



Media monitoring during the electoral campaign for the early parliamentary elections of July 11, 2021

Report no. 5
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Kingdom of the Netherlands

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General data

Purpose and objectives of the project: Monitoring and informing the public about media behavior during the electoral campaign and access of electoral competitors to the media. The monitoring aims to analyze reporting trends that may affect the performance of media outlets and compromise their ability to provide truthful, unbiased, and pluralistic information to the public.

Monitoring period: June 1 – July 10, 2021

Criteria for selecting media outlets for monitoring:

- Audience / impact: national, regional
- Type of media: audiovisual
- Form of ownership: public, private
- Language of broadcasting: Romanian, Russian

List of monitored media outlets:

- Moldova 1 (19:00) – public television, national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian
- Prime TV (21:00) – private television, national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian
- Primul în Moldova (18:00) – private television, national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian
- Publika TV (online version) – private television, national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian
- Jurnal TV (19:00) – private television, regional coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian
- NTV Moldova (19:00) – private television, regional coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian
- RTR Moldova (20:00) – private television, regional coverage, broadcasts in Russian and Romanian
- TV 8 (19:00) – private television, regional coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian
- Pro TV (20:00) – private television, regional coverage, broadcasts in Romanian
- TV6 (19:00) – private television, regional coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian

ABBREVIATIONS

CPA – central public administration

LPA – local public administration

AUR – Alliance for the Union of Romanians

CEC – Central Electoral Commission

BECS – Electoral Bloc of Communists and Socialists

BERU – Electoral Bloc Renato Usatfi

PACCC – Civic Congress Joint Action Party

PACE – Building Europe at Home Party

PAS – Action and Solidarity Party
PDCM – Development and Consolidation Party from Moldova
PDA – Democracy at Home Party
PDM – Democratic Party of Moldova
PLD – Party of Law and Justice
PNOI – NOI Party
PPDA – Dignity and Truth Platform Party
PPPO – People Power Political Party
PPPS – Party of Change Political Party
PP Şor – Shor Political Party
PUN – Party of National Unity
PVE – Ecologist Green Party
PMPSN – Hope Professional Movement Party

2. Methodology

We monitored the entire content of the main daily newscasts from each television station, analyzing materials of direct and indirect electoral nature. The materials were subjected to a content and context assessment to determine whether they are favorable or unfavorable to any party or other political entity. Also, the materials were analyzed according to the following criteria of objective media coverage:

Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship: According to the Code of Audiovisual Media Services (CAMS), by virtue of the fundamental right to information, media service providers must a) ensure a clear distinction between facts and opinions in the news; b) inform about a fact or event correctly, verifying information and presenting it impartially and in good faith (Article 13 (1)). At the same time, according to ethical standards, the news should be unbiased and objective and should not favor any parties / groups / persons at the expense of others. The presence of discriminatory elements in reports and news stories is the first sign that reality is presented through the journalist's opinions. The filtering of news and minimal analysis of history and context also suggest that the interests of certain actors, and not of the general public, are being protected. Furthermore, the Electoral Code stipulates in Article 69 (5) that mass media shall not adopt privileged treatment towards electoral competitors by virtue of their social status and/or functions held by their candidates.

Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources: In order to be fair and balanced, materials must present all the sides concerned, especially when it comes to controversial topics, and must treat opponents equally. The media must also ensure access to a multitude of diverse opinions that would help the audience create their own opinion on the covered topics. CAMS stipulates that in audiovisual news programs, for which accuracy and fairness are essential, reports must come from reliable sources, with sufficient documental proof of the facts, with a credible and impartial approach to events, and with balanced coverage of different opinions (Article 13 (4)).

Language and images used:

Exaggerations and deliberately used indecent language, such as derogatory language or labels attributed to certain individuals or organizations, as well as images manipulated so that certain parties appear in a negative light, raise serious questions about compliance with ethical and professional standards. The ethical behavior of journalists is questioned most of the time when images present aspects that do not correspond to reality, when they are rigged, but also when news stories are illustrated with images that are not related to the text. The CAMS prohibits the dissemination of reports that are likely to propagate, incite, promote, or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, or other forms of hatred based on intolerance or discrimination on grounds of sex, race, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation (Article 11 (2)).

3. Monitoring data



Moldova

Involvement in the coverage of the electoral campaign

During the monitoring period, Moldova 1 had eight editions of the main daily newscast *Mesager*, in which it broadcast 73 election-themed news stories. With the exception of one material of indirect electoral nature, they appeared in the section of *Early Parliamentary Elections 2021*, and their total volume was 5,431 seconds (1.5 hours). The public television focused on informing about the electoral priorities that competitors presented at the debates organized by Moldova 1, at protest actions, or at meetings with voters. About a quarter of the news stories (18) focused on the accusations of some parties against others. The journalists also informed about the organization of the electoral process (printing of ballots, allocation of the money needed for elections, the number of polling stations in the Transnistrian region), the results of opinion polls, the conclusions of the Promo-LEX Association regarding the conduct of the electoral campaign, etc.

Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

During the last week of the electoral campaign, Moldova 1 treated most of the competitors in a neutral manner, except for a slight favoring of BECS and disfavoring of PAS and President Maia Sandu through selection of topics and the angle of approach. While BECS was the protagonist of materials on campaign activities and accusations made by some representatives of the bloc, PAS and the Presidency were placed mainly in the position of responding to accusations, as well as in news about campaign activities.

In addition to news about BECS's electoral commitments, Moldova 1 chose to report on accusations made by some PSRM MPs against members of PAS or the Presidency: complicity in the bank fraud, hidden interests in the auction of forms for biometric passports, external financing or financing through foundations and organizations. In one case journalists noted, "*Confrontation between parties continues.*" On July 5, the station broadcast a news story about an investigation by the foreign publication *New Europe*, according to which western actors invested about 56 million euros to ensure the PAS victory in the elections. The station did not demonstrate the journalistic effort to verify the veracity of the information, and the next day, July 6, it said in the intro of another news story, "*The General Prosecutor's Office might investigate the information from the European publication New Europe.*" It did not refer to official sources from the Prosecutor's Office, but to the statements made by the socialist Bogdan Țirdea at a briefing, who said, "*PSRM was the one to take action, having asked the CEC to investigate the illegal external financing of PAS.*" There was no reply from CEC or the General Prosecutor's Office.

On July 7, Moldova 1 informed, from another briefing of the socialist Țîrdea, that the politician presented the Russian version of his book about the civil society in Moldova, in which he writes that Maia Sandu used “*dirty money, washed through NGOs.*” Another news story on the same day told of the press conference of a group of teachers who declared their support for BECS in the elections, saying, “*They are worried that a new stage of school and kindergarten closures will follow in the country if PAS comes to power. The teachers reminded that, when Maia Sandu was at the head of the Ministry of Education, 119 schools were closed.*” “*In ten years, the total number of pupils and students has decreased by 10,000, and of teachers – by over 11,000 people,*” the intro to the story said. On July 9, while presenting the information that the CEC appealed against the decision to reduce the number of polling stations on the left bank of the Dniester, Moldova 1 preferred to include separately the reaction of BECS, which protested in front of the Supreme Court of Justice. The station mentioned, “*The decision inflamed passions in society.*” It cited three critical opinions of BECS supporters and included the opinions of three other electoral competitors on this topic in another news story.

BECS was covered in a positive tone in two materials out of 20. PAS was covered in a negative tone in six materials out of 16. President Maia Sandu was the protagonist of three negative materials.

During the monitoring period, the public station reported on the results of three opinion polls on the electoral preferences of voters (one on July 2 and the other two on July 5). All three were in line with the requirements of the *Regulation on the coverage of the electoral campaign for the early parliamentary elections of July 11, 2021 in the media of the Republic of Moldova.*

Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources

Moldova 1 directly or indirectly cited 166 sources in the 73 news stories relevant to this monitoring. In addition to electoral competitors and the representatives of the CEC, these were diplomats, representatives of the Government, NGOs, and justice sector institutions.

17 candidates out of 23 had access to the news. According to the frequency of direct and indirect citations, as well as their duration, PAS was in the top, having appeared in 22 news stories with 366 seconds of airtime, followed by BECS, which appeared in 20 news stories with a total volume of 329 seconds.

Frequency of appearance of electoral actors in the news and the volume of interventions / Top 10

Cited/mentioned subjects	Frequency	Duration of direct and indirect appearance, seconds
PAS	22	366
BECS	20	329
PACE	5	179
PPDA	3	147
PDM	3	134
BERU	7	127
AUR	6	127
PRM	3	121
PUN	3	119
V.Valico	4	111

PP Șor appeared in four news stories, of which in three (about the polls) it was only mentioned. PDA was cited three times; PACCC and PDCM were cited twice; PMPSN, PP NOI, and PNOI – only once. The representatives of the Presidency and/or President Maia Sandu were cited or mentioned in nine election-themed news stories, with a total volume of 41 seconds, mostly with short reactions to accusations.

The news stories that presented the candidates' commitments and promises, as well as other electoral topics, were short, based on one source, without background information, and in some cases did not mention where and when exactly statements were made.

18 of the monitored materials were of conflicting nature, and two of them were partially balanced. In the case of Bogdan Țirdea accusing Maia Sandu of using “*dirty money, laundered through NGOs*” (July 7), the newscaster only mentioned, “*The Presidency said it does not comment on Țirdea’s statements,*” without providing further details on whether the journalists tried to approach the presidential institution for a reaction or on where/when/who said they do not comment on accusations. In the news story about the teachers’ conference where PAS and Maia Sandu were accused of closing schools and kindergartens, Moldova 1 indirectly cited PAS, which “*does not comment on the electoral statements of competitors,*” while the reaction of the Presidency missed altogether.

