



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

**Subagreement # S-12-155**

**Report for: October 29 - November 4, 2012**

*Project Period: 11 June 2012 - 10 December 2012*

*Total Budget: 31 000\$*

### ***Results Summary/Impact Statement***

#### **Main findings of the thirteenth phase of monitoring:**

- Very few of the monitored subjects were dedicated airtime on regional TV channels;
- Reporting on the events and subjects is neutral in tone;
- The amount of reporting on State agencies including Parliament, government went up while there was a decrease identified in the coverage of the activities by the Georgian Dream coalition;
- The amount of reporting on the local self-government considerably went up.

### ***Background***

The report represents the results of the survey carried out within the period of October 29 - November 4, 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), 9<sup>th</sup> 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), 9<sup>th</sup> Wave (Poti), Kronika (Dusheti), Egrisi (Senaki).

Within the period of October 29 - November 4 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.

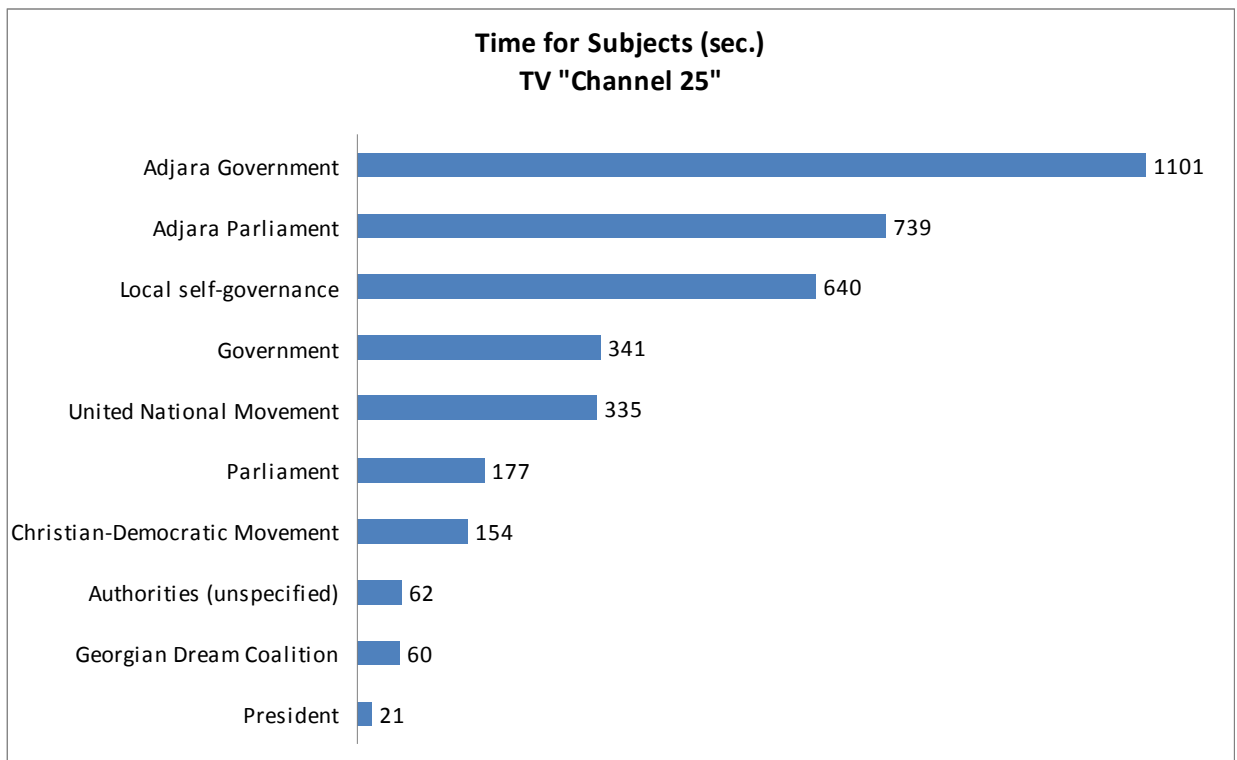
The monitoring subjects include: Parliament (speaker, vice speaker, MPs, committees); President (administration, advisors, press speaker); government (prime minister, ministers, deputy ministers, governors); authorities (when mentioned with no specification); local self-governments (mayors, chairs of 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).

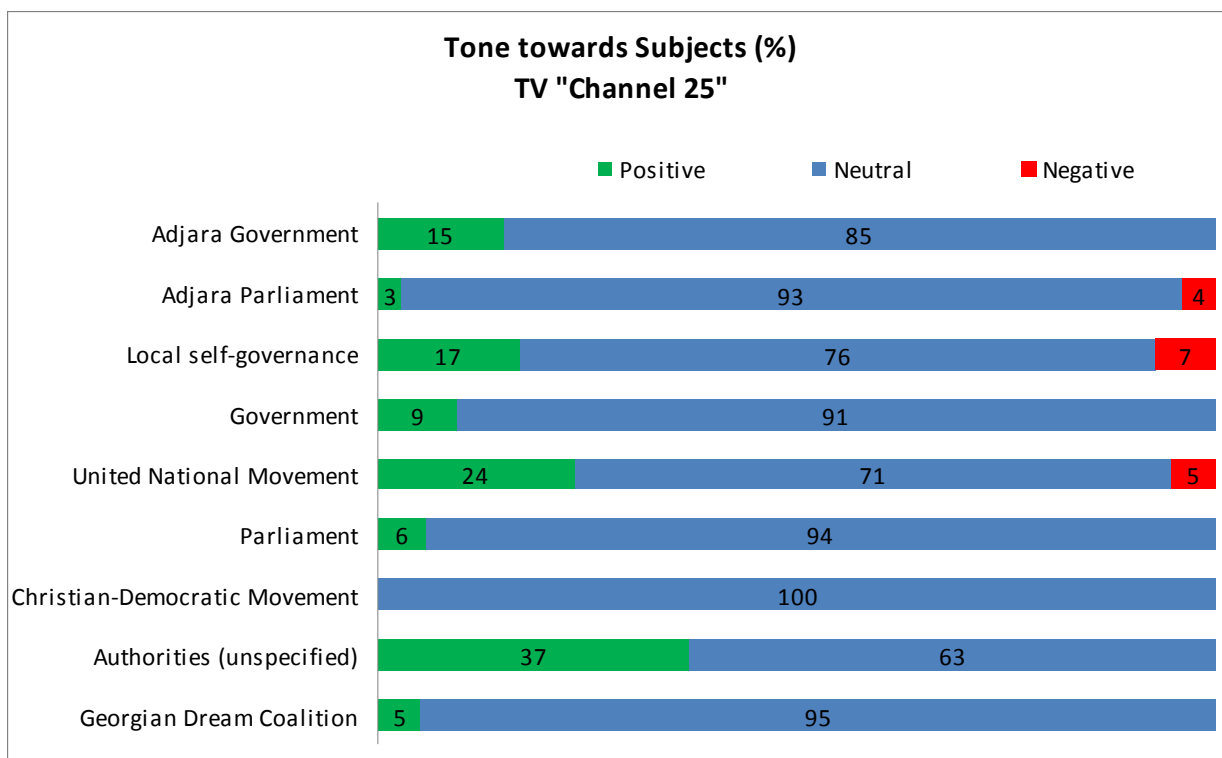
The list is not final and might change in case a new election-related appears.

**News programs monitoring results per channel:**

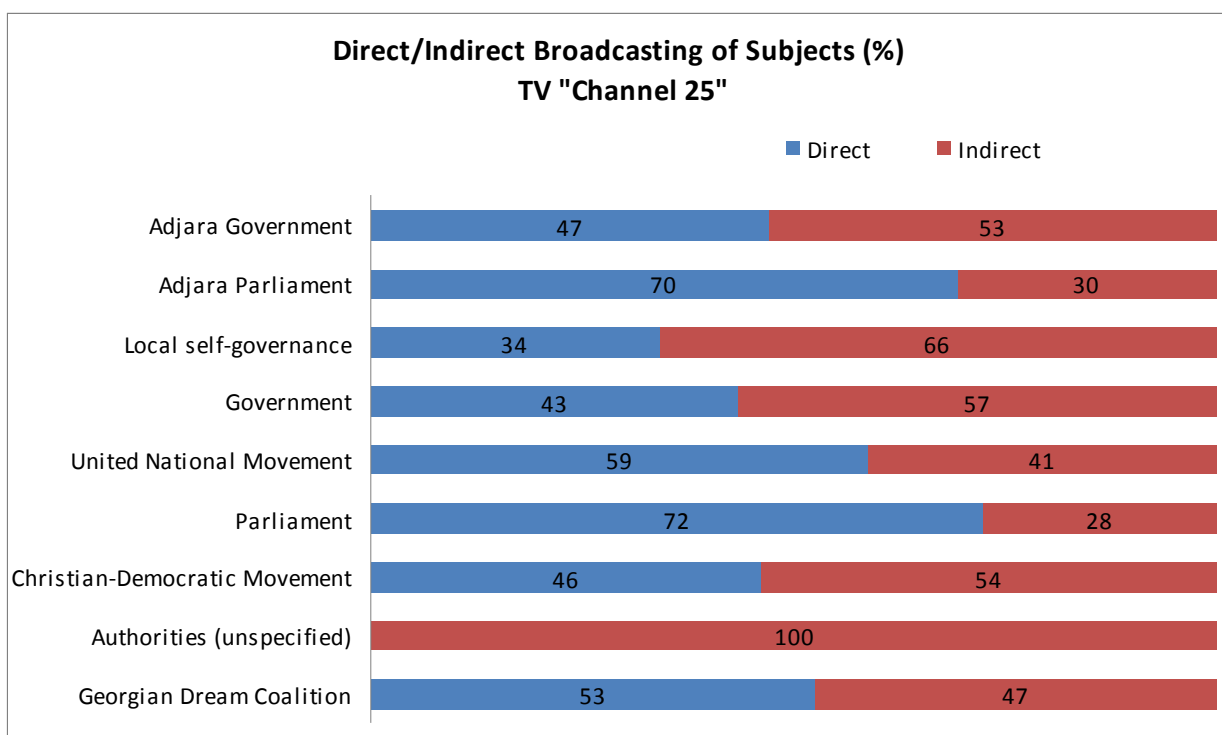
**Channel 25 (Batumi)** – News programs on the channel dedicated the biggest share of airtime, 18 minutes, to Adjara AR government. Adjara Parliament and local self-government come next with 10 minutes each. Government and United National Movement (UNM) each received 5 minutes.



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

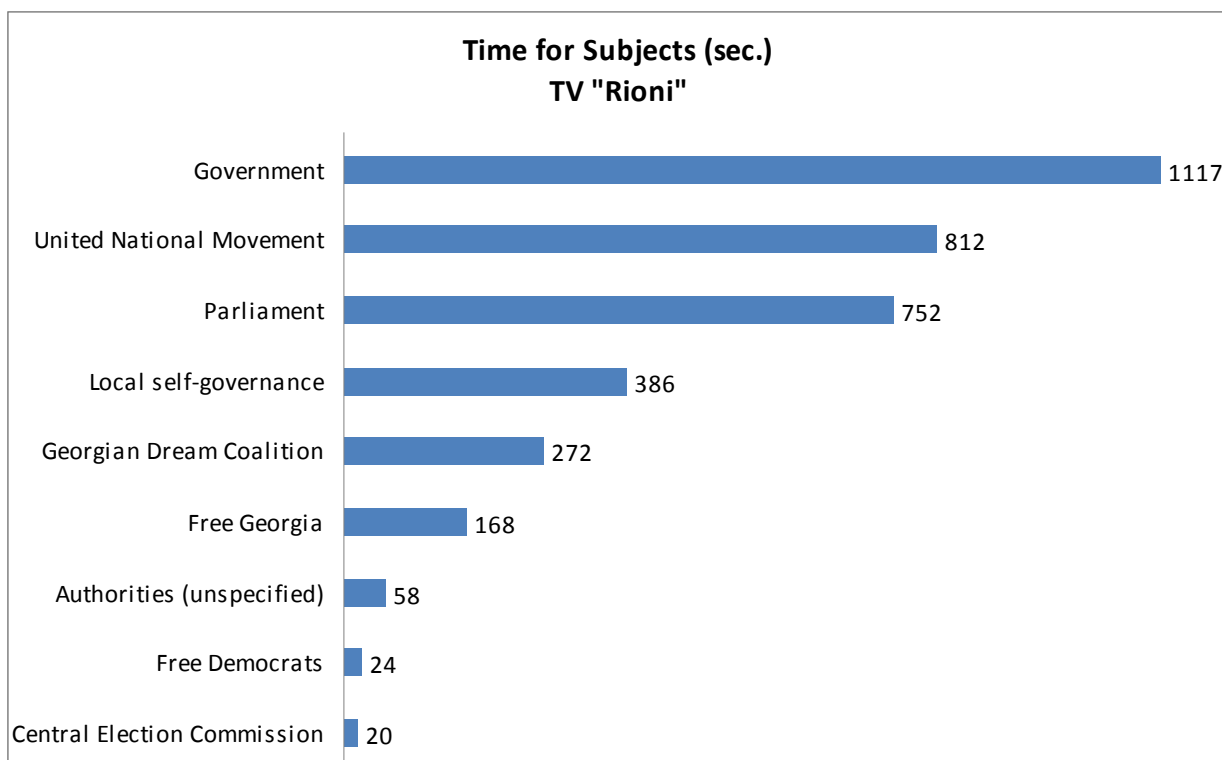


The share of direct/indirect reporting was equal:

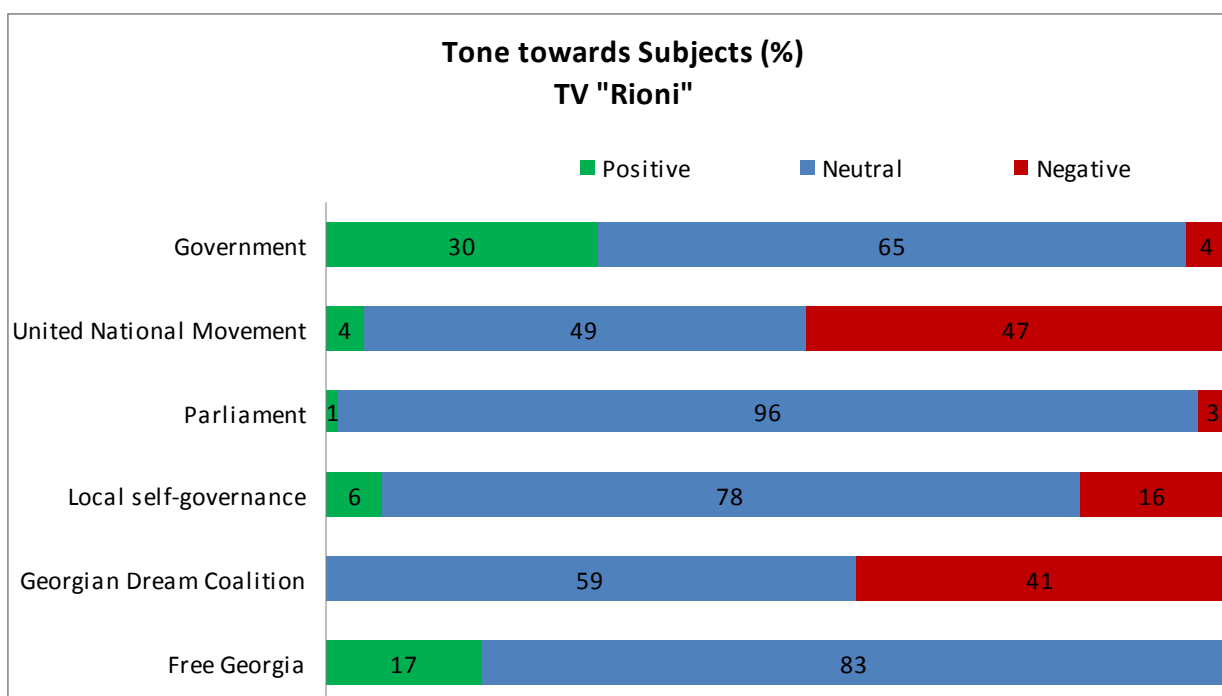


Within the reporting period TV Company Channel 25 essentially covered the developments in the region. The approval of the new composition of Adjara AR government was dedicated the biggest share of airtime. The TV Company aired the positions of the representatives of the opposition as well as authorities, accordingly the greater majority of stories were balanced. No subjective opinions were demonstrated by journalists: the texts were neutral and unbiased.

