



ევროკავშირი  
საქართველოსთვის  
The European Union for Georgia



# 2021 Municipal Elections Research on media coverage

## Print Media Monitoring Summary Report

July 5 - November 14, 2021



INTERNEWS  
GEORGIA

This report has been produced with the assistance of the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The authors are responsible for its content. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

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## About the Project

Internews Georgia monitored the print media as part of a project funded by the European Union and the United Nations Development Program - “Research on Media Coverage of the 2021 Municipal Elections”.

The monitoring started on July 5, 2021 and ended on November 14. It covered pre-election, first (October 2) and second (October 30) rounds, as well as post-election periods.

Observations were carried out on 11 editions: “Rezonansi”, “Akhali Taoba”, “Kviris Palitra”, “Alia”, “Asaval-Dasavali”, “Kronika +”, “Georgia and the World”, “Guria News”, “Alioni”, “”Ho da Ara” (“Yes and No “),” My Kharagauli “.

## Monitoring Methodology

The purpose of the print media monitoring was to determine what extent the activities of political entities during the pre-election period were covered on equal terms and in accordance with journalistic standards.

Monitoring consists of quantitative and qualitative research components. Quantitative monitoring determines the indicators that can be counted and measured: the area allocated to the subjects, the tone of coverage (positive, neutral, negative), the sex of the subject (male or female).

Qualitative monitoring focuses on indicators that are difficult to quantify but important for the quality of information: timely reporting of facts, distortion of information, unbalanced coverage, partiality, fact-based reporting, diversity of information sources, photo manipulation, adherence to ethical and professional and so on.

During the monitoring, parties and politicians who participated in the 2021 municipal elections were observed. The monitored subjects were also: the government (central, local, Adjara), the president, Bidzina Ivanishvili and Mikheil Saakashvili.

The monitoring was carried out not only on articles prepared on political topics, but also on all materials where the subjects of monitoring were discussed.

The report covers the results of the print media monitoring period from July 5 to November 14.

# Key Findings of the Print Media Monitoring for the Period of July 5 - November 14

- Most print media outlets continue to face significant challenges and do not try to provide their readers with high-quality and reliable information. Some newspapers are unbalanced and biased, and in many cases print articles based upon a single source, which prevents their readers from reading about different opinions on various issues. Some entire editions were unbalanced, biased and one-sided, making it necessary for people to read more than one newspaper in order to obtain comprehensive information;
- Some newspapers were guilty of gross violations of journalistic standards and ethical norms, and continued to use hate speech and homophobic terminology. However, the gender-based threats that were so frequently detected in articles during the 2020 monitoring were hardly detected at all this year;
- Newspapers, as in previous years, continued to actively report on ongoing political processes. However, most publications failed to give their readers in-depth analytical information about the elections and did not report on the pre-electoral activities or electoral programmes of either the ruling party or the opposition (even when these existed). Essentially, they limited themselves to publishing the statements and opinions of various politicians on specific topics, reporting current developments and focusing on party controversies. Towards the end of the monitoring period, all reporting was dominated by the arrest of ex-president Mikheil Saakashvili;
- One of the main problems of some newspapers over the past few years has been the spread of unverified, inaccurate information. Some journalists do not hesitate to make serious allegations against the government and politicians without justification and evidence. In many cases, their reasoning was based upon subjective opinions and was not supported by any factual material. Statements containing serious allegations made by various respondents were also repeated without verification; the journalists cast no doubt upon the correctness of what they said and did not try to determine the accuracy of this information by asking additional questions. Moreover, neither these articles nor the current nor even the next issue of the newspaper gave those criticized the opportunity to respond;
- Most newspapers lack sources of information among politicians and especially experts. The same experts are quoted in almost every issue. It would be better if newspapers would provide their readers with the opinions of specialists in the field, even in connection with the specific pre-electoral promises of politicians. One of the challenges that print media also continue to face is materials being written based upon dubious sources of information; journalists often do not try to determine the accuracy of information obtained from supposedly 'reliable' sources;

