

# SOCIAL INTEREST OF COVID-19 ON POLISH INTERNET

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## Aim

This study presents investigation of the social interest in SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 in the Internet media during the outbreak epidemic in Poland in the beginning of 2020

## Results-phases of interest (Chart 1)

We identified nine major temporal clusters of interest on the topic COVID-19 in the beginning of epidemics in Poland:

- 1) Chinese, 2) Italian, 3) Waiting,
- 4) Mitigations, 5) Physical distancing and Lockdown,
- 6) Anti-crisis shield,
- 7) Restrictions releasing, 8) Increase of incidence 9) Summer Outbreaks.

These phases constitute social responses to emerging unknown health-threat and mass reactions to declared by government protective strategies. Some queries were induced by public discussions on adequacy of mitigation strategies. The observed media behavior and distortion reflects the strong fear-based attitude of common media users.

## Methods

We quantitatively analyzed “coronavirus” digital footprints on the Internet, in particular, on Google, Twitter, YouTube, Wikipedia and electronic media represented by EventRegistry, from 15.01 to 22.08.2020. The analysis of relative internet search volumes (RSV) gives information on the extent of public attention and may be used as for real-time analyses for transmissibility, severity, and natural history of an emerging pathogen. We covered ca. 28 millions Polish language speaking residents of Poland representing over 85% of the literate population.

