



Media monitoring of 2014 local self-governance elections

Election Monitoring of Online Media

April 14 – May 2, 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*, *pirveliradio.ge*, *liberali.ge*, *news.ge*, *presa.ge*, *civil.ge*, *tabula.ge*, *reportiori.ge*, *for.ge*, *dfwatch.net*, *palitrstv.ge*. The report contains the media monitoring results from April 15 until May 2, inclusive.

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

- As compared to media monitoring results for 2012 and 2013, significant improvement has been observed in online media from the standpoint of both following journalism ethics norms and objective coverage of subjects.
- As compared to the results of 2013 monitoring, positive changes have been observed on the websites *presa.ge*, *droni.ge*, *for.ge*, *tabula.ge*
- *presa.ge*, which has drastically changed its work style, shall be especially highlighted.
- The activities of the United National Movement, the coalition Georgian Dream and the Government have been covered most intensively.
- Election related activities of the candidates for the position of the Mayor are being covered less actively; the websites paid more attention to coverage of political parties and authorities.
- Percentage indicator of positive tone prevails while covering candidates for the position of Tbilisi Mayor, which is caused by the fact that numerous articles have been dedicated to presentation of candidates and their pre-election meetings within the given period.

netgazeti.ge

Within the monitoring period netgazeti.ge has 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 ethics norms have been followed at a highest level

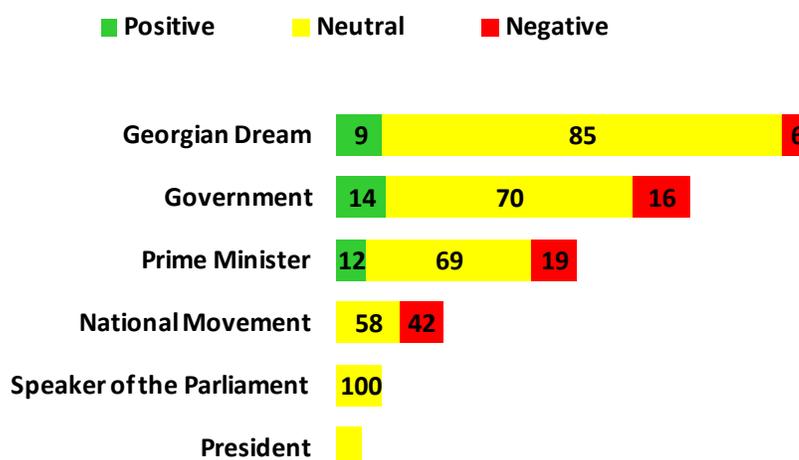
Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the coalition Georgian Dream (37%), the Government (28%), the Prime Minister (19%) and the United National Movement (8%) have been covered most intensively. There were no especially high percentage indicators of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (refer to Diagram 1). Relatively high indicator of negative tone has been registered while covering the United National Movement (42%). 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 netgazeti.ge have been refraining from making political evaluations and unjustified judgments within the monitoring period.

David Narmania is the only candidate for the position of a Mayor, whose activities have been covered. Within the monitoring period netgazeti.ge has been paying less attention to pre-election activities of candidates, while being oriented mostly on political parties and government agencies. Within the given period of monitoring the website has been actively covering activities of the Parliament related to consideration of the law on antidiscrimination.

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

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

Volume of the text allocated to the subjects on netgazeti.ge according to the tone (%)



droni.ge

As compared to monitoring results of 2013 presidential elections, positive changes with respect to following balance in subjects' coverage have been observed on droni.ge. Positive or negative attitude towards any political subject does not exist of the webpage any more. Journalism standards and ethical norms are followed.

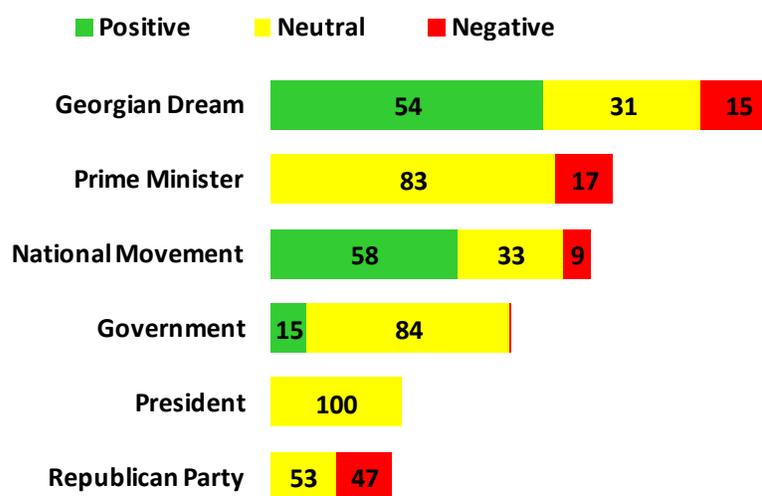
Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the coalition Georgian Dream (33%), the Prime Minister (22%), the United National Movement (21%) and the Government (16%) have been covered most intensively. While covering the subjects, high percentage indicator of a positive tone has been observed in case of the United National Movement (58%) and the coalition Georgian Dream (54%) (refer to *Diagram 2*), which is caused by the fact the webpage has been actively covering pre-election meetings and promises made by candidates representing those parties.

