



**Monitoring Regional Television Broadcasters
Presidential Election 2013**

Subagreement # S-13-238

Report for: October 21 - 27, 2013

Main findings of the fourth phase of monitoring:

- On the Election Day (October 27) most of the TV companies operated in an emergency mode, delivering information to the audience in a timely manner: the situation at the polling stations and ongoing events were provided impartial and balanced coverage;
- Reporting on the Central Election Commission (CEC) boosted up;
- The amount of airtime dedicated to presidential candidates decreased: solely their pre-election meetings were covered;
- Most of the TV companies further tended to devote considerable amount of airtime to reporting on the activities of local self-governance, reporting was essentially neutral in tone;
- Superficial coverage of events was still the main issue of concern on most of the TV companies.

Background

The report represents the results of the survey carried out by the Internews Georgia monitoring team within the period of October 21-27, 2013.

Media monitoring helps raise standard of professionalism and is conducive to the development of independent unbiased journalism.

The goal of our survey is to identify, through the monitoring of evening news outlets (19:00 - 24:00) and public-political programs aired on Georgian regional TV broadcasters, the proceeding of regional media coverage of pre-election campaign and key trends.

Analysis and Methodology

Monitored TV broadcasters include 12 regional TV companies *Channel 25 (Batumi)*, *Rioni (Kutaisi)*, *Kvemo Kartli TV-Radio Company (Rustavi)*, *Odishi (Zugdidi)*, *Tanamgzavri (Telavi)*, *Channel 9 (Akhaltsikhe)*, *Trialeti (Gori)*, *Guria (Ozurgeti)*, *Imervizia (Chiatura)*, *Gurjaani (Gurjaani)*, *Mega TV (Khoni)* and *9th Wave (Poti)*.

Monitoring was conducted on the regional broadcasters' main evening news programs, public-political talk shows and PSAs during so-called prime time when the number of viewers is at its peak.

Monitoring of News Programs

The technique applied in the project is based on quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative monitoring determines quantitative indicators that can be counted and analyzed. While qualitative monitoring is applied to evaluate the efficiency of media outlets' activities in relation to the indicators such as ethical or professional standards whose quantitative measurement is complex. In particular, the distortion of news, unbalanced coverage, bias or anything else that might affect quality news was focused on.

Quantitative data includes the running time (seconds) of the stories produced about our preselected subjects or making a mention of them. Time is counted when either a news reader or a journalist or any of the respondents of the story is speaking about the monitored subject. The time is being counted when the monitored subject is on the TV screen, either his/her photo, poster or any kind of visual material is shown on the screen (in case s/he is not spoken about).

The monitoring focuses whether the subject is speaking on his/her own or is being spoken about either by a journalist or a respondent. When a monitored subject is speaking (the voice is audible) time is being counted as direct reporting; When a monitored subject is spoken about by others, either by journalists or respondents time is being counted as indirect reporting.

Reporting tone is attributed to every monitored subject. To assess the reporting tone three categories are applied: positive, neutral and negative. Always when the time dedicated to a monitored subject is calculated the tone is evaluated as well, this is to say the running time, seconds/minutes, of the monitored subject being spoken about in a certain tone is calculated. When evaluating the tone both the content as well as context is focused on.

Based on qualitative data the efficiency of media activities in terms of adherence to ethical or professional standards is evaluated. The qualitative part embraces components such as balance, impartiality, accuracy (whether mistakes are in place in the titles, numbers or

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respondents' names), fact-based reporting, cases of ignoring news, timely coverage of events, journalist's vocabulary, subliminal political advertising and all those important aspects that are not subject to quantitative measurement. Manipulation through shots and music used in the news programs is also brought into focus.

Monitored subjects include: Parliamentary chairperson, independent MPs, President, government, Prime Minister, Central Election Commission, local authorities (without specification), Adjara government, United National Movement, Georgian Dream Coalition, Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia, Free Democrats (coalition), National Forum (coalition), Georgian Republican Party(coalition), Georgian Conservative Party (coalition), People's Party, Georgia's Way, Free Georgia, New Rights, Democratic Movement for United Georgia, National-Democratic Party; Labor Party, Georgian Democratic Party; Georgian Troupe; Christian-Democratic Movement, European Democrats, as well each and every presidential candidate separately.

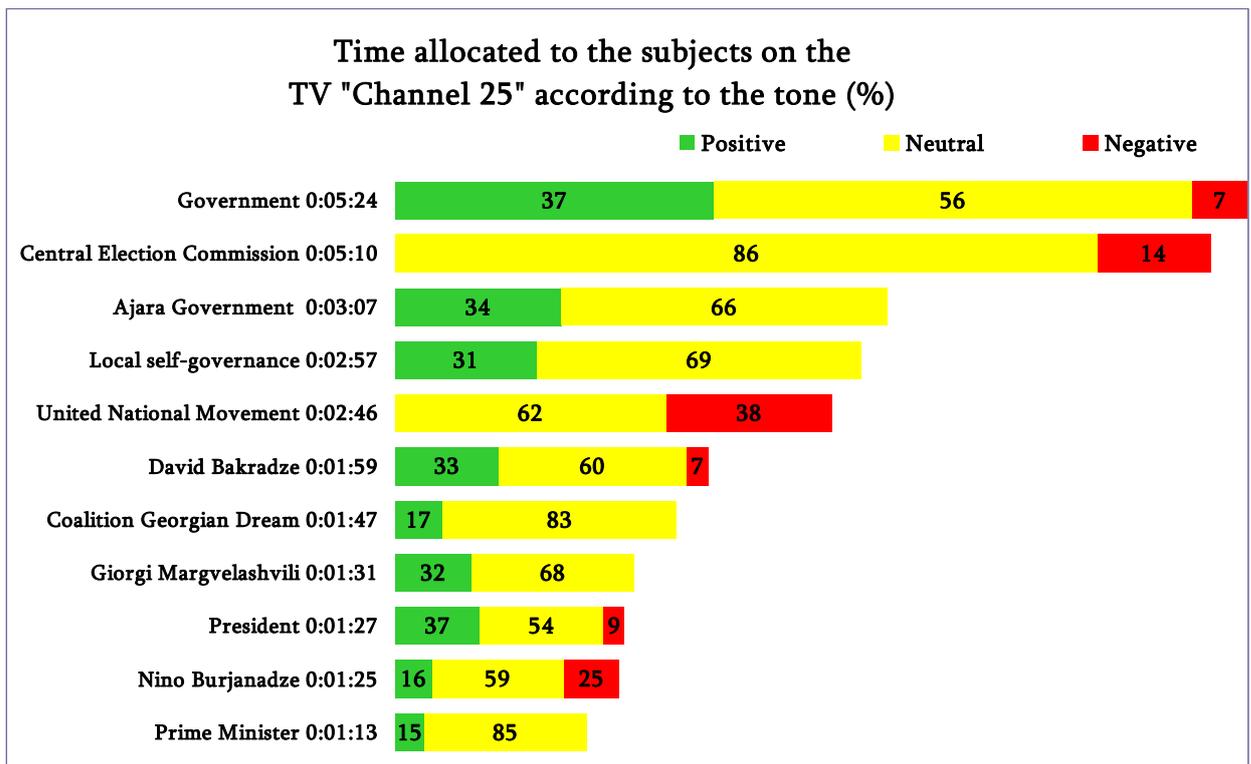
News programs monitoring results per channel:

Channel 25 (Batumi) – Within reporting period the news program Matsne was on air on a daily basis. The October 27 news outlet covered the events related to the development of the election process. The channel dedicated the total of 29 minutes to the monitored subjects, 29 percent of which falls on government, 18 percent on CEC, 11 percent on government. Out of the presidential candidates more than one minute was devoted to Davit Bakradze (United National Movement), Giorgi Margvelashvili (Georgian Dream coalition) and Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) per each.

Newscast covered the developments within the region as well as nationwide. Reporting on Adjara AR government and local authorities was positive and neutral in tone.

The share of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal. All three reporting tones were identified, neutral tone though prevailed. Only neutral and negative tones were attached to reporting on CEC and UNM.

The stories aired in the newscast were found balanced. Journalists were trying to report in a timely and unbiased manner. All of the interested parties were offered a possibility to express their viewpoints.



Rioni (Kutaisi) – Within reporting period the news program dedicated one hour and 37 minutes to the monitored subjects. News program Dghis Ambebi (News of the Day) aired a TV story about the Democratic Movement – United Georgia nominee Nino Burjanadze’s pre-election meeting held in Kutaisi. Another TV story was produced about Giorgi Targamadze: presidential candidate of the Christian-Democratic Movement met with the representatives of one of the Kutaisi-based companies facing certain problems with a bank.

