

Messengers Used to Get Information in Belarus

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According to the research "Media consumption and media literacy in Belarus in August 2021", in August 2021 the Belarusian Internet audience aged 18-74 most oftenly used two messengers to obtain information - Viber (66%) and Telegram (66%)

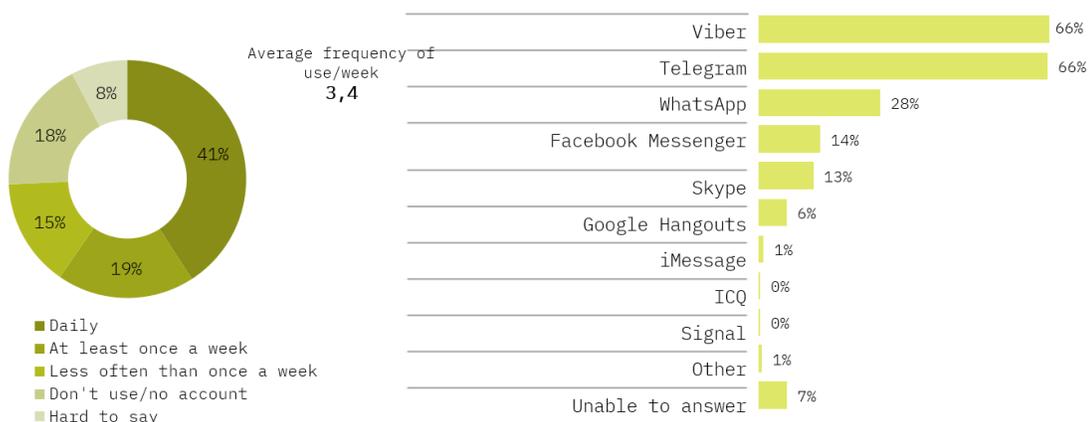
MESSENGRERS USED TO GET INFORMATION



How often do you use the following information sources?*

Which messengers do you use most often to get news, needed information?*

75% of respondents are active messenger users. Viber and Telegram users have the highest share.

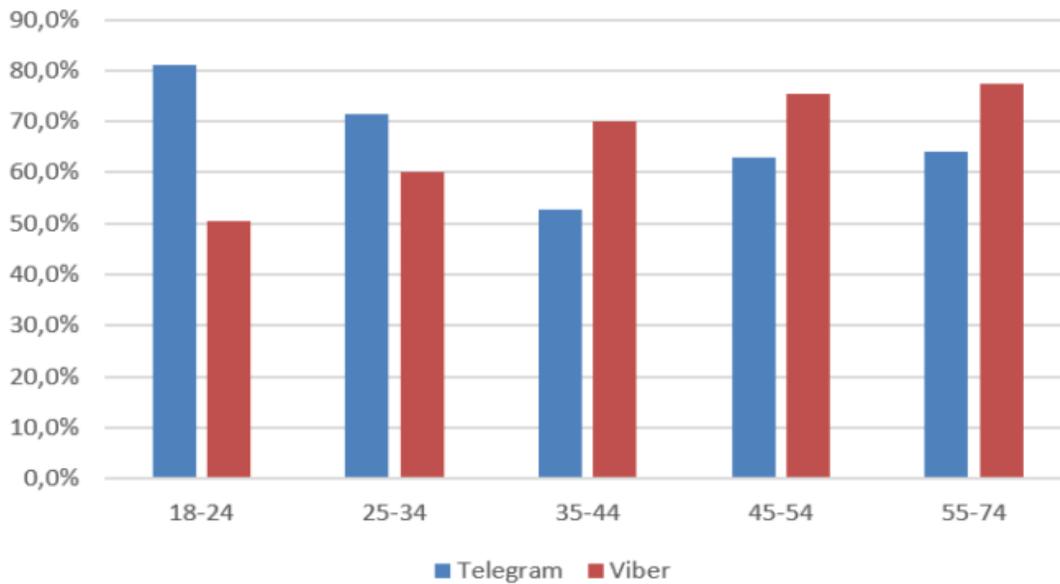


Sample 897

It should be noted that 18% of respondents (almost 1/5) do not use messengers to get information.

