

Monitoring of Mass Media Coverage of Campaign for General Local Elections

Report No. 2
25 April – 6 May 2007ⁱ

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The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the funding organizations.



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1. General data

1.1 Project goal: to monitor and inform the public opinion about the behavior of mass media during the campaign for general local elections in Moldova.

1.2 Monitoring period – 10 April 2007–17 June 2007 – covers the electoral campaign with two ballots.

1.3 Criteria for the selection of media outlets subject to the monitoring:

- type of ownership (public and private)
- audience/ impact
- broadcasting language

1.4 Monitored mass media:

TV

Moldova 1, PRO TV, NIT, Euro TV Chişinău, TV 7, N 4

Radio

Radio Moldova, Antena C, Vocea Basarabiei, Russkoe Radio

Print media:

Moldova Suverană, Nezavisimaia Moldova, Săptămîna, Flux, Moldavskie vedomosti, Jurnal de Chişinău, Timpul de dimineaţă, Komsomolskaia pravda
Unghiul, Căuşenii, SP (Bălţi), Golos Bălţi, Vesti Gagauzii, Realitatea (Soroca), Observatorul de Nord (Soroca), Farul Nistean (Rezina)

1.5 Monitoring time schedule

TV

Monday-Friday

06:30 – 09:00 and 17:00 – 22:30

Saturday-Sunday

06:30 – 22:30

Radio

Monday-Sunday

06:00 – 24:00

1.6. Team

The project is implemented by the Association of Independent Press and Independent Journalism Center in partnership with the Institute of Marketing and Polls IMAS-INC Chisinau.

2. Methodological framework

The monitoring methodology has been developed by Oxford Media Research for the monitoring projects of the international organization Global Campaign for Free Expression “Article 19”. The methodology’s characteristics are as follows: 1) use of a broad spectrum of quantity indicators, including type, duration, topic of coverage, news sources, frequency and duration of appearance of certain persons in the newscasts. 2) the quality component is more developed than in other methodologies, which allows to establish the biasness of the monitored outlet during the coverage of events. Each news article or opinion is subject to a content and context assessment, to determine if it favors or disfavors one or another party / one or another political entity. A negative or positive content and/or context of the news does not necessarily indicate the biasness or partisanship of the station broadcasting the news. It is possible that a news article favor or disfavor one of the subjects and, nonetheless, be equidistant and professionally correct. Only if there is a tendency to favor or disfavor one of the subjects for a certain period of time can we say that we are dealing with an imbalance.

3. General conclusions

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

During 25 April – 6 May 2007, the monitored mass media maintained the editorial policy adopted during the previous period, at the beginning of the electoral campaign. The public stations *Moldova 1* and *Radio Moldova*, and the private stations with national coverage *NIT*, *Antena C* and *N4* further broadcasted news that favored directly or indirectly the ruling party, and avoided news that would have disfavored it or critical opinions about it. It should be noted, however, that *NIT* limited itself to only a few pieces of news, which, objectively, could not be excluded from the newscasts. Opposition parties were mainly present through the information provided by electoral commissions and through electoral publicity. On *Euro TV*, the same favoring attitude towards both PCRM (Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova) and PPCD (Christian Democratic People’s Party) was registered.

News and programs on *PRO TV*, *TV 7* and *Vocea Basarabiei* reflected a more varied range of events and political actors, without particularly favoring any party, they also being the only stations that did not spare the ruling party and presented the protests of patent holders, refugees and Cahul transporters. Also, *Russkoye Radio* repeatedly broadcasted news disfavoring PCRM and PPCD, seeking to limit its involvement in the electoral campaign and reducing it to electoral publicity in the last days.

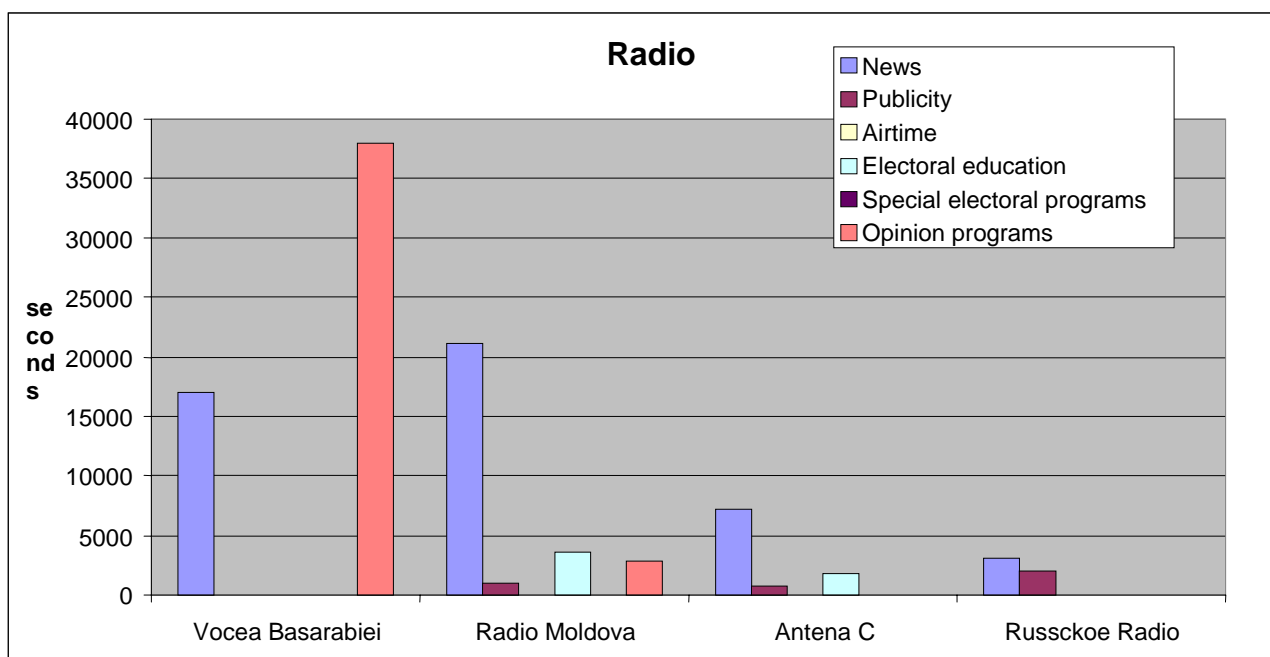
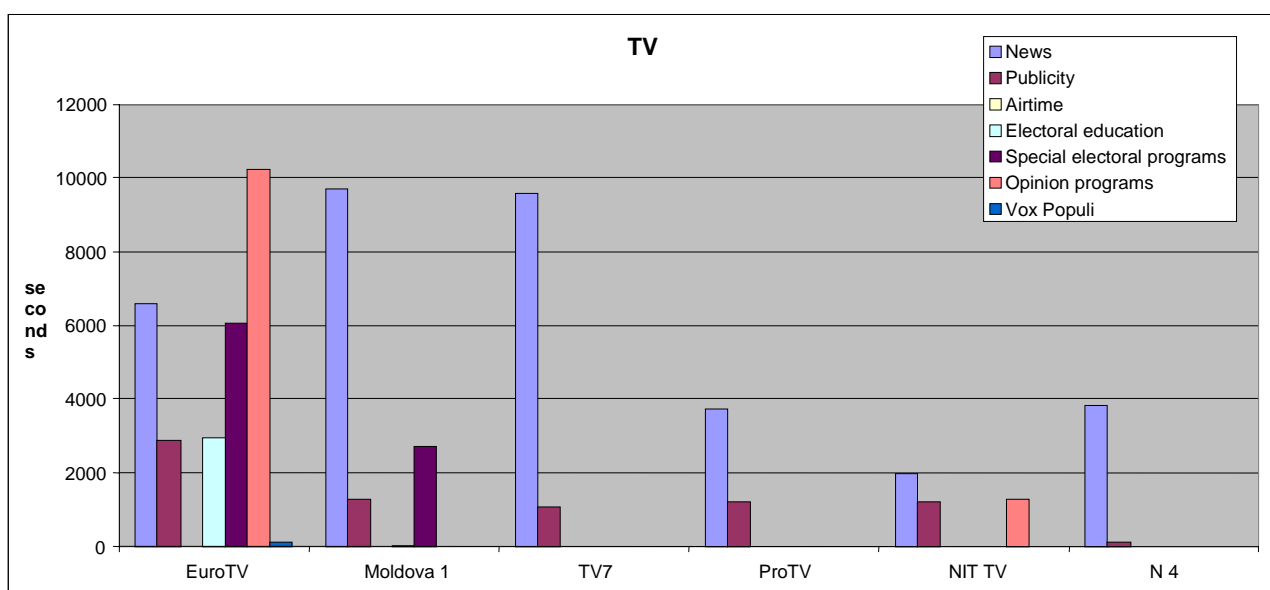
In print media, spirits started to run high, as some pro-government newspapers published libelous materials about some opposition parties. Most of the local public newspapers and the former central public newspapers – *Moldova Suverana* and *Nezavisimaia Moldova* – continued to favor PCRM, whereas most private newspapers, with a few exceptions, criticized PCRM, but without openly supporting any opposition party.

