

INSTITUTE OF
COMMUNICATION
STUDIES

REPORT

BASED ON THE MONITORING
OF TV NEWS PROGRAMMES

TIME FRAME FEBRUARY 13 - 17 AND 20 - 24 2017



SUMMARY

- The results provided in this report were obtained from the analysis of TV news programmes broadcast in the periods from the 13th to the 17th and from the 20th to the 24th February 2017, i.e. during a total of 10 days. The goal of the analysis was to establish how national TV stations are reporting on the democratic processes in the county and whether they present a balanced overview of the differing political standpoints. The news programmes of 12 TV stations were analysed: MTV1, MTV2, Sitel, Telma, 24 Vesti, Kanal 5, Alfa, Alsat M (in Macedonian and in Albanian), TV 21 (in Macedonian and in Albanian) and TV Nova.
- The analysis was implemented in a period when the establishment of a new government cabinet was still uncertain, since the negotiations between VMRO-DPMNE and DUI have failed, and SDSM have submitted 67 signatures to the President of State, in expectation to receive the mandate for constituting a Government. The monitoring period ended before March 1st, when Ivanov announced that he will not be handing the mandate over to any party, thus deepening the crisis. Hence, this topic was prevalent in the 10 days of observation; however individual TV stations differed in the number of published reports and in the way in which they approached the topic. TV21, Alsat M and Sitel, published the most reports on this topic in their news, while for TV stations 24 Vesti, MTV 2 and Kanal 5 the topic most frequently covered was the work of public institutions (however, from a differing perspective). In the news on Alfa, this topic (23) was less presented than the promotion of the projects and measures of the current government and of other institutions, such as municipalities (41). Due to the technical status of the Government and the uncertainty of organizing the upcoming local elections, these announcements from officials, mainly coming from the party VMRO-DPMNE, could only be seen as party promises, although outside the period of election campaign. Apart from MTV1, 24 Vesti, Kanal 5 and Alfa, where the entity dominantly presented in the reports was VMRO-DPMNE, with other TV stations most of the reports were about SDSM, which was due to the shift in focus in the cabinet negotiations process onto this party.
- The basic feature of the central news of the first programme service of the Macedonian Television was straightforward (sterile) reporting, without delving into topics of public interest and critical observation of the work of institutions, nor was any opinion of an entity presented as prevalent over others. When covering the activities of main political entities, in terms of number of published reports, the Public Service aired more reports about VMRO-DPMNE and the government officials from this party (66) as opposed to the reports about SDSM and their

government officials (42). Approximately 10 instances of favourizing of the party VMRO-DPMNE were observed, all by promoting projects of government institutions that are headed by people from this party.

The Second Programme Service – MTV 2, informed about all significant political events in the county, although a mild inclination could be observed towards topics that are of interest to the Albanian ethnic community, which was also reflected in the number of reports – 73 (the most reports) about the party DUI.

- Due to the current situation, this time the intensity of reporting about non-party entities was much smaller. The most common such entity in the news was the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, and most of the reports regarded their work, and less often it was mentioned in the context of ongoing political negotiations. Divided reporting continues: pro-Government media, although they published few reports, have kept their demonizing attitude, while critically inclined media either kept strictly to informing or they critically pointed out some aspect of their work (being non-transparent before the media).
- Critically inclined TV stations mostly dealt with the regular work of state and local institutions (24 Vesti, Telma, Alsat M and TV21), and when this topic was presented on pro-Government media, the perspective

of reporting was positive and favourable for VMRO-DPMNE officials. Pro-Government media continued with their accusatory style of reporting towards NGOs, civil organizations, which they once again linked to the so called 'De-Sorosoization' process.

- In general, it can be concluded that in the second consecutive period of monitoring, following the elections, the media image about political pluralism in Macedonia remains the same as a year ago. TV stations 24 Vesti, Telma, Alsat M and TV 21 continued to follow political events from a neutral position, while critically observing the work of public institutions, which is actually the principal role of professional journalism that protects public interest. On the other hand, TV stations Sitel, Alfa, TV Nova and Kanal 5 once again presented dominantly the standpoints of the political party VMRO-DPMNE and the reports about projects and achievements of their officials. In this ten day period, negative speech was observed with TV station Sitel (towards journalist Branko Gerovski) as well as stereotypization of an ethnic group (directed towards the Albanian ethnic group). The Macedonian Television continued, for the most part, with unbiased reporting about the main political and social events, however without making attempts to go in-depth in the topics of public interest and their well-argued and critical observation.

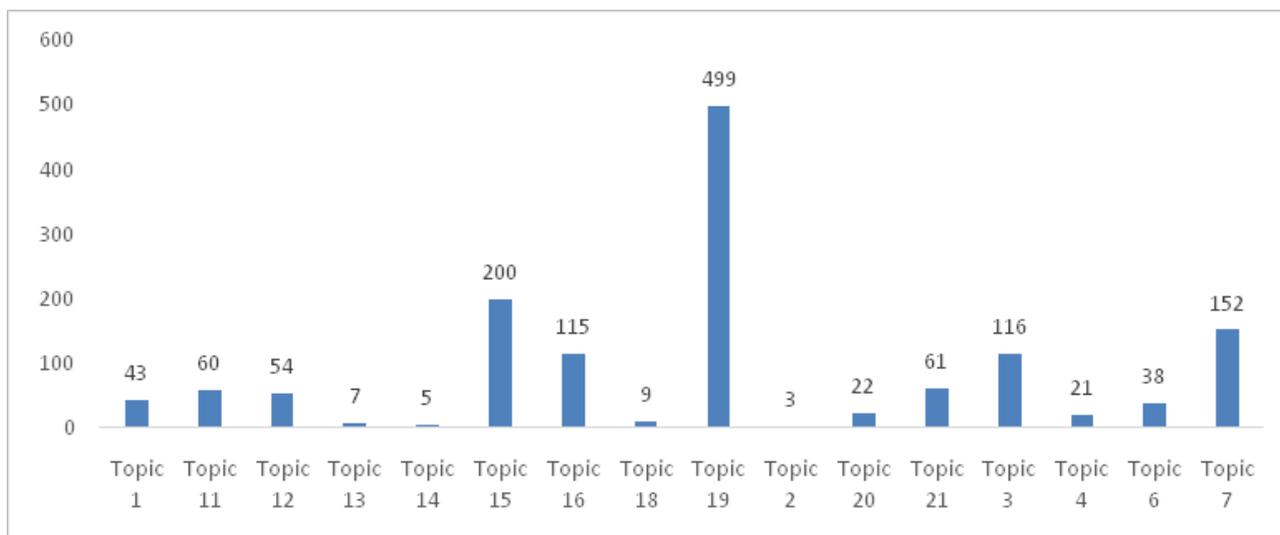


GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

1. TOPICS THAT WERE COVERED

In the ten day period, in the 12 news editions that were subject to analysis, a total of 1,405 reports related to political life and to democratic reforms were published and the most common topics, according to the number of reports, were the following: post-election negotiations for forming a government (499 reports), the regular work of state and public institutions (200 reports), the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (152), the promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (116), state bilingual-

ism that came as a result of the topic of negotiations for a government (60), the state of the economy, such as employment and other statistics (54), investigations for financing the election campaign (38), and to a smaller extent the so called process of De-Sorosoization (22), promoting projects by party representatives (21), the situation with the education sector (8), borrowings (7), the media (5), etc. Numerous reports were also published on other topics from social life (115), and especially the reactions of public personas to the political situation.



Number of reports shown in TV news, shown in regards to the different topics (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
Topic 6	Regular activities of Government and authority representatives (resolving current issues, protocol activities, etc.)
Topic 7	Operations of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (and other topics related to SPPO)
Topic 11	Proposal for expanded use of Albanian language (reports that cover in more depth the proposal for using the languages, in which the context of negotiations for forming a government is secondary)
Topic 12	Economy and investments (foreign investments, budget investments, employment)
Topic 13	Borrowings and state of public debt
Topic 14	The media and their work
Topic 15	Regular activities of public institutions, meeting or failing to meet their obligations
Topic 16	Miscellaneous
Topic 18	Education
Topic 19	Negotiations for forming a government
Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)

1. In this analysis too, as well as in the previous one, the topic of highest interest were the attempts to form a new government following the parliamentary elections (499 reports published on all TV stations). However, the focus of reporting was now redirected to other entities: instead of the negotiations between VMRO-DPMNE - DUI, the reports now concerned SDSM and DUI, after SDSM leader, Zoran Zaev, submitted 67 signatures from MPs to the President-of State Gjorge Ivanov and asked for the mandate. The monitoring covered the period prior to the statement of President Ivanov stating that he will not be handing over the mandate to Zaev, thus the reports mainly concerned daily events in the negotiations, which were not completely transparent, despite the fact that the TV stations aired numerous forecasts from domestic and foreign experts, opinions of international representatives and institutions and they referenced domestic and foreign media. Most of the reports were published by TV 21 in Macedonian (56) and in Albanian language (52), Sitel (51) and Alsat M (50), and the least by Alfa (24) and MTV 1 (27). Unlike all TV stations, Alfa reported the most about the promotion of Government projects and measures (41).
In terms of the approach in reporting, the conclusion remains that Telma and 24 Vesti regularly and impartially reported on all events, mainly conveying the information on the latest developments in this process, without major journalistic interventions. Telma also used analytical announcements about the TV show 'Top Tema', while 24 Vesti specially analysed the uncertainty of having local elections in April, which criticized the move of SEC of returning the phantom voters erased from the voters' registry in 2016. Apart from daily events, TV21 (in both languages) also published excerpts from debate shows where the political state was viewed analytically, and especially the so called Albanian platform, and messages were also aired from representatives of different parties, from high officials from DUI stating they are against a government in coalition with VMRO-DPMNE, from high officials from VMRO-DPMNE stating that they are not giving up on the idea of forming a government with DUI, etc. Alsat M continued to monitor the inspection controls in the municipalities led by mayors from DUI who have declared themselves to be opposed to a coalition with VMRO-DPMNE. Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and TV Nova reported on the negotiations saying that a new government comprised of SDSM and DUI will have negative consequences on the country, with the fact that Macedonia will become a bilingual country. They also reported about the standpoints of VMRO-DPMNE and the calls for new elections, the messages from international representatives, comments from political analysts, as well as the first protests against such a government. MTV1 and MTV 2 only conveyed the basic information on inter-party and intra-party meetings as well as the messages from international representatives.
2. Monitoring the work of state and public institutions was the second topic in terms of representation, with 200 published reports. It was most often published on 24 Vesti (34), on MTV 2 (26) and on Kanal 5 (23). Reports were shown about the problems in the judiciary system, public enterprises (the strike of Macedonian Railways), employment for vulnerable groups, procurement of medications, public transportation, etc. 24 Vesti and Alsat M provided an especially critical coverage of the move to relocate judges in the Criminal Court (Alsat M February 21 'Judges who acted in accordance with the requests of SPPO'). Alsat M also scrutinized the actions of the Minister of Education regarding his promises in some schools that have not been delivered (February 14 'Minister of Education, Pishtar Ljuftiu, failed to meet his promise to send a task force in the village near Veles - Klukovec to assess the state of the primary school 'Vasil Glavinov'). TV stations Site and TV Nova published only 7 reports each regarding the work of public institutions and Alfa published 16, these were mainly non-critical conveyance of information. Telma also re-visited the expenses for the project 'Skopje 2014'.
3. The work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office during the monitored period was once again one of the more frequently presented topics (152). The period in which the TV stations were analysed ended before this institution announced the new investigation 'Trust' (for the excavation in REK Bitola (Mining and Energy Combine - Bitola)). Most of the reports were shown by Alsat M (22), Telma (18) and 24 Vesti (17), while the least reports were published by Sitel and Alfa (6 each), and TV Nova and MTV 1 (7 each). This block division also applied in the contents of the reports. TV stations Alsat M, Telma, 24 Vesti and TV 21 regularly reported about all activities of the prosecutor's office - from the meetings with prosecutor Katica Janeva in the Council of Prosecutors for the withdrawal of the case 'Coup', up to the entry of investigators in REK Bitola and media houses MPM and Kanal 5. In reporting about SPPO on TV stations Sitel, Alfa, Kanal 5 and TV Nova, the reports were about the hearing about violence in the Municipality of Centar, where the first defendant is the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, however there was not a single report about the investigation that this prosecutor's office is implementing in the TV station concerned and in the media consortium MPM who is known to be close to the government.

MTV 1 and MTV 2 primarily informed about the hearing regarding the protests and demolition of the barracks of the municipality of Centar.

4. Although the negotiations for forming a government are still ongoing and there is uncertainty whether the local elections will be held, some TV stations published many reports for the promotion of projects and measures of the Government and other institutions, and according to the number of published reports – 116, this was one of the most frequently presented topics in this period of political and economic uncertainty. The most reports on this topic were published by TV stations Alfa (41), Kanal 5 (19), Sitel (15) and MTV 1 (14). Alfa, Sitel and Kanal 5 reported on current projects that are implemented (Alfa, February 13 'The number of foreign tourists has doubled in Macedonia'), and on announced projects (Kanal 5, February 17, '10 000 new jobs - the Government has adopted the operational plan for 2017'), they also reported on major economic successes of VMRO-DPMNE officials, and statements made by foreign representatives were shared, who were to the benefit of the favourable reporting for successful government policies (Alfa, February 17 'Miller: I am impressed with the economic progress of Macedonia'). After a longer period of time, reports were once again observed in which the source of information concerning the new measures and projects was the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, via his Facebook profile, which was a blurring of the line between state and the ruling party. 24 Vesti showed a few reports on this topic and they did not express a critical opinion, rather they merely conveyed the information, except in one report where the measure was presented as a positive example (February 23 'The Government is providing self-employment measures'). MTV 1 and MTV 2 featured reports about Government projects and measures in infrastructure, healthcare and other areas, without considering the fact that at the time of broadcasting, the country was in a post-election transition period, which restrains the possibilities for public officials to announce new measures and projects. Alsat M did not publish a single report on this topic.
5. During the monitored period, addresses from several institutions were also current, as well as from public personas (Other topics) that were about the current political situation, for which the TV stations published 61 reports. Attracting the most attention were the reactions from the Macedonian orthodox church, especially the one from bishop Agatangel, and the ones from the actor Vlado Jovanovski, who participated in one of the many campaigns of the government of VMRO-DPMNE. Alfa provided the most reports on this topic (16), 24 Vesti (16), TV21 (14) and Sitel and Kanal 5 (12 each), however with a different approach in the reporting in terms of the contents. While Alfa, Sitel and Kanal 5 justified the defending of the policy of the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE by the Church and by public personas from the field of culture and they blamed the opposition and the Soros Foundation for 'lynching' instigated by these publically presented opinions (Alfa, February 17 'SDSM and SOROS, along with their activists, are performing a public lynch on the actor Vlado Jovanovski just for warning publically against a war in case Zaev accepts the entire platform of Albanians'), TV stations Alsat M and 24 Vesti criticized public support as inadequate and they linked it to the failed negotiations between VMRO-DPMNE and DUI (Alsat M, February 14 'The call of the member of the Synod of MOC came after VMRO-DPMNE's failure to form a government with DUI).
6. The next topic, according to the number of published reports was state bilingualism (60 reports), which also came as a result from the negotiations for a new government. The most reports on this topic were published by Alsat M (12) and TV Nova (11), with completely opposed perspectives. Alsat M analysed the topic by opposing expert opinions (February 21 'Experts: a complete and rounded up law on use of Albanian language', February 23 'Shasivari: to promote Albanian language, however not to make it official'), and they also published a reportage piece about the denied right to Albanian children to learn in their mother tongue (February 17: 'Albanian children are calling for their mother in Macedonian'). A similar approach was taken in the reporting of TV 21, who published analyses of how bilingualism would be implemented, as well as a reportage piece for Macedonians and Albanians who speak both languages. Kanal 5 favoured the opinion of VMRO-DPMNE by sharing the opinions of experts close to that party, stating that bilingualism leads to federalization, and at the same time they conspired about the fact that this is impermissible (February 22, Cuculovski: Language must not be agreed upon behind closed doors - the solution is a referendum'). Alfa, TV Nova and Sitel published manipulative reports (with words such as 'learns') concerning the agreement for a new bill for language use, agreed between the parties SDSM and DUI (TV Nova, February 24: 'Agreement between SDSM – DUI: 3 000 to 5 000 EUR fine for not using Albanian language'). Sitel, February 23: 'With the agreements between SDSM and DUI, Macedonia is becoming a bilingual country, according to Zoran Zaev. However, this is contrary to the Constitution and in this case judicial and political steps will ensue').
7. Another typical topic was informing about the state of the economy, with a total of 54 published reports. In this context, TV stations 24 Vesti, Alsat M, Telma and TV 21 provided comprehensive reports about economic events, mainly in the context of the political crisis, such as the blocked subsidies and tourism, foreign investments and in that line the state of national debt. On the topic of the economy, TV stations Kanal 5, Alfa, Sitel and MTV 1 presented reports about the government's expectations for economic growth and about the report of the Heritage Foundation about the progress of economic liberties in the country, for which Alfa and Kanal 5 reported for several consecutive days.

2. APPROACH TO REPORTING

2.1. Approach to reporting on the activities of VMRO-DPMNE, SDSM and DUI

The change in the subjects in the post-elections negotiations for constituting a new government cabinet (Topic 19), i.e. the replacement of VMRO-DPMNE with SDSM, contributed to SDSM being the most frequently mentioned subject during this monitoring period (894), in a slight lead before the second major party VMRO-DPMNE (928 reports). The party that was third in terms of presentation in the reports was DUI (658). Except in MTV1, 24 Vesti, Kanal 5 and Alfa, where VMRO-DPMNE was present in more reports, on all other TV stations the majority of reports mentioned SDSM. In regards to contents, 'block reporting' was present once again among pro-Government and neutrally – critical TV stations.

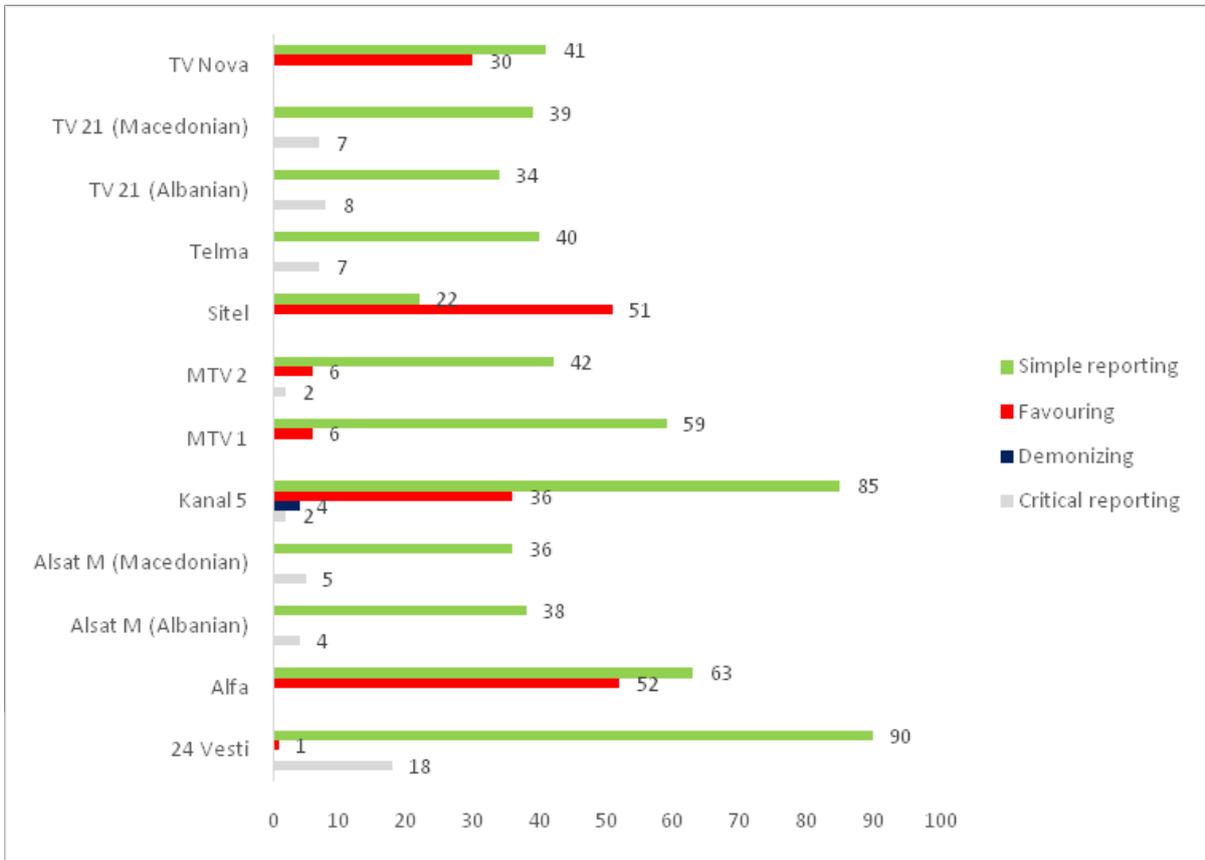
The news on Sitel, Kanal 5, TV Nova and Alfa showed propagandist and favourizing reports about VMRO-DPMNE, while a negative and often demonizing opinion was taken towards the politics of the opposition (SDSM). Favourable reporting about VMRO-DPMNE (182 reports) was shown mostly by presenting the party as a protector of national interests (Sitel, February 14: 'However, in order to change the paramount legal act, consent from VMRO-DPMNE is required. They present a clear standpoint. We will not allow amendments to the Constitution'). Another type of favouritism was shown through emphasizing the standpoint of the party stating that they are the winner of the elections (TV Nova, February 24: 'The people who have gathered are expressing major anger and dissatisfaction with how the will of the Macedonian people is being let down, at these elections, around 455 thousand votes were given to VMRO-DPMNE'). Kanal 5 television displayed a negative attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE in 4 published reports and this was done through non-critical and one-sided conveyance of the opinions of representatives of SDSM who criticized a policy of VMRO-DPMNE (February 1, 'SDSM: Rushed reconstructions have left high-school students without electricity', February 19 'SDSM: Gynecology Clinic left without BCG').

