



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



MACEDONIAN TELEVISION FIRST SERVICE

6

GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF MACEDONIAN TELEVISION (FIRST SERVICE)

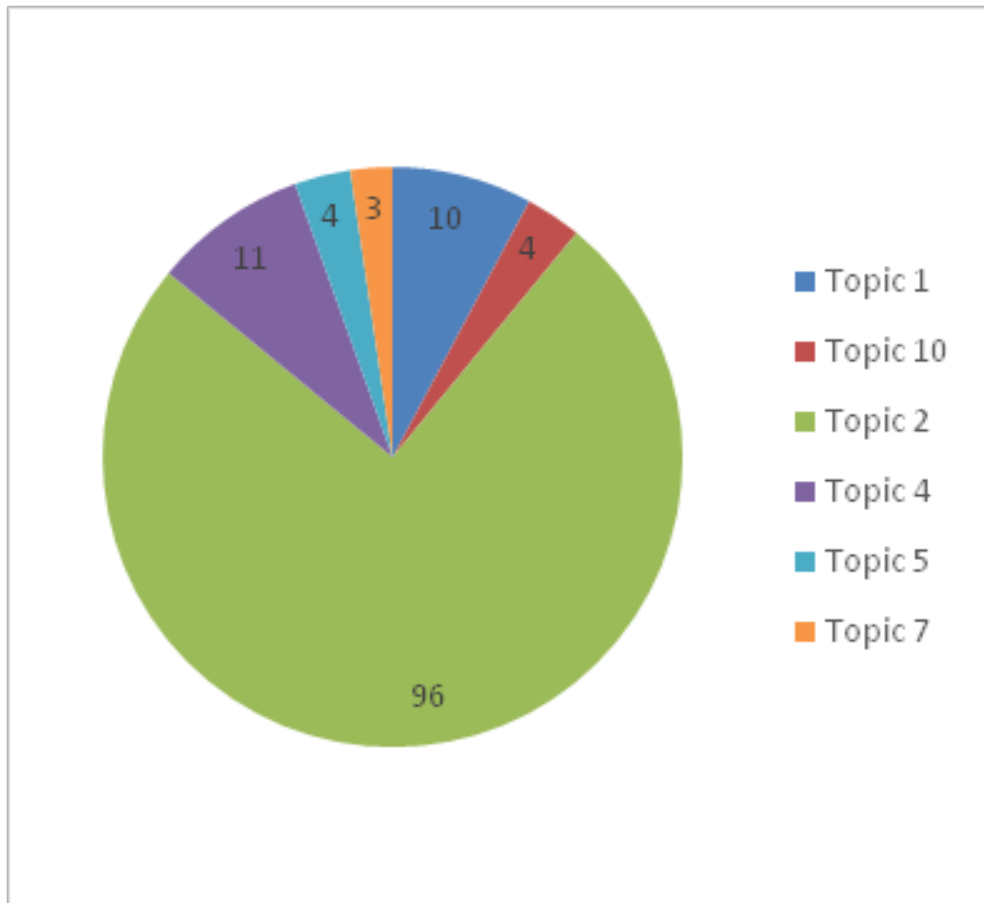
- On its first programme service, the Macedonian Television showed 128 reports about political actors, processes and situations in the country. Three quarters of them (96) were dedicated to covering the pre-election campaign, and as far as the others are concerned, the topics that stood out were the regular activities of state officials (11) and the organization of the elections (10).
- Most commonly mentioned in the news overall were SDSM (in 43 reports) then VMRO-DPMNE (42), and the least mentioned were the Coalition Alliance for Albanians (12), Besa (10), the Liberal Party (8) and PDP (2).
- Covering the election campaign was done solely by reporting about candidates' activities and without raising any specific topic. MTV1 published information about all 11 parties and coalitions that submitted lists of candidates for the parliamentary elections.

1. COVERED TOPICS

During the pre-election period, campaign reports completely dominated the news on the first channel of the national service. Without an analytical or critical approach, the news on MTV1 during the monitored period served as a platform for presenting the participants at the early elections.

