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The European Union's policy towards the COVID-19 crisis in 2020 and the Russian contribution to infodemic

Dr. Tomasz Marcinkowski

Dr. Juliusz Sikorski

The Jacob of Paradies University

Gorzów Wielkopolski, Poland



Covid - 19 crisis

- „The pandemic is undermining the very foundation on which the European project was built - namely the belief that interdependence is the most reliable source of security and prosperity“ (I. Krastev)
- Covid-19 pandemic is a crisis that is evolving and disruptive and its consequences are difficult to predict.
- At the same time, attention should be devoted to the accompanying phenomenon of infodemic, full of false messages and narratives. Infodemic is often inspired and fuelled by state

The image is a composite. On the left, a portion of the European Union flag is visible, showing the blue field with yellow stars and the word 'CORONA' in yellow capital letters. On the right, a traffic light is shown against a blue sky with clouds. The traffic light has three lenses: the top one is red, the middle one is yellow, and the bottom one is green. Each lens contains a black silhouette of a coronavirus particle. The overall theme is the intersection of the EU and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The EU and the pandemic crisis

- EU responses to the threat of a pandemic in the first months
- The strengthened of Multiannual Financial Framework for 2020-2027
- Next Generation EU (NGEU)
- The European temporary support instrument to reduce the risk of unemployment in an emergency (SURE - Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency).

Activities in the sphere of public health

- In the sphere of public health, measures are taken to increase the availability of protective medical devices and basic medicines, as well as personal protective equipment.
- The European Commission supported research and implementation research on medicines and vaccines for SARS CoV-2 from the very beginning
- A major initiative of the European Commission was the purchase of a potential vaccine against the SARS CoV-2 virus. From the very





Activities in the sphere of public health

- EU4HEALTH
- NEW PHARMACEUTICAL STRATEGY
- Strengthening the European Medicines Agency
- Strengthening the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)
- Creating a European health data space
- Strengthening rescue, increasing funding for research and development in the field of health,
- Increasing “The Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve”
- Developing more effective mechanisms concerning crisis preparedness and crisis management at European level

European public opinion and the SARS CoV-2 pandemic

- More than half of the respondents replied that they were not satisfied in this respect (53%), of which as many as 17% were not at all satisfied. On the other hand, 39% of the respondents declared satisfaction. However, it gives over a dozen percent advantage of negative answers. The only positive aspect for the EU authorities is that the percentage of negative ratings has decreased by 4 pp. from the first examination.



The Russian Federation and its disinformation and propaganda activity

information confrontation structures

classic elements

diplomacy

secret services

military

official (state) media

the latest technological developments

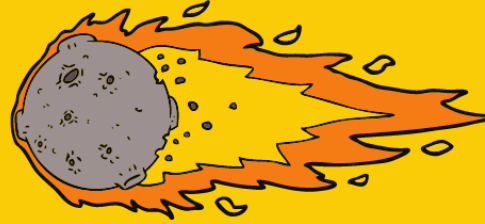
multilingual websites

so-called troll factories

a key instrument of influence

manipulation of information (disinformation)

