



## **Media Monitoring During the Electoral Campaign for the Parliamentary Elections of September 28, 2025**

Report No 2  
September 6-12, 2025



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## General Data

**Goal and objectives of the project:** monitoring and informing the public about the editorial behavior of the media outlets during the electoral campaign and candidates' access to the media. The monitoring is intended for analyzing reporting trends which may affect the performance of media outlets and to undermine their ability to provide truthful, impartial, and pluralistic information to the public.

**Monitoring period:** August 29 – September 26, 2025.

### Criteria for selecting media outlets for monitoring.

- Audience / impact: national, regional.
- Media type: broadcasting.
- Type of ownership: public, private.
- Broadcasting language: Romanian, Russian.

### List of monitored media outlets

Moldova 1 – public channel, national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian;  
GRT – public channel, regional coverage, broadcasts in Russian and Gagauz;  
TVR Moldova – public channel with national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian;  
Jurnal TV – private channel, national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian;  
Pro TV Chisinau – private channel, national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian;  
TV8 – private channel, national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian;  
Exclusiv TV – private channel, national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian;  
Cinema 1 – private channel, national coverage, broadcasts in Russian and Romanian;  
One TV – private channel, national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian;  
N4 – private channel, national coverage, broadcasts in Romanian and Russian.

### ABBREVIATIONS

CPA – central public administration

LPA – local public administration

CEC – Central Electoral Commission

ALDE – Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Political Party

AUR – Alliance for the Union of Romanians Political Party

AM – Alliance of Moldovans

BEÎ – *Împreună* (Together) Electoral Bloc

BEP – Patriotic Electoral Bloc of Socialists, Communists, *Inima și Viitorul Moldovei* (Heart and Future of Moldova)

BUN – *Unirea Națiunii* (Unity of the Nation) Electoral Bloc

CUB – *Coaliția pentru Unitate și Bunăstare* (Coalition for Unity and Prosperity) Party

MAN – *Mișcarea Alternativa Națională* (National Alternative Movement) Political Party

PAS – *Partidul Acțiune și Solidaritate* (Action and Solidarity Party) Political Party

PCRM – Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova Political Party

PDA – *Democrația Acasă* (Democracy at Home) Political Party

PDCM – *Partidul Dezvoltării și Consolidării Moldovei* (Party of Development and Consolidation of Moldova) Political Party

PL – *Partidul Liberal* (Liberal Party) Political Party

PN – *Partidul Nostru* (Our Party) Political Party

PNL – *Partidul Național Liberal* (National Liberal Party) Political Party

PPDA – *Platforma Demnitate și Adevăr* (Dignity and Truth Platform) Political Party  
PP LOC – *Liga Orașelor și Comunelor* (League of Towns and Communities) Political Party  
PP NOI – NOI (We) Political Party  
PPRM – *Partidul Popular din Republica Moldova* (Popular Party of the Republic of Moldova) Political Party  
PRIM – *Partidul Republican INIMA MOLDOVEI* (HEART OF MOLDOVA Republican Party) Political Party  
PRM – *Partidul Republican din Moldova* (Republican Party of Moldova) Political Party  
PRN Acasă – *Partidul Reîntregirii Naționale Acasă* (National Reunification at Home Party) Political Party  
PS – *Partidul Schimbării* (Party of Change) Political Party  
PSDE – *Partidul Social Democrat European* (European Social Democratic Party) Political Party  
PSRM – Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova Political Party  
PUCM – *Uniunea Centristă din Moldova* (Centrist Union of Moldova) Political Party  
PVE – *Partidul Verde Ecologist* (Ecologist Green Party) Political Party  
UCSM – *Uniunea Creștin-Socială din Moldova* (Christian-Social Union of Moldova) Political Party

## 2. Methodological framework

The full content of the main daily newscasts on each TV channel and one prime-time broadcast were monitored for analyzing directly and indirectly electoral materials. The materials were assessed from the perspective of content and context to determine whether they were favorable or unfavorable to specific parties/political entities. In addition, the materials were analyzed according to the following objective coverage criteria.

**Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship.** According to the Code of Audiovisual Media Services (CAMS), by virtue of the fundamental right to information, media service providers shall a) ensure clear distinction between facts and opinions in news item; b) correctly inform about a fact or event, and the information shall be verified and presented impartially and thoroughly (Art.13 (1)). Besides, pursuant to the ethical provisions, news items shall be impartial and objective and shall not favor any particular parties/groups/individuals to the detriment of the others. The presence of discriminatory elements in reports and news items is a primary criterion for presenting reality by means of a journalist's opinions. Filtering news items and minimal analysis of history and context may also indicate protecting the interests of certain stakeholders instead of those of the general public. Art. 89 (3) of the Electoral Code stipulates that the media shall not adopt treating election candidates in a privileged way due to their social status and/or the positions held by their candidates.

**Pluralism of opinion. Fairness and balance of sources.** To be fair and balanced, materials shall present all the parties concerned, especially when covering controversial topics, and treat opponents equally. The media shall also provide access to a multitude of diverse opinions which could help the public to form their own opinion on the topics covered. The CAMS stipulates that, during audiovisual newscasts where accuracy and fairness are essential, reports shall be based on reliable sources, sufficiently documented and confirmed by facts, demonstrate a credible and impartial approach to events, and provide a balanced coverage of different opinions (Art.13).

**Language and images used** Exaggerations and deliberately used vulgar language, such as pejorative expressions or labels referring to particular individuals or organizations, as well as

images manipulated in such a manner that certain parties are presented negatively, raise serious questions about compliance with ethical and professional standards. The ethical behavior of journalists is most often questioned when images present the aspects which differ from reality, when they are intentionally modified, and also when certain news items are illustrated with images not related to the text. The CAMS prohibits broadcasting reports which are likely to propagate, to incite, to promote, or to justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, or other types of hatred based on intolerance or discrimination based on such factors as gender, race, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation (Art. 11(2)).

### 3. Monitoring data

#### Moldova 1



#### Involvement in covering the electoral campaign

On September 6-12, 2025, seven broadcasts of the “Mesager,” the main newscast of the day, aired on 21:00, and four broadcasts, such as “Skanner,” “Pe față,” and two special editions were monitored on the Moldova 1 public TV channel. Only one broadcast was relevant for this assessment.

**News.** A total of 36 directly or indirectly electoral materials were monitored, most of them were included in the electoral section. 23 of them were directly electoral materials. They covered the CEC’s activity, presentation of priorities from electoral programs, information regarding the ballot (length, order of candidates, and printing ballots for postal voting), searches and detentions related to the electoral corruption cases, opinion poll results, monitoring reports by civil society organizations, detention of electoral candidates in the Transnistrian region, and such topics as countering Russian disinformation and propaganda, voters’ options about the September 28 election, and other related topics. The other 13 news items were indirectly electoral materials. They covered such topics as President Maia Sandu’s speech in the European Parliament, *Energocom* providing natural gas for the 2025-2026 cold season, governmental support for farmers and persons affected by the spring and summer weather conditions, infrastructure projects, citizens’ opinions regarding the country’s geopolitical vector, a retrospective of the history of the “Kozak plan,” and Maia Sandu’s visit to Italy, where she had meetings with the Italian Prime Minister and Pope Leo XIV.

**Broadcasts.** Of the four broadcasts monitored, only the special edition aired on September 9 regarding President Maia Sandu’s speech in the European Parliament tangentially and indirectly concerned the issues related to the parliamentary elections. The same broadcast also included such topics as the Kremlin’s hybrid war against the Republic of Moldova, the eventual outcome of the parliamentary elections, and *Ziarul de Gardă*’s investigations relevant to the context of the elections.

#### Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

**News.** Moldova 1 news items were generally neutral and included no ethical breaches. Eight news items were focused on the support provided to agricultural industry, farmers, or citizens affected by bad weather, as well as such infrastructure projects as irrigation systems or road construction, initiatives by the executive authorities and international partners, and Moldova’s progress on the path to European integration. These news items included statements by the CPA representatives or references to their actions, and they were presented positively.

Similarly, two news items were focused on President Maia Sandu and covered her speech in the European Parliament and her official visit to Italy.

Moldova 1 provided a large-scale representation of the election candidates. In one news item, all the 23 election candidates were mentioned, and 20 were covered in more detail. The *Alternativa* Bloc was covered in six news items, two of which had a neutral context and four had a negative one; the PAS was covered in four news items, three of which were neutral and one was positive; the BEP was covered in four news items, three of which were neutral and one was negative; the PL and the PSDE were covered in two news items each, neutrally in both cases. The other election candidates – the ALDE, *Alianta Moldovenii*, *Partidul Nostru*, Andrei Nastase, the AUR Moldova, the *Impreuna* Bloc, the BUN, the CUB, the NOI Political Party, the *Moldova Mare* Party, the *Respect Moldova* Movement, the Christian-Social Union of Moldova, Victoria Sanduta, the PDA, and the PNM – were mentioned once each, all in a neutral context.

**Broadcasts.** In the only broadcast relevant to this monitoring, with the presence of three experts and analysts in the studio, no election candidates were mentioned. Moderation was fair, neutral, and impartial; the moderator was asking relevant questions and offering the guests an opportunity to express their opinions without being interrupted. The broadcast included longer fragments of Maia Sandu’s speech in the European Parliament, including the issue of Russia’s interference in the Moldovan elections. However, the moderator also mentioned Moscow’s position, paraphrasing the words by the Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov.

#### **Fairness and balance of sources. Pluralism of opinion**

**News.** In the 36 news items analyzed, Moldova 1 used a total of 82 sources. Their list included the CEC representatives, election candidates, civil society members and central and local public administration representatives, members of the European Parliament, political analysts, farmers, ranchers, war veterans, and citizens.

Four news items ensured diversity and pluralism of sources, offering the audience multiple perspectives and additional context. Nevertheless, most electoral materials were based on a single source, as a rule, the event organizer.

Five news items were conflict-based; the right to reply was requested or offered in three cases, and it was not respected in two cases. Both cases involved Ion Ceban, one of the leaders of the *Alternativa* Bloc. The first news item (September 8) covers the CEC warning the mayor of the capital about using administrative resources for election purposes following a complaint filed by the PAS. The second news item (September 9) with the headline reading, “*Beware of Fake News*” covers the authorities addressing online media consumers and warning them to be attentive in order to tell the authentic videos from the fake ones. The news item includes details about an AI-generated video which shows Prime Minister Dorin Recean spreading false information about the energy sector before the parliamentary elections, followed by explanations from his spokesperson on how to figure out that a video is AI-generated. The same material includes a fragment about Ion Ceban who shared a video created two years ago and hinting that alleged irregularities could take place while counting the ballots, and informing that such practices were allegedly prepared for the parliamentary elections. The CEC reacted to it and debunked the information. Moldova 1 did not offer Ion Ceban the right to reply.