Moldova 1 cited in its news almost three times more men than women – 99 male sources versus 34 female sources (25%).

Language and images used

During the monitoring period, the public station did not resort to editing tricks, and the language used was in line with deontological standards, without labeling or discrimination.



Jurnal TV

Involvement in the coverage of the electoral campaign

The television station Jurnal TV broadcast 41 materials of direct and indirect electoral nature, with a total volume of 6,202 seconds (1.7 hours). The relevant materials informed about the campaign activities of electoral competitors, about the activity of the CEC/electoral processes, but also about the altercations, accusations of some competitors against others. The station also broadcast several video materials, some from unclear sources, which showed some electoral competitors in a negative light. Campaign-related materials presented brief information, from primary sources, on the electoral priorities and objectives of the reflected candidates. The station mentioned that it was reporting on visible electoral events, organized daily.

Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

Many of the materials (29) were impartial and objective, separating facts from the opinion. At the same time, there were 12 cases that were more or less tendentious, and in four news stories facts were not separated from opinion. For example, on July 2, Jurnal TV broadcast a news story from anonymous sources with assumptions regarding the involvement of some people from the Russian Federation in the July 11 elections. “*Agitation before the early elections of July 11! People on both sides of the Dniester, who allegedly have a role in the tacit organization of the vote of people from the Transnistrian region, commute to Moscow. Jurnal TV sources reported that the last visit of this kind ended on July 1,*” the story said, without including other sources to confirm the assumptions of anonymous sources. On the same day, there was a large news story (6 minutes 20 seconds) based on an analysis by the WatchDog NGO, according to

which several criminal people got involved in the elections, supporting BECS. Under the caption “*Criminals are involved in elections again,*” the text “*BECS is supported by dubious people from Russia*” was displayed on the screen, and the story informed about the creation of a civic platform to support BECS and about the links of some of its founders with the criminal world. At the end, the reporter said, “*More and more dubious characters with a criminal past have landed in Chisinau lately, who are either acquitted by the Moldovan judiciary or come here to support certain political parties,*” without referring to sources.

In a material from July 7, the presumption of innocence was not respected. The caption in it said, “*Igor Dodon is shooting pigs from behind a fence.*” “*The leader of PSRM, Igor Dodon, candidate in the July 11 elections, was caught shooting, from behind a fence, some pigs locked in a pen,*” informed the station in the intro, without referring to the source of images. Although the station cited the BECS reply published in other media, according to which the images were fake, the caption did not respect the presumption of innocence. Facts were not separated from opinion, as the text contained statements that were not attributed to anyone.

The news story from July 7 about the alleged problems of PSRM MP Ala Dolința with the National Integrity Authority was also tendentious. The material included footage from an online meeting last year, in which the protagonist appeared eating in front of the screen. The inclusion of irrelevant images and mentions into the story denoted tendentiousness on the part of the station in relation to the protagonist. In another news story, on July 8, facts were clearly mixed with opinions. “*To parade – Yes, to the meeting – No!*” said the newscaster in the intro of the story about the presence of the Minister of Defense Victor Gaiciuc at a festivity, although he did not attend the Government meeting for health reasons the day before. “*Yesterday, the Ministry of Defense published on Facebook several images from the ceremony of handing over certificates to the graduates of military higher education institutions from abroad, an event attended by Gaiciuc, too. To make matters worse, this ceremony took place just before the Government meeting,*” the reporter exclaimed, expressing his attitude in relation to the minister’s actions.

On July 8, Jurnal TV announced that it “*got possession of footage showing former President Igor Dodon when he first entered his office in the renovated Presidency. Enthusiastic, he was filmed by Rita, whom he asked if he looked good in the presidential chair.*” The caption said, “*Dodon at the Presidency: Does it look good with me?*” The text informed, “*The footage was made on December 19, 2018, by a lady called Rita, who was the first to accompany him in the new office. According to some sources, she is his counselor at the time, Rita Manole. Previously, her name appeared in journalistic investigations targeting her fortune and businesses, as she is also one of the PSRM donors.*” The station inserted the woman’s picture. The reason of this information and the need to disseminate such a material, which is irrelevant for public interest, are unclear. Another material from unclear sources was based on “*an explanatory note from a public institution*” that Jurnal TV got hold of, which spoke about “*an alleged fraudulent gas scheme that involved people from Igor Dodon’s entourage, including his brother, Alexandru*” (July 8).

The tone of coverage of most competitors was neutral, except for BECS, which appeared in negative light 8 times (38% of all appearance) and in neutral light 13 times, and PACE, which had three appearances in negative light (42%) and four in neutral light. AUR and PP Șor were covered in a negative tone in one case each.

During the reporting period, the station reported on an opinion poll, in compliance with the provisions of the *Regulation on the coverage of the electoral campaign for the early parliamentary elections of July 11, 2021 in the media of the Republic of Moldova.*

Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources

The 41 monitored news stories were documented from 147 sources, which were diverse, ensuring pluralism of opinion. Most of them were electoral competitors, representatives of the Government, the CEC, the local public administration, the Prosecutor's Office, lawyers, and citizens. During the reporting period, the station reported on 14 electoral candidates, six of whom were cited only once.

BECS was the protagonist with the highest number of appearances/mentions and volume allocated to direct interventions, followed by PAS, PACE, and AUR.

Frequency of appearance of electoral actors in the news and the volume of interventions / Top 10

Cited/mentioned subjects	Frequency	Duration of direct and indirect appearance, seconds
BECS	21	374
PAS	8	204
PACE	7	135
AUR	7	133
PPRM	4	168
PPDA	6	106
BERU	7	83
PDM	1	42
PCDM	1	38
PLD	1	37

The station also covered PUN, PPPO, and PDA, whose representatives were cited once, and PP Şor, which was cited once and mentioned three times.

Of the 17 conflicting news stories, most (13) were balanced, providing airtime for both sides of the conflict. Four other news stories were not balanced. One of them was the news story of indirect electoral nature on July 7 about the arrest of a group of people, including businessman Dorin Damir, for committing several crimes, including state fraud by paying Damir a salary at state structures where he was formally employed, but did not actually work. At the end, the reporter mentioned that this happened during the time when Gheorghe Cavcaliuc [leader of PACE] was at the head of the Special Operations Department, but the story did not contain the opinion of the PACE leader about this. It should be noted that on previous days, Jurnal TV cited Cavcaliuc, who said that he had nothing to do with this case. Other unbalanced materials targeted BECS (allegedly supported by criminals) and groups preparing to bring voters from the Transnistrian region to vote, saying that one of the people concerned did not answer the phone to comment. The material from July 8 about a group of Ialoveni town councilor leaving the PSRM, also remained unbalanced.

Regarding gender balance, during the reporting period there was an obvious discrepancy between the number of men and women cited/mentioned, men being cited/mentioned 83 times, and women – 26 times (24%).

Language and images used

The language and images used by Jurnal TV were usually relevant, in line with deontological standards. In some cases, the station used labels (for example, in a news story on July 7 – *the*

controversial businessman Dorin Damir, the fugitive oligarch Vladimir Plahotniuc). In the news story on July 7 that showed images of shot animals, the station warned that shocking images were coming, but repeated the footage showing how the pig was shot, where one could see how it struggled in convulsions, which could amplify the negative emotional effect on viewers.



NTV Moldova

Involvement in the coverage of the electoral campaign

During the reporting period, NTV Moldova actively covered the electoral campaign. In the six monitored newscasts, there were 58 news stories of direct and indirect electoral nature, with a total volume of 8,899 seconds or 2.4 hours. 51 stories appeared in the section *Elections 2021*, and the other seven appeared outside this section.

The newscasts contained extensive materials about the commitments and campaign activities of BECS, the solutions proposed by BECS to overcome the crisis in the country, and accusations against other candidates. Other news stories referred to the electoral priorities of other competitors, provided information on the electoral process, and announced voter options on the eve of elections. The station also broadcast a detailed material explaining to citizens various aspects related to the voting process. Some of the materials focused on the activity of President Maia Sandu.

Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

Of the 58 monitored news stories, 25 were tendentious, indicating the station's predilection for favoring or disfavoring certain electoral competitors. The lack of impartiality and objectivity was evident in the way in which electoral and non-electoral topics were selected and covered in newscasts. All newscasts contained materials about the electoral actions of BECS and accusations against PAS and President Maia Sandu – an approach that revealed the station's intention to present BECS in a positive context and to discredit PAS and President Maia Sandu. As a rule, controversial materials targeting PAS and the Presidency were shown at the beginning of the newscast or in the opening of the section dedicated to elections.

