



**Monitoring Regional Television Broadcasters**

**Presidential Election 2013**

**Subagreement # S-13-238**

**Report for: September 30 – October 13, 2013**

**Main findings of the second phase of monitoring:**

- Compared with the previous reporting period the scale of coverage of monitored subjects boosted up;
- The time dedicated to presidential candidates (including unqualified candidates) considerably increased;
- The TV companies produced interesting talk shows about presidential candidates' election programs;
- Superficial coverage of events is still the main issue of concern on most of the TV companies. News programs were limited to citing policy makers' statements;
- The share of direct and indirect reporting was equal on most of the TV companies;
- Within the reporting period no manipulation through music/sound was identified

**Background**

The report represents the results of the survey carried out by the Internews Georgia monitoring team within the period of September 30 – October 13, 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 (Akhaltzikhe), Trialeti (Gori), Guria (Ozurgeti), Imervizia (Chiatura), Gurjaani (Gurjaani), Mega TV (Khoni) and 9<sup>th</sup> 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 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.

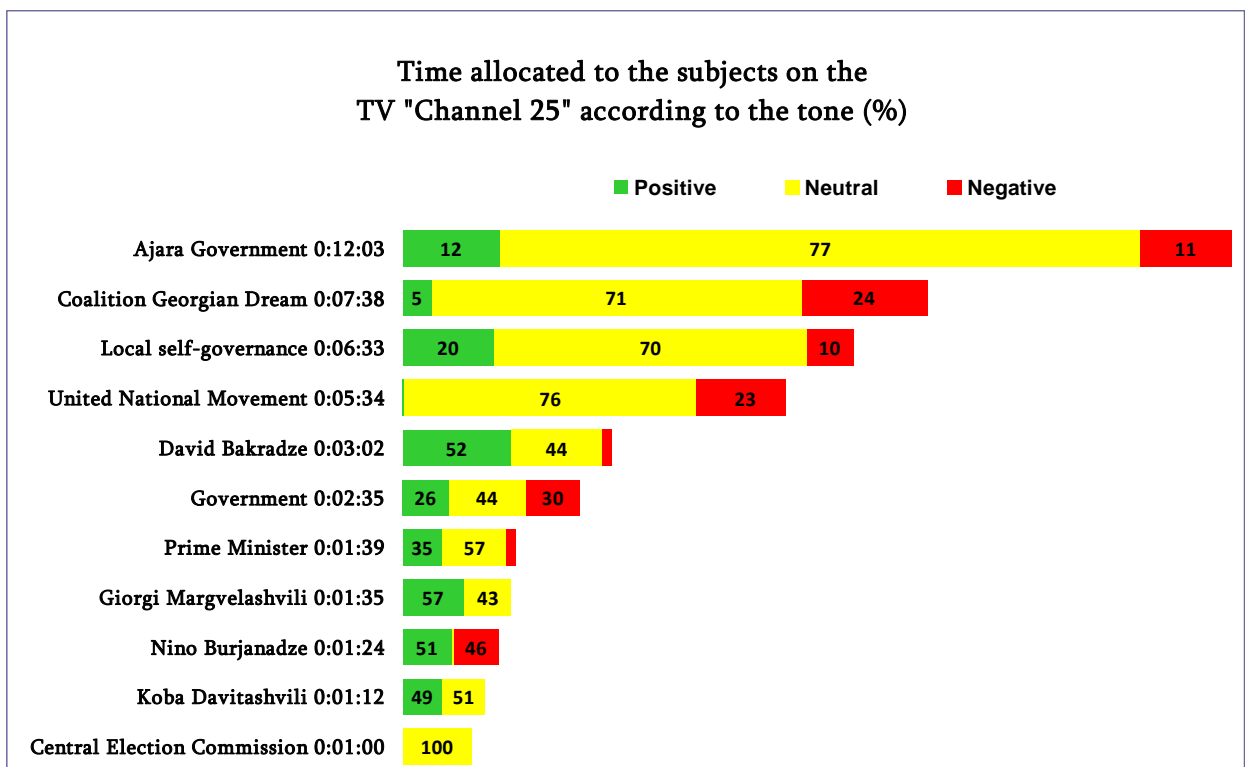
**News programs monitoring results per channel:**

**Channel 25 (Batumi)** – Within the reporting period the channel continued news production on a daily basis. News program Matsne dedicated the total of 47 minutes to monitored subjects. 26 percent of the time was devoted to reporting on the Adjara AR government. Georgian Dream Coalition comes next with 16 percent followed by local authorities with 14 percent. Reporting on local developments prevailed in the news programs. Accordingly respondents essentially included Adjara government representatives. It is noteworthy that compared with the previous reporting period reporting on election subjects went up. Out of the presidential candidates over one minute was dedicated to each of the following four candidates: Davit Bakradze (United National Movement) – 3 min. 2 sec; Giorgi Margvelashvili (Georgian Dream Coalition) – 1min. 35 sec; Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) - 1min. 24 sec and Koba Davitashvili (People's Party) - 1min. 12 sec. In the main the presidential candidates' meetings with the population were covered. Reporting was direct solely in relation to Davit Bakradze and Koba Davitashvili. Reporting was essentially neutral in tone. Negative tone was observed too though in regard to Nino

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Burjanadze and Davit Bakradze – the channel covered the incident which took place during UNM candidate’s meeting with the population. Offensive public statements were televised in the news program Matsne with no sound muted.

News programs daily covered social problems that citizens face. TV stories essentially maintained balance when televising comments made by local authorities or Adjara government, socially vulnerable or affected population. It is noteworthy that journalists often posed critical questions to the representatives of local authorities and Adjara government. In the October 8 news outlet the Chairman of the Council of Adjara AR insulted a journalist for the question about the mosque to be built in Batumi. It is worth to note though that the journalist sounded ethical.



**Rioni (Kutaisi)** – TV company Rioni-produced daily news programs dedicated the total of 3 hour and 44 minutes to the monitored subjects, 23 percent of which falls on the Georgian Dream Coalition, 20 percent on – UNM and 18 percent on local authorities.

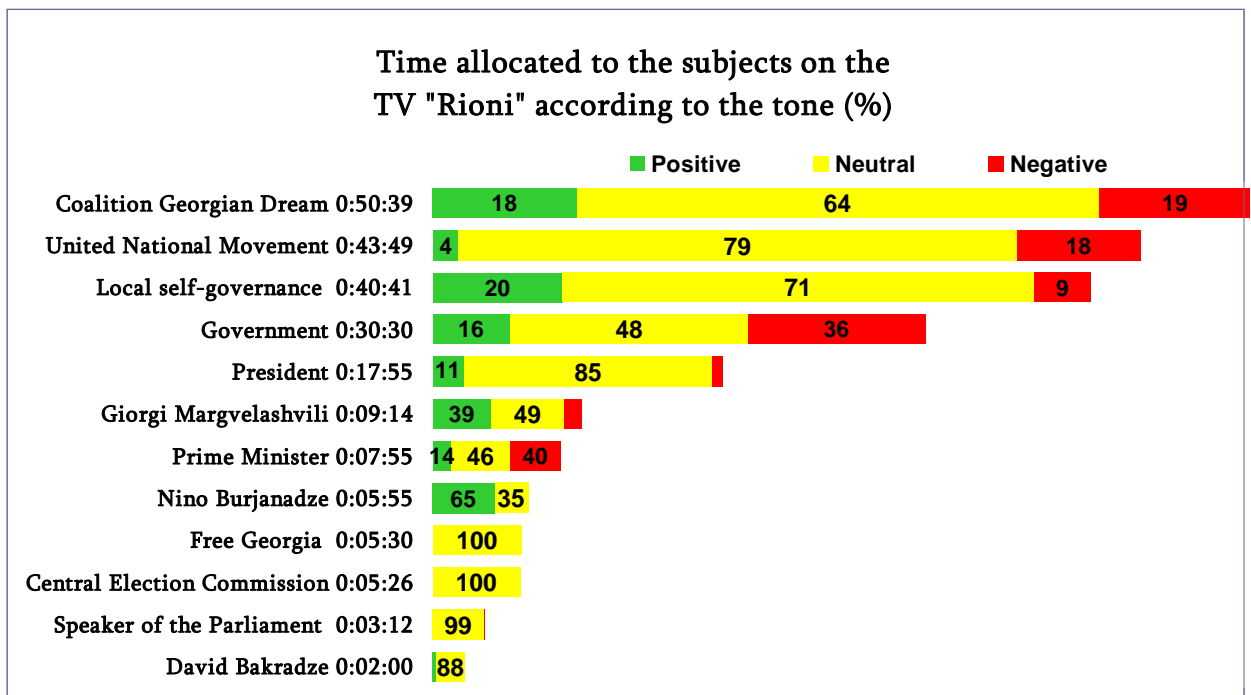
Journalists, compared with the previous reporting period, more aggressively covered the activities carried out by the regional election HQs of presidential candidates, reviewed

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population's approach to the pre-election campaign. A bit more than nine minutes was dedicated to the presidential candidate of the Georgian Dream Coalition which was due to reporting on the Prime Minister's and Giorgi Margvelashvili's visit to Kutaisi. This event was covered in the October 13 weekly program 7 Days in the most unbiased and neutral manner. Positive evaluations made by the population in regard to the presidential candidate was the prerequisite of 39 percent of positive reporting tone.

Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) stands out in terms of high index of positive reporting. 65 percent of 6-minute reporting was found positive.

