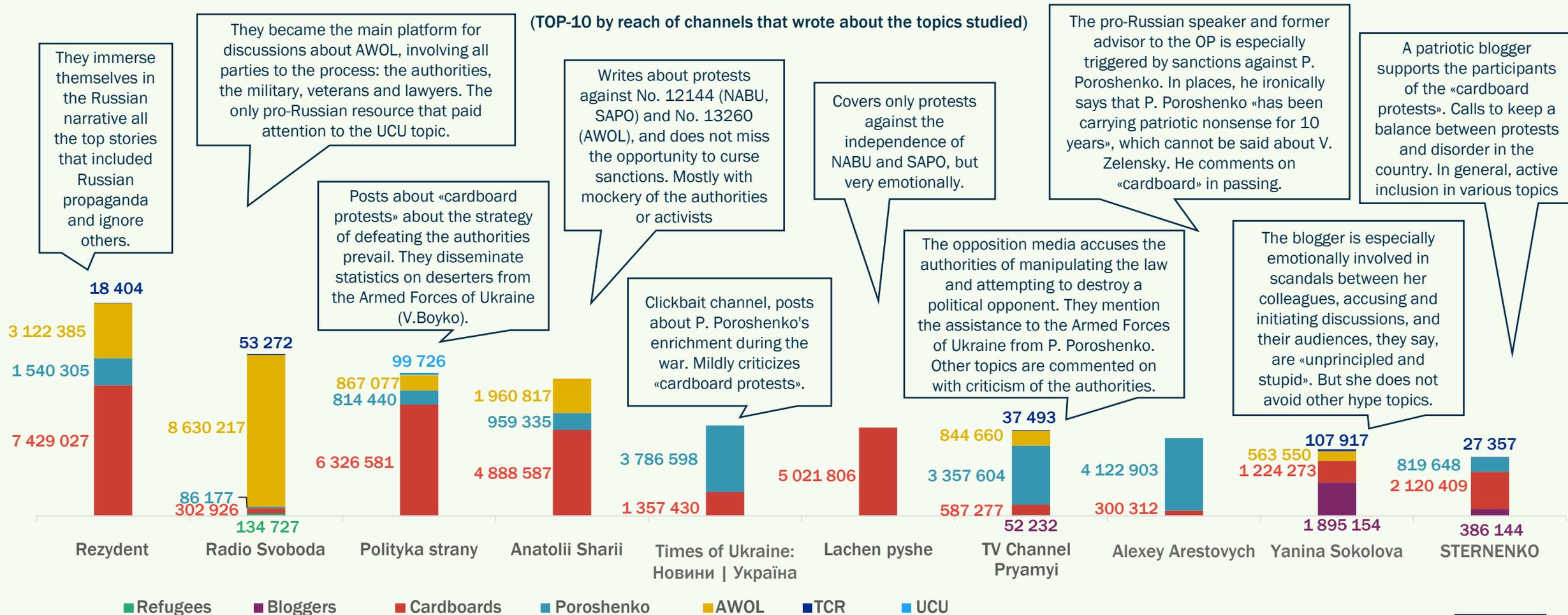
In most disputes, the position of the parties is categorical and excludes the possibility of understanding with opponents. Understanding is expressed only when individual participants or groups of people are willing to compromise. For example, in the scandal with bloggers, the main topics were language, loyalty to everything Russian, and the security of the regions of Ukraine, and this left no room for understanding. But the participant in the conversation, O. Mandziuk, expressed readiness for discussion. Similarly, M. Berlinska was ready for reconciliation with Lachen, although all other speakers were not. The topic of Ukrainians leaving abroad was too emotional, although some speakers took into account the difficult experience of those who left. The limited understanding of the opponents was in the topic of sanctions against P. Poroshenko (pro-Ukrainian accounts sometimes did not support any of the politicians and advocated for the unity of Ukrainians, among the most famous here S. Sternenko) and «cardboard protests», where the authorities went for reconciliation, fulfilling the demands of the protesters. The greatest understanding of the parties was in the case of the murder of the military TCR in Lviv: they tried to understand the motivation of the murderer, and justify his act with fear.

In general, it is noticeable that the younger generation, intellectuals and the military elite demonstrate a high willingness to hear the opponent. This was manifested in discussions about the UCU and the AWOL, where criticism was often constructive: the parties called for dialogue and understanding of the problem.

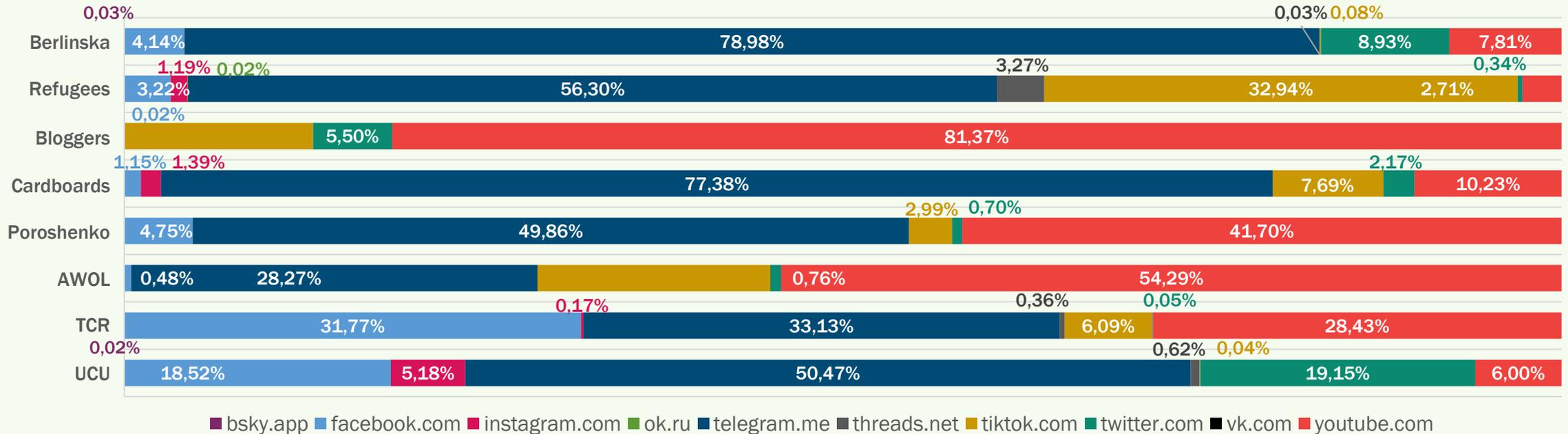
TOP ACCOUNTS BY TOTAL ATTENTION

Topic comparison

Top accounts mostly paid attention to the same topics, covering them repeatedly and making them leaders in terms of reach. However, nuances are also noticeable: the attention of «quality» media to AWOL, the opposition media to the Poroshenko topic, etc.



(Share of coverage of posts in each topic)



Most of the discussions developed in Telegram: both in pro-Ukrainian news accounts (national media and anonymous channels) and in the extensive network of pro-Russian forces (Resident, Legitimny). The exception was the topic of female bloggers, which Telegram did not pay attention to at all.

Audience coverage on YouTube was achieved through reputable media (Radio Liberty), which became platforms for discussions on socially important topics, or offline media that duplicated their broadcasts there (Channel 5, TV Channel Pryamy). In the topics of female bloggers and the TVC, the contribution of personal blogs was especially large.

Videos of military personnel with personal stories and Ukrainians about their experience of life abroad gained many views on TikTok.

The role of Facebook as a platform for discussions has greatly diminished and is mostly limited to the topic of the Ukrainian Catholic University and the murder of a soldier in Lviv: opinion leaders' pages generated a large reach there.

X becomes a secondary platform for discussion only if some of its participants are traditionally there.

DOMINANT EMOTIONS AND GOALS OF ACCUSATION

Topic comparison

In 2025, anger not only led in every conflict case, but also occupied more than 60% in each of them, in some reaching more than 90%. As for the most noticeable targets of the accusation in each case, there were two possible options: either they were the direct perpetrators of the criticized phenomena, without generalizations (such as M. Berlinska, bloggers or the suspect in the murder of a TCC soldier), or the authorities, more or less personalized. In other words, no social group was ever at the top of the accusations.

Topic	Berlinska	Refugees	Bloggers	Cardboards	Poroshenko	AWOL	TCR	UCU
Most noticeable emotion	Anger	Anger	Anger	Anger	Anger	Anger	Anger	Anger
The most visible target of the accusation	Berlinska	Authorities	Pro-Russian Bloggers	Authorities	Zelensky	Authorities	Suspected	UCU

SOCIAL GROUPS AS TARGETS OF ACCUSATION

Topic comparison

Activists were only subjected to hate speech during protests: there is probably no sustained public hatred towards them.

Those who went AWOL are mostly condemned by the military. Other categories of citizens do not directly condemn them.

But those who fled are subject to widespread hatred. This is probably the most vulnerable category of Ukrainians at the moment.

It is also significant that draft dodgers and TCCs have similar coverage rates in the cases studied. Thus, this is also a major social dividing line, and a symmetrical one at that, unlike those who went AWOL: their opponents, the commanders, are not publicly condemned to the same extent.

Condemnation of Russian speakers is minimal, while attempts to condemn Ukrainian speakers immediately provoke fierce opposition.



DIVISION LINES: AUTHORITY – MILITARY, ORDINARY DEFENDERS – COMMAND, FAITHFUL TO THE OATH – THOSE WHO WENT AWOL.

The discussion became relevant immediately after the adoption of the law by which the Verkhovna Rada extended the deadline until March 1, 2025, for the return to service of those who went ‘absent without leave’ (AWOL) or deserted. This caused a considerable wave of discussion of the mobilization process itself, with criticism of both the civilian authorities, which allegedly did not develop an effective recruitment mechanism from the very beginning, and the military command, which allegedly sometimes pushes defenders to go AWOL. At this time, pro-Russian accounts on Telegram and pseudo-lawyers on YouTube are picking up with their comments the statement of V. Zelensky, where he speaks of an increase in the number of personnel in AWOL in 2024, but its decrease in September-October of the same year. The controversy over the solution to the AWOL problem in the army is rekindling with renewed vigor immediately after the next vote: on April 30, the Verkhovna Rada adopted bill No. 13177, which extended the deadline for simplified return to service after the first AWOL until August 30, 2025. At this time, there is a noticeable criticism of the authorities due to the lack of systemic solutions. However, the

peak of the discussion is provoked by protests in Kyiv and Lviv against criminal liability for military personnel for going AWOL. The statistics published by the Prosecutor General's Office on the number of AWOL during the war period - almost 290 thousand criminal cases - add fuel to the discussion. This becomes an argument for all sides of the discussion to continue mutual accusations. In addition, in September 2025, a bill was passed in the first reading to restore responsibility for going AWOL. As a result, at the time of the end of the study (January 2026), the discussion is ongoing, and the authorities are still looking for ways out of the crisis.

The discussion mainly involved accusations of the failed policy of the authorities and military leadership, where the rational arguments of the military were quickly used by pro-Russian accounts to promote their general narrative about the weakness of the Ukrainian army and the incompetence of the political elite. But when it came to specific recommendations on what to do about all this, it turned out that there was no single solution, and military commanders and activists from among the rank-and-file soldiers offered opposite solutions.

The number of posts analyzed is **350**. The approximate reach is **41.5 million** users.

The most criticized were the civilian authorities, in particular V. Zelensky personally, his team and faction in the Verkhovna Rada. Opposition politicians (S. Fedyna, O. Goncharenko, D. Razumkov) appeal to the current authorities' disregard for the law. As an example, they mention the public demarche of military S. Gnezdilov, who voluntarily left the military unit, after serving for 5 years: in this way he tried to draw attention to the topic of demobilization. The military, in turn, talk about systemic problems that made going AWOL a mass phenomenon: the absence of a military prosecutor's office (S. Palamar), the absence of effective mechanisms for returning military personnel who went AWOL (A. Ilenko, an officer of the Svoboda battalion), violation of the constitutional rights of military personnel in the event of increased criminal liability for going AWOL (veteran A. Sarnatska); the problem of demobilization (S. Gnezdilov, Masi Nayem). The military leadership is most often criticized by the military themselves. The main argument: the defenders are forced to use AWOL as a loophole in the legislation for transfer to other units (commanders K. Veres, A. Biletsky, deputy commander R. Kudryashov). If a soldier nevertheless voluntarily returns to service, commanders often throw such people into the most difficult areas (G. Skorokhod). Opposition politicians or other military personnel who are loyal to their oath often criticize those who have gone AWOL or evade service. The activities of the military ombudsman and law enforcement agencies as part of a single system that is unable to ensure the implementation of the law are subject to constructive criticism. Pro-Russian bloggers are also trying to accuse public figures (celebrities, bloggers, etc.) of public evasion of service.

Civilian authorities and senior military leadership became the main objects of criticism during the discussion and were also the most attacked by pro-Russian forces and opposition politicians. The military was more inclined to blame individual institutions or oath-breakers.

(Part of coverage of posts)

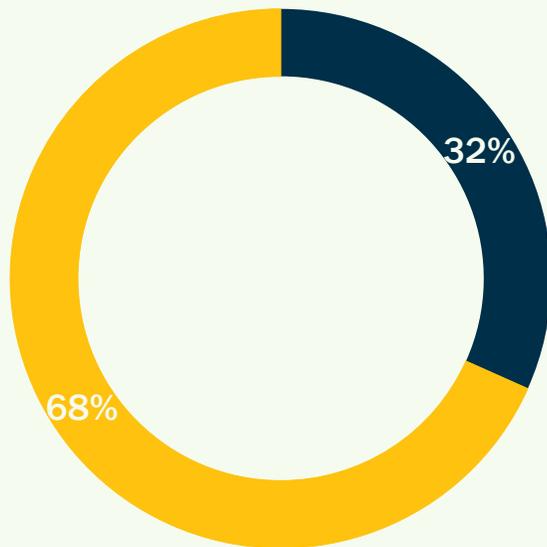


Decriminalization of going AWOL

The discussion developed mainly within the pro-Ukrainian audience, but the involvement of the pro-Russian network of Telegram channels and pseudo-lawyers on YouTube was also noticeable. Hate speech is recorded mostly in the pro-Russian segment, but from time-to-time oppositionists and ordinary Internet users resort to hate speech. Attempts to understand the opponent are more often noticeable among the high military command and representatives of the authorities, who demonstrate openness to dialogue and readiness to compromise for the sake of the result.

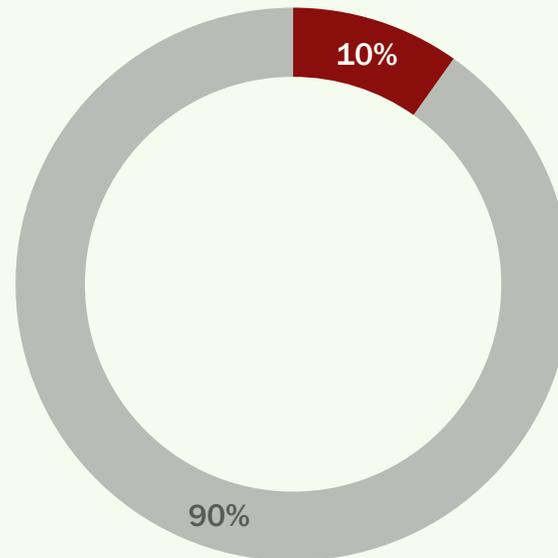
(Part of the coverage of posts)

Participation of supporters of different sides



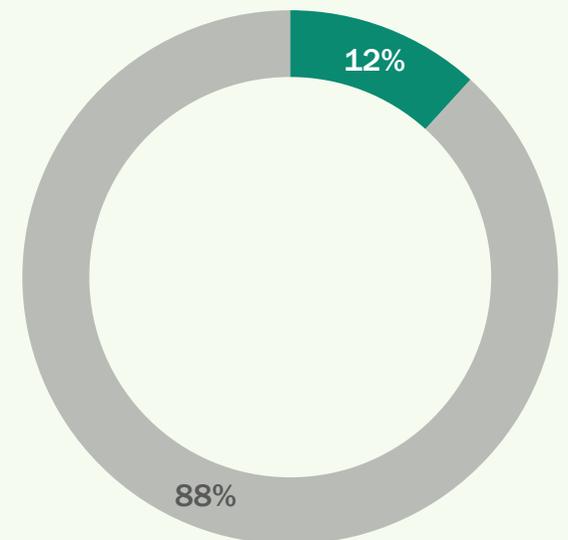
■ Pro-Russian audience
■ Pro-Ukrainian audience

Use of hate speech



■ Hate speech present
■ Hate speech absent

Search for a common point of view



■ Opponent's understanding expressed
■ Opponent's understanding not expressed

Anger - prevails in the posts of absolutely all participants in the discussion. Opposition politicians and military personnel are outraged by the extension of the terms for voluntary return after going AWOL, because it does not solve a systemic problem. There is anger among the military and the military community at the military command, which leaves no choice but to go AWOL to simplify the transfer mechanism or simply take leave; there is also irritation among the military, and sometimes criticism from the authorities, towards individuals who went AWOL: they say, this undermines the army's defense capabilities. At the same time, there is sharp criticism of the idea of strengthening criminal liability for going AWOL by almost all sides of the discussion, where they appeal to the violation of constitutional rights and blocking the ways for people with combat experience to return to the army.

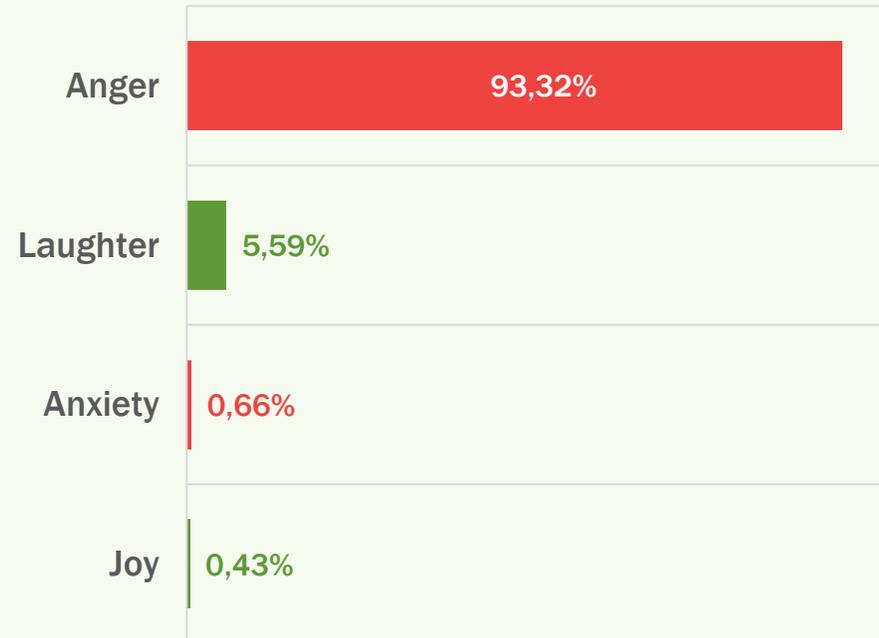
Laughter - posts by pro-Russian users with frank mockery of the authorities. They say, but he is trying with all his might to save the mobilization (A. Shariy, T. Nykyforchuk). There are ironic posts by military personnel about participating in protests against No. 13260 or about returning from AWOL in time before the vote for increased responsibility.

Anxiety - part of the posts about the scale of the AWOL problem in Ukraine (Radio Liberty broadcasts).

Joy - the story of a serviceman who told about the positive experience of returning from the NWCH, despite previous misunderstandings with the former command (official TikTok account of the Land Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine).

Anger is the dominant emotion of the discussion participants, which is sometimes diluted by ridicule from pro-Russian users and self-irony from the military. Anxiety is recorded among civilians when trying to find out the scale of the AWOL problem. The official military command brings joy with stories of soldiers who, despite the difficulties, have a positive experience of returning from AWOL

(Part of the coverage of posts)



DISCUSSION MESSAGES PART 1

Decriminalization of going AWOL

The most popular messages of the discussion discuss the policy of the civilian and higher military authorities. The military, as well as a proactive pool of citizens, are trying to stimulate the authorities to make systemic changes in the army. In their understanding, the AWOL issue is a consequence of a deep managerial crisis, which is often manipulated by pro-Russian agents of influence and opposition politicians.

The message with direct criticism of the authorities began to be spread massively immediately after the news about the September protests against the draft law No. 13260 in Lviv and Kyiv. The footage where the protesters chant: «Service is not slavery», was broadcast on TSN, Radio Liberty, and News.LIVE. However, the posts of pro-Russian TG channels (A. Shariy, Resident) had the greatest reach.

First, the message was voiced by I. Vereshchuk, speaking about the extension of the period for voluntary return to service. This is supported by the military and a number of opposition politicians. Pro-Russian contributors note the increase in the number of AWOL cases after previous similar statements by the authorities (A. Shariy, Resident, Legitimny). Later, the topic became relevant again after the intention to introduce criminal liability for going AWOL.

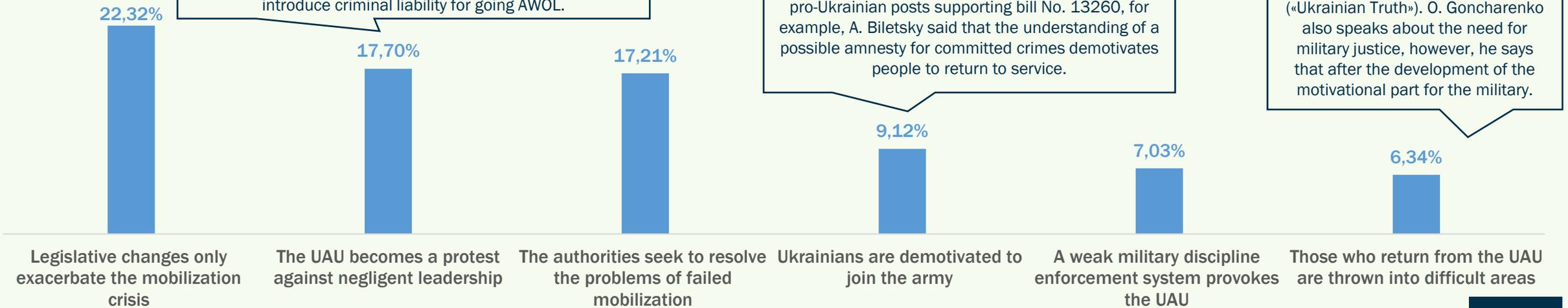
(Part of the coverage of posts)

Positions of the military criticizing government initiatives. Among them: interviews with commanders K. Veres and A. Biletsky, who talk about fatigue, problems with the transfer mechanism, and poor command.

MP H. Skorokhod (recently accused of corruption) stated that it is only possible to return from AWOL to the assault brigades. This opinion is also supported by the legal community (R. Lykhachev). There are also personal stories of servicemen who were thrown into difficult areas after returning to service.

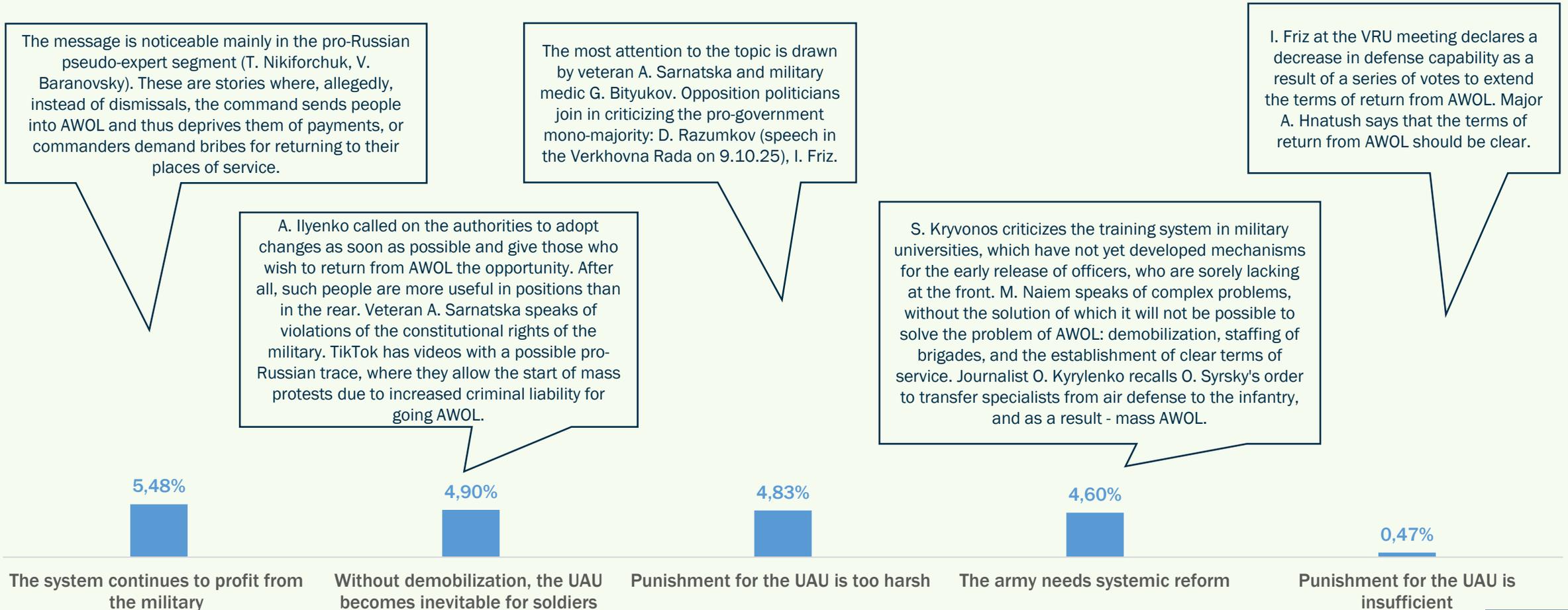
A message that was actively promoted by pro-Russian accounts (Strana.ua, Kartel, Spletnitsa, Ye. Murayev). But the greatest reach was brought to it by pro-Ukrainian posts supporting bill No. 13260, for example, A. Biletsky said that the understanding of a possible amnesty for committed crimes demotivates people to return to service.

