



Second Monthly Report
based on the monitoring of media content through the Rapid Response Media Mechanism
of the Institute of Communication Studies
(time-frame: 19th December 2015 – 29th January 2016)

I. ON THE POLITICAL PLURALISM IN THE MEDIA

Political pluralism is one of the most important dimensions of media pluralism as it enables free and equal circulation of different political ideas and opinions. This means that each media outlet individually should endeavor to ensure a so-called internal pluralism in the news, or to present all opposing positions on a given topic. This is fairly important for the overall democratic public sphere as citizens will be able to obtain a full picture and to form opinion on issues of public interest. On the other hand, avoiding reporting on certain topics or distorting the angle by highlighting only one view, in the long run, creates ideological manipulation of the public opinion.

The broadcasting media outlets, especially the television broadcasters, have a great significance in informing the citizens for the pluralism of views and opinions in the society. They have both legal (Article 61 of the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services) and ethical obligation (Article 14 of the Code of the Journalists of Macedonia) to provide unbiased and balanced reporting on various political entities and must not reflect political leanings by favouring or attacking certain positions.

Given the importance of political pluralism in the election period, particularly in the context of the political crisis, Przino Agreement and the current political negotiations, the Institute of Communication Studies (ICS) conducts monitoring and analysis of the way the national televisions report on various political views and ideas and the extent to which they provide political actors access to their programmes.

The conclusions and observations presented in this report were obtained based on a qualitative analysis of various aspects of informing in the news and the informative programmes.



Kingdom of the Netherlands

SUMMARY

The second monthly report from the framing analysis of the political actors and the events associated with them, conducted by the Institute of Communication Studies, covers the period between December 19th, 2015 and January 29th, 2016. The analysis examined 11 news programmes and 38 editions of 11 different current-affairs programmes of the Public Service Broadcaster (MTV 1 and MTV2) and of 7 private television broadcasters (Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa, Telma, Alsat M, 24 Vesti and TV21).

- (a) The propagandistic reporting of MTV1, MTV2, Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa in favour of the Government, particularly in favour of VMRO-DPMNE, continues. The editorial convergence of these media outlets continues and is plainly evident in the selection of identical topics, citations of identical sources and identical angle of processing; thus, the reports of different television broadcasters appear to be edited by the same center of power. The patterns of strategic demonisation of SDSM i.e. favouring of VMRO-DPMNE and the repeated use of sources that defend the same position continue. The conclusion from this monitoring period is again that the mass production of demonising and favouring reports of these broadcasters creates an atmosphere of strong political antagonism¹.
- (b) The analysis of the central news on MTV 1, MTV 2, Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa shows that these television broadcasters use logic of argumentation in the framing of political events and actors identical to that of VMRO-DPMNE. This kind of reporting establishes the so-called *applicability effect*² whereby all new events are framed in several major “frames of interpretation” that constantly circulate in the media. Once constructed by the ruling party, these frames of interpretation continue to replicate in the media. According to communication studies on the applicability effect, when people are exposed to information on a new event, they will more probably believe the journalist if they can fit what is being said in a *previously adopted mental scheme or frame of interpretation*.
- (c) Similarly, the analysis shows that the television broadcasters MTV 1, MTV 2, Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa construct simplified frames both for the political parties and other actors involved in the attempts for overcoming the political crisis. By simplifying, their reporting constructs a *chain of equivalence* between representatives of NGOs or experts working on the electoral process and the opposition party, SDSM; or, a chain of equivalence between this party and the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office. This reporting strategy is typical of populist discourse. It makes a strategic alignment of these actors in order to construct an easy target of unfounded media attack. The related practices of (b) and (c) systematically destroy the democratic public debate.
- (d) The television broadcasters 24Vesti, Alsat M (in Macedonian and Albanian) and Telma were observed to practise justifiable criticism of the political actors and the events associate with them. Despite resisting the discourse of VMRO-DPMNE that circulates among the pro-government media, their reporting strategies lack power to create a counterbalance by providing contrary information that will enable viewers to create an image of the actual events.

Nonetheless, the television broadcasters 24 Vesti, Alsat M (in Macedonian and Albanian) and Telma, were not observed to practise investigative journalism in the daily reporting, which is important for development of political pluralism and public debate.

- (e) In general, the television broadcasters in Macedonia provide space for public debates on burning political issues in the country. But, a general observation is that, in the current-affairs shows, the five pro-government television channels (MTV1, MTV2, Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa) tend to propagate primarily the positions of the ruling political structures, yet either provide no space for the positions and opinions of the Opposition or utterly attack and demonise them. The most apparent examples

¹The findings on this item were detected in the first monthly report available online at:

http://respublica.edu.mk/images/modem/attach/MODEM-eden_18%20noemvri%20_23%20dekemvri.pdf

²Price, V., & Tewksbury, D. (1997). News values and public opinion: A theoretical account of media priming and framing. In G. A. Barrett & F. J. Boster (Eds.), *Progress in communication sciences: Advances in persuasion* (Vol. 13, pp. 173–212). Greenwich, CT: Ablex.

thereof are again the shows “Jadi Burek” on Sitel and “Milenko Late Night Show” on Kanal 5.

- (f) The position of the Public Service Broadcaster i.e. the two broadcasters MTV1 and MTV2 is deeply worrying. By definition and by law, the Public Service Broadcaster should lead in providing space for political pluralism and should be a forum for public debate on all current issues as it is financed by and serves all citizens. However, in Macedonia, not only did the Public Service Broadcaster lose the lead in this regard long time ago, but also continuously serves the ruling structures just like some of the commercial television broadcasters.
- (g) The hosts of the shows “Jadi Burek” and “Milenko Late Night Show” continuously violate Article 14 of the Code of Journalists, which requires a professional distance from the political entities. Almost in all their shows, they clearly favour and propagate the positions of the ruling VMRO-DPMNE, while openly and offensively demonise the opposition party SDSM and its representatives. Some of these shows contain discrimination on the grounds of political or other conviction of those who are critical of the Government and the critical media, by belittling and insulting them (“Collaborators of Soros”, “Soros dogs”, “traitors” and so on), which is in contravention of Article 3 of the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination.
- (h) The host of “Milenko Late Night Show”, in the January 15th edition, used even more extreme speech, negative qualifications and open personal insults and profanity. By attacking one individual, Nedelkovski discriminated an entire group of people: “Homosexuals are sick people and I think they should undergo medical treatment”. By doing so, he brutally violated Article 3 of the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination.
- (i) Both hosts repeatedly violate the basic principles prescribed in the Code of Journalists of Macedonia, and, in particular, Article 10, which stipulates that journalists “... shall not use hate speech and shall not encourage discrimination of any sort (nationality, religion, sex, social class, language, sexual orientation, political orientation...)”.

II. FRAMING, PRIMING AND AGENDA SETTING

According to Scheufele and Tewksbury³, the *agenda setting* theory suggests that there is a strong correlation between the emphasis that mass media place on certain topics/issues and the importance attributed to these topics/issues by mass audiences. According to them, *priming* occurs when news content suggests to news audiences that they ought to use specific issues as benchmarks for judging or evaluating the performance of political parties, leaders and governments. Finally, *framing* refers to the interpretive frameworks which are “contextualisation that situates a specific claim within a selective, coherent and purposeful interpretive context”⁴.

Within this framework, the second monthly report analysed: which topics and issues were selected as important by the editorial teams in the media, how the public agenda of the parties and politicians was evaluated, how much emphasis they placed on the coverage of the topics and how they contextualised the events or whether they situated them in a selective, coherent and purposeful interpretive context. The media coverage in the past month focused on the following topics: the political crisis and the early parliamentary elections (682 reports), the projects and achievements of VMRO-DPMNE as the ruling party (280 reports), the scandal with the forged ID cards (118 reports), the work of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (94 reports), the negotiations on media regulation (53 reports) and the opening of the university “Mother Teresa” in Skopje (34 reports).

- (1) In the reporting on *the political crisis and the early parliamentary elections*, Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and MTV1 propagated the position of VMRO-DPMNE that the elections must be held on April 24th,

³Scheufele, D. & Tewksbury, D. (2007) Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models *Journal of Communication* 57 (2007) 9–20

⁴Baden, C. (2010). *Communication, contextualization, & cognition: Patterns & processes of frames' influence on people's interpretations of the EU Constitution*. Delft, the Netherlands: Eburon.

whereas SDSM and the other actors that pointed to the unfulfilled requirements – uninspected electoral register and postponement of the agreement on media reform, were demonised or even vulgarly attacked. The other media, with rare exceptions, mainly neutrally-critically and/or analytically approached the topic.

- (2) By intensively *promoting government projects and government achievements* on a daily basis, the four pro-government television broadcasters (MTV 1, Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa) presented to the citizens an “optimistic” image of the operation of the Government, thereby transforming the critical informing function of journalism into political propaganda. According to the discursive structure and the visual presentation, the reports of these television broadcasters appeared as produced by the same newsroom. In some cases, even the captions were almost identical. The other television broadcasters provided no coverage or limited coverage (critical in tone) of these pseudo-events concocted by the Government in order to enhance its influence on the opinion of the voters before the elections. Following Nikola Gruevski’s resignation from the Prime Minister position, the pro-government media turned their full attention toward him, but now referring to him as the leader or president of VMRO-DPMNE. The pro-government media covered his attendance at public events, such as the celebration of Epiphany, pseudo-events organized by state institutions where he was a guest, or at party platforms. The strong favourable tone continued with the same intensity, even after he stepped down from the premiership. Even reports in which citizens express support to Nikola Gruevski, not the Government, were broadcasted. The four television broadcasters did not question why the former Prime Minister participates in events, in what capacity, as the neutrally-critical media did.
- (3) The pro-government broadcasters selected the *scandal with the forged ID cards* and transformed it into a scandal of the Opposition, emphasising alleged connection between the suspects and the opposition leadership. They used every opportunity to promote the positions of VMRO-DPMNE, uncritically took over news from each other or from other media, used many anonymous sources, and unlike other television broadcasters, avoided raising logical and unanswered questions.
- (4) Tendentious reporting could be noticed on the topics related to the *work of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office*. Selecting some and neglecting other aspects of the work of the Public Prosecution by the pro-government media shows how “framing of the topic” is used to manipulate the public opinion. In this case, directed and synchronised “construction of a story” was evident in all three media that did not correspond to the actual events and intended to foster negative viewer perceptions of the work of the Special Prosecution “that works in collaboration with the opposition”.
- (5) The pro-government media twisted the *negotiations on media regulation* as an attempt of the Opposition “...to bargain for media control”, which culminated when Sitel openly sided with VMRO-DPMNE and attacked SDSM and the mediator Vanhoutte describing his proposal as “Vanhoutte’s censoring Media Law”. The other television broadcasters covered the topic neutrally, without expressed positions, through statements of the party officials and the representatives of journalists’ associations.
- (6) The *opening of the university “Mother Teresa”* was more covered by the televisions that broadcast in Albanian. MTV2 and in TV21 were observed to have a favourable attitude towards the partner in the Government – DUI. MTV2 presented it as “a major national project” and TV21 broadcasted a promotional interview with the Minister of Education and Science, Abdilaqim Ademi. MTV1, Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa dedicated less attention to the event, announcing it as a big project of Government.

III. TOPICS AND EVENTS COVERED IN THE NEWS

(1) The Political Crisis and the Possibility of Early Elections

The development of the political crisis and the possibility of early elections was the most widely covered topic during the entire month (a total of 682 reports). The interest in the topic started to develop soon after New Year concerning the resignation of Gruevski and the positions that the

requirements arising from the Przhinskiot Agreement have not been fulfilled and that the elections should be postponed. In the next week, the focus of this topic culminated due to the decision of the Assembly for holding the elections on April 24th and for postponing the dissolution. Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and MTV1 propagated the position of VMRO-DPMNE that the elections must be held on April 24th, whereas SDSM and the other actors that pointed to the unfulfilled requirements – uninspected electoral register and postponement of the agreement on media reform, were demonised or even vulgarly attacked. The other media, with rare exceptions, mainly neutrally-critically and/or analytically approached the topic.

In the first week of January (January 7th - 15th), a total of 176 reports were broadcasted on the political crisis including the visit of the MEPs Howitt, Vajgl and Kukan and the European Commissioner Johannes Hahn. Sitel and Kanal 5 approached this topic by attacking the Opposition, “In despair, SDSM prepares violent scenarios” (Sitel, January 10th) and “Is the Opposition preparing violent scenarios?” (Kanal 5, January 10th), and individuals who were correlated with the Opposition because their views opposed those of the Government (a Facebook status of the columnist – critic of the Government, Xhelal Hoxhic, who is not a member of the SDSM, was represented as a prelude to violence organised by the Opposition “SDSM is preparing tensions and violence in order to elude the elections”, January 10th). MTV 1 and Alfa approached this topic in positive tone for the ruling party (“VMRO-DPMNE: SDSM is trying to find an alibi for an electoral defeat” – MTV 1, January 8th, “There has to be a guarantee for elections, otherwise PM Gruevski should not resign” and “Analysts are unanimous that all the conditions for elections have been met and that the Opposition is trying to persuade that the impossible is possible, just to postpone the elections” – Alfa, January 9th). Telma, Alsat M (in Macedonian and Albanian), MTV2, and 24 Vesti approached the topic neutrally, by providing contrasting views and expert opinions (“The resignation of Gruevski reinvigorated the politics” – TV21 in Albanian, January 14th; “Last-minute deal – competence or mentality?” – Telma, January 9th). On the topic, Alsat M and TV21 broadcasted in the news in Macedonian and Albanian language reportage from Pustec, on the voters pointed out by the Opposition as disputable and abused by the Government in the previous elections.

The following week (January 16th - 20th), three times more reports (361) were broadcasted on the early elections and the topic directly related to it – the dissolution of Assembly and the formation of the new government. Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and MTV1 reported favourably towards the positions of VMRO-DPMNE, in the sense that the elections must take place without a delay on the 24th of April, and strongly and even vulgarly attacked the arguments of SDSM and other actors that there will be not enough time to update the electoral register and to regulate the media, and thereby create conditions for holding fair, democratic and credible elections. It is less pronounced in the case of MTV1 (“This country will not find its way through the political maze unless they meet the recommendations of the June–July agreement in which all leaders signed to elections on April 24th”), but more aggressive in the case of the other broadcasters (Sitel: “Zaev fears the punishment of the citizens – not just eluding the elections, but directly violating the electoral code”, Alfa: “People are mockery Zaev for his election phobia on the social networks”, Kanal 5: “In panic, the Opposition avoids facing the people”). The four television broadcasters fully broadcasted the statement of the leader of GROM Stevco Jakimovski, in which he attacks the Opposition Leader in an offensive tone and with elements of hate speech: “After everything, the whole nation is antsy and is waiting for what the guy from Murtino will say, who is 30% human, 30% pardoned criminal and 30% bribery suspect, and the remaining part is unknown to him himself”. Part of the remaining television broadcasters aired other parts of the statement with Jakimovski calling for elections on the 24th of April, but none of the remaining broadcasted this part. The other broadcasters covered the intensive political events neutrally and occasionally critically of the actions of the ruling coalition between VMRO-DPMNE and DUI (Alsat M: “Macedonia is perhaps the only country worldwide where the Assembly works and adopts laws after its dissolution”).

In the fourth week (January 23rd to 29th), this remained the main topic in the news, but with lower intensity than in the previous week (145 reports). The reporting angle of the pro-government media Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and the Public Service Broadcaster MTV1 remains unchanged in terms of the strong support for the positions of the Government (and VMRO-DPMNE) on the scheduling of the

elections for April 24th. Unlike last week's monitoring, the vocabulary in the reports on the topic of Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa increased momentum for strong favourable attitude towards the ruling VMRO-DPMNE and hostile attitude towards SDSM (Alfa, January 23rd: "SDSM will stop at nothing to score cheap political points. Analysts remind: it is not the first time the Social Democrats make unwise moves and damage the international reputation of Macedonia", Sitel, January 23rd "While running for mayor, Zaev claimed that the electoral register can be updated in two week, yet now he thinks that three months are not enough."). The favoritism of MTV 1 is less severe and only the statements of the international officials that are in line with the positions of the Government are broadcasted (January 26th, "Kelam: The elections are a good signal for Europe", Brasseur: Boycott is not a solution"). The other monitored media approached the topic impartially, by informatively broadcasting the statements of the political actors and international representatives (MTV2, Alsat), or critically approached the issue, with expert analysis (Telma, 24 Vesti, TV21).

(2) Projects and accomplishments of the ruling party

The projects and accomplishments of VMRO-DPMNE as a party in power are a topic that was predominant throughout the entire period of observation (280), because all four pro-government television stations (MTV 1, Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa) presented everyday and with strong intensity 'a maximally positive' image about the work of the government, transforming the function of journalism from critical informing into bare political propaganda. The other television stations did not report at all or reported very little about these pseudo-events constructed by the government.

In the last week of December (December 19 – 24) the Government project 'Buy a house – for young people' was promoted. All stories (19 in total) were aired on televisions MTV 1, Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa, and none were aired on the other televisions. All of them highlighted a positive and favourizing stand towards the government, and the stories were more promotional than informative. On Kanal 5 and Alfa statements were observed from the same speakers on this topic (Robert Hot, representative of the Chambers of Commerce Alliance), even the same citizens were asked for opinions in the project information office in the Ministry of Finance.

In the week from the 7th to the 15th of January as many as 135 stories were published concerning governmental projects and investments, most of them by the commercial televisions that are close to the government. Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and MTV 1 published these propaganda stories with a strong commentary tone, both in the headlines and in the reports, like for instance 'A historic day for Veles' (Sitel and Kanal 5, January 12th) or 'delivered as promised' with old statements from party rallies from Gruevski ('Construction began on the new factory of Alkonplast from Germany', Sitel and Kanal 5, January 14th), where emphasis was placed on the ceremony and the addresses from political entities, instead of the basic information. With other media, such promotional events were covered without euphoria, or with a critical stand from time to time ('This investment of the Government with the people's money, say some of the businessmen from the catering-tourist center, is uneconomical' – 24 Vesti from January 14th). To a smaller extent this was reported by 24 vesti, TV 21 and MTV 2. Telma showed only one such story, and Alsat M in Macedonian and in Albanian language did not show any.

On Sunday, January 16 – 22, the promotion of the projects of the Government or of other subjects managed by staff from VMRO-DPMNE was done exclusively by the four pro-government televisions MTV 1, Sitel, Alfa and Kanal 5, with 61 stories total. In that, these stories not only had a strong favourizing tone towards the Government and its high officials, but they also had more marketing than journalistic elements (Alfa: 'Money for construction, a plot; the only thing that is left is the blueprint for the house. The state has a solution for that too – readymade and detailed construction plans are offered free of charge by the Ministry of Transport and Communications, which helps save on architects'). The sums are strongly emphasized, so it can be pointed out how much the Government helps the people (MTV1: 'Innovations fund: Over 2.6 million euro help for innovative projects'), or more numbers were used in order to enhance the effect (Sitel: 'An investment cycle of 150 million euro in infrastructure and 100 million euro in equipment in healthcare. This sector will receive investments in 2016 as well'). The pseudo-events that refer to these topics got prime slots (Kanal 5: "The project 'Buy a house – for young people' got the

president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski and the competent Ministers and Mayors at the same table”).

In that same week, a topic related to the promotion of government projects were *the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski* (24 stories). Almost all stories were aired on Kanal 5, Alfa, MTV1 and Sitel. After Gruevski resigned from the position of Prime Minister, pro-government media have completely directed their focus on him, now naming him as the ‘leader of VMRO-DPMNE’. His presence at public events was monitored, like for example the celebration of the holiday Vodici, (MTV1: ‘Dejan Momirovski was most fortunate at Vodici, he got a laptop from VMRO-DPMNE), at pseudo-events organized by state authorities where he was a guest, or at party tribunes (Sitel: ‘The youth’s future remains in the focus of the government headed by VMRO-DPMNE’, Alfa: ‘Gruevski said in front of the Union of Young Forces of VMRO-DPMNE that the biggest obligation is working for the good of the people’). The strong favourizing tone continued with the same intensity even after he stepped down from the position of Prime Minister, although previously one of the explanations of the televisions (of the editor of Kanal 5 in a recent interview with Zoran Zaev), was that they follow him because he was Prime Minister of the country. Even the stories where gratitude was expressed continued to air, and they were now no longer directed towards an abstract subject such as the Government, rather directly to Nikola Gruevski (Kanal 5: ‘The students welcomed the measures promoted by the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski’). The four televisions did not raise the question why the former Prime Minister is attending the events at all, and to what capacity. The other televisions did not follow Gruevski’s activities, except for 24 Vesti who raised the question in one of their stories as to what is his current role in society and in political events (24 Vesti: ‘Gruevski is announcing projects, it is unclear whether as a Prime Minister or as president of the party.’)

And in the week from the 23rd to the 29th of January the stories concerning the government projects took a major part of the news in the larger part of monitored televisions, with a total of 65 stories. Most of them were published on Sitel (17), Alfa (14), Kanal 5 (7), MTV 1 and MTV 2 aired 10 each, all of them were promotional-advertising, where there was no critical information about the project, only a message that it is a result of the work of the government, and it was accompanied by extremely manipulative video material. With all of these televisions not only synchronized publishing of stories on the same topic was noticeable, but also almost identical titles in the captions and the headlines (January 23rd: ‘The municipalities are clearing the grounds from Buy a house – for young people’ – MTV 1, ‘The small municipalities will be revived. The benefits that the state offers for implementing the project Buy a house – for young people will allow for young people to stay in the places where they live’ – Sitel, ‘New benefits for the project Buy a house – for young people. The state will financially support the municipalities in the implementation of the project’ – Alfa). TV 21 in Macedonian and in Albanian language aired only one story (January 25th: ‘A debate for the new University ‘Damjan Gruev’ only in Macedonian and in English language’), and Alsat in Albanian had 7 stories, they took a neutrally critical stand in observing the moves of the Government mainly in the economic sphere (‘Free health zones: SDSM says that they are accessible only for the rich’ – January 29th, ‘The Government hasn’t got a project for the construction of 13 km of highway towards Kosovo’ – January 27th). TV 24 Vesti, Telma and Alsat did not cover this topic at all.

