



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



ALSAT M

ALBANIAN LANGUAGE

38

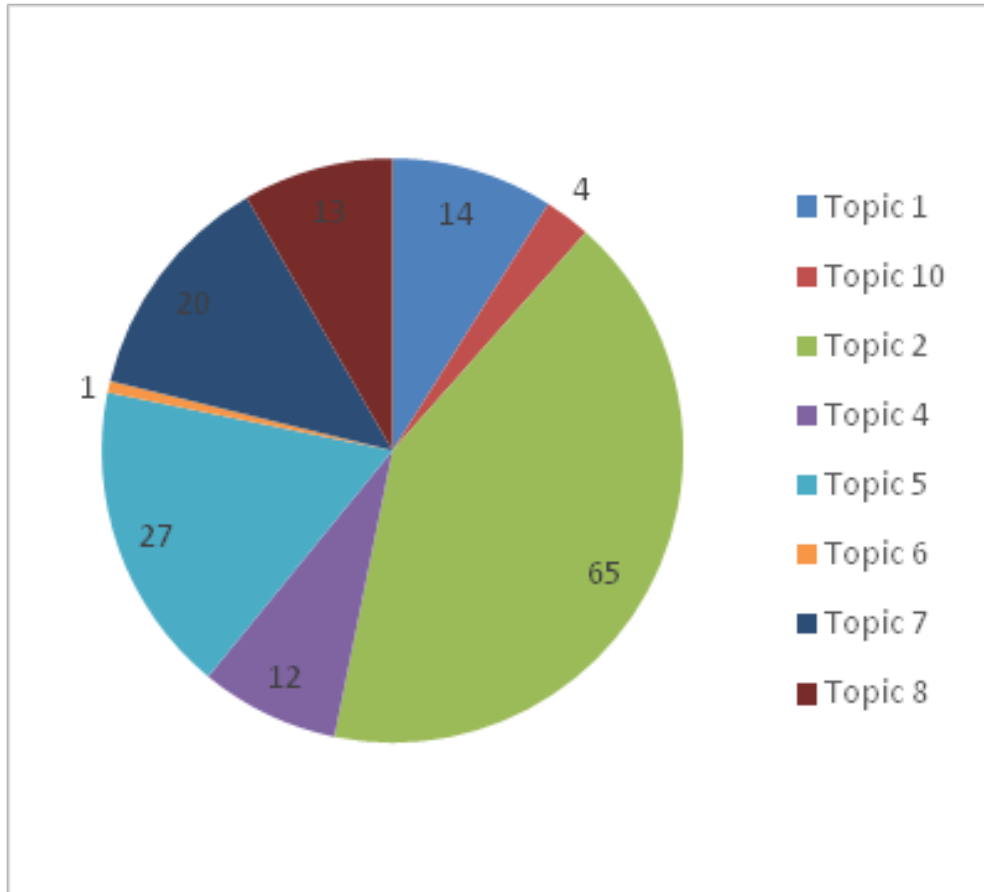
GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF ALSAT M (ALBANIAN LANGUAGE)

- During the monitored period, the news on Alsat M TV in Albanian and in Macedonian were identical for the most part, except in covering the election campaign, where the Albanian language news programme published more reports about the daily activities of the candidates. In their news programme in Albanian, the media outlet published a total of 15 reports, which referred to political actors, processes and situations in the country. 65 of them pertained to the pre-election campaign, 27 to the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, 20 to the regular work of state institutions, etc.
- The most commonly mentioned political entities in the news in Alsat M in Albanian, during this period, were VMRO-DPMNE with their coalition and officials (82), then followed SDSM with their coalition and officials (61) and DUI and their officials (56), and DPA were present in 25 reports. A neutrally-critical stand was most often expressed towards DUI and VMRO-DPMNE as public policy creators of many years.
- The election campaign, although it was represented in almost half of the reports, was not prevalent in the news in this media outlet, unlike others. The daily activities of candidates (rallies and meetings with the people) were shown near the end of the news, and in the rest of the space allotted for the campaign, the media outlet raised numerous topics, such as the quality of the campaign, how realistic the promises are, what parts of the programme are disputable, etc.
- These news also focused more attention, as compared to other media, on the work of SPPO and their cases, also by providing an analytical and not only an informative approach.