As to gender balance, of the 66 persons quoted, 48 were men (72%) and 18 were women (28%).

**Broadcasts.** The guests expressed relatively similar opinions regarding the topics addressed, without discussing any ideas. As to gender balance, the only show relevant to the monitoring was attended by three guests: two men and one woman.

### **Language and video images used**

The video images complied with the deontological provisions, and the language used by journalists, moderators, and guests was correct, without any significant breaches.

### **Gagauziya Radio Televizionu (GRT)**



### **Involvement in covering the electoral campaign**

During the period of time covered by this report, five newscasts aired by the GRT regional public channel (*Новости*, the main newscast in the Russian language starting at 19:00) were assessed, as well as four editions of the “De facto” broadcast and one edition of the *Большая Игра* program in Russian.

**News.** The aired newscasts included 14 direct and indirect electoral topics which were presented, with some exceptions, in the electoral section. More than half of the news items referred to the CEC’s decisions concerning the electoral process: the procedure of registration of candidates on the ballots, launching the hotline for reporting cases of bribing voters, verifying the data in the electoral lists, information materials intended for the public, etc. The channel also covered the promises of the election candidates. In one of the newscasts, GRT covered the sanctions applied against the TV channel by the BC for the way it covered the first week of the electoral campaign.

**Broadcasts.** The five monitored broadcasts covered the topics related to the electoral process (exclusion of some candidates, possibilities of election fraud, post-election prospects for the Republic of Moldova, and involvement of the diaspora), the unstable economic situation in the country, the aspects related to the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova, European integration, governance, and the PAS, as well as the situation of the unionist parties in the current political context. In two broadcasts, foreign events were discussed (the decline of the governance in France, the assassination of activist Charlie Kirk, and the economic situation in Romania), and several parallels with the situation in the Republic of Moldova were drawn.

### **Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship**

**News.** The monitored materials complied with the deontological provisions, and no tendencies of favoring or disfavoring any particular candidates could be identified.

All the electoral candidates were shown twice in a neutral context. The first of them could be seen in the news items about the CEC’s decision on establishing the order of registration of the electoral candidates on the ballots, in which they were only mentioned (September 8). The second appearance was included in two news items which presented 11 contestants (September 11) and, respectively, 12 contestants (September 12). These materials had similar formats, covering some electoral priorities, the news items were based on the video content available online and shared by the candidates on various platforms (such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, or their web pages) or on the images borrowed from the other media outlets, with the sources indicated. No news item included any direct speech by the electoral candidates, only a few of them were indirectly quoted.

**Broadcasts.** In all four editions of the “De facto” broadcast, the guests demonstrated a biased attitude towards the central public authorities as well as towards the PAS, and a number of accusations against them could be heard: “*The PAS, unfortunately, has not succeeded in consolidating society (...) it has actually dispersed society*” (September 8), “*She’s obviously... not an economist, you could see it from the start, and she’s not a professional in her basic specialty*” (about Doina Gherman/PAS – author’s note), “*What we currently see in 2021 is one of the most perverse forms of pro-Europeans in which they assume power in an absolutely exclusive way. (...) They breach absolutely all the provisions. (...) If they lose their minds today, you have no one to complain to, in fact, there is no institution which could protect your rights and interests*” (September 11). The moderator did not interfere in such situations to balance the discussion or to specify that the persons and/or institutions mentioned had the right to reply. The moderator mostly supported the accusations and/or the arguments expressed by the guests, also making some additions. For instance, when a guest mentioned Dorin Recean’s forecast regarding the increase in prices, the moderator ironically mentioned: “*He also predicted that prices would not increase (...) Read my lips, never* (the second phrase was said in English – author’s note)”. When the same guest spoke about “*limiting the right to vote for citizens in Russia, Belarus, and the CIS countries,*” emphasizing that “*this is a crucial aspect,*” the moderator confirmed: “*It really is, let me say it as a political scientist*” (September 10). Moreover, in all these editions, the host exceeded the limits of moderation: “*Wait a minute, in our country, some parties are excluded because they didn’t find a common language with Maia Sandu,*” “*How could you contest anything if they can jail you in five minutes?*” (September 8) or “*That’s why the globalists, I beg your pardon, the sovereignists must come to power*” in the context of discussing the economic decline in the Republic of Moldova (September 10). Tendentious questions could also be heard. For instance: “*I would like to ask you if these elections on September 28 still make sense? Do you think that the Republic of Moldova will live the way it used to* (with reference to the elections in Romania – author’s note), *or there is a chance for the opposition to win?*” (September 11).

In the *Большая Игра* broadcast, accusations against some political actors could also be heard, but in a more subtle manner. However, the moderator did not behave in such a biased way as in all the editions of the “De facto” broadcast.

Therefore, in the five monitored broadcasts, the PAS was exclusively presented in a negative context. The *Moldova Mare* Party was mentioned twice, both times in a positive context, when the moderator and the guests welcomed the party’s return to the electoral activities (“De facto,” September 8) and in the September 12 edition, when the guest analyzed the similarities between Victoria Furtuna and Calin Georgescu (whom the moderator discussed with admiration). The BEP, the *Alternativa Bloc*, *Democrația Acasa*, and independent candidate Andrei Nastase each were mentioned once, in a neutral context.

### **Fairness and balance of sources. Pluralism of opinion**

**News.** The monitored news items were based on 48 sources, including the CEC, the electoral candidates, and citizens. Diversity and pluralism of sources were provided only in three news items. More than half of the news items relevant to the monitoring were exclusively based on the information provided by the CEC.

The GRT channel did not air any conflict-based news items during the monitoring period of time.

As to gender balance, female sources prevailed: 11 women (58%) vs. eight men (42%). It is worth mentioning, however, that the monitored materials also included a survey, which contributed to the increase in the number of sources used.

**Broadcasts.** All the guests present in the analyzed broadcasts mostly had the same opinions regarding the topics discussed. They frequently directly or indirectly accused the PAS and the CPA, and no efforts to ensure the balance of opinions or to offer the right to reply for the persons mentioned and presented exclusively in a negative context were made.

All the five broadcasts had only male guests, six in number, and gender balance was not ensured.

### **Language and video images used**

In the news items, the language and video images complied with the deontological provisions. In only one case, a discrepancy was detected: the reporter's voice indirectly quotes the leader of the *Respect Moldova* Movement, and the material was illustrated with video footage in which another representative of the entity appears (September 12).

However, several breaches were reported in the broadcasts, such as labels or pejorative phrases used by the moderator: “*no matter how smart they think they are*” (indirectly, referring to the current governance – “De facto,” September 8), “*that politician with the cowlick*” (referring to Emmanuel Macron), “*The entire Brussels construction, this Brussels sprout*” (referring to the European structures – “De facto,” September 12).

### **TVR Moldova**



### **Involvement in covering the electoral campaign**

On September 6-12, 2025, seven newscasts (“Telejurnalul orei 18:00” and “Telejurnalul de weekend”) and five editions of the “Punctul pe AZi” broadcast were monitored on the TVR Moldova TV channel.

**News.** In the monitored newscasts, 45 directly and indirectly electoral materials were identified; most of them were included in the electoral section. The category of directly electoral news items (30 materials) included reports on the CEC's activity and details regarding the electoral process, such as printing ballots for those who will vote by mail or establishing the order of the candidates on the ballots. Besides, the channel aired news items about the official start of some candidates' electoral campaign, presentation of commitments from their programs, searches and detentions related to electoral corruption cases, presenting the data from opinion polls, reports on campaign monitoring by non-governmental organizations, detention of some electoral candidates in the Transnistrian region, as well as online propaganda and breaches committed by some electoral candidates. It should be mentioned that the electoral section included the news items which did not cover the parliamentary elections, such as an attempt of a woman from the Republic of Moldova to enter the Romanian Parliament with several knives; the statement made by President Nicusor Dan according to which the Republic of Moldova could join the EU in 2028, or the fact that the members of the *Victorie* Bloc were investigated by the Federal Security Service for financial embezzlement.

A third of the monitored news items (15) were indirectly electoral and mostly referred to the activity of the central public authorities. Among them there were reports about the fact that the authorities had ensured the volume of natural gas necessary for the 2025-2026 heating season, allocating 100 million lei for farmers affected by weather conditions, or the threefold increase in the income of the Moldovan Railways (CFM) which allowed partially paying

salary debts. A significant portion of this category of news concerned the activity of President Maia Sandu: the channel covered her speech in the European Parliament, her official visit to Italy, and her meetings with Georgia Meloni, Prime Minister of the country, and Pope Leo XIV. The material about traffic jams in the capital can also be considered indirectly electoral.

**Broadcasts.** Of the total of five editions of the “Punctul pe AZI” broadcast, three included obviously electoral topics. They discussed detention of Alexandru Balan, ex-deputy director of the Intelligence and Security Service (ISS), in Romania, for attempted espionage in favor of another country; searches and detentions related to electoral corruption; establishing the order of the candidates in the ballots; President Maia Sandu’s speech in the European Parliament; the Russian Federation’s interference in the electoral process in the Republic of Moldova and this country’s hybrid war; the European integration of the Republic of Moldova; and the prohibition to enter the Schengen area applied to the Ion Ceban, mayor of the capital. Another edition covered regional geopolitical topics, in particular, the hybrid war waged by Russia against the Republic of Moldova, Romania, and European security, Russian drones in the territory of Poland, the military situation in Ukraine, as well as propaganda promoted online and via the church. The fifth broadcast with the participation of the Ministers of Culture of the Republic of Moldova and Romania, was indirectly electoral; it was dedicated to such topics as the Bookfest 2025 Book Festival, the Romanian Film Festival, and other cultural events.

### **Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship**

**News.** In general, materials directly or indirectly concerning the parliamentary elections were balanced and impartial. In most cases, journalists complied with the deontological provisions, separating facts from opinions. However, a share of negative attitude could be observed in a headline dated September 11 – “*Nostalgic for the CIS*” – the material was about the BEP.

As to selecting topics, a predilection for several political stakeholders and sources of information was noted. For instance, President Maia Sandu was the subject of TVR Moldova news items six times, and the representatives of the central public authorities were mentioned in five news items, most of which were positive. Similarly, the news items that referred to the PAS (five news items) presented this electoral candidate in a predominantly positive (three news items) or neutral (two news items) manner. In contrast, the BEP and the *Alternativa* Bloc were the subjects of five news items each, but they were presented mostly negatively (in three news items each) and neutrally (in two news items each).

