



HATE SPEECH 2019



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INTRODUCTION

This report reflects the results of media monitoring conducted in a period between 1 January and 31 December 2019. The objective of the study was to identify various forms and sources of hate speech in media and public discourse as well as to analyze main trends.

Apart from media outlets, the monitoring also focused on other sources – politicians, clergy, civil society organizations and individual members of society.

The introductory part of the report presents the key findings and the methodology of the study; the first part provides unified quantitative data; the second part discusses various sources of hate speech by typology.

The report was prepared within the USAID-funded Promoting Integration, Tolerance and Awareness in Georgia (PITA) program that is implemented by the UN Association of Georgia (UNAG).

METHODOLOGY

MDF selected both mainstream and tabloid media outlets as the subjects of monitoring. The monitoring was conducted on 15 media outlets. Several TV programs, taken off the air because of changes to programming during the reporting period, were replaced by the programs of a similar format. The subjects of the monitoring were:

- **DAILY PRIME-TIME NEWS BULLETINS AND WEEKLY ANALYTICAL PROGRAMS ON FOUR TV CHANNELS:** Georgian Public Broadcaster (Moambe; Akhali Kvira); Rustavi 2 (Kurieri; P.S.); Imedi (Qronika; Imedis Kvira); Obieqtivi TV (News).
- **TALK SHOWS ON FIVE TV CHANNELS:** Georgian Public Broadcaster (Kviris Interviu); Rustavi 2 (Archevani), later Mtavari (Archevani)²; Imedi (Pirispir)³; Obieqtivi (Gamis Studia; Dgis Bolos⁴); Kavkasia (Barieri; Spektri).
- **SIX ONLINE MEDIA OUTLETS:** Sakinformi, Netgazeti, Interpressnews, Georgia and World, PIA, Marshalpress.
- **FOUR NEWSPAPERS:** Rezonansi, Kviris Palitra, Asaval-Dasavali, Alia.

The study reflects both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative part of the report provides the number of discriminatory comments by topics and sources, while the qualitative part presents the typology of messages.

¹ After the European Court of Human Rights rejected Rustavi 2 TV's lawsuit in July 2019, new TV channel "Mtavari Arkhi" established by former employees of Rustavi 2, particularly its news program "Mtavari" and weekly analytical program "Post Factum," became the subject of monitoring.

² After Rustavi 2 TV changed hands, a program "Archevani" moved to the newly established Mtavari Arkhi TV. Thus, the subject of monitoring was changed from October 2019.

³ After Imedi TV's program "Pirispir" was taken off the air, a talk show "Arena" became the subject of monitoring.

⁴ Talk show "Dgis Bolos" became the subject of monitoring in September 2019 after Valeri Kvaratskhelia's TV program "Okros Kveta" was taken off the air.

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KEY FINDINGS |

The media monitoring revealed the following trends:

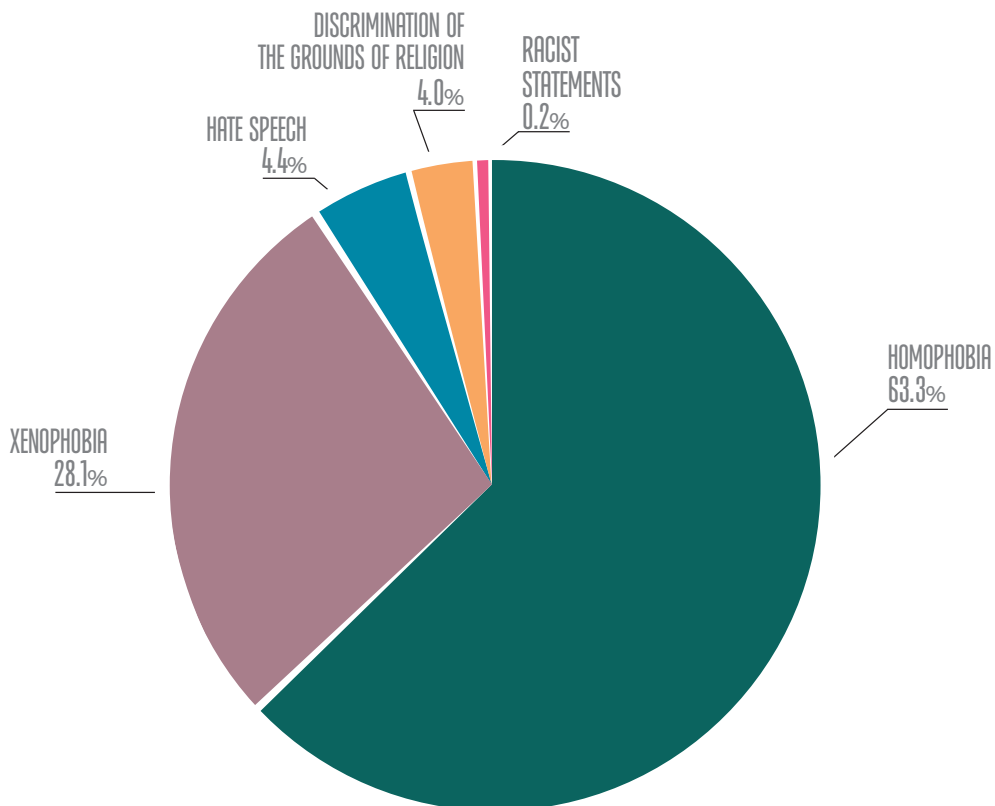
- As many as 1,918 discriminatory statements were covered by the monitored media outlets in the reporting period. The largest proportion of these statements was homophobic, followed by xenophobic comments.
- The comparison with the 2018 data shows a significant increase in homophobic statements; however, xenophobic comments as well as statements involving discrimination on the grounds of religion and racist remarks decreased in 2019.
- Following homophobic messages were popular: homosexuals are confronting God; the anti-discrimination law makes homosexuals equal to other groups; homosexuals are sick people and their freedom of expression should be restricted; gay pride is a provocation; gay films (“And Then We Danced,” “Comets”) are propaganda of perversion; the West is imposing homosexuality on us, Russia is fighting against it.
- Political parties were associated with LGBT community (40), including in connection with anti-occupation protests.
- The anti-occupation rally of June 20 was linked to gay pride not only by media, but anti-liberal group Georgian March. The message that opposition National Movement members and “pederasts” are demanding PM Gakharia’s resignation during the anti-occupation rallies were spread.
- The largest proportion of xenophobic messages accounted for anti-migrant comments, followed by Turkophobic statements.
- The following anti-migrant messages were spread: the expectation that the new government would have stopped “the resettlement of aliens” has not been justified; the education system is preparing juveniles for “Ottomanization” and “Arabization”; migrants mean increased crime rate/sexual violence/demographic threat; the Marrakesh Treaty obliges us to accept migrants from Asian and African countries.
- Most of Turkophobic comments were made by Alliance of Patriots and its affiliated media outlet Obieqtivi TV. The following Turkophobic messages were cultivated: Turkey is a historical enemy; Turkey is carrying out expansion in Adjara; Turkey will claim Adjara as soon as the validity of the Treaty of Kars expires/Russia is a guarantor of territorial integrity; if Russia is an occupier, Turkey is an occupier too; neutrality is a guarantee to suspend Turkish expansion.
- Anti-Azerbaijani sentiments were mainly linked to the developments around the David Gareji Monastery Complex and were promoting the idea that Azerbaijan is trying to grab Georgian territory.

