



ევროკავშირი
საქართველოსთვის
The European Union for Georgia



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

Post-election Monitoring of Print Media Key Findings

1 February - 31 March 2021



This report has been produced by the Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics with the assistance of the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the EU and UNDP.

Background Information

Within the framework of the UNDP project “Research on Media Coverage of 2020 Parliamentary Elections in Georgia”, and with the generous financial support of the European Union, the Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics monitored the coverage of current political processes taking place in the country from February 1st, 2021 until March 31st 2021, inclusive. As part of the monitoring, there were 12 online media outlets monitored: ambebi.ge, interpressnews.ge, kvira.ge, mpn.ge, netgazeti.ge, news.on.ge, publika.ge, radiotavisupleba.ge, reginfo.ge, sknews.ge, sputnik-georgia.com, tabula.ge.

Research Methodology

The monitoring of online media aimed to determine the extent of equality of terms and adherence to journalistic standards while covering the political parties during the post-election period.

The selected media outlets were monitored for both quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative research focused on the frequency and tone of coverage of a particular subject in the selected media. The qualitative research focused on the extent to which the selected media outlet adhered to the standards of journalistic ethics, such as: accuracy of facts, diversity of sources, balanced coverage, incitement to discrimination on any grounds, dissemination of gender stereotypes, manipulation of any kind, etc.

The monitoring also focused on the coverage of issues and the terminology applied by the online media, which directly or indirectly reinforced gender stereotypes within the society.

The monitoring was targeted to the parties and politicians participating in the 2020 parliamentary elections. In particular, the monitored subjects were both the parties that obtained parliamentary seats as a result of the elections held on October 31st 2020, as well as those political unions that have been actively involved in the post-election processes.

The monitoring addressed not only the articles on political topics, but also all the materials where the monitored subjects were discussed. However, due to the political processes taking place during the post-election period, the monitoring laid a special emphasis on the following topics: parliamentary boycott, reform of the electoral system, reform of the election administration, financing of political parties, snap parliamentary elections, local government elections, rallies/demonstrations, Nika Melia’s case, changes in the Government, political dialogue/negotiations.

The report covers the results of the online media monitoring for the period from February 1st to March 31st.

Key Findings

- During the post-election period, the online media most intensively covered the issues related to the political negotiations mediated by the EU representatives, and the detention of Nika Melia;
- The vast majority of the websites selected for the monitoring mainly covered the Georgian Dream and the United National Movement among the political parties. Each of these parties received more coverage than all the other parties combined;
- Polarization is less evident in the online media. Out of 12 websites selected for the monitoring, it was clearly observed that 2 of them always covered the authorities positively, and on the other hand, tried to discredit politicians from the opposition. Besides, none of the monitored online media outlets showed a particularly positive attitude towards any of the opposition parties;
- The journalists hardly ever referred to hate speech or used discriminatory terminology in their texts. However, the observation revealed two online media outlets that disseminated the statements inciting discrimination by politicians or other celebrities;
- Separation of sponsored and editorial materials remains a serious challenge for some online media outlets. In many cases, a reader may not be able to clearly see which of the published articles is sponsored and which one is a journalistic work prepared by the editorial staff;
- Observation of the post-election period suggested that, compared to the results of the pre-election media monitoring, the vast majority of selected websites had more balanced coverage of issues, especially during the EU-mediated political negotiations.

Gender Stereotypes in Online Media

During the monitoring period, special emphasis was laid on the observation of at what extent the online media outlets adhere to professional standards when covering the statements of politicians or other public figures containing the gender-based discrimination or gender stereotypes.

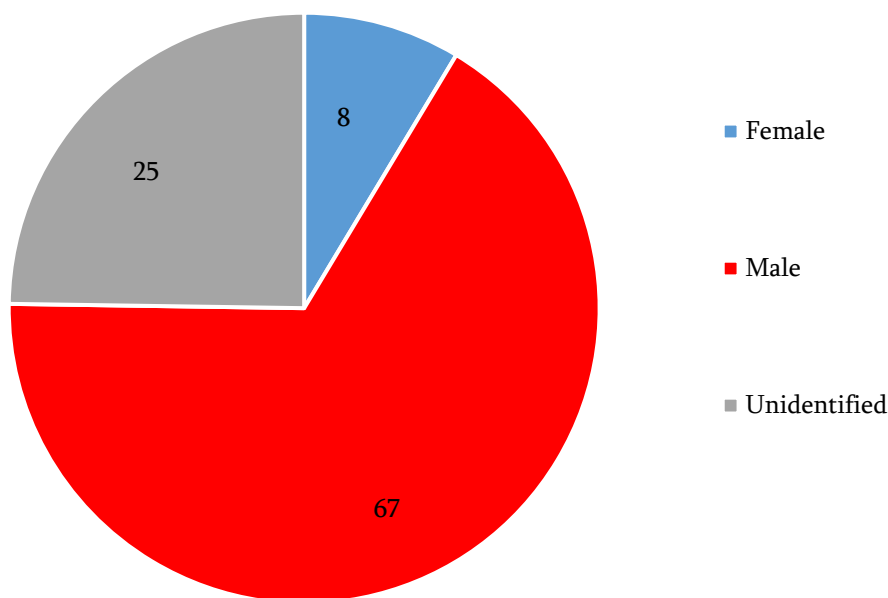
As the monitoring has revealed, the online media has a problem of neglecting the standards of reporting about gender-stereotypical or sexist statements, as far as some websites publish such

statements without making any changes into them, without editorial comments or other appraisal, which encourages gender-based discrimination by the media

Examples:

