ARMENIAN AND NK MEDIA IN NK 2020 ELECTIONS

YEREVAN 2020

Research methodology and analysis of results

Laura Baghdasaryan, Director of Region Research Center

Monitoring team – Sona Kyurkchyan, Angela Chobanyan,

Irina Hovhannisyan, Meri Sargsyan, Tigran Baghdasaryan, Marine Sargsyan

Technical processing of results,

counts, tables and graphs by Shoghik Stepanyan

CONTENTS

About the Study and the Context---------- 4

METHODOLOGICAL GUIDE

Monitored Media Platforms ---------- 6

Principles of Counting ---------- 7

MEDIA MONITORING RESULTS

Frequency and Number of Materials on Elections in RA and NK Media ---------- 8

What About? Topics and Rating Thereof ----------12

The Conflict in Candidates' Programs and during the Campaign ----------18

Who? On What Topics? ---------- 22

Who and How Frequently? About Whom and How Frequently? ---------- 25

Propaganda and Anti-Propaganda ---------- 26

Facebook as a Campaign Tool in NK Elections ---------- 30

CONCLUSIONS ---------- 35

APPENDIX ---------- 38

ABOUT THE STUDY AND THE CONTEXT

Presidential and parliamentary elections were held in Nagorno Karabakh on March 31, 2020. For the **first time** in the history of the NK elections, presidential elections were held in two rounds. Former Prime Minister of NK Arayik Harutyunyan, who entered the second round of the presidential election on April 14, was elected President of Nagorno Karabakh.

Both parliamentary and presidential elections were competitive due to the number of participating political forces and presidential candidates. And this is **the second specificity** of these elections. 14 candidates, most of them well-known figures, ran for presidency. For two of them (former Secretary of the NK Security Council, General Vitaly Balasanyan and NK Foreign Minister Masis Mayilyan), these elections were the second attempt at presidency. In the second round of the elections, Masis Mayilyan ran as Arayik Harutyunyan's opponent.

Most of the political forces participating in the electoral process (10 out of 15 parties) were newly formed parties founded in the last two years. This is the **third specificity** of these elections. Although two of the five political forces elected into the Parliament are from among the newly formed forces, they are led by two well-known high-ranking retired military servicemen in NK and Armenia (S. Babayan with his *United Homeland* Party and V. Balasanyan with his *Justice* Party).

The leaders of 4 out of 5 parties that were elected into the new parliament (A. Harutyunyan's *Free Homeland*, V. Balasanyan's *Justice*, D. Ishkhanyan's *ARF*, A. Ghulyan's the *Democratic Party of Artsakh*) ran for office, too.

Another specificity of the elections in NK was the fact that they were held in the conditions of the coronavirus epidemic, due to which the NK-2020 process can be called "elections in the conditions of a (un)declared state of emergency." This "accompanying" circumstance

had some influence over the process: some presidential candidates proposed to postpone the elections, and a discussion rolled out on the consequences of (dis)continuing the election process, given the circumstances. During the second round, M. Mayilyan called on the citizens not to go to polls on April 14. He did not vote on that day.

Even before the full manifestation of all these specificities, the 2020 elections had already drawn the attention of the Armenian society and media as the first process organized in NK after the Velvet Revolution in Armenia and would thus trigger various discussions and discursive content. This can certainly be mentioned as **another specificity** of these elections, if we take into account the level of attention in Armenia to Karabakh elections in the past.

This study focuses on the very last specificity. Namely,

- **how did that interest change in the course of the NK elections?**
- **what content and messages did the NK and Armenian media publish in the course of the campaign? By and large, "what were these elections about"?**
- **to what extent did the preferences of the Armenian and NK media for certain forces manifest themselves?**
- **what competitive behavior did the campaign participants and figures demonstrate?**

This is Region Research Center's first attempt at an in-depth analysis of the NK media.

METHODOLOGICAL GUIDE

Monitored Media Platforms

We studied a total of 8 online media outlets in Armenia and Karabakh, 16 programs on 6 TV channels from February 15 to April 14 (i.e. since the the deadline for application submission to the NK Central Electoral Commission up to the vote in the second round of presidential elections).

From the second half of the first official campaign (February 26-March 29), when the opponents stopped live contacts with voters one after the other due to the threat of the virus and began campaigning on FB platforms and traditional media only, we initiated the monitoring of presidential candidates' social media campaign, too.

The choice of online media and TV companies **in Armenia** was conditioned by both the ratings and the political preferences/ political affiliations of the media outlets. 5 online media outlets (1in.am, News.am, Armtimes.com, Aravot.am, 168.am) and 14 programs on 5 TV channels were monitored.

These were:

- Public Television of Armenia – the main newscast “News”, as well as "Interview with Petros Ghazaryan", "Public Discussion", and "Rules of the Game" talk shows,
- Yerkir Media TV – the main newscast "Country Today", as well as the "Country’s Question" talk show,
- Kentron TV - the main newscast "Epicenter"[1],

[1] There were no talk shows on Kentron TV in the period of our monitoring.

- ArmNews TV – the main newscast "Evening News with Abraham Gasparyan", and "In front of the Mirror", "Pressing", "Security Factor", "Agenda" talk shows,
- Channel 5 TV - the main newscast "Haylur", and "Interview" talk show.

For the study in **Nagorno Karabakh**, we selected 3 online media outlets: Artsakhpress.am, Aparaj.am, Artsakhtert.am (again based on the political affiliations of the media outlets) and monitored two programs, namely the main newscast “Today” and the “Face to Face” talk show on Artsakh Public TV, the only TV company operating in Nagorno Karabakh.

Prinicples of Counting

- **What did they they speak about and how frequently?** – We have defined the topics covered in the election materials based on the content analysis of monitored media products. We measured the frequency of occurrence of this or that topic after the principle of "**One piece = one or more topics**".
- **Who spoke and how frequently?** – Everyone (the representatives of political, public, professional and other groups, journalists, ordinary citizens) whose opinions on the elections ended up on media platforms were identified as authors of the topic. We measured the level of their activity based on the number of topics they addressed after the principle of “**authors = topics."**
- **Who did they talk about?** This table contains records of original references. Concrete names were recorded whenever concrete names of political forces/alliances and candidates nominated by them were mentioned, and whenever there were general formulations (RA political forces, NK political forces, candidates, RA authorities, NK authorities, etc.), we recorded them as non-specific references. In the "About Whom" table, we recorded only the names of parties/alliances and the presidential candidates running for office, as well as the entities officially responsible for holding the elections.

- **How did they speak**? - we assigned (+, -, 0) connotation markers based on the direct semantic meaning, rather than the implicature of the wording used in the messages. In the course of this study, we recorded connotation markers in reference to political forces, figures, and official circles, after the principle of **"Signs = mentions**."
- In case of TV newscasts, inidividual reports on the topic of elections were considered as one item, and in case of talk shows, the whole episode was counted as one.

MEDIA MONITORING RESULTS

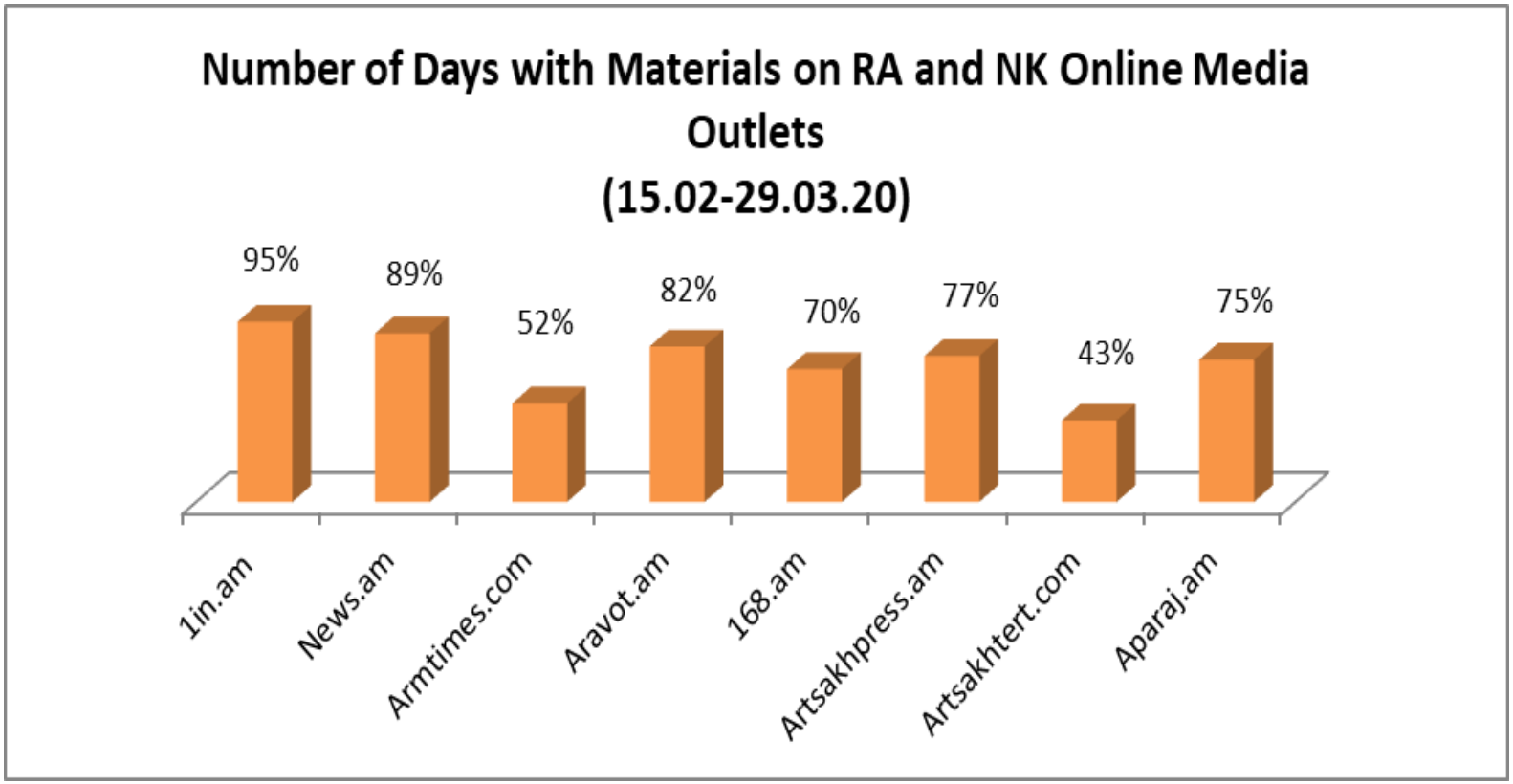
Frequency and Number of Materials on Elections in RA and NK Media

Although the presidential elections were held in two rounds, the whole burden of the campaign lay on and was confined to the first round (February 26-March 29) due to a number of contributing circumstances. On April 1, the day after the first round of the elections, presidential candidate A. Harutyunyan, who had come out into the second round, stated during his press conference that in terms of propaganda, everything had already been shared with the electorate during the first stage of the campaign, and there was nothing to add. However, later, in the course of his campaign he gave several interviews to the Public Television of Armenia, RFE/RL, and other media outlets and alone took part in a television debate on Artsakh Public TV before the second round (April 12). Whereas M. Mayilyan, who joined A. Harutyunyan into the second round, issued a statement on April 5, urging voters not to go to the polls on April 14 because of the growing threat of coronavirus infection. M. Mayilyan, who did not formally withdraw his name from the ballot, but in fact refused to participate in the second round, did not say anything else either on Facebook or any other media outlet. He did not take part in any of the two pre-election TV debates on Artsakh Public TV, since he had used another excuse not to attend the first one on March 29.

However, regardless of the decision on no postponement of the NK elections and no formal obstacle for the NK media for more intensive coverage, the first round of the elections was not actively covered. In case of the Armenian media, the topic of NK elections was overshadowed by the constitutional amendments referendum in the country, followed by the spread of the coronavirus and the declared state of emergency.

