DETERMINING POLITICAL HARMFUL NARRATIVES



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INTRODUCTION



The research Determining Political Harmful Narratives (HARM-TIVE) begun in September 2023 with the aim of determining whether and how political actors in Macedonia produce, use and share harmful narratives, as well as as well as what is the role of the media in reporting on these narratives, i.e. whether they apply the professional and ethical journalistic values and standards.

The established research methodology includes monitoring and analysis of two segments:

» monitoring and analysis of the narratives produced and shared by political actors in Macedonia

» monitoring and analysing media coverage of political actors and the narratives they create and share through the media.

The main variable in both segments of the analysis is the harmful narrative. Additional variables refer to political actors and political communication and to the media and media professional reporting.

While the analysis of political parties and their leaders is focused on determining the dominant harmful narratives, rhetorical strategies and techniques, the media monitoring provides an answer as to whether the media adhere to professional and ethical standards for accurate, fair and impartial information or, whether they unquestioningly follow the agenda dictated by political actors. The six-month summary reflects how the political actors and the media behave in the public discourse, what and how they communicate to the public, how they treat the public, before continuing at the same pace in the following period.

The research was conducted within the project Use Facts: Fact-Based Journalism for Raising Awareness and Countering Disinformation in the Media Space in North Macedonia supported by the British Embassy Skopje.

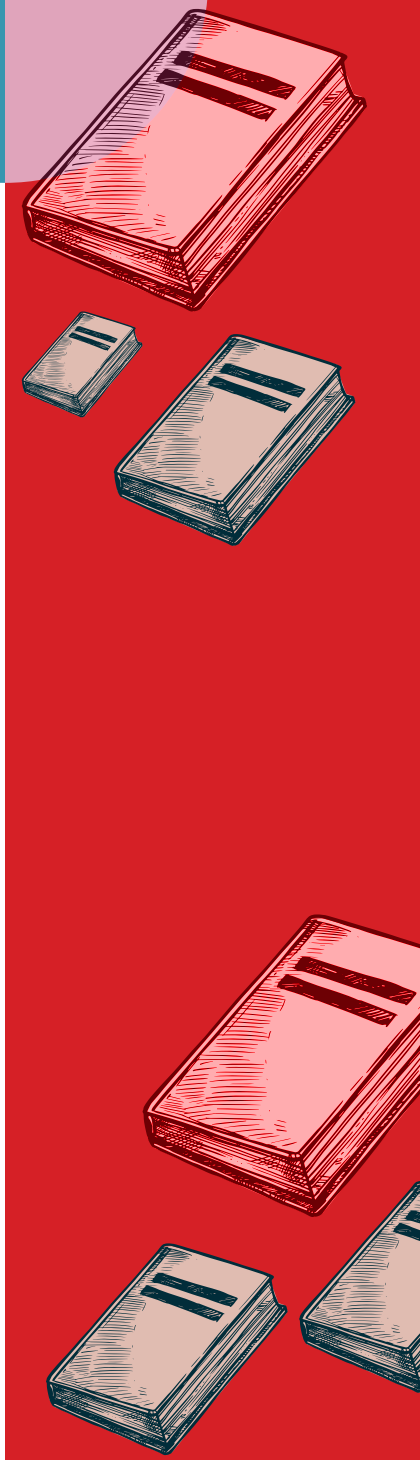
Prominent social developments during the monitoring period

Among the main events from the beginning of the monitoring, which served as a fertile breeding ground for the harmful narratives, we single out the following significant social developments: delay in the printing of textbooks for pupils in third and sixth grades in primary education, disclosure of the case with the abuse of medicines at the University Clinic for Oncology and Radiology in Skopje. The theme of the last two months of 2023 was the preparation for the formation of the caretaker government, the publication of the European Commission's report on Macedonia, the selection of judges in the Court of Appeal. From the beginning of 2024 until the end of February 2024 and the end of the six-month summary discussed in this report, the election of the members of the caretaker government and the caretaker prime minister dominated the developments in the country.

Political entities and media that are the subject of the analysis

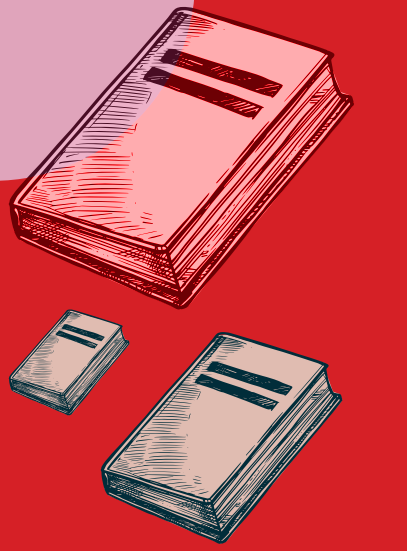
The political parties whose official websites and official Facebook pages/profiles were monitored and analysed are: Alliance for Albanians, Alternativa, VMRO-DPMNE, Democratic Movement, Democratic Union for Integration (DUI), Levica, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), New Social Democratic Party (NSDP), Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM), Socialist Party of Macedonia (SPM), i.e. their official websites. Moreover, the official Facebook pages/profiles of the political party leaders were also monitored: Arben Taravari, Afrim Gashi, Ali Ahmeti, Izet Medjiti, Hristijan Mickoski, Dimitar Apasiev, Monika Zajkova, Goran Misovski, Ljupcho Dimovski as well as Dimitar Kovachevski.

The sample of ministers' official Facebook pages/profiles covers the government composition from 1 September to 28 January, as well as members of the caretaker government from 28 January to 29 February. They are: Dimitar Kovachevski, President of the Government, Talat Djaferi, President of the Government, Artan Grubi, First Deputy of the President of the Government and Minister of Political System and Relations between Communities, Bojan Marichikj, Deputy of the President of the Government in charge of European Affairs, Slavica Grkovska, Deputy Prime Minister in charge of good governance policies, Oliver Spasovski, Minister of Interior, Panche Toshkovski, Minister of Interior, Kreshnik Bekteši, Minister of Economy, Risto Penov, Minister of Local Self-Government, Bujar Osmani, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fatmir Besimi, Minister of Finance, Blagoj Bochvarski, Minister of Transport and Communications, Ljupcho Nikolovski, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Slavjanka Petrovska, Minister of Defence, Jeton Shaqiri, Minister of Education and Science, Jovanka Trenchevska, Minister of Labour and Social Policy, Gjoko Velkovski, Minister of Labour and Social Policy, Bisera Kostadinovska-Stojchevska , Minister of Culture, Kaja Shukova, Minister of Environment and Physical Planning, Azir Aliu, Minister of Information Society and Administration, Fatmir Medjiti, Minister of Health, Krenar Loga, Minister of Justice.



The monitoring of media reporting includes monitoring and analysis of media reporting on the narratives of political entities on: (1) press releases (central, main news) on a total of 9 TV stations: MTV 1 (public, MTV 2 (public, in Albanian) , Alfa TV (private), Kanal 5 (private), Sitel TV (private), TV 24 (private), Telma (private), Alsat M (private, in Albanian), TV 21 (private, in Albanian); and (2) informative online media: Vecher.mk, Lokalno, Nezavisen, Sloboden Pechat, A1on.mk, MKD. mk, Republika, Kurir, Almakos, Tetova Sot, Nova TV.

The subject of analysis by the TV stations are all the articles the central news in which the political parties (with two or more MPs in the current parliamentary structure), the leaders of these political parties, the Prime Minister of the RNM Government, the deputies of the prime minister and the ministers in the RNM government (when they speak or are mentioned in the role of representatives of a political party).





SUMMARY

HARMFUL NARRATIVES BY POLITICAL ACTORS

Period of analysis: March - May 2024

Monitored days: 46

» Political parties had a total of 2920 posts, of which 307 (or percentage of harmfulness: 10.5%) contained harmful narratives, mostly in April (43%) and March (39%). Compared to the previous six-month period, t**he percentage of harmfulness in the March-May period decreased by 26.5%** (in the period September 2023 - February 2024, the percentage of harmfulness was 37%).

» In the three-month pre-election period, VMRO-DPMNE (33%), Levica (29%) and SDSM (21%) are the parties with the highest number of posts with harmful narratives. **In the previous six-month period also, the same parties were in the lead** according to the number of posts with a harmful narrative.

» Political leaders had a total of 327 posts, of which 68 posts (or 20.8%) contained harmful narratives, mostly in May (43%). Similarly, **among political leaders, there is a decrease in the percentage of harmfulness**, although lesser (from 29.6% in the previous period to 20.8% in the last analysed quarter). The president of Levica, Dimitar Apasiev, had the largest number of posts containing harmful narratives, a total of 32 (47% of all posts with a harmful narrative by political leaders). **In the six-month analysis, Apasiev was also the leader with the largest number of posts containing harmful narratives**.



HARMFULNESS



HOW PREVALENT is it?

In 307 posts from political parties there are 796 harmful narratives, which means the intensity of harmfulness is 2.6, or, on average, 2 to 3 harmful narratives in one post. Two parties have posts with the highest intensity of harmfulness: Alternativa (4) and Levica (3). **Compared to the six-month period, Alternativa has the same highest intensity of 4, but in comparison to the Democratic Movement, Levica is rising** (previously with an intensity of 3.6).

The analysis of 68 posts by political leaders showed the presence of a total of 166 harmful narratives. The largest quantity is in May – 79 posts out of 166 and Apasiev - 83 in total out of 166. **Apasiev was also the leader in the six-month period** according to the number of posts with a harmful narrative

HOW it can be identified?

In terms of frequency, two harmful narratives stand out among political parties and leaders: *Biased selection and Undermining trust in the institutions of the system.* **There is a change in the places of these two narratives** if we make a comparison to the analysis from the previous six months, i.e. from the first place in terms of frequency, the narrative *Undermining trust* in this quarter is in second place, while the opposite happens with **Biased selection, which in the last quarter is the first most frequently used harmful narrative**. In third place among political leaders is the harmful narrative *Character attacks/demonization*, while among political parties, the harmful narrative Fomenting *divisions* is third in terms of frequency. The picture is similar in the previous period for these two narratives.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

The most common forms through which political parties spread harmful narratives are: press releases (29%) and press conferences (25%), as well as interviews (18%). **The order of used types of posts with press releases and press conferences by political parties is exactly the same as in the previous six-month period,** although with a much lower percentage in the last quarter, and **interviews are the new form** in posts by parties in the (pre) election quarter. Posts by political leaders with a harmful narrative are mostly: reactions (31% of posts) and interviews (17%). The reactions were in first place in the six-month period as well, but as with the parties and leaders, **in this quarter they published their interviews more frequently, which are not present in the six-month period as a type of publicity.**

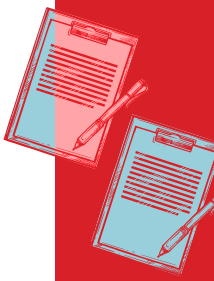
WHICH topic does it address?

Nearly 80% of all posts with a harmful narrative by both political parties (76.2%) and political leaders (86.8%) are on the topic of domestic politics. But topics such as corruption and crime appear with a certain dynamic in the communication of political parties and their leaders with the public. **There was almost no change in the themes within which harmful narratives are produced between the recent quarter and the previous six-month period.**

HARMFUL NARRATIVES ON TV

Period of analysis: March - May 2024

Monitored days: 24



» A total of 185 news items with harmful narratives were noted. The smallest number of news items is during May (compared to March there is a drop of 35% - from 79 to 51 news items). **Compared to the six-month period, there is a decrease in the number of news items with a harmful narrative in the last quarter analysed by about 20%** (on average in the six-month period, with televisions there were recorded 81 news items with a harmful narrative monthly, while in the three-month period, on average, that number is 62 news items per month). In this quarter as well, TV Alfa has the largest number of news items with harmful narratives - 61 news items, although compared to the six-month period, there is an average decrease of about 30%. MRT 1 is the television station with the lowest number of news items with a harmful narrative (9 news items), which is different to the previous six months when it was TV 24 with 15 news items.

» When considering the decreased presence of harmful narratives in the news broadcasts, one should bear in mind the obligations that broadcasters have according to the legislation during election period (Electoral Code, Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services), as well as the regular and extraordinary monitoring by the domestic and foreign observers, including the media regulator, the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services.

HARMFULNESS

HOW PREVALENT is it?

The analysis of the content of 185 news items confirmed the presence of 318 harmful narratives, of which the largest quantity was in January. The general intensity of harmfulness is 1.7, that is, television stations on average broadcast almost two harmful narratives in one news item. The intensity of harmfulness from the previous period is almost the same (1.8).

HOW it can be identified?

The top three most frequently mentioned harmful narratives in central editions of TV news coverage are: *Undermining trust in institutions, Biased selection,* and *Fomenting divisions*. Furthermore, in terms of frequency, Character attacks follow, as well as the *Spread of panic, fear and insecurity.* Compared to the previous six-month period, there is a change only in the third-ranked narrative – *Fomenting divisions* (previously, *Character attacks* was in third place).

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

The most common genre of harmful news items is the report or analytical-reportage news item The same two genres were the most used in the six-month monitored period.

WHO IS SPREADING IT?

Almost 80% (78.6%) of the harmful narratives present in the news items were created by political actors, 13% of the harmful narratives were 'produced by both (the political actor and the journalist)', and 8% of the harmful narratives in the news items were produced by the journalist. The ratio is similar in the previous six-month period. At Telma, MTV 2, Kanal 5 and Alsat M there are no harmful narratives produced by the journalist.

The most common attitude of the journalist towards the harmful narrative originating from the political entity is that they broadcast the harmful narrative without any intervention, and this is the case with all TV stations. Alfa is the only television that almost in 60% broadcasts the harmful narrative with approval.

WHICH topic does it address?

Usually, domestic politics is the main theme in the news items with a harmful narrative.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS:

- ➔ Sources in television coverage are almost always precise.
- ➔ Regarding the number and sides of the sources in the news items: news items with one-sided reporting dominate (60 %), although when consulting sources more than half of the sources consult two or more sources.

HARMFUL NARRATIVES IN ONLINE MEDIA

Period of analysis: March - May 2024

Monitored days: 24

» A total of 672 news items with harmful narratives were noted. The smallest number was registered in May (187), and the largest in April (261). There are significant differences in the number of published news items with a harmful narrative: the online media outlet with the most published news items is Kurir - 124 news items and the online media outlet with the fewest published news items with a harmful narrative is Nova TV – 14 news items.

HARMFULNESS

HOW PREVALENT is it?

In 672 news items, the presence of 1131 harmful narratives was established (a reduction of 61 harmful narratives on average per month from the previous period is noted). The most significant decline is evident in Kurir.

The general intensity of harmfulness is 1.7 (decrease from 2.1 in the six-month report to 1.7): online media on average broadcast two harmful narratives in one news item. Sloboden Pechat and Kurir are with the highest intensity (2.3), and Almakos with the lowest intensity of harmfulness (1.1).

HOW it can be identified?

The top three most frequently mentioned harmful narratives are *Undermining trust in institutions, Biased selection*, and *Character attacks*. Furthermore, in terms of frequency, they are followed by: F*omenting divisions, Populism and Spreading panic, fear and insecurity.*

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

The forms through which the harmful narrative is disseminated, viewed generally at the level of all 11 analysed online media outlets, are either *a broadcast press release by political parties or broadcast speech of a politician.*

WHO IS SPREADING IT?

Over 87% of the harmful narratives are produced by the political actor alone, 5% of the harmful narratives are produced by the journalist alone, 8% are produced by both.

The most common attitude of the journalist towards the harmful narrative originating from the political entity is that they broadcast the harmful narrative without any intervention and this is the case with 62% of the harmful narratives; in 25% of the cases when a harmful narrative is broadcast, the journalist clearly highlights it, but does not take a position, and even in 11% of the cases, the journalist approves the present harmful narrative in the news item.



WHICH topic does it address?

Domestic politics dominates as the main topic of news items with a harmful narrative with 80%.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

- ➔ Sources in online media news items are mostly (90%) precise.
- ➔ Regarding the number and sides of the sources in the news items: those news items with one source (85%) dominate by far and consequently – sources from only one side (90%); then follow those news items with two sources, i.e. news items with sources from two sides (5%) and those news items with three or more sources (5%), i.e. news items with sources from 3 or more sides.

SUMMARIZED SHORT COMPARISONS

	SEPTEMBER 2023 – FEBRUARY 2024	MARCH – APRIL 2024
Analysed entity	**NEWS ITEMS/ POSTS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVE/S**	
Political parties	797 - ВО ПРОСЕК ПО 133 МЕСЕЧНО	↓ 307 –102 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE
Leaders of political parties	87 - ВО ПРОСЕК ПО 15 МЕСЕЧНО	↑ 68 – 23 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE
TV-stations	484 –81 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE	↑ 185 –62 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE
Online media	1236 – 206 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE	↓ 673 – 224 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE
Analysed entity	**TOTAL NUMBER OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES**	
Political parties	2573 – 429 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE	↓ 796 – 265 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE
Leaders of political parties	294 – 49 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE	↑ 166 – 55 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE
TV-stations	879 – 147 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE	↓ 318 – 106 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE
Online media	2631 – 439 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE	↓ 1131 – 377 PER MONTH ON AVERAGE
Analysed entity	**INTENSITY OF HARMFULNESS**	
Political parties	3 (three harmful narratives in a post)	↓ 2.59 (two to three harmful narratives in a post)
Leaders of political parties	3.38 (three harmful narratives in a post)	↓ 2.44 (two harmful narratives in a post)
TV-stations	1.8 (nearly two harmful narratives in a post)	↓ 1.7 (nearly two harmful narratives in a post)
Online media	2.1 (two harmful narratives in a post)	↓ 1.7 (nearly two harmful narratives in a post)
Analysed entity	**THE MOST COMMON HARMFUL NARRATIVES**	
Political parties	*Undermining trust in the institutions of the system, Biased selection.*	Undermining trust in institutions
	Nearly the same Character attacks, Fomenting divisions and Populism	Biased selection Fomenting divisions
Leaders of political parties	*Undermining trust in the institutions of the system and Biased selection.*	Biased selection
	Nearly the same Character attacks, Fomenting divisions and Populism	Undermining trust in institutions Character attacks
TV-stations	*Undermining trust in institutions, Biased selection, Character attacks*	Undermining trust in institutions; Biased selection, nearly the same Fomenting divisions and Character attacks
Online media	*Undermining trust in institutions, Biased selection, Character attacks*	Equally Biased selection; Undermining trust in institutions; nearly the same as Fomenting divisions and Spreading panic, fear and insecurity
Analysed entity	**THE MOST COMMON TOPIC IN THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE(S)**	
Political parties	Domestic politics – 66.5%	↑ Domestic politics – 76%
Leaders of political parties	Domestic politics – over 80%	↑ Domestic politics – 87%
TV-stations	Domestic politics – 60.1%	↑ Domestic politics – 82%
Online media	Domestic politics – 64.4%	↑ Domestic politics – 81%

POLITICAL ACTORS



The subject of monitoring and analysis were the 10 parliamentary political parties and their leaders. These parties are monitored in parallel on their official websites and Facebook profiles. Leaders of political parties are monitored on their Facebook profiles. Detailed information on the monitoring samples is available in the description of the methodology of the research.

Until the end of January, the Facebook profiles of the Prime Minister, the deputy prime ministers and the ministers in the Government were also monitored, and from the end of January, with the formation of the Caretaker Government to conduct the elections, there were monitored the Facebook profiles of the Prime Minister of the Caretaker Government Talat Djaferi and the new ministers – the Minister of Interior Panche Toshkovski, as well as the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, Gjoko Velkovski.

The monitoring was performed every third and fourth consecutive day. In total, in the period March - May 2024, the monitoring of the official pages of political actors covered 46 days.

After the conclusion of the presidential and parliamentary elections, the new parliamentary composition was constituted and the new Government.



Prevalence of posts by political actors (political parties and their leaders) containing harmful narratives

POLITICAL PARTIES

In the period March - May 2024, a total of 307 posts with harmful stories and narratives were recorded, of which 90 posts appeared only on the parties' Facebook profiles, 114 only on the parties' official websites, and 103 simultaneously on their Facebook pages/profiles and on official websites.

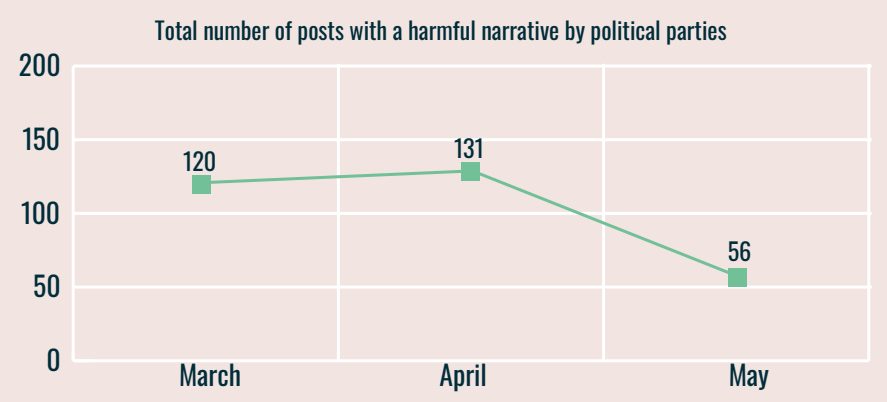


Figure 1 Total number of posts with a harmful narrative by political parties

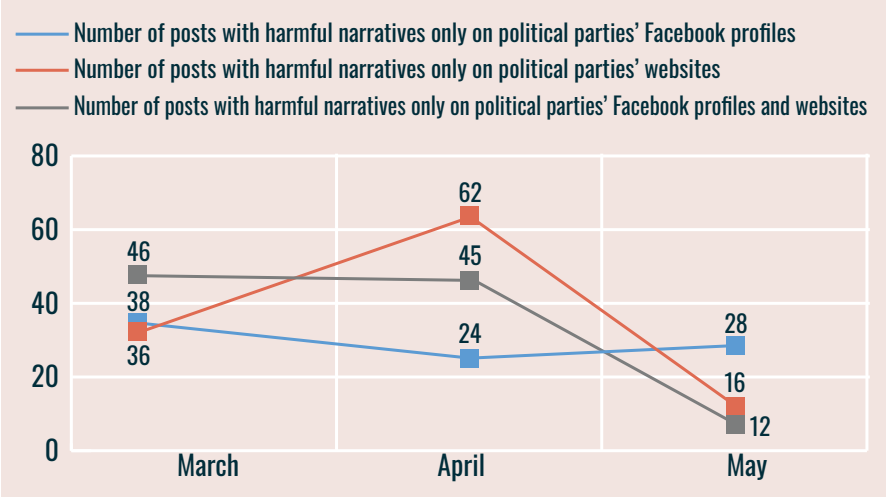


Figure 2 Total number of posts by political parties on their websites and Facebook profiles

POLITICAL LEADERS

In the period from March to May 2024, the contents published on the Facebook profiles of political leaders were monitored and analysed for 46 days. A total of 68 posts with harmful narratives were recorded, the largest quantity in May (29).

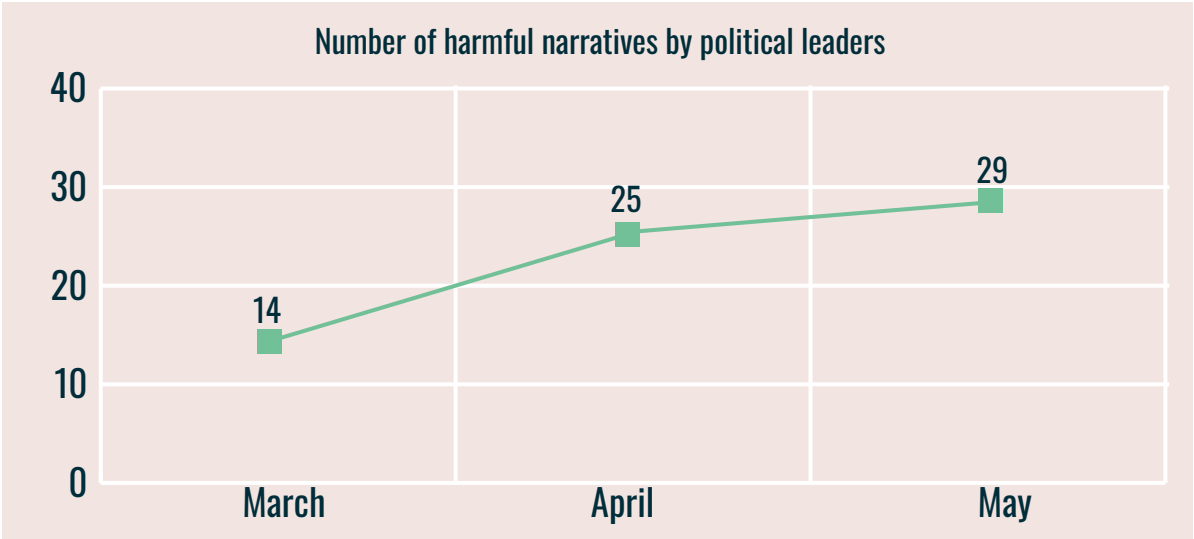


Figure 3 Total number of posts by political leaders on their Facebook profiles

ANALYSIS OF HARMFULNESS OF PUBLISHED ITEMS

Three aspects of the analysis of the harmfulness are outlined below:

1. The first aspect is the **frequency of harmful narratives,** which is the total number of posts with harmful narratives

2. The second aspect is **the percentage of harmfulness**, which is the percentage of posts with a harmful narrative from the total number of posts of the political entity (for example, if during the day the political entity has 10 posts, of which 7 are with a harmful narrative, the percentage of harmfulness of that political entity is 70 %)

3. The third aspect is the **intensity of harmfulness**, which is the number of harmful narratives in one post (for example, if during the day the political entity has one post in which three harmful narratives are broadcast, then this means that the intensity of harmfulness is 3).

POLITICAL PARTIES

In 307 posts by political parties, there are 796 harmful narratives (114 harmful narratives were recorded on the parties' websites, 90 on their Facebook profiles, while 103 were recorded on both channels of communication with the public). The largest number was recorded in April (during the pre-election campaigns) and there is a significant drop in May.

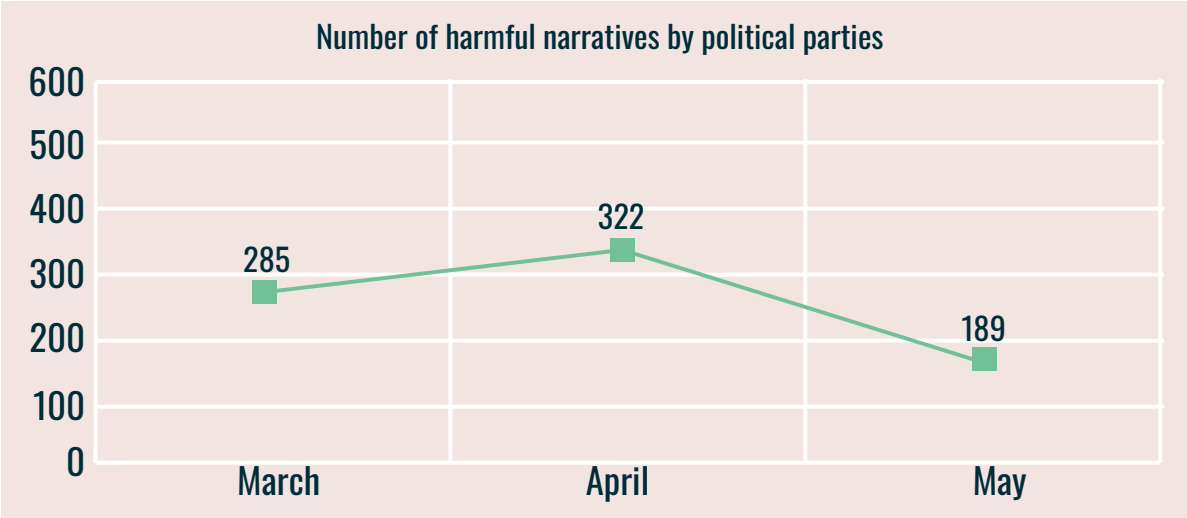


Figure 4 Number of times political parties created harmful narratives per month

If the percentage of harmfulness is analysed by months, the trend of the movement of that percentage is upward, despite the drop in posts with a harmful narrative during May:

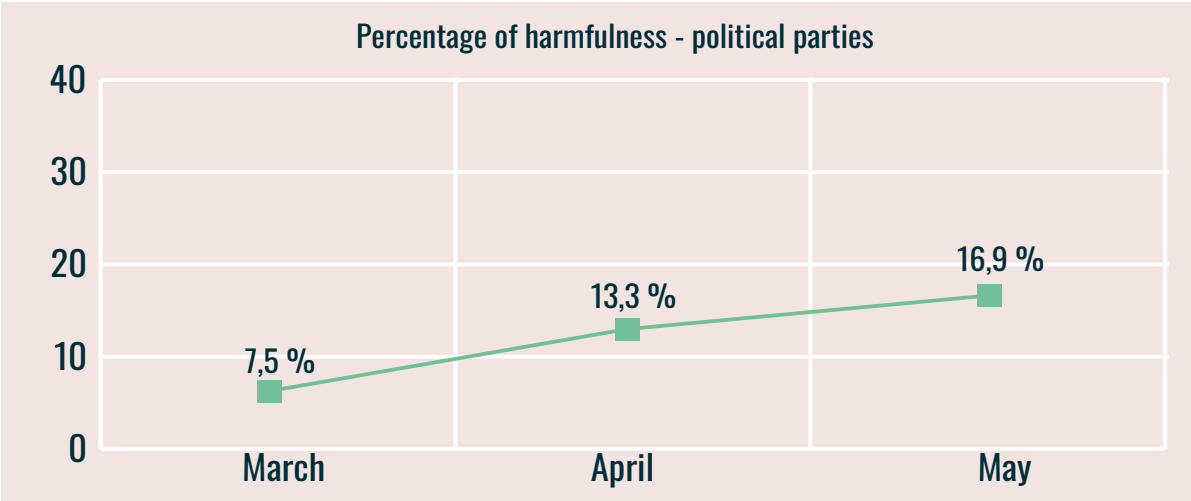


Figure 5 Percentage of harmfulness by months

The percentage of harmfulness, viewed by month, ranges from 7.5% (in March) to almost 17% (in May). Summarised for three months, **about 11% of all posts by all political parties on their websites and Facebook profiles have a harmful narrative**.

In terms of the intensity of harmfulness in the posts, it can be said that it was continuously growing from March to May, from 2.4 to 3.4, so that on average it ranged from two (2) harmful narratives in one post in March to three (3) harmful narratives in one post in May. It appears that the harmful rhetoric increased during the elections and especially after the election period. The largest share in the intensity of harmfulness belongs to Alternativa (4) and Levica (3).

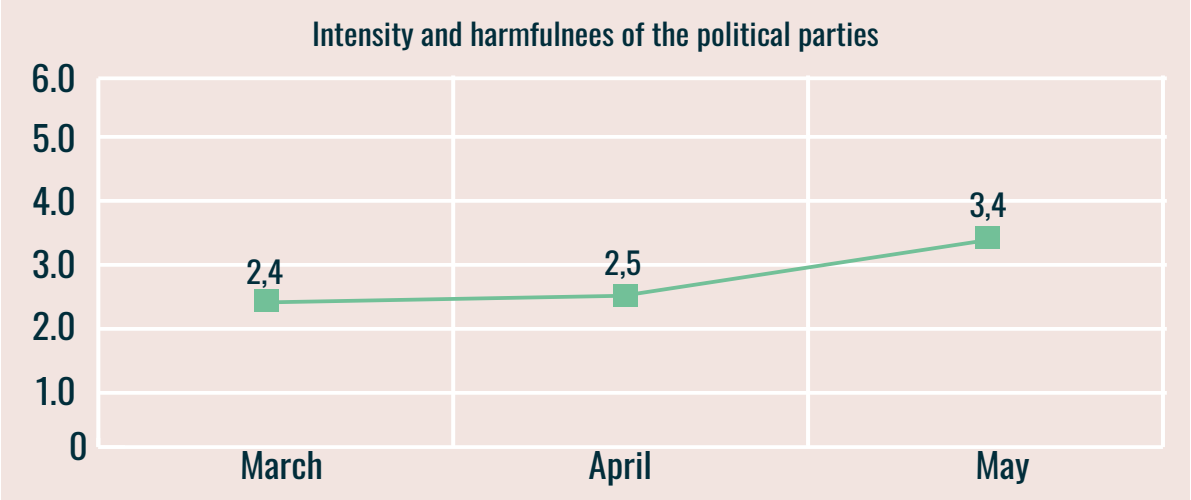


Figure 6 Intensity of harmfulness by months

POLITICAL LEADERS

The analysis of the 68 posts by political leaders showed the presence of a total of 166 harmful narratives. Among political leaders, the number of posts with a harmful narrative shows a constant growth, more significant from March to April and milder in May, when the number is the highest (79).

