

MONITORING REPORT

CONFLICT REPORTING IN AZERBAIJANI- AND ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA AND OTHER MEDIA OUTLETS



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The following report reflects the results of media content monitoring to analyze conflict coverage by Azerbaijani- and Armenian-language regional platforms. In addition, the report incorporates conflict-related qualitative data acquired from specific Russian- and Georgian-language Facebook accounts.

The study aims to identify the degree of media's adherence to professional standards of conflict reporting and the potential spread of disinformation and hate speech.

The study applied a mixed methodology – namely, Internews' conflict coverage assessment methodology, which relies on quantitative and qualitative methods and was adapted for use in the context of Georgia. The study has also utilized the Facebook analytics tool CrowdTangle for social media monitoring.

The report reflects the results of monitoring conducted between May 1, 2021 and January 31, 2022.

The introductory section covers the research methodology and key findings; the first part provides general quantitative data; the second part provides the assessment of reporting quality and professionalism; the third part assesses conflict-sensitive reporting; the fourth part is about crossing “the red lines” in conflict reporting; the fifth part includes examples of manipulation with religious sentiments; and the sixth part provides an illustration of a specific case of manipulation. The seventh part outlines conflict-related narratives shared by Russian- and Georgian-language Facebook platforms. In addition, the annex provides the profiles of media outlets sampled for monitoring.

MONITORING METHODOLOGY

The research aims to study the coverage of recent regional conflicts, peace initiatives, and developments related to ongoing territorial disputes between countries, as well as instances of severe interethnic and interreligious confrontation between various groups in the country, by Azerbaijani- and Armenian-language regional media outlets in the Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions. The monitoring also entails identifying messages, disinformation, and hate speech disseminated on the aforementioned topics. Apart from Azerbaijani- and Armenian-language outlets, Facebook accounts of Russian-language news outlets and specific Georgian-language Facebook accounts targeting particular ethnic groups were analyzed qualitatively in order to fully understand the regional context.

The monitoring was carried out with a mixed methodology incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data analyses. Quantitative data were collected during the content monitoring of Azerbaijani- and Armenian-language regional media outlets, while selected Russian-language news outlets and Georgian-language Facebook accounts were analyzed qualitatively to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the context.

QUANTITATIVE DATA

The topics monitored include:

- Conflicts and related peace initiatives;
- Territorial disputes between countries;
- Border demarcation issues between countries;
- Internal interethnic conflicts; and
- Historical conflicts and other contentious issues leading to confrontation between various ethnic, religious, and national groups in the current context.

The media coverage of the abovementioned topics applies the factor of direct and indirect coverage:

DIRECT COVERAGE – media content (article, news item, TV or radio report) covers the topic of interest to this study in full;

INDIRECT COVERAGE – media content mentions the topic of interest to this study indirectly while covering another topic instead

The monitoring relies on Internews’ conflict reporting assessment methodology, which has been applied to analyze the coverage of violent conflicts around the world. Three indicators of the methodology have been applied in this study:

1. **QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM:** (Accuracy, objectivity/impartiality, balance/fairness, relevance, language, clarity, background/context).
2. **CONFLICT SENSITIVITY**
3. **CROSSING RED LINES** (Use of violent imagery, hate speech, and offensive/denigrating language in reporting)

QUALITATIVE DATA

- Messaging Typology
- Hate Speech Typology and Targets
- Fake News Typology

SELECTION OF SUBJECTS (SAMPLING)

Azerbaijani- and Armenian-language media outlets were selected as monitoring subjects based on the specifics of the region and the results of previous studies. A total of 24 news outlets have been monitored; quantitative data are being collected on 20 outlets (10 Azerbaijani- and 10 Armenian-language outlets); and two Russian-language and two Georgian-language Facebook pages have undergone qualitative analysis.

AZERBAIJANI- AND ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA OUTLETS

AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE MEDIA OUTLETS		ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA OUTLETS	
1	24News.ge	1	Aliq Media; http://aliq.ge/
2	Gündəlik – Gürcüstan; https://www.facebook.com/gundelikgurcistan/ Gündəlik – Gürcüstan – Home	2	Парвана Тв; http://parvana.ge/
3	Aktual.ge; https://www.aktual.ge/	3	Radio NOR; https://nor.ge/
4	Radio Marneuli 96.9 FM; http://marneulifm.ge/	4	TV9News.AM; https://tv9news.ge/am/

ՀԱՅԿԱՍՏԱՆԱԿԱՆ ՊԵՐՈՒՆ		ԵՐԱՅԻՐԱՆԱԿԱՆ ՊԵՐՈՒՆ	
5	Marneuli TV; http://www.marneulivt.ge/	5	JavakhhNews.ge; http://www.jnews.ge/
6	Yeni Yol; http://yeni yol.ge/	6	Atv 12 television https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCr0QsJx-P6uccU6jXpD9-seA
7	Borchalivt; http://borchalivt.wordpress.com/	7	News from Javahk-akhaltskha; http://akhaltskha.net/
8	Xeber.ge; http://xeber.ge/	8	Akhalkalaki News; https://www.facebook.com/akhalkalakinews
9	Radio Bolneli http://bolneli.ge/	9	Javakhh Media http://javakhhmedia.com/
10	Radio Ivrisi http://ivrisi.org.ge/	10	Samkhretis Karibche https://sknews.ge/am

The following factors prompted the selection of these additional Russian and Georgian-language news outlets for the qualitative analysis: the Russian state-run Sputnik and a regional outlet, Jeiran Media Press Club, often cover topics related to conflicts, although these outlets have a different approach to sharing their materials on Facebook. Georgian-language news outlet Kavkaz Plus and The Caucasian Telegraph,¹ a Facebook page, shared Armenophobic materials during the resumption of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh and in the post-conflict period, presumably in an attempt to exacerbate the conflict.

RUSSIAN AND GEORGIAN LANGUAGE PLATFORMS

RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA OUTLETS		GEORGIAN-LANGUAGE PLATFORMS	
1	Sputnik Georgia	1	The Caucasian Telegraph
2	Press Club Jeiran Media	2	Kavkaz Plus

The content monitoring of Facebook pages of the selected media outlets was carried out in Crowd-Tangle, a Facebook analytics tool.

¹ Myth Detector, 1 December 2020. Caucasian Telegraph publishes Armenophobic disinformation and conspiracy theories. <https://mythdetector.ge/ka/caucasian-telegraph-armenophobiuri-khasiathis-dezinphormatsias-da-konspiratsiebs-aqveqhnebs/>

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The following are the findings of the media content monitoring conducted between May 15, 2021, and January 31, 2022.

AZERBAIJANI- AND ARMENIAN- LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA

- Out of 59 456 published posts, 2175 were related to conflicts (1276 in Armenian-language media; 899 in Azerbaijani-language media). Direct coverage of conflicts was observed in 1623 stories, while indirect coverage occurred in 552 materials.
- The frequency of both direct (695) and indirect (333) coverage of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was the highest in Armenian-language regional media. By contrast, the frequency of coverage of the same topic in Azerbaijani-language regional media, both directly (352) and indirectly (213), was relatively low.
- Coverage of the topics related to the occupied territories of Georgia was more frequent among the Armenian-language media (82) compared to the Azerbaijani-language media (34).
- Azerbaijani-language regional media dedicated significantly greater attention to the internal interethnic conflict that broke out in Dmanisi in the Kvemo Kartli region (52).
- After the end of the Nagorno-Karabakh war, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's initiative to establish a "3 + 3" format of regional cooperation was almost equally covered by both media (Azerbaijani-language: 45; Armenian-language: 41).
- The most problematic aspect of coverage was balance, reflected in the low overall score of the balance indicator (0.30); however, Armenian-language media outlets scored slightly higher (0.33) than Azerbaijani-language media outlets (0.26).
- Second to "balance" in terms of deviation from the professional standard is the content indicator (0.42), where both media scored almost equally (Armenian-language: 0.42; Azerbaijani-language: 0.41).
- Media outlets performed higher than average when assessed for background (0.68), objectivity/impartiality (0.61), language (0.64), and accuracy (0.64). The closest to the professional standard were the indicators of relevance (0.82) and clarity (0.95).

- The sharpest difference among the Azerbaijani-language (0.80) and Armenian-language (0.48) outlets was observed for the accuracy indicator, which resulted from the omission of a number of essential sources by Armenian-language media.
- Azerbaijani- and Armenian-language media outlets often wholly or partially copied content produced by other media outlets. Of the 985 items copied from other media, only a little over half (582) of the stories included references to the original sources.
- Apart from Armenian sources, Armenian-language regional media outlets relied on Russian sources, including Russian propagandist media outlets like Tass.ru, Armeniasputnik.am; Russia 24; Ria.ru, and Infoteka24.ru. As for Georgian media sources, Armenian-language regional media mainly used content from credible Georgian national media platforms, with a few exceptions such as Taonews.ge and Newsgeorgia.ge.
- Azerbaijani-language regional media mainly relied on Azerbaijani sources. As for the Georgian sources, regional media outlets relied more on critical Georgian national TV channels (e.g. Mtavari Arkhi and TV Pirveli) and less on Russian sources.
- Materials containing disinformation or unspecified data are primarily found in the media outlets when these media outlets shared publications prepared by other media outlets or in materials prepared based on other media outlets' materials.
- Among the leaders covered by the regional media outlets, the Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan (320) and the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev (286) occupy the first and second places, while the Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili is lagging behind noticeably (166). Coverage of Russian President Vladimir Putin (139) and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (133) was almost equal. The regional media outlets devoted the least attention to the U.S (60) and Georgian (31) presidents.
- Cases of inflammatory language use in both Armenian- and Azerbaijani-language media are mostly found in the assessments made by journalists when reporting the story.
- Violent imagery used by the Armenian-language media outlets depicted mostly Armenian prisoners of war and border incidents, while in the Azerbaijani-language media, violent imagery was mainly used while covering the topic of the confrontation in Dmanisi.
- The monitoring process revealed instances of manipulation incorporating religious sentiments in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Materials with such content were manipulatively disseminated by the monitored Armenian-language media (such as Parvana TV), as well as Georgian-language Facebook users on various groups and pages.

FACEBOOK PAGES OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE MEDIA

- Jeiran Media Press Club content, on the one hand, underscored the West's inability to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, hinting at its decreasing influence in the region and, on the other

hand, emphasized Russia's special role in ensuring stability in the region. At the initial stage of the monitoring, Press Club Jeiran-Media's content portrayed Turkey as a party to the conflict; however, the trend changed after the initiation of the "3 + 3"² regional cooperation format by the Turkish President Erdogan.

- Materials published on the website of Sputnik, which were predominantly based on interviews with various political scientists, on the one hand, underscored the decreased role of the West (namely, the United States) in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and promoted the essential role of Russia in the conflict, on the other. Sputnik sought to show the causal link between Turkey's open involvement in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the strengthening of the country's position in the region.

GEORGIAN-LANGUAGE FACEBOOK PAGES

- In the articles devoted to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, The Caucasian Telegraph echoed the official Azerbaijan narratives regarding Armenia and described Armenia's actions at the border as "provocative." Some of the Armenophobic assessments published by the outlet were based on respondents' opinions.
- As for Kavkaz Plus, the outlet clearly expressed its Armenophobic position during the monitoring period. The outlet portrayed Armenians as nationalists and highlighted the dangers of Armenians annexing Abkhazia, using Georgian territories as a buffer zone, and inciting separatist sentiments.

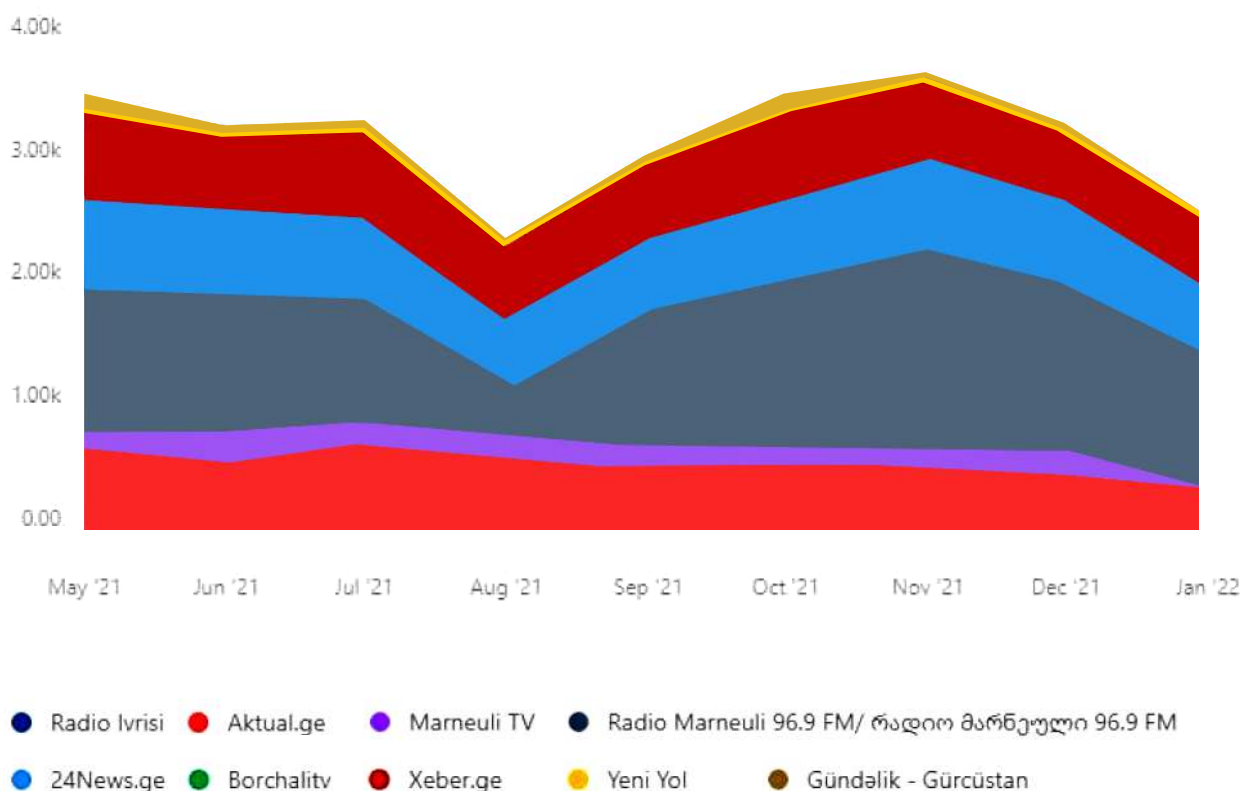
² The "3 + 3" format is an initiative of the President of Turkey, which he voiced in 2020 after the end of the Nagorno-Karabakh war. The format envisages the regional integration of the three South Caucasus countries (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan) on the one hand and Russia, Turkey, and Iran on the other.

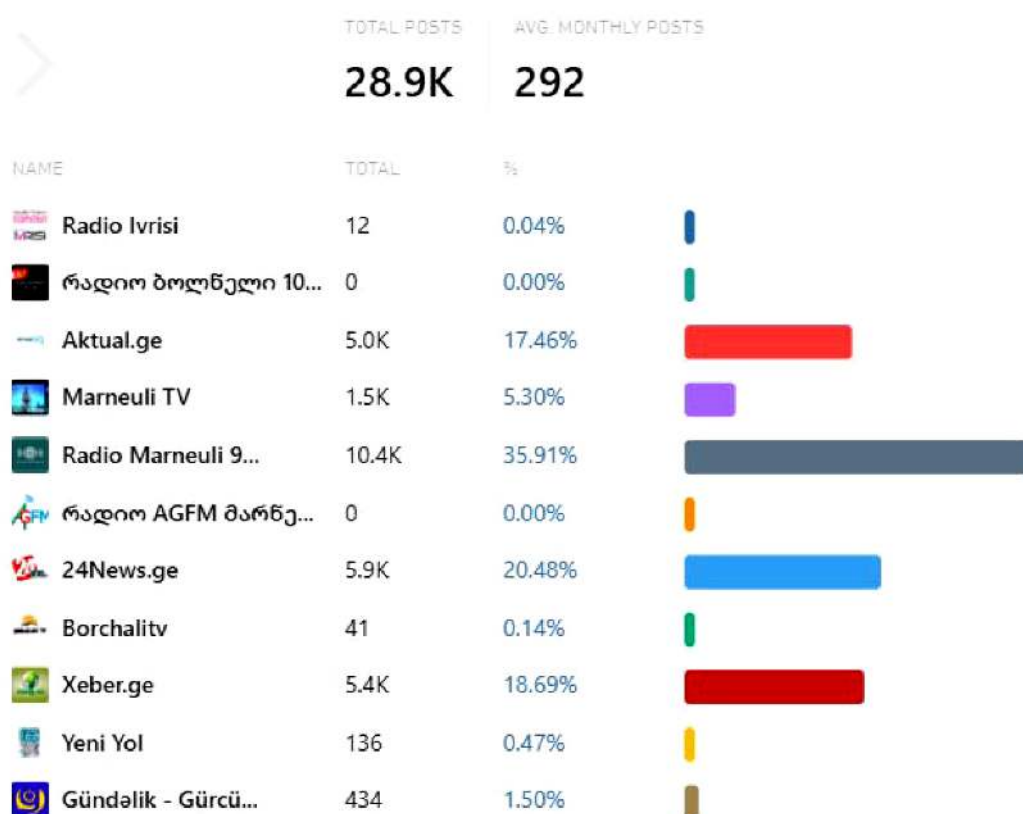
1. GENERAL QUANTITATIVE DATA

NUMBER OF FACEBOOK POSTS: During the period covered by the report (May 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022), the Facebook pages of Azerbaijani- and Armenian-language regional media outlets published a total of 59 456 posts. Notably, the number of Azerbaijani-language Facebook posts (28 917) was slightly less compared to the number of Armenian-language posts (30,539).