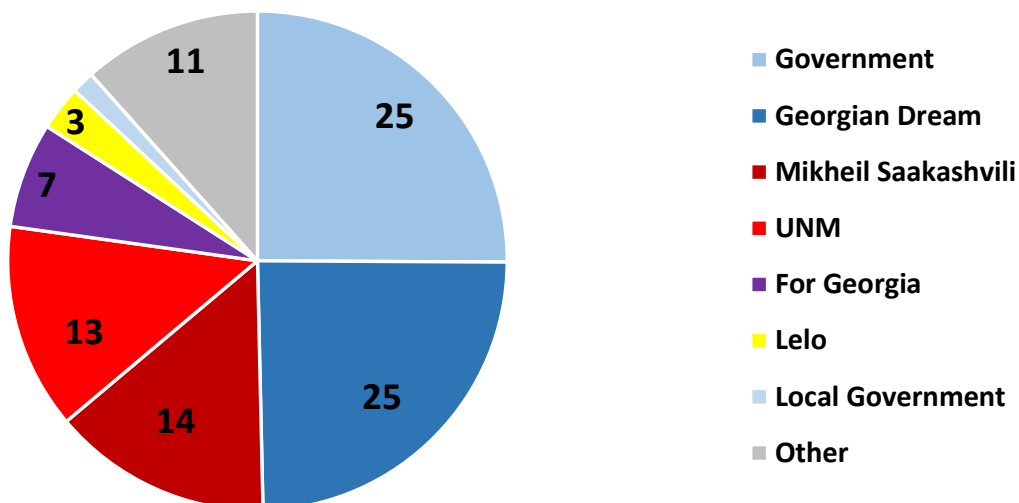
- In some publications, the use by journalists of insulting or unethical terminology towards ruling party or opposition politicians remains a problem. Similar terms were often found in statements made by respondents, from which journalists did not try to distance themselves. In some cases, insulting statements made by respondents were even included in the titles of articles;
- Regional publications are generally speaking balanced and contain no offensive or unethical terminology, manipulated imagery or subjective, unverified or unsubstantiated information. Regional newspapers work in accordance with journalistic standards. The electoral activities of political parties and the programmes of mayoral candidates were covered equally and impartially. That said, journalists did not ask searching questions, thus giving politicians the opportunity to present themselves in an exclusively positive light. In addition to the pre-electoral political processes, regional newspapers discussed current socio-economic or infrastructural problems faced by the population of their region, city or village, as well as various social or agricultural issues or agrotourism, publishing the comments of both the government and the opposition as well as those of the population. However, their coverage of the activities and projects of local governments was rarely critical, presenting the government in a largely neutral or positive light.

# ANNEX. Diagrams.

## Coverage of Subjects(%)

Resonansi

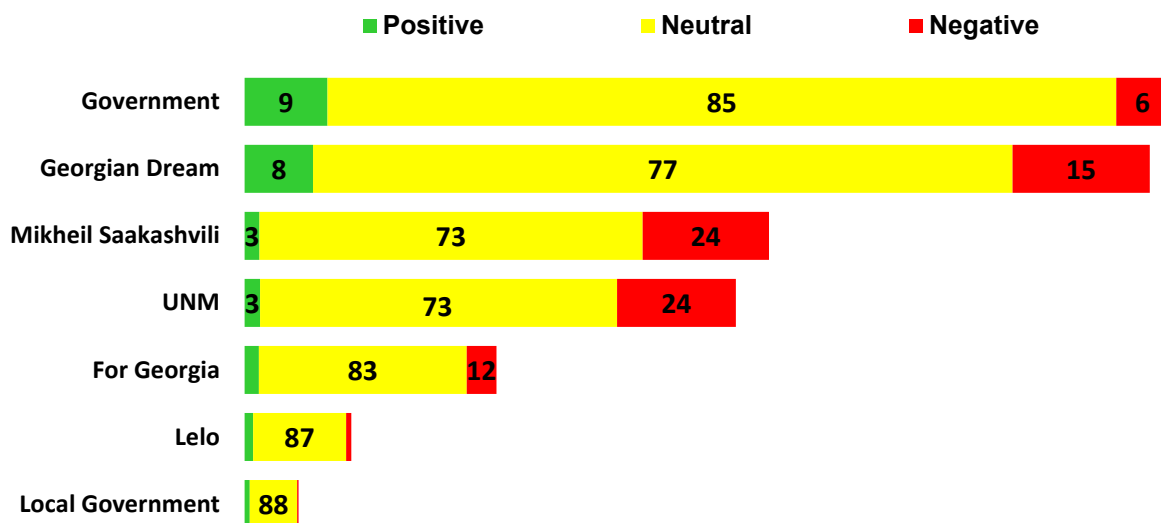
5 July - 14 November, 2021



## Tone of Coverage (%)

Resonansi

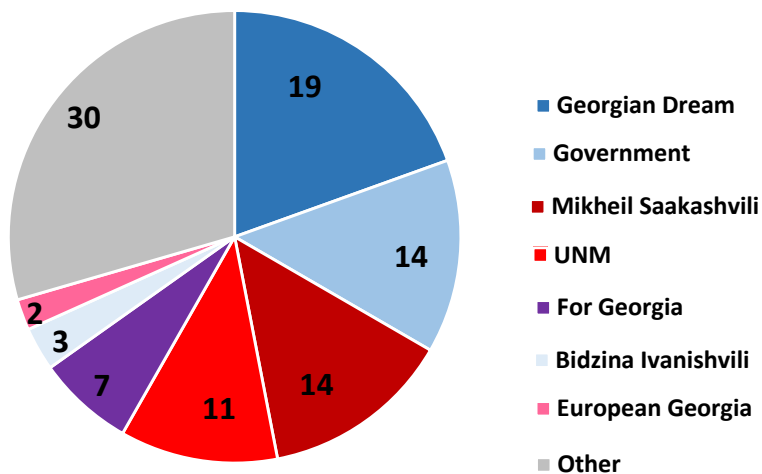
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Coverage of Subjects(%)

