



ИЗВЕШТАЈ ОД СЛЕДЕЊЕТО НА МЕДИУМСКИТЕ СОДРЖИНИ

16 април - 7 мај 2016



Fifth Monthly Report
based on the monitoring of media content through the Rapid Response Media Mechanism
of the Institute of Communication Studies
(time-frame: 16th April – 7th May 2016)

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 12 different current-affairs programmes of the Public Service Broadcaster (MTV 1 and MTV2) and of 8 private television broadcasters (Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa, Telma, Alsat M, 24 Vesti, TV21 and TV Nova).

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.

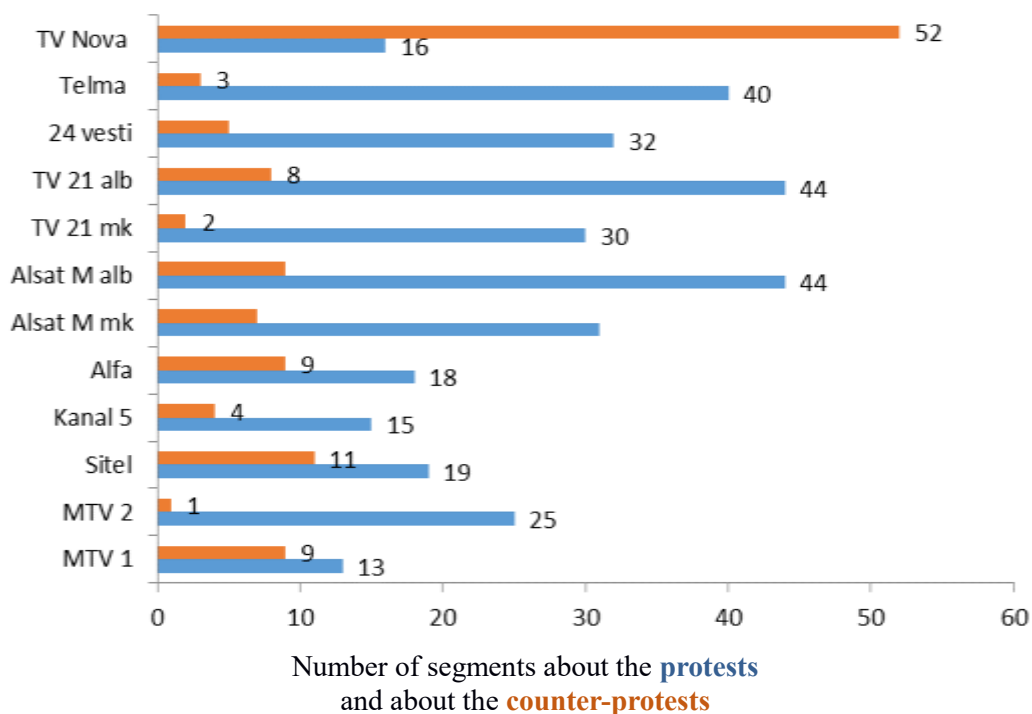


CONCLUSIONS

The most relevant topic in the media reporting in the second half of April and the beginning of May were the protests of the civil movement ‘Protestiram’. The way in which pro-government TV stations reported about the protests confirms the phenomenon which is theoretically known as ‘protest paradigm’¹. Namely, mass communications researchers have established that the media’s reporting on different social protests is often aimed at discrediting and marginalizing the protest actions or at promoting and favouring one party and degrading the other party of the social conflict.² The more the social protests are directed towards the changes of society’s state, norms and policies, the more negative the media’s presentation of them is. This is especially enhanced in systems in which the media are under strong political and ideological control.

The main communications strategy of the ruling party has the purpose of silencing, delegitimizing and demonizing all voices of criticism, starting from the loudest ones coming from the daily rallies of the people mobilized in the Colourful Revolution, to the ones of the representatives of the international community. In this period too, it seems like ‘the fear’ of the power structures from the actions performed by the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office caused for this institution to be subjected to the harshest of attacks and discrediting.

If something is anti-government, it is neither civic nor is it national



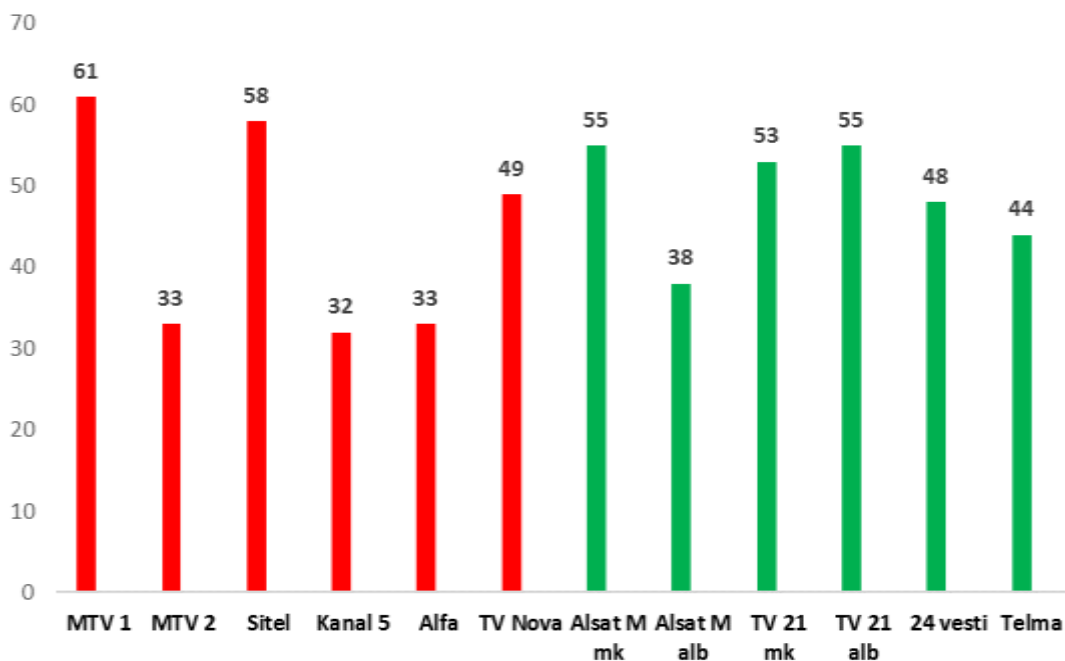
¹ McLeod, Douglas M., and Benjamin H. Detenber. "Framing effects of television news coverage of social protest." *Journal of Communication* 49, no. 3 (1999): 3-23.

