



**Monitoring of Media Content
of Local/Regional Television Broadcasters
during Pre-Elections**

Subagreement # S-12-155

Report for: October 8 - 14, 2012

Project Period: 11 June 2012 - 10 December 2012

Total Budget: 31 000\$

Results Summary/Impact Statement

Main findings of the tenth phase of monitoring:

- Very few of the monitored subjects are dedicated airtime on regional TV channels;
- There is a sharp increase in the amount of time dedicated to the Georgian Dream coalition and substantial decrease in the amount negative tone of reporting in regard to the coalition;
- The amount of airtime dedicated to the rest of the political subjects has largely gone down;
- There is a decline in the subjective coverage of events by journalists;
- The amount of airtime dedicated to the coverage of events ongoing nationwide increased in most of the TV companies.

Background

The report represents the results of the survey carried out within the period of October 8-14, 2012 by the Internews Georgia monitoring team. Media monitoring helps raise standard of professionalism and is conducive to the development of independent unbiased journalism. The goal of our survey is to reveal, through monitoring main news programs aired on Georgian regional TV broadcasters, the proceeding and trends of media coverage of pre-election campaign.

Activities

The survey was carried out on 20 regional broadcasters operating nationwide, including: Channel 25 (Batumi), Rioni (Kutaisi), Kvemo Kartli TV and Radio Company (Rustavi), Odishi (Zugdidi), Tanamgzavri (Telavi), 9th Channel (Alkhaltshikhe), Trialeti (Gori), Guria (Ozurgeti), Imervizia (Chiatura), Argo (Zestaponi), Gurjaani (Gurjaani), Borjomi (Borjomi), Marneuli TV (Marneuli), LTV (Lagodekhi), 12th Channel (Bolnisi), Mega TV (Khoni), Zari (Samtredia), 9th Wave (Poti), Kronika (Dusheti), Egrisi (Senaki).

Within the period of October 8-14 TV companies Kronika (Dusheti) and Egrisi (Senaki) still lacked self-produced news programs.

Methodology

Monitoring was conducted on the regional broadcasters' main evening news programs during so-called prime time when the number of viewers is at its peak.

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 mention of them. In the given charts the time dedicated to the subjects is shown in seconds. In case the chart is missing any political party, which is the subject of monitoring, it means no channel dedicated any time to it within the monitoring period.

Direct and indirect coverage shows whether the subject is speaking on one's own or is being spoken about either by a journalist or other respondents. In the given charts direct and indirect coverage is shown in percentage. 100 percent indicates the time dedicated to each subject on a particular channel.

The tone of coverage is attributed to a subject when being indirectly spoken about or when speaking directly about oneself, other subjects or some general issues. Charts illustrate three categories of tones: positive, neutral and negative.

When conducting monitoring on news programs it was interesting to find out which events, either central or regional, were covered by the TV companies.

Based on qualitative data the efficiency of media activities in terms of adherence to ethical or professional standards, will be evaluated. The qualitative part embraces components such as balance or whether diverse opinions over the covered issue are represented in the stories; accuracy or whether mistakes are in place in the names or numbers; the vocabulary used and all those important

aspects that are not subject to quantitative measurement. The cases of manipulation through shots and music used in the news programs were also brought into focus.

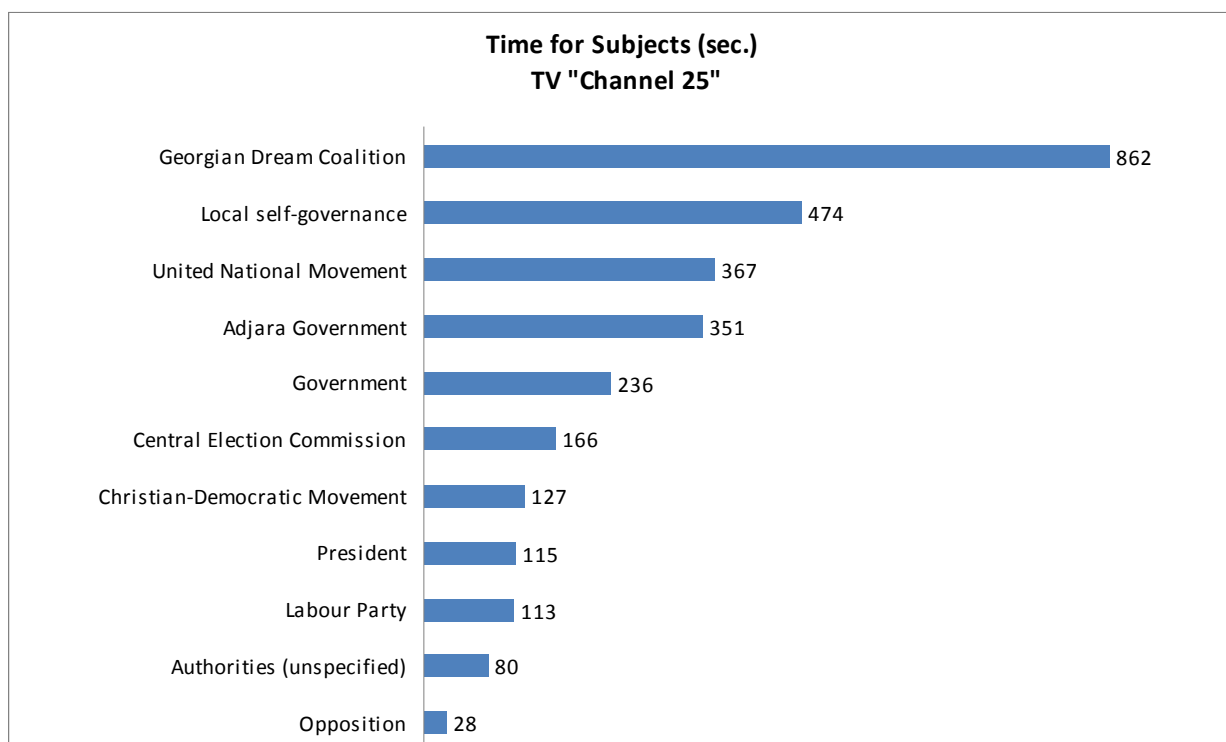
The monitoring subjects include: Parliament (speaker, vice speaker, MPs, committees); President (administration, advisors, press speaker); government (prime minister, ministers, deputy ministers, governors); authorities (when mentioned with no specification); local self-governments (mayors, chairs of Sakrebulo and Gamgeoba); Central Election Commission; election observers; State Audit Agency (in relation to elections); commission in charge of verifying voters' list; United National Movement; Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia; coalition Georgian Dream; Free Democrats; National Forum; Georgian Republican Party; Georgian Conservative party; People's Party; Georgia's Way; Free Georgia; New Rights; Democratic Movement for United Georgia; National Democratic Party; Labor party; Industry Will Save Georgia; Georgian Democratic Party; Georgian Troupe; Christian-Democratic Movement; European Democrats; Voters' League; People's Assembly; opposition (when mentioned with no specification).

The list is not final and might change in case a new election-related appears.

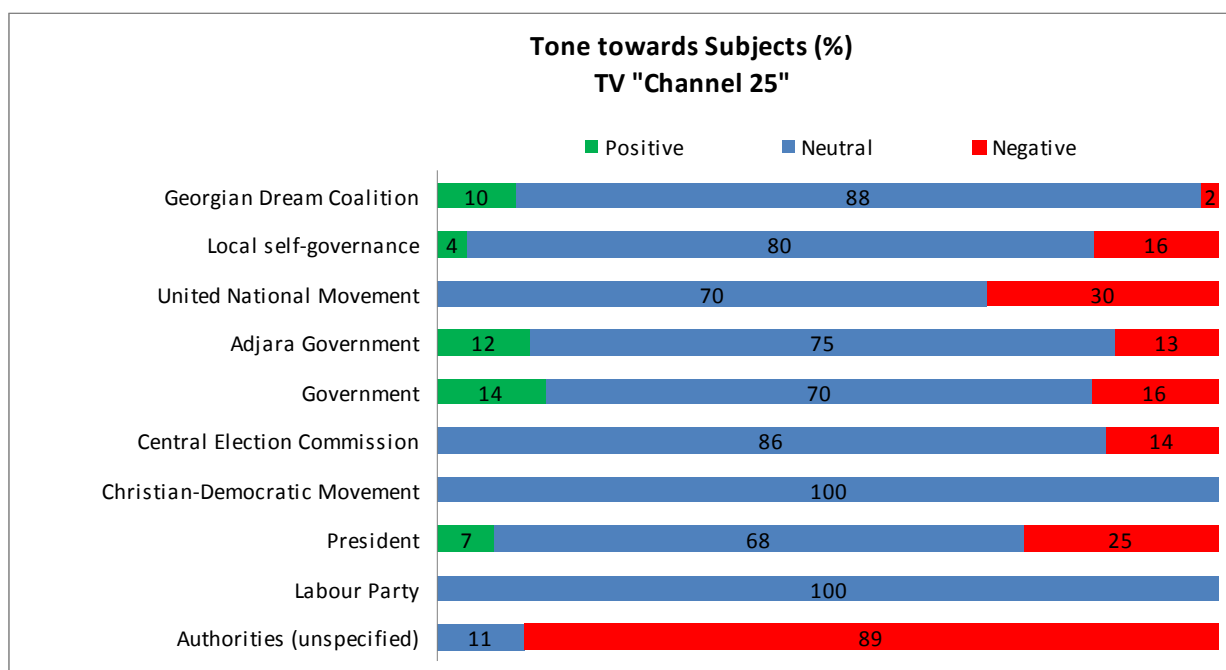
News programs monitoring results per channel:

Channel 25 (Batumi) – News programs dedicated the biggest share of airtime, 14 minutes, to the Georgian Dream coalition. 8 minutes of reporting was received by the local self-government. United National Movement (UNM) and Adjara government each enjoyed 6-minute coverage.

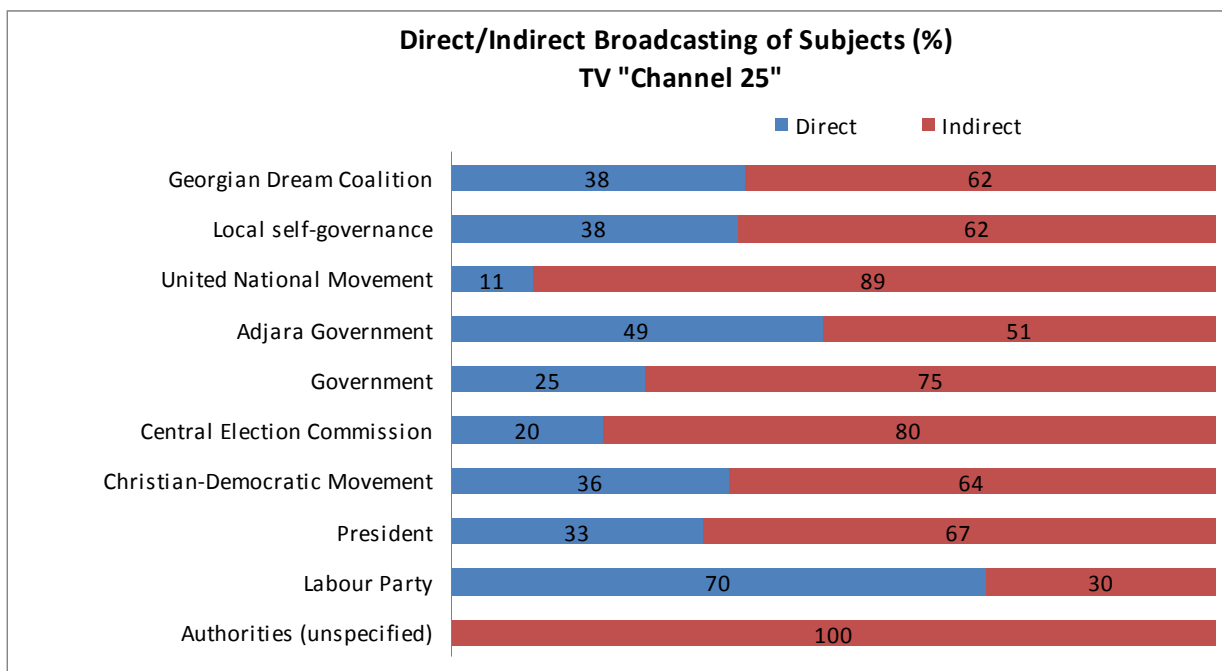
Monitoring of Media Content of Local/Regional Television Broadcasters



All of the three tones were observed when reporting on the monitored subjects; neutral tone though considerably prevailed over positive and negative tones:



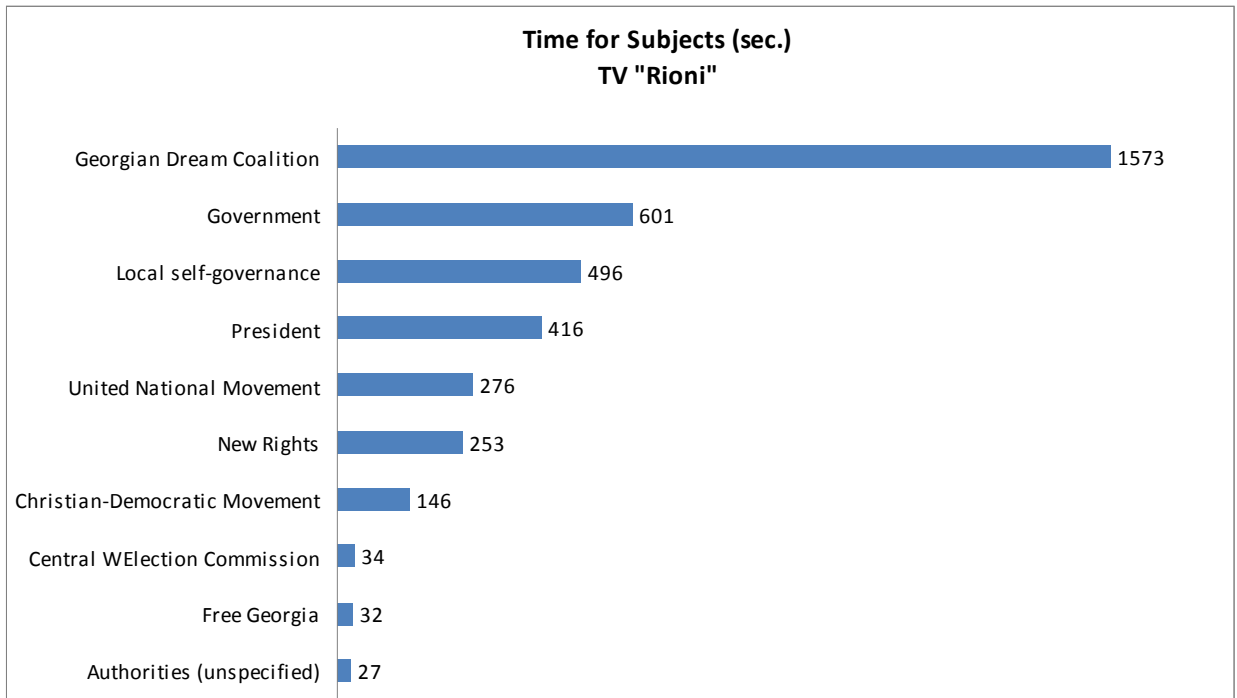
Direct reporting prevailed over indirect reporting. UNM had the highest percentage (89) of indirect reporting:



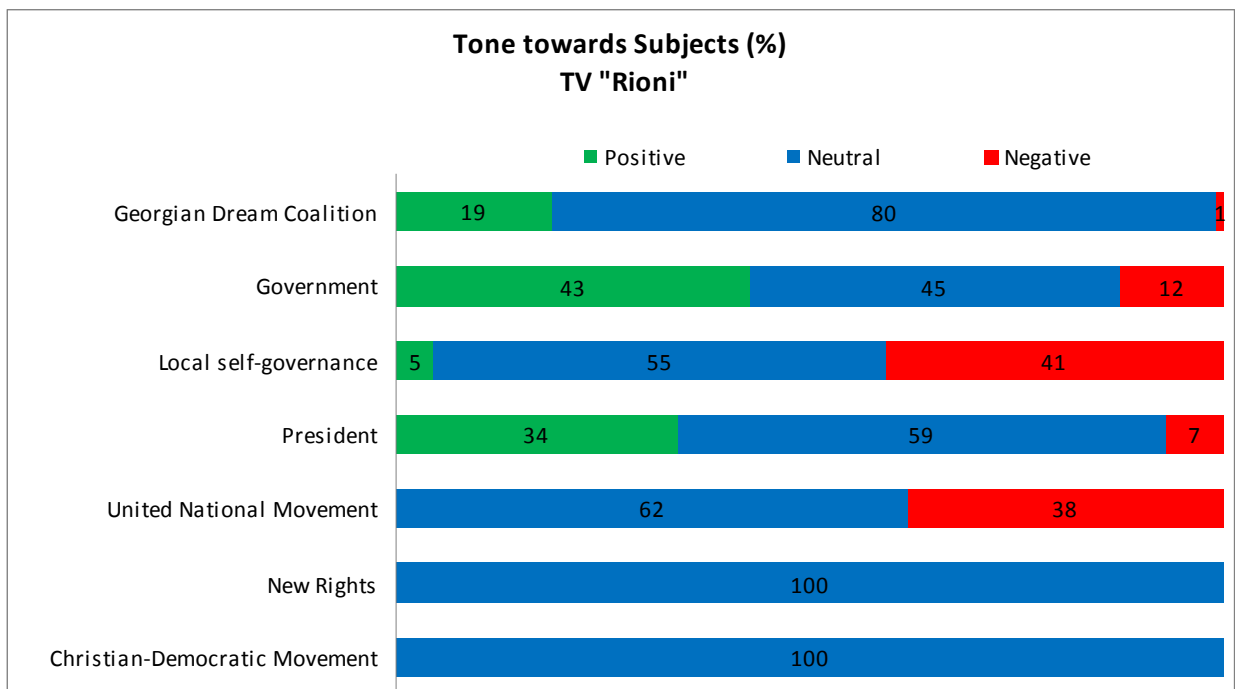
According to the findings within the reporting period the TV Company Channel 25 was procured by UNM's majoritarian deputy, which was followed by journalists' protest. Ultimately the news program of October 11 aired only two TV stories. Notwithstanding the changes at the TV company Channel 25 aggressively covered political events ongoing nationwide. Out of the monitored subjects the bigger share of airtime was dedicated to the Georgian Dream coalition: virtually twice more than the subject coming next in the chart. Besides, only 2 percent of the total time dedicated to the coalition was negative in tone, while negative tone attached to reporting on UNM was 30 percent.

It is noteworthy that journalists are unbiased and do not demonstrate personal approach to any subject.

Rioni (Kutaisi) – The biggest share of airtime in the news programs was dedicated to the Georgian Dream coalition – 26 minutes. UNM comes next with 10 minutes, followed by local self-government with 8 minutes and President with 7 minutes.

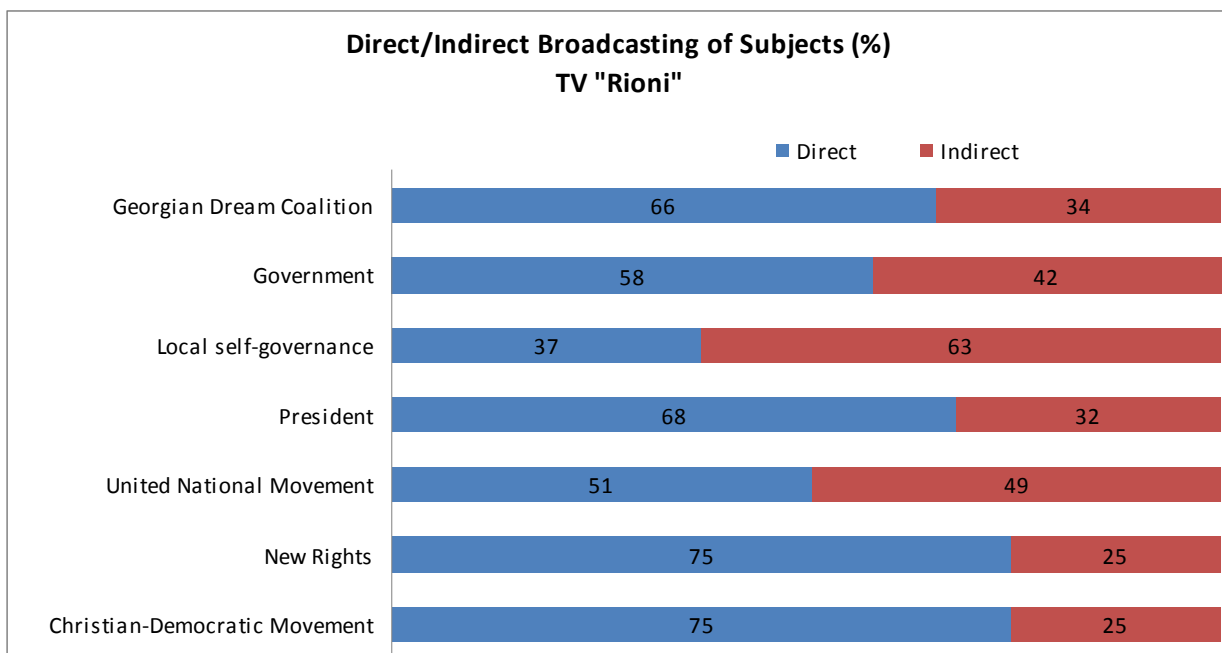


All of the three tones were applied in regard to the monitored subjects. Neutral tone though prevailed over positive and negative tones. The highest percentage (43) of positive reporting was received by government. Local self-government ranks first in terms of negative reporting – 42 percent. Positive (19 percent) and neutral (80 percent) tones were attached to reporting on the Georgian Dream coalition, reporting on UNM was 62 percent neutral and 38 percent negative.



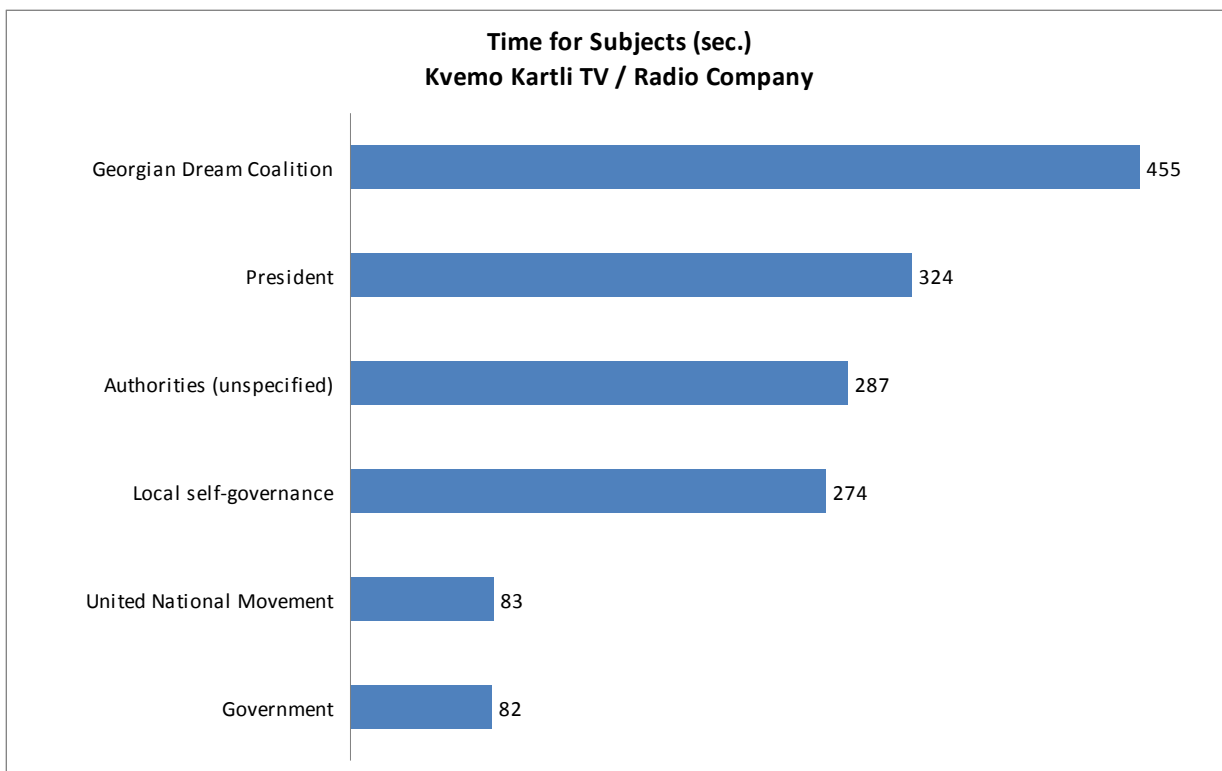
The share of direct and indirect reporting was almost equal in regard to government and UNM. Direct reporting prevailed in case of President (68 percent) and the Georgian Dream coalition (66

percent). 73 percent of direct reporting was observed in relation to New Rights (4-min coverage) and Christian-Democratic Movement (2-min coverage).

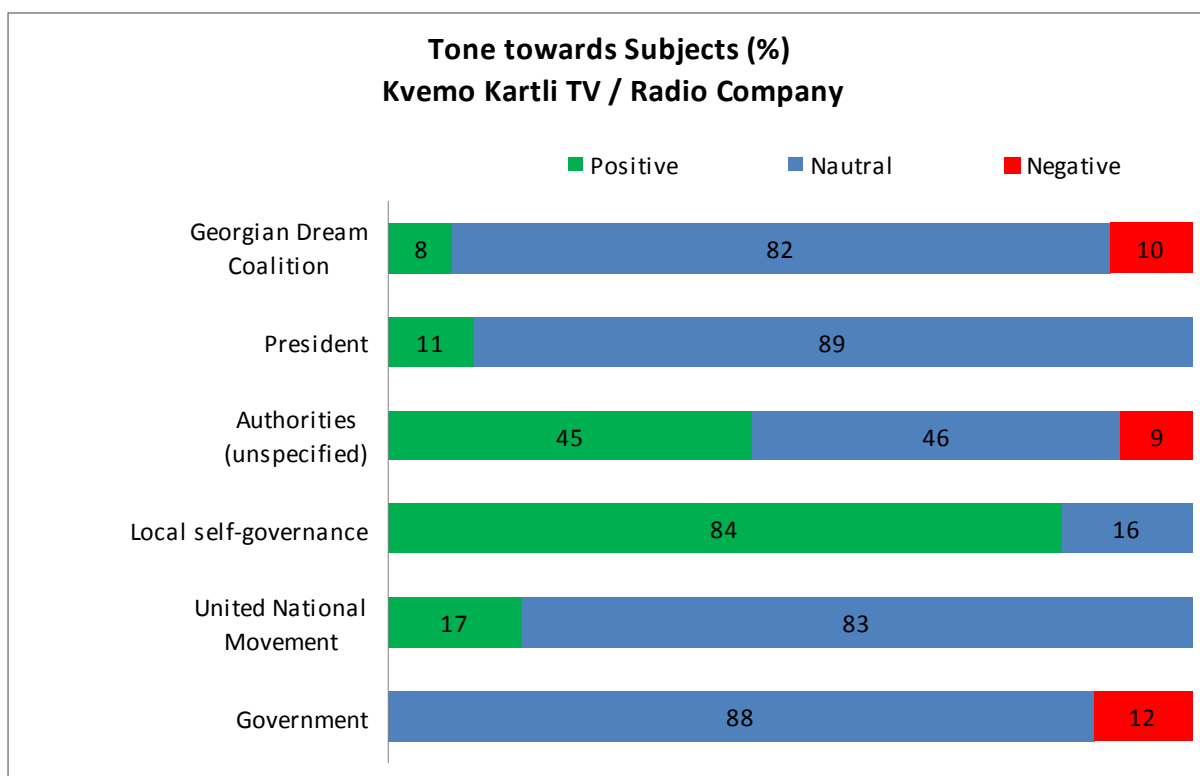


During the reporting period TV Company Rioni covered events ongoing locally as well as nationwide. TV stories in the news programs are balanced, journalists are trying to provide equal coverage of all of the parties. The biggest share of airtime was dedicated to the Georgian Dream coalition – twice more than the subject which comes next in the ranking.

