



The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict as a Domestic Political Competition Factor in Armenia - 2018

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Yerevan 2019

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WHAT WAS GOING ON BEFORE THE SNAP ELECTIONS OF 2018

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan made his first statement on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in his new capacity in Stepanakert, the capital of Artsakh, on May 9, 2018, after his elections as Prime Minister of Parliamentary Armenia by the National Assembly at the second attempt¹ the day before. The essential message of the announcement was that if there was a problem and a desire to settle that conflict, we should change the illogical format of the negotiations. The problem is that the authorities of the Republic of Artsakh, entitled to represent the population's interests on their behalf, are not taking part in the negotiations, whereas he is authorized to act only on behalf of Armenia which, like the Republic of Artsakh, has a conflict with Azerbaijan, too.

But for this statement, his visit would be taken merely as a step to demonstrate the special attitude of the new power in the RA towards Artsakh. But since the announcement drew a demarcation line between the powers of Armenian and Karabakh authorities in terms of conflict resolution and was addressed to Azerbaijan and the international mediators in charge of organizing the negotiation process at the same time, it received a lot of attention. The responses of Azerbaijan and the Foreign Affairs Minister of Russia did not linger. Despite the traditional consensus within the Armenian society regarding the involvement of Artsakh in the negotiations, the Armenian PM's statement was perceived as a threat not only by some experts, but also by the members of the Republican Party of Armenia. From the very beginning the latter estimated the transition of power to Nikol Pashinyan and his administration as a threat, first of all, to the security of Armenia and a risk for the achievements in the Karabakh conflict.

They started displaying their attitude from the very onset of power transfer to the new authorities, namely from April-May 2018. Yet, this was only the organic continuation of the decennial strategy of referring to the Karabakh conflict to condition and frequently justify many things within and outside the country. Though the topic of Karabakh have always been in the center of public attention, and steps and formulations used in pragmatic and verbal platforms within the context of the conflict have been commented on and discussed, the Karabakh conflict had never turned into an topic of loud electoral campaign clashes ever before the snap Parliamentary elections of 2018.

Thus, in 1998 the Karabakh conflict triggered a change of power when Levon Ter-Petrosyan, the first President of the RA, in 1997 publicized his plan to conclude peace with Azerbaijan. However, the change of power did not take place in the course of an electoral campaign, but rather on the administrative level. In 1998, Levon Ter-Petrosyan resigned, and the following elections framed the change of power post factum.

During the first national elections following the April War of 2016 (Parliamentary elections of 2017), the Armenian National Congress led by Levon Ter-Petrosyan anchored its electoral program on the concept of Peace, and the campaign was devoted mainly to that theme. But the various disagreements with this party did not cause any loud disputes and

¹ N.Pashinyan did not receive enough votes at the special session of the NA on May 1, 2018, so he was not elected as Prime Minister.

clashes again. During that campaign, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was ranked second² with its frequency of occurrence, mainly not due to the Peace program of the Armenian National Congress, but rather the references to the issues of the April War (army logistics, border security, casualties and territorial losses during the war, etc.) by different parties and because of the criticism addressed to the Republican Party authorities in the context of the Four-Day War. By the way, Nikol Pashinyan, leader of “Yelk” Alliance elaborated on the issue of the April War during his campaign as well.

Originally, remarkable features were ascribed to the elections of 2018 since they would obviously change the ratio of partisan representation in the Parliament and would align the layout within the legislative body to the revolutionary events. That is to say, the Prime Minister, who enjoyed high legitimacy among the public and his team would for the Parliamentary majority. Nobody questioned this projection, even those political forces that opposed the revolutionary force during the electoral race. As the outcome of the participation in the campaign, those political forces intended to become the second or the third in the Parliament, or simply be somehow elected into the Parliament. Nonetheless, in October 2018,³ it was even more evident that the competition on the verbal level and in public platforms is not so predictable as it was during the above-mentioned electoral campaign for “My Step” alliance. It also became clear that one of the significant issues – the Karabakh conflict, as well as others deriving from it with a potential to impact on the society, would continue to be part of the arsenal used by political forces, most likely and at least by the Republican Party, to oppose the new authorities with.

These very events incited us to study:

- Will the Karabakh conflict become a factor of domestic political struggle?
- What manifestations will that conflict have? Which political forces, professional and other groups will participate in it?
- What role will be ascribed to the topic of the conflict in Armenia during the electoral race in general?
- How will the audience react to those messages and debates?

We have tried to find the answers to those questions, examining the materials on the conflict that were published in the Armenian online media and broadcast as part of television programs during the campaign.

² See “Armenian Online Media and Facebook Platforms in the 2017 Parliamentary Elections”, p.41 <http://www.regioncenter.info/sites/default/files/Elections%20on%20Armenian%20online%20platforms%20%202017%20ARM.pdf>

³ On October 2, 2018 PM Pashinyan dismissed the ARF and PAP Ministers in the presence of the people had assembled in front of the NA by his own call. The PM also publicized his own decision of resignation. The resignation was a necessary step for dissolving the NA and conducting snap elections in compliance with the provisions of the enforced Constitution.

WHAT WE HAVE EXAMINED AND IN HOW MANY STAGES

We picked materials referring to the Karabakh conflict published by 6 leading Armenian media outlets (1in.am, News.am, Tert.am, Aravot.am, Armlur.am, Lragir.am) as well as all the programs aired in the talk show format of 6 television companies (H1, H3, Yerkir Media, Shant, Kentron, Ararat) in the period of November 15 - December 15, 2018. We studied a total of 15 different television series.



H1 - From among the programs we studied **Today in Reality** which is a program in interview format (during the elections it was broadcast on a daily basis), another daily program called **Pre-Electoral Debate** which started broadcasting from the eve of the official campaign, the **Rules of the Game** program which is debate format program broadcast once a week.



H3 - We selected **View Point, Real View** and **Daily Observation** programs in interview format from H3.



Yerkir Media - We examined the **Era** debate program, the **Question of the Country, Questions to ARF Members, The Guest of the Day** programs in interview format from Yerkir Media TV company. **Questions to ARF Members** stopped broadcasting during the official campaign.



Shant - We monitored the only talk show on Shant TV, namely the **Prospect**.



Kentron - We studied Kentron TV's series **In Front of the Mirror** which sometimes had 2 or 3 issues a day during the official campaign. That program was both in interview and debate formats. Besides, we also monitored **Epikentron Interview** within the framework of Epikentron news cast.



Ararat - We studied the programs **Interview** and **Tête-à-tête** in debate format in case of Ararat TV.

The selection of the TV companies was mainly conditioned by their political affiliation. 3 out of the 6 companies belong to three political forces that participated in the elections (Yerkir Media belongs to ARF, Kentron to PAP, H3 to Rule of Law). On the eve of the elections the informal link between Ararat Channel and the second President of the RA Robert Kocharyan was revealed. It was purchased by one of Kocharyan's relatives.

The time between November 15 and December 15 covered the pre-election period with the availability of the list⁴ of political forces to participate in the election (November 15-25), the phase of the official campaign (November 26 – December 7) and the first post-election week (December 8-15). The voting took place on December 9.

HOW DID WE CONDUCT THE STUDY?

We conducted the study through quantitative and discourse analyses.

- We defined the issue of the Karabakh conflict raised in the context of domestic political struggle judging by the content, circulating in online platforms and TV programs.
- We measured the extent of reference to the problem after the principle of **one material-one or more problems**.
- In case of TV content we considered each issue of the program monitored as a separate piece/material which contained full or partial references to various aspects of the Karabakh conflict.
- We defined the representatives of political, social, professional and other groups as authors of the problem. We measured the extent and frequency of reference after the principle of **one author - one or more problems**.
- We determined the number of problems by the change of authors and the change of the message markers (+,-,0), namely **Number of Authors= Number of problems = Number of connotation marks and Number of connotation mark = Number of problems**.
- From among the participants of TV and online media debates we selected only those authors who talked about the Karabakh conflict.
- We determined the markers of the topic (+, -, 0) based on their explicit semantic meaning and not implicit messages.