- On March 16, online media outlets published materials about the statement that Tea Tsulukiani made at the Parliament, in which she addressed the opposition MP Aleko Elisashvili: “The God did not give a tongue to a human being, and especially to a man, for saying everything”. This was a statement encouraging the gender stereotype according to which a man should be speaking less than a woman. The online media disseminated it without adequate explanation or comment, facilitating the spread of gender stereotype. Neither did the media provide any comment when they disseminated Elisashvili’s sexist response to the statement: “If Tsulukiani had not been a woman, I would have responded to her differently”. However, for example, in compliance with journalistic standards, news.on.ge indicated in the headline that Elisashvili’s statement was sexist, and then explained in the background that Tsulukiani’s statement was also sexist, to which Elisashvili was responding;
- There were several materials published on kvira.ge during the monitoring period, in which the respondents discriminated against one of the opposition leaders on the ground of gender, for example: “Nikoloz Mchedlishvili: so far I have known that Melia (this surname means ‘fox’ in Georgian) ate chicken in the hen-house, but now Melia is a chicken himself and he is shielding himself with women” (February 17th), Zaal Anjaparidze – about Nika Melia: If he is so fearless as the fleshless and a hero, why did he hide in front of women, young people and so many “heavy-weight” politicians (February 17th);

Coverage of Subjects in Online Media by Gender (%)
February 1 - March 31, 2021



- Ambebi.ge often publishes about the so-called yellow stories about private lives of politicians, which often promote gender stereotypes. For example, gender inequality and the stereotype of a man's dominant role in the family are fueled in the statements made by the wife of an MP Kakha Kuchava in the article published on February 24th (“I see Kakha on TV more often than at home” – “Family life of the GD's parliamentarian and his Russian wife, who is promoting Georgia”), suggesting: “At the same time, a husband is a head of the family and I listen to him on many issues. The husband lights a fire and the wife supports it – this is about our life”.
- In another article posted on ambebi.ge – “Nika Melia's private life - secret romance and a woman who gave birth to a politician's son” (February 25th) – a woman's diminished role – just a reproductive function of a woman - is read right in the headline.

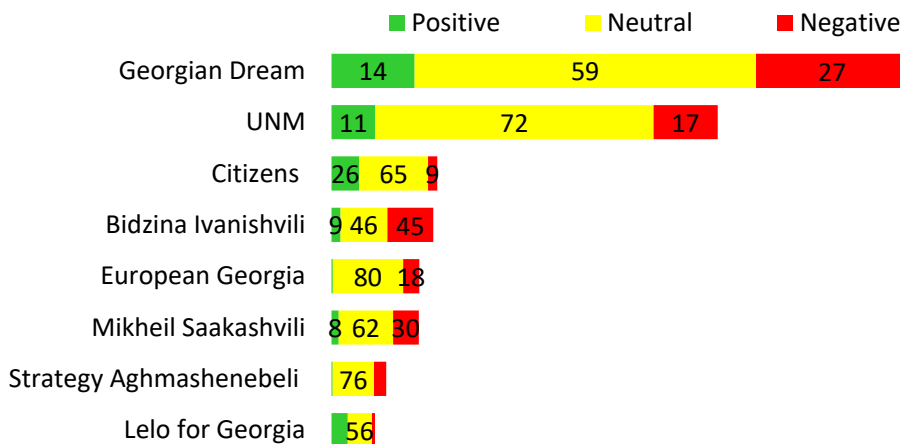
ANNEX I. Charts.

Ambebi.ge

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)

ambebi.ge

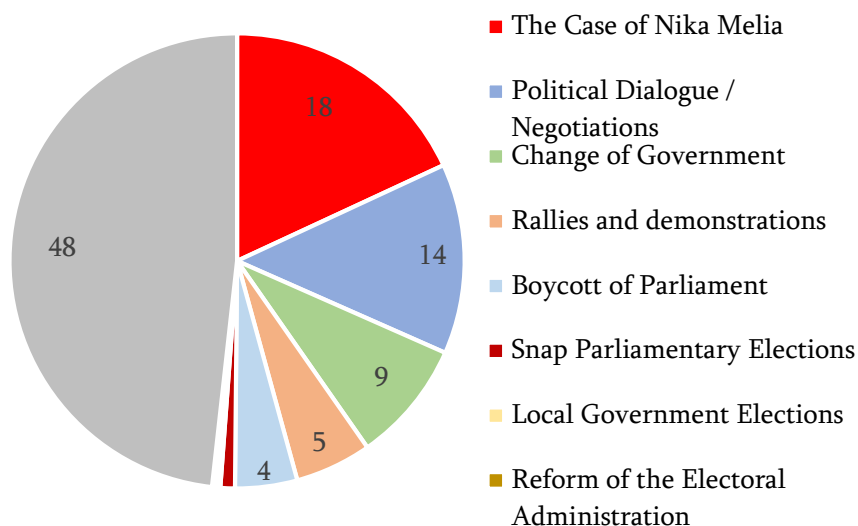
February 1 - March 31 2021



Coverage of Topics (%)