S. Palamar says that the liquidation of the military prosecutor's office only strengthens the AWOL problem («Ukrainian Truth»). O. Goncharenko also speaks about the need for military justice, however, he says that after the development of the motivational part for the military.



The most destructive and toxic messages are spread by pro-Russian agents and pseudo-experts. Other sides of the discussion express a more balanced position, often with high-quality comments and solid arguments, albeit with criticism of the opponent

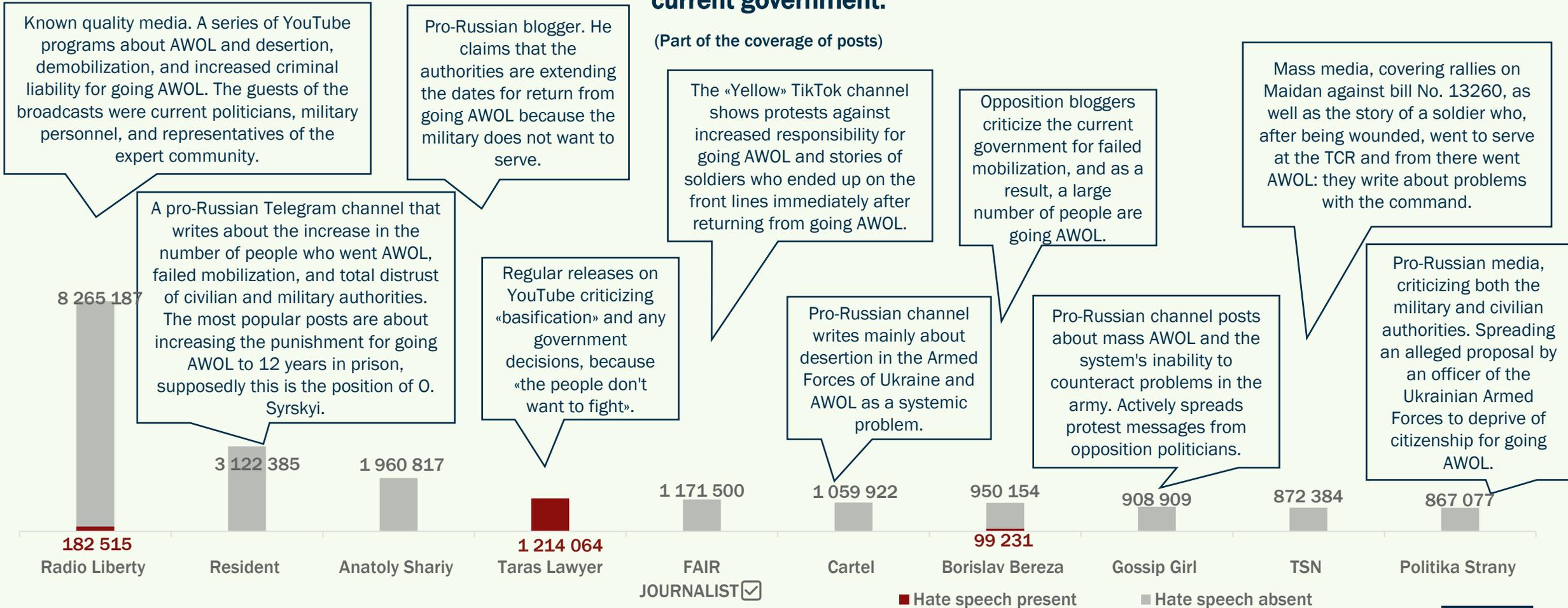
(Part of the coverage of posts)



TOP-10 AUTHORS OF THE DISCUSSION

Decriminalization of going AWOL

Well-known Ukrainian media outlets often served as platforms for discussion, providing an opportunity for different parties to the process (representatives of civil and military authorities, legislators, ordinary defenders, and command personnel) to express their views. Pro-Russian channels actively used the topic to strengthen their narrative, in particular about the weakness of the Ukrainian army, often resorting to frank ridicule and toxic content. In some places, the opposition joined the discussion with criticism of the current government.



YOUNG MEN GOING ABROAD AND REFUGEES' RETURN TO UKRAINE

DIVIDING LINES: THOSE WHO LEFT – THOSE WHO STAYED; THOSE WHO RETURN – THOSE WHO DO NOT RETURN; THE MAJORITY OF UKRAINIAN CITIZENS – YOUNG PEOPLE WHO CAN LEAVE; CITIZENS – THE AUTHORITY.

The topic includes two partially related cases: permission for young men under 23 to travel abroad and the return of Ukrainian refugee women from Europe to Ukraine. Both discussions on social networks took place in parallel, influenced each other and had certain common messages.

The return of women was not tied to current news: it was a continuous process that lasted for a year, when posts by more or less famous Ukrainian women who decided to return received a significant reaction on social networks.

As for the decision to allow young men to leave, it was adopted by the government at the end of August 2022. Although this idea had been voiced by representatives of the authorities a few months earlier, it did not cause any significant discussion, but after the adoption of the relevant resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers, there was a powerful communication surge.

This is partly explained by the context: after the «cardboard protests», many speakers suspected that such a decision by the authorities was dictated by the desire to eliminate the threat from the younger generation or to please it.

Within a month after this decision, several statements with statistics on young men leaving abroad or simply impressions of socio-demographic changes in Ukraine after such a permit became resonant.

The topic is quite emotional, it caused a lot of insults, quarrels, mutual ridicule between the parties to the process. Russian activity is noticeable in the topic, pro-Russian channels and pages mock both those who left and the country that cannot keep its citizens, these sources often sound calls to leave, not to return to Ukraine, predictions that all young men will leave after the adoption of the resolution. As in the case of mobilization, there are not very many posts from pro-Russian accounts, but there are constant complaints from women that their posts about returning receive numerous comments with Russian messages and hate.

In addition to the obvious Russian activity, the topic was used by the opposition to criticize the authorities. Such information activity reinforced the natural dividing line between people making different life decisions, giving priority to patriotic or personal considerations.

The number of posts analyzed was **350**. The approximate reach was **6.3 million** users.

The **authorities** are most often accused of ineffectively returning Ukrainians from abroad, of not creating any conditions for this, and of not having programs for those who have returned. The authorities are also accused of being interested in the departure of the maximum number of people, and most of all young men who went to «cardboard protests». On the other hand, there are accusations that the authorities do not let citizens out of the country and create various obstacles.

Those who have left are accused very emotionally – most often by politicians or public figures who call them traitors, or by pro-Russian accounts where they are mocked, as well as by their resentment towards Europe.

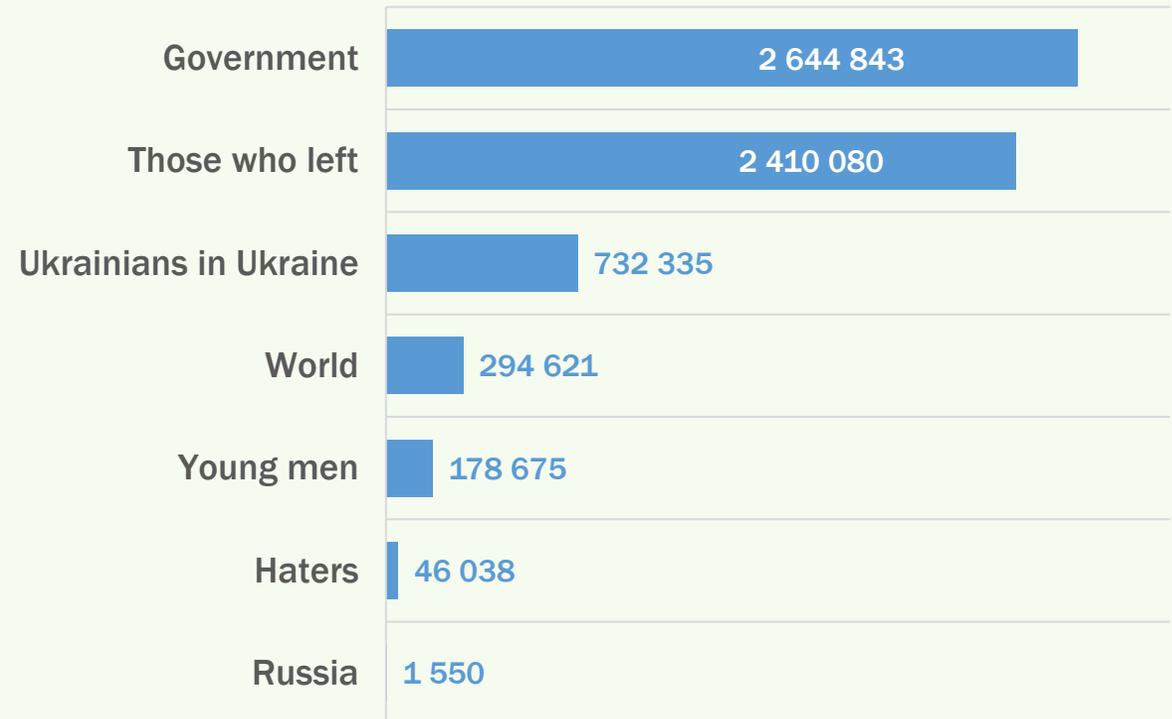
The refugees themselves sometimes accuse the **world** of bureaucracy, complicated life, misunderstanding of Ukrainian problems, and ignoring Ukrainians.

They spread statistics that 17% of exchange students did not return to Ukraine and draw conclusions that almost all young men want to leave, warning that allowing **young men under 22** to leave would be a disaster.

Those who return and write about it on social media notice that their posts are being followed by haters who write very negatively about their return, most of the **haters** have signs of bot accounts. The Center for Countering Disinformation writes that Russia is spreading fakes about the men leaving, but in general, no one directly blames **Russia** anymore. Even those bots that react aggressively to posts about their return are usually not called Russian.

Different groups accuse the authorities of opposite things, the accusations against those who left are often very emotional, as is the offense of those who left towards Ukrainians who do not accept them well upon their return

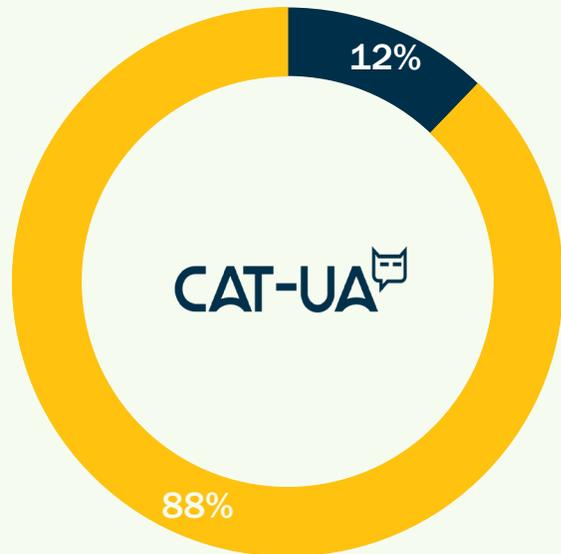
(Part of the coverage of the posts)



The activity of pro-Russian accounts, compared to other topics, is moderate, but complaints about hate bots in the comments are typical. Anger and hate speech are extremely powerful and occur primarily in the mutual hatred of those who live in Ukraine and those who have left. Anger at the authorities is manifested to a lesser extent. Understanding opponents is very rare, and mainly concerns Ukrainians who do not want to return: some, condemning them, express understanding of the position

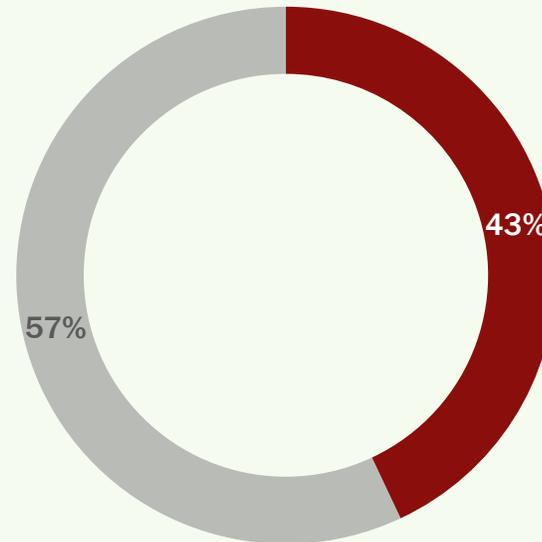
(Part of the coverage of posts)

Participation of supporters of different sides



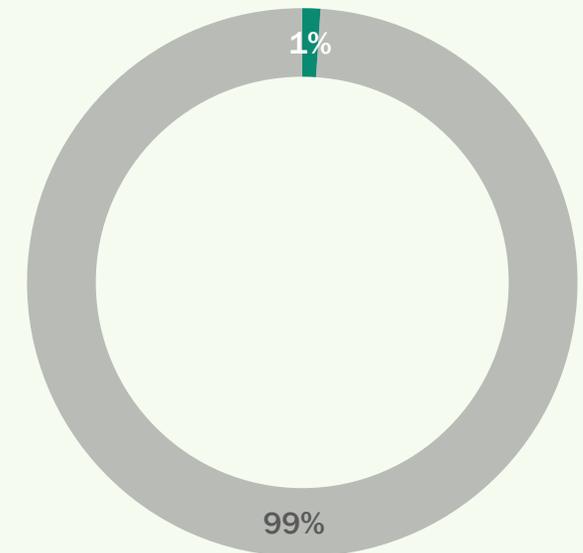
- Pro-Russian
- Pro-Ukrainian

Use of hate speech



- Hate speech present
- Hate speech absent

Search for a common point of view



- Opponent's understanding expressed
- Opponent's understanding not expressed

Anger – most of the analyzed content is very angry, and there is anger at the authorities, at those who left, at those who condemn them, and at the world that weakly supports refugees. More emotional anger – in pro-Russian posts and videos, the least emotional, and rather mixed with sadness – in stories about how Ukrainians returned and saw that they were not expected here.

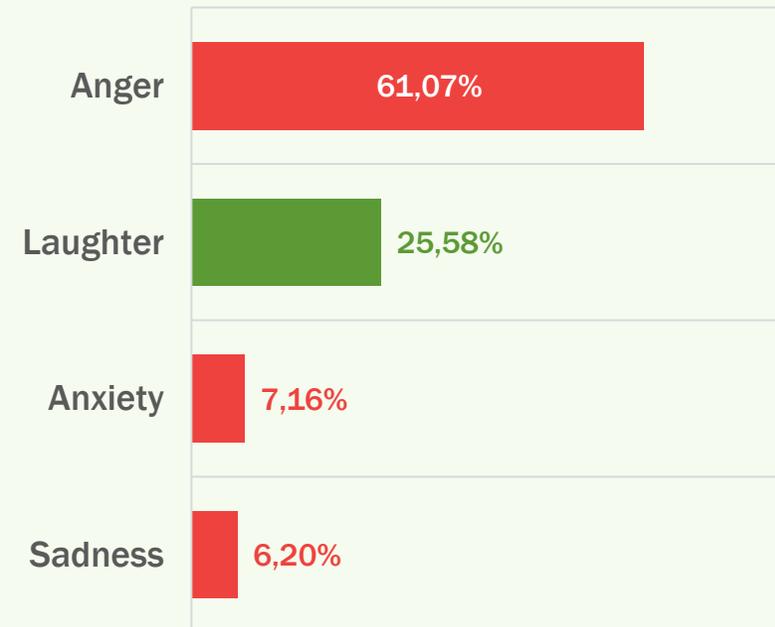
Laughter – most of all in the pro-Russian part, this is aggressive mockery of the Ukrainian authorities, which cannot keep people in the country, of Ukraine, from which everyone is fleeing, of Ukrainians abroad, who do not want to do anything, want to receive help, and of young men who immediately began to flee the country allegedly due to fear of future mobilization.

Anxiety – anxious discussion of a possible situation when many Ukrainians will not return to Ukraine, some anxiety before the resolution was adopted to allow young men under 22 to leave: they are worried that they will leave en masse, spread the news that employers are complaining about the dismissal of young men, and from this they draw alarming predictions about a future crisis.

Sadness – most of all in posts and videos where women returning to Ukraine talk about the difficulties they faced after returning, or about how they were negatively perceived by some acquaintances or employers for being abroad for a long time.

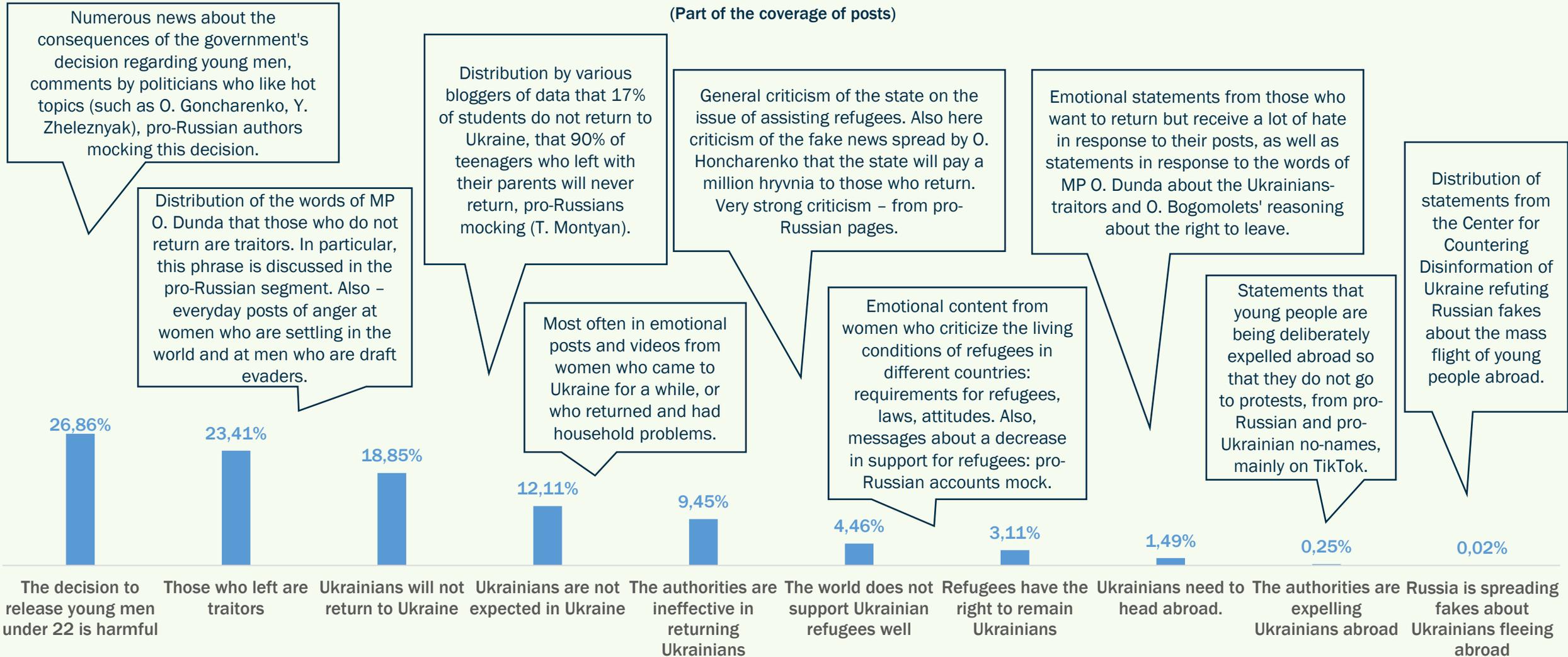
Anger has different shades, depending on who it is directed at. There is very little good laughter - it is found in memes about young men, and instead there is a lot of evil mockery in pro-Russian content.

(Part of the reach of posts)



This is the only topic where the wording of the messages is very sharp, categorical, bordering on stigmatization

(Part of the coverage of posts)



TOP-10 AUTHORS OF THE DISCUSSION

Leaving and Returning

Active and constant criticism of those who left and young men who will have the opportunity to leave is being carried out on pro-Russian channels and communities, and pages critical of the government

(Part of the number of posts)



DIVIDING LINES: CITIZENS – AUTHORITIES AND POLITICIANS IN GENERAL, CIVIC ACTIVISTS – CRITICS OF «GRANT EATERS» AND EXTERNAL MANAGEMENT, PROTESTORS – SKEPTICS

The bill No. 12414, which eliminated the institutional independence of the NABU and the SAP, initiated a discussion about threats from the authorities to civil society, the impunity of V. Zelensky's entourage. It also resulted in street actions, the reportage content of which made up the lion's share of the discussion.

The trigger for the protests was the appeal of veteran D. Kozyatynsky, who on July 22 called on the X to gather in Kyiv near the Franko Theater, to which various popular (in particular, aimed at a youth audience) communities instantly responded by spreading their messages. Similar events were held simultaneously in other cities (peak attention - July 22-25). The vast majority of the materials contained anger at the authorities, but mostly without disdain for institutions, with creativity and memes (in particular, many quoted songs by S. Zhadan, A. Kuzmenko, etc.), although there were also excesses («Yermak – go to hell», «Zelya is a devil!»). The reaction of people to V. Zelensky's signing of the controversial bill was extremely negative, which led to the continuation of the actions.

On the second day, despite attempts to put out the «fire» (Zelensky's meeting with the heads of the NABU and SAPO), categorical expert statements about a return to 2013 continued. A kind of anti-hero of the third day of protests was M. Bezugla, who came to Franko Square and was immediately ridiculed because she came out with different slogans and initially voted «for» No. 12414.

After the fourth day of protests, the info crisis moved from the streets to social networks for a while. Pro-Russian sources did everything they could to dispel the need for protests against the TCR and violent mobilization. The final surge of attention was on July 30-31, when the Verkhovna Rada voted for a new bill.

The discussion about the protests did not contain any hatred towards parties not involved in the confrontation. Even pro-Russian figures in this case, which is not typical for them, only targeted the authorities and the West.

The number of posts analyzed - **554**. The approximate reach - **88.2 million** users.

Civilian authorities – for the bill No. 12414 itself (news resources that broadcast the protests; popular bloggers and experts such as S. Sternenko, V. Portnikov, Ya. Sokolova, I. Lachenkova), for the attempt to curtail European integration, reforms, etc. Pro-Russian sources did not emphasize this, instead appealing to the threats of usurpation of power.

Russia – in the context of the Defence Intelligence of Ukraine’s warnings about the threats of provocations; O. Skabeeva was also quoted as «supporting the protests against Zelensky».

Politicians – mostly M. Bezugla, who voted for No. 12414, but still came to the rallies; regarding other political figures who were there (V. Klitschko, A. Sadovyi), despite the organizers’ calls to refrain from participating in the rallies.

Protesters – reproached them mainly for incompetence (most often on TikTok, where they selected people from the crowd who might not know the meaning of the abbreviations of NABU, SAPO, etc.); called them paid off.

Public organizations – pro-Russian authors and Yulia Tymoshenko (outraged by the «external management») saw their dependence on Western donors.

Anti-corruption agencies – veteran of «Azov» B. Krotevych accused them of inefficiency, which makes it difficult to protect the agencies from their complete liquidation (similar messages – from political scientist T. Zahorodniy).

The military – M. Bezugla accused them, stating the need together with the laws on NABU, to also adopt army reform, change approaches to mobilization, and publicize the «crimes of O. Syrskyi».

Law enforcement officers – because they allegedly started working on the participants of the actions (rumors from A. Gura).

Other compatriots – for distrust and attempts to devalue the meaning of the actions, for example, by asking «how much did you pay to participate in the rally?».

Anonymous Telegram channels – for ignoring the protests or attempts to defame NABU in publications with signs of being commissioned.