## Conclusion

## Results-sociolinguistic analysis

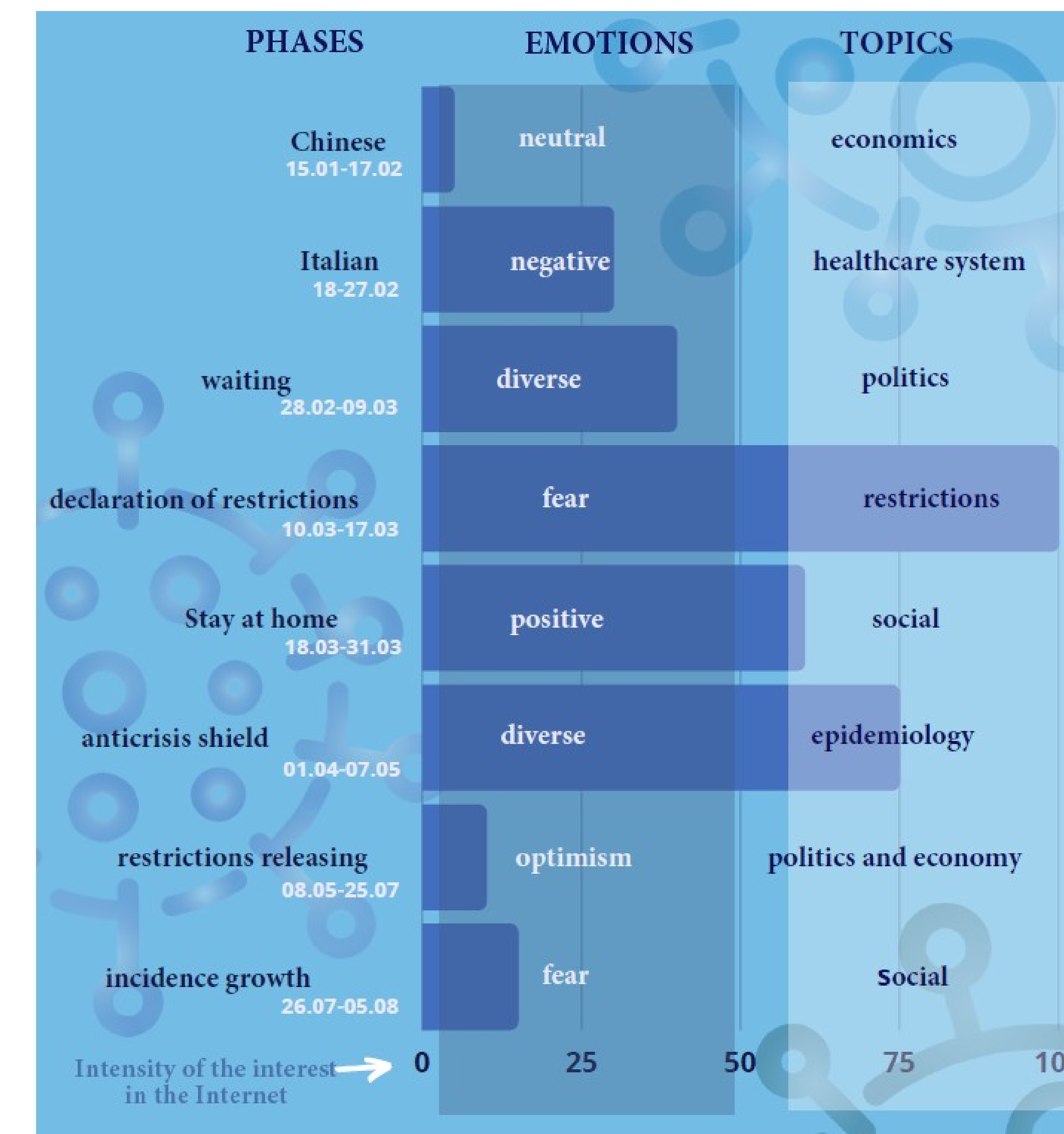


Chart 2. Level of interest, dominating topic and social emotions

## Results –interest in

Poles looked for professional (or quasi-professional) measures of self-protection: “antiviral mask” or “hand disinfection” (instead of simple “washing hands”). The first peak of interest shows lack of basic epidemiological knowledge.

