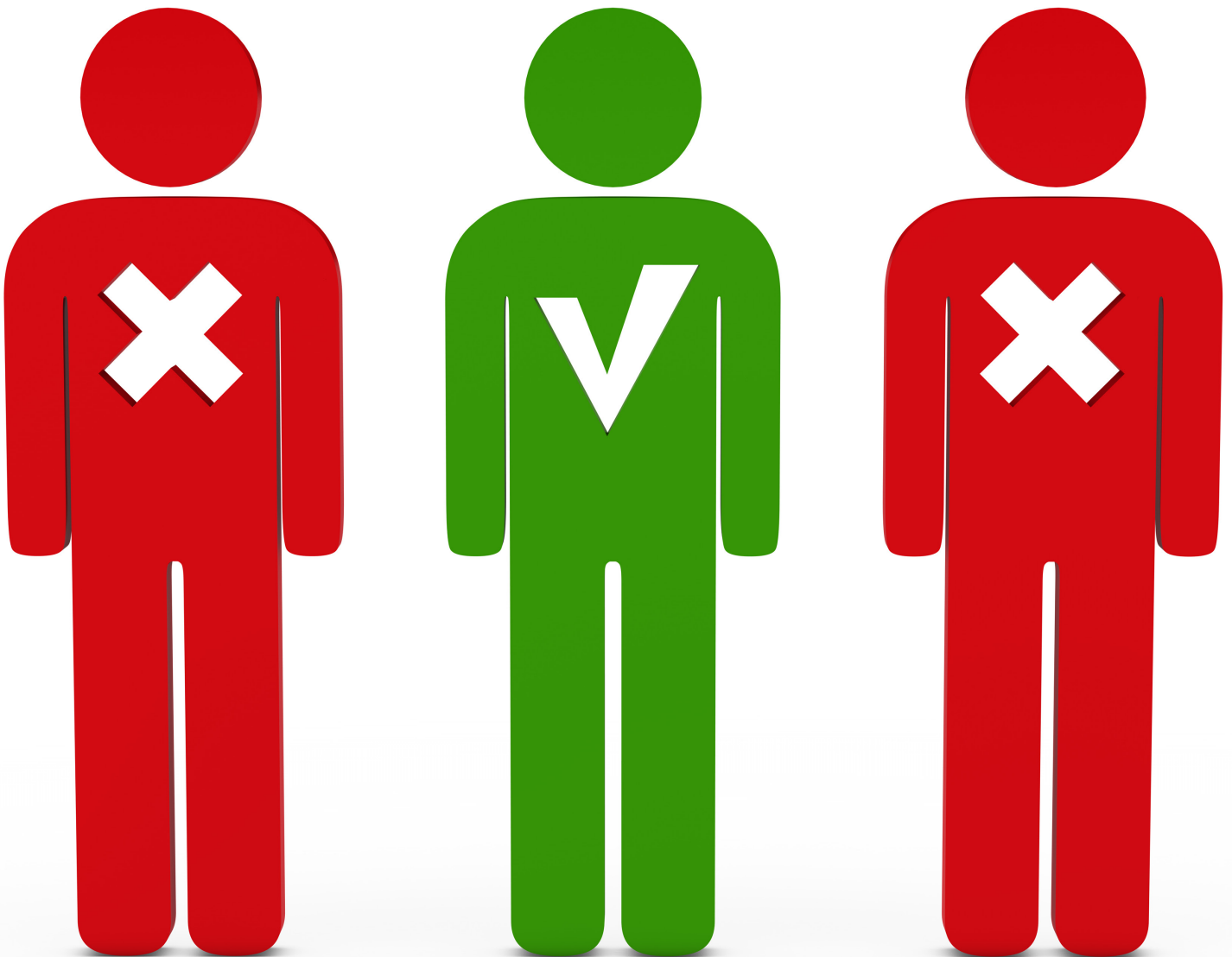


# REPORT

**BASED ON THE MONITORING OF ELECTION  
CAMPAIGN COVERAGE IN TV NEWS**

**INSTITUTE OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES**



**TIME FRAME: 30<sup>TH</sup> – DECEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2016**



# GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- During the monitoring period, from November 30 to December 9, most of the TV stations covered the pre-election activities of the parties' with increased: MTV1 125, MTV2 - 80, Sitel 75, Telma 56, 24 Vesti 67, Alsat M in Macedonian - 16 and in Albanian - 72, TV 21 in Macedonian - 91 and in Albanian - 85, Kanal 5 - 96, Alfa - 69, and TV Nova - 62 reports.
- Both channels of the public service covered the campaign of the most entities. Regarding the organization of the elections, reports were shown that presented financial reports of the parties; conveyed the official standpoints of the institutions and of the international representatives, and there were fewer reports about potential irregularities. TV stations Sitel, Kanal

- 5, Alfa and TV Nova continued with the numerous reports on the topic of ‘state bilingualism’, and with some of them this topic was the dominant topic of the news (Sitel – on December 5, published as many as five reports on this topic). All of these TV stations framed the topic in a similar way, as an introduction to the play-out of some sort of scenario for federalization of the country, led by the opposition.
- Regarding other topics, during this period, there were more frequent reports about the measures and accomplishments of the Government, especially on the following four TV stations Sitel (20), Kanal 5 (16), Alfa (25) and TV Nova (3). In this process, VMRO-DPMNE and their leader were mostly favoured, especially in the reports on foreign investment, the source of which was the Facebook profile of VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski.
  - When it came to media such as TV 24, Alsat M, Telma and TV 21, there was much more intense coverage of topics related to the organization and preparation of the elections: abuse of official position and of state resources, irregularities, financing of campaigns (24 Vesti, Alsat M), the activities of the civil sector, the events surrounding trade union organizations and the judiciary system, the work of SPPO (Telma), as well as the regular work of the institutions, mostly the courts (TV 21).
  - In this part of the pre-election campaign too, the public broadcasting service was the only media outlet that covered the activities of all political parties that participated in the elections, simply by reporting about the activities and the messages of candidates and no specific topics were raised. MTV 2 in its news in Albanian provided relative balance in representing the political messages of the parties from the Albanian and from the Macedonian political block, for the parties that are in Government and the oppositional political parties, by focusing on issues that are of interest for the Albanian ethnic community.
  - Sitel, Kanal 5, Alfa and TV Nova provided a balance in quantity, however in view of the approach they provided non-critical reporting: positive for VMRO-DPMNE, the coalition and the officials and a negative stand towards SDSM.
  - Telma and TV 24 Vesti attempted to provide a balanced reflection of the realistic political diversity, which was evident in terms of the quantity and the quality of the reporting, through an analytical approach. When reporting about party programmes, TV 21 (in Macedonian and in Albanian) allocated most of their air time to the three parties (VMRO-DPMNE, DUI and SDSM), their coalitions and their officials, reporters from the rallies, and analytical approaches were provided not as often. Alsat M provided the least reports about the daily activities of the candidates (rallies and meetings with the people), towards the end of the news, and in the time they allotted for the campaign, the media outlet analyzed specific aspects of it.
  - State bilingualism and federalization were once again the most common topic for negative framing of the party SDSM. Most of these reports were published by Sitel (19), most of which were editorial comment (every day from December 2 to December 5), then there were claims from experts, citizens and foreign representatives (December 9, three comments), ‘Statements such as this one are the reason why many analysts in the last few days have warned that Macedonia is threatened by federalization and redefining of the state’. Alfa and TV Nova reported with a negative rhetoric towards SDSM and their leader Zaev (Alfa, December 4: ‘Experts warn that by insisting on this concept, SDSM leader Zaev, on the topic of state bilingualism and cantonization, can cause new disturbances and conflicts in the country’, TV Nova, December 6, ‘Vast majority of Macedonians are against state bilingualism’.
  - Kanal 5, besides negatively framing SDSM, this time also published reports that were positive for VMRO-DPMNE, i.e. they were construed in a way in which they led to a conclusion that federalization can be avoided by following the call of leader Gruevski for his party to get 63 MP positions (December 2: ‘Experts fear that the announcements for potential wide coalitions after the elections bring about the danger of redefining the country and changes of the Constitution, which may be prevented only if the party currently in power wins 63 MP positions’).
  - TV 24 Vesti touched upon this topic indirectly, although in a different context (December 6: ‘Civil Macedonia placed before an ethnic test’). TV 21 (in Macedonian and in Albanian) showed only one report from a pre-election appearance of a political party, however without giving a journalistic opinion. Alsat M and Telma paid no notice to the topic.





# **ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL TV STATIONS**



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



# MACEDONIAN TELEVISION FIRST SERVICE

6

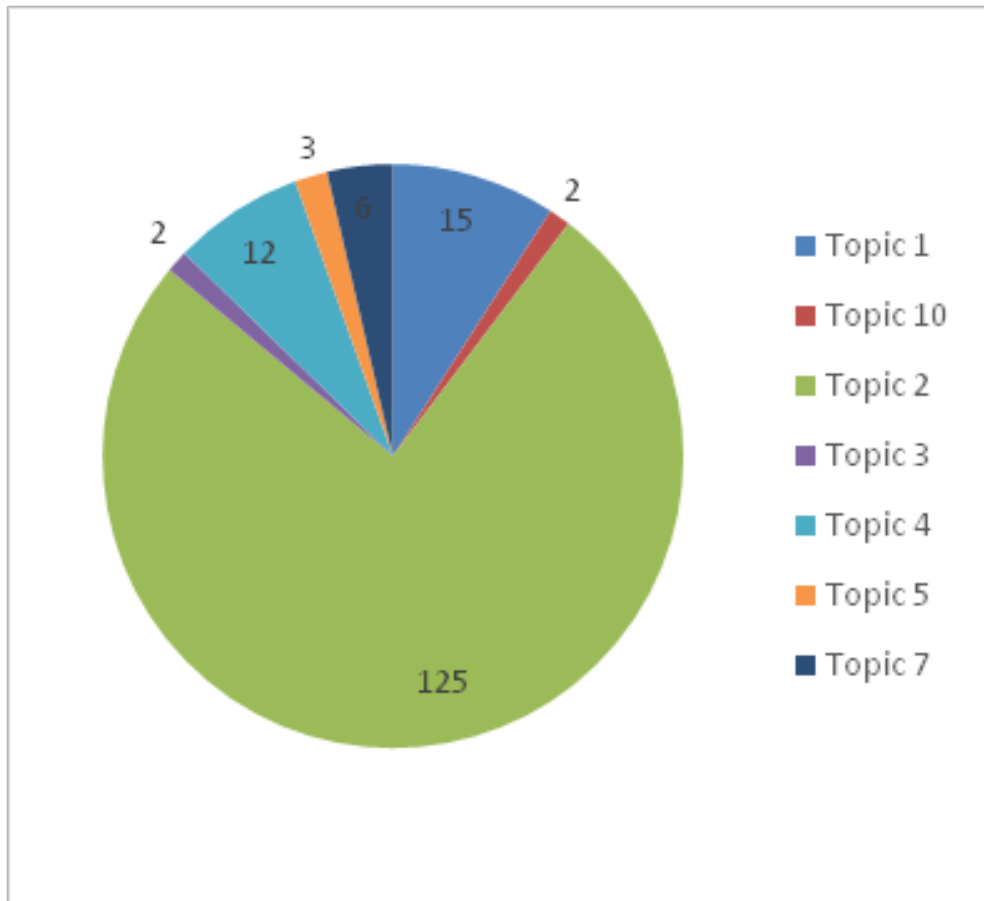
## GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF MACEDONIAN TELEVISION (FIRST SERVICE)

- On its first programme service, the Macedonian Television showed 165 reports about political actors, processes and situations in the country. Over three quarters of them (125) were dedicated to covering the pre-election campaign, and as far as the others are concerned, the topics that stood out were the organizational aspects of the elections (15) and the regular activities of state officials (12).
- Overall, the most mentioned political party in the news was SDSM (57 times) and VMRO-DPMNE (56), and the least were Levica, the Liberal Party and PDP. There were no news reports on MTV 1 shown during the reporting period where an explicit attitude was expressed (be it positive, negative or neutrally-critical) towards any political entity.
- In this part of the pre-election campaign, the public broadcasting service was the only media to cover the activities of all political parties that ran in the elections in their central news programme. Covering the election campaign was done solely by reporting about candidates' activities and without raising any specific topic.

# 1. COVERED TOPICS

During the second part of the pre-election period, campaign reports continued to dominate the news on the first channel of the national service. Without an analytical or critical approach, the news on MTV1 during the monitored period once again served as a platform for presenting the participants at the early elections. Regard-

ing the organization of the elections, information was aired about the financial reports of the parties, the activities of the State Electoral Commission, and less often information related to potential abuses. In the reporting of the work of state officials, most common were the news about the activities of President Gjorge Ivanov.



**Number of reports on MTV1, in relation to the different topics (November 30 – December 9)**

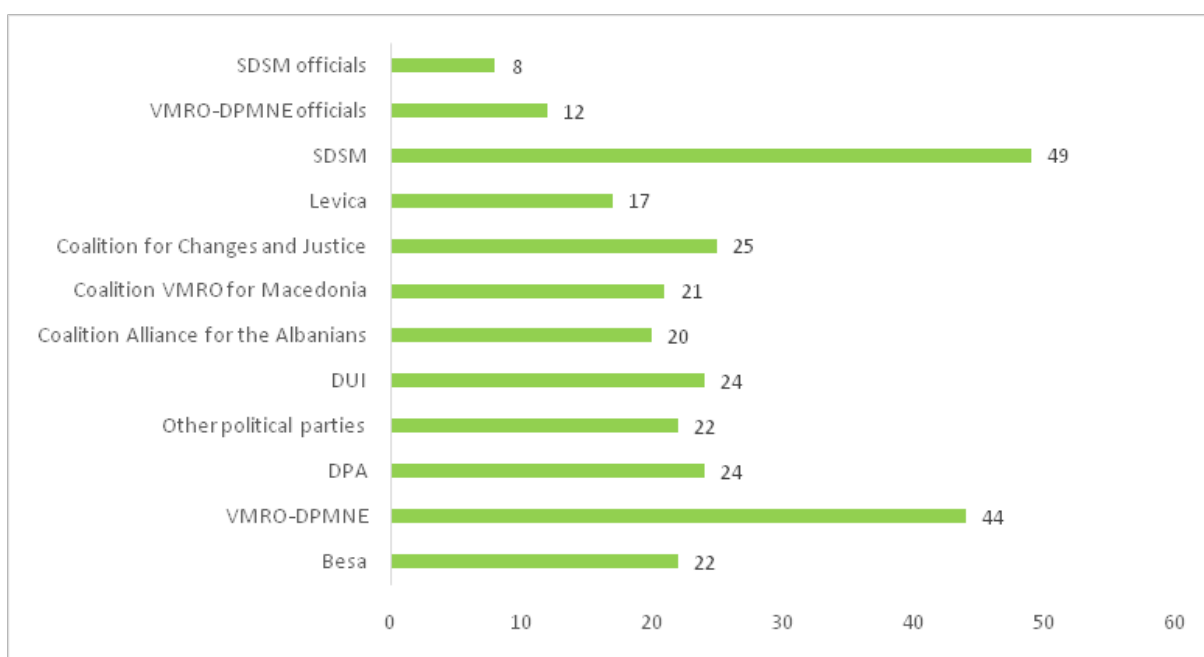
|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Topic 1  | Organization of the early parliamentary elections (voters' registry, issues with the number of voters, monitoring potential irregularities, etc.).  |
| Topic 2  | Pre-election activities of political parties (all activities involving rallies, meetings with the people, promises, announcements, reactions, etc.).  |
| Topic 3  | Promotion of Government projects and measures   |
| Topic 4  | Other activities of Government officials (protocol meetings, statements, etc. 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 (the celebration of the Day of the Albanian Flag)  |

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

If we are to analyse the number of reports shared about political entities, in relation to all of the reports pertaining to domestic events, it can be said that the national TV station provides the widest information space for all political entities. In the second half of the campaign too, no entities were ignored. Once again, 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. In

topics other than the campaign, the reports were mainly about VMRO-DPMNE, SDSM and DUI, or about non-political entities (such as institutions, NGOs, etc.), because smaller entities do not have their own Government officials.

There were no reports that contained an expression of an explicit opinion from the media outlet for any political entity. Having in mind that the TV station did not go into depth on any topic, rather they merely conveyed daily events; the reports did not provide any space for expressing such attitudes.



Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 - December 9)

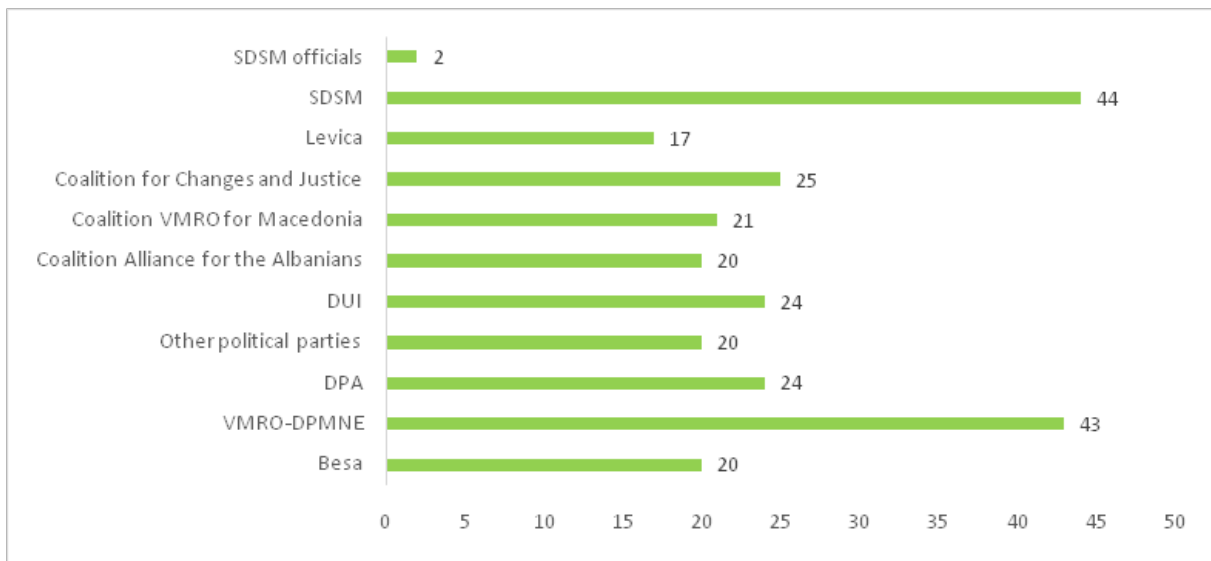


### 3. BALANCE IN REPORTING ON THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN OF POLITICAL ENTITIES

In reporting about the election campaign, most of the reports informed about SDSM's activities (46) and VMRO-DPMNE's activities (43), however the difference between them and the other participants at the elections was significantly smaller in comparison to private media. The third entity in terms of representation was the Coalition for Changes and Justice, with 25 appearances and DPA and DUI, with 24 each. Least mention was given to the Liberal Party (12) and PDP (6).

The varied order of airing the reports about the activities of the participants at the elections continued to be a method for achieving a balanced approach of the public broadcasting service towards different political entities. There was not one party that had a guaranteed 'first slot' in the block of pre-election reports, and the reports about the major parties such as VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM were often presented after the smaller ones, such as Levica, LP, PDP and others.

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 30 – December 9)

### 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

Just as in the first half of the campaign, 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 regard-

ing 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.