(3) Falsified IDs affair

This was the main topic that was in the focus of television news, only in December (December 19th to 24th) (118 stories total). After the media announced that the police and the public prosecution discovered a workshop for these documents, the story gradually grew into an affair against the opposition, with indications for connections between the suspects for falsifying and the opposition’s leading people. The four pro-government televisions promoted at the same time the standpoint of the party VMRO-DPMNE, they took over non-critically the news from each other or from other media, they used numerous anonymous sources, and unlike the other televisions, they avoided raising logical questions.

Sitel, Alfa and Kanal 5, and to a significantly smaller extent MTV 1, had an attacking and demonizing stand towards the opposition in their reporting on these topics, discovering links

between the falsifiers and the leading people of the opposition, the leader Zoran Zaev and the Secretary General (and Minister of Interior) Oliver Spasovski (MTV1, December 19th: ‘most of the media, referring to sources from the investigation linked Minister Oliver Spasovski personally to the suspects in the case’, Alfa, on December 21 published: ‘the investigation of the scandal with the suspected falsifiers of IDs close to the opposition reveals new scandalous details’: Kanal 5, December 23rd: ‘Zaev also associated with the suspects from the scandal’, Sitel, December 23rd: ‘this is only a part of the collaboration of SDSM and the criminal underground that is headed by their members and personal friends’). The case was also used for promoting the party VMRO-DPMNE (Alfa, December 21st: ‘the public is expecting an answer, because while VMRO-DPMNE addressed Spasovski everyday saying that he should clear up the affair with the IDs, he remained silent’; Sitel published on December 21st: ‘after this it became clear why VMRO-DPMNE appealed for this case to be cleared up, and SDSM said nothing and avoided direct answers’).

The other televisions conveyed all relevant information pertinent to the topic, however they did not make their own conclusions that are to be beneficial or harming for any political entity. They also took a criticizing stand towards the topic, pointing out some suspicious details (Alsat, on December 20th published: the public prosecution did not ask for any of the three suspects to be detained: 24 Vesti, December 21st: ‘why is there no detention for the alleged falsifiers’).

(4) The work of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office

The work of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office was a topic that occupied media attention in the last week of December and, then again, in the last week of January. And in both waves of reporting (94 stories in total) a different angle of reporting with different media could clearly be noticed when it came to this topic. The selection of some and the disregard of other aspects in the work of the public prosecution of pro-government media shows how ‘framing a topic’ is used for manipulating public opinion. In this case, with all three media it was even clearly visible that there is directed and synchronized ‘constructing of stories’ that do not correspond with the real events, with the end goal of instigating negative perceptions of the viewers about the work of the special prosecution and the opposition.

In the week of December (December 19th to 24th) a total of 25 stories were aired. Telma, Alsat M in Macedonian and 24 Vesti dealt with the conditions under which the prosecution is working, in the sense of who should be responsible for paying the prosecutors that are part of it. A law was adopted that initially stipulated that the Public Prosecutor Marko Zvrlevski was to decide about that, however later on an amendment was added to change that. Sitel, Alfa and Kanal 5, however, focused on the fact that the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev is not turning over the materials from the intercepted conversations that are in his possession to the prosecutor Katica Janeva, nor is she requesting them from him. They took an attacking stand towards the opposition and the prosecutor’s office, referring to it as ‘a structure of SDSM’. On Alfa and Kanal 5 identical collages were used from old statements from Zaev in which he announces that he will hand over the materials to her. And in this case there are indications of synchronized accusatory and negative reporting towards SDSM and towards the Special Public Prosecution, since all three televisions focused on an aspect that was not connected to daily events, and later on in the week it was linked to the affair about the fake IDs (through the information that with one of the suspects 70 000 conversations were found in a computer), and the current events were ignored, such as the enactment of the legal provisions that concern this prosecution office.

In the last week of January (January 23rd – 29th), the televisions’ focus (with 69 stories total) was the case with discharging two prosecutors from Katica Janeva’s team. Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa reported of an ‘alleged conspiracy’ between Janeva and Zaev and, referring to web portals (Alfa to Telegraf) or with no source at all (Sitel and Kanal 5) they gave deadlines for ‘when the master plan of the Special Prosecutor Katica Janeva and the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev was supposed to take place’. While MTV1 followed the events daily only in an informative fashion, 24 Vesti, TV21, Telma and Alsat M observed Janeva’s move neutrally and critically.

(5) Negotiations for regulating the media sphere

In the last week of January (January 23rd – 29th) the topic that came up was the negotiations for regulation of the media sphere (53 TV stories total), and once again there was visible polarization of the televisions in terms of the reporting angle: Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa reported from a strongly favourizing (or propagandist) position (Alfa and Sitel January 28th, with almost identical titles: ‘SDSM is trying to bargain, for nothing other than power over the media’, ‘SDSM is bargaining, the Electoral Code for control over the media’), while Sitel also published an editorial comment that contained at the same time strongly accusatory positions towards the proposals from the opposition and an emphasized favourizing one towards VMRO DPMNE (January 28th: the national televisions condemn the position of SDSM and the intermediary Van Heute). These two television published commentaries on this topic on the same day (January 28th) with literally identical journalistic sentences (‘how ironic is the position of SDSM that they will accept the model for revising the electoral registry if the other parties accept the censoring Law of Van Heute on the media’). The other televisions followed the topic neutrally, without any underlined opinions, through the statements of party representatives and representatives of associations of journalists.

(6) New University in Skopje ‘Mother Teresa’

In December (December 19th to 24th) the televisions reported with less intensity (34 stories) on the opening of a new University in Skopje, ‘Mother Teresa’. MTV 1, Sitel, Alfa and Kanal 5 paid less attention, announcing it as a new big project of the Government, the televisions Telma and 24 Vesti just conveyed neutrally the information about it, while the topic was more addressed in the televisions in Albanian language (on MTV 2 it even prevailed over the affair with the IDs, and then came Alsat and TV 21, also in their news in Macedonian language). With MTV 2 and TV 21 a favourizing stand can be noticed towards the Government partner in power – DUI. On MTV 2 it was shown as a ‘large national project’, and in TV 21 on December 23rd a promotional interview was broadcast for it with the Minister of Education Abdilakjimi Ademi (DUI). Alsat M reported in balance and critically, also conveying experts’ opinions that it is good that a new university is being opened, however that quality is also very important, and not just quantity in teaching (December 21st). This leads to the conclusion that in the media reports there is still an ethnic approach, i.e. the televisions in Albanian report more on issues that concern Albanians, as compared to ones in Macedonian language.

IV. ANALYSIS OF TV PROGRAMMES BY TV STATION

1. Macedonian Television – First Channel

(1) **First week (19 – 23 December 2015)**

In the monitoring period, MTV 1 broadcasted 62 reports that relate to the political developments. In the news, it was mostly reported on (1) The scandal over the forged ID cards (10) and (2) The project “House for young people” (4). The remaining topics in the focus of the Public Service Broadcaster were the investment projects of the Government in different areas. Most of the reporting (13 reports) on these topics favours VMRO - DPMNE, whereas the demonising attitude towards SDSM exists in a small number of reports (4) and is low in intensity.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: In the period between 19th and 24th of December, in 17 reports, the journalist reported on the subject with unfounded criticism. The positive attitude of the journalist is present in the promotional–propaganda reports in favour of the Government: “Project, a chance for the young people” (December 19th), “Buy a House for Young People: Strong support for the young people (December 20th), “New action: We fight for each job” (December 22nd), “Fertility: After New Year, the young David will get a sister” (December 22nd).

Using sources: Most of the reports (28) broadcasted on MTV 1 have only one source, 13 have two sources, most whereof represent the same position (11 reports), whereas only 2 reports contain conflicting views. Only a small number of reports have three (or more) sources (10 reports), whereof equal number contain identical and divergent opinions (5 reports respectively). One or identical sources are usually government institutions and senior government officials, ranging from the President, the Prime Minister, ministers, mayors to experts who favour government policies: “Buy a house for young people: Strong support for the young people” (December 20th), “The new university will offer new opportunities” (December 21st) or “Buy a house for young people: Through a range of benefits to a home” (December 22nd). The reference to “most”, “part” or “some media outlets” without specifically specifying the sources is a manipulative approach in the use of sources: “Most media, citing sources from the investigation have linked the Minister Oliver Spasovski to the suspects in the case” (December 19th), and “Some media publish photographs of the suspects showing that in addition to the Interior Minister, Oliver Spasovski, they also met and communicated with the leader of the Social Democrats, Zoran Zaev (December 22nd).

Direct addresses: The leaders of both major political parties had direct addresses, however the number of appearances and the approach show an evident imbalance in favour of VMRO-DPMNE. In the six- day period, Gruevski had 7 addresses broadcasted, whereas Zaev had 3.

Audio-visual presentation: In the analyzed period, 23 reports broadcasted in the news contained malicious audio-visual manipulation. One of the tools is disguising a promotion of a political party (VMRO-DPMNE) as an event of educational character (“Youth training for innovation in business and business tools” – December 19th), at the same time, the symbols of the political party are highlighted in the foreground. Another type of use of visual presentation for propaganda purposes is when almost every shot contains a government official (“Higher salaries in the police” – December 21st, “Orphanage” October 11th, “Christmas gifts for children” – December 21st), who is favoured (the Prime Minister or Deputy Minister), although the report covers general government activity. In one report (“Case forged ID cards: the investigation will engage partner agencies” from December 21st), a malicious approach is observed in the presentation of the statements of the leaders of the two rival parties, VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, with positive attitude towards Gruevski by rebroadcasting his old and extensive statement, as opposed to the statement of Zaev, which consists of a sentence.

Instances:

- (December 19th, headlines) “‘Buy a house, buy an apartment’ as well as ‘Buy a house for young people’ will be the main incentives of the construction industry”.
- (December 19th, journalist’s opinion) “According to the officials, the first project reduced the price of the apartments and the interest rates of the loans. The new project is expected to decrease the house price, thereby making them affordable to the citizens”
- (December 22nd, journalist’s opinion) “Spasovski failed to answer specifically whether he is familiar with the suspects in the case? The Deputy Minister Chavkov urged disclosure of the entire network”
- (December 23rd, journalist’s opinion) “Many young people and adults came to the newly opened office in the Ministry of Finance to get information on the project “Buy a House for Young People”

(2) Second week (8 – 15 January 2016)

MTV 1 broadcasted 95 reports pertaining to the political developments. The main focus was on: the government projects and investments (32 reports), the visit of the Prime Minister to the United States (5 reports), the political crisis and the elections (4 reports) and the visit of the MEPs and the European Commissioner Hahn (4 reports). Most of the reports (44) are observed to have a favourable attitude towards the Government and the ruling party, and, one report, a notably demonising attitude towards an official of the Opposition (“Remenski made an illegal change and caused chaos” – response from the Cabinet of Mr. Spasov, January 13th).

Commentaries and opinions in the news: Due to the predominance of the promotional and proapagandic reports, the news in Macedonian language of the Public Service Broadcaster resemble a campaign advertising space of the Government or the ruling VMRO-DPMNE: through the reports on the success in the economic growth (January 8th), the Government and the foreign investments (“The patients who are waiting for an operation will no longer have to travel abroad” and “Over a million euro to start a hundred new companies in the agribusiness”, January 8th) as well as promoting the role of the government officials (“Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski, during his visit in the Ohrid region, had an insight into the operation,” January 9th, and the profile of the proposed transitional Prime Minister, Emil Dimitriev, from January 15th).

During the monitoring period, the Opposition was only mentioned in a small number of reports and mainly through statements of its officials in the Government or the members of Parliament (Assembly: Shilegov: Gruevski should publicly testify before the Inquiry Commission”, from January 13th, “Duplicate forms for driving licenses have been discovered”, from January 14th).

Using sources: The reports in the news on MTV1 predominantly use one source (40 reports). 12 reports use two sources and 12 reports use three or more sources defending the same position. Two, three or more sources with contrasting views have been observed in 10 reports.

There is also a case of manipulation with the sources (“Analysis: Fast and expected meeting between Biden and Gruevski” from January 12th), in which an expert close to the Government is used in the propaganda-positive coverage of the visit of the Prime Minister to the United States. Another example is the use of unnamed sources in apologetic defense of the politics of the Government (“There is a certain increase in the birth rate in Macedonia. It is fashionable to have a third child in the municipality of Aerodrom” from January 10th), in which unnamed sources from the Balkans praise the government project aimed at increasing the birth rate.

Direct addresses: 15 direct addresses of the political leaders were broadcasted during the analysed period. MTV1 keeps allocating the largest news space to the Prime Minister and Leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski (11), whereas the Leader of DUI, Ahmeti, has two addresses, and the Leaders of SDSM, Zaev and DPA, Taci, have one.

Audiovisual Presentation: 26 reports were observed to include manipulative video or audio content. The video manipulation involves usage of materials that point to the dominance of the ruling VMRO-DPMNE over the Opposition (“VMRO-DPMNE: SDSM is trying to find an alibi for an electoral defeat”, from January 8th), full coverage of the announcement of VMRO-DPMNE accompanied by a big image of the party logo, yet the mention of the Opposition is accompanied by an image of the headquarters of SDSM.

Video manipulation has been mostly observed in the reports that promote the government projects wherein the government officials of VMRO-DPMNE occupy the foreground instead of the project being promoted (“Culture: Promotion of new capital projects”, “Healthcare: Opening of a transplantation center”, from January 8th and “Germans are investing 15 million euro in Bunardzik” from January 13th, which underlines the Facebook status of PM Gruevski announcing an investment boom). In another case, “Spasov filed a complaint against Remenski”, from January 12th, the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, Remenski (from the Opposition) is just mentioned by the journalist, whereas Deputy Spasov (official from VMRO-DPMNE) has a statement – address.

Instances:

- (January 8th, journalist’s opinion) “The country has a dynamics twice bigger than the average of the region of Europe and Central Asia”
- (January 8th, journalist’s opinion) “The patients who are waiting for an operation will no longer have to travel abroad”
- (January 8th, headlines) “Exports will continue to grow in 2016. It is a result of the increased economic growth of the companies in the industrial zones”

- (January 15th, journalist's opinion) "Expert will say that he is the right solution for the Prime Minister's seat."

(3) **Third week (16 – 22 January 2016)**

MTV 1 broadcasted a total of 68 reports pertaining to the political developments during the monitoring period from the 16th until the 22nd of January. The main focus was on: the elections (26 reports), along with the government projects (15 reports), with the resignation of the Government and the new Prime Minister (4 reports) and the situation with the refugees (2 reports).

Most of the reports (26) are observed to have a favourable attitude towards the Government and the ruling party. Only one report in a negative tone criticises the politics of the Opposition regarding the request for postponement of the elections date (January 16th, "After the last negotiations Przino: Gruevski: Zaev fears defeat by the people").

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The central news on MTV1 during the analyzed period resembles campaign space for government policies on the current political and economic issues. The Opposition gets space through few reports covering the work of the ministers and deputy minister for agriculture assigned under the Przino Agreement (January 16th, "Migrants: The Minister visited the transit center", "MOI: Macedonia and Serbia intensify the cooperation", "Agriculture: Nikolovski accuses of nepotism and selectivity").

Using sources: The reports in the MTV1 news predominantly use one source (30 reports). 7 reports use three or more sources and 6 reports use two sources, but with the same position. The views of the interlocutors are contrasting in 9 reports.

Direct addresses: A total of 8 direct addresses of political leaders were broadcasted during the analyzed period. MTV1 keeps allocating the largest news space to the Prime Minister and Leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Gruevski, (8 addresses), whereas one to the Leader of GROM, Stevco Jakimovski, and one to LDP, Goran Milevski.

Audiovisual Presentation: 19 reports were observed to contain manipulative elements. The most common are the presentation of party projects as government projects (platform of VMRO-DPMNE "Stavrevski: Politicians to solve the problems" from January 21th, Project: Buy a house for young people: "Better cooperation for urgent implementation of the project" from January 21th) or the promotion of the success of the government projects through selected statements (January 21th, "The recess is over, the second semester started", in which the students and the principles are presented in a positive audiovisual light and praise the state external examination, without mentioning that this very project caused dissatisfaction and protests).

Instances:

- (January 16th, statement) "Innovation Fund: Over 2.6 million Euros for assistance for innovative projects", a statement by Jasmina Popovska
- (January 16th, journalist's opinion) This country will not find its way through the political maze unless they meet the recommendations of the June–July agreement in which the all leaders signed to elections on the 24th of April
- (January 19th, statement) Dejan Momirovski, the happiest man on Epiphany (laptop from VMRO-DPMNE)
- (January 20th, headline) "The state assistance amounts to 3,500 Euros. 207 million will open more than 900 small businesses and create thousands of jobs"
- (January 21th, headline) The ruling party considers that young people should be assisted with subsidies for utilities

- (January 21th, headline) “The Ministry of Education announced that they will support projects for laundry machines and driers in the dorms, and for opening reading rooms (projects announced by VMRO-DPMNE)”

(4) Fourth week (23 – 29 January 2016)

MTV 1 broadcasted a total of 71 reports pertaining to the political developments during the monitoring period from the 23rd until the 29th of January. The main focus was on: the elections (13 reports), the government projects (10 reports), the media negotiations (3 reports) and the work of the Special Public Prosecution (3 reports). Most of the reports (24) are observed to have a favourable attitude towards the Government and the ruling party. Only one report concerning the tensions between the Minister (VMRO-DPMNE) and the Additional Deputy Minister (SDSM) of the Ministry of Agriculture was negative in tone (January 29th, “The Ministry of Agriculture: Accusations of conflict of interest”), which was more of a criticism than demonisation.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: Due to the broadcasting of the European Handball Championship, the central news on MTV1 during the analyzed period was abridged and the reports were short, thus resembling a bulletin on the activities of the Government and VMRO-DPMNE. The Opposition appears in reports concerning the daily activities of the Ministry of Interior (January 27th, “MOI: Promotion of the Strategy for Police Development”), the meetings of the Leader of SDSM with the Chinese Ambassador (January 25th), the proposed measures against pollution (January 28th), Zaev’s press conference (January 29th) and in the reports on the case of the forged driving licenses revealed by the Minister Oliver Spasovski (23rd and 24th of January, “VMRO-DPMNE: The Technical Minister Spasovski nailed on a lie” and “Spasovski responded on the forged licenses”). Newscasts that contain critical positions (of international institutions) on the government policies (Reports of Freedom House and Transparency, from January 27th) were observed over the analysed period.

Using sources: In this period as well, the reports of MTV1 mostly use one source (33 reports). 13 reports used three or more positions, but they are one-sided, and 8 reports use two sources, but again with the same position. The views of the interlocutors are contrasting in 5 reports. One report has no reference to a source of information, but it does not contain pronounced attitude towards any of the political entities.

Direct addresses: A small number of statements of the political leaders (4) were broadcasted over the analysed period. The numbers show a balanced approach, with two broadcasted addresses of the Leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, and two of the Leader of SDSM, Zoran Zaev.

Audiovisual presentation: Twenty (20) of the total number of newscasts contain elements of audio or visual manipulation. The promotional reports already identified in the previous analyses (January 23rd, “Projects: Municipalities pave the way for ‘Buy a house for young people’”, January 27th, “1,500 job openings in Strumica”, January 25th, “Healthcare: New PET Center, the first patients in 9 months”) appear again with more emphasis on who attended the promotion, instead of the occasion itself. Another type of manipulation in the reports of MTV1 is the one-sided sources promoting a particular project (“The external examination without serious objections” from January 29th, containing only a statement by the Deputy Minister of VMRO DPMNE, Spiro Ristovski, although there have been reports of problems in the process) and “Committee discussion on the university Damjan Gruev” (January 25th) in which the “discussion” comes down to two statements of the Defense Minister, Jolevski, and the Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Spiro Ristovski. The information in the caption of the report from January 29th is manipulative as well “VMRO-DPMNE: There will be fair and democratic elections”, an alleged statement of MP from VMRO-DPMNE Ilija Dimovski, which is not contained within report in this form. A specific example of manipulative presentation (video and audio) is the report from January 24th, “Gruevski: On April 24th, the people will administer the punishment”, which lasts 3 minutes and 40 seconds and consists solely of quotes from Gruevski’s speech to the Union of Women of VMRO-DPMNE).

Instances:

- (January 25th, preview): “Plan for a construction of a new industrial zones – Paving the way for new plants which will create new jobs”

- (January 25th, journalist) “Investment: New German company will invest in Macedonia”, citing an announcement from the Facebook profile of Gruevski
- (January 25th, journalist) “Wages in the zones close to the average in the field”
- (January 27th, journalist): “The state subsidies for cheap airlines stirred up the tourism and the economy”
- (January 29th, journalist): “Industrial production keeps growing at double-digit rates”

2. Macedonian Television – Second Channel

(1) First week (19 – 23 December 2015)

A total of 39 reports were broadcasted from 19th until 24th of December pertaining to political developments, issues and actors. The most dominant topic is the new university in Albanian language (6 reports), which is followed by the scandal over the ID cards (5 reports). An openly favourable tone towards DUI is evident.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The television broadcaster reported neutrally and critically on the scandal over the ID cards, but continued its positive reporting in favour of DUI, in even 14 reports. The new university in Albanian language “Mother Teresa” is described as “a large national project” of DUI, and the vote for the University on the Parliamentary Committee was depicted as a great victory of DUI over DPA (“DUI presented the Opposition with fait accompli”). There is a report for increasing the representation of Albanians in the judiciary with a promotional speech of the Minister of Justice, Adnan Jashari. The television broadcaster even covers the mutual visits of the Ministers of DUI, this time the Minister of Economy, Bekim Neziri, visited the Minister of Justice, Jashari, as well as the meetings of the Deputy Prime Minister, Fatmir Besimi, in the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Information Society and Administration. The activities of the political party are also covered, such as putting in use two roads in Aracinovo, and one debate at the department of agriculture of DUI. The Mayor Nevzat Bejta announces the extension of the deadline for legalization of illegal buildings in Gostivar (extended at state level).