1. COVERED TOPICS

The TV station focused on a relatively low number of topics, the pre-election activities in the political parties' campaign, the work of SPPO, the work of the institutions, organizing the elections, regular activities of state officials and state bilingualism. They all featured an analytical approach with well-argued criticisms. Special focus was paid to the relationship of institutions with SPPO, which was

shown to be inappropriate and tendentious, then the claims from observers of the election process that pressure is put onto voters, the pollution and the lack of adequate measures (as part of the work of institutions and public officials), and state bilingualism which was portrayed, first and foremost, as a pre-election manipulation, as is suggested by Albanian parties.



Number of reports on Alsat M in Albanian, in relation to the different topics (November 21 - 29)

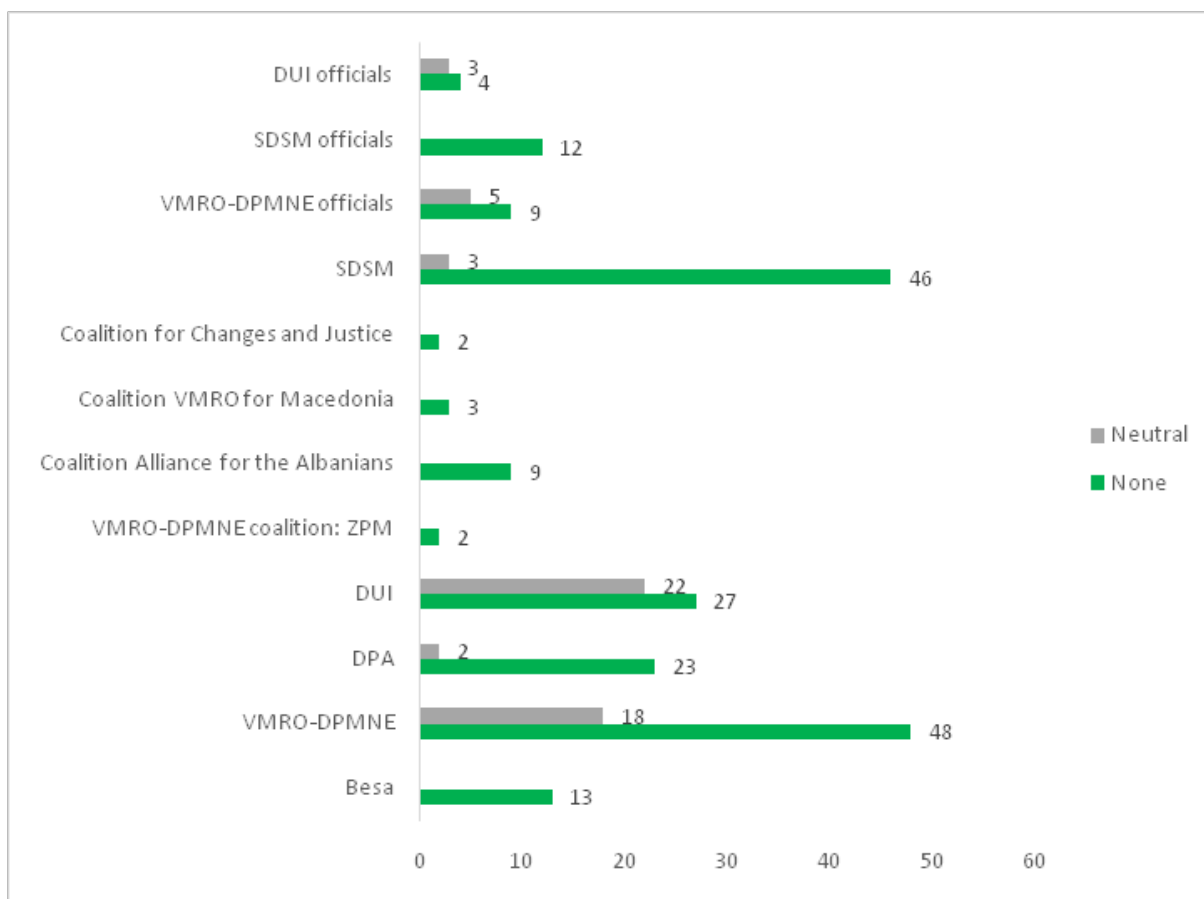
Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (voters' registry, issues with the number of voters, following up on potential irregularities, etc).
Topic 2	Pre-election campaigns of political parties (all activities including rallies, announcements for rallies, meetings with the people, promises, 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 information published about political entities in the light of all reports that refer to domestic events, it can be said that, in its news in Albanian, the TV station reported about VMRO-DPMNE, their coalition and officials in more reports (82) as compared to SDSM with their coalition and officials (61). They also dedicated much more reports to DUI (56) than to DPA (25).