- The majority of Armenophobic statements involved a negative portrayal of Armenian identity, when separate politicians and individuals were referred to as Armenians in a negative context regardless of their ethnic identity.
- Most instances of religious discrimination were Islamophobic, followed by the comments against Jehovah Witnesses and non-Orthodox denominations.
- Following messages were mainly promoted as regards to religious discrimination: Islamization of Adjara is underway; Russia saved Georgia from Islamization; only Orthodox Russia can protect us from Jehovah's Witnesses.
- Statements employing hate speech on various grounds, most frequently made were the ones inciting individual conflict and calling for violence.
- Most hate comments were made by media outlets, followed by politicians and members of society.
- Like previous years hate speech was most frequently used by journalists and authors of a pro-Kremlin online edition, Georgia and World, followed by ethno-nationalist newspaper Asaval-Dasavali; Obieqtivi TV affiliated with pro-Russian political party the Alliance of Patriots; pro-Kremlin news agency, Sakinformi; Alia newspaper which pursues ethno-nationalistic editorial policy and Rezonansi newspaper.
- Among political parties, hate speech comments were most frequently made by members of the Alliance of Patriots, followed by representatives of Georgian Troupe, Democratic Movement – United Georgia and Georgian Idea. Members of the ruling Georgian Dream party made 28 discriminatory statements during the monitoring period, followed by members of the opposition United National Movement with 11 comments.
- Most of discriminatory statements made by politicians were homophobic. Noteworthy that the assessments made by representatives of Georgian Dream and National Movement (gay film premiere), also Georgian Dream and Alliance of Patriots (linking ant-occupation protest with gay revolution) regarding certain issues were identical.
- Eight civil society organizations were identified using hate speech most frequently, with Georgian March and Society for the Protection of Children's Rights taking the lead, followed by Rights Defenders' Union, Primakov Georgian-Russian Public Center, Georgian Mission, People's Assembly and Eurasian Institute.
- Most of the discriminatory comments made by the clerics were homophobic, followed by those containing xenophobia, religious discrimination, including presenting Catholicism is a heresy, while cooperation with Catholics – a trouble.
- Like in the instances of politicians and clerics, most of the statements made by representatives of society were homophobic.

1. UNIFIED QUANTITATIVE DATA |

As many as 1,918 discriminatory statements were covered by the monitored media outlets in the reporting period (1 January – 31 December 2019). The largest proportion of these statements – 63.3% (1,214) was homophobic, followed by xenophobic comments (28.1% – 538); a share of statements inciting hatred on various grounds is 4.4% (84). Noteworthy that statements involving discrimination on the grounds of religion (4% – 76) as well as racist statements (0.2% – 6) decreased compared to the previous year.

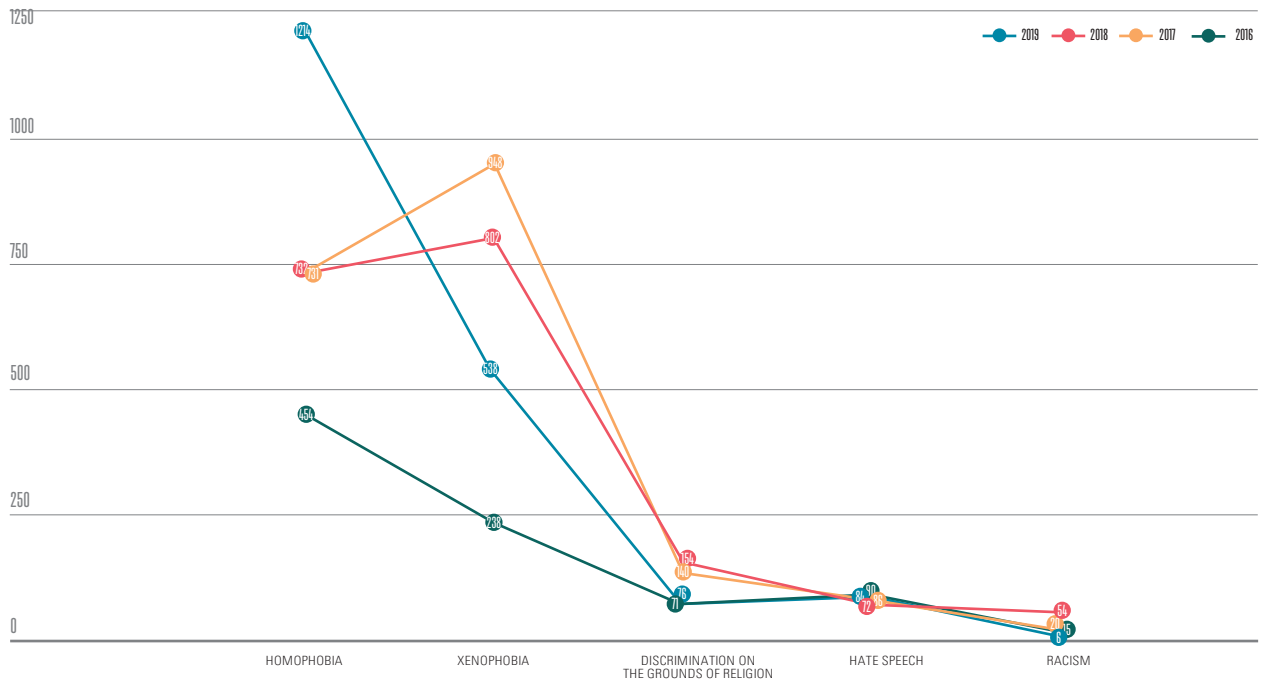
CHART 1. TYPOLOGY OF HATE SPEECH



	HOMOPHOBIA	XENOPHOBIA	HATE SPEECH	DISCRIMINATION ON GROUNDS OF RELIGION	RACISM
Media	409	195	19	22	1
Politicians	191	170	20	21	0
Civil society organizations	254	57	7	10	1
Clerics	111	22	4	7	1
Society	249	94	34	16	3
Total	1214	538	84	76	6

The comparison with the 2018 data shows a significant increase in homophobic statements (2019 – 1214; 2018 – 732); however, xenophobic comments (2019 – 538; 2018 – 802) as well as statements involving discrimination on the grounds of religion (2019 – 76; 2018 – 154) and racist remarks (2019 – 6; 2018 – 54) decreased in 2019.

CHART 2. TYPOLOGY OF HATE SPEECH IN 2016-2019



	HOMOPHOBIA	XENOPHOBIA	DISCRIMINATION ON GROUNDS OF RELIGION	HATE SPEECH	RACISM
2019	1214	538	76	84	6
2018	732	802	154	72	54
2017	731	948	140	86	20
2016	454	238	71	90	15