Overall, TVR Moldova provided the visibility of ten electoral candidates in the monitored news items. The PAS, the BEP, and the *Alternativa* Bloc were the subjects of five news items each. The BEP was mentioned four times in a neutral context and once in a negative context; the *Alternativa* was mentioned three times in a neutral context and twice in a negative context; the PAS was mentioned three times in a neutral context and two times in a positive context. The PL was presented in two news items, both times in a neutral context. The NOI PP, the PNM, the PDA, Our Party, and independent candidate Andrei Nastase were mentioned once each, in a neutral context in almost all the cases, except the PDA and the NOI PP, which were mentioned negatively.

**Broadcasts.** In general, the guests demonstrated a balanced behavior; however, in some situations, their support for certain political directions could be suggested directly or indirectly. For instance, in the broadcast aired on September 9, a guest stated that it would be good for citizens of the Republic of Moldova to “*vote for the pro-European forces on September 28.*” In the same broadcast, another guest criticized several politicians, stating that

*“Mr. Dodon is a politician without imagination”* and that *“if Dodon and Tkaciuc come to power, they will finish us all off,”* without the moderator’s intervention.

In addition, in the broadcast aired on September 11, Ion Ceban, the head of the Alternativa Bloc, was attacked by a guest and presented negatively: *“You shouldn’t expect any moral behavior from Moldovan politicians”* (in the context of discussions regarding the mayor of the capital). Another guest mentioned that *“Ceban is doing poorly, according to the polls.”* TVR Moldova’s biased attitude towards Ion Ceban could also be observed in the headline formulated as follows: *“Ion Ceban as a threat to Romania’s national security”* (September 11).

The moderation was overall balanced and fair in the September 10 and 12 broadcasts, in which no actual electoral topics were discussed. However, in the editions aired on September 8, 9, and 11, several cases of bias could be found: it was manifested either by the way the questions were formulated or by the lack of the moderator’s interventions when the guests were on the verge of electoral advertising or were accusing the candidates.

Thus, one-sided value judgments were identified, such as, *“A fulminating speech by Ms. Maia Sandu today in Strasbourg,”* *“One of the best speeches we have heard from Maia Sandu,”* *“I’ve noticed great respect for Maia Sandu in the European Parliament”* (all on September 9). At the same time, in several cases, the central public authorities were obviously favored by the following phrases: *“We can see that the authorities are becoming increasingly efficient in struggling against this ‘octopus’ of paid voting”* (September 8); *“In the recent years, the authorities have become more resilient in countering this hybrid war”* (September 12). At the same time, some other electoral candidates or politicians were presented by using negative connotations: *“Ms. Victoria Furtuna’s irredentist Moldova Mare Party”* or *“the Kremlin’s digital army headed by Sor’s acolytes.”*

In the analyzed broadcasts, the BEP and the *Alternativa Bloc* were topics of three editions, and they were mostly presented negatively. The PAS was also discussed in three programs and was presented positively, including the presentation of the central public authorities and President Maia Sandu. The Moldova Mare Party appeared only once in a negative context.

### **Fairness and balance of sources. Pluralism of opinion**

**News.** While documenting the 45 analyzed news items, TVR Moldova used a total of 62 sources: electoral candidates, the CEC, civil society representatives, the central public administration, political analysts, citizens, etc. Eight news items ensured diversity and pluralism of sources, offering the public varied perspectives and additional context. Still, most materials regarding the electoral campaigns quoted only one primary source, typically, it was the organizer of the event.

Six news items were conflict-based. In almost all of these cases, TVR Moldova journalists addressed the mentioned party for reply or tried to contact it in order to offer it the right to reply. An exception was a news item aired on September 8: it was about the searches and detentions related to the new electoral corruption case, when a source which was difficult to verify was referred to. The news item stated that, *“according to TVR Moldova sources, ex-deputy Viorel Melnic, one of those closely connected with the fugitive Ilan Sor, was also detained”* without offering the right to reply.

As to gender balance, of the 42 persons quoted, 37 were men (88%) and only six were women (12%).

**Broadcasts.** In general, the guests or those who took part in the broadcast online had relatively similar opinions on the topics discussed. However, in the situations when they directly attacked certain individuals (such as Igor Dodon, Ion Ceban, or Mark Tkaciuc), the moderator did not interfere in order to balance the discussion or to specify that TVR Moldova would offer the persons in question the right to reply.

As to gender balance, a major disproportion could be seen in the broadcasts, where only men were present (13).

### **Language and video images used**

In general, the language and video images complied with the deontological provisions, but a few discrepancies were identified. Their list includes the use of such labels as “*the fugitive Ilan Sor*” or “*the convicted fugitive Ilan Sor*” (news items dated September 8 and 9). Although this description is actually correct from the legal point of view (Sor was convicted and resides abroad), using this label is far from neutral because it has a negative connotation and could affect public perception. Labels such as “*Sor’s acolytes*” or “*Ms. Victoria Furtuna’s irredentist Moldova Mare Party*” could also be noticed (they were said by the moderator during the “Punctul pe AZI” broadcast on September 8).

### **Jurnal TV**



### **Involvement in covering the electoral campaign**

During the second week of the electoral campaign, six newscasts (“Jurnalul orei 19:00” and “Jurnalul Săptămânii”) as well as five broadcasts (“Ora Expertizei,” “Trigger,” “Secretele puterii,” “Cabinetul din umbra,” and “Parliamentare 2025: Ediție specială”) were monitored on the Jurnal TV channel.

**News.** 25 directly and indirectly electoral materials were inserted into the newscasts, mostly in the electoral section. News items with a direct electoral impact concerned unauthorized opinion polls conducted in the context of the elections, promises made by the electoral candidates, breaches committed by them and reported by Promo-LEX, accusations against an electoral candidate who allegedly spent over 1.4 million dollars for the 2024 elections without reporting this amount to the CEC, etc. Indirect electoral topics include those embezzlement committed by the politicians affiliated with Ilan Sor and funds allocated by Russia for destabilizing the situation in Moldova, President Maia Sandu’s speech during the plenary session of the European Parliament, the results of an opinion poll on Moldova’s accession to the EU, and some topics concerning the European path of the Republic of Moldova.

**Broadcasts.** The broadcasts monitored analyzed, in particular, Maia Sandu’s speech in the European Parliament, topics for discussion such as propaganda and disinformation in the context of the elections, the voter-bribing network created by Ilan Sor, opinion polls dedicated to the elections, the extent of hybrid attacks and Russian interference in the elections, the shattered image of the ruling party, improving connections with the EU, the role of the local public authorities in the electoral process, and the church’s involvement in the elections.

## **Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship**

**News.** In general, the news items which had a direct or indirect connection with the September 28 elections were neutral and balanced, and complied with the deontological provisions. However, in one case, a certain amount of unilateral approach was detected. Specifically, in the news item dated September 8 about *“the candidates’ new promises,”* a fragment from the PAS advertisement was aired, in which Dan Perciun urged the electorate to vote for the party represented by him: *“On September 28, go and vote for the PAS to have modern universities, larger scholarships, and your own future here at home!”* The promises of the other seven electoral candidates in the same news item did not include any direct urges to vote for them.

Four materials which covered the data from an opinion poll demonstrating that over 57% of Moldovans support the country’s accession to the EU, the investment call by the European Commission and the Government in Chisinau, the statements made by Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, and the resolution according to which the European Parliament demonstrates its support for Moldova’s path to EU accession provide a positive context which could improve the positive perception of the CPA and, indirectly, the PAS as the governing party.

The newscasts presented by Jurnal TV ensured the visibility of 22 electoral candidates; the general tone of the coverage was neutral. The BEP appeared twice in a negative context and three times in a neutral context; the PAS could be seen four times in a neutral context and twice in a positive context; the *Alternativa* Bloc was presented neutrally in five news items; the *Respect Moldova* Movement was mentioned four times in a neutral context; the PSDE was presented twice neutrally and once in a negative context. The other political entities were mentioned once or twice in a neutral context.

**Broadcasts.** Overall, Jurnal TV broadcasts were balanced and neutral, and moderation was mostly correct. Nevertheless, in the *“Ora Expertizei”* broadcast aired on September 8, one of the guests remarked, *“it’s quite clear that Mr. Stoianoglo was the beneficiary during the second round of the presidential elections due to Sor’s voter-bribing system. He demanded amnesty for those who had received money for voting, and this fact quite obviously links Stoianoglo as a potential beneficiary of the voter-bribing system in 2025 as well,”* and the presenter did not make any comments to ensure the balance of opinions, announcing a break for commercials, after which, the next topic started being discussed.

During the broadcasts, the BEP was mentioned three times in a mostly negative context, the PAS was mentioned once in a neutral context and once in a negative context, the *Moldova Mare* party was mentioned once in a negative context, and the *Unirea Națiunii* Bloc and the *Împreuna* Bloc were mentioned only once in a neutral context. The *Alternativa* Bloc was mentioned twice in a negative context. In one of the cases, at the beginning of the *“Secretele puterii”* broadcast, the moderator announced that invitations had also been sent to Ion Ceban (*Alternativa* Bloc) and Igor Dodon (BEP). *“Unfortunately, both of them refused from these invitations. I saw Ion Ceban last night while he was saying a 50-minute monologue in which I counted at least 20 extremely serious fakes and manipulations which weren’t debunked by anyone else in that studio,”* the moderator said, presenting Ion Ceban in a negative context.

In the broadcasts monitored, a rather positive attitude towards the parties promoting the country’s European vector, especially the PAS, could be observed, and a more negative tendency towards the parties oriented towards Russia, especially the BEP and the *Moldova Mare* Party, prevailed.

## **Fairness and balance of sources. Pluralism of opinion**

**News.** The 25 monitored news items were based on 95 sources; these were mostly the electoral candidates, the CEC, the Police, the NAC, civil society representatives, and European officials. Two news items were pluralistic and provided several opinions and a broader context.

Of the total number of the materials aired, eight news items were conflict-based, most of them were balanced. One news item regarding electoral corruption remained unbalanced (September 8).

Of the total number of sources used (96), 84 were live sources. As to gender balance, the statistics are distributed as follows: 55 men (66%) and 29 women (34%).