Akhali Taoba

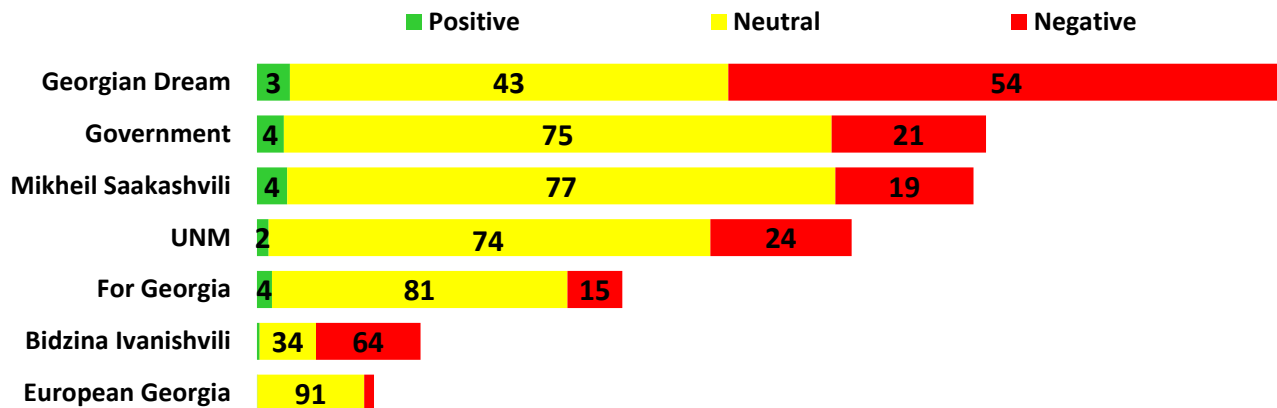
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### Tone of Coverage (%)

Akhali Taoba

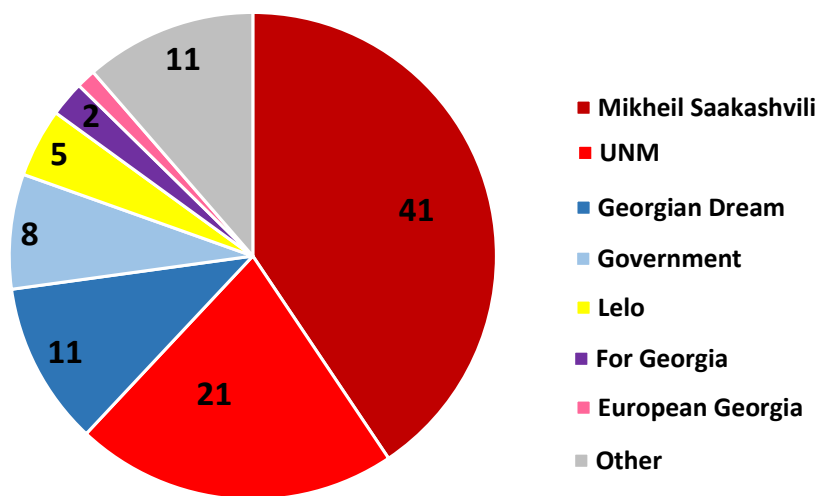
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Coverage of Subjects (%)

Asaval-Dasavali

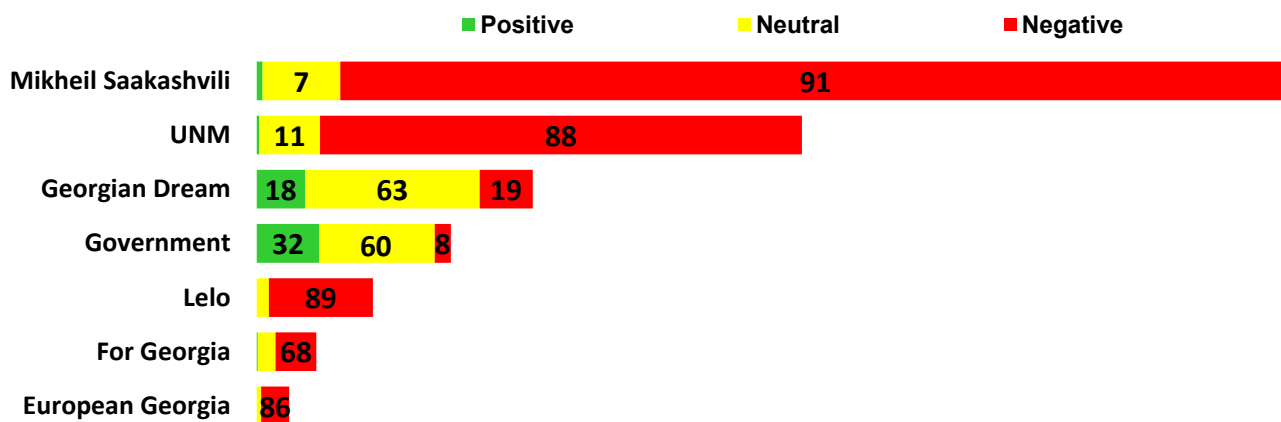
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Tone of Coverage (%)