However, if you analyse the approach to these political entities in a qualitative sense, the news in Albanian on Alsat M showed an expressive neutrally-critical attitude in 25 cases towards DUI (November 25: 'Ecology Minister Ahmeti does not join in the measures against pollutions') and in 23 cases towards VMRO-DPMNE

(November 22: 'The ruling party VMRO-DPMNE is ordering texts from lobbyists in foreign media, and are presenting them to the local public as the opinions of experts from those countries'), and in some of the cases towards both parties at the same time (November 25: 'This project has been presented for years in the pre-election campaigns of Ahmeti's and of Gruevski's party'). A critical stand was observed towards SDSM and DPA in reports that also include other political entities in the report (November 27: 'In the pre-election period, the parties are promising pension increases, although the state fund is swallowing up hundreds of millions of euros'; November 29: 'Albanian parties are promising consensus, are they willing to make it happen').

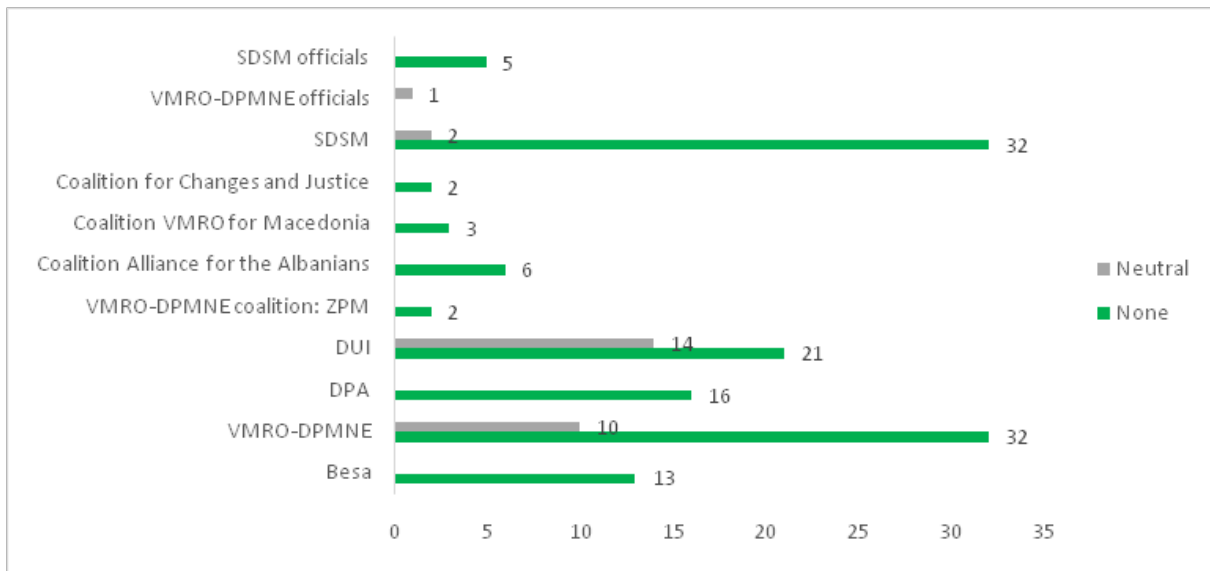


Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 21 - 29)

