



Media monitoring of 2014 local self-governance elections

Print Media Monitoring

April 15 – May 2, 2014

The Civic Development Institute has carried out election monitoring of the print media within the frameworks of the EU and UNDP funded project “Professional Media for Elections” and hereby presents the first interim report for 2014, which covers pre-election period from April 15 until May 2 inclusive.

The following media outlets have been monitored within this period: *the Resonance, the Alia, the Kviris Palitra, the Asaval-Dasavali, the Akhali Taoba, the Versia and the Kviris Qronika*.

Following key findings were identified after performing the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the material:

- Criticism towards the United National Movement has prevailed in all print media outlets selected for the monitoring.
- Among the monitoring subjects the activities carried out by the United National Movement, the coalition Georgian Dream and the Government have been covered most intensively.
- Pre-election activities of the candidates for the Mayor’s position are covered less intensively; the media outlets have paid more attention to coverage of political parties and government agencies.
- Percentage indicators of positive tone have prevailed while covering candidates for the Mayor’s position – David Narmania and Dimitri Lortkipanidze, while indicators of negative tone have been high in case of Nika Melia’s coverage.
- Journalism standards and ethical norms have been violated in *the Alia, the Asaval-Dasavali, the Versia and the Kviris Qronika*.
- Particularly rough violation of journalism standards and ethical norms has been registered in *the Asaval-Dasavali and the Kviris Qronika*.

The Resonance

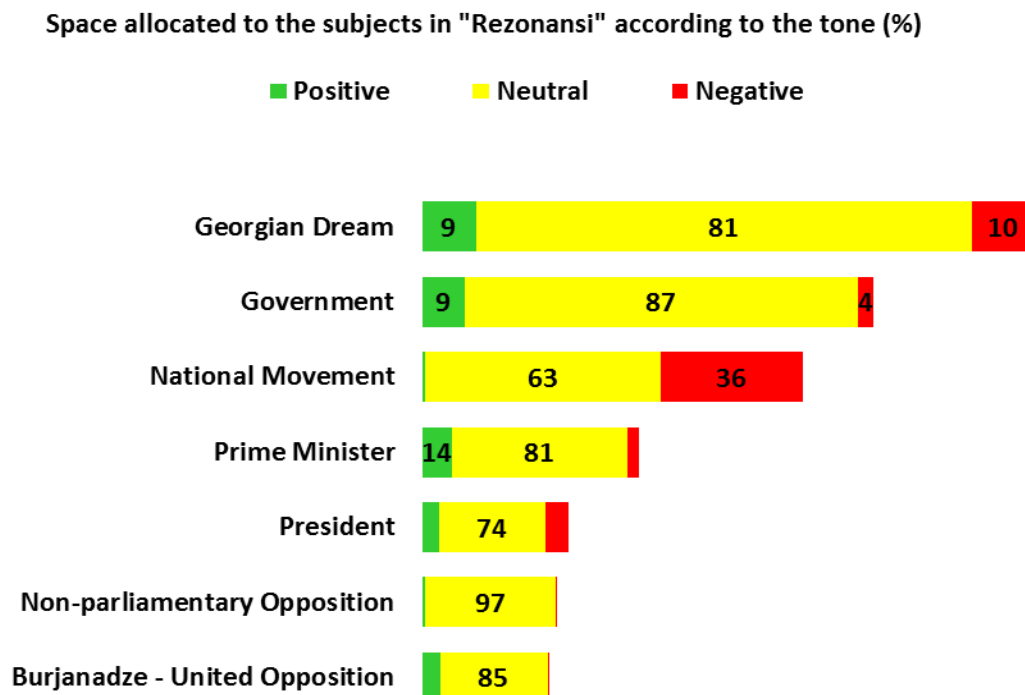
Within the monitoring period the Resonance has been covering ongoing events of the country pretty objectively and impartially. Positive or negative attitude towards any political power has never been observed on the website. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed.

Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the coalition Georgian Dream (28%), the Government (21%) and the United National Movement (17%) have been covered most intensively. There has been no especially high percentage indicators of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject. Relatively high indicator of negative tone has been registered while covering the United National Movement (36%) (refer to Diagram 1). It shall however be noted that negative tone has been most often observed in statements made by respondents and not the texts drafted by journalists. The journalists of the Resonance have been refraining from making political evaluations and unjustified judgments within the monitoring period.