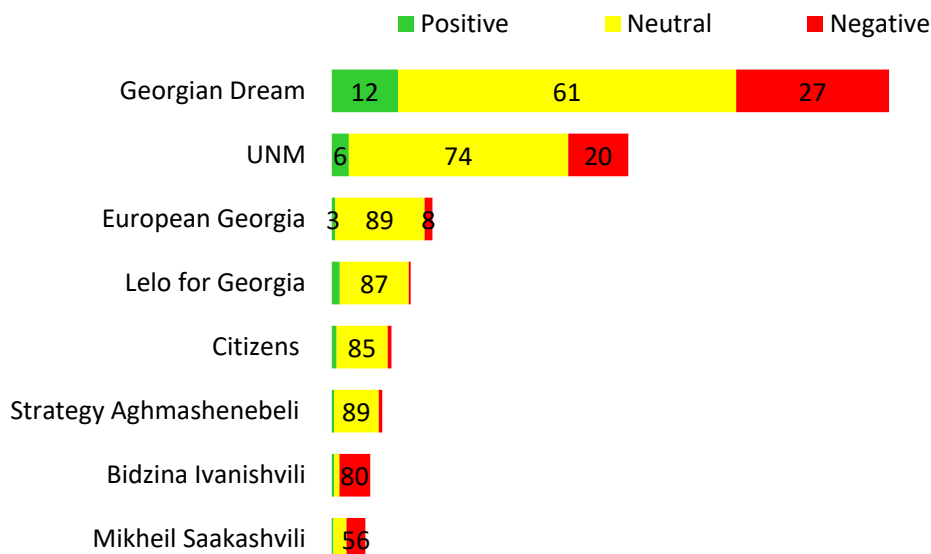
ambebi.ge

February 1 - 31 March 2021

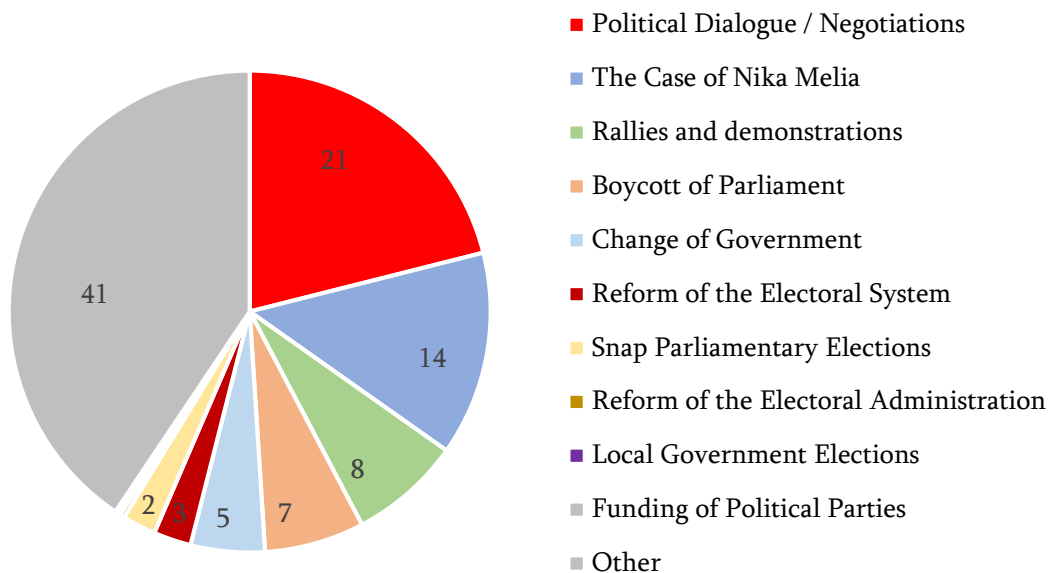


Interpressnews.ge

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)
interpressnews.ge
February 1 - March 31, 2021



Coverage of Topics (%)
interpressnews.ge
February 1 - 31 March, 2021

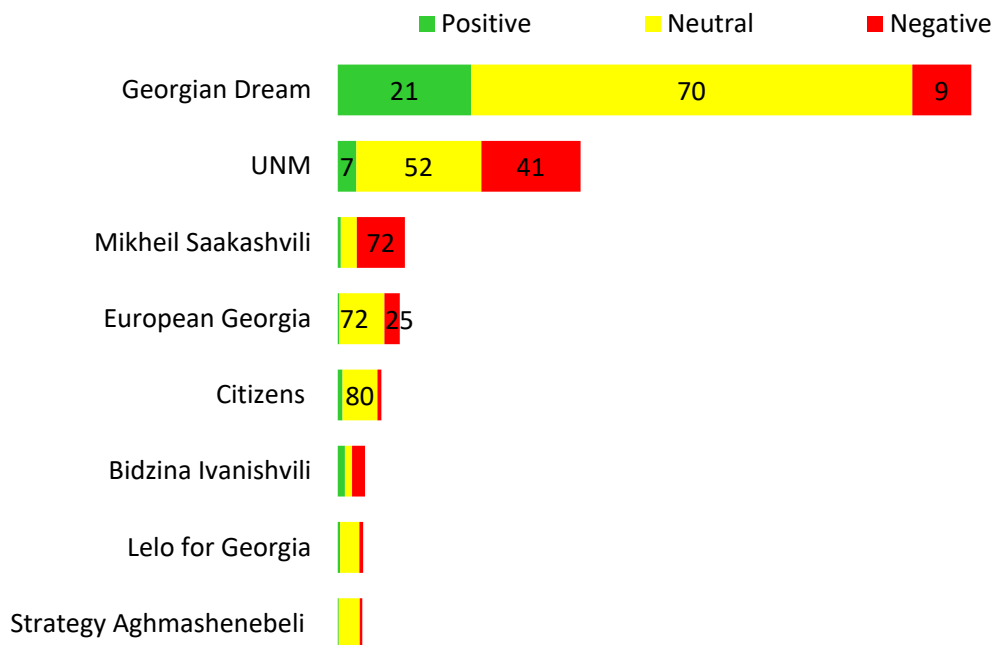


Kvira.ge

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)

kvira.ge

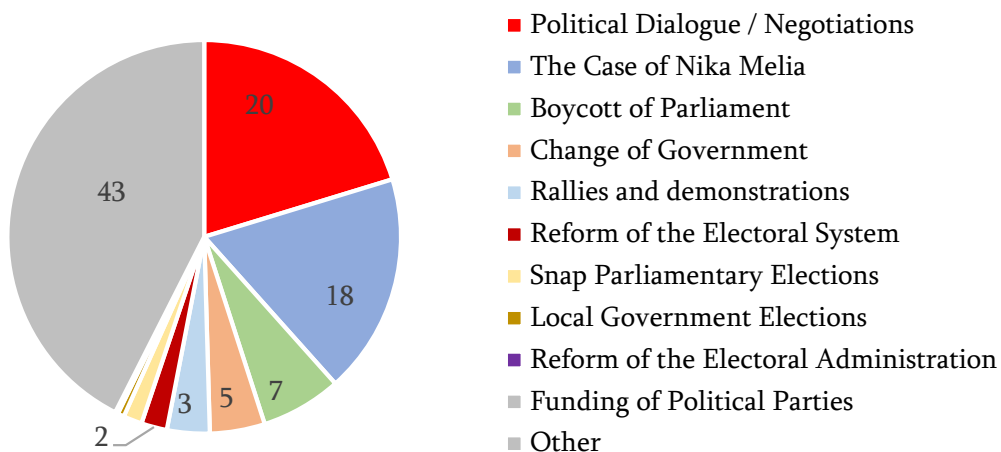
February 1 - March 31, 2021



Coverage of Topics (%)