**Broadcasts.** Overall, the guests on the set behaved in a balanced way, mostly expressing relatively similar opinions regarding the topics discussed. The moderation was neutral, with a few exceptions. For instance, in the “Ora Expertizei” broadcast (September 8), when the ALDE leader Arina Spataru stated that “*everybody knows that Ivan Ceban pays people for the electoral campaign,*” the moderator asked her to provide more details without demanding any particular evidence: “*Who exactly does he pay, how much does he pay?*” “*I have a colleague who was personally contacted by him. He invited this person for a discussion and offered them 4000 Euros,*” the guest continued. At the end of the discussion, the moderator did not mention he would request Ion Ceban’s opinion concerning these accusations. In addition, after the guest’s other statements about electoral corruption, the moderator asked in order to conclude: “*Therefore, do you claim that the direct beneficiaries of Ilan Sor’s schemes are Irina Vlah and Moldova Mare?*” without providing the balance of the discussion at least by mentioning that the right to reply would be offered to the persons in question. However, at the beginning of the same broadcast, the moderator mentioned that the representatives of the PAS and the BEP had been invited to the show, but they were “*unavailable.*”

During the broadcasts, a rather large gender balance disproportion could be observed: 13 men and four women.

## **Language and video images used**

The language and video images complied with the deontological provisions, with a few exceptions. Such label as “*the fugitive Ilan Sor*” was used in a news item aired on September 9. In a September 11 report dedicated to the promises of the candidates, while the ALDE and the PSDE candidates appeared on the screen and the journalist described their electoral commitments, the headline read: “*The PAS promises a European future if they manage to obtain citizens’ votes,*” which actually means 38 seconds of extra visibility for the PAS at the expense of the other two electoral candidates. In the “Ora Expertizei” broadcast aired on September 8, the moderator labeled three political entities as “*obscure*” while speaking about the *Moldova Mare* Party, the NOI PP, and the BEP.

## Pro TV Chisinau



On September 6-12, 2025, seven editions of the main newscasts aired at 20:00 were monitored, as well as one edition of the “În profunzime” broadcast.

**News.** For this report, 34 directly and indirectly electoral materials were assessed; 29 of them were included in the “Elections 2025” section. The directly electoral news items covered the call for digital platforms to block disinformation in the context of the upcoming elections in Moldova, registration of the *Moldova Mare* Party for the elections, the political entities starting their campaign, the way in which the candidates were promoted on social networks, procedural actions related to the cases of electoral corruption, conducting the electoral process, the sanction applied by the CEC against Ion Ceban, the controversy caused by Minister Alexei Buzu’s statement during the electoral meeting, a hidden audio recording in which the voice of Dinu Plangau could be heard, the PAS leaders’ press conference, the decision of the Bucharest Court regarding the case of the ban imposed on Ion Ceban who was prohibited to enter Romania and the Schengen area, and a monitoring report compiled by Promo-LEX on conducting the electoral campaign.

The indirectly electoral topics referred to President Maia Sandu’s speech during the plenary session of the European Parliament, the head of state’s visit to Italy, including her meeting with Pope Leo XIV, extradition of Vladimir Plahotniuc, accusations against Marina Tauber concerning embezzlement of funds intended for bribing protesters, the European Parliament’s resolution which calls for the start of Moldova’s negotiations for joining the EU, and detention of Alexandru Balan, the ISS ex-deputy director.

**Broadcasts.** The edition of the “În profunzime” broadcast monitored during the reporting period covered the post-election scenarios and Russia’s interference in the elections in the Republic of Moldova.

### **Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship**

**News.** The news items relevant to this monitoring were mostly neutral and complied with the provisions of the Journalist’s Code of Ethics. Pro TV Chisinau did not demonstrate preferential attitude and did not disadvantage any electoral candidates. However, in the news item regarding the official list of electoral candidates published by the CEC (September 8), the TV channel aired irrelevant images referring to two electoral candidates, which shows a certain element of biased attitude. For instance, after announcing that four electoral blocs had started the campaign, Pro TV Chisinau showed the footage of Vladimir Voronin speaking at the tribune: *“I asked them: what should we expect from all of them or each one of them? Is it a bloc, or what is it, actually?”* The channel later mentions that the *Alternativa* Bloc would also be included in the ballots, illustrating this information with images of several young people at the tribune with the inscription “*Alternativa*” on it, against the background of such leaders as Ion Ceban and Ion Chicu shaking hands.

As to the central authorities, four news items were about the head of state, Maia Sandu, and had a positive tone, which was indirectly advantageous to the PAS due to image transfer. One of the materials covered the president’s speech during the plenary session of the European Parliament (September 9), during which Pro TV Chisinau mentioned four times that the head of state was applauded. The preference was also evident in the way other sequences were selected. For instance, the channel aired a fragment of the moment when Roberta Metsola,

President of the European Parliament, welcomed Maia Sandu saying, “*We are extremely delighted. You will see that the parliament is very happy to see you.*” These details were also added by the following selected quotes from the material: “*We look forward to starting the accession negotiations with Moldova. We are united for supporting the Republic of Moldova and its European path*” (Roberta Metsola), and this quote was followed by Maia Sandu’s statement: “*Now we have to take a decisive step. Let us elect a Parliament that will guide Moldova towards the EU.*”

The other news items about the head of state referred to her meeting with the central authorities in Rome (September 10), as well as her visit to the Vatican (September 12). Similarly, Maia Sandu is mentioned in a news item about the European Parliament’s resolution calling for initiating Moldova’s EU accession negotiations, in which Siegfried Muresan, Member of the European Parliament, indirectly praises the central authorities for “*essential reforms, including in the sphere of Justice*” and managing two energy crises (September 10).

During the reporting period, all the candidates were briefly mentioned in a news item regarding the official list of the candidates. 11 of them – the *Moldova Mare* Party, the PL, the *Alternativa*, the PAS, the PNM, the BEP, the PN, the *Respect Moldova* Movement, the *Democracy at Home* party, Olesea Stamate, and Andrei Nastase – were presented in separate news items. The PAS had the largest number of appearances (nine), followed by the *Alternativa* Bloc (six) and the Patriotic Bloc (six). The Patriotic Bloc appeared once in a negative context, and the *Moldova Mare* Party had two appearances in a negative context. The other candidates were presented neutrally.

**Broadcasts.** In the monitored edition of the “În profunzime” broadcast, nine electoral candidates were mentioned: the PAS, the Patriotic Bloc, the *Alternativa* Bloc, *Our Party*, the *Moldova Mare* Party, the *Democratia Acasa* Party, the *Respect Moldova* Movement, the AUR, and the Christian-Social Union. With the exception of PAS, the other candidates were mentioned in the discussions in a negative way, criticism and accusations against them could be heard. The moderator’s certain bias could be observed due to the absence of interventions which could balance the discussion or the remarks which could be regarded as favoring certain perspectives related to these electoral candidates.

### **Fairness and balance of sources. Pluralism of opinion**

**News.** For documenting 34 monitored news items, Pro TV Chisinau referred to 83 sources: electoral candidates, the central authorities, representatives of the CEC and the law enforcement agencies, European officials, and civil society experts. Five of these news items included pluralism of opinion.

14 materials were conflict-based, most of them were balanced. Three news items – about blocking the accounts belonging to Irina Vlah (September 9), searches related to an electoral corruption case (September 11), and the news item in which Valeriu Pasa lists a series of political entities during the “În profunzime” broadcast and mentions that “*Sor’s people*” could be allegedly found among them (September 12) – did not include any replies from the parties in question.

Analyzing gender balance in the news items, one can find an imbalance in favor of women: in total, 36 men (61%) and 23 women (39%) were quoted.

**Broadcasts.** In general, the moderator did not intervene in order to balance the discussion when one of the guests accused or criticized eight electoral candidates: the Patriotic Bloc, the *Alternativa* Bloc, *Our Party*, the *Moldova Mare* Party, the *Democratia Acasa* Party, the

Respect Moldova Movement, the AUR, and the Christian-Social Union. For instance, when expert Valeriu Pasa spoke about the amounts allocated by Russia for promoting the pro-Russian candidate during the 2020 presidential elections, he remarked while speaking about Igor Dodon: *“Everyone understands who we’re talking about. I don’t understand these rules anymore.”* The moderator made the following remark: *“Well, please tell me who it is about, because in the end, we’ll have to point at that person with our fingers. We won’t understand who it is about.”* The moderator did not balance the discussion even when the guest mentioned a series of electoral candidates allegedly associated with Ilan Sor: *“We see some people from Sor’s network present in Ms. Vlah’s party. I hope no one has any illusions about what sort of party Tarlev’s party is. We see Sor’s people who have recently become Voronin’s people, in the Party of Communists. Therefore, everyone who has high rankings on the BECSIV list (BEP – author’s note), those from the Communists, are persons close to Sor’s group (...). Ms. Furtuna’s party has joined the campaign, and even though it is formed by lawyers, ex-prosecutors who know how to make things look legal, let us not be hypocritical and admit it – this is Sor’s party.”* The moderator replied: *“She says it’s not true”* and the guest continued his speech with new accusations: *“Ms. Furtuna may say anything she wants to say. She is a qualified liar.”* The moderator intervened again in the context of the topic related to Ion Ceban’s visa for Thailand, but her remark did not balance the conversation, but fueled speculative discussions instead: Valeriu Pasa said: *“What kind of one-day vacation could he have?”* and the moderator replied: *“He manages to do as many things in one day as many others do in a week.”*

The moderator did not specify that the channel would offer the candidates discussed during the broadcast the right to reply. Instead, she mentioned that she expected them to attend the debates to answer some questions: *“It would be good to have the candidates who are widely known and for whom we have some questions as our guests.”*

### **Language and video images used**

The language used in the electoral news items was generally neutral, with a few exceptions. In three cases, the labels *“fugitive”* or *“convicted fugitive”* were used while mentioning Ilan Sor (September 9, 11, and 12). The phrase is correct from the legal point of view, but using it as a label is far from neutral because it has a negative connotation and can affect public perception. In the news item regarding the official list of the electoral candidates, irrelevant images regarding two electoral candidates, the Patriotic Bloc and the *Alternativa* Bloc, were shown (September 8). During the broadcast, in the context of a discussion about the lessons learned from the elections in Romania, one of the guests remarked that certain political stakeholders were caught with *“their pants down,”* and the moderator replied: *“I hope no one will sanction us for it.”*

### **TV8**



### **Involvement in the electoral campaign**

On September 6-12, the content of six newscasts aired at 19:00, as well as that of six broadcasts (*“Cutia Neagră,” “Cutia Neagră Plus,”* two editions of *“Novaya Nedelya,” “Alo, TV8,”* and *“Întreabă Ghețu”*) was analyzed.