DISINFO ABSURDITIES ABOUT COVID-19



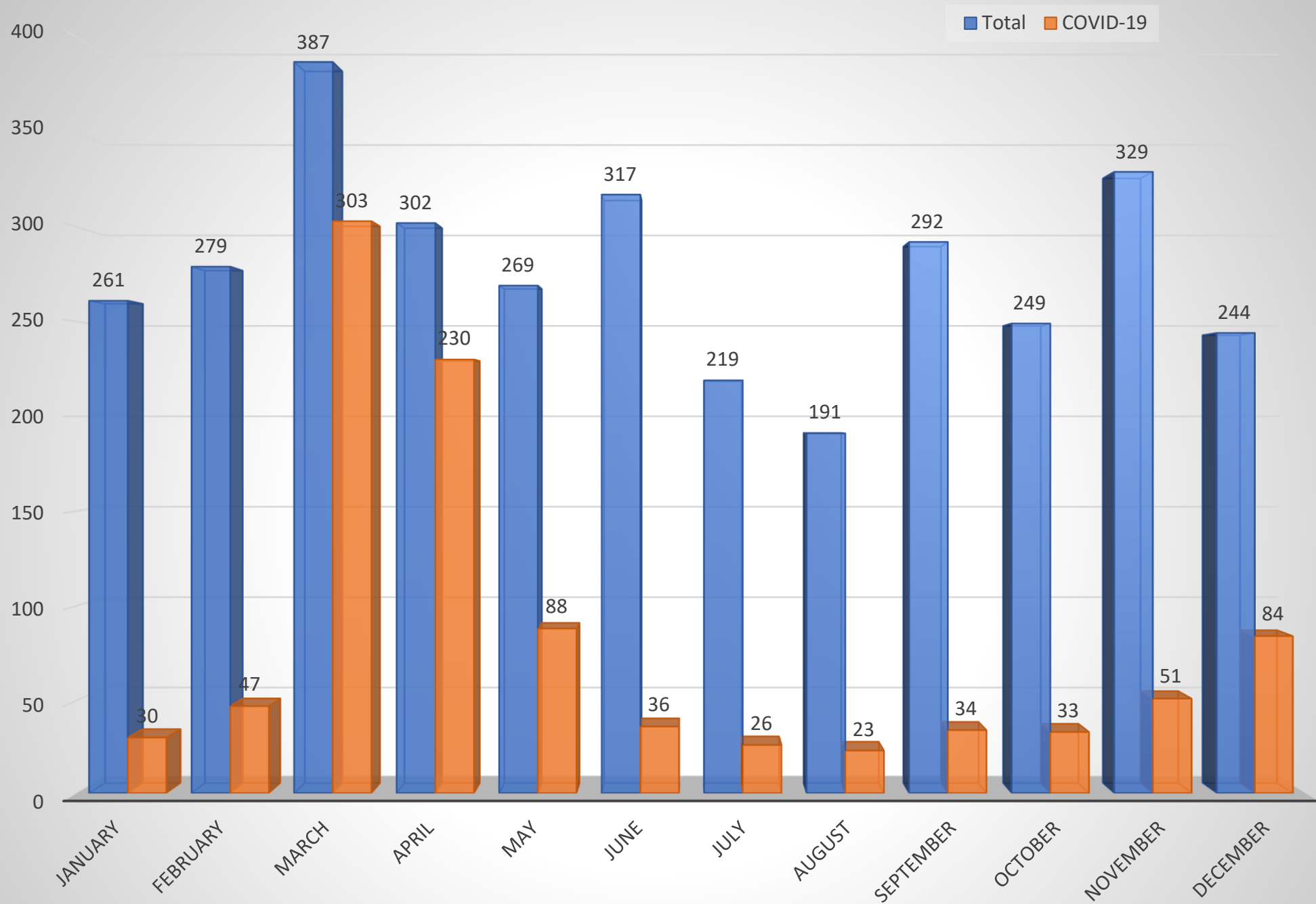
- 1 **CORONAVIRUS GOT TO EARTH FROM SPACE THROUGH A METEORITE & SPREADS THROUGH THE WIND**
- 2 **COVID-19 IS A REHEARSAL FOR THE TRUE APOCALYPTIC WEAPON**
- 3 **HARVARD PROFESSOR ARRESTED FOR CREATING COVID-19**
- 4 **COVID-19 IS A BIOLOGICAL WEAPON TO MAKE THE PLANET'S POPULATION INFERTILE**
- 5 **CORONAVIRUS WAS INVENTED BY THE ROCKEFELLERS AND THE ROME CLUB**

Russian contribution to infodemic targeting the European Union



**reported
cases of
Russian
disinformat
ion,
including
false COVID
information
from
January to
December
2020.**

Source: own
elaboration
based on East
StratCom data
(accessed:
13.05.2021).

