



Gender Equality in TV Coverage of the 2017 Local Self-Government Elections in Georgia

Monitoring of television channels with the focus on gender equality

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Introduction

Supported by UNDP in Georgia and the Government of Sweden, CRRC-Georgia has monitored eight TV channels in the light of gender equality within the frameworks of the UN Joint Program for Gender Equality from September 11 to November 12, 2017. The monitoring is focused on main evening news releases and political talk shows broadcasted in prime time (from 18:00 to 00:00) on five national and three regional channels. These national channels are: Channel One of the Public Broadcaster, Adjara, Rustavi 2, Imedi and Maestro. The regional channels are: Trialeti (Shida Kartli), Gurjaani (Kakheti) and Odisha (Samegrelo).¹ The TV channels were selected based on the phone survey of adult Georgian-speaking population of Georgia about their consumption of media outlets, which the CRRC Georgia carried out in May 2017. This monitoring project aims at observing the media environment during the run-up to the local elections in 2017. However, its findings and recommendations are not limited to election topics only, and has to be taken into account by the monitoring subjects and other media outlets as well.

The monitoring consists of quantitative and qualitative components. For the quantitative component, the project is using the data collected within the frameworks of the ongoing media monitoring project implemented by the Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics, which has been commissioned by the UNDP.² The quantitative component monitors the time allocated to female respondents in main evening news releases, their direct and indirect speech.³ The qualitative component is based on the guidelines on covering gender issues, which the Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics has developed for media outlets.⁴ The qualitative component monitors the topics for which the news is made and if there is a gender-based segregation in this respect, i.e. if there is any particular topic more associated with women or men. Special emphasis is laid on the coverage of gender equality and the issues raised by journalists / talk show hosts, which are pertinent to the equality between men and women, especially putting this issue on the agenda during the pre-election period. The monitoring observes the usage of terms and the coverage which strengthens or defies gender stereotypes rooted within the Georgian community. The list of these terms/phrases was made up in accordance with the guidelines prepared by the Charter of Journalistic Ethics and it can be found in the Annex 2.

Monitoring of talk shows observes whether the guests are talking in a language which emphasizes that women are unequal to men and how the host reacts to these cases.

¹ List of the monitored TV channels and programs is provided in the Annex 1.

² Election Media Monitoring Project of the UNDP is implemented in Georgia with the EU support.

³ Note: the election media monitoring of the UNDP collects the data only about political subjects. Besides, it does not cover the TV channel Maestro. The list of monitoring subjects is provided in the Annex 3.

⁴ Guidelines on Gender Coverage are available at the website of the Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics: <http://qartia.ge/ka/sakhelmdzghvano-tsesebi1/article/34573-genderuli-sakithkhebis-gashugeba>

Key Findings and Recommendations

The monitoring during September 11 – November 12 revealed that there are **some topics that are associated mostly with women or mostly with men**. While covering the stories about education (schools, kindergartens), culture, healthcare, environment, we predominantly see female respondents. Schools and kindergartens are almost exclusively reported as women's topics, which strengthens the stereotype that childcare is a woman's business more than that of a man. While covering the topics of military, foreign policy, transport and infrastructure, natural disasters and sports, we mostly encounter male respondents. In case of some topics (e.g. military affairs) there may be fewer women at leading positions and connected to this topic. However, this leads to the efforts by TV representatives and the respective editorial policy, which should enable journalists to try to find a female respondent and show more women at those positions, which the Georgian community has not got used to, and this way to ruin stereotypes that women are good only at some professions. Otherwise, currently it seems that women are not seen and their voices are not heard regarding the whole range of issues.

Little coverage of women was well reflected in quantitative data as well. According to the election monitoring results, **there is a very little coverage of female respondents among political subjects, and the women do not even represent one tenth of political and electoral subjects**. A big part of this coverage is the direct speech of the women, which indicates that in rare cases they have female respondents in main evening news releases, however the indirect speech about them is even less.

If we look at the number of a female and male guests in political talk shows, **the number of men significantly exceeds that of female guests**, and except for very few cases, there is no focus laid or question asked about why the female candidates were not nominated.

One of the main goals of monitoring of the coverage of gender equality is to identify cases which strengthens or ruins the gender stereotypes established within the Georgian society. **Eventually, the cases where the gender stereotypes are fostered, exceed the cases that ruin them**. There were several occasions of attempted defiance of stereotypes revealed during the monitoring period, for example, female drivers, who are asked about parking and heavy traffic together with male drivers, coverage of vintage in Kakheti, where women are represented as vintage managers and equal to men: military women in Syria, men cooking in the kitchen. However, such cases are not many and the journalist do not always succeed in ruining the stereotypes. For example, in one of the stories about heavy traffic, a female driver was asked about the increased fuel prices same way as male drivers. However, the woman was also asked about prices on food products, with which they emphasized a role of a woman as it is perceived in the society. We see more female respondents in the stories about food prices and quality than men, and this also strengthens the stereotype that it is the woman who is responsible for buying food and cooking. Another example of strengthening the stereotype is a story about the quality of toys, where a neutral and objective text was accompanied by the footage of children playing with toys. There was a little girl and a boy in one of the first pictures, playing together with toy cars in the sand, which is a good example of stereotype-free visualization, but then there is a footage of a girl playing with a doll, feeding her and putting her to sleep and even singing to it. Children learn about the gender roles from a very early age. Correspondingly, the segregation of toys is a powerful tool for learning it. Promoting dolls, kitchen

accessories and similar toys as “girl’s toys” strengthens the existing stereotypes, which afterwards influences how girls and women envision their role in the future.

The language used in TV space is not always gender neutral. The list of words/phrases that foster the gender stereotypes includes referring to women as ‘madam’ (Kalbatono - ქალბატონო) not while addressing them, but while they are talked about. Besides, there are phrases used to denote women such as ‘representatives of weaker sex’, ‘beautiful sex’, whereas men are referred to as ‘stronger sex’. Differentiating the issues and professions as ‘man’s’ or ‘women’s’ job. **Such words/phrases feed inequality between men and women. According to the monitoring, such terms are not frequently used.⁵ However, we see such cases on many TV channels.** For example, there was a story aired by one of the national channels about special pink trolleybuses in Turkey that will “provide services to representatives of weaker sex only”. There was a coverage of vehicle accident on one of the regional channels, which reported “one person was killed and a 27-year old girl was injured”. If the sex is specified, it should be done in both cases and there should be a reason behind.

The monitoring observes not only the text of journalists, but also the text of the respondents in stories and of the guests in talk shows, and the host’s reaction when the guests use the language while communicating with one another, or generally, in their talks, which presents women unequally and fosters gender stereotypes. There were cases revealed during the monitoring, when the talk show hosts successfully interrupted the guests and reacted to their words, or distanced themselves from the opinions they provided. **However, some hosts failed to do it and we would hear the words or phrases that presented women unequally.**

The monitoring laid special emphasis on the promotion of gender equality issues. During the first month of the monitoring, some channels broadcasted stories about women at Parliament, mostly discussing quotas, female politicians in the lists of various parties and mayoral and majoritarian female candidates. In the second half of October and in the beginning of November, all the channels prepared stories about sexual harassment and violence, as processes taking place abroad, also legislative initiative in Georgia. Some part of the stories presented the problem well, however, at some channels the stories diminished the significance of the problem and discussed it in an ironical context. Having observed the whole monitoring period it is possible to say that in total, **there is no frequent coverage of gender equality issues.** Majority of talk shows were focused on covering election campaigns of mayoral candidates and other politicians. Scarcity of female guests was observed at talk shows. Appearance of women was often related to the fact of having a female candidate from the party.⁶ Other than the guests, there were only a few cases when the invited party representatives were asked about the gender policy of their party and the candidate selection criteria. Correspondingly, these issues were discussed at talk shows only at a little extent and the women’s equality issue was not successfully promoted in the election agenda.

⁵ Note: TV channels often refer to women as ‘madam’ (Kalbatono in Georgian - ქალბატონო), and this is mostly done by respondents in stories and talk show guests.

⁶ Male candidates prevailed over the female ones during the local government elections in 2017: <http://cesko.ge/statistic/>

Based on the findings of the monitoring of gender equality coverage, CRRC-Georgia developed the following recommendations for the media:

- To report so that the male and female respondents are equally represented and this way to ruin the stereotype that some profession/issue is more appropriate for a man or for a woman.
- To cover gender equality issues more frequently and promote them during talk shows.
- To prepare more stories, where the established stereotypes are defied; correspondingly, to have fewer stories which supports fostering the gender stereotypes, among them, promoting successful women as exceptions.
- To ensure that journalists realize the significance of gender equality while preparing any story.
- To avoid the usage of terms in news stories that strengthen the stereotypes. When the guests are using these terms during the talk shows, the host has to indicate on incorrect speech and/or distance from the expressed position.