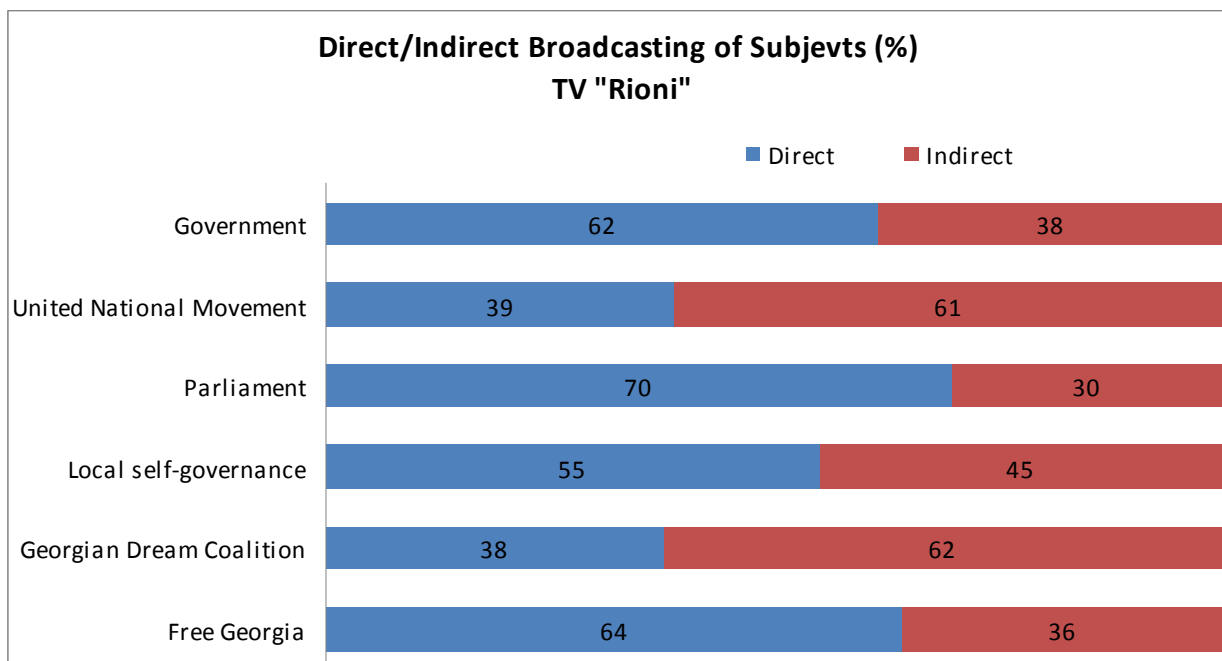
**Rioni (Kutaisi)** - The news programs produced by the channel dedicated 18 minutes to the government. UNM and Parliament come next with 13 and 12 minutes respectively.



The reporting on the subjects was mainly neutral in tone. According to the findings positive and negative tones were observed. 47 percent of the time dedicated to UNM was negative in tone. 41 percent of negative tone was attached to reporting on the Georgian Dream coalition. Government enjoyed the biggest share of positive reporting (30 percent).

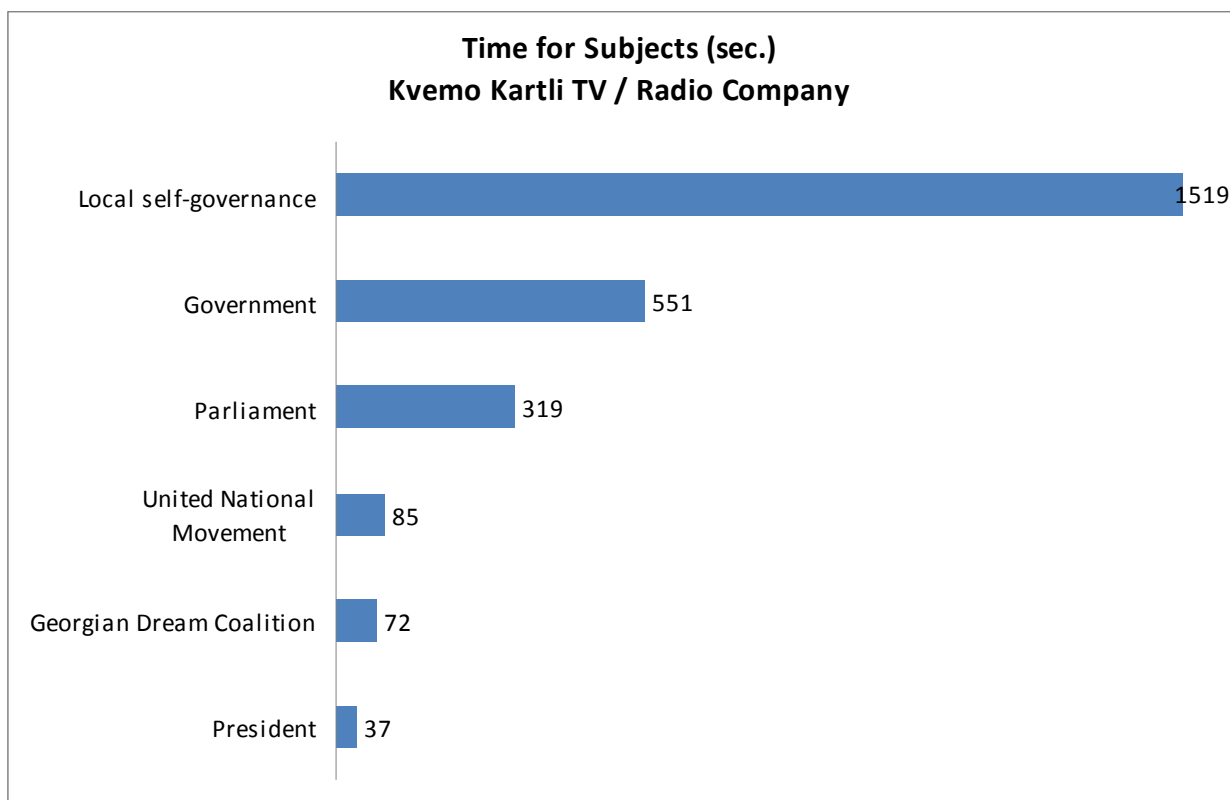


70 percent of reporting on Parliament was direct. In regard to the rest of the monitored subjects too direct reporting prevailed. Indirect reporting prevailed in relation to UNM (39 percent / 61 percent) and the Georgian Dream coalition (38 percent / 62 percent).

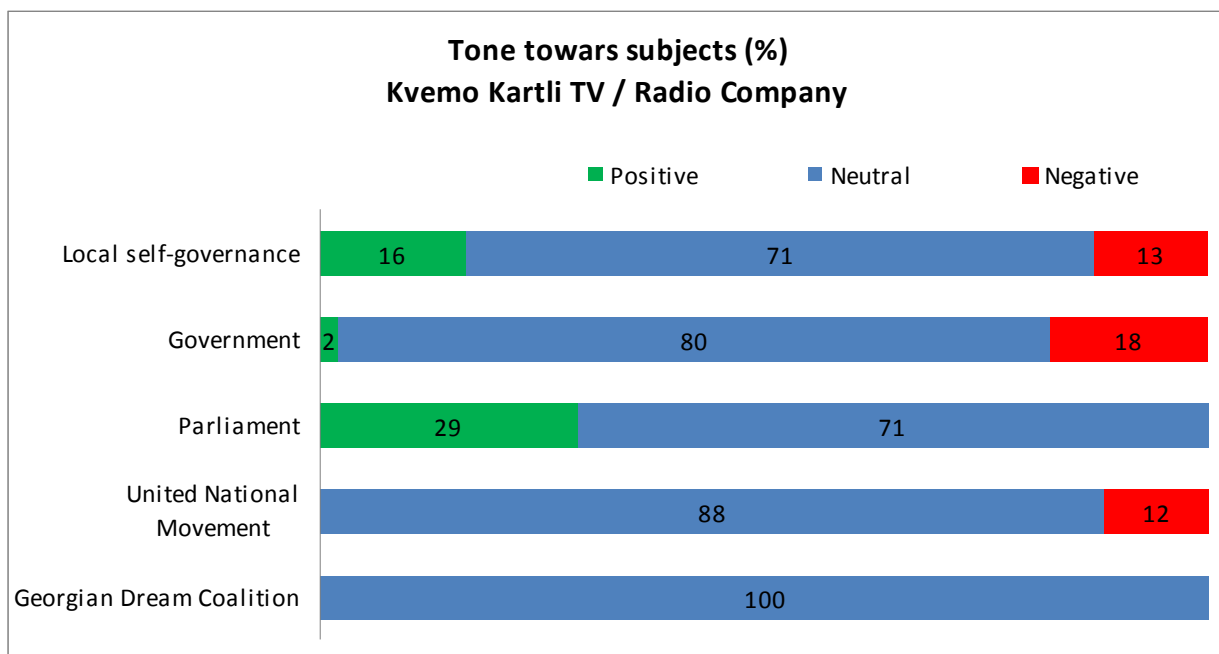


During the reporting week TV Company Rioni aggressively covered events ongoing at the Parliament of Georgia. A fair amount of time was dedicated to the parliamentary debates, plenary sittings and discussions. Programs were balanced, journalists' texts were unbiased. All of the interested parties were covered in the TV stories.

**Kvemo Kartli TV/Radio Company (Rustavi)** – The news programs dedicated the biggest share of airtime, 25 minutes, to the local self-government. Government received 9-minute coverage, followed by Parliament with 5 minutes. UNM and the Georgian Dream coalition was each dedicated less than one minute.

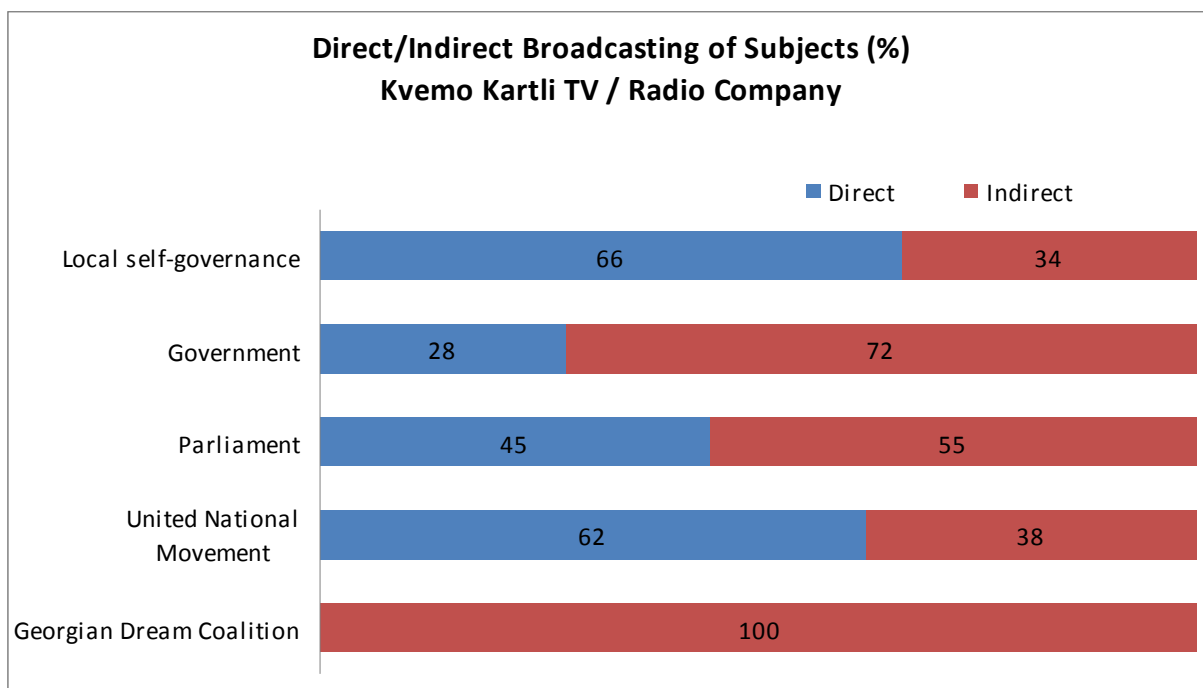


Reporting was essentially neutral in tone. Positive and negative tones were observed too though:



The biggest share of direct reporting falls on the local self-government – 66 percent. While in regard to the government indirect reporting prevailed – 72 percent.