4. Monitoring data

4.1 Involvement in the electoral campaign

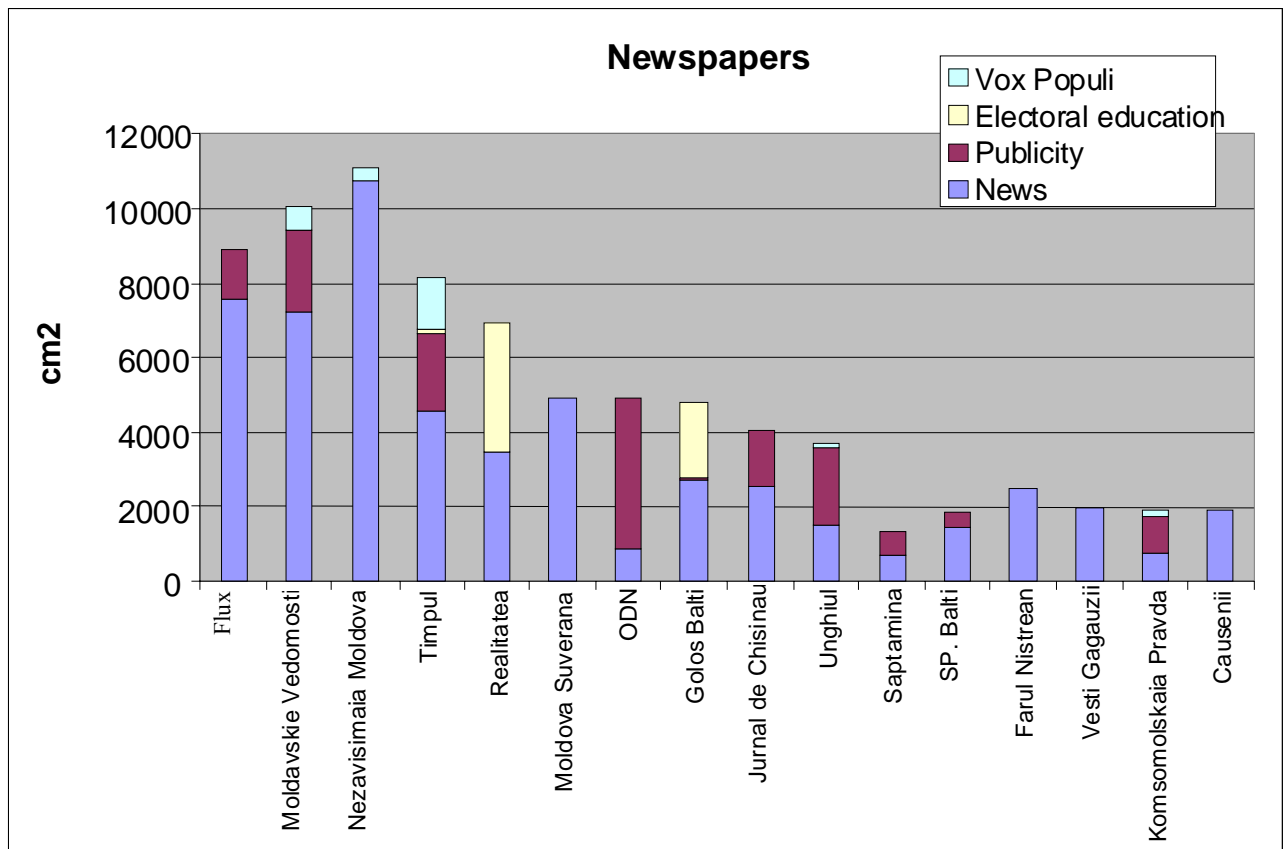
4.1.1 Radio and TV

During 25 April – 6 May 2007, the appearance of a significant amount of opinion programs, special electoral programs and electoral publicity was attested on many of the monitored stations. *NIT* sought to reduce the broadcasting of news with electoral implications. *Euro TV* ranked first with regards to opinion programs, electoral publicity and education. As to the radio stations, *Vocea Basarabiei* broadcasted the largest amount of opinion programs, and *Moldova 1* and *Antena C* broadcasted electoral education materials.



4.1.2 Newspapers

Electoral materials accounted for most of the space in *Nezavisimaia Moldova*, *Moldavskie vedomosti*, *Flux*, *Timpul* and *Realitatea*. Only *Realitatea* and *Golos Bălți* published electoral education materials.

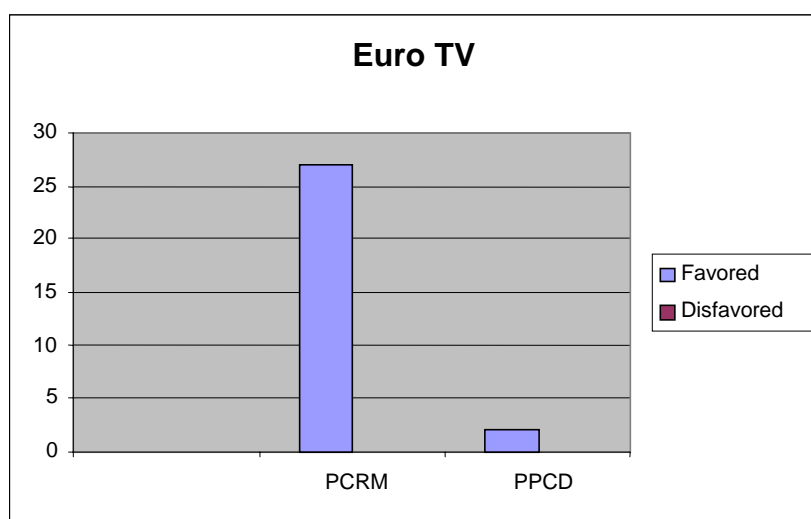
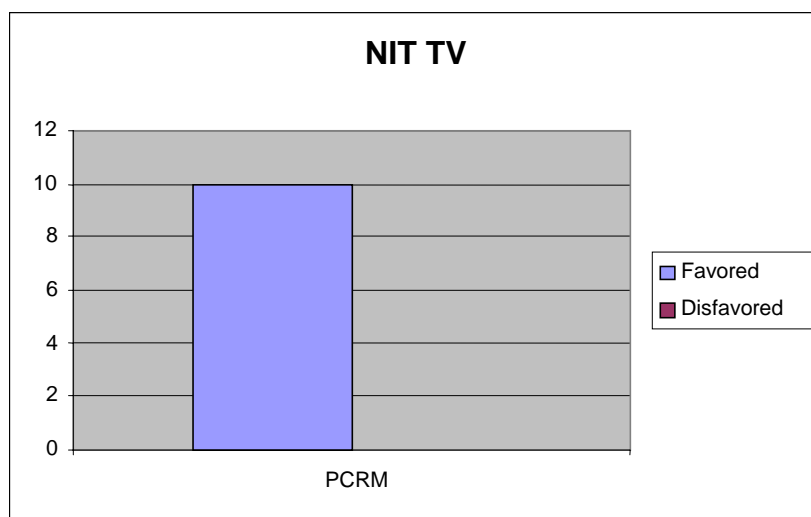
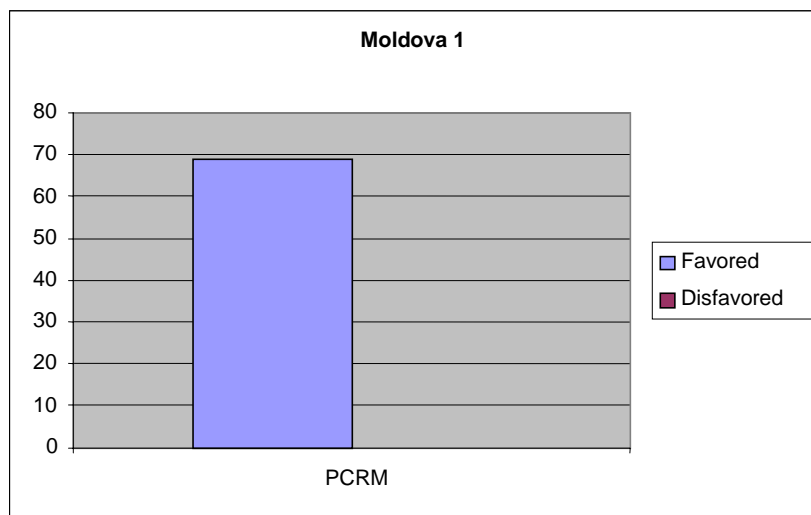


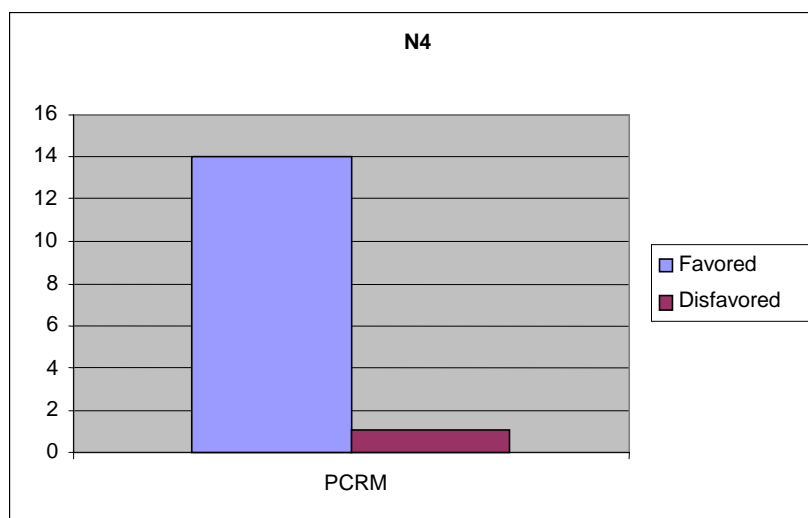
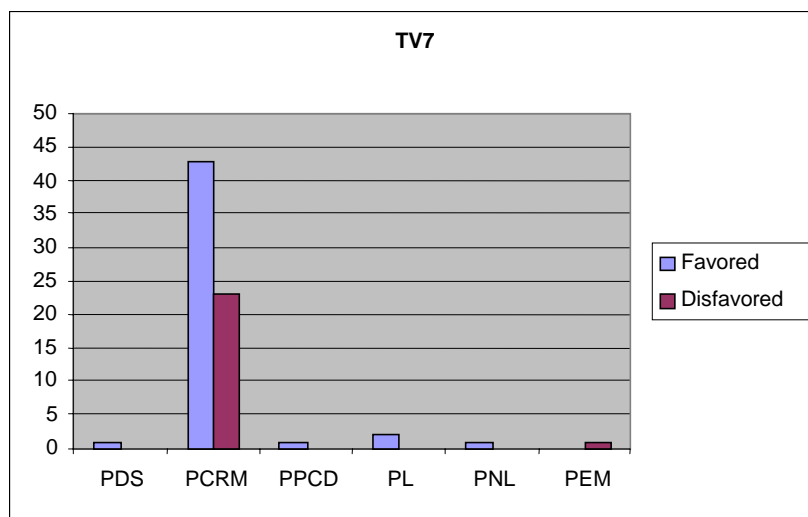
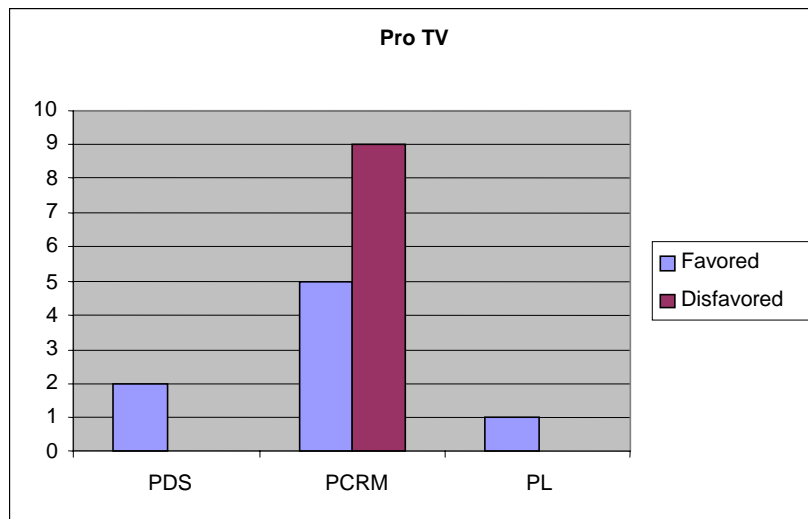
4.2 Candidates and parties directly or indirectly favored or disfavored during newscasts and opinion programs – frequency

4.2.1 TV

As in the previous period, *Moldova 1*, *NIT*, *Euro TV* broadcasted only news favoring the ruling party. It should be noted, however, that *NIT* limited itself to only a few pieces of news, which, objectively, could not be excluded from the newscasts. They were about the opening of the Common Visa Center, the voting by the Parliament of President Voronin's economic initiative and the additional allowances for veterans. *Euro TV* broadcasted twice a piece of news favoring both PCRM and PPCD, about the participation of Voronin and Roșca in the opening of the Common Visa Center. *N4* was obviously part of the same pro PCRM group that reflected the reality in Moldova only in positive colors (with a single exception that confirmed the rule).