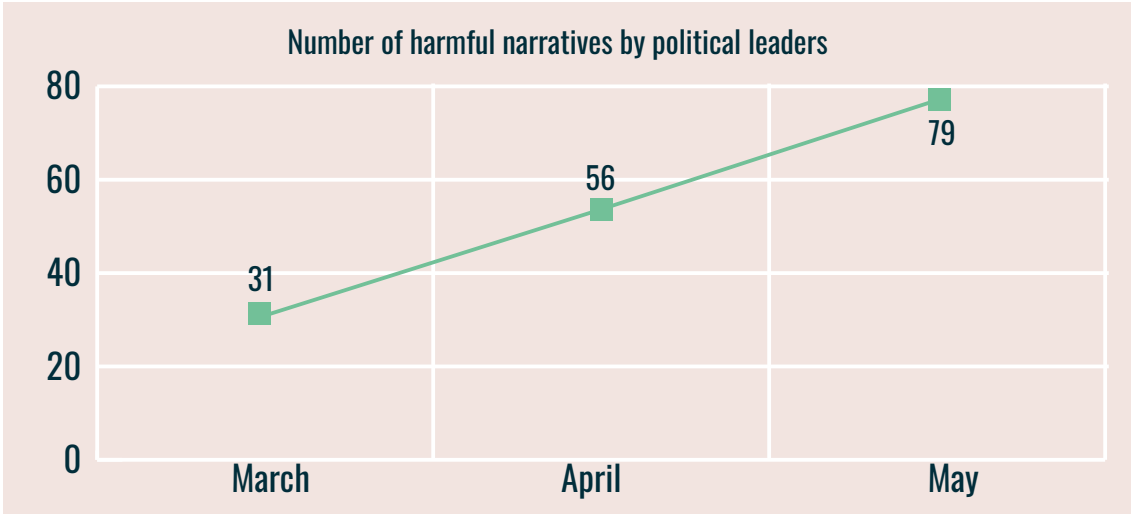


Figure 7 Frequency of harmful narratives of political leaders by month

If the percentage of harmfulness is analysed by month, the trend of movement of that percentage is as follows:

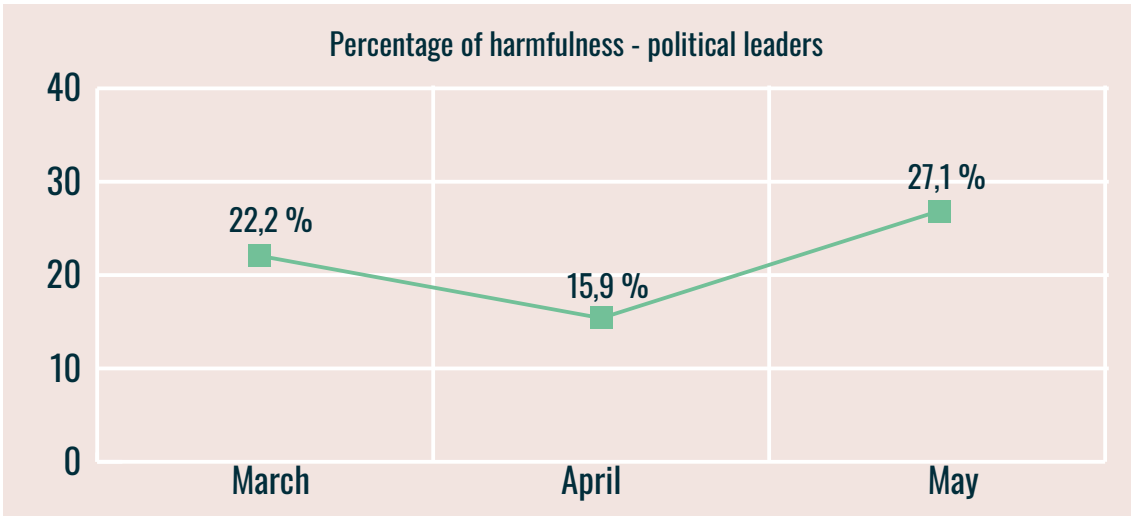


Figure 8 Percentage of posts with a harmful narrative from the total posts of political leaders by month

The percentage of harmfulness, viewed by month, recorded a drop in April (from 22% in March to 16%), before rising again to 27% in May. Summarised over three months, it is 21% for all political leaders, **or there is one-fifth of political leaders' posts on Facebook with one or more harmful narratives**.

Analysis of the intensity of harmfulness of political leaders by month shows that the intensity is relatively the same, ranging from an average of 2.2 to 2.7 harmful narratives in/per post.

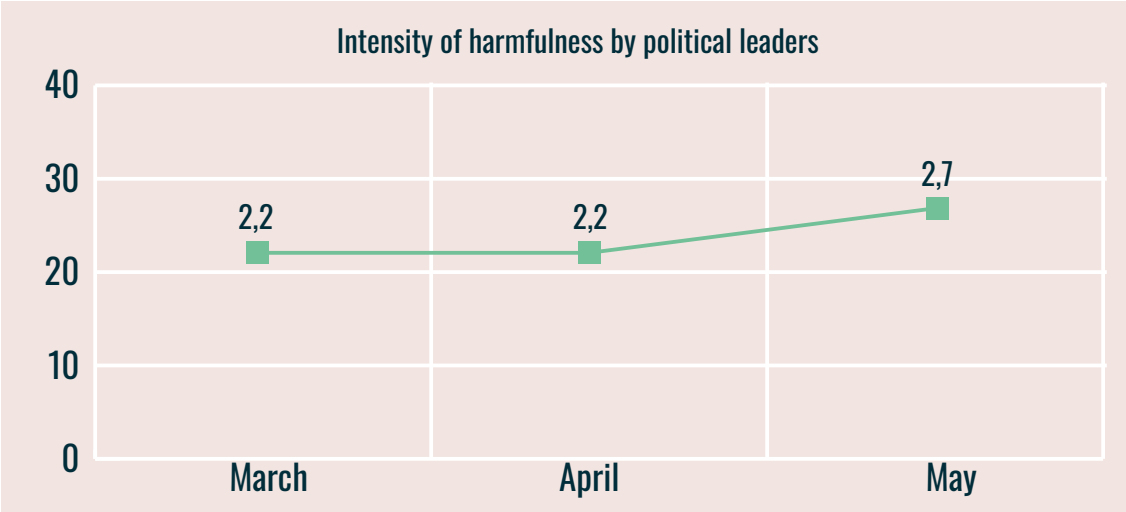


Figure 9 Intensity of harmfulness by months

POLITICAL PARTIES

Speaking about all political parties, two most frequently used harmful narratives stand out: *Biased selection* and *Undermining trust in the institutions of the system*. Furthermore, with nearly the same frequency are *Fomenting divisions; Character attacks/demonization* and *Populism*. As a third group of harmful narratives that appeared among political parties more frequently during April and May, which in the previous period did not appear or appeared quite rarely are *Spreading fear, panic and insecurity and Foreign influence*.

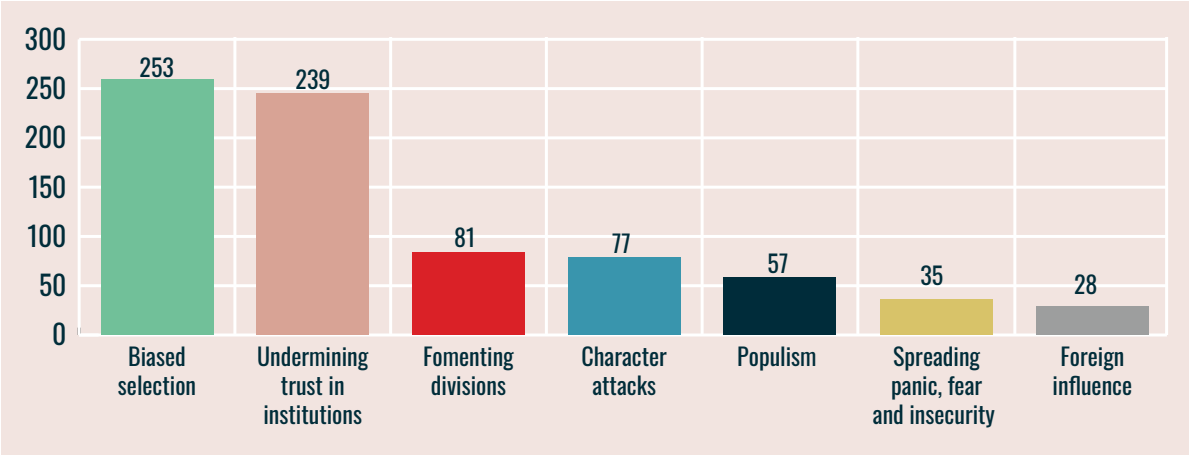


Figure 10 Frequency of different types of harmful narratives spread by political parties

POLITICAL LEADERS

Among political leaders, the situation is almost identical: three harmful narratives stand out according to frequency: *Undermining trust in institutions, Biased selection* and *Character attacks/demonization*. This is followed by *Populism, Fomenting divisions* and *Hate speech*, which are particularly strong during May.

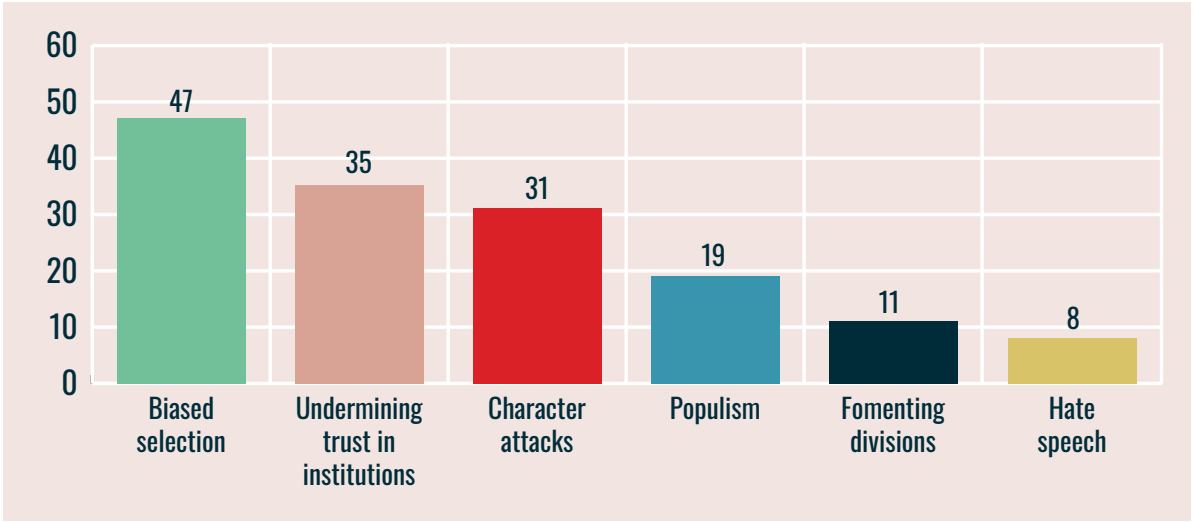


Figure 11 Frequency of different types of harmful narratives disseminated by political leaders

Type of posts by political actors

POLITICAL PARTIES

The analysis of the forms through which harmful narratives are spread shows that one type dominates: broadcast press releases from political parties (43%), followed far less by press conferences from political parties (19%) and speech (13%).

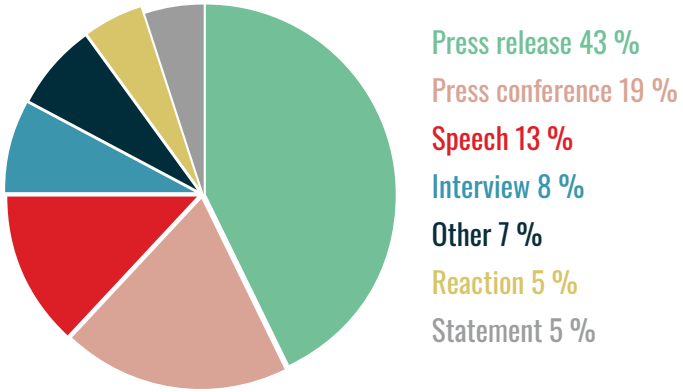


Figure 12 Type of post with a harmful narrative by political parties

POLITICAL LEADERS

Posts by political leaders with a harmful narrative are mostly reactions (30%), followed by speech (13%) and even then press release (9%). Of the posts 31% are in another form, and these are mostly video reels from speeches at rallies or statements and interviews, manipulated visual and video content, as well as short Facebook statuses.

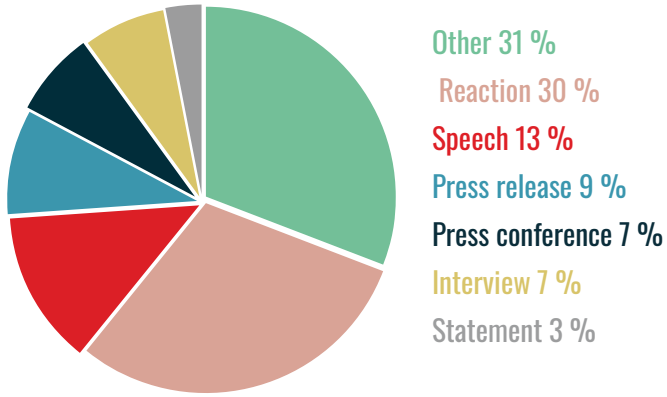


Figure 13 Type of post with a harmful narrative by political leaders

Main topic in posts with harmful narratives

POLITICAL PARTIES

Almost four-fifths (76%) of all posts with a harmful narrative by political parties are on the topic of domestic politics. Topics related to corruption (5 %), crime (5 %) and economy (4 %) appear significantly less in the communication of political parties with the public.

POLITICAL LEADERS

Among political leaders, the percentage of posts with harmful narratives on the topic of domestic politics is 87%. From the topics of domestic politics, criticism and attacks on political opponents, with accusations of corruption, and reactions to their statements or actions, but also broadcast of party content and promotion of one's own party and offer were mostly discussed.

Posts with harmful narratives on any other topic are incidental.

How political entities present themselves

POLITICAL PARTIES

In 121 out of a total of 307 (39 %) posts with harmful narratives by political parties on their websites and Facebook profiles, the parties had no particular intention to present themselves in any light, except, apparently, only to criticize their political opponents. In the remaining 61% of the posts, they presented themselves as follows:

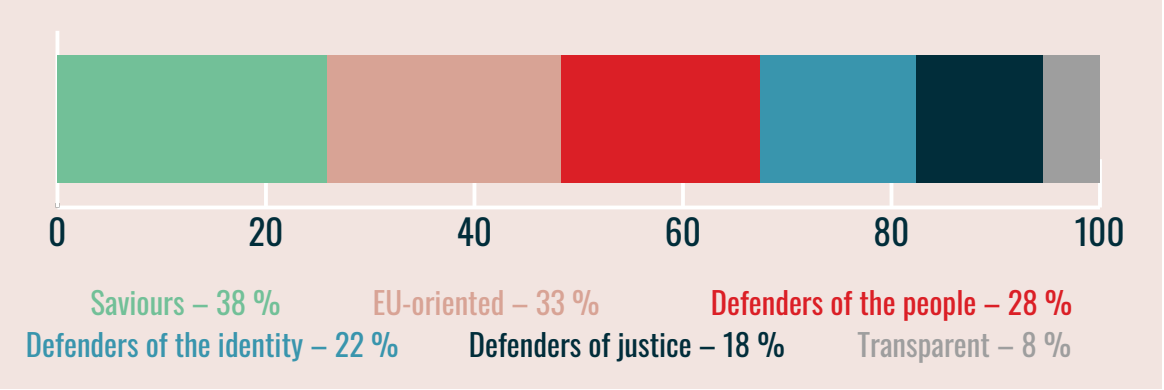


Figure 14 Image of self-representation of political parties in posts with a harmful narrative

In their communication with the citizens, the parties usually send the message that the people need someone to save them and in their posts they present themselves as the saviours, but also that they are oriented towards the “European path”. Apart from being saviours and EU-oriented, parties are frequently portrayed as the ones who defend the people, the identity, as well as being in the role of defenders of justice in the state. Very rarely do political parties portray themselves as being transparent as part of their profile.

POLITICAL LEADERS

In 29% of the posts, the political leaders had no particular intention to present themselves, and in the remaining 71% they presented themselves as follows:

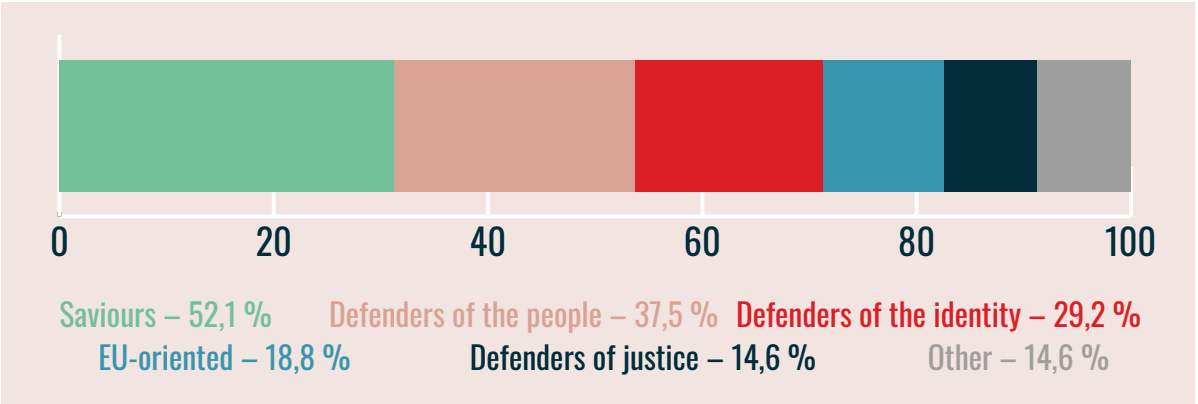


Figure 15 Image of self-representation of political leaders in posts with a harmful narrative

Unlike the parties whose leaders they are, the leaders portray themselves much more frequently (over half of self-presentation cases) as saviours, and then as defenders of the people and identity (in more than a third of the cases of self-presentation). Also, in contrast to the rhetoric of their political parties, leaders are much less likely to present themselves as EU-oriented.

INDIVIDUAL PROFILES OF THE POLITICAL ENTITIES

POLITICAL PARTIES

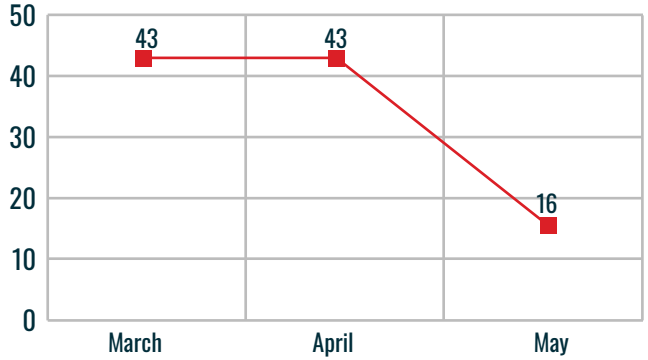
Out of a total of 307 posts published by the political parties on their own websites and Facebook profiles, 255 or 83% were from the three parties: VMRO-DPMNE (102 posts), Levica (90 posts) and SDSM (63 posts). **With significantly fewer posts were DUI (29) and Alternativa (12) with harmful narratives in 3 months. Thereto, there will be separate outline for each of these five political parties.**



VMRO - DPMNE

TOTAL NUMBER OF POSTS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PROFILE OVER THE MONTHS

In three months:
102 posts, with identified 11 types of harmful narratives, mentioned 266 times.

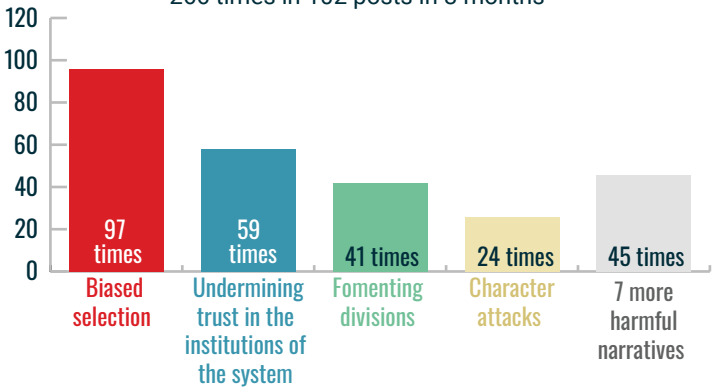


Average percentage of harmfulness:
7.3% of posts contain harmful narrative.

Average intensity of harmfulness:
2.6 harmful narratives per post

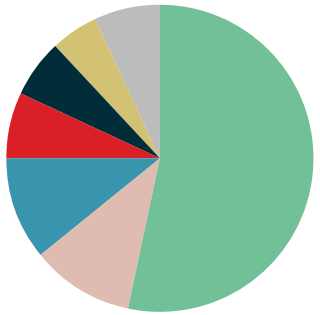
THE MOST FREQUENT HARMFUL NARRATIVES

VMRO-DPMNE disseminated harmful narratives
266 times in 102 posts in 3 months



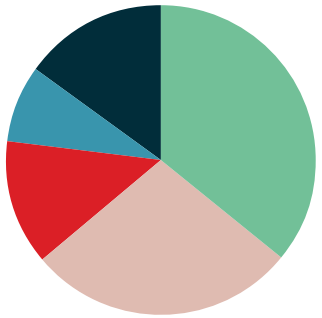
TYPES OF POSTS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

Most frequent topics in posts with a harmful narrative



54 % - domestic politics
11 % - corruption
11 % - crime
7 % - economy
6 % - healthcare
5 % - foreign policy
7 % - other topics

Types of posts with a harmful narrative



Press release – 36 %
Press conference - 28 %
Speech - 13 %
Statement – 8 %
Other types of posts – 15 %

Who, how and how often do they talk about in their posts which contain a harmful narrative?

Negative for everyone without exception!

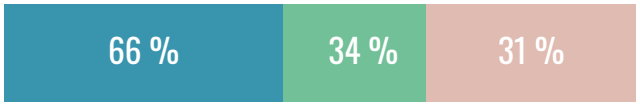


The actors name them as:

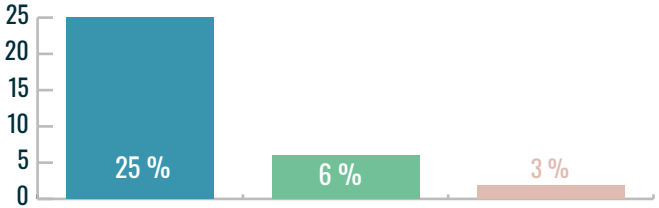
1. GOVERNMENT/AUTHORITIES – 43 times, 'corrupt' 'criminal', 'gang', 'DUI and SDS government'
2. SDSM – 41 times, called 'SDS', 'DUI servants'
3. Stevo Pendarovski – 37 times, called 'former president', 'dumb observer', 'misogynist',
4. Dimitar Kovachevski - 19 times, not named otherwise

How does the party present itself in its posts?

In 69% of the posts, they do not present themselves with a special intention
In 31% of the posts, they are presented with intent, as follows:



in 66% they present themselves as saviours
in 34% they present themselves as defenders of justice
in 31% they present themselves as defenders of the people

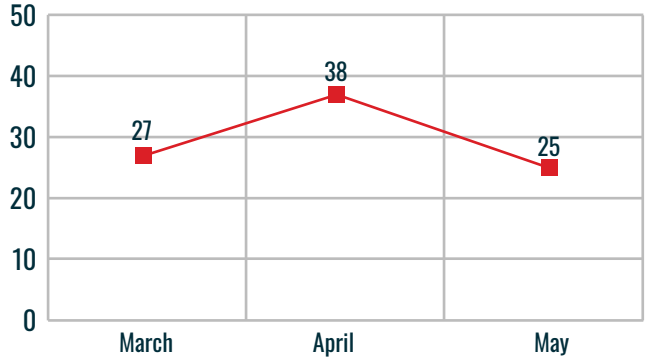


in 25% they present themselves as defenders of identity
in 6% they present themselves as transparent
in 3% they present themselves as EU-oriented

LEVICA

TOTAL NUMBER OF POSTS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON THE WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PROFILE OVER THE MONTHS

In 3 months: 90 posts,
with identified 10 types of harmful narratives,
mentioned 272 times.

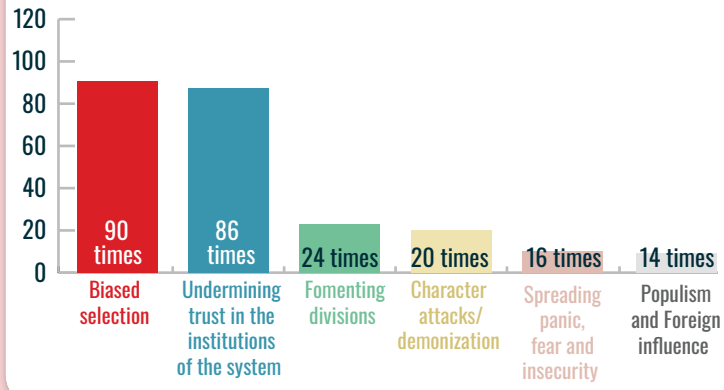


Average percentage of harmfulness:
25% of posts contain a harmful narrative.

Average intensity of harmfulness:
3 harmful narratives per post.

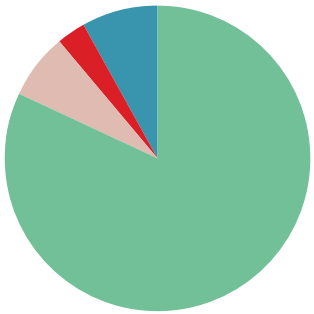
THE MOST FREQUENT HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In 3 months, in 90 posts,
Levica disseminated harmful narratives 272 times



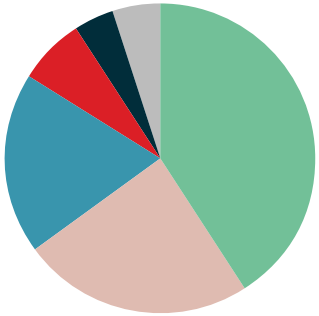
TYPES OF POSTS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

Most frequent topics in posts with a harmful narrative



Domestic politics – 82 %
Economy – 7 %
Crim – 3 %
Other topics – 8 %

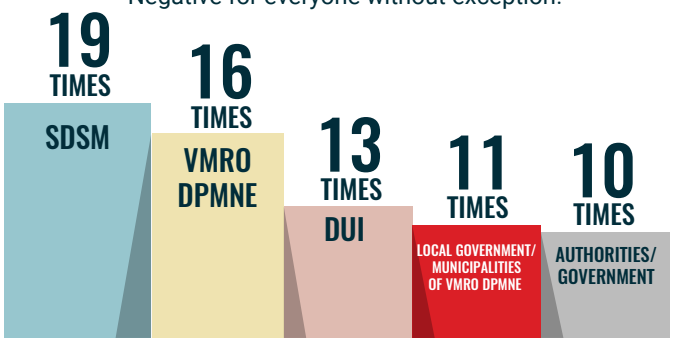
Types of posts with a harmful narrative



Press release – 41 %
Speech 24 %
Interview – 19 %
Statement – 7 %
Reaction 4 %
Other types of posts – 5 %

Who, how and how often do they talk about in their posts with a harmful narrative?

Negative for everyone without exception!



The actors name them as

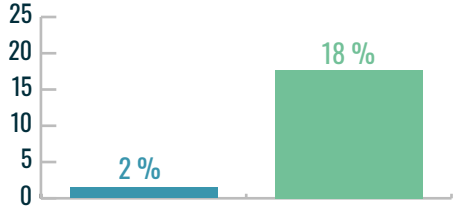
1. SDSM= 19 times called 'SDS', 'insignificant partner of DUI', 'fake social democrats', 'bourgeois party', 'schizophrenic party', 'transitional kleptomaniacs', 'quislings', 'SDS of Our Country', 'fat-ass' (for VP B. Marichikj), 'mafia people'
2. VMRO-DPMNE – 16 - called 'DPMNE', 'false opposition', 'bourgeois party', 'false patriots', 'millionaires', 'schizophrenic party', 'neo-Vrhovists from DPMNE', 'half-breed vmroids', 'nit vmroids', 'vmroids', 'mafia people'
3. DUI – 13 - called 'monster', 'UCK-ies', 'secessionists''neobalists',
4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT/MUNICIPALITIES OF VMRO DPMNE – 11 times
5. AUTHORITIES/GOVERNMENT= 10 -'government of SDS and DUI', 'criminal government of SDS and DUI', 'government disserving to the people', 'Outgoing government', 'DPMNE-SDS-DUI.'

How does the party present itself in its posts?

In 31% of the posts, they do not present themselves with a particular intention
In 69% of posts, they present themselves with intent, as follows:



in 50% they present themselves as saviours
in 37% as defenders of the people

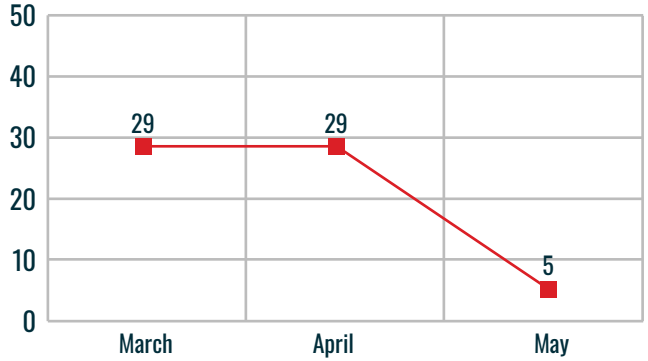


in 2% as defenders of justice
in 18% as defenders of identity

SDSM - SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC UNION OF MACEDONIA

TOTAL NUMBER OF POSTS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PROFILE OVER THE MONTHS

In 3 months:
63 posts, identified 6 types of harmful narratives mentioned 156 times.

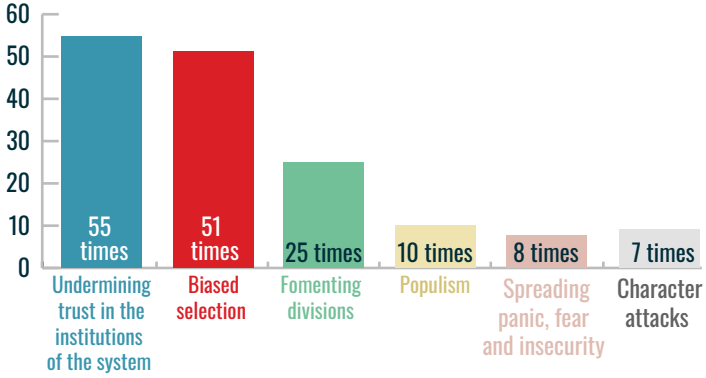


Average percentage of harmfulness:
6.8% of posts contain a harmful narrative

Average intensity of harmfulness:
2.5 harmful narratives per post.

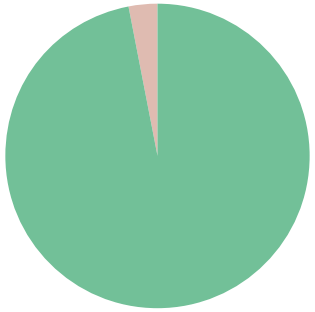
THE MOST FREQUENT HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In 3 months, SDSM disseminated
harmful narratives 156 times in 63 posts



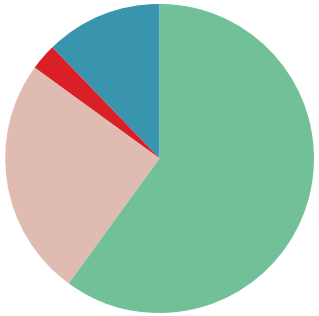
TYPES OF POSTS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

Most frequent topics in posts with a harmful narrative



Domestic politics – 97 %
Foreign policy – 3 %

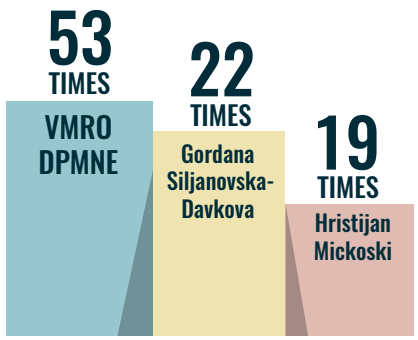
Types of posts with a harmful narrative



Press release – 60 %
Press conference – 25 %
Speech – 3 %
Other – 12 %

Who, how and how often do they talk about in their posts with a harmful narrative?

Negative for everyone without exception!



The actors name them as:

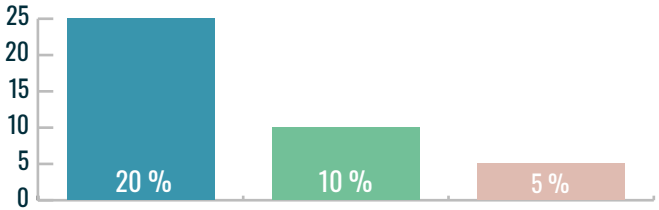
1. VMRO-DPMNE – 53 times - called 'DPMNE' (i.e. without the acronym 'VMRO'), 'VMRO', 'VMRO-MVRO'
2. Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova – 22 times, not named otherwise
3. Hristijan Mickoski - 19 times – not named otherwise

How does the party present itself in its posts?

In 35% of the posts, they present themselves without any particular intention
In 65% of the posts, they present themselves with intention, as follows:



in 78% they present themselves as EU-oriented
in 29% they present themselves as saviours
in 20% they present themselves as defenders of the people

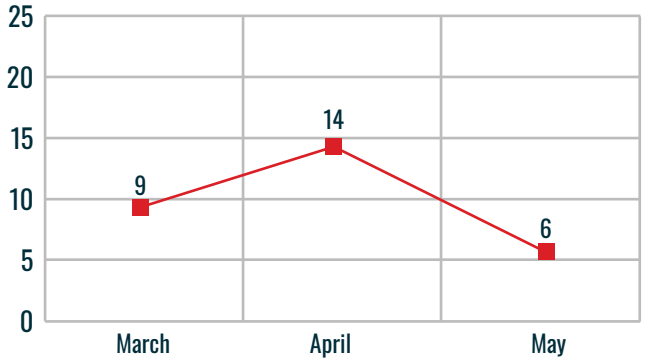


in 20% they present themselves as defenders of justice
in 10% they present themselves as transparent
in 5% they present themselves as defenders of identity

DEMOCRATIC UNION FOR INTEGRATION (DUI)

TOTAL NUMBER OF POSTS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PROFILE OVER THE MONTHS

In three months:
29 posts in which 5 types of harmful narratives were identified, mentioned 36 times.

