



Media monitoring of 2014 local self-governance elections

Election Monitoring of Online Media

June 15 – 30, 2014

In connection to the local self-governance elections of 2014, the Civic Development Institute (CDI) has resumed its media monitoring within the frameworks of the EU-UNDP funded project “Professional Media for Elections”. The monitoring is taking place from April 15, 2014 through June 30, 2014 and covers 12 most highly rated Georgian websites that are of a news portal type: netgazeti.ge, droni.ge, politico.ge (up to September 18), liberali.ge, news.ge, presa.ge, civil.ge, tabula.ge, garbonline.tv, for.ge, dfwatch.net, palitratv.ge. The report contains the media monitoring results from June 15 until June 30, inclusive.

The following key findings have been identified during the monitoring of online media:

- Compared to media monitoring results for 2012 and 2013, significant improvement has still been observed in online media from the standpoint of both following journalism ethics norms and objective coverage of subjects.
- Compared to the results of 2013 monitoring, positive changes have still been observed on the websites presa.ge, droni.ge, tabula.ge
- Within the given period of monitoring negative approach towards the United National Movement has still been observed on the web-pages reportiori.ge and for.ge
- There has been no particularly positive or negative approach observed towards any other political parties.
- All websites selected for the monitoring have actively covered issues related to local self-governance elections.
- Majority of the websites have covered the election day, the vote counting procedures and violations identified during the elections in a rather objective way.

netgazeti.ge

Within the monitoring period netgazeti.ge has still been covering ongoing events in the country in a pretty objective and impartial way. Positive or negative attitude towards any political power has never

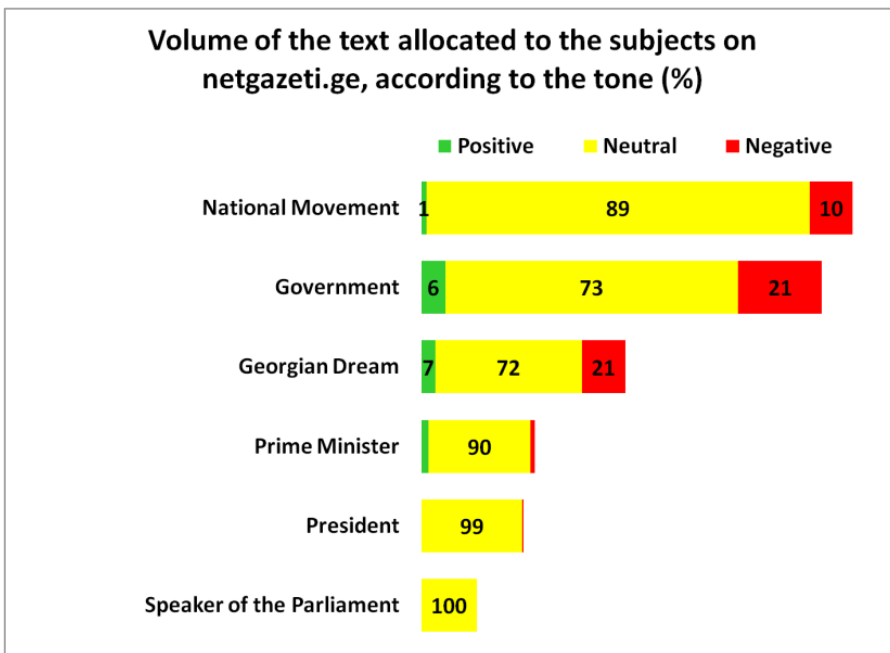
been observed on the website. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed at a high level. The website has actively covered local self-governance elections.

Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the United National Movement (31%), the Government (29%), the coalition Georgian Dream (15%) and the Prime Minister (8%) have been covered most intensively. There have been no especially high percentage indicators of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (refer to Diagram 1).

The local self-governance election day has been actively covered on the website. The automatically updated website – self-governance elections, where the fresh information concerning the election process has been uploaded during the whole day, has been put in place specifically for that day. After the elections the website has covered information related to election results (for instance: “the Dream “has won 7 election precincts out of 14, while the national movement won three precincts”, 30.06.2014), as well as reports prepared by various organizations in regard to violation identified on the election day (for instance: “Violations registered by the GYLA during the runoff”, 29.06.2014).

As a result of the monitoring we may conclude that netgazeti.ge has still been covering ongoing events of the country pretty objectively. Journalists have been following journalism standards and ethical norms at a high level. The website has actively and objectively covered the election process.

(Diagram 1, Coverage of subjects, netgazeti.ge)



droni.ge

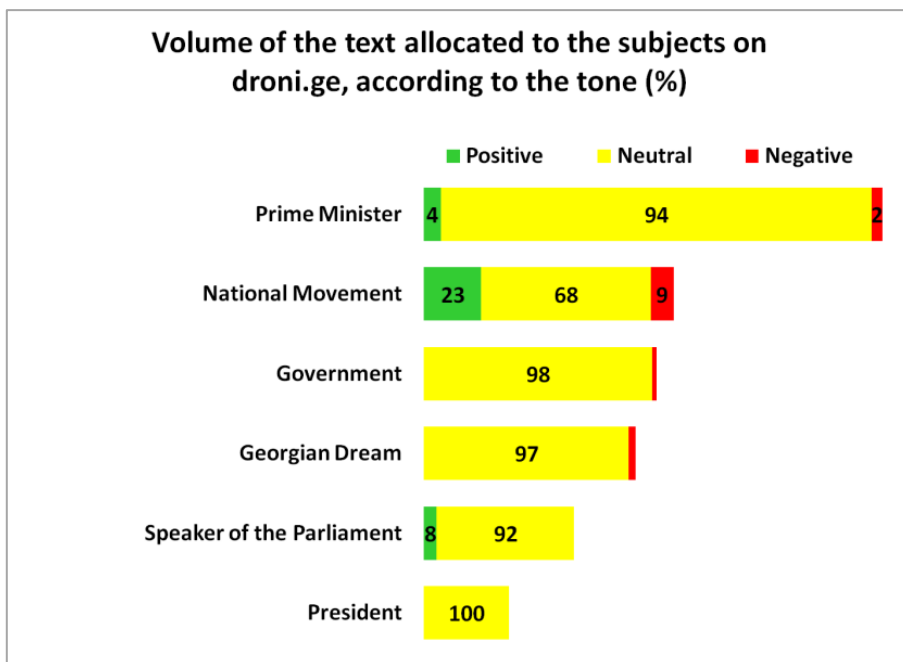
Within the monitoring period netgazeti.ge has still been covering ongoing events in the country in a pretty objective way. Positive or negative attitude towards any political power has never been observed on the website. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed.

Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the Prime Minister (32%), the United National Movement (18%), the Government (16%) and the coalition Georgian Dream (15%) have been covered most intensively. There have been no especially high percentage indicators of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (refer to Diagram 2).

On the election day the website has actively covered the voting process of various politicians (for instance: “Kakha Kalakdzze made his vote – what did he say to journalists?”, 15.06.2014 ; “Aleksandre Chikaidze arrived at the election precinct and it appeared that his ID was left at home”, 15.06.2014; “The President has already voted”, 15.06.2014).

As a result of the monitoring we may conclude that droni.ge has still been covering ongoing political processes of the country in an objective and impartial way. There have been no cases of rough violation of journalism standards and ethical norms registered within the given period of monitoring.

(Diagram 2, Coverage of subjects, droni.ge)



pirveliradio.ge

Within the given period of monitoring pirveliradio.ge has still been covering practically all important ongoing events of the country in an objective and impartial way. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed. Issues related to local self-governance elections were actively covered.

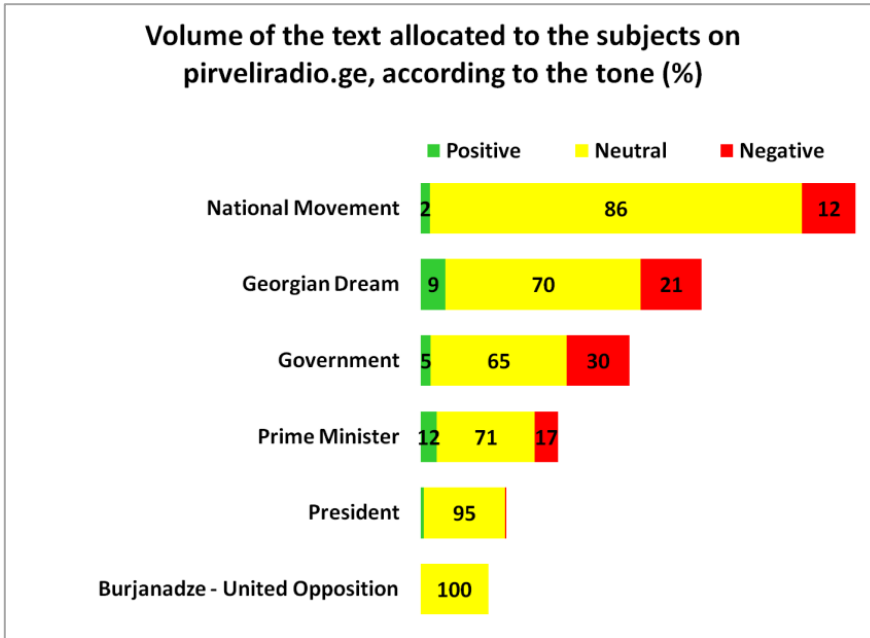
Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the United National Movement (26%), the coalition “Georgian Dream” (24%), the Government (23%) and the Prime Minister (22%) have been covered most intensively. There have been no especially high percentage indicators of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (refer to Diagram 3). Neutral tone indicators have prevailed in coverage of Tbilisi mayoral candidates (refer to Diagram 4).

Within the given period of monitoring the website has covered the election related issues pretty actively and objectively (for instance: “The results of elections in Kutaisi are known”, 16.06.2014; “According to preliminary results announced by the CEC, the runoff of Tbilisi mayoral elections will be held”, 16.06.2014; “Approximately 87% of Tbilisi based election precincts have been already counted”, 16.06.2014).

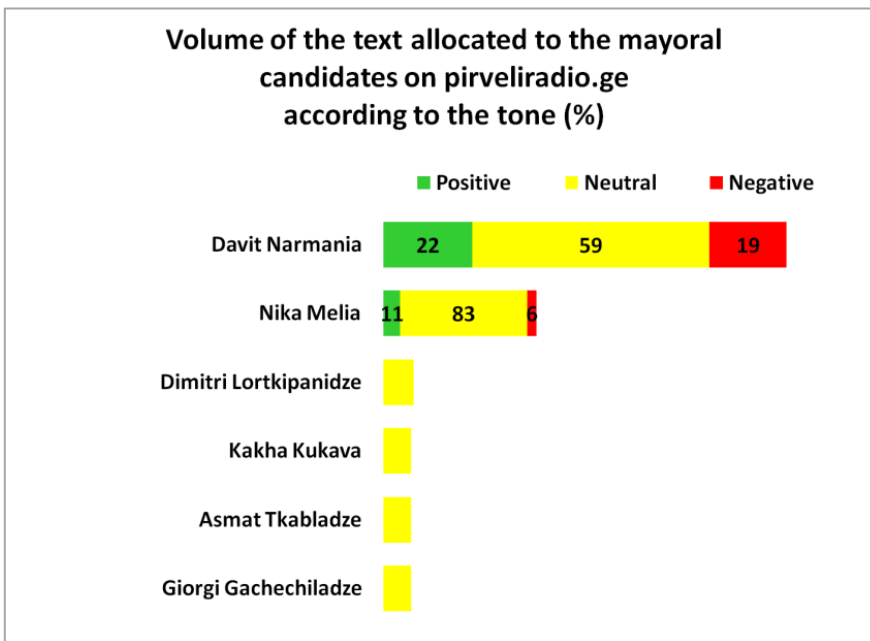
Within the given period of monitoring journalism standards have been mostly followed on the webpage, however we have come across numerous articles containing unverified information. For instance, in the following articles: “Kobakhidze’s brother in Sakrebulo – will Tkemaladze’s son become a chairman of Sakrebulo” (18.06.2014) and “The former head of the police will become a chairman of Sakrebulo” (26.06.2014), the journalist used the following language while discussing the possible candidates for the position of the chairman of Sakrebulo: “predictions are already made in lobby interviews...”, “according to certain information...”, “as they say in the “Dream...”, “they already state in the Georgian Dream...”.