Within the given period of monitoring certain changes from the standpoint of following journalism ethical norms and balance in subjects' coverage have been observed in comparison with results of the monitoring carried out in previous years. Insulting and discriminatory terminology is no more present on droni.ge.

As a result of the monitoring we may conclude that droni.ge has been covering ongoing political processes of the country in an objective and impartial way.

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

Volume of the text allocated to the subjects on droni.ge according to the tone (%)



pirveliradio.ge

Within the monitoring period pirveliradio.ge has been covering practically all important ongoing events of the country in an objective and impartial way. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed. There was no particularly high indicator of positive or negative tone towards any political power registered on the website within the given period of monitoring.

Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the Government (23%), the coalition Georgian Dream (23%), the United National Movement (21%) and the Prime Minister (15%) have been covered most intensively. There were no especially high percentage indicators of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (*refer to Diagram 3*).

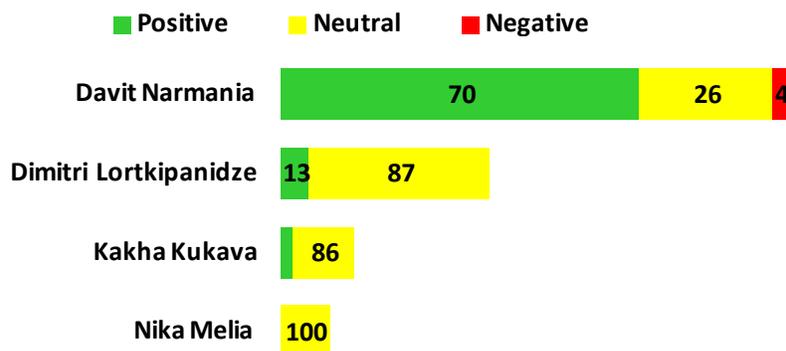
David Narmania (2%), Dimitri Lortkipanidze (1%), Kakha Kukava (1%) and Nika Melia (1%) have been covered most intensively among candidates for the position of the Mayor. Pretty high indicator of positive tone shall be highlighted in coverage of David Narmania (70%) (*refer to Diagram 4*), which is caused by the fact that within the monitoring period the website has actively covered presentation of the candidate, his meetings and promises.

Journalism ethical norms have been followed strictly in articles published on pirveliradio.ge. However, over the given period of monitoring we have encountered a few articles on the website that simply quoted various newspapers. Those articles often violated journalism ethical norms (for instance: “Do the “dreamers” prepare David Maghradze for the position of the Mayor?”, 01.05.2014).

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that pirveliradio.ge is covering ongoing political processes of the country in a pretty objective and impartial manner. Journalism standards and ethical norms are followed.

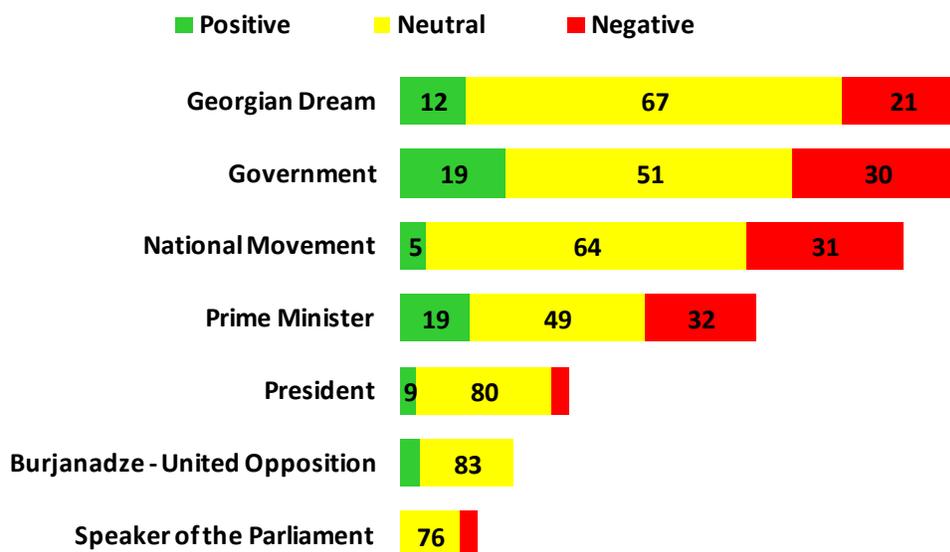
(Diagram3, Coverage of subjects, pirveliradio.ge)

**Volume of the text allocated to the mayoral candidates on
pirveliradio.ge according to the tone (%)**



(Diagram 4, Coverage of candidates for the Mayor's position, pirveliradio.ge)

**Volume of the text allocated to the subjects on pirveliradio.ge according
to the tone (%)**



liberali.ge

Within the monitoring period liberali.ge has been objectively covering ongoing events of the country. There has been no positive or negative attitude towards any political force registered on the website. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed at a high level.