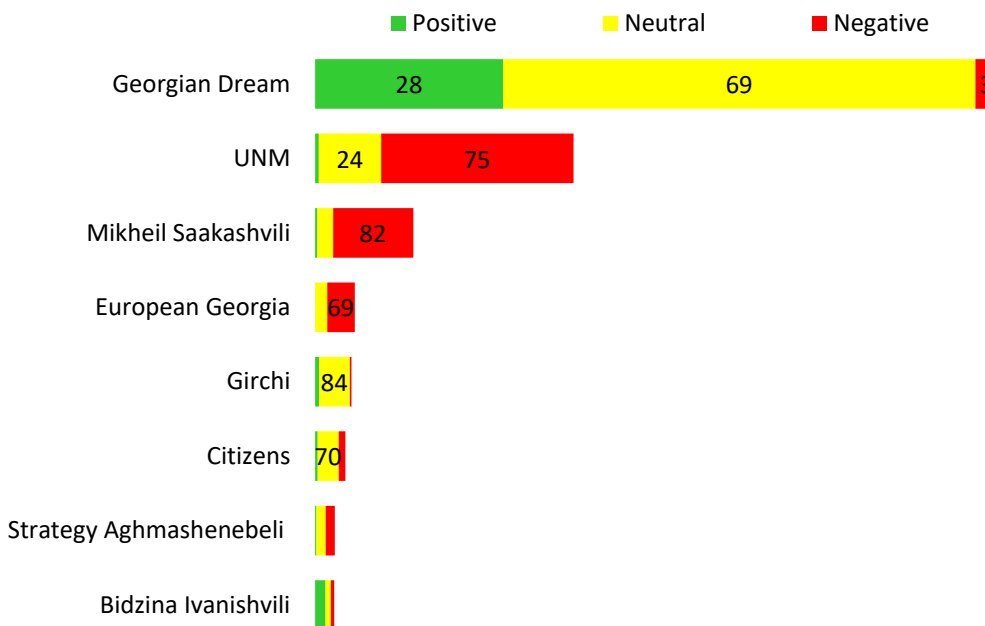
kvira.ge

February 1 - 31 March, 2021

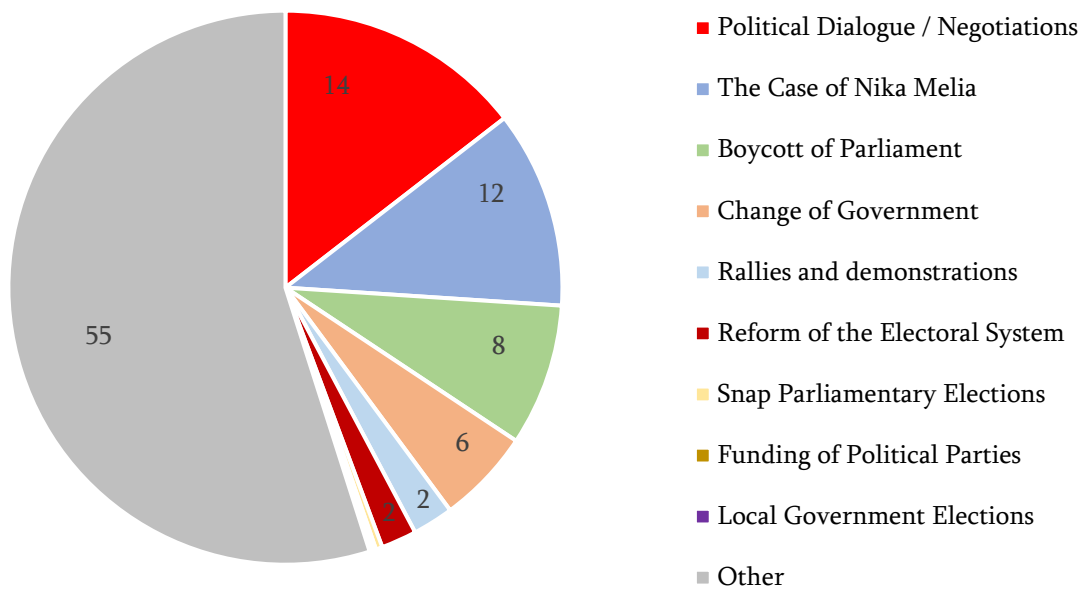


MPN.ge

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)
mpn.ge
February 1 - March 31 , 2021