CRRC-Georgia recommends international and non-governmental organizations to conduct more work and trainings with journalists and editors so that the gender equality issues become a part of their editorial policy, and all the parties involved in the creation of media products acknowledge how important it is to promote gender equality issues in a right manner.

The report provides the monitoring findings per channels, containing positive examples observed during the channel monitoring, also the cases where the coverage was not found to be gender-sensitive.

Georgian Public Broadcaster, Channel-1

From September 11 to November 12, inclusive, there were several stories on women in politics aired in main evening news releases of the Channel One of the Public Broadcaster. The texts of journalists were quite neutral and gender-balanced in the stories. However, the comments of male respondents in some cases were saturated with gender stereotypes. For example, there was a piece “women in politics” broadcasted in Moambe on September 11. One of the respondents, namely, Gedevan Popkhadze said in his comment: *“I understand that women should be promoted in politics, we need women in politics, but politics is not a tram or a trolleybus to stop and let women pass first”*. It is noteworthy that the journalist did not leave this opinion uncommented and balanced it: *“However, nobody argues that everybody should be represented in politics based on merits and not only because of their gender. There is no argument, either, that women in Georgia do not have any problem with merits.”* Besides, the story about “Sakrebulo Session” aired on September 29 in Moambe, contained a comment by the Head of Sakrebulo Giorgi Libegashvili: *“All this was performed for the sake of a political show, and the female parliamentarians [implicitly referring to Elene Khoshtaria] underlined herself that her goal is to disrupt the Sakrebulo session”*. There was a story on women’s sexual harassment aired on November 1, where the discussion mostly evolved about the cases of Harvey Weinstein and Kevin Spacey, and the campaign #metoo (#მეო). The story highlighted the issue and the global response to it. Besides, there was a story on “status of a single mother” aired on November 2, where the problems of single mothers in Georgia was well presented.

Despite the channel tries to cover gender issues in a balanced manner and without stereotyped prejudices, and to allocate time to the women’s activities and candidates in the Georgian politics during the pre-election period, still, there are topics and cases when the gender misbalance is visible. Often these topics are healthcare, education, problems in schools and kindergartens, inclusive education. Almost always, the female respondents prevail in this stories on these issues. We should especially point out the respondents who are selected not because of their official positions but quite by chance. For example, parents or passersby in the streets, majority of whom are women. Besides, soon the stories about vehicles, their technical inspection, the respondents are mostly male drivers. The stories about foreign policy, legal offenses, election campaigns of various political subjects, we often feel the lack of the female respondents. In regard to ruining the stereotypes, there was an interesting story broadcasted on October 15 about a male teacher from Guria holding the Best Teacher award, who uses contemporary approaches and has an advanced attitude to his occupation. The footage shows him standing in the kitchen and cooking meal, which somehow defies the stereotype that cooking is mostly a woman’s chore. There was a story about transport and traffic on 1 November, where the first respondent was a female driver talking about the activation of smart cameras.

There is a good example of stereotyped coverage – a story broadcasted on November 4 “Women against ISIS”, which was about female fighters. The story emphasizes the role that women play in fighting against the ISIS. The story presents the women as warriors and this somehow supports running the stereotypes, which exist because of less presentation of women in this field.

Quantitative data of the election monitoring reveals that the coverage share of women among electoral and political subjects is very little, 7%, most part of which (68%) is a direct speech of women, when the women are shown as respondents in the stories and talk about certain issues themselves.⁷

There is a cycle of programs **“Tvittmartveloba 2017”** (Local Governance 2017) broadcasted on the Channel One of the Public Broadcaster during the election period, on every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 9 pm. Main goal of the program is to inform the population about the parties participating in the elections, candidates and their programs during the run-up to the elections. The first program in this cycle was informative. The host and invited guests were talking about what local governance is and what direct obligations local governments have, how realistic are election promises given by the candidates, if they have budget for this and how the population should control their activities. The talks were rather general and referred to the significance of local government and its election. There were guests from various fields invited, who were trying to raise awareness of citizens together with the host during the election period.

Other programs were dedicated to the mayoral candidates and presentation of their programs. Mayoral candidates for Batumi, Zugdidi, Poti, Ozurgeti, Kutaisi, Ambrolauri, Akhaltsikhe, Mtskheta, Gori, Rustavi and Telavi, also the chairman candidates running for Tbilisi Sakrebulo and representatives of qualified parties appeared in the programs from September 18 to October 20, inclusive. Due to the candidates nominated by the parties, male participants prevailed in the programs. In total, 20 female and 83 male candidates out of 103 guests participated in these programs.

The program is quite structured, and the guests have 90 seconds allocated for answering the question. The journalist does not interrupt them and does not probe with additional questions. However, the host asks individual questions to the candidates at the end of the program and enables them to address the voters. Majority of programs were balanced, quiet and dynamic, without any tension among the guests or gross violations by the journalist. The guests were provided with equal conditions. The attitudes were the same towards female and male candidates.

There was no candidate from the Georgian Dream in the program where the mayoral candidates for Akhaltsikhe were invited. However, the host made a statement about it that the candidate refused to participate in the very last moment.

We should also point out the stories reported at the beginning of the program, where the regional problems are discussed with the population, and the host asked questions based on this. One of the regions raised the issue of the lack of kindergartens, regarding which two local people made comments. It is noteworthy that both of them were men. This is a commendable fact because we usually see female respondents in the stories about kindergartens.

⁷ The data is taken from the election monitoring program of the UNDP, which calculates the coverage time of electoral subjects (political parties and subjects, central and local government) in main evening news releases. The data cover the period from September 11 to November 12.

Adjara TV

During September 11 – November 12, there were several stories **broadcasted in main evening news releases of Adjara**, which were dedicated to the women in politics, gender policy of parties and female members of Sakrebulo. Story aired of September 21 “Women in Politics” was set up in a very interest way: From the beginning and during the whole story the title “Women in Politics” was very well visible and the story started by presenting and showing the pictures of male mayoral candidates in Batumi, which emphasized well that Batumi did not have a women candidate.⁸ Then the respondents in the stories, representatives of political parties talked about how they selected their candidates. There was also a public opinion provided about this topic, including both men and women among the respondents, who shared different opinions. The story successfully presented the problem. The story broadcasted on October 22 “Gender and Local Governance” provided a good discussion about the number of female candidates in local government during the previous and 2017 elections. There was no statistics provided in the story, it displayed a diagram about the number of female candidates in municipalities and comments of NGO representatives.

There were many stories aired during main news releases on Adjara, which were dedicated to the local elections and this topic was covered in many angles. There was a story about the election numbers of parties, their composition, candidates, females among party candidates and, in general, gender policy, also about the broadcaster’s plans to cover the elections, CEC statements, Batumi mayoral candidates, former mayors of Batumi. There was a public opinion about the Batumi Mayor, where 15-15 male and female respondents were presented. There were other stories about the election technique, influencing the voters or political messages. There was a coverage about the NDI report, national minorities in party lists, election environment and opposition’s allegations about using administrative resources. In general, there were more male respondents in the stories about elections, than women.

The topics, where women were less represented, were about legal violations, natural disasters, foreign policy and foreign political news, agriculture, infrastructure, tourism. Female respondents were not represented if the story was about tourism or tourism infrastructure, e.g. a report about the development of Mtirala National Park. However, there were quite very many female respondents represented in the stories about attractive tourist locations, guides, tourist events and festivals. Another story without women participation was about technical inspection, that lasted for nine and half minutes, with 10 respondents: some of them were drivers and all of them were men. This strengthens the opinion that sitting behind the steering wheel is a man’s thing to do and fosters an opinion that these changes do not affect women and their opinions are not interesting. There was another story without women: “Preparing for Winter”, showing how the villages of Adjara prepare for winter. The respondents representing the local government and other official persons were men. Nevertheless, opinions of local population were heard, but these two respondents were male. Besides, there are 10 respondents in the story of October 15 about the former head of the Khulo local government, 6 of them are residents of Khulo districts and none of them are women.

⁸ There was 1 women out of 9 mayoral candidates in Batumi.

Topics that were more associated with women, where several female respondents were shown, were about culture, art, healthcare and education. If there was any news covered about a school in terms of education, infrastructure and healthcare (stories about school cafeterias, teachers, party campaigning at schools, poisoning of students) female respondents prevailed. For example, there was a story broadcasted on October 9 “Expired Food at Shelves”, which was about the expiry date of food products at stores and their control, the journalist surveyed consumers at the market to learn how they check the expiry date before buying products. All the four surveyed buyers were women, which strengthens the stereotype that it is a woman’s business to go to the market and buy food.

