



MEDIA MONITORING DURING THE ELECTORAL PERIOD AND ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN

for the presidential elections of November 1, 2020

Report no. 3
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The opinions expressed belong to the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the funders.

I. GENERAL DATA

1.1 Project goal: Monitoring and informing the public about the editorial behavior of media outlets during the electoral period and electoral campaign for the presidential elections in the Republic of Moldova.

1.2 Monitoring period: September 14, 2020 – November 15, 2020.

1.3 Criteria for selecting media outlets to be monitored:

Media outlets were selected on the basis of the following objective criteria:

- a) form of ownership;
- b) geography;
- c) language of broadcasting;
- d) audience.

Thus, the monitoring refers to public and private media outlets with national and regional coverage, broadcasting in Romanian and Russian.

1.4 Monitored media outlets: Accent TV, Jurnal TV, Moldova 1, NTV-Moldova, Prime TV, Primul în Moldova, Pro TV, Publika TV, Televiziunea Centrală, TV8.

1.5 Television programs subject to monitoring (between 17:00 and 23:00):

- a) main newscasts;
- b) electoral programs;
- c) electoral debates.

1.6 Methodological framework

Statistical data: Data were collected and analyzed on the basis of a monitoring methodology developed by the Oxford Media Research Center for the monitoring projects of the international organization for freedom of expression Article 19. The methodology was updated in late 2018 and early 2019 with the assistance of experts from the Italian organization Osservatorio di Pavia.

This methodology is characterized by the use of 1) quantitative indicators, including the type, duration, topics of media coverage, news sources, frequency and duration of electoral competitors' appearances in news; and 2) qualitative indicators, establishing the tone in which political actors and electoral candidates were presented. Each news story or opinion is subject to a content and context assessment to determine whether it is favorable or unfavorable to a party/electoral competitor. A positive or negative content and/or context of a news story does not necessarily indicate the bias or partisanship of the media outlet that broadcast the news. A story might favor or disfavor one of the subjects, and yet be unbiased and professionally correct. Only if one of the subjects tends to be constantly favored or disfavored over a certain period of time, one can say there is imbalance.

ABBREVIATIONS

CPA — central public administration

LPA — local public administration

CEC — Central Electoral Commission

BE Unirea — Electoral Bloc Unirea

PACE — “We Build Europe at Home” Party

PAS — Action and Solidarity Party

PCRM — Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova

PLDM — Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova

PDM — Democratic Party of Moldova

PNL — National Liberal Party

PPDA — Dignity and Truth Platform Party

PP Şor — Şor Party

PSRM — Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova

PUN — National Unity Party

II. DATA ANALYSIS

General conclusions

Between October 7 and 14, 2020, the 10 monitored television stations broadcast a total of 429 materials with direct and indirect electoral tangency, with a total airtime of about 45 hours. Of these, 398 were news stories, 26 programs, and 5 debates, which were organized by three of the 10 monitored stations.

Topics. The most discussed topics remained those related to politics (164), social issues (61), and the electoral process (55). The stations informed about the campaign activities of electoral candidates, accusations launched by some electoral competitors against others, the results of electoral polls, civil society reports on the fairness of candidates in elections, the activity of the Central Electoral Commission. Social issues were covered in materials of direct electoral nature (electoral promises of competitors to increase pensions, salaries, etc.), but also in positive or negative materials of indirect electoral nature about the activity of central and local public administration, which could favor or disfavor some candidates for the position of head of state, and so on.

Protagonists/sources. In the analyzed news stories, the most often cited/mentioned were citizens (218), representatives of the Government (131), LPA (83), CEC (43), experts (29), judges/lawyers (25). The top three parties cited/targeted in news were PSRM (44 times), PPDA (32), and PAS (29), and among candidates, the first three places in terms of frequency of coverage were taken by the independent candidate