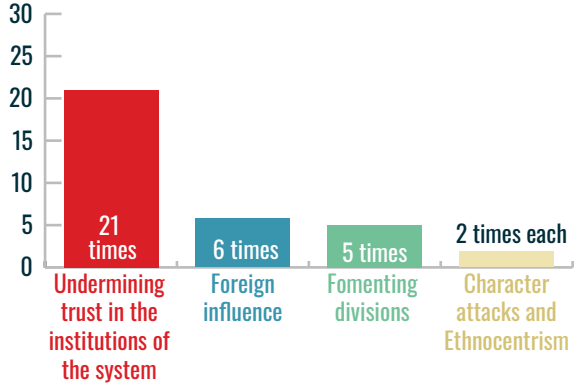


The average percentage of harmfulness:
19.5% of posts contain a harmful narrative

Average intensity of harmfulness:
1 (1.2) harmful narrative per post

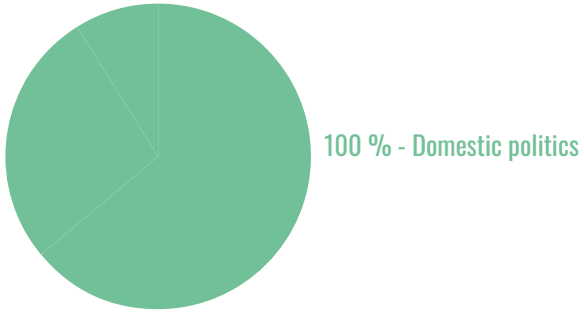
THE MOST FREQUENT HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In 3 months DUI
disseminated harmful narratives 36 times in 29 posts.



TYPES OF POSTS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

Most frequent topics in posts with a harmful narrative

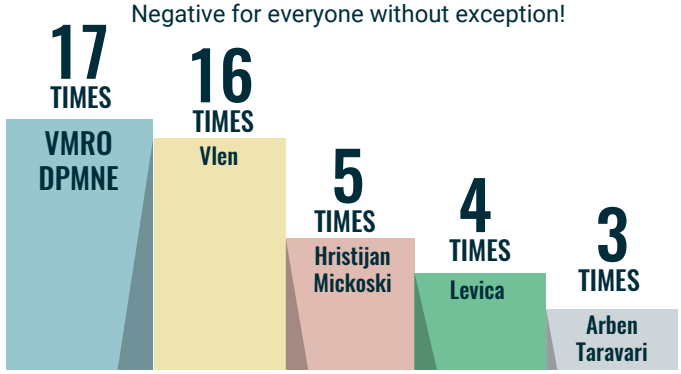


Types of posts with a harmful narrative



Who, how and how often do they talk about in their posts with a harmful narrative?

Negative for everyone without exception!

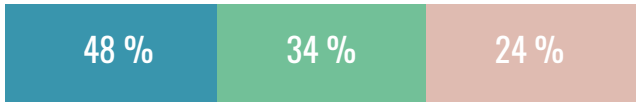


The actors name them as:

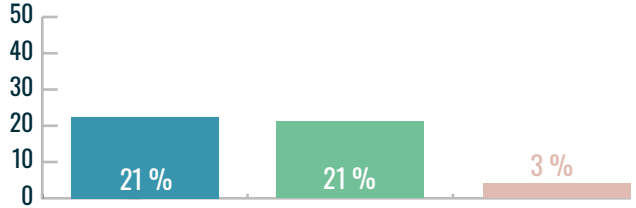
1. VMRO - DPMNE – 17 times
2. Vlen – 16 times, called the Albanian opposition
3. Hristijan Mickoski – 5 times named as “the president of VMRO-DPMNE”
4. Levica – 4 times
5. Arben Taravari – 3 times

How do they present themselves?

In 100% of the posts, they present themselves with intent, as follows:



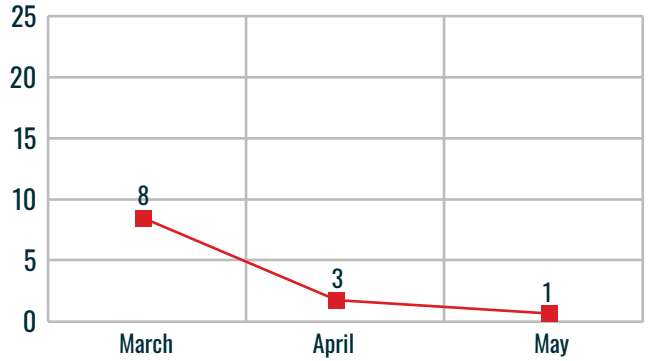
in 48% they present themselves as defenders of identity
in 34% they present themselves as EU-oriented
in 24% they present themselves as transparent



in 21% they present themselves as defenders of the people
in 21% they present themselves as defenders of justice
in 3% they present themselves as saviours

TOTAL NUMBER OF POSTS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PROFILE OVER THE MONTHS

In three months:
12 posts in which 9 types of harmful narratives were identified, mentioned 49 times.

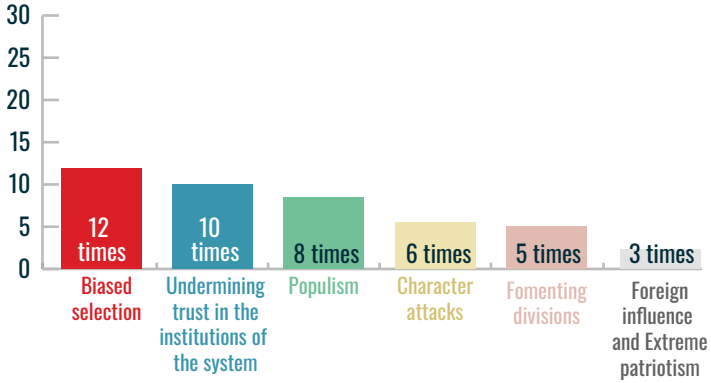


The average percentage of harmfulness:
25% of the posts contain harmful narrative

Average intensity of harmfulness:
4 harmful narratives by post

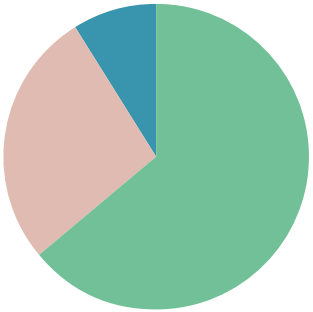
THE MOST FREQUENT HARMFUL NARRATIVES

Alternativa in 3 months in 12 posts disseminated harmful narratives 49 times



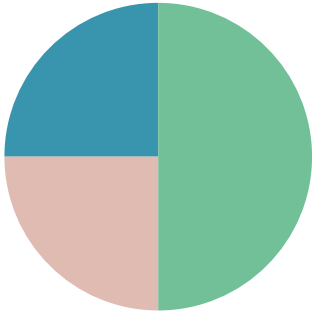
TYPES OF POSTS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVE

Most frequent topics in posts with harmful narrative



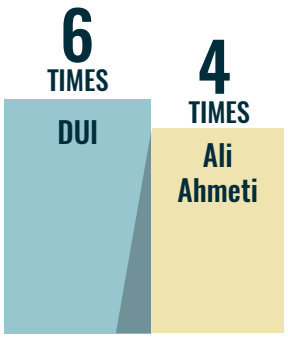
Domestic politics – 59%
Corruption – 25%
Crime and education – 8% each

Types of posts with harmful narrative



Press release – 50%
Press conference – 25%
Other – 25 %

Who, how and how often do they talk about in their posts with a harmful narrative?



The actors name them as:

1. DUI-6 times, called 'corrupt elite', 'corrupt government', 'corrupt DUI government', 'DUI Lottery', 'Ahmeti clan', 'Multi-ethnic front'
2. Ali Ahmeti – called a 'hypocrite' 4 times

How do they present themselves?



in 36% they present themselves as saviours
in 36% they present themselves as defenders of justice
in 36% present themselves as EU-oriented

in 27% they present themselves as defenders of the people
in 9% they present themselves as transparent

INDIVIDUAL PROFILES OF THE POLITICAL ENTITIES

POLITICAL LEADERS

From the total of 68 posts by political leaders that they published on their Facebook profiles, 59 or 87% are by the three leaders: Dimitar Apasiev from Levica (32 posts – 47%), Izet Medjiti from Democratic Movement (17 posts – 25%) and Afrim Gashi from Alternativa (10 posts - 15 %). **Further on, with 4 posts with harmful narratives is Ali Ahmeti from DUI, Arben Taravari from Alliance for the Albanians has 3 posts and with 2 posts with harmful narratives is Hristijan Mickoski from VMRO-DPMNE. Thereto, the aforementioned three political leaders will be presented separately.**



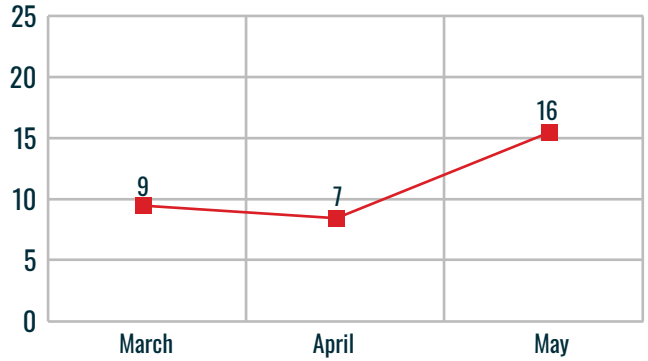


DIMITAR APASIEV, PRESIDENT OF LEVICA



NUMBER OF POSTS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE OVER THE MONTHS

In 3 months:
32 posts with a harmful narrative on his Facebook profile.

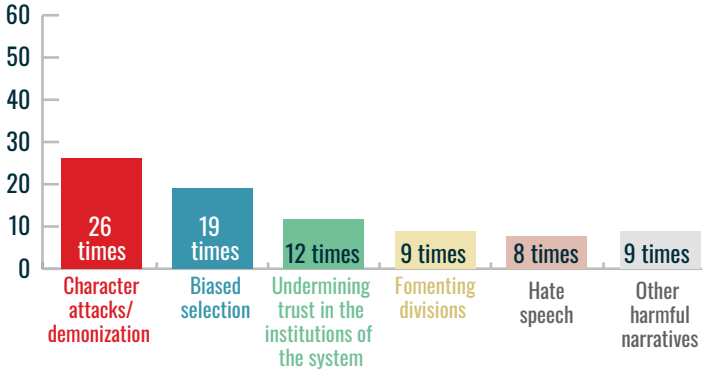


Average percentage of harmfulness:
24% of posts have a harmful narrative

Average intensity of harmfulness:
2.6 harmful narratives per post.

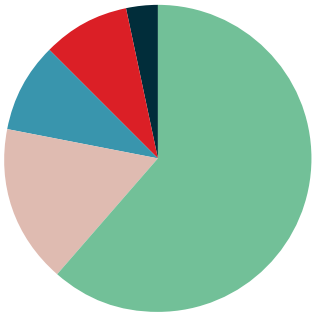
THE MOST FREQUENT HARMFUL NARRATIVES

D. In three months, Apasiev disseminated harmful narratives 83 times in 32 posts



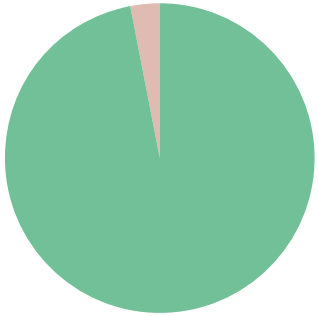
TYPES OF POSTS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

Types of posts with a harmful narrative



Reaction 59 %
Press release – 16%
Interview 9 %
Speech 9 %
Statement and Other – 3% each

Most frequent topics in posts with a harmful narrative



97 % Domestic politics
3 % Healthcare

Who is he most frequently talking about in posts with a harmful narrative?

8 TIMES VMRO DPMNE

2 TIMES Dimitar Kovachevski

2 TIMES Hristijan Mickoski

The actors name them as:

1. VMRO-DPMNE - 8 times, called 'DPMNE', 'Vmroids', 'nits'
2. Dimitar Kovachevski - 2 times called 'Tache', 'flabby', 'installed prime minister'
3. Hristijan Mickoski - 2 times called 'dummy-duke', 'Mitsika', 'Zhmicko'

How does this political actor present himself in his posts?

In 53% of the posts, he does not present himself with a special intention

In 47% of the posts, he presents himself with intent, as follows:



in 64% he presents himself as a saviour
in 21% he presents himself as the defender of the people

in 14% he presents himself as defender of identity

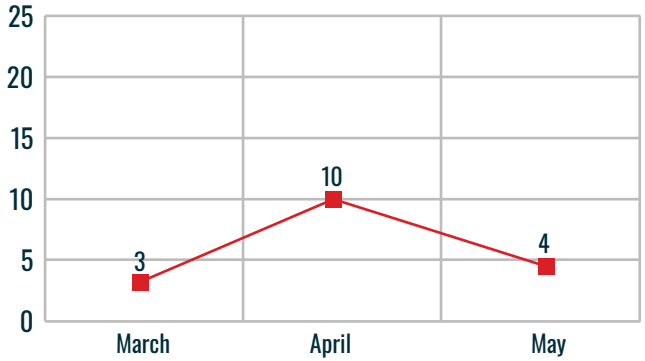


IZET MEDJITI, PRESIDENT OF DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT



NUMBER OF POSTS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE OVER THE MONTHS

In 3 months:
17 posts with a harmful narrative on his Facebook profile.

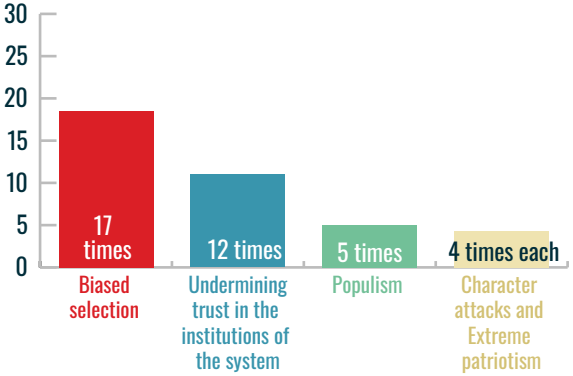


Average percentage of harmfulness:
21% of posts have a harmful narrative

Average intensity of harmfulness:
2.7 harmful narratives per post

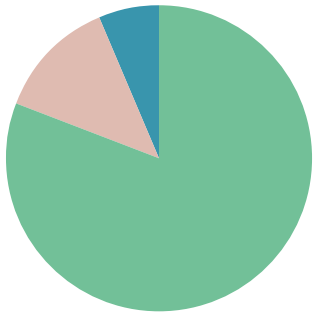
THE MOST FREQUENT HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In 3 months, in 17 posts,
Izet Medjiti disseminated harmful narratives 46 times

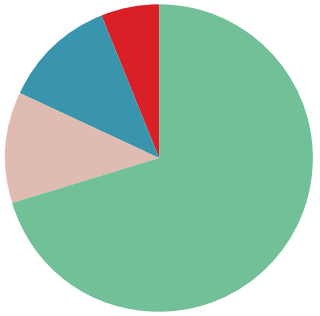


TYPES OF POSTS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

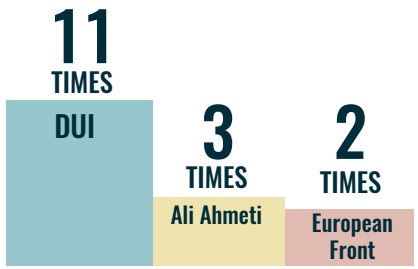
Types of posts with a harmful narrative



Most frequent topics in posts with a harmful narrative



Who is he most frequently talking about in posts with a harmful narrative?



The actors name them as

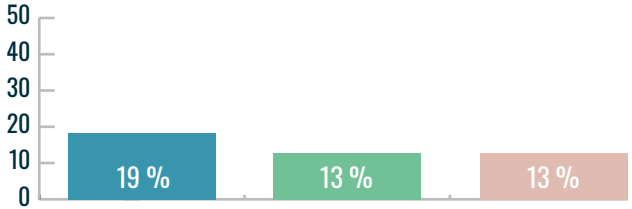
1. DUI – 11 times 'criminal party'
2. Ali Ahmeti - 3 times, not named otherwise
3. European Front – 2 times
(called 'Multi-ethnic Front' and 'DUI's Front')

How does the political actor present himself in his posts?

In 6% of the posts, he does not present himself with a special intention
In 94% of the posts, he presents himself with intent, as follows:



in 63% he presents himself as a saviour
in 38% he presents himself as the defender of the people
in 31% he presents himself in another way



in 19% he presents himself as defender of identity
in 13% he presents himself as a defender of justice
in 13% he presents himself as EU-oriented

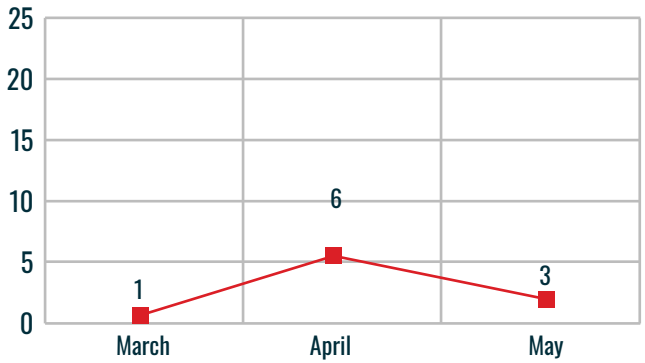


AFRIM GASHI



NUMBER OF POSTS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE OVER THE MONTHS

In 3 months:
10 posts with a harmful narrative on his Facebook profile.



Average percentage of harmfulness:
44% of posts have a harmful narrative

Average intensity of harmfulness:
2.6 harmful narratives per post

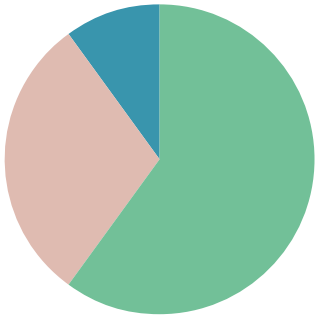
THE MOST FREQUENT HARMFUL NARRATIVES

A. In three months, in 10 posts,
Gashi disseminated harmful narratives 26 times



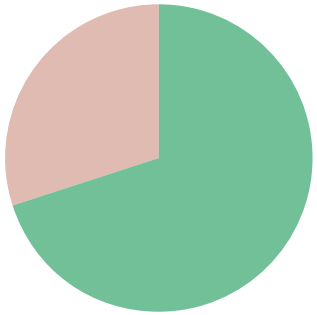
TYPES OF POSTS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

Types of posts with a harmful narrative



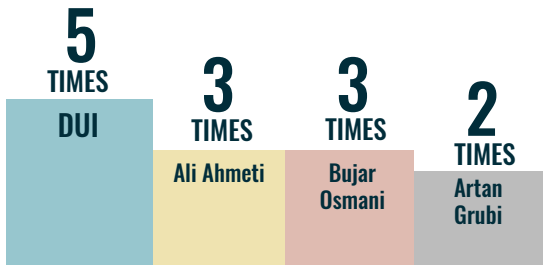
Other – 60 %
Speech – 30%
Press release – 10%

Most frequent topics in posts with a harmful narrative



Domestic politics – 70%
Foreign policy – 30%

Who is he most frequently talking about in posts with a harmful narrative?



The actors name them as:

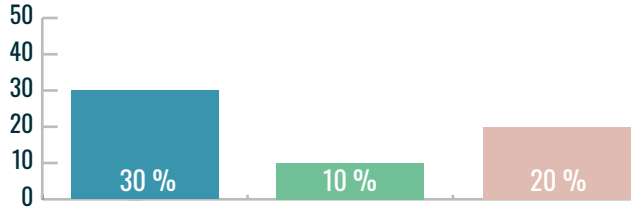
1. DUI - 5 times
2. Ali Ahmeti - 3 times,
3. Bujar Osmani - 3 times called 'Ali Ahmeti's spokesman'
4. Artan Grubi – 2 times

How does A. Gashi present himself?

In 100% of the posts, he presents himself with intention, as follows:



Defender of the people – in 50% of the posts
Defender of the identity – in 40% of posts
Saviour – in 40% of posts



EU-oriented – in 30% of the posts
Defender of justice – in 10% of posts
In another way – in 20% of the posts

Similarities and differences between political entities regarding harmful narratives

Comparison in terms of number of posts with harmful narratives

POLITICAL PARTIES

Between March and May 2024, a total of 307 posts with harmful narratives were recorded. The difference in the number of posts with harmful narratives between political parties is significant.

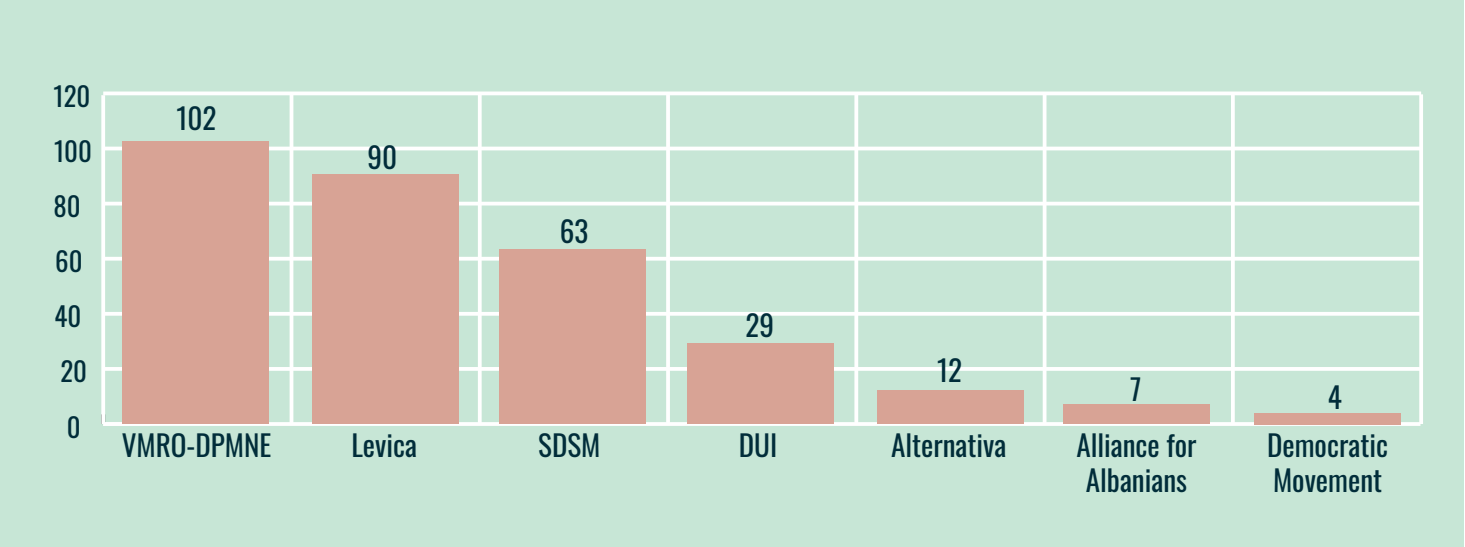


Figure 16 Number of posts with a harmful narrative by political party

Similar to the overall analysed period, again the political parties LDP and Socialist Party, as well as the New Social Democratic Party, did not have any posts with a harmful narrative on their websites and Facebook profiles. Among those with posts with a harmful narrative, there are political parties that have relatively few posts on their websites and Facebook profiles, such as the Democratic Movement and the Alliance for Albanians. The political parties Alternativa and DUI publish moderately. VMRO-DPMNE is the only party with over 100 posts with a harmful narrative (102 posts) in this three-month period, whereas with over 50 posts with harmful narratives are SDSM (63 posts) and Levica (90).

POLITICAL LEADERS

In the same period of monitoring and analysis, a total of 68 posts with harmful narratives were noted among political leaders, with only one political actor standing out: Dimitar Apasiev.

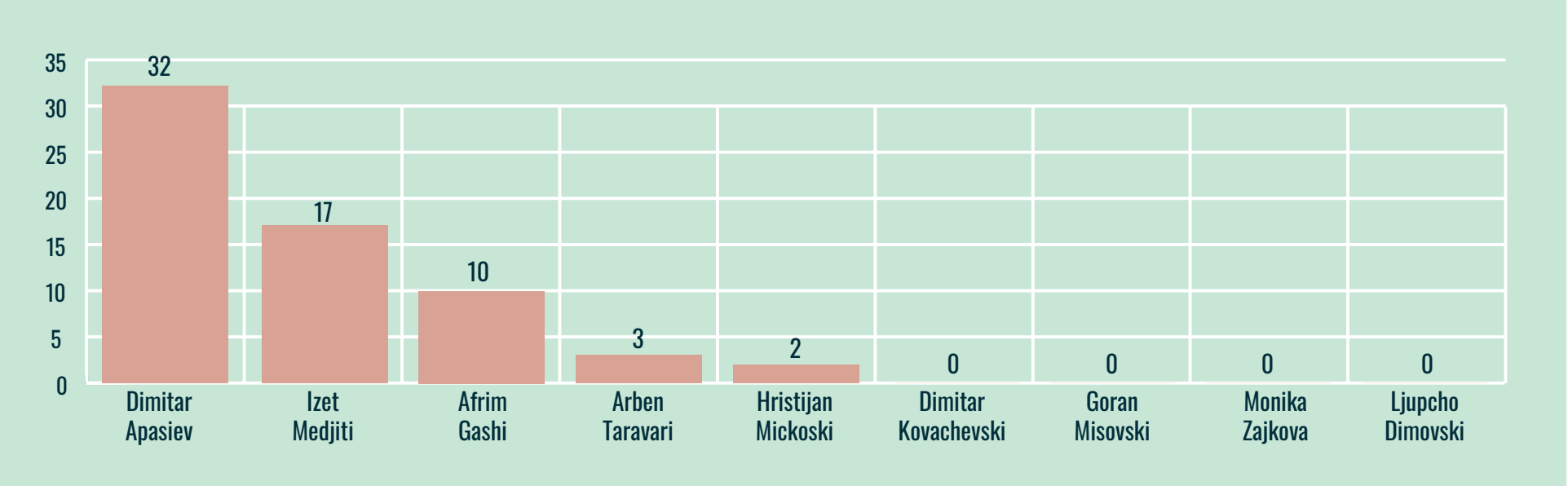


Figure 17 Number of posts with harmful narrative by leader

Monitoring in the past three-month period did not record posts containing harmful narratives by the leaders of smaller political parties such as Monika Zajkova (LDP), Goran Misovski (NSDP) and Ljupco Dimovski (SPM), as well as by the leader of the party that was in power until the elections, Dimitar Kovachevski (SDSM). Politicians who published a relatively small amount of information with harmful narratives in the monitoring quarter are Hristijan Mickoski, Arben Taravari and Ali Ahmeti.

Comparison by number of harmful narratives

POLITICAL PARTIES

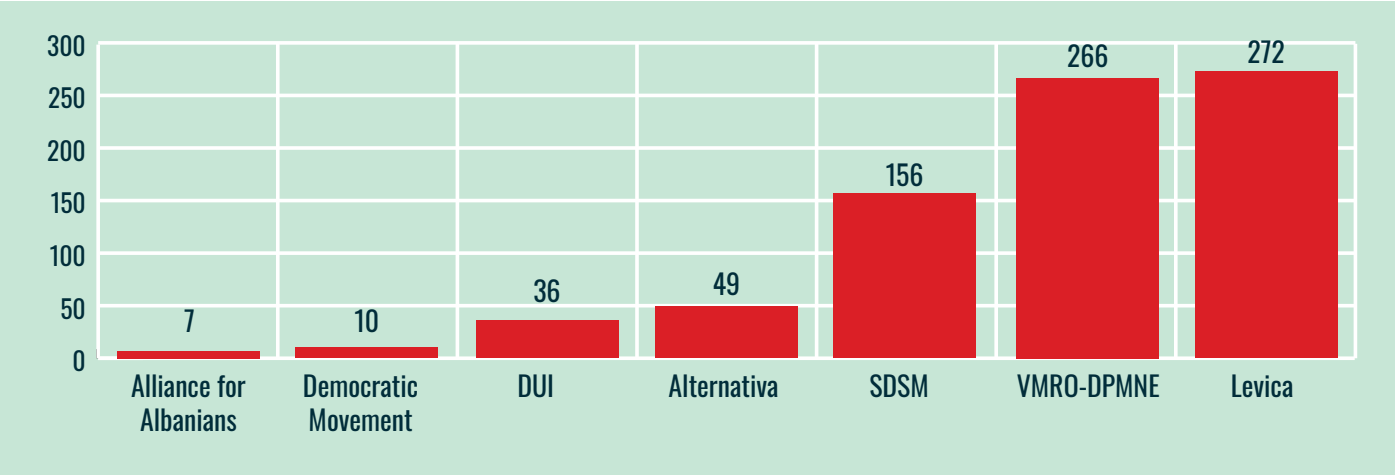


Figure 18 Number of disseminated harmful narratives by political party

From a total of disseminated 796 harmful narratives, 694 or 87% were disseminated by the three political parties Levica, VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM

POLITICAL LEADERS

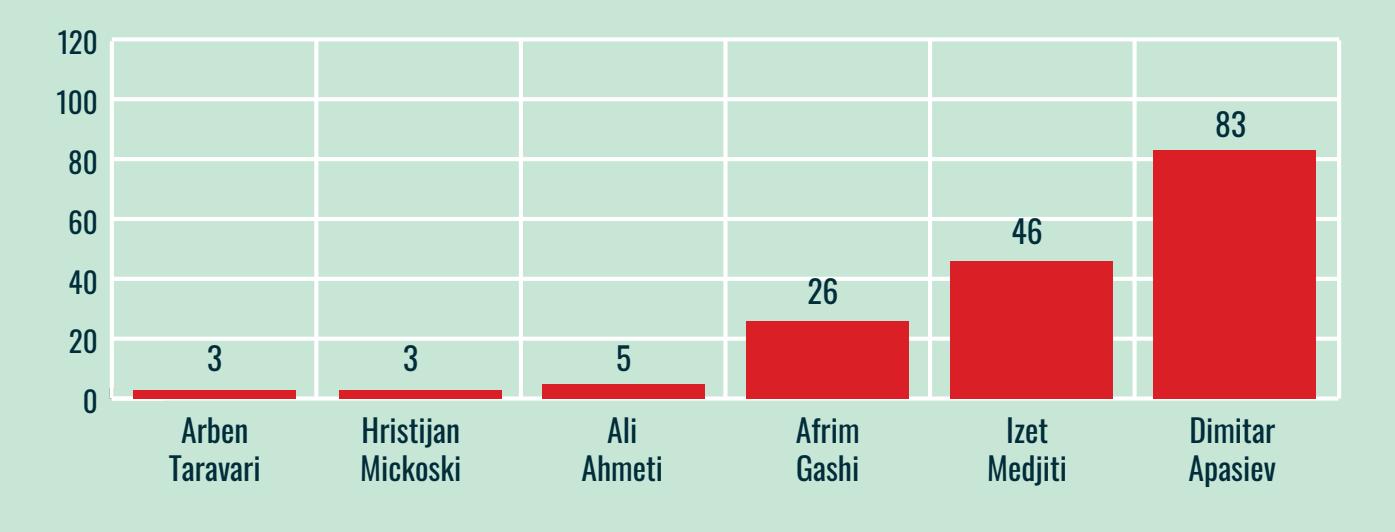


Figure 19 How often were harmful narratives disseminated by leaders of political parties

The situation with the frequency of harmful narratives by leaders is similar to that of their parties – the leader of Levica, which is at the top of the list of the parties according to the number of times it disseminated a harmful narrative, is also far ahead of the rest of the leaders in disseminating harmful narratives. Together with the leaders Izet Medjiti and Afrim Gashi, Dimitar Apasiev they account for 93% (155 harmful narratives disseminated out of a total of 166) of the total number of disseminated harmful narratives among the leaders. The leaders of VMRO-DPMNE, Hristijan Mickoski and the leader of the Alliance for Albanians Arben Taravari disseminated harmful narratives three times during the three months, on average once a month.

Comparison in terms of percentage of harmfulness

POLITICAL PARTIES

The picture of the harmfulness of the posts changes visibly, when seen through the prism of the overall communication of the political parties in the three-month period. From the perspective of the share of posts in which a harmful narrative is recognized out of all posts in the same period, the Democratic Movement party stands out, which in this period had a harmful narrative in more than a third (36.4%) of the messages addressed to the public.