⁴ The political forces to run for the elections submitted their application to the CEC on November 14, 2018. As a result, the list of the forces to run for the elections became clear.

DEFINITIONS OF KARABAKH CONFLICT ISSUES

Based on the studies of various content, we defined 23 groups of issues, that were raised with the collective efforts of speakers on media platforms (political powers participating and not participating in the elections, different professional groups, journalists, representatives of Artsakh, etc.), although with different degrees of intensity.

Thus,

Negotiation process	We grouped the formulations with which presented the ideas concerning negotiations objectives and processes so far, its details and consequences, the possibility and expediency of changing/maintaining negotiation agendas, etc. under the heading of negotiation process.
Concession/ compromise	We combined formulations about concessions and compromises of Armenian and Azerbaijani parties, the possibility and expediency of concessions or compromises, their consequences and preconditions under the heading of concession/compromise.
Rights	The heading Rights contains not only judgments about the conditions of implementing the right to self-determination, but also formulations regarding human rights and freedoms within the context of the conflict.
Imposing peace	We compiled formulations concerning the peace establishment in the region and the possibility of imposing peace in order to prevent the resumption of the war in the group, called Imposing peace. By the way, it would be coercion not only as an activity taken by international players to stop escalations in the conflict zone, but as an activity undertaken by the Armenian party to the same end.
Territories	The heading Territory contains the group of formulations on border determination and ceding/not ceding territories.
Status	The heading Status contains formulations of the current and future status of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh, estimations concerning its current status and the acceptable/completely unacceptable status of NKR.
Ceasefire Escalation	Ceasefire/Escalation group is comprised of formulations concerning the current and previous situations along the contact line and borderlines, as well as predictions on its modifications in the future and comments about the political and military technical components of ceasefire maintenance.

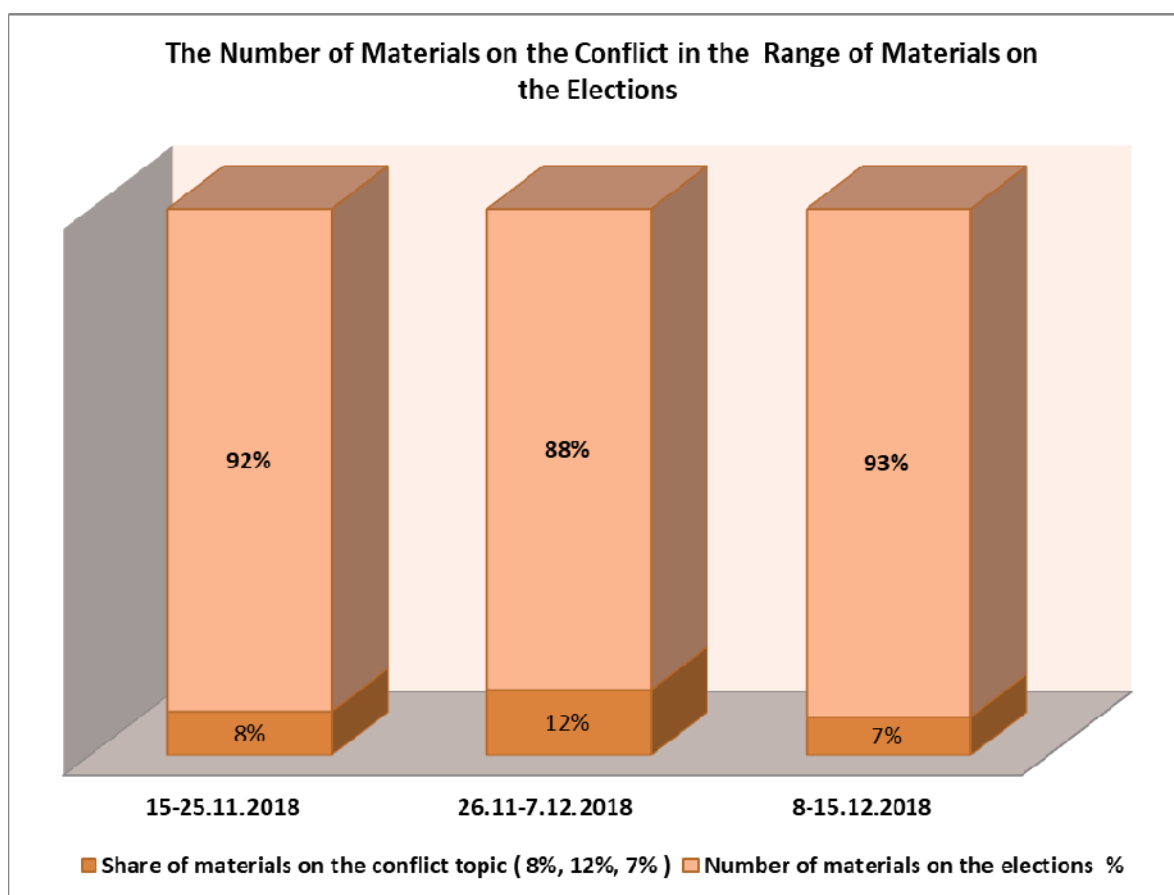
Army	The heading of Army groups announcements and estimations of the military component for conflict resolution or protection of parties' interests, as well as viewpoints considering the army as an important factor.
Recognition	Recognition the group of formulations concerning the international recognition of the status of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh and its political significance.
Unification	Unification comprises claims and estimations concerning the recognition of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh as a part of Armenia and the political consequences thereof.
Conflict factor	The conflict factor has grouped all formulations on the impact the conflict had on the domestic and foreign political relations of Armenia, the perceptions of Armenian procedures among the population of Nagorno Karabakh, and the mutual relations of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh.
Decision-makers	The group of decision-makers includes formulations about those who act as decision-makers regarding the conflict, about public confidence towards them and their responsibility.
Intermediaries	The group of Intermediaries comprises estimations concerning the policy pursued by mediating organizations and countries towards the conflict and the mutual relations among the mediators and between the latter and the parties to the conflict.
Armaments	The heading Armaments brings together formulations about the arming of parties, their military potential, the foreign relations of parties in that sphere and the military balance.
Resolution	Resolution comprises perceptions of the conflict resolution, as well as notions and claims about the resolution by means of negotiations or war.
Mutual trust	Mutual trust groups estimations concerning the current state of the mutual trust between the Armenian and Azerbaijani parties, the political significance thereof and other issues as well.
Parties	The Parties group contains definitions of conflicting parties, as well as estimations concerning the opportunities and powers assigned to them in the different stages of the conflict development.
Status quo	Status quo is the heading for a group of formulations concerning the possibility of preservation or alteration of military and political components and the major beneficiaries of the variants.

Guarantees	The guarantee group includes estimations and comments concerning the internal and external security guarantees, as well as the factors, countries and organizations ensuring such guarantees.
Armenian interests/ Azerbaijani interests	The Armenian interests/ Azerbaijani interests groups include definitions of the parties' interests and formulations concerning their incompatibility.
Rhetoric	The rhetoric group is comprised of comments concerning the rhetoric circulating in the Armenian and Azerbaijani societies about the opponent and the popularity of bellicose rhetoric.
Contacts	Contacts are the estimations concerning the significance and expediency of the official and non-official contacts between the opponents.
Foreign Intervention	The issue of foreign intervention comprises announcements, claims and predictions concerning interventions in the Armenian domestic affairs, as well as non-formal interventions and foreign pressures within the context of conflict.