As indicated on Figure 1, during the period covered by the report, Radio Marneuli led among the Azerbaijani-language regional media outlets in terms of the number of posts published on Facebook, followed by Aktual.ge and Xaber.ge.

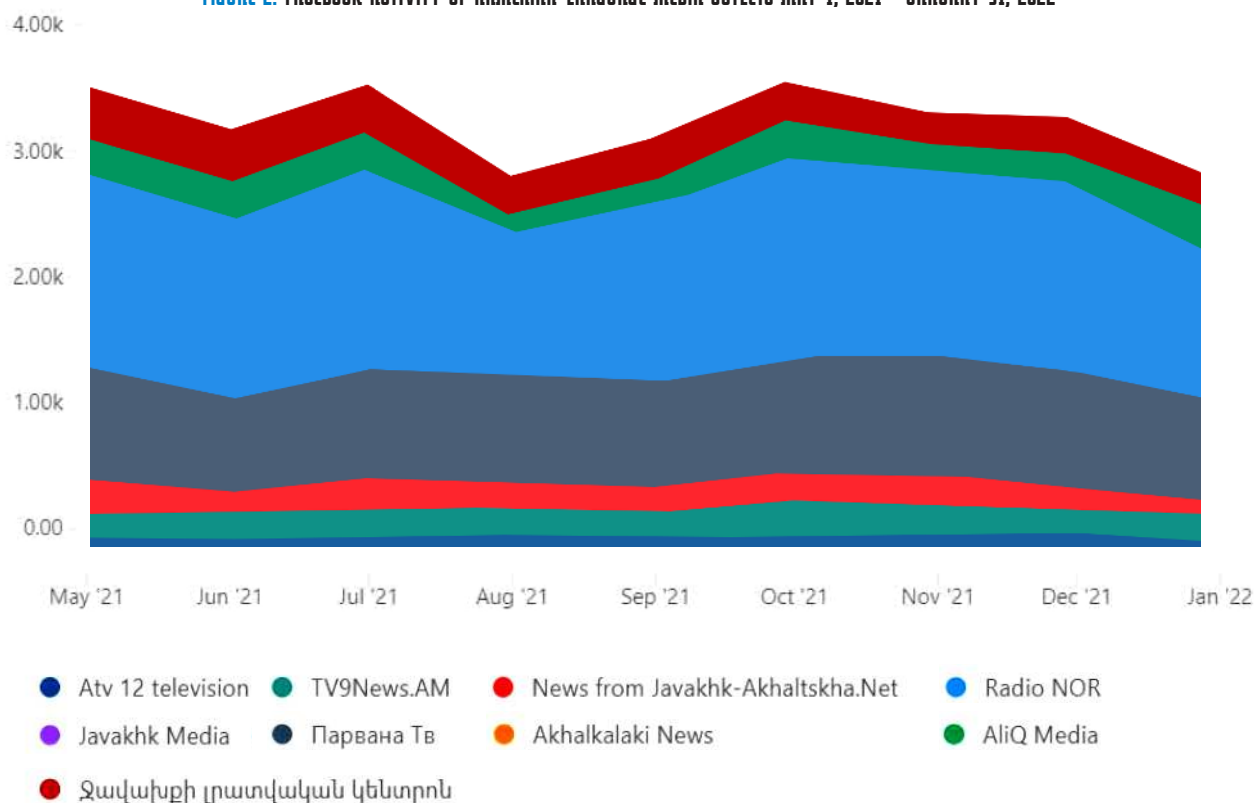
FIGURE 1. FACEBOOK ACTIVITY OF AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE MEDIA OUTLETS MAY 1, 2021 – JANUARY 31, 2022

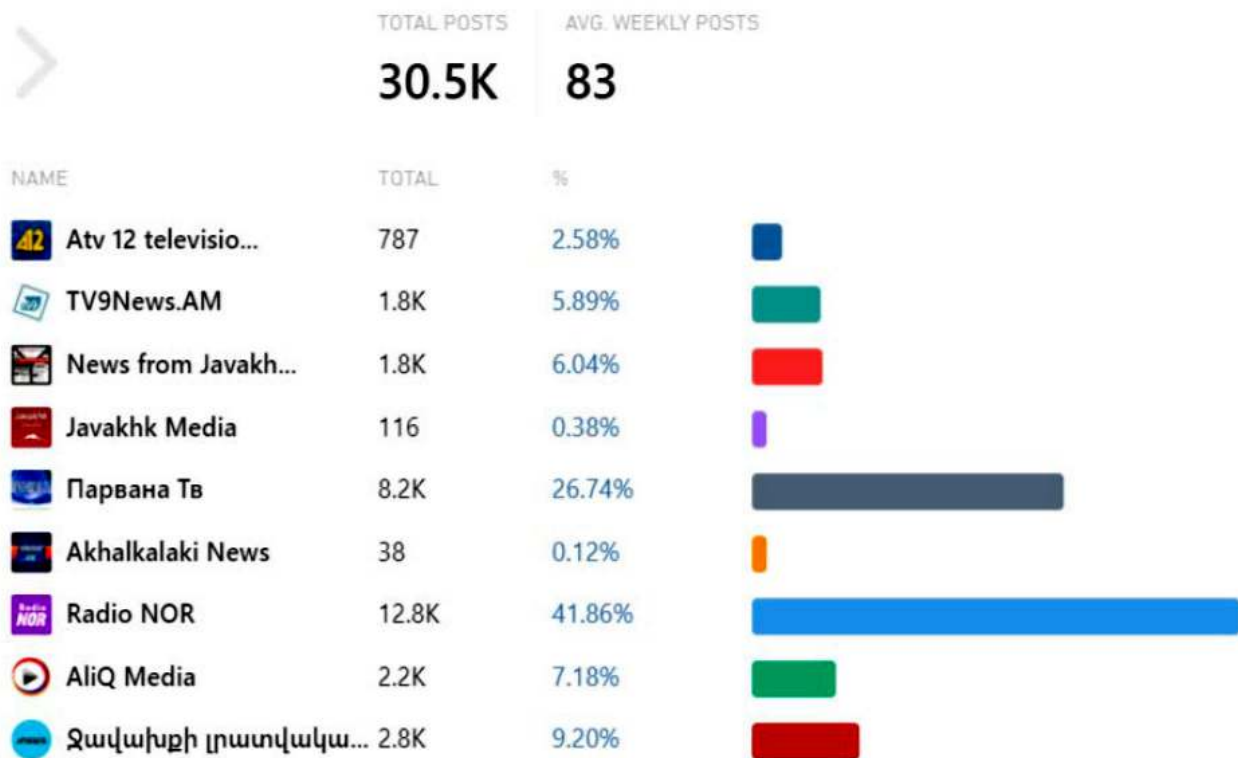




Among Armenian-language regional media outlets, the Facebook pages of Radio Nor, Parvana TV and Samkhretis Karibche published the highest number of posts.

FIGURE 2. FACEBOOK ACTIVITY OF ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA OUTLETS MAY 1, 2021 – JANUARY 31, 2022





TOPICS. Of the 59 456 total posts published during the reporting period, 2,175 were dedicated to conflicts. Notably, Armenian-language media (1,276) devoted more content to the topic of conflicts compared to the Azerbaijani-language media (899). Most of the conflict-related posts focused on the resumption of the Nagorno-Karabakh war, as well as post-war processes and border incidents. In addition to Nagorno-Karabakh, topics such as the Taliban’s use of force to seize control over Afghanistan, the developments around protests in Kazakhstan, and the mobilization of Russian troops along the Ukrainian border were covered during the monitoring period.

As shown in Table 1, both direct (695) and indirect (333) coverage of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in the Armenian-language media far exceeds the coverage of the Azerbaijani-language media (direct: 352; indirect: 213). Other topics were mostly covered only directly. Issues related to the occupied territories of Georgia were covered more frequently in the Armenian-language media (82) compared to Azerbaijani-language media (34), while the interethnic conflict in Kvemo Kartli (Dmanisi) was covered rather extensively in the Azerbaijani-language media (52).³ Following the end of the Nagorno-Karabakh war, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s initiative to establish a “3 + 3” for-

³ On May 17, 2021, a conflict that began on banal grounds at a local shop between ethnic Georgian and Azerbaijani citizens of Georgia in Dmanisi escalated into physical violence, mass disturbances, and a confrontation. Police forces were deployed to Dmanisi. On May 18, with the involvement of representatives of central and local authorities as well as the clergy, the conflicting parties met at Dmanisi city hall and agreed to end the confrontation. <https://civil.ge/archives/419991>

mat⁴ of regional cooperation was almost equally covered by both media (Azerbaijani-language: 45; Armenian-language: 41). No significant difference was observed between the Azerbaijani-language (75) and Armenian-language (69) media coverage around the mobilization of Russian troops along the Ukrainian border. The picture is somewhat different when it comes to the materials published by the regional media outlets about the Taliban's seizure of control in Afghanistan, which were considerably more common in the Azerbaijani-language media outlets (90) compared to the Armenian-language media (22).

TABLE 1. DIRECT AND INDIRECT COVERAGE OF CONFLICT-RELATED TOPICS IN ARMENIAN- AND AZERBAIJANI- LANGUAGE MEDIA OUTLETS, MAY 1, 2021 - JANUARY 31, 2022

	ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA		AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE MEDIA	
	DIRECT	INDIRECT	DIRECT	INDIRECT
The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict	695	333	352	213
Occupied Territories of Georgia	82		34	
Mobilization of Russian troops along the border of Ukraine	69		75	
Proposition of the “3+3” format by Russia	41		45	
Establishment of the Taliban rule in Afghanistan	22		90	
Protests in Kazakhstan	18		32	
Interethnic confrontation in Georgia	5		52	
Genocide	9			
Demarcation of the Georgian-Azerbaijani border / the disputed Davit Gareji monastery		2	2	4

As for the coverage of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the topic of military personnel killed and wounded as a result of the conflict (322) dominated among the Armenian-language outlets, followed by the topics of international negotiations (248) on the resolution of the conflict, the release of detained servicemen (228), and incidents on the disputed territories of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border (160). These issues were covered less intensively in the Azerbaijani-language media, where the greatest attention was devoted to the topic of international negotiations on the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (205) and the least attention was devoted to issues related to the release of Armenian servicemen (50).

The issue of the demarcation/demilitarization of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border was almost equally

⁴ The “3 + 3” format is an initiative of the President of Turkey, which he voiced in 2020 after the end of the Nagorno-Karabakh war. The format envisages the regional integration of the three South Caucasus countries (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan) on the one hand and Russia, Turkey, and Iran on the other.

covered by both Armenian-language (70) and Azerbaijani-language (65) regional media outlets, as were the process of mobilization of Russian military units along the border of Ukraine (Azerbaijani-language: 75; Armenian-language: 69) and the issue of Georgia's participation in the "3+3" format initiated by Turkey (Azerbaijani-language: 45; Armenian-language: 41).

Topics related to the occupied territories of Georgia, such as the 28th anniversary of the fall of Sokhumi, the support of the country's territorial integrity and sovereignty by international partners, and the provision of refugee housing, were covered more in the Armenian-language regional media (82) than in the Azerbaijani-language regional media (33).

When it comes to international issues, the establishment of Taliban rule in Afghanistan (Azerbaijani-language: 90; Armenian-language: 22), as well as the mass protests in Kazakhstan⁵ (Azerbaijani-language: 32; Armenian-language: 18) were covered more extensively by the Azerbaijani-language regional media compared to the Armenian-language media.

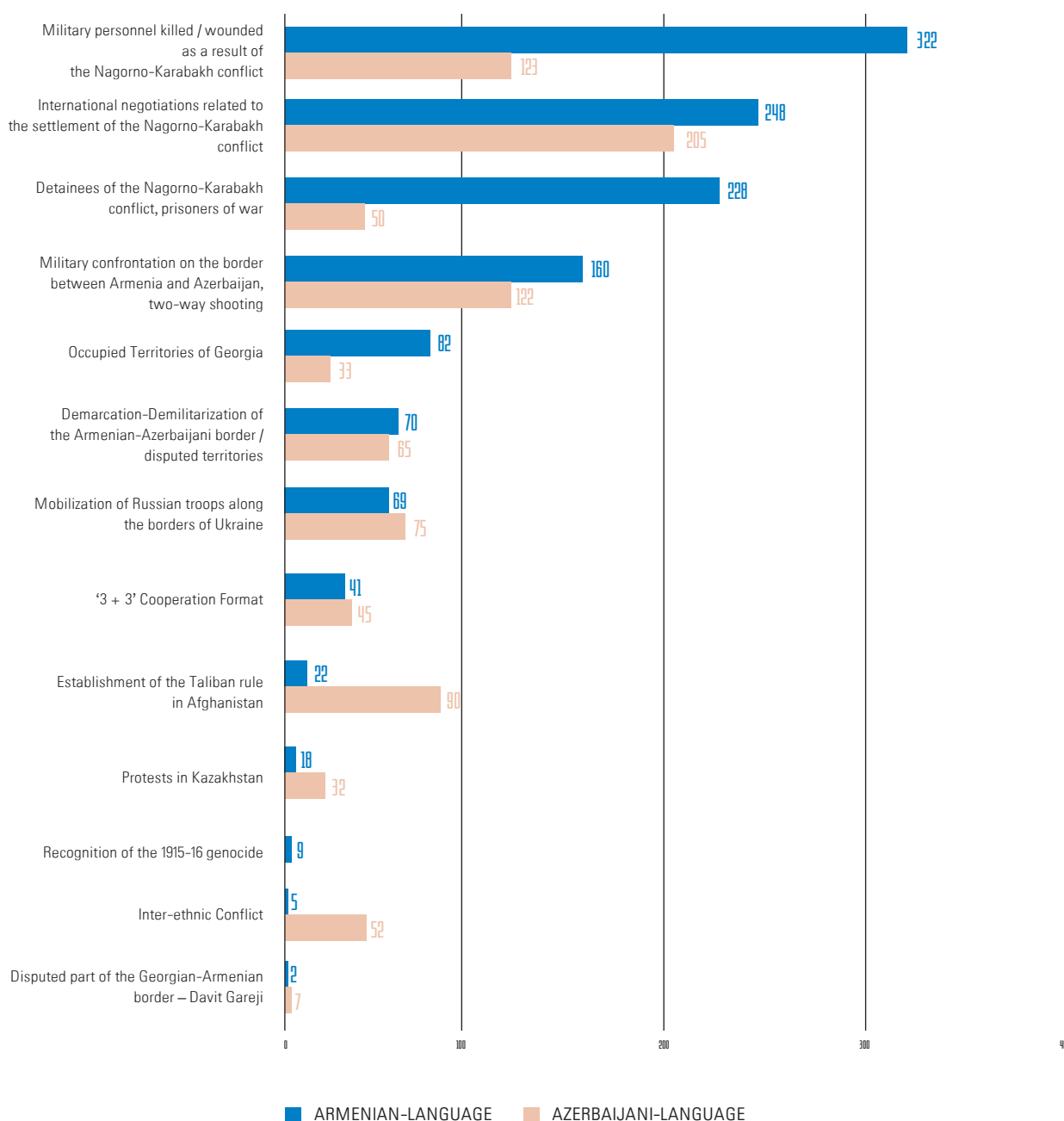
The interethnic conflict in Dmanisi, which involved Georgian ethnic Azerbaijanis and ethnic Georgians, was widely covered by the Azerbaijani-language regional media (52), as was the case of Davit Gareji on the disputed section of the Georgian-Azerbaijani border (6).

The recognition of the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916 by the United States was covered only by the Armenian-language regional media (9).⁶

⁵ On January 1, 2022, the increase in the price of natural gas provoked public protest in Kazakhstan, which turned into a mass protest on January 2.

