



ИЗВЕШТАЈ ОД СЛЕДЕЊЕТО НА МЕДИУМСКИТЕ СОДРЖИНИ

12 МАРТ - 8 АПРИЛ 2016



Third Monthly Report
based on the monitoring of media content through the Rapid Response Media Mechanism
of the Institute of Communication Studies
(time-frame: 12thMarch – 8thApril2016)

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 endeavour 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 third monthly report on the political pluralism in the media covers the period between March 12th and April 8th, 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).

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

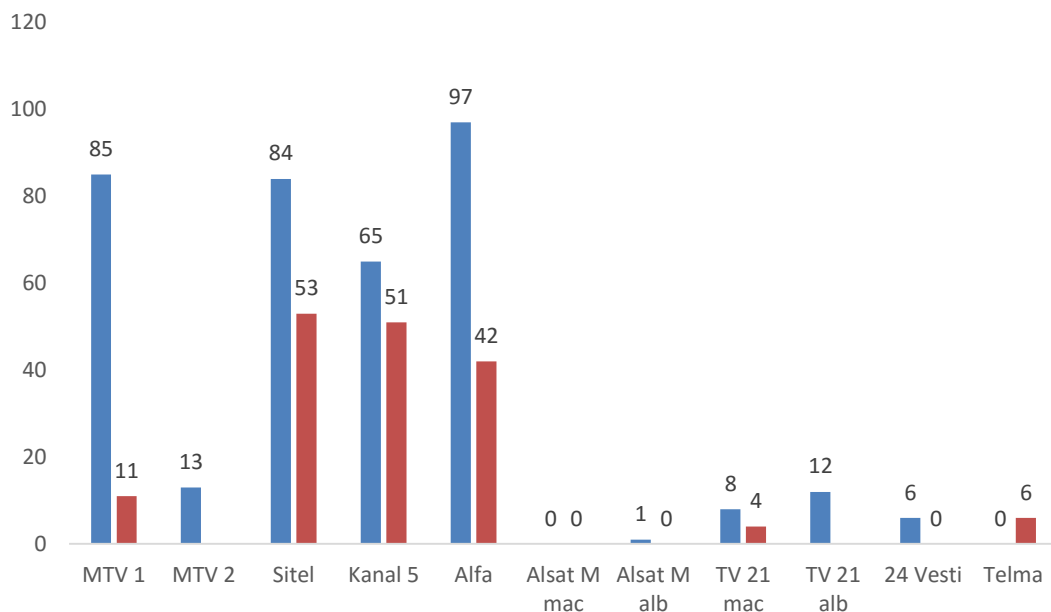
CONCLUSIONS

Empirical research studies on the role of the media in the political communication conducted in certain countries clearly demonstrate the impact of the media coverage on the public image of populist leaders and parties, which is crucial for their success on the elections.¹ Even though the impact of the media coverage is crucial for the image of any political leader or party, this is particularly true of leaders of populist parties. However, in hybrid regimes – regimes striving for open authoritarianism – the creation of pseudo-legitimacy to the government is almost exclusively based on the media constructs of that government.

In this regard, the reporting of the pro-government media during March and early April confirms this conclusion: the public image of the ruling VMRO-DPMNE, and especially its leader, Nikola Gruevski, depends entirely on their image and the image of their political opponents which are presented to the public by the media.

In the political communication strategy employed by the ruling party through the most influential television broadcasters, the role of the party leader is vital for two reasons: (1) in circumstances of mediatisation and popularisation of the politics, the success of the leaders of the populist parties depends on the image of them which is presented to public by the media; and (2) the populist and authoritarian parties require a strong leader and the party is organized around that leader who represents and disseminates the messages and the image of the party.

Nikola Gruevski, VMRO-DPMNE and the Government are in fact one and the same



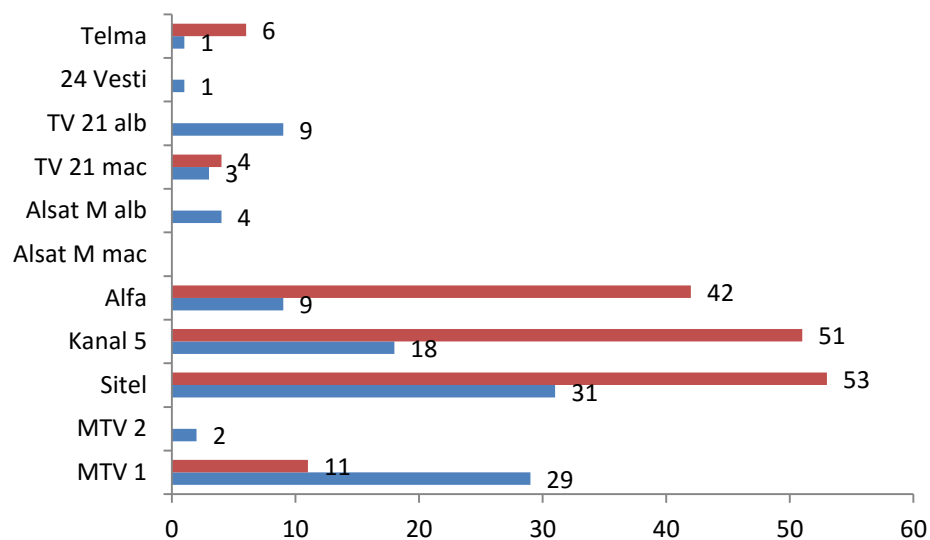
Number of news reports on the projects and accomplishments of **the ruling party** and the activities of **Gruevski**

¹Bos, Linda, Wouter Van der Brug, and Claes De Vreese. "How the media shape perceptions of right-wing populist leaders." *Political Communication* 28, no. 2 (2011): 182-206.

In this monitoring period, just like in the previous three months², one of the main objectives of the reporting of the television broadcasters close to the government was Gruevski, as a symbol of VMRO-DPMNE, to be as prevalent on the screens, to be presented in the most positive light, and on the other hand to conceal, neglect and attack all critical voices revealing incriminating facts and information on the operation of top officials from the ruling party, including the leader. Despite the fact that he resigned as Prime Minister, the media close to the government continued to intensively cover his field activities during which he talks about the projects of the government and promises citizens solutions to their problems. Thus, the boundary between the party and the state was erased.

Majority of the reports on the projects and accomplishments of the ruling party (371 reports) were broadcasted on MTV1 and the three private television broadcasters close to the government. Moreover, these televisions broadcasted a large number of reports on the activities of Gruevski in which he, despite only being a leader of VMRO-DPMNE, appears in the role of the head of government. Unlike the pro-government television broadcasters, the broadcasters with a neutrally critical position towards the government either provided no coverage or adopted a critically analytical approach to the topic.

The coverage of SDSM as a pretense of political balance



Number of news reports on the field activities (resembling an election campaign) of **SDSM** and **Gruevski**

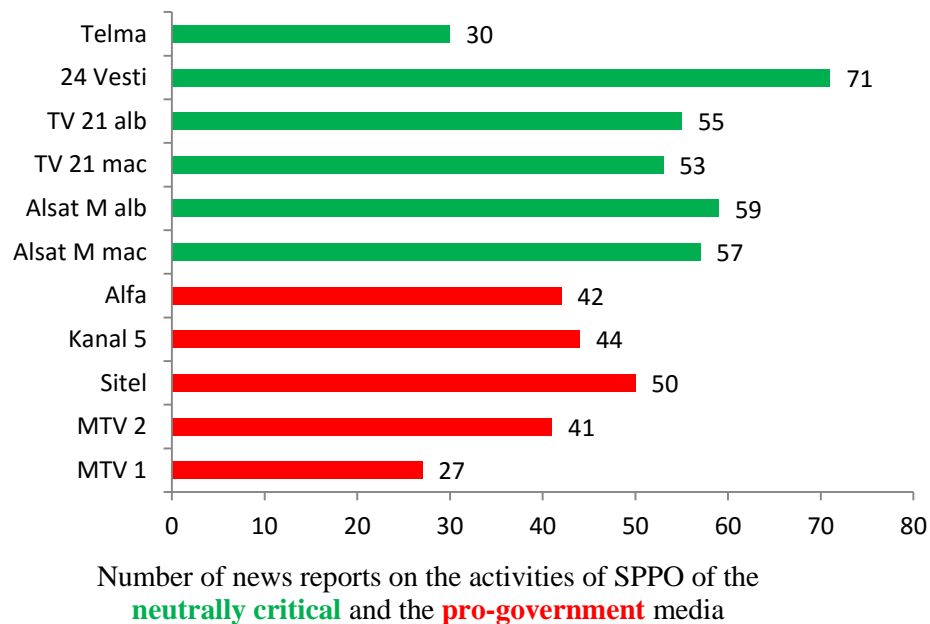
Even though the official election campaign has not started, the field activities of the opposition (resembling an election campaign) in this period were covered mainly by the pro-government television broadcasters. The media have no legal obligation to cover such activities in the pre-campaign period, which leads to the conclusion that the coverage is intended to create a false picture of a balance in the reporting, mainly to justify the intensive television appearances of Gruevski. The presented findings indicate that the number of news reports on Gruevski on the private pro-government broadcasters is much greater than the number of reports on the opposition.

² First, Second and Third Monthly Report based on the monitoring of the media content through the Rapid Response Media Mechanism of the Institute of Communication Studies, available at: <http://respublica.edu.mk/modem/MODEM-eden%2018%20noemvri%2023%20dekemvri.pdf> and <http://respublica.edu.mk/2016-03-08-11-03-03/96-second-monthly-report-based-on-the-monitoring-of-media-content-19th-december-2015-29th-january-2016>

MTV1 appears as an exception, as it attempts to demonstrate a different form of reporting. However, the conclusion that MTV1 broadcasted a huge number of reports (85) on the projects and accomplishments of the government is still valid. The neutrally critical broadcasters generally do not cover such activities of SDSM and Gruevski, and when they do, they mostly adopt a neutrally critical approach.

Discreditation of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office as a political tool of SDSM

The harmonised rhetoric of the pro-government broadcasters in the coverage of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office reflects the performance strategy of the ruling party which relies on the exploitation of fear and incitement of hatred towards organizations, groups or individuals who represent a “potential threat” (real, exaggerated or completely fictional) to the “state” or the “people”. However, the real purpose of such portrayal is actually to silence or relativise all critical voices that threaten the interests of the ruling elite and to establish social control. This manipulative strategy of using the media as a means of persuasion and for political propaganda is theoretically explained in the well-known “propaganda model”³.



Thus, the reporting on the two press conferences (“Torture” and “Fortress”) and the other activities of SPPO was framed in the same general frame which has been circulating for several months as Gruevski and VMRO-DPMNE’s position on SPPO and their main political opponents: “SPPO is an inquisitorial tool of SDSM”, SPPO “under full control of SDSM ... the main tool for political persecution of the people from VMRO-DPMNE, aimed at destroying its reputation, and the reputation of the leadership of VMRO-DPMNE”, “Katica Janeva’s SPPO has become a base for fostering party members of SDSM” and so on. On the other hand, the neutrally critical media covered the work of SPPO from the perspective of the “fight against crime”, “the rule of law” and so on.

³Herman, E.S. and Chomsky, N., 1988. Manufacturing consent: A propaganda model. *Manufacturing Consent*.

VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW AND OF THE ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

The same violations of the law and the ethical standards were detected as in the previous reports:

- MTV1 continues to violate the standards and principles of the programmes established in Article 111 and in particular the responsibility established in Article 110 of the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services “not to advocate or defend positions or interests of a specific political party... and to protect the programmes it develops and broadcasts from any kind of influence from the Government, political organisations or other centers of economic and political power”.

This violation is committed by all news reports wherein MTV1 uncritically promotes government projects and investments through propaganda and apologetic approach and with all reports that cover the activities of Gruevski while promoting government projects as a leader of VMRO-DPMNE.

- The three private television broadcasters Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa continue to violate the basic principles underlying the news programmes established in Article 61 of the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services of: (1) “objective and unbiased presentation of events, with equal treatment of diverse views and opinions, enabling free creation of a public opinion on individual events and issues” (Article 61, paragraph 1, line 9), and (2) “autonomy, independence and accountability of editors, journalists and other authors involved in the creation of programmes and editorial policy” (Article 61, paragraph 1, line 13).

Each of these televisions sided with and favoured the positions of the ruling party in the reporting on the relevant political developments that took place this week, especially on: the political crisis and the early parliamentary elections, the work of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office, the ruling of the Constitutional Court pertaining to the Law on Pardons and others.

- MTV 1 and the three private television broadcasters Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa continuously violate the basic principles established in the Code of Journalists of Macedonia and in particular Article 14 which stipulates that “reporting on political processes ... must be impartial and balanced.”

TOPICS COVERED IN THE NEWS

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

The conditions for holding the early elections on June 5th, particularly the issue of the revision of the electoral register, were the main topic in this monitoring period as well (a total of 621 reports). Like in the previous months, Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and MTV1 synchronously propagated the positions of the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE, that “the electoral register is correct”, that “the problems with the register are created by the opposition to evade the elections”, that the citizens who were inspected by the interviewers of SEC “were revolted that the opposition declared them ghost voters” and, thus, favoured the holding of the elections on June 5th without postponement (also the position of VMRO-DPMNE). The other media neutrally, critically and/or analytically inspected the issues with the electoral register, thus conveying various views on this issue in a balanced manner.

In the first monitoring week (from March 12th to March 18th), in the reporting on the *early parliamentary elections* (102 news reports), predominant were feature stories concerning the consolidation of the electoral register. Most television broadcasters neutrally conveyed the information that the initial review by the State Electoral Commission had shown that there were 495,000 suspicious voters, 190,000 of which only existed on record in the Ministry of Interior, with the exception of Alsat-M, which came out with direct accusations against the ruling party (18th March: ‘DPMNE used 195 thousand fictitious voters’). Kanal 5, Alfa and Sitel, on the other hand, came to the defence of the ‘accuracy; of the electoral register, dismissing the claims that it contains irregularities

(Sitel, 17th March: ‘Faced with the shock, Bihacka St. rushed to supply the media they control with Soros with false data according to which, Macedonia has over 500,000 phantom voters.’; Kanal 5, 14th March: ‘SDSM’s manipulations with the electoral register are unfounded.’).

In the following week (March 19 to March 25th), the topic of the early elections, especially the revision of the Electoral Register gained greater significance (148 reports). A clear distinction in the reporting on this topic was observed, with the pro-government Kanal 5, Sitel and Alfa, on one hand, defending the thesis that there are no problems in the electoral register, but that the problems are created by the opposition in order to evade the elections (Alfa March 20th: “The main question posed by the media is whether SDSM lost the trump card in its scenario – discreditation of the electoral register”, Sitel March 19th: “The real drama took place last night behind closed doors at the State Election Commission, once the representatives of SDSM in the Commission realised that the number of disputed voters in the revision of the electoral register is four and a half times lower than the number announced by the party”; Kanal 5 March 20th: “There have never been nor will there ever be phantom voters. It is all a farce so that SDSM can establish an alibi for its upcoming defeat, said the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski”). On the other hand, MTV1, MTV2, Alsat M (in Macedonian and Albanian) and Telma covered the topic just by conveying the views of the stakeholders. 24 Vesti reported along the same lines, although they also conveyed critical positions against certain actions of the SEC (March 21st: “Non-verification of the 124 thousand expatriates is a serious problem”). TV 21 in Macedonian problematises the question of the existence of “phantom voters” through expert debates (March 19th, “What about the disputed records in the electoral register?”, March

In the week from March 26th to April 1st, this topic was still central, with 126 news reports broadcasted on all monitored television broadcasters. The focus was on the revision of the electoral register as well as on the assessment of the domestic political representatives and the foreign diplomatic representatives on whether a favourable conditions for holding the elections on June 5th will be created. The reporting of Sitel, Alfa and Kanal 5 again differed from the reporting of the remaining broadcasters. The other media outlets covered and broadcasted the events neutrally, whereas the three television broadcasters favoured the holding of the elections on June 5th without further postponement (which is identical to the position of VMRO-DPMNE), and attacked SDSM on the topic of the revision of the electoral register, stating that the citizens inspected by the SEC were revolted that the opposition declared them ghost voters and that now they had to prove they are not. A distinctive example was MTV2, which accused of “Albanianisation” of the suspicious voters.

In the fourth monitoring week (April 2nd – April 8th), the interest in this topic culminated with almost twice as many reports (245) as the previous week. The topic became especially dominant with the dissolution of the Assembly and the officialisation of June 5th as the date for the early parliamentary elections. The television broadcasters Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa favourably and euphorically reported on the dissolution of the Assembly (Sitel April 7th “The Assembly was dissolved last night, elections on June 5th – applause on Bihackjka, music in front of VMRO-DPMNE”), whereas MTV1 and MTV2 covered it only as a current event. The remaining broadcasters analysed whether this also means aggravation of the crisis, upon the submission of the resignations of the ministers from SDSM and their rejection by the Assembly. A distinction in the informing was also observed in relation to the election date, as Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa clearly favoured this date and fiercely criticised the opposition on their determined efforts to postpone it.

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

Due to the report of SPPO submitted to the Assembly, the statements of the special prosecutor Janeva and especially due to the two launched investigations “Torture” and “Fortress”, the work of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (373 reports) remained one of the topics that were the focus of media attention in this monitoring period as well. The different ways in which these two investigative procedures were framed by the two groups of media were highly distinctive: the central topic in the reporting of the neutrally critical media were ‘the actions undertaken by SPPO for detection of crime and corruption of top politicians’, whereas the focus of the group of media close to the government was that “SPPO is a political tool of the opposition and that the accusations against the officials of VMRO-DPMNE are unfounded’. The first group of media covered these events at the beginning of

the news, whereas the second group later in the news, after the reports on accomplishments and projects of the ruling party.

The coverage of the first week (from March 12th to March 18th) mainly focused on the report of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office submitted to the Assembly and the Council of Public Prosecutors, on its six-month work (46 reports). While some television broadcasters focused on the substance of the work of SPPO, as in how many individuals are being prosecuted and on what charges (24 Vesti, 15th March: 'Janeva to file charges soon'; Alsat-M: 'Eighty politicians in Janeva's crosshairs'), others (Kanal 5, Alfa, Sitel) were more concerned with inconsistencies in the number of wiretapped communications mentioned in the statements of Janeva and of the opposition leader Zoran Zaev, as well as the expenses of the Special Prosecutor's Office, which, according to them, amounted to EUR 3,000 per day.

In the second monitoring week (March 19th to March 25th), the coverage of the topic intensified (115 reports), especially due to the public appearance of prosecutor Katica Janeva whereby, referring to the current state of the Electoral Register, the content of the 'bombs' of the opposition and many other circumstances, she brought into question the legitimacy of the past several election cycles and of multiple institutions. In this monitoring week as well, the Prosecution and Janeva were again subjected to uncritical (even insulting and libelous) attacks by the three television broadcasters Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa (Sitel, March 23rd: "That statement is a type of statement issued only by Beria. Beria was a special policeman, special prosecutor and logically a special judge of Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin", Alfa, March 23rd: "The social networks are boiling with anger and the expert public is appalled by the statements of the special prosecutor that the institutions in Macedonia are illegitimate"). 24 Vesti paid more attention to the possible obstructions posed on the SPPO (March 22nd: "A judicial precedent or a legal loophole is used for establishment of eligible criminal council that would decide on the cases of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office"). TV21 in Macedonian was analysing on March 25th, "Whether the SPPO stormed into the Central Register or not?"), whereas the other broadcasters only reported on the daily current events conveying the statements of all stakeholders.

In the third monitoring week (March 26th to April 1st), the topic became top of the public agenda (156 reports) due to the two new cases opened by SPPO: "Torture", wherein the former director of the Administration for Security and Counterintelligence, Sasho Mijalkov, and others are suspected of use of excessive force during the arrest of the leader of the party United for Macedonia, Ljube Boskoski, and "Fortress" wherein officials from the Interior Ministry, including the former Interior Minister Gordana Jankuloska are suspected of destroying an interception equipment. The media also covered the disagreements between the Special Prosecutor Katica Janeva and the Council of Public Prosecutors, and the discussion on the SPPO in the Assembly. The work of SPPO was the main topic in the most media, and some broadcasters (Alsat, 24 Vesti, Telma) devoted several reports a day, at the beginning of the news. The coverage was neutral and conveyed all the relevant information and reactions. Contrarily, the work of the SPPO was rarely the first topic in the news of MTV1, Alfa, Sitel and Kanal 5, and was often moved later in the news, after the promotion of the government measures and projects. Some of these television broadcasters (Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa) adopted a strong negative and demonising attitude towards the SPPO, depicting it as a political tool of SDSM, and questioning their professionalism and competence. In advance they dismissed the charges against the suspects, some of whom are top officials from VMRO-DPMNE.

In the same week, though closely related to the topic of the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, the proposed amendments to the Law on Criminal Procedure submitted by the coalition partners VMRO-DPMNE and DUI, stand out as a separate topic, with 23 reports. It concerns a decision under which the deadline for the suspects to prepare a defense is extended from 15 to 90 days. This topic appeared rarely in the news on Kanal 5 and MTV1 and was completely absent from Sitel and Alfa, but appeared more often on Alsat M, 24 Vesti, TV21 and Telma. These television broadcasts mainly conveyed the criticism from the opposition and from the experts that the purpose of the legal solution is to obstruct the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office.

In the last monitoring week (April 2nd to April 8th), the media attention to the work of SPPO decreased significantly (56 reports). All reports were related to the events subsequent to the detention of the Head

of the Fifth Directorate of MOI Grujevski, the reversal of the court decision and the appeal to the higher instances, as well as the appearance of the former Interior Minister Gordana Jankulovska at the hearing for the case “Fortress”. A common thread in the reporting of Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa was the early rejection of the allegations against the suspects. These three television broadcasters, outside of the current events, reported on this topic adopting a strong negative and demonising attitude, again presenting the SPPO as a political tool of SDSM and disputing its expertise and competence (Kanal 5, April 5th, “Katica Janeva’s SPPO is becoming a base for fostering party members of SDSM, family members of the close associates of Janeva, writes the web portal Kurir”, Sitel April 2nd “Janeva’s transcript of records reflects her capacity, says Professor Alexander Klimovski”).

(3) The Constitutional Court ruling on the Law on Amnesty

A topic which was directly related to the proceedings brought by SPPO and was pervasive in the media in the first monitoring week, from March 12th to March 18th (149 reports), was the *Constitutional Court ruling* to repeal the 2009 Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Amnesty, whereby the president is once again allowed to pardon felons convicted of electoral fraud, child molesting, terrorism, drug dealing, organised crime and other serious felonies. The events related to this topic were covered almost every days, from the civil society associations’ against the initiative, the protest and the counter-protest on the eve of the session, through the ruling, preventing the media to be present, the reactions of various segments of the national and international community, etc. Two narratives predominated. Some television broadcasters, such as Alsat-M and 24 Vesti, put the ruling in the current context of the *Titanic* case brought by the Special Prosecutor’s Office against senior VMRO-DPMNE officials precisely on charges of electoral irregularities (24 Vesti, 16th March: ‘Although the initiative was not marked *urgent*, the initiative found itself in front of the constitutional judges, at a time that the SPO opened an investigation of electoral fraud into government officials’). Other broadcasters, however, primarily Kanal 5, Alfa and Sitel, attacked the opposition for allegedly undermining the institutions and came to the defence of the counter-protest, which they portrayed as a practically spontaneous attempt of the citizens to defend the institutions against partisan pressure (Kanal 5, 15th March: ‘The state bodies under attack of the opposition and its exponents.’; Sitel, 16th March: ‘The citizens decided to put an end to the opposition’s destructive policies and yesterday appeared in large numbers to protect the Macedonian institutions. Rivers of people surrounded the Constitutional Court and did not allow the SDSM and Soros protesters to launch their destabilisation scenario.’; Alfa, 16th March: ‘Announcements to camp out and demolish the Constitutional Court fall through’). Moreover, they ignored the possible link of the ruling with the *Titanic* case. Both groups of broadcasters reported that at least one of the protests had been feigned. But the television broadcasters that were critical of the counter-protest organised by GROM aired footage of sandwiches being distributed, of sign-in sheets, as well as statements of citizens who did not know what they were protesting. The broadcasters that supported the counter-protest and attacked the protest, however, came out with similar allegations, but without audio-visual corroboration.

(4) Projects and accomplishments of the ruling party and the activities of Gruevski

In this period as well, the pro-government television broadcasters continued to strongly promote the projects and achievements of VMRO-DPMNE as a ruling party (288 reports), and the speeches and activities of Gruevski who, as an “actual” Prime Minister, met with citizens or announced and promised undertakings of the state bodies at public rallies. These reports cover artificially staged events in order for citizens to receive a more positive image of the Government. The other television broadcasters either provided limited coverage or critically framed these pseudo-events concocted by the government.

In the first week (from March 12th to March 18th), MTV 1, Sitel, Alfa and Kanal 5 were the only ones to report promotionally on measures and projects of the Government and other state and local institutions (67 news segments, with additional 2 segments on TV21), as well as to continually cover the field activities of the leader of the VMRO-DPMNE party Nikola Gruevski (35 news segments). Both groups of segments not only crossed the lines between reporting and political marketing, but also did not make any distinction between the state and the ruling party (MTV 1, 17th March: ‘New social housing to be built. The VMRO-DPMNE leader stated that soon there will be social housing in

Gostivar as well.’; Sitel, 14th March: ‘According to the VMRO-DPMNE President Nikola Gruevski, EUR 70 million are to be invested in the construction and reconstruction of these hospitals.’; Alfa, 12th March: ‘A new road, a new sewer system, building a motorway between Gostivar and Kičevo, over 1,000 new jobs are only some of the project that the VMRO-DPMNE President Nikola Gruevski discussed with the citizens of Kičevo and the Kičevo region.’; Kanal 5, 15th March: ‘Another project that the citizens of the Sopište Municipality asked from the VMRO-DPMNE President Nikola Gruevski is to be realised. The road between Sopište and Govrlevo to be built’).

The strong propaganda support for VMRO-DPMNE continued in the next week as well (March 19th – March 25th), mostly through the coverage of three topics: the actions and projects of the Government, the performance report of VMRO-DPMNE and the activities of the leader of the party, Nikola Gruevski. MTV 1, Sitel, Alfa and Kanal 5 were once again the televisions that most extensively reported promotionally on the *actions and projects of the Government* and other state and local institutions (71 reports) and which continually cover the *field activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski* (19 reports). In both cases, there was no differentiation between news reporting and political marketing or between the state and the ruling party (MTV1, March 20th: “The support for the innovative businesses strengthens the competitiveness of the economy. It creates companies that generate growth and create jobs”; Sitel, March 25th: “Citizens’ demands are being met and Gruevski’s promises from the visit to GorcePetrov are being fulfilled”; Alfa, March 24th: “Again free elaborations for legalization of facilities. The problem of about 5,000 citizens resolved upon Gruevski’s visit to the municipalities”; Kanal 5, March 25th: “The municipality of GorcePetrov is working on the implementation of the government project ‘Buy a House for Young People’, on the initiative of VMRO DPMNE and Gruevski for providing construction sites”). Favourable reports with a promotional tone for the Government, and especially for DUI were also broadcasted in the news on MTV2 and TV21 in Albanian language, whereas reports that criticise the government policies were broadcasted on Alsat M and 24 Vesti (the borrowing).

The performance report of the ruling VMRO-DPMNE (37 reports) for the ten-year governance dominated the four television broadcasters MTV 1, Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa, not only on the day it took place (March 20th), but also in the following few days, thus apart from the strong favoring, supporting and propagandistic tone, the reports constituted political advertising (Sitel, March 20th: “In yesterday’s public performance report, VMRO-DPMNE again demonstrated a new way of communication with the public, an approach that is a real novelty in Macedonia and the region. The party is the first and only in Macedonia at the end of each term of the Government to come out with a precise account before the citizens and report in detail on what has been realized from the program that was offered before the elections”; Alfa, March 20th: “Over 3,500 projects, reforms implemented in the past 10 years. VMRO DPMNE with a mega-report before the citizens”; MTV 1, March 23rd: “Low taxes, support for the domestic companies, foreign investments, 150 thousand job openings, reduced unemployment. Stavrevski reported on the work done in the economy”). Telma critically reported on the event, as the journalist concludes that “the report was full of comparisons – that VMRO-DPMNE for a decade did much more than the predecessors in all areas”. TV21 in Macedonian covered the topic a day after the event through a debate between two experts close to the ruling party (March 21st “The performance report of VMRO-DPMNE: For some perfect, for others a whitewash”) and 24 Vesti (March 21st, “The performance report of VMRO-DPMNE is a political marketing on the eve of the election campaign, whereby the party is trying to demonstrate strength and massiveness, claim some analysts”), whereas MTV2, Alsat M, and TV21 in Albanian did not report on the event at all.

In the third week, from March 26th to April 1st, this topic appeared only on six television broadcasters (a total of 77 reports). TV21 in Macedonian and 24 Vesti aired 4 or 3 reports on this topic, whereas the remaining 70 were broadcasted on Alfa, Sitel, MTV 1 and Kanal 5. The favouritism and promotion of the work of the Government, the uncritical reporting that equates with political marketing and cases when the regular duties of the state are portrayed as accomplishments of the Government were clearly identified. Part of this reporting was again the coverage of *the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski*, with 29 reports, all broadcasted only on the four televisions (Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and MTV1). Although Gruevski is not in public office, but is only a party leader, he was still presented as a man who announces decisions on matters of state competence (cheaper medication, allocation of agricultural land etc.), and who meets the requirements of the citizens in his field visits.

He was also depicted as a messenger who through his Facebook profile announces new foreign investment in the country regardless of the fact that there are state institutions responsible of that.

In the last week (April 2nd – April 8th), the pro-government television broadcasters provided extensive coverage of this topic (92 reports) with the same favourable tone in the reporting. Telma, TV21, Alsat, and 24 Vesti also broadcasted reports pertaining to the the work of the Government, but they were accompanied by a strong criticism of certain policies (investment, borrowing).

(5) The activities of the opposition

Compared to the previous three months, during this monitored period pro-Government media showed a reduction of the reporting on on-site activities of the opposition (107 news segments overall). On the other hand, in the remaining segments there was a continuation of the demonization and accusation of the opposition, which confirms that balance has not been achieved and that the reporting on the opposition in the past months was with the sole purpose of creating the false appearance of political pluralism in informing.