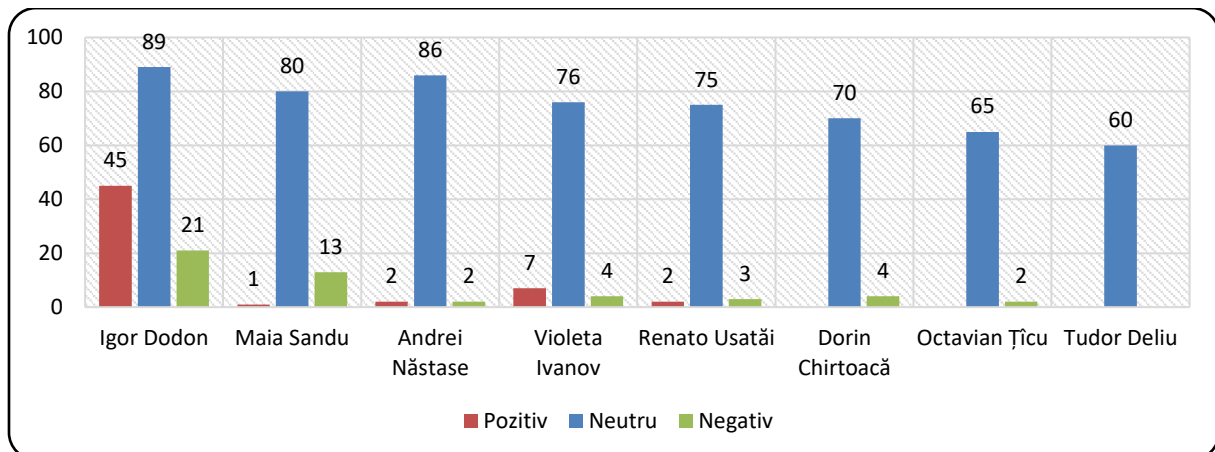
Igor Dodon supported by PSRM (132 appearances, with direct speech of 1,709 seconds), Maia Sandu of PAS (74 appearances/mentions, with direct speech of 608 seconds), Violeta Ivanov of Shor Party and Andrei Nastase of PPDA (71 appearances/mentions each, with direct speech of 574 and 765 seconds, respectively).

Gender. Most of the times, the sources/protagonists cited/mentioned in materials were men (60%), with women accounting for 22%, which is one percentage point more than in the previous monitoring period.

The tone of coverage. The political parties that were presented mostly in neutral, but also positive light are PSRM (21 times) and Shor Party (5 times), the other parties appearing mostly in neutral and sometimes negative light. The tone of coverage of central public authorities, especially the Government, was 59 times positive, 86 times neutral, and 4 times negative.

In most cases, electoral candidates were presented neutrally. Igor Dodon had the most appearances in positive light (45 times), benefiting also from positive materials about the activity of the central public administration and PSRM (80 in total). At the same time, Igor Dodon had 21 appearances in negative light as an electoral competitor, being disadvantaged by the negative tone of coverage of CPA and PSRM (28 in total). Violeta Ivanov of Shor Party was presented in a positive tone 7 times, being at the same time favored by the positive appearances of Shor Party (5 times). The PAS candidate Maia Sandu was disadvantaged by the negative tone of 18 materials about her own and PAS's activities.

The tone of presentation of candidates in materials of electoral nature, frequency / 10 stations



Media behavior

Between October 7 and 14, 2020, the public television station **Moldova 1** offered access to news to all electoral candidates who organized campaign activities, presenting them in most cases neutrally. Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, had the most appearances/mentions, being presented most of the time neutrally and 2 times positively, benefiting at the same time from 4 positive

news stories regarding the activity of the Government and the Chisinau Mayor's Office.

Primul în Moldova, NTV Moldova, and Accent TV usually used the same angles of approach, treating electoral candidates differently. Thus, the stations followed and widely covered the campaign activities of some candidates, presenting details from their electoral programs, while other candidates were either completely ignored or were protagonists of the news with negative connotations. Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, was massively favored by these stations, both by the high frequency of appearances/airtime allocated to direct speeches (54 appearances/mentions, with direct speech of 1,023 seconds), and by the positive tone (40 times). Also, the stations broadcast a total of 55 positive materials about the Government's activity, which were favorable for Igor Dodon. The PAS candidate Maia Sandu was more often mentioned than cited by these stations (33 appearances/mentions, with direct speech of 37 seconds), the tone of her presentation being negative in 13 cases. The other competitors were presented sporadically.

Televiziunea Centrală provided more access to news to the Shor Party candidate Violeta Ivanov, whose campaign activities were covered daily, in positive light. In addition, she was favored by the positive news about Shor Party. The other candidates (with the exception of Tudor Deliu of PLDM) were present each in one news story that presented their electoral programs, and the tone of presentation was predominantly neutral.

Prime TV and Publika TV covered the campaign in newscasts and debates, giving access to the majority of electoral competitors, without obviously favoring or disfavoring any competitor or political party. The tone of the presentation of candidates, political parties, and public institutions was in most cases neutral. Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, was advantaged by the large number and topic of appearances at both stations, and Violeta Ivanov of Shor Party was more advantaged by Prime TV.