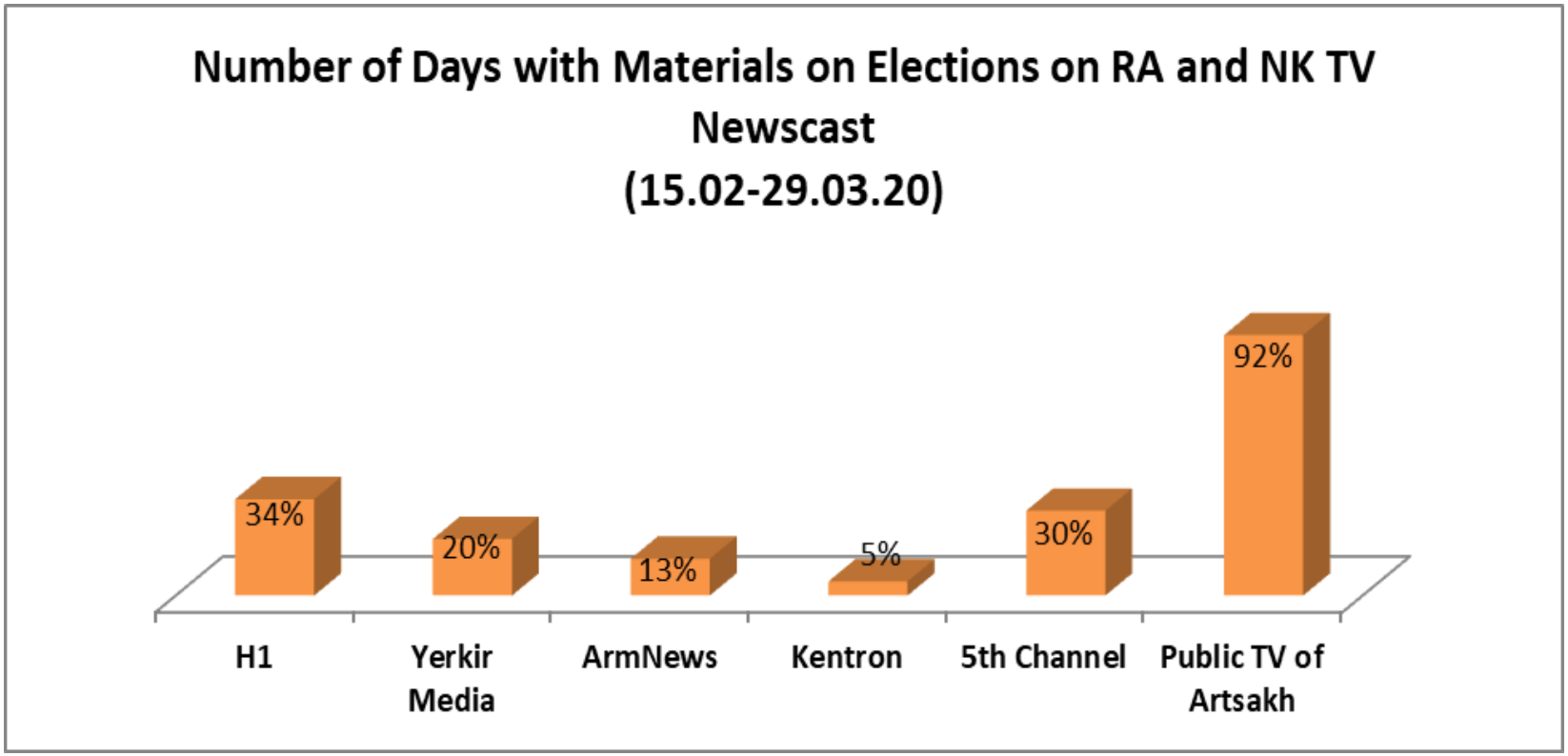
According to our results, Karabakh online media coverage of the elections happened on fewer days than online coverage on Armenian platforms. In Karabakh online media, the daily number of produced materials was smaller than that in similar Armenian media. If the Armenian online media published a daily maximum of 7-15 articles about the elections (news.am – 15, 1in.am – 12, Aravot.am – 9, 168.am – 7), the maximum number of publications in NK online media a day ranged from 5 (Artsakhpress.am, Artshakhtert.com) to 10 (it should be noted that so many articles were published on Aparaj.am only once). Among the Armenian and Karabakh online media, Armtimes.com had the lowest frequency and number of publications on the elections, thus covering the elections on fewer days, and producing a maximum of 3 articles a day.

See the chart below.



In terms of daily TV news, Artsakh Public TV is ahead of the news programs on all 5 Armenian TV channels. Artsakh Public TV started covering the elections on a daily basis only during the official campaign. In terms of daily news, the Public TV of Armenia and Channel 5 came the second and the third. Kentron TV had the fewest days of reporting on the NK elections.

See the chart below.


Number of Days with Materials on Elections on RA and NK TV Newscast
(15.02-29.03.20)
34%
20%
13%
5%
30%
92%
H1
Yerkir Media
ArmNews
Kentron
5th Channel
Public TV of Artsakh

What About? Topics and Rating Thereof

The content analysis of the election materials showed that the first round campaign was quite intense in terms of thematic diversity. We identified 36 different topics, circulating on the Armenian and Karabakh media platforms.[2] They addressed various issues of the internal and external life of Nagorno-Karabakh with varied intensity, different semantic emphases, and despite the generally ethical campaign rhetoric of the opponents, these issues were raised, targeting different addressees.

There are some significant differences among the top ten most addressed topics in the Armenian and NK media. Thus, in addition to the main election topics (electoral process, campaign, election bribes/other violations), the Armenian online media and TV companies were more interested in political issues, such as the relations between Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh, the role of the conflict and its settlement, security (by the way, the latter was addressed not only in the context of the conflict, but also in the contexts of internally societal issues, solidarity and Armenian unity), the importance of holding free and transparent elections and, in general, rights and freedoms in NK, along with domestic political relations and the significance of adversary parties'/candidates' background.

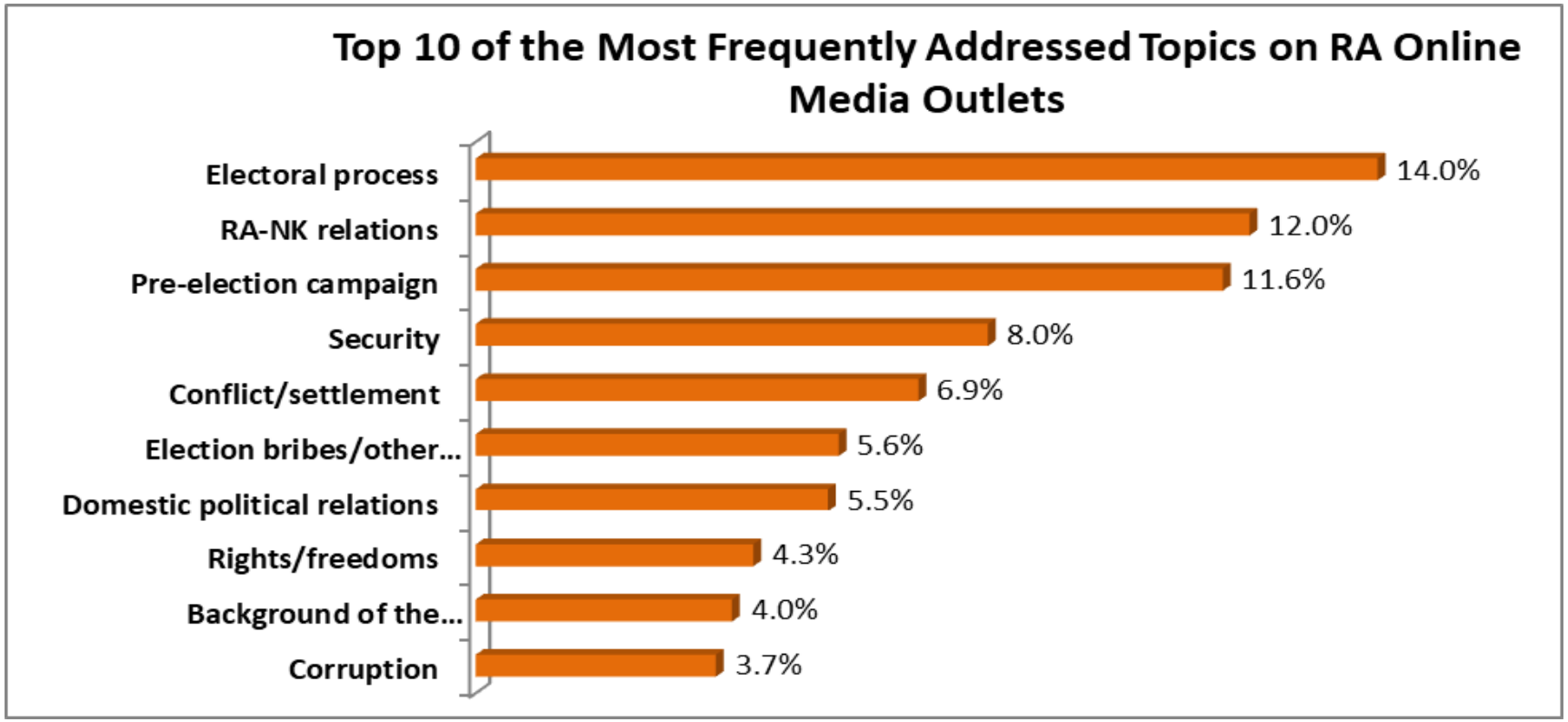
Meanwhile, NK media obviously showed more interest in the topics related to the organization of domestic life. For example, NK online media prioritized social and economic issues over RA-NK relations, the latter, by the way, was not even among top ten issues addressed on Artsakh Public TV. The conflict or its settlement, addressed from the perspective of importance of the public and the acceptable or unacceptable options for its settlement, did not appear among the top ten most frequently covered topics. The materials on Unification, a topic on the top ten, focused on the societal attitude towards the matter in the past and present and the official formulation of the de facto relations with Armenia.

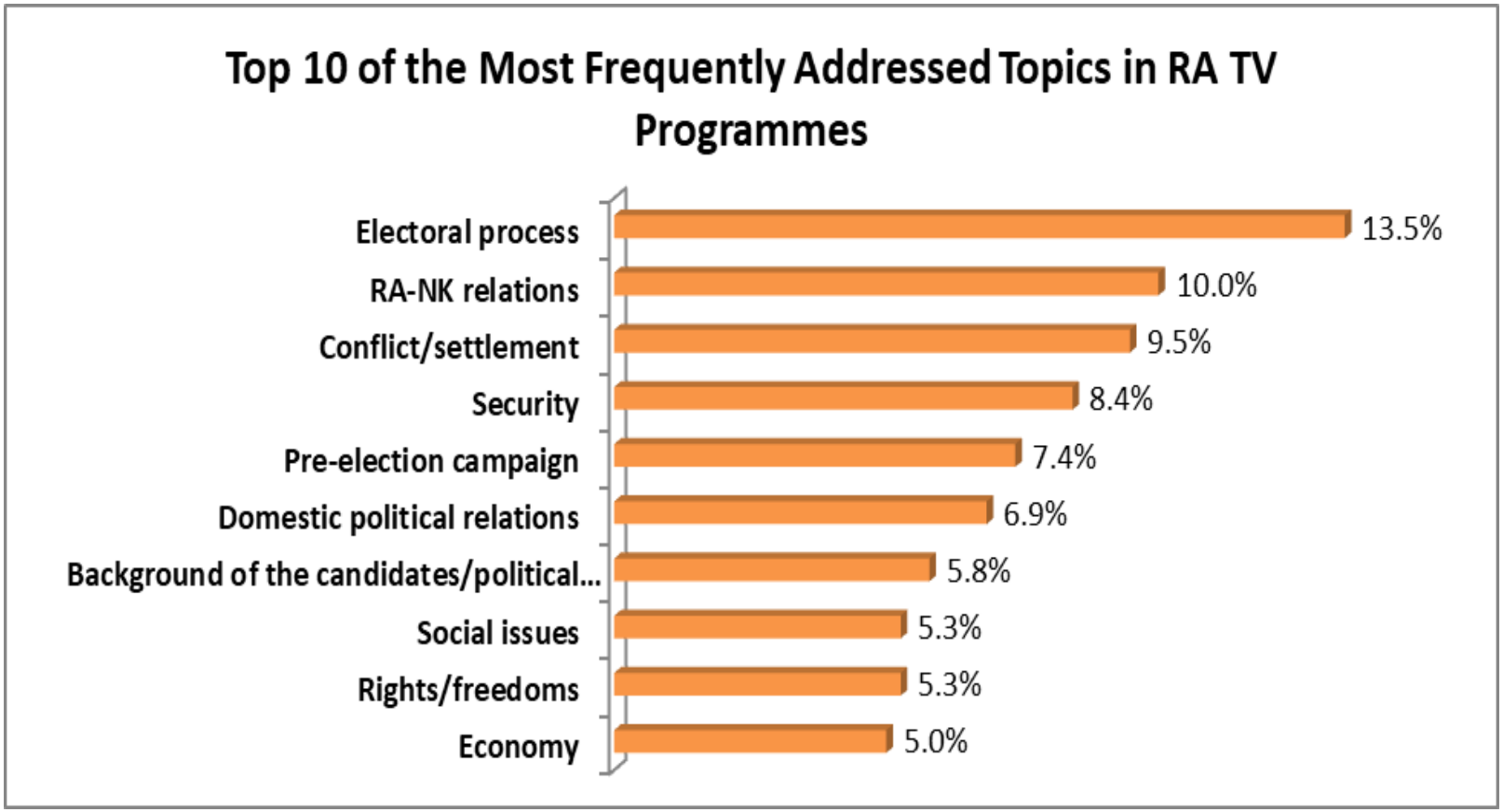
[2] The full list of the topics is available in the Appendix.