Using sources: The reports that have one source or several sources representing the same position are predominant.

Direct addresses: The leader of SDSM, Zoran Zaev, has direct addresses for the case “Puc”, and the scandal with the illegal ID cards. Gruevski had an address for the university “Mother Teresa”. Zoran Zaev has two direct addresses, whereas Nikola Gruevski has one. There is also a broadcasted statement of the leader of DUI, Ali Ahmeti.

Audio-visual presentation: A manipulative audiovisual presentation is observed in the report “Planted seedlings in Chair” (December 21th) presenting the mayors of Skopje and Cair, Koce Trajanovski and Izet Mexhiti, respectively, with shovels in their hands while planting trees. A manipulative presentation is the broadcasting of the video of the Minister of Education and Science, Abdilaqim Ademi, with DUI MPs during the voting on the new University on the Parliamentary Committee.

(2) Second week (8 – 15 January 2016)

A total of 52 reports were broadcasted in the news on MTV2 during the past 8-day monitoring period. The postponement of the elections and the crisis (16 reports), the visit of the MEPs and Hahn (5 reports) and the scandal with the false ID cards and driving licenses (7 reports) were the main topics covered in the news in Albanian language on MTV2. The television broadcaster reported mainly in a neutral tone.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The topic of the postponement of the elections was explored in the news through “for” and “against” arguments of the Macedonian political parties (“Zaev does not exclude the

possibility of postponing the elections” (January 9th), “VMRO: The postponement of the elections puts the Przino agreement at risk”) and the Albanian political parties (“Ahmeti: The agreement should be implemented properly, there are just several small elements remaining, such as the update of the electoral register” (January 11th), “Taci: The time for updating the electoral register expires”). A report from January 13th deals with the views of the analysts who consider that the elections should be postponed due to the lack of optimum conditions. In another report, however, (January 14th) the analysts are against the postponement and a survey of citizens against the postponement of the elections is presented.

The resignation of PM Gruevski and the events surrounding it, such as the expectation and the announcement of the resignation, were covered as “The last day for resignation of PM Gruevski (January 14th), “The resignation of PM Gruevski is a signal for holding the elections”, and “Gruevski submitted his resignation to the Assembly” (January 15th).

Though in a smaller number, some reports were observed to have a positive and favourable attitude towards the activities of the officials of DUI (announcement for construction of small hydropower plants by an Italian company, the pollution and decentralisation of the Polog region), as well as positive tone of coverage of the visits of Ahmeti to Athens and of PM Gruevski to the United States.

Using sources: Regarding the number and the position of the sources used in the reports, 17 reports use only one source, whereas other 17 reports use several sources that defend a single position.

Direct addresses: 11 statements were broadcasted, whereof, Gruevski, Ahmeti and Zaev delivered 3 addresses each, and the DPA Leader, Taci, delivered two.

Audiovisual Presentation: Audiovisual manipulation was not identified.

(3) Third week (16 – 22 January 2016)

In the monitored period, the television broadcasted 47 reports pertaining to the political entities. The main focus was on: the scheduling of early parliamentary elections (19 reports), the activities of DUI (7 reports), and the appointment of the new Government (4 report).

Commentaries and opinions in the news:

The television broadcaster neutrally and fully covered the war of words over the date of the elections and the dissolution of the Assembly (January 16th: “The talks failed, the political crisis in the country deepens”), (January 17th: “The war of words over the date of elections continues”), (January 18th: “VMRO-DPMNE and DUI decide on election on the 24th of April, and on dissolution of the Assembly”). Attention is given to the statements of the foreign representatives (“Hahn insists SDSM to participate in the elections”).

The television broadcaster continues with positive report favourable towards the activities of DUI. The Minister of Education and Science, Abdilaqim Ademi, says “invest in all Albanian municipalities” (January 21th), State Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Behixhudin Shehapi, announces more funds for the Albanian culture in 2016 etc. Two statements by Ali Ahmeti were broadcasted at the ceremony of conferral of an honorary citizen of Chair and on the anniversary of the Albanian patriot (January 17th: “Ali Ahmeti: The enemies of the Albanians are working, therefore, every anniversary of Yusuf should remind us of the bad plans on our old enemies”).

Using sources: The television broadcaster covers all parties involved in the events, the political parties are represented in accordance with the role they had in the political developments. 17 reports have one source, which are mostly messages of embassies or the parties, and 12 reports have two or more sources, but with identical position.

Direct addresses: The television broadcasted direct addresses of the leaders of the main negotiating parties and the leaders of the smaller political parties. The Leader of DUI, Ali Ahmeti had 5 direct addresses, 3

whereof for the date of the elections and the political crisis, and 2 for the festivities dedicated to the Albanian people. Gruevski and Zaev have 3 statements each, for the date of the elections and the political crisis.

Audiovisual Presentation: Manipulative audiovisual presentation was not detected.

(4) Fourth week (23 – 29 January 2016)

MTV 2 broadcasted 58 reports pertaining to the political developments during the monitoring period. The main focus was on: the elections (15 reports), tensions between the officials of VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM in the Government (6 reports), the media negotiations (5 reports), the SPP (4 reports), the speech of the Leader of VMRO - DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, to the Union of Women (4 reports) and the activities of officials of DUI (6 reports). A positive approach to reporting is evident in the reports on the activities of the ruling party DUI.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The reporting in the news in Albanian on MTV2 is neutral on all subjects, except on the government projects. The war of words about the election date is conveyed through the views of all political entities (“SDSM did not give up mopping up” from January 24th, “Zaev demands SEC to speak out on the duration of the update of the electoral list” from January 25th, “Hahn: the important thing is the quality of the elections and not who is participating” from January 26th). As well as SDSM’s response that “There are no quality elections without equal opportunities”. The same approach is applied in the coverage of Gruevski’s speech from January 24th, which broadcasted parts of speech as well as reactions. Bias reporting was observed in the reports favourable towards the activities of DUI, such as the “investments in all Albanian municipalities” (January 23rd), “90% of the services of the Health Insurance Fund are electronic” (January 27th) and “The economic zone in Tetovo is not lacking investments” (January 28th), or through statements of the Leader Ali Ahmeti at the ceremony of the conferral of the honorary citizen of Chair and on the anniversary of the Albanian patriot (January 27th: “Ali Ahmeti: The enemies of the Albanians are busy, therefore, every anniversary of Yusuf should remind us of the evil plans on our old enemies”). A positive tone is observed in the reports concerning the building of a monument of an Albanian hero in Saraj (January 23rd), the memory of the birthday of Arben Xhaferi and criticism of DPA for the announcement of the new university “Dame Gruev” in Skopje (“DPA: Nationalistic doctrines are not a way to EU” from January 27th).

Use of resources: 21 reports use only one source of information, whereas 14 use two or more sources, but with the same position.

Direct addresses: MTV 2 broadcasted 5 addresses of the four leaders of the major parties over the analysed period. The Leader of SDSM Zaev has the highest number or 2, while Gruevski, Ahmeti and Taci are represented with one statement each.

Audiovisual Presentation: Manipulative audiovisual presentation was not detected.

3. Sitel

(1) First week (19 – 23 December 2015)

In the analysed period, Sitel broadcasted 62 reports on current political topics. In most of the reports cover the (1) scandal with the forged ID cards (12 reports), which is followed by (2) the handing over of the materials from the interception of communications to the Special Public Prosecutor (5 reports) and (3) the governmental project “House for the young people” (5 reports). Almost all reports of this television broadcaster contain an opinion of the reporter (or the editor). The favouring attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE (and Government) is observed in 19 reports, while in 28 reports there is a negative attitude towards SDSM (the Opposition), with a fierce intensity especially in relation to the first two topics.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The hybrid forms of reporting such as analyses/commentaries and headlines/commentaries are often used by the journalists and editors of this television broadcaster. 10 analysis and 5 headlines broadcasted in this period contained a random opinion of the journalist without any supporting evidence and offensive rhetoric towards the demonised party (“Is there a direct link, motive and interest between SDSM and the criminals caught in the counterfeiting factory – Yes” December 23rd; “This is just the fragment of the cooperation between SDSM and the criminal underworld lead by their members and personal friends” – December 23rd) and praise for the favoured party (It becomes clear why VMRO-DPMNE every day invited SDSM to clarify the case, whereas SDSM remained silent and evaded questions” December 22st; “Enabling equal opportunities for the children without parents is in the focus of the Government” - December 21st).

Using sources: There is only one source of the information in 27 reports broadcasted on this television, and that is the state institutions and the governmental officials and MPs. In 8 reports the topic is processed by citing 2 sources, but with the identical opinion, whereas the two opinions are opposed in 4 reports. When 3 or more sources are cited, then they (5 reports) represent the same position. The information is based on “Sitel’s sources” or “sources of the investigation” in 4 reports, which makes the content itself manipulative (December 19th, “One of the detainees, part of the establishment of SDSM”, December 20th, “Factory for scandals was behind the false ID cards”, December 21st, “Spasovski communicated with the suspects for forging ID cards and other documents”), while 1 report (December 24th, “Two legal options available to Katica Janeva”) is without any source. The broadcasting of the old statements of the leader of SDSM in a negative context is another type of manipulation (December 19th, “Zaev breaks the law and his word - he is not submitting the thousands of conversations to Janeva”, December 20th, “Gruevski: All the conditions for work will be provided to Janeva”, December 22nd, “Mega scandal: Much of Zaev’s illegally intercepted materials found in the “Factory of scandals”).

Direct addresses: Zaev had the highest number of addresses broadcasted on Stile (11), followed by Gruevski with 9 addresses and one address of the leader of GROM. However, most of the statements of Zaev were old, whereas Gruevski had an extensive interview (December 24th).

Audio-visual manipulation: Malicious presentation is observed in 14 reports. In some reports, this is done by inserting video recording in context of demonising SDSM (December 19th, “A man from SDSM is behind the forged ID cards that were revealed by Focus”, December 21st, “Spasovski communicated with the suspects for forging ID cards and other documents”). The visual presentation of the reports that favours the Government contains video material of mass gatherings of citizens (December 19th, “The citizens are satisfied by the mega project of the Government”, December 22nd, “Never easier to own a home”).

Instances:

- (December 19th, journalist’s opinion) “And while the leader of SDSM, Zoran Zaev, lies to the public, his Minister Oliver Spasovski fails to implement the law that obliges him to provide the illegal recordings to the Special Prosecutor’s Office through the police”.
- (December 20th, journalist’s opinion) “SDSM was aiming to destroy the ratings of the people of the ruling parties – already tested scheme of the establishment of SDSM”.
- (December 21st, journalist’s opinion) “According to the employees in MOI, who saw Spasovski that evening, he seemed very upset when he learned of the investigation and the raid in the forgery factory of SDSM”.
- (December 22nd, journalist’s opinion) “According to unofficial information, recently, Zaev personally went to Serbia, and also the POC Director, Sasha Bogdanovikj, had contact with Bozhinovski”. (December 22nd, journalist’s opinion) “The motive for this project comes after the fruitfulness of the previous measures for employment that contributed towards the fall of the unemployment rate in the third quarter to 25%”.
- (December 22nd, journalist’s opinion) “Through a series of projects the Government creates conditions for the young people to easily buy their own home”.
- (December 23rd, journalist’s opinion) “During the arrest, the criminals first called Zoran Zaev and asked for protection and afterwards Zoran Zaev asked Oliver Spasovski, his Minister for Interior,

for an explanation”.

- (December 22nd, journalist’s opinion) “Macedonia sees the new scandal surrounding crime, corruption and racketeering wherein the head people of SDSM are involved, especially their president Zoran Zaev. And again, for the countless time, Zoran Zaev is part of organized crime”.
- (December 24th, cue for an interview with Gruevski) “Let us start this interview with that good news – an increase in the salaries of the medical and nursery staff was announced today”.

(2) Second week (8 – 15 January 2016)

In the monitoring period, Sitel broadcasted 84 reports pertaining to the current political events. The television broadcaster allocated the largest news space to reports on: the government projects and investments (35 reports), the political crisis and elections (8 reports), the visit of the MEPs and the European Commissioner Hahn (6 reports), the visit of PM Gruevski to the United States (5 reports) and (5) the taking over of the intercepted materials by the Special Public Prosecutor (3 reports). All broadcasted reports were observed to contain a pronounced apologetic propaganda for the Government, and especially for the ruling party, VMRO-DPMNE (41 reports), whereas 18 articles had extremely negative, and in some cases offensive attitude towards the Opposition.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The daily promotional reports praising the politics of the Government resemble advertising reports during election campaign: “Indian investor buys Porcelanka. A historic day for Veles” (January 12th), “Akomplast is one of the many investments that resulted from the reforms in the business climate and the promotion of Macedonia as a business destination” (January 14th). Favourable tone is further manifested by demonstrating the support that the politics of the Government “enjoys” at home (“The people from Ohrid pleased to receive a modern healthcare institution through the construction of the hospital St. Erasmus” – January 13th, “Veles residents are satisfied with the re-opening of Porcelanka” – January 13th) and abroad (“The meeting Gruevski – Baiden is a statesmanlike step and encouragement for the Government” – January 12th).

The television broadcasted 6 analyses and 1 announcement with a pronounced commentative attitude of the journalist. In addition to the negative tone, these reports call the Opposition “a clan” and accuse the Opposition of “violent scenarios” and “arbitrariness” (“The Government pays for the Zaev clan”, January 8th, “In despair, SDSM prepares violent scenarios”, January 10th, “Remenski introduced a brutal partisanship and arbitrariness”, January 11th, “Janeva acts to the benefit of Zaev providing him the opportunity to blackmail citizens with the recordings”, January 15th).

Using sources: Mainly the reports have one source of information (35 reports), whereas 13 report use two sources, but with identical position. 11 reports cite more than two sources, but they are, except in one case, always concurring. Sitel broadcasted three reports which refer to the portal Kurir as a source (“Kurir: In despair, SDSM prepares violent scenarios” from January 10th), and reports without sources (“The Facebook profile of Beqiri revealed his friendships”, and “The Special Prosecutor remains silent concerning the materials received from the Leader of SDSM”, January 11th, “Greeks were furious because of the group Friends of Macedonia in the European Parliament”, January 15th). Promotional reports use anonymous citizens with a favourable position on a certain government project as sources (“As of today, you can apply for the project Buy a house for young people”, January 15th).

Direct addresses: A total of 19 direct addresses of political leaders were broadcasted in the Sitel news during the 8-day monitoring period. 16 thereof are statements (public addresses) of PM Gruevski, two of the Leader of SDSM, Zaev, and one of the Leader of DUI, Ahmeti, all pointing to the imbalance in the representation of the political entities. A report that particularly stands out is the report “Reconstruction and new equipment for the hospital in Ohrid” (January 9th), which contains up to 4 statements of PM Gruevski.

Audiovisual presentation: Most of the promotional reports contain manipulative presentation in which government officials occupy the foreground while opening factories, hospitals, promoting books, ribbon cutting ceremonies for investments. The manipulative presentation also appears in the form of framing old statements in a new manipulative context (“The scandal factory of SDSM acquired an international dimension”, January 9th, “The project Macedonia employed over 11,200 people”, January 11th, “Katica

Janeva did not make a record of the materials received from Zaev”, January 13th, “A third investment in four days. Akomplast laid the foundation stone in Prilep”, January 14th) or videos (“Kurir: In despair, SDSM prepares violent scenarios”, January 10th), by using footage of the riots during the protests on May 5th in order to show violence allegedly planned by SDSM.

Instances:

- (January 8th) SDSM’s elusion of the Inquiry Commission for the Scandal Factory means admitting involvement.
- (January 9th, journalist’s opinion) Sources of the investigation confirm that Beqiri was part of an international criminal network. They also add that he probably financed SDSM through this criminal network.
- (January 11th, journalist’s opinion) The Facebook profile of the suspect in the case Scandal Factory, Zakir Beqiri, discloses his links with the party leadership of SDSM and people from the party assigned to the Special Public Prosecution
- (January 11th, journalist’s opinion) Although the project is not in the electoral program, the Prime Minister announced it in March, last year, at a platform in Bitola.
- (January 11th, journalist’s opinion) The dozens of announcements of SDSM that accuse “Kurir” are the reason for the raid and banditry in the newsroom of the web portal
- (January 14th, journalist’s opinion) Probably Janeva did not compile a Record in order to enable the Leader of SDSM to continue the political manipulation
- (January 15th, journalist’s opinion) Since 2010, the Government has invested 65 million euro to build a local road infrastructure in the country.

(3) Third week (16 – 22 January 2016)

Sitel broadcasted 68 reports on the current political events during the monitoring period. The main focus was on: the election (23 reports), the government projects and investments (18 reports) and the resignation of the government (2 reports). All broadcasted reports were observed to contain a pronounced apologetic propaganda for the Government, and especially for the ruling party, VMRO-DPMNE (23 reports), whereas 20 reports contain negative attitude towards the Opposition and representatives of other organisations whose views are not in line with those of the Government.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The propagandic positions on the activities of the Government and the ruling VMRO-DPMNE marked the central news on Sitel. The host/journalist presents personal commentaries in 13 headlines and analyses, which are extremely apologetic towards the Government (VMRO-DPMNE), and demonising towards the Opposition (SDSM). A characteristic of this monitoring period is that after the resignation of Gruevski from the Prime Minister positions, there is no distinction between the promotions he makes as leader of the party and prime minister (January 20th: “Future of youth remains the focus of the government led by VMRO-DPMNE”).

Using sources: Most of the reports use one source of information (25 reports), whereas 13 reports use two, but with identical positions. 18 reports cite more than two sources, but, except in 5 cases, all with the same position. Sitel broadcasted two reports which refer to the portal Kurir as a source (January 21st: “Zaev-mayor of Strumica, yet SDSM in the Opposition. You did not boycott the local elections, but you will the parliamentary?”, and January 22nd: “Aleksov from MOST with same positions as SDSM” and one report with the web portal Deneshen as a source (January 17th: “Another scandal in the ministryship of Remenski”. In 4 reports, the journalist gives an assessment not supported by any source (January 22nd: “The opposition in Serbia with the same excuses wants to boycott the parliamentary elections on no grounds”, January 20th: “The special public prosecutor is facing a dismissal procedure”).

Direct addresses: A total of 18 direct addresses of political leaders were broadcasted in the Sitel news. 10 thereof are statements of the Leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Gruevski, 4 of the Leader of SDSM, Zaev, two of Jakimovski, one of the Leader of PODEM, Jankulovski, and one of LDP, Milevski. The report from January 21st “What do young people think of the 5 new projects launched yesterday by the Leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski” contains four audio recordings of Gruevski.

Audiovisual Presentation: The news reports contain elements of audio and visual manipulation. The

established forms appear in this period as well: (1) using old statements (in this particular case, of Gruevski) in a current context (“The investments in healthcare will continue in 2016”, “The Airport Alexander the Great is the fastest growing in the region” from January 17th), (2) through statements of allegedly random citizens (“Survey: Right decision for salvation from the agony caused by the Opposition” from January 19th, “Ristovski: Capital projects for the pupils and students in Stip” from January 22nd) and (3) by video-material with Gruevski in the foreground (“VMRO DPMNE was in Gostivar for Epiphany, gave an icon as a gift” from January 19th, “The future of youth remains the focus of the government led by VMRO-DPMNE” from January 20th).

Instances:

- (January 16th, headline) Citizens are angry after yesterday’s decision of Zaev and SDSM, they collapsed the talks again. They want the agreement to be respected and to end the crisis with the elections
- (January 17th, journalist’s opinion) Zaev fears the punishment of the citizens and not only eludes elections but also directly violates the electoral code which was voted in by the Opposition at the Assembly session held on November 9th
- (January 17th, journalist’s opinion) Investment cycle of 150 million euros in infrastructure and 100 million in healthcare equipment. This sector will receive investments in 2016 as well.
- (January 18th, journalist’s opinion) Cold shoulder from the European Union for the Opposition party, SDSM, and their destructive game attempting to outplay the Przino agreement
- (January 19th, journalist’s opinion) Survey: Right decision for salvation from the agony caused by the Opposition (Zaev cannot lead an agricultural cooperative, much less a state. Why should we listen to him)
- (January 20th, journalist’s opinion) Janeva can be dismissed due to her incompetent and dishonest performance. Experts explained that there are elements of abuse of power and authority
- (January 21th, headline/comment) SDSM cannot even trust themselves. They question the regularity of the elections, yet SDSM controls the main points of regularity – SEC and the police
- (January 21st, journalist’s opinion) Many inconsistencies and contradictions contained in the decision of the Central Board of SDSM, for postponing the leaving of the government for the date of the call for election, February 24th (Kurir)
- (January 22nd, journalist’s opinion) The last public appearances of Aleksov where his views almost fully correspond with those of the Leader of SDSM, Zaev, give good grounds to doubt that MOST is just another organisation financed by the Soros Foundation, writes Kurir.
- (January 22nd, journalist’s opinion) Apart from the high ratings, what Vucic and Gruevski have in common is that both have the support of the international community for holding the elections on the 24th of April.