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



# MACEDONIAN TELEVISION SECOND SERVICE

10

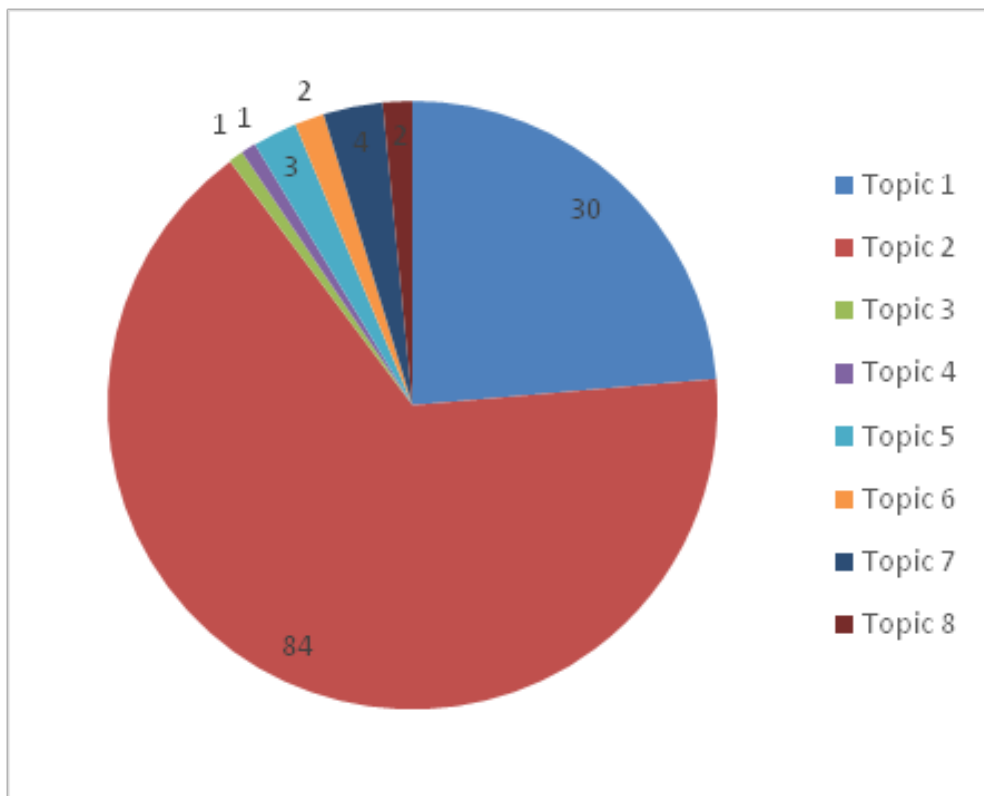
## GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF MTV2

- The second service of the Macedonian Television, in the news in Albanian, published a total of 127 reports during the monitored period, about political entities' pre-election campaign activities and other political events and actors. Most of the reports (80) were about pre-election activities of the parties, then followed the reports related to the organization of the elections (30), the regular work of state and local institutions (4), the work of SPPO (3), the work of the Ad Hoc body (2), one report about Government measures and one about the regular work of the officials.
- Overall, during the analyzed period, the news showed reports about various political entities, both from the government and the opposition, with an emphasis on issues that concern the Albanian ethnic community.
- While monitoring the campaign, MTV 2 in its news in Albanian provided relative balance in representing the political messages of the parties from the Albanian and from the Macedonian political block, for the parties that are in Government and the oppositional political parties. The reporting came down to conveying the points from the presentations of party representatives, with a focus on the issues that are of interest to the Albanian ethnic community.

# 1. COVERED TOPICS

Although the reports about the election campaign were most frequent, the second programme service, in its news in Albanian, reported about other events too, in fewer reports as the campaign came to a finish. The reporting about the campaign came down to conveying the messages from political representatives, without the use of any journalistic assessment. The reports about the preparation of the elections were dedicated to com-

municating the official standpoints of public institutions (SEC, Anticorruption Commission), the comments of NGOs and international organizations (CIVIL, IRI) and of the international representatives (embassies). When speaking about other topics, in the little remaining space the topics that were presented were the assessment of the Ad Hoc body on media monitoring during the pre-election period and the work of SPPO.



**Number of reports on MTV2, in relation to the different topics (November 30 – December 9)**

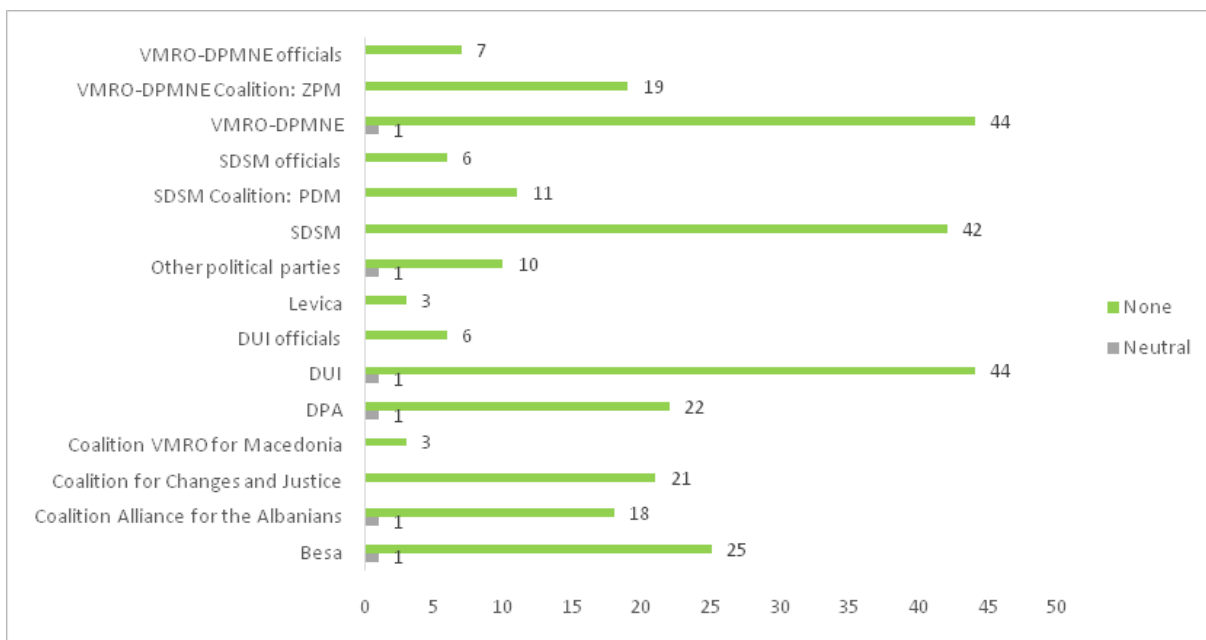
|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Topic 1  | Organization of the early parliamentary elections (voters' registry, issues with the number of voters, monitoring potential irregularities, etc.).  |
| Topic 2  | Pre-election activities of political parties (all activities involving rallies, meetings with the people, promises, announcements, reactions, etc.).  |
| Topic 3  | Promotion of Government projects and measures   |
| Topic 4  | Other activities of Government officials (protocol meetings, statements, etc. 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 (the celebration of the Day of the Albanian Flag)  |



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

During the ten days that were analysed, 287 reports were shown on various political entities, and the most numerous ones are the reports about the two parties that comprise the Government (along with their coalitions and officials): VMRO-DPMNE (71) and DUI (51), and then SDSM with the coalition and the officials (59). About other political entities from the Albanian political block, they broadcast a total of 68 reports, as follows: about Besa (26), about DPA (23) and about the Alliance of the Albanians (19). Reports were also shown concerning the smaller political entities from the Macedonian block: The Coalition for Changes and Justice (21),

Levica and the Coalition VMRO for Macedonia, with 3 appearances and 11 reports about other political parties. This leads to the conclusion that the news programme in Albanian was accessible for a large number of political entities, and the strongest emphasis is placed on the issues that concern the Albanian ethnic community. In terms of the approach, the reporting was stereotypical, without any engagement on part of the journalists (in 6 reports there was a neutral approach: 5.12. 'Agreement for protection of the environment. Only the Albanian opposition is a signatory') and without raising any topics that are of civil (public) interest.

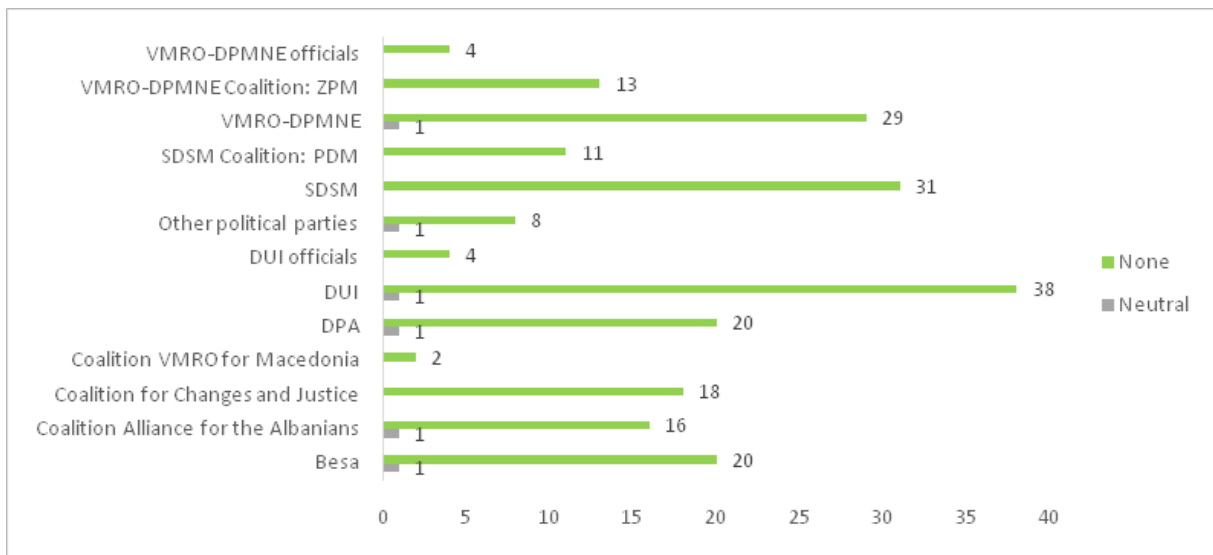


Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 - December 9)

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

In terms of quantity, the public service in the news in Albanian provided a relative balance in presenting the parties from the Albanian and from the Macedonian political block. For instance, 41 reports that were shown were about DUI and their officials, while 59 reports total that were shown were about all oppositional parties from the Albanian block. Besa and DPA had 21 appearances each, and the Alliance of Albanians had 17. As far as the Macedonian block is con-

cerned: 47 reports were about VMRO-DPMNE, the coalition and their officials, 42 were about SDSM with their coalition and officials, while a total of 29 reports were about the other smaller oppositional parties: 18 of which were about the Coalition for Changes and Justice, 2 for VMRO for Macedonia and 9 reports discussed other political parties. The characteristic simple conveyance of the political messages of the parties remained, with a focus on ethnic issues.



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 30 – December 9)

### 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

The second service of the Macedonian Radio Television in its news in Albanian did not raise any specific topic from the campaign or from other events. What was mentioned in the

first part of the campaign, although it was only mentioned as part of the pre-election activities – state bilingualism and federalization, was completely absent this time.



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



## SITEL

14

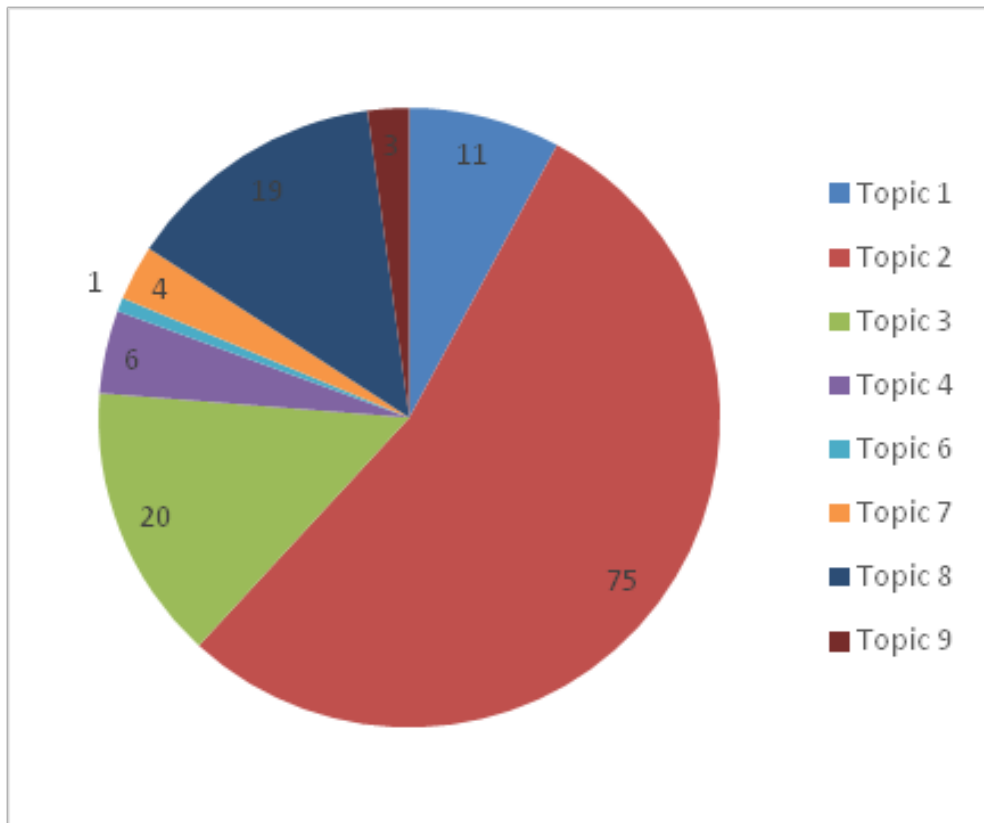
### GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF SITEL

- During the analysed period, Sitel published a total of 139 reports in its central journal that were related to topics of current political events. The pre-election campaign, covered in 75 reports, was the main topic of the news on this TV station, after which came the promotional reports about Government measures (20), then state bilingualism and federalization (19), the preparation of the elections and the comments about irregularities in the voters' registry (11), the regular work of officials in state and local institutions (6), the regular work of the institutions (4), 3 reports about gauging public opinion in the pre-election period and one report dedicated to the Ad Hoc body for media monitoring.
- The focus of reporting was directed to the two major political parties, their officials and the coalitions they lead, smaller entities had very little space left for them in the news.
- Quantity wise, Sitel published slightly more reports in which the subject is VMRO-DPMNE, the coalition and their officials (132), unlike the ones about SDSM, the oppositional coalition and their officials (125).
- The reports about the Government (VMRO DPMNE, the officials and the coalition) were favourable and supportive, while the ones about the opposition (SDSM and their officials) were demonizing. The TV station took a negative stand while reporting about the work of the Ad Hoc body for monitoring the elections.
- An explicitly favourable attitude was focused towards the ruling party VMRO DPMNE and an accusatory one towards SDSM and their leader Zoran Zaev, not only in the reports about pre-election activities, but also in commentary headlines and editorial comments, through the thesis imposed by the ruling party in the pre-election campaign about state bilingualism and federalization

# 1. COVERED TOPICS

The pre-election campaign was the dominant topic in Sitel's news, and the other topics that were occasionally treated were mainly linked to the dominant topic: financial reports of the parties for the first part of the campaign, non-critical presentation of the promotional projects of the Government (1.12. 'We anticipate a new investment in mining, the size of which is yet to be seen in Macedonia'), and the topic of state bilingualism and federalization. The TV station often exploited this topic, for the most part of the ed-

itorial comments, and in some days it dominated the news (on December 5, five reports were broadcast on this topic). Just like in the first part of the campaign, during this period the topics that give a critical overview of the work of state institutions or that protect the interests of the people were completely ignored, except on rare occasions, when a selective approach was taken and information were published that once again aim to protect Government interests (Bedem, Macedonian Manifesto).



Number of reports on Sitel, in relation to the different topics (November 30 – December 9)

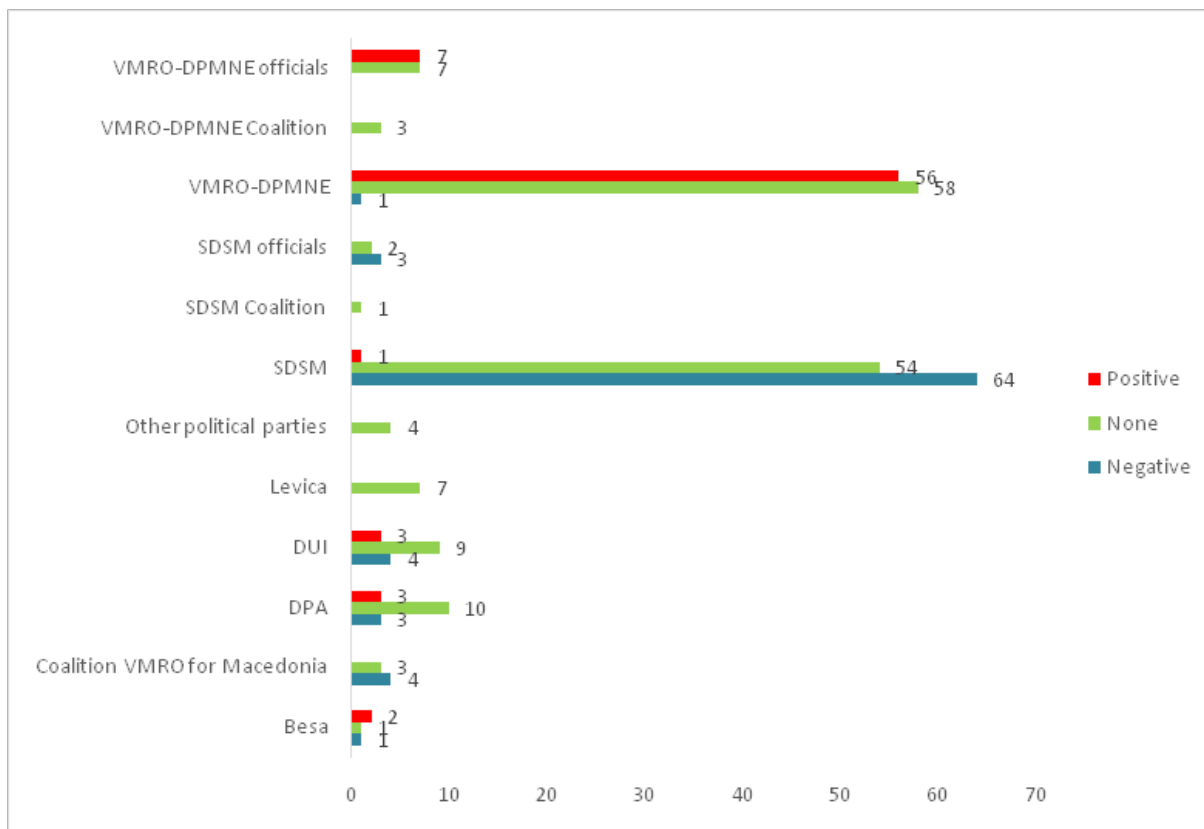
|          |   |
|----------|---|
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| Topic 7  | Regular operations of state institutions, courts, local self-government (reports in which the media do not report about political parties, rather they report of various public interest problems and issues) |
| Topic 8  | State bilingualism and federalization   |
| Topic 9  | Public opinion polls  |
| Topic 10 | Other topics (the celebration of the Day of the Albanian Flag)  |

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

The reports about the two major parties from the government and from the opposition were dominant in the central journal on Sitel (VMRO DPMNE with 132 and SDSM with 125 appearances), while reports on other political entities were significantly fewer (DUI and DPA have 16 appearances each, VMRO for Macedonia and Levica had 7 each, while Besa, the Alliance for Albanians and other political parties had 4 appearances each). 155 reports (cues, reports, comments, commentary analysis) contained an explicitly expressive journalistic opinion, in 74 of which it was positive and propagandist. In 66 reports, the expressive positive opinion was about the ruling party VMRO DPMNE, the coalition and their officials, and mostly about the leader Nikola Gruevski: (9.12 'Ten new foreign direct investments announced in this past period should provide over 2900 new jobs', 8.12 'Three new foreign investments in Macedonia for 500 new jobs, announced by VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski', 6.12 'Final polls: Considerable lead of VMRO-DPMNE in all six electoral units: VMRO-DPMNE – 28.1%, SDSM – 15%).

In 81 reports, the narrative was negative, demonizing, and in 64, the subject of accusatory reporting was the opposition and its officials (8.12 'Just two days before the elections, the opinion poll shows that SDSM is faced with a new disaster and that VMRO-DPMNE will take their fifth victory in a row, fourth in early elections'), their leader in particular, with personal disqualifications and labeling (8.12 'Zoran Zaev got a stamp confirming that he is unfit to serve the army in the midst of the war in 2001, was published by the Association of Defender Bedem', 7.12 'Latas: If on December 11 we vote for Zoran Zaev and his liaisons with the Albanian underground, we are finished, we will be Kosovo in the morning').

In the attacks of the opposition, there was selective use of the opinions of foreign representatives and pro-Government portals (30.11 "Axel Fisher, President of EPP in the Council of Europe: I hope that VMRO-DPMNE win the elections" – the journalist asked 'Your sister party, VMRO-DPMNE will run these elections with the biggest programme so far, written on 500 pag-



Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 – December 9)



es. Do you expect them to win and what is your opinion about their programme:' 4.12. ,KURIR: SDSM are bribing Roma people in Kumanovo with fire wood through NGOs'.