The actions of July 22-31 became primarily a platform for condemning the authorities, which tried to «strike back» with minimal effectiveness. The discussion almost did not affect the categories of citizens outside the authorities (except for some indignation at «agents of the West» from old politicians and pro-Russian speakers)

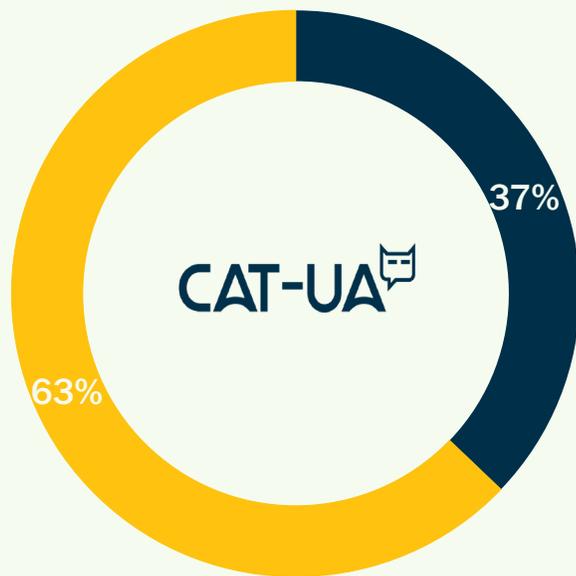
(Part of the coverage of posts)

civil authorities	70 852 437
Russia	6 932 441
politicians	5 769 115
protesters	5 448 705
Western states	5 386 983
activists	2 219 227
anti-corruption bodies	1 486 579
military	481 948
law enforcement officers	350 155
other compatriots	348 779
Telegram channels	224 340

The pro-Russian audience is included in the discussion no less than the pro-Ukrainian one, situationally supporting the protests as a tool of pressure on the Ukrainian authorities, although not sharing their ideology. There was relatively little hate speech: in the pro-Ukrainian segment, its object was mainly M. Bezugla due to the very fact of participating in the protests (despite supporting the law), with obscene epithets; pro-Russian authors were harsh towards the «Sorosites», «herd» and «Saloreikh» (T. Montyan), whereas there were no harsh comments regarding «man-catchers» (TCR). Understanding of the protests was voiced by V. Zelensky, who announced a revision of bill No. 12414, but his statements were broadcast weakly. Among the conciliators, only D. Gordon is notable, who tried to convince in the wisdom of the authorities and their tendency to admit mistakes.

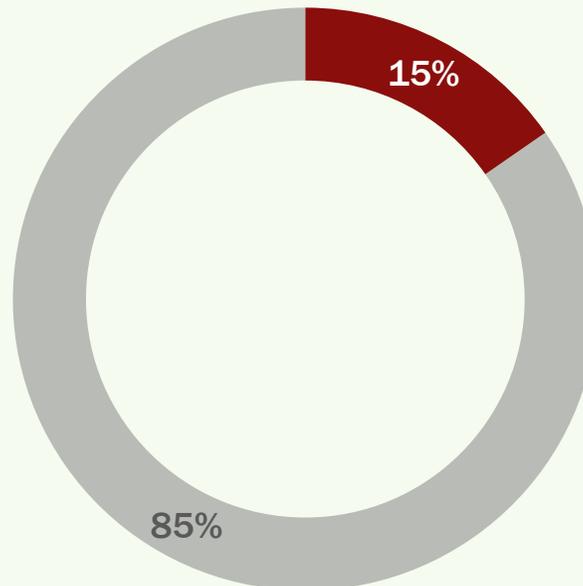
(Part of the coverage of posts)

Participation of supporters of different sides



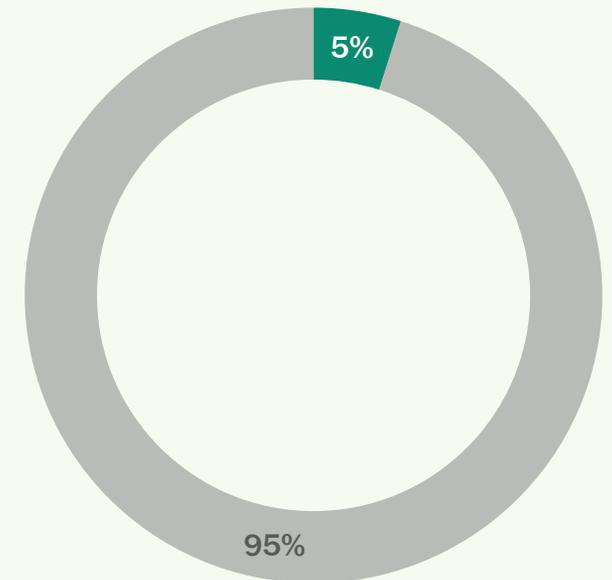
- Pro-Russian audience
- Pro-Ukrainian audience

Use of hate speech



- Hate speech present
- Hate speech absent

Searching for a common point of view



- Opponent's understanding expressed
- Opponent's understanding not expressed

Anger – basically at the authorities, but also at activists («grants patriots» – from Yulia Tymoshenko) and the West that sponsors them; among pro-Russian users and M. Bezugla – at law enforcement officers for double standards (lack of dispersal of protests and at the same time «arbitrariness» during the protest against the TCR in Vinnytsia); at Bezugla herself, V. Klychko and other politicians (for inappropriate PR); at the organizers of information attacks on protesters; at Russia (which dreams of destabilizing the situation in Ukraine).

Anxiety – the likelihood of losing support from partners, the preparation of provocations by the Russian Federation (quoted by the Defence Intelligence of Ukraine), the risks of a crisis of trust in the authorities during the war (V. Portnykov), intentions of repressions against the protests participants (pro-Russian sources).

Hope – for a positive result of V. Zelensky with the heads of anti-corruption bodies and signing a law that returns independence to them (during the action on July 31, near the Verkhovna Rada), for vetoing the old one.

Joy – in the news that V. Zelensky canceled the reduction of the powers of the NABU and SAPO, proposed an alternative bill; thanks to the “people with cardboards” and celebration of their victory.

Laughter – at M. Bezugla, who came out to protest; at the elderly man who threatened to call the TCR to calm the protesters; in the pro-Russian segment – at the youth who do not know how to decipher the abbreviations of NABU and SAPO.

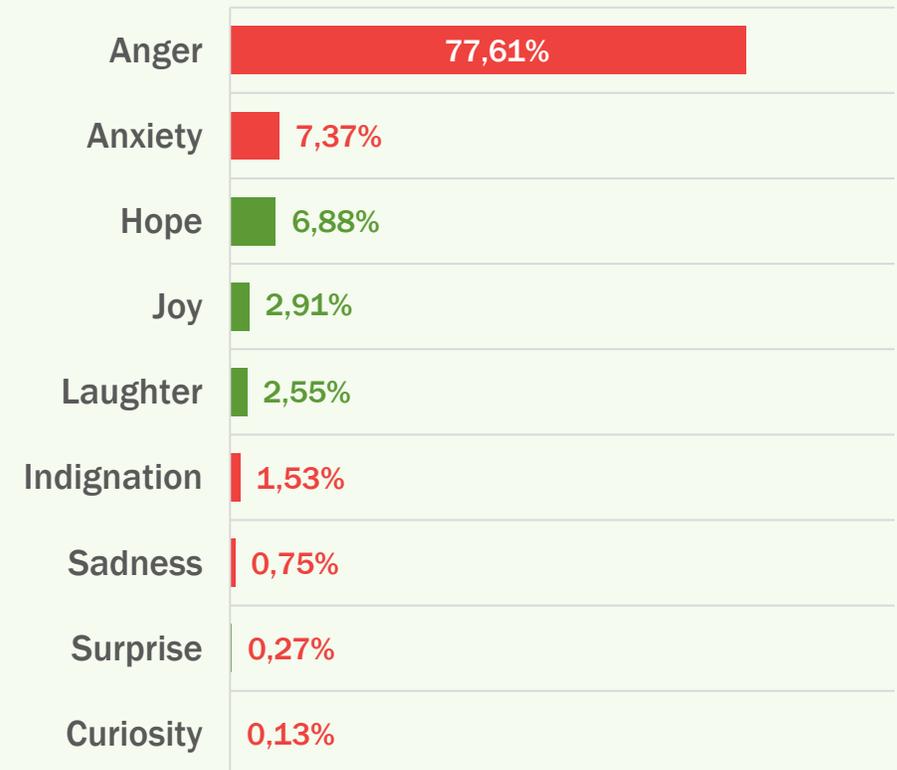
Indignation – that people advocated for the independence of NABU and SAPO, although they still continue to report something to V. Zelensky (I. Herashchenko); due to the illogicality of M. Bezugla's participation in the protest; ignorance of what NABU and SAPO are; the absence of rallies against the TCR (M. Bezugla).

Sadness – honoring the fallen with a minute of silence at the protest (Lachen writes).

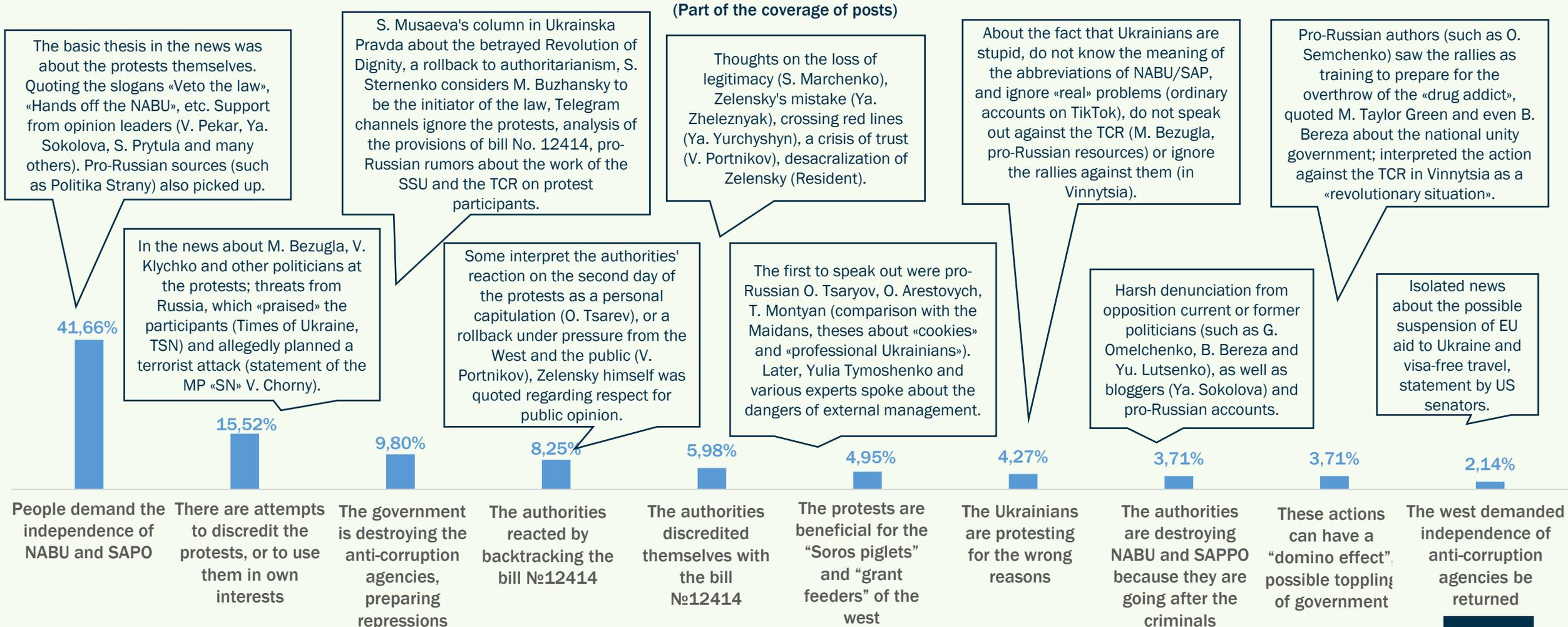
Surprise – due to the demands of the USA (senators J. Shaheen and L. Graham) to return the independence of the state bodies (STERNENKO).

Anger applies to all objects, but when it is directed at the authorities, it is often cheerful anger. Anxiety and hope have approximately the same indicators

(Share of post coverage)



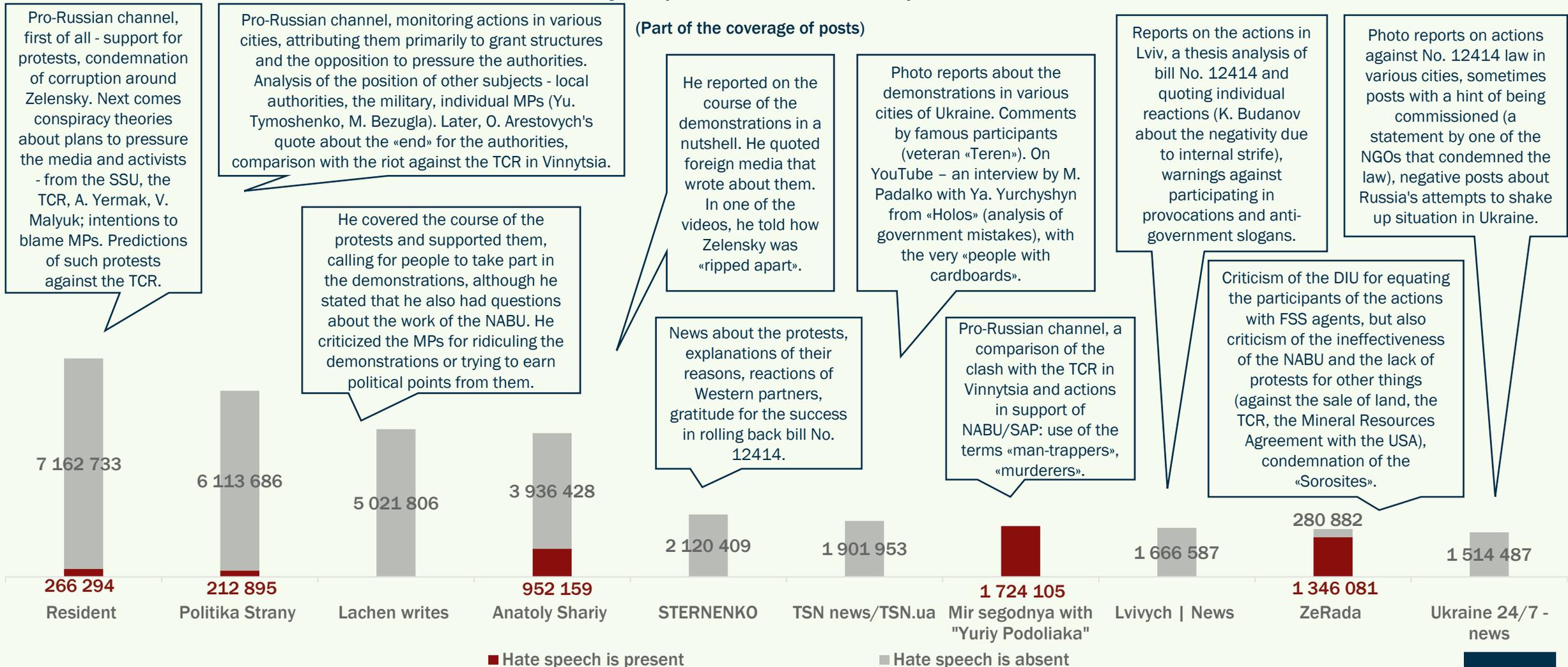
Almost half of the coverage was occupied by posts that simply talked about the protests and broadcast the protesters' demands. The rest was made up of interpretations and considerations about the causes and consequences of the protests. The messages of pro-Russian bloggers were very diverse, as is often the case when they were unprepared for the events.



TOP 10 AUTHORS OF THE DISCUSSION

Cardboard protests

Opinion leaders called for joining the protests, journalists distributed reports from the actions in different cities. There is a thesis analysis, in pro-Russian sources - with conspiracy theories, condemnation of the authorities, speculation on other topics (such as mobilization)



DIVIDING LINES: CONSERVATIVE - LIBERAL VIEWS (INCLUDING LGBTQI+), HOMOPHOBES - TOLERANT TO LGBTQI+, THOSE WHO THINK LGBTQI + RIGHTS ARE «ON TIME» - AND THOSE WHO DON'T

The trigger for the discussion was N. Vorozhbyt's post on September 2, in which she spoke about the refusal to accommodate her daughter Paraska in the UCU dormitory allegedly because of the LGBT flag on her personal Instagram account, and accused the university of homophobia. On the same day, UCU responded to the wave of hate that had arisen and gave its explanations about the need to «support spiritual values and understand the rules of residence in the Collegium». The post was widely distributed by news TG channels, and the director was supported by liberal activists on X and Facebook. Later, the discussion was picked up by conservative users who used the information platform as another opportunity to condemn views hostile to them. The scandal also reached the Catholic Church: priest N. Zatorsky was banned from commenting on LGBT issues after he supported the Vorozhbyt family and reminded that the Western Catholic Church and the Pope personally opposed discrimination against LGBT representatives. At the same time, for liberal Ukrainians, the scandal at UCU became an occasion for a broader discussion of European integration and EU values in education,

discrimination, and the right of private higher education institutions to establish rules that contradict Ukrainian legislation. UCU was also supported by former graduates of the institution, who reminded that «Catholic» appears in the name of the higher education institution for a reason, and one of the best educational institutions in Ukraine should not be condemned. They also stated that they never faced discrimination while studying at UCU, and that the Christian vector of education helped them grow morally and become better members of Ukrainian society. The discussion came to nothing at the end of September.

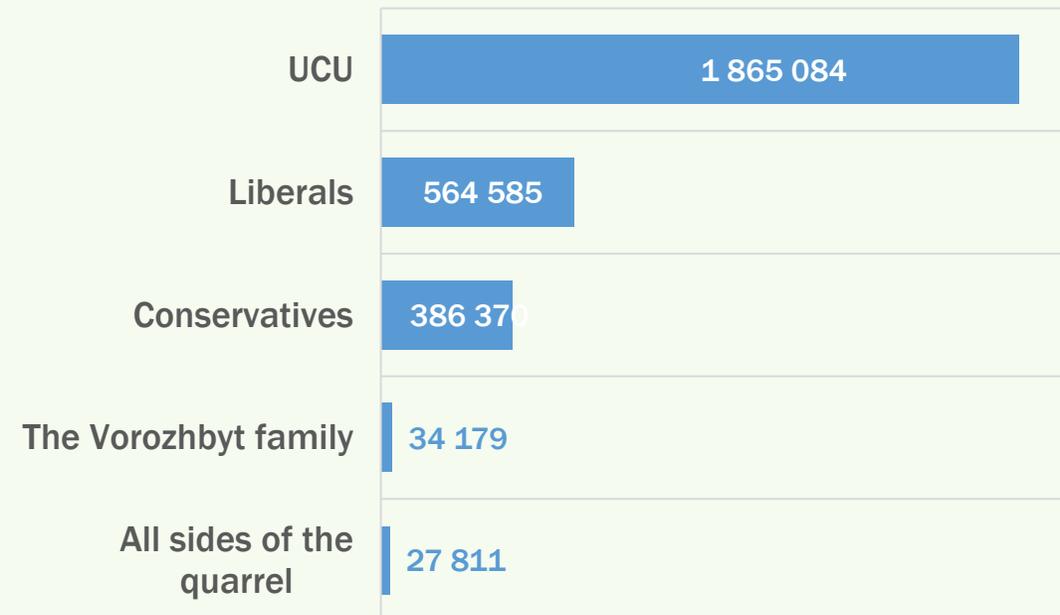
This is a rare case of a conflict in which the authorities did not «get it», and it also did not actually interest overt Russian propaganda (unless there are covert propagandists among the patriotic accounts that joined the discussion).

The number of posts analyzed is **545**. The approximate reach is **2.8 million** users.

The UCU itself received the most hate: in the opening post, N. Vorozhbyt reproaches the educational institution for homophobia and discrimination, causing moral harm to her daughter. The director was immediately supported by liberal Facebook users: the university was accused of archaic prejudice and rejection of European values. At the same time, conservative patriotic TG channels and religious activists (such as D. Korchynskiy) mockingly condemned the **Vorozhbyt family**, using obscene language and in relation to **LGBT representatives**. The **conservatives** themselves were also condemned for this rhetoric: they were condemned for disregarding the law, demanding not to interfere in the affairs of the educational institution. In the end, even commentators appeared on social networks, who condemned **each side of the quarrel**: they say, the war in Ukraine is still going on, and thousands of people are dying every day, so discussing the "rainbow" scandal at UCU is inappropriate and «untimely».

The most coverage is given to posts accusing UCU, as news channels with large audiences mostly only reacted to N. Vorozhbyt's post, and did not support the discussion further. Mutual accusations of «liberals» and «conservatives» were mainly carried out in thematic blogs and by figures concerned with the topic

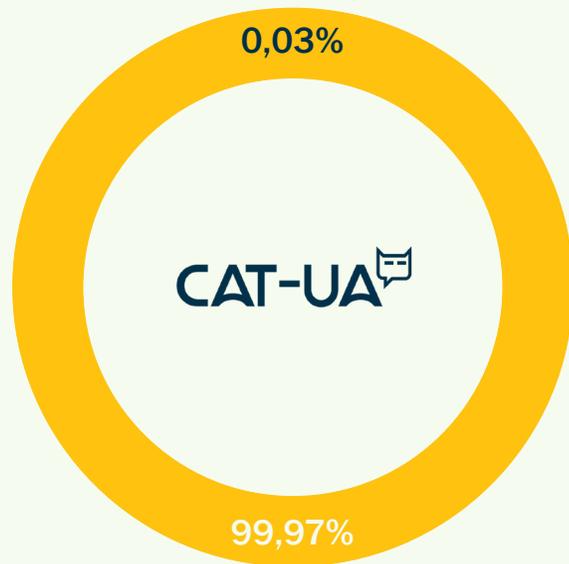
(Part of the coverage of posts)



The discussion was attended almost exclusively by pro-Ukrainian authors, channels and media; a negligible pro-Russian portion of the audience was made up of priests of the UOC MP. Hate speech was more typical of the conservative part of the audience: critics of the UCU position are called «perverts», «grant-eaters», «leftists», compared to Russians, and used insults against LGBT representatives. Liberals use hate speech in the format of «black» humor. Students, graduates and teachers of UCU are most inclined to seek a common view

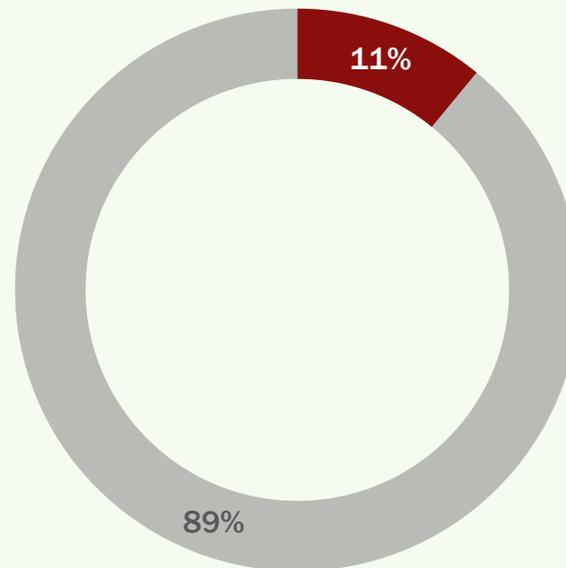
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Participation of supporters of different sides



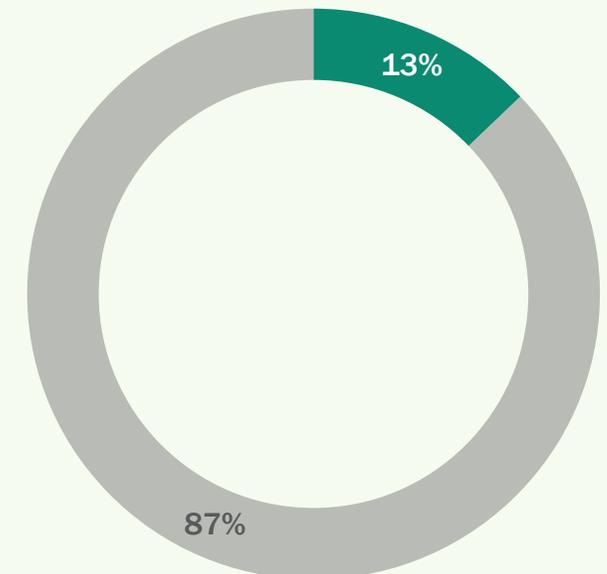
- Pro-Russian audience
- Pro-Ukrainian audience

Use of hate speech



- Hate speech present
- Hate speech absent

Search for a common view



- Opponent's understanding expressed
- Opponent's understanding not expressed

Anger – prevails in posts from absolutely all sides of the discussion; the starting post – accusations of UCU by N. Vorozhbyt; accusations of UCU in discrimination against the daughter of a war veteran, neglect of European values; outrage at the hypocrisy of UCU, because students and teachers are not convicted for other violations of «Christian» values (marital infidelity, bad habits), and interference in the personal lives of applicants; anger at the attention paid to the case while the Russian offensive at the front continues.

Laughter – a self-ironic post by the mayor of Dnipro B. Filatov, in which he marvels at the savagery of the conflict; jokes about «believers burning LGBT witches»; jokes are also made about Catholics' fear of LGBT people on the level of criminals or drug addicts; They write with irony that UCU is forced to «walk the tightrope» between traditional values and bribes from applicants whose parents support the «queer party».