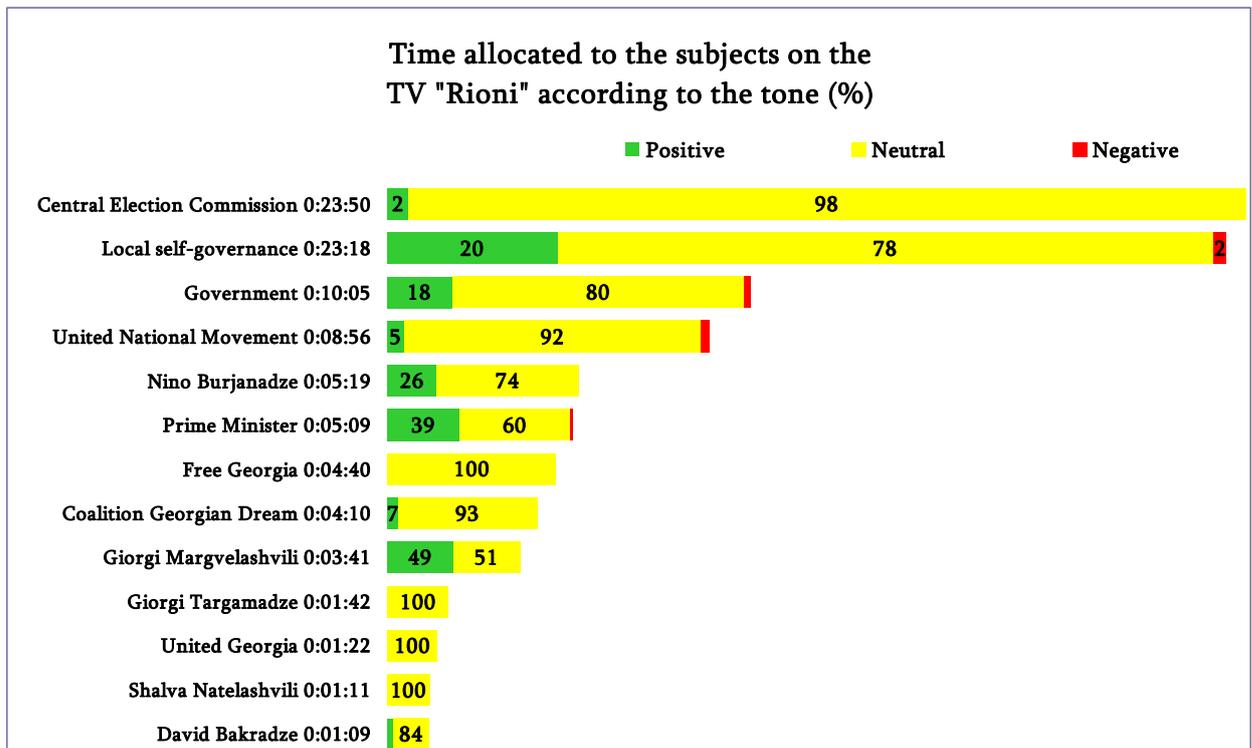
During reporting period news were produced on a daily basis. The news program provided a lengthy coverage of precincts’ readiness for the polls to be held. The TV stories included comments made by CEC representatives. On the E-day, October 27, the news production team worked under emergency mode. All of the TV stories aired in the newscast covered elections. Accordingly the overwhelming amount of airtime (24 min.) was devoted to CEC. In the news program 23 minutes were dedicated to the activities carried out by the local authorities and 10 minutes to the government.

Reporting on monitored subjects was mostly direct: all of them provided equal time to express their opinions. Reporting was essentially neutral in tone. Negative tone was not

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identified to any of the monitored subjects. In terms of positive tone Prime Minister (39 percent) and Giorgi Margvelashvili (50 percent) of the Georgian Dream Coalition ranked high.

News programs did not lack balance. Journalists tended to provide unbiased coverage, abstaining to express their subjective opinions.



Kvemo-Kartli TV-Radio Company (Rustavi) – During monitoring hours in the fourth reporting period the news program Kronika was on air on a daily basis. The news program dedicated one hour and 21 minutes to the monitored subjects. In terms of the length of the time dedicated the local authorities rank first with 20 min. and 7 sec. followed by GD coalition (19 min. and 48 sec.) and government (10 min. 39 sec.).

Three presidential candidates Giorgi Margvelashvili (GD coalition), Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) and Davit Bakradze (UNM) were devoted the overwhelming majority of airtime.

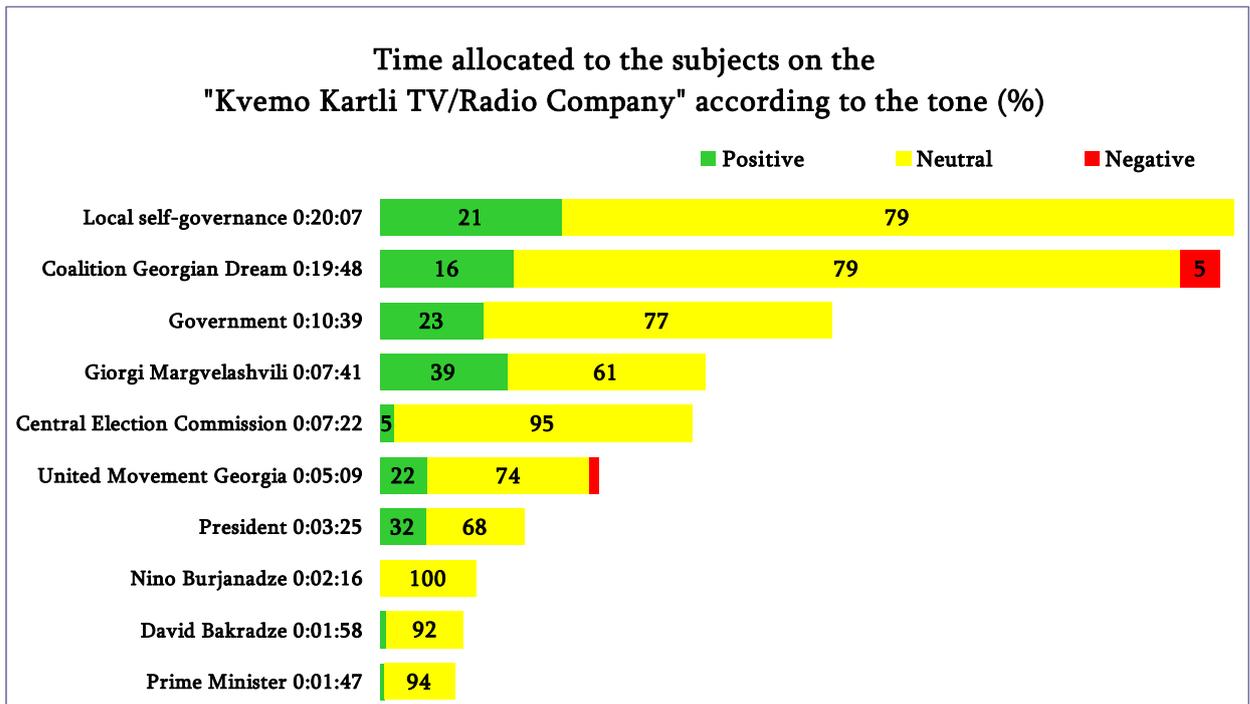
Reporting on monitored subjects was essentially direct: interviews with them were not a few in the news programs. Neutral reporting tone was overwhelming. Negative tone was identified in regard to GD coalition (5 percent) and UNM (4 percent) which was due to negative comments made in regard to one another.

Leading TV stories in the news programs touched upon the activities carried out by local authorities, government and President. Reporting on political parties and presidential candidates was offered in the middle of the program or at the end. Some of the TV stories lacked balance. In the October 26 newscast, for instance, included the story about the Bishop blessing Rustavi town during religious holiday. In the TV story the comments were made by Rustavi mayor and the representatives of the public hall supporting GD's presidential nominee Giorgi Margvelashvili. No other political subjects were covered in the story. The news programs produced by the channel devoted a fair amount of time to the activities carried out by the public hall supporting GD's presidential candidate.

In the October 24 news outlet the statement containing hate speech was identified. The TV story about President's meeting with the Bolnisi and Dmanisi population touched upon President Saakashvili's statement: "No one should ever get bandits back to the streets, no one should ever seize our property, no one should ever call you **Tatars**, the way it used to be! Since we have created a new Georgia." Reading the statement the newsreader said: "The leader of the country met with the Bolnisi and Dmanisi population. No one should ever call you **Tatars** – said the President addressing the Azerbaijani-dwellers residing in the villages in Bolnisi and Dmanisi." Even though the President's statement was aimed at the elimination of hate speech the channel should not have aired the journalist rephrasing President.

TV stories always offered viewers shots and comments to support the facts televised.

On the E-day, October 27 at 23:30 the channel televised a special outlet to inform audience of the outcome of exit polls and preliminary data provided by CEC.



Odishi (Zugdidi) – Within reporting week TV company did not stand out with the scale of reporting on monitored subjects. TV stories in the news programs touched upon political events and social issues. Monitored subjects were dedicated airtime in Infolent, the program featuring for about 15 seconds the opinions expressed by policy makers and public figures. Mostly together with the texted citation and the author’s photo was put up.

