

## **Media Monitoring of Radios during Elections**

**June 12 – July 23, 2012**

During the period of June 12 – July 23, 2012, Internews Georgia monitored the evening news releases of 12 radio stations. Main findings of the monitoring are:

- The journalists rarely make evaluations of their own about the topics covered in the news item or concerning the particular subject, and they are mostly limited to the reporting of facts. This tendency is equally distributed among all the twelve radios;
- The tone used by the journalists in most cases is neutral, although there were cases reported during the monitoring period when the journalists covered the subjects with negative tone as well;
- In most cases the negative tone is used in regards to particular subjects by the means of quotation, or when a subject is speaking about the other one;
- Compared to the neutral tone, there is a little usage of positive tone and in most cases it is used by a subject when s/he is evaluating his/her political activities and achieved results, or those of a certain political group. Most often the positive tone is used in regards to the President, the government and the Coalition Georgian Dream;
- As the polling day gets closer, the radios allocate more air time to the visits of political subjects to the regions of Georgia;
- Intensity of coverage of political subjects largely depends on the processes going on in the country. The shifts within the government and natural disasters in the country caused major interest among the news media;
- Compared to the previous monitoring period, frequency of coverage increased for local NGOs, international organizations, election observation missions and Voters List Verification Commission;
- In regards to the allocated time, the Coalition Georgian Dream is a leader almost in all the radio stations.

## **Methodology and Analysis**

The monitoring consists of quantitative and qualitative stages of the research. During the quantitative research the following indicators are observed: time allocated to the subjects, direct and indirect speech and the tone of coverage. At the stage of qualitative research a monitor is observing the following qualitative indicators: balance, impartiality, accuracy, facts-based coverage, timely coverage of facts, ignorance of the news.

At the stage of quantitative research, the time is calculated (in seconds), when the subject is talked about by the anchor of the news release, radio reporter of the news item or any respondent of that news item.

The coverage tone is assigned to the subject when s/he is talked about indirectly and also when s/he is talking about himself/herself, about other subjects or general issues. There are three categories for evaluating the tone: positive, neutral and negative. Always, while counting the time allocated to the subject, simultaneously, the tone is also evaluated, i.e. the amount of time is counted, for how many seconds/minutes this or that subject was talked about with a specific tone. While evaluating the tone the emphasis is laid not only on the contents of the news item, but also on the context as well. Such evaluation aims at determining whether we create positive, neutral or negative impression for the audience in regards to the subject. Besides, it should be noted that the tone is not assigned to the whole news item. The monitors divide the news items according to the subjects mentioned therein and then input each of them into the database according to the coverage tone, air time allocated to them (in seconds), source of information and topic. This is because sometimes one news item contains various statements of different tones in regards to one or more subjects.

Quantitative data are provided in the diagrams which are attached to the report. Time allocated to the subjects is given in percentage in the diagrams. 100 per cent equals the time allocated to all the subjects on each channel during the particular monitoring period, which is indicated in the title of each diagram.

Direct and indirect speech differentiates whether the subject is talking himself in the news item or if s/he is being spoken about. Direct and indirect speech is given in the diagrams in percentages. 100 per cent equals the time allocated to every subject on that channel, which is indicated in the diagrams along the subjects (format- minutes:seconds).

The diagrams also show three tone categories: positive (green), neutral (yellow) and negative (red). Tone-based evaluation of the time allocated to subjects is given in two ways: tone-based evaluation of the total time allocated to the subjects

in a given channel, and the tone of coverage/mentioning of subjects by the journalists. The coverage tone is given in percentage. In the first case 100 per cent equals to the total time of talking about the subject on a particular channel and then the time of talking about the subject by a journalist separately.

Qualitatively, the monitor observes whether the fact/issue covered in the news items is provided in a balanced way, i.e. whether the audience has an opportunity to listen/watch this issue from different angles, and evaluate this event from his point of view. In this case the attention is paid to the sources of information and the respondents of various viewpoints shown in the news item. Besides, the impartiality is also monitored, for which emphasis is laid on whether the any subject/s is distinguished and enjoys longer coverage and mostly positive or negative tone. Moreover, for evaluating the accuracy, the monitor observes how relevant the journalist's opinion and the materials used in the news item are (respondents' comments), if there are mistakes in the names, figures, respondents' identities. If the news release of any channel does not cover any important fact happening in the country, then this is also reflected in the monitoring.

Based on these components, we are presenting the results of monitoring of news releases per radio stations for the period of June 12 – July 23.

It should be pointed out that the trends and opinions are similar in case of all the monitored radios. As for the key trends, we should mention that the radios cover the events related to the monitoring subjects accurately and in a quite balanced way as well.

## **Radio 1**

Subjects of the Radio 1 are mostly of descriptive contents and they mainly leave a neutral impression in regards to the presented subjects. During the monitoring period of June 12 – July 23, the radio allocated most of the air time to the Coalition Georgian Dream (20%), New Rights (13%) and the government (10%). The radio provides a daily coverage of events and politicians' visits to the regions within the frameworks of the election campaign of political parties.

In regards to the direct-indirect speech, we can clearly see from the monitoring results that the share of indirect speech prevailed in the air of Radio 1.

As for the evaluation according to the tone allocated to the subjects it should be noted that the subjects are mostly covered with neutral tone. As for the journalist's tone, it is noteworthy that except for the three subjects, the journalist's tone is neutral in 100% of cases when speaking about the subjects. These three

subjects are: the Coalition Georgian Dream, government and authorities. However, even in these three cases the coverage tone is predominantly neutral (see the Diagram 4).

### **Radio Imedi**

During the monitoring period, the Radio Imedi provided almost equal coverage for the Coalition Georgian Dream, the government, Christian-Democratic Movement, New Rights, the President and the Parliament. In regards to the direct and indirect speech, here too the indirect speech is prevailing. The direct speech was most often used while covering the United National Movement, the Parliament, the President, Christian-Democratic Movement and New Rights.

As for the coverage tone, as it was the case for the other 11 radios, the neutral tone is prevailing here too.

### **Radio Utsnobi**

According to the allocated space, the Radio Utsnobi allocated the largest air time to the Coalition Georgian Dream, the government and the President. In regards to the direct and indirect speech, here the picture is more diverse. We come across with the cases of both direct and indirect coverage, although the indirect coverage is still most often used one.

In regards to the tone-based coverage the neutral tone is prevailing. However, there was a little coverage with negative tone as well. For example, the journalist used a negative tone towards the authorities and the local self-government. No cases of positive coverage were observed in the air of the Radio Utsnobi during the monitoring period.

### **Radio Palitra**

According to the time allocated to the subjects, the Coalition Georgian Dream is a leader in the Radio Palitra (32%). The government and the President are ranking second and third (15% and 8%). United National Movement and local NGOs equally got 7-7%.

In regards to the direct and indirect speech, the situation is very diverse in the Radio Palitra. Despite the indirect speech is still most frequently used, according

to the monitoring there is a direct coverage for Christian-Democratic Movement, local NGOs, the Parliament, the President and the Coalition Georgian Dream.

There is a quite diverse picture from the viewpoint of a tone-based coverage. There were positive, neutral and negative coverage, though during this period the radio most frequently had a negative coverage of the authorities, the Chamber of Control and the President. There was a little positive tone used in regards to the authorities, the government, the Coalition Georgian Dream and the United National Movement.

### **Voice of Abkhazia**

Unlike the majority of radios, in regards to the time allocated by the Radio Voice of Abkhazia, the government is a leader (33%). It is followed by the Coalition Georgian Dream (18%) and the President (15%).

In regards to the direct and indirect speech, only the indirect speech prevailed in the evening news releases on the Radio Voice of Abkhazia. The direct speech was used only in case of the United National Movement, the Parliament, the President and the Coalition Georgian Dream.

The coverage tone is mostly neutral. In case of the tone of a journalist specifically, the coverage tone was neutral in 99% of cases.

### **Hot Chocolate**

The radio allocates quite little time to the coverage of political subjects. According to the allocated time, the Coalition Georgian Dream, the government and the local NGOs are among the top subjects. The speech is mostly indirect, and the tone is neutral.

### **Radio Hereti**

The Radio Hereti pays much time to the local news, and to the processes developed in the region and in local municipalities. After the natural disaster which took place in Kakheti during the monitoring period, the Radio Hereti allocated quite much time to the activities of the Cabinet of Ministers in the region, also to the activities of opposition parties as well. There was much direct speech by the monitoring subjects. The Radio Hereti also allocated much time to

the population affected by the disaster. The applied tone was neutral in most cases. Out of the monitoring subjects, the most time was allocated to the government (32%), the Coalition Georgian Dream (22%) and the President (15%).

### **Radio Atinati**

Like other regional radio stations, the Radio Atinati also allocated much attention to the events developed particularly in Samegrelo. In parallel to the election processes, the Radio Atinati intensively covered the regional activities of political parties and their election campaign. Most attention was paid to the activities of the government, the Coalition Georgian Dream and the local NGOs.

### **Radio Old City (Dzveli Kalaki)**

In total, the Radio Old City allocated 1 hour and 15 minutes was allocated to the monitoring subjects. The applied tone was mostly neutral. The shifts within the government and activities of the Cabinet of Ministers were most often attracting the attention of the Radio Old City (24%). Together with the government, much time was also allocated to the Coalition Georgian Dream (21%) which makes quite a contrast if compared to other subjects, whereas only 9% was allocated to the third subject (the President).

### **Radio Green Wave**

The new Cabinet of Ministers and shifts within the government turned out to be mostly covered events on the Radio Green Wave. Correspondingly, quite a large portion of time (32:62 minutes) was allocated exactly to these events. From the standpoint of the allocated time, the Coalition ranks second, to which the Radio Green Wave allocated 12:06 minutes during the monitoring period.

### **Fortuna**

The Radio Fortuna allocated about an hour to the monitoring subjects and a big part of this time was allocated to the shifts within the government, the President Saakashvili and the Coalition Georgian Dream. Mostly the neutral tone was applied.

## **Radio Liberty**

The Radio Liberty, due to the length of its program, allocated more than 3 hours to the political subjects. Programs of the Radio Liberty are usually balanced, although several inaccuracies were reported during the monitoring period.

### *Radio Liberty, June 12*

A journalist: “according to Levan Vepkhvadze, one of the leaders of the Parliamentary Majority...” Levan Vepkhvadze is a leader of the Christian-Democratic Party and a Member of the Parliament. Besides, a leader of the National Forum Gubaz Sanikidze was mentioned as the leader of the “Georgian Forum”.

There is a noteworthy report broadcasted from Ozurgeti, where the radio reporter is providing the coverage of the rally of the Coalition Georgian Dream in a very positive light. He uses clearly positive attributes, such as: “number of the people exceeded all expectations”, “to me, as a journalist, the most important was to see the people gathered at the fences of their houses and I had an impression that only the elderly women and little children stayed at home, and all the other people are in the center of Ozurgeti, where almost all the entrances are blocked not because of the police, but because of so many vehicles and people. There is an unimaginably big number of people in Guria, more than any of us would expect.”

He mentions independent experts who also think that the number of people went beyond all expectations. “They did not expect that so many people would show up”. However, it is unclear which experts the journalist is relying upon.