In the first week (from the 12th to the 18th of March), pro-government TV stations reported to a lesser extent about party activities of the opposition (18 segments). The negative and demonizing attitude that these media showed in other stories regarding to the opposition (Alfa – 21 segments, Sitel – 15 segments, Kanal 5 – 9 segments) continued.

In the second week (March 19th – 25th) the activities of the opposition (37 segments) were covered by all TV stations, with at least one news segment. The segments were either informative and they registered visits from opposition representatives to populated areas and promotion of projects (in the form of political marketing) or they referred to the work of opposition officials in the Government.

During week three (March 26th to April 1st), 26 news segments which concerned *opposition party activities* were aired, more often on TV stations that are considered as pro-Government (MTV1, Kanal 5, Sitel and Alfa), than on other media. The doubt that this is done in order to show a seeming balance in reporting was confirmed with the fact that most of the segments about the opposition were consisted only of a statement from an opposition representative, a static shot, while the segments about the government had a much more complex audiovisual presentation (handshakes with the local population, ribbon cutting ceremonies, etc.).

CURRENT – AFFAIR PROGRAMS

Throughout the monitored period, 38 editions total were aired of 11 different programs which are broadcast on televisions on a national level. Out of all of them, only the shows that continuously favourize a particular political entity were analyzed, i.e. the ones which violate the journalistic rule of professional distance from political entities, as well as the shows where hate speech or a discriminating and negative speech was detected against individuals or groups.

On MTV 1 the shows ‘Akcent’ (‘Accent’) (3 editions) and ‘Od nash agol’ (‘From Our Perspective’) (4 editions) were analyzed. Guests were the Minister of Exterior Nikola Popovski, pro-Government analysts as well as analysts who are critically inclined towards the government who discussed the refugee crisis, the terrorist attacks and whether the requirements are in place for fair and democratic elections. No favourizing or accusatory attitude was observed towards political entities. In the show ‘Od nash agol’ guests were high government officials, all from the party VMRO-DPMNE, such as: the Deputy Minister of Interior Mitko Chavkov, the Director of the technological-industrial zones Viktor Mizo and the Minister of Information Society and Administration Marta Arsovska Tomovska. The topics that were discussed were the state with the refugees, foreign investments in Macedonia and the reforms in the media sphere. The host did not display any accusatory or negative attitudes towards the opposition, although the selection of guests shows a favourizing and positive attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE.

Pro-government oriented private TV stations (Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa), just like in the previous months, insisted to first and foremost present the views of the ruling party in their current-informative programs. Opposition actors were either absent or were groundlessly attacked:

- Sitel does not air debate shows in prime time. On Sitel 3, the show ‘Jadi burek’ was analyzed (16 editions). In most of the editions political topics were discussed, most often by reviewing print media and calls from viewers. In three of the shows during the observed period, three public personas were guests in the studio; all three are close to the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE: Sitel Editor Marjan Nikolovski, Sitel Editor in Chief Dragan Pavlovic Latas and Professor Tanja Karakamisheva. Evident was the fact that both the host and the guests in the shows used the term ‘umbrella’ to allude to ‘foreign protection over the oppositional SDSM and their mentorship over the process of publishing the recordings from the wiretapped conversations whose end goal was to take down VMRO-DPMNE from power’. In all of the shows that pertained to domestic political topics, the host and the guests took a favourable stand towards VMRO-DPMNE and an accusatory and demonizing stand towards the opposition and ‘sorosoids’ which is a terms that implies media and civil organizations that criticize the government. Karakamisheva also called the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office ‘the tissue growth of the system’ and accused SDSM of gradually performing a coup d’état. In another show, Dragan Pavlovic Latas claimed that the publishing of the wiretapped conversations is a diplomatic experiment with Macedonia and that behind the distribution of the recordings is the Italian Ambassador. According to Latas, the objective of the experiment is for Macedonia to become a federal state, and in stating this he used abusive language towards the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev and instigating and unsupported speech towards the opposition, and the host did not distance himself from it.

Example: ‘He is interested (Zaev, j.n.) for blood to be drawn on the streets, 15 people, hopefully 36, following his logic, to die from SDSM out on the street so that he could have an alibi and coverage for the elections not to take place. So, he would sacrifice 35 lives so they may lose in this way. Just so he could be covered, riots could happen, to get diplomatic involvement, and for him to stay. If he does stay, he will not go to jail, Katica is his people, the diplomats take him in, 205 million (euros) saved. But he did a lot of harm to the people of Branko Crvenkovski’. Latas.

- On Kanal 5, the object of analysis were the shows ‘Milenko Late Night Show’ (4 editions) and the show ‘Vo centar’ (‘In the Center’). Only one edition of the show ‘Milenko Late Night Show’ referred to internal political events and a negative and accusatory attitude from the host was observed, mostly directed towards the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office, and also towards the opposition and the media that are not inclined towards the government and a positive and favourizing attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE. This show aired on April 1st, and the guests in the studio were pro-Government commentators and journalists Vasko Stamevski, Ljupco Zlatev, Aleksandar Klimovski, Boban Nonkovic and Vladimir Bozinovski. The topic presented by the host was the work of the SPPO and the personality of Katica Janeva, and there were also discussions on how to discontinue its work, and once again the representatives of the international community were referred to as ‘an umbrella’ meaning they protect the opposition. Throughout the show there was a photocopy of Janeva’s University diploma in front of the host and her low grade average was underlined repeatedly.
- Four (4) editions were analyzed of the show ‘Vo centar’ (‘In the Center’), and in two of them a negative accusatory and stereotypical attitude from the journalist was observed. In the first show aired on March 14th this attitude was directed towards Albanians in Macedonia. The topic of the show is the question ‘Who is afraid of a Census in Macedonia?’, and the journalist claimed that some of the Albanian voters do not come from Macedonia, rather, they were a fluctuating constituency, which moves across the borders of Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo, as need may be, and they vote at the elections in the respective country in the way the Americans see fit. The guests in the show were Mirka Velinovska, Darko Janevski (Editor of ‘Dnevnik’) and independent MPs Solza Grcheva and Roza Topuzovska Kareva. The second show in which a negative and accusatory attitude was observed was aired on March 28th, with the topic ‘Will the umbrella save Verushevski?’. The ‘umbrella’ is used to allude to the international community. The guests in this show were Filip Petrovski, Albert Musliu and Dane Talevski.

The other group of private televisions in debate shows insisted on providing as many political entities and different points of view as possible:

- During the period of observation, twenty (20) editions of the show ‘Top tema’ (‘Top Theme’) on Telma were analyzed, covering various political topics. In some of the editions, an accusatory attitude from the guests directed towards the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE was observed, however the hosts maintained a critical and neutral attitude towards the political entities. In the show, during the observed period, guests were the coordinator of the Parliamentary group of VMRO-DPMNE Ilija Dimovski, the Mayor of Aerodrom Ivica Konevski and the Councilor within the Municipal Administration from SDSM Ljubica Janceva, analyst professors, journalists and Members of the European Parliament. The topics raised by the hosts were the current political events, the possibility to have elections on June 5th, the Przino reforms, the work of the SPPO, the decision of the Constitutional Court, the refugee and the migrant crisis, urbanism plans in the Municipality of Aerodrom.
- During the period of observation, eleven (11) editions of the show ‘24 Analiza’ (‘24 Analysis’) on 24 Vesti were analyzed, and the topics of discussion were: the dissolution of Parliament, announcing the elections, the political crisis, investigations and obstructions of the work of the SPPO, the new ministers from DUI, the work of the MoI, the revision of the electoral registry, the refugee crisis. As representatives of the political entities, some of the guests in the shows were: the presidents of DOM and DS, Liljana Popovska and Pavle Trajanov, and Stevo Pendarovski from SDSM. There was no observation of a favourizing or accusatory attitude of the hosts of the show towards any political entities, nor were there any elements of hate speech.

During the period of observation, four (4) editions of the show ‘Win-win’ of the journalist Olivera Trajkovska were monitored. In one of the shows, the guests were Gzim Ostreni, the leader of the new party of Albanians in Macedonia, Uniteti, and in the other shows the interlocutors were journalists and university professors that reflected on the political state of affairs. There were no visible unsupported accusatory or favourizing attitudes towards political entities.

- On Alsat M the shows ‘Patot kon’ (‘The Road Towards’) (4 editions), ‘360 stepeni’ (‘360 Degrees’) (11 editions) and ‘200’ (4 editions) were analyzed. In ‘Patot kon’ the guests were Ali Ahmeti, leader of DUI, Bujar Osmani Duir, Artan Sadiku from DPA, Ivon Velickovski – president of LP, Nevzat Bejta DUI, Bekim Fazliu DPA, journalists and analysts. The topics for discussion were the cases initiated by the SPPO, the decision of the Constitutional Court for the Law on Pardoning, the cases Sopot and Monster, current political events such as the June 5th elections, the revision of the electoral registry and politicizing public institutions. In the shows there was no notice of an accusatory or a favourizing stance towards political entities. In the show ‘360 stepeni’ the guests were representatives of NGOs, analysts, activists, university professors. During this period there was no framing of political entities nor was there any favourizing or negative attitude towards them. In the show ‘200’ there was no notice of framing, favourizing or a negative attitude towards political entities and actors, and the guests were analysts, commentators and journalists who discussed current political events such as: the wiretapping scandal, the change of ministers in DUI, the opposition in the Albanian political block, as well as the opportunity to organize elections on June 5th.
- On television TV 21 four editions of the show ‘Klick’ (‘Click’) were analyzed. The guests in these editions were: Zijadin Sela from DR DPA, Ermira Mehmeti from DUI, Teuta Sabedini from DPA, Blerim Bedzeti from DUI, the Vice Prime Minister for European Affairs and member of DUI, Fatmir Besimi, Ilmi Selami from DUI, Mitasim Bekjiri from DPA, Fatmir Limani from DUI, Dukagjin Osmani from DR DPA, as well as other analysts and journalists. In all of the editions of ‘Klik’ there was no notice of a favourizing or a negative attitude towards political entities. The topics of discussion are current political events, the state of the Albanian opposition, European integration of Macedonia as well as the state of the media.

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.



Detailed Analysis
based on the monitoring of media content through the Rapid Response Media Mechanism
of the Institute of Communication Studies
(time-frame: 12th March – 8th April 2016)

1. Macedonian Television – First Channel

(1) First week (12 – 18 March 2016)

In the monitored period between 12th and 18th March 2016, MTV 1 aired a total of 87 news segments concerning political players, events or situations. The most featured topics included: the Government projects (18 segments), the events surrounding the Constitutional Court ruling to repeal the amendments to the Law on Amnesty (14 news segments), the elections (11 news segments), the situation surrounding the refugee crisis (10 segments), the activities of opposition officials (4 segments), coverage of the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (3 segments), the work of the Special Prosecutor's Office (2 segments), as well as the activities concerning the negotiations on the media (2 news segments).

Most of the coverage of these topics exhibited a favourable attitude towards VMRO-DPMNR (23 news segments), whereas a negative and demonizing narrative was noted in 2 segments, the political subject in which was the opposition SDSM.

Commentary and Assessments in the News: In the monitored period, the main TV Journal on the public service broadcaster resembles an advertising promoting the Government's activities: (12th March): 'Healthcare: New equipment for the old City Hospital'; (14th March, a journalist's assessment) 'The status of 112 professional soldiers should be resolved; (16th March) 'Infrastructure: Prilep soon to receive a new wastewater treatment station'; (18th March) 'Healthcare: Five new mammography machines acquired.' There was coverage of the partisan activities of the two largest parties, SDSM (4 news segments) and VMRO-DPMNE (3 news segments), but to a much lesser extent, as compared to the previous week. After several weeks' absence of the negative narrative in reporting on the opposition, in this period there were two segments aired, in which, during conveying SDSM's statements ('Quality public healthcare is our priority' and 'Zaev: We are joining the protests in front of the Constitutional Court' on 14th March), the news anchor used structures such as 'would supposedly see,' 'would supposedly promise,' and 'would supposedly do.' The reporting on the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Gruevski still contained elements of political marketing, without making it clear to the public that he is a party leader, not a prime minister. In the news segments on current affairs such as the Constitutional Court ruling, the work of the SPO and the elections, the public service broadcaster did not adopt an explicit stance alluding to apologetics towards or to demonising some of the political subjects, but was informative.

Using Sources: In most news segments one source was used (49 segments), most often government representatives (for the Government projects) or the president's Cabinet (on the refugee topic). Of the news segments using three or more sources (a total of 12), in 10 the sources had the same positions, whereas when two views were presented (7 news segments), they always had the same position. On two occasions, there

were news segments aired where no specific source of information is mentioned, but they did not contain manipulative elements.

Direct Addresses: In the analysed period, MTV 1 aired a relatively small number direct addresses by party leaders—a total of 6. Three of those were by the president of VMRO-DPMNE, Gruevski, two by the SDSM leader, Zaev, and one by the leader of GROM, Jakimovski, who at the time was topical as the organiser of the protest for the so-called protection of the Constitutional Court.

Audiovisual Presentation: Of all the news segments aired on MTV 1, in 23 there was elements of manipulative presentation. By far the most featured type of such manipulation appeared during the coverage of the activities of the government officials (project promotions) and of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, whereby he as the leader of the largest ruling part promoted projects funded by public finances (14th March: ‘Gynaecology clinic: Laboratory for detecting foetal abnormalities’; 17th March: ‘Social housing in Ćorĉe Petrov’).

In the remaining promotional features, the video presentation did not focus on the projects, but on the government officials from the ruling party (Dimitriev, Todor, Kanĉeska-Milevska)—16th March: ‘Kriva Palanka: Over a million euro in road infrastructure’; 18th March: ‘Healthcare: Five new mammography machines acquired’; 18th March: ‘Premiere of *Call Them Happiness*: Children with Down syndrome in the lead parts’).

The 16th March news segment on the visit of the British Minister of State for Europe contained manipulative video content, whereby the seemingly protocolar information on his meeting with the representatives of SDSM, DUI and VMRO-DPMNE was accompanied by shots of his meeting with Gruevski, insisting on the cordiality of the meeting (friendly taps on the shoulders, head-nodding and chit-chat).

In the 14th March news segment ‘Journalists’ associations: Requesting the parties to continue negotiations,’ for the Association of Journalists exclusively the term ‘journalists’ associations’ is used, whereas in the following news segment, the specific name of the other organisation, Macedonian Association of Media, is used.

Examples of Favouring or Demonising Political Subjects:

- (12th March) ‘Healthcare: New equipment for the old City Hospital’
- (14th March, a journalist’s assessment) ‘The status of 112 professional soldiers who remained unemployed after reaching the age limit should be resolved’
- (15th March) ‘OECD: Macedonia ranked first in 6 areas’
- (16th March, a journalist’s assessment) ‘The economic development is once again secured by the new facilities in the industrial zone, foreign investments and the Employment Agency’s project. In nine years, there are 10 thousand fewer unemployed.’
- (16th March, a journalist’s assessment) ‘Dimitriev concluded his visit to Kriva Palanka with a meet-and-greet with the citizens’
- (16th March, a journalist’s assessment) ‘In the new legal amendments even agricultural workers from other sectors recognised their interest...’
- (17th March, a journalist’s assessment) ‘New social housing to be built. The VMRO-DPMNE leader stated that soon there will be social housing in Gostivar as well.’

(2) Second week (19 – 25 March 2016)

MTV1 broadcasted a total of 78 reports pertaining to the political developments, processes and actors in the prime time news during the monitoring period from the 19th to the 25th of March. The main focus was on: the government projects and investments (16 reports), the activities related to the revision of the electoral register and the early elections (9 reports), the work of the SPPO (8 reports), the activities of the representatives of the opposition (8 reports), the performance report of the ten-year work of the ruling VMRO-DPMNE (5 reports), the migrant crisis (5 reports), the reforms in the media (4 reports), the strike in

the judicial administration (3 reports) and other topics.

Most of the reports (22) are observed to have a favourable attitude towards the Government and the ruling party, whereas not a single report has an explicit negative attitude towards a political party or an individual. The remaining articles are informative and the journalist only conveys the position of an institution or a political entity, without commentary or personal opinions.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The prime time news of the Public Service Broadcaster resembles advertisements, with sporadic information that is not related to the promotion of a government project or investment. Most of the information space is filled in with reports on the achievements of the Government (March 19th “State Cardiac Surgery: More than 200 operations performed in two years”, March 19th “Innovation: This year the fund will allocate 2.65 million euros”, March 21st “Transportation: Investments in road infrastructure”) or on promotion of new projects (March 19th “Education: 7,000 teachers in training for Cambridge”, March 19th “Culture: Francophonie opens your doors”, March 22nd “Healthcare: The procedure for surrogate motherhood commenced”), henceforth the news seem anachronistic, which is typical of a system of the past and of pre-election campaign. What further fits into this image are the reports (8) on the activities of the opposition (a principle practiced for some time), pertaining to the promotion of some of their projects (March 20th “Eco Brigade Zernovski”), electoral campaign (March 21st “SDSM: Shekerinska: We will raise the minimum wage”), criticism of some government measure (March 21st, “Energy: Why is expensive electricity being imported?”, March 22nd “Agriculture: Nikolovski asks about the leases in viticulture”, March 22nd “The soldiers are serving in inhumane conditions”) or accusations of illegal operation of government officials (March 23rd “Misuse in the healthcare”, March 24th “Nikolovski with new accusations against Delev”). Special attention in the analysis period was dedicated to the reporting on the performance report of the ruling VMRO-DPMNE, with pompous campaign coverage (March 20th “Performance report of VMRO 2006-2016”), wherein both the visual and the intonational part are favourable for the ruling party. The favoring continued in the following days (23rd, 24th and 25th of March) with the broadcasting of individual reports on the achievements in the economy and the healthcare through the speeches of the ministers Stavreski, Pesevski and Todorov given on this campaign party event.

Using sources: The reports in the MTV1 news predominantly use one source (47 reports). 12 reports use three or more sources, in 8 whereof, the sources express opposing views. 10 reports have views of two interlocutors, in 9 whereof the views are concurring. In three articles the information is presented without sources of origin, but the content is not manipulative.

Direct addresses: Only three direct addresses of party leaders were broadcasted during the analysis period. The leaders of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, SDSM, Zoran Zaev and GROM, Stevco Jakimovski, have one statement each.

Audiovisual presentation: 17 reports in this period contain elements of audio-visual manipulation. Two types of manipulation were identified:

- visual such as in the March 20th report “Performance report of VMRO 2006-2016” which looks like a political advertisement in a pre-election campaign and is accompanied by a favourable intonation, through the use of indirect speech. In the reports presenting the position of the opposition (March 24th “SDSM: Macedonia ranks lowest according to foreign investment” and from March 25th, “SDSM: The right report will come after the elections”), the information is accompanied by a meager video footage of the headquarters of the party.
- when the promotional reports are presented as problem specific (March 23rd “Performance report: Stavrevski: The biggest success is 150 thousand jobs”, March 24th “Performance report: Pesevski: 34,000 jobs in the forthcoming period”, March 25th “Performance report: Todorov: 200 million euros in capital investments”, March 25th “The business demands better loan conditions”).

Instances of favoritism or demonisation of political entities:

- (March 20th, journalist’s opinion) Over 3,500 projects implemented in the course of 10 years. VMRO-DPMNE reported to the citizens on the work carried out from 2006 to 2016

- (March 20th, journalist's opinion) There is also development in the agricultural insurance. Each year is marked by a nearly 50% increase in the sales of the insurance policies. According to the Agency, this is a result of the 60% increase in the premiums of the subsidies by the state
- (March 20th, evaluation journalist) The support for the innovative businesses strengthens the competitiveness of the economy. It creates companies that generate growth and create jobs
- (March 21st, journalist's opinion) In Kocani, Dimitirev announced an expansion of the production of the company Antura, which, according to him, along with the company Amphenol will lead to 1,000 job openings in the upcoming period
- (March 23rd, journalist's opinion) "Low taxes, support for the domestic companies, foreign investments, 150 thousand job openings, reduced unemployment. Stavrevski reported on the work done in the economy"
- (March 24th, headlines) The foreign direct investment brings benefits for the Macedonian economy. 500 domestic companies cooperate with the foreigners. Direct and indirect job openings. Apart from the profit, new knowledge is acquired. Part of the performance report of Vladimir Pesovski

(3) Third week (26 March – 1 April 2016)

In the monitoring period from March 26th to April 1st, MTV1 broadcasted a total of 91 news reports pertaining to the current political events. Most of the reports focus on: the elections (19 reports), the government projects (15 reports), the work of the SPPO and the cases "Torture" and "Fortress" (8 reports), the activities of the opposition (8 reports), the resignations of the ministers from DUI (4 reports), the performance report of the ruling VMRO-DPMNE from a couple of weeks ago (3 reports), the migrant crisis (3 reports), the activities of Gruevski (2 reports), the events surrounding the reform of the media (2 reports), the amendments to the the Law on Criminal Procedure (2 reports) and other topics. A favourable attitude towards the government and the ruling party was detected in majority of the reports (19), and most of them are promotional reports on the investment projects and the government policies in the form of political marketing and advertising. Not a single article adopts a negative or demonising attitude towards any entity.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: Over the analysis period, the tone in the MTV1 prime time news was propagandistic in favor of the government and particularly of the ruling VMRO DPMNE. The reports on the economic conditions of the Government are predominant: (March 27th, "Healthcare: The number of teams in the emergency doubled", March 27th "Culture: Building of a Turkish theatre", March 29th "Airlines: Three new routes to Berlin, Bratislava and Copenhagen", April 1st "Healthcare: 165 more medications cheaper as of today"). This week as well, the Public Service Broadcaster aired reports dedicated to the performance report of the ruling party, although the event took place seven days ago, favourably and apologetically presenting the alleged accomplishments of VMRO DPMNE over the past decade in the style of a political propaganda (March 26th, "Performance report: More than a billion euros invested in road infrastructure", March 27th, Performance report: Increased pensions and social benefits", March 28th "Performance report: Ristovski: 74 schools build, 400 repaired").

Although on a small scale, MTV 1 in the prime time news broadcasted favourable reports on the activities of the VMRO DPMNE leader Gruevski, conveying his announcements about the projects in the competence of the Government (March 29th, "Agriculture: Call for lease of 7,000 hectares of state land", March 30th "Investment: Amphenol will open a new factory in Kocani", April 1st "Healthcare: 165 more medications cheaper as of today"), without pointing out that his activities are from the position of a party leader.

The opposition still appears as a subject of the reports (8). Some of the broadcasted statements of the representatives of the opposition are a political marketing (election promotion): March 27th "There will be more subsidies and social rights", March 27th "Promotion of programmes and measures for young people", March 28th "Support for the domestic companies for new jobs", March 30th "Naumov: We will provide 65 thousand jobs", and some are a criticism of the government policies: March 30th, "Agriculture: Lease malpractice with 5,642 hectares", March 31st "MISA: Kiracovski accuses of a crime worth 200 thousand euros", April 1st "MISA: Kiracovski accuses of illegal tenders".

The only report that has a negative tone towards any political entity broadcasted in the news is the

announcement of VMRO DPMNE (March 29th “Analysis and review of the work of Spasovski”) analysing the work of the Interior Minister Spasovski, an official from the opposition, in a strong critical tone. In addition, the television broadcaster conveys the reaction of the institution (MVR) to the party accusations.

Using sources: In this period as well, the reports of MTV1 mostly use one source of information (57 reports). 18 reports use two positions, but in 12 thereof the positions are concurring, whereas in 6 they are contrasting. 4 reports refer to three or more views of the same topic, but in three cases they adopt the same standpoint. The source of the information cannot be identified in three reports.

Direct addresses: 7 direct addresses of the political leaders were broadcasted in the analysis period. The numbers indicate imbalance, since most of them – 4 belong to the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, two to the leader of SDSM, Zoran Zaev and one to the leader of DU, Pavle Trajanov.

Audiovisual presentation: Nineteen (19) of the total broadcasted reports contain elements of audio or visual manipulation. It concerns the reports with political marketing (March 26th, “Report: More than a billion euros invested in road infrastructure”, March 27th, “Performance report: Increased pensions and social benefits”, March 27th “Healthcare: The number of teams in the emergency doubled”, March 27th “Bitola: Rural development for the needs of the residents”); the reports which instead of promoting the project, focus on promoting the political official (March 27th, “Culture: Bulding of a Turkish theater”), in this case, the Minister of Culture, Elizabeta Kanceska Milevska, but the reports in which the leader of VMRO DPMNE promotes government projects particularly stand out. There are also examples of uncritical transmission of information (March 30th “New price reduction of medication”), as well as an example of an official criticising the citizens, and not vice versa (March 30th “Healthcare: 434 thousand patients set up a doctor’s appointment, but did not show up”).

Manipulative approach was also observed in the presentation of the reports (statements and news) on the opposition and the information is accompanied by a crude video footage (March 27th “SDSM: There will be more subsidies and social rights”) or the graphics (the caption) does not describe (cannot be discerned whose tribune it is) the event that is being presented (March 27th “Debate: Promotion of a programme and measures for young people”).

Instances of favouritism and demonisation of political entities:

- (March 27th, journalist’s opinion) Those who have a tight budget and could hardly allocate such means to meet the needs of vital importance for citizens are especially welcomed
- (March 28th) Performance report: Ristovski: 74 schools build, 400 repaired
- (March 29th) Airlines: Three new routes to Berlin, Bratislava and Copenhagen
- (March 29th) Health: New camera for the Institute of Pathophysiology
- (March 30th) Investment: Amphenol will open a new factory in Kocani
- (March 31st) New price reduction of medication – the prices of the medications in the country are reduced twice a year – in March and in October
- (March 31st) Economy: Stavrevski: The industry achieved a spectacular growth

(4) Fourth week (2 – 8 April)

MTV 1 broadcasted 96 reports pertaining to the political events in the reporting period from April 2nd to April 8th. The focus centered on: the government projects and investments (19 reports), the elections (17 reports), the activities of the opposition (9 reports), the resignations and the appointments of DUI officials (6 reports), the activities of the VMRO DPMNE leader, Gruevski (6 reports), the SPPO (3 reports), the migrant crisis (3 reports), the annulment of the decisions of the ministers from SDSM (2 reports), the situation in the media (2 reports), the case with the Panama Papers (2 reports) and others. A favorable attitude towards the government and the ruling party was observed in 27 reports, which promote the activities of the government. Three reports were observed to contain a demonising attitude towards the opposition.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: With predominantly promotional-propagandistic reports, the news in Macedonian language of the Public Service Broadcaster resemble an election marketing space for the

government, primarily for the ruling VMRO-DPMNE through reports on achievements in the economic growth (April 2nd “Standard & Poor’s: The high credit rating of Macedonia affirmed”, April 5th “Statistics: A 7.5% growth in the exports in the first two months”), the government and foreign investments (April 2nd “Mobile pharmacies: Part of the costs will be reimbursed”, “Culture: Promotion of 15 new titles”, “Announcement: Four employment measures”, April 3rd “Programme: A EUR 700.000 grant for the secondary schools”, “Healthcare: With renovation of the clinics to a better healthcare system”, April 4th “ESA: Grants for self-employment for persons with disabilities”, April 5th “Mines: Agreement for concession of Zletovo and Toranica”), and to promote the role of the leader of VMRO DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski in it (April 3rd “Strumica: A new building for the public administration”, April 4th “Resen: Opening of a memorial house Tatartcev”, April 8th “Congress: The Union of Roma calls for unification”). In the monitoring period, the opposition appeared in the news with statements (9) of its representatives in a political (electoral) marketing (April 3rd “SDSM: Spasovski visited Stip and Karbinci”, April 4th “Debate SDSM: The measures of the programme presented in Stip”, April 5th “SDSM: Pendarovski: After the elections, a responsible government”) or criticism of a government policy (April 2nd “SDSM: The citizens in Aerodrom breathe polluted air”, April 3rd “Kiracovski: A scandal worth 1 million euros”, April 4th “Electoral register: Kiracovski: I will not allow manipulation”, April 5th “Agriculture: Nikolovski accused of suspicious procurement”). A negative tone in the reporting was observed in the reports on the opposition, as well as a tendency for one-sided interpretation of the statements of the international community as a criticism of SDSM (April 7th “Brussels: Some progress has been made on these fronts, but considerable work remains.”).

Using sources: The reports in the news on MTV1 predominantly use one source (54 reports). 15 reports use two sources, but mostly with the same viewpoint (12 reports). 13 reports use three or more sources, but in 9 thereof the sources have the same standpoint. The source of the information is not stated in two reports.

Direct addresses: In the analysis period, only two direct addresses were broadcasted, both whereof belong to the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski.

Audiovisual presentation: 28 reports were observed to contain manipulative video or audio content. The promotional reports on the projects implemented by state institutions or announced by the VMRO-DPMNE leader Gruevski which resemble a political marketing remain the dominant type of audiovisual manipulation (April 2nd “Culture: Promotion of 15 new titles”, April 3rd “Strumica: A new building for the public administration”, April 3rd “Healthcare: “With renovation of the clinics to a better healthcare system”, April 4th “Resen: Opening of a memorial house Tatartcev”, April 8th “Congress: The Union of Roma calls for unification”). However, other cases of audiovisual manipulation have been observed as well. In two reports from a correspondent in Brussels from April 4th, “Brussels: Meeting Danielson-Poposki” and from April 7th “Brussels: Some progress has been made on these fronts, but considerable work remains.”, the journalist uncritically expresses personal opinion that “almost all conditions for the upcoming elections have been fulfilled both in terms of the organization of the Government and in terms of the legal texts, which have been accepted by the Macedonian Assembly” (April 4th), without referring to the source of the information. In the April 7th report, the journalist again conveys the opinion of the international representatives and expresses a personal opinion that “in one of the oldest democracies – in Belgium”, “they (the citizens) have a right and an obligation to vote on the election day regardless of how many and which parties participate in the elections. If not, they would receive a 500-euro fine”, as if addressing the opposition’s announced boycott. In the April 8th report “Elections: EU and US: The political agreement needs to be implemented”, the presenter interprets rather than conveys the information from the statement. Hence, the quote “April 6th was a missed opportunity to create the conditions for credible elections. Therefore, the European Union and the United States urge the political leaders to implement the political agreement from Przino and stress that it is a responsibility not only of the state institutions to prepare credible elections, but also of the political parties,” was conveyed as “urge the political leaders in Macedonia to implement the signed agreement and to create conditions for credible elections. They recommend not missing another opportunity for elections like the one from April 6th”. There are also examples of selective transmission of information (April 5th “Statistics: A 7.5% growth in the exports in the first two months”), not naming the interlocutors (April 2nd “Rally: A Protest for Ljube Boskovski”), or a caption which does not reflect the topic of the report as the one on April 2nd “SDSM: The citizens in Aerodrom breathe polluted air”, the point whereof is the destruction of the green areas by the municipal authorities (VMRO-DPMNE) at the expense of building high-rise residential complexes.