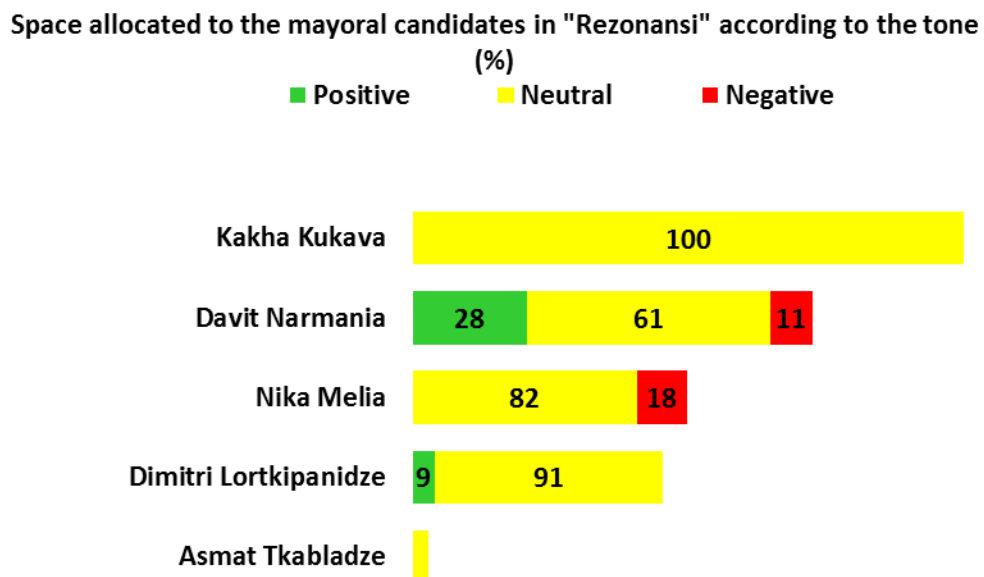
Among the candidates for the position of the Mayor the Resonance has been covering most intensively candidates for Tbilisi Mayor's position. The highest indicator of positive tone (28%) has been registered while covering the candidate from the coalition Georgian Dream David Narmania (refer to Diagram 2), while highest indicator of negative tone (18%) – the candidate from the United National Movement Nika Melia.

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that within the first stage of the monitoring the Resonance has been covering ongoing political events of the country pretty objectively and impartially. However, we shall highlight a relatively high indicator of negative tone towards the United National Movement on one hand and a high indicator of positive tone while covering David Narmania of the coalition Georgian Dream – on the other. Within the given period of monitoring journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed in the newspaper.

(Diagram 1, Coverage of subjects, the Resonance)



(Diagram 2, Coverage of candidates for the Mayor's position, the Resonance)



The Alia

Within the monitoring period the Alia has been distinguished by critical approach towards various political forces. The newspaper has been especially critical towards the United National Movement. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been violated on frequent occasions. Unjustified value judgments, unethical statements and cases of publishing unverified facts and information supplied by unreliable source have been observed in the newspaper.

