



ევროკავშირი
საქართველოსთვის
The European Union for Georgia



Study and Research on Election Media Coverage for the 2020 Parliamentary Elections in Georgia

Online Media Monitoring: Pre-Election Report

1 September - 15 October 2020



საქართველოს
ჟურნალისტური
ეთიკის ქარტია

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About the project

As part of the UNDP ‘Study and Research on Election Media Coverage for the 2020 Parliamentary Elections in Georgia’ project, and with the financial help of the European Union, the Georgian Charter for Journalistic Ethics is monitoring online media coverage of Georgia’s 2020 parliamentary elections.

This monitoring, which began on the 15th of June 2020 and will end in December, focused upon the 13 following online media platforms: Ambebi.ge, Interpressnews.ge, Kvira.ge, Mpn.ge, Netgazeti.ge, News.on.ge, Primetime.ge, Publika.ge, Radiotavisupleba.ge, Reginfo.ge, Sknews.ge, Sputnik-georgia.com and Tabula.ge.

Research methodology

The monitoring of the media platforms and outlets selected for research involves both quantitative as well as qualitative components. During quantitative observation, particular attention is paid to the frequency and the tone with which individual media cover political or electoral stories. Coverage is considered as positive or negative if 1) a journalist or respondent evaluates the political or electoral subjects as positive or negative, or 2) if the topic’s coverage encourages a positive or negative attitude towards the subject. During qualitative observation, attention is paid to the extent to which media platforms or outlets respect ethical standards of journalism such as: accuracy of facts, diversity of sources, balanced coverage, not encouraging any kind of discrimination, not disseminating gender stereotypes, no manipulation of any kind, etc.

The monitoring focused upon parties and politicians taking part in Georgia’s 2020 parliamentary elections. Subjects also included the Georgian Government (central, local, of Adjara), the Prime Minister and the President.

Monitoring was not carried out on promotional articles, which are marked as such.

Findings

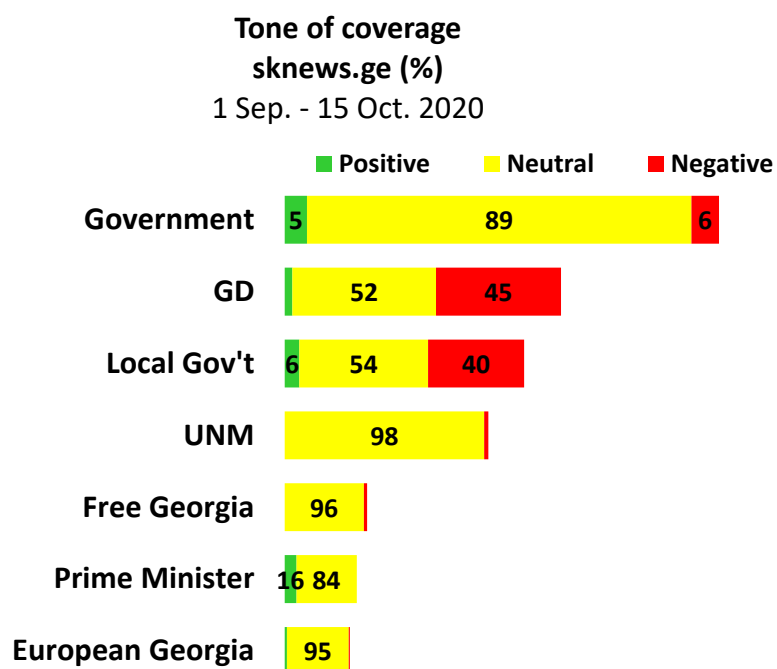
Quantitative and qualitative observation led to the following **key findings**:

- Compared to the first period of monitoring, the number of violations of journalistic standards has significantly decreased on websites that normally try to meet high standards of journalism.
- During the second period of monitoring, the dissemination of gender stereotypes or the publication without changes or comment of sexist statements also decreased significantly.
- A slight improvement was identified in terms of the pluralism of coverage of the political spectrum. During the pre-electoral period, most of the websites selected for monitoring paid due attention to the pre-electoral activities of different political parties and covered their electoral programmes.