News programs dedicated a fair amount of airtime to the events ongoing in the parliament. The issues and initiatives discussed in the legislative body were covered in a timely manner. A considerable amount of airtime was dedicated to the direct speeches delivered by members of Parliament.



**Kvemo Kartli TV and Radio Company (Rustavi)** – Within the reporting period the TV company, from Monday to Saturday, aired 20-35-minute news program Kronika. On Sundays TV air was dedicated to Kviris Kronika (Weekly Chronicles).

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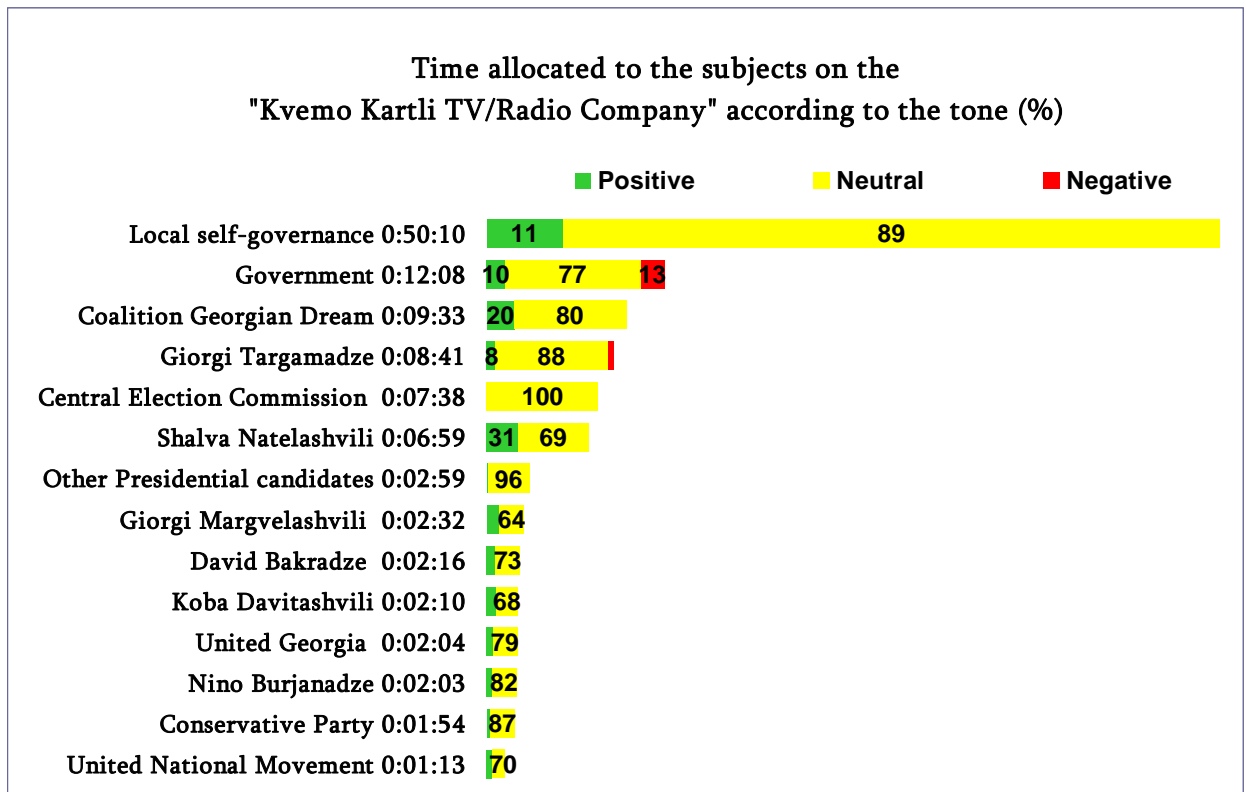
News programs provided a lengthy coverage of political, economic, social, cultural and sports events ongoing in Kvemo Kartli region. Considerably less time was devoted to reporting on central developments.

During the reporting period the monitored subjects were dedicated the total of one hour and 54 minutes. The biggest portion (50 min.) of which falls on the local authorities, followed by government with 12 minutes.

News programs aggressively covered the activities of the local authorities (Rustavi City Mayor, Sakrebulo chairperson and their deputies). The first and second story of news programs essentially covered their activities. The stories about presidential candidates were the fifth, sixth, seventh or eighth in row. The channel tended to actively report on the pre-election campaigns conducted by presidential candidates including Giorgi Targamadze (Christian-Democratic Movement), Shalva Natelashvili (Labor Party), Giorgi Margvelashvili (Georgian Dream Coalition), Davit Bakradze (United National Movement) and Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia). The time calculated for each of them was made up of reporting on their pre-election campaigns.

Reporting on monitored subjects, including presidential candidates, was mostly neutral in tone. The index of direct and indirect reporting was almost equal: same amount of airtime was apportioned to any of them. Only in regard to Giorgi Margvelashvili (Georgian Dream Coalition) reporting was found 100 percent indirect (2 minutes, 32 seconds of the time dedicated).

Journalists reported in a timely manner, with no subjective comments attached. TV stories were balanced. All of the interested parties were equally represented.



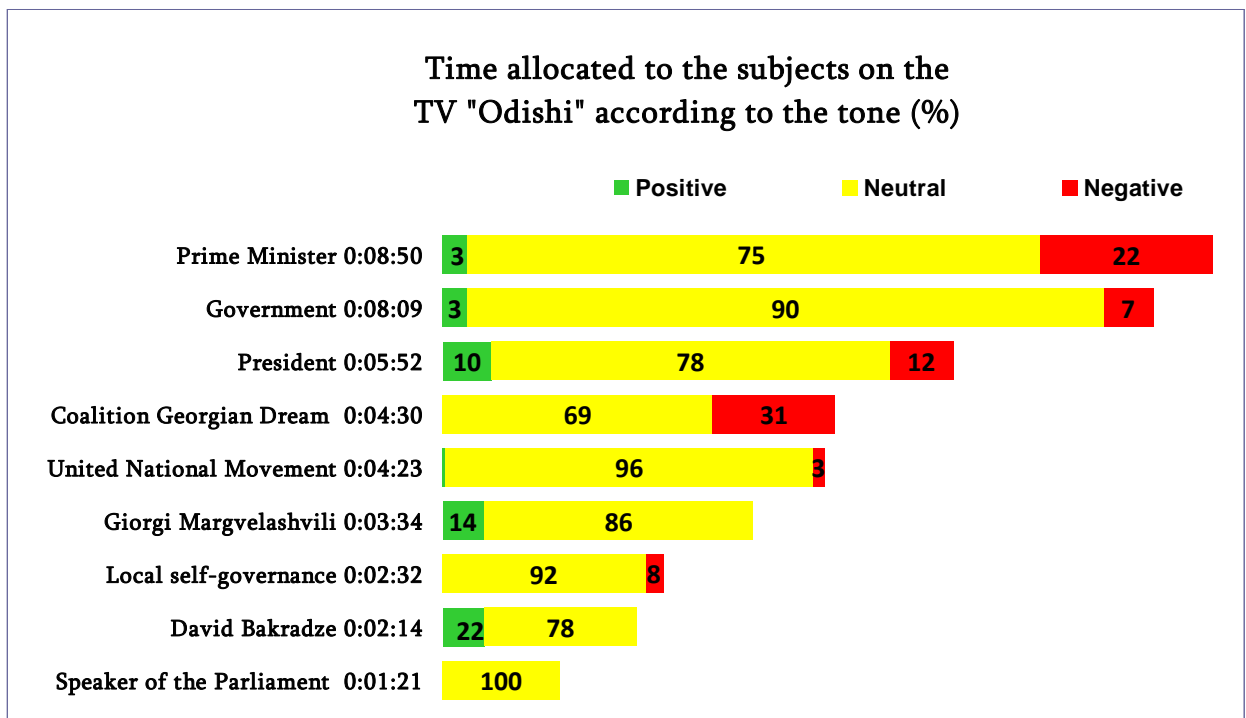
**Odishi (Zugdidi)** – News program Dro (Time), whose running time is 6-12 minutes, was on air on a daily basis from Monday to Saturday.

The evening TV air was also dedicated to Infolent featuring, for about 15 seconds, the opinions expressed by policy makers and public figures. Mostly, together with the texted citation, the author's photo was shown.

Within the reporting period monitored subjects were dedicated 45 minutes in total. Prime Minister and government shared the biggest share (8-8 min each) of total time. Five minute was dedicated to reporting on President.

News programs mostly reported on local developments. Out of the presidential candidates Giorgi Margvelashvili (Georgian Dream Coalition) and Davit Bakradze (UNM) fell within news coverage. The channel covered the proceeding of their pre-election campaign in the region. Reporting in monitored subjects was neutral in tone. In relation to every monitored subject indirect reporting always prevailed over direct reporting. TV stories were found unbiased and balanced.





**9<sup>th</sup> Channel (Alkhaltshikhe)** – TV company’s evening air was dedicated to two news outlets Echo. The monitored subjects were in total dedicated 1 hour and 2 minutes. The channel was notable for the diversity of reporting on election subjects.