Jurnal TV was actively involved in covering the campaign, offering access to news to all electoral candidates, without obviously favoring or disfavoring any of them. The station treated the competitors equally in news, informing about the electoral meetings/promises of all candidates, the tone of presentation being in most cases neutral. Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, had 5 appearances in negative light (25%), especially in programs.

Pro TV Chişinău had a balanced behavior, without showing obvious tendencies to favor or disfavor any electoral competitor. The station did not inform in the news about the electoral priorities of candidates, who were the protagonists of materials about other activities than the campaign ones. Pro TV offered relatively equal access to all electoral candidates and presented them mainly in neutral light. Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, had three appearances in negative light, being also disadvantaged by four materials in which CPA and PSRM appear in a negative context.

TV8 was actively involved in covering the electoral campaign, allocating a lot of airtime to news and programs with direct and indirect electoral tangency. The station

informed about the electoral priorities of Andrei Nastase (PPDA), Violeta Ivanov (Shor Party), and Renato Usatii (Our Party), presenting the other candidates in news stories of other kind. In most cases, the registered candidates, parties, and CPA were presented neutrally. Igor Dodon had the most appearances/mentions in a negative context (7 times, or 33%), especially during programs.

Moldova 1



Between October 7 and 14, 2020, the public television station Moldova 1 broadcast 55 news stories and one program of direct and indirect electoral nature, with a total duration of 8,042 seconds or 2.2 hours. It did not hold any debates during the reporting period.

Topics. Most of the time, the relevant topics referred to politics (25), the electoral process (7), social issues (6), and economy (5). Other topics, such as education, health, foreign relations, law, and the Constitution were addressed less frequently.

During the reporting period, Moldova 1 informed about the candidates' meetings with voters, the results of some electoral polls, the activity of CEC. At the same time, the station broadcast materials with indirect electoral tangency, about activities and initiatives of the central public administration, such as the payment of the one-time aid of 900 lei to pensioners (which was increased from 700 to 900 lei) or the aid the Government promised to farmers. Some materials informed about the plans of the Chisinau public administration (managed by an exponent of PSRM) to improve the city's infrastructure.

Protagonists/sources. The relevant materials broadcast by Moldova 1 cited/mentioned various protagonists, most often Government representatives (22 times), citizens (8), CEC (7), LPA (7), judges and lawyers (6), civil society (5), and so on. Among public institutions, the station mainly cited/mentioned Government representatives, who were given a lot of airtime, with 3,011 seconds on the screen and 2,821 seconds of direct speech, both in newscasts and in programs.

Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, is the first in the top of the candidates cited/mentioned most often by Moldova 1, and PAS and PPDA were the first among political parties.

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in news and programs, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Igor Dodon	Independent / Party of Socialists	14	429	150
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	10	223	87
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	10	238	129
Dorin Chirtoacă	Electoral Bloc Unirea	9	229	116

Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	9	185	67
Renato Usatîi	Our Party	8	177	85
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party	7	129	95
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	7	115	58

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of parties in news and programs, seconds

Subjects	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Action and Solidarity Party	8	68	40
Dignity and Truth Platform Party	7	79	26
Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova	5	15	0
Electoral Bloc Unirea	4	18	0
Democratic Party of Moldova	4	144	117
Shor Party	4	16	0
Our Party	4	18	0
Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	3	13	0
National Unity Party	2	8	0
Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova	1	5	0
Pro Moldova Party	1	5	0

Gender. Most of the times, the sources and protagonists of the relevant materials on Moldova 1 were men (51%), women being mentioned or cited in 36% of cases, which is 7 percentage points more than in the previous monitoring period.

Tone. In most cases, electoral candidates were presented neutrally, as were political parties. Among candidates, Igor Dodon, supported by PSRM, had two appearances in a positive context, the Government representatives being presented neutrally and 4 times positively, and the LPA – 3 times positively.



Between October 7 and 14, 2020, the television station Accent TV broadcast 58 news stories and one program with electoral tangency, with a total airtime of 7,751 seconds or 2.1 hours. The station did not hold electoral debates.

Topics. The relevant topics most often focused on politics (19), LPA (9), social issues (8), economy (7), the electoral process (5). Topics related to culture and entertainment, health, foreign relations, and others were covered, too. Many of the materials with indirect electoral connotations informed about the Government's successes, *despite the drought and pandemic*: major road modernization projects, economic rehabilitation, financial support for young entrepreneurs, creation of

industrial platforms (at the initiative of Igor Dodon), which will provide new jobs and increase the country's economy, good roads, etc. Accent TV had a lot of positive materials about the projects of Chisinau's public administration, led by an exponent of PSRM, speaking about successes, some of them due to the support from Igor Dodon. Such news stories showed citizens who thanked the mayor when asked by the reporter who should be thanked for the beautiful things done by the Mayor's Office.