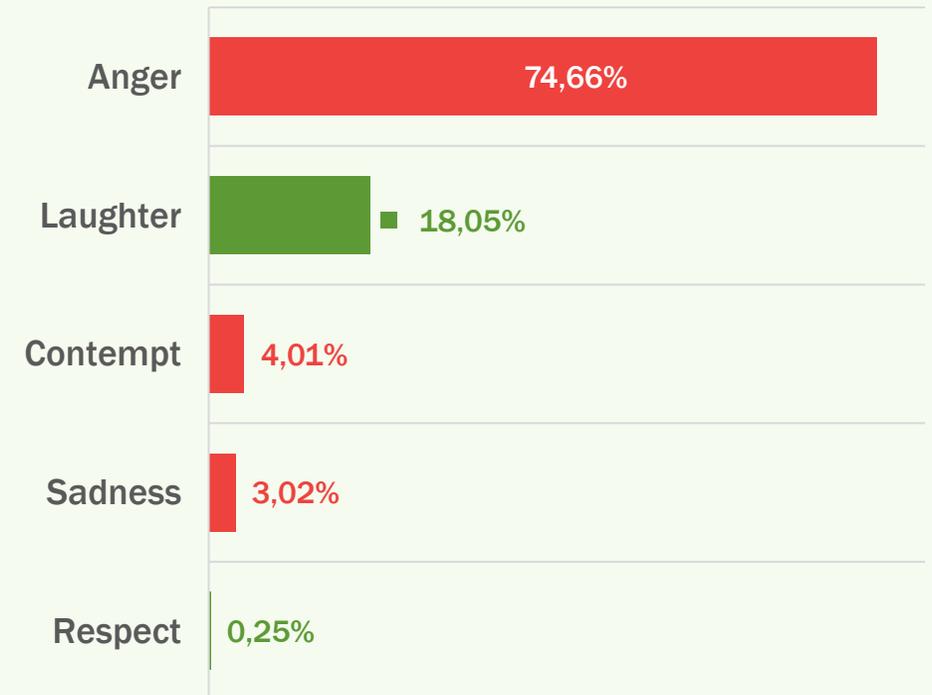
Contempt is directed at the family of N. Vorozhbyt (they mention the director's work in Moscow, condemn the desire for «hype» at the expense of a knowingly unsuccessful admission); posts by believers about «LGBT perverts».

Sadness is expressed by supporters of UCU's contribution to education, who are unpleasantly surprised by the institution's discrimination and intolerance.

Respect - pride in the new generation ready to defend its ideals and conflict with outdated norms; Catholic priests express respect for UCU for its unwavering position.

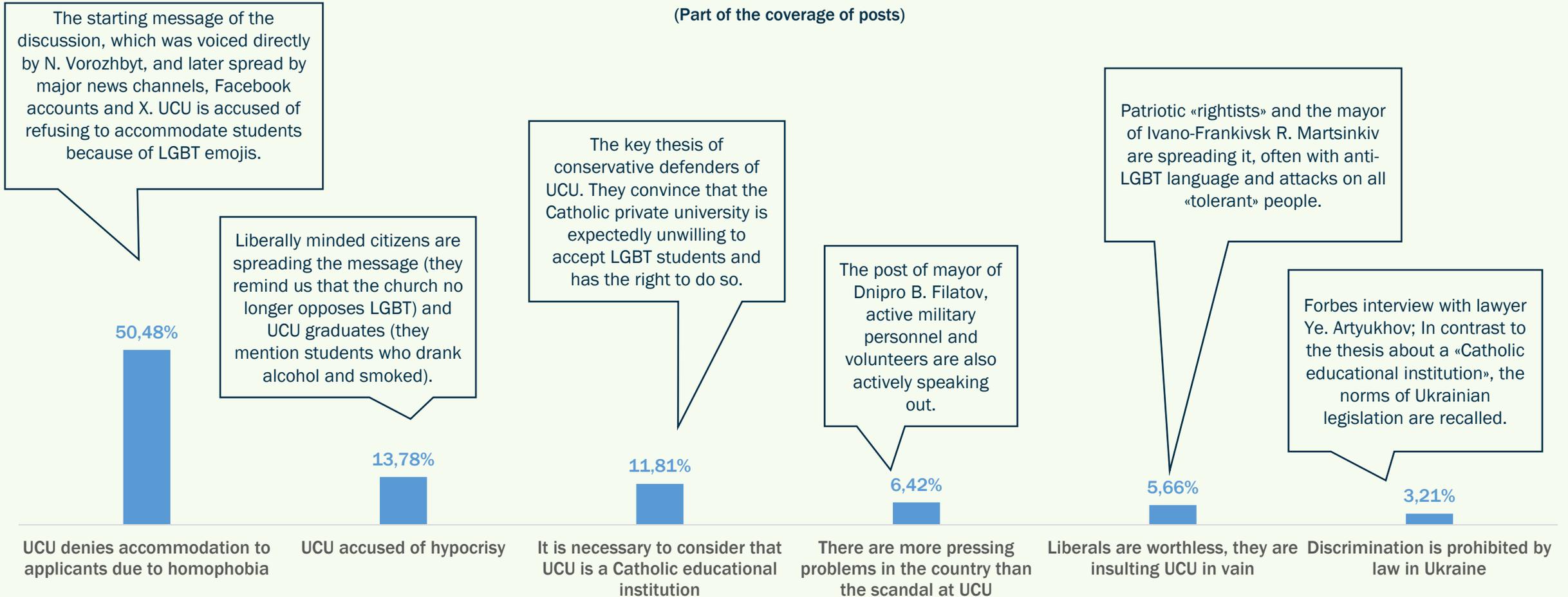
Although anger is a basic emotion for all categories of participants in the discussion, there are certain peculiarities. For example, contempt is more often found in posts by conservatives, laughter in posts by liberals

(Part of the reach of posts)



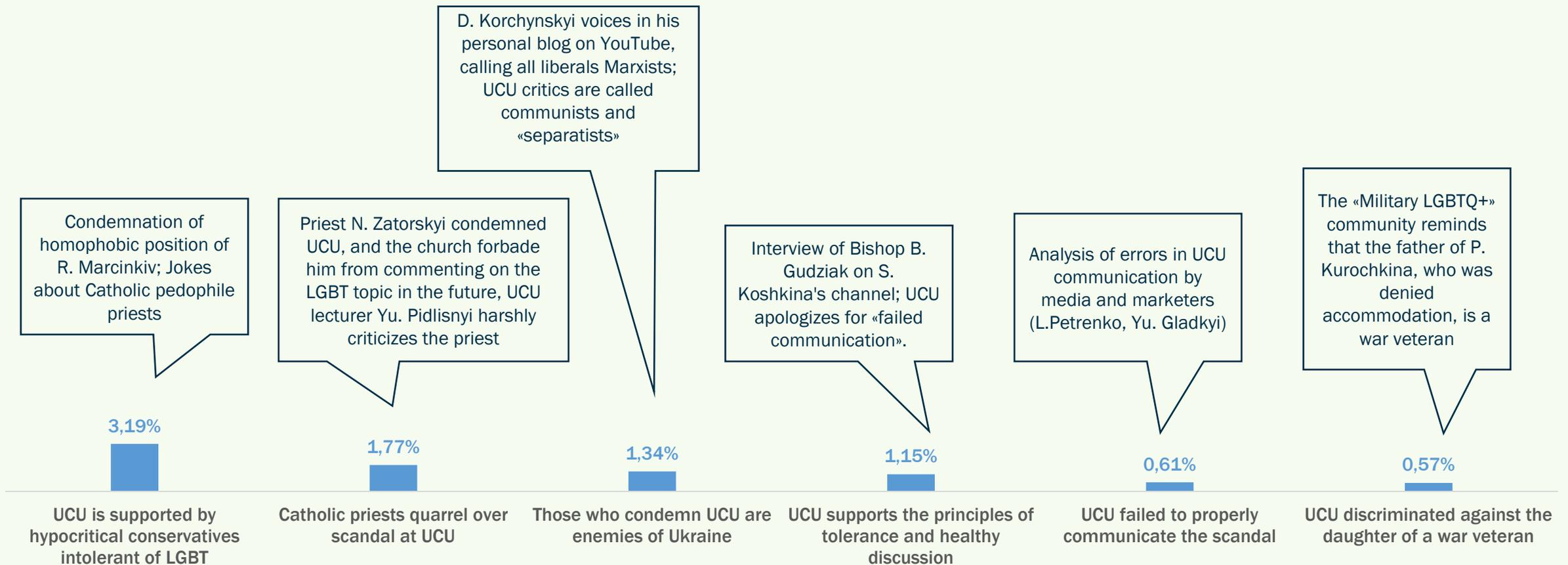
The UCU post-accusation triggered a broad discussion in which Ukrainians touched upon many sensitive topics: religion, LGBT, education in Ukraine and its current state, war, attitude towards veterans and their families. For liberal and conservative citizens, the UCU scandal became another reason to quarrel on social networks.

(Part of the coverage of posts)



The scandal became an interesting case for discussion between communicators, military personnel and even Catholic priests

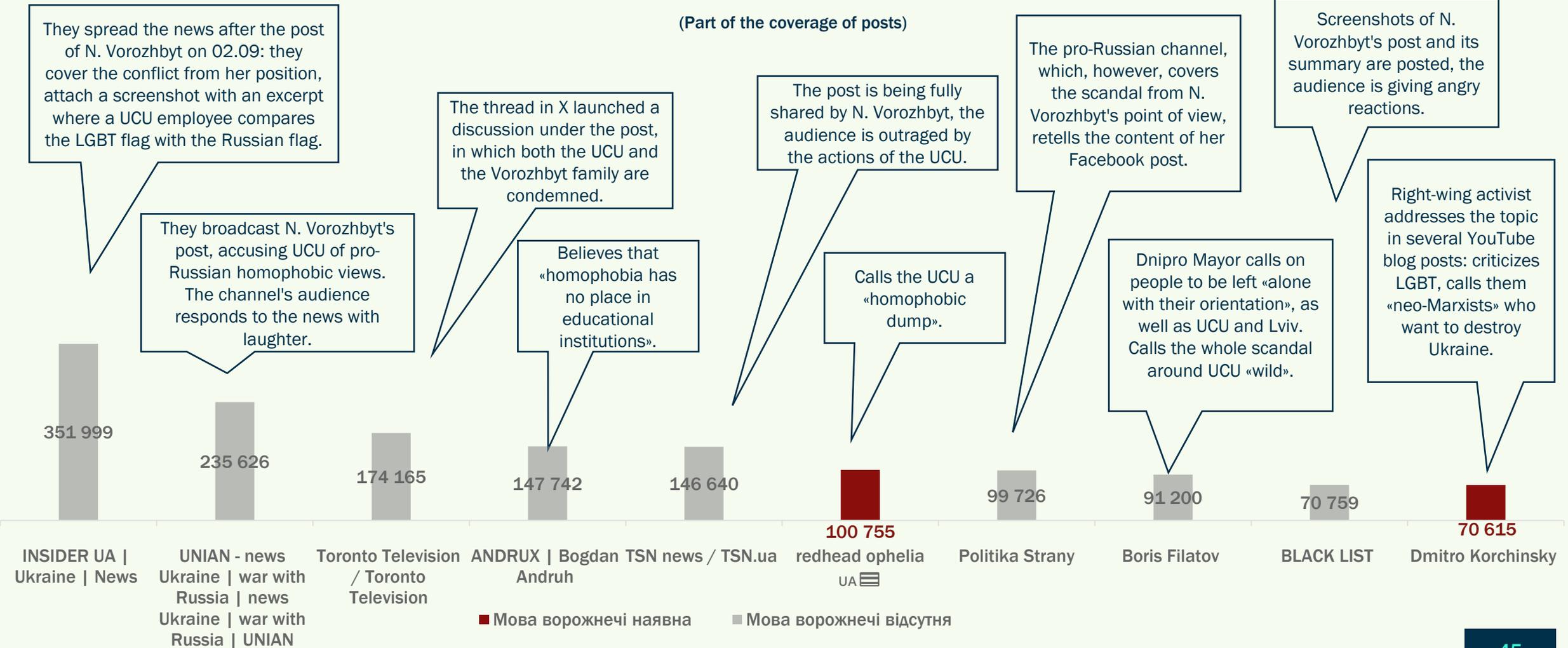
(Part of the coverage of the posts)



TOP 10 AUTHORS OF THE DISCUSSION

Scandal at UCU

The largest share of the audience was attracted to the scandal by news channels that covered the scandal from the position of N. Vorozhbyt. Both liberal activists and LGBT representatives and militant conservatives used hate speech against each other (the latter spoke more frivolously and obscenely)



DIVISION LINES: P. POROSHENKO SUPPORTERS – V. ZELENSKY SUPPORTERS, POLITICIANS – CITIZENS, OLIGARHS – CITIZENS

This discussion began on February 13, 2025, when V. Zelensky introduced sanctions against citizens of Ukraine, including people suspected of having ties to Russia and people under investigation (I. Kolomoisky), but also P. Poroshenko. In addition to the general issue of sanctions against a politician opposed to the government, the audience is also outraged by a kind of equating him with other defendants. Since then, the public discussion has continued, being periodically updated thanks to court hearings and other informational reasons. Pro-government speakers regularly explain the expediency of the restrictions, recalling the former president's previous controversial decisions throughout his political career. The European Solidarity Party and its supporters emphasize the illegality of applying sanctions to a Ukrainian citizen who is not hiding from the investigation and announce a battle in court. In addition, very different speakers participate in the discussion, united by the rejection of the entire Ukrainian power elite.

They include both pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian citizens.

It is noticeable that in political quarrels there is no noticeable emphasis on ordinary people - supporters and voters of V. Zelensky and P. Poroshenko. It is politicians and individuals and organizations associated with them who become the objects of accusation.

The number of posts analyzed is **429**. Approximate reach is **52.5 million** users.

OBJECTS OF ACCUSATION NSDC Sanctions

Criticism of V. Zelensky for the sanctions prevailed primarily due to the systematic work of a pool of bloggers who are committed to «European Solidarity», but the discussion of the situation was also actively picked up by pro-Russian bloggers - for example, in May O. Arestovych spoke of a certain unity with P. Poroshenko, saying that regardless of the rhetoric, they are both enemies of V. Zelensky. Pro-Russian figures also criticize the Ukrainian authorities for their election activity. A. Shariy has more conspiratorial versions - they say that the sanctions are invalid, and the «Nazi» **authorities** are only imitating discord.

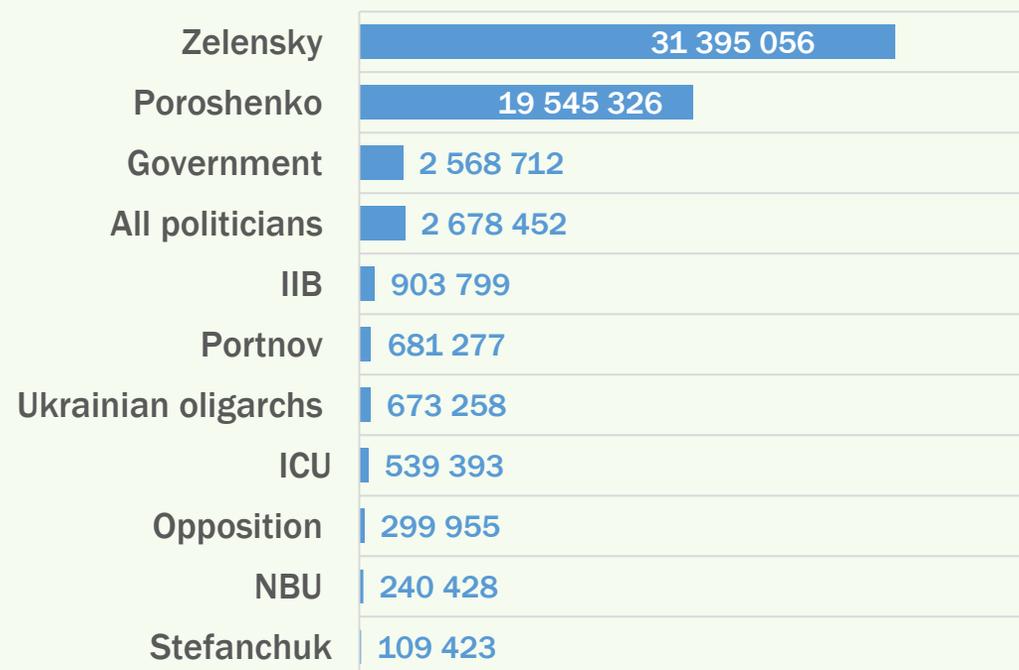
P. Poroshenko is criticized in this situation by popular clickbait channels, such as Trukha, which in February spreads SFMS messages about the benefits of sanctions, and in the summer talks about the ex-president moving money abroad despite the government's ban.

Glavkom speaks of an attempt to circumvent sanctions by dividing property with M. Poroshenko and condemns it as fraud, this opinion is spread by a number of other channels. Criticism of P. Poroshenko is accompanied by more detailed accusations from pro-government speakers, such as S. Ivanov, who use the names of P. Poroshenko's companies: they mention the misuse of Ukrainian donations through the IIB, remind of the activities of the ICU, etc.

But there is also a lot of criticism of **politicians in general**. Patriotic bloggers (S. Sternenko) mark the introduction of sanctions as another blow to the unity of Ukrainians, sometimes speculate about the external customer of the restrictions (argue whether it is D. Trump or V. Putin) or laugh at the ex-president's complaints about everyday problems. Pro-Russian pages also join in the general hatred of the entire government.

The sanctions in February are immediately supported by an active pro-government campaign: P. Poroshenko is reminded of all the previous scandals. Criticism of V. Zelensky is noticeably heard from pro-Russian sources (they do not support the ex-president, but «inflate» the struggle for power), and from Eurosolidarity, which operates with legal narratives.

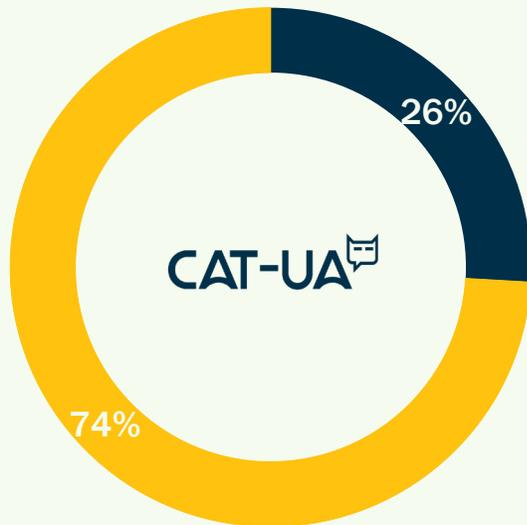
(Part of the coverage of posts)



Pro-Russian speakers pay attention to the situation mainly at the beginning, and during updates in later months they write less about it. They focus on criticizing V. Zelensky, but they seem to «explain» his motivation and generally work to incite anxiety. On pro-Ukrainian pages, criticism of P. Poroshenko goes through waves of spreading the same narratives, which is a sign of artificial attention. The language of hostility is noticeably heard from pro-Russian speakers such as O. Arestovych and A. Shariy (it is directed at V. Zelensky and accuses him of weakness and vindictiveness, of building a dictatorship). Understanding the positions of the parties (V. Zelensky and P. Poroshenko) is heard from pro-Ukrainian accounts that do not support any of the politicians and advocate for the unity of Ukrainians and the effectiveness of the state, among the most famous here S. Sternenko

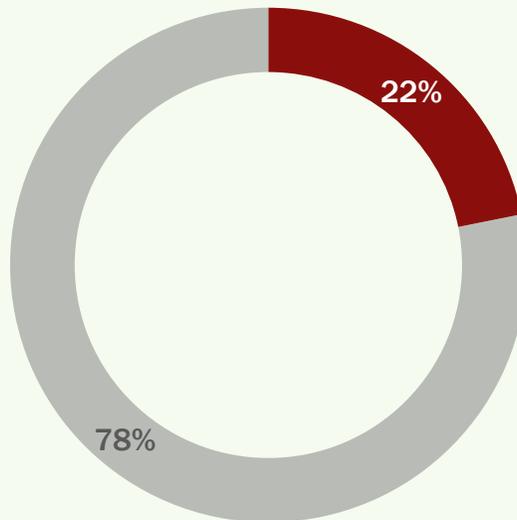
(Part of the coverage of posts)

Participation of supporters of different parties



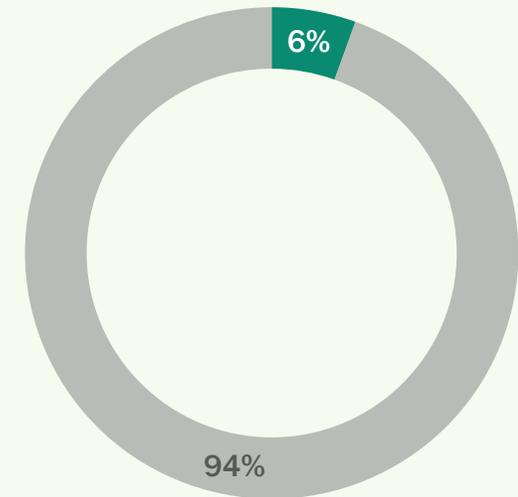
- Pro-Russian
- Pro-Ukrainian

Use of hate speech



- Hate speech is present
- Hate speech is absent

Search for a common point of view



- Understanding the opponent is expressed
- Understanding the opponent is not expressed

Anger is a totally dominant emotion. Anger towards V. Zelensky from pro-Russian accounts is directed primarily at him personally (for fighting the opposition and the President's alleged financial interest in his predecessor's money). But from channels close to Poroshenko (such as Pryamy), anger towards the «greens» and the oligarchs who brought V. Zelensky to power is also palpable. Local publics remind of P. Poroshenko's help to the front and that sanctions will complicate it. V. Portnikov speaks of a tendency towards dictatorship. However, they angrily criticize the authorities for supporting P. Poroshenko's ratings due to sanctions (M. Davydiuk). Anger towards P. Poroshenko is broadcast by both pro-government bloggers and well-known media outlets: they say that despite sanctions, he moves money abroad (S. Ivanov), wears expensive clothes. The anger also affects P. Poroshenko's family (wife and sons), they recall V. Putin's offer to grant P. Poroshenko political asylum and talk about P. Poroshenko's destabilization of the country. In general, there is a lot of anger at the «undermining of sovereignty». The anger is also supported by the results of polls regarding the attitude towards the ex-president. They also criticize Eurosolidarity - for supporting their leader when it is necessary to support Ukrainians. They are angry at the NBU for delaying with Poroshenko's assets. Sometimes they are angry at everyone for the situation in general.

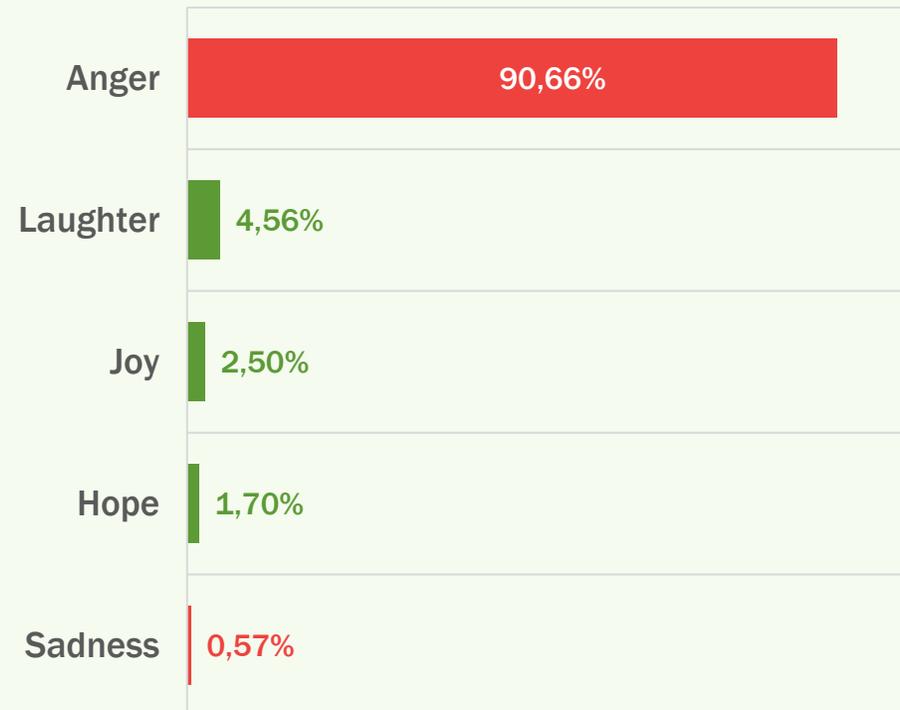
Laughter - at the authorities, which could not even draw up the documents properly (A. Shariy), at P. Poroshenko, who complains about the inability to even buy himself coffee (UNIAN).

Joy - at P. Poroshenko's «hysteria» due to the alleged inability to abuse donations (P. Oleschuk).

Hope - that the authorities will explain everything and provide more convincing evidence (Channel 24), that the sanctions will be lifted (Eurosolidarity).