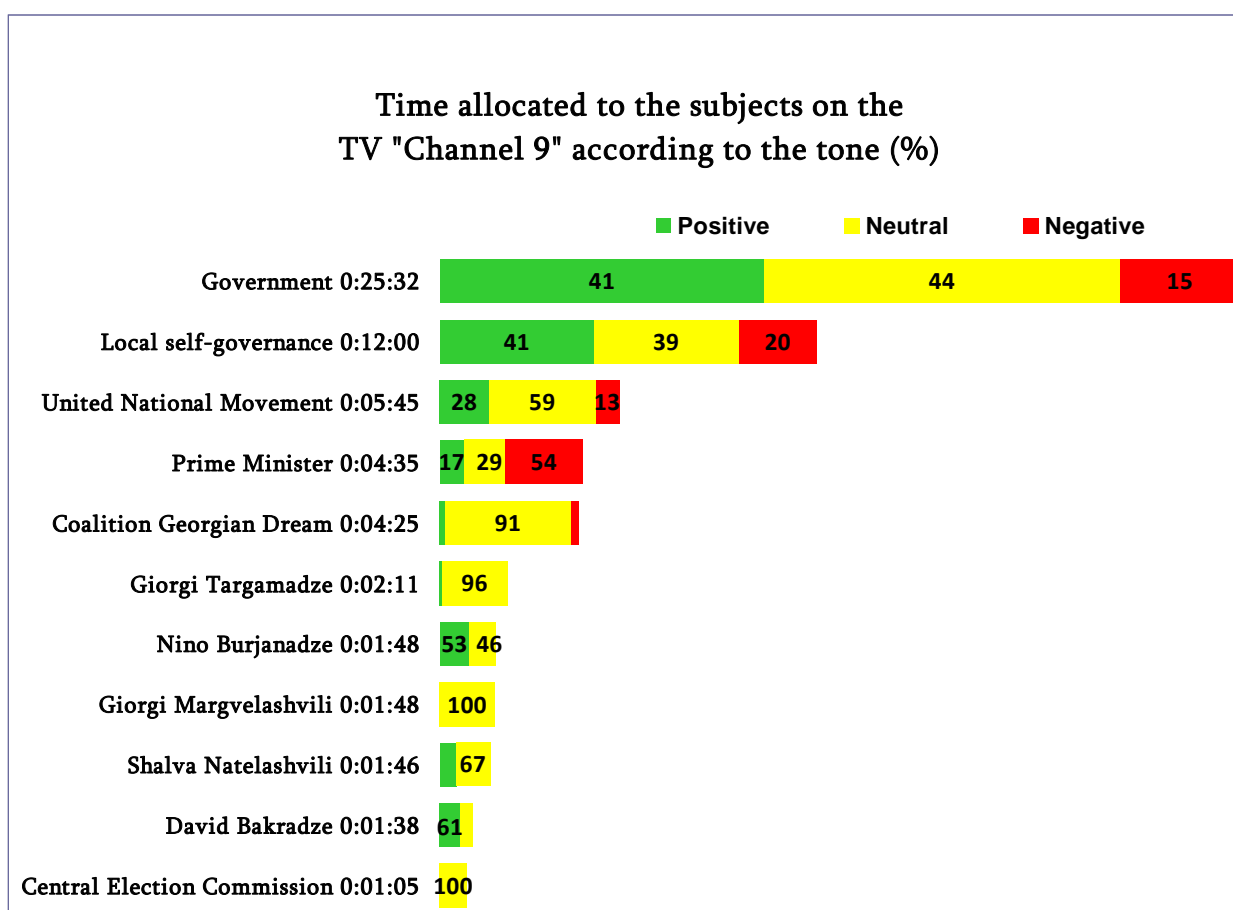
The biggest share of airtime was dedicated to government (40 percent of total time) and local authorities (20 percent of total time). Out of the political parties United National Movement (5 min. 45 sec.) and Georgian Dream Coalition (4 min. 25) were covered. As regards presidential candidates over one minute was dedicated to Giorgi Targamadze (Christian-Democratic Movement), Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement –United Georgia), Giorgi Margvelashvili (Georgian Dream Coalition), Shalva Natelashvili (Labor Party) and Davit Bakradze (UNM). In relation to almost every presidential candidate indirect reporting prevailed over direct. Reporting was either neutral or positive in tone. No negative tone was identified. News programs were balanced and unbiased. The airtime dedicated to presidential candidates was almost equally distributed.

In the news programs it was sometimes hard to identify respondents due to the missing subtitles.

Inaccuracy was identified in the October 1 news outlet: ahead of the story the newsreader said: “A year after the October 1 presidential elections. What has changed in Akhhaltsikhe

during one-year office of the new government and what are expectations for the presidential elections 2013. Let's see how the society feels," and at the time the story featured respondents interviewed on Rustaveli Ave. Tbilisi.

The October 6 main news program aired a TV story about the issues discussed in the October 3 talk show produced by the same channel. Speaking in the talk show the GD Coalition representative accused the channel of being biased. Granting an interview to the news program the same representative said since last year's parliamentary elections the situation has changed. Contrary to the remarks made to the channel the journalist referred to the report released by National-Democratic Institute according to which the channel enjoyed high degree of locals' trust.



**Tanamgzavri (Telavi)** – During reporting period Tanamgzavri aired 20-30-minute news program from Monday to Friday. The first part of the news program covered developments in Telavi and Kakheti region in general: presidential candidates' pre-election campaigns, social issues, infrastructural projects, the problems the local dwellers face, cultural and other

events. In the second part of the program the events ongoing nationwide were provided lengthy coverage. News programs devoted equal time to reporting on the events ongoing in the region and nationwide. At times though more time was apportioned to reporting on the events ongoing nationwide.

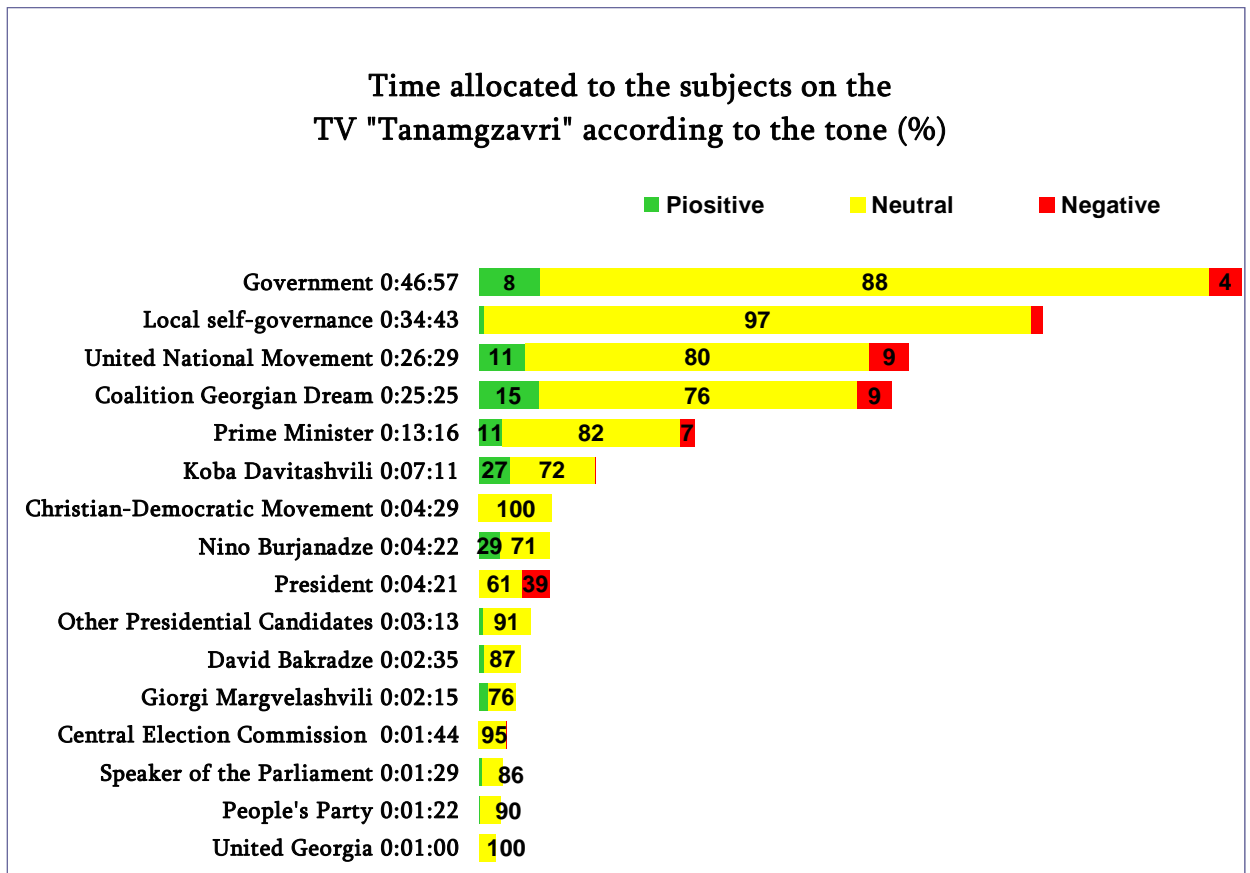
Monitored subjects were in total dedicated 3 hours and 2 minutes. A greater portion of the time (47 min.) falls on reporting on government. 34-minute reporting was enjoyed by local authorities, 26 minutes by UNM, 2 minutes by GD Coalition. Out of the presidential candidates Koba Davitashvili (People's Party) leads the chart: his pre-election meeting in Gurjaani, as well as press conference during which the presidential candidate accused parliamentary majority leader Davit Saganelidze of lobbying insurance companies, was covered.

News programs also covered Giorgi Margvelashvili's meeting in the village of Karajala; Nino Burjanadze's (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) and Davit Bakradze's (UNM) statement on election-related or other issue. Reporting was mostly neutral in tone. The index of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal.