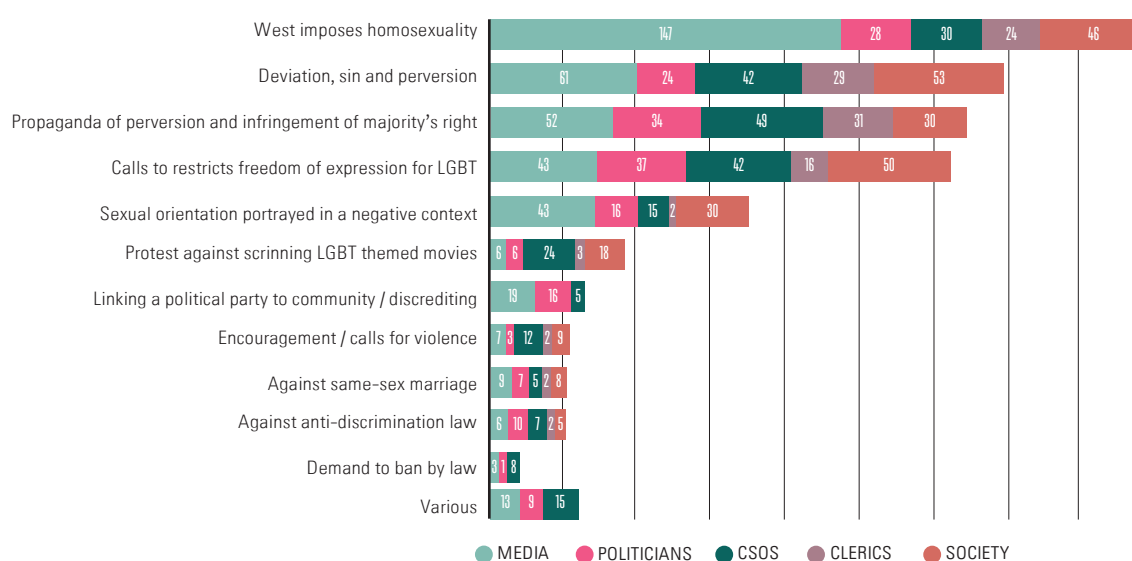
1.1 HOMOPHOBIA

A large proportion of homophobic messages promoted the idea that the West imposes homosexuality (275); homosexuality was described as a deviation, sin and disease (209); the rights of LGBT community were depicted as the propaganda of perversion and infringement of majority's rights (196); numerous calls were made to restrict freedom of expression for LGBT people (188); individual sexual orientation was portrayed in a negative context (106).

Messages against the premieres of “And Then We Danced,” a film by Levan Akin with gay protagonists, and Tamar Shavgulidze’s “Comets” were made amid protest rallies (57) in 2019, coupled with the statements (33) encouraging violence against LGBT community.

Political parties were associated with LGBT community (40), including in connection with anti-occupation protests. There were statements calling to restrict same-sex marriages and child adoption by such couples (31), to scrap the anti-discrimination law (30) and ban LGBT activities by law (12).

CHART 3. HOMOPHOBIC MESSAGES



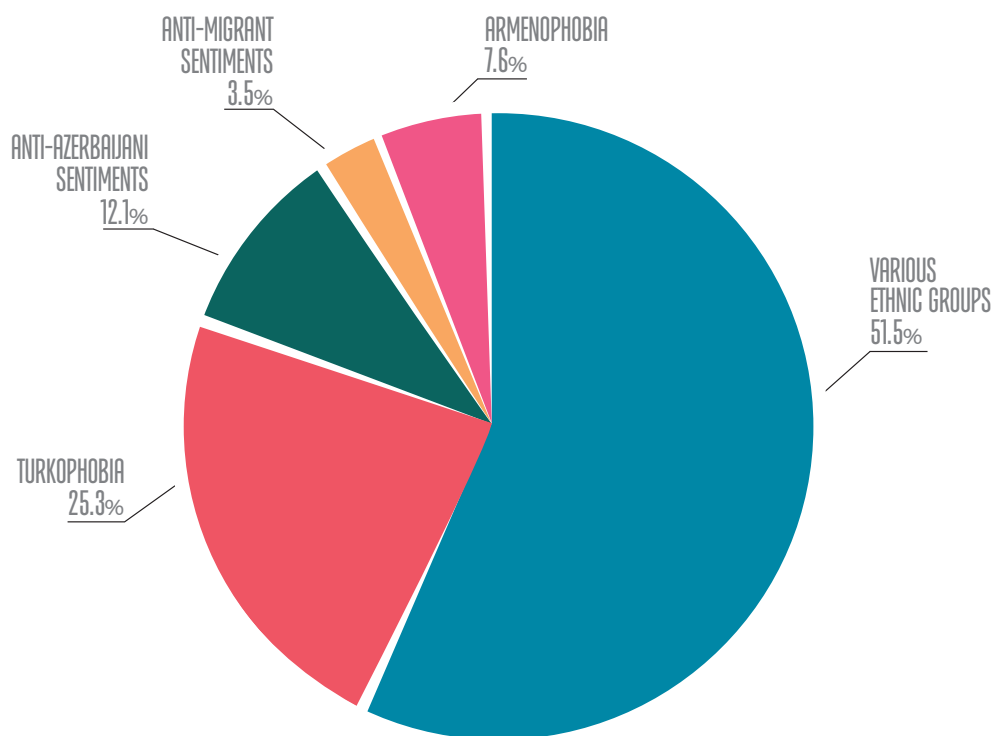
1.2 XENOPHOBIA

The largest proportion of xenophobic messages (277) accounted for anti-migrant comments; Turkophobic comments were second by proportion (136). 65 comments made against Azerbaijanis were mainly linked to the developments around David Gareji Monastery Complex⁵ that promoted the idea that Azerbaijan is trying to seize and occupy Georgian territory. 41 comments were Armenophobic, involving a negative portrayal of Armenian identity of politicians and separate individuals. Comments (19) made against various ethnicities linked these

⁵ David Gareji Monastery Complex is located at a disputable section of the Georgian-Azerbaijani border that periodically triggers controversy. Eka Kevanishvili, Radio Liberty, 30 April 2019. David Gareji Dilemma <https://bit.ly/2ZMevhe>

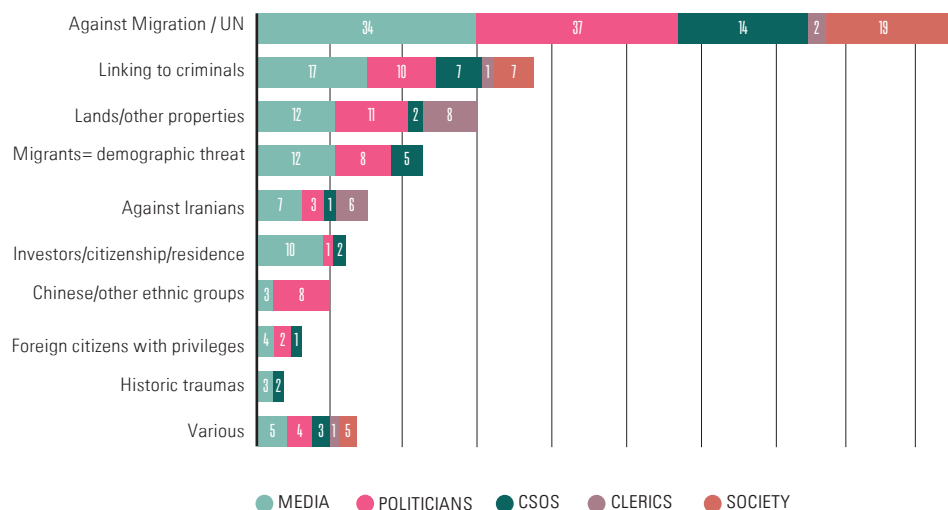
groups to a threat of separatism and loss of territories, also deemed the appointment of ethnically non-Georgian citizens on various positions unacceptable.