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

Alsats M in Albanian had a specific approach to covering the pre-election campaign – analytical as opposed to merely reporting packages were prevalent and there was no balance in terms of quantity in reporting on these topics. VMRO-DPMNE were presented in 31 reports, DUI in 24, SDSM in 14, DPA in 7 and all other participants at the elections in 9 reports. In this topic too, the strongest neutrally-critical stand was expressed towards DUI and VMRO-DPMNE (November 22: ‘VMRO and DUI are using nationalistic rhetoric in order to avoid suspicions about their crimes’, November 27: ‘VM-

RO-DPMNE and DUI are running the election race with some identical projects’, November 27: ‘DUI is promising tens of millions of euros in investments in Popova Shapka, however the party does not have an answer about the irregular systemization of workers’, etc.). There were no specifically intended criticisms towards other entities, only if they are covered in reports that report on a general critical stand towards all parties, for instance in reports that not a single party is offering solutions about pollution in the pre-election period (November 26: ‘Polluted air, the people demand a solution’)



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

In reports about state bilingualism as a separate topic brought about by the election campaign, Alsats M in Albanian once again focused most of their criticisms on DUI, by creating a frame that supports that the party is failing to implement legal solutions that guarantee state bilingualism (November 23: ‘Even after 15 years DUI are still promising Albanian language at all levels’) and towards VMRO-DPMNE (November 24: ‘Although having spoken in Albanian, Gruevski still finds state bilingualism to be a threat’).

The work of SPPO was one of the most common topics on the TV station and the obstructions that this institution faces in taking over cases were criticized (November 27: ‘Resistance from some institutions to hand over the case ‘Sopot’ to Katica Janeva only goes to show how much the state was involved in this and in other court cases, analysis of professor Biljali’), in implementing court procedures (November 28: ‘The court has requested that SPPO provide a license for the materials from the Counter-intelligence and Safety Administration’) and in other cases.



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



ALSAT M MACEDONIAN LANGUAGE

42

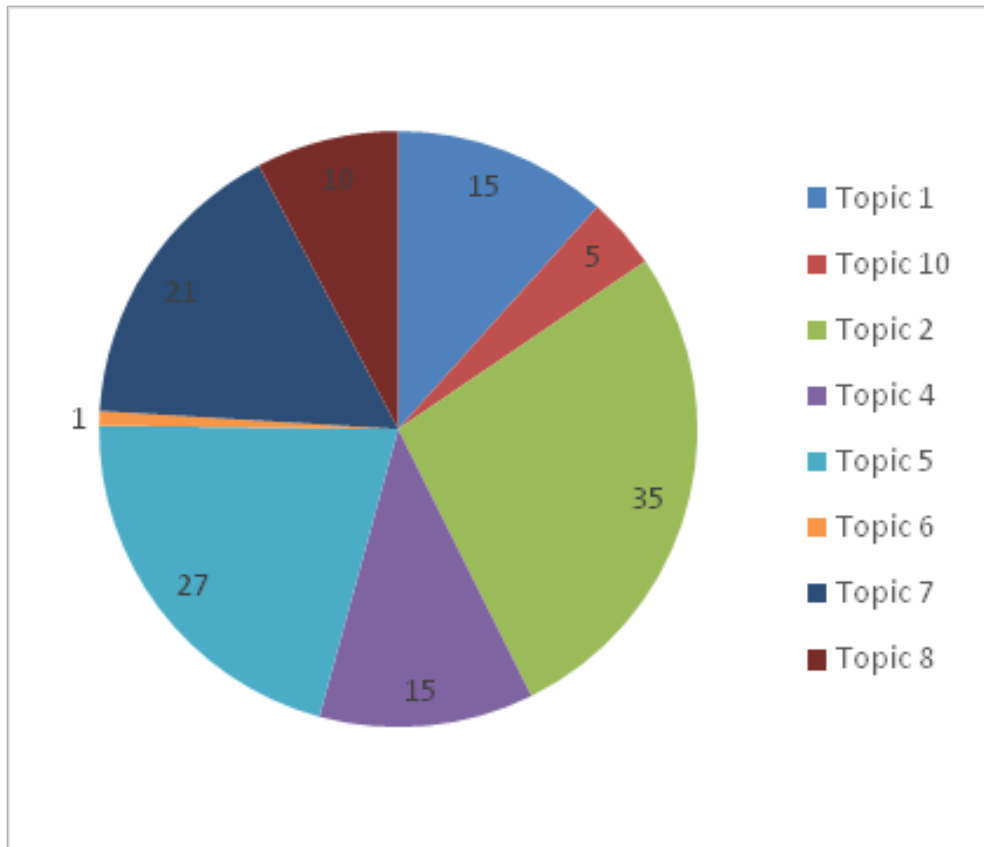
GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF ALSAT M (MACEDONIAN LANGUAGE)