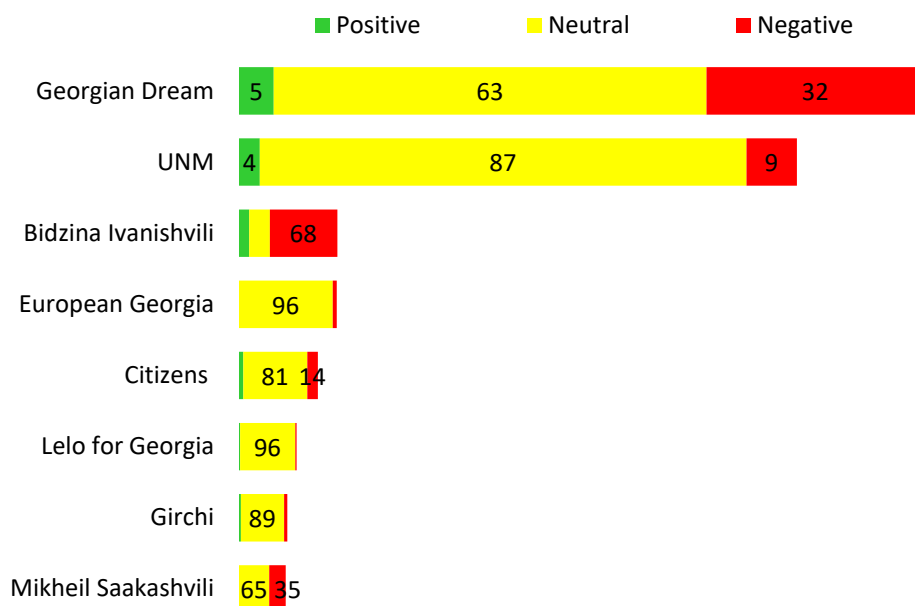


Coverage of Topics (%)
mpn.ge
February 1 - 31 March, 2021

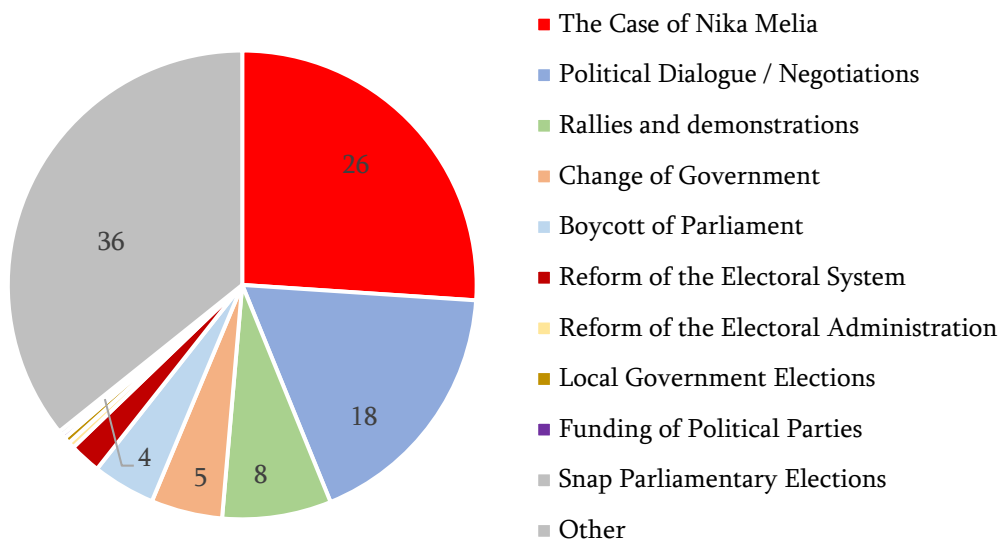


Netgazeti.ge

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)
netgazeti.ge
February 1 - March 31 , 2021

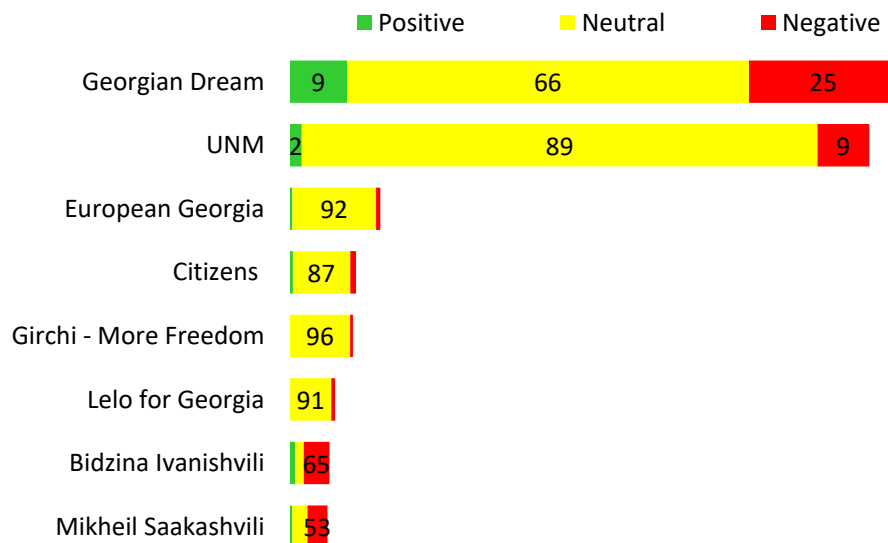


Coverage of Topics (%)
netgazeti.ge
February 1 - 31 March, 2021

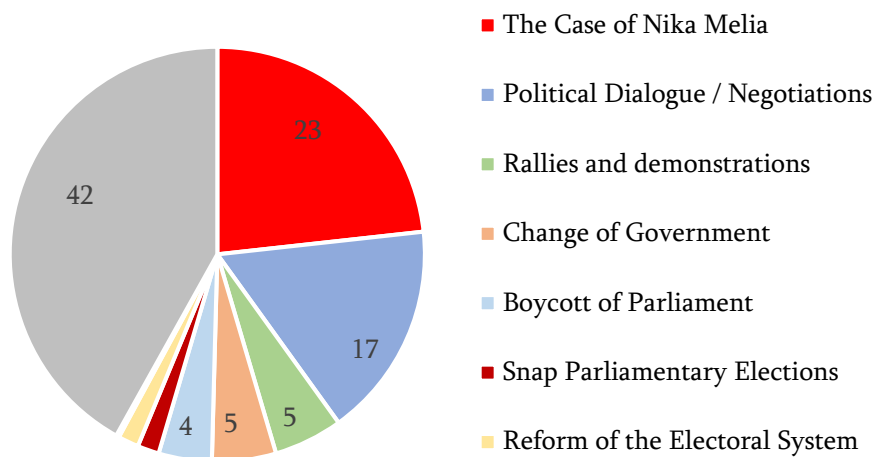


News.on.ge

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)
news.on.ge
February 1 - March 31 , 2021