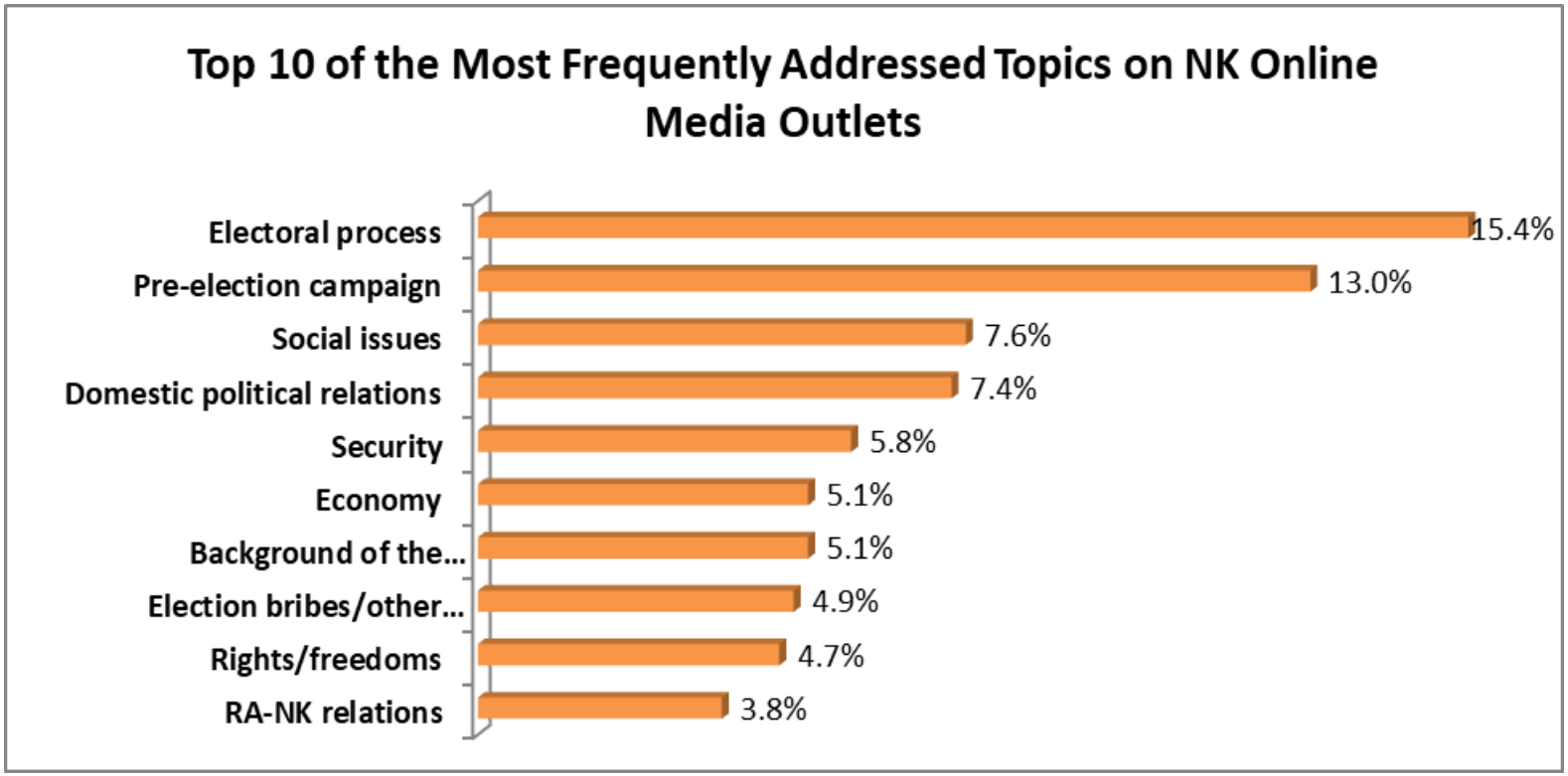
By the way, the topic of RA-NK relations, which was covered with varying intensity in the RA and NK media, mainly consisted of such points as Armenia's interference in the NK elections, the importance of free and transparent elections for Armenia, and the discussions on NK presidential candidates preferred by N. Pashinyan.

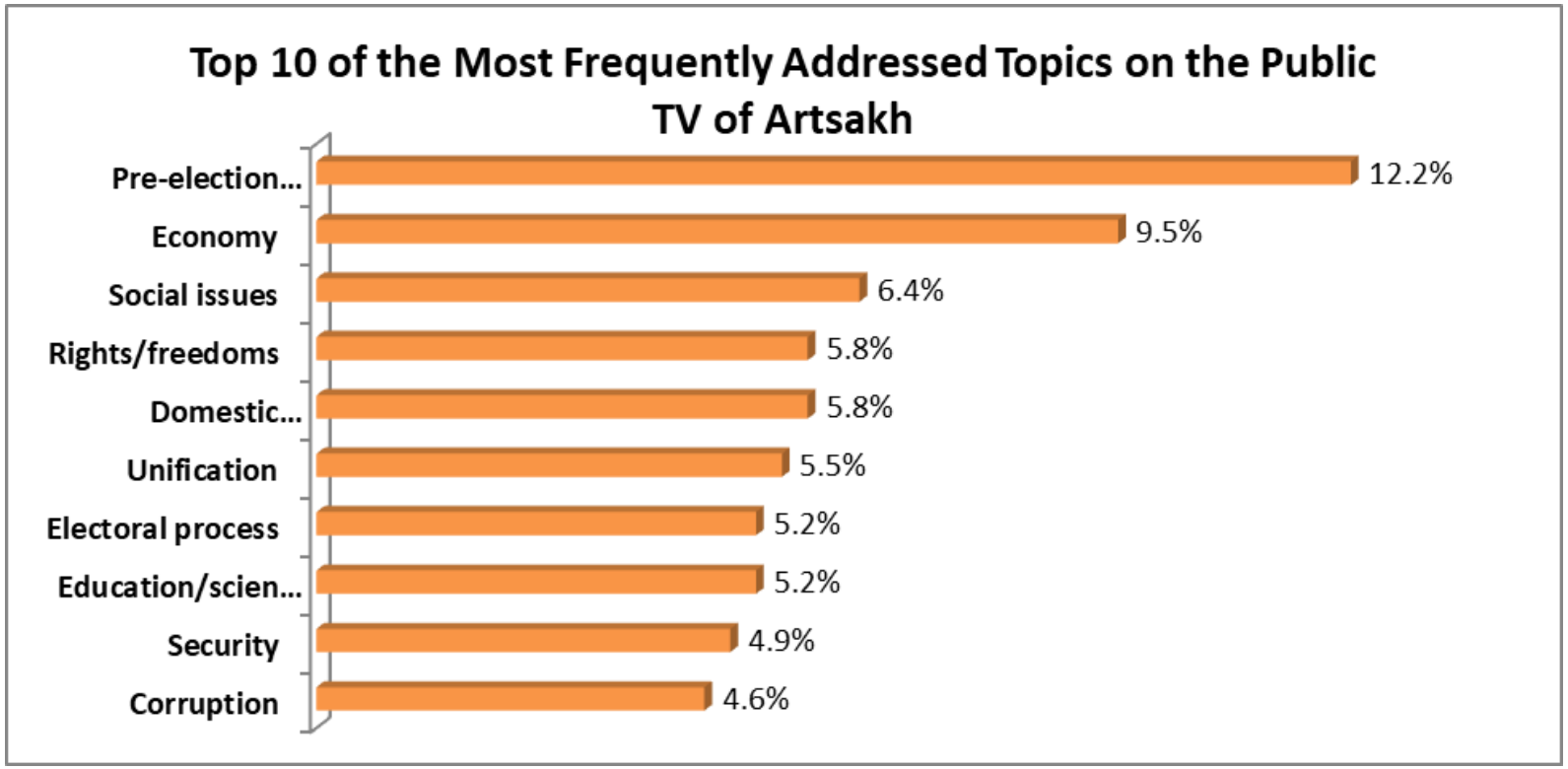
In fact, the variety of issues/problems discussed and shared during the campaign led us to the conclusion that there were no taboo topics, since almost all spheres and issues related to the life in Nagorno Karabakh were discussed. Though with apparently lower frequency, there were even discussions on such "exotic" topics as youth, succession of generations in politics, civic activism in Nagorno Karabakh, women and so on.

It is also worth noting that the need for expressing free will in Nagorno Karabakh was not directly linked with the conflict, there were only very few mentions (once or twice) of Azerbaijan's or international community's attitude towards the elections.
See the chart below.


Top 10 of the Most Frequently Addressed Topics on RA Online Media Outlets
Electoral process
14.0%
RA-NK relations
12.0%
Pre-election campaign
11.6%
Security
8.0%
Conflict/settlement
6.9%
Election bribes/other...
5.6%
Domestic political relations
5.5%
Rights/freedoms
4.3%
Background of the...
4.0%
Corruption
3.7%


Top 10 of the Most Frequently Addressed Topics in RA TV Programmes
Electoral process
13.5%
RA-NK relations
10.0%
Conflict/settlement
9.5%
Security
8.4%
Pre-election campaign
7.4%
Domestic political relations
6.9%
Background of the candidates/political...
5.8%
Social issues
5.3%
Rights/freedoms
5.3%
Economy
5.0%


Top 10 of the Most Frequently Addressed Topics on NK Online Media Outlets
Electoral process
15.4%
Pre-election campaign
13.0%
Social issues
7.6%
Domestic political relations
7.4%
Security
5.8%
Economy
5.1%
Background of the...
5.1%
Election bribes/other...
4.9%
Rights/freedoms
4.7%
RA-NK relations
3.8%


Top 10 of the Most Frequently Addressed Topics on the Public TV of Artsakh
Pre-election...
Economy
Social issues
Rights/freedoms
Domestic...
Unification
Electoral process
Education/scien...
Security
Corruption
12.2%
9.5%
6.4%
5.8%
5.8%
5.5%
5.2%
5.2%
4.9%
4.6%

The Conflict in Candidates' Programs and during the Campaign

On March 29, a debate for presidential candidates[3] was organized on Artsakh Public TV with the participation of 12 out of 14 candidates. Masis Mayilyan and self-nominated Kristin Balayan considered the chosen format ineffective and refused to participate in the debate.

During the nearly 1.5-hour long debate, most of the candidates' questions to one another were about corruption and the use of administrative resources. Opinions on the Karabakh conflict and its settlement were voiced at the request of the journalist, moderating the debate. Despite some nuanced differences, these opinions contained a notable consensus about the territories, status, armaments, combat capabilities, and other key issues.