Reports about the ruling party as opposed to the opposition, were also prevalent on TV station 24 Vesti (109 reports on VMRO-DPMNE and 72 for SDSM), although most of them did

not include any opinions. When it comes to public interest, the TV station showed a well-argued critical opinion towards the politics of this party and their officials (February 13, 'A new government is in the works, the technical government is still implementing tender procedures', February 16 'VMRO-DPMNE's head office is mortgaged by Komercijalna Banka').

Telma reported on activities of VMRO-DPMNE, however the activities of public officials from this party were observed with criticism, like for example the statement of the Minister of Finance Kiril Minovski declaring that the country has no debt to the economy sector (February 21: 'If the country really has no debt to the economy sector, the persons who are competent should come out and document this claim publicly, was the message from some of the managers, after the MF stated yesterday that they are timely financing their payables to domestic companies') The activities of VMRO-DPMNE were under critical observation on TV 21 and on Alsat M in several instances, mainly related to the opinion of the party about the work of SPPO, and a documentary film was also broadcast about the controversial historical persona – Andon Janev Kjoseto at the premises of the Municipality of Butel (TV21 February 22: 'During the election campaign last year, VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski made a reference to the name and actions of 'Kjoseto', in order to send a message to his political opponent, SDSM leader Zoran Zaev. In his words: 'If Delchev were alive, he would send 'Kjoseto' to finish the story with this man', many saw an open threat to Zaev and fear from an election defeat'). A total of 53 reports were published on these TV stations with critical observations about VMRO-DPMNE.

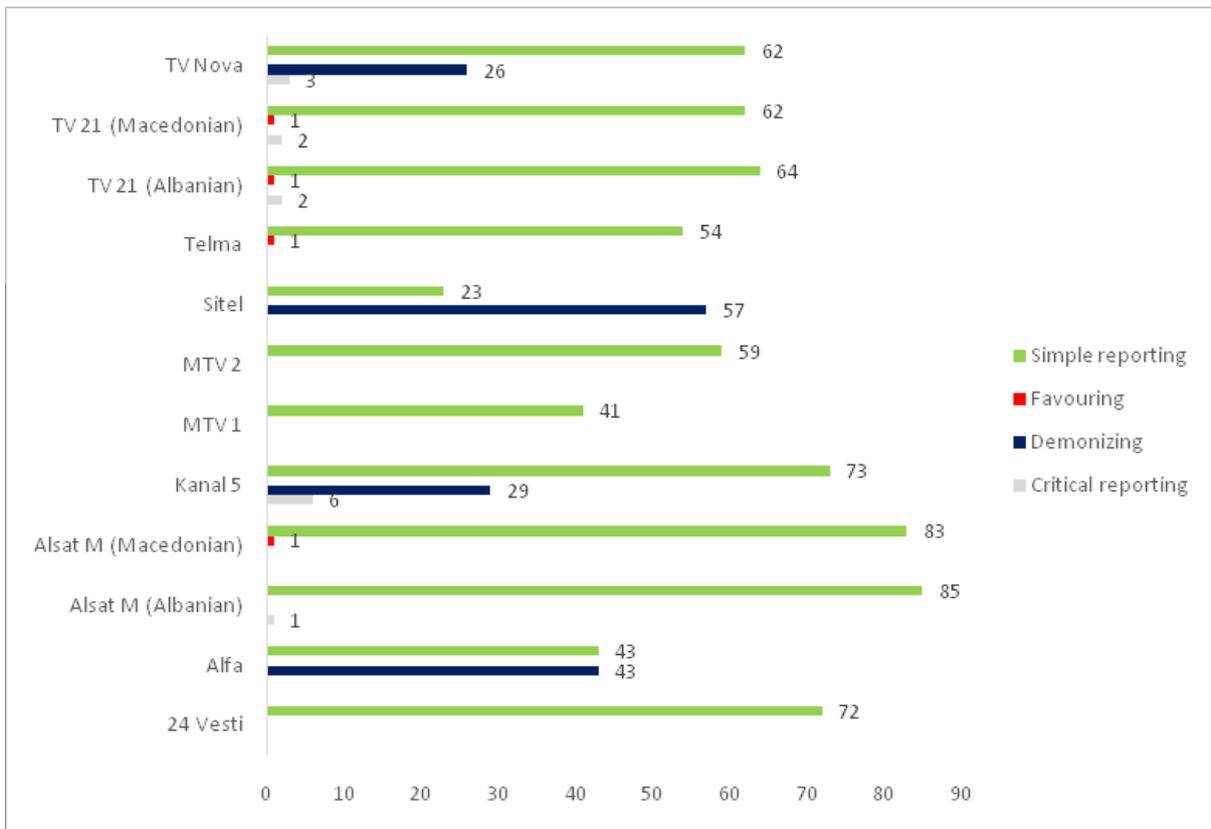
MTV 1 and MTV 2 reported in relative balance regarding the two major parties, with rare instances of favourizing the ruling party (MTV1: February 20 'VMRO-DPMNE: Healthcare infrastructure as a priority' MTV 2, February 14: 'Misajlovski: the investments in road infrastructure are continuing'), firstly through communicating information about measures and projects of the Government announced after the elections, while a new Government Cabinet is expected.



Approach to reporting on the party VMRO-DPMNE, their officials and coalition partners (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

As far as the approach towards SDSM is concerned, it was mainly informative with TV stations Alsat M, 24 Vesti, Telma and TV 21 (722 reports), and on the other hand it was negative with TV

stations TV Nova, Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa, who published 155 reports with accusatory contents about the opposition. Demonization of SDSM was most frequently expressed through the reports on

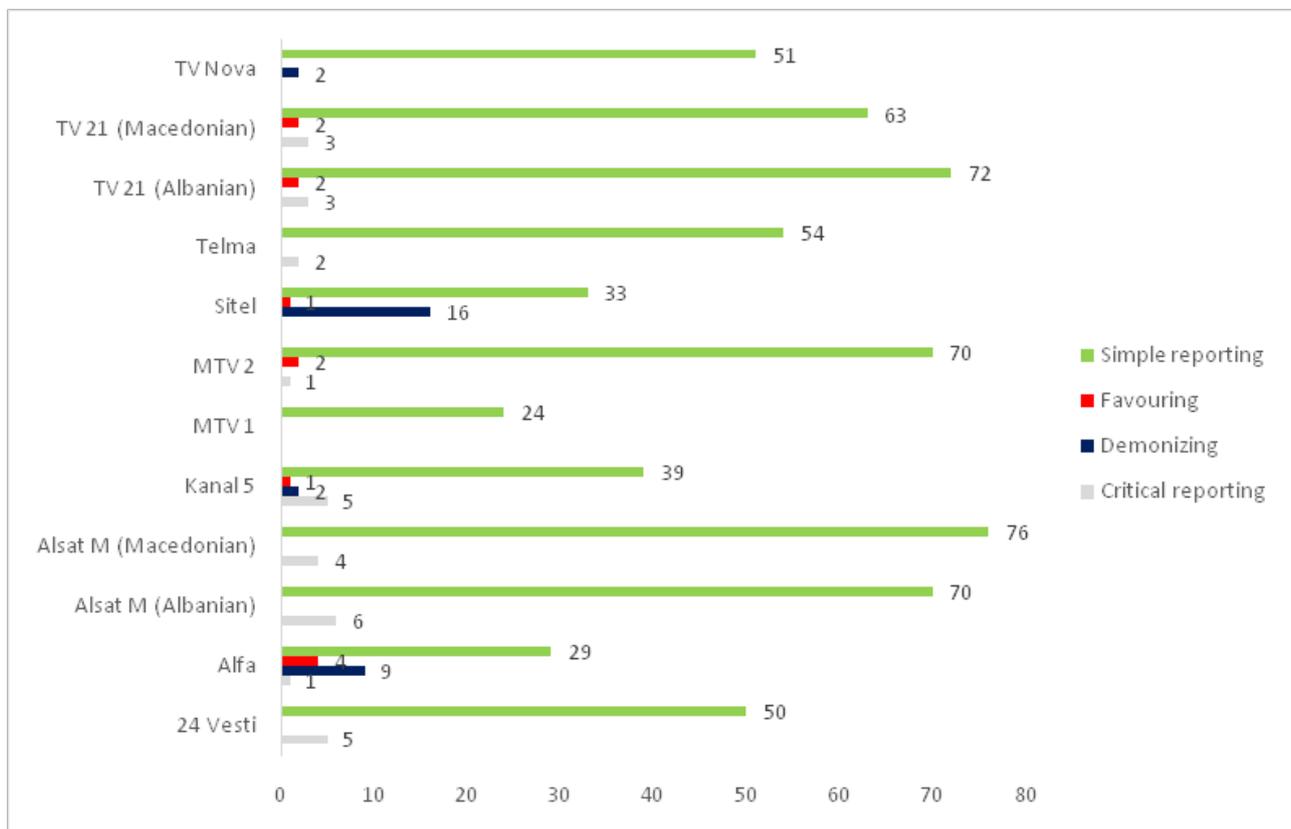


Approach to reporting on the party SDSM, their officials and coalition partners (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

the option for SDSM to establish a government cabinet, a scenario that was presented in the form of an apocalypse for the country (February 17: 'In line with the behaviour shown so far which was trying to get to power at any cost, it is expected for Zaev to accept Ahmeti's proposal, yet how will a solution be found for the requests for changing the national coat of arms and the flag of the country, as well as setting free the criminals charged for the murders near Lake Smilkovci, the case Divo Naselje in Kumanovo and Brodec', about negotiations for the law on languages (TV Nova, February 20: 'Is a new attempt being made to sneak through an anti-constitutional solution?') and through reports that show one-sided writings

and claims of other media with a negative tone for the party and its representatives (Kanal 5: February 20, 'Netpress: PPO is running investigations for Vice Zaev and Oliver Spasovski', Alfa: February 16, 'Exit: Bogoevski has announced that Zaev is using SPPO to blackmail Ahmeti').

Alsats M, TV 21 and Telma published rare reports that were favourable and they referred to a survey done with Albanian population and according to the results, this population prefers SDSM to any other party (Alsats M: February 14 'SDSM is the leading party for Albanians, according to surveys', Telma, February 15 'Why are Albanians voting for SDSM. They have imposed themselves as a factor of change and uniting').



Approach to reporting on the party DUI, their officials and coalition partners (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

What was interesting was the way the analysed TV stations positioned themselves in regards to DUI, which was the third most frequently presented subject in the reports from the monitored period, primarily due to the currency of the negotiations for constituting a government cabinet. Although in most of the reports (590), the activities of the party and their officials were merely reported on, yet Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and TV Nova have repeatedly (in 29 reports) acted demonizingly (Sitel, February 23: 'In the future, DUI will control the police, customs, healthcare, PRO, justice,

practically, with 80 000 votes alone and 10 MPs they will control all security and the main public and financial departments in the country', Alfa, February 23 'A potential coalition with SDSM will also mean disregarding the will of the majority of Macedonians who voted for VMRO-DPMNE. However, their feelings are not as important'). In some moments, with these TV stations, the reporting turned to positive, i.e. protective (Sitel: February 16: 'DUI leader asked for a written offer for coalition from SDSM and in response to that, he got a personal threat from SDSM official Pavle Bogoevski').

evski') and commending when it came to the work of officials from this party (TV 21, February 20, '14 million EUR for self-employment, active job seeker may apply', Kanal 5, '10 thousand new jobs - the Government has adopted the operational plan for 2017'.

In a small number of reports (2) a favourable stand was expressed by MTV 2 by promoting the activities of officials from this party (February 24: 'The Ministry of Education and Science have successfully achieved the end results').

Telma, 24 Vesti, TV21 and Alsat M have published most of the neutrally-critical reports about

the party. The most criticized aspect was their finicky behaviour in negotiations for forming a government (Telma, February 24: 'Everyone is waiting for a Government Cabinet and DUI are deciding to what extent they wish to participate in the government', 24 Vesti, February 17: 'DUI wish to avoid amendments to the constitution, however they wish to have an outcome as if the Constitution were amended'), and concerning the secrecy of the negotiations (TV21, February 21: 'The parties are silent, the public is asking for answers, the negotiations about Albanian language are continuing').

2.2. Approach to reporting about non-party entities (SPPO, NGOs, institutions)

Non-party subjects, such as the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, local and state institutions and NGOs were covered in the same manner in which they were covered in the previous period, however this time it was due to the focus of the reports on the negotiations for constituting a government, these subjects were much less presented in the news.

The attitude towards the Special Public Prosecutor's Office remained the same, although this institution was now mostly mentioned in the reports in relation to their work, and seldom in the context of ongoing political negotiations. Divided reporting continues. Although publishing a few reports, pro-government media kept their demonizing attitude, in this specific case it was towards prosecutors Janeva and Fetaj for their behavior at the hearing for the violence in the Municipality of Centar, where the first defendant was VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski, at which hearing they were fined with 2,000 EUR each for contempt of court (TV Nova, February 23: 'After yesterday's scandalous hearing in the First Instance Court Skopje 1, Katica Janeva is threatening to file criminal charges against the judge', Sitel, February 23: 'After yesterday's embarrassment in the courthouse and the direct insults that Janeva and Fetaj used to hinder the hearing for the riots in front of the building of the Municipality of Centar, the Special Public Prosecutor continues to make threats with criminal charges to judges') and there was one-sided conveyance of accusations stating that this institution is related to the opposition party (Sitel, February 16: 'With the final public messages of Bogoevski from SDSM, it is confirmed that SPPO is a partisan instrument that is used for confronting people with different opinions and for blackmailing DUI'). Kanal 5 provided the same style of reports about the work of SPPO, however they did not publish a single report about the investigation that this prosecutor's office is implementing in that very TV station and in the media consortium MPM, which is known for its close ties to the government. Telma reported about a survey according to which SPPO have the people's support to continue with their work, while 24 Vesti criticized this institution for their lack of transparency towards the public.

Also, the conclusion remains that the critically inclined TV stations deal the most with the work of state and local institutions (24 Vesti, Telma, Al-

sat M and TV21). As objects of critical observation were the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (TV 21, February 14: 'The Ministry of Social Policy has not replied yet about the efficiency of the registry of paedophiles and why they have not published the names of convicted persons for two years'), the Ministry of Education (Alsat M, February 20: 'For the works on UMT, the MES is using the crisis as an excuse. MES is using the crisis as justification for the construction of UMT, and UMT was formed during a crisis'), the post-elections measures for employment (24 Vesti, February 20: 'New grants for self-employment. Government measures are creating overdrawn accounts in the Pension and Disability Insurance of Macedonia'), such as the expenses for the project 'Skopje 2014' (Telma, February 16: 'Anything the Government has asked for, the City of Skopje has built.

The accusatory style of reporting about NGOs and civil organizations was mostly present with pro-government media and they were most often linked to the so-called process of 'De-Sorosization', which was present very little in this analysed period, unlike the previous one (Sitel, February 16: 'Since yesterday, Sorosoids and the Social-Democratic Union of Macedonia are strongly attacking Vlado Jovanovski whom they wish to falsely present as someone who is inciting war'). Kanal 5 reported on activities that are performed abroad, which show the justification of the negative campaign for this foundation and its founder, which was promoted by VMRO-DPMNE (February 15: 'Fox News: This man is a 'spider' with a massive online influence', February 20 'The main counselor of Trump has announced a fight against Soros in USA, Hungary and Macedonia'). TV station Alfa reserved no judgment when reporting about the standpoints presented in the author's show 'Vo Centar' (Dead Centre) that is broadcast on Kanal 5 television (February 21: 'The web of 'NGOs' is untangling, as well as the way in which they function in Macedonia, under the coverage of Soros and USAID'). On the final day of monitoring, other civil movements emerged, and these media presented their standpoints in a favourable light (Sitel, February 24: 'Tens of patriotic organizations, civil organization and numerous intellectuals are mobilizing against federalization of Macedonia, since the will of the Macedonian people is close to being denied and a coalition of DUI and SDSM approaches').





ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL TV STATIONS



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

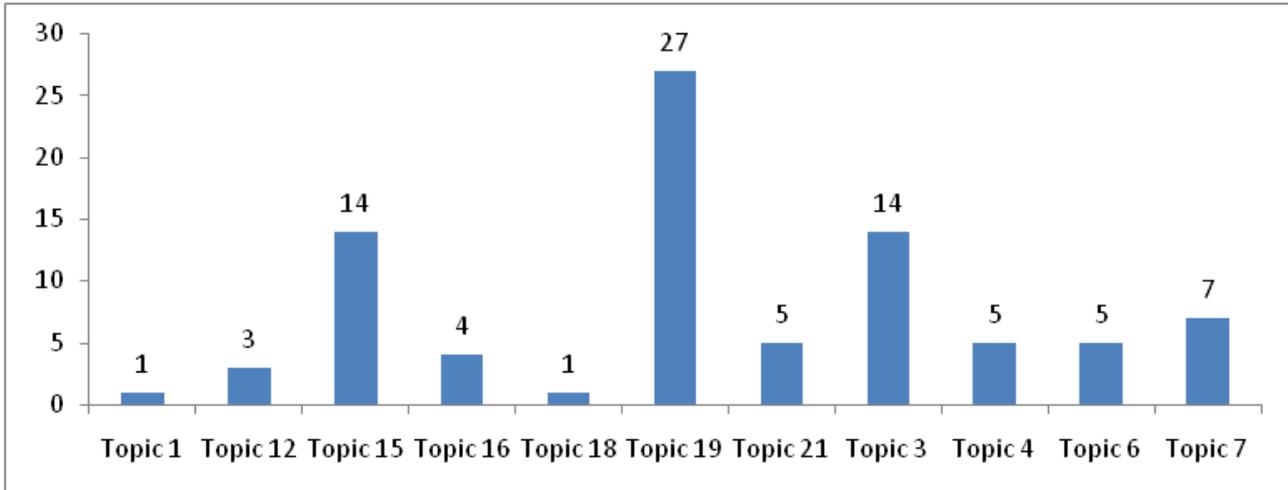


MACEDONIAN TELEVISION FIRST SERVICE

1. COVERED TOPICS

During the reporting period, the first programme service of the Macedonian Television broadcast 86 news reports, which regarded current topics in political events. Most of them (27) were about the negotiations for constituting a government, the second topic in terms of frequency was the work of public authorities and government projects with 14 reports, and 7 reports concerned the work of SPPO, 5 published

reports were about promoting government projects by parties, 5 were about party reactions on various topics (health sector, pollution) and the regular activities of governmental officials. Further on, 3 reports were about the state of the economy, one was about organizing the elections, i.e. the investigation about the financing of the campaign and one report concerned the state of education.



Number of reports related to the various topics on MTV 1 Television (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
Topic 6	Regular activities of Government and authority representatives (resolving current issues, protocol activities, etc.)
Topic 7	Operations of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (and other topics related to SPPO)
Topic 11	Proposal for expanded use of Albanian language (reports that cover in more depth the proposal for using the languages, in which the context of negotiations for forming a government is secondary)
Topic 12	Economy and investments (foreign investments, budget investments, employment)
Topic 13	Borrowings and state of public debt
Topic 14	The media and their work
Topic 15	Regular activities of public institutions, meeting or failing to meet their obligations
Topic 16	Miscellaneous
Topic 18	Education
Topic 19	Negotiations for forming a government
Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

In the news on MTV 1, the most frequently presented topic was covered by conveying the opinions of the entities involved in the negotiations for constituting a government (February 13: ‚Politics: Party tactics are continuing’), the reactions of the domestic and international representatives (February 14: ‚Politics: While the parties contemplate, diplomats make appeals’), as well as the events that were linked to this topic, such as the protests of the association ‚For a Joint Macedonia’ (February 24 ‚Skopje: Oath march for Macedonia’). None of these reports favored any opinions of any entity.

A major part of the news programme in prime time news was devoted to promoting government projects for investments in infrastructure, new medications, benefits for some categories of citizens and successful endeav-

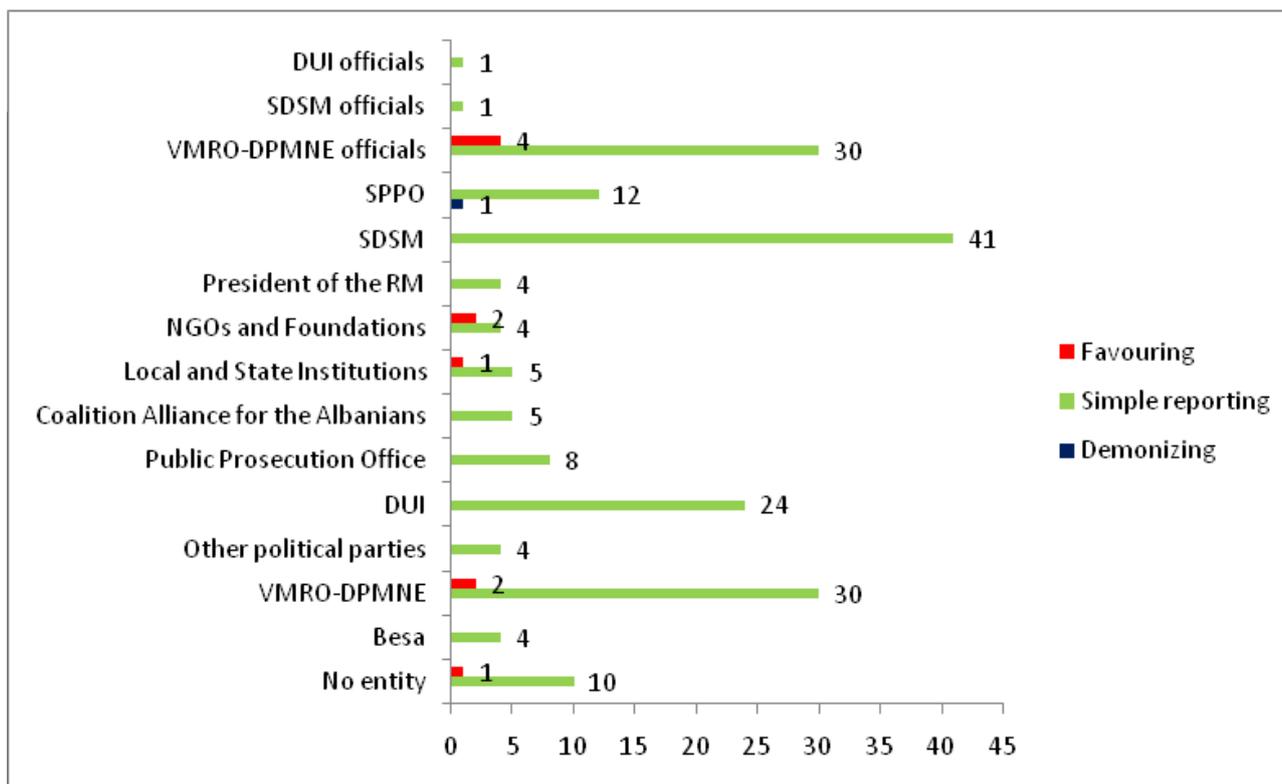
ours in the economy (February 13: ‚Health sector: Reconstruction of the General Hospital in Veles’, February 15, ‚Health sector: New medications for cancer and hepatitis’, February 17 ‚Index of economic liberties: Macedonia at the top of European states’).