On July 5, the station broadcast a material citing a “*European publication*” (NewEurope.eu), according to which “*Western actors have spent 56 million euros on the electoral activities of PAS,*” for “*promotional materials, payment of experts and trolls, the media holding supporting Maia Sandu.*” Reporters did not provide information about this publication or other details to prove that it is a reliable source of information. The topic of PAS financing was examined in further detail in another news story (July 6), in which BECS representatives warned, “*Our citizens, who are expected to vote at the parliamentary elections next Sunday, should know that various Western countries have already spent dozens million euros for PAS to manipulate them.*” The story was balanced, but it showed the station's tendentious approach to this electoral competitor, given that the PAS intervention was shortened when the PAS candidate Sergiu Litvinenco was explaining the source of donations. In the newscast on July 7, the BECS candidate Bogdan Țirdea claimed that the presidential campaign back in 2020 was also financed from abroad, when “*thousands, thousands, thousands lei*” were transferred “*to Maia Sandu's electoral account*” – “*money that were supposed to get to pensioners, to disabled people, to mothers with many children.*” Further, he addressed PAS, “*You get lots of money, you take lots of money, and here we caught you with documented proof.*”

Here are some other examples of tendentious and biased materials: The news story about the direct involvement and contribution of the PAS candidate Igor Grosu to the “*theft of the billion*,” who “*enjoys an impressive fortune six years after that theft*.” “*He, who stole millions from people and made them pay 25 billion lei in 25 years, is speaking about fairness and good times? If this is the first person on the PAS list and he participated in the theft of the billion, what could we say about others?*” (July 2); The news story about alleged pressure from some presidential advisors on the leaders of the Public Services Agency and “*reasonable suspicion regarding the preparation of the fraud of the tender for the purchase of passport forms after the parliamentary elections*,” announced by the BECS candidate Nichita Țurcan, who also warned that previously “*a similar scheme was set up by the councilor Veaceslav Negruța when he was minister of finance in the Filat Government, and Maia Sandu was his fellow party member*.” (July 2); A material about another PAS candidate, Petru Frunze, who was accused of “*physical aggression and involvement in the fabrication of a criminal case*.” The story said, “*The residents of Puhoi village are outraged by the fact that people involved in unworthy actions are running for the position of MP*,” although the story contained only the statements of two local people (July 7); The news story about some teachers being worried of losing jobs “*in PAS gets to promote policies similar to the ones implemented by Maia Sandu when she was minister of education*,” when over one hundred schools were closed (“*Tell me please, would a reasonable and kind person close boarding schools for orphaned children or leave 5,800 teachers without a job? To us, every school is valuable, and we will defend them to the end*,” July 7).

The mixture of facts and opinions could be noticed in three news stories. For example, the story about President Maia Sandu’s visit to Ceadir-Lunga, broadcast on July 2. At the beginning, it announced, “*The media is undesirable at President Maia Sandu’s meetings in districts*,” without attributing this quote to anyone. The material was accompanied by the caption “*Maia Sandu is running away from the media*.” A similar example is the story about “*Romania’s involvement*” in the electoral campaign (July 8).

NTV Moldova also broadcast three materials (July 2, 5, 6) about successful projects completed in several rural localities due to an efficient collaboration between mayors who ran in elections on PSRM lists (Mihail Andruh, Brătușeni village; Dmitri Ikizli, Congazcic village, ATU Gagauz-Yeri; Vladimir Priseajniuc, Șofrîncani village) and central authorities. All these materials were accompanied by appreciative opinions of the locals who are satisfied with the new changes and hope that similar initiatives will be carried out in the future.

During the monitoring period, it was possible to observe the partisanship of NTV Moldova in favor of BECS, which was the protagonist of 30 news stories, including 21 of an obviously positive nature. BECS representatives were presented as candidates who defend the Moldovan state (“*The country where you were born, the country that is your homeland, you are obliged (...) to love it*”); fight for the Parliament to remain “*in the service of the people*” (“*We with you must be united in doing our utmost to disclose the traitors who have sold themselves to others*”) (July 5); defend the Constitution, “*given that since 2013, the text of the fundamental law has been amended according to the interests of the rulers, ignoring national interests*”; promote interethnic cohesion (July 6); are open for debate with other electoral competitors, because they have a solid governmental program and a professional team (“*We, the socialists, will present a platform that will show that we have the capacity to develop the Republic of Moldova without external debt*”) (July 7); report the abuses of PAS and warn the people “*that the right-wing parties want to destabilize, at any cost, the socio-political situation in the country*” (July 9).

In relation to PAS, the station had a tendentious attitude, and the tone of its coverage was negative in 15 materials out of 20, its representatives being the candidates who “*contributed to the theft of the billion*” (July 2), beneficiaries of “*dubious financing*” from abroad (July 5, 7), or promoters of interests other than those of the state (July 8). In a material broadcast on July 9, referring to the right-wing forces, the BECS candidate Igor Dodon said, “*Last year, the likes*

of Grosu blocked their access, made them separatists. (...) Such actors and such leaders started the war on the Dniester. (...) Voting for those on the right wing means the beginning of a war on the Dniester, I want you to understand this.”

In relation to President Maia Sandu, the station adopted a negative tone in 17 of the 20 materials that targeted her. The head of state was accused of involvement “*in the abduction of Ceaus, to help Zelenski in the political struggles in Ukraine*”; promotion of foreign interests and not those of the country; irresponsible attitude towards citizens by triggering early elections in the midst of an economic and health crisis (“*The things Maia Sandu did with her friends, the show they made in the Parliament with Natalia Gavrilică and everyone else, the way they mistreated the opinion of the people – no one should do that, this is what only criminals do*”) (July 8). The station also broadcast two materials suggesting that PAS and Maia Sandu enjoy the support of corrupt former prime ministers who had no achievements. The first material referred to the message of support and the urge to vote for PAS launched by the leader of the Romanian PNL party, Ludovic Orban, presented as “*the supporter of Maia Sandu in Romania*” and “*the politician dismissed with the most votes in the history of the Parliament in Bucharest,*” who was often “*booed*” by citizens (July 8). The second material was about the appeal of Vlad Filat, “*the first prime minister of Moldova convicted for corruption,*” to vote for PAS. The story contained retrospective information about Vlad Filat’s activity, the reporter mentioning that he was released “*after the five months of Maia Sandu’s government.*”

In three news stories, the tone was negative towards AUR. Other competitors, who appeared in the newscasts of NTV Moldova, were covered in a neutral manner, with a brief presentation of electoral priorities.

NTV Moldova did not comply with the provisions of the Electoral Code (Article 69 (1)), which stipulates that “*broadcasters, in all their programs (...) have the obligation to respect the principles of fairness, responsibility, balance, and impartiality in the coverage of elections,*” but also the provisions of the Code of Audiovisual Media Services, Article 13 (6), which provides for *ensuring impartiality, balance, and favoring the free formation of opinions by presenting the main opposing points of view during the period when issues are in public debate.*

On July 2 and 5, the station broadcast two news stories about the results of two electoral opinion polls. The materials were made in line with the provisions of the *Regulation on the coverage of the electoral campaign for the early parliamentary elections of July 11, 2021 in the media of the Republic of Moldova.*

Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources

The reporters of NTV Moldova consulted 187 sources to prepare the 58 materials of direct and indirect electoral nature. The main sources were electoral candidates, the CEC, the Presidency, representatives of state institutions, experts, and citizens.

The station informed about 17 electoral candidates in total, and three of them were only cited/mentioned.

From the perspective of appearances, BECS representatives had the largest presence, with 2,452 seconds of direct and indirect interventions. It was followed by PACE, with a volume of appearances 25 times smaller (96 seconds), and PRM, with 92 seconds for direct or indirect interventions.

Frequency of appearance of electoral actors in the news and the volume of interventions / Top 10

Cited/mentioned subjects	Frequency	Duration of direct and indirect appearance, seconds
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BECS	32	2,452
PACE	3	96
PRM	2	92
AUR	3	88
PDM	3	87
PPPS	2	85
PNOI	1	80
PAS	20	74
PPDA	4	64
PMPSN	1	56

PLD had one appearance of 45 seconds, PUN – of 44 seconds, the independent candidate Veaceslav Valico – one of 40 seconds, and PDA – 22 seconds.

BERU and PP Șor were mentioned twice, and PDCM – only once.

President Maia Sandu was cited/mentioned 20 times, with three direct interventions of 64 seconds, one of which was taken from another media outlet.

Of the 58 materials, 19 covered controversial topics, six of which were unbalanced.

In three of these news stories, with accusations against the Presidency (July 8) and PAS (July 2, 8), no editorial effort to balance them in terms of the sources cited was described.

Three other news stories lacked the opinion of the Information and Security Service, which allegedly knew about the abduction of Judge Ceaus from Ukraine (July 5); the opinion of the Constitutional Court, which was accused by BECS of amending the text of the Constitution according to political actors (July 6); and the CEC comment about Romania's involvement in the electoral campaign (July 9).

In terms of gender balance, men as sources/protagonists were cited/mentioned 92 times, and women were cited/mentioned 50 times (35%).

Language and images used

The language and images used in the newscasts of NTV Moldova were in line with deontological standards. In five news stories, the microphone of the Primul în Moldova television station appeared in the image.



Prime TV

Involvement in the coverage of the electoral campaign

During the reporting period, on Prime TV we monitored six newscasts in Romanian, at 21:00, and one in Russian, at 18:00, broadcast on July 2. The station covered the electoral campaign in 45 news stories, all of which appeared in the section *Elections 2021*. The total volume of news was 5,049 seconds (1.4 hours). The station informed about the campaign activities of electoral competitors, statements and commitments of the representatives of political parties, accusations of some candidates against others, the conclusions presented by the civil society regarding the electoral campaign. At the same time, Prime TV broadcast five reports on infrastructure development projects implemented in Orhei district by representatives of PP Șor. The station also reported on the results of two opinion polls regarding the parties that have a chance to enter the Parliament.

Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

Most of the news stories broadcast by Prime TV during the reporting period (39 out of 45) were impartial, and facts were separated from opinion. Prime TV neutrally covered the activities carried out by the majority of the competitors in the early parliamentary elections that were targeted by the station during this period, except PP Șor, which was openly favored.

The favoring of PP Șor was expressed in the selection of topics and information included in materials. On July 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, Prime TV broadcast five biased reports on infrastructure development projects implemented in Orhei district, citing directly Orhei Mayor Pavel Verejanu (in four news stories), or Isacova village Mayor Stanislav Cvasnii (in one story). Prime TV noted in four materials that they were elected “*as part of Șor Party.*” In three materials, Prime TV noted that it used images taken from the Orhei District Council and the Orhei Mayor’s Office, including footage with people interviewed, indicating the source or.md or orhei.md. All four materials were laudatory to local authorities. For example, Prime TV said, “*The mayor of Orhei, Pavel Verejanu, elected as part of the Șor Party, said that neither the pandemic nor the electoral campaign stopped the local authorities from completing infrastructure projects in Orhei*” (July 7). The materials were supplemented with voices of citizens who expressed their support for the projects carried out by the local authorities in Orhei.

Prime TV also broadcast three news stories about the PP Șor leader addressing the court with the request to cancel his arrest warrant so that he could return to the country to get involved in the electoral campaign (two news stories), and about the decision of the court to reject this request (one story).

BECS was also favored by the way Prime TV selected topics. The representatives of this party were presented in a larger number of news stories than other competitors, commenting on the European integration of Moldova, appealing to citizens in the diaspora, participating in the meeting with the US Ambassador to Moldova Derek J. Hogan, inviting PAS to electoral debates, organizing demonstrations or protests. During the reporting period, Prime TV broadcast an interview with BECS leaders Vladimir Voronin and Igor Dodon, as well as with Andrei Năstase, leader of PPDA, all within *Prime Time*, presented as a project of *Primele Știri* [the name of the monitored newscast].

The two political entities were also targeted in two materials in which PAS accused BECS and PP Șor of wishing to obstruct the voting process in the diaspora (July 5), and BECS of aiming to defraud election results (July 6).

The tone adopted by Prime TV in relation to BECS was neutral in 19 news stories and positive in two. The tone in relation to PP Șor was neutral in 11 stories and clearly positive in five.

The other electoral competitors were covered in a neutral tone. In relation to the Presidency or President Maia Sandu, the tone was neutral in six news stories and negative in one.

On July 5, Prime TV broadcast two news stories about the results of two opinion polls on the parties that would enter the Parliament. The materials were in line with all the provisions of the *Regulation on the coverage of the electoral campaign for the early parliamentary elections of July 11, 2021 in the media of the Republic of Moldova.*

Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources

In the 45 monitored news stories, Prime TV cited/mentioned 170 sources/protagonists: representatives of electoral competitors, the CEC, the Government, the Presidency, citizens, representatives of civil society, etc.

The station cited/mentioned less than half of the parties registered for the early parliamentary elections (11 out of 23). PP Șor and BECS benefited from the most airtime, with 570 seconds and 526 seconds, respectively, followed by PAS with 339 seconds.

Cited/mentioned subjects	Frequency	Duration of direct and indirect appearance, seconds
PP Șor	16	570
BECS	21	526
PAS	13	339
AUR	8	157
PPDA	10	143
BERU	7	91
POM	2	70
PDCM	1	45
PDM	4	55
PACE	1	20

PDA was mentioned only once.

The Presidency and/or President Maia Sandu were cited/mentioned seven times, with 33 seconds of interventions: laying flowers at the Monument of Stephen the Great, two opinion polls, and three accusatory statements by BECS representatives, according to which the President of Moldova could use the Constitutional Court if she disagrees with election results, as well as in relation to the Chisinau Court of Appeal decision to reduce the number of polling stations on the left bank of the Dniester and in the context of the violations found by Promo-LEX Association during the electoral campaign.

Half (22) of the 45 news stories covered controversial topics. The balance of sources was not ensured in two of these materials, both broadcast on July 9, regarding the BECS reactions after the Chisinau Court of Appeal decided to reduce the number of polling stations on the left bank of the Dniester. The story about the BECS protest presented only one point of view, exposed in the speeches of its representatives at the event. In another news story, Prime TV cited Vlad Batrânca, BECS candidate, also present at the protest, with accusations against Maia Sandu, who, according to him, facilitated the appointment of the interim president of the Chisinau Court of Appeal, Ana Panov, who was part of the panel that decided on the number of polling stations in the Transnistrian region. Prime TV did not offer the right to reply to the head of state.

News stories that presented the commitments of candidates were based on one source and had no background information.

The ratio of sources from a gender perspective was in favor of men: 84 vs 35 women (29%).

Language and images used

During the reporting period, the language and images used by Prime TV were in line with deontological standards.



Primul în Moldova

Involvement in the coverage of the electoral campaign

The television station Primul în Moldova broadcast during the reporting period 55 materials of direct and indirect electoral nature, with a total volume of 7,801 seconds (2.2 hours), most of

which appeared in the section dedicated to elections. Most of the time, materials focused on the campaign activities of some electoral competitors and the accusations of some candidates against others. They also covered the results of opinion polls on voter preferences, along with information on the electoral process and the decision of the Chisinau Court of Appeal to reduce the number of polling stations for citizens in the Transnistrian region and the protests that followed. The station also broadcast materials that referred to the successful activities of PSRM mayors in the regions, but also accusations against President Maia Sandu.

Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

Most of the materials (31) had a tendentious nature, with obvious bias in the selection of topics for coverage and in the angle of approach. The station mainly selected topics about the BECS campaign events, informing about the achievements of the bloc's representatives at national and local level, about the electoral priorities to stop the chaos and bring order in the country, and about the support they have from citizens, with their massive quotes in newscasts. The materials about PSRM mayors from the regions followed the same model: the presentation of mayors' successes, the insertion of the villagers' opinions, and repeated emphasis that these things would not have happened without the support of the central authorities. Other relevant materials with the presence of BECS included accusations against other electoral competitors and gloomy predictions in case PAS wins the elections. BECS representatives often appeared as defenders of justice, of teachers, and of state sovereignty. At the same time, materials that targeted PAS, AUR, and President Maia Sandu contained in most cases different accusations. They were mentioned in the news more than cited. Other electoral competitors (e.g. PUN, PPPS, AUR) appeared with quotes only in the news with accusations against PAS, which demonstrates the unfavorable attitude of the station in relation to the latter electoral competitor.

Examples of biased materials are the news stories regarding the press conferences of the BECS candidate Bogdan Țîrdea, from which the station selected large accusatory quotes addressed to PAS, President Maia Sandu, and civil society (July 2, 7, 8); the news story of indirect electoral nature that presidential advisers create obstacles in the process of printing passports (July 2); the PPPS leader accusing PAS of urging the PPPS to give up the election race in their favor (July 2). On July 5, the news story about the abduction of the Ukrainian judge Ceaus respected the presumption of innocence, saying that Maia Sandu was involved in it. The caption on the screen said, "*Abduction with the knowledge of the Presidency,*" although the cited source several times said the word "*I suppose.*" Another news story, which cited a European online portal claiming that PAS is financed from abroad through civil society organizations, was accompanied by the caption "*PAS financed from abroad.*" The topic was resumed on other days. Tendentiousness could be seen in the material about the opinion poll of July 5, where the station said that the two BECS leaders gathered more points than Maia Sandu, claiming that respondents believe that left wing forces will win the elections, which was pointed out both at the beginning and at the end of the story. On July 7, the station informed about the press conference of a group of people working in the field of education, who predicted disastrous things if PAS comes to power – "*schools closed, like at the time when Maia Sandu was minister of education*" – and praised the former socialist government, expressing hope that BECS will win. The station also dedicated airtime for negative comments on the PAS decision to leave the electoral debates at the public television (July 8). In another news story on July 8, Bogdan Țîrdea spoke of PAS financing in previous campaigns, but the caption said, "*Suspect financing in the electoral campaign,*" leaving the impression that they meant the current campaign, which showed the intention to spread disinformation.

A news story where facts were not separated from opinion was broadcast on July 8, informing that PAS refused to have a public duel with BECS. The reporter generalized that voters also expected this debate and that "*the big wish of the people is for parties who are likely to get into the Parliament to work together.*" Also on July 8, the station informed in the caption that

“Romania gets involved into the electoral campaign,” although the material referred only to the statement of Ludovic Orban, head of the PNL party. The material noted that such spots are in violation of the law, but did not refer to concrete legal provisions. It contained the opinions of two experts, who did not cite any legal act, either, and then for about two minutes the station aired information aiming to discredit the protagonist, having selected footage from Romanian television stations, in which people booed the politician when he was in power. “Dismissed from the Government and booed at every corner, Ludovic Orban claims to be the best friend of Maia Sandu and calls on Moldovans to vote,” the reporter said, mixing facts with opinion. At the end, it was mentioned that the CEC did not take note of this case, and the reporter did not ask the CEC for an opinion.

The material on July 9 about the former PLDM leader Vlad Filat calling on people to support PAS in these elections was made in the same style. A large part of the story was made to discredit the protagonist, and facts were mixed with opinion: “After being dismissed from the Government for corruption, Vlad Filat was the first prime minister of Moldova who got convicted.” The reporter noted that Filat was released from prison during the five months of Maia Sandu’s government, suggesting that the president of Moldova was involved in the trial.