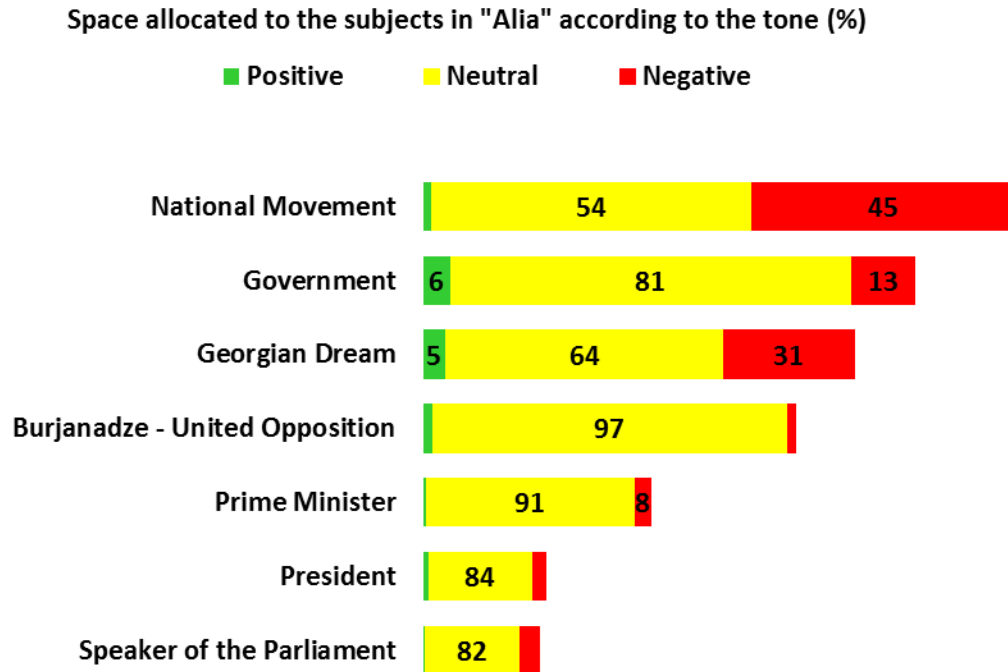
Among the monitoring subjects the activity of the United National Movement (24%), the Government (19%), the coalition Georgian Dream (17%) and Burjanadze – United Opposition (11%) have been covered most intensively. The highest percentage rate of negative tone has been applied to the United National Movement (45%) and the coalition Georgian Dream (31%) (refer to Diagram 3). The lowest percentage indicator of negative tone has gone to Burjanadze – United Opposition (1%).

Among the candidates for the Mayor's position the candidates for Tbilisi Mayor's position have been covered most intensively. A pretty high percentage indicator of positive tone has been awarded to David Narmania (30%) and Dimitri Lortkipanidze (21%). High percentage indicator of negative tone has been registered towards Kakha Kukava (37%) and Nika Melia (28%) (refer to Diagram 4).

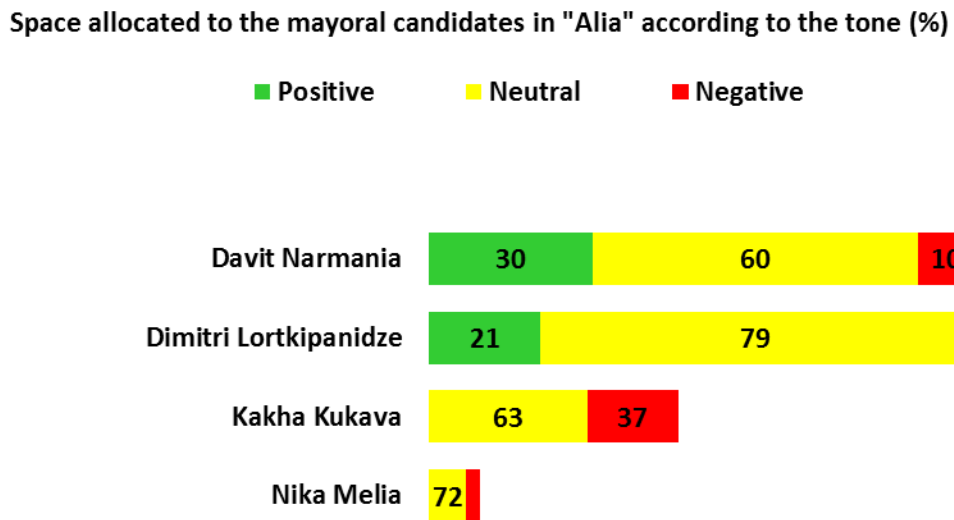
Within the given period of monitoring numerous cases of rough violation of journalism ethics norms have been observed in the Alia, mainly subjective evaluation of various politicians made by journalists and publication of information researched on the basis of less reliable source. For instance, "Yes but in whose name does Irakli Alasania forgive representatives of the National Movement, when did he become the father of the nation.?", "Shamelessly states he opposed the regime of Saakashvili.", („the article: Bidzina Ivanishvili tries to return to the position of the coalition head", 23.04.2014, page 3-4). We have come across numerous cases of journalists using abusive terminology addressed to the United National Movement. For instance: "Nationals bandits" ("scandalous lobby talks of Gharibashvili's government", 18.04.2014, page 11). Within the given period of monitoring there have been certain cases of manipulating with photo materials – the article "Saakashvili applies to the Government of Ukraine not to be afraid of the Russian troops" (18.04.2014, page 4) has been accompanied by Saakashvili's photo, where he chews his tie. The article has presented only the statement of Mikheil Saakashvili that has been neutral towards the respondent, while placement of such photo material by the outlet may serve the purpose of initiating negative emotion addressed to the respondent.