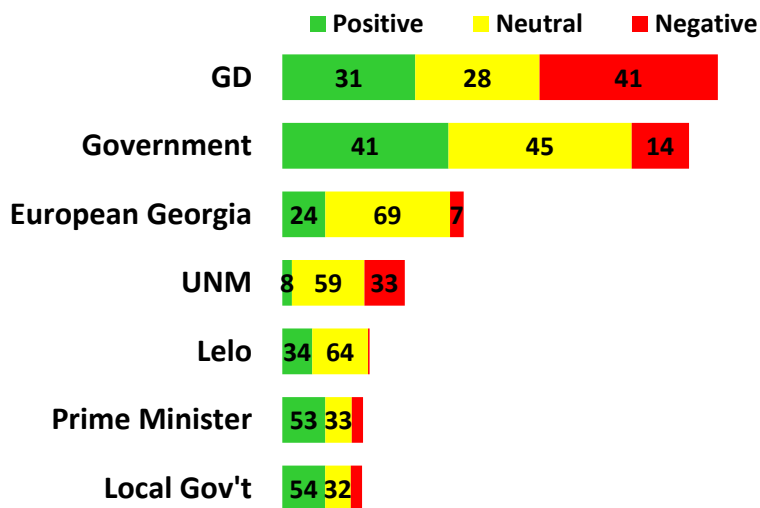
- Of the 13 media platforms selected for monitoring, 4 of them clearly revealed a constant attempt to portray the Government positively and to discredit politicians belonging to the opposition.
- During the pre-electoral period, none of the online media platforms selected for monitoring expressed a particularly positive attitude towards a party of the opposition.
- The inadequate separation of editorial materials from paid articles remains a major challenge for some of the media platforms. Readers of some websites are not given the possibility to identify which articles were paid for and which were written by the editorial staff as journalism.
- In some cases, a lack of critical in-depth analysis remains a challenge. Most of the websites monitored covered topics superficially, limiting themselves to publishing statements made by representatives of state institutions or politicians, and covering their everyday activities. Only a small proportion of websites try to cover stories in depth and to offer their readers critical and multifaceted analyses of ongoing events.
- The use of hate speech or discriminatory terms in the texts of journalists was rare during the second period of monitoring, but the problem remains of media outlets publishing, unchanged and without accompanying comments, statements made by politicians or other prominent public figures containing such content.
- The most frequent violation of journalistic ethics by online media is the one-sided i.e. partial coverage of facts and crude accusations. Journalists working for some of the websites selected for monitoring made no attempt to check the veracity of accusations made towards individuals or to seek out their response to these accusations.

None of the websites monitored displayed an unequivocally positive or negative attitude towards any political party of the opposition.

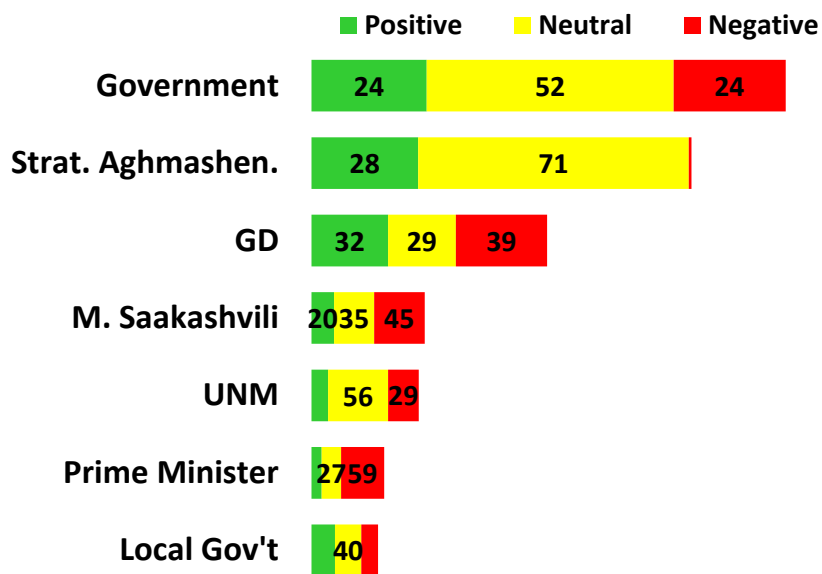
APPENDIX. Charts. Tone of Coverage.