² Reuben, Richard C. "Impact of News Coverage on Conflict: Toward Greater Understanding, The." *Marq. L. Rev.* 93 (2009): 45.

Reporting about the protests of the ‘Protestiram’ platform and the counter-protests that GDOM started organizing as a reaction to the former, as the main topic during the monitored period, best illustrated the block division of the media. On one hand were the TV stations that are pro-Government (Sitel, Alfa, Kanal 5 and TV Nova), which persistently and in synchronization repeated the phrase ‘hooligans from SDSM and of Soros’ when talking about the ‘Protestiram’ movement and the colourful revolution protests. Although in reality this movement has only declarative support from the opposition and it has no formal collaboration with them, this did not prevent these TV stations from claiming that behind the protests against the abolition from President Gjorge Ivanov (which later on expanded to protests against one-sided elections and for general introduction of democracy in the country) is actually SDSM. Opposite to that, the counter-protests of the movement GDOM were called ‘civil’ and ‘rallies of the people’, ignoring the fact that there was much less spontaneity in these protests, with regard of the organized transportation from various towns. This framing was followed up by identical audiovisual manipulation, which means that whenever the ‘Protestiram’ movement was discussed, violent scenes of shoving with the police were shown, or throwing objects at buildings from the ‘Skopje 2014’ project, while when GDOM was mentioned, the video coverage was of scenes that illustrated massive outcomes.

From another perspective, the neutrally – critical TV stations reported much more rarely on the rallies of GDOM, and more often about the colourful revolution protests. In some segments they showed the organized transportation or handing out sandwiches with the event organized by GDOM. MRT’s reporting on both services was informative and balanced out for both movements.

Relativizing the appeals from the international communities for repealing the abolition and solving the crisis



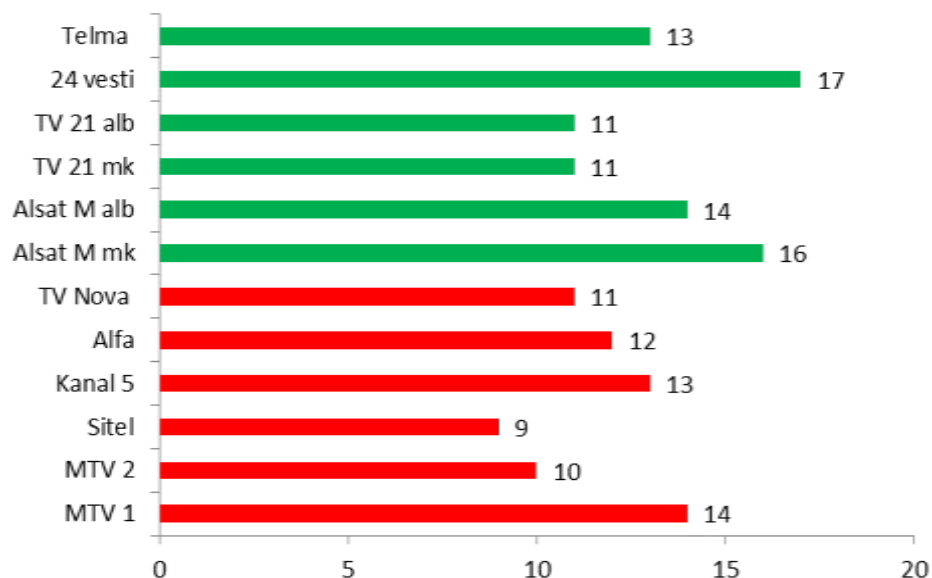
Number of segments about the political crisis of the **neutral** and **pro-Government** media

The reporting about the political crisis was intense and it involved segments that concerned the preparations for the elections, the abolition, economic consequences from the political situations, as well as the opinions and activities of the international community (perceived in the sense of EU, USA and EU members) as attempts for finding a solution for the internal political problems. All media regularly communicated the standpoints of all relevant sources from the international community, including the European commission, representatives of EU, USA and the European countries, etc. They were unanimous in their messages to revoke the abolition and to come to an agreement among all parties so that the elections could take place.

Pro-Government TV stations, however, intensively communicated the opinions of individual MEPs too, of current or former politicians or representatives of informal political organizations, which expressed full support for the positions of the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE in terms of all issues related to the political crisis. This involved opinions from known and relatively unknown politicians such as Marijana Petir, Luka Volonte, Joseph Daul and Karl von Habsburg, in order to create the image of discordance among the international community regarding the events in Macedonia.

There are no limits to demonizing the SPPO

From the very beginning of monitoring, and especially since the Special Public Prosecutor's Office started to open cases in which high officials of the governments and from the party VMRO-DPMNE are suspected of abusing their power, pro-Government TV stations will use anything to attack this institution which is a result of the Przino Agreement. In the past months this was done through creating various affairs connected to the rent that Prosecutor Katica Janeva paid from the Prosecution's budget in order to live and work in Skopje, through documents according to which Janeva has applied for agricultural land that the country has advertised for allocation (and no answers are sought from her, nor from the state), and through other means, which were not always linked to her current work as a special prosecutor.



Number of segments about SPPO activities with **neutrally – critical** and with **pro-Government** media

Still, these attacks were benign compared to what was happening during this period of monitoring, especially in the last week, where the Special Public Prosecutor's Office was blamed by these media for the death of Kosta Krpach, who was found dead in his apartment in Skopje on April 27th. Krpach was an academic painter, former owner of an Internet portal and he was mentioned in the opposition's 'bombs' related to the procurement of Israeli equipment for the Counter Intelligence and Security Agency. He was on the list of pardoned persons, although from the SPPO they claimed he was their witness, and not a suspect. Without any arguments, by using opinions from non-credible experts for this topic, as well as with unofficial information that came from the reports for alleged abuse of witnesses filed against the SPPO, they came to the conclusion that Krpach committed suicide because he could not take the pressures put on him by the SPPO for him to falsely testify.

VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW AND OF ETHICAL STANDARDS

In most of the cases, the violations of the law and of ethical standards were just like in the previous reports, with the exception of MTV1 where some improvement is evident as compared with the previous months:

- With MTV 1 there is improvement in the reporting, in the sense that when covering relevant political events (the protests, the abolition, early elections, etc.) the TV station withheld from taking sides and from highlighted favourizing of the views of the ruling party, which was the practice in the past period. Nonetheless, MTV1 continued to violate the standards and principles of the programmes set forth in Article 111, and especially the obligation from Article 110 from the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services, stating they 'shall not represent and protect the attitudes or interests of a certain political party, ... and the programs they create and broadcast shall be protected from the influence of the authorities, political organizations or other centers of economic and political power.' This violation was made with the segments that were aired which non-critically promoted Governmental projects and investments, as well as in the segments that reported on Gruevski's activities as leader of VMRO-DPMNE, who at the same time promoted Government projects.
- The three private TV stations Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa continued with serious and major violations of the basic principles of the programs set forth in Article 61 of the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services, for: (1) 'objective and impartial displaying of events with equal treatment of the various views and opinions and allowing free forming of opinions of the audience regarding certain particular events and issues' (Article 61, paragraph 1 line 9) and for (2) 'individuality, independence and accountability of the editors, journalists and other authors during the creation of the programs and creation of the editorial policy' (Article 61, paragraph 1 line 13).

Each of these TV stations constantly took sides and was partial and favoured the attitudes of the ruling party, i.e. it derogated and demonized all critical views, announcing them as hostile, traitorous, mercenary, etc.

- MTV 1 and the three private TV stations Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa continued to seriously violate the fundamental principles established in the Code of Journalists of Macedonia, especially in Article 14 where it is said that 'reporting on political processes... should be impartial and balanced out'.

EVENTS THAT WERE COVERED IN THE NEWS

(1) Protests

All TV broadcasters regularly informed about the *protest rallies in the streets* which were a reaction to the abolition from President Ivanov and to other events from the political crisis (535 news segments in total). The activities of the informal platform Protestiram were more present, however with different, even opposite approaches in the informing process, among different TV broadcasters. The phrase ‘the hooligans of Soros and from SDSM’ was prevalent with TV stations Alfa, Kanal 5, Sitel and TV Nova, who only assigned the attribute ‘of civil character’ to GDOM. MTV, on both of its program services, reported neutrally and informatively about the protests, without any qualifications. A similar approach was taken by several other critically – neutral TV stations such as 24 Vesti, TV 21 and Telma, which still gave more air time to ‘Protestiram’. With Alsat M there were instances of favourable tones for the movement ‘Protestiram’ and for the Colourful Revolution. The case of TV Nova was characteristic; they aired reporters coming in live form almost all of their rallies, in the style of an official reporter of GDOM.

During the first week of monitoring (April 16th – 22nd) *the protests* were the most represented topic, with 262 news reports. This includes coverage, reactions and analysis of the protests against the presidential pardon which are spearheaded by the movement “Protestiram”, the rallies organized by the Civil Movement for Defence of Macedonia (GDOM), and other occasional gatherings such as those organized by the Albanian parties and associations. Some television broadcasters (24 Vesti, Telma, Alsat M and others) covered the protests neutrally, by stressing their massiveness, and conveying the basic messages of the protesters. These broadcasters regularly surveyed participants on both sides, and occasionally broadcasted surveyed participants of the rallies of GDOM who emphasised their support for VMRO-DPMNE. MTV1 also provided balanced coverage of these events. In contrast, Kanal 5, Sitel, Alfa and TV Nova, strongly favoured the protests of GDOM (Kanal 5, April 22nd: ‘At the most massive rally so far, in front of Parliament, over 60 000 mouths were shouting the messages: we will not allow the black scenarios to happen’) and demonised those of “Protestiram”. (Alfa, April 21st: ‘Support for the so called Colourful Revolution through destruction and violence’)., Without offering adequate argumentation, often even without surveying the audience, they published allegations that the rallies of “Protestiram” were fully managed and controlled by the opposition. Their participants were called “hooligans”, while the participants of the rallies of GDOM were called “the people” in all four television stations alike. Despite the presence of senior representatives of VMRO-DPMNE at the events organized by GDOM, and the support given to this party by a large number of participants, the connection of the

During the second week (April 23rd – 28th), *the protests* remained one of the topics on which the television focused most of their attention (151 news reports) against the presidential pardon and for fair and democratic elections. Negative language was mostly observed in the reporting of Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and Nova TV. Their reports on the protests of the platform “Protestiram” contained words such as “hooligans”, “vandals”, “mercenaries” (Kanal 5, April 24th: “The hooligans lashed at the reliefs and the monuments of fighters in the Ilinden Uprising and the revolutionaries”, Alfa, April 25th: “Instead of conversation and dialogue, crisis aggravation, all paid for by Soros, realised by SDSM”). They are also accompanied by a manipulative selection of footage that shows only violent footage of throwing paint and eggs at the monuments from the protests of “Protestiram”, and an elevated view from the rallies of GDOM, with many people and flags. Apart from being portrayed as violent, the protests against the presidential pardon are also portrayed as requested (April 24th, an article written by the Italian politician Luca Volonte was conveyed by these four media). In addition, they are connected with a conspiracy theory published by the weekly magazine “Republika” and broadcasted by Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and Nova TV in two consecutive reports suggesting that the protests attempt to destabilise and afterwards redefine the state (Kanal 5, April 26th: “A nightmare scenario for federalisation of Macedonia is unfolding. Are we going to toe the line regarding the name issue”, Sitel, April 25th “Republika: Zaev’s scenario to toe the line is unfolding”, Nova TV, April 26th “Zaev negotiated a federalisation of Macedonia?!”, Alfa, April 26th “Change the name,

the flag, the national anthem, a bicameral parliament, an Albanian President. Zoran Zaev negotiated a federalisation of Macedonia, writes the web portal Republika”). A manipulation of the audiovisual presentation has also been observed, as the waving of the Macedonian and the Albanian flag together at the protests was placed in a context of the theory for federalization (Kanal 5, Sitel and Nova TV). Nova TV extensively covered the rallies of GDOM across the country, including live broadcast. Telma, 24 Vesti, Alsat M and TV21 generally reported more on the protests of the platform “Protestiram”, however, the reports were entirely free from journalistic opinion and commentary elements. An exception is the report/commentary of Alsat M (both in Albanian and Macedonian language), in which the television broadcaster explicitly expressed opinion “Colourful revolution and a sandwich counterrevolution”). MTV1 covered both protests, in a balanced ratio without taking sides.