Instances of favouritism and demonisation of political entities:

- (April 2nd, journalist's opinion) S&P affirmed the stable credit rating at BB with a stable outlook. This is a result from the high economic growth, the 3.7% GDP growth, the export growth of the free economic zones and the public investments.
- (April 4th, journalist's opinion) The European Commission supports the June 5th early parliamentary elections. They see no good reason for postponement. The elections will unblock Macedonia's EU integration.
- (April 4th, journalist's opinion) The new memorial house will be important for the development of tourism, says the VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski. He said that, 15 million euros have been invested in infrastructure in this region.
- (April 5th, cue) Project: Macedonia Employs ends in 10 days. The companies have 10 more days to use the benefits of the Macedonia Employs project for exemption from contributions for personal income tax for workers. Thus far, this project created over 16,600 jobs in around 9,000 companies.
- (April 7th, journalist's opinion) EC, at least until noon today, seemed surprised by SDSM's decision not to participate in the upcoming elections because its representatives here in Brussels have been sending in recent days unambiguous messages that, with small remarks, the country is prepared for elections.
- (April 7th, cue) Celebrating the World Health Day. The Minister reported on the work done.

2. Macedonian Television – Second Channel

(1) First week (12 – 18 March 2016)

The news on the second channel of the Macedonian Radio and Television, in the period between 12th and 18th March, aired 66 news segments concerning political subjects or events. The topics concerning the events at and around the Constitutional Court were featured most (10 news segments), before those on the early parliamentary elections (8 news segments), and the Special Prosecutor's Office (4 news segments).

Commentary and Assessments in the News: The second programming service of MTV broadcast 12 favourable features on the DUI party and three on the Government.

(1) There was critical coverage of the events surrounding the Constitutional Court (16th March: 'Pardoning criminals is in the president's hands'). This position was particularly prominent towards the counter-protest (16th March: 'The tents in front of the Constitutional Court have been removed, the protesters have no idea what kind of a ruling they defended'). The criticism from national and international subjects, as well as analysts, regarding the ruling was also aired.

(2) There was continual coverage of the activities of DUI, from memorial services, visits and so forth (14th March: 'The spring of dignity. On the fortress of freedom, respect was paid to the martyrs of 2001.').

(3) Uncommonly for the second channel, a positive view was expressed of Government projects, the one of employing 112 former professional soldiers (14th March), as well as employing persons with disabilities (16th March).

Using Sources: There were 23 news segments broadcast in which the sources had different or opposing views, 20 segments using a single source, and 16 segments with two or more sources, but with shared positions.

Direct Addresses: The leaders of DUI, Ali Ahmeti, of SDSM, Zoran Zaev, and of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, were represented with one direct address each.

Audiovisual Presentation: There was one instance of manipulative audiovisual presentation noted: a footage of Ali Ahmeti laying flowers (14th March: 'In Kolarevo, Kičevo, homage to the activist Ruzhdi Veliu').

(2) Second week (19 – 25 March 2016)

During this analysis period, the news in Albanian on MTV2 broadcasted 53 reports on the political entities and developments. The predominant topics included the elections (11 reports), the SPPO (8 reports) and the media reforms (3 reports). One report was dedicated to the activities of the opposition.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The second program service of MTV broadcasted 10 reports that favour DUI (9) and the politics of the Government (1). The broadcaster provides balanced reporting on the elections conveying the views of all policy entities (March 19th “SEC to revise the electoral register”, “VMRO-DPMNE says that SDSM is terrorising SEC”, March 20th “SEC decided that 100,440 questionable voters require a field check”, March 21st “SDSM: Why SEC does not check 124 thousand voters”, “VMRO-DPMNE: SDSM is looking for an alibi to postpone the elections”, March 22nd “Taci: Skepticism over the June 5th elections”). The poll of the survey agency “Faktor Plus Adria” is also covered (March 23rd), as well as the analysis on this topic which shows that the analysts believe that the campaign started before the lawful prescribed term (March 21st).

The reports regarding the SPPO convey the conflicting views of VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM (March 21st “The review of the report of Janeva was postponed. VMRO is blaming Janeva and SDSM respond, you are afraid of the work of Janeva”, March 22nd “Janeva declared a war on the Constitutional Court, the Parliament and the President and declared them unlawful”).

The promotional reports which in praising tone cover the activities of the officials of DUI refer to projects on sewerage, water supply, commemoration, and political marketing, whereas one report promotes the Government (March 23rd “101 people with no roof over their head will be given a job and residence”).

Using sources: There are 14 report with one source and another 17 reports with two or more sources, but with concurring views.

Direct addresses: There is only one direct address of the DPA leader Menduh Taci.

Audiovisual Presentation: Manipulative audiovisual presentation was not detected.

(3) Third week (26 March – 1 April 2016)

In the period from March 26th to April 1st, the television broadcasted 60 reports related to the political entities, processes or conditions. The Special Public Prosecutor’s Office and the preparations for the early elections were the most common topics (12 reports), followed by the topics of the resignations of the DUI ministers (4 reports) and the media (3 reports).

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The television broadcasted 11 positive news reports on DUI, two on the Government and one on the opposition.

(1) The events surrounding the political crisis and the withdrawal of DUI from the Government were covered informatively (April 1st: “The officials from DUI resigned from the government”, “The underworld is trying to degenerate the process, DUI explains the resignations”). The views of other parties were also conveyed (April 1st: “For SDSM, the resignations of DUI aggravate the crisis”, “For DPA, the resignations are culmination of the hypocrisy”).

(2) The neutral approach has been retained in the reports on the new cases opened by the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (March 28th: “Mijalkov suspected of abusing Boshkoski”), as well as on the proposed amendments to the Law on Criminal Procedure (March 28th, “SDSM says the government obstructs the work of SPPO”). The news also covered the war of words of the parties over the report and between the Prosecutor Katica Janeva and the Council of Public Prosecutors. On March 31st the report says “The first detention at the request of Janeva, a 30-day detention for Goran Grujevski” and on April 1st “The SPPO opens preliminary investigation over the private conversations”. The expert opinions were also conveyed (March 30th “The SPPO will separate the state from the party”).

(3) The reports regarding the early elections favour the views of the international community, as opposed to

those of the Government (March 27th: “Althausser denies Gruevski, the quality of the elections is more important than the date”. Part of this topic is also placed in an ethnic context “March 30th “Experts say SEC Albanises the suspicious voters”. Most of the reports are informative (March 31th, “OSCE starts with the monitoring”).

Using sources: There are 25 news reports with one source and 13 reports with two or more sources, but with concurring positions of the sources, and 15 reports with sources that have different or opposing views.

Direct addressing: During this period, only one direct address of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, was broadcasted.

Audiovisual Presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was detected.

(4) Fourth week (2 – 8 April)

The television broadcasted 75 reports which were subject to this weekly analysis. 20 reports were broadcasted on the elections, 3 reports on the SPPO, 4 on the media, 6 on the resignations and assignment of the DUI officials, and 3 on the resignations of the ministers from SDSM. 15 reports are positive for the government, 9 whereof for DUI and 6 for VMRO-DPMNE, and two reports are critical of the government. There is one promotional report on SDSM.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The television broadcaster represents all opposing views on the topics of the election date and the developments in the crisis (April 2nd “The resignations of the ministers of DUI. Gruevski: DUI is in the Government, awaiting new appointments”, April 3rd “SDSM says that reportedly DUI is making changes”, April 4th “Bailey: Credible elections as a condition for the US support”, April 5th “Taci is skeptical of June 5th, there are no conditions”, April 6th “All eyes on SEC”, “MOST asks SEC to state whether we can have elections”, “Civil demands the elections to be postponed to September”). Regarding the resignations of the ministers of DUI, the Public Service Broadcaster informs in the news in Albanian that “the Assembly will be dissolved at midnight. The opposition ministers submit their resignations” (April 6th), whereas according to the experts “without creating conditions, the crisis will be taken to the street”. The April 7th reports inform that “Zaev calls for an alliance against Gruevski”, as well as Gruevski’s message that “The people will choose”, the smaller parties do not want “elections without conditions”. In the analysis, however, experts point out that “Macedonia is facing another crisis”. The position of AJM is conveyed on the situation with the media that “The government is afraid of free media” (April 5th) and conveys the statement of the EU Ambassador that “the situation in the media is not good” (April 7th). Regarding the work of SPPO, the April 6th report concludes that “The judge fainted and Jankulovska saved her passport”. The critical reports on the government cover the “scandal at the Ministry of Information Society and Administration”, in which the additional Deputy Minister Kiracovski accuses the former minister Ivanovski of abusing 1 million euros (April 3rd).

The favourable reports on the officials of DUI report that “Mexhiti talks about the Albanian names of the schools” (April 4th), as well as “Opening of a museum in the memorial center in Zajas” (April 6th). “Amendment of the Constitution, official use of the Albanian language, a President in the Assembly, and a different model of elections” demands Ostreni in the programme of his party “Uniteti” (April 4th).

Using sources: 24 reports use one source, whereas 20 reports use two or more sources, but with concurring positions.

Direct addresses: 4 direct addresses were broadcasted, 3 whereof belong to Gruevski and one to Zaev. There were also addresses of the leaders of the smaller Albanian parties.

Audiovisual presentation: Manipulative audiovisual presentation was not detected.

3. Sitel

(1) First week (12 – 18 March 2016)

In the monitored period between 12th and 18th March, the Sitel TV Journal aired a total of 88 news segments related to current events and political players. The broadcaster paid most attention to: the events surrounding the Constitutional Court (14 news segments), promotion of projects and measures of the Government and other institutions (13 news segments), the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (10 news segments), the migrant crisis (10 segments), the activities of the opposition (7 segments), the work of the Special Prosecutor's Office (4 segments), and so forth.

In most of the coverage of these topics, the broadcaster expressed a positive and favourable view of VMRO-DPMNE (29 news segments) and a negative and demonising view of SDSM (25). The hostile attitude, particularly towards the leader of SDSM Zaev and the special prosecutor Janeva, continued.

Commentary and Assessments in the News: Commentary was noted in 15 news segments containing demonising views of SDSM and the SPO, which remained the target of negative informing in the segments of this television broadcaster.

The predominant news segments were of promoting and supporting government measures and projects, characteristics for their strong favourable tone (12th March: 'New equipment for the old city hospital'; 13th March: 'The pensioners in Macedonia are satisfied'; 14th March: '112 former professional soldiers were employed'), as well the segments that, in the style of political marketing, informed on the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Gruevski (12th March: 'Gruevski with solutions to the problems of the population of the Kičevo region'; 14th March: 'In Kumanovo, the construction of an emergency medical centre has begun. According to the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, in the construction and reconstruction of these hospitals 70 million euro are to be invested'), conveyed uncritically, as if he were holding public, not a partisan office. There were repeats of his former statements announcing the events covered at the time (13th March: 'The firefighters received reduced years of service for retirement. For every 12 months of effective work, 15 months of service will be calculated.'). as well as his allegedly spontaneous conversations with the citizens during field visits, where he would move among the population holding a microphone.

Although in the previous period the television broadcaster had increased the number of news segments informing on the activities of the opposition, SDSM and its leader Zaev, and the special prosecutor Katica Janeva continued to be subjects reported on in a negative demonising context (13th March: 'Šilegov is just one among the SDSM leadership involved in a serious criminal affair'; 13th March: 'Soros and SDSM willingly wish that Macedonia be an international protectorate'; 18th March: 'A Pavel Šatev survey: VMRO-DPMNE with a double advantage over SDSM, 64% of respondents do not trust Katica Janeva').

The broadcaster reported highly uncritically on the protests in front of the Constitutional Court, openly demonstrating support of the counter-protests organised by GROM (16th March, a journalist: 'The citizens decided to put an end to the opposition's destructive policies and yesterday appeared in large numbers to protect the Macedonian institutions. Rivers of people surrounded the Constitutional Court and did not allow the SDSM and Soros protesters to launch their destabilisation scenario.').

There were also instances when the journalist/anchor (who is also the editor-in-chief at the television broadcaster) personally confronted the opposition leader Zaev and Janeva in the announcements (18th March, commentary/announcement: 'I would like to trade with Zoran Zaev tomorrow, to sign over, everything I have, everything he has, to run his family firm, which during his being in opposition, just in Gruevski's time, according to accounting data, balance-sheets at the IRS, had a turnover of above 200 million euro. Imagine if he came to power, it will be 2 billion. Katica, on the other hand, has been warned, and from high-up from the US, not to partisanise the institution.'). In the 18th March TV Journal, most of the announcements and news segments contained commentary, and they all exhibited a highly demonising, even defamatory narrative towards these two institutions.

Using Sources: Over half the news segments (46) use only one source, a representative of the Government or of the VMRO-DPMNE party. Then come the news segments with two or more sources (15) whose positions did not counter one another, and were either VMRO-DPMNE officials or analysts with pro-government views recognised as such in the public. In 13 news segments, two or more sources were consulted, but in 10 of them they complement, and do not contradict one another. In three news segments the broadcaster refers to unreliable online sources or social media statuses, where the source ‘finds out,’ and those were segments with a prominent demonising view of the opposition.

Direct Addresses: Of a total of 20 aired statements of political party leaders, half (10) were of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski. Next are Zaev and Jakimovski with 4 addresses, and one statement each of the leaders of two smaller parties, Janevski and Jankulovski (PODEM).

Audiovisual Presentation: In the analysed period, 29 news segments exhibited elements of audiovisual manipulation. The most featured type of manipulative presentation were the segments promoting government measures and projects, and the activities of Nikola Gruevski, which cross the lines between reporting and political marketing (13th March: ‘The firefighters received reduced years of service for retirement. For every 12 months of effective work, 15 months of service will be calculated’—Gruevski’s statement from 12th November 2015 upon meeting a firefighter in Ohrid; 13th March: ‘The pensioners in Macedonia are satisfied’—Gruevski’s statement from 7th January 2016 and a survey of pensioners praising the Government and its projects; 14th March: ‘Gruevski pays a visit to Gorče Petrov with the minister of transport’).

Visual manipulation was noted in the segments concerning the two protests in front of the Constitutional Court. In the 15th March segment ‘Protests in front of the Constitutional Court,’ the 16th March segment ‘Jakimovski: GROM and the citizens will always defend the law and the institutions when necessary,’ and 18th March segment ‘Ivanov: There will be no pardons for election hooligans, child molesters and drug dealers,’ the journalist manipulates with a number of 6,000 attendees at the (counter-)protest organised by the pro-government GROM. While the section reporting on the protest of the non-governmental organisation was accompanied by video material from the end of the protest, the section informing on the counter-protest is covered by footage showing mass attendance.

The same type of manipulative video presentation is featured in the 17th March news segment ‘The Electoral Commission will conduct additional control tests,’ in the section indicating the opposition SDSM, the video material is a footage of the party headquarters, whereas the section dedicated to VMRO-DPMNE is covered with clips from the large election meeting.

On two instances (Kire Naumov’s statement and the 15th March segment ‘SDSM launches accusations against the mayor of Skopje’), the representatives of the opposition remained nameless. The manipulative coverage proceeded when it came to news segments related to the SPO and the opposition. In the 15th March segment ‘Katica with a weak report she has not explained to the public,’ an old statement of Zaev’s was framed in a manipulative context, whereas 3 segments convey hostile and defamatory content from web portals (16th March: ‘Journalists and intellectuals close to the opposition disappointed by today’s protest that SDSM co-organised with Soros’s platform of non-governmental organisations *Ajde*’; 16th March: ‘What is the reason for withdrawing the public debt counter?’; 17th March: ‘NetPress; Remenski causes the Ministry of Labour to fall apart at the seams’).

Examples of Favouring or Demonising Political Subjects:

- (12th March, a journalist’s assessment) ‘In the centre of Kičevo, where numerous citizens welcomed the president of VMRO-DPMNE, educators pointed out the problem of the lack of defectologists at the schools.’
- (12th March, a journalist’s assessment) ‘Her approach has been interpreted as mere theatrics and pressure, since there is no logical explanation why the investigation into and charges against someone would be announced at a press conference, and hold a hearing a month later.’
- (13th March, a journalist’s assessment) ‘Off the record, members of the investigation team say that they were often offered witness protection as a way to save themselves, but in exchange they should point to other guilty parties. The same sources also reference instances in which, after refusing the

offer, the interrogated persons were advised to reconsider, because, if they do not accept, they will go to prison. Their children and families were mentioned.’

- (14th March, a journalist’s assessment) ‘‘112 former professional soldiers were employed. After the promise from the Government, a realisation followed, and the soldiers signed their employment agreements in the presence of the interim prime minister in the run-up to the elections and the defence minister.’
- (17th March, a journalist’s assessment) ‘Faced with the shock, Bihacka St. rushed to supply the media they control with Soros with false data according to which, Macedonia has over 500,000 phantom voters.’
- (18th March, commentary/announcement) ‘When you say *Nikola Gruevski*, it is immediately followed by future projects, water pumps, hospitals roads, something is happening, someone’s needs are being met. When you say *Zoran Zaev*, it is immediately followed by affairs, telephone conversations, fighting with the policy, simply, a mess.’

(2) **Second week (19 – 25 March 2016)**

In the monitoring period, Sitel broadcasted 90 reports on the current political developments and entities. Largest space in news was dedicated to the government projects and investments (14 reports), the revision of the electoral register and the early elections (13 reports), the activities of the leader of VMRO DPMNE, Gruevski (12 reports), the work of the SPPO (10 reports), the field activities of the opposition (7 reports), the performance report of the ruling VMRO DPMNE (5 reports), the migrant crisis (2 reports). 35 reports were observed to have a pronounced favourable, apologetic and propagandistic attitude towards the Government, and especially the ruling party VMRO – DPMNE. 21 news reports adopt a negative or demonising and in some cases abusive attitude towards the opposition (especially towards the leader of SDSM, Zaev) and the Special Public Prosecutor, Katica Janeva.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The largest part of the space in the prime time news is taken up by propagandistic reports on the government politics through reports that praise and uncritically cover projects and investments (March 20th ‘‘Dimitriev in Kocani: The government will continue with new capital projects in Kocani’’, passing the opinion of the journalist that ‘‘this is only a portion of the 4 million euros invested by the government in public utilities and road infrastructure in this municipality’’, March 22nd ‘‘More money for education, new schools, free textbooks, modern Cambridge programs for students and new dormitories are only a portion of the work done over the past years’’, March 22nd ‘‘The construction companies do not remember an investment boom of this sort. They say that there are no unemployed builders at the moment’’, March 24th ‘‘The income of the pensioners has been on a continuous rise. Apart from the steady increase in the income, pensioners also enjoy other benefits provided by the state’’).

The television broadcaster published 13 reports and analyses with a pronounced commentary of the journalist/anchorperson, in which the journalist reports on the government with an uncritical and apologetic narrative (March 19th ‘‘Business Insider: Macedonia is a country with the lowest taxes on the planet’’, March 21st ‘‘150,000 jobs created in 10 years, the measures for reduction of the unemployment continue’’, March 22nd ‘‘50 million euros invested in educational infrastructure’’, March 22nd ‘‘The image of the Macedonian agriculture changed entirely’’, March 25th ‘‘Citizens’ demands are being met and Gruevski’s promises from his visit to Gorce Petrov are being fulfilled’’).

Negative, demonising and abusive tone was observed in the commentative reports that refer to the opposition and the prosecutor Katica Janeva, again proposing the unsupported ‘‘conspiracy’’ theory of these two parties against the government (March 21st ‘‘Kurir: Due to her close relationship with Zaev, Janeva will amnesty Canovski and open the case of the demolition of illegal construction – Kosmos’’ March 23rd ‘‘These are the excesses of Katica Janeva’’, March 23rd ‘‘How did Katica Janeva get rich, since just yesterday she admitted that there is no evidence in the investigation’’).

Examples of such uncritical attacks of this media outlet against Janeva, both as an official and as a person, appear in the March 23rd news, in which she is a subject of accusations and insults, and the editor/anchorperson with utterly negative attitude presents opinion on the opposition leader and Janeva as a

fact:

- uses terms such as “compromised, with limited technical and professional capacities, whatever Katica Janeva and Zoran Zaev undertake, it fails, wherever they appear, they create a scandal in front of the camera”;
- uses unsubstantiated accusations (“literally making a profit, since in recent days, weeks, there is an extortion racketeering around the country and directors of important businesses are racketeered by those in possession of the conversations, and only SPPO and SDSM have the conversations in their possession and those who bought off the conversation, thereby collecting money, between 50 and 70,000 euros from one person”, “she attempted to deceive the country twice with the apartments and the field of figs”);
- Personal disqualifications (“and that statement is a type of statement issued only by Beria. Beria was a special policeman, special prosecutor and logically a special judge of Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin”), disputing the “intellectual, linguistic and legalistic capacity of Katica Janeva” in a derogatory context calling her a “character” (“now this character who is supposed to lead the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office”, “this character that got involve in corruption in 6 months cannot prosecute others”).

The reports on the activities of the opposition refer to the promotion of the party program (March 20th, “The Vice President of SDSM, Frosina Remenski, accompanied by the members of the Management Board of SDSM today met with the citizens of Kicevo”, March 25th, “The Vice President of SDSM, Damjan Manchevski, yesterday met with the citizens of Karposh”, March 21st “Radmila Shekerinska: will stimulate the domestic economy just like the foreign companies”), of the projects (March 24th, “Zernovski: A primary school in Kapishtec and several other projects in Center”), but also critical of the government policies (March 22nd “Naumov: The interest rates in Europe fall, yet Macedonia raises the interest rates on the treasury bills”, March 22nd, “Ljupco Nikolovski with accusations against Delev”). The television also broadcasted two interviews (with the leader of VMRO DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, and the leader of GROM, Stevco Jakimovski) in which the questions of the journalists contain statements that are in line with the views of interlocutors:

- The leader of SDSM, Zoran Zaev, has been claiming over the past couple of days that there are 500,000 phantom voters in the electoral register. In the last statement there were about 200,000 disputed voters in the electoral register. What is your position?” (March 19th, an interview with Gruevski)
- “Is SDSM now in Macedonia manipulating with the number of voters in the electoral register as it did with the number of intercepted conversations?”, “It is evident that VMRO-DPMNE will win the elections and that SDSM will lose, but what are we going to do after the elections?”, “Mr. Jakimovski, there is no party in the Balkans that wants to come to power without elections, without offering people, programs, operations, field work, meetings with people and so on?”, “Mr. Jakimovski, we have a situation now in which the first associate of Zoran Zaev, Katica Janeva, along with several foreign diplomats insist on swift actions against officials of VMRO-DPMNE, however, she is also blocking the criminal proceedings against Zaev and Radmila Shekerinska and several other people from the leadership of SDSM?” (March 20th, an interview with Stevco Jakimovski).

Using sources: 47 reports use a single source of information. 16 reports confront the views of three or more interlocutors, but in 13 thereof the views are concurring. In 9 reports, the information is confirmed by two sources, although in 5 reports, their views are not contrasting.

Direct addresses: A total of 23 addresses of leaders of the political parties were broadcasted in the news, with an evident imbalance in favor of the leader of the ruling VMRO DPMNE, Gruevski, who is represented with 17 direct addresses. The remaining addresses belong to the leader of SDSM, Zaev – 3, the leader of GROM, Jakimovski – 2, and the leader of DC, Trajanov – 1.

Audiovisual Manipulation: In the period of the analysis, the television broadcasted reports with manipulative elements. The main type of audiovisual manipulation is the broadcasting of reports that promote the government and the leader of the ruling party VMRO DPMNE, Gruevski. 33 reports were observed to contain elements of:

- uncritical dissemination of information from portals or social networks (March 19th, “VMRO DPMNE: Check all two million, the important thing is to see you in the elections” – Kurir, March 19th “Business Insider” – Gruevski’s status on Facebook, March 21st, “Kurir: Due to her close relationship with Zaev, Janeva will amnesty Canovski and open the case of the demolition of illegal construction – Kosmos”, March

23rd “These are some of the excesses of Katica Janeva” – announcement on Facebook of Professor Vankovska, March 24th “Action or a Hollywood scenario of Katica Janeva?” – Kurir).

- visual manipulation (March 22nd “Ivanov: We should not be naive, there are 72 terrorists returning to Macedonia from the battlefields of Syria”), wherein part of the information on the bomb attacks in Brussels is accompanied by a video footage from the refugee camps in Macedonia.

- Framing old statements in the commentative reports (March 24th “Great operation for the scandal factory: arrested three people, including the brother and sister of Chaush” – an old statement of Zaev for Telma, March 24th “Gruevski: Free elaborations for more than 5,000 households” – Gruevski’s statement from March 18th during his visit of Radovish and his post on Facebook, March 25th, “Over 1,000 intercepted conversations from Zaev’s bombs ended up in the underground”, where the a current statement of the deputy Minister Chavkov opposes the old statement of Zaev in an interview for Sitel).

Instances of favoritism or demonisation of political entities:

- (March 19th, journalist’s opinion) The real drama took place last night behind closed doors at the State Election Commission, once the representatives of SDSM in the Commission realised that the number of disputed voters in the revision of the electoral register is four and a half times lower than the number announced by the party;
- (March 20th, journalist’s opinion) Tonight’s performance of the ruling VMRO DPMNE introduces a new concept of accountability through interaction with the citizens. Before the packed hall of Jane Sandanski, with no seat to spare, the leader of the party, Nikola Gruevski, first addressed the citizens;
- (March 21st, journalist’s opinion) Gruevski led a public session for more than four and a half hours in front of more than 10,000 people in the hall and hundreds of thousands who watched the event on television and dozens of portals that live-streamed the event;
- (March 21st, journalist’s opinion) Katica Janeva also evaded the Parliamentary Commission for Political System;
- (March 21st, journalist’s opinion) 150,000 new jobs have been created in the course of ten years. The unemployment fall by 11% is the biggest success in the past decade. The unemployment rate declined from 36 to 24.6% primarily due to the economic policies followed in times of two economic and one political crisis;
- (March 23rd, headlines) Egocentrics and self-proclaimed rulers do not offer anything but themselves above the law, above the state and above the citizens. On the other hand, VMRO DPMNE is carrying out the most difficult process in a society like ours, and that is drastic reduction of unemployment;
- (March 25th, evaluation journalist) During his visit, Gruevski promised to build regional facilities of the school “Dimitar Pop Georgiev Berovski”. Several months later, the facilities are in construction and should be ready for use at the beginning of next school year or as of this September.

(3) Third week (26 March – 1 April 2016)

In this monitoring period, Sitel broadcasted 84 reports on the political actors and events. Most reports focused on: the projects of the Government (17 reports), the activities of the SPPO (14 reports), Gruevski’s promotional visits (11 reports), the elections (10 reports), the activities of the opposition (5 reports), the performance report of the ruling VMRO-DPMNE that took place 10 days previously (3 reports), the media (2 reports), the new developments surrounding the scandal factory (2 reports), one report on the resignations of the DUI ministers and one report on the migrant crisis.

36 broadcasted reports adopt an extremely apologetic and propagandistic attitude towards the Government, and especially towards the ruling VMRO-DPMNE, while 23 reports are dominated by a negative attitude towards the opposition. The negative tone in the reporting on the work of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office and personally on Katica Janeva continues.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: In the monitoring period, the reports containing positive and favourable content pertaining to VMRO-DPMNE dominate the news, in comparison to those with negative and demonising content pertaining to SDSM.

But the intensity of the attacks against the opposition was stronger than the support for the government, according to the reports with commentary content of the journalist/editor/presenter or transmitted by other media (16 reports).

There are three types of negative and attacking contents against the opposition. First, the allegations about the work of their ministers (March 26th “Employees of the Ministry of Interior and the special police told Sitel that yesterday was a debacle for Oliver Spasovski. According to them, it became clear from his confession today that the only effect of his biggest operation since he became a Minister is the panic amongst the citizens”, March 26th “Web portal “Deneshen”: The obstruction of Remenski affect the children with disabilities”).

The second content are the allegations associating SDSM with crime (March 28th “10 days until the dissolving of the Assembly and SDSM and Zaev have neither a performance report nor a programme. According to the analysts, the largest investment of SDSM before the elections is the factory of Chaush. Katica Janeva is an additional assistance with framed cases like the unlawful arrest of Edmond Temelko”, March 31st “Anyone can do anything, no one will be held accountable, Zaev introduced this last year, when supported by his party, supported by the Sorosoids and also by some of the diplomats, took a criminal action for gaining political points by releasing someone else’s private phone conversations, which is a crime itself”, April 1st “Not only DUI, but many consider that someone will pay with their head for all of this, but the question is who. DUI is saying that these conversations are now in the hands of Zaev and criminals, and I have been saying this for more than a year, and I assure you that not only now, but since always these conversations have been in the hands of criminals including when they were in the hands of Zaev and now the SPPO has to bring proceedings against Zaev”).

In the center of the demonising approach is again the SPPO and personally the prosecutor Janeva and the opposition leader Zaev. The third type of demonisation is the existence of an alleged plot: (March 28th “This poses the question that these conversations serve for racketeering, which was reported and published on websites, taking money, why Katica Janeva has not answered the question, Ma’am you have the conversations, some of them are out in public, being broadcasted, why are you not taking any actions? Because you and SDSM have a political benefit?”, March 28th “Analysts: Katica Janeva and Chaush are both the programme and the performance report of SDSM”, March 30th “The experienced lawyers comment that in this case as well, the prosecution Katica Janeva acted outside the law and her proceedings and cases are seen as a political collaboration which is beneficial only to SDSM and Zoran Zaev”).