PRO TV and *TV 7* further avoided political partisanship and even covered events ignored by the other stations, such as the protests of patent holders, of Transnistrian refugees, and of Cahul transporters.



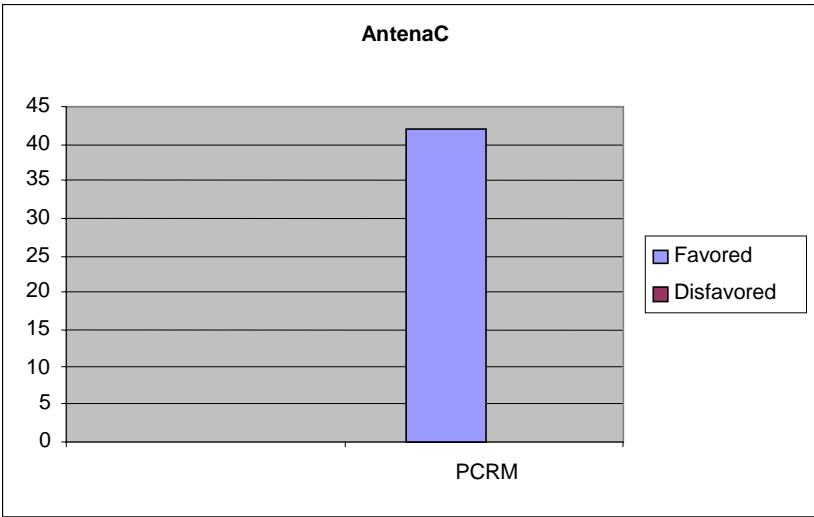
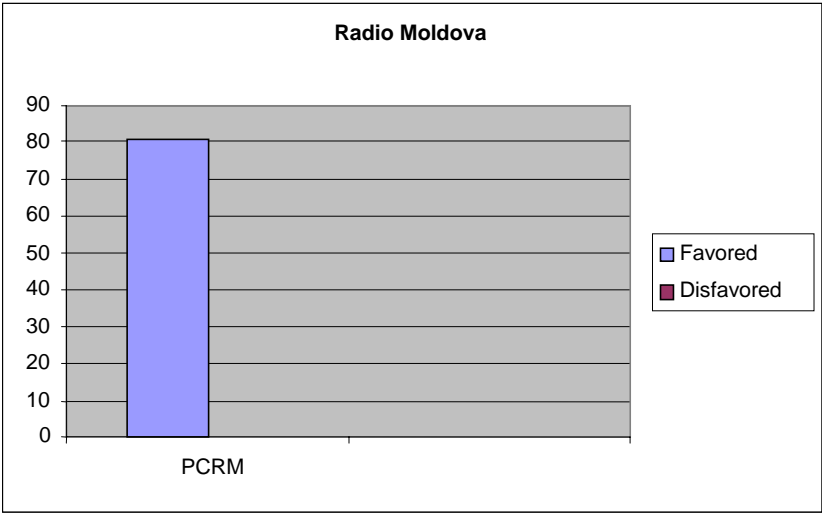


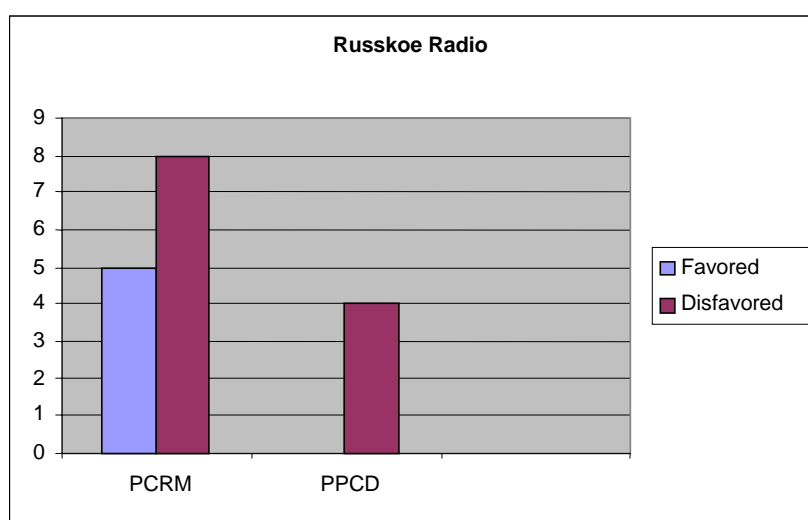
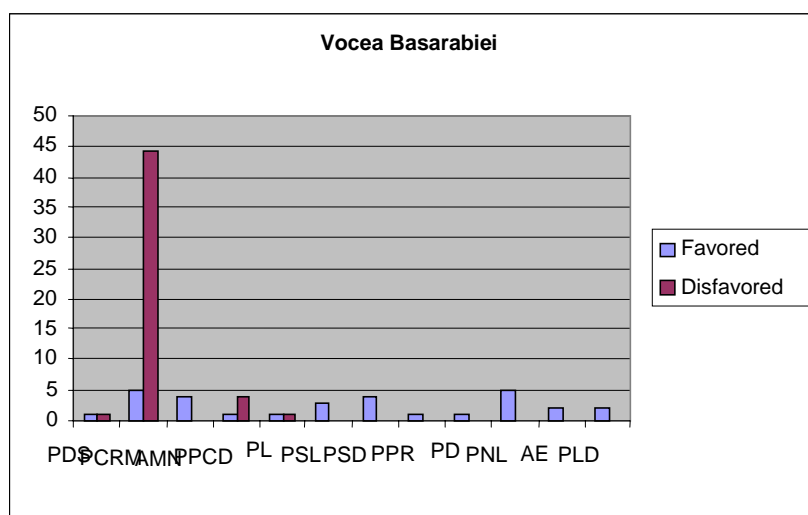
4.2.2. Radio

Radio Moldova and *Antena C* continued to favor indirectly PCRM by covering the actions and initiatives with electoral touch of the government and ignoring the opposition parties.

Vocea Basarabiei broadcasted much more favoring than disfavoring materials about the ruling party. PPCD was also mentioned rather in a negative, than positive, context. The other parties enjoyed less attention.

Russkoe Radio broadcasted only a few pieces of news that indirectly disfavored PCRM and PPCD. They were mainly about the criticism leveled by the municipal councilor Oleg Cernei at PCRM and PPCD councilors.



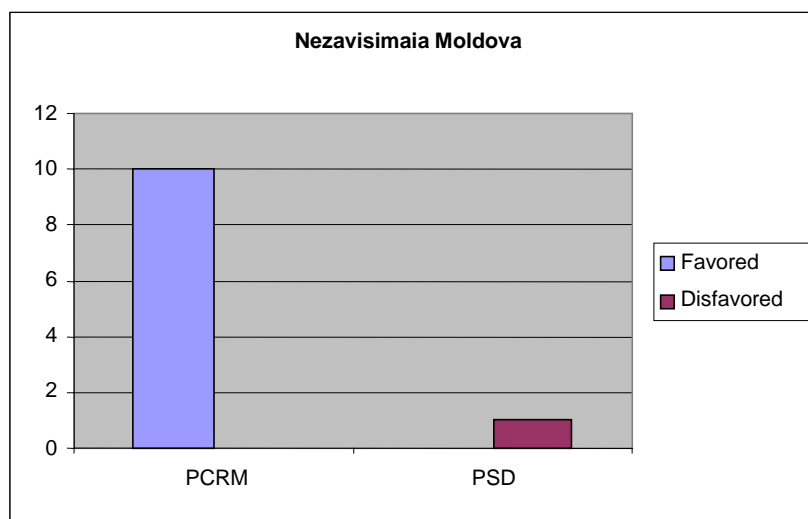
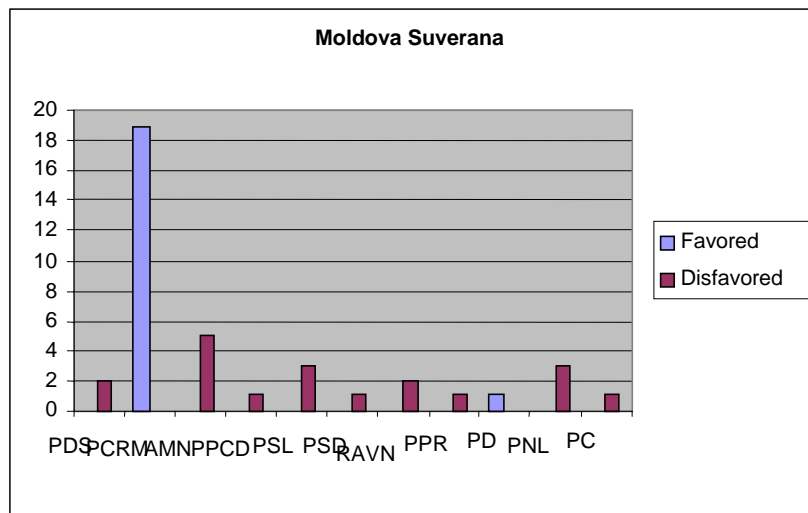


