



Monitoring of Hate Speech in Relation to LGBTQ+ in Belarusian Mass Media

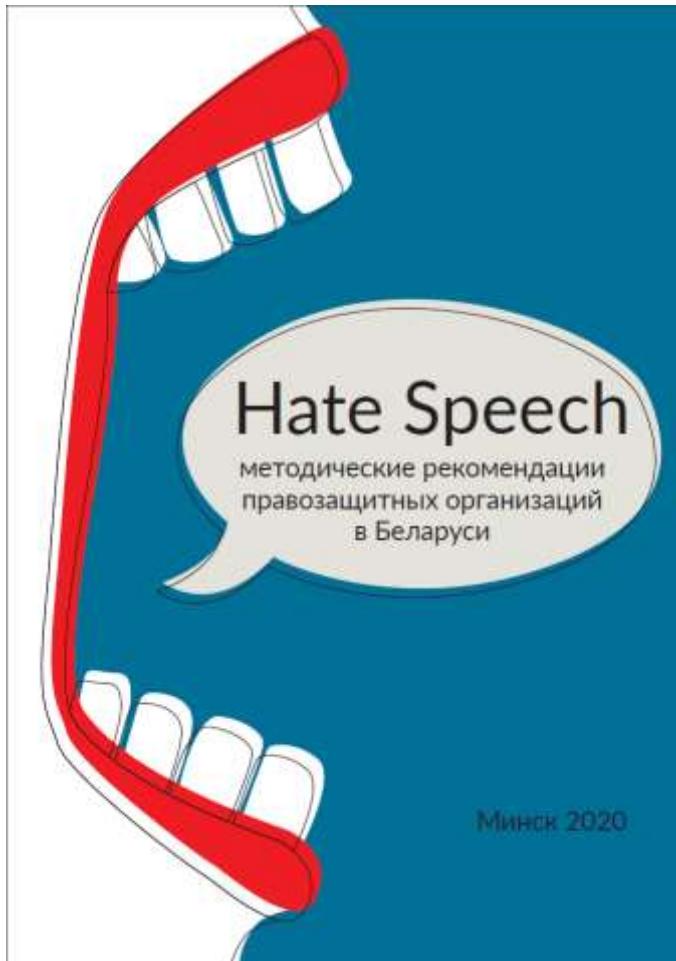
July-November 2020

'Journalists for Tolerance' Human Rights Initiative
Minsk, 2021

Basic Information about J4T Monitoring Studies

- Regular studies of hate speech manifestations in relation to vulnerable populations in Belarusian mass media
 - Annual monitoring studies of LGBTQ+ media coverage and rhetoric in Belarusian mass media
 - The outcome of monitoring studies is aimed at the journalistic community, human rights defenders, representatives of vulnerable populations and enlightening organizations and initiatives that work with the hate speech problematic
- The archive of J4T studies since 2014:
<https://j4t.by/category/issledovaniya/>

The meaning of hate speech



'Hate speech' and 'disparaging vocabulary' are differentiated in this monitoring study.

'Disparaging vocabulary' includes stereotypical statements in relation to vulnerable populations, which don't pose security threats, don't contain calls to violence, and don't dehumanize people from vulnerable groups.

'Hate speech' includes the kind of statements, which pose security threats, contain calls to violence, and dehumanize people from vulnerable groups.

Basic Information about the Monitoring Study

The goal of monitoring study

The methods of collecting data

The frequency of monitoring

26 out 36 selected mass media wrote about LGBTQ+ in the second half year of 2020

To provide a systematic overview of disparaging vocabulary and hate speech use in relation to LGBT people in the Belarusian mass media

- The cluster stratified sampling of 36 online media
- The search for publications with the use of key words
- The search for disparaging vocabulary in the found publications
- The search for hate speech in the publications, containing disparaging vocabulary