During the broadcast there is a positive and biased tone towards the opposition party and the journalist is making following evaluations in regards to the authorities:

“Asphalt is being laid on most roads of Guria now. For example, the whole center is blocked in Ozurgeti and despite it is Sunday and this government has been in power for nine years already, it is only today that they are laying asphalt in the district center of Chokhatauri.”

## Annex

Diagram 1

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Voice of Abkhazia  
(Total: 1 hour and 12 minutes)

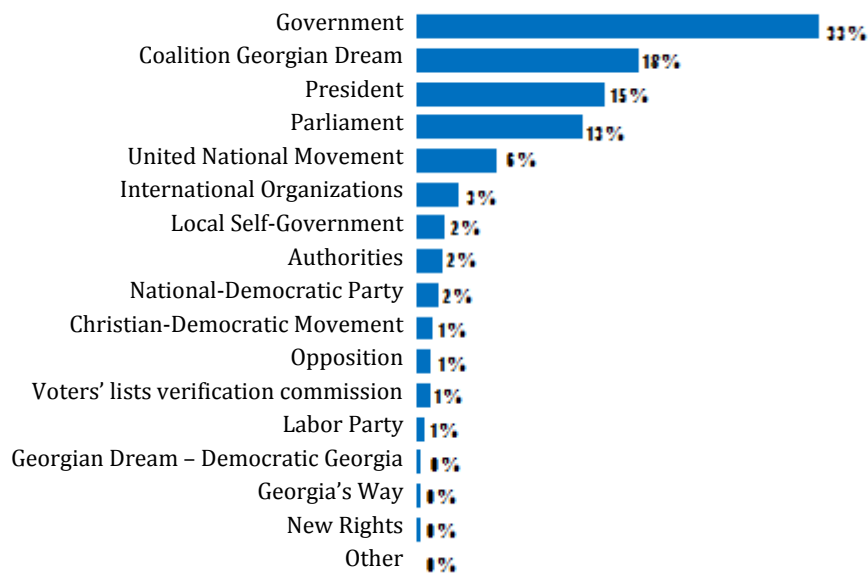


Diagram 2

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Hot Chocolate  
(Total: 20 minutes, 15 seconds)

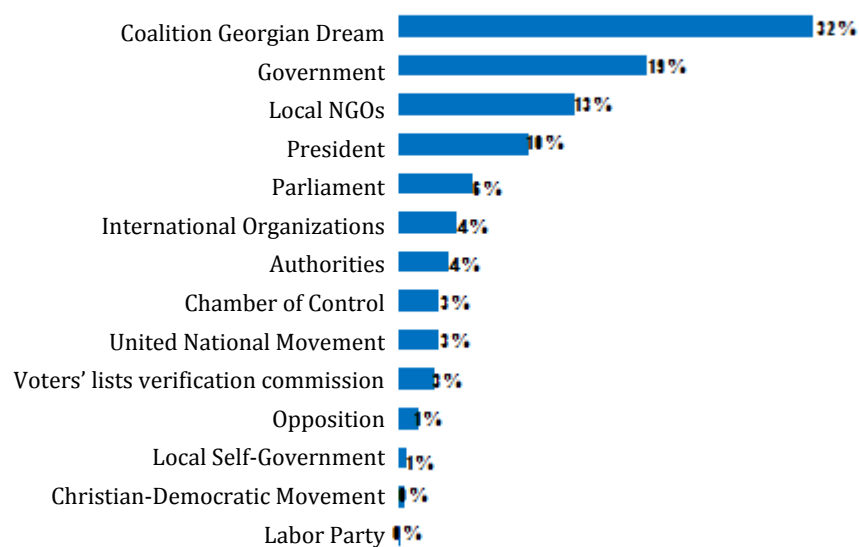




Diagram 3

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio 1  
(Total: 1 hour and 48 minutes)

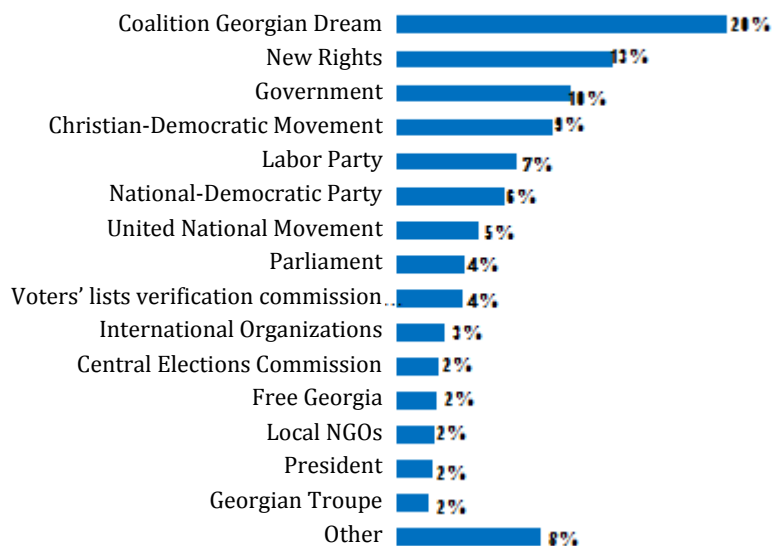


Diagram 4

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Imedi  
(Total: 3 hours)

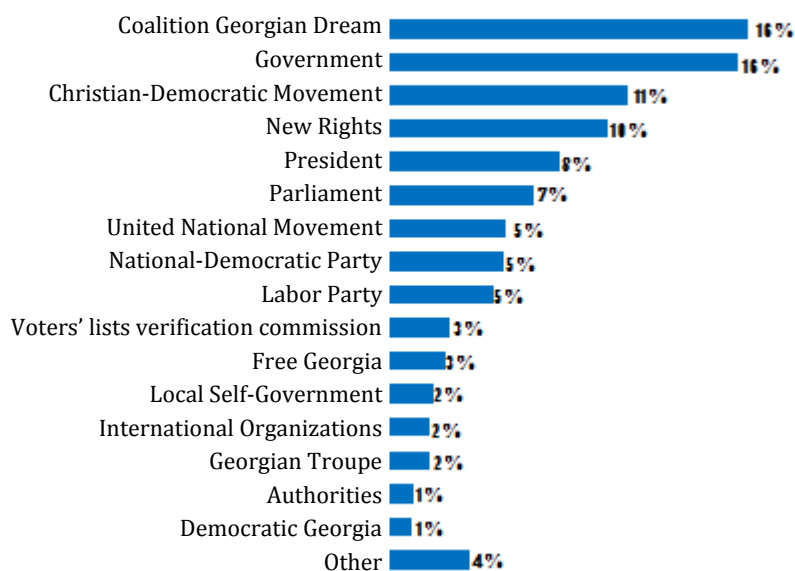


Diagram 5

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Utsnobi  
(Total: 1 hour and 16 minutes)

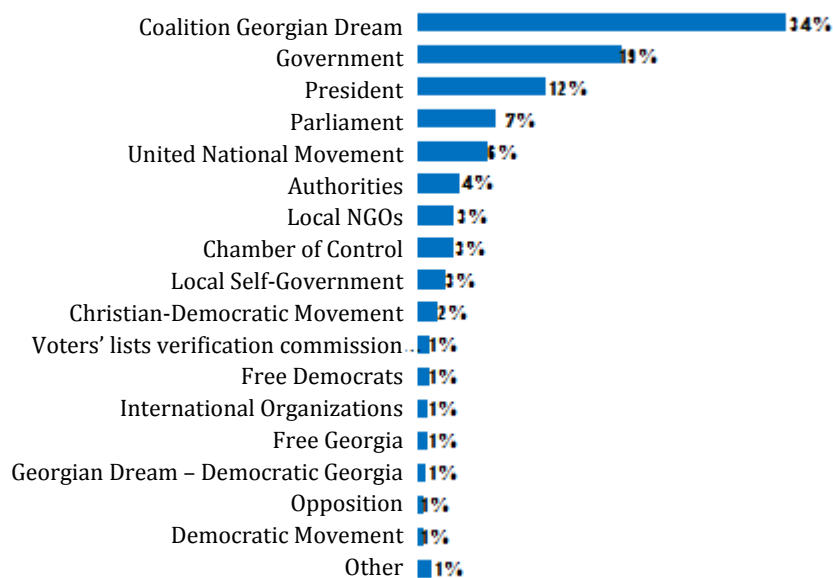


Diagram 6

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Palitra  
(Total: 3 hours and 9 minutes)

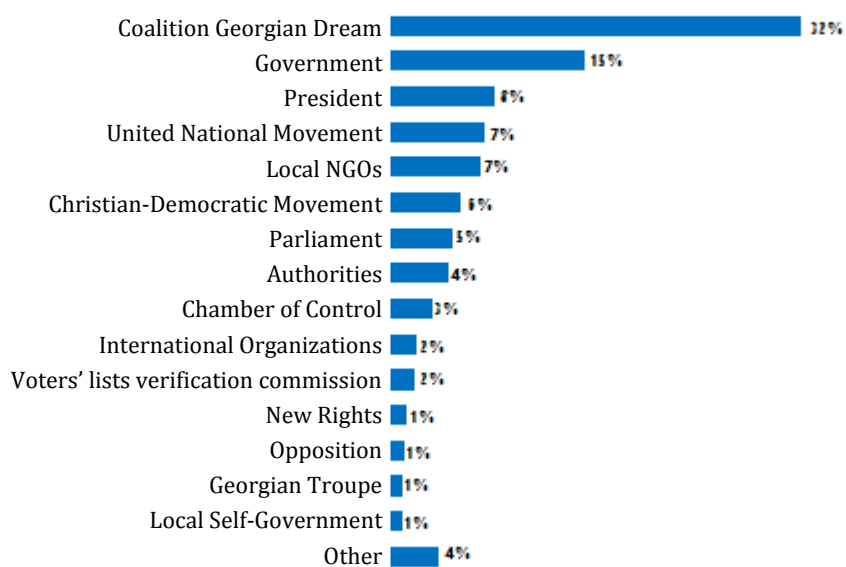


Diagram 7

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Hereti  
(Total: 59 minutes)

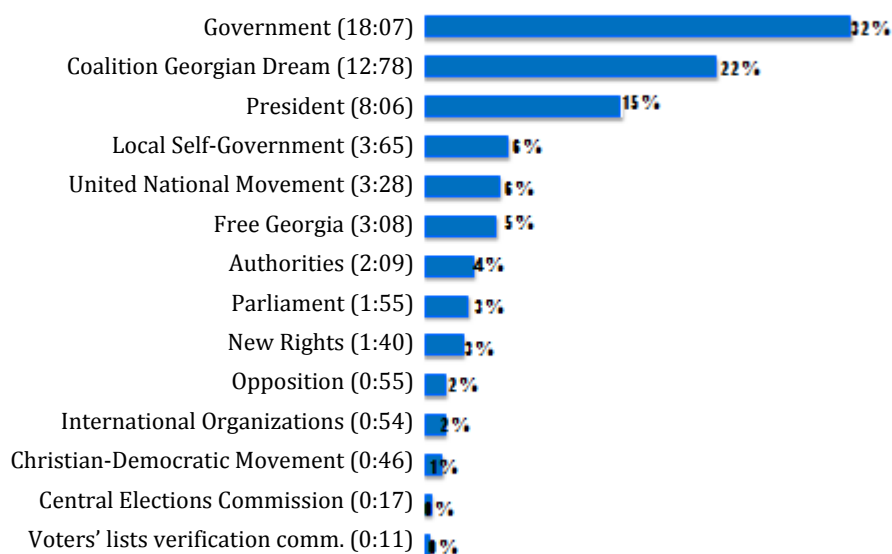


Diagram 8

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Old City  
(Total: 1 hours and 14 minutes)