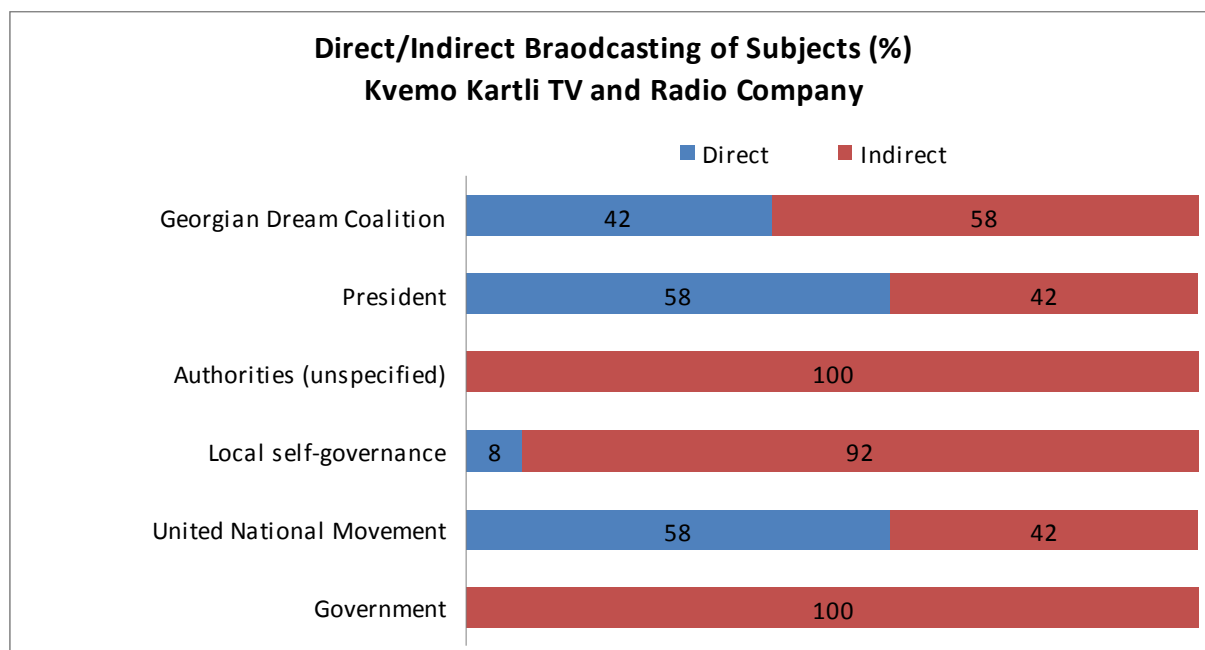
Kvemo Kartli TV/Radio Company (Rustavi) – The TV Company dedicated the biggest share of airtime to the Georgian Dream coalition. President, authorities and local self-government each received approximately 5-minute coverage.



Reporting tone was essentially neutral. Negative and positive tones were applied too though. 84 percent of positive tone was attached to reporting on the local self-government.



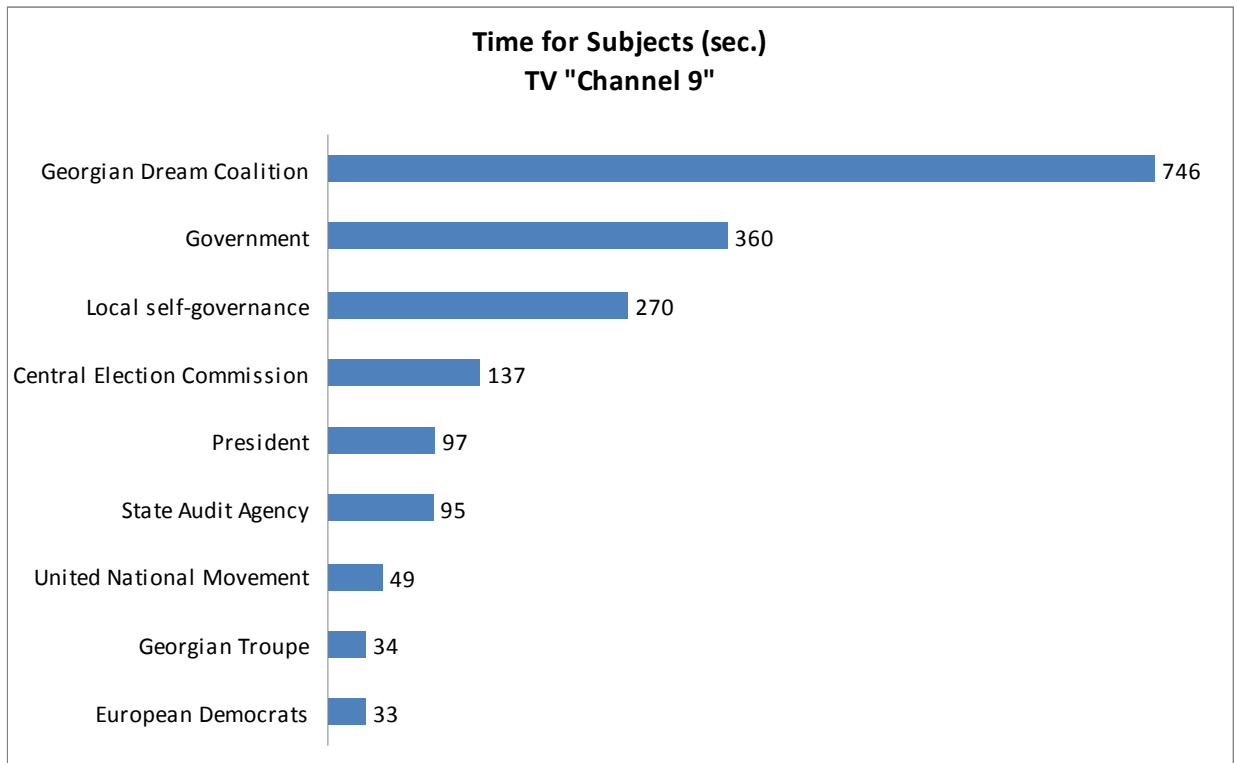
The share of direct and indirect reporting was almost equal. 92 percent of reporting on the local self-government falls on indirect coverage.



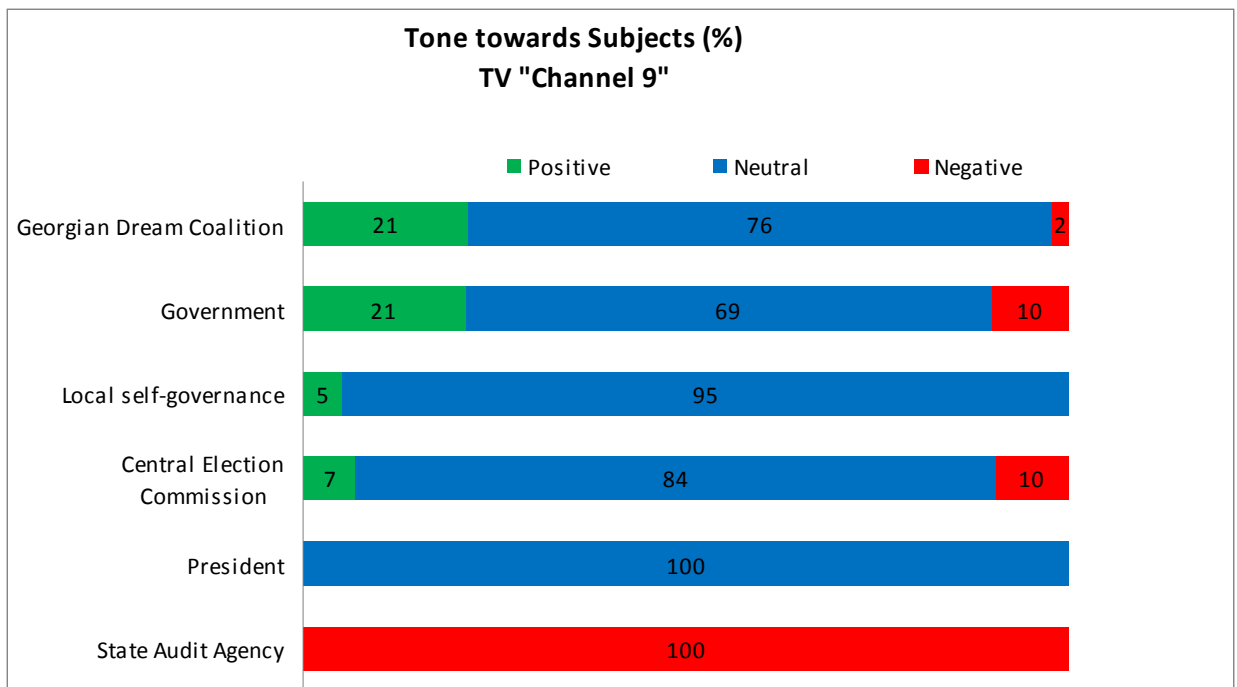
Within the period of October 8-14 Kvemo Kartli TV/Radio Company covered only Georgian Dream coalition and UNM. The rest of the airtime was dedicated to reporting on the activities carried out by State agencies. It is noteworthy that when reporting journalists demonstrate bias. In the October 11 news program, for instance, the journalist analyzing auto business says that the decisions by the authorities, perfection of legislative framework and correct policy followed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs was conducive to the development of the field. It is also worth to note that within the reporting period the airtime dedicated to the Georgian Dream coalition boosted and percentage of negative coverage decreased in regard to the coalition.

Odishi (Zugdidi) - During the reporting period the TV Company produced 4 TV stories. About one-minute TV story was dedicated to the visit of Irakli Alasania, Georgian Dream coalition's majortarian deputy. The rest of the monitored subjects were provided no coverage.

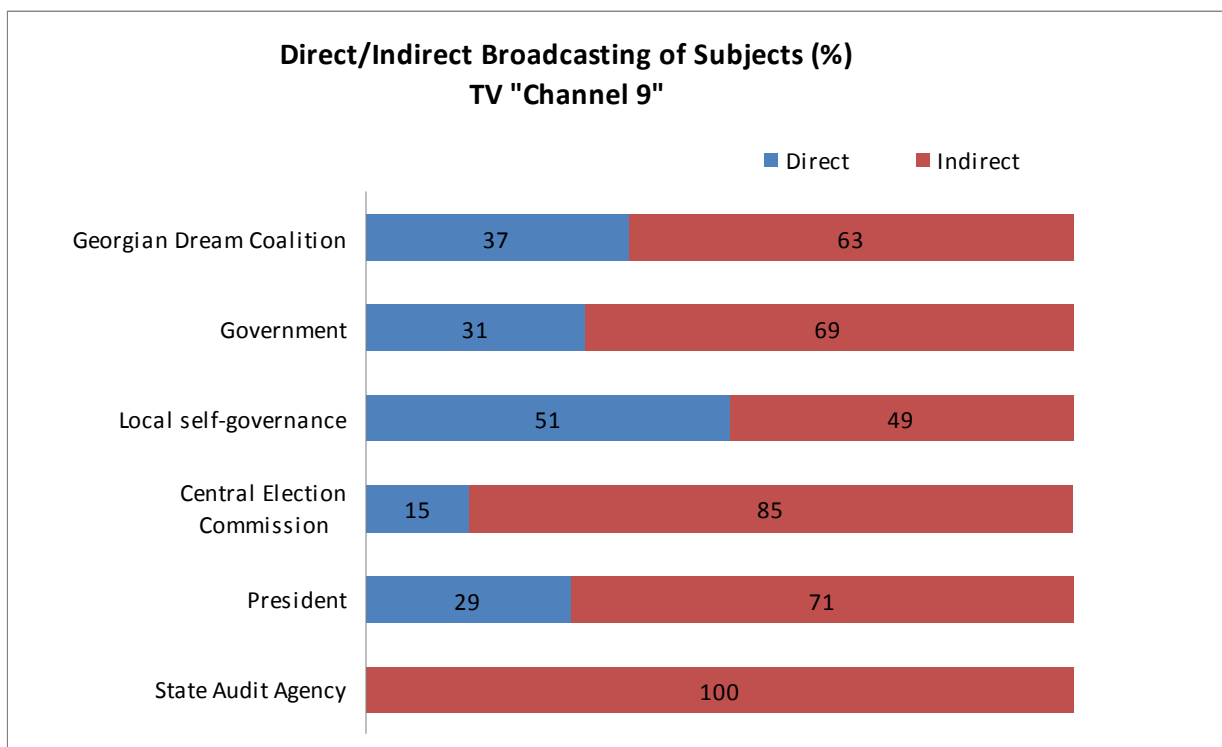
Channel 9 (Akhaltzikhe) – The news programs dedicated the bigger share of airtime – 12 minutes, to the Georgian Dream coalition. Government comes next with 6 minutes, local self-government with 4 minutes and CEC with 2 minutes.



All of the three tones were applied to reporting on the subjects. But neutral tone prevailed over positive and negative. Only in regard to the State Audit Service (1,58 min coverage) 100 percent negative tone was observed.

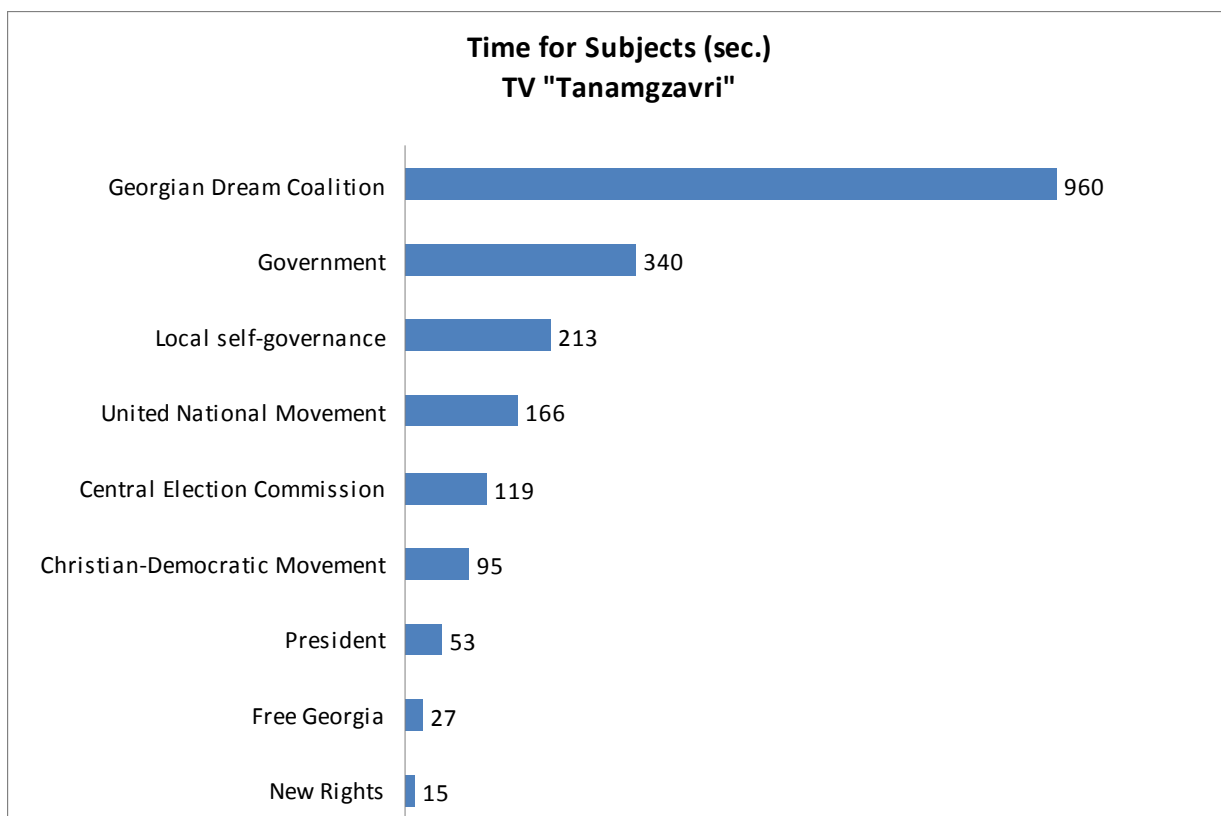


Monitored subjects were mainly spoken about. Only in regard to the local self-government the share of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal.