Despite the fact that Nikola Gruevski is not in public office, but just a party leader, the intensity of the coverage of his activities did not decrease (promoting the projects “Buy a house”, grants, announcing calls for state land, announcing new investments, price reduction of medication, opening the new building of the archive in Kumanovo, etc.).

The television continues to broadcast reports on the opposition which can be promotional in the style of electoral marketing (March 26th “The government of SDSM will abolish the external testing in the first 100 days”) or critical of the government policy (March 29th “Naumov reacts to the auction of treasury bills”). Unlike the extensive reports on the activities of the officials from the ruling VMRO DPMNE, the activities of the opposition are covered only through statements, arousing suspicion that it comes to ensuring fictitious balance in reporting.

Using sources: Most of the reports have one source of information (51 reports), while 10 use two opinions, but in 8 of them they are identical. 8 reports cite more than two sources, but in 6 thereof the sources are like-minded. In 2 reports, the journalist does not refer to a single source. The television continues to broadcast reports that uncritically transmit information from web portals that are demonising towards the opposition and SPPO.

Direct addresses: A total of 17 direct addresses of political leaders were broadcasted in the Sitel news. The favourable attitude towards the ruling VMRO DPMNE is reflected in the analysis of this parameter as well, as 13 of the addresses belong to the leader of this party, Nikola Gruevski. Three of the statements belong to

the leader of SDSM, Zoran Zaev, and moreover, one statement is an old statement from his appearance on another television. The leader of GROM, Stevco Jakimovski, has one statement as well.

Audiovisual presentation: 22 reports broadcasted over the past week contain elements of audiovisual manipulation. The most usual type continues to be the intensive coverage of the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, and his interference in the activities of the state or the local authorities (March 26th “The meetings between Gruevski and the citizens give results – new roads, playgrounds, sewers in Radovish”, March 29th “A new call for lease of state-owned agricultural land”).

Another form is the uncritical transmission of information from portals and referencing to unnamed sources, used to favour one (VMRO-DPMNE) and demonise another (SDSM) entity: (March 27th “Higher earning for worker by 150 euros in comparison to 10 years ago” – without a source, April 1st “Bekir Asani seriously threatened Zaev if another conversation comes out. Zaev asked for a security reinforcement” (media.mk), April 1st “Changing VMRO DPMNE – in order to change the name of R. Macedonia” – Croatian portal direktno.hr).

A week after the performance report of VMRO DPMNE, the television (March 27th) broadcasted an excerpt from the speech of the Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Policy, Dime Spasov, on the decade of achievements of the ruling party in this area (“Spasov: We returned the dignity to the pensioners”). In the favouring and the demonising reports, the television broadcaster used surveys of citizens that fully agree with the position of the journalist, without a single dissenting opinion (March 29th “The citizens recognize the political frame in the cases of Katica Janeva”, March 31th “The site inspection of SEC refuted SDSM’s theory of ghost voters”, April 1st “Presentation of the housing subsidies in Kavadarci”). The March 30th report, “Experts: The list of voters considered by SDSM as ghost voters uncovered Zaev’s frame for escape from the elections”, instead of broadcasting experts’ statements, the report broadcasts statements of citizens.

Manipulation with old statements taken out of the original context and framed as a position in a new (mostly commentative) context was detected again (April 1st “Indictment against Zahir Beqiri Chaush and his brother for forgery, abuse and procurement and production of weapon”). In the promotional news reports, the statements are used to prove the principle of promised-delivered, as is the case with Gruevski (March 28th “Great interest across the municipalities for the project Buy a House for Young People” – a statement from 21.01.2016, March 31st “40 youth projects will create new jobs”, a statement from an interview for Sitel).

Instances of favouritism and demonisation of political entities:

- (March 26th, journalist’s opinion) “Most of the request of the residents of Radovish from the last week’s visit of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, and the government ministers from the ruling party were met”.
- (March 27th, journalist’s opinion) This period of 10 years was marked by a continuous growth in the rights to social protection, the quality of life of the pensioners, the benefits for single parents and persons with disabilities.
- (March 27th, journalist’s opinion) “Macedonians earn an average of 150 euros more compared to a decade ago”.
- (March 28th, cue) “Each new day we are closer to the elections due on June 5th, closer to resolving the crisis and the frustrating atmosphere in Macedonia, and to the torture inflicted by SDSM on all Macedonian citizens by establishing morality, ethics, standards and breaking the law with the protection of the diplomats and sorosoids every day and in every opportunity”.
- (March 28th, cue) “As if it came out of the cartoon Ednooki, which created by Boris Damovski and broadcasted on Sitel, Fetai with all poses practiced in front of a mirror stated the following today”.
- (March 28th, journalist’s opinion) “Thus far, 48 different municipalities run by the mayors from VMRO-DPMNE secured over 7,600 plots that can be used in the project Buy a House for Young People. This was an initiative which was launched by Gruevski on the meeting with the mayors from the ranks of his party, and which, according to the information from the field visits, stirs great interest among the citizens”.
- (March 29th, question from an interview with Todorov) “What interests me is, today you promoted new equipment in the Institute for Pathophysiology. How much has been invested in the Macedonian

healthcare and will this equipment and modernization of the clinics continue under the plan of your party in the future”.

- (March 31st, headlines) The investment boom continues. 16 new companies for over 6,200 jobs opening in three months.
- (March 31st, headlines) “The growth in the industry is an excellent introduction to 2016. The economy will grow this year according to the projections”.
- (April 1st, cue with commentary) “Why is it being insisted on bringing down the government of VMRO DPMNE, even by force. Growing pensions, growing wages, falling unemployment, subsidies for the farmers, free education, almost free healthcare ...”
- (April 1st, journalist’s opinion) “Young people under 35 have a unique chance to get their own home. The Finance Minister, Zoran Stavrevski, stated this in the presentation of the project Buy a House for Young People last night in Kavadarci”.

(4) Fourth week (2 – 8 April)

Sitel broadcasted 104 reports pertaining to the political actors and events in the monitoring period. Majority of the reports focus on: the elections (28 reports), the government projects and investments (21 reports), the activities of the leader of VMRO DPMNE, Gruevski (13 reports), the activities of the opposition (12 reports), the work of SPPO (4 reports), the resignations and appointment of new ministers from DUI (3 reports), the annulment of the decisions of the ministers from SDSM (2 reports), as well as two reports on the performance report of the ruling VMRO DPMNE from 3 weeks ago, one report on the migrant crisis and other topics. 46 reports contain openly favourable and apologetic attitude towards the government and the ruling party, while 19 reports are dominated by a negative attitude towards the opposition. The opposition leader Zaev, the ministers in the government from SDSM, Spasovski and Remenski, and (although to a lesser extent) the SPPO and the prosecutor Janeva continue to be subject of demonisation.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: In the monitoring period, the reports containing positive and favourable content pertaining to VMRO-DPMNE dominate the news, in comparison to those with negative and demonising content pertaining to SDSM (April 2nd “16,000 students used the free transportation measure in three months”, April 2nd “The Ministry of Health will award licenses to 17 more rural pharmacies which will cover 186,000 residents in the rural areas”). 13 reports, predominantly demonising towards the opposition, contain commentative content. In several news releases, the cues are markedly hostile in tone (April 7th (cue/commentary “The US presidential campaign talks about the level of manipulation and deception in Macedonia created by SDSM and the Sorosoids”, April 7th cue/commentary “Can someone explain Zoran Zaev, the head of SDSM, that the elections are not organized by the government but by the State Election Commission. The President of the State Election Commission is a member of SDSM, so the government has nothing to do with the election process other than providing police security to the places where there are fights and incidents”). The focus of the demonising reports is placed on the SDSM leader, Zoran Zaev, the Ministers Spasovski and Remenski and the Special Public Prosecutor, Katica Janeva (April 6th “Netpress: Remenski hindering the allocation of social housing for 76 families”, April 8th “The government puts an end to the chaos in the Ministry of Interior and Labour and Social Policy: annulment of the decisions of Spasovski and Remenski”, April 7th “100 illegal decisions for assignments only a few hours before the dissolution of the Assembly signed by the technical Interior Minister, Oliver Spasovski”, April 2nd “Klimovski: Janeva with this grade average would not have been able to enroll in the Academy of Judges and Prosecutors”, April 5th “Kurier: SPPO – a base for fostering party and family members”). The intensive coverage of the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, continues. In the coverage of all of his public appearances, there is no clear differentiation that he is a part leader, and not a government official (April 2nd “Standard & Poor’s affirmed the country’s stable BB credit rating, with a stable outlook”, April 3rd “The opening of the renovated facility was attended by the leader of VMRO DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, who said that this is another fulfilled promise”, April 3rd “Johnson Controls started a test production on Wednesday”, April 4th “By the end of the week, we will start with the payment of the tobacco subsidies”, April 6th “1000 miners will return to work, the new concessionaires promise increased salaries in Zletovo and Toranica”). In the April 2nd report “Launching the relocation of the official indexes of Macedonian, Bulgarian and Zagreb stock exchange”, the journalist refers to an article by Gruevski published in 2003, saying “the position of a young economist, politician and one of the first brokers Macedonia”,

indicating his vision. The reports on the opposition are promotional in the style of electoral marketing (April 2nd “Radmila Sekerinska presented the party programme in Ohrid last night”, April 6th “SDSM in a debate in Kicevo”, April 6th “SDSM’s programme presented in Berovo”) or critical of a government policy (April 3rd “Alexandar Kiracovski from SDSM in the capacity of an additional deputy minister in the Ministry of Information Society and Administration accused of abuse by the former minister”, April 4th “The opposition councilors in the City of Skopje demand resignation of the Mayor Koce Trajanovski due to the developments in Butel”, April 5th “Kire Naumov, SDSM: The trade deficit is growing”). The practice of broadcasting only the statements from the representatives of the opposition continues, yet the reports promoting the political agenda of the ruling VMRO DPMNE are comprehensive.

Using sources: Most of the reports use one source of information (66 reports), whereas 13 use two sources, in 10 whereof the positions of the sources are identical. 10 reports cite more than two sources, but, 9 of them are like-minded. The television broadcasts reports which uncritically cite information from web portals, which are mostly demonising (April 4th “Deneshen: SDSM fostered the meritorious staff at the expense of the citizens”, April 5th “Direktno.hr: Controlled instability or political credit with no effort SDSM”, April 5th “Kurir: SPPO – a base for fostering party and family members”), and broadcasts reports referring to unspecified “sources” in SEC, of the Television broadcaster and so on.

Direct addresses: 16 direct addresses of the political leaders were broadcasted in the Sitel news. The favourable attitude towards the ruling VMRO DPMNE is reflected here as well, since 11 addresses are statements of the leader of this party, Nikola Gruevski. The SDSM leader, Zaev, has 3 addresses and the leader of the DPA and GROM, Taci and Jakimovski, have one address each.

Audiovisual Presentation: There are manipulative elements in 55 news segments. In addition to the most common manipulation of the VMRO-DPMNE leader appearing as the promoter of government projects, there are several other types of manipulation. The first is the uncritical conveying of information from web portals, which are demonising the opposition (2 April ‘Under the title *Change of VMRO-DPMNE for a Change of the Name* the artinfo.ba web portal delivers the analysis on the current political events in the country’; 4 April ‘Brodić: The crisis in Macedonia is about a change of the name’; 4 April ‘Denešen: SDSM provides placement for deserving officials at the citizens’ expense’; 5 April ‘Direktno.hr: Controlled instability or political reward without toil for SDSM’; 5 April ‘Kurir: SPO – a base for accommodating party officials and family members’). Another type of manipulation is citing sources referred to either as ‘our’ or ‘anonymous’ (3 April ‘SEC sources: SDSM impedes the consolidation of the voter registry’; 5 April ‘SEC sources for Sitel: The voter registry will be consolidated on time’; 6 April ‘The first hearing for the bribe offered to a Ministry of the Interior employee to testify before the SPO has been postponed’), whose information is being conveyed as fact. Two interviews aired last week (on 2 April with Kahveci and on 3 April with Novakovski) were tendentious and leading the interviewee to a certain response: ‘You said that Turkish companies are happy with the tax package offered in this country, but are you happy with the support government institutions are getting in terms of overcoming some of the administrative obstacles coming up in their work? Are Turkish companies happy?’; ‘You are a member of SDSM. Do you not think that SDSM employs this scenario of constantly finding problems as a strategy to postpone the election, so that there are no elections at all and it can remain in power unelected?’ In some news segments selective statements were also aired (6 April ‘The Assembly is dissolving—an SEC debate,’ where statements of partisan representatives were broadcast, but not the key statement of President Čičakovski that if there were even a single disputed voter, he would not sign the registry), as well as a citizen opinion poll (7 April) in which everybody fiercely attacked SDSM, or expert opinions were broadcast (7 April ‘Experts: SDSM’s decision is wrong and will have a disastrous impact on both the party and the entire country’), the expert in question in this case being Vladimir Božinovski, whose positions are viewed as pro-government in the public. In addition, the already familiar type of manipulation was employed of using old statements framed into a fabricated concept (7 April ‘The neglected facilities of Macedonia are being revived,’ Gruevski’s statements from 12 January and 20 March from an interview given to *Sitel*).

Examples of Favouring or Demonising Political Subjects:

- (2 April, a journalist’s opinion) ‘Since 2007, with the state employment measures from the operational plan 34 thousand jobs have been created. They helped the unemployment rate in the fourth quarter last year fall to 24.6 percent, the lowest rate since such statistical measures began.’

- (2 April, analysis/commentary) ‘Janeva’s transcript is a reflection of her abilities, Professor Aleksandar Klimovski claims. According to him, Janeva would not have been able to enrol in the Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors.’
- (2 April, a journalist’s opinion) ‘According to artinfo.ba, most Macedonians stand behind VMRO-DPMNR because the party is fighting to preserve the country’s name.’
- (4 April, a journalist’s opinion) ‘Unbelievable family absurdity among SDSM members. This weekend, Ljubica Jančeva announced that Aerodrom in Skopje required changes, but only in fair and democratic elections.’
- (5 April, a journalist’s opinion) ‘The same sources state that there are problems only in SIA Strumica and SIA Kumanovo, where Oliver Spasovski’s people make maximum efforts to obstruct the process.’
- (5 April, a journalist’s opinion) ‘SDSM uses the media in the region, as well as the neighbouring countries’ interests and some of the foreign ambassadors in order to postpone the elections they themselves caused, analyses the journalist Ivan Brodić for Direktno.hr.’
- (6 April, a journalist’s opinion, live) ‘What could be noted today in the media controlled by SDSM and Soros is that the opposition is looking for various ways to have the elections postponed, and according to some information, the key reason for this is the latest survey that arrived at Bihacka Street.’
- (7 April, general announcement) ‘This is the beginning of the end of an untenable crisis situation created by SDSM, and founded on disrespecting and undermining the institution, corruption under the guise of partisan functions, putting the state in the role of a foreign embassies’ protectorate, street violence, privacy violations and racketeering with other people’s telephone conversations, endangering the pensions, investments and salaries. This is the beginning of the end of all that and a day of relief for Macedonians.’
- (7 April, announcement/commentary) ‘Well, on election day there will be no diplomats, no Sorosoids, no fake non-governmental organisations, no online spin, nothing. The citizens come out and say what they want. So let us hear the citizens.’
- (7 April, announcement/commentary) ‘How the social democrats understand politics and how they think the party and the state are one and the same.’
- (8 April, general announcement) ‘Survey: VMRO-DPMNE with a two and a half times higher rating than SDSM, five and a half times more trust in Gruevski as compared to Zaev. The citizens believe that the goal of the crisis is changing the constitutional name.’

4. Telma

(1) First week (12 – 18 March 2016)

During the monitored period Telma aired 68 news segments concerning political subjects and situations. They focused on the events surrounding the Constitutional Court ruling (21 news segments), the elections (14 segments), the migrant crisis (9 segments), the work of the SPO (4 segments), as well as the events surrounding and the removal of the public debt counter at the Macedonian Academy of Arts and Sciences (2 segments), reports on the work of the Assembly (2 segments) and other topics. In most of the coverage of these topics the television broadcaster maintained a neutral position on the political subjects, and critical tone was noted on the topic of the events surrounding the Constitutional Court.

Commentary and Assessment in the News: Although this broadcaster very seldom airs news segments containing commentary, in the monitored period there were two analyses in which the media outlet expressed a position (15th March: ‘Why does GROM organise counter-protests?’), reflecting in a critical tone on the counter-protests, and then juxtaposing the statements of the special prosecutor Fatime Fetaj and of the leader of GROM, Jakimovski.

In the 17th March news segment ‘What did the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski promoted three days ago, an old or a new laboratory?’, the journalist expressed a critical view of one of Gruevski’s activities.

The television broadcaster also aired two editorial commentaries, one in response to the attack of the reporting crew by municipal officials at the Aerodrom Municipality while on a journalistic assignment (17th March: ‘This is not the first time that TV Telma has been attack while on assignment. In the future, we shall ask for legal protection so that we can perform our professional assignments unhindered.’), and the second as the broadcaster’s position on the elections (15th March: ‘TV Telma is certain that, in order to have fair and honest elections, the message that everyone should send is that electoral manipulations will be most severely punished, and not that someone who commits electoral fraud may be pardoned by the president of the country.’). Prominent critical tone in this broadcaster’s coverage was also noted in the 18th March news segment, in which the journalist expressed his position on the work of the State Electoral Commission: ‘The SEC holds sessions behind closed doors, even though it is against the Rules of Procedure. The journalists are still outside. They will call us after they resolve their issues, so that they show that the SEC is compact and has a shared interest.’ The television broadcaster continued to inform on the daily current events through analyses (6 in this period), juxtaposing the positions of experts in different fields (12th March: ‘Phantom voters in Optičari near Ohrid as well’; 12th March: ‘The political crisis has dealt an big blow on the economy’; 16th March: ‘The Constitutional Court’s decision to hold the session without the media is scandalous, experts say’; 17th March: ‘The EU demands reforms from Macedonia’; 18th March: ‘The low taxes increase the debt’).

Direct Addresses: In the analysed period there was a total of 11 direct addresses by political party leaders aired. The leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev was featured most (4 addresses), followed by the leaders of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski and of GROM Jakimovski with three addresses each, and the leader of FRODEM Kekenovski with one address.

Audiovisual Presentation: There were no manipulative elements noted.

(2) Second week (19 – 25 March 2016)

Telma broadcasted 62 reports on the political developments from the 19th to the 25th of March. Most reports refer to the revision of electoral register (16 reports), the work of the SPPO (11 reports), the migrant crisis (5 reports), the strike of the judicial administration (4 reports), the events surrounding the Constitutional Court (3 reports) and the performance report of the ruling VMRO DPMNE (2 reports), the activities of the opposition (1 report), and other topics. A negative attitude of the journalist towards the entity which is subject of the reporting was observed in two (2) of the broadcasted reports.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: Telma’s reporting is generally balanced, but mildly critical in tone, without pronounced propagation or demonisation of some political entity. In this period, two of the reports (March 21st “VMRO-DPMNE gave an account of the 10-year governance”, March 22nd “Kovesi, Janeva and Zvrlevski on the same table”), apart from the criticism, contain an explicit journalistic opinion: “Towards the end, Jane Sandanski was almost empty, except for the forefront, and while waiting at the table, the ministers did not listen carefully. The account was full of comparisons – that VMRO-DPMNE for a decade did much more than the predecessors in all areas”, “His speech eventually ended with a loud laughter from the audience”). The remaining reports are informative and the topics are approached with substantiated criticism by confronting conflicting expert opinions in the analyses (3 reports) on the relevant topics.

Using sources: Telma’s news reports predominantly contain at least three or more views (26 reports), most of which (16) are contrasting opinions on certain problematics. The information comes from one source in 21 reports, whereas in 11 cases there are two interlocutors – in 7 reports with conflicting opinions, and in 4 with the same standpoint. One report does not explicitly cite a source of information.

Direct addresses: A total of 7 direct addresses from Gruevski, Zaev, Jakimovski, Trajanov, Kekenovski, Popovska and Taci, were broadcasted in the news.

Audiovisual presentation: Not a single report contains manipulative audio or video presentation.

(3) Third week (26 March – 1 April 2016)

Telma broadcasted 60 reports on the developments of the political issues in this period. The main focus was on: the work of the SPPO (16 reports), the events surrounding the elections (8 reports), the resignations of the ministers from DUI (3 reports), the amendments to the Law on Criminal Procedure proposed by the ruling coalition (4 reports), the migrant crisis (2 reports), the Annual report of the Ombudsman (2 reports), one report on the Draft – Media Law, one on the activities of the opposition and other topics.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: In general, the journalists and the anchorpeople in the Telma prime time news do not express their opinions and commentaries in the news reports and the headlines. In the monitoring period, a commentary appears in one report (March 27th “Will the trial process for Divo Naselje start all over?”), which does not cite any sources, and in one headline (March 31st, “The Skopje Criminal Court one day does not accept the SPPO as competent for the illegal interception and does not grant a permission for a search of the apartment of a suspect. The next day, the Court recognises the competence and grants detention for the same suspect at the request of the SPPO”).

Apart from the reporting approach to the daily events, Telma unlike most other television broadcasters approaches the current events analytically by facing expert views in the analyses (5) (March 26th “Reinforced police controls in the Lipkovo region”, March 29th “Voters registered at a gas station”, March 30th “The Law on Whistleblowers obliging the private companies as well”, April 1st “Possible options after the withdrawal of DUI”), and devotes attention to the work of the Assembly more than any other television (Law on Whistleblowers, Law on Pardons, Commission for supervision of the work of the Administration for Security and Counterintelligence...).

Using sources: Most reports (18) have one source. 14 reports use three (or more than three) sources, in 10 whereof the sources have opposing views, while 4 reports have more sources, but with concurring positions. Some reports use two or more sources (16 reports), in 10 whereof the sources have contrasting views.

Direct addresses: The television broadcasted a total of 4 direct addresses of only two political leaders – three of the VMRO DPMNE leader, Nikola Gruevski, and one of the DU leader, Pavle Trajanov.

Audiovisual presentation: Not a single article contains manipulative elements in the monitoring period.

(4) Fourth week (2 – 8 April)

Telma in this period aired a total of 56 news segments on political events. This television broadcaster in the news primarily focused on: the elections (20 segments), the work of the SPO (5 segments), on the resignations and the appointment of new ministers from DUI (5 segments), on the case of the leader of United for Macedonia, Ljube Boškoski (3 segments), on Macedonia’s role in the Panama Papers (3 segments), on Gruevski’s assets (3 segments), on the migrant crisis (2 segments), on the negotiations on the media (1 segments), and other topics. The reporting was in a mildly critical tone, and there were no segments involving an opinion of favouring or demonising.

Commentary and Opinions in the News: The journalists and anchors in the central news on *Telma* refrain from giving their personal opinions and commentary in the segments and the announcements. In addition to the reporting approach, *Telma* also covered current affairs through analytical feature stories (11), in which two or multiple positions were being confronted. Some analyses were not related to daily affairs, but were on public interest matters (‘It is difficult to access public information’; ‘How can unemployment be lowered’; ‘The Aktor affair’).

Using Sources: Most segments (23) used two sources, whereby the in the majority (15) they shared the same positions. In 21 news segments three interviewees or institutions were cited, in 12 of which their positions overlapped, and in 9 they differed. In 16 news segments the information came from a single source. No segments involved uncritical conveying of information.

Direct Addresses: The television broadcaster aired a total of 14 addresses from political leaders. Most of the statements in the news were made by the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Gruevski (6), two each by the leaders of DOM and DPA, Popovska and Thaçi, whereas it broadcast one statement made by each of the leaders of Dignity Angelov, of DS Trajanov, of MR-DPA Sela and of SDSM Zaev.

Audiovisual Presentation: In the monitored period there were no news segments with manipulative elements.

5. TV 21 (Macedonian)

(1) First week (12 – 18 March 2016)

In the analysed period, in the news in Macedonian TV21 aired a total of 85 news segments concerning political subjects and current events and affairs. Most of them were on: the events surrounding the Constitutional Court (19 news segments), current affairs surrounding the elections (18 news segments), the migrant crisis (14 segments), the work of the SPO (5 segments), Government projects (2 segments), and one segment informing on an activity of the opposition outside the activities of its government official. Three news segments ('History textbooks spread hate' of 13th March, 'Bilingualism at the Skopje City Skopje' of 15th March, and 'Debates on amending the Constitution in favour of the Albanians' of 16th March) treat topics pertaining to the rights of an ethnic group. The attitude in the segments is either informative or critical of the current processes, mainly through expert opinions, presented through daily analyses.

Commentary and Assessment in the News: In the analysed period the broadcaster did not express a favourable or hostile position on any of the political subjects in the news segments, nor did it use commentary in the informative programming. There were 14 analyses broadcast on current affairs, regarding the two protests in front of the Constitutional Court, which in a neutral and critical tone analyse the views of the protesters against and in support of the Court's ruling (16th March: 'Jakimovski protects the institutions. Why did he not protect the Ministry of Interior as well?'; 17th March: 'Bexheti: *The bombs* for sale,' 'Mitasin Beqiri: The Constitutional Court ruling is scandalous'; 17th March: 'The Constitutional Court's ruling sets a precedent,' 'Analysts: Macedonia in the most serious political crisis'; 17th March: 'Diplomats voice criticism—amnesty is a ruling that concerns them'; 17th March: 'The enlargement is not a priority for the EU. Macedonia falls behind fulfilling the recommendations'; 18th March: 'Experts: There will be negative consequences. The amnesty increases the danger of child molesting'; 18th March: 'Debate on *Klik plus*: Amnesty is a constitutional (in)justice'). Then they treat the response of the Macedonian and European authorities to the refugee crisis: (12th March: 'Reactions to Ivanov's interview. Brussels: Macedonia has received 50 million euro'; 12th March: 'Debate in *Klik plus*: The migrants – victims of the geopolitical bargaining'), as well as other topics initiated by international events (14th March: 'Security experts following the attack in Turkey. Markovski: Macedonia is not safe').

The news segments on the Government activities adopted a neutral, critical tone (14th March: 'Resolved status—112 former soldiers employed. What about the rest?'), while the coverage of the activities of the opposition are broadcast informatively.

Using Sources: In 35 news segments only one source was used, in 20 two sources, in 12 of which they had shared positions, and 20 segments used three or more sources, most of which (13 segments) exhibited contrasting views. Two news segments do not mention a source of information, but the content was not manipulative.

Direct Addresses: In the news in Macedonian in the monitored period, TV21 aired a total of 10 direct addresses by political party leaders, who were in the focus of current events. The leaders of VMRO-DPMNE Gruevski and of GROM Jakimovski had two addresses, whereas the leaders of SDSM Zaev, of DOM Popovska, of FRODEM Kekenovski, of NDP, of DRDPA Sela, and of DPA Taci—one each.

Audiovisual Presentation: No instances of manipulative audiovisual presentation were noted.

(2) Second week (19 – 25 March 2016)

A total of 81 news reports pertaining to the current political events were broadcasted in the news in Macedonian language on TV21 during the period of analysis from the 19th to the 25th of March. Most reports focus on: the revision of the electoral register and the activities of the institutions and the political entities related to the early elections (13 reports), the work of SPPO (13 reports), the activities of the opposition (7 reports), the positions and reactions regarding to the migrant crisis (5 reports), the strike of the judicial administration (5 reports), the media reforms (4 reports) and other political issues and civil matters of public interest. None of the broadcasted reports in this period convey a pronounced journalistic position on any political entity.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The reporting approach of this television broadcaster is predominantly informative and the daily news contains analyses which express substantiated criticism of a current problem or issue by confronting the positions of the political actors or experts. The 11 analyses broadcasted in this period problematise the current political issues as well (March 19th, “What about the disputed records in the electoral register?”, March 23rd “New elections, old promises. The political parties with “copy paste” platforms”, March 24th “The bombs constitute an invasion of privacy?! The recommendations of the Venice Commission should be taken into account”, March 25th “Alternative routes for the migrants: An illegal refugee camp discovered in Vaksince”, March 25th “Did the SPPO storm into the Central Register or not?”), as well as civil issues and topics of interest to any of the ethnic communities (March 22nd “The City of Skopje decided in favour of new baroque buildings in Kapishtec”, March 23rd “Only with ID cards from Macedonia into Kosovo as of April 17th”, March 24th “Macedonian parties against EU integration”, March 25th “Problems in the interethnic integrated education”). The performance report of the ruling VMRO-DPMNE was covered in the news of this broadcaster only through the March 21st analysis (the day after) “The performance report of VMRO-DPMNE: For some perfect, for others a whitewash”, confronting the views of the two interlocutors, Risto Nikovski, an expert known for his pro-government views, and Nenad Novkovski, a former education minister from VMRO DPMNE.

Using sources: The information in 41 reports (slightly more than half of the total number) is based on a single source, which is either an institution or a political entity. Three or more sources were consulted in 15 reports, in 8 whereof, the positions of the sources are conflicting. 11 reports have two sources, 7 whereof have interlocutors with conflicting viewpoints. In 5 reports, the journalist/anchorperson cites no source of information, but the news is informative and does not contain a position of the journalist or the media outlet.

Direct addresses: The number of direct addresses of political leaders in the news is small in the analysis period. Out of 4 statements, two belong to the leader of DPA, Menduh Taci, one to the leader of GROM, Stevco Jakimovski and one to the leader of DU, Pavle Trajanov.

Audiovisual presentation: Manipulative presentation of the news content was not detected in this period of analysis.

(3) Third week (26 March – 1 April 2016)

During the period of analysis, TV21 broadcasted 85 reports on the current events and topics in the news in Macedonian language. Majority focused on the activities of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office and the cases “Torture” and “Fortress” (14 reports), the events surrounding the early elections (13 reports), the migrant crisis (9 reports), the proposed amendments to the Law on Criminal Procedure (5 reports), the Government projects (4 reports), the resignations of the ministers from DUI (3 reports), the Draft Media Law (3 reports), the opposition (3 reports), the monuments of the Albanian intellectuals in Center (2 reports) and other topics. 4 reports were observed to have a mild favourable tone in the reporting on the government policies.