While broadcasting the foreign news in the program on September 19, one of the stories was about a pink trolleybus that appeared in one of the cities in Turkey, which “will provide services to weaker sex only”. Usage of such term underlines the gender inequality.

There was a story aired in the program on October 12 “Sexual Abuse against a Minor”, which was about an allegation of child molestation involving an 8-year-old girl and a 60-year-old man in Batumi. The story is quite extensive. It is felt that the journalist has a cautious attitude to this issue: selection of right terms, respondents’ faces are covered and there are no words heard during their speech that would make it possible to identify the persons related to this case. There is a mother of an 8-year-old girl, the defendant’s wife and neighbor represented in the story. The neighbor’s speech is aggressive, arguing with the journalist saying that this case should be investigated by the police and not by the television. The journalist replies that the mother has the right to let us make TV story, and the neighbor replies: “What are you talking about, then she will have to worry about her daughter, how to have her married and what kind of family she will have”. The neighbors expand this opinion in a few second: “then you have to make sure to finish the case. If you are suing, if you are a mother and protect the dignity of your child”; “they stained the child’s reputation, smeared it”. Supposedly, the journalist wanted to show the false prejudices among the people about hiding such facts. However, it was not shown in the story that this attitude was wrong and that it is not a victim who should be ashamed of such events, but the perpetrator.

Quantity-wise, women represent only 1% of the political and electoral subjects covered in the main evening news releases on Adjara Television from September 11 until October 20. More than a half of this coverage (55%) represents direct speech of women.⁹

There are two political talk shows on TV company Adjara: “Akhali Sivrtse” (New Space) and “Paktori” (Factor). “**Akhali Sivrtse**” is hosted by Irina Kurua. Programs broadcasted during the monitoring period (September 11 – October 3) were dedicated to the issues such as: election environment and the election campaign, getting familiar with the programs of qualified and non-qualified electoral subjects, presentation of parties, discussion of programs and plans of mayoral candidates of various municipalities in Adjara. In total 39 men and 6 women visited these programs. It is interesting that these 6 women visited only two programs that were about the election environment and the election campaign. 4 of these 5 women are journalist, 1 is a lawyer and 1 is a representative of an NGO ISFED. All the other respondents

⁹ The data are taken from the election monitoring program of the UNDP, which calculates the coverage time of electoral subjects (political parties and subjects, central and local government) in main evening news releases. The data cover the period from September 11 to November 12, inclusive.

(men) were the number one persons in the electoral lists of various parties, members of various parties and mayoral candidates of municipalities.

Topic of the program on September 14 was election environment and conduct of the election campaign, where the journalist laid emphasis on the fact that the women are not represented at decision-making positions and asked an important question to the head of Batumi branch of GYLA, where the underrepresentation of female candidates in the party lists was underscored: *“What is the situation in regard to gender, do the parties still have time to present party lists, but what is the trend? As of now, women’s representation is low at local governments and it is only 15%. None of the current mayors is a woman. There is only one women among the directly elected 59 Gamgebelis (heads of local government). Who is responsible for this?”*

During the talk show monitoring it is important to observe if the guests are talking the language that would emphasize inequality between men and women, and how the hosts respond to that. There was a case when a respondent expressed a gender stereotype in Akhali Sivrtse on September 28. Merab Abashidze, member of the Development Movement characterized a woman in his own team: *“Let us move to my native Khelvachauri. Madam Makvala Gejadze, a philologist, a very successful housewife and mother, a successful woman in all regard”*. The guest in the program, whose intention was to commend his team member, linked her success only to her roles of a housewife and mother, by which echoed the stereotypes established about a woman’s role in the society. The host did not respond to that.

The talk show “Paktori” (The Factor) is hosted by Rusudan Abashidze and the following topics were discussed during the monitoring period: beginning of a new academic year, evaluation of the performance of the third convocation local government, presenting the candidates’ election campaign and introducing the number one candidates in party lists in various municipalities. In total, there were 19 men and 3 women invited to the program. Out of 3 respondent women, 2 were invited to talk about education, specifically in the program dedicated to the beginning of a new academic year. The third woman is a representative of an NGO sector and she was invited to evaluate the performance of the local government of the third convocation. Absolute majority of male respondents were the number one candidates in the party lists in various municipalities of Adjara.

As for mentioning gender stereotypes by the guests and the host’s reaction to it, there were several cases of it: on October 6, Genadi Diasamidze, number one in the list of the Labor Party in Keda Municipality, said that working in a tobacco industry was a “work category for women”. The journalist Rusudan Abashidze reacted to that, interfered and asked why women specifically were supposed to work in tobacco production. Asking such questions by the journalist is a positive example, because she naturally did not accept segregation by profession. To answer that, the respondent continued to talk with stereotypes. Genadi Diasamidze: *“because it is such a culture that it is a woman’s thing to do, 90%. The man’s job there is to plough and then to set up greenhouses. The rest is for women...”* Here the journalist tried to change the topic and asked the next question to the guest: *“then which industry has a better future?”* this way the host avoided the stereotyped discourse initiated by the guest.

We still encounter a stereotyped language by the respondent in the Paktori on October 13. Tamaz Jorbenadze: *“I have been very happy this month, because the authorities nominated Gocha Meladze as a mayoral candidate. This is a man of good breeding genes and roots”*. One would not use the words “of good genes and roots” for describing a female candidate. As a rule, women are less presented as strong and we have seen this on the same channel in the talk show “Akhali Sivrtse” (The New Space), where the female candidate was nominated because of being a good housewife and mother. The host did not react to “the man of good genes”.

Rustavi 2

There were stories broadcasted on Kurieri 9 p.m. and P.S. from September 11 to November 12, inclusive, where gender stereotypes were fostered by the footage, respondent's comment or journalist's text. Like other monitored channels, there were topics observed on Rustavi 2, which are more related to men or women. For example, the topics such as: environment, social issues, education, kindergartens, schools, culture, healthcare are more associated with women and the respondents are mostly women. On the other hand, male respondents prevail when discussing foreign affairs, sport, justice, finances, demonstrations, security and budget. For example, there were seven respondents in story that covered the devaluation of Lari on October 27: representatives of the government, Parliament, NGOs and all of them were men. There were 8 respondents from various parties discussing party financing in the story aired on November 1, and all them were men.

Other than gender-based division of topics, we also see the stories, where the societal stereotypes concerning the role of men and women are fostered in various situations. In some cases, there is an impression that more efforts from the journalist may change the picture of gender balance.

For example, one of the stories about increased fuel prices features respondent drivers, both male and female. However, when the female driver is talking about the price increase, the journalist is asking *"is it also reflected on food products?"*, which strengthens the stereotype that increased prices on food and similar topics about domestic issues affect women more.

Besides, we may consider that it was a stereotyped coverage when Zaal Udumashvili had meetings with students followed by the comments only from boys. Girls were seen in the footage just sitting at the meeting. It is possible to see in the meeting footage how a boy is asking a question to Udumashvili. There are some girls seen in the footage and the journalists could have observed the gender balance.

It is possible to consider the story broadcasted on October 31 "Dan Bay & Maya" to be a good example of non-stereotyped coverage. The story features a Georgian female singer who is a personal assistant of a leader of one of the successful banks Union Investment and the first Georgian who was nominated an ambassador at the German Economic Summit in 2018. The story described her success, but no emphasis was laid on her gender.

The story aired on November 2 "Closed School in the Village Kveshi", which was about an obsolete school building in the village Kveshi, because of which the students distributed to neighboring village schools. The respondent was a father of one of the students, which is quite rare when school issues are covered.

We should also mention the stories about social and daily lives, where mostly the female population are approached to share their opinions.

We need to point out the story broadcasted on October 8 in "P.S." about Nino Kvitaishvili, majoritarian candidate of the United National Movement. Before airing the story, the journalist says that maybe a little number of female politicians is not eye-catching for the population, but the men really prevail, *"this is why the parties try to let more women run in the elections and fight for seats. We will meet one of them"*

today.” However, despite such introduction and the attempt to highlight topics of female politicians, the story is quite loaded with gender stereotypes. Nino Kvitashvili is primarily represented as a single mother and not as a professional woman and politician. The story starts by showing her taking her child from school, how they go home, play and do homework. At the same time the respondent is telling some details about her personal life. We hear the following phrases in her story: *“the whole idea of my life, as a woman, was to have a child. I knew that even if were alone I would be able to raise my child.”* The journalist also emphasizes that a single mother raises some questions in the society, but the respondent has coped with this easily. It is also underlined that she had to return to work very soon “because of little revenues”.

On one hand, such coverage generates compassion and sympathy among the audience towards the respondent, as if this increases the visibility of problems that women face in our society. However, despite the second part of the story discusses her career and shows her work environment, the viewers still have the feeling they got in the first part: a single mother should raise her child, thus causing some pity because of this. There is less impression that this is one of the candidates in the elections, who the voters should vote for because of her political opinions or performed work.