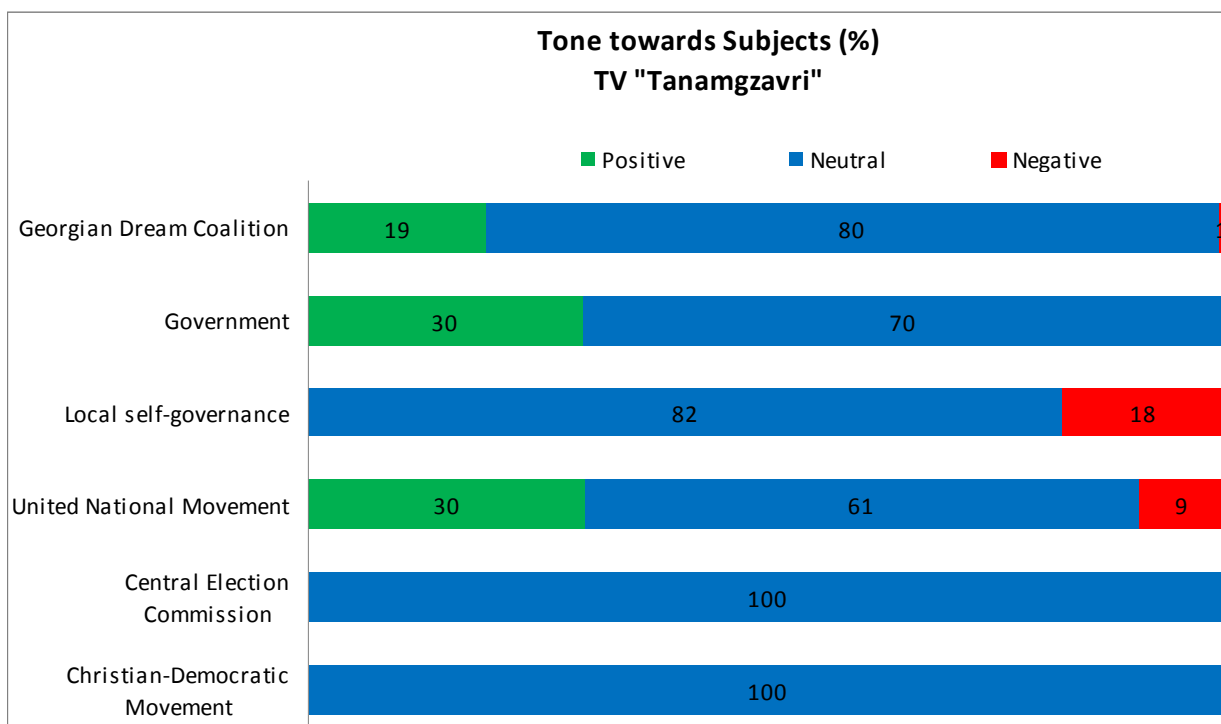


During October 8-14 TV Company TV 9 provided equal coverage of the events ongoing in the region as well as nationwide. TV stories were balanced and unbiased. No loyalty to any subject was visible. Reporting on the monitored subjects was essentially neutral in tone.

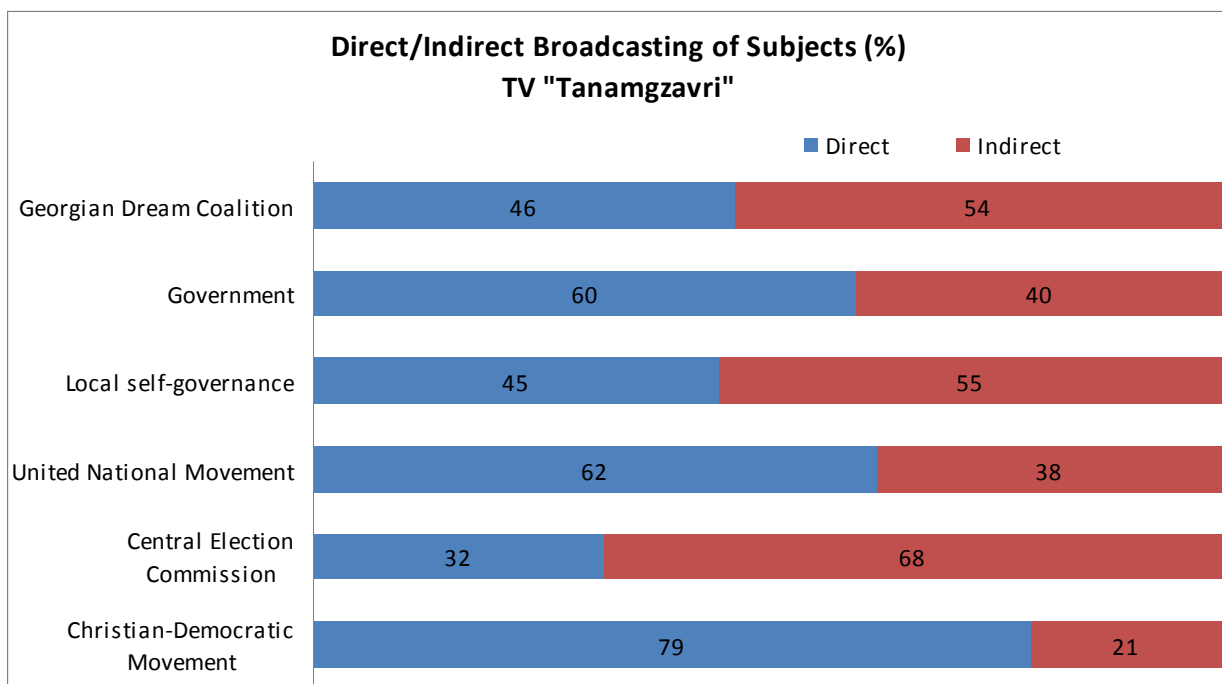
Tanamgzavri (Telavi) – News programs dedicated biggest share of airtime (16 min) to the Georgian Dream coalition. Government, local self-government and UNM enjoyed 6, 4 and 3-minute coverage respectively.



Subjects were mainly discussed in neutral tone. But positive (Georgian Dream coalition, government, UNM) and negative (local self-governance, UNM) tones were observed too.

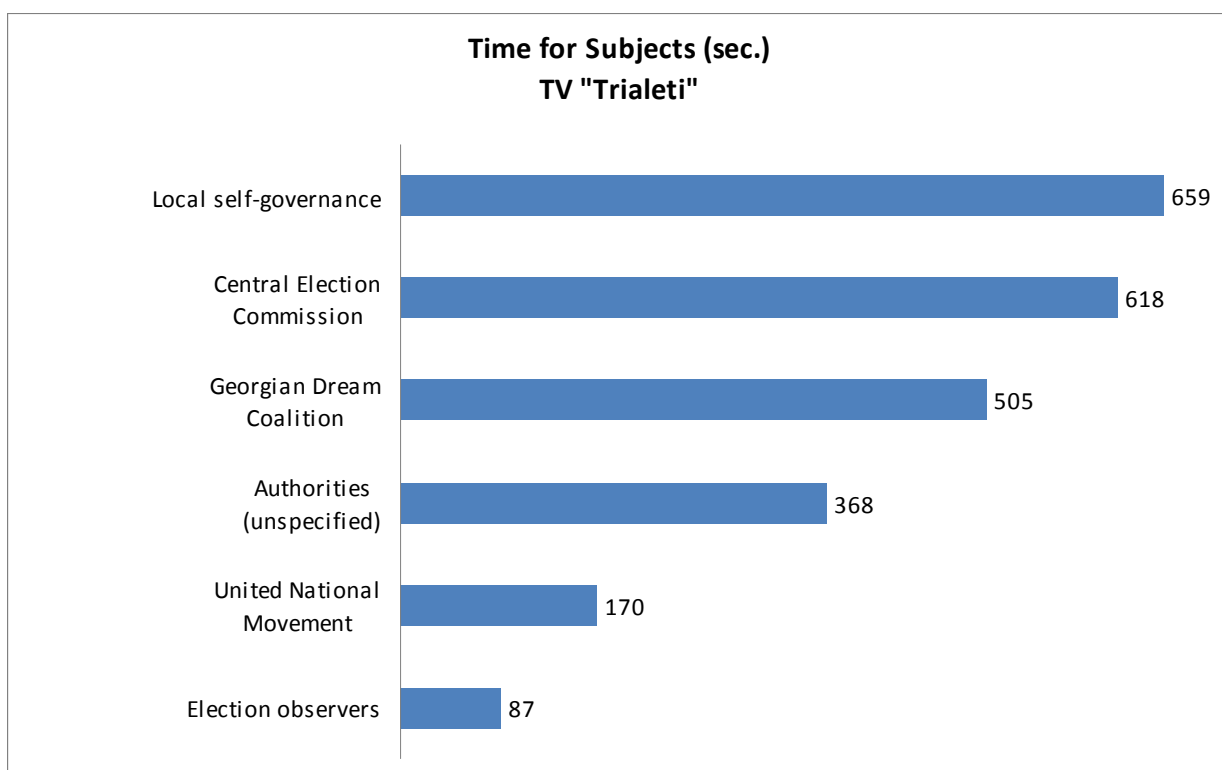


According to the findings the share of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal:

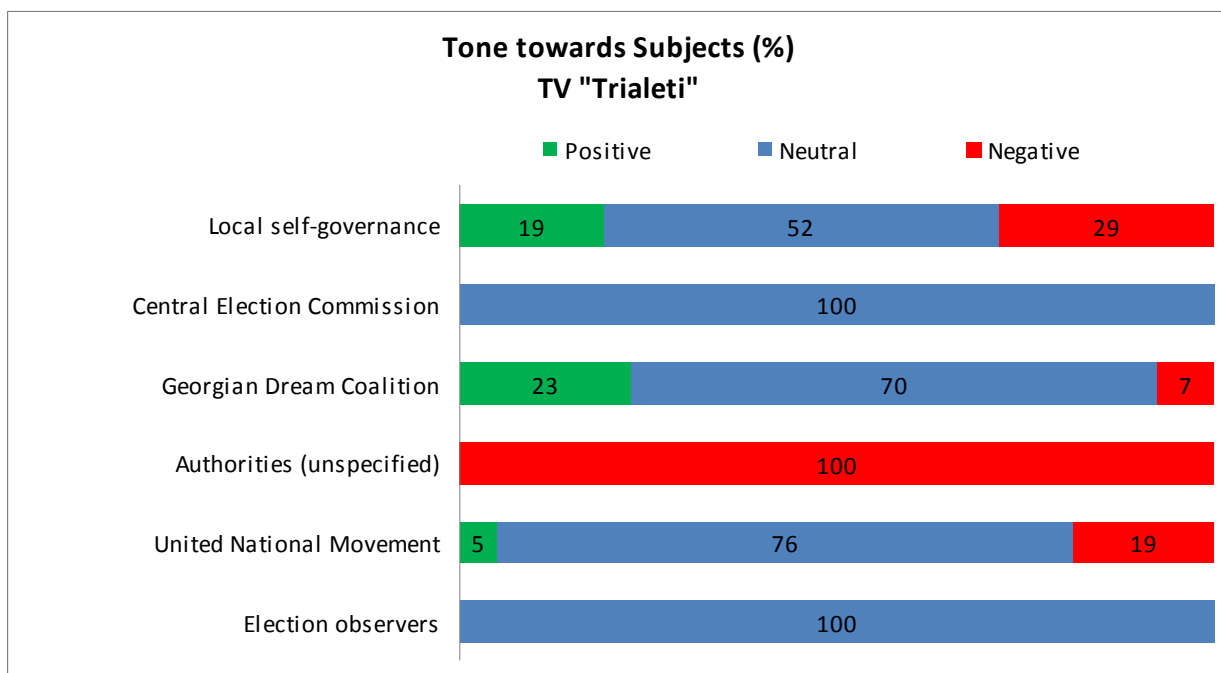


During the reporting period TV Company Tanamgzavri covered developments in the region and nationwide. TV stories equally covered all of the parties. News programs are balanced. The Georgian Dream coalition though enjoyed the biggest share of airtime which was almost three-fold more than the subject coming next in the chart.

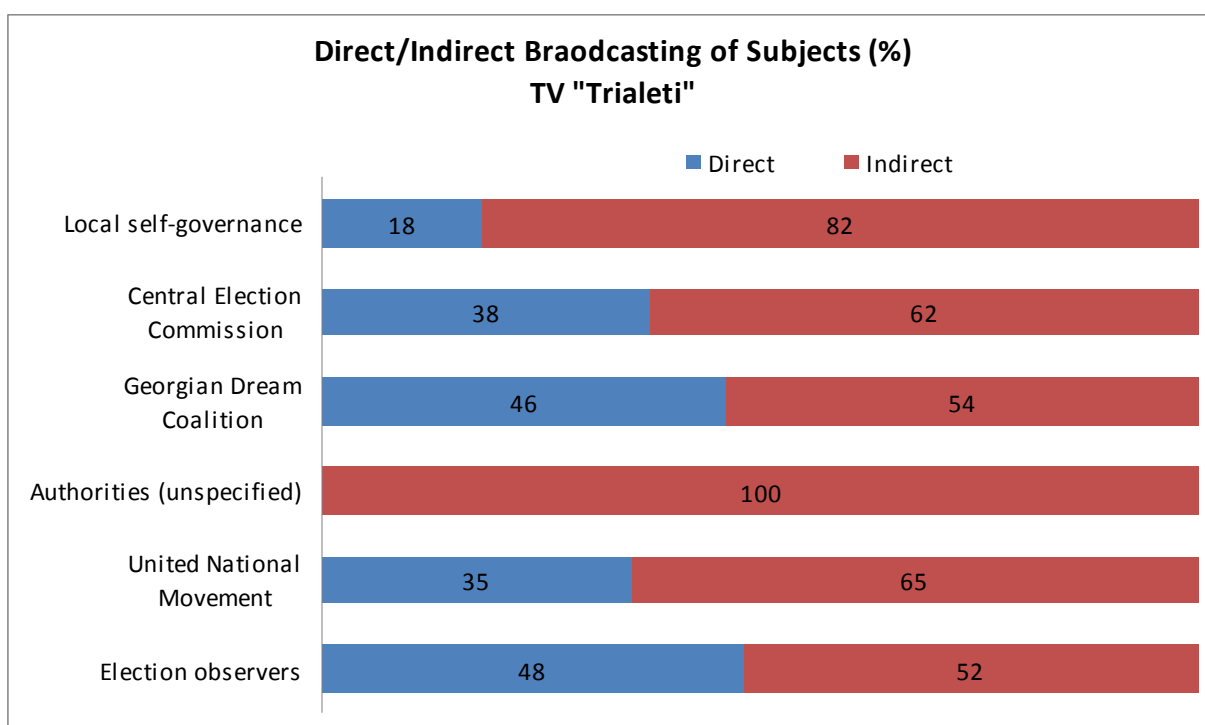
Trialeti (Gori) – The biggest share of airtime (11 min) was dedicated to the local self-government. CEC and the Georgian Dream coalition received 10 and 8 minutes of reporting respectively.