Two monitoring periods in 2020: January – June and July – November

214 publications were analyzed within the monitoring study

Main Outcome of Monitoring Study

47%

publications were related to the LGBTQ+ thematic in the Belarusian context

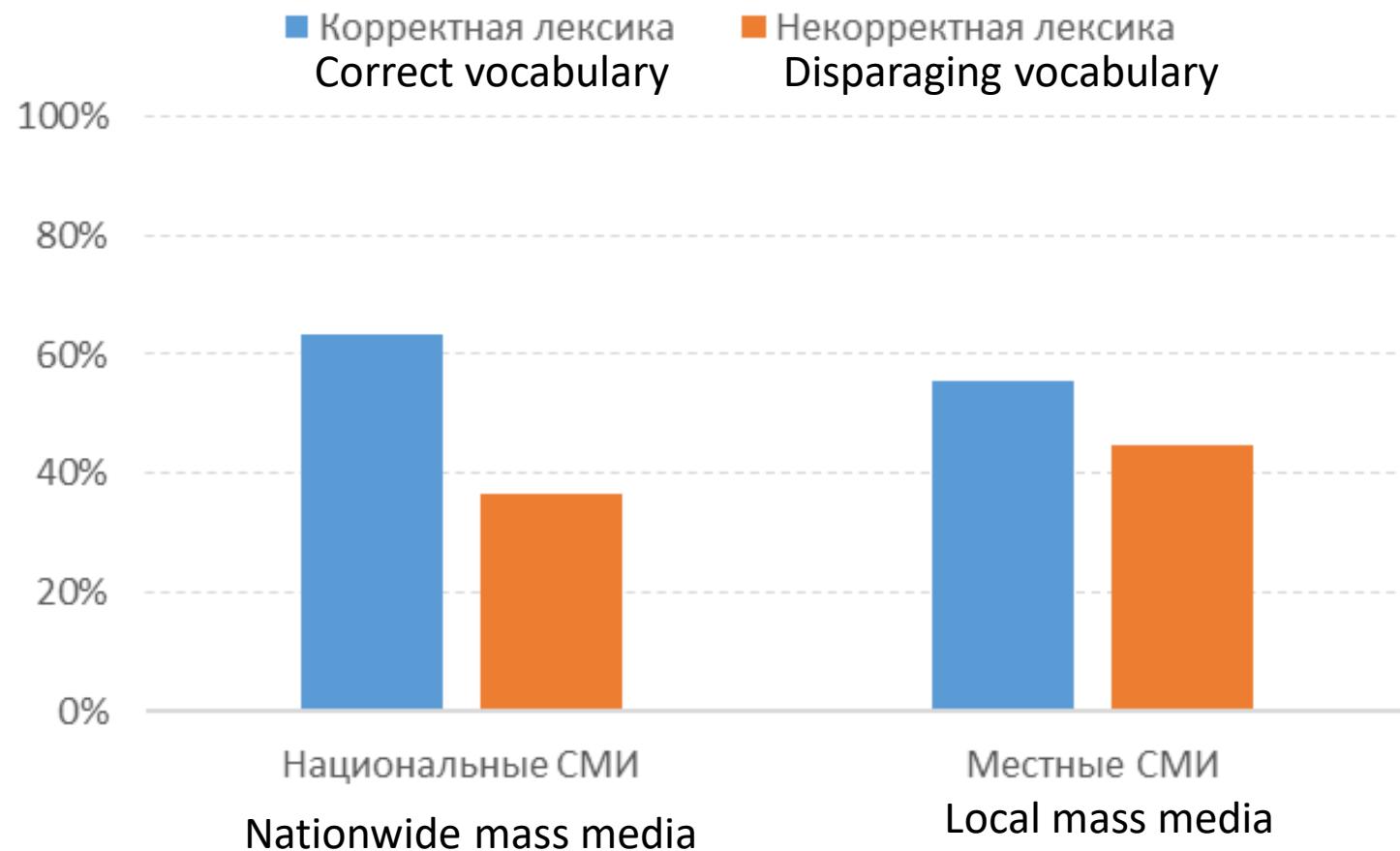