Protagonists/sources. Relevant materials often cited/mentioned representatives of LPA (19 times), Government (16), experts (16), citizens (12), CEC (7), and other sources. The members of the Government had appearances of 189 seconds and direct speeches of 98 seconds. Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, was the most present competitor in the relevant materials of Accent TV, both in terms of frequency and airtime allocated to direct speeches. Maia Sandu of PAS was targeted in the news rather than cited. Political parties were only mentioned, without direct speeches.

During the reporting period, Accent TV treated candidates differently. Thus, the campaign activities of Igor Dodon were presented in detail and extensively in 6 news stories, and those of Violeta Ivanov – in 4 stories, in which these two candidates presented various electoral promises. The other six candidates were the protagonists of news that referred little or not at all to meetings with voters and their electoral programs.

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in news and programs, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Igor Dodon	Independent / Party of Socialists	16	577	227
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	8	357	0
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	8	115	25
Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	6	158	60
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party	5	195	108
Dorin Chirtoacă	Electoral Bloc Unirea	4	76	39
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	3	73	35
Renato Usatîi	Our Party	2	10	0

Gender. The analyzed materials were unbalanced in terms of gender balance: 60% of the relevant sources were men and 22% were women.

Tone. Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, was the only one who appeared mainly in positive light (15). The other competitors appeared mostly in neutral light, but also negative. Maia Sandu of PAS was presented 6 times negatively and 2 times neutrally. The tone of presentation of political parties was mostly negative for PAS (3), PLDM (3), and PPDA (2). Among public institutions, the Government had the most appearances in positive light (15), especially in news of

indirect electoral nature, which were favorable to Igor Dodon. Another 15 news stories that favored Igor Dodon referred to the activity of Chisinau Mayor's Office.

Jurnal TV



During the reporting period, Jurnal TV broadcast 64 materials of direct or indirect electoral nature, including 60 news stories and 4 programs. The total airtime was 34,336 seconds or about 9.5 hours. The station did not hold any debates during the reporting period.

Topics. News stories and programs covered topics related politics (20), social issues (13), and the electoral process (8), as well as integrity (6), economy (5), corruption, legislation, etc. During this period, Jurnal TV focused on the meetings of all electoral competitors with voters, presented information on the integrity profiles of candidates, civil society reports, treating electoral candidates equally.

Protagonists/sources. The relevant materials most often cited/mentioned citizens (37%), especially in materials on opinions regarding electoral issues, as well as electoral candidates, among whom the first was Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, followed by Renato Usatii (Our Party) and Andrei Nastase (PPDA). Sources from categories other than candidates, parties, and public institutions included experts (5), LPA (5), CEC (4), NGOs (3), business people (3), etc.

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in news and programs, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Igor Dodon	Independent / Party of Socialists	20	772	138
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	11	496	95
Renato Usatii	Our Party	10	331	60
Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	8	230	52
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	6	160	52
Dorin Chirtoacă	Electoral Bloc Unirea	4	230	65
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party	3	105	50
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	3	155	0

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of parties in news and programs, seconds

Subjects	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Dignity and Truth Platform Party	4	2,893	2,625

Shor Party	3	135	0
National Unity Party	2	1,435	1,400
Action and Solidarity Party	2	2,240	2,240
Electoral Bloc Unirea	1	1,600	1,600
Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova	1	2,800	2,800
Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	1	15	0
Pro Moldova Party	1	10	0
Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova	1	10	0

Gender. Most relevant materials were unbalanced from the gender perspective: men were most often cited/mentioned as sources/protagonists – 66%, women accounting for 27% of the total, which is 7 percentage points more than in the first report.

Tone. The tone of presentation of electoral candidates was in most cases neutral. Igor Dodon appeared mostly in neutral light (15), especially in the news, and there were 5 cases of negative tone, especially in programs. Political parties were presented mostly neutrally, except for Shor Party and Pro Moldova, which were also presented in a negative light (2 times and once, respectively).

NTV Moldova



Between October 7 and 14, 2020, NTV Moldova broadcast 48 materials relevant to this monitoring, including 43 news stories and 5 programs. Their time on air was 24,053 seconds or 6.7 hours. The station did not hold any debates during the reporting period.

Topics. The most often covered topics concerned the electoral process (12) and politics (12), but also social issues (9) and economy (7), while other issues were addressed less frequently. NTV Moldova briefly informed about the campaign activities of some candidates, most of the relevant materials presenting the work of LPA and CPA, including topics on allocation of funds for road repairs in the country, implementation of rural development projects, drinking water supply, subsidies for recycling companies, investments for farmers, financial gifts for children who go to school (at the initiative of Igor Dodon), improvement of life in villages due to the support offered by the Government, and so on. Such materials often contained footage of citizens praising the leadership's initiatives.