Covering the regular activities of public officials included reports about the traditional participation of President Gjorge Ivanov at the celebration of the holiday St. Tryphon, the visit of the Minister of Culture Elizabeta Kanchevska Milevska to Berlin, etc. Regular reports were published about all the information concerning the work of SPPO, i.e. the hearing of the case for violence in the municipal building of Centar and the meeting between Janeva and the head of the Council of Public Prosecutors concerning the case ‚Coup’.

2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

The most frequently mentioned entity in the central news on MTV 1, during the monitored period, was SDSM (41 reports), having in mind that this party along with DUI were most frequently mentioned in the negotiation process for constituting a government cabi-

net. The second topic in terms of frequency were officials from the Government of VMRO-DPMNE (34) and 32 other reports were aired in which the subject is the party VMRO-DPMNE. DUI was the subject of 24 reports, while other parties had an insignificant part of the over-



Approach to reporting about political entities on MTV 1 (February 13 – 17 and February 20 – 24)

all coverage. When it comes to non-party entities, SPPO was most frequently covered in the reports (13), the Public Prosecutor's Office in 8 and public authorities and NGOs and the foundations in 6 reports each.

The basic feature of the central news of the first programme service of the Macedonian Television was straightforward (sterile) reporting, without delving into topics of public interest and critical observation, nor was any opinion of an entity presented as prevalent over others. The TV station merely conveyed the opinions of both concerned parties (February 13 'VMRO-DPMNE: Evidence for the Public Prosecutor's Office about 'Strumica Gas', February 13 'PE 'Strumica Gas': Vasil Pishev's claims are false', February 17 'VMRO-DPMNE: Zaev is prepared for any kind of bargaining', February 17 'SDSM: Macedonia will be a country where there is rule of law').

In rare examples of biased reporting (10 reports), the work of officials from VMRO-DPMNE in the government was presented (February 15 'Education: Increased interest about the programme 'Horizon 2020', February 16 'Health sector: New medications for cancer and hepatitis'), and of the party, through promoting party projects (February 14: 'VMRO-DPMNE: 33 million EUR for pro-

curement of healthcare equipment', February 20 'VMRO-DPMNE: Healthcare infrastructure as a priority'). In two reports, the journalist used a commending tone in reporting about the assessments of the Heritage Foundation of America about the achievements of the country in terms of economic liberties (February 17 'Index of economic liberties: Macedonia at the top of European states'). Favourable reporting was also present in the report about individual and group counselling sessions of students and parents from the pedagogical services of the schools, in which reports they were presented as a solution to the problems in schools (February 13 'Education: 5 176 counselling sessions for the parents of students').

The only report with a demonizing approach towards an entity was aimed against SPPO, where a negative tone was used to assess the actions of prosecutors Janeva and Fetaj at the hearing about the case of violence in the Municipality of Centar where the first defendant is ex-prime minister and leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (February 22: 'Even after being fined, the prosecutors continued to offend the judge - stating that she does not even know the basics of law and that she does not deserve to be a judge').





MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

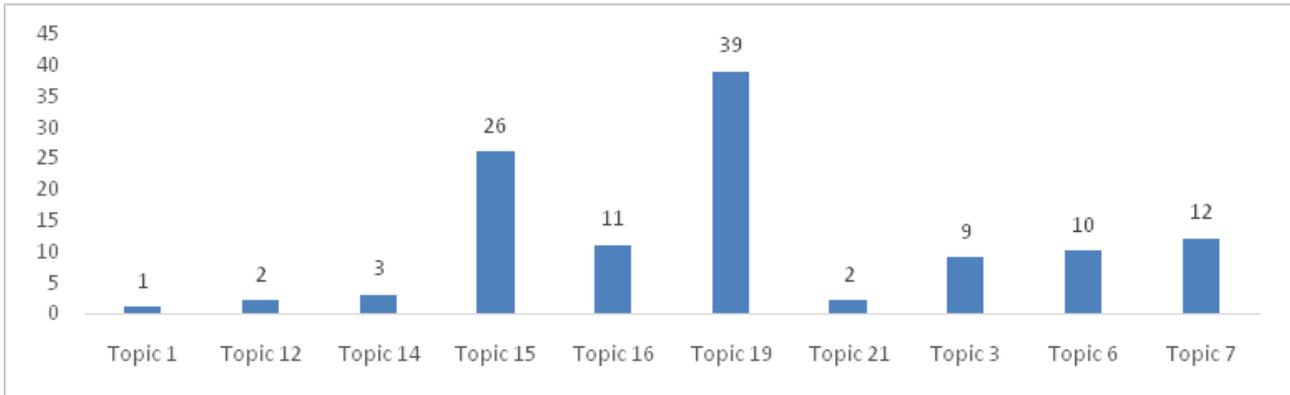


MACEDONIAN TELEVISION SECOND SERVICE

1. COVERED TOPICS

In the ten monitored editions of the daily journal (prime time news) in Albanian language, on the Second Programme Service, Macedonian Television published a total of 115 reports related to political life and the democratic reforms in the country. In terms of frequency in

presenting, the topics regarding the discussions for forming a new government were most frequent (39 reports), following them was the topic of the work of state and local authorities (26 reports) and the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's office (12 reports)



Number of reports related to the various topics on Macedonian Television, second programme service (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
Topic 6	Regular activities of Government and authority representatives (resolving current issues, protocol activities, etc.)
Topic 7	Operations of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (and other topics related to SPPO)
Topic 11	Proposal for expanded use of Albanian language (reports that cover in more depth the proposal for using the languages, in which the context of negotiations for forming a government is secondary)
Topic 12	Economy and investments (foreign investments, budget investments, employment)
Topic 13	Borrowings and state of public debt
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Topic 15	Regular activities of public institutions, meeting or failing to meet their obligations
Topic 16	Miscellaneous
Topic 18	Education
Topic 19	Negotiations for forming a government
Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

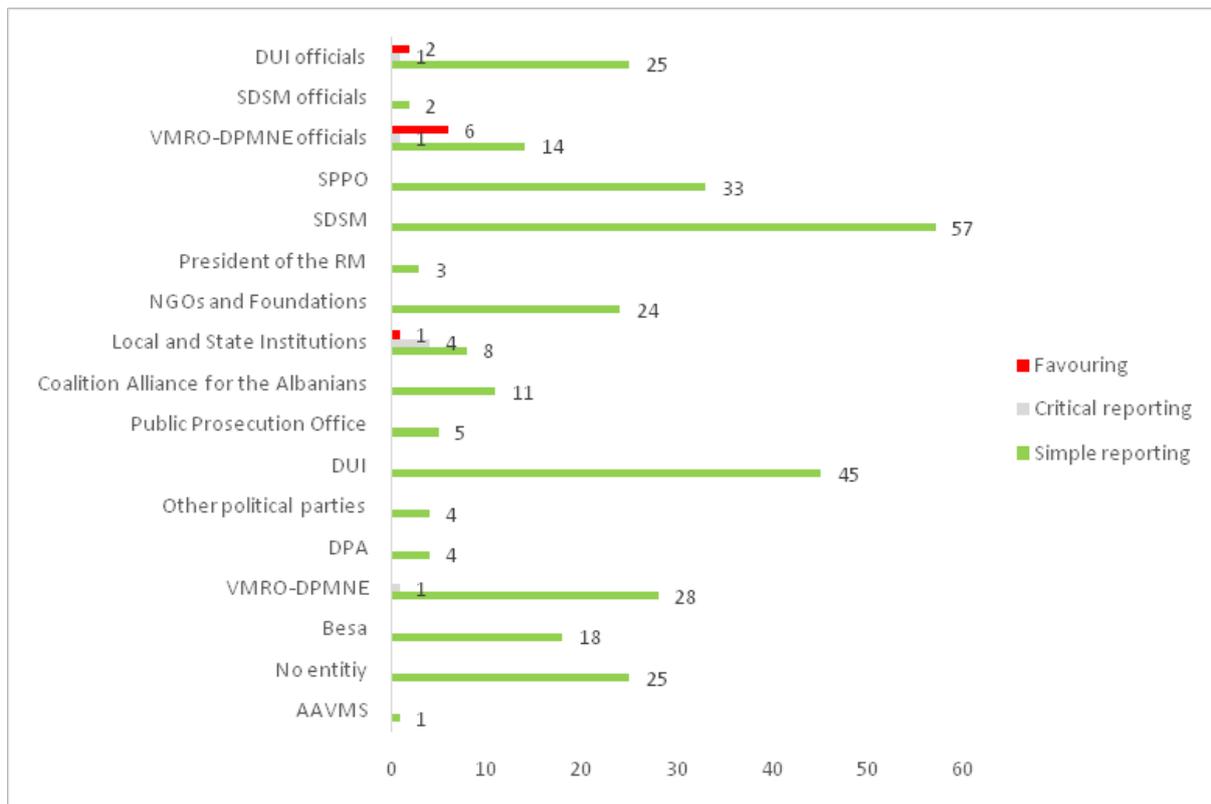
The TV station provided fair and impartial reporting during the discussions between SDSM, DUI and other parties regarding the forming of a parliamentary majority and constituting a new government, the reactions from VMRO-DPMNE and from international representatives to this process, as well as other aspects of this topic. Regarding the work of the institutions, the work of judicial bodies was monitored; the issue with pollution was covered as well as public transportation and others. The court cases related to the cases of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office were

also reported, as well as reactions to them, primarily concerning the hearing about the protests and demolition of the barracks of the Municipal Administration – Centar, in which a defendant was VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski. The news programme also featured nine reports about Government projects and measures in infrastructure, healthcare and other areas, without considering the fact that at the time of broadcasting, the country was in a post-election transition period, which restrains the possibilities for public officials to announce new measures and projects.

2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

The political party DUI was in the centre of attention of the public in the negotiations for forming a government, and its officials had their regular and other activities in the standing government, which made them the most frequently presented entity in the news, with a total of 73 reports on them. 59 reports were shown about SDSM, and about VMRO-DPMNE and the officials of this party - 50. More fre-

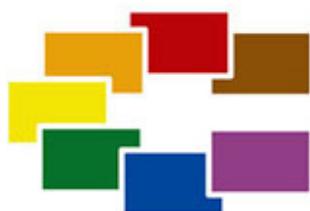
quently presented from the other parties were Besa (18 reports) and the Alliance of Albanians (11 reports), as factors that impact the forming of a government. When it comes to non-party entities, SPPO were predominantly presented, in 33 reports total. In terms of content, no political opinions were presented as dominant over others’ and occurrences of favouring someone’s views were incidental.



Approach to reporting about political entities on Macedonian Television, Second Programme Service (February 13 – 17 and February 20 – 24)



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

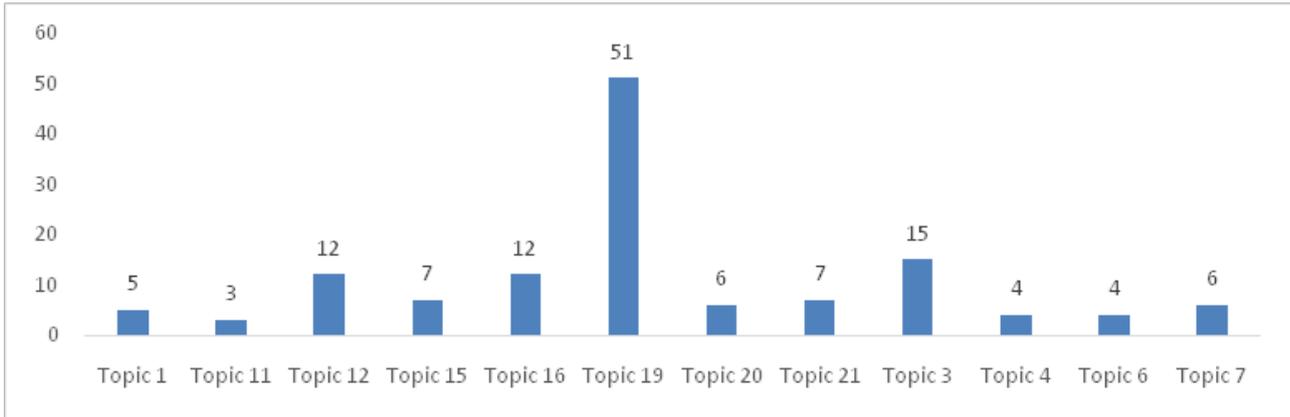


SITEL

1. COVERED TOPICS

During the reporting period, Sitel TV published 132 reports related to political life and the democratic reforms in the country. In the news on this TV station, the prevalent topics were related to the forming of a new government (51 report), and all other topics were

at least three times less represented than the mentioned topic. Regarding Government projects and measures - 15 reports were published, the state of the economy was covered in 12 reports, and other topics were not as frequently covered.



Number of reports related to the various topics on Sitel Television (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
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Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

Regarding the most frequently presented topic, reports and analyses were aired regarding various aspects of the process of forming a government cabinet, including reports from inter-party and intra-party meetings with SDSM and DUI as the main protagonists, reactions were conveyed from the party VMRO-DPMNE, analyses according to which the forming of a cabinet led by SDSM will have a negative impact on the country (February 23: 'With the agreements between SDSM and DUI, Macedonia is becoming a bilingual country, according to Zoran Zaev. However, this is contrary to the Constitution and in this case judicial and political steps are to ensue'), messages from international representatives were shared, as well as reports about the preparations for protests and about the first protests against such a government.

As far as the second most frequently presented topic is concerned, which were the projects and measures of the current Government, reports were shown on the new measures and investments in healthcare, road infrastructure, education, as well as new measures to promote employment. After a longer period of time, reports were once again observed in which the source of information concerning the new measures and projects was the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, via his Facebook pro-

file, which was a blurring of the line between state and the ruling party.

Concerning the state of economy, reports were shown in the news about projections of EC and the Government for high economic growth of the country, the report of the Heritage Foundation regarding the development of economic liberties, commending reports on the economic successes of the party VMRO-DPMNE (February 17: 'Unemployment in Macedonia is at 23 percent, which is a record low, especially in comparison to 2006 when VMRO-DPMNE and Nikola Gruevski took over power, when the unemployment rate was 38 percent), denouncements from the Government about their debt to the economy and about new foreign investments.

The work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office was not as frequently covered, with reports regarding the rescinding from the case 'Coup' and with the first hearing about the violent protests in the Municipal Administration building Centar. The TV station continued reporting about the so called De-Sorosization, to a much smaller extent, conveying information about USA senators and congressmen who are looking for answers from the American Ambassador in the country – Jess Bailey on how US money was spent for the civil society. Reports were also shown about TV interviews and shows related to Soros's influence in Macedonia.

2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

As the party with the leading role in the processes for establishing a new government cabinet, SDSM was the most frequently mentioned political entity in the news, with 80 reports published about them. The second most frequently mentioned party was VMRO-DPMNE with 73 reports, then DUI with 50 and from the minor parties the Coalition Alliance for Albanians was represented in 8 published reports. In terms of non-party entities, the news programme on Sital during the period of monitoring featured NGOs and foundations in 22 reports, as well as the Special Public Prosecutor's Office in 13 reports.

In the news on Sital, a clear favourable stand was expressed towards the party VMRO-DPMNE, their officials in the current government and towards the coalition partners (this stand was expressed in 51 out of 73 reports), as well as a negative and demonizing attitude towards SDSM and the coalition (in 57 reports out of the 80 published in total). Demonizing

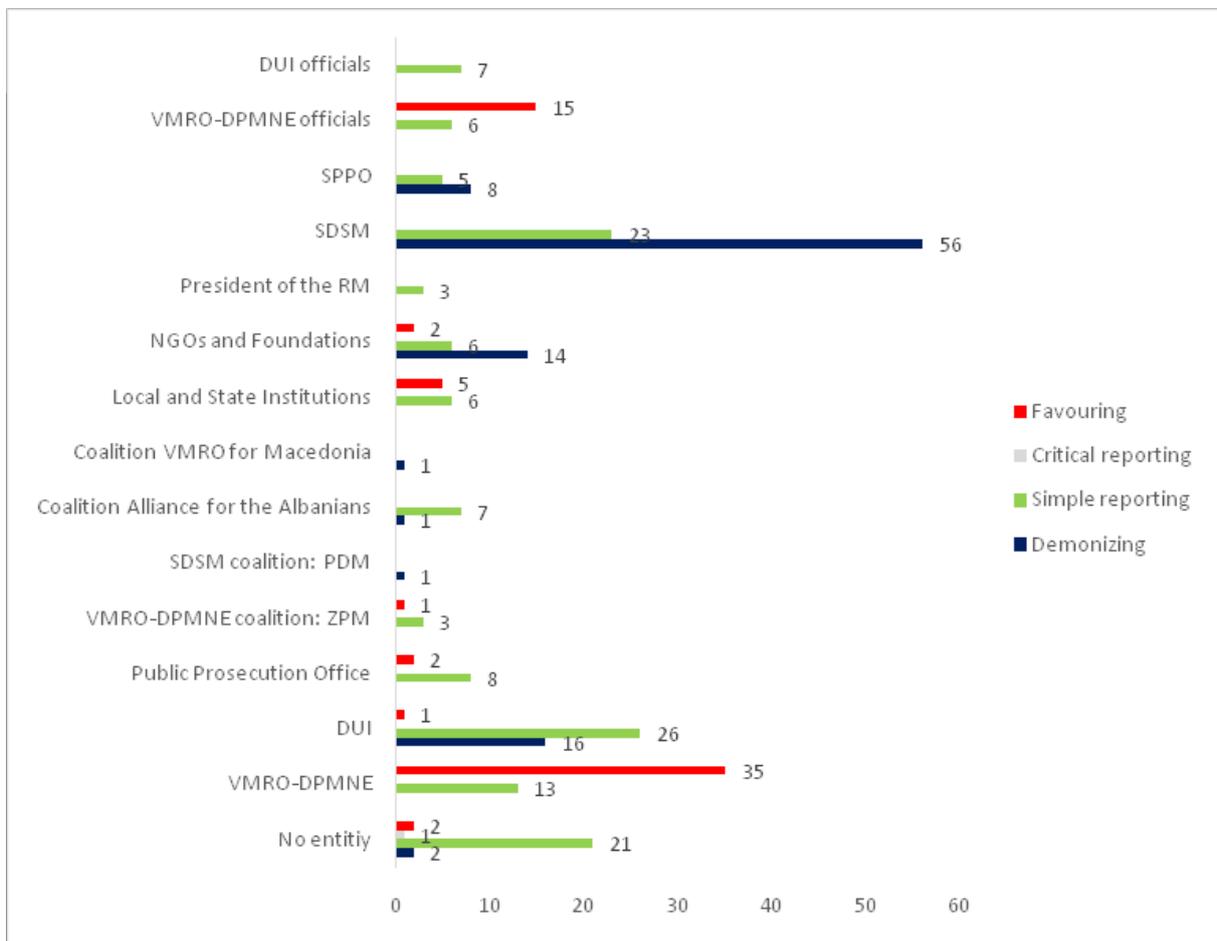
was also typical for the reports regarding SPPO and the civil organizations, and less frequently it was also found in other cases.

Demonization of SDSM was most frequently expressed through the reports on the option for SDSM to establish a government cabinet, a scenario that was presented in the form of an apocalypse for the country (February 17: 'In line with the behaviour shown so far, trying to get to power at any cost, it is expected for Zaev to accept Ahmeti's proposal, yet how will a solution be found for the requests for changing the national coat of arms and the flag of the country, as well as setting free the criminals charged for the murders near Lake Smilkovci, the case Divo Naselje in Kumanovo and Brodec', 'SDSM can lead the government, however if they accept DUI's offer, then that will be the last Macedonian government, according to some experts'). This type of reporting was systematic and it was present every day throughout the

reporting period (February 22:‘According to experts, the situation remains unchanged today.SDSM are willing to do anything to get to power, and the Albanians are skilfully packing it all up in a platform and they are achieving their goals step by step’).The party was presented as traitorous (February 23:‘Despitehaving won the electiononly once, SDSM were in position of power for over ten years in this country, in terms of executive power.As you are witnessing this now, in 1995 the flag was sold out as well as the constitutional name, because of which we cannot be a member of NATO or EU to this day.What will be the response to the latest sales?’) and they called for legal accountability of the party (February 23:‘With the agreements between SDSM and DUI, Macedonia is becoming a bilingual country, according to Zoran Zaev.However, this is contrary to the Constitution and in this case judicial and political steps will ensue’).The negative stand towards the party was present in other instances as well, such as reporting about an investigation of the Prosecutor’sOffice (February 13:‘SDSM and Zoran Zaev are under investigation by the Public Prosecutor for illegal financing of the election campaign’) and in speculation reports on alleged intra-party divisions that were not confirmed in any way (February 16:‘Sitel learns:once they realized that Crvenkovski will

not be returning to politics, members and affiliates have formed an initiative to save SDSM. Zaev as Prime Minister will destroy Macedonia, is the message of the initiators.SDSM’s statement is that the leadership stands with Zaev’).

