

# HOW RUSSIAN MEDIA FOMENTS HOSTILITY TOWARD THE WEST

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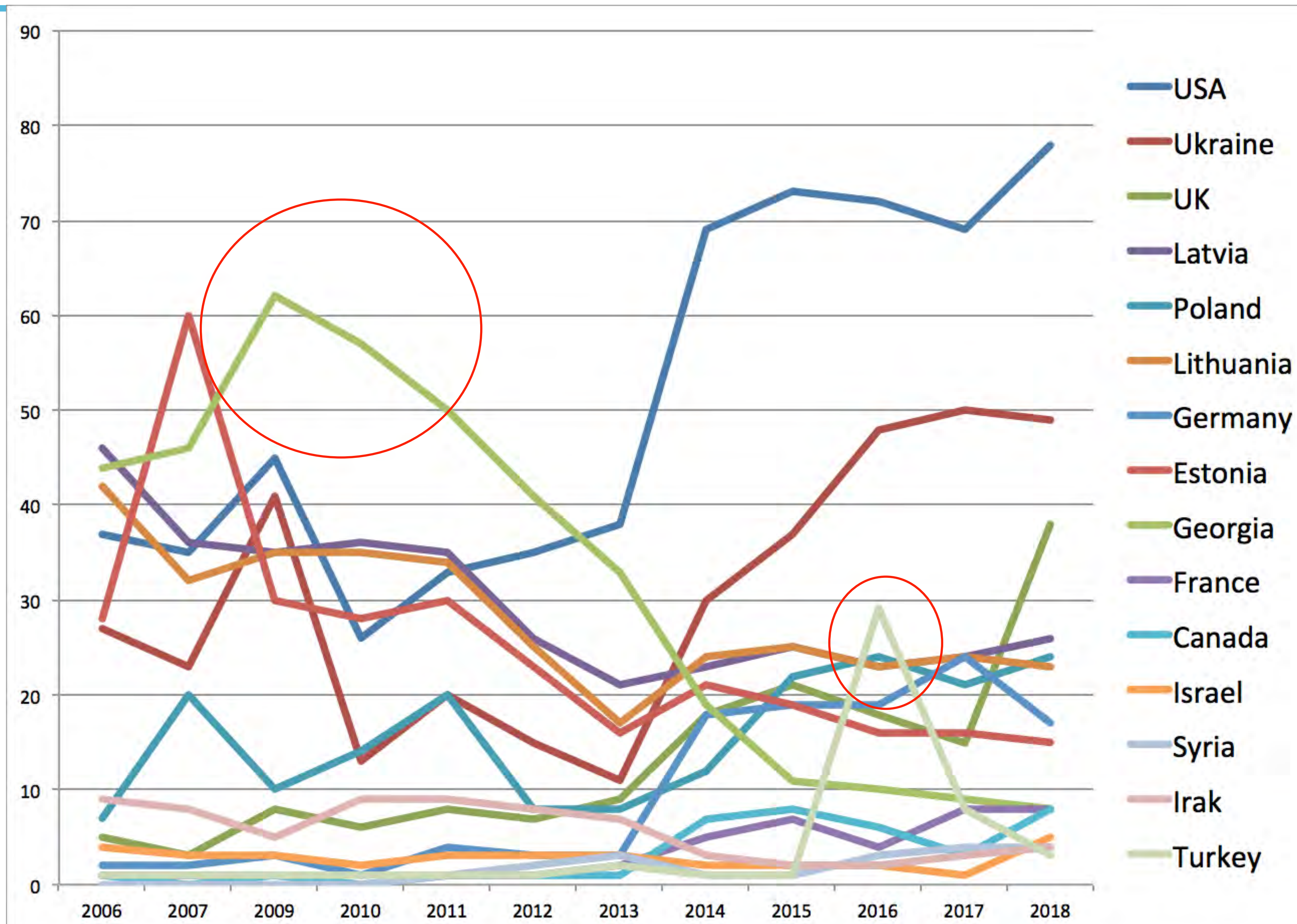
**UKRAINE CRISIS**  
media center

**HYBRID  
WARFARE  
ANALYTICAL  
GROUP**





# Who are the enemies for Russians?



Poll by Levada Center

# Methodology

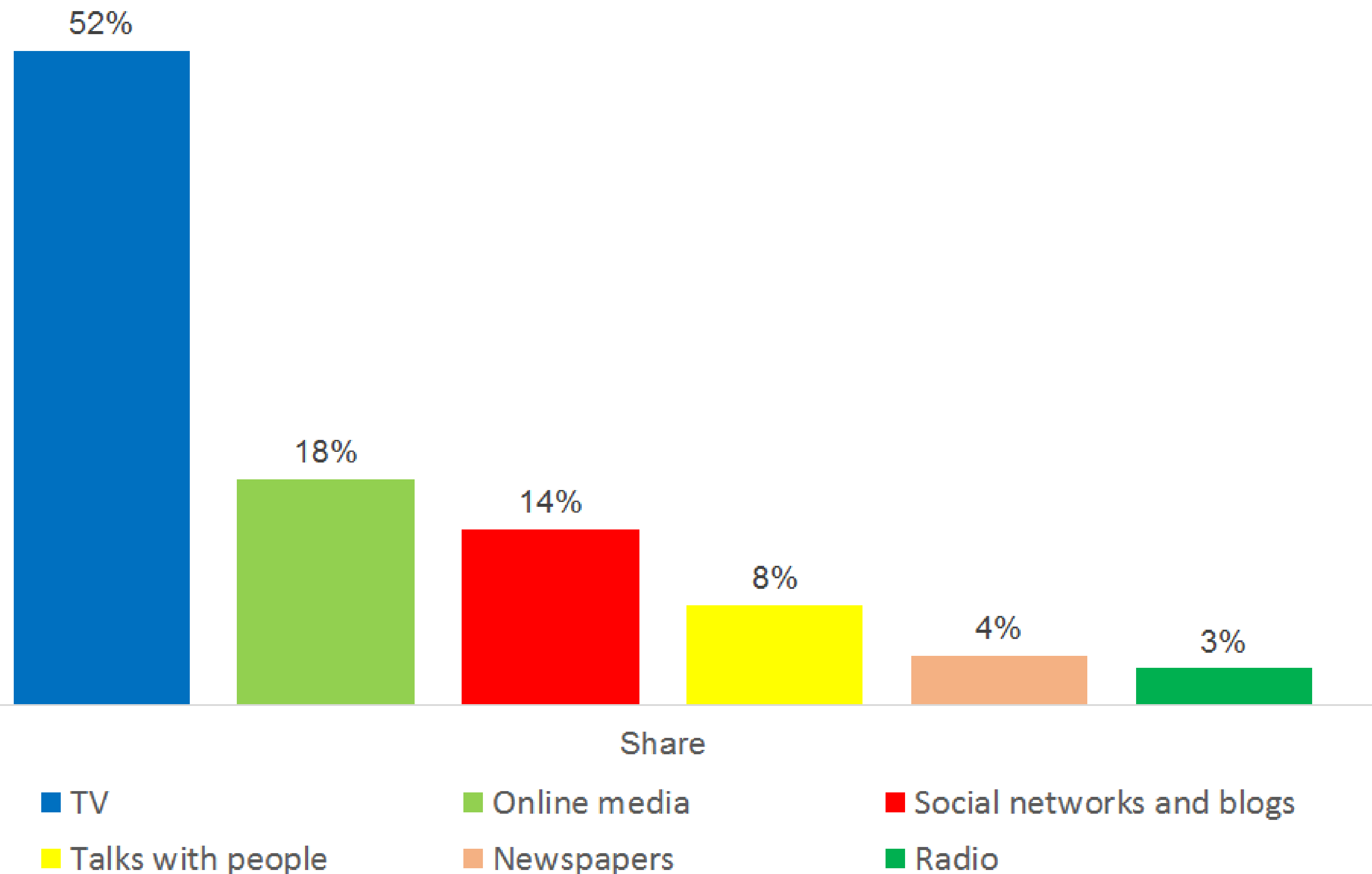
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- Content-analysis of all news and political talk-shows of top three Russian TV channels and 10 popular web sites
- Time period: 3,5 years from July 1, 2014 to December 31, 2017
- TV channels and programs which were analyzed
  - Channel One – News (Новости), Sunday Time (Воскресное время), Time (Время)
  - NTV – Today (Сегодня), Majority (Большинство)
  - Russia 1 – News (Вести), News of the week (Вести недели), News on Saturday (Вести в субботу), Evening with Vladimir Solovyov (Вечер с Владимиром Соловьевым)
- Keywords for content-analysis – 35 European countries, the USA and Ukraine

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# MEDIA LANDSCAPE OF RUSSIA

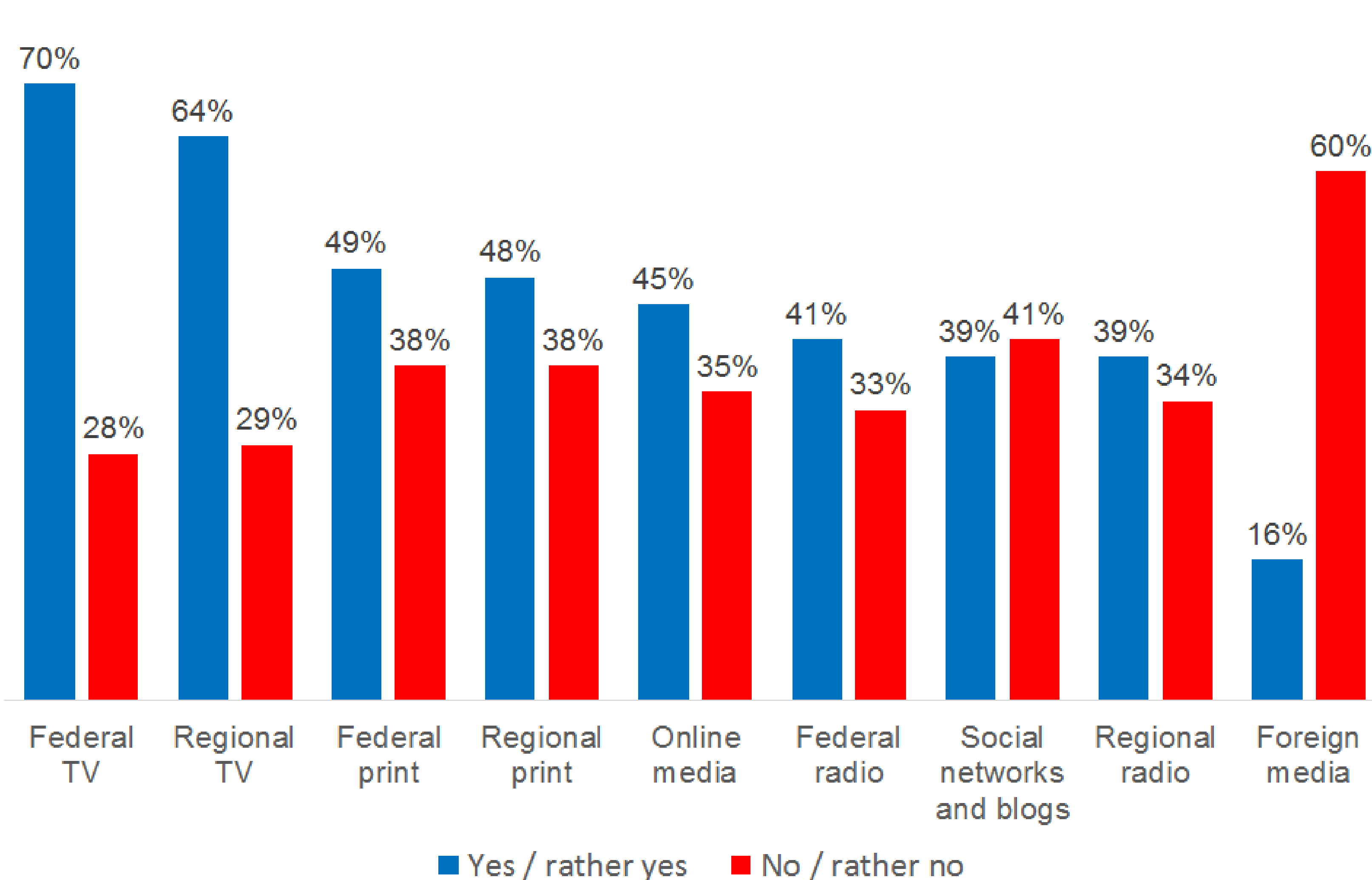
# TV is by far the main source of news for Russians



What is your main source of information about the events in Russia?



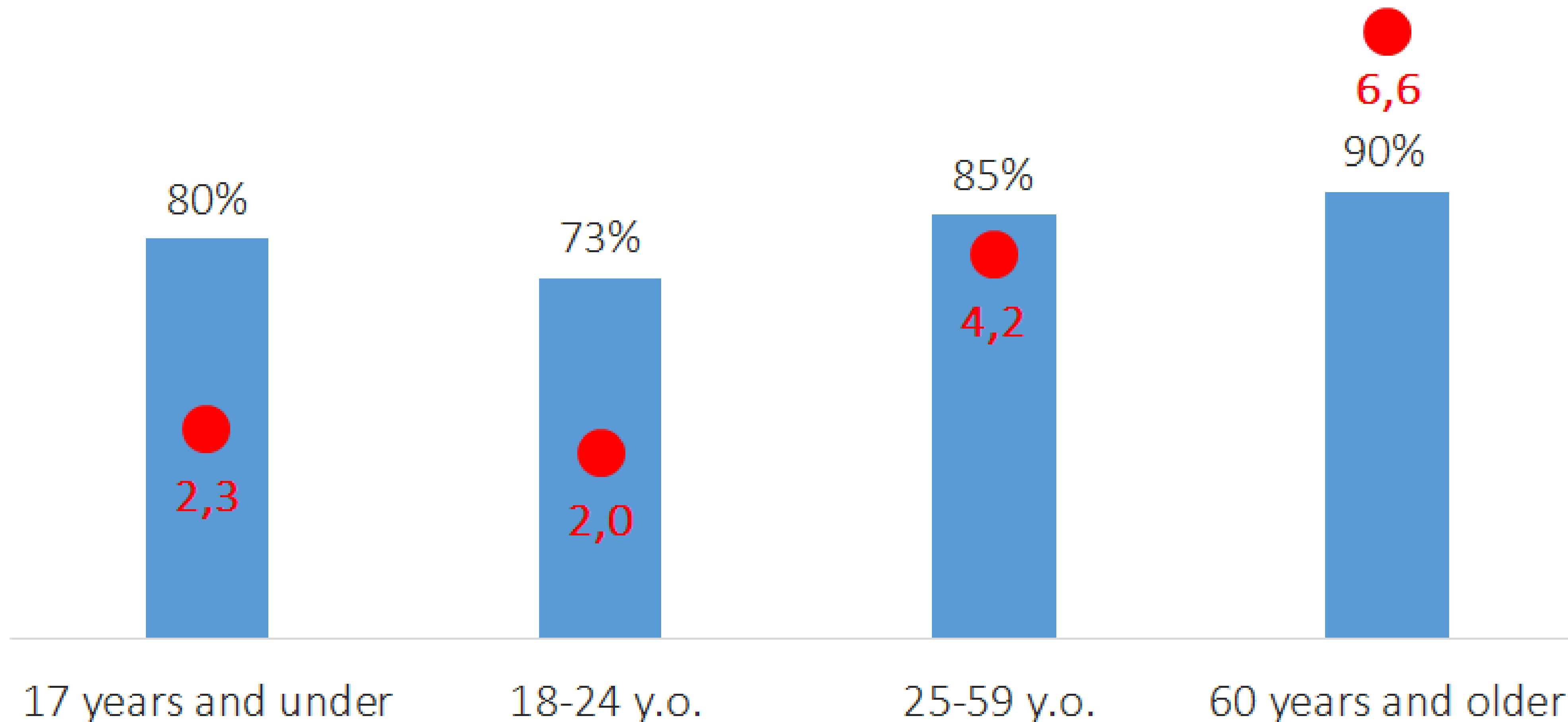
# Which media do Russians trust?