**News.** The newscasts included 29 directly and indirectly electoral news items. Directly electoral topics (27) cover the way in which Ion Ceban (*Alternativa* Bloc) obtained a

temporary visa to Italy, eventual blocking of funds of the *Inima Moldovei* Party (the BEP member party), registration of a new candidate for the electoral campaign, the ZdG investigation into Moscow's online activity for promoting propaganda messages on social networks, new arrests related to electoral corruption cases, detention of a candidate from the PL lists on the left bank of the Dniester, the CEC's activity, breaches committed by the candidates and reported by Promo-LEX, and the authorities' cooperation with the TikTok platform to counter disinformation.

The two news items not directly related to the electoral campaign concerned the resolution voted by the European Parliament for initiating the accession negotiations with the Republic of Moldova, as well as purchasing over 90% of the necessary amount of natural gas for the cold season.

**Broadcasts.** Out of the six broadcasts aired by TV8, four were directly electoral – “Novaya Nedelya” (two editions), “Cutia Neagră,” and “Cutia Neagră Plus,” which had five electoral candidates as guests. They discussed various aspects of the electoral process, including falsification of the election results by means of using the voter-bribing network created by Ilan Sor, searches certain electoral candidates had faced with, post-electoral scenarios, the war in Ukraine, etc. “Alo, TV8” covered the topic of corruption during the electoral process and the tools for manipulating voters, and the “Întrebă Ghețu” broadcast included several statements by the representatives of the diaspora from Great Britain.

### **Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship**

**News.** Of the total number of news items, 26 can be regarded as objective and impartial. In three other news items a certain amount of bias in the selection of information or a mixture of facts and opinions could be detected. In particular, on September 7 (“Sinteza săptămânii”), TV8 mentioned referring to Ion Ceban's visit to Italy: “*The situation raises questions about the way in which this exception was made, as well as about the purpose of his three-day visit*”: this statement can be classified as a mixture of facts and opinions. A certain degree of biased attitude could also be detected in the selection of statements and questions asked by the journalists during Ion Ceban's press conference.

Two other examples of facts mixed with opinions could be found in two news items aired on September 10. In one of them, it is stated that, “*In the midst of the electoral campaign, the government remembers about the farmers,*” and another one states, “*This year, the Government has demonstrated exemplary organization skills in gas purchases after waiting for lower prices last year in vain.*”

During the monitoring period, TV8 did not focus on presenting the candidates' campaign activities and/or electoral promises. The 11 candidates registered for the September 28 parliamentary elections were mentioned/quoted in the other contexts which concerned the electoral candidates. Thus, the *Alternativa* Bloc was mentioned/quoted three times in a neutral context and three times in a negative context; the BEP was mentioned four times neutrally and once negatively; the PAS was mentioned six times neutrally and once negatively; the *Respect Moldova Movement* was mentioned once negatively and once in a neutral context, and the *Moldova Mare* Party was mentioned twice in a neutral context. In addition, the PL, the PN, Andrei Nastase, the AUR, and the *Împreună* Bloc were mentioned only once in a neutral context, while *Democrația Acasă* had a more negative coverage.

In three cases, the PAS could take advantage of the positive coverage of the CPA which was included in the September 10 newscast. One of them refers to the compensation paid to

farmers by the Commission for Exceptional Situations. Another news item covers the adoption of the European Parliament resolution which quotes Marta Kos, the European Commissioner for Enlargement: “*The Republic of Moldova has complied with all the provisions to open the first negotiation cluster.*” In the news item concerning the purchase of 90% of the required amount of natural gas, the following statement by the Minister of Energy is quoted: “*The authorities ensure safety and uninterrupted gas supplies for the cold season.*” All the three news items present the CPA and, implicitly, the PAS as the governing party, positively.

**Broadcasts.** Five electoral candidates were invited to the broadcasts. The broadcasts were mostly neutral, without demonstrating any obvious biased attitude. However, a certain amount of biased attitude was shown by the moderator of the “Cutia Neagră” broadcast in relation to the guest from the BEP: she demonstrated her mildly negative attitude, and the questions were sometimes asked in a raised voice or in a provocative manner. During an edition of the “Novaya Nedelya” broadcast with the participation of the leaders of the PN and the PSDE, there were moments when the discussions took place in a raised voice, and the guests argued interrupting each other. However, the moderator acted relevantly to balance some topics and reactions.

In the six broadcasts aired by TV8, the PAS appeared twice in a neutral context and once in a more negative context; the BEP appeared three times mostly in a negative context; the PN and the PSDE appeared twice each in a neutral context, and the *Alternativa* Bloc appeared once in a neutral context.

### **Fairness and balance of sources. Pluralism of opinion**

**News.** To present the 29 news items, the channel used 89 sources quoted directly and indirectly. Only one news item out of the 29 monitored could be considered pluralistic, including opinions which offered the public a broader perspective on the topic discussed.

Of the total news items, 16 covered controversial topics, providing balanced sources in 12 cases. The four cases presented in an unbalanced manner concerned the statements made by Viorel Cernauteanu, head of the General Police Inspectorate, about the electoral corruption network created by Ilan Sor (September 8); detention of the deputy mayor of Comrat accused of abuse of office in relation to an electoral corruption case (September 9); searches in Calarasi related to a new electoral corruption case (September 12); and imprisonment of the president of Glodeni Territorial Office of the ex-Sor Party for accepting illegal funding (September 9). In the first three cases, the information was provided unilaterally, and in the last case, it was only mentioned that “*the defendant pleads not guilty.*”

Of the total number of sources used (89), 78 were live sources; the gender ratio clearly favors men: 52 men (67%) and 26 women (33%).

**Broadcasts.** The six broadcasts subject to monitoring had balanced. During an edition of the “Novaya Nedelya” broadcast, Mark Tkaciuc from the *Alternativa* Bloc was invited in order to be offered the right to reply, because he had been mentioned by ex-Prime Minister Ion Sturza during the previous broadcast in the context of his advocacy for signing the Kozak Memorandum in 2003.

The balance of sources in the broadcasts is the following: out of 39 persons quoted, 14 are women (35%), and 25 are men (65%).

## Language and video images used

During the reporting period, TV8 used such label as “*the convicted fugitive Ilan Sor*” in news item (September 7). Although it is correct from the legal point of view, using this label is far from neutral because it has a negative connotation and can affect public perception. Another news item included a sarcastic remark in the subtitles referring to an electoral candidate. Thus, in the news item (broadcast repeatedly) about the court’s decision to order the CEC to register the Moldova Mare Party headed by Victoria Furtuna, TV8 announced that “*the elections will take place with Furtuna*” (September 7). The same situation was also mentioned in the first monitoring report.

## Exclusiv TV



## Involvement in covering the electoral campaign

On September 6-12, five editions of the main newscast of the day were aired (“Știri Exclusiv TV” at 18:00), four broadcasts (two editions of the “Vocile Puterii” broadcast, one edition of the *Ha Grani* broadcast in Russian, and one edition of “Moldova Live cu Oxana Bodnar”), as well as an electoral debate.

**News.** Exclusiv TV aired 31 directly and indirectly electoral nature topics, most of which were included in the “Elections 2025” section. The directly electoral news items informed voters about the CEC’s decisions, as well as about the other details of public interest concerning the electoral process, and covered the electoral priorities of particular candidates and events with the participation of the electoral candidates. The channel also covered the results of a survey regarding voters’ electoral preferences; the news item complied with the requirements of the Regulation on Coverage of Elections by Media Institutions. Besides, the news items were broadcast about the searches conducted in several localities and related to cases of illegal financing of the political parties, electoral corruption, and money laundering. The category of indirectly electoral topics includes news items and materials which present the ministers who review achievements in certain spheres.

**Debates.** The monitored debate was broadcast on September 12, in which three candidates – the PNM, the PSDE, and the PMRM – presented their electoral priorities.

**Broadcasts.** The main topic of the analyzed broadcasts was the electoral campaign and the importance of these elections. The topics discussed included the electoral survey results, voters’ preferences, and eventual scenarios after the campaign, the country’s economic situation, the lack of reforms and economic stagnation, deficiencies in particular spheres of development, and solutions suggested by the candidates in case if they are included in the future Parliament. At the same time, the foreign vector of the Republic of Moldova and its relations with neighboring states, as well as the reasons why the pro-European parties did not succeed in creating a coalition for saving the country’s European path, were discussed.

## Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship

**News.** The news identified for monitoring mostly complied with the deontological provisions. However, in some materials, a certain dose of biased attitude could be detected due to selecting information, and tendentious accents could also be noticed. For instance, in the

September 8 newscast, the presenter announced that “*Alexei Buzu, Minister of Labor and Social Protection, said seriously offensive words about those who have another voting option, other than for the Action and Solidarity Party*”; this statement is rather a reinterpretation with a mixture of facts and opinions. The news about the inauguration of the Irish Embassy in Chisinau, with the appearance of Igor Grosu, the PAS leader, included an irrelevant quote: “*I remember, more or less jokingly or seriously, when I was in Ireland, they said that immediately after an Irish embassy is open in any country, an Irish pub necessarily appears, which should not be neglected*” (September 8). In another topic, one of the BEP objectives is detailed – restoring relations with Russia which “*must be a priority on the Moldovan diplomacy agenda*” (September 8). Finally, the news item is completed with contextual details on the current government’s distancing from Russia. In the case of the other candidates, such details could not be found.

During the monitoring period, Exclusiv TV provided access to 11 electoral candidates. The PAS had the largest number of appearances – they were eight, all in a neutral context; they are followed by the BEP with five appearances, two of which were in a positive context and three were in a neutral context, and Our Party and the *Alternativa Bloc*, with four and, respectively, two appearances in a neutral context. The other candidates had only one appearance in a neutral context each. It should be mentioned that all the electoral candidates were mentioned in one news item, also in a neutral context.

As to the structure of the materials, a predilection for the BEP was noticeable: it was the only electoral candidate which had from two separate extensive topics dedicated to them, with direct speech in which their various priorities were presented.

Indirectly electoral topics were also identified: they had a positive connotation for the representatives of the central public administration and the Presidency who described their achievements or reiterated their commitments to the citizens and the country. In total, eight such materials were aired.

**Debates.** The PNM, the PSDE, and the PMRM representatives present in the studio complied with the rules announced by the moderator at the beginning of the broadcast. As to the questions asked, no hint of biased attitude in relation to the candidates was observed. All the participants had an opportunity to express their own ideas. In certain contexts, accusations against the CPA could be heard; some of them were followed by the moderator’s interventions, while some of the others were not.