The demonization of the opposition was especially evident in the reports about state bilingualism and federalization, it was accused without any arguments of antinational and anti-state politics (1.12 'Ahmeti is eyeing the position of Prime Minister: The ideas for the election of an Albanian Prime Minister are not new, however they have been placed by SDSM through their supporters', 2.12 (analysis/cue) ,Unlike the opposition, who envisage the introduction of bilingualism from as early as kindergarten, VMRO-DPMNE's programme says on page 293 that the new Government will not accept a change in the Constitution of any ideas and proposals that endanger the national identity', 2.12 ,Zaev has made a dangerous precedent and raised questions that have not been discussed so far,

such as the introduction of bilingualism on the entire territory and expansion of the Framework Agreement. SDSM are not hiding the fact that this is their strategy and they are openly discussing changing the name'.

In the second part of the campaign, the attacks towards the Ad Hoc body for monitoring the media (9.12. ,The members of the Ad Hoc body that constantly requested fines and warnings for Sitel TV, admitted themselves that they are on the pay roll of SOROS'), and this time towards the Media Ethics Council was also targeted (5.12 (analysis / commentary) 'The Media Ethics Council, which is under total control of Soros structures, assesses ethical standards, however they do not verify the members of the organization of over 80 media and organizations, was reported by the daily newspaper Vecer), in response to the assessments these bodies published about the TV station's reporting.

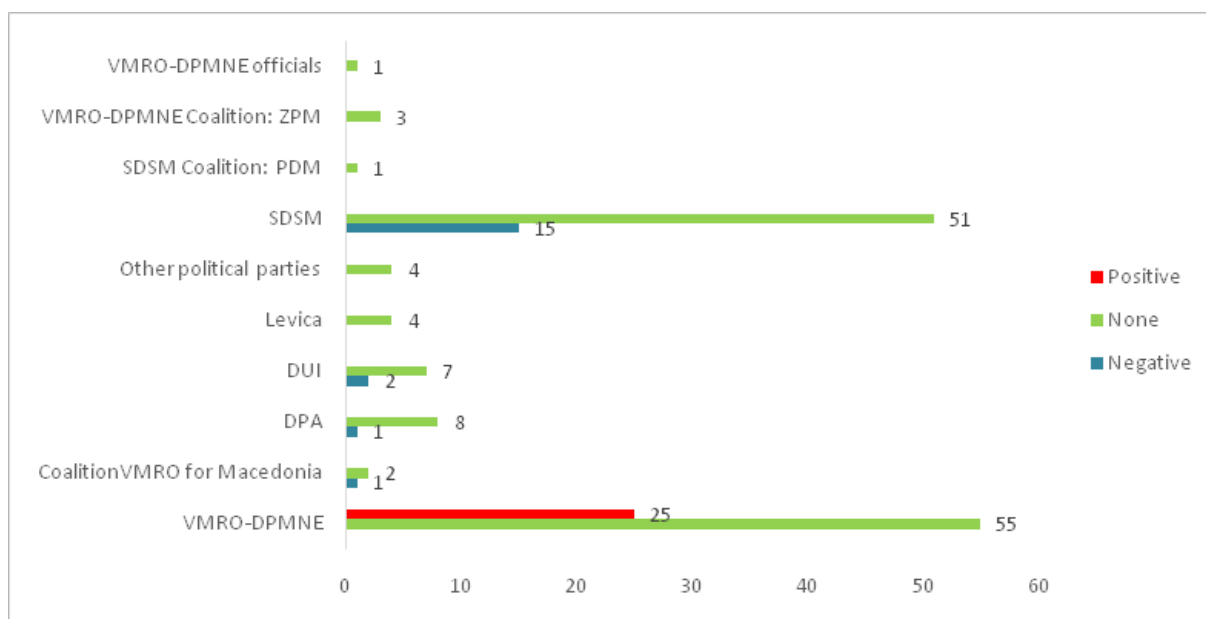
### 3. BALANCE IN REPORTING ON THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN OF POLITICAL ENTITIES

According to the quantity of the published information and according to the approach in the reporting, the news on TV Sitel did not provide balance in presenting the campaigns of political entities. The most frequently mentioned entities in the reports on the election campaign were the ruling party VMRO DPMNE (their coalition and officials) – 84 and SDSM 67, while the other entities were present in very few reports: DUI and DPA in 9 each, Levica and other parties in 4 each and VMRO for Macedonia in 3.

These reports did not contain a neutral and distanced criticism, instead they showed non-

critical presenting of the Government's projects, which were presented as promises of the ruling party and their leader Gruevski ('During yesterday's rally in Bitola, VMRO DPMNE leader announced one more investment in the city'- two reports were shown regarding that same promise, on December 2 and on December 6) and supportive reporting about the Government (9.12 'As it may be noted, people have already started to gather at the city square in Prilep, although there is just under an hour before the start of the rally, so the final rally promises to be a massive one', 5.12 (headline) 'The economic and so-

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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 30 – December 9)



cial topics that Gruevski has dominated are intentionally avoided as topics by SDSM and Zaev in their campaign', 6.12 'The people from Delcevo are saying that Delcevo is always like that, especially when VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski comes to visit, for whom they say is the only person that can defend Macedonia from, as they say, internal and external enemies'). There was a positive attitude expressed by the journalist in 25 reports, all benefitting VMRO DPMNE.

In 19 reports the reporting was demonizing, 15 of which were about SDSM and their officials. In the reports from the rallies and the gatherings the cues were informative (1.12 'And

in the Eastern part of the state, the coalition led by SDSM is present today'), while offensive rhetoric is used in the editorial comments (8.12 'Zoran Zaev is implementing federalization in practice. Zaev invited the people from Debar to a rally only in Albanian, and he invited the people from Kumanovo in Albanian, and then addressed them in Macedonian too', 4.12 'With this plan, Zaev and SDSM wish to get the vote from Albanians, however they are losing much more votes from Macedonians and from others who understand that they are not having their interests met, while only one party's interests are being met').

## 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

In the second part of the campaign, the focus remained on state bilingualism and federalization as a topic that arose from the pre-election period. The TV station advocated the thesis of the Government and in their attacks on the opposition they showed reports where the attacks were articulated through experts opinions (2.12 (analysis/commentary) 'With the introduction of state bilingualism, the Albanian language will also be mandatory for soldiers, doctors, nurses, firefighters and front desk clerks', 3.12 'Kamilovski: Bilingualism may prove disastrous in the operating room'), attitudes of high officials from the ruling party (4.12 'Konevski: Zaev's bilingualism will have a high price for all municipalities – Children in kindergartens will also have to learn Albanian'), or regular citizens (5.12 'The people from Prilep are offended by the idea of bilingualism'). In some days, most of the reports were on this topic (on December 5 there were 5 reports, on December 9 there were three: (analysis/commentary) 'Statements such as this one are the reason why many analysts in the last few days have warned that Macedonia is threatened by federalization and redefining of the state', 9.12 (analysis/commentary) 'Zaev is playing with fire... This is the opinion of the experts about the plans of the oppositional SDSM to introduce state bilingualism and federalization', 9.12. 'In today's interview for the Macedonian Radio Television, Zaev reiterated

his stand on teaching Albanian language in primary schools').

During the monitoring period, the TV station published editorial comments on this topic with an accusative narrative towards SDSM. From December 2 to December 5 there were editorial comments published every day on this topic (2.12 'Editorial comment: 'Bilingualism is a problem that will destroy the Macedonian character of the Macedonian state, will introduce an ambiance and rules similar to Kosovo prior to it declaring independence, which is reason enough for Macedonian to become worried', 3.12 'State bilingualism will cause 10 000 teachers or professors to lose their jobs, and around 4000 administrative employees in the educational institutions', Day three 4.12 'With this plan, Zaev and SDSM wish to get the vote from Albanians, however they are losing much more votes from Macedonians and from others who understand that they are not having their interests met, while only one party's interests are being met', 5.12 'Will the people give their support and stand for federalization and cantonization of Macedonia, which is supported by five parties, four are Albanian and the fifth is SDSM, or are they against cantonization and federalization and against bilingualism, which is the standpoint of one party, that is defending the only Macedonian political side – and that is VMRO-DPMNE').





MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



## TELMA

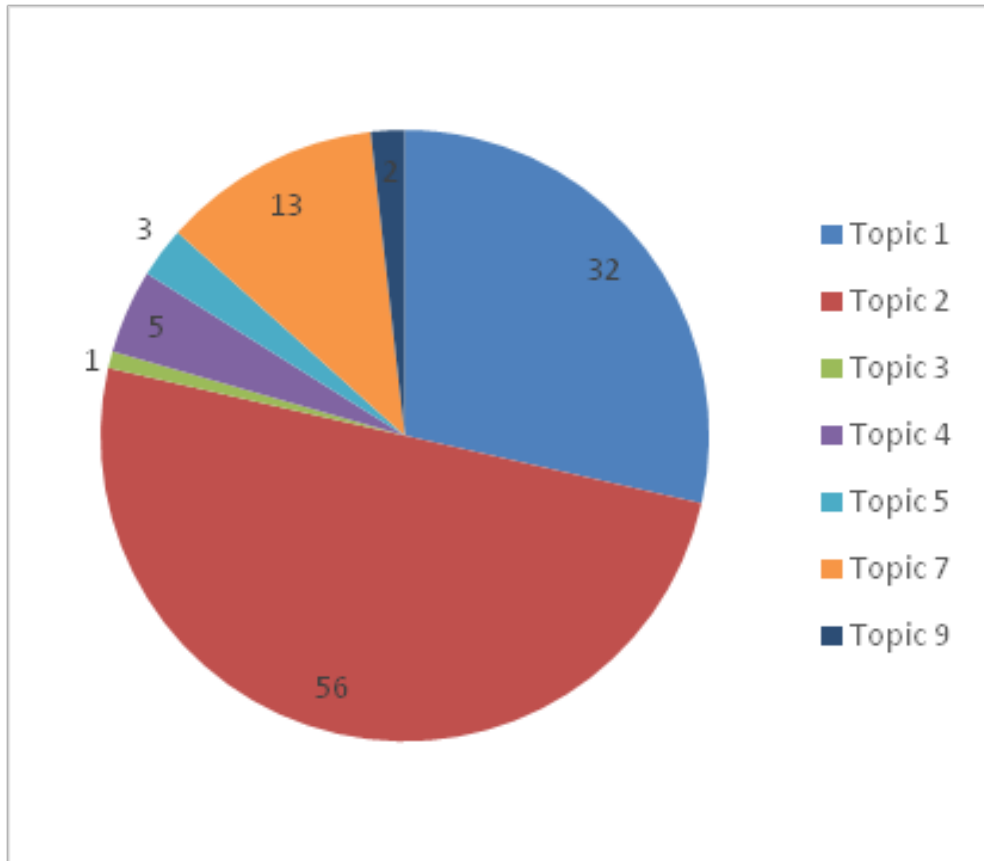
### GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF TELMA

- Telma published 112 reports on all current topics and events. Most of them (56) were about segments that refer to the pre-election period, 32 report about the preparations for the elections, 13 were about the regular work of institutions, 5 about the activities of officials, 3 about the work of SPPO, and the polls gauging public opinion were presented in 2 reports, and one was a neutrally critical report about a Government project.
- Overall, in the news, on all topics that were processed, the TV station insisted on reporting on as wide a spectrum of political views and stands as possible – most of the time without journalistic opinion, and in a few reports (6) with a neutrally-critical observation of the activity of political entities or the institutions.
- In reporting about the election campaign, Telma insisted on providing a balanced reflection of realistic political diversity. This was evident both in terms of quantity and in terms of quality in the reporting.

# 1. COVERED TOPICS

Having in mind that the period of monitoring overlaps the end of the election campaign, the number of reports about the pre-election representation of the parties and the organization (and the problems in the organization) of the elections

took up most of the informative air time of the TV station. Nonetheless, other topics were also presented: the activities of the civil sector, the events in the organization of trade unions and in the judiciary system, the work of SPPO.



**Number of reports on Telma, in relation to the different topics (November 30 – December 9)**

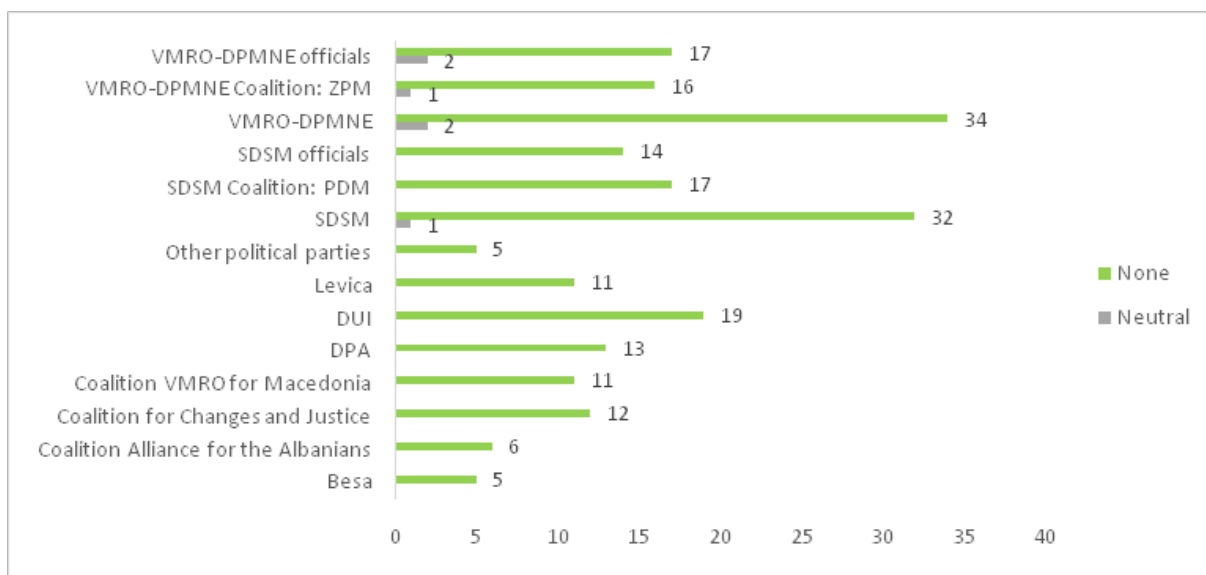
|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Topic 1  | Organization of the early parliamentary elections (voters' registry, issues with the number of voters, monitoring potential irregularities, etc.).  |
| Topic 2  | Pre-election activities of political parties (all activities involving rallies, meetings with the people, promises, announcements, reactions, etc.).  |
| Topic 3  | Promotion of Government projects and measures   |
| Topic 4  | Other activities of Government officials (protocol meetings, statements, etc. 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 (the celebration of the Day of the Albanian Flag)  |



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

In 218 mentions of political entities, the two major parties of the Macedonian block prevailed, VMRO DPMNE, the Coalition for a Better Macedonia and the officials (72) and SDSM with their coalition and Government officials (64). Although other parties did not have even a half of the previously mentioned parties: DUI (19), DPA (13), VMRO for Macedonia (12), Levica and the Coalition for Changes and Justice (11), Alliance for the Albanians (6) and Besa (5), the TV station did provide enough space for presenting a wide spectrum of parties - both smaller and bigger. The neutrally-critical stand remained to be the only journalistic opinion expressed in some reports (6 reports): 2.12 'New obstructions for SPPO. The President of the Criminal Court

Vladimir Pancevski and judges Ilievska and Boskovska made a decision to deny the request from SPPO for a court order for confiscating computers from a telecommunications operator', 'The situation with the trade union association (SSM) is becoming more and more intricate. SSM Secretary continued Mitrevski's practice of having press-conferences only for a selection of media and presented letters of trade unions claiming that they have not participated in the decision making process for repealing Mitrevski'. The TV station aired one report about a Government measure, however it was with a neutrally critical stand (5.12 'An Olympic-sized pool will be built in Shuto Orizari: They may not have water to drink, they will however have water to bathe')

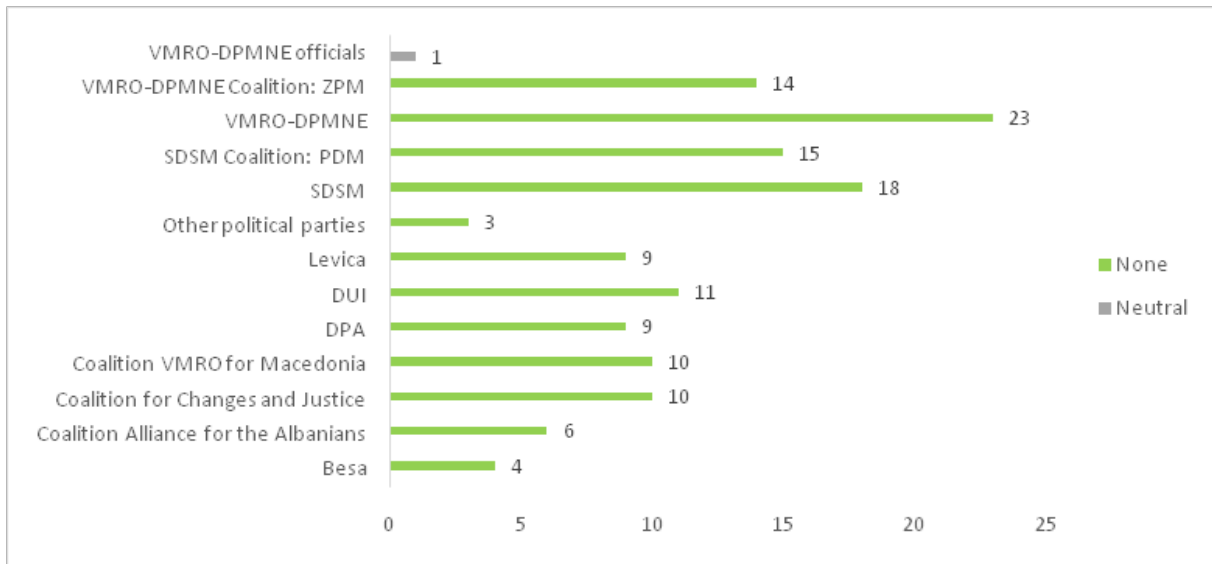


Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 - December 9)

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

In publishing the reports about the campaign of political parties, the TV station provided a relatively balanced coverage of the two largest entities from the Macedonian block: VMRO DPMNE (38 reports) and SDSM (33 reports). The appearances of DUI in 11, the coalitions VMRO for Macedonia and for Changes and Justice in 10 each, DPA in 9, Alliance for Albanians in 6, Besa in 4 and other political parties in 3 reports, completes the image of accessibility of news air time on Telma for other parties running in the elections as well. None of them con-

tained a favourable or a demonizing opinion of a political entity. The cue for one of the debate shows on this TV station, ‘Top Tema’, was neutrally-critical (6.12 ‘Is the TV duel in general the face of a Macedonian political and democratic spring, judging by how much Gruevski fiercely and brutally evaded even the most bizarre and more critical TV interviews, does this say that he obviously lacks the capacity to withstand a serious verbal duel with the opposition, regardless of the fact that he is currently in power and according to some polls is in a significant lead’).