⁶ On April 24, US President Joe Biden recognized the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916 by the Ottoman Empire and issued an official statement on the issue. <https://bit.ly/36n3oRk>

FIGURE 3. VARIOUS ASPECTS OF CONFLICT REPORTING IN ARMENIAN- AND AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE MEDIA OUTLETS, MAY 1, 2021 – JANUARY 31, 2022



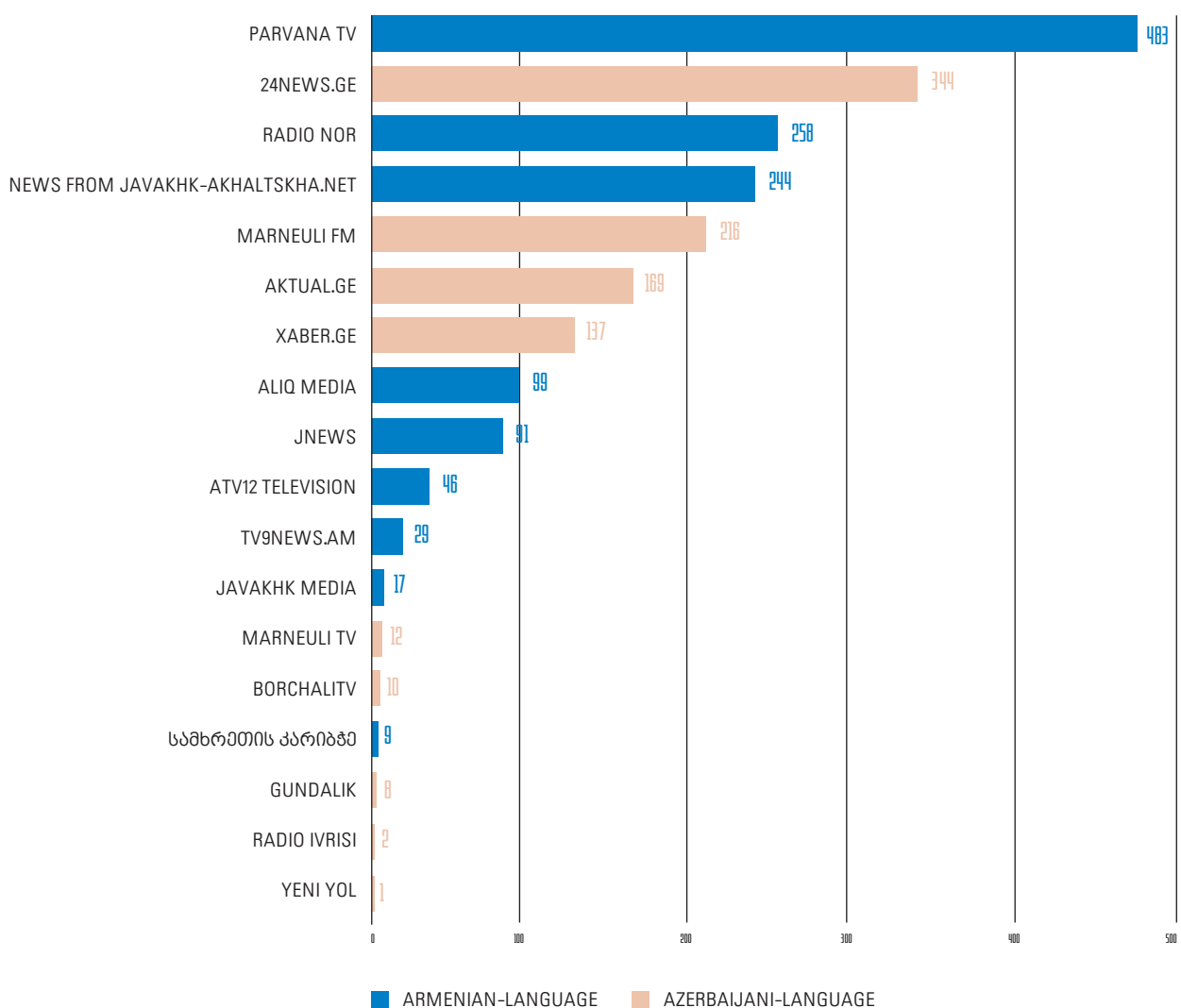
NUMBER OF PUBLICATIONS BY MEDIA OUTLETS

During the period covered by the monitoring report, (May 1, 2021 – January 31, 2022) 9 out of 10 monitored Armenian-language regional media outlets covered the topic of conflicts at various levels of intensity. The topic was not covered by the Facebook page of Akhalkalaki News. Conflict-related topics were most frequently covered on the Facebook pages of the following Armenian-language media outlets: Parvana TV (483), Radio Nor (258) and the online outlet News from Javakhk-Akhaltskha (244). Aliq Media (99) and Jnews (91) published approximately the same amount of conflict-related Face-

book posts. The topic was covered the least intensively by the Facebook pages of ATV-12 (45), TV9 NEWS (29), Javakh Media (17), and Samkhretis Karibche (9).

Among the monitored Azerbaijani-language media outlets, only the Facebook page of Radio Bolnisi did not cover conflict-related topics. Among the remaining monitoring subjects, the topic was intensively covered by the following four outlets: 24 News (344), Radio Marneuli (216), Aktual.ge (196), and Xaber.ge (137). The Facebook pages of Marneuli TV (12) and Borchali TV (10) covered conflicts somewhat rarely, while the remaining outlets published less than 10 publications on the aforementioned topic.

FIGURE 4. NUMBER OF PUBLICATIONS BY MEDIA OUTLETS, MAY 1, 2021 - JANUARY 31, 2022



2. QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM

ASSESSING QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM. The Internews methodology assesses the quality and professionalism of conflict coverage based on the following indicators: accuracy, objectivity/impartiality, balance/fairness, relevance, language, background/context, and clarity.

OVERALL DATA. The results of the media outlets content monitoring revealed that among the indicators of quality and professionalism, the overall score of the balance indicator was the most problematic (0.30). Both Armenian-language (0.33) and Azerbaijani-language (0.26) media outlets relied solely on official Armenian and Azerbaijani sources, respectively. Prioritization of official sources and the neglect of the people directly affected by the news stories resulted in the low value of the content indicator (0.42). If the Azerbaijani-language media outlets scored lower in the balance indicator, the value of the content indicator was more or less equal (Armenian-language: 0.42; Azerbaijani-language: 0.41) in both cases.

The values for the indicators of background/context (0.68), objectivity (0.61), language (0.64), and accuracy (0.64) were above average, while the most difference between the Azerbaijani-language (0.80) and Armenian-language (0.48) materials was observed in terms of accuracy indicator. This can be attributed to the omission of a number of important sources by the Armenian-language media outlets.

The outlets scored the highest in the indicators of relevance (0.82) and clarity (0.95).

TABLE 2: ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM, MAY 1, 2021 – JANUARY 31, 2022

Scores: 0 = breach of standard (low score); 1 = adherence to standard (high score)

REPORTING QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM	OVERALL SCORE	AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE MEDIA OUTLETS	ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA OUTLETS
Accuracy	0.64	0.80	0.48
Objectivity / impartiality	0.61	0.56	0.65
Relevance	0.82	0.86	0.80
Content	0.42	0.41	0.42
Balance	0.30	0.26	0.33
Language		0.64	0.66 0.59
Background / context	0.68	0.86	0.56
Clarity	0.93	0.95	0.91

ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA OUTLETS

FREQUENCY OF REPORTING. In assessing the indicators of quality and professionalism of the regional media, the outlets were divided into two categories in accordance with the intensity of coverage. The first category included media outlets that published more than 50 articles on conflicts during the monitoring period, while the second category included platforms that published less than 50 articles. In this regard, five Armenian-language media outlets were identified during the monitoring period that fell into the first category, while four fell into the second one:

- I. MORE THAN 50:** Among the Armenian-language media outlets, the topic of conflicts was most intensively covered by Parvana TV (483), followed by Radio NOR (258) and News from Javakhhk-Akhalt-skha (244). The number of relevant items published by Aliq Media (99) and JNEWS (91) was almost equal.
- II. LESS THAN 50:** Atv 12 (46), TV9 News (29), Javakhhk Media (17), and Samkhretis Karibche (9) published the least amount of materials on the topic of conflicts.

HIGH-INTENSITY REPORTING ON CONFLICTS BY THE ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA. Among the Armenian-language media outlets that reported on the topic of conflicts most intensively, the following trends have been observed:

- In terms of **ACCURACY**, Aliq Media scored the highest (0.71), followed by Radio NOR (0.62) and JNEWS (0.61) with almost equal scores. An average level of accuracy was observed in the reporting of Parvana TV (0.50), and the lowest in News from Javakhhk-Akhaltskha (0.39).
- The rating in the **OBJECTIVITY** indicator is above average for all media outlets of this category. The difference between the highest rating (Radio NOR, 0.75) and the lowest (Parvana TV, 0.64) is 0.11. The indicator rating is almost equal for the materials of Radio NOR (0.75), Aliq Media (0.72), and JNEWS (0.71), followed by News from Javakhhk-Akhaltskha (0.66).

- Aliq Media's reporting was rated as having the highest degree of **RELEVANCE** (0.91), although this figure is quite high for other outlets as well.
- In terms of **CONTENT AND BALANCE**, all outlets scored lower than average, with the most problematic levels observed in the reporting of News from Javakhh-Akhaltskha (0.23) and Parvana TV (0.29).
- The **LANGUAGE** indicator rating ranges between slightly above average (Aliq Media; JNEWS; and News from Javakhh-Akhaltskha) and average (Parvana TV; and Radio NOR).
- In terms of **BACKGROUND / CONTEXT**, the highest score was accorded to the coverage of Aliq Media (0.76) and Radio NOR (0.62), while the scores of other media outlets slightly exceed the average level.
- The indicator of **CLARITY** has hewed closely to the desired reporting standard in all the cases.

TABLE 3: ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM BY ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA OUTLETS (>50 ARTICLES)

	NUMBER OF ARTICLES	ACCURACY	OBJECTIVITY	RELEVANCE	CONTENT	BALANCE	LANGUAGE	BACKGROUND / CONTEXT	CLARITY
Parvana TV	483	0.50	0.64	0.80	0.37	0.29	0.57	0.53	0.88
Radio NOR	258	0.62	0.75	0.81	0.47	0.44	0.54	0.62	0.97
News from Javakhh-Akhaltskha	244	0.39	0.66	0.76	0.43	0.23	0.68	0.50	0.92
Aliq Media	99	0.71	0.72	0.91	0.47	0.37	0.67	0.76	0.97
JNEWS	91	0.61	0.71	0.79	0.47	0.38	0.63	0.55	0.98

LOW-INTENSITY REPORTING ON CONFLICTS BY THE ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA. Among the Armenian-language media outlets, reported on the topic conflicts less intensively, the following trends have been observed:

- When it comes to the assessment indicators, the score of Samkhretis Karibche is closest to the standard of reporting. With the exception of the content indicator (0.50), all the remaining indicator scores for the outlet are far above average.
- In terms of **ACCURACY**, the overall score of Samkhretis Karibche (0.78) was above average, TV9News (0.66) and Atv 12 (0.50) scored near average, while Javakhh Media (0.24) saw the lowest score.
- With the exception of **content** (0.07) and **CLARITY** (0.30), the scores for all other indicators of TV9News are above average. When it comes to ATV 12, with the exception of **CLARITY** (0.98) and **RELEVANCE** (0.72), the scores for all the remaining indicators are below average.
- Except for **RELEVANCE** (0.61) and **CLARITY** (0.75), the scores for the remaining indicators for Javakhh Media are low.

TABLE 4: ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM BY ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA OUTLETS (<50 ARTICLES)

	NUMBER OF ARTICLES	ACCURACY	OBJECTIVITY	RELEVANCE	CONTENT	BALANCE	LANGUAGE	BACKGROUND / CONTEXT	CLARITY
Atv 12	46	0.50	0.37	0.72	0.49	0.30	0.49	0.38	0.98
TV9News	29	0.66	0.76	0.78	0.07	0.47	0.59	0.57	0.30
Javakhh Media	17	0.24	0.39	0.61	0.32	0.20	0.35	0.27	0.75
Samxretis karibche	9	0.78	0.78	0.90	0.50	0.63	0.89	0.85	1

AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA OUTLETS

FREQUENCY OF REPORTING. When it comes to the Azerbaijani-language regional media, we find more than 50 articles on the topic of conflicts in 4 outlets, and less than 50 in five. In addition, the reporting frequency in the latter category does not go beyond singular publications:

- I. **MORE THAN 50:** Among the Azerbaijani-language media outlets, the topic of conflicts was most intensively covered by 24News.ge (344), Marneuli FM (216), Aktual.ge (169), and Xaber.ge (139).
- II. **LESS THAN 50:** Marneuli TV (12), Borchalitiv (10), and Gundalik (8) devoted only a small portion of their coverage to conflict-related topics. Radio Ivris featured only 2 articles, while Yeni Yol published only one.

HIGH-INTENSITY REPORTING ON CONFLICTS BY THE AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA. Among the Azerbaijani-language media outlets that reported on the topic of conflicts most intensively, the following trends have been observed:

- For media outlets characterized by a high intensity of reporting, with the exception of **CONTENT** and **BALANCE**, all indicators scored above average.
- Radio Marneuli (0.90) demonstrated the highest degree of **ACCURACY** among the group, followed by Aktual.ge (0.79) and 24News.ge (0.79) with equal scores. While the score of Xaber.ge is the lowest (0.67), it is still higher than average.
- The scores in the **OBJECTIVITY** indicator, with the exception of Radio Marneuli (0.64), only slightly exceed the average (in the case of other outlets Xaber.ge: 0.51; 24News.ge: 0.54; and Aktual.ge: 0.55).
- The scores of **CLARITY**, **RELEVANCE**, and **CONTEXT** were closest to the ideal standard of reporting, while the most problematic were **CONTENT** and **BALANCE** indicators, which all scored below average.
- The **CONTENT** indicator, which measures the representation of those affected by issues along with that of official sources, was observed to be highest for Radio Marneuli (0.46) and the lowest for Xaber.ge (0.35).
- Radio Marneuli (0.34) also leads in terms of **BALANCE**, while the scores of the remaining media outlets are almost equal (Xaber.ge: 0.25; 24News.ge: 0.24; and Aktual.ge: 0.23).

TABLE 5: ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM BY AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA OUTLETS (>50 ARTICLES)

	NUMBER OF ARTICLES	ACCURACY	OBJECTIVITY	RELEVANCE	CONTENT	BALANCE	LANGUAGE	BACKGROUND / CONTEXT	CLARITY
24News.ge	344	0.79	0.54	0.88	0.41	0.24	0.47	0.88	0.97
Marneuli FM	216	0.90	0.64	0.90	0.46	0.34	0.77	0.94	0.98
Aktual.ge	169	0.79	0.55	0.83	0.43	0.23	0.67	0.83	0.91
Xaber.ge	137	0.67	0.51	0.85	0.35	0.25	0.66	0.81	0.98

LOW-INTENSITY REPORTING ON CONFLICTS BY THE AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA. Among the Azerbaijani-language media outlets that reported on the topic of conflicts less intensively, the following trends have been observed:

- The **ACCURACY** indicator is highest in the case of Marneuli TV, Radio Ivrisi, and Yeni Yol (1), while in the case of Gundalik (0.75) and Borchaliv (0.60) it was higher than average.
- Two articles of Radio Ivrisi scored the highest in the **OBJECTIVITY** indicator, (1) while the indicators of Yeni Yol and Marneuli TV (0.63) are identical and higher than average. The lowest score was observed in the case of Borchaliv (0.33).
- With the exception of Gundalik (0.30), the **RELEVANCE** indicator is above average for all media outlets.
- In terms of **CONTENT**, Marneuli TV scored the highest (0.65) and Yeni Yol was rated as average (0.50), while all the remaining outlets scored below average.
- The scores of **BALANCE** and **LANGUAGE** indicators are higher than average for Marneuli TV and Radio Ivrisi, while the scores for context (0.13) and clarity (0.50) were found to be the lowest for Gundalik.

TABLE 6: ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM BY AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA OUTLETS (<50 ARTICLES)

	NUMBER OF ARTICLES	ACCURACY	OBJECTIVITY	RELEVANCE	CONTENT	BALANCE	LANGUAGE	BACKGROUND / CONTEXT	CLARITY
Marneuli TV	12	1	0.63	0.85	0.67	0.54	0.67	0.92	1
Borchaliv	10	0.60	0.33	0.73	0.20	0.20	0.28	0.53	0.70
Gundalik	8	0.75	0.46	0.30	0.25	0.08	0.37	0.13	0.50
Radio Ivrisi	2	1	1	0.89	0.25	0.67	0.50	1	1

2.1 ACCURACY

The indicator of accuracy is evaluated based on the credibility of sources, the number of sources, reporting of unverified information, and omission of important sources.

SCORE: 0.64

Of the 2,175 materials published in Azerbaijani- and Armenian- language regional media, various measures of deviation from the accuracy standard were observed in 792 materials in one or more of the above sub-indicators.

The most widespread deviation from the standard was the omission of important sources (33.38%). When reporting on conflicts, media outlets were one-sided and relied on a single source, primarily Armenian or Azerbaijani sources.

The omission of important sources was observed in 556 out of 1,276 materials published by the Armenian-language regional media, while out of 899 materials published by the Azerbaijani-language me-

dia outlets, the source issue was present in 166. Accordingly, this tendency was reflected in the media accuracy indicator scores (Azerbaijani-language: 0.80; Armenian-language: 0.48). Such a significant difference in the accuracy indicator scores can also be explained by the frequency of reporting, as the direct and indirect coverage of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in the Armenian-language media (1028) is almost twice that of the Azerbaijani-language media (565) and therefore reflected a more frequent lack of sources from the opposing side.

It must be noted, however, that Armenian-language media scored better in the remaining sub-indicators of accuracy compared to Azerbaijani-language media, with the latter often deviating from the standard by using non-credible sources (Armenian-language: 1.8%; Azerbaijani-language: 5.12%) and reporting unverified information (Armenian-language: 0.78%; Azerbaijani-language: 2.78%).

The use of general, unspecified sources (3.17%) was a problem in certain cases; 3.4% of the published materials contained no sources at all.

SELECTED EXAMPLES:

A video⁷ shared by Parvana TV on August 26 is accompanied by a description, according to which an Azerbaijani serviceman broke into a house in Martakert where two children were staying. One of them managed to call the police, and the police took the man away. The video shows two police officers taking a person out of the house. However, the Facebook post does not indicate sources – namely, by whom the video was taken – nor does it feature an official source: a comment from the police.

Parvana TV once more published information about the Azerbaijani soldier detained during the incident, this time indicating his identity (Jamil Babayev), while covering the exchange of hostages on September 7. However, the source was not mentioned in this case either. Representatives of the Red Cross can be seen in the accompanying visual, and neither the mentioned organization nor a representative of it was used as a source in the disseminated material.

The Azerbaijani-language media outlet 24 News.ge reported that “a group of Armenian citizens secretly crossed the Dmanisi border – they are not detained,”⁸ citing the population of the village of Irganchai as a whole. The author of the news article claims on the basis of a general source (village locals) that these people chose immediate imprisonment in Georgia over death in Nagorno-Karabakh. Although the information was verified with an official source and the material indicates that the Ministry of Internal Affairs has not confirmed the occurrence of the alleged incident, the title of the article presents the information as fact and is therefore problematic in terms of accuracy.