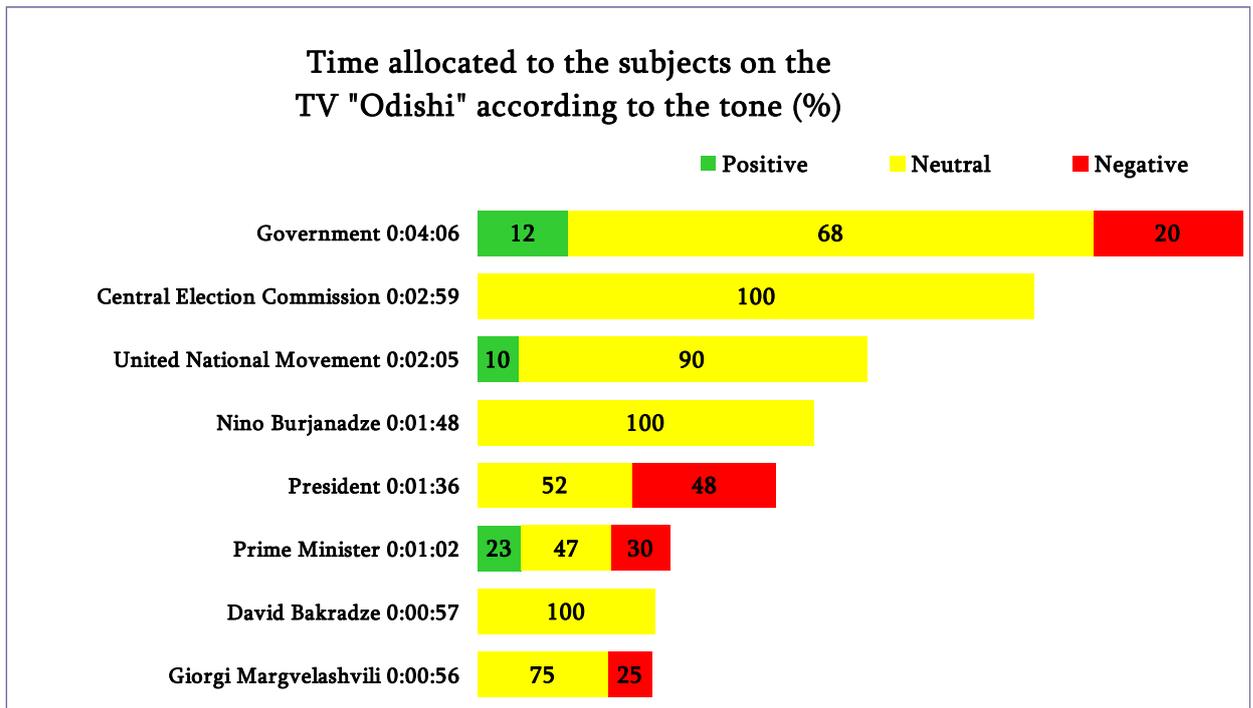
News programs dedicated the total of 18 minutes to the monitored subjects. Government leads the chart with 4 min. followed by CEC with 3 min. Two minutes were devoted to UNM, 50 percent of which falls on direct reporting that has been the prerequisite of negative tone (20 percent) to the government. Due to reporting on protest rallies against President Saakashvili reporting tone was 48 percent negative.

Out of the presidential candidates Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) was the only one having enjoyed over one minute reporting: the activities carried out by her election HQ was covered.

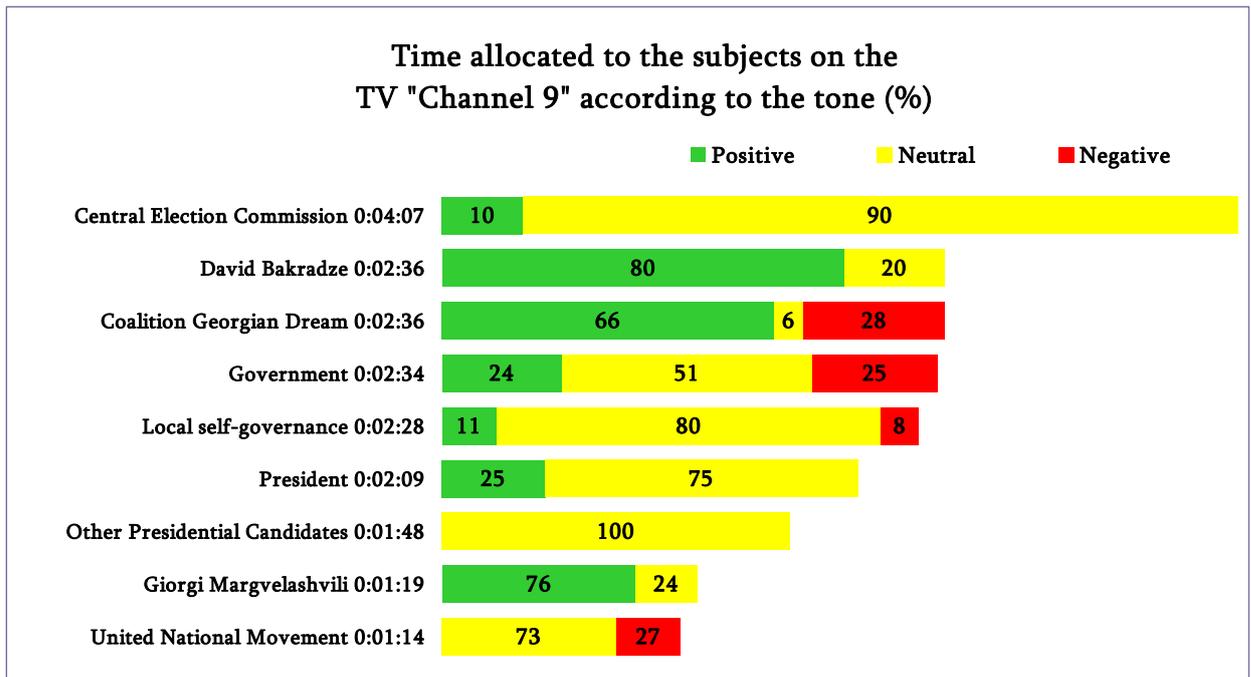
The October 26 news outlet produced a TV story about the activities implemented by district election commission and the situation at the polling stations.

The stories in the news programs were limited to brief reporting on ongoing events. Journalists tended to cover events in an unbiased manner, just delivering information about

certain developments, posing not too many questions. Respondents were offered every possibility to express their opinions.



Channel 9 (Akhaltsikhe) – Within reporting week Channel 9 aggressively covered political developments. News programs were televised on a daily basis. On the Election Day, October 27 a special news outlet was offered to the viewers. In total the monitored subjects were dedicated 23 minutes, 18 percent of which falls on CEC. Much less time was devoted to the rest of the monitored subjects. The airtime dedicated to them was more or less equally distributed. A bit more than two minutes were dedicated to UN's presidential candidate Davit Bakradze. A bit more than one minute was devoted to GD's presidential nominee Giorgi Margvelashvili. News programs also focused on the rest of the presidential candidates including Nestan Kirtadze, Shalva Natelashvili, Nino Burjanadze, Sergo Javakhidze, Levan Chachua, Giorgi Targamadze. The time dedicated to them though was less than one minute. Reporting on the monitored subjects was mainly direct. All three tones were identified, neutral and positive tones mostly prevailed though. TV stories in the news program maintained balance, journalists were trying to apportion equal airtime to any party. Events were provided timely and fact-based coverage.



Tanamgzavri (Telavi) – Within reporting week TV company Tanamgzavri aired news on a daily basis in the evening time at 19:30 and re-aired at 21:00.

During last week the channel covered more monitored subjects than previously. The time dedicated to the monitored subjects tops 2 hours and 22 min. Government (33 min.) and CEC (21 min.) lead the chart in terms of the length of coverage. The time dedicated to them essentially falls on direct reporting: government – 71 percent and CEC – 60 percent. Almost in regard to every monitored subject direct reporting prevailed over indirect. Solely in regard to reporting on President 72 percent of reporting was indirect of the total time dedicated (6 min.). When reporting on the monitored subjects neutral tone considerably prevailed over positive or negative tones. The reporting period also includes Election Day (October 27), accordingly news program devoted a fair amount of time to the developments at the polling stations.