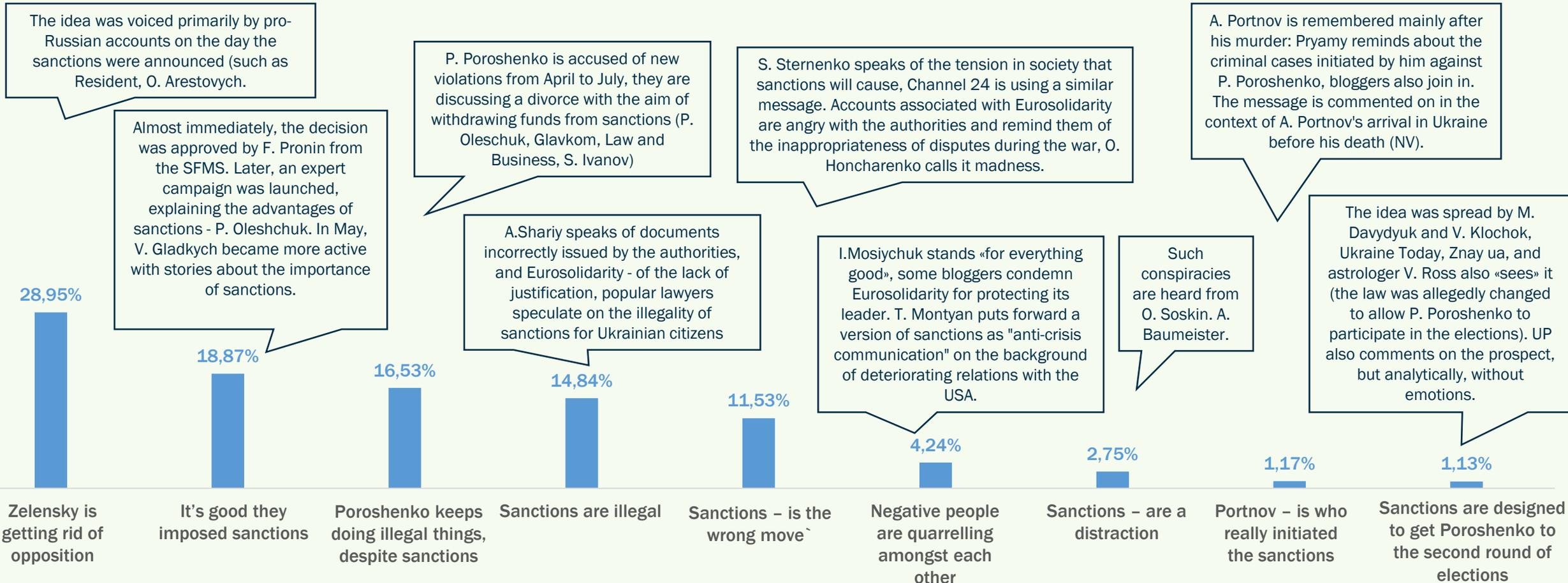
The anger of P. Poroshenko's supporters towards V. Zelensky is spreading in a very disciplined manner, supplemented by angry posts from pro-Russian figures, and a wave of anger towards P. Poroshenko is spreading across newsgroups with signs of conspiracy. Other emotions are less noticeable against this background and are rather concomitant.

(Part of the coverage of posts)



V. Zelensky is criticized for sanctions by pro-Russian speakers and publics, but P. Poroshenko is not justified either, they say, all Ukrainian politicians are scoundrels, but the President has more opportunities. «Election» narratives are supported not only by analysts but also by esotericists, which demonstrates the lively interest of society in the topic of elections.

(Part of the coverage of posts)



TOP 10 AUTHORS OF THE DISCUSSION

NSDC Sanctions

In the top of the channels – pro-Russian, pro- «EU» and simply clickbait channels. At the beginning, the discussion from both «camps» concerns the sanctions themselves, but in the summer, a massive information attack is noticeable – experts count P. Poroshenko's fortune.

First, it comments on and approves of the sanctions, later actively spreads news about the division of property with M. Poroshenko (P. Oleshchuk). Starting from the summer, it actively reminds of the ex-president's wealth, expensive clothes, money for children, stresses on social differences from the «ordinary Ukrainian».

In May, he talks about the presidential elections in Ukraine, from which P. Poroshenko was removed, as well as Arestovych himself (attention to the Ukrainian authorities, often with foul language). He comments on the topic less actively and with less emotion from July.

It keeps attention from February to August, blames V. Zelensky and sometimes A. Portnov for the situation, and talks about the trial.

Immediately after the introduction of sanctions, it reminds of all (real and imaginary) «offenses» of P. Poroshenko, in particular, enrichment from donations. In May-June, he activates mentions of the ICU (S. Lyamets), and also raises the issue of the hypocrisy of the ex-president and his fortune.

(Part of the coverage of posts)

They talk about the illegality of sanctions, the fight against them in the Verkhovna Rada, and blame V. Zelensky (February-April). In June, they broadcast court hearings, but with less coverage.

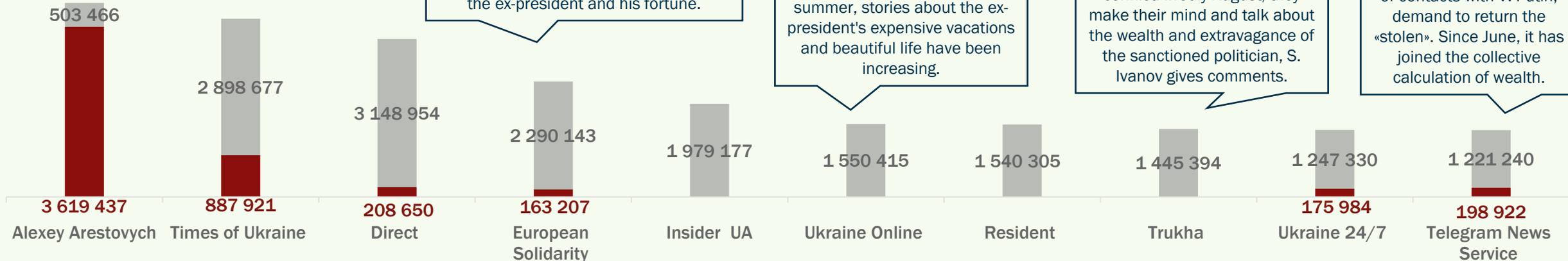
After the sanctions were imposed, it mostly approved and broadcasted officials with such messages (F. Pronin). Since the beginning of the summer, stories about the ex-president's expensive vacations and beautiful life have been increasing.

It only comments on the situation immediately after the sanctions were imposed and only spreads messages about «cleaning the electoral field».

They comment on the situation in a fairly balanced way, spread statements from supporters of both sides, Eurosolidarity and its opponents, hate speech is heard from individual personalities (R. Skripin).

In February-March, they spread clearly commissioned posts praising both sides of the conflict. In July-August, they make their mind and talk about the wealth and extravagance of the sanctioned politician, S. Ivanov gives comments.

Great malevolence in February-March, P. Poroshenko is reminded of contacts with V. Putin, demand to return the «stolen». Since June, it has joined the collective calculation of wealth.



■ Hate speech is present ■ Hate speech is absent

DIVIDING LINES: RUSSIAN-SPEAKING – UKRAINIAN-SPEAKING, PATRIOTIC – INDIFFERENT – PRO-RUSSIAN, TOLERANT – AGGRESSIVE

The case includes communication regarding two similar cases that occurred during the year and partially overlapped in time. These are scandalous unpatriotic statements by bloggers who come from Eastern Ukraine.

Situation 1. Accent on language. Anna Alkhim has been causing discussions since last year, but in 2025 it continued especially actively from May to September, during her active quarrel with another blogger, O. Mandziuk. She reacted to the case when A. Alkhim was asked to sing in Ukrainian at the christening of her friend's child, but she reacted with indignation and contempt for the language, Ukrainians, and with pro-Russian statements. O. Mandziuk publicly called A. Alkhim a "media scum" and appealed to the SSU. Later, information appeared that a DDoS attack was carried out on the column of journalist N. Pototska, who wrote about the incident, and O. Mandziuk complained about threats. R. Eskhakzai invited bloggers to a «round table» on her podcast. Other actors were also criticized - when they were spotted at a party with Alkhim.

As a result, both bloggers received both criticism and hate. A. Alkhim – for her pro-Russian position and disparaging remarks about Ukrainians,

O. Mandziuk – for hype over the scandal and manipulation of patriotism. The latter even invited A. Alkhim to join her in delivering humanitarian aid, but the events did not develop in further discussion. A. Alkhim was served a notice of suspicion, and in September, she noted that she would not publicly share her Russian-language preferences. Both ordinary and political bloggers (Ya. Sokolova, S. Sternenko, O. Sukhanov) joined in criticizing A. Alkhim. National broadcasters, primarily mass channels and tabloids (LuxFM, STB) and news channels and platforms (Channel 5, Ukraine Today, Kyiv24), joined the discussion.

Situation 2. Emphasis on the region of Ukraine. In October-November, food blogger Anastasia Kuskevych from Nikopol, who lived in Lviv and was convicted of distributing pornography, called for Russian missiles on the city, explaining that western Ukrainians are terrible people. She was suspected and fined. Western Ukrainian TV channels (ZAXID.NET) were interested in the food blogger, but in general, the coverage of this topic was smaller.

The campaign to cancel the Russian language and culture is very persistent and often resorts to hate to popularize its position. Supporters of this culture often provide reasons for this. And by involving famous people, the discussion spreads well on social networks.

The number of analyzed posts is **422**. Approximate reach is **16.4 million** users.

The main portion of the condemnation in this topic was received by **pro-Russian bloggers** for disrespect for the language and promotion of Russian content. Both news channels (Channel 5, Espresso, BBC News, Kyiv24) and political bloggers (S. Sternenko) wrote about suspicions and accusations. The audience of such pro-Russian bloggers is criticized for content promiscuity.

On the other hand, **pro-Ukrainian activists** for using language scandals for hype and promoting hate speech against Russian speakers were criticized not only by openly pro-Russian channels, but also by many accounts that position themselves as pro-Ukrainian, O. Mandziuk was even accused of «justifying the TCR» (BespaLOVmedia, Myroslav Oleshko).

Any bloggers are generally accused of causing the audience to waste time and attention on their content.

This wave of hate also affected some **Ukrainian artists** (Potap, Kamenskyh, Serdyuchka, and others), who were previously Russian-speaking or even defended Russian content: they were reminded of their past, despite their current demonstrative patriotism.

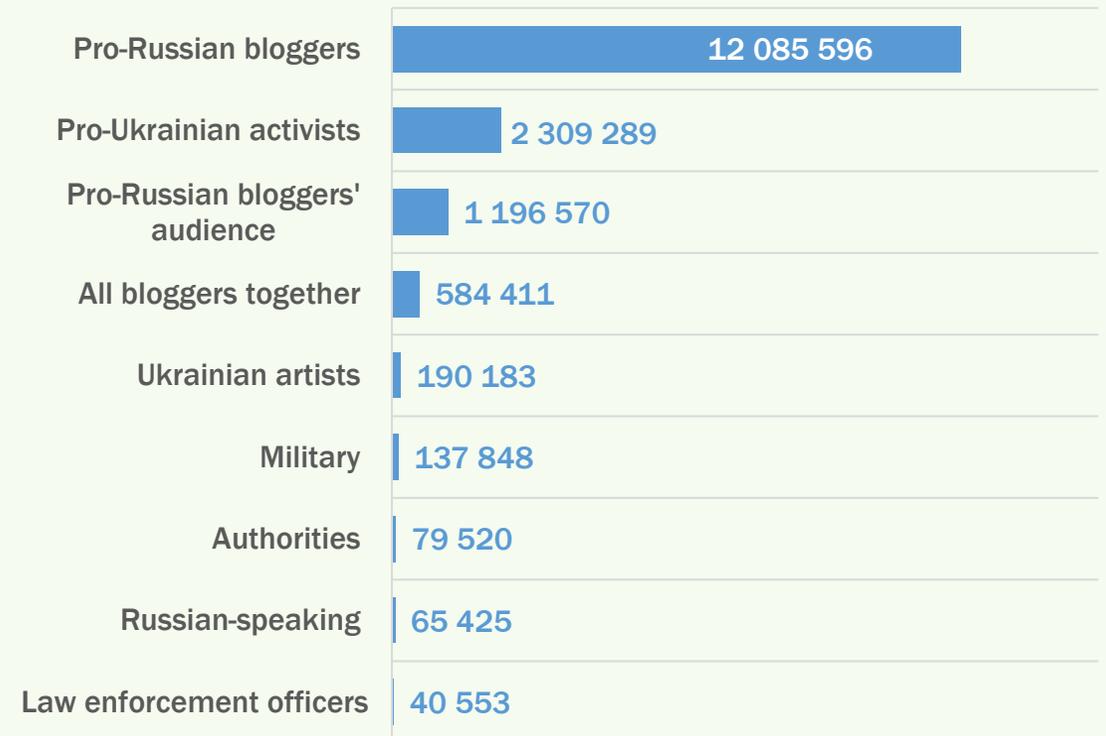
The **authorities** are accused of solving nothing by language conflicts, but rather distracting from the problems of corruption (BespaLOVmedia). Some call for punishment for anti-Ukrainian messages (Espresso). Pro-Russian accounts promote the message that the authorities, through O. Mandziuk and S. Sternenko, are persecuting Russian-speakers (Myroslav Oleshko).

Russian-speakers are declared either enemies (the pro-Ukrainian segment) or victims of discrimination (the pro-Russian part).

The military mostly support the pro-Ukrainian side, but there is a mention of the «fake sniper Yevheniya», who supported A. Alkhim (Symoroz).

The main target of the accusations were the scandalized bloggers themselves, partly the hate affected their audience or Russian-speaking people in general. However, there was no noticeable public hate from the residents of the East: no one generalized the bloggers' actions to all their compatriots

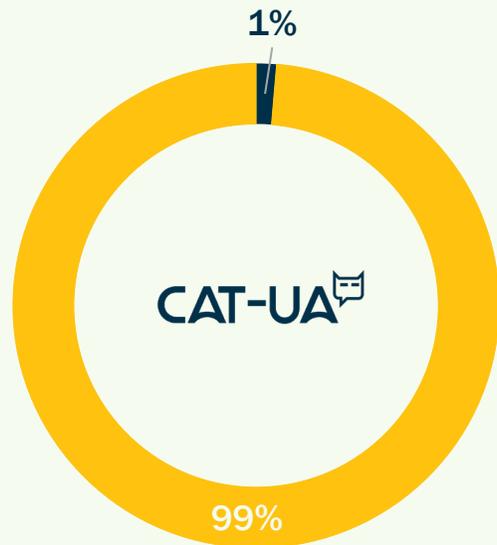
(Part of the coverage of the posts)



Pro-Russian accounts have gathered minimal reach on this topic; they complain about pressure on Russian speakers. However, there are also messages from pro-Ukrainian contributors who promote the idea of tolerating Russian speakers and «hating haters». Some authors use hate speech to stigmatize Alkhim personally as anti-Ukrainian or unwise, while others use it to designate supporters of Russian culture. Mandziuk’s willingness to reconcile with Alkhim at Ramina’s round table is an exceptional example of understanding one’s opponent

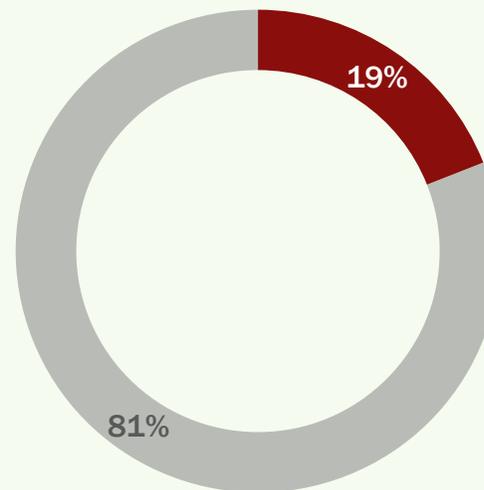
(Part of the reach of posts)

Participation of supporters of different sides



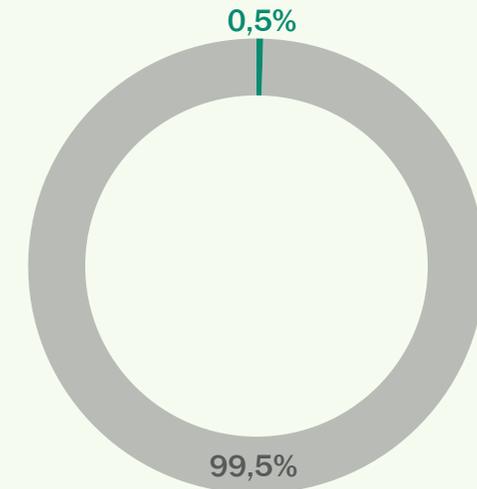
- Pro-Russian
- Pro-Ukrainian

Use of hate speech



- Hate speech present
- Hate speech absent

Searching for a common point of view



- Opponent's understanding expressed
- Opponent's understanding not expressed

Bloggers

Anger is mainly caused by the bloggers themselves and their position. In the case of Alkhim, some of the anger is also directed at her critics and harassment.

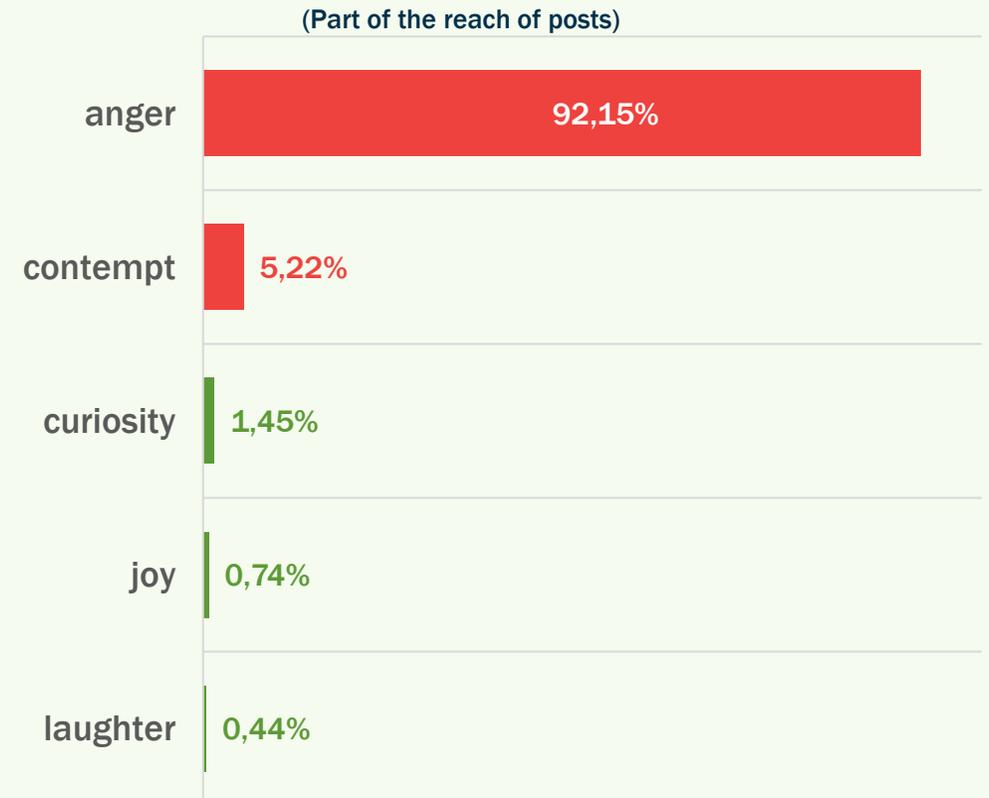
Contempt is expressed towards Alkhim, people insist that it is not the first time that she herself has spoken disparagingly about Ukrainians and their language and culture. The disparaging tone also prevails in the criticism of Anastasia Kuskevich: «How many such people are there among us? There are a lot of them, friends. Therefore, we must talk about them and make them marginalized» (Ya. Sokolova).

Curiosity is the dominant emotion in posts in which they speculate whether Alkhim will be punished for her statements or whether any sanctions will be applied to her, and they are also interested in Taras Tsymbalyuk and the STB channel's policy of tolerating pro-Russian sentiment.

Joy – because the SSU will take care of Alkhim.

Laughter – because Alkhim is accused of treason, also at the round table with Ramina – «I was wrecking myself» (BespaLOVmedia).

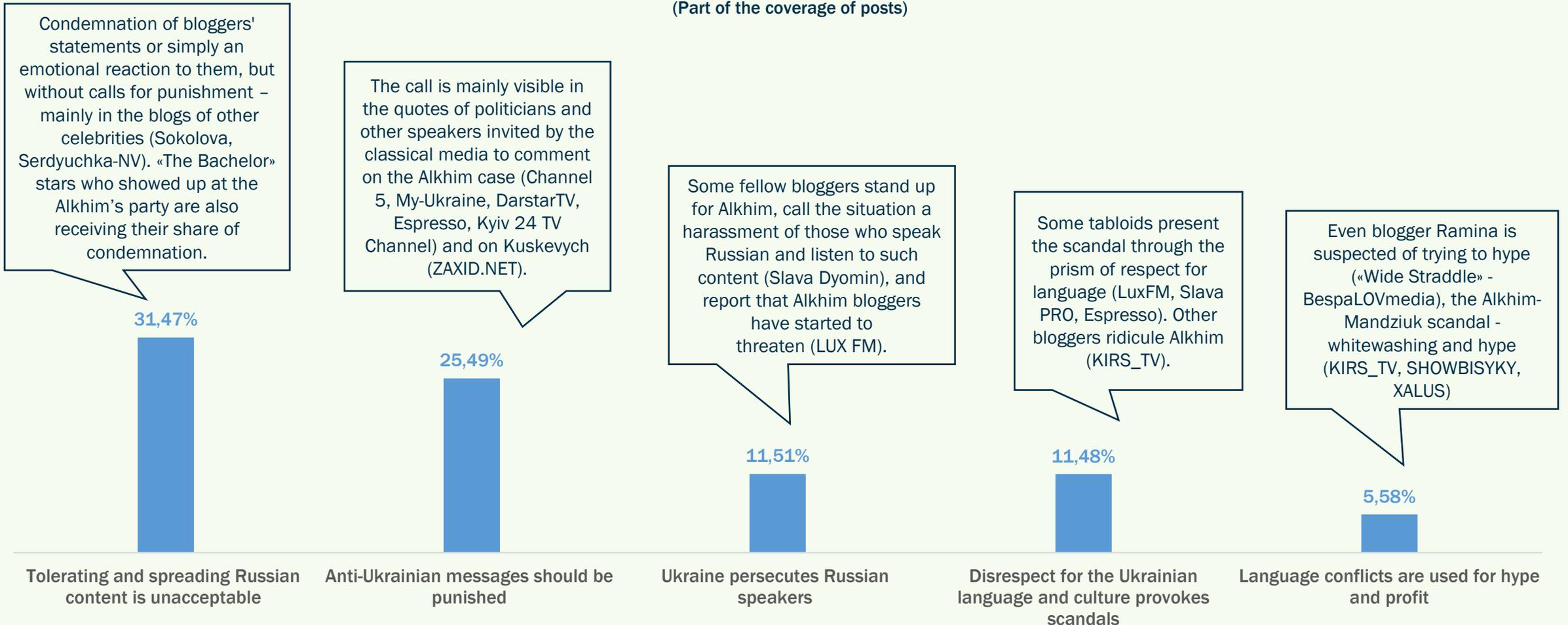
Anger is the key emotion in the communication of the scandal; it draws out the image of the pro-Russian blogger as an enemy and tolerance towards Russian-language content as a sign of at least weak development. The presence of positive emotions shows the bloggers' ability for (self)irony.