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that the Alia has covered ongoing political events of the country in a pretty subjective way. A negative attitude towards the United National Movement has been evident in the newspaper. Within the given period of monitoring numerous cases of violating journalism standards and ethical norms have been registered in the newspaper.

(Diagram 3, Coverage of subjects, the Alia)



(Diagram 4, Coverage of the candidates for the Mayor's position, the Alia)



The Kviris Palitra

Within the monitoring period the Kviris Palitra has been covering ongoing events of the country pretty objectively and impartially. Particularly positive or negative attitude towards any political power has never been observed on the website. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed.

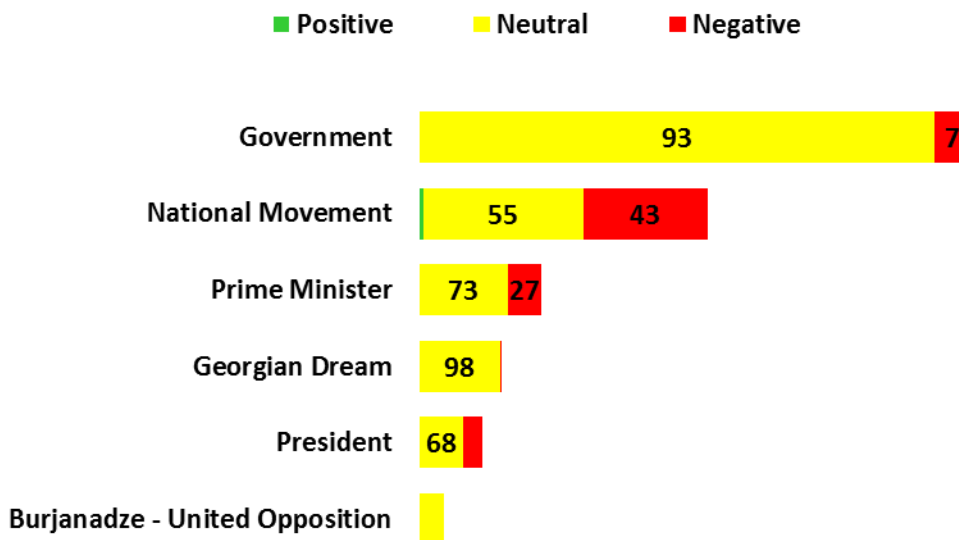
Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the Government (49%), the United National Movement (26%), the Prime Minister (11%) and the coalition Georgian Dream (7%) have been covered most intensively. There has been no especially high percentage indicators of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject. Relatively high indicator of negative tone has been registered while covering the United National Movement (43%) (refer to Diagram 5). It shall however be noted that negative tone has been most often observed in statements made by respondents and not the texts drafted by journalists. The journalists of the Resonance have been refraining from making political evaluations and unjustified judgments within the monitoring period.

The Kviris Palitra has not actively covered pre-election activities carried out by the candidates for the Mayor's position.

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that the Kviris Palitra has been covering ongoing political events of the country pretty objectively and impartially. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed. Relatively high indicator of negative tone has been registered while covering the United National Movement.

(Diagram 5, Coverage of subjects, the Kviris Palitra)

Space allocated to the subjects in "Kviris Palitra" according to the tone (%)



The Asaval-Dasavali

Within the monitoring period the Asaval-Dasavali has been distinguished by extremely critical approach towards the United National Movement. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been systematically violated. Unjustified value judgments and unethical statements have been applied on frequent occasions. Within the given period of monitoring the Asaval-Dasavali has covered ongoing events extremely subjectively.