Asaval - Dasavali

5 July - 14 November, 2021

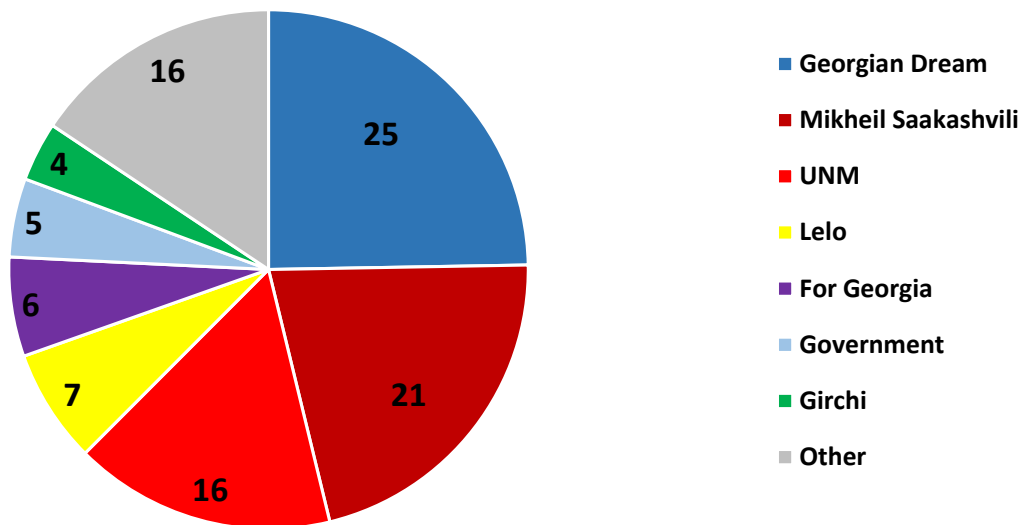




### Coverage of Subject (%)

Kviris Palitra

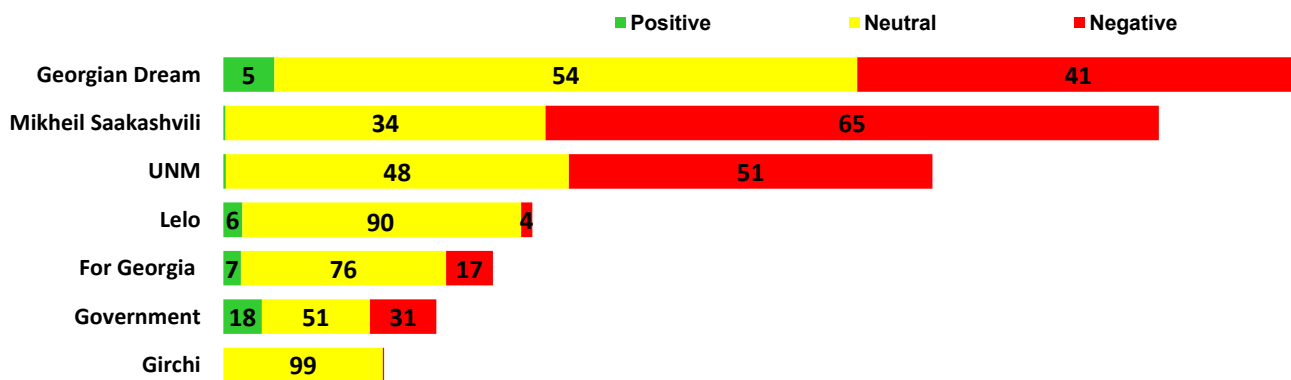
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Tone of Coverage (%)

Kviris Palitra

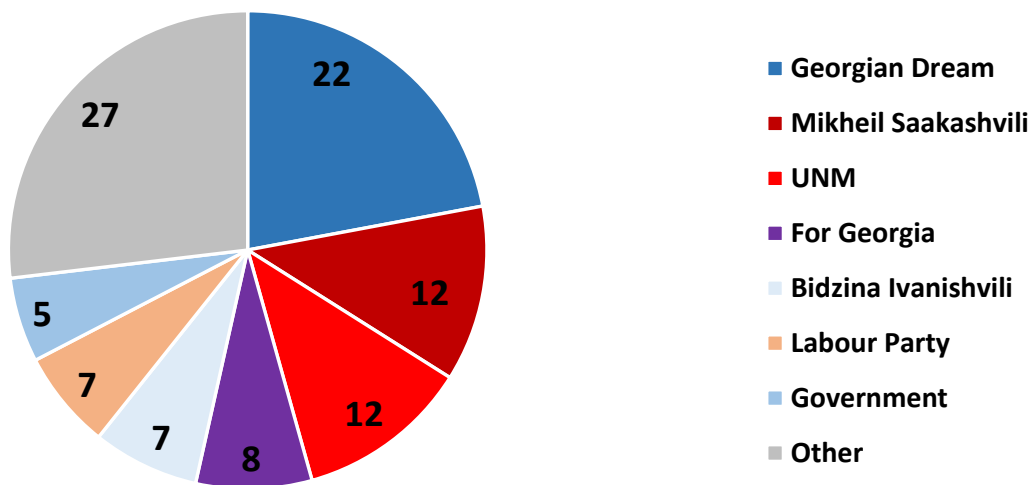
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Coverage of Subjects (%)