Favourable reporting about VMRO-DPMNE was done mostly by presenting the party as a protector of national interests (February 13:‘VMRO-DPMNE has already decided that for them the installation of bilingualism on the entire territory is unacceptable;February 14:‘However, in order to change the paramount legal act, consent from VMRO-DPMNE is required. They present a clear standpoint.We will not allow for the Constitution to be amended’), which was reiterated throughout the entire period of monitoring (February 23:‘The party presenting the majority of Macedonians yesterday came out with the stand that they shall remain to stand at the frontline of defence and that they will not allow Macedonian citizens to lose their right to a voice in their own country’).In terms of other ways to present the party in a positive light, the promotions of government projects stood out (February 14:‘Minister Misajlovski announced that a record number of roads will be built this year; February 17:‘10 thousand new jobs with the operational employment plan. The Government has adopted 22 measures and programmes which aim at reducing unem-



Approach to reporting about political entities on Sitel Television, (February 13 – 17 and February 20 – 24)



ployment') and Government standpoints about the state of the economy (February 14: 'This proves that governmental economic policies provide the necessary results even in terms of political crisis, and the private sector has the capacity to continue providing new jobs'). In some of these announcements the source was VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski, which presented a blurring of the line between party and state (February 15: 'A new waterline built for Gevgelija and Bogdanci. Yet another promise from the programme has come to fruition. Our priority are the citizens. - was written by VMRO-DPMNE leader Gruevski on Facebook'). The party was also favoured with one-sided accusations presented by them (February 15: 'VMRO-DPMNE are accusing today that Zoran Zaev has used the money of the people to reward his fellow party members and close relatives'). In some cases, the journalists themselves have also given positive qualifiers (February 24: 'VMRO-DPMNE, according to their membership and structure, is the largest and most organized party in Macedonia. At the last elections they won the most support from the people, by winning over 450 000 votes').

What was interesting was the stand towards DUI, which was demonizing on more than one occasion (February 23: 'In the future, DUI will be controlling the police, customs, the health sector, tax authorities, justice sector, so practically with only 80 000 votes and 10 MPs they will be in control of all security and the main public and financial sectors of the country'), although in some cases the attitude turned to positive, i.e. protective (February 16: 'DUI's leader asked from SDSM an offer for establishing a coalition in writing, and to that he received a personal

threat from SDSM's official Pavle Bogoevski'). In this period of monitoring as well, the accusatory stand towards the civil society was repeated (February 16: 'Since yesterday, Sorosoids and the Social-Democratic Union of Macedonia are strongly attacking Vlado Jovanovski whom they wish to falsely present as someone who is inciting war'), up until the final day, when various civil movements came forth, whose standpoints were shown in a favourable light by the media outlet (February 24: 'Tens of patriotic organizations, civil organization and numerous intellectuals are mobilizing against federalization of Macedonia, since the will of the Macedonian people is close to being denied and a coalition of DUI and SDSM is imminent').

Although there were few reports about the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, there were no changes in the demonizing stand towards this institution (February 23: 'Special Prosecutor Katica Janeva gave a scandalous statement for Deutsche Welle, addressing threats for the judiciary authorities. After yesterday's embarrassment in the courthouse and the direct insults that Janeva and Fetaj used to hinder the hearing about the riots in front of the building of the Municipality of Centar, the Special Public Prosecutor continues to make threats with criminal charges to judges').

The only example with elements of neutral critical observation, which viewed various aspects of one phenomenon, did not refer to a specific political entity, rather the general state of affairs (February 15: 'Albanian parties stand united, Macedonian parties are as far apart as they have ever been. Will the Macedonian platform protect national interest or will it deepen the crisis').

3. NEGATIVE SPEECH DIRECTED TO INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

Negative speech was observed against journalist Branko Geroski when a reaction was shared to his text from the Socialist Party of Macedonia, in which text the journalist states his opinions (February 16: 'Branko Geroski is using defocused lenses to present a handful of qualifiers and insinuations, was written in the written reaction to yesterday's column of the Sorosoid and media strategist of SDSM Branko Gerovski').

There were notices of assigning stereotypes to an ethnicity through an attempt to

analyse the number of Albanians without any specific data, rather by using arbitrary conclusions (February 22: 'Current demographic set-offs, primarily due to the massive emigration of Albanians and abandoning the tradition of families with multiple children, making almost certain the possibility for Albanians to present less than 20 percent at the next census, thus losing numerous rights which were guaranteed to them with this percentage with the Framework Agreement').





MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

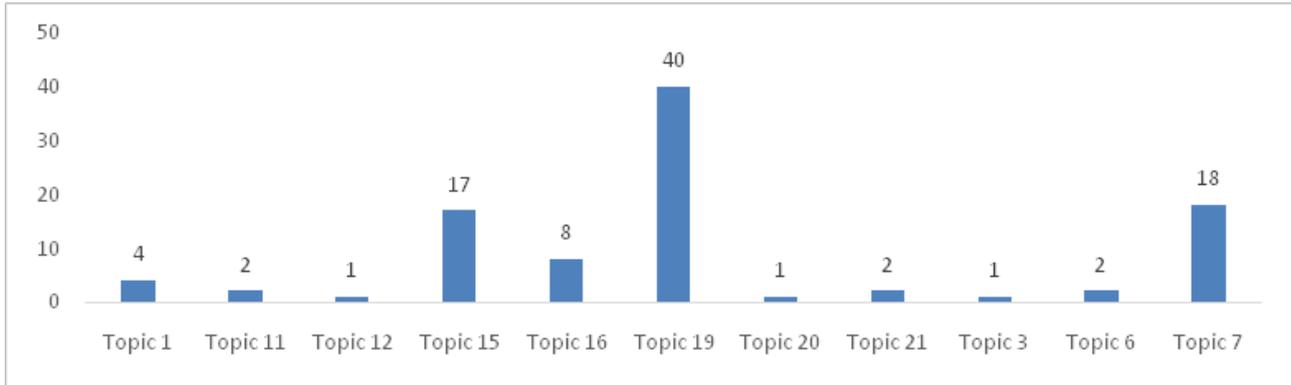


TELMA

1. COVERED TOPICS

During the reporting period on Telma Television, 96 reports were shown that refer to political life and to democratic reforms in the country. The predominant topic was the formation of a government cabinet (40 reports). A

significant portion of the reports also focused on the work of public institutions (17 reports) and the activities of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (18 reports). The other topics were not as commonly presented.



Number of reports related to the various topics on Telma Television (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
Topic 6	Regular activities of Government and authority representatives (resolving current issues, protocol activities, etc.)
Topic 7	Operations of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (and other topics related to SPPO)
Topic 11	Proposal for expanded use of Albanian language (reports that cover in more depth the proposal for using the languages, in which the context of negotiations for forming a government is secondary)
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Topic 13	Borrowings and state of public debt
Topic 14	The media and their work
Topic 15	Regular activities of public institutions, meeting or failing to meet their obligations
Topic 16	Miscellaneous
Topic 18	Education
Topic 19	Negotiations for forming a government
Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)

Regarding the negotiations for forming a government cabinet, reports were shown regularly and frequently about the activities of SDSM and DUI as directly involved parties, there were also the reactions of VMRO-DPMNE and the messages from representatives of the international community. Mainly, reports were shown about latest developments in this process, without major journalistic intervention, with the exception of analytical announcements for the show 'Top Tema'.

Monitoring the work of the public institutions in the context of achieving and protecting public interest continued as one of the main characteristics of the news programmes

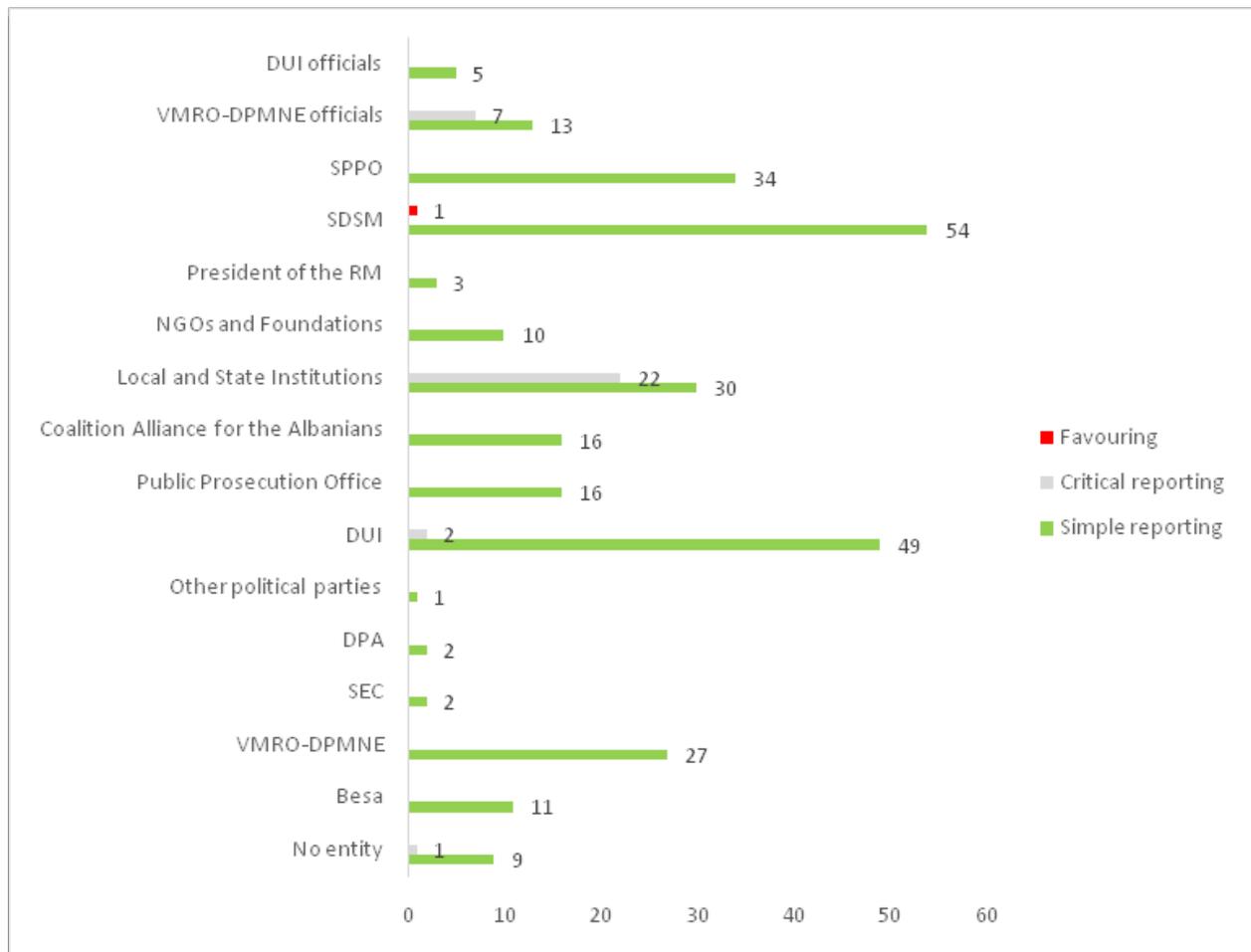
of this medium. The work of the judicial bodies, problems in education, employment in public enterprises, the expenses for the 'Skopje 2014' project, providing medications for persons with illnesses and other topics.

Reports were also shown about a survey according to which SPPO has the support from the people to continue with their work, then about the discussions between SPPO and the Council of Public Prosecutors regarding the case 'Coup', about the trial regarding the case of the violent incident in the Municipality of Centar, which is led by that prosecutor's office as well as other investigations of the special prosecutor's office and the issues to which they complain.

2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

The most frequently presented political entities in the monitored news programmes on Telma Television were DUI (56 reports) and SDSM (55 reports) as parties that led the ne-

gotiations regarding the formation of a new government cabinet. The party VMRO-DPMNE, along with their officials were presented in 47 published reports. When it comes to the other



Approach to reporting about political entities on Telma Television, (February 13 – 17 and February 20 – 24)

parties, more frequent mentions were made of the Alliance for Albanians (16 reports) and Besa (11 reports). Regarding non-party entities, again, the most frequently mentioned ones were state and local authorities (52 reports) and the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (34 reports). In terms of content, there were no opinions of a political party that were presented as predominant over the other parties, on the news on Telma.

Reports about the party SDSM were fair and impartial, mainly regarding their activities in the process of negotiations for constituting a new government cabinet (February 23: 'Zaev is announcing a new government cabinet in two weeks'). The only observed instance of favourable reporting during this period of monitoring was intended for this party (February 15: 'SDSM have imposed themselves as a factor of change and uniting. This viewed in the context of the published intercepted conversations and the nationalistic narratives of the parties of Albanians is the reason why many Albanians are choosing SDSM as an alternative more and more, say civil activist Mariglen Demiri').

Reports were also shown regarding the activities and positions of VMRO-DPMNE (February 21: 'The stand of VMRO-DPMNE is that SDSM are putting continuous pressure on the judicial system') and neither a favourizing nor demonizing attitude was presented towards this party. However, the activities of public officials from this party were observed with criticism, like for example the statement of the Minister of Finance Kiril Minovski that the country has no debt to the economy sector (February 21: 'If the country really has no debt to the economy, the persons who are competent should come out and document this claim before the public, was the message from some of the managers, after the MF stated yesterday that they are financing their payables to domestic companies on time') or the Minister of Defence Zoran Jolevski regarding the situation of the army (February 24: 'The Minister of Defence presented the new uniforms for officers; however the members of the leading structures of the army that should wear the uniforms failed to show up at the formal event. The speculations are that the Army Chief and the Deputy are displeased by the poor state of the army, and the official reason for their absence was that they had other engagements').

Criticisms were stated for the party DUI about their finicky behaviour in the process of negotiations for constituting a government cabinet (February 24: 'While everyone is waiting for a Government Cabinet DUI are deciding to what extent they wish to participate in the government. Whether they only wish to take part with their MPs or to include their representatives as ministers and other officials. The objective is, as they say, for the new government to assess their governance so far, without them getting in the way').

The most common subject of critical observation was the work of state and local authorities, more specifically regarding issues in the educational sector (February 13: 'Scholarships for some of the students studying abroad through the Erasmus Plus programme are late'), with the post-election employments in the public sector (February 15: 'New announcements for employment were made in several public enterprises. Experts say that these employments are not illegal, however it should be taken into consideration that the current technical government is not refraining from hiring new people'), about the expenses for the Skopje 2014 project (February 16: 'Anything the Government has asked for, the City of Skopje has built. They spent 27 million EUR from budget grants, with 95 per cent allocated on squares and baroque facades, in 2016 alone, is stated in the budget report of the City of Skopje. The least amount of the city's budget was spent on protecting the environment'), as well as the problems with the quality of performance of the buildings from this project (February 24: 'The roof of the new theatre building is leaking. The building, which cost 40 million EUR is leaking, and no one is taking responsibility. The architect believes that he has no connection to the event, rather it is the company Beton Shtip, that built it. The Theatre Director is silent, although scandalous images of plastic sheets spread over the floor of the luxurious building were shown to the public'). Especially emphasized were the criticisms towards judicial bodies, especially concerning the re-assignment of judges who cooperated with the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (February 21: 'A group of judges in the criminal court have been reassigned to other departments of the court from where they will have no contact with SPPO cases. The judges concerned are the ones that have ruled in favour of SPPO, i.e. have signed search orders and issued detainment verdicts for current and former officials').



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

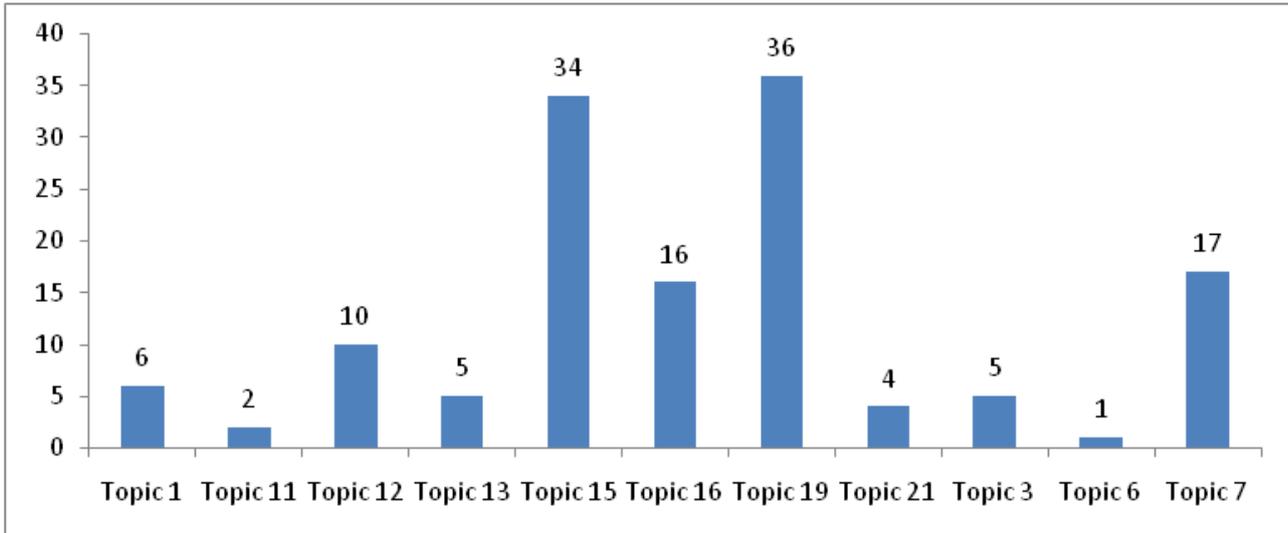


24 VESTI

1. COVERED TOPICS

During the reporting period on Television 24, 136 reports were shown that refer to political life and to democratic reforms in the country. Two topics were dominant with an almost identical number of reports: constituting a government (36 reports) and the work of state and public institutions (34 reports). Then followed the work of the Special Public

Prosecutor's Office (17 reports), the reactions from public personas to the political situation in the country (Miscellaneous) – 16 reports, the state of the economy (10 reports), 6 reports for organizing the elections (financing the electoral campaign), borrowings (5 reports) and as many reports that referred to some government project or initiative.



Number of reports related to the various topics on TV 24 Television (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
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Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)



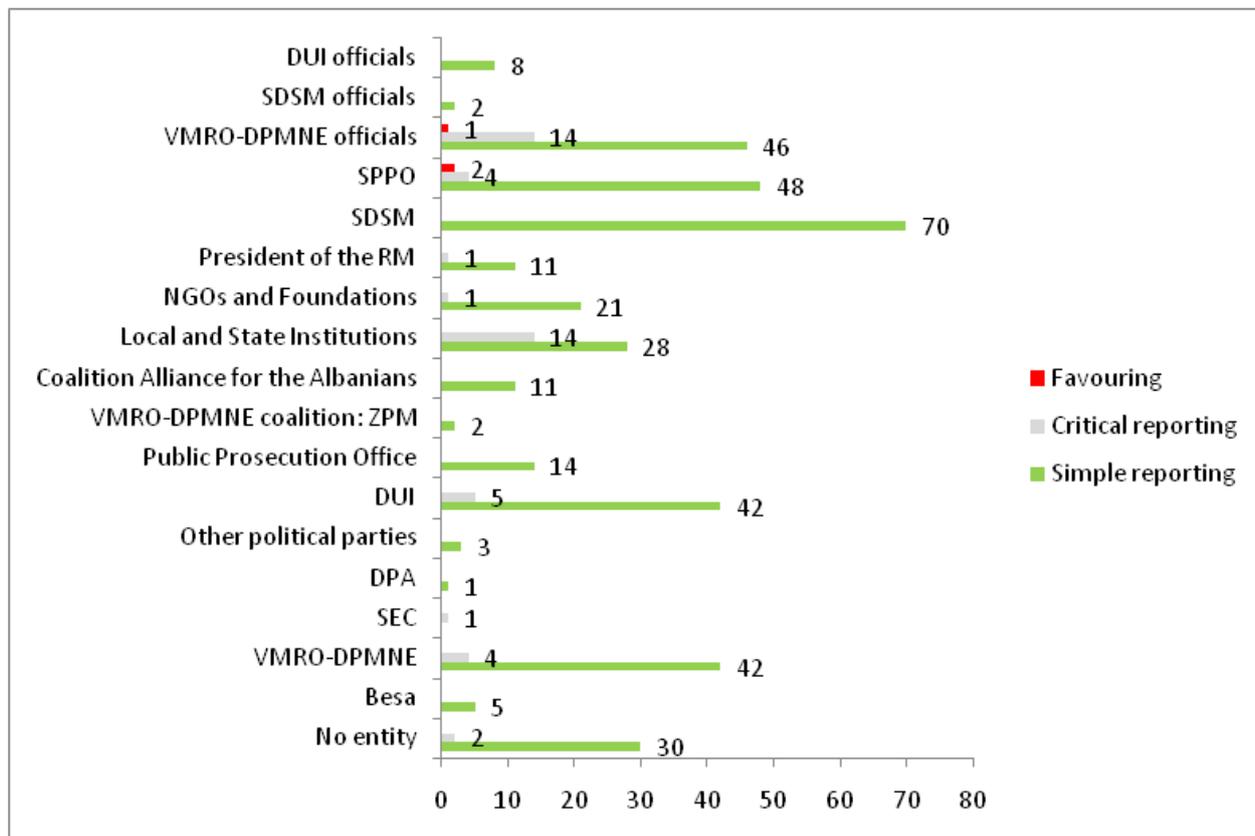
Regarding the negotiations for constituting a government cabinet, the TV station intensely covered the regular meetings among the current negotiators – SDSM and DUI and about the messages from the international community and they made analytical reviews on this topic by conveying differing opinions. In this context, there were also reports about the reactions from the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the protests of the civil association ‚For a Joint Macedonia’ and the analysis about the uncertainty of having local elections in April, at the same time criticizing the move of the State Electoral Commission to reinstate the phantom voters who were erased from the voters’ registry (February 21 ‘The local elections in April are hanging on a thread’) The TV stations continued with regu-

lar monitoring of the work of public authorities and they comprehensively covered the problems with the judiciary system, public enterprises (the strike of the Macedonian Railway Transport Company), employing vulnerable groups, procurement of medications, etc. From the work of SPPO, the news reported on the investigation of the two media houses MPM and TV Kanal 5 and in REK Bitola, the trial about the violence in the Municipality of Centar and the case ‚Coup’, as well as the report of Amnesty International that deals with the block of the Public Prosecutor’s Office. The TV station also provided comprehensive reports about economic events, mainly in the context of the political crisis, such as the blocked subsidies and tourism, foreign investments and in that line the state of national debt.