CHART 4. TYPOLOGY OF XENOPHOBIA



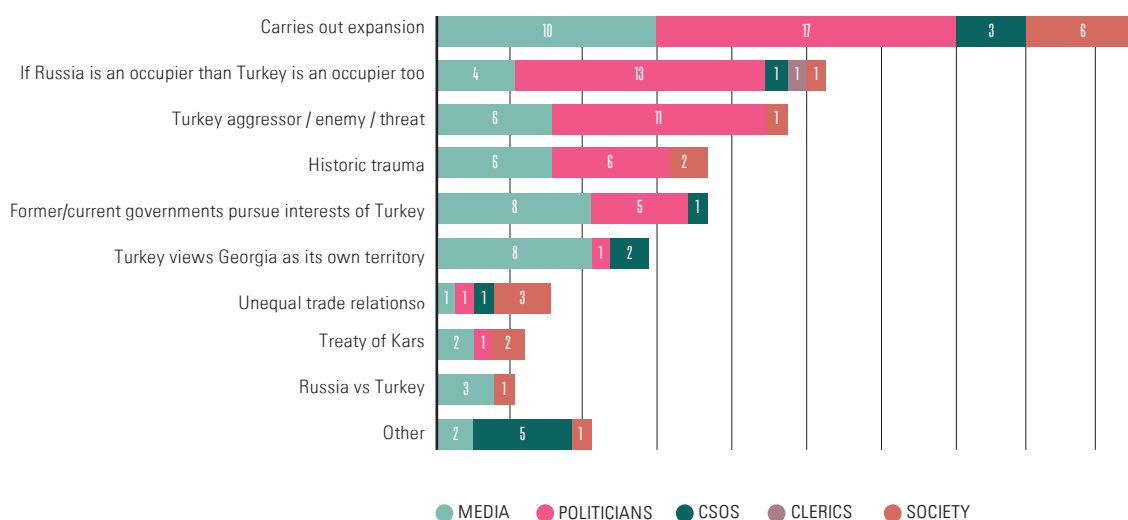
The highest number of anti-migrant statements (277) concerned migration and the UN Compact, which, as interpreted by various sources, obliges Georgia to accept migrants (106); along with linking migrants to criminals (42), comments were made against the sale of land and other immovable properties to foreign nationals (33), granting citizenship and residence permits to investors and foreign citizens (13). Migrants were portrayed as a demographic threat (25); comments were made against Iranians (17), Chinese and other ethnic groups (11). According to some opinions, foreign citizens enjoyed certain privileges in Georgia (7). There were attempts to reopen wounds of historic traumas (5).

CHART 5. ANTI-MIGRANT MESSAGES



Turkophobic comments (136) were dominated by an allegation that Turkey was carrying out an expansion in Georgia (42); that Russia’s current occupation of Georgia and the historical occupation by Ottoman Empire were equal threats (“if Russia is an occupier than Turkey is an occupier too” – 20); a neighboring country was portrayed as an enemy, aggressor and threat (18); attempts were made to reopen historical wounds (14); former and incumbent governments were accused of pursuing Turkey’s interests (14); messages alleging that Turkey views Georgia as its own territory (11); the Treaty of Kars expires in 2021⁶ and Russia will not be able to be a guarantor of Georgia’s territorial integrity thereafter because Turkey will occupy Adjara (5). Messages were made portraying Russia as the guarantor of Georgia’s security against Turkish invasion (4).

CHART 6. TURKOPHOBIC MESSAGES



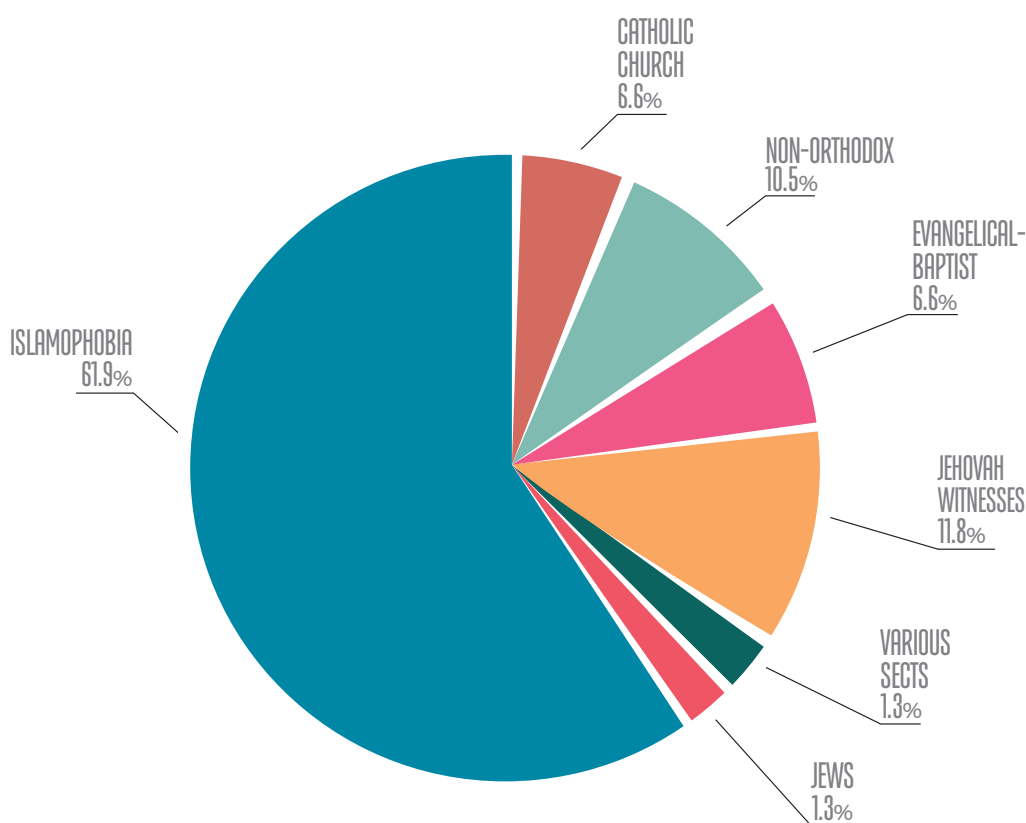
⁶ The Treaty of Kars was signed between Turkey, on the one side, and Armenian, Azerbaijan and Georgian SSR, on the other, in the city of Kars on 23 October 1921. According to the treaty, Turkey transferred part of Adjara, including Batumi, as well as Gyumri, to the Soviet Union, in exchange for Kars, Artvin and Ardahan. <http://mythdetector.ge/ka/myth/dezinpormatsiapotshi-natos-samkhedro-bazis-shesadzlo-gakhsnis-da-qarsis-khelshekrulebis>

The majority of Armenophobic statements (41) involved a negative portrayal of Armenian identity, when separate individuals were referred to as Armenians regardless of their ethnic identity (22). Comments were made about the attempts by Armenians to seize Abkhazia (12). Armenia was also accused of acting against Georgia’s interests (5); one comment was made against Georgian MP Ruslan Pogosyan and his ethnicity.

1.3. DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUNDS OF RELIGION

Out of 76 instances of religious discrimination, 47 were Islamophobic, followed by the comments against Jehovah Witnesses (9) and non-Orthodox denominations (8). The Evangelical-Baptist Church (5) and the Catholic Church (5) were also mentioned in the context of religious discrimination. One statement was made against the Jews and one – against representatives of various sects.