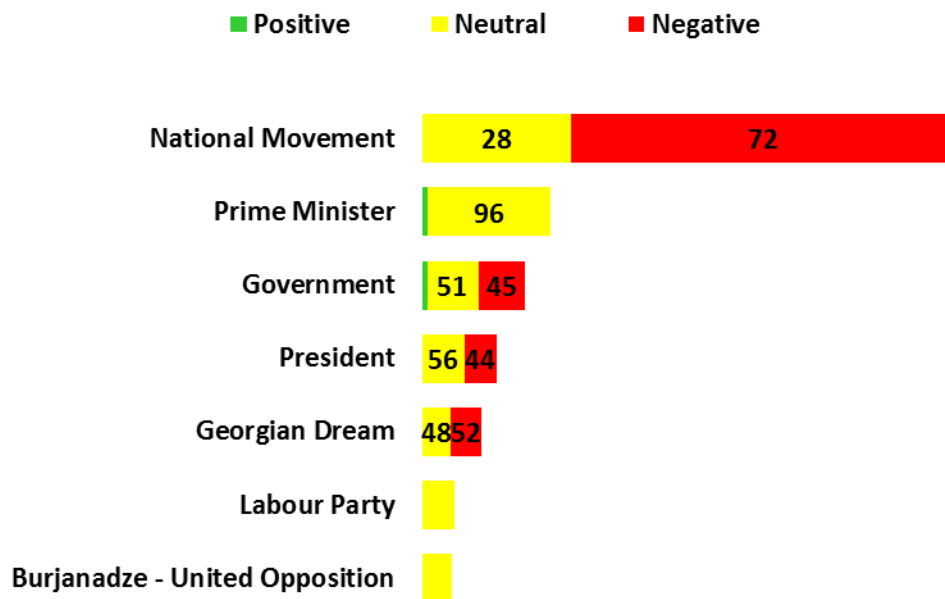
Among the monitoring subjects the United National Movement (54%), the Prime Minister (13%) and the Government (10%) have been covered most intensively. Extremely high indicator of negative tone (72%) has been registered while covering the United National Movement (refer to Diagram 6). Pretty high indicator of negative tone has been addressed to the coalition Georgian Dream (52%), the Government (45%) and the President (44%). It is noteworthy that there has been no negative tone registered while covering the Prime Minister, the Labor Party and Burjanadze – United Opposition whatsoever. The Asaval-Dasavali has not covered pre-election activities of the candidates for the Mayor's position within the given period.

Within the given period of monitoring Asaval-Dasavali has mainly offered comments of those respondents, who have demonstrated negative approach towards the United National Movement. The newspaper journalists have not refrained from systematic usage of subjective judgment and abusive terminology either. For instance: "Indeed, Saakashvili got harmed by political syphilis...", "Finally Saakashvili will by all means get where similar "David Agmashenebelis", "Ilia Chavchavadzes" are located in large quantities – i.e. among lunatics wearing robes..", "...However, obviously Saakashvili's schizophrenia is progressing on a daily basis..." („Are you a tire?", 28.04.2014, page. 2); "Yes, similar to lack of justification for Judas, who gave up Jesus for 30 silver monets, the people who sell themselves out to National liars for 30 GEL may not be justified..." ("Is a "National" a human at all?", 21.04.2014, page 8).

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that the Asaval-Dasavali is covering ongoing events of the country extremely subjectively. Cases of rough violation of journalism standards and ethical norms are being registered in the newspaper systematically.

(Diagram 6, Coverage of subjects, the Asaval-Dasavali)

Space allocated to the subjects in "Asaval-dasavali" according to the tone (%)



The Akhali Taoba

Within the monitoring period the Akhali Taoba has been pretty critical towards both the ruling party and the Parliamentary opposition. In certain cases we have observed violation of journalism standards and ethical norms that has been expressed in unjustified value judgments and unethical statements. Extremely high indicator of positive tone has been registered while covering the candidate from Burjanadze – United Opposition, Dimitri Lortkipanidze.

Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the coalition Georgian Dream (20%), the United National Movement (18%), the Government (18%) and Burjanadze – United Opposition (12%) have been covered most intensively. Pretty high indicator of negative tone towards the United National Movement (53%) shall be highlighted (refer to Diagram 7). Relatively high percentage indicator of negative tone has also been addressed while covering the coalition Georgian Dream (19%) and the President (17%). The highest indicator of positive tone has been registered while covering Burjanadze - United Opposition (9%).