4.2.3. Print media

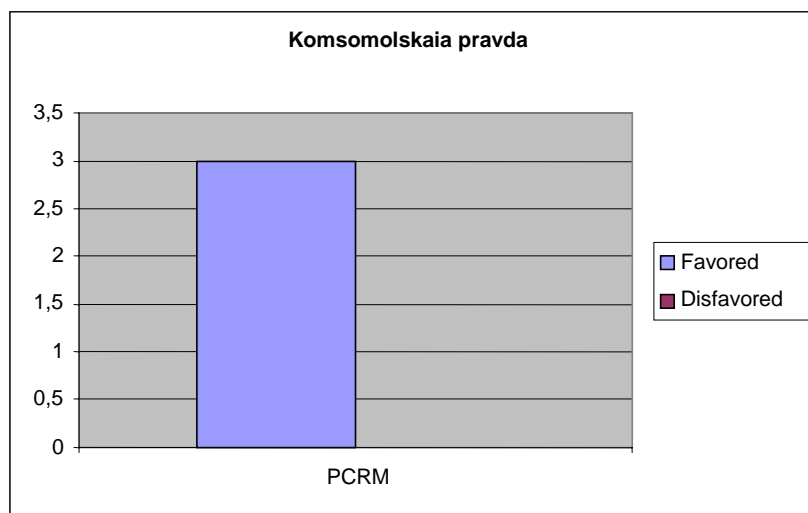
During 25 April – 6 May 2007, “*Moldova Suverană*” and “*Nezavisimaia Moldova*” continued to favor PCRM by publishing broad articles about the initiatives with electoral touch of President Vladimir Voronin, Prime Minister Vasile Tarlev or of the PCRM candidate for the position of Chisinau mayor, Veaceslav Iordan.

As compared to the previous monitoring period, “*Moldova Suverană*” published articles disfavoring other electoral actors, and most often presented “ ‘Our Moldova’ Alliance” Party and National Liberal Party in a negative light. As a rule, the attacks on the electoral opponents were launched through the editorials signed by Mihai Conțiu and Oleg Cristal, as well as by the actor and film director Tudor Tătaru.

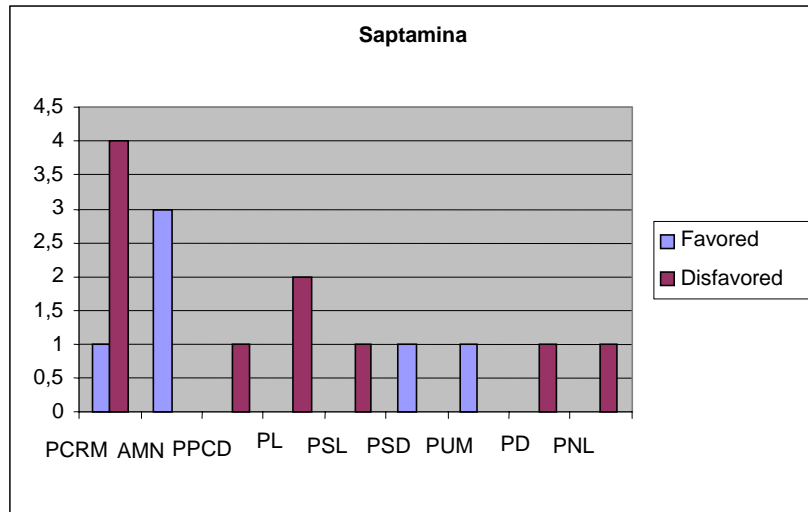
“*Nezavisimaia Moldova*” further avoided publishing news about other electoral candidates, except for the Social-Democratic Party, which was criticized for the meeting organized on 1 May.



“*Komsomolskaia Pravda*” reduced the amount of news with electoral touch. Some issues did not contain any electoral articles. The newspaper indirectly favored the ruling party by writing about the increase in veteran indemnities.

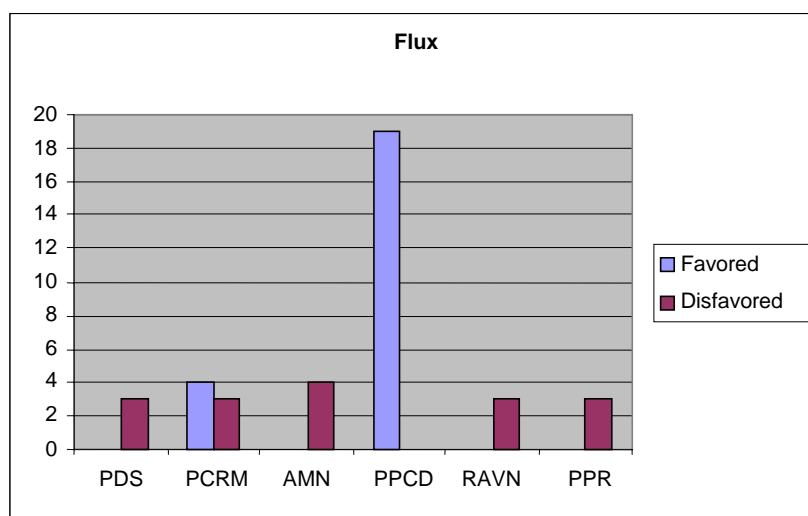


In comparison with the previous period, “*Săptămîna*” presented more often the Communist Party, as well as other electoral competitors, in a negative, rather than positive, light, especially the liberal orientation parties (Liberal Party, Social Liberal Party and National Liberal Party). The editorials signed by Viorel Mihail called the President of the Liberal Party, Mihai Ghimpu, ironic names. On the other hand, “*Săptămîna*” is the newspaper that presented “Our Moldova” Alliance and its President, Serafim Urechean, as well as the Humanist Party and Social Democratic Party, most often in a positive context. It should be noted that the newspaper did not specify whether the articles favoring certain candidates had been paid for or not from their electoral funds, although it was obvious that that was electoral publicity.



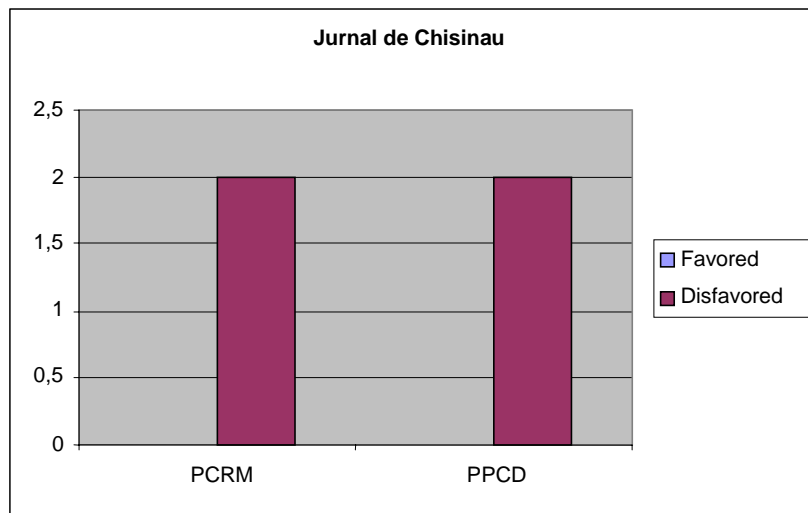
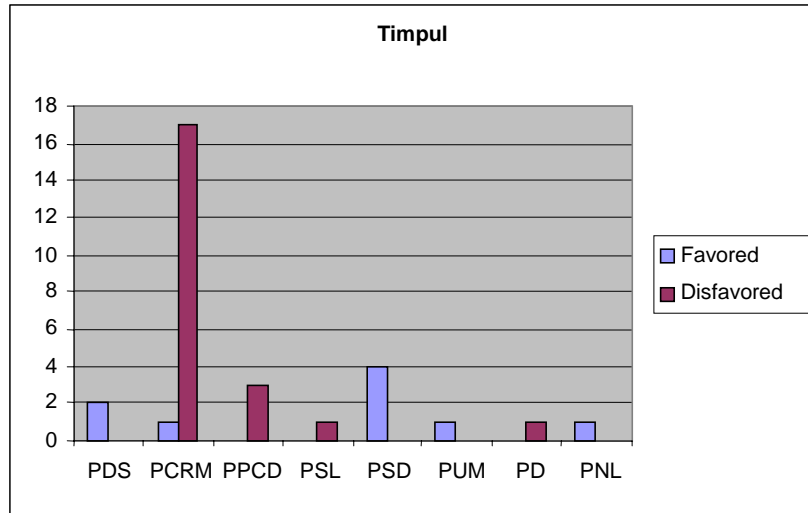
The daily “*Flux*” presented the Christian Democratic People’s Party in positive context. The newspaper published numerous interviews with PPCD candidates for municipal councilor positions, and the electoral publicity of the PPCD candidate for the position of Chisinau general mayor, Alexandru Corduneanu. “*Flux*” organized electoral debates with the participation of the candidates for the office of Chisinau mayor.

On the other hand, “*Flux*” continued to favor directly or indirectly a number of political entities, including the Communist Party, “Our Moldova” Alliance, Social Democracy Party, Republican People’s Party etc.



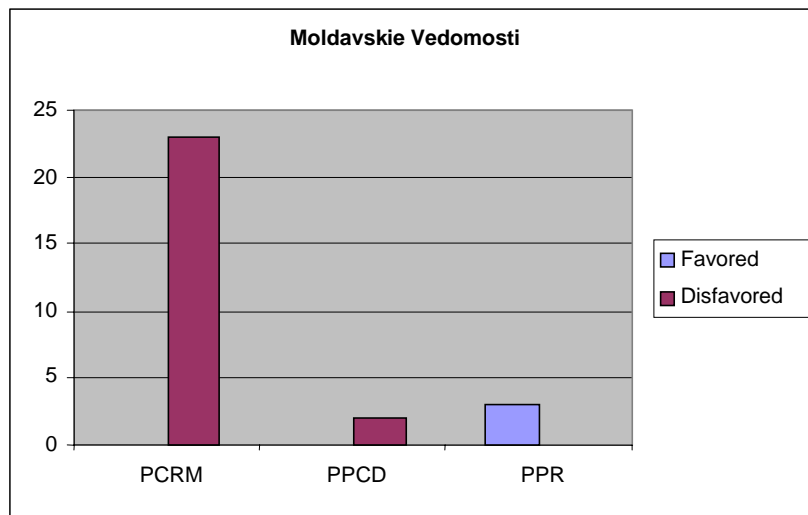
The newspapers “*Jurnal de Chișinău*” and “*Timpul de dimineață*” disfavored most often, directly or indirectly, the Communist Party and the Christian Democratic People’s Party. “*Jurnal de Chișinău*” did not support any electoral candidate, whereas “*Timpul de dimineață*” presented some democratic orientation parties in a positive context.