- TV is the most trustable source of information for Russians, while foreign media have the highest level of distrust

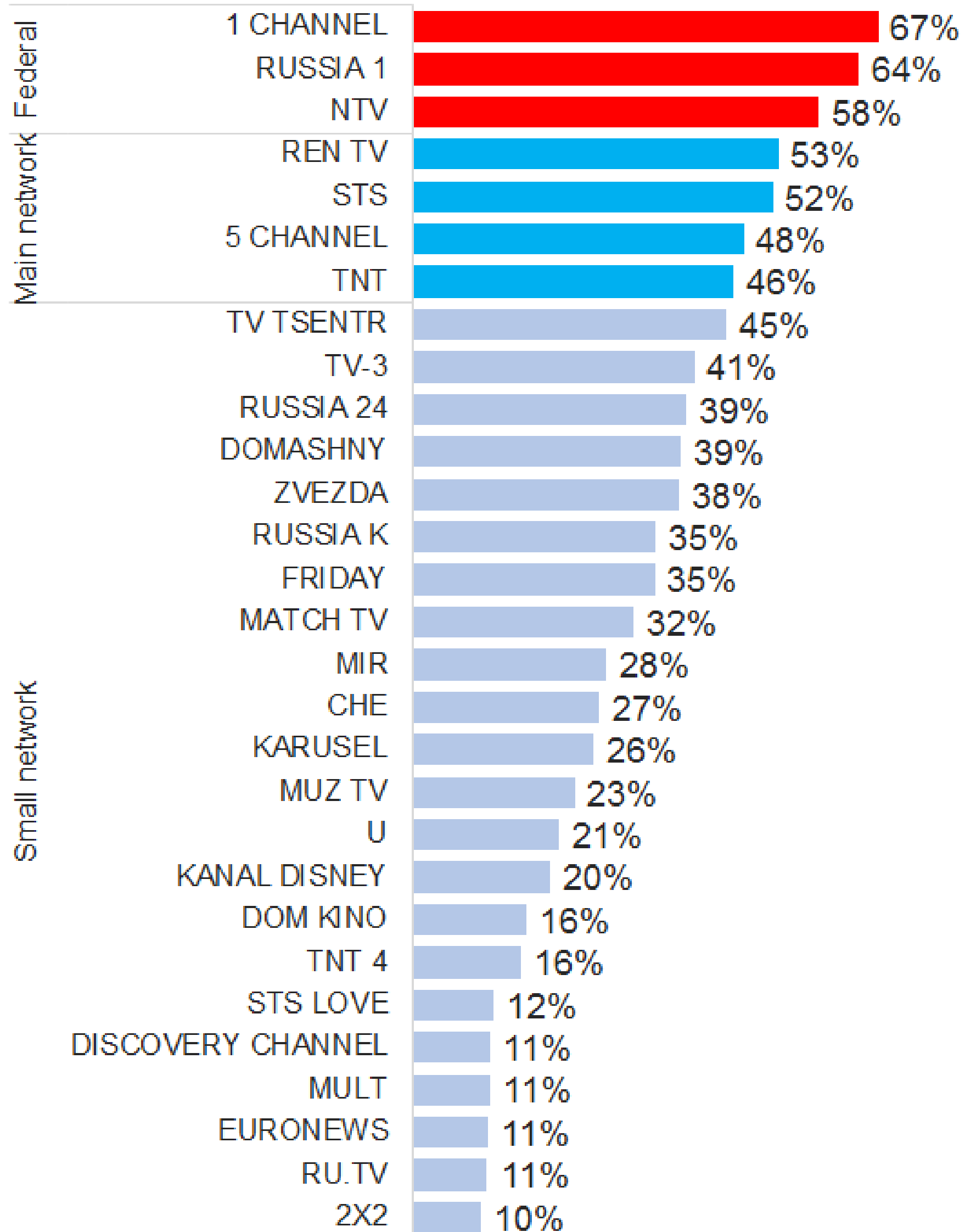
# An average Russian citizen watches TV 4,5 hours per day

■ Weekly reach %    ● Ave. time spend (in hours)



# Weekly reach of Russian TV channels
























Total weekly reach of  
3 main federal TV  
channels is 76%





# The most popular TV channels in Russia

All major channels with news programs are owned by state or proxy companies

Holding	Owner (share)	Audience share (18+ 100K+)	News in prime time	Channels
VGTRK	Government (100%)	18,7	YES	   
Gazprom-Media	Gazprombank (100%)	17,2	YES	    
1 Channel	Government (75%), NMG (25%)	12,1	YES	
NMG	NMG (100%)	11,3	YES	 
TV Center	Moscow Government (100%)	3,0	YES	
Zvezda	Ministry of Defense (100%)	2,6	YES	
CTC-Media	UTV (75%)	9,4		   
Prof-Media	Gazprombank (100%)	5,0		  
UTV	UTV (100%)	2,4		
	UTV (80%), Walt Disney (20%)			



# Kremlin has full control of all top channels



РОССИЯ 1

Russian Television and Radio  
Broadcasting Company

100% Russian government



ПЕРВЫЙ КАНАЛ

Federal Agency for State Property  
Management  
Subdivision of Russian Ministry of  
Economic Development

National Media Group

Key owner – Yuriy Kovalchuk

ORT-KB, Ltd

Property of Roman Abramovich, one of  
the richest Russian businessmen

JSC Gazprom-media

Key owners – state company Gazprom  
and Yuriy Kovalchuk companies

Yuriy Kovalchuk, Russian  
businessman and one of  
the closest Putin's proxies;  
under U.S. and EU  
sanction since 2014



# Conclusions

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- TV remains the most influential media in Russia
- 3 main federal channels reach 76% of Russians in a week
- Russians trust TV much more than any other media
- Foreign media have the lowest trust rating and the biggest anti-rating
  - few people can speak foreign language and travel abroad
- All big media are owned by the Kremlin

# Image of the West in Russian TV

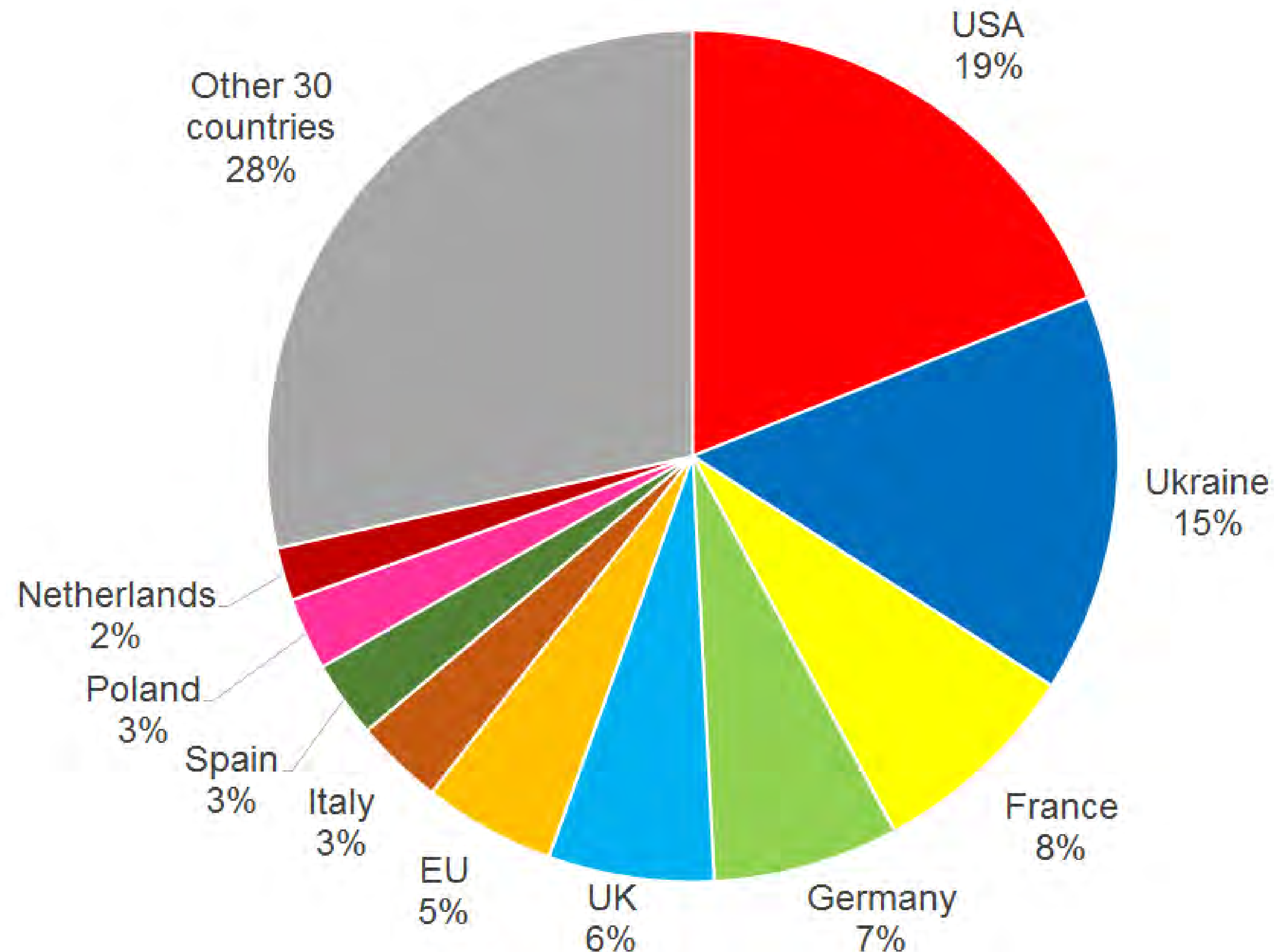
**25 negative news daily  
on the top three TV  
channels**