DISCUSSION MESSAGES. PART 1 Bloggers

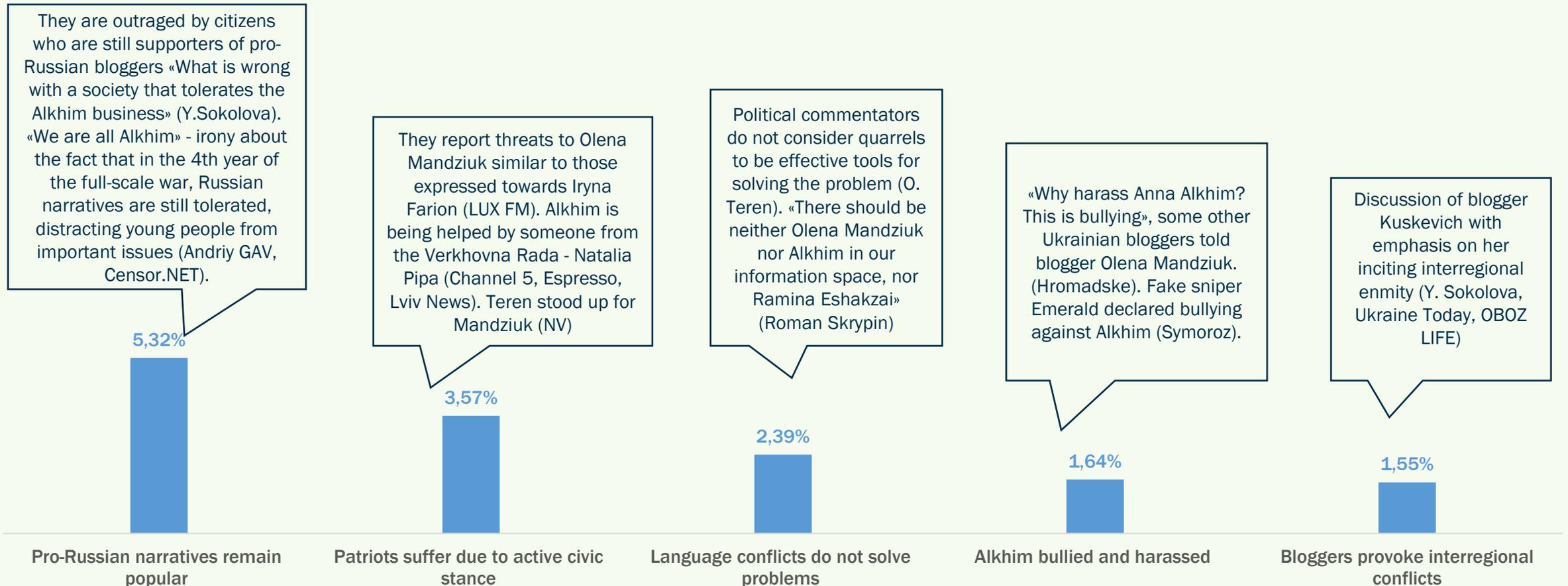
Bloggers and celebrities emotionally side with Alkhim or Mandziuk, while politicians and other experts in the classical media demand punishment.

(Part of the coverage of posts)



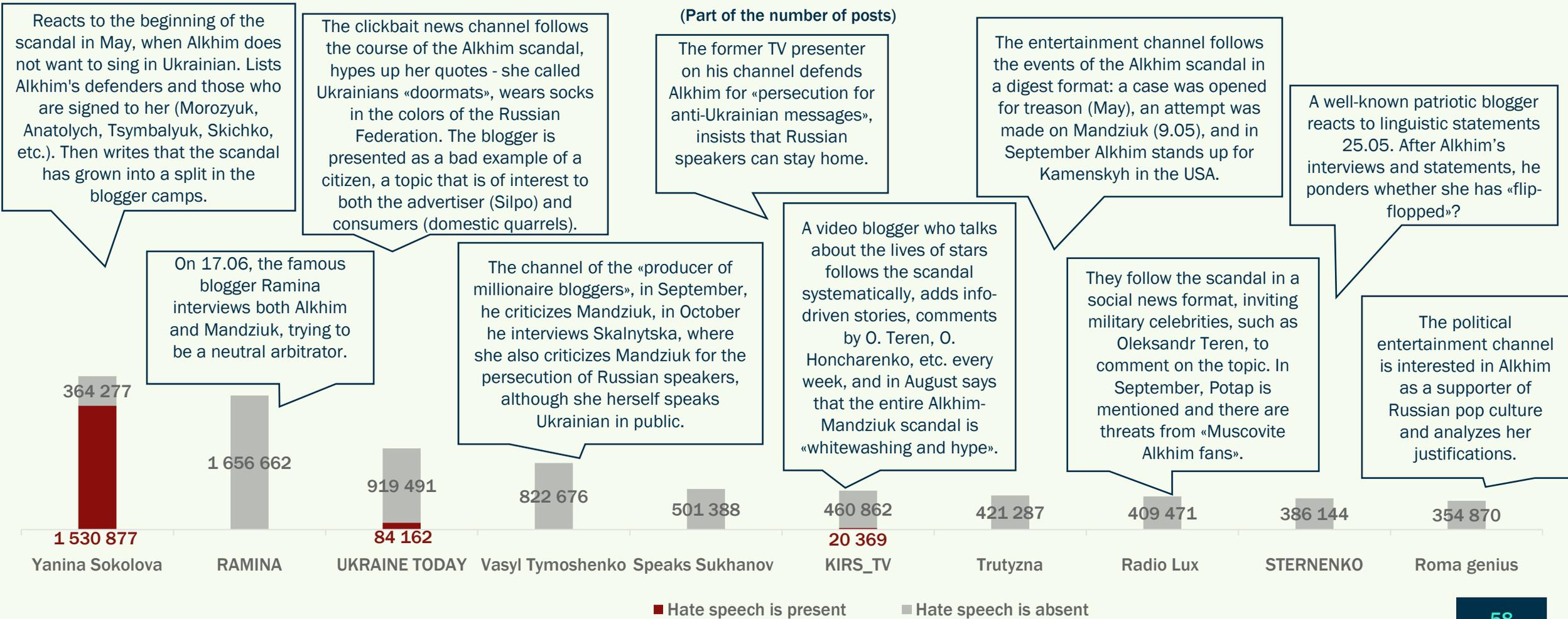
Complaints are primarily focused on the bloggers themselves, and their audience is criticized primarily for tolerating pro-Russian messages, rather than for speaking Russian or, even more so, coming from a certain region. Criticizing on a regional basis is generally unethical

(Part of the reach of posts)



TOP 10 AUTHORS OF THE DISCUSSION Bloggers

The topic of bloggers captivates the authors and shows three types of patriotism: purely pro-Ukrainian, where any Russian-speaking culture is unacceptable, tolerant, which should not allow discrimination against the opponent, Zhdunivsky, which shows vigilance due to the threat of punishment for the spread of Russian-language content. Potential for dividing bloggers in the struggle for the distribution of attention



Reacts to the beginning of the scandal in May, when Alkhim does not want to sing in Ukrainian. Lists Alkhim's defenders and those who are signed to her (Morozyuk, Anatolych, Tsymbalyuk, Skichko, etc.). Then writes that the scandal has grown into a split in the blogger camps.

The clickbait news channel follows the course of the Alkhim scandal, hypes up her quotes - she called Ukrainians «doormats», wears socks in the colors of the Russian Federation. The blogger is presented as a bad example of a citizen, a topic that is of interest to both the advertiser (Silpo) and consumers (domestic quarrels).

(Part of the number of posts)
The former TV presenter on his channel defends Alkhim for «persecution for anti-Ukrainian messages», insists that Russian speakers can stay home.

The entertainment channel follows the events of the Alkhim scandal in a digest format: a case was opened for treason (May), an attempt was made on Mandziuk (9.05), and in September Alkhim stands up for Kamenskyh in the USA.

A well-known patriotic blogger reacts to linguistic statements 25.05. After Alkhim's interviews and statements, he ponders whether she has «flip-flopped»?

On 17.06, the famous blogger Ramina interviews both Alkhim and Mandziuk, trying to be a neutral arbitrator.

The channel of the «producer of millionaire bloggers», in September, he criticizes Mandziuk, in October he interviews Skalnytska, where she also criticizes Mandziuk for the persecution of Russian speakers, although she herself speaks Ukrainian in public.

A video blogger who talks about the lives of stars follows the scandal systematically, adds info-driven stories, comments by O. Teren, O. Honcharenko, etc. every week, and in August says that the entire Alkhim-Mandziuk scandal is «whitewashing and hype».

They follow the scandal in a social news format, inviting military celebrities, such as Oleksandr Teren, to comment on the topic. In September, Potap is mentioned and there are threats from «Muscovite Alkhim fans».

The political entertainment channel is interested in Alkhim as a supporter of Russian pop culture and analyzes her justifications.

DIVIDING LINES: CITIZENS – VOLUNTEERS, CITIZENS – AUTHORITIES, POROSHENKO SUPPORTERS – ZELENSKI SUPPORTERS, THOSE WHO TRUST VOLUNTEERS – THOSE WHO DO NOT TRUST.

The discussion on the topic of drones began after Maria Berlinska reposted a table with contacts of UAV manufacturers in her Telegram channel. The publication caused a wave of indignation due to the possible risks of leaking sensitive information and a threat to the security of manufacturers and defense processes in general. The wave of hate significantly intensified after a post by blogger Lachen, who accused Berlinska of helping the enemy. At the initial stage, the discussion had a limited focus and was not accompanied by systematic criticism of the authorities.

Over time, the topic expanded and went beyond a single incident. The situation with the repost is starting to be used as a pretext for a broader discussion of information security issues in the field of UAVs, the role of volunteers and the state in providing the army with drones.

The discussion is gradually covering other social networks and news Telegram channels.

Opposing opinions are forming in the discussion. On the one hand, there is a demand for punishment for mistakes, on the other, the position that public attacks on volunteers divide society and help the enemy. But the first opinion prevails by a significant margin. After each shelling, the culprits are sought, mainly among representatives of the authorities and public figures. Dividing lines are forming between those who protect volunteers and call for a more thorough verification of information, and citizens who accuse volunteers and the authorities of systemic failures in the field of UAVs.

The number of analyzed posts is **476**. The approximate reach is **2.2 million** users.

At the first stage, the main object of the accusation was **M. Berlinska**. Users demanded that she be punished for her actions, because, in their opinion, the repost of the message with contacts jeopardized the safety of drone manufacturers. She was also accused of involvement in the shelling of Chernihiv in August 2023, where a drone exhibition was being held. There were almost no direct accusations against the authorities at this stage. Later, the wave of hate spread to other public **volunteers** related to the topic of UAVs, in particular S. Prytula and T. Chmut. A discussion is taking shape regarding their competence and responsibility in the field of drones.

At the same time, criticism of the **state** is increasing, mainly from Telegram news channels, as well as users of other social networks, in particular from military experts and drone manufacturers. Berlinska's repost becomes a reason for accusations of the authorities in improper protection of strategically important information and insufficient provision of the UAV army.

After a wave of hate towards the volunteers, users who defend M. Berlinska begin to appear and blame the **bloggers** who started the scandal. Criticism of the volunteers is perceived as a manifestation of **Russian propaganda**.

The debate was de facto between those who are ready to criticize the volunteers and those who consider it harmful. In the process, as always, the authorities also got involved

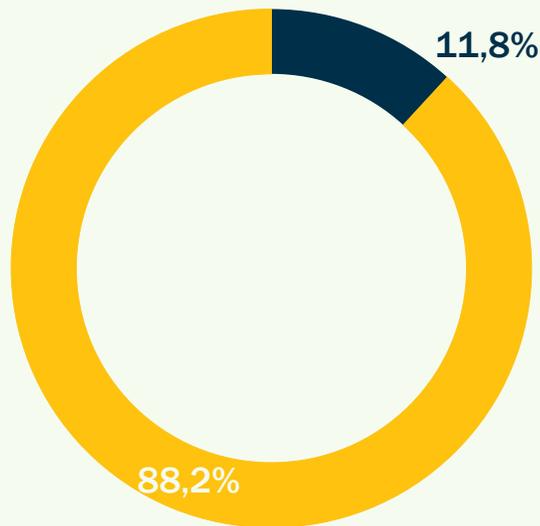
(Part of the coverage of the posts)



Pro-Russian accounts mostly expressed joy over the mistakes of Ukrainian volunteers and the authorities, thanking them for the «help». It was this reaction that became one of the triggers for the escalation of the conflict in the pro-Ukrainian environment. Hate speech was mainly found among pro-Ukrainian users – in the form of personal insults and aggressive attitudes towards volunteers and authorities. Anonymous Telegram news channels communicated in this manner most often. Professional and expert circles, in particular the military, resorted to aggressive language less often, combining support for volunteers with criticism of the state. Understanding of the opponent's position was negligible - mainly in quotes from Berlinska herself and her response to Lachen

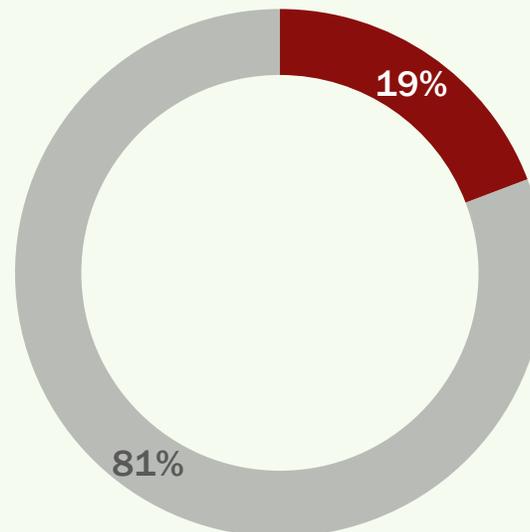
(Part of the coverage of posts)

Participation of supporters of different sides



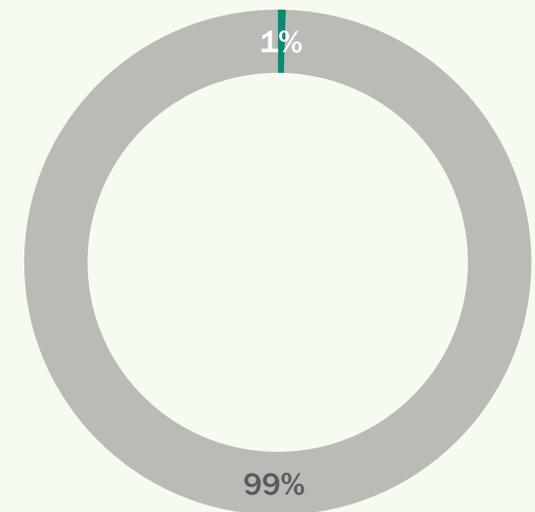
■ Pro-Russian audience
■ Pro-Ukrainian audience

Use of hate speech



■ Hate speech present
■ Hate speech absent

Search for a common point of view



■ Understanding of the opponent is expressed
■ Understanding of the opponent is not expressed

Anger – careless handling of information of critical importance for state security by volunteers and government representatives; insufficient competence of people with access to strategically important data; lack of government reaction to mistakes of public figures; lack of investigation into those responsible for shelling of the drone production sites; insufficient provision of drones to the army.

Anxiety – interviews with military experts regarding the effectiveness of government decisions; articles about people being led to Russian propaganda; stories of public figures' mistakes that harmed the country's security.

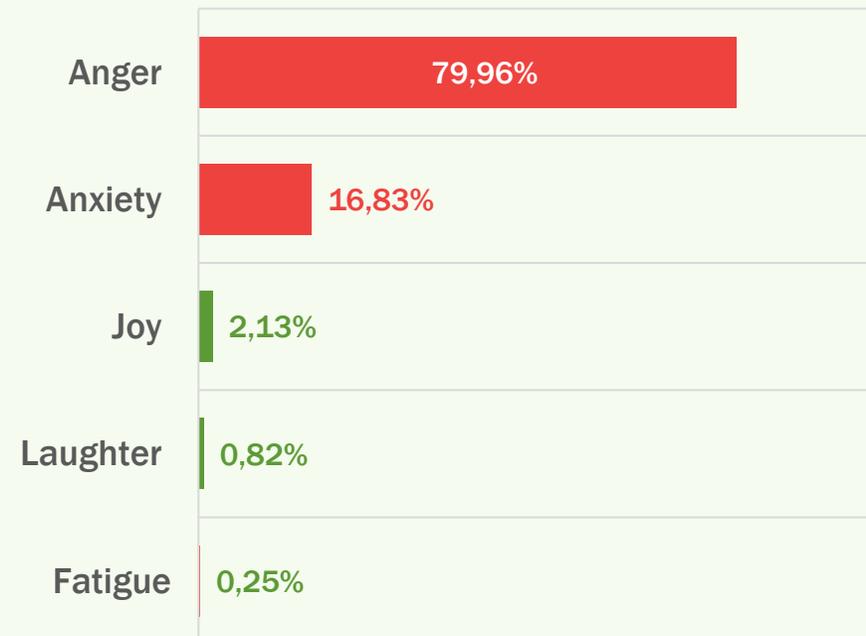
Joy – from pro-Russian figures: mistakes of Ukrainian authorities and volunteers.

Laughter – ironic statements about the government's unjust actions and corruption schemes.

Fatigue – statements about the need for 18-year-olds to serve.

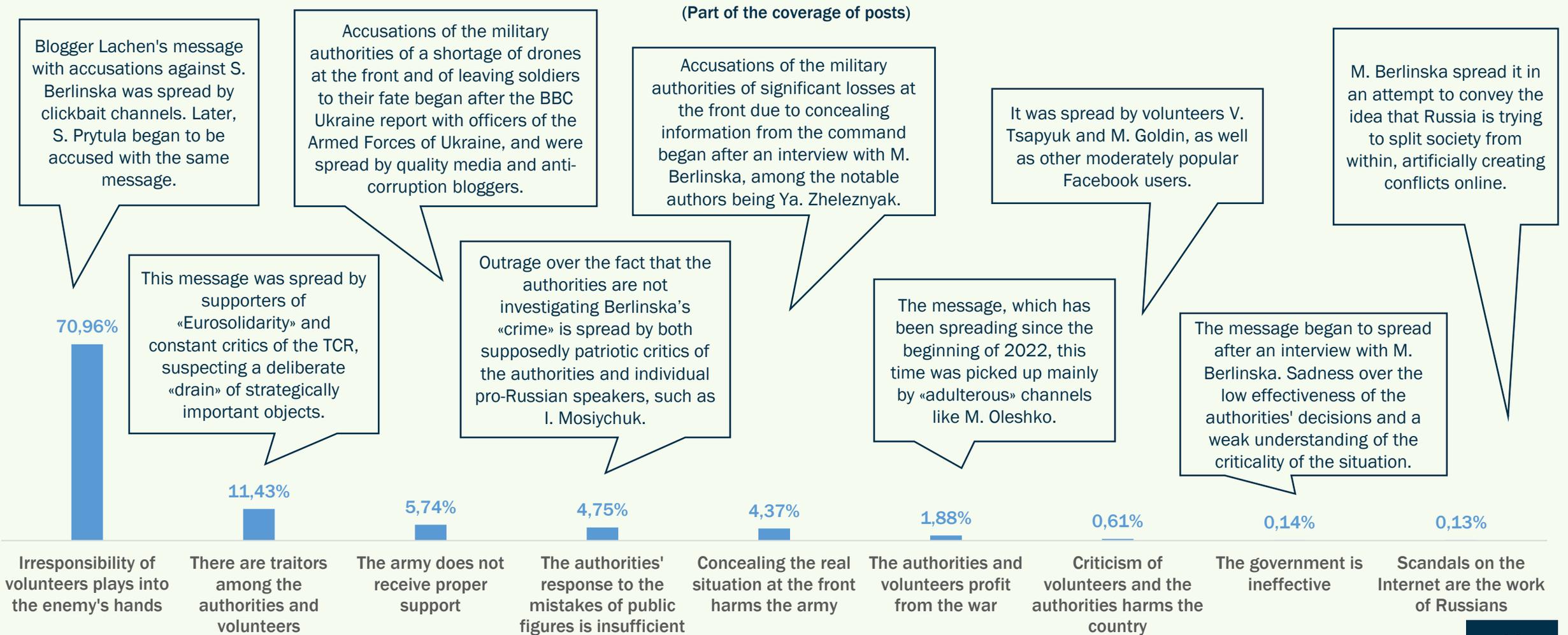
Anger, as everywhere else, prevails, with any new resonant events causing repeated waves of negative reactions, primarily in anonymous Telegram channels. Analysts and military personnel, however, more often demonstrate the emotion of anxiety. Joy is mostly recorded in posts with a pro-Russian position; other emotions do not have a significant impact

(Part of the reach of posts)



DISCUSSION MESSAGES Berlinska and Drones

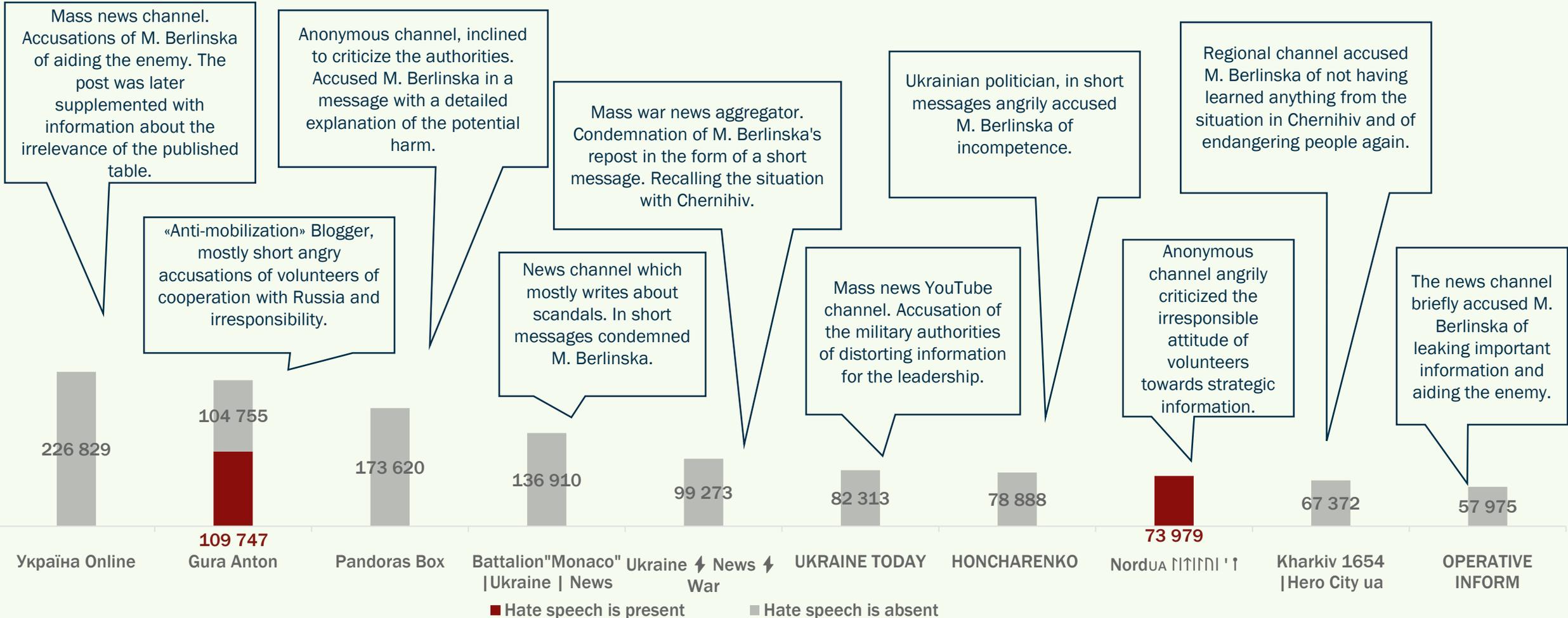
The volunteers were mostly accused by Telegram channels and users without public authority. At the same time, the authorities were most often the object of accusations from the military and drone experts. The key triggers of the discussion were national security, drone shortage, corruption and suspicions of treason



TOP-10 AUTHORS OF THE DISCUSSION Berlinska and Drones

Clickbait channels mostly clung to hype accusations of politicians or experts and helped spread them

(Part of the number of posts)



MURDER OF A TCR SERVICEMAN IN LVIV

DIVIDING LINES: CITIZENS – TCR; CONSCIOUS CITIZENS – DRAFT EVADERS; CITIZENS – AUTHORITIES, ESPECIALLY MILITARY – AUTHORITIES.

On December 4, a tragedy occurred in Lviv: a citizen mortally wounded a military TCR officer during a document check. This event immediately sparked significant public discussion. The actual events were mostly concentrated within one day: the murder itself, the detention, and the selection of a preventive measure – with the suspect's comments on the event, and the military command's statements on this topic. A day later, the court decision was made public. But the discussion of this event on social networks continued for several days.

Most bloggers, politicians, and social media users in general condemned the murder and the suspect, many of them emphasized that the murdered person was a soldier, a volunteer, while some directed their anger at the murderer, others - at all Ukrainians, generalizing that they tolerate evaders and treat the military with hostility. Traditionally, the topic has provoked criticism of the authorities from well-known bloggers - in particular, for not protecting the military and that its mobilization policy is a failure.

Only a few people defended the murderer, often not delving into details, but angrily attacking the TCR, the criticism is often very emotional and contains a lot of likes. Almost half of such contributors constantly publish pro-Russian content. Also, pro-Russian groups working for the Ukrainian regions are actively spreading the message that this murder is the beginning of a great rebellion of people against the authorities and against the TCR, which has long been a punitive tool of the authorities. At the

same time, it is emphasized that the «riots» began precisely in Lviv, which is a patriotic city, which means that the entire society is ready for a rebellion. Although in general, anger towards the murderer prevails on social networks, people note that many commentators come to posts on this topic with very aggressive rhetoric towards the murdered person, and often have clear signs of bots - closed profiles or profiles consisting exclusively of reposts, the absence of real photos, etc. At the same time, these profiles are the most active and aggressive. OK Zakhid and lawyer T. Borovsky state the Russian influence on this topic, their statements are picked up on social networks, and in reposts, anger is often directed not at Russia, but at those citizens who succumb to Russian influence and spread Russian messages.

In addition, «irresponsible citizens» are accused of treating the military badly, defending draft evaders, and also accusing journalists of incorrectly naming the deceased and «trying too hard to hear the other side», this is especially often broadcast by D. Korchynsky and M. Bezugla.