Both newspapers published informative, neutral, articles about the electoral competitors.

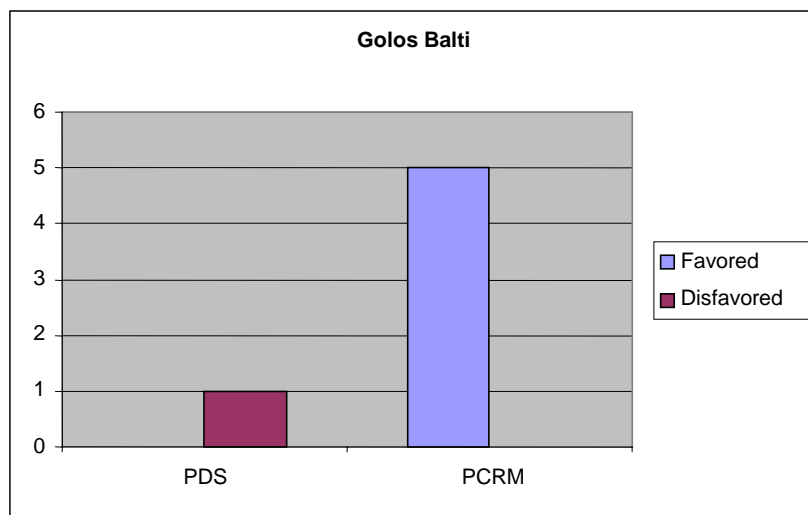


“*Moldavskie vedomosti*” directly disfavored the Communist Party and less the Christian Democratic People’s Party. The publication heavily criticized the initiatives with electoral touch of the President, Prime Minister, or General Mayor ad interim.

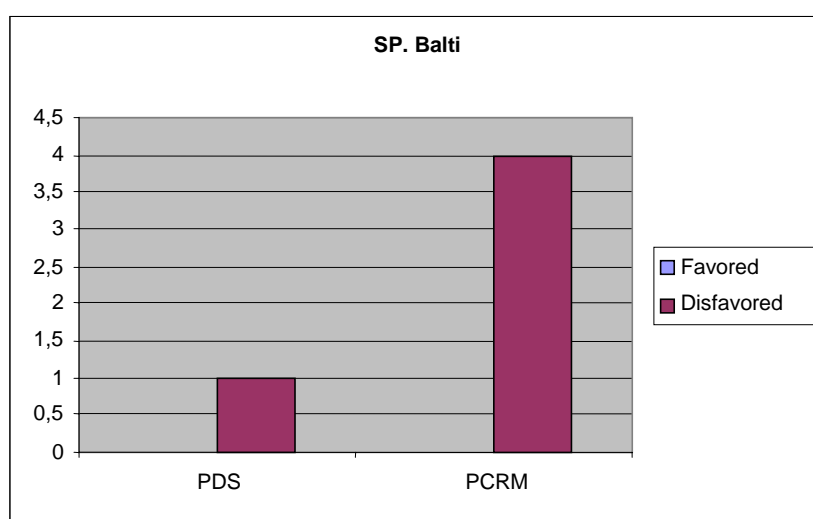
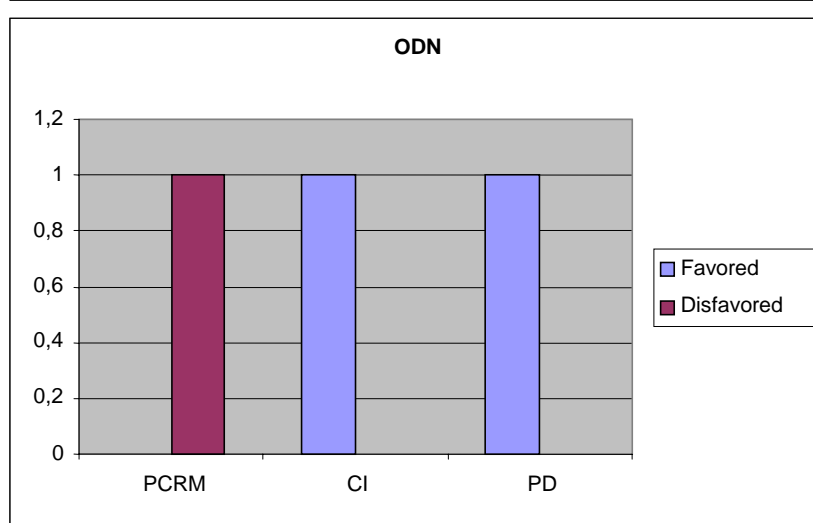
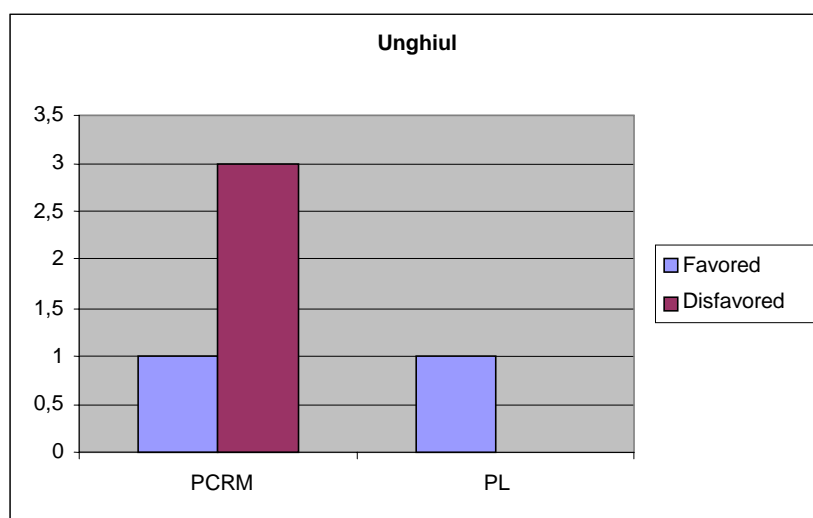
On the other hand, “*Moldavskie vedomosti*” frequently favored, directly or indirectly, the Republican People’s Party.



The local newspapers founded by district councils and funded from the public money usually favored the current district leadership, but avoided attacking the opposition parties. Exception from this was “*Golos Bălți*”, which published an article disfavoring the Social Democracy Party. Local council newspapers published on a regular basis the decisions of local electoral commissions and the lists of candidates for the positions of local councilor.



The local independent newspapers “*Observatorul de Nord*” (Soroca), “*Unghiul*” (Ungheni) and *SP* (Bălți) presented more often the Communist Party in a negative light. “*SP*” did not favor any electoral candidates, whereas “*Observatorul de Nord*” and “*Unghiul*” sympathized with the Democratic Party and Liberal Party.

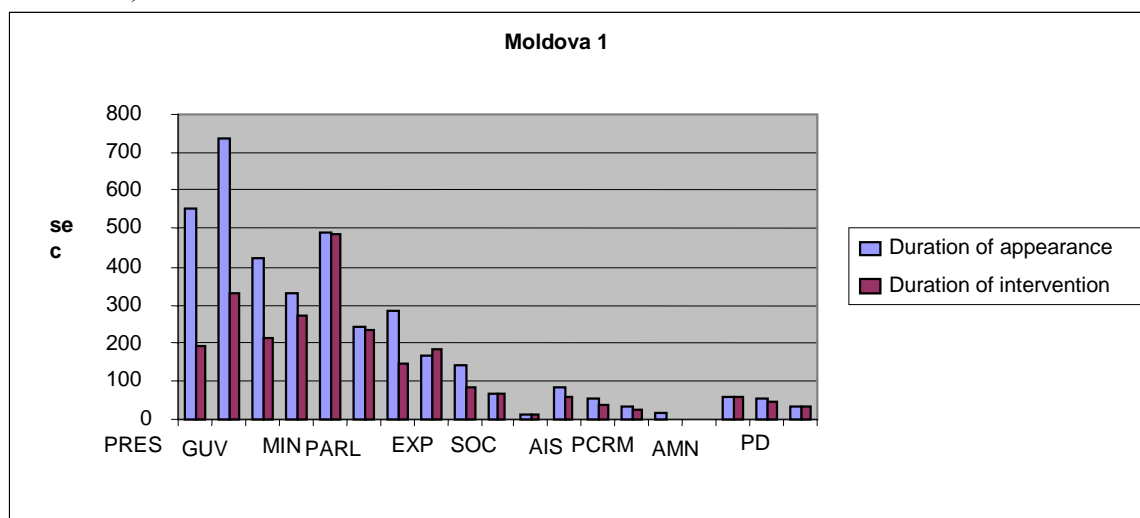


It should be noted that the local independent newspapers “*Observatorul de Nord*” and “*Unghiul*” further inserted the largest amounts of electoral publicity on their pages – 4,014 sq. cm and 2,063 sq. cm, respectively. On the other hand, the local newspapers “*Realitatea*” and “*Golos Bălți*” were the only publications, which provided space for electoral education articles.

4.3 Frequency of sources, appearances on TV, direct interventions in news with direct or indirect electoral implications

As in the previous period, *Moldova 1* and *NIT* used most of the times the governmental sources, diplomats and foreign officials, local public administration and Central Electoral Commission as sources for their news with electoral implications. Of the political parties, *Moldova 1* referred to PCRM, AMN and PD, while *NIT* limited itself only to the information provided by CEC and to broadcasting political publicity.