Consensus could be noticed during the campaign, too. The topic of the conflict did not become a matter of competition among the candidates, moreover, it was never used as a tool for anti-propaganda even though the candidates who participated in the various stages of the conflict, as a rule, cited their personal role, military skills, and behavior during escalation periods. Such statements on the conflict constituted a considerable share within the content, grouped under "Background of the Political Force/Political Figure", and there were fewer references to their relations with corruption deals in the past.

Vitaly Balasanyan: "I want to be honest. I have never left and I will not leave the trench, I have served and will serve my people. I will be in the trenches whenever Artsakh and Armenia are in danger." [4]

[3] The other monitored NK media outlets did not touch upon the first ever debates in NK in any way. The debates were not covered by 168.am and Armtimes.com. Parts or the whole of the video was published on Aravot.am, News.am, 1in.am websites.
[4] "The political power of Armenia pursues an anti-Armenian policy." Vitaly Balasanyan, https://news.am/arm/news/564371.html

Arayik Harutyunyan: Arayik Harutyunyan shares the opinion that the President of Artsakh should have a military past. "When it comes to the military past, I have enough of it and I have an advantage in that regard, too," he said.[5]

Vahan Badasyan. "Most of our team members have backgrounds, dating to the very beginning of the Artsakh movement. We are not random people here." [6]

The only significant difference **among the visions in the candidates' programs on the settlement of the conflict** is reflected in the provisions on achieving the international recognition of Nagorno Karabakh's independence and its immediate unification with Armenia. **Masis Mayilyan**'s election program had a separate section on the Concept of Unification and Independence. It stated that the strategy of independence did not contradict the idea of unification at all. It aimed at the international recognition and acceptance of the right of the people in Karabakh to self-determination, which would later pave the way for unification in order to ensure that such Unification was adequately perceived, too.

The conflict settlement section emphasized that "territories against status, territories against peace" provisions were unacceptable. **Arayik Harutyunyan's program** stated quite briefly that there was a need for activating processes to ensure the international recognition of Artsakh's independence and final peaceful settlement of the conflict, which ought to stem from the rights and security of Artsakh people.

The provisions on the conflict and its settlement contained in the election program proposed by **Vitaly Balasanyan** and his party were also about the need for defining the roles in the cooperation between Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh.

[5]"Probably they feel what the election results will be like." Arayik Harutyunyan about accusations against him, https://news.am/arm/news/566015.html

[6] The authorities in Armenia have left Artsakh people alone against the old regime: Vahan Badasyan, https://www.1in.am/2706581.html

Thus, it emphasized that it was necessary to ensure the following:

- the international recognition of Artsakh Republic, as well as the recognition of Armenia as a subject of the second statehood;
- the signature of an intergovernmental agreement on the formation of a strategic alliance between Armenia and Artsakh Republic,
- a change in the current format of the conflict settlement and Artsakh's participation,
- Artsakh's full and reliable activity within Artsakh-Armenia-Diaspora cooperation,
- in general, a clear identification of responsibilities for the Republic of Armenia and Artsakh Republic in the context of the Karabakh conflict.

There was a provision on the need for a military-political cooperation alliance with Armenia in **David Ishkhanyan's/ARF program,** too. The settlement of the conflict was seen as "a constituting element of the Armenian Cause, the recognition of Artsakh's independence shall be seen as an intermediate milestone on the way to building united Armenia."

The program proposed by **Vahan Badasyan**, the leader of the "United Armenia" party, was about unification "right now and right here." It stated the need for eliminating those circumstances that were related to the course of the Armenia-Nagorno Karabakh relations and had so far hindered this unification. It was necessary to amend the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia and declare Artsakh a part of Armenia with a unique system of government, with all the changes arising from it, and declare Artsakh part of Armenia with its current territories.

The program proposed by Hayk Khanumyan/"National Revival" party stated that although the settlement of the conflict through negotiations was unrealistic, Artsakh's participation in the talks could enhance its role as a full-fledged political agent. The status quo could change only due to war. One of the primary goals of this force would be the "reconstruction of infrastructure in the liberated territories, the development and implementation of a large-scale resettlement strategy. Artsakh can be part of the Republic of Armenia

only. Any idea that implies Artsakh's affiliation or mandated subordination to another country or international organization is unacceptable."

In fact, the presidential candidates had to share their visions on the settlement of the conflict even before their official registration and the launch of the official campaign due to two events. The first one was the appeal by the RA Prime Minister to the figures running for the NK President's office to express their views on the negotiations held by the former RA authorities (on January 25), and the second occasion was the debate held between N. Pashinyan and I. Aliyev at the Munich Security Forum (on February 15).[7]
By the way, the speeches of the presidential candidates in the first part of the campaign were about the Munich debate. See some quotes below:

Ashot Ghulyan: "As for me, the meeting in Munich made me perceive thesis of being very far from the solution of the problem even more clearly. I think whatever the Prime Minister said was very global, because in the realpolitik it is difficult to imagine that we may arrive at a solution, equally acceptable for Artsakh, Armenia and Azerbaijan."[8]

Arayik Harutyunyan: "The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia put forward an important idea that there can be no solution without the consent of the people of Artsakh." [9]

Vitaly Balasanyan: "As a candidate for the presidency of Artsakh Republic, I must respond to this. The President of Azerbaijan once again voiced the stage-by-stage option for Artsakh Republic conflict settlement, that is, an option that is unacceptable for Artsakh Republic."[10]

---

[7] See our article *Artsakh 2020 Campaign in Action: Overview* for more detail: https://www.aravot.am/2020/03/16/1100241/?fbclid=IwAR0keSqfe4RarIL-Wvub7yHC3ZE_jvj_eXfZRAyFwDI1pFyQxAILRXQoKZI
[8] The Armenian authorities' approach not to interfere in Artsakh elections is the best choice, https://www.1in.am/2706079.html
[9] The struggle in Artsakh will be based on programs, rather than denials, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xj93T0JMPLg

Masis Mayilyan: "I spoke about the Madrid Principles back then and I have explained all the dangers thereof. At that time, I did not hold a state office. When appointed as Foreign Minister, I have been consistent and pursued the same line. As a result of this velvet revolution, the new authorities have adopted the important policy we have been pursuing, namely to ensure Artsakh returns to the table of negotiations. As Pashinyan stated, it is important that there is no negotiation document."[11]

Judging by the content of the messages delivered during the campaign, we can unequivocally state that these elections were not about the settlement of the conflict and especially not about any concessions, but rather the reinforcement of the current positions and the maintenance of NK status quo.

And if we take into account the intensity of conflict coverage in comparison with other topics, we can definitely say that these elections were not about the conflict, but rather RA-NK relations and the improvement of life in Nagorno Karabakh.

Who and on What Topics?

The differences in the ratings of topics covered in the Armenian and NK media could be detected when considered per individual presidential candidate.

Most of them (14 to 8 candidates) spoke about a larger number of topics in the Armenian than NK media. This was the case with Vitaly Balasanyan, Arayik Harutyunyan, Masis Mayilyan, Ashot Ghulyan, Hayk Khanumyan,[12] Vahan Badasyan,[13] and Bella Lalayan. By the

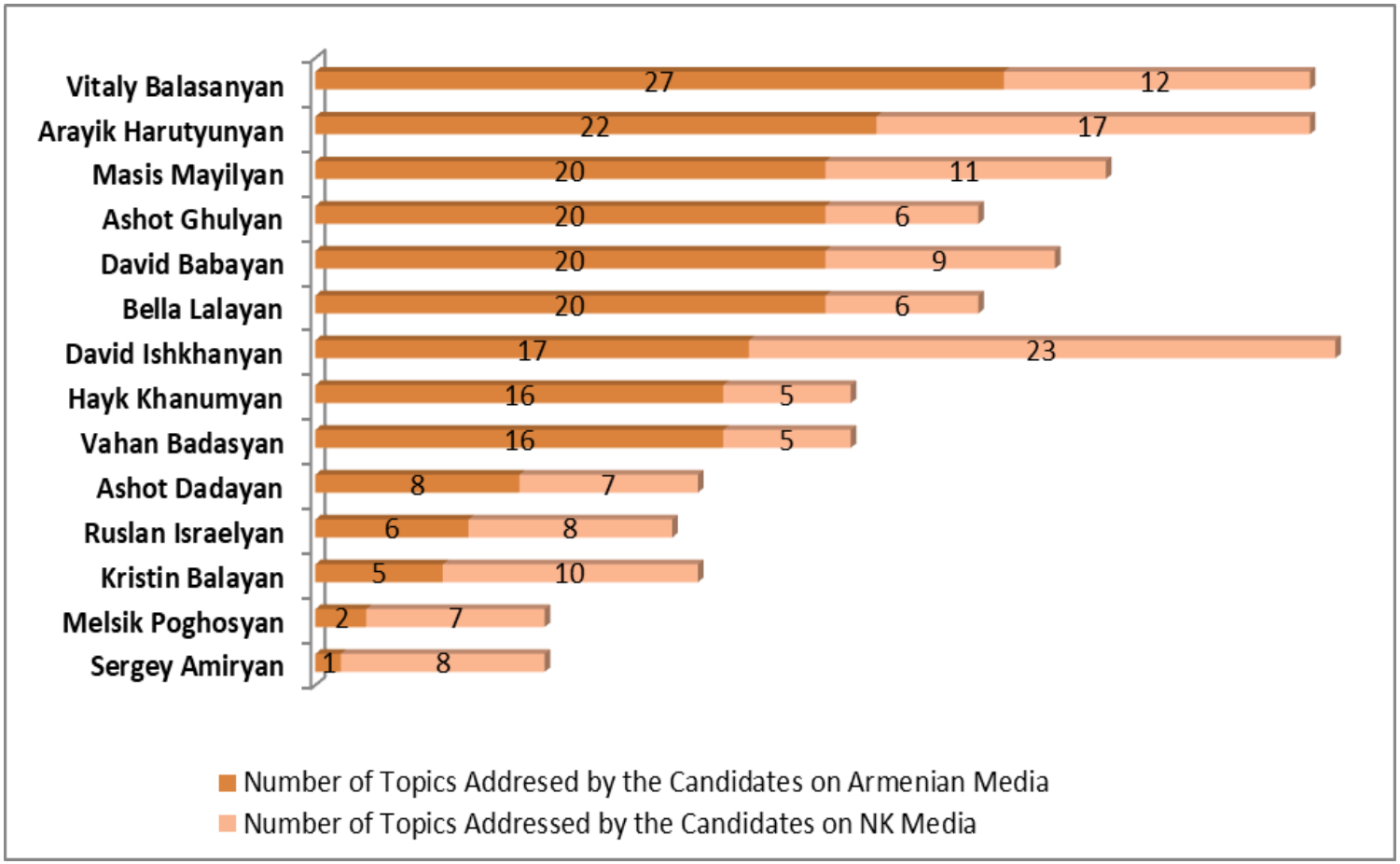
[10] The Republic of Artsakh is an independent, democratic, sovereign state, it has never been and will never be part of Azerbaijan: any other approach is perceived as a threat of war, https://168.am/2020/02/16/1257340.html

[11] Either the Armenian, or the NK authorities are cheating. A question posed to Masis Mayilyan in Artsakh https://www.1in.am/2709903.html

[12] Hayk Khaumyan participated in the elections with his "Natioal Reviaval" party.

way, the latter is the only one among self-nominated presidential candidates, who was given as much space and time in the Armenian media (online media and TV stations) as other prominent figures with notable political careers; moreover, she also spoke on a large diversity of topics, addressing as many topics as Masis Mayilyan, Ashot Ghulyan, and Davit Babayan.[14]

See the chart below.



[13] Vahan Badasyan participated in the elections with his "United Armenia" party.
[14] David Babayan participated in the elections with his "Artsakh's Conservative Party".

