

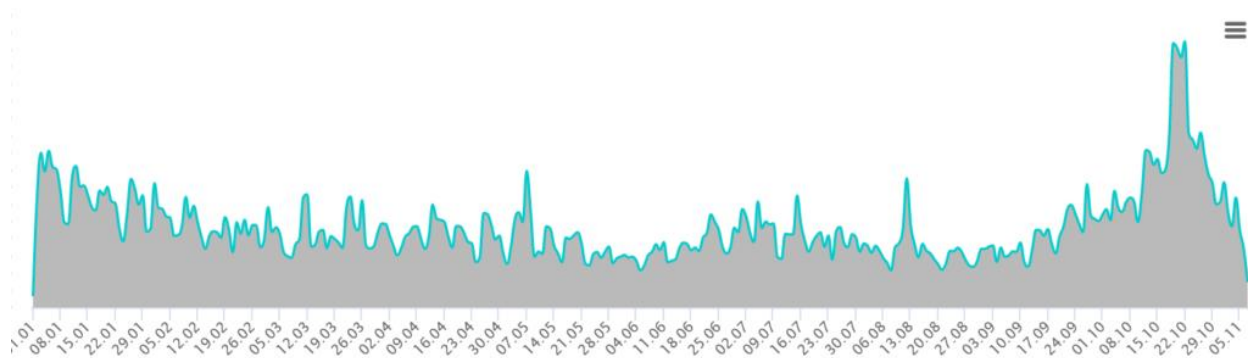
## Topic of Coronavirus Pandemic and Vaccination in September-October 2021

Mikhail Doroshevich

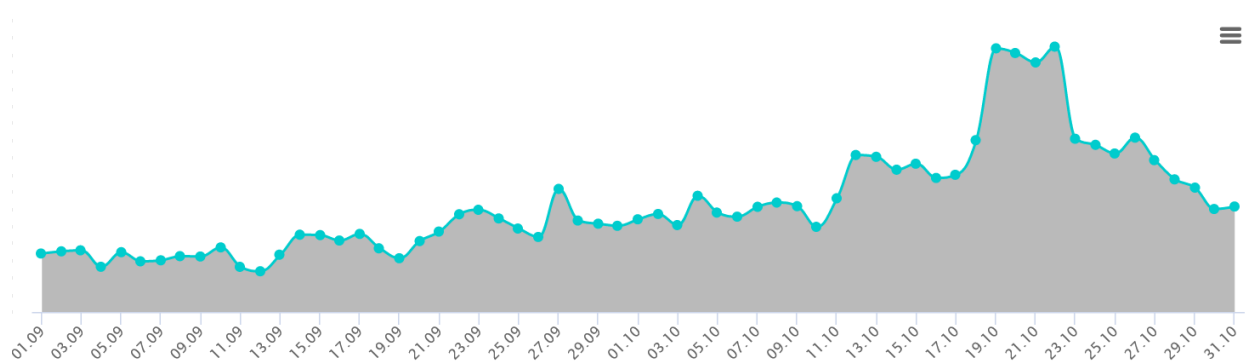
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The situation with the number of coronavirus COVID-19 infections in Belarus had rapidly worsened in September-October, with a lot of discussions regarding the possibility of using the larger spectrum of WHO-recommended vaccines for vaccination of Belarusian citizens and, of course, also regarding the mandatory mask regime and its scandalous repealing, COVID-dissidence, desinformation.