No lack of balance was found in any TV story aired in the news programs. Journalists' reporting did not include subjective evaluations, the October 2 TV story though captured attention. The TV story "one year passed since the death of 10-month-old baby Barbare Rapaliantsi killed a day ahead of the parliamentary elections 2012" provided equal coverage of any party and balance was more or less maintained but some depressing shots featuring the removal of the dead body out of the pitcher were openly shown as well as the mourning family members and relatives. Transmission of this kind of shots is against the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Article 35. **Requirements to ensuring privacy (rules).** "Broadcasters shall not take or broadcast material featuring victims of accidents or individuals suffering a personal tragedy, including in a public place or at funerals, if it infringes privacy, except for cases when the consent from people concerned is obtained. In case of death the consent shall be obtained from the deceased's family."



**Trialeti (Gori)** – In the past two weeks 20-minute news program was on air from Monday to Friday. The Saturday news outlet repeatedly aired the most important TV stories of the week, the second part of the program was dedicated to the selected guests.

Within the reporting period the subjects were dedicated 1 hour and 3 minutes in total. 35 percent of the total time falls on UNM, 17 percent on government, 11 percent on GD Coalition, 10 percent on Prime Minister and President each, 6 percent on local authorities.

It is noteworthy that high index of time dedicated to UNM was due to the activities carried out by Andro Barnov, head of administration of the President of Georgia. He paid several visits to Shida Kartli region. He was also invited to the Saturday (October 5) special outlet in the course of which he stood a chance to speak, for about 15 minutes, about UNM activities as well as of Prime Minister and GD coalition. Barnov was the only guest to the studio, journalists did not call on him much to refrain from voicing accusations against ruling team and Prime Minister and to respond to certain questions only. Accordingly the index of negative reporting on the Premier and ruling team stands high.

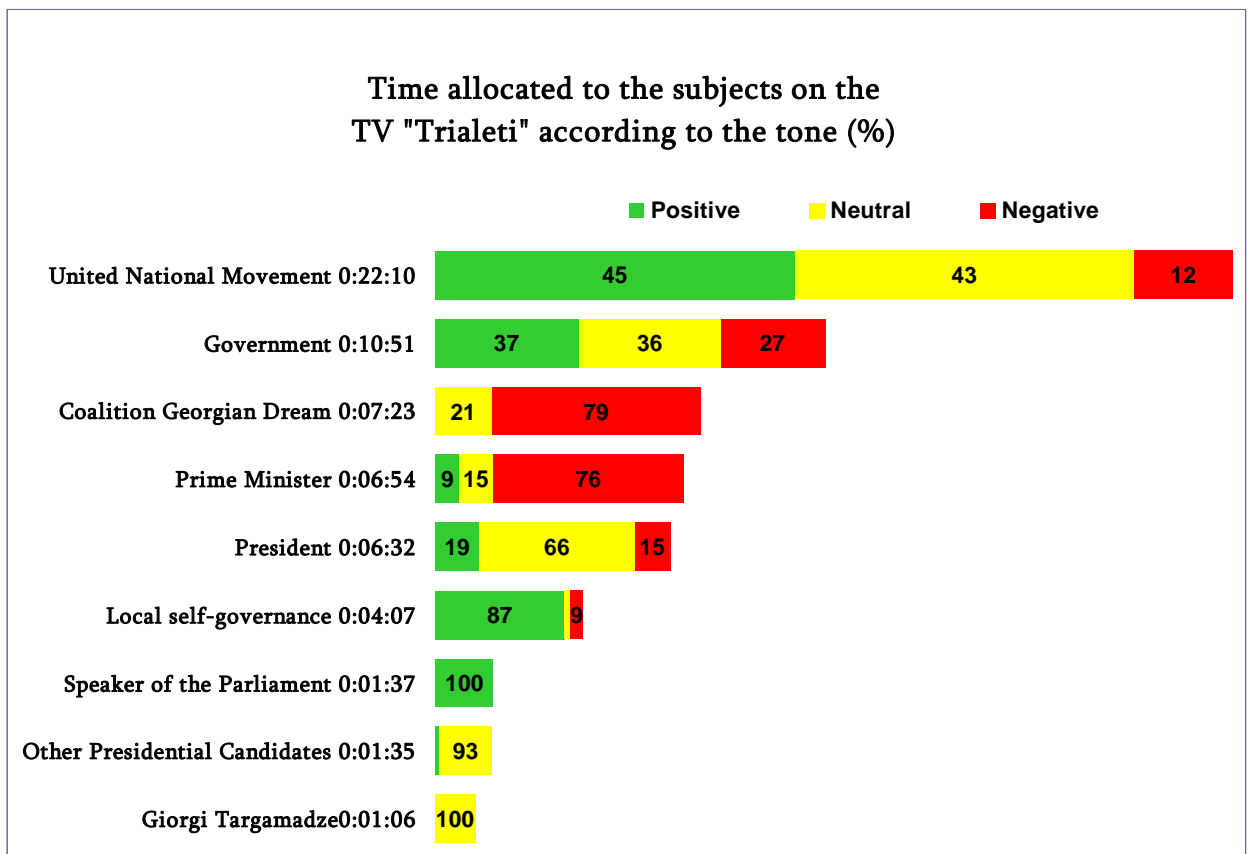
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The TV company aggressively covered the events ongoing in the region as well as nationwide.

Equal reporting was enjoyed by both President and Prime Minister. It is worth to note though that direct reporting by President was 84 percent and 21 percent by Premier.

The October 10 news program covered presidential candidate Giorgi Targamadze's (Christian-Democratic Movement) visit to the region. In case of any activity airtime was devoted to any presidential candidate.

Journalists reported in a timely and impartial manner. For a few days in row the events were covered until full exhaustion of the topic.

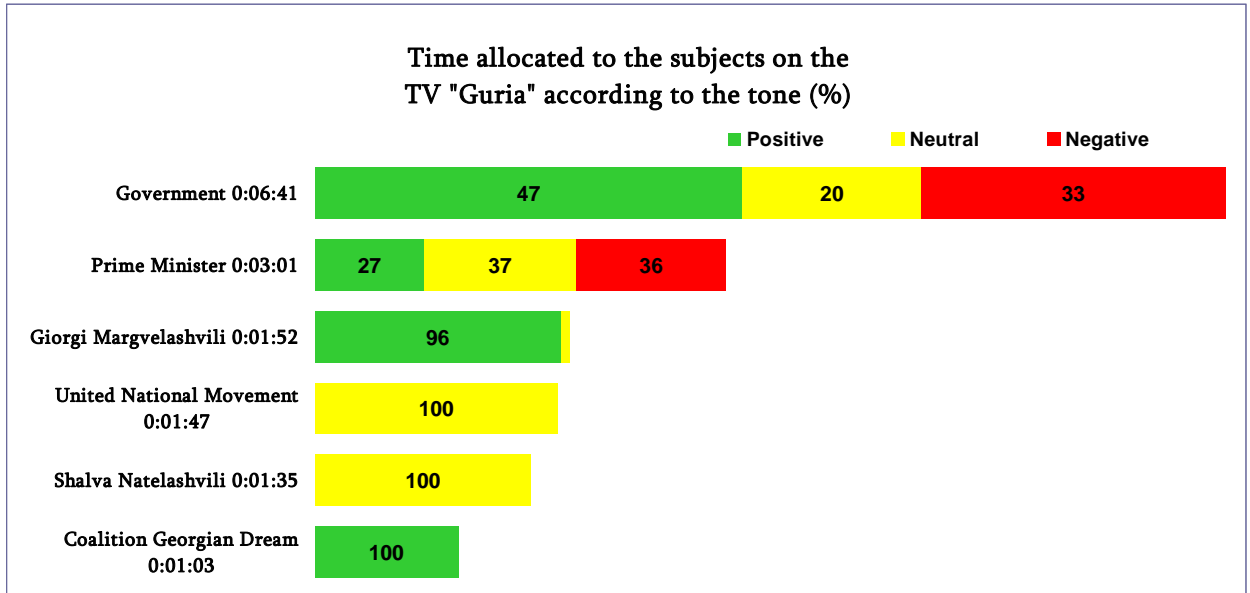


**Guria (Ozurgeti)** – Within the reporting period broadcasting company Guria offered viewers 12-15-minute news programs from Monday to Friday. Along with reporting on local events the central developments were covered too.

In total the monitored subjects were dedicated 18 minutes. 37 percent of reporting falls on government, 17 percent – Prime Minister, 10 percent – Giorgi Margvelashvili and UNM each, 9 percent – Shalva Natelashvili. Out of the presidential candidates airtime was devoted

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to Koba Davitashvili too, the time length though did not exceed one minute. Journalists provided balanced coverage of events, refrained from making subjective evaluations. All three reporting tones were identified when covering government and Prime Minister.



