



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH

REPORT BASED ON THE MONITORING OF TV NEWS PROGRAMMES

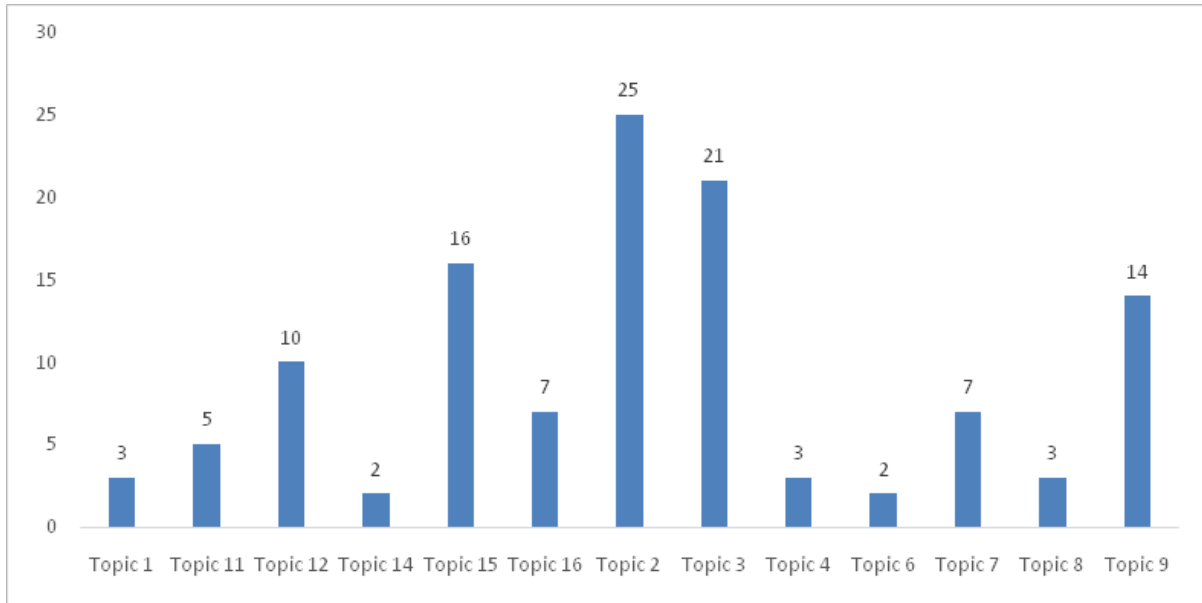


ALFA

1. COVERED TOPICS

During the monitored period, Alfa Television aired a total of 103 reports that refer to the state of politics in the country: Almost a quarter of them (25) referred to pre-election activities of political parties, and a large number of reports (21) were dedicated to promot-

ing Government projects and measures and the institutions. Significant attention was also paid to the 25th anniversary of independence, the economic state (the decline of unemployment, investment opportunities), the work of the SPPO (first charges and a retrospective)



Number of reports on TV Alfa, in relation to the different topics (September 5 – 9 and 11 – 16)

Topic 1	Organizing early parliamentary elections (preparation of the voters' registry, the issue with the exceedingly high number of voters in the sixth electoral unit, etc.)
Topic 2	Pre-election activities of political parties (all activities involving announcements, promises and reactions to them)
Topic 3	Promotion of Government projects and measures (the measures, most often in agriculture, were promoted by Government representatives from VMRO-DPMNE)
Topic 4	Government projects and measures that promote political parties and leaders
Topic 5	Pre-election promises of Government representatives
Topic 6	Other activities of Government representatives
Topic 7	The work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (including other topics related to SPPO, as waiting for the Constitutional Court to give a statement about its constitutionality)
Topic 8	Dealing with the consequences from the flooding in August (including Parliamentary sessions on this topic)
Topic 9	Marking 25 years since Macedonia declared independence (including the analytical stories about how much the country has progressed)
Topic 10	Honoring Mother Teresa
Topic 11	Zoran Zaev's announcement for expanded use of Albanian language
Topic 12	The state of the economy (state debt to the business sector, unemployment statistics, budget preparations)
Topic 13	Borrowing and public debt
Topic 14	The media and the work of the media
Topic 15	The work of the institutions
Topic 16	Other topics

and the proposal for expanding the use of Albanian language. Only three reports on the topic of the floods were aired, and none regarding public debt.