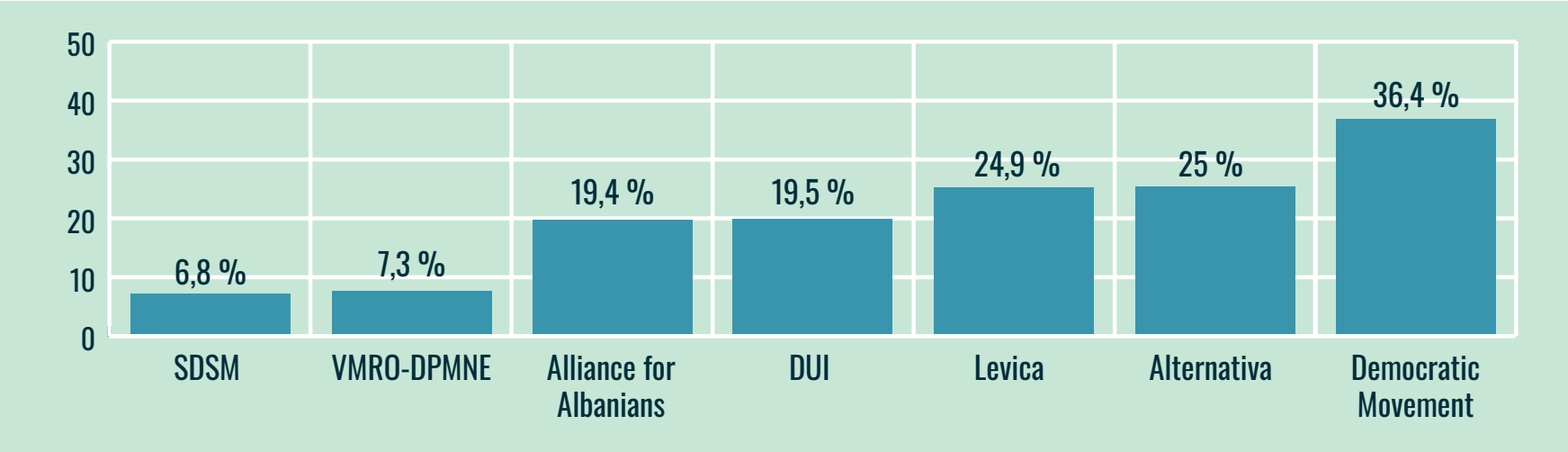


Figure 20 Percentage of harmfulness among political parties

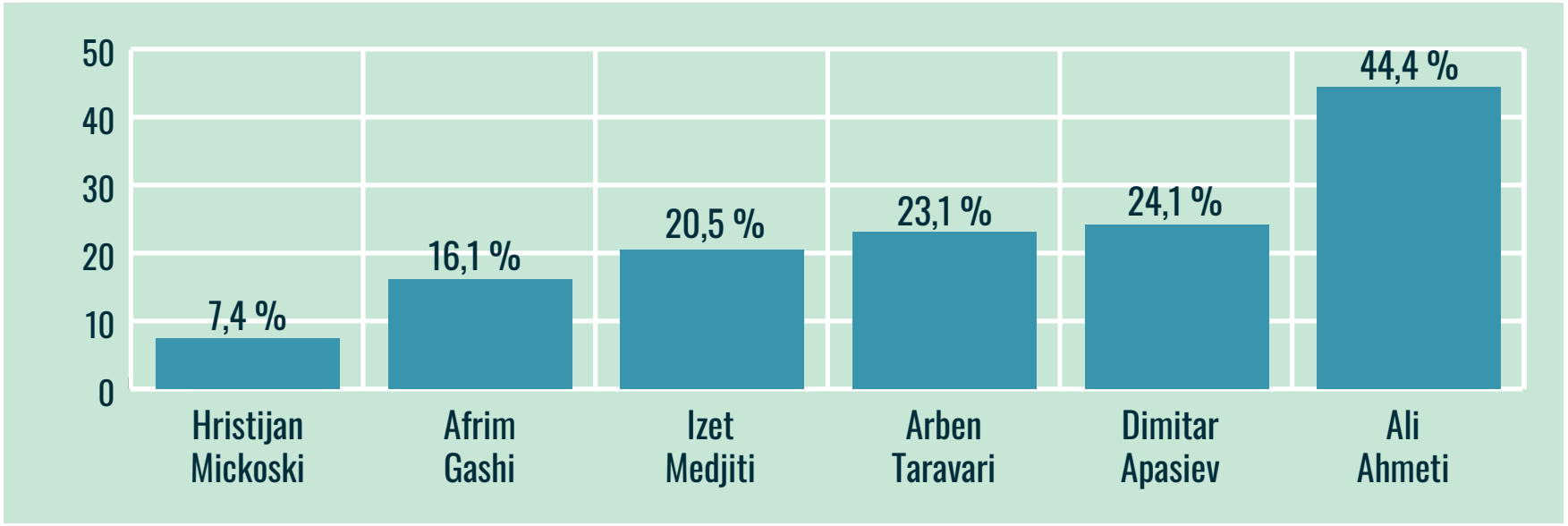


Figure 21 Percentage of harmfulness among leaders of political parties

Regarding the percentage of harmfulness of the posts of the political party leaders, it does not match that of their parties. Thus, the leader of DUI, Ali Ahmeti, despite the fact that he has a small number of posts, both in total and those with a harmful narrative, still in that modest communication he conveys one or more harmful narratives more frequently than the leaders of other parties. A harmful narrative was recognized in 44% of his posts. The leader of Levica is next, and right after Apasiev is Arben Taravari, the leader of the Alliance for Albanians. The leaders of the two largest parties from the Macedonian bloc, Hristijan Mickoski and Dimitar Kovachevski, are either last (Mickoski) in terms of harmfulness, or do not have any (Kovachevski).

Comparison in terms of intensity of harmfulness

POLITICAL PARTIES

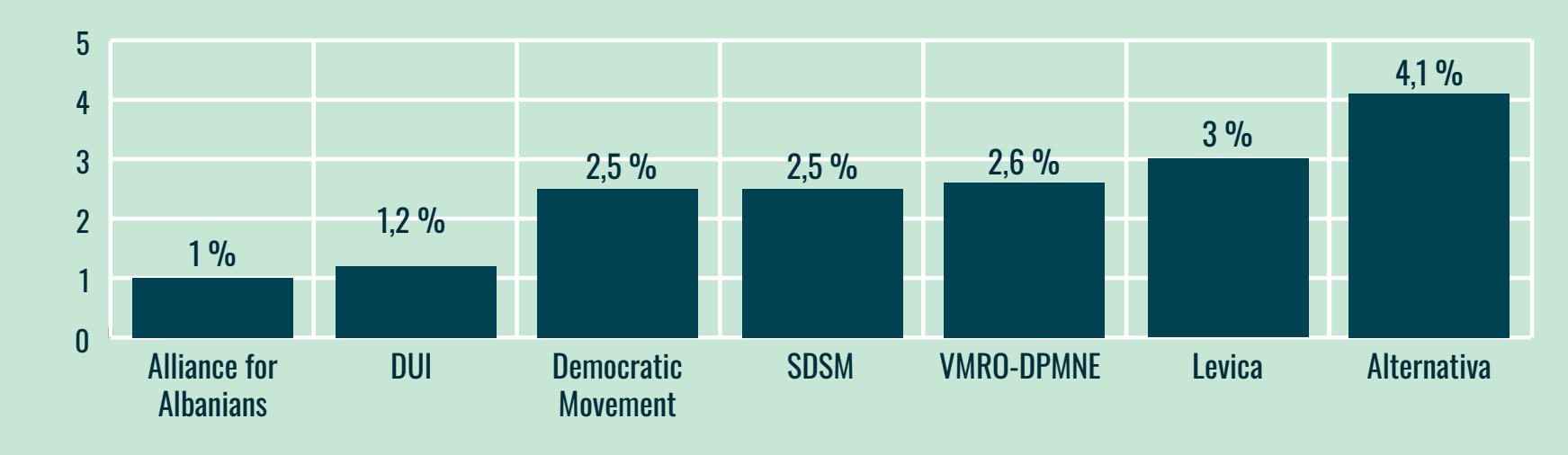


Figure 22 Intensity of harmfulness among political parties

The analysis of the intensity of harmfulness showed that two political parties of Albanians are at the beginning, with the least intensity of harmfulness, such as DUI and Alliance for Albanians and one is at the very end of the continuum, with the highest intensity of harmfulness: Alternativa, while the Democratic Movement is in the middle with an intensity of 2.5. VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, which had the largest number of posts with a harmful narrative, are in the middle of this continuum, while Levica is right next to Alternativa.

POLITICAL LEADERS

The situation with the intensity of harmfulness among political leaders is slightly different from their parties, in the middle and high part of the continuum of harmfulness. Namely, Izet Medjiti is the leader with the most evident harmfulness of 2.7 harmful narratives on average per post. Hristijan Mickoski, is among the leaders with a lower intensity of harmfulness, in contrast to his party, which was among the three parties with a higher intensity.

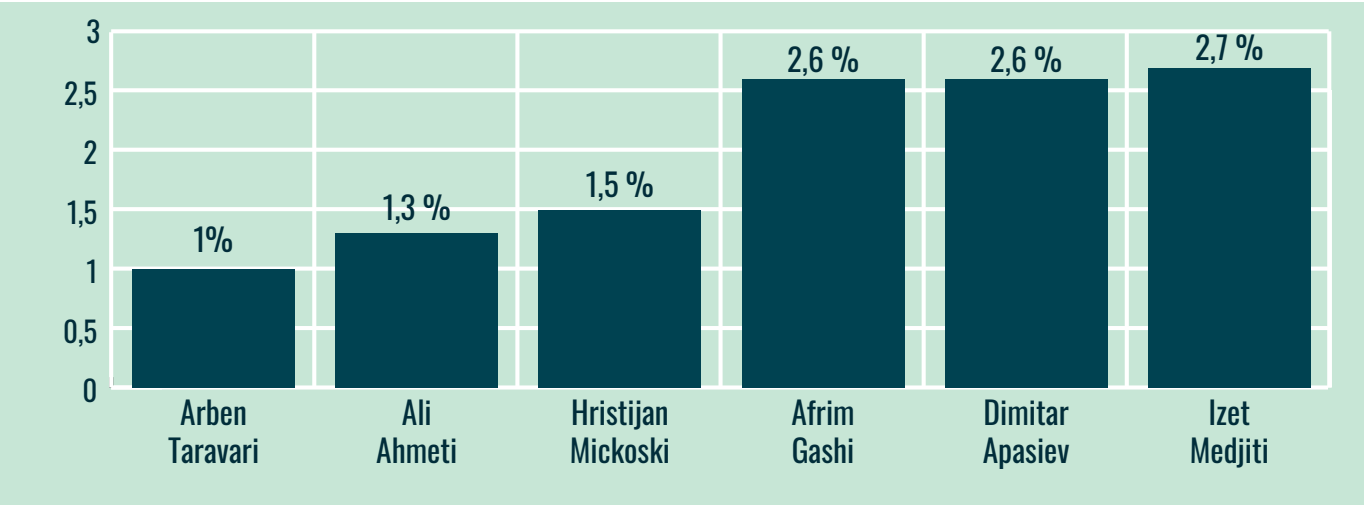


Figure 23 Intensity of harmfulness in posts by political party leaders

Comparison in terms of type of dominant harmful narratives

The analysis of the most frequently present harmful narratives in the posts of political parties and their leaders showed that: 1) **parties and leaders do not differentiate between themselves** which harmful narratives they use, and 2) that there are two groups of harmful narratives.

In the first group, there are two harmful narratives that among all political entities, both political parties and political leaders, are noted among the first two most frequently present narratives *Undermining trust in institutions and the media* and *Biased selection*. These two narratives are a constant.

In the second group are three harmful narratives, which alternately occupy third, fourth and fifth place: *Character attacks, Populism* and *Fomenting divisions*.

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT



In this section, the subject of monitoring and analysis are the Facebook profiles of 20 political actors, members of the Government (Prime Minister, deputy prime ministers and ministers). Analysed in detail are posts in which these political actors misused their position for partisan purposes and/or generated harmful narratives. **For more details about the monitored members of the Government, see the Methodology** (link)

From 28 January 2024, the monitoring includes the new members of the Caretaker Government for conducting the elections, i.e. the profiles of the new Prime Minister Talat Djaferi, the Minister of Interior Panche Toshkovski and the Minister of Labour and Social Policy Gjoko Velkovski.



Frequency of posts by members of the Government containing harmful narratives

In the research period from March to May 2024, the contents published by the above-mentioned members of the Government were monitored and analysed on their Facebook profiles for 46 days. A total of 58 posts with harmful narratives and a total of 93 harmful narratives were recorded. Compared to the previously analysed six-month period (September 2023 – February 2024), there is a significant increase in the number of posts with a harmful narrative of government officials and in the number of disseminated harmful narratives. Namely, in the last quarter subject to monitoring, the number of posts with a harmful narrative increased by 2.2 times compared to the previous six-month period or 223%, while the use of harmful narratives increased by 1.7 times, or an increase of 172% in the last quarter compared to the previous six-month period. By month, the trend is as follows:

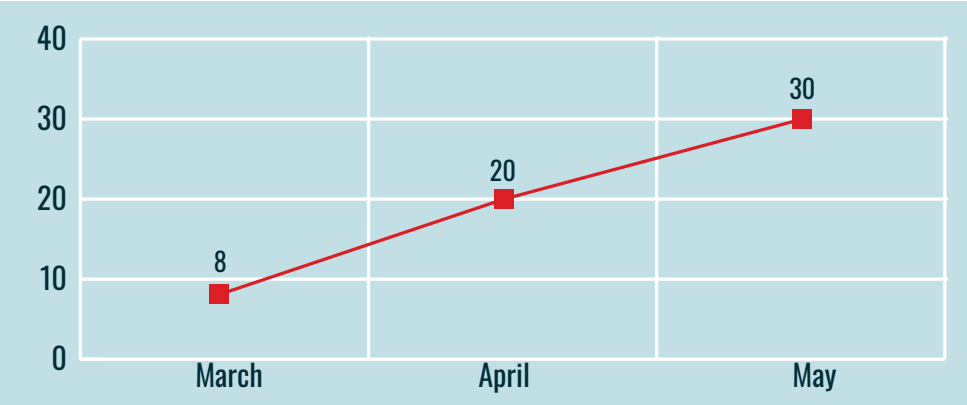


Figure 24 Number of posts with harmful narratives

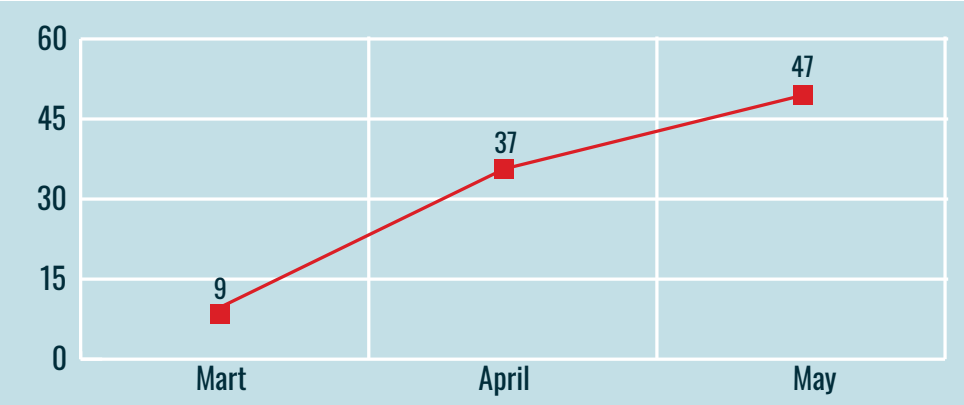


Figure 25 Frequency of posted harmful narratives by months

From March to May, there was a continuous growth in both the number of posts with harmful narratives and the frequency, i.e. how many times harmful narratives were used. At the same time, the largest increase is from March to April - both in the number of posts and in the number of times harmful narratives were disseminated - there were 2.5 times more posts in April compared to March and 4 times more harmful narratives were disseminated. Regarding the intensity of harmfulness, the monthly trends can be seen in the graph below:

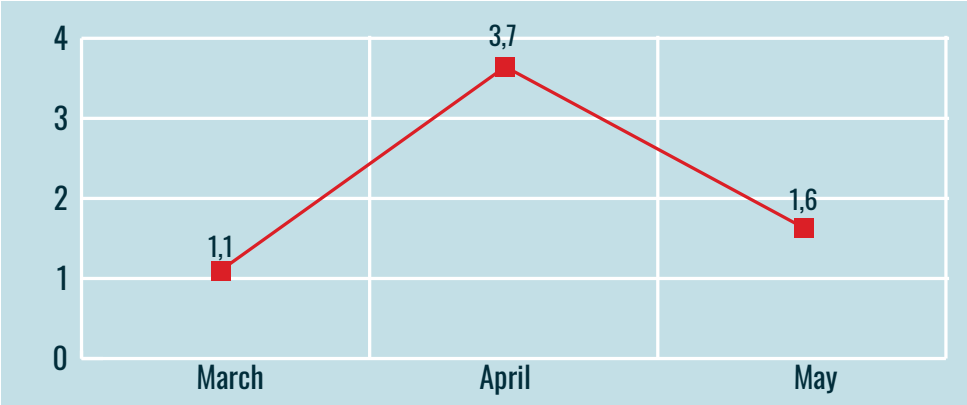


Figure 26 Harm intensity

During April, which was the month of pre-election campaigns and the first round of presidential elections, an average of four (4) harmful narratives were present in one post.

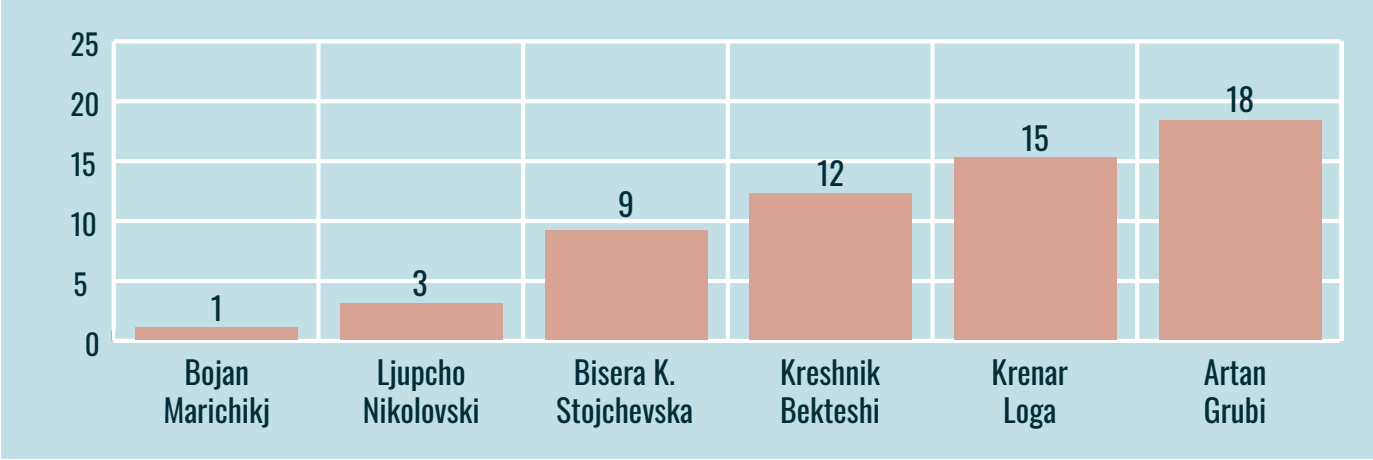


Figure 27 Number of posts with a harmful narrative by each government official

Bojan Marichikj is a member of the Government with one post with a harmful narrative, Ljupco Nikolovski with three posts, and Artan Grubi with the most, 18 posts with harmful narratives, with Krenar Loga and Kreshnik Bekteshi following behind. During the monitoring there was noted a significant increase in posts with a harmful narrative by Loga and Bekteshi in May (from 2 in April to 10 posts in May by Bekteshi and from 3 to 10 in May by Loga).

Regarding the types of harmful narratives that appear in the posts of government members, the analysis showed that they mostly used two types of harmful narratives: *Biased selection* and *Undermining citizens' trust in institutions and the media*. They used the harmful narratives of *Fomenting divisions, Character attacks,* and *Foreign influence* less frequently. The other harmful narratives were used incidentally. Although incidental, it is interesting to note that the harmful narratives: *Ethnocentrism and Extreme Patriotism* were used only in May by Kreshnik Bekteshi and Krenar Loga, while Spreading panic and fear were used only in April by Artan Grubi and Bisera Stojchevska. Another interesting note is that the *Foreign* influence harmful narrative was only used by Artan Grubi during each month of this quarter.

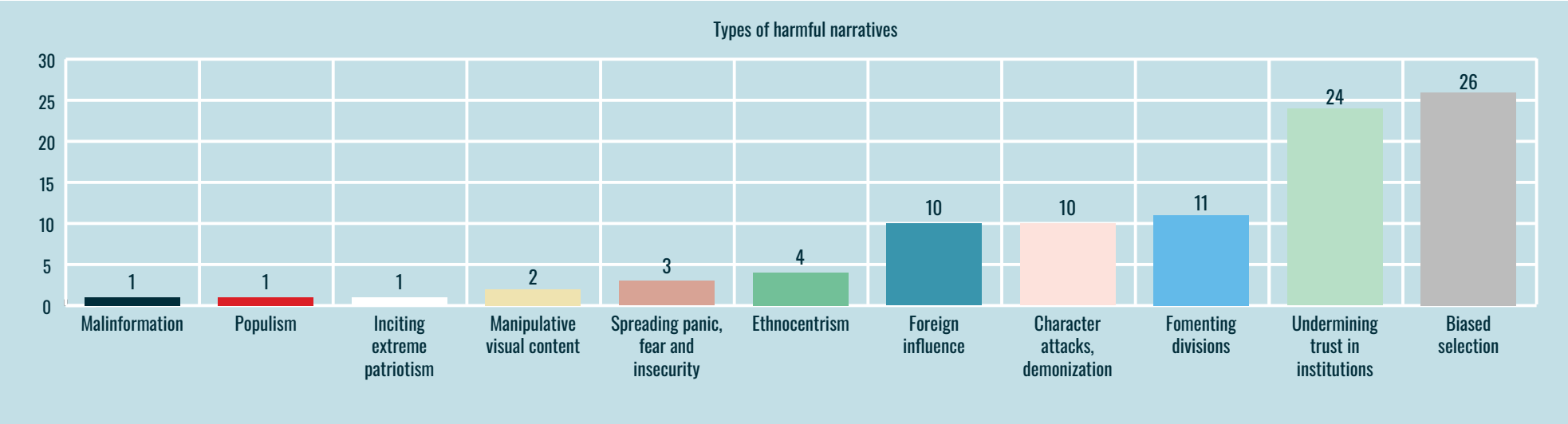


Figure 28 Which harmful narratives and how frequently were disseminated by members of the Government

As for the main topic in the posts, the analysis showed that in 95% of the posts with harmful narratives of the members of the Government, the main topic was domestic politics.

In terms of how they present themselves, members of government in their posts attacked their political opponents, frequently presented themselves and emphasized that they were European-oriented and defenders of the national identity.

Regarding the form in which the harmful narratives were disseminated, the data showed that the harmful narratives produced by government members were mostly in the disseminated reactions published on their Facebook profiles, but more frequently through other forms such as audio-visual content from campaign videos, speeches from rallies and media interviews.

TV STATIONS

Frequency of news items on TV stations containing harmful narratives

In the past three-month period, the central news editions of 9 television stations (MTV 1, MTV 2, Kanal 5, Sitel, Telma, Alsat M, Alfa, TV 21 and TV 24) were monitored and analysed for 26 days. A total of 185 news items with harmful narratives were recorded. The smallest number of news items was during May (a 35% drop compared to March). A significant drop was noted in April, in the period of the pre-election campaigns for the presidential and parliamentary elections. There should also be considered the legal obligations that television stations have according to the Electoral Code and the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services and the monitoring carried out by the AAVMU.

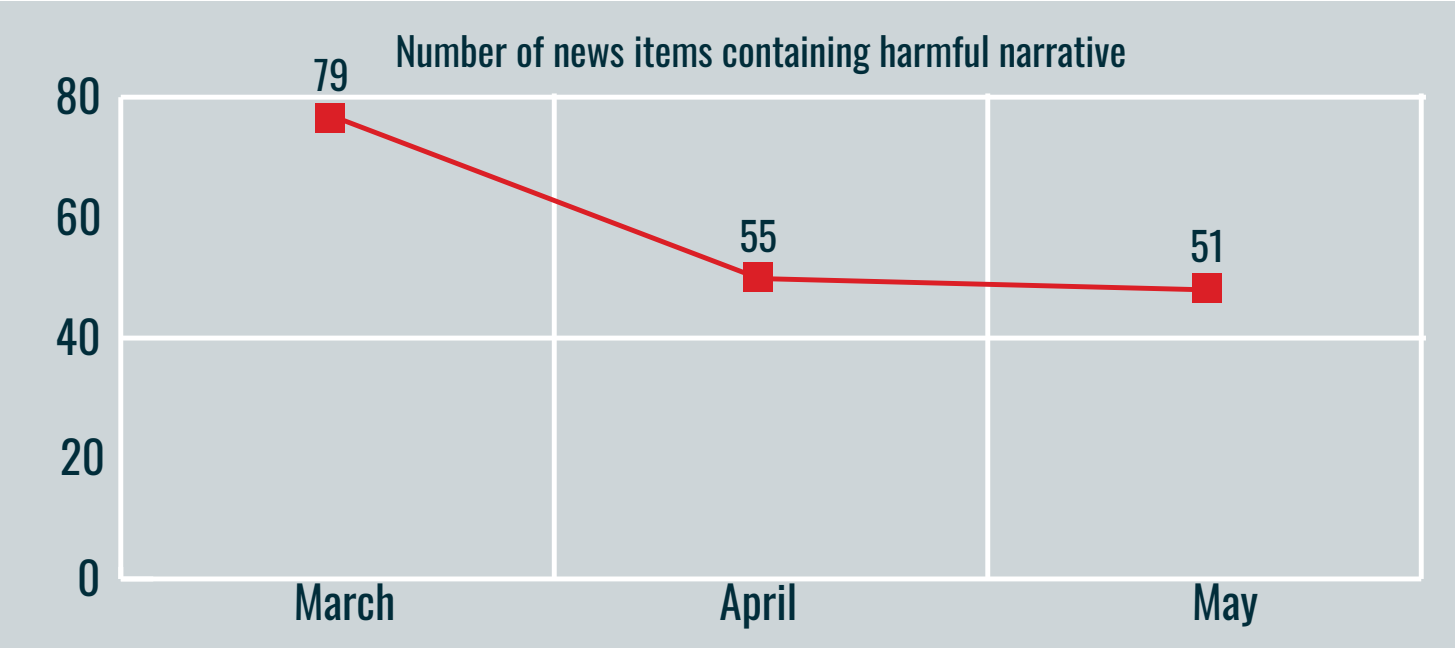


Figure 29 Number of news items with harmful narrative by month

Frequency of harmful narratives and intensity of harmfulness

The content analysis of the185 news items established the presence of 318 harmful narratives, again the least in May (88).

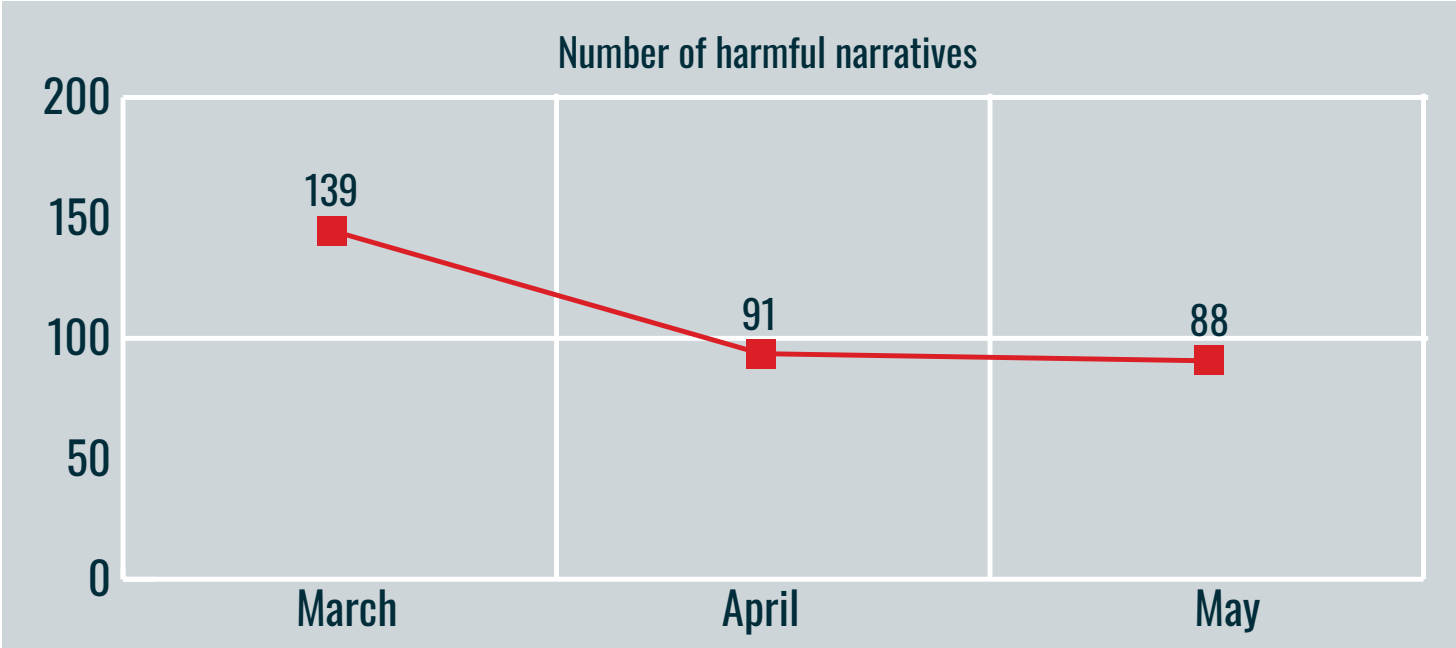


Figure 30 Frequency of disseminated harmful narratives on monthly basis

The general intensity of harmfulness (which represents the average number of harmful narratives present in one news item) is 1.7 for all analysed TV stations. This means that, on average, television stations broadcast almost two harmful narratives in one report.

Types of harmful narratives

In the last quarter from the monitoring, in the news items of the nine TV stations, there are recorded 13 of the total 16 harmful narratives which are the focus of the research. Only the harmful narratives *Malinformation, Xenophobia* and *Sexism* were not recorded in either TV station's reporting. The top three most frequently mentioned harmful narratives in mainstream TV news coverage are:

I. **Undermining trust in institutions** (100 times or 31% of the total number of narratives)

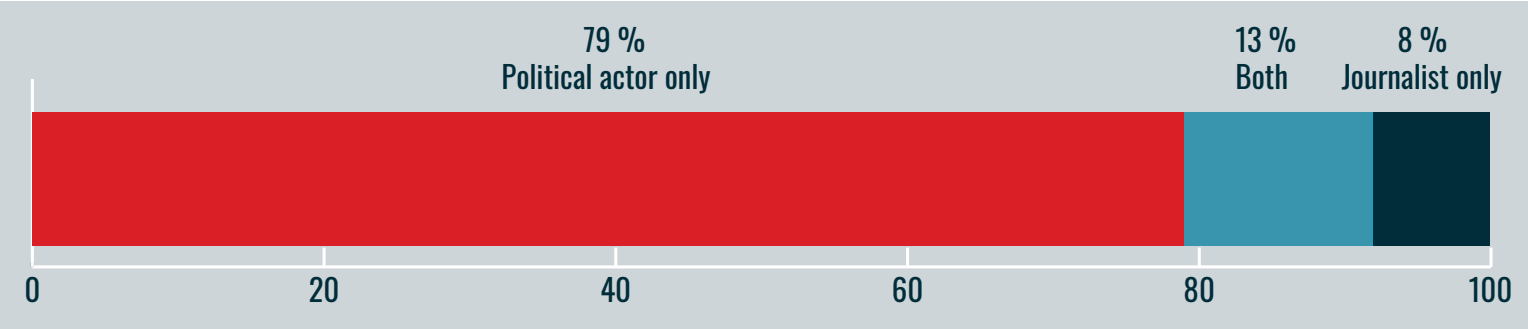
II: **Biased selection** (100 times or 31 % of the total number of narratives)

III: **Fomenting divisions** (34 times or 11% of the total number of narratives)

These three harmful narratives noted in central news editions coincide with the same three most commonly used by political actors.

Furthermore, in terms of frequency, *Character attacks* follow with 10% (31 times) participation in harmful narratives, then *Spreading panic, fear and insecurity* with 5% participation (17 times) and *Disinformation*, which accounts for 2.5% (8 times) of the narratives noted on TV stations for the analysed three-month period.

Who produces the harmful narratives and how journalists respond to the harmful narratives by political actors



In 67% of the cases when the political actor produces a harmful narrative, the journalist broadcasts it without any intervention, in 18% of the cases the journalist broadcasts the harmful narrative from the political actor with approval, in 9% the journalist clearly highlights it, but does not take sides and in 6% of cases, the journalist condemns and/or criticizes the harmful narrative of the political actor.

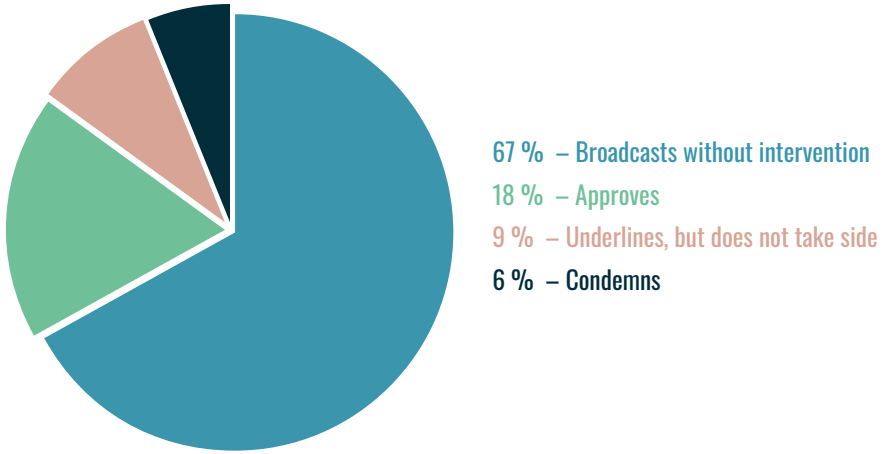


Figure 31 What is the attitude of the journalist when reporting the harmful narrative?

What is the form in which the harmful narrative can be found?

The most common genre of the news items with a harmful narrative is the report (31% of the news items) or the analytical-reportage news item (23%), while in 19% of the news items with a harmful narrative, the speech by the political actor is broadcast.

Main topic in news items containing harmful narratives

Out of 185 news items with a harmful narrative in this quarter, in 151 (82%) the main topic is domestic politics, but there is also a certain number of news items on topics of economy, crime, corruption and foreign policy.

Sources

The sources in the television news items are mostly (in 175 or 95% of the news items) precise.

In terms of the sides presented in the news items, mostly present are those with one-sided reporting (107 news items or 60%), followed by those that include multiple sides - 22% (40 news items), and finally there are news items with 2 sides (such are 32 news items or 18% of news items).

When it comes to the number of sources in the news items, the tendency is the same: those with one source dominate (there are 83 news items or 45% of the total number of news items), followed by those with three or more sources (55 news items or 30%), and the rarest are those with two news items (41 news items - 22%). Only six (6) TV Alfa reports do not have sources listed, which represents about 3% of the total number of news items with a harmful narrative from all TV stations.