The majority of electoral candidates were presented in a neutral tone, except for BECS, which benefited from positive tone in 15 cases and neutral in 11 cases, and PAS, which was the protagonist of nine materials with negative connotation and five – neutral. AUR appeared five times in negative light and once in neutral. PAS was disadvantaged by the large number of negative news stories targeting President Maia Sandu, former head of PAS – 11 in total.

Thus, Primul în Moldova did not comply with the provisions of the Code of Audiovisual Media Services, Article 13 (1), which stipulates that *media service providers must a) ensure a clear distinction between facts and opinions in the news; b) inform about a fact or event correctly, and the information must be verified and presented impartially and in good faith.*

The station had two materials on the results of opinion polls, and in both cases, it complied with the provisions of the *Regulation on the coverage of the electoral campaign for the early parliamentary elections of July 11, 2021 in the media of the Republic of Moldova.*

Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources

The 55 relevant news stories cited/mentioned 154 sources, which were relatively diverse. Most of them were representatives of the electoral competitors, of the central and local public administration, of the CEC, citizens, diplomats, experts, other media. During the reporting period, the number of the electoral competitors covered by the station increased – it informed about 17 competitors, of which 15 were cited and only two were only mentioned.

BECS was the protagonist with the highest number of appearances/mentions and volume allocated to direct interventions, followed by AUR, PPR, and PPM. BERU and PP Șor were only mentioned in two cases each, in the news about opinion polls.

Frequency of appearance of electoral actors in the news and the volume of interventions / Top 10

Cited/mentioned subjects	Frequency	Duration of direct and indirect appearance, seconds
BECS	26	1,558
AUR	6	147
PPR	2	129
PPM	1	120

PPDA	3	114
PDM	2	111
PPPS	2	102
PNOI	1	95
PLD	1	68
PPPOM	1	68

The station also cited/mentioned PAS (14 times, 66 seconds), PACE (twice, 65 seconds), independent candidate Veaceslav Valico (once, 66 seconds), PUN (once, 50 seconds), and PDA (once, 25 seconds).

President Maia Sandu was mentioned 10 times and had two direct interventions.

Of the 22 conflicting news stories, some (10) were unbalanced or partially balanced, without citing both sides of the conflict. The station made no effort to balance the news, often mentioning that the person concerned did not answer the phone or refused to comment, without providing evidence of journalistic effort in this regard. Thus, for example, the news stories about altercations in front of the PSRM headquarters with the involvement of AUR (July 7) and about the provocations coming from AUR (July 8) were completely unbalanced. A partial balance was ensured in the stories about the accusations launched by Bogdan Țirdea (July 2, 7), about the obstacles that presidential advisers allegedly create in the process of printing passports (July 2), about the accusations of teachers against PAS and Maia Sandu (July 7).

As for gender balance, there was a discrepancy during the reporting period between the number of men and women cited/mentioned – 80 and 46 (36%), respectively.

Language and images used

In election-themed news stories, the language was generally adequate and neutral. No image manipulations or editing tricks were identified. However, in two materials, the station accompanied images by jerky music, repeating several times the footage illustrating the attack by a protester on a representative of the police. Thus, the effect of the text about the attack was amplified (July 5, 7).



Pro TV

Involvement in the coverage of the electoral campaign

During the monitoring period, Pro TV broadcast, in the seven editions of its main daily newscast, 51 news stories of direct and indirect electoral nature, with a total volume of 7,158 seconds (1.9 hours). These materials were not included in a special section dedicated to the early parliamentary elections of 2021. The monitored news stories covered the campaign activities of competitors; the protests, incidents, and conflict situations targeting some candidates; accusations of some political entities against others; the criminal cases involving some electoral competitors; the current activity of the CEC; the conduct of the electoral process; court decisions about the number of polling stations to be opened in the Transnistrian region. In five of the seven newscasts, the station informed about the organization of debates *Te votezi la Pro TV*, with the announcement of the invited competitors, including a material about the course of the debates the night before. Pro TV also broadcast two news stories announcing the results of opinion polls.

Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

41 materials out of the 51 monitored during the reporting period were impartial, facts being separated from opinions. In 10 news stories out of all monitored we noticed a biased approach, and in half of them facts were not separated from opinions.

During the last week of the electoral campaign, Pro TV adopted a tendentious attitude towards BECS, expressed in the selection of topics/information for the news. The representatives of this bloc were mainly targeted in stories on controversial topics: protests, accusations they launched against other electoral competitors, but also other competitors' accusations against BECS, incidents and altercations, suspicions regarding the integrity of some BECS representatives, a journalistic investigation according to which this electoral bloc might fraud the elections, etc.

Pro TV's biased attitude towards BECS could be noticed, for example, in materials from the protests/demonstrations organized by this electoral bloc. On July 4, reporting on the BECS march "We love Moldova" and the counter-demonstration organized by AUR, Pro TV highlighted the altercations between AUR and the police, followed by the reporter's comment, in which facts were mixed with opinions: "*Meanwhile, the socialist leader, who stepped forward with a smile on his face, was proud of what had happened and threatened the unionists.*" This material was supplemented by the voices of five citizens preceded by the generalizing comment of the reporter: "*Heated speeches were made. However, many of those who came did not know why they were there.*" The images showed that at least two people refused to talk to the Pro TV reporter, and the others offered answers that cannot be attributed to the journalist's statement.

On July 9, reporting on the BECS protest against the decision of the Chisinau Court of Appeal to reduce the number of polling stations on the left bank of the Dniester, the Pro TV journalist said, "*The majority of the communists' and socialists' supporters at the protest could not say why they were there and the symbols of which party they had on their shirts.*" The material included the opinions of four people, a number that did not represent the "majority of BECS supporters" and did support the journalist's comment.

During the last week of the electoral campaign, the station also aired materials that questioned the integrity of BECS representatives, but they had no connection with the electoral campaign and were not fully documented. This happened with the material according to which "*the president of the Floresti territorial organization of PSRM repaired the road exactly to his gate, while a main street in the city remained unfinished*" (July 7). The material was mostly based on statements by "*outraged citizens,*" although the BECS candidate said he paid for the works "*out of his own pocket.*" The journalists did not provide evidence for the accusations that came from citizens or for the statements of the PSRM representative.

On July 8, in a material about an incident in Bălți, where a journalist from the Nord News portal was not allowed to attend a meeting of Igor Dodon with voters and was mistreated by BECS representatives, Pro TV included wrong background information: "*This is not the first time that PSRM representatives are mistreating journalists. Last year, Dodon's bodyguards mistreated a Pro TV reporter at a march in the center of the capital. (...) The same thing happened this winter at the Theophany service at the Cathedral.*" In the case of both incidents reported by the station in the background information, Pro TV previously informed that those who mistreated Pro TV reporters were the agents of the State Protection and Guard Service, and not representatives of PSRM.

A biased approach could also be observed in the case of a demonstration organized by PACCC (July 3). In the material made by Pro TV, the journalists generalized in the intro: "*However, many of the participants did not know why they came to the march, and some told us that they were brought to the event in an organized manner.*" The journalists also noted, mixing facts with opinions, "*The action displeased the drivers, who stayed for minutes in traffic jams formed due to blocked roads,*" and "*Iurie Muntean was displeased when we asked him how much money*

he spent to organize the event.” In addition, they filmed with a candid camera the musicians present at the event to find out if they were paid for participation, and ended thus: “At the end of the event, protesters got on the minibuses that brought them here, and went home.”

In a material summarizing the electoral campaign (July 9), we noticed the tendentiousness of Pro TV in relation to BECS, PP Șor (whose leader they called “fugitive” in 7 out of 12 materials), and BERU, out of the 11 competitors mentioned. The station noted: “The communists and socialists, whose leaders insulted each other for years, but shook hands for the sake of the elections” (BECS); “The event launching the Renato Usatii Bloc was meant to be a grand one, with almost 500 people present at the Palace of the Republic, but it seems that the speeches were too long and the people were bored” (BERU), a statement followed by footage with participants in the event looking into their phones, accompanied by a soundtrack; “Alone, in front of a screen, the fugitive Ilan Șor listed the priorities of his party. Convicted for fraud at BEM, he wants to be at the head of the Government” (PP Șor).

Most of the electoral competitors were presented in a neutral tone, except for BECS, in relation to which the tone was negative in 8 cases and neutral in 24 cases, and PACCC – negative tone in one case and neutral in one case. PP Șor and BERU were presented mostly in a neutral tone, in 12 and 11 cases, respectively. In relation to PP Șor, the tone was negative in 2 news stories, and in relation to BERU – in one story. The other competitors were presented neutrally.

On July 5, Pro TV aired two news stories about the results of two opinion polls on the potential results of the early elections. Both materials did not fully comply with the provisions of the Regulation on the coverage of the electoral campaign for the early parliamentary elections of July 11, 2021 in the media of the Republic of Moldova. These materials did not mention whether the CEC was informed about the conduct of the surveys, as required by the Regulation.

Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources

In the 51 materials broadcast during the reporting period, Pro TV cited/mentioned 283 sources, most often the parties registered for elections, representatives of the CEC, citizens.

During the reporting period, the station provided access for 21 electoral competitors in the broadcast materials. The first in the top was BECS with 405 seconds, followed by PAS with 243 seconds and AUR with 165 seconds.