Tone of coverage
interpressnews.ge (%)
 1 Sep. - 15 Oct. 2020



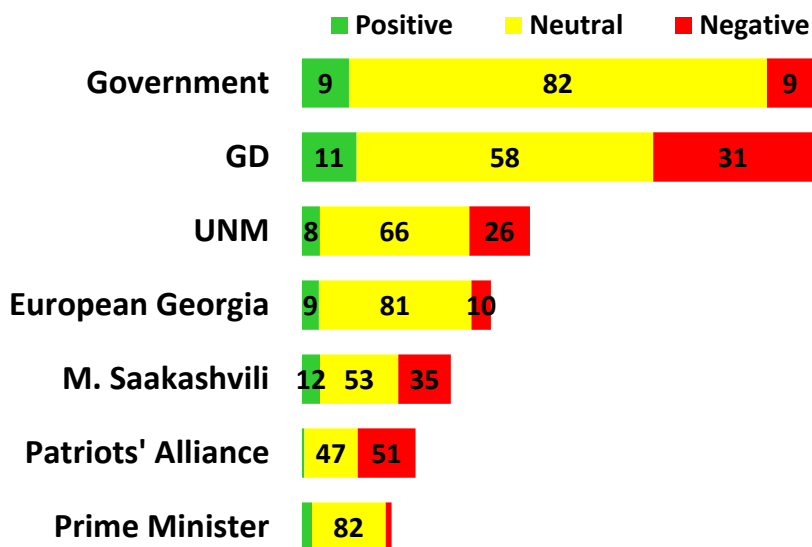
Tone of coverage
primetime.ge (%)
 1 Sep. - 15 Oct. 2020



Tone of coverage (%)