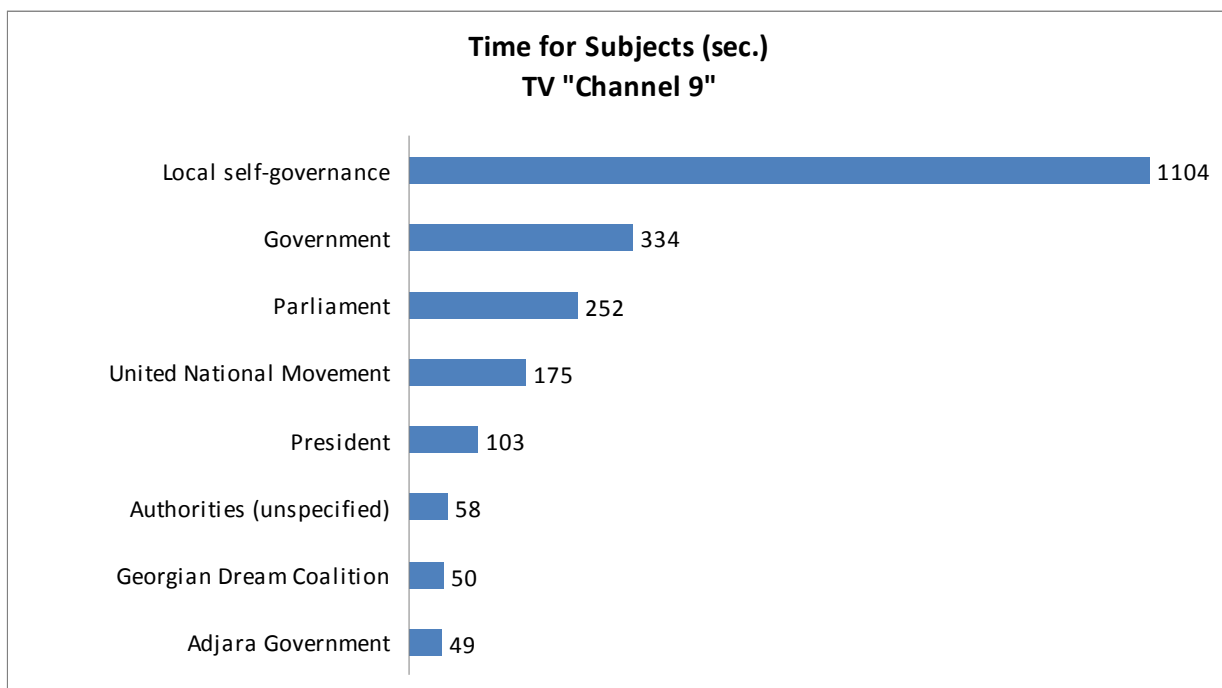




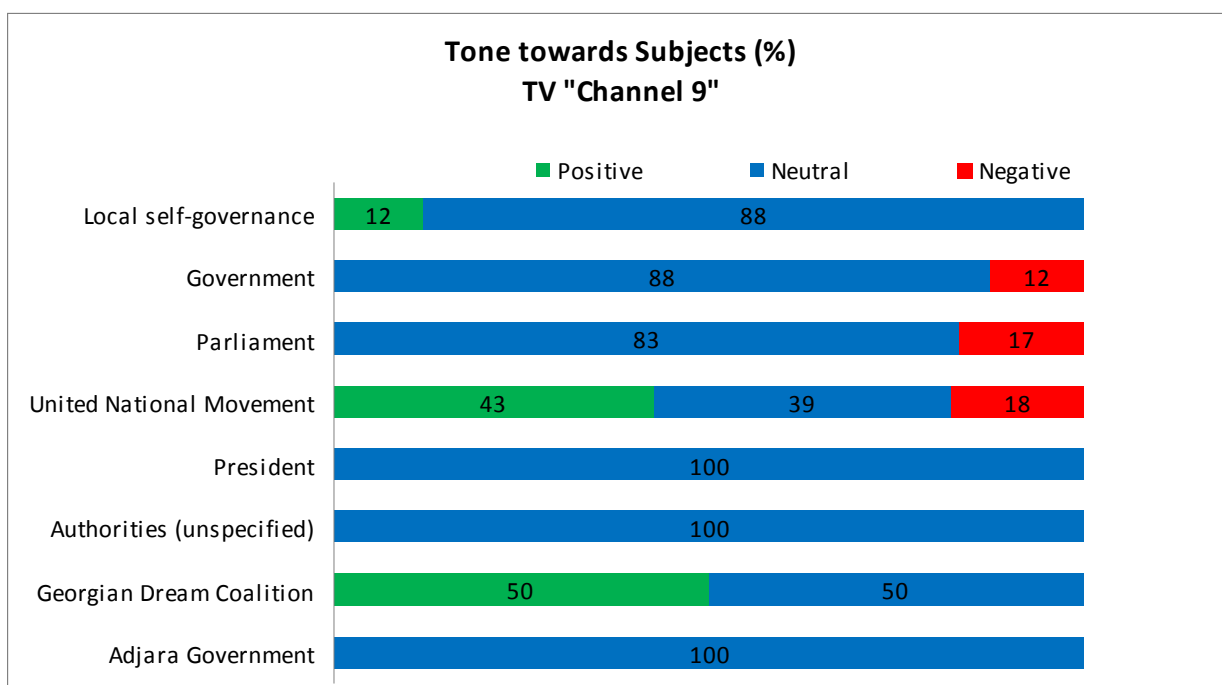
Within the reporting week the news programs produced by Kvemo Kartli TV/Radio Company dedicated biggest share of reporting to the local self-government. The latter was dedicated three times more time than government - the subject coming next in the chart. The protest voiced by Rustavi establishment prisoners and their relatives. The stories produced on the topic demonstrated the positions by some of the protesters as well as official sources.

**Odishi (Zugdidi)** – Out of the monitored subjects the news programs covered only government. The length of coverage was 2 minutes. The reporting, which was 60 percent direct, was neutral in tone.

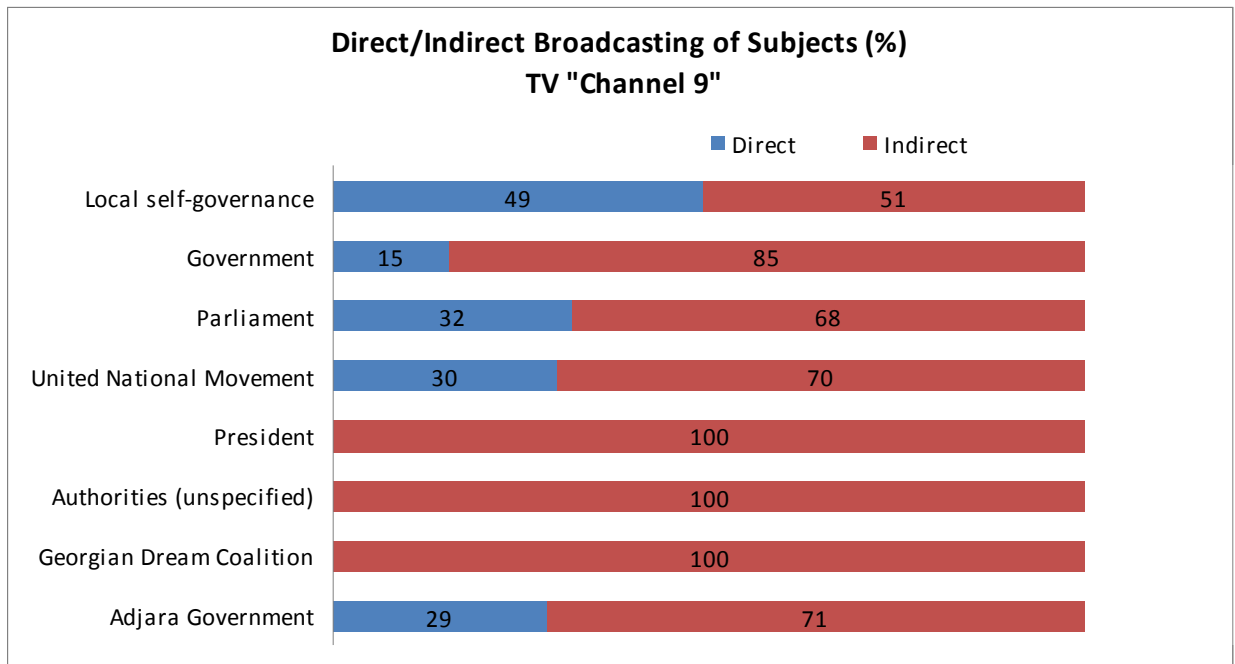
**9<sup>th</sup> Channel - (Akhaltzikhe)** – The news programs dedicated the biggest share of airtime, 18 minutes, to the local self-government. Government, Parliament and UNM received 5, 4 and 3-minute reporting respectively.



All of the three tones were observed, neutral tone prevailed though. Positive tone was attached to reporting on the Georgian Dream coalition (50 percent), UNM (43 percent) and local self-government (12 percent). Negative tone was applied in regard to government (12 percent), Parliament (17 percent) and UNM (18 percent).

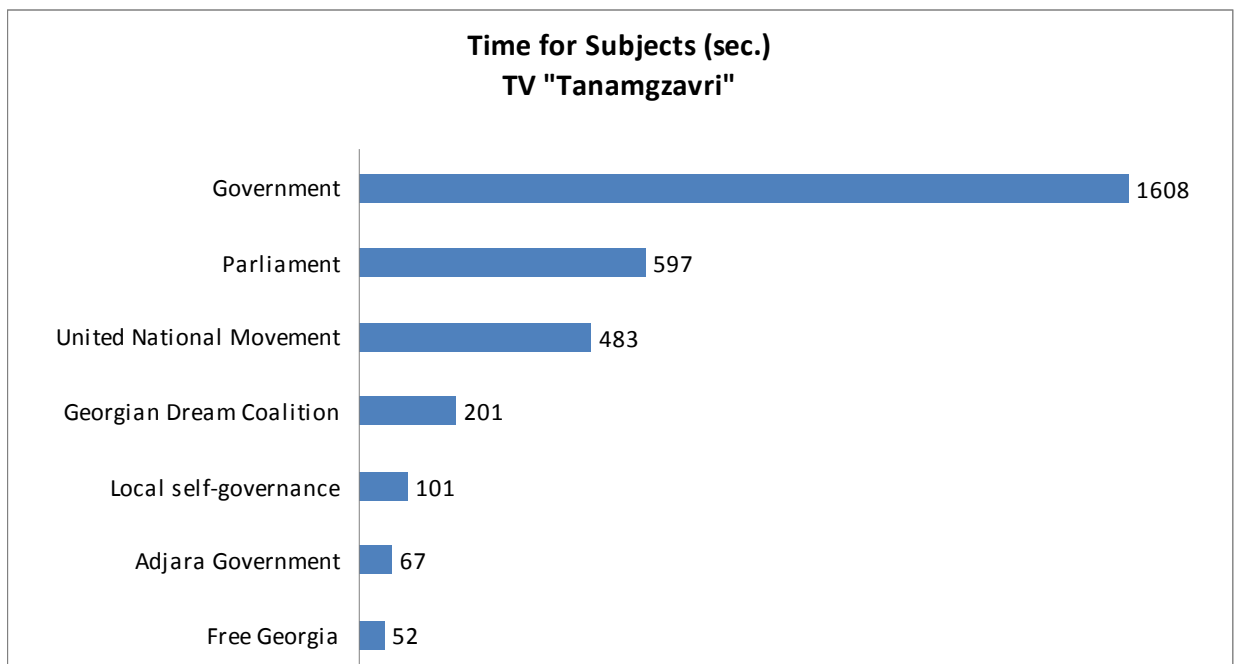


Indirect reporting mostly prevailed over direct or made up 100 percent. The share was almost equal only in regard to the local self-government.

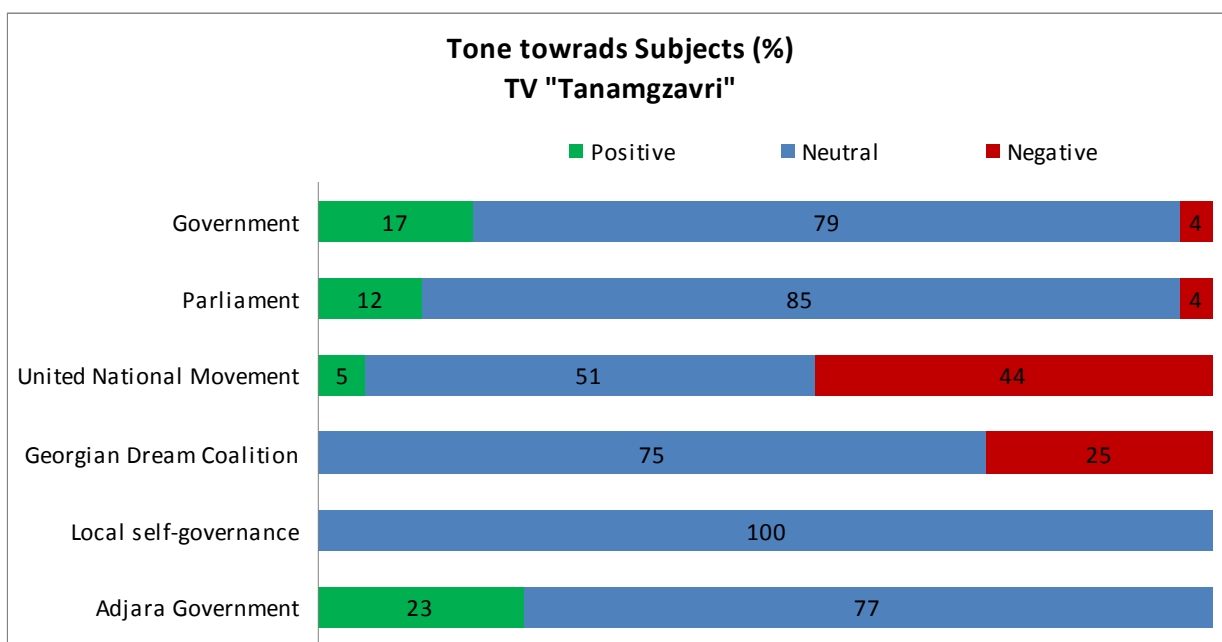


Within the reporting week the TV Company 9<sup>th</sup> Channel news programs essentially covered the developments in the region. The events ongoing nationwide were devoted attention too. One of the main topics of the week was the developments at the local self-governments following the new executive and legislative governments' coming into power. Reporting was neutral in tone.