Frequency of appearance of electoral actors in the news and the volume of interventions

Cited/mentioned subjects	Frequency	Duration of direct and indirect appearance, seconds
BECS	32	405
PAS	18	243
AUR	15	165
PPDA	11	129
BERU	11	77
PP Șor	12	76
PACCC	2	59
POM	4	58
PUN	2	47
PACE	7	43
PDA	6	41

Pro TV also cited/mentioned PLD – 32 seconds, PDCM – 30 seconds, PNOI – 29 seconds, PVE – 28 seconds, PP NOI – 27 seconds, PDM – 26 seconds, independent candidate Veaceslav Valico – 25 seconds, PMPSN – 24 seconds, PPM – 23 seconds, PRM – 3 seconds.

Almost half (25) of the 51 monitored news stories covered conflicting topics. In four of these, the balance of sources was not ensured. On July 3, in a material borrowed from RISE Moldova, about private talks between Igor Dodon, one of the BECS leaders, and PACE leader Gheorghe Cavcaliuc, the PACE spokesperson Victoria Kriukova described the RISE Moldova investigation as false information fabricated by BERU leader Renato Usatii. In reply, the journalists only said, “*Renato Usatii has not reacted yet.*”

On July 5, in the material about Gheorghe Cavcaliuc’s return from Moscow after he was detained, Pro TV referred to the Moldovan authorities, who described the PACE leader’s trip with two colleagues, one of whom is banned from coming to Russia, as “*a provocative action.*” In the material, Pro TV did not offer PACE the right to reply.

On July 9, in the material about the BECS protest after the Chisinau Court of Appeal decided to reduce the number of polling stations to be opened on the left bank of the Dniester, Igor Dodon called the decision “*illegal.*” The entire news story was made from the opinions of BECS representatives and the voices of several citizens who came to the rally.

Also on July 9, Pro TV announced, referring to Inga Grigoriu, chairman of the Parliamentary Commission for investigation of the so-called Russian laundromat (PPDA representative), that Ilan Șor, Vladimir Plahotniuc, and Veaceslav Platon were the beneficiaries of money from bank frauds. Pro TV cited directly only Veaceslav Platon and did not announce what steps it took to offer the right to reply to Ilan Șor and Vladimir Plahotniuc.

During the reporting period, Pro TV failed to ensure gender equality, having cited/mentioned in the news 160 men and 43 women (21%).

Language and images used

In most of the materials in Pro TV newscasts analyzed during the reporting period, the language and images were in line with deontological standards, without violations or discriminatory elements. In seven news stories, on July 5, 7, 8, and 9, the station resorted to labeling in relation to Ilan Șor, the leader of PP Șor, calling him a “*fugitive.*” In one news story (July 9), Veaceslav Platon was labeled a “*controversial businessman.*”

On July 4, at the beginning of a material about an event organized by BECS, where there were altercations between AUR and the police, Pro TV inserted some footage from the action organized by PACCC the day before, showing Iurie Muntean in the foreground.



Publika TV

Involvement in the coverage of the electoral campaign

Between July 2 and 10, Publika TV made 41 materials of direct electoral nature, with a total volume of 3,690 seconds (1.02 hours). These materials focused on the campaign activities of the electoral competitors; preparations for the elections carried out by the CEC, which also published the candidates’ profiles; the decision of the Chisinau Court of Appeal to reduce the number of polling stations on the left bank of the Dniester and the reactions of electoral actors to this decision. Also, in the last days of the electoral campaign, the station broadcast some controversial topics involving electoral competitors. During the monitoring period, Publika TV presented the electoral preferences of voters through the results of two opinion polls.

Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

The materials of direct electoral nature broadcast by Publika TV were generally objective and impartial, without violations of deontological standards. Election-themed materials presented the information in a fair and impartial manner, without mixing facts with opinions or treating events in a biased manner.

During the monitoring period, the station showed predilection for BECS from the perspective of the topics selected for broadcasting. This electoral competitor received airtime in four news stories to state its electoral objectives in certain segments or to reflect its campaign activities: “Vladimir Voronin believes that European integration must be included in the Constitution” (July 2); “The leader of the socialists, Igor Dodon, is worried that foreign agents are swarming in state structures and proposes amending the legislation in order to prevent their involvement in the internal affairs of the country” (July 3); “Leaders of the Electoral Bloc of Communists and Socialists, Vladimir Voronin and Igor Dodon, claim that they have the formula to get the country out of the crisis. They promised people higher pensions, jobs, but also a stable standard of living. Such statements were made during the march they organized on Sunday under the slogan ‘I love Moldova,’ which was attended by thousands of their supporters from different parts of the country” (July 4); “BECS has developed an effective plan to get the country out of the crisis and is ready to take over the government immediately after the new parliament is formed” (July 8).

BECS was also the protagonist of some materials in which it asked state institutions to take action in certain respects, for example: “BECS asks the General Prosecutor’s Office and the Central Electoral Commission to investigate information published in the foreign press about possible external financing of the electoral campaign of the Action and Solidarity Party” (July 6). At the same time, the bloc’s representatives were mentioned or cited in several news stories regarding various accusations against them or other electoral competitors.

Electoral candidates were presented mostly in a neutral tone, except for BECS, which benefited from the context, attitude, and positive tone, through the topics chosen and the large number of appearances and direct and indirect interventions (6 materials).

During the reporting period, Publika TV reported on the results of two opinion polls. Both materials were presented on July 5 and prepared in line with the provisions of the Regulation on the coverage of the electoral campaign for the early parliamentary elections of July 11, 2021 in the media of the Republic of Moldova.

Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources

To document the 41 news stories, the station’s reporters referred to 109 sources, most often mentioning or citing electoral candidates and CEC representatives. Also, the news mentioned institutions such as the Chisinau Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, the Government, and some police subdivisions.

Publika TV covered the electoral activity of less than half of the electoral competitors (nine candidates out of 23 were cited or mentioned, and two were only mentioned).

From the perspective of the frequency and context of appearances, the BECS representatives had the largest presence in the news, benefiting from 17 appearances with 525 seconds of direct and indirect interventions. It was followed by PAS with 371 seconds of interventions, and PPDA, which was allocated 270 seconds for direct and indirect interventions.

Frequency of appearance of electoral actors in the news and the volume of interventions

Cited/mentioned subjects	Frequency	Duration of direct and indirect appearance, seconds
BECS	17	525

PAS	12	371
PPDA	9	270
AUR	9	248
PP Șor	8	232
BERU	5	122
PACE	2	45
PACCC	1	37
PUN	1	25

PDA and PDM were mentioned twice, and the Presidency only once with a five-second intervention.

Of all the monitored news stories (41), 12 were of a conflicting nature, and one of them was unbalanced in terms of the sources cited. On June 8, the station broadcast a news story about *“a new incident involving members of the Alliance for the Union of Romanians at the entrance to the Transnistrian region. They were not allowed to get to Varnița, where they were going to campaign, and at one point, tempers flared. AUR members tried to detain a border guard.”* The caption said, *“New altercation on the Dniester,”* but the story did not contain other opinions regarding this incident. Another accusatory news story was partially unbalanced. Specifically, on July 2, Publika TV broadcast a news story, saying, *“Renato Usatii accuses the director of the Institute of Public Policies, Arcadie Barbăroșie, of manipulating the data of the survey to be presented on Monday.”* Reporters announced, *“Barbăroșie could not be found for a reaction.”* On June 6, the station broadcast Arcadie Barbăroșie’s reaction to Renato Usatii’s accusations.

In other cases, reporters ensured the balance of sources.

The materials that targeted campaign activities mainly cited a single source, usually the primary sources from events, with the exception of those of a conflicting nature, which largely ensured the balance of sources.

From the perspective of gender balance, there was an obvious discrepancy between the number of female and male sources: the station cited in the news 50 men and 10 women (16%).

Language and images used

During the monitoring period, the language and video images used were in line with deontological and professional standards.



RTR Moldova

Involvement in the coverage of the electoral campaign

Between July 2 and 10, 2021, RTR Moldova broadcast 69 election-themed materials in six newscasts, with a total volume of 4,411 seconds (1.2 hours). Most of the news stories (57) referred to the campaign priorities and objectives of competitors; seven focused on the infrastructure projects of the local authorities in Orhei district and were broadcast outside the section dedicated to elections; and another five informed about the course of the electoral process (allocation of the necessary money by the Government, printing of ballots, supervision of the election by foreign observer missions, etc.).

Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

Most of the news stories broadcast by RTR Moldova were impartial, balanced, and separated facts from opinions. The station had a neutral attitude towards most of the electoral competitors. Most of the time, the news spoke about the electoral commitments presented at meetings with voters, during televised debates, at press conferences or rallies held during the week. On the last day of the campaign (July 9), RTR briefly presented the candidates' messages before the elections, reiterated their promises, and mentioned that the so-called day of silence was coming.

Each newscast had one or two reports that favored PP Șor and placed it in a positive light. The materials spoke about infrastructure projects currently implemented or recently completed in Orhei district with the effort of local public authorities and PP Șor mayors: street repairs, renovation of apartment building courtyards, arrangement of playgrounds, installation of street lighting. RTR Moldova noted, for example, *“The modernization of Orhei is in full swing,”* *“Works on such a scale have not taken place there for 40 years. (...) There has never been such beauty and order here,”* *“The planned works were executed by the Mayor’s Office in record time.”* Finally, in the reports about roads, the station said, *“In the last six years, investments in road infrastructure in Orhei have increased fourfold.”* Materials were supplemented by statements of the mayors and laudatory opinions of the locals. In five out of seven cases, the logo on the microphone was covered.