Kronika +

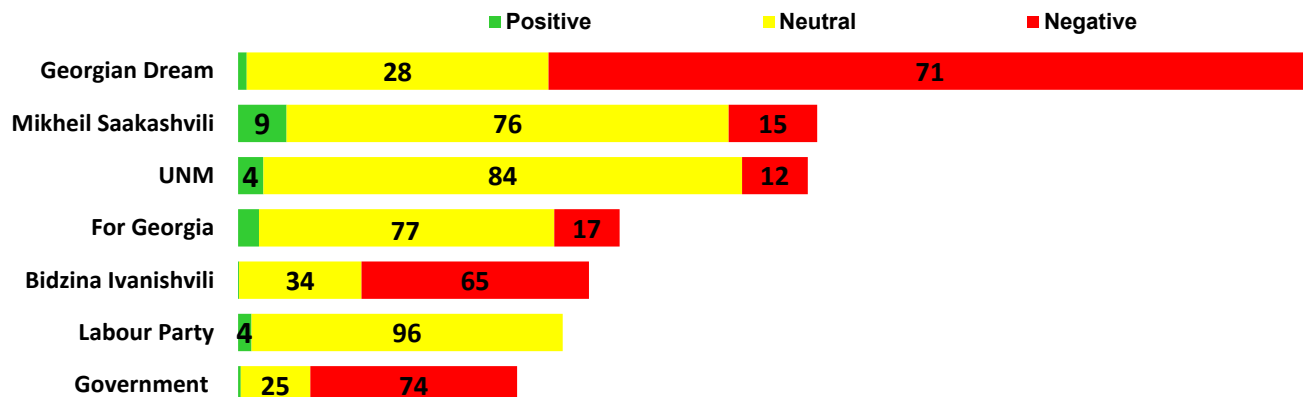
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Tone of Coverage (%)

Kronika +

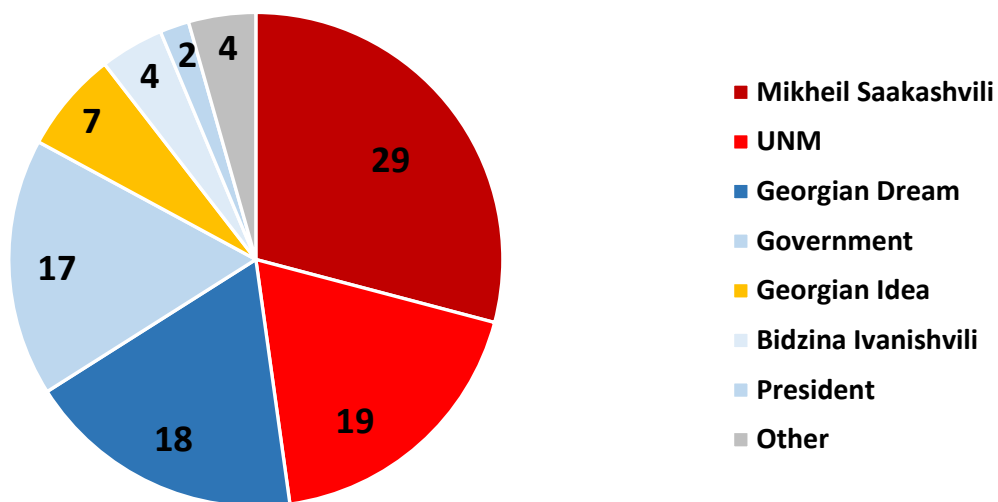
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Coverage of Subjects (%)

Sakartvelo da Msoplio

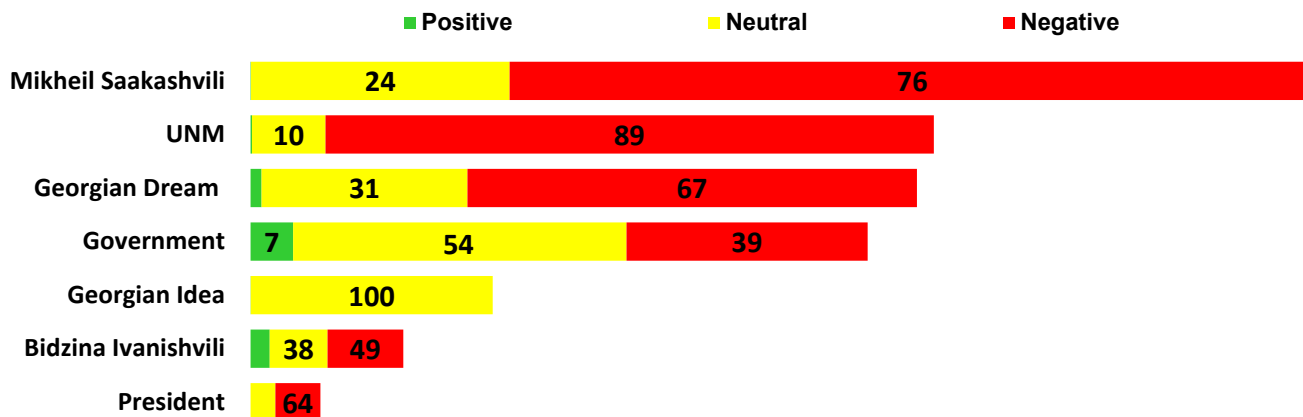
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Tone of Coverage