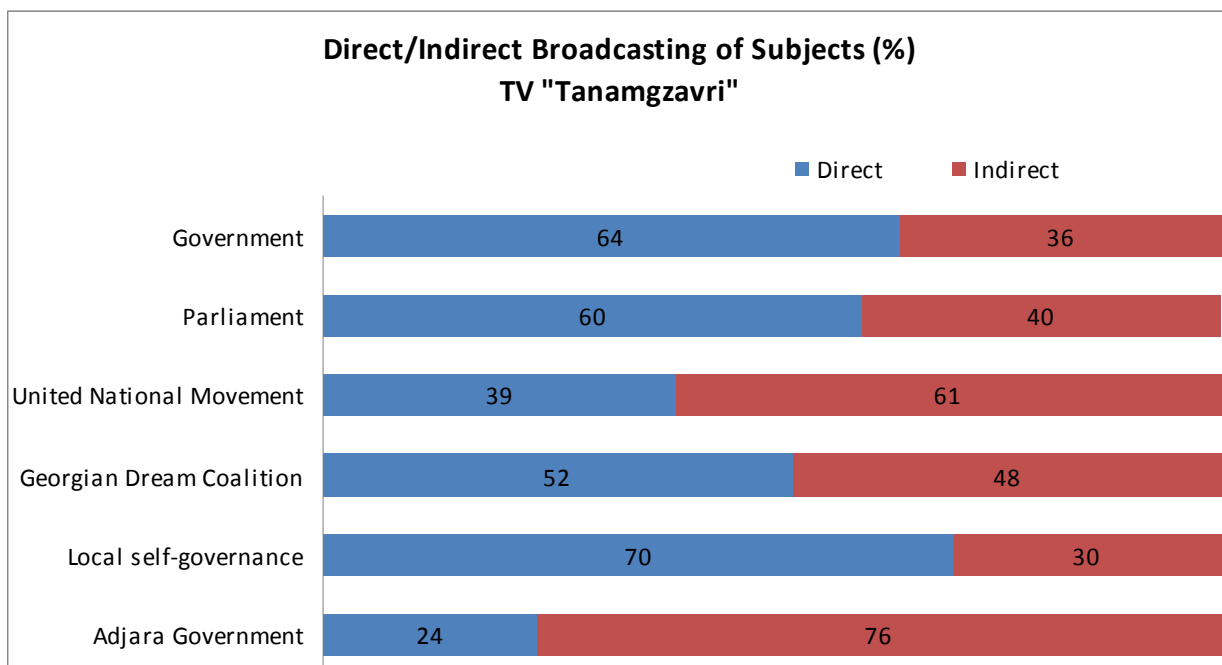
**Tanamgzavri (Telavi)** – The news programs on the channel dedicated the biggest share – 27 minutes, to reporting on the government, Parliament comes next with 10 minutes, followed by UNM with 8 minutes and the Georgian Dream coalition with 3 minutes.



Reporting was essentially neutral in tone, positive and neutral tones were observed too. 44 percent of reporting dedicated to UNM was negative in tone. Negative tone was attached to reporting on the Georgian Dream coalition too – 25 percent.



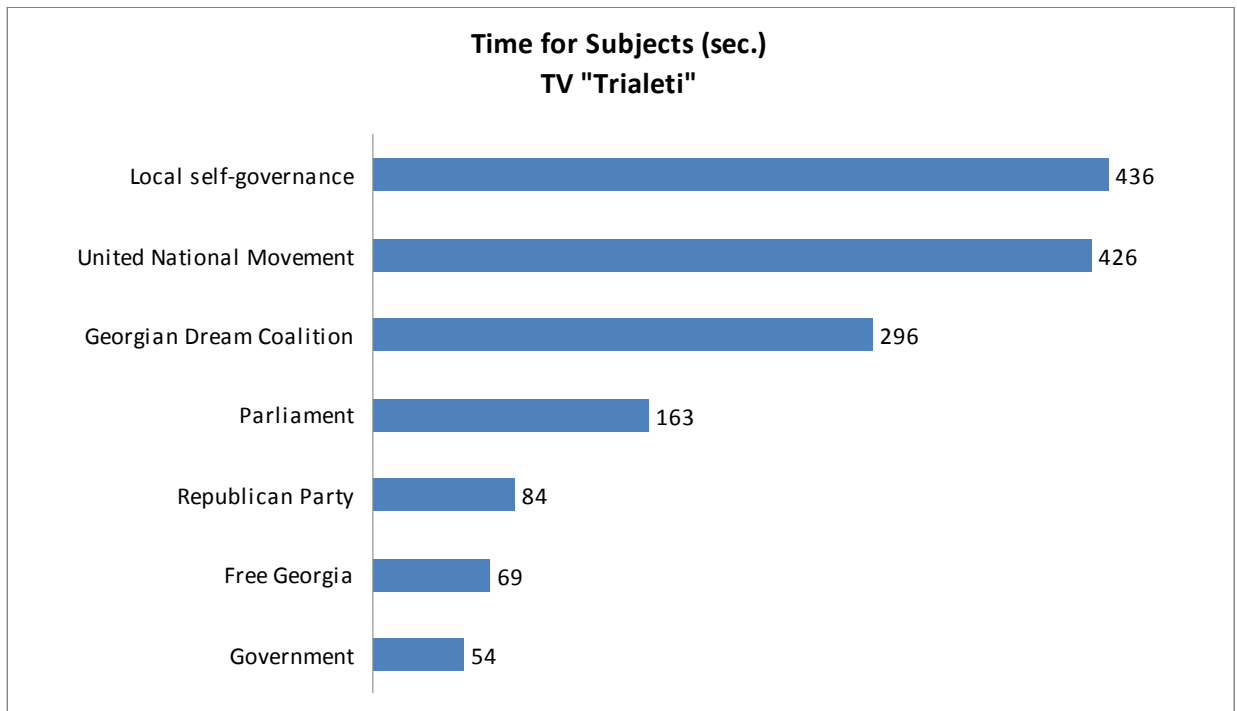
The share of direct reporting prevailed over indirect reporting. Only in relation to UNM indirect reporting (61 percent) prevailed over direct reporting (39 percent).



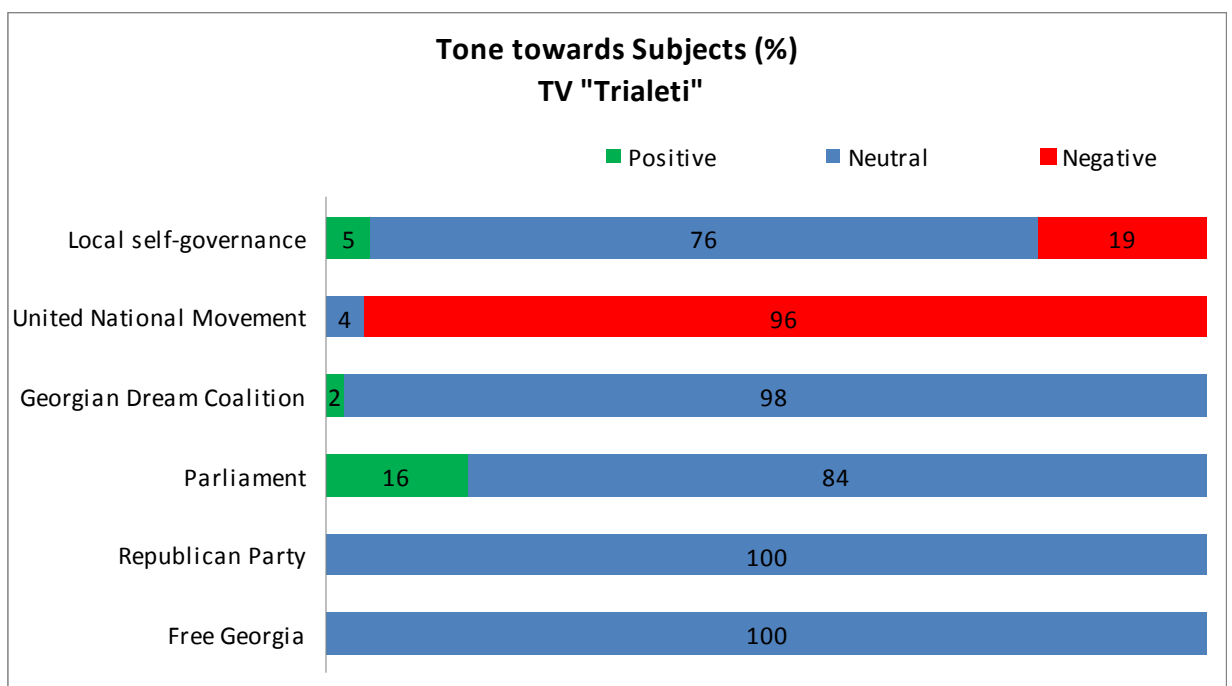
During the reporting period TV Company Tanamgzavri covered local as well as national developments. News programs tended to start with local news. TV stories were balanced. Reporting was neutral in tone. The October 30 news outlet though, on the manning of the General Prosecutor's

Office, violated the journalistic standard – the press conference conducted by Chief Prosecutor was dedicated 8 minutes.

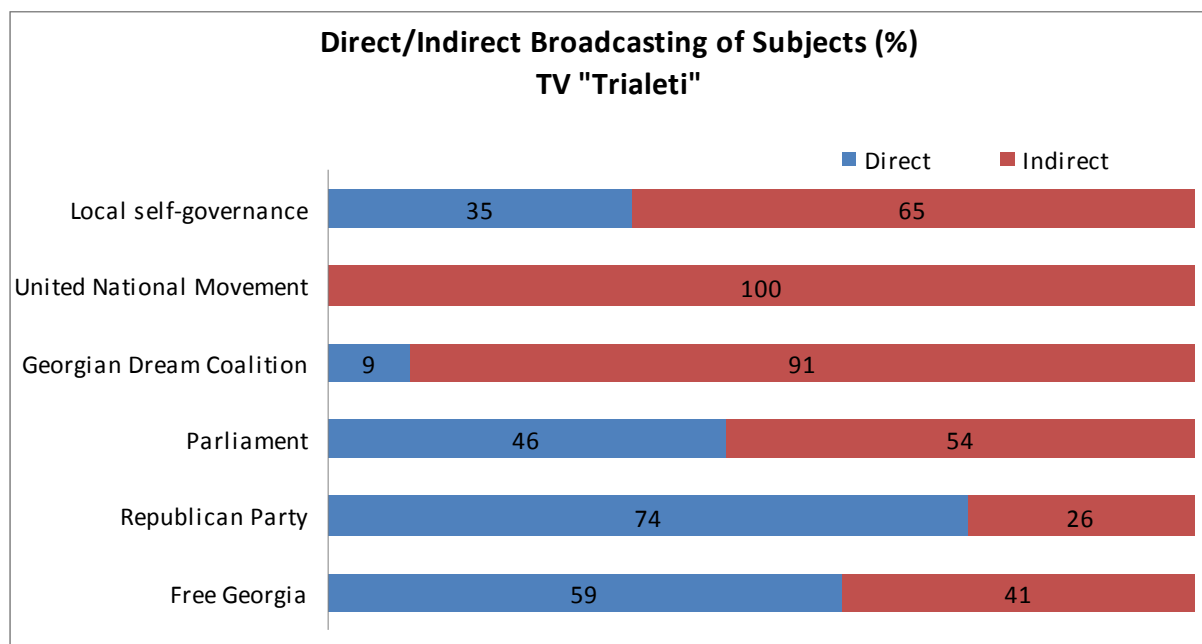
**Trialeti (Gori)** – The news programs on the channel dedicated 7 minutes to the local self-government and UNM per each. The Georgian Dream coalition and Parliament enjoyed 5 and 3-minute TV coverage.



Reporting was essentially neutral in tone. Positive and negative tones were observed too. 96 percent of the time dedicated to UNM was negative in tone.

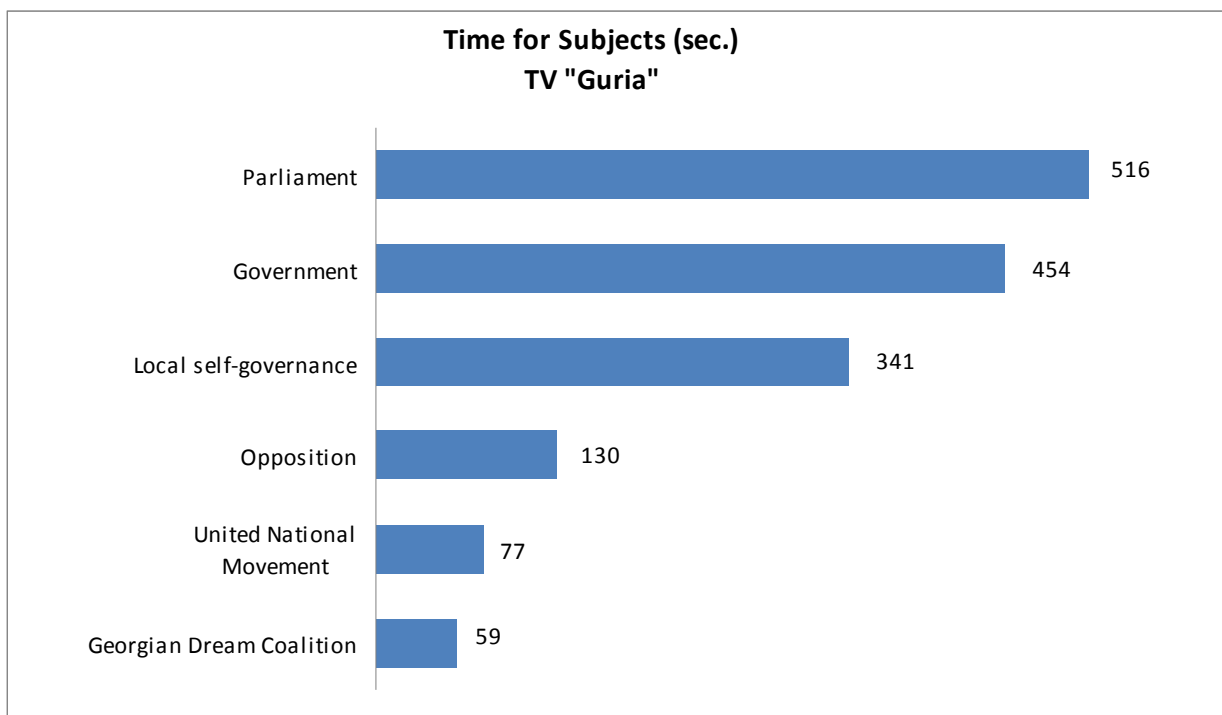


Indirect reporting prevailed over direct reporting. UNM received 100 percent of indirect reporting. 91 percent of total reporting was indirect in relation to the Georgian Dream coalition.