2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

The most common subject of reports was SDSM (in 70 reports) and the officials of VMRO-DPMNE (in 61 reports), next in terms of frequency in reporting was DUI (47) and VMRO-DPMNE (46 reports). The other parties were presented with 11 reports (Alliance for Alba-

nians), 5 (Besa), 8 (DUI officials). When it came to non-party entities, the most frequently represented entity was SPPO (54 reports), local and national institutions (42), NGOs (22), Public Prosecutor’s Office (14), President of the State (12), etc.



Approach to reporting about political entities on Television 24 (February 13 – 17 and February 20 – 24)

The TV station provided critical coverage from a neutral position and they observed the situations from numerous topics. The critical stand was expressed towards various subjects, first and foremost towards the authorities (14 reports): February 16 'Black stains in Lake Ohrid - Is it oil or plant life?' February 20 'New grants for self-employment. The results of Government measures are overdrawn accounts in the Pension and Disability Insurance of Macedonia') and towards officials from VMRO-DPMNE (4 reports): February 13 'A new government is brewing, the technical one is still implementing tender procedures', February 13 'New borrowings for settling debts', February 15 'Harsh reactions following the decision to build a swimming pool in Shuto Orizari'. Especially critical arguments were provided by the TV station when reporting about the fact that the Ministry of Agriculture did not prohibit the use of the Istibanja springs, although they are polluted with arsenic (February 14: 'Delev: Poisonous arsenic is found in the water of the springs in Istibanja'). The influence of the party VMRO-DPMNE was pointed out as the reason for changes made in the Criminal Court (February 21 'Tectonic rotations are shaking up the Criminal Court. Is the Criminal Court being 'purged' of 'unfit' judges?'). The TV station provided a well-argued criticism and the policy of non-transparency before the media in the case concerning the mortgage over the party's building (February 16 'He did not answer the question about the real value of the building, nor the question of whether the mortgage is an attempt to protect the party's head office in the possibility of becoming the opposition') and the connection to Kanal 5 television in the context of the investigation of SPPO about the financing of a campaign (February 21 'Major differences between the space allotted for advertising, the discounts that were provided and the uncollected receivables opens up for the public the dilemma of the lawfulness of the donations of this political party').

When covering the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, two instances were also observed of favourizing (February 20 'Contrary to this practice, although they are administering the procedures in accordance with the law, SPPO are facing constant obstacles and disregard to their requests'), and the attacks to the work of this institution were criticized while other reports were shown about the international recommendations to support them (February 13 'The new German President showed active interest in the Macedonian political crisis', February 20 'New appeals for constituting a reform

government and to support SPPO'). However, critical reports were also directed towards this institution in terms of their lack of transparency for the public for some investigations (February 20 'Janeva attended a coffee meeting with the Council of Public Prosecutors: They had coffee and then gave their statements', February 21 'Investigation on Kanal 5?: Are electoral donations of the media part of the investigation that the SPPO is already undertaking regarding the financing of a campaign?').

In one of the three reports on Government projects, a favourable attitude was observed towards officials of VMRO-DPMNE, by pointing out the measure as a positive example of operations of a government institution (February 23 'The Government with measures for self-employment').

The TV station criticized the State Electoral Commission in the report on the issue of organizing local elections this year, for placing back the 30 thousand disputed voters erased from the voters' registry on December 11 last year, due to an oversight of the Law (February 21 'Local elections in April are hanging by a thread').

Reporting on the activities of SDSM mainly came down to conveying the party's standpoints through announcements, or through statements of their representatives. In two cases there was one-sided reporting about the opinion of one party, without asking for a response from the government whose policy was being criticized (February 15 'Shilegov: The Government is not paying the subsidies', February 16 'SDSM will put an end to 'Skopje 2014' in the City of Skopje').

DUI were criticized as a party (in 5 reports) about their behaviour in the negotiations for constituting a government (February 16 'The division of the party was once again visible at today's observance of the anniversary of the conflict in 2001 at which event the vice-presidential three failed to show', February 17 'DUI wish to avoid amendments to the Constitution, yet to obtain effects identical to making amendments to the Constitution', February 20 'The denar is to be features in two languages. DUI have raised the bar on requests on language use'). In the context of constituting a new government, the TV station criticized the actions of the President of State for his silence regarding the assignment of the mandate (February 23 'Will the mandate be handed to Zaev or will he return to his recent requests, besides the signatures, for the programme to contain points of protection of national interests and national security').



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

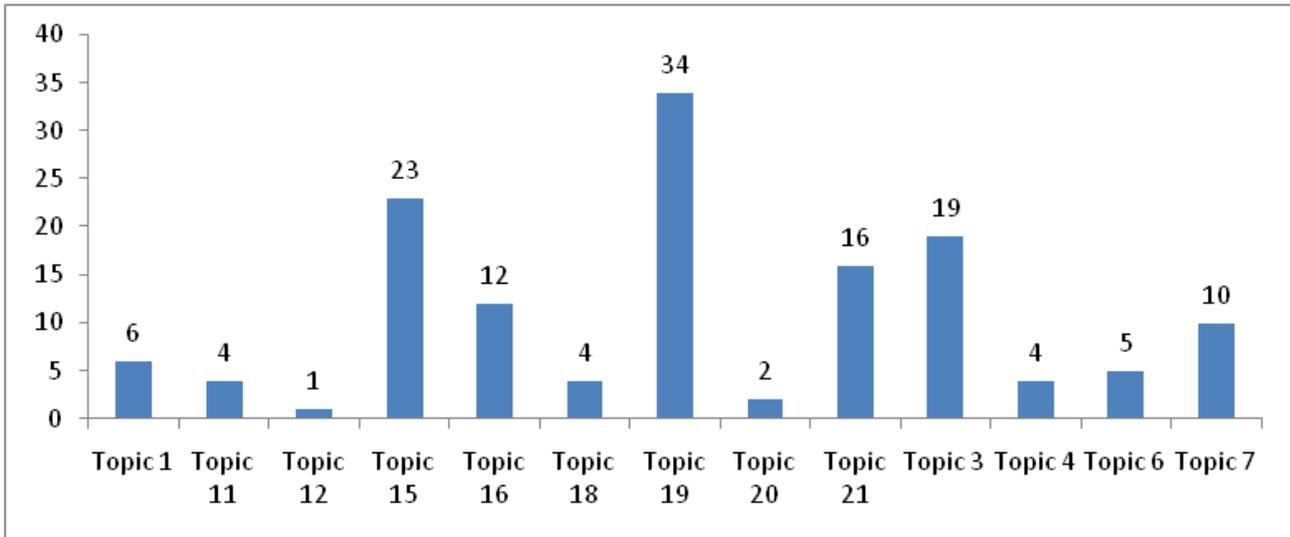


KANAL 5

1. COVERED TOPICS

During the reporting period, Kanal 5 TV published 140 reports related to political life and the democratic reforms in the country. Most of them referred to the negotiations for forming a new government (34 reports), the work of the institutions (23), Government projects (19), reactions from political parties

on different topics such as healthcare and pollution (16), the work of SPPO (10), the organization of the elections (investigation for financing the campaign) 6 reports, regular work of officials (5 reports), promoting projects by political parties, state bilingualism and education (4 reports each) and other topics.



Number of reports related to the various topics on Kanal 5 Television (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
Topic 6	Regular activities of Government and authority representatives (resolving current issues, protocol activities, etc.)
Topic 7	Operations of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (and other topics related to SPPO)
Topic 11	Proposal for expanded use of Albanian language (reports that cover in more depth the proposal for using the languages, in which the context of negotiations for forming a government is secondary)
Topic 12	Economy and investments (foreign investments, budget investments, employment)
Topic 13	Borrowings and state of public debt
Topic 14	The media and their work
Topic 15	Regular activities of public institutions, meeting or failing to meet their obligations
Topic 16	Miscellaneous
Topic 18	Education
Topic 19	Negotiations for forming a government
Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)



Regarding the negotiations for forming a government, the reports informed about the meetings between party representatives and their standpoints, the messages from the international community, as well as the reactions from experts and public personas. At the same time, the thesis represented by the party VMRO-DPMNE regarding new elections was favoured (February 16 'The parties are preparing for election at full steam'), as well as statements that the state needs defending (February 22 'Gruevski: VMRO-DPMNE remains at the rampart of national and state interests', February 23 'VMRO-DPMNE are prepared to prevent a defactorization of the Macedonian people'). At the same time, reports were shown stating that the situation in SDSM 'has reached a boiling point', because of the requests that the counter-part from DUI is delivering in the negotiations (February 17 'SDSM did not obtain the signatures, DUI delivered new requests').

Many of the reports concerned the ongoing Government projects (February 17: '10 thousand new jobs - the Government has adopted the operational plan for 2017', February 17 'Subsidies of 31 million MKD for domestic documentary and election programme', February 20 'In ten years, the number of citizens with a university level education aged 30 – 34 has increased by 17 percent'). The promotional reports included announcements by VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski made on his Facebook profile (February 14 'Gruevski: Construction has begun of a new waterline in Gevgelija'), and the report of the Heritage Foundation that praises the achievements of the country in terms of economic liberties. Two TV reports were aired about the above mentioned report during the analysed period, on the day when it was promoted (February 16 'Heritage: Macedonia is economically a free country, occupying the 31st place'), and one week later (February 22 'In the last year, the country has progressed by 16 positions, while

in the last 10 years, the progress has been as many as 47 positions, so now we are ahead of many developed European countries'). At the same time, the report failed to mention the fact that the country has been in a political crisis for more than a year, which is impacting the economic state of the country.

The TV station published expert opinions about state bilingualism, which was a result of the negotiations for constituting a government, through which they criticized the negotiations on this issue (February 22 'Cuculovski: A part of the platform will lead to federalization – Cuculovski: The language must not be agreed behind closed doors – the solution is a referendum') and they favoured the standpoint of VMRO-DPMNE through reports that showed that there is clear dissatisfaction of what is negotiated between SDSM and DUI (February 24: 'Tens of patriotic organizations, many intellectuals and civil initiatives are mobilizing after details emerged from the bill for use of Albanian language from DUI').

The reporting on the topic of 'De-Sorosozation' continued, although to a much lesser extent from the previous period and it was directed towards activities that are happening abroad which show justification for the negative campaign about this foundation and her founder, promoted by VMRO-DPMNE, seeing that it is also present in his homeland USA (February 15 'Fox News: This man is a 'spider' with a massive online influence', February 20 'The main counsellor of Trump has announced a fight against Soros in USA, Hungary and Macedonia').

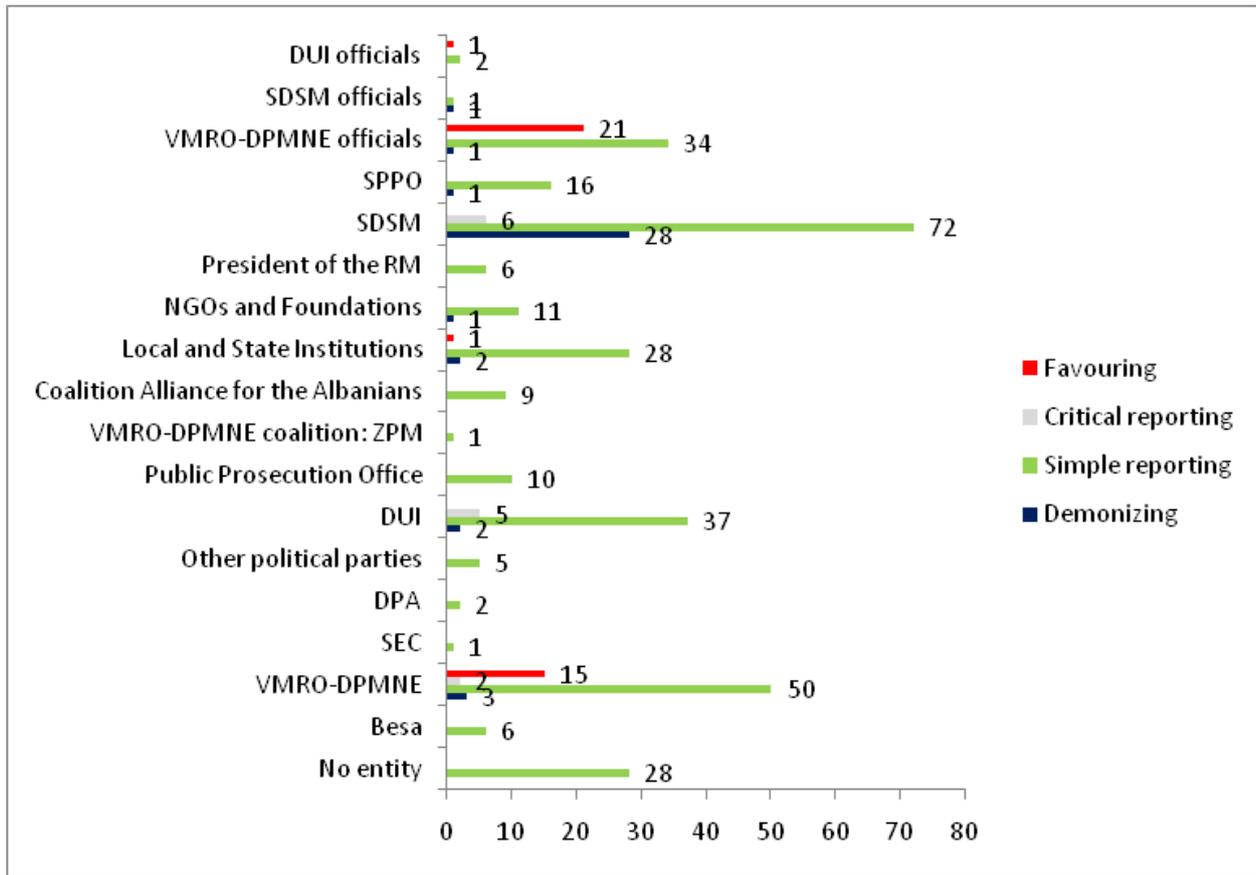
The reports about the work of SPPO concerned the hearing about the violence in the Municipality of Centar, where the first defendant was VMRO-DPMNE leader, however there wasn't a single report about the investigation implemented by this prosecutor's office in that same TV station and in the media consortium MPM which is known for being close to the Government.

2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

During the monitored period, the most frequently presented entity in the reports of this TV station was SDSM (106 reports), then followed VMRO-DPMNE (70 reports), VMRO-DPMNE officials (56 reports), DUI (44). When talking about other parties, only the Alliance for Albanians (9) and Besa (5) were more significantly presented. Considering non-party entities, most of the reports were about local and state institutions (31 reports) SPPO (17 reports) and NGOs (12 reports). An evidently expressed favourable stand was present in reports about VMRO-DPMNE and

the officials (36 reports total), and a demonizing stand in reports about SDSM (28 reports).

Favourable reporting for VMRO-DPMNE, i.e. VMRO-DPMNE officials was done by one-sided conveying of information from press conferences or announcements with accusations towards another entity (February 13 'Pishev: Zaev's corrupt tender procedures must be put to an end, the Public Prosecutor must initiate a proceeding'). Another type of favourable reporting were propagandist reports on the successes of Government policies, implemented by VMRO-DPMNE officials



Approach to reporting about political entities on Kanal 5 Television (February 13 – 17 and February 20 – 24)

(February 13 ‘Macedonia has played a key role in dealing with illegal migration. We have succeeded to deliver to Europe what they needed and to what extent we felt was sufficient’, February 13 ‘An increase in the number of tourists who have visited the country, Government projects and measures to support tourism are continuously marking an upward trend’). The TV station also published a critical report about VMRO-DPMNE in relation to the political crisis, where this party is being remarked for the fact that ‘Two months after the elections the state is without a government (February 13). In one-sided reports from a press conference of SDSM, negative criticisms are directed towards VMRO-DPMNE officials (February 17 ‘SDSM: Rushed reconstructions have left high-school students without electricity’).

Reports about the party SDSM were mainly demonizing in several ways. One of them was conveying one-sidedly and without reserved judgment opinions of VMRO-DPMNE representatives that were an attack on the politics of SDSM and personal attack of SDSM leader Zoran Zaev and members of their family (February 15 ‘VMRO-DPMNE: The money from the Municipality of Strumica end up with close relatives of Zaev’, February 22 ‘Kostovski: SDSM has kept Macedonia in custody for two and a half years’). The TV station also expressed negative attitude towards SDSM through reports that show one-sided writings and claims of other media with a negative tone for the party and its representatives (February 14, Zurnal: Kadriu was a secret service associate’, February 16 ‘Exit: SDSM is threatening Ahmeti with SPPO’,

February 20 ‘Netpress: PPO is running investigations for Vice Zaev and Oliver Spasovski’).

The TV station regularly publishes the statements of representatives of SDSM about promoting projects that were part of their election campaign (February 13: ‘SDSM: The schools will employ new psychologists, pedagogues and defectologists’, February 14 ‘SDSM: Sports played in schools daily’), or about criticizing local or national institutions (February 17 ‘SDSM: Rushed reconstructions have left high-school students without electricity’, February 20 ‘SDSM: Gynecology Clinic left without BCG’) and one critical report where this party’s position is observed, however it is not demonized, in the negotiations with DUI (February 14: ‘What does the dilemma imply, will the offered guarantees from Zaev mean de facto acceptance of the platform of Albanians, meaning full bilingualism of the state’).

In regards to the party DUI, the TV station mainly reported fairly, and with occasional critical observation of the moves of the party in terms of negotiations for a Government (February 16: ‘While SDSM are waiting for the signatures, DUI’s leader paid homage to the two-headed eagle in Chair, on the occasion of the anniversary of the conflict in 2001’).

Although to a smaller extent, the TV station expressed opinions in reporting about the work of SPPO, which was one-sided (February 22 ‘First Instance Court Skopje 1: Janeva and Fetai behaved insolently and unprofessionally’, February 22 ‘Ristovski: Katica Janeva and Fatime Fetai are continuing to act as if in a circus’).



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

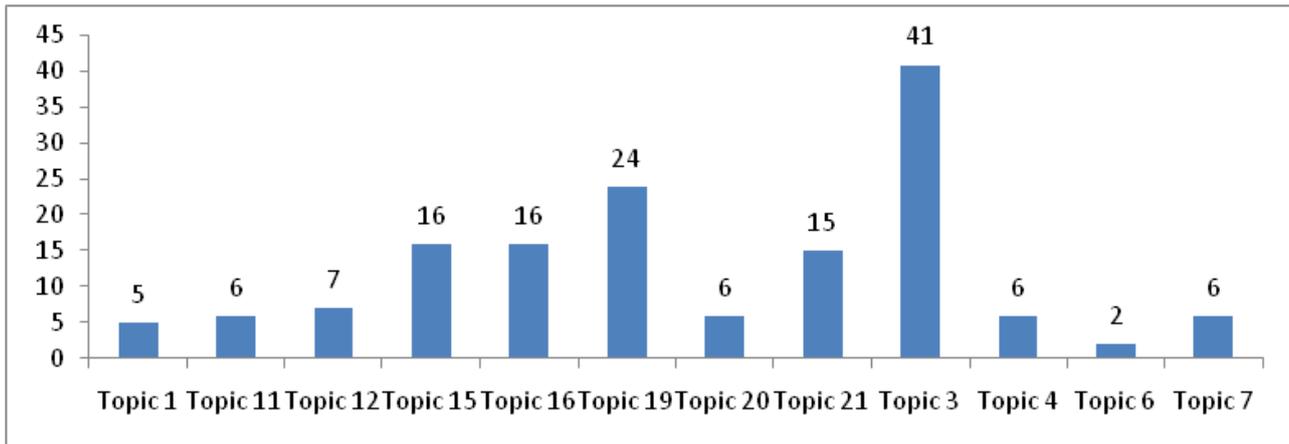


ALFA

1. COVERED TOPICS

During the reporting period, Alfa TV published 150 reports related to political life and the democratic reforms in the country. The most frequently presented topic were the projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (41 reports), the negotiations for constituting a Government (24

reports), the work of public institutions (16 reports), the state of the economy (7 reports), 6 reports on state bilingualism, 6 on promoting projects by the parties and 6 on the work of SPPO. In five reports, the topic was the organization of the elections, i.e. the investigation opened by PPO for financing the campaign.



Number of reports related to the various topics on Alfa Television (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
Topic 6	Regular activities of Government and authority representatives (resolving current issues, protocol activities, etc.)
Topic 7	Operations of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (and other topics related to SPPO)
Topic 11	Proposal for expanded use of Albanian language (reports that cover in more depth the proposal for using the languages, in which the context of negotiations for forming a government is secondary)
Topic 12	Economy and investments (foreign investments, budget investments, employment)
Topic 13	Borrowings and state of public debt
Topic 14	The media and their work
Topic 15	Regular activities of public institutions, meeting or failing to meet their obligations
Topic 16	Miscellaneous
Topic 18	Education
Topic 19	Negotiations for forming a government
Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)



Regarding the most frequently presented topic, the TV station reported about current projects that are being implemented (February 13, 'The number of foreign tourists in Macedonia has doubled'), and about announced projects (February 14: 'The highways Skopje - Blace and Gostivar - Kicevo are being designed'). The TV station uses statements of foreign representatives and their commending words presented in the reports benefit the favourable reporting about successful government policies (February 17 'Miller: I am impressed with the economic progress of Macedonia', February 20 'In the analysis made by the Irish agency for researching health-care services, it was underlined that Macedonia has moved up from the 27th to the 16th position on the European Health Consumer Index in 2014, because of the project 'My scheduled appointment'. Some of these reports were about the reports of mayors from the party VMRO-DPMNE, who also announced the projects for this year (February 13 'The Municipality of Lozovo, with assistance from the Government and donations they have received, has implemented several projects that are of vital importance for the citizens', February 21 'In the Municipality of Kisela Voda, 80 percent of the foreseen programme has been implemented'). The media did not take into account that new local elections are due this year, and the position from which they are making these promises, nor did they pay note to whether this is an early elections

campaign for elections that are still uncertain, in the light of current political events.