**Coca Cola had  
  
6 ADS DAILY  
on the same top three  
channels**



# Top negatively mentioned countries in Russian media

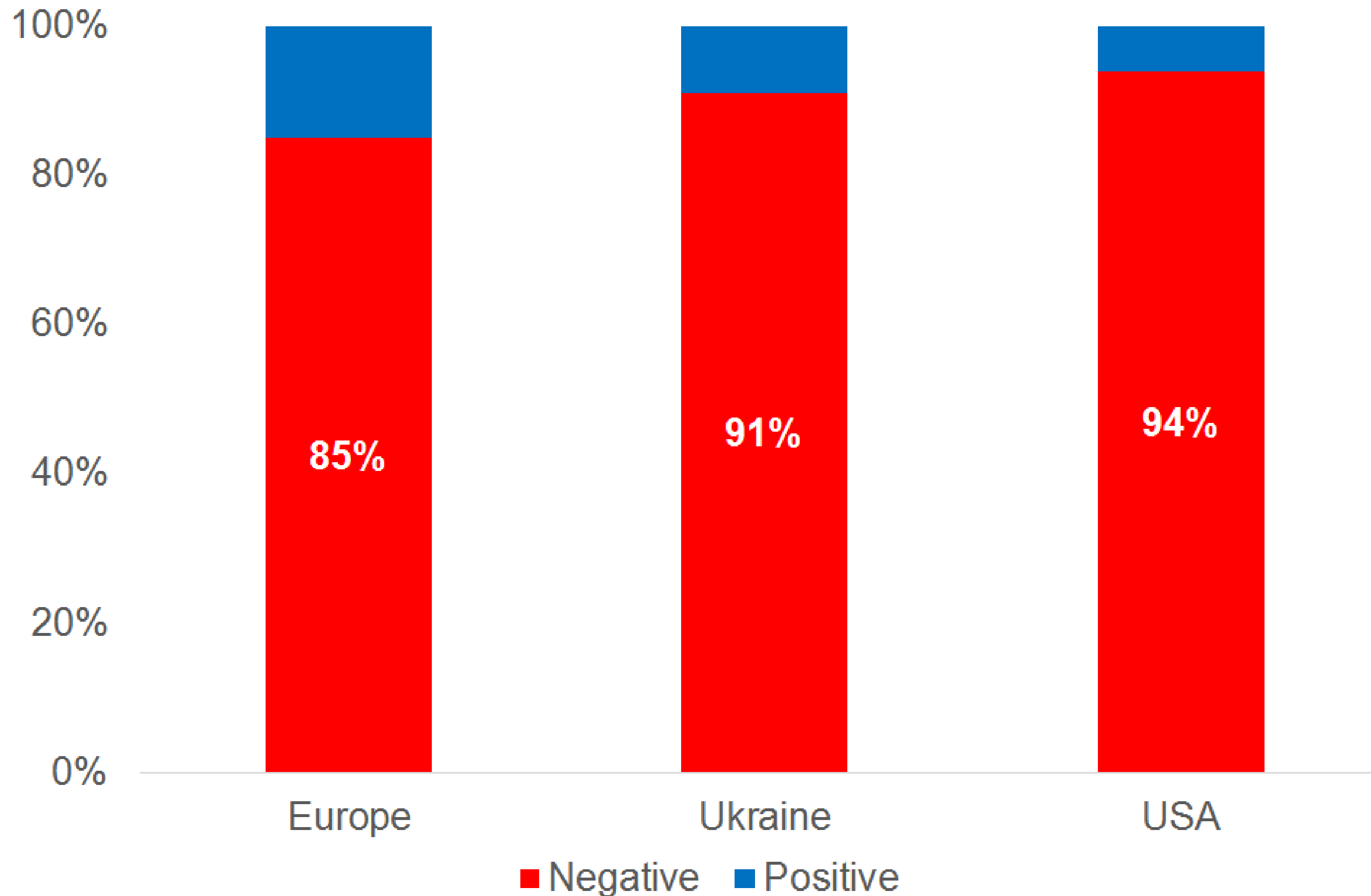


The main enemies in Russian media are: USA, Ukraine and Europe

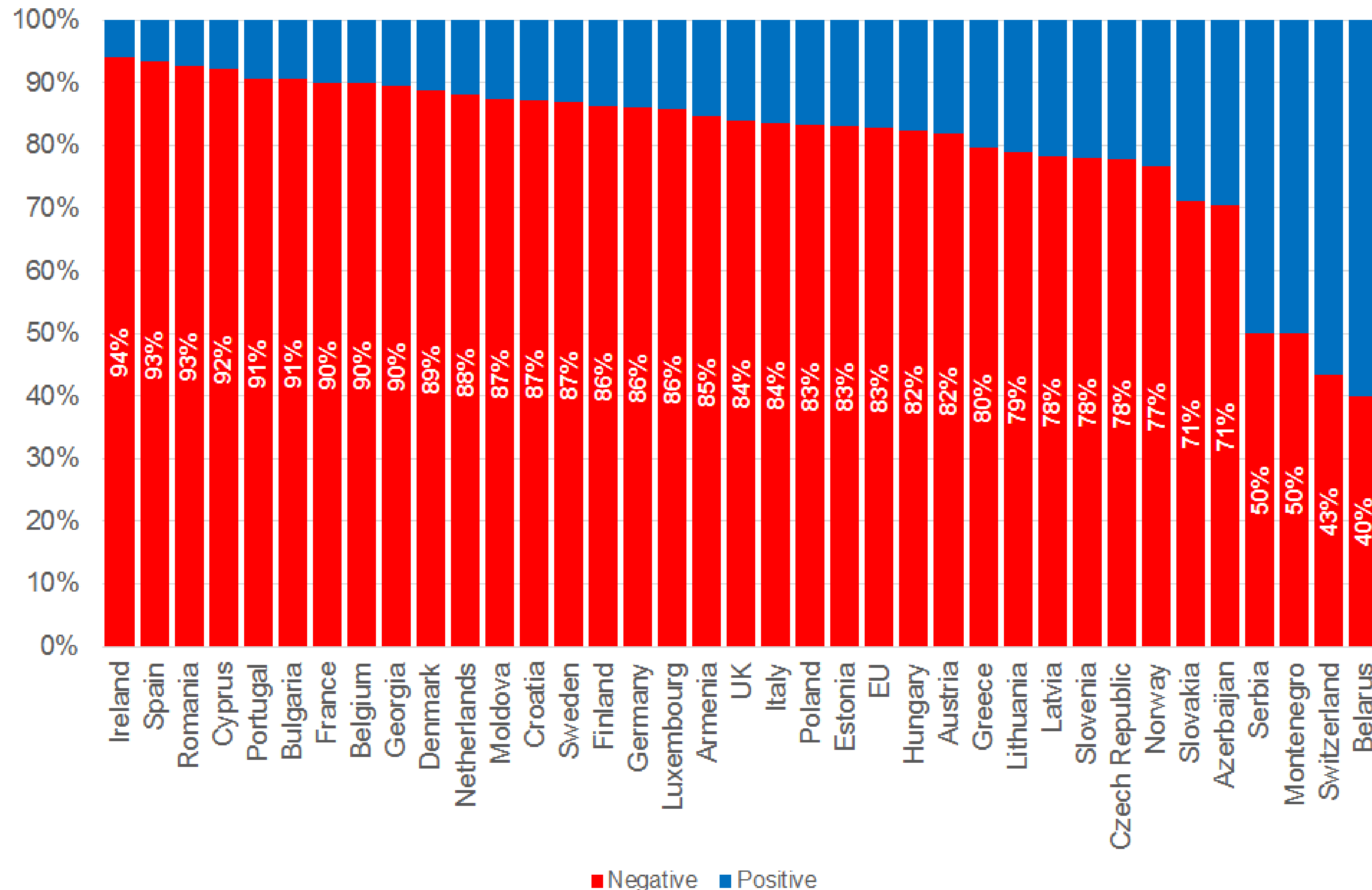
Top three TV channels and 10 web sites



# Negative to positive news ratio on Russian TV



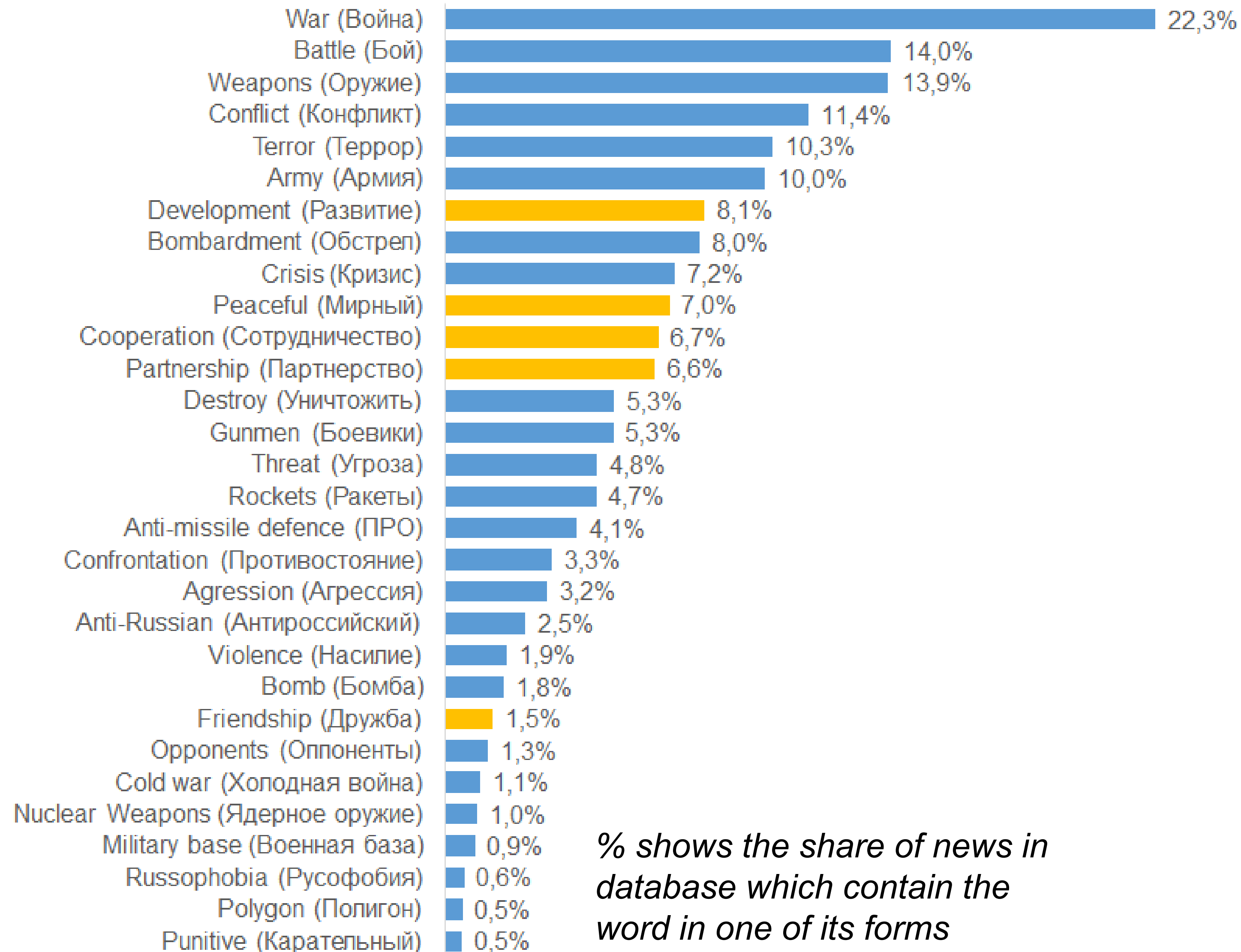
# Positive to negative news ratio for Europe



The average ratio of negative to positive news is 85%/15%

However there are two countries that Russian TV covers positively: Belarus and Switzerland

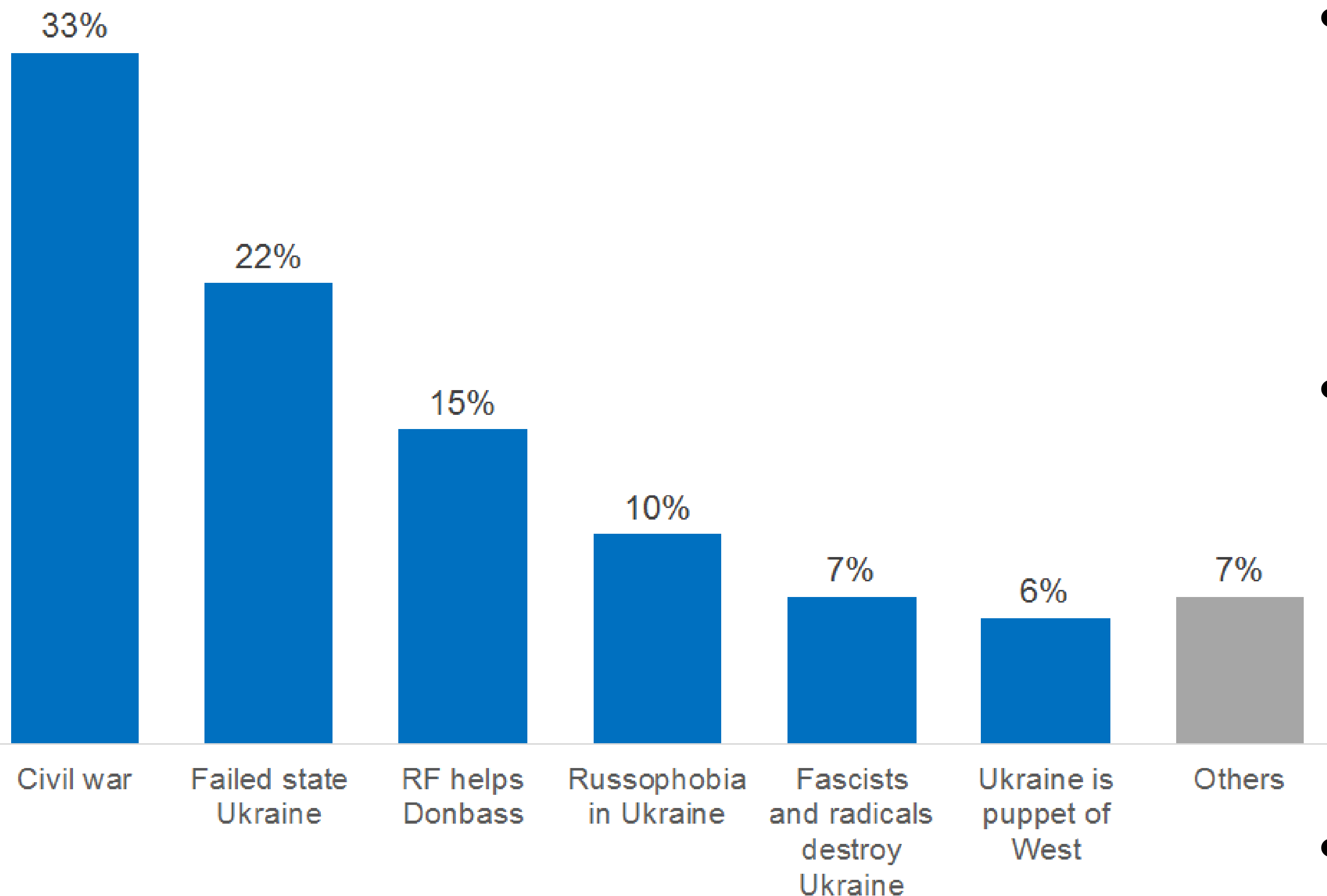
# 22% of negative news contain the word “war” in different forms



*% shows the share of news in database which contain the word in one of its forms*

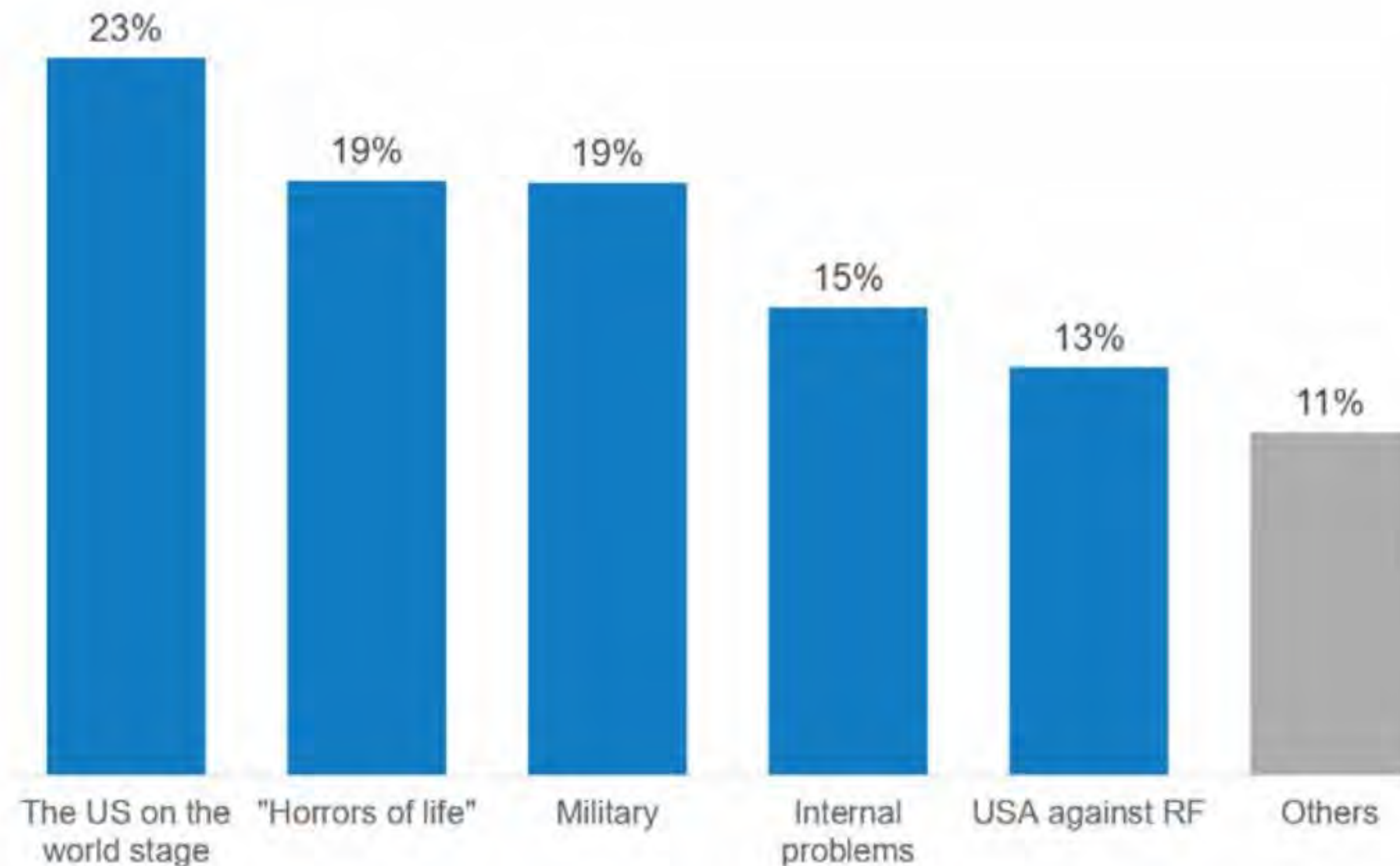
- “Development”, “peaceful” and “cooperation” are present in Russian news around 3 times less than “war”