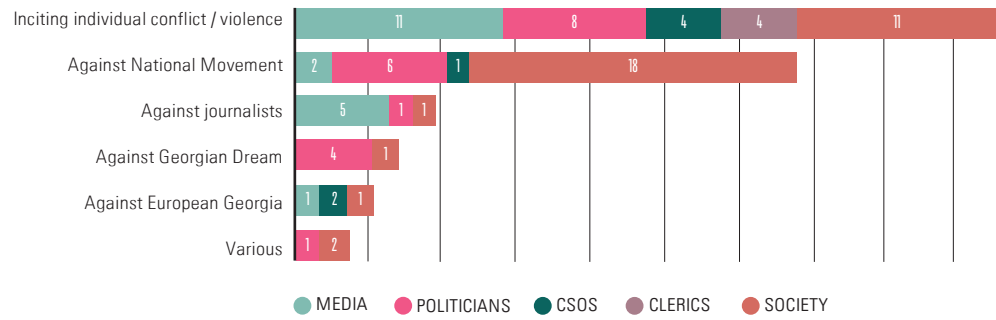
CHART 7. DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUNDS OF RELIGION



1.4. HATE SPEECH ON VARIOUS GROUNDS

Out of 84 statements employing hate speech on various grounds, most frequently made were the ones inciting individual conflict and calling for violence (38); 27 statements were made against the members of the opposition United National Movement. 7 hate comments were made against journalists from Mtavari Arkhi TV (former Rustavi 2). Almost equal number of comments was made against the opposition European Georgia party (4) and the ruling Georgian Dream party (5).

CHART 8. HATE SPEECH ON OTHER GROUNDS



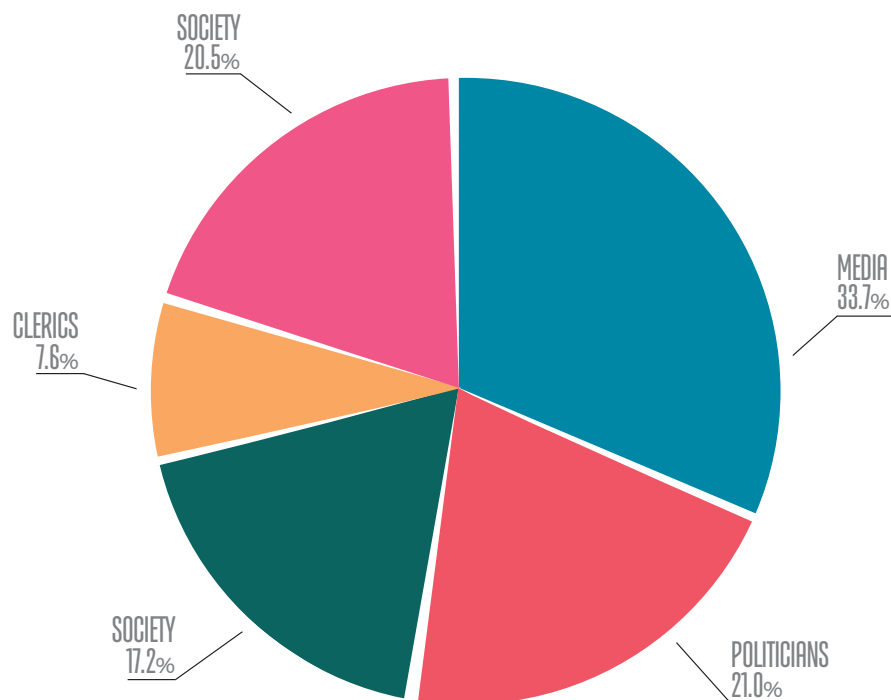
1.5. RACISM

Three out of six racist statements were equally divided among media, CSOs and clerics. The remaining three comments were made by members of society.

2. HATE SPEECH BY SOURCES AND TYPOLOGY

Most hate comments were made by media outlets (646), followed by politicians (402) and members of society (396). Members of various civil society organizations made a total of 329 discriminatory statements; the fewest hate comments were made by clergy (145).

CHART 9. SOURCES OF HATE SPEECH

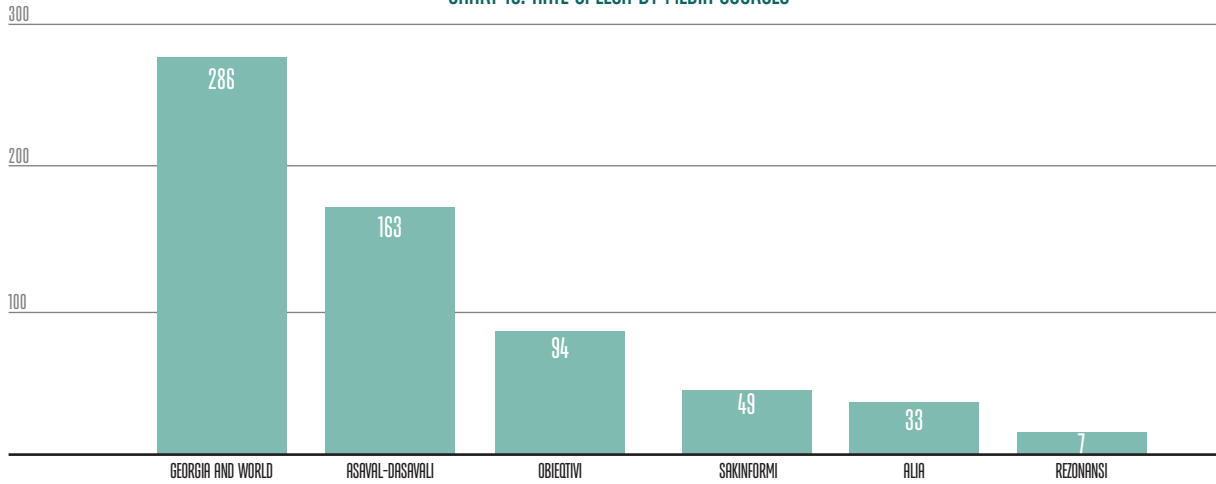


2.1 MEDIA

Media sources of hate speech are identical to those of previous years: hate speech was most frequently used by journalists and authors of a pro-Kremlin online edition, Georgia and World (286); it is followed by ethno-nationalist newspaper Asaval-Dasavali (163). Journalists of Obieqtivi TV, the channel having close links to the

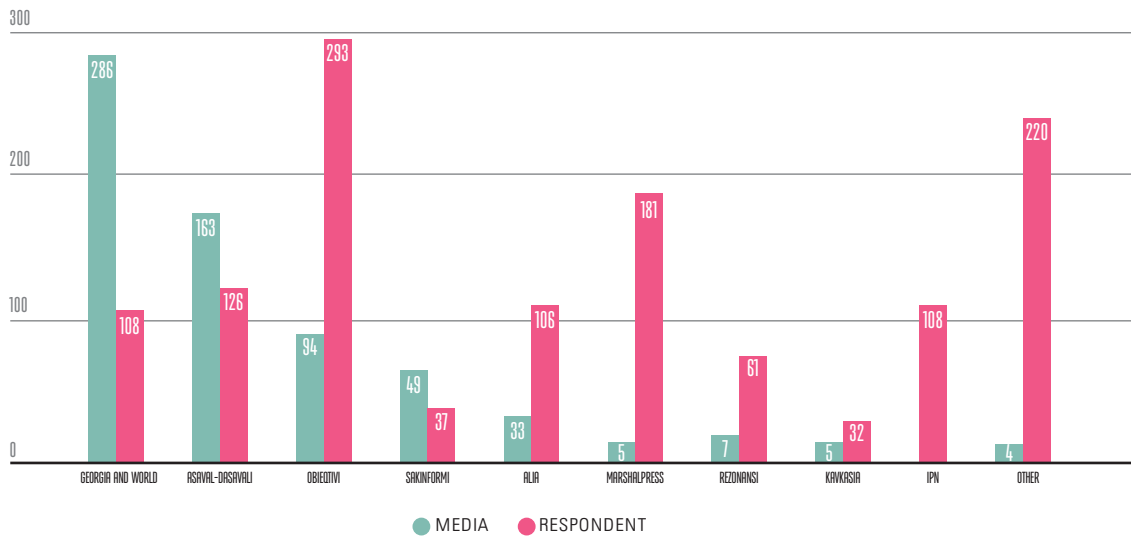
Alliance of Patriots party, made 94 discriminatory statements. Representatives of yet another pro-Kremlin news agency, Sakinformi, made 49 such statements, while journalists of Alia newspaper which pursues ethno-nationalistic editorial policy made 33 discriminatory statements. Journalists of Rezonansi newspaper made 7 hate comments.