⁷ Parvana TV, August 26, <https://bit.ly/3lF6lLx>

⁸ 24News.ge, May 30, <https://www.facebook.com/1510727729175828/posts/2905417986373455>

OTHER MEDIA SOURCES. Given the specifics of regional media, Azerbaijani- and Armenian-language outlets monitored by the study often published stories produced by other media outlets. Of 985 items identified as such, only 582 referenced the original media sources.

In addition to Armenian sources, Armenian-language regional media outlets often used Russian propagandist media outlets as sources (Tass.ru, Armeniasputnik.am, Россия 24 [Russia 24]; ria.ru, and Infoteka24.ru). Russian sources are less frequently found in the materials of the Azerbaijani-language regional media.

As for Georgian media, Armenian-language regional media mainly published content of credible Georgian national platforms, with a few exceptions such as Taonews.ge and Newsgeorgia.ge.

Both materials published by Javakhk Media based on Taonews.ge ran the risk of inciting hatred. One of them covered the confrontation between ethnic Azerbaijanis and a local bishop over agricultural lands in Kvemo Kartli in a xenophobic context,⁹ while the other concerned a poem recited by the Turkish president about Meskheti.¹⁰

Azerbaijani-language media outlets relied mainly on Azerbaijani sources, most often on Report.az. As for Georgian sources, regional media relied mainly on critical channels (Mtavari Arkhi, TV Pirveli, and Formula TV).

TABLE 7. SOURCES OF REGIONAL MEDIA OUTLETS

ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA			AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE MEDIA		
ARMENIAN MEDIA	GEORGIAN MEDIA, AS WELL AS MULTILINGUAL OUTLETS OPERATING IN GEORGIA	RUSSIAN MEDIA	AZERBAIJANI MEDIA	GEORGIAN MEDIA	RUSSIAN MEDIA
tert.am	newsgeorgia.ge	tass.ru	report.az		TASS
tv.am	interpressnews.ge	Россия 24	apa.az	Mtavari arkhi	armeniasputnik.am
alternativ.am;	1tv.ge	infoteka24.ru	axar.az	TV Pirveli	Ria Novost
past.am		moscow-baku.ru	AZTV	Formula TV	
armenpress.am	jam-news.net	armeniasputnik.am	salamnews.org	report.ge	
GALA TV	netgazeti.ge	ria.ru	publika.az	Gpb	
armnews news.am iravaban.net	sova.news	sputnik-georgia.ru	qafqazinfo.az	Netgazeti	
mediahub.am a1plus.am shoghakat.am para.tv	aliq.ge	interfax.ru	baku.ws	InterPressNews	
hraparak.am Artsakh Public TV 5tv.am yerkir.am	newsgeorgia.ge	novostink.net	trend.az	kvirispalitra.ge (Georgian)	

⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/111026635652359/posts/4084951354926514>

¹⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/Javakhk.Media/posts/4127782530643396>

ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA			AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE MEDIA		
ARMENIAN MEDIA	GEORGIAN MEDIA, AS WELL AS MULTILINGUAL OUTLETS OPERATING IN GEORGIA	RUSSIAN MEDIA	AZERBAIJANI MEDIA	GEORGIAN MEDIA	RUSSIAN MEDIA
tsayg.am shamshyan.com AREG TV	spress.ge		Baku TV	Palitra News	
1lurer.am civilnet.am panarmenian.net	taonews.ge		azertac.az		
lurer.com			oxu24.com		

Materials containing disinformation or unspecified data are primarily found in the media outlets of the monitoring subjects when they share publications prepared by other media outlets or in materials based on these media outlets' content.

SELECTED EXAMPLES:

- **INFORMATION BASED ON ANOTHER SOURCE:** Citing Caliber AZ,¹¹ a military analysis channel on YouTube, Azerbaijani-language outlet Xeber.ge¹² reported on August 9 that Armenian troops were being deployed in the territory controlled by Russian peacekeepers. According to the creator of the YouTube channel, the Armenian soldiers were moving via military and civilian transport to the territories temporarily under the control of the Russian peacekeepers, and the Russian side was not reacting. The information shared by Xeber.ge, does not in fact rely on official sources, which casts doubt on the credibility of the information.
- **SHARING ARTICLES PREPARED BY OTHER MEDIA OUTLETS ON FACEBOOK.** A similar trend was observed in the Armenian-language media. Javahk Media published an article by Russian-language online outlet Infoteka24.ru entitled "Turkish and Azerbaijani special services stand behind attempts to pit Georgians against Armenians" on its Facebook page.¹³ The article, which was based entirely on an interview with Shota Apkhaidze, director of the pro-Kremlin organization Caucasus Center for Islamic Studies,¹⁴ reported on alleged websites created by Turkish and Azerbaijani special services aimed at inciting ethnic strife using the topic of the Bagramyan Battalion.¹⁵

¹¹ Caliber AZ, August 9, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h91YWIXtui4>

¹² Xeber.ge, August 9, Armenians send troops to Nagorno-Karabakh, peacekeepers remain silent – Video, <https://www.facebook.com/104504864588179/posts/358583702513626>

¹³ Javahk Media, May 4, <https://www.facebook.com/111026635652359/posts/3995285853893065>

¹⁴ <http://mythdetector.ge/ka/profile/apkhaidze-shota>

¹⁵ The Bagramyan Battalion was a unit established in 1992–93 during the War in Abkhazia. Mainly composed of ethnic Armenians residing in Gagra, Gudauta, and Tkvarcheli, the battalion fought along with the separatists. The unit was named after the Soviet Armenian Marshal Ivan Bagramyan.

2.2. OBJECTIVITY / IMPARTIALITY

The indicator of objectivity is assessed based on the representation of various points of view, the presence of opposing viewpoints, attribution of opinions to sources, and the absence of attitudes or personal viewpoints of reporters or news outlets in materials. Assessment: 0 = partial, non-objective coverage; 1 = impartial, objective coverage.

SCORE: 0.61

When it comes to the objectivity/impartiality indicator, the closest to the standard is neutral reporting (i.e. reporting not reflecting the attitudes or personal views of reporters and/or news outlets; 86.6%), followed by the identification/referencing of sources of opinions and positions (85.7%). The lowest score is accorded to the usage of conflicting opinions in the materials (11.1%).

Opposing views (15.8%) were more frequently reflected in the Armenian-language publications compared to the Azerbaijani-language media (4.3%). At the same time, the attitudes and points of view of the authors of the publications were present in only 6% of the Armenian-language materials, compared to 23.9% in the case of the Azerbaijani-language ones.

SELECTED EXAMPLES:

Several instances were identified in which bias in coverage of conflicts was evident in the title of the article. In some news articles on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border clashes, the term “provocation” appeared in both Azerbaijani-language and Armenian-language regional media headlines:

NEWS FROM JAVAKHK-AKHALTSKHA.NET HEADLINE: “Two servicemen were lightly wounded as a result of provocation by Azerbaijan – shooting has stopped”¹⁶

24NEWS.GE HEADLINE: “Armenians create a provocation in the direction of Kalbajar: shooting continues”¹⁷

2.3. RELEVANCE

The indicator of relevance assesses the relevance of a news item to target audiences. Assessment: 0 = irrelevant; 1 = relevant

SCORE: 0.82

Although most of the published topics were relevant to the local target audiences, making the overall score in the indicator quite high (0.82), 60% of the articles did not explain what impact a particular

¹⁶ News from Javakhk-Akhaltskha.Net, December 9, <https://bit.ly/3lyLUyU>

¹⁷ Marneuli FM, November 19, <https://bit.ly/385C6QB>

event might have on the audience. When measuring relevance, irrelevant mentions of conflict or post-conflict situations was identified in only 8.6% of the materials.

SELECTED EXAMPLE:

In terms of relevance, the information published by the Azerbaijani-language media Xeber.ge regarding the equestrian competition in Georgia was interesting. The article titled “Karabakh veteran became the first in Georgia”¹⁸ concerned the victory of “Khan-Khan” equestrian club jockey Hilal Nazarov in the competition in Georgia. The journalist adds that the winner is a veteran of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and was previously awarded the Brave Warrior Medal by the president.

The article does not provide information on the date of the competition or other prize winners, and the participation of the winner in the war in Nagorno-Karabakh raises questions regarding the relevance of mentioning the war in the coverage of the equestrian event, and even more so in the title.

2.4. CONTENT

The content indicator assesses whether a news item covers official perspectives as well as the perspectives of those affected by the developments. Assessment: 0 = low standard of coverage; 1 = high standard of coverage.

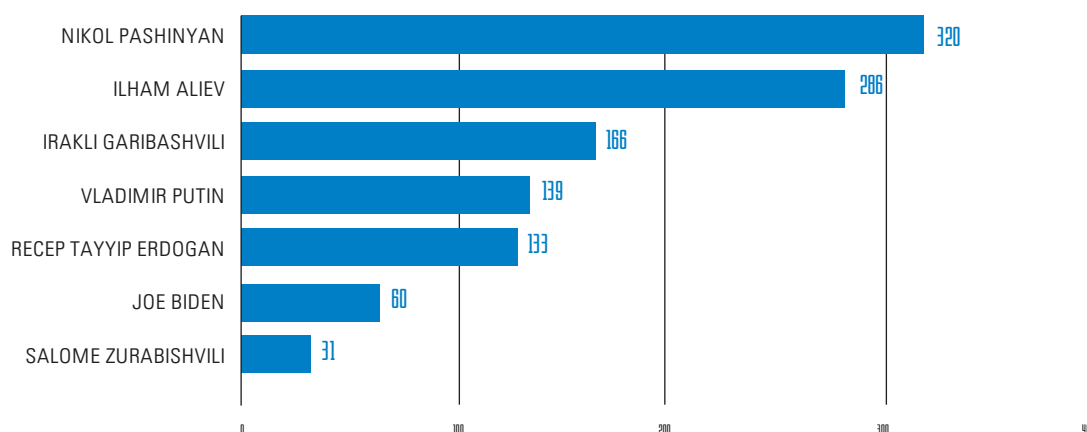
SCORE: 0.42

The overall score of the content indicator is lower than average (0.41), as media outlets at the time of coverage relied heavily on government and official perspectives (73%) and were less likely to portray people directly influenced by the news (0.09%). This can be partially attributed to the limited resources of the regional media outlets. In the Armenian-language media articles covering the bilateral shooting incident on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, the positions and assessments of officials were predominantly presented. Human stories were presented in the media through coverage of the military servicemen who died during the conflict, the process of rehabilitation of soldiers returning from the war, and the stories that occurred amid the war.

Among the leaders covered by the regional media outlets, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan (320) and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev (286) come first and second, while the Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili lags behind noticeably (166). Coverage of Russian President Vladimir Putin (139) and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (133) was almost equal. US President Joe Biden was relatively less represented in the regional media (60), while Georgian President Salome Zurbishvili appeared to be the least represented political leader (31).

¹⁸ Xeber.ge, October 29, <https://www.facebook.com/104504864588179/posts/410471490658180>

FIGURE 5. COVERING POLITICAL LEADERS, MAY 1, 2021 – JANUARY 31, 2022



The negative coverage of Nikol Pashinyan (19) in the Armenian-language regional media was comparatively less than the positive coverage (96), while no instances of negative coverage of the President of Azerbaijan appeared in the Azerbaijani-language media and the number of instances of positive coverage amounted to 37. No negative coverage of the Turkish President was observed in the Azerbaijani-language regional media, while 15 such cases were revealed in the Armenian-language media. The number of instances of positive coverage of Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the regional media was almost equal (Azerbaijani-language: 23; Armenian-language: 20;).

Positive media coverage of Georgian leaders also prevails in the regional media outlets. However, it should be noted that the positive coverage of Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili in the Armenian-language media (89) is significantly higher than in the Azerbaijani-language media (18). This can be attributed to Georgia's role in the negotiations on the return of captives to Armenia.¹⁹ In the regional media, the President of Georgia appeared most often in the Armenian language – largely in a positive context – and the only case of negative coverage of her in the Azerbaijani-language outlets was related to the dispute over Davit Gareji.²⁰

In contrast to the Armenian-language media (16), no negative coverage of the Russian president was observed in Azerbaijani-language regional outlets. US President Joe Biden has been mentioned three times in a negative context regarding the events that took place in Afghanistan.

2.5. BALANCE

The indicator of balance assesses whether different points of view are duly represented in a story and whether the perspective of any of the sides has been omitted.

Assessment: 0 = not balanced, 1 = balanced.

SCORE: 0.30



¹⁹ Through the mediation of Georgia, Azerbaijan Swapped 15 Armenian Captives for Mine Maps. <https://civil.ge/archives/427221>

²⁰ Radio Ivrissi, 17 November, <https://www.facebook.com/404613603252694/posts/1517801121933931>

The professionalism score appeared to be the lowest in the balance indicator (0.30). The low score is largely due to the omission of a number of important sources by the media outlets (56%). In addition, media coverage did not provide equal representation of different positions (23.17%) and opposing sides (10.57%), while attempts by journalists to obtain comments from the opposing side appeared in only 1.47% of the materials.

SELECTED EXAMPLES:

The case of the crossing of the Azerbaijani border by the Armenian military on June 8 provides a clear example of shortcomings per the balance indicator and the coverage of the same event from a different perspective in Azerbaijani-language and Armenian-language media. As can be seen in the table below, both the visual information and the headlines suggest a different motive for the Armenian soldier crossing the border:

24 NEWS.GE, AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA OUTLET	JNEWS, ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE REGIONAL MEDIA OUTLET
 <p>A member of an Armenian sabotage group trying to plant a mine in Lachin was detained</p> <p>Headline: “A member of an Armenian sabotage group trying to plant a mine in Lachin was detained.”²¹</p>	 <p>Headline: “An Armenian serviceman [got lost and] found himself in the territory controlled by Azerbaijan.”²²</p>

24 News.ge’s report quotes the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry as saying that a member of the subversive group took advantage of the bad weather and entered the Azerbaijani-controlled territory, after which he was detained by a member of an Azerbaijani military unit. The material is solely based on an official Azerbaijani source and does not cite the official position of Armenia.

Jnews denied the same incident and the accusation of the Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan, citing

²¹ 24 News.ge, June 8, <https://www.facebook.com/1510727729175828/posts/2911505269098060>

²² Jnews, June 8, <https://www.facebook.com/188861221858210/posts/999782184099439>

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia. According to the media report, soldier Kartanian lost his way due to fog, got lost, and accidentally found himself in the territory controlled by Azerbaijan.

Notably, citing the Armenian Defense Ministry, Jnews reported on the transfer of a missing service-man to the Armenian side on June 9.²³

2.6. LANGUAGE

The indicator of language assesses whether offensive, inflammatory language, hate speech, xenophobic, or loaded words are used. Assessment: 0 = language is problematic, 1 = language is not problematic.

SCORE: 0.64

Use of inflammatory language and hate speech by journalists was identified in 23% of the materials.

Emotionally loaded terms such as “hero,” “tormented,” “tortured,” and “sacrificed” were used in relation to stories about military personnel who were wounded or captured. The term “terrorist” was used to cover both the events in Afghanistan and the trials of Armenian military personnel by Azerbaijan.

TABLE 8. TERMINOLOGY

AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE MEDIA		ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA	
Liberated	83	Liberated	24
Occupier	68	Occupier	29
Martyr	66	Martyr	14
Victim	44	Victim	194
Terrorist	26	Terrorist	27
Enemy	19	Enemy	37
Hero	26	Hero	62

2.7. BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

The background/context indicator assesses whether a material provides sufficient background and historical information for audiences to fully understand the story and whether there are unanswered questions. Assessment: 0 = background information not provided, 1 = background information is provided.

SCORE: 0.68

Among the sub-indicators defining background/context in the Armenian- and Azerbaijani-language regional media, the highest score is accorded to the information provided to the audience to allow them to fully comprehend the story (86%), while historical facts related to the news are presented

²³ Jnews, July 9, <https://www.facebook.com/188861221858210/posts/1000068410737483>

in 56% of the monitored articles. Blatantly unanswered questions are found in 38% of the monitored materials.

2.8. CLARITY

The indicator of clarity assesses whether the information is provided in a clear and easily comprehensible manner.
Assessment: 0 = unclear, 1 = clear.

SCORE: 0.93

The score of clarity (0.93), which entails delivering the materials in simple and understandable language to the readers, is high in both Armenian- (0.91) and Azerbaijani-language (0.95) media outlets.

3. CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

The conflict sensitivity indicator assesses whether a journalist avoids the use of offensive, inflammatory, and violent imagery or audio; whether a journalist applies a neutral tone, avoids the use of offensive language or hate speech, and maintains impartiality towards parties to the conflict.

Assessment: 0 = not conflict-sensitive, 1 = conflict-sensitive.

SCORE: 0.57

The score of the conflict coverage sensitivity indicator is slightly above average. For the most part, media outlets refrained from using inflammatory and violent imagery (98.2%) as well as offensive and denigrating language (96%). Journalists told the story in a neutral tone in 89% of cases. The lowest score among sensitivity sub-indicators was accorded to the support of journalists for either side of the conflict, with 61.1% of the coverage demonstrating bias towards one side or another.

4. CROSSING RED LINES

The crossing red lines indicator evaluates whether the news item contains violent imagery or audio, hate speech, denigration of an individual or a group, pro-terrorist group coverage, or bias against women.