Regarding the negotiations for constituting a government, most of the reports referred to covering party meetings and sessions. However, some of the reports were favourable towards the position of VMRO-DPMNE (February 23 'VMRO-DPMNE are saying that they will not allow Macedonia to be redefined'), and accusatory towards the standpoints of SDSM and DUI, whose negotiations for a new government were ongoing (February 23 'The Government led by SDSM and DUI would disregard the will of Macedonians'). In this context, the TV station also reported about bilingualism that came as a result of the negotiations, by publishing manipulative reports (Alfa learns) – February 24 'The Denar will become bilingual. Fines up to EUR 5 000 for failing to implement bilingualism. Details from the legal solution for Albanian language accepted by Zoran Zaev'.

The reports about the work of SPPO were mainly reactions from VMRO-DPMNE, and the TV station continued to report on the topic of 'De-Sorosozation', this time in the context of international examples used to defend this process in the country initiated by VMRO-DPMNE (February 15 'Fox News presented an analysis showing the leader of the Open Society Foundation as someone who wants to use his power and influence Balkan countries, to use his money to change and tailor politics').

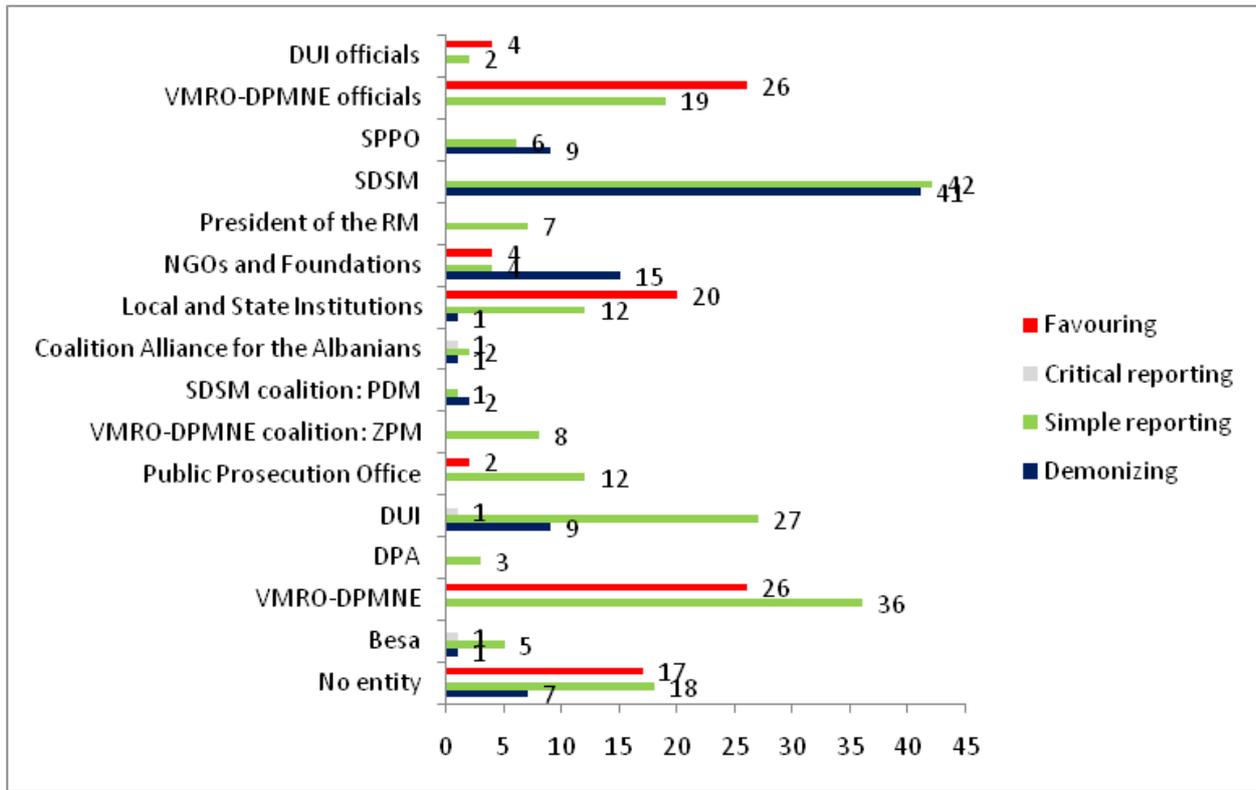
2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

The most presented political entity in the TV station's reports was the party SDSM (83 reports). Then followed VMRO-DPMNE with 62 and the officials from this party with 45 reports. In 42 reports, the subjects were international institutions, embassies, foreign experts and officials. Then followed DUI (37 reports) and DUI officials with another 6 reports, while 8 reports mentioned parties from the coalition led by VMRO-DPMNE 'For a Better Macedonia' and in 7 reports it was the movement Besa. Out of the other, non-party entities, 33 reports mentioned local and state institutions, SPPO was featured in 15 reports, in 14 reports it was the Public Prosecutor's Office, in 7 - the President of State and in 3 it was the civil society, i.e. NGOs and foundations. In terms of content, the political standpoints of VMRO-DPMNE and their officials were predominant over others (in 99 cases the reports were favourable), and an

especially negative attitude was directed towards SDSM (41 reports), towards SPPO (9) in as many towards DUI (9) and towards international institutions and embassies in 7 reports.

The TV station reported information from the party VMRO-DPMNE for promoting projects non-critically, and during the monitoring period the most coverage went to the leader of the party Nikola Gruevski, by publishing his statuses on Facebook (February 15 'VMRO-DPMNE leader, Nikola Gruevski, posted on his Facebook profile that their goal is to improve the real life of the people').

That same favourable approach was used for VMRO-DPMNE officials, such as the Minister of Health Nikola Todorov with the announcements for new medications and courses of treatment (February 14 'A new course of treatment for six kinds of carcinoma') as well as local officials from VMRO-DPMNE (February 14 'Prilep is investing



Approach to reporting about political entities on Alfa Television (February 13 – 17 and February 20 – 24)

in sports facilities’, February 16 ‘Facades will be renovated of residential buildings in Aerodrom’).

The accusatory stand towards the party SDSM was noted in the reports about the negotiations for constituting a government cabinet, where the leader of the party, Zoran Zaev, was accused without support from arguments, for making accessions and bargaining in order to save himself personally from persecution for an alleged crime (February 17 ‘Because of two acts that call for imprisonment, Zaev is now willing to make any kind of accession and any kind of bargaining’). This attitude was also encountered in the reports about the investigation of the Public Prosecutor’s Office for financing the election campaign of last year (February 13: ‘Some media outlets have already published that this step of the Public Prosecutor’s office has caused panic among the leadership of SDSM’), and in these accusations, the TV station used other media as sources (February 21 ‘Netpress: Vice, Zoran Zaev’s brother and ex minister Oliver Spasovski under investigation for involvement in electoral irregularities’, February 16 ‘Exit: Bogoevski made the announcement, Zaev is using SPPO to blackmail Ahmeti’).

The oppositional party was also mentioned in a demonizing context in reports relating so-called ‘De-Sorosoization’, in which the role of the NGO ‘Open Society Fund’ was attacked at the same time (February 17 ‘SDSM and SOROS, along with their activists, are publically lynching the actor Vlado Jovanovski, simply because he

warned against a war - in case Zaev accepts the entire platform of the Albanians’), which was a topic that continued to be covered, although to a lesser extent. The TV station used the same negative tone in reports where, without reserving judgement, they share the standpoints presented in the show ‘Vo Centar’ (Dead Centre) that is aired on TV station Kanal 5, where the role of the Soros Foundation in Macedonia is placed under attack, as well as the role of US-AID and the ‘Colourful Revolution’ as ‘external enemies’ of Macedonia (February 21 ‘The web of the ‘NGOs’ is untangling along with the way in which they function in Macedonia, under the protection of Soros and USAID” (February 22 ‘Eftov ‘Vo Centar’ - ‘Colourful Revolution’, terrorist threats and blocking the border – a coordinated strategy against Macedonia’).

The most expressive demonizing reporting about international representatives in the country (without entities) were directed towards Ambassador Jess Bailey, who was reported to face threats for an investigation for his ties to Soros (February 14: ‘The group of congressmen and one senator asked for an explanation from Ambassador Jess Bailey for his ties to George Soros’). In a report in which the TV station used opinions ‘Vo Centar’ (Dead Centre) (February 20 ‘Eftov: Intercepted communications in Macedonia was a grand-scale operation’), ‘foreign factors’ were accused without any argument support, for standing behind the alleged ‘grand-scale’ interception of communications in Macedonia.



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

However, in the reports about the activities of the association 'Macedonian Manifesto' (February 21 'Macedonia is under attack from foreign meddlers who intent to destroy the Macedonian people'), a favourable stand was taken towards the opinions that were presented as 'patriotic' and as an attempt to defend the country from such enemies. A commendable tone was used in informing about the report from the Heritage Foundation from America about the level of economic liberties (February 16, "Heritage': Macedonia comes 31st worldwide when it comes to economic liberties', February 17 'The author of the report of 'Heritage': Macedonia's progress is extensive'). When covering international institutions, favourable report were presented about the work of the European Parliament, more specifically about several MPs from the 'Group of Friends of Macedonia' who, according to the TV station, are defending the interests of our country (February 14 '318 amendments of

the resolution for Macedonia in the European Parliament). A propagandist report informed about 'My scheduled appointment', which is a healthcare project that was promoted as a successful example from Macedonia for the world (February 20 'Macedonia's project 'My scheduled appointment' has become popular worldwide, after Serbia, now Ireland wants to introduce it in order to regulate the chaos in their hospitals').

The attacks on the work of SPPO that lack argument support continued, especially against Katica Janeva, who along with Prosecutor Fatime Fetaj were accused of a 'theatrical display' at the hearing about the violence in the Municipality of Centar, where the first defendant is VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski (February 22 'Theatrical display in the Criminal Court. Janeva and Fetaj turned today's hearing about the violence in 'Centar' into a marketplace') and threats towards the judges in the statement provided for Deutsche Welle.





MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

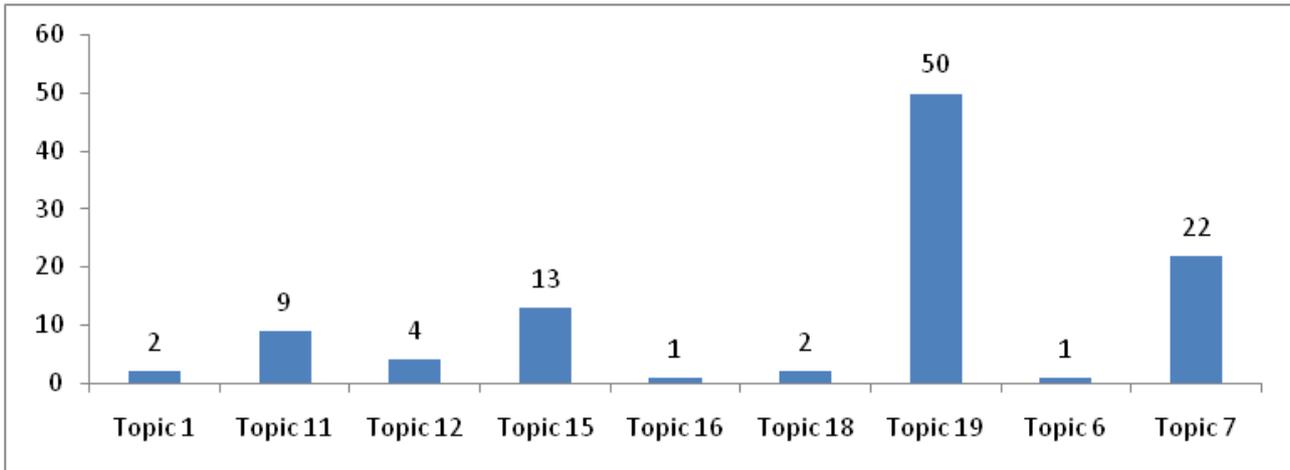


ALSAT M MACEDONIAN LANGUAGE

1. COVERED TOPICS

In their news in Macedonian, TV station Alsat M published a total of 104 reports that refer to the political life and the democratic reforms in the country. A convincing lead in terms of representation went to the topic of negotiations for constituting a new government cabinet (50 reports), after which came the reports on the work of SPPO (22), of the public authorities (13 reports), state

bilingualism which was brought upon by the negotiations for a government (9 reports), the topic of organizing the elections in the context of the investigation for campaign financing (2 reports), education (2) and other topics that were not as frequently presented. For the most part, the contents of the news in Macedonian were identical with the ones on the news in Albanian.



Number of reports related to the various topics on Alsat M, news in Macedonian (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
Topic 6	Regular activities of Government and authority representatives (resolving current issues, protocol activities, etc.)
Topic 7	Operations of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (and other topics related to SPPO)
Topic 11	Proposal for expanded use of Albanian language (reports that cover in more depth the proposal for using the languages, in which the context of negotiations for forming a government is secondary)
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Topic 16	Miscellaneous
Topic 18	Education
Topic 19	Negotiations for forming a government
Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)



The news contained reports about inter-party meetings between SDSM and DUI regarding the negotiations for constituting a government, the back-and-forth between VMRO-DPMNE – DUI concerning state bilingualism following the unsuccessful negotiations (February 13 'Osmani: we do not distinguish between SDSM and VMRO in terms of ethnic issues'), the messages from the international community (February 13 'Hahn and the international community are ruling out a government constituted by VMRO since they are opposed SPPO', February 15 'Zbogor is optimistic about the swift solution of the crisis'), the inspection controls in the municipalities managed by Mayors from DUI that have declared themselves as opposed to a coalition with VMRO-DPMNE (February 17 'Arifi: the controls of the businesses are contentious').

When covering the work of public institutions, reports were shown about judiciary bodies (February 16 'The Criminal and Supreme Courts are still without appointed presidents'), especially numerous regarding the re-distribution of judges in the Criminal Court, and there were also reports about discrimination on an ethnic basis, such as the one about the court process 'Sopot' (February 20 'Although after publishing the evidence for their innocence,

the defendants were released from prison, they to this very day roam the courtrooms in the country, concerning the same case').

As far as the work of the SPPO is concerned, the TV station reported about the investigations of this prosecutor's office surrounding the financing of VMRO-DPMNE, Janeva's elaboration before the Council of Prosecutors, the hearing about the violence in the Municipality of Centar and the fines for prosecutors Janeva and Fetaj and the mainly external support and the interior obstacles that this prosecutor's office is facing.

Besides mentioning them in the context of negotiations, 9 reports were also aired about state bilingualism. The TV station analysed the topic by opposing expert opinions (February 21 'Experts: a complete and rounded up law on use of Albanian language', February 23 'Shasivari: promoting Albanian language, however not making it official'). A report was broadcast about the denied right for Albanians to learn in their mother tongue (February 17 'Albanian children are calling for their mothers in Macedonian. Pupils from the village Banjica, Municipality Chashka in Veles, are not fortunate enough to learn the 36 letters of the Albanian alphabet. This is because their right to an education in their mother tongue has been denied').

2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

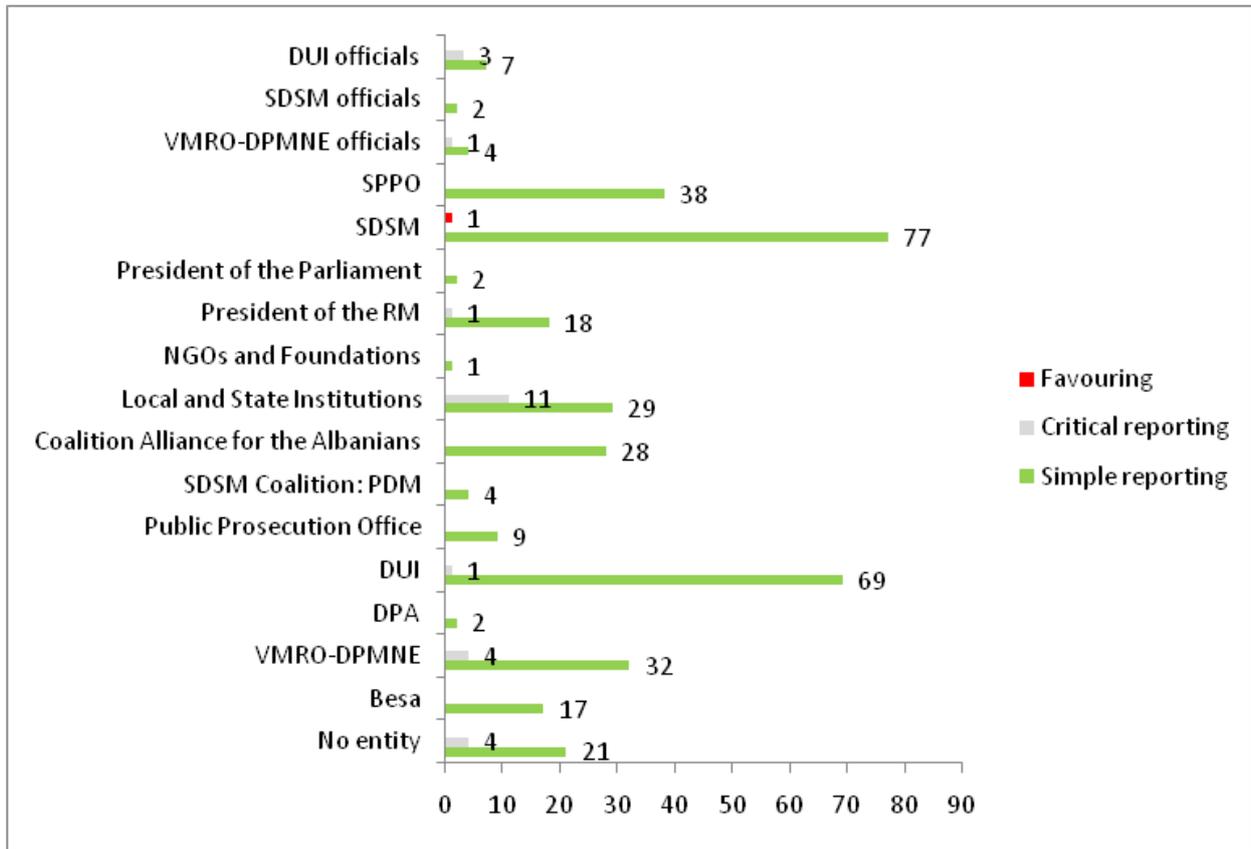
SDSM in 78 reports and DUI in 70 reports were the most frequently presented entities in the news in Macedonian on this TV station. Following these two entities, with almost half the number of reports (46) was VMRO-DPMNE, in 28 reports the subject was the Alliance for Albanians and in 17 Besa. In 10 reports it was the officials of DUI and in 5 it was VMRO-DPMNE. When it comes to other entities, in 40 reports subjects were local and national authorities, in 38 reports it was the SPPO. When it comes to other entities, very few reports dealt with them.

In most of the reports, the TV station merely conveyed information from sources, without giving any value judgements.

In 25 reports, the journalists provided a critical observation of the topics they covered, and these mostly referred to public institutions (11), the work of DUI officials (3) and to VMRO-DPMNE and officials from that party (5), one report was about the President of State.

Critical reporting about the work of public

institutions can be mostly related to the criticisms of institutions governed by DUI officials who are 'under the ever-watchful eye' of this TV station. During the analysed period, the actions of the Minister of Education were discussed regarding two educational institutions - a primary school in a village near Veles, Klukovec, which is functioning in poor conditions (February 14 'Minister of Education, Pishtar Ljuftiu, failed to keep his promise of sending a task force in the village near Veles, Klukovec, to assess the situation of the primary school 'Vasil Glavinov', as well as the accountability of this official regarding the fact that the most recently opened University in the country 'Mother Theresa' is still without a building (February 20 'MES: the University 'Mother Theresa' left without a building because of the crisis'). The Minister of Economy was also criticized for not giving a report on his spending (February 21 'The Ministry of Economy gives no response about their expenses. Kuchi is refusing to provide a report').



Approach to reporting about political entities on Alsat M, news in Macedonian (February 13 – 17 and February 20 – 24)

Reports on VMRO-DPMNE was mainly consisted of conveying their positions (February 22 ‘Gruevski: SDSM are redefining their country’) and to a lower extent the standpoints of this party on state bilingualism were observed. At the same time, the policy of the party was ‘identified’ in the opinions of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, stated by the Bishop Agatangel (February 14 ‘The call of the member of the MOC Synod came after VMRO-DPMNE failed to form a government cabinet with DUI – a process that, according to Nikola Gruevski, failed solely because of the request to provide the status of a national language to Albanian language’). Expert opinions were also used to show well-argued criticism on MOC’s interference with politics (February 24 ‘Shasivari: To promote Albanian language, however not to make it an official language’ MOC’). Critical observation was also noted in the report analysing the implementation of the existing Law

on Language Use (February 17 ‘Albanians in Chashka have been assimilated, the pupils have never seen the 36 letters of the Albanian alphabet’) and in the report about the trial for the defendants in the case ‘Divo Naselje’ (February 17 ‘The accused in ‘Divo Naselje’, victims of political framings - lawyers claim’).

