



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



## 24 VESTI

24

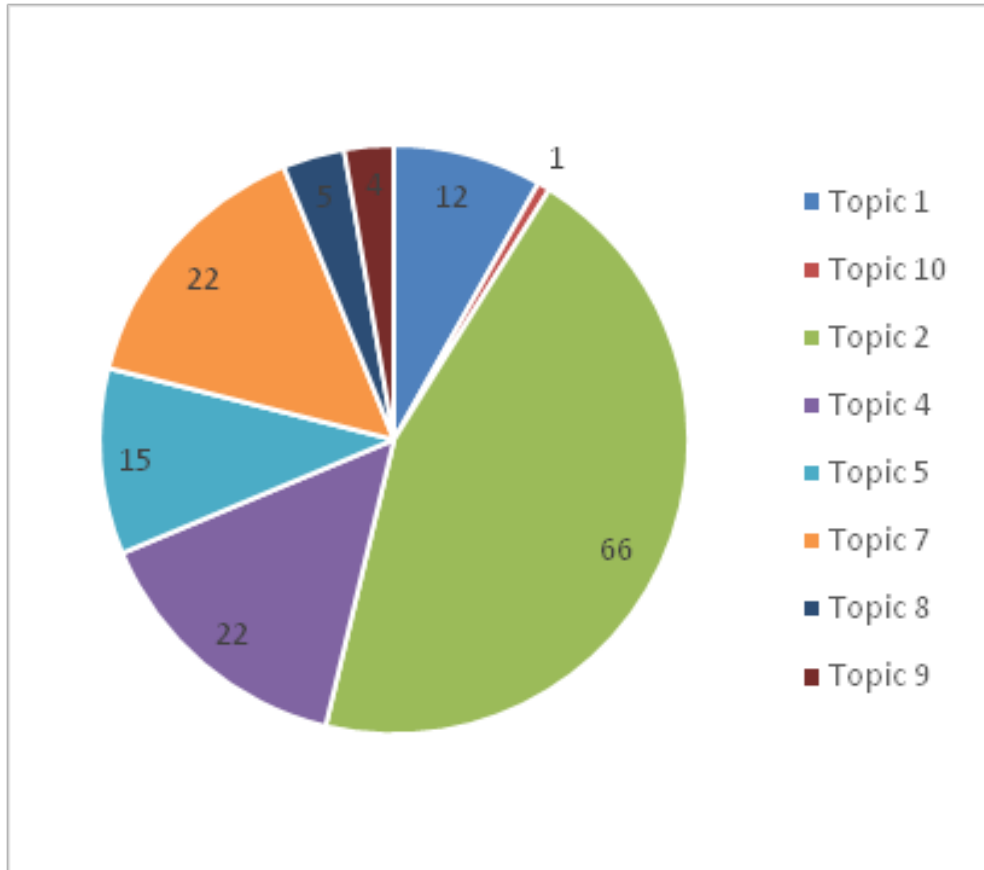
### GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF 24 VESTI

- During the monitored period, TV station 24 Vesti broadcast a total of 147 news reports concerning political actors, processes or states in the country. Almost half of them (66) were focused on covering the pre-election campaign, and out of the other topics, the ones that stood out were the work of public institutions (22), regular activities of state officials (22) and the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (15).
- In general, in the news reports concerning domestic events, TV 24 Vesti reflected the various political views on current events and processes: the standpoints of VMRO-DPMNE, their coalition and Government officials were reported in 111 news reports, while in 86 news reports it was the standpoints of SDSM, their coalition and officials. Mentions of other political parties were significantly fewer. In a small number of instances, a neutrally critical stand was observed towards VMRO-DPMNE and towards DUI.
- The media outlet's coverage of the election campaign was balanced, both in terms of quantity and in quality, including reports on the activities of participants in the election process, and also by providing an overview of the course of the campaign, the rhetoric, comparison of the programmes and especially the introduction of bilingualism, which appeared to be the topic for this period of the campaign.

# 1. COVERED TOPICS

While covering the pre-election campaign, reports were made not only about activities of political parties, but also about political party programmes, musicians hired in the campaign, comparisons were published between the economical promises made by both major parties, comparisons of their energy projects, about the lack of debates, the participation of Austrian Minister Kurz, and especially about the case with Sedat Asanovski, who was killed on

his way to the first rally of VMRO-DPMNE in Ohrid and was left lying roadside. The organization and preparation for the elections was monitored, with an emphasis of the information for abuse of official duty and of national resources, as well as pressures made on public sector employees, coming from NGOs. Reports were made about court proceedings related to the cases of SPPO, turbulences in the judiciary system, the national debt and other topics.