(4) Fourth week (23 – 29 January 2016)

Sitel broadcasted 90 reports on the political actors and the developments during the monitoring period. The main focus was on: the election (16 reports), the government projects and investments (16 reports), the SPP (7 reports), the media negotiations (7 reports) and the case of the forged driving licenses (4 reports). All broadcasted reports were observed to contain a pronounced apologetic propaganda for the Government, and especially for the ruling party, VMRO-DPMNE (39 reports), whereas 29 reports contain a negative attitude towards the Opposition, the Special Public Prosecution and personally towards Katica Janeva.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The propagandic tone in favour of the Government and the ruling VMRO-DPMNE continues to mark the central news on Sitel. The reports related to this entity are apologetic to the point that the position of the journalist cannot be distinguished from the position of the entity (January 25th, headline: “Fortunately, today we have the opportunity to start with good news because people want that, because citizens have a personal interest and satisfaction for many of their needs”, January 25th, headline “Yesterday’s speech of Nikola Gruevski was assessed as a strong impetus for restoring the democratic processes in the politics and the policy of accountability before citizens”). During this period, 6 analysis and headlines were broadcasted in a strong commentative tone which were extremely positive when they referred

to VMRO-DPMNE and extremely demonising when they referred to SDSM (January 24th, “Gruevski: On April 24th, the people will administer the punishment and their revenge”, January 23rd, “While running for mayor, Zaev claimed that the electoral register can be updated in two week, yet now he thinks that three months are not enough.”). This television broadcaster continues to cover the appearances of Gruevski as the Leader of VMRO-DPMNE with the same intensity as when he was Prime Minister, which intertwine with the existing or announced government projects in the same area (January 24th, headline, “Gruevski announced that as the president the party, he will go to the events that will promote projects that include improving the standard of living”).

Using sources: Most of the newscasts use one source of information (43 reports), while 9 reports use two sources, but with identical positions. More than two sources are cited in 8 reports, but in 8 thereof the positions are like-minded. In 4 reports, the journalist does not refer to any source, January 25th: “How are the negotiations progressing before of the elections on April 24th”, January 28th: “The independence of the MOST is questioned due to its similar views to SDSM”). The trend of referring to web portals (pro-government) as sources continues, January 23rd: “The direct connection of Zaev with the Special Public Prosecutor will only bring negative results for the opposition leader, say experts” (Republika), January 24th: “The German company is considering suing Oliver Spasovski” (Kurir), January 24th: “Remenski partisanized and obstructed the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy during these two months (Denesen), January 25th: “Frosina Remenski will be held accountable for negligence and misconduct” (Kurir).

Direct addresses: A total of 10 direct addresses of political leaders were broadcasted in the Sitel news. 7 thereof are statements of the Leader of VMRO-DPMNE Gruevski, while 2 belong to Zaev and one to the Leader of DUI, Ahmeti. The most drastic example is the report from January 24th, “Gruevski: On April 24th, the people will administer the punishment and their revenge”, consisting of alternating audio statements of Gruevski and quotes from the speech by the journalist.

Audiovisual presentation: 9 newscasts contain pronounced elements of visual and audio manipulation. One of the forms is the use of old statements and announcements (January 23rd, “While running for mayor, Zaev claimed that the electoral register can be updated in two week, yet now he thinks that three months are not enough”, January 26th, “The carpet revealed that Caus is behind the forged passports and the factory”). Manipulative presentation of the statements of the international representatives was also observed in this period (January 25th, “The European institutions which are in charge of the monitoring of the elections have no dilemma – the election will take place on April 24th – OSCE and ODIHR established teams for monitoring the elections, and so did the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe”) depicted as they are the ones that dictate when the elections will be held, and not that it was a reaction to the announcements of the Government on the election date.

Instances:

- (January 23rd, journalist) The Technical Interior Minister, Oliver Spasovski, literally invented the scandal with the alleged 70,000 forged driving licenses, reveals Dnevnik.
- (January 23rd, journalist) The small municipalities will be revived. The benefits that will be provided by the state for implementation of the project “Buy a House for Young People” will enable young people to stay in their places of residence.
- (January 24th, headline) The political crisis will end with the early elections in April. The anger of the people towards SDSM is growing every day
- (January 24th, headline) Gruevski announced that as the president the party, he will go to the events that will promote projects that include improving the standard of living. He also announced new investments.
- (January 25th, headline) Yesterday’s speech of Nikola Gruevski was assessed as a strong impetus towards restoring the democratic processes in the politics and the policy of accountability before the citizens, as opposed to creating crises, corruption and claiming victory in elections beyond the law, beyond the will of the citizens and with assistance of the foreign factors”
- (January 26th, journalist) The same journalist from FOCUS and Soros again received forged documents. But the police and the prosecutors did their job. SDSM could not hide their involvement in the scandal.

- (January 27th, journalist) The goal of Zaev's master plan was to compromise the ruling party at any cost, by framing cases or taking on the role of Caus by Katica Janeva.
- (January 28th, commentary) The position of SDSM that they will agree to the model for updating the electoral register provided the other parties agree to Vanhoutte's censuring Media Law is ironic

4. Telma

(1) First week (19 – 23 December 2015)

A total of 41 reports on political topics were broadcasted in the Telma news, while the focus in the analyzed period was the case with forged ID cards (9 reports), the activities of the Special Prosecutor's Office (5 reports) and the Annual Address of the President of the Assembly (3 reports). Positive approach towards SDSM is observed in only 1 broadcasted report (December 22nd, "SDSM is suing the former SEC"), but not with a rhetoric by the journalist that violates the journalists standards.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: In the monitoring period, Telma continues to report in neutral and balanced manner as before, without favouritism or demonisation of any party or political entity.

Using sources: Most of the reports in the news on are based only on a one source of information (16 reports), followed by reports with 3 or more sources with opposing positions (10), then reports with 2 opposing opinions (5), and 3 reports with 3 or more sources of identical positions, and lastly, 2 reports where both sources represent the same opinion. In cases when only a single source is used, the source is the opinion of state institutions or public representatives through announcements or statements. In cases with 2 or more contrasting positions on the same issue, the sources are MPs from different parties and experts.

Direct addresses: Telma broadcasted 5 direct addresses of the leaders of VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM in the analyzed period. Gruevski had only 1 address, whereas Zaev had 4 addresses. The news broadcasted the address of the President of the country, Ivanov, as well as the Minister of Interior, Spasovski, the Minister of Health, Todorov, and MPs, in relation to the developments from the previous week, such as the Annual Address of the President and the interpellation of the Minister of Health.

Audio-visual presentation: There were no examples of malicious audio-visual presentation. Although in one of the reports ("MOI discovered voters with illegally issued ID cards", from December 23rd) a use of the audio/video materials of the so-called "bombs" was observed, in order to illustrate a press- conference of the Minister of Interior, Spasovski – still, this case could be considered as contextualisation of the case.

(2) Second week (8 – 15 January 2016)

In the time-frame between the 8th and the 15th of January, Telma broadcasted a total of 58 reports pertaining to the political developments. Most of the reports referred to: the visit of the MEPs and the European Commissioner Hahn (8 reports), the political crisis and elections (6 reports), the presidential pardon of prisoners (5 reports) and the visit of PM Gruevski to the United States (4 reports). The reporting of this television broadcaster is not biased. Negative attitude was identified only in 1 case.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: In this period as well, the reporting of Telma is balanced and without pronounced propagation or demonisation of political entities. Only one headline may be identified to have a negative attitude towards a social problem ("Killers and convicts of serious crimes are pardoned by the President on the occasion of the New Year", broadcasted on January 9th), one of the series of reports on this topic covered by Telma from several aspects and with greater frequency than the other media. The remaining reports are informative and the topics are approached with well-argued criticism by confronting conflicting expert opinions.

Using sources: The news reports on Telma mostly present three, or even more positions, which are conflicting (15 reports), whereas 3 reports have more interlocutors but with the same position on the particular issue. In 14 reports, the information comes from a single sources, whereas in 8 reports from two interlocutors, in 4 whereof the sources present conflicting opinions, whereas in the remaining 4, the sources defend the same position.

Direct address: 11 direct addresses were broadcasted in the news, with visible imbalance to the benefit of the Prime Minister and Leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, with 5 direct addresses, followed by Ahmeti with 3, Zaev with 2 and finally Taci with one broadcasted statement.

Audiovisual presentation: Manipulative audio and video presentation was not detected in the reports.

(3) Third week (16 – 22 January 2016)

Telma broadcasted 56 reports on the events of the political topics in this period. The main focus was on: the election (32 reports), the resignation of the previous and the new government (5 reports) and the summoning of SPP, Katica Janeva, before the Council of Prosecutors (2 reports). The reporting of this television broadcaster is balanced and without apologetic or demonising attitudes towards political parties or individual, but critical towards certain issues of the current developments.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The reports in this period are absent of propagandistic or demonising attitude towards any subject. Only one of several analytical reports contains commentative elements (January 19th, “Emil Dimitriev appeared in public for the first time”), where the journalist does not name a source for the information. The remaining is either reporting or well-argued criticism through the presentation of multifaceted positions.

Using sources: Most reports (24) use one source. 11 reports have three (or more than three) sources with conflicting points of view, while 6 reports have two opposing views. Some articles use 2 or more sources (8 reports) that defend the same position.

Direct addressing: During this period, a total of 12 direct addresses of political leaders were broadcasted. The Leaders of both major parties, VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, Gruevski and Zaev, have three direct addresses each, Trajanov has two and Popovska (DOM), Ahmeti (DUI), Milevski (LDP) and Sela (DR DPA) have one address each.

Audiovisual Presentation: A new story containing manipulative elements has been detected for the first time since the beginning of the monitoring of the television broadcaster. It is the report “What benefits will Gruevski enjoy upon his resignation” from January 19th, which uses statements from Gruevski and officials of VMRO-DPMNE, from 2013, framed in the present context.

(4) Fourth week (23 – 29 January 2016)

Telma broadcasted 56 reports on the political developments in this period. The main focus was on: the elections (12 reports), the media negotiations (6 reports), the work of SPP Katica Janeva (4 reports), the conflict at the Ministry of Labour (6 reports). The reports adopt a critical and argumentative approach, and also face two (or more) positions and use expert opinions. Balance coverage still predominates, with the exception of one report negative in tone that was identified in the analysed period (January 24th, “24 Picturesque speech of former Prime Minister”)

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The journalists and anchorpeople of the Telma central news refrain from giving their opinions and commentaries in the reports and the headlines. Apart from the reporting approach to the daily events, Telma, unlike most other television broadcasters, approaches the current events analytically by facing expert opinions and devotes attention to the work of the Assembly more than any other television broadcaster.

Using sources: Most reports (22) use only one source. 8 reports face three (or more than three) sources with disagreeing positions, while 8 reports contain two disagreeing positions. There are also reports which use 2 or more sources (11 reports) with the same position.

Direct addresses: The television broadcasted a total of 6 addresses of political leaders – all of the major political parties. The Leader of SDSM, Zaev, had the highest number of addresses – 3, followed by the Leader of VMRO DPMNE, Grievski, with 2 and finally the Leader of DUI, Ahmeti, with 1.

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative presentation was detected in the reporting period.

Instances:

- (January 24th, journalist) Speech between the angels and the devil, with emphasised kicks and violated constitution, with several new investments of old investors and with a fixed date for elections.

5. TV 21 (Macedonian)

(1) First week (19 – 23 December 2015)

In the analysed period, TV K21 in the news in Macedonian aired 65 stories on topics pertaining to the political situation. Most of them were about the affair with falsified IDs (8 stories) and about the pollution (7 stories). Unlike the other commercial televisions that air news in Macedonian, K21 also aired several stories with an ethic focus. ('Eight years after 'Brodec' on December 19th, 'Statistical inclusion, Albanian ministers – Macedonian bosses', on December 19th, 'Jashari reiterated the request that the Special Prosecution Office should take 'Monster' on December 21st, Is the Albanian language an issue?! The Kozle Clinic is still closed, on December 23rd). The manner of reporting is balanced out, without rhetoric from the journalists that favours or demonizes any party.

Commentary and opinions in the news: In this period, two analyses and one cue were aired in which an opinion of a journalist was expressed on the K21 news in Macedonian, however not one of those stories was to the advantage or stood against any of the political entities.

Using sources: As was the case in the previous analyzed period, K21 continues to base most of the reports on only one source (15). In 11 stories the topic was presented through two sources, however with an identical standpoint, in 7 stories there were two sources with opposite views and in 6 stories three or more sources were consulted, with opposed views (4) and with an identical standpoint (2 stories). The standpoints of the sources in the stories of K21 are concisely listed, presented as statements from governmental representatives, representatives of the local self-government, experts, general population, and they are not taken out of their initial context.

Direct addresses: In the six days of monitoring, there were 7 addresses from political leaders in the news, Zaev had 3 and Gruevski had 2, while statements were also published of the leaders of DOM and of the Democratic Party of Turks. The other political addresses were of governmental high officials, in the context of the reports on current topics.

Audio-visual manipulation: There were no stories on this television that contained malicious manipulation.

(2) Second week (8 – 15 January 2016)

84 reports pertaining to the political events were broadcasted in the news on TV21 in Macedonian during the 8-day monitoring period. Most of the broadcasted reports refer to: the visit of the MEPs and European Commissioner Hahn (7 reports), the government projects (6 reports), the political crisis and elections (4 reports), the reportage from Pustec (3 reports), the resignation of the Prime Minister, the reactions and the profile (3 reports). 6 reports are observed to have favouring attitude, and they all refer to the government projects, yet none of the reports contain demonising attitude towards any entity. Unlike most television broadcasters, TV K21 broadcasted reports (3) that contain a well-argued criticism of a certain social problem.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The reports are generally characterised by balanced reporting, without pronounced favouring or demonisation of political entities. However, in this monitoring period as well, reports that favour the politics of the Government were detected, but not through a pronounced apologetic journalistic attitude, yet by broadcasting announcements of government institutions and statements of government officials: “Gruevski opened a plant in Bitola” from January 9th, “A Russian center in Macedonia – Strengthening the relations between Macedonia and Russia” from January 11th, “the Ministry of Education and Science awards university scholarships to 30 Roma students” January 12th, “150 job openings announced – Akomplast is building a factory in Prilep” from January 14th.

Using sources: 31 reports use only one source, which are usually statements of the Government, the Cabinet of the President, Ministries, SEC, and international organisations and institutions such as the European Commission and OSCE. Two opposing views on specific issues are confronted in 16 reports, yet 15 reports use three or more different views. One headline – commentary “Gruevski did not attend the traditional Christmas dinner” from January 9th) does not refer to any source.

Direct addresses: A total of 10 addresses were broadcasted in the news in Macedonian. The leaders of DUI, Ahmeti, and VMRO – DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, delivered 3 addresses each, whereas the leaders of SDSM, Zaev, and DPA, Taci delivered 2 addresses each.

Audiovisual presentation: Only the report “Profile: Who is Gruevski and who is Dimitriev?” from January 15th, is observed to contain a manipulative presentation through a video material of the “achievements” of Gruevski during his mandate.

Instances:

(January 15th, journalist’s opinion) A series of reforms and projects aimed at improving the business climate were implemented during the mandate of PM Gruevski. Significant investments in infrastructure, culture and sports have been initiated and progress has been made in the fight against crime and corruption...”

(3) Third week (16 – 22 January 2016)

In the period between the 16th and 22nd of January, TV21 broadcasted a total of 76 reports on political events in the news in Macedonian language. The main focus was on: the election (46 reports), the resignation of the old and the new government (3 reports), the promotion of projects by Gruevski (2 reports) and the refugee crisis (2 reports). 4 reports contain a very pronounced position of the journalist, in both cases, favourable towards the politics of the Government and the ruling VMRO-DPMNE, and negative and hostile attitude towards the politics of the Government regarding ethnic issues.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: Since the number of reports with a pronounced apologetic and demonising attitude in relation to the total number of reports is negligible, it can be concluded that the reporting of the television broadcaster on the current affairs is balanced, and the analytical reports are neutral through the use of more opposing views on an issue. This week as well, the news in Macedonian language broadcasted two reports with a thread of propaganda in favour of the politics of the Government (January 21th, “The doctors will be trained abroad, 2 million Euros per year for education of physicians”) and of the Leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski (January 21st, “Gruevski with guidelines on ‘Buy a house’, he arrived at the meeting in a car from the party”). In one of the reports, the television adopts a negative attitude towards the politics of the Government (January 17th, “MES published the list of 2704 scholarship holder, and only 264 are Albanians”) related to the ethnic proportionality.

Using sources: 37 reports use only one source. 11 reports on current topics present two sources but with the same position, whereas the interlocutors in 7 reports have conflicting views. In 13 reports (mostly analytical) face three or more opinions, but in 11 thereof, they are different and opposite. In three reports, the source is not mentioned directly, but the contents indicate that it refers to party announcements.

Direct addresses: During the analyzed period, a total of 16 direct addresses were broadcasted in the news in Macedonian language. It is evident that they are not concentrated on one (or several) leaders. The Leader of the VMRO-DPMNE, Gruevski, has three speeches, Zaev, Milevski LDP, Ahmeti and Trajanov have two

addresses each, whereas the Leader of DPT, Hasipi, Popovska, Zijadin Sela, Stevco Jakimovski and Ivan Stojiljkovic have 2 addresses each.

Audiovisual Presentation: No manipulative presentation was detected.

Instances:

- (January 17th, journalist's opinion) "While saying that the allocation is proportional, however, judging by the list published on their official website, it can be concluded that only ten percent of the total number of students who received scholarships are Albanian."
- (January 21st, journalist's opinion) "Unlike before, when Gruevski arrived to the scheduled events with official vehicles, this time he arrived alone with his party car ..."
- (January 21st, journalist's opinion) "This year as well will be provided training for 800 doctors and 200 members of the medical personnel abroad. This process has been conducted in recent years ..."

(4) Fourth week (23 – 29 January 2016)

In the period between the 23rd and 29th of January, TV21 broadcasted a total of 85 reports on the political developments in the news in Macedonian language. The main focus was on: the elections (9 reports), the media negotiations (7 reports), the work of SPP (5 reports), the tensions in the Ministry of Agriculture between the Minister and the Additional Deputy Minister of the (4 reports) and the refugee crisis (3 reports). 4 reports are observed to adopt a favourable attitude towards the ruling VMRO-DPMNE (promotional campaign) and towards the ethnic issues.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: This week, the television broadcaster covered many different topics, primarily current events, generally in balanced manner without expressed journalistic position, neither in the reports, nor in the headlines. What is distinctive about this television broadcaster is that it provides equal amount of space to the smaller political parties, especially from the Albanian block. Two reports in the news in Macedonian language propagate the activities of the Leader of VMRO-DPMNE (January 24th, "Aerodrom crowded with the women of VMRO-DPMNE from all cities", January 28th "Gruevski promotes youth projects Basketball halls, scholarships, renovations"), while the other two favourable reports refer to the celebration of the birthday of the former DPA leader, Arben Xhaferi (January 24th) and the placing of a monument in Saraj (January 23rd).

Using sources: 38 reports use only one source. 19 reports face positions of three or more interlocutors, while 18 reports have two positions, 9 whereof oppose disagreeing positions and the remaining 9 have like-minded positions. In one report, the source is not directly mentioned, although it does not contain a journalistic position.

Direct addresses: A total of 9 addresses were broadcasted in the news in Macedonian language during the analysed period. The Leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Gruevski, had 3 addresses, whereas Ahmeti, Taci, Trajanov, Zaev, Ostreni and Kasami had one statement each.

Audiovisual presentation: Both in the promotional reports and in the other reports, the video presentation is accompanied by the information and there is no presence of manipulative elements.

Instances:

- (January 23rd, headline) The square is in the initial phase of construction, Saraj got a four-meter monument of Isa Boletini
- (January 24th, journalist) Aerodrom crowded with the women of VMRO-DPMNE from all cities. As soon as the party president, Nikola Gruevski, arrived and finished with the photographing, they rushed to enter the hall
- (January 24th, headline) 68th birthday of Arben Xhaferi, Taci: The main squares will be named after him

- (January 28th, journalist) The Leader of VMRO-DPMNE continues promoting projects. Today he promoted five projects for young people who, according to him, will improve life in Macedonia

6. TV 21 (Albanian)

(1) First week (19 – 23 December 2015)

In the monitored period from December 19th to the 24th, a total of 65 stories were aired regarding the political events, situations and actors. The affair with the illegal IDs was most represented in the stories (11 stories), then followed the new University with studies in Albanian ‘Mother Theresa’ (5 stories), then came the pollution, as well as topics that are of interest to Albanians. There was no particularly favourizing or demonizing stance towards any entity regarding these topics.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television was generally neutral in following the events, especially when it comes to the main topics, representing all sides, for example: ‘MoI announces details about the factory’, ‘Gruevski and Zaev give counter-accusations about the affair’, ‘Minister Oliver Spasovski exploded, stating that there is a trap being set up around him concerning the IDs’ (December 22nd), etc. Positive notes characterized the stories about the University ‘Mother Theresa’ (December 20th: ‘Albanians in Macedonia will have one more University’, ‘Studies in Albanian were provided only in Tetovo so far, now they can also be found on another address’). There was a positive attitude towards some other activities of DUI, for example the announcement that there will be a bust put up of the Albanian national hero Isa Boletini in the center of Saraj (‘After Skenderbeg and Hasan Prishtina, Isa Boletini will also be arriving in Skopje’, as well as the launch of roads, planting trees, etc.

Using sources: The television had 14 stories with one source and in 9 stories there were two or more sources that stand behind a unified view. Still, it was noticeable that most of these sources are most often transmitted announcements or a speech from a politician, like for example Zaev speaking about the 24th of December, Zernovski announcing a law suit against Jankulovska. Also unified in their stance were the protocol meetings of Besimi with ministers, the protests against the pollutions before the City of Skopje administration, there were statements only from activists about the pollution, seeking accountability from Koce. Unified in their views are also Gruevski and Ademi when announcing a state university with studies in Albanian. SDSM and Sugarevski about the draft law on the special prosecutor again stand united. Here are also the annual reports of Trajanovski, of the mayor of municipality of Studenicani, the letter from Van Haute to the parties is with one source, etc.