**Broadcasts.** Some of the guests mentioned the governance and/or the PAS in a negative context while presenting their electoral priorities. For instance, in the “Moldova Live cu Oxana Bodnar” broadcast, a guest accused Radu Marian (PAS) of being “*a perfect example of division of society, a head of a parliamentary committee who decides which polls are credible and which ones are not.*” The moderator intervened, mentioning that she offered everyone the right to reply. In the *Ha Грани* broadcast, multiple accusations against the PAS and the government could also be heard, but the moderator specified several times that these were merely the guests’ opinions, and that the parties in question had the right to reply. In the in some situations, no reaction to accusations followed. At the same time, a case of discrimination of electoral candidates on the basis of age was reported in the edition aired on September 9. When asked why the unionist forces had not succeeded in forming a coalition, the Dragos Galbur, the PNM leader, stated: “*In the bloc you’ve mentioned, the youngest candidate is 62 years old (referring to the PL – author’s note) (...) Mr. Boris Volosatii is also about 73. Therefore, these persons have exhausted themselves, well, their term of validity as politicians has already expired, it would be better for them to retire, to allow the younger*

persons get involved (...) It scares me to watch 75-year-old people, who, if you forgive my expression, can barely crawl yet still try to give me some life lessons.” In addition to the aspect of discrimination, the statements made by the PNM representative were accompanied by other accusations, yet the moderator failed to intervene in any way. In another edition of the same broadcast, the discussion was sometimes monopolized by some of the guests, and the moderator found it difficult to maintain the balance among the speakers. Besides, she did not intervene after some of the candidates accused the others (September 11).

In the broadcasts analyzed, the PAS was mentioned four times, in most (three) cases in a negative context, the BEP was mentioned once negatively and twice neutrally, and the *Moldova Mare* Party and the *Alternativa* Bloc were mentioned twice in a neutral context. The AUR, the PL, and the BUN had one appearance in a negative context each, and the PN, the PNM, the Alliance of Moldovans, the PMRM, the *Împreună* Electoral Bloc, and the CUB had one appearance each in a neutral context.

### **Fairness and balance of sources. Pluralism of opinion**

**News.** To document 31 news items, the Exclusiv TV channel used 65 sources: the electoral candidates, the CEC, the police, and the experts. Pluralism of sources was ensured in five news items aired, and the rest of them were unilateral.

The Exclusiv TV channel aired seven controversial materials, and in three cases, the principle of balance of sources was not complied with. Two of them concerned the searches conducted by the NAC in connection with electoral corruption cases (September 11 and 12). In both cases, the reaction of the parties in question was not requested, and no efforts to balance the materials were made. Another situation could be identified in a news item regarding an eventual threat of pro-Russian forces gaining access to the Parliament, when Prime Minister Dorin Recean declared: “*Dear citizens, Sor’s network intends to use you in their dishonest interests*” (September 11).

As to gender balance of the sources, a disproportion could be observed: 24 men (56%) and 19 women (44%).

**Broadcasts.** All the monitored broadcasts could be considered pluralistic, as they provided different perspectives regarding the issues discussed. Sometimes, the moderators intervened to remark that the accusations represented exclusively the guests’ opinions, and in some other situations, they specified that they offered the right to reply. However, several accusations, especially those in the “*Vocile Puterii*” broadcast, remained unbalanced.

As to ensuring gender equality, imbalance could be observed: three women (37%) and eight men (63%).

### **Language and video images used**

The language used in the monitored news items was generally neutral, with one exception such as using the label “*the fugitive Sor*” (September 8). Although this definition is correct from the legal point of view, using it is far from neutral neutrality because it has a negative connotation and could affect public perception. As to the images included in the same newscast, an inconsistency was reported: the reporter quotes the statements by the ombudsman Ceslav Panico while in the video material, Radu Marian’s Facebook account is mentioned as the source. In the other cases, the images aired complied with the deontological provision.

## Cinema 1



### **Involvement in covering the electoral campaign**

On September 6-12, 2025, five newscasts (aired at 18:00) and two electoral debates were broadcast on Cinema 1.

*News.* 56 directly and indirectly electoral materials were presented in the newscasts; most of them were included in the “Elections 2025” section. Directly electoral news items mainly covered the candidates’ campaign activities, printing ballots for remote voting and for the diaspora, reports on monitoring the electoral process conducted by civil society, results of opinion polls, searches and detentions related to the cases of electoral corruption and illegal financing of the parties, the Ombudsman’s and the CEC representatives’ reactions to the offensive phrase said by the minister during his meeting with voters, etc.

Indirectly electoral topics covered the visits of President Maia Sandu to Strasbourg and Rome, the European Parliament’s resolution on accelerating the accession negotiations of the Republic of Moldova to the EU, the progress made by CFM (the Railroad of Moldova) due to its new management, the authorities’ contribution to solving the energy crisis in the Transnistrian region last winter, the Government’s decision to offer financial support to farmers affected by the weather conditions in spring and summer this year, etc.

*Debates.* During the reporting period, Cinema 1 aired two electoral debates in cooperation with 7 TV on September 6 and 7. The representatives of the CUB, the PNM, and independent deputies Andrei Nastase and Olesea Stamate were taking part in these debates. The other two candidates (the ALDE and the PDA) did not respond to the invitation for various reasons.

### **Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship**

*News.* In general, directly electoral materials broadcast by Cinema 1 complied with the principle of neutrality and impartiality. Most of the news items, with the exception of four materials, were objective and covered mainly the CEC’s activity or the candidates’ campaign activities. In four materials, biased elements could be found due to selection of information. In the news item dated September 12 and covering the Promo-LEX report, the channel provided general information regarding the irregularities registered and avoiding mentioning the candidates who had the largest number of breaches (the PAS, the BEP, and the Respect Moldova Movement author’s note). A news item dated September 10 covering the improved situation at the CFM included Prime Minister Recean’s appreciation of the CFM management which, “*under the guidance of Deputy Prime Minister Bolea,*” had registered some progress, according to him: its income increased three times, salary arrears were reduced, and current salaries were being paid timely. A material dated September 9, about the difficulties faced by farmers in the Dubasari District, in addition to the information from the press release of the Bureau for Reintegration Policies, included the information about the compensation of 2.5

million lei paid last year by the Government to landowners along the Camenca – Tiraspol route for covering the taxes imposed by the self-proclaimed authorities from Tiraspol. This detail of the context which presents the Government positively could be considered excessively supportive in the electoral context. On the same day, the channel broadcast another news item about a meeting of specialized organizations in the Transnistrian region, where providing natural gas for the winter was discussed. The material concerns the Bureau for Reintegration Policies, and Prime Minister Recean is quoted referring to a previous interview, according to which, the region daily receives 1–2.3 million m<sup>3</sup> of gas. At the same time, Dorin Recean mentions last year’s energy crisis in the region, specifying that the authorities in Chisinau acted in a responsible way and, with the support from the EU, “*did whatever was necessary.*”

An increased presence of the representatives of the central public authorities in the news items should be mentioned – they had 15 appearances, 12 of which were positive for the governance. In addition to the above examples, a material covering President Maia Sandu’s speech in the European Parliament, her visit to Rome, the decision to pay compensation for farmers, adopting the country’s energy strategy, etc., could also be mentioned. All of these news items could be considered favorable to the governing party as an electoral candidate due to the manner of presentation and the tone favorable to the governance.

However, the channel’s editorial policy allowed presenting most of the electoral candidates in the news items (18 out of 23). The tone of the coverage was predominantly neutral. As to frequency of appearances, the PAS has the largest number of them (four) and is followed by the *Alternativa* Bloc (three), including in the materials which were responses to the accusations. The BEP, the PL, and independent candidates Andrei Nastase and Olesea Stamate appeared in two news items each, and the rest (the PN, the *Moldova Mare* Party, the *Respect Moldova* Movement, the PSDE, the UCS, the CUB, the BUN, the LOC, the Alliance of Moldovans, the NOI Party, the PNM, and Victoria Sanduta) appeared once each and were presented neutrally.

**Debates.** Both debates were organized according to pre-established scenarios. At the beginning, the moderator listed the rules, which included prohibiting obscene language, inciting hatred or war, sexist language, or harming the dignity and reputation of other persons. The questions asked were relevant and balanced, without offending or favoring any candidates. The questions from the audience were also balanced and unbiased, and the airtime was managed efficiently. All the four participants – Ina Vartosu (CUB), Andrei Nastase, Olesea Stamate, and Dragos Galbur (PNM) – were speaking in a decent language and avoided attacking their opponents personally.

### **Fairness and balance of sources. Pluralism of opinion**

**News.** In the 56 materials aired, Cinema 1 cited 77 sources, most of which were represented by the electoral candidates, the CEC, the central authorities, and the representatives of the law enforcement agencies. Most of the news items were unilateral, based on a single source or sources sharing the same position, which limited pluralism of opinion.

Of the five conflict-based news items, the balance of sources was ensured in three. The news items about the searches related to electoral corruption cases remained unbalanced, and the material of September 8 regarding the accusations expressed by Ion Ceban, the co-chairman of the *Alternativa* Bloc, against the PAS, who said he would like to abandon the campaign, was partially unbalanced. The reporter asked for the PAS’ opinion, yet the party’s spokesperson’s reply did not directly concern the accusations and was generally critical: “*The*

*PAS insists that the mayor should take care of Chisinau Municipality. While he is victimizing himself, Chisinau has been left without its budget for eight months, with deteriorated roads, infernal traffic jams, and inefficient public transportation.”*

The sources cited were significantly unbalanced in terms of gender balance, with a total of 13 women (22%) and 46 men (78%) quoted in the relevant news items.

### **Language and video images used**

The language used in the analyzed materials aired by Cinema 1 was, in general, neutral and complied with ethical and professional standards. The label “*the fugitive Sor*” was used only once. Although it is correct from the legal point of view (Sor was actually convicted and resides abroad), using label is far from neutral because it has a negative connotation and can affect public perception. As to using the images, no situations in which they were intentionally altered or manipulated in order to distort the messages transmitted were noted. However, technical issues related to the visual presentation, especially related to the Russian subtitles, could be observed. The subtitle text did not always correspond to the content of the news items aired, which caused confusion. For instance, in the September 10 newscast, while a news item about the country’s natural gas supply was on the screen, the subtitles read, “*The Government’s support for farmers.*” Even though such technical errors are not intentional and do not imply any editorial manipulation, could affect clarity and correctness of the journalists’ message.