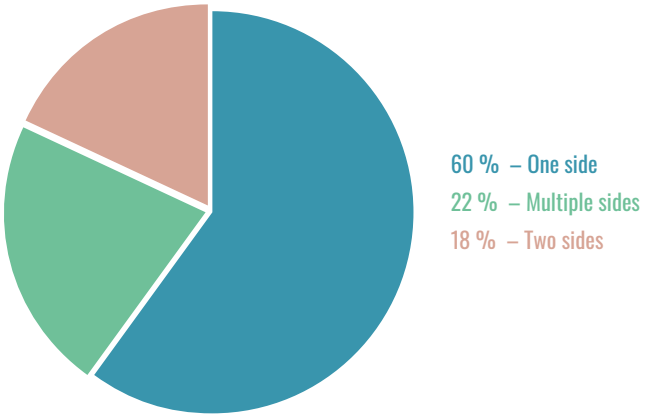


Figure 32 Sides in reporting

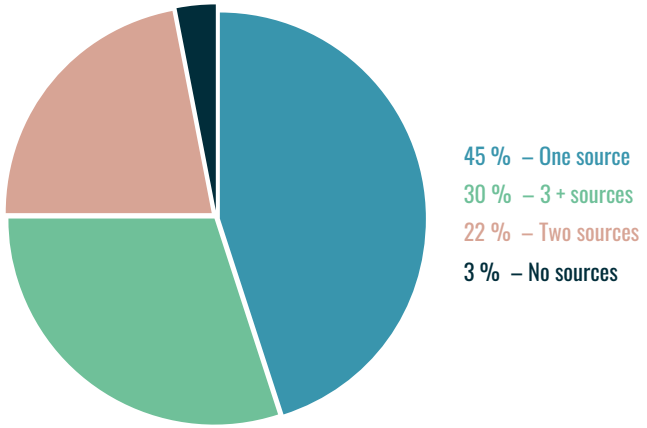
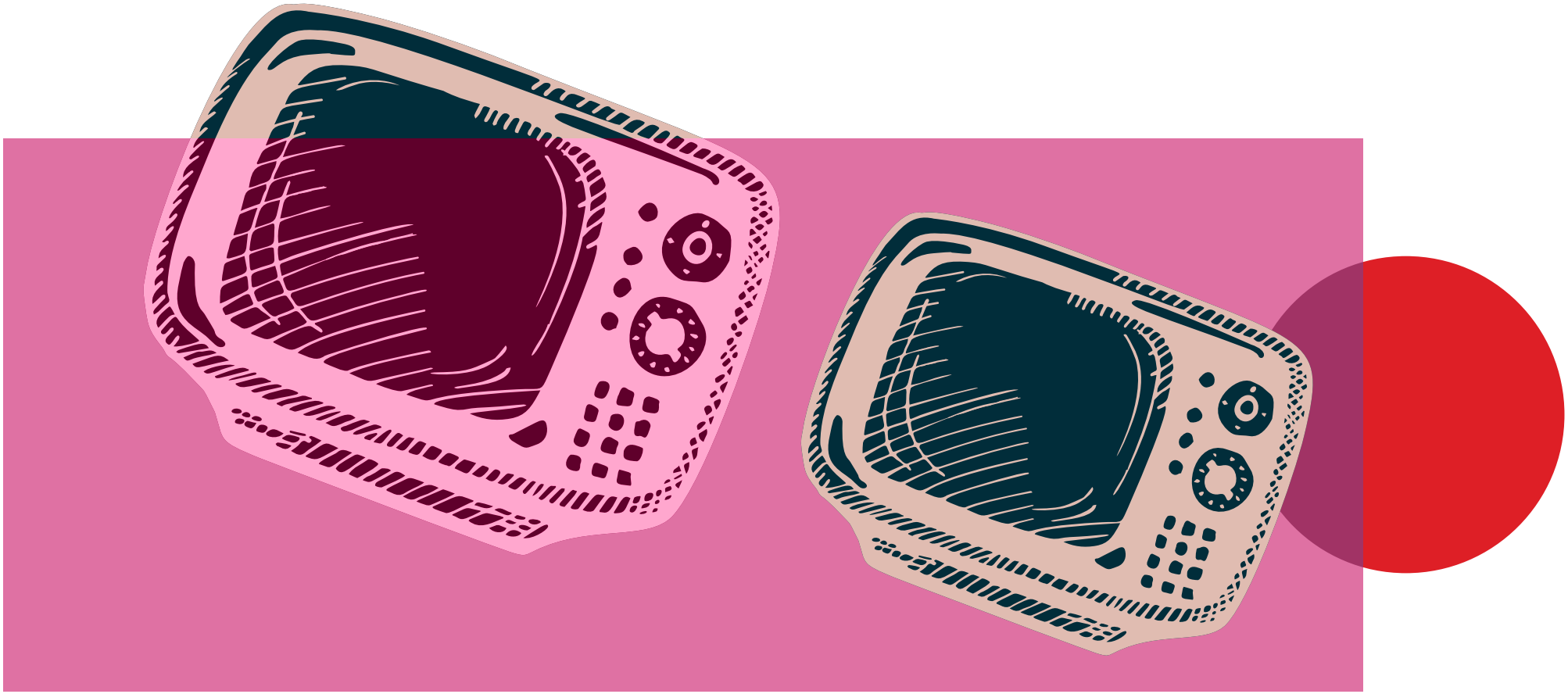


Figure 33 Number of sources in news items

The individual profiles of the television stations are presented further below, which illustrate information on the number of published news items with harmful narratives, the frequency and intensity of the harmful narratives, who produces the harmful narrative and what is the attitude of the journalist towards the harmful narrative of the political actor. Dominant themes, most common genres, as well as sources (number, type and side of sources) are also shown.

INDIVIDUAL PROFILES OF THE TV STATIONSS



HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON MRT1

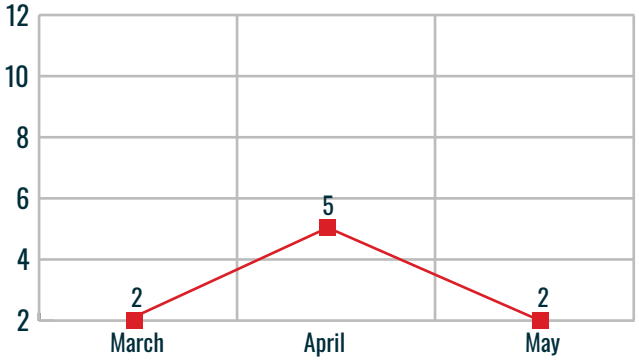
MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In the analysed three months, the following most frequent themes were noted in the nine news items with a harmful narrative on MRT 1:



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

In three months: 9 news items
During April, more than half are present (5 news items -56 %) of the news items with a harmful narrative.



Intensity of harmfulness:
1.6 harmful narrative per news item

WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEM WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?

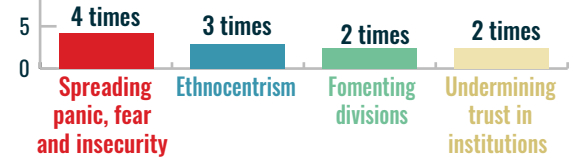
In the last quarter, news items with a harmful narrative addressed less than twice different personalities. Only in April, the following political actors are mentioned more than once:



NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months, MTV 1 broadcast harmful narratives 14 times in 9 news items

Incidentally, the following were also registered:
Encouraging extreme patriotism *– once*
Foreign influence *– once*
Character attacks *- once*



In the last quarter of the monitoring, 9 news items with a harmful narrative were noted on MTV1. In them the political actors spread panic, fear and insecurity, encouraged ethnocentrism, but also unfoundedly encouraged mistrust in institutions and the media, and divisions among citizens.

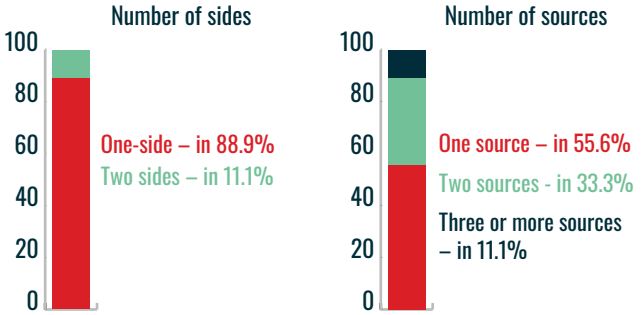
Harmful narratives are mostly about domestic politics, but they are also produced when talking about crime and judiciary. By genre, they are usually packaged as a broadcast speech of a politician, and incidentally also as an analytical-reportage news item, or news/news with a statement.

One-sided reporting dominates MTV1's broadcasts (in almost 90% of news items). In over half of the news items, only one source was consulted.

The harmful narratives broadcast on MTV1 in the three months referred to various personalities from political life. Ali Ahmeti, Arben Taravari, Bujar Osmani and DUI were mentioned more than once during April.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

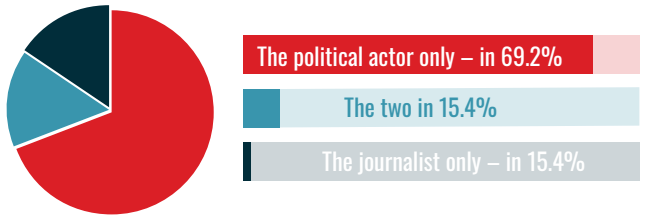
NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



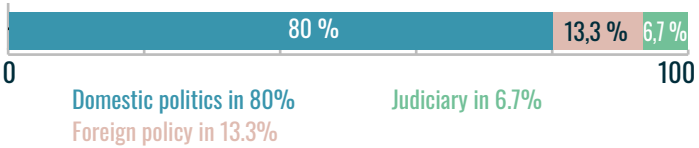
THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



The journalist broadcasts the harmful narrative without any intervention – in 100% of the cases with present harmful narratives

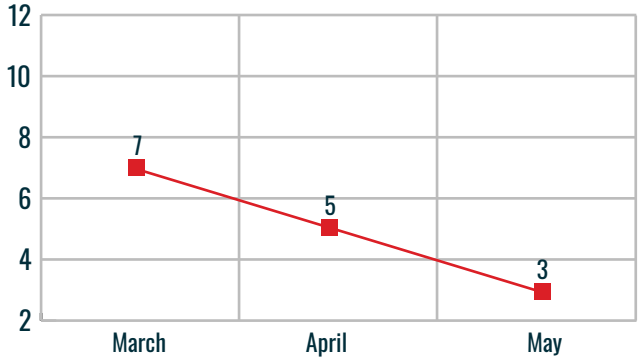
HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON MRT2

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months: 15 news items,
the most news items (7) in March



Intensity of harmfulness:
1.5 per harmful narrative per news item

WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEMS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?

In the news items of MTV 2, there are twice as many personalities from politics, political parties or other actors mentioned:

Politicians mentioned twice:

Ali Ahmeti | Stevo Pendarovski | Hristijan Mickoski | Dimitar Kovachevski

Political parties mentioned twice:

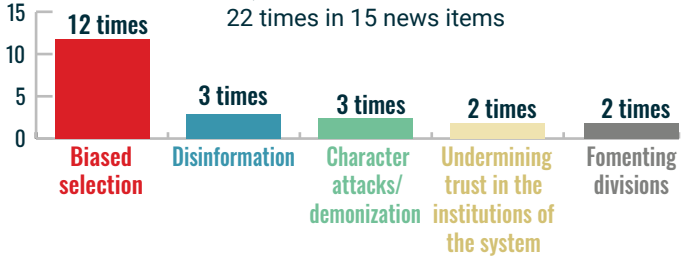
VMRO DPMNE | SDSM and DUI | Macedonian parties

Other actors mentioned twice:

The State Electoral Commission

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months, MTV 2 broadcast harmful narratives
22 times in 15 news items



In three months, 15 news items with a harmful narrative were recorded on MTV2, with which a biased selection is made, there is character attack, disinformation is spread, but also there is unfounded undermining of trust in the institutions of the system and fomenting divisions.

100% of harmful narratives are generated only by political actors, and the journalist broadcasts them without any intervention.

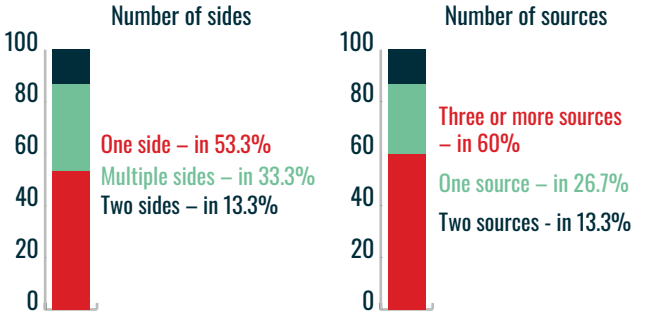
Most frequently, the harmful narratives are on the topic of domestic politics, and less frequently on the topics of foreign policy and judiciary. The most common genre of harmful narratives is the report, while news and the reported speech by a politician are less common.

In this quarter, MTV 2's news items are dominated by one-sided reporting. In about one third (33.3%) of the news items, several sides are shown, and only in two news items two sides are consulted.

The harmful narratives broadcast on MTV2 are mostly about DUI, VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM and their leaders.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



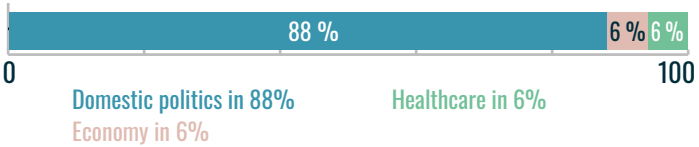
THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



The journalist broadcasts the harmful narrative without any intervention – 100% of the time of the identified harmful narratives.

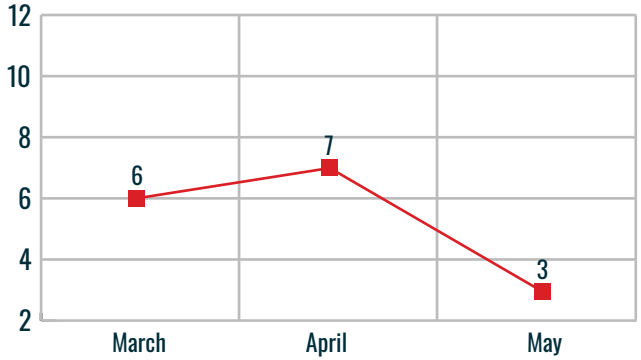
HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON KANAL 5

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

There are the fewest news items in May, and the most in April



Intensity of harmfulness:
2.4 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

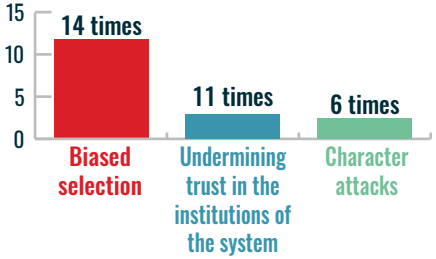
WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEM WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months, Kanal 5 broadcast harmful narratives 39 times in 16 news items

Disinformation: *- in 8% of all present harmful narratives (**3 times**)*
Fomenting divisions: *in 8% of all harmful narratives present (**3 times**)*
Spreading panic, fear and insecurity *and* ***Manipulative audiovisual media content*** *- **once***



In three months, 16 news items with a harmful narrative were recorded on Kanal 5, with which *biased selection is made, trust in the institutions of the system is unfoundedly undermined, there are character attacks, divisions are also encouraged, and disinformation is spread.*

Nearly all (96 %) harmful narratives are generated only by the political actor, and the journalist (all 100 %) broadcasts them without any intervention.

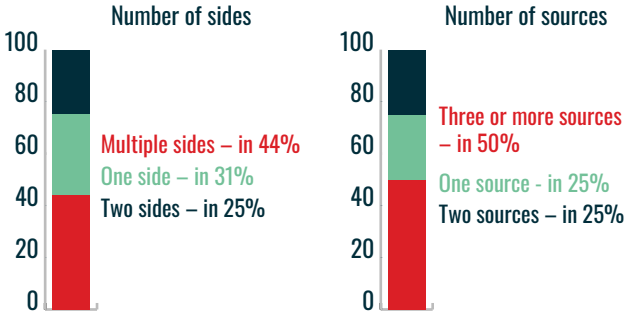
The most common topic of harmful narratives is domestic politics, but among the more frequent topics are the economy and healthcare. Three genres occur most frequently - half of the news items are in the form of a report, while in almost 40% the speech of a politician and news are broadcast.

Fairly multi-sided reporting is provided in the news items of Kanal 5, although the number of news items in which one-sided reporting is provided is not small (31%). More than one source was consulted in half of the news items, and two or one source in a quarter.

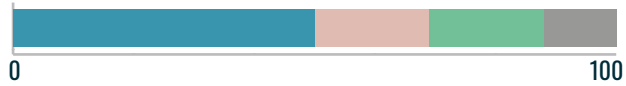
Harmful narratives broadcast on Kanal 5 mostly refer to different actors, however, more frequently compared to other actors, they are about the leader of VMRO-DPMNE – H. Mickoski, and then for Prime Minister Dimitar Kovachevski and VMRO-DPMNE.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Analysis/commentary and other appear in a smaller percentage - in total 12% of news items with a harmful narrative

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



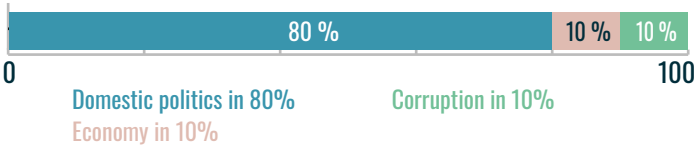
THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



The journalist broadcasts the harmful narrative without any intervention – 100% of the time of the present harmful narratives.

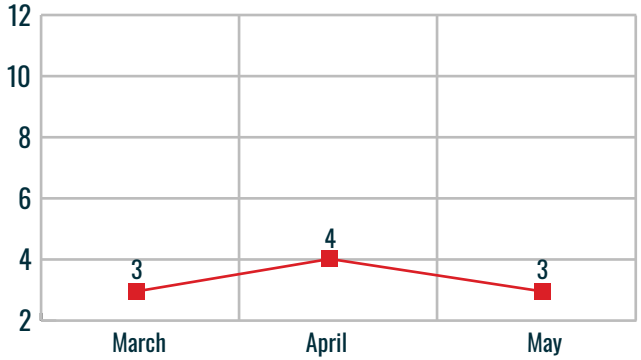
HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON SITEL

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

In three months:
10 news items, relatively evenly distributed



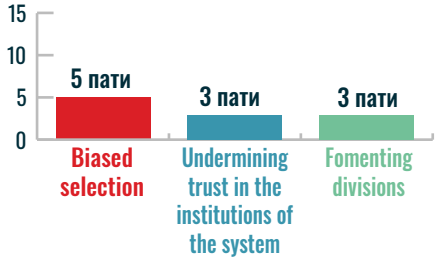
Intensity of harmfulness:
1.5 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEM WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months, in 10 news items, harmful narratives were broadcast by Sitel 15 times



*Conspiracy theories, Ethnocentrism, Spreading panic, fear and insecurity and Populism (**once each**)*

During the three months in Sitel, 10 news items with a harmful narrative were noted, with which *biased selection is made, trust in the institutions of the system is unfoundedly undermined, and division is fomented.*

Almost two-thirds of harmful narratives are generated by the political actor alone. In about a fifth of them, only the journalist produces them, and in the same amount, both of them. In doing so, the journalist mainly broadcasts them without any intervention and clearly without taking sides, but it also happens that the journalist broadcasts them with approval.

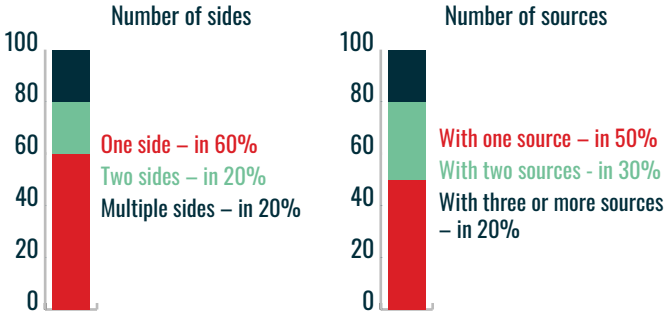
Harmful narratives are mainly about topics from domestic politics, and a little less often about topics like economy and corruption. In terms of genre, half of the news items are analytical-reportage news items, followed by a broadcast speech of a politician and an interview.

Only one side is represented in 60% of the news items. Similarly, in half of the news items, only one source was consulted.

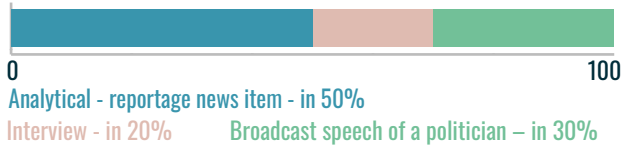
The harmful narratives broadcast by Sitel mostly refer to the government and VMRO-DPMNE.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

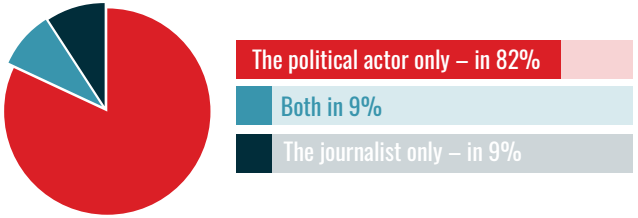
NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?

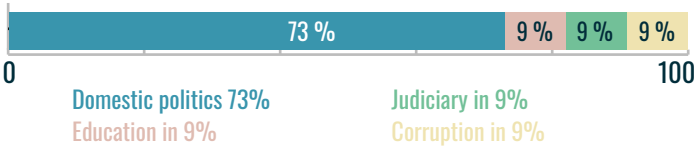


THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



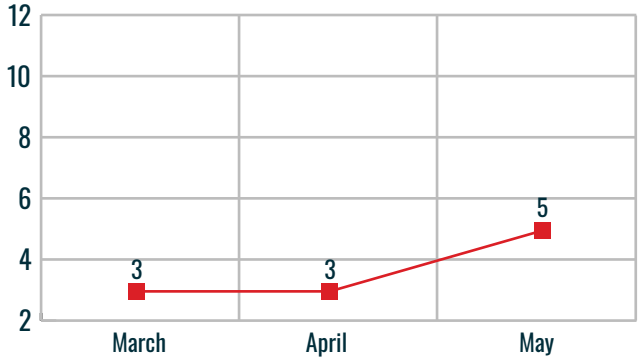
HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON TELMA

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months: 11 news items
Largest quantity of news items is in May



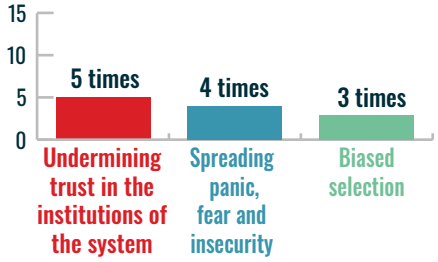
Intensity of harmfulness:
1.7 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEM WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?

In this quarter, the **11 news items** on Telma with harmful narrative talked about different personalities; only in March it was noted that **two news items** (out of five) talked about Ali Ahmeti.

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months, in 11 news items, Telma broadcast harmful narratives 19 times



Foreign influence *and* ***Fomenting divisions*** *– (two times each)*
Populism, Conspiracy theories *and* ***Disinformation*** *– (once each)*

There were recorded 11 news items with a harmful narrative on Telma during the three months of monitoring. Most of the time, *trust in the institutions of the system is unfoundedly undermined, biased selection is made, panic and fear are also spread.*

All harmful narratives are generated by the political actors alone. The journalist mainly reports these narratives without intervention and without taking sides, but in a small number (14%) of cases the journalist broadcasts them with condemnation and/or criticism.

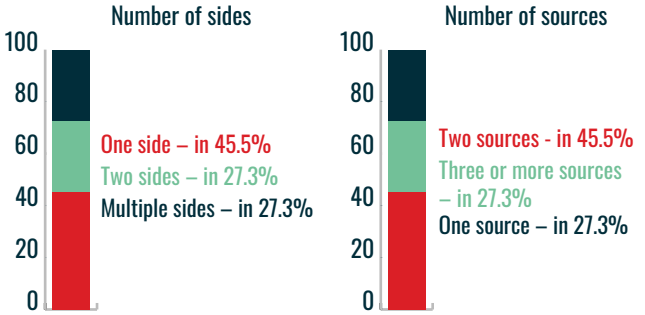
Over 70% of the news items with a harmful narrative are about domestic politics, and much less about education, judiciary and corruption. For the most part, the genre of the news items is a report and an analytical-reportage news item, but also a broadcast speech of a politician, and less (12.5%) news.

In more than half of the news items, the journalist provides information from multiple sources and in 73% of the news items, two or more sources are consulted.

In this quarter, the 11 news items on Telma with harmful narrative referred to different personalities; only in March it was noted that two news items (out of five) were about Ali Ahmeti.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Report – in 37%
Analytical - reportage news item - in 27%
Broadcast speech of a politician – in 18%
Broadcast press release – in 9%
News/news with a statement – in 9%

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



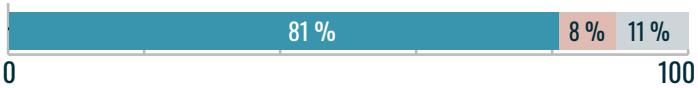
THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



The journalist broadcasts the harmful narrative without any intervention – in 50%
The journalist clearly underlines it, but does not take sides - in 36%
The journalist condemns it – in 14%

HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON ALSAT M

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



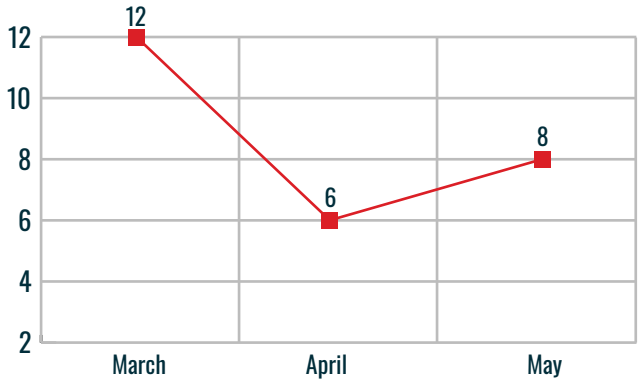
Domestic politics is the topic in 81%
Corruption is the topic in 8%
Topics of education, judiciary and economy also appear once

WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEM WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVES

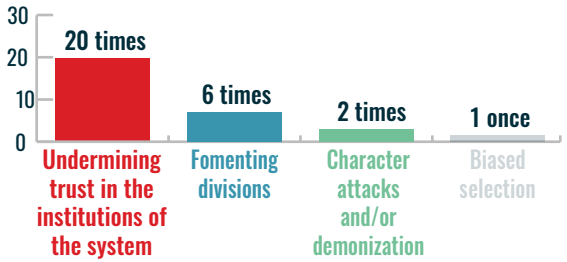
In three months: 26 news items



Intensity of harmfulness:
1.1 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months, Alsat M broadcast
29 harmful narratives in 26 news items



During the three months there were recorded 26 news items with a harmful narrative on Alsat M. In them, *trust in the institutions of the system is often baselessly undermined, division between citizens is encouraged and there are character attacks on political opponents.*

In all news items, the harmful narratives are produced by political actors. The TV station broadcasts them without any intervention and without taking sides.

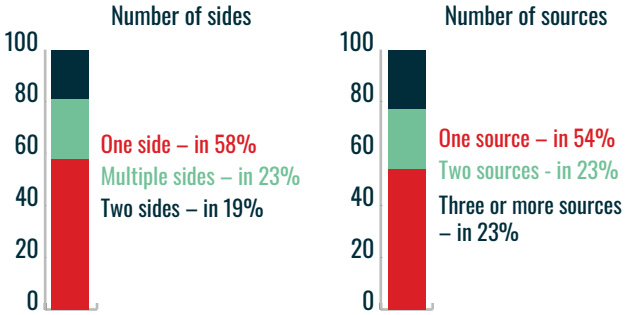
In the news items with harmful narratives, the topics that appear most often are related to domestic politics, and then to corruption, judiciary, education and economy. Less than half of the news items are in the form of a report and an interview, and then in the form of news and a broadcast speech of a politician.

In most of the news items (58%), one-sidedness in the reporting can be noted. Also, for the most part (54%) during the preparation of the news items, they use information only from one source.

Harmful narratives broadcast on Alsat M mostly refer to DUI and Ali Ahmeti, but also to SDSM, VMRO-DPMNE, coalition Vlen, as well as to Stevo Pendarovski and Hristijan Mickoski.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

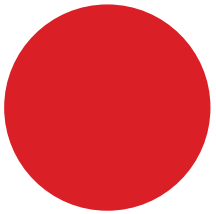


GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Report – in 42%
Interview – in 28%
News/news with a statement – in 15%
Broadcast speech of a politician – in 15%

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



The political actor only – in 100 %

THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



The journalist broadcasts the harmful narrative without any intervention – in 97%
The journalist clearly underlines it, but does not take sides - in 3%

HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON ALFA

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES

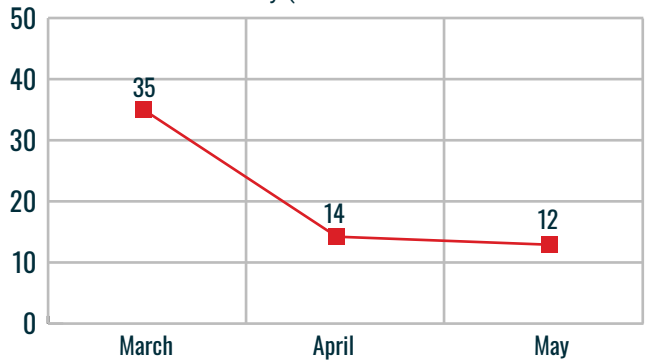


Domestic politics is the topic in 77%
Economy is the topic in 8%
Healthcare is the topic in 3.3%
Crime is the topic in 3.3%
Judiciary is the topic in 3.3%

In about a total of 6% of the news items with a harmful narrative, culture, social policy and foreign policy also appear.

NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

In three months: 61 news items
Smallest number in May (almost three times less than March)



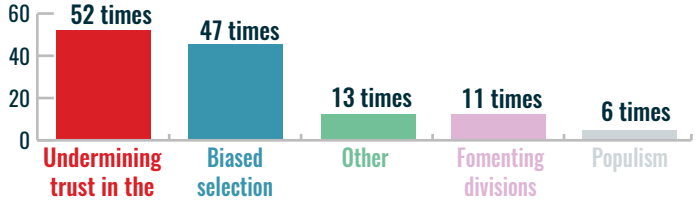
Intensity of harmfulness:
2.1 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEM WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



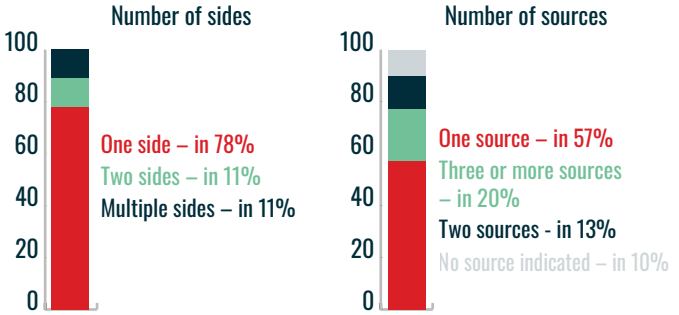
NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months, Alfa broadcast harmful narratives
131 times in 61 news items



PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

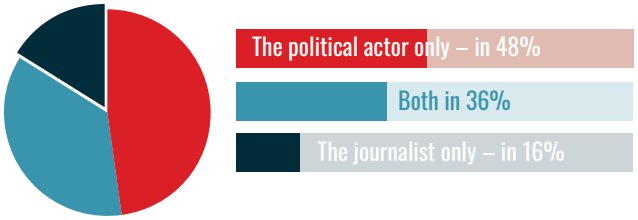


GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Analytical – reportage news item - 54%
Broadcast speech of a politician –16%
Analysis/commentary – in 10%
Report – in 10%
Broadcast press release and other genres also appear in a smaller percentage

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



The journalist approves it - in 59%
The journalist condemns and/or criticizes it – in 16%
The journalist broadcasts the harmful narrative without any intervention – in 14%
The journalist clearly underlines it, but does not take sides - in 11 %

During the three months of monitoring, 61 news items with a harmful narrative were registered at Alfa, which mostly *unfoundedly undermine trust in the institutions of the system and use biased selection, encourage division among citizens, spread populism, there are character attacks on the political opponents, etc.*

Only in TV Alfa, 52% of the harmful narratives are created either by the journalist (16%), or by the journalist and the political actor (36%), while the remaining 48% are by the politicians. In doing so, the journalist in most cases approves the indicator of the harmful narrative produced by the political actor, and only then broadcasts them without any intervention and clearly without taking sides. In a smaller number (7.4%) they broadcast the narrative with condemnation and/or criticism.

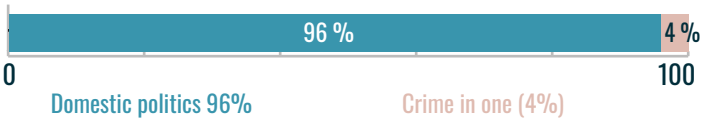
One-sided reporting dominates (in 78% of the news items only one side is presented). Similarly, most frequently (57%) only one source is consulted in the news items. In 20% of the news items three or more sources were consulted, and in 13% two sources. Alfa is the only television station that does not have sources listed in almost 10% of broadcast news items with harmful narratives.

There is almost no topic that is not covered in the news items with a harmful narrative on Alfa, but most of them are related to domestic politics, and less often to the economy, judiciary, crime and healthcare, and foreign policy, culture and social policy/issues are also mentioned. Half of the news items are analytical-reportage news items, followed by the genres broadcast speech of a politician, analysis/comment and report.

Harmful narratives at Alfa mostly refer to the government, SDSM, DUI, D. Kovachevski and S. Pendarovski, in a negative context, while VMRO-DPMNE, H. Mickoski and A. Nikolovski in a positive.