INTENSITY OF MATERIALS ON THE CONFLICT

In the formal sense, materials containing formulations concerning the Karabakh conflict did not make up a significant bulk in online mass media. 92% (before official campaign), 88% (the stage of the official campaign), and 93% (first week after election) of all materials on the elections, including daily news, did not contain any formulation concerning the conflict whatsoever. The topic of the Karabakh conflict came 4th or 5th in the ranking of various themes circulated during the elections.⁵

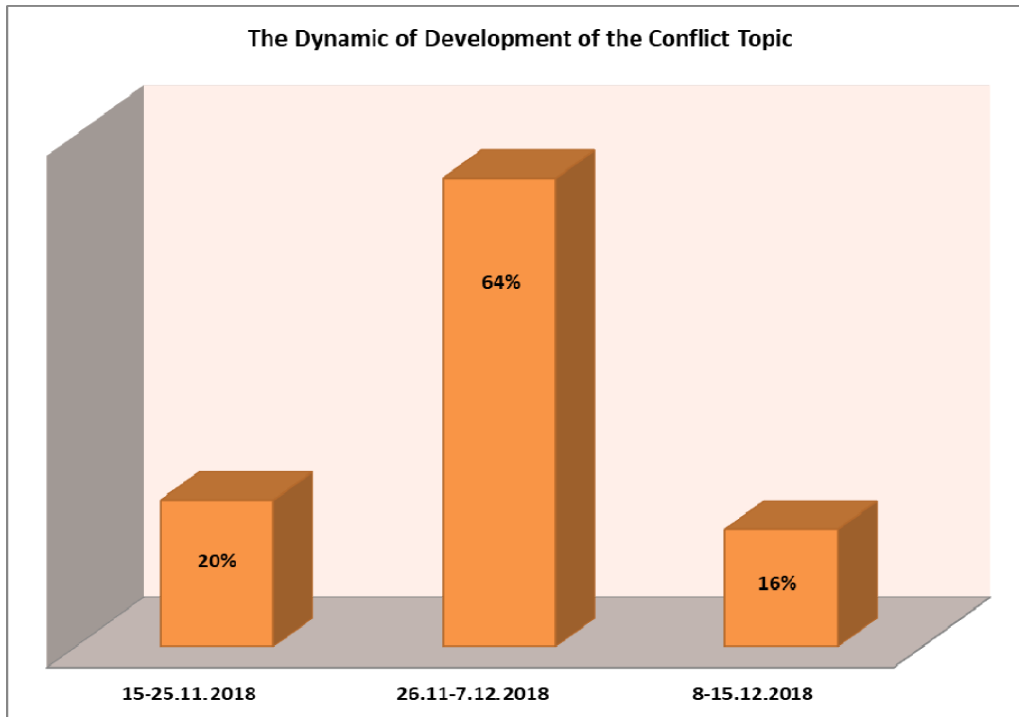
See the figure below



The number of materials partially or fully dedicated to the conflict increased threefold at the stage of the official campaign; audiences were provided with this kind of information from the first day of the race till the last 12th day. At the post-election stage the intensity of this topic's circulation in the domestic political contexts returned to the pre-campaign level.

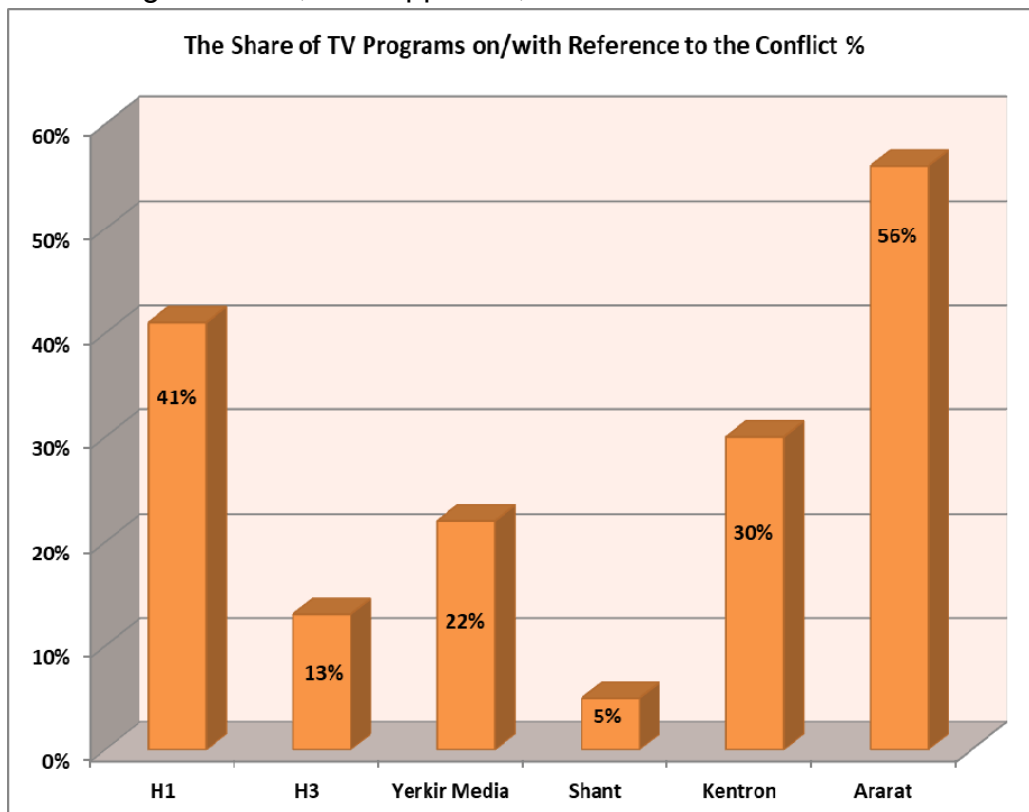
⁵ See 2018 Snap Elections and Post-Election Agendas on Online Platforms in Armenia, page 19-20, <http://www.regioncenter.info/sites/default/files/2018%20Elections%20and%20post-election%20Agendas%20in%20Armenia%20-ARM.pdf>

See the figure below, also Appendix, Table 1:



A quarter of TV talk shows issued from November 15 to December 15 was partially or fully dedicated to the topics of Artsakh discussed on offline and online platforms during that period, as well as to the circumstances of making them a subject of electoral race. However, this topic was covered at varied extent and of varied frequency among TV companies.

See the figure below, also Appendix, Table 2:



PROCLAIMED PROGRAM PROVISIONS

Within the context of the elections the competing political powers started to make announcements concerning the conflict already at the pre-campaign stage. For example, it was expressed already in May 2018 during the verbal confrontation unfolding between the Republican Party of Armenia and My Step Alliance, the core of which was the debate about the priority of various unresolved domestic issues and external political challenges the Armenian states faced (including those connected with the Karabakh conflict).

During that very pre-electoral stage, 2 out of the 11 political forces participating in the elections, namely the **Republican Party of Armenia and Sasna Tsrer Party**, explained their decision of participating in the elections and their desired presence in the NA by the existence of the Karabakh conflict. Both parties announced they should certainly be in the NA to prevent the wrong decision-making concerning the conflict. Although in that respect the program clauses of the Republican Party of Armenia and Sasna Tsrer were radically different. From the perspective of Sasna Tsrer the conflict resolution lay in the de jure unification of Armenia and Artsakh, whereas the approaches proclaimed by the Republican Party of Armenia were anchored on the principles of the implementation of the right to self-determination of Artsakh and its recognition by everyone.

The point of unification was also noted in the party programs of the **Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF, Dashnak Party) and the National Progress Party**. However, in both cases this unification is considered possible as a final outcome of the conflict resolution. The ARF believed that a treaty about military cooperation should be initially signed between the RA and the Republic of Artsakh, to deepen the integration process in different spheres, continue the work aimed at the international recognition of the Republic of Artsakh and making it a party to the negotiations. And for the National Progress Party the path towards unification was possible through the development of Artsakh economy, essential growth of population and the creation of a powerful defense army. As a possible legal resolution a new referendum was suggested to be conducted in Artsakh and Armenia by the initiative of citizens, which should be viewed as an internationally acceptable option of a legal resolution for the issue of two Armenian states' unification.

The program clauses of other powers (**My Step Alliance, Prosperous Armenia Party, Bright Armenia Party, We Alliance, Rule of Law, Citizen's Decision Party**) are not different in principle. They are all anchored on theses that are circulating up until now – implementation of the right to self-determination, absolutely peaceful settlement, preservation of the mediation format, retention of the ceasefire, physical security assurance of the people of Artsakh, assurance of humanitarian channels for transportation, etc. The difference was manifested in the number of theses put forth by different parties. Let's say, in comparison to all the other 10 parties the measures leading to the conflict resolution suggested by My Step Alliance were the most thoroughly described ones. Moreover, they are stated from the perspective of the immediate executor. For example, the programs of other parties stated the visions of the Karabakh conflict development in the style of secondary actors and using terms such as "to contribute", "to support", etc.