Commentaries and opinions in the news: The television broadcaster covered many different topics, primarily, current events, generally balanced, without pronounced journalistic position neither in the reports, nor in the headlines. However, 4 broadcasted reports (March 26th “The Ministry of Health with a new

advertisement: Call for 20 doctors for the rural clinics”, March 26th “The Global Summit on Education in Istanbul: Ademi: Modernisation of the education in all spheres”, March 26th “The National Competition in Informatics with 102 competitors from all over Macedonia”, March 31st “128,347 new employments in the public sector, data published by the Register of Employees”) promote the politics of the government and contain favourable tone towards the ruling VMRO-DPMNE and DUI.

The television also broadcasted reports (4) that were sort of a political marketing for the opposition (March 26th “SDSM promises to abolish the external testing in the first 100 days”), as well as criticism of a government action or policy (March 28th “Zernovski: A political game of VMRO-DPMNE and DUI. The setting up of the Albanian monuments is deliberately postponed”, March 29th “New borrowings of 25.3 million, Naumov: The National Budget is on the verge of a financial collapse”, March 31st “Kiracovski accuses of selection of a more expensive bidder for the project ‘Computer for Every Child’”).

Apart from approaching the current events by conveying the daily events, the television broadcaster also provides analysis with expert opinions (10 reports) March 26th, “The situation in Lojane and Vaksince is peaceful. The residents do not believe that the operation is aimed for migrants”, March 26th “Person – Ghost, 50 years without a citizenship in Macedonia”, March 26th “What kind of reforms does the media sector need?”, March 29th “Why amend the Law on Criminal Procedure now?”, March 31st “Fetai and Ristoska: We will succeed. Does the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office have a support?”), often analysing long-term problems: March 26th “Two months are insufficient for five lights. Tetovo blames the Law and the residents blame the local-self government”, March 27th “Unpaved streets in Kumanovo, Damjanovski praises the city infrastructure”, March 31st “Playgrounds for the children in Chair. The residents demand more parks”).

The broadcaster covered the resignations of the ministers from DUI through neutral reporting on the event, whereas in April 1st debate the analysts with opposing views analysed “Why did DUI come out of the government? June 5th is fixed as a date for the elections”.

Using sources: 37 reports use only one source. 18 reports use views of two sources, in 9 whereof the two interlocutors have concurring views, and in 9 they have conflicting views. 15 reports have three or more sources, but in 14 they have opposing viewpoints. 6 reports fail to clearly indicate the source of information.

Direct addresses: A total of 5 direct addresses were broadcasted in the news in Macedonian language over the analysis period. The leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, has three addresses, while Pavle Trajanov and Stojanche Angelov have one statement each.

Audiovisual presentation: In all reports, both promotional and critical, the video presentation is in line with the information and there are no manipulative elements. Exception to this is the March 26th report “National Competition in Informatics with 102 competitors from all over Macedonia”, in which the video content focuses on two government official of VMRO-DPMNE, the Minister of Information Society and Administration, Marta Arsovska and Marjan Spasovski from the Agency for Youth and Sports, despite the fact that the information refers to a national competition, thereby putting it into a political context.

(4) Fourth week (2 – 8 April)

In the period between 2 and 8 April, in the news in Macedonian, *TV21* aired a total of 87 news segments on political events. The majority of segments aired were on: the elections (26 segments), on the resignations of the old and the appointment of new ministers from DUI (10 segments), on the migrant crisis (5 segments), on Government projects (3 segments), on the work of the SPO (3 segments), on the media (3 segments), on the activities of the opposition (2 segments), as well as on the case with the declaration of asserts of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Gruevski (2 segments) and on other topics. In 3 segments a favourable attitude was noted, regarding the government projects, but an equal number of segments were critical of certain government policies.

Commentary and Opinions in the News: This week the television broadcaster covered many different topics, mostly current events, in a generally balanced manner without express journalistic opinion in the news

segments or in the announcement. Three segments reported in a mildly favourable tone on promoting a government project (investment) or policy (6 April, 'The new minister Kuçi signed a new agreement. Over a thousand miners are to return to work to Zletovo and Toranica'; 8 April 'The World Bank report: Macedonia with the fastest growth of the economy'). On the other hand, multiple segments (4) were critically observing the work of the Government (3 April 'Employment according to the Ohrid Framework Agreement overfilled the institutions'; 5 April 'OLAF opened an investigation into Macedonia. How were the money from the IPA funds being spent?'). In the seven-day analysed period the television broadcaster aired 12 analyses on all current subjects (2 April 'A debate on *Klik Plus*: DUI's resignation – the right or the wrong decision?'; 3 April 'A key week for a resolution. Analysts: The dates are absurd'; 4 April 'Extra-parliamentary parties: DUI hides the officials' shame'; 4 April 'On elections without media reform. AJM: The media as in Milošević's time'; 8 April 'Macedonia in a political vacuum: A new leader or expert government?'), which confront primarily opposing expert positions, or opinions of members of the political subjects. The broadcaster continued to air reportage features concerning citizens' local problems (3 April 'Cotton lungs will show the Karpoš 4 authorities what they are breathing'; 3 April 'An unusual tender at the Tetovo Municipality. The criterion: 32 years of experience for a lawyer'; 8 April 'Topaana in Skopje: Living on welfare and in unhygienic conditions'). This week the news featured two segments on the activities of the opposition, both of which consisted of statements from SDSM representatives on abuses by the government.

Using Sources: In 25 news segments only one source was used. In 21 segments the positions of three or more interlocutors were being confronted, whereby in 11 they shared the same views. In 16 segments two positions were featured, and in 8 cases they were opposing, and in just as many they were matching. In 6 segments the source was not mentioned directly, but judging by the content, they were statements from international and national institutions and contained no manipulative elements.

Direct Addresses: In the news in Macedonian on this television broadcaster, in the analysed period a total of 11 addresses were aired. Three addresses were of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Gruevski, whereas one statement was made by Stojanče Angelov, Gëzim Ostreni, Ziadin Sela, Amdi Bajram, Jove Kekenovski and Samka Ibrahimovski.

Audiovisual Presentation: Both in the promotional and in the other segments the video presentation followed the information and there were no manipulative elements.

6. TV 21 (Albanian)

(1) First week (12 – 18 March 2016)

The TV21 news in Albanian in the monitored period aired 86 news segments concerning political subjects and events. Two topics predominated in different parts of the week: first the Constitutional Court ruling on the Law on Amnesty (15 news segments), and then the segments related to the elections, that is, the consolidation of the voter registry (also 15 news segments). Third most featured were the segments on the Special Prosecutor's Office (6 news segments), and other topics also included the negotiations on the media (2 news segments).

Commentary and Assessment in the News: The news segments with promotional or favourable content on this television broadcaster were rare, but also accidental, considering the diversity of the subjects they referred to (3 on DUI, 2 on the opposition, 3 on the Government, but also 5 critical on the government).

(1) The broadcaster critically and vividly covered the events surrounding the Constitutional Court, the ruling itself, as well as the protest and counter-protests (14th March: 'On the eve of the Court's ruling, SDSM is protesting, VMRO-DPMNE is accusing'). The atmosphere was fully captured (15th March: 'The Constitutional Court with a view of tents, parallel protests and counter-protests'). But critical commentary in the following days were not lacking (17th March: 'The Constitutional Court ruling sets a precedent, experts say'; 'The latest Constitutional Court ruling is scandalous, the ombudsman confirms'), neither were stronger qualifications (18th March: 'The Constitutional Court was buried').

(2) Different positions on the certainty of the election date were broadcast, that of the EU Ambassador Aivo

Orav (16th March: ‘The SEC has made progress, there are no doubts on the election date’), but also of the German Ambassador Christine Althaus (17th March: ‘First doubts over 5th June, no one knows whether the elections will take place’).

(3) Topics with an ethnic Albanian focus were not lacking either (13th March: ‘Historians are asking for new textbooks, since the existing ones incited hatred; the concept is the same as the view the Serbs had of the Albanians, that the Albanians are not an autochthonous people’).

Using Sources: Predominant are news segments using two or more sources with different or opposing positions (35 news segments), over those with one source (27 segments), and those with two or more sources, but a shared position (17 segments).

Direct Addresses: Few direct addresses were aired: two by the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski and one by the president of SDSM Zoran Zaev.

Audiovisual Presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was noted.

(2) Second week (19 – 25 March 2016)

In the news on TV 21 in Albanian, from the 19th to the 25th of March there were 81 analyzed segments which referred to political entities or events. There were 14 segments focusing on the revision of the electoral registry and the events surrounding the elections, 12 segments about the SPPO, 9 segments about the migrant crisis, 4 segments about the reforms in the media, 3 segments about the wiretapped conversations broadcast by the opposition. The TV station also aired 8 segments where the subject was the ruling party DUI, 4 of which were favourable and 4 critical. In 9 segments the subject was the Government and the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE, 2 of which were favourable and 7 had a mild critical tone.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The early elections were still the main topic this week, and the TV station was neutrally critical in reporting on the events related to this them. The statement of the special prosecutor Janeva that ‘the President, the Constitutional Court judges and the MPs are illegitimate’ (March 22nd) was marked the work of the SPPO this week, and the television also broadcast the reactions: ‘Janeva’s claims are unfounded and tendentious, was the statement given by Ivanov’s Office’, ‘Still, doubts still exist about the outcome of the elections’ (March 23rd). the reports on the action of the ‘SPPO in the Central Registry’ (March 23rd) remained overshadowed by the former, as were the parties’ back and forth concerning the report from SPPO. The TV also aired Zaev’s statement regarding the recommendation of the Venice Commission for publishing the bombs (March 22nd), and they announced a debate on this topic: ‘The recommendation of the Venice Commission also supported by the experts in a debate of ICS’ (March 23rd), as well as the support of DUI (March 25th).

Regarding the topics that were of interest for the Albanian ethnic community, the following segments were aired: ‘Sela lodged a complaint to the Constitutional Court about the cross in Butel’ (March 19th), that ‘In Aerodrom three new churches are currently being built, two of them are in Lisiche’, and the headline where the presenter gives an opinion: ‘Lisiche – Skopje’s Jerusalem?! How many churches need to be built in Aerodrom?’ (March 20th).

Using sources: There were 27 segments with one source, 13 had two or more sources, however the standpoints of the sources were like-minded.

Direct addresses: There were 4 direct addresses overall, two were from the leader of DPA Tachi, one was from Pavle Trajanov and one from Stevco Jakimovski.

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was observed.

(3) Third week (26 March – 1 April 2016)

From the 26th of March to the 1st of April, the TV broadcaster aired 76 news segments regarding political entities, processes or states. The most present topic was the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (16 segments), then the preparations for early elections (8 segments), the media (6 segments), DUI exiting the

Government (4 segments) and 15 segments about topics that are of special interest for Albanians.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The TV station aired two positive segments for the party DUI and three for the Government, but it also aired segments criticizing those two entities. Three segments promoting the opposition were also noted. The television provided neutral reporting on the main events from the political crisis (April 1st: ‘DUI is leaving the Government because of the wiretapping’; ‘Gruevski said that the decision is made within the party, and the opposition is making accusations’). The work of the SPPO was monitored completely (March 28th: ‘Mijalkov is being investigated for harassing Boshkoski’). The attitude was mainly neutral, or ever so slightly positive (March 31: ‘The work of the SPPO is starting to bear fruits. The First Instance Court ordered custody for a department manager of DBK (Security and Counterintelligence Administration)’). Neutral positions are also kept regarding the topic of early parliamentary elections (March 27th: ‘The quality of the elections is more important than the date, says the German Ambassador’; March 28th: ‘SEC is commencing controls of 100 436 disputed data’; 17 thousand suspicious voters in Chair’; April 1st: ‘In order to protect the data, SEC have decided to take the voters registry off the Internet’).

In the segments on the topics of special interest for Albanians, those that stand out are related to the police operation in the Lipkovo area (March 26th: ‘Speaking in Matejce, Spasovski is calling not to spread panic, the residents do not believe that the police are there for the migrants’). The opinion of Dzezair Shakjiri was also conveyed (March 28th: ‘I am not going back from Tanushevci to Skopje without a change in power’). Although, topics were also observed that were not present in other media (March 31st: ‘Bekjir Asani was caught, then released in Bujanovac, who pulled strings for him?’).

Using sources: 21 segments were aired with one source and 17 segments with two or more sources, however with a unified position, as well as 31 segments where the sources had different or opposing opinions.

Direct addresses: Throughout the entire period only two direct addresses were aired from the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski and one from the leader of DS Pavle Trajanov.

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was used.

(4) Fourth week (2 – 8 April)

In the monitored period the television broadcaster aired 77 news segments on political events and subjects. Most of them were on: the elections (27 segments), the work of the SPO (5 segments), on media reform (3 segments), on the replaced ministers from DUI (11 segments) and 3 segments on the resignations of the ministers from SDSM. There were 4 positive and 6 critical segments on government officials, mostly from VMRO-DPMNE.

Commentary and Opinions in the News: The television broadcaster reported critically on the political crisis. In the 3 April news segment ‘Resignations of the ministers from DUI, VMRO-DPMNE will not replace its ministers,’ Gruevski’s statement was aired that ‘there will be changes when the new Government is formed after the elections.’ In the 4 April segment ‘The crisis puts the support for joining NATO at risk,’ the statement of the US Ambassador Bailey was quoted that ‘the focus is on the foreigners,’ whereas on 5 April the statements of the two most prominent ambassadors were aired: ‘Baily and Orav say that the international community does not decide on the date.’ The television broadcaster reported neutrally on the subject of the elections as well. In the announcement for the 7 April segment ‘SDSM came out with a clearer position today and called for uniting against Gruevski in order to restore democracy,’ and then in the following segment ‘SDSM chose the streets, not the election. Gruevski challenged Zaev to a showdown,’ the two leaders’ statements were confronted. In the 7 April segments ‘The opposition parties decided unanimously not to participate in the elections on 5 June,’ ‘Analysts: VMRO does not want free elections,’ and ‘Without the opposition there can be no elections,’ as well as the segments from 8 April ‘No end in sight of the political crisis,’ ‘The government repealed all legal acts adopted by the ministers from SDSM,’ and ‘EU and NATO require Macedonia to get back on the Euro-Atlantic track,’ in a critical tone and by confronting expert opinions the consequences of the current situation were analysed. Another coverage in a critical tone was that of the appearance of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE at the Romani Party Congress, where he announced ‘a big victory on 5 May,’ whereas experts wondered: ‘Macedonia in a political vacuum: A new leader or expert government?’ (8 April).

Reporting on media reform, the television broadcaster aired AJM's position that 'The media [are] as in Milošević's time' (5 April), and that 'Journalism does not protect the public interest: a MODEM debate' (6 April). It also aired EU Ambassador Aivo Orav's statement that 'freedom of expression is unsatisfactory' in a news segment on 7 April. The broadcaster critically covered the Government's economic policies: 'Stay-at-home salaries for the new public sector jobs' (3 April), 'How many assets does Gruevski have?' (5 April), and 'An investigation: where were the money from the IPA fund being spent?' (5 April).

Using Sourced: In 21 segment only one source was used, whereas in 25 segments two or more sources were employed, but they had shared positions.

Direct Addresses: The broadcaster aired a total of 7 addresses of political leaders, most of which (5) were given by Gruevski, one by Zaev and one by Taçi. There were also statements by the leaders of the smaller parties.

Audiovisual Presentation: The broadcaster generally does not use manipulative audiovisual presentation.

7. Alsat M (Albanian)

(1) First week (12 – 18 March 2016)

During the analyzed period from the 12th to the 18th of March, Alsat television broadcast 68 segments in their informative shows that pertained to political actors, processes or situations. The prevalent topic was the decision of the Constitutional Court regarding the Law on Pardoning (19 segments), then holding early parliamentary elections (11 segments), the work of the Special Prosecutor's Office (4 segments) and the situations with the media (3 segments). 16 segments were also aired that were of special interest to Albanians. In reporting on these topics, the television took a neutral stand towards the political entities.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television did not express favourable or offensive attitudes towards any political entity, nor did they use any commentary elements in the news.

(1) A critical stand was observed regarding the topic of the Constitutional Court which cancelled the provisions preventing the President to pardon persons convicted of electoral frauds, terrorism, pedophilia, etc. Criticisms were directed with personal conclusions (March 16th: "The court voted for pardoning falsifiers"), or with opinions from analysts (March 17th: "If the president pardons he is breaking the deal with from Przino"); "By giving amnesty you undermine the work of the Special Public Prosecution").

(2) Special attention was also paid to the topics related to the holding of early parliamentary elections, especially the information about the revision of the electoral registry. Here also a strong critical tone could be observed. Details were conveyed too (March 13th: "600 persons from Pustec voted on the local elections in Kicevo"), however the big picture was also shown (March 17th: "SEC: 500.000 suspicious voters in the electoral registry"), although specific political entities were pointed out as well (March 18th: "VMRO-DPMNE is manipulating with 195.000 voters").

(3) The other main political topics were regularly followed and in general the approach was impartial, like for instance the issue on the media (March 14th: "Without reforms in the media there will be no fair elections and the political crisis will not be solved"), the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (March 15th: "Janeva aims at 80 politicians"), the news regarding the wiretapped conversations (March 17th: "the Venetian convention is asking for the bombs to be published"), etc.

(4) The issues that are of special interest to Albanians were also quite present, especially the relationship between the party DUI and the country's President Gjorje Ivanov. He formally is not acknowledged by this party, however the party's representatives did participate at a meeting of the Security Council that he convened, and was criticized by the media outlet (March 16th: "DUI are changing their opinion about Gjorge Ivanov"; March 17th: "DUI have discontinued their non-recognition of the President"). Among other topics of this kind, during this observed week the building of a 55 meter cross in Butel Municipality was once again encountered (March 14th: "Sela submitted the cross to the Constitutional court").

Using sources: In most of the segments (27) two or more sources were used with different or opposed positions, then came the segments with one source (22) and the fewest segments were the ones with two or more sources, however with a unified position (12).

Direct addresses: The most representation in terms of direct addresses was for the leaders of SDSM Zoran Zaev and of GROM Stevco Jakimovski (three addresses each), and following them were the leaders of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, of DUI Ali Ahmeti and of DPA Menduh Taci (each had one address).

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was observed.

(2) Second week (19 – 25 March 2016)

During the analyzed period from the 19th to the 25th of March, the TV station Alsat in its news in Albanian aired 76 segments pertaining to political actors, processes or situations. The most frequent topic were the elections (12 segments), then followed the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (10 segments) and the situations with the media (4 segments), the recommendation from the Venice Commission (2 segments). 13 segments were also aired on topics that are of special interest for Albanians. The TV station also aired 9 segments on the Government and 6 segments where the subject was the ruling DUI, the tone of which was critical.

Commentary and opinions in the news: When reporting on these topics, the TV station had a neutral stand towards political entities. On the topic of early elections the statements from Zaev and from Gruevski were broadcast (March 19th: 'Zaev, without a revised electoral registry there will be no free elections', March 20th: 'The last elections were in compliance with the rules'). In the headline on March 21st the TV expressed an opinion that 'The date for elections is uncertain', and it continues with the clashing opinions with the two largest parties: 'SDSM, with reforms in the media and a revised registry we will be ready for elections even before June 5th' and 'VMRO states that only elections will get the country out of crisis'. In a segment from March 22nd the following statement was shown: 'Tachi is skeptical about June 5th', according to whom 'with Albanians, boxes are filled with shovels, and that it is not a matter of sophisticated electoral fraud'.

The television expressed a positive attitude towards the recommendation from the Venice Commission for publishing the 'bombs' and conveyed the statement of the Justice Minister: 'Jashari says: we are looking at the recommendations from Venice' (March 19th). On March 24th a debate was broadcast in which the opinion of the experts was 'for the bombs to be shown'.

The reactions following the statement of the Special Public Prosecutor Katica Janeva on the 'illegitimacy of the authorities' were neutrally communicated: 'Ivanov: Janeva's claims are unfounded, according to the president' (March 22nd), as well as the experts opinions that 'Janeva should prove the electoral irregularities' (March 23rd).

The topics that are of interest for Albanians this week were refracted through the prism of ethnic relations. In a critical story on the economic programs of DUI it was said that 'Macedonians are working in the foreign investment businesses in Tetovo' (March 20th). In a cue on March 20th the TV commented that 'A sports hall will be built in Struga only where Macedonians go to school', while in a segment aired on March 21st the journalist concluded that 'out of 21 000 subsidies for a third child, 10 000 are for Albanians, 6 700 are for Macedonians, and the rest are for other nationalities'. On March 24th there was a critical story on the monuments of Albanians figures that have still not been placed in Centar ('Albanian monuments left to be forgotten'). In the segment on March 25th the television station critically conveyed the statement of the Justice Minister 'Jashari not saying anything on the discrimination in the justice sector', with the attitude that 'Albanians appear to be guilty before the authorities lately'. In the segments on the economic policies of the Government and the loans, the television reported with a critical overtone.

Using sources: There were 20 segments with one source and 19 segments with two or more sources, however unified in their positions.

Direct addresses: 4 direct addresses were published overall, two of which were from the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Gruevski, one from the leader of SDSM Zaev and one from the leader of DPA Tachi.

Audiovisual presentation: There was no manipulative audiovisual presentation.

(3) Third week (26 March – 1 April 2016)

During the monitored period from the 26th of March to the 1st of April, Alsat M television in their news in Albanian aired 90 news segments related to political actors, processes or situations. Most frequent were the topics about the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (20 segments), then the preparations for the early elections (10 segments), DUI exiting the Government (6 segments) and the media (3 segments).

Commentary and opinions in the news: The TV broadcaster aired five critical segments about the Government's policies and 15 segments on topics that are of special interest to Albanians. Some of the critical segments referred to the police action in the Lipkovo region (March 26th: 'Psychological terror on the population'), as well as the borrowing and the economy.

(1) DUI's withdrawal from Parliament was the key event in the monitored week. The reasons given by the party were conveyed (April 1st: 'Wiretapping is a reason for DUI's withdrawal'), as well as the reactions from other parties (April 1st: 'SDSM: DUI's act further deepens the crisis') and analytical views (April 1: 'According to experts, DUI's move is leading towards a technical Government').

(2) Reports about the new cases opened by SPPO were awarded prime time slots, they were informative and neutral (March 28th: 'Sasho Mijalkov under investigation for harassment during the arrest of Ljube Boshkovski', March 30th 'Fort' Janeva is also starting an investigation on the Mol'). Reactions from the parties were communicated (March 29th: 'Gruevski: SDSM is using the work of SPPO'; March 30th: 'According to SDSM, this points to wiretapping being performed by the government itself'). In the context of the work of the SPPO, the bill for the Law on Criminal Procedure was included (March 28th: 'The Government is trying to sneak a bill for stalling the SPPO').

(3) Regarding the topics with a special Albanian ethnic focus, stories concerning the naming of institutions such as the Macedonian Opera and Ballet, the Macedonian Radio Television and others (March 26th: 'The prefix 'Macedonian' of the institutions is irritating the Albanians'). As opposed to this, there were also segments concerning the use of the language (March 26th: 'Ignoring Albanian is unconstitutional'); the monuments of Albanian historic persons in the center of Skopje.

(4) The reporting about the date of the elections was neutral, and the opinions of the international community were conveyed (March 27th: 'The German Ambassador asks for conditions to be provided first, the quality of the elections is more important than the date: March 31st'; 'Hahn: The elections are a way out of the crisis');

Using sources: There were 26 segments with one source and 20 segments with two or more sources, albeit with like-minded views, as well as 37 segments with two or more sources with different or opposed views.

Direct addresses: Only two direct addresses were aired from the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, and there was one from each of the leaders of the smaller parties: Zijadin Sela from the Reforms Movement of DPA and Pavle Trajanov from the Democratic Alliance.

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was used.

(4) Fourth week (2 – 8 April)

The television broadcaster aired 79 analysed segments on political events and subjects. There were 22 segments on the early elections aired, 8 segments on the SPO, 3 segments on the media, 5 segments on SDSM's exiting the Government, and 7 segments on the resignations and the new ministers from DUI. There were 14 segments on government policies, but all were critical: 10 of which on officials from VMRO-DPMNE, and 4 on DUI. Six segments covered topics of interest to the Albanian ethnic community.

Commentary and Opinions in the News: The television broadcaster neutrally and critically covered the upheavals of this week, which started with 'Resignations of the ministers from DUI, DUI is silent' (2 April), and Gruevski's explanation that 'DUI has not exited the Government, and it is not true that only us and SDSM are in the Government.' The 3 April segment aired Vanhoutte's statement that 'Macedonia has a non-functioning democracy.' A 7 April news segment aired the statement of the leader of the opposition 'Zaev called for a front against Gruevski,' in which he said 'either Gruevski, or Macedonia.' An 8 April segment, on the other hand, broadcast the view of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Gruevski 'SDSM is afraid to face us in elections,' as well as the messages from the diplomats 'Bailey-Orav: There is a lot more work to be done

to secure free elections,’ and DPA’s position that ‘The conditions are more important than the date’ (8 April). In the analysis of this subject, according to the experts ‘Elections without the opposition exacerbate the crisis’ (8 April). The work of the SPO this week was marked by the subjects on the ‘Suspicious of Katica Janeva being under surveillance’ (5 April) and the SPO’s claims that ‘It is official: we were subject to surveillance’ (8 April). In the focus of the Albanian topics this week was the question why there were ‘More Macedonian classes in Cvetan Dimov and Arsenij Jovkov,’ in segments on 2 and 3 April. Another segment from 3 April aired a parent’s statement that it was ‘patriotic to establish an Albanian class in Idrizovo.’ An 8 April news segment on the wiretapping aired Ahmeti’s statement that he was being blackmailed, with a special emphasis on his claim that he did ‘not offend the prophet Mohammad.’ In the critical news segments on the authorities and VMRO-DPMNE, the broadcaster reported that ‘Gruevski’s wealth septupled’ (5 April), that in ‘Ohrid, the municipality raised the directors’ salaries by MKD 10,000,’ and on the ‘IPA funds: the investigation into the abuses continues’ (7 April).

Using Sources: There were 29 segments with a single source and 11 segments with two or more sources, but with shared positions.

Direct Addresses: There were a total of 7 direct addresses. Three of them were given by Gruevski, 2 by Ahmeti and one each by Zaev and Taçi.

Audiovisual Presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was noted.

8. Alsat M (Macedonian)

(1) First week (12 – 18 March 2016)

During the reporting period from the 12th to the 18th of March Alsat M television in their news in Macedonian broadcast a total of 70 segments that refer to political actors, processes or situations. The television focused most of its attention on: the events related to the decision of the Constitutional Court to cancel the restraints of the President regarding the pardoning of convicts (15 segments), the topics related to the early parliamentary elections, with the main focus on the electoral registry (15 segments), the work of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (4 segments), the state of the national debt (2 stories), etc. For the most part, in the reports on these topics no attitude towards political entities was noted.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television generally does not express favouring or demonizing attitudes towards any political entity, nor do they use commentary contents in the news. The most frequent topics in their informative program corresponded with the main political topics of society, which are of public interest. The reporting on these topics was impartial, the opinions of all concerned parties were conveyed and a broader context of the events was provided (the decision of the Constitutional Court to allow pardoning for election violations was linked with the procedures that the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office is currently running for such actions against officials of VMRO-DPMNE).

(1) A rare case of broadcasting negative speech was recorded, regarding the topics on the electoral registry. On March 18th the academic Abdulmenaf Bexheti was published claiming that the party VMRO-DPMNE abused 195 thousand fictional voters, although the procedure related to this case has not been finalized yet by the State Elections Commission. Besides, the second side did not get a chance to speak. Furthermore, the caption only included the second part of the party’s acronym (“DPMNE used 195 thousand fictional voters”) which is considered as an insult to the party. This is not the first such occurrence for this TV station.

(2) The television showed a stronger critical attitude towards the party DUI, which was accused of being inconsistent in two segments about the meeting of the Security Council convened by the president of state, which DUI does not recognize, although their representative was present (March 17th: “Political analysts believe that DUI’s presence at the meeting of the Security Council is a signal that Ahmeti’s party stopped their campaign of non-recognition of President Ivanov”).

(3) Although in not so many segments, the television once again critically treated the issue of the national debt, this time through segments regarding the counter that was put up and then taken down by the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, after VMRO-DPMNE reacted against it (March 15th: MANU (MASA) had a change of heart, they took down the counter of national debt. The move, accidentally or not,

comes after the reaction from VMRO-DPMNE”).

(4) The television aired 12 segments on topics that are of special interest to Albanians, or they processed them in such a way (March 14th: ‘Prime Minister Emil Dimitriev attended today the signing of employment contracts for 112 former professional soldiers, where not a single Albanian was present’). With nine aired segments, a dominant topic was the arrest of Kosovo high official Gafur Dugoli, after an arrest warrant was issued by Serbia. The Minister of Justice Adnan Jashari was criticized for the move, information from the court were conveyed, as well as the reactions of political parties.

Using sources: One source was used in 27 segments, in 22 there were two or more sources whose positions are mutually aligned or neutral, and in 9 there were two or more sources with conflicting viewpoints. In 5 segments opinions of analysts and experts were used, in 3 of these segments they were either the single source or the single analyst, and in 2 segments there were two or more experts whose positions were close. Although the positions presented were justified, there still was no notice of a segment with contrasting analytical perspectives. Manipulation of a source was observed, i.e. a reference to anonymous sources for offensive content (March 13th "Alsat M learns that hundreds of people from Pustec voted in Kicevo at the last elections, many of whom live at the same address with high officials from VMRO-DPMNE. This figure for Alsat M was confirmed by anonymous sources in the Interior sector in Kicevo ").

Direct addresses: During this period, addresses were aired from a large number of leaders of political entities, four from Zoran Zaev from SDSM, three from Stevco Jakimovski from GROM, and one each from Nikola Gruevski from VMRO-DPMNE, Zijadin Sela from the Movement for reforms of DPA, Ali Ahmeti from DUI and Menduh Taci from DPA. Addresses from the old and the new leaders of NDP were also aired, Vesel Mehmedi and Fadil Zendeli, where there was a change of the position of leader in the course of two days.

Audiovisual presentation: On March 12th a segment was aired about the children from the village Blace that go to school in Kosovo, since Macedonia did not build them a school. The story included dramatic music in order to enhance the effect, and the second side was not asked to comment.