During the third and final week (May 2nd – 7th), although the intensity with which the *protests* were covered had significantly decreased (122 newsreports), they remained as one of the main topics, and the different approaches in the reporting remained. . Alsat M most extensively reported on the Colourful Revolution led by the informal platform “Protesiram”. 24 Vesti, Telma, TV 21 and other television broadcasters also reported on the protests daily. Furthermore, on the subject of the protest, it was also reported on the judicial proceedings against the detained protesters, as well as the guerrilla operation against the Mayor of the City of Bitola, Vladimir Taleski. The rallies organized by GDOM had limited coverage. Sitel, Kanal 5 and Alfa broadcasted a smaller number of reports related to the protests. The reports were not typical, but critical of the protest movement, accusing them of being controlled by the opposition party and paid for with foreign money from the Soros Foundation. (Sitel, May 6th: ‘Kurir: Soros is spending EUR 15.000 a day for tearing down Macedonia, and ZNM got EUR 200 000 from EU for party propaganda’). The reporting of Nova TV on this topic is particularly distinctive, due to the intensive coverage of the activities of the Civil Movement for Defense of Macedonia in all cities where it held rallies, through live broadcasts, interviews with the leaders and so on.

(2) The development of the political crisis

The second most common topic was *the development of the political crisis* (521 news segments). It is a compilation of multiple topics that are directly inter-linked, such as the public and covert attempts of the international community to *reactivate the negotiations*, then the matter of having the *elections*, how the *abolition* is impacting those processes, etc. The segments themselves that concerned these topics were combined and rarely only covered one of the abovementioned topics. In covering these topics, once again the same polarization was observed with the media. Regarding the elections, TV stations Kanal 5, Alfa, Sitel and TV Nova reported as if there are no problems with them and as if everything is running a normal course, while Alsat M, 24 Vesti, Telma, TV 21 and MTV reported different opinions on this matter. There, informing on the positions of the international community about the crisis was mainly neutral, however the four TV stations that are pro-Government also intensively reported the opinions of less known European politicians who supported the ruling party (the same politicians were shown on all four TV stations).

During the first week (April 16th – 22nd) there was increased reporting on all aspects of the political crisis (197 reports) were covered as well, including the preparations for elections which continued as if nothing is happening, the attempts for restart of the political negotiations with the meeting of the party leaders in Vienna etc. Alfa TV, Kanal 5, Sitel, covered the preparations for elections like in normal circumstances, without mentioning the controversy surrounding the issue. It was emphasised that the State Election Commission reached a final decision that the conditions have been fulfilled and the comment of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, describing the decision as good news was also broadcasted. Unlike these television broadcasters, 24 Vesti, Alsat, Telma and other media outlets mentioned that the conclusions of the State Election Commission were adopted without the presence of the members of the opposition and without the support of the committee chairman. The attempt for holding a meeting in Vienna was covered informatively, by conveying all views, as well as by consulting expert opinions about the expectations. All reactions upon the cancellation of the meeting were also conveyed, however, the pro-government television broadcasters slightly favoured the position that the fault was with Zoran Zaev and his conditions.

The information that the international community implies serious consequences for the country if the political crisis is not resolved falls into this group of reports, and was given more attention by Alsat M and 24 Vesti through consultations with analysts, yet it is barely mentioned on Alfa, Kanal 5, Sitel, TV Nova and others.

During the second week of monitoring (April 23rd – 28th), *the development of the political crisis* was mainly covered through the prism of the *early parliamentary elections (155 news segments)*. The television broadcasters, which have shown favouritism to the government (Sitel, Alfa, Kanal 5, and since recently, Nova TV) propagated the theory that the conditions have been met and that Macedonia needs to hold the elections on June 5th without further delay. While supporting this theory, the positions of some international representatives were manipulated, such as those of the delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, as only their statements on the boycott of the elections were broadcasted (Kanal 5, April 28th: “The boycott of the elections is undemocratic, said the delegation of the Council of Europe after a two-day assessment of the election atmosphere in the country”, Sitel “PACE monitoring mission: SDSM’s boycott is contrary to the democratic values”), but not their criticism over the abolition, the media and other current conditions. The approach of the other broadcasters questioned the existence of right conditions for fair and democratic elections on this date. MTV1 and MTV2, as part of the Public Service Broadcaster, conveyed the information of the entities without journalistic opinion

- (1) During the third week (May 2nd – 7th) the topic of the *political crisis* was most present (169 news segments). The reports included the efforts of the international community to open a new political dialogue for finding a way out of the deadlock, the information on secret negotiations and the positions of the various parties, the publicly expressed views of the domestic and international officials on the situation, as well as the *preparations for the early parliamentary elections*. Even through these are different topics, they were intertwined to the point that in many cases the topic of the report was unclear. Generally, the topic dominated all television broadcasters under monitoring, but the approach was quite different. Regarding the engagement of the international community, some televisions (Alsat, 24 Vesti, and Telma) primarily conveyed the positions of the ambassadors in Macedonia who mainly expressed serious concern about the situation and called for resolution that would include postponement of the elections and annulment of the presidential pardon. The other broadcasters (Sitel, Alfa, Kanal 5, Nova TV), on the other hand, conveyed statements from individual politicians in Europe, current or former public office holders, such as Joseph Daul, Marijana Petir, Luca Volonte, Karl von Habsburg and others who attacked the opposition and urged for elections on June 5th. Regarding the elections, the pro-government television broadcasters favoured June 5th as a date for the elections and reported on the preparations thereof as if the situation is normal, whereas the other television broadcasters reported on all aspects, especially the problematic ones such as the boycott of several parties, including SDSM and DUI.

(3) The abolition from President Ivanov

In a certain number of cases (214 segments), *the abolition of 56 persons* from President Gjorge Ivanov stood out as a separate topic, although completely linked to the other aspects of the political crisis. It was mainly segments that referred to calls for the President to completely repeal the decision, requests from pardoned persons to do that separately for them, analysis of how this problem could be legally solved as well as through conveying the requests of the prisoners, the same principle that applied for politicians should also apply for them.

Covering the *abolition* as a separate topic was most expressed in the first week (April 16th – 22nd), with 99 segments. The reports mainly conveyed the requests of individual pardoned persons for withdrawal of the pardon, the positions of parties, the response from the international community that this act would deepen the political crisis, and the response from the President’s Cabinet that there is no way to reverse the decision. (Alfa, April 16th: ‘I worked honestly and conscientiously in the interest of the security of my country. Former Director of the Counter-intelligence and Security Agency Sasho Mijalkov publically asked from President Ivanov to revoke the abolition for him’) However, some television broadcasters (Alsat M) went even further and not only did they convey critical attitude towards the pardon but also, with the help of legal experts, tried to suggest possible



solutions, such as annulment of the pardon by the Constitutional Court. (24 Vesti, April 17th: ‘Some of the legal experts that 24 Vesti consulted said that the way out can be found in the Constitutional Court’).