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 30 – December 9)

### 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

No reports shown during the monitored period contained the topic of federalization and state bilingualism, which was previously imposed by the campaign. However, the topic of gauging the rating of the parties was mentioned in one report with a critical tone – editorial comment, where a court procedure was announced (against TV Nova) for accusations on

the poll that was ordered by this TV station and conducted by a specialized agency (7.12 ‘A TV station that has nothing in common with journalism and that conceals a poll so they do not harm their boss VMRO-DPMNE, is accusing a TV station that spent 2 hours publishing integral results from a poll, for allegedly not publishing the poll as a whole’)



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



## 24 VESTI

24

### GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF 24 VESTI

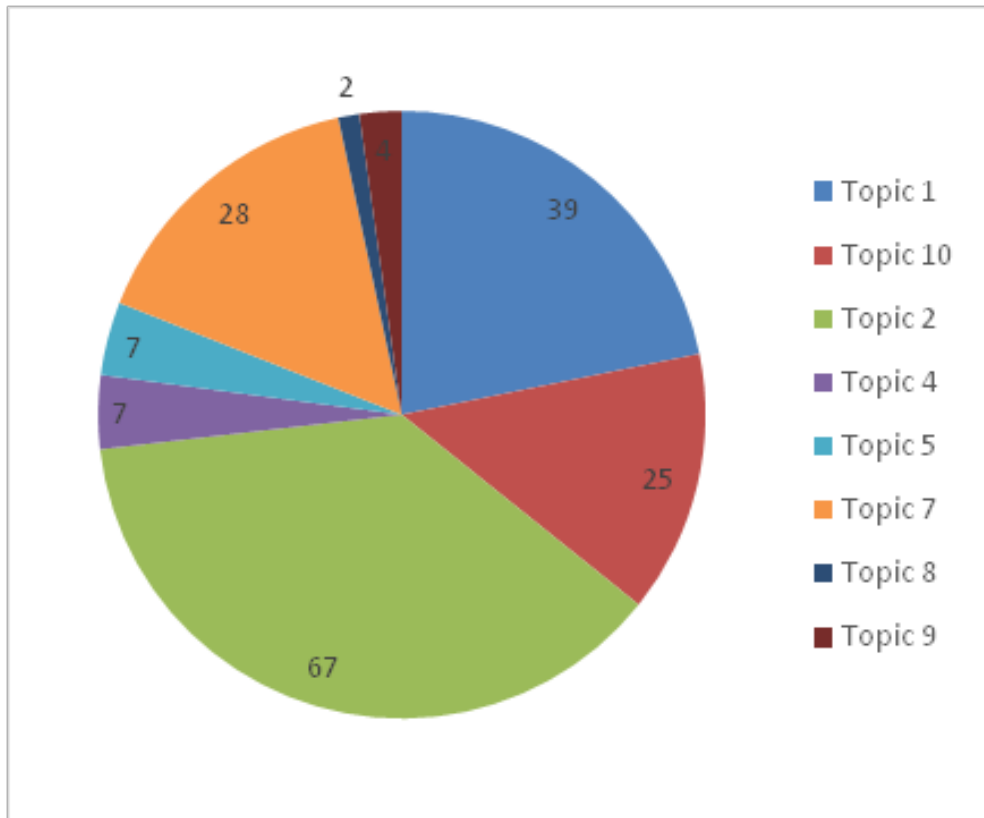
- TV station 24 Vesti aired a total of 179 reports during the monitored period, which referred to political actors, processes and situations in the country. Around a third of them (67) were dedicated to covering the pre-election campaign, and the ones that stood out from the others were the preparations and organization of the elections (39) and the work of state and public institutions (28).
- In general, in all reports pertaining to domestic events, TV 24 reflected the various political views on current events and processes: 145 reports informed about VMRO-DPMNE, their coalition and Government officials, 97 reports informed about SDSM, their coalition and officials. When it comes to the smaller parties, the ones more present were DUI (34 reports), and the rest are mentioned in fewer reports. A critical stand was expressed towards VMRO-DPMNE and towards DUI in 35 reports and towards SDSM in four reports.
- When covering the pre-election campaign too, the most commonly present entities were VMRO-DPMNE (60 mentions) and SDSM (42). The media outlet provided a balanced coverage of the election campaign, by conveying the activities of the participants in the elections process. The campaign and the parties' pre-election activities, although most common as a topic, did not dominate the news.



# 1. COVERED TOPICS

In the coverage of the second half of the pre-election campaign, the reports mainly concerned the activities of political parties, since during the first part of the campaign the TV station covered the analytical topics such as the parties' programmes, economic promises, etc. During this period, there was more focus on following the organization and

preparations of the elections, with an emphasis on the information about abuse of official positions and of state resources, on the information about irregularities, on the campaign financing and on other public interest topics. When it comes to topics related to the work of the institution, the ones about the judiciary system prevailed.



Number of reports on 24 Vesti, in relation to the different topics (November 30 – December 9)

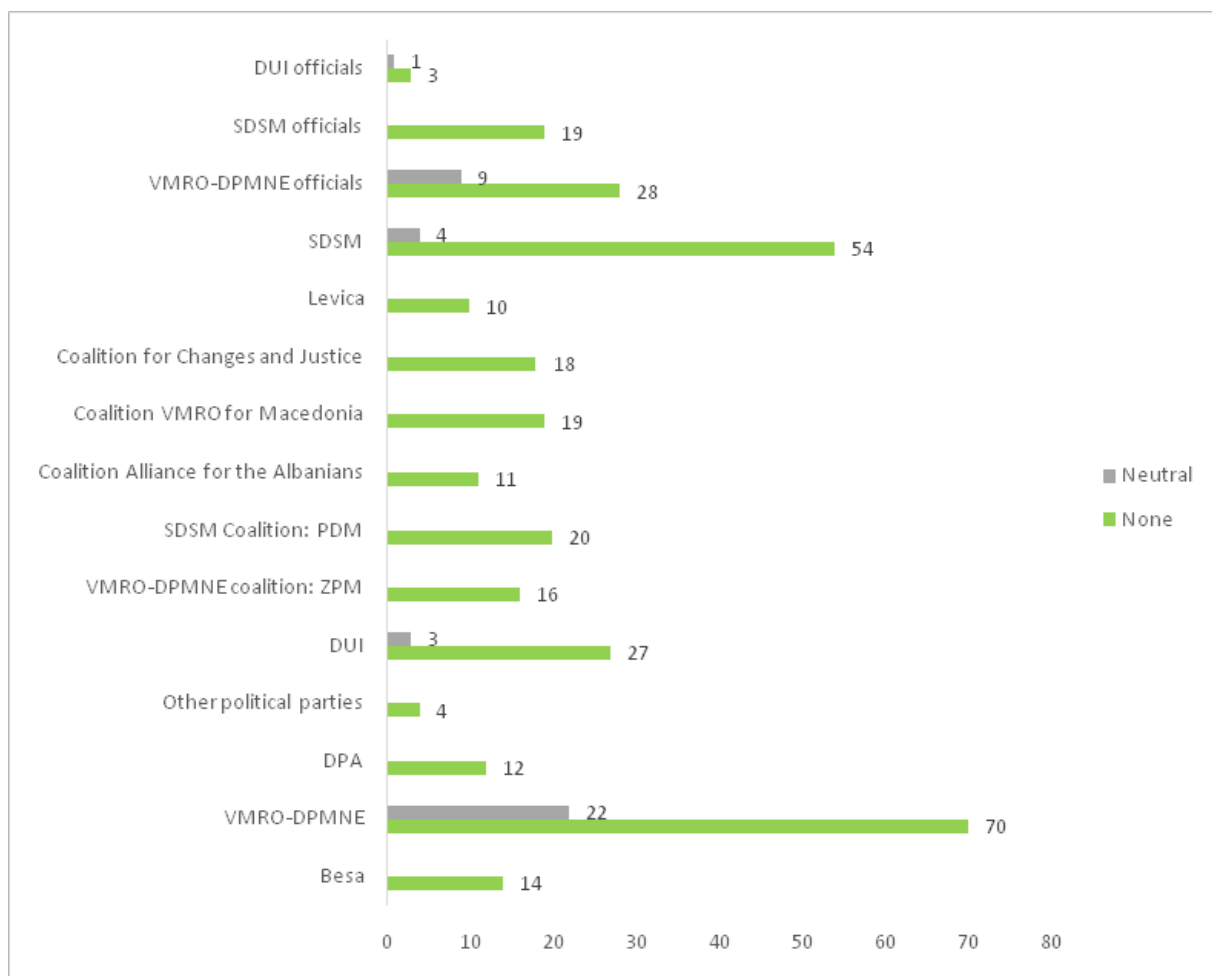
|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Topic 1  | Organization of the early parliamentary elections (voters' registry, issues with the number of voters, monitoring potential irregularities, etc.).  |
| Topic 2  | Pre-election activities of political parties (all activities involving rallies, meetings with the people, promises, announcements, reactions, etc.).  |
| Topic 3  | Promotion of Government projects and measures   |
| Topic 4  | Other activities of Government officials (protocol meetings, statements, etc. 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 (the celebration of the Day of the Albanian Flag)  |

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

If we analyse the reports published about political entities as part of all published reports referring to domestic events, it may be said that the TV station's news programme gave a balanced presentation of the political standpoints and views of the two major political parties in the country. 145 reports informed about VMRO-DPMNE, their coalition and Government officials, 97 reports informed about SDSM, their coalition and officials.

For the most part, the TV station merely conveyed the messages of the political entities, without any journalistic opinion. A neutrally-critical stand was taken in 22 instances overall, towards the party VMRO-DPMNE (December 1: 'ZNM, SE and MIM assess that

through the high amounts of financing of PPP, the Government has turned the media into a spin tool'; December 6: 'Splendor in the head office of VMRO-DPMNE?'), in 9 cases towards the party's officials (November 30: 'The Mayor of Skopje Koce Trajanovski does not know how much money is being spent on new plants from the city's budget'), in 4 cases towards DUI (December 1: 'Mol has no evidence, nor information that Euro-Asian secret services were the godfathers of the crisis in Macedonia, as it is claimed by Ali Ahmeti's party'), and in 4 it was towards SDSM (December 5: 'There are items missing with SDSM about the expenses for transportation services and for the stay of the persons and affiliates who attend the rallies').



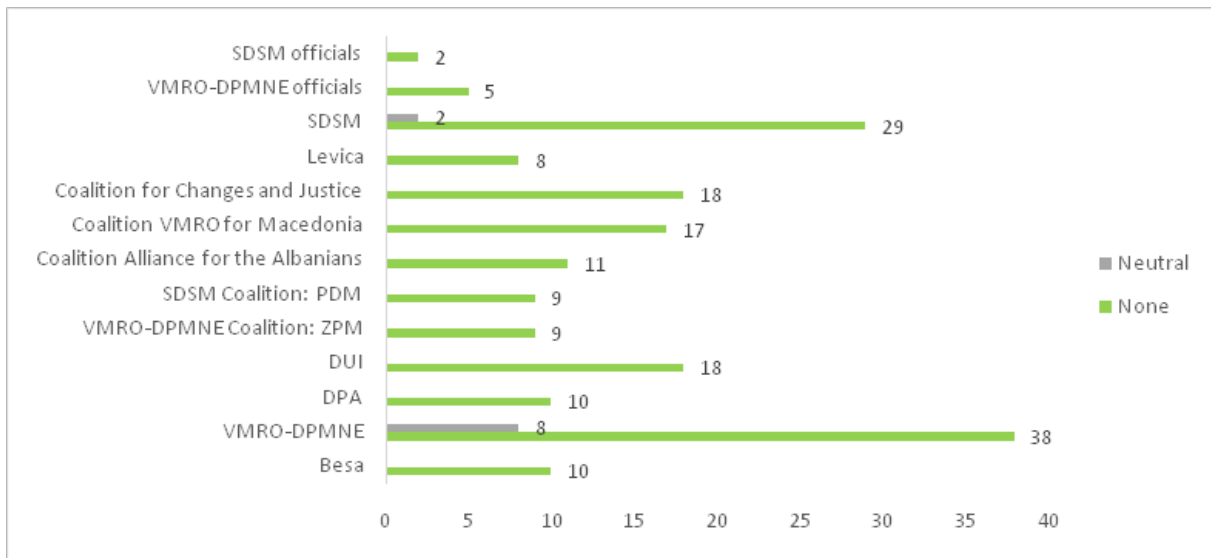
Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 – December 9)

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

In terms of quantity, TV 24 provided a balanced coverage of the campaign of the two major political parties (60 reports where VMRO-DPMNE are mentioned and 46 about SDSM). DUI and the Coalition VMRO for Macedonia appeared in 18 reports, the Coalition for Changes and Justice in 17, DPA, Besa and the Alliance of Albanians each had around ten, and there were no reports about other entities. Most of the reports were classic campaign reporting, by conveying key messages sent by the candidates, in single blocks covering several parties (December 5: ‘Final week of the election campaign’), and in some cases they were in separate reports (December 9: ‘Gruevski: After December 11, the crisis will come to an end;

Zaev: The people should vote for a better life; Angelov: Macedonia will get back on track’).

The TV station took a sharp critical stand towards some steps taken by VMRO-DPMNE during the campaign, such as the statement of leader Nikola Gruevski saying that if Goce Delcev were alive, he would send Kjoshe to Zaev, (December 7: ‘Goce Delcev is turning over in his grave seeing Macedonia divided as it is today. The call for Zaev’s liquidation is not a naïve electoral rhetoric’), and on the final day there was a critical overview of the entire campaign, of all parties (December 9: ‘Nationalistic and familiar messages. Boring and unrealistic promises. Nevertheless, the commercials were creative’).



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 30 – December 9)

### 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

During the second part of the campaign, the TV station did not publish any reports regarding state bilingualism and federalization, which was one of the topics imposed by political entities. There was only one report that indirectly referred to this topic, it related to attracting voters from different ethnic communities (December 6: ‘Civil Macedonia put to an ethnic test’).

The prevalent topic, besides reports about the campaign, during the ten-day period of monitoring, was the preparations and organization of the elections. Reports were also shown about protocol events, and special attention was paid to the occurring problems, such as information about pressures (December 9: ‘CIVIL:

Over 170 cases of threats and pressures’), the revision of the voters’ registry (December 5: ‘Are you on the voters’ registry or are you facing problems with your right to vote?’), abuse of the institutions (December 8: ‘Healthy people were given verifications for being ill or incapacitated, i.e. they were included in the category of voters voting from home’), irregularities in the financial reports (December 5: ‘They have spent beyond their means. VMRO-DPMNE’s financial report has shown expenditures that are six times higher than the income’), abuse of public space (December 8: ‘Lisice has been flooded with party flags of VMRO-DPMNE for a long time now’), and other cases.



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



## KANAL 5

28

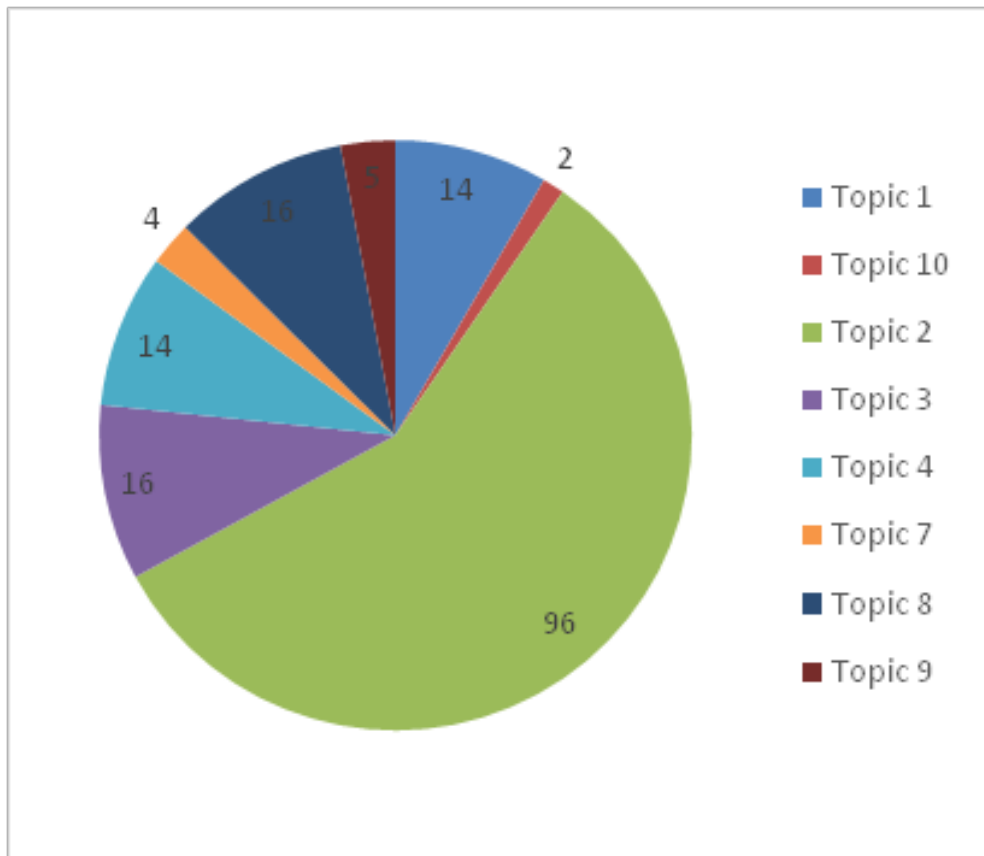
### GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF KANAL 5

- TV station Kanal 5 aired a total of 167 reports during the monitored period, which referred to political actors, processes and situations in the country. Over half of them (96) were dedicated to covering the pre-election campaign, and the ones that stand out from the rest are the reports that also referred to the campaign, i.e. the measures and accomplishments of the Government (16), mostly in attracting foreign investments, and state bilingualism and federalization (16).
- In general, in all reports pertaining to domestic events, Kanal 5 reflected the various political views on current events and processes: 173 reports informed about VMRO-DPMNE, their coalition and Government officials, 150 reports informed about SDSM, their coalition and officials. Reports about other political parties were significantly fewer. However, in terms of quality, there was an expressed negative attitude towards the opposition in 32 reports, and a positive attitude was evident towards the ruling party in 37 reports.
- In the reports about the election campaign there was a balance in terms of quantity, however in some of them a positive attitude was expressed towards VMRO-DPMNE. That same attitude was expressed even more strongly on the topic of measures and accomplishments of the Government, first and foremost to attracting foreign investments. State bilingualism was the most common topic where a negative stand was shown towards SDSM

# 1. COVERED TOPICS

The news on Kanal 5 television during the monitored period were mostly dedicated to covering the pre-election campaign, which was mostly done by simply communicating the statements, the messages and promises made at rallies and at the meetings with the people of the two major political entities, VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM. The other participants in the elections were much less present. The topic of state bilingualism stood out especially, as a result of the

pre-election campaign, with an emphasis that it presented an introduction to federalization. Unlike the first part of the campaign, this time there was much greater intensity in reporting about the measures and accomplishments of the Government. Some of these reports, especially the ones that refer to attracting foreign investments, crossed over with the election campaign, thus erasing the line between state and party. Other topics were presented to a smaller extent.



Number of reports on Kanal 5, in relation to the different topics (November 30 – December 9)

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 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)  |

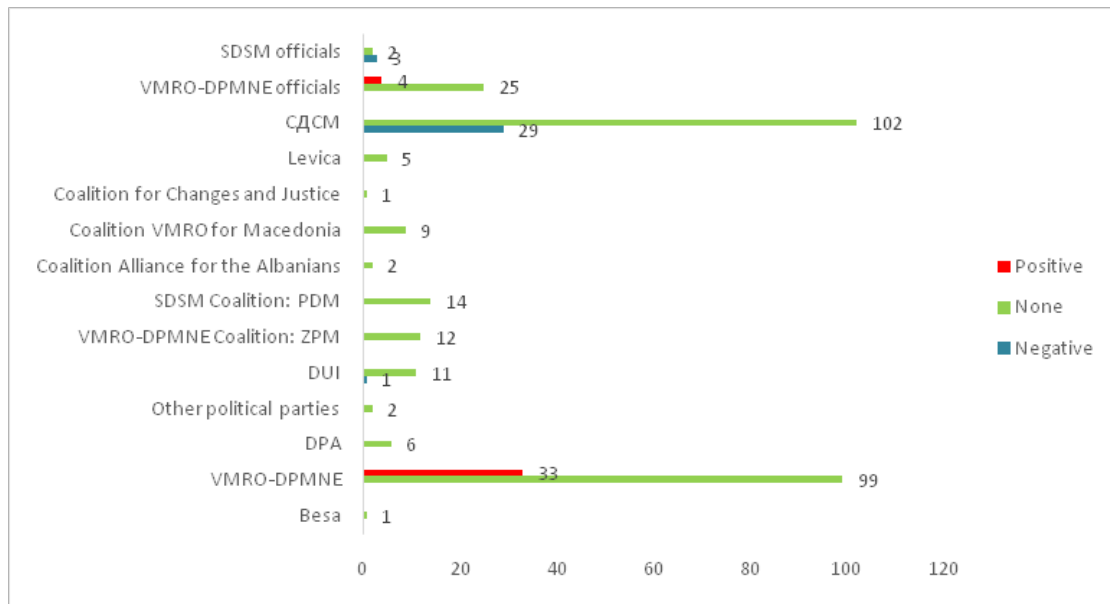
## 2. POLITICAL PLURALISM IN THE OVERALL REPORTING ON DOMESTIC EVENTS

If we analyse the reports published about political entities as part of all published reports referring to domestic events, it may be said that the TV station's news programme did not give a balanced presentation of the political standpoints and views of the two major political parties in the country. There is a minor difference between the mentions made about the Government and the opposition, along with their coalitions and officials (173 reports mentioned VMRO-DPMNE and 150 discussed SDSM). The basic principles of fairness were violated in 19 instances, where SDSM were portrayed in a negative context, and in that same number of reports there was an expressive positive attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE.