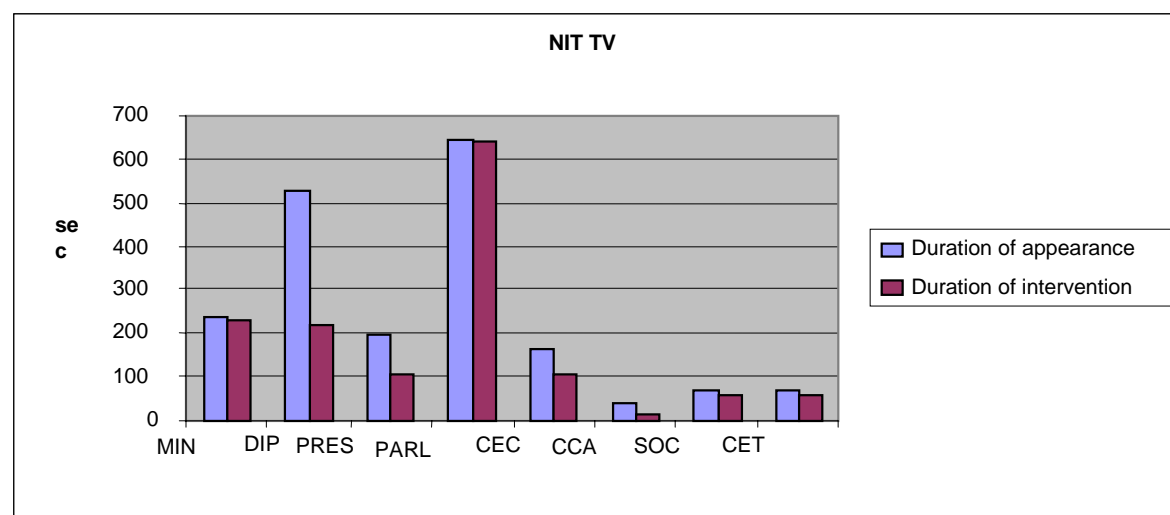
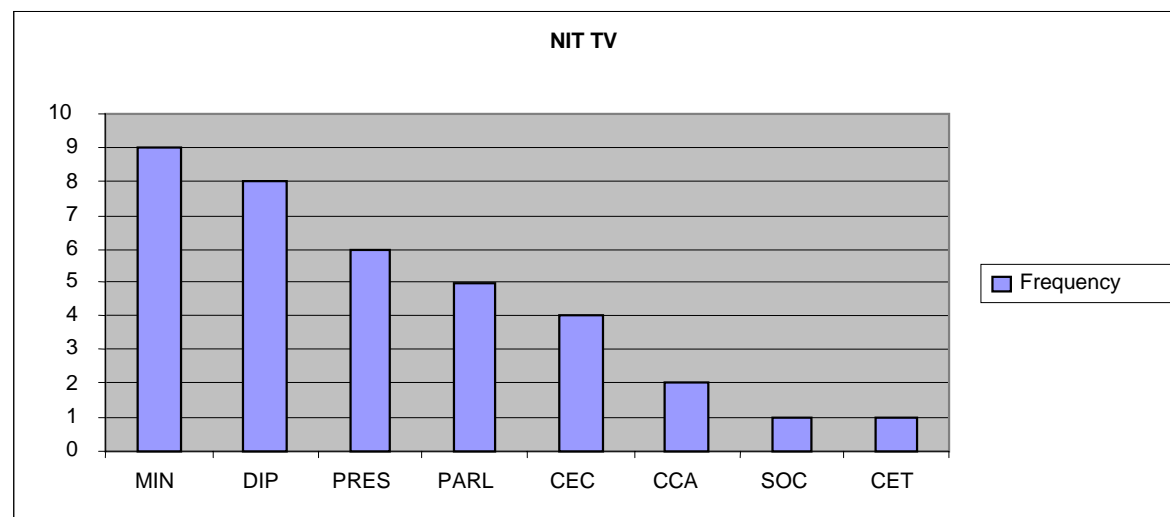
On *Moldova 1*, President Voronin had the longest duration of appearances, after various diplomats and foreign officials, and on *NIT* – Speaker Marian Lupu (who participated in the program “Maxima”).



Sources of information	Code	Frequency	Duration of appearance, sec	Duration of intervention, sec
President, President's Office	PRES	27	555	194
Diplomats, foreign officials, other external subjects	DIP	24	737	329
Prime Minister, government officials	GUV	24	423	216
Central and Local Electoral Commission	CEC	23	331	273
Ministers	MIN	20	490	486
Businesses, businesspersons, employers	BUS	15	238	234
Parliament, Speaker of the Parliament	PARL	12	283	146
Citizens	CET	9	169	181
Experts (foreign and local)	EXP	6	139	86
Local public administration	ADL	5	67	67
Civil society – NGOs	SOC	5	9	9
Mass Media	MED	4	85	60
Other state institutions	AIS	4	51	38
Trade unions	SIN	4	29	27
Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova	PCRM	3	16	0
Coordinating Council of the	CCA	3	0	0

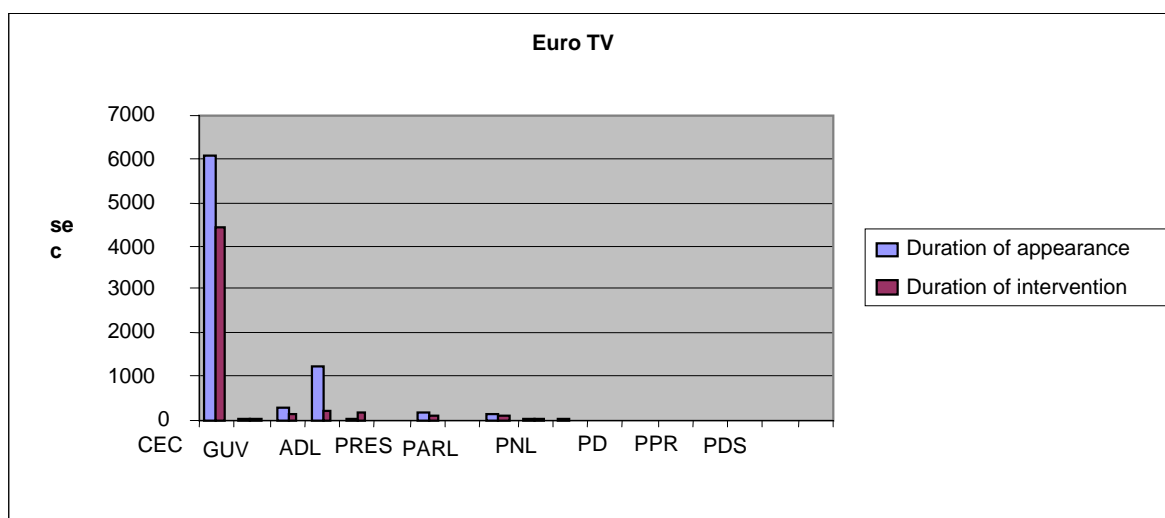
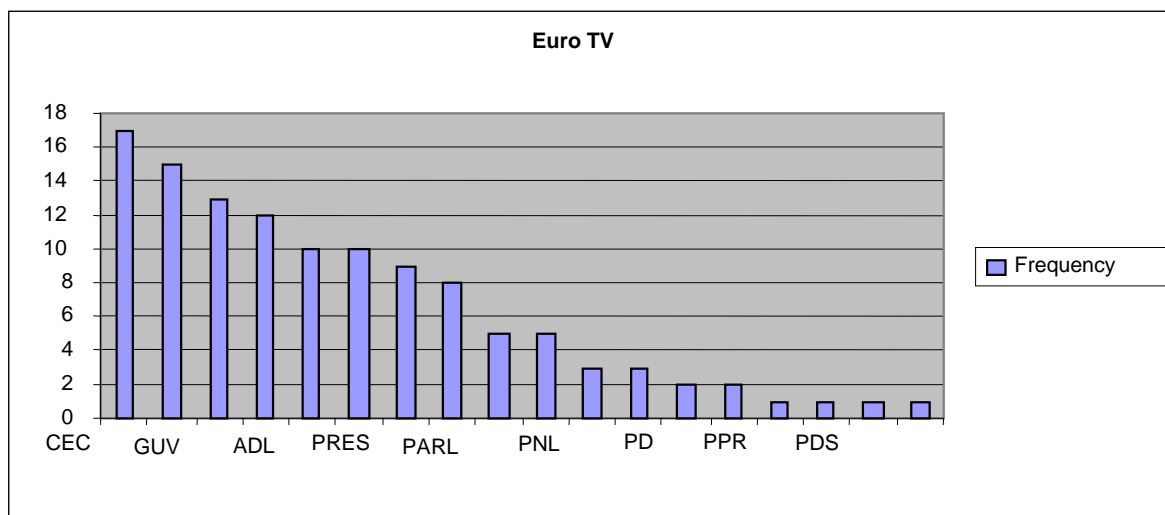
Audiovisual

“ ‘Our Moldova’ Alliance” Party	AMN	2	56	56
Medical institutions	SAN	2	51	48
Democratic Party of Moldova	PD	2	31	31



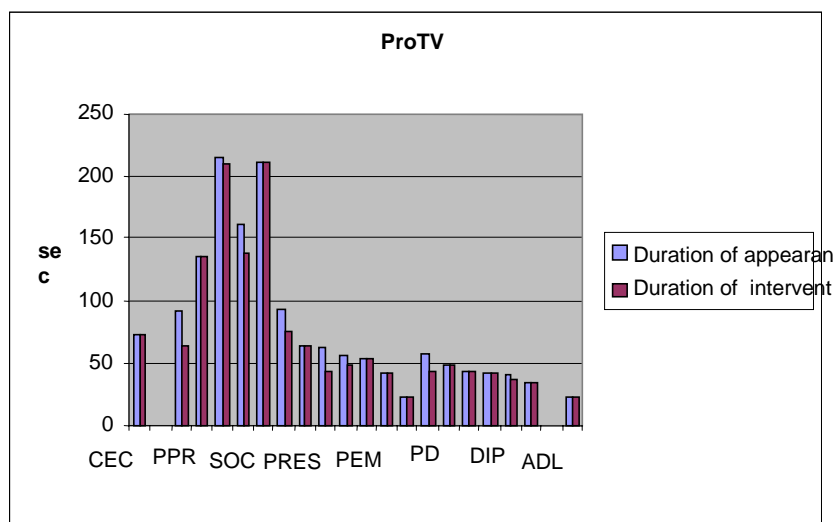
Sources of information	Code	Frequency	Duration of appearance, sec	Duration of intervention, sec
Ministers	MIN	9	236	230
Diplomats, foreign officials, other external subjects	DIP	8	524	220
President, President's Office	PRES	6	198	104
Parliament, Speaker of the Parliament	PARL	5	646	640
Central and Local Electoral Commission	CEC	4	166	106
Coordinating Council of the Audiovisual	CCA	2	40	16
Civil society – NGOs	SOC	1	70	60
Citizens	CET	1	70	60

As in the previous period, *Euro TV* is the station that used most often the Central and Local Electoral Commissions as news source, and Commission representatives also enjoyed the longest appearances in this station's programs. Other often used sources were various NGOs, the Executive and ministers, LPA, President and President's Office. Of the political parties, PPCD was favored.