(2) Second week (19 – 25 March 2016)

During the reporting period from the 19th to the 25th of March, Alsat M television aired 75 segments in its news in Macedonian that referred to political actors, processes or situations. The TV station dedicated most of its attention to two topics: the events surrounding the holding of early parliamentary elections, above all concerning the revision of the electoral registry (11 segments) and the work of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (11 segments). On other topics, most present were the segments about the situations with the media (4 segments), the opinion of the Venice Commission regarding the wiretapped conversations (3 segments) as well as the report on the achievements from VMRO-DPMNE, DUI’s program, the national debt, the migrant crisis, the activities of the opposition, the police operation linked with the ‘affairs factory’ and the placement of monuments of Albanians in Centar (2 segments each). For the most part, the reports on these topics did not include any attitude towards political entities, except for the activities of VMRO-DPMNE and DUI, which were treated critically.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The TV station overall did not express any favourable or demonizing attitude towards any political entity, nor did they use commentary contents in the news. (1) The TV station criticized the conferences of parties of the ruling coalition, VMRO-DPMNE and DUI, however they did not report on them. For instance, they did not report what were the economic measures that DUI is proposing, however they showed a critical segment in which the opinion of an expert was presented as a general consensus of the profession (March 20th: ‘Economy experts are skeptical about the potential success of DUI’s economic program. According to Vasar Ademi, due to the unsuccessfulness of DUI in this segment, Polog remains to be the least-developed region of the country’). The report on achievements of VMRO-DPMNE was also criticized (March 21st: ‘Economists are criticizing the report of Gruevski, they demand a realistic economic development’). However, not one of the many data pointed out at that event were mentioned, not even to dispute them or to argue that the real effect does not correspond with the reported number (March 21st: ‘Numbers were quoted on the growth of the economy, employment, export, foreign investments, road construction. Employment measures were reported, as well as tax reductions, government

projects for pensioners and for young people. According to Gruevski, we are doing so well, that it causes fear with foreign investors’).

(2) The strong and well-argued critical attitude towards the topic of the national debt continued (March 23rd: ‘After several months of silence, Stavreski explained that the new loans that are above what was planned are for salaries and pensions. He claims that the level of public debt of almost 50 percent is not dangerous’; March 24th: ‘Interest rates at which the country is taking on loans from domestic banks are increasing. This is the result of the increasingly high uncertainty and lack of trust in the state, economists believe’)

(3) In 8 segments total an Albanian ethnic focus was observed in the selection or the presentation of the topics. This was done in a way that as civil topics places where the population is mostly Albanian were selected (March 22nd: ‘Thirsty for water. This is how the residents of Tetovo met today as the World day of water’), or topics were selected that are of special interest to Albanians (March 23rd: ‘Despite the promises for completing the reconstruction of the Albanian Theatre in Skopje, it seems that the work was abandoned half way’), or by placing the topics in an ethnic context (March 24th: ‘With over one thousand amendments, the opposition are against the Law on Notary Services. DPA also criticizes the neglect of the Albanian language’)

Using sources: In 27 segments, two or more sources were used with opposed positions, in 16 segments two or more sources whose positions are aligned or neutral, and in 19 there was one source. Opinions of experts or analysts were used in 9 segments, and in 6 of them they were either the only source of the only expert opinion, and in 3 segments it was two or more analysts with similar positions. Although generally the opinions of this kind that were presented were well argued, still, not one segment was shown with opposed analytical opinions.

Direct addresses: Very few direct addresses were shown, two from the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, one from the president of SDMS Zoran Zaev and one from the president of DPA Menduh Taci.

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was noted.

(3) Third week (26 March – 1 April 2016)

During the reporting period from the 26th of March to the 1st of April, Alsat M television in their news in Macedonian have published a total of 87 news segments which refer to political actors, processes or situations. The TV station focused most of its attention to: the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (16 segments), the preparations for the early parliamentary elections (10 segments), the police operations in the Lipkovo region (7 segments), the resignations from DUI (6 segments), the monuments of Albanian historical persons in the center of Skopje (4 segments) and other topics. In most of the reports on these topics, there was no notice of any attitudes towards the political entities.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The TV station did not express any favouring or demonizing attitudes towards any political entity in general, nor did they use commentary contents in the news. Most frequent were the two trending topics, the elections and the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office, for which the reporting was informative, neutral, comprehensive and it included the opinions of all concerned parties.

(1) The TV broadcaster reported more than the other media on the police operation in the Lipkovo region. The basic information about it were conveyed, however there were strong criticisms about the size of it, underlining that it caused panic with the local population. The necessity for the operation itself was not brought into question, nor was it suggested that it was directed against one ethnic group (March 27th: ‘The people believe that most of the fault for the panic caused by the police operation was with some web portals that presented fallacies’).

(2) Also present more here than in other media were topics that are of special interest for the Albanian ethnic community, like for example the use of the Albanian language (March 26th: ‘In the new draft Law on Notaries there is no option left for the official use of the Albanian language’), naming the institutions ‘Macedonian’ or ‘of Macedonia’, the inadequate provision of healthcare services or other public services in populated areas where Albanians live, etc.

(3) An enhanced and well-argued critical attitude was expressed towards a wide range of topics. In this sense, the forerunners are the proposed amendments to the Law on Criminal Procedure, which foresee more opportunities for the defendants, however they come from the ruling coalition, at a time of strengthened activities of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (March 29th: 'A highly strung debate in Parliament about the amendments to the Law on Criminal Procedure, which seem to be aimed at blocking the SPPO'). Critical reporting was also observed on the topic of the cross in Butel (March 28th: 'On this spot, where the setting up of a gigantic cross was planned, a week ago, high officials of DUI with their militants were singing and celebrating the fact that the cross will not be put up'), the behavior of the RSS (Republic Court Council) President Ushkovski at the formal ceremony (March 31st: 'On the Day of the Judiciary, nothing but praises for the judges and the courts in the country. The Court Council President, after listing all of the successes, chased away the press'), the borrowing (March 31st: 'The Government should stop borrowing, since according to the academics and experts in economy, we've already reached the red line') and other topics.

Using sources: In 35 segments only one source was used, in 23 there were two or more sources with opposed views, and in 20 segments there were two or more sources whose positions were aligned or neutral. In 6 segments the opinions of analysts and experts were consulted, in 4 of which they were the only source or the only analyst, and in 2 segments there were two or more experts whose positions were like-minded. Although the presented opinions were argument supported, still there was no notice of a segment with opposed analytical views.

Direct addresses: Only a small number of direct addresses were broadcast in this period, two from VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski, two from the leader of the Movement for Reforms of DPA Zijadin Sela and one from the leader of Dostoinstvo, Stojanche Angelov.

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was observed.

(4) Fourth week (2 – 8 April)

In the monitored period between 2 and 8 April, the *Alsat-M* television broadcaster in the news in Macedonian aired a total of 78 news segments concerning political players, processes or situations. Predominant were the topics related to the early parliamentary elections (25 segments), over the ministerial changes in DUI (9 segments), the developments in the cases opened by the Special Prosecutor's Office (9 segments), the situations with the economy (4 segments), as well as the media, the anti-corruption commission, the request to release Ljube Boškoski, the control over the ASC, the cross in Butel (2 segments each), and other topics. In most reports on these topics there was no explicit attitude towards the political subjects noted.

Commentary and Opinions in the News: The television broadcaster generally does not take a favourable or demonising position towards any political subject, or use commentary in the news. The most featured topics were those on the current events in the country, such as the early parliamentary elections, the change of DUI's ministers, the cases opened by the SPO, etc. They were covered informatively, in a neutral and comprehensive manner.

(1) The television broadcaster sporadically expressed criticism of various situations and phenomena in society. It criticised the lack of oversight of the ASC (2 April: 'MPs admit that they cannot conduct the necessary oversight of the intelligence services'), the policies for attracting foreign investments (2 April: 'Even after eight years, it has remained an institutional the amount of government assistance each company receives'), as well as the policies on government spending (3 April: 'Motorways – a belated investment'). The emphasis was on those sections of the World Bank report that were critical of the government (8 April: 'Economic growth without investments, but with government spending on goods and services—this is stated in the World Bank report for 2015').

(2) The coverage of topics that are of special interest to the Albanian ethnic community in Macedonia continued. This time, the predominant among them was the issue of the number of classes in Macedonian and Albanian in secondary education (2 April: 'In the high school competition published by the Ministry of Education, once again the number of classes taught in Macedonian has increased, and those taught in Albanian have remained more or less the same').

(3) The broadcaster also criticised the conduct of the Anti-Corruption Commission regarding the failure to

release Nikola Gruevski's declaration of assets after he resigned from his prime ministerial position, but one of the segments featured an unfounded allegation regarding his assets (5 April: 'According to some calculation, in 10 years Gruevski managed to septuple his personal wealth').

Using Sources: In 29 news segments only one source was used, in 19 two or more sources with opposing views, and in 16 segments two or more sources whose positions were matching or neutral. In 10 segments opinions of analysts and experts were employed, in 5 of which they constituted wither the only source or the only analyst, 4 segments featured two or more experts whose positions were similar, and 1 segment presented opposing views.

Direct Addresses: The most featured was the leader of VMRO-DPMNE with 4 addresses, there were two addresses aired of the leaders of DUI Ali Ahmeti and of the Movement for Reforms in DPA Ziadin Sela, as well as single addresses by multiple other leaders, such as Stojanče Angelov (Dignity), Jove Kekenovski (FRODEM), Gëzim Ostreni (Uniteti), Menduh Thaçi (DPA) and Zoran Zaev (SDSM).

Audiovisual Presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was noted.

9. 24 Vesti

(1) First week (12 – 18 March 2016)

During the reporting period from the 12th to the 18th of March, the television 24 Vesti published 91 segments that refer to political actors, processes or situations. Most present were the topics related to the decision of the Constitutional Court regarding the Law on Pardoning (15 segments), the early parliamentary elections (13 segments), the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (6 segments), the national debt (6 segments), the moves of Macedonian political representatives in connection to the migrant crisis (4 segments), the media (3 segments), etc. While reporting about these topics the television took a neutral or critical approach towards the political entities.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The TV station did not use commentary elements, nor did they express explicit favourable or accusatory behavior towards political entities in their news program. The selection of topics and their coverage were adequate to current events in society, which were of public interest.

(1) There was permanent monitoring of all events pertaining to the decision of the Constitutional Court to cancel sections of the Law on Pardoning, thus enabling the President to also pardon people convicted of electoral irregularities and for other criminal acts: the preparations and the making of the decision itself, the protests and the counter-protests, the reactions and opinions of the political subject and of various parts of the public, etc. Especially critical behavior was shown towards the very decision (March 16th: "The Constitutional Court opened the path to pardoning for persons convicted of electoral crime, pedophilia and dealers of illegal narcotics"), towards the procedure (March 15th: "The Constitutional Court, however, announced today that the controversial decision will be made behind closed doors"), which was placed in the current context of the 'Titanic' case (March 16th: "This morning, in front of the Constitutional Court protesters were gathering with organized transportation to support the institution. With sandwiches in their hands they went to defend the Constitutional Court"). Uncertainty in the honesty of the standpoints of President Gjorge Ivanov was also expressed (March 18th: "Although the president of VMRO-DPMNE refrains from the decision of the Constitutional Court, at the counter-protest his coalition partner Stevco Jakimovski went out formally to defend the court, and evidence of recruiting members of VMRO-DPMNE to participate in those protest were also presented to the public").

(2) This week too, aside from all current political events, the TV station continued to regularly monitor the state of the country's public debt, taking a critical stand, most often through emphasizing the total debt after each new loan (March 15th: "With this new loan, counting from the beginning of this year, the Government has created a new internal debt of nearly 62 million euro, and as of the end of last year the level of public debt was 4,2 billion euro"), or by expressing suspicion in the necessity (March 13th: "According to the calendar of the Ministry of Finance, no pay-back of debts are foreseen for this week, which raises the issue as to the purpose of the loan from domestic creditors").

(3) There are critical observations of other, sporadic events in political life, whenever violation of public interest is observed, for instance the presentation of a new detailed urban plan in Municipality Aerodrom (March 17th: “The media’s attempt to present to the public the comments of the citizens about the plan to build new buildings in Aerodrom has become a problem for the staff from the urban community”), and the behavior of the Minister of Health Nikola Todorov and the press conference (March 18th: “The danger of an infectious disease epidemic with the refugees in Tabanovce and the responsibility of the institutions from the death of little Tamara for the Minister of Health, Nikola Todorov, are commissioned questions”).

Using sources: In 27 segments one source was used, in 25 there were two or more sources with conflicted opinions and in 20 there were two sources whose positions were aligned or neutral in light of one another. In 6 segments the opinions of analysts and experts were used, and 2 of those segments were with only one source or the only analyst, and in 2 segments there were two or more experts whose positions were close, albeit well argued. In the only segment showing opposed analytical views, the statement from the opposed side (Professor Tanja Karakamiseva, on March 18th) was taken from another media outlet, however the TV station did point out that they tried to get her statement.

A case of manipulating with the sources was noted in relation to the Constitutional Court’s decision, when the opinions of two experts (the former constitutional judge Igor Spirovski and the constitutional law professor Osman Kadriu) were presented as a ‘joint conclusion of the expert public’ (March 16th). They are well known and credible speakers on this topic, however they are neither the sole representatives of the expert public, nor did they speak on behalf of the wider profession, they spoke on their own behalf.

Direct addresses: Because of his role in the counter-protests, the leader of GROM Stevco Jakimovski was most present, with 4 direct addresses, before the presidents of SDSM Zoran Zaev, with 3 addresses and of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski with 2 addresses. The television continued to broadcast addresses of the leaders of many political entities, including Branko Janevski from SDPM, Jove Kekenovski from FRODEM and Ivon Velickovski from the Liberal Party, each with one address.

Audiovisual presentation: No manipulative audiovisual presentation was noted.

(2) Second week (19 – 25 March 2016)

During the reporting period from the 19th to the 25th of March, 24 Vesti television published 100 segments all in all which referred to political actors, processes or situations. Most present were the topics regarding the holding of early parliamentary elections and the revision of the electoral registry (17 segments), the work of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (11 segments), the strike of the courts’ administrative staff (6 segments), the state of the media (6 segments), the opinion of the Venice Commission on the wiretapped conversations (5 segments), the report on what has been achieved from VMRO-DPMNE (5 segments), the activities of the opposition (3 segments), the tenders from the mines Sasa and Toranica (3 segments), the situation with the national debt (2 segments), the action linked to the case ‘Affairs Factory’ (2 segments), the monuments of Albanians in the Centar Municipality (1 segment), the activities of Macedonian politicians regarding the migrant crisis (1 segment) etc. The reporting of this TV station mostly did not express any explicit attitudes towards political entities.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The TV station did not use any commentary elements and in general did not express any explicit favourable or offensive attitude towards any political entities in their news program.

(1) The critical attitude of the TV station directed towards VMRO-DPMNE, albeit rarely expressed, at times bordered negative speech, which was still communicated and did not come directly from the media outlet, however they were the ones that decided to air it. In a segment analyzing the report of achievements, although two analysts were consulted, one of which criticized and the other commended the way in which the party made their report, still the prime position was the one of the former analyst (March 21st: ‘VMRO-DPMNE’s reported achievements is political marketing in the anticipation of the pre-elections campaign, with which the party is attempting to demonstrate power and numbers, was the opinion of some of the

analysts’). This behavior was repeated with the conveyance of contents from a Swiss newspaper. Although the announcement itself can find justification in the fact that it is public interest that one relevant foreign media outlet is writing about the state of affairs in Macedonia, still in the cue and in the segment special emphasis was placed on the most fierce parts (March 23rd: ‘Pandora’s box of the criminal schemes of Gruevski’s government in energetics was opened, were the reactions from the oppositional SDSM’). Also, when it came to foreign direct investments, analysts were consulted that call them ‘populist and pompous propaganda that does not yield the expected results’ (March 25th). The theses in these segments were supported; however the comment only refers to the tone of the conveyed speech.

(2) On the other hand, negative speech towards SDSM was also observed, through quoting the interview of the Deputy Minister Mitko Chavkov for radio Slobodna Makedonija, regarding the new police operation linked with the so called ‘Affairs Factory’ (March 25th: ‘There is a serious threat for some of the people blackmailed through phone conversations to take justice into their own hands, said for RSM the Deputy Minister for Interior Mitko Chavkov. According to him, there is solid evidence that the hard disk and the flash drive containing conversations that were impounded yesterday come from the archives of the opposition party SDSM, whose purpose was not public interest, rather it was blackmail’). Because of this, the option of highlighting the parts assessed as most attractive is not excluded, neither is the option of having different tendencies in informing about the two parties.

(3) The relation of the TV station towards the topic on early elections, especially with the current process of revising the electoral registry was neutral and the opinions of all parties concerned were communicated. Still, critical opinions were also communicated towards some moves of SEC (March 21st: ‘Not checking the 124 thousand expatriates is a serious problem’). Opinions were also conveyed that there is a possibility to postpone the June 5th elections, as well as conclusions that the TV station has made on its own (March 23rd: ‘The British Ambassador Charles Garret said that the June 5th elections are still an option, thus clearly showing doubt in whether there are conditions for them to be held’).

(4) The statement of Special Prosecutor Katica Janeva regarding the legitimacy of the people leading the national authorities was communicated as news, without an opinion from the TV station. Regarding the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office, more attention was paid on the potential obstructions that it might be facing (March 22nd: ‘A precedent in judiciary or a legal loophole that is used to form suitable criminal councils which will decide on cases of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office’).

(5) One of the topics on which the TV station reported more than the other media was the strike of the courts’ administrative staff. The announcements and the duration of the strike were reported, in Skopje and in the other cities.

(6) The TV station continued to monitor the state of the national debt, although with fewer segments, since there were less events on this topic. The media takes a critical stand towards this (March 22nd: ‘The loan that was taken is somewhat higher than what was initially planned’).

Using sources: In 35 segments one source was used, in 33 there were two or more sources with opposed opinions, and in 15 two or more sources whose positions are unanimous or neutral to one another. Analytical or expert opinions were used in seven segments, in two of which the guest speaker is the only source or the only analyst, in two there were two or more experts with like-minded, albeit supported positions, and in three two or more analysts were used with opposed opinions.

Direct addresses: Two addresses each were broadcast from the leaders of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, of Demokratski Sojuz Pavle Trajanov, of DPA Menduh Tachi as well as of the Liberal Party Ivon Velickovski and of GROM Stevco Jakimovski. There was no statement from the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev.

Audiovisual presentation: The only instance of problematic audiovisual presentation was noted in a segment about the report of achievements of VMRO-DPMNE (March 21st), where although nothing was mentioned regarding the attendance, on several occasions shots were shown of the empty chairs in the hall.

(3) Third week (26 March – 1 April 2016)

During the reporting period from the 26th of March to the 1st of April, Television 24 Vesti broadcast 104 news segments that referred to political actors, processes or states. Most common were the topics regarding the activities of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (22 segments), the preparations for the early elections (14 segments), the proposal for amendments of the Law on Criminal Procedure (5 segments), the media (5 segments), as well as the projects and the measures of the Government, the borrowing, the activities of the ministers from the opposition (3 segments each) and other topics. In reporting on these topics, the television station took a neutral or critical stand towards political entities.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The TV station did not use any commentary elements, nor did it express any explicit favourable or accusatory attitudes towards the political entities in their news program. The selection of the topics and their coverage corresponded with society's current events, which were of public interest.

(1) What was typical for the monitored period was that the reporting was almost completely neutral and informative. There was no tendency to show a critical attitude on some topics, but rather occasional criticisms were present in individual segments. One of the topics that were criticized were the proposed amendments of the Law on Criminal Procedure (March 28th: 'After the Special Prosecutor's Office announced enhanced investigations and opening of new cases, VMRO-DPMNE and DUI filed a motion to amend the Law on Criminal Procedure, which will allow suspects longer times to defend themselves and a possibility to come to a settlement with the prosecutors'). This attitude was also visible with the topic of putting up monuments of Albanians in Centar (March 29th: 'The Municipality did not have any competences to put them up, up until three months ago, when a new decision was made at a Government Session, after which the Municipality of Centar was visited by inspections from three Ministries') and towards the attitude of the president of the Republic Court Council (RSS) Branko Ushkovski (March 31: 'After Ushkovski ended his address to the retired judges and the media, the journalists had their own questions for the President of the Council, but they were no longer welcome'). The TV station even toned down their typical critical attitude towards the topic of national debt (March 28th: 'As of the end of 2015, the national debt is 4.22 billion EUR or 46.5 percent of the GDP, which is one of the highest levels measured in recent years. Even with this parameter, Macedonia remains in the group of moderately indebted economies, however with a upwards moving trend of internal and external debt'). Accusations were also communicated, from some political entities to others (March 31st: UBK (Security and Counterintelligence Administration) so far has dealt mostly with counterintelligence activities with the goal to protect the business interests of the joint-stock company VMRO-DPMNE, claimed the president of Dostoinstvo – Stojance Angelov').

(2) On the other hand, in fewer segments, the standpoints of the Government and of the ruling party were also communicated, like the report of achievements from the ministers (March 27th: 'Spasov: The dignity of pensioners and the elderly has been restored. '), as well as their views pertaining to the economy (March 31st: 'The growth of the industrial production from 15.3 percent in February, according to Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Zoran Stavreski is a good outcome and an excellent start').

Using sources: In most of the segments (49) one source was used. However, the reporting of the TV broadcaster was not unilateral, since it was most often the case of two consecutive segments, one conveying one and the second conveying the other side. In an equal number of segments (19 each) two or more sources were presented with opposed and with unanimous positions. In 7 segments the opinions of experts or analysts were used, out of which in 4 segments they were either the only source or the only analyst, and in 3 of the segments there were two or more experts with different or opposing opinions.

Direct addresses: Three direct addresses were aired from each of the following: the leader of Dostoinstvo – Stojanche Angelov and of VMRO-DPMNE – Nikola Gruevski, and one each from the leaders of SDSM – Zoran Zaev, of NSDP – Tito Petkovski and of DS – Pavle Trajanov.

Audiovisual presentation: The only instance of inadequate audiovisual presentation was noted on March 28th, when in a segment about the initiatives for a Law on Media, short footage was aired from SDSM's headquarters, and not from any other party (it is not ruled out that it was a technical error).

(4) Fourth week (2 – 8 April)

During the reporting period from the 2nd to the 8th of April, 24 Vesti television published a total of 105 news segments that refer to political actors, processes or situations. Predominant by far were the topics related to the early parliamentary elections (26 segments), preceding the shift of ministers from DUI (8 segments), the development of the cases opened by the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (8 segments), the state of the economy (5 segments) as well as public debt, the media, doubt concerning the use of IPA funds, healthcare, the anticorruption commission (in 3 segments) and other topics. While reporting on these topics the TV station had a neutral or critical approach to political subjects.

Commentary and opinions in the news: Generally speaking the television did not use any commentary elements in the news, nor did they express any favourable or accusatory attitudes towards political actors.

(1) Nonetheless, during the monitored period, an exception was made on the occasion of the dissolution of Parliament, in a segment analyzing its work (April 7th: 'How did Parliament function in the past two years'). In it, a tone was observed that is not typical for informative contents ('MPs enacted laws without any discussions, they just pressed the green button, oftentimes without even knowing what is written in them'), however the analysis was supported and well-argued, and the object of criticism was first and foremost the general state of Parliament ('the legislative house moved at a line of voting through hundreds of laws without any discussion, up to tragic and comic instances of fights and vulgar gestures of the MPs').

(2) The most often encountered topics in the media outlet were those pertaining to the early parliamentary elections. All significant pieces of information and relevant attitudes on this topic were conveyed. The opinions that the elections should not take place on June 5th prevailed in the presentation (April 4th: 'There are no conditions to hold democratic elections on June 5th, this is the conclusion from the conducted monitoring of the freedom center Civil and the expert teams').

(3) There was mainly informative monitoring of the development of the cases opened by the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, primarily regarding the custody of the chief of the Security and Counterintelligence Administration (SCA) – Goran Grujovski, suspected for destroying equipment for interception of communication. Criticism was expressed for ending the custody he was issued with (April 3rd: 'The latest decision of the Criminal Council for abolishing the detention caused a reaction with former detainees'), by communicating the views of Tomislav Kezharovski and of Vane Cvetanov.

(4) The television showed the reports on the good state of Macedonian economy (April 8th: 'With a growth of 3.7 percent, Macedonia is a leader in the region, was published by the World Bank in the regional economic report for Southeastern Europe'), however without allowing politicians to boast with them. On the contrary, in parallel to this there were also reports on the other side of the state of the economy, for instance the growth of the national debt (April 4th: 'As at December 2015, the gross external debt of the country is 6 billion and 353 million EUR, and it is 361 million euro higher than the state in 2014, it was published by NBRM. According to this criterion, Macedonia is already in the group of highly indebted economies'), as well as on the increased number of people with blocked accounts (April 3rd: 'The citizens are most often blocked because of late payment of utilities' bills, the broadcasting fee and a loan repayment installment').

(5) Strong criticism was expressed towards the behavior of the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption, regarding the declaration of assets of Nikola Gruevski (April 7th: 'The decision not to publish the declaration of assets of former Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski is scandalous and unlawful, were the reactions of some parties. Experts and NGOs say that the commission loses its meaning if they do not perform their role').

(6) One sided reporting was observed on two occasions, where accusations were communicated from the alternate deputy ministers of the Government from SDSM – Aleksandar Kiracovski and Ljupco Nikolovski, for abuse within the authorities (April 5th: 'the Alternate Deputy Minister for Agriculture – Ljupco Nikolovski claims that the public announcement for the construction of the damn 'Konsko' and the selection procedure have had consistent irregularities, ambiguities and are questionable'), without consulting the other party.

Using sources: In most of the segments (38) there was one source, then followed the segments with two or more sources with different or opposed points of view (30) and in the end were those with two or more sources with non-colliding standpoints (20). The TV station used the opinions of experts and of analysts in 12 segments, in 8 of which they were the only source or the only analyst, in 3 of them they took a similar stand and in 1 they had opposed opinions.

Direct addresses: It is common for the TV station to air direct addresses from a large number of political leaders. Most present was the leader of VMRO-DPMNE with 5 addresses and one repeat of an old statement, and then followed Liljana Popovska from DOM with 3 addresses, Stojanche Angelov (Dostoinstvo), Menduh Tachi (DPA), Zijadin Sela (DR-DPA) and Zoran Zaev (SDSM) with two addresses each, as well as Pavle Trajanov (DS) and Stevcho Jakimovski (GROM) with one.

Audiovisual presentation: In the report on the visit of the Austrian Defense Minister Doskozil to Macedonia (April 7th), only his statement regarding the migrant crisis was aired, and not the one from his host Zoran Jolevski. Minister Jolevski was shown once very briefly at the beginning of the segment, and he was not mentioned at all, as if Minister Doskozil was alone staying and speaking in Macedonia.

10. Alfa TV

(1) First week (12 – 18 March 2016)

During the reporting period from the 12th to the 18th of March, Alfa television published a total of 94 segments which referred to political actors, events or situations. The television paid most of its attention to promoting projects and measures of the Government and of other institutions (19 segments), the decision of the Constitutional Court for cancelling some parts of the Law on Pardoning (11 segments), the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (9 segments), the early parliamentary elections and the revision of the electoral registry (9 segments), the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (3 segments), the activities of the oppositions (3 segments) and other topics.

For the most part of the reporting on these topics, the television station expressed a positive and favourable stand towards VMRO-DPMNE and a negative and demonizing one towards SDSM.

Commentary and opinions in the news: The television expressed a positive and favourable stand towards the party VMRO-DPMNE in 38 segments total. In 21 segments a negative and offensive attitude towards SDSM, and also in three segments towards the international community, in two towards "Most", also in two towards the SEC and in one towards the mediator Vanhoutte. Strong commentary contents were observed in 13 segments that were in the context of attacking the opposition.

In 36 segments total the television has expressed a positive and favourable stand towards the party VMRO-DPMNE. In 14 segments a negative and accusatory stand was observed against SDSM and in 2 towards the Special Public Prosecutor's Office and in 1 segment towards the former mediator of the political negotiations Peter Vanhoutte. Commentary contents were evident in 9 demonizing segments towards SDSM and 2 favouring ones towards VMRO-DPMNE (March 12th: "The Ministry's website is like a fan page for the Minister, so instead of saying what the police are doing, it shows who Spasovski took photos with"),

(1) The promotion of the projects, the measures and the policies of the government and other institutions managed by staff from VMRO-DPMNE was the most frequent topic in the news. In many cases there was no clear line between informative and marketing vocabulary (March 14th: "Blacksmiths, quilt makers, glass blowers, chimney sweepers – the Employment Agency is starting new measures for unemployed persons, training in acquiring skills in old crafts"). Regarding the successfulness of government projects, the assessments of the implementers are mostly used (March 15th: "The competent persons say that the translated professional books are used every day by students and they are often not the supplementary but the primary text books"). This type of segments included many of the government's political representatives (March 16th: The realization of capital investments, new infrastructure projects and support measures. The ministers of the government and the Prime Minister for implementing the elections Emil Dimitriev went out on field in several municipalities in Macedonia. The Minister of Finance Stavreski promoted, among other things, the financial benefits of the projects Buy a house – buy an apartment and Buy a house – for young people) today in Prilep.

(2) All of this was definitely most visible in the segments dedicated to following the activities of the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski. The intensity of their coverage is not decreasing, although for more than two months he has not had a state function. In the stories Gruevski is shown as a person who is in charge of all types of issues that concern the people (March 12: "The resolving of problems of the people

from Kicevo will commence. The low number of defectologists in schools as one of the major problems that the residents of the villages around Kicevo pointed out to the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski”). Even the regular obligations of the relevant authorities, such as road maintenance, are shown as his credit and good will (March 15th: “A tender is announced for reconstructing the road Sopishte – Govrlevo, with a length of 8 kilometers. The project will cost around 550.000 Euro. This is a response to the request from the citizens to the leader of VMRO-DPMNE during his visit of the two populated areas several months ago). Gruevski is presented as someone who is reported to both by national and by local officials, without taking into consideration the autonomy of local self-government. In the conversations that were broadcast, between him and local residents, which were supposed to create the impression of spontaneity, however with microphones between the participants in the conversation, a protégé of a home for children without parents was abused, for whom it was said that he’s been looking for a roof over his head for a decade, however right at that moment Gruevski was to solve his problem (March 17th: ‘His troubles may be over even today. Finally he will be at the right place in the right time. He had the direct chance to ask the president of VMRO-DPMNE and the Minister of Transport and Communications when his wandering will end).