The positive representation of VMRO-DPMNE was mainly linked to their activities in the pre-election campaign, among other things with reportage news packages about their field activities, such news packages were not shown for the other political reports (November 30: 'Gruevski

promoted projects for the farmers from Banski and Kuklish'). This attitude was also observed towards the local officials of the party (November 30: 'New facades, streets, amusement park... The budget of the City of Skopje has increased by EUR 10 million, compared to last year's').

Most of the reports that included a negative attitude towards SDSM referred to state bilingualism (December 2: 'Are SDSM preparing the municipalities for the federalization of Macedonia?'), as well as the reports linked to the alleged plagiarism of their campaign (December 1: 'SDSM are committing a political fraud with our campaign, was stated by the Serbian party Dveri for 'Republika)'). There were also one-sided reports, that did not include any additional checks, that presented attacks and accusation of the opposition (December 8: 'According to the Association of Defenders 'Bedem', Zoran Zaev used a false certificate to stand in the defense of his homeland').



Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 – December 9)

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

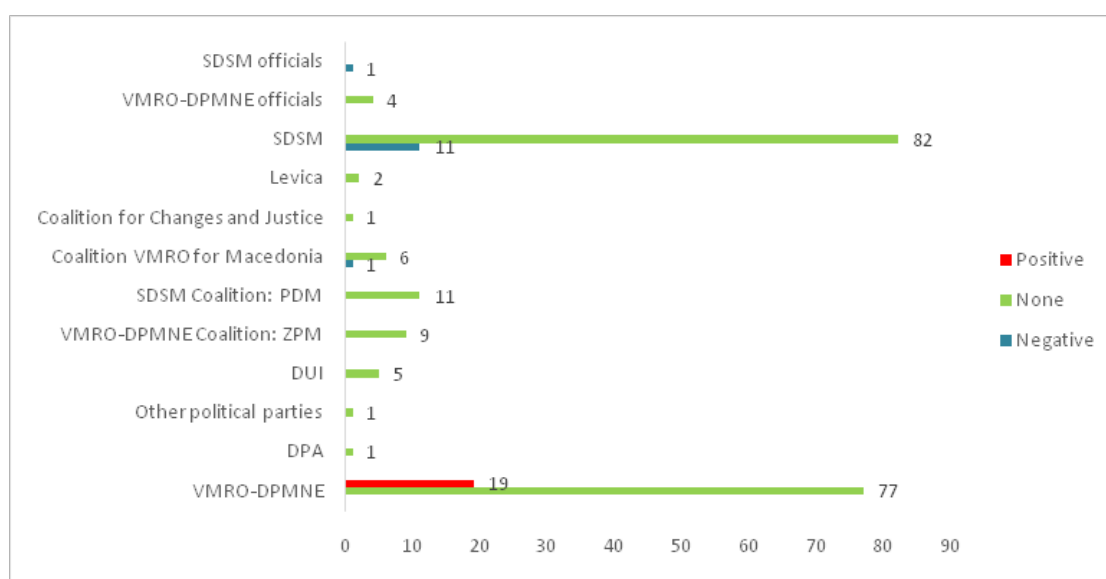
The TV station achieved a significant balance in terms of quantity in the reports of the election campaign between the two major political entities, by publishing 109 reports about

VMRO-DPMNE and 105 about SDSM. On the other hand, only 17 reports were shown about all other participants in the elections, total. In the second part of the campaign, the regular

practice of first showing a block about the rallies and meetings with the people of VMRO-DPMNE candidates, and then a block about SDSM continued, and in some days this was shown at the very end of the news programme. A positive attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE in the campaign was most often expressed through the different quality in production in reporting about leaders Nikola Gruevski and Zoran Zaev. Reportage packages were shown about the activities of VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski from his meetings with the people (December 1: ‘Previously, VMRO-DPMNE President met with tobacco producers in Prilep. They are pleased with the price of MKD 2000 and with the subsidies’, December 7: ‘Gruevski visited the residents of Dobrejci and Murtino, near Strumica’), and when it came to

the leader of SDSM, only on-camera statements were shown (December 9: ‘Zaev presented his programme to the people of Strumica’).

The TV station also published several reports about the entry of foreign investments, and although these are state policies, they were inserted as part of the campaign reports. The source of information about these investments, which should have been the competent state authorities, was the Facebook profile of VMRO-DPMNE president Nikola Gruevski (December 2: ‘Two new foreign investments in Bitola were announced by the President of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski’; December 8: ‘Three new foreign investments in Krushevo, Negotino and Skopje, and 500 new jobs were announced by Gruevski’)



Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 – December 9)

## 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

In 16 reports overall, which were especially dedicated to state bilingualism and federalization as a topic that emerged from the election campaign, Kanal 5 expressed a negative stand towards SDSM on 14 occasions, thus this topic was the main topic to serve as the basis for building a demonizing stand towards the opposition (November 30: ‘SDSM presented a Life Plan in their programme, foreseeing decentralization of Macedonia and transfer of some of the competencies of the central government onto the local government’; December 1: ‘The increased appetite of the Albanian parties is the result of the announcements of SDSM for state bilingualism’; December 4: ‘The game of conspiring about federalization following the Swiss model is a dangerous one. What is the plan to destroy Macedonia?’). Nevertheless, unlike the first part of the campaign, this time there were seven occasions when a positive

stand was taken towards VMRO-DPMNE, i.e. the reports were construed in a way in which they lead to a conclusion that in order to avoid federalization, the call of leader Gruevski should be abided so that his party can get 63 MP positions (December 2: ‘Experts fear that the announcements for potential wide coalitions after the elections are a hazardous gateway for redefining the state and for amending the Constitution, which may be prevented only if the current ruling party wins 63 MP positions’; December 3: ‘The ruling party VMRO-DPMNE is constantly asking for 63 MP positions, so that they are not blackmailed, was included in Gjorgjevski’s column’; December 5: ‘VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski is asking for the people’s support for 63 MP positions. According to him, it is necessary to have absolute majority so they can stop the plans of state bilingualism and federalization of Macedonia’)



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



ALFA

#### GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF ALFA

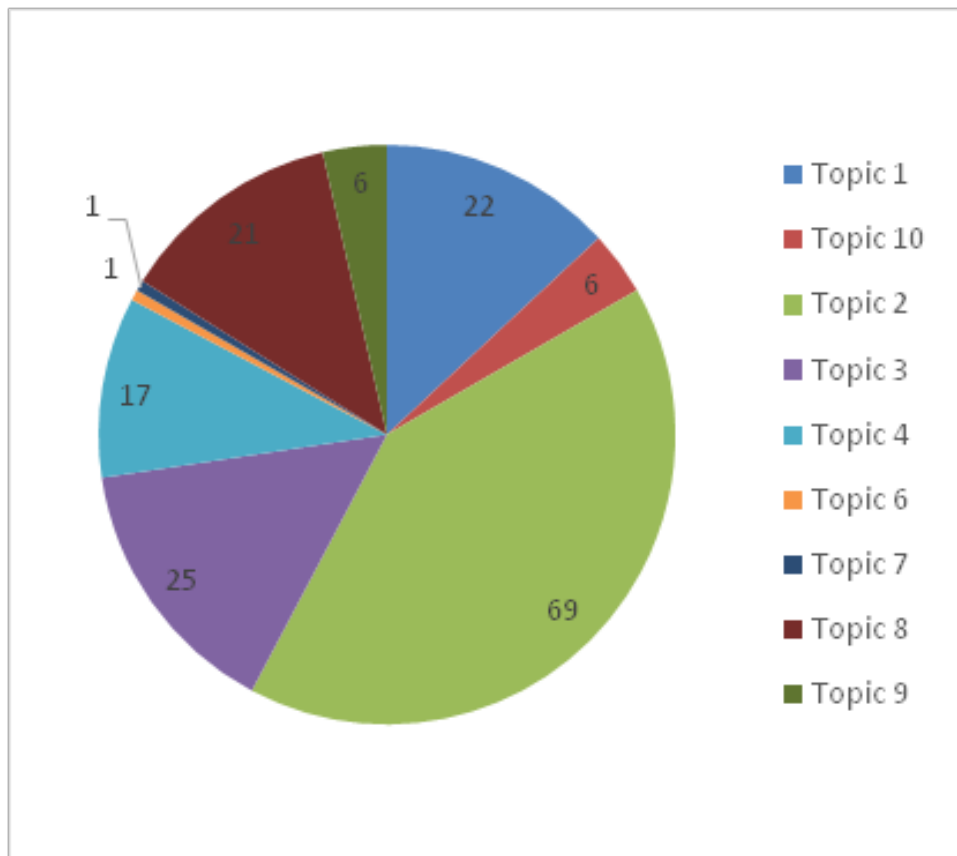
- TV station Alfa aired a total of 168 reports during the monitored period, which referred to political actors, processes and situations in the country. Over a third of them (69) were dedicated to covering the pre-election campaign, and the other reports that were present were about the measures and accomplishments of the Government (25), the preparation of the organization of the elections (22), state bilingualism and federalization (21) and other topics.
- From the aspect of quantity, in all reports pertaining to domestic events, Alfa reflected the various political views on current events and processes: 133 reports informed about VMRO-DPMNE, their coalition and Government officials, 130 reports informed about SDSM, their coalition and officials. Reports about other political parties were significantly fewer. Despite the fact that the opposition is mentioned in more reports, there was an expressed negative attitude towards them in over 50 reports, and a positive attitude was evident towards the ruling party in approximately sixty reports.
- Also, in covering the election campaign, the media outlet expressed a positive attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE, and in some cases a negative one towards SDSM, although there was a quantitative balance between them. The negative attitude towards SDSM once again was expressed mainly through the topic of federalization



# 1. COVERED TOPICS

The campaign was mainly followed by simply conveying the statements, messages and promises from rallies and meetings with the people of the two major political entities, VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, with a small number of reports about other participants in the elections. However, the TV station linked this topic to the one about measures and accomplishments of the Government, especially in the field of foreign investments, and in some cases as a source of information for the reports, instead of a state authority, was the Facebook profile of VMRO-

DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski. The focus on the topic of state bilingualism remained, and it was reinforced, again with the thesis that it is an introduction to federalization. Numerous reports were shown regarding the organization of the elections, but they were mainly reported as protocol, and there was unilateral reporting about the findings about irregularities (December 2: ‘The administrative officers from the municipal administration in Strumica were engaged in filming a political video for SDSM’s campaign during working hours’)



Number of reports on Alfa, 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 (the celebration of the Day of the Albanian Flag)  |

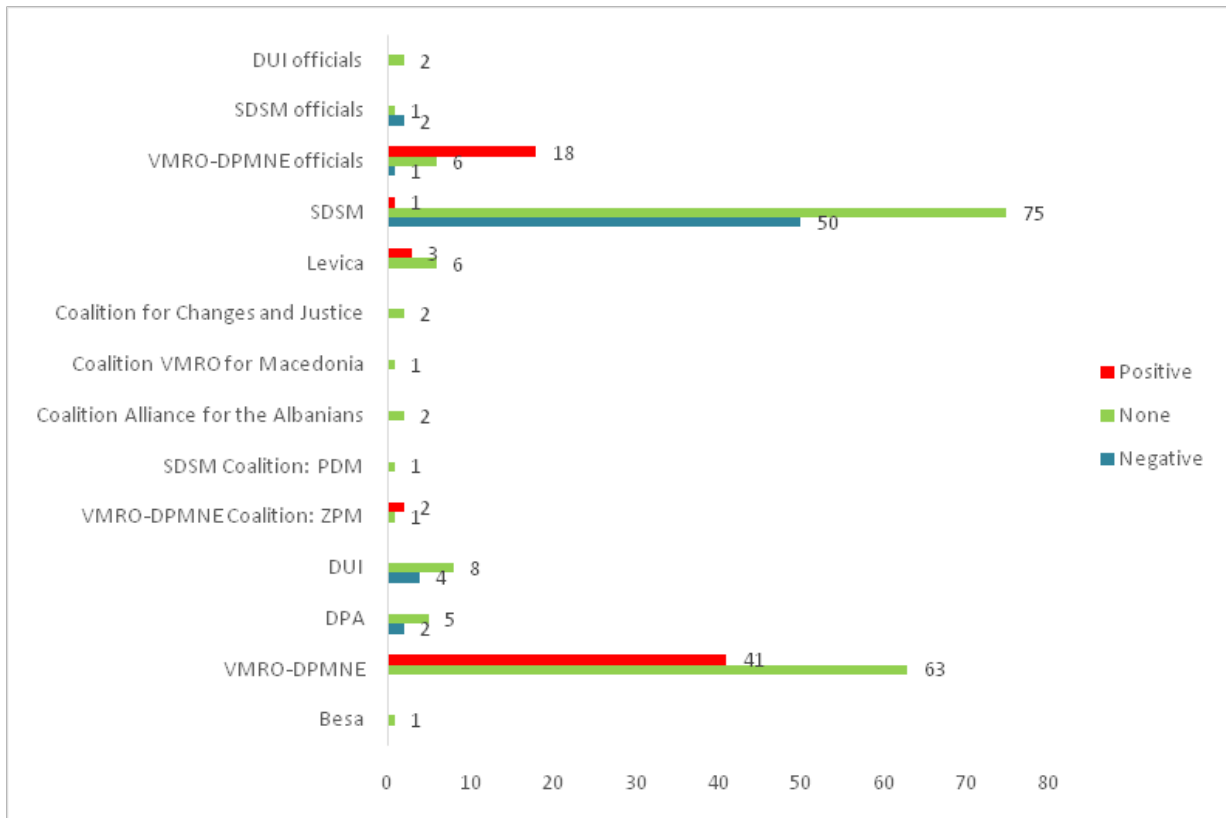
## 2. POLITICAL PLURALISM IN THE OVERALL REPORTING ON DOMESTIC EVENTS

If we analyse the reports published about political entities as part of all published reports referring to domestic events, it may be said that the TV station's news programme did not give a balanced presentation of the political standpoints and views of the two major political parties in the country. Despite the fact that the ruling party and the opposition, along with their coalitions and officials were mentioned in almost the same number of reports (133 as opposed to 130 reports), the attitude towards them is completely opposite (in 52 instances SDSM were placed in a negative context, and VMRO-DPMNE in a positive one in 61).

The positive representation of VMRO-DPMNE was mainly linked to the measures and projects of the Government (November 30: 'According to the Mayor of Skopje - Koce Trajanovski, the use of these buses will also greatly reduce the pol-

lution in the city. JSP announced an invitation for letters of interest to participate in an international call for awarding a contract for their procurement'). In most cases, the favourizing of VMRO-DPMNE was done by non-critical interference of party and state, especially when it comes to foreign investments (December 2: 'The investment announced by Gruevski from Bitola has started its implementation'). Negative reporting about SDSM, except in the topics of bilingualism, was also present in other reports (December 2: 'Since SEC have definitely established that SDSM's phantoms were a regular and poor excuse to run from the elections in April and then in June, and the citizens in the polls confirmed that they are aware of the lie and are announcing a penalty').

Reports about other political entities were rare.



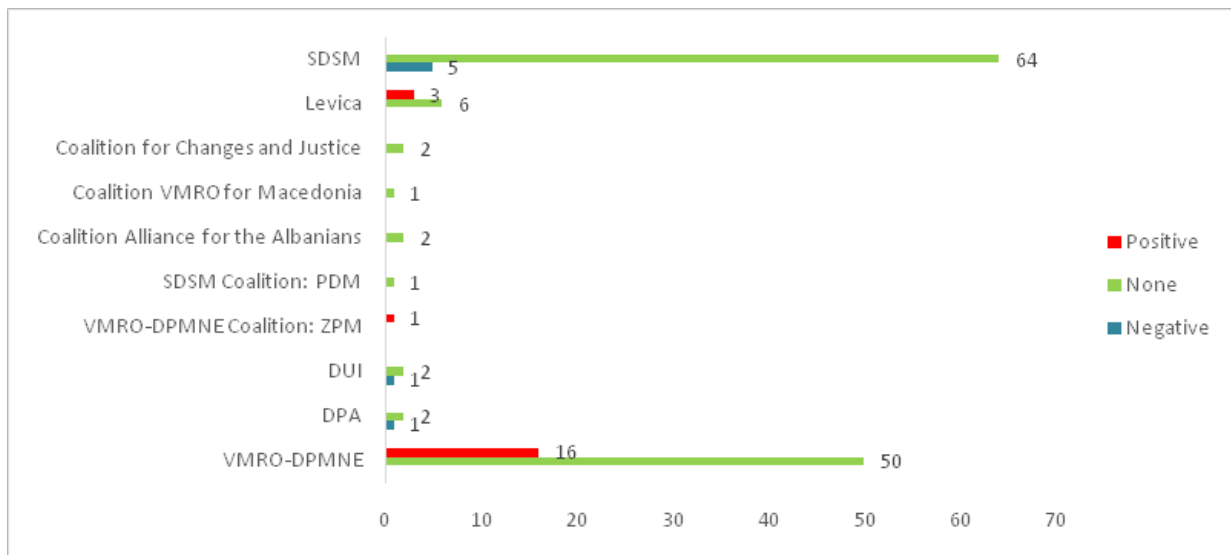
Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 – December 9)

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

From the perspective of quantity, Alfa Television provided a balanced coverage of the campaign of the two major political parties. 67 reports about VMRO-DPMNE and their coalition and 70 about SDSM and their coalition were published. Opposite to this, only 20 reports informed about other participants at the elections, 9 of which were about Levica as the most commonly presented third entity.

More of the reports were classic campaign reporting, by conveying key messages sent by the candidates, in separate news reports. Regular practice during the news was to first report about VMRO-DPMNE’s activities, and then about SDSM’s activities. In several cases there were also more direct expressions of a positive attitude towards VMRO-DPMNE. There was an obvious difference in the cues for the addresses of the ruling party (December 6: ‘The main people of the coalition led by VMRO-DPMNE were also among the people. They said that there is a huge difference between the programmes of their party and the opposition’) and for the oppositional party (December 6: ‘The principle representatives of the lists continue with their outreach activities. SDSM are promising a guaranteed monthly salary of MKD 12,000 for extremely poor families of four’). Expressing a different stand through the cues for

the reports was also typical for the addresses of the party leaders (December 9: ‘On Sunday VMRO-DPMNE will be celebrating their 10th consecutive victory, and one of the main tasks will be to open new jobs, was the message from the leader of VMRO-DPMNE Nikola Gruevski on today’s meeting with the people from Negotino and the region’; ‘SDSM leader Zoran Zaev called the people in Strumica to come out to vote on Sunday and to choose Life in Macedonia’) Once again, in some reports the opposition were accused of plagiarism (December 2: ‘Republika: The Serbian party Dveri has confirmed the theft – SDSM are committing political fraud with our campaign’). Not only was the party Levica the third most represented entity in the reports of the TV station that referred to the election campaign, a positive attitude was also expressed towards them (December 5: ‘No party leaders, no funders. With EUR 1700, raised from donations, Levica are running the race with the other political parties. Under the motto A Spark in the Dark, the extremely left-oriented Levica are advocating social justice, reducing the gap between the rich and the poor and one of the main measures that they propose is to discontinue the work of court enforcement agents. What comes first is the care for the workers and their rights’).



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 30 – December 9)

## 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

During the second part of the pre-election campaign, Alfa Television reinforced their reports on state bilingualism and its interpretation as an introduction to federalization of the country. Once again this topic was most commonly used to demonize the party SDSM, with an expressive negative attitude in a total of 28 instances (November 30: 'Federalization and efforts for cantonization are a potential security threat!?!'; December 1: 'Frckovski opened up in Ljubljana, Zaev surprised me with his bravery. He said: Perhaps it is not such a bad thing for first grade pupils to learn Albanian'; December 4: 'Experts warn that by insisting on this concept, SDSM leader Zaev, on the topic of state bilingualism and cantonization, can cause new disturbances and conflicts in the country'; December 6: 'Sign boards, announcements, meetings. SDSM are becoming a bilingual party. Would they copy this practice for the state as well. '). Meanwhile, in the reports there were constant reruns of video footage from public appearances and from interviews of the leader of the opposition, which were interpreted as arguments for the intent to federalize the country.