Two reports were also aired in which the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, announced new projects and extensions of old ones on behalf of the country, and in one he

was shown as a guest at a governmental event (book promotion, September 9).

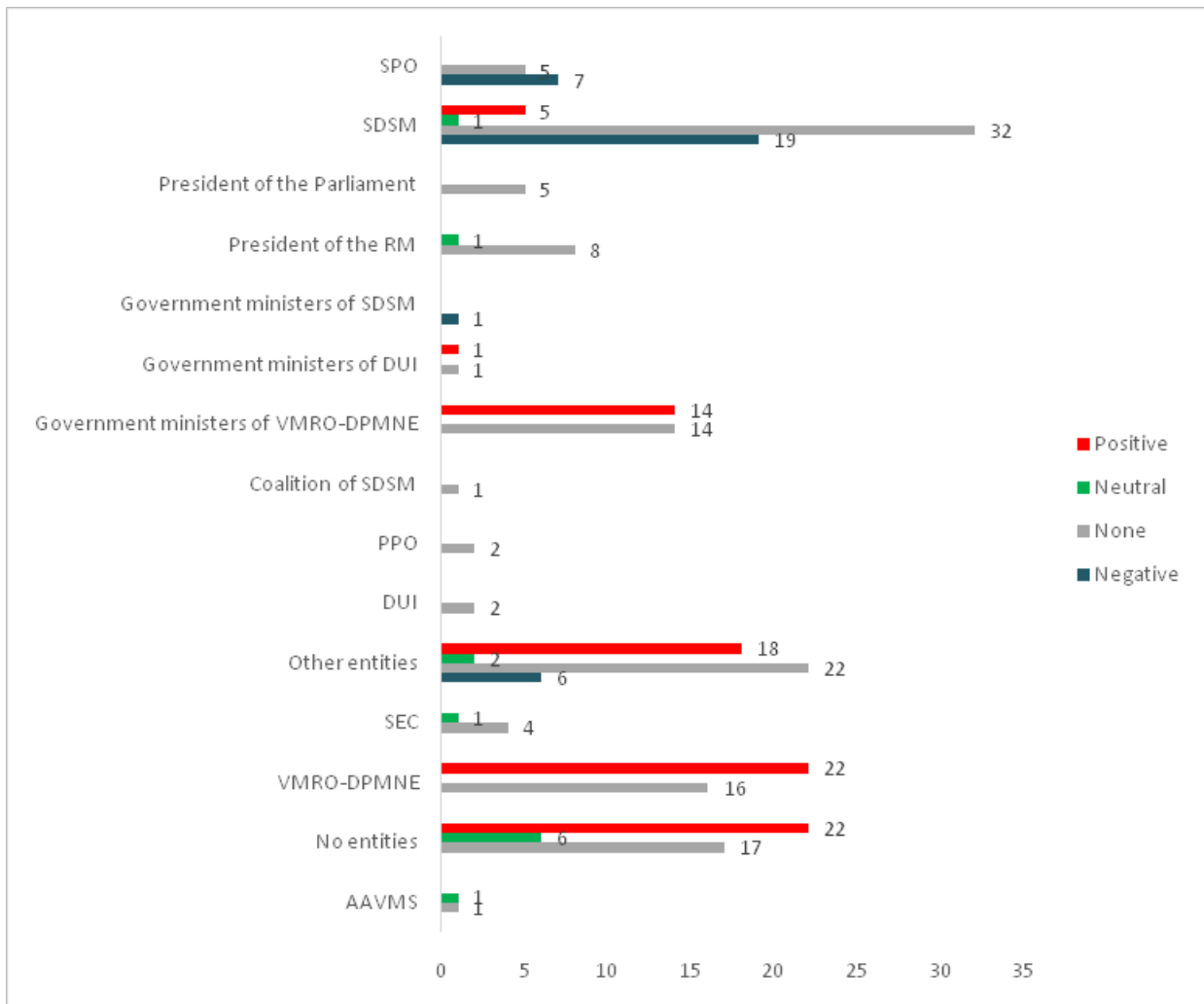
Alfa Television extensively followed the campaign activities of the parties, although the elections were not announced during the monitored period, and they had very few reports on the potential problems in organizing the elections, like for example the surplus voters in the sixth electoral unit.