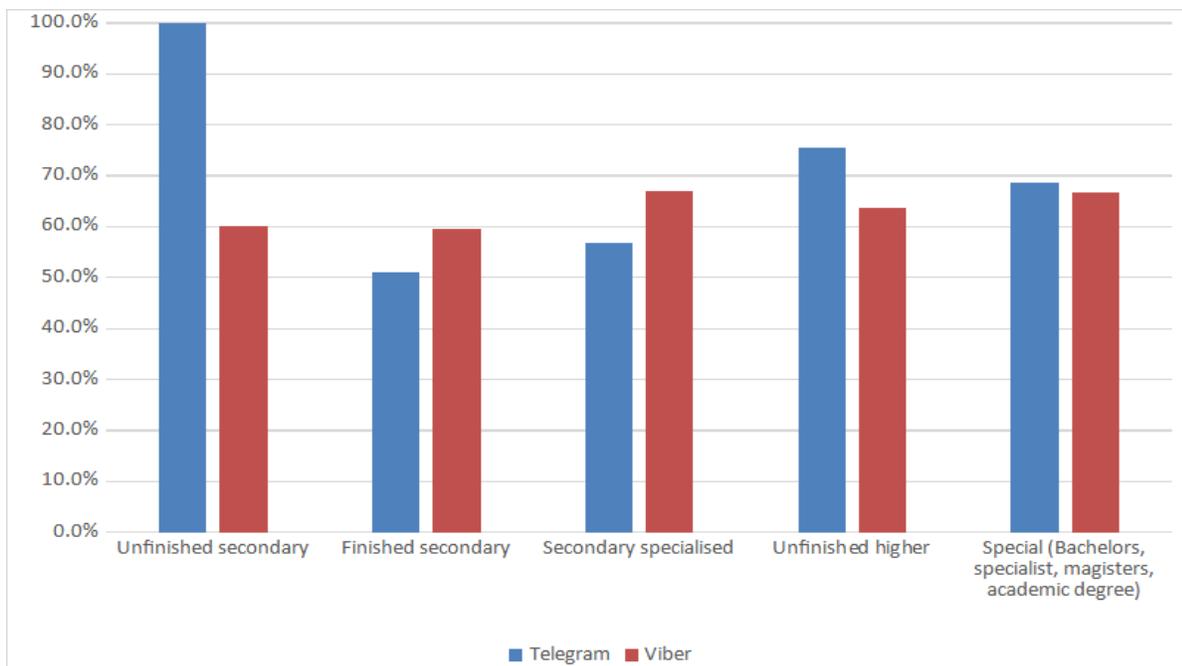
Based on the above, we will study the main socio-demographic characteristics of Telegram and Viber instant messengers.

There is absolutely no gender difference among the respondents-users of Viber (66%). There is a difference in the use of Telegram - 69% of the male audience and 63% of the female audience.



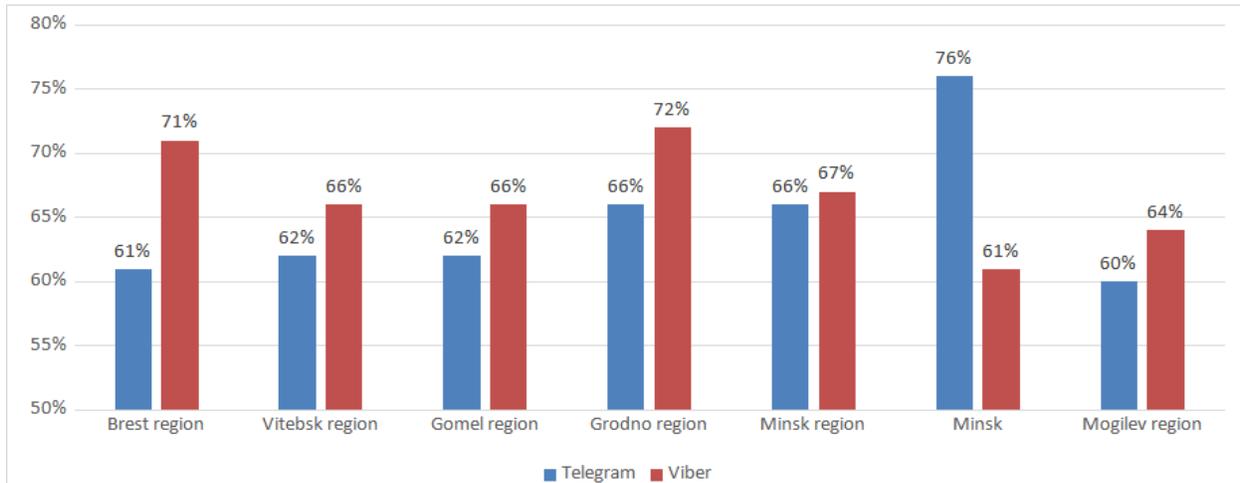
According to the graph, the younger audience uses Telegram to receive news more compared with the older one. And there is a 30-point difference in the use of Telegram relative to Viber by young people aged 18-24. There is also a direct dependency on age for using Viber as an information source.