A novelty in the coverage of this topic was more frequent expressions of a positive attitude (7 instances) towards VMRO-DPMNE (December 1: 'VMRO-DPMNE are defying these calculations. Gruevski is saying that there will be no wide coalition, SDSM are lying to their members and they are not aware that they will lose with a huge difference'). Some of the reports were construed in a way so that they lead to a conclusion that the ruling party is the right option to vote (December 2: 'If the Coalition of a Better Macedonia, led by VMRO-DPMNE does not obtain 63 MP positions, negotiations and bargaining with national interest are possible').

In a smaller number of cases (3) a negative attitude concerning this topic was expressed towards DUI as well (December 1: 'DUI's appetite has risen suddenly, literally to the ceiling, as the people say. After opening Pandora's box with the announcements for bilingualism, federalization and the potential for amending the Constitution, Ali Ahmeti is not aiming for the position of Prime Minister, report sources from the lines of the Integration Party for 'Dnevnik').





MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



# ALSAT M MACEDONIAN LANGUAGE

38

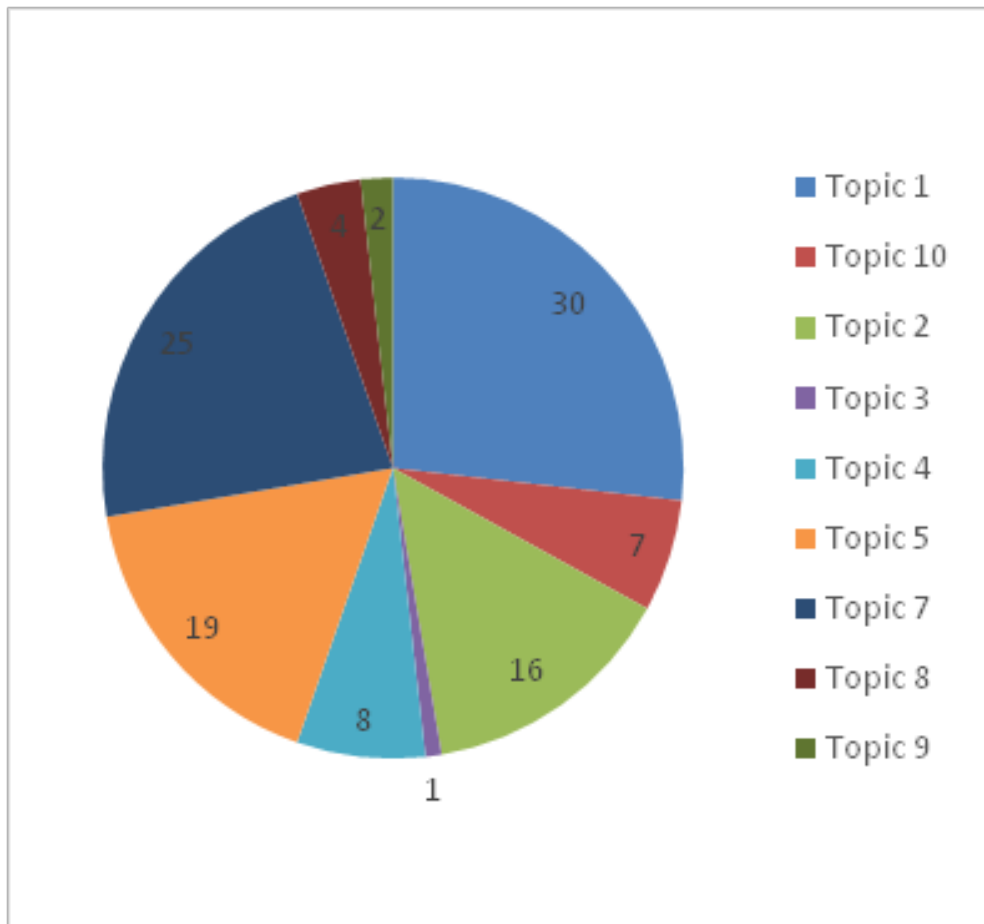
## GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF ALSAT M (MACEDONIAN LANGUAGE)

- In their news in Macedonian, TV station Alsat M aired a total of 112 reports during the monitored period, which referred to political actors, processes and situations in the country. The most common topics were the ones concerning the organization of the elections (30 stories), the work of state institutions (25), the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office (19), and the fourth was the election campaign (16 reports).
- The most commonly mentioned entities in the news on Alsat M in Macedonian during this period were VMRO-DPMNE (51 instances), SDSM (37), DUI (30) and DPA (11). A critical attitude was expressed on occasions, towards most of the most prominent political entities, and there were no explicit favourizing or demonizing examples observed.
- In the news in Macedonian, the TV station did not inform about the daily activities of political parties in the election campaign, rather it was about specific aspects of it (Gruevski's threats to Zaev, etc.).

# 1. COVERED TOPICS

The most common topic was the preparation and organization of the elections, with a special emphasis on the financial reports of the parties, the findings of irregularities, the cases that the Anticorruption Committee opened, connected to the election irregularities from

SDSM, etc. The work of the institutions was presented mostly by covering court cases, and regarding the Special Public Prosecutor's Office the developments it was the cases 'Sopot' (that SPPO are trying to take over) and 'Forress' (that is already opened).



Number of segments on Alsat M (Macedonian language), in relation to the different topics (November 30 – December 9)

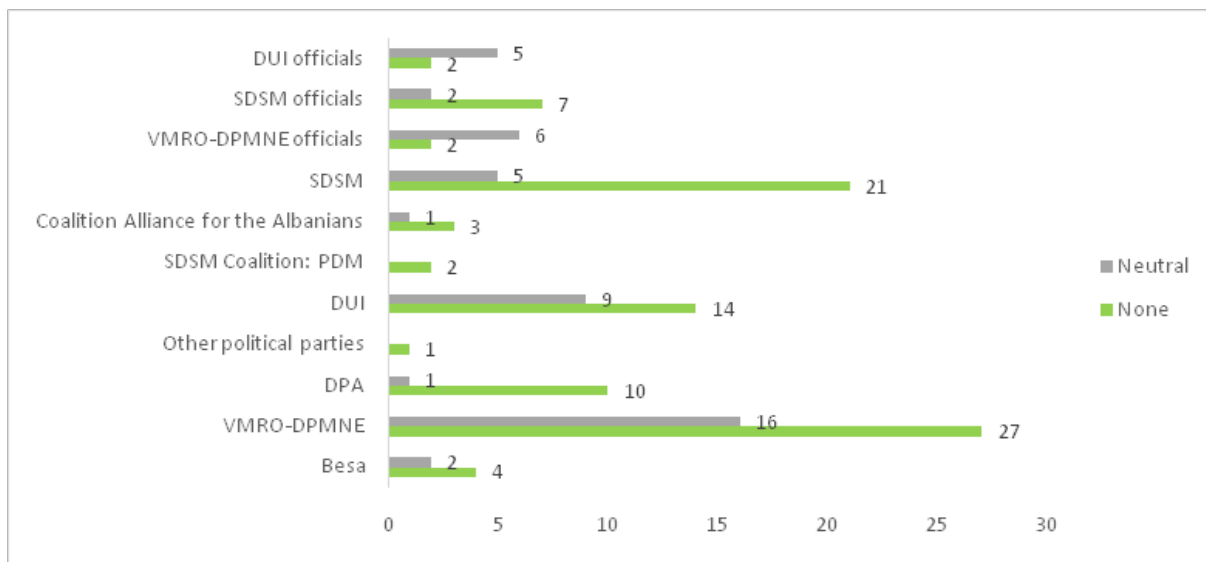
|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Topic 1  | Organization of early parliamentary elections (voters' registry, issues with the number of voters, following up on potential irregularities, etc).  |
| Topic 2  | Pre-election campaigns of political parties (all activities including rallies, announcements 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 (the celebration of the Day of the Albanian Flag)  |

## 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 events linked to VMRO-DPMNE, SDSM and DUI and less on those linked to DPA and other parties.

On the news programme in Macedonian, the TV station expressed a critical stand towards most of the political entities, as well as the institutions and state organs. Most often, this attitude was expressed towards VMRO-DPMNE, in 22 instances (December 1: ‘Since VMRO-DPMNE filed submissions against SDSM for violation of the electoral code, anti-corruption officials

sat down for an urgent meeting, which is rare’; December 4: ‘Gruevski is continuing the fight against SPPO. Analysts warn: he wishes to cover up the crimes from the past decade’) and towards DUI in 9 instances (November 30: ‘Despite several failures, DUI are promising admission into NATO and solution of the name dispute’), and on occasion towards SDSM, in 7 instances, among other things about the information for abuse related to a so called Kumanovo group, which is on trial for a heavy armed incident in Kumanovo from last year (December 1: ‘Minister of Interior, Oliver Spasovski says that Mol’s internal control have determined that no violence has been performed on the accused, regarding this case’).



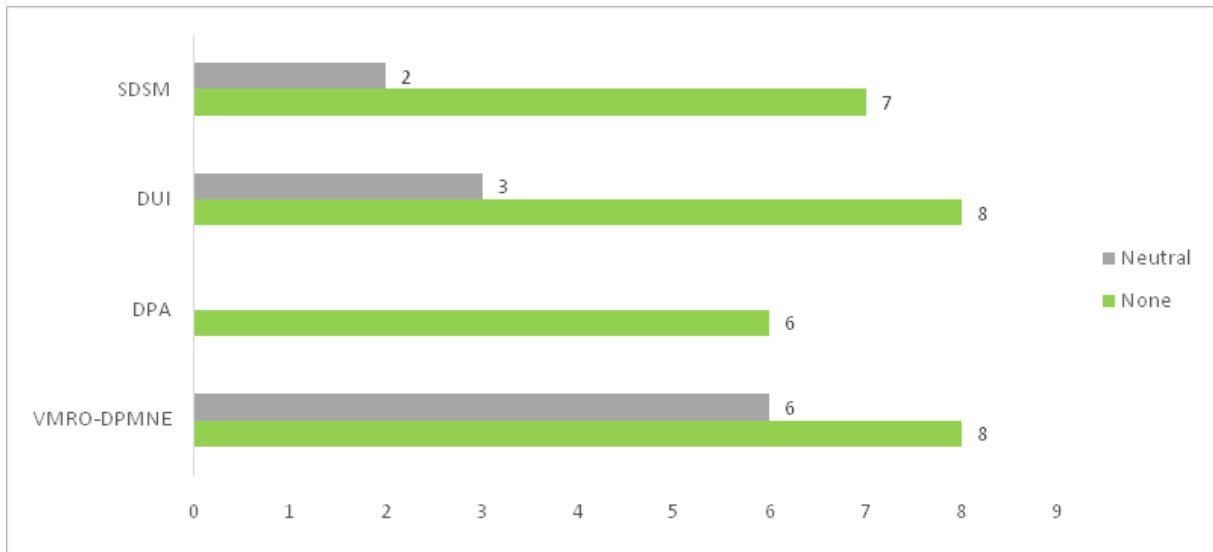
Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 – December 9)



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

In the news in Macedonian, the TV station did not inform about party activities in the pre-election campaign. There were days when the news programme on Alsat M did not show a single report about the campaign. When they did air such content, it was mostly about analytical-critical reports regarding unrealistic promises of the parties (December 4: ‘A general fight between the parties about which one will offer a higher minimal wage. VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM are promising similar amounts to the voters. Economists say that there is a realistic assessment as to what the minimal wage may be, and the amount is lower than what the parties are promising’), about the hazardous consequences those promises may be cause (Decem-

ber 2: ‘VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, in their fight to win over voters, are bidding amounts for increasing pensions, yet none of them are offering a solution for sustainability of the fund’) and other topics in which the different political entities were criticized equally. An especially harsh critical attitude was taken by the TV station regarding the statement of VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski that was interpreted as a threat to physically liquidate the oppositional leader Zoran Zaev (December 7: ‘Gruevski has threatened Zoran Zaev with physical liquidation. From Delcevo he sent a message that if the leader of the Macedonian revolutionary fight were alive, we would send executioner Andon Lazov Kjoseto to get rid of the likes of him’).



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 30 – December 9)

### 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

During the second half of the pre-election campaign, Alsat M Television did not address the topic of state bilingualism and federalization, however they did analyse a few reports (4 total) on topics that are indirectly linked to it. In these reports there was one instance of a critical stand towards DUI (November 3:

‘Why has DUI forgotten their promise to take over one of the three key functions’) and towards VMRO-DPMNE (November 4: ‘Political experts criticize the parties, saying that in a lack of ideas, they are trying to win voters over by encouraging them to nationalistic sentiments’).



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



# ALSAT M

## ALBANIAN LANGUAGE

42

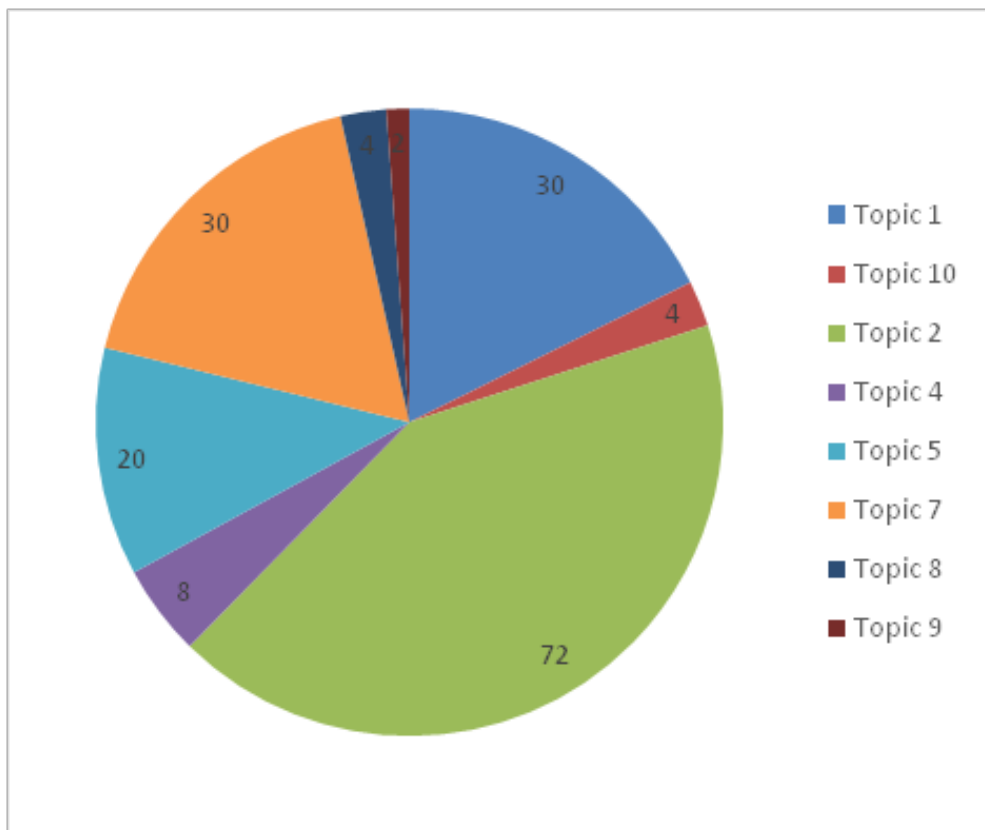
### GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF ALSAT M (ALBANIAN LANGUAGE)

- During the monitored period, the news on Alsat M TV in Albanian and in Macedonian were identical for the most part, except in covering daily political events, where the Albanian language news programme published more reports on them. In their news programme in Albanian, the media outlet published a total of 170 reports, which referred to political actors, processes and situations in the country. 72 of them pertained to the pre-election campaign, 30 to the regular work of state institutions and the preparation and organization of the elections, 20 on the work of the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, 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 (89), then followed SDSM with their coalition and officials (72) and DUI and their officials (62), and DPA were present in 39 reports. A critical stand was most often expressed towards DUI and VMRO-DPMNE as public policy creators for many years.
- The election campaign once again was not the prevalent topic on the news on this media outlet, unlike the others, although it was mentioned in numerous reports. The daily activities of the candidates (rallies and meetings with the people), were shown towards the end of the news, and in the time they allotted for the campaign, the media outlet analyzed specific aspects of it.

# 1. COVERED TOPICS

The TV station focused on a relatively low number of topics, the pre-election campaign, the work of SPPO, the work of the institutions, organizing the elections and on regular activities of state officials. State bilingualism was not covered, as was the case in the first part of the campaign. All reports featured an analytical ap-

proach with well-argued criticisms. Special focus was directed on the preparation and organization of the elections, with a special emphasis on the financial reports of the parties, the findings of irregularities, the cases that the Anticorruption Committee opened, connected to the election irregularities from SDSM, etc.



Number of reports on Alsat M in Albanian, in relation to the different topics (November 30 – December 9)

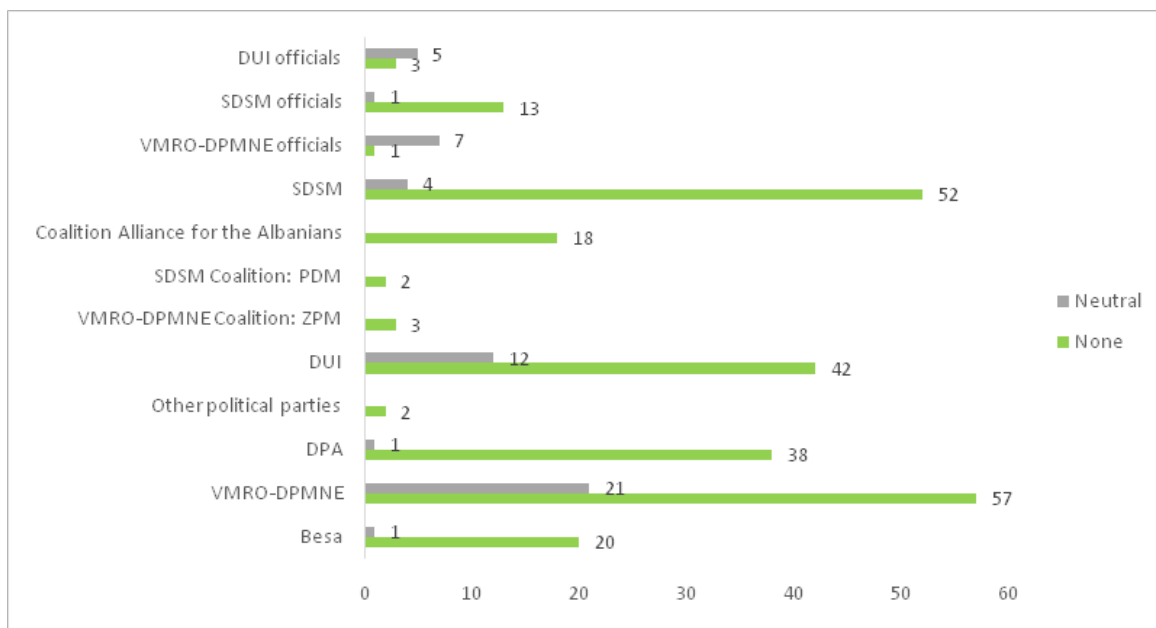
|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Topic 1  | Organization of early parliamentary elections (voters' registry, issues with the number of voters, following up on potential irregularities, etc).  |
| Topic 2  | Pre-election campaigns of political parties (all activities including rallies, announcements 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 (the celebration of the Day of the Albanian Flag)  |

## 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 achieved partial balance in reports about VMRO-DPMNE, their coalition and officials in more reports (89) as compared to SDSM with their coalition and officials (72), DUI (62) and DPA (39). Reports about other political entities were much fewer.

However, if we analyse the approach to these political entities, in the news in Albanian on Alsat M, there was an expressive critical attitude in 21 instances towards VMRO-DPMNE (December 1: ‘Since VMRO-DPMNE filed submissions against

SDSM for violation of the criminal code, anti-corruption officials sat down for an urgent meeting, which is rare’, December 8: ‘Foreign companies would have gone bankrupt without the Government too’; in 12 instances it was towards DUI (November 30: ‘Despite the rhetoric, which has yielded no results so far, DUI’s leader once again promises a solution to the name dispute and de-blocking the process’), as well as 5 instances towards SDSM, although this was mostly in reports that also criticize other parties (December 5: ‘VMRO-DPMNE and Besa have spent more than they have collected, and SDSM are also looking suspicious’). There was almost no journalistic opinions given about other political entities.