Subjects were mainly covered in neutral tone, positive and negative tones were observed too. 100 percent of reporting was negative in regard to the authorities (6-minute reporting).

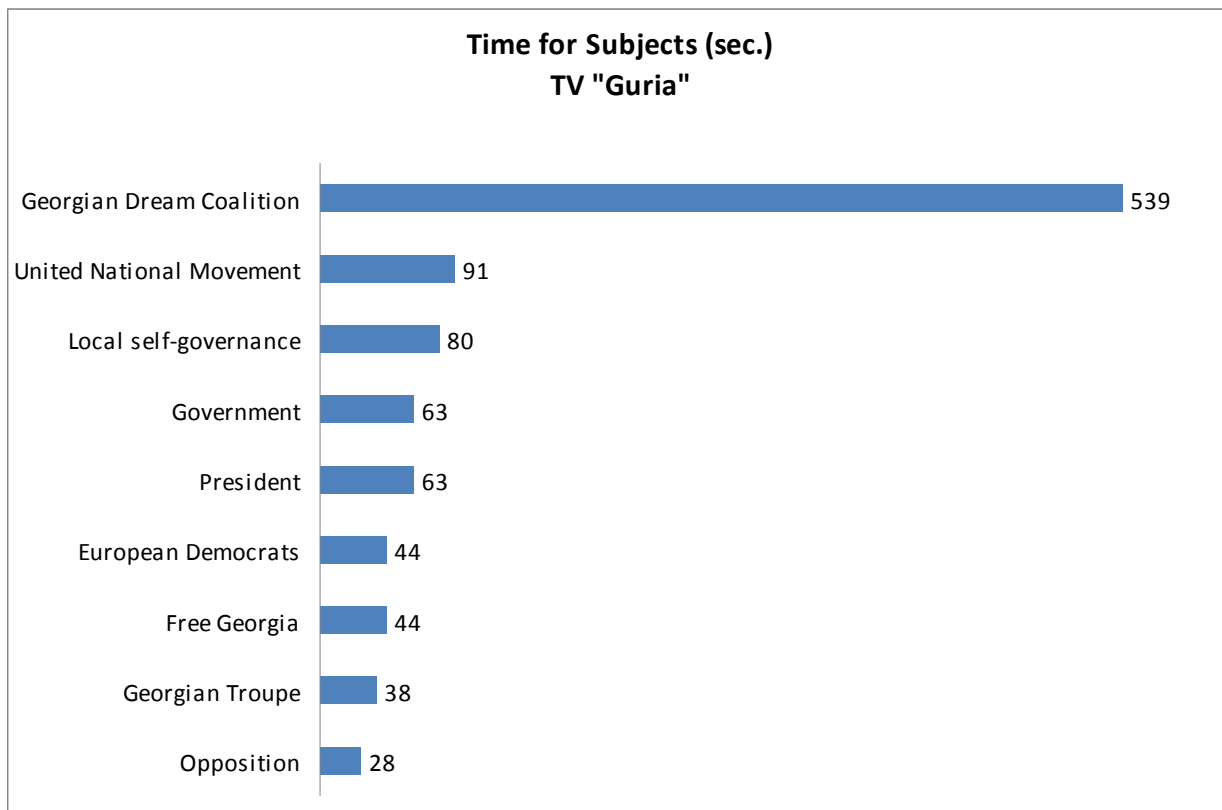


Indirect reporting prevailed over direct reporting. The share of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal in case of the Georgian Dream coalition.

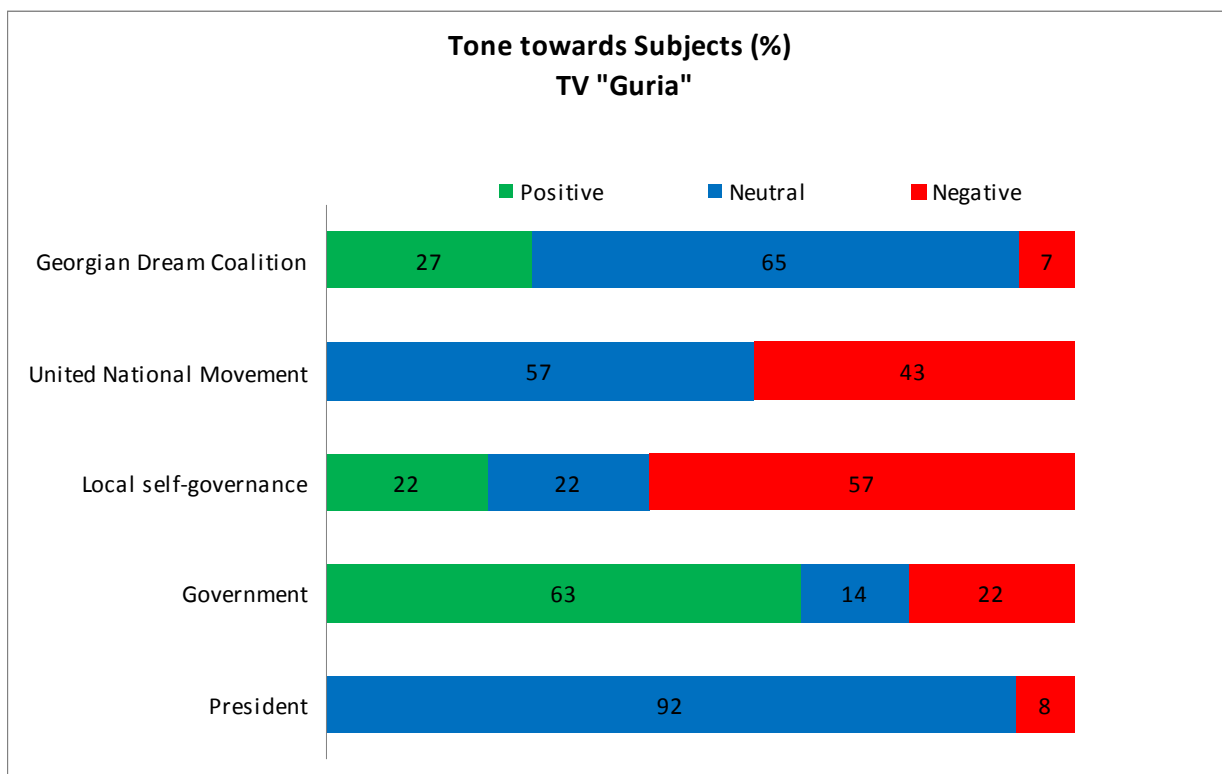


Within the reporting period TV Company Trialeti reported solely on the Georgian Dream coalition and UNM. The TV stories demonstrated the stance of both of the parties. The time dedicated to the Georgian Dream coalition though was three times more. Along with the political parties local self-government, CEC and activities of election observers were covered too.

Guria (Ozurgeti) – News programs dedicated the biggest share of airtime, 9 minutes, was dedicated to the Georgian Dream coalition. The rest of the monitored subjects were virtually provided no coverage. A bit more than a minute was dedicated to UNM and local self-government.



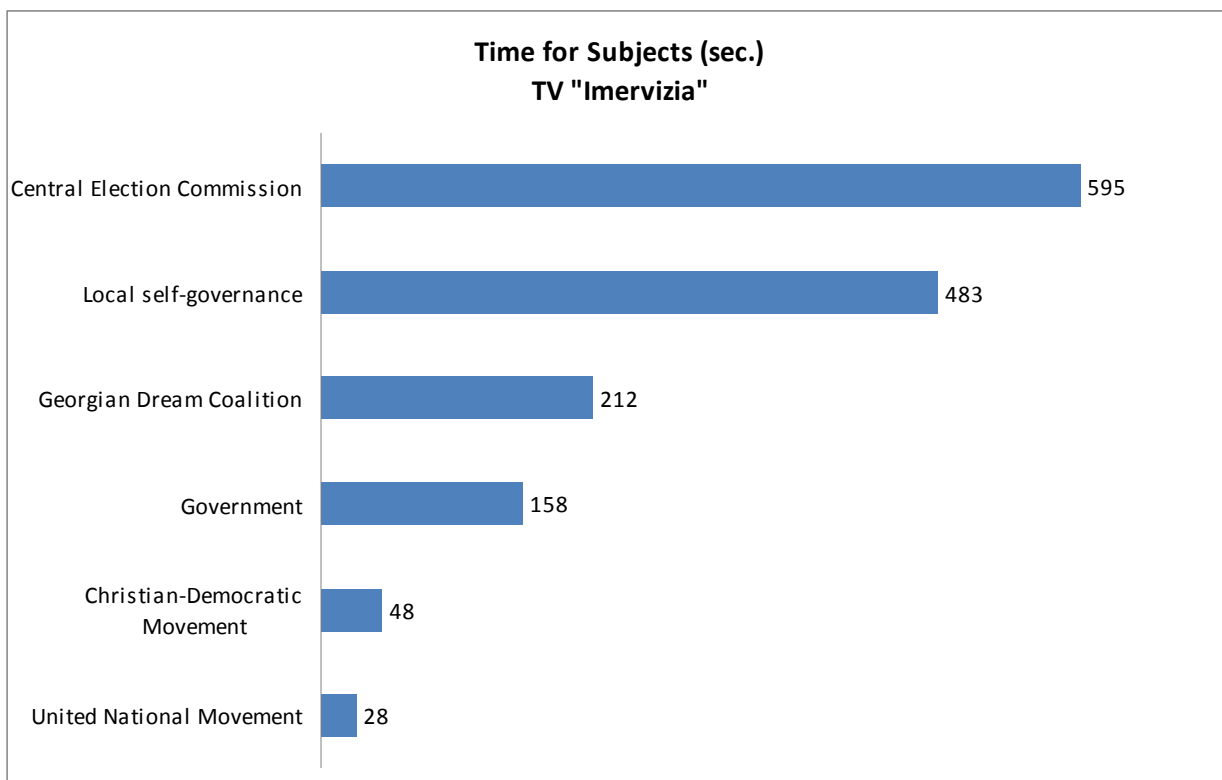
All of the three tones were attached to reporting on the Georgian Dream coalition. 65 percent of reporting was neutral.



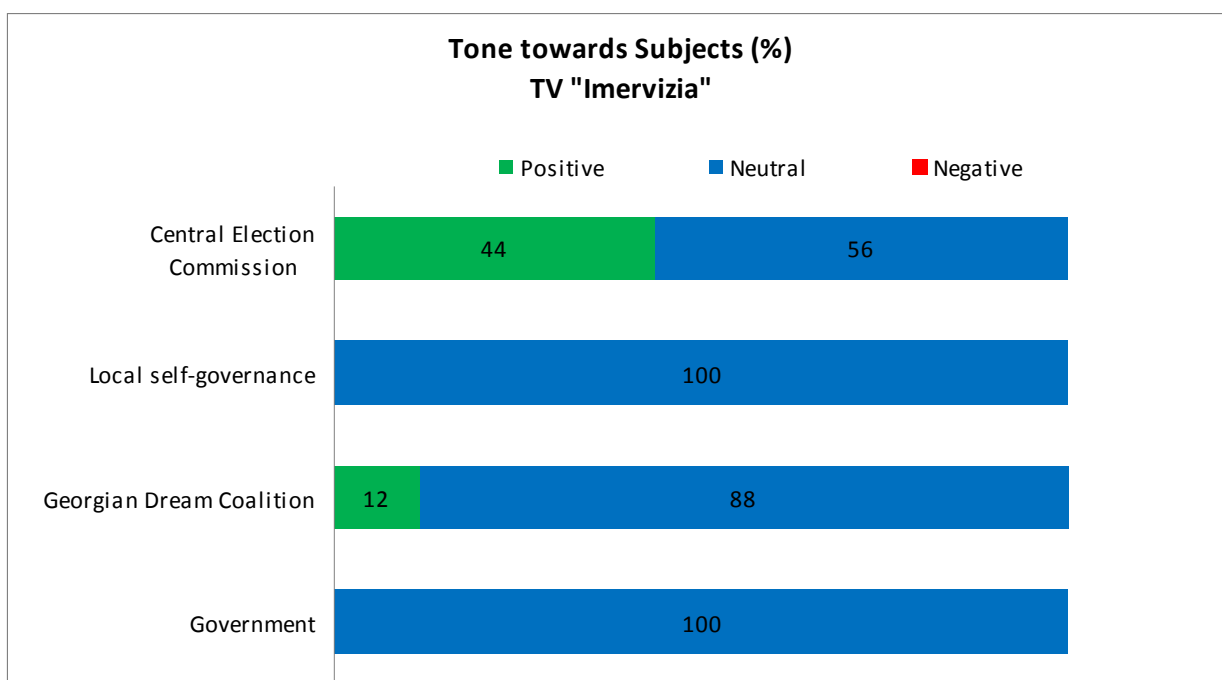
When reporting on the coalition the share of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal 41 percent / 59 percent. Due to the lack of findings it is hard to provide qualitative analysis.

Channel 12 (Bolnisi) – During the reporting period the TV company produced the only news program which included no story about monitored subjects.