Sakartvelo da Msoplio

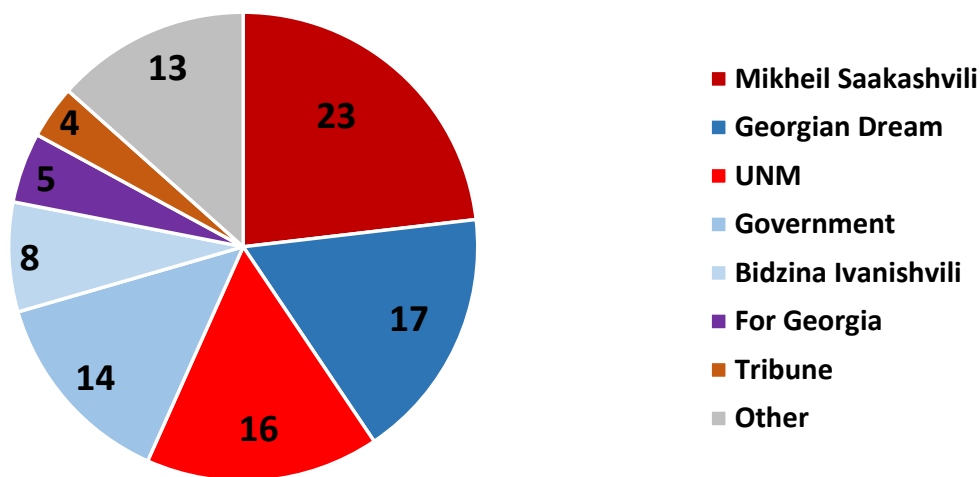
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Coverage of Subjects (%)

Alia

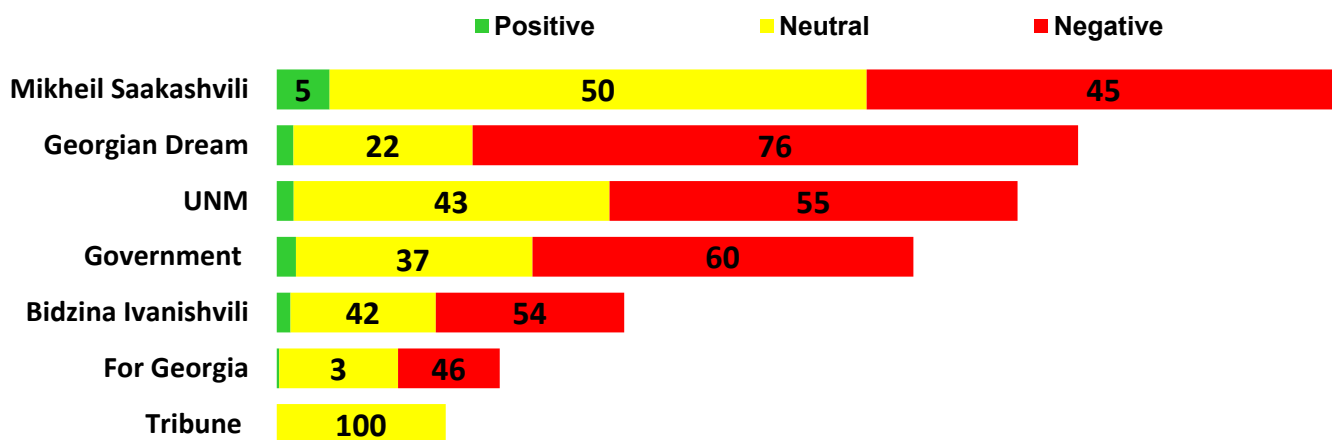
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Tone of Coverage (%)

Alia

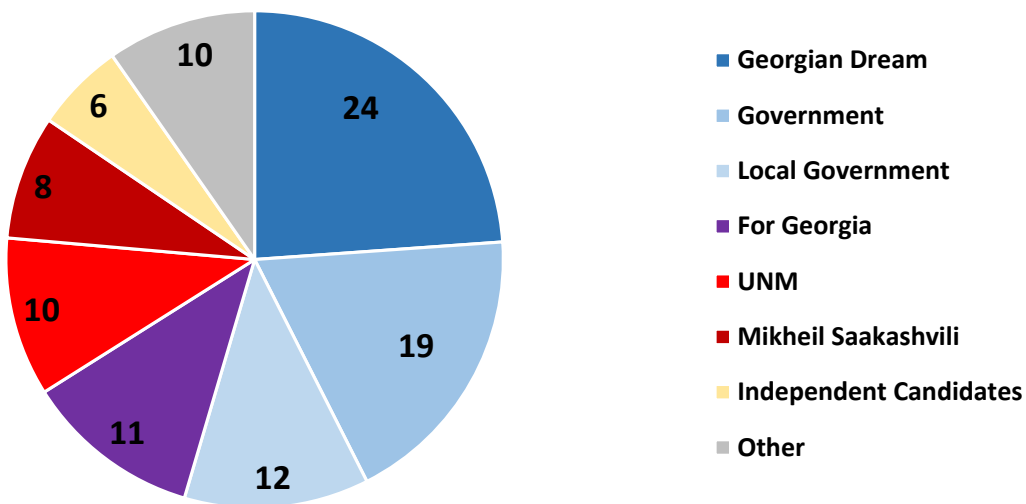
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Coverage of Subjects (%)