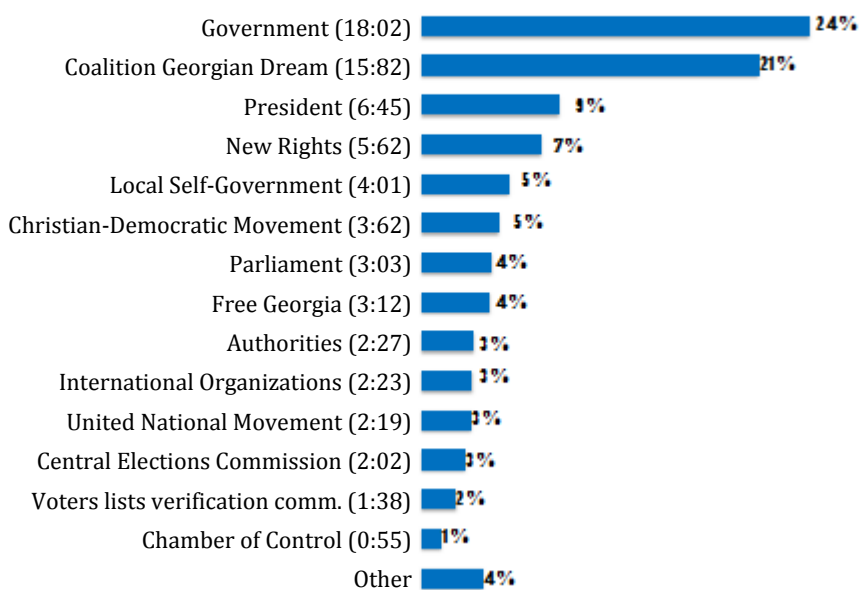


Diagram 9

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Fortuna  
(Total: 59 minutes)

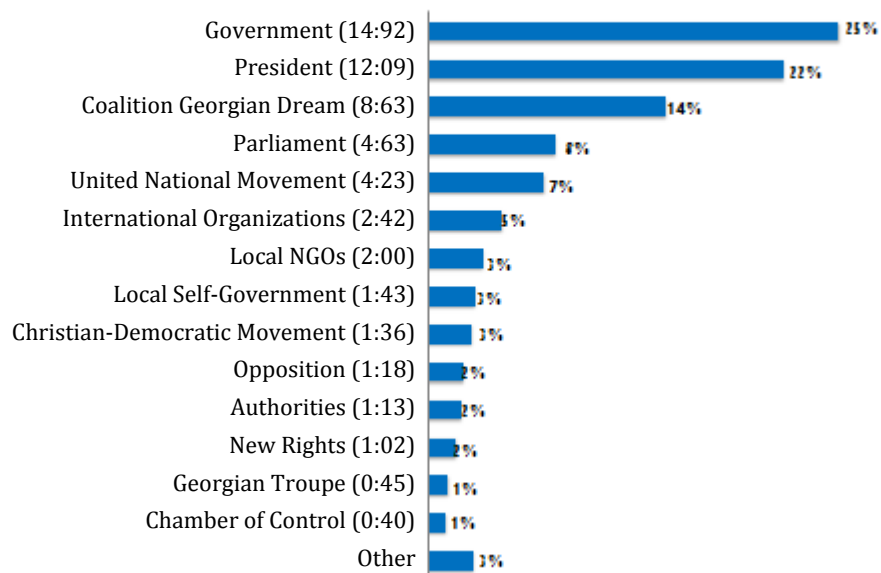


Diagram 10

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Liberty  
(Total: 3 hours and 21 minutes)

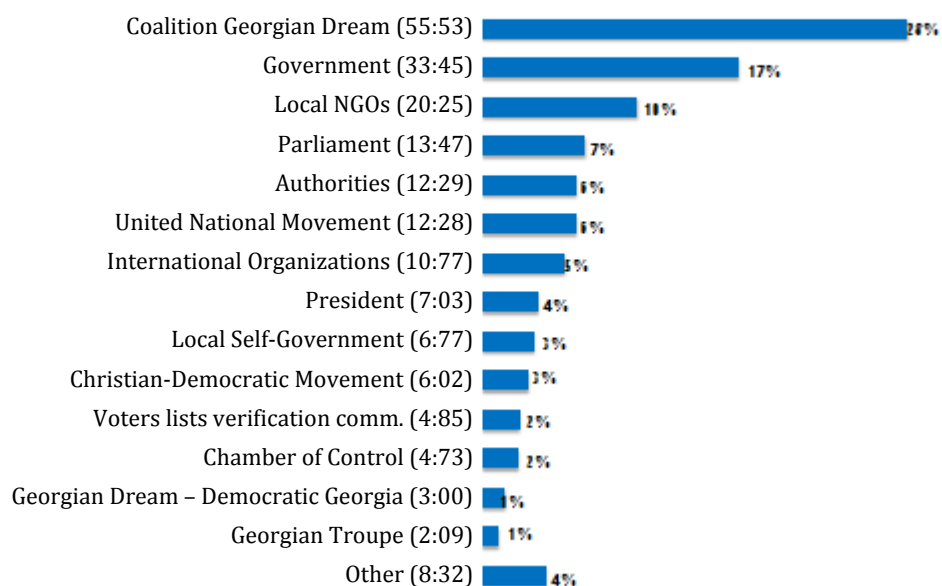


Diagram 11

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Green Wave  
(Total: 1 hour and 38 minutes)

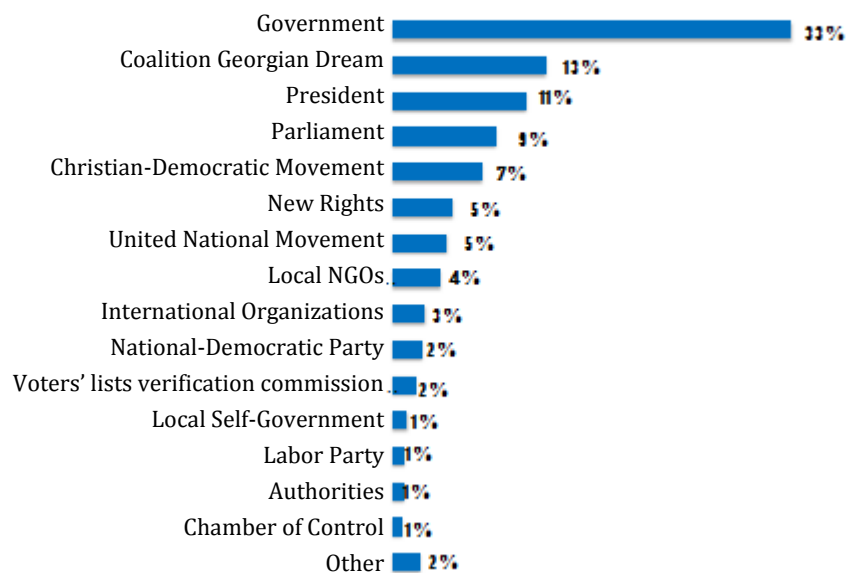


Diagram 12

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Atinati  
(Total: 1 hour and 14 minutes)

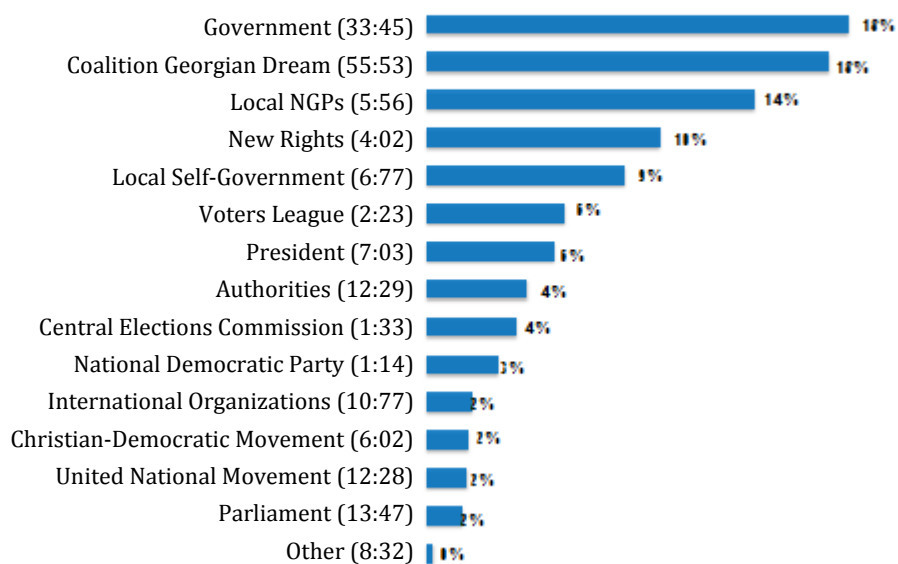


Diagram 13

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Voice of Abkhazia  
Direct-indirect speech

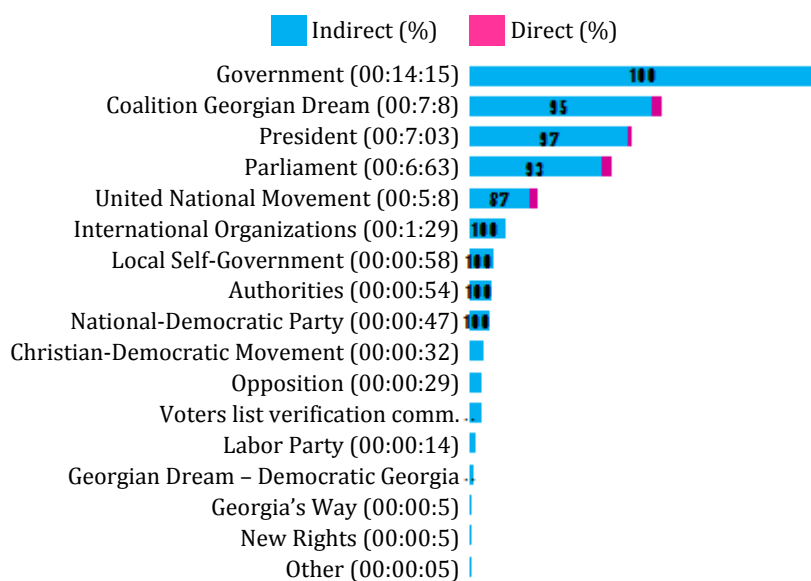


Diagram 14

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Hot Chocolate  
Direct-indirect speech