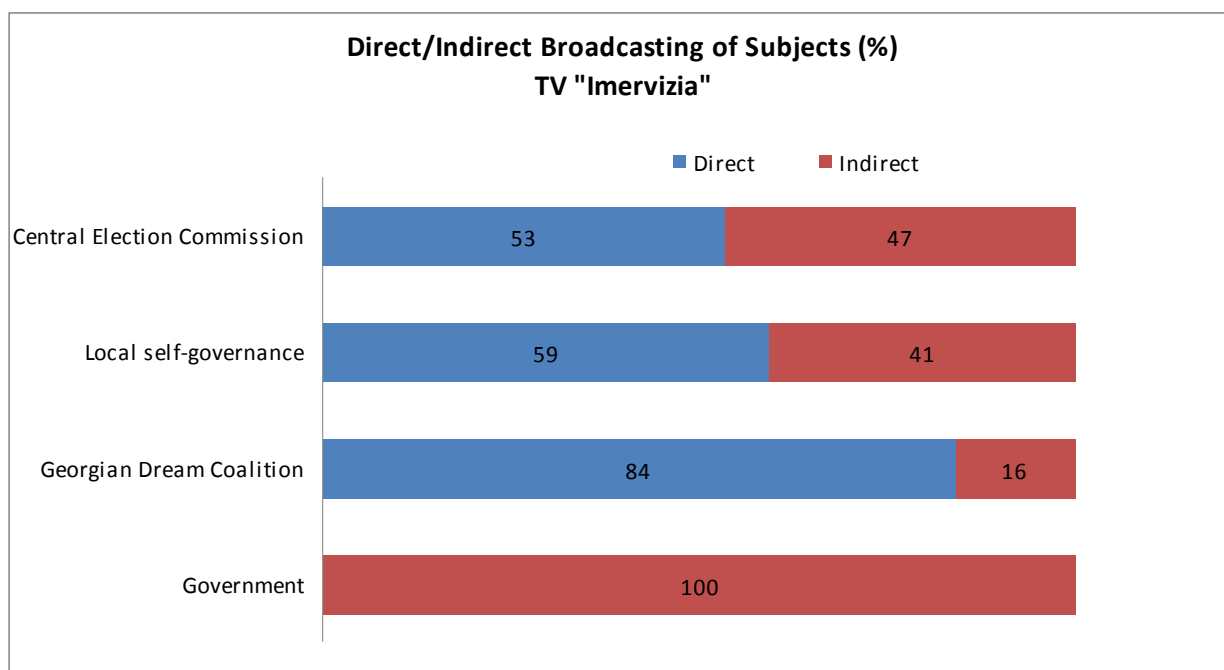
Imervizia (Chiatura) – News programs reported on CEC (10 min), local self-government (8 min), Georgian Dream coalition (4 min) and government (3 min).



Subjects were essentially discussed in neutral tone. Positive tone was observed as well in regard to CEC (44 percent) and Georgian Dream coalition (12 percent).

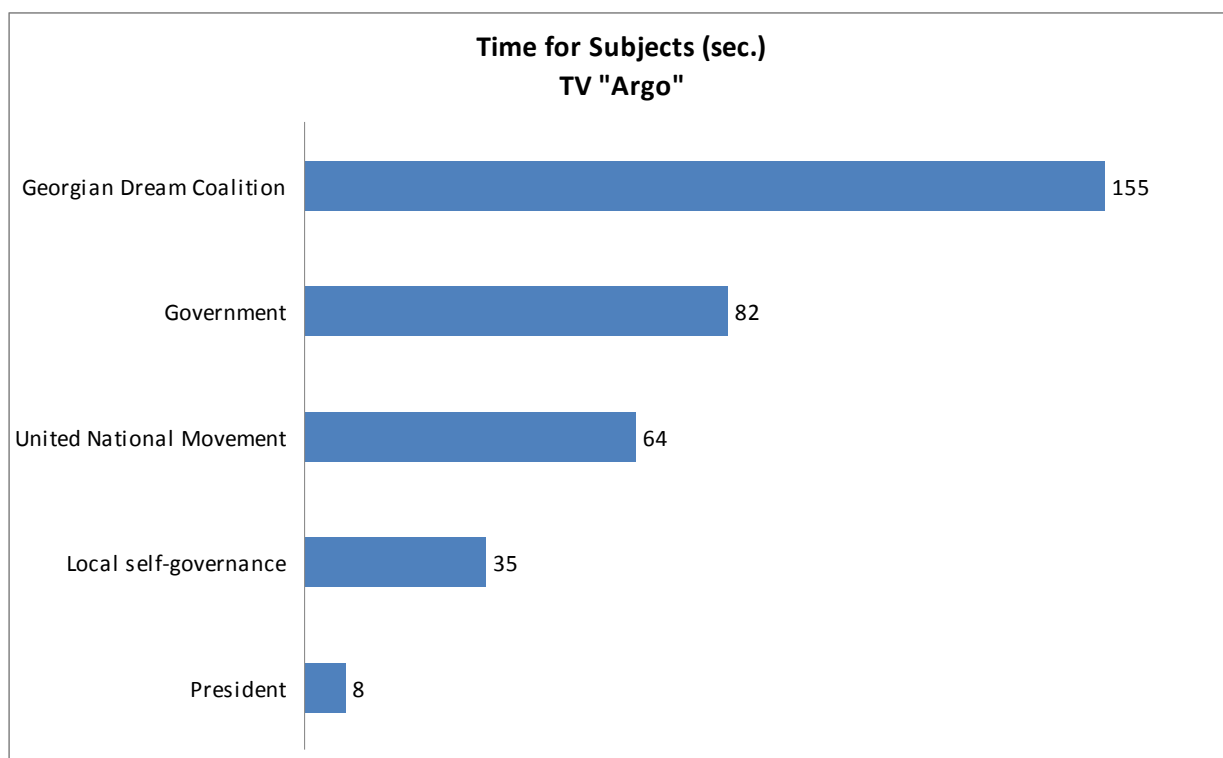


The share of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal:



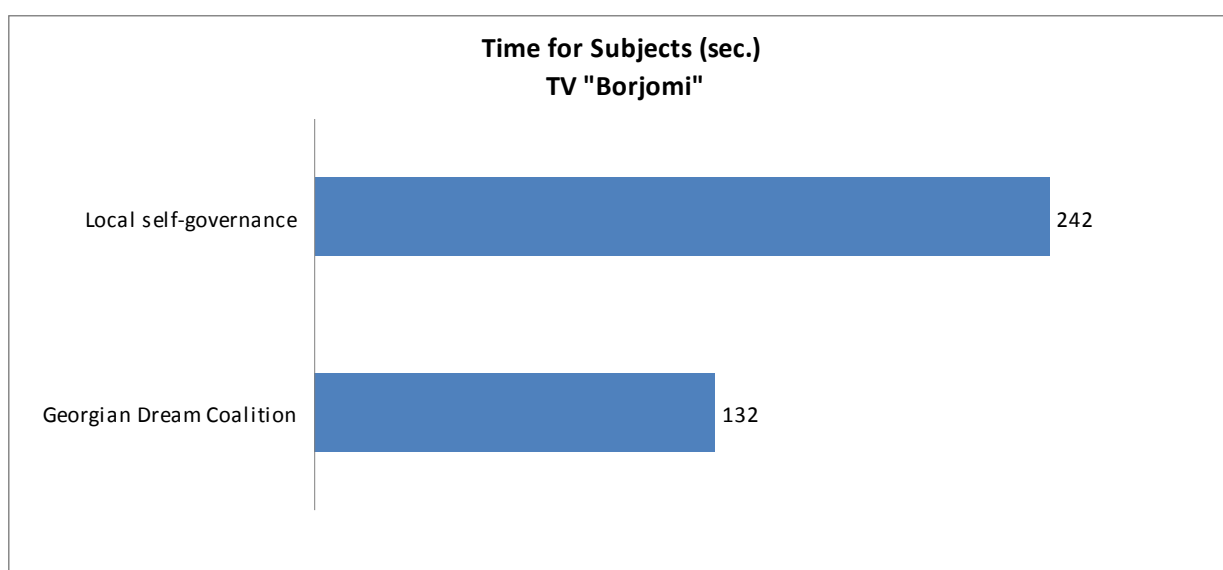
During the reporting period the TV Company produced four news programs which repeatedly aired certain stories (e.g. CEC sitting, Sakrebulo sitting, problems related to mini buses and water supply) which ultimately doubled the airtime dedicated to the monitored subjects. Reporting was neutral in tone, journalist's personal attitude to either issue was not demonstrated.

Argo (Zestaponi) - The channel dedicated the biggest share of reporting to the Georgian Dream coalition - 3 minutes. The rest of the subjects were provided no coverage. The time dedicated to them is too little.



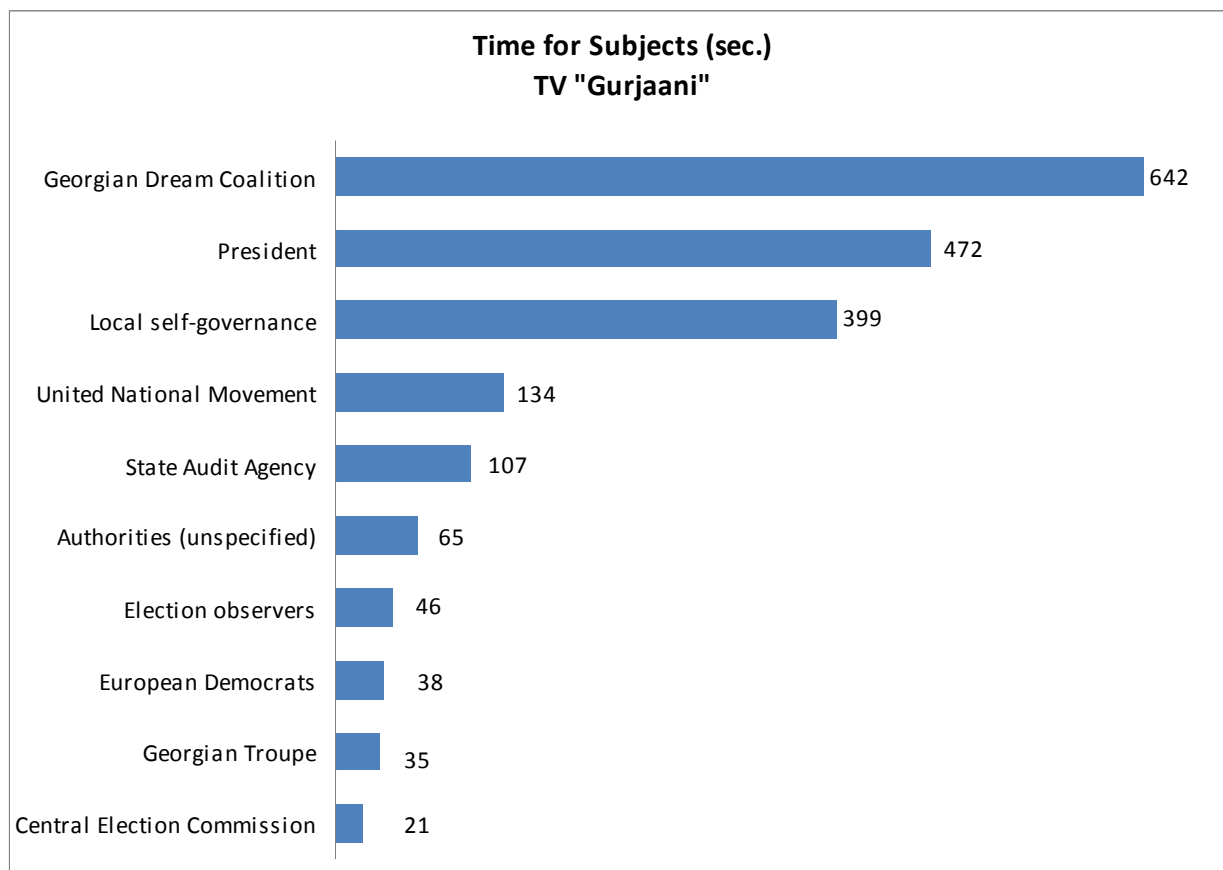
Reporting tone attached to the Georgian Dream coalition is 87 percent neutral. The way of reporting is 100 percent indirect. Because of scarce time dedicated to the monitored subject there is no possibility to provide qualitative analysis.

Borjomi (Borjomi) – The TV Company reported on two of the monitored subjects: local self-government (4 min) and the Georgian Dream coalition (2 min). All of the reporting tones were observed, the neutral tone though considerably prevailed over negative and positive. The greater share of reporting falls on direct reporting. Since the survey material is scarce qualitative analysis is impossible to make.

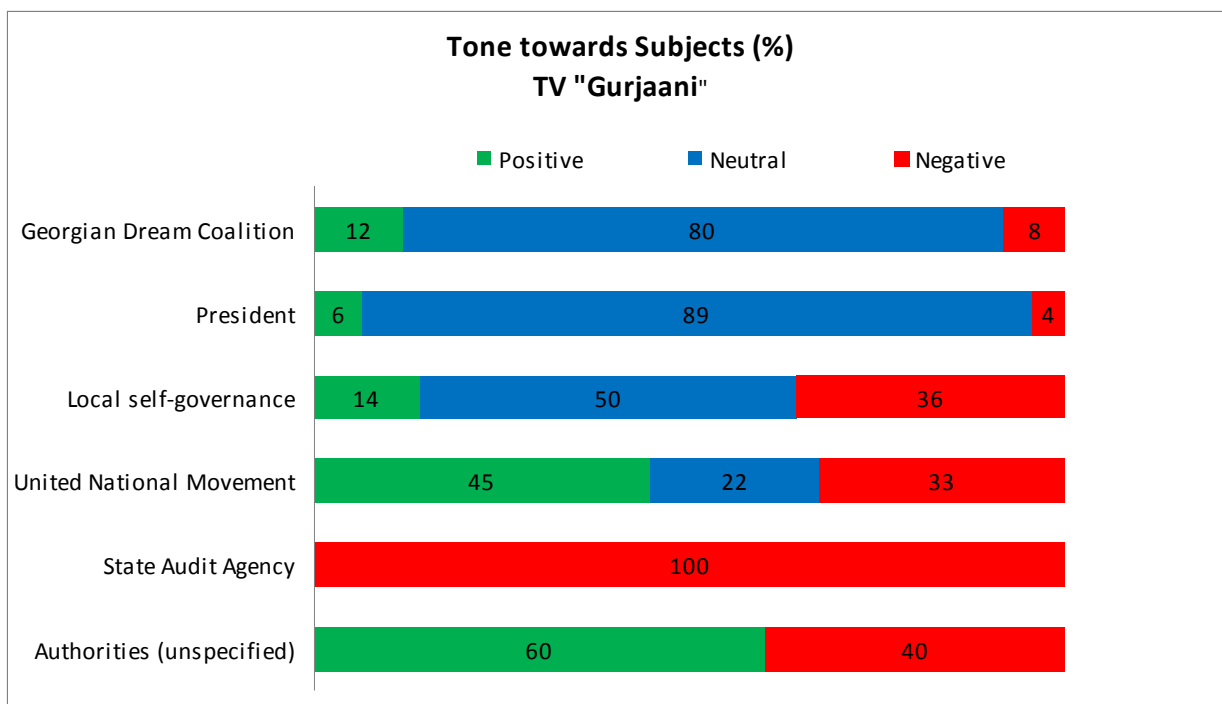


Marneuli TV (Marneuli) – Within the reporting period the TV Company produced the only news program with no story about the monitored subjects included.