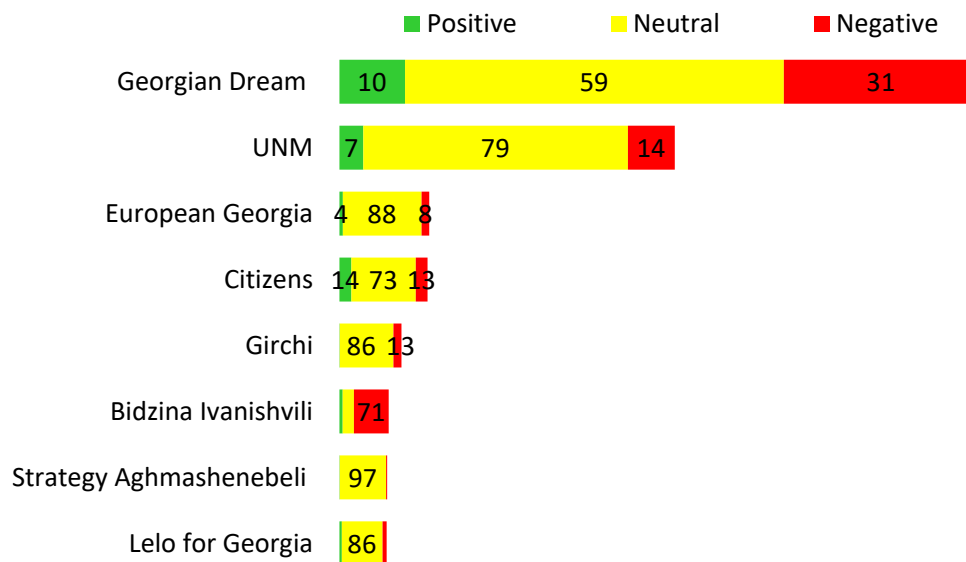


Coverage of Topics (%)
news.on.ge
February 1 - 31 March, 2021

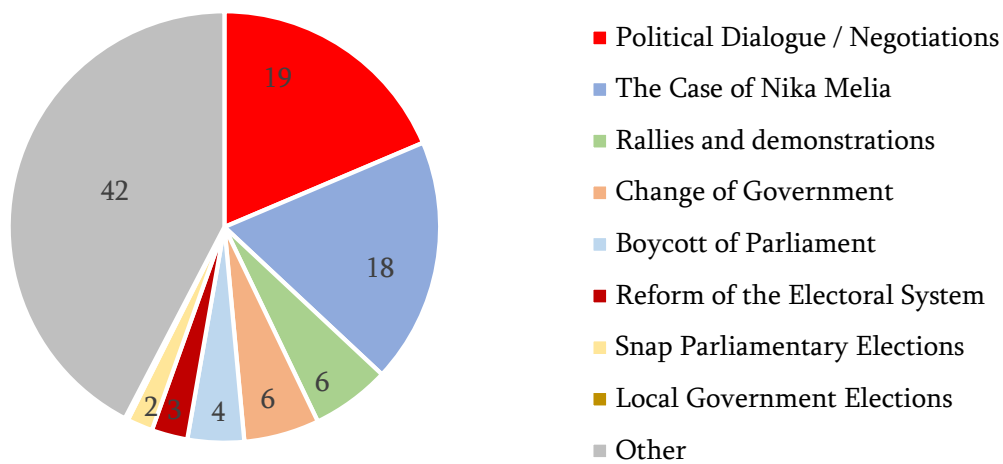


Publika.ge

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)
publika.ge
February 1 – March 31, 2021

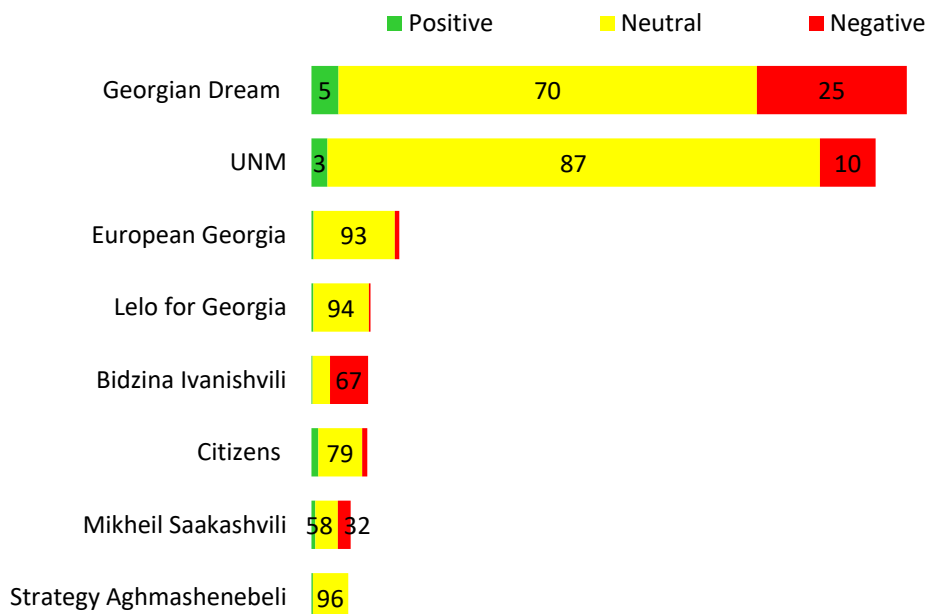


Coverage of Topics (%)
publika.ge
February 1 - 31 March, 2021

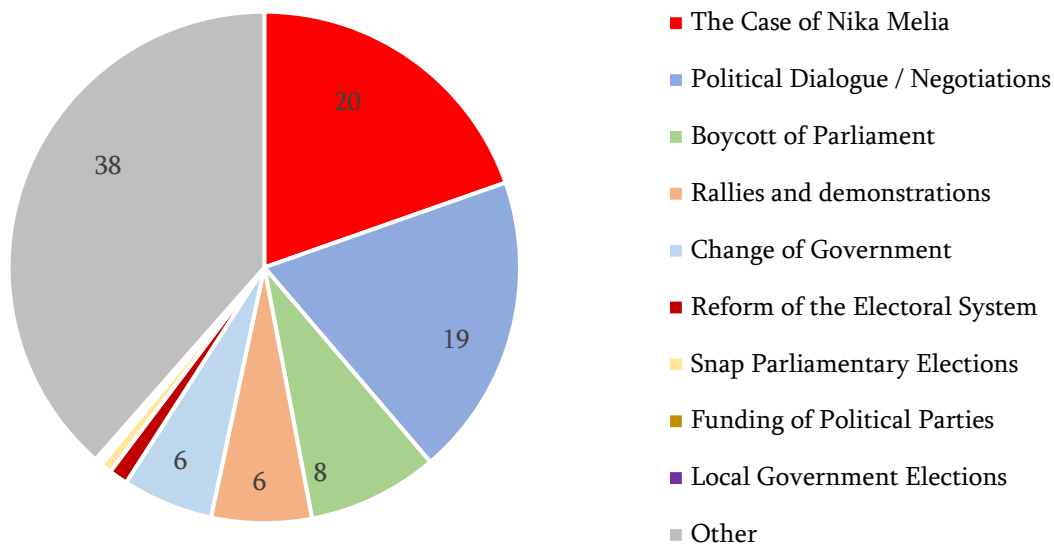


Radiotavisupleba.ge

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)
radiotavisupleba.ge
February 1 – March 31, 2021