As distinct from all the other political powers, **the Rebirth Party's** program provisions were more precisely formulated during the public speeches of their representatives, when it turned out that they considered the issue solved, and they see the international actualization of this fact via the change of the mediation format and using the UN Declaration on Decolonization as a foundation.

PRIORITY AMONG CIRCULATED ISSUES

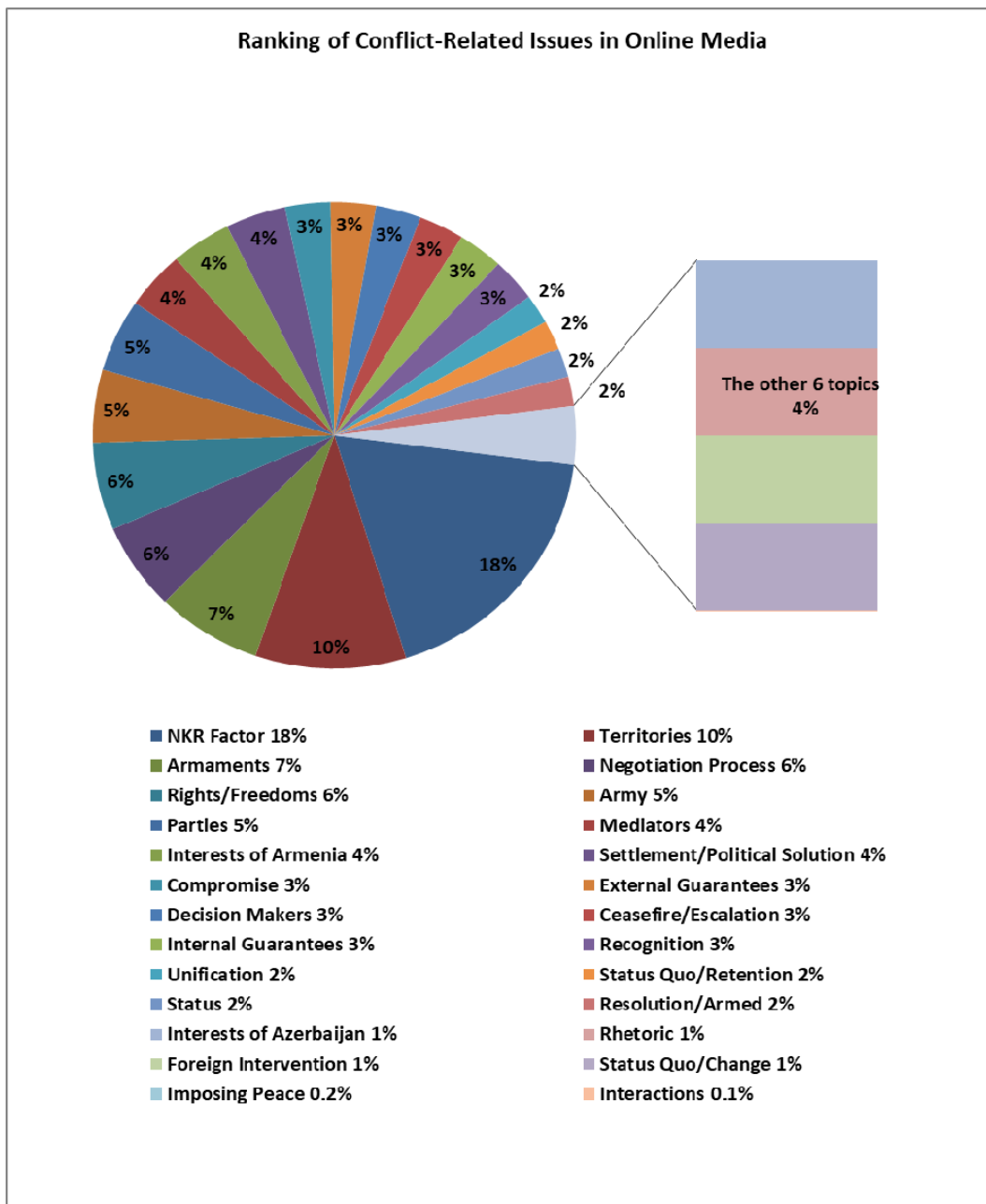
Not only did the topic of the conflict become a reason for violent clashes among several powers, but also significantly influenced the campaign process: it pushed forward broad public discussions and wide dissemination of issues on the topic of Karabakh. These were issues that had not been raised on Armenian public platforms by so many political forces at the same time during the precious elections, but were either discussed in the professional analytical circles, or were published in the mass media in the form of individual publications.

We identified 23 issues that were raised in online platforms and TV programs, focusing on those cases when the vis-à-vis and in absentia debates contained references to and statements about the conflict or comments on the campaign with manipulations of the Karabakh issue. Current debates served as a ground for the presentation of involved parties' program provisions on the conflict in mass media and TV programs. Nonetheless, guided by the indicators of topic coverage extent and frequency, greater attention was paid to the debates, unprecedented announcements, prompt reactions and counter-arguments during the offline campaign than the political forces' visions.

So, the two most intensively discussed topics during the official campaign were the conflict as a factor (18%) and the territorial problems (10%). The third point is the issue of armaments (7%). These were followed by the negotiation process, rights and liberties in the conflict context and conflicting parties, all were at the core of the debates and violent verbal clashes.

In online media, the frequency and volumes of reference to all the other issues has not significantly changed. Such traditionally significant issues as the status of Artsakh, its recognition, the internal and external guarantees for security, external interventions in the conflict dynamic, armed solution to the conflict, ceasefire maintenance, tensions at the frontier or decision makers were mentioned less frequently compared to the issues that took the first positions in the rating scale .

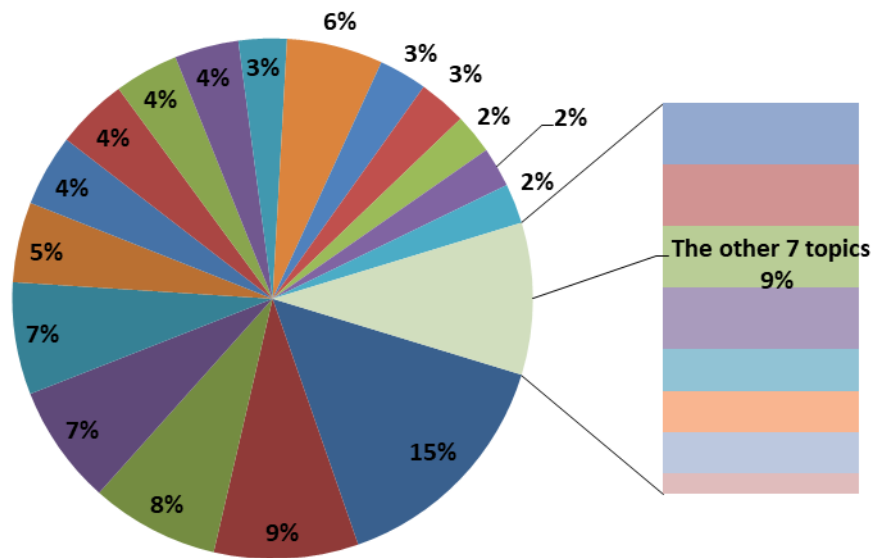
See the figure below, as well as the Appendix, Chart 3.



In the case of TV programs the situation is different. The first place according to the extent and frequency of references is taken by the territorial issue (15%), followed by the decision makers in the conflict issue from the Armenian party (9%) and the third place is taken by the conflict as a decisive factor in the developments and processes in Armenia (8%).

See the figure below, as well as the Appendix, Chart 4.