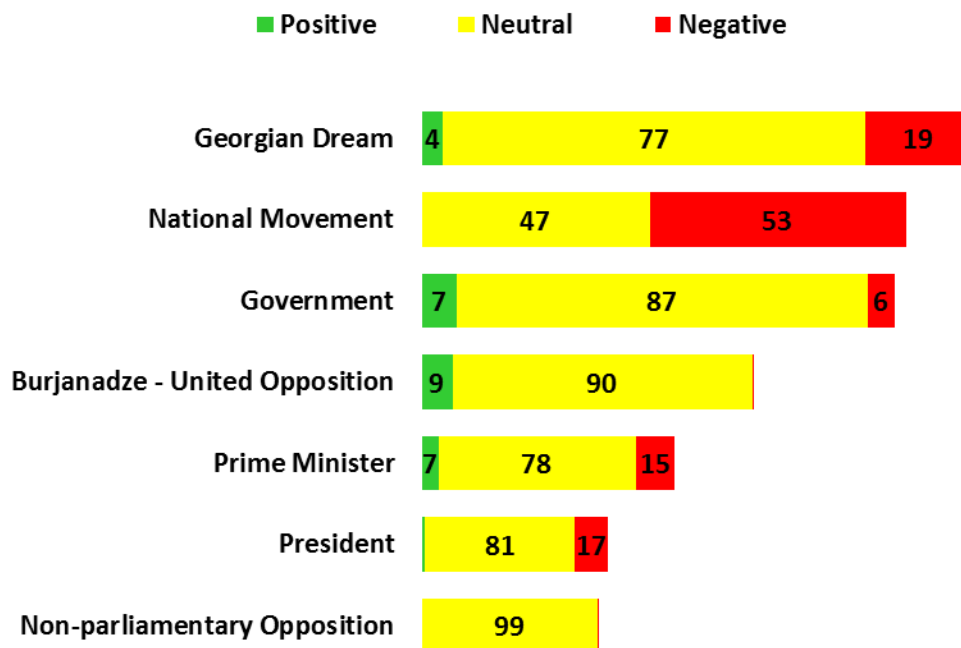
Among the candidates for Tbilisi Mayor's position Dimitri Lortkipanidze (76%) and David Narmaniani (29%) have been covered most positively. (refer to Diagram 8). A rather high indicator of negative tone has been registered while covering the candidate from the United National Movement Nika Melia (67%).

Within the given period of monitoring the journalists have applied subjective value judgments and unethical statements towards the United National Movement on numerous occasions. For instance: “Natmov (i.e. National Movement)” groans over illegal surveillance...” (“Salaries of the officials raised by 138 million”, 1.05.2014, page. 4). We have also encountered cases of referring to unjustified judgment and distribution of information researched from unreliable sources. For instance: “They do not disclose the reason publicly but based on the lobby talks and reliable source of the Akhali Taoba, Kukava appears to be flirting with National Movement” (“The politics turned into business in Georgia”, 25.04.2014, page 2).

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that the Akhali Taoba have demonstrated a rather critical approach towards the United National Movement. In certain cases the newspaper journalists openly express their negative attitude towards the party. Journalism standards and ethical norms are more or less followed, however, numerous cases of serious violations have been registered within the given period of monitoring.

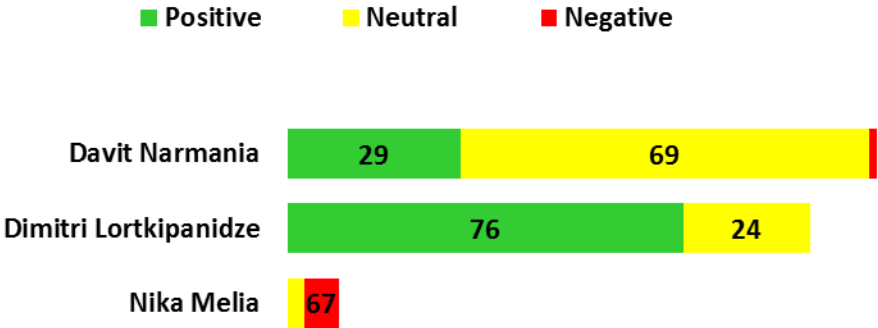
(Diagram 7, Coverage of subjects, The Akhali Taoba)

Space allocated to the subjects in "Akhali Taoba" according to the tone (%)



(Diagram 8, Coverage of the candidates for the Mayor's position, the Akhali Taoba)

Space allocated to the mayoral candidates in "Akhali Taoba" according to the tone (%)