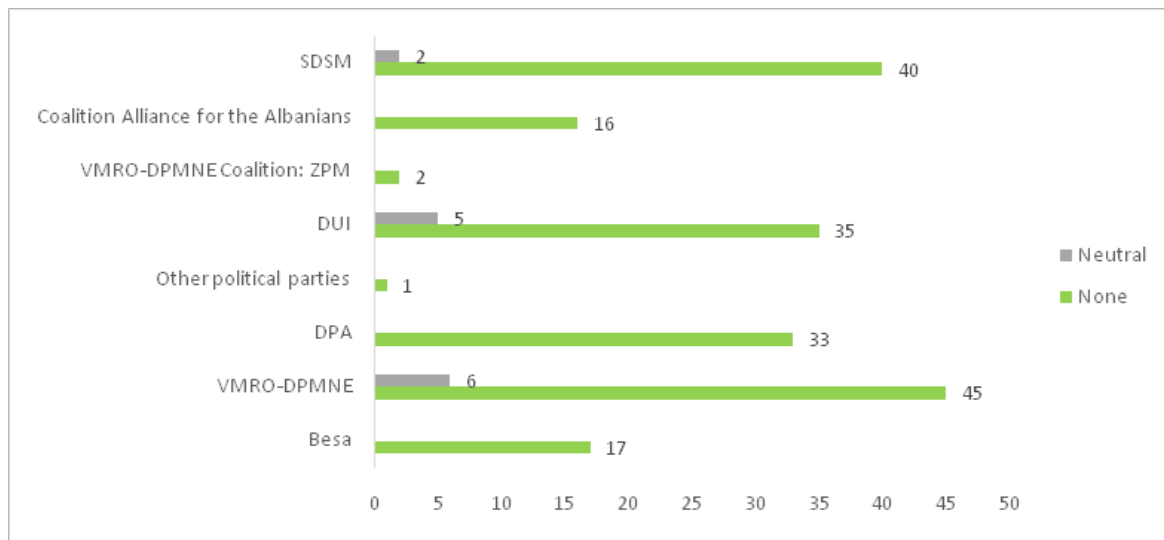
Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 – December 9)

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

Coverage of the election campaign was a topic that had the most reports published, for this period of monitoring as well. However, reports about political party activities, rallies, meetings with the people, etc. did not have a dominant place in the news programme in Albanian on Alsat M. Several brief reports with the key messages from the final addresses of the party leaders were shown at the end of the news, following all other reports. Mostly, in these blocks, the reporting was about DUI, DPA, Besa, the Coalition Alliance for Albanians, Besa, VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM.

The most commonly presented entity in the overall reports referring to the campaign was VMRO-DPMNE (53 reports), then followed SDSM (42), DUI (40), and DPA (33), somewhat fewer were

about Besa (18) and the Alliance for Albanians (17), and there were no reports about other participants in the elections. However, these reports did not refer only to the ongoing campaign activities; they focused on specific aspects of it. The most commonly expressed negative attitude was towards VMRO-DPMNE (December 4: 'Nationalistic rhetoric is prevalent in the campaign'; December 7: 'Gruevski is harshening his tone, threats are made to Zaev'), towards SDSM in the reports that contained common criticisms towards the entities (December 4: 'VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM are announcing higher minimal wages in their programmes) and towards DUI (December 4: 'DUI also did not provide an explanation why they requested so many police officers to provide a security detail around their leader').



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 30 – December 9)

### 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

The TV station did not re-visit the topic of bilingualism, which was imposed as one to the main topics of the campaign. Only a small number of published reports (4) indirectly related to it (December 3: 'DUI have forgotten their promises for one of the three key functions'; December 4: 'The nationalistic rhetoric is taking its toll in the campaign').

The topic that got a lot of attention (30 reports) was the organizational aspects and the regularity of the pre-election process, of the fi-

ancial reports of the parties, the findings about irregularities, etc. Reports on various irregularities linked to the elections got special attention and a critical attitude (December 2: 'The Prosecutor's Office, 42 investigations about election irregularities'; December 3: 'Legal experts doubt that Marko Zvrlevski's Prosecution Office is working on election irregularities'; December 6: 'Thousands of applicants have entered the same e-mail address, abroad'; December 9: 'Civil have reported numerous violation in the SEC').



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



# TV 21

## MACEDONIAN LANGUAGE

46

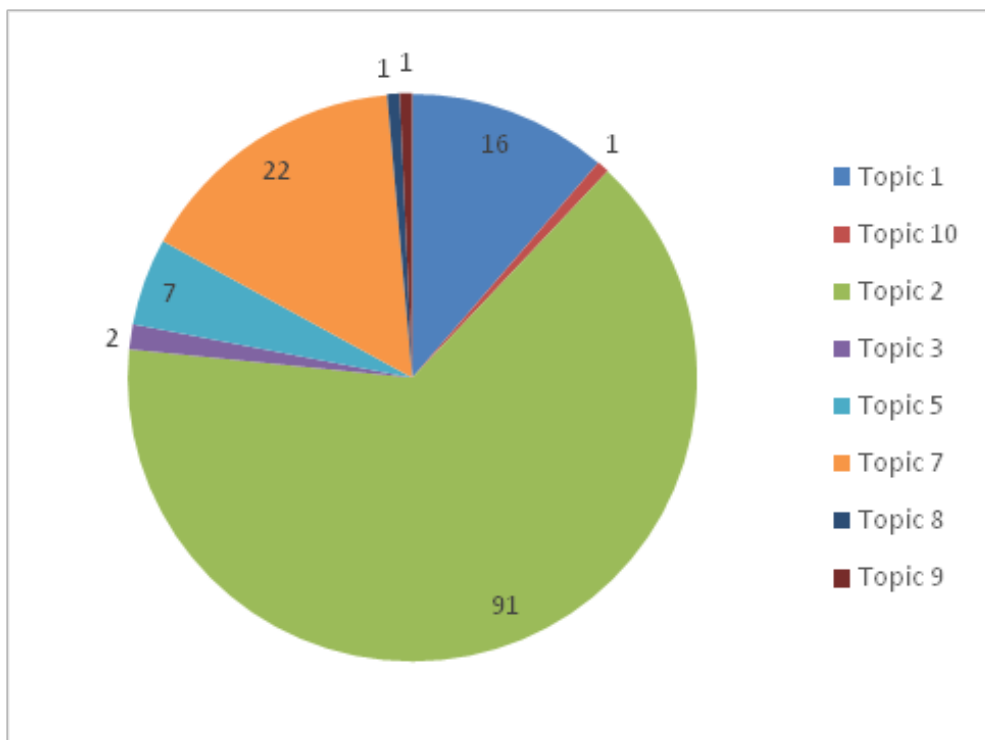
### GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF TV 21 IN MACEDONIAN

- In their news in Macedonian, TV 21 published a total of 141 reports concerning current political events. More than half of the reports (91) were about the pre-election activities of the parties, then followed the reports about state and local institutions (22), the activities around the preparation of elections (16), the work of the SPPO (7), the promotion of Government measures and investments (2), state bilingualism and federalization (1) and Albanian Flag Day (1).
- Also judging by the number of reports and the manner of reporting about the role of Government (73) and opposition (61) representatives in daily political events, this TV station showed an almost balanced approach. Most of the reports (322 total, mentioning political entities) were a conveyance of the standpoints of the actors in daily political events, and an insignificant number of reports (13) out of the total number of reports, contained well-argued criticism.
- Except for the major political parties and coalitions, for which there was balanced reporting, this TV station allotted space in their news programme for all new pre-election coalitions and smaller entities, unlike other TV stations. In none of the reports a favourizing or demonizing attitude was observed.

# 1. COVERED TOPICS

Very few of the topics that this TV station covered during the monitoring period were not linked to the elections. Nonetheless, in these topics, such as the pre-election political programmes, the TV station raised some topics that are of interest for a larger or smaller group of citizens, such as the rights of the LGBT community (5.12. 'The LGBT community is invisible, only one party has an LGBT candidate for MP'), or for the blind (5.12 'Voting ballots with Braille alphabet, can the vote of the blind be abused?'). The preparation of the elections was analyzed with the same pattern, focusing on specific issues. 'Are there reasons to doubt the results from the

elections', (9.12.) '104 persons 'disappeared' from the voters' registry, Civil: the phantoms have migrated from one address to another (9.12) 'Voters cannot find themselves on the voters' registry' (6.12.), 'and are the costs in the financial reports of the parties realistic, etc. The work of the SPPO was monitored through reports of the inaccessibility of the servers of the operators in the case 'Fortress', about the state in the courts, the air pollution, raising public awareness about the poor conditions of the Center for Rehabilitation of Children and Young People (3.12), which was published on the occasion of marking the Day of Persons with Disabilities



Number of reports on TV 21 (Macedonian), in relation to the different topics (November 30 – December 9)

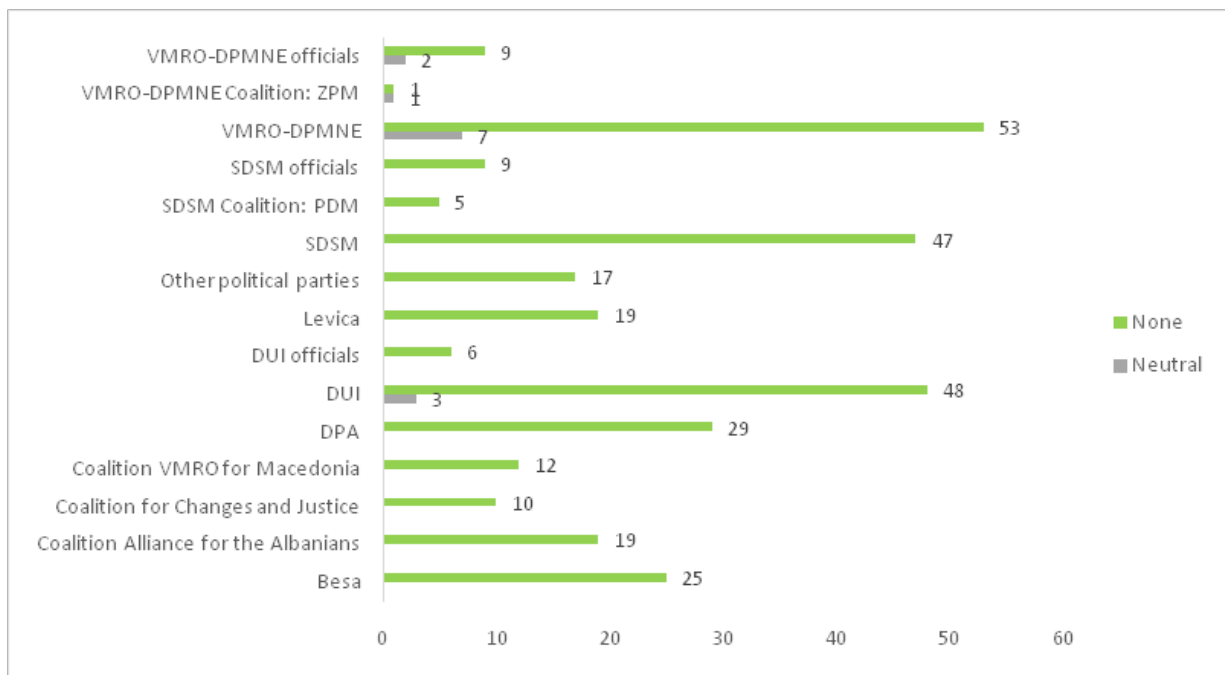
|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Topic 1  | Organization of early parliamentary elections (voters' registry, issues with the number of voters, following up on potential irregularities, etc).  |
| Topic 2  | Pre-election campaigns of political parties (all activities including rallies, announcements 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 (the celebration of the Day of the Albanian Flag)  |



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

VMRO DPMNE, the Coalition for a Better Macedonia and Government officials had the highest number of appearances (73), although SDSM, their coalition and officials from the opposition did not fall far behind (61), after which came DUI with 57 mentions, as compared to all reports on domestic events. With half, even less than half appearances, DPA followed (29) and Besa (25), the Alliance for Albanians (19) as many for Levica, other political parties (17), the Coalition VMRO for Macedonia with 12, Chang-

es and Justice 10. In 13 reports the journalistic approach was critically-neutral (in 7 it was for VMRO-DPMNE, 3 for DUI, 1 for VMRO for Macedonia and 2 for SDSM): 1.12 'Less money allocated for fighting HIV, 37 new cases of the virus this year – only 3 are women', 3.12 'Pensioners got paid ahead of time, they got their pensions increased by five percent for November', 2.12. 'Suspicious payments made to parties and singers; businessmen and companies are the main donors'.



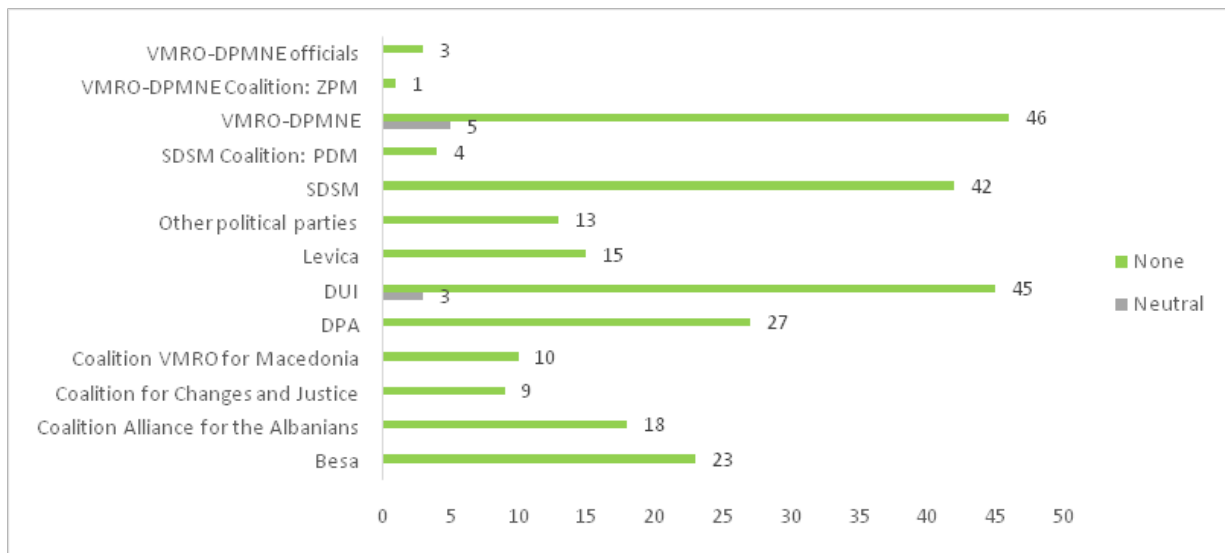
**Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 - December 9)**



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

This TV station, in the news in Macedonian, kept balance only in the appearance of the three political entities when reporting about the campaign: VMRO DPMNE (55), DUI (48) and SDSM (46), after which came DPA (27), Besa (23), the Alliance for Albanians (18), Levica (15), the Coalition VMRO for Macedonia (10), Coalition for Changes and Justice (9) and other political parties (13 ap-

pearances). Most of the reports were descriptive, while 8 contained an argument supported critical and neutral stand (5 for VMRO DPMNE and 3 for DUI): 5.12. 'Agreement between Eco Guerilla and the political parties, Dzaferi: VMRO-DPMNE and DUI are boycotting the agreement', 7.12 'Electoral rhetoric: Gruevski: Goce Delcev would have sent Kjoseto to Zaev'.



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 30 – December 9)

### 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

In the second part of the campaign, the topic of bilingualism and federalization appears in only one report which was from a pre-election

appearance of a political party and it did not include a journalist opinion.



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



# TV 21

## ALBANIAN LANGUAGE

50

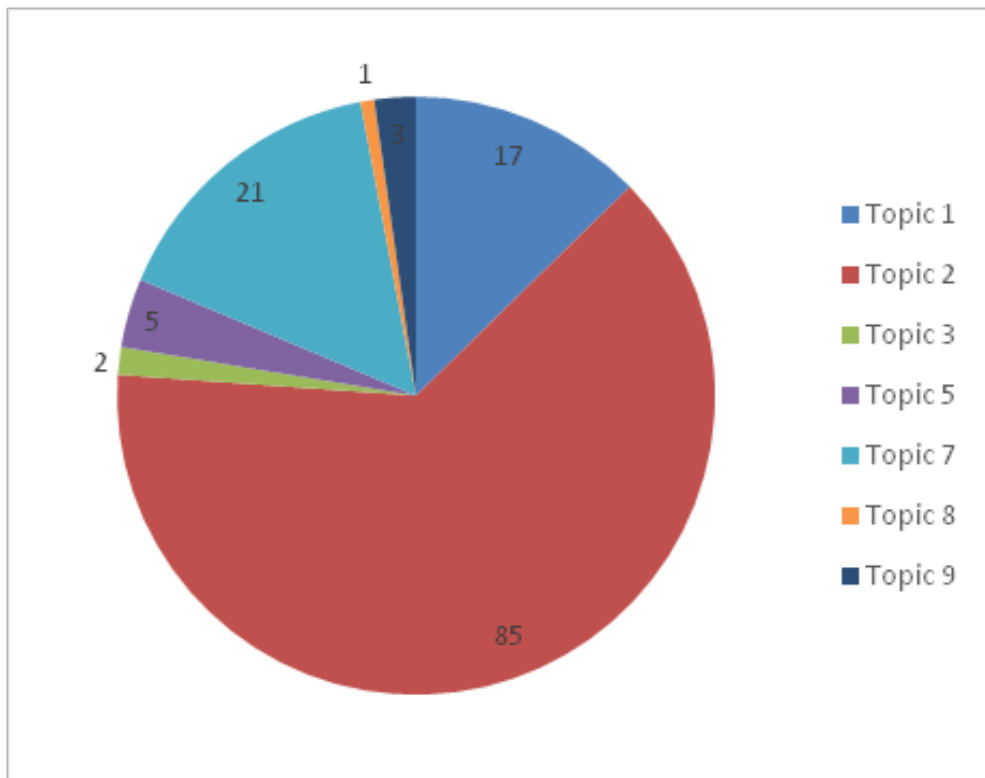
### GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF TV 21 IN ALBANIAN

- In their news in Macedonian, TV 21 published a total of 134 reports concerning current political events. More than half of the reports (85) were about the pre-election activities of the parties, then followed the reports about the regular work of state and local institutions (21), the activities around the preparation of elections (17), the SPPO (5), the promotional Government measures (2) and state bilingualism and federalization (1).
- In general, the reports did not include an explicit journalistic attitude, and both in the number of reports and the manner of reporting about the role of Government and opposition representatives in daily political events, this TV station showed an almost balanced approach.
- Relative balance both in a quantitative and qualitative aspect was also present in reports about pre-election activities of political entities. Most of the reports were about the ruling VMRO DPMNE (50), then DUI (49), SDSM (42), DPA (29), having in mind that the TV station reported on all of them without a journalistic opinion. A slightly smaller portion of news air time was about the new pre-election coalitions (Coalition Alliance for Albanians and the Coalition for Changes and Justice) and other smaller parties.

# 1. COVERED TOPICS

Both in terms of the number of reports and in the topics that were covered, the news in Albanian and in Macedonian on TV 21 were almost identical. Pre-election representations cover most of the news air time, and following the principle of non-selectivity space was allotted (although slightly more) to bigger parties and to the smaller parties, as well as to new parties and coalitions. The preparation of the elections was monitored by raising questions about the doubts in the voters' registry

encouraged by claims from NGOs about shortcomings, through the financial reports of the parties for the first part of the campaign. The TV station continued to monitor the regular work of institutions, mostly the courts, SPPO (Fortress and the photograph from a hearing about this case), the average salaries in the industrial zones (8.12), the quality of Macedonian education (The Pisa Test from 7.12), researching public opinion about economic dissatisfaction (7.12), air pollution.