Ranking of Conflict-Related Issues in TV Programs



- Territories 15%
- NKR Factor 8%
- Unification 7%
- Compromise 4,5%
- Armaments 4%
- Status 3%
- Recognition 3%
- Mediators 2,5%
- External Guarantees 2,5%
- Resolution/Armed 1,5%
- Interests of Azerbaijan 1,5%
- Rhetoric 1%
- Settlement/Political Solution 0,5%
- Decision Makers 9%
- Interests of Armenia 7,5%
- Negotiation Process 5%
- Army 4,5%
- Parties 4%
- Ceasefire/Escalation 6%
- Foreign Intervention 3%
- Internal Guarantees 2,5%
- Imposing Peace 1,5%
- Status Quo/Retention 1,5%
- Status Quo/Change 1%
- Interactions 1%
- The other 7 topics 9%

WHO AND HOW INTENSIVELY

According to our data, the Republican Party was the political force that spoke most frequently on the topic of the conflict in online media. The debates between the Republican Party and the new authorities were held between the RPA leadership and the Prime Minister. The other representatives of the Prime Minister's administration expressed themselves on fewer topics. The two other parties that referred to the topic of the conflict significantly more than others were the Sasna Tsrer and the ARF parties. During their campaign, the Citizen's Decision, the Rebirth and the National Progress⁶ referred to the issue of conflict the least. The views of Artsakh representatives, namely the authorities and other figures on the topic of the conflict-related aspect of campaign debates were also actively circulated in online platforms. These reactions exceeded in number the reference to the conflict made by all competing forces, except for the Republican Party and the Prime Minister.

See Appendix, Chart 5.

The representatives of all the 11 parties were invited to participate in the TV talk-shows. Nonetheless, during our research the majority of the guests were experts and other individual specialists. The leader of the Yerkir Tsirani party that was not running for election was among them, too. Other forces not taking part in the elections did not address this topic at all, just as was the case with online media.

See Appendix, Chart 6.

On TV shows the ARF representatives referred to the conflict the most (Yerkir Media), then in descending order: the Republican Party (H1, Kentron and Ararat TV stations), Sasna Tsrer (H1, Ararat TV stations), We Alliance, My Step Alliance (H1, Ararat and Kentron TV stations) and others. It is worth mentioning that the representatives of Rule of Law Party referred to the topic of the conflict on the air of H3 TV station less than on the air of H1 TV station. The same goes with the "Prosperous Armenia". All their views on the conflict were raised exclusively in the talk-shows on Public TV of Armenia (H1), meanwhile during the interviews and debates on the air of Kentron TV station they did not convey any context containing that topic.

See Appendix, Chart 7.

⁶ These parties were established on the eve of the snap elections, in October-November 2018.

WHO AND HOW

The **RPA's** propaganda line of making the conflict the main subject of the race and the party's negative disposition in that very context were explicitly reflected in online media outlets. The statements containing references to adversaries within the context of this issue were negative by 60%. The number one targets of the critical attitude disseminated by the Republican party's was the Prime Minister and his political team.

Unlike the Republican Party, there was no significant difference noted in the number of positive, negative and neutral evaluations contained in the discourse of the **Prime Minister and My Step Alliance**. The negative evaluations made personally by the Prime Minister targeted not only the representatives of the Republican Party, but were also made without zooming on a certain addressee. They were delivered in general formulations and were three times fewer than the negative statements made by the Republican Party.

Even though we noted verbal clashes on this topic between **the Prime Minister and the representatives of the ARF**, the negative disposition of the latter towards the new authorities was not very obvious in the context of the conflict, as compared with the Republican Party. The negative evaluations of the ARF add up to 20% of the party's discourse.

Sasna Tsrer referred to the conflict issue either without mentioning any other specific power, or with a neutral assessment towards the latter.

For more details about the disposition of the other powers see Appendix, Chart 8.

The TV programs reflected approximately the same picture in relation to the disposition of forces participating in the campaign.

See Appendix, Chart 9.

THE SUBJECT OF DEBATES AND CRITICISM

In fact, the political forces participating in the campaign held differing positions on the major issue of the conflict, namely the status of Artsakh. As we have already mentioned above, one of the groups was comprised of forces that saw the solution of this issue exclusively through the unification of Armenia and Artsakh, whereas the other involved forces who focused on the right of the people of Artsakh to self-determination and the international recognition of the status of the Artsakh Republic.

However, regardless of the essential differences of strategic nature, severe confrontation on the matter of the conflict took place not among the political forces belonging to these two different groups, but mainly between My Step Alliance and the RPA. The core issues of the program-based visions held by these two forces, as we have already mentioned, are the same (the implementation of the right to self-determination, the issue of status recognition, ensuring and guaranteeing the physical security of the Artsakh people, the

adoption and the acknowledgement of the same mediation format, determination to settle the issue exclusively peacefully, etc.).

The debates held between the ARF representatives and the PM on the matter of the conflict, represented by only a few examples on the public platforms and generating limited engagement, referred to the provisions established in the Artsakh Constitution and addressed issues related to the territories. This was especially manifested during the TV debate among the leaders of the parties (December 5, 2018). A large portion of the debate, unprecedented in terms of its format, was dedicated to the presentation of and a debate on the positions held by the 11 forces running for the elections.

In fact, the vast majority of issues related to the conflict and touched upon throughout the campaign, except for only a few (the issue of the participation of Artsakh representatives in the debates on processes in Armenia, the issue of the perception of these processes among the population of Artsakh and so on), have been traditional for Armenian public platforms.

During the campaign, identified topics were circulated mainly in combination with one another. Thus, the topic of negotiations was combined with the visions of conflict settlement, the matters on the parties to the conflict and the decision-makers thereof. The topic of guarantees was touched upon jointly with the following: the army, the status of the Karabakh Republic, the balance between the parties and their armaments, and a number of external and internal circumstances. And so on and so forth. The debates and disagreements focused on a number of matters.

With regard to the conflict as a factor the debates rolled out within the frame of mirroring statements, such as “***the old authorities led to the failure of the Armenian party, the new authorities will lead to the failure of the Armenian party***”.

The RPA representatives accused Pashinyan and his team of having a political program, based on ***power in the stead of Artsakh*** and piloting it verbally during this campaign through a number of supporters.

Should Artsakh express its attitude towards the processes taking place in Armenia? Or should Armenia be interested exclusively in the security issues of Artsakh, leaving the domestic processes and the issues of human rights and freedoms in the backdrop? These were topics grouped under the headline of Conflict as a factor, which had hardly been raised on public platforms before.

On the occasion of clashes between the PM/My Step Alliance and the RPA, the PM and the ARF representatives, many statements conveyed that conflict-related discursive manipulations were taking place and they were as dangerous as never before. Such statements were made not only by analysts and experts, but other political forces participating in the elections as well.

The significance of N. Pashinyan's high legitimacy was also discussed in the context of the conflict during the elections, and again via mirroring evaluations. On the one hand, they

said that the high legitimacy was a solid foundation for making decisions favorable for Armenians, on the other, that on the contrary, it would be easy to guide the public toward any settlement.

Regardless of the statements made during the campaign on the unity of Armenians, on the lack of past and present leaders who were going to surrender Artsakh to Azerbaijan, the counter claims resonated stronger. Clashes were ongoing with the use of contradictory claims on a broad front between the representatives of My Step Alliance and the RPA representatives, with the participation of their leaders and other members.

In relation to the territories, the representatives of the Sasna Tsrer Party declared very concretely that they were against surrendering any land, as established in the Madrid principles. Concession of territories was not going to solve the conflict or establish stable peace in the region, on the contrary, it would lead to a large-scale and destructive war. According to the claims made by the representatives of the party, all other parties were for surrendering land. Whereas they acted in favor of the unification of Artsakh and Armenia.

In response to statements on territories and other topics the representatives of the RPA emphasized that they agreed not to the Madrid principles which were based on the principle of returning lands, but rather to holding negotiations about those principles. The next point for debates and clashes within the topic of territories was the loss of lands during the April 2016 war, as well as the reduction of distance between the Azerbaijani and Armenian forces in the direction of Nakhijevan in the spring of 2018.