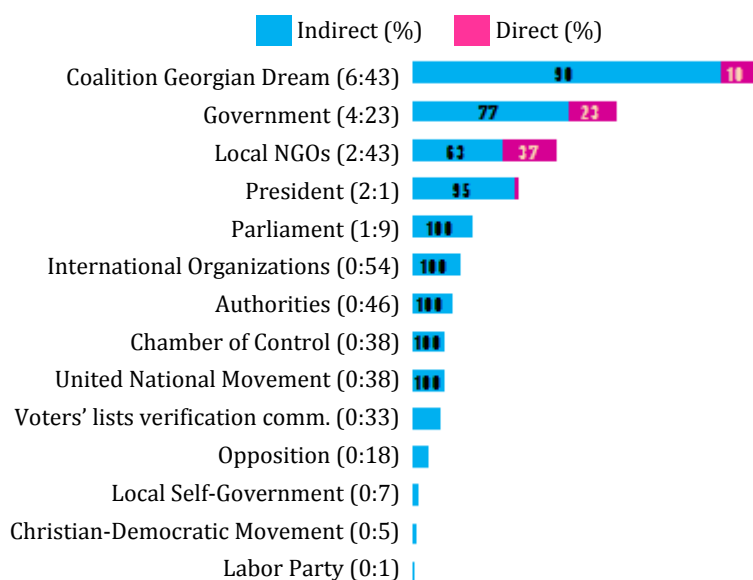


Diagram 15

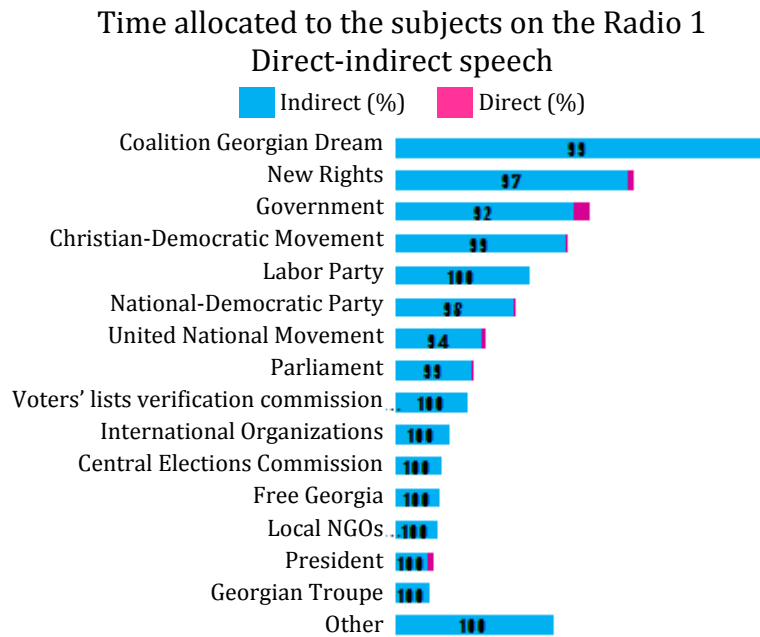


Diagram 16

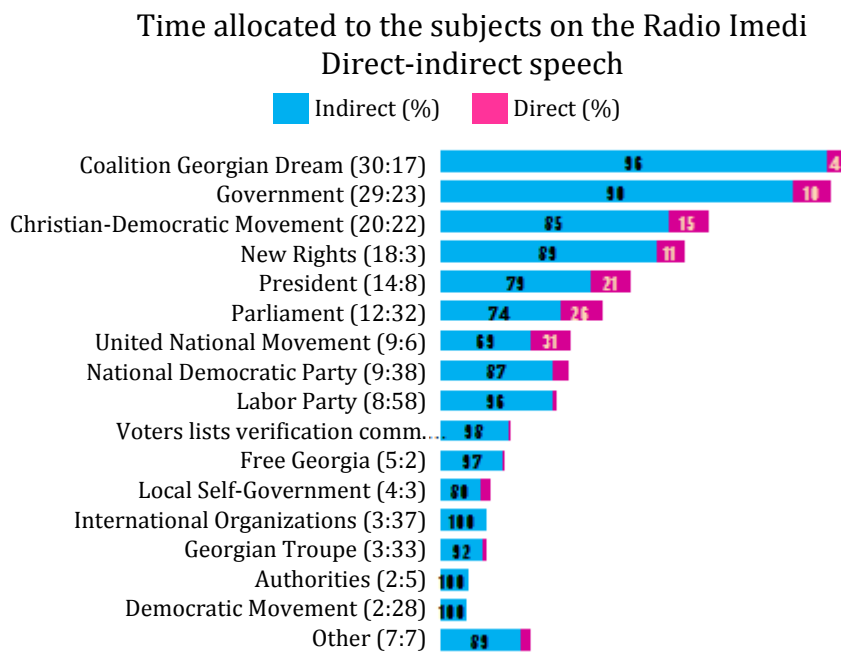


Diagram 17

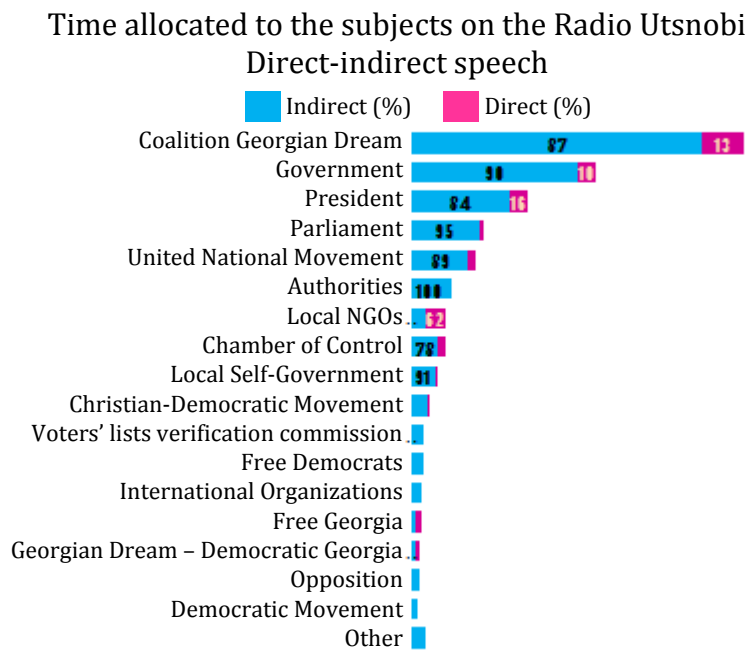


Diagram 18

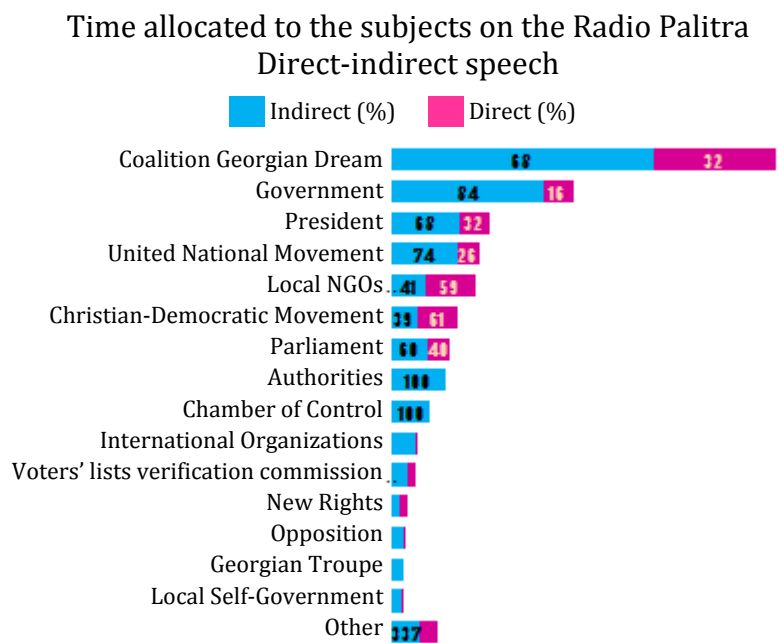




Diagram 19

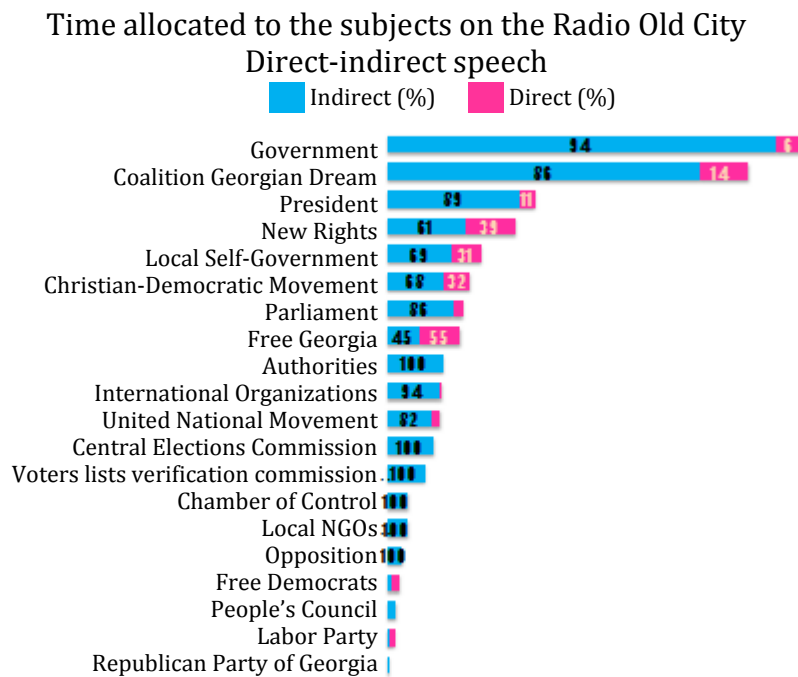


Diagram 20

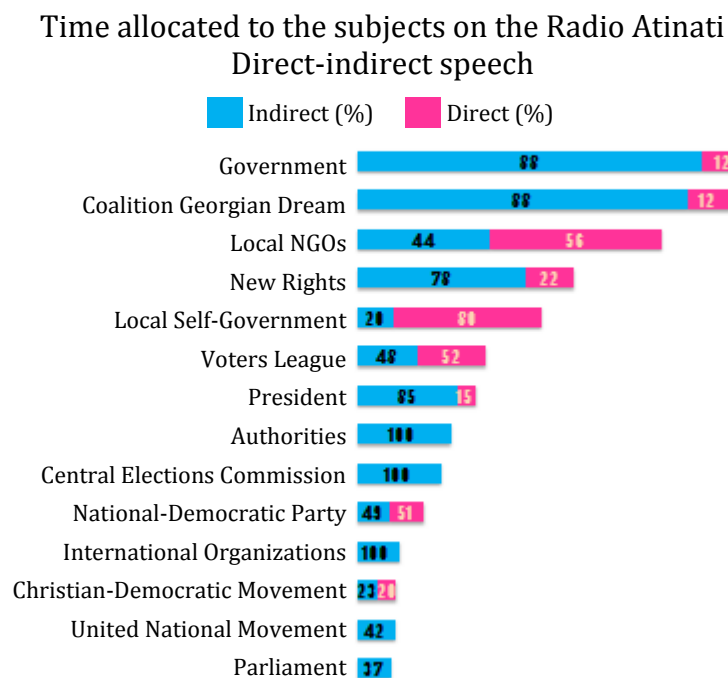


Diagram 21

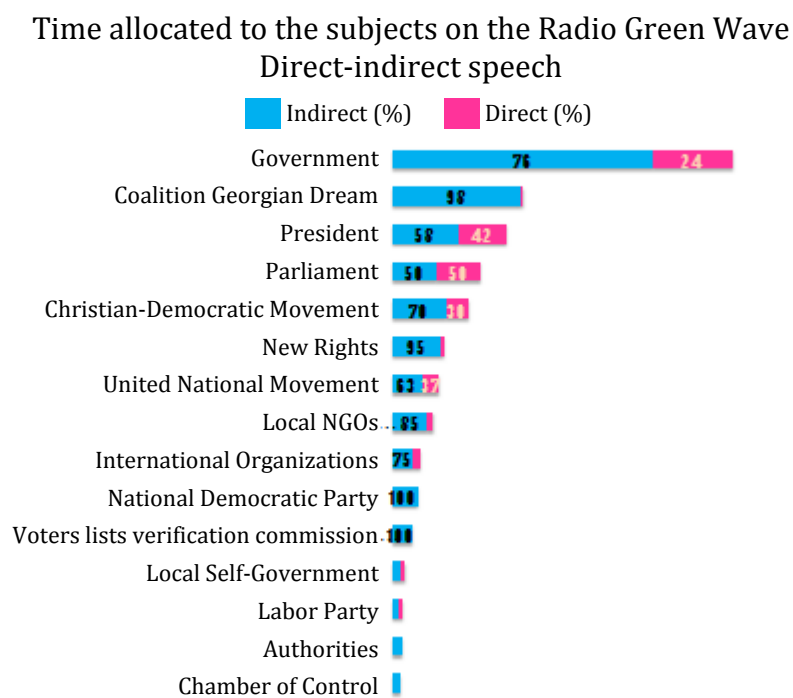


Diagram 22

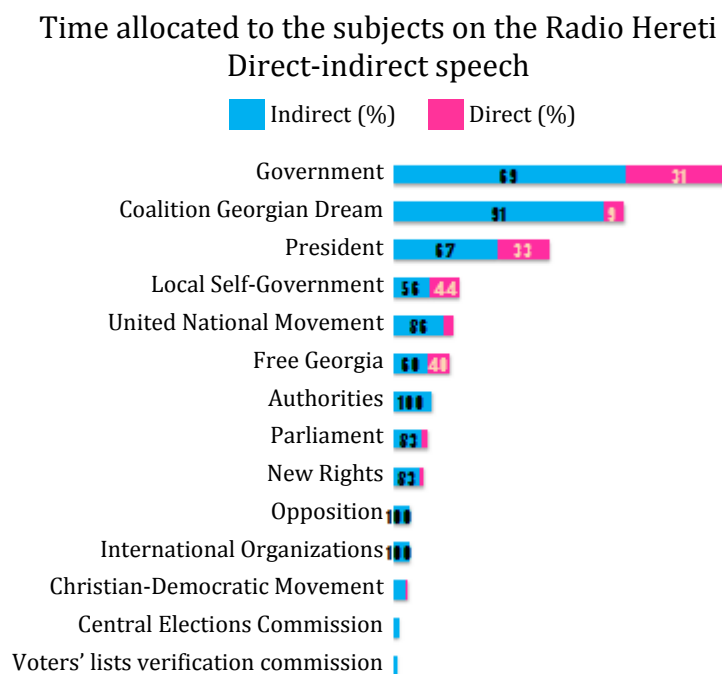


Diagram 23

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Fortuna  
Direct-indirect speech

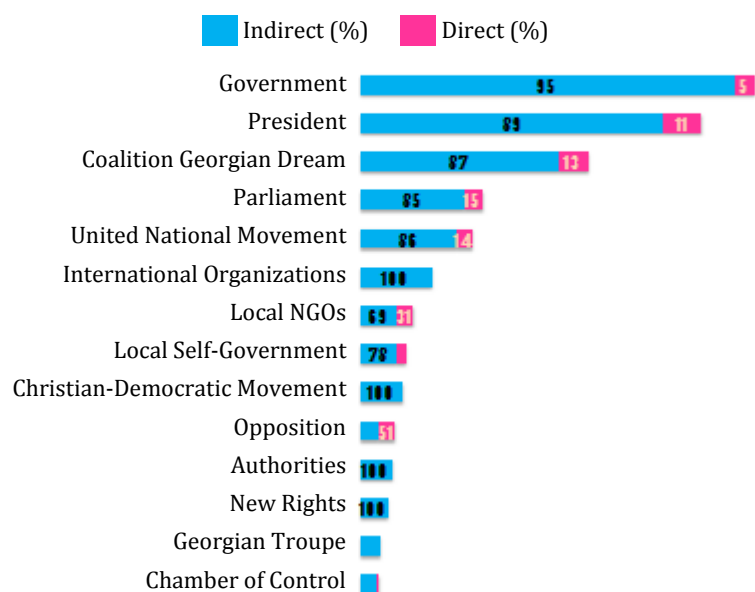


Diagram 24

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Liberty  
Direct-indirect speech