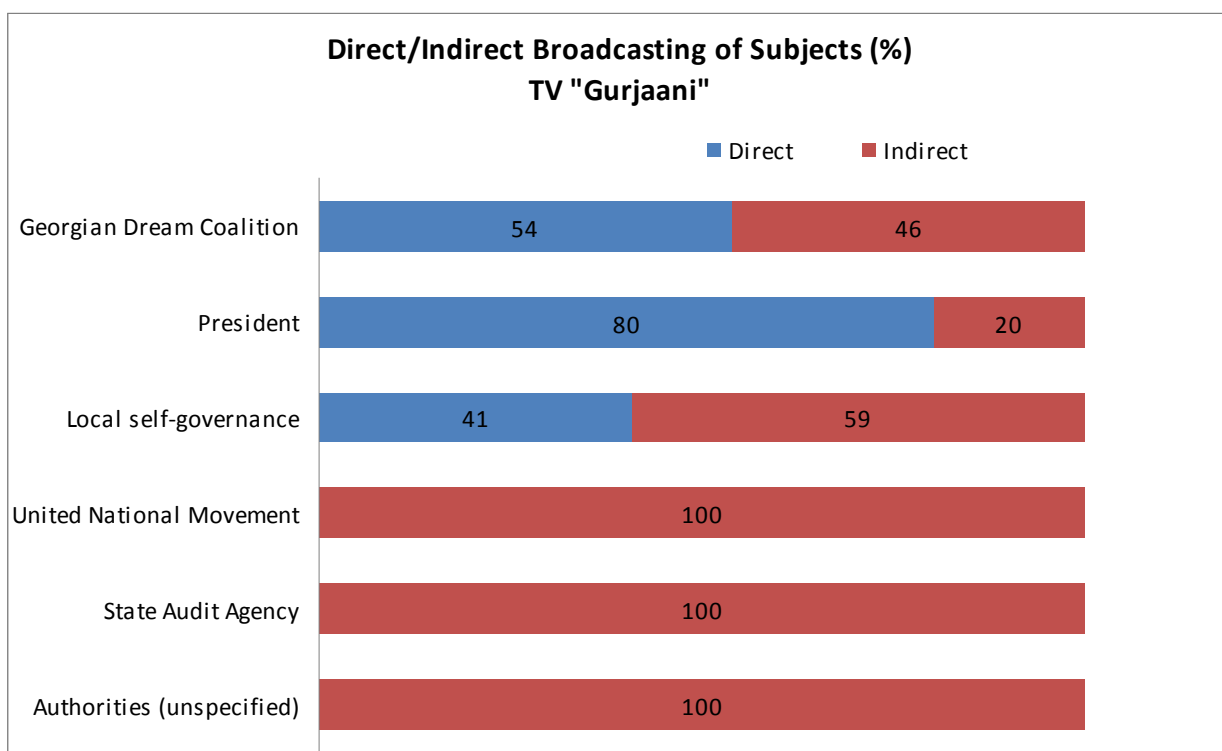
Gurjaani (Gurjaani) – The TV Company dedicated the biggest share of airtime, 11 min, to the Georgian Dream coalition. 8 and 7-minute reporting was enjoyed by President and the local self-government respectively.



All of the three tones were observed in regard to the monitored subjects. The biggest share of neutral tone falls on President (89 percent) and Georgian Dream coalition (80 percent).

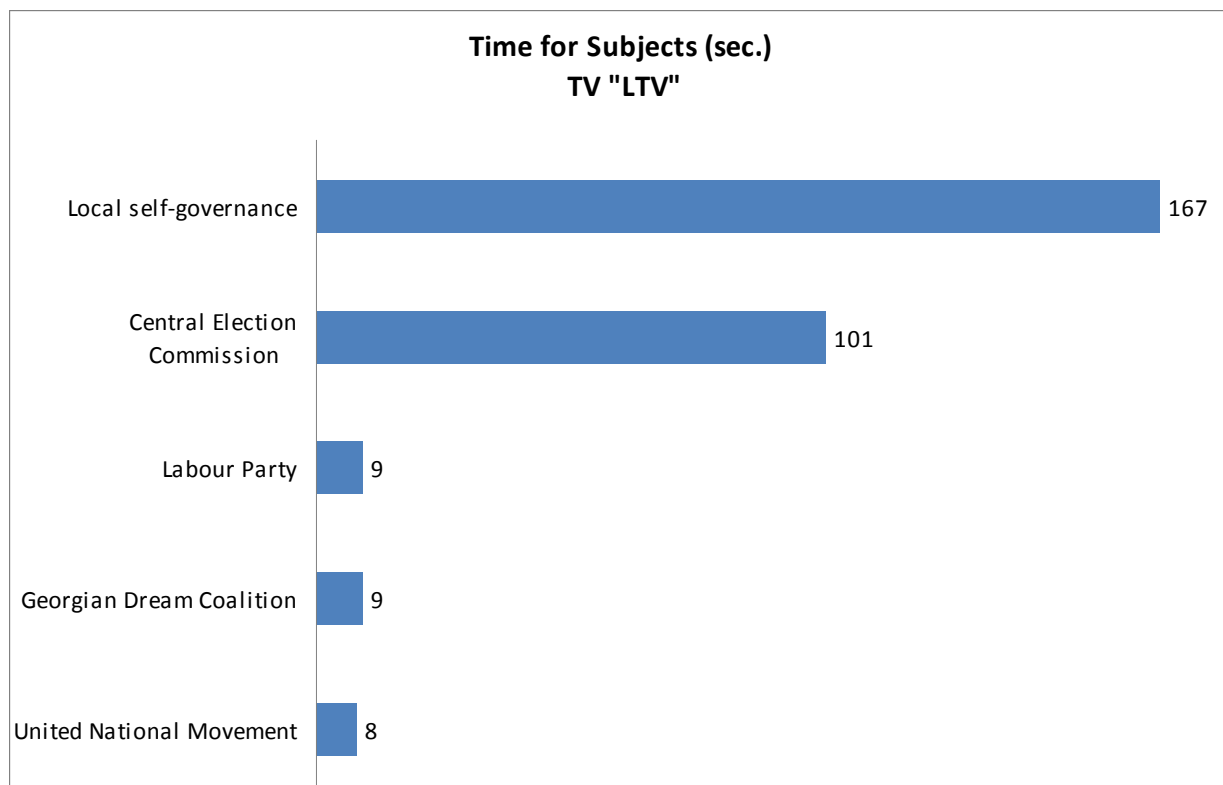


Direct reporting greatly prevailed over indirect reporting 80 percent / 20 percent. But in case of the Georgian Dream coalition the share was almost equal.

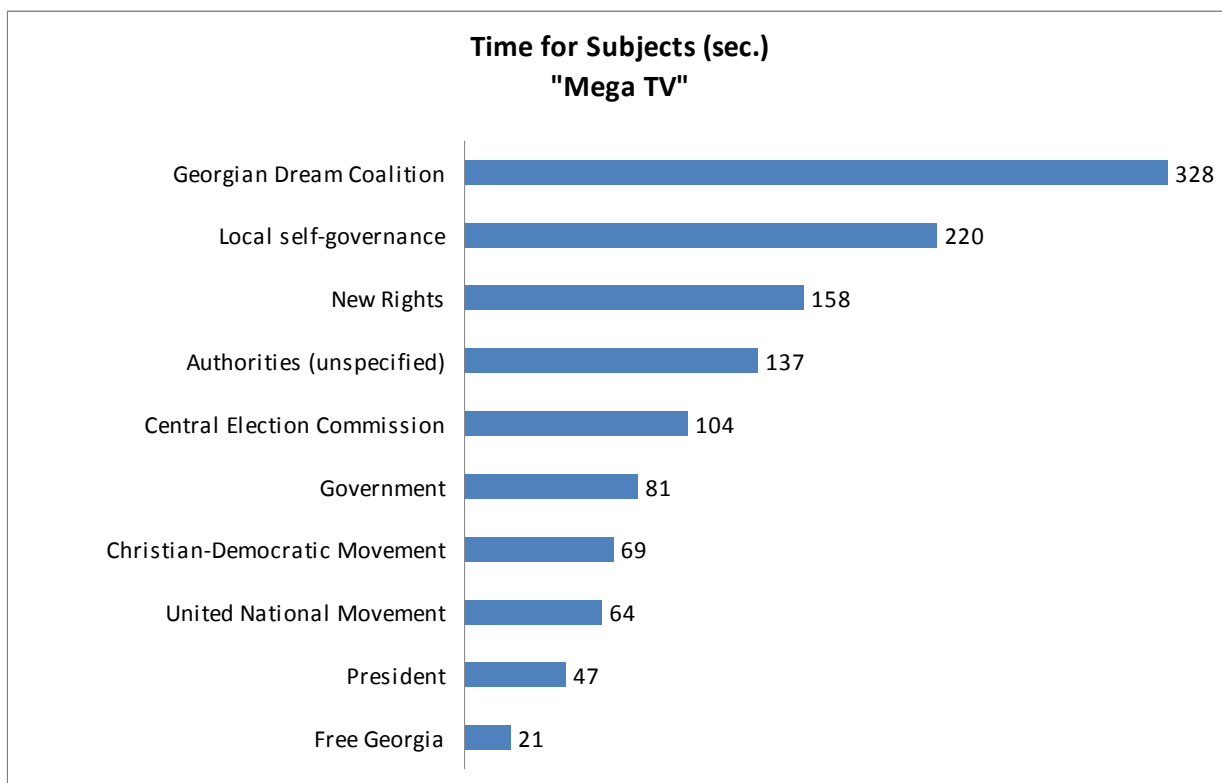


During the reporting period TV Company Gurjaani reported on the developments at the regional as well as national level. A fair amount of airtime was dedicated to the TV stories about social and infrastructural issues. The stories featured locals expressing their viewpoints.

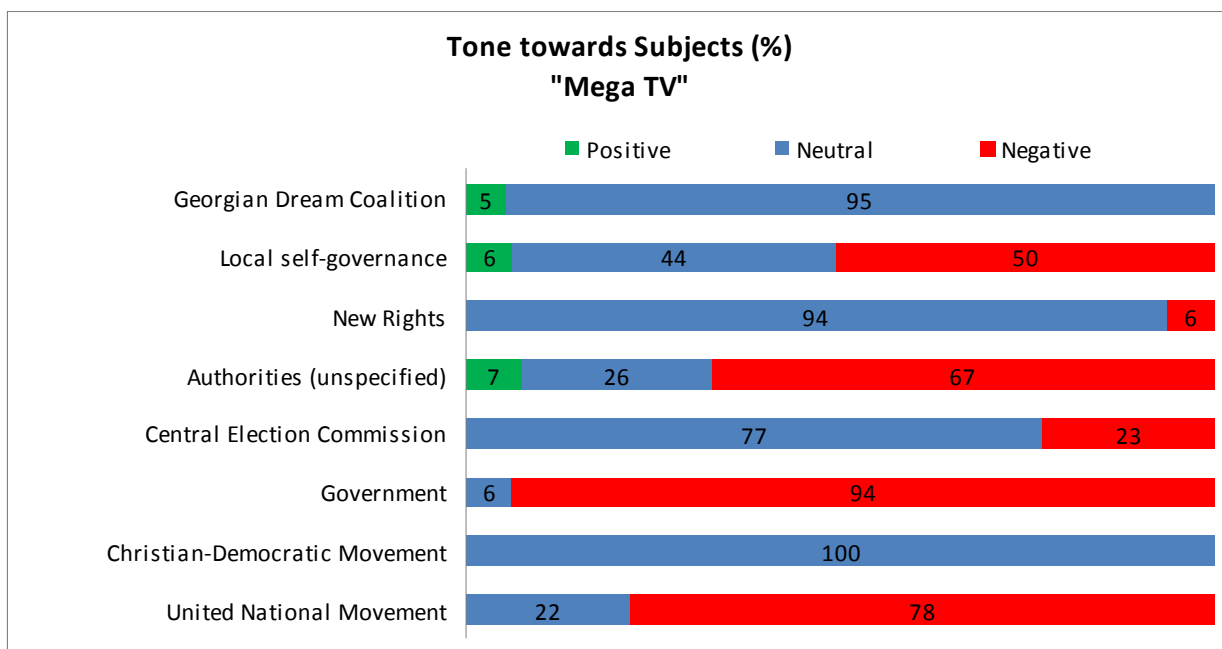
LTV (Lagodekhi) – Within the reporting period 3 minutes were dedicated to the local self-government. 2 minute-reporting was received by CEC. The rest of the monitored subjects were provided no coverage. The tone of reporting on both of the covered subjects was positive. The bigger share of reporting is direct. The lack of findings gives us no possibility to provide qualitative analysis.



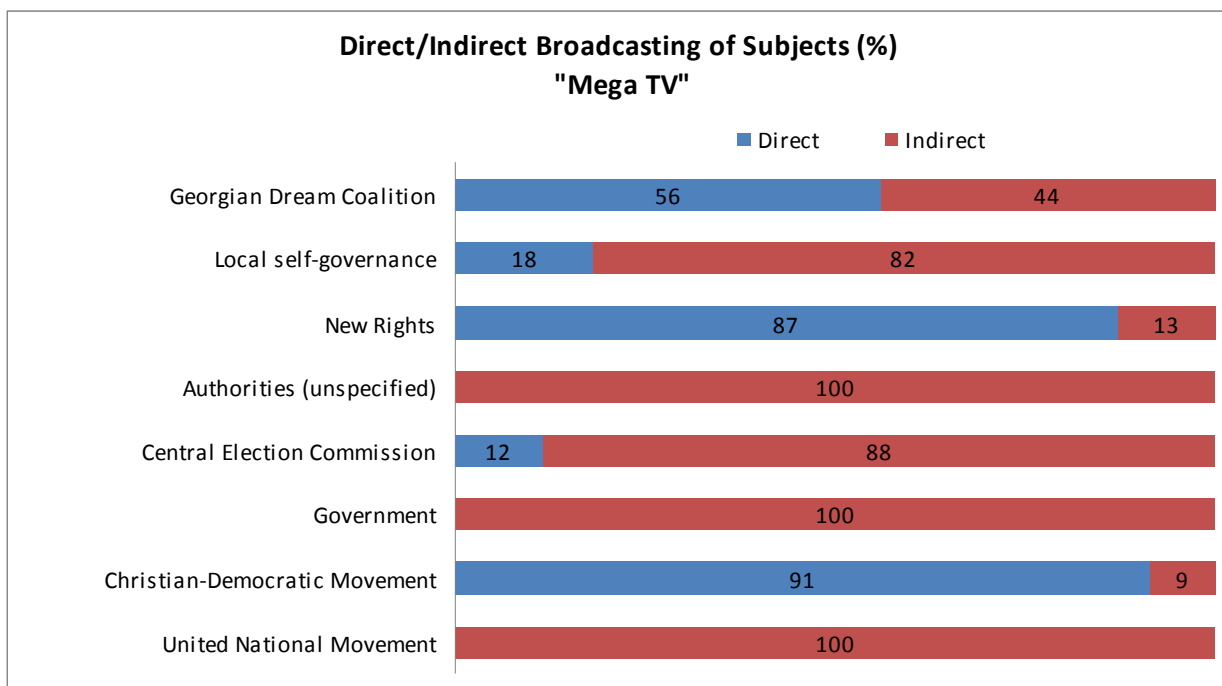
Mega TV (Khoni) – The Georgian Dream coalition leads the chart in terms of the airtime dedicated in the news programs – 5 minutes. Local self-government comes next with 4 minutes, followed by New Rights and authorities with 2 minutes.