The Versia

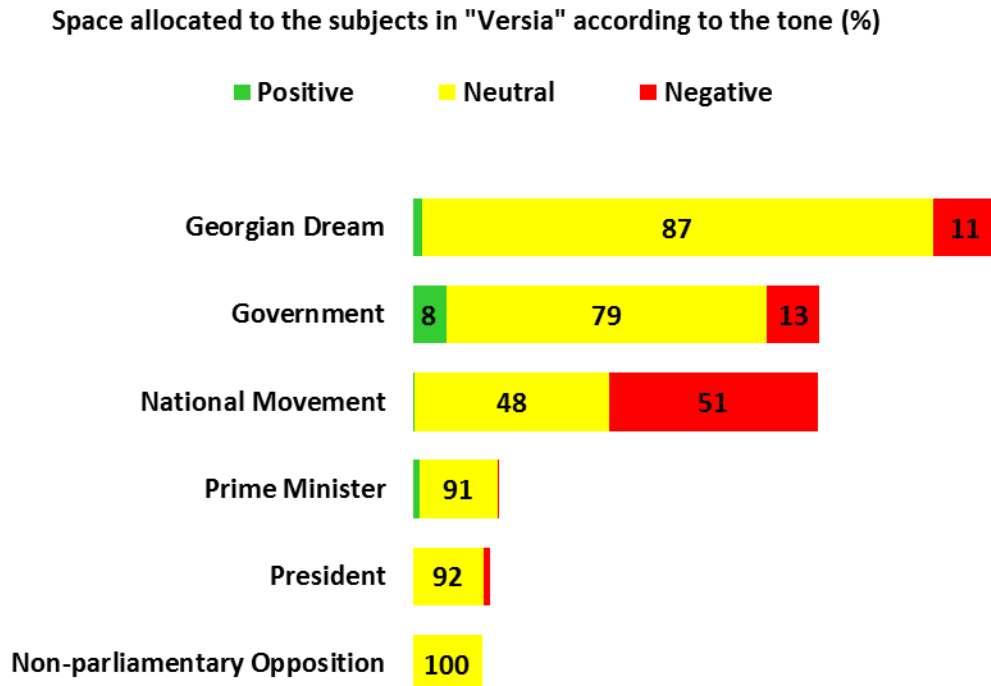
Within the first period of monitoring a rather critical approach towards the United National Movement has been observed in The Versia. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been mostly followed during news coverage, while articles often contained unjustified value judgments and unethical statements.

Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the coalition Georgian Dream (32%), the United National Movement (22%) and the Government (22%) have been covered most intensively. Particularly high indicator of negative tone has been registered towards the United National Movement (51%). High indicators of positive or negative tone have not been registered while covering any other subjects (refer to Diagram 9). The Versia has not been active in covering pre-election activities of the candidates for the Mayor's position.

Within the given period of monitoring subjective judgment and unethical statements addressed to various politicians, mainly representatives of the United National Movement, has often been a case in the newspaper. For instance: "I know from Zugdidiens that Roland Akhalaia is a man, who will not do good for his children no matter how one tries to make him to..", "Son of Nestor fitted immunity of an MP.." ("New factor of Akhalaia and the announced national movement, 16-17.04.2014, page 3").

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that the Versia has been pretty critical towards the United National Movement. During the news coverage journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed. In author's articles, however, there have been numerous cases of rough violation of journalism standards.

(Diagram 9, Subjective coverage, the Versia)



The Kviris Qronika

Within the first period of monitoring the Kviris Qronika has been covering ongoing events of the country pretty subjectively. The newspaper has been distinguished by extremely negative attitude towards the United National Movement. We have encountered frequent cases of rough violation of journalism standards and ethical norms. The journalists of the Kviris Qronika have not refrained from making subjective judgment and using abusive terminology addressed to various politicians.

Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the United National Movement (37%), the coalition Georgian Dream (25%), the Government (12%) and the President (10%) have been covered most intensively. Extremely high indicator of negative tone has been registered while covering the United National Movement (61%) (refer to Diagram 10). The President (44%), the Government (34%) and the coalition Georgian Dream (22%) have received pretty high indicator of negative tone. It is noteworthy that the Prime Minister and Burjanadze – United Opposition have enjoyed the lowest percentage indicator of negative tone and, at the same time, the highest indicator of positive tone.