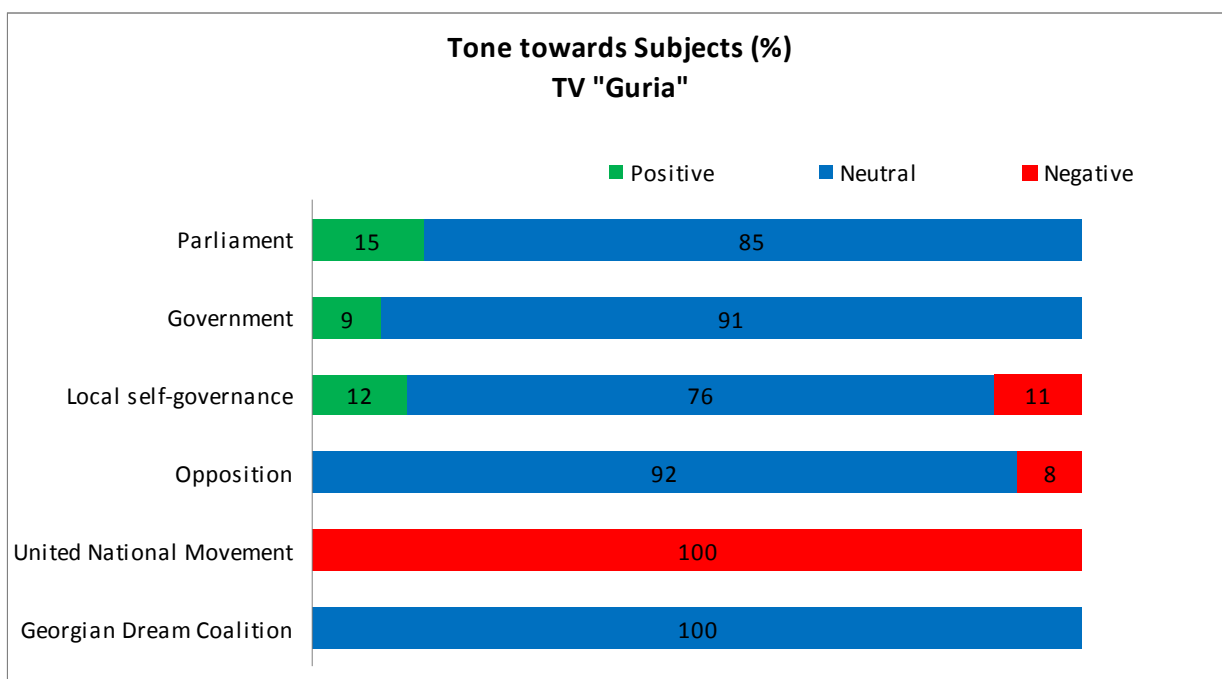


TV Company Trialeti aggressively covered monitored subjects. The biggest share of airtime was dedicated to the local self-government and UNM. UNM's term of governance was covered in negative context. Journalists demonstrated subjective evaluations in relation to the local self-government. For example in the November 1 TV story the journalist says: "Gori Municipality, as a rule, refrained from providing any comments." The evaluation of the kind, occasionally implying municipality comments, is exaggerated and creates additional negative approach to the local self-government.

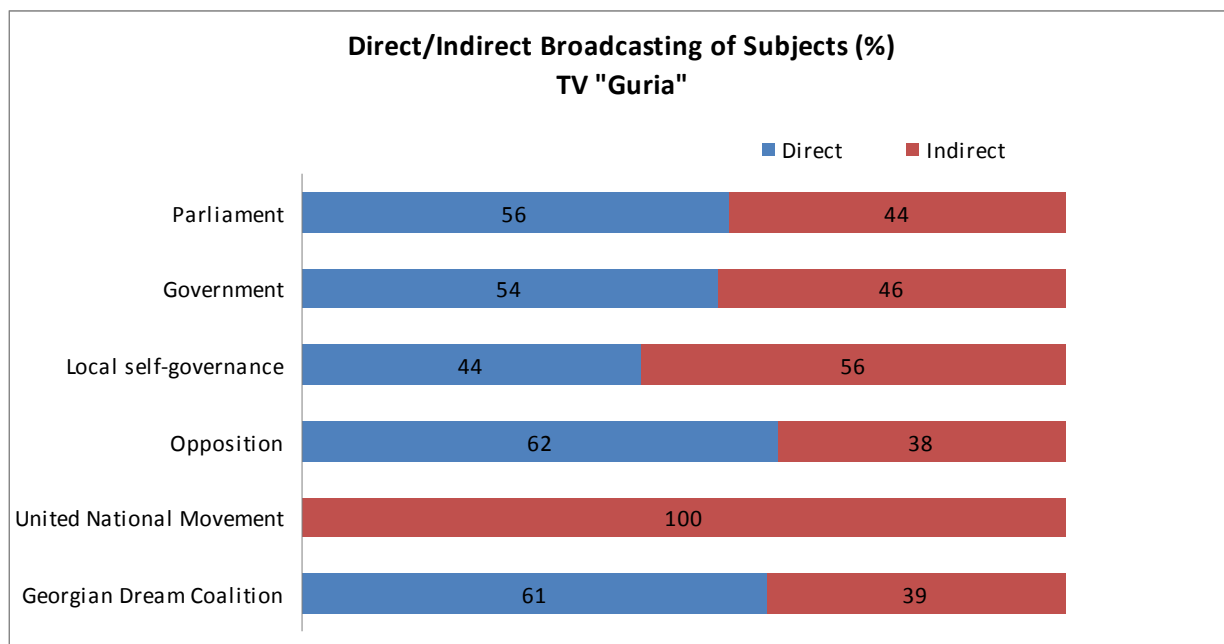
**Guria (Ozurgeti)** – The channel dedicated 8 minutes to reporting on Parliament. Government comes next with 7 minutes followed by local self-government with 5 minutes.



Reporting was essentially neutral in tone. A minor amount of positive and negative tones were identified too. Solely negative tone was attached to reporting on UNM (1,28 minutes of total coverage).



The share of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal. Solely indirect reporting was observed in UNM's case.

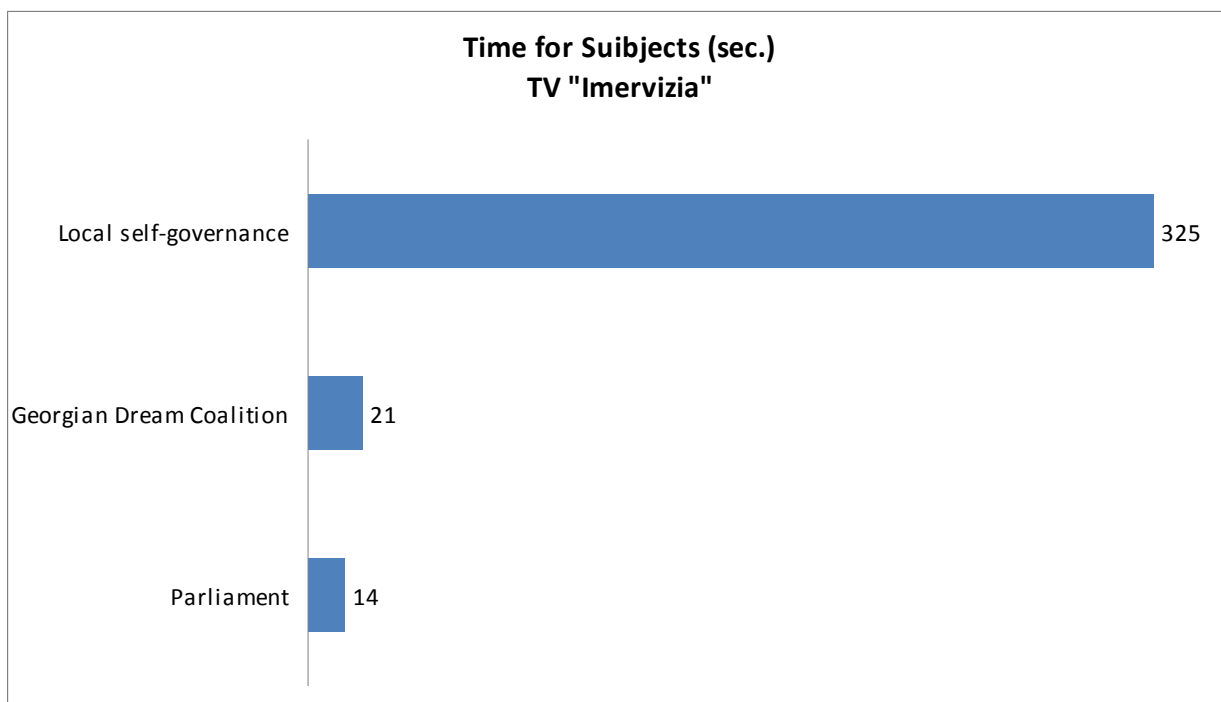


Within the reporting period TV Company Guria focused on the events ongoing in the region and government's initiatives. News were essentially of informative nature, reporting was neutral, without providing journalists' subjective opinions. It is noteworthy though that the amount of criticism to the local self-government and UNM went up.

**12<sup>th</sup> Channel** – During the reporting period the news programs dedicated no time to the monitored subjects.

**Imervizia (Chiatura)** – The channel dedicated around 5 minutes to the local self-government. The rest of the monitored subjects were provided no coverage.

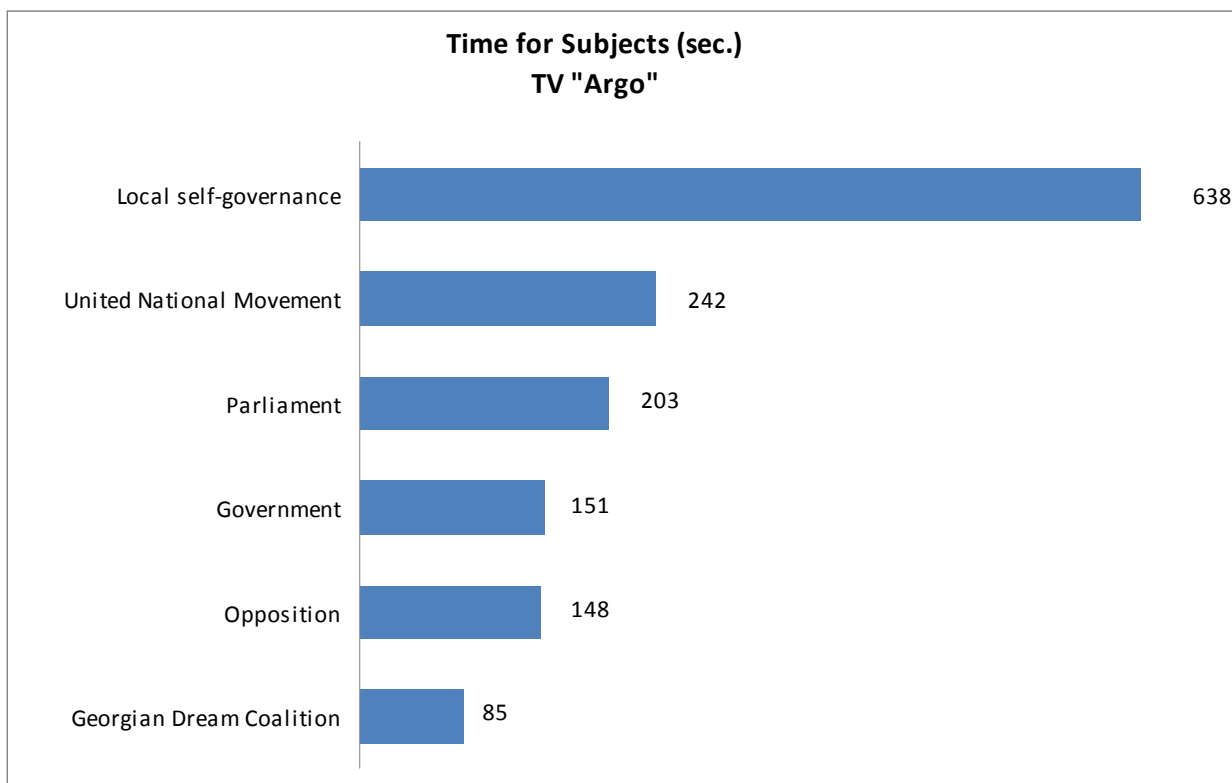




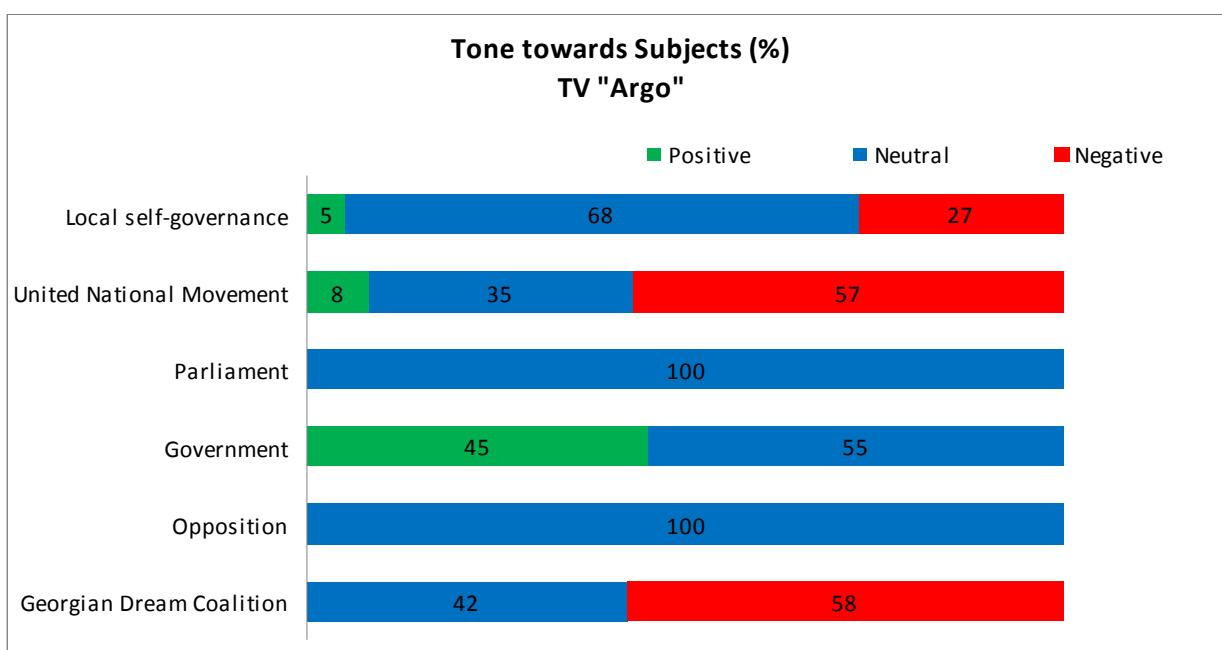
Only positive (27 percent) and neutral (73 percent) tones were applied to reporting on the local self-government; direct reporting (75 percent) prevailed over indirect (25 percent).

Within the reporting period the main topic of the TV Company Imervizia news programs was the miners on strike in Chiatura. The rest of the monitored subjects were dedicated little time (6 minutes in total). The findings give no possibility to provide qualitative analysis.

**Argo (Zestafoni)** – News programs dedicated the biggest share of reporting, 10 minutes, to the local self-government. 4 minutes were received by UNM, followed by Parliament and government with approximately 3 minutes.