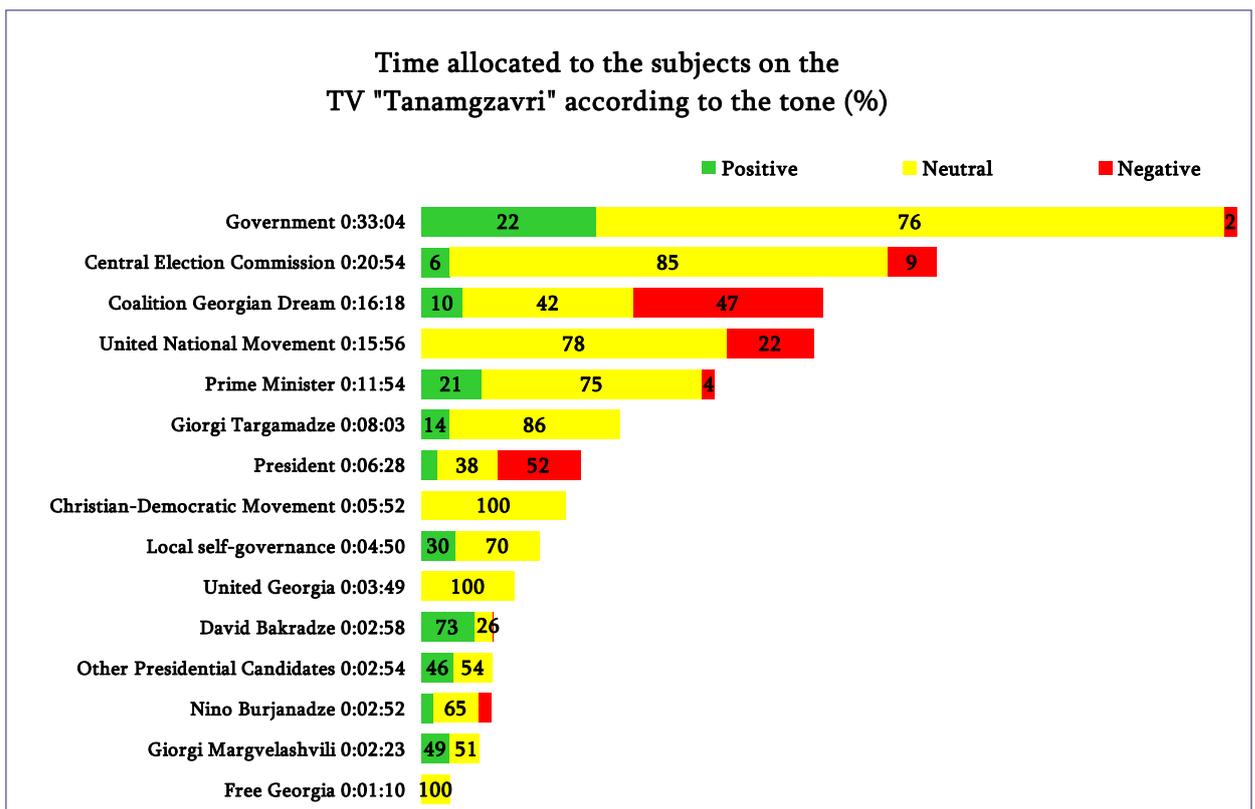
News programs reported on political parties and their presidential nominees in utmost impartial manner. GD coalition and UNM were provided equal coverage. Each was devoted 11 percent of total time and they were both offered a possibility to directly express their stance (42 percent and 65 percent). 47 percent of negative tone was due to the opponents' negative statements made in direct reporting.

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Giorgi Targamadze of the Christian-Democratic Movement enjoyed the most lengthy coverage (8 min.). UNM and Democratic Movement – United Georgia was each devoted 3 minutes. As regards the GD’s candidate Giorgi Margvelashvili the latter was offered 2-minute coverage.

On the Election Day news reporters worked in an emergency mode. Two news programs fell under monitoring thoroughly covering the E-Day developments in the region as well as nationwide: describing the situation at precincts, comments made by election commission members.

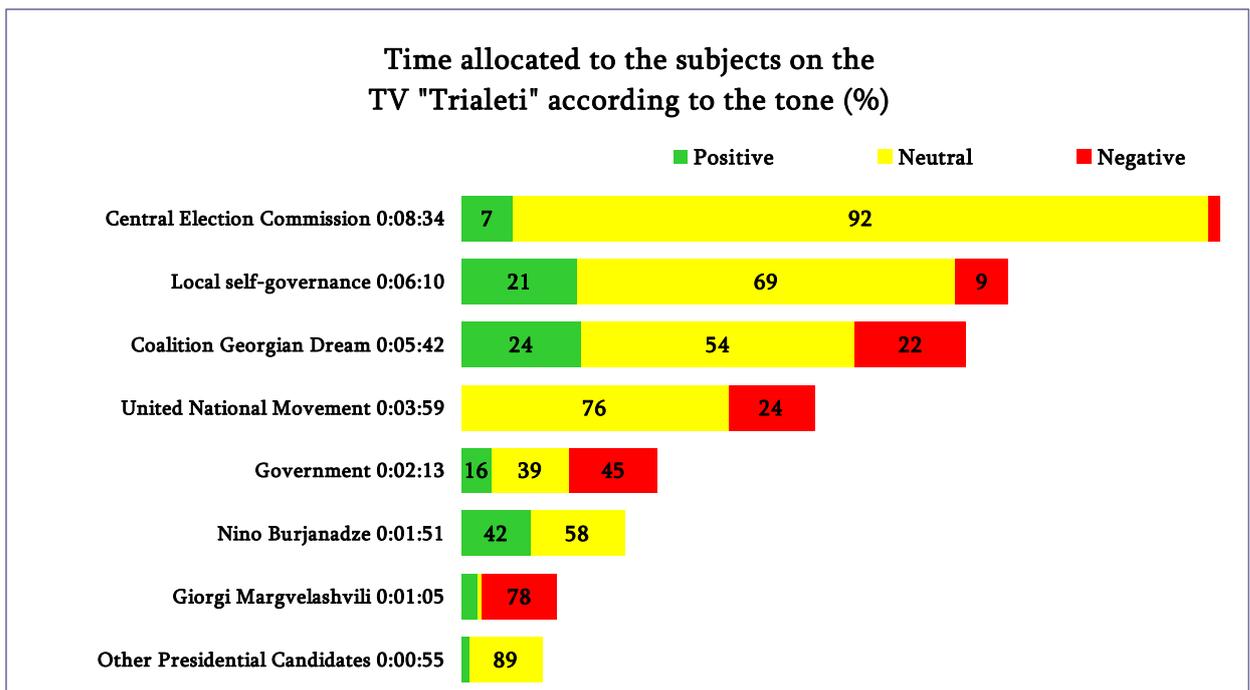
The newscasts produced within the period of October 21-27 journalists tended to pose critical questions to the government, conducting monitoring of the activities carried out by local authorities; conducted street opinion poll surveys about presidential candidates’ election programs and election environment.



Trialeti (Gori) – Within reporting week the TV company aired brief news programs on a daily basis. Reporting on monitored subjects amounts to 32 minutes in total, 27 percent of which falls on CEC followed by local authorities with 19 percent. Rather critical stories were

produced about government activities having thus preconditioned 45 percent negative reporting tone.

High index (78 percent) of negative reporting on GD's presidential candidate Giorgi Margvelashvili was due to negative tone applied by his opponents reporting direct. On the Election Day October 27 a special news outlet was produced thoroughly covering the developments at polling stations. Journalists delivered news without providing their comments and opinions. TV stories were characterized by brief and impartial reporting.



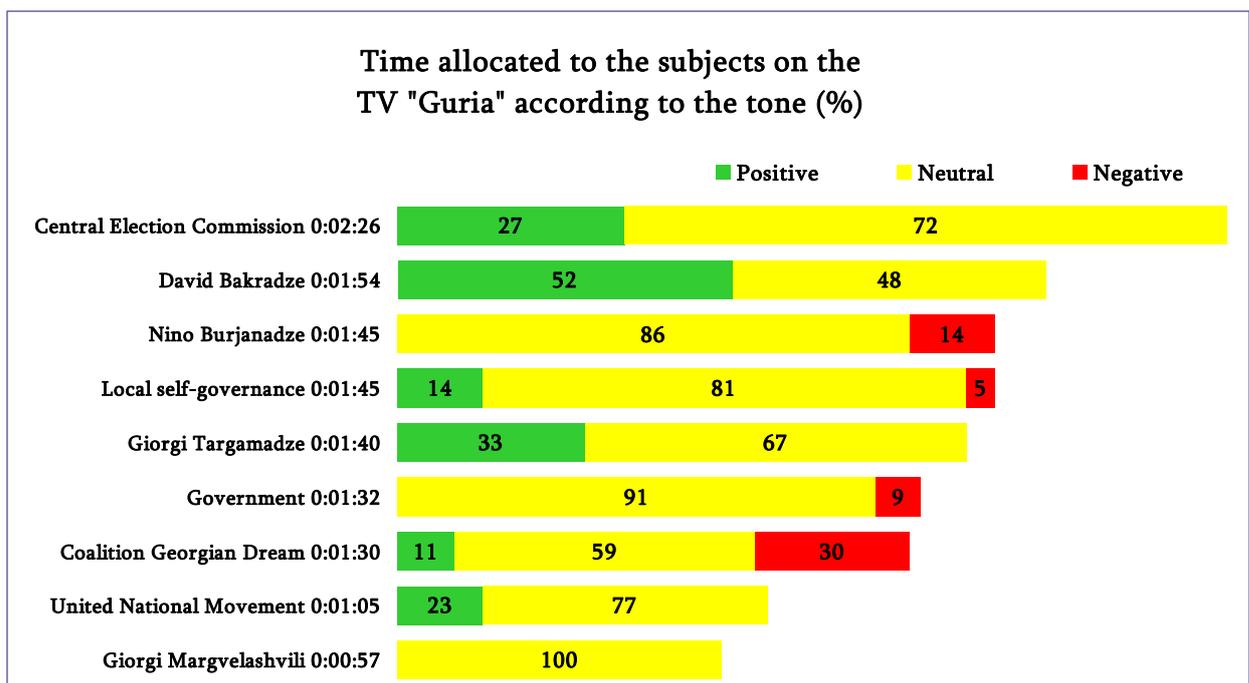
Guria (Ozurgeti) – In the fourth reporting period, during monitoring hours, the channel aired news program Fact on a daily basis. In the news outlets the monitored subjects were dedicated 15 minutes in total. 16 percent of the given time was de-voted to reporting on CEC.