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that pirveliradio.ge has covered election related issues pretty actively. Journalism standards have been mostly followed, however, within the given period of monitoring we have come across numerous articles containing unverified information.

(Diagram3, Coverage of subjects, pirveliradio.ge)



(Diagram4, Coverage of mayoral candidates, pirveliradio.ge)



liberali.ge

Within the given period of monitoring liberali.ge has still been objectively covering ongoing events of the country. There has been no positive or negative attitude towards any political power registered on

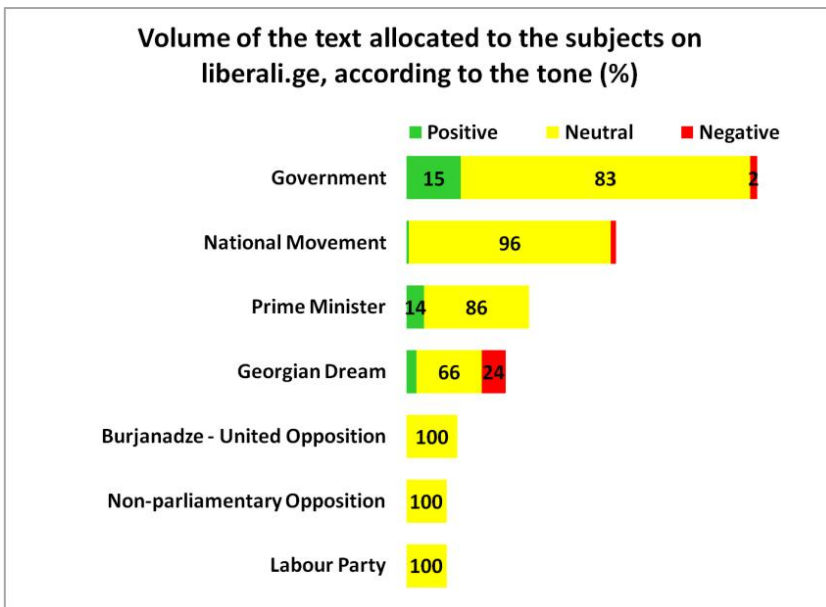
the website. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed at a high level. The website has actively covered the issues related to local self-governance elections.

Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the Government (37%), the United National Movement (22%), the Prime Minister (13%) and the coalition Georgian Dream (10%) have been covered most intensively. There have been no especially high percentage indicators of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (refer to Diagram 5).

The website has actively covered election related issues as well as statements made by various organizations concerning violations identified during the elections (for instance: “Almost all election precincts populated by ethnic minorities suffer from shortage of bulletins”, 15.06.2014; “The police found stolen bulletins”, 15.06.2014).

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that liberali.ge has still been covering ongoing political processes pretty objectively. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed at a high level.

(Diagram 5, Coverage of subjects, liberali.ge)



news.ge

Within the monitoring period news.ge has still been actively covering ongoing events of the country. There has been no positive or negative attitude observed towards any political power. Cases of rough violation of journalism standards and ethical norms have not been registered within the given period. The website has actively covered local self-governance elections.

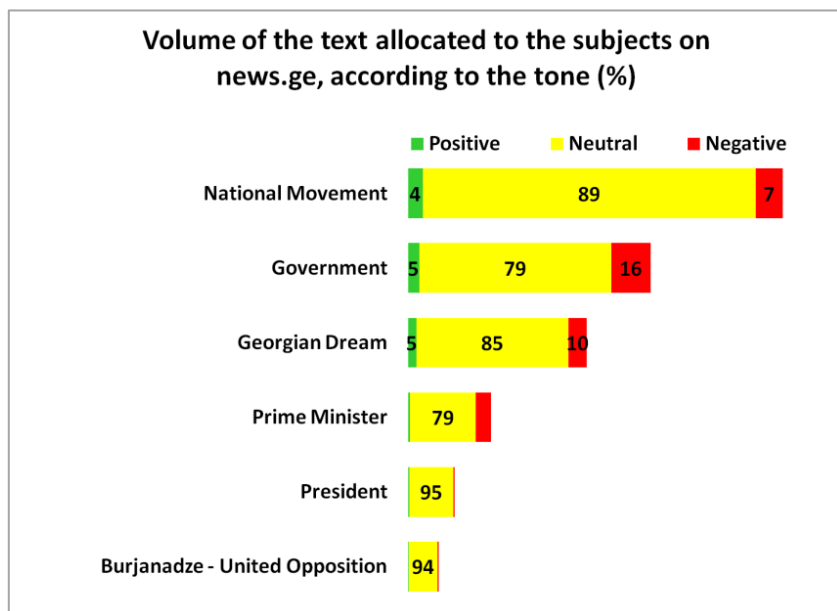
Among the monitoring subjects the “United National Movement” (37%), the Government (24%), the coalition “Georgian Dream” (18%) and the Prime Minister (8%) have been covered most intensively. There has been no particularly high percentage rate of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (*refer to Diagram 6*).