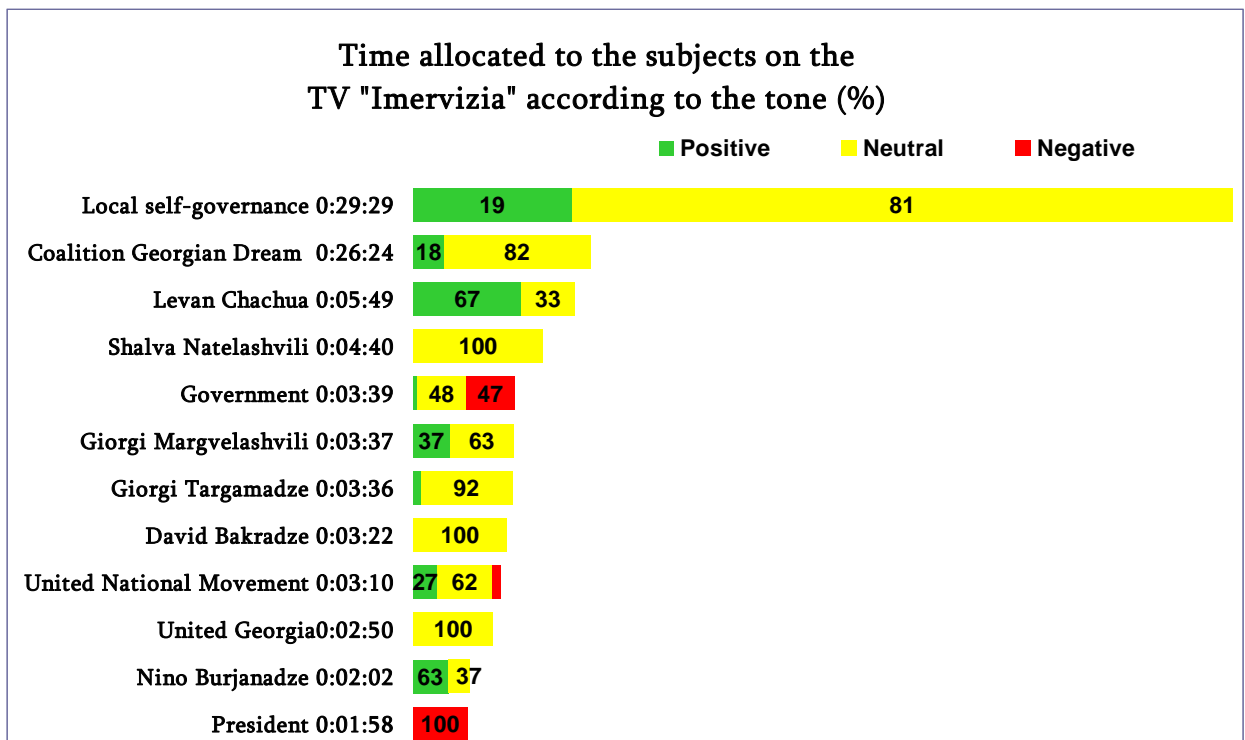
**Imervizia (Chiatura)** – in the first part of reporting period (September 30 – October 8) TV company produced two news programs (Tuesday, Friday). From October 9 the channel started daily news production. Accordingly there was a sharp rise in the time dedicated to monitored subjects. The reporting on pre-election campaigning boosted as well. Out of the presidential candidates Levan Chachua (initiative team) and Shalva Natelashvili (Labor Party) enjoyed biggest portion of reporting. Presidential candidates of the Christian-Democratic Movement, UNM and GD coalition was each devoted 3 minutes. Reporting on the GD’s presidential candidate Giorgi Margvelashvili was 37 percent positive in tone, reporting tone in regard to the rest of the candidates was found 90-100 percent neutral. 100 percent negative was reporting on President: Gori majoritarian deputy of the GD coalition negatively evaluated President Saakashvili’s criticism towards government over the actions taken against so called “creeping occupation.”

One hour and 12 minutes was dedicated to 15 monitored subjects, 41 percent of which falls on local authorities. In the ‘News of the Day’ program journalist Inga Jajanidze had Chiatura Municipality Gamgebeli Sulkhan Makhatadze invited. At the beginning of the program the journalist announced that the representative of the local authorities would be answering TV

viewers' questions. Almost one-hour dialogue was held with the guest. In the course of the program the host of the program posed questions proposed by the population. The journalist was trying to obtain comprehensive answers about the infrastructural and social issues. Some critical questions were voiced as well but the greater part of the program was more like a press conference conducted by Gamagebeli. Following this program a considerable rise in the positive tone in relation to local authorities was identified. This kind of inclusion in the news program overwhelms the TV stories aired afterwards.

News programs were essentially limited to shallow reporting on events.

It is noteworthy that the recording of the sitting of Chiatura Municipality Sakrebulo happened to fall within the monitoring hours (19:00-24:00) October 8. The sitting of the local self- government body discussed ongoing events. The aforementioned recording falls under quantitative component of the monitoring.



**Gurjaani (Gurjaani)** – Within the reporting period broadcasting company Gurjaani, in its 20-30-minute news outlets, aggressively covered developments in and out of the region.

Lengthy TV stories fully portrayed the matters of concern and were always balanced with respondents' comments. Monitored subjects were in total dedicated 40 minutes.

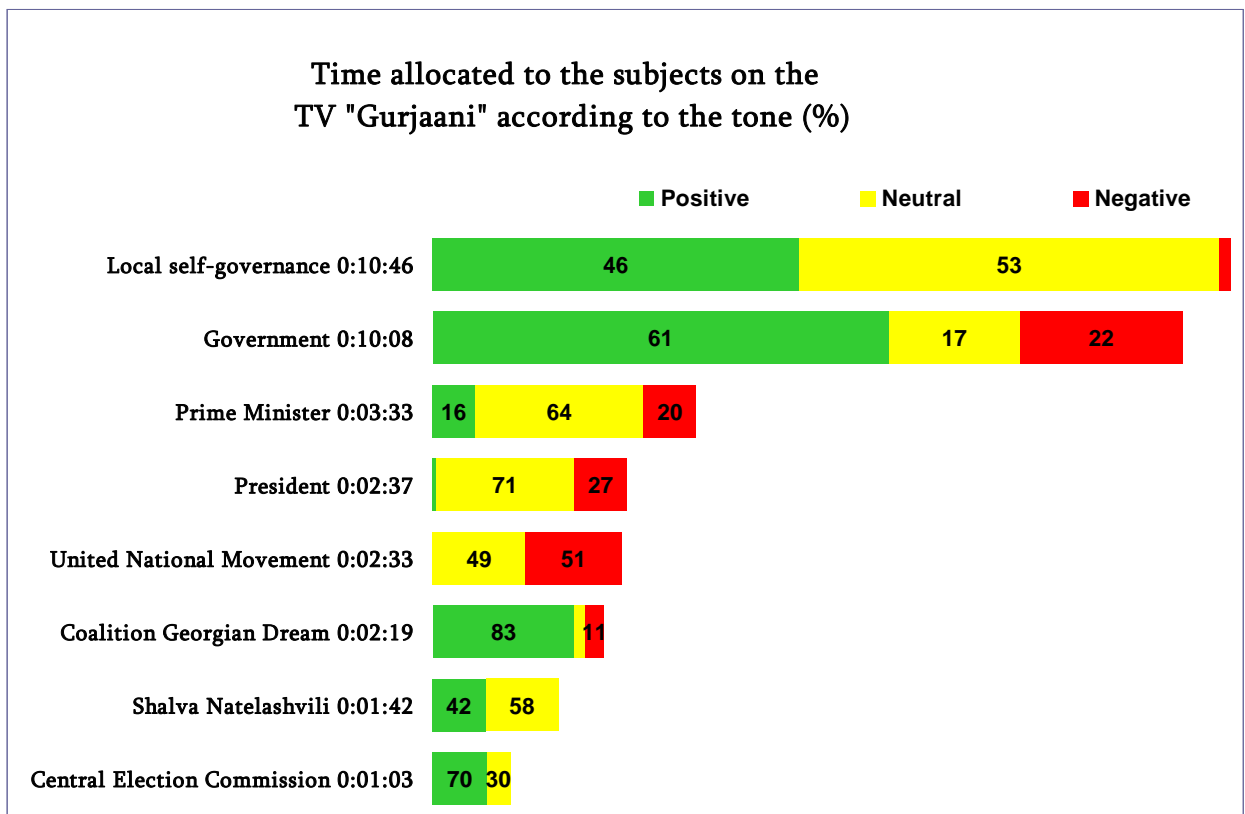
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28 percent of the aforesaid time falls on reporting on local authorities, 26 percent on government, 9 percent on Prime Minister, 7 percent on President and UNM each.

In regard to the local authorities direct reporting considerably prevailed over indirect reporting. As for government, Prime Minister and President the share of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal.

Even though journalists tended to pose critical questions reporting tone was balanced between neutral and positive.

Out of the presidential candidates solely Shalva Natelashvili (Labor Party) was devoted over one minute.



**Mega TV (Khoni)** - In the second phase of monitoring the news program Main Today was on air on a daily basis. The program devoted one hour and 4 minutes to the monitoring subjects. Compared with the previous reporting period, in the run up to elections, the share of reporting on election-related issues went up.

Out of the monitored subjects the biggest portion of reporting falls on government (27 percent) and local authorities (23 percent). As regards political parties UNM (9 min.) and GD coalition (6 min.) were mostly covered.