23%

publications were totally dedicated to the LGBTQ+ thematic

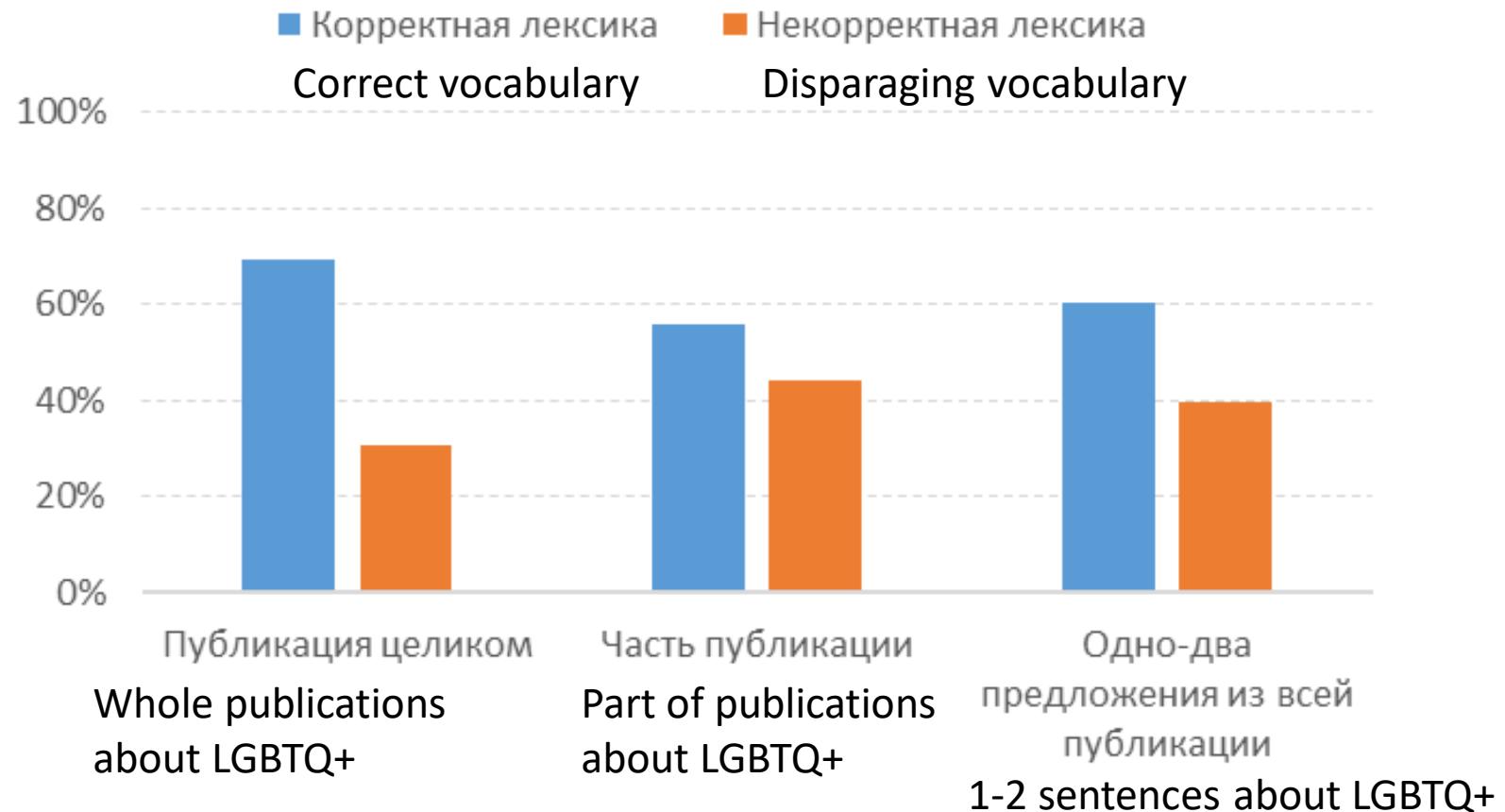
21%

publications contained manifestations of hate speech

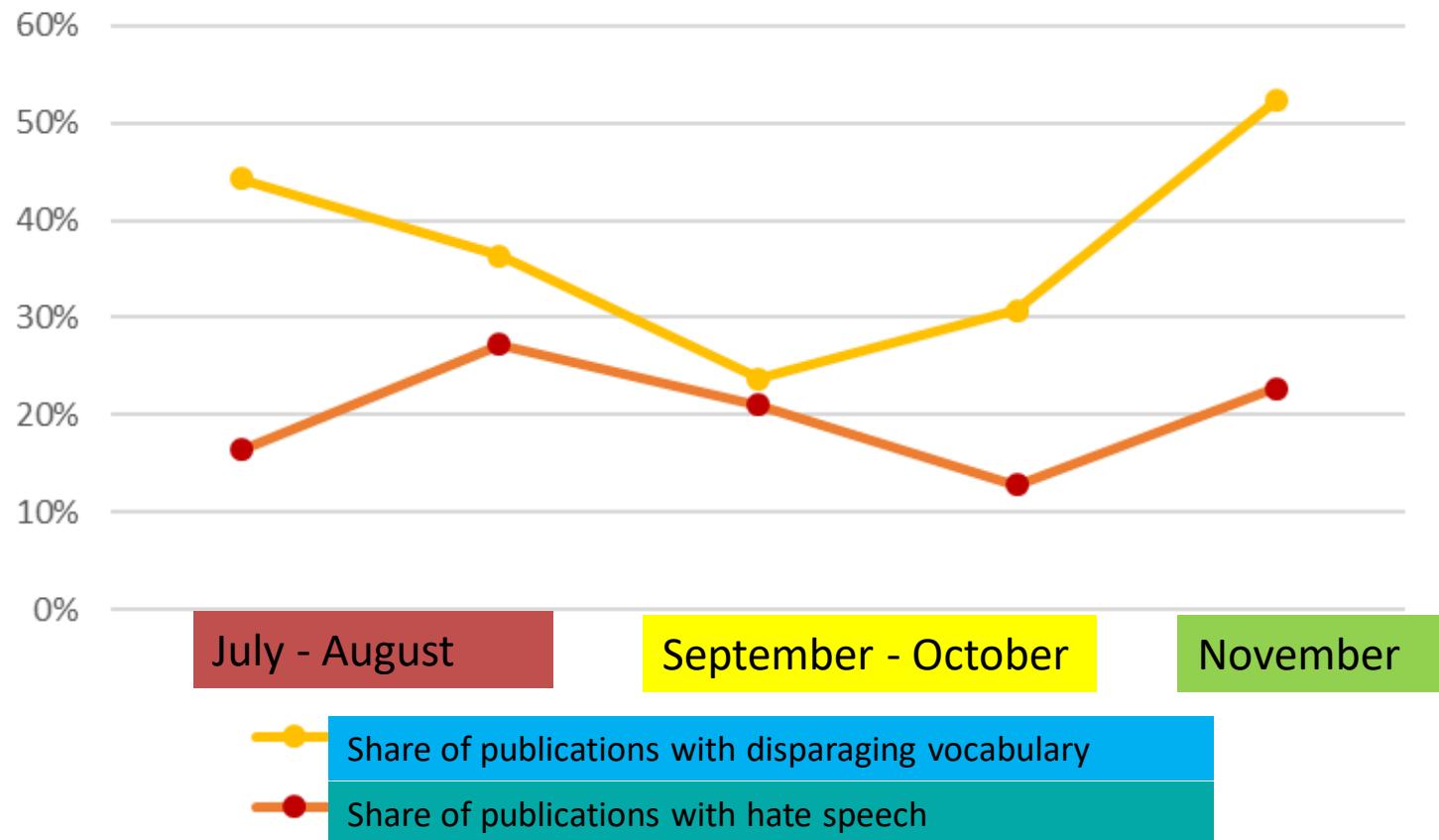
Publications with correct vocabulary exceeded 1.5 times publications with disparaging vocabulary



Smaller quantity of disparaging vocabulary in the publications totally dedicated to LGBTQ+ thematic



At the peak of the political crisis practically all incorrect publications contained hate speech