2. POLITICAL ENTITIES

Although SDSM is convincingly the most represented political entity in the news (57 reports), the TV station often expressed an explicit negative attitude towards this party, conveying in full the accusatory statements from the political opponent (as far as Dime Spasov is concerned, Mila Carovska's party has created social poverty, September 12) or by inserting their own commentary elements (in a race to win votes, Zaev is prepared to expand

the use of Albanian language, September 14).

VMRO-DPMNE was represented with fewer reports (38), however with a visibly positive attitude (with 160,000 new employees we have reduced unemployment, said the leader Nikola Gruevski, September 9.) However, if we add to this number the reports in which the leading role is of the members of the Government from VMRO-DPMNE, also frequently positively assessed (promotions of new Government



Number of reports and manner of framing of political entities (September 5 - 9 and 11 - 16)

measures for farmers), there is no difference in the level of representation. Many refer to 'other entities' (48) or have no clear subject (45), and in half of them a positive attitude is expressed. It concerned an assessment of the work of state institutions (VAT returns paid regularly, September 5) or the general state of affairs (in 25 years Macedonia went from a crisis destination to a desired destination, September 8). A negative stand was also taken towards the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (a lot of hype and a parade, and not a single valid charge, September 14). The attitude towards this institution could also be seen in the line-up, the news of the first charges (September 15) was shown seventh in

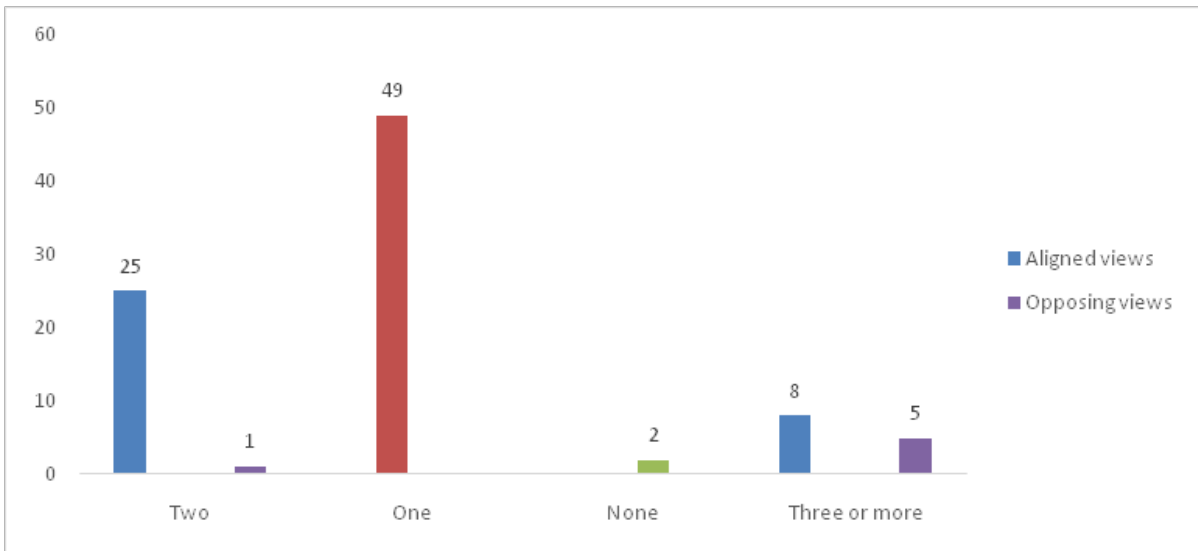
the journal, after the news about the growth of industrial turn-over, business opportunities for Macedonian companies, etc.

Although the positive or negative stand towards the entities was clear, its expression, in comparison with previous months, was with much lower intensity in terms of the vocabulary and audiovisual presentation. The TV station had a more analytical approach towards the measures proposed by Government ministers, providing a rationale as to how positive their effects would be, and the proposals of the opposition were conveyed in their original format, and with a reaction-comment from the institutions or from the ruling party.

3. USING SOURCES

Using one source was predominant in the reports (49 reports), rather than two (26) or more (13). In only six reports there were different or opposed viewpoints. The differing views were often presented in consecutive reports. The

TV station aired most of the addresses of the opposition's representatives, stating their reactions to the issues or pre-election promises, and immediately after they showed reactions from the ruling party or from state institutions.



Using sources in the news on Alfa (September 5 - 9 and 11 - 16)