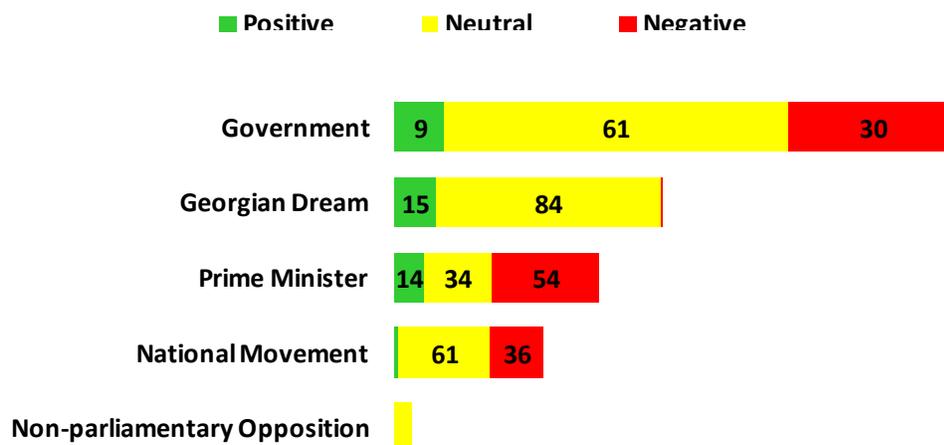
Among the monitoring subjects the activities of the Government (46%), the coalition Georgian Dream (22%), the Prime Minister (17%) and the United National Movement (12%) have been covered most intensively. A rather high percentage indicator of negative tone has been observed in case of the Prime Minister's coverage (54%) (*refer to Diagram 5*), which is caused by the fact that the webpage has been actively covering critical appeal of the NGOs towards the Prime Minister (for instance: "The statements of the Prime Minister are insulting", 1.05.2014). There have been no especially high indicators of positive or negative tone registered towards other subjects. The website has been covering pre-election activities of the candidates for Mayor's position less intensively and has paid more attention to political parties and government agencies.

Within the given period of monitoring liberali.ge has been thoroughly covering the work of the Parliament related to consideration of antidiscrimination law. The website has also actively published reports on research carried out by various international or local organizations.

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that liberali.ge is covering ongoing political processes pretty objectively. Critical attitude towards activities carried out by the Government has been visible. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed at a high level.

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

Volume of the text allocated to the subjects on liberali.ge according to the tone (%)



Within the monitoring period news.ge has 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.

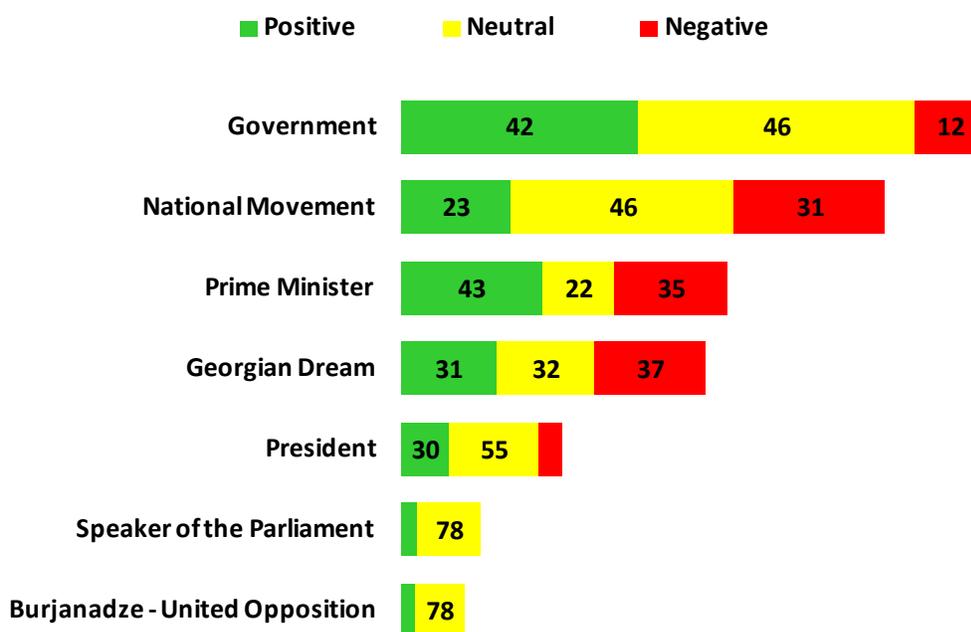
Among the monitoring subjects the Government (28%), the United National Movement (23%), the coalition Georgian Dream (15%) and the Prime Minister (8%) have been covered most intensively. There has been no particularly high percentage rate of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (refer to Diagram 6). The website has been covering pre-election activities of candidates for the Mayor's position less frequently, paying most of the attention to political parties and government bodies.

Within the given period of monitoring the website has been covering information researched on the social network Facebook.

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.

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

Volume of the text allocated to the subjects on news.ge according to the tone (%)



presa.ge

Drastic changes in terms of following journalism standards and ethical norms have been observed on presa.ge as compared to the results of the monitoring carried out in 2012 and 2013. Subjective evaluations and abusive terminology, usual for presa.ge, have not been visible in texts any more. Within the given period of monitoring the website has covered ongoing events of the country pretty objectively and impartially.

Among the monitoring subjects the United National Movement (29%), the coalition Georgian Dream (25%), the Prime Minister (17%) and the Government (15%) have been covered most intensively. Particularly high percentage rate of negative tone has been registered in case of the President (*refer to Diagram 7*) that is caused by the fact that just one extensive article has been published about the President within the monitoring period – the criticism addressed by Grigol Vashadze towards the President Margvelashvili (“Grigol Vashadze called Giorgi Margvelashvili “talking weeds”, 26.04.2014).