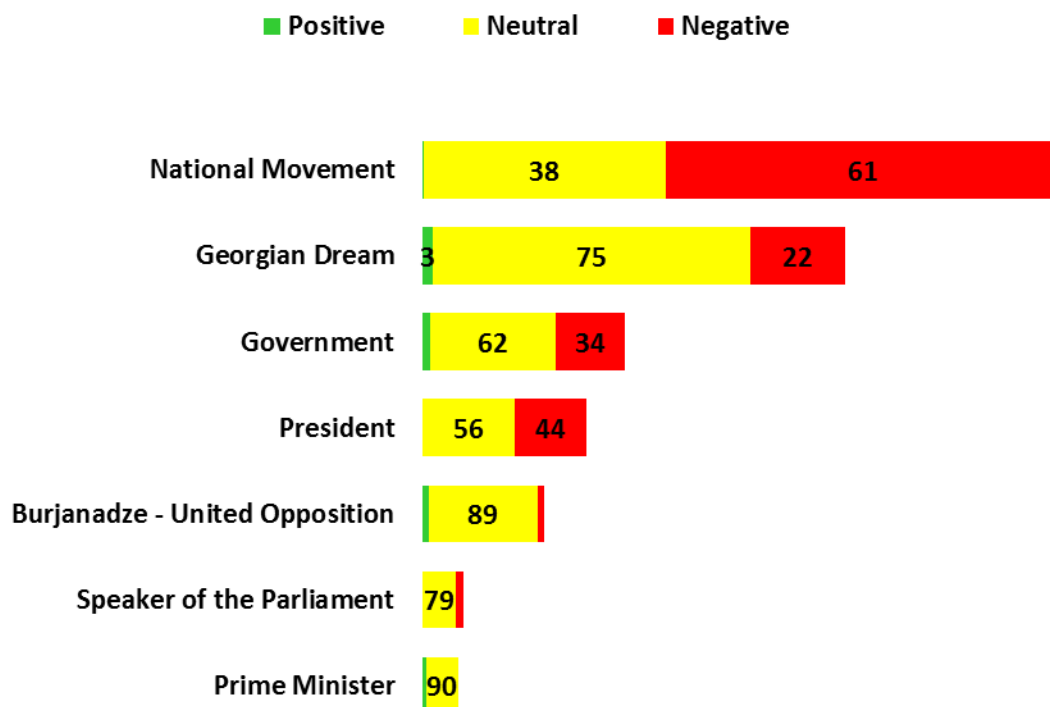
Within the given period of monitoring we have come across numerous instances of Kviris Qronika journalists using subjective judgment and abusive terminology towards certain politicians. For example: “The President Giorgi Margvelashvili have demonstrated even more fantasy skills and

impudence than his predecessor. He started enjoying our money much faster than Mikheil Saakashvili did”, “...Margvelashvili has gone wild since 2013...”, “...This is not only monkey business but a serious treason as well...” (“Giorgi Margvelashvili has outrun Mikheil Saakashvili in terms of appetite, 28.04.2014, page 27-28); “ And now Nodar (Khaduri) recalled his genius calculations, dropping this rhyme: I looked down from Gldani, the tractor ploughs the field and if potato does not grow – I do not give a damn!” (“Give us MAP for existence today and forgive us for our cohabitation”, 22.04.2014, page 31).

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that the Kviris Qronika is covering ongoing political processes in the country in a rather subjective way. Journalism standards and ethical norms are systematically violated in the newspaper.

(Diagram 10, Coverage of subjects, The Kviris Qronika)

Space allocated to the subjects in "Kviris Kronika" according to the tone (%)



Conclusion

The monitoring has revealed that journalism standards and ethical norms are violated in Georgian print media pretty often. Journalists do not refrain from subjective and unjustified value judgments on frequent occasions. Moreover, the texts prepared by the journalists of the selected media outlets often contain abusive and discriminating terminology addressed to various politicians. Particularly rough violation of journalism standards and ethical norms has been systematically observed in the Asaval-Dasavali and the Kviris Qronika.

Within the given period of monitoring criticism towards the United National Movement has prevailed in all selected print media outlets. While covering the candidates for the position of the Mayor positive tone has mostly been observed in case of David Narmania and Dimitri Lortkipanidze, while negative tone – while covering activities carried out by the candidate for the Mayor's position from the United National Movement, Nika Melia.