Guria News

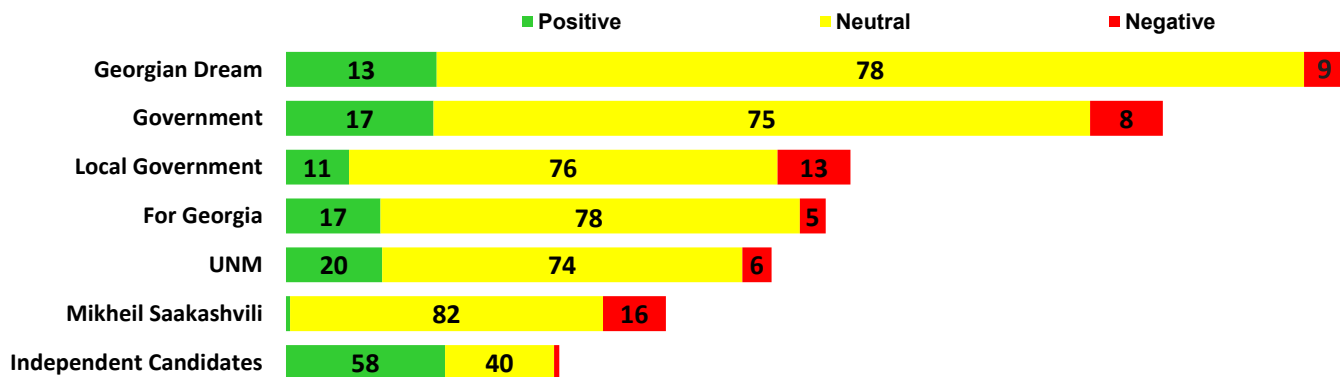
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Tone of Coverage (%)

Guria News

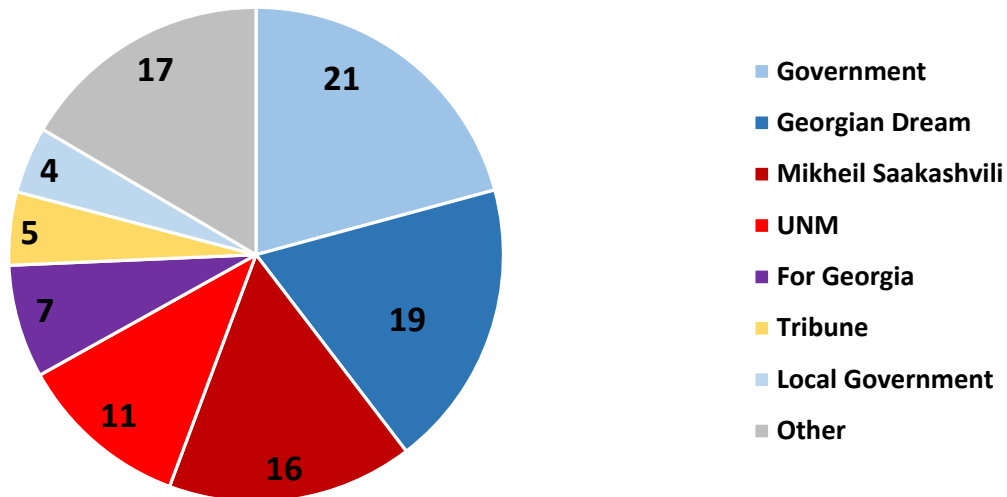
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Coverage of Subjects (%)

Ho da Ara

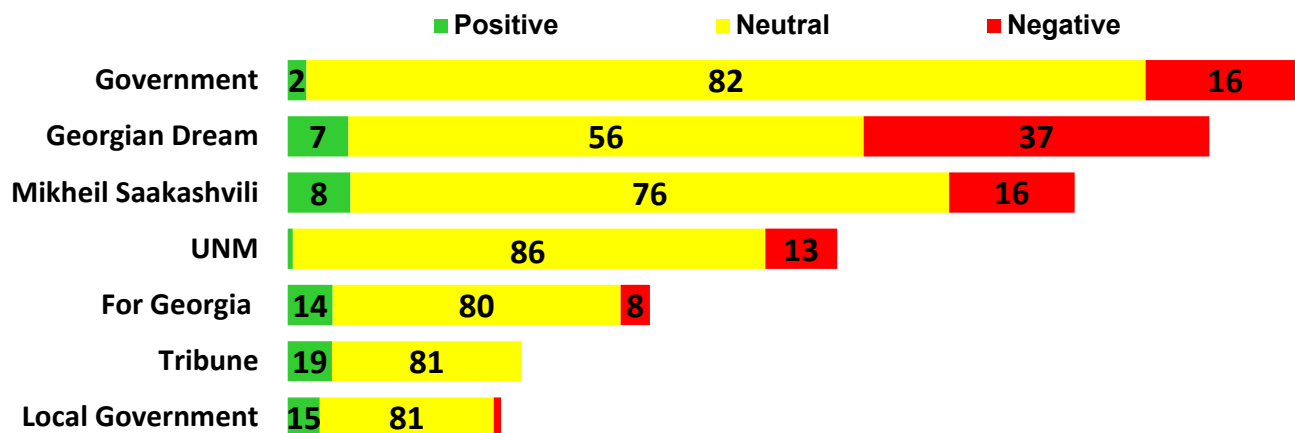
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Tone of Coverage (%)