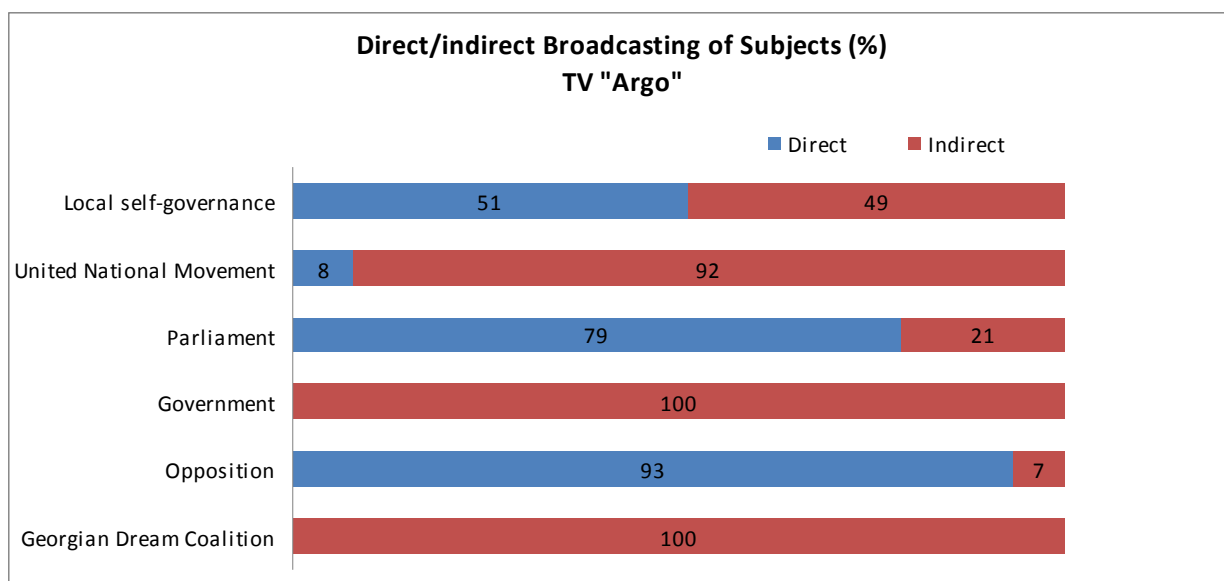


All of the three tones were observed in regard to the monitored subjects, neutral tone though prevailed over positive and negative. The share of positive reporting amounted to 45 percent in regard to government. High percentage of negative tone was attached to reporting on UNM (57 percent) and the Georgian Dream coalition (58 percent). Negative tone was also attached to reporting on the local self-government (27 percent).



Indirect reporting prevailed over direct reporting. 100 percent of indirect reporting falls on government and the Georgian Dream coalition. Indirect reporting also prevailed over direct reporting

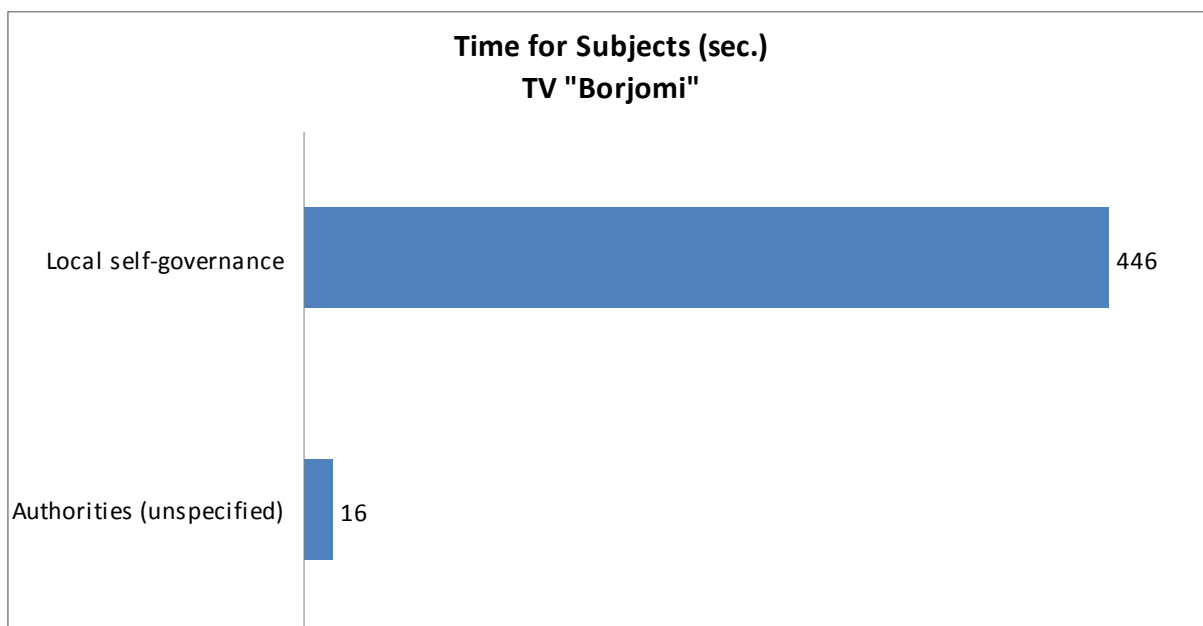
in UNM' case (92 percent). Direct reporting prevailed over indirect reporting in regard to Parliament (79 percent) and opposition (93 percent).



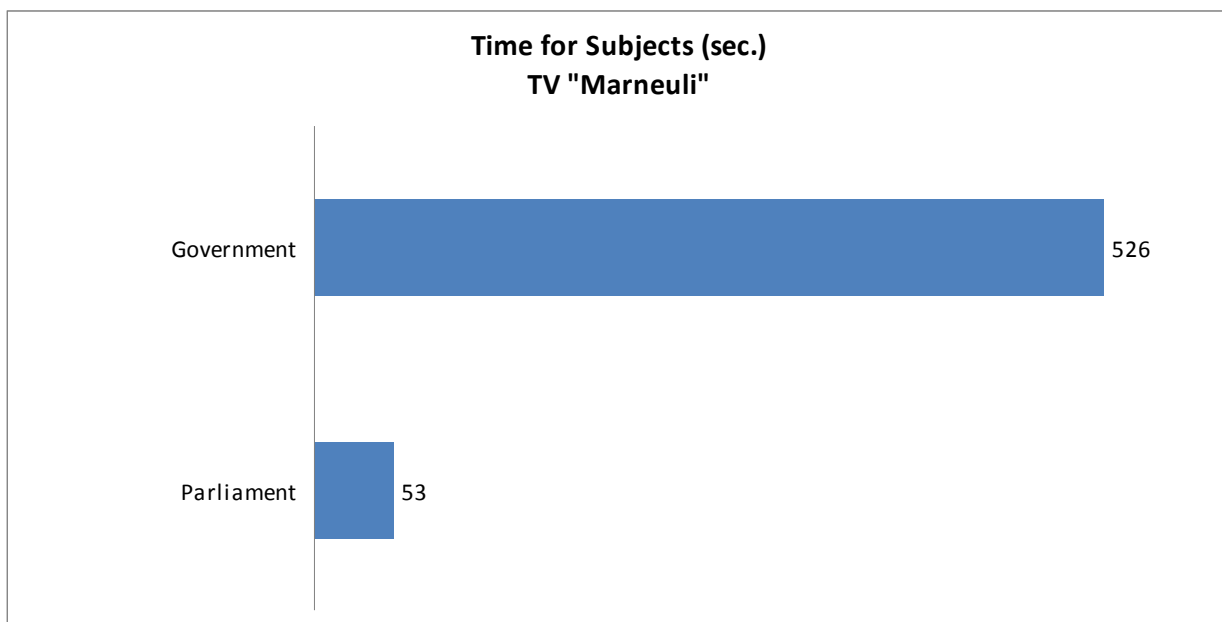
Within the reporting week TV Company produced news programs on a daily basis whose running time amounted to approximately 10 minutes.

The appointment of former MP Kakha Getsadze of UNM to the position of Municipality Gemgebeli was the event of the week. Sakrebulo sitting over the issue caused noise. This topic was covered in the news programs in a balanced manner, without journalists' evaluations. The channel apportioned equal airtime to the opponent parties. It is also noteworthy that a fair amount of time in the news program Spectrum was dedicated to social, cultural and sports events.

**Borjomi (Borjomi)** – The news programs dedicated 7 minutes to the local self-government. The rest of the monitored subjects were provided no coverage. Reporting on the local self-government was 85 percent neutral in tone and 79 percent fell on indirect reporting. The results of the survey give no possibility to provide qualitative analysis.

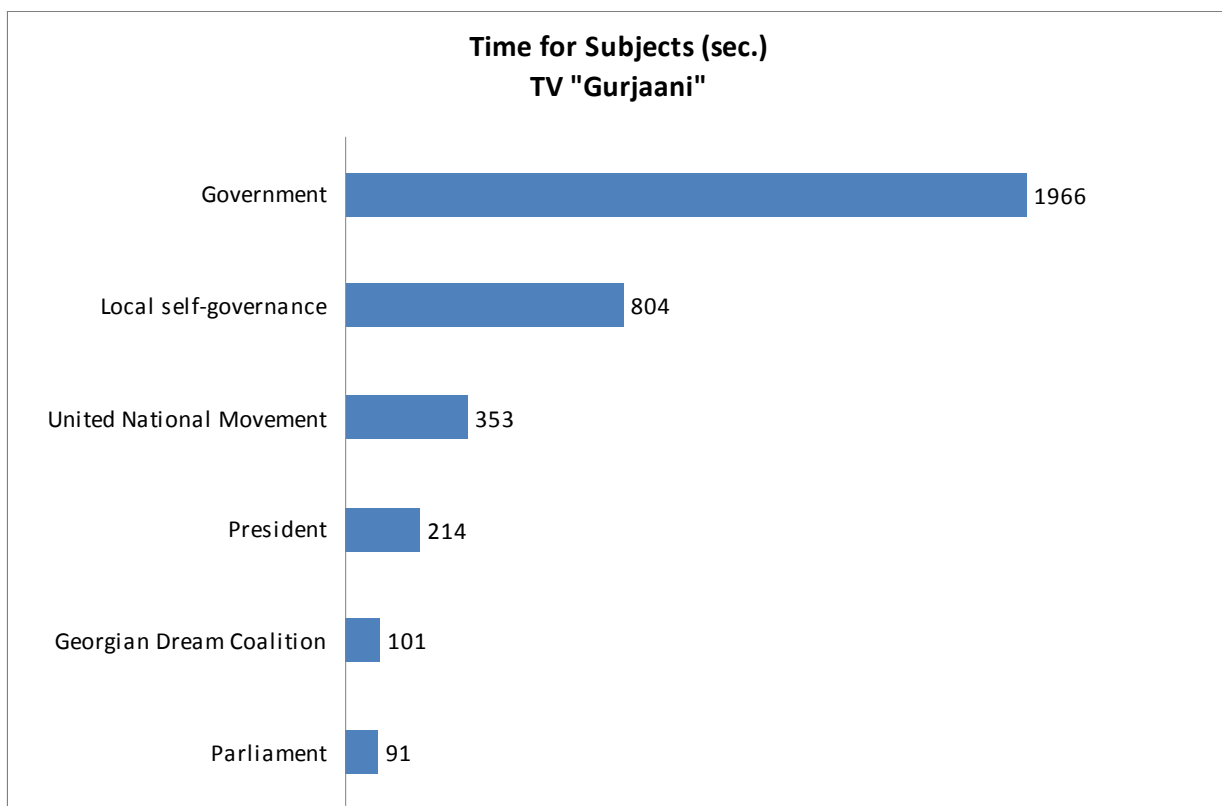


**Marneuli (Marneuli)** – The channel dedicated approximately 9 minutes to government, less than one minute to Parliament. The rest of the monitored subjects were provided no coverage. Neutral (97 percent) and positive (3 percent) tones were observed when reporting on the government. Direct reporting prevailed over indirect reporting (38 percent).

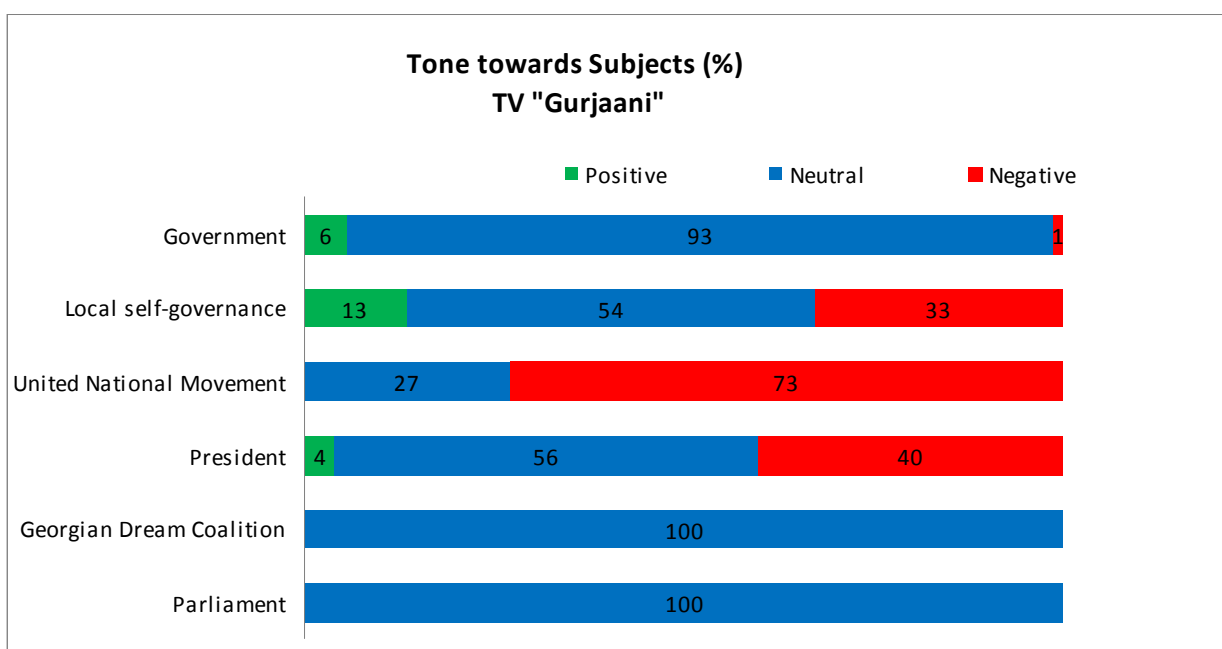


During the reporting period TV Company Marneuli produced news programs on a daily basis. The running time of the outlets, which included about 3-4 stories, was approximately 10 minutes. News programs focused on the issues related to the government and Parliament. The programs were balanced. Journalists showed no bias.