During the second week of monitoring (April 23rd – 28th), the presidential pardon was among the central topics this week with 70 news reports. The reactions of the international community against the decision were conveyed, and mainly overlapped with the topic of potential sanctions. Once again, an exception was TV station 24 Vesti, which continued with the analysis of the opportunities to overcome this problem (24 Vesti, April 24th: ‘While President Ivanov is looking for help from the parties to repeal the abolition, the expert public believe that he can repeal it the same way he declared it’)

During the third week (May 2nd – 7th), the topic of the presidential pardon (45 reports) was covered, the media reported on the requests of the prisoners from the Prison Idrizovo for reduction of their sentences, following the release of the politicians from prosecution. Most television broadcasters such as 24 Vesti, Alsat M, Telma and others reported on possible pressure on the prisoners, whereas Alfa broadcasted one report on this topic, in which it claimed that the case with the prisoners’ protests was invented. On the subject of the presidential pardon, the media conveyed calls for its annulment from representatives of the Macedonian Academy of Science and Arts and others.

(4) Special Public Prosecutor’s Office

Media focus was kept on the investigations led by the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (164 segments). The cases opened by this prosecution were discussed (Transporter – concerning illegalities in the transport of students in Bitola, and TNT – for political pressures in the demolition of the building ‘Kosmos’ of Fijat Canovski). The reporting about the SPPO is a blatant example of polarization of the media, where in both groups, the pro-Government media and the media that are neutrally – critically oriented, the information that were shared were completely opposite, and this has become the norm. This mostly concerned the segments regarding the death of the abolished witness Kosta Krpach.

During the first week (April 16th – 22nd), with topics related to the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office (58 reports), the developments in the case concerning the transportation of the students in Bitola (“Transporter”) was also covered and so were the decisions of the court to put the suspect into custody at the requests of the prosecutors, followed by the decision for placing them under house arrest. Over the last two days, the media coverage focused on the new case of SPPO, under the name of “TNT”, concerning the demolition of the building complex Cosmos of the businessman and politician Fiat Canoski in 2011, which accused the former Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski and the former Minister of Transport and Communications Mile Janakieski for arranging the demolition for political vendetta. Generally, all media outlets reported neutrally and objectively on the work of SPPO in this period, by conveying the views of all parties (the prosecution, Gruevski’s response, the subsequent reactions of SDSM etc.). Some television broadcasters, such as Alsat M and 24 Vesti, broadcasted brief conversations with the developer Canoski and shared his views on the newly opened case. The neutral approach to SPPO, however, was mostly a result of the fact that other developments came into the media spotlight in the monitoring period, rather than an increased professionalism in the media.

In the second week (April 23rd – 28th), the work of the SPPO and especially the case of the death of Kosta Krpac was extensively covered (60 new reports). Broadcasters such as Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa, and Nova TV promoted a theory that he allegedly fell “victim” to the pressure of SPPO (Sitel, April 27th “A suicide in Skopje – he shot at the a van and then shot himself, he thought he was being followed and recorded by SPPO”, Nova TV, April 28th “Was Kosta Krpac a victim of torture inflicted by the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office?”), whereas the others television broadcasters (Telma, 24 Vesti, TV21, Alsat M) cited the statement of SPPO that they had knowledge that the person was under severe pressure ever since he appeared as a witness in a case opened by this institution). MTV1 broadcasted the positions on the case of the police and SPPO.



Kingdom of the Netherlands

During the third week (May 2nd – 7th), The work of this prosecution was generally covered through two cases: the death of the artist and businessman Kosta Krpac (a person pardoned by the President), and the Transporter Case against the Mayor of the City of Bitola. The television broadcasters with pro-government editorial policy reported that Krpac committed a suicide due to the pressure from SPPO CJO (Kanal 5, May 5th: ‘The method of work of the special prosecutors has become problematic these days with the case of Kosta Krpach as well, who committed suicide in his apartment in Skopje’), whereas the other broadcasters reported that the cause of death is still unclear. The information on the request for freezing the assets of Mayor Talevski was also conveyed

(5) Projects and accomplishments of the ruling party and Gruevski’s activities

Intensifying the political crisis, and the reduced number of outreach activities of the representatives of the Government and the leader of the political party Nikola Gruevski, were the main reasons why during this period there was a much smaller number of segments aired *about the projects and achievements of the authorities led by staff from VMRO-DPMNE* (135 segments) *and the work of the party president Gruevski* (57 segments). Almost all segments were published on TV broadcasters MTV1, TV Nova, Sitel, Alfa and Kanal 5. Although to a lesser extent, the practice still remains to use every occasion for segments that praise the ruling party, and this was done even when there was no direct occasion, by broadcasting old statements from Gruevski.

During the first week (April 16th – 22nd), (5) An unusually small number of reports were broadcasted on the new measures and projects of the Government and other institutions run by member of VMRO-DPMNE (38 reports). But due to other developments, there were far fewer events of this type. Almost all reports from this group were broadcasted on MTV 1, Sitel, Alfa and Kanal 5. The reports mainly involved projects of local character, such as the landscaping of Lake Mladost in Veles (April 17th), or the reconstruction of the local road to the village of Nikolic near Dojran (April 20th), again presenting the regular duties of the state as accomplishments of the government. These reports also include the announcement about procurement of new trains issued by the incumbent Minister of Transport and Communication, Misajlovski, during his visit to the village of Nikolic (April 20th). The coverage of the *activities of the President of VMRO-DPMNE*, Nikola Gruevski, also decreased (23 reports), also due to the smaller number of occasions, not because of the increased level of professionalism. The monitoring week began with his interview on Kanal 5, in which he announced a new project for farmers and announced another project for the agricultural sector. His appearances were praised, without maintaining the line between the party and the state, i.e. without differentiating the measures that he mentioned (the introduction of agricultural advisers and opening an agri-stock market) as mostly election promises from a party leader who has no public office, rather than a representative of the state. They were presented as positive announcements, and even broadcasted that the agri stock market will be constructed in Negotino and will be ready by 2018. All reports on the activities of Gruevski were broadcasted on Alfa, Kanal 5, Sitel, TV Nova and MTV1. Alfa, Sitel and Kanal 5 participated in joint manipulation, a political marketing abusing persons from vulnerable groups, conveying a story that two families from Kratovo received social housing only two months after they complained to the leader of VMRO-DPMNE (April 18th). In his interview for Kanal 5, Gruevski freely attacked the political opponent Zoran Zaev with the words “criminal”, “pathological liar”, “suicide bomber”, etc., and those parts were then retransmitted on the TV, and broadcasted on Alfa and Sitel.