The overall number of mentions of the pandemic topic in online and social media from January 1st, 2021, to November 7th, 2021, data acquired by using SemanticForce platform of monitoring and analysis:



To carry out the analysis of COVID19 mentions, let's shorten the window of analysis to two calendar days: September-October



Peak values of the given distribution are related to the following news cases:

- September 27, 2021. First, medical telegram channels and then online media began to report an unprecedented increase in coronavirus cases (fourth wave): ["We are redirecting the ambulances": Doctors begin to write about the situation with coronavirus in Belarus en masse](#)
- October 12, 2021. Over the past day, according to the Ministry of Health, 2038 people were detected to have coronavirus. In total, 561,753 people have been infected since the beginning of the pandemic
- October 19, 2021 [Lukashenko: Planned medical care will not be canceled!](#)



*Minister of Health Dmitry Pinevich stands at a meeting with Alexander Lukashenko It is worth noting that all present at the meeting are without personal protective equipment (masks)*

- October 22, 2021 [Why did Lukashenka's statement about the impact of covid on cancer cause such a resonance? President's opinion](#)

An illustration of Belarusian news from October 22, 2021 in one anti-

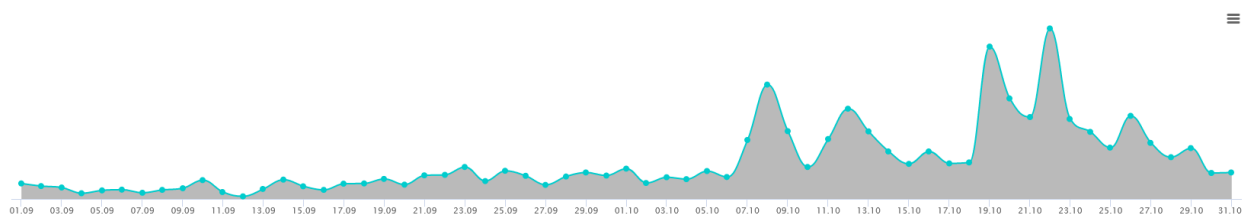


The

vaxxer (anti-vaccination) community in the Russian social network VK: [The laws of natural human reproduction have been discovered](#)

evolution the topic of compulsory wearing of medical masks in public places deserves

the construction of a separate chart:



On October 8, 2021, a news piece was published that stated that since October 9, wearing masks and social distancing in public places is mandatory for everyone in the Republic of Belarus. This requirement was introduced to the sanitary norms and rules regarding the prevention of influenza and COVID-19 by specialists of the Ministry of Health.




Due to this video - [Why are you making fun of people? - Lukashenka's reaction to vaccinations and fines for the lack of masks](#), posted on the Youtube channel of the First National Channel of Belarusian Radio on October 19, 2021, the channel managed to [make its way](#) into to the thirty Belarusian YouTube channels, which collected the most views of videos posted in October 2021.

On October 22, 2021, the Ministry of Health of Belarus canceled paragraph 41-1 of the Sanitary Norms and Rules for Preventing Flu and COVID-19 on the mandatory wearing of masks in public places.

But at the same time, the next regulation was issued. Heads of various organizations must ensure that workers are wearing masks at sites. The same goes for site visitors. This only applies to those cases when it is impossible to maintain a distance of 1-1.5 meters

Please be sure to wear masks (personal protective equipment) in all public places, including vehicles, and keep the recommended distance!