Direct addresses: There are direct addresses from the Macedonian leaders of parties, the scandal with the IDs, the case ‘Coup, the anniversary of the 24th of December 2012 when the opposition was thrown out of the Parliament, etc. The leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev had three addresses, and the Prime Minister had two.

Audio-visual presentation: The television did not use manipulative audiovisual presentation in general.

(2) Second week (8 – 15 January 2016)

During the analyzed period, a total of 76 stories were aired on the news in Albanian on TV21 concerning the current political topics on: the political crisis and the postponement of the elections (12 stories), the affairs with the fake IDs and the fake driver’s licenses (9 stories), the visit from the MEPs and Hahn (6 stories), the pollution (5 stories). Although the television is usually neutrally critical towards the Government, in this period a positive note could be observed in the announcements of new projects of the Government, like for example the opening of factories, projects in the health sector, announcements for building new small hydro-power plants.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television followed the events regarding Gruevski’s resignation. ‘The last hours of the political finale, in expectation of the resignation from Gruevski.’, ‘Gruevski’s

resignation stirred up the political scene’, and ‘Where is the resignation from Gruevski, did Veljanovski sign the memo?’. In the series of stories concerning this topic, the following was published ‘Profile: Who is Gruevski, and who is Dimitriev?’, in which a German newspaper is quoted, describing Gruevski as an authoritative person who doesn’t respect agreements. Much attention was also paid to the potential date for the elections. ‘While the opposition does not rule out the option of postponing the elections, the parties in power are against it. Analysts say that the outcome will be decided by the international factor’. In the stories, the importance of the revision of the electoral register for the legitimacy of the elections and the mediation role of the foreigners in resolving the problems is underlined. There were also stories about the visits of DUI to Athens and of Gruevski to USA (‘DUI in Athens, the name is on the Agenda’), during which the stand of Gruevski was reiterated that the visit (of DUI) has a political background. The affairs with the IDs and the driver’s licenses, the voters from Pustec, with a reportage from there, were treated critically, at the same time quoting analysts who claim that ‘Pustec is a product of VMRO’.

Using sources: In general, the television represents different and opposed sources. 18 stories were with only one source, while in 13 of them there were two or more sources, however with the same standpoint. One-sided sources were typical for surveys made on citizens or in reportage stories regarding the problems that the people are facing.

Direct addresses: The television aired 10 direct addresses in total from the leaders of all four larger political parties. Three statements each were from the leaders of the two Albanian parties DUI and DPA; Ahmeti and Tachi, while two that aired in that period were from the leaders of VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM – Gruevski and Zaev.

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was observed.

(3) Third week (16 – 22 January 2016)

During the monitored period, television TV 21 in Albanian published 80 stories on political actors, processes and events. The topics concerning the early elections date (23 stories) and the election of a new Government (6 stories) were the events that marked the weekly agenda on the television. Then followed the topics that are of interest to ethnic Albanians (9 stories).

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television followed the events related to the political crisis, the back-and-forth regarding the election date and the revision of the voters register (January 16th: ‘Failure of the political talks, is the crisis in Macedonia growing deeper’). Statements were aired from the leaders (‘Zaev: the elections are not acceptable without a regulated Law on Media and without revising the electoral register’, ‘Gruevski: Commissioner Hahn said that the President of SEC informed him that there are no obstacles for elections on April 24th, OSCE said the same’).

The whole development of the events was followed informatively and impartially (January 18th: ‘Hahn is calling from Brussels for a compromise on the elections date’), (January 19th: ‘Dismissal of Parliament before voting for the Government’), (January 21st: ‘Spasovski and Remenski swore their oaths, the Government of Dimitriev until April 24th etc. Positive favourizing stories were noted about Government projects (January 21st: ‘The Government is allocating 2 million euro for educating doctors out of state’), (January 20th: ‘Nikola Gruevski is promoting the ‘Buy a house’ project), (January 21st: ‘the Minister of Environment Nurhan Izaira says that the Government is taking long-term measures against pollution). The topics that are of interest for Albanians were present as usual, regarding the discrimination in the awarding of scholarships by the Ministry of Education and Science, about the poor infrastructure in populated areas (Grushino) etc.

Using sources: There are as many as 33 stories with one source and 12 stories with like-minded sources. Many of the stories with one source are communicated messages of foreign representatives and ambassadors, announcements or statements from parties, including the smaller ones regarding the crisis.

Direct addresses: There were direct addresses from the leaders of the larger political parties regarding the political crisis, as well as from the smaller parties (both from the opposition and the coalition). Zoran Zaev had 2 addresses, Ali Ahmeti had 3 and Nikola Gruevski had 4 direct addresses one of which was about the

‘Buy a house’ project, after he resigned as Prime Minister.

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was noted.

(4) Fourth week (23 – 29 January 2016)

The television had a total of 59 analyzed stories with political content. Most of them refer to the: early elections (16 stories), the arguing between the ministers and the deputies from both parties – VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM (7 stories), the negotiations about the media (6 stories), the speech from Gruevski before the Women’s Union (5 stories) and the work of the Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) (4 stories).

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television took a critical distance in reporting on the topics that were current during the analyzed period – the elections, the negotiations about the media, Gruevski’s speech and the work of the SPP. The number of stories with a favourizing tone was insubstantial, examples of such stories are the one about placing a monument of Isa Boletini at the square ‘Zname’ (Flag) in Saraj (January 23rd), the marking of the birthday of Arben Dzaferi (January 24th) and the standpoint of DPA regarding the new University Damjan Gruev (‘Why shouldn’t the new University ‘Damjan Gruev’ also be in Albanian), from January 25th).

Using sources: During the analyzed period, 20 stories were published in which one source was used and 9 stories called upon two or more sources, however with a unified position.

Direct addresses: There were a total of 6 addresses from political leaders of the four larger parties. Three were from Gruevski (a quotation from the speech was aired twice on different days), and one address each from Zaev, Ahmeti and Tachi.

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was observed.

7. Alsat M (Albanian)

(1) First week (19 – 23 December 2015)

The television aired a total of 57 stories regarding the political events, situations or actors in the period from the 19th to the 24th of December. The new scandals with the illegal IDs prevailed (14 stories), after them came the new University in Albanian ‘Mother Theresa’ (5 stories), the pollution, the address of the President Gjorgje Ivanov and issues that concern the Albanians. In the reports there were no favouring or demonizing stances towards a political entity.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television had a neutral critical approach in following the scandals with the fake IDs for which SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE blamed each other. In some of the stories it was said ‘The prosecution and the police discover the factory, the media close to the Government pin the scandal on SDSM’, or ‘Gruevski congratulates the MoI and calls on the international community to keep a close eye on this case’, ‘Zaev: Gruevski is looking for salvation, the mafia is in the Government’, etc. It was reported that in the ‘affairs factory’ conversations were found between high officials of DUI, which was of special interest for Albanians, although again the reporting is unbiased. There was no partiality in the reporting on other topics too, for instance with the announcements for opening a new university in Albanian emphasis was put on the language that will be used, whether the studies will be only in Albanian or not, however there are opposed opinions of different parties (the Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski, the Minister of Education Abdilakjimi Ademi, the MPs of DPA) without any favourizing between them. There was a critical story towards Izet Medziti, the mayor of Cair, for an unfinished mosque in Topana. Medziti explained that the mosque is very expensive and it will be built by the Islamic community of Turkey (December 19th).

Using sources: The television made sure to use different sources and in general they covered all

parties of an event. The political parties were represented equally, depending on their role in the events.

Direct addresses: There were addresses from the leaders of SDSM and of VMRO-DPMNE regarding the discovery of the scandals with the IDs, the third anniversary of ‘Black Monday’ (the day the opposition was thrown out of the Parliament), the cases ‘Coup’, the University ‘Mother Theresa’ etc. Four addresses of Zoran Zaev were aired, three addresses and one announcement from Nikola Gruevski and one address from Ali Ahmeti.

Audio-visual presentation: In general, the television did not use manipulative audiovisual presentation.

(2) Second week (8 – 15 January 2016)

In the news in Albanian on Alsat M in the period from the 8th to the 15th of January, a total of 72 stories were aired concerning the current topics: the political crisis and the elections (18 stories), the visit from MEPs and Hahn (10 stories), the visits of Ahmeti to Athens and of Gruevski to USA (7 stories).

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television provided neutral and balanced reporting on these events. In the news on January 14th there was a live coverage of Gruevski’s address in the news.

Most of the stories were directed towards stating the fact that the requirements for fair elections have not been met, like for example the meeting of Zaev with the MEP Howitt and the statements from the leader of SDSM were that ‘100 days prior to the elections the new Prime Minister should be elected’, that ‘it is possible for the elections to be held in September because the electoral register cannot be revised by April, and can there be democratic elections in that case?’. The television also aired statements from the leaders of DPA – Menduh Taci: no-one will be going to elections if the requirements are not met’ and of the leader of DUI – Ali Ahmeti, who believes that ‘postponing the elections will prolong the crisis’. The analysts in the stories advised ‘not to rush with the elections if the requirements are not in place, and the media and the electoral register are problems that need to be resolved.’

Using sources: In the stories on this television one could most often find different and opposed sources (12 stories), while for 11 stories only one source was used.

Direct addresses. During the reporting period in the news in Albanian on this television, a total of 15 direct addresses (statements) from the leaders were aired. Most of them, 6, were from Gruevski, followed by Zaev with 4, Ahmeti with 3 and Tachi with 2 addresses.

Audiovisual presentation: The television generally did not use manipulative presentation.

(3) Third week (16 – 22 January 2016)

From the 16th to the 22nd of January, the television aired 69 stories that refer to political actors, processes or states. This week’s most dominant: the arguing over the early elections (18 stories), the dissolution of Parliament (8 stories) and the forming of the new Government (4 stories), all of them intertwined. Another more present topic was the increase of the Governments debt (3 stories).

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television critically followed all events pertaining to the political crisis (January 16th: ‘Failure of the negotiations, the political crisis deepens, the parties cannot come to an agreement’), (January 17th: SEC is requesting 4 months to revise the electoral registry’), etc. The monitoring of the political situation continued in the same fashion (January 18th: ‘June 5th as a potential date for elections’), (January 19th: ‘Hahn: I would rather have seen political agreement between the parties’) etc. However, there was also an analytical approach, not just informative (January 19th: ‘The dissolution of Parliament: Analysts say that Macedonia has entered a new crisis’), and the voting in Parliament was interpreted as violating democracy.

The television reported also on the new debts the Government took (January 20th: ‘The foreseen debt has

been surpassed'), (January 22nd: 'Next week a new debt of 8 million euro). On the topic of debt, the dispute of the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs – Frosina Remenski with the Director of PIOM (national pension fund) – Shaip Zeneli was monitored (January 18th: 'Remenski is requesting, Zaneli is not responding. Finance took on a new debt in order to help PIOM'). It was interesting to note, because it is rare for an Albanian party to take the side of a Macedonian (high official) as opposed to an Albanian.

There were stories about the absence or poor use of Albanian in Skopje and in traffic.

Using sources: The television generally depended on different and opposed sources, the parties were equally presented, depending on their activity in recent political occurrences. There was space for the smaller political parties, primarily from the Albanian political block. Although, this week as many as 21 stories were observed with one source (many of them were messages and announcements of the ambassadors and foreign intermediaries in the crisis, but also party announcements), and another 16 stories with two or more sources, however with a united stand.

Direct addresses: There were direct addresses from the leaders of the three larger political parties. Ali Ahmeti from DUI (3 addresses), Zoran Zaev from SDSM (3 addresses) and Nikola Gruevski from VMRO-DPMNE (2 addresses) talking about early elections.

Audiovisual presentation: The television did not use manipulative audiovisual presentation.

(4) Fourth week (23 – 29 January 2016)

In the course of the monitored period, the television published 60 stories about political events. The greatest number of those stories were concerning the elections (15 stories), the negotiations about the media (8 stories), the tensions in the relations between the ministers from SDSM and their deputies from VMRO-DPMNE and vice versa (7 stories), Gruevski's speech (5 stories) and SPP (7 stories). None of the stories had any underlined favourizing or demonizing stand towards any political entity.

Commentary and opinions in the news: In all of the stories the reporting was neutral and critical. The speech from the ex prime minister was aired along with the condemning reactions that it caused ('Gruevski: on April 24th the punishment and the revenge of the people will arrive', 'The ex prime minister attacked the international representatives and the opposition', 'SDSM: Gruevski confessed that a criminal cannot be a prime minister' from January 24th) and with analyses that 'Nikola Gruevski is a pale copy of Miloshevic' (Mersel Biljali). In the reports on the early elections, more attention was paid to the opinions of the analysts, according to which 'Without regulating the media there cannot be free elections' (January 26th), and statements were also published from representatives of the international community ('Hahn: It is of less importance if not all parties are going to the elections'), as well as the reaction of SDSM that 'There are no good-quality elections without equal opportunities for all' (January 27th). What was also critical was the reporting about the work of the Special Public Prosecution, especially pertaining to the discharge of two women prosecutors ('A split in Janeva's team', 'Was the dismissal of the Albanian woman prosecutor the reason' from January 26th). The Albanian issues were usually in the focus of the reporting on this Television. The placement of the monument of Isa Boletini in Saraj (January 23rd), the external testing in Kumanovo ('764 Macedonian language secondary school graduates in and 655 Albanian language secondary school graduates' from January 25th) had a mild favourizing tone, however with no explicit opinions from the journalist. The focus on the ethnic issues was also evident in the stories about the highway to Kosovo, for a new 'Flea market (Bit – Pazar)' and similar topics that were not present in other televisions that are subjected to monitoring.

Using sources: There were 13 stories with one source and 12 stories with two or more sources, however with the same opinion.

Direct addresses: 4 direct addresses were broadcast in the news. Two statements were from the leader of SDSM Zaev, one was from Gruevski (from his speech) and one from Ahmeti.

Audiovisual presentation: The television in general did not use manipulative audiovisual presentation.

8. Alsat M (Macedonian)



Kingdom of the Netherlands

(1) First week (19 – 23 December 2015)

In the news in Macedonian, the television Alsat M, in the course of the monitored period from the 19th to the 24th of December aired a total of 63 stories that referred to political events, contents, actors or situations. 11 stories total were aired about the topic of the falsified IDs, and among the other dominant topics were the air pollution in Tetovo and Skopje (6 stories) and the announcement of the new University 'Mother Theresa' in Skopje (4 stories). The television's reporting on these events was impartial, without favourizing or attacking the political entities involved.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television did not show any commentary contents during the monitored period, nor were there any negative and accusatory contents towards a political subject. There was only one case of mild favourizing, with the cue that the leader of SDSM did just as he announced that he would do, he appeared at the trial of the case 'Coup' (December 21st). In the stories there were no opinions, excepts for some neutral supported criticisms, for instance that while representatives of DUI are launching new streets, no one is covering the canal in Aracinovo that is a major environmental problem (December 19th), then while the Government is opening new universities in Albanian, elementary and secondary schools are facing a shortage of books (December 20th), and that there were twice as many denied than approved applications for the 'mega-project of the Government' for signing off debts (December 22nd), and that the mayor of Skopje Koce Trajanovski sees God as the only way out of the air pollution in the capital, and he was hoping for wind (December 23rd).

Using sources: For most of the stories (28) two or more sources with differing or opposed standpoints were used. For all main topics on which the television reported, they communicated the views of various stakeholders (of the government and the opposition both in the Macedonian and the Albanian political block, and of other entities). There were 14 stories with one source, mostly transmitted statements or announcements, as well as 11 stories with two or more sources that were not opposed. In cases when opinions of analysts were used, they were not with opposed views, in one case they had supported and non-accusatory stances (December 19th: Naser Ziberi and Petar Arsovski on the possibility of postponing the elections), and in another case they were accusatory (December 23rd: Bashkim Selmani and Jove Kekenovski on the address of the President Gjorge Ivanov).

Direct addresses: Three addresses were aired from the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev, two of the Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski and one of the leader of DUI Ali Ahmeti. They were all statements made in the monitored period and they referred to current topics.

Audiovisual presentation: No cases of manipulative audiovisual presentation were noted, the stories were covered with adequate image and tone.

(2) Second week (8 – 15 January 2016)

During the reporting period from the 8th to the 15th of January 2016, in the news in Macedonian television Alsat M aired a total of 85 stories referring to the political actors, processes or states. The television paid most of the attention to the topic of (1) holding or postponing the early parliamentary elections (17 stories), (2) the visit from Hahn and the MEPs (8 stories), (3) the topic of the fake IDs that included the so called affairs factory, however they also published their own reportage stories from Pustec (6 stories) and (4) the fight between the MP Ermira Mehmeti and her party DUI (5 stories). In the reporting on these topics there was no notice of favourizing or accusatory positions towards any political entity.

Commentary and opinions in the news: During the monitored period, the television's reporting was fair and appropriate, impartial and supported with arguments about the political entities. A favourizing behavior was very rare, even accidental. A certain mild form of favourizing could be noted in only one story, about taking on a new national debt (January 13th: 'Unlike the foreign creditors who are cautious in this pre-elections period when approving loans for this country, the domestic banks did not listen to the plea of the Additional Deputy Minister of Finance Kire Naumov'). However there were no tendencies, and the accusatory elements and the commenting behavior were completely excluded from the news. With Alsat M in Macedonian,

more than with other televisions, one could come across neutral and supported criticism towards political entities (9 stories), and this sometimes (in 4 of the stories) refers to their decision or procedure (January 9th: ‘The Government will fight the pollution by fighting grilled kebabs, if this proposal is passed food service facilities would be jeopardized’), and in other cases (5 stories) to their not taking actions or not responding to calls (January 10th: ‘After the floods, this kind of landfills can be found on three locations, two in the Municipality Tearce and one in the Municipality Brvenica, and they have been as you see them for months’). What remains in the bigger focus to topics that are of interest for ethnic Albanians, however this was not notable in the selection or treatment of the dominant topic – the elections and the Przino Agreement, except with the fact that on this television one could more often hear the opinions of Albanian political analysts. Ethnocentricity could be noted in the selection of the other topics, like for example the coverage of the story about the Zehiri family from Radishani and their problems with the Municipality of Butel (4 stories), the increased following of the visit of Ali Ahmeti to Athens compared to the others (3 stories), and less attention paid to the visit of Nikola Gruevski to Washington (2 stories), etc.

Using sources: The television has used two or more sources with different or opposed views in almost the same number of stories (20), two or more sources that are in agreement or at least do not conflict with their opinions (19 stories) or one source (17 stories). However, what is typical is that when analysts are consulted in the stories, there is either only one analyst (4 stories) or two or more with similar opinions (4 stories). Although they all show argument supported standpoints and they do not attack anyone, the fact still remains that during the monitored period not a single story was aired with analysts with opposed positions. Opposed opinions could often be found in stories where there were transmissions of accusations between representatives of the two largest parties.

Direct addresses: A total of 13 direct addresses from political leaders were aired, and they were distributed evenly. The ones from Gruevski were most frequent (5), then from Ahmeti (3) and from Zaev (3), as well as from Menduh Tachi (2 stories).

Audiovisual presentation: Generally, the stories were covered with adequate image and tone and there was no manipulative audio-visual content observed.

(3) Third week (16 – 22 January 2016)

During the reporting period from the 16th to the 22nd of January 2016, Alsat M television aired a total of 70 stories in its news in Macedonian referring to political actors, processes or states. The television focused most of its attention on: the topic of scheduling the early parliamentary elections on the 24th of April (26 stories) and the topic that is directly linked to it, the dissolution of Parliament and the election of a new Government (8 stories). A third topic according to the presence was the increase of the national debt (5 stories). In the stories there was no notice of a favourizing or an accusatory stand towards political entities.

Commentary and opinions in the news: During the monitored period, the television’s reporting about political entities was fair and appropriate, impartial and argument-supported. An emphasized critical stand was noted towards three types of topics.

- The moves of the ruling parties in resolving the political crisis (January 20th: ‘Macedonia might be a unique case globally where Parliament can enact laws even after it is dissolved’).
- The new debt (January 18th: ‘And while the new political crisis was heating up – bam! A new decision to take on a debt by the Government on the domestic market and to the amount of 5 and a half million euro’, ‘January 22nd: In a pre-elections period, some economy specialists suspect that the money may be used for political purposes’).
- The problems that Albanians face in Macedonia (January 21st: ‘While Minister Nurhan Izairi announced an investment worth 6 million euro, to regulate the river bed of Vardar in Jegunovce, so far not a denar has been disbursed to clean the river beds on Ponika and Bistrica in the municipality of Tearce’).

Using sources: In most of the stories only one source was used (25 stories), then two or more sources with different or opposed opinions (19 stories), and in the end there are the stories with two or more sources with opposed views (15 stories). In 9 stories the opinions of analysts were used, who although provided

argument-supported opinions, were either the only source in the story or the only analyst, together with political or other entities.

Direct addresses: A total of 15 direct addresses from political leaders were aired. 8 of them were addresses from the main political actors who explain their positions on the current crisis, Nikola Gruevski from VMRO-DPMNE (2 addresses), Zoran Zaev from SDSM (3 addresses) and Ali Ahmeti from DUI (3 addresses). The other 7 addresses were from leaders of smaller political entities, who commented on the political situation, and they were Pavle Trajanov from DS (2 addresses) and Liljana Popovska from DOM, Tito Petkovski from NSDP, Vesel Memedi from NDP, Bilal Kasami from Besa and Gzim Ostreni from Uniteti (1 address each)

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was observed, and the stories were covered with adequate image and tone.

(4) Fourth week (23 – 29 January 2016)

During the reporting period from the 23rd to the 29th of January 2016, the television Alsat M in the news in Macedonian aired a total of 68 stories that refer to political actors, processes or states. The television focused most of its attention to: the topics related to the implementation of the early parliamentary elections (15 stories), the work of the Special Prosecutor Katica Janeva (6 stories), the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (4 stories), the negotiations about the media (3 stories) etc. In most of the reports on these topics the television took a neutral stand towards the concerned parties. An exception was the topic regarding the activities of Gruevski, where the television took a strongly critical approach.