We should mention another story in this program about raping an underage girl. As we learn from the report, the classmates have been raping the girl for several years. However, she was fearful to speak out. This story was covered in the program completely with political implications. The host and the journalist were emphasizing that the perpetrator’s parent is a representative of Georgian Dream, and the parent of the victim of violence – representative of opposition. Giorgi Gabunia: *“Parents in one of the villages in the west Georgia suddenly found out that their underage daughter had been regularly raped by her fellow schoolchildren for 3 years. Perhaps, you immediately start to ask a logical question, how come that you are being raped for 3 years and you do not speak out? The girl is saying that she was threatened so much that she was afraid to tell anyone about this crime. Indeed, it was one of the threatening text messages that her parents found in her mobile phone and learned about what had happened. This is not all, the raped girls’ father is a member of the opposition party, and mother of one of the alleged perpetrators is a teacher in the same school. However, the story does not end here either. School principal is a relative of this alleged perpetrator and at the same time is a member of the Georgian dream, acting member of Sakrebulo (local council), and is running for the next elections. The principal’s son is a head of the local government. Obviously, it is not advantageous for the principal with so many official titles to have so much public discussions about the violence at school.”* The story was covered completely with political implications and the whole story was dedicated to the negative coverage of the ruling party. However, such issue should have been followed by severe discussions about this problem, involvement of respective NGOs and condemnation of the violence against minors.

The texts of journalists are less stereotyped in the stories and no gross violations are observed from their side. However, still we encounter some phrases by respondents. For example, there was a story broadcasted on October 19 about replanting two big trees from Samegrelo, where the person performing the replanting works expresses aggression towards the journalist and the cameraman of Rustavi 2 and does not want to be filmed. He is telling the journalist: “Gog away now, or I will crash it on your head.” And adds soon: “I’ll forget that you are a woman now.” Understandably, the author wants to show that

the respondent was not giving a comment and did not let them film, but it is unclear why the channel is repeating this sexist expression.

Besides, the story of October 8 about the infrastructure of old Tbilisi, where the problems of obsolete houses are discussed, the damaged buildings are shown. One of the residents is saying: *“Khoshtaria yes, okay, but I don’t think that a woman can be a mayoral candidate at all, the man has a different prism indeed.”* If it is necessary to include such comment expressed by the respondent in the story, the journalist needs to balance it with the text so that the audience does not reinforce stereotype about the appropriate professions for men and women. This is especially problematic during the run-up to the elections, as the female candidates are underrepresented. This strengthens the stereotype that politics is not a women’s business.

We also have cases when politicians address female candidates in a politically incorrect manner. For example, Gia Volski is telling Salome Samadashvili during the program: *“Why are you yelling, girl, what’s up?”* In another story the man, who is a member of majority in the Sakrebulo, addresses the opposition representative women after their speech: *“we don’t scream, we don’t screech, you have your time to speak and you can use this time, and now let me talk.”* Salome Samadashvili perceived Gia Volski’s statement as a gender-based offence and referred to the Gender Equality Council and explained why such statement is a hindrance for women to come to politics.

We should also highlight several stories broadcasted in November about sexual harassment. The topic that was widely discussed worldwide recently, was covered by the Georgian media as well, and Rustavi 2 prepared several stories on this topic, which covered the current situation in Georgia (e.g. there was a story “Request of Women’s Movement” on November 7), also opinions of Hollywood stars about this (story broadcasted on November 15 about a meeting between Meryl Streep and Anna Wintour, an editor-in-chief of Vogue, where they are talking about women and their problems).

If we look at the quantitative data of the election monitoring, we will see that the coverage share for women coverage was only 3% among electoral and political subjects on Rustavi 2, and its vast majority (88%) is the direct speech of women.¹⁰

There is a weekly civic-political talk show **“Archevani”** (The Choice) broadcasted on Rustavi 2, hosted by Giorgi Gabunia. The program format is as follows: the first part features various mayoral, Sakrebulo and MP candidates. They are allocated equal time and equal rights. They first talk about the election promises first, then there is an opinion poll about what problems the city residents have at this stage and based on the results the host identifies key problems, which the candidates are supposed to reply individually.

The host leads the process in the program. He does not let the opponents engage in debates, not to use each other’s time and to provide equitable conditions to each of them. The host also points out that they have this format only because to ensure that the audience understands the candidates’ promises, and to

¹⁰ The data are taken from the election monitoring program of the UNDP, which calculates the coverage time of electoral subjects (political parties and subjects, central and local government) in main evening news releases. The data cover the period from September 11 to November 12, inclusive.

listen to them without having a dispute. The guests are not replaced in the second part. Journalists from specific towns enter the studio and they ask questions of their choice to the candidates. The program is interactive, and from time to time the host asks us questions and specifies that it is not equipollent to a sociology survey and does not reflect the party rating. This interactive poll is just an opinion of viewers of Rustavi 2.

Mayoral and majoritarian candidates from Rustavi, Batumi, Kutaisi and Tbilisi visited the programs broadcasted during the monitoring period. Besides, the candidates running for a chairman of Tbilisi Sakrebulo as well. The gender balance among the invited guests derived from the candidates of represented parties as well. Male respondents prevailed in all the programs.

The programs were balanced. All the candidates had an opportunity to express his/her opinion. The host tried to let the invited journalists ask questions equally to all the guests and thus tried to keep balance.

We should highlight the programs broadcasted on October 3, 10 and 17, which were done in a different format. There were no guests invited to the studio. Instead, 5-5 journalists of Rustavi 2 went to various regions in east and west Georgia to learn about public opinion, and then in Tbilisi on October 17. The journalists surveyed the local population, who were talking about the most important problems for them. Stories prepared by each journalist was broadcasted separately. Like the news programs, these stories contained much footage loaded with gender stereotypes, with respondents' comments. Women were visible in the kitchen, engaged in household chores. One of the female respondents is saying about a neighbor man: *"He goes to Dusheti all alone and eats food there. How can he cook? He is a man."*

From September 11 to November 10, inclusive, the program **"Ganskhvavebuli Aktsentebi"** (Different Accents) covered the programs and visions of various candidates and parties, also discussed various issues that were important and challenging for the public. The host was quite demanding and was asking additional probing questions to almost all the guests. In this respect, the female and male respondents were treated equally.

We should point out the program broadcasted on October 28, second bloc of which was dedicated to the women's sexual harassment. There was a guest invited to the program - Tatia Samkharadze, who sued Shalva Ramishvili because of sexual harassment at workplace. The host was distinguished with a high sensitivity towards this issue. She told the guest as soon as they went live that she knows she is traumatized and is very nervous, and this is why she would not ask about many details. So, he tried not to re-traumatize the victim again. The host was focused on having an in-depth discussion of this topic and not to get 'scandalous' information. Eka Kvesitadze said that she intentionally did not invite Shalva Ramishvili – an alleged perpetrator - to the program, so that he would not re-traumatize the alleged victim. This is a good example of ethics by the journalist, because on one hand she felt responsible not to allocate space for the alleged perpetrator, and on the other hand took into account the victim's condition. However, in order to keep balance, she included a recorded phone interview with Shalva Ramishvili's lawyer. The journalist said that she cannot imagine a woman, and underlined that she also implies herself, who have not become a victim of sexual harassment in various situations. During the whole bloc, the

journalist mentioned several times with the guests that it is necessary to have a broad public discussion about this topic, to make sure that it is the perpetrators who are ashamed, not the victims.

Imedi

From September 11 until November 12, a certain gender segregation was observed in the main evening news releases on Imedi regarding the topics where only men or women respondents appeared. As a result, women are not visible and their voices are not heard. There were several stories prepared on sexual harassment at the end of October and in November as well, where we encounter both good and bad cases.

The stories where female respondents are missing are about the following topics: economy and finances, technologies (e.g. story about the sales of a new iPhone in Georgia), infrastructure, conflict territories, foreign policy, foreign news, terrorism, military theme/army, natural disasters (e.g. stories about large fires in various regions of Georgia, a story about flood and landslide hazard), elections. In case of elections we also come across with the stories where the female politicians are represented, when the coverage of election campaign is linked to the female mayoral/majoritarian candidates.

The topics that are more associated with women are: education (schools, kindergartens), healthcare, demographics, environment (e.g. air pollution). The stories that are dedicated to the cases affecting the children at kindergartens or schoolchildren, where we see their parents as respondents, we mostly see mothers, which eventually creates an impression that childcare is predominantly a mother's prerogative.