Educational level of respondents-users of the analyzed messengers:



100% use of Telegram as an information source by respondents with incomplete secondary education (schoolchildren?) draws attention to itself on this graph.

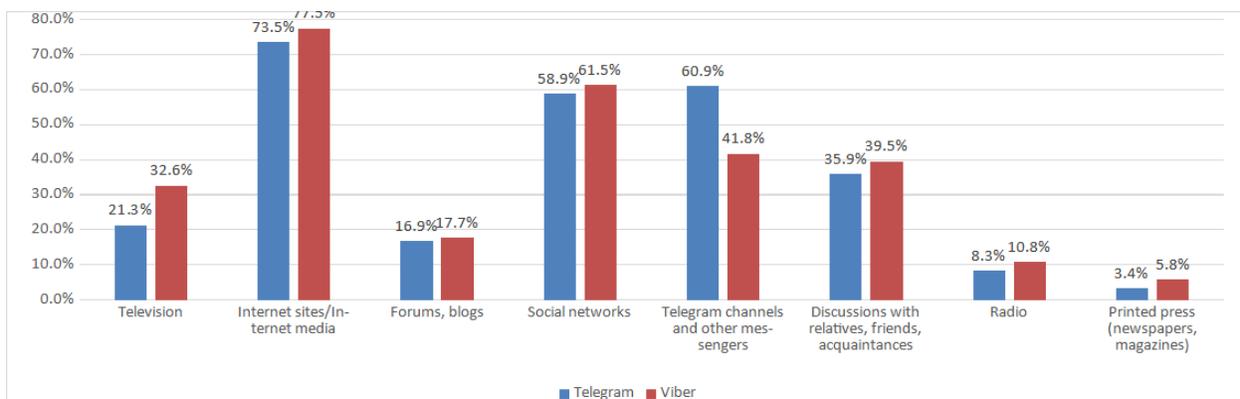
Regional breakdown:



There is a very serious difference in the use of Telegram between Minsk and other regional cities and regions in general, and Viber is used less in Minsk.

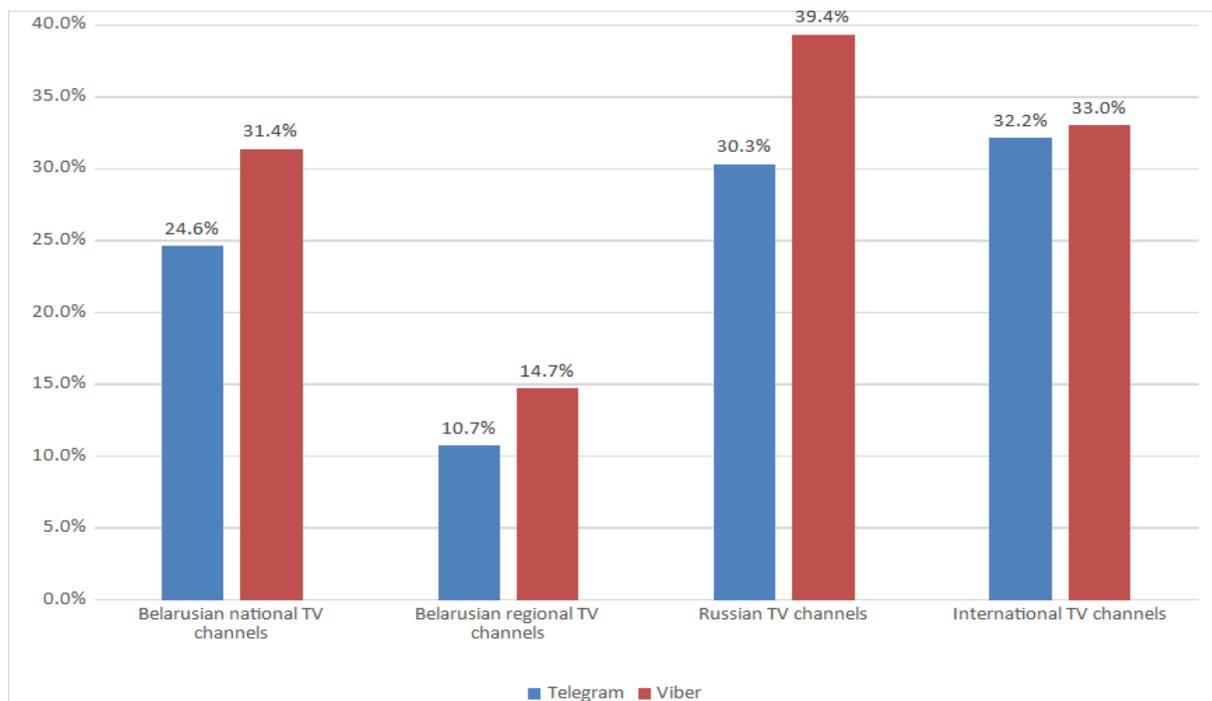
It is important to look at a few key behavioral questions.