As a result, we see that the existing hostility between the TCR and draft evaders is actively used by Russia through its agents of influence, strengthening one of the most emotional internal divisions in Ukraine. Also, since the issue is significantly politicized, the authorities also suffer.

The number of relevant posts in the sample is **350**. The estimated reach is **4.2 million** users.

Accusations on social networks are most often directed at the **suspect** and are divided into two types: they either accuse him of committing a serious crime and call for the maximum punishment, or emphasize that he killed a soldier, a hero, an ATO participant, a volunteer.

Claims to the **authorities** also have two vectors: they are accused of not protecting the military, sending them to work in the TCR, while the military do not have to work there, or of failing to implement the mobilization policy, which led to the tragedy.

Some authors blame the **TCR** - they justify the suspect, they scold the TCR a lot, calling them man-trappers, the authors are almost entirely those who systematically broadcast pro-Russian content. Some people notice this and blame **Russia** and its influence, write about the «Russian IPSO», deliberately spreading hatred towards the TCR.

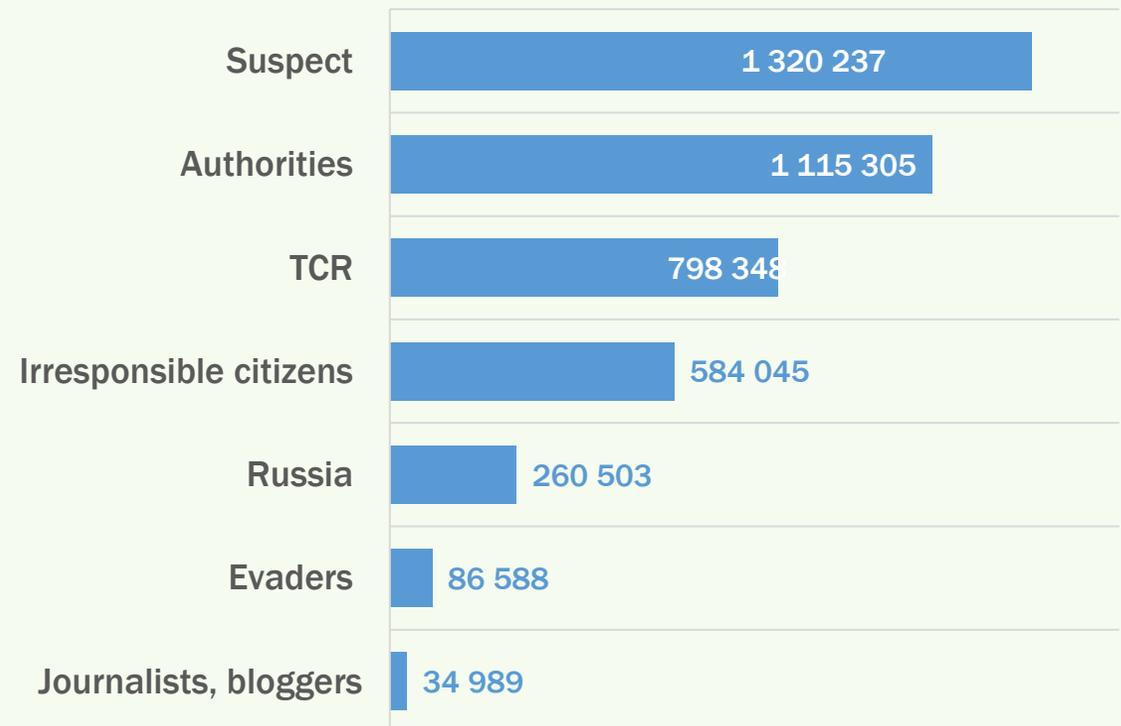
At the same time, some blame both Russia and **irresponsible citizens** who are subject to Russian influence. In addition, irresponsible citizens are accused of poorly assessing the topic, not understanding it, repeating what they did not know and did not check.

Anger is directed at **draft evaders** relatively rarely, but they are accused very angrily, with hatred, generalizing that they are running away from mobilization and killing the military.

There are also accusations of **journalists and bloggers** hyping the topic or calling the murdered person a «Tetsekashnik», a «TCR employee», although he is a military serviceman.

The suspect himself receives maximum accusations, but it is noticeable that the authorities' accusations are much more visible than Russia's accusations, and the accusations against the TCR are voiced primarily by pro-Russian speakers

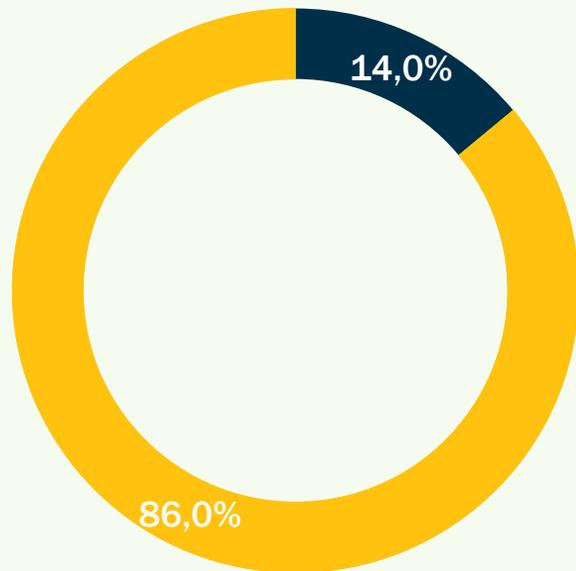
(Part of the coverage of posts)



Pro-Russian authors either mocked the TCR or wrote that this murder shows that Ukraine is lawless and chaos is beginning. Their posts also contain visible criticism of the authorities. The content is often full of emotions, aggressive attacks on the accused, foul language, shouting in the video, exclamation marks and caps lock in the text. On the other hand, many said or wrote that «the murderer can be understood, he was afraid», or «the authorities tried to make the mobilization better, but failed»

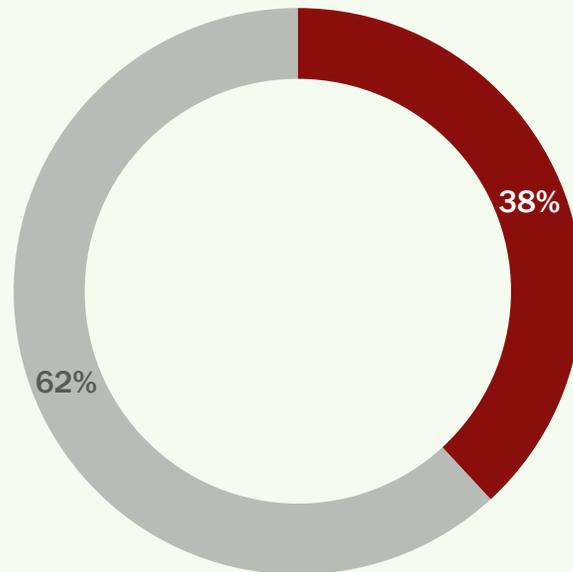
(Part of the coverage of posts)

Participation of supporters of different sides



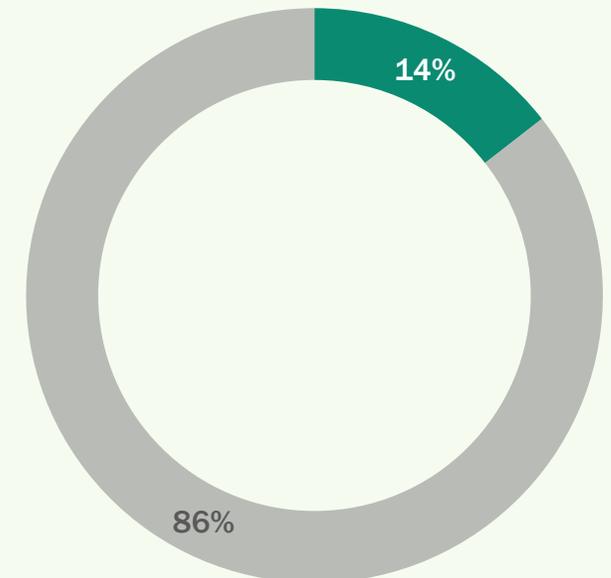
- Pro-Russian
- Pro-Ukrainian

Use of hate speech



- Hate speech present
- Hate speech absent

Search for a common point of view



- Understanding of the opponent is expressed
- Understanding of the opponent is not expressed

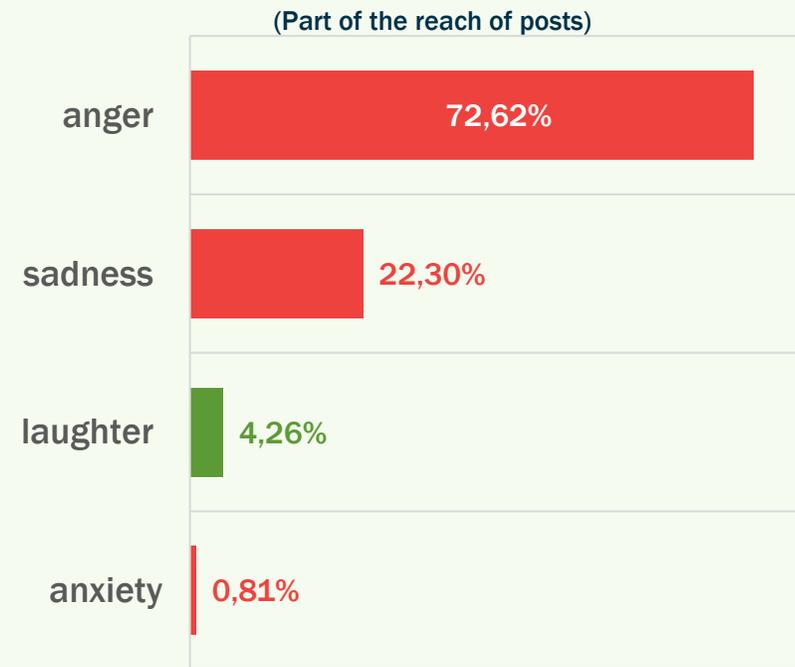
Anger – most of all anger against the suspect, there is also anger at Russia, which sets Ukrainians up negatively towards the TCR, and at people who react inadequately to this murder. There is also anger at the TCR, but it is much less, and to a large extent – from pro-Russian contributors. They also are angry at the authorities who «cannot restore order».

Sadness – in posts and videos in which they talk about the murdered person, about his life, and also sadly report on his funeral criticizing the murderer along the way. In the analysis of the social media reaction to the murder, there is also sadness that people react inadequately to the death of a soldier.

Laughter – not cheerful, but always angry and mocking, almost entirely in pro-Russian posts and videos. They mock the TCR, saying that it was the knife of the «Tetsekashnik», not the attacker, that he collected them; respectfully calling the attacker a «beast», and also mocking at the fact that the murder took place in Lviv reminding that it is a patriotic city. In the pro-Ukrainian part, there is evil mockery of those who try to argue in the comments, as well as of those who say that the accusation of the TCR is a Russian provocation.

Anxiety – in the posts of prominent bloggers: Ya. Sokolova, B. Bereza, S. Fedyna. They alarmingly declare that such cases are a sign that the people are starting to have hostile attitude towards all military personnel. At the same time, they criticize the authorities who led to this.

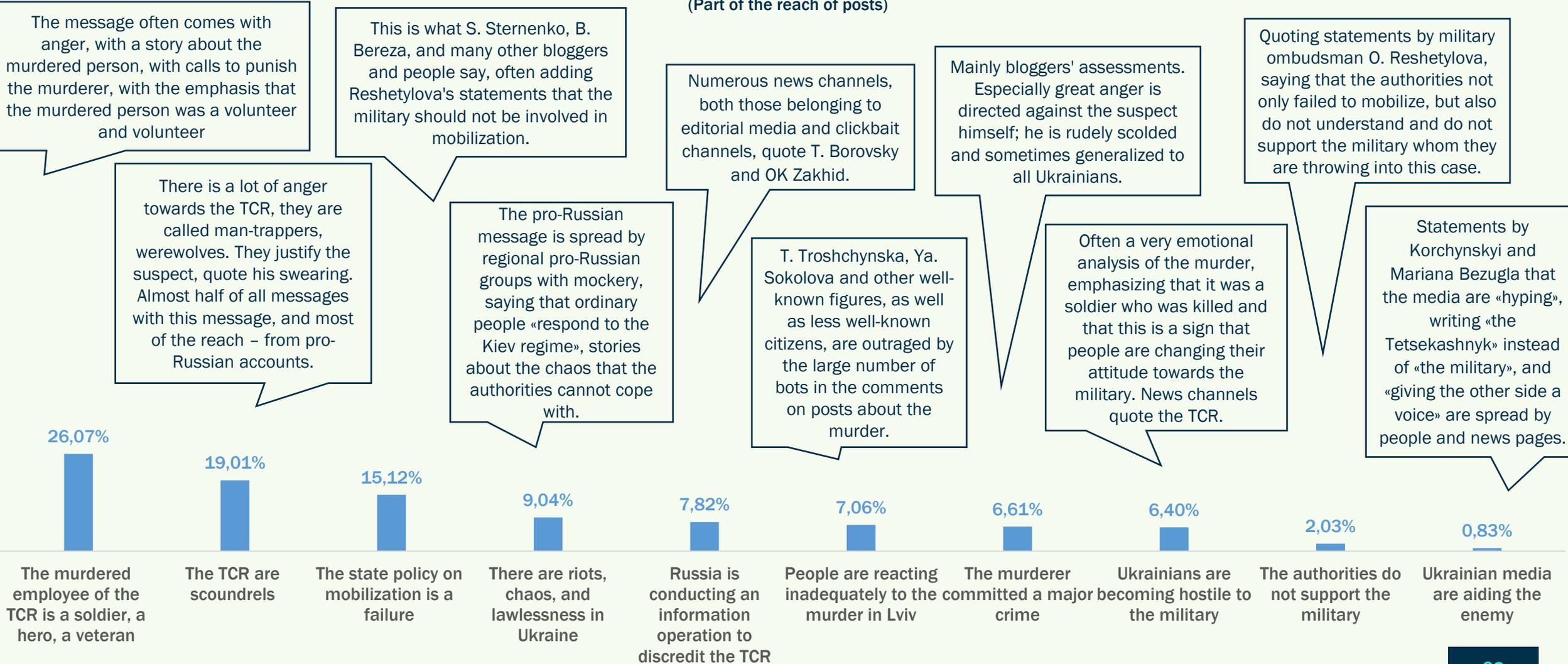
Anger was connected with all those accused, and sadness arises when they talk about the murdered man and his life, about his funeral. The laughter is aggressive, it is mockery, more often from pro-Russian accounts, the anxiety is not entirely sincere, expressed in criticism of the authorities from prominent bloggers



DISCUSSION MESSAGES TCR

People who condemn the murder have many different messages about both the causes and the consequences of the event. Those who support the murder have no different messages, only hatred for the TCR

(Part of the reach of posts)

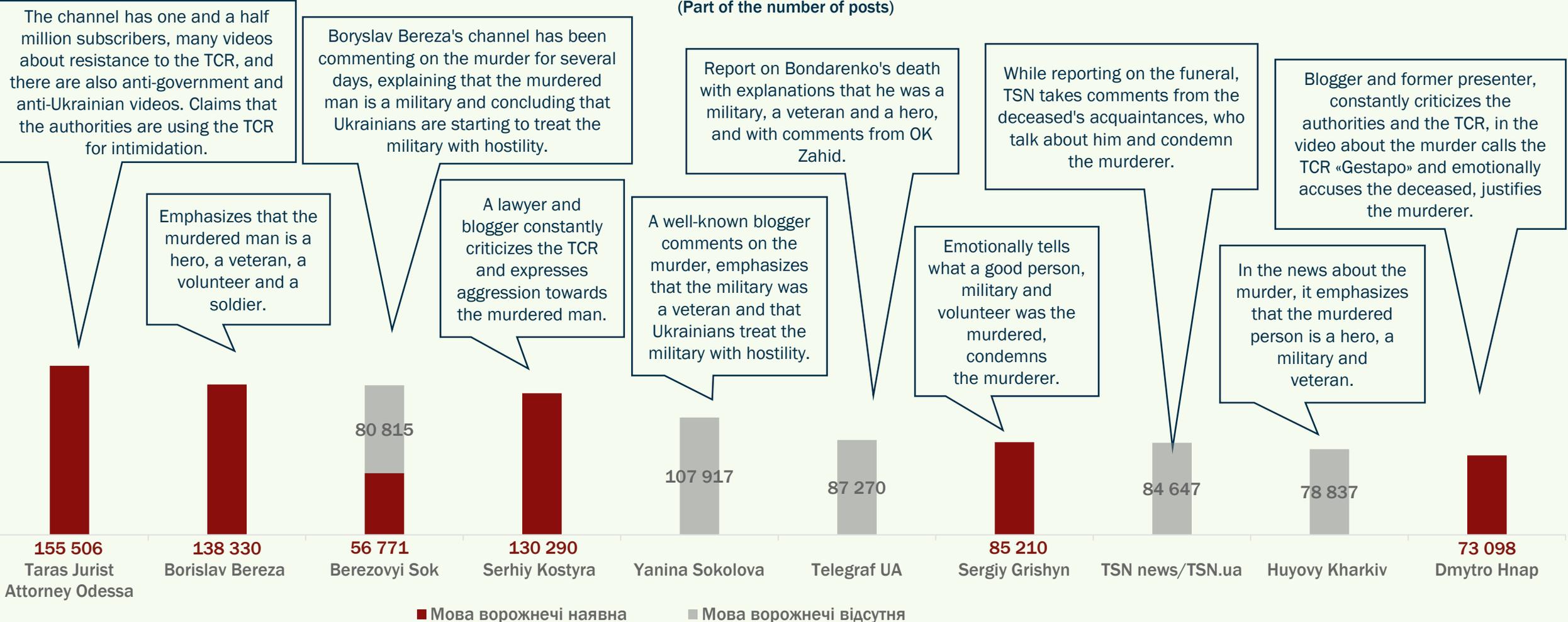


TOP 10 AUTHORS OF THE DISCUSSION

TCR

Anti-mobilization channels broadcast the most hate speech, patriotic bloggers sharply condemn the murderer, and well-known media outlets tell the human story of the murdered person

(Part of the number of posts)



The channel has one and a half million subscribers, many videos about resistance to the TCR, and there are also anti-government and anti-Ukrainian videos. Claims that the authorities are using the TCR for intimidation.

Emphasizes that the murdered man is a hero, a veteran, a volunteer and a soldier.

Borislav Bereza's channel has been commenting on the murder for several days, explaining that the murdered man is a military and concluding that Ukrainians are starting to treat the military with hostility.

A lawyer and blogger constantly criticizes the TCR and expresses aggression towards the murdered man.

A well-known blogger comments on the murder, emphasizes that the military was a veteran and that Ukrainians treat the military with hostility.

Report on Bondarenko's death with explanations that he was a military, a veteran and a hero, and with comments from OK Zahid.

Emotionally tells what a good person, military and volunteer was the murdered, condemns the murderer.

While reporting on the funeral, TSN takes comments from the deceased's acquaintances, who talk about him and condemn the murderer.

In the news about the murder, it emphasizes that the murdered person is a hero, a military and veteran.

Blogger and former presenter, constantly criticizes the authorities and the TCR, in the video about the murder calls the TCR «Gestapo» and emotionally accuses the deceased, justifies the murderer.

APPENDIX . «MINDICH TAPES»

DIVIDING LINES: AUTHORITY AND OLIGARHS – SOCIETY; AUTHORITY – OPPOSITION; UKRAINE – WEST; ANTI- CORRUPTION BODIES – SKEPTICS

The trigger, starting on November 10, was a series of videos on the NABU YouTube channel, which provided evidence of accusations of several officials in creating a criminal organization that earned money from «kickbacks» from purchases at NNEGC Energoatom. During November 10-14, more than 400 publications appeared. Commentators from across the spectrum immediately joined the discussion.

The information space was very saturated: preventive measures by the courts, sanctions, distancing and indignation of the authorities (personally V. Zelensky) with facts of corruption, and demands to punish those involved which many considered insincere.

There were ideas of a government reshuffle, a «government of national unity», and some politicians, such as Yulia Tymoshenko, also expressed solidarity with them.

On the third day of the info crisis - November 12 - the channels «Kyiv» and «Espresso» began to spread rumors about the presence of Zelensky on the tapes, which coincided with the first public calls for his resignation. The corresponding track was led on social networks by M. Barabash, but her communication of the «anti-corruption Maidan» had a limited effect and did not develop into a general uproar.

There was somewhat less attention to T. Mindich's flight abroad, which was supported by media with the image of investigators (primarily «Ukrainska Pravda»). And supposedly pro-government anonymous Telegram channels («Telegram News Service», «Times of Ukraine») were outraged that NABU did not prevent Mindich's departure.

After the initial stage of the info crisis, some «interval acts» can be noted (November 15-16): I. Kolomoisky's reaction to the Mindich case, the boycott of «Kvartal 95» (owned by Mindich) by the «Homin» choir and other artists.

The following week - from November 17 to 23 - was marked by strong pressure on the authorities through «Mindich gate» both in parliament (the opposition blocked the rostrum of the Verkhovna Rada in order to dismiss government officials, an internal rebellion in «Servant of the People») and outside (against the backdrop of the publication of the "28 points" of the US peace plan). At this stage, the topic became completely politicized, the accusations were directed at the entire ruling elite, and not at specific individuals. NABU stopped publishing new videos. The reaction to rumors that V. Zelensky would not dismiss Yermak (Ya. Zheleznyak) and to the president's address to the Day of Dignity and Freedom, where they saw manipulations around the concept of «unity», was extremely pessimistic. But in general, the threat from Trump somewhat dampened the degree of criticism from everyone except the political opposition.

The final act (November 24-30) was the interrogation of R. Umerov and rumors of suspicion of A. Yermak, and then - the culminating wave of reports about searches at the apartment of the head of the OP and his resignation. Some irony was caused by the words allegedly by Yermak himself to the Western media that his honor had not been defended, and he would go to the front.

Ukrainians are divided into several camps, considering their attitude towards the government, the opposition and corrupt officials. However, this case did not stigmatize any of these camps, focusing entirely on criticism of officials, politicians and Russia.

The number of posts analyzed is **1086**. The approximate reach is **178.6 million** users.

The **authorities** as the target of the accusation, are mentioned in all key news and in reactions to the published records. The accusers are all key actors: investigators and activists (Bihus.Info, Yu. Nikolov, V. Shabunin), political bloggers (M. Davydiuk, S. Sternenko, V. Portnikov, Ya. Sokolova), media of various leanings (UP, Pryamiy), opposition MPs (S. Fedyna, O. Goncharenko), pro-Russian resources.

The **suspects** are T. Mindich as an agent of influence on institutions (Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Defense), a «gray cardinal» or «friend of the president»; O. Tsukerman as his partner. Separately from the authorities, they are mentioned in the news about their conversations on «tapes», sanctions against them and their departure from Ukraine. Since the 20th of November, they have been mentioned much less.

Energoatom usually appears in passing, alongside other participants in top corruption. The exception is focused reports on NABU searches at Energoatom, cases against company officials and their removal. Supervisory Board member T. Mylovanov is also accused of ignoring crimes.

The **West** is mainly the United States, which either puts pressure on Ukraine through corruption to sign an unprofitable peace, or is itself suspected of corruption (as evidence, the fact that the bundles of Mindich's money had details of American banks on them; this argument was heard from pro-Russian authors).

Law enforcement officers are NABU which allegedly allowed Mindich to escape (political experts engaged by the authorities and anonymous telegram channels like Times of Ukraine).

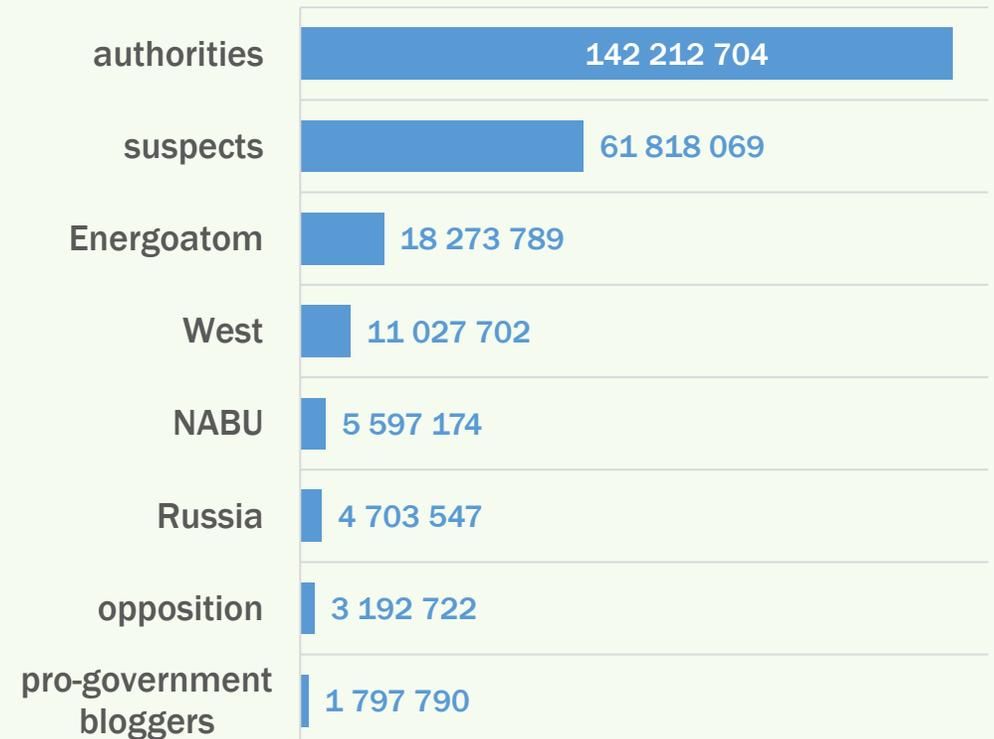
Russia and collaborators – A. Derkach as the main «watcher» of the nuclear industry, Russia, which filled Ukraine with agents (R. Chervinskyi calls A. Yermak one of them), and puts pressure on Ukraine during negotiations using the topic of corruption.