In the Armenian media, **Arayik Harutyunyan,** one of the first three candidates to win the first round of the elections, spoke most frequently on the course and nature of the campaign, followed by such topics as the economy, the significance of the conflict and its settlement, RA-NK relations and social issues. Whereas in the NK media, he mostly spoke about domestic issues, such as the NK economic, social and healthcare reforms, as well as his past and background.

As for **Masis Mayilyan**'s speeches and statements, the Armenian media were most interested in his evaluations of the election campaign, followed by issues related to the conflict, his vision of internal political relations within Nagorno Karabakh, the relations between RA-NK, issues of cooperation with political forces and figures supporting him during the elections, his announcements on the cessation and postponement of the elections. Whereas the NK media focused on Mayilyan's thoughts on the fight against corruption, misinformation about him in the Armenian media, the course of the campaign, the economy and the legal system in Nagorno Karabakh.

There were partial differences in the Armenian and NK media coverages of the 5 topics most frequently addressed by **Vitaly Balasanyan**. In the Armenian media, he most frequently spoke about security and conflict, the RA-NK relations, his past and electoral violations. Whereas the NK media were primarily interested in Balasanyan's statements on the conflict/its settlement, internal political relations in Nagorno Karabakh, RA-NK relations and Unification, as well as the electoral process, including his proposal to consider the threats of the epidemic situation and postpone the elections halfway through the campaign.
For the topics addressed most frequently by other candidates, see Appendix, Table 1, Table 2.

Who and How Frequently? About Whom and How Frequently?

The list of candidates who spoke on the topic of elections in the Armenian and Karabakh media looks largely different. Thus, presidential candidates' statements on this topic were covered by the Armenian online media and TV programs at the following frequency, in decending order: Vitaly Balasanyan - 286, Arayik Harutyunyan - 232, Vahan Badasyan - 121, Masis Mayilyan – 103 and Hayk Khanumyan - 89.

Meanwhile, on the NK media, Davit Ishkhanyan, the presidential candidate nominated by the ARF Dashnaktsutyun, came the first (addressing the issue 119 times, mainly due to his appearances on Aparaj.am media outlet that belongs to ARF), Arayik Harutyunyan (45 times) with a three times smaller indicator came the second, followed by Vitaly Balasanyan (20 times), Vahan Badasyan (15 times) and Masis Mayilyan (14 times).

The indicators of the incumbent Armenian and NK authorities on the topic of elections in both Armenian and NK media occupied more modest positions in terms of rating. Thus, the Armenian media quoted the words of the RA Prime Minister most, followed by the incumbent President of Nagorno Karabakh, and only then the representatives of different branches of the RA government. In the NK media, the incumbent President of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic spoke most, followed by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and the other representatives of the Armenian government.

In contrast to the Armenian media, where the opinions of NK citizens (about this or that candidate, and the general significance of the elections, their expectations and problems - 96 stories) were considerably notable, the NK media contained almost no such stories (we recorded only 1 case).

See Appendix, Table 3, Table 4

Different candidates drew the attention of different online media outlets in Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. Thus, Arayik Harutyunyan was talked about most on 1in.am, Artsakhpress.am, News.am websites. Vitaly Balasanyan was in the Armenian media spotlight than in the NK media spotlight. His name was most frequently mentioned on 168.am, 1in.am, News.am websites. Masis Mayilyan was talked about most on 1in.am, News.am and 168.am websites. David Ishkhanyan was the only candidate whose name was mentioned more than the names of others in NK online platforms due to the above-mentioned circumstance.

See Appendix, Table 5, Table 6.

Propaganda and Anti-Propaganda

The campaign was run by the presidential candidates themselves who mostly spoke about their own positions, and used concrete mentions and the names of their opponents mostly with neutral connotation. This was a commonality between the Armenian and Karabakh media.

When interacting with the electorate and in the interviews wih various media outlets, only some of the candidates spoke about their advantages over their opponents using anti-propaganda, questioning their promises in relation to a certain matter, criticizing their activities and behavior in the previous years.

For example, there was no significant difference noted between Vitaly Balasanyan's positive and negative evaluations of others in the Armenian media. His speeches contained proportionally balanced references to propaganda for his own sake and shades of anti-propaganda against others.

Another presidential candidate, Hayk Khanumyan, criticized others using negative connotation markers twice more than the positive connotations to praise himself and his political force. In the Armenian media, the speeches of two other presidential candidates, Vahan Badasyan and Bella Lalayan, were mainly based on anti-propaganda rather than their own propaganda. The number of negative evaluations they gave to others significantly exceeded the number of statements and conclusions with both positive and neutral semantic markers.

The case with presidential candidates Arayik Harutyunyan, Masis Mayilyan, Ashot Ghulyan, Davit Babayan and David Ishkhanyan was just the opposite. Their tactics was based more on propaganda rather than anti-propaganda, and their positive evaluations exceeded the negative ones far more significantly. **See Appendix, Table 3**.

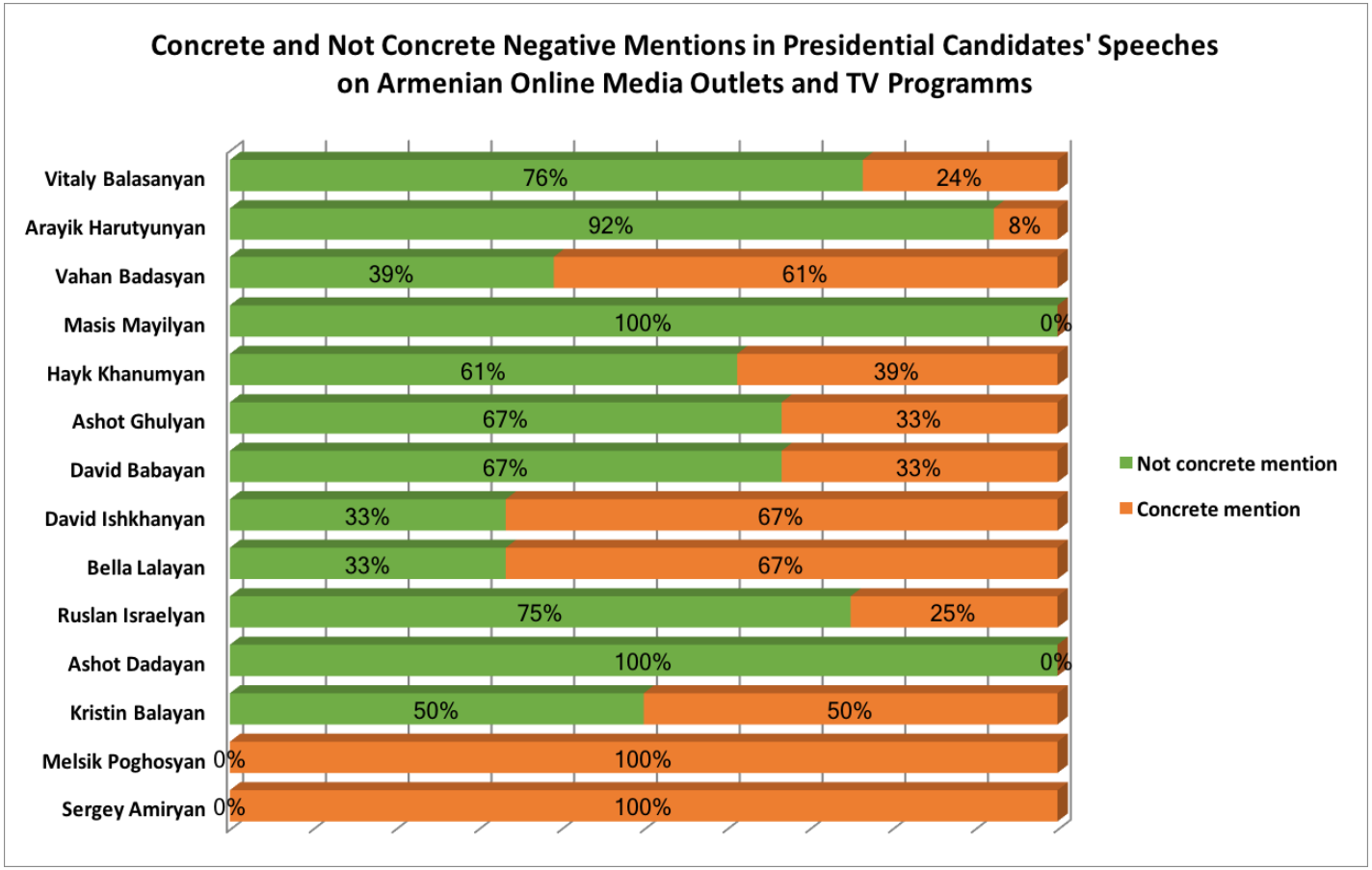
In this respect, the same picture could be seen in NK media. Only one person joined the group of candidates with more negative than positive evaluations about others, namely presidential candidate Ruslan Israelyan.[15] **See Appendix, Table 4**.

It is noteworthy that most of the presidential candidates (9 out of 14) spoke negatively about others, using non-specific, generalized references, namely "Artsakh authorities", "Armenian authorities", "political forces/some forces", "candidates", "media outlets serving some candidates', "they (some) say". The two candidates running the second round, Masis Mayilyan and Arayik Harutyunyan, did the same. There were a lot of negative evaluations and comments about them from various sources, including the representatives of the Armenian and NK NGO sector, individual experts, individual political and public figures, and in concrete Armenian media outlets (News.am, 168.am, ArmNews TV - In front of the mirror, Channel 5 TV - Interview).[16] 92% of Arayik Harutyunyan's negative evaluations

[15] Ruslan Israelyan participated in the elections with the "Independence Generation Party".
[16] See also article *Artsakh 2020 Campaign in Action: Overview*: https://www.aravot.am/2020/03/16/1100241/?fbclid=IwAR0keSqfe4RarIL-Wvub7yHC3ZE_jvj_eXfZRAyFwDI1pFyQxAILRXQoKZI

of others were non-specific, general references. Masis Mayilyan did not mention anyone specific when his statements contained a negative connotation.

The summary of the critical references made by these and other presidential candidates shows that most of the references with negative markers, in fact, did not target any specific addressee. **See the chart below.**



The Armenian media gave obvious preference to the presidential candidates, which was openly demonstrated by means of anti-propaganda in the online media and on television channels affiliated with the former Armenian authorities. The target was mainly Masis Mayilyan with his teammates and supporters who fell prey to a full-scale anti-propaganda campaign, portraying him as an undesirable candidate for Russia and claiming that he was supported by Soros-financed forces in Armenia. Despite immediate refutation, these anti-propaganda narratives continued not only until the end of the first round, but also after M. Mayilyan announced his decision not to run in the second round.[17] In contrast, anti-propaganda against Arayik Harutyunyan referred to him personally (as the former Prime Minister of Nagorno Karabakh, as a businessman, the participant in the Karabakh war, and addressed his role and actions during the April 2016 war).

In the Armenian media the propaganda-driven or anti-propaganda-driven positions in relation to the NK presidential candidates were especially noticeable in the speech of public and political figures, invited to talk shows on various Armenian TV channels. For example, the guests invited by TV companies that are oppositional to the Armenian authorities made anti-propaganda remarks about Masis Mayilyan and spoke positively in favor of Vitaly Balasanyan.

The Armenian online media also resorted to publishing content from the FB pages of their favourite candidates or publishing the FB posts of various Armenian figures, analysts and other experts who followed their campaign line. See more about this below.
See Appendix, the list of interviewees invited to talk shows on the elections on RA TV channels.