Evaluation: 0 = red line issues present, 1 = red line issues absent

SCORE: 0.95

In terms of red lines, Azerbaijani- and Armenian- language media outlets largely adhere to the standard (0.95). During the reporting period, there were only 24 identified instances of the use of violent imagery and 35 instances of the use of emotive words and inflammatory language. Instances of hate speech were rare. Emotive wording was mostly used by the Armenian- and Azerbaijani-language media to cover the stories of soldiers killed or wounded in the Nagorno-Karabakh war. When it comes to the Azerbaijani-language media, violent imagery was most often identified in connection with the confrontation in Dmanisi, while for Armenian-language media it was observed in connection with the Armenian servicemen held hostage during the war.

4.1 EXAMPLES OF VIOLENT, INFLAMMATORY LANGUAGE

Cases of inflammatory language in the Azerbaijani-language media are mostly identified in assessments made by journalists when reporting a story. In some cases, the assessments made by journalists coincide with the statements of public figures. We find similar terms like “Armenian vandalism” in the coverage of 24news.ge and “Armenian vandals” in the assessments of the governor of Shushi, Maftun Abbasov, in describing the period when the city of Shushi was under Armenian control.

In the Armenian-language media, as in the Azerbaijani-language media, the use of inflammatory language is mostly observed among journalists.

AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE MEDIA. On August 18, 24news.ge shared a story²⁴ with the headline “Georgian flag fluttered in the liberated town of Shushi.” The article referred to the visit of ethnic Azerbaijani Georgian

²⁴ 24News.ge, 18 August <https://bit.ly/3hw7GrY>

citizens to Shushi while simultaneously accusing Armenians of vandalism. In the article, the journalist spoke about vandalism from an ethnic point of view:

EDITORIAL BOARD: During the visit, they saw historical sites and “places of evidence of Armenian vandalism.”

Armenians are referred to as destroyers of historical and cultural monuments in the September 21 article of another Azerbaijani-language regional outlet, Xeber.ge,²⁵ which concerned the visit of Georgians to Nagorno-Karabakh.

EDITORIAL BOARD: “... they will see the consequences of the destruction carried out by the Armenians during the occupation. During the visit, the guests will visit the destroyed cultural, historical, and religious monuments.”

Based on the content of Azerbaijani outlet Axar.az, Xeber.ge published a news story on July 22 about the expulsion of Armenian clerics from the Khudavang Monastery Complex in the Kalbajar region. In an article entitled “Armenian priests leave Khudavang Monastery forever,”²⁶ a cleric, Nerze Haratunian, states that six Armenian priests have been banned from staying in the monastery.²⁷ At the end of the article, the journalist accuses the Armenian priests and the Russian army of forbidding Azerbaijanis from entering the territory of the monastery and of restricting worship for the Christian members of the Udi community.²⁸ In the same article, the journalist refers to the Armenian clergy as an “enclave” on the territory of Azerbaijan:

EDITORIAL BOARD: “As a result, it seems that the Azerbaijani side has decided to end the existence of an enclave in Kalbajar in the form of an ‘ancient Armenian church.’”

On October 11, Radio Marneuli published an article with the headline “Armenian cultural worker not allowed in Georgia.”²⁹ Armenian media cited Armpress while claiming that Gagik Ginosyan was refused entry at the Georgian border. Although Ginosyan himself mentions the restrictions imposed due to the pandemic as the reason for the refusal of entry into the country, the journalist attributes the incident to separatist sentiments in Samtskhe-Javakheti, noting that Gagik Ginosyan is among the Armenian intellectuals who support separatism.

²⁵ Xeber.ge, September 21, <https://bit.ly/3IPNGfO>

²⁶ Xeber.ge, July 22, <https://bit.ly/3MjS1dk>

²⁷ The author of the article notes that in November 2020, after the Armenian occupation forces left the Kalbajar district, Azerbaijan complied with Moscow’s request that the Khudavang Monastery be open to Armenian believers and allow several Armenian priests to remain in Khudavang.

²⁸ “However, later Armenian priests and Russian peacekeepers began suppressing worship at the monastery for members of the Azerbaijani Udi community in Khudavang.”

²⁹ Radio Marneuli, October 11, <https://bit.ly/3HCNajZ>

In addition, without specifying the sources, the author also cites the opinion of “Armenian writers,” claiming that the refusal to allow Ginosyan to cross the border was due to the pro-Turkish stance of the current Georgian government.

EDITORIAL BOARD: “Notably, the city of Akhalkalaki in the Samtskhe–Javakheti region is densely populated by Georgian citizen ethnic Armenians. From time to time, Armenian separatists claim that the region should be separated from Georgia.

Ginosyan is among the Armenian intellectuals who support separatism.

The Armenian press indirectly linked his refusal to enter Georgia to his activities. Armenian writers claim that the current government in Tbilisi is pursuing a pro-Turkish policy, which is why the leader of the ensemble ‘Karin’ was not allowed in Georgia.”

On September 17, the Facebook page of 24News.ge published an article³⁰ with the headline “Azerbaijani police erased the flag on an Armenian car like this.” The article is accompanied by a video in which an Azerbaijani police officer scrapes off a flag on an Armenian car with a knife and the journalist describes the process of removing the flag on private property as “eliminating lawlessness,” which portrays the action as a positive event and incites strife in a post-conflict situation.

EDITORIAL BOARD: “Azerbaijani police, which control the 21-kilometer stretch of the Goris–Kapan highway leading to the village of Shurnukh, has resorted to an interesting method of eliminating another [instance of] lawlessness on a vehicle driving on the road.”

The incident was also covered by the Armenian-language regional outlet Parvana TV.³¹ In contrast to the Azerbaijani-language media, a Parvana TV journalist noted that the police officer had “committed an act of insult to the state flag of the Republic of Artsakh” and added that there were minors in the car at the time of the incident.

Two instances were identified in which the media covered statements made by public figures in which the opposing side was referred to as “destroyers” and “vandals.”

On June 24, The Facebook page of the Azerbaijani-language media outlet 24news.ge shared an article³² incorporating the following words of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev: “Armenians destroyed

³⁰ 24News.ge, September 17, <https://bit.ly/35k1a5l>

³¹ Parvana TV, September 18, <https://bit.ly/3MbgkKy>

³² 24News.ge, June 24, <https://bit.ly/3Cc47AH>

cities not during the first Nagorno-Karabakh war, but afterwards.” The material reflects the comments made by the President of Azerbaijan after the meeting between Ilham Aliyev and Ángel Moratinos, the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC).

The quote by Ilham Aliyev concerns the devastating impact of the Armenians on the Nagorno-Karabakh region, which is also included in the headline (“Aliyev: Armenians Destroyed Cities During the First War”).

ILHAM ALIYEV, PRESIDENT OF AZERBAIJAN: “As you know, the date of the destruction of the cities is not the first [Nagorno-Karabakh] war; the destruction began afterwards. They systematically destroyed cities for 30 years after the first [Nagorno-Karabakh] war. The first reason was theft; houses were demolished and construction materials were smuggled. The second reason was to deprive the Azerbaijani people of the opportunity to return. Because they thought that if it [Nagorno-Karabakh] were completely destroyed, no one would return.”

On August 20, in covering the visit of local Azerbaijanis to Shushi,³³ 24news.ge used a quote by the local governor Maftun Abbasov in which Armenians are referred to as “vandals.”

MAFTUN ABBASOV, THE GOVERNOR OF SHUSHI: “... The damage done to the city by Armenian vandals can be seen on every street and house.”

ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA. With reference to the Twitter account of the American journalist Lindsey Snell, the Facebook page of Parvana TV published a post about an Azerbaijani history textbook. In describing the story, the author criticizes the textbook and notes that “the goal of Azerbaijani fake historians” is to falsify history³⁴:

EDITORIAL BOARD: “The falsification of history is the main task of modern Azerbaijani historiography. All the textbooks and works of Azerbaijani historians are full of unscientific information. American journalist Lindsey Snell published an excerpt from the Azerbaijani 7th-grade textbook “History of Nagorno-Karabakh” on World War I on Twitter. The book says: “Armenian gangs created and armed by Russia committed genocide against the peaceful Turk-Muslim population. Hundreds of thousands of Armenians were relocated to the ancient Azerbaijani lands of Yerevan, Ganja, Baku.”

On November 8, without indicating a source, the Facebook page of the Armenian-language media outlet Parvana TV published a post with the following description: “Beastly shooting of civilians near

³³ 24News.ge, 20 August, <https://bit.ly/3K8DRtV>

³⁴ Parvana TV, November 5, 2021 <https://bit.ly/35jXkZZ>

Shushi.”³⁵ The post describes an incident that, according to Parvana TV, took place near the town of Shushi. According to the media, a person dressed in military uniform approached the group working on the water pipes and opened fire without any explanation, as a result of which one worker died and another was wounded in the chest.

Apart from using emotive language in the title and the attached violent imagery depicting the wounds, the publication disseminates information without referencing the source.

On January 4, News from Javakhk-Akhaltskha shared an article³⁶ on its Facebook page with the following caption: “A group of Azerbaijanis gathered in front of the Georgian Parliament, having fun to music insulting to Armenians. Ethnically Armenian Georgian citizens are waiting for the response of law enforcement agencies.” In the article, Eduard Aivazyán, editor of News from Javakhk-Akhaltskha and director of the Samtskhe-Javakheti Media Analytical Center, claims that similar provocations by Azerbaijani groups are frequent. At the same time, he does not rule out the possibility of punishing the Azerbaijani “provocateurs” on his own.

EDUARD AIVAZYAN, POLITICAL SCIENTIST: “Similar provocations took place in the regions of Azerbaijan as well, when an Armenian was beaten after an anti-Armenian demonstration. This does not mean that the Armenians here are afraid of such aggressive manifestations. Moreover, the Armenians of Javakheti are not only not afraid, but if necessary, they can punish those who carry out similar provocations, both in Tbilisi and in their region.”

On July 7, Parvana TV’s Facebook page published an article by Novostink.net³⁷ entitled “Aliyev is the new Hitler.” In the article, the director of the Center for Globalization and Regional Studies, political scientist Stefan Grigorian, equates the actions of Ilham Aliyev to the actions of Hitler.

STEFAN GRIGORIAN, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR GLOBALIZATION AND REGIONAL STUDIES: “Ilham Aliyev continues to periodically voice territorial claims and threats against Armenia. He threatens to provide the Zangezur Corridor to Azerbaijan to communicate with the Nakhichevan Exclave through the Syunik region of Armenia. This is an analogy of Hitler’s demands to Poland in 1938 to provide Germany with the “Danzig Corridor.”

³⁵ Parvana TV, 8 November, 2021 <https://bit.ly/3C8hmCw>

³⁶ News from Javakhk-Akhaltskha.Net, 4 January, 2022 <https://bit.ly/3C69scZ>

³⁷ Parvana TV, 21 July, <https://bit.ly/3sBhg35>

4.2 VIOLENT IMAGERY

Among the Armenian-language media, violent imagery was predominantly observed on the Facebook page of Parvana TV. Most of this concerns Armenian prisoners of war and border incidents.

On May 20, along with the official statement of the Armenian Ministry of Defense, Parvana TV published the video of the ministry as an illustration of the beating and humiliation of Armenian servicemen by the Azerbaijani military.³⁸ The video was posted on Facebook with a disclaimer indicating graphic footage.



On May 27, Armenian-language Parvana TV published photos of soldiers captured by Azerbaijan lying face down on the ground.³⁹ According to the TV broadcaster, the mentioned photos have been disseminated in the Azerbaijani media.



³⁸ Parvana TV, May 20, <https://bit.ly/3ts3uis>

³⁹ Parvana TV, May 27, <https://bit.ly/371Tk0J>

On July 27, Parvana TV published two photos on its Facebook page without mentioning the source.⁴⁰ One photo shows a man with torn clothes, while the other depicts a person lying in bed with a leg injury. The images do not reveal the identity of the person and are accompanied by text saying that the person was tortured by the Azerbaijani military:

EDITORIAL BOARD: “The examination of a captured resident of the village of Machkalasheni of the Martuni district of Artsakh has revealed that he was beaten and mistreated by the Azerbaijani armed forces, injuring his right leg. His clothes were torn. The citizen is currently at home. The Azerbaijani side continues its aggressive behavior and never misses an opportunity to torture and humiliate the citizens found under its control.”

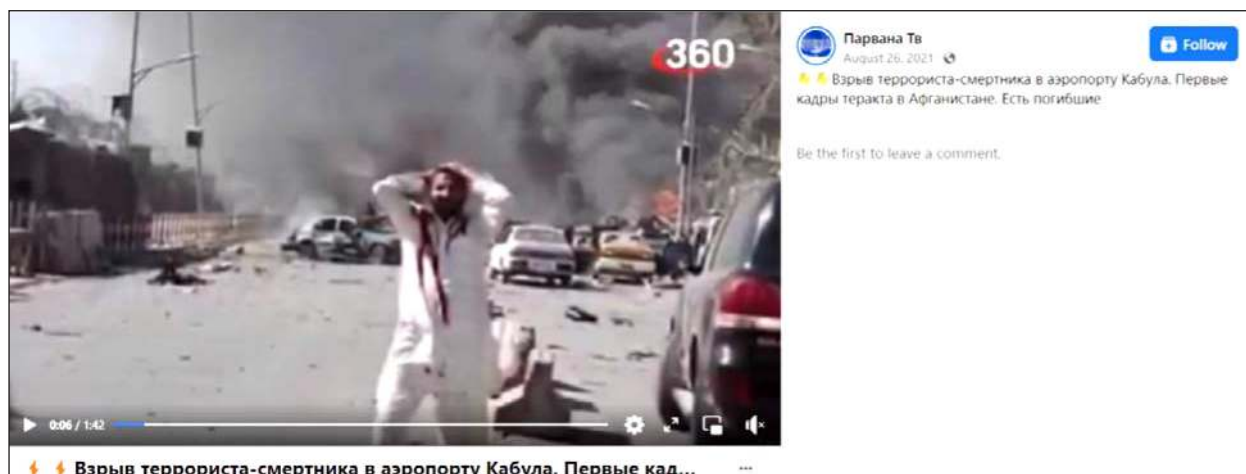
The post does not cite any official sources, nor any information on where the victim underwent the examination, nor information about their current condition.



On August 8, in covering the events in Afghanistan, footage of a terrorist attack at an airport showing injured and bloodied citizens was posted on the Facebook page of Parvana TV.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Parvana TV, July 27, <https://bit.ly/3pJSIbQ>

⁴¹ Parvana TV, August 8, <https://bit.ly/3ikmqLr>



On September 9, Parvana TV published a post on its Facebook page about the Turkish invasion of an Armenian settlement in Smyrna in 1922. The post is accompanied by a photo with the caption “Mas-sacre of Armenians and Greeks in Smyrna,” which shows people dressed in military uniforms and the severed heads of three people.⁴² The video was posted on Facebook with a disclaimer indicating graphic footage.



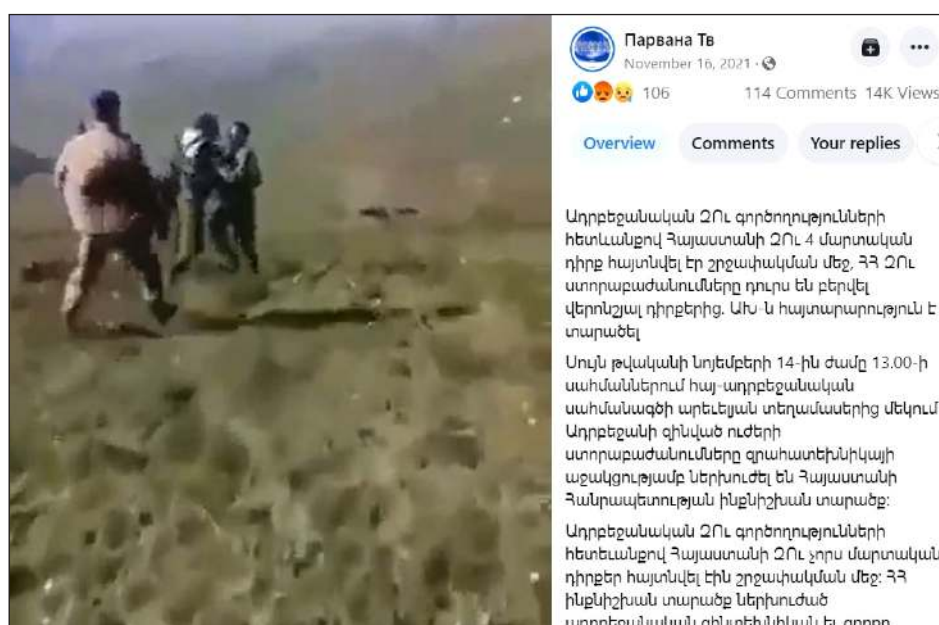
On November 8, without mentioning the source, Parvana TV published a post on its Facebook with the caption: “Beastly shooting of civilians near Shushi.”⁴³ The post was accompanied by a photo of an unidentified person with chest wounds.

⁴² Parvana TV, September 9, <https://bit.ly/3Cb05c4>

⁴³ Parvana TV, November 8, <https://cutt.ly/eTbbGPv>



On November 11, while covering an incident on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border,⁴⁴ Parvana TV used a video of a physical confrontation⁴⁵ between the Armenian and Azerbaijani militaries, showing footage of several people hitting one person on the ground.



⁴⁴ According to the Armenian Ministry of Defense, in one of the eastern zones of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border line, units of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces penetrated the sovereign territory of Armenia with armored vehicles.

⁴⁵ Parvana TV, November 11, <https://bit.ly/3szj2lq>

The use of violent imagery by the Azerbaijani-language media was mainly observed when covering the confrontation in Dmanisi. A 30-minute video⁴⁶ published by Aqtual.ge on May 17 shows footage of ethnic Azerbaijanis damaging private property.