CHART 10. HATE SPEECH BY MEDIA SOURCES



The majority of respondents using hate speech were seen on Obieqtivi TV (293); the figures are also high in respect of news agency Marshalpress (181), newspapers Asaval-Dasavali (126), Georgia and World (108), Interpressnews news agency (108) and newspaper Alia (106).

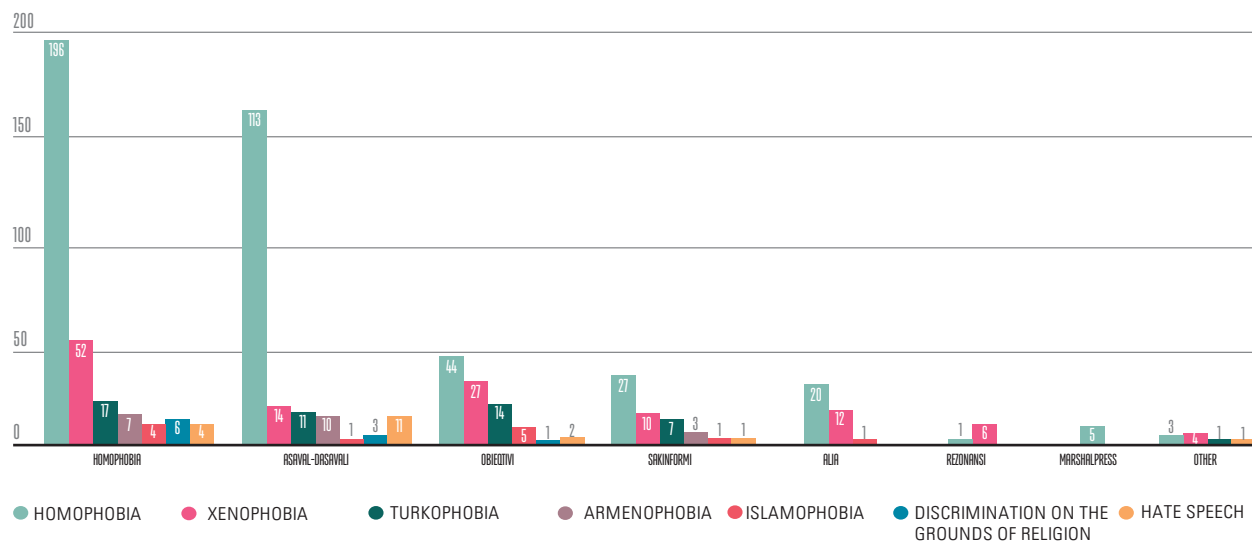
CHART 11. HATE SPEECH BY MEDIA OUTLETS AND THEIR RESPONDENTS



Most comments made by media outlets were homophobic (409), followed by xenophobic statements (125) made by various groups, as well as Turkophobic (50) and Armenophobic (20) statements.

Almost one half (196) of all homophobic statements (409) were made by online edition Georgia and World, followed by Asaval-Dasavali (113), Obieqtivi TV (44), Sakinformi news agency (27) and newspaper Alia (20).

CHART 12. TYPOLOGY OF HATE SPEECH BY MEDIA OUTLETS



HOMOPHOBIA

Almost half of homophobic comments (409) were spread by the online outlet Georgia and World (196), followed by Asaval-Dasavali newspaper (113), Obieqtivi TV (44), Sakinformi news agency (27) and Alia newspaper (20).

Media outlets were spreading the following homophobic messages:

- **HOMOSEXUALS ARE CONFRONTING GOD:** “Satan is on their side (LGBT and human rights activists) and God is here... When you are leading the humankind in the direction, where there is no future, what else can Satan be?” (Nino Ratshvili, Obieqtivi TV host)⁷.
- **THE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAW MAKES HOMOSEXUALS EQUAL TO OTHER GROUPS:** “With this law, the government has made sexual minorities equal to other groups, granting them the same rights.” (Levan Javakhishvili, Alia journalist)⁸.
- **HOMOSEXUALS ARE SICK PEOPLE AND THEIR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION SHOULD BE RESTRICTED:** “If the society allows gathering of not so healthy people in the street, it will trigger large-scale changes in public consciousness.” (Giorgi Gachechiladze, Georgia and World journalist)⁹.
- **GAY PRIDE IS A PROVOCATION:** “They are going to hold a gay pride on Saturday?! It will be a provocation! They hope that people will not resist them! But the protest will definitely take place! And the society will primarily express this protest against the government! Do not allow holding of this provocative march!” (Bondo Mdzinarashvili, Obieqtivi TV journalist)¹⁰.
- **GAY FILM IS PROPAGANDA OF PERVERSION:** “... and we know that this film [And Then We Danced] has been created to propagandize perversion.” (Valeri Kvaratskhelia, Obieqtivi TV host)¹¹.

⁷ Obieqtivi, Gamis Studia (Night Studio), August 13, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3835257>

⁸ Alia, March 11-17

⁹ Georgia and World, June 20, <https://bit.ly/31MHkZS>

¹⁰ Marshalpress, July 5, <https://marshalpress.ge/archives/248250>

¹¹ Obieqtivi TV, Gamis Studia – Kvelas Gasagonad (Night Studio – Attention Everybody), November 12 <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3872832>

- **NATIONAL MOVEMENT MEMBERS AND “PEDERASTS” ARE DEMANDING PM GAKHARIA’S RESIGNATION DURING THE ANTI-OCCUPATION RALLIES¹²:** “Yes, since June 20 rallies on Rustaveli Avenue, the National Movement and “pederasts” are standing side by side, demanding Giorgi Gakharia’s resignation! The return of the National Movement’s gang to power means turning Georgia into the venue of gay prides! This is the united Natsi-Gay-Anal movement!” (Giorgi Gigauri, Asaval-Dasavali journalist)¹³.
- **THE ANTI-OCCUPATION RALLY IS THE UNITY OF HOMOSEXUALS CONFRONTED BY CLERICS:** “On the one side, there were clerics and peaceful protesters who came to the rally to protest perversion, homosexuality and immorality, and on the other, there were aggressive Euro-liberasts fighting against “occupation,” who were waving the rainbow flag at the April 9 Memorial several days ago” (Jaba Zhvania, Georgia and World reporter)¹⁴.
- **THE WEST IS IMPOSING HOMOSEXUALITY ON US, RUSSIA IS FIGHTING AGAINST IT:** “What is most important here, Russia, just Russia does not tolerate the orders and directives coming from the West, especially those directives that go against morality¹⁵” (Valeri Kvaratskhelia, Obieqtivi TV host). “Propaganda of homosexuality is banned in Russia by law. It is banned to hold demonstrations and gatherings; therefore, Europe and America are criticizing our Northern neighbor¹⁶” (Besio Barbakadze, Georgia and World journalist). “... the issue is as follows: not this way like “Russia or America?!” , but “do you support pederasts or not?!” (Giorgi Gigauri, Asaval-Dasavali journalist)¹⁷.