For example, what sources do you most frequently use to get news, necessary information?



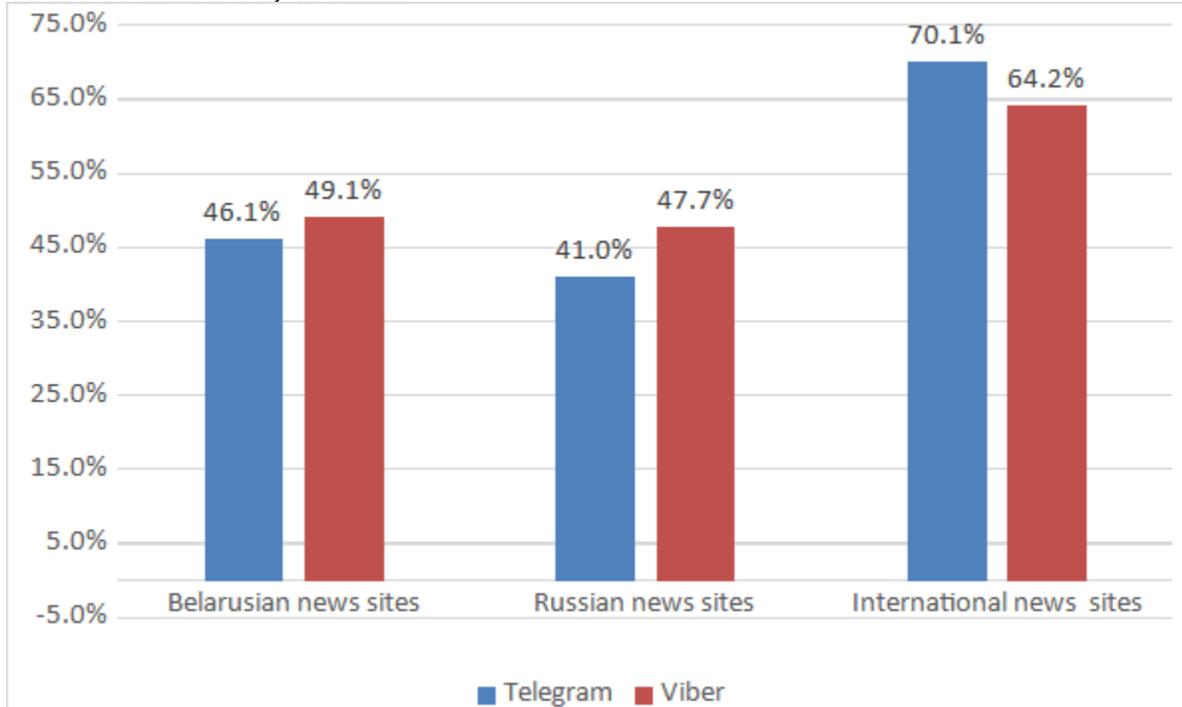
The respondents who named Viber as the messenger used for getting information are also more likely to watch television for information. Telegram users are much more likely than Viber users to receive the necessary information from Telegram channels and other instant messengers.

Let's look at TV media consumption: What TV channels do you use most often in order to get news, necessary information?