- In their news in Macedonian, TV station Alsat M aired a total of 129 reports during the monitored period, which referred to political actors, processes and situations in the country. The most common topics were the election campaign (35 reports) and the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (27 reports), after then followed the work of state institutions (21).
- The most commonly mentioned political entities in the news of Alsat M in Macedonian, in this period, were the partners in the latest Government coalition (before the Technical Government), VMRO-DPMNE with their coalition and officials (67) and DUI with their officials (45), before SDSM with their coalition and officials (37), DPA (15) and other parties. A neutrally-critical stand was most often expressed towards DUI and VMRO-DPMNE as public policy creators of many years.
- In the news programmes in Macedonian on Alsat M, the activities of parties in the elections campaign, albeit as most commonly present topic, did not dominate the news. In the space allotted for the campaign, the media outlet did not focus only of communicating the activities of participants at the elections, rather it raised several topics, for instance about the quality of the campaign, how realistic the promises are, that parts of the programmes are disputable, etc.
- These news also focused more attention, as compared to other media, on the work of SPPO and their cases, also by providing an analytical and not only an informative approach

1. COVERED TOPICS

The TV station focused on a relatively low number of topics, the pre-election activities in the political parties' campaign, the work of SPPO, the work of the institutions, organizing the elections, regular activities of state officials and state bilingualism. They all featured an analytical approach with well-argued criticisms. Special focus was paid to the relationship of institutions

with SPPO, which was shown to be inappropriate and tendentious, then the claims from observers of the election process that pressure is put onto voters, the pollution and the lack of adequate measures (as part of the work of institutions and public officials), and state bilingualism portrayed, first and foremost, as a pre-election manipulation, as is suggested by Albanian parties.



Number of reports on Alsat M (Macedonian language), in relation to the different topics (November 21 - 29)