Another theme for RPA's speeches against the Prime Minister and his team had to do with the issues of ***negotiations and retention of the ceasefire, as well as escalations on the front***. The theme started out in September 2018 when after the short meetings between Pashinyan and Aliyev in the course of the CIS member states leaders' summit they began to announce of the arrangement to minimize the tension along the border and establish an operational line between the parties to overcome escalations. This arrangement that stood firm also during the elections still served as another topic for criticism, especially by the representatives of the RPA, since, according to their claims, in terms of the resolution of the Karabakh conflict Nikol Pashinyan was intentionally destroying the positions erected by the Armenian party during the previous stages of negotiations, instead satisfying himself with "elevator diplomacy." This idea was multiply expressed by different republican candidates during the campaign.

REACTIONS OF THE AUDIENCE

Online media and TV program pieces about competing forces' programme provisions on the conflict and debates thereof did not have the largest number of views, unlike those materials which had a detailed presentation of in absentia or face to face debates between the Prime Minister/My Step Alliance and the RPA representatives. By the way, all materials with maximum views were published during the official campaign.



1in.am

Thus, ***Campaign – Day One: A Scandalous Statement that Frustrated All*** (26.11.2018, 28 500 views) and ***“David Shahnazaryan is an enemy, he has always sought revenge,” says Vahan Badasyan*** (27.11.2018, 38 500 views) had the largest number of views from among materials on this topic in 1in.am.



News.am

In the case of News.am the largest number of views amounted to 131 299, (***“Call others and yourselves to order,” says Margarit Yesayan to Pashinyan*** 30.11.2018). The next piece with the most views (35 670 views) is the video recording of the debate among the leaders of December 5th, which was broadcasted by this media outlet both fully and part by part.



Aravot.am Armlur.am

This video ranked as number one among all the pieces on the topic of Karabakh conflict in Aravot.am and Armlur.am due to the number of its views (179 260 views).

The following materials having a large view rates in Aravot.am were again the debates between the Prime Minister/the representatives of his team and the top candidates on the RPA slate (***David Shahnazaryan says, “I promise they will get surprised, let them get ready and put on political bulletproof vests”*** 15.11.2018, 10102 views, ***An Artsakh human rights activist to Nikol Pashinyan: “Even the leader of our enemy state does not do that”*** 29.11.2018, 12410 views).



Tert.am

From among materials on the conflict in Tert.am the recording of Vigen Sargsyan's speech, former Defense Minister and leader of the RPA slate, had the largest number of views (141 898). In this speech he wrapped up the campaign and dwelt upon the negotiations process and external guarantees. This is followed by a piece of many views (119 896 views), uploaded on the day of

the elections: **“David Shahnazaryan had a fit of schizophrenia: they would have surrendered Karabakh if we did not step in,” says Sasun Mikayelyan** (video).



Lragir.am

The topics covered in the materials with the most views in Lragir.am were different. The video demonstrating missile systems within the armaments of Armenia, disseminated by the RA Ministry of Defense on the election silence day came first, followed by the piece on external interventions, titled ***Is Azerbaijan a CSTO member: has Lukashenko Lied?***

The picture is the same also in case of TV programmes. Programmes containing harsh and categorical formulations received more views, but also had more “dislikes”.

See Appendix, Table 10.

CONCLUSIONS

- Even though Karabakh related topics have always been in the center of public attention, the steps taken and the formulations made in the context of the conflict in the practical and verbal plains have always been commented on and discussed, up until the snap parliamentary elections in 2018 the topic of the conflict never before became a theme for loud clashes during the campaign with a number of participants at a time.
- During this round of elections, too, but for the debates and scandalously acute statements containing contextual references to the conflict starting day one of the official campaign to the election silence day before the vote, this topic would not considerably stand out against all other topics dwelt upon during the campaign. Even more so, because in formal terms by the indicators of its coverage extent and frequency, this topic came fourth in the online platform segment. It came fifth in talk-shows segment.
- This was a period during the first stage of which speeches made by the RPA and the new power team were shot at each other. These speeches were on a wide array of topics, including the topic of the conflict. However, the harsh confrontation within the context of this very issue started during the official campaign, it grew larger as a snowball and revealed a number of problems that that were reflected only in individual analytical pieces on public platforms before (for example, the issue of verbal participation of representatives of Artsakh in the debates on processes in Armenia, the issue of the perceptions of those processes among the population of

Artsakh, the issue of human rights and freedoms in Artsakh and so on). During the 12 days of the official campaign, the number of materials on the conflict grew threefold in online media.

- The forces participating in the elections presented their approaches to the conflict in their election programs. Generally, judging by these provisions we can assert that the political forces participating in the elections could be divided into 2 groups, regardless of their tactical commonalities. The first group was comprised of those forces, which stressed the right of the Artsakh people to self-determination, the international recognition of the sovereign status of Artsakh (My Step Alliance, RPA, PAP, BAP, Rule of Law, We Alliance, Citizens' Decision SDP, Rebirth). Whereas the other group included those forces who put forth the thesis of the official unification of Armenia and Artsakh (ARF, Sasna Tsrer, and National Progress). Though it is valid to say that unlike the Sasna Tsrer Party which from the very beginning saw the resolution of the conflict in the unification of Armenia and Artsakh, the other two considered such unification an outcome of the solution of a number of issues.
- However, regardless of these differences, the harsh clash over the topic of the conflict took place not between the political forces belonging to these 2 groups, but rather and mainly between My Step Alliance and the RPA, the key points of the visions of both forces reflected in their programs were the same - the implementation of the right to self-determination, the issue of status recognition, ensuring and guaranteeing the physical security of the Artsakh people, the adoption and the acknowledgement of the same mediation format, determination to settle the issue exclusively peacefully. The debates held between the ARF representatives and the PM on the conflict presented by only a few examples of limited resonance on public platforms referred to the provisions established in the Artsakh Constitution and issues related to the territories. This was especially manifested during the TV debates among the leaders of the parties, which was partially devoted to the stances of the political forces on this matter.
- The topics that had the highest indicators for the extent and frequency of reference in online media were those of the conflict as a factor and territories. The topic of armaments came third, followed by the negotiation process, the rights/freedoms in the context of the conflict and parties to the conflict. These were at the heart of ongoing debates and harsh verbal confrontations. Even though due to their formats TV programs had more capacity of demonstrating the causes and actual nature of clashes among the forces, the prioritization of topics was different in this domain.
- The RPA representatives made the most critical and negatively marked references to the adversary forces in the context of the conflict. Regardless of the fact that the RPA's criticism targeted the Prime Minister and his political team, the latter had fewer formulations of negative modality addressed at competitors, including the RPA. Whereas the other representatives of My Step Alliance in general referred to the topic of the conflict less frequently than the PM.

- Not all materials on the conflict drew the major attention of and resonated with the audience. Materials covering the remote clashes that took place between the RPA and the PM, the RPA and a few representatives of My Step Alliance with harsh rhetoric received the highest number of views, unlike those materials which, for example, covered the presentations of different forces regarding their approaches and views to the various aspects of the conflict.
- During 2018 snap Parliamentary elections the topic of Karabakh conflict was explicitly used as a factor of harsh competition in the electoral race.