# Top narratives about Ukraine on Russian TV



- Ukraine is shown as collapsing failed state with weak authorities, which is directly managed from Washington
- Russian-backed war in the East of Ukraine is portrayed by Kremlin as civil war, where Russian people are suffering and therefore Russia has duty to protect them
- Ukraine is "ruled by nationalists and fascists"

# Top narratives about the USA on Russian TV

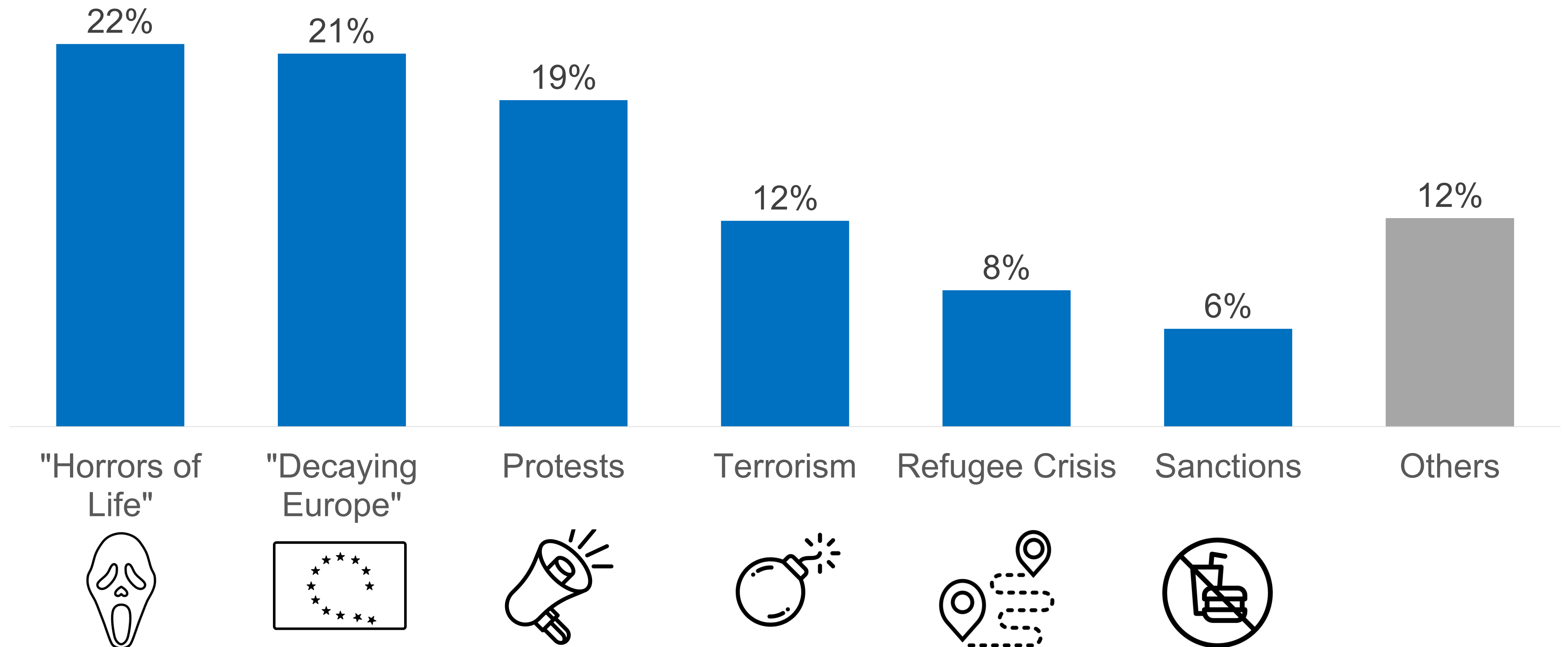


- USA is described as the most aggressive power in the World, but only Russia can counter it
- At the same time the U.S. is decaying power
- According to RU media, the U.S. is fueling illegal wars, terrorism, coups etc
- Also, the U.S. is using Ukraine and Europe as instruments against Russia



# There are 6 main narratives

- 88% of all negative coverage may be divided into six main narratives



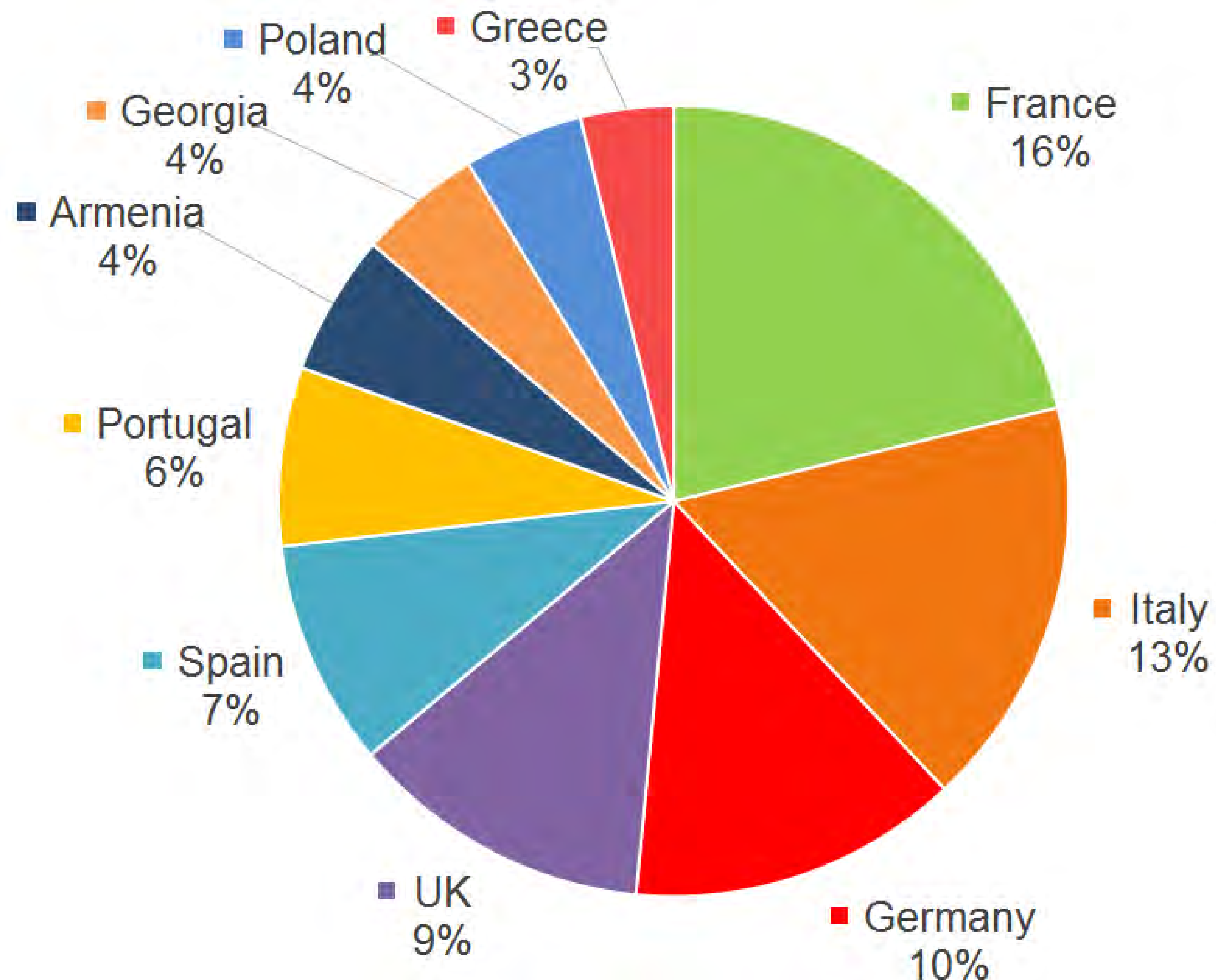
# Narrative #1 – "Horrors of Life" in Europe

- Daily life in Europe is shown as very insecure, danger comes unexpectedly but constantly from different causes. Most popular are natural disasters, technogenic disasters and accidents or crimes
- Authorities are often depicted as incapable of managing challenges or the ones who use double-standards in favor of the rich & powerful
- Most of this narrative is based on tiny scale events, which might be worth covering only by local media, if any
- In the end, that creates a story of a hard, unstable and dangerous life in Europe on a daily basis, because Europe deserves it. Even reports of “endless” natural disasters in Europe prompt the Russian viewers to assume that Mother Nature doesn’t like Europe



Title in photo: The European Flood

# “Horrors of Life” by countries



- Top 5 countries are the Top 5 EU countries by population
- This narrative is constantly promoted
- According to Levada-Center survey 70% of Russians didn't want to travel abroad in 2015 due to alleged insecurity outside Russia

# “Horrors of Life” in quotation

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“The mourning in Naples, Italy. A simple quarrel over a clothes line led to tragedy. A 48-year-old man, who is a medic, arguing with his brother's wife as to where the washed clothes should dry, took his gun. He killed her first, then opened fire from the balcony and shot his brother and neighbour and a policeman who tried to intervene.” - *Channel One, 16 May 2015 and same story on NTV channel*



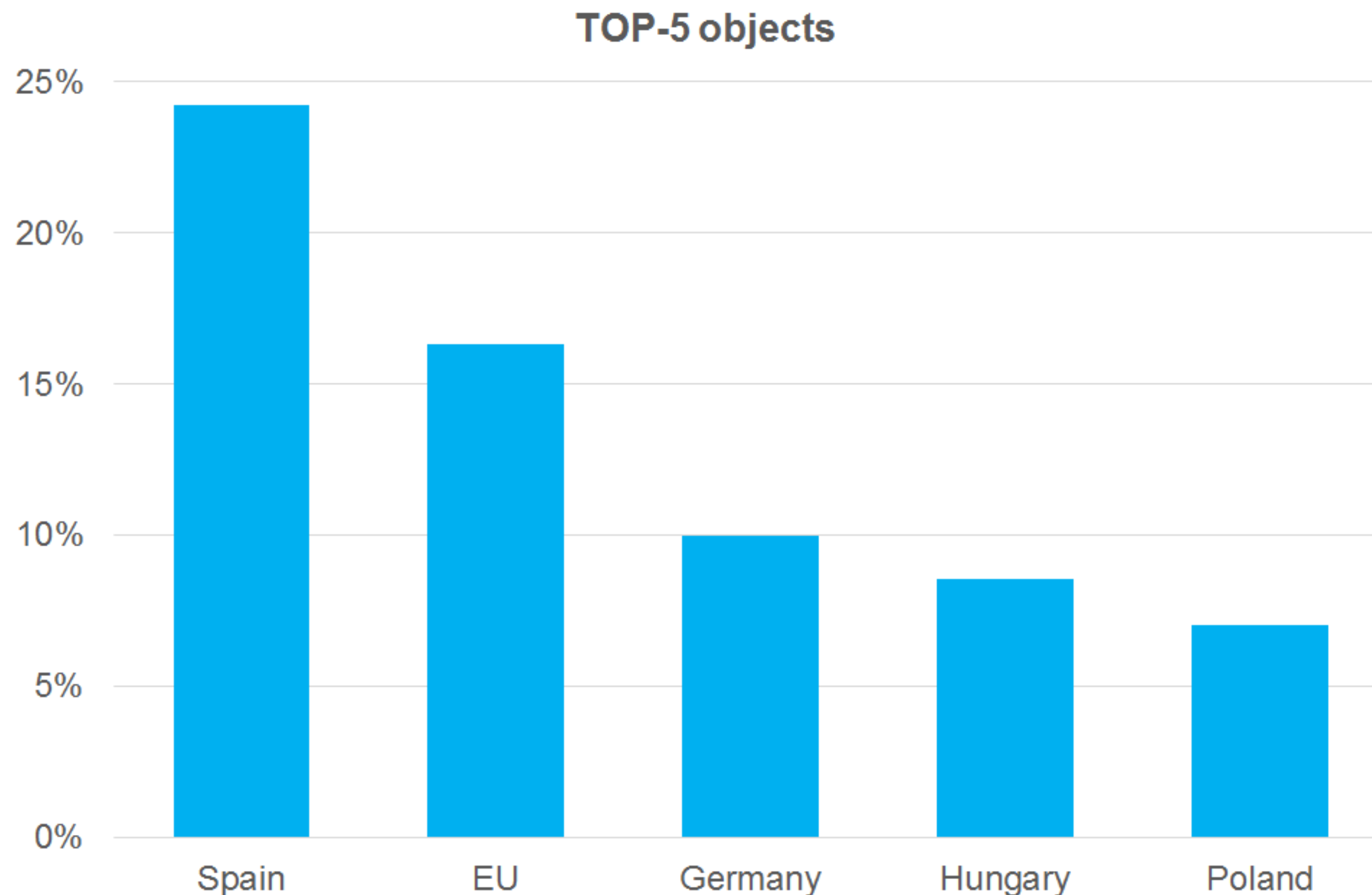
# Narrative #2 – «Decaying Europe»

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- More than 70% of this narrative is built around message that Europe falls apart and is full of internal conflicts in all spheres: policy, economy, justice, moral values.
- The idea of a united Europe based on shared values is depicted as unrealistic (Catalonia and Brexit are used as proof). In Russian media there are strong and important European countries that infringe upon other weak countries.
- The societies within countries themselves are divided about European values. Europeans are depicted as people with weak and declining morale. Hypocrisy, unjust, biased media, puppet politicians, pedophilism, neo-nazism – all have been showcased as commonplace in the EU. Homosexuality continues to be a part of it.
- This narrative forms the opinion that Russia has to be aggressive not to let Europe impose its values on Russia.