XENOPHOBIA

After homophobia, xenophobic comments account for the highest number of discriminatory remarks made by the media (195), most of which are of anti-migrant nature (107), followed by anti-Azerbaijani (10), Turkophobic (50), Armenophobic (20) comments and discriminatory statements made against ethnic minorities (8).

ANTI-MIGRANT SENTIMENTS. The following anti-migrant messages were spread in the media:

- **THE EXPECTATION THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE STOPPED “THE RESETTLEMENT OF ALIENS” HAS NOT BEEN JUSTIFIED:** “This man [Bidzina Ivanishvili] also continued Saakashvili’s path – he further empowered liberasts... We thought the process of resettlement of aliens would be suspended, but we were mistaken” (Levan Javakhishvili, *Alia* journalist)¹⁸.
- **THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IS PREPARING JUVENILES FOR “OTTOMANIZATION” AND “ARABIZATION”:** “Our children are being taught from their early age that Arabs, African Americans, Persians or other aliens will live and study beside them in Georgia!.. Georgian children are being prepared at schools for “Ottomanization” and “Arabization” of Georgia!” (Giorgi Gigauri, *Asaval-Dasavali* journalist)¹⁹.

¹² The appearance of Russian State Duma MP from the Communist Party, Sergei Gavrilov in the Georgian Parliament Speaker’s seat during the session of the Inter-parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (IAO) on June 20, 2019 sparked protest among the parliamentary opposition and Georgian citizens, who started gathering outside the Parliament building. The anti-occupation rally dubbed “It’s a Shame!” acquired a permanent nature after police violently dispersed the protesters on the first day of protest. The protesters were demanding resignation of Interior Minister Giorgi Gakharia citing violent dispersal of the June 20 rally as the reason. <https://www.mythdetector.ge/en/myth/trolls-against-anti-occupation-protest>

¹³ Asaval-Dasavali, July 1 – 7

¹⁴ Georgia and World, July 10, <https://bit.ly/30v7PS1>

¹⁵ Obieqtivi TV, Gamis Studia – Kvelas Gasagonad, October 29, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3868281>

¹⁶ Georgia and World, January 17, <https://bit.ly/2RwbsqK>

¹⁷ Asaval-Dasavali, June 17-23

¹⁸ Alia, January 28 – February 3

¹⁹ Asaval-Dasavali, November 11-17

- **THE MARRAKESH TREATY²⁰ OBLIGES US TO ACCEPT MIGRANTS FROM ASIAN AND AFRICAN COUNTRIES.** “In this situation, when so many Georgians are leaving the country, whose idea was this, is it the statehood to accept migrants from African and Asian countries?” (Nino Ratishvili, **Obieqtivi TV**)²¹.
- **MIGRANTS MEAN INCREASED CRIME RATE / SEXUAL VIOLENCE:** “Have not police arrested foreigners from the East, who were raping small guys? Are not young Georgian girls being involved in prostitution and drug use at Turkish and other night clubs, where Georgians are banned entry? Sometimes, this sexual intercourse with African Americans, Indians, Syrians and Turks is taking place in social media and YouTube” (Arno Khidirbegishvili, **Sakinformi** editor-in-chief).²²
- **MIGRANTS POSE A DEMOGRAPHIC THREAT:** “If this situation continues, Iranian and Indian settlements will soon emerge on the ruins of Georgian villages – the government does not utter even a word about the catastrophic demographic situation in the country” (Beso Barbakadze, **Georgia and World** journalist)²³.
- **IRANIAN MIGRANTS HAVE DOUBTFUL INTENTIONS IN GEORGIA.** “There are some doubts that Iranians are founding companies paying only USD 100 just to gain an investor’s status, and actually they have absolutely different plans” (Nina Gardapkhadze, **Rezonansi** journalist)²⁴.
- **CHINESE MIGRANTS REPRESENT A THREAT:** “Neither weapons, nor atomic bombs are needed in many countries... for example, an inflow of Chinese migrants is quite enough for Georgia” (Nino Ratishvili, **Obieqtivi TV** host)²⁵.

Like in case of anti-migrant messages, most of **TURKOPHOBIC** comments were made on **Obieqtivi TV**. The following messages were made:

- **TURKEY IS A HISTORICAL ENEMY:** “All normal Georgians know, almost at a genetic level, that a Turk means an enemy!” (Giorgi Gigauri, **Asaval-Dasavali** journalist)²⁶.
- **TURKEY HAS TERRITORIAL CLAIMS TO GEORGIA:** “Today, Turkey has a territorial claim to Guria, Adjara region and part of Samtskhe-Javakheti” (Giorgi Kasradze, **Obieqtivi TV** host)²⁷.
- **TURKEY IS CARRYING OUT ECONOMIC EXPANSION IN ADJARA:** “... Since the day of dissolution of the Soviet Union, official Ankara has been carrying out creeping economic occupation in the region...” (Jaba Zhvania, **Georgia and World** journalist)²⁸.
- **IF RUSSIA IS AN OCCUPIER, TURKEY IS AN OCCUPIER TOO:** “Russia has occupied 12.6 thousand sq./m of Georgian land involving Abkhazia, Tskhinvali and Ksani Gorge, and Turkey has occupied 24.8 thousand sq./m, or twice more! After all this, fool Georgians call Turkey “a historical friend” and “strategic partner,” and Russia – “an enemy” and “an occupier”! However, the whole truth is that both are occupiers, both are plunderers!” (Dito Chubinidze, **Asaval-Dasavali** journalist)²⁹.

²⁰ Myth Detector, December 26, 2018, Sputnik’s Manipulation on UN Compact and Increased Migration Flow <http://www.mythdetector.ge/en/myth/sputniks-manipulation-un-compact-and-increased-migration-flow>

²¹ Obieqtivi TV, Gamis Studia, February 3 https://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=3743754

²² Sakinformi, December 9, <https://bit.ly/3g9j6Pq>

²³ Georgia and World, March 13, <https://bit.ly/2030wvJ>

²⁴ Rezonansi, November 13, http://www.rezonancedaily.com/index.php?id_rub=3&id_artc=82586

²⁵ Obieqtivi TV, Gamis Studia, April 1, https://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=3771645

²⁶ Asaval-Dasavali, April 29 – May 5

²⁷ Obieqtivi, Gamis Studia, February 16, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3749995>

²⁸ Georgia and World, November 6, <https://bit.ly/32nGNf0>

²⁹ Asaval-Dasavali, March 11-17

- **TURKEY WILL REGAIN ADJARA AS SOON AS THE VALIDITY OF THE TREATY OF KARS EXPIRES RUSSIA IS A GUARANTOR OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY:** “After two years, in 2021, when the validity of the Treaty of Kars expires, Adjara (due to absence of a guarantor – Russia) will be transferred to Turkey’s ownership!.. I am saying it to get attention of some pseudo-Georgians, who are eager to put their heads in a Turkish noose, from where Russians will again save them” (Arno Khidirbegishvili, **Sakinformi** editor-in-chief)³⁰.