The website has covered the election process actively and objectively; evaluations made by various politicians have been covered actively (for instance: “Bakradze – the population of Georgia rejected conflicts and false promises”, 15.06.2014; “David Sergeenko: According to our information there will be a runoff”, 15.06.2014; “Statement of the Prime Minister indicates that there is a possibility of switching pressure on election commissions”, 15.06.2014).

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that news.ge is covering pre-election processes objectively. Journalism standards and ethical norms are followed.

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that news.ge has covered the election process actively and objectively. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed.

(Diagram 6, Coverage of subjects, news.ge)



presa.ge

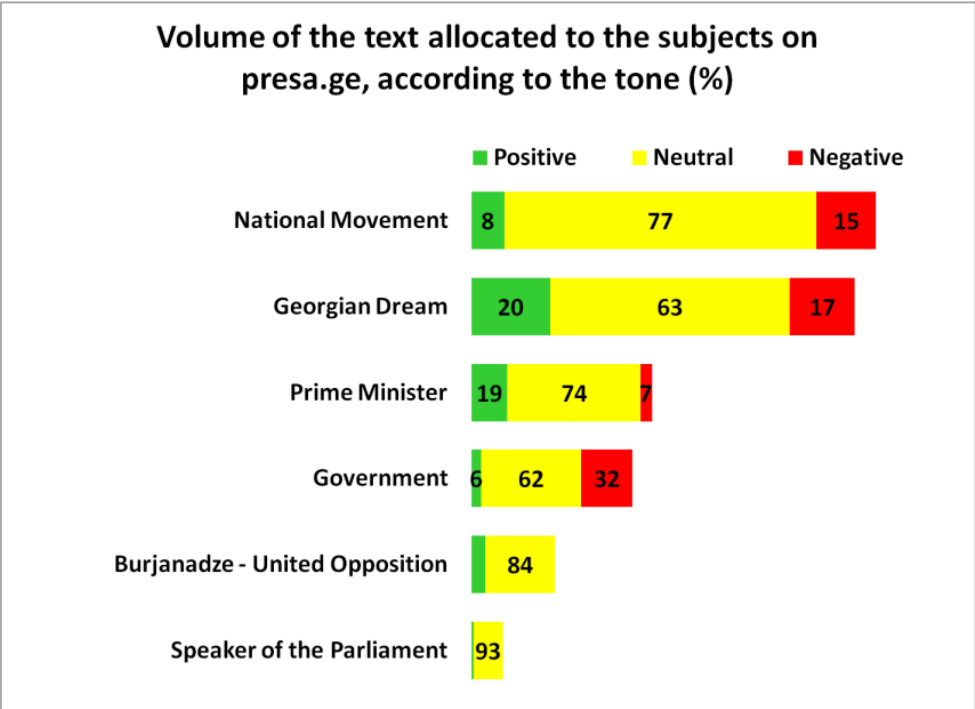
Within the given period of monitoring presa.ge has still been covering ongoing political events of the country pretty objectively. There has been no positive or negative attitude observed towards any political power on the website. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed. The election day has been covered actively.

Among the monitoring subjects the United National Movement (30%), the coalition Georgian Dream (29%), the Prime Minister (14%) and the Government (14%) have been covered most intensively. There have been no particularly high percentage indicators of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (*refer to Diagram 7*). Positive and neutral tone indicators prevail on the website while covering Tbilisi mayoral candidates (*refer to Diagram 8*).

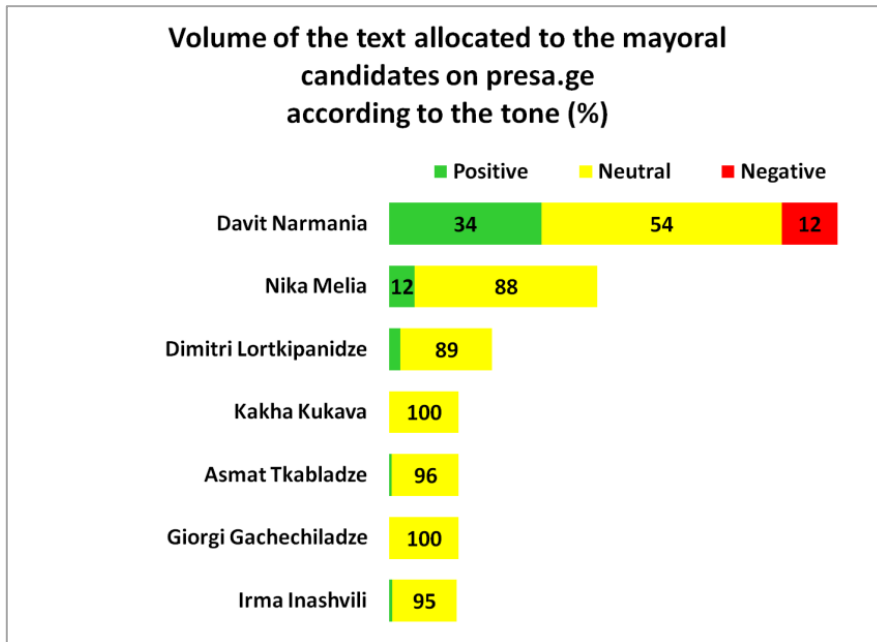
On the election day the website covered voting process of various politicians in a pretty active and objective way (for instance: “David Narmania voted on election precinct #1, Saburtalo district”, 15.06.2014; “Nika Melia: I am sure the Tbilisi population will make a pragmatic choice”, 15.06.2014; “The Minister of Defense voted in Zugdidi”, 15.06.2014. The information about the election process has also been covered (for instance: “CEC: as of 12:00, 571,123 voters have taken part in the elections”, 15.06.2014; “Voter activeness by 12:00 and the voting process”, 15.06.2014), as well as violations identified during the elections (for instance: “The GYLA speaks about violations identified by 2 p.m.”, 15.06.2014).

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that presa.ge has still been covering the ongoing political processes pretty objectively. The website actively covered issues related to local self-governance elections.