APPENDIX

Table 1. The Dynamic of Reference to the Conflict at Various Stages of the Elections

Media outlets	Number of materials containing reference to the conflict 15-25.11	Number of materials containing reference to the conflict 26.11-7.12	Number of materials containing reference to the conflict 8-15.12	Total
1in.am	25	45	6	76
	33%	59%	8%	100%
News.am	19	96	21	136
	14%	71%	15%	100%
Aravot.am	9	38	15	62
	15%	61%	24%	100%
Armlur.am	2	15	4	21
	10%	71%	19%	100%
Tert.am	34	91	19	144
	24%	63%	13%	100%
Lragir.am	12	40	16	68
	18%	59%	24%	100%
Total	101	325	81	507
	20%	64%	16%	100%

Table 2. The Share of TV Programs on/with Reference to the Conflict / 15.11-15.12.2018

TV company	Programs	Number of broadcasts	Number of broadcasts containing reference to the conflict	Share of broadcasts containing reference to the conflict %
H1	Today in Reality	23	11	48%
	Rules of the Game	5	1	20%
	Pre-Electoral Debate	13	5	38%
	TOTAL	41	17	41%
H3	Viewpoint	18	2	11%
	Daily Observation	26	2	8%
	Real View	2	2	100%
	TOTAL	46	6	13%
Yerkir Media	Era	4	0	0%
	The Question of the Country	22	3	14%
	Questions to ARF Members	8	3	38%
	The Guest of the Day	17	5	29%
	TOTAL	51	11	22%
Shant	Prospect	61	3	5%
	TOTAL	61	3	5%
Kentron	Epikentron - Interview	8	1	13%
	In front of the Mirror	35	12	34%
	TOTAL	43	13	30%
Ararat	Tête-à-tête	8	4	50%
	Interview	17	10	59%
	TOTAL	25	14	56%
Total		267	65	24%

Table 3. Rating of the Conflict-Related Issues in Online Media / 15.11-15.12.2018

What about/ Issue	1in.am	News.am	Aravot.am	Armlur.am	Tert.am	Lragir.am	Total
Conflict factor	39	26	18	4	53	29	169
	23%	15%	11%	2%	31%	17%	100%
Territories	12	33	18	7	10	9	89
	13%	37%	20%	8%	11%	10%	100%
Armaments	8	21	10	3	18	7	67
	12%	31%	15%	4%	27%	10%	100%
Negotiation Process	6	28	9	4	8	2	57
	11%	49%	16%	7%	14%	4%	100%
Rights/Freedoms	4	31	5	8	3	4	55
	7%	56%	9%	15%	5%	7%	100%
Army	4	9	7	4	19	4	47
	9%	19%	15%	9%	40%	9%	100%
Parties	3	18	8	8	8	2	47
	6%	38%	17%	17%	17%	4%	100%
Mediators	11	18	2	3	4	2	40
	28%	45%	5%	8%	10%	5%	100%
Armenian Interests	5	16	2	2	9	4	38
	13%	42%	5%	5%	24%	11%	100%
Settlement/ Political Solution	6	9	5	5	7	5	37
	16%	24%	14%	14%	19%	14%	100%
Compromise	5	6	5	4	9	3	32
	16%	19%	16%	13%	28%	9%	100%
External Guarantees	7	5	3	1	11	2	29
	24%	17%	10%	3%	38%	7%	100%
Decision Makers	7	10	4	3	0	3	27
	26%	37%	15%	11%	0%	11%	100%
Ceasefire/ Escalation	2	13	12	1	4	0	32
	6%	41%	38%	3%	13%	0%	100%
Internal Guarantees	9	3	4	1	7	4	24
	38%	13%	17%	4%	29%	17%	100%
Recognition	1	8	2	3	7	3	24
	4%	33%	8%	13%	29%	13%	100%
Unification	2	7	5	1	2	2	19
	11%	37%	26%	5%	11%	11%	100%
Status Quo/ Retention	1	7	5	1	3	0	17
	6%	41%	29%	6%	18%	0%	100%
Status	2	4	2	0	4	3	15
	13%	27%	13%	0%	27%	20%	100%
Resolution/Armed	3	1	5	0	2	4	15
	20%	7%	33%	0%	13%	27%	100%
Interests of Azerbaijan	3	7	2	0	1	0	13
	23%	54%	15%	0%	8%	0%	100%
Rhetoric	0	9	0	0	2	0	11
	0%	82%	0%	0%	18%	0%	100%
Foreign	0	0	3	2	4	2	11

Intervention	0%	0%	27%	18%	36%	18%	100%
Status Quo/Change	0	0	3	0	2	3	8
	0%	0%	38%	0%	25%	38%	100%
Imposing Peace	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Contacts	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Total	140	289	139	65	199	98	930
	15%	31%	15%	7%	21%	11%	100%

Table 4. Rating of the Conflict-Related Issues in TV Programs / 15.11 – 15.12.2018

What about/Issue	H1	H3	Yerkir Media	Shant	Kentron	Ararat	Total
Territories	4	2	4	3	10	7	30
	6%	17%	11%	43%	36%	14%	15%
Decision Makers	7	1	4	0	4	2	18
	11%	8%	11%	0%	14%	4%	9%
Conflict factor	6	0	0	1	4	5	16
	9%	0%	0%	14%	14%	10%	8%
Armenian Interests	7	0	3	0	2	3	15
	11%	0%	8%	0%	7%	6%	7.5%
Unification	7	1	1	2	1	2	14
	11%	8%	3%	29%	4%	4%	7%
Negotiation Process	3	1	6	0	0	0	10
	5%	8%	16%	0%	0%	0%	5%
Compromise	2	0	3	0	0	4	9
	3%	0%	8%	0%	0%	8%	4.5%
Army	5	2	1	0	0	1	9
	8%	17%	3%	0%	0%	2%	4.5%
Armaments	4	1	1	0	0	2	8
	6%	8%	3%	0%	0%	4%	4%
Parties	3	0	1	0	1	3	8
	5%	0%	3%	0%	4%	6%	4%
Status	0	0	1	0	3	2	6
	0%	0%	3%	0%	11%	4%	3%
Ceasefire/Escalation	2	1	4	0	1	4	12
	3%	8%	11%	0%	4%	4%	6%
Recognition	2	1	1	0	0	2	6

	3%	8%	3%	0%	0%	4%	3%
Foreign Intervention	1	0	0	0	1	4	6
	2%	0%	0%	0%	4%	8%	3%
Mediators	4	0	0	1	0	0	5
	6%	0%	0%	14%	0%	0%	2.5%
Internal Guarantees	3	0	1	0	0	1	5
	5%	0%	3%	0%	0%	2%	2.5%
External Guarantees	1	1	1	0	0	2	5
	2%	8%	3%	0%	0%	4%	2.5%
Imposing Peace	1	0	1	0	0	1	3
	2%	0%	3%	0%	0%	2%	1.5%
Resolution/Armed	0	0	0	0	1	2	3
	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	4%	1.5%
Status Quo/Retention	1	0	0	0	0	2	3
	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	1.5%
Interests of Azerbaijan	1	0	1	0	0	1	3
	2%	0%	3%	0%	0%	2%	1.5%
Status Quo/Change	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
	2%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Rhetoric	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Contacts	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
	0%	8%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%
Settlement/Political Solution	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.5%
Total	66	12	37	7	28	51	201
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 5. Who Spoke about the Conflict in Online Media / 15.11 -15.12.2018

Who	1in.am	News.am	Aravot.am	Armlur.am	Tert.am	Lragir.am	Total
RPA	11	33	17	7	34	8	110
	10%	30%	15%	6%	31%	7%	100%
Prime Minister	12	29	11	7	23	16	98
	12%	30%	11%	7%	23%	16%	100%
Journalist	23	1	5	2	5	18	54
	43%	2%	9%	4%	9%	33%	100%
NGO/expert/other specialist	11	11	6	0	22	4	54
	20%	20%	11%	0%	41%	7%	100%
Representative of other country	7	20	15	4	14	4	64
	11%	31%	23%	6%	22%	6%	100%
Representative of Artsakh	9	15	8	2	7	7	48
	19%	31%	17%	4%	15%	15%	100%
Sasna Tsrer	3	15	6	3	8	3	38
	8%	39%	16%	8%	21%	8%	100%
ARF	6	10	5	2	8	4	35
	17%	29%	14%	6%	23%	11%	100%
My Step Alliance	4	4	5	4	9	2	28
	14%	14%	18%	14%	32%	7%	100%
Government	2	10	5	0	4	3	24
	8%	42%	21%	0%	17%	13%	100%
We Alliance	0	3	3	3	3	0	12
	0%	25%	25%	25%	25%	0%	100%
Prosperous Armenia Party	2	3	1	1	2	0	9
	22%	33%	11%	11%	22%	0%	100%
Bright Armenia Party	1	2	1	1	4	0	9
	11%	22%	11%	11%	44%	0%	100%
Rule of Law Party	0	2	1	1	5	0	9
	0%	22%	11%	11%	56%	0%	100%
Citizen's Decision	0	1	2	1	1	0	5