(3) A completely anti-opposition attitude was taken concerning the events with the Constitutional Court (March 16th: “The announcements for setting up camp and taking down the Constitutional Court were unsuccessful. The opposition’s counter-protesters withdrew before the thousands of citizens who were defending the institutions. A river of people was coming from all sides and made a circle around the courthouse. The citizens stood united against the torture from SDSM and their counter-protests which ended in a debacle”). At the same time, this topic was not joined with the current context of the ‘Titanic’ case, where the Special Prosecutor’s Office is running a procedure for electoral irregularities against members of the ruling party.

(4) The negative attitude in the segment about the Special Public Prosecution was visible in the angle from which the topic was treated. The media outlet pays much more attention to whether there are any inconsistencies with the number of wiretapped conversations handed over to the SPPO or how the money was spent, as a standard, and this was no exception, in an attempt to discredit the institution (March 15th: “Contradictory numbers: Katica Janeva finally reveals – I was presented with 540 000 audio recordings. Zoran Zaev recently stated – I have over one million conversations. Where is the rest?”). This is symptomatic since this institution is leading investigations against party members for which the television mostly expresses a positive and favouring attitude in their news program.

(5) The migrant crisis was primarily shown as a security threat, and less as a humanitarian crisis (March 16th: “The opinions of President Ivanov were communicated: The migrant crisis will increase security risks along the transit corridor, the country is exposed to a constant threat from illegal migration, a threat from violent extremism in the region and constant threat from religious radicalism, connected with foreign terrorist groups and the intention to establish an Islamic caliphate”). Previously, the television station, along with other stations, tried to impose the narrative that due to the migrant crisis, the country should put an end to the domestic political crisis as soon as possible. At the same time, they did not specify whether the speed with which the crisis will be resolved implies that all conditions from the agreements should be met. This happened when the time approached for deciding whether there will be elections on April 24th.

Using sources: In most of the segments (53 segments) there was only one source, and in half of them (28 segments) the source was a representative of the government or the political party VMRO-DPMNE. After that came the segments with two or more sources with non-colliding viewpoints (28 segments), and in most of them (20 segments) it was two or more officials from VMRO-DPMNE which support or complement each other. Conflicted positions were present in only 3 segments. In 2 segments there was non-critical conveyance of accusatory content from other media outlets (March 17th: “Will SDSM find a way to ensure postponement of the elections through the street riots. A source of Dnevnik from inside the party says that Zaev is already aware that the elections cannot be pushed back any further, hence the mobilization of the members out on the streets will be the most common image in the month to come up to the 5th of June“).

Direct addresses: VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski was represented with 9 direct addresses, coming before the leaders of SDSM Zoran Zaev (3 addresses) and of GROM Stevco Jakimovski (2 addresses).

Audiovisual presentation: The main type of manipulative audiovisual presentation were the promotional segments for the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski or for officials of the Government, where even fulfilling regular obligations of the state were presented as achievements (March 18th: “The burning

issue for women who are from rural areas of the country and who have to go to the nearest hospital with a diagnostics machine to get a mammography has been resolved.”) Other characteristic examples were also noted.

(1) The segment about the anniversary of the formation of the police unit ‘Tigres’ was made like an advertisement video for the unit, with dramatic music, clips from practice sessions, etc. It was also used to attack Oliver Spasovski for not having rounded up the courage to congratulate them on their birthday (March 13th: “The members of this unit of the police, which carries the primate of safety of the country were not treated as worthy of a greeting speech or even a card. The Minister of Interior Oliver Spasovski did not round up the courage to make an appearance at the birthday”). It finished with a slogan, “heroes live forever”.

(2) While reading an announcement from VMRO-DPMNE (March 15th) a video was shown from the party’s management in a ceremonial hall standing and singing the anthem of Macedonia.

(3) The leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski was shown browsing through books at the promotion of professional books. He was constantly in the shot, despite the fact that he was not mentioned in the text (March 15th).

(4) It was claimed that at the gathering organized by GROM in front of the Constitutional Court, 15.000 people were gathered, which does not correspond with reality nor with the images that were shown, even in the widest angle shots

(5) While reporting about the results from the survey of the ‘Pavel Shatev’ Institute regarding political party ratings, and when speaking about Nikola Gruevski, he was shown greeting citizens, and when Zoran Zaev is mentioned, he is shown sitting alone in an office.

Instances of favourizing or demonizing audiovisual contents:

- (March 12th, cue): A new road, new sewerage system, the construction of the highway Gostivar-Kichevo, over 1.000 new jobs are just some of the projects that the president of VMRO-DPMNE discussed with the citizens of Kicevo and the surroundings.
- (March 14th, headline): SDSM and Soros’s NGOS went into a final offensive against the Constitutional Court, the court will judge the way they want it to, or they will take it down
- (March 14th, report): The investment that was arranged last year by the leading man of VMRO DPMNE and Prime Minister at that time Nikola Gruevski costs EUR 150.000.
- (March 16th, analysis/commentary): Not even hooligans and persons with thick criminal records who were part of the counter-protests could help the opposition. The people did not allow for the scenario that was meant to be a continuation of May 5th, when there were violent protests in front of the Government, to take place.
- (March 17th, analysis/commentary): However, someone simply does not have a problem with Vanhoutte, on the contrary the reproachable negotiator, provocateur, even despite all outrageous tweet and insults to the nation, represented through a clowder of cats, continues to go on as a guest in opposition debates, represented as a top connoisseur of the situation and a person whose words are greatly respected.

(2) Second week (19 – 25 March 2016)

During the reporting period from the 19th to the 25th of March Alfa television broadcast 93 segments overall concerning political actors, events or situations. The television focused most of its attention on: the measures and the projects of the Government (15 segments), the early parliamentary elections with a focus on the electoral registry (13 segments), the work of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (12 segments) and the report on the achievements of VMRO-DPMNE (8 segments), and among other topics the activities of Macedonian politicians regarding the migrant crisis were present (3 segments), as were the activities of the opposition (3 segments), the police operation regarding the case ‘Affairs Factory’ (3 segments), the activities of the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (3 segments), the state of the media (2 segments) and other topics.

In most of the reports on these topics the TV expressed a positive and favourable attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE and a negative and demonizing one towards SDSM.

Commentary and opinions in the news: In a total of 54 segments the TV station expressed a positive and partial attitude towards the party VMRO-DPMNE. In 26 segments a negative and accusatory attitude was noted against SDSM and in 9 segments towards the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, in 2 towards the businessman and politician Fijat Canoski, in 1 segment towards the former mediator in the political negotiations Peter Vanhoutte and in 1 segment towards the American agency USAID (March 22nd: 'Besides the millions that come in yearly in the budgets of media close to SDSM, USAID are announcing a new call for additional 3 million dollars, was published by the portal Deneshen'). A strong commentary behavior was noted in 5 segments aimed to attack SDSM (March 19th: 'Sources in the commission lead to the fact that the obviously nonsensical math of the opposition's spin heads failed, so the panic of ex Bihacka has resulted with a new attack on the Macedonian institution. The SEC is now being discredited'), and in the same number of acclaiming segments for VMRO-DPMNE (March 20th: 'On one hand is the positive approach with project and a lot of work from the ruling party, and the other is the idealess negativity of the opposition and SDSM, weaved with many protests, obstructions and boycotts').

(1) The strong propaganda support for the party VMRO-DPMNE continued this week of monitoring too, primarily through following three topics: the measures and projects of the government, the report on achievements of VMRO-DPMNE and the activities of the party leader Nikola Gruevski. At the same time the television station often crossed the line between reporting and political marketing (March 20th: 'Over 3500 projects, reforms have been implemented in the last 10 years. VMRO DPMNE with a mega report on achievements before the people'). The report of the ruling party was reported not only on the day when the big political event took place in Skopje, but also in the days that followed, along with the consecutive thematic reports of the ministers (March 23rd: 'In 10 years more than 150 000 jobs were created, investments in healthcare reached over 200 million euro. Report of VMRO-DPMNE, the new program will aim towards an even better life for the people'). Reports were shown not only on the new projects of the government (March 24th: 'Tailors, bakers, welders, hairdressers – these are just some of the 32 activities for which the Government and the Employment Agency will be organizing trainings'), but achievement made thus far were repeated (March 22nd: 'Investments in infrastructure and in other objects combined with the other support measures such as the projects 'Buy a House – for young people' has encouraged the construction sector which last year was the strongest sector in Macedonian economy'). The stories of the kind what-was-promised-was-kept from the leader Gruevski did not fall short, the news even opened with them (March 24th: 'Once again free surveying elaborate reports for legalizing buildings. After Gruevski's visits to the municipalities the problem of around 5000 citizens is solved').

(2) Regarding the early elections, the TV station defended the thesis that there are no problems in the electoral registry, rather that the opposition is creating them in order to avoid elections (March 20th: 'The main question asked by the media is whether SDSM have lost their main asset in their scenario to compromise the electoral registry'). Opposed to this, the claims that there are only technical errors in the registry are fully accepted and supported (March 21st: 'Gone are the half million phantom voters insinuated by the largest opposition party. The SEC concluded that there will be on-site visits made to 100 000 voters whose data were assessed as 'inconsistent', including the cases when several persons are registered to one address or the existence of illegal buildings').

(3) The Special Public Prosecutor's Office and the Prosecutor Katica Janeva was one of the most attacked subjects in the monitored period. She was attacked on three topics with commentary vocabulary and with demonizing qualifications. Regarding the non-appearance before the Parliament Commission which was supposed to review the report on her work, these attacks were milder (March 21st: 'The chair reserved for Katica Janeva remained empty, the Special Prosecutor did not appear before the MPs'), and the reactions of the opposition were communicated. They became more harsh after the Prosecutor's statement that the President, the MP and judges of the Constitutional Court were illegitimate (March 23rd: 'Social networks are teeming and the experts are appalled by the statements of the Special Prosecutor that the authorities in Macedonia are illegitimate'), and the thesis was pushed at the same time that she completely denied the authorities, not only the ones leading them. The attacks continued with the same intensity after the operation

of the SPPO at the premises of the Central Registry (March 24th: ‘Evening drama in an empty institution. The Central Registry was the target of attack of the Special Prosecutor Katica Janeva’).

(4) Also attacked by the TV station were several other subjects, which were directly or indirectly attributed to be linked with the opposition. Among them were businessman Fijat Canoski, the agency USAID as well as the mediator in the political negotiation Peter Vanhoutte (March 25th: ‘On his last day as the worst and most partial mediator in history, Vanhoutte called for violent takeover of power’). The TV station placed in a completely political context the operation of the MoI related to the case ‘Affairs Factory’, in which members of the family of the prime suspect Zahir Bekiri Chaush were arrested (March 25th: ‘Chaush is considered an upstanding member of SDSM, his wife is part of the political employments of SDSM and she takes her salary from a municipal company ‘Parkinzi Centar’, where the director is Sasha Bogdanovic, president of the municipal branch of SDSM in Skopje’s Centar’).

Using sources: In most of the segments (43 segments) there was only one source, and in nearly half of them (20 segments) that source was a representative of the Government or the party VMRO-DPMNE. Then followed the segments with two or more sources whose positions are not conflicted (26 segments), and in some of them (10 segments) it was two or more officials from VMRO-DPMNE who gave supporting or complementary statements. In 6 segments there were opposed positions. The TV station calls upon ‘experts’ or ‘those who are well familiar’ in segment where no one is quoted in that capacity. In 4 segments there was uncritical conveyance of accusatory and defamatory contents from websites (March 19th: ‘The portal Zurnal informed that a police chief promoted by Oliver Spasovski was caught on Megitlija in an automobile that belongs to a drug dealer with narcotics in it’).

Direct addresses: The leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski was presented through 7 direct addresses, 2 of which were old statements used in segments of the what-was-promised-was-kept nature. One address was shown from the leader of GROM Stevco Jakimovski. 2 old statements were shown from the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev which were used in segments against him, and none was from the current period.

Audiovisual presentation: The promotional stories for the projects of the Government and of other authorities, as well as of the party VMRO-DPMNE, were the main type of audiovisual presentation manipulation. Other instances were also observed:

- (1) In stories about VMRO-DPMNE’s report on achievements (March 21st) the party’s anthem is played.
- (2) While reading an announcement from VMRO-DPMNE (March 21st) shots were shown from the party’s management in a ceremonial hall where they stand while the anthem plays. It is not the first time that this footage was used.
- (3) In a segment about the project ‘Skopje VeloCity’ (March 21st) an advertisement video was shown.
- (4) The same survey of passers-by was used for two days (March 20th and 22nd), in the first case in a segment of how much VMRO-DPMNE are better than SDSM, and in the second segment about how much the people are pleased with the building expansion in the country.
- (5) Sequencing the segments: after the conveyed statement from the president of ZNM Naser Selmani (March 22nd) that reforms in the media are necessary, a story was shown on how ‘USAID is pouring millions for SDSM media outlets’.
- (6) In a segment about the report of the achievements of VMRO-DPMNE (March 23rd) almost constantly the shot showed the advertisement videos of the party, broadcast on a video beam in the hall.
- (7) Jason Katz’s column (March 23rd), who is already known by some of the public as a paid lobbyist, was conveyed as if it were the opinion of the newspaper where it was published, the Washington Times. The name of the author was not mentioned.
- (8) Nikola Gruevski was once again shown having conversations with local residents (March 24th) which were supposed to give out the impression of spontaneity, although there are TV microphones between the speakers.

Instances of favouring or demonizing audiovisual contents:

- (March 19th, analysis/commentary): Aggressive, chaotic behavior, throwing notebooks, insults and shouting at colleagues. The social-democrats have left the SEC, the number of phantom voters was four and half times less than what they claimed and desired. The calculations did not come out as they planned;

- (March 20th, cue for an interview): Over 3500 projects, reforms were implemented in the past 10 years. VMRO DPMNE gives a mega report on achievements before the people;
- (March 21st, report): Projects, measures, reforms, employments, improvement and facilitation of life. The difference between VMRO DPMNE and SDSM is the one of work as opposed to destruction, 3500 actions against rampage and chaos of the social-democrats;
- (March 22nd, analysis/commentary): Experts are reacting that the Special Prosecutor Janeva, who placed herself above the authorities today, is acting with political bias and is takes guidance from SDSM's actions.

(3) Third week (26 March – 1 April 2016)

During the reporting period from the 26th of March to the 1st of April, Alfa television published a total 102 news segments pertaining to political actors, events or situations. The television focused most of its attention on: the promotion of projects and measures of the Government and other authorities (23 segments), the preparations for the early elections (10 segments), the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (10 segments) and the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (7 segments). Among other topics, the following were also present: the report on achievements of Government representatives (4 segments), the state of the economy (4 segments), the police operation in the Lipkovo region (3 segments), the activities of the opposition (2 segments), etc.

In most of the reporting on these topics, the television expressed a positive and favourable stand towards VMRO-DPMNE and a negative and demonizing one towards SDSM.

Commentary and opinions in the news: In 58 segments total, the TV station expressed a positive and favourable attitude towards the party VMRO-DPMNE. In 25 cases a negative and accusatory stand against SDSM was observed, in 10 cases it was against the Special Public Prosecutor's Office and in 1 segment it was aimed at the former mediator in the political negotiations – Peter Vanhoutte. Commentary contents were found in 9 demonizing segments against SDSM (March 27th: 'It can be said that the first big action since Oliver Spasovski became Minister of Interior was all show and no substance') and in 3 segments favouring VMRO-DPMNE (???)

(1) The TV station kept their standard news format, strongly promoting Government projects, including the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE – Nikola Gruevski, regardless what important current events have taken place during the monitored period. The language of marketing was especially emphasized in the reporting (March 28th: 'Free Government projects provide for millions in savings for the people, pupils, students, farmers, socially marginalized groups all stand to profit'). Gruevski, even though he now only holds a political function, was presented speaking on behalf of the country (March 29th: 'So far 8 700 agreements have been signed for lease of this kind of land, and the Government will continue with this policy as long as there remains undistributed land for which there is interest, was said today by the president of VMRO-DPMNE – Nikola Gruevski'). Even things that should be considered as regular obligations of the state are shown as achievements of the Government (April 1st: 'After 60 years, the school in the Reka village Skudranje will get central heating').

(2) Regarding the early parliamentary elections, the TV segments were mainly informative, revolving around the process of revision of the electoral registry, the start of the OSCE/ODIHR mission, etc. Still, even before the end of the process ran by the State Elections Commission, the media supports the thesis that there are no so called phantom voters and that they are merely constructs made by the oppositions in order to manipulate the people (March 29th: 'The truth is slowly coming out as to why yesterday, at the meeting of the State Elections Commission, SDSM were opposed public announcement of the list of persons that the party declared as phantoms, although they were previously published when the electoral registry was put up for public inspection').

(3) The TV station expressed an open, explicit and strong accusatory and demonizing attitude towards the Special Public Prosecutor's Office under the lead of Katica Janeva, and towards both of their investigations opened during the monitored week (March 30th: 'Special Prosecutor Katica Janeva pompously presented today a new case to the public, which, just like the previous ones, has no firm ground to stand on and resembles more a political heist than a legally grounded investigation'). Strong allusions are made to a connection between this prosecution office and SDSM, and the overall tendency is to show it as a pre-

elections instrument of the party, and not a legal institution (March 28th: ‘The desperate and barely there rating of SDSM will continue to result in political appearances from Katica Janeva’).

(4) Several segments were aired on the general state of economy, where the assessments of Government representatives were taken wholeheartedly and were conveyed uncritically (March 31st: ‘The growth of industrial production of 15.2 percent is a good result and an excellent start which creates expectations and hope that the overall growth of the economy for this year will be good, was pointed out by Vice Prime Minister Zoran Stavreski’).

(5) Rarely was there coverage of party activities of the opposition, and this was done primarily through broadcasting statements from their representatives, through static shots, while the segments which showed the activities of the Government or VMRO-DPMNE leader Gruevski had a much more complex audiovisual presentation. Hence, the attempt of the media outlet to show at least some balance in their reporting failed.

Using sources: In most of the segments (61 segments) there was only one source, and in almost half of them (29 segments) that source was a representative of the Government or the party VMRO-DPMNE. Then followed the segments with two or more sources whose views did not clash (28 segments), and in some of them (7 segments) there were two or more officials from VMRO-DPMNE giving supporting or complementing statements. In only 4 segments there were opposed views. There were also segments where non-defined sources were used, such as ‘according to experts’.

Direct addresses: The leader of VMRO-DPMNE – Nikola Gruevski was presented with 9 direct addresses from the current period and one that was repeated from before, in a segment following the what-was-promised-was-kept pattern. The only other leader that was presented with a direct address was the leader of GROM – Stevcho Jakimovski (2 addresses), who are also a coalition partner of VMRO-DPMNE.

Audiovisual presentation: The main type of manipulative audiovisual presentation were the segments promoting the president of VMRO-DPMNE – Nikola Gruevski or government officials. Other typical examples were also noted, some of which were not only manipulations, but also lies.

(1) In a segment about the case ‘Torture’ (March 28th), it was said that after the arrest of Ljube Boshkovski, videos appeared in the public where he could be seen ‘selling’ the name. However, Boshkovski was arrested in 2011, and these videos surfaced in 2015, right after SDSM published the taped telephone conversations that suggest alleged psychological abuse during his arrest. The video of the act of ‘selling’ appeared online from an unknown source, although it is believed to be part of police special investigation measures.

(2) in the cue for a press conference of the Ombudsman Idzet Memeti (March 28th), it was claimed that the highest number of complaints against the authorities appeared after the technical ministers from the lines of the opposition – Oliver Spasovski and Frosina Remenski came to their positions, this was in no way confirmed with the statement from the segment.

(3) The news editor on March 29th, Kole Chashule, stated that he himself was on the list of ‘phantom voters’, however he instructed the viewers to take a look at the screen and see for themselves that he was not a phantom after all.

(4) In a segment about the visits from foreign tourists to this country (March 31st) it was said that the French are in the lead, which is not true (French nationals, according to the data published in a French media outlet, comprise only 1.5 percent of the total number of visitors to Macedonia).

Instances of favourizing or demonizing audiovisual contents:

- (March 27th, analysis/commentary): The four checkpoints with members of PEP and armored transporters that were distributed yesterday at the entrance of Brnjarci, Arachinovo, Grushino, Nikushtak, are nowhere to be found today, as if they were simply decorum from the Minister Oliver Spasovski, so he can take pictures with them on his way to Matejche yesterday. From the prevention album of the Minister, only his Facebook and Instagram profiles profited, so the party membership can applaud.
- (March 29th, cue): Reactions are not dying down from yesterday’s performance of the SPPO and their allegations concerning the arrest of Ljube Boshkovski. The people watch with disbelief the whole situation and they think that SPPO really cares much more if someone cursed at someone else, rather than if they were illegally taking money, and for that they traded the name of the country.
- (March 31st, news): This is one of the 40 measures for the youth announced by VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski, which, among other things, foresee the construction of sports halls,

multipurpose basketball and tennis courts and playgrounds, swimming pools, reading rooms, libraries

- (April 1st, cue): The economy is moving upward. State statistics measured growth of the industrial production of 15.2 percent in February. The highest monthly leap in the last 5 years. This, according to the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, is an indicator that the policies have been positioned correctly.

(4) Fourth week (2 – 8 April)

During the reporting period from the 2nd to the 8th of April, Alfa television published a total of 96 news segments that refer to political actors, processes or situations. The television focused most of its attention to: the early parliamentary elections (17 segments), the projects and measures of the Government (16 segments), the state of the economy (7 segments), the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (7 segments), ministerial shifts in DUI (4 segments), the migrant crisis (4 segments), the development of the cases opened by the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (3 segments) and other topics.

In most of the reports on these topics, the TV station expressed a positive and favourable attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE, and a negative and demonizing one towards SDSM.

Commentary and opinions in the news: In 62 cases overall, the TV station expressed a positive and favourable attitude towards the party VMRO-DPMNE. On 22 occasions a negative and accusatory attitude was observed against SDSM, on 5 occasions against the Special Public Prosecutor's Office and in one case towards each of the following: the State Elections Commission, the civic association MOST and the businessman Fijat Canoski. Commentary contents were registered in 11 demonizing segments against SDSM (April 2nd: 'SDSM's lies in collaboration with Katica Janeva are coming down like a house of cards') and in 4 segments favouring VMRO-DPMNE (April 7th: 'The ruling party presented the largest program so far and a several hours long report on what was promised and what was fulfilled, the opposition in Zaev's vocabulary are going to elections with as he says the torch of freedom, a phrase that was repeated on several occasions in the boycott announcement').

(1) The television regularly took an accusatory stand towards the party SDSM, however during this monitored period this happened with increased intensity. Sometimes it was a case of conveyed accusatory contents from other media (April 6th: 'The biggest opposition party SDSM is making all efforts to escape early parliamentary elections that should take place on June 5th, writes the portal Kurir'). In some of the segments there were references to expert opinions (April 8th: 'A vast program for the people as opposed to destructions and protests. The current crisis that is being created knowingly undermines the identity, it also implies an attempt to change the power made by the opposition, say experts on the political events in the country'). However, in some cases the TV station made conclusions on its own (April 7th: 'Everyone is literally fed up already with the prolongation of the political agony, which has taken a hold on Macedonian society like a virus'). Even the unspecific statements from the international community were arbitrarily interpreted as directed against SDSM (April 8th: 'International representatives are pressuring for the opposition to take part in the elections scheduled for June 5th').

(2) Regardless of what the current situation may be, 'Alfa' television once again set aside most space for the measures and projects of the Government (April 5th: 'Since the beginning of the mega project 'Macedonia is providing jobs' over 16 600 jobs have been created in over 9 000 companies). Gruevski continues to act and speak on behalf of the state, which is conveyed without any objections by the media outlet (April 3rd: 'A formal tour of the new facility was organized today for the directors of the competent authorities, the Minister of Culture, Kanchevska Milevska and the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski'). In this category, the segments commending the state for fulfilling its regular obligations were not left out (April 5th: 'More than 5 decades after the construction of the infirmary in Madzari, it is now getting a new look'). There was also a segment where the leader of the ruling party was presented as the savior from the transitional ruin of the country, by saving several industrial objects (April 7th: 'Abandoned factories, bankrupt companies, closed mines are waking up from their winter sleep, the worker are going back to work'). The line between reporting and political marketing is often crossed.

(3) Two reports regarding the state of Macedonian economy that were current during the reporting period (the credit rating from 'Standard & Poor's' and the regional report of the World Bank) helped to develop a story that the economy is excellent, and it permeated throughout the entire week of monitoring. At the same

time, apart from the reports their interpretations of representatives of the ruling party were also used (April 8th: ‘The positive assessments, as well as results that Macedonia is achieving economically, according to VMRO-DPMNE president Gruevski is due to the solid economic policies and the numerous anti-crisis measures of the Government’), along with other opinions that served to support that thesis (April 2nd: ‘The firms in Macedonia are paying the lowest taxes. That is hundreds of millions of euros per year as direct assistance from the government for domestic companies through the taxation policy, is believed by the Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Zoran Stavreski’). Gruevski was also aired with a statement that Macedonia has the lowest taxes on the planet (April 4th).

Using sources: In most of the segments (49 segments) there was only one source, and in some of them (19 segments) that source was a representative of the Government or the party VMRO-DPMNE. Then followed the segments with two or more sources with opinions that are not conflicted (28 segments) and in some of them (7 segments) it was two or more officials from VMRO-DPMNE that support each other or give complementary statements. In only 7 segments there were opposed positions. On 4 occasions the TV station used as a source texts from other media and portals, both domestic and foreign and in one instance a manipulation with the sources was noted (April 5th, in a segment about employment in SPPO, it was said ‘according to experts’, and not a single expert was consulted).

Direct addresses: The impartiality in reporting was also visible in the representation of the political leaders. The president of VMRO-DPMNE was presented with 13 direct addresses. Among other things, his entire speech from April 7th that lasted for 23 minutes was aired at the end of the news on that date. When it comes to other leaders, Zoran Zaev from SDSM and Stevcho Jakimovski from GROM had two addresses each and the first member of the Roma Alliance – Amdi Bajram had one.

Audiovisual presentation: The main type of manipulative audiovisual presentation were the promotional segments for the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski or for Government officials. The only other typical case was the segment on April 4th in which it was said that ‘Balkan media’ are scanning the situation in Macedonia, and the only quotation is from a text published on the Croatian portal Direktno.hr, where the author presents a thesis that behind the political crisis in Macedonia is an attempt to bring down from power VMRO-DPMNE in order to change the name of the country. This is the latest point in the latest text of the Croatian media outlet’).

Instances of favourizing or demonizing audiovisual contents:

- (April 3rd, report): The fact that ‘Jonson Controls’ is reinvesting in Macedonia, according to VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski, is a validation of the successfulness of government policies for improvement of the business climate and creating fertile ground for investments
- (April 4th, cue): SEC is slowly turning into a party branch of SDSM. While the Secretary General of the Commission seems to be looking for a way to postpone things, his wife is giving a speech at a party rally of SDSM looking for fair and democratic elections that should be provided by no other than her husband.
- (April 7th, headline/commentary): Just a little while ago Zaev and SDSM had another change of heart. The ministers resigned, complaining it was not accepted. They asked for an emergency meeting of Parliament for the adoption. Zaev complained last night that they were being held hostages by VMRO-DPMNE, and now in less than 24 hours or to be more precise just 18 hours later, Zaev brings back them to the stage. MoI and Labor and Social Affairs could not function without Spasovski and Remenska, was the new statement of the opposition leader.
- (April 8th report): The Roma people in Macedonia are content with the living conditions provided to them by the state. Numerous jobs are being created, the conditions in education and health improved, and these are just some of the reasons why the Roma Alliance remains in the coalition ‘For a Better Macedonia’, was pointed out by Bajram. Precisely because of the fulfillment of the set goals and projects, the leader of VMRO-DPMNE pointed out that he sees a steady partner in the Roma Alliance for the future too. Another validation of nurturing the respect to Roma is the fact that their holidays have been recognized too.

11. Kanal 5

(1) First week (12 – 18 March 2016)

During the reporting period from the 12th to the 18th of March 2016, Kanal 5 television aired a total of 90 segments that referred to political actors, events or situations. Most frequent were the topics: the projects and measures of the Government or the ruling party (17 segments), the activity of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (13 segments), the events in and around the Constitutional Court (11 segments), the topics related to the early parliamentary elections (9 segments), the refugee crisis (7 segments), the activities of the opposition (7 segments), the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (4 segments), etc.

For the most part in the reporting on these topics, a favourable stand towards VMRO-DPMNE was noted, and a negative and demonizing one towards SDSM.

Commentary and opinions in the news: During the reporting period, the television took a favorable stand towards VMRO-DPMNE and its officials in 24 segments, and a negative, attacking and demonizing stand towards SDSM in 9 segments. As for the commentary contents, they can be seen in five offensive segments towards SDSM (March 14: "A classic lynch against the state institutions. SDSM and Soros continuously implement this scenario, experts say") or towards the Special Public Prosecutor (March 12 "Katica Janeva is obstructing justice and continues to work outside the law writes the portal Kurir").