- (1) During the second week (April 23rd – 28th), (6) The intensive reporting on the government measures and projects (57 reports) with a promotional and praising language returned on the media that promote government policies (Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa, Nova TV), and remained the most striking element of favouritism in the news of MTV1. MTV2 shows favoritism in the coverage of the activities of DUI and its officials. The broadcasters Alsat M, Telma, 24 Vesti completely ignored these events, except when addressing them critically. TV21 occasionally broadcasts reports that are related to a government project, but mildly favourable in tone. The reporting on the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, continued as formerly (22 reports) but only on the television channels that promote pro-government positions: Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa, Nova TV. He is depicted as a decision maker (Kanal 5, April 28th: “From a city to a village for a fresh start, the

leader of VMRO DPMNE launched a new mega project for all who will decide to move from a city to a village, regardless whether they had migrated from a village to a city”, Sitel, April 23rd “Another mega project of Nikola Gruevski in the agriculture”, Nova TV, April 23rd “Today, the leader of VMRO-DPMNE announced another measure for support of the agriculture”, an authority who is being reported to (Kanal 5, April 25th: “The mayor Koce Trajanovski, before the President of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, informed that all municipalities are implementing at least two capital projects”, Alfa, April 25th “The President of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, the Mayor of the City of Skopje and the Mayor of the Municipality of Gorce Petrov carried out an inspection today”).

During the third week (May 2nd – 7th) the number of segments devoted to the projects and measures of the Government and other institutions run by people from VMRO-DPMNE to a new low of 40 reports. The reports mainly involve local projects such as roads or lighting, new services from state institutions such as cadastre, and other topics. All reports were broadcasted by MTV 1, Sitel, Alfa, Kanal 5 and Nova TV. Selective coverage and incomplete information on the events were observed in one case of this topic. The report on the reconstruction of the road from Bitola to Resen, which was attended by senior government officials, and which would have normally appeared on the news, was absent from Nova TV, Kanal 5 and Sitel, because the activists conducted a guerrilla operation scattering the Mayor of Bitola with paper euros with his photograph. Alfa covered the event omitting both the statement of Talevski and the guerrilla operation.

The same referred to coverage of the activities of the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, in the past monitoring period, was the absence of public appearances throughout the week. However, that did not prevent Kanal 5, Alfa, Sitel and Nova TV from reminding about the measures for the agriculture which he announced, arguing how many positive effects they will have on the agriculture and the rural development, and rebroadcasting his old statements. (Kanal 5, May 4th: ‘Improvement of the demographic image in the rural environments is expected with the project ‘From the city to the village – for a new beginning’ which was announced last week by the leader of the ruling party, and which encompasses a set of measures for encouraging the population to replace city asphalt with natural beauties’).

(6) Economic consequence from the political crisis

Another topic that was directly linked to the political crisis, although it referred to a specific aspect of it, were the economic consequences from the political crisis, more specifically the potential *sanctions* against the country if a solution is not found, as well as *increased interest* rates from the National Bank.

During the first week (April 16th – 22nd) this topic did not stand out on its own and it was only sporadically mentioned in other segments regarding the political crisis.

During the second week (April 23rd – 28th), the rumors concerning the possible imposition of sanctions against the Republic of Macedonia stood out as a separate topic (a total of 60 segments) if the political crisis is not resolved, as well as the possible impact of the political situation on the economy i.e. savings withdrawal, buying foreign currencies, and the risk of devaluation of the Denar. And while 24 Vesti, Telma, TV21, and Alsat M pointed to the possible international sanctions and broadcasted for and against expert opinions (Alsat M, April 26th: “The economic crisis is on our doorstep. If the Union imposes sanctions, 77% of Macedonia’s exports will be threatened”, 24 Vesti, April 23rd: “The experts consider that the European Union and the United States possess instruments to call for sanctions against individual politicians and institutions”), Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and Nova TV provided no thereon, but promoted an idea that the opposition is attempting to cause an artificial crisis (Kanal 5, April 27th: “According to the web portal Kurir, SDSM uses tactics for devaluation of the Denar before all elections”, April 27th “A devaluation is speculated before all elections”, Alfa, April 27th: “Some political analysts consider that the scenario for denar devaluation and euro rise is well-known and well-constructed by SDSM). The reporting of MTV 1 and MTV2 on this topic was in the direction of sending reassuring messages by broadcasting statements of official representatives of financial institutions in the country.



During the third week (May 2nd – 7th), the emphasis was placed on *economic consequences of the political crisis*, i.e. the tightening of the monetary policy by the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia (50 reports). Some television broadcasters (TV 21, Alsat, 24 Vesti) covered the topic neutrally, indicating that this situation necessitates a more serious approach to resolving the political crisis. Other television broadcasters (Kanal 5, Sitel, Alfa) blamed the opposition for the economic losses incurred by the political crisis, and even made an identical estimate of how much the loss in GDP growth would cost the state (170 million euros).

CURRENT – INFORMATIVE SHOWS

During the monitored period, a total of 72 broadcast editions of 11 different shows were the object of monitoring, airing on the national TV broadcasters. In-depth analysis was only made to those shows where hate speech was observed as well as discriminatory and negative speech, as well as explicit and continuous violation of Article 14 of the Code of Journalists, where it is said that the journalist must provide professional distance from the political entities.