On June 8, 24News.ge published an article titled “Armenian subversive group arrested in Lachin trying to plant mines.”⁴⁷ The article is accompanied by a photo of a detained Armenian military serviceman, who is being held by Azerbaijani soldiers armed with machine guns.



⁴⁶ Aqtual.ge, 17 May <https://bit.ly/3MlrfFaX>

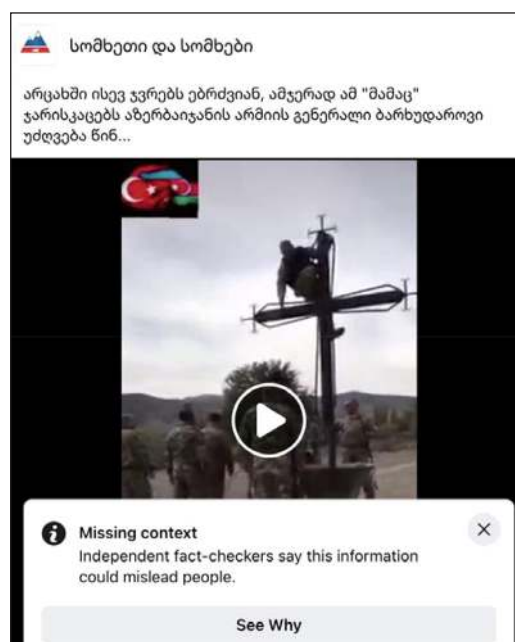
⁴⁷ 24News.ge, 8 June <https://bit.ly/3HC1QA1>

5. MANIPULATION USING RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS

The monitoring process revealed instances of manipulation using religious sentiments in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Materials of such content were manipulatively disseminated by monitored Armenian-language media Parvana TV as well as by Georgian-language Facebook users on various groups and pages.

On October 22, a Facebook user shared a video⁴⁸ depicting a group of soldiers removing a cross in the Facebook group “Armenia and Armenians.” According to the post’s description, the event took place at the moment of the post’s publication in Nagorno Karabakh and the soldiers were led by Azerbaijani General Barkhudarov.

The fact-checking portal “Myth Detector”⁴⁹ found that the video was manipulative, rating it as misleading on Facebook. In fact, the video was shot not in 2021, but a year earlier, on October 26, 2020, during the Nagorno-Karabakh war.



⁴⁸ Armenia and Armenians, October 22, <https://bit.ly/3qvKAqh>

⁴⁹ Myth Detector, October 29, Old Video from the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict Disseminated with a False Description, <https://bit.ly/3tvB9ZZ>

Identical information was published by the Russian-language website Infoteka24.⁵⁰ The public Facebook group “Armenia and Armenians” was created on July 23, 2020, a few weeks before the start of the Nagorno-Karabakh war.⁵¹ Notably, other videos⁵² showing the dismantling of the cross were previously shared in this group as well, and the authors of the respective posts used terms such as “enemy,” “vandal,” “barbarian,” and “fighter with the cross.”

Temo Bokelavadze,⁵³ a Facebook user linked to far-right groups who is the admin of the group “A Little bit about everything,” shared a video of the dismantling of the cross with an identical caption.⁵⁴ The description labelled neighboring Azerbaijan as hostile to Christians and Christianity:

“This is our neighbor Azerbaijan! They say they do not want to be enemies, but the facts are clear! ... Another ‘victory’ over the cross by the Azerbaijani military.”



⁵⁰ Infoteka24, October 21, <https://bit.ly/3qpeBlr>

⁵¹ Armenia and Armenians <https://bit.ly/3iBoAG1>

⁵² Armenia and Armenians, 7 November <https://bit.ly/3D6q7xt>, <https://bit.ly/37VBsVB>

⁵³ <https://bit.ly/3L7Cjkb>

⁵⁴ <https://bit.ly/3JDFVua>

Among the monitoring subjects, the incident with the cross was also covered by Parvana TV. On July 5, a video was posted on Parvana TV's Facebook page showing an Azerbaijani soldier firing a machine gun in the direction of the cross at the memorial. The video was accompanied by the following comment: "Another example of Azerbaijani barbarism."⁵⁵

On November 14, Parvana TV published a video showing the taking down of the cross on its Facebook page with the following description:⁵⁶

EDITORIAL BOARD: "Another 'positive signal' from the Azerbaijanis. While the Armenian government talks about friendship with Azerbaijan, the latter demonstrates their readiness for friendship. The enemy happily dropped the cross erected in Artsakh...The cross is probably located in Artsakh, on the region of Karvachari..."

⁵⁵ Parvana TV, July 5, <https://bit.ly/3HCNJdB>

⁵⁶ Parvana TV, 14 November <https://bit.ly/3vxliKE>

6. MANIPULATION ON THE TOPIC OF A TURKISH BASE DEPLOYMENT IN THE SAMTSKHE-JAVAKHETI REGION

On May 7, the Facebook page of Javakhk Media⁵⁷ shared information from the Armenian online publication Hayeli.am with the headline “Turkish military base in Javakheti, a Georgian Slap to Ankara and Baku.”⁵⁸ In the article, which is about Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili’s visit to Azerbaijan, the reporter notes that the issue of the deployment of a Turkish military base on the territory of Georgia – namely, in Javakheti – may be discussed during the upcoming visit of the Turkish President to Georgia.



Without specifying the source, the article asserts that the rumors about the construction of a Turkish base in Georgia have been actively discussed in the Armenian media recently. There is also talk that

⁵⁷ Javakhk Media, 7 May <https://bit.ly/3tkTQ2e>

⁵⁸ hayeli.am, 7 մայիսի, Թուրքական ռազմաբազա Ջավախքում. Անկարայի ու Բաքվի վրացական ապտակը <https://bit.ly/37LAyuV>

Turkey is preparing to construct an airbase in Javakheti, which will shorten the route to access Azerbaijani military bases. The journalist also notes that similar rumors based on Russian sources spread in 2020 before and during the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The article does not cite any official sources; moreover, the journalist notes that the information is neither confirmed nor denied by official sources. The journalist concludes the article with the following quote based on unconfirmed information:

“Finally, we need to find out, officially, whether Georgia could create such an unpleasant ‘surprise’ for the Armenians, again in favor of the interests of the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem.”

Conspiracies about the planned deployment of a Turkish base in Georgia, specifically in Samtskhe-Javakheti, have been disseminated by various anti-Western actors and Kremlin-linked Georgian media for years,⁵⁹ which link the process to Georgia’s NATO integration. The fact that Turkey is a member of NATO has been used manipulatively to convey the idea that Georgia’s membership in NATO would automatically result in the deployment of Turkish troops in the country. Moreover, the deployment of a Turkish army in Samtskhe-Javakheti, where the Soviet army was based, would re-escalate historical traumas and result in a confrontation between the Turks and ethnic Armenians residing in Georgia.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Myth Detector, March 22, 2018. “Who Puts Equal Sign between NATO Integration and Deployment of Turkish Troops in Georgia?” <https://bit.ly/3IMhPMd>

⁶⁰ Anti-Western Propaganda, 2018, (2019). <https://bit.ly/3wB8nJr>

7. NARRATIVES SHARED BY RUSSIAN AND GEORGIAN-LANGUAGE FACEBOOK PLATFORMS

Russian-language media outlets (Sputnik/Sputnik-Georgia and Jeiran Media Press Club/ Pressunity.org), discussed only in the qualitative part of the report, applied various approaches to publishing materials on Facebook.

7.1 PRESSUNITY.ORG

The narratives of Jeiran Media Press Club, which were mainly presented in the form of expert opinions, on the one hand, conveyed the idea that the West has been unable to either resolve the conflict nor had the appropriate leverage for it for years, and emphasized Russia's special role in resolving the conflict, carrying out a successful peacekeeping mission, and ensuring stability in the region on the other. Anti-Western narratives were particularly prevalent with regards to the EU and its initiatives, which were related to the meetings of the President of the Council of Europe Charles Michel with the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan. In addition, at the initial stage of the monitoring, the narratives of the Press Club Jeiran-Media targeted another regional player: Turkey. However, this trend later changed, which became especially evident after the initiation of the "3 + 3"⁶¹ regional cooperation format by Turkish President Erdogan.⁶²

⁶¹ The "3 + 3" format represents an initiative of the President of Turkey, which he voiced in 2020 after the end of the Nagorno-Karabakh war. The format envisages regional integration of the three South Caucasus countries (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan) on the one hand and Russia-Turkey-Iran on the other.

⁶² Russian-Turkish cooperation is a guarantee of peace and stability in the region. Press Club Jeiran Media, October 4, Russia and Turkey, Pragmatism as the Key to Regional Development, <https://bit.ly/36gpTb1>

THE WEST	RUSSIA	TURKEY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mechanisms proposed by Europe in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are ineffective.⁶³ The EU does not have a clear policy towards Azerbaijan within the framework of the Eastern Partnership Initiative.⁶⁴ The EU is no longer the organization it was ten years ago, the union is weakening amid internal strife, and the crisis is deepening every year. EU economic aid to Armenia is an attempt by the EU to “buy” Armenia and pursue its goals in the South Caucasus, and create a sphere of influence near the Russian border.⁶⁵ Charles Michel’s visit is a demonstration of the EU’s desire to be involved in the “Big Game” in the South Caucasus.⁶⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only Russia can settle the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.⁶⁷ Eurasian Economic Union is an alternative for the Eastern Partnership.⁶⁸ The Eastern Partnership program is attractive to member states in terms of economics and technology, although the EU does not have mechanisms for resolving ethnic conflicts and ensuring security.⁶⁹ The 3 + 3 format of regional cooperation will connect Armenia with Azerbaijan and Turkey and allow it to get out of the transit “deadlock.”⁷⁰ Russia remains the key player in the region.⁷¹ Russia-Azerbaijani relations gain new momentum in the liberated lands.⁷² While Russia played a major role in the ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh, the EU had no interest in the region.⁷³ Choosing military non-alignment allows Azerbaijan to act in its own national interests.⁷⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turkey is a biased party while Russia is neutral.⁷⁵ Regaining control over Shusha strengthens Turkey’s position in the Caucasus.⁷⁶ Deployment of Turkish armed forces on the territory of Azerbaijan is not in Baku’s interests.⁷⁷

⁶³ Press Club Jeiran Media, July 20, 2021 <https://bit.ly/3MdMZzn>

⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁵ Press Club Jeiran Media, July 20, 2021 Unexpected Activities in the East: Charles Michel’s Main Narratives during his visit to Armenia <https://bit.ly/3HJkwxW>

⁶⁶ Press Club Jeiran Media, July 20, 2021 Unexpected Activities in the East: Charles Michel’s Main Narratives during his visit to Armenia <https://bit.ly/3HJkwxW>

⁶⁷ Press Club Jeiran Media, May 14, 2021. <https://www.facebook.com/1608182412791087/posts/2983810655228249> December 15, “3+3’: Who needs a new platform in the South Caucasus and why?” <https://bit.ly/3ItLTmk> July 12, 2021, “Russia’s role in the peace process is central – Azerbaijani expert: <https://bit.ly/3tnT03Q>

⁶⁸ Press Club Jeiran Media, July 20, 2021 “Visit of the President of the European Council to Azerbaijan: Priorities and Narratives of Baku,” <https://bit.ly/3MdMZzn>

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ Press Club Jeiran Media, December 15, “3 + 3’: Who and Needs a New Platform in the South Caucasus and Why?” <https://bit.ly/3ItLTmk>

⁷¹ Press Club Jeiran Media, July 18, 2021. <https://bit.ly/3xxkfZL>

⁷² Press Club Jeiran Media, May 27, 2021. <https://bit.ly/2VuBzlh>

⁷³ Press Club Jeiran Media, May 27, 2021. <https://bit.ly/2VuBzlh>

⁷⁴ Press Club Jeiran Media, September 21, 2021, Azerbaijan and the EU: Is it possible to reform the relations? <https://bit.ly/3sDN9Z3>

⁷⁵ Press Club Jeiran Media, June 18, 2021, “NATO Summit, Erdogan in Shusha, Biden and Putin: On the Consequences of Major Political Developments in the Caucasus.” <https://www.facebook.com/1608182412791087/posts/2983810655228249>

⁷⁶ Press Club Jeiran Media, June 18, 2021, NATO Summit, Erdogan in Shusha, Biden and Putin: On the Consequences of Major Political Developments in the Caucasus.” <https://bit.ly/3xxkfZL>

⁷⁷ Press Club Jeiran Media, Deployment of Turkish armed forces on the territory of Azerbaijan is not in Baku’s interests – Expert, May 25, 2021 <https://bit.ly/2VueT4F>

7.2 SPUTNIK-GEORGIA.RU

Although Sputnik Georgia's Russian-language website published a number of articles regarding conflicts, as mentioned in the interim report,⁷⁸ the outlet did not share these materials on its Facebook page, where most of the articles were devoted to internal politics, social affairs, and entertainment in Georgia. The sole exception was articles prepared about the interethnic confrontation that broke out in Dmanisi, as well as information about Georgia's role as a peacekeeping intermediary⁷⁹ between Azerbaijan and Armenia and the Davit Gareji monastery located on a disputed section of the border between Azerbaijan and Georgia.⁸⁰

Russian-language Sputnik materials, which, on the one hand, underscored the decreased role of the West (namely, the United States)⁸¹ in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and, on the other hand, promoted the essential role of Russia in conflict, were not published on Sputnik's Facebook page. Sputnik's articles on this issue were predominantly based on interviews with various political scientists and voiced the following narratives:

- Through open intervention in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Turkey has strengthened its position in the region.⁸²
- Russia has made a significant contribution to resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh crisis and will continue to work on the existing problems in the format of three countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia).⁸³

⁷⁸ During the interim report, Sputnik's Facebook page covered the topic of Davit Gareji and the confrontation on ethnic grounds in Dmanisi in the time when Georgia acted as a mediator to release Armenian captives and Prime Minister Garibashvili visited Azerbaijan.

"Georgia helped to free 15 Armenian citizens detained by the Azerbaijani side" <https://www.facebook.com/479574228862020/posts/1995459327273495>

"The visit of Georgia's Prime Minister to Baku will become a new momentum in the two countries' relations – ambassador" <https://sputnik-georgia.ru/politics/20210505/251653007/O-chem-govorili-Garibashvili-i-Aliev-v-Baku.html>

⁷⁹ Sputnik, May 13, 2021. "Tbilisi is prepared to be the setting for negotiations between Baku and Erevan" <https://www.facebook.com/479574228862020/posts/1968338159985612>

June 12, 2021 "Georgia helped to free 15 Armenian citizens detained by the Azerbaijani side" <https://www.facebook.com/479574228862020/posts/1995459327273495>

⁸⁰ Sputnik, May 5, 2021 "What did Garibashvili and Aliyev talk about in Baku?" <https://sputnik-georgia.ru/politics/20210505/251653007/O-chem-govorili-Garibashvili-i-Aliev-v-Baku.html> "The visit of Georgia's Prime Minister to Baku will become a new momentum in the two countries' relations – ambassador" <https://sputnik-georgia.ru/politics/20210505/251646660/Vizit-premera-Gruzii-v-Baku-stanet-novym-impulsom-v-otnosheniyakh-dvukh-stran---posol.html>

⁸¹ Sputnik, 5 November, "The Armenian political scientist spoke about the purpose of the US Deputy Secretary of State's visit to the South Caucasus." <https://sputnik-georgia.ru/20211105/armyanskiy-politolog-rasskazal-o-tselyakh-vizita-zamestitelya-gossekretarya-ssha-na-yuzhnyy-kavkaz-261818578.html>

⁸² Sputnik, 24 August, "How the Karabakh war strengthened Turkey's position in the South Caucasus" <https://sputnik-georgia.ru/20210618/Kak-voyna-v-Karabakhe-usilila-pozitsii-Turtsii-na-Yuzhnom-Kavkaze-252056651.html>

⁸³ Sputnik, 30 June, Vaccination, World War III, social networks and Karabakh – what Putin talked about live, <https://sputnik-georgia.ru/20210630/Vaktsinatsiya-tretya-mirovaya-sotsseti-i-Karabakh--o-chem-govoril-Putin-na-pryamoy-linii-252174127.html>

- When it comes to the mediation process between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Georgia is partly a conductor of Western positions, and it can theoretically achieve certain results, albeit on very narrow topics.⁸⁴
- The US fears it will lose influence in the South Caucasus and is trying to mitigate that by offering innovations to the regional agenda.⁸⁵

7.3 KAVKAZ PLUS AND THE CAUCASIAN TELEGRAPH

As underscored in the interim report,⁸⁶ the Facebook pages of the Georgian-language Kavkaz Plus and The Caucasian Telegraph were selected for the monitoring because of their Armenophobic editorial policy.

In contrast to the interim report,⁸⁷ in which The Caucasian Telegraph covered the Georgian and Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts in a relatively neutral way, following the controversy on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border,⁸⁸ in the published material regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, The Caucasian Telegraph voiced the official Azerbaijan narratives with regards to Armenia and labelled their actions on the border as “provocations.”