(Diagram 7, Coverage of subjects, presa.ge)



(Diagram 8, Coverage of mayoral candidates, presa.ge)



civil.ge

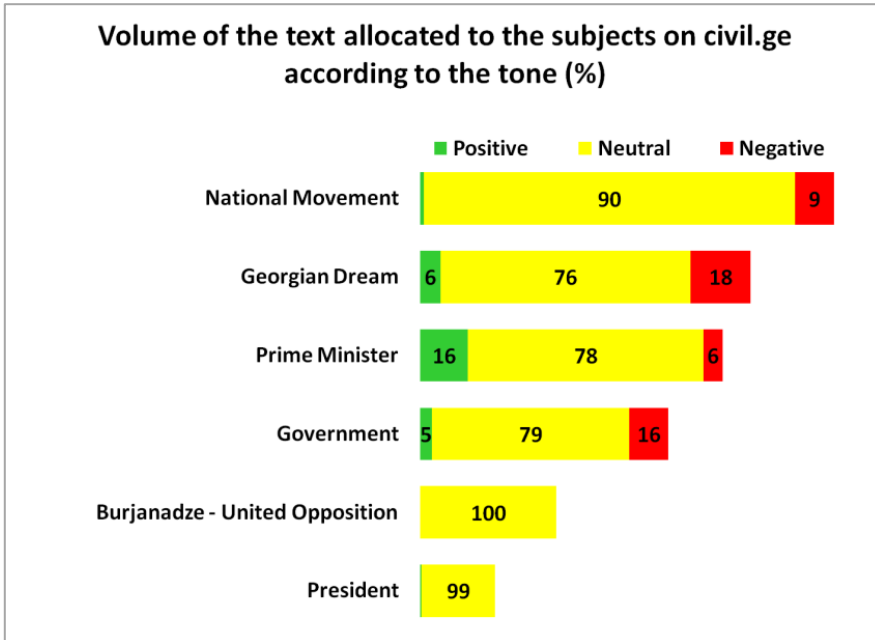
Within the given period of monitoring civil.ge has still been covering ongoing events of the country pretty objectively and impartially. There has been no positive or negative attitude towards any political power observed on the website. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed at a high level. The website has actively covered the election day.

Among the monitoring subjects the United National Movement (24%), the coalition Georgian Dream (19%), the Prime Minister (18%) and the Government (15%) have been covered most intensively. There has been no particularly high percentage rate of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (refer to Diagram 9). Neutral tone has been prevailing while covering Tbilisi Mayoral candidates (refer to Diagram 10).

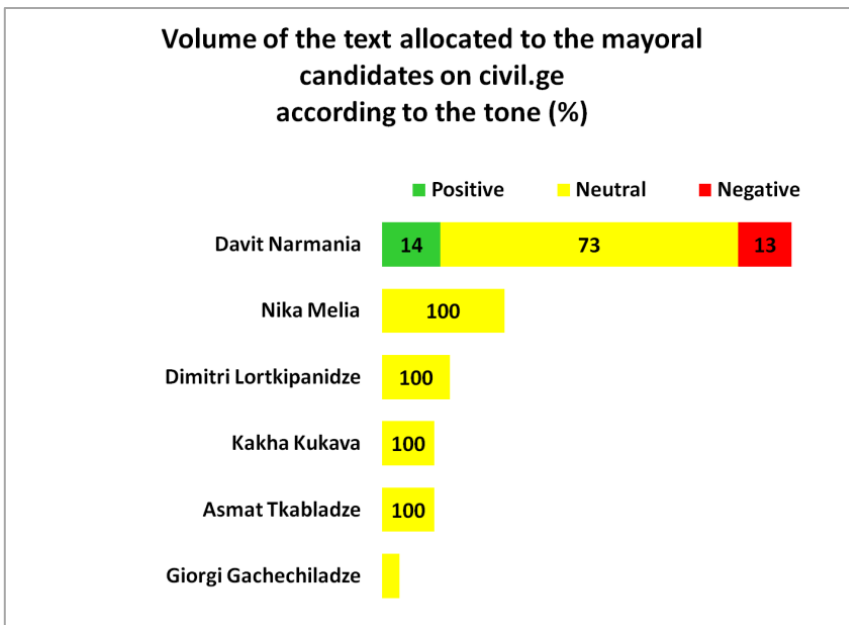
During the election day the website has actively covered information concerning the election process (for instance: “Monitoring Groups’ Report on Voting Process”, 15.06.2014; “Municipal Elections Underway”, 15.06.2014; “Exit Polls Give GD’s Tbilisi Mayoral Candidate Lead, But Runoff Possible”, 15.06.2014). The website has also covered the election results related issues pretty comprehensively (for instance: „Round-Up of Local Elections’ Preliminary Results”, 25.06.2014).

As a result of the elections, we may conclude that civil.ge has still been covering ongoing political processes pretty objectively. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed at a high level. The website has actively covered the election process.

(Diagram 9, Coverage of subjects, civil.ge)



(Diagram10, Coverage of mayoral candidates, civil.ge)



tabula.ge

Within the given period of monitoring tabula.ge has still been covering ongoing events of the country pretty objectively. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed on the website. The comments made by representatives of the United National Movement have been covered most often

among the political parties. The election day and issues related to violations identified during the day have been actively covered.