There is an interesting example in the story of October 24 about the demand on banning sexual harassment, with five respondents in it: representatives of NGOs and Parliament, and a model. It would have been interesting to hear male respondent's opinion, say, from the Parliament, but all the respondents were women. There was another story on the same topic on November 7, with four male and three female respondents. The story clarified very well what sexual harassment was about, how it is defined and how the perpetrators can be punished. The topic of sexual harassment was again covered in the story on November 10, highlighting the allegations of sexual harassment against show business celebrities. There was no sensitivity towards this topic felt in this story and the issue was represented as a new fashionable trend in show business. "Blaming the celebrities of sexual abuse and harassment has become a certain trend in the US and Europe." "Sex scandal went viral in Europe". The story tells about the cases of Weinstein, Kevin Spacey, Dustin Hoffman, Steven Seagal, also a sexual harassment allegation against Mariah Carey. "As we see, women did not lag behind the men in terms of sexual harassment" – as if the allegations against Mariah Carey balanced the cases of sexual harassment against men and women. At the end of the story the author says that this news generated a new wave of fighting against women's discrimination worldwide. However, there was more time dedicated in the story to the girls who stood naked in front of the US Embassy who declared solidarity to Weinstein, as compared to the discussion of this issue. In total, there is no sensitivity felt in the story for this topic. This does not promote this issue as a significant problem. This was also exacerbated by the fact that after the story was over (the story ended with a footage of naked Russian girls), Levan Javakhishvili, host of the news release could not help smiling. The topic is completely reduced to the show business scandal and there is no sensitivity observed towards this topic.

There was a story broadcasted on November 10 about an alleged fact of extorting money from younger schoolchildren, where five respondents were represented. Two of them are mothers of schoolchildren, with a director, a teacher and a resource center representative – all women. In general, the female respondents dominate when the coverage is about schoolchildren and cases occurred at schools, which strengthens the stereotype that childcare (especially at a school age) is mostly women's business.

There were stories during the monitoring period, when male and female respondents were represented in equal numbers. For example, a story about constitutional amendments (however, there was a story broadcasted in the program on October 6 about the approval of constitutional amendments by the Venice Commission that lasted for seven and half minutes, with nine respondents: political party representatives and MPs, all of them were men), also, stories about tourist season and Center Point case. There were stories, where the represented female respondents were presented equal to men and somehow ruined the societal stereotypes about the men's or women's professions and activities. For example, there was a businesswoman in the story about the tourism season, female deputy minister of Economy; the story about vintage featured a woman in the footage, who is sitting behind the steering wheel and takes grapes to the cellar, observes the wine making process; a respondent in the story about the violation of traffic rules was woman who is an expert on road safety issues; a female driver. There was a female fighter of Syrian democratic forces, which featured as a respondent in the story about a Syrian city Raqqa, wearing a military uniform, which at some point defies a stereotype that the army and fighting is not a woman's business.

Whereas we often see the stories where female respondents are not represented at all regarding some cases mentioned above (e.g. economy and finances, technology, military, foreign policy, sports, etc.), it is rare to see stories without male respondents. In these stories, there are no respondents represented at all, or they are about the topic such as: culture, arts or fashion.

The monitoring lays emphasis on the usage of words or phrases in the stories, or the footage, which promotes women unequally, strengthen or ruins the stereotypes established in the society. There was a story in the program on September 25 about an incident taken place at Sarpi Border Checkpoint, when a woman, citizen of Georgia was not allowed to cross the border. There are comment of several eye-witnesses who are talking about that the woman was being beaten up. One of the respondents said: *"there was a woman standing in front of me, who was pushed and hit her head on the gate. I ran out to help her, because she is a woman and I was sorry for her..."* Other respondents are also talking about the fact of physical violence in the story and it could have been possible to edit and shorten the comment of this respondent, or not to use it at all, because what should be emphasized is the fact that a customs officer is violent against citizens and not the fact that this citizen is a woman and deserves more empathy because of this.

There was a story broadcasted on "Imedis Kvira" on September 24 about the decreasing number of population and demographic problems in Georgia. The story starts by showing a family with six children, where the mother is saying that six children – this is her choice and talks about the advantages of having children. Other than this woman, the footage shows her children of various ages, and her activities at home. The mother is doing something in the kitchen with a child in her hand, then a child is sitting in her

lap and she is feeding him. We cannot see the father and only the journalist mentions him: “the father provides for the family”. This part of the story emphasizes the role of a woman as a mother, who is at home at most times (sometimes she takes orders and bakes at home), takes care of her children and she is happy with it. However, the father, who is not seen at home, provides financial support to the family.

“Kronika” had two guests on October 7: Levan Gogichaishvili from the Georgian Dream and Tina Bokuchava from the National Movement. Thea Sichinava was hosting the program and this part of it. The guests were arguing and asking questions to each other, but did not let each other finish. They were mentioning Mikheil Saakashvili, Bidzina Ivanishvili, Minister of Interior. During this discussion, Levan Gogichaishvili said once: *“It is good, Tina, that you were not at the demonstration because you could have scratched police officers with your nails”*. The word “scratch with fingernails” emphasizes the gender of the opponent. After that the discussion continues and Gogichaishvili is telling Bokuchava: *“what does it mean to touch upon tins, you are not sitting in your kitchen”*. Thea Sichinava does not react to any of these cases even when Tina Bokuchava responds back to Gogichaishvili: “Gender – is it somehow related to my gender, sorry?” Here too, when Bokuchava makes a sexist expression, Thea Sichinava is saying: “this is not the main subject of our conversation” and tries to finish it.

The story broadcasted on the training of kindergarten caregivers, which was broadcasted on November 1, can be considered a positive example. The story’s author emphasizes the significance of training the kindergarten caregivers, according to which it is wrong to differentiate children based on gender, and the training should address this issue. To describe the situation of gender-based differentiation, as an example, the journalist talks about how they teach professions to children at the public kindergartens; when “boys started to play the role of a builder, and majority of girls was dressmaker or cook”.

From the quantitative point of view, according to the election monitoring data, there is only a 3% share of coverage of women among electoral and political subjects, and the vast majority of such coverage (82%) is dedicated to the women’s direct speech.¹¹

There is a political talk show broadcasted in the prime time of Imedi “**Amomrchevlis Pirispir**” (Face to Face to Voters), hosted by Irakli Chikhladze, where he invites people participating in the elections or linked to the elections, to talk about the election topics in the program.

During the monitoring period (September 11 – November 12) the topic of the program blocs covered the issues such as: election environment, election violations, party presentation, debates of mayoral candidates in Tbilisi and Kutaisi, presentation of the number one candidates in party lists, evaluation of election environment by the NGO representatives, technical inspection of vehicles and pension reform. There were 74 men and 27 women invited to the program in total.

It is interesting that the balance was distorted among respondents not only because, for example, there was no women among 5 candidates participating in the debates of mayoral candidates in Kutaisi, where

¹¹ The data are taken from the findings of the election monitoring program of the UNDP, which calculates the coverage time of electoral subjects (political parties and subjects, central and local government) in main evening news releases. The data cover the period from September 11 to November 12, inclusive.

no female mayoral candidate was nominated, but also when they presented a certain party or alliance. For example, the first bloc in the program on October 3 was dedicated to the presentation of the United National Movement. There were only 2 women among 10 party representatives. As for the program on October 26, where the second bloc was dedicated to the presentation of European Georgia, there were 4 women out of 12 guests: mayoral candidates of the European Georgia in Tbilisi, Zugdidi, Telavi and Rustavi. Besides, there was only one woman in the studio during the presentation of number one candidates in party lists, with three men. However, this is caused by the people being number ones in the party lists. The gender balance was observed in the first bloc of the program on September 19, which was dedicated to election violations and hosted 4 guests from various parties, 2 women and 2 men.

During the talk show monitoring it is important to observe whether the guests are talking the language which emphasizes the woman's inequality to men, and what the host's reaction is to this. The host sometimes reacted to these cases, but not always, in the program "Amomrchevlis Pirispir" (Face to Face to Voters).

In the program on September 26, Nika Melia addressed several times the number one candidate in the party list of the Georgian Dream in the program by emphasizing her gender: *"Don't be offended, my lady, it does not matter how many times you say that you are not partisan and will not take a responsibility for your team, because there is Narmania, Kaladze, Partskhaladze hiding behind your kind-faced mask... I feel very inconvenient to talk about it with you as a woman, but this is a fact. You are the number one candidate in the party list of the ruling party and for the city of a million and half inhabitants. This is why I would not have been critical to you yesterday, but yes, today I will hold you responsible today"*. The journalist has not reacted to this.

Maestro

During the monitoring period (September 11 – November 12), there was little gender-based segregation according to topics observed in the stories broadcasted in the main evening news releases on Maestro. The women respondents, same way as men, were often invited to talk about the issues such as: foreign policy, justice, economy, constitutional amendments, etc. In this respect, Maestro looks more balanced than other channels, and separation of topics according to men and women respondents is less evident.