Party	0%	20%	40%	20%	20%	0%	100%
Christian-Democratic Rebirth Party	1	2	1	1	0	0	5
	20%	40%	20%	20%	0%	0%	100%
National Progress Party	0	3	1	1	0	0	5
	0%	60%	20%	20%	0%	0%	100%
Other political figures/forces	4	5	1	0	1	2	13
	31%	38%	8%	0%	8%	15%	100%
Diaspora	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	100%
Total	96	169	94	40	150	71	620
	15%	27%	15%	6%	24%	11%	100%

Table 6. Guests Invited to the Programs / 15.11 – 15.12.2018

Who	H1	H3	Yerkir Media	Shant	Kentron	Ararat	Total
NGO/expert/other specialist	26	23	11	13	4	7	84
	31%	27%	13%	15%	5%	8%	100%
Civil Contract/My Step Alliance	13	1	6	11	5	9	45
	29%	2%	13%	24%	11%	20%	100%
RPA	15	1	6	7	9	6	44
	34%	2%	14%	16%	20%	14%	100%
ARF	9	1	15	3	3	3	34
	26%	3%	44%	9%	9%	9%	100%
Bright Armenia Party	13	1	7	3	3	5	32
	41%	3%	22%	9%	9%	16%	100%
Rule of Law Party	10	13	1	2	3	0	29
	34%	45%	3%	7%	10%	0%	100%
Prosperous Armenia Party	9	1	1	5	7	2	25
	36%	4%	4%	20%	28%	8%	100%
Christian-Democratic Rebirth Party	7	2	1	3	2	10	25
	28%	8%	4%	12%	8%	40%	100%
We Alliance	10	0	2	4	5	1	22

	45%	0%	9%	18%	23%	5%	100%
Sasna Tsrer Party	8	1	0	3	2	4	18
	44%	6%	0%	17%	11%	22%	100%
Citizen's Decision Party	6	1	2	3	2	2	16
	38%	6%	13%	19%	13%	13%	100%
National Progress Party	5	1	0	2	2	0	10
	50%	10%	0%	20%	20%	0%	100%
Other political forces	0	0	2	0	3	1	6
	0%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Government	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Central Electoral Commission/observers/electoral commissions	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Local self-government bodies	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Total	131	46	54	63	50	50	394
	33%	12%	14%	16%	13%	13%	100%

Table 7. Who Referred to the Conflict in the Course of the TV Programs and in Relation to Which Issues / 15.11 – 15.12. 2018

Who	H1	H3	Yerkir Media	Shant	Kentron	Ararat	Total
ARF	4	0	18	0	6	5	33
	12%	0%	55%	0%	18%	15%	100%
RPA	12	2	1	0	8	5	28
	43%	7%	4%	0%	29%	18%	100%
NGO/expert/other specialist	5	5	10	2	1	3	26
	19%	19%	38%	8%	4%	12%	100%
Sasna Tsrer Party	10	2	0	2	1	7	22
	50%	10%	0%	10%	5%	35%	100%
We Alliance	6	0	0	1	5	7	19
	32%	0%	0%	5%	26%	37%	100%
My Step Alliance	6	0	1	0	1	7	15
	40%	0%	7%	0%	7%	47%	100%
Bright Armenia Party	4	0	7	0	0	3	14
	29%	0%	50%	0%	0%	21%	100%

Christian-Democratic Rebirth Party	1	0	0	1	2	10	14
	7%	0%	0%	7%	14%	71%	100%
Rule of Law Party	7	3	0	0	0	0	10
	70%	30%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Other political forces	0	0	0	0	5	2	7
	0%	0%	0%	0%	71%	29%	100%
Prosperous Armenia Party	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
National Progress Party	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Citizen's Decision Party	1	0	0	0	0	2	3
	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	67%	100%
Total	66	12	37	6	29	51	201
	129%	6%	18%	3%	14%	25%	100%

Table 8. Who Spoke about the Conflict in Online Media and How / 15.11 – 15.12.2018

Who	+	-	0	Without any mention of force	Total
RPA	16	66	11	17	110
	15%	60%	10%	15%	100%
Prime Minister	17	22	23	36	98
	17%	22%	23%	37%	100%
Representative of other country	0	1	7	56	64
	0%	2%	11%	88%	100%
Journalist	2	22	14	16	54
	4%	41%	26%	30%	100%
NGO/expert/other specialist	3	21	8	22	54
	6%	39%	15%	41%	100%
Representative of Artsakh	7	10	9	22	48
	15%	21%	19%	46%	100%
Sasna Tsrer Party	13	5	12	8	38
	34%	13%	32%	21%	100%
ARF	4	7	11	13	35
	11%	20%	31%	37%	100%
My Step Alliance	2	9	7	10	28
	7%	32%	25%	36%	100%

Government	1	0	5	18	24
	4%	0%	21%	75%	100%
We Alliance	7	2	1	2	12
	58%	17%	8%	17%	100%
Other political forces/figures	0	2	3	8	11
	0%	18%	27%	73%	100%
	0%	3%	4%	11%	15%
Prosperous Armenia Party	0	0	1	8	9
	0%	0%	11%	89%	100%
Bright Armenia Party	0	4	0	5	9
	0%	44%	0%	56%	100%
Rule of Law Party	1	3	4	1	9
	11%	33%	44%	11%	100%
Citizen's Decision Party	0	1	1	3	5
	0%	20%	20%	60%	100%
Christian-Democratic Rebirth Party	0	1	0	4	5
	0%	20%	0%	80%	100%
National Progress Party	0	0	0	5	5
	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Diaspora	0	0	0	2	2
	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Total	73	176	117	256	620
	12%	28%	19%	41%	100%

Table 9. Who Spoke about the Conflict in TV Programs and How / 15.11 – 15.12.2018

Who	+	-	0	Without any mention of force	Total
RPA	6	13	4	5	28
	21%	46%	14%	18%	100%
ARF	2	2	11	18	33
	6%	6%	33%	55%	100%
NGO/expert/other specialist	1	3	2	20	26
	4%	12%	8%	77%	100%
Sasna Tsrer	6	2	2	12	22
	27%	9%	9%	55%	100%
We Alliance	2	9	4	4	19
	11%	47%	21%	21%	100%
My Step Alliance	3	6	2	4	15
	20%	40%	13%	27%	100%
Bright Armenia Party	0	3	3	8	14
	0%	21%	21%	57%	100%
Christian-Democratic Rebirth Party	1	1	2	10	14
	7%	7%	14%	71%	100%
Rule of Law Party	1	0	4	5	10
	10%	0%	40%	50%	100%
Other political figures/forces	1	6	0	0	7
	14%	86%	0%	0%	100%
Prosperous Armenia Party	0	0	0	5	5
	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
National Progress Party	1	0	1	3	5
	20%	0%	20%	60%	100%
Citizen's Decision Party	0	0	0	3	3
	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Total	24	45	35	97	201
	12%	22%	17%	48%	100%

Table 10. Most Viewed and Reacted to TV Programs Containing Reference to the Coverage of the Conflict

TV Channel	Program	Broadcast date	Viewed	Like, Share, Comment	Dislike
H1	Pre-Electoral Debate	05.12.2018	183 771	1742	0
	Pre-Electoral Debate	26.11.2018	120 357	1084	0
	Pre-Electoral Debate	06.12.2018	99 970	978	0
	Today in Reality	21.11.2018	47 368	913	304
H3	Daily Observation	26.11.2018	114	0	0
	Viewpoint	07.12.2018	60	0	0
	Viewpoint	30.11.2018	57	0	0
Yerkir Media	The Question of the Country	23.11.2018	4247	44	5
	The Question of the Country	06.12.2018	1015	9	4
	Questions to ARF Members	20.11.2018	559	21	0
Shant	Prospect	12.12.2018	6936	134	14
	Prospect	27.11.2018	3010	38	3
	Prospect	01.12.2018	1884	31	10
Kentron	Epikentron/Interview	29.11.2018	28997	194	0
	In front of the Mirror	17.11.2018	18617	876	718
	In front of the Mirror	06.12.2018	11620	84	26
Ararat	Tête-à-tête	29.11.2018	175 872	1524	224
	Tête-à-tête	04.12.2018	167 883	1628	228
	Tête-à-tête	06.12.2018	15028	161	14