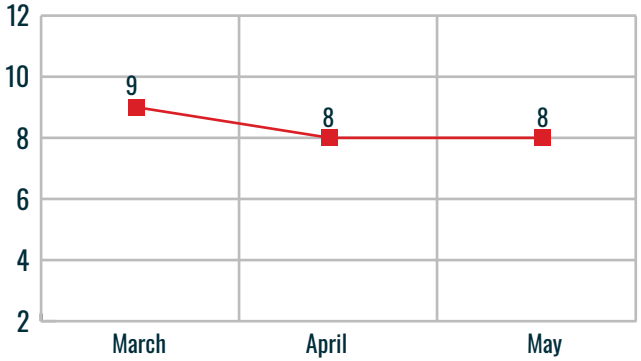
HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON TV 21

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

For three months:
25 news items, evenly distributed by month



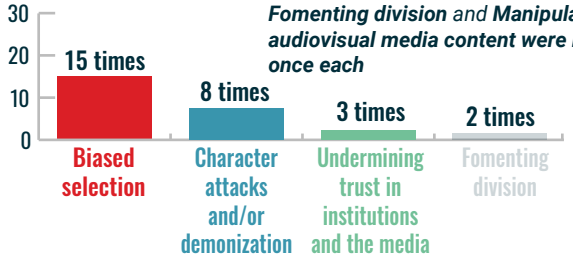
Intensity of harmfulness:
1.2 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ARTICLE WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

TV 21 broadcast harmful narratives
30 times in 25 news items in three months



A total of 25 news items with harmful narratives were recorded on TV 21 in the three months. In them, *biased selection is made, there is also character attack on political opponents and trust in the institutions of the system is unfoundedly undermined, but divisions are also encouraged.*

All harmful narratives are generated only by political actors, and the journalist broadcasts them without any intervention.

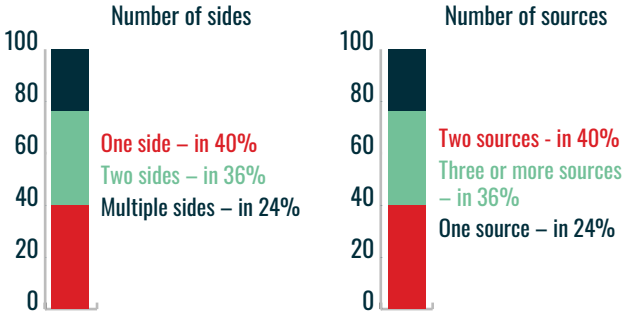
The news items with harmful narratives are dominated by domestic politics, and in one news item the topic of corruption appears. The dominant genre (60%) is the report, and one third of the news items are news.

In more than half of the news items, the reporting includes multiple sides. Similarly, in 76% of the news items two or more sources are consulted.

Harmful narratives broadcast on TV 21 mostly refer to DUI, SDSM, Vlen, A. Ahmeti, H. Mickoski and S. Pendarovski. Usually, the journalist's attitude towards the actors is neutral, and when negative, it typically reproduces someone else's attitude towards the actors, not the journalist's.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



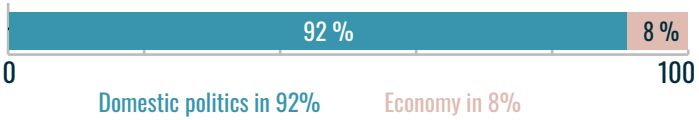
THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



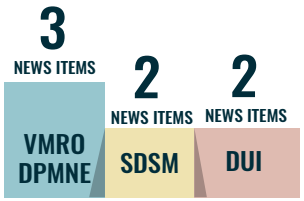
The journalist broadcasts the harmful narrative without any intervention – in 100% of the harmful narratives

HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON TV 24 VESTI

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES

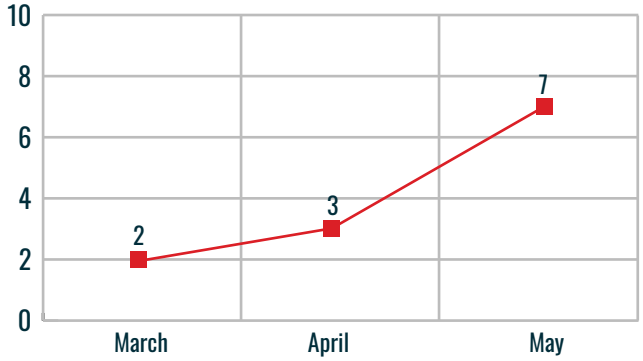


WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ARTICLE WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE

In three months: 12 news items
The largest number (7) is in May

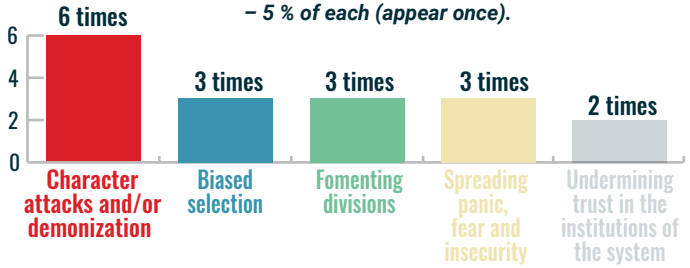


Intensity of harmfulness:
1.6 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

TV 24 broadcast harmful narratives
19 times in 12 news items in three months

***Foreign influence** and **Hate speech** – 5 % of each (appear once).*



During the past three months, there were recorded 12 news items with a harmful narrative on TV24, *with character attack on political opponents, biased selection, fomenting divisions and spreading panic and fear, but also undermining trust in the institutions of the system.*

Most of the harmful narratives are produced only by political actors and 17% of them by the journalist. The television mainly broadcasts them without any intervention and clearly without the journalist taking sides.

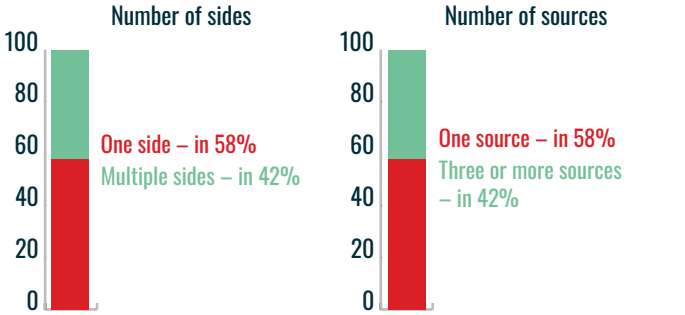
Domestic politics appears as the main topic in almost all news items with a harmful narrative, and the economy appears as a topic in only one. By genre, in half of the news items it is reported through a broadcast speech of a politician, in a quarter through an analysis / comment, and only once through a news, report or broadcast press release.

In more than half of the news items, it is reported unilaterally, etc., and usually only one source is consulted.

The harmful narratives broadcast on TV 24 mostly refer to VMRO-DPMNE, SDSM and DUI.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Broadcast speech of a politician – in 50%
Analysis/commentary – in 25%
Broadcast press release, news and report appear each once as the genre of the news item (all about 8 %)

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



The journalist broadcasts the harmful narrative without any intervention – in 83%
The journalist clearly underlines it, but does not take sides - in 17%

Similarities and differences between TV stations in broadcasting harmful narratives

Comparison by number of news items for three months: March – May 2024

In this quarter's report, similar to the previous six-month period, TV Alfa continues to stand out among all other TV stations in terms of the number of news items with a harmful narrative. Following far behind are TV Alsat M with a total of 26 such news items and TV 21 with 25.

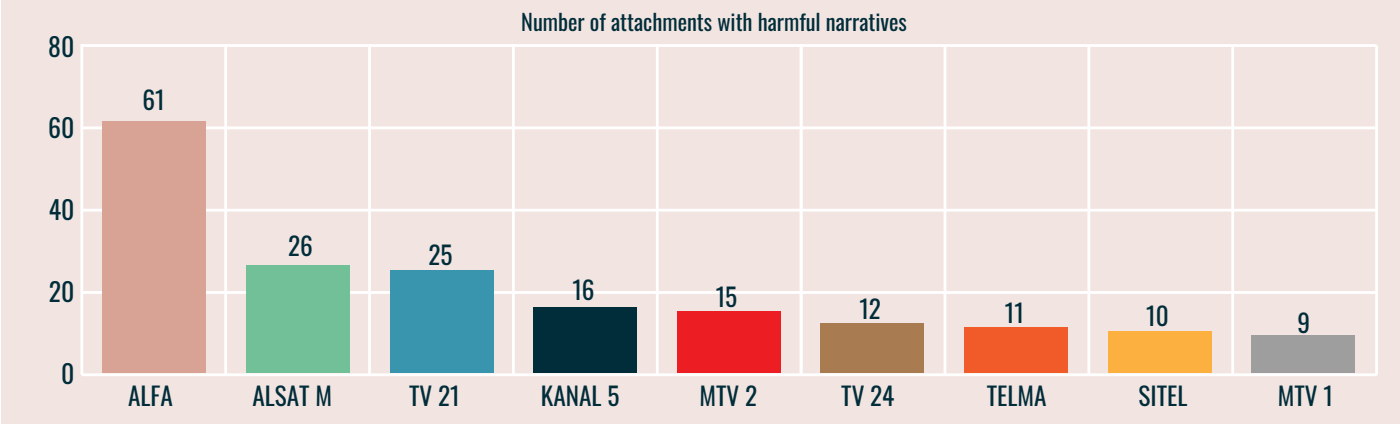


Figure 34 Number of news items with a harmful narrative by TV station

As can be seen from the Figure, the difference between the TV station that published the fewest news items with a harmful narrative (9) and the one that published the most (61) amounts to 52 news items.

Comparisons by intensity of harmfulness of the news item

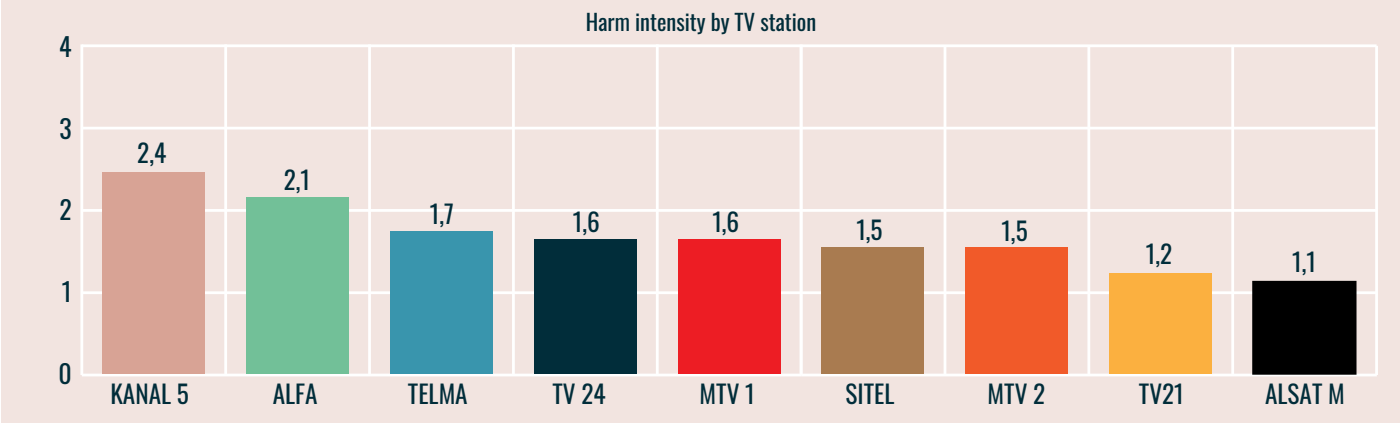


Figure 35 Intensity of harmfulness by TV station

According to the intensity of harmfulness, Alsat M and TV21 have the lowest intensity (on average one harmful narrative per news item), and with the highest intensity of harmfulness are the news items on Alfa and Kanal 5 (on average two harmful narratives per news item). If compared to the previously analysed six-month period (September 2023 – February 2024), there are significant differences in some televisions. Namely, the biggest difference is with Telma, where there is a decrease of 0.8 in the intensity of harmfulness from 2.5 to 1.7 (almost one harmful narrative less). The next television that recorded a more significant decrease of 0.6 is Sitel - from 2.1 to 1.5, and reductions of 0.5 and 0.4 were also recorded by Alsat M (from 1.6 to 1.1) and TV21 (from 1 .6 to 1.2). A slight increase in the intensity of harmfulness is noted in the following televisions: MTV1 (from 1.5 to 1.6), MTV1 (from 1.2 to 1.5), Alfa (from 1.8 to 2.1) and TV24 (from 1.5 to 1.6). Only Kanal 5 remained at the same intensity of harmfulness – 2.4 and in this quarter it is at the top in terms of harm.

Comparisons by type of harmful narratives

The chart below shows the most common harmful narratives that each of the television stations broadcast and how many times they broadcast each of those narratives.

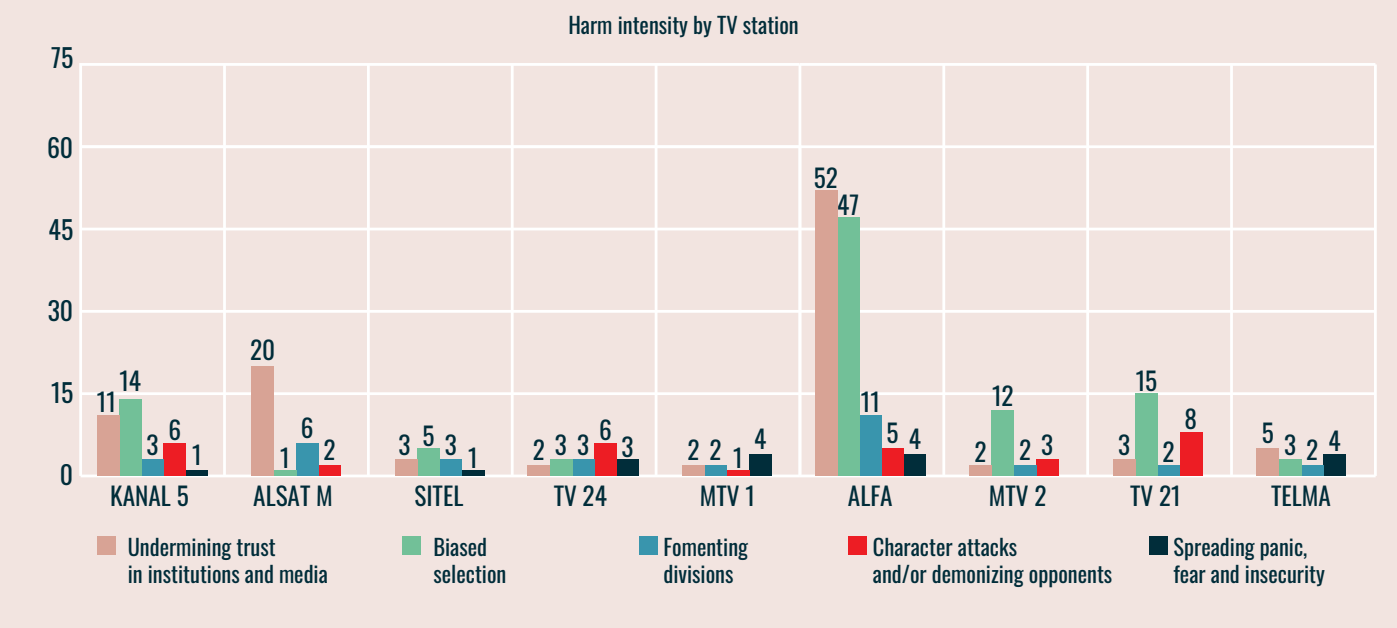


Figure 36 Most commonly broadcast harmful narratives by TV station

For all TV stations, it is presented how many times the five most frequent harmful narratives were broadcast: *Undermining trust in institutions and the media, Biased selection, Fomenting divisions, Character attacks and Spreading panic, fear and insecurity*. The first two harmful narratives were in the most common three narratives also in the previous six-month period. What is new in this quarter is the rise of *Fomenting divisions* to third place (without exception, present with all nine televisions). At its expense, the previous narrative that occupied the third place in terms of frequency – *Character attacks* is in the fourth place (in the analysed quarter, this harmful narrative is absent from two TV stations: Sitel and Telma). What is also interesting in this quarter is the rise of the *Spreading fear/panic* narrative to fifth place, when previously it barely appeared (in the previous six-month period this narrative accounted for 1% of the total number of present narratives, while in the last quarter with 5%). The same trend can be observed with *Fomenting divisions*, in the previous six-month period the frequency of its use in public discourse was 5%, while in the last three months it was 11%. When considering the context of this quarter – election campaigns and elections – the emergence of the narratives *Fomenting divisions and Spreading panic, fear and insecurity* take on a different meaning. Hence, it can be said that the first two harmful narratives – *Undermining trust* and *Biased selection*, as well as Character attacks are constant and their use seems to be normalized in political communication and public discourse. The rest vary and are used according to the current context and needs.

Comparison by the entities producing the narrative

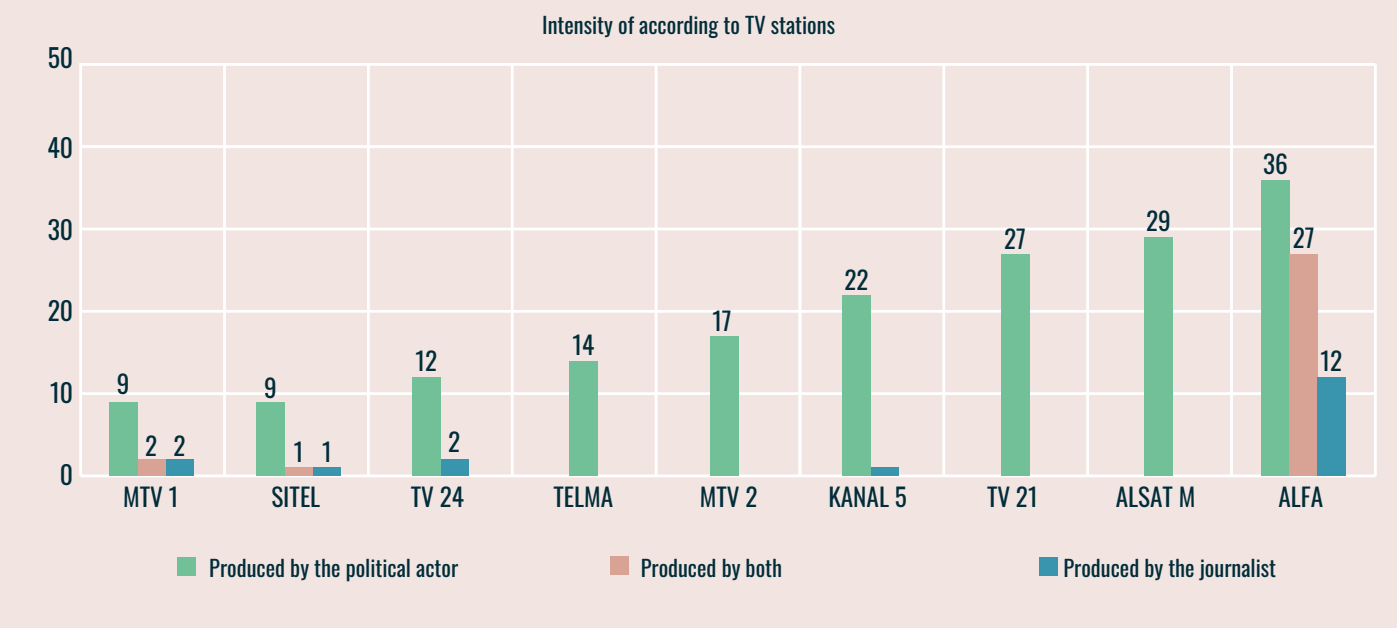


Figure 37 Who is producing the harmful narrative in the news items, comparison by TV stations

In all television stations, except for TV Alfa the political actor creates the harmful narrative and the journalist broadcasts it in the largest number of reports. In all news items of Telma, MTV 2, TV21 and Alsat M the politician is the creator of the harmful narrative. In contrast to the last analysed period, in the last one that is the focus of the analysis, it is noted that Alsat M and MTV2 have no reports in which the journalist produced the harmful narrative (in the past, the journalist produced a harmful narrative in about 4% of both televisions). At MTV 1, the journalist alone or together with the political actor creates the harmful narrative in 4 reports (or 30% of the reports), in Sitel's news items, in 18% of them (or in 2 news items) the journalist or both of them produce it, at TV 24 and Kanal 5 in two or one news items, the journalist produces the harmful narrative (14% or 4%). Only at Alfa in 39 out of 75 cases or 52% the journalist or both of them produce the harmful narrative, while only in 39 cases or 48% it is done by the political actor and the journalist only broadcasts it.

Comparisons between TV stations on the attitude of the journalist towards the harmful narrative by the political entity

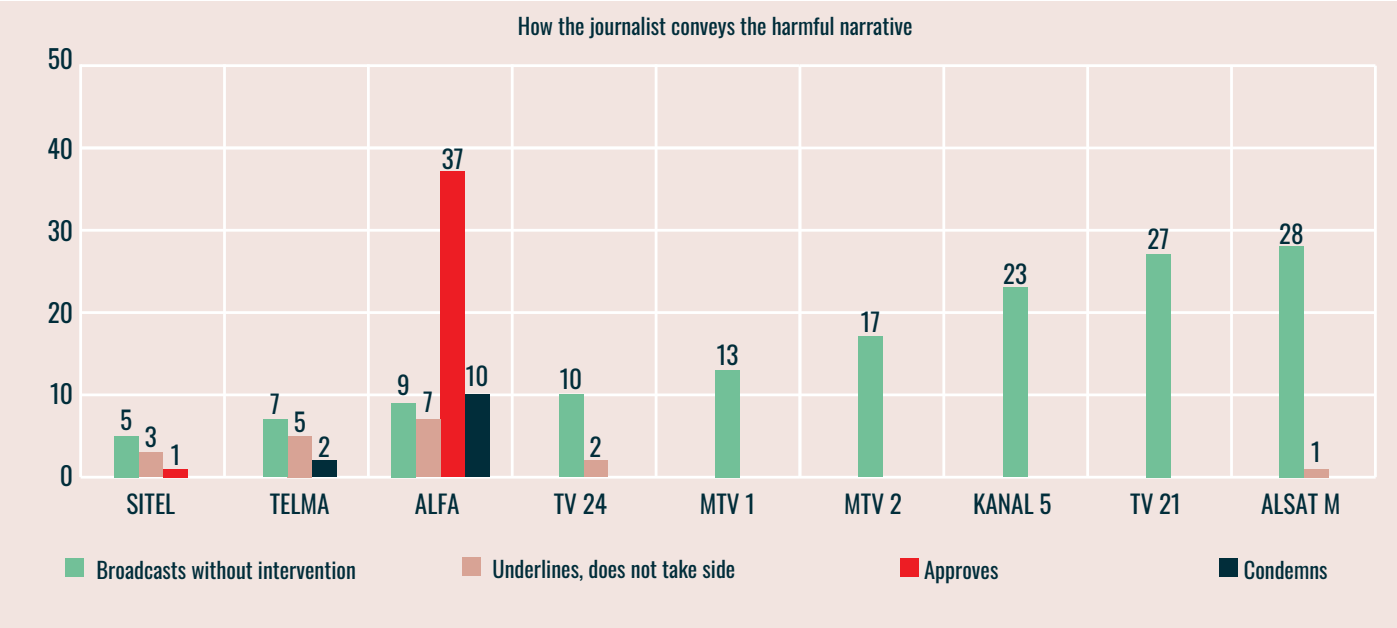


Figure 38 Attitude of the journalist when broadcasting the harmful narrative

The data shows that the most common attitude of the journalist towards the harmful narrative is that they broadcast the harmful narrative without any intervention, and this is the case for all TV stations. However, there are stations that, not infrequently, clearly highlight the harmful narrative without taking sides, or broadcast it with approval.

The two reviews of the political and media communication situations, conducted after six months and after the last quarter of the nine-month monitoring period, indicate several important insights regarding televisions:

- Televisions in both the six-month and this three-month analysis have the lowest number of news items with harmful narratives, the least used harmful narratives and the lowest intensity of harmfulness. Of course, the legal regulations that oblige television stations to respect professional standards, the existence of a regulatory body, and other self-regulatory mechanisms contribute to this;

- In the last analysed three-month period compared to the previous six-month period, there is noted larger and continued decrease in both the number of posts with harmful narrative, as well as the frequency of using harmful narratives, and thus the intensity of the harmfulness, is visible in almost all televisions;

- Although in this three-month period also the same harmful narratives dominated as in the previous period (*Biased selection* and *Undermining trust*) there appear new ones which were not evident in the six-month report or were not used. More frequently used harmful narratives are *Fomenting division* and *Spreading panic, fear and insecurity.* Certainly, these harmful narratives are a reflection of the narratives of the political actors in the media space, which they used in their own election campaigns and strategies.

- With some televisions, there is a smaller number of news items in which the harmful narrative is created by the journalist, compared to the previous analysed six-month period

- Unfortunately, the last quarter of the monitoring noted that the one-sided reporting dominates, consulting only one source (and even one of the television stations does not cite sources at all), and instead of professional news or another impartial genre of reporting, frequently the television stations broadcast a speech by a politician or a press release.

ONLINE MEDIA



Frequency of online media news items with harmful narratives

In the period March 2024 – May 2024, 11 informative online media outlets were subject to monitoring. In total during the 46 days of monitoring, 672 news items with harmful narratives were recorded. There were the fewest in May (187), and the most in April (261).

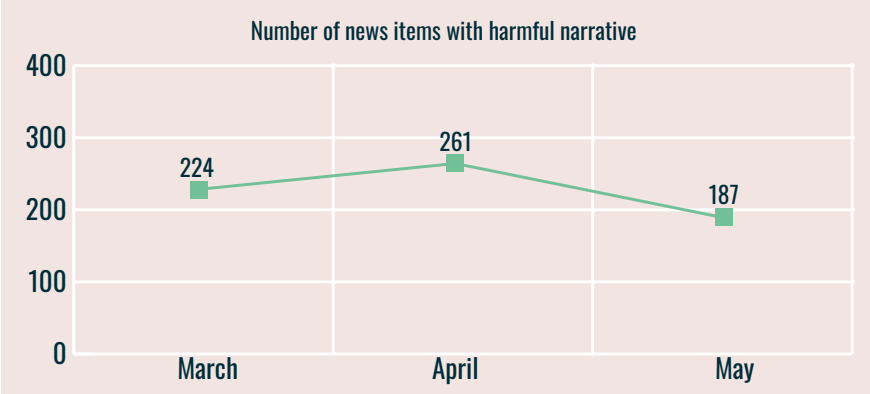


Figure 39 Total number of news items with a harmful narrative by online media outlets

Frequency of harmful narratives and intensity of harmfulness

The content analysis of the 672 news items published by 11 online media outlets confirmed the presence of 1131 harmful narratives, the most in April (482).

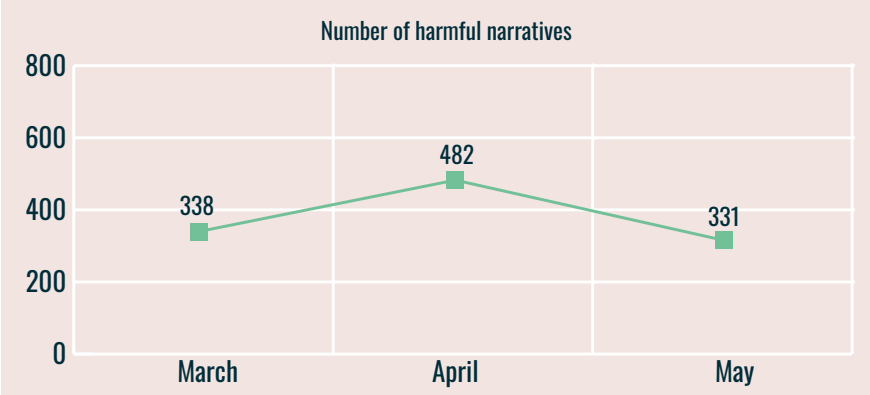


Figure 40 Number of reported harmful narratives by month

The intensity of harmfulness is 1.7 for all analysed online media outlets. This means that online media on average publish almost two harmful narratives in one post/news item.

If reviewed on monthly basis, one can see that the intensity was lowest in March and most intensive in April, although in the three months it is around two harmful narratives by post.

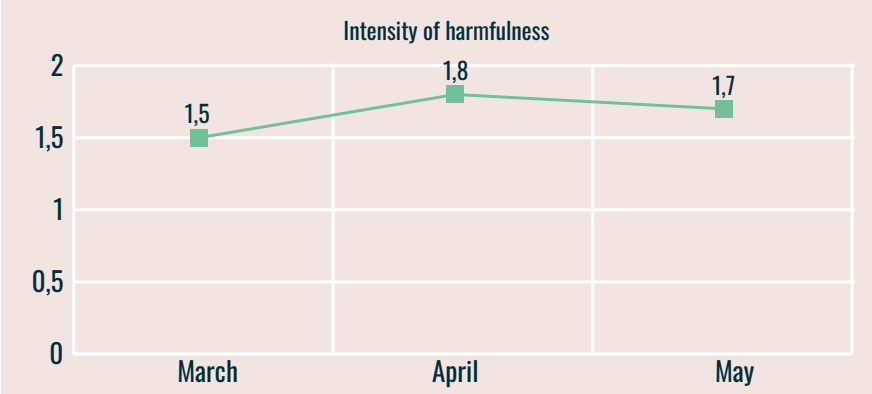


Figure 41 Intensity of harmfulness by month

Types of harmful narratives

The top three most frequently broadcast harmful narratives throughout the three-month period are:

- ➔ *Undermining trust in institutions*
- ➔ *Biased selection*
- ➔ *Character attacks*

Furthermore, Fomenting divisions, Populism and Spreading panic, fear and insecurity follow in order of frequency.

Who produces the harmful narratives and how journalists respond to the harmful narratives by political actors

In 87% of the news items with a harmful narrative, it is produced only by the political actor, in 8% it is produced by both, while only the journalist produces it in 5 % of the news items.

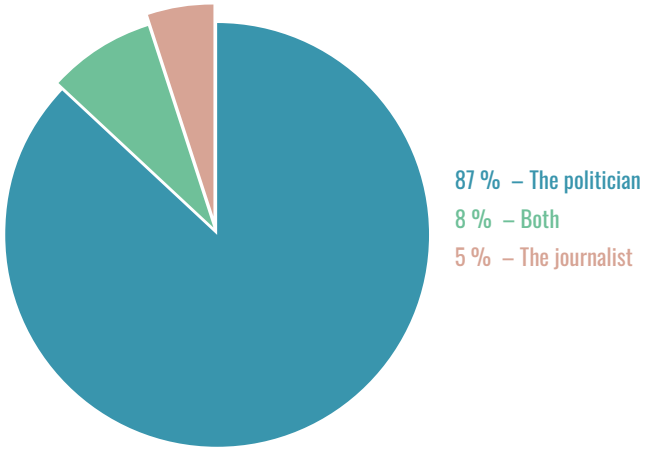


Figure 42 Who produces the harmful narrative?

In cases where the harmful narrative is produced either by the political actor or by both, most of the time, i.e. in 62% of the news items, the journalist just reports it without intervening during the reporting and in 11% of the news items they even **approve** the present harmful narrative in the news item.

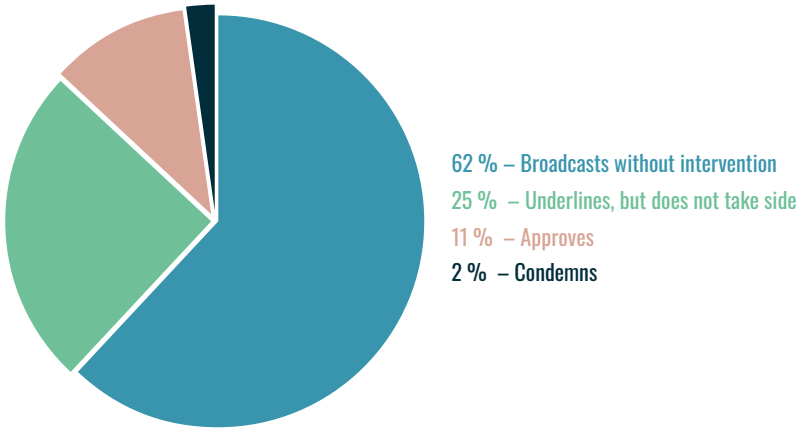


Figure 43 What is the attitude of the journalist in reporting the harmful narrative?

What is the most commonly used genre of news items with harmful narrative

Almost two-thirds of the posts are either a broadcast press release by political parties or a broadcast speech of a politician. The other journalistic genres that convey a more complete picture, elaboration of the topic from several sides for impartial and objective reporting, are represented in a very small number, so the impression remains that the online media outlets, i.e. those that are subject to monitoring, represent another platform for political actors and parties to convey their harmful narratives.

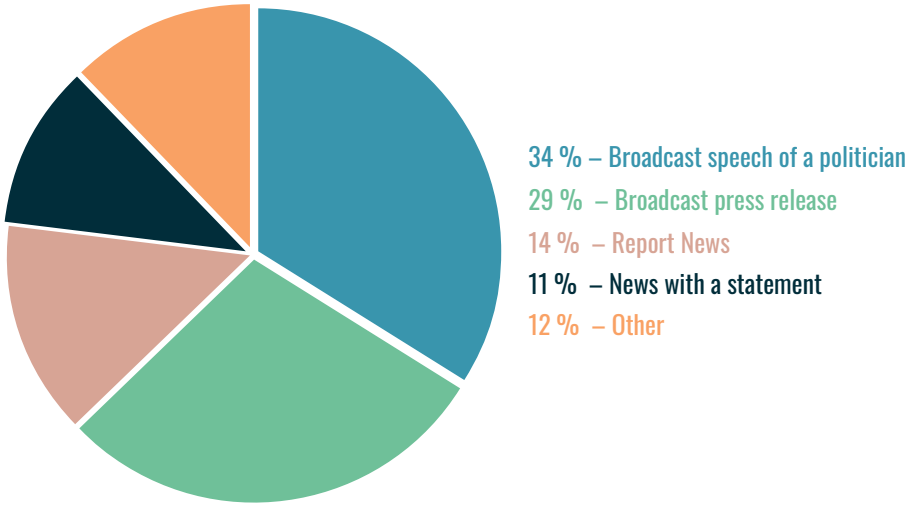


Figure 44 What genres are most frequently used in posts with a harmful narrative

Main theme in news items with harmful narratives

Similar to the political actors and TV stations, domestic politics dominates as the main topic of the news items with a harmful narrative with almost 80%, while the topics of crime, foreign policy, economy, corruption, economy, judiciary and health participate with 2-4% (each of them).

Sources

The sources in the news items/posts of the analysed online media outlets are mostly (constantly throughout the months) precise, on average in 90% of the cases. This is primarily due to the fact that the dominating form are press releases and speeches by politicians.