PP Șor was also covered in a positive tone in nine other news stories, of which six presented its electoral commitments announced at briefings, and three focused on the request addressed to the judges of the Cahul Court of Appeal that the arrest warrant issued in his name be annulled.

The tone of coverage of other candidates was neutral.

During the reporting period, RTR Moldova did not present the results of any electoral poll.

Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources

The 69 analyzed news stories were documented from 106 sources. The journalists cited only electoral competitors, representatives of the CEC or of the Government, and some citizens.

The station provided access to news for 20 of the 23 candidates registered for the elections. PP Șor benefited from the most airtime and the most frequent appearances in the news – 16 times, with a total volume of 702 seconds. BECS representatives were cited directly or indirectly twice less (313 seconds).

Frequency of appearance of electoral actors in the news and the volume of interventions / Top 10

Cited/mentioned subjects	Frequency	Duration of direct and indirect appearance, seconds
PP Șor	16	702
BECS	6	313
PAS	5	259
BERU	6	192
PACCC	3	175
PPDA	3	140
PPPO	2	93
PUN	2	90
PDA	3	82
AUR	2	79

The station also cited twice the representatives of PDCM, PVE, and the independent candidate Veaceslav Valico, and in one news story – PACE, PLD, PPM, PP NOI, PPOM, and PPPS.

The news stories that presented the commitments and promises of the candidates were short, based on a single source, and without background information. None of the materials of direct or indirect electoral nature addressed conflicting topics or included accusations.

In the monitored materials, almost four times more men than women were cited or mentioned, the numerical ratio being 82 to 19 (18%).

Language and images used

RTR Moldova used appropriate and non-discriminatory language in the monitored news stories, without resorting to labeling. Regarding the video images used, in some cases, the TV station took footage from the electoral spots of some competitors, keeping the soundtrack, but did not indicate its source, and in a news story on July about BERU, the station included an image of the party's place in the ballot paper and the "Voted" stamp.



Involvement in the coverage of the electoral campaign

During the reporting period, TV6 broadcast in six editions of the *Ora știrilor* newscast 53 materials of direct or indirect electoral nature, with a total volume of 7,312 seconds (2.03 hours). Of these, 40 appeared in the section *Elections 2021* and 13 were broadcast outside it. More than half of election-themed news stories (27) referred to the activity of PP Șor. Other stories focused on the campaign activities of some parties registered for elections, including their mutual accusations, the last preparations of the CEC for elections, as well as the decision of the Chisinau Court of Appeal to reduce the number of polling stations on the left bank of the Dniester and the reaction of some electoral competitors in relation to this decision.

Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

During the monitoring period, TV6 showed an obvious tendency to cover mostly the electoral activity of PP Șor. Moreover, the selected topics and the angle of approach showed the activity of this political party mostly in positive light. Thus, TV6 journalists daily broadcast between three and seven news stories featuring the representatives of PP Șor, including its leader Ilan Șor, who was cited in the context of video broadcasts posted on Facebook or his online participation in the inauguration of some social projects.

Of the 27 news stories of direct and indirect electoral nature targeting PP Șor, six highlighted the commitments of this party in various fields, mostly presented by Ilan Șor. He promised that *"the minimum wage will be 3,000 lei"*; *"pensioners will have a pension of 10,000 lei and will be able to help their grandchildren"*; *"pensioners will receive essential medicines free of charge, and other medicines with a discount of 60%"*; he *"will launch a real estate program that will allow citizens to buy apartments on credit for a period of 40 years, with monthly installments of 500 lei"*; he *"came up with the initiative for the village of Peresecina to obtain the status of city"*; and he *"promised the diaspora that he will make Moldova a country where they will want to stay."*

Five other news stories referred to the situation around the arrest warrant against Ilan Șor. The politician asked the Cahul Court of Appeal to cancel the arrest warrant *"in order to participate in the elections,"* and a day before the court ruled, he said, *"If the authorities are not afraid of the truth about the bank fraud, then tomorrow the arrest warrant against me will be canceled."*

Subsequently, after the court decided to maintain the arrest warrant, Șor called the decision “*a farce*” in relation to him and challenged the decision in the Supreme Court of Justice.

The tendentiousness of the station in relation to PP Șor was also noticed in news stories outside the electoral section. Thus, TV6 broadcast 11 materials highlighting the achievements of the local public authorities, particularly the local authorities in Orhei municipality and in the town of Taraclia, whose mayors are members of PP Șor. Thus, in Orhei, several apartment building courtyards were renovated, side streets were repaired, playgrounds were inaugurated, and in Taraclia a gym for children and young people was opened, a mini-tractor was purchased, and rehabilitation works started on Matrosov Street and in a kindergarten that had been abandoned for eight years. Also, in Isacova village of Orhei district, street lighting was inaugurated.

In these news stories, the station mixed facts with opinions, noting, “*From now on the inhabitants of Alexei Șciusev Street in Orhei will have comfort and safety,*” “*In Orhei, the modernization of roads continues at a fast pace,*” “*A new road was completely renovated, being the largest project implemented this year,*” “*People practically can’t recognize their streets,*” “*With happy tears people see their street change,*” “*Orhei district is getting brighter,*” “*Several playgrounds are inaugurated in Orhei every week, meaning that more and more children are happy,*” “*All this has become possible due to the involvement of PP Șor MP Vadim Fotescu, at the request of Mayor Veaceslav Lupov.*” The head of Orhei district, Dinu Țurcanu, who is a member of PP Șor, was cited directly in most of the news stories.

A mixture of facts and opinions was also noticeable in six other news stories. Specifically, on July 2, in a material on the commemoration of Prince Stephen the Great and Holy, the reporter mentioned, “*MPs of the Șor Party together with representatives of the party and of the Platform for Moldova expressed their respect, admiration and gratitude to the one who fought for the prosperity of Moldavia between 1457 and 1504.*” On July 5, in the context of the creation of PP Șor youth organization in Criuleni, the newscaster mentioned in the intro of the news, “*The political family of PP Șor is growing and getting younger.*” On July 7, she described the dissensions between socialists and unionists as “*full-scale beating,*” noting, “*AUR members who came to the PSRM headquarters to protest got into a fight with the party’s representatives. The members of the PSRM Youth Guard and the people of AUR pushed each other, and after that, tempers flared. The demonstrators crawled on the ground and punched each other, and the former mayor’s glasses flew off after he received a slap from the socialist Alexandru Odinoțov. After an exchange of retorts, the situation got out of hand. The peaceful protest turned into a battlefield where members of both parties got into a fistfight. The violence has degenerated.*” At the same time, the reporter mentioned, “*Last Sunday during the BECS march, Dorin Chirtoaca attacked the socialist leader.*”

Also, on July 9, when Ilan Șor presented the initiative to make the village of Peresecina in Orhei district a city, the reporter said, “*Peresecina of the future, which looks absolutely impressive, was presented in a graphic spot.*” Also on July 9, in another news story, “*farmers complained that they could not sell their goods,*” that “*pumpkins will be thrown to animals,*” and “*the money turned out to be thrown in the wind.*” This story was biased in relation to the authorities, which “*hide behind a law that supposedly protects local producers. (...) This law, however, is gathering dust on the shelves of the head of state. The document was not promulgated by Maia Sandu because it violates commitments according to the Association Agreement with the European Union and will affect exports to the European market.*” The reporter did not try to find out the opinion of the head of state about that law.

Another news story with a mixture of facts with opinions, but also some tendentiousness in relation to right-wing parties through the selected quotes, focused on the protest of BECS supporters before the Supreme Court of Justice after the Court of Appeal decided to reduce the number of polling stations on the left bank of the Dniester. Thus, on July 9, in the intro of the story, the newscaster said, “*After the unionist parties fought for the right of the diaspora to have*

more places where they can vote, now is the time for left-wing politicians to defend their electorate.” In front of the protesters, the BECS parliamentary candidate Bogdan Țirdea said, “Today we came with flags, tomorrow we will come with hayforks. You will be thrown into the Dniester. I am warning Messrs. Grosu, Alaiba and others to get their swimsuits ready.”

The tone in relation to PP Șor was definitely positive. BECS was presented mainly in positive light, but also in the context in which it put other electoral competitors in negative light, especially PAS and President Maia Sandu. For example, “BECS asks the General Prosecutor’s Office to open criminal cases against Maia Sandu and Igor Grosu for complicity in the theft of the billion” (July 2); “BECS throws down the gauntlet and calls those from PAS to electoral debates” (July 5); “BECS asks the General Prosecutor’s Office to investigate the information published in the media about the financing of PAS by EU countries, but also by the USA,” and “the leader of the socialists claims that Maia Sandu might cancel the results of the parliamentary elections if they are not in favor of PAS” (July 6).

TV6 also announced that the PACE leader Gheorghe Cavcaliuc invited “Maia Sandu and Aureliu Ciocoi to a public debate on national security,” and after they did not accept the invitation, the PACE leader warned, “The security of the country is in danger (...), and Maia Sandu and Aureliu Ciocoi, to whom the Supreme Security Council, the Army, and the Government are subordinated, are to blame for this.”

In relation to PAS and President Maia Sandu (who were cited/mentioned in 18 news stories), TV6 had equally a neutral and negative tone (in nine news stories they were presented neutrally, and in nine other stories – negatively).