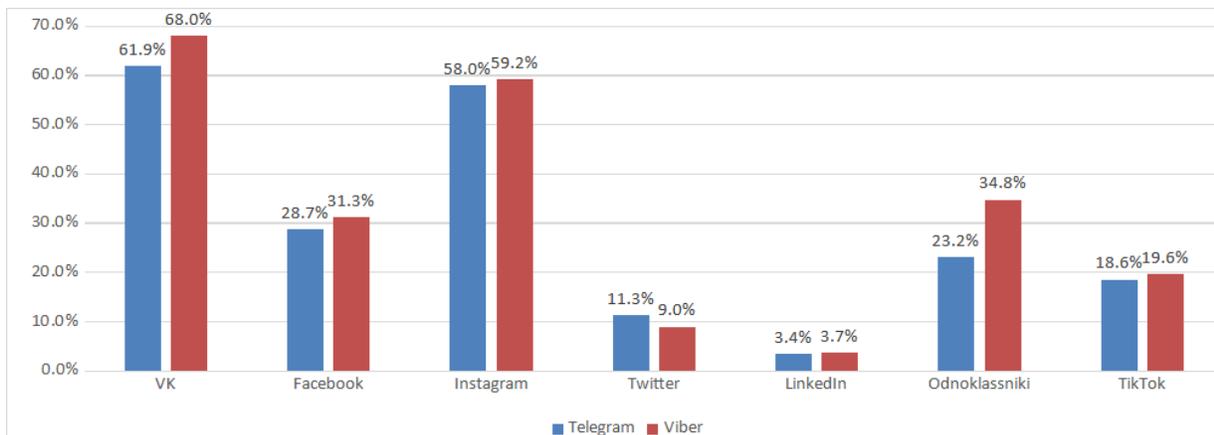
The difference in TV viewing of Russian television channels is quite expected given the fact that the Viber audience is older, a larger share of it lives in the regions, and on the whole watches television more, as shown in the previous graph.

What news sites do you use most often in order to get news, necessary information?



We can talk about similarities with TV media consumption: Viber users consume more news from Russian news sites, and, vice versa, Telegram users consume more from international sites. Of course, this indicates a correlation in the level of education (in particular, Telegram has a younger audience with incomplete higher education).

What social networks do you use most often in order to get news, necessary information?



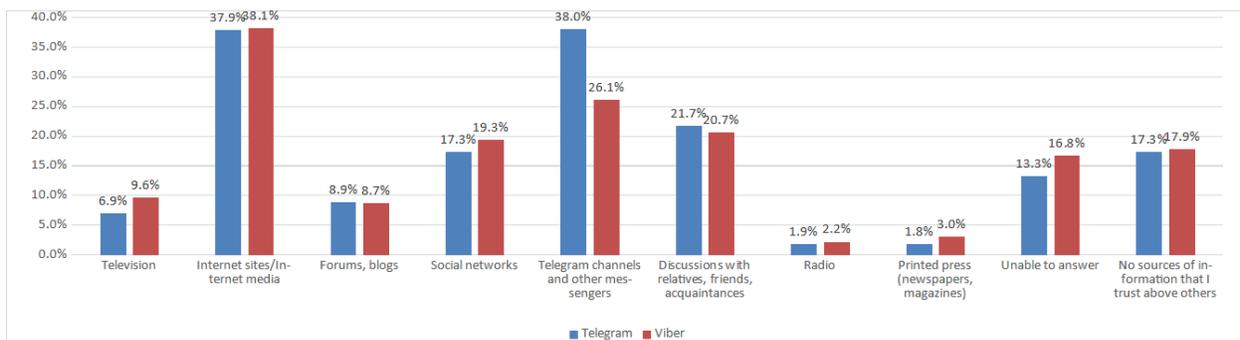
Viber users have a significant preference for Russian social networks - VK and Odnoklassniki. The use of other social networks for getting news does not differ for users of the studied messengers.

Audience Duplication:

64% of Viber users who use instant messengers to get news, use Telegram. Accordingly, with practical equality of use, 65% of Telegram users use Viber.