Regarding the organization of the elections, the pleas from international representatives for fair and democratic elections were published,

as well as reports from the work of non-governmental observers and the announcement of the final version of the voters' registry. When it came to the regular activities of officials, reports were shown about the visit of President Gjorge Ivanov to Sofia, the Italian donation to the military museum which was received by Minister Zoran Jolevski, the dispute between Minister Frosina Remenski and the trade union, etc.



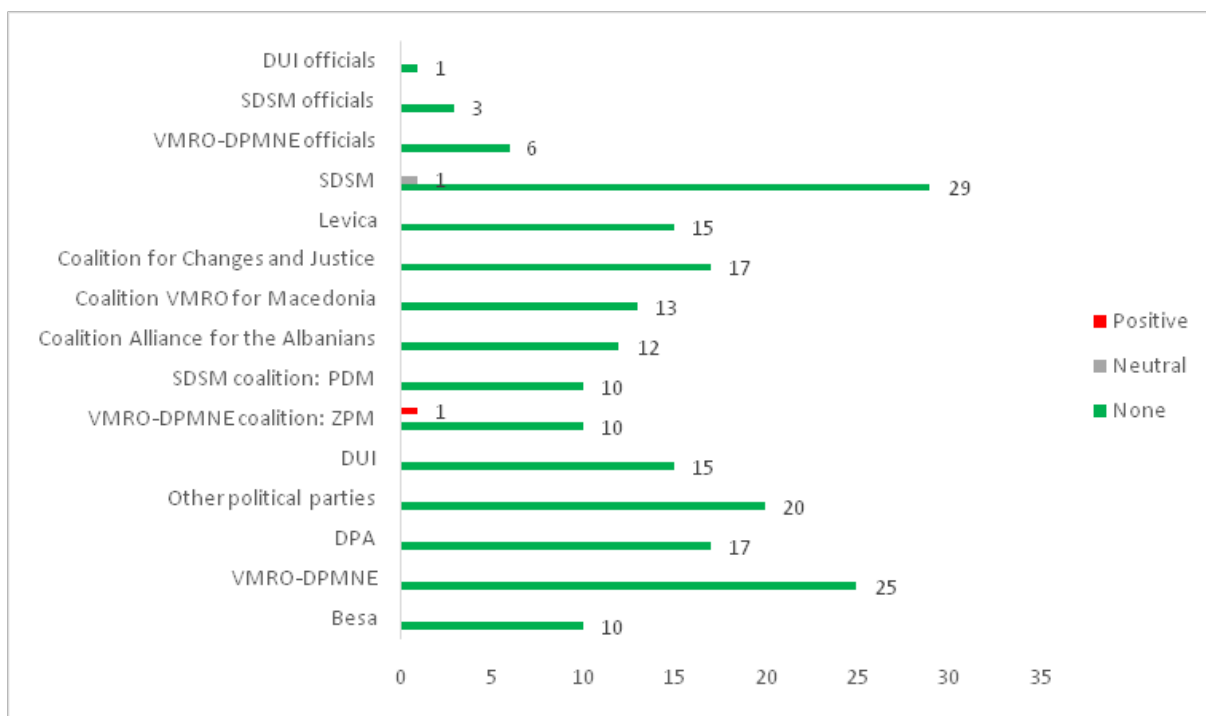
Number of reports on MTV1, in relation to the different topics (November 21 - 29)

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 analyse the number of published reports about political entities in the context of all reports referring to domestic events, it can be said that the public service has achieved an equality for all participants at the elections in terms of quantity. None of the actors was disregarded during the monitored period. Still, the ones that were most commonly present were the two major parties and their coalitions, VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, although reports were also shown about the smaller political entities, much more than on most of the private TV stations that broadcast nationally. In topics other than the campaign, the reports were mainly about VMRO-DPMNE, SDSM and DUI, or about other entities (such as institutions, NGOs, etc.), because smaller entities do not have their own officials.