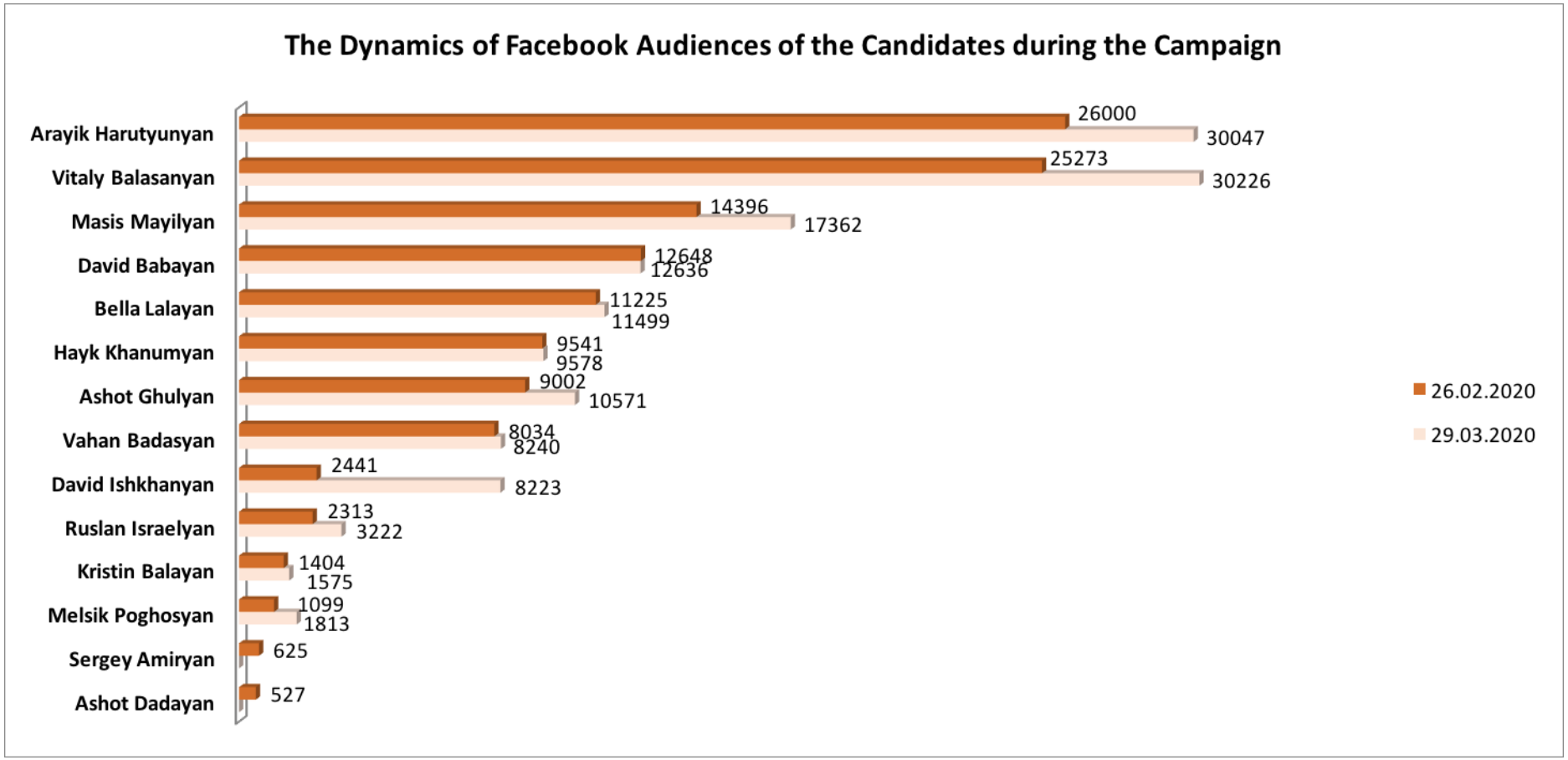
[17] Vitaly Balasanyan is the only guarantor of Artsakh's security, ArmNews TV, "In front of the mirror" program, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTZdCVhQa9Y&list=PLq1nxWzeILqHOSyyq5tY7COOgKK8Go5ul&index=7, Masis Mayilyan has never been in charge of the votes he had, Channel 5 TV, "Interview" program, https://www.5tv.am/programs/%D5%B0%D5%A1%D6%80%D6%81%D5%A1%D5%A6%D6%80%D5%B8%D6%82%D5%B5%D6%81.html?episode=2219, Masis Mayilyan is sported by those who are funded by Soros, Channel 5 TV, “Interview” program https://www.5tv.am/programs/%D5%B0%D5%A1%D6%80%D6%81%D5%A1%D5%A6%D6%80%D5%B8%D6%82%D5%B5%D6%81.html?episode=2217

Facebook as a Campaign Tool in the NK Elections

The moment indoor and outdoor meetings with the electorate were suspended to prevent the spread of the virus in NK, Facebook became the only tool for the candidates to campaign. From the point of view of attracting audiences, we can hardly consider this a severe limitation of opportunities, if we take into account that about 60% of NKR citizens enjoying suffrage were already Facebook users by then.[18] To this, we can add those groups out of 1,300,000 users in Armenia who were interested in the NK elections. If we consider the audiences of 14 presidential candidates, they were different in size at the time of the official kickoff of the first round. But during the campaign, the audiences of several candidates expanded significantly.

See the chart below.

[18] During the elections, the number of users in Karabakh was 65,000, of which about 60000 are aged 18 and over. 103,506 citizens had the right to vote in Nagorno Karabakh.



The Facebook audiences of candidates who chose to interact with users via live sessions on the social media and answer their questions on various matters, expanded significantly, though we cannot claim a direct causal relation here. The other candidates confined themselves to unilateral messages, spoke about their own program provisions, the currently common opinions, and specific events.

Masis Mayilyan organized his first Facebook live[19] to answer users' questions even before the state of emergeny was announced in Armenia and the discourse on postponing the elections in Karabakh was shaped. Later, Arayik Harutyunyan, [20] Vitaly Balasanyan[21], and David Ishkhanyan[22] had a series of such live interactions, too.

During the second round, Arayik Harutyunyan was ahead of Masis Mayilyan in terms of the growth rate of his Facebook audience, and as of April 13 (on the eve of the second round of the elections), Harutyunyan's Facebook audience was 1.7 times larger than Masis Mailyan's audience (Arayik Harutyunyan's audience amounted to a total of 32,648 users who liked and followed his page, and Masis Mailyan's audience amounted to 18,641 users who liked and followed his page).

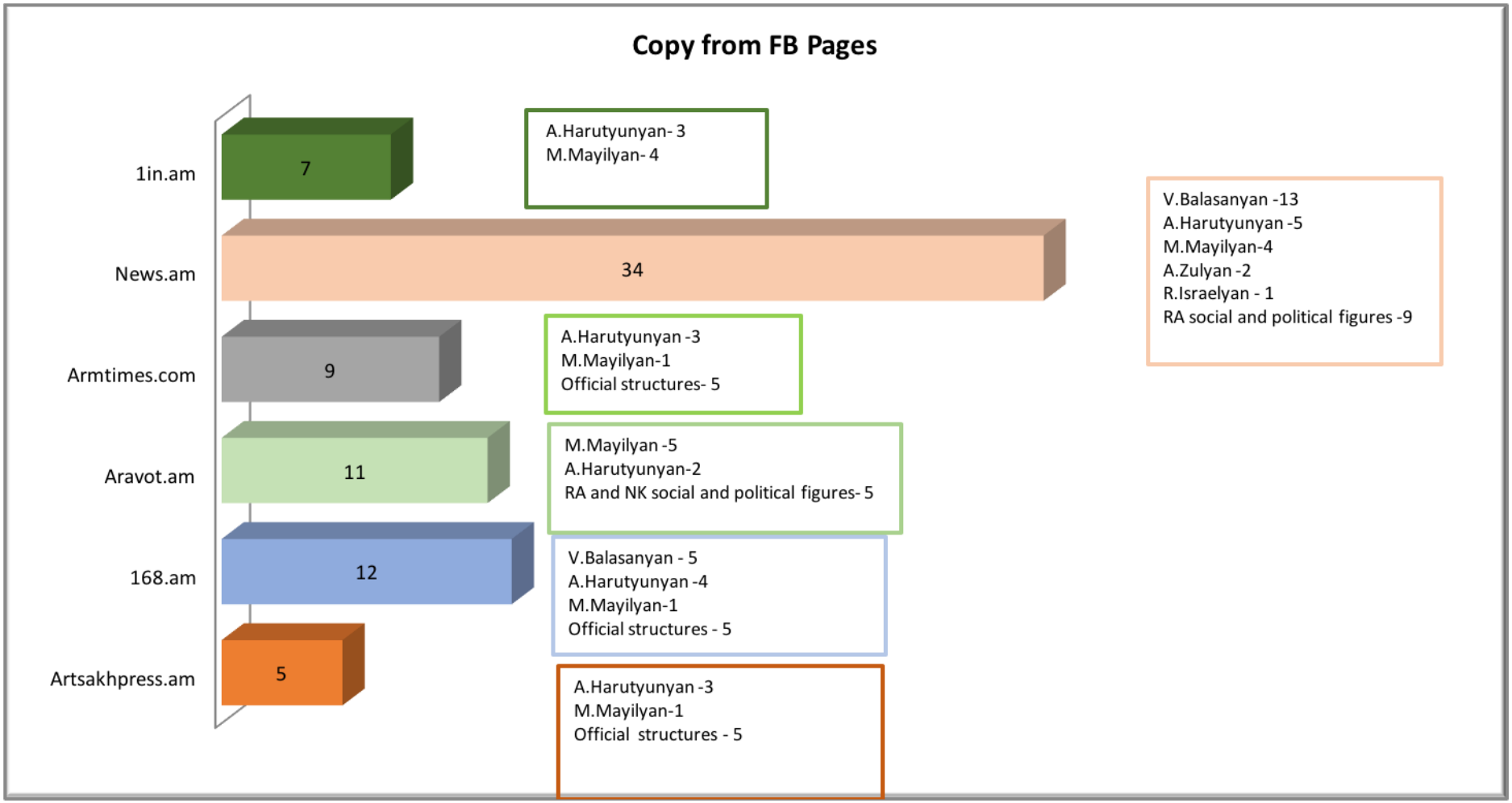
Already in the second half of the first round of the campaign, along with its final relocation onto Facebook, a pool of exclusive materials was generated on the pages of presidential candidates and their most active teammates, which, however, was rarely made use of by the Armenian media. There were even fewer republications/shares of Facebook content in the NK media. There were few shares of materials from the Facebook pages of even those candidates who enjoyed obvious political preference (Artshakhpress.am, Aparaj.am).

From among Armenian media outlets, News.am published materials from Facebook pages most frequently: by the way, the majority of these materials came from Vitaly Balasanyan's page. This media outlet also published the Facebook posts of a number of Armenian public and political figures with an oppositional stance against incumbent Armenian authorities and their policy towards Karabakh. We could see the same in 168.am. Among the few Facebook post publications in Armtimes.com were Arayik Harutyunyan's and Masis

[19] https://www.facebook.com/MasisMayilian/videos/655847201841986/, https://www.facebook.com/MasisMayilian/videos/512344269482981/
[20] https://www.facebook.com/ArayikHarutyunian/videos/207738833814155/?epa=SEARCH_BOX
https://www.facebook.com/ArayikHarutyunian/videos/2506701769433854/?epa=SEARCH_BOX
[21] https://www.facebook.com/BalasanyanVitali/videos/3379226708772050/,
https://www.facebook.com/BalasanyanVitali/videos/2487744554874081/,
[22] https://www.facebook.com/DavitIshkhanyann/videos/211411326791027/, https://www.facebook.com/DavitIshkhanyann/videos/208654997123354/

Mayilyan's posts about their positions on the postponement of the elections. Artsakhpress.am was the only NK online outlet that published the candidates' Facebook materials to its page. When monitoring this platform, we recorded two publications of Arayik Harutyunyan's posts and a repost of David Babayan's Facebook status.