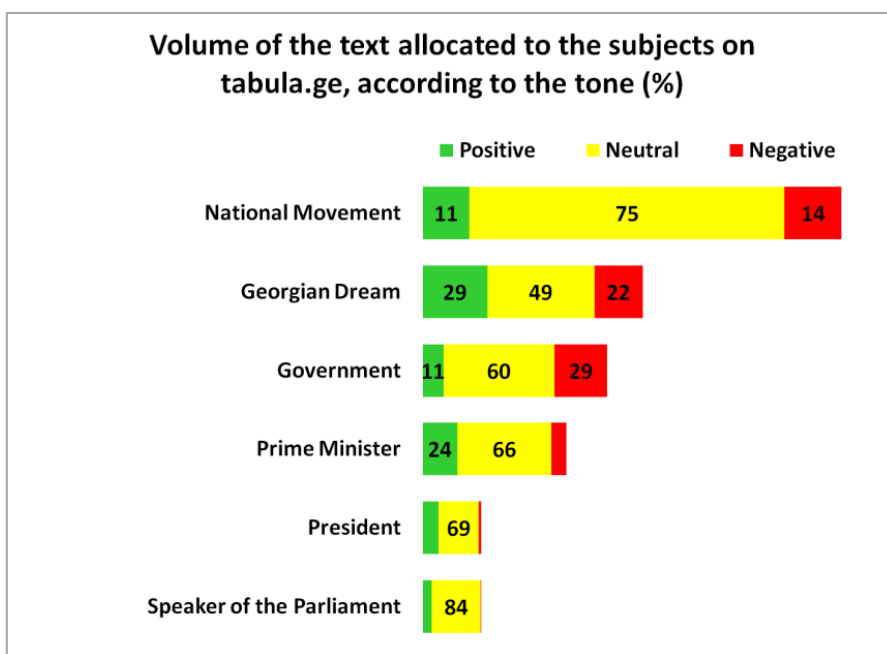
Among the monitoring subjects the United National Movement (37%), the coalition Georgian Dream (19%), the Government (16%) and the Prime Minister (13%) have been covered most intensively. There has been no particularly high percentage indicator of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (refer Diagram 11). Positive tone indicators prevail on the website while covering Tbilisi mayoral candidates (refer to Diagram 12).

The website has actively and objectively covered the election day, as well as the issues related to the results of the elections and identified violations (for instance: “ISFED: by 5 p.m. the observers submitted 62 claims to the Commission”, 15.06.2014; “The runoff for the Tbilisi mayoral elections will be held in Tbilisi and seven self-governing cities”, 17.06.2014; “According to the latest data, the runoff for Gamgebeli position has been held in 13 districts”, 17.06.2014).

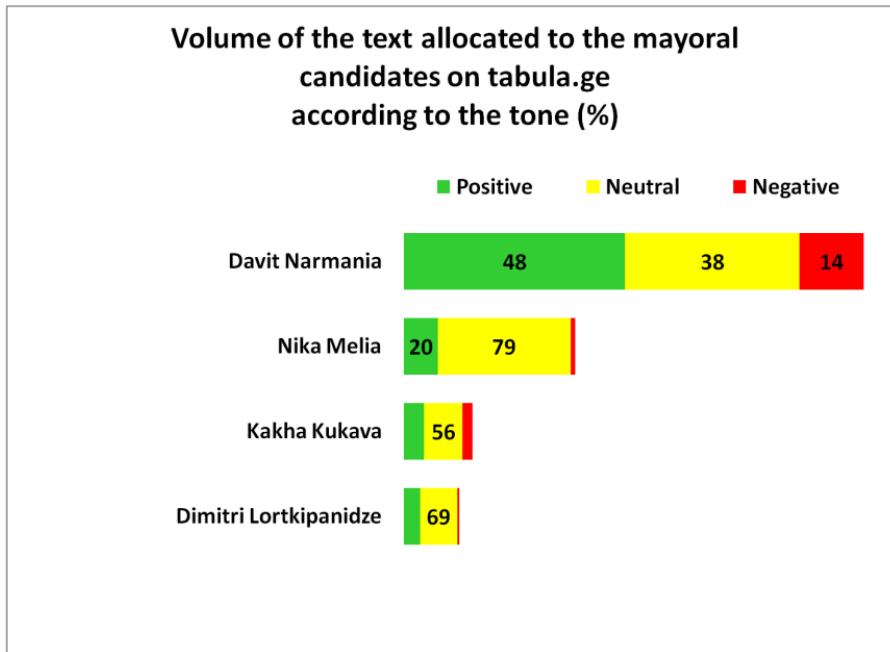
tabula.ge has been particularly active in covering the signing of the EU Association Agreement by the Prime Minister as well as statements made by various politicians in regard to that process (for instance: “Petriashvili: Let us celebrate today and start implementation of reforms from tomorrow”, 27.06.2014; “The President: We have started the route towards full-scale EU membership”, 27.06.2014; “Bokeria: This is the first step, we shall believe that this road will take us through the end”, 27.06.2014).

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that tabula.ge has covered the election day and the following events pretty actively and objectively. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed.

(Diagram 11, Coverage of subjects, tabula.ge)



(Diagram12, Coverage of mayoral candidates, tabula.ge)



reportiori.ge

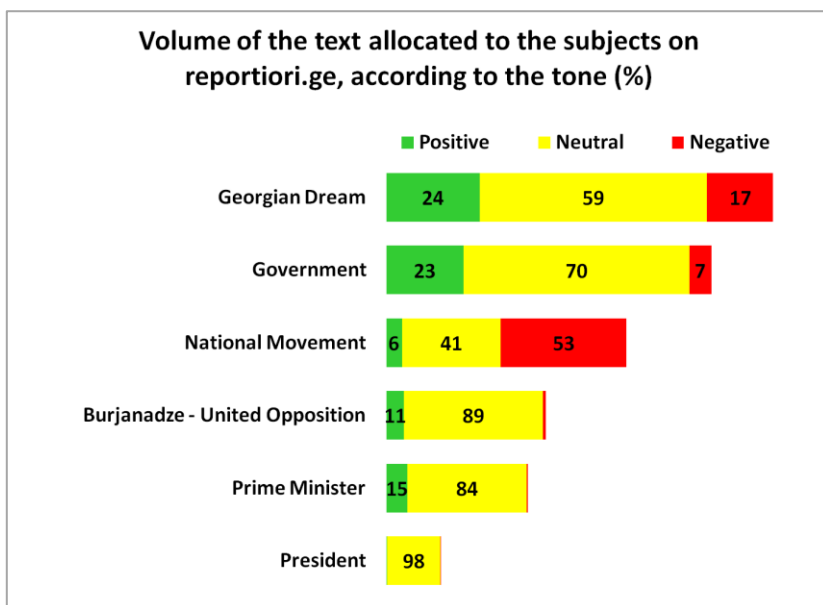
Within the monitoring period criticism towards the United National Movement has further increased on reportiori.ge. However, there have been no cases of rough violation of journalism ethical norms registered on the website during the given period of monitoring.