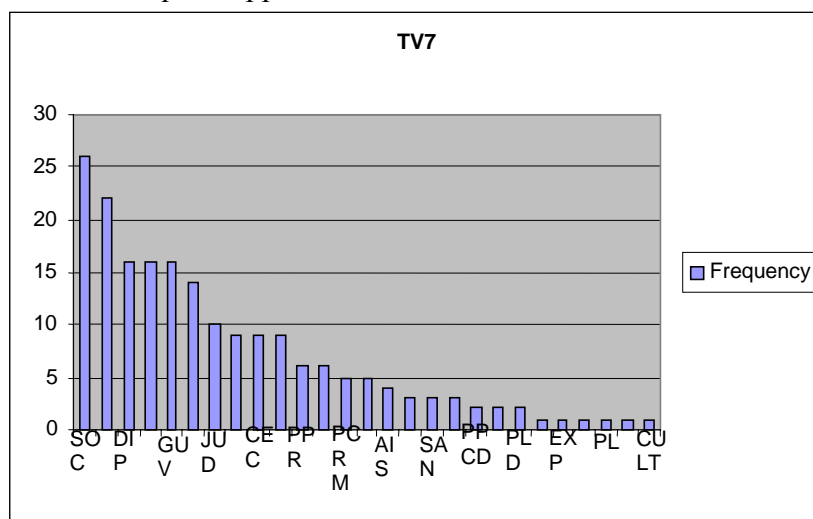
Sources of information	Code	Frequency	Duration of appearance, sec	Duration of intervention, sec
Central and Local Electoral Commission	CEC	17	6100	4416
Civil society – NGOs	SOC	15	60	56
Prime Minister, government officials	GUV	13	260	147
Ministers	MIN	12	1218	224
Local public administration	ADL	10	55	191
Mass Media	MED	10	21	21
President, President's Office	PRES	9	204	108
Diplomats, foreign officials, other external subjects	DIP	8	0	20

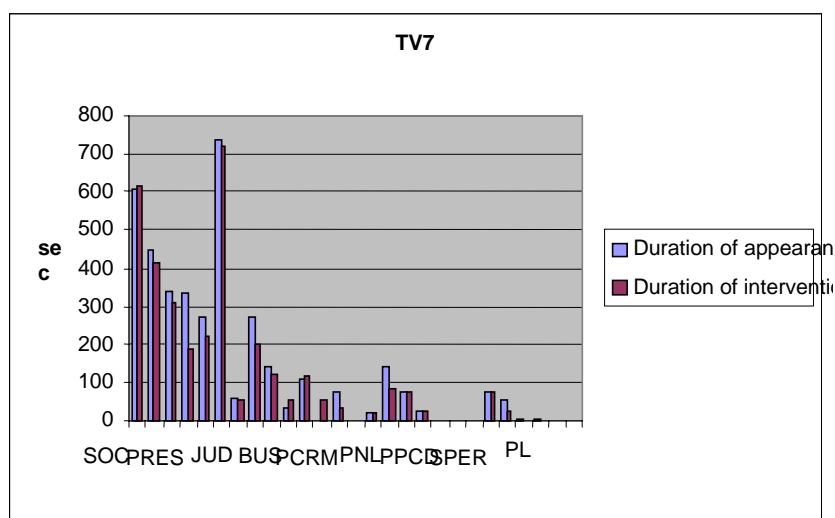
PRO TV is the station that used most frequently information from the political parties involved in the electoral campaign – PCRM, PPR, PDS, PSL, AMN, PD, PPCD and PSD. Civil society representatives, citizens, CEC, various parties and President Voronin had the longest appearances on this station.

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Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova	PCRM	10	92	64
Republican People's Party of Moldova	PPR	8	136	136
Citizens	CET	7	215	210
National Liberal Party	PNL	7	162	138
Civil society – NGOs	SOC	5	211	211
Social Justice Party	PDS	5	93	75
Social Liberal Party	PSL	4	64	64
President, President's Office	PRES	4	62	44
“ ‘Our Moldova’ Alliance” Party	AMN	4	56	48
Justice, Constitutional Court, judges, attorneys	JUD	3	53	53
European Party	PEM	3	42	42
Parliament, Speaker of the Parliament	PARL	3	22	22
Ministers	MIN	2	58	43
Democratic Party of Moldova	PD	2	48	48
Christian Democratic People's Party	PPCD	2	44	44
Social-Democratic Party of Moldova	PSD	2	42	42
Diplomats, foreign officials, other external subjects	DIP	2	40	37
Independent candidate	CI	2	34	34
Prime Minister, government officials	GUV	2	0	0
Local public administration	ADL	1	23	23

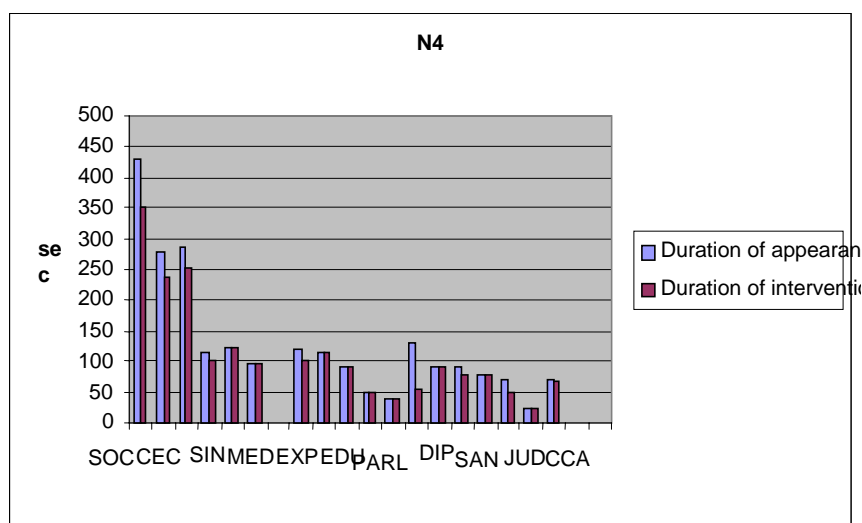
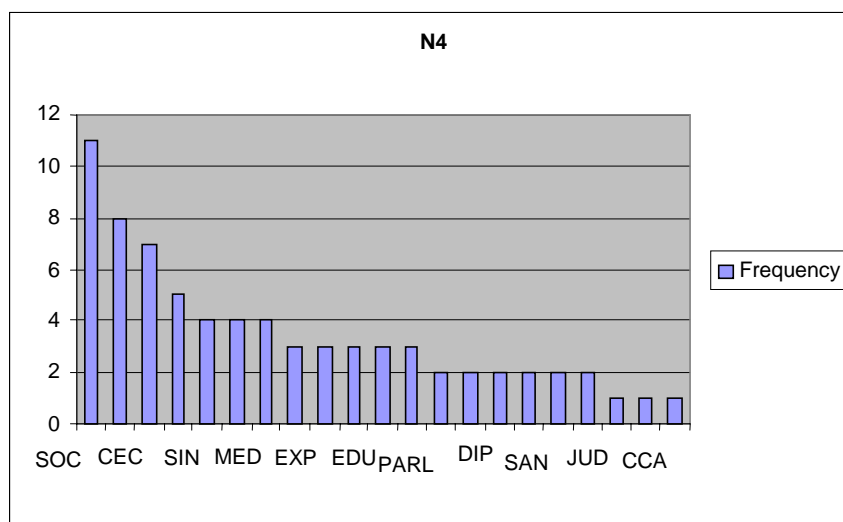
TV7 took its information most often from NGOs, diplomats and foreign officials, President and President's Office as well as from a number of parties, such as PPR, PCRM, PDS. Various citizens, civil society representatives, ministers, diplomats and foreign officials, and President Voronin had the most frequent appearances on *TV7* within news with direct or indirect electoral implications.





Sources of information	Code	Frequency	Duration of appearance, sec	Duration of intervention, sec
Civil society – NGOs	SOC	26	607	619
Ministers	MIN	22	451	414
Diplomats, foreign officials, other external subjects	DIP	16	340	310
President, President's Office	PRES	16	333	190
Prime Minister, government officials	GUV	16	272	220
Citizens	CET	14	739	722
Justice, Constitutional Court, judges, attorneys	JUD	10	55	52
Parliament, Speaker of the Parliament	PARL	9	270	200
Central and Local Electoral Commission	CEC	9	140	122
Businesses, businesspersons, employers	BUS	9	30	51
Republican People's Party of Moldova	PPR	6	109	115
Local public administration	ADL	6	0	53
Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova	PCRM	5	74	30
Social Justice Party	PDS	5	0	0
Other state institutions	AIS	4	21	21
National Liberal Party	PNL	3	143	86
Medical institutions	SAN	3	74	74
Mass Media	MED	3	24	24
Christian Democratic People's Party	PPCD	2	0	0
Social-Democratic Party of Moldova	PSD	2	0	0
Party of Law and Justice	PLD	2	0	0
Movement of Professionals "Speranta-Nadejda"	SPER	1	72	72
Experts (foreign and local)	EXP	1	51	24
European Party	PEM	1	4	0
Liberal Party	PL	1	4	0
Trade unions	SIN	1	0	0

The most frequently used sources by *N4* were NGOs, followed by the President's Office (which was on the first place last time), CEC and other state institutions. President Voronin further remained the person with the most frequent appearances of electoral character on *N4*.