Manifestation of hate speech in relation to LGBTQ+ in Belarusian mass media

Accusations of exerting negative impact on the society

Mentioning LGBTQ+ for discrediting political opponents

Calls for discrimination

Accusations of making attempts to expand and domineer

Creation of a negative image of LGBTQ+

Accusations of exerting negative impact on the society

- *I believe that the decision on "gender-neutral" awards is not related to the issue of culture at all. As for me personally, I regard this as a sign that the rampant bearers of new European values have made their way to cinematography. I mean those of them who advocate the unlimited, but ridiculously understood tolerance and transcendental equality of the sexes. The latter creates risks that the very words "woman" and "man" will be banned.* [[Source](#)]
- *LGBT activists have pushed all reasonable notions of equality to the extreme by promoting indecent behavior and perversion.* [[Source](#)]

Mentioning LGBTQ+ for discrediting political opponents

- *A group of people opposing themselves to the society or affirming their values in the society is always more active. It catches the eye. Regardless whether it stands out by skin color, non-traditional sexual orientation (sorry), special religious or political views. They write on the Web, throw themselves under cars with flowers and balloons, and honk.* [[Source](#)]
- *In addition, they were looking for the image of an outwardly cute person who would look touching and tender on the avatar. Apparently with non-traditional sexual orientation.* [[Source](#)]

Calls for discrimination

- *[It is necessary] to introduce punishment for LGBT propaganda among children and youth. Since the propaganda of homosexuality, which was suggested for reduction of birth rate, and the LGBT ideology that undermines traditional family values have proven their effectiveness (there is an increase in the population of people with low reproductive potential, the incidence of STDs, and cases of pedophilia), it is necessary to introduce stricter penalties for promoting homosexuality, up to criminal liability.* [[Source](#)]
- *Moreover, our country needs legislative restrictions against the imposition and promotion of sexual perversion as well as the return of the age of consent for homosexual relationships to the age of full civil legal capacity.* [[Source](#)]

Accusations of making attempts to expand and domineer

- *A new "race of masters" was born among us. Jokes against it are punished with fines and dismissal from work as well as breaks of business contracts. ... The "sexual Gestapo", which arranges the persecution of all dissidents, has many agents. As in Nazi Germany, most of them try to do their best not out of fear, but out for conscience.*
[\[Source\]](#)
- *There also exist some people for whom broad, and better free access to IVF and surrogacy is extremely important. These are the people living in same-sex unions. The use of IVF is practically the only way for them to become parents. Therefore, LGBT activists are ready to overcome any resistance in this field.* [\[Source\]](#)

Creation of a negative image of LGBTQ+

- *There was a sad joke heard a few years ago that a black one-legged lesbian should be the next winner of everything and everyone in the world of triumphant political correctness.* [[Source](#)]
- *Due to cooperation with a psychiatrist Alexander Bukhanovsky from Rostov, the police excluded the registered psychos, minors, masturbators, and homosexuals from the list of suspects.* [[Source](#)]

Main News Feeds

- Protests after the Presidential election in Belarus in August 2020
- Presidential election campaign in Belarus
- The second round of Presidential election in Poland
- Presidential election in the United States
- New Rules for Oscar Best Film Nominations
- Protests over the ban on abortion in Poland
- A letter against the restriction of open debate and a conflict between Rowling and LGBT-community in Twitter

Conclusions

- 61% of monitored publications about LGBTQ+ in the Belarusian mass media contained correct vocabulary and 39% of monitored publications contained disparaging vocabulary in the second half-year of 2020. The number of publications with correct vocabulary exceeded 1.5 times the number of publications with disparaging vocabulary.
- 21% of publications on LGBTQ+ thematic in the Belarusian media contained hate speech in the second half year of 2020. It is two times more than in the first half year of 2020.
- Accusations of imposing a negative impact on the society in the West, mentioning LGBTQ+ for discrediting political opponents in the situation of a political crisis in Belarus as well as calls for discrimination of LGBTQ+ people were among the most frequently met manifestations of hate speech in relation to LGBTQ+ in the Belarusian media in July - November 2020.
- Subject to the situation of a double crisis with the COVID-19 pandemic and the protests against the results of Presidential election, the Belarusian mass media started paying less attention to the LGBTQ+ issues. At the same time, the use of hate speech and disparaging vocabulary in relation to LGBTQ+ in the media significantly increased.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENTION!

Will you, please, send a message to us by e-mail, if you have additional questions about the monitoring study and its outcome:
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THANK YOU