The **opposition** – P. Poroshenko, V. Zaluzhny and others, who were attributed with intentions to fight for power (mostly pro-Russian resources).

Others – accusations from supposedly pro-government bloggers who whitewashed suspects or downplayed crimes (V. Petrov, V. Zolkin, M. Podolyak, etc., MP A. Osadchuk).

The authorities are criticized more than twice as often as the suspects themselves. The authorities' attacks in return are very subtle and ineffective. There is relatively little military context - accusations of the West and Russia

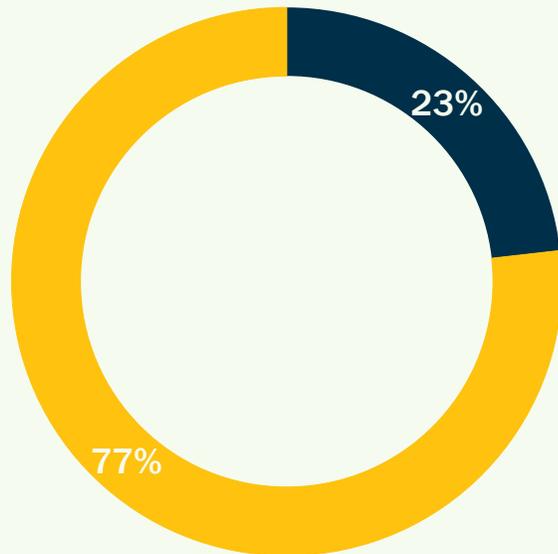
(Part of the coverage of posts)



The pro-Russian segment discussed the corruption crisis in Ukraine, reproducing the arguments of pro-Ukrainian critics of the government but with its own pessimistic forecasts. Proportionally, the most hate speech and foul language were also from pro-Russian authors and resources with a weak reputation (Politeka), the most radical being A. Shariy («stupid pigs», «abomination», «a bunch of lousy sheep»); but the opposition (primarily O. Honcharenko) does not disdain such a style either. The guilt of the people on the «tapes» is almost unanimously acknowledged, but sources loyal to the government added comments from the government to the accusations of corruption officials about the intention to punish the criminals

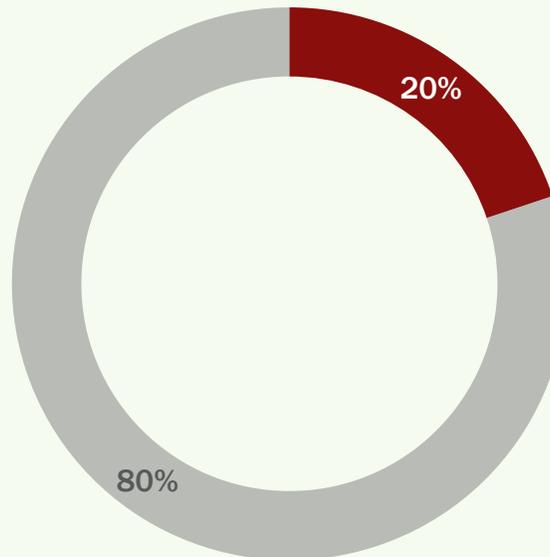
(Part of the coverage of the posts)

Participation of supporters of different parties



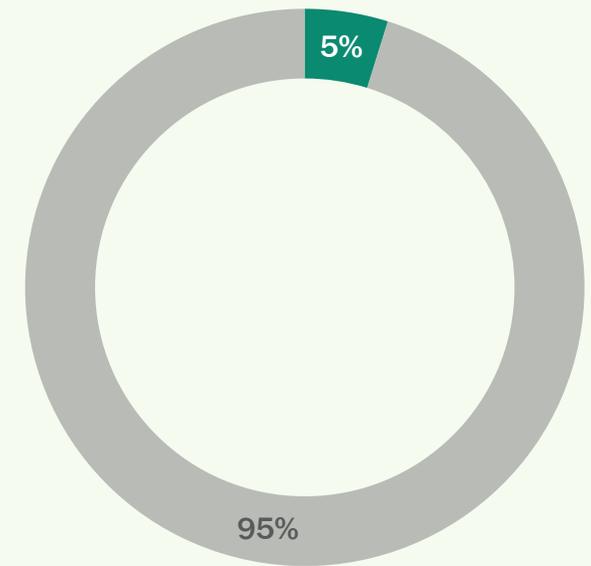
- Pro-Russian views
- Pro-Ukrainian views

Use of hate speech



- Hate speech is present
- Hate speech is absent

Search for a common point of view



- Opposition's understanding is expressed
- Opposition's understanding is not expressed

Anger is automatically directed at all those present on the «tapes»: T. Mindich, D. Basov, I. Myronyuk, O. Tsukerman, etc. A little later, the emotion is projected onto officials: H. Halushchenko, S. Hrynchuk, O. Chernyshov, as well as V. Zelensky and the entire vertical. Anger over corruption is intensified by the fact that Ukrainians must survive without electricity. In the last days of the analysis, A. Yermak took on almost all the negativity. Limited expressions of emotion are directed at the USA, in particular, which, together with the Russian Federation, uses corruption to pressure Ukraine. Pro-Russian and opposition sources also express more anger at the authorities who are allegedly to blame. There is also anger at law enforcement officers (in particular, NABU) that allowed the people involved to flee abroad. Or at the opposition, which dreams of taking advantage of the situation.

Anxiety – in discussions about the political crisis (Yu. Lutsenko, others from the opposition), the crisis of military command (S. Sternenko), international pressure on Ukraine.

Hope – in the continuation and support of V. Zelensky for the investigation of the case (in the reaction of G7 ambassadors), in quoting Zelensky's own demands and promises to punish those involved. This emotion is often broadcast by Russian oppositionists (M. Feigin) and Ukrainian authors close to them (D. Gordon), hoping for a favorable reaction from the authorities.

Laughter – memes (in particular, the AI-generated Mindich at the resort, who says that he was simply «making shawarma»), trolling (actor S. Boklan), in reactions to denials of guilt («the Kremlin is to blame for corruption» – M. Podolyak).

Curiosity – who and how took Mindich out; did Zelensky know about «Mindich gate»; whether sanctions will be imposed against R. Umerov in the same way.

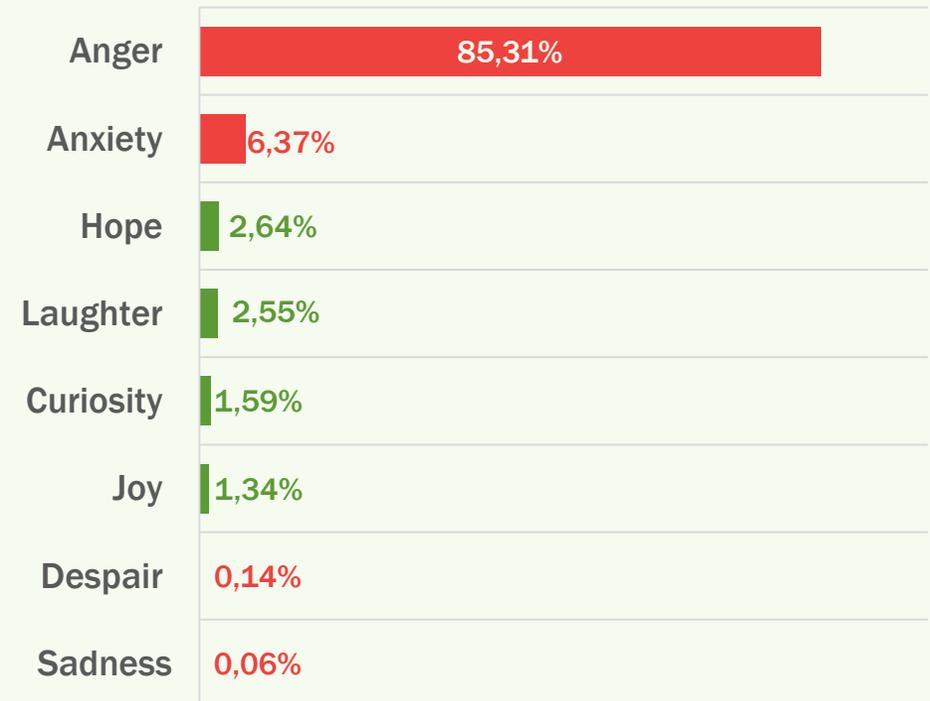
Joy – in positive assessments of the corruption investigation by some partners (such as the EU), in some news about Yermak's dismissal.

Despair – in quoting Ya. Zheleznyak's statement that Zelensky does not plan to dismiss Yermak.

Sorrow – in the emotional response of Channel 24 presenter K. Solyar to «Mindich gate» about the decline in military recruitment due to this event, the despair of ordinary Ukrainians, and their own everyday problems.

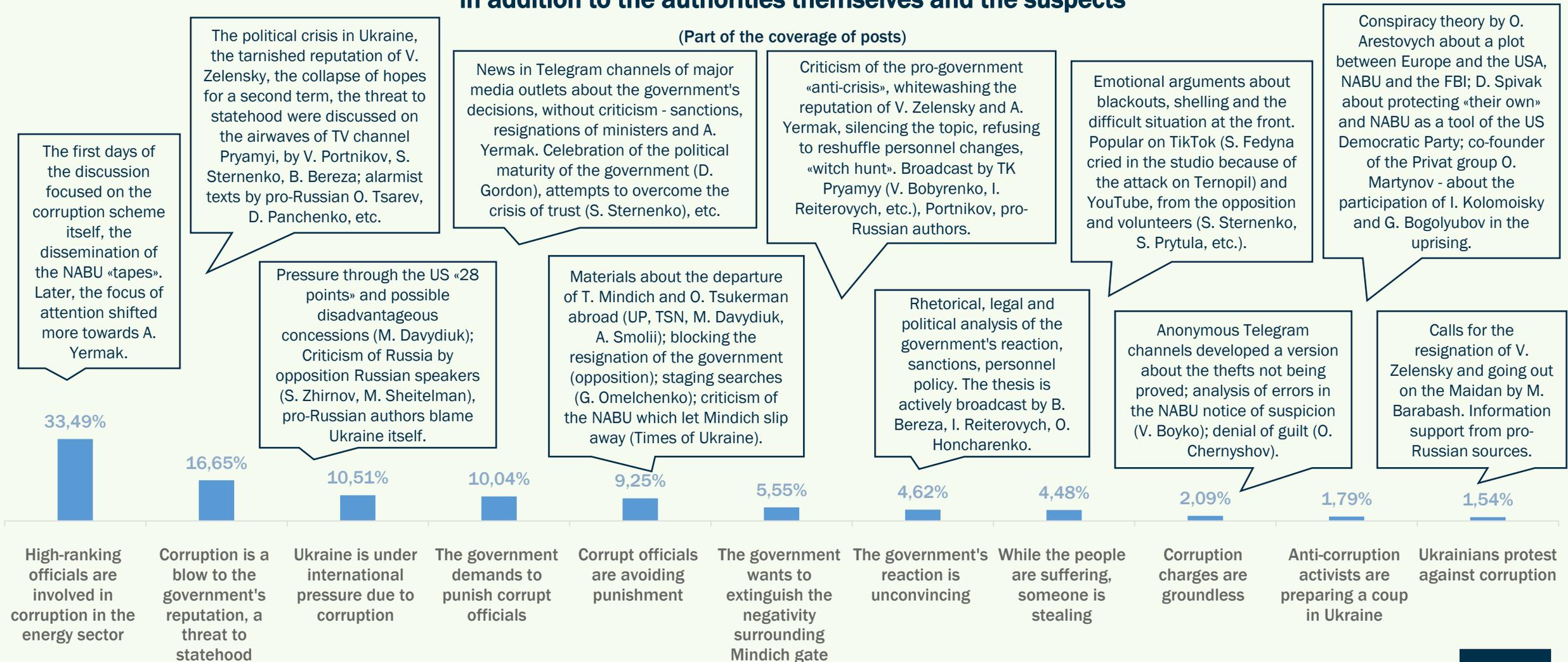
Anger is dominant, which over time has engulfed increasingly higher levels of power. The conditions in which corruption was exposed contributed to anxiety - for the future of Ukraine. The greatest optimists were Western partners or Russian opposition bloggers like M. Feigin

(Part of the coverage of posts)



Appendix. «Mindich Tapes»

After the first surge of attention to the facts, numerous media outlets, bloggers, and speakers rushed to speculate about the causes and consequences of the crisis, its secret mechanisms, and, depending on the versions, to focus the accusations on various objects, in addition to the authorities themselves and the suspects



TOP 10 AUTHORS OF THE DISCUSSION

Appendix. «Mindich Tapes»

The entire spectrum of Ukrainian media and political commentators joined the topic, trying to use the situation that everyone is talking about to promote their messages - pro-Russian, opposition, anti-corruption, etc.

(Part of the coverage of posts)

The pro-Russian blogger retold on Telegram the details of the «Mindich tapes» and the NABU's investigative actions, mixing it with hate speech («Zelya, scum», «stupid pigs»), doubts about the effectiveness of sanctions, dissemination of Western media materials (NYT, WSJ, etc.) about the political crisis, the deterioration of the negotiating position.

The pro-Russian ex-politician first only retold news about the Mindich case, comparing it with corruption in the Russian Federation («two Timurs»: Ivanov and Mindich), then theses about the pressure on Ukraine through FBI, protests of Ukrainians against corruption, pressure from A. Yermak on anti-corruption activists. Actively comments on the topic for Russian media.

News about searches, questions to NABU for not preventing T. Mindich from fleeing abroad, denial of the involvement of V. Zelenskyi and A. Yermak, as well as the truthfulness of the accusations in general (the allegedly stolen \$100 million is a myth).

Constant analysis of the situation on the political scientist's YouTube channel, its consequences in the domestic and foreign arenas, emphasizes the risk of using it to blackmail Ukraine into surrendering.

Anti-mobilization activist promptly comments on the Mindich case as a blow to the power vertical, a political «sabbath», adds that the US «keeps» A. Yermak and R. Umerov on the hook, and possible coercion of Ukraine into a peace agreement.

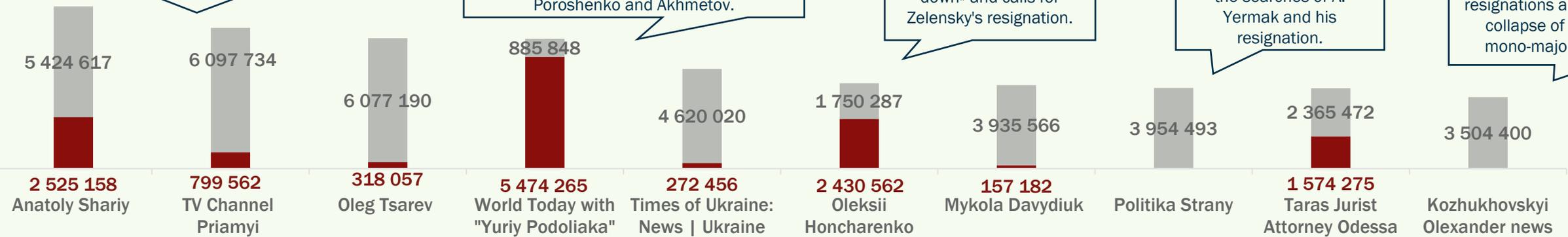
The opposition media constantly emphasizes the decline in trust in the authorities, the political crisis (on air with I. Lapin, V. Portnikov, R. Chervynskiy, etc.), the promotion of the idea of a national unity government, linking it to problems at the front and turning off the lights.

Pro-Russian account, aggressive harassment of V. Zelenskyi and his entourage («Jankie», «Nazis»); corruption is rather discussed in connection with problems at the front (attempts to extinguish problems with fake «victories» in Kupiansk and Pokrovsk), up to conspiracy theories about a plot by MI-6 or Poroshenko and Akhmetov.

Emotional reactions (especially on TikTok) to searches of «Zelenskyi's friends» and «powerful» sanctions (with sarcasm). Hope that everyone will be «pinned down» and calls for Zelensky's resignation.

Pro-Russian channel, mostly a lot of concise news about the «Midas» case, its figures, retelling of NABU tapes and official reactions; later – the focus of attention on the searches of A. Yermak and his resignation.

TikTok video with «shocking», «sensational», «resonant» news about searches, interrogations, resignations and the collapse of the mono-majority.



■ Hate speech is present

■ Hate speech is absent

Social group hate has decreased significantly

In most cases in posts that received wide distribution, we did not (or almost did not) record hate directed at social groups - for example, Ukrainian or Russian speakers, residents of different regions, the electorate of various politicians, the military, etc. Although we deliberately selected cases that could cause such hate if there were social prerequisites for it. On the contrary, examples of such hate from individual bloggers (A. Alkhim, A. Kuskevych) became a reason for harsh criticism of them. **The only top «social» addressee of hate is «those who left Ukraine».** There are also accusations against «evaders», «those who went AWOL» and «the audience of pro-Russian bloggers», as well as «liberals» and «conservatives» in mutual hatred on the topic of UCU, but they are not in the top of popular accused in their cases. Instead, many cases are built around personal hatred towards a certain «culprit», without generalizations regarding the groups he represents. However, the authorities (primarily as a political team, to a lesser

extent – institutions), as in 2022, remain the main object of criticism in most discussions – after all, the opposition does not miss the opportunity to use various cases (the only exception is the scandal at UCU) to fight its opponents.

Deliberate political campaigns are the main driver of attention to scandals

Coverage is provided by those topics that at least one political force undertakes to «disperse» through its channels. The most visible and with the greatest communication opportunities are the following forces:

1. A network of P. Poroshenko's supporters;
2. A group of channels and experts that carry out the instructions of the Office of the President;
3. A pool of pro-Russian accounts in Ukraine;
4. The anti-corruption community.

When at least one of these forces has joined in dispersing accusations in a topic, top media, news channels, and conditionally «independent» top bloggers often follow suit. In other topics, they participate episodically if it suits their interests (such as Ya. Sokolova

on the topic of pro-Russian statements by bloggers). If none of the organized forces joins in commenting on the discussion, then it remains with a relatively limited audience. Even the community of bloggers who distribute entertainment content cannot match political networks – as we can see in the example of the story with A. Alkhim.

Each discussion case further deepens several lines of division at once

As soon as a dispute arises, it immediately triggers people who are dissatisfied not only with the direct culprit of the events, but also with other social groups or institutions. Thus, quite influential speakers appear in the media who make accusations against these groups or institutions more visible. On the one hand, society becomes more divided because of this. On the other, mutual claims are discussed, and a chance arises to overcome them.

Pro-Russian authors, like pro-Ukrainian ones, pay attention to political topics and almost do not inflate others

Those cases that receive the most attention from Ukrainian political forces are almost proportionally more commented on by pro-Russian accounts. And these are topics related to state power in Ukraine with a narrative about the incapacity of the Ukrainian state. But social topics are inflated by Russian influence networks very weakly and rather «optionally», even their «favorite» dividing lines - such as attitudes towards LGBT or the Ukrainian language. The only social dividing line that Russian influence agents still pay much attention to is the issue of refugees. The usual inflating by various sides is not noticeable in the topic of the TCR, but only uncreative criticism of the TCR as such.

Hate speech: patterns have changed significantly compared to 2022

Hate speech is most actively visible in «average» quarrels and comes from politicians (the refugee issue) or pseudo-experts opposing mobilization (TCR). At the same time, the discussion between Poroshenko and Zelenskyi which led in terms of hate speech in 2022 has now «calmed down» much more.

Understanding the opponent depends only on the consciousness of specific discussion participants

Most discussions do not systematically express their understanding of the opponent's position: they are quite irreconcilable. Somewhat more often such understanding is demonstrated by the military and young intellectual audiences. However, more often such a search for compromises is due to the goodwill of individual discussion participants – such as M. Berlinska, O. Mandziuk, etc.

Facebook is losing its status as the main platform for debate, handing over this role to Telegram. YouTube is catching up with the leader

In 2022, Facebook was no longer the main source of news but remained the main platform for debate. But now the reach of discussion posts on Facebook can no longer be compared to other platforms. Its role is felt only in those little-noticeable discussions that top authors from Telegram and YouTube did not join. TikTok has never been able to fully join the discussion trends, remaining largely an entertainment network, this statement applies to Instagram to an even greater extent.

The trend of «hating haters» is noticeable

In many topics, the objects of accusations are those who incite useless discussions instead of focusing entirely on supporting the Defense Forces. Especially those who attack public figures like volunteers.

The only area where top Russian bloggers and channels resonate with the Ukrainian audience is the military

As in 2022, in most topics, the pro-Russian information flow is separate from the Ukrainian one, with almost no overlap in messages: the Russians repeat their narrative elements that the Ukrainian audience simply cannot perceive. This explains why, according to OpenMinds research, the audience of such channels is mainly Russians, not Ukrainians. However, in the military sphere, pro-Russian accounts still try to use messages that are already present in the Ukrainian information space, in particular, those coming from the military themselves: about incompetent leadership, failed mobilization, and unsuccessful

military policy. This is a potential risk that the audience of Russian accounts in Ukraine may grow.

From «Cardboard Protests» to «Mindich Tapes»: a noticeable shift in focus to the authorities

If in the case of «Cardboard Protests» there were quite a few accusations directed at ordinary citizens, primarily those who went to protests, then in the case of «Mindich Tapes» the maximum focus was on the authorities and businessmen close to them. Anti-corruption demands ceased to be perceived with distrust, although this did not prevent them from criticizing anti-corruption institutions in a specific and reasoned manner. Pro-Russian accounts are still

included in these topics to the maximum extent, but if during the «Cardboard Protests» they hoped for a change of government, then during the «Mindich Tapes» they only vented their aggression on the Ukrainian authorities.

In both cases, the cases were accompanied by anxiety that Russia would be able to take advantage of the instability in Ukraine, and that Ukraine itself would be weakened in times of testing. However, the share of such anxiety in the overall spectrum of emotions remained small.

- **We keep the advice from 2022: create a communication tool that will take care of social consensus.**

For example, extinguishing social disputes can be one of the functions of the Center for Strategic Communications. The key tool for such communication should be the practice of creating unifying narratives that all parties to the discussion cannot disagree with, stimulating statements that demonstrate understanding of the opponent's position, and vice versa, hate speech should be considered bad form. It is also worth spreading the maxim that individual people who have done something wrong or harmful should be criticized, and not entire social groups.

- **The most important direction should be overcoming the dividing lines between those who left and those who stayed.**

This is the most noticeable dividing line that is sharply manifested in discussions. Refugees should be told how they can be useful to those who remained in Ukraine, and their inclusion in the Ukrainian context should be supported. It would be ideal to

«rebuild» the functionality of the «Ministry of Unity» launching it with a professional leader and a clear goal.

- **Hostility and Russian influence in military topics can be overcome only by creating a new strategic narrative.**

We see evidence of the powerful participation of Russian influence agents in campaigns regarding military policy. This is the only area where their messages are also perceived by pro-Ukrainian users. As our previous observations show, a full-fledged narrative has already been formed in the anti-mobilization topic, not just a set of messages. Overcoming this narrative will be possible only through the formation and consistent deployment of another, more powerful narrative, which will include mobilization policy, reforms in the army, and understanding in society. After the reboot of the state leadership, the possibility of implementing such a narrative has opened up.

- **We need to speak openly about the Russians' focus on the authorities.**

Of course, it is not only Russians who

criticize the government; this is a democratic procedure that, among other things, made the successes of anti-corruption activists possible. But it is the Kremlin's propaganda that tries to show a) that the government, not the Russians, is to blame for all the problems of Ukrainians, b) that Ukrainians should stop listening to the government and agree to the demands of the Russians. This difference must be explained, and citizens must be taught to distinguish.

- **We keep the advice from 2022: the desire of the Russians to inflate the Ukrainian conflicts should become common knowledge.**

In Ukraine, the Russian goal of dividing Ukrainian society is still not sufficiently communicated. However, at least in the examples of the dividing lines between those who left and those who returned, as well as between the TCR and the evaders, we see that they have not abandoned this strategy. It is also important to convey this idea to people.