Commentary and opinions in the news: In the television's informative programme during the monitored period no commentary behaviour was observed towards the political entities, nor were they favoured or demonized in any sense. However, the television did not keep the role of a silent observer, but their reporting more often than the other media was characterized with a well-argued critical report towards the political and the social situations. The medium took a strong critical stand towards the appearance of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski before the Women' Union of the party, calling it aggressive (January 24th: Gruevski with a new, aggressive approach increased the already emphasized polarization of the society). His behaviour 'befitting a prime minister' after resigning (January 28th: Not a day goes by without the former prime minister attending an event funded by the state). The increase of the national debt was also criticized (January 26th: For the third time this year, the Government took on a debt higher than the initially requested sum).

Nonetheless, the nationalistic rhetoric from the unveiling of the monument of the Albanian national hero Isa Boletini in Skopje was covered non-critically (January 23rd), where his grand-son, among other things said: 'for Skopje to always be Albanian'.

The television aired eight stories about civil problems that called upon the local self-government units or other bodies as accountable; however most of them referred to places with Albanian population. The dominant topic, however, were the early parliamentary elections, and no bias was observed in their coverage of that.

Using sources: For the most part of the stories, the television used two or more sources with differing or opposed positions (28 stories). Then came the stories with one source (15 stories). Finally, there were the ones with two or more sources with non-confronting opinions (12 stories), and in some cases (3 stories) they were surveys of citizens complaining about a certain issue. In accordance with their editorial policy of critical reviews, the television used the opinions of analysts in five stories, four of which consulted two or more analysts. They gave argument-supported opinions, however there was no notice of a story in which the analysts had different positions.

Direct addresses: One direct address was aired from the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski and one from DUI Ali Ahmeti, two from the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev, and three from the Mayor of Struga and leader of the Movement for Reforms of DPA Zijadin Sela, who replied to a criminal charge filed against him and he commented on general states.

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was noted and the stories were covered with adequate image and tone.

9. 24 Vesti

(1) First week (19 – 23 December 2015)

The television 24 Vesti aired 85 stories in total in the period from the 18th to the 24th of December, which referred to political events, contents, actors or situations. Most represented were the topics on the falsified IDs affair (8 stories), then the air pollution (6 stories), as well as the plan to open a new university in Skopje (3 stories) and the administrative difficulties in the work of the special public prosecution office (3 stories). No instances were spotted of attacking or favourizing political entities in the course of reporting on these topics.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television did not air stories with unsupported commentary content, although there were rare cases of confusing content that seemed as an explicit opinion towards the entity. On December 19th the Mayor of Skopje Koce Trajanovski was criticized for ‘backing down’ on raising the prices of public transportation and did not give an explanation, and especially specific was the story on December 21st on the interpellation of the Minister of Health Nikola Todorov, who was half accusatory commentary on him, and not until the second half was it said that those were the messages that the MP from the opposition sent to him at the meeting. There were two cues on December 24th in which it was unclear what is the opinion of the journalist, and what is a quotation (‘the judges pardon the crimes of the government’, a headline on the debate in the Eurointegrations Council, and ‘the crimes of VMRO-DPMNE confirmed’, in a cue for the address of the mayor of Centar Zernovski regarding the information that fake IDs were used for citizens of Pustec to vote in the municipality of Centar.

Using sources: The television had a fair approach in representing all stakeholders in their stories. 31 stories had one source only, they were mostly addresses or announcements of political and other entities. For 14 stories there were two or more sources with non-opposed opinions and for 29 stories the sources were with opposed views.

Direct addresses: The television aired direct addresses of seven leaders of political entities, and they were of Zoran Zaev (three), of Nikola Gruevski (one and one transmitted announcement), and one from Stevco Jakimovski (GROM), Samka Ibrahimovski (PCER), Pavle Trajanov (DS) and Liljana Popovska (DOM) each, and there was the address of President Gjorge Ivanov before Parliament. All statements had been made during the monitored period and they referred to current topics.

Audio-visual presentation: No cases of manipulative audio-visual presentation were noted, the stories were covered with adequate image and tone.

(2) Second week (8 – 15 January 2016)

During the reporting period from the 8th to the 15th of January, 24 Vesti published 98 stories that refer to political actors, processes or states. Most of the attention this week was on the following topics: the political negotiations and holding the early parliamentary elections (8 stories), the visit from the European Commissioner Johannes Hahn and the MEP (6 stories), the new borrowing (6 stories), the new investments (6 stories), and special attention was paid to the affairs that the Additional Deputy Minister of Agriculture – Ljupco Nikolovski, revealed, mainly on the export of fire wood (4 stories) and that the terrace of the building of VMRO-DPMNE was not demolished (3 stories). While covering these topics, the television had a neutral position towards the political actors, except in the topic about the terrace of VMRO-DPMNE, where they adamantly criticized the lack of action in accordance with the decision for demolition, on part of the Mayor of Centar Andrej Zernovski.

Commentary and opinions in the news: During the monitored period, the television’s reporting was generally

fair and appropriate, impartial and argument-supported when it came to political actors. (1) An enhanced critical stand was noted in the topic concerning the terrace of the ruling party (January 13th: ‘The soap opera ‘Demolishing the terrace of VMRO-DPMNE’ directed by Zernovski continues’), and such behavior but in a milder form could be noted when covering the visit of the leader of DUI Ali Ahmeti to Athens and the disagreement with the coalition partner VMRO-DPMNE whether it is a visit related to political or state matters (January 9th: ‘Those who are more informed claim that the name dispute is becoming part of the pre-election campaign focus’), and with Government projects, for example the election of a concessioner of the complex Ethno Selo on Vodno (January 14th: ‘This Government investment of the people’s money, according to some businessmen from the catering – tourism center, is uneconomical’). (2) The instances of negative and accusatory contents are extremely rare, however two could be observed during the monitored period. The first one was in a story regarding a petition for the Professor Tanja Karakamisheva to move out of the country (January 8th: ‘The citizens are becoming active on the Internet and are collecting signatures for a petition requesting the Professor Tanja Karakamisheva to move out from her homeland after publishing her last column’), which, although technically correct, the mere non-critical coverage of such an initiative is disputable since it is not massive and it is unconstitutional. The second case was a non-critical coverage of an accusatory statement from the opposition (January 12th: ‘Washington pointed their finger at the culprit for the state of the country, this according to the opposition is the message from the visit of Gruevski to the White House’), especially having in mind that these were not the objectives and messages from Gruevski’s visit to Washington at all. (3) The information on the new foreign investments and on some of the Government projects (January 14th: ‘Starting tomorrow, the citizens will be able to apply for the project ‘Buy a house – for young people’’) were communicated fairly and appropriately, without taking a promotional or supporting stand, and somewhere at the end of the news the speeches from the Prime Minister Gruevski on those occasions were aired only twice, unlike the televisions with a generally more favourizing stand towards the Government, where these contents were the main story with which the news started and every address from Gruevski was aired.

Using sources: In most of the cases (34) the television used two or more sources with opposed points of view. In a smaller number of stories (21) one source was used or two or more sources, but with non-conflicting standpoints (19). When it comes to consulting political, economic and other analysts, during the monitoring period this was the case in 8 stories, in 4 of which it was two or more analysts with similar or close positions, in 3 of the cases it was only one analyst (not necessarily the only guest speaker in the story, however the only one commenting from an expert’s point of view), and in only 1 case analysts with opposed views were presented.

Direct addresses: During the reporting period, 13 direct addresses were aired of the leader of political entities, most of them (6) were from the Prime Minister and leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, then from the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev (3) and from the leading people of DUI Ali Ahmeti (2), from DPA Menduh Tachi (1) and of the Demokratski Sojuz Pavle Trajanov (1).

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulation with audiovisual presentation was noted. The contents were covered with adequate image and tone.

Instances:

(January 8th, cue) The citizens are becoming active online and they are collecting signatures for a petition requesting the Professor Tanja Karakamisheva to move out of the homeland after publishing her latest column.

(3) Third week (16 – 22 January 2016)

During the reporting period from the 16th to the 22nd of January, the television 24 Vesti aired 84 stories that pertained to political actors, processes or situations. Completely dominant was the topic on: implementing the parliamentary elections (36 stories and 4 stories about the election of a new Government), before the foreign investments and the problems with the investor ‘Prodis’ (7 stories), and the increase of debt of the Government (2 stories).

In most of the cases in the reporting on the first topic there was a neutral approach, in communicating the

opinions of all political actors. In the reporting about the second and the third topic there was presence of a critical behavior towards the concerned subjects (the Government and the authorities in charge of attracting foreign investments).

Commentary and opinions in the news: During the monitored period, the television's reporting about the political actors was generally fair and appropriate, impartial and argument-supported. Sporadic neutral and supported criticism could be noticed, on the main topics (January 22nd: 'If the elections are organized on April 24th then that will merely be an unsuccessful simulation resembling the previous elections, it is assessed by some NGOs'), on the main political actors (January 20th: 'Gruevski is announcing projects, it is unclear if he is doing it as the Prime Minister or President of the party'), or about individual cases (January 16th: 'Srgjan Kerim stands for a career diplomat, although his name also came up in our country in the 'money in a bottle' affair').

In very rare, incidental cases there was note of a negative stand towards VMRO-DPMNE, which was manifested through the choice of paraphrased statements (January 21st: 'The government of VMRO-DPMNE that is leaving continues to impudently put the people in debt with new and news loans, state the reactions from the oppositional SDSM'), or through communicating accusatory content without consulting the other side (January 17th: 'Crven: I am threatened every day because I spoke out about Zaev's framing').

Using sources: In most of the cases there was one source in the stories (35 stories), then two or more sources with different or opposed views (24 stories), then with two or more sources with unopposed standpoints (15 stories). The television consulted with analysts for their opinions in seven stories, four of which had only one analyst, and three had several with opposed views.

Direct addresses: The television continued to air direct addresses from the leaders of many political entities, regardless if they are part of a larger coalition or standalone. From the leaders of VMRO-DPMNE and of SDSM, Nikola Gruevski and Zoran Zaev, 4 addresses were aired from each, and as many from the leader of Demokratski Sojuz – Pavle Trajanov, who was especially active in the monitored period, disputing the early dissolution of Parliament before the Constitutional Court. Two addresses were aired from the leader of DUI – Ali Ahmeti, and one from each of the first people of several other entities – Liljana Popovska (DOM), Jove Kekenovski (FRODEM), Stevco Jakimovski (GROM), Goran Milevski (LDP) and Tito Petkovski (NSDP).

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulation with the audiovisual presentation was observed. The contents were covered with adequate image and tone.

(4) Fourth week (23 – 29 January 2016)

During the reporting period from the 23rd to the 29th of January, the television 24 Vesti published 96 stories referring to political actors, processes or states. The television encompassed a wide spectre of topics, and most represented among them were the contents regarding the early parliamentary elections (13 stories), then the work of the Special Public Prosecution (7 stories) and public procurements and public money spending (7 stories), following them was the national debt (4 stories) and the issues concerning the media (4 stories). In most of the reports on these topics the television took a neutral approach towards the concerned political entities, occasionally taking a critical position, especially pertaining to public procurements and new debts and around the issues connected to the elections.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television did not use any elements of commentary in the informative programme, nor did they express explicit positive or negative positions towards the political entities. A moderate and well-argued critical stance was observed in the reporting on several topics: About spending public money (January 23rd: for the reconstruction of the Government building, so far 11 million euro have been spent, 10 of which were for the new facade in baroque style, 1 million for the terrace and 700 thousand euro for the baroque fence);

For the monument of Isa Boletini in Saraj (January 23rd: the Albanian hero Isa Boletini, whose face was on the flag on the drone that provoked the riots during the match between Serbia and Albania, got a monument in Skopje); the speech from the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (January 24th: the 16th

Conference of the Women's Union of VMRO-DPMNE, instead of being dedicated to women, their roles and achievements in politics, it was used by the president of the party to send a message to the European Ambassadors and the oppositional SDSM that the people will decide whose is the country of April 24th); about the national debt: (January 24th: Just two weeks in the first month of the year, the Government created a new debt of 23 million euro, the money was loaned from domestic creditors);

Using sources: In most cases the stories had one source (36 stories), then two or more sources with different or opposed views (30 stories) and then two or more sources with non-opposed views (10 stories). The television consulted the opinions of analysts in two stories, and in both cases they had opposed views.

Direct addresses: The television continued to broadcast direct addresses from leaders of many political entities, regardless of their status or influence on the political scene. Two addresses were aired from the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, one from the leader of DUI Ali Ahmeti and one from SDSM Zoran Zaev. One address was shown from the president of DOM Liljana Popovska from her speech in Parliament, and one from the first person of the Movement for Reforms of DPA Zijadin Sela regarding the criminal charge filed against him, and an interview was broadcast with Vladimir Golubovski – leader of VMRO-Democratic Party, an almost forgotten political entity that has existed since the beginning of the 1990s.

Audiovisual presentation: There was no notice of classical manipulation with audiovisual presentation. The contents were covered with adequate image and tone.

10. Alfa TV

(1) First week (19 – 23 December 2015)

During the monitored period from the 19th to the 24th of December, Alfa Television aired 70 stories total that referred to political events, contents, actors or situations. The topic on the falsified IDs was present in 16 stories and it prevailed over the other topics. Second in line was not handing over the materials of Zaev from the intercepted conversations to the special prosecution (six stories). The other topics were not as prevalent as these, except in part the project 'Buy a house – for young people' (three stories in three days) and the address from President Gjorge Ivanov (three stories in one day, on December 22nd) and four stories about employment activities. In most of the stories about the fake IDs and the materials from the wiretapping, a negative and demonizing stance towards SDSM was noticeable (16), and a positive one for VMRO-DPMNE (5). The stories concerning the project 'Buy a house – for young people' (3) and employments (4) are favourable for VMRO-DPMNE.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The monitored period on Alfa television was mainly in the sense of showing off the opposition as criminal, a creator of false affairs, inconsistent and manipulative, and its high officials as abusers of their functions. This was made through the topics of the fake IDs (December 21st: Spasovski had intensive communications with the suspect forgers), the materials from the wiretapping that Zaev possesses (December 2th: for some of the experts it is becoming more and more obvious that the special prosecutor's office is dancing to the tune of SDSM), the employments or other occurrences in the ministries where the opposition has their high officials (December 19th: the opposition ministers are obstructing the work of the institutions where they entered without being elected), etc. Every day of the monitored period, without exceptions, two to three stories were dedicated to these topics at the very start of the news. There were a total of 29 negative and demonizing contents towards SDSM and the opposition. In parallel to this, numerous promotional materials for the government were also broadcast, a total of 36 stories with a positive, favourizing or apologetic tone towards the government, concerning its projects (December 21st: when asked whether there was an attempt to obstruct the investigation, Cavkov was clear – the build institutional capacity and the systemic dynamic prevents from any kind of attempt or intrusion). Ten stories were aired from the genre analysis/commentary, nine of which were accusatory towards to opposition (December 23rd: Spasovski acts as a special prosecutor, he opened an investigation himself), and one was favourable to the government (December 21st: increased salaries and serious investments in equipment and human capacity made in the health system).

Using sources: 34 stories with one source were aired, 22 stories with two or more sources that are not with differing views and nine stories where the sources were opposed. The stories with one source were mostly statements or announcements from politicians, the government, the opposition, the prosecution or from other entities. With two or more sources that are not opposed were mostly stories when a high official of the government took part in an event along with another subject (December 19th: A celebration of St. Nicholas in Prilep, with mayor Marjan Risteski, HH Petar and other sources). The opposed statements could be mostly found when the government and the opposition were shown in the same story (December 21st: Zaev says that he will hand over the wiretapped materials once the conditions are met and Gruevski that the special prosecution will be with constant security detail). As far as using analysts goes, in these cases there is one that stands against the statement of a representative of the opposition (December 19th: Zoran Zaev and Aleksandar Pandov on the intercepted materials), or two that hold the same ground (December 22nd: Risto Nikovski and Vladimir Bozinovski gave positive comments about the address of the president Gjorge Ivanov). There was manipulation with the sources, when using ‘sources from the investigation’, and when quoting other media (Pres 24, Sitel) with accusatory content for the opposition, when they themselves call upon their sources (December 23rd: Pres 24 is communicated that during the arrest, the suspects for the falsified IDs contacted Zaev and Spasovski).

Direct addresses: The Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski was shown in eight direct addresses and one transmitted announcement from him personally. There were also eight addresses from the leader of the opposition Zoran Zaev, however the situation is anything but balanced out. In most cases, audio recording were aired from Zaev in stories where his standpoints were being attacked, or collages were used from old statements given for Alfa or for other televisions, to which the full context cannot be identified. A part of the address of President Gjorge Ivanov was also aired, as was as a speech from the leader of GROM Stevco Jakimovski.

Audio-visual presentation: Stories were shown every day that contained audio-visual manipulation, and the most common example was the positive PR content to the benefit of the government. The examples are from promotions of the projects and activities of the government (‘Buy a house – for young people’ on December 19th, a new employment project on December 22nd), then projects or activities on a local level, however in municipalities where VMRO-DPMNE holds the power (December 19th, Ohrid is ready for the New Year), up to the visit of the Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski to the children from the Home for Children Without Parents (December 21st). Several consecutive days contents were shown from Facebook accounts of the suspects in the affair of falsified IDs in order to show their connection to the opposition. One day prior to the address of President Gjorge Ivanov, a promotional story about him was aired (December 20th). The reporting on the interpellation of the Minister of Health Nikola Todorov was an apology and a praise of his work (December 21st). Also, news about the building an expansion of a boulevard in Skopje was cued as a measure against the air pollution (December 23rd).

Instances:

- (December 19th, headline): The ministers from the opposition are obstructing the work of the institutions in which they entered without elections.
- (December 20th, cue): Zoran Zaev is still holding on to the so called bombs, and Katica Janeva is not requesting the illegally recorded conversations. For some of the experts it is becoming more and more obvious that the special public prosecution office is dancing to the tune of SDSM.
- (December 21st, headline): Joy for the children of the Home 11 Oktomvri. The Prime Minister gave them New Year packets; they gave back with an appropriate programme
- (December 24th, cue): Roundabouts, expanding streets and boulevards, bike trails and gasification of secondary schools, these is just part of the project of the City of Skopje.

(2) Second week (8 – 15 January 2016)

During the reporting period from the 8th to the 15th of January 2016, Alfa Television published a total of 102 stories referring to political actors, events and states. The television directed most of the attention to (1) the projects from the Government (20 stories), (2) whether the elections will take place or not (8 stories) and (3) the visit from European Commissioner Johannes Hahn, the new foreign investments, good indicators for the economy, as well as on the so called 'Affairs Factory' and the Inquiry Committee formed on that issue (6 stories each).

In most of the cases, in the reports about these topics there was notice of a positive and favourizing standpoint towards VMRO-DPMNE (41 instances), and then a negative and demonizing standpoint towards SDSM (10 instances).

Commentary and opinions in the news: In the course of the reporting period, in 14 stories a strong commentating tone could be observed in the stories, the cues or in both. In just one of those cases there was a favourable stand towards VMRO-DPMNE (January 15th: 'Four investments in four days, Prime Minister Gruevski attended the opening ceremony, he managed to find time for economy despite his packed agenda of political meetings'), and the other 13 were demonizing towards SDSM (January 9th: 'We may not have El Chapo, but we have Chaush, the scandal called the Affairs Factory linked to SDSM is reaching international dimensions'). Most common instances of positive and negative behavior could be noted in the stories where the ruling and the opposition party conflict with each other, and the position of the government are favoured, while the ones of the opposition are attacked: January 9th: 'There must be guarantee for the elections, otherwise Gruevski must not submit his resignation', 'The analysts are unanimous that all prerequisite for the elections have been met and that the opposition will attempt to convince that the impossible is possible, just so they may be postponed', January 11th: 'VMRO-DPMNE are underscoring that light must be shed on who was falsifying IDs and passports'... The television published five accusatory stories with commentating contents against the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs - Frosina Remenski, directly accusing her of breaking the laws (January 11th: 'Remenski reached the pinnacle of her unlawful work today and she introduced chaos in the ministry she is head of, was underlined by the portal Kurir', January 14th: 'Minister Remenski continues to politicize the Ministry, claims the portal Netpres'). To attack the Minister of Interior – Spasovski, the case with the murder of 19 year old Leard A. in Skopje was used, where initially one person was arrested, however was later on released when the real killer turned themselves in (January 13th: 'Now the public is wondering if this is how the professionals that the Technical Minister Spasovski appointed as chiefs of police are working').

Using sources: In most of the stories, only one source was used (50 stories), and in a third of them that source was a high official from VMRO-DPMNE (18 stories). Out of the stories with two or more sources, the bigger part were instances of harmonized sources or sources that are at least neutrally positioned to one another (31 stories), and very seldom they were opposed (4 stories). Sometimes (5 stories) there were two or more high officials from VMRO-DPMNE used as sources, in the same story. What was also noted was that the non-critical transmitting of contents that are an attack to the opposition, where the source is another medium continued (5 stories), these were mostly the portals Netpres, Press 24 and Kurir, which in turn, most often call upon their own anonymous sources.

Direct addresses: During the monitored period, direct addresses were aired only from the Prime Minister and leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (11 addresses). The exception was only the coverage of the meeting of the leaders of the signatory parties of the Przino Agreement with European Commissioner Johannes Hahn, when one statement was aired from all four, Nikola Gruevski, Zoran Zaev, Ali Ahmeti and Menduh Taci.