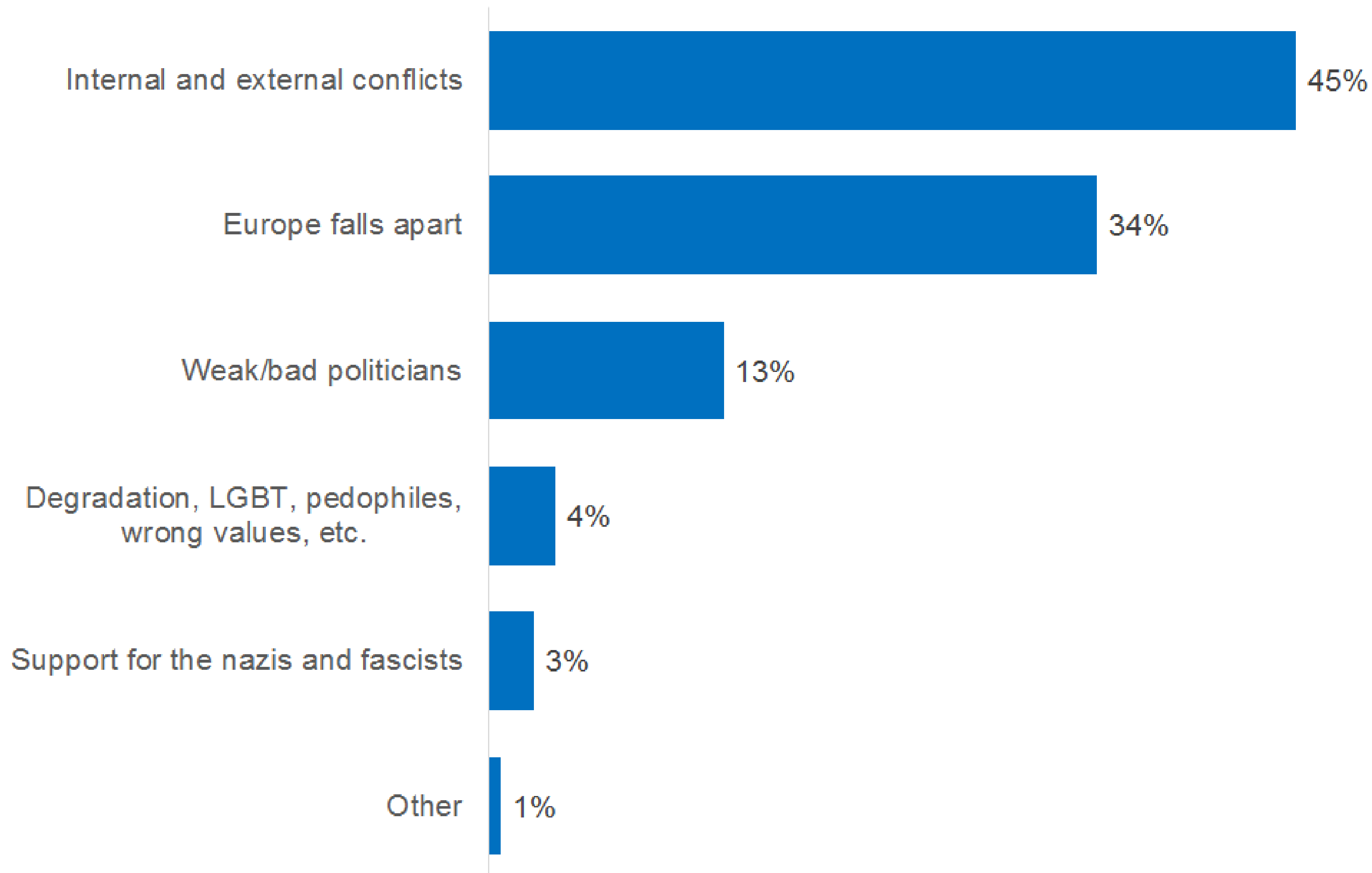


# “Decaying Europe” narrative during 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2017



- “Decaying Europe” was the most growing narrative during Jul-Dec 2017
- Spain was the leader by mentions because of the Catalonia crisis
- The Government crisis in Germany was interpreted as one of the main signs of “Decaying Europe”
- Hungary is in the Top-5 due to claims it apposes new educational laws in Ukraine

# “Decaying Europe”



Main focus of this narrative is on the growing and inevitable disintegration of Europe

# “Decaying Europe” in quotes

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"All the talks about Europe in different gears will immediately turn out to be what they really are - a vain attempt to hide the total inability of the United Europe to self-preserve"

*Channel One, 19 March 2017*

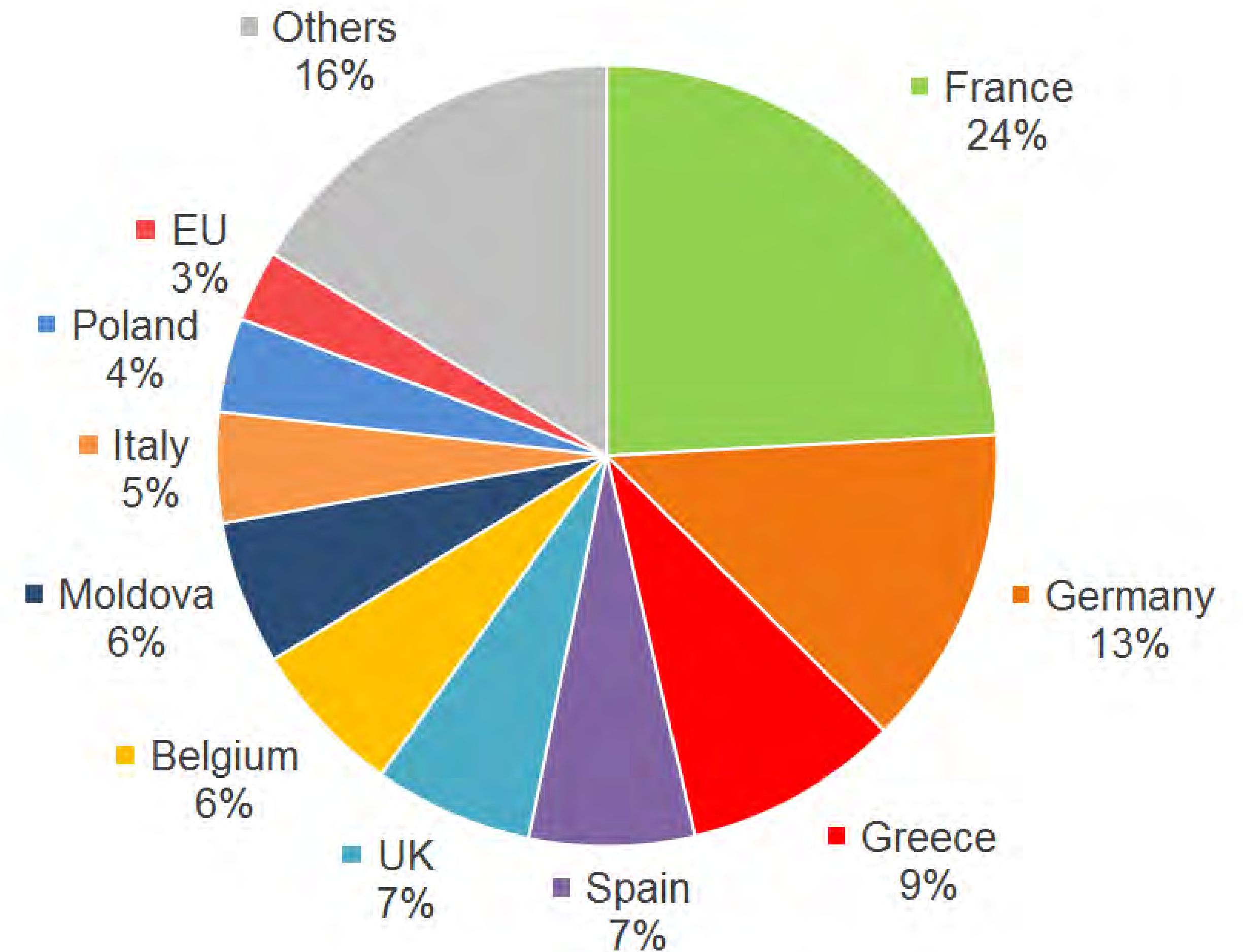
”

"Why the voices of Germany and France sound louder than others in the eurozone? Because they remain at the head of all the unions, whether it is currency, visa, or policy ones. They are the [proverbial] wallets of Europe. It was them who benefited the most when the European space expanded"

*Russia 1, 7 July 2015*

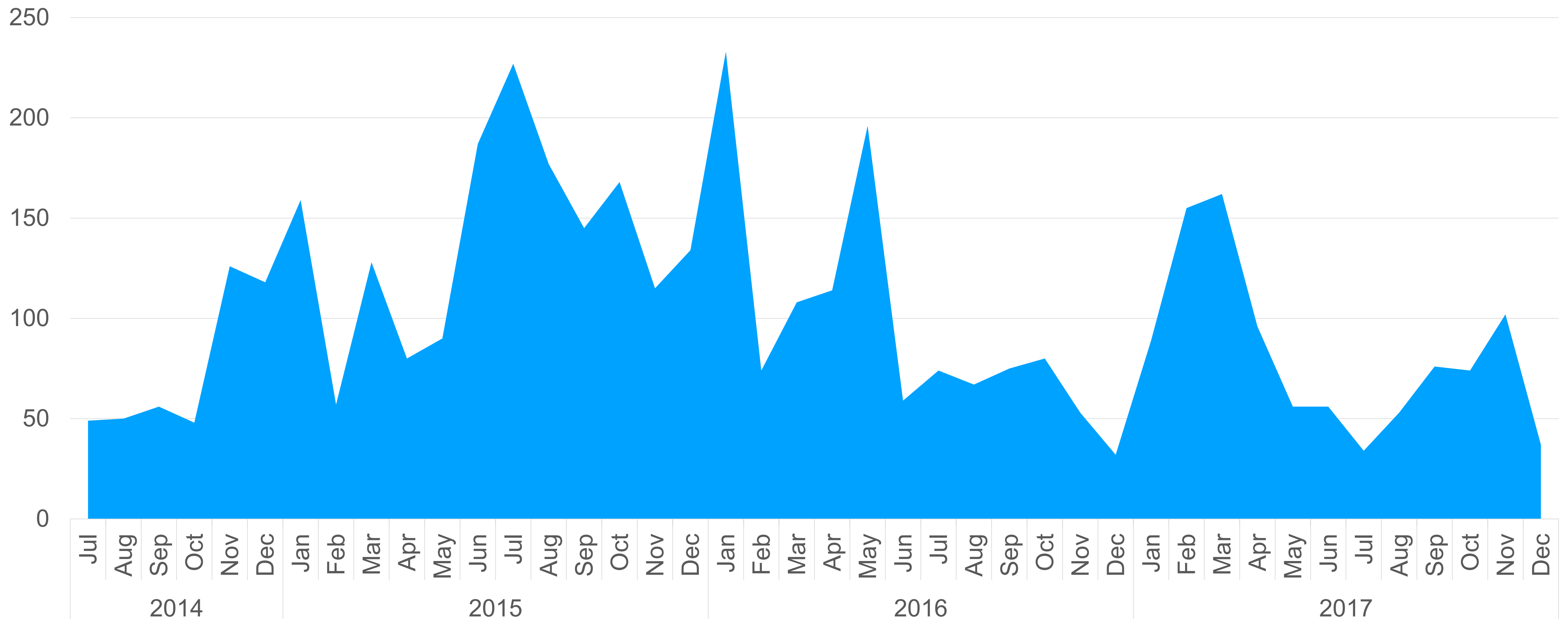
# Narrative #3 – "Protests in Europe"

- Similarly to Narrative #1, "Protests in Europe" are constantly pushed by the Russian media as a regular phenomena
- Europe is not united, hardly ever was, and has a clear trend to fall apart
- There are plenty of chronic flaws in economy, policy and security, which leave common Europeans no choice but to protest
- Russian top TV channels use all opportunities during prime time broadcasting to cover any types of protests in European countries like protests of janitors, air pilots, environmentalists, nurses, sailors, gas station employees, etc



# “Protests in Europe” by months

The narrative of “Protests in Europe” never disappear from top Russian TV channels





# “Protests in Europe” quotes

“Paris is turning into a big dump. While juniors who announced the strike are storming the offices of the officials.” *Channel One, 10 September 2015*

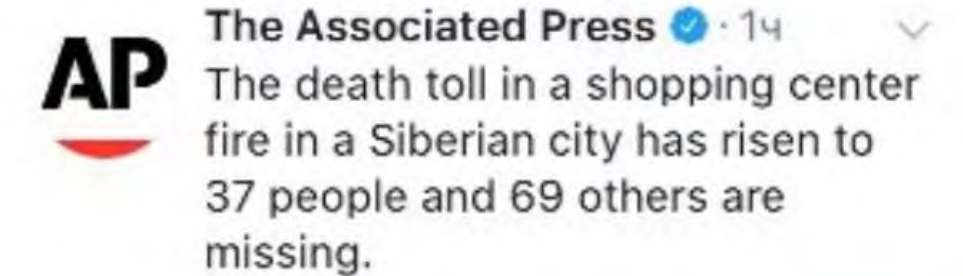
“In Amsterdam, thousands of people gathered in the center of the city. The main streets were flooded with tractors. There was a mass strike of Dutch farmers against the trade agreement between the European Union and Canada.” – Channel One, 23 October 2016

“Brussels downtown was covered with white smoke. European farmers covered one city block with dry milk. This way they expressed their dissatisfaction with the agrarian policy carried out by the European Commission.” *Channel One, 24 January 2017*

**How tragic fire at Kemerovo was covered in Ru media**  
Translation: “Lavrov played football to celebrate his birthday”



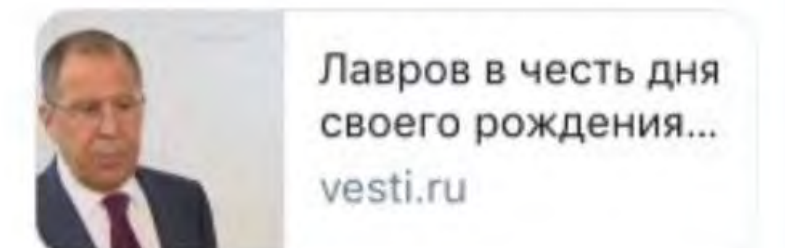
Russia shopping mall blaze kills dozens  
bbc.co.uk