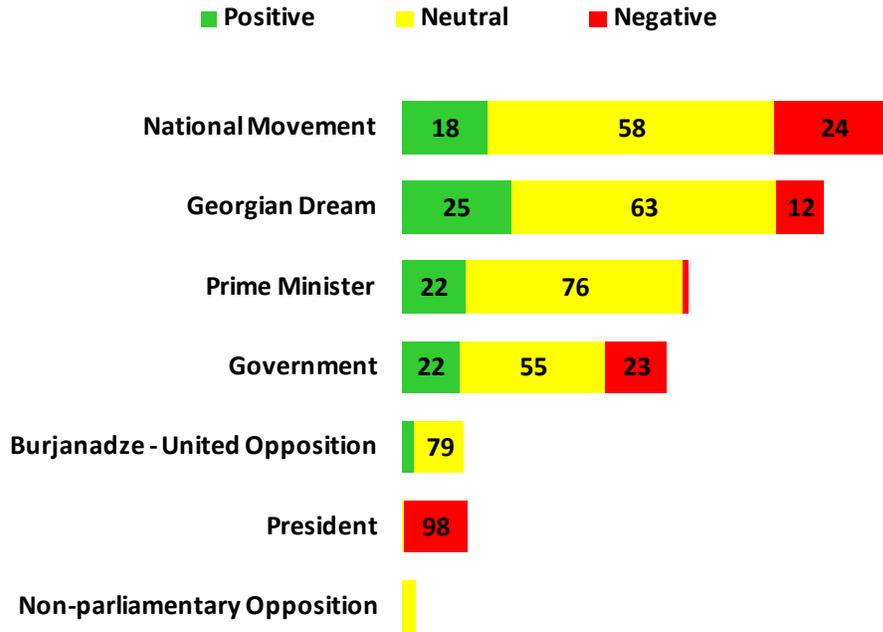
Within the given period of monitoring the website has been actively covering pre-election activities of the candidates for the Mayor’s position David Narmania and Nika Melia. A rather high rate of positive tone has been registered during their coverage (*refer to Diagram 8*) that is caused by the fact that presa.ge has been actively covering their pre-election meetings and promises.

A single case of journalism standards violation has been registered on presa.ge in the first period of monitoring. In April 23, 2014 article “Tea Tsulukiani prohibits her employee to bring religious subjects to his office?” the website published the statement about the Minister of Justice disseminated by the news portal “Zona News”. The presa.ge journalist has tried to verify the information, however without any result. In such case it is better if a journalist refrains from publishing unverified information containing negative elements about a public official.

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that presa.ge has drastically improved the work style in terms of following journalism standards and ethical norms. Within the given period of monitoring the website has covered ongoing political processes objectively and impartially.

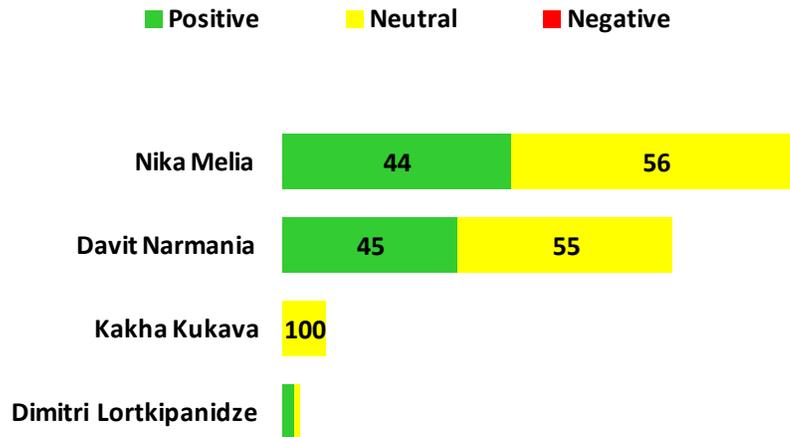
(Diagram 7, Coverage of subjects, presa.ge)

Volume of the text allocated to the subjects on presa.ge according to the tone (%)



(Diagram 8, Coverage of candidates for the Mayor's position, presa.ge)

Volume of the text allocated to the mayoral candidates on presa.ge according to the tone (%)



civil.ge

Within the given period of monitoring civil.ge has 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 highest level.

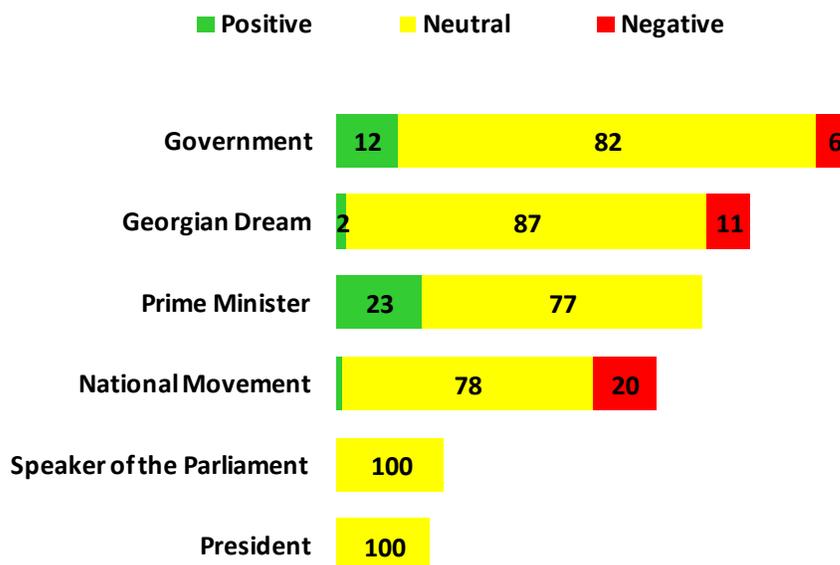
Among the monitoring subjects the Government (26%), the coalition Georgian Dream (21%), the Prime Minister (18%) and the United National Movement (16%) have been covered most intensively. There has been no particularly high percentage rate of positive or negative tone registered towards any subject (refer to Diagram 9). Neutral tone has been dominating while covering candidates for the Mayor's position (refer to Diagram 10). David Narmania has received high rate of positive tone, caused by the fact that the website has actively covered his presentation as a candidate for the position of the Mayor.