- **‘Jadi Burek’ Show – TV Sitel 3**

During the period from the 15th of April to the 6th of May 2016, 11 editions of the show ‘Jadi Burek’ were analyzed with host Janko Ilkovski. In most of the editions political topics were included, most often by going through newspaper stories and calls from viewers, and because of the contents of the discussions and the attitude of the host, they can be considered as indicative. In this period, the host changed the show’s format, and now instead of inviting guests to the studio, in 5 editions of the show he included some of the participants over the phone. There were phone calls regarding the protests of Protestiram and GDOM in two editions of the show, in the first edition the callers were Milenko Nedelkovski, Mirka Velinovska, Boban Nonkovic, Vladimir Pandov, in the second edition they were MP and coordinator of the MP group from VMRO-DPMNE Ilija Dimovski and the actor Toni Mihajlovski, who is a member of GDOM. In two editions where the abolition and the constitutionality of the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office were discussed, the professors from the Faculty of Law Tanja Karakamisheva and Aleksandar Klimovski were included in the show over the phone. All of these telephone commentators in the show are close to or are a part of the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE. In this period, in two of the show’s editions guests were the artist Aco Stankovski and Deputy Minister for Agriculture, from VMRO-DPMNE, Vancho Kostadinovski.

What was striking during this period was that in the show’s editions the host, the guests and quite often the viewers paid attention to the anti-government protests of the ‘Protestiram’ movement and GDOM’s rallies. In this, the attitude towards the ‘Protestiram’ actions were openly and predominantly negative, accusatory and demonizing and associated to a coup d’etat, an attempt to take over the power with violence, vandalism, radicalism, hooliganism and anarchy, led by foreign instigators and linked to the opposition. The attitude towards GDOM’s rallies was openly supportive, positive and favourable and associated to defending the state, constitutional order, the alleged ‘cultural heritage’ and civilized peaceful gatherings. The host, the guests and the viewers paid less attention to political entities from the government and the opposition, as compared to the previous monitored periods.

***Instance:** ‘On Friday a take-over of the public institutions was arranged to take place; entering Parliament, it did not happen yesterday, not today, not the day before yesterday; reportedly it will happen on Thursday. And on Thursday, the commanders of UCK, BESA are supposed to join in, the dangerous Albanian elements. From another perspective, in Serbia the ones from Kanvas are arriving, that is the organization that teaches them how to picket, how to fight the police, how to protest, how to protect themselves from tear gas, how to provoke, how to infiltrate an official building, how to set fire, how to make a Molotov cocktail, etc. By all means, the most interesting and so far unprecedented thing was the arrival of Greeks from Greece who were protesting along with SDSM for alleged justice’. **Janko Ilkovski**, edition from April 20th, 2016.*

In respect to the abolition from Ivanov, the host Ilkovski underlined on several occasions that Gruevski asked for its repeal, while Zaev, the current leader of SDSM, did not ask for repeal when he was pardoned by



Branko Crvenkovski.

Instance: *'How many did the SPPO present, 5-6, means they can present 10 more recordings and start a court process against this person or that person. Perhaps, for Gruevski, if not for this, then for something else, so he can prove his guilt or innocence. That is why he asked for it to be repealed. And Zoran Zaev presented such a request now, where was he with such a demand when Branko Crvenkovski pardoned him? Because he knew he was guilty, and now he knows that he has an umbrella. And now I have the right to speculate, well I am speculating, people. Because you are together with Kanvas and Soros, and I trust neither of them. I can't, in the fact that they are fighting for justice and all. Far be it that these ones are great, but the other ones are way worse. It's not even a matter of choosing between a rock and a hard place. It's like choosing between a very hard rock, and a place twenty times harder, with the rocks and all. It's the same thing. So, keep it up with the protest, well done.'* Janko Ilkovski, from the edition aired on April 25th.

The professor from the Faculty of Law – Tanja Karakamisheva, when she was phoned-in on the show, defended the decision for abolition of the President Ivanov as constitutional and legal and accused SDSM for attempting to violently tear down constitutional order with the protests. At the same time she asked for the party to be terminated and banned from participating in the elections.

Instance: *'They should not be part of the election process, because they are acting contrary to the Constitution. They are tearing down constitutional order, they are not doing it any good, and as such they should not exist, first they should be forbidden to exist on the political scene, and second if we cannot ban them from that, then we will not give them the right to participate in the election process, because a legitimate political party would never allow themselves to defend violence, the disorder that is created, the chaos that is made, the psychosis that is created among the people. No one alive can defend this type of destructive behavior and this kind of rampage.'* Tanja Karakamisheva, from the show aired on April 20th.

- **'Milenko Late Night Shoe' – TV Kanal 5**

During the monitored period, four (4) editions of the show 'Milenko Late Night Show' were analyzed, with host Milenko Nedelkovski. All four of them deal with topics of home political affairs of the Republic of Macedonia, as well as some other aspects of current international geo-politics and its impact on the home political scene. In this period too, Nedelkovski's interlocutors were mainly the usual people from the country, represented as analysts or as experts in the current affairs and the field at question, which were guests on multiple previous occasions in Nedelkovski's shows, such as Zhidas Daskalovski, Denko Skalovski, Filip Petrovski, Vangel Bozhinovski, Natalija Ivcheva, Toni Mihajlovski, Aleksandar Klimovski, Aleksandar Pavlov. An exception was one of the editions in which the guest was Admiral Davor Domazet Loshko, a geo-political expert and analyst from Croatia. For all four editions, the common element was extreme negativity, demonizing approach to the analysis of the actions and the persons of the opposition, by using familiar stereotypes and customary discrediting vocabulary (criminals, Ukrainian scenario, illegally obtained recordings, Sorosoids, anti-Macedonians), also directed to the international community (*'There will be no peace in Macedonia until Soros is expelled from Macedonia... Zoran Zaev is a product of Soros'*).

One of the shows discussed the abolition from President Gjorge Ivanov and the implications it had on the current political crisis; the main topic that was addressed in the show was the harness between SDSM (the opposition) with undefined external forces (Soros, the international community, EU) aimed to induce a crisis in Macedonia in order to take down from power the 'democratically elected political establishment' and to allow for wider geo-strategic agendas to be implemented.

Instance: *'Macedonia is in the midst of a so called asymmetrical war that aims at destroying Christian Europe and she stands today at the forefront defending Europe from the wave of refugees that intend to flood Europe.' ... 'The main reason behind the events in Macedonia today, the protests and the attack of the public institutions from within, is so that the Macedonian state weakens to that extent that the damn defending Europe gives way, and this is done through Soros's wolf packs',* Domazet Loshko, Croatian analyst, edition aired on April 22nd.



Instance: *'I disagree with Ivanov, because I think that all criminals should be convicted for their wrongdoings, and do their time, however I have the information that Ivanov with his abolition actually prevented a coup d'etat, because I got the information that the SPPO was preparing to bring in a certain person (Gruevski), and he prevented this with his signature'* Milenko Nedelkovski, edition aired on April 15th.