Protagonists/sources. The materials with direct or indirect electoral tangency cited/targeted mainly citizens (34 times), followed at a great distance by LPA (12), business people (8), experts (6), CEC (5). Among public institutions, the Government representatives appeared/were mentioned the most often (26 times, with 688 seconds of direct speech).

Electoral candidates had relatively equal access to news in terms of frequency, and less so in terms of airtime. Among candidates, the most present was Igor Dodon,

both in terms of frequency and airtime allocated to direct speech. Next is Maia Sandu, the PAS candidate, who was often targeted/mentioned, being rarely cited directly. Political parties were mainly mentioned, without direct speech.

NTV Moldova treated electoral candidates differently, presenting them from different perspectives: Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, was the protagonist of 7 news stories about his electoral promises, on some days benefiting from 2 such materials (October 7, October 12, October 14), and Violeta Ivanov of Shor Party was the protagonist of 3 materials, in which she spoke about her electoral program. In the case of other candidates – Renato Usatii, Dorin Chirtoaca, Octavian Ticu, and Maia Sandu, – the materials were structured so as to bring to the fore negative aspects, which presented them in a bad light.

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in news and programs, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Igor Dodon	Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova	21	1,507	381
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	15	1,433	37
Dorin Chirtoacă	Electoral Bloc Unirea	12	200	79
Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	12	225	63
Renato Usatii	Our Party	11	213	29
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party	10	131	46
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	10	233	24
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	8	55	0

Gender. From the perspective of gender balance in newscasts and programs, NTV Moldova had a higher presence of men as sources (62%), women being less frequently cited or mentioned in news and programs (29%).

Tone. Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, had the most appearances in positive light, also benefiting from extensive airtime in the news. In addition to the positive materials (14) about his campaign activities, Igor Dodon was favored by 20 positive materials about the Government's activity. Maia Sandu of PAS was further disadvantaged by the large number of appearances in negative light (6). The other competitors were presented mostly in neutral light, but also negative in the case of Dorin Chirtoaca of BE Unirea (3), Renato Usatii of Our Party (2), and Octavian Ticu of PUN (2). Political parties were presented mostly neutrally.

Prime TV



During the reporting period, the television station Prime TV covered the electoral campaign in news stories (27) and debates (2), allocating a total of 7,185 seconds or 2 hours of airtime.

Topics. The topics addressed often referred to politics (14) and social issues (8), as well as issues related to economy, health, electoral process, the Transnistrian problem, but less frequently. Prime TV covered the launch of the last two electoral candidates in the campaign, the campaign activities of some candidates, some candidates' appeals against others, the results of electoral polls, and so on.

Protagonists/sources. Most of the times, news stories cited/mentioned citizens (11 times) and sporadically the representatives of LPA, CEC, police, church. Among public institutions, the news most often featured members of the Government (3 times, 77 seconds on screen and 19 seconds of direct speech), and among political parties – Pro Moldova. Igor Dodon of PSRM, Maia Sandu of PAS, and Violeta Ivanov of Shor Party are in the top three in terms of frequency and airtime for appearances in Prime TV news. Most of the competitors took part in the debates, with the exception of Igor Dodon and Renato Usatii.

The station informed about the electoral promises of Igor Dodon (3 stories), Violeta Ivanov (3 stories), and Andrei Nastase (1 story), as well as about the launch of Octavian Ticu (PUN) and Dorin Chirtoaca (BE Unirea) in the campaign. The other candidates either did not appear in the news (Tudor Deliu of PLDM), or appeared in news stories that did not present their electoral programs (Renato Usatii of PN, Maia Sandu of PAS).

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in news, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Igor Dodon	Independent / Party of Socialists	9	373	120
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	7	415	102
Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	6	407	126
Dorin Chirtoacă	Electoral Bloc Unirea	4	186	81
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	4	243	122
Renato Usatii	Our Party	3	61	23
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party	3	121	69
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	2	10	0

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in debates, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Igor Dodon	Independent / Party of Socialists	1	51	0
Dorin Chirtoacă	Electoral Bloc Unirea	1	540	540
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	1	540	540

Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	1	525	525
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	1	593	593
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	1	540	540
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party	1	520	520
Renato Usatîi	Our Party	1	5	0

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of parties in news, seconds

Subjects	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Pro Moldova Party	3	100	51
Action and Solidarity Party	2	40	16
Democratic Party of Moldova	2	21	12
Shor Party	2	70	41
Dignity and Truth Platform Party	2	95	47
Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova	1	31	15

Gender. The rate of men as sources/protagonists cited/mentioned remains high – 68%, the rate of women being 28%, down 1 percentage point from the previous reporting period.