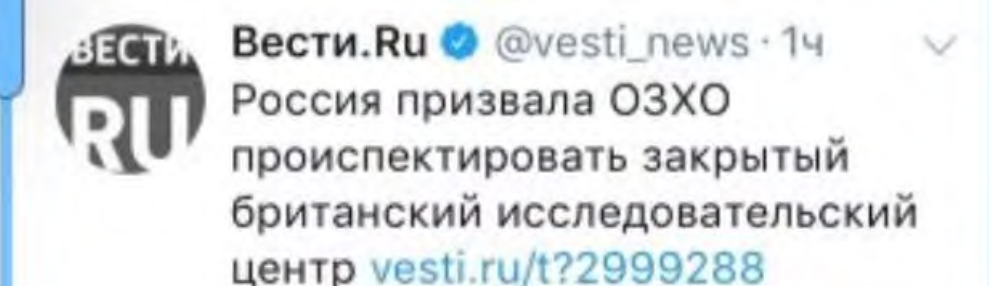
37 dead, 69 missing in Russian shopping center fire  
apnews.com



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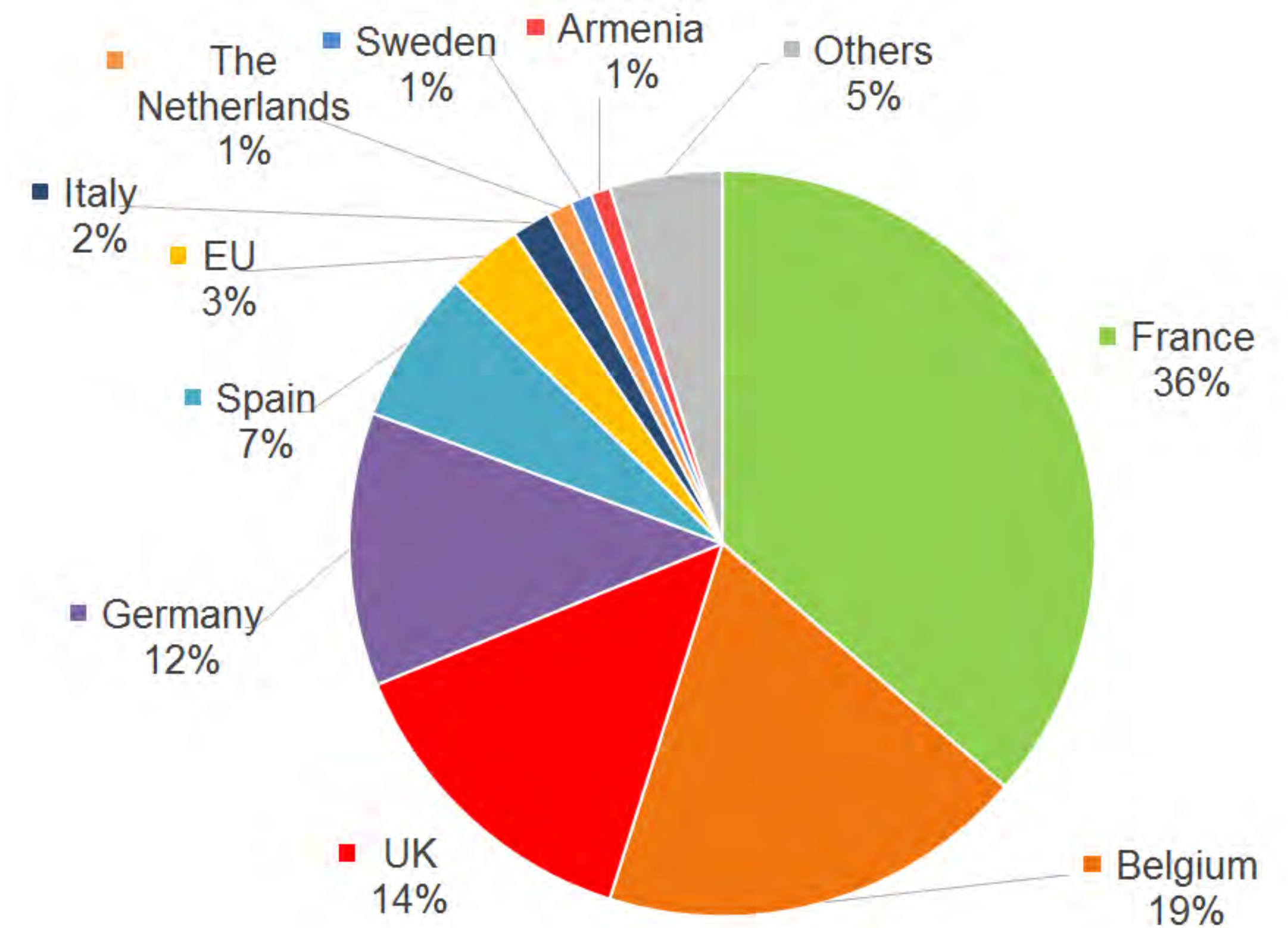
11 10 16





# Narrative #4 – "Terrorism"

- Though there were several terrorist attacks in Europe during the researched period, Russian media creates a narrative that Europe is under a never-ending terrorist attack
- For this purpose Russian media cover each and every terrorist act, sometimes interpreting criminal activity as terrorism
- Security and special forces of the EU are depicted as weak and incapable of anticipating threat and protecting their citizens
- Another part of this narrative is that there could be less terrorism in the EU, if only it were to cooperate with Russia on its terms



# “Terrorism” in quotation

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"The chaotic movement of the police, who did not quite know where to run, can hardly be considered as high professionalism. As well as storming of the printing house, the hiding place of the Kouachi brothers who shot the editorial office of the journal Charlie Hebdo"

*Channel One, 18 January 2015*

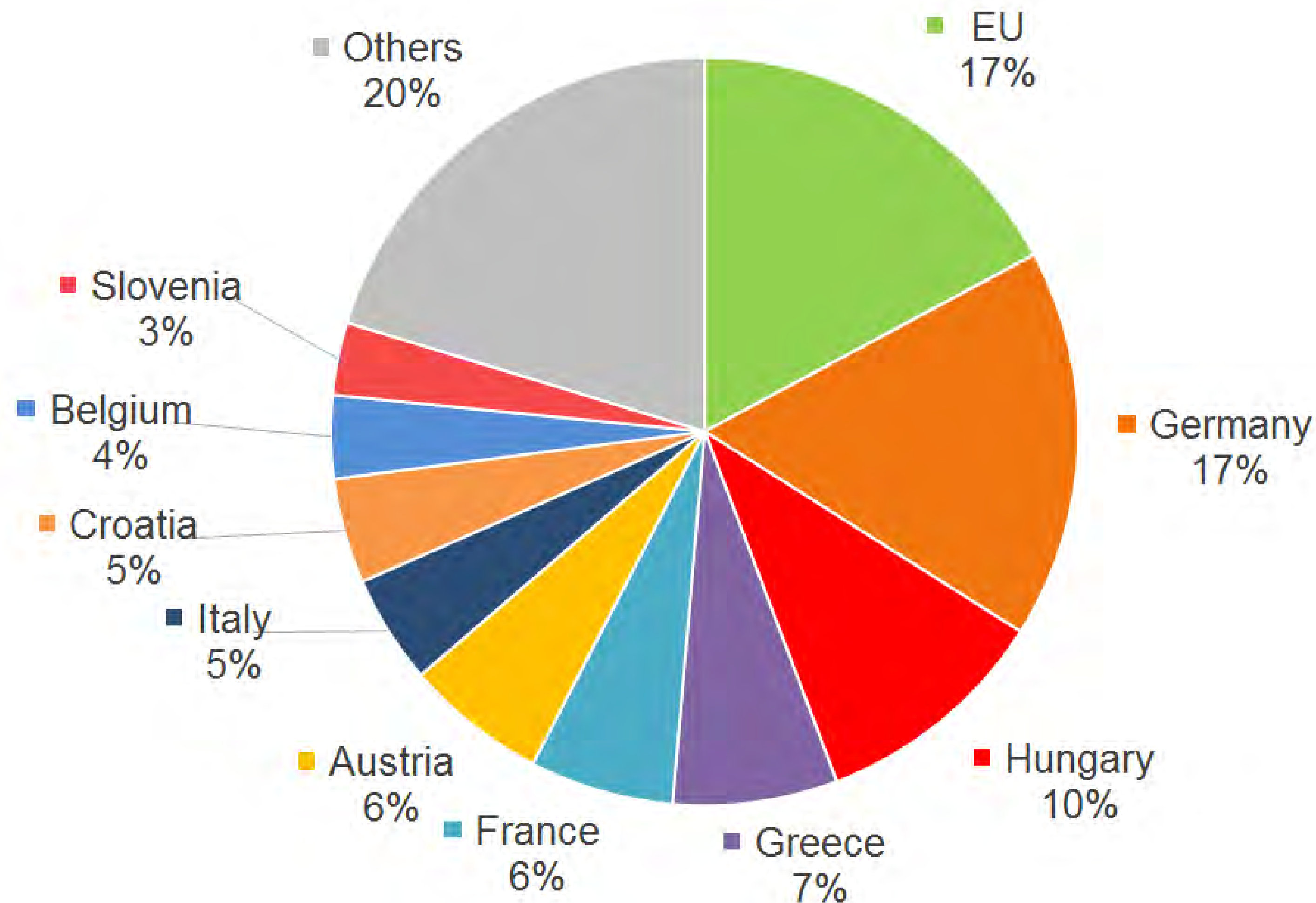
# Narrative #5 – "Refugee crisis"

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- In this narrative Russian media blame Europe for the refugee crisis, since it supported the U.S. when it initiated the war in Syria
- Also Russian media blame Europe, that it inspired Syrian people to immigrate, but later realized that refugees were a burden
- The way refugees have been handled in the EU had created an unprecedented crisis. Refugees are kept in horrible inhumane conditions in the EU countries.
- Russian media creates the picture that hundreds of thousands and millions of dangerous hungry people are already overwhelming the EU and are pushing locals away



# “Refugee Crisis” by countries



This narrative is mainly associated with Germany and the EU

Total share of this narrative has significantly decreased in comparison to 2015

# “Refugee Crisis” in quotation

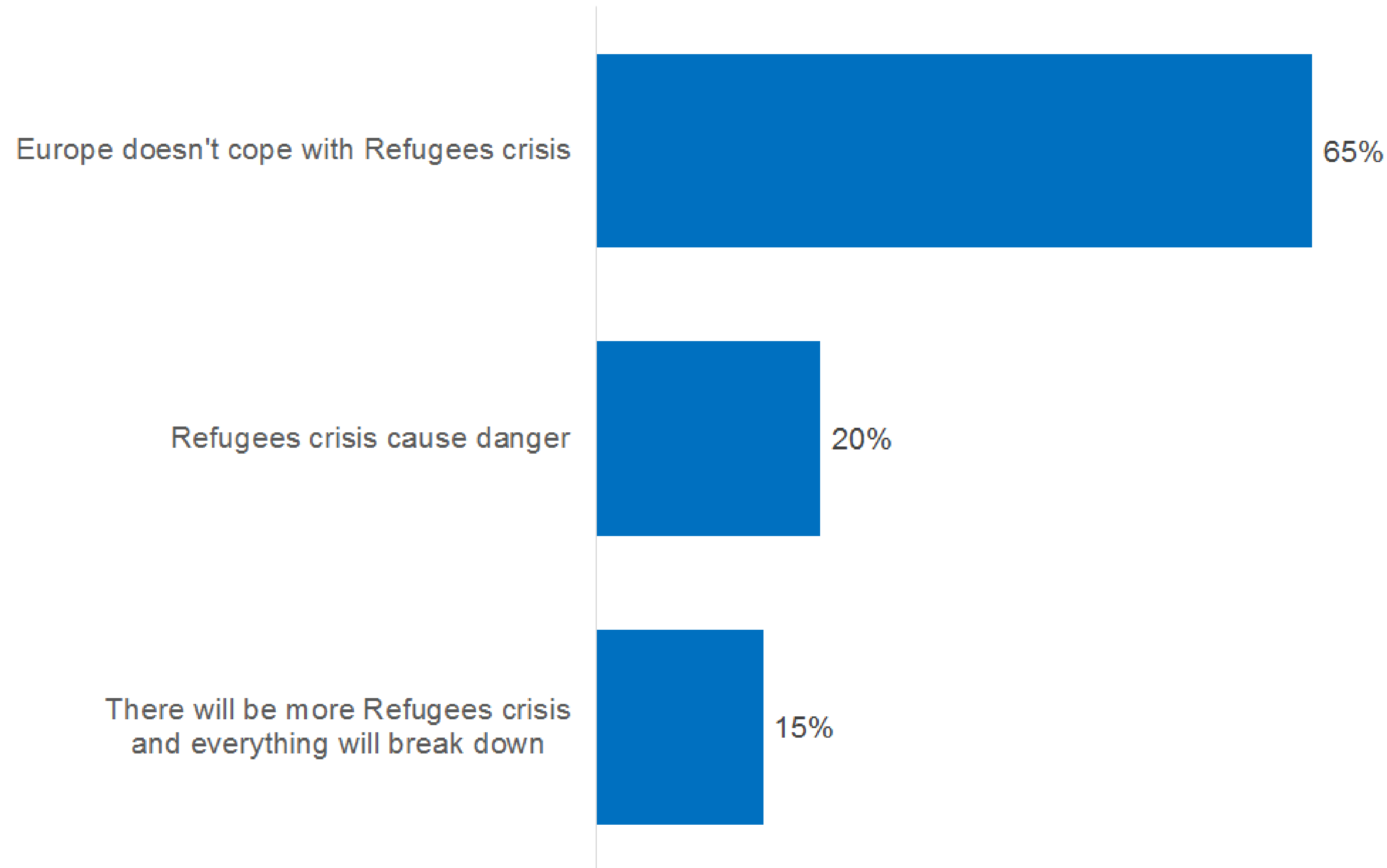
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"The number of migrants in Europe, especially in Austria and Germany, has grown so much that it became clear that someone is stimulating and supporting this flow. Apparently, these are the same forces that supported the Arab Spring or the Ukrainian Revolution"

*Channel One, 9 June 2015*

# “Refugee crisis”

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Key message of this narrative is that Europe has failed the refugees