- **'24 Analiza' ('24 Analysis') Show – TV 24 Vesti**

During the monitored period, eight (8) editions of the show 24 Analiza were analyzed, with different hosts. In none of the shows was there evidence of a favourable or accusatory attitude from the host or guests towards any political entities. The guests in the editions aired during the monitored period were Ljupcho Georgievski – president of VMRO-Narodna Partija, Stojan Andov – politician, Dejan Lutovski from 'Levica', Minister of Interior from SDSM – Oliver Spasovski, Daniela Rangelova – VMRO DPMNE, Sofija Kunovska from SDSM, also guests were former journalists, members of civil organizations and associations and former EU Ambassador – Ervan Fuere. The topics that were discussed in the editions were all current issues regarding the political crisis.

- **'Argument' Show – MTV2**

In the period from April 16th to May 6th, three (3) editions of the show 'Argument' on MTV2 were analyzed. The guests in the shows were DUI representatives Dzevat Ademi and Arber Ademi, Edmond Ademi from SDSM, Elmi Aziri from DR-DPA, Dritan Sulejman from the movement Besan, Albanian journalists and analysts, who discussed current political topics. A favourizing or accusatory stand towards political entities was not observed in any of the show's editions.

- **'Akcent' ('Accent') Show – MTV 1**

During the monitored period, one (1) edition of the show 'Akcent' was aired on the Macedonian radio-television. The guest was VMRO-DPMNE MP Zoran Ilioski who discussed the current political and economic topics. The host mentioned that representatives from other parliamentary parties were also invited to the show – SDSM, DUI and DPA, however they did not respond to the invitation. No favourizing or accusatory attitude towards political entities was observed in the show.

- **'Win-Win' Show – 24 Vesti**

During the monitored period, four (4) editions of the show Win-Win of journalist Olivera Trajkovska were observed. The interlocutors in these editions were journalists and university professors who paid attention to the political situation. At the same time, no unsupported accusatory or favourizing attitude towards political entities was noted.

- **'Top Tema' ('Top Theme') Show – TV Telma**

Fifteen (15) editions of the show Top Tema were analyzed during the period at question, with different hosts. In the show's edition aired on April 18th, where the guests were university professors Jeton Shasivari and Jasna Koteska and Branimir Jovanovic from the party 'Levica', the guests and the host did show an accusatory attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE. This attitude of the host could be observed in the topic he set at the beginning of the show, which was:

Example: 'Civic enthusiasm for fighting against the criminals in the Government is coming back. Can the way out be found in the withdrawal of the trio Gruevski, Ivanov, Mijalkov?' Aleksandar Chomovski, April 18th.

In the other editions of the show, the critical stand towards political entities persevered, and the guests were ZIJadin Sela from DR DPA, Pavle Trajanov from DS, Dimitar Apasiev from Levica, critical – pro and anti-Government commentators from civil associations, movements and university professors who discussed



current political and economic topics.

- **‘Vo Centar’ (‘Dead Center’) – TV Kanal 5**

Two (2) editions of the show ‘Vo Centar’ of the journalist Vasko Eftov were analyzed during the monitored period. In both editions of the show, the topics that were addressed did not refer to the political state in Macedonia and there was no mention of political entities. No negative, accusatory or stereotypical speech was noted.

- **‘Patot Kon’ (‘The Road Towards’) Show – TV Alsat M**

During the monitored period, two (2) editions of the show ‘Patot Kon’ were analyzed. The guests in the shows were Edmond Ademi from SDSM, Artan Grubi from DUI, Orhan Ibraimi from DPA and university professors who discussed the current political and economic events. There was no notice of accusatory or favourizing attitudes taken towards political entities during the editions.

- **‘Debata’ (‘Debate’) Show – TV Nova**

During this period, fifteen (15) editions of the new show ‘Debata’ were aired on TV Nova. In the shows there was notice of multiple negative and accusatory framing of political entities, however it was exclusively from the guests in the show towards SDSM and towards DUI, and positive and favourable ones towards VMRO-DPMNE and the Government. At the same time, the host maintained a neutral stand, although he did not comment on the accusations. In the observed editions of the show during this time, the representatives of political entities who were guests were Zoran Stavreski – Minister of Finance and member of VMRO-DPMNE and Bujar Osmani from DUI, as well as the independent MP Solza Grcheva. The remaining guests were university professors, political commentators and the Croatian MP Marijana Petir. The topics of discussion covered all current political and economic events.

- **‘Klik’ Show (‘Click’) – TV 21**

During the monitored period from April 16th to May 6th, four (4) editions of the show ‘Klik’ were analyzed. The guests in these editions, besides the three regular analysts included political representatives of all of the parties of Albanians in Macedonia. In the editions the guests were Blerim Bedzeti, former Minister of Justice from DUI, Mitasim Bekjiri, member of the presidency of DPA, Fatmir Besimi, Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of RM from DUI, Luan Tresi, spokesperson of DPA, Ilmi Selami from DUI, Fatmir Limani from DUI, Dukagjin Osmani from DR DPA, Zijadin Sela, leader of DR DPA, Ali Ahmeti, leader of DUI, Bekim Neziri from DUI, Azem Sadiku from DPA. There was no presence of a favourizing or negative attitude found towards any of the political parties. The topics for discussion were current political events, the state of the Albanian opposition, Euro-Atlantic integration of Macedonia as well as the state of affairs with the media.

- **‘360 Stepeni’ (‘360 Degrees’) – Alsat M**

During the period, seven (7) editions of the show ‘360 stepeni’ with host Vasko Popetrevski were analyzed. In one of the editions the guest was Stevo Pendarovski from SDSM. The other guests were university professors, commentators, journalists, activists and representatives of civil organizations who discussed the current political topics. There was no framing or favourizing or attacks towards political entities or actors observed in any of the editions.

- **‘200’ Show – Alsat M**

During the monitored period, three (3) editions were aired from the show ‘200’ with host Nazim Rashidi. In none of them was framing, favourizing or a negative attitude towards any political entities and actors observed. The guests in the show’s editions were Radmila Shekerinska – SDSM, Zijadin Sela – DR DPA, Bujar Osmani – DUI, Bekim Fazliu – DPA, Rafiz Aliti – DUI, and they discussed the current political topics with emphasis placed on the role of Albanians in these processes.

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, TV 21 and TV Nova.

4) Research Team

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