Within the given period of monitoring the website has been actively covering activities of the Parliament related to consideration of the antidiscrimination law.

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that civil.ge is covering ongoing political events pretty objectively. Journalism standards and ethical norms are followed at a highest level.

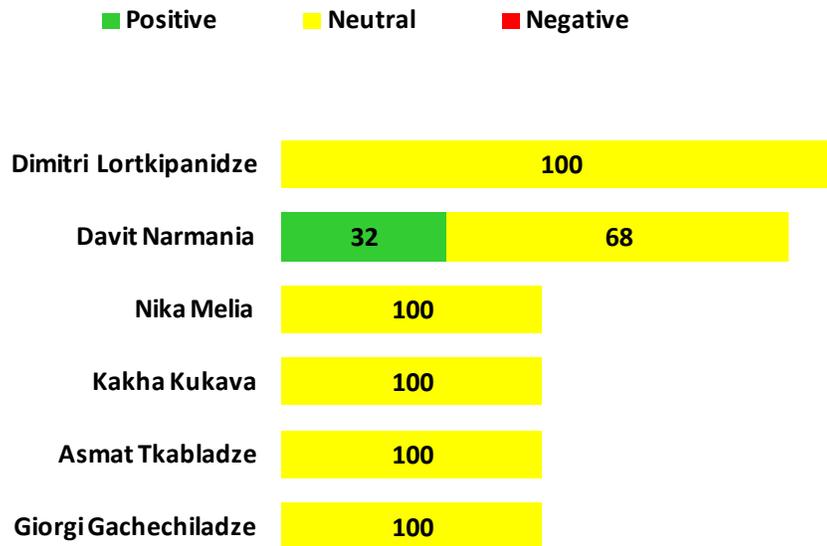
(Diagram 9, Coverage of subjects, civil.ge)

Volume of the text allocated to the subjects on civil.ge according to the tone (%)



(Diagram 10, Coverage of candidates for the Mayor's position, civil.ge)

Volume of the text allocated to the mayoral candidates on civil.ge according to the tone (%)



tabula.ge

As compared to the results of the monitoring carried out in 2012 and 2013 positive changes in terms of following balance in coverage of candidates has been observed on tabula.ge. Within the given period of monitoring the website has been covering ongoing events pretty objectively and impartially. Although it shall be mentioned that statements made by representatives of the United National Movement have been covered more extensively. Journalism standards and ethical norms are strictly followed on tabula.ge.

Among the monitoring subjects the United National Movement (30%), the Government (21%), the coalition Georgian Dream (18%), and the Prime Minister (18%) have been covered most intensively. Relatively high percentage rate of negative tone has been dedicated to the Prime Minister (31%). However, it shall be mentioned that negative tone has been observed in statements made by respondents and not the texts drafted by journalists. Within the monitoring period the journalists of tabula.ge have been refraining from making political evaluations and unjustified judgments.

There has been no particularly high rate of positive or negative tone registered in coverage of other subjects (refer to Diagram 11).

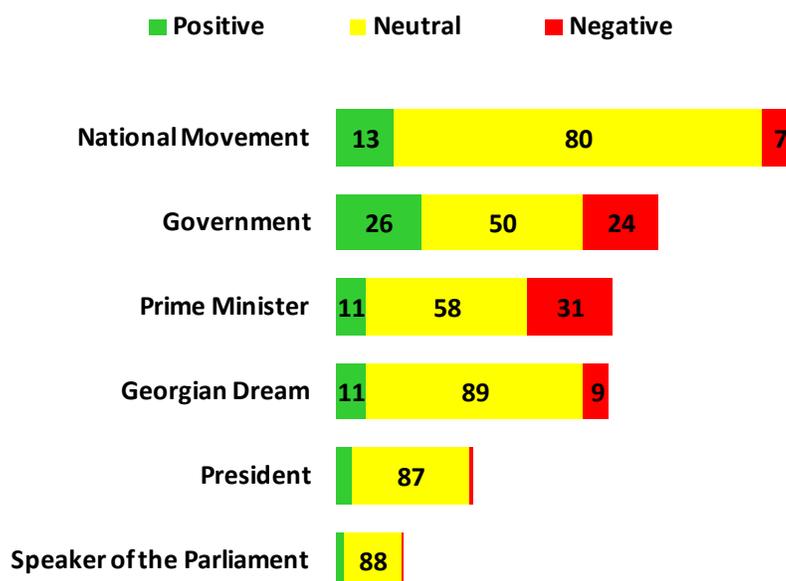
Within the given period of monitoring the website has been covering pre-election activity of candidates for the position of the Mayor less frequently and the main attention has been paid to political parties and

government agencies. Also the activities of the Parliament related to consideration of antidiscrimination law have been covered pretty actively.