# Narrative #6 – "Sanctions"

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- The key message of this narrative is that sanctions imposed against Russia together with the Russian counter-sanctions which hurt the EU so much, that more and more countries wish to remove them to give themselves a chance to survive. However the U.S. doesn't let them
- This narrative is also used to highlight the strength of Russia. Often it is supported by very disputable examples from history, all depicting Europe as a cruel power that for centuries tried to seize Russia, but always failed
- Russians are also described as people who do not need all that European welfare, because they have a higher moral compass
- World War Two is often used as an example of Russia's strength despite technological advancement of Europe. For instance, the narrative is supported by saying "We can do it again" meaning that Russia is able to save (seize) Europe again as in WW2



# “Sanctions” in quotation

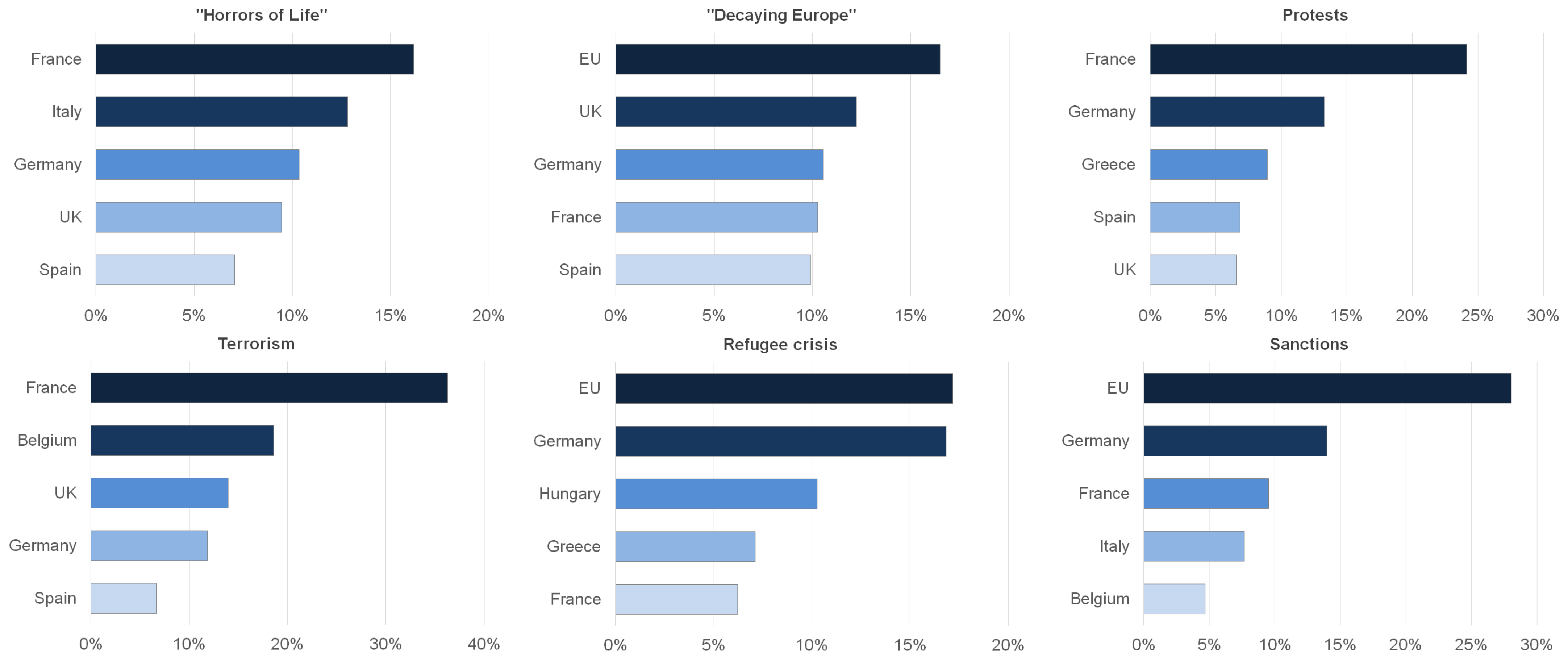
"Even Angela Merkel recently confessed that it was hard for Germany to prolong the sanctions. The EU is facing a serious conflict of interest. But opponents were convinced to vote in solidarity with partners from the United States"

*Russia 1, 21 July 2015*



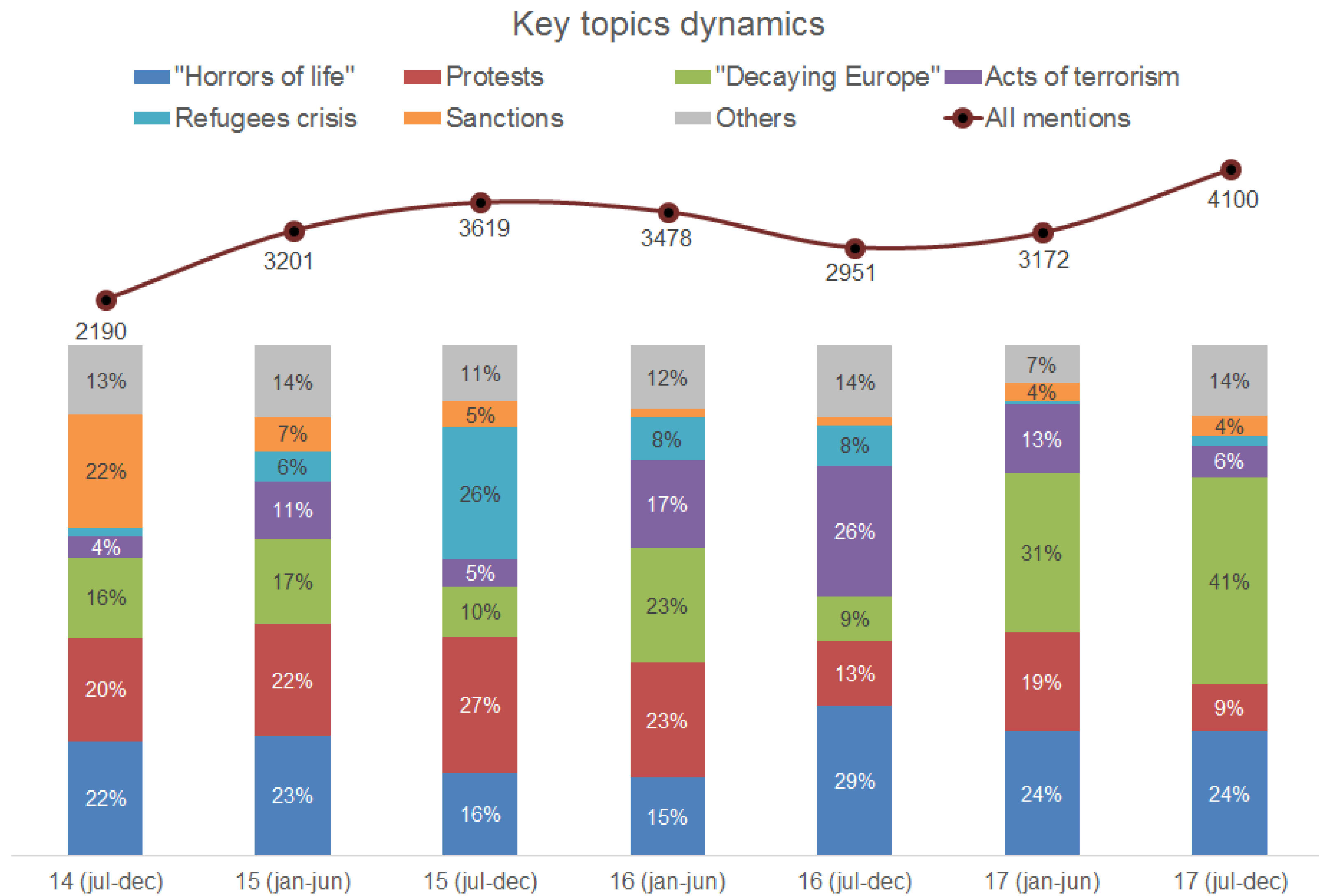


# Top five countries by narrative



- France is depicted as incapable to deal with terrorism, protests and as generally dangerous to live in
- Germany and the EU are associated with the “Refugee crisis” and “Sanctions”

# Key narratives' dynamics by half-year periods



Quantity of negative news has increased by 87% from July'14 to December'17

“Decaying Europe” was the most growing narrative in 2HY 2017

A big share of the “Horrors of Life” narrative in order to support a perception of a “dangerous” life in Europe

Total amount of negative news, share

# Quote

*“The USA has been waging a war against Russia for a long time. The aim of this war is the same as in 1941-1945 – to destroy Russia as a country and Russian people as a nation. [This is done] so that nothing remains of Russia in history. This is the point of American aggression.”*

Russian academician and  
acting Advisor to President Putin  
Sergei Glaziev



Sergei Glaziev



# Quote

*“The United States has taken the course of destroying Russia, and it is unchanged. “A good Indian is a dead Indian”, they say. Do not think that this saying is only about the Indians.”*

Famous Russian writer, regular speaker  
at key TV shows, and also favourite  
Putin’s “philosopher”

Nikolai Starikov



Nikolai Starikov



# Narratives about NATO

**NATO equals the U.S.A.** NATO countries are the vassals of the United States. They have lost their sovereignty and are under external control or occupation (Germany is often used as an example).

**The NATO bloc consists of countries that are almost at war with each other, and therefore it has no prospects.**

**NATO in the geopolitical game seeks Russia's death.** NATO is encircling Russia and encroaching on zones of its interest (Baltic States, Georgia, Ukraine)

**NATO kills Russian people in Donbas (East Ukraine).**

**NATO wanted to turn Crimea into the NATO fleet base.** For this, they planned to slaughter the "Russian Crimea"





# Some quotes

*“We all are dreaming of visiting the ruins of the Pentagon with the red flag!”* Russia 1, TV, “Evening with Vladimir Solovyov”.

*“The USA is the largest terrorist state! NATO is the largest terrorist organization!”* Mikhail DELYAGIN, academician, famous public person.

*“Americans planned to kill Erdogan”*  
Channel One, TV.

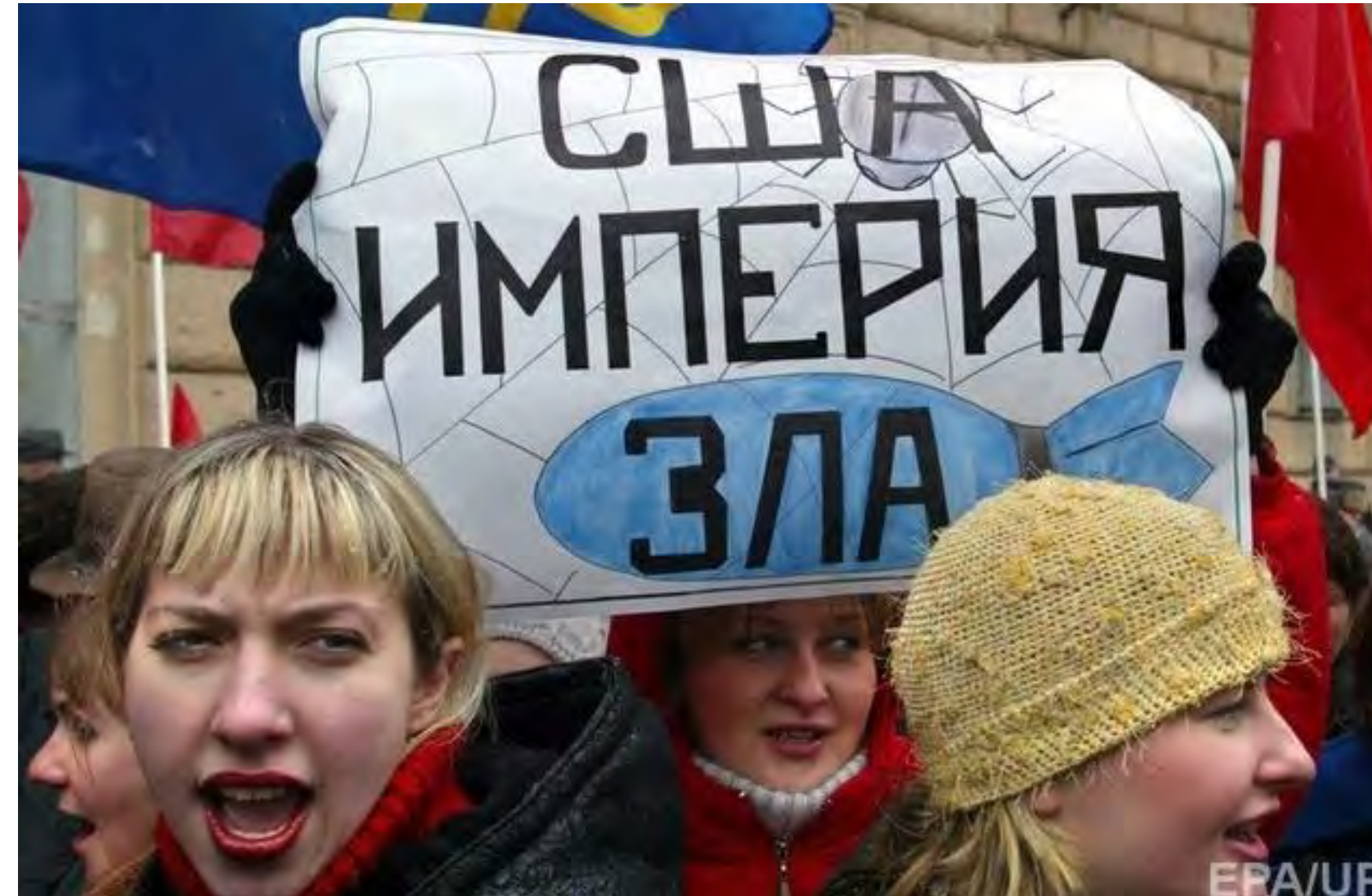




Anti-Americanism is promoted by Kremlin's proxies to become popular trend



“Obama is a schmuck”



“The USA is an Empire of Evil”



“Obama is a schmuck”



# Russian media are willingly covering anti-American sentiment



Burning the dollar sign during the religious orthodox holiday of Maslenitsa



Writing on Obama's scarecrow – "devil"



# Renowned Russian satirist – Mikhail Zadornov

He has created a very popular mem in Russia about “stupid Americans”

“America is the only country that went from barbarism directly to decline, passing the stage of civilization”

“An American wanted to warm up sandwiches in the hotel room. So he put them in a safe and entered a heating time. Well, stupid!”