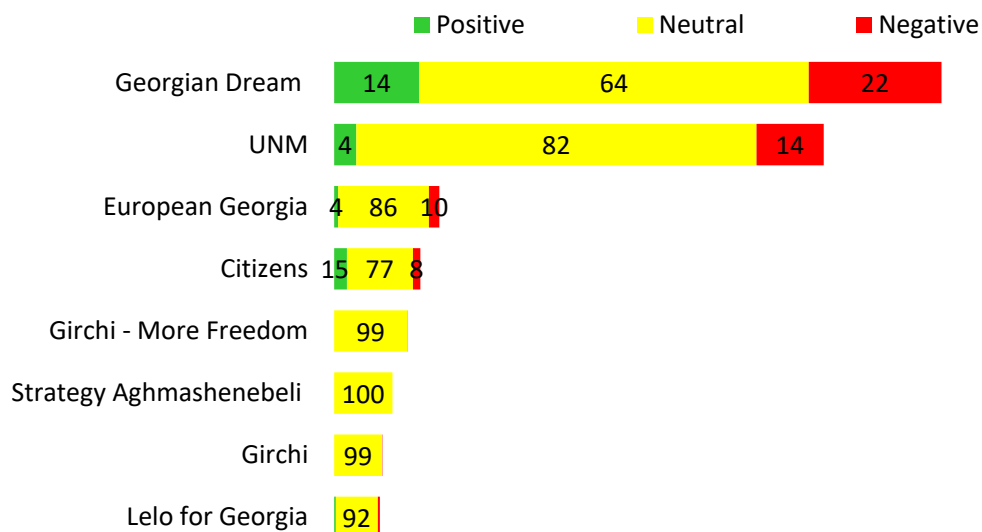


Coverage of Topics (%)
radiotavisupleba.ge
February 1 – March 31, 2021

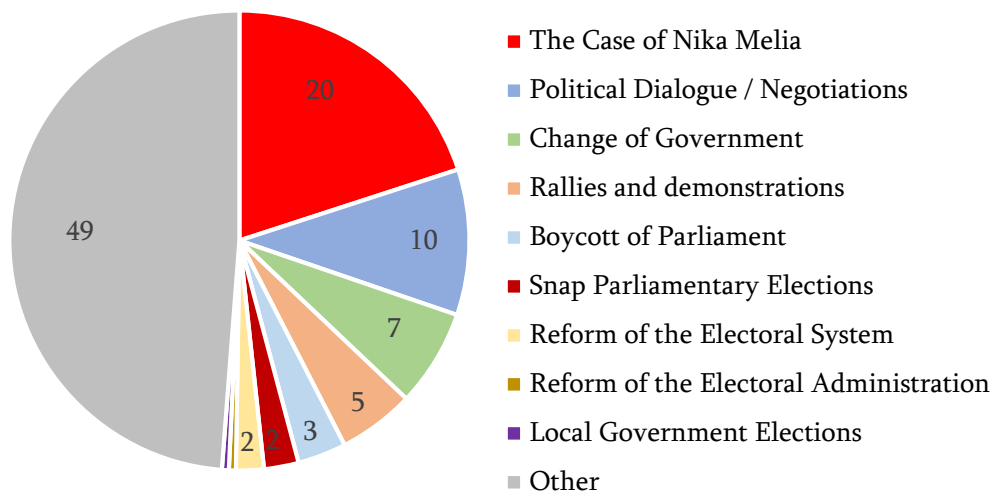


Reginfo.ge

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)
reginfo.ge
February 1 – March 31, 2021