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that, as compared to the results of the monitoring carried out in previous years, improvement in terms of objective coverage of political processes has been observed. There have been no cases of violating journalism standards and ethical norms registered within the given period.

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

Volume of the text allocated to the subjects on tabula.ge according to the tone (%)



reportiori.ge

Within the monitoring period reportiori.ge has been covering ongoing events of the country pretty objectively. However, it shall be mentioned that negative tone has prevailed on the website while covering the United National Movement. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed in articles published on reportiori.ge.

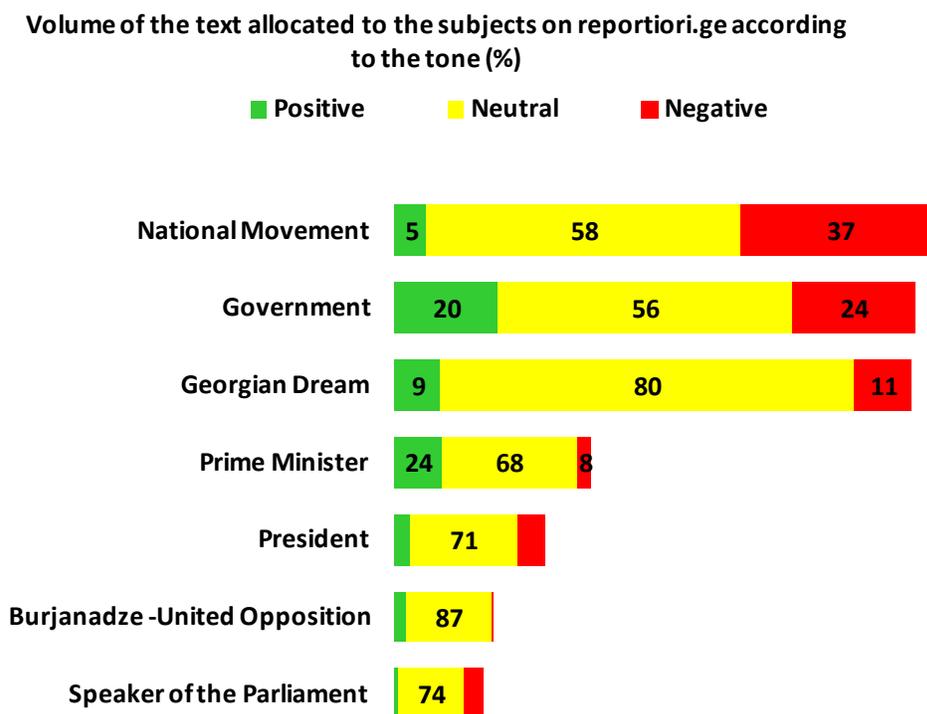
Among the monitoring subjects the United National Movement (24%), the coalition Georgian Dream (18%), the Government (23%) and the Prime Minister (9%) have been covered most intensively. The highest percentage rate of negative tone has been dedicated to the United National Movement (31%), while the positive tone – to the Prime Minister (24%) (refer to Diagram 12). 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 journalists of reportiori.ge have been refraining from making political evaluations and unjustified judgments within the reporting period.

Positive tone indicators prevail in coverage of candidates for the Mayor’s position(refer to Diagram 13), which is caused by the fact that reportiori.ge has been actively covering pre-election meetings and promises of candidates within the monitoring period. The highest indicator of positive tone has been registered while covering Dimitri Lortkipanidze (51%), while the lowest indicator – when covering Nika Melia (2%).

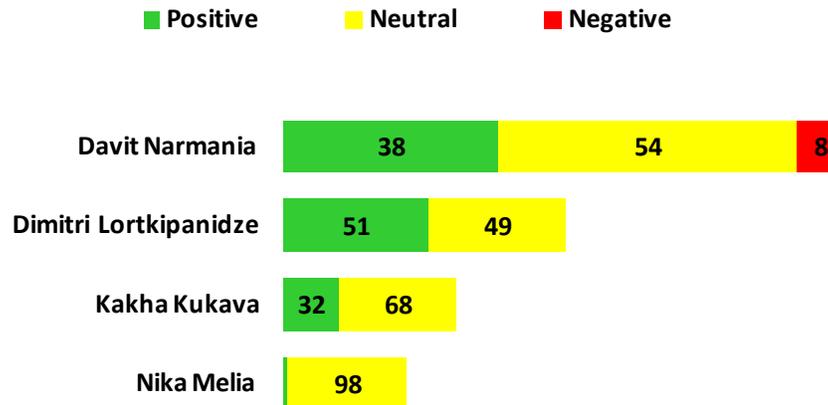
As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that reportiori.ge has been objectively covering ongoing political processes. However, negative tone prevails towards the United National Movement. Journalism standards and ethical norms have been followed on the website.

(Diagram 12, Coverage of subjects, reportiori.ge)



(Diagram 13, Coverage of candidates for the position of the Mayor, reportiori.ge)

Volume of the text allocated to the mayoral candidates on reportiori.ge according to the tone (%)



for.ge

As compared to the results of the monitoring carried out during 2012 and 2013 elections, some positive changes in terms of following journalism standards have been observed on the website. Subjective evaluations and abusive terminology are no more present in the texts prepared by journalists. The coverage balance of monitoring subjects has significantly improved.