Reports on the party SDSM were fair and they were mainly consisted of conveying the opinions of their representatives about the negotiations for constituting a government cabinet. The only report aired during this analysed period that showed a favourable approach was about this party, and it referred to public opinion research, where the Albanians have stated that they prefer SDSM to any Albanian party (February 14 ‘Survey: SDSM is the leading party with Albanians’). The report is also aimed at criticizing the Albanian parties, especially DUI, who as they say ‘have failed to represent Albanian national interests’.



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

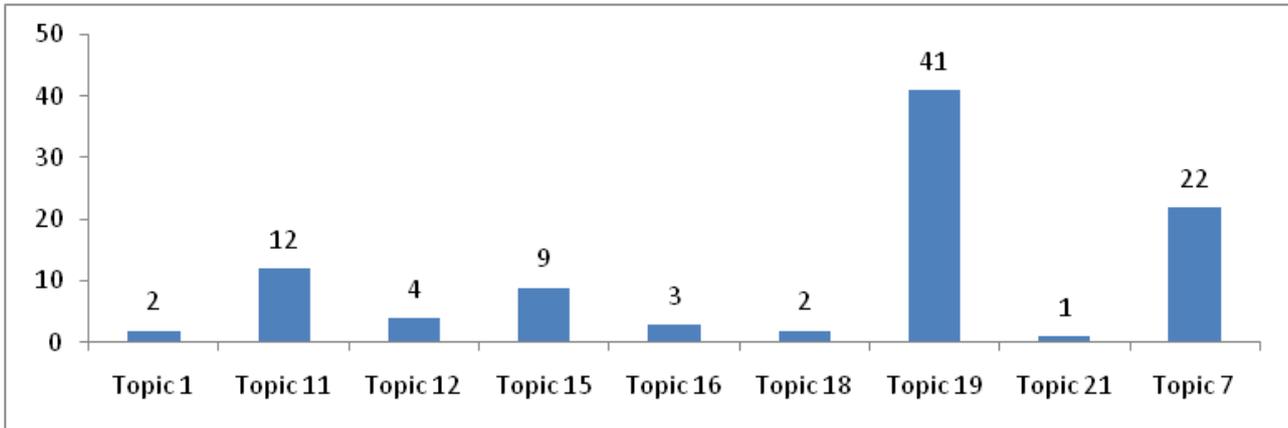


ALSAT M ALBANIAN LANGUAGE

1. COVERED TOPICS

In their news in Albanian, TV station Alsat M published a total of 96 reports that refer to the political life and the democratic reforms in the country. A convincing lead in terms of representation went to the topic of negotiations for constituting a new government cabinet (41 reports), after which came the reports on the

work of SPPO (22), state bilingualism which was brought upon by the negotiations for a government (12 reports), the work of public institutions (9 reports), the topic of the economy (4 reports), 2 reports on the organization of the elections (investigation about financial the elections campaign), two about the education sector, etc.



Number of reports related to the various topics on Alsat M, news in Albanian (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
Topic 6	Regular activities of Government and authority representatives (resolving current issues, protocol activities, etc.)
Topic 7	Operations of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (and other topics related to SPPO)
Topic 11	Proposal for expanded use of Albanian language (reports that cover in more depth the proposal for using the languages, in which the context of negotiations for forming a government is secondary)
Topic 12	Economy and investments (foreign investments, budget investments, employment)
Topic 13	Borrowings and state of public debt
Topic 14	The media and their work
Topic 15	Regular activities of public institutions, meeting or failing to meet their obligations
Topic 16	Miscellaneous
Topic 18	Education
Topic 19	Negotiations for forming a government
Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)



The news programme on Television Alsat M in Albanian was almost identical to the one in Macedonian language, with some changes due to the time in which they air (the Macedonian edition is three hours later). So, in terms of the most frequently presented topic – the negotiations for a government cabinet, the focus of reporting in the edition in Albanian, once again, were the meetings between the parties, mainly SDSM and DUI, and between other parties (February 13 ‘The materials sent by SDSM are being reviewed by DUI and the Alliance’), the messages from the international community, the duel between DUI and VMRO-DPMNE concerning state bilingualism (February 13 ‘VMRO and DUI are still arguing about the failure to establish a Government’), the inspection controls in the municipalities led by mayors from DUI who declared themselves to be against a coalition with VMRO-DPMNE.

When covering the work of the institutions, most frequently the reports were about judiciary bodies (February 16, ‘It’s been over two months without presidents, only acting officials’, February 21 (Judges who acted in accordance with requests from SPPO are being demoted’) and the pollution (February 14 ‘The Guardian: Tetovo is the most polluted city in Europe’).

The work of SPPO was also one of the most frequently presented topics, and reports were also shown about the investigation in REK Bitola, the elaboration of Janeva before the Council of Prosecutors for rescinding ‘Coup’, as well as issuing a fine for both prosecutors from SPPO at the hearing about the violence in Centar.

The TV station reported about state bilingualism in 12 reports, which was a topic that came out of the negotiations for constituting a government cabinet. In one of the reports, they reveal details from the bill for a law that is under negotiations, as ‘official, spoken as well as written’ (February 16) and calling to their sources they published that SDSM’s law is for Albanian language at all levels, and the municipalities where there are no Albanians will have to be able to respond in Albanian’ (February 16). In this context, the issue of ethnic relations was analysed (Macedonian – Albanian), and the TV station published the opinion of former politician Hisni Shakjiri, according to whom ‘the turning of Albanian voters to SDSM is an expression of dissatisfaction from Albanian politicians who used the national issue for over two decades, just to get rich’ (February 14).

2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

52

The most frequently presented entity, in 80 reports, was SDSM, then came DUI in 67 reports, VMRO-DPMNE in 39, the Coalition Alliance for Albanians in 33, Besa in 22, and officials of DUI in 9, i.e. of VMRO-DPMNE in 3 reports. When it comes to other entities, SPPO were prevalent in 47 reports, which was followed by public institutions (42), President of State (18), the Public Prosecutor’s Office in 9 reports. In most of the reports in the news in Albanian on Alsat M the information was merely conveyed from the source.

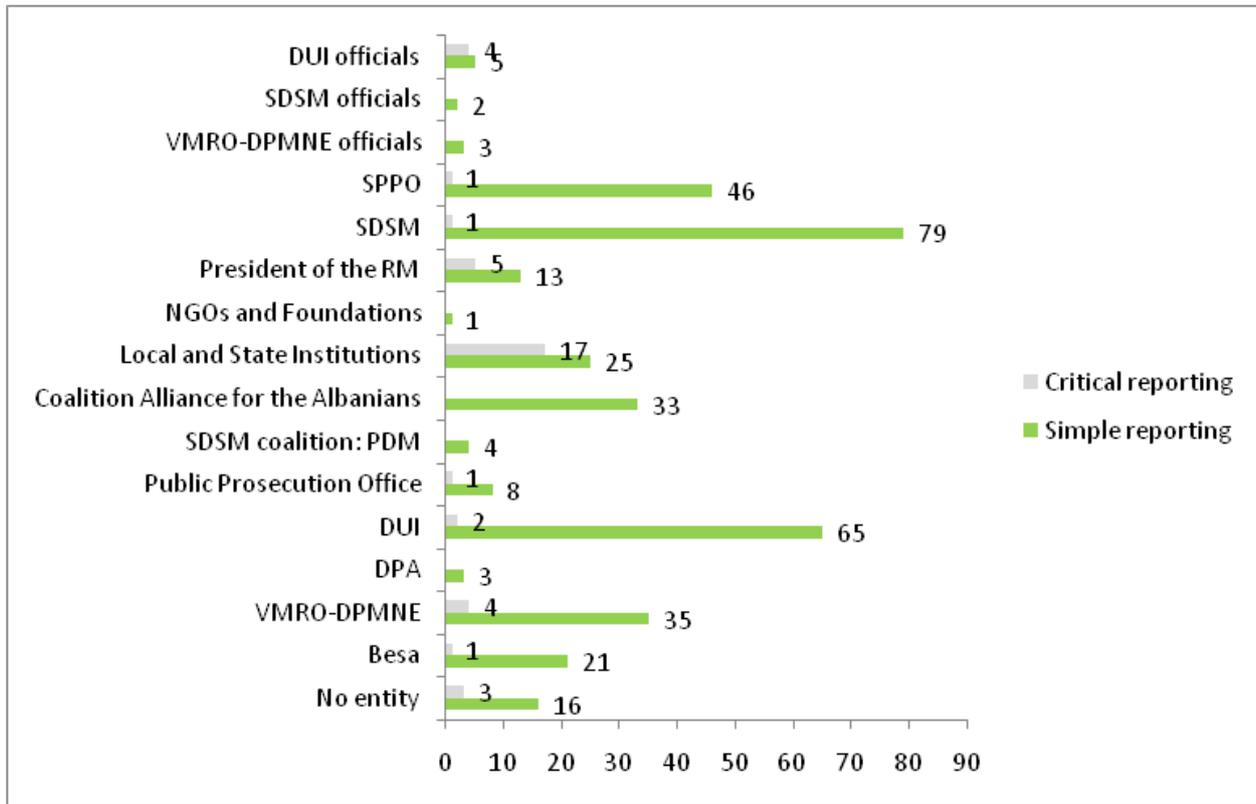
In most of the reports there was no expressive journalistic, or editorial opinions expressed. In a small number of reports (39), a critical stand was expressed towards some problem in the context of protecting public interest.

The work of public institutions received the strongest critical observation (February 20 ‘The process has been postponed for 7 years, although innocence has been proven in ‘Sopot’), as well as DUI officials (February 20 ‘The work of UMT, MES are using the crisis as an excuse. MES

is using the crisis as an excuse for not building the facility of UMT, and UMT was established in a crisis’) as did VMRO-DPMNE and SPPO in one case each (February 20 ‘The process has been postponed for 7 years, despite the fact that innocence has been proven in ‘Sopot’’) and SDSM.

The role of the president of state, through his competence for assigning a mandate for constituting a government has also been subjected to analysis and critical reporting. The President was journalistically ‘reproached’ for being a puppet of VMRO-DPMNE (February 13 ‘Ivanov at the service of Gruevski and VMRO’), and his opinions were critically observed as an obstacle for potential coalition between SDSM and DUI (February 17 ‘The implementation of DUI’s platform may be viewed as a danger’, February 17 ‘The President may stall, however he may not avoid signing’).

The reports about the party VMRO-DPMNE most often conveyed their standpoints (announcements or statements), however some statements, especially about the opinions of



Approach to reporting on political entities on Alsat M, news in Albanian (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

the party about failing to form a government cabinet with DUI were covered critically, most often criticism was directed towards the leader of the party Nikola Gruevski for his radical opinions in terms of the law on languages (February 14 'However, Gruevski too is mixing politics and religion and he has blamed Muslim priests for

campaigning against him', February 14 'Following Gruevski, Agatangel too is against Albanian language'). The TV station also linked this party to the protests of the civil association 'For a Joint Macedonia' (February 24 'Although VMRO are denying it, Alsat learns that VMRO is behind these protests').



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

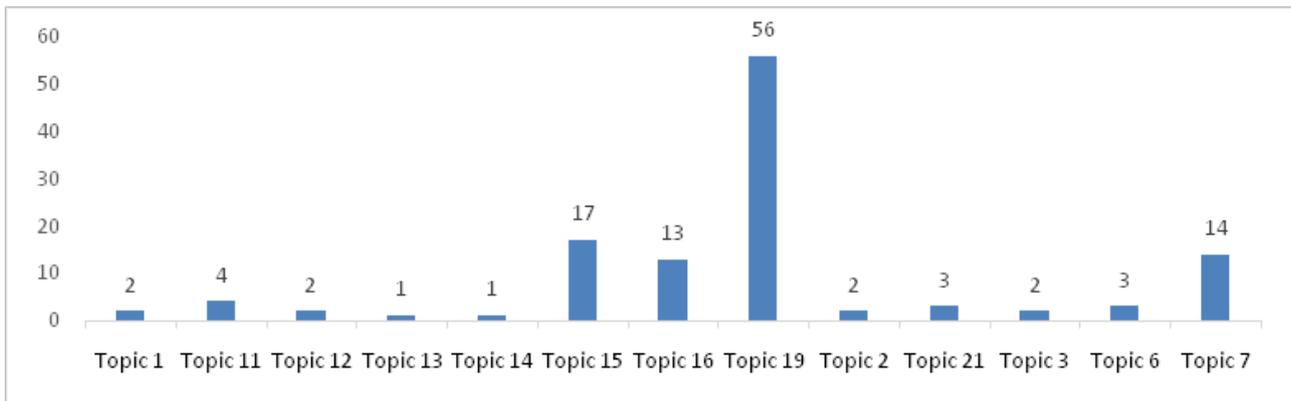


TV 21 MACEDONIAN LANGUAGE

1. COVERED TOPICS

In their news in Macedonian, TV station 21 published a total of 120 reports that refer to the political life and the democratic reforms in the country. Almost half of them (56 reports) were related to political negotiations for constituting a new government cabinet following the parliamentary elections. The media outlet

also published frequent reports on the work of state and local authorities, as well as the activities of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office. Other topics were not as commonly presented. For the most part, the contents of the news in Macedonian were identical with the ones on the news in Albanian.



Number of reports related to the various topics on TV 21, news in Macedonian (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
Topic 6	Regular activities of Government and authority representatives (resolving current issues, protocol activities, etc.)
Topic 7	Operations of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (and other topics related to SPPO)
Topic 11	Proposal for expanded use of Albanian language (reports that cover in more depth the proposal for using the languages, in which the context of negotiations for forming a government is secondary)
Topic 12	Economy and investments (foreign investments, budget investments, employment)
Topic 13	Borrowings and state of public debt
Topic 14	The media and their work
Topic 15	Regular activities of public institutions, meeting or failing to meet their obligations
Topic 16	Miscellaneous
Topic 18	Education
Topic 19	Negotiations for forming a government
Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)



The main focus of reporting about the negotiations for forming a government was placed on inter-party and intra-party meetings which comprised this process. In parallel with reporting about the opinions of members of VMRO-DPMNE regarding them not giving up on the idea for a government in coalition with DUI, opinions of members of DUI stating they are against a government with VMRO-DPMNE, messages from representatives of the international community, analytical reports with debates among experts about the general situation and individual aspects of it (the Albanian platform, etc.). Four reports were also shown about state bilingualism, as a topic that was directly linked to forming a government. They covered analyses about how it would be implemented, as well as a reportage segment about Macedonians and Albanians speaking both languages.

Regarding the work of the authorities, reports were shown about court proceedings and the state of the judiciary system, air pollution, public transport, the registry of paedophiles and other topics. The reports on the state of the economy contained a critical tone and they discussed the burdening of the pension system and the debts of the state owed to the economy sector.

Regarding the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, reports were shown about the discussions between the Prosecutor's Office and the Council of Public Prosecutors regarding the potential reinstatement of the case 'Coup', which was dropped by SPPO, then about the various investigations led by SPPO, the hearings about the violent protests in front of the Municipality of Centar and the opinion of VMRO-DPMNE against the extension of the mandate of this prosecutor's office.

2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

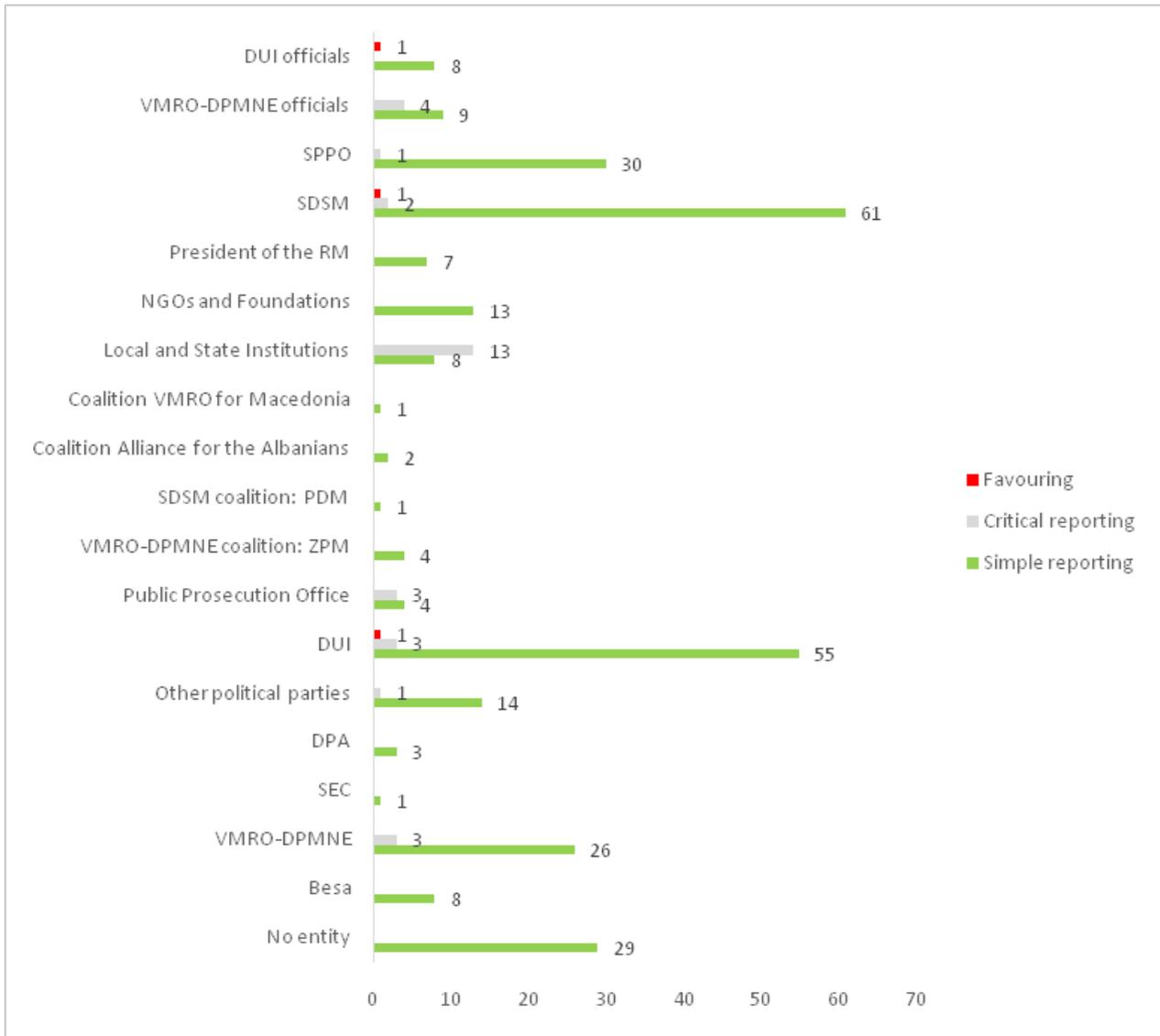
DUI with 68 and SDSM with 65 reports published about them, were the most frequently presented political entities on the TV station during the reporting period, mainly because they were in the centre of attention of the negotiations for forming a government. 45 reports were published about VMRO-DPMNE and 8 about Besa, and other parties were not as frequently presented. The Special Public Prosecutor's Office was presented in 31 reports and public authorities in 21 reports, and these were the most frequently presented non-party subjects. In terms of contents, the opinions and positions of any political party were not presented as prevalent over others'.

Expressing any kind of journalistic opinion in the reporting is not typical for this TV station, and such occurrences were sporadic. During the reporting period, a report was published about the role of women in society, which pointed out Teuta Arifi from DUI and Radmila Shekerinska from SDSM as positive examples (February 17: 'these two ladies took active participation in political events in Macedonia. More precisely, they are part of the negotiations between SDSM and DUI for forming the new government'). Contrary to this, there were also reports in which these parties were criticized, also related to the forming of a government (February 21: 'The parties are silent, the public is asking

for answers, the negotiations about Albanian language are continuing').

The activities of VMRO-DPMNE were under critical observation in several cases, related to the opinion of the party about the work of SPPO, and a documentary film was also broadcast about the controversial historical persona – Andon Janev Kjoseto at the premises of the Municipality of Butel (February 22: 'During the election campaign last year, VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski made a reference to the name and actions of 'Kjoseto', in order to send a message to his political opponent, SDSM leader Zoran Zaev. In his words: 'If Delchev were alive, he would send 'Kjoseto' to finish the story with this man', many saw an open threat to Zaev and fear from an election defeat'). In some reports, critical observations were made of the work of the officials of this party (February 24: 'A while ago, photographs emerged on social networks of members of the army wearing torn up and stitched up uniforms. The poor condition of the uniforms was also confirmed by the Independent Trade Union of Professional Soldiers').

Critical reporting was most often present in the reports on the work of state and local authorities, more precisely the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (February 14: 'The Ministry of Social Policy has not replied yet about the efficiency of the registry of paedophiles and why



Approach to reporting on political entities on TV 21, news in Macedonian (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

they have not published the names of convicted persons for two years'), the Government about the borrowings (February 14: 'By the end of 2016, the level of public debt has reached 50.1 per cent of the GDP, amounting to over 4.7 million euro, which is twice as more than it was in 2008'), the City of Skopje for public transportation (February 16: 'The City of Skopje is ignoring the requests of Albanian councillors to bring back the two bus lines with numbers 9 and 19'), the Government over the debts to

the economy sector (February 17: 'The technical government is failing to meet their obligations, the business community are asking for fast forming of a new government'), the Government for their employment policies (February 21: 'With the intention of cutting down unemployment, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia is subsidizing payment of social insurance contributions for new employees, thus causing distress to the pension fund, is the opinion of the World Bank') etc.