Among the monitoring subjects the coalition Georgian Dream (27%), the Government (23%), the United National Movement (17%) and Burjanadze – United Opposition have been covered most intensively. A rather high percentage indicator of negative tone shall be highlighted in coverage of the United National Movement (53%), while, on the other hand, high percentage indicator of positive tone has been registered in case of the coalition Georgian Dream (24%), the Government (23%) and the Prime Minister (15%) (refer to Diagram 13). However, it shall be mentioned that positive or negative tone has been observed in statements of respondents and not in the texts drafted by reporters.

The website has covered the local self-governance election day pretty actively. The voting process of Tbilisi mayoral candidates has been covered during the day (for instance: “David Narmania has already voted”, 15.06.2014; “Dimitri Lortkipanidze: I voted for settlement and regulation of the city an bright future of our children”, 15.06.2014; “Nika Melia: I voted for implementation of infrastructural projects, cheaper public transportation and reduced utility fees”, 15.06.2014).

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that negative tone towards the United National Movement still prevails on reportiori.ge. We have not come across cases of rough violation of journalism ethical norms.

(Diagram 13, Coverage of subjects, reportiori.ge)



for.ge

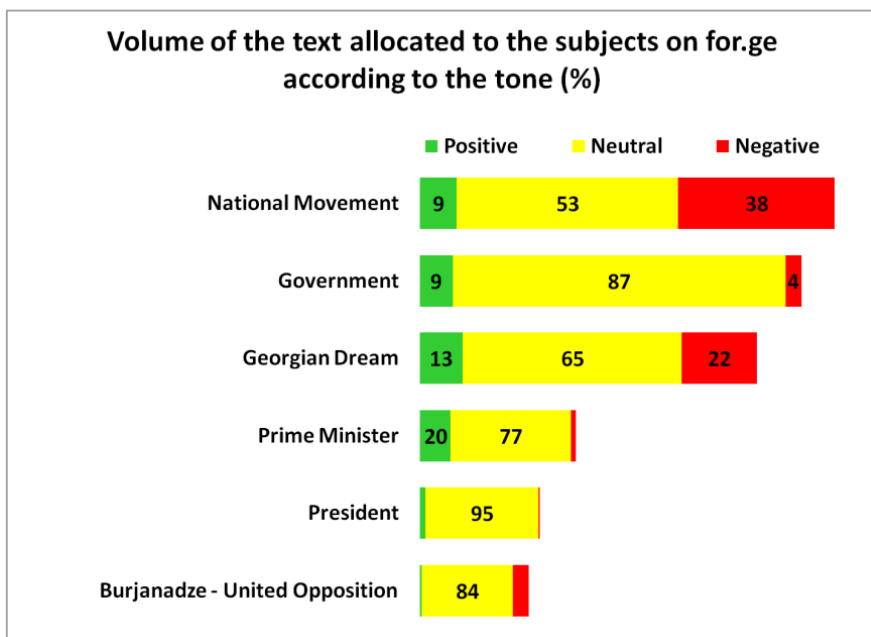
Compared to the previous period of monitoring criticism towards the United National Movement has decreased on for.ge, however negative attitude towards that party is still observed. It shall be noted that cases of violation of journalism standards and ethical norms have not been registered on the website over the reporting period.

Among the monitoring subjects activities of the United National Movement (25%), the Government (23%), the coalition Georgian Dream (20%) and the Prime Minister (9%) have been covered most intensively. A rather high indicator of negative tone has been registered in case of the United National Movement (38%) (refer to Diagram 14). A relatively high indicator of negative tone has been allocated to the coalition Georgian Dream (22%) and Burjanadze – United Opposition (14%). The highest percentage indicator of positive tone has been observed in coverage of the Prime Minister (20%) that has been caused by the fact that the website has actively covered statements of the Prime Minister related to signing of the EU Association Agreement (for instance: “Today Georgia is making a big step towards Europe!”, 27.06.2014; “The EU door has opened for Georgia”, 27.06.2014).

Within the given period of monitoring the website has actively covered issues related to the election results (for instance: “One exit poll predicts a runoff, while another one – victory of the “Dream”, 15.06.2014; “A runoff will presumably be held in 8 self-governance cities”, 16.06.2014). The website has also actively covered value judgments of various experts and politicians in regard to the runoff (for instance: “What will happen after June 16?”, 16.06.2014; “If population will leave Tbilisi for summer, the Government may well lose the runoff”, 17.06.2014).

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that compared to the previous period of monitoring, for.ge has covered ongoing political processes in a relatively objective way. It is noteworthy that comments made by representative of various political parties have been covered on the website with equal frequency.