However, there were some stories, where the gender stereotypes were fostered, for example, in the story “Safety of Toys” broadcasted on September 11. The story is about the safety of toys and the absence of regulations in this respect in Georgia. The story begins with a footage of a young boy and girl playing with a car in the sand, which is a gender-neutral image, which free from the stereotype that toy cars are meant only for boys. However, we also see a little girl holding a doll – an infant, which she is feeding with a bottle and then spoon, and sings to it. Showing the infant dolls, kitchen appliances and other items as the toys meant for girls supports the stereotype and the idea that girls have innate childcare skills and desire. This footage fosters the stereotype that appropriate toys for girls should necessarily be the items linked to a stereotyped ‘female’ chores, and that there are ‘female’ and ‘male’ type of chores. On September 16, there was another story about the safety of toys, where the same footage was shown with a girl holding a doll. However, it is commendable to hear the father’s comment, who talks about selecting toys for the child.

Besides, there was a story about changing the road system on Pekini Street in Tbilisi. 3 drivers and 2 passersby are interviewed. All the three drivers are men and both passersby are women. This fosters the stereotype that it is mostly men who drive cars and women move on foot.

Another example of stereotyped coverage can be the story aired on November 4 about the probability of increasing prices on food products. They interviewed a seller and buyer women, and experts who are consulted about this issue are men.

We should also point out a gender-neutral story about two citizens detained at the Tbilisi International Airport who are charged with document fabrication and illegal border crossing. The footage shows that the arrested citizens are women. Although their faces are blurred in order to prevent their identification, but based on their clothes and also considering that female police officers are taking them to the patrol police car, we realize that they are women. Despite this, the story never talks about their sex and in every case, when the detainees are mentioned, the journalist uses the word ‘citizen’ or ‘detainee’, which are gender-neutral words.

In regard to non-stereotyped coverage we should also point out the story broadcasted on November 5 about volunteer women in the Syrian army. The story is about 50 volunteer women, who joined the Syrian army. The footage shows the women wearing a Syrian military uniform, with guns in their hands, shooting. There is also an interview with one of the women: *“we chose this because we want the people in Syria to feel secure and quiet. We have the same right to protect our country, as men. Syria is a country that*

supports gender equality.” Stories like that support to ruin gender-based stereotypes and promoting women in the roles that are more associated with men.

During the monitoring, period the topic of sexual harassment became a subject of heated discussion worldwide, and the Georgian media responded to that. Like other channels, Maestro also had stories about sexual harassment, both Georgian and foreign cases. The channel covered the demonstration of women against sexual harassment in Sweden on October 23. Besides, there was a story about the session of Gender Equality Council on October 24. The Council heard the claims of MPs Salome Samadashvili and Khatuna Gogorishvili and blamed the members of majority: Giorgi Volski and Vano Zardiashvili of violating the ethical rules. As reported in the story, the Council agreed that it was necessary to develop some ethical norms, because at this moment the current legislation does not envisage any mechanism against it.

We should also point out the story broadcasted on November 2 about the facts of sexual harassment. The coverage was about one of the influential producers in the US, who the women accuse of sexual harassment and violence, including Ekaterina Mtsituridze, a Georgian TV-presenter currently working in Russia. The journalist’s text should be highlighted, which was quite ironical: *“just a trend, or a cheap self-promotion?” This is yet to be asked. How far the campaign #Metoo go, and will the public recognition of this problem bring real results – we will see in the future*”. This is something that diminished the significance of this issue.

The talk show **“Tsetskhli Khazi”** (Firing Line) is broadcasted every Wednesday and Saturday on Maestro. It is peculiar because both hosts point out in the beginning of every program that they are not only hosts, but also “parties”: *“you are watching the Firing Line, a program where not only guests, but also hosts are opposing to each other*”. There was a guest who complained in one of the programs that the host was stating his position openly, and Vaka Gorgiladze replied: *“you are aware of the format of this program, I am a party, I am not the host only*”. The program started like this on September 20: *“I am Magda Anikashvili – a liberal... I am Vaka Gorgiladze – a conservative*”.

Due to such format, the program takes place in a pretty unquiet environment. The hosts are arguing with some guests, but ask less severe questions to others. They are not reluctant to openly state their opinions and positions. However, often their opinions are not based on any source. Correspondingly, the audience often gets information that are not supported by facts. There were cases when the hosts were not properly prepared about a particular topic and the facts they communicated were not accurate, and the guests would correct them.

From September 11 to October 20, inclusive, there were ten programs of Firing Line broadcasted on Maestro and following topics were discussed: a scandal around the Iavna Foundation, is there a targeted defamation of the church during the run-up to the elections, if the election environment is fair, environmental promises of mayoral candidates, rhetoric of the authorities about Russia, review of the movie “One Fourth of the Century”, which candidate has a better program for education and culture, and discussion of economic development in the election context. It should be pointed out that out of the above-mentioned programs, only female respondents were invited to discuss environment issues. Concerning the education and culture programs of candidates, the program invited only female guests,

which reinforces the stereotype that culture and education are appropriate topics for women. Besides, Nino Burjanadze was invited to the program in connection to Russia, and there was another female respondent invited to discuss the movie “One Fourth of the Century”, as a co-author of the movie. As for other programs, the guests were men only.

Regional Channels

Coverage of gender monitoring is observed on three regional channels, main evening news releases and talk shows broadcasted on these channels. These channels are: Trialeti (Shida Kartli), Gurjaani (Kakheti) and Odishi (Samegrelo).

Trialeti

There were several stories prepared about the gender misbalance in party lists for elections, in the main evening news release on Trialeti, Shida Kartli regional television during the monitoring period (September 11 – November 12). The stories were focused on the number of female candidates in Khashuri and Kaspi districts – sometimes low numbers, or in some cases the equal number of male and female candidates. One of the stories mentioned the government’s gender equality policy, and the Action Plan for 2014-2016, according to which the state has undertaken to take measures for achieving gender equality at the level of local governments. Promoting these topics is especially commendable, especially during the election period.

There were several topics reported in the main news release of Trialeti, where the women’s opinions were less visible: the story about legal offences, foreign policy, infrastructure and transport. Here the women were less or not represented at all. For example, the parking problem in Gori, where six respondents were men, with no woman among them. The story about technical inspection of vehicles – seven men and no women among respondents. The story about increasing the price on fuel – five respondents, all men, with no women. Footage in these stories featured only men drivers. However, there was a woman shown in the story of September 19, which was about road accidents. The same story included a stereotyped phrase by a male driver: *“mostly girls cause these accidents, and these 100-points as well. If somebody gets 100-point, by girls who just drive for fun. My son has been driving a car since he was a kid and he hardly managed to get a driver’s license, but my daughter just went there and showed me her driver’s license the next day – daddy, you see, I’ve got the license”*. The story does not neutralize the ungrounded sexist statements expressed by the men and just repeats it.

The story “People’s Voice from Khashuri” of October 12 shows a journalist and vox populi about the social background in Khashuri. There are six respondents, all of them are men. We do not hear women’s opinions and voices in story “People’s Voice from Khashuri”. However, the same day there was another report about Khashuri “Khashurians Expecting their Dreams to Come True”, with four female respondents from Khashuri, and two men, representatives of a political party and the municipality.

The gender balance is more or less observed in the similar story about Gori “What Should Change in Town” – what Gori residents think. There were nine respondents: five men and four women. As for the story about changing the names of some areas, five women were interviewed, mostly the Gori residents (the footage showed four women and a man, who were the residents of Gori), and also a female member of Gori Sakrebulo.

There were many female respondents in the report about electricity and water rates, increasing currency exchange rates, internet addiction among children. There were seven women interviewed in story broadcasted on September 22, without any men among the respondents. Men are less represented in the stories about kindergartens, schools or schoolchildren. Here the respondents are women, which emphasizes the existing gender stereotype in the society, that “childcare is a woman’s business”.

If we look at the quantitative data of the election monitoring, the share of women is only 1% among electoral and political subjects in main evening news releases on Trialeti, and biggest part of this coverage is a direct speech of women (87%).¹²

There are two public-political talk shows on Trialeti: “Ganskhvavebuli Azri” (Different Opinion) and “Movlenebis Tsentri” (Events in Focus). During September 11 – November 12, the following topics were discussed in the talk show “**Ganskhvavebuli Azri**”: pre-election environment, election campaigns of candidates, movement of Georgian Dream members to the Development Movement, equal conditions of electoral subjects, election programs and plans of mayoral candidates of Khashuri, reliability of election results and second round of elections. There were 53 men and 22 women invited to these seven programs. Majority of male guests were from various political parties and/or mayoral or majoritarian candidates. The female guests represented various parties, one of them was a mayoral candidate of Khashuri community.