Number of reports on 24 Vesti, in relation to the different topics (November 21 - 29)

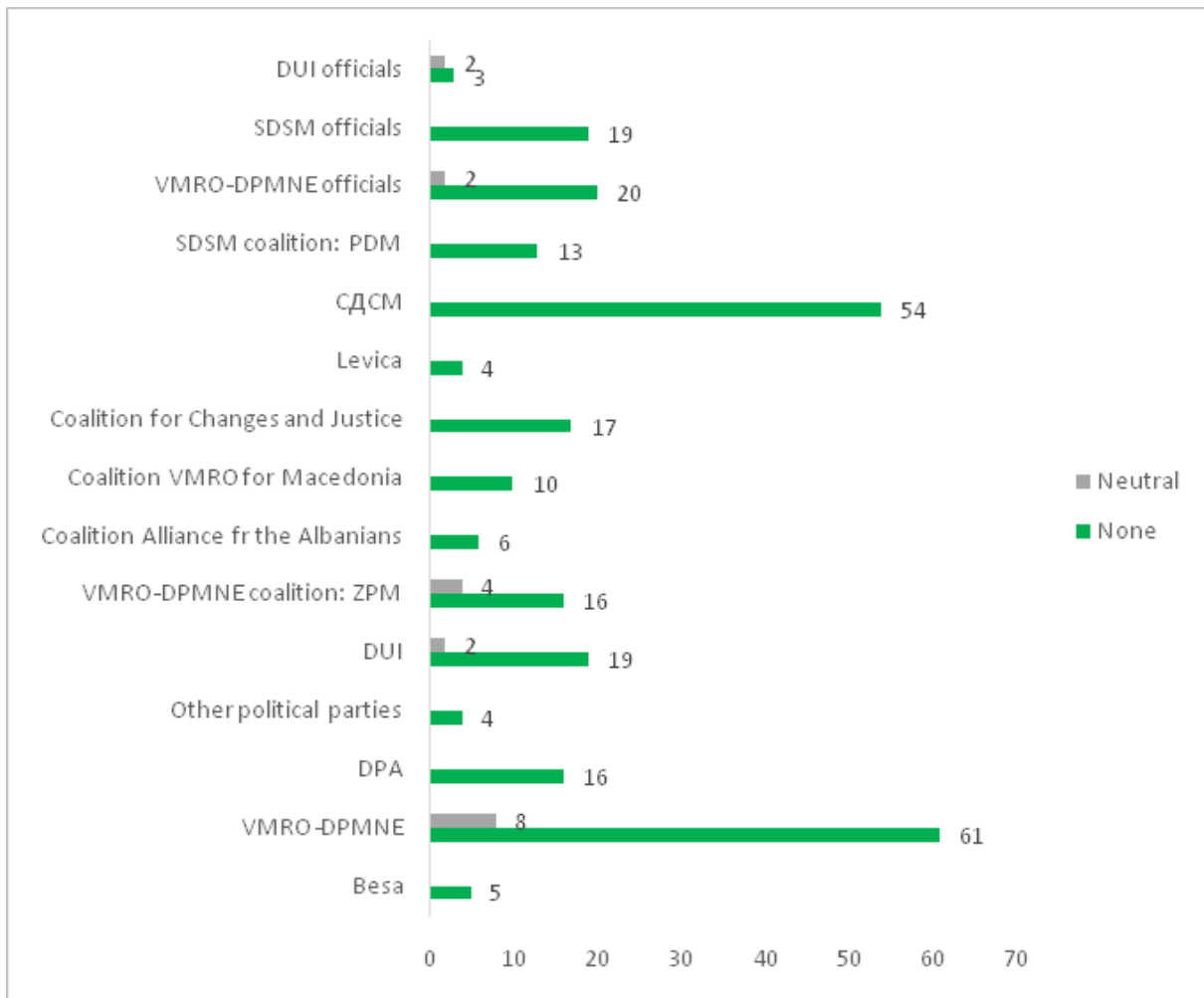
Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (voters' registry, issues with the number of voters, following up on potential irregularities, etc).
Topic 2	Pre-election campaigns of political parties (all activities including rallies, announcements for rallies, meetings with the people, promises, press releases, reactions, etc.).
Topic 3	Promotion of Government projects and measures
Topic 4	Other activities of Government officials (protocol meetings, statements and other regular activities)
Topic 5	The work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office
Topic 6	The work of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AAMS) and the Ad Hoc body
Topic 7	Regular operations of state institutions, courts, local self-government (reports in which the media do not report about political parties, rather they report of various public interest problems and issues)
Topic 8	State bilingualism and federalization
Topic 9	Public opinion polls
Topic 10	Other topics (celebrating Albanian Flag Day)

## 2. POLITICAL PLURALISM IN THE OVERALL REPORTING ON DOMESTIC EVENTS

If we are to analyse the quantity of information published about political entities in the context of all reports that refer to domestic events, a conclusion can be made that, in their news programme, the TV station has mainly reported the political standpoints and views of the two major political entities in the country. 111 reports about domestic events informed about VMRO-DPMNE, their coalition and Government officials, and 86 such reports informed about SDSM, their coalition and officials.

In most cases, the TV station merely conveyed the messages of political entities, without any journalist opinions. A neutrally-critical stand

was expressed in 17 instances overall, towards DUI officials (November 24: 'Apart from giving recommendations, the Ministry will not be able to undertake any measures for reducing air pollution'), towards VMRO-DPMNE (November 21: 'Public administration workers are faced once again with pressures and threats to attend political rallies of the Government', November 25: 'The scandalous thing is that while rushing to get to a rally, fellow party members left Sedat Asanovski's dead body by the road'), towards DUI (November 28: 'With nationalistic iconography and a song depicting Ali Ahmeti, Albanian Flag Day was celebrated'), i.e. towards entities that comprise parliamentary majority.