In the newscasts over one minute was devoted to three presidential candidates Davit Bakradze (UNM), Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) and Giorgi Targamadze (CDM). Reporting was essentially indirect. The reporting was mostly neutral in tone, negative and positive tones though were identified too. Reporting on the presidential candidate Nino Burjanadze and government was neutral and negative in tone. Negative tone was attached to reporting on the GD coalition. Negative tone attached to reporting on the

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monitored subjects was essentially due to opponents' comments about one another (in case of local authorities comments made by citizens), not journalists' subjective or critical approach. The news programs produced within reporting period covered presidential candidates' meetings with the population. Critical stories were just few, the comments made by the citizens supporting presidential candidates were televised. Journalists reported in a superficial and impartial manner. No lack of balance was identified.

In some of the TV stories it was sometimes hard to identify respondents since subtitles were missing.



Imervizia (Chiatura) – During reporting week TV company produced news on a daily basis (except for Saturday). In the evening TV air from Monday to Saturday the TV company televised newscast at 19:00, being re-aired at 21:20.

The monitored subjects were devoted the total of 2 hours and 3 minutes. 58 percent of the given time falls on reporting on GD coalition. 16 minutes were enjoyed by CEC, followed by presidential candidate Nino Burjanadze with 10 minutes: her pre-election campaign in Chiatura and Sachkhere was covered.

GD coalition representatives' pre-election meetings with the population were also covered. In the second part of the October 25 news outlet the presenter had the GD member Malkhaz

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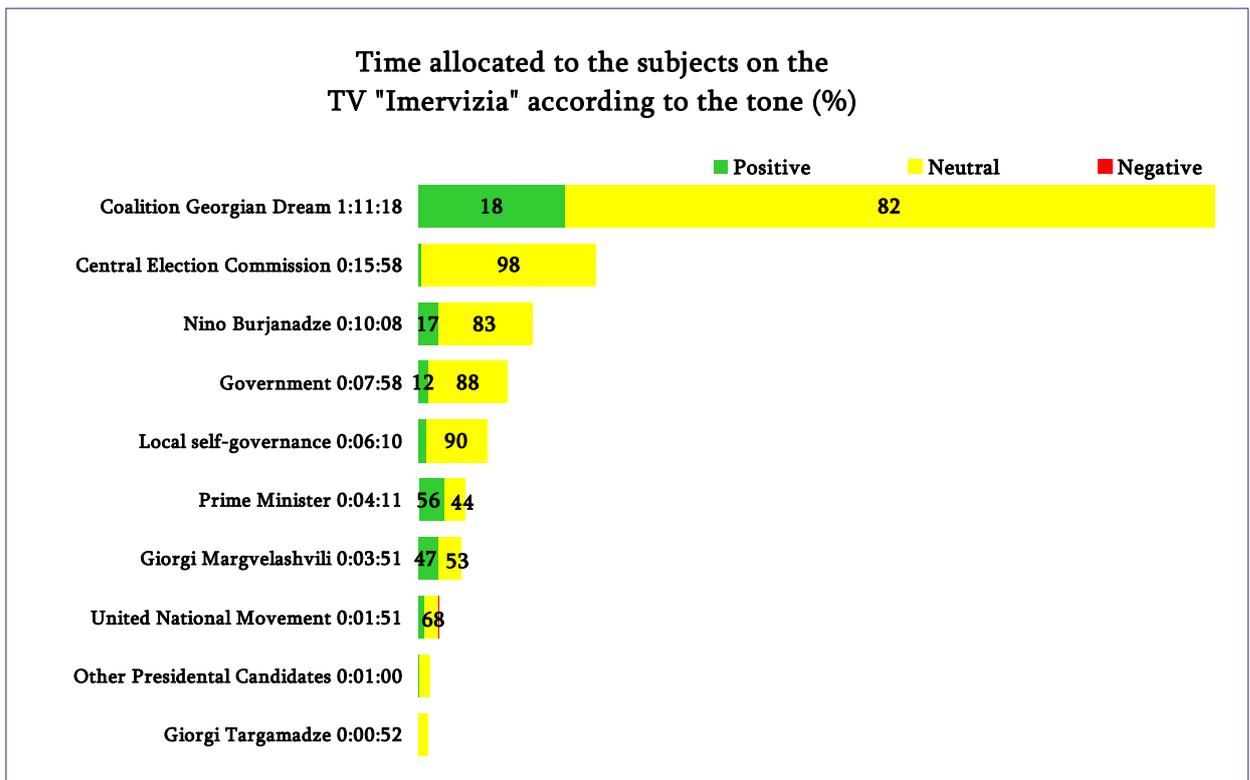
Tsereteli, Chiatura majoritarian MP invited to the studio. Due to this interview there was a rise in the time devoted to the coalition.

Reporting was essentially direct. In Prime Minister's case though indirect reporting (88 percent) considerably prevailed over direct reporting (4-min. dedicated in total). In regard to all of the monitored subjects neutral and positive tones were identified.

The news programs produced within reporting week aired TV stories about developments in the precincts, journalist tried to figure out whether all of the issues had been tackled to hold presidential elections smoothly.

The October 27 news outlet thoroughly covered the proceeding of the election in Chiatura and Sachkhere as well as nationwide.

Last week's news programs, in addition to election-related topics, covered social issues, activities carried out by local authorities and other events. TV stories did not lack balance. No bias was identified in regard to the events covered.



Gurjaani (Gurjaani) – During monitoring hours within reporting period news program Dghes (Today) was aired. The monitored subjects were dedicated the total of 36 minutes and 42 seconds.

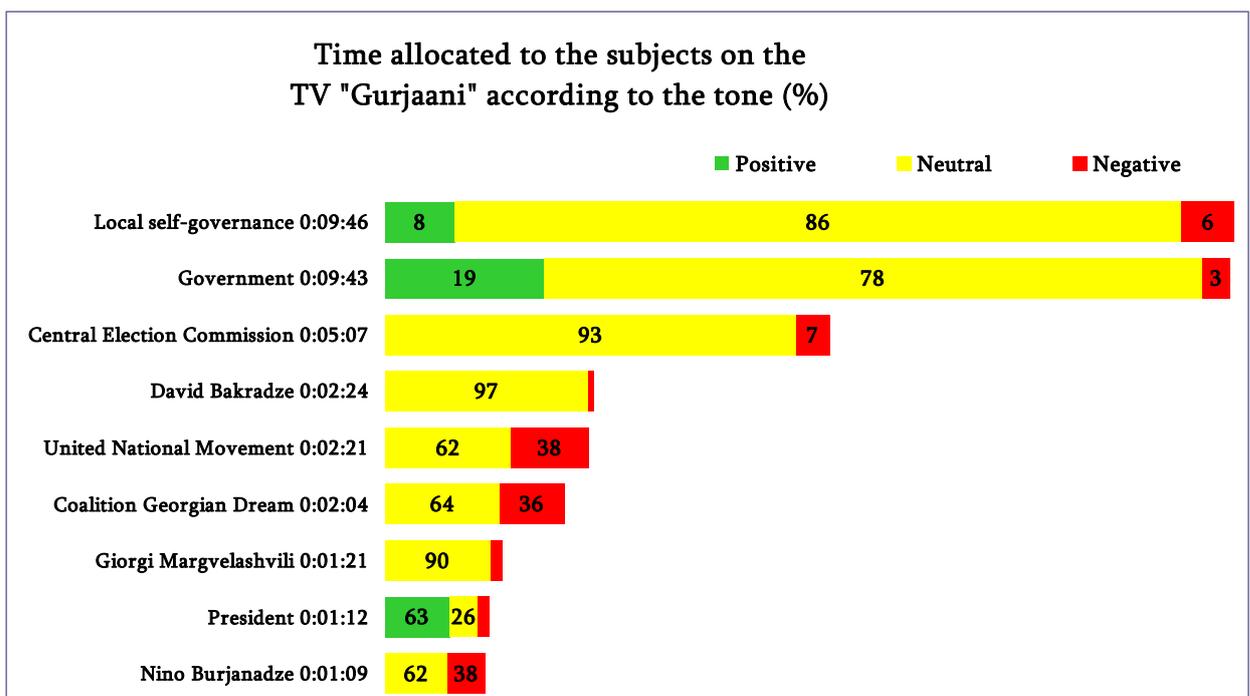
Local authorities and government was each devoted 10 minutes. CEC was found as the third most covered monitored subject (5 min. 7 sec.). Almost equal amount of airtime was dedicated to UNM and GD coalition.

In the news programs over one minute was dedicated to three presidential candidates including Davit Bakradze (UNM), Giorgi Margvelashvili (GD coalition) and Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia).

Local authorities and government were mostly covered directly, while presidential candidates and parties were covered indirectly. Neutral reporting tone greatly prevailed over positive and negative. Negative tone was attached to every subject having enjoyed over 50 seconds.

On the E-day, October 27 the channel aired a lengthy news program fully dedicated to presidential elections, violations and results of exit polls.

No lack of balance was identified. Journalists provided impartial coverage of events. Facts and comments substantiating topics of discussion were provided in the TV stories.