In regard to promoting the women’s issues, there is a positive case observed in the program dated October 13, that hosted mayoral candidates of Khashuri. The journalists asked the following question: *“Are you familiar with the problems of various walks of life among the voters in this municipality – people with disabilities, IDPs, women in rural and urban areas, and have you reflected these problems in your program?”* It is commendable to ask questions like this and it helps the viewers to acknowledge that there are groups of people with special needs. The journalist displayed sensitivity towards this topic, inasmuch as she singled out the women living in urban and rural areas, who have various needs based on their living conditions, and we cannot combine their problems in just “women’s needs”, because these terms are sometimes blind towards the needs of various subgroups.

One of the guests invited to the program on November 10 talked about gender several times with special emphasis, “if Iliia were in this studio, I would say, and I would ask a question as a woman (to one of the man). Probably, I would not intervene if I were a man”; “I am a woman and this is why I am talking to you. If I were a man I would not say that for sure”. The host responded to one of the cases and told the guest that it was irrelevant to introduce gender dimension in this issue. The host did not react in the second case.

There were seven programs of the talk show “**Movlenebis Tsentri**” during the monitoring period. The program topics were focused on the lecturers dismissed from the Iliia University, student demonstrations, constitutional amendments, elections and its peculiarities, election evaluation, case of a man who died

¹² The data are taken from the findings of the election monitoring program of the UNDP, which calculates the coverage time of electoral subjects (political parties and subjects, central and local government) in main evening news releases. The data cover the period from September 11 to November 10, inclusive.

while being arrested, and wearing a rainbow armband by Guram Kashia. There were 13 guests invited in total, 8 men and 6 women. The program on constitutional amendments hosted two lawyers – a man and a woman, so the gender balance was observed. As for the other program, it hosted 2 men, a former lecturer at the Ilia University and a student – organizers of demonstrations. The third program, which covered elections and its peculiarities, hosted 4 women, 3 of whom were migrants, and one – a Gori residents.

Gurjaani

From September 11 to November 12, male respondents prevailed in main evening news releases on Gurjaani, like other channels. There were more stories with only men than the ones where only women would comment.

What catches the eyes most in the main evening news releases on Gurjaani is the gender bias per discussed topics. For example, only the male drivers were interviewed in the story on increased fuel prices, and only women – for the story on universal insurance. It should be pointed out that the women prevail among respondents about the topics such as healthcare, environment, culture and education, and men – if the topics of the discussion are vehicles, agriculture and violations of law. Besides, there were 5 citizens surveyed about the activation of smart cameras on roads on October 31, and all of them were men. The same story was broadcasted again on November 4. There was a similar report on November 11 about installing the radars on November 11, and only men were interviewed there again.

News releases on Gurjaani had several reports about the pension age from September 11 to November 10. What should be the pension age and should the pension ages of men and women differ? It is notable that female and male respondents were equally represented in these stories.

We should point out the story broadcasted on October 2 “Women in Politics”. The journalists highlighted that the women are registered mainly in party lists and as candidates in villages, they perform, they perform common work and are employed at lower levels, and mayoral candidates are men. 3 citizens were surveyed (women and men). One of them says that women are smarter and half of the people in politics should be women; the second says that a woman is more important in the family and they should not be in politics; the third one is saying that it does not really matter, as long as they are smart politicians.

We should also point out the report on increased number of road accidents. Despite observing the gender balance among respondents, there is a noteworthy phrase by a journalist: *“If we have a look at the statistics of August-September in Kakheti, the number of road accidents has increased. For example, a person was killed and a 27-year-old girl was severely injured 2 days ago in Sagarejo.”* In such cases making reference to someone’s sex does not serve any particular purpose, this is why the sex should be specified in both cases and to say that a person of this sex was killed and a person of that sex was injured, or not to specify that at all.

Other than journalists, the respondents often express statements that are saturated with gender stereotypes. It is especially noteworthy that these are heard from female politicians/candidates. Elmira Betsiashvili, majoritarian candidate of the National Movement in the village Vejini is saying on October 9: *“I am a goal-oriented, and I am a woman. At the same time, I am a mother, with an intensified maternal instinct and I can do more than man.”*

There were stories reported in main news releases about women candidates running. The story broadcasted on October 12 emphasizes the existence of women candidates in the electoral lists and mentions the fields where the women candidates will be working, if they win: *“improvement of the quality of life of Gurjaani population, improving the agrarian market and tourism development. Mayoral*

candidate woman from the labor party in Gurjaani plans to address these priority issues". And the candidate says: *"Me, as a female mayoral candidate promise that I will be committed to serve Gurjaani district faithfully"*. This story was aired again in the program on Saturday on October 14. There was a story on gender equality campaign We Need Equality broadcasted in the main evening news release on Gurjaani TV on October 16. It provides information about the campaign activities. The campaign aims at showing the public once again that there are few women engaged in politics, and highlights the barriers that women are facing when they try to advance their career, and it is focused on raising public awareness on gender equality. The story was not stereotyped, the gender balance of respondents was observed; for example, during the vox populi, they interviewed both men and women. Authors of the story did not speak the language of stereotypes. In total, it was an informative story about gender equality.

Gurjaani TV, like other channels, prepared a story on gender-based violence and gender problems. However, it is noteworthy that this story broadcasted on October 30, which could have become a good example of covering gender-based domestic violence, was loaded with violence videos from one of the movies. The story contained the comments of a journalist and respondents, who were talking about the present situation in Georgia, and also some footage of violence showing a man beating a woman. She falls down and the man continues beating her with his legs, and then the man takes milk out of the fridge and pours it onto her. It is noteworthy that in general, the idea of the story was good. The movie talked about the problem that we have in Georgia now, that the violence against women happens frequently, they often do not speak out and it was a certain message to encourage them to report to police. However, videos of violence from a foreign feature film exacerbated the story and went beyond the Georgian reality and also created a less serious impression.

If we look at the quantitative data of election monitoring, the coverage share of women is 5% among electoral and political subjects in main evening news releases on Gurjaani TV, and the majority of this coverage (80%) is a direct speech of women.¹³

There was no political talk show broadcasted via Gurjaani TV during the monitoring period.

¹³ The data are taken from the findings of the election monitoring program of the UNDP, which calculates the coverage time of electoral subjects (political parties and subjects, central and local government) in main evening news releases. The data of Gurjaani TV cover the period from September 12 to November 11.

Odishi

Odishi is a local television in Samegrelo Region, which has a brief news release in the evening. The program depends on the news and if there is no news, then the program may not be broadcasted at all. During the monitoring period (September 11 – November 12), main news releases on Odishi did not report anything about women’s equality, gender policy or stories about female politicians and candidates running in the elections. There were several stories prepared on elections, which were mostly dedicated to the election activities of parties and candidates. It represented mayoral candidates and party representatives. Zugdidi has a female mayoral candidate and she was seen in the stories on elections together with other women representing the parties.

It is difficult to speak about gender-based segregation of topics in the news releases of Odishi, because there is no big diversity of topics. However, the stories prepared without women were mostly about politics and economy, and the stories with some women in it were dedicated to education. The stories often had problems with diversity of sources and the journalists’ text were not perfect, either.

However, it is possible to point out something positive: a story broadcasted on November 10 about the presentation of a one-year work performed by the GYLA in Zugdidi, where the GYLA representative underlined the gender component when summarizing their performance.

According to the quantitative data of election monitoring, the coverage share of women was 4% among electoral and political subjects, and majority of the coverage (81%) was a direct speech of female respondents.¹⁴

TV Company Odishi broadcasted TV debates during the run-up to the elections on October 15 and 17 “Elections 2017”, which hosted mayoral and majoritarian candidates in Zugdidi. Not only the host, but also the NGO representatives and social network users asked questions to the Zugdidi mayoral candidates. There were 16 guests invited to these two programs, 11 men and 5 women, among them: one mayoral candidate and one majoritarian candidate, two NGO representatives and a female journalist.

It is important to highlight from the very beginning how the host reacts to sexist comments. On October 17, when the program hosted the Zugdidi mayoral candidates and NGO representatives, the guests were making statements that were homophobic and reinforced stereotypes. The issue of women’s equality was put forward after Tsitsino Shengelia, representative of an NGO Civic Activity and Equality Center asked the candidates about their vision on a gender-sensitive budget.

Domenti Sichinava, independent mayoral candidate in Zugdidi pointed out that there are more important problems than gender equality: *“we should manage everything that is present in our municipality. However, today Zugdidi is losing 10-14 million from the buildings that are registered as an asset of the Ministry of Economy. This money goes to Tbilisi and we can talk about gender equality after eliminating*

¹⁴ The data are taken from the election monitoring program of the UNDP, which calculates the coverage time of electoral subjects (political parties and subjects, central and local government) in main evening news releases. The quantitative data cover the period from September 13 to November 3.

these problems". This comment implies that other more important and valuable problems should be resolved first, than women's problems and the issue of their emancipation. The host has not reacted to this and other similar comments by the guests.