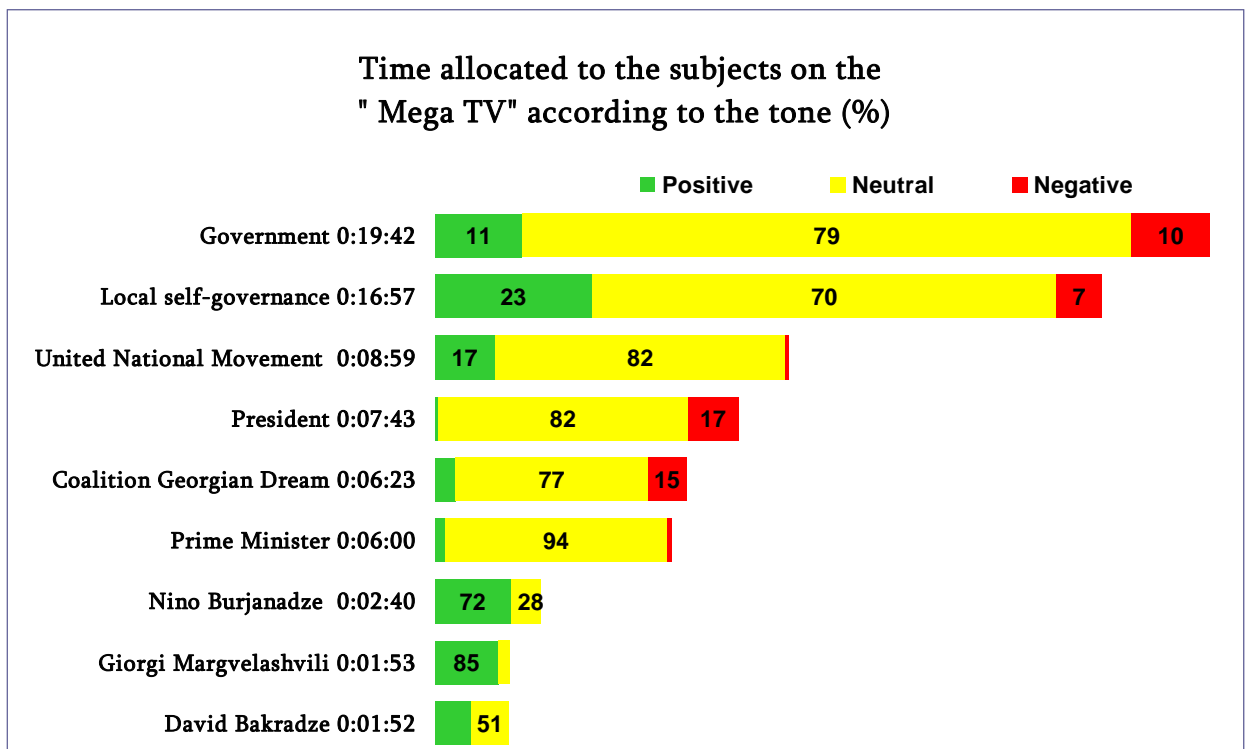
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Within the past two weeks the share of reporting on election campaigns conducted by presidential candidates increased. The time of reporting on election-related meetings was mainly distributed among three subjects. Over one minute was dedicated to the activities carried out by Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia), Giorgi Margvelashvili (GD Coalition) and Davit Bakradze (UNM). When covering presidential candidates indirect reporting prevailed, while reporting on local authorities and political parties direct reporting was dominant. TV stories about candidates were aired one after another.

Reporting on presidential candidates was mostly positive in tone. Negative tone was mainly attached to reporting on local authorities and President.

News program, including weekly summarizing outlet, lacked analytical stories. At times it was hard to identify the respondent due to the subtitle missing.

Balance and impartiality was observed in the TV stories. Journalists were trying to offer viewers the stance of any party.

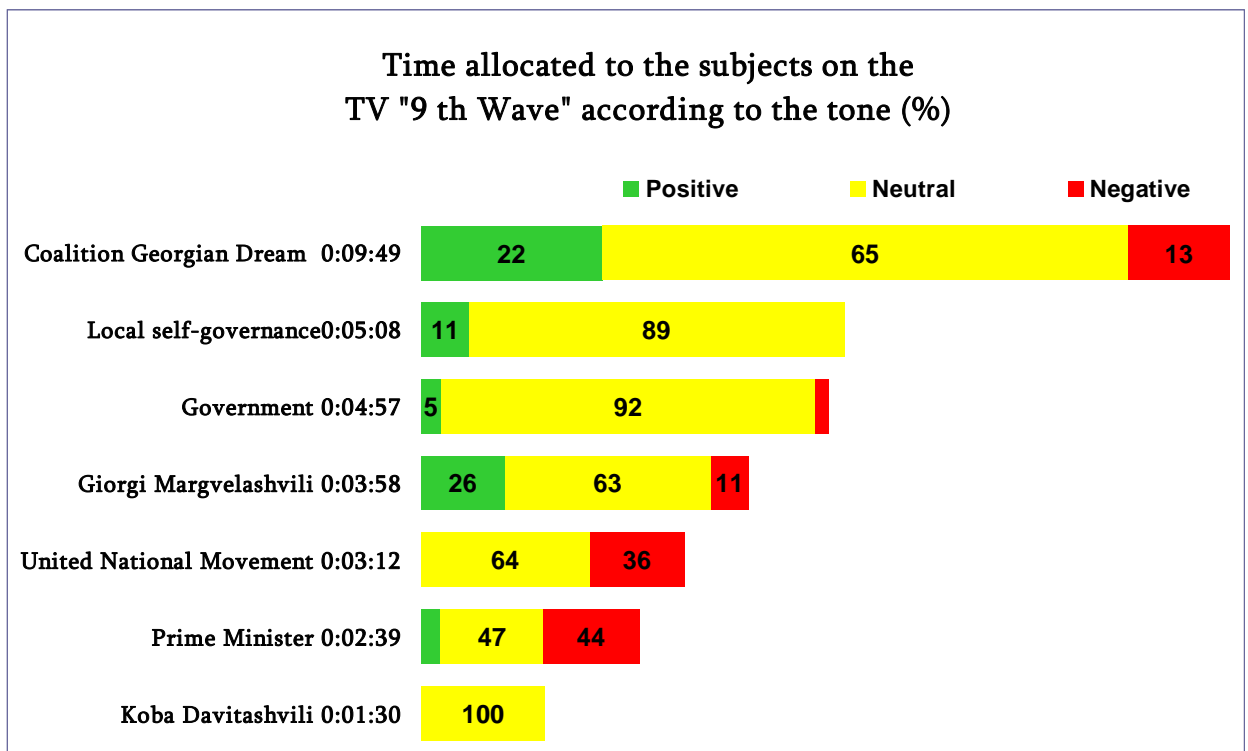


**9<sup>th</sup> Wave (Poti)** – During reporting period 34 minutes of the channel’s evening air was dedicated to reporting on monitored subjects. 29 percent of the aforesaid time falls on GD coalition. Out of the presidential candidates the biggest portion of reporting was enjoyed by

Giorgi Margvelashvili (GD coalition). It is noteworthy that news programs dedicated a considerable amount of time (around 40-50 percent) to direct coverage of political subjects. Prime Minister and GD's presidential candidate Giorgi Margvelashvili was the exception.

In the main the reporting was neutral in tone which is due to shallow brief and unbiased coverage of events, while negative and positive reporting tone was the outcome of respondents' comments.

The news programs produced within the reporting period provided no coverage of events ongoing nationwide: developments in the region were focused on. Considerable amount of time was dedicated to social issues and the problems the population faces.



### 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, they way the lead the process, whether they are just moderators or are trying 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)** – In the evening the TV company daily, from Monday to Friday, aired **talk show Dialogue**. Once a week another similar type of **talk show Answer People** (project implemented by Open Society Georgia Foundation) was on air.

On October 8 the channel aired **talk show Choice 2013** produced in partnership with the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters (GARB) in the framework of media sector partnership project Elections 2013 being made possible with the support of IREX G-MEDIA program.

Together with the selected guests respondents called in from other regions which made the program more dynamic. The TV stories produced about the topics of discussion were shown. The host of the talk show Jaba Ananidze reviewed the events ongoing in the region and presidential candidates' election programs. Within the period of September 30 – October 13 the 10 programs were produced about the following topics:

Increased rights for notaries:

- Adjara government's public relations strategies;
- Old people's Day;
- Adjara TV's competition commission;
- General healthcare program;
- Old people's Day;
- Co-investment Foundation;
- Foundation of "civic organization";
- Debates among the heads of three presidential candidates' headquarters;
- Power generating plant on the river Kintrishi;
- Election programs of presidential candidates Koba Davitashvili and Giorgi Targamadze;
- Past of presidential candidates;

Compared with the previous reporting period the election programs of more presidential candidates were covered.

In the October 8 TV program political debates were held. The heads of the election headquarters of Davit Bakradze (UNM), Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) and Giorgi Margvelashvili (GD coalition) were scheduled to participate in the program, but according to the host of the program half an hour earlier the head of Giorgi Margvelashvili's election HQ said no to participate in the program. Instead of him the lawyer of Giorgi Margvelashvili's election HQ came to the studio. The participants of the discussion were apportioned equal airtime. Due to the noise made during the argument between the participants it was sometimes hard to comprehend the guests' viewpoints. The journalist tried to mediate. In the October 10 the head of HQs of presidential candidates Koba Davitashvili (People's Party) and Giorgi Targamadze (CDM) responded to the questions posed through calls in. Journalist offered both of the respondents almost equal time. The questions touched upon presidential candidates' election programs and it was evident the journalist had conducted a kind of survey into the topic. At times though respondents' visions were obscure.

The talk shows on Channel 25 stood out in terms of diversity. Policy makers, experts, representatives of local authorities and Adjara government, citizens were given a possibility to freely express their opinions. The October 11 program excelled in terms of the diversity of opinions. The program aired a TV story about the past activities of presidential candidates. In the TV story where the journalist was speaking about the low activity of parties during pre-election period David Bakradze's (UNM) damaged campaign poster was put up on air. It would have been preferable if journalist would have clarified corresponding legislation which restricts damage to campaign-related materials. The same TV story discussed Nino Burjanadze's career success and the reasons of quitting Mikheil Saakashvili's team. According to the journalist an "unofficial" reason was Nino Burjanadze's failure to be included in the UNM's so called "list of favorites." The ground for such an allegation was unclear from the TV story though.

