

"Georgian First Channel devoted approximately equal time to the main election subjects, and the tone of the coverage was largely neutral," the OSCE/ODIHR EOM said in a statement.

The International Election Observation Mission today presented the preliminary findings of the observation of the Georgian parliamentary elections, including the media environment.

"Broadcasters covering the elections were required by law to organize debates and invite all political parties eligible for state funding. Georgian Public Broadcaster, in addition to the four debates with the participation of these parties, organized an additional four debates for other election subjects. Georgian Dream's participation in the debates was limited to only a few programs, which likely narrowed the ability to view debates between key election subjects.

Three private broadcasters: Mtavari Arkhi TV, TV Pirveli, and Formula, have expressed strong bias toward the ruling party and government, 29 to 35% and 11 to 16% were dedicated to the coverage of Georgian Dream activities in prime time newscasts. The tone of the coverage was mostly negative.

In contrast, Imedi TV devoted 45% and 24% to the coverage of Georgian Dream and government activities. The tone of the coverage was mostly positive and neutral, while about 14.2% was devoted to the coverage of the activities of the coalition led by the United National Movement and European Georgia. In this case, the tone of the coverage was mostly negative. The other subjects received a total of three per cent.

Rustavi 2's tone of coverage of the activities of all major election subjects was mostly neutral; This TV station paid great attention to the coverage of the activities of the Georgian Dream and the government - 27.15%; About 14.9% and 6%, respectively, were allocated to the United National Movement coalition, European Georgia and Lelo For Georgia.

Adjara TV focused mainly on local news and did not fully cover the pre-election campaign; Adjara Public Broadcaster and Georgian Public Broadcaster devoted approximately equal time to the main election subjects, the tone of the coverage was mostly neutral. Government activities were widely covered.

The results of the media monitoring carried out by the OSCE / ODIHR Election Observation Mission show that all monitored private broadcasters were significantly biased," the International Election Observation Mission said in a statement.