- Armenian Armed Forces once again created a provocation aimed at the Kalbajar District.⁸⁹
- “War trophies captured by the Azerbaijani army during another provocation of the Armenian side!”⁹⁰
- “As a result of the Armenian provocations on November 16, 7 servicemen of the Azerbaijani Army were killed during the hostilities on the state border of Azerbaijan.”⁹¹

⁸⁴ Sputnik, 11 October, Tbilisi Peace Initiative Ahead of Pashinyan-Putin Meeting: View from Moscow and Yerevan, <https://sputnik-georgia.ru/20211011/mirnaya-initsiativa-tbilisi-pered-vstrechey-pashinyana-i-putina-vzglyad-iz-moskvy-i-erevana-260456778.html>

⁸⁵ Sputnik, 5 November, “The Armenian political scientist spoke about the purpose of the US Deputy Secretary of State’s visit to the South Caucasus.” <https://sputnik-georgia.ru/20211105/armyanskiy-politolog-rasskazal-o-tselyakh-vizita-zamestitelya-gossekretarya-ssha-na-yuzhnyy-kavkaz-261818578.html>

⁸⁶ Conflict reporting – in Azerbaijani- and Armenian-language regional media and other media outlets, <https://www.mdfgeorgia.ge/eng/view-library/213/>

⁸⁷ The Caucasian Telegraph, May 15, 2021. Nikol Pashinyan Asks the Russian President for Military Aid. <https://www.facebook.com/100907098457590/posts/243347764213522>

The Caucasian Telegraph, June 10, 2021. US Senator Rob Portman on the occupation of Samachablo. <https://www.facebook.com/100907098457590/posts/260020092546289>

⁸⁸ On November 13, the shooting on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border escalated into a bilateral confrontation – “For three days, the conflicting parties spread contradictory and alarming information about wounded, killed, and captured soldiers as a result of intense fighting” RFE / RL, November 16, <https://bit.ly/3tTxvZT>

⁸⁹ The Caucasian Telegraph, November 13, “Armenian Armed Forces once again created a provocation aimed at the Kalbajar District.” <https://cutt.ly/4YvaA5d>

⁹⁰ The Caucasian Telegraph, November 11, War trophies captured by the Azerbaijani army during another provocation of the Armenian side!!!” <https://cutt.ly/eYbJ85v>

⁹¹ The Caucasian Telegraph, November 17, “As a result of the Armenian provocations on November 16, 7 servicemen of the Azerbaijani Army were killed during the hostilities on the state border of Azerbaijan.” <https://cutt.ly/rYu22f3>

A portion of the Armenophobic content published by The Caucasian Telegraph was based on opinions of individuals – namely, director of the Caucasus International Center Guram Maskhulia, who considered Armenia a threat in the context of the occupied territories of Georgia (and specifically, Abkhazia) as illustrated by the history of the Bagranyan Battalion:

- Georgians will not forgive Armenians for crimes against civilians committed during the Abkhaz war, mainly involving members of the Bagranyan Battalion.⁹²
- Political and economic power in Abkhazia is in the hands of Armenians; if Georgia recognizes Abkhazia, political power will be in the Armenian hands.⁹³

As for Kavkaz Plus, similar to the interim report, the outlet continued to spread Armenophobic narratives and portrayed Armenians in the international and regional arena as nationalists and separatists:

- Armenians incite separatist sentiments in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia.⁹⁴
- After the Nagorno-Karabakh war, Armenians will try to create a “buffer zone” at the expense of Georgian territories, particularly Samtskhe-Javakheti.⁹⁵
- With the aim of annexing Abkhazia, Armenians want to expel the remaining Georgians.⁹⁶
- Against the backdrop of the banning of Georgian language teaching in Abkhazia, there are 24 fully-operational Armenian schools there.⁹⁷
- The Armenian lobby in Russia is working on creating a conflict between Russia and Turkey.⁹⁸
- Armenia appropriated the Khuchap Monastery⁹⁹ and now voices claims for the territory where the cathedral of the holy trinity is located.¹⁰⁰
- “Armenian provocateurs” are behind current ethnic conflicts and destabilizations in Georgia.¹⁰¹
- The campaign against Namakhvani Hydro Power Plant is coordinated by the Armenian lobby in the Kremlin.¹⁰²
- Armenian nationalists obsessed with Russophobia do not understand that Russia need simply to leave the South Caucasus and Armenian neo-Nazi statehood would be liquidated.¹⁰³

⁹² The Bagranyan Battalion was a unit established in 1992-93 during the War in Abkhazia. Mainly composed of ethnic Armenians residing in Gagra, Gudauta and Tkvarcheli, the battalion fought along with the separatists. The unit was named after the Soviet Armenian Marshal Ivan Bagranyan.

⁹³ The Caucasian Telegraph, January 29, 2022 “What has the Krasnodar Territory got to do with Georgia? Who started the war in Abkhazia, where are the Abkhazians from, what is the future of Abkhazia?” <https://cutt.ly/OPy4gYQ>

⁹⁴ Kavkaz Plus, August 24, 2021, <https://bit.ly/2X8G05Z>

⁹⁵ Kavkaz Plus, August 2, 2021, Armenians nationalists want to expand their “buffer zone” to Georgia.” <https://bit.ly/3IK2ynw>

⁹⁶ Kavkaz Plus, August 2, 2021, “They want to expel the remaining Georgians from Abkhazia to create a ‘Armenia by the sea’” <https://bit.ly/3iFGkkJ>

⁹⁷ Kavkaz Plus, September 16, 2021, “Zero Georgian schools in contrast to 24 (according to other sources 32) Armenian schools – the reality of separatist Abkhazia” <https://bit.ly/3kH5Sih>

⁹⁸ Kavkaz Plus, November 29, 2021, New “Horror Story” of the Armenian Lobby – “The Great Turan” <https://cutt.ly/hYyEEExu>

⁹⁹ Kavkaz Plus, August 30, 2021, “Comrade Pashinyan, return Khuchap!” <https://bit.ly/2XalX5Q>

¹⁰⁰ Kavkaz Plus, January 3, 2022, “Armenians claim the land on which the Holy Trinity – the cathedral of the Georgian Orthodox Church is built” <https://cutt.ly/W00mZYR>

¹⁰¹ Kavkaz Plus, May 25, 2021 “Who provoke conflicts in Georgia and why?” <https://bit.ly/3fJv9WC>

¹⁰² Kavkaz Plus, May 27, 2021. “Ruben Tatulyan exercises control on Abkhazia and Enguri HPP energy sector against the backdrop of protest against Namakhvani HPP” <https://bit.ly/34N7WMT>

¹⁰³ Kavkaz Plus, May 12, 2021. “It is enough for Russia to simply leave the South Caucasus and Armenian neo-Nazi statehood will simply be liquidated” <https://bit.ly/3uAx5A>

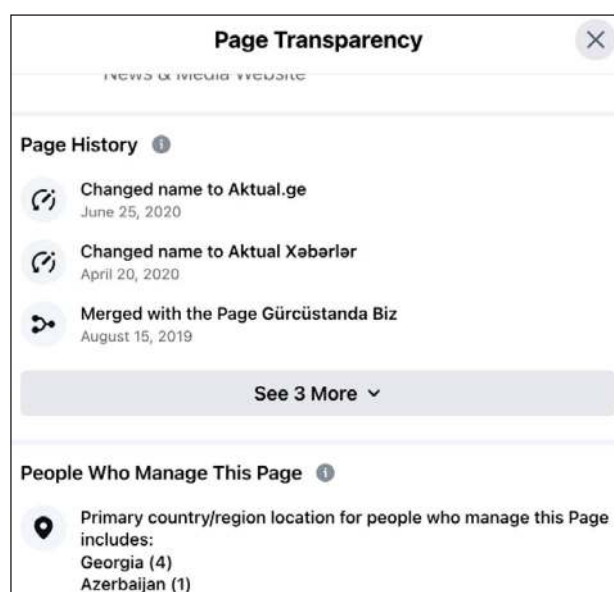
8. MEDIA PROFILES

8.1 AZERBAIJANI-LANGUAGE MEDIA PROFILES

AKTUAL.GE

The information portal Aktual.ge has been operating since April 21, 2020. Its founder is “Actual Media,”¹⁰⁴ which is registered in Marneuli. The outlet’s content is available in Georgian, Azerbaijani, Turkish, and English.

Aktual.ge’s Facebook page,¹⁰⁵ founded on August 15, 2019 under the name Gürcüstanda Biz, was renamed Aktual.ge on June 25, 2020. The Facebook page is managed by 2 administrators from Georgia and 3 from Azerbaijan. The page has 23 000 subscribers, while the number of likes is not displayed publicly. Its YouTube¹⁰⁶ channel has 560 subscribers.



¹⁰⁴ <https://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=400&bid=boVlyOwIsX3qmYsntmLmFJI53u5CERIBs3zIEmXJLILx4Nhn0kGzkSKsYnoJ5oIB>

¹⁰⁵ Last accessed March 26, 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/aktualge>

¹⁰⁶ Last accessed March 26, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCovBEv8QnpmccF98h6s3Qdg>

BORCHALITV

The domain of Borchalitiv¹⁰⁷ was registered in 2000 in the US state of California. The website of the TV company does not indicate any information about the organization.

The Facebook page of the TV company was created in 2016. The page has 12,930 subscriptions and 9,310 likes.¹⁰⁸

GÜNDƏLİK - GÜRCÜSTAN

The website Gundelik.ge is currently not accessible, although there is a functioning Gündəlik – Gürcüstan Facebook page,¹⁰⁹ which was registered in 2016. The page was initially entitled “Parliamentary Elections – 2016”, but on October 31, 2016, it was renamed to Gündəlik – Gürcüstan. The page is only available in Azerbaijani.



The e-mail address of Elmeddin Memmedov is indicated in the registration data of the site.

The Facebook page has 26,134 subscribers and 17,133 likes.

MARNEULI TV

Marneuli TV (Marneulitv.ge) was established in 2006 as a limited liability company.¹¹⁰ The television channel broadcasts in Georgian and Azerbaijani in the Kvemo Kartli region. The channel also broadcasts through Global TV, Magti, Silk, and other TV operators.

¹⁰⁷ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/borchalitiv/>

¹⁰⁸ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/borchalitiv/>

¹⁰⁹ Last accessed March 26, 2022. Gündəlik – Gürcüstan – Home | Facebook

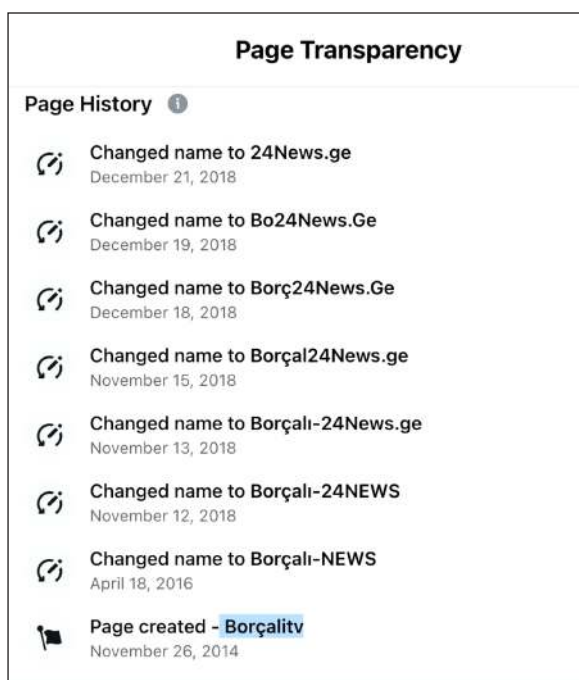
¹¹⁰ [https://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=400&bid=boVlyOwlsX3qmYsntmLmFC4QniTeGOsul28nqD06U7hhpOK\[wZrIHACPjldLcuFJ](https://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=400&bid=boVlyOwlsX3qmYsntmLmFC4QniTeGOsul28nqD06U7hhpOK[wZrIHACPjldLcuFJ)

The Facebook page¹¹¹ of Marneuli TV, created in 2013, has 36,390 subscribers and 19,929 likes, while the YouTube channel¹¹² has 1,220 subscribers.

24NEWS.GE

News portal 24news.ge was founded in September 2018¹¹³ by Georgian Leader Media¹¹⁴ in Marneuli. The outlet's content is available in four languages (Azerbaijani, Georgian, Russian, and English). The portal also has an internet TV channel.

The outlet's Facebook page,¹¹⁵ which was registered under the name of Borçalitv in 2014, was re-named Borçalı-24NEWS in 2018 and 24News.ge in December of the same year. The page has 52,047 subscribers and 20,957 likes, while the YouTube channel,¹¹⁶ which broadcasts in Azerbaijani, has 16,400 subscribers.



RADIO BOLNELI

The “Bolneli” Broadcasting Company was founded in 1997. From that time until July 2010, the radio broadcast under the name of “TV-Radio Company XII Channel,” and the name of the broadcasting company has been “Bolneli” since 2010.

¹¹¹ Last accessed March 26, 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/MARNEULITV/>

¹¹² Last accessed March 26, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQBG29vHcRIA97zlcJb1Llg/featured>

¹¹³ <https://24news.ge/about>

¹¹⁴ <https://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=400&bid=boVlyOwlsX3qmYsntmLmFAn01a40tuqeLZzWs7EzxdGSdGI5vJg6mTfIXqg1fluu>

¹¹⁵ Last accessed March 26, 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/24newsgeofficial/>

¹¹⁶ Last accessed March 26, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyCWRCdLmr8JITLhHifk50w>

In 2015, the company obtained a radio broadcasting license on the FM-107.3 frequency (Bolneli.ge). At various times, the radio has implemented projects with the support of organizations such as Internews, OSCE, Open Society Georgia, and the Georgian Public Broadcaster.

The Facebook page of the radio station was created on February 28th, 2020. It has 114 subscribers and 111 likes.¹¹⁷

RADIO IVRISI

Azerbaijani radio outlet “Ivrissi” is part of the “Spectri” Media Holding and operates with the domain¹¹⁸ of the same organization. “Radio Ivrissi” was established in 2016 within the framework of a project by the Journalists’ Association “Metsenati” with the financial support of the Open Society – Georgia Foundation.

The Facebook page of the radio outlet was created on April 2, 2017 under the name of Ivrissi FM, and it soon changed its name to Radio Ivrissi. The page has 1,208 followers and 1033 likes.¹¹⁹

RADIO MARNEULI 96.9 FM

Radio “Marneuli” (Marneulifm.ge) is the first community broadcaster in the Kvemo Kartli region and was founded by BBC World Service Trust, Studio Re, and the “Journalists’ Union – Voice of the People.”¹²⁰ While the radio station was established in 2006, the channel only received a broadcasting license in 2015.

The website of Radio Marneuli offers information in Georgian, Azerbaijani, and Armenian.

Marneuli Radio’s Facebook page,¹²¹ registered in 2015, has 34,184 followers and 15,835 likes, while its YouTube channel¹²² has 3,220 subscribers.

XEBER.GE

Xeber.ge is an Azerbaijani-language online information portal. Information about the portal is mentioned neither on the website nor on Facebook. The web domain was registered in Georgia in April

¹¹⁷ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://bit.ly/3I0DFz2>

¹¹⁸ <http://radio.spectri.ge/>

¹¹⁹ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/IVRISI>

¹²⁰ [https://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=400&bid=boVlyOwlsX3qmYsntmLmFAtJoAMh\]juToqq7n9uBL58gi8R\[PdLt5UzIYieMa\[RU](https://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=400&bid=boVlyOwlsX3qmYsntmLmFAtJoAMh]juToqq7n9uBL58gi8R[PdLt5UzIYieMa[RU)

¹²¹ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/marneulifm>

¹²² Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChWSDYsfb6isIJxGwyJ1pDg>

2020, and the Facebook page was created on May 2, 2020.¹²³ The page currently has only 628 followers and 555 likes.

YENI YOL

Yeniyol.ge is an Azerbaijani-language newspaper that covers public affairs and is published online. According to the information provided on the website, the newspaper has been operating since 2015. The founder of the newspaper's website is the Georgian Youth Aid and Awareness Organization.

The Facebook page of Yeni Yol was registered on October 30th, 2018. The page has 692 followers and 671 likes.¹²⁴

8.2 ARMENIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA PROFILES

AKHALKALAKI NEWS

The Facebook page Akhalkalaki News¹²⁵ was created on March 31, 2020. The page shares news by other local media outlets as well as the statements of Samvel Petrosyan, a former member of the Georgian Parliament and a member of the Alliance of Patriots of Georgia. During the 2020 Parliamentary Elections, the site actively shared content related to the Alliance of Patriots.

The page has 3,977 subscriptions and 2,633 likes.¹²⁶

AKHALTSKHA.NET

Samtskhe-Javakheti news portal Akhaltskha.net has been operating since 2016. The outlet was founded by the Samtskhe-Javakheti Media Analytical Center.¹²⁷

The website is available in Armenian, Georgian, Russian, and English.

The Facebook page “News from Javakhk-Akhaltskha.Net”¹²⁸ was created on July 21, 2011 and has 3,830 followers and 3,730 likes. The page is managed by 4 administrators from Georgia and 1 from Armenia.