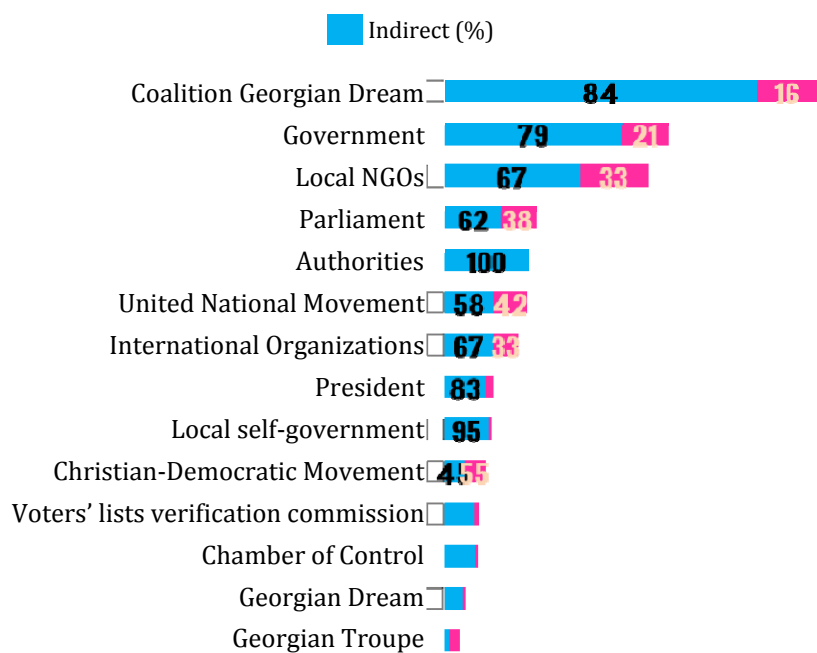


Diagram 25

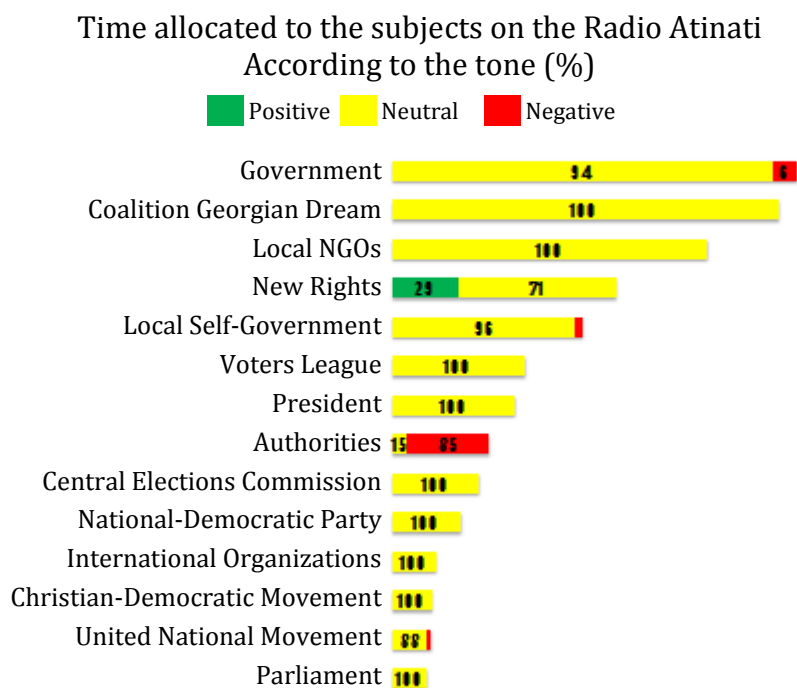


Diagram 26

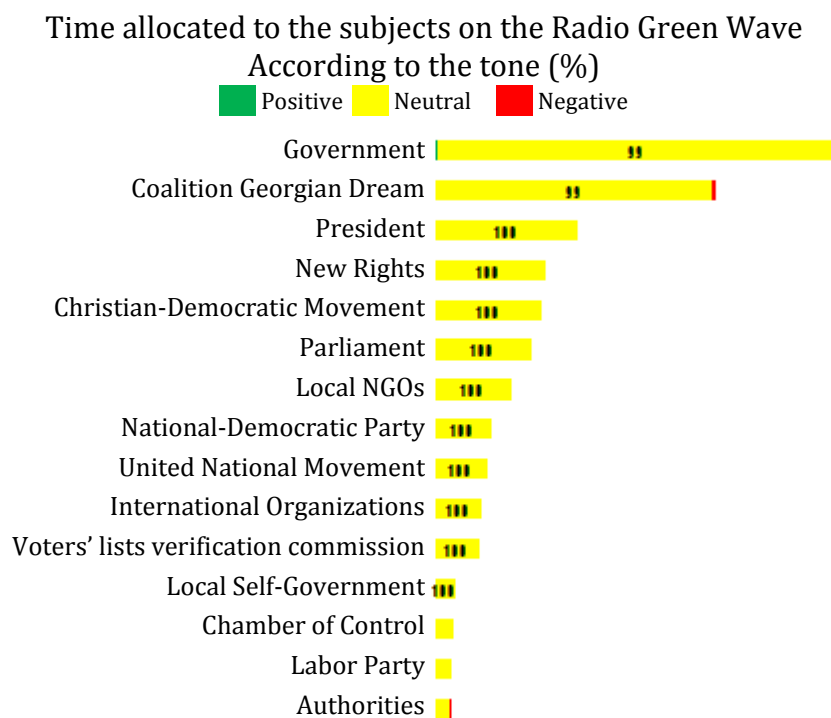


Diagram 27

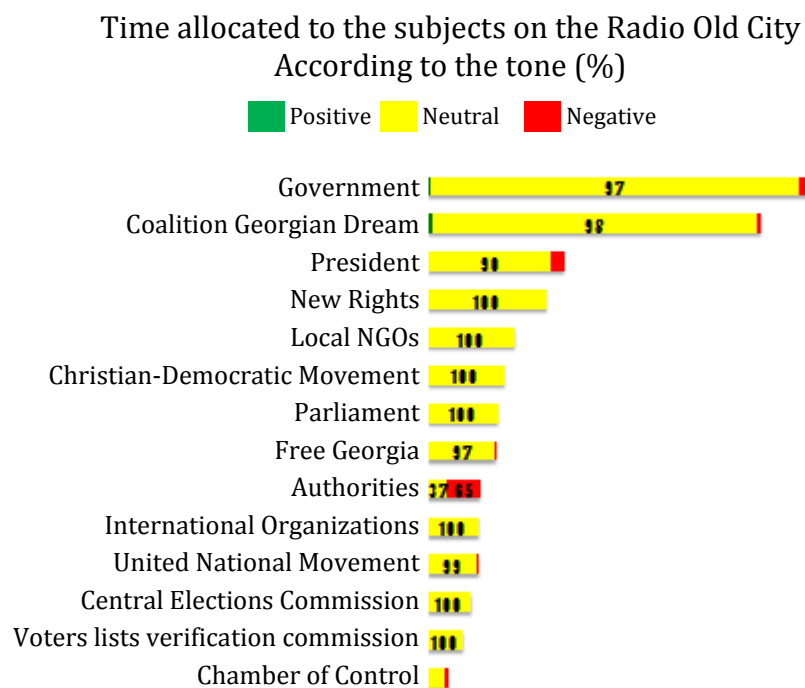


Diagram 28

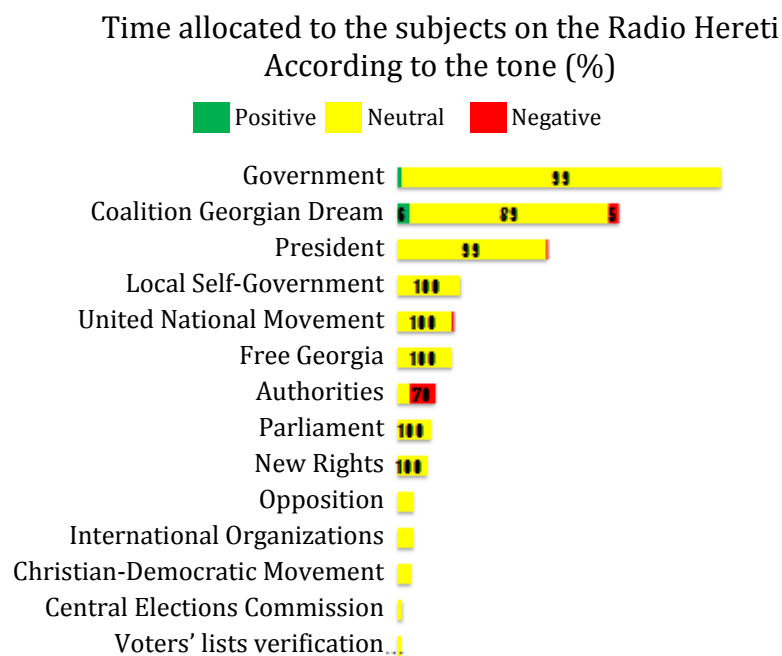


Diagram 29

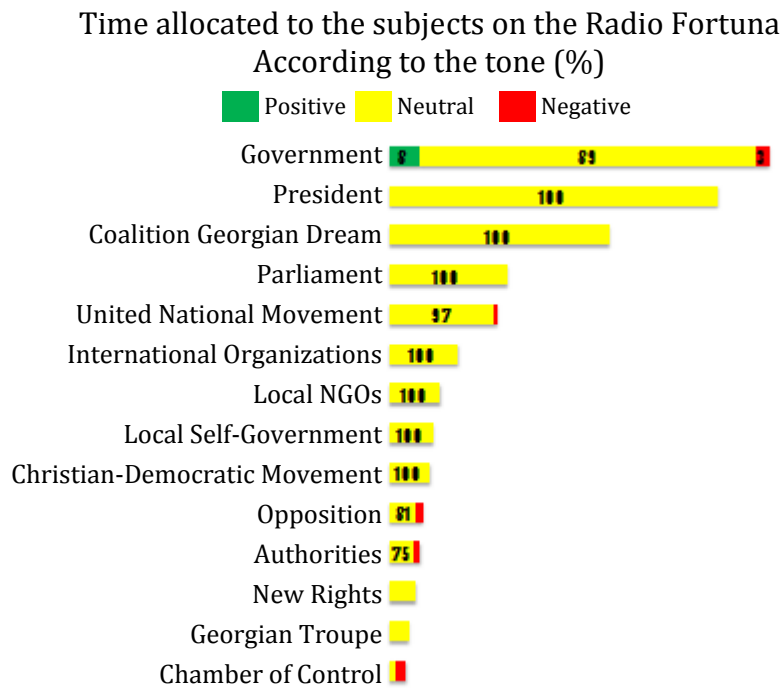


Diagram 30

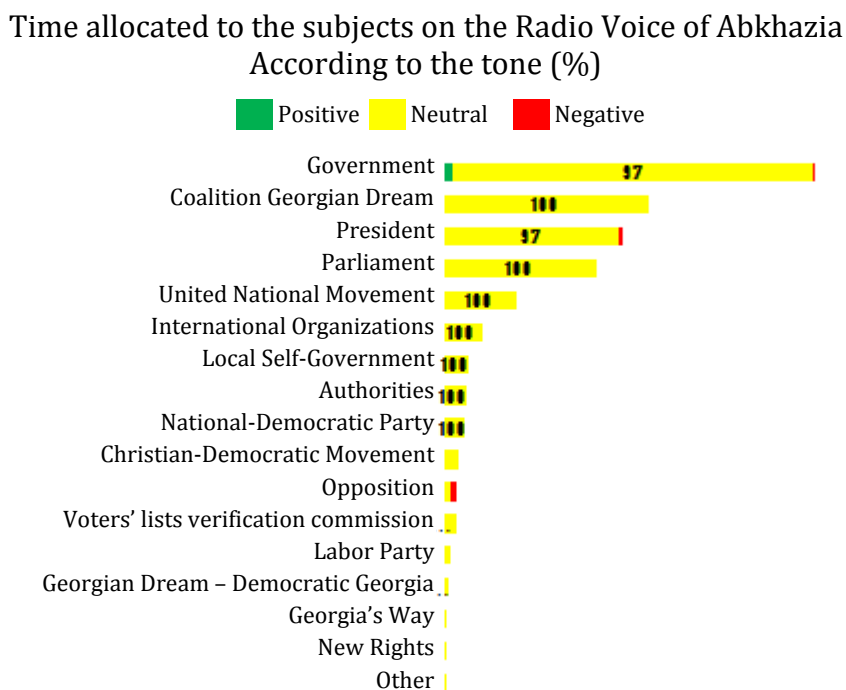


Diagram 31

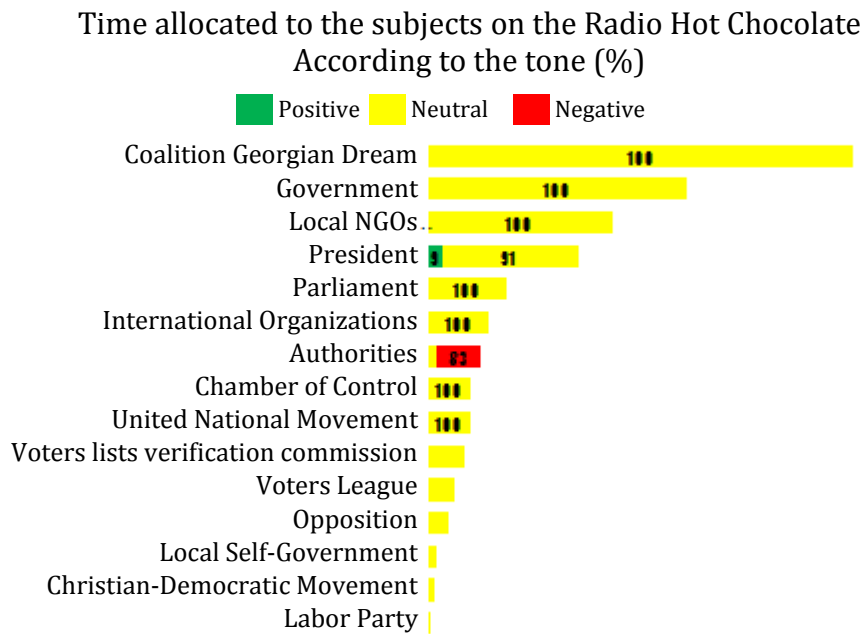


Diagram 32

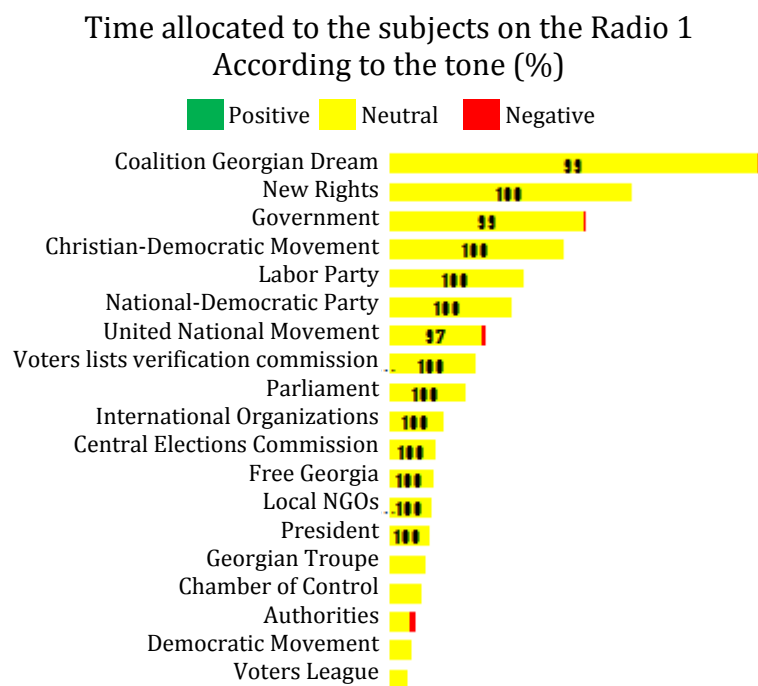