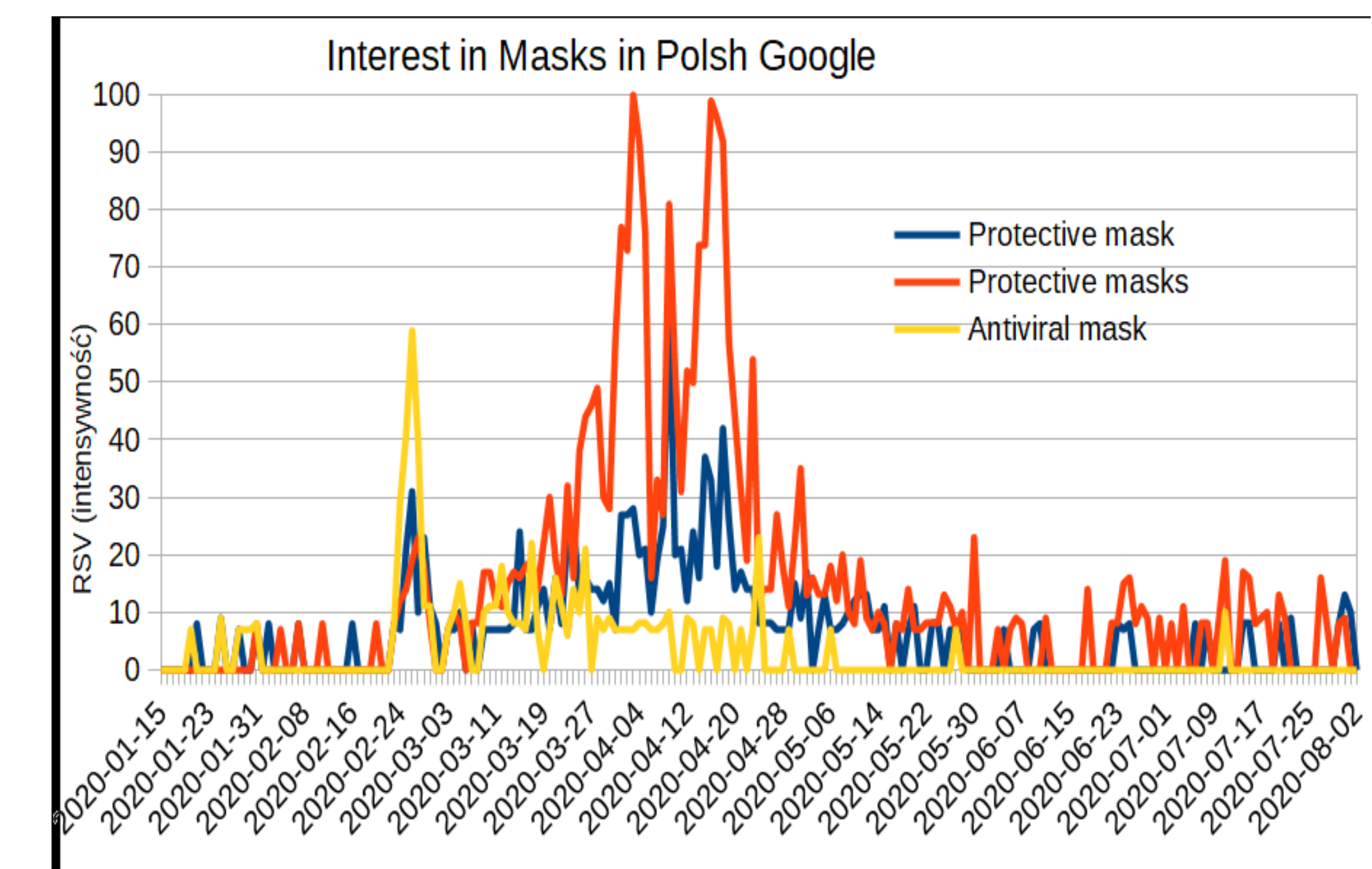


Chart 3. Interest in masks in Polish Google

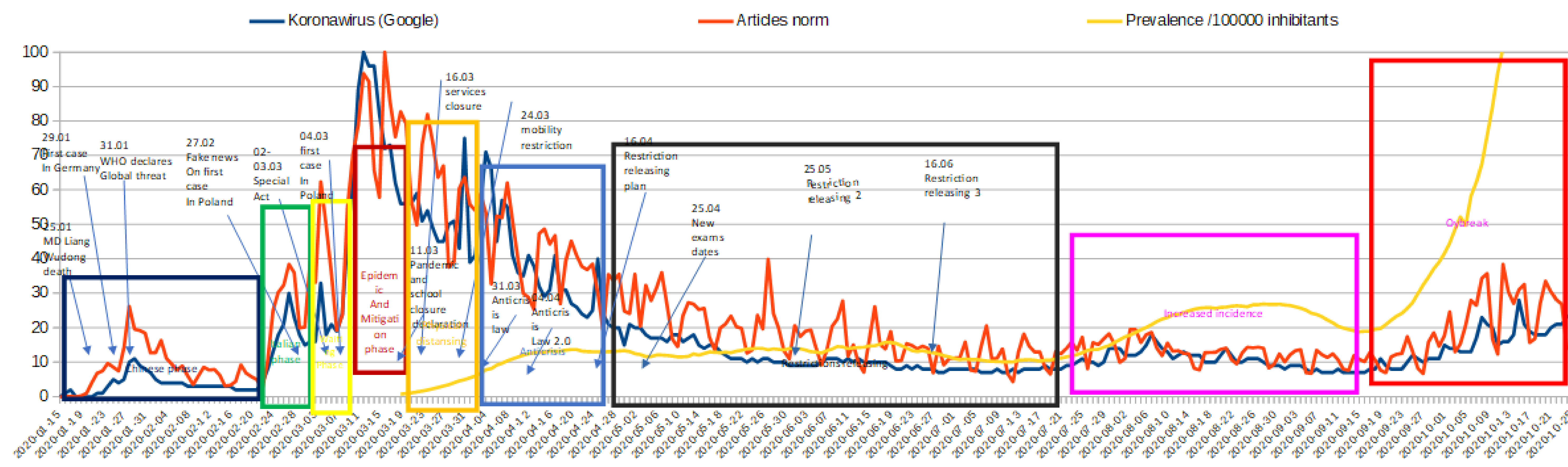


Chart 1. Phases of social interest of Coronavirus in Google and traditional media vs estimated prevalence

1. The phases of interest do not overlap with official statistics of infection prevalence.
2. Risk mitigation strategies and self-protection measures have gathered the highest interest on all investigated platforms.
3. The fluctuation of interest reflects social not medical dimension