It should also be noted that there have been no Facebook live shares by either Armenian or Karabakh online platforms.
Perhaps it was due to the given circumstances, but Facebook became an active campaign platform in the 2020 elections. We can also state that it will be more widely used in NK political processes in the future, too.
See the chart below


Copy from FB Pages
1in.am
7
A.Harutyunyan- 3
M.Mayilyan- 4
News.am
34
V.Balasanyan -13
A.Harutyunyan -5
M.Mayilyan-4
A.Zulyan -2
R.Israelyan - 1
RA social and political figures -9
Armtimes.com
9
A.Harutyunyan -3
M.Mayilyan-1
Official structures- 5
Aravot.am
11
M.Mayilyan -5
A.Harutyunyan-2
RA and NK social and political figures- 5
168.am
12
V.Balasanyan - 5
A.Harutyunyan -4
M.Mayilyan-1
Official structures - 5
Artsakhpress.am
5
A.Harutyunyan -3
M.Mayilyan-1
Official structures - 5

CONCLUSIONS

- Although long before the official launch of the NK 2020 elections there was a strong interest in the process in Armenia, there were circumstances (the campaign for the constitutional referendum in Armenia, the spread of the coronavirus) that prevented active coverage of these elections in the Armenian media. And in general, **NK media covered the elections even less intensively**, although formally there were no other processes overshadowing the topic of elections in Nagorno Karabakh. On the other hand, if we take into account how actively the Armenian media covered the previous elections in Nagorno Karabakh (mainly news pieces with direct references to the process and less frequent appearance of candidates' statements on media platforms), we can state that **the coverage of these elections was more active in the Armenian media than ever before.**

- **Competing forces and presidential candidates were given more time and space in the Armenian than Karabakh media.** NK online platforms manifested passive behavior, did not take advantage of the opportunity to publish/share the exclusive content available on other platforms (even the interviews of their favorite candidates published in the Armenian media or their live broadcasts and speeches on social media). In general, republication and sharing of media products is not a typical practice for NK media.

- Different approaches to the prioritisation of topics revealed during the elections indicate that **the Armenian media was more interested in political issues:** the conflict, RA-NK relations, rights and freedoms in NK, free, transparent elections, etc. **Whereas NK media paid more attention to domestic life:** social issues, economy, corruption, rights/freedoms, etc. The topic of RA-NK relations was covered more in the Armenian media than in the NK media. Mostly, this topic included such issues as Armenia's interference in the NK elections, the importance of holding free and transparent elections for Armenia, and whether or not a certain candidate was preferable for Prime Minister N. Pashinyan.

- Judging by the content of statements on the conflict during the campaign, we can unequivocally state that **these elections were not about the settlement of the conflict and concessions,** but rather about reinforcing the security and maintaining the current status of Nagorno Karabakh. And if we take into account how frequently the conflict was mentioned against other topics, we can definitely say that these elections were not about the conflict, but RA-NK relations and improving life in Nagorno Karabakh.

- **Various Armenian and Karabakh media outlets clearly demonstrated their preference of some presidential candidates over others by means of propaganda.** This was demonstrated by covering the campaigns of favorite candidates more intensively, allocating more space and airtime to them, or depriving undesirable candidates of space and time, and carrying out anti-propaganda actions against them. In contrast to NK online platforms, where, for example, the ARF-affiliated aparaj.am covered exclusively the campaign of the ARF presidential candidate and the party, Armenian online platforms and TV channels resorted to both propaganda and anti-propaganda. Presidential candidate Masis Mayilyan was the main target of anti-propaganda in media outlets supporting the former Armenian authorities. The misinformation about him in the Armenian media and frequently harsh anti-propaganda formulations continued even after the vote in the first round, when in fact he had already refused to participate in the elections. It should be noted that anti-propaganda was conducted by analysts, NGO sector representatives and politicians who supported the former RA authorites and were invited to speak on the topic of elections on Armenian TV channels (Channel 5, ArmNews).

- **Presidential candidates themselves led mostly ethical campaigns.** For example, when criticizing their opponents they prevalently used non-specific references, such as "some candidates", "some people" and so on. This holds true for even those cases when the candidates responded to media anti-propaganda against them.

- **Facebook became an active campaign tool** during these elections as a result of restriction and later complete exclusion of live contacts. For the first time ever in the course of NK elections, a number of candidates began to organize a series of Facebook lives, answering users' questions. We think that in the near future Facebook will have a wider application in the domestic political life of Nagorno Karabakh, which will become more active after these elections.

- Ordinary voters' voices were also heard on Armenian online platforms due to the fact that a number of Armenian media outlets covering the Nagorno Karabakh elections were posting videos of candidates' meetings with the electorate and the opinions expressed by the citizens during these meetings. **The NK voters could be heard on the Armenian online media more than on NK media.** Apart from Artsakh Public TV, no other monitored NK media used videos to cover the topic of the elections.

APPENDIX

Topics Addressed in the Materials on the Elections on RA and NK Media

1. Electoral process
2. Pre-election campaign
3. Disinformation
4. Hate speech
5. Election bribes/other violations
6. RA-NK relations
7. NK independence
8. Unification
9. Conflict/settlement
10. Security
11. Foreign policy
12. Corruption
13. Economy
14. Social issues
15. Women issues
16. Youth issues
17. Background of the candidate/political force
18. New figure
19. Legal system
20. Rights/freedoms
21. Domestic political relations
22. Army
23. NK other force structures
24. Civil society
25. Legitimacy of the elections
26. Azerbaijani's reaction to the NK elections
27. International attitude to the NK elections
28. Ecology
29. Tourism
30. Diaspora
31. Culture
32. Education/science
33. Healthcare
34. Migration
35. Repatriation
36. Church

Table 1. Top 5 Topics Candidates Spoke about on Armenian Online Media Outlets and TV Programmes

Candidate	Top 5 topics raised by the candidates	Total
Vitaly Balasanyan spoke on 27 topics	Security	42
	Conflict/settlement	40
	RA-NK relations	38
	Background of the candidate/political force	21
	Election bribes/other violations	19
Arayik Harutyunyan Spoke on 22 topics	Pre-election campaign	34
	Economy	26
	Conflict/settlement	20
	RA-NK relations	19
	Social issues	16
Masis Mayilyan Spoke on 20 topics	Pre-election campaign	15
	Conflict/settlement	12
	Domestic political relations	11
	RA-NK relations	11
	Electoral process	9
Ashot Ghulyan Spoke on 20 topics	Electoral process	12
	Pre-election campaign	11
	RA-NK relations	11
	Domestic political relations	10
	Conflict/settlement	10

David Babayan Spoke on 20 topics	Domestic political relations	12
	Conflict/settlement	12
	Electoral process	10
	RA-NK relations	9
	Pre-election campaign	7
Bella Lalayan Spoke on 20 topics	Conflict/settlement	5
	Domestic political relations	5
	Background of the candidate/political force	3
	Domestic political relations	3
	Pre-election campaign	2
David Ishkhanyan Spoke on 17 topics	Conflict/settlement	6
	Pre-election campaign	5
	Electoral process	4
	Domestic political relations	4
	RA-NK relations	4
Hayk Khanumyan Spoke on 16 topics	Electoral process	16
	Domestic political relations	16
	Corruption	16
	Conflict/settlement	10
	RA-NK relations	6
	Election bribes/other violations	5
Vahan Badasyan Spoke on 16 topics	Domestic political relations	29
	Corruption	23
	RA-NK relations	11
	Election bribes/other violations	9
Ashot Dadayan Spoke on 8 topics	Unification	9
	Pre-election campaign	2

	Economy	2
	Electoral process	1
	Election bribes/other violations	1
Ruslan Israelyan Spoke on 6 topics	Background of the candidate/political force	1
	Electoral process	12
	Social issues	2
	Pre-election campaign	1
	Domestic political relations	1
Kristin Balayan Spoke on 5 topics	Security	1
	Electoral process	5
	Election bribes/other violations	1
	New figure	1
	Rights/freedoms	1
Melsik Poghosyan Spoke on 2 topics	Pre-election campaign	2
	Electoral process	1
Sergey Amiryan Spoke on 1 topi	Corruption	3

Table 2. Top 5 Topics Candidates Spoke about on NK Online Media Outlets and TV Programmes

Candidates	Rating of topics	Total
David Ishkhanyan Spoke on 23 topics	Domestic political relations	17
	Pre-election campaign	12
	Electoral process	11
	Social issues	9
	Security	9
Arayik Harutyunyan Spoke on 17 topics	Pre-election campaign	9
	Economy	7
	Social issues	6
	Healthcare	4
	Background of the candidate/political force	3
Vitaly Balasanyan Spoke on 12 topics	Conflict/settlement	3
	Domestic political relations	3
	RA-NK relations	3
	Unification	2
	Electoral process	2
Masis Mayilyan Spoke on 11 topics	Corruption	3
	Disinformation	2
	Pre-election campaign	1
	Economy	1
	Legal system	1
Kristin Balayan Spoke on 10	Pre-election campaign	2
	Social issues	2
	Unification	2
	Education/science	2
	Legal system	1

David Babayan Spoke on 9 topics	Foreign policy	2
	Conflict/settlement	2
	Election bribes/other violations	1
	Economy	1
	Lagal system	1
Sergey Amiryan Spoke on 8 topics	Pre-election campaign	2
	Domestic political relations	2
	Background of the candidate/political force	1
	New figure	1
	Legal system	1
Ruslan Israelyan Spoke on 8 topics	Rights/freedoms	3
	Pre-election campaign	2
	Election bribes/other violations	2
	Economy	1
	Army	1
Melsik Poghosyan Spoke on 7 topics	Economy	2
	Pre-election campaign	1
	Social issues	1
	Youth issues	1
	Rights/freedoms	1
Ashot Dadayan Spoke on 7 topics	Rights/freedoms	2
	Security	2
	Economy	1
	New figure	1
	Background of the candidate/political force	1
Bella Lalayan Spoke on 6 topics	Corruption	2
	Pre-election campaign	1
	Economy	1
	Army	1
	NK independence	1

Ashot Ghulyan Spoke on 6 topics	Economy	3
	Social issues	2
	Youth issues	2
	Legal system	1
	Security	1
Vahan Badasyan Spoke on 5 topics	Unification	3
	Social issues	2
	Economy	1
	Security	1
	Ecology	1
Hayk Khanumyan Spoke on 5 topics	Economy	3
	Domestic political relations	2
	Pre-election campaign	1
	Migration	1
	Corruption	1

Table 3. Who, How Frequently and How Talked on the Elections on Armenian Online Media Outlets and TV Programmes

Who	How				Total
	Without mentioning anyone	+	-	0	
Journalists	38	14	34	213	299
	13%	5%	11%	71%	100%
Vitaly Balasanyan (presidential candidate)	126	43	51	66	286
	44%	15%	18%	23%	100%
Arayik Harutyunyan (presidential candidate)	67	51	13	101	232
	29%	22%	6%	44%	100%
NGOs/individual specialists, social and political figures	52	24	48	98	222
	23%	11%	22%	44%	100%
Vahan Badasyan (presidential candidate)	9	12	69	31	121
	7%	10%	57%	26%	100%
Masis Mayilyan (presidential candidate)	29	17	4	53	103
	28%	17%	4%	51%	100%
Hayk Khanumyan (presidential candidate)	10	14	31	34	89
	11%	16%	35%	38%	100%
Ordinary citizens	30	35	23	8	96
	31%	36%	24%	8%	100%
Ashot Ghulyan (presidential candidate)	45	14	3	39	101
	45%	14%	3%	39%	100%
David Babayan (presidential candidate)	31	14	9	32	86
	36%	16%	10%	37%	100%
David Ishkhanyan (presidential candidate)	14	8	3	20	45
	31%	18%	7%	44%	100%
Bella Lalayan (presidential candidate)	8	8	15	7	38
	21%	21%	39%	18%	100%
CEC NK/observers/election commissions	18	1	4	12	35
	51%	3%	11%	34%	100%
Samvel Babayan	6	3	4	11	24
	25%	13%	17%	46%	100%