It is noteworthy that in the second phase of monitoring the coverage of political topics tended to increase. The host of the program never demonstrated his opinions, trying to apportion equal time to different debating political forces.

**Rioni (Kutaisi)** - Within the reporting period two talk shows Tema (Topic) and Dialogue were monitored.

The running time of **talk show Dialogue** is 60 minutes. The program is on air every Monday at 21:00.

The main topics of the program included presidential candidates' election programs and evaluation of pre-election environment in the region:

- Presidential candidate Nino Burjanadze's (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) election campaign and program;
- Evaluations made by the heads of presidential candidates HQs based in Kutaisi about election environment and presidential candidates' election programs;

The presenter was playing the role of an unbiased mediator delivering comprehensive information about election subjects.

To the September 30 program presidential candidate Nino Burjanadze's of Democratic Movement – United Georgia was invited to discuss election program and current issues of concern.

It is noteworthy that the guests selected for the October 7 program stood a chance to pose questions to one another. The host excelled in terms of maintaining balance between parties, calling on the guests to conduct dialogue in ethical manner. The program was hosting the heads of election headquarters of six presidential candidates including Giorgi Margvelashvili (Georgian Dream Coalition), Giorgi Targamadze (Christian-Democratic Movement), Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement – United Georgia), Davit Bakradze (United National Movement) and Koba Davitashvili (People's Party). Equal conditions were provided for the guests, the use of hate speech was not in place.

During the reporting period for outlets of the **talk show Tema** was aired. The topics discussed included:

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- Food safety;
- Evaluation of Georgian Dream coalition's ten-month legislative activities;
- Rural Support Program monitoring results;
- Exchange program for journalists in Moldova.

Due to the topics of the talk shows the monitored subjects were devoted less time. The October 4 outlet, hosting MP Zakaria Kutsnashvili, from Georgian Dream coalition, was conducted in the Q&A format. The respondent though, in addition to the host, was responding to calls made by citizens. Journalist's bias or an attempt to portray authorities in a positive or negative light was not observed.

Within the reporting period the TV company aired two outlets of the **TV program Your Parliament** produced with the support of USAID within the framework of the Parliament's Communication Center project implemented by NDI and Internews-Georgia.

The October 6 outlet summarized autumn and spring sessions of the Parliament. Vakhtang Lemonjava, UNM's majoritarian deputy from Chkhorotsku was invited to the studio. The guest mainly discussed the results of his activities.

The October 13 outlet touched upon the legislative initiative on the amendment to the Law on Higher Education. To discuss the aforementioned issue two guests, one from GD coalition and another one from UNM, were invited to the studio.

The host of the program, being neutral, limited himself to shooting questions. The guests were granted equal time to express their viewpoints.

**Kvemo Kartli TV-Radio Company** – Every Tuesday and Friday TV air was dedicated to the **talk show Your Time** hosted by Tato Gogoladze.

Within the reporting period four outlets were aired. Each one-hour outlet, dedicated to presidential candidates' election programs, was hosting one guest (presidential candidate). The selected guests included Koba Davitashvili (People's Party), Giorgi Targamadze (CDM), Akaki Asatiani (Union of Georgian Traditionalists), and Avtandil Margiani (initiative team). The journalist mainly limited himself to posing questions. Critical questions were just few. The host of the program did not oppose presidential candidates invited to the studio. At

times the selected guests deviated from the topic of discussion but the journalist did not request them to get back to the issue. The host was trying to make respondents speak about the items laid out in the election program. The host though did not show much interest into details, or provide in-depth survey.

**Odishi (Zugdidi)** – During reporting period Odishi aired six outlets of the 6-minute TV program **Your Parliament**, produced with the support of USAID within the framework of the Parliament's Communication Center project implemented by NDI and Internews-Georgia.

The program host Ana Konopleva had Poti majoritarian MP Eka Beselia of GD coalition invited to the studio. The topic of the program was the draft bill on police. The journalist was curious to know about pros and cons of the draft bill. The host asked the guest four questions proposed by TV company Odishi.

During reporting period, on October 9 and 12, TV company Odishi aired the program **Protect Family for Violence** hosted by journalist Sopho Svanidze. The topics of the program included:

- Essence of domestic violence, its forms and causes; role and importance of mass media in solving this problem;
- Ways to tackle domestic violence, adequate assessment of the problem and correct response.

The guests of the program were not subject to monitoring.

**9<sup>th</sup> Channel (Akhlatshikhe)** – During the reporting period TV company aired talk shows: **Dialogue with Rusudan Gvaramadze** and **Women Choose**. The topics of the program included:

- One year after GD coalition's coming into power;
- Suspended and ongoing infrastructure projects.

Talk shows did not cover presidential candidates' election programs or election campaigns. The representatives of two or three political parties were taking part in the program.

The October 10 talk show presented two political subjects. At the beginning of the program journalist clarified that they tried to invite every political party the consent though was received from two of them. Accordingly, positive tone was attached to reporting on GD coalition and Democratic Movement - United Georgia. Guests demonstrated negative approach to UNM.

The October 3 talk show was hosting the representative of GD coalition, UNM and Democratic Movement - United Georgia. The activities carried out by the parties were discussed. The audience, mostly comprised of GD coalition and UNM supporters, were participating in the talk show. Criticism in regard to Bidzina Ivanishvili, government, GD coalition and UNM was overwhelming.

The journalist refrained from demonstrating his stance, observing impartiality. In the October 3 talk show the GD coalition representative was trying comprehend journalist's position about possible positive changes emerging a year after GD's coming into power. The journalist though abstained from expressing his stance, asking the guest to continue discussion.

The journalist was trying to secure peaceful environment, so that every guest could have a possibility to express his/her opinions. In the October 3 talk show several respondents demonstrated discontent to the time apportioned. At the end of the program, despite journalist's attempt, failed to secure normal proceeding of the talk show, for a few minutes the stance of the audience was impossible to comprehend, guests did not let one another speak.

In the same program the GD coalition supporter accused the TV company of supporting UNM in the past nine years, alleging the channel was biased. The journalist, following the policy of the channel, said the guest's presence in the studio evidenced the channel covered the opinions of any political subject.

**Talk show Women Choose** is being implemented by NGO Samtskhe-Javakheti Media Center with the support of NDI. The program was launched on the channel on October 5. The topic



of the program was Woman and Business. Out of the monitored subjects the program made an indirect mention of government and local authorities, the reporting was essentially neutral in tone. None of the political party representative was taking part in the thematic discussion.

**Tanamgzavri (Telavi)** – Within the reporting period talk shows Choice 2013 and Dialogue fell within the scope of monitoring. Both of the programs were hosted by journalist Nato Megutnishvili.

The October 11 outlet of **talk show Dialogue** was made up of two parts. In the first part the host had presidential candidate Nestan Kirtadze (initiative team) invited to the studio. The journalist was posing interesting and neutral questions to the guest. At times the questions posed by the journalist sounded critical. In case the guest deviated from the topic of discussion the journalist was trying to take the respondent back to the issue. The journalist showed keen interest to the topics under discussion and opposed the presidential candidate in a proficient manner. The format of the program implied calls in but in the first part of the program there was just a single call made.

To the second part of the program, discussing the involvement of national minorities in the electoral processes, four guests were invited, including the representatives of NGO Public Defender. The journalist was trying to let respondents thoroughly speak about involvement of national minorities in the electoral processes as well as the general developments nationwide.

On October 4 the TV company dedicated its TV air to **the talk show Choice 2013** produced in partnership with the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters in the framework of media sector partnership project Elections 2013 being made possible with the support of IREX G-MEDIA program.

The spokespersons of five presidential candidates were taking part in the political debates. Presidential candidates' party supporters and Telavi-based medics were present among the public. Healthcare and health insurance were the main issues of the debates.

The journalist was trying to figure out how the presidential candidates intend to tackle the problems in the given field.

Journalist Nato Megutnishvili equally distributed airtime to all of the presidential candidates. The host did not tend to be subjective. She was trying to generalize the topics so that the guests could have a possibility to thoroughly discuss various important issues other than healthcare and insurance. The journalist showed profound interest into the degree of operation of general insurance program and current problems.

In the course of the program TV opinion poll survey was conducted, Telavi dwellers were discussing the drawbacks in the health insurance program. The journalist was trying to obtain answers from the guests to any issue raised.

In the second part of the program presidential candidates' party supporters had a possibility to pose questions to other presidential candidates. Public appeared rather active using this possibility.

**The program Protect Family** from Violence was aired on Tanamgzavri on Thursday, October 9. The topic discussed was domestic violence. The guests to the program did not include monitored subjects.

**Trialeti (Gori)** – During reporting period TV company Trialeti aired **talk show Discussions on Women's Issue**. The guests selected to the program did not include monitored subjects.

**Guria (Ozurgeti)** – In the past two weeks TV company aired two talk shows Public Hall (September 30) and Together with You (October 7).

The main topic of the **program Public Hall** was the development of agriculture in Ozurgeti region. The program had two guests Jaba Cheishvili of the association Elkana and Guram Iobishvili, deputy head of information-consulting service of Ozurgeti municipality under the Ministry of Agriculture.

The first guest represented civil sector, another one official party. The time was equally shared between the participants. The discussion went on in a peaceful environment, in a free manner, the guests encountered no restrictions. The journalist played the role of a moderator, constantly updating topics of discussion.