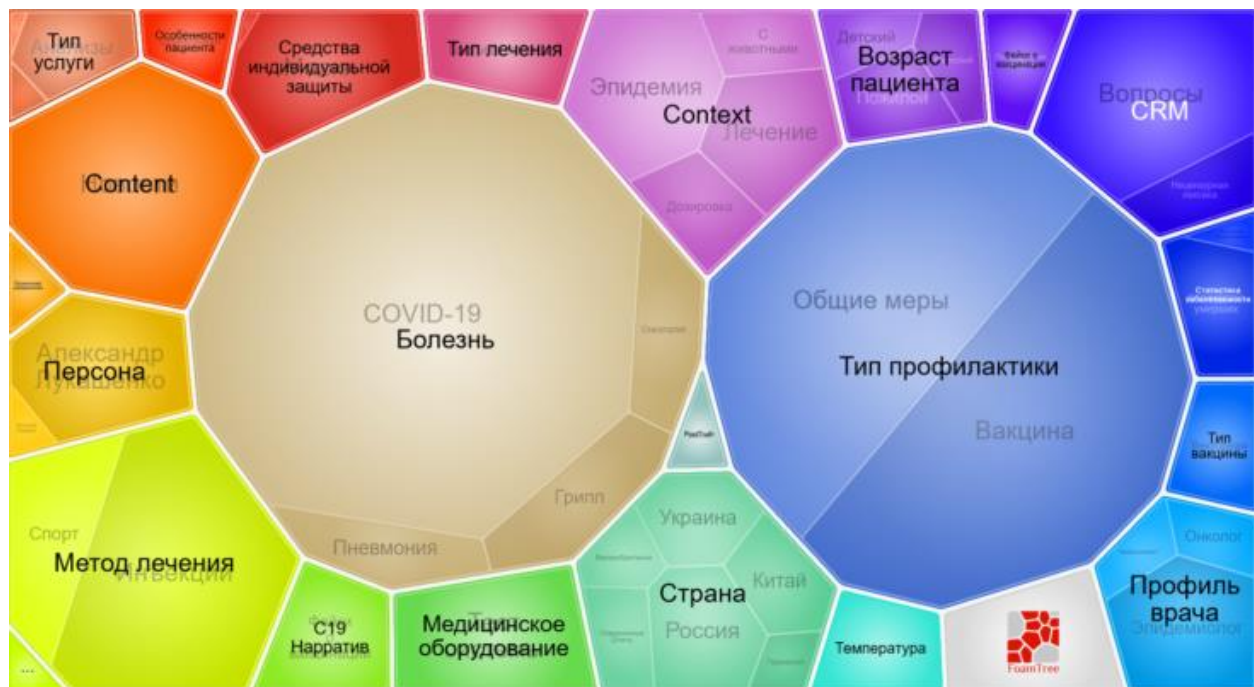
The main sources of reports on the COVID19 pandemic and vaccinations are:

 vk.com	94002
 t.me	20212
 youtube.com	14606
 facebook.com	8439
 twitter.com	8000
 instagram.com	3685
 odnoklassniki.ru	2915
 forum.onliner.by	2529
 n1.by	1981
 sb.by	1171
 R reform.by	1063
 charter97.org	1029
 belnovosti.by	957
 belta.by	872
 mobile-business.by	564
 sputnik.by	537
 telegraf.by	525
 BY moyby.com	519
 ctv.by	513
 123 ru24.net	502
 kp.by	467
 belaruspartisan.by	465
 Minsknews.by	461
 tvr.by	451
 interfax.by	449

It should be noted that Telegram has moved to the second position in terms of the number of mentions, displacing YouTube. From the [results](#) of the study "Media consumption and media literacy in Belarus in August 2021" presented on October 14, 2021, [Instagram](#) was named a source of information by 53% of respondents from the Belarusian Internet audience, second only to VK, named so by 63%. From the above data, it can be seen that on Instagram, the topic of the pandemic was less frequently mentioned than on facebook.com, twitter.com. There is also a noticeable dramatic decrease in Belarusian news sites due to the discriminatory measures of the Ministry of Information of the Republic of Belarus.

The absence of large media platforms with non-state ownership dramatically reduces the opportunity for a nationwide information campaign in support of vaccination, the publication of more materials with reliable information about the pandemic.