Among the monitoring subjects activities of the United National Movement (41%), the Government (20%), the coalition Georgian Dream (16%) and the Prime Minister (10%) have been covered most intensively. Percentage indicator of positive tone prevails while covering the coalition Georgian Dream (24%) (refer to Diagram 14), while high indicator of negative tone – in case of “Burjanadze – United Opposition“ (76%). It shall be mentioned that positive and negative tone has been registered in statements of respondents rather than texts prepared by journalists. Journalists of for.ge have refrained from making political evaluations and unjustified judgments within the reporting period.

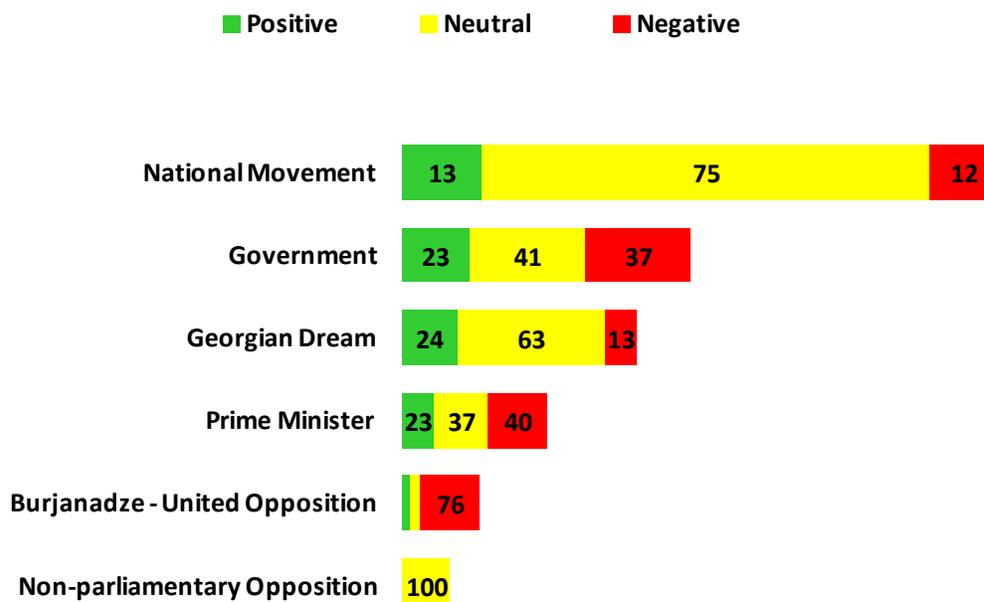
Positive tone indicators prevail while covering candidates for the Mayor’s position (refer to Diagram 15), which is caused by the fact that numerous articles have been dedicated to pre-election meetings.

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that, compared to the results of the monitoring carried out in previous years, the work style both in terms of following journalism ethics norms and objective

coverage of subjects has significantly improved on for.ge. The website journalists do not openly express their attitude towards certain politicians anymore.

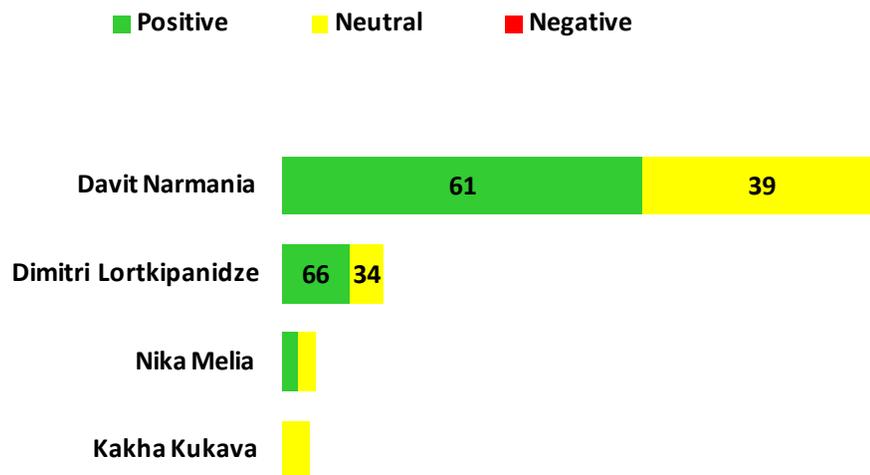
(Diagram 14, Coverage of subjects, for.ge)

Volume of the text allocated to the subjects on for.ge according to the tone (%)



(Diagram 15, Coverage of candidates for the Mayor's position, for.ge)

Volume of the text allocated to the mayoral candidates on for.ge according to the tone (%)



dfwatch.net

Within the monitoring period dfwatch.net has been covering ongoing events of the country 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 (33%), the Government (26%), the coalition Georgian Dream (20%) and the President (7%) have been covered most intensively. High indicators of positive or negative tone have not been registered on the website (refer to Diagram 16). Neutral tone dominates on dfwatch.net while covering subjects.