news.on.ge

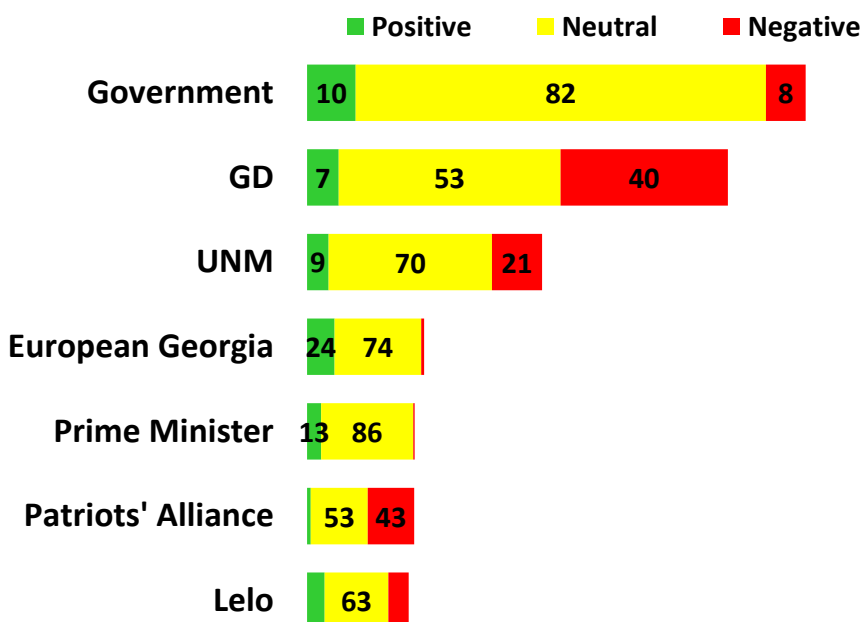
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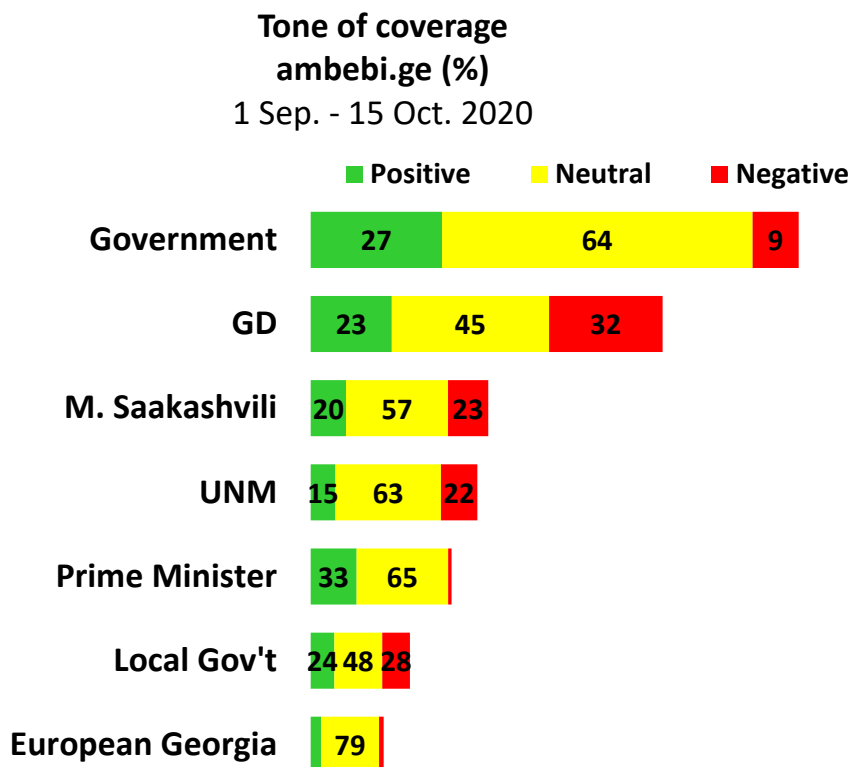
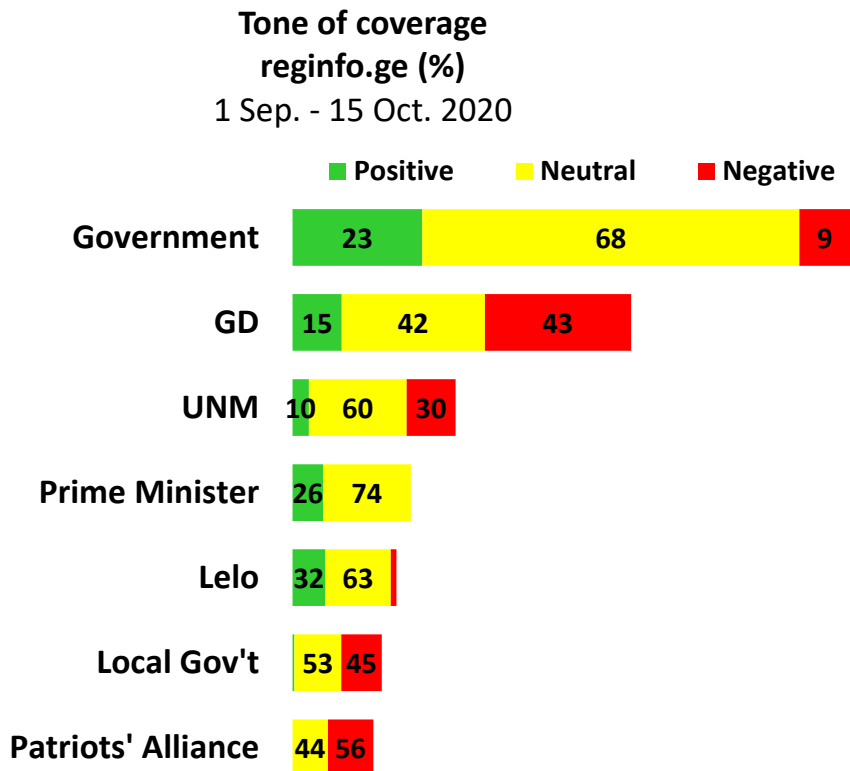