“New Artsakh” alliance	0	10	1	9	20
	0%	50%	5%	45%	100%
Ruslan Israelyan (presidential candidate)	3	0	4	11	18
	17%	0%	22%	61%	100%
“National Security” party	0	1	10	6	17
	0%	6%	59%	35%	100%
NK force structures	2	0	7	8	17
	12%	0%	41%	47%	100%
RA Prime Minister	28	0	4	7	39
	72%	0%	10%	18%	100%
NK authorities	19	0	1	6	26
	73%	0%	4%	23%	100%
RA authorities	13	1	0	3	17
	76%	6%	0%	18%	100%
RPA	3	5	1	5	14
	21%	36%	7%	36%	100%
Representatives of other countries	6	7	0	1	14
	43%	50%	0%	7%	100%
“Free Homeland” party	3	1	1	5	10
	30%	10%	10%	50%	100%
Ashot Dadayan (presidential candidate)	5	3	2	0	10
	50%	30%	20%	0%	100%
Kristin Balayan (presidential candidate)	4	1	2	2	9
	44%	11%	22%	22%	100%
Democratic Party of Armenia	0	1	2	3	6
	0%	17%	33%	50%	100%
“National Agreement” party	0	1	3	1	5
	0%	20%	60%	20%	100%
“Sasna Tsrer” party	3	0	2	0	5
	60%	0%	40%	0%	100%
“Bright Armenia” party	4	0	0	1	5
	80%	0%	0%	20%	100%
“Free Motherland-UCA” alliance	3	0	1	0	4
	75%	0%	25%	0%	100%
“Reformists” party	2	0	2	0	4
	50%	0%	50%	0%	100%

“United Homeland” party	1	0	0	2	3
	33%	0%	0%	67%	100%
“One Armenia” party	1	0	0	2	3
	33%	0%	0%	67%	100%
“Justice” party	2	0	0	1	3
	67%	0%	0%	33%	100%
Melsik Poghosyan (presidential candidate)	1	0	1	1	3
	33%	0%	33%	33%	100%
Sergey Amiryan (presidential candidate)	0	0	3	0	3
	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%
“My Step” alliance	0	0	0	2	2
	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Revolutionary Party of Artsakh	0	0	1	1	2
	0%	0%	50%	50%	100%
“National Agenda” party	2	0	0	0	2
	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
“United Armenia” party	1	0	0	1	2
	50%	0%	0%	50%	100%
ARF	0	0	0	1	1
	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Justice Party of Artsakh	0	0	1	0	1
	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%
“Democratic Homeland” party	1	0	0	0	1
	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Republican Party of Artsakh	1	0	0	0	1
	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
European Party of Armenia	1	0	0	0	1
	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Democratic Party of Artsakh	0	0	0	1	1
	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%

Table 4. Who, How Frequently and How Spoke on the Elections on NK Online Media Outlets and TV Programmes

Who	How				Total
	Without mentioning anyone	+	-	0	
ARF	34	37	5	78	154
	22,1%	24,0%	3,2%	50,6%	100,0%
Journalists	21	6	6	114	147
	14,3%	4,1%	4,1%	77,6%	100,0%
David Ishkhanyan (presidential candidate)	50	9	9	51	119
	42,0%	7,6%	7,6%	42,9%	100,0%
NGOs/individual specialists, social and political figures	23	1	3	21	48
	47,9%	2,1%	6,3%	43,8%	100,0%
Arayik Harutyunyan (presidential candidate)	16	7	2	20	45
	35,6%	15,6%	4,4%	44,4%	100,0%
CEC NK/observers/election commissions	20	0	0	23	43
	46,5%	0,0%	0,0%	53,5%	100,0%
NK authorities	9	0	3	22	34
	26,5%	0,0%	8,8%	64,7%	100,0%
“Free Motherland-UCA” alliance	9	2	2	7	20
	45,0%	10,0%	10,0%	35,0%	100,0%
Vitaly Balasanyan (presidential candidate)	12	3	1	4	20
	60,0%	15,0%	5,0%	20,0%	100,0%
“United Homeland” party	15	0	1	3	19
	78,9%	0,0%	5,3%	15,8%	100,0%
“United Armenia” party	12	1	2	0	15
	80,0%	6,7%	13,3%	0,0%	100,0%
“New Artsakh” alliance	8	3	4	0	15
	53,3%	20,0%	26,7%	0,0%	100,0%
Vahan Badasyan (presidential candidate)	9	1	4	1	15
	60,0%	6,7%	26,7%	6,7%	100,0%

Masis Mayilyan (presidential candidate)	12	1	1	0	14
	85,7%	7,1%	7,1%	0,0%	100,0%
Kristin Balayan (presidential candidate)	11	1	1	1	14
	78,6%	7,1%	7,1%	7,1%	100,0%
Democratic Party of Armenia	9	0	0	4	13
	69,2%	0,0%	0,0%	30,8%	100,0%
Ashot Ghulyan (presidential candidate)	8	1	0	4	13
	61,5%	7,7%	0,0%	30,8%	100,0%
Ruslan Israelyan (presidential candidate)	6	0	3	3	12
	50,0%	0,0%	25,0%	25,0%	100,0%
National Revival Party of Artsakh	4	3	4	1	12
	33,3%	25,0%	33,3%	8,3%	100,0%
Hayk Khanumyan (presidential candidate)	8	0	2	1	11
	72,7%	0,0%	18,2%	9,1%	100,0%
David Babayan (presidential candidate)	10	1	0	0	11
	90,9%	9,1%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Sergey Amiryan (presidential candidate)	7	0	3	1	11
	63,6%	0,0%	27,3%	9,1%	100,0%
Communist Party of Artsakh	8	0	1	0	9
	88,9%	0,0%	11,1%	0,0%	100,0%
Melsik Poghosyan (presidential candidate)	4	1	1	3	9
	44,4%	11,1%	11,1%	33,3%	100,0%
Ashot Dadayan (presidential candidate)	8	1	0	0	9
	88,9%	11,1%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
“Justice” party	7	0	0	2	9
	77,8%	0,0%	0,0%	22,2%	100,0%
“Generation of Independence” party	6	0	3	0	9
	66,7%	0,0%	33,3%	0,0%	100,0%
NK force structures	3	0	2	2	7
	42,9%	0,0%	28,6%	28,6%	100,0%
Bella Lalayan (presidential candidate)	5	0	2	0	7
	71,4%	0,0%	28,6%	0,0%	100,0%

Revolutionary Party of Artsakh	5	0	1	1	7
	71,4%	0,0%	14,3%	14,3%	100,0%
“National Revival” party	5	1	0	0	6
	83,3%	16,7%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
RA Prime Minister	3	0	0	3	6
	50,0%	0,0%	0,0%	50,0%	100,0%
Artsakh Conservative Party	6	0	0	0	6
	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
RA Government members/other representatives of RA authorities	4	0	0	1	5
	80,0%	0,0%	0,0%	20,0%	100,0%
“Free Homeland” party	2	1	0	2	5
	40,0%	20,0%	0,0%	40,0%	100,0%
Artsakh Conservative Party	3	0	1	0	4
	75,0%	0,0%	25,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Samvel Babayan	3	0	0	0	3
	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Representatives of other countries	1	1	0	0	2
	50,0%	50,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Representatives of Diaspora	0	2	0	0	2
	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Ordinary citizens	0	1	0	0	1
	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Republican Party of Artsakh	0	0	0	1	1
	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	100,0%
	386	85	67	374	912

Table 5. About Whom and How Frequently Was Spoken on RA and NK Online Media Outlets

Presidential Candidates	1in. am	News. am	Armtimes. com	Aravot. am	168.am	Artsakhpress. am	Artsakhtert. com	Aparaj. am	Total
Arayik Harutyunyan	102	30	8	16	17	31	0	0	204
	50%	15%	4%	8%	8%	15%	0%	0%	100%
Vitaly Balasanyan	37	32	8	20	41	14	1	0	153
	24%	21%	5%	13%	27%	9%	1%	0%	100%
Masis Mayilyan	65	22	5	5	18	8	0	1	124
	52%	18%	4%	4%	15%	6%	0%	1%	100%
David Ishkhanyan	1	0	0	0	1	4	0	26	32
	3%	0%	0%	0%	3%	13%	0%	81%	100%
Ashot Ghulyan	13	1	1	2	2	8	0	0	27
	48%	4%	4%	7%	7%	30%	0%	0%	100%
Vahan Badasyan	15	2	1	3	0	3	0	0	24
	63%	8%	4%	13%	0%	13%	0%	0%	100%
Sergey Amiryan	2	3	0	1	0	3	0	0	9
	22%	33%	0%	11%	0%	33%	0%	0%	100%
Hayk Khanumyan	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	9
	44%	11%	11%	0%	0%	33%	0%	0%	100%
Kristin Balayan	1	2	1	1	0	3	1	0	9
	11%	22%	11%	11%	0%	33%	11%	0%	100%
David Babayan	4	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	7
	57%	0%	0%	0%	0%	43%	0%	0%	100%
Melsik Poghosyan	1	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	5
	20%	20%	0%	0%	0%	60%	0%	0%	100%
Bella Lalayan	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	5
	0%	40%	0%	0%	0%	60%	0%	0%	100%
Ruslan Israelyan	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	5
	40%	0%	0%	0%	0%	60%	0%	0%	100%
Ashot Dadayan	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
	25%	50%	0%	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	100%

Table 6. About Whom and How Frequently Was Spoken on RA and NK TV Programmess

Presidential Candidates	H1	Yerkir Media TV	Armnews TV	Kentron TV	Channel 5 TV	Public TV of Artsakh	Total
Arayik Harutyunyan	15	2	3	0	17	5	42
	36%	5%	7%	0%	40%	12%	100%
Vitaly Balasanyan	13	0	6	0	19	3	41
	32%	0%	15%	0%	46%	7%	100%
Masis Mayilyan	10	0	2	0	3	2	17
	59%	0%	12%	0%	18%	12%	100%
Ashot Ghulyan	5	0	0	0	4	6	15
	33%	0%	0%	0%	27%	40%	100%
Bella Lalayan	0	1	3	0	9	1	14
	0%	7%	21%	0%	64%	7%	100%
David Ishkhanyan	4	2	0	0	4	0	10
	40%	20%	0%	0%	40%	0%	100%
Vahan Badasyan	3	0	0	0	0	5	8
	38%	0%	0%	0%	0%	63%	100%
David Babayan	2	0	0	0	4	1	7
	29%	0%	0%	0%	57%	14%	100%
Hayk Khanumyan	4	1	0	0	1	1	7
	57%	14%	0%	0%	14%	14%	100%
Melsik Poghosyan	0	0	1	0	0	4	5
	0%	0%	20%	0%	0%	80%	100%
Ruslan Israelyan	1	0	0	0	0	3	4
	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	75%	100%
Kristin Balayan	0	0	1	0	0	2	3
	0%	0%	33%	0%	0%	67%	100%
Ashot Dadayan	0	0	0	0	2		2
	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Sergey Amiryan	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%

List of Those Who Were Invited to Speak on the Elections in the Talk Shows of the RA TV Channels

H1
Interview with Petros Ghazaryan
RA Prime Minister
Presidential candidate – David Babayan
Presidential candidate – David Ishkhanyan
Presidential candidate – Masis Mayilyan
Presidential candidate – Arayik Harutyunyan
Presidential candidate – Vitaly Balasanyan
Presidential candidate – Ashot Ghulyan
Presidential candidate – Hayk Khanumyan
Samvel Babayan/"United Armenia" party

Yerkir Media TV

Country's Question
Presidential candidate – Bella Lalayan

ArmNews TV

Pressing
Viktor Soghomonyan – Head of Armenia's second president Robert Kocharyan's office

Security Factor
Hrant Melik-Shahnazaryan – political scientist

In front of the Mirror
Presidential candidate – Bella Lalayan
Presidential candidate – Vitaly Balasanyan
Aram Sargsyabn - Democratic Party of Armenia
Larisa Alaverdyan – First Human Rights Defender of Armenia
Konstantin Ter-Nakalyan – "Veto" NGO

Naira Karapetyan – social figure
Aghasi Yenokyan – political scientist
Alvard Petrosyan – writer, publicist
Samvel Farmanyan – former deputy, former member of RPA
Arman Saghatelyan - former deputy, former member of RPA
Gevorg Gevorgyan – combatant
Shahe Ajemyan – combanant
Mihrdat Madatyan – political psychologist

Channel 5 TV
Interview
Presidential candidate – Arayik Harutyunyan
Presidential candidate – Vitaly Balasanyan
Presidential candidate - Ashot Ghulyan
Presidential candidate – David Babayan
Presidential candidate – Bella Lalayan
Presidential candidate – David Ishkhanyan
David Shahnazaryan – political figure
Aghvan Vardanyan – political figure
Ashot Minasyan –military figure, combatant
Narek Malyan – Head of "Veto" NGO