On MTV1 there were only rare expressions of explicit attitudes towards a political entity, in one case a positive attitude was expressed towards VMRO-DPMNE, because a statement of Gruevski was non-critically conveyed on behalf of the Government (November 24: 'Nikola Gruevski said that the Government has made a decision to pay 20 thousand MKD to winegrowers who are cultivating half a hectare of land') and once there was a neutrally-critical stand towards SDSM for the attack of a crew from MTV at a rally of the party (November 25: 'We would like to mention that on several occasions since the beginning of the campaign, at rallies organized by SDSM at which our journalists and cameramen are subjected to inappropriate pressures and verbal provocations and they are prevented from doing their job').



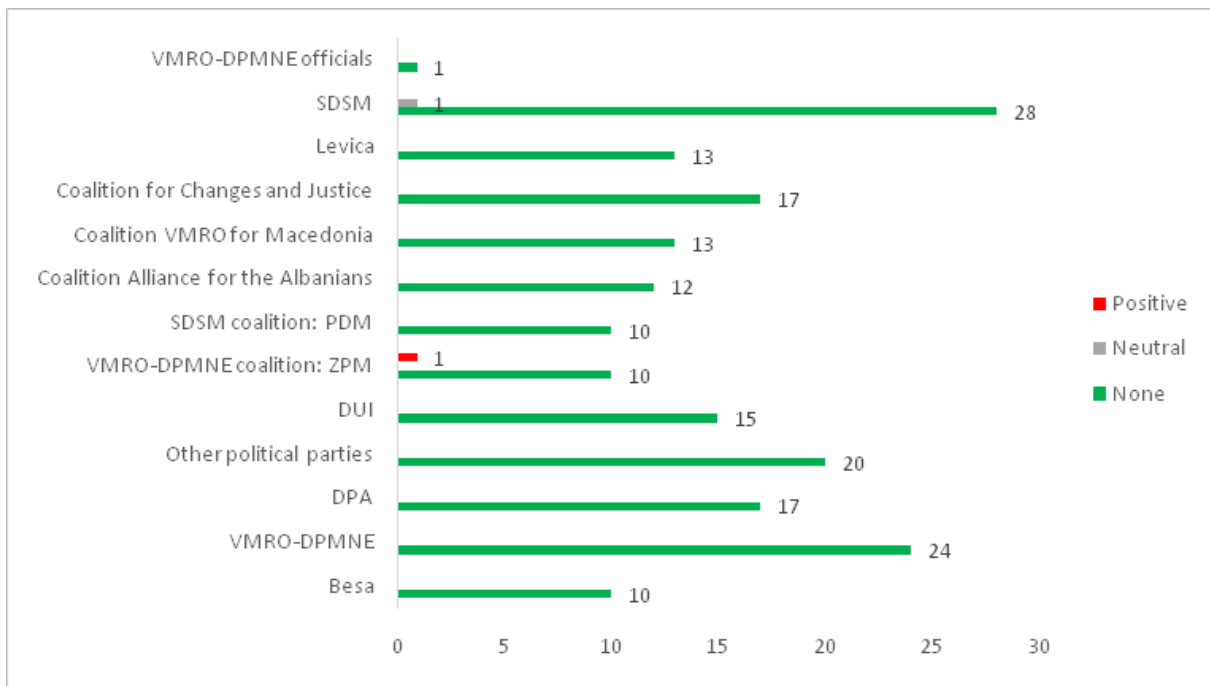
Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 21 - 29)

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

In reporting about the election campaign, most of the reports informed about SDSM's activities (39) and VMRO-DPMNE's activities (35), however the difference between them and the other participants at the elections was significantly smaller in comparison to the private media. The third most common subjects were the Coalition for Changes and Justice and DPA with information in 17 reports, DUI with 15, Levisa and the Coalition 'VMRO for Macedonia', 13 each.

The balanced approach of the public broadcasting service was not only reflected in the number of reports published about the different candidate lists, but also in the varying line-up in air time. The block of reports from the campaign started with different political parties, not only with VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, and more often the reports about them followed those about smaller parties, such as LP, Levisa, DPA, etc.

The reporting was informative, without going more in-depth in the campaign or the topics that arose from it.



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

The Macedonian Radio Television did not raise a single characteristic topic from the campaign or from other events during the period of monitoring. The attitudes of political parties

regarding state bilingualism and federalization, as a topic that came as a result from the campaign, were communicated in reports from the rallies and from meetings with the people.