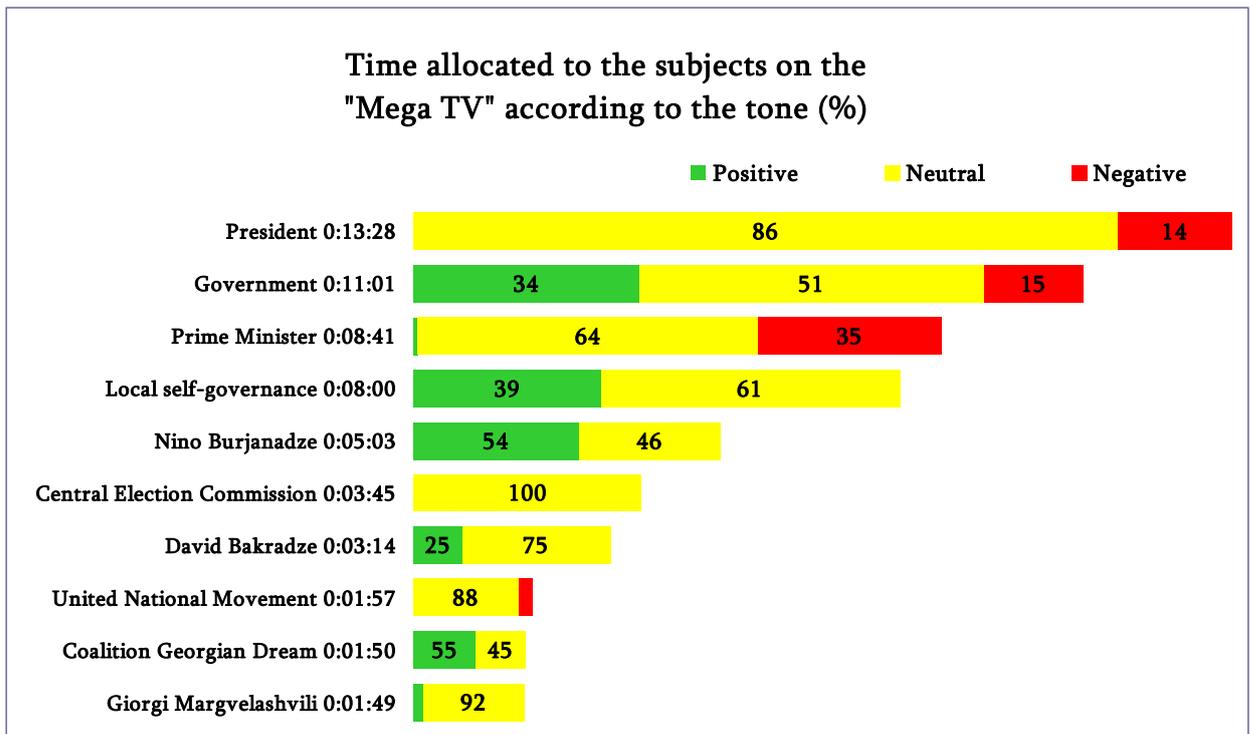


Mega TV (Khoni) – Within reporting week the monitored subjects were dedicated one hour. 23 percent of the given time falls on reporting on President, 18 – government, 15 percent – Prime Minister, and 13 percent - local authorities.

Out of the presidential candidates Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) enjoyed 8-minute reporting, followed by Davit Bakradze (UNM) and GD coalition with 3 and 2 minutes respectively.

For direct reporting the monitored subjects were offered more time: lengthy interviews came about in the TV stories, having ultimately entailed negative tone identified in regard to subjects.

Journalists refrained from making subjective evaluations. They tended to cover events in an impartial and superficial manner.



9th Wave (Poti) – Within reporting period the 9th Wave-produced news program Cursor was on air on a daily basis (except for Saturday). Along with election-related topics TV stories were produced about the problems the locals and IDPs face. The activities carried out by local authorities were covered as well as sports and cultural events taking place in the city. The total of 34 minutes were dedicated to the monitored subjects in the newscasts produced by the channel. Pre-election campaigns of two presidential candidates Teimuraz Mzhavia

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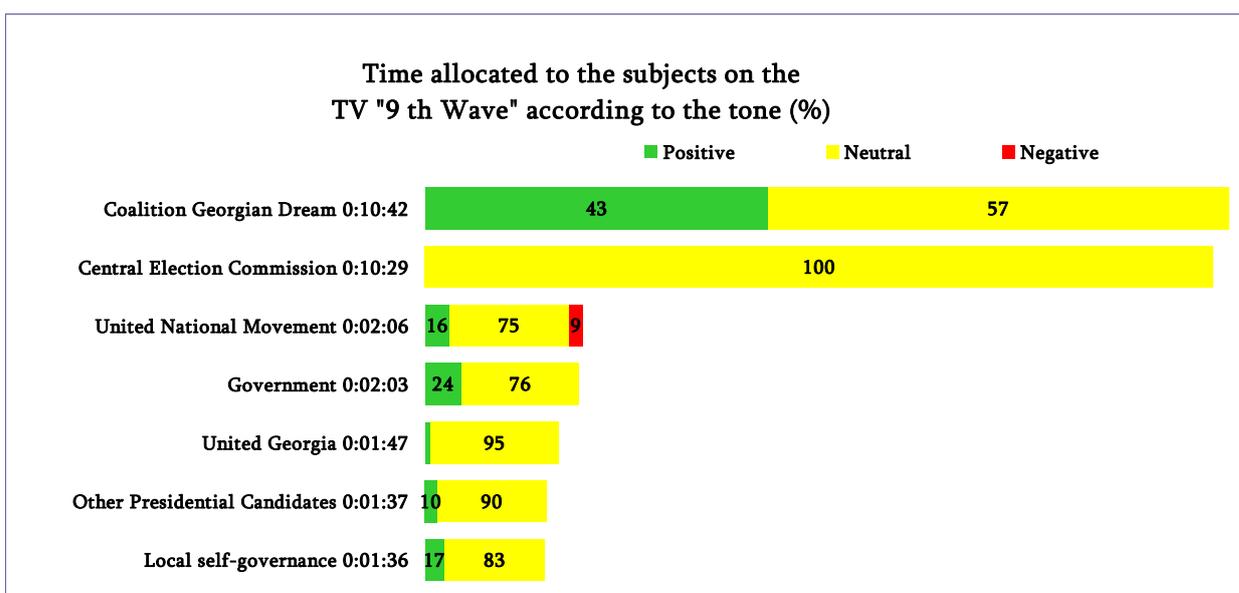
(Christian-Democratic People's Party) and Shalva Natelashvili (Labor Party) were covered, less than one minute in length though.

Less than one minute was devoted to Giorgi Margvelashvili (GD coalition), Davit Bakradze (UNM), and Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) each.

Out of the monitored subjects 31 percent of the total time falls on GD coalition and CEC each. Some TV stories were produced about pre-election campaign conducted by the coalition.

When reporting, journalists refrained from providing their own stance. TV stories did not lack balance. All of the parties were offered equal share of airtime, including direct speeches. Reporting was mostly neutral in tone.

On the Election Day, October 27, the news production team worked in an emergency mode. 9th Wave actively covered election-related processes ongoing in Poti.



Monitoring of Public-Political Programs and Talk Shows

The monitoring of this type of programs implies only qualitative component. Solely journalists are subject to monitoring. Their behavior is evaluated based various criteria: their role and participation in the program, the way the lead the process, whether they are just moderators or are trying to demonstrate their stance, the extent of equality of conditions offered to guests, the way they approach guests and how hard they try to obtain in-depth

information, how well they let guests express their opinions, when do the guest get interrupted. Monitoring also focuses on the use of offensive or discriminating expressions and statements by journalists and their response to the use of hate speech by guests.

Results of Monitoring per Channel:

Channel 25 (Batumi) – Within reporting period the TV company aired **talk show Dialogue** on weekdays. Approximately one-hour program was hosted by Jaba Ananidze. The topics of the past weeks included:

- Election program of presidential candidate Shalva Natelashvili, Labor Party (head of Shalva Natelashvili's election HQ in Adjara was the selected guest to the studio);
- The fate of piece of land at Gonio fortress;
- Foundation of a new civil movement Batumelebi;
- Government's electoral activities (MP Murman Dumbadze was the selected guest to the studio).

Based on the format of the program the airtime was dedicated to a single party. The host though was very well aware of the topic of discussion, posing interesting and critical questions to the guests. He was always trying to deliver in-depth and well-grounded information to the viewers.

The programs were of interactive nature: viewers had a possibility to call in, express his/her viewpoints and pose questions to the guest.

At times discussions held between the host and the guests heated up. The journalist though was trying his best to remain fair and unbiased.

On October 25 the channel aired **talk show Answer People**. 1,5-hour program was hosted by journalist Jaba Ananidze. The guests to the studio including UNM and GD representatives, and political scientist discussed voter turnout issue. The program also aired TV stories produced about the topic.

The host of the program offered equal airtime to all three guests.

Rioni (Kutaisi) – Within one-week reporting period TV company aired **talk show Dialogue**. The topic of the program was Sochi Olympics: whether Georgian sportsmen should participate in the Sochi Olympics.

To discuss the topic journalist Nana Robakidze had veteran and young sportsmen invited to the studio. The selected guests were not subject to monitoring. The journalist, in the one-hour program, was trying to discuss the importance of participation/non-participation in Sochi Olympics; All of the guests in the studio said Georgian sportsmen are to take part in the Olympic games. The host repeatedly pointed out that some of the Georgian citizens have dissenting opinions over the issue.