In the program of October 15, a well, where the election programs were discussed, one of the guests spoke about women in a stereotyped language: *"the social background that exist in our district prevents the people, the women, representatives of weaker sex to be more active"*. The host has not responded to this.

Conclusion and recommendations

Monitoring of gender equality coverage on the selected television channels between the period of September 11-November 12 identified several major findings:

Primetime news and political talk-shows of television channels show signs of segregation of topics by gender. During the coverage of certain topics mostly women or mostly male respondents/guests are presented and it intensifies associations of specific topics to one or the other gender. For example, education (schools, kindergartens), healthcare, environment protection – when covering these topics mostly women respondents are presented. On the other hand, men dominate in the following topics: military, foreign policy, transport and infrastructure, natural calamities and sports.

One more topic, in which women are underrepresented is politics. Quantitative data collected by the Charter of Journalistic Ethics for the pre-election media monitoring project show that women do not make even 10 percent of the coverage of political subjects in primetime news programs. The number of women guests in talk-shows is also low. It is particularly important during the pre-election period and with political talk-shows very rarely raising issues of gender equality in their programs.

Despite gender-based division of topics, there is often the type of coverage, which reinforces gender stereotypes existing in the Georgian society. There are less cases of coverage that breaks stereotypes. Examples of those can be presenting women or men in a way that strengthens or breaks stereotypes about women's and men's roles in the Georgian society.

Usage of terms and phrases that present men and women as unequal also contributes to the strengthening of stereotypes. For example, referring to women as “Kalbatono” without directly addressing them; also using phrases such as “representatives of weak sex”, “beautiful sex” to refer to women and phrases like “representatives of strong sex” to refer to men. Usage of such terms/phrases is not common; they are especially rare in news programs and are mostly used by guests of talk-shows. At moments like that it is important for talk-show hosts to have prompt and proper reaction, which is not always the case.

Based on the findings of the monitoring of gender equality coverage, CRRC-Georgia developed the following recommendations for the media:

- To report so that the male and female respondents are equally represented and this way to ruin the stereotype that some profession/issue is more appropriate for a man or for a woman.
 - For example, when ordinary citizens are used as respondents in news stories, try to keep gender balance and ask for the opinion of both men and women.
 - In stories about transport and infrastructure, increased prices, education (schools, kindergartens), politics, parliament present both men and women as respondents.
- To cover gender equality issues more frequently and promote them during talk shows.

- Identifying topics related to gender equality based on the ongoing events and the situation in Georgia and cover the stories proactively. For example, cover stories about domestic violence, violence against juveniles, early marriages, lack of women in politics, etc.
- To prepare more stories, where the established stereotypes are defied; correspondingly, to have fewer stories which supports fostering the gender stereotypes, among them, promoting successful women as exceptions.
 - For example, presenting women in a way that contradicts established stereotypes in Georgia about the role of women – women as military workers, women drivers, women transport experts, women ministers, women policemen, etc.
 - When presenting women politicians, applying the same criteria to their coverage as would be used for men politicians – emphasizing their experience, education, professionalism and not only presenting them as housewives, mothers or judging them by appearance.
- To ensure that journalists realize the significance of gender equality while preparing any story.
 - Increase sensitiveness of everyone who is involved in the making of media products towards gender equality issues.
- To avoid the usage of terms in news stories that strengthen the stereotypes. When the guests are using these terms during the talk shows, the host has to indicate on incorrect speech and/or distance from the expressed position.
 - For example, when referring to women avoid the following: using phrases such as Kalbatoni (not when addressing them but when talking about women), representatives of weak sex, representatives of beautiful sex; pointing out gender when it does not convey any additional information; adding male or female labels to any action or profession.

In addition to recommendations for the media, CRRC-Georgia recommends international and non-governmental organizations to work more with journalists and editors and train them so that the gender equality issues become a part of their editorial policy, and all the parties involved in the creation of media products have high sensitivity towards issues related to gender equality.

Annex 1: Monitored channels and programs

1. Channel One of the Public Broadcaster
 - Moambe (*Messenger*) 20:00
 - Tvitmartveloba (*Local Governance*) 2017
2. Adjara TV
 - Mtavari (*Main*) 21:00
 - Paktori (*Factor*)
 - Akhali Sivrtse (*New Space*)
3. Rustavi 2
 - Kurieri (*Courier*) 21:00 (including the P.S.)
 - Archevani (*Choice*)
 - Ganskhvavebuli Aktsentebi (*Different Accents*)
4. Imedi
 - Qronika (*Chronicle*) 20:00 (including the Imedis Kvira)
 - Amomrchevlis Pirispir (*Face to Face with Voters*)
5. Maestro
 - Mtavari Tema (*Main Topic*) 21:00
 - Tsetskhilis Khazi (*Firing Line*)
6. Trialeti
 - Akhali Ambebi (*The News*) 22:00 (summary talk show of the week, with Saturday's Studio)
 - Ganskhvavebuli Azri (*Different Opinion*)
 - Movlenebis Tsentri (*Events in Focus*)
7. Gurjaani
 - Dges (*Today*) 22:00 (including the "Dges" on Saturday)
8. Odishi
 - Dro (*Time*) 22:00
 - Archevnebi (*Elections*) 2017

Annex 2: Glossary / list of phrases

List of terms and phrases, which are paid special attention during the monitoring.

Stereotyped coverage:

- Specifying sex when it does not provide any significant additional information;
- Labelling some activity or profession as if it were more relevant for men or women;
- Presenting a successful woman as a superhero. Comparing their professional work with their domestic activities.

Terms and Phrases:

<u>Wrong</u>	<u>Correct</u>
Madam (Kalbatoni - ქალბატონი)	Woman
Lady (Mandilosani - მანდილოსანი)	Woman
Gatkoveba - გათხოვება	Get married
Gabedniereba - გაბედნიერება	Get married
Weaker sex, fair sex - მშვენიერი სქესი, სუსტი სქესი	Woman
Stronger sex - ძლიერი სქესი	Man
Feminine happiness - ქალური ბედნიერება	Happiness

Words, phrases and questions that support reinforcement of stereotypes:

- Is not appropriate for women - ქალს არ შეეშენის
- Not a woman's business - ქალის საქმე არაა
- If you were a woman I would talk to you differently - ქალი რომ იყო, სხვანაირად გესაუბრებოდი
- Patron პატრონი (Don't you have someone to take care of you? - პატრონი არ გყავს? If she had a patron - პატრონი რომ ყავდეს..)
- Blaming of emotions (yelling, becoming hysterical, squeal, etc. - წიკვინი, ისტერიკის მოწყობა, წიწინი და ა.შ)

It is a man's business, interfering in man's business - კაცების საქმეა, კაცების საქმეში ჩარევა.

Annex 3: UNDP/EU Pre-election Media Monitoring 2017 - Subjects

The election monitoring subjects are the political parties participating in elections, also other political parties and their representatives, independent candidates running in the elections, central and local authorities of Georgia.

List of the media monitoring subjects:

- President
- Prime Minister
- Speaker of the Parliament
- Independent MPs
- Independent candidates running in the elections
- Government (ministers, ministries, governors)
- Local government (city halls, local governments, Gamgeobas)
- Government of Adjara
- Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia
- United National Movement
- European Georgia
- Republican Party
- Conservative Party
- National Forum
- State for People
- Girchi
- Free Democrats
- Alliance of Patriots
- Left-Wing Alliance
- Industry Will Save Georgia
- The Way of Georgia
- New Rights
- National-Democratic Party
- Labour Party
- Social-Democrats
- Georgian Troupe
- Christian-Democrat Movement
- European Democrats
- Green Party
- Whites
- Georgian Party
- Traditionalists Union
- People's Party
- New Georgia
- Reformers
- Socialist Georgia
- People's Authority
- Mechiauri for United Georgia
- Imedi

- Davit Tevzadze – for Peace of Georgia
- Centrists
- Civil Alliance for Freedom
- Our Country
- Refugees
- United Communist Party
- Serve Georgia
- Georgian Idea
- Mikheil Saakashvili
- Bidzina Ivanishvili
- Development Movement
- Freedom Party
- National Movement of All Georgia
- Alexandre Elisashvili
- Independent mayoral candidates
- National Front of Salvation of Georgia
- New Democrats
- Progressive-Democratic Movement
- Georgia for Unity and Development
- New Union Georgia
- Christian-Conservative Party
- Electoral Block – Kukava-Burjanadze
- For the Public Unanimity of the People