Diagram 33

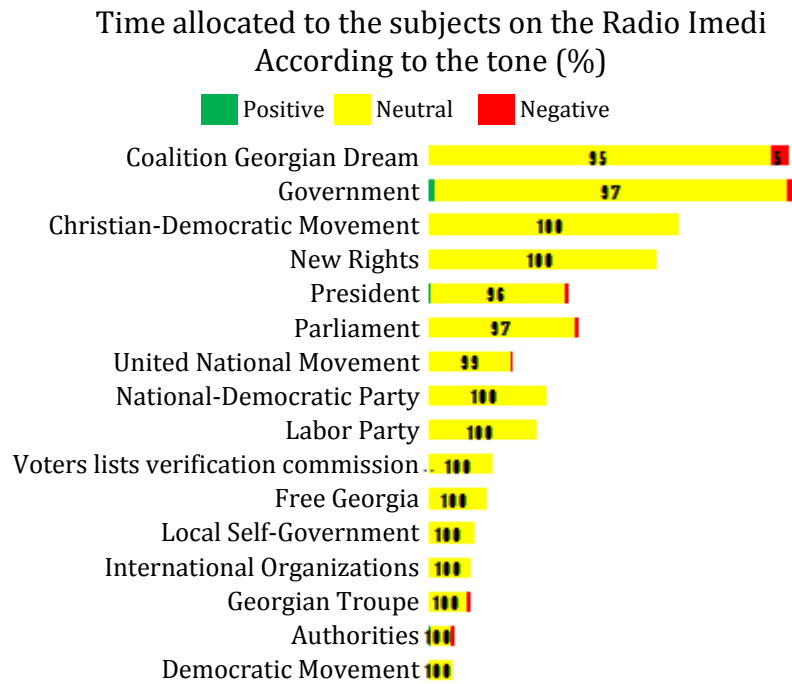


Diagram 34

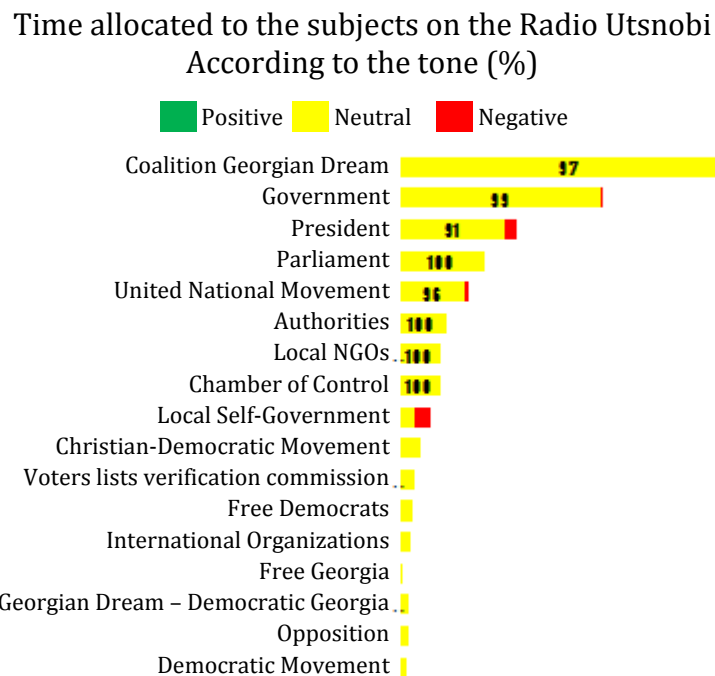




Diagram 35

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Palitra  
According to the tone (%)

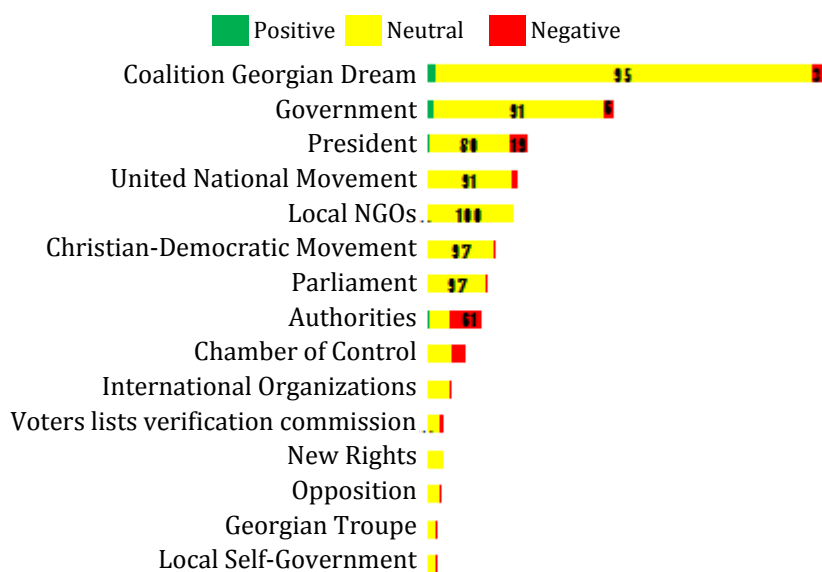


Diagram 36

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Liberty  
According to the tone (%)

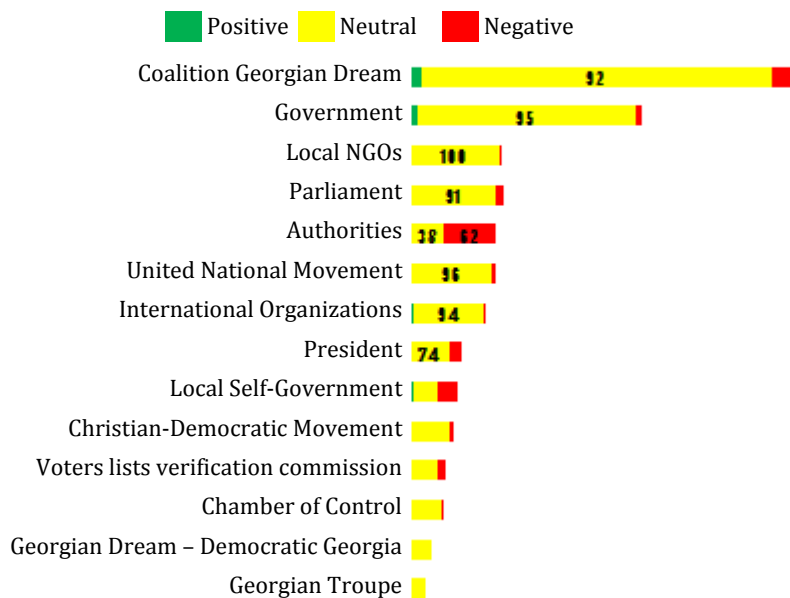


Diagram 37

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Voice of Abkhazia  