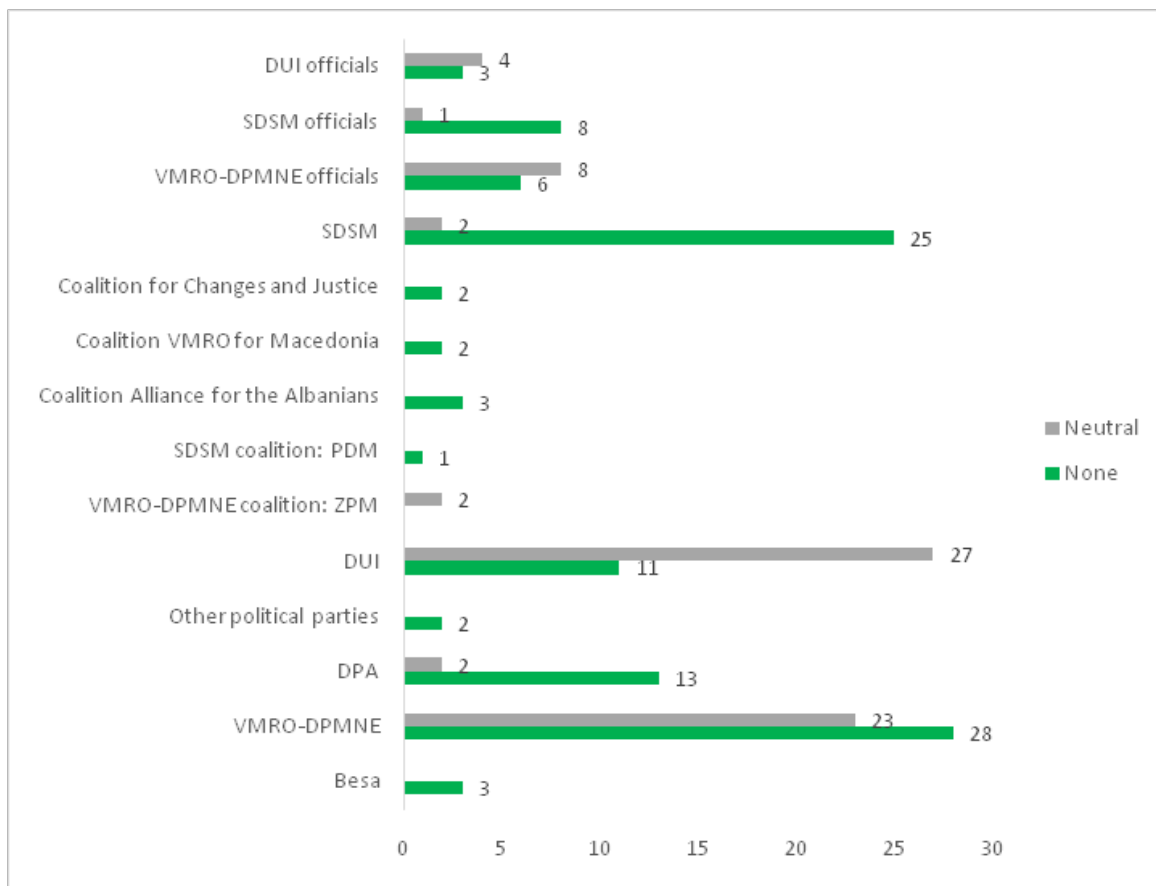
Topic 1	Organization of early parliamentary elections (voters' registry, issues with the number of voters, following up on potential irregularities, etc).
Topic 2	Pre-election campaigns of political parties (all activities including rallies, announcements for rallies, meetings with the people, promises, 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 information published about political entities in the light of all reports that refer to domestic events, it can be said that, in its news in Macedonian, the TV station focused more on VMRO-DPMNE and DUI and the parties in power. The coalition partners were mentioned 112 times in the reports, and their political competitors SDSM and DPA 52 times. These numbers include the mentions of coalitions and officials of these parties.

If you analyse the approach to these political entities in a qualitative sense, the news in Albanian on Alsat M showed an expressive neutrally-critical attitude in 31 cases towards DUI (November 25: 'Ecology Minister Ahmeti does not join in the measures against pollutions') and in 33 cases towards VMRO-DPMNE (No-

vember 22: 'The ruling party VMRO-DPMNE is ordering texts from lobbyists in foreign media, and are presenting them to the local public as the opinions of experts from those countries'), and in some of the cases towards both parties at the same time (November 25: 'This project has been presented for years in the pre-election campaigns of Ahmeti's and of Gruevski's party'). A critical stand was observed towards SDSM and DPA in two reports that also include other political entities in the report (November 27: 'In the pre-election period, the parties are promising pension increases, although the state fund is swallowing up hundreds of millions of euros'; November 29: 'Albanian parties are promising consensus, are they willing to make it happen').