The tone of TV6 in relation to other electoral competitors was neutral, but the station preferred to highlight conflicting topics – Gheorghe Cavcaliuc claims that Renato Usatii wanted to withdraw from the election race and run independently (July 2); PDA leader Vasile Costiuc was allegedly attacked with tear gas by a BECS supporter (July 8); altercations and thrusts with AUR representatives at the border post in Varnița (July 8); a group of young people who were pasting posters got into a fight (July 8).

Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources

During the monitoring period, to prepare the 53 news stories, TV6 cited/mentioned 175 sources, mostly electoral competitors, representatives of the CEC, the Government, local public authorities, citizens.

From the perspective of the frequency and duration of appearances, PP Șor benefited from the most airtime (1,736 seconds), the time allocated to this electoral competitor being longer than that of all other formations mentioned/cited by TV6 during the reporting period taken together (1,328 seconds). BECS came second, with 598 seconds of airtime, and PACE was third, with 320 seconds.

Frequency of appearance of electoral actors in the news and the volume of interventions

Cited/mentioned subjects	Frequency	Duration of direct and indirect appearance, seconds
PP Șor	28	1,736
BECS	15	598
PACE	4	320
AUR	5	152
BERU	1	76
PPR	1	65
PPDA	4	63

PAS	7	34
PDA	1	20

PDM was mentioned only once, and President Maia Sandu and the presidential institution were cited 11 times, with total interventions of 49 seconds.

During the reporting period, TV6 broadcast 19 news stories on controversial topics, four of which were unbalanced, with formal attempts to balance the news from the perspective of sources, stating that the sources “could not be found on the phone,” “did not reply to messages,” or “do not comment on the statements of electoral competitors.”

Most of the news stories that covered the activity of PP Șor were based on one source (particularly, the party leader Ilan Șor) or on several sources, but expressing the same point of view, without being supplemented with background information.

During the monitoring period, TV6 did not ensure the gender balance of sources/protagonists in the news. The station cited/mentioned 95 men and 41 women (30%).

Language and images used

The language and images used during the reporting period were in line with deontological standards.



Involvement in the coverage of the electoral campaign

During the monitoring period, TV8 broadcast 33 materials of direct or indirect electoral nature in the eight editions of the main daily newscast. Their total volume was 4,802 seconds or 1.3 hours. The relevant materials were broadcast within the section dedicated to elections, but also outside it.

News stories contained information on the course of the electoral process, campaign expenses, the profile of candidates, and the electoral priorities announced by competitors at campaign events. The station also had election-themed materials based on the debates organized by TV8.

Reporters also reported on the controversial situations that involved several electoral competitors (detention of the PACE leader, altercations between BECS and AUR representatives, hunger strike announced by the PRM leader).

Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

TV8 covered the activities carried out by competitors in the early parliamentary elections of July 11 in a correct, neutral, and fair manner. The news stories were objective, without violation of deontological standards.

There was some tendentiousness in relation to BERU in the news story about the campaign expenses of electoral competitors (July 5), as it was presented as “*the competitor who shook his pockets the most during this period*” and “*leader in terms of expenses.*” In detailing BERU’s expenses, the reporter said, “*Most of the money was wasted on electoral advertising,*” while for other candidates the wording was that they “*invested*” (PAS) or “*spent*” (PP Șor, BECS).

There was also a tendency to disadvantage BECS through selection of topics for coverage, while the informational value of such materials was not clear (for example, the news story broadcast on July 7 about wild boar hunting).

The mixture of facts with opinion was noted in one news story, about the participation of some party leaders in the commemoration of the victims of deportations (July 6). At the beginning of

the story, the newscaster announced, “*The tragic 72nd anniversary of the second wave of Stalinist deportations was used by some politicians in order to make themselves heard and seen around the early parliamentary elections.*”

In the monitoring process, no obvious intentions to favor or disfavor electoral competitors were identified. The station adopted a neutral tone in relation to most of the candidates present in the news during the monitoring period.

On July 5, the station broadcast a news story about the parties that might enter the Parliament. The material was made in line with the provisions of the *Regulation on the coverage of the electoral campaign for the early parliamentary elections of July 11, 2021 in the media of the Republic of Moldova.*

Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources

In the process of documenting the 33 news stories, TV8 reporters consulted 169 sources: electoral candidates, the CEC, representatives of state institutions, experts, and citizens.

The station informed about 12 electoral candidates out of the 23 registered for elections.

From the perspective of appearances, PAS representatives had the largest presence, with 181 seconds of direct and indirect interventions. The next in the top was PACE, with 172 seconds of appearances, and BECS, with 171 seconds for direct or indirect interventions.

Frequency of appearance of electoral actors in the news and the volume of interventions / Top 10

Cited/mentioned subjects	Frequency	Duration of direct and indirect appearance, seconds
PAS	10	181
PACE	4	172
BECS	15	171
PPDA	5	126
PP Șor	4	87
AUR	5	66
PRM	1	44
PDA	2	36
BERU	6	27
PMPSN	1	20

PACCC had an appearance of 16 seconds, and PDM – one of 12 seconds.

Of all news stories (33), 12 were controversial. In all such materials, reporters ensured full or partial balance of opinion, demonstrating the journalistic effort to provide the right to reply.

In terms of gender balance, the news stories were documented primarily from male sources – 64, while female sources had a smaller presence – 20 (23%).

Language and images used

The language and images used in the newscasts of TV8 were in line with deontological standards. Discriminatory elements in relation to candidates were not found, with one exception. In the July 5 newscast, when announcing the results of the electoral poll, the reporter resorted to a label, presenting the PP Șor candidate as a “*fugitive MP.*”

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Between July 2 and 10, 2021, the 10 television stations monitored during the electoral campaign showed the following trends:

- Moldova 1 provided access to newscasts to most electoral competitors and presented them in a neutral manner, except for a slight favoring of BECS and disfavoring of PAS and President Maia Sandu, which was evident in the selection of topics and in biased approach. Most of the conflicting materials were balanced, and the language and images were in line with deontological standards. From a gender perspective, the public station did not ensure balance between male and female sources in the monitored news.
- NTV Moldova and Primul în Moldova provided airtime to more than half of the electoral competitors. These stations demonstrated a biased and partisan behavior in relation to BECS, which benefited from the most airtime for interventions, and the tone of its coverage was positive and neutral. PAS was disfavored, as well as President Maia Sandu. Most of the times, the tone adopted by NTV Moldova and Primul în Moldova in relation to PAS was negative. About half of the controversial news stories were balanced. The language and images used were, with some exceptions, neutral. The gender balance was tilted towards male sources.
- Jurnal TV covered the campaign activities of most electoral competitors in a correct and fair manner. Some of the materials were objective and impartial, separated facts from opinions, and there were also cases of tendentiousness and lack of impartiality in relation to some competitors. Many of the competitors were presented in a neutral manner, except for BECS and PACE, which were covered neutrally, but were also disadvantaged by a relatively large number of materials with a negative tone. The station ensured the diversity of sources, and the language and images used were in most cases neutral. From a gender perspective, Jurnal TV did not ensure balance between male and female sources.
- Pro TV provided airtime to most electoral competitors. Most of the materials were objective and impartial, facts were separated from opinions, and the language and images used were neutral, with some exceptions. The station covered most of the electoral competitors in a neutral tone, except for BECS, which it disfavored both by the negative tone and by selection of topics or the angle of approach. The station did not ensure the diversity of sources or their gender equality.
- Prime TV and Publika provided access to news to less than half of the electoral competitors, most of whom were covered in a neutral and impartial manner. For Prime TV, the exception was PP Șor, in relation to which the station adopted a positive tone in materials about the development of infrastructure in Orhei district. Both stations, from the perspective of the airtime allocated to interventions, showed predilection for BECS, which was slightly favored by selection of topics for coverage and the angle of approach. Controversial materials were balanced. The language and images were in line with deontological standards. The gender balance was tilted towards male sources.
- RTR Moldova covered the electoral campaign mostly in a correct, neutral, and fair manner, without mixing facts with opinions or using inappropriate language. Most of the competitors registered for elections had access to newscasts, and the tone towards them was neutral, except for PP Șor, which was favored by the airtime allocated to direct

and indirect interventions and presented in positive light. The station did not ensure the gender balance of sources, with men being cited or mentioned four times more than women.

- TV6 provided access to news to less than half of the electoral competitors. The station visibly favored PP Șor by the frequency and the amount of airtime allocated to interventions, as well as by the positive tone present in materials. In relation to PAS, the tone of coverage was negative in some cases. This competitor was also disadvantaged by negative materials about President Maia Sandu, the former leader of PAS. In conflicting news stories, sources were usually balanced. The language and video images used were in line with deontological standards. From the perspective of gender balance, the monitored news stories were unbalanced.
- TV8 offered airtime to less than half of the electoral competitors and in most cases adopted a neutral tone. In relation to BECS, there was a tendency to disfavor it by selection of topics for coverage. Controversial materials were balanced. The language and images used were in line with deontological standards. From the perspective of gender equality, the station gave priority to male sources.

Recommendations:

- Broadcasters to use monitoring reports as tools for self-regulation and to eliminate deficiencies, so that their activities could be in line with legal requirements and the Journalist's Code of Conduct.
- The Broadcasting Council to take note and use monitoring reports in order to assess whether the monitored television stations respected the right to full, objective, and truthful information.
- The Broadcasting Council to develop intervention tools and apply them promptly and efficiently in cases of violation of legal requirements by broadcasters in their coverage of electoral campaigns, in order to ensure proper information of the electorate through audiovisual programs.