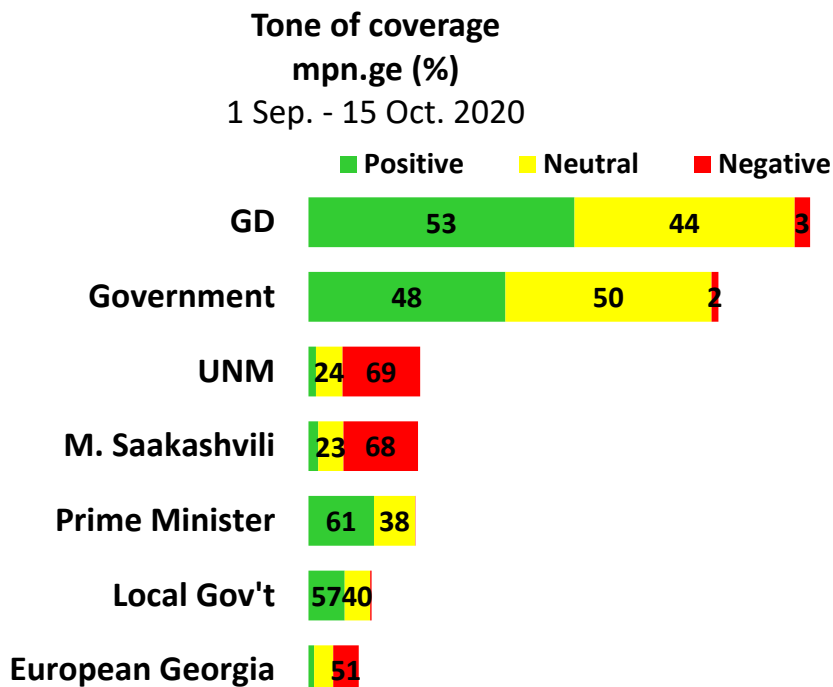
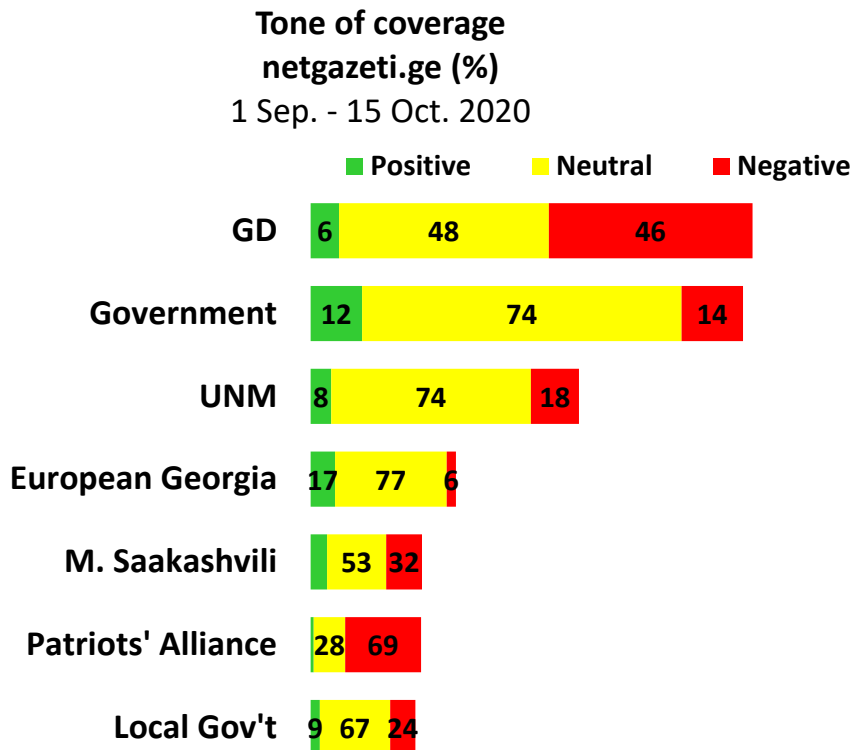
Tone of coverage