All of the three tones were observed when reporting on the monitored subjects. Neutral and negative tones though prevailed over positive. 95 percent of neutral reporting was identified in regard to the Georgian Dream coalition and 94 percent in relation to New Rights. 67 and 50 percent of the dedicated time was negative in regard the authorities and the local self-government respectively.

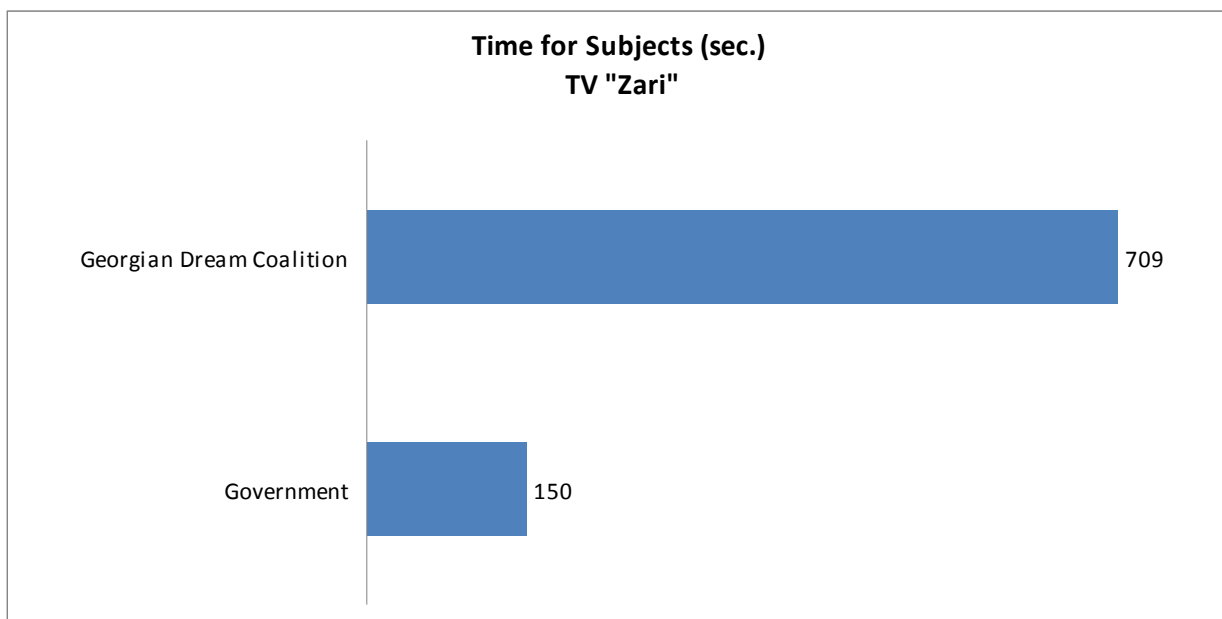


The share of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal in case of Georgian Dream coalition. In regard to the local self-government indirect reporting (82 percent) greatly prevailed over direct reporting.



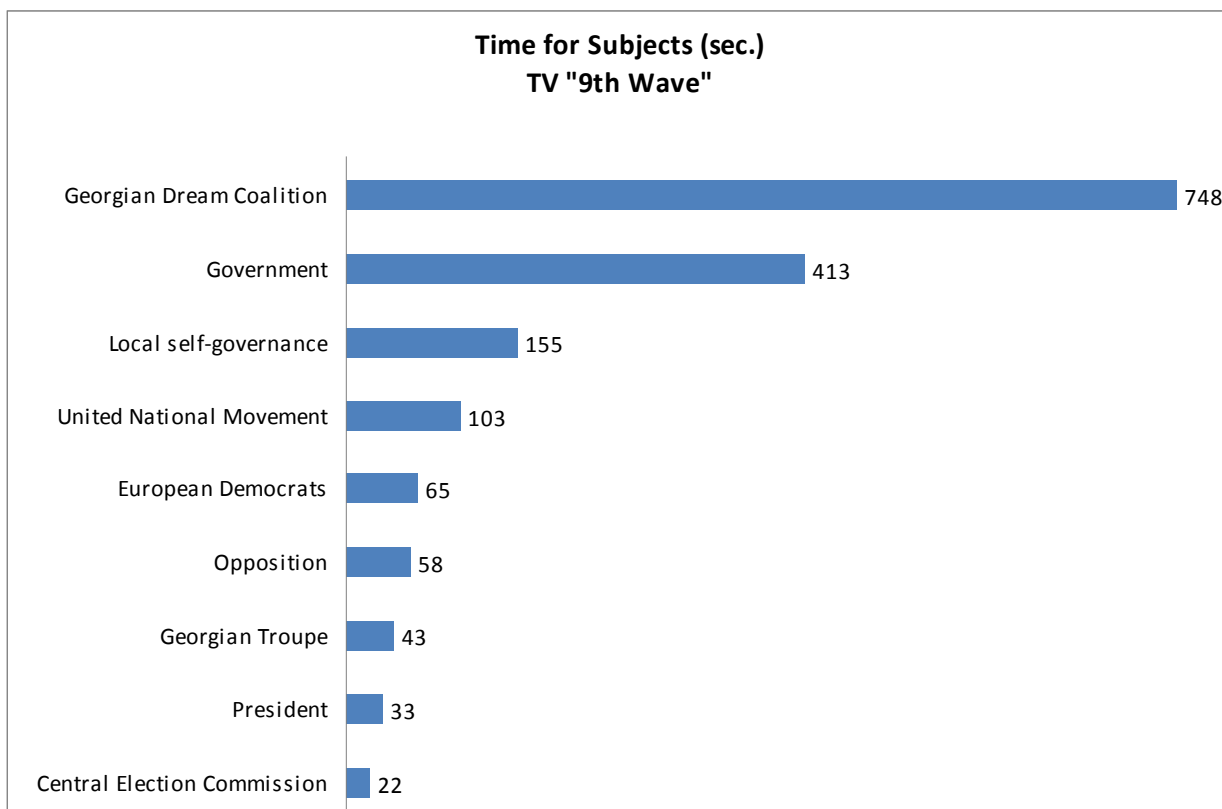
TV Company Mega TV aggressively covered political developments. During the reporting week 10 of the monitored subjects were covered. Reporting on the State agencies and UNM was mainly negative in tone while reporting tone in regard to the Georgian Dream coalition and other opposition parties was neutral.

Zari (Samtredia) – The channel covered only two of the monitored subjects including the Georgian Dream coalition (12 min) and government (3 min). Reporting on the Georgian Dream coalition was 87 percent neutral while reporting on the government was 77 percent positive in tone. Negative tone was not attached to reporting on either subject. In regard to both of the covered subjects indirect reporting was observed.

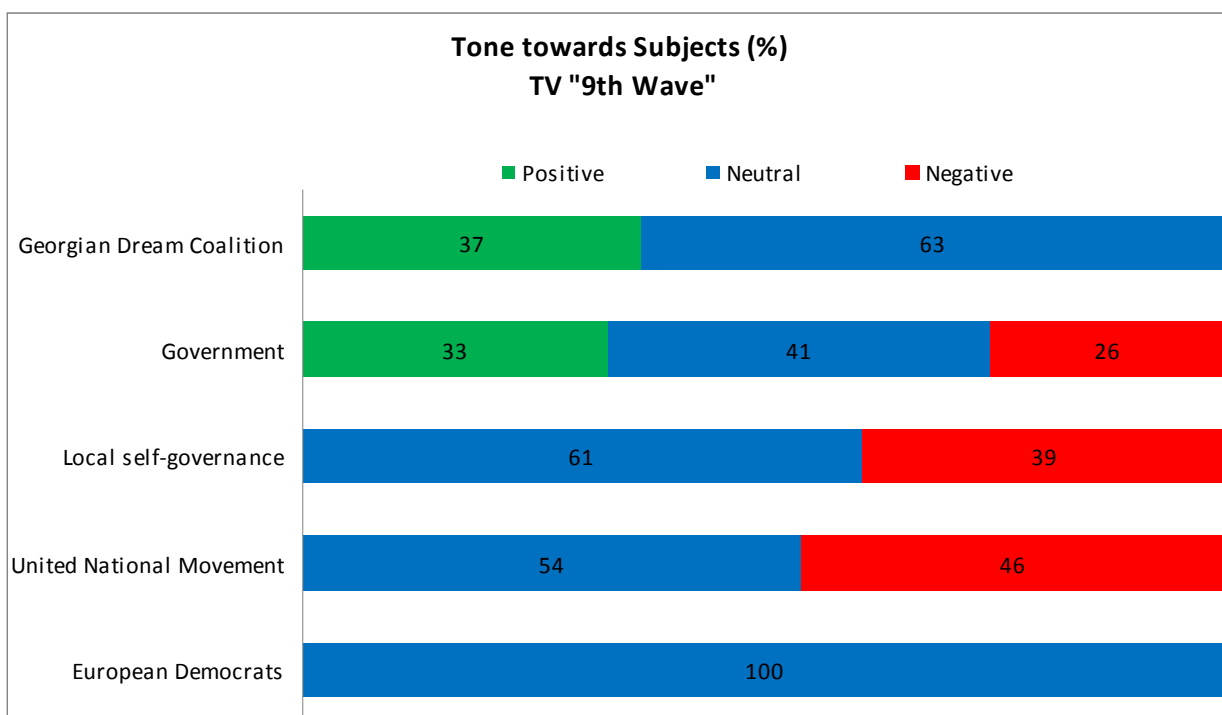


Within the reporting week TV Company Zari aired two news programs. The October 9 news outlet violated journalism standards: a 10-minute story was produced about the concert organized in Samtredia by the Georgian Dream coalition, 7 out of 10 minutes was dedicated to songs and dancing. It is noteworthy that the stories lack balance, journalists show bias, e.g. when reporting on the concert the journalist says: the charge the audience got from singers at this grand concert further boosted following Kakhi Kaladze's appearance.

9th Wave - News programs dedicated about 12 minutes to the Georgian Dream coalition. Government received 7-minute reporting, followed by local self-government with 3 minutes and UNM with 2 minutes.

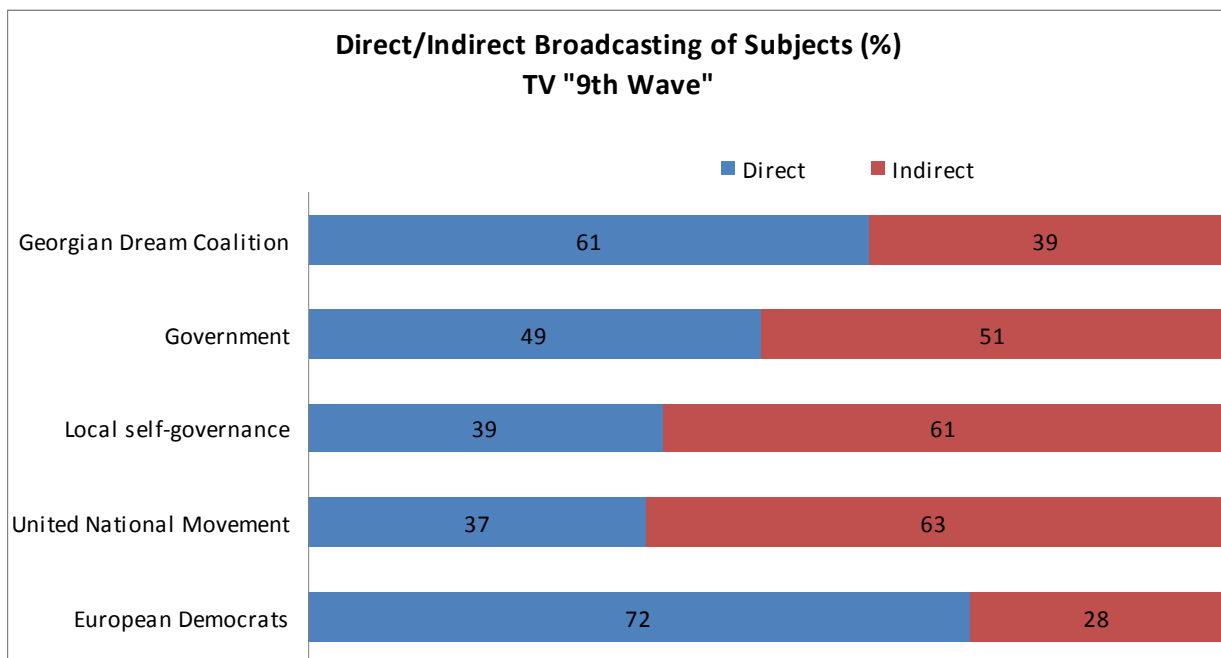


All of the three tones were observed when reporting on the government. Reporting on the Georgian Dream coalition was positive (37 percent) and neutral (63 percent) in tone. Only neutral and negative tones were attached to reporting on the local self-government and UNM.



The share of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal in government's case. Indirect reporting

prevailed over direct reporting in regard to the local self-government and UNM, the picture looks contrariwise in regard to the Georgian Dream coalition.



Within the reporting period news programs in the 9th Wave, in addition to self-produced stories, dedicated a fair amount of time to the TV stories by Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters, Gurjaani and Akhaltsikhe-based TV Companies. The TV Company aggressively covered a strike organized by Poti port employees and case-related issues. It is noteworthy that TV stories are balanced and journalists show no bias.

Activities to be carried out:

Within the period of October 15-21 the eleventh phase of monitoring of regional broadcasters will be carried out.



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