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

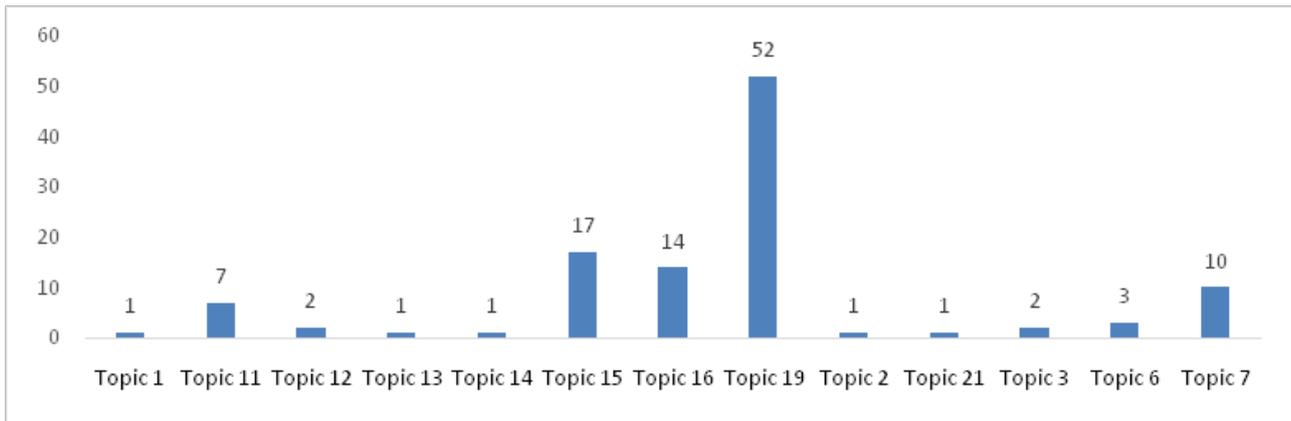


TV 21 ALBANIAN LANGUAGE

1. COVERED TOPICS

In their news in Albanian, TV station 21 published a total of 112 reports that refer to the political life and the democratic reforms in the country. The topic that was by far most frequently presented was the negotiations for constituting a new government cabinet (52 reports), and from other topics there was more intense reporting about the work of public institutions (17 reports) and the activi-

ties of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (10 reports). 7 reports were also aired about state bilingualism, as a topic directly linked to the establishment of a government cabinet. Reports on other topics were shown less often. For the most part, during the monitored period, the contents of the news in Albanian were identical with the ones on the news in Macedonian



Number of reports related to the various topics on TV 21, news in Albanian (February 13 - 17 and 20 - 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
Topic 6	Regular activities of Government and authority representatives (resolving current issues, protocol activities, etc.)
Topic 7	Operations of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (and other topics related to SPPO)
Topic 11	Proposal for expanded use of Albanian language (reports that cover in more depth the proposal for using the languages, in which the context of negotiations for forming a government is secondary)
Topic 12	Economy and investments (foreign investments, budget investments, employment)
Topic 13	Borrowings and state of public debt
Topic 14	The media and their work
Topic 15	Regular activities of public institutions, meeting or failing to meet their obligations
Topic 16	Miscellaneous
Topic 18	Education
Topic 19	Negotiations for forming a government
Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)



Regarding the negotiations for forming a government cabinet, most of the reports focused on the activities of the parties that were involved in the process, SDSM and DUI, as well as the messages of representatives of the international community. Extracts were aired from debate shows where the political state was viewed analytically, and especially the so called Albanian platform, and messages were also shown from representatives of different parties, from high officials from DUI stating they are against a government in coalition with VMRO-DPMNE, from high officials from VMRO-DPMNE stating that they are not giving up on the idea of forming a government with DUI, etc. In the seven reports on state bilingualism, this topic was viewed in more detail, and the context of negotiations for forming a government was moved to the side lines. They covered analyses about how it would be implemented, as well as a reportage segment about Macedonians and Albanians speaking both languages.

Court proceedings and the state of the judicial system, air pollution, problems with public transportation, the functioning of the registry of paedophiles and other topics were presented in reporting about the work of state and local authorities. The reports on the state of the economy contained a critical tone and they discussed the burdening of the pension system and the debts of the state owed to the economy sector.

There was regular coverage of the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, with reports regarding the discussions between the Prosecutor's Office and the Council of Public Prosecutors regarding the potential reinstatement of the case 'Coup', from which SPPO withdrew, then about the various investigations led by SPPO, the hearings about the violent protests in front of the Municipality of Centar and the opinion of VMRO-DPMNE against the extension of the mandate of this prosecutor's office.

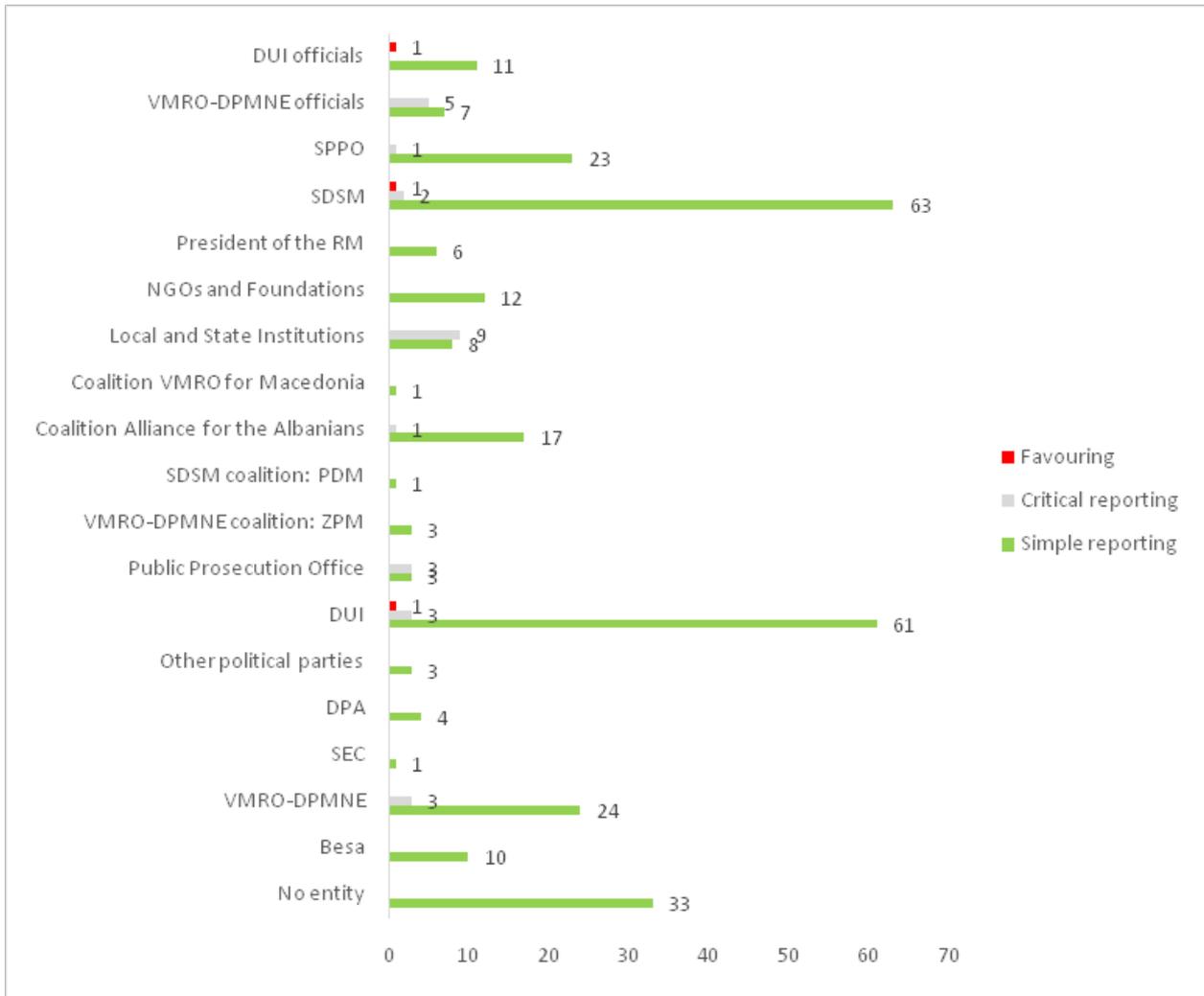
2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

DUI, as a party that on one hand was directly involved in the negotiations for the constitution of a government cabinet and a participant in the current cabinet with their officials on the other hand, was most frequently mentioned in the news on this TV station, with 77 reports published about them. Then followed SDSM with 67 reports, followed by VMRO-DPMNE with 42 reports, the Alliance for Albanians with 18 and Besa with 10, while other political entities were not as frequently mentioned. The most frequently mentioned non-party entity was the Special Public Prosecutor's Office with 24 published reports, as well as state and local institutions with 17. In terms of contents, the opinions and positions of any subject were not presented as predominant over others'.

In most cases, reporting on political entities did not include a journalistic intervention and no opinions were provided, not even a critical observation. Favourizing was sporadic, and demonizing of entities was not present at all. The only instance of a report with elements of favourable reporting was when a report was published about the role of women in society, which pointed out Teuta Arifi from DUI and Radmila Shekerinska from SDSM as positive examples (February 17: 'these two ladies took active participation in political events in Mace-

donia. More precisely, they are part of the negotiations between SDSM and DUI for forming the new government'). Nevertheless, criticisms were also directed at these two parties, mostly regarding the secrecy of the negotiation process for forming a government (February 21: 'The parties are silent, the public is asking for answers, the negotiations about Albanian language are continuing').

The activities of VMRO-DPMNE were under critical observation in several cases, related to the opinion of the party about the work of SPPO, and a documentary film was also broadcast about the controversial historical persona – Andon Janev Kjoseto at the premises of the Municipality of Butel (February 22: 'During the election campaign last year, VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski made a reference to the name and actions of 'Kjoseto', in order to send a message to his political opponent, SDSM leader Zoran Zaev. In his words: 'If Delchev were alive, he would send 'Kjoseto' to finish the story with this man', many saw an open threat to Zaev and fear from an election defeat'). In some reports, critical observations were made of the work of the officials of this party (February 24: 'A while ago, photographs emerged on social networks of members of the army wearing torn up and stitched up uniforms. The poor condition of the



Approach to reporting on political entities on TV 21, news in Albanian (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

uniforms was also confirmed by the Independent Trade Union of Professional Soldiers’).

However, critical reporting, when it was used, was primarily present in the reports on the work of state and local authorities, more precisely the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (February 14: ‘The Ministry of Social Policy has not replied yet about the efficiency of the registry of paedophiles and why they have not published the names of convicted persons for two years’), the Government about the borrowings (February 14: ‘By the end of 2016, the level of public debt has reached 50.1 per cent of the GDP, amounting to over 4.7 million euro, which is twice as more than it was in 2008’), the City

of Skopje for public transportation (February 16: ‘The City of Skopje is ignoring the requests of Albanian councillors to bring back the two bus lines with numbers 9 and 19’), the Government over the debts to the economy sector (February 17: ‘The technical government is failing to meet their obligations, the business community are asking for fast forming of a new government’), the Government for their employment policies (February 21: ‘With the intention of cutting down unemployment, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia is subsidizing payment of social insurance contributions for new employees, thus causing distress to the pension fund, is the opinion of the World Bank’) etc.



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

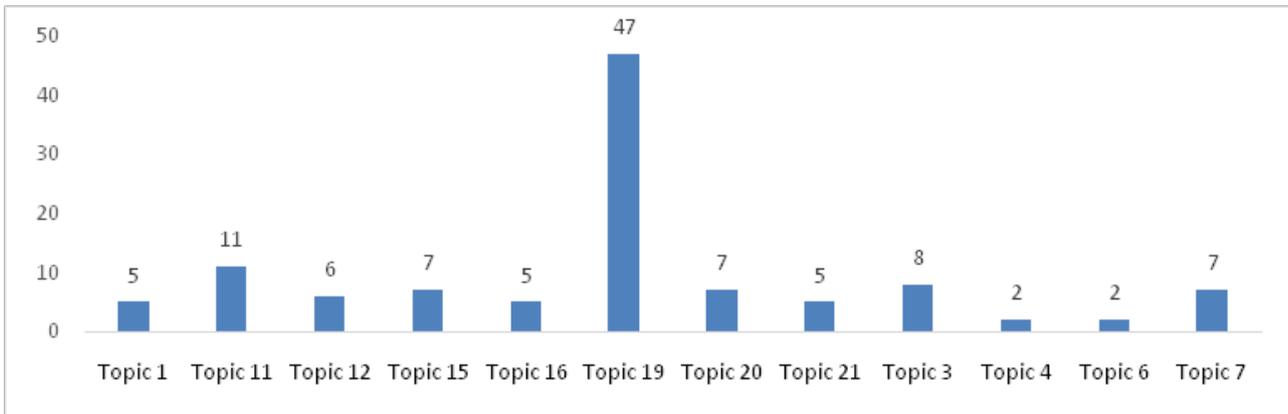


TV NOVA

1. COVERED TOPICS

During the reporting period, Nova TV published 112 reports related to political life and the democratic reforms in the country. The topic that was clearly most frequently discussed on the news of this TV station were the discussions for forming a new government

cabinet (47 reports), after which followed the topic of state bilingualism as directly linked to the first topic (11 reports). According to that, half of the reports shown in the news were concerning the most current issue during the monitored period.



Number of reports related to the various topics on Nova Television (February 13 – 17 and 20 – 24)

Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (assessments of PACE of how the elections were organized)
Topic 3	Pre-election activities of political parties
Topic 4	Promotion of projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (promotions or announcements by ministers, representatives of local self-governments and of other officials).
Topic 6	Regular activities of Government and authority representatives (resolving current issues, protocol activities, etc.)
Topic 7	Operations of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (and other topics related to SPPO)
Topic 11	Proposal for expanded use of Albanian language (reports that cover in more depth the proposal for using the languages, in which the context of negotiations for forming a government is secondary)
Topic 12	Economy and investments (foreign investments, budget investments, employment)
Topic 13	Borrowings and state of public debt
Topic 14	The media and their work
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Topic 16	Miscellaneous
Topic 18	Education
Topic 19	Negotiations for forming a government
Topic 20	De-Sorosozation
Topic 21	Activities of political parties related to current events (judiciary system, health sector, etc.)



Most of the reports on forming a government referred to daily reports about SDSM's and DUI's activities, the meetings held between the two parties, internal meetings held among same party members as well as statements. VMRO-DPMNE's opinions on this topic were also reported as well as the requests for new elections, the messages from international representatives, comments from political analysts, etc. Regarding state bilingualism, reports were published and speculations were communicated about a new bill for a law on language use arranged by the parties SDSM and DUI (February 24: 'Agreement between SDSM – DUI: 3 000 to 5 000 EUR fine for not using Albanian language').

Reporting on the projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions was the third topic in terms of representation. Long-term announcements were also covered, at the same time ignoring the fact that this is a temporary post-elections Government, so these reports suggested that the current rul-

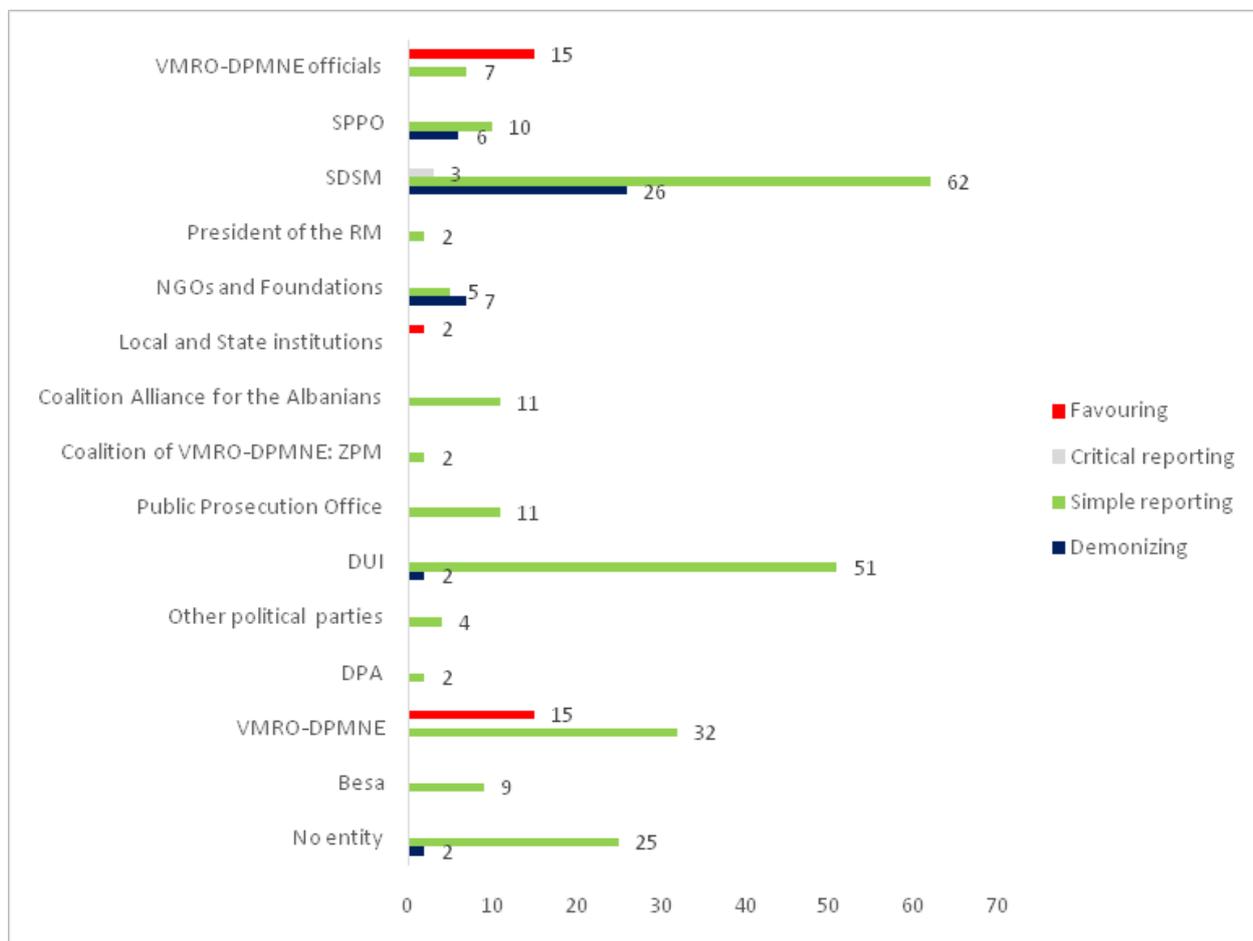
ing structure will continue to lead the country. After a longer period of time, once again the source of information for some of these announcements were posts published by the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski on his Facebook page. The Special Public Prosecutor's Office and the work of public institutions were rarely covered. The topic of 'De-Sorosization' was not as present as it was before, with reports that American Senator Mike Lee asked for answers from the American Ambassador in Macedonia Jess Bailey about donations given to NGOs, that Cvetin Chilimanov from the Association 'Stop Operation Soros' gave an interview for the American portal Brightbard, and segments of the show of journalist Vasko Eftov were also shown where he claims to untangle the web of 'Soros's' civil organization. Reporting on the state of the economy was comprised of conveying the Government's expectations of economic growth and the report from the Heritage Foundation about the growth of economic liberties in the country.

2. ПОЛИТИЧКИ СУБЈЕКТИ

Having in mind the role that the political party SDSM had during the monitored period, as a candidate for constituting a government cabinet, reports about them were most frequently presented (91), then followed VMRO-DPMNE along with their government officials (71 reports) and DUI (53 reports). Only the Alliance for Albanians (11) and Besa (9) were significantly less represented than the other parties. Considering non-party entities, most of the reports were about SPPO (16 reports) and NGOs (12 reports). No political opinions were presented as predominant over others, however an expressive favourizing attitude was observed in the reports about VMRO-DPMNE, and a negative and demonizing one in the reports about SDSM, SPPO and the civil sector.

Demonizing reporting about the Social-Democratic Union of Macedonia could be observed in reports about the investigation for financing the pre-election campaign (February 13: 'Moving on to the topic of politics, more precisely the topic of politics and crime. The Prosecutor's Office reported that an investigation is under way about a party... Unofficially, the

party is SDSM and it is about suspicions about the way in which they financed the campaign of the elections'), on one of the court processes against party leader Zoran Zaev (February 17: 'On Monday there will be a verdict about the illegal interception of communication and publishing of the conversations of the so called bombs, where the defendant is SDSM leader Zoran Zaev'), the negotiations about the law on languages (February 20: 'Is a new attempt being made to sneak through an anti-constitutional solution?') and the reactions to the accepted solutions (February 24: 'On social networks a video is being shared about Macedonian banknotes in two languages, the comments are that Zaev has demolished the foundations of the country, after the language issue he also made an Albanian influence to the denar'). In a small number of cases, correct critical observation was shown regarding SDSM's actions, regarding the negotiations for a Government (February 14: 'No comments yet from 'Bihacka' about its content, despite the announcement that they will be implementing the process in a transparent way').



Approach to reporting about political entities on Nova Television, (February 13 – 17 and February 20 – 24)

Several characteristic ways for favourable reporting about VMRO-DPMNE were observed. One of them was one-sided reporting where the party is blaming other entities (February 15: 'Kostovski: There is no tender procedure in Strumica that can be won by someone who is not close to the abolished Zaev'). Another way was through emphasizing that the party is the winner of the elections (February 24: 'The gathered people are expressing major anger and dissatisfaction with how the will of the Macedonian people is being let down, on these pre-election around 455 thousand votes went to VMRO-DPMNE'). Among the most frequently used methods was a commending tone in reports about government measures and projects and economic successes (February 14: 'We are still on the topic of economy, building and growth. The construction of the road infrastructure in the county is continuing with a strong pace. Minister of Transport Vlado Misajlovski

has announced that this year approximately 40 roads will be reconstructed').

The media outlet has expressed negative attitudes towards SPPO in reporting about their activities (February 23: 'After yesterday's scandalous hearing in the Court Office Skopje - 1, Katica Janeva is threatening criminal charges against the judge') and they reported one-sided accusations that this institution is in connection with the oppositional party (February 16: 'With the final public messages of Bogoevski from SDSM, it is confirmed that SPPO is a partisan instrument that is used for confronting people with different opinions and for blackmailing DUI, is written by the portal'). The accusatory style of reporting was also observed towards civil organizations, in reports about so called 'De-Sorosozation' (February 16: 'The latest lie from the kitchen of SDSM and Soros stating that the public can see is the allegedly independent group of MPs').



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