Tone. The electoral candidates were mainly presented in neutral light, Igor Dodon and Violeta Ivanov also benefiting from an appearance/mention in positive light. The political parties mentioned/cited in materials were presented neutrally in most cases, except for Shor Party, which also had two appearances in positive light. Likewise, CPA representatives appeared in the news mostly in a neutral context.

Primul în Moldova



The television station Primul în Moldova had in the reporting period 39 news stories with direct or indirect electoral tangency, with a total airtime of 6,166 seconds or 1.7 hours. About 10% of the news stories were of priority, being inserted first in newscasts. The station did not hold electoral debates.

Topics. The analyzed topics focused mostly on the electoral process and political issues – 8 news stories each, as well as social and economic issues – 7 news stories each. The main materials focused on the campaign activities of electoral competitors, but also on the activities of LPA and CPA, including road repairs, granting aid to the municipality of Comrat and to other localities to remove the consequences of torrential rains, payment of the one-time aid of 900 lei for 300 thousand pensioners (at the initiative of Igor Dodon), increase of doctors' salaries (at the initiative of Igor Dodon), and so on. Primul în Moldova also informed about some projects of the Chisinau Mayor's Office, headed by an exponent of PSRM.

Protagonists/sources. The relevant news stories most often cited/mentioned citizens (41), the Government (29), and the LPA (13). Other sources were approached less frequently. Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, appeared the most often, benefiting from the most airtime allocated for direct speech in the news. Political parties were only mentioned, without direct speeches in the news. CPA often appeared in materials (29 times, 653 seconds on screen and 550 seconds of direct speech), as did the local public administration, which was featured in several positive news stories, including with the presence of Chisinau Mayor Ion Ceban, exponent of PSRM.

The station did not provide equal access to all candidates in the news. The only candidate who was constantly presented was Igor Dodon, who was the protagonist of 5 news stories about his campaign activities. Dorin Chirtoaca and Octavian Ticu appeared in 2 news stories about the launch of the campaign, and the other candidates were ignored, being mentioned only in the context information in the news stories about Igor Dodon's campaign activities. In one case, the station presented in detail the accusations launched by Andrei Nastase of PPDA against Maia Sandu of PAS.

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in news, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Igor Dodon	Independent / Party of Socialists	17	578	415
Dorin Chirtoacă	Electoral Bloc Unirea	12	170	115
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	12	147	100
Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	11	55	0
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	11	55	0
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	11	67	0
Renato Usatii	Our Party	11	55	0
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party	10	107	62

Gender. The rate of men as protagonists and sources, cited or mentioned, was 64%, women being mentioned or cited less often – in 28% of cases, which is 3 percentage points more than in the previous monitoring period.

Tone. Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, was presented mainly in positive light by Primul în Moldova (11 times), while benefiting from the positive tone of news about CPA (21 in total). The other candidates were presented mostly neutrally and mostly mentioned in brief. Parties often appeared in neutral light.

Pro TV Chișinău



Between October 7 and 14, 2020, Pro TV Chisinau broadcast 39 relevant materials (38 news stories and one program) with a total airtime of 10,612 seconds or 2.9 hours. The station did not hold electoral debates during the reporting period.

Topics. The most often covered topics referred to politics (15), followed by the electoral process, social issues, culture, and entertainment (3 each), as well as other issues, regarding LPA, health, expatriates, law and Constitution, but less often. Materials of direct or indirect electoral nature mainly informed about the launch of Dorin Chirtoaca of BE Unirea and Octavian Ticu of PUN, the candidates' wealth declarations, electoral spots, some competitors' accusations against others, the activity of CEC, the printing of ballots, the activity of LPA, with emphasis on the problems in Chisinau, and so on. The station did not inform about the campaign activities of electoral competitors.

Protagonists/sources. The most frequently cited/mentioned sources/protagonists were citizens (33 times) and LPA (19 times), judges/lawyers (8), business people (6), police/army (6), CEC (5), experts (3), etc. Among electoral competitors, the most appearances in the analyzed materials had Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM. Next were Maia Sandu of PAS, Andrei Nastase of PPDA, Violeta Ivanov of Shor Party, and Dorin Chirtoaca of BE Unirea, who benefited from a lot of airtime (appearances and direct speech), due to their participation in the program broadcast by Pro TV. Among political parties, the PDM representatives had the biggest presence, followed by PPDA, with the largest appearances and direct citations. Government representatives had 13 appearances, with 97 seconds of direct speech.