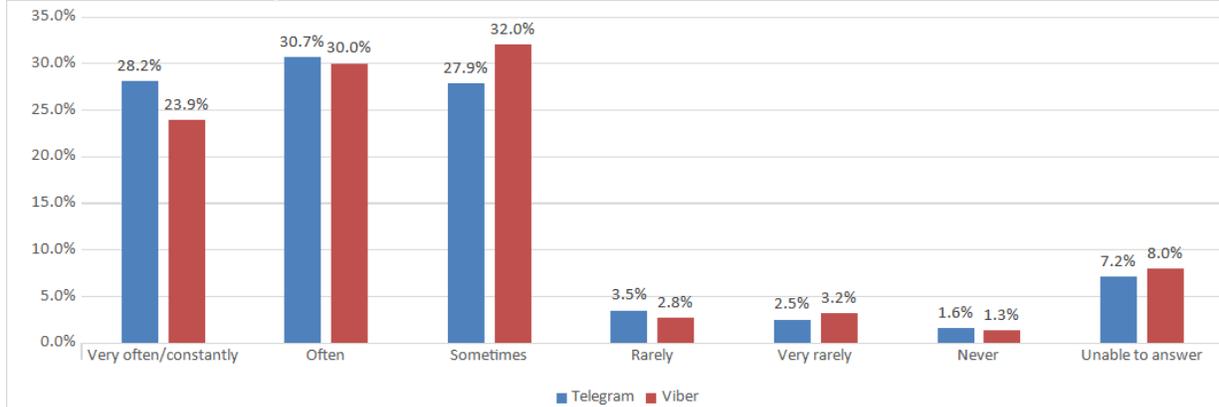
Now let's move on to issues of attitude towards the media.

Let's start with trust: Are there any sources of information you trust more than others? And if so, which ones?



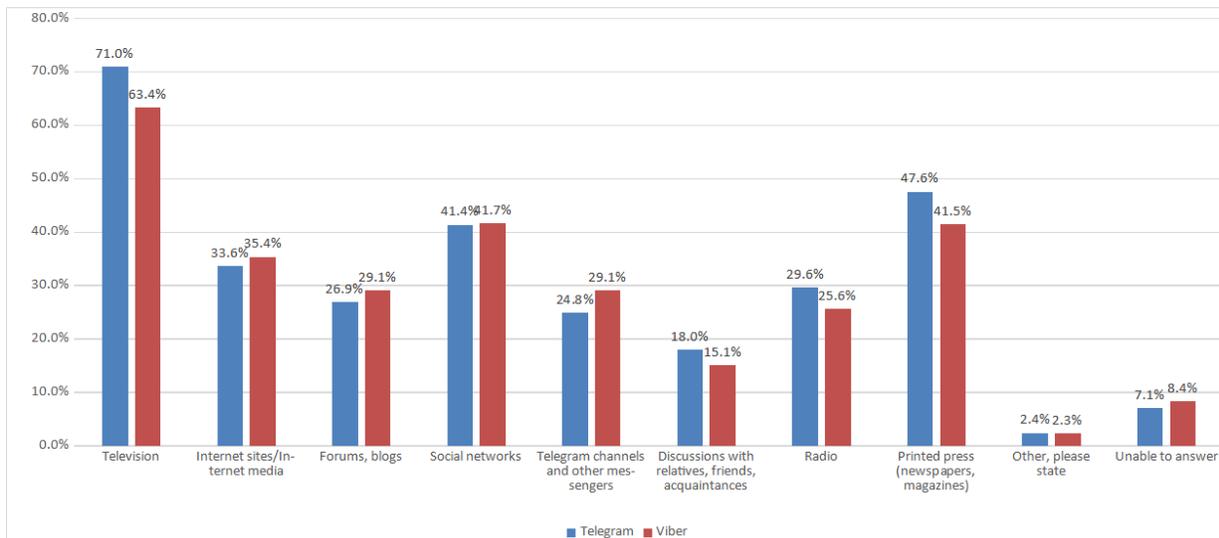
However, Telegram users trust Telegram channels and messengers more and this is not an unequivocally positive answer, because the amount of inaccurate and toxic information continues to grow in messengers, which requires an increase in the level of digital skills in general and media literacy in particular. Attention should be paid to about 1/5 of users who do not trust any sources of information. And that's bad.

Do you get the feeling that the media are deceiving you?



Overwhelmingly high opinion: 86-87% of respondents using Viber and Telegram as sources of information believe that the media, at least sometimes, deceive them. Telegram users are even more pessimistic - a third think that it is very frequent or constant.

Let's conclude the comparative analysis by looking at the expectation of fake news: Based on your experience, where can you most often come across fake/false news?



The absolute majority expects fake news from TV news.

In conclusion, it can be noted that instant delivery of news using instant messengers is a characteristic feature of the Belarusian Internet audience. It can be seen that media consumption using messengers is overvalued in many ways, attracting excessive attention and unjustified restrictions and repression.