According to the journalist's tone (%)

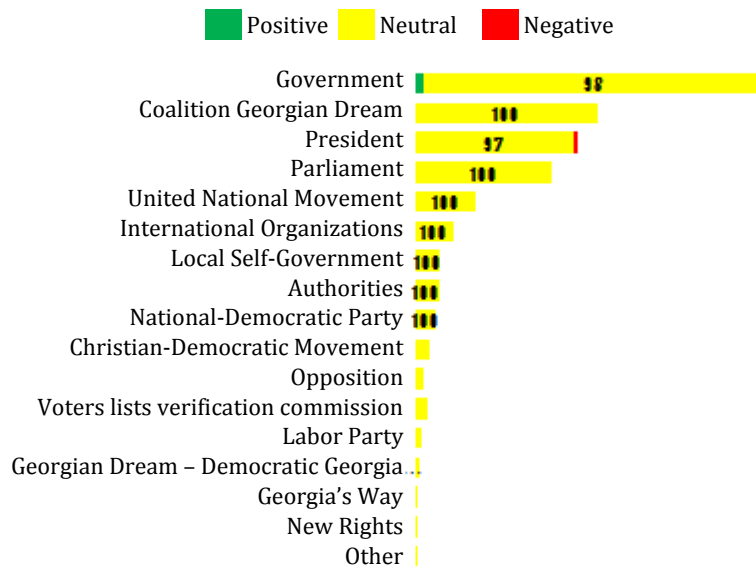


Diagram 38

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Hot Chocolate  
According to the journalist's tone (%)

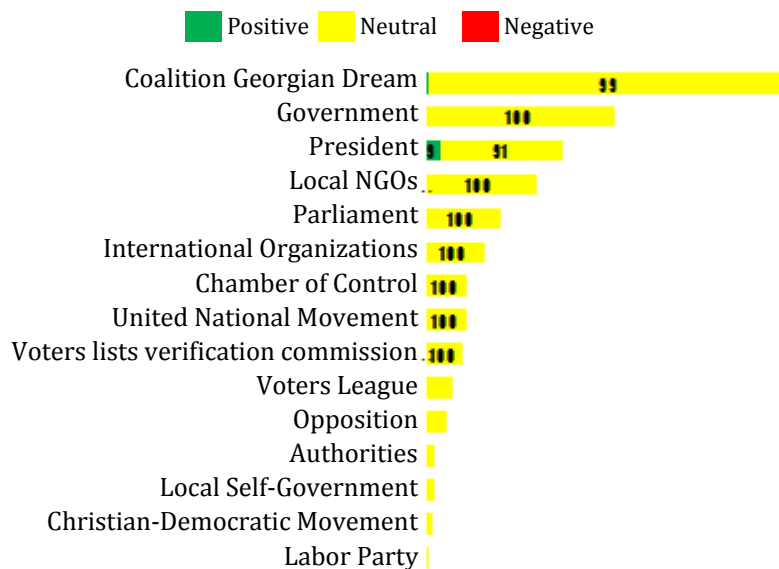


Diagram 39

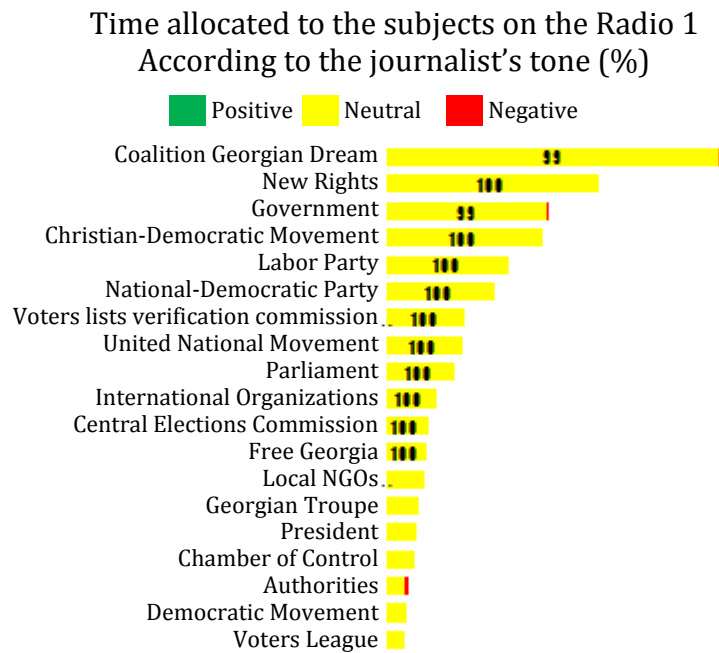


Diagram 40

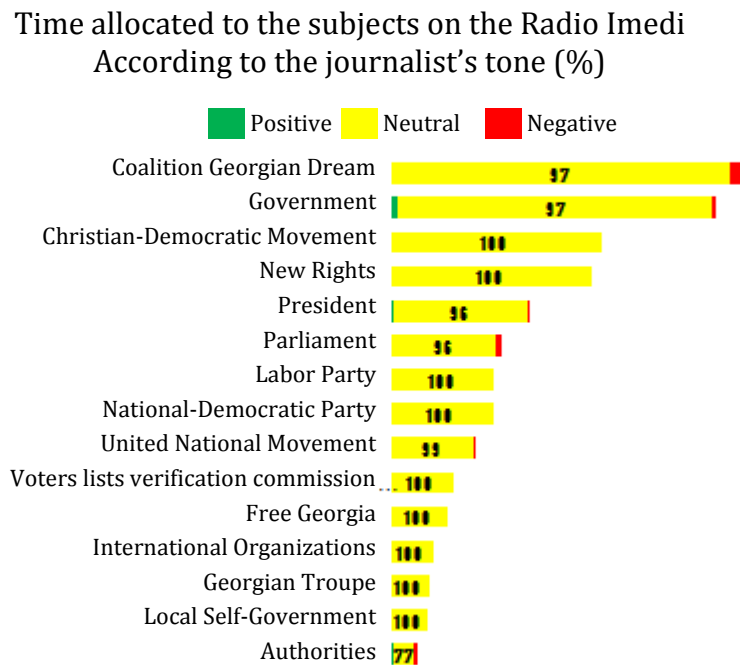


Diagram 41

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Utsnobi  
According to the journalist's tone (%)