Audiovisual presentation: A typical way of audiovisual manipulation was when broadcasting promotional stories about the government and the ruling party, more specifically the reporting on Government projects that resembled more an advertisement, than informative news contents (January 8th: 'Help for young famers, for this year alone 1 million EUR are planned for agricultural business start-ups', January 13th: 'Self-employment grants, the unemployed persons with a business idea can apply', January 14th: 'Tomorrow is the starting day for the project 'Buy a house – for young people'). There was even a story that the people from Skopje visited Vodno in masses on Sunday, and the opportunity was used to insert in the story an announcement that the cableway will be extended (January 10th: 'This year the construction of the second

stage of the cableway that should connect Sredno Vodno to the settlement Kapishtec is to take place, the length will be 1 600 meters, and the investment is EUR 8 million'). Also, Prime Minister Gruevski was shown opening four factories during the monitored period.

Instances:

- (January 9th, analysis-commentary) The blurred image of the entire Affairs Factory, according to many, is about to be resolved, having in mind the contacts of Chaush with Sonja Verushevska, wife of the prime suspect in Coup – Zoran Verushevski
- (January 10th, headline) Speculations that SDSM are preparing violent scenarios are growing louder. Some of the activists shared public calls on the social networks.
- (January 10th, analysis/commentary) Previously photos were published from SDSM Party HQs where several people are practicing with bats, which was interpreted as preparations for violence. According to many, this is due to the poor rating of the opposition.
- (January 10th, report) The incentive for young farmers to get into agro-business is a true initial spark, manifested with this measure, which will lead to strong perspectives for Macedonian agriculture.
- (January 11th, cue/commentary) Following the example of the Technical Minister Spasovski who created chaos in MoI, now Minister Remenski, whose husband was promoted by Spasovski himself, is doing the same in Labor and Social Affairs, was announced by the portal Kurir
- (January 11th, analytical-reportage story) Over 11 000 people became employed so far through the project 'Macedonia Is Hiring', which goes to everyone's benefit.
- (January 14th, headline) SOROS admitted the fear that SDSM will lose the elections. NGOs that are under their cape asked for a postponement from Hahn
- (January 15th, headline) Four days, four investments. MTIES will employ 100 people. The Prime Minister in his agenda packed with political meetings, also made time for the economy.

(3) Third week (16 – 22 January 2016)

During the reporting period from the 16th to the 22nd of January 2016 a total of 80 stories were aired on Alfa television that refer to political actors, events or situations. The television focused most of its attention to: the scheduled early parliamentary elections (31 stories and 3 more stories about the election of a new Government), the projects of the Government and other national and local authorities (13 stories), the activities of Nikola Gruevski as President of VMRO-DPMNE and the celebration of the holiday Vodici (6 stories each).

In most of the stories about the dominant topic of the week, the elections taking place, a strong favourizing stand was observed towards the positions of VMRO-DPMNE or an accusatory stand towards those of SDSM. The stories about government and other projects, as well as the activities of Gruevski are completely favourizing towards VMRO-DPMNE.

Commentary and opinions in the news: During the reporting period, the television had a positive and favourizing attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE and their high officials in 50 stories, and a negative, accusatory and demonizing attitude towards SDSM and their high officials in 37 stories. In 17 cases there was notice of a strong commentary tone in the stories, in the headlines, or in both, more precisely in 12 stories about the attacks on SDSM (January 16th: 'When leaving the negotiations, the leader of SDSM could not hide a facial expression that gave out severe depression and strong annoyance due to the attitude of Brussels and the three other participants in the negotiations') and in 5 stories in favourizing VMRO-DPMNE (January 22nd: 'The Technical Prime Minister immediately got to work on organizing the elections on April 24th').

Favourizing and demonizing political entities was mostly reflected in the reporting about the topic of early parliamentary elections, in which strong, even vulgar attacks were made on the standpoint of SDSM to postpone the elections (January 17th: 'Two days after the charlatan destruction of the Przino negotiations, the expert public and the people are looking for a way out of the imposed crisis, one of the options is a healer to heal Zaev's phobia of elections'). The attacks on the stands of the opposition and on the opposition itself also included the broadcasting of speeches from leaders of smaller parties that are in coalition with VMRO-DPMNE, which also included elements of hate speech (January 17th: 'After all of this the entire nation is

tapping their feet in place and waiting to see what the boy from Murtino will say, who is 30% human, 30% pardoned criminal, 30% bribe-taker under investigation, and he doesn't even know what is the rest of him', January 20th, Zivko Jankulovski: 'You cannot come to power through blackmail, illegal methods and the mercenaries from the so called NGO sector')

(2) The specific thing about this period was that not only were the reports about Government projects formulated with the language of marketing (January 18th: 'There is no end to government projects aimed at reducing unemployment, i.e. promoting employment'), but also the monitoring of the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski continued even after he no longer was Prime Minister (January 20th: 'Gruevski said before the Union of Young Forces of VMRO-DPMNE that the good of the people is at stake. The promise was supported with actions').

The negative stand towards the ministers in the Government appointed by SDSM continued (January 21st: 'They run from elections, however they like all other perks that come from the Przino Agreement, after a three-day delay an official oath of Remenski and Spasovski'). However, apart from the usual form of non-critical transmitting of accusatory contents towards them from web portals (January 17th: 'The portal Deneshen.mk writes about the work of the Technical Minister Remenski that is utterly unprofessional and reckless'), this also took on another form. In the news that the Serbian Minister of Interior Nebojsa Stojanovic visited the refugee camp near Gevgelija, the fact that he was accompanied by the Macedonian Minister Spasovski was completely ignored. A statement was shown only from Stefanovic, but not from Spasovski, who could only be seen in the frame and was not mentioned at all by the journalist.

Using sources: Throughout the entire monitored period, the television aired only one story in which the sources have different or opposing viewpoints (January 16th: 'SDSM has a phobia of elections'), that included European Commissioner Johannes Hahn, the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev and citizens. 40 stories total were with one source, and the biggest part was high officials of VMRO-DPMNE, in 12 stories. Using more sources, however without opposed views, were 28 stories, in 6 of which there two or more high officials of VMRO-DPMNE from different levels of authority.

The television mainly reported the opinions of the political leaders regarding the issue of early parliamentary elections, however in separate stories, which is why there are a high number of stories with only one source. Analysts or specialists in a certain field were used three times, as only sources in the stories, with the intention to present that as a general opinion. In three stories the sources were web portals, whose accusatory content towards the opposition was communicated non-critically.

Direct addresses: A total of 11 direct addresses were aired, five were from the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, three from the opposition leader Zoran Zaev, and one from the presidents of DUI Ali Ahmeti, of GROM Stevco Jakimovski and of PODEM Zivko Jankulovski. The leaders of GROM and PODEM, coalition partners of VMRO-DPMNE, had the role of demonizing the opposition, and in their speeches there were elements of hate speech.

Audiovisual presentation: The stories that monitor the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski with the same intensity as when he was Prime Minister are the most typical example of audiovisual manipulation. Then followed the stories about the Government or other institutions managed by people from VMRO-DPMNE, using the language of marketing.

Instances of favourizing or demonizing audiovisual contents:

- (January 16th, headline) The people have come to a boiling point. Harsh judgment of the charlatan behavior of SDSM;
- (January 16th, commentary) When leaving the negotiations the leader of SDSM could not hide a facial expression that gave out severe depression and strong annoyance due to the attitude of Brussels and the three other participants in the negotiations;
- (January 17th, headline/commentary) On social networks jokes are made about healers healing Zaev's phobia of elections. They say medically that phobia is treated by facing the fear, in this case by going to elections;

- (January 20th, cue) European representatives heightened the security measures after some of pro-opposition media started an intense campaign against the diplomats;
- (January 21st, report) Money for construction, a plot; what is left is only the blueprint for the house. The state has a solution for that too – ready and detailed building plans free of charge are offered by the Ministry of Transport and Communications, which also saves money for an architect. So far 9.000 citizens downloaded the blueprints for 6 different types of tract houses with different square footage;
- (January 21st, headline/commentary) And what is hiding behind the demands for total media darkness and classic censorship of Macedonian media.

(4) Fourth week (23 – 29 January 2016)

During the reporting period from the 16th to the 22nd of January 2016, a total of 82 stories were aired on Alfa TV that referred to political actors, events or states. Most of the television's attention was focused on: the new measures and projects of the Government and the public institutions (14 stories), the activities of the leader of VMRO—DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (12 stories) and on the implementation of the early parliamentary elections (10 stories), and to a smaller extent on the work of the ministers appointed by SDSM Oliver Spasovski and Frosina Remenski (7 stories), the special prosecutor Katica Janeva (8 stories), the media (4 stories), etc. A strongly emphasized favourizing position was noted in most of the cases when reporting on the first three topics, while a negative and demonizing in the others, above all against the opposition and the special prosecutor.

Commentary and opinions in the news: According to the number of stories in the news shown on the television during the monitored period, the stories with a positive and favourizing content for VMRO-DPMNE prevailed (34 stories) followed by the ones showing a negative and demonizing stand towards SDSM (26 stories). However, according to intensity, the attacking of the opposition was stronger than the support for the government, which could be seen in the stories that included commentary content, whether it was their own or transferred from other media. In 11 such cases the opposition was under attack (January 29th: 'The Hadzibulic family members in the security detail, with Chaush and the Bulgarian falsifier Chipev at the table, the leader of SDSM – a magnet for criminals, now caught in the company of Dzeljadin Jusufi who is wanted by the police for crimes for three years now'). The intensity of monitoring the activities of the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski has not decreased, although he no longer holds an executive position in the state, but is just a party leader. In the centre of attention at the beginning of the week was his address before the Women's Union of VMRO-DPMNE, a speech that caused a lot of reactions, however the television conveyed and pointed out his most fierce and most controversial parts (January 24th: 'With foul play and manipulations one cannot win trust and cannot get to power. On April 24th the revenge of the people will come, was said by Gruevski from the speaker's podium at the 16th annual conference of the Women's Union of VMRO-DPMNE'). The line of political marketing in these and in other stories was crossed multiple times (January 29th: 'A new Municipal Hall for marriage registration, a big reading hall and a reconstruction of the University Library St. Clement of Ohrid are the other projects announced by the President of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski. Politics is not about the words you say, it is the work you accomplish, was said by Gruevski').

Generally speaking, there were three types of negative and accusatory contents directed towards the opposition. The first one was the accusations for the work of their ministers in the Government (January 23rd: 'A scandalous fabrication of the Minister of Interior – Oliver Spasovski is the alleged affair for around 70 000 falsified drivers' licenses'). Then, there were the accusations towards SDSM for being related to crime (January 27th: 'The journalist from Focus who was working on the affair with the fake passports was in direct communication with Zahir Bekiri – Chaush, member of SDSM and a primary suspect in the Affairs Factory and in whose home the passports were made, is written by Kurir'). The third type was the stories for an alleged conspiracy between the special prosecutor Katica Janeva and the opposition leader Zoran Zaev (January 23rd: 'Tandem Janeva – Zaev. Are the specialists following a scheme to get around the laws. An analysis of the special hope of Zaev'). Furthermore, April 24th was favourized as the date for the elections, for which SDSM said wasn't suitable (January 26th: 'People with knowledge on the topic are convinced that the opposition will not stop setting terms, day expect every day for news ones to be delivered, all in order to avoid April 24th, because they are aware that another debacle awaits them').

Using sources: Most of the stories (43 stories) had only one source, and around a third of those had a source who was a representative or a high official of the party VMRO-DPMNE. Then followed the stories with two or more sources whose opinions did not clash (20 stories), and with one half of them (10 stories) the sources were two or more high officials from VMRO-DPMNE who supported or complemented each other. The least number of stories had opposed positions (7 stories). The television continued to use other media (6 stories) as sources in stories that fiercely attacked the opposition.

Direct addresses: Nikola Gruevski is the only leader of a political entity whose direct addresses were aired on the television during the monitored period. He was shown in six addresses, and the announcements on his Facebook account were also followed. From the leader of the opposition Zoran Zaev two old statements were shown regarding the affair about fake passports, in an accusatory context.

Audiovisual presentation: The intense monitoring of political activities of the President of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, as well as his involvement in the activities of state or local bodies, remained as the main form of audiovisual manipulation in this period as well. Another form was the hidden promotional content. For instance, in a story about safety in traffic (January 25th: ‘Through investing in roads to a smaller number of traffic victims) more was said about government projects than traffic issues. Then, in a story about external testing (January 26th: ‘Over 7 thousand secondary school graduates took the external examination today’) contents were inserted about promotional activities of the Deputy Minister of Education Spiro Ristovski.

Instances:

- (January 23rd, headline) SDSM will use any means to score cheap political points. Analysts give a reminder that it is not the first time for the socio-democrats to make unreasonable moves and to harm the international reputation of Macedonia;
- (January 24th, cue) For VMRO-DPMNE as a party, the question of preparing for the pre-elections campaign also brings about the question of an election promise and keeping one’s word;
- (January 25th, analytical-reportage story): The Government wants to reproduce the positive examples of the industrial zones in Ilinden, Bitola and other municipalities throughout the whole of Macedonia;
- (January 27th, cue) SDSM is trying to bargain, and they are bargaining for power over the media. The opposition party decided to accept the methodology that will be proposed by SEC for revising the elections register, only if VMRO-DPMNE accepts the amendments to the Law on Media that they are proposing;
- (January 28th, analysis/commentary) Such irony in the position of SDSM of not accepting the model of revision of the electoral registry if the other parties accepted the censoring law of Van Heute on the media. In other words, this means – let us have control over the media so we can agree on revising the electoral registry;
- (January 29th, headline/commentary) And Technical Minister Spasovski is not giving up easily on the promotions of Remenski’s husband and party acolytes, among which was the police officer who got criminal charges for abusing witnesses while following political instructions.

10. Kanal 5

(1) First week (19 – 23 December 2015)

In the monitored period from the 19th to the 24th of December, Kanal 5 television aired a total of 65 stories that refer to political actors. Strongly prevalent was the topic of the falsified IDs (14 stories), then followed the promotional stories for the government’s project ‘Buy a house – for young people’ (5 stories), and Zoran Zaev not handing over the materials from the wiretapped conversations that are in his possession to the Special Prosecutor Katica Janeva (4 stories), a case that was later on linked with and continued as part of the affair with the falsified IDs. In most of the stories on these topics, a negative, accusatory and demonizing stance towards SDSM was noted (15 stories), and a positive and favourizing stand towards VMRO-DPMNE (10 stories).

Commentary and opinions in the news: A positive and favourizing stand towards VMRO-DPMNE or towards the high officials of this party was noted in 27 stories that the television aired, while a negative stand towards SDSM and its high officials was shown in 16 stories. SDSM were criticized mainly about their connection with the ones taken in for the affair with the fake IDs (December 21st: Spasovski had intensive communication with the suspects, December 22nd: Zaev also associated with the suspects from the scandal), then about not handing over the materials to Janeva (December 20th: according to the experts, the special prosecution is a branch of SDSM), about politicized employments in the institution where the opposition had pointed out their representatives as per the Przino Agreement (December 19th: Spasovski filled the cabinet with party personnel from SDSM) and on other topics. The apologetic stance towards the Government is mirrored in the promotional reporting about the project 'Buy a house – for young people' (December 20th: the mega project of the Government should solve the housing issue of young people) and about other projects, as well as in the reporting on the decision to raise the salaries of the police (December 21st) and the medical staff (December 24th). One story was also noticed with a neutral supported criticism towards a high official

of VMRO-DPMNE, towards the mayor of Valandovo Nikolce Curlinovski, for a road that was not built (December 20th: when it rains, the children from Gorno Josifovo do not go to school). This is a very rare, having in mind the general tendencies of the television. It also aired four stories from the hybrid genres analysis-commentary and cue-commentary, three of which were an attack to the opposition, and one was positive for the government.

Using sources: For more than half of the stories (31) on source was mainly used, and these were statements from politicians or high officials from the Government, or announcements. For a third (21) two or more sources with the same or at least not opposed standpoint were used, mostly from reports about events at which state or other high officials were present, and other persons. For only seven stories there were opposed opinions. Notice was made of a tendency to quote other media with accusatory content directed towards the opposition (the fake ID affair, political employments, etc.) which in their turn call upon unnamed sources. Mostly in these cases the portal Pres 24 was quoted (December 19th: Spasovski is filling MoI with partisan soldiers, December 22nd: according to the portal, with the recently revealed details from the case 'Affairs Factory' it is becoming clear why Zaev is not abiding by the Przino Agreement), and then the television Sitel (December 21st: Oliver Spasovski was in intensive communications with the suspects) and the newspaper Dnevnik (December 24th: the Affairs Factory had an administrators approach to some portals that are close to SDSM). The contents from other media were transferred non-critically, and it did not seem as if they had made an attempt to hear from the other side that is being accused or attached by said contents. In both cases the opinions of analysts were used, in one case it was one analyst, and in the other there were two with the same standpoint.

Direct addresses: The simple calculation shows that more addresses were aired from the leader of the opposition Zoran Zaev (10) than the Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski (9), however in most cases it was pieces from old statements of Zaev given for Kanal 5 or in interviews for other televisions, without being able to establish the context in which they were made, and they were used to supplement accusatory stories of the opposition (December 20th: more than 10.000 conversations that go years back: over 20.000 were the subject of wiretapping; approximately 600.000 conversations, we published 1000, 1100). One address was aired from the leader of GROM Stevco Jakimovski, and of course from the President Gjorge Ivanov, who gave his annual speech in Parliament.

Audio-visual presentation: The basic form of manipulative audiovisual presentation continues to be the presentation of promotional contents for the government as informative contents in the news (December 21st: Prime Minister Gruevski gave packets to the children from the Home for Children Without Parents 11 Oktomvri, December 22nd: promotion of a new employment project) etc. In this context, especially striking were the stories about the project 'Buy a house – for young people'. In the parts of the headlines that referred to them and in the stories, all days when they were aired (December 19th, 20th, 22nd and 23rd), drone footage was shown from newly built settlements with luxury houses that looked like a part of a commercial, however it was never mentioned what settlement that was and where it was located. Also, in the stories about the connection of the leader of the opposition Zaev and the Minister of Interior Spasovski with the persons taken in for the affair with the fake IDs, materials from Facebook

accounts were used.

Instances:

- (December 19th, report): Taking in the party army on the expense of the country, i.e. the Ministry, is costing the citizens over 10.000 euro per month, in line with the fact the SDSM officials receive monthly salaries of approximately 1.000 euro.
- (December 20th, cue): The questions is also raised whether the Special Prosecution has turned into a political player and has transformed into an extended arm of SDSM, instead of being a body for revealing crime
- (December 20th, cue): The mega project of the Government that will start in February should resolve the housing issue of young people up to 35 years of age.
- (December 21st, headline): Countless wishes and smiles of the children from the Children's Home 11 Oktomvri. Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski wished them health and lots of happiness
- (December 24th, cue/commentary): As it was published on one of the Macedonian portals, the Affairs Factory had an administrator's access to some portals close to SDSM, through which portals a series of lies were presented to the public.

(2) Second week (8 – 15 January 2016)

In the reporting period from the 8th to the 15th of January 2016, a total of 89 stories were aired on Kanal 5 that pertained to political actors, events or states. Most of the television's attention was focused on (1) Projects of the Government and investments (29 stories), (2) the meeting Gruevski-Biden (6 stories), (3) the political crisis and the elections (3 stories) (4) the visit of the European Commissioner Hahn and the MEPs (9 stories).

During the reporting period, the television had a positive and favourizing stand towards VMRO-DPMNE and their high officials in 41 stories, and a negative, accusatory or demonizing stand towards SDSM and their high officials in 12 stories.

Commentary and opinions in the news: In all instances of reporting on the most frequent topics (government projects, investments and the meeting Gruevski-Biden) a positive and favourizing position towards VMRO-DPMNE and its high officials could be noted. The most common examples were using tones of *praise* when reporting about state projects, reporting them as if they are not an obligation of the state, but as achievements or good will of the Government and the ruling party (January 9th: 'A new mammography machine in the General Hospital in Ohrid', January 15th: 'Misajlovski: 48 local roads were reconstructed and built', January 15th: 'Reconstruction of the Ossuary in Veles', etc.). This behavior was also visible in stories in which there was no mention of political entities, however they did talk about project that are generally known to be implemented by the Government (January 11th: 'Over 11 000 jobs through Macedonia Is Hiring'). *The demonizing* position towards the opposition in some cases went as far as slandering for performed crimes. In a story regarding a break-in in the newsroom of the portal Kurir (January 12th: 'MoI should find the crooks who stole equipment from Kurir's newsroom'), the following was added – 'the staff claims that in the past period they were the target of pressure and threats from the largest opposition party'. In other cases, the slandering behavior was not constructed through contextualizing, but it was much more direct (January 10th: 'Is the opposition preparing violent scenarios?'). In the news on January 12th, the guest was the leader of the opposition Zoran Zaev, and the interview was remembered after the statement of the Editor Lidija Bogatinova that 'this would not have happened if he was not ordered to do it'.

Using sources: For most of the stories, only one source was used (31 stories), and for half of them the source was a high official of the Government from VMRO-DPMNE (16 stories). Out of the stories that had two or more sources, they were more often in congruence or at least with a neutral position between the two (25 stories), and more seldom they were opposed (12 stories). Sometimes (7 stories) two or more high officials of the Government from VMRO-DPMNE were used as sources in the same story. What also continued was the non-critical reporting of accusatory contents towards the opposition with other media used as sources (most often these were the portals Press 24 and Kurir), which in turn call upon their own anonymous sources (January 14th (the source was Kurir): 'New information about the politicization that is ongoing in the

authorities for social welfare.’, January 9th (source Press 24): ‘According to the data, it is most likely that Bekiri funded some of the activities of the party through a criminal network’). Most often the impression is that there were no attempts made to hear out the other side.

Direct addresses: The large discrepancy between the number of aired direct addresses from the Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski and the other political entities continued. During the eight-day monitoring period the television aired as many as 22 addresses from Gruevski, sometimes two addresses per story (when they promoted the foreign investment and one older one, when he announced it). There were four direct addresses from the leader of DUI Ali Ahmeti and three from the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev, including the interview he had on this television.