(1) Despite important political developments of the country, the television devoted most of the reports on various projects and measures of the government or other institutions led by staff of VMRO-DPMNE. A place in the journal was reserved for a reportage for free travel to pensioners by train (March 12: "Pensioners are using the government measure of free rail transport by the masses"), and a report on the construction of a road that is one kilometer long (March 16, "the Prime Minister for conducting elections Emil Dimitriev marked the start of construction activities today for the building of a road in the village Zhivilovo in the length of one kilometer"). There were days in which this type of segments were moved ahead of political events (March 14: "The government started the implementation of measures for free training in foreign languages and free training in basic computer skills"). These contents are not only informative, but also serve as a political marketing, like for instance the interview with Health Minister Nikola Todorov about opening a new center for cystic fibrosis (March 15), where his statement was aired that said "in the program for the 2014 elections such a center was promised, and now they deliver. "

(2) All this was even more enhanced when it came to covering the activities of the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski. The news were opened with segments about him, following the pattern of it-was-done-as-was-promised (March 13th: 'Firefighter will get to retire sooner and they will get extra protection in their jobs, was announced by the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski on his Facebook profile'), even when it was an announcement of project that should be a regular obligation of the state (March 15th: "Yet another project will be realized, at the request of the citizens of Municipality Sopsishte to the President of VMRO DPMNE Nikola Gruevski. The road Sopsishte-Govrlevo will be built"). His representation in the news did not decrease at all, despite the fact that he currently holds no state function, and is only a political party leader. Therefore, the television goes so far as to make a complete symbiosis between party and state (March 14th: "Gruevski said that VMRO-DPMNE continues with the reconstruction and construction of new hospitals"). From one of his field visits as many as three segments were aired (March 17th "Gruevski announced the continuation of the project for the construction of social apartments", "Gruevski at a meeting with residents of the municipality Gorce Petrov", "This year five express ways will be built"). VMRO-DPMNE's leader was presented as someone who runs the processes in the country, speaks on behalf of the country, makes the decisions, and he is referred to not only by ministers from the government, but also mayors, which is contrary to the constitutional principle of autonomy of local self-government. The theatrical dialogues between him and residents or officials were not left out, they were said as if they were spontaneous, but with television microphones between interlocutors.

(3) The television has taken a clear and unambiguous anti-opposition stand regarding the two main political topics. In reporting about the events connected to the decision of the Constitutional Court to cancel the limitations stipulated in the Law on Pardoning, the opposition was accused of acting against the state and their arguments that the increased authorizations of the president, especially the option to pardon persons convicted of electoral irregularities, which comes at a time when there is an ongoing process for such irregularities against officials of the ruling party, were ignored. (March 15th: 'The opposition and their

exponents take a swing at national bodies'). Regarding the discovered irregularities in the electoral registry, the television rejects the option that abuse of the list was possible. Although the opinions of both the government and the opposition were communicated, no clear distinction was made as to what is the standpoint of the ruling party and what of the medium (March 17th: "VMRO-DPMNE speak up against the latest operation of SDSM and the media controlled by the party and Soros, which commenced the operation of declaring Macedonia a phantom state").

(4) In segments about the report of the Special Prosecutor Katica Janeva submitted to the Parliament, attention was primarily focused on the expenses that she is making, rather than her work (March 18th: 'It is not the first time for the Prosecutor to humiliate the council and the people who pay 3 thousand euro that her team spends every day').

Using sources: In most of the segments one source was used (46 segments), and in almost half of them (22 segments), the source was a representative of the government or the party VMRO-DPMNE. Out of the segments which used two or more sources, they were more often in agreement or had at least a neutral stand toward each other (22 segments), and in most of them (12 segments) it was two or more representatives or the ruling party complementary to each other. The least number of aired segments (3 segments) were ones where the sources had different or conflicting standpoints. In four cases the television uncritically broadcast offensive and defamatory content against the opposition or against other entities, from web portals or other media. There was a case of manipulation of sources observed, which states that experts were consulted, but no one was named (March 12th: "Experts that the portal contacted interpreted those actions of the prosecutor Janeva plainly as theater").

Direct addresses: The president of VMRO-DPMNE was represented the most, with 12 addresses, one of which was shown three times, twice in the headlines and once in the story. Following him were the leaders of GROM Stevco Jakimovski with three addresses and the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev with two.

Audiovisual presentation: A predominant type of manipulative audiovisual presentation was the broadcasting of promotional contents of the Government, the ruling party and the leader Nikola Gruevski, as part of the news. Some other characteristic cases were also observed.

(1) Leading the respondents in a survey. In the report from the gathering of the supporters of the Constitutional Court (March 15th), they asked them 'are threats of the kind – we will burn down the Constitutional Court acceptable'.

(2) In the announcement of the protest and counter-protest among rice farmers in the Kocani area (March 15th), the presenter said that the conflict was between NGO activists and the rice farmers, because the protesters introduced themselves as members of the association "White Gold" from Kocani. They were not recognized as rice farmers and their relationship as a civil association was emphasized, because the television often spreads a negative campaign against civil sector, especially the part for which they say are financed by Soros. The story, on the other hand, was quite correct and equally presented the views of both sides.

(3) The report about the protest before the Constitutional Court, said that 15,000 people stood in defense of the court, which could not be seen in even the widest of shots. The realistic situation in which those protesting the court decision outnumbered the others was ignored.

(4) In the cue regarding the visit of the leader of SDSM in Veles (March 18th) it was mentioned that he was greeted with signs saying that the people from Veles will never forget SDSM's transition, although nothing similar could be seen in the story.

Instances of favourizing or demonizing political entities:

- (March 14th, headline/commentary): SDSM's manipulations with the electoral registry are unfounded.
- (March 15th, headline/commentary): The police intervened in Obleshevo, where an NGO came out to protest, while rice farmers from the Kocani region clearly told them not to bring in politics to agriculture. Since this morning, the NGOs have blocked the road Kocani - Shtip
- (March 17th, report): The president of the ruling party highlighted starting next year, new apartments will be built in 4 other towns across the country.

- (March 18th, cue): Gruevski announced today that successful projects such as the rural doctor and the construction of roads in this region will continue.

(2) Second week (19 – 25 March 2016)

During the reporting period from the 19th to the 25th of March on Kanal 5 television all in all 77 segments were published which referred to political actors, events or situations. The most frequent topics were: the events pertaining to the early elections and the electoral registry (14 segments), the Government's measures and projects (10 segments), the report of achievements from VMRO-DPMNE (9 segments) and the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (9 segments). Among other topics, the activities of the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski were featured (4 segments), the police operation linked to the case 'Affairs Factory' (3 segments), the events pertaining to the migrant crisis (2 segments), the activities of the opposition (2 segments), etc.

In most of the reports on these topics a favourable attitude was observed towards VMRO-DPMNE and a negative and demonizing one towards SDSM.

Commentary and opinions in the news: During the reporting period, the TV took a favourable attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE and her officials in 30 stories, and a negative, offensive and demonizing one in 16 stories towards SDSM, in 4 segments it was directed towards the Special Public Prosecutor's Office and in 1 segment towards USAID. As far as commentary contents are concerned, they could be seen in 4 accusatory segments directed towards SDSM (March 19th: 'SDSM's destruction continues. The latest information obtained by the portal Kurir were that the opposition had left the SEC after it was proven that the results from the inspection were at least 4 and a half time less than what they claimed') and in 2 segments favouring VMRO-DPMNE (March 21st: 'Yesterday's report of VMRO-DPMNE was the largest one so far, with over 3 500 projects, measures and reforms, in the period from 2006 to 2016. And the economy and the reduction of employment are most represented in it').

(1) The report or the account on the achievements of VMRO-DPMNE was reported in five of the seven monitored days, with as many as three thematic segments per day, regarding the achievements of the party in economy, healthcare, infrastructure and in other areas. Typical for these segments was not that only did they cross the line of political marketing (March 20th: 'With the report on achievements the ruling party practically once again showed one of the principles of the method of their work, that work is necessary, however reports or accounts should be given to the people, to precisely those people for who these projects are intended'), but they also resembled commercials, especially the ones regarding the 'Buy a House – for young people' project (March 21st: 'The first model is for a duration of 11 years, when the citizens will get a monthly installment subsidy. While with the second model there is 100 percent coverage of the participation in the down-payment in the bank for a housing loan. According to relevant subjects, the objective has been achieved').

(2) The political marketing did not end with the report of what was achieved from the ruling party. It was also conducted by promoting the projects of the authorities headed by members of VMRO-DPMNE (March 21st: 'The building of the express way Stip-Kocani to start in June and July, a capital government investment worth 54 million euro, as well as the renovations of the road Kocani – Makedonska Kamenica – Delcevo, an investment worth 6 million euro. This was announced today by Prime Minister Emil Dimitriev during his business visit to Kocani'). Also present were stories portraying the style promises-made-are-promises-kept from the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski, although less frequently, since during this period he had less such activities (March 25th: 'The municipality Gjorce Petrov is working on implementing the project of the Government Buy a House – for Young People, following the initiative of VMRO-DPMNE and of Gruevski for providing locations for building').

(3) In the segments related to the elections and especially the revision of the electoral registry, the position of having them on June 5th was favoured, without any further postponements. Segments were shown that discard first and foremost the possibility for any irregularities in the registry and an alibi is given why several voters could have appeared on the same address (March 21st: 'It's the situation with people whose

information following the cross checks were assessed as inconsistent, i.e. it is a matter of situations where several people are registered on the same address. Cases of addresses of persons with more than one last name, for instance if the husband and the wife, after getting married, decided to each keep their own last name, or it is a matter of villages with no house numbers, they are all registered on the same address. All of these are common situations, if you take into consideration the address system in the Republic of Macedonia, as well as settlements with illegal buildings'). What was interesting were the statements from surveyed passers-by, who used phrases that could be heard coming from the ruling party (March 21st: 'On June 5th we will show that there were no phantom voters'). Accusations were conveyed against the opposition for making up problems with the registry (March 20th: 'There were no phantom voters, nor will there be. All of this is absurdities from SDSM with the purpose of building an alibi for the loss they are facing, said the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski. According to him, the opposition party is in total disarray before the upcoming elections').

(4) The Special Public Prosecutor's Office and the Prosecutor Katica Janeva were not attacked as fiercely regarding the non-appearance before the Parliament Commission where the report of her work was reviewed, but much more on other cases, such as taking over the 'Kosmos' case linked to the demolition of the building of the businessman Fijat Canoski (March 21st: 'Political orders instead of law. Due to the proximity with Zaev, Janeva gives amnesty to Canoski and opens a case concerning the demolition of the illegal building Kosmos, was written by the portal Kurir'). Particularly negative were the segments regarding her statement that the President and the MPs are illegitimate (March 22nd: 'Scandalous behavior from Katica Janeva: all authorities were under her feet'), and at the same time no differentiation was made of whether she denied the very institutions or the people manning the institutions. The next day her explanation about this was published.

(5) In the case with the so called 'Affairs Factory' there was particular insistence on the link of the suspect Zahir Bekiri Chaush and the others, with the party SDSM (March 25th: 'There appeared in the public several photos of leading people from SDSM with some of the suspects, and in the meanwhile the president of SDSM personally stated that Zahir Bekiri Chaush is a member of SDSM and that he met with him in his office').

Using sources: For the most part, the segments had one source (46 segments) and that source was either a representative of the Government or of the party VMRO-DPMNE. When it came to segments with two or more sources, they were more often in alignment or at least had a neutral attitude towards each other (23 segments), and in almost half of them (11 segments) it was two or more representatives of the government or the ruling party, giving complementary statements. The least number of segments (8 segments) aired had sources with different or opposing standpoints. In four cases the TV station uncritically conveyed accusatory and defamatory contents against the opposition or against other subjects, from web portals or from other media outlets, and in some segments they called upon 'experts' or 'the people's opinion', although no one was shown.

Direct addresses: Four addresses from the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev were aired, three of which were old statements of his, which were used against him (for not recognizing the authorities/institutions, about the connection with Chaush, etc.), as well as one old statement from the leader of PEI Fijat Canoski. The most present was the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski with 11 addresses, one of which was an old statement in a news segment that was following the type what-was-promised-was-kept. The president of GROM Stevco Jakimovski was also present with one address.

Audiovisual presentation: The prevalent type of audiovisual presentation was broadcasting promotional contents about the Government, the ruling party and the leader Nikola Gruevski as part of the news. Other typical cases were also observed.

(1) In support that SDSM have no grounds in disputing the electoral registry (March 19th), the latest surveys regarding the ratings of the politicians from the 'Pavel Shatev' Institute were shown, in order to suggest that the opposition is trying to prevent the elections

(2) The caption says: 'The residents of Kavadarci will be relieved of paying water and utility costs' (March 19th), although it is not for all citizens, but only for those on welfare.

- (3) In the aired segments of the interview with Nikola Gruevski on Sitel (March 20th), drone footage is shown from the ruling party's rally on May 18th 2015 in Skopje
- (4) Sequencing the segments: after the appropriate segment about Katica Janeva not appearing before the Parliament Commission (March 21st), a text was shown from 'Kurir' according to which, she, following the orders of Zoran Zaev, is protecting Fiat Canoski. The television is trying, in this way, to distance itself from the negative stand it takes towards some subjects, although the media outlet is responsible for the entire contents it airs.
- (5) Hidden propaganda: in a segment about the repair work made on a road in the municipality of Dolneni (March 21st), the Minister of Transport was shown saying: 'I spoke to president Gruevski, he said I should come here and see you, not just to make promises but also to see what the situation is like'. Grievski was presented as the one making orders, although he has no state function at the moment.
- (6) A text from Kurir was shown, stating that 'USAID have provided an extra three million euro for SDSM's and Soros's media outlets', (March 22nd), although in reality it was competition for grants that is open for all, including Kurir and Kanal 5.
- (7) In the text that was taken from the Washington Times (March 23rd) phrases such as 'according to the author' or 'according to the newspaper' were used. The author – Jason Katz, who is known by part of the public for being a paid lobbyist, was not mentioned.
- (8) In the cue regarding the visit of the Minister of Health Nikola Todorov in M. Kamenica (March 24th) and the presenting of a new mammography machine, numerous projects that the government has implemented in that municipality were mentioned, which were not at all related to health (a road, employment, aquaduct, etc.).

Instances of favouring or demonizing political entities:

- (March 21st, report): VMRO DPMNE once again demonstrated leadership in their political communications, according to experts. The entire event was a form of public meeting of high officials of VMRO DPMNE where they reported on what has been done;
- (March 21st, headline/commentary): Political orders instead of law. Due to his proximity to Zaev, Janeva gave amnesty to Canoski and opened a case about the demolition of the illegal building Kosmos, reports the portal Kurir;
- (March 22nd, headline): And here the theatre of Katica Janeva continues. The Special Prosecutor is not showing up in Parliament, and she crowned her scandalous behavior with the statement that she will continue to increase her personal wealth;
- (March 24th, cue): In Makedonska Kamenica 90 young people were employed through the 'Macedonia Provides Employment' project and through the employment measures meant for persons up to 29 years of age. During today's visit of M. Kamenica, Minister Todorov visited the hospital, where a new mammography machine was procured. The projects implemented in the municipality include the reconstruction of the road to Delcevo, worth 75 million denars, as well as the secondary waterline grid;
- (March 25th, editor's commentary): Two more dilemmas remain, how was Zahir Bekiri – Chaush's mattress a safer place, since we know that around the end of the year the Special Prosecutor said that the safe box in the Special Prosecutor's Office was not safe enough to keep the wiretapped conversations, and the other thing, how could there be three telephones in Chaush's cell, however this remains to be determined in the investigation

(3) Third week (26 March – 1 April 2016)

During the reporting period from the 26th of March to the 1st of April 2016, Kanal 5 television published a total of 86 news segments referring to political actors, events or situations. Most present were: the projects and measures of the Government or of the ruling party (15 segments), the events related to the holding of early parliamentary elections, mostly the revision of the electoral registry (12 segments), the activities of the president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski (9 segments) and the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (8 segments). There was also presence of the topics regarding the work of the ministers from the opposition (5 segments), the activities of the opposition (4 segments), the resignations of the ministers from DUI (4

segments), the draft law on criminal procedure (2 segments), the report of achievements from VMRO-DPMNE (2 segments) and other topics.

For most of the reporting on these topics, a partial attitude was observed towards VMRO-DPMNE and a negative and demonizing one towards SDSM and also towards the Special Prosecutor's Office.

Commentary and opinions in the news: During the reporting period, the TV station took a favourable stand towards VMRO-DPMNE and towards their officials in 35 segments, and a negative, accusatory and demonizing stand towards SDSM in 16 segments and towards the Special Public Prosecutor's Office in 6 segments (March 31st: 'With the decision made last night it becomes clear that Janeva and the Special Prosecution are rescuing Verushevski and his associates, who called for violence, said the University Professor Oliver Andonov'). As far as commentary contents are concerned, they were encountered in six segments where SDSM were attacked (April 1st: 'As it is known, Zahir Bekiri – Chaush is a member of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia, and he was also guest in Zoran Zaev's office, as the leader of SDSM stated himself on several occasions'), and in 2 segments commending VMRO-DPMNE (March 30th: 'One more piece of excellent news for the people which implies new jobs and development of the Macedonian economy').

(1) Despite the important political events of the monitored week, connected to the investigations of the Special Prosecutor's Office and with the preparations for elections, the TV station still decided to give advantage to the promotion of government measures and projects, and the activities of the president of VMRO-DPMNE Gruevski. Favouring these contents was also shown in the number of aired segments, and the way in which they were positioned (five of the seven monitored days opened with such stories). Marketing vocabulary was still dominant in them (March 28th: 'Excellent results from government projects. Over 7600 locations for 'Buy a house – for young people', millions in savings for the people through the free-of-charge projects'). Gruevski was once again shown speaking on behalf of the country, although he only holds a political position (March 29th: '7,800 people have been employed through the self-employment project, said the president of VMRO DPMNE – Nikola Gruevski, who announced that there is an active advertisement for additional 7,000 hectares of agricultural land').

(2) Among the topics on early elections, the prevalent one was the topic of revision of the electoral registry. Although the process is not complete, inclinations were made towards the thesis that there are no phantom voters and the opposition was accused for manipulating the people (March 30th: 'In the media close to SDSM and on social networks, the demands for the SEC to take down the public list of so called phantom voters are becoming louder and louder. Many members of SDSM management were found on that list, thus rescinding Zaev's theses that the electoral registry contains voters made up by the ruling party').

(3) Concerning the Special Prosecutor's Office, the newly opened investigations were followed for the cases 'Torture' and 'Fort', their development and the political reactions. Accusations are rejected beforehand (March 28th: 'Despite the fact that Boshkovski in person, along with his attorney had immediately signed a document that they have no remarks about the way they were treated by the police, nor did the person placed in custody complain of any injuries, Janeva announced that emotional distress will be investigated'), and the thesis that the prosecutor's office is working with a political agenda was accepted, to the benefit of the opposition (March 29th: 'How much can a political service delivered to SDSM from the Special Prosecutor's Office help Zaev'). In several segments on the prosecutor's office, negative attitudes towards them from Professor Oliver Andonov were used, and they were shown as the general opinion of experts.

(4) During this period, there was continued coverage of activities promoting the opposition party, in attempt to show balance and to justify publishing contents of that nature for the benefit of VMRO-DPMNE. The vocabulary typical for political PR was not missing in the cues for these segments (March 27th: 'We will invest in the youth's future, and not in monuments, weeping willows and bronze horses, promised Pendarovski'). However the segments themselves are mostly broadcast speeches from the politicians, with static shots of them speaking in front of the microphones, while the contents promoting the ruling party had a much more complex audiovisual presentation. Aside from that, the fact that negative contents are still being aired for SDSM, and in a much greater quantity, and this is not the case for VMRO-DPMNE, is yet another indicator that achieving true balance is still a long way to go.

Using sources: For the most part of the segments, one source was used (45 segments), out of which in nearly a half (20 segments) the source was a representative of the Government or the party VMRO-DPMNE. Out of the segments where two or more sources were used, they were more often in alignment than not, or at least

they had a neutral stand towards one another (23 segments), and in one part of them (7 segments) it was a matter of two or more representatives of the government or the ruling party, giving complementary statements. The least number of segments aired (6 segments) had sources with different or opposed standpoints. On two occasions there were non-critical conveyances of accusatory contents from web portals, without hearing out the other side (March 26th: ‘Under attack from Remenski - the beneficiaries of the project for free rehabilitation and recreation for children with disabilities, writes the portal ‘Deneshen’).

Direct addresses: The predominant type of manipulative audiovisual presentation was airing promotional contents for the Government, the ruling party and the leader Nikola Gruevski, as part of the news. Other characteristic instances were also observed.

(1) In the report about the case ‘Torture’ (March 28th) the prosecutor Fatime Fetaj was shown talking in Albanian, with no translation, to emphasize the language that was used (just briefly) at the press-conference, instead of the topic of the press-conference.

(2) In a headline (March 29th) it was said that a debate was encouraged on the Greek political scene about the dispute with the name Macedonia ‘from the bribe from Ljube’, which is inaccurate. The reason for the debate were statements from Greek politicians. Furthermore, when reporting on the case ‘Torture’, the TV station underlined that Ljube Boshkovski took a bribe in order to change the name of the country, although he was convicted in 2011 for illegal financing of the pre-elections campaign, and the footage that he arranged for the name to be changed appeared last year, and their source was not confirmed.

(3) The accusatory phrases have multiple uses. Identical sentences were used on March 29th and the 30th, in segments on the same topic (‘SEC’s electoral registry shows that SDSM attempted to manipulate the public’). The same people that were interviewed, stating their anger that the opposition had declared them to be phantoms, were shown on March 30th and 31st and on April 1st.

(4) Hidden propaganda: the Deputy Minister of Agriculture Vanco Kostadinovski stated that he is implementing a decision after a meeting with president Nikola Gruevski (March 30th). Gruevski has no state function, which points to a connection between the state and the party. Hidden propaganda is also present in a segment about the revision of the electoral registry (March 31st), in which surveys for party ratings were inserted, in support that SDSM falsely indicated to phantom voters.

(5) In a segment about foreign investments (March 31st: ‘The investment boom continues. From the beginning of this year, as many as 16 foreign investors made a decision to invest in the country a total of over 100 million EUR’) old statements were used from Nikola Gruevski and from the Director of TIRZ (Technological Industrial Development Zones) Viktor Mizo, which suggests that the segment goes in support of the statements, not the other way around.

(6) Numbers were used selectively. There were pretentious claims saying ‘Macedonia is winning over the French tourist market’ (March 31st), due to a story in a French media outlet saying that the number of French tourist has increased by 41 percent. However, the segment does not mention any absolute numbers, 7,603 visits in 2015, which is an increase of 2,225 as compared to 2014, which is almost a negligible number, for Macedonia, let alone for the French tourist market.

(7) In a segment about the resignations of the ministers from DUI (April 1st) footage was inserted from a party rally.

Instances of favourizing or demonizing political entities:

- (March 26th, cue): Continuous meetings of the leader of VMRO DPMNE – Nikola Gruevski are showing results. To benefit from these meetings are also the citizens of Radovich, roads are being build and reconstructed, as well as playgrounds, sewerage systems and a new bridge has also been built.
- (March 28th, headline/commentary): Katica Janeva’s constructs, whose highest achievement was the illegal arrest of the Mayor of Pustec – Edmond Temelko, as well as the Affairs Factory of Zahir Bekiri – Chaush, are the largest projects of SDSM, at about only ten days before Parliament is dismissed, in anticipation of the early elections scheduled on June 5th, experts claim.
- (March 29th, cue): 40 measures and projects aimed at young people - building sports courts, playgrounds, swimming pools, free transportation for pupils and students, new faculties, increasing scholarships, are all just part of the measures that VMRO DPMNE is using to facilitate the life of young people.

- (April 1st, report): A large part of the people that are subjected to on-site inspections are angry at the fact that SDSM has declared them as phantoms.

(4) Fourth week (2 – 8 April)

During the reporting period from the 2nd to the 8th of April, Kanal 5 television published a total of 92 news segments that refer to political actors, processes or situations. Most common were: the early parliamentary elections (17 segments), the projects and measures of the Government and other authorities led by VMRO-DPMNE staff (14 segments), the activities of VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski (9 segments), the state of the economy (6 segments), the activities of the opposition (5 segments), the development of the cases opened by the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (5 segments), ministerial shifts in DUI (2 segments) and other topics.

For the most part, in the reporting on these topics a favourable attitude was perceived directed towards VMRO-DPMNE and a negative and demonizing one against SDSM.

Commentary and opinions in the news: During the reporting period, the TV station had a favourable stand in terms of VMRO-DPMNE and their officials in 56 segments, and a negative, accusatory and demonizing stand in terms of SDSM in 21 segments, in terms of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office in 7 segments (April 2nd: 'The certificate for graduating at the Faculty of Law of Katica Janeva is a reflection of the capacity she possesses, in the opinion of professor Aleksandar Klimovski'), and in one segment in terms of MOST. As far as commentary contents are concerned, they could be seen in 8 accusatory segments against SDSM (April 6th: 'SDSM in panic, the low ratings triggered them to make a new political maneuver this afternoon'), and in 6 praising segments in terms of VMRO-DPMNE (April 2nd: 'The portal writes that from 2006 to 2016 VMRO-DPMNE had a series of successes in defending these interests').

(1) The television continued their typical editorial policy, where the news were dominated by segments about new projects of the Government or other authorities (April 6th: 'The road to Belo Pole – Vranchevo in the Prilep region will get a makeover. The holes that made it difficult to move were repaired at the request of the residents of several surrounding villages') and how old projects are moving forward with implementation (April 2nd: '16 340 new jobs have been opened through the project "Macedonia – providing jobs"'). Intense monitoring of the activities of VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski continued, and him acting on behalf of the state was conveyed non-critically, although he currently holds no state function (April 3rd: 'With the objective to help the residents of rural environments was also the opening of 75 pharmacies in populated areas with a population of less than 3 500, which cover approximately 180 thousand people, was said by Gruevski), and his posts on social networks were often taken as a primary source of information for state matters, even more so than official channels (April 6th: 'Reliable livelihood for 1 000 families from the Zletovo and Toranica mines. Gruevski commended the agreement signed with Ministroj on Facebook'). As part of this category are also the segments showing that the economy is in excellent shape, and mainly the satisfaction of government officials with the economy is communicated (April 2nd: 'According to Gruevski, the report of Standard & Poor's is one of the best validations of the solid policies of the government led by VMRO-DPMNE') The line between reporting and political marketing was often crossed.

(2) The events surrounding the preparations for early elections were also followed intensively. There were inclinations towards the thesis that the requirements for elections on June 5th have been met (April 6th: 'Yet another attempt from SDSM to negate their leader's signature. There will be elections on June 5th'). The opinions of international representatives on this topic were communicated, and even though they were not specific in themselves, the media outlet interpreted them as being directed against the announced boycott of the elections by SDSM (April 8th: 'And especially with a message to SDSM that on April 6th that opportunity was missed out').

(3) Increased intensity was observed in conveying contents from other media, primarily from web portals, and this time not only were they negative and accusatory, they also contained libel for committing specific actions, thus compromising the concerned subjects, most often without making any attempts to consult with the other party. The forerunners of this category were texts conveyed from a Croatian journalist published on the portal direktno.hr, which developed a thesis that behind the political crisis in Macedonia is a conspiracy,

involving Western countries, with the end goal of taking VMRO-DPMNE off power and then for SDSM to change the name of the country (April 5th: ‘Controlled instability or political gain without any pain for SDSM? This is the title of the Croatian portal Direktno under which an analysis of the political situation of the country continued’). These claims were communicated in several segments and they had a strong favourable tone for the government and a demonizing one for the opposition, however in the contents that were conveyed there was a lack of arguments that the author used to back up his theory. Slander was also stated against SDSM officials (April 6th: ‘A total of 76 families are unable to get a welfare apartment because of the obstacles put up by Minister Remenski, was written by the portal Netpres’), against the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (April 5th: ‘Katica Janeva’s SPPO is becoming a home-base for taking in SDSM political members, who are close family members of Janeva’s associates, writes the portal Kurir’) and against other entities.

Using sources: In most of the segments, one source was present (52 segments), and in a large portion of them (22 segments) that source was either a representative of the Government or of the party VMRO-DPMNE. Out of the segments where two or more sources were used, they were more often in alignment or at least had a neutral stand as compared to one another (27 segments), and in one third of them (9 segments) it was a case of two or more representatives of the government or the ruling party complementing each other. Only 4 segments were aired in which the sources were opposed. In a total of 7 segments, domestic portals were cited as sources, and in 3 segments it was regional portals.

Direct addresses: The president of VMRO-DPMNE was most present, with 14 direct addresses. Other political leaders were also presented, with only one address each, the leaders were Ali Ahmeti from DUI, Amdi Bajram from the Roma Alliance, Stevco Jakimovski from GROM, as well as Zoran Zaev from SDSM. An old statement was also shown from Zaev, used in a segment against him.

Audiovisual presentation: A predominant type of manipulative audiovisual presentation was broadcasting promotional contents for the Government, the ruling party and the leader Nikola Gruevski, as part of the news. Other instances were also noted.

(1) Especially characteristic was the segment glorifying the visionary skills of Gruevski, which did not have an informative role, rather it was solely intended for marketing (April 2nd: ‘Even back in 2003, the young economist and broker at the time – Nikola Gruevski wrote about the need for connecting the stock markets in the region, for which a decision was made this week’).

(2) Although he wasn’t mentioned, Gruevski was shown in the shot in a segment where the Minister of Culture was promoting books (April 2nd).

(3) Everyday obligations of the Government were presented as achievements, like for example in the segment where it was said that after 50 years the infirmary in Madzari has been reconstructed (April 3rd), however in Kanal 5’s segment ‘before and after’ photos were inserted, in order to enhance the effect.

(4) Sequencing: on April 6th a segment was broadcast which was related to the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office, where it was underlined that ‘many citizens rounded up courage’ and filed criminal charges for performing pressure. Right after that segment, another one followed where the topic was non-political – home thefts. The news editor linked the two with the following sentence: ‘in continuation of the topic of crime’. Thus, she convicted beforehand the persons suspected of alleged pressuring of witnesses for the benefit of SPPO.

(5) Hidden campaign: Prime Minister Emil Dimitriev’s address was broadcast from a conference organized by the Young Forces Union of VMRO-DPMNE on the topic ‘Political parties in the digital era’ (April 8th), however the part of his speech that was shown did not refer to the topic, rather to the measures intended for young people that VMRO-DPMNE is promoting.

Instances of favourizing or demonizing political entities:

- (April 4th, analysis/commentary): The firm stand of VMRO-DPMNE on not changing the constitutional name is the reason why there is a political crisis in Macedonia, was written by

Croatian journalist Ivan Brodic.

- (April 5th, analysis/commentary): Katica Janeva has vast resources made available to her from the budget. However, no report of what has been accomplished has been made so far before the public and the MPs, on how the people's money is being spent.
- (April 5th, cue): 500 million MKD in subsidies will be paid to the accounts of tobacco growers. The president of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski promised that the funds will be transferred to the treasury.
- (April 8th, headline): For finding a way out of the crisis, elections will be held on June 5th. VMRO DPMNE will go to elections with a prepared program. SDSM - a destruction scenario.