**Number of reports on TV 21 (Albanian), in relation to the different topics (November 30 – December 9)**

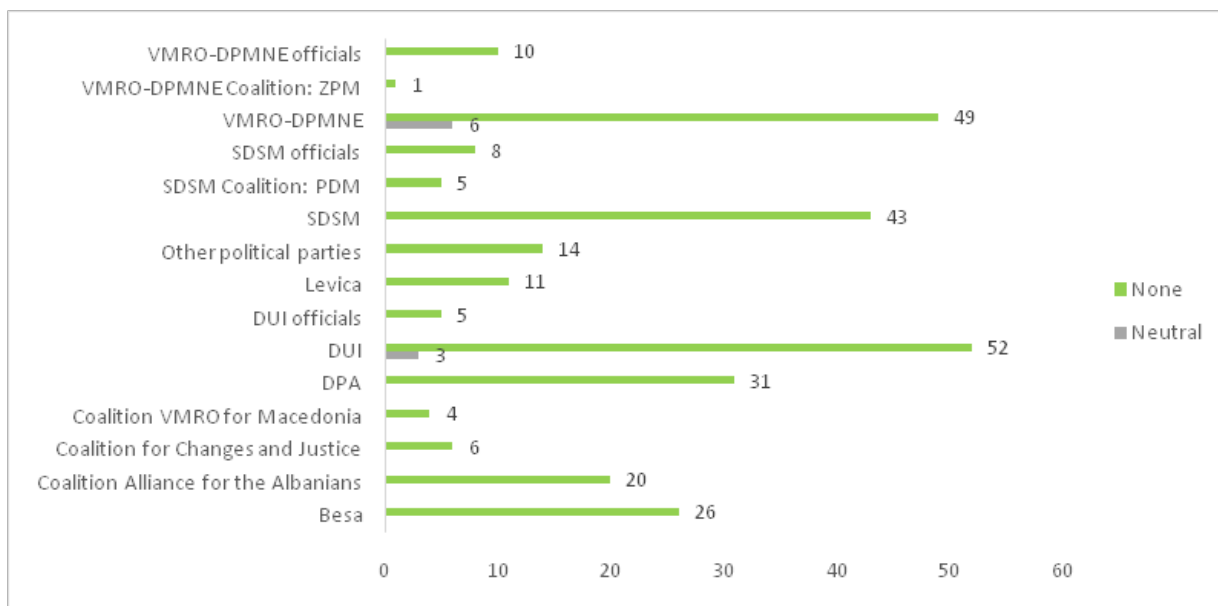
|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Topic 1  | Organization of early parliamentary elections (voters' registry, issues with the number of voters, following up on potential irregularities, etc).  |
| Topic 2  | Pre-election campaigns of political parties (all activities including rallies, announcements 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 (the celebration of the Day of the Albanian Flag)  |



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

If we take a look at the number of parties who were mentioned as subjects in the reports on this TV station in Albanian, it can be concluded that there is pluralism in the reporting, on all topics, however especially on the pre-election campaign and the preparations of the elections. The three biggest subjects, VMRO DPMNE (their coalition and officials) had the highest representation (66), DUI and their officials (60) and SDSM and coalition and oppositional officials (56). DPA with 31, Besa with 26 and the Alliance for Albanians would be part of the second group of parties

in terms of representation, while the third group was consisted of the Coalition for Changes and Justice and other smaller parties with 14 mentions. The informed remained neutral, with an occasional critical attitude (9 reports, 6 of which were about VMRO DPMNE and the officials and 3 were about officials and representatives of DUI (2.12 'How much money have the parties spent for 10 days of campaigning? VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM paid more', 5.12 'An agreement against air pollution, VMRO-DPMNE and DUI were not for signing').

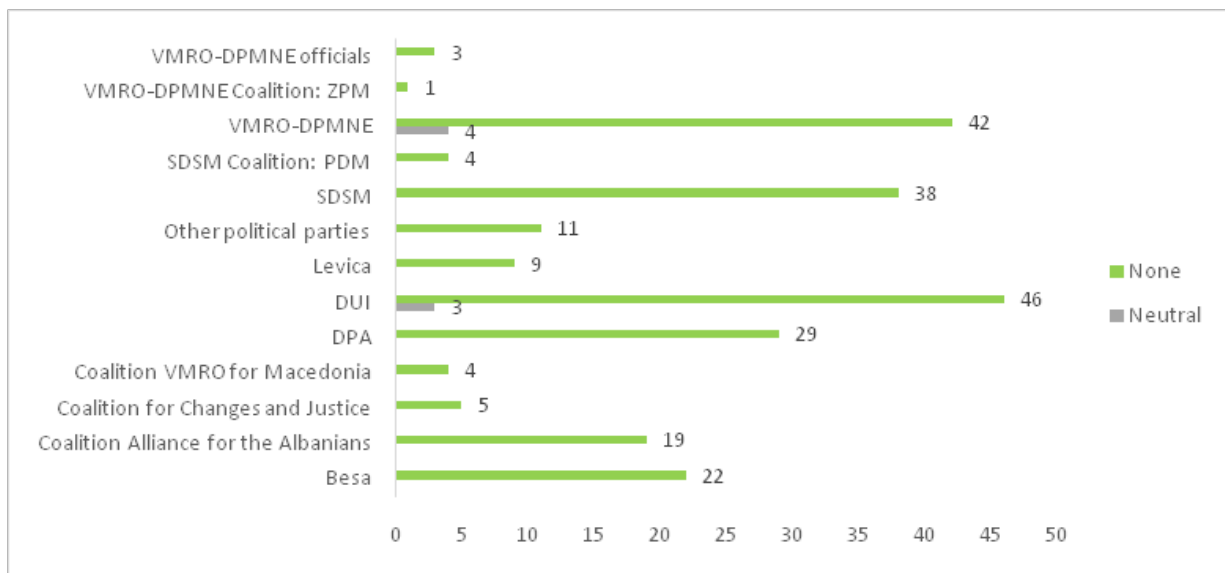


Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 - December 9)

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

When reporting about party programmes, once again an impression was made that most of the space is assigned for the three parties, their coalitions and officials: VMRO-DPMNE (50), DUI (49) and SDSM (42), after which came DPA (29), the Alliance for Albanians (19), Levica (9) and the Coalitions for Changes and Justice and VMRO for Macedonia, with 5 appearances each. Most often these reports came down to reports about messages from rallies or gather-

ings and meetings, without any raised topics. In 7 of these reports (4 about VMRO-DPMNE and 3 about DUI), the journalist made a criticizing observation of the messages (7.12. ‘Electoral rhetoric: Gruevski: Goce Delcev would have sent Kjoseto to Zaev’, 8.12. ‘DUI’s leader, Ali Ahmeti, is not crossed at his coalition parties for intercepting his communications, he even claims that the same was done when SDSM were in power’).



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 30 – December 9)

### 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

Except in one report, the TV station did not address the topic of state bilingualism and federalization, which was imposed as a topic more often in the first part of the election campaign,

as a result of the accusations made from Gruevski to Zaev. In this single report on that topic, the issue was mentioned as a part of the programme of political parties, not in an offensive rhetoric.



MACEDONIA DEMOCRACY WATCH



## TV NOVA

54

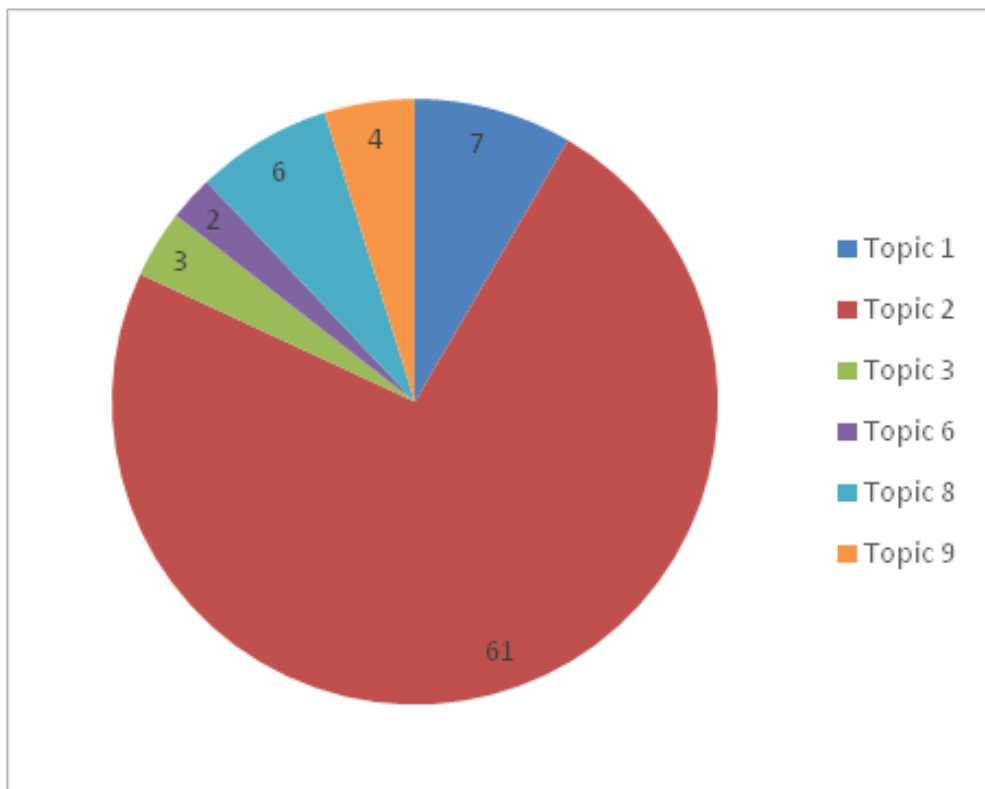
### GENERAL CONCLUSION ABOUT THE REPORTING OF TV NOVA

- During the analyzed period, TV NOVA published a total of 83 reports on current political events and happenings. Most of the reports (61) were about pre-election activities of the parties, then followed the preparation for the elections (7), state bilingualism and federalization that came from pre-election accusations between the Government and the opposition (6), the party rating polls before the elections (4), three reports about promotional Government measures and two on the Ad Hoc body.
- Most of the space was assigned for the two major parties: SDSM (coalition and officials) – 83 reports and VMRO-DPMNE, the coalition 'For a better Macedonia' and their officials (80). The small number of reports where other political entities are represented on current topics points to a selectiveness that this media outlet used in their reporting. The approach to reporting show a imbalance and partiality, for the benefit of the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE. The TV station published editorial comments with demonizing words addressed to SDSM, on three consecutive days.
- Most of the reports with a demonizing tone towards SDSM referred to bilingualism and federalization, and accusations were made of selling out national interests. The TV station also presented these attacks on the opposition through demonizing texts publishing in pro-government portals and newspapers.

# 1. COVERED TOPICS

The topic that got the most representation, by far, in this TV station's reporting in the news during the second part of the campaign, were rallies and gatherings, partially about the organization of the elections, and topics that surfaced during the campaign as specific topics – state bilingualism and federalization and the polls for gauging party ratings. The TV station also published promotional reports about Government measures, although they were

rare, however they were presented as promises of VMRO-DPMNE leader, Nikola Gruevski, published on his Facebook profile (3.12 'Economy: The mine 'Toranica' has restarted its production process. Restarting 'Toranica' was greeted by VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski on his profile') or at rallies (30.11 'The investment boom in the country continues. A new factory of Amfenol will be built', 8.12 'Three new investments for 500 news jobs').



Number of reports on TV Nova, in relation to the different topics (November 30 – December 9)

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 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)   |
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| Topic 8  | State bilingualism and federalization   |
| Topic 9  | Public opinion polls  |
| Topic 10 | Other topics (the celebration of the Day of the Albanian Flag)  |



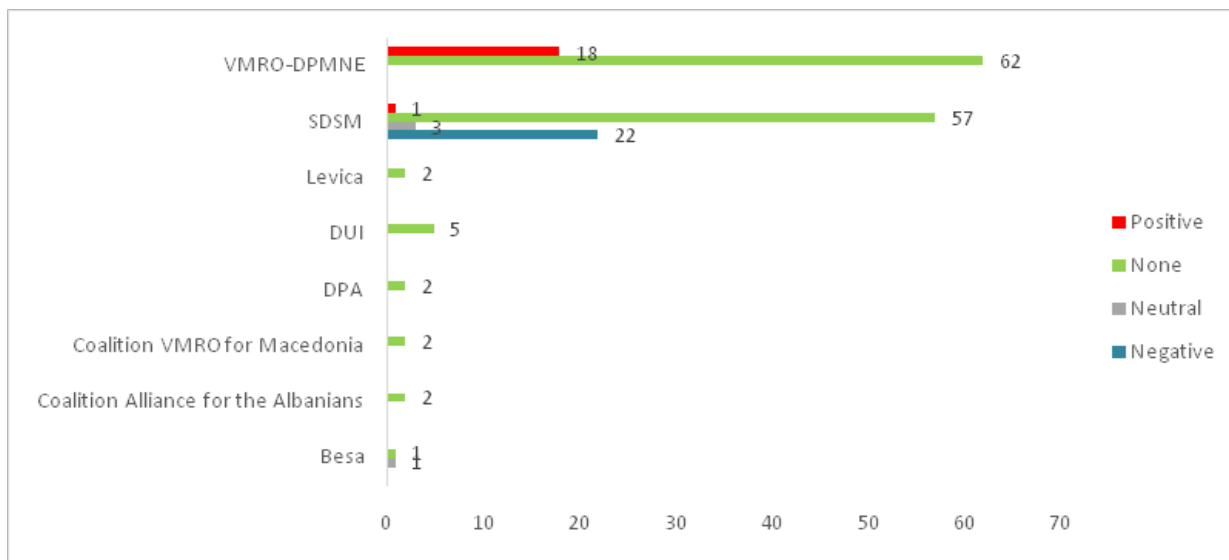
## 2. POLITICAL PLURALISM IN THE OVERALL REPORTING ON DOMESTIC EVENTS

In the period from November 30 to December 9, most of the news space on this TV station was assigned for the two major parties: SDSM (coalition and officials) – 83 reports and VMRO-DPMNE, the coalition ‘For a better Macedonia’ and their officials (80). The number of reports where other political entities are represented on current topics points to a selectiveness that this media outlet used in their reporting – DUI 5, Besa, DPA, Alliance for the Albanians, Coalition VMRO for Macedonia and Levica had 2 reports each. Although in terms of quantity, the opposition got approximately the same media space, the approach in the reporting points to an imbalance and partiality, for the benefit of the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE. In 19 reports where the journalist explicitly praises some move or activity of the political entity, 18 were about VMRO-DPMNE (coalition and officials) – 30.11 ‘If the people decide to give their vote to VMRO-DPMNE and their coalition, once again there will be infrastructural projects, highways will be built, local and regional express ways will be built, old factories that were closed during the transition will be re-opened, the salaries and pensions will grow’, while in 22 reports the tone was negative, and all are about SDSM

(and oppositional officials) - 4.12 ‘Bribing voters in Kumanovo, by doling out fire-wood’, 5.12. ‘Analysis: A stable government to end all scenarios of disintegration’).

The TV station published editorial comments for three days in a row (December 4, 5 and 6) with a demonizing content against SDSM, accusing their members and affiliates of attacking a reporting crew at one of the oppositions rallies (4.12 ‘The security guards at the rally, once they saw that TV Nova’s crew is going live, attempted to prevent our reporting from the field with pyrotechnics’, 5.12. ‘Once more we appeal to SDSM, since they do not have the courage to come to interviews and debates in TV NOVA, to act with dignity and allow our crews to work without obstructions’, 6.12. ‘Tonight we faced such obstructions and problems... we hope that we will be left to continue to do our jobs professionally throughout the evening and that there will be no further obstructions’, 6.12. ‘How can we keep a balance in our reporting if we encounter things like this at the rallies?’).

There were rare instances (4 reports) of neutral statements or reports about SDSM (3) and Besa (1).



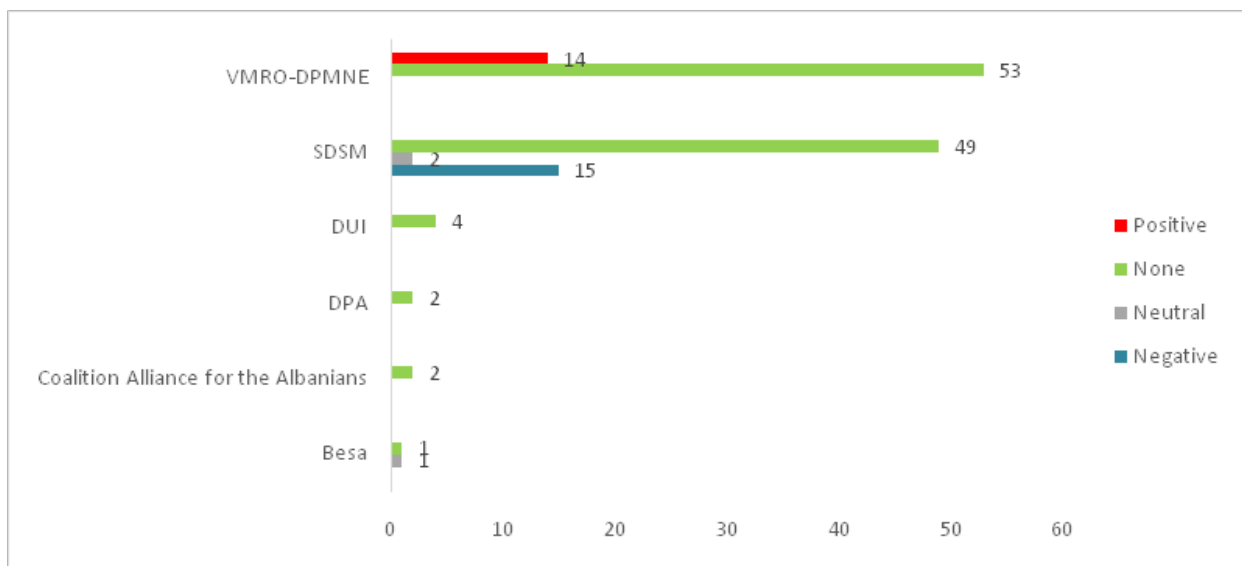
Number of reports about political entities (shown as part of the total number of reports) and the manner in which they were framed (November 30 – December 9)



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

The same image of selectiveness in the reporting was present in news packages about the rallies of the two major parties, the ruling party and the opposition; although in terms of quantity they were equally represented: VMRO DPMNE with 67 and SDSM with 66 reports. The other parties had minimal representation, although they were just as active in their pre-election activities: DUI 4, DPA, Besa and the Alliance for Albanians had 2 reports each. In 14 of them the journalist had a positive, propagandist tone when reporting about pre-election activities, and all reports were from the rallies of the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE, while the negative tone was typical in 15 reports in which the subject was the opposition (SDSM). This approach was also evident in one such report that contained a commentary analysis, where the Government is praised and the opposition in demonized (30.11. 'One village – a canton, and it decides for itself – this is cantonization according to the vision of opposition leader Zoran Zaev and his words before the Albanian immigrants in Switzerland'; 'Today, the political parties had on-field activities, meetings with the people, projects that provide subsidies for the people in agriculture and cattle-growing,

support for the development of rural environments, are all contained in the programme 'Realistically'). Most of the reports with a demonizing tone towards SDSM referred to bilingualism and federalization, and accusations were made of selling out national interests (2.12. 'A wide coalition for changing the constitutional name of the Republic of Macedonia? Oppositional leader Zoran Zaev has already pronounced Macedonia as the one to blame for the disputes with the neighbors, in front of the Albanian immigrants in Switzerland, and in the past he announced bending spines about the imposed dispute with Greece about the name', 3.12. 'After sign-boards in two languages, SDSM took a step further in the battle to court Albanian voters. In the party quarters of SDSM in Cair the Albanian flag is also raised'). Attacks on the opposition were presented by the TV station also by using demonizing texts published in pro-government portals and newspapers (1.12. 'And the Serbian party Dveri has confirmed the theft of their election campaign, the sign, the advertising materials and messages, which, they say, they made themselves. 'Dveri' are accusing – SDSM is committing a political fraud with our campaign' - Republika).



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 30 – December 9)



## 4. APPROACH TO REPORTING ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

In the reports in the second part of the election campaign, this TV station continued to publish reports on topics that came out of the campaign and became an object of accusations between the ruling party and the opposition. Through explicit expressions of journalistic opinions, the TV station advocated the position of the ruling party (4.12 'Reactions after announcements of state bilingualism and federalization are still going strong'; 5.12 'Analysis: A stable Government to end all scenarios of disintegration'; 6.12 (analysis/comment 'The vast majority of Macedonian are against bilingualism'). Reports were also aired

regarding the public opinion, and in these reports there were references to the polls conducted by institutions that are close to the Government and the results of which benefit the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE and its leader Nikola Gruevski (5.12 "Pavel Shatev' Poll: The citizens support VMRO DPMNE, and they want Nikola Gruevski as Prime Minister"). In this 'defense' of the standpoints of the Government, the TV station published a prologue in which they accused another TV station for concealing data from a poll they ordered themselves (6.12. 'Scandal: TV Telma did not published the poll in its entirety?').



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