What significantly deviates from professional journalistic reporting, which implies objectivity, impartiality and duty to provide balanced information to the public so that the public can make reliable decisions, is the tendency in 90% of the posts to show only one side.

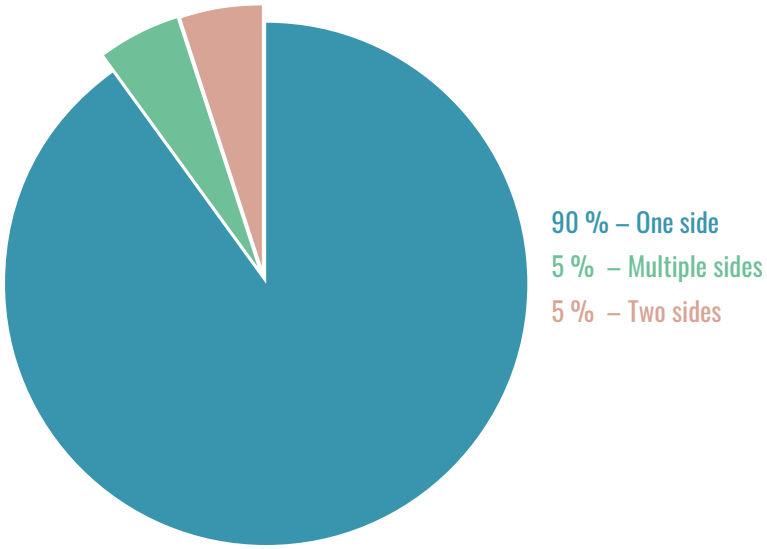


Figure 45 Presented sides in online media posts

In terms of the number of consulted sources (number of sources) in the news items/posts, news items in which only one source is consulted dominate (85%), followed by those with two sources and those with three or more (7% each). In 1% of the news items/posts there is no source indicated.

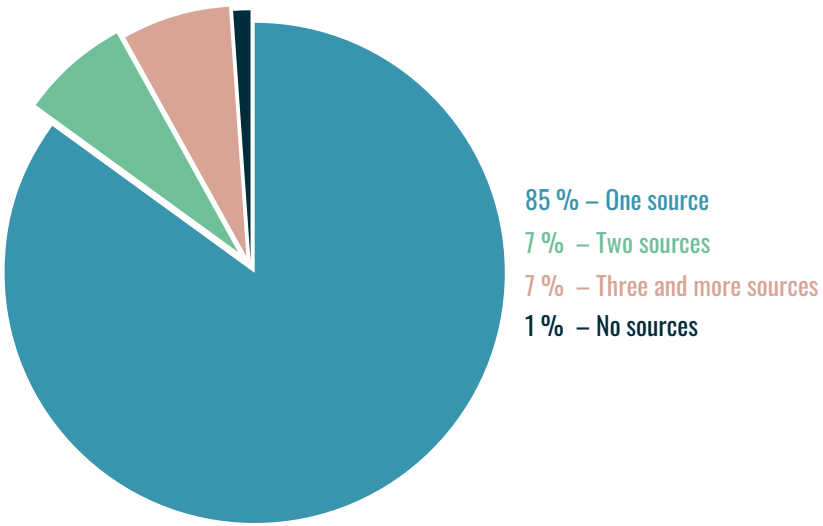


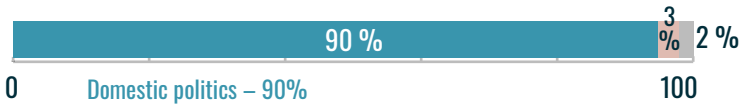
Figure 46 Number of sources in online media posts

INDIVIDUAL ONLINE MEDIA PROFILES



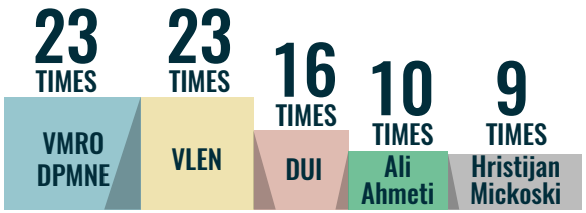
HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON TETOVA SOT

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



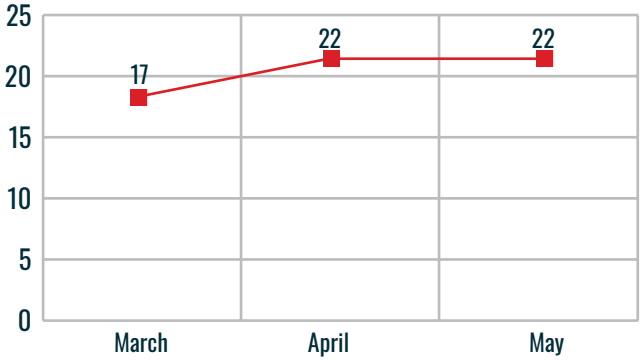
Domestic politics – 90%
Foreign Policy and Judiciary – 3%
Corruption and Economy 2% each

WHO IS THE TOPIC IN THE NEWS ITEMS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

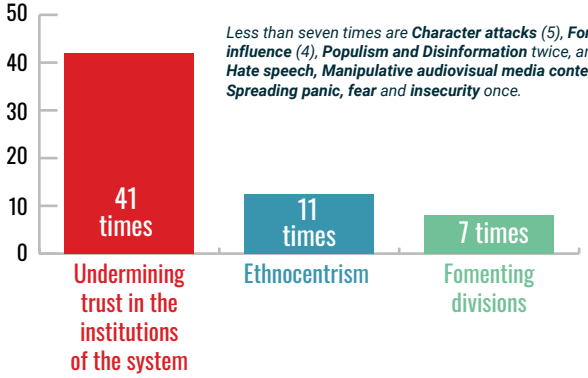
In three months: 61 posts, least in March



Intensity of harmfulness:
1.2 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

Tetova Sot broadcast harmful narratives
75 times in 61 posts in three months

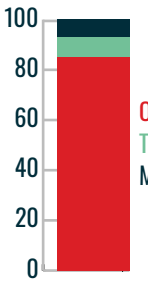


*Less than seven times are **Character attacks** (5), **Foreign influence** (4), **Populism and Disinformation** twice, and **Hate speech, Manipulative audiovisual media content** and **Spreading panic, fear** and **insecurity** once.*

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

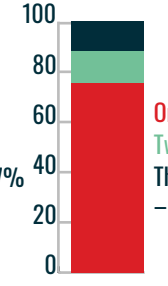
NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

Number of sides



One side – in 85%
Two sides – in 8%
Multiple sides – in 7%

Number of sources



One source – in 77%
Two sources – in 13%
Three or more sources – in 12%

GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Report – in 38%
Broadcast speech of a politician – in 23%
Broadcast press release – in 23%
News – in 15%
Interview – in 1%

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



The political actor only – 93%
The journalist only – 6%
Both – 1%

THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



They broadcast the harmful narrative without any intervention – 93%
They approve it – 7% of harmful narratives

In the course of three months, Tetova Sot posted 61 news items with a harmful narrative that *unfoundedly undermine trust in the institutions of the system, encourage ethnocentrism and divisions.*

Almost all news items with harmful narratives are related to domestic politics, and less frequently to foreign policy, judiciary, corruption and economy.

Harmful narratives reported by Tetova Sot mostly refer to the coalition Vlen, VMRO-DPMNE, DUI, Ali Ahmeti and the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Hristijan Mickoski.

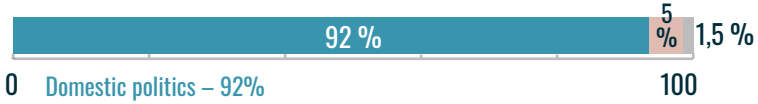
The most common genre forms are report, then broadcast speech and broadcast press release and in a small percentage also news.

Most of the harmful narratives are produced by political actors, while the journalist in most cases broadcasts them without any intervention, and in a small number approves the indicator of the harmful narrative produced by the political actor.

In the news items, reporting is usually unilaterally. Equally, most frequently only one source was consulted in news items with a harmful narrative. There are precise sources in 78% of the news items, and in 12% of the news items the source is another media outlet.

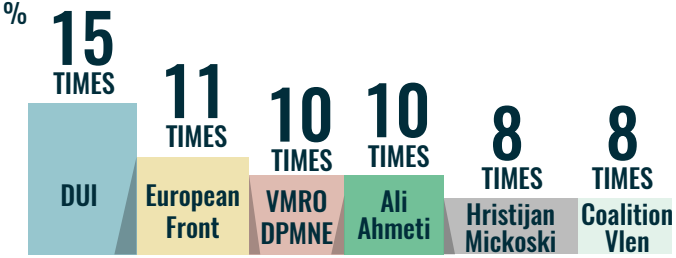
HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON ALMAKOS

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



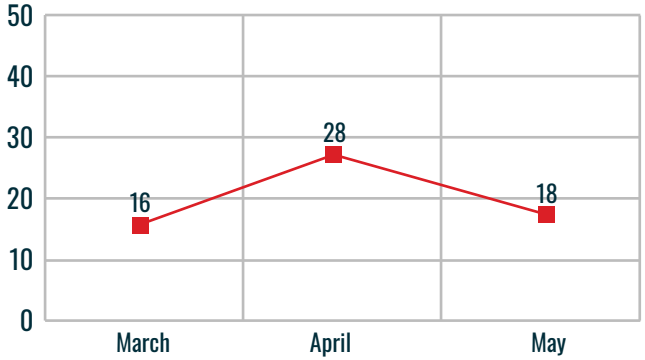
Domestic politics – 92%
Foreign policy – 5%
On the topics of judiciary and corruption there is one news item each (about 1.5% each)

WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ARTICLE WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

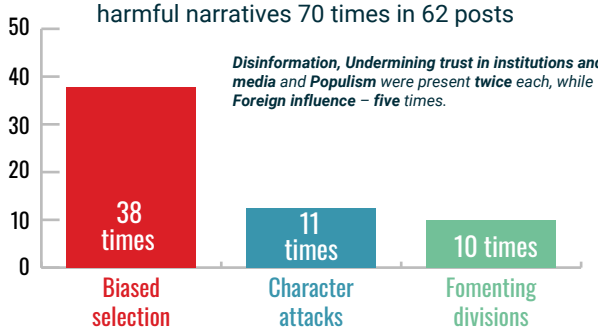
In three months: 62 posts
The most (28) in April



Intensity of harmfulness:
1.1 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

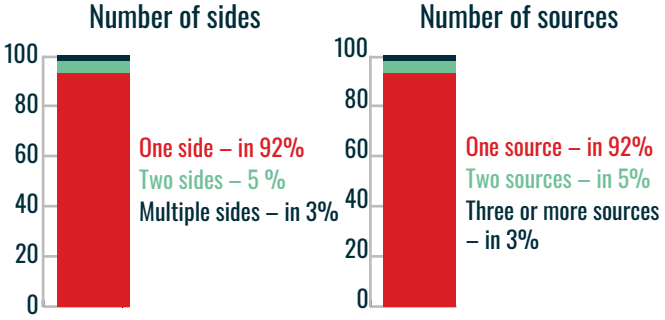
In three months, Almakos broadcast harmful narratives 70 times in 62 posts



Disinformation, Undermining trust in institutions and media *and* ***Populism*** *were present* ***twice*** *each, while* ***Foreign influence*** *–* ***five*** *times.*

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

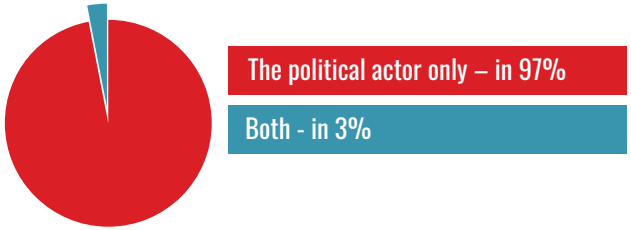


GENRE OF THE NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Broadcast press release – in 35%
Report – in 31%
News – in 24%
Broadcast speech of a politician – in 10%

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



They broadcast the harmful narrative without any intervention – in 95%
Approve it – in 3%
Underline it, without taking a position – in 2%

In the three months in Almakos there are recorded 62 posts with a harmful narrative that used *Biased selection, Unfoundedly fomenting divisions and Character attacks on the political opponents.*

Most frequently, harmful narratives are related to topics from domestic politics, and less often to foreign policy, corruption and judiciary.

Harmful narratives broadcast by Almakos mostly refer to DUI, then the European Front coalition, the leaders of VMRO-DPMNE and DUI, and the Vlen coalition.

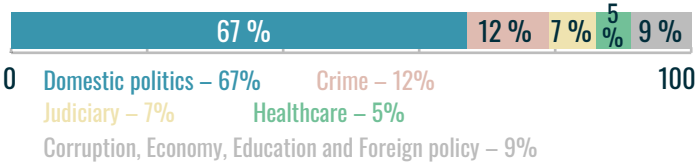
The most common genre used is the report, and one-third are packaged as broadcast press release. News is the genre in about a quarter of the news items in which there is a harmful narrative.

Political actors are the ones who mostly produce the harmful narratives, and very few produce both. At the same time, the journalist broadcasts them in almost all the reports without any intervention.

News items usually provide one-sided reporting. In over 90% of the news items, only one source was consulted. Sources are precise in all posts.

HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON VECER.mk

MOST FREQUENTLY PRESENT TOPICS IN ITEMS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES

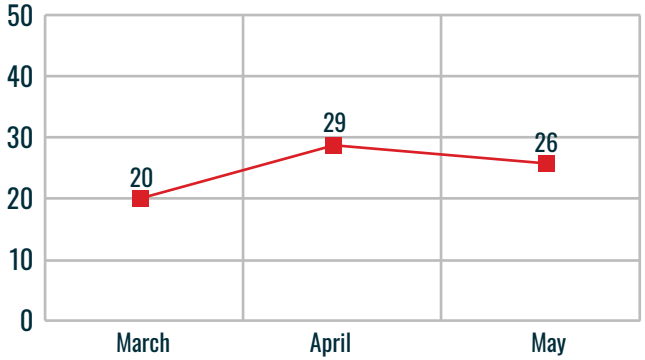


WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEMS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

In three months: 75 posts
Most in April (29)

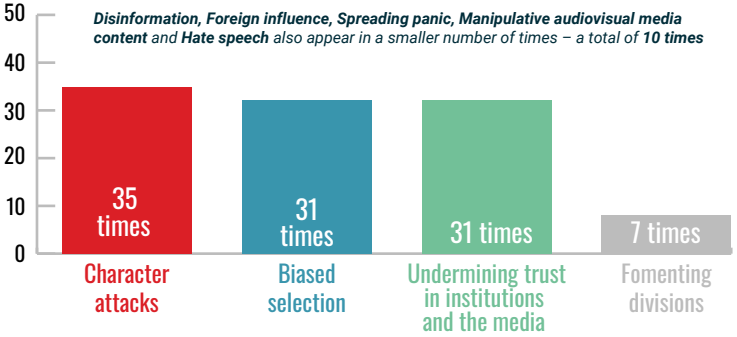


Intensity of harmfulness:
1.5 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In the last three months, in 75 posts,
harmful narratives were broadcast in Vecer 114 times

Disinformation, Foreign influence, Spreading panic, Manipulative audiovisual media content *and* ***Hate speech*** *also appear in a smaller number of times – a total of* ***10 times***



In the three monitored months, 75 posts with a harmful narrative were recorded in Vecher, which *unfoundedly used character attacks, biased selection, undermining trust in institutions and the media, and fomenting divisions.*

Almost 70% of the news items with harmful narratives are related to the topic of domestic politics, followed by crime, judiciary, healthcare, foreign policy and education.

Harmful narratives broadcast in Vecer usually refer to SDSM, Stevo Pendarovski and Ali Ahmeti.

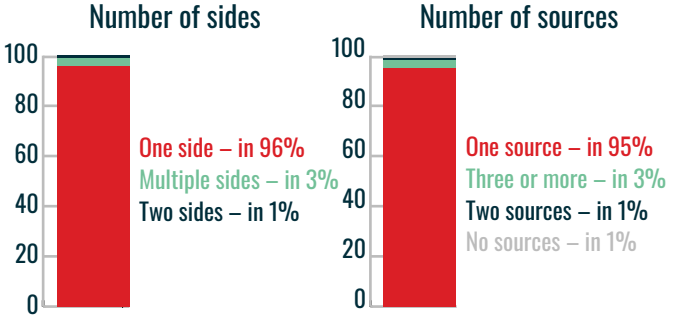
Over 70% of posts use broadcast press release and broadcast speech as genres. The news is present in only 11% of the news items with a harmful narrative.

Almost 70% of the harmful narratives are produced by the politician, almost a quarter by the politician and the journalist together, while 10% by the journalist. Thus, the journalist usually broadcasts them with approval (81%).

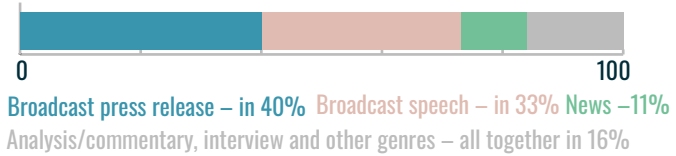
In nearly all posts, the reporting is one-sided and only one source is consulted. The sources are precise.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

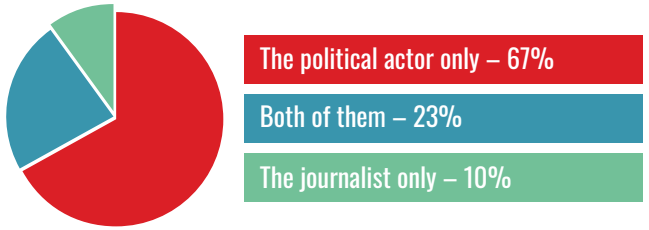
NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?

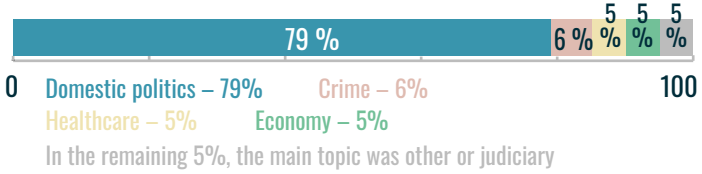


THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE

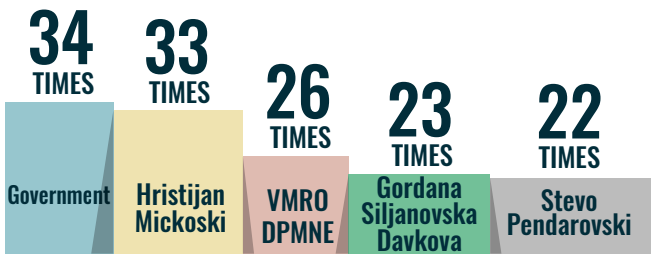


HARMFUL NARRATIVE ON KURIR

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES

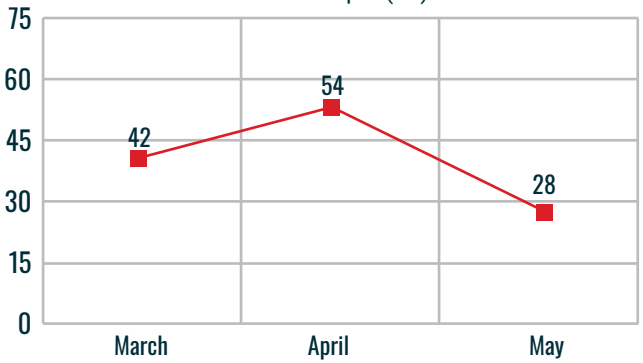


WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ARTICLES WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

In three months: 124 informative items
Most in April (54)

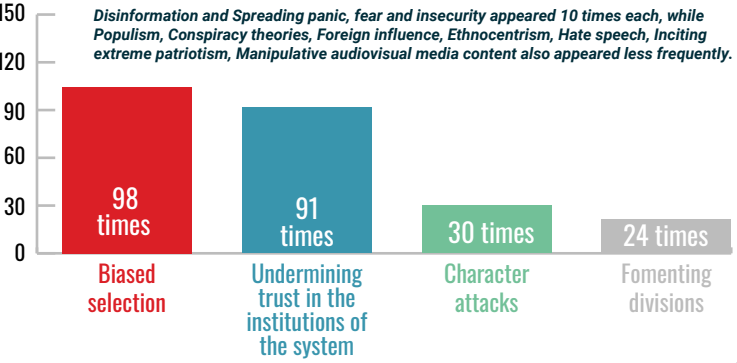


Intensity of harmfulness:
2.3 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months, Kurir broadcast
harmful narratives 280 times in 124 posts

Disinformation and Spreading panic, fear and insecurity appeared 10 times each, while Populism, Conspiracy theories, Foreign influence, Ethnocentrism, Hate speech, Inciting extreme patriotism, Manipulative audiovisual media content also appeared less frequently.



In the three months 124 posts with a harmful narrative were registered at Kurir. In these posts with a harmful narrative, *trust in the institutions of the system is unfoundedly undermined, biased selection is made and divisions are encouraged.*

In over four-fifths of the news items with harmful narratives, the main topic is domestic politics, followed by crime, healthcare, economy and judiciary.

Harmful narratives broadcast by Kurir mostly refer to the Government, Hristijan Mickoski, VMRO-DPMNE, Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova and Stevo Pendarovski.

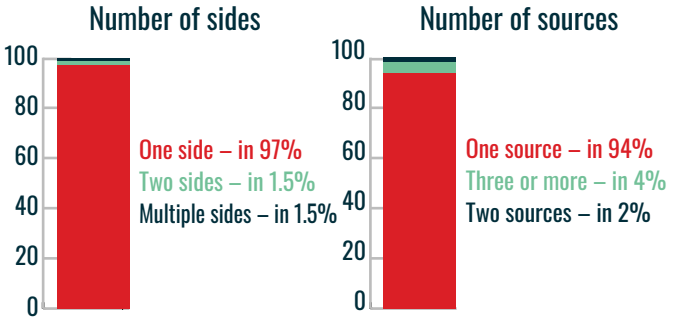
Over 70% of the posts are in the form of a broadcast press release and a broadcast speech, 10% of the news items are in the form of a report, and the rest of the genres occur in a very small percentage (1-2 news items each).

The greatest number of harmful narratives are generated by the politician (90 % of the posts). Thus, the journalist usually conveys them without any intervention, and rarely condemns them.

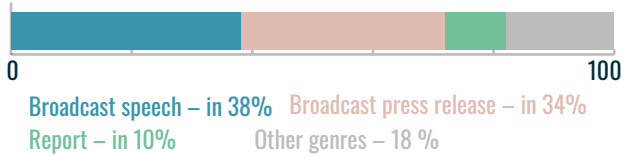
In almost all posts the reporting is one-sided and for almost all posts only one source is consulted. Sources are precise in most posts.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

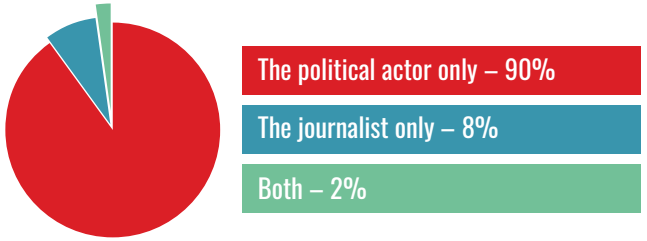
NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



HARMFUL NARRATIVES OF REPUBLIKA

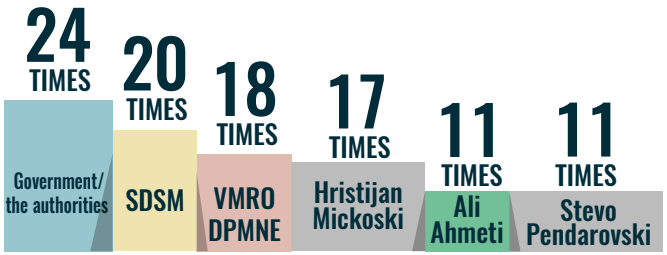


MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



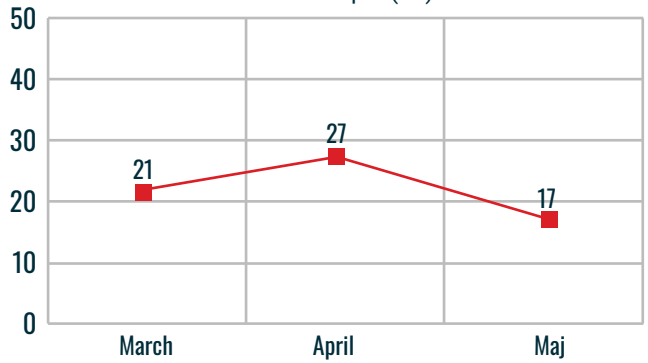
Domestic politics – 69%
Corruption – 11%
Judiciary – 5%
The remaining 15% of news items are on healthcare, crime, foreign policy, social policy, education and other topics

WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEMS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

In three months: 65 posts with a harmful narrative
Most in April (27)

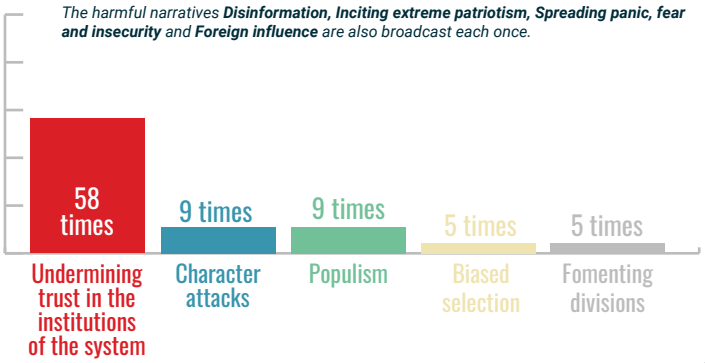


Intensity of harmfulness:
1.4 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

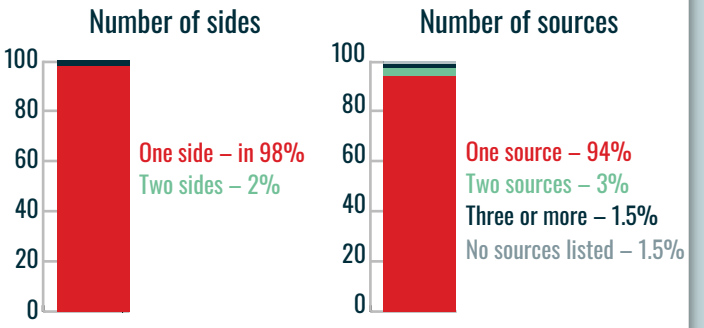
In three months, in 65 news items,
Republika broadcast harmful narratives 90 times

*The harmful narratives **Disinformation, Inciting extreme patriotism, Spreading panic, fear and insecurity** and **Foreign influence** are also broadcast each once.*



PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTATION OF SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

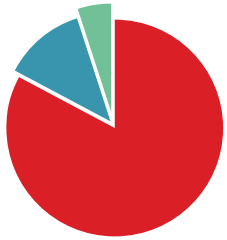


GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Broadcast speech of a politician – 52%
Broadcast press release – 28%
News or news with a statement – 8%
Interview – 8%
Other – 6%

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



The political actor only – 83%
Both of them – 12%
The journalist only – 5%

THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



They broadcast it clearly without taking sides – 48%
They broadcast the harmful narrative without any intervention – 40%
They approve it – 12%

In the three months, 65 posts were registered in Republika, in which *the trust in the institutions of the system was unfoundedly undermined, there were character attacks on the political opponents, populism was spread, divisions were encouraged and biased selection was made.*

Harmful narratives are related to many topics, but mostly (in 70% of the posts) with domestic politics, and much less with corruption, judiciary and others.

Harmful narratives broadcast by Republika usually refer to the Government, SDSM, VMRO-DPMNE, the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, then DUI and Stevo Pendarovski.

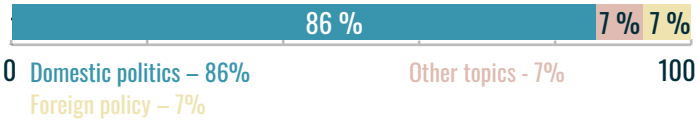
The most common genres are broadcast press release and broadcast speech.

Almost all harmful narratives are produced by the politician, and then by both - the politician and the journalist. Thus, the journalist usually broadcasts them clearly but without taking sides or without any intervention, but in slightly more than 10% of the posts, they also convey it with approval.

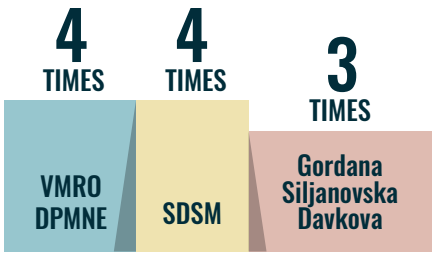
In almost all posts, only one side is shown and only one source is cited. In 1.5% of the posts, there is no source indicated. The sources are precise in the majority of posts.

HARMFUL NARRATIVES OF NOVA TV

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES

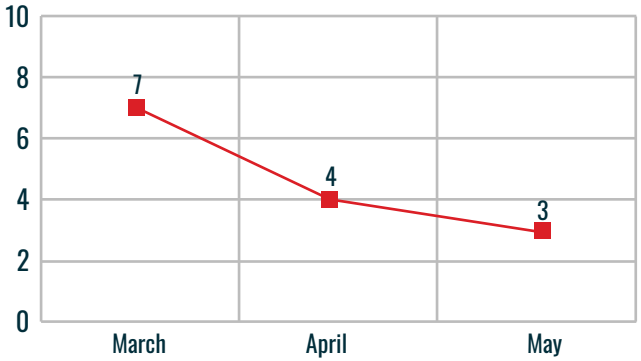


WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ARTICLE WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF NEWS ITEMS PUBLISHED WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES

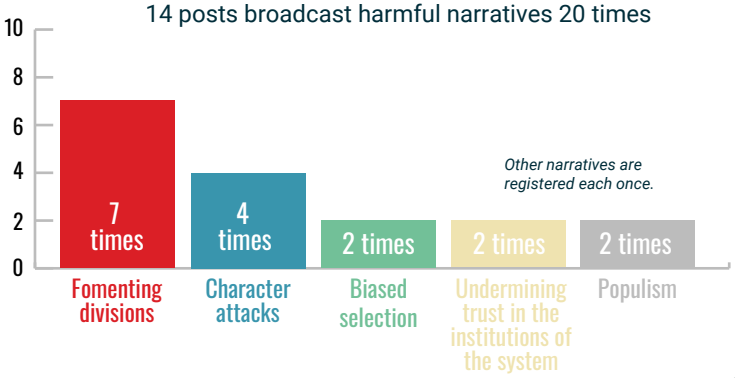
In three months: 14 posts
A downward trend in posts from March to May is evident.



Intensity of harmfulness:
1.4 Indicator of harmful narrative per news item

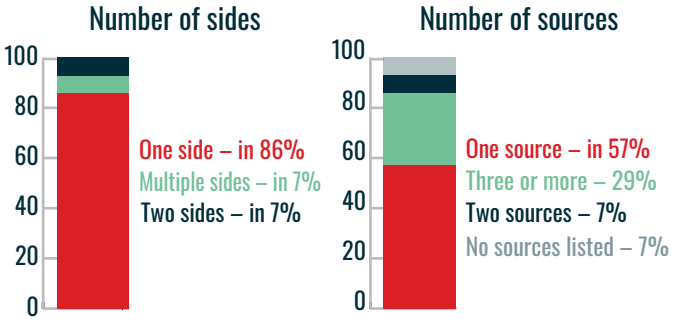
NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

Nova, in three months in
14 posts broadcast harmful narratives 20 times



PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

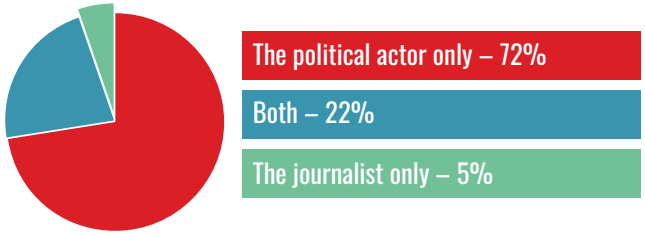


GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



The genres report, analytical-reportage and analysis/commentary also appear once - 21% all three (3 posts)

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



They broadcast the harmful narrative without any intervention - 80%
They broadcast the harmful narrative without taking sides – 6.5%
They approve it – 6.5%
They condemn it – 6.5%

In three months, 14 posts were registered in Nova TV, in which *divisions are encouraged, there are character attacks on political actors, biased selection is made, trust in the institutions is undermined and populism is spread.*

Harmful narratives in most cases are related to domestic politics.

Harmful narratives broadcast on Nova TV mostly refer to VMRO-DPMNE, SDSM and Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova.

Nearly all of the harmful narratives are produced by the politician, very few are produced by the journalist. Thus, the journalist usually broadcasts them without any intervention or clearly, but without taking sides.

By genre, slightly more than a third of the posts are news, and then in the form of broadcast press release, while other forms occur in a small number of cases.

In most cases, only one side of the posts is shown, and more than half of the posts consult only one source. In 10% of the posts there is no source indicated. Sources are precise in all posts.