(Diagram 14, Coverage of subjects, for.ge)



dfwatch..net

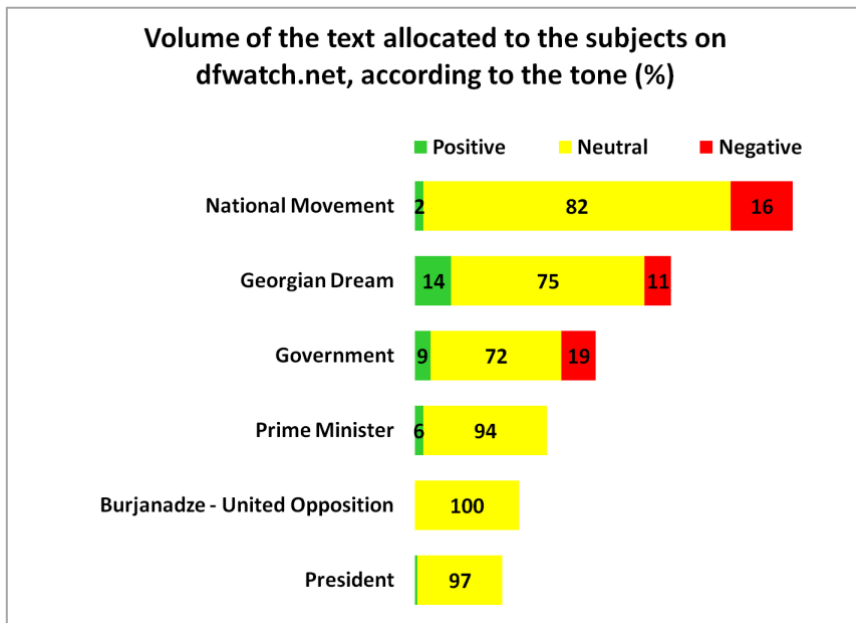
Within the given period of monitoring dfwatch.net has still been covering ongoing events of the country pretty objectively and impartially. There has been no positive or negative attitude towards any political power observed on the website. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed.

Among the monitoring subjects activities of the United National Movement (32%), the coalition Georgian Dream (22%), the Government (16%) and the Prime Minister (11%) and have been covered most intensively. There have been no particularly high indicators of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (refer to Diagram 15).

The website has covered the election day (for instance: “Voting Goes Smoothly in Georgia’s Local Election”, 15.06.2014) and issues related to the election results (for instance: “Exit poll: runoff may be needed in Tbilisi”, 15.06.2014; “Election update after 98% of votes have been counted”, 17.06.2014).

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that dfwatch.net objectively covers ongoing political processes of the country. Journalism standards and ethical norms are being followed.

(Diagram 15, Coverage of subjects, dfwatch.net)



palitratv.ge

Within the second period of monitoring palitratv.ge has still been objectively and impartially covering ongoing events of the country. There has been no positive or negative attitude towards any political power observed on the website. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed. Election related issues have been actively covered.

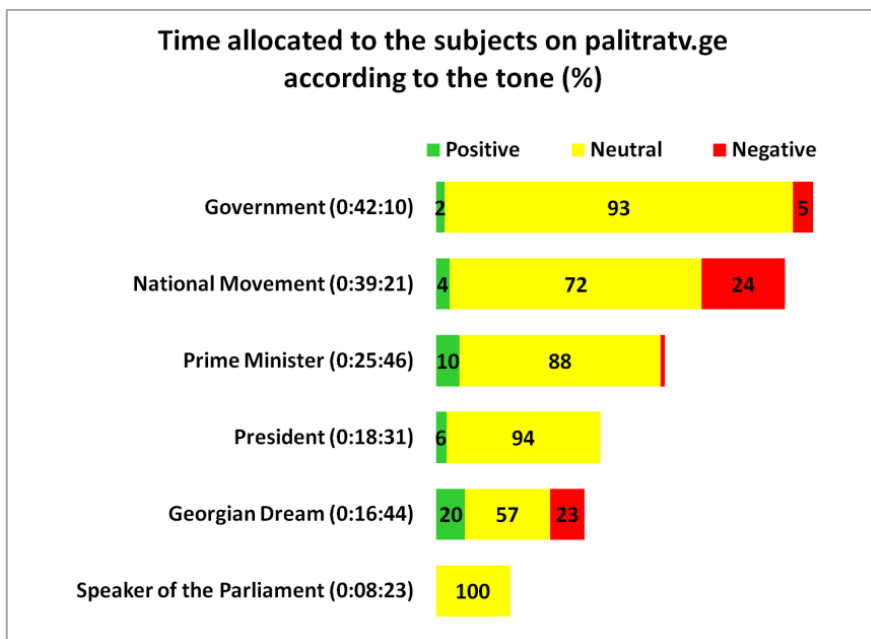
Among the monitoring subjects activities of the Government (27%), the United National Movement (26%), the Prime Minister (17%) and the President (11%) have been covered most intensively. There has been no particularly high percentage indicator of positive or negative tone observed in relation to any subject. A relatively high indicator of negative tone has been registered in case of the United National Movement (26%) and the coalition Georgian Dream (23%) (refer to Diagram 16).

During the election day the website has actively covered voting process of Tbilisi mayoral candidates (for instance: “David Narmania visited the election precinct together with his family”, 15.06.2014; “It is high time to release Tbilisi from resentful politics – Nika Melia”, 15.06.2014) as well the issues related to the election results (for instance: “A runoff is expected in Tbilisi? – “Rustavi 2 exit poll results”, 15.06.2014; “David Narmania leads with 51.2% based on exit poll results ordered by Imedi“, 15.06.2014).

Within the monitoring period numerous different types of public opinion polls have been held on palitravt.ge. It shall be noted that balance of opinions has been followed in such stories and respondents having different opinion concerning the issue at stake have been represented (for instance, “What was the most unexpected in election results?”, 16.06.2014; “Why did the number of the Georgian Dream supporters decrease?”, 17.06.2014) .

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that palitravt.ge has still been objectively covering ongoing political processes. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed.

(Diagram 16, Coverage of subjects, palitravt.ge)



Conclusion

All websites selected for the monitoring have actively covered the election day and the following events.

Compared to the election monitoring of 2012 and 2013, positive changes in Georgian online media are still being observed in terms of following journalism standards and ethical norms. presa.ge is particularly worth mentioning, since it has radically changed its work style. The websites droni.ge and tabula.ge have improved their work from the standpoint of objective coverage.

Within the given period of monitoring negative attitude towards the United National Movement has been observed on the websites reportiori.ge and for.ge. Compared to the previous period of monitoring, no significant changes have been introduced in online media.