"MH17 fell because it was heavier than air"



Mikhail Zadornov



# “Sanctions: entry for Obama is prohibited”



Ban on entering the furniture store



Ban on entering the printing house



Ban on entering the shopping mall



# Threats

Russian media put tremendous resources within to:

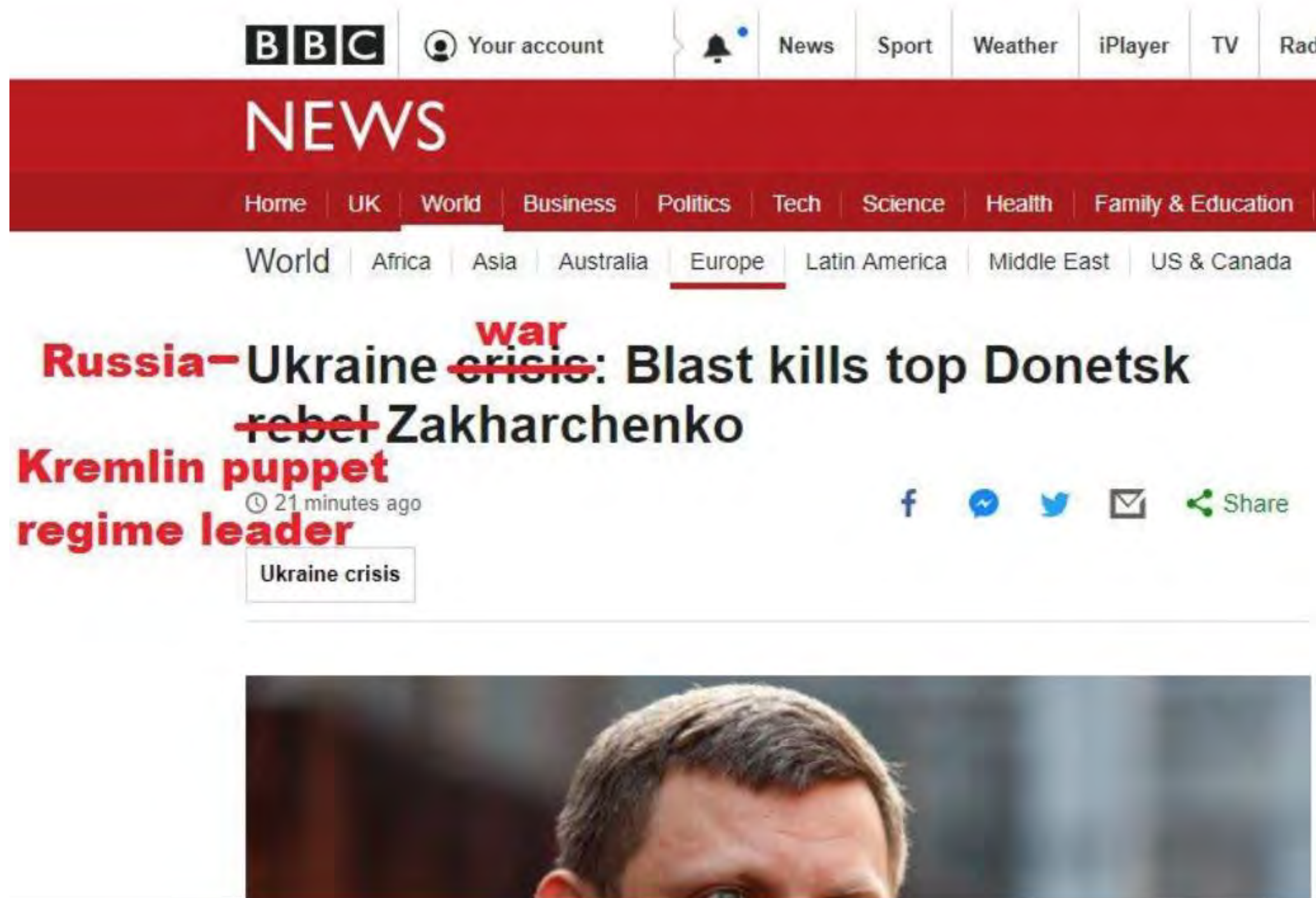
1. Convince the Russian population never to accept western liberal values, neither today nor tomorrow
2. Prepare the Russian population ready for potential conflicts with the West and feel right and motivate their citizens to take over the weak and divided West
3. Increase the awareness that if Russia isn't resistant, the West will impose its "toxic" values



*On screen: "If we don't, then they will... us"  
Dmitry Kiselyov, "Vesti Nedeli" program, Russia 1*



# Kremlin narratives still have significant influence on media of other countries



The screenshot shows the BBC News website interface. At the top, the BBC logo is on the left, followed by a 'Your account' link and a navigation bar with links for News, Sport, Weather, iPlayer, TV, and Radio. Below this is a large red banner with the word 'NEWS' in white. Underneath the banner is a horizontal menu with links for Home, UK, World, Business, Politics, Tech, Science, Health, and Family & Education. Below this menu is another row of links for World, Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe (which is underlined), Latin America, Middle East, and US & Canada. The main headline reads 'Russia-Ukraine <sup>war</sup> ~~crisis~~: Blast kills top Donetsk ~~rebel~~ Zakharchenko'. To the left of the headline, there are two red annotations: 'Kremlin puppet' and 'regime leader'. Below the headline, it says '21 minutes ago'. To the right of the headline are social media sharing icons for Facebook, Messenger, Twitter, Email, and a 'Share' button. Below the headline is a small box labeled 'Ukraine crisis'. At the bottom of the screenshot is a partial view of a photograph showing the top of a man's head.

The biggest challenge from our perspective is that Kremlin uses an inherently Western value of free speech to attack the West.



# Russian media are no different from special services



*One and the same person was seen to be a “driver” in a car at the place of Nemtsov killing and as a “farmer” asking Putin to keep sanctions*



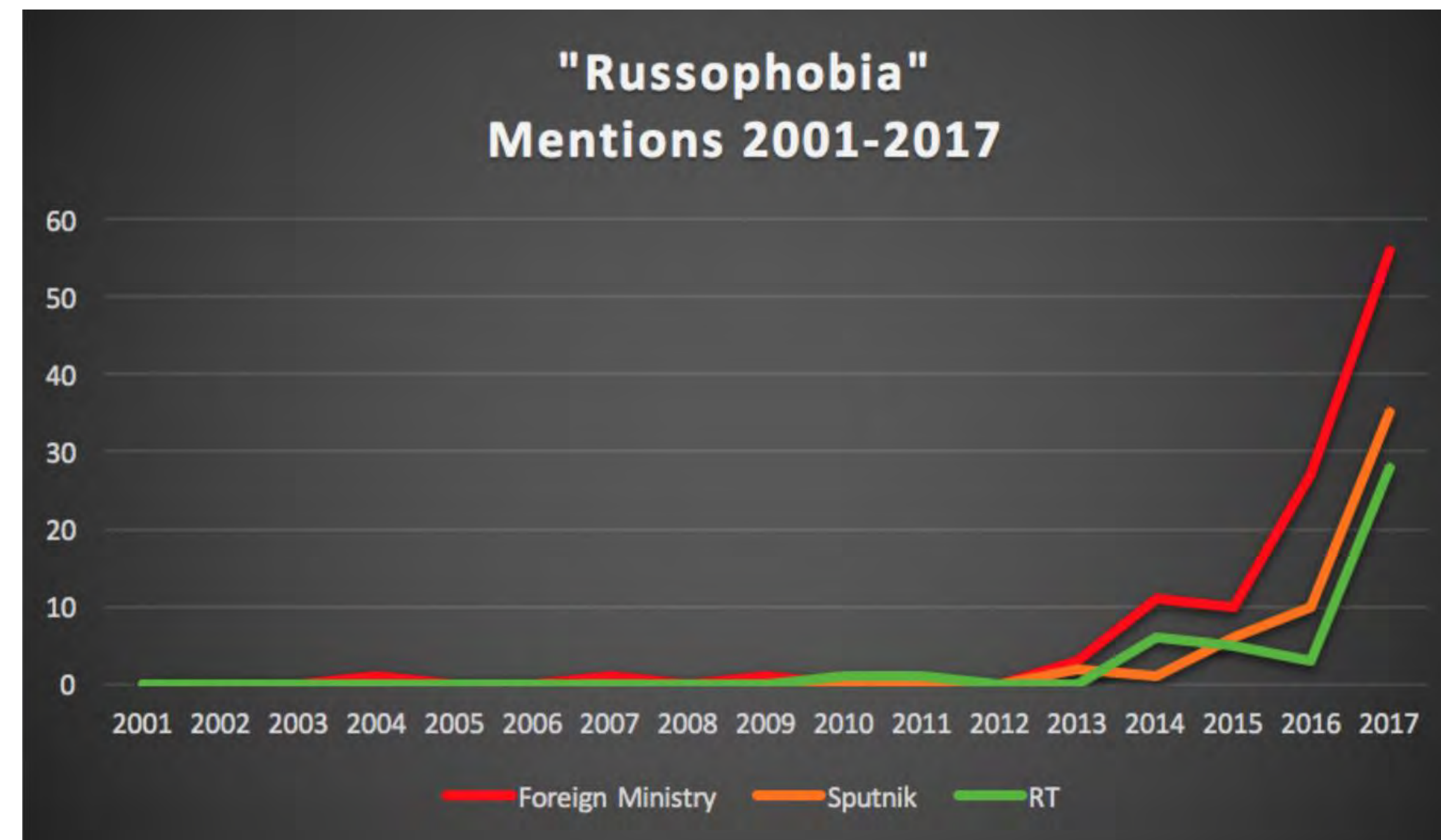
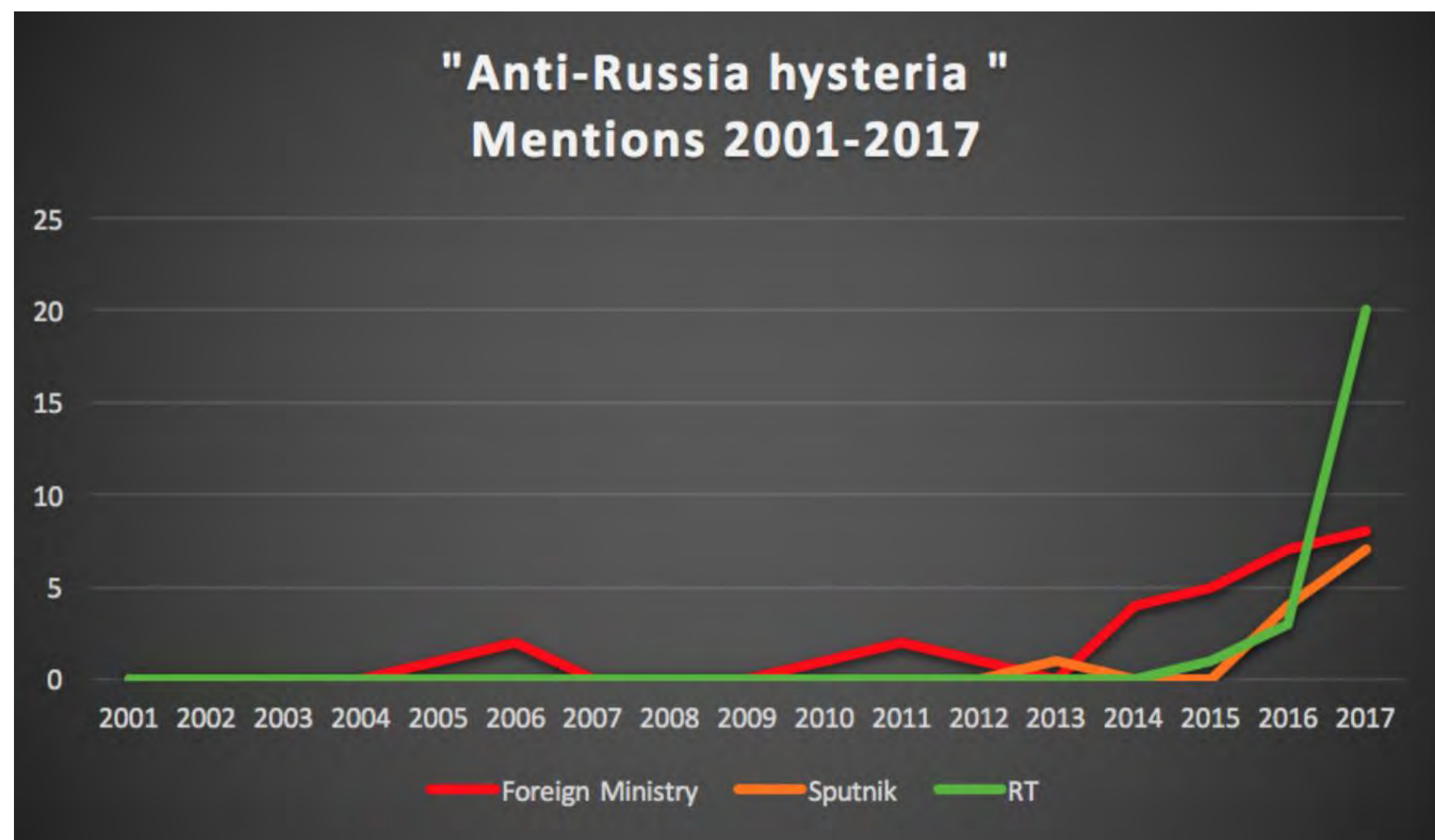
*One and the same person at different pro-Kremlin events in different countries outside Russia*

TV is actively used by Kremlin as an instrument of Informational Operations



# What is Kremlin's reply?

Admit nothing. Deny everything. Make counter accusations



*"The prospects for our relations with the European Union remain hostage to the Russophobic policy pursued by a narrow group of countries within the EU, which, in effect, is acting in the interests of the United States, not Europe."*

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, December 2017

# Conclusions

Emphasis in Russian news programs is intended to dehumanize an average westerner. He/She is depicted as strange, depraved, unfair. Therefore the western way of life comes as a threat, and public opinion is being prepared for the fact that Russia has the right to bring order on the World stage

A distinct feature of Russian news is that a viewer virtually never gets a pure fact about an event, but always an interpretation, an already formed opinion. Head of Russian news agency Mr. Kiselyov openly declares that “Time for neutral journalism has gone”



*Dmitry Kiselyov, “Vesti Nedeli” program*



# Conclusions

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- Mindset of peaceful cooperation is perceived by the Kremlin as an opportunity for attack
- Kremlin is putting enormous resources to portray the USA as an ultimate enemy to Russians
- Kremlin's is using media as part of hybrid warfare against the West along with financial, business and cultural ties with the West



The Black Sea Trust  
for Regional Cooperation

A PROJECT OF THE GERMAN MARSHALL FUND

THANK YOU!

Full research can be found here:

[www.ucmc.org.ua/hybrid/](http://www.ucmc.org.ua/hybrid/)

Facebook @HybridWarfareAG



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