Within reporting period TV company Rioni aired public-political talk show Tema (Topic) twice. The program had two different hosts. On October 22 talk show Tema was dedicated to **Choice 2013** produced in partnership with the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters in the framework of media sector partnership project made possible with the support of IREX G-MEDIA program.

Presidential candidate Sergo Javakhidze of the For Fair Georgia movement was the selected guest to the studio. Presidential candidate Nino Burjanadze was to be present too but, according to the host of the TV program, she was to urgently travel to Tbilisi therefore the leader of Democratic Movement – United Georgia addressed the Rioni TV audience through a call in the fourth block of the program.

At the beginning of the program journalist Nana Robakidze said all of the qualified election subjects had been invited to the talk show, they though did not show up. The topic of the talk show was presidential candidates' election programs, priorities and future plans.

The program centered on the problems socially vulnerable population faces. The guest laid out the way he is going to decrease the number of socially vulnerable persons, tackle their problems and find solution to unemployment.

NGO sector representatives and journalists were also taking part in the discussion. The program was made up of four parts: the first part was dedicated to the presentation of election program; the second one discussed a certain topic and a story was televised; in the third part the representatives of local media outlets and NGOs got involved and in the fourth

part TV viewers called in. Guests were rather active. The questions they posed to the presidential candidate were not limited to social issues. The program aired a TV story covering the problem socially vulnerable population faces in Imereti region. The journalist was curious to know how the guest would tackle citizens' problems if elected as President. The host of the program was trying to obtain concrete questions to the questions. The host strictly adhered to the rules set within the format of the program, shooting questions in an unbiased and ethical manner.

The October 25 public-political **talk show Tema** was hosted by journalist Khatia Babunashvili. The topic of the talk show was: messages and implications within pre-election campaign. What are presidential candidates offering population? What is hidden behind their key messages? Who is telling the truth? The program also discussed the prospective of victory of the candidates.

The host had Tariel Putkaradze, Professor at Akaki Tsereteli State University, Head of the Center for Georgian Studies at St. Andrew the First-Called Georgian University invited to the studio.

The host was posing comprehensive and interesting questions about the topic. In the course of the program the journalist kept expressing his opinions and tried to make a guest thoroughly speak about the slogan of each presidential candidate. Pre-election programs of presidential candidates were discussed too.

Within reporting week TV company Rioni aired Badri Kapetivadze **public TV club Open Civil Society**. The topic of the program was upcoming presidential election.

To discuss election-related topics the host had Goga Kldiashvili, deputy chairman of #59 district election commission invited to the studio. The program discussed elections, election procedures, precincts' readiness for upcoming elections. DEC chairman discussed the difference between parliamentary and presidential elections.

Critical statement against Prime Minister made by a citizen calling in was responded by the guest in the studio, having expressed his positive approach to the Premier. It is noteworthy

that the host of the program too expressed his sympathy to PM Bidzina Ivanishvili. The program also discussed the activities carried out by local authorities.

On October 27 Rioni aired **program Your Parliament** made possible with the support of USAID within the framework of the Parliament's Communication Center project implemented by NDI and Internews-Georgia. The host had Tkibuli majoritarian MP Eliso Chapidze of GD coalition invited to the studio. The journalist posed her questions readied by the journalists working for TV company Argo. The topic of 6-minute program was the amendments to be made to Law of Georgia on Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection of and Support to Its Victims. According to the journalist the second guest to the studio was to be the representative of parliamentary minority but UNM members refused to take part in the program.

Kvemo-Kartli TV-Radio Company (Rustavi) – On October 22 and 25 TV company aired **talk show Your Time** hosted by journalist Tato Gogoladze.

The talk show stood out with the diversity of coverage of presidential candidates. Presidential candidate Teimuraz Mzhavia (Christian-Democratic People's Party) was the selected guest to the October 22 talk show. On October 25 talk show was devoted to presidential candidate Nino Chanishvili of the initiative team Future is Ours.

The journalist appeared favorable to the respondents. No debates were held, no critical questions posed. According to the format of the program at the beginning respondent had a possibility to address voters. Later on the journalist was posing questions to the guest about program priorities and visions, showed little concern into details though.

As for the rest of monitored subjects government, GD coalition and UNM were indirectly covered. To them respondents demonstrated neutral or negative tone.

Odishi (Zugdidi) – Within reporting week on October 25 TV company Odishi dedicated its evening airtime to **talk show Choice 2013** hosted by Nana Kobalia. The talk show is produced in partnership with the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters in the

framework of media sector partnership project made possible with the support of IREX G-MEDIA program.

The talk show thoroughly discussed presidential candidates' election programs. The spokespersons of Zugdidi-based election HQs were taking part in the program, in particular the representatives of GD coalition, UNM, CDM, Democratic Movement - United Georgia and Party of People.

In the second part of the program presidential candidate Nestan Kirtadze of the initiative team called in, she though did not take part in the debates held in the studio.

In the course of the talk show a TV story and opinion poll survey in the street was televised. Moreover, citizens enjoyed a possibility to express their viewpoints through calls or pose questions to the guests.

Selected guests were granted 3 minutes each to present their election programs. The host of the program apportioned additional time to let them discuss certain projects related to the region. Journalist requested guests to provide concrete answers to the questions.

When discussing his/her presidential candidate's election program the spokespersons of some parties made critical comments towards opponents, the use of hate speech or discriminating statements were not in place though. The host was utmost neutral, trying to balance the situation as well as viewpoints. The TV story televised in the second part of the program touched upon suspended infrastructural project in Anaklia and the problems the population faces. In the same part of the talk show citizens were granted a possibility to express their opinions and pose questions to the guests. The host of the program called on everyone to be ethical.

At the very end of the program guests stood a chance to deliver summarizing speeches, each was allocated one minute for that purpose.

In the past week **Your Parliament** made possible with the support of USAID within the framework of the Parliament's Communication Center project implemented by NDI and Internews-Georgia fell under monitoring.

The October 27 outlet touched upon the increase of the manganese fee. The new draft law provides for some amendments to be made to the law on the fee for the use of natural

resources. Malkhaz Tsereteli, co-initiator of the draft bill, Chiatura majoritarian MP of the Georgian Dream Republicans faction discussed the topic in the course of the program. The parliamentary minority representatives, the host clarified, refused to take part in the program. The guest responded to the questions prepared by the journalists working for Chiatura-based TV company Imervizia.

The program was conducted in the Q&A format. No critical questions were posed.

On October 26 TV company Odishi aired another **talk show Discussions on Women's Issues** about the problems and needs of the women residing in the borderline villages. The guests of the program were not subject to monitoring.

Channel 9 (Akhaltzikhe) – On October 24 TV company aired **talk show Dialogue Together with Rusudan Gvaramadze**. The program about upcoming presidential election was divided into two. At the very beginning of the talk show the host of the program pointed out that the representatives of all political parties were invited to the studio but solely the spokesperson of UNM, GD coalition and Democratic Movement - United Georgia accepted the invitation. In the first part of the program the guests reviewed pre-election environment in the region. The guests selected to the second block of the program was presidential candidate Nestan Kirtadze of the initiative team. Together with the guests some representatives of CDM, Democratic Movement – United Georgia, GD coalition and UNM present in the studio were actively involved in the discussion.

The host of the program appeared favorable to the guests, trying to allocate equal airtime to the participants, however the representatives of Democratic Movement – United Georgia enjoyed better possibility to speak.

The journalist let the guests demonstrate their stance in full. The host was posing critical questions in an unbiased manner.

Tanamgzavri (Telavi) – On October 25 at 20:30 **talk show Dialogues**, hosted by Nato Megutnishvili, was on air. The guests to the studio included the spokesperson of Telavi-based election HQs of some presidential candidates nominated by GD coalition, Democratic

Movement – United Georgia, CDM. Despite invitation the UNM representative did not take part in the talk show.

No heightened debates were held, to the host's questions the guests responded in turn. All of the selected guest were offered equal time. In regard to the issues raised their stance was provided in a balanced manner. The host mainly played the role of a mediator, maintaining maximum neutral position.

It is noteworthy that critical questions were essentially posed by the citizens calling in. The talk show also televised opinion poll survey, Telavi dwellers mainly focused on social issues, requesting solutions to the matters of concern.

The questions posed by the host touched upon solution to unemployment, social welfare programs, education, and foreign priorities. Through these questions the visions of political subjects and election programs were presented in a comprehensive manner.

Trialeti (Gori) – Within reporting period TV company Trialeti aired several talk shows. A fair amount of time was devoted to presidential candidates' election programs and pre-election environment.

Election-related issues and monitored subjects were discussed in the **program From Your Viewpoint** hosted by Gvantsa Doluashvili. The talk show comprised of two parts and was essentially implied opinion poll survey and public involvement. The first part of the program was dedicated to the analytical TV story produced about the topic of the program and calls in, the second part was hosting the selected guest to the studio.

Within reporting week three programs were aired. The topics discussed included:

- Why the meetings held by the GD coalition's presidential candidate are attended by schoolchildren and teachers during school hours;
- Should Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili quit politics;
- Second round of presidential election to be scheduled or not.