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in news and programs, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Igor Dodon	Independent / Party of Socialists	23	326	58
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	12	776	695
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	10	779	676
Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	9	701	629
Dorin Chirtoacă	Electoral Bloc Unirea	8	885	736
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party	8	167	61
Renato Usatîi	Our Party	8	104	8
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	6	48	12

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of parties in news and programs, seconds

Subjects	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Democratic Party of Moldova	8	99	36
Dignity and Truth Platform Party	7	206	159

Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova	5	27	0
Action and Solidarity Party	5	52	38
Shor Party	4	33	13
Pro Moldova Party	3	18	8
Electoral Bloc Unirea	2	8	0
Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova	1	5	0
National Unity Party PUN	1	5	0

Gender. The rate of men as sources/protagonists (58) cited/mentioned in the relevant materials of Pro TV Chisinau prevailed over the rate of women (21%).

Tone. Electoral competitors were presented mostly in neutral light, the tone of presentation for some of them being negative or positive. Igor Dodon most of the time appeared in negative light (3), and he was also disadvantaged by 4 materials in which CPA and PSRM appear in negative light. Violeta Ivanov of Shor Party appeared twice in a negative context. Most of the political parties were presented neutrally, as well as public institutions.

Publika TV



During the reporting period, Publika TV broadcast 27 news stories relevant to this monitoring and 2 debates, with a total duration of 7,472 seconds or 2 hours.

Topics. The most often covered topics referred to politics (15), health (4), social issues (3), and the electoral process (2). The station presented the campaign activities of some electoral competitors, protests of minibus drivers in front of the Government building, the abduction of four people in the Transnistrian region.

Protagonists/sources. The sources/protagonists cited/mentioned in relevant news stories were citizens (16 times), Government representatives (12 times, 122 seconds on screen and 87 seconds of direct speech), CEC (2 times), business people (2 times), LPA (2), foreign diplomats and observers (2). Political parties were rarely cited/mentioned, the first in the top being PSRM and PPDA. The most often cited/mentioned electoral candidates were Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, and Maia Sandu of PAS. Most of the candidates took part in the debates, with the exception of Igor Dodon and Renato Usatii.

Publika TV reported on the electoral promises of Igor Dodon (2 news stories) and on the launch of Octavian Ticu (PUN) and Dorin Chirtoaca (BE Unirea) in the campaign (2 news stories). The other candidates were either not covered in the news (Renato Usatii of Our Party, Violeta Ivanov of Shor Party, and Tudor Deliu of PLDM) or appeared in news stories that did not present their electoral programs, such as those on reproaches and accusations (Andrei Nastase of PPDA versus Maia Sandu of PAS).

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in news, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Igor Dodon	Independent / Party of Socialists	10	153	103
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	6	174	82
Dorin Chirtoacă	Electoral Bloc Unirea	3	103	92
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	2	97	80
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party	2	63	60
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	1	5	0
Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	1	5	0
Renato Usatîi	Our Party	1	5	0

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in debates, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Igor Dodon	Independent / Party of Socialists	1	51	0
Dorin Chirtoacă	Electoral Bloc Unirea	1	540	540
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	1	540	540
Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	1	525	525
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	1	593	593
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	1	540	540
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party	1	520	520
Renato Usatîi	Our Party	1	5	0

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of parties in news, seconds

Subjects	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova	4	20	4
Dignity and Truth Platform Party	3	48	43
Action and Solidarity Party	2	10	0
Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova	1	65	65

Gender. From the perspective of gender equality, the balance was tilted towards men as sources – 76% compared to 24% of women as sources. Compared to the previous period, there is an increase of 15 percentage points in the rate of men as sources/protagonists.

Tone. Most of the relevant materials presented the electoral candidates in neutral light, as well as the representatives of political parties. Igor Dodon, supported by

PSRM, had 2 appearances in a positive context. The Government was presented mostly neutrally, as was the Presidential Office.



During the reporting period, Televiziunea Centrală broadcast 26 news stories of direct or indirect electoral nature, one program and one electoral debate, with a total airtime of 7,230 seconds or 2 hours.

Topics. The topics covered during this period most often concerned politics (12), social issues (6), and the electoral processes (3). The station mainly informed about the launch of the last two candidates in the electoral race, candidates' meetings with voters, and infrastructure modernization in several localities in the country, organized by Shor Party.