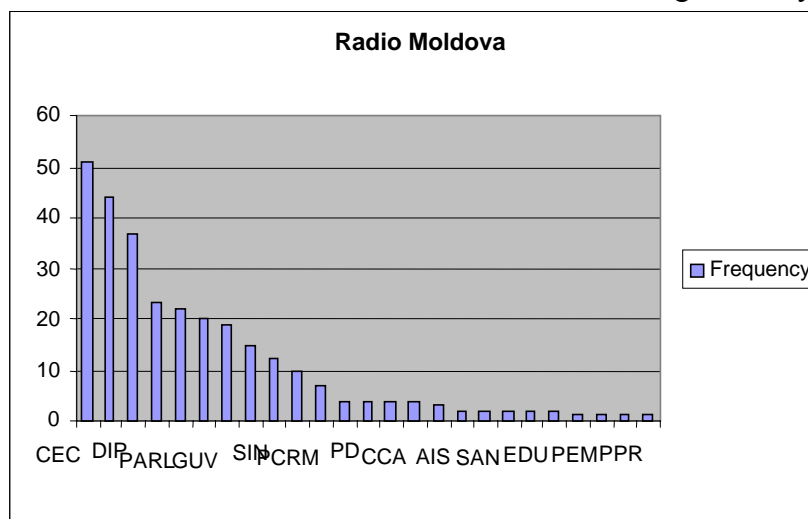


Sources of information	Code	Frequency	Duration of appearance, sec	Duration of intervention, sec
Civil society – NGOs	SOC	11	430	351
President, President's Office	PRES	8	279	238
Central and Local Electoral Commission	CEC	7	286	254
Other state institutions	AIS	5	115	102
Trade unions	SIN	4	122	122
Businesses, businesspersons, employers	BUS	4	98	98
Mass Media	MED	4	0	0

Local public administration	ADL	3	120	100
Experts (foreign and local)	EXP	3	113	113
Citizens	CET	3	90	90
Educational-scientific institutions	EDU	3	49	49
Ministers	MIN	3	38	38
Parliament, Speaker of the Parliament	PARL	2	129	56
Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova	PCRM	2	91	91
Diplomats, foreign officials, other external subjects	DIP	2	90	78
“ ‘Our Moldova’ Alliance” Party	AMN	2	78	78
Medical institutions	SAN	2	71	48
Democratic Party of Moldova	PD	2	24	24
Justice, Constitutional Court, judges, attorneys	JUD	1	73	69
Prime Minister, government officials	GUV	1	0	0
Coordinating Council of the Audiovisual	CCA	1	0	0

4.4 Frequency of sources on radio stations

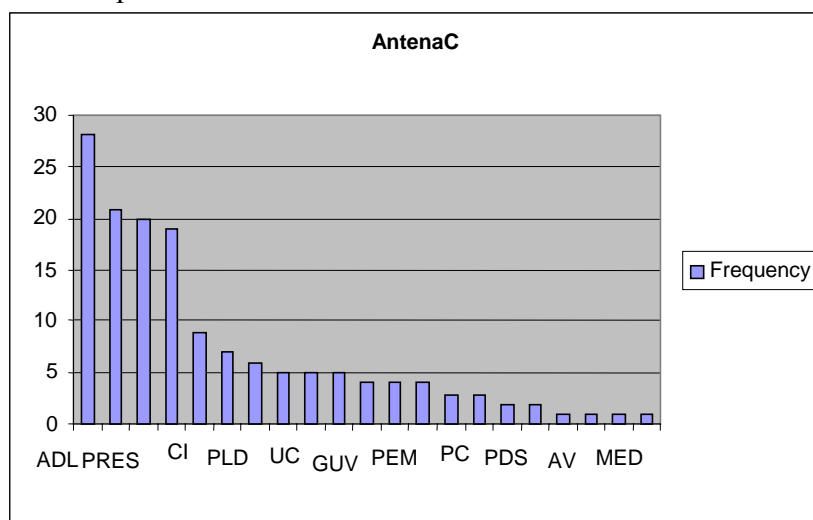
Radio Moldova made most frequent references to the Moldovan President, Central and Local Electoral Commissions, the Executive, experts and local public administration in its news with direct or indirect electoral implications. Of the political parties, it covered more PCRM and its coalition partners – PPCD and PD, as well as AMN, PNL, Humanist Party etc. It should be noted that all monitored radio stations significantly used the news of press agencies.



Source of information	Code	Frequency
Central and Local Electoral Commission	CEC	51
President, President's Office	PRES	44
Diplomats, foreign officials, other external subjects	DIP	37
Ministers	MIN	23
Parliament, Speaker of the Parliament	PARL	22
Civil society – NGOs	SOC	20
Prime Minister, government officials	GUV	19

Businesses, businesspersons, employers	BUS	15
Trade unions	SIN	12
Mass Media	MED	10
Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova	PCRM	7
Citizens	CET	4
Democratic Parry of Moldova	PD	4
Local public administration	ADL	4
Coordinating Council of the Audiovisual	CCA	4
“ ‘Our Moldova’ Alliance” Party	AMN	3
Other state institutions	AIS	2
National Liberal Party	PNL	2
Medical institutions	SAN	2
Social Justice Party	PDS	2
Educational-scientific institutions	EDU	2
Liberal Party	PL	1
European Party	PEM	1
Christian Democratic People’s Party	PPCD	1
Republican People’s Party of Moldova	PPR	1

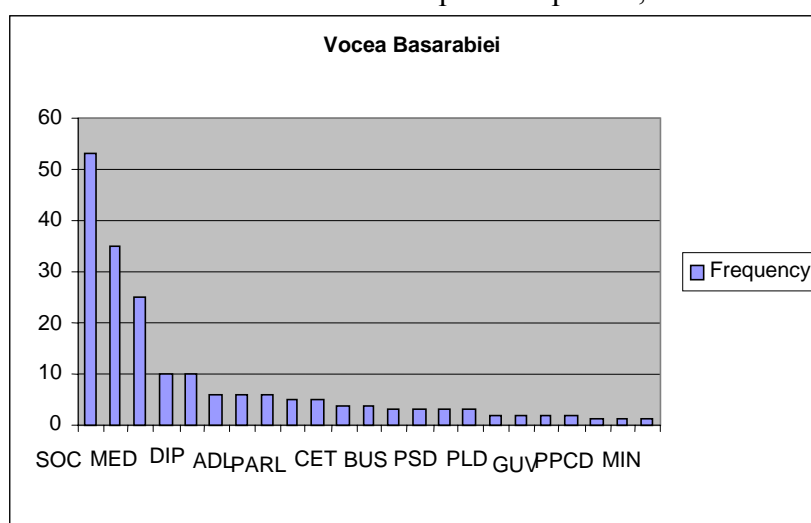
The sources of most of the electoral news broadcasted by *Antena C* were LPA, diplomats and foreign officials, President’s Office, Central and Local Electoral Commissions. Unlike last time, when, from the political parties, most references were made to PCRM, during 25 April – 6 May 2007, this station made more frequent references to PPR, Party of Law and Justice, Centrist Union and European Action.



Source of information	Code	Frequency
Local public administration	ADL	28
Diplomats, foreign officials, other external subjects	DIP	21
President, President’s Office	PRES	20
Central and Local Electoral Commissions	CEC	19
Independent Candidate	CI	9
Republican People’s Party of Moldova	PPR	7
Party of Law and Justice	PLD	6
National Liberal Party	PNL	5
Centrist Union of Moldova	UC	5
European Action	AE	5

Prime Minister, government officials	GUV	4
Ministers	MIN	4
European Party	PEM	4
Civil society – NGOs	SOC	3
Conservative Party	PC	3
Social-Democratic Party of Moldova	PSD	2
Social Justice Party	PDS	2
Union of Labor "Patria-Rodina"	UM	1
"Green Alliance" Ecological Party of Moldova	AV	1
Coordinating Council of the Audiovisual	CCA	1
Mass Media	MED	1

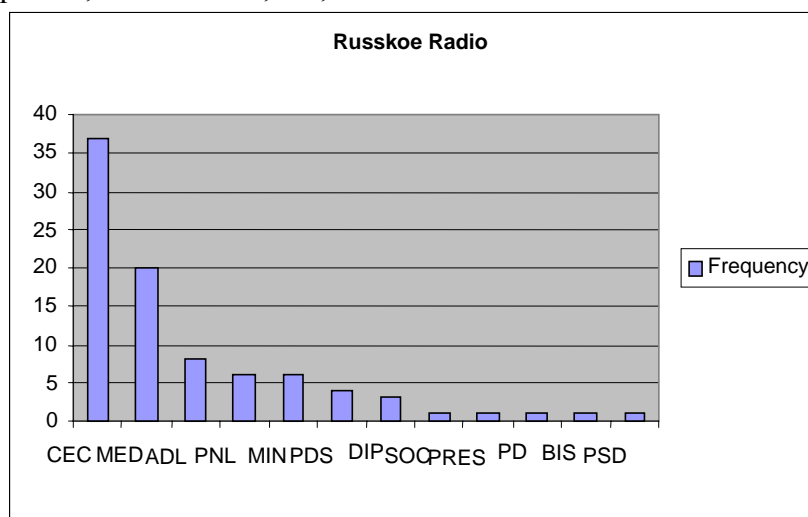
Vocea Basarabiei preferred to take its information from NGOs, CEC, local public administration, CCA as well as from a number of political parties, such as PSL, European Action, PNL, AMN etc.



Source of information	Code	Frequency
Civil society – NGOs	SOC	53
Central and Local Electoral Commissions	CEC	35
Mass Media	MED	25
Social Liberal Party	PSL	10
Diplomats, foreign officials, other external subjects	DIP	10
European Action	AE	6
Local public administration	ADL	6
National Liberal Party	PNL	6
Parliament, Speaker of the Parliament	PARL	5
Coordinating Council of the Audiovisual	CCA	5
Citizens	CET	4
“ ‘Our Moldova’ Alliance” Party	AMN	4
Businesses, businesspersons, employers	BUS	3
Experts (foreign and local)	EXP	3
Social-Democratic Party of Moldova	PSD	3
President, President’s Office	PRES	3
Party of Law and Justice	PLD	2
Culture institutions	CULT	2
Prime Minister, government officials	GUV	2

Social Justice Party	PDS	2
Christian Democratic People's Party	PPCD	1
Justice, Constitutional Court, judges, attorneys	JUD	1
Ministers	MIN	1

Russkoe Radio mainly took its information from CEC, press agencies, LPA and certain political parties, such as PNL, PD, PSD.



Source of information	Code	Frequency
Central and Local Electoral Commission	CEC	37
Mass Media	MED	20
Local public administration	ADL	8
National Liberal Party	PNL	6
Ministers	MIN	6
Social Justice Party	PDS	4
Diplomats, foreign officials, other external subjects	DIP	3
Civil society – NGOs	SOC	1
President, President's Office	PRES	1
Democratic Party of Moldova	PD	1
Church	BIS	1
Social-Democratic Party of Moldova	PSD	1

ⁱ The reports will be translated into English and Russian and will be posted on the web page designed for the general local elections www.alegeri.md/2007, created within Coalition 2007 by ADEPT, as well as on the websites of API (www.api.md) and IJC (www.ijc.md).