¹²³ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/xeber.ge>

¹²⁴ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/Yeni-Yol-331048807450400>

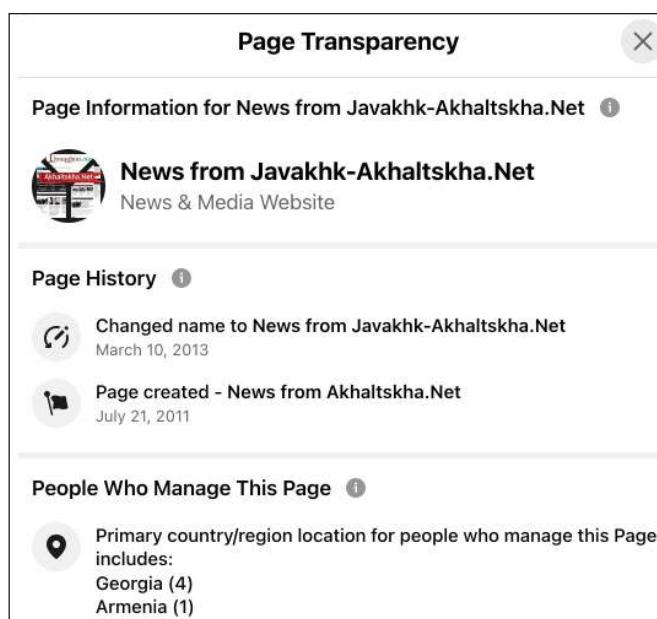
¹²⁵ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/akhalkalakinews>

¹²⁶ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/akhalkalakinews>

¹²⁷ [https://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=400&bid=boVlyOwlsX3qmYsntmLmFPB1qyKw\]vnSWBnRgk5fNyMDk1H\[ArvO68o9EzdiXh0W](https://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=400&bid=boVlyOwlsX3qmYsntmLmFPB1qyKw]vnSWBnRgk5fNyMDk1H[ArvO68o9EzdiXh0W)

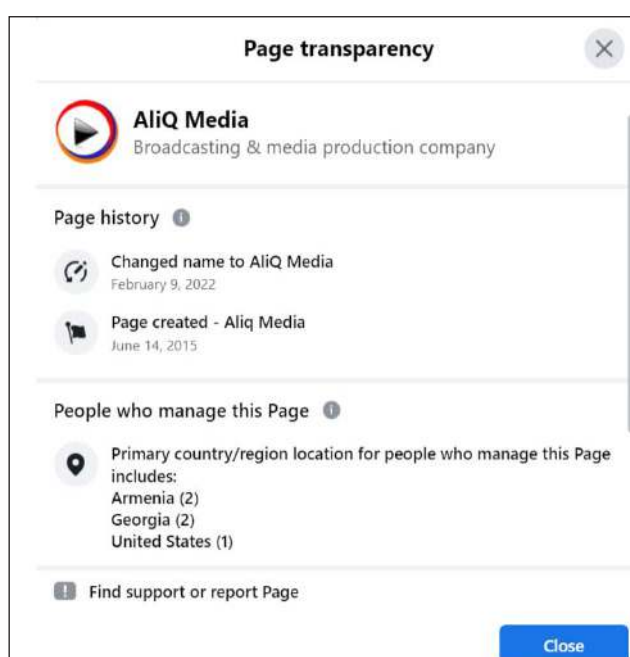
¹²⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/javakhk.akhaltskha.net>

ALIQ MEDIA



The domain of Aliq Media (Aliq.ge) was registered on June 5, 2015. The partners of the outlet are the European Union for Georgia, Tbilisi Human Rights House, National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and Equal Rights & Independent Media (ERIM).

The Facebook page¹²⁹ of the outlet was created on June 14, 2015 and has 2 administrators from Armenia, 2 from Georgia, and 1 from the United States. The page has 19,328 followers and 13,334 likes, while the YouTube channel¹³⁰ has 1,250 subscribers.



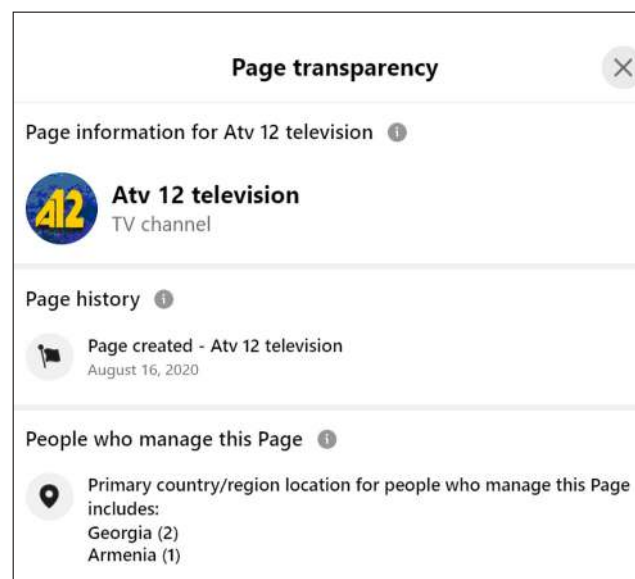
¹²⁹ Last accessed 26 March 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/aliQmedia>

¹³⁰ Last accessed 26 March 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuFebSGQcHJhf9SB7oum1ZA>

ATV 12

ATV 12 TV (<https://bit.ly/3ztIVnL>) was founded in Akhalkalaki in 2001. According to information posted on the YouTube channel, the television channel has existed for more than 15 years. ATV-12 covers local news in Akhalkalaki, as well as national and international news in Armenian.

The Facebook page¹³¹ of ATV-12 was created on August 16, 2020 and has 2 admins from Armenia and 1 from Georgia. The page has 4,104 followers and 3,231 likes. The YouTube channel was registered on July 25, 2016.¹³²



JAVAKHK MEDIA

Javakhkmedia.com is an information portal, the domain of which was registered on October 7, 2013. The website contains neither contact information nor information about the media outlet's owner and the editorial board. Eduard Ayvazyan, the editor-in-chief of Akhaltskha.net, indicates on his Facebook¹³³ page that he is also the editor of the online edition of Javakhk Media. The content of these two media outlets is identical.

The website is available in the following four languages: Armenian, Georgian, Russian, and English.

The Facebook page,¹³⁴ 76 which has 3,325 followers and 3,213 likes, states that the page is a unified informational resource about Javakheti. The publication's Facebook account was created in 2011 and was called Javakhk – History Archive. The page has been operating under the name of Javakhk Media since December 19, 2013 and it is managed by 3 administrators from Armenia and 1 from Georgia.

¹³¹ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/atv12akhalkalaki>

¹³² Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.youtube.com/c/ATV12Akhalkalaki/channels>

¹³³ <https://www.facebook.com/eduard.ayvazyan>

¹³⁴ Last accessed 26 March 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/Javakhk.Media>

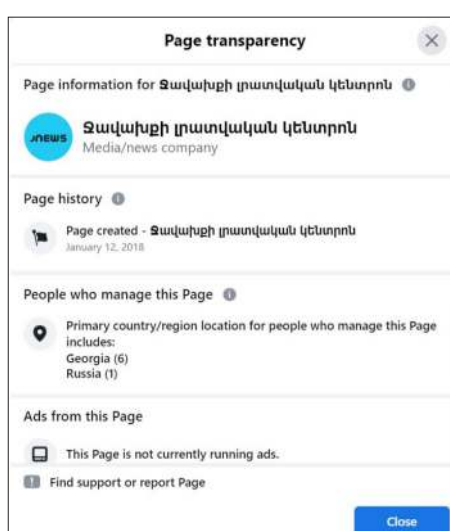


JNEWS.GE

The Javakheti Information Center (Jnews.ge) was established in October 2014 with the financial support of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) within the framework of the project “Government Control and Civic Involvement in Javakheti.” The media outlet was founded by the “Open Borders”¹³⁵ organization in Akhalkalaki. The publication is mainly supported by Western foundations.

Jnews.ge is available in Armenian, Georgian, and Russian languages.

The Facebook page¹³⁶ of the Javakheti Information Center was registered in January 2018, and is managed by 6 administrators from Georgia and 1 from Russia. The Facebook page has 3,688 subscribers and 3,243 likes, while the YouTube channel¹³⁷ has 5,550 subscribers.



¹³⁵ <https://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=400&bid=boVlyOwlsX3qmYsntmLmFIUA3BcfPZWl64ZtQQ7XyEhnRxJjhVpNu4ISOBXiyTKG>

¹³⁶ Last accessed 26 March 2022. https://www.facebook.com/JavakhhkNews.ge/?ref=page_internal

¹³⁷ Last accessed 26 March 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXDkGjkwx6CoxN2BFL1nW8g>

PARVANA TV

TV-Radio Company “Parvana” (Parvana.ge) was founded by Konstantin Vardanyan in Ninotsminda on January 12, 2001.¹³⁸ The programs of the channel are available in Armenian.

According to a report by Transparency International Georgia,¹³⁹ after Georgian Dream came to power, Konstantin Vardanyan was elected as the Deputy Chairman of the Municipal Council. From spring 2013 to March 2020, Vardanyan was both the director of Parvana and the deputy chairman of the Ninotsminda City Council. On March 9, 2021, Vardanyan resigned as the head of television channel, and his wife, Albina Vardanyan, was appointed as the director of the company.

The Facebook page¹⁴⁰ of Parvana TV was created on August 5, 2017. The page has 64,367 followers and 31,652 likes, while the YouTube channel¹⁴¹ has 13,100 subscribers.

RADIO NOR

The internet portal of the community radio outlet “Nor” (Nor.ge) was registered in Georgia on September 5, 2012. The radio broadcasts on FM 100.1 in the Ninotsminda municipality of the Samtskhe-Javakheti region. According to the information posted on the radio’s website, in December 2014, Ninotsminda Community Radio became the first licensed community broadcaster not only in Samtskhe-Javakheti, but in Georgia overall. The information on the website is available in two languages: Armenian and Russian. The donors of the radio station are the Open Society Foundation Georgia and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

Radio Nor’s content is available in Armenian and Russian.

The Radio Nor Facebook page¹⁴² was created on September 10, 2012, and is managed by 13 administrators from Georgia and 1 from Armenia. The page has 22,795 followers and 9,842 likes, while the YouTube channel¹⁴³ has 11,500 subscribers.

¹³⁸ <https://transparency.ge/en/blog/tv-station-deputy-chairperson-municipal-council-ninotsminda-wins-tenders-without-competition>

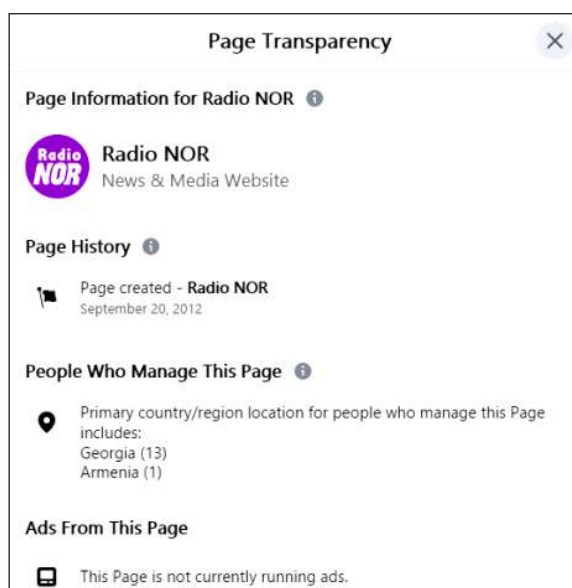
¹³⁹ <https://transparency.ge/ge/blog/ninocmindis-sakrebulo-tavmjdomaris-moadgilis-televizia-ninocmindis-municipalitetsh-tenderebs>

¹⁴⁰ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/televidenia>

¹⁴¹ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtsgnN2vBISEcmnIngSTNtw>

¹⁴² Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/radiotvnor>

¹⁴³ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.youtube.com/c/radionorGeorgia>



SKNEWS.GE

The Samtskhe-Javakheti information portal Sknews.ge was created on the basis of the “Samkhretis Karibche” (South Gate) newspaper. From 2004–2017, the newspaper was distributed in Georgian and Armenian. The online version of the publication has been operating since 2010, and the radio station since 2016. The Open Society Foundation, National Endowment for Democracy, and Deutsche Welle Academy (DW Akademie) are donors supporting the media outlet.

Sknews.ge is available in Georgian and Armenian languages, and the Armenian-language Facebook page of the publication (Հարավային Դարպաս) was created on January 9, 2020. Sknews.ge created a profile instead of a Facebook page, which has 4,999 friends.¹⁴⁴

TV9NEWS.GE

Channel 9 (TV9news.ge), which bears a legal name Imperia Ltd.,¹⁴⁵ has been broadcasting since 1998. The channel broadcasts through the 6th digital broadcasting in the Akhaltsikhe, Adigeni, and Aspindza municipalities.

The website of Channel 9 is available in Georgian and Armenian languages.

The channel’s Facebook page¹⁴⁶ is created in the form of an individual user, and therefore the number of followers is not public, while the YouTube channel¹⁴⁷ has 12,100 subscribers.

¹⁴⁴ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100061579884817>

¹⁴⁵ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IOF-erQITipr0fv1V3AjH1hm9eSUSyS2/view>

¹⁴⁶ Last accessed 26 March 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/TV9News.AM>

¹⁴⁷ Last accessed 26 March 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiYSWvrayKsAS2GPdyiFmQ>

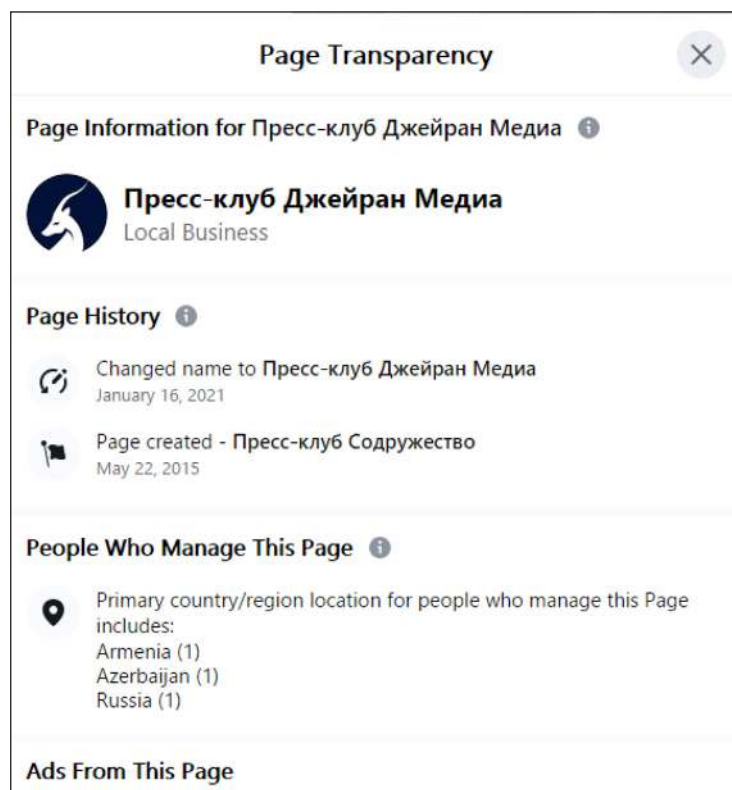
8.3 RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA OUTLETS

PRESS CLUB JEIRAN MEDIA

The webpage of Jeiran Media Press Club Press Club (Pressunity.org) indicates that it has been operating since 2016. The “about us” section of the website stresses that despite the ongoing controversies in the South Caucasus region, the website tries to be objective and to devote its platform to any expert or journalist irrespective of his or her opinion about the current events in addition to news in Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia in the respective languages.

No other information, including about the publisher and editor, is available on the website. The IP address¹⁴⁸ of Jeiran Media was registered in St. Petersburg on August 12, 2020; the identity of the owner of the registration is hidden.

The Facebook page¹⁴⁹ of Jeiran Media Press Club was created in May, 2015, under the name “Press Club Commonwealth,” and changed its name to the current name in January, 2021. The Facebook page is managed by three administrators: one from Azerbaijan, one from Armenia, and two from Russia. The page has 6,306 followers and 5,874 likes.¹⁵⁰



¹⁴⁸ <https://whois.domaintools.com/pressunity.org>

¹⁴⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/pressunity>

¹⁵⁰ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/pressunity>

SPUTNIK-GEORGIA

Sputnik-Georgia Ltd was officially registered in the Public Registry of Georgia on January 23, 2015. Sputnik is housed at the former Ria Novosti office. Sputnik is an international multimedia project created by the presidential decree on December 9, 2013. Sputnik, owned by the Russian government, replaced RIA Novosti and Voice of Russia in the international arena.

Anton (Tato) Laskhishvili owns 100% of Sputnik-Georgia Ltd and has also been the head of Svobodnaya Gruzia newspaper since 1991.

The Facebook page of the Russian-language Sputnik-Georgia was created on May 7, 2017 and has 5 administrators located in Russia and 4 administrators in Georgia. The page has 64,842 followers and 57,104 likes.¹⁵¹

8.4 GEORGIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA PROFILES

KAVKAZ PLUS

The website (En.kavkazplus.com) of the “Kavkaz Plus” online edition does not provide information about the editorial board, while the articles are published anonymously, without indicating the authors’ surnames. By checking the web page domains, one learns that the website Kavkazplus.com was registered in 2015. The site’s IP address is currently registered in California, under the official name “Kavkazplus.com – новости Грузии.”

The online publication Kavkaz Plus often publishes anti-Armenian, xenophobic, and discriminatory materials in Georgian, Russian, and English. The edition often writes about crimes committed by Armenians in Abkhazia and the rise of Armenian separatism in Javakheti.

The Facebook page of Kavkaz Plus was created on May 6, 2016. The page has 1,161 followers and 1,131 likes.¹⁵²

THE CAUCASIAN TELEGRAPH

The Georgian-language Facebook page “The Caucasian Telegraph” was created on October 2, 2020. In addition to daily news, the page often publishes videos aimed against Armenians, especially the Armenian Diaspora. “Caucasian Telegraph” published videos with the headlines “Hysterical Preaching of Armenian Diaspora Re-

¹⁵¹ Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/SputnikGeorgiaRu/>

¹⁵² Last accessed March 26, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/%E1%83%99%E1%83%90%E1%83%95%E1%83%99%E1%83%90%E1%83%96-%E1%83%9E%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98%E1%83%A3%E1%83%A1%E1%83%98-1675642542697030>

vanchism,” “Sick plans of the Armenian Diaspora in Russia: new territorial claims against Georgia, Turkey and Azerbaijan,” and “The Armenian Diaspora has become a global threat ...France will fall first,” etc.

The page has 43,083 followers and 7,819 likes.¹⁵³

¹⁵³ Last accessed 26 March 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/TheCaucasianTelegraph>