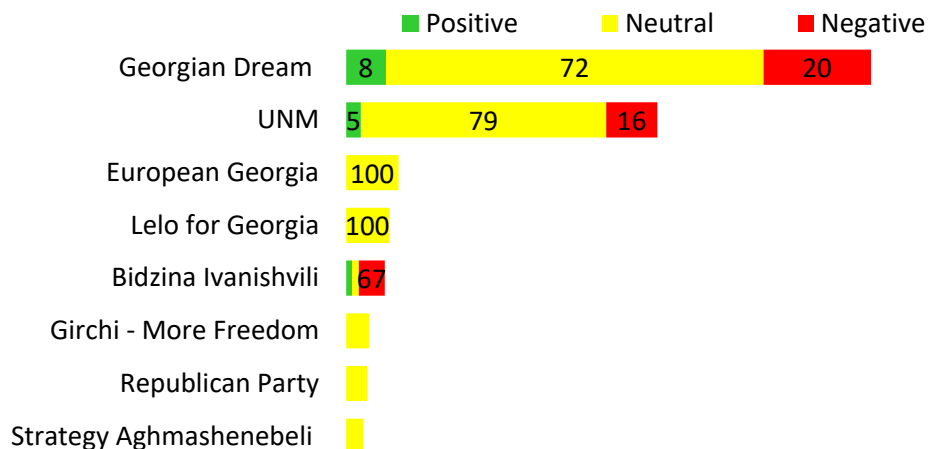


Coverage of Topics (%)
reginfo.ge
February 1 – March 31, 2021

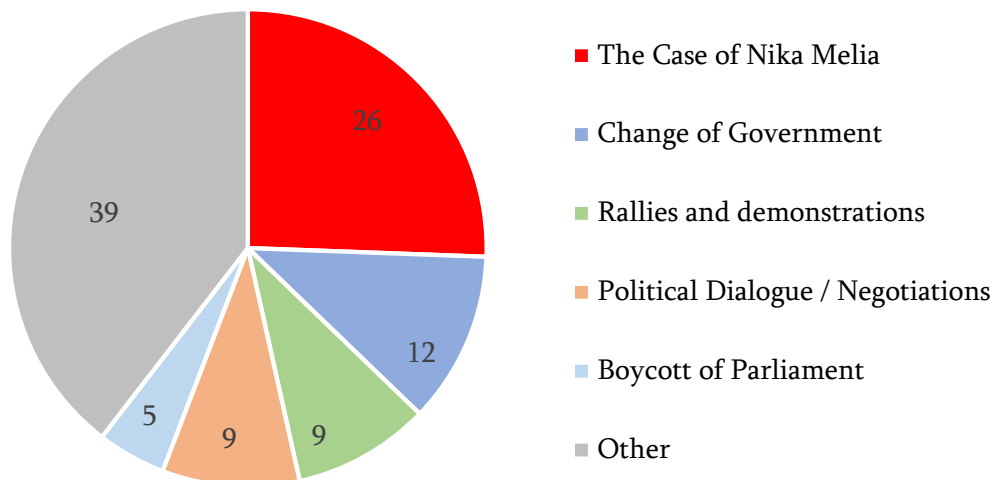


Sknews.ge

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)
sknews.ge
February 1 – March 31, 2021

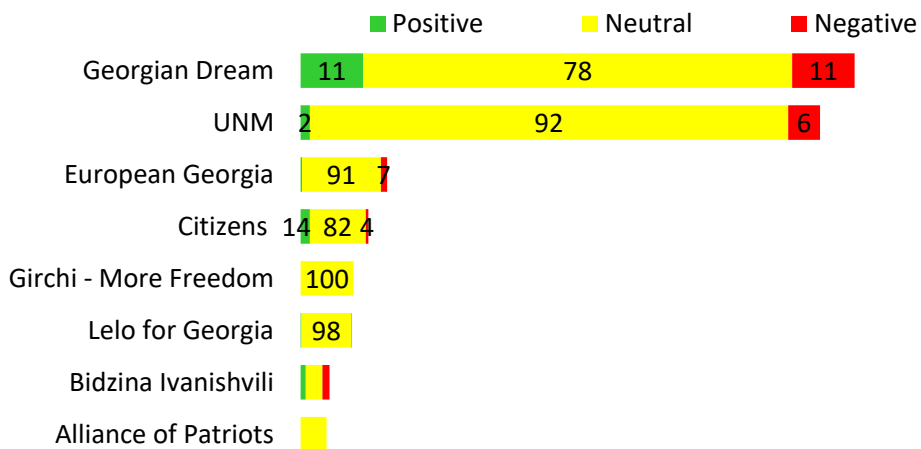


Coverage of Topics (%)
sknews.ge
February 1 – March 31, 2021

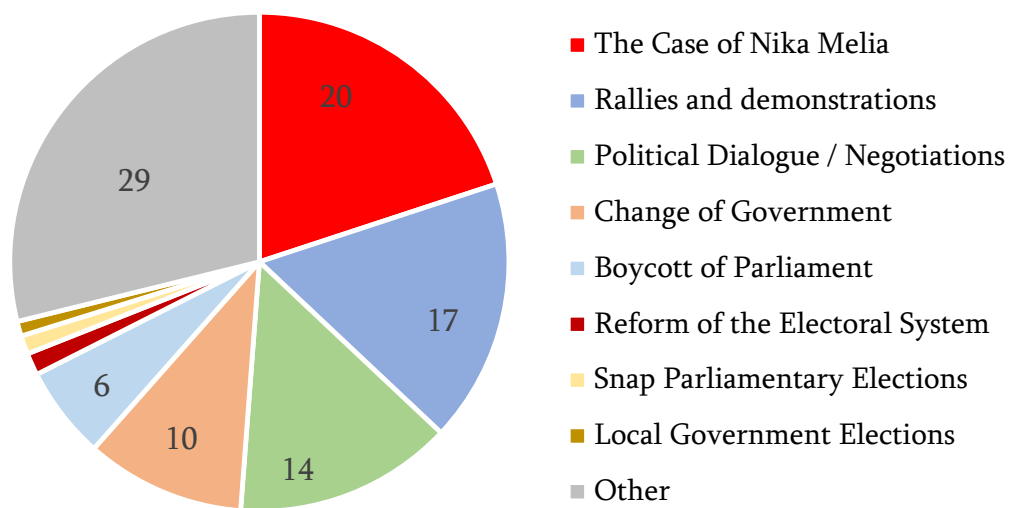


Sputnik-Georgia.com

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)
sputnik-georgia.com
February 1 – March 31, 2021

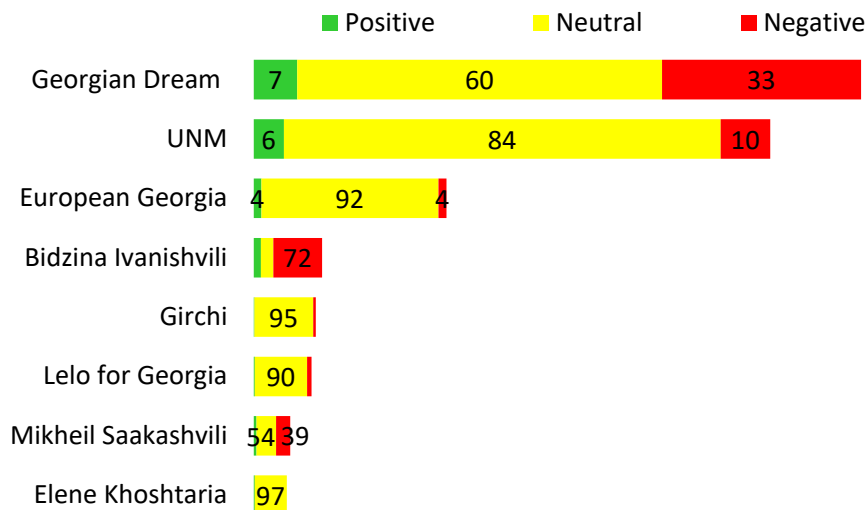


Coverage of Topics (%)
sputnik-georgia.com
February 1 – March 31, 2021



Tabula.ge

Coverage of Subjects by Tone (%)
 tabula.ge
 February 1 – March 31, 2021



Coverage of Topics (%)
 tabula.ge
 February 1 – March 31, 2021