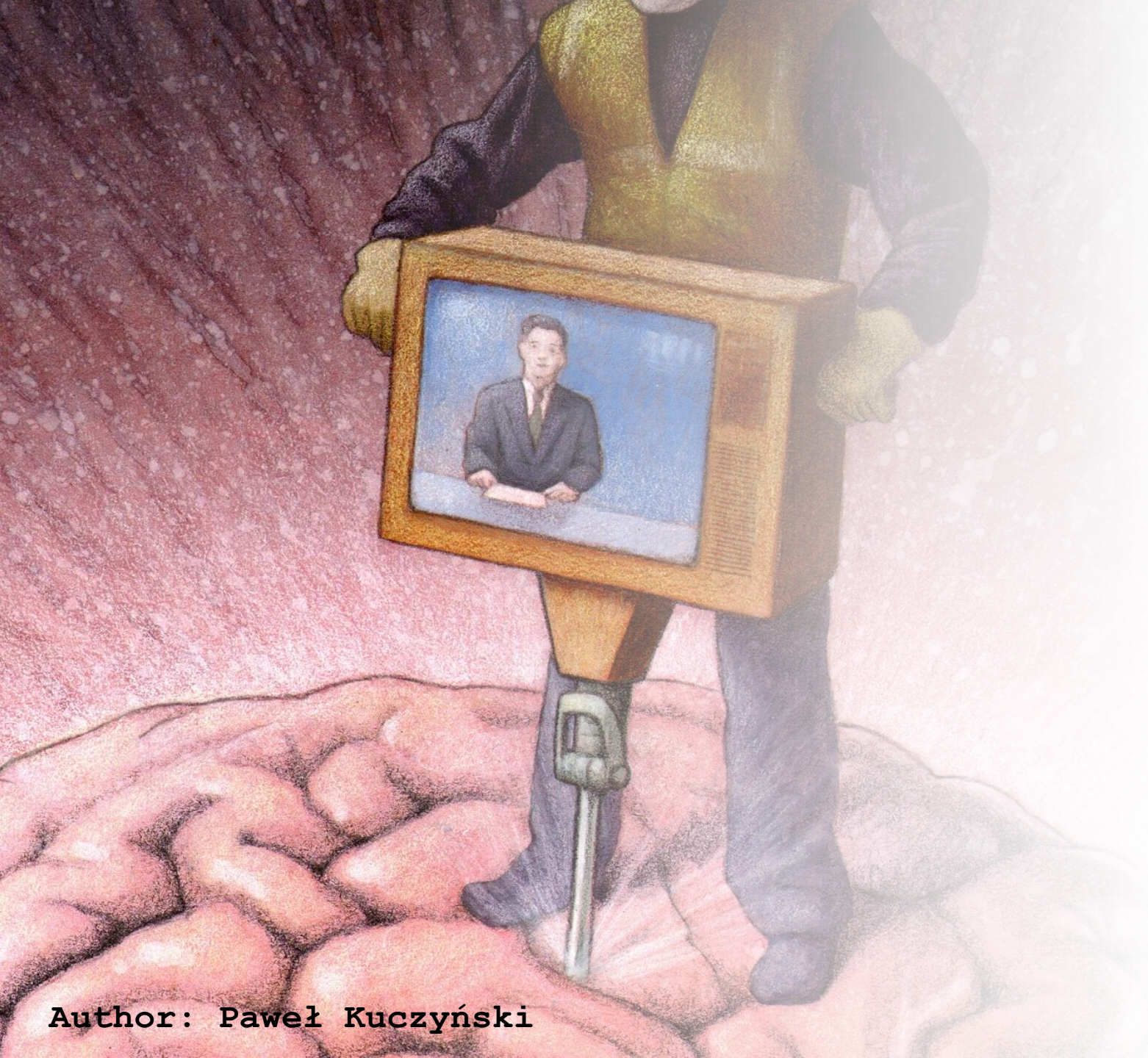


Reach and counteracting the infodemic

A video posted on the German-language YouTube channel denying the pandemic had been viewed nearly 900 000 times by the second half of April. It had around 5,000 comments.

Activists of the global organisation Avaaz found:

by April alone, disinformation about COVID had been shared on Facebook more than 1.7 million times and viewed about 117 million times.



Some visible effects of infodemic

- **continued-influence effect**

one learns "facts" about an event that later turn out to be false or unfounded, but the discredited information continues to influence reasoning and understanding even after one has been corrected

- **cognitive economy**

the tendency for cognitive processes to minimize processing effort and resources.

- **motivated reasoning**

a phenomenon studied in cognitive science and social psychology that uses emotionally biased reasoning to produce justifications or make decisions that are most desired rather than those that accurately reflect the evidence.

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Thank you for your
attention
and we will be happy
to answer your
questions!



tmarcinkowski@ajp.ed
u.pl



jsikorski@ajp.edu.pl