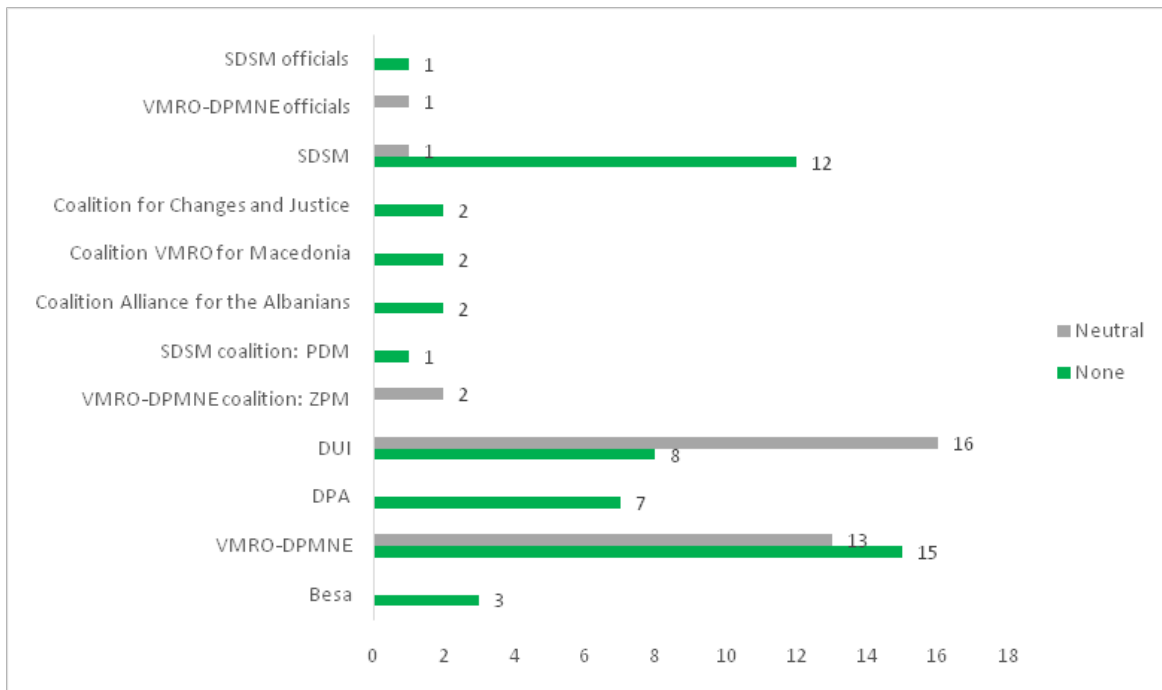


Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 21 - 29)

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

Alsat M in Macedonian had a specific approach to covering the pre-election campaign as compared to the other media – the specificity being that analytical and not merely reporting packages were prevalent in the news. Nonetheless, the news did not provide a quantitative balance in covering these topics. VMRO-DPMNE were presented in 31 reports, DUI in 24, SDSM in 14, DPA in 7 and all other participants at the elections in 9 reports. In this topic too, the strongest neutrally-critical stand was expressed towards DUI and VMRO-DPMNE (November 22: ‘VMRO and DUI are using nationalistic rhetoric in order to avoid suspicions about

their crimes’, November 27: ‘VMRO-DPMNE and DUI are running the election race with some identical projects’, November 27: ‘DUI is promising tens of millions of euros in investments in Popova Shapka, however the party does not have an answer about the irregular systemization of workers’, etc.). There were no specifically intended criticisms towards other entities, only if they are covered in reports that report on a general critical stand towards all parties, for instance in reports that not a single party is offering solutions about pollution in the pre-election period (November 26: ‘Polluted air, the people demand a solution’).



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

In reports about state bilingualism as a separate topic brought about by the election campaign, Alsat M in Albanian once again focused most of their criticisms towards DUI, by creating the frame to present that the party is failing to implement legal solutions that guarantee state bilingualism (November 23: ‘Even after 15 years DUI are still promising Albanian language at all levels’) and towards VMRO-DPMNE (November 24: ‘Although having spoken in Albanian, Gruevski still finds state bilingualism to be a threat’).

The work of SPPO was one of the most common topics on the TV station and the obstructions that this institution faces in taking over cases were criticized (November 27: ‘Resistance from some institutions to hand over the case ‘Sopot’ to Katica Janeva only goes to show how

much the state was involved in this and in other court cases, analysis of professor Biljali’), in implementing court procedures (November 29: ‘Experts are criticizing the decision of the court that the SPPO should ask for authorization from the Counter-intelligence and Safety Administration in order to confirm the charges. According to them the court is trying to conceal a crime of the secret police’) and in other cases.

In the period of the pre-election campaign, the TV station did not deviate from their standard editorial policy of critical observation of the work of state officials (November 29: ‘If trees had been planted around the ring road 8 years ago, there would not have been the erosion that caused the death of 20 persons) and the institutions (November 29: ‘The Ministry of Health remains silent on infant mortality’).