Audiovisual presentation: The main type of audiovisual manipulation is broadcasting stories that promote the Government and the ruling party. The distinction between them is even erased, so in stories regarding state projects inserts are placed from rallies of VMRO-DPMNE (from January 11th: ‘Over 11 000 people were employed through the project ‘Macedonia is hiring’), or speeches from the Prime Minister Gruevski on party rallies. Classic advertisements for the Government Projects continued to air in the news, especially for the project ‘Buy a house – for young people’ (four stories on the 11th, 12th, 14th and 15th of January), in which there are detailed elaborations on the terms, government representatives are allowed to promote themselves, satisfied passers-by are interviewed and there are continuous re-runs from a drone video in a new settlement with luxurious houses, and it is unclear where that video was taken from.

Instances:

- (January 8th, cue) 2015 was a very successful year from the perspective of sports, administration and structure.
- (January 10th, analysis-commentary) Is the largest opposition party preparing violent scenarios once again?
- (January 10th, report) The owners of the buildings are satisfied with the Government’s project. Their houses are protected and today they are a real attraction for tourists.
- (January 12th, headline) A historical day for Veles. 1000 new jobs in the production plant of former Porcelanka in Veles
- (January 12th, interview with Zoran Zaev) Actually this interview, how shall I put this, would not have happened, if you were not ordered to do it. We know the reasons behind your presence here.
- (January 14th, report) Oliver Spasovski showed once again today how incompetent he is, he embarrassed himself and the party he represents and he proved that he is not the Minister of Interior, but a part of the Affairs Production Factory, was stated in the announcement from VMRO-DPMNE.
- (January 15th, report) Some of the public prosecutors stated for the newspaper Dnevnik that by making her announcement today, the Special Public Prosecutor Katica Janeva confessed to breaking the law by not making Minutes (Record) for the wiretapped conversations that were handed over to her.

(3) Third week (16 – 22 January 2016)

During the reporting period from the 16th to the 22nd of January 2016, a total of 62 stories were aired on Kanal 5 television that refer to political actors, events or situations. The television focused most of its attention on the predominant topic of the week – the scheduling of the elections for the 24th of April (29 stories and 4 more stories about the election of a new Government), then on the promotion of national and local projects (12 stories), and on the activities of the President of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski after he stepped down from the office of Prime Minister (7 stories).

In most cases of reporting about the first topic, the television favoured the positions of VMRO-DPMNE, and attacked the ones of SDSM. The stories that refer to the second and third most present topic were exclusively favourizing in nature.

Commentary and opinions in the news: In the course of the reporting period, the television took a positive and favourizing stand towards VMRO-DPMNE and their high officials in 21 stories, and a negative, accusatory or demonizing stand towards SDSM and their high officials in 11 stories. In four cases a strong

commentary tone could be observed in the stories, the cues or both, primarily accusatory towards the opposition (January 17th: ‘Zoran Zaev changed his opinion who knows how many times, he is giving contradictory statements and he went back on his own word and signature placed on the Przino Agreement’), and in fewer cases it was positive towards the government (January 16th: ‘The development of a country largely depends on the development of innovations. The countries that pay attention to innovations are ahead of others. The Government is in line with these trends’). The explicit behavior towards political subjects was expressed in several ways.

The topic of having as opposed to postponing the early parliamentary elections of April 24th completely dominated during the monitored period, and the television stood strongly in support of the standpoint of VMRO-DPMNE for the elections to take place (January 19th: ‘To put an end to the political crisis in the country through fair and democratic elections was also demanded by the citizens who are living for over a year in uncertainty and as hostages of the destructive policies of the opposition’). The arguments for postponing the elections, firstly those related to the feasibility of revising the electoral registry on time, were not only presented from a neutral standpoint, but were also demonized (‘The Director of the NGO Most – Darko Aleksov has the same standpoints as the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev, these standpoints of Aleksov told on Telma television are believed to cause suspicion, as is believed by several media, that Most is yet another organization of the SOROS Foundation’). Regarding the topic of elections, there was a broadcast of a part of the address of the leader of GROM Stevco Jakimovski, coalition partner of VMRO-DPMNE, with elements of hate speech towards the leader of the opposition (January 17th: ‘After all of this the entire nation is tapping their feet in place and waiting to see what the boy from Murtino will say, who is 30% human, 30% pardoned criminal, 30% bribe-taker under investigation, and he doesn’t even know what is the rest of him’).

The television continued with the non-critical coverage of the field activities of the President of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, just like when he was Prime Minister. This also refers to the cases when he was guest at the promotion of public facilities (January 22nd: ‘The leader of VMRO DPMNE Gruevski was also present today at the double tennis court in the settlement Senjak in Shtip’), and when it came to his party activities (January 20th: ‘Macedonia for young people, young people for Macedonia, the President of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski announced to the party’s youth division 5 new measures for young people’). Even the stories for expressing gratitude continued, although reduced in numbers, however this time they were not directed towards an abstract subject such as the Government, but directly towards the leader Gruevski (January 21st: ‘The students welcomed the measures promoted by the leader of VMRO DPMNE Nikola Gruevski’). There was even non-critical informing when his party activities were combined with state functions (January 21st: ‘Buy a house - for young people’ gathered at the same table the President of VMRO DPMNE Nikola Gruevski and the competent ministers and the mayors’).

Using sources: In most of the stories only one source was used (27 stories), and in around a third of them that source was a high official of the Government or a representative of VMRO-DPMNE (10 stories). Out of the stories that used two or more sources, they were mostly concordant or at least had a neutral stand between each other (19 stories), and on less occasions they were opposed (11 stories). Sometimes (6 stories) two or more high officials from VMRO-DPMNE were used as sources, in the same story. Analysts were consulted on two occasions, and in both cases they were the only ones and they defended the government’s positions. What continued with a reduced intensity was the non-critical transmission of contents that are an attack of the opposition, using other media as a source (the portal Kurir), which in turn often call on their anonymous sources (January 17th, source Kurir: ‘Minister Frosina Remenski, despite the chaos she caused in the social work centers, left the employees without insurance’).

Direct addresses: During the monitored period again the most direct addresses that were aired were from the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (9 addresses), and then come the leaders of SDSM Zoran Zaev and of GROM Stevco Jakimovski (3 addresses from each) and from Ali Ahmeti (1 address). What was symptomatic was the behavior of the leader of GROM Jakimovski, whose addresses in which he attacked the opposition or other subjects (SEC) were reported non-critically, although there were inconsistencies, even vulgarities, such as the statement against Zaev.

Audiovisual presentation: Broadcasting the activities of the President of VMRO-DPMNE non-critically, as if he is still Prime Minister, was the most characteristic type of audiovisual manipulation. The promotion of

government projects continued, using marketing language, as part of the news (January 16th: ‘The development of a country largely depends on the development of innovations, the countries that pay attention to innovations are ahead of the others’

Instances:

- (January 21st, analytical-reportage story) The unanimous decision of the Social-democrats to not participate in the elections of April 24th, and to keep their ministers and MPs in Government and Parliament until the dissolution, according to the experts is a continuation of their intention to overtake power without elections. People with knowledge on the subject assess that this is a new plan of the opposition to obstruct the elections.
- (January 17th, analysis/commentary) The opposition is running in panic away from confrontation with the people. Their leader demanded elections, he got guarantee from European Commissioner Hahn and from SEC fair and democratic elections can be held, however he is once again asking for their postponement.

(4) Fourth week (23 – 29 January 2016)

During the reporting period from the 23rd to the 29th of January 2016 television Kanal 5 aired a total of 78 stories that refer to political actors, events or states. The television focused most of its attention to the activities of the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (12 stories), then on the implementation of the early parliamentary elections (11 stories), on the work of the ministers of the Government appointed by SDSM, Oliver Spasovski and Frosina Remenski (11 stories), as well as on the events surrounding the Special Public Prosecution (8 stories).

When covering the first topic, the television not only had a positive and favourizing attitude towards the subject, but also some of the stories crossed the line into political marketing. Regarding the elections, generally two different standpoints were reported, however the idea of having the elections on April 24th was more emphasized, which is also the position of the Government, unlike the opposition. The ministers Spasovski and Remenski were accused of unprofessionalism, manipulation and breaking the laws, although there were stories where their side could be heard too, while the Special Public Prosecution was attacked, even blamed for conspiracy.

Commentary and opinions in the news: During the reporting period, the television had 'positive and favourizing stand' towards VMRO-DPMNE and its high officials in 18 stories, and a negative, accusatory and demonizing stand towards SDSM and its high officials in 13 stories. In six cases a strong commentary tone could be noted in the stories, cues or both, firstly accusatory towards the opposition (January 24th: ‘The two months as minister of Frosina Tashevska Remenski are quite enough to build a profile of a politician and a minister – a period that abounds in scandals, revenge, carelessness, political obstructions, is written by the portal’), or towards other subjects, such as the Special Public Prosecution (January 29th, taken from Kurir: ‘Opposite to the law, extremely biased and political, lacking evidence, associates of the Special Prosecutor Katica Janeva performed brutal pressures while extorting statements and depositions that did not match the actual state’), or towards the weekly magazine Focus (January 27th: taken from Kurir: ‘The portal writes that the option for the weekly magazine to have entered the fake passports affair with full knowledge and intention is not excluded, and that it’s not a matter of amateur unprofessionalism of a journalist who did not check his sources’). Three situations call for special underlining: Nikola Gruevski was not prime minister but just leader of a party during the entire reporting period, however this did not decrease the intensity of keeping up with his activities, non-critically and favourizingly, even when they did not differ from the period when he was at the head of the Government. He did not make promises, but announcements (January 28th: ‘Five new projects for the young person in several social domains were announced by the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski in front of a hall full of youths’), he was also followed on the social networks (January 27th: ‘The investment that was announced by the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski on his Facebook profile is worth 20 million dollars’), he was reported to for ongoing activities (January 29th: ‘At the start of the works also present was the president of VMRO DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, to whom the Mayor of the City of Skopje emphasized that the boulevard will get atmospheric sewerage too’), and gratitude was expressed to him (January 26th, Viktor Mizo: ‘I would like to thank Mr. Nikola

Gruevski for his vision, his perseverance'). His speech at the conference of the Women's Union of VMRO-DPMNE, which caused numerous reactions due to its fierceness, was not criticized, on the contrary, the most controversial parts were highlighted (January 24th: 'The people are wise, smarter than many services and their dug up exhibition pieces. That is why, on April 24th the punishment and the revenge from the people are coming').

A novelty was the fact that the television informed in at least one story a day about the activities of SDSM and they conveyed their standpoints. That, at times, even had a favourizing tone (January 24th: 'Spasovski, Remenski and Shilegov in Shuto Orizari'), in an attempt to show higher political balance.

Nonetheless, the continuous non-critical conveyance of severe forms of slander from web-portals, directed against the opposition (January 27th: 'The goal of Zaev's master plan was to compromise the ruling party by setting up cases, i.e. taking over the role of Chaush from Katica Janeva') or against their high officials (January 24th: 'Remenski caught in lie following Zaev's example), show that the television is far from balanced out in reporting on political entities.

Using sources: In most of the stories only one source was used (38 stories), and around a third of them had a high official of the Government or a representative of VMRO-DPMNE as a source (13 stories). When it comes to stories with two or more sources, they much more often were in accordance or at least had a neutral position one against the other (18 stories), and much more rarely they were opposed (8 stories). Sometimes (6 stories) two or more high officials from VMRO-DPMNE were used as sources in the same story. What continued with increased intensity was the non-critical transmission of accusatory contents against the opposition from other media as a source (the portals Kurir, Republika, Telegraf, the newspaper Dnevnik), and in some cases even an unnamed media source (January 27th: 'The media are publishing that recently a secret meeting was held between Zoran Zaev and Katica Janeva outside Skopje, at which meeting the master plan was agreed of the leader of SDSM for making the date election date an issue.')

Direct addresses: During the monitored period, a relatively small number of direct addresses from political leaders were aired. The president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski was represented for the most part (6 addresses, as well as 4 broadcast announcements from his Facebook profile). The leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev was broadcast three times, however only one of his announcements was from the reporting period. In two stories, on two different days, his old statements were repeated regarding the falsification of passports, in an accusatory context. One address was also shown from the President Gjorge Ivanov.

Audiovisual presentation: The most characteristic type of manipulative audiovisual presentation remains the following of the activities of the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, just as when he was prime minister. In five out of the seven days of monitoring, the news started with him. Another form of manipulation was also observed, inserting favourizing contents that is not related to the initial topics of the story. On January 26th, in a story about the visit of minister Nikola Poposki to Brussels, what was dominant was a commentary from the American website 'Daily Caller' that supports the Government.

Instances:

- (January 26th, report) The investment was first announced by the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski on his Facebook profile.
- (January 26th, cue) The Government cares about the health, and the opposition about the economic well-being of the restaurants and cafes.
- (January 27th, analysis/commentary) The goal of Zaev's master plan was to compromise the ruling party by setting up cases, i.e. taking over the role of Chaush from Katica Janeva.
- (January 28th, report) VMRO-DPMNE as a contender for running the Government again after the early parliamentary elections, in the last month and a half announced the implementation of a total of 14 projects only for young people, counting today's five announcements.
- (January 29th, cue) Young people greeted the new projects promoted yesterday by the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski.

V. CURRENT AFFAIR SHOWS

During the monitored period, the objects of observation were a total of 38 broadcast editions of 11 different shows that are aired on national televisions. Out of them, the object of in-depth analysis were only the shows that continuously favourize a specific political entity, i.e. that violate the journalistic rule for a professional distance from political entities, as well as the shows in which hate speech or a discriminatory and negative speech towards individuals or groups was noted.

Overall, the televisions in Macedonia provide space for public debate for the most current political issues in the country. Nonetheless, a general assessment is that the five pro-government oriented television channels (MTV1, MTV2, Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa) also insist in the current – informative shows to propagate primarily the views of the ruling political structures, and they either do not allow any space for oppositional standpoints and opinions or they attack and demonize them to an extreme. The most expressive examples in this regard are once again the shows ‘Jadi Burek’ on Sitel and ‘Milenko Late Night Show’ on Kanal 5.

What is most disconcerting is the position of the public service, i.e. the two television services MTV1 and MTV2. By definition and in compliance with the legal obligations, it is exactly this service that should provide the most space for political pluralism, i.e. a forum for public debate for all current issues, since it is financed and it serves all citizens. In Macedonia, the public service not only lost the leading role in this regard a long time ago, but just as the commercial televisions, it continuously serves the governing structures.

The issue that was the object of special analysis was whether the current-informative shows contain hate speech and does it come from the host or the journalists, or from the viewers or guests. The televisions should abide by the legal norms that do not allow for enticing or spreading discrimination, impatience or hate that is based on race, gender, religion or nationality (Article 48 of the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services) i.e. discrimination based on sex, race, skin colour, gender, belonging to a marginalized group, ethnicity, language, citizenship, social background, religion or religious belief, other types of belief, educational background, political affiliation, personal or social status, mental and physical disability, age, family or marital status, wealth status, health status or on any other grounds (Article 3 of the Law on Prevention and Protection Against Discrimination). The editorial staffs should take equal care to comply with these legal norms, regardless whether the shows are owned by them or an external production, because they are the ones with ‘editorial accountability for the selection of audio and audiovisual contents...’ (Article 3 paragraph 1 point 6 of the Law on Audio and Audiovisual media services).

The host or the journalist holds accountability even when the hate speech or the discriminatory speech is coming from viewers, in the sense that they must distance themselves from it, dispute it or contextualize such a speech. Otherwise, it would imply that they are in agreement with it and that they encourage it. In the show ‘Jadi Burek’ on Sitel, aired on January 20th, viewers called the opposition with the names ‘anti-Christis’, ‘Zaev – servant of Satan’, however the *host did nothing to distance himself nor did he warn the viewers about the offensiveness of such remarks*. In the show on January 9th, the open call for violence towards the opposition and towards the special prosecutor Katica Janeva from a caller, was not *followed by a clear distancing and declaring such violence as unacceptable*, rather it was said that such an act could cause for the elections to be postponed, which would go in favor of the opposition.

The host of that same show continuously discriminates on the basis of political i.e. other type of belief of all people that criticize the government and he names the media who criticize - ‘sorosoids’, and on several occasions ‘sorospii’ (‘sorosluts’). On the show on January 22nd he also used a strong negative and stereotyping speech, blaming this whole group of spreading hate towards a part of the people. By replacing theses, the host created here a rough logical manipulation in order to discredit the entity that is the object of his attack: he himself used disguised hate speech towards the group he blames for ‘spreading hate’. The group he discredited – ideologically already qualified in many previous public appearances of representatives of VMRO-DPMNE and journalists from pro-government media (as a traitor of national interests, a mercenary, communist, etc.), he now opposed in terms of values to another group of citizens, to

‘... all of us who are traditional, concerning the name, the language, the church...’.

An even more extreme speech was made by the host of the show ‘Milenko Late Night Show’ on Kanal 5. In the edition on January 15th, Nedelkovski for almost one third of the show crudely attacked the opposition and specific representatives from it, using negative qualifications, open personal insults and vulgarities. Through the attack on one individual, Nedelkovski discriminated against a whole group: ‘*Homosexuals are sick people and I believe they should be under medical care*’. Through this, he is seriously violating Article 3 of the Law on Prevention and Protection Against Discrimination. Both hosts continuously violate the basic principles set forth in the Code of the Journalists of Macedonia, especially Article 10 which stipulates that the journalist shall not ‘... speak in the language of hate and will not incite violence and discrimination on any basis (national, religious, racial, sex, social, language, sexual orientation, political...).’

VI. METHODOLOGY

1) Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The method applied in this research is based on the theory of framing that explains how the media frame the topics of the social and political life on which they report. The frame of reporting (news frame) is the “central idea” or “story line” that organises the journalistic text and gives meaning to the outlined events. It is a central organising idea in the informative content that provides context and suggests the essence of the issue, through selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration.

The reporting frame contains four aspects: (1) *Topic* of the informative report – that is included in the frame; (2) *Presentation* – scope and position of the report; in addition, elements that are also assessed in terms of the presentation are photos, quotes, headlines and sub-headlines; (3) *Cognitive attributes* – details of the points included in the frame; (4) *Affective attributes* – the tone of reporting.

The data collection on the quantity of informing or the time devoted to different political parties does not give a complete picture of the pluralism presented by the media. The public image of the political parties, candidates and leaders is not only shaped by the time they are granted, but also by the way they are presented. The evaluation of the approach or the ‘tone’ of the report shows the attitude or the approach of the media outlet to the specific political entity. However, this is not sufficient to assess whether the media outlet reports objectively and accurately. Continuous false reporting is one of the most serious shortcomings in the coverage of political events, which can only be identified by a comprehensive qualitative analysis, which involves complex methodological procedures (for example, comparison of the reporting with the actual events or monitoring of the reporting of several media outlets on the same event).

2) Methodological Approach Applied in the Research

This research aims to determine whether media outlets comply with the professional standards in reporting on political actors defined in the Code of Journalists of Macedonia and the codes of conduct of international organizations. The analysis should answer the following research questions:

- What is the extent of presenting commentaries and opinions in the news that favour or attack certain political positions (unsoundly, or when journalists themselves take sides).
- What are the most evident instances of favouritism or demonisation of the political entities in the news?
- What are the most common instances of manipulation with the sources? Are the opinions of the sources quoted in the news opposing or do they basically represent the same position.
- Which political entities are commonly presented with direct address in the news? Are some political positions too prevalent and others disregarded?
- Is a manipulative audiovisual presentation used in the news? What are its most common forms?
- Do the news and the current affairs programmes contain explicit calls to violence, negative speech and stereotyping of certain groups?
- Are the different positions on the debate topics adequately presented in the current affairs programmes? Do presenters/journalists favour or demonise certain political entities?

The concepts of “unbiased” and “balanced” reporting which actually intertwine need to be defined in order to answer these questions. This segment of the analysis uses the definitions and methodological guidance provided in the *Guidelines on Media Analysis during Elections Observation Missions* prepared in 2005 by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Human Rights Directorate and the Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) of the Council of Europe and the European Commission. The quantitative aspect of the balance relates to the scale or time in the news allocated by the broadcaster for reporting on the activities of a candidate or organiser of an election campaign, whereas with qualitative aspect relates to the approach or ‘tone’ of the reporting.

The subject of this analysis is not the quantitative, but the qualitative aspect of the balance – the approach or the way in which the media “frame” political actors during election campaigns. In addition, the content in the news and in the current affairs programmes containing speech that incites and reinforces stereotypes, discriminatory speech or hate speech towards groups and individuals is also subject to the analysis.

The method used to answer the questions on the manner of framing of political parties is *content analysis* that is defined as a comprehensive approach that focuses on the qualitative and quantitative aspects of media reports/texts. Additionally, the *critical discourse analysis method* is used to determine whether certain content contains hate speech or discriminatory speech of groups and individuals. It is a qualitative method that emphasises the analysis of the function and meaning of the media texts in the present social and political context.

The frame of the reporting of the media on certain political entity is determined after the presence of several elements is encoded in the analysed report: explicit expression of opinions of the journalist/news room on the stakeholders; manipulative use of films, images and sounds; presence and selection of direct address of the political entity; the number and position of the sources; and the main topic that dominates the report.

3) Sample and Implementation Time-frame

All central informative releases and informative programmes of the television broadcasters aired from the 19th of November 2015 to the 29th of January 2016 were subject to analysis.

Samples from the following media outlet were included in the analysis: MTV 1, MTV 2, Sitel, Alsat M, Telma, Alfa, Kanal 5, 24 Vesti, and TV 21.

4) Research Team

The research team includes 15 analysts and 3 researchers from the Institute of Communication studies.