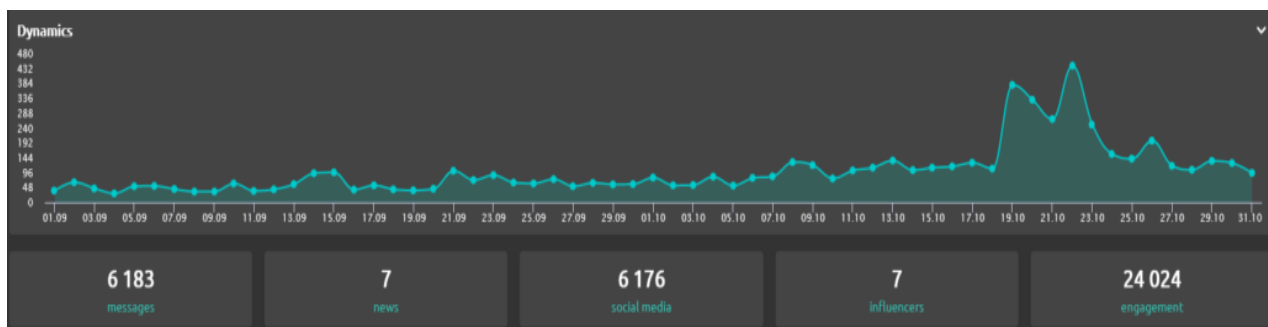
Distribution of messages by categories:



## False information / fake news

Now let's see what kind of false information (fake news) about the pandemic was disseminated among the Belarusian Internet audience in the months scrutinized by the study.

Temporary distribution of inaccurate information:

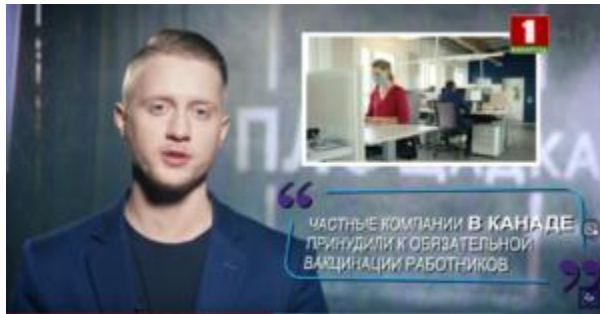


Main fake narratives:

Фейки о вакцинации: Принудительная вакцинация	2532
Фейки о медицинских масках: Маски неэффективны	776
Отрицание опасности: Коронавируса нет	724
Фейки о вакцинации: Имплантация чипа	264
Теории заговора: COVID19 - это биологическое оружие	184
Фейки о медицинских масках: Маски опасны	88
Фейки о вакцинации: Вакцина против COVID19 не будет эффективной	72
Теории заговора: Технология 5G и COVID19	50
Фейки о вакцинации: Вакцина изменяет ДНК	41
Псевдонаучные советы: Группа крови и COVID19	24
Теории заговора: Искусственное происхождение COVID19	14
Псевдонаучные советы: Лук и чеснок как лекарство	14
Отрицание опасности: COVID19 не опаснее гриппа	14
Теории заговора: Билл Гейтс и COVID19	12
Теории заговора: COVID19 и Новый мировой порядок	9

Two key fakes were common: about compulsory vaccination and the ineffectiveness of medical masks.

One of the illustrative examples of fakes about compulsory vaccination is this video:



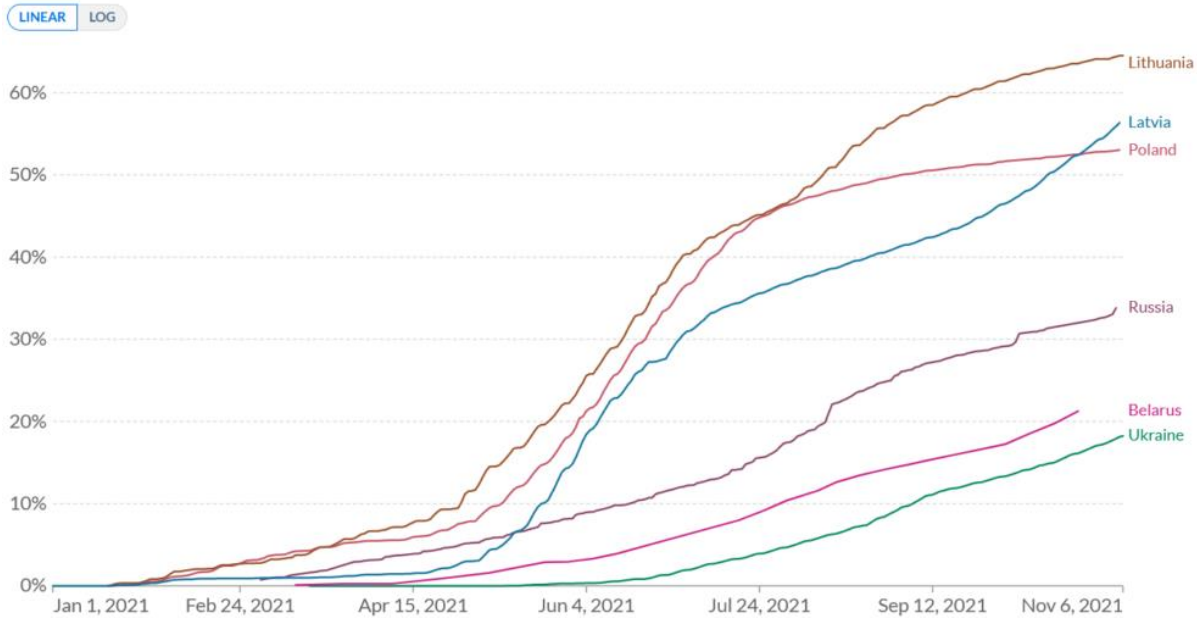
[The Belarusian approach in the fight against COVID-19 has already proved its effectiveness more than once. Ploschadka. Panorama.](#) Posted on Oct 13, 2021.

The uncertainty about the effectiveness follows from the publicly available data on the number of fully vaccinated people in Belarus and neighboring countries as of November 6, 2021, a characteristic that unambiguously characterizes the success or the need for additional efforts of the vaccination campaign for the country's population:

## Share of the population fully vaccinated against COVID-19

Total number of people who received all doses prescribed by the vaccination protocol, divided by the total population of the country.

Our World in Data



Source: Official data collated by Our World in Data. Alternative definitions of a full vaccination, e.g. having been infected with SARS-CoV-2 and having 1 dose of a 2-dose protocol, are ignored to maximize comparability between countries.  
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The main sources of inaccurate information:

Source [214]	Volume	Community [1679]	Volume
<a href="#">vk.com</a>	3154	<a href="#">АТН: новости Беларуси и мира</a>	157
<a href="#">t.me</a>	722	<a href="#">Любимую не отдадим 🇷🇺🇺🇸</a>	113
<a href="#">youtube.com</a>	344	<a href="#">Любимую не отдадим 🇷🇺🇺🇸</a>	112
<a href="#">facebook.com</a>	161	<a href="#">Общество</a>	107
<a href="#">sb.by</a>	83	<a href="#">НЕТипичный Витебск</a>	97
<a href="#">odnoklassniki.ru</a>	80	<a href="#">Беларусь Сегодня</a>	88
<a href="#">n1.by</a>	78	<a href="#">В мире</a>	85
<a href="#">tvr.by</a>	76	<a href="#">Коронавирус nCoV</a>	76
<a href="#">forum.onliner.by</a>	74	<a href="#">Offtopic</a>	74
<a href="#">twitter.com</a>	74	<a href="#">Беларусь Live</a>	74



The topic of the coronavirus pandemic COVID19 and vaccination remains one of the most relevant ones, and one of the components of the general political and economic crisis in the Republic of Belarus. The topic of the pandemic is related to the health of all Belarusian citizens, regardless of political views, therefore, it requires reasonable, urgent protocols for solving the problem. These decisions should be based on the maximum use of all available opportunities for global international assistance, including the WHO certification of recommended vaccines and their free availability to Belarusian medical institutions. Attraction of international aid funds for the expansion and renovation of the medical infrastructure of the Republic of Belarus. Conducting a broad integrated communication campaign for various target audiences,

And once again, a huge gratitude to all medical workers, who, in an extremely unfavorable situation, continue to save Belarusian citizens!

*This publication was prepared by the Baltic Internet Policy Initiative.*