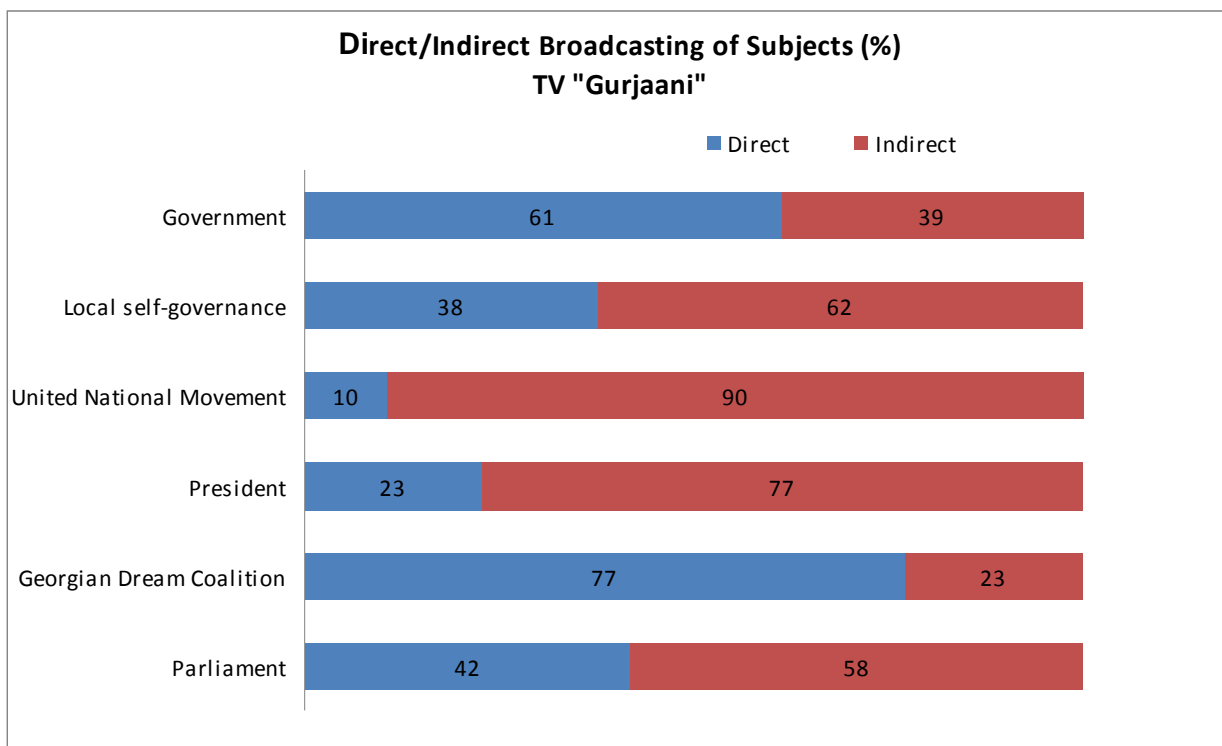
**Gurjaani (Gurjaani)** – The news programs on the channel dedicated the biggest share of airtime, 33 minutes, to the government. Local self-government comes next with 13 minutes, followed by UNM with 6 minutes, President with 4 minutes, the Georgian Dream coalition with 1,68 minutes.



Neutral tone prevailed in regard to the monitored subjects. A minor share of positive tone was attached to reporting on government (6 percent), local self-government (13 percent) and President (4 percent). Negative tone was applied to UNM (73 percent), President (40 percent) and local self-government (33 percent).



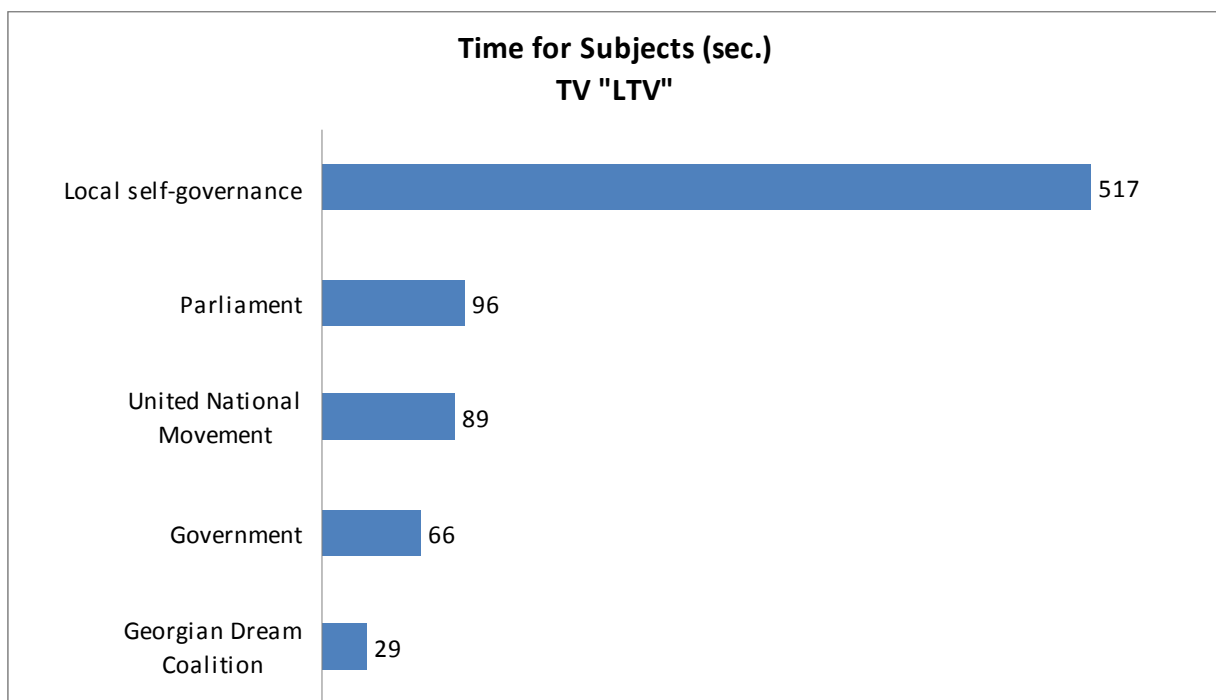
According to the findings the monitored subjects were talking about themselves and were talked about as well. The highest percentage of indirect reported was found in UNM's (90 percent) and President's (77 percent) case. The share of direct reporting was high in relation to government (61 percent) and Georgian Dream coalition (77 percent) of 2 minutes dedicated in total.



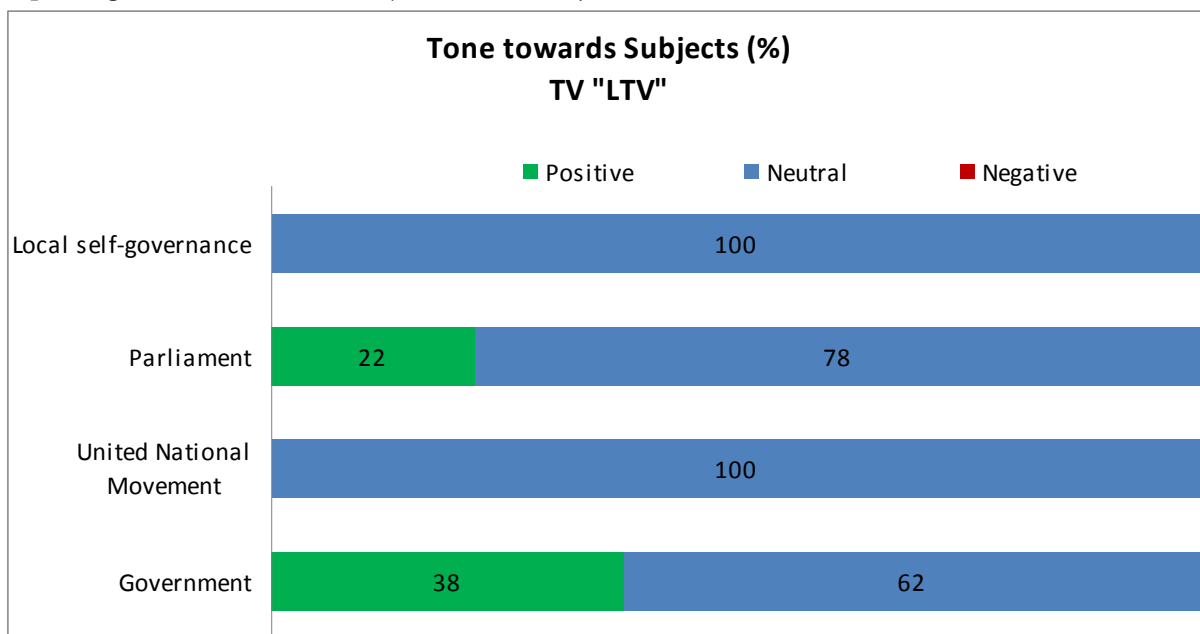
Within the reporting week the main topics covered by the TV Company Gurjaani news programs included the problems accumulated throughout years. The events ongoing nationwide were focused too. The government sitting, new initiatives proposed by the Ministry of Finance and Prosecutor's Office, as well as staff changes at the Ministry of Internal Affairs were among the topics the journalists placed emphasis on. The coverage was balanced and unbiased.

It is noteworthy that negative tone in regard to UNM (73 percent) and local self-government (33 percent) considerably went up. Within the reporting period the infrastructural projects carried out by the local self-government were less covered in the past week. Along with that the amount of criticism to the activities carried out by the local self-government voiced by respondents greatly increased.

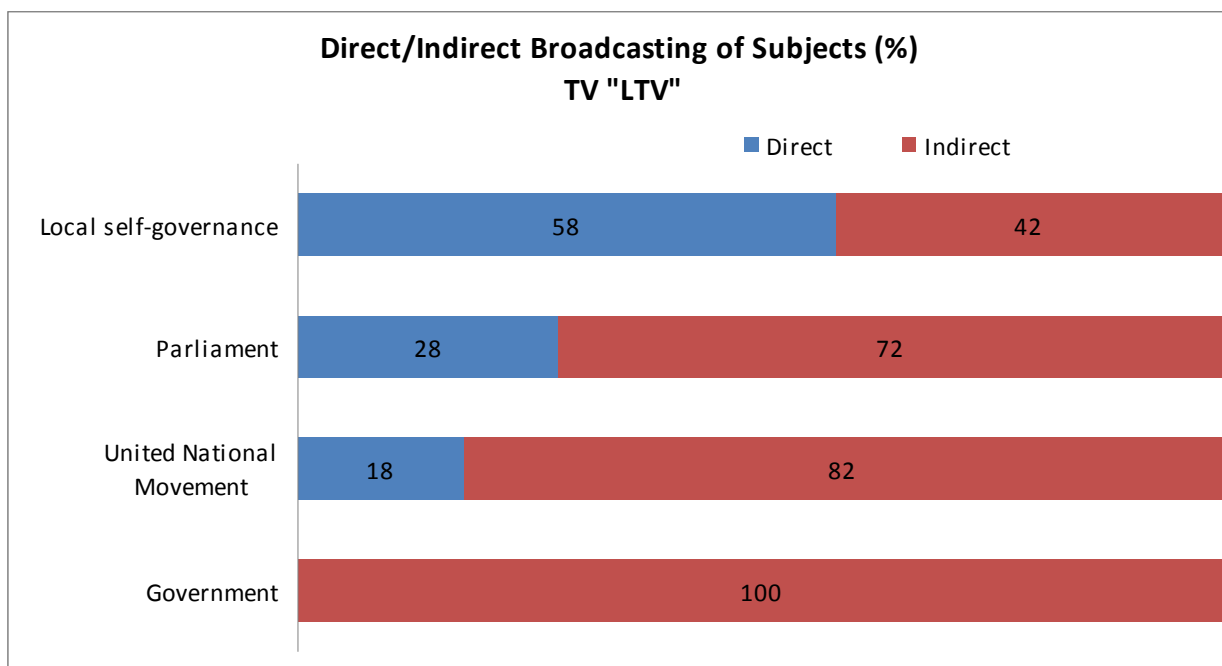
**LTV (Lagodekhi)** – Within the reporting week the local self-government received 9-minute reporting. The rest of the monitored subjects including Parliament, UNM and government were dedicated less than one minute.



Reporting on the monitored subjects was mainly neutral in tone:



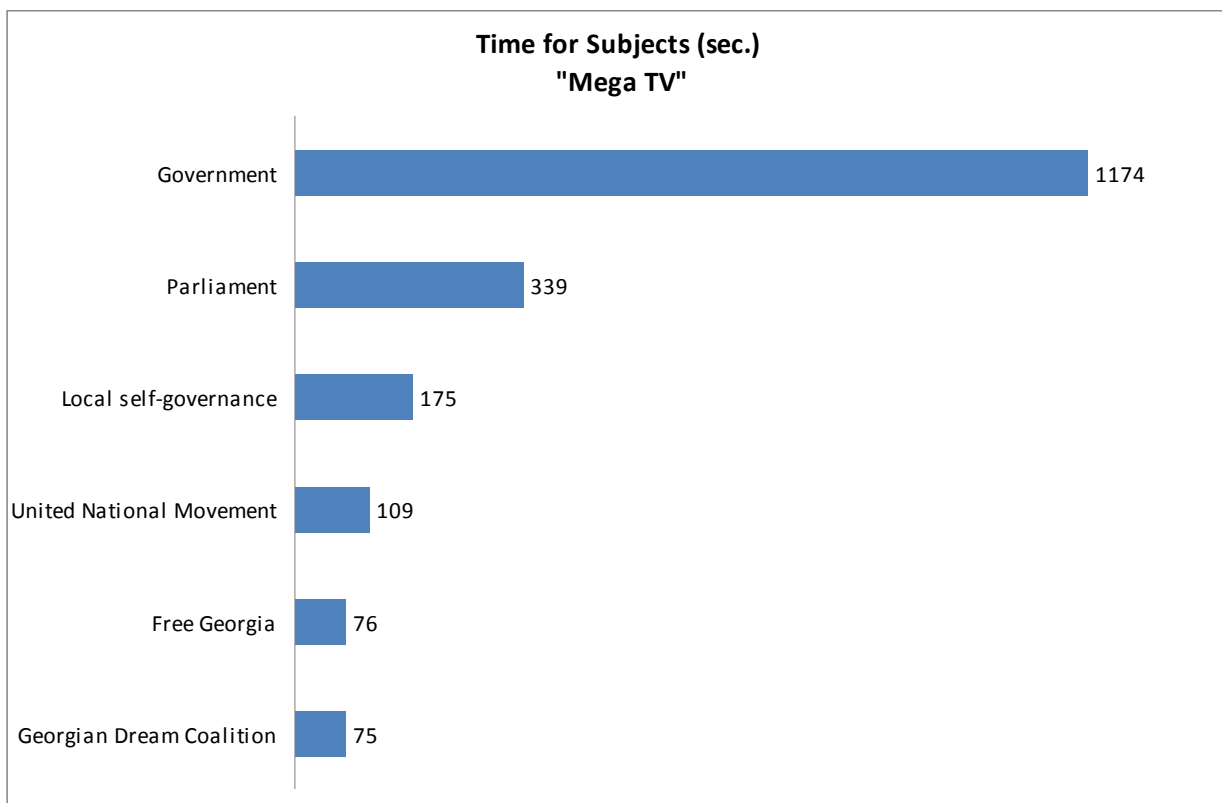
The share of direct/indirect reporting was almost equal in regard to the local self-governance:



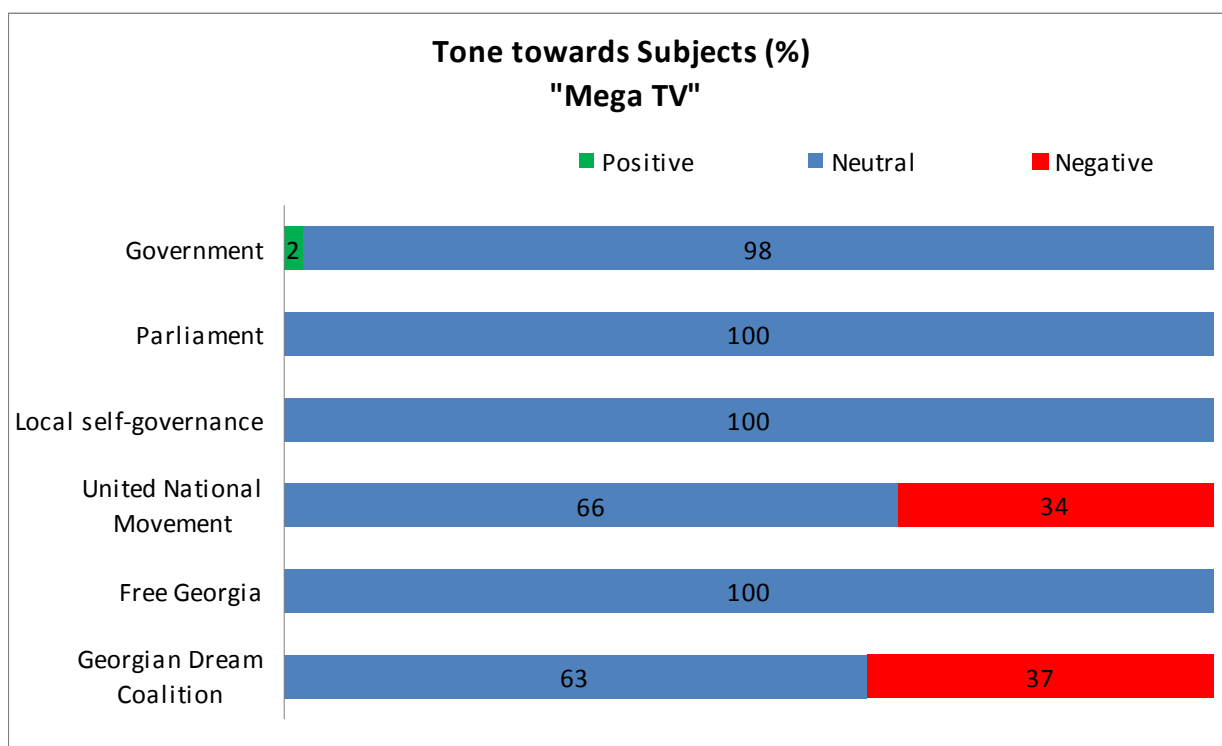
During the reporting week the TV Company essentially covered the activities carried out by the local self-government. It is noteworthy that the TV stories were more or less balanced, journalists' bias was evident.

**Mega TV (Khoni)** – The news programs on the channel dedicated the biggest share of airtime, 19 minutes, to the government. Parliament and the local self-government follow with 5 and 3 minutes respectively.

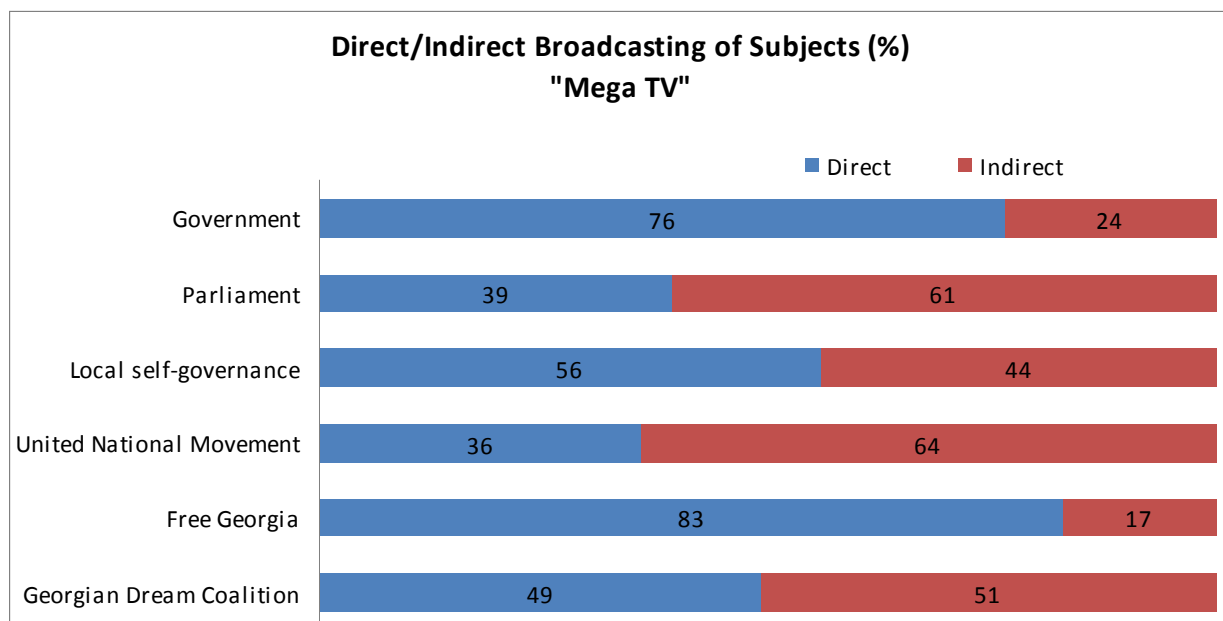




Reporting on the monitored subjects was neutral in tone. Negative reporting falls on UNM (34 percent) and the Georgian Dream coalition (37 percent). The airtime dedicated to them is a bit more than one minute.



76 percent of the time dedicated to the government was direct. Indirect reporting prevailed over direct reporting in Parliament's and UNM's case.

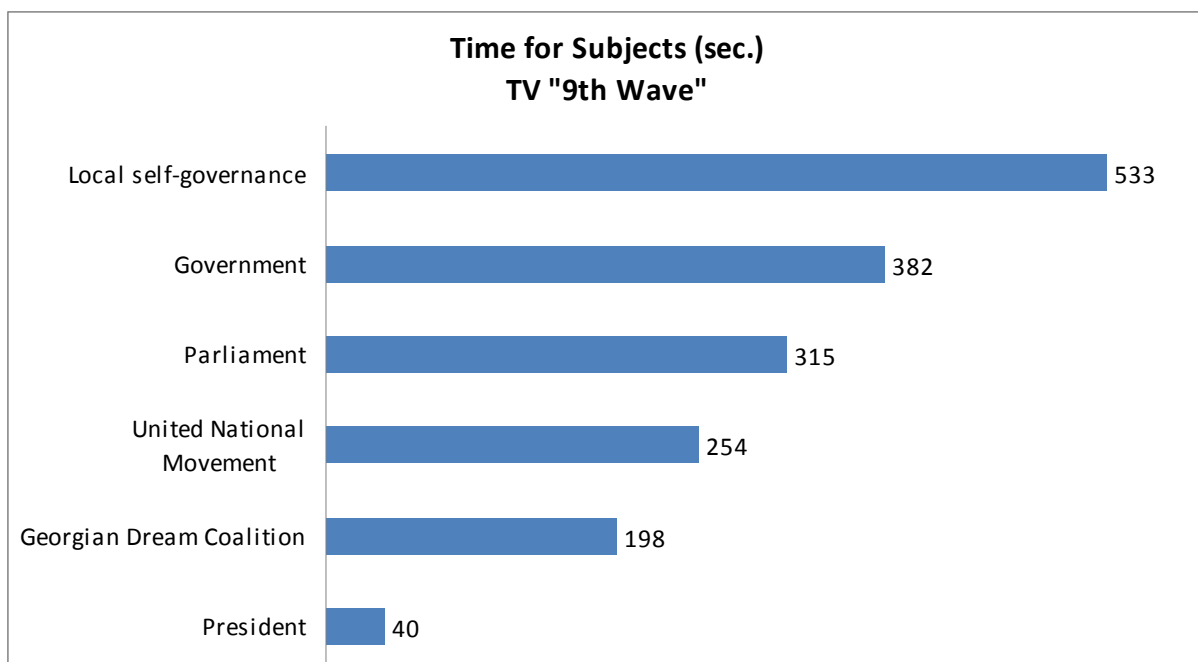


Within the reporting week TV Company Mega TV essentially covered the activities carried out by the new government: the latter was dedicated 20 minutes followed by Parliament with 6 minutes.

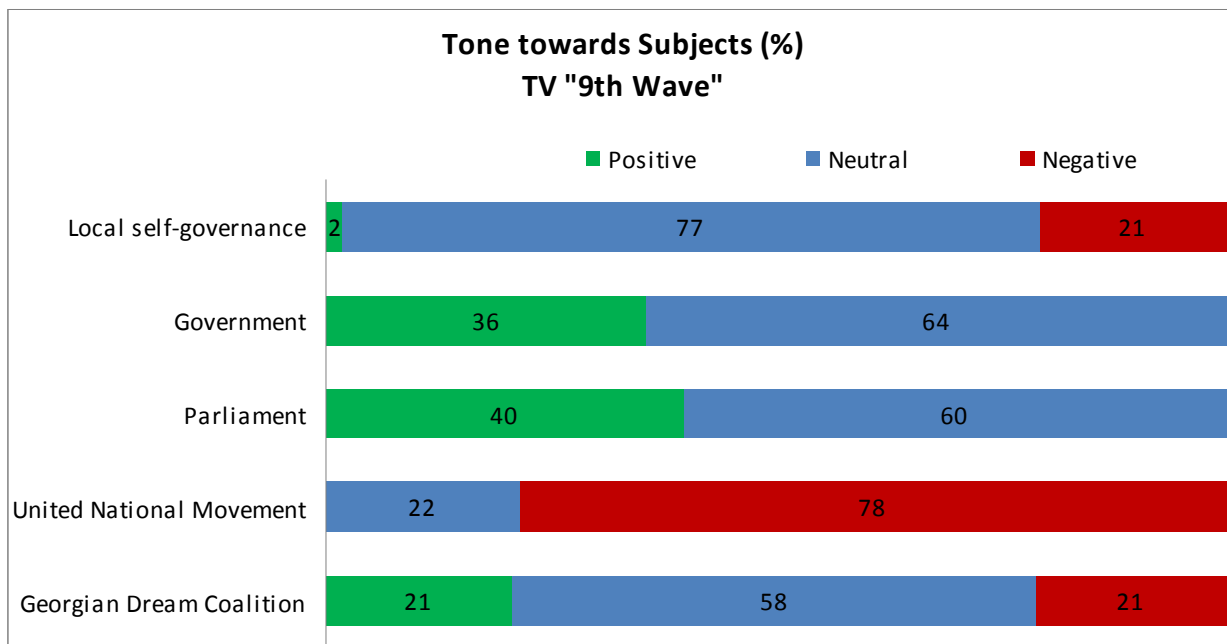
It is noteworthy that reporting on Mega TV was mostly neutral in tone. The greater majority of stories were balanced and demonstrated the stances of the representatives of the authorities as well as the opposition.

**Zai (Samtredia)** - Within the reporting week the TV Company news programs provided no coverage of the monitored subjects. Only local self-government was dedicated 1,71 minutes.

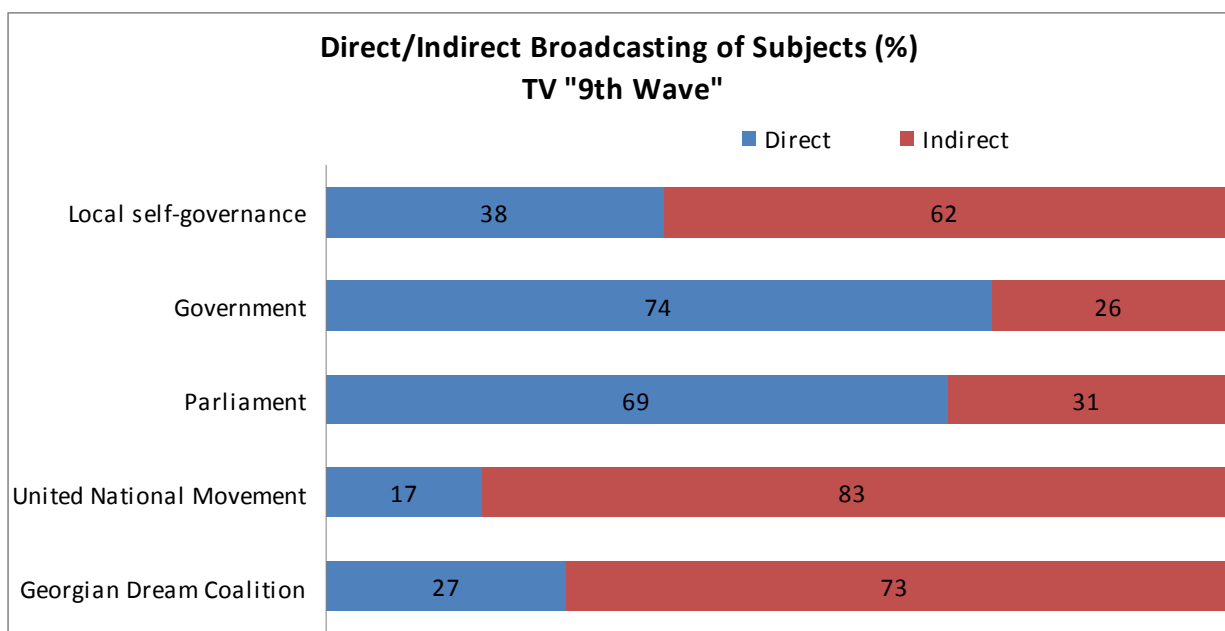
**9<sup>th</sup> Wave** – Out of the monitored subjects the biggest share of airtime – 9 minutes - was dedicated to the local self-government. The 6-minute coverage was enjoyed by government. Parliament comes next with 5 minutes, UNM with 4 minutes and the Georgian Dream coalition with 3 minutes.



All of the three tones were identified when reporting on the monitored subjects. 78 percent of negative reporting falls on the local self-government. 77 percent of neutral tone was attached to reporting on the local self-government. Positive tone was applied when reporting on the Parliament (40 percent) and government (36 percent).



Direct and indirect reporting was identified in regard to the monitored subjects. Government with 74 percent, and Parliament with 69 percent, led the chart in terms of direct reporting. The biggest share of indirect reporting falls on UNM (83 percent) and the Georgian Dream coalition (73 percent).



The daily news on the channel covered political as well as local cultural and sports events. A fair amount of airtime was dedicated to the Poti port staff on strike, the rally organized by the Georgian Dream coalition against the appointment of the new city mayor, also meeting of Poti majoritarian MP Eka Beselia with the representatives of the local self-government. Reporting was balanced; journalists' bias to either political party or policy maker was not evident. Within the reporting period the airtime was dedicated to the TV stories produced by the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters (GARB).

***Activities to be carried out:***

Within the period of November 5-11 the fourteenth phase of monitoring of regional broadcasters will be carried out.



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