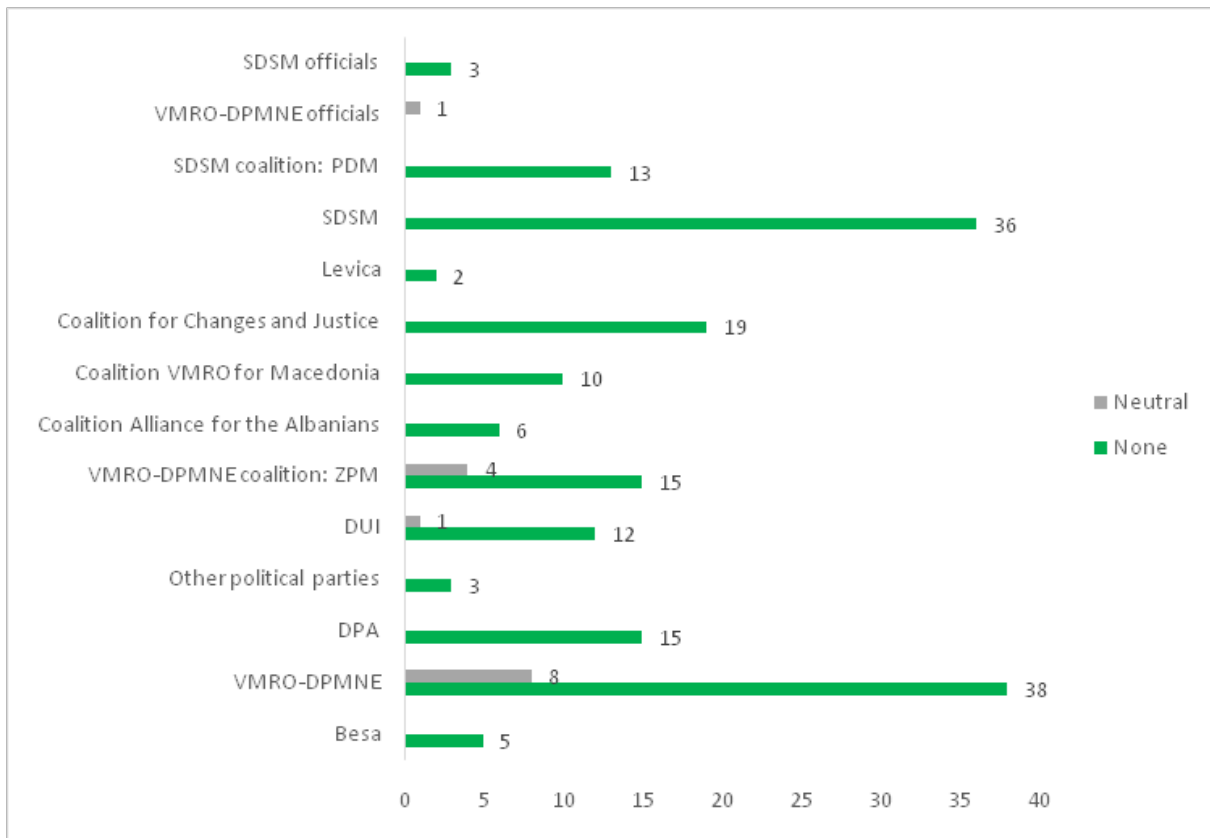
Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 21 - 29)

### 3. BALANCE IN REPORTING ON THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN OF POLITICAL ENTITIES

In a quantitative sense, TV 24 provided balanced coverage of the campaign of the two major political parties, at the same time publishing a certain (although significantly lower) number of reports about smaller political entities that participate in the campaign. Most of the reports referred to classic campaign reporting, by conveying key messages sent by the candidates and this was in single blocks covering several parties (November 26: The election campaign continues – the parties are presenting their political programmes at rallies), and in some cases there were separate reports (November 26: Gruevski from Rosoman: Another 600 million

euro for farmers, November 25: The Coalition for Change and Justice assures that they will provide a unitary state, etc.).

The TV station also took an analytical approach to reporting about the campaign, by comparing the programmes of the parties (November 21: What are the parties offering in their election programmes) or segments from them (November 23: Economy in the party programmes). A critical stand was observed towards the ruling coalition regarding the case of the deceased party follower which they themselves uncovered (November 26: The body was laid on the asphalt for three hours)



Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the reports on the pre-election campaign) and the manner in which they were framed (November 21 - 29)

### 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

Apart from conveying the statements from politicians from their public appearances in the campaign, the TV station also made special reports focusing on the topic of state bilingualism and its interpretation as an introduction to federalization, which was one of the main ele-

ments in the first nine days of the campaign. Nonetheless, when covering this topic, there were no instances of stands taken towards political entities, rather it showed opposing views on this issue (November 24: 'Federalization – fake or real topic?').