### **One TV**



### **Involvement in covering the electoral campaign**

On September 6-12, 2025, six newscasts were monitored on One TV, including “Sinteza săptămânii” in Russian, as well as two broadcasts – “1 la 1,” one of which was repeatedly aired, and an edition of the “Info One Week” broadcast.

**News.** In total, One TV aired 29 directly and indirectly electoral news items. The first category includes the materials on the CEC’s activity, including the decisions to register or sanction some electoral candidates, the voter information campaigns, printing ballots for remote voting, searches related to the electoral corruption investigations, opinion poll results and monitoring the electoral process by civil society, as well as a number of news items in which the candidates presented their appeals or accusations against some opposing candidates.

Indirectly electoral news covered President Maia Sandu’s participation in the plenary session of the European Parliament and the resolution of the European forum on the country’s accession negotiations to the EU, the visit of the European Commissioner for Agriculture and Food to the Republic of Moldova (repeated), the progress registered by the CFM, the financial assistance paid to farmers, etc.

**Broadcasts.** The September 7 edition of “Info One Week” contained several news items aired during the previous week and two studio interviews, one of which was relevant for the monitoring report, and discussed the topics related to the electoral process and the CEC’s activity. On September 6, the channel repeatedly aired the “1 la 1” broadcast with the participation of Ion Chicu (*Alternativa Bloc*), the September 9 edition had Valeriu Pasa,

President of *WatchDog*, as a guest, and several topics were discussed, including the iData survey regarding voters' electoral preferences, the issues related to the visit of Ion Ceban, the Alternativa Bloc co-chairman, to Rome, the situation within the structure of the BEP, Russia's interference in the electoral process in Moldova, and other similar topics.

### **Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship**

**News.** A large part of the topics, especially those on the CEC's activity, European integration, and the CPA representatives' foreign visits, were covered fairly and impartially. However, in some (six) cases, the channel's biased attitude towards the protagonists covered was obvious. For instance, in two materials – the one about the CEC's decision to warn Ion Ceban (*Alternativa Bloc*) for participating in an event abroad as a mayor without being relieved of his duties (September 8) and the one about the Bucharest court's rejection of the appeal filed by Ion Ceban due to being banned from entering the Schengen area (September 11) – this biased attitude could be observed due to selection of sources included in the news items, as well as due to the contextual information which presented Ceban negatively. Another news item in which a certain element of biased attitude is noticeable is the one regarding Prime Minister Recean's praise to the CFM administration at the beginning of the Government's meeting held on September 10. The news item emphasizes the progress made by CFM due to state investments, includes some fragments from the CFM press release where the role of the Government is appreciated, and quotes a representative from the company's administration. Finally, the opinion of the enterprise's ex-director, who says that this reform is a populist one, is included, but this brief reply is not enough to balance the news item.

Overall, the central public authorities, including President Maia Sandu, could take advantage of the positive tone in ten news items, which was implicitly favorable to the PAS. The list of such topics includes the news item about President Sandu's announcement on recognition of Moldovan driving licenses in Italy and pensions for Moldovans who had spent many years working in Italy, a material about the resolution on accelerating accession negotiations adopted by the European Parliament, offering grants to entrepreneurs, 100 million lei assistance payments for farmers, the visit of the European Commissioner for Agriculture to Moldova, etc.

During the reporting period, the representatives of six electoral candidates appeared or were mentioned in the relevant news items – the PAS, the *Alternativa Bloc*, the PDA, the BEP, the *Respect Moldova* Movement, and the *Moldova Mare* Party. Most of the news items with the presence of the electoral candidates were mostly focused on mutual accusations, without providing information about their campaign activities, which limited voters' access to relevant information. The frequency of contradictory news items created a negative context for the *Alternativa Bloc* which was covered in five news items four of which had negative connotation (for instance, a news item on the protests of veterans of the Dniester war at the headquarters of the National Alternative Movement and the incident involving the mayor of Sadic during which a village resident was allegedly attacked). The PAS was covered in mostly neutral news items (three), and was the only electoral candidate covered in a news item from an electoral briefing where the PAS President Igor Grosu and Prime Minister Dorin Recean discussed the dangers of pro-Russian parties winning the elections. The *Respect Moldova* Movement and the Patriotic Bloc were mentioned in the news item regarding the breaches registered during the campaign by Promo-LEX, the context was negative, and the PDA was mentioned in the news item about the picketing next to Minister Buzu's home.

**Broadcasts.** The two editions of “1 la 1” broadcast aired during the reporting period of time were generally impartial, with no obvious shown by the moderator. In the September 6

broadcast (rerun) with the participation of Ion Chicu (*Alternativa Bloc*), the tone of coverage was neutral for the BEP and negative for the PAS: the latter was described by the guest as a “*criminal regime*.” The moderator did not intervene in spite of his repeating this statement several times during the broadcast. In addition, in the September 9 edition, the BEP representatives appeared in a rather negative context when the guest ironically called them the “*Bloc of Patriots of Russia*,” remarking that its members were allegedly under the control of Ilan Sor, including the Communist deputies; he also listed specific names. “*Chicu, Dodon, Vlah, and Ceban keep repeating the same lies like parrots*,” the guest said without the moderator’s intervention, and some statements sounded close to defamation (e.g. the statement about the “*group of bandits at the Prosecutor’s Office headed by Viorel Morari*”). Ion Ceban from the *Alternativa Bloc* was presented mostly negatively and characterized as “*unreasonable*” in the context of his visit to Rome and the issues generated by this travel. The other electoral candidates – the PAS, the PN, and the Moldova Mare Party – were mentioned in a neutral context.

“Info One Week” dated September 7 repeatedly aired several directly and indirectly electoral news items broadcast in the previous days, in which the PAS, the CUB, the PN, the *Alternativa Bloc*, and the *Moldova Mare Party* appeared mostly neutrally. The BEP was disadvantaged by three articles regarding the pact signed by the members of the bloc: due to it, they promised not to form a coalition with the governing party. The PAS representative’s reply and the included contextual information shifted the emphasis from the pact itself to the integrity of one of the BEP members. In spite of presenting a number of opinions, the news item is negative for the BEP due to the extensive reply, the detailed contextual information about an alleged bribe, and facts mixed with opinions. Two other news items with a context negative for the BEP were about detention of Irina Zelenskaya, deputy mayor of Comrat, and Prime Minister Recean’s statement according to which Irina Vlah’s accounts would be blocked by the tax services.

Some materials which presented the CPA positively were also inserted, informing about a new tranche of financial aid from the EU because Moldova had complied with four reform objectives, in which Dorin Recean presented as a PAS candidate also speaks, as well as the material about the progress assessed by the President of the European Council on the path to European integration.

One of the two interviews with guests in the studio which directly concerned the elections (guest Pavel Postica, vice-president of the CEC) was neutral and balanced.

### **Fairness and balance of sources. Pluralism of opinion**

**News.** When documenting the 29 news items, One TV directly or indirectly quoted 66 sources, including the electoral candidates, the CEC representatives, the European officials, the central authorities, the experts, etc. Ten news items of the total number were pluralistic and documented from various sources, offering the audience a more complex picture of the topics in question. The news about the activities of the CEC and the central public authorities were less diverse and were mostly based on unilateral sources, mainly press releases.

11 news items covered contradictory topics; seven of them ensured the right to reply of the party concerned. The list of the news items which remained unbalanced were those about the electoral corruption cases (September 8 and 12), the one about detention of two deputy mayors in Comrat for corruption (September 9), the material of September 9 about the Deschide.md investigation of embezzlement of funds obtained from Russia via the Sor

network, a scheme allegedly involving Marina Tauber (it is mentioned in the news item that the persons concerned did not comment on these statements publicly).

As to gender balance, the news items were unbalanced: male sources were cited 45 times (70%), and female sources were cited 19 times (30%).

**Broadcasts.** The “Info One Week” broadcast included several news items which presented multiple perspectives, including opinions of the CEC representatives, the electoral candidates, and the Moldovan or European officials on different topics. Some of them were unbalanced, such as the news item about the BEP pact and the reaction of those urged to join this pact (the PN and the *Alternativa Bloc*), or the material regarding the reaction of Irina Vlah and Igor Dodon (BEP) to detention of Comrat Deputy Mayor Irina Zelenskaya due to illegal financing of the *Inima Moldovei* party (September 7).

The discussions in the studio were balanced, without any accusations against the other persons which could require offering the right to reply.

### **Language and video images used**

The language and video images did not include any serious deviations from deontological provisions. However, in seven cases, such labels as “*fugitive*” or “*the fugitive oligarch Sor*” were used. Although they are factually and legally correct, this expression has a negative connotation and, if it is repeated, it could influence the public’s perception. In the September 10 newscast, a technical issue generated some confusion: the subtitles informed about the European Parliament’s resolution, while the news item itself covered the government aid for farmers.

N4



### **Involvement in covering the electoral campaign**

During the reporting period, N4 aired 24 directly and indirectly electoral media products: 19 news items, three debates, and two broadcasts.

**News.** The directly electoral topics covered an opinion poll regarding the electoral candidates who would enter the Parliament, information communicated by the CEC such as the number of the candidates included in the ballots, possibilities of verifying the data in the electoral lists, sending envelopes for postal voting, and printing ballots. The topics related to new arrests related to electoral corruption cases were also covered, as well as the authorities’ cooperation with the international companies which manage social networks to counter disinformation in an electoral context, campaigning activities in the countryside (a material borrowed from TV Nord), the urge of Nicusor Dan, President of Romania, to take part in the voting, and statements made by the PAS leaders during a press conference about the risks for the country’s European path if a pro-European majority failed to enter the Parliament. The category of indirectly electoral news items includes such topics as improving conditions for prematurely born children after the renovation of the Premature Section of the Mother and Child Institute, the diaspora’s desire to return home, compensations for farmers, timely paying

salaries to CFM staff, increasing number of companies with foreign capital, avoiding another gas crisis, the Forest Festival held under the auspices of President Maia Sandu, the speech of the head of state during the plenary session of the European Parliament which also touched upon the topic of the elections, and the arrest of a ex-deputy director of the ISS. It should be mentioned that the N4 news items mostly consisted of video footage borrowed from other media outlets or from official sources.

**Debates.** During the reporting period, N4 aired three debates with eight representatives of the electoral candidates in the first days of the week – the PAS, the BEP, the *Alternativa Bloc*, the PN, the PSDE, the LOC, the *Împreună Bloc*, and the *Respect Moldova* Movement – offering them enough airtime to present their electoral commitments.