HARMFUL NARRATIVES OF LOKALNO

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



Domestic politics – 77%

The topics: corruption, crime, judiciary, healthcare and foreign policy appear as the main topic in only one post each, accounting for 23% in total, or about 4.5% each

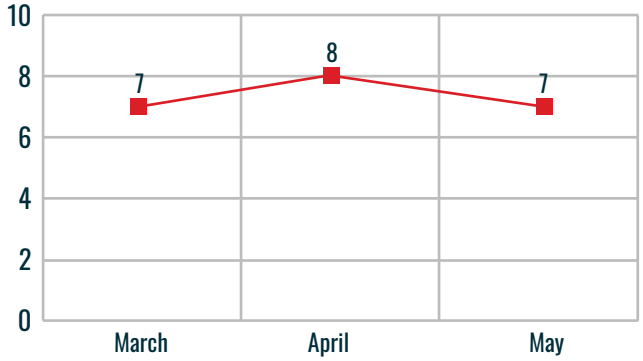
WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEMS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE

In three months: 22 posts

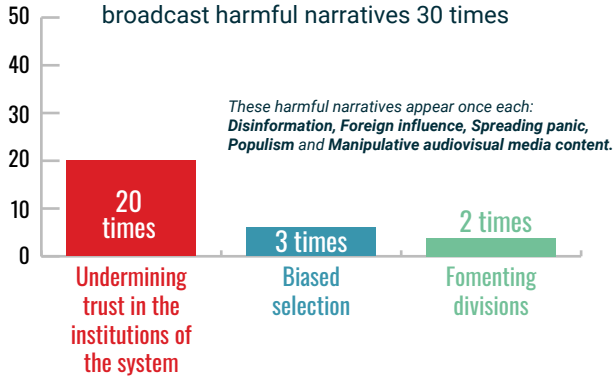
Chart Number of posts by month



Intensity of harmfulness:
1.4 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

Lokalno, in three months, in 22 posts, broadcast harmful narratives 30 times



These harmful narratives appear once each: ***Disinformation, Foreign influence, Spreading panic, Populism*** *and* ***Manipulative audiovisual media content.***

In three months, 22 posts with a harmful narrative on Lokalno were registered. In them, *trust in the institutions is often undermined, there are character attacks on political actors and biased selection.*

The topics of posts with harmful narratives are related to domestic politics, corruption and crime, and much less often they are related to foreign policy, healthcare, economy, then education, social policy and judiciary.

Harmful narratives reported on Lokalno mostly refer to VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM.

Over half of the posts are in the form of broadcast press release and broadcast speech, and one fifth are in the form of news. Among the genres appear interview and report.

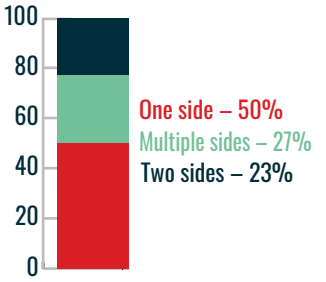
Almost all of the harmful narratives are produced by the politician. The journalist usually broadcasts them without any intervention or clearly, but without taking sides, and in 4% of the posts they approve them.

In most of the posts, information is provided unilaterally and most of the time only one source is consulted. Sources are precise in most posts.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

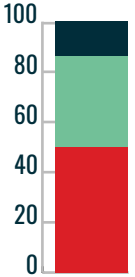
NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

Number of sides



One side – 50%
Multiple sides – 27%
Two sides – 23%

Number of sources



One source – in 50%
Two sources – in 36%
Three or more – in 14%

GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Broadcast speech of a politician – 32%
News – 27%
Broadcast press release – 18%
Interview – 14%
Other – 9%

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



The political actor only – 92%
Both - 8%

THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



They broadcast the harmful narrative without any intervention – 63%
They broadcast the harmful narrative without taking sides – 23%
They approve it - 4%

HARMFUL NARRATIVES OF NEZAVISEN

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



Domestic politics – 83%

Foreign policy – 6%

In 11% the main topic is related to economy, crime, social policy, judiciary or other topics

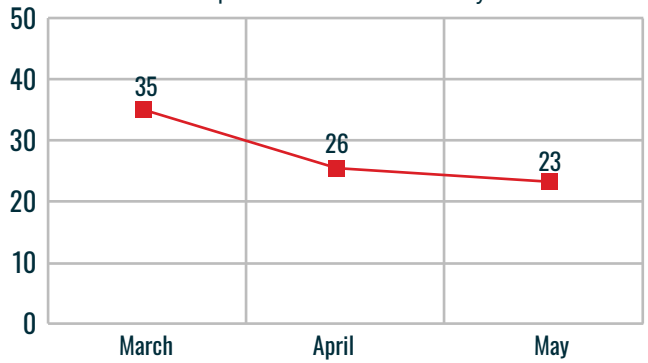
WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEMS WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

In three months: 83 posts

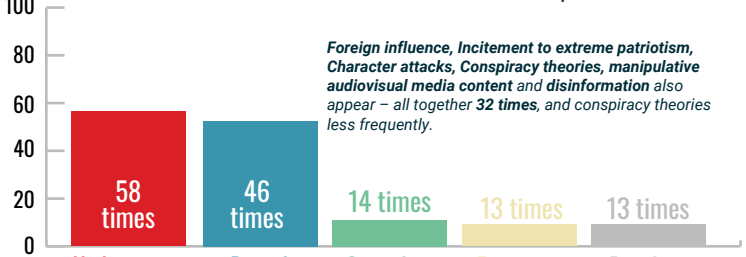
There is a trend of decreased number of posts from March to May.



Intensity of harmfulness:
2.1 indicator of harmful narrative by news item

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months, Nezavisen published harmful narratives 176 times in 83 posts

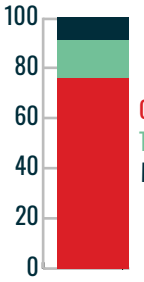


Foreign influence, Incitement to extreme patriotism, Character attacks, Conspiracy theories, manipulative audiovisual media content *and* ***disinformation*** *also appear – all together* ***32 times****, and conspiracy theories less frequently.*

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

Number of sides

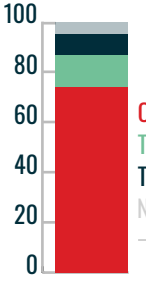


One side – in 76%

Two sides – 15 %

Multiple sides – 9%

Number of sources



One source – 74%

Two sources – in 13%

Three or more – in 8%

No source indicated – in 5%

GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Broadcast speech of a politician – in 45%

Broadcast press release – in 12%

Analytical-reportage news item - in 11%

Report – in 11%

News – in 7%

Analysis/commentary, commentary and other genres – total 14%

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



The political actor only – 71%

Both of them – 20%

The journalist only – 9%

THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



They broadcast the harmful narrative without any intervention – 62%

They broadcast the harmful narrative without taking sides – 15%

They approve the harmful narrative – 13%

They condemn the harmful narrative – 10%

In three months, 84 posts with a harmful narrative on Nezavisen were registered. In them, *trust in institutions is often undermined, biased selection is made, panic is spread, as well as divisions and populism are encouraged.*

The topics of the posts with harmful narratives are mostly related to domestic politics and to a lesser extent they are related to foreign policy, and even less frequently they are related to economy, crime, social policy and judiciary.

Harmful narratives broadcast by Nezavisen mostly refer to VMRO-DPMNE, Hristijan Mickoski, Dimitar Kovachevski, the Government, Stevo Pendarovski, Gordana S. Davkova and SDSM.

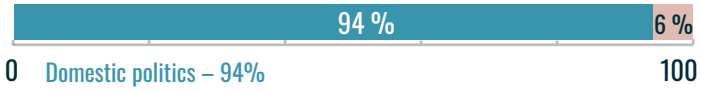
In terms of genre, the posts are in the form of a broadcast speech of a politician, then broadcast press release and even then follow report, analytical reportage or news.

More than two-thirds of harmful narratives are produced by the politician, one-fifth by both, and a smaller number is produced by the journalist. The journalist usually broadcasts them without any intervention or clearly, but without taking sides. However, in 13% of the posts they approve them and in 10% they condemn the harmful narrative.

Reporting is largely one-sided by consulting only one source. In 5% of the posts no sources are indicated. Sources are precise in most posts.

HARMFUL NARRATIVES OF SLOBODEN PECHAT

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



Domestic politics – 94%

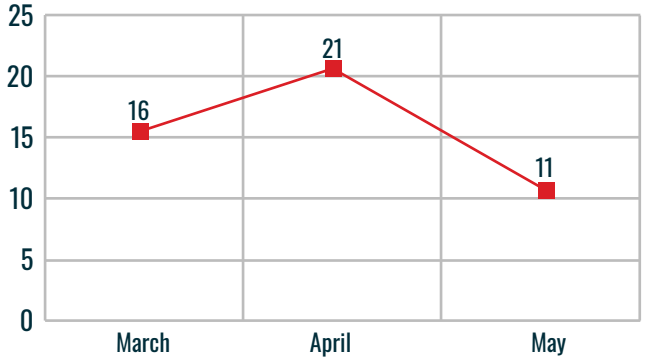
In the remaining 6%, the main topic is related to foreign policy, social policy and other topics.

WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEM WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF NEWS ITEMS PUBLISHED WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES

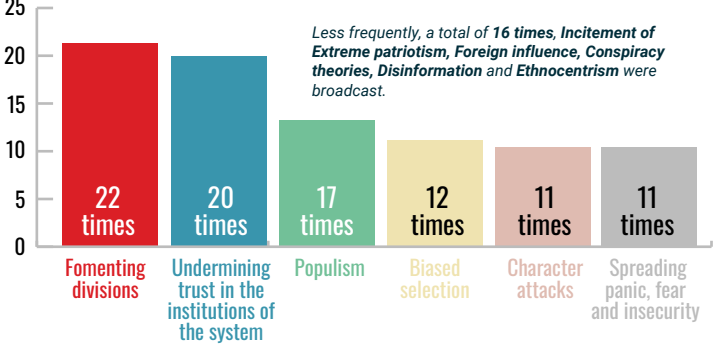
In three months: 48 posts
The smallest number of posts (11) posts are in May.



Intensity of harmfulness:
2,3 indicator of harmful narrative by news item

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months, Sloboden Pechat broadcast harmful narratives 109 times in 48 posts



*Less frequently, a total of **16 times**, **Incitement of Extreme patriotism, Foreign influence, Conspiracy theories, Disinformation** and **Ethnocentrism** were broadcast.*

In the period from March to May 2024, there were registered 48 posts with a harmful narrative in Sloboden Pechat. They frequently *foment divisions, undermine trust in institutions, spread populism, but also use biased selection, character attacks on the political actor and spread panic.*

Harmful narratives are mostly related to topics of domestic politics and to a lesser extent, they are on the topic of crime and judiciary. They are very rarely related to education, healthcare, economy and foreign policy.

Harmful narratives broadcast by Sloboden Pechat usually refer to VMRO-DPMNE, Hristijan Mickoski, Stevo Pendarovski, Dimitar Kovachevski, Gordana S. Davkova and Ali Ahmeti.

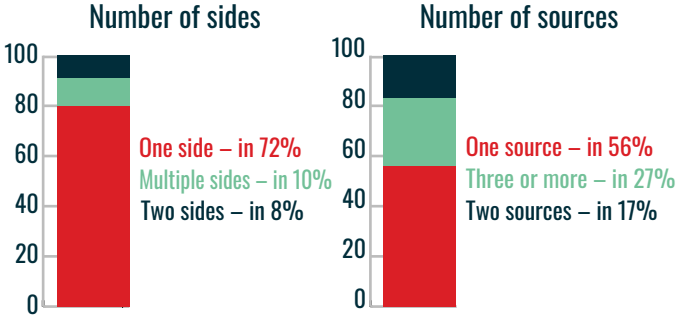
The report and the news are the most frequently used genres, followed by the broadcast speech of a politician, the broadcast press release, as well as the analytical reportage and analysis/commentary.

Nearly all harmful narratives are produced by the politician, and the journalist usually broadcasts them clearly, but without taking sides.

In most of the posts, only one side is presented and only one source is cited. Sources are precise in 94% of posts.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

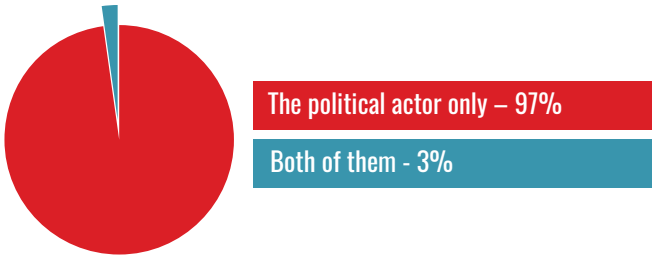


GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Report – 33 %
News – 30%
Broadcast speech of a politician – 11%
Broadcast press release – 9 %
Analysis / comment – 9 %
Analytical-reportage news item – in 7%
Other genre 1 %

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



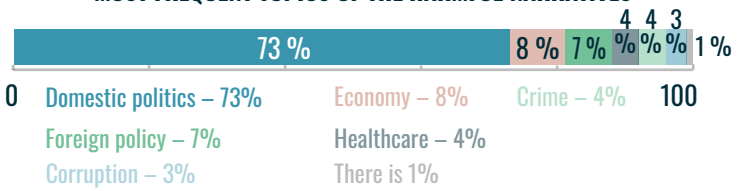
THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



They broadcast the harmful narrative without taking sides – 75%
They broadcast the harmful narrative without any intervention – 24%
They condemn the harmful narrative – 1%

HARMFUL NARRATIVES OF A1ON MK

MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES

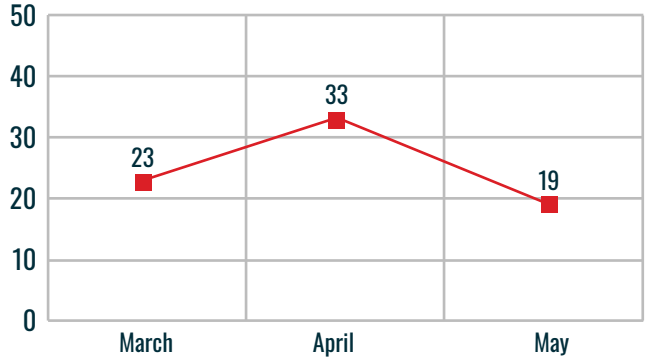


WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ARTICLE WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE:

In three months: 75 posts
Largest number in April (33)

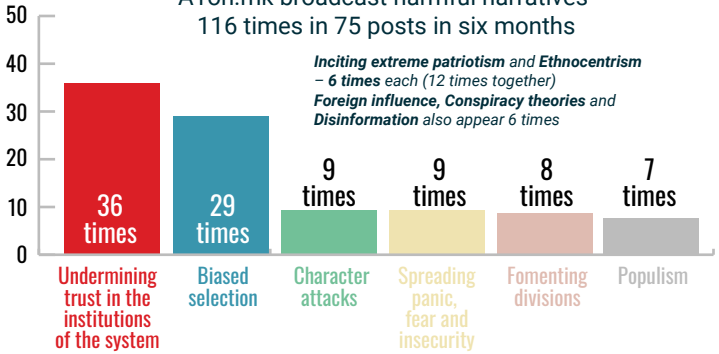


Intensity of harmfulness:
1.5 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

A1on.mk broadcast harmful narratives
116 times in 75 posts in six months

Inciting extreme patriotism *and* ***Ethnocentrism*** *–* ***6 times*** *each (12 times together)*
Foreign influence, Conspiracy theories *and* ***Disinformation*** *also appear 6 times*



In three months, 75 posts with a harmful narrative on A1On.mk were registered. In them, *trust in institutions is frequently undermined, biased selection is made, there is character attack, as well as panic and fear are spread.*

The topics of the posts with harmful narratives are: mostly domestic politics and to a lesser extent economy and foreign policy, and much less often they are related to healthcare, crime, corruption and judiciary.

Harmful narratives broadcast on A1ON.mk usually refer to VMRO-DPMNE, Hristijan Mickoski, DUI, SDSM, Dimitar Kovachevski, Stevo Pendarovski, the Government and Gordana S. Davkova.

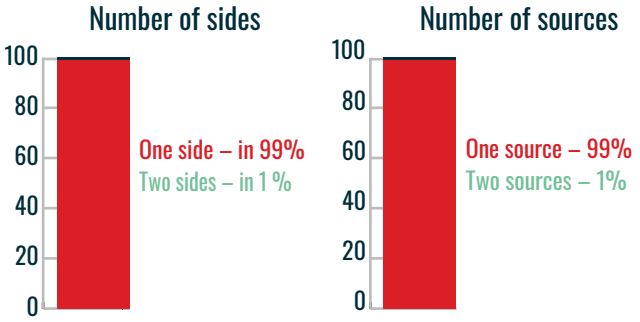
Most frequently, the posts are in the form of a broadcast press release and a broadcast speech of a politician, and in a very small percentage, news and an interview.

Nearly all harmful narratives are produced by the politician. The journalist usually broadcasts them clearly, but without taking sides or without any intervention.

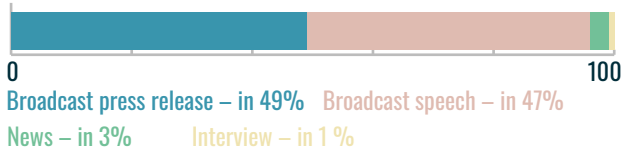
The news items inform one-sidedly and consult only one source. Sources are precise in all posts.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

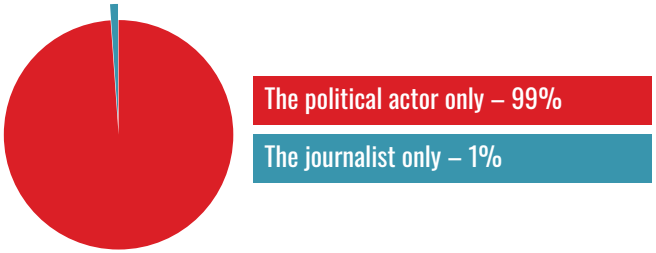
NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



HARMFUL NARRATIVES OF MKD.MK

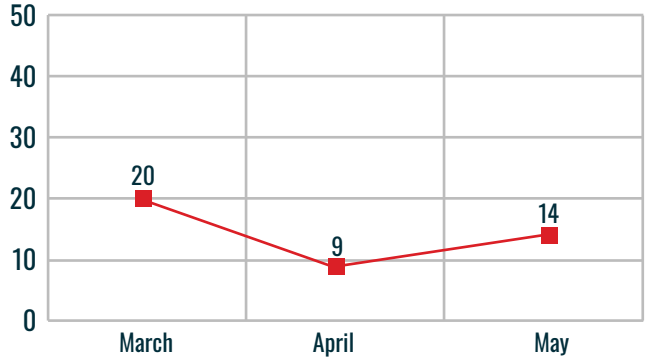
MOST FREQUENT TOPICS OF THE HARMFUL NARRATIVES



Domestic politics – 77%
Corruption – 7%
Judiciary – 5%
In the remaining 12%, the main topic is related to Social policy, Crime, Foreign policy, Social policy and Education

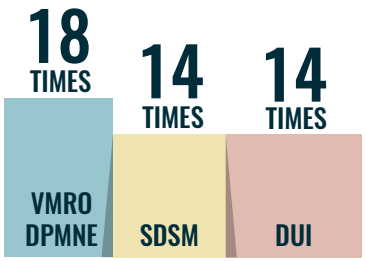
NUMBER OF PUBLISHED NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING HARMFUL NARRATIVE

In three months: 43 posts
The smallest number (9) of news items are in April, and the most (20) in March



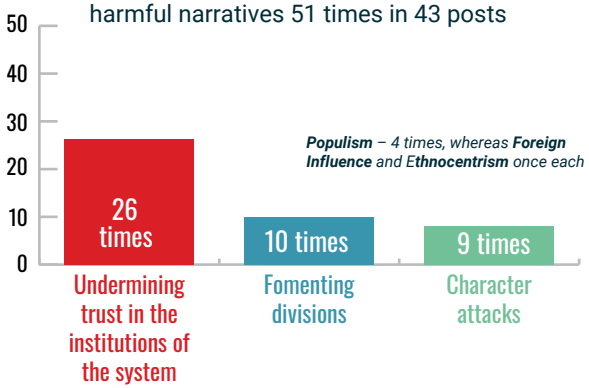
Intensity of harmfulness:
1.2 indicator of harmful narrative per news item

WHO IS THE TOPIC OF THE NEWS ITEM WITH HARMFUL NARRATIVES AND HOW FREQUENTLY?



NUMBER AND TYPE OF BROADCAST HARMFUL NARRATIVES

In three months, MKD.mk broadcast harmful narratives 51 times in 43 posts



Populism *– 4 times, whereas* ***Foreign Influence*** *and* ***Ethnocentrism*** *once each*

In three months, 43 posts with a harmful narrative on MKD.mk were registered. In them, *trust in institutions is often undermined, divisions are fomented and there are character attacks on the political actors.*

The topics of the news items with harmful narratives are: mostly domestic politics and much less frequently on the subject of corruption and judiciary. Harmful narratives broadcast on MKD.mk mostly refer to VMRO-DPMNE, SDSM and DUI.

Frequently, news items are in the form of broadcast speech of a politician and broadcast press release and in less than one third a report.

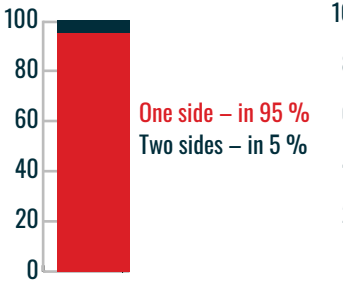
Nearly all harmful narratives are produced by the politician. Thus, the journalist always broadcasts them without any intervention.

In most of the posts, only one side is shown and only one source is cited. Sources are precise in almost all posts.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS

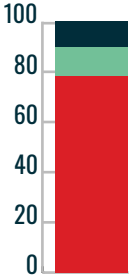
NUMBER OF SOURCES AND PRESENTED SIDES IN NEWS ITEMS CONTAINING A HARMFUL NARRATIVE

Number of sides



One side – in 95 %
Two sides – in 5 %

Number of sources



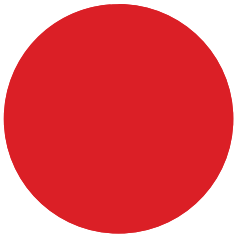
One source – in 83 %
Two sources – in 12 %
Three or more – in 5%

GENRE OF NEWS ITEMS WITH A HARMFUL NARRATIVE



Broadcast speech – 37% of posts with a harmful narrative
Broadcast press release – 35%
Report – in 28%

WHO PRODUCES THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE?



The political actor only – 100%

THE JOURNALIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE



They broadcast the harmful narrative without any intervention – 100%

Similarities and differences among online media regarding harmful narratives

Number of news items for three months

Out of the 11 monitored online media outlets, the largest number of news items/posts with harmful narratives during the three months were registered at: Kurir (124 news items), Nezavisen (84), A1on.mk (75) and Vecher.mk (75). Nova TV has the least (14 posts). The difference between the online media outlet with the smallest number of published news items with a harmful narrative (Nova TV – 14 news items) and the online media outlet with the most published news items with a harmful narrative (Kurir – 124 news items) amounts to 110 news items.

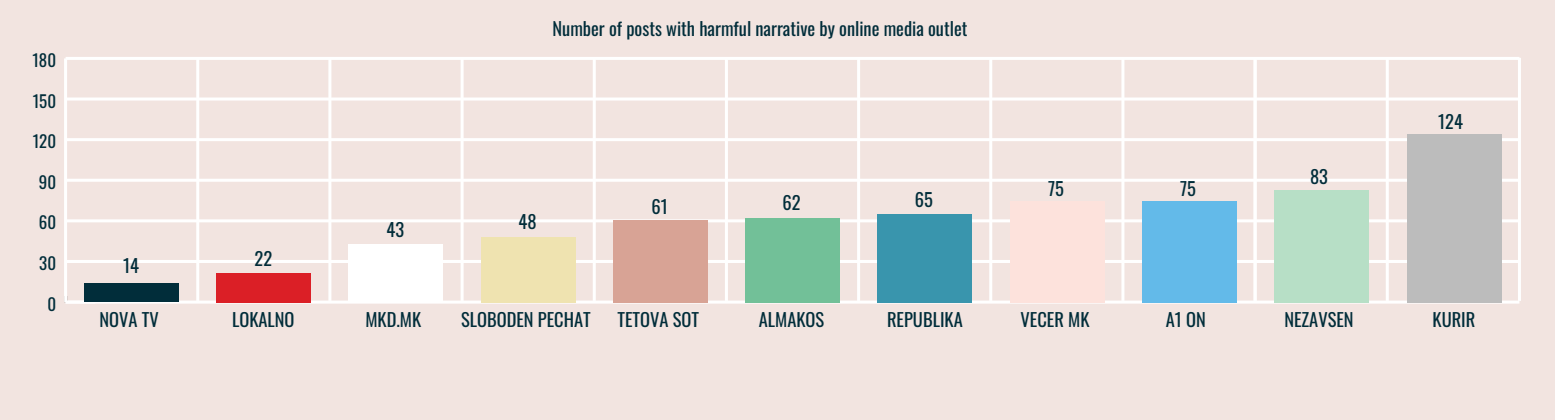


Figure 47 Number of posts with harmful narrative by online media outlet

Number of harmful narratives in news items in a period of three months

The setting of online media outlets is similar also when comparing the number of present harmful narratives. The difference between the online media outlet whose news items contain the least harmful narratives (Nova TV – 20) and the online media outlet whose news items contain the most harmful narratives (Kurir – 280) amounts to 260 harmful narratives. If we categorize them according to the presence of harmful narratives, four categories can be established according to the presence of harmful narratives:

1. Online media outlets with an **extremely high number of present harmful narratives** in the news items (over 200 harmful narratives) - Kurir (280)
2. Online media outlets with **a very high number of present harmful narratives** in the news items (101 - 200 harmful narratives) – Sloboden Pechat (109), Vecer mk (114), A1on (116) and Nezavisen (176)

3. Online media outlets with **a fairly high number of harmful narratives** present in the news items (70-100 harmful narratives) – Almakos (70), Tetova sot (75) and Republika (109)

4. Online media outlets with **a relatively moderate number of harmful narratives** present in the news items (up to 70 harmful narratives) – Nova TV (20), Lokalno (30) and Mkd.mk (51)

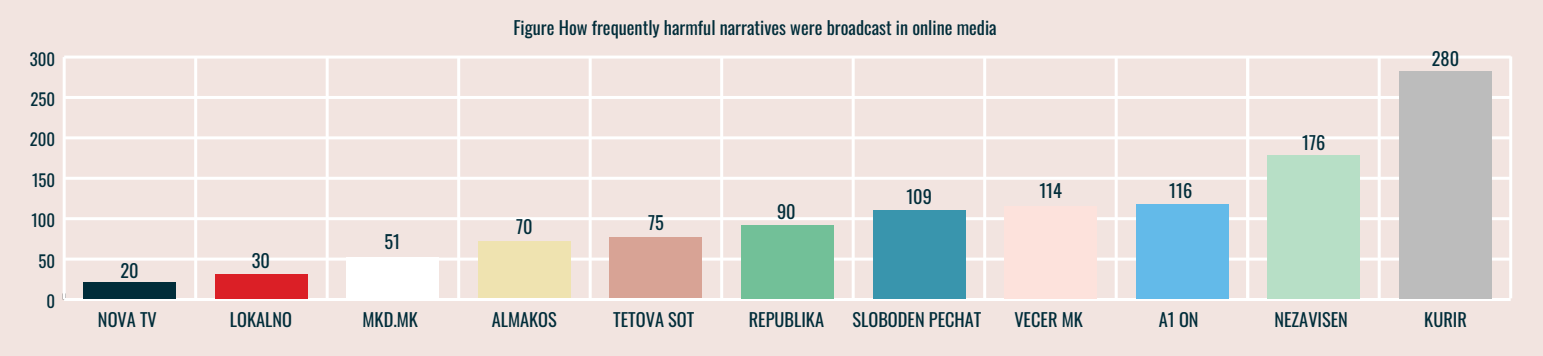


Figure 48 How frequently harmful narratives were broadcast in online media

Comparisons by intensity of harmfulness

If a more thorough research is conducted and considered how many harmful narratives a news item published by an online media outlet contains, the situation changes. Sloboden Pechat, despite the fact that it has a smaller number of news items and is somewhere in the middle of the scale in terms of the total number of present harmful narratives, according to the proportion of harmful narratives in the news items, it stands highest in terms of harmfulness. There is another significant shift in Nova TV, which rises to the group with a high intensity of harmfulness. Slight shifts are noted in most online media outlets when looking at the intensity of harmfulness. The difference between the online media with the lowest intensity of harmfulness (Almakos – 1.1) and the online media with the highest intensity (Sloboden Pechat – 2.3) is 1.2. Thus, according to the intensity of the harmful narratives, three categories of online media can be distinguished:

1. Online media outlets with **a relatively low intensity of harmfulness** (1.1-1.2) – Almakos (1.1), MKD.mk (1.2) and Tetova Sot (1.2). In these media outlets, there is an average of one harmful narrative in one news item.

2. Online media outlets with **a high intensity of harmfulness** (1.4-1.5) – This is the most numerous group, which includes: Lokalno (1.4), Republika (1.4), Nova TV (1.4), Vecer mk (1.5) and A1on (1.5). On average, 1.5 harmful narratives are present in one news item in these media outlets.

3. Online media with **a very high intensity of harmfulness** (above 2) – Nezavisen (2.1), Kurir (2.3) and Sloboden Pechat (2.3). At least 2 harmful narratives are present in one news item in these media outlets.

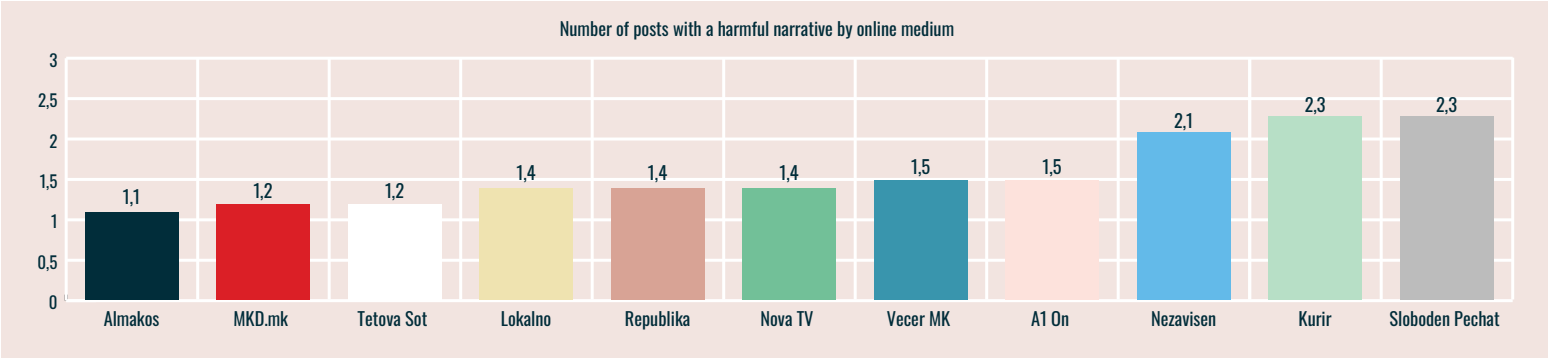


Figure 49 Intensity of harmfulness according to online media outlets

Compared to the previous six-month analysed period, there is a decrease in the harmfulness of online media news items, with an average of one harmful narrative per news item. This is registered both at the lowest and at the highest intensity point (in the six-month period, the lowest intensity point was 1.5 and the highest was 3.6).

Comparisons by type of harmful narratives

The three harmful narratives that are most frequently present narratives in all 11 online media outlets, as well as in the previous six-month period, are:

- ➔ Harmful narrative *Undermining trust in institutions and media*
- ➔ Harmful *narrative Biased selection* and
- ➔ Harmful narrative *Character attacks*

However, in the last analysed quarter, two harmful narratives appear that were not in the top five in the previous period. These are *Fomenting divisions* and *Spreading panic, fear and insecurity*. These two narratives in some of the online media outlets appear in the top three - four most frequently present harmful narratives.

In six (Tetova Sot, Republika, Lokalno, Nezavisen, A1on and MKD.mk) of the 11 online media outlets, the harmful narrative in first place, i.e. the most frequently present, is *Undermining trust in institutions and the media*. In two online media outlets (Almakos and Kurir), Biased selection is the most frequent harmful narrative, in another two (Nova and Sloboden Pechat) *Fomenting divisions*, while *Character attacks* is most frequent in one media outlet (Vecer MK). The harmful narrative *Fomenting divisions* is present in all online media outlets in the top four places (mostly third in presence).

The harmful narrative *Spreading panic, fear and insecurity* appears as the third most frequent in A1.on and Nezavisen, while in Kurir fourth and in Sloboden Pechat as fifth in frequency.

Comparison by creators of the narrative



The most frequent creator of the harmful narrative, without exception, among all 11 online media outlets, is the political actor (the percentages range from Vecer: 67% - MKD.mk: 100%). At Vecer.mk, Nova TV and Nezavisen, 23%, that is, 22% and 20% of the harmful narratives are produced by both the journalist and the political actor. Vecer.mk, recorded the highest share of the journalist (10%), followed by Nezavisen (9%) and Kurir (8%). Almakos, Sloboden Pechat and MKD.mk are online media outlets where the journalist did not produced a harmful narrative.

Following the nine-month monitoring, the analyses point to several important findings regarding the online media outlets:

- In the last quarter, online media continue the trend of being the biggest producers or transmitters of harmful narratives in the public discourse. Except for political party leaders, online media recorded an average monthly increase in posts with a harmful narrative in the last analysed period, from March to May 2024. April is the month with the highest number of posts for all analysed online media, without exception, in this nine-month period;

- However, there is a decrease in both the number of broadcast harmful narratives and the intensity of harmfulness compared to the previous six-month period, which may seem surprising considering that the last quarter was a pre-election and election period, a time when harmfulness is expected to intensify;

- The shift in the first three to four most frequently used harmful narratives in this pre-election period is visible. Namely, in addition to the dominance of harmful narratives of U*ndermining trust in institutions* and *Biased selection*, in the first three places appeared the narrative of *Fomenting divisions,* but also *Spreading panic, fear and insecurity*. These two narratives were also recorded to had been used more frequently in the TV stations' news items, which confirms that they are a reflection of the narratives of the political actors;

- In all online media, there is a significant increase in harmful narratives related to domestic politics (on average about 20%, and in some media up to 30%) and the more frequent occurrence of the topics of crime and judiciary, in contrast to the previous period;

- Compared to the previous period, in the last quarter, there are almost no changes in terms of who produces the harmful narrative, how balanced the reporting is, i.e. how many sides are presented and how many sources are consulted when reporting the information, nor are there any significant differences in the most frequently used genre, the leaders remain - the broadcast speech of a politician and the broadcast press release by political parties.



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