Ho da Ara

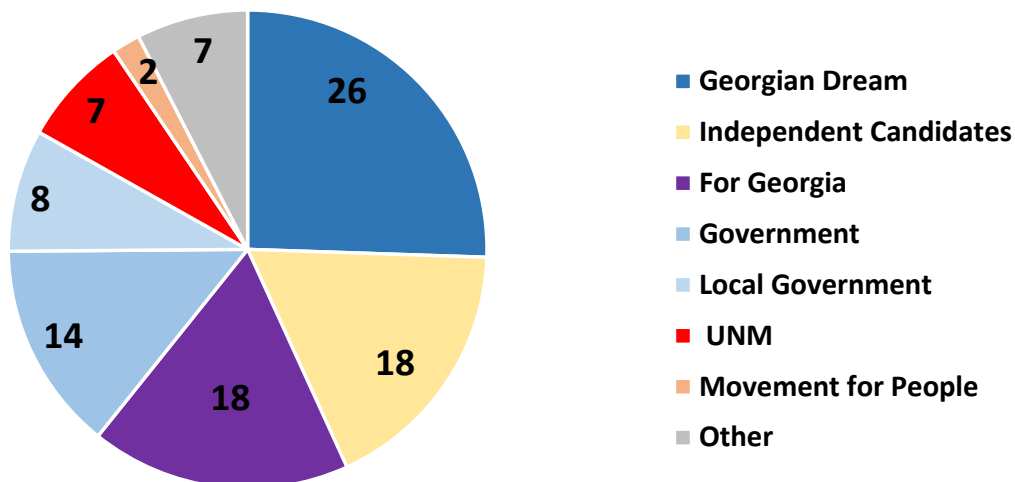
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Coverage of Subjects (%)

Alioni

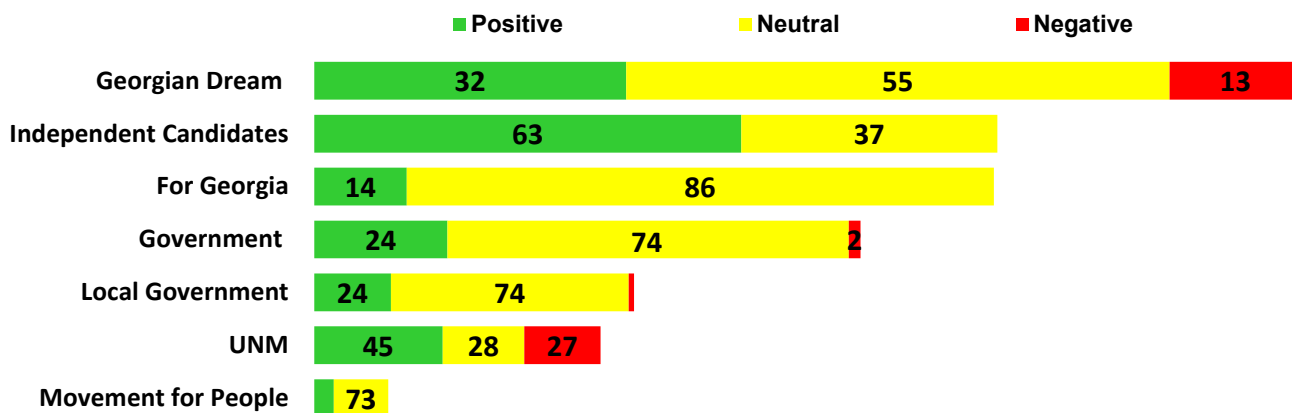
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Tone of Coverage (%)

Alioni

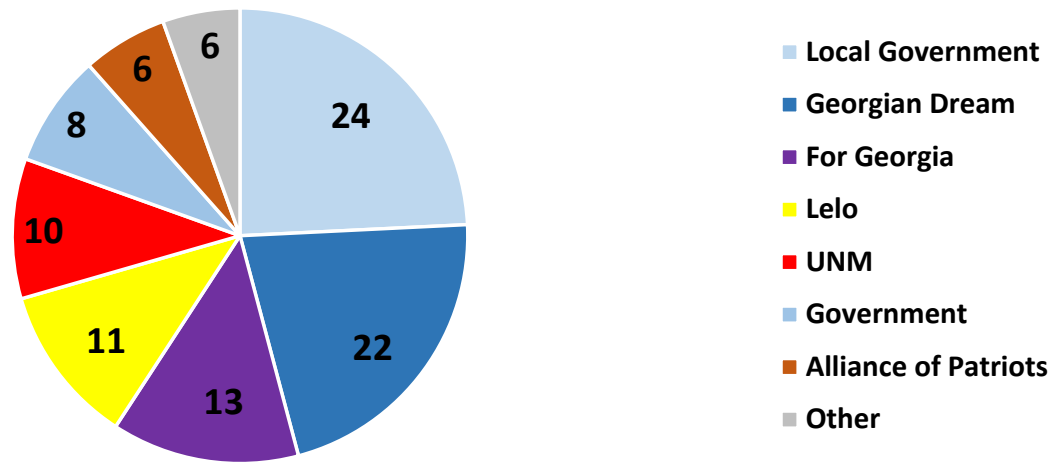
5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Coverage of Subjects (%)

Chemi Kharagauli

5 July - 14 November, 2021



### Tone of Coverage (%)

Chemi Kharagauli

5 July - 14 November, 2021