**Broadcasts.** The only edition of the “Puterea a patra” broadcast aired during the monitoring period and announced as an electoral information program was focused on discussing Russia’s interference in the elections in the Republic of Moldova and the European path of the Republic of Moldova. During the reporting period, N4 also borrowed an edition of the “Tema” broadcast produced by journalist Vladimir Soloviov for his YouTube channel and dedicated to a similar topic.

### **Impartiality and objectivity. Political partisanship**

**News.** On September 6-12, N4 did not provide visibility to most electoral candidates. The only party which received more consistent attention was the PAS (September 11), when N4 covered a press conference organized by this party. Otherwise, the channel mentioned four candidates – the PAS, the BEP, the *Alternativa Bloc*, and the PN – in a news item covering the results of an opinion poll (September 8). The BEP and the PAS were later mentioned in a news item about campaigning in the countryside (September 10).

However, the channel indirectly favored the governance and, due to image transfer, the PAS, by broadcasting eight news items on the activity of the central public administration and President Maia Sandu. Here we could mention the news item about reflected the achievements of the governance which were discussed by the representatives of the executive authority and its subordinate institutions, such as paying the salary arrears to CFM employees, compensations offered to farmers, avoiding another energy crisis, renovating a hospital department for newborn children, the diaspora’s desire to return home, Maia Sandu’s speech during the plenary session of the European Parliament, etc. Favoring could be observed not only due to selection of topics, but also due to quotes. Let us provide a few examples: “*The Government takes care of our people and the results of their labor*” (Dorin Recean speaking about the compensation offered to farmers – September 10); “*During this very brief period of time, we have restored many things we have not done in recent years, more exactly, a sustained effort for restructuring the company has begun. It has resulted in a three-fold increase in income. (...) When we make necessary decisions, when we assume responsibility for making difficult but courageous decisions, we gain a very good result*” (Dorin Recean discussing the CFM situation – September 10); “*We are the Forest Generation, we have managed to afforest over 15000 hectares in just two years, and we won’t stop at this point*” (Maia Sandu speaking about the Forest Festival – September 12). Favoring the central authorities could also be observed in the slogans used: “*Salaries paid to CFM staff on time*” (September 10), “*100 million lei as a compensation for farmers*” (September 10), “*Moldova will not have to face another gas crisis*” (September 12).

**Debate.** The debates were held with three candidates in the studio, except for the September 9 edition, when the representative of the *Democrația Acasă* Party did not appear.

In general, the moderation limited direct accusations among the participants or against the other candidates by the rules prohibiting discriminatory language, hate messages, insults, and personal attacks. The moderator tried to maintain balance by distributing time equally, as well as by the questions asked.

In the editions without the PAS representatives, several attempts to criticize the ruling party were observed, for instance, for using administrative resources for the campaign (September 9) or for an increase in natural gas tariffs, they were also accused of lies (September 10), which presented the PAS in a negative tone. Ion Ceban, representative of the *Alternativa Bloc*, was also criticized for using administrative resources (September 9). Trying to balance the discussion, in the September 9 edition, the moderator asked the participants whether they were willing to solemnly promise not to use any administrative resources.

**Broadcasts.** The only edition of the “Puterea a patra” broadcast during the reporting period of time had such guests as Hubert Knirsch, the new ambassador of Germany to the Republic of Moldova, and analyst Balázs Jarábik, who visited the studio in turn. The discussions were focused on Russian interference in the Moldovan elections, the country’s European path, and the regional political context. The image of any electoral candidates was not affected by the questions asked by the author or by the answers provided. The same thing could be said about the edition of the “Tema” broadcast which analyzed the role of Sergey Kiriyenko who was presented as the coordinator of Russian influence in the Republic of Moldova; the program did not specifically refer to any electoral candidate.

### **Fairness and balance of sources. Pluralism of opinion**

**News.** The 19 materials monitored for this report included a total of 28 sources which represent the central authorities, the CEC staff, foreign officials, and citizens. Most of the news items were based on a single source, and only one of them about campaigning in the countryside borrowed from TV Nord (September 10) could be regarded as pluralistic. During the reporting period, N4 did not broadcast any topics which could require using the right to reply.

As to gender balance, the sources were distributed in a balanced way, with 12 women and 11 men.

**Broadcasts.** Although the “Puterea a patra” broadcast had two guests, both men, their presence in the studio in turn did not contribute significantly to pluralism of opinion. In contrast, the edition of the “Tema” broadcast filmed in a style typical of online video platforms and including several perspectives was a pluralistic one: it was based on nine sources, including five men and four women.

### **Language and video images used**

The language used in the news items was generally neutral and appropriate, except for the case when the label “*fugitive oligarch Ilan Sor*” could be heard in the “Tema” program (September 12). As to video images, in the TV version of this program, approximately first five minutes were in English, and translation was apparently AI-generated, which is most likely a technical issue.

As to video images, it should be mentioned that N4 did not indicate the source of the video in which Dorin Recean discussed the compensation offered to farmers (September 10): it was taken from the politician's Facebook page. The video footage from the Government meeting taken from the official sources, where the Prime Minister discussed the progress at CFM (September 10) were not properly marked either.

## CONCLUSIONS

On September 6-12, 2025, the following tendencies in covering the electoral campaign by the ten monitored TV channels could be observed.

- The **Moldova 1** public TV channel covered the electoral campaign in a neutral and balanced way, providing coverage for almost all the electoral candidates. Since many materials, especially the indirect ones, were about the actions of the central authorities or President Maia Sandu, they presented a favorable image for the governance and, correspondingly, for the PAS as an electoral candidate. The *Alternativa* Bloc was mildly disadvantaged by presenting Ion Ceban, one of the leaders of the entity, in the news items with a negative context. The broadcasts addressed electoral topics only tangentially and were focused on foreign and security aspects, with fair moderation and without any breaches.
- In the newscasts, the **GRT** regional public TV channel covered the elections neutrally, presenting its agenda based on the information provided by the CEC. All the electoral candidates had access to the newscasts. The relevant news items did not include any direct speech by the candidates; the TV channel compiled the information published online. In its broadcasts, GRT demonstrated a biased approach due to constant criticism of the PAS and the central public authorities; no diversity of opinions was provided. The moderator actively supported the guests' accusations by expressing his own opinions, which affected the balance and impartiality of these media products.
- **TVR Moldova** mostly offered the public a neutral and diverse image of the electoral process in its newscasts, providing documented information and mostly complying with the deontological provisions. However, a predilection for covering the activities of the central public authorities was observed, which could be interpreted as an indirect advantage for the governing party. In the newscasts, the approach was generally neutral, whereas biased tendencies could be noticed in the broadcasts, especially due to the negative presentation of the BEP and the *Alternativa* Bloc.
- **Jurnal TV** covered the electoral process in a correct and impartial manner in its newscasts, providing visibility to most candidates and generally maintaining a neutral tone. No obvious accents of political partisanship could be identified, though some elements of biased attitude could be noticed. Covering the European path and the activities of the central public authorities predominantly positively was indirectly advantageous to the PAS. During the broadcasts, the comments had a more favorable tone while discussing the pro-European parties, especially the PAS, while the entities associated with the eastern vector, such as the BEP and the *Moldova Mare* Party, were mainly presented in a negative context. The moderators maintained a largely balanced approach, but did not intervene consistently enough to provide representation of all the parties concerned, which partially affected the editorial balance.
- **Pro TV Chisinau** covered the electoral campaign in a generally balanced and correct manner. The tone of the news items was predominantly neutral. President Maia Sandu was presented in a positive context in several news items, which gave an indirect advantage to the PAS. In the broadcast, the moderator did not intervene consistently

enough to balance the discussion in the case of accusations or criticism against several electoral candidates, which resulted in the editorial imbalance.

- **TV8** presented the electoral campaign in a mostly correct manner, both in its news items and in the broadcasts. Most electoral candidates were presented neutrally, yet in some cases, a certain amount of biased attitude could be noticed in the way information was selected and presented. In some situations, the public authorities were presented in a positive context, which could be regarded as an advantage for the PAS. Although the broadcasts were generally balanced, moments of tendentious approach in moderation in relation to the BEP and tensions among the guests could be noticed.
- **Exclusiv TV** was actively involved in covering the electoral campaign in its news items and broadcasts. The channel provided visibility to a relatively large number of candidates, and the topics were generally covered correctly, impartially, and neutrally. However, in the case of the PAS, there were some hints of tendentiousness which could eventually be disadvantageous to them, while the BEP benefited from visibility with more favorable accents. The broadcasts offered space for debates and diverse opinions, but there were also several cases of unilateral presentation, lack of the right to reply in controversial situations, and age-related discrimination demonstrated by one of the candidates against his colleagues from the other parties.
- **Cinema 1** covered the electoral campaign consistently, providing access to a great number of electoral candidates and presenting them predominantly neutrally. Most news items, with some exceptions, complied with the principles of neutrality and impartiality, but they were unilateral and based on a single source of information. The representatives of the central public authorities could often be seen in the news items, they were mostly presented positively, which implicitly favored the PAS as the governing party.
- **One TV** covered the electoral campaign by means of neutral and impartial topics, some of which lacked diversity, concerning the electoral process, yet avoided providing the candidates direct access to its newscasts and programs. The channel did not cover the candidates' campaign activities yet they were presented mainly through mutual accusations or conflict situations. Several materials were biased due to selection of information which presented certain political stakeholders positively or negatively. The *Alternativa* Bloc had the largest number of negative appearances, and the PAS was generally presented neutrally, however, benefiting from the positive appearances of the representatives of the central public authorities.
- **N4** was involved in covering the electoral campaign in its newscasts, debates, and broadcasts. In the news items, the visibility of the candidates was insufficient; the channel did not cover their campaign activities or statements, except for those of the PAS. The governing party was also advantaged by a large number of news items regarding the activity of the central authorities, including President Maia Sandu, in a positive context. The debates and broadcasts aired were generally neutral and correct, without any obvious elements of biased attitude.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Broadcasters should use monitoring reports as self-regulation tools and should eliminate defects, so that their activity be in line with legal standards and with the Journalist's Code of Ethics:
  - to inform voters in a fair, impartial, and unbiased manner;
  - to ensure pluralism and diversity of opinion by including several views on the issues discussed in the news;
  - to offer the right to reply to all parties involved in cases of conflicts;

- to promote gender equality by citing more female sources.
- The Broadcasting Council should take note and use the monitoring reports to evaluate whether the monitored TV stations respected the citizens' right to complete, objective, and truthful information and the electoral candidates' right to have equal access to the media.
- If the legal provisions are breached, the Broadcasting Council should apply sanctions proportional to the frequency and degree of the breaches committed.