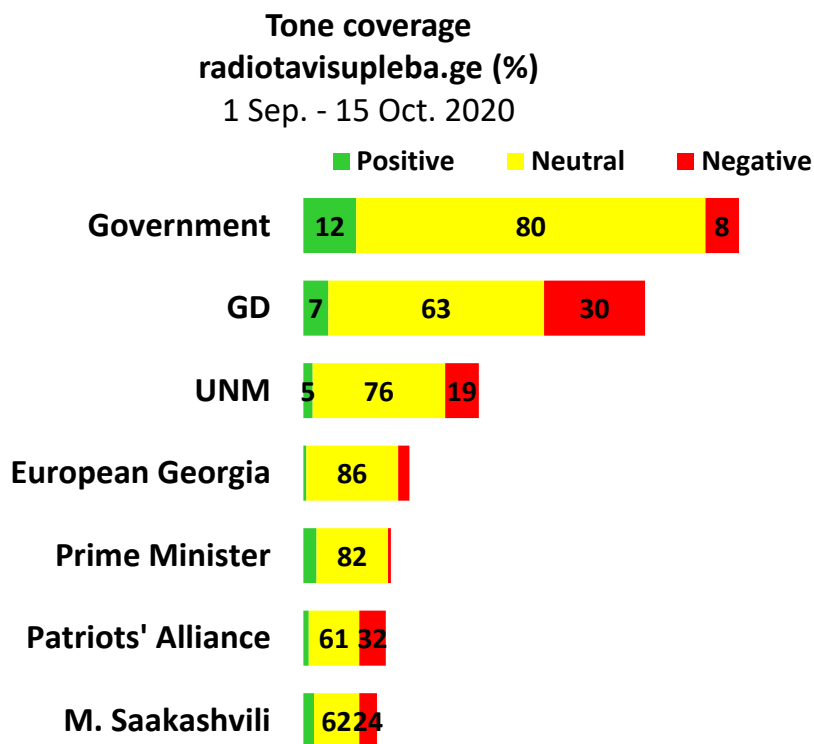
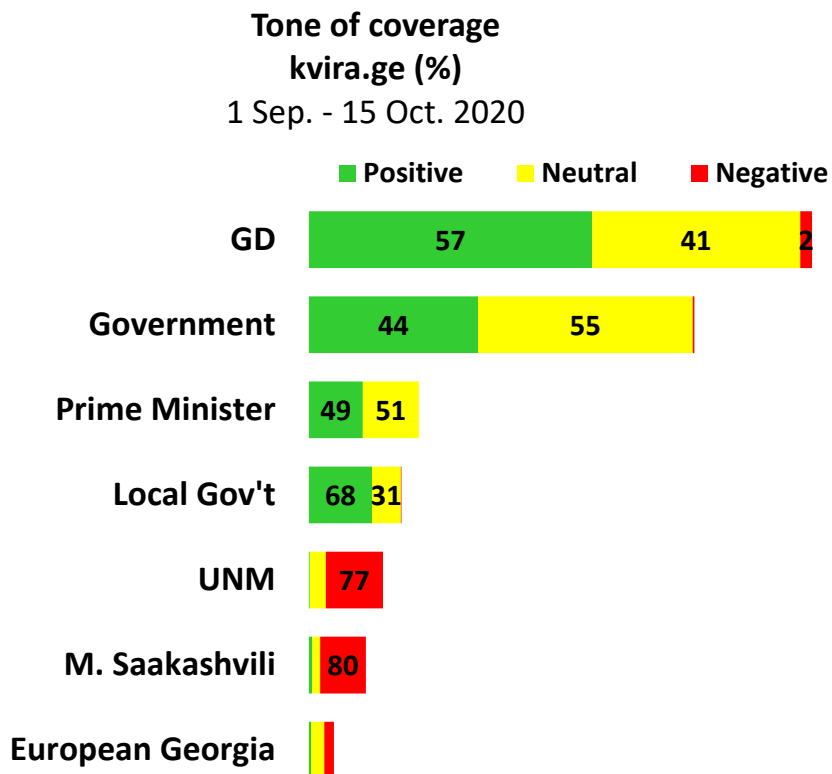
publika.ge (%)

1 Sep. - 15 Oct. 2020



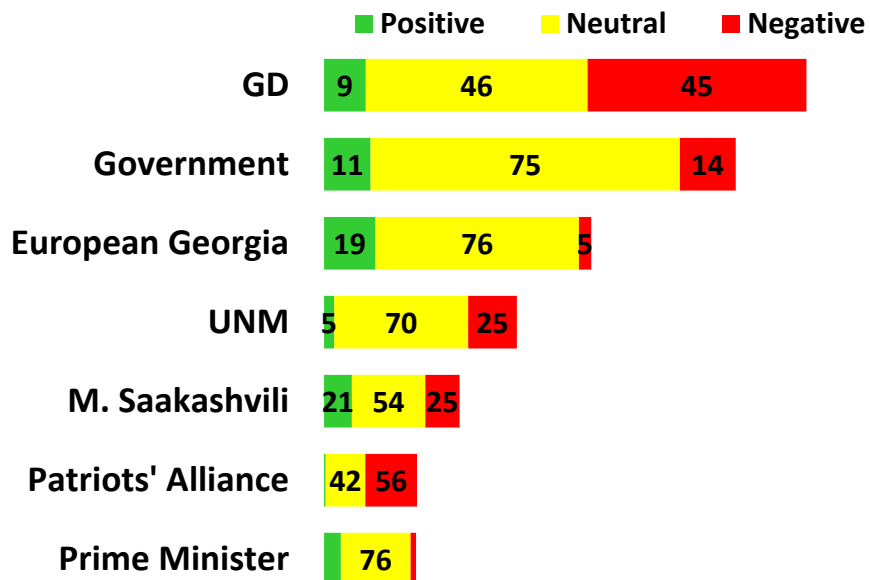






**Tone of coverage
tabula.ge (%)**

1 Sep. - 15 Oct. 2020



**Tone of coverage
sputnik-georgia.com (%)**

1 Sep. - 15 Oct. 2020