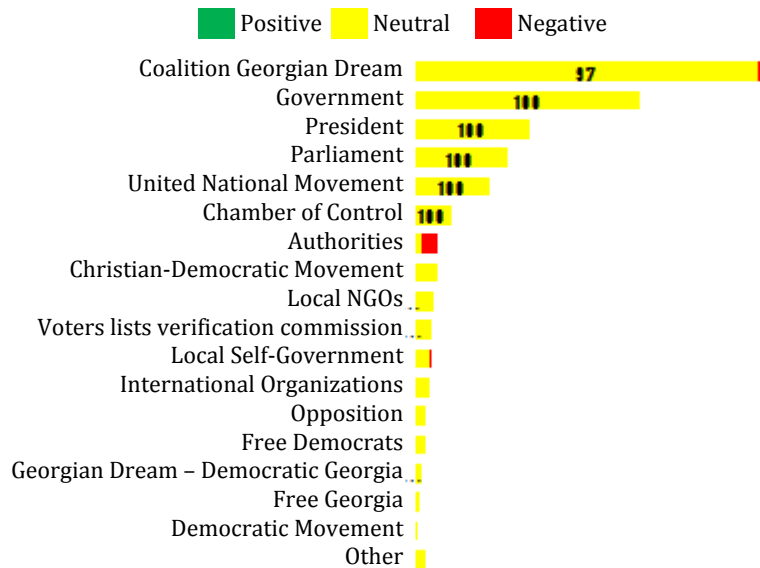


Diagram 42

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Palitra  
According to the journalist's tone (%)

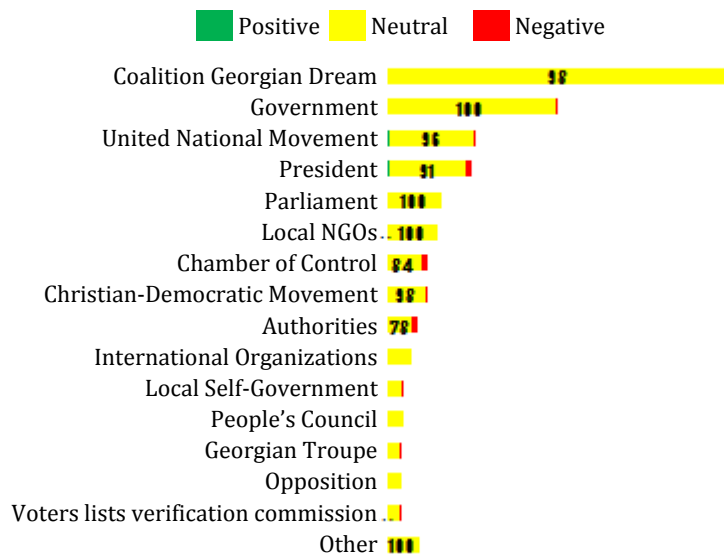


Diagram 43

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Liberty  
According to the journalist's tone (%)

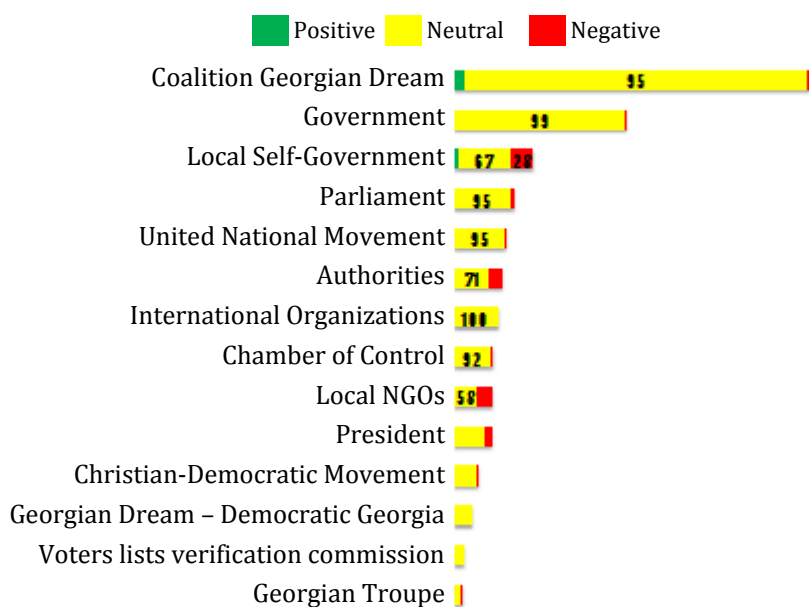


Diagram 44

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Old City  
According to the journalist's tone (%)

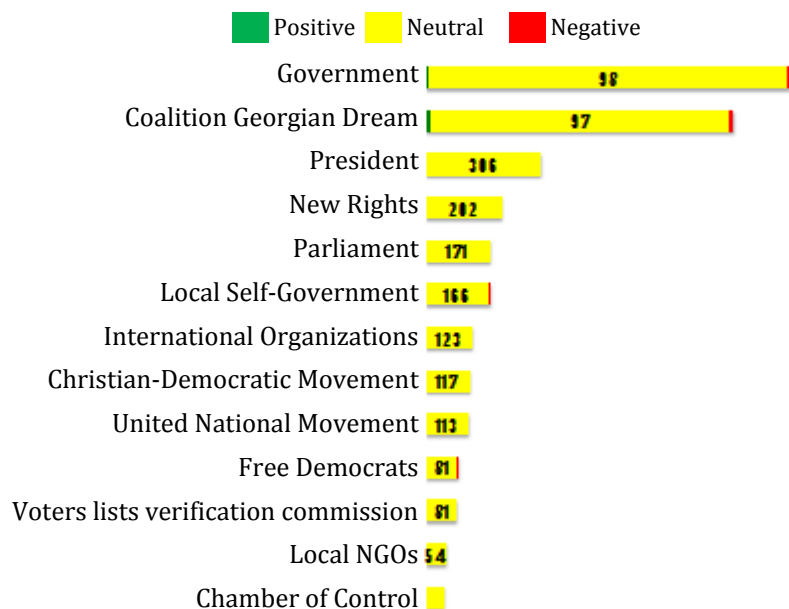


Diagram 45

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Atinati  
According to the journalist's tone (%)

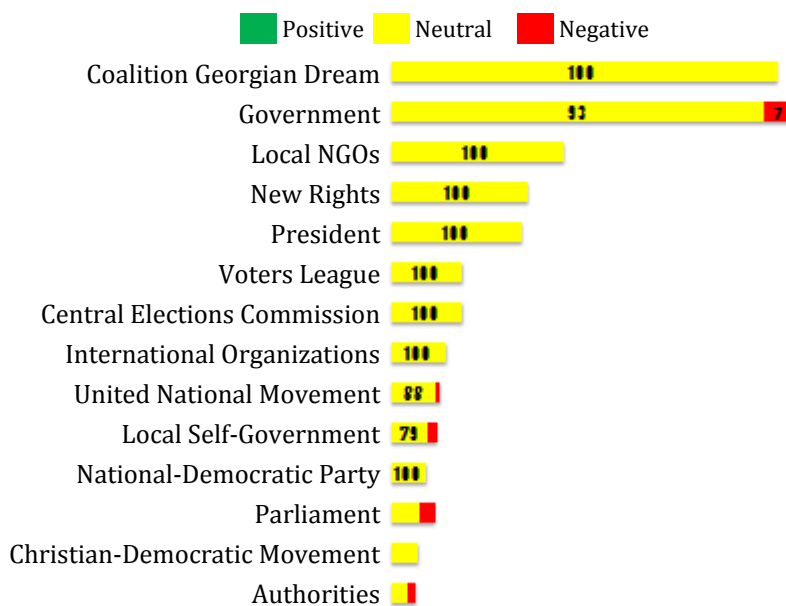


Diagram 46

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Green Wave  
According to the journalist's tone (%)

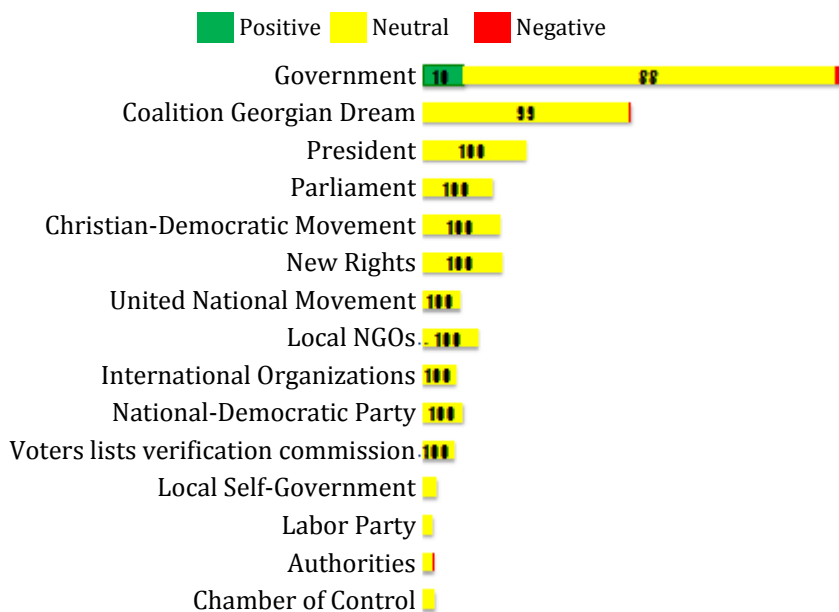


Diagram 47

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Hereti  
According to the journalist's tone (%)

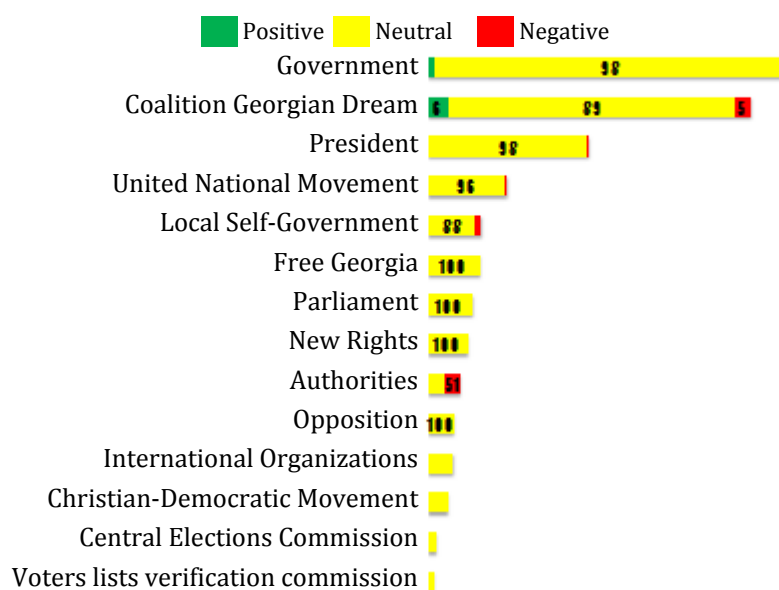


Diagram 4

Time allocated to the subjects on the Radio Fortuna  
According to the journalist's tone (%)