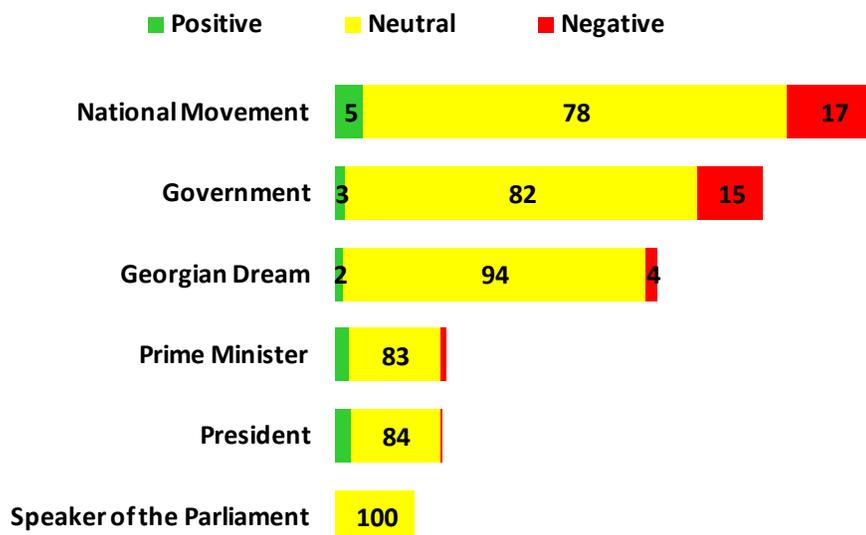
The activity of David Narmania has been covered most intensively among the candidates for the Mayor’s position. Pre-election activity of the candidates has been covered less intensively within the given period of monitoring, while most of the attention has been paid to activity of political parties and government agencies.

Within the first period of monitoring dfwatch.net has been actively covering the activity of the Parliament related to consideration of antidiscrimination law. Also results of various researches are being published on website on a frequent occasion (For instance, “Georgia on top of EU visa rejection list”, 22.04.2014; “Voter’s list shrinks ahead of local election in Georgia”, 22.04.2014).

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 at a high level.

(Diagram 16, Coverage of subjects, dfwatch.net)

Volume of the text allocated to the subjects on dfwatch.net according to the tone (%)



palitratv.ge

Within the monitoring period palitratv.ge has 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.

Among the monitoring subjects activities of the Government (32%), the coalition Georgian Dream (32%), the Prime Minister (13%) and the United National Movement (12%) have been covered most intensively. Percentage indicator of positive tone prevails while covering subjects (refer to Diagram 17), which is caused by the fact that in most of the cases palitratv.ge has been offering simply quotes of various politicians or government officials, where they describe their own achievements or promises.

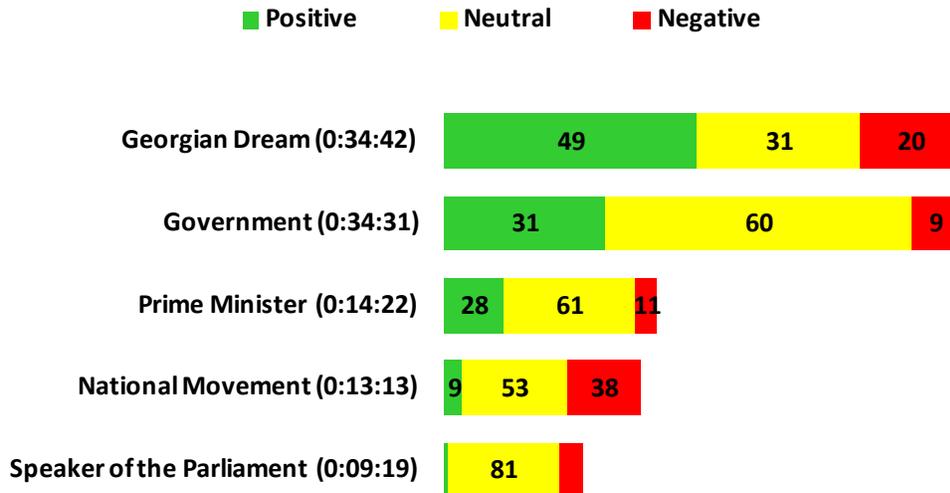
The website has not actively covered pre-election activity of candidates.

Within the monitoring period numerous different types of public opinion polls have been held on palitratv.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, “Is there a problem that the Georgian Dream has not named a woman among their 12 candidates for the Mayor’s position?”, 28.04.2014; “Do you agree with the Prime Minister that the campaign “It concerns you – they listen to all of us” is damaging the country?”, 1.05.2014) .

As a result of the monitoring, we may conclude that palitratv.ge has been covering political processes pretty objectively. Journalism standards and ethical norms are followed.

(Diagram 17, Coverage of subjects, palitratv.ge)

Time allocated to the subjects on palitravt.ge according to the tone (%)



Conclusion

Compared to the results of the election monitoring carried out in 2012 and 2013, positive changes in Georgian online media are being observed in terms of following journalism standards and ethical norms. Within the given period of monitoring there has been no rough violation of journalism ethics norms in either of the selected webpages. Presa.ge is particularly worth mentioning, since it radically changed its work style. The websites droni.ge and tabula.ge have improved their work from objective coverage standpoint.

Within the given period of monitoring the Georgian online media has objectively and impartially covered activities of candidates for the Mayor's position, as well as various political parties and government agencies. Neither of the websites contain particularly positive or negative attitude towards any political power.