Protagonists/sources. The analyzed materials most often cited/mentioned the representatives of Shor Party (4 times) and this party's candidate Violeta Ivanov (8 times), followed by Igor Dodon (5 times), Maia Sandu (4 times), and Andrei Nastase (4 times). To prepare the news, the station often appealed to citizens (15), particularly in the materials on infrastructure modernization and those on Violeta Ivanov's campaign activities. Other sources/protagonists were cited/mentioned sporadically. Public institutions were only mentioned in 2 materials, without direct speech.

Violeta Ivanov of Shor Party was the protagonist of most of the news about the electoral meetings in the country (5), which were inserted daily in newscasts, the other candidates (except for Tudor Deliu of PLDM) being presented in one such news story each.

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in news, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	8	470	140
Igor Dodon	Independent / Party of Socialists	5	125	60
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	4	125	70
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party PUN	3	140	60
Dorin Chirtoacă	Liberal Party	3	170	50
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	3	67	55
Renato Usatîi	Our Party	2	50	30
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	1	20	20

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in debates, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Renato Usatîi	Our Party	1	5	0
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	1	5	0
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	1	960	960

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of parties in news, seconds

Subjects	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Pro Moldova Party	4	28	0
Shor Party	4	163	25
Dignity and Truth Platform Party	1	5	0
Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova	1	7	0
Action and Solidarity Party	1	15	0
Democratic Party of Moldova	1	7	0

Gender. The rate of men as protagonists and sources in the relevant materials of Televiziunea Centrală was 51%, and of women – 40%, this being one of the highest indicators recorded since the beginning of monitoring.

Tone. Most of the electoral candidates were presented neutrally, except for Violeta Ivanov, who was presented mainly positively (6 times), and Igor Dodon, who appeared in two cases in negative light. Violeta Ivanov was also favored by the positive appearances of Shor Party (3), while other parties were presented neutrally.



During the reporting period, TV8 had 39 materials with direct or indirect electoral tangency, of which 25 news stories and 14 programs, with a total airtime of 52,489 seconds or about 14.6 hours. The station did not hold any debates during this time.

Topics. The topics covered referred to politics (20), the electoral process (6), integrity (5), health (3), and other issues. The station informed about the launch of Octavian Ticu (PUN) and Dorin Chirtoaca (BE Unirea) in the campaign, about the campaign activities of some candidates, the activity of CEC, as well as the altercations between the members of some parties during a meeting with voters.

Protagonists/sources. The sources and protagonists cited/mentioned were from various categories, most often CPA (24), experts (17), citizens (11), CEC (8), judges/lawyers (7), business people (5), other media outlets (5). Among public institutions, the representatives of the Government were most often cited/mentioned in news (24 times, with 379 seconds on screen and 119 seconds of direct speech). The most frequently cited/mentioned electoral competitors were Renato Usatii of Our

Party, Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, and Andrei Nastase of PPDA, and among parties – PPDA, PDM, PAS, and Shor Party.

TV8 presented information about the electoral meetings of Andrei Nastase (PPDA), Violeta Ivanov (Shor Party), and Renato Usatii (Our Party), the other candidates being presented in news stories of other kind. Some of the candidates participated in programs, being the protagonists of news stories based on those programs.

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of candidates in news and programs, seconds

Subjects	Political affiliation	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Renato Usatii	Our Party	21	743	122
Igor Dodon	Independent / Party of Socialists	21	1,868	67
Andrei Năstase	Dignity and Truth Platform Party	17	5,588	5,075
Violeta Ivanov	Shor Party	15	464	37
Tudor Deliu	Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	15	5,321	5,125
Octavian Țicu	National Unity Party	14	408	123
Maia Sandu	Action and Solidarity Party	13	773	47
Dorin Chirtoacă	Electoral Bloc Unirea	13	6,126	5,697

Frequency, duration of appearance and of direct speech of parties in news and programs, seconds

Subjects	Frequency	Duration of appearance	Duration of direct speech
Dignity and Truth Platform Party	22	402	48
Democratic Party of Moldova	20	512	176
Action and Solidarity Party	19	325	147
Shor Party	18	420	0
Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova	16	267	12
Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova	10	210	0
Pro Moldova Party	6	153	58
Our Party	3	15	0
Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova	2	80	0

Gender. During the reporting period, the rate of women as protagonists/sources was 28%, which is 9 percentage points more than in the previous reporting period, and of men – 59%.

Tone. Most of the time, the tone of presentation of electoral candidates was neutral. Igor Dodon, independent candidate supported by PSRM, had 7 appearances in negative light, especially in programs. Political parties and public institutions were presented neutrally.