**Program Together with You** lasted about 53 minutes. The guest to the studio was acting Ozurgeti municipality Gemgebeli Konstantine Sharashenidze. Journalist Tamta Dolidze tended to shoot critical questions to the guest, she refrained from expressing her opinions, trying to get the obtained information specified. Infrastructural projects and gasification of the region were the topics of discussion.

**Imervizia (Chiatura)** – During reporting period TV company aired two talks shows: Choice 2013 and Your Parliament.

**The talk shows Choice 2013** aired on October 11 was produced in partnership with the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters in the framework of media sector partnership project Elections 2013 being made possible with the support of IREX G-MEDIA program.

The talk show was fully dedicated to pre-election topics. The spokesperson of the presidential candidates HQs based in Chiatura were invited. In particular Giorgi Targamadze (Christian-Democratic Movement), Giorgi Margvelashvili (Georgian Dream Coalition), Davit Bakradze (United National Movement). Head of Nino Burjanadze's (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) election HQ was invited too but the latter, according to the host of the program, ultimately refused to take part in the debates.

The talk show, made up of three parts, was hosted by journalist Inga Jajanidze. In the first part the spokespersons of presidential candidates were allocated equal airtime to speak about election programs and their visions. The second part was dedicated to the debates among the guests, in the final part of the program selected guests were answering calls in. Guests had every possibility to express their viewpoints. The host appeared to play the role of a moderator, mainly speaking in a neutral tone. In the course of the program she refrained from demonstrating her stance, allocating equal time to the parties to speak.

**TV program Your Parliament**, produced with the support of USAID within the framework of the Parliament's Communication Center project implemented by NDI and Internews-Georgia was televised on October 10.

The topic of the program touched upon a new legislative initiative about increasing fee for manganese. The guest of the program was Malkhaz Tsereteli, author of the initiative,

Chiatura majoritarian MP, member of the parliamentary majority. At the very beginning the host pointed out that the UNM's representative of the parliamentary minority refused to take part in the talk show.

In the opening part of the talk show the guest presented the draft bill, and afterwards responded to the questions readied by TV company Imervizia. The viewers were provided in-depth information in relation to the topic. But since thither party was missing in the program the issue was laid out in a positive light, no critical questions were posed to the author of the draft bill.

**Gurjaani (Gurjaani)** – The TV company, within the two-week reporting period, televised **talk show Power of the Powerless** twice, on October 4 and 11. The talk shows were hosted by Levan Aleksishvili. The programs had a special election-related format, solely presidential candidates were selected as guests.

One-hour program was divided into two parts, equally allocated to two presidential candidates. Presidential candidates Akaki Asatiani (Union of Georgian Traditionalists), Shalva Natelashvili (Labor Party), Levan Chachua (initiative team) and Giorgi Chikhladze (initiative team) were invited.

Since Giorgi Chikhladze came to the studio at the end of the October 4 program the time was almost fully dedicated to Levan Chachua.

Selected guests, along with election pledges, were to discuss domestic or foreign issues the country is facing. The host mostly played the role of a moderator. But sometimes got involved into heated argument. The questions posed were adequate and critical, the journalist was trying to learn the most out of the guests.

In the October 11 program presidential candidate Shalva Natelashvili voiced accusations against GD coalition and UNM the host though let the guest conclude his speech.

In the course of the talk shows some calls in were accepted: TV viewers posed candidates the questions of their interest. The host was impartial, no being biased was demonstrated to either party.

**TV program Your Parliament**, televised on October 6 and 13, was produced with the support of USAID within the framework of the Parliament's Communication Center project implemented by NDI and Internews-Georgia.

UNM representatives refused to take part in the programs. To the selected guests including Eka Beselia and Gela Samkharauli of the parliamentary majority the journalist posed the questions readied by regional televisions.

The main topics of the program included:

- Stricter law for anonymous threatening calls or insults made to the Emergency and Operative Response Centre 112.
- Parliament's resolution on the restriction of agricultural land ownership by foreign citizens until December 31, 2014.

The running time of the program was 7 minutes and the guest had around 25 seconds to answer the question.

In the past two weeks **talk show Dialogue** was aired twice on TV Gurjaani the topics (development of football, presentation of puppet theatre) of the program though were beyond monitoring.

On October 5 and 12 the TV company dedicated TV air to **Studio Re TV discussions**. 40-45-minute programs were hosted by journalist Zviad Koridze. The topics of the programs televised during reporting period included:

- Khudon-hesi economic impact;
- Young people's involvement in confidence building.

State officials as well as NGO representatives and experts were invited to the program.

The host of the program played the role of a mediator, he was though fully involved in the discussion, shooting adequate and critical questions, when the discussion got heated up the journalist instructed guests to be more ethical, precisely distributing airtime among the participants. Most of the questions were readied in advance and allocated in a balanced manner.

**Mega TV (Khoni)** – Within the reporting period two talk shows were aired on the channel. Talk show **Forum** was on air on Monday, September 30. From the same studio **Choice 2013** was televised on October 10.

The September 30 **talk show Forum** touched upon the construction of wire fences on the Georgian territory occupied by Russia. Out of the monitored subjects the program discussed government, Prime Minister, and local authorities. In the main the program covered foreign relations of the country and protest by civil sector.

The October 10 programming included TV **program Choice 2013**. The dialogue between journalist and election administration representative touched upon election processes. Out of the monitored subjects Central Election Commission (CEC) was dedicated a fair amount of time. The guest was discussing novelties as well as works performed by Kutaisi district election commission for the Presidential Elections 2013. When speaking about the Commission chairperson's meeting with the heads of presidential candidates headquarters presidential some of the candidates Davit Bakradze (UNM), Giorgi Margvelashvili (GD coalition) and Nino Burjanadze (Democratic Movement - United Georgia) were indirectly covered.

The journalist was limited to posing shallow questions. In the October 10 program no critical question was posed to, the most reported subject - CEC.

In the televised programs the activities carried out by presidential candidates were not covered. Reporting on election-related topics was limited to electoral process and CEC activities.

**9<sup>th</sup> Wave (Poti)** – Every Friday the channel aired approximately one-hour **talk show Tema** hosted by journalist Thea Absaridze.

Within reporting period two planned and one special program was under monitoring. All of the three programs were dedicated to election-related topics.

The topics discussed are as follows:

- Pre-election environment in Samegrelo region and in the country as a whole – evaluations made by experts and representatives of election HQs;

## Monitoring Regional Television Broadcasters - Presidential Election 2013

- Interview with Poti majoritarian MP Eka Beselia of GD coalition;
- Presidential candidates' programs and their priorities.

The guests invited to the talk shows were given every possibility to discuss electoral environment and the programs of their presidential candidates.

To the first program the representatives of Poti-based election HQs and NGOs were invited. The journalist allocated equal time to the guests to express their viewpoints. Accordingly the opinions were presented in a balanced manner. The journalist sounded neutral, posing objective questions, arranging a logical chain among topics and requesting guests to directly answer the questions posed.

In the October 11 program, held with the participation of the heads of presidential candidates' election HQs, the host of the program appeared passive. Out of the selected guests (chiefs of CDM, GD coalition, Democratic Movement – United Georgia and UNM presidential candidates HQs) Giorgi Margvelashvili's spokesperson was dedicated the least of time since the latter was more oriented on commenting opponents' statements. Head of Nino Burjanadze's (Democratic Movement – United Georgia) HQ managed to fully express his stance. It is noteworthy that the host of the program showed no bias to any guest.

On October 5 the TV company televised **interview with Poti majoritarian deputy Eka Beselia** of GD coalition. The respondent was speaking about her political stance and opinions, making utmost use of the airtime to represent the issues of urgent importance. But when the guest made an unethical mention of Poti-based UNM bureau representative the journalist immediately responded, calling on the guest to hold back.

**TV program Your Parliament** produced with the support of USAID within the framework of the Parliament's Communication Center project implemented by NDI and Internews-Georgia was aired on 9<sup>th</sup> Wave on October 3. Poti majoritarian deputy Eka Beselia of GD coalition was invited to the program to discuss stricter regulation for hoax notification, terrorism. Parliamentary minority refused to take part in the talk show. Accordingly no dissention was observed, the program was utmost informative. MP responded to the questions readied by the 9<sup>th</sup> Wave journalists.

### TV Magazine Mravalkutkhedi (polygonal)

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

Within reporting period two outlets of the magazine were aired. The facts covered in analytical stories were substantiated by reference to sources. The stories were covered from different angle, with pre-history provided. TV stories were utmost balanced and objective.

Out of the monitored subjects the time was essentially devoted to central government and local authorities. The first program of the TV magazine was made up of stories to cover important developments of the week. The second program was dedicated to stories and the interview with the selected guest – Bidzina Giorgobiani, Head of the National Forestry Agency Department. The guest thoroughly discussed the situation in the National Forestry Agency Department during former authorities and currently. Accordingly negative tone attached to reporting on UNM, in particular former Prime Minister Vano Merabishvili, boosted up.

Several important topics and events were covered in the programs:

- Agro credit-related problems and promises made;
- New legislative initiatives;
- Halted construction of factories;
- Occupation line and so-called cross-border population;
- Sochi Winter Olympics;
- Draft bill on the protection of the State language and opinions of ethnic minorities;
- Social problems of the population;
- Review of current situation at Forestry Department.



The stories within TV magazine stand out with in-depth analysis and diversity of viewpoints. Journalists delivered information in an unbiased manner, without providing personal stance. In most of the stories neutral tone prevailed when reporting on the monitored subjects.

### 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:** Within the period of October 14-20 the third phase of monitoring of regional broadcasters will be carried out.



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