The host of the talk show introduced topic-related pre-history and assessments to the viewers, TV stories and street opinion poll surveys were televised. The journalist did not tend to be biased, and presented events in an interesting manner and from different angle. The guests to the studio did not include monitored subjects, the reporting tone tended to be

neutral. At times though former and incumbent governments were mentioned in a negative tone, hate speech was not used.

The TV air was also dedicated to the **program Tvalsazrisi** (Viewpoint) hosted by Lado Bichashvili. Monitored subjects were not taking part in the talk show aired within reporting week. The program was fully dedicated to the pre-election environment. Media expert Zviad Koridze was invited to the studio to express his stance about the topic and monitored subjects (GD coalition, UNM, Prime Minister, government).

Within reporting period TV company Trialeti aired **Presidential Election 2013** which was fully dedicated to presidential candidates' election programs, their visions, also their addresses to the population. Presidential candidates including Giorgi Targamadze (CDM), Giorgi Chikhladze, Nestan Kirtadze, Mikheil (Gela) Saluashvili of the initiative team were invited to the program.

The hosts of the program were limited to posing questions, demonstrating no personal approach to the subjects.

The October 25 TV air was devoted to the **talk show Gender and Society**. Neither the topic of the program nor the selected guests were subject to monitoring.

Guria (Ozurgeti) – Within reporting period the channel aired three talk shows including Choice 2013, Your Time and Your Parliament.

On October 25 the company aired **talk show Your Time**. The topic of the program was local self-government, and village support programs. Out of the monitored subjects the talk show covered local authorities, GD coalition, and UNM. Local businessman and Gamgebeli of the region were invited to the studio. Reporting on the activities of local self-government was positive in tone. Several TV viewers and businessman demonstrated their positive approach to Gamgebeli holding the position for a few months now. The businessman was indirectly hinting to support GD coalition nominee. Respondents' negative tone was observed in regard to UNM.

Journalist seldom posed critical questions. Even though the program was of interactive nature and citizens enjoyed a possibility to pose questions to the local authorities the talk show was not characterized with the diversity of opinions.

The October 27 TV **program Your Parliament** made possible with the support of USAID within the framework of the Parliament's Communication Center project implemented by NDI and Internews-Georgia fell under monitoring.

The program covered legislative amendments over the use of timber. Giorgi Gozalishvili, Lagodekhi majoritarian MP was invited to the studio. The format of the program was strictly observed, to answer questions the guest was granted certain time to rule out the possibility of deviating from the topic of the day. The journalist was favorable to the respondent. The guest had no opponent in the studio. He answered the questions readied by Lagodekhi-based TV company TV and clarified the essence of the case-related legislative initiative.

On October 23 the channel dedicated its air to Poti-based 9th Wave TV **program Choice 2013** produced in partnership with the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters in the framework of media sector partnership project made possible with the support of IREX G-MEDIA program. The program was aired on 9th Wave on October 18 (please view the monitoring results October 14-20).

Imervizia (Chiatura) – Within reporting period the TV company produced no talk show.

Gurjaani (Gurjaani) – On October 27, within reporting week the company aired TV **program Your Parliament** made possible with the support of USAID within the framework of the Parliament's Communication Center project implemented by NDI and Internews-Georgia fell under monitoring.

The host had Tkibuli majoritarian MP Eliso Chapidze of GD coalition invited to the studio. The second guest was meant to be the spokesperson of the parliamentary minority but UNM refused to participate in the program. To the selected guest the host of the program posed questions readied by the journalists employed at Zestaponi-based TV company Argo.

The topic of the program was legislative amendments. The guest was answering questions about the amendments to be made to Law of Georgia on Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection of and Support to Its Victims.

Out of the monitored subjects the program included local authorities and government, GD coalition and UNM. In the program neutral tone essentially prevailed.

Mega TV (Khoni) – Within reporting week TV **program Election 2013** was offered to viewers. The October 23 outlet mainly focused on election environment. At the beginning of the program the host of the program Nana Toshkhua pointed out that presidential candidates abstain from visiting the regional broadcaster. Neither the representatives of election HQs of all of the presidential candidates were active. Therefore, the lawyer of Kutaisi-based bureau of Georgian Young Lawyers Association (GYLA) was invited to the studio to discuss pre-election environment. The selected guest reviewed the pre-election environment and also discussed the violations identified in the run up to elections. Election environment in the region was focused on too.

The program was conducted in the dialogue format. The guest had a possibility to provide comprehensive answers to the journalist. In relation to the topic the journalist was shooting questions in a successive manner, refrained from making subjective assessments and was trying to obtain utmost comprehensive answers.

The topics of two outlets of **Your Parliament** included:

- Especially talented high school graduates to be exempted from exams to enter higher education institutions;
- Providing equal conditions to IDPs.

To discuss the first topic MP Eliso Chapidze (GD coalition) and Sergo Ratiani (UNM) were invited to the studio. The guests were granted equal time to answer questions and express their opinions.

In regard to the second topic Gori majoritarian MP Malkhaz Vakhtangashvili of GD coalition was invited to answer questions readied by Trialeti TV journalists. UNM representatives refused to take part in the program.

The program is made possible with the support of USAID within the framework of the Parliament's Communication Center project implemented by NDI and Internews-Georgia.

9th Wave (Poti) – On October 25 **talk show Tema** (Topic) was to be on air. The selected guests were to include chairpersons of Poti and Khobi-based DEC's to discuss election procedures. But at the end of the main newscast the newsreader said the DEC chairpersons were unable to get to the studio since they were at the CEC in Tbilisi. Therefore 9th Wave offered viewers the partner company Guria-produced **talk show Choice 2013** made possible in partnership with the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters in the framework of media sector partnership project implemented with the support of IREX G-MEDIA program. The talk show aired on Guria TV on September 23 was dedicated to election-related topics, visions and priorities of political parties (please view results of monitoring September 16-29).

On October 21 the channel aired TV **program Your Parliament** made possible with the support of USAID within the framework of the Parliament's Communication Center project implemented by NDI and Internews-Georgia.

The topic of the program was the draft bill on the alteration of the status of agricultural land. To the studio the host had invited majoritarian MP Gela Samkharauli of Georgian Dream – Free Democrats. He answered the questions readied by TV company Gurjaani.

The parliamentary minority representative was to be another selected guest but UNM members refused to take part in the program.

TV Magazine Mravalkutkhedi (polygonal)

Weekly TV magazine Mravalkutkhedi (polygonal) produced by Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters was aired at different times on the following TV channels: *Kvemo Kartli TV-Radio Company, Channel 25, Tanamgzavri, Odishi, 9th Wave, Rioni, Imervizia, Gurjaani and Channel 9.*

Within reporting week the only outlet of the magazine was aired. The topics discussed included:

- 23 presidential candidates struggling for victory;
- Population's expectations about presidential election.

In relation to the first topic of the program Mravalkutkhedi offered viewers quite an interesting story. In regard to the population's expectations the interviews obtained in different regions nationwide were televised. The interviewed citizens spoke about their expectations and wishes for changes in the country.

To the studio the host of the TV magazine Nikoloz Rubashvili had invited some media researchers having conducted pre-election media monitoring. The Mravalkutkhedi viewers had a possibility to hear the evaluations made in regard to pre-election media environment. The host was posing interesting questions to the selected guests. The journalist was curious to know about the differences the researchers identified between parliamentary and presidential elections; the importance of the survey and whether the process is going to be carried out in the run up to municipal elections 2014.

Studio Re

Within reporting week some TV companies including **9th Wave, Trialeti, Mega TV, Gurjaani** aired 45-minute TV discussion produced by Studio Re. In the past week two programs were televised. The topics covered included:

- The role of medical projects in peace building (*Trialeti, Mega TV, Gurjaani*);
- Media coverage of pre-election developments (*9th Wave*).

The programs hosted by journalist Zviad Koridze stood out in terms of diversity of selected guests.

The program dedicated to peace building was produced with the financial backing of EU in the framework of the USAID project. The civil sector representatives and the head of healthcare service of South Ossetian administration discussed the importance of medical programs in confidence building between detached societies. Out of the monitored subjects the program discussed local authorities and government. The guests spoke about the government's positive role in promoting implementation of medical projects.

To the TV discussion that focused on media coverage of pre-election period the host had five guests invited. The organizations the guests represented conduct media monitoring. The guests assessed Georgian media environment in the run up to elections. The program comprehensively discussed pre-election media coverage and trends. The program host Zviad Koridze was trying to fully represent the situation being now in place in the Georgian media.

Monitoring of PSAs

Within the framework of the undertaking PSAs will be monitored as well. According to Article 12 of the Law of Georgia on Advertising “The social advertising is the advertising aimed at supporting public goods and achieving charitable objective, which is neither commercial nor election advertising and does not promote a legal entity of public law or a government organization as well as the service rendered by them.” (9.06.2006 #3245). Monitoring will try to identify whether social ads meet the legal criteria and whether they contain the signs of subliminal advertising (advertising of State agencies, and their services). Along with qualitative research the frequency of PSAs containing signs of subliminal ads will be counted.

Results of monitoring: Within two-week reporting period no signs of subliminal political ads were identified in the PSAs aired on the monitored TV companies.

Activities to be carried out:

Report on the fifth phase (October 28 – November 3) of monitoring of regional broadcasters is planned to be written.



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