ANTI-AZERBAIJANI SENTIMENTS were mainly linked to the developments around the David Gareji Monastery Complex when the Azerbaijani side restricted Georgian citizens’ access to the monastery complex located on a disputable section of the Georgian–Azerbaijani border from May 5. Two main messages were voiced:

- **AZERBAIJAN IS TRYING TO GRAB GEORGIAN TERRITORY:** “Azerbaijan openly considers this territory to be its own! Though just this section of the Georgian–Azerbaijani border is so disputable! Is not it Ottoman malevolence?!” (Giorgi Gigauri, **Asaval-Dasavali** journalist)³¹.
- **IN RESPONSE TO BAKU ACTIONS, THE RIGHTS OF ETHNIC AZERBAIJANI GEORGIAN CITIZENS SHOULD BE RESTRICTED:** “Shortly speaking, if Azerbaijan remains so “friendly” stubborn and continues grabbing Georgian holy soil shed with blood of 6,000 Gareji monks, we should make it clear to our sweet neighbor: Georgia will launch total boycott against agricultural products grown by Azerbaijanis living in the Kvemo Kartli region! We will not issue birth certificates to newborns unless they have Georgian names and surnames! Those who do not like it can freely leave for Baku!” (Giorgi Gigauri, **Asaval-Dasavali** journalist)³².

VARIOUS. Various messages involved remarks against sale of land to foreign nationals, as well as attempts to portray ethnic minorities as a threat of separatism.

- **AGAINST SALE OF LANDS:** “Since the law and constitution do not allow foreign nationals to directly purchase Georgian land... they try to enter into a sham marriage with Georgians and get Georgian citizenship through simplified rules in order to pursue the interests of their respective countries and gain ownership of Georgian land with the money given by their own governments” (Bondo Mdzinarashvili, **Obieqtivi** host)³³.
- **ETHNIC MINORITIES = A THREAT OF SEPARATISM:** “By the way, neither do Azerbaijani nationalists lag behind Armenians by dreaming about appropriation of Georgia’s ancient lands!” (Giorgi Gigauri, **Asaval-Dasavali** journalist)³⁴. “Armenian and Azerbaijani populations compactly living in Samtskhe–Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli – two regions that are weakly controlled by the central government – who are inspired by impunity of Pankisi residents of Akhmeta Municipality and arbitrariness of Azerbaijani border guards, will again raise their old demands... As a rule, it ends with confrontation of ethnically non–Georgian population with the Georgian state with the latter losing its territories, like it happened in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region.” (Arno Khidirbegishvili, **Sakinformi** editor-in-chief)³⁵.

³⁰ Sakinformi, January 14, <http://saqinform.ge/news/40680/>

³¹ Asaval-Dasavali, May 27 – June 2

³² Asaval-Dasavali, June 3 – 9

³³ Obieqtivi TV, Gamis Studia, March 20 <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3765675>

³⁴ Asaval-Dasavali, January 28 – February 3

³⁵ Sakinformi, May 6, <https://bit.ly/31Gj7VK>

Like in previous years, **ARMENOPHOBIC** comments involved a negative portrayal of Armenian identity; moreover, Armenians were portrayed as an ethnic group fighting against the interests of Georgia.

- **ARMENIANS ARE ACTING AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF GEORGIA:** “They are absolutely usual enemies and what is most important, they publicly acknowledge it” (Beso Barbakadze, **Georgia and World** journalist)³⁶. “Armenians are keeping their eyes on Batumi port, though they have not confirmed it officially so far.”³⁷

DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUND OF RELIGION

Out of 22 instances of religious discrimination in the media, 12 were Islamophobic; equal number of discriminatory comments (3) was made against the Evangelical-Baptist Church and the Jehovah’s Witnesses.

ISLAM

- **AGENTS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES ARE GROWN UP IN RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS FINANCED BY FOREIGN COUNTRIES:** “These so called Quran Centers are financed by foreign countries, mainly Turkey and Arabic countries, and Georgian citizens are grown up there not as Georgian patriots, but as agents of these countries in Georgia” (Bondo Mdzinarashvili, **Obieqtivi TV** host)³⁸.
- **THERE IS NO NEED TO BUILD A NEW MOSQUE IN ADJARA:** “Although they failed to build Sultan Aziziye Mosque in Batumi, who was swimming in the blood of Georgians, they say that there are more mosques in Adjara and the rest of Georgia than in Azerbaijan” (Davit Mkheidze, **Georgia and World** journalist)³⁹.
- **ISLAMIZATION OF ADJARA IS UNDERWAY:** “What threats does the process of Ottomanization in Adjara contain, what will construction of another mosque in the region change and which force is standing behind all this?” (Jaba Zhvania, **Georgia and World** journalist)⁴⁰.
- **RUSSIA SAVED GEORGIA FROM OTTOMANIZATION:** “Not only the Romanov Russia saved the Georgian nation from physical destruction, but, what it most important, it saved us from Ottomanization” (Davit Mkheidze, **Georgia and World** journalist)⁴¹.

EVANGELICAL-BAPTIST CHURCH

- **THE EVANGELICAL-BAPTIST CHURCH IS A SATANIST SECT:** “...“Other confessions”, as a rule, mean not the so called traditional confessions (Islam, Judaism, Catholicism), but Satanist sects; years ago I united them under a common name – Khlysts-Budara-Budarikha and just one Budarikha, bishop of the Baptist Church [Rusudan Gotsiridze], reproached Salome Zourabichvili during Inga Grigolia’s TV program Reaction...” (Davit Mkheidze, **Georgia and World** journalist)⁴².

³⁶ Georgia and World, April 4, <https://bit.ly/2FRxhZ3>

³⁷ Georgia and World, December 25, <https://bit.ly/365huBW>
arno+xidirbegishvili%63A+Turquli+yulfi++saqarTvelos+marTImadidebeli+eklesiis+kiserze.html

³⁸ Obieqtivi TV, Gamis Studia, March 6, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3758651>

³⁹ Georgia and World, June 12, <https://bit.ly/2WC0kX3>

⁴⁰ Georgia and World, October 9, <https://bit.ly/35kpP4I>

⁴¹ Georgia and World, May 22, <https://bit.ly/2wo3F1r>

⁴² Georgia and World, June 12, <https://bit.ly/2WC0kX3>

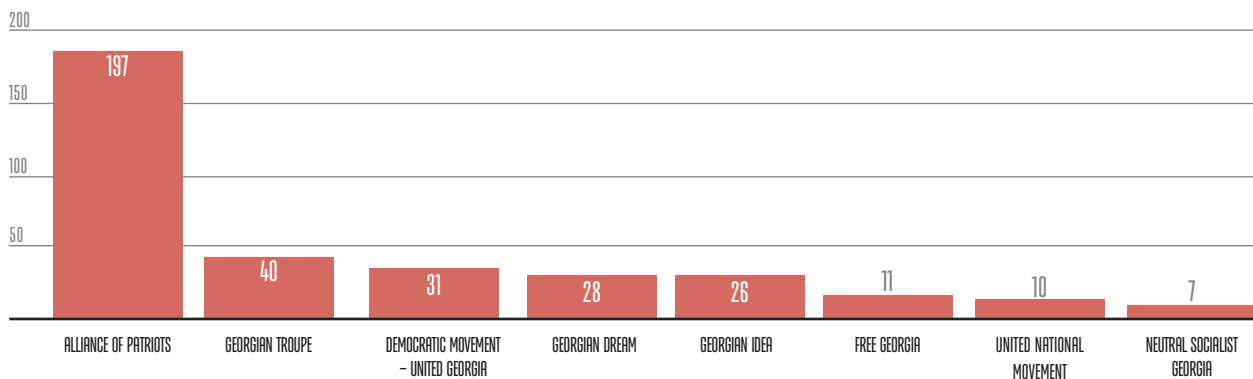
JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES

- **JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES ARE IMPOSING THEIR “SATANIC” RELIGION ON THE SOCIETY:** “It wasn’t enough for them that Jehovah’s witnesses are coming to our homes and shoving their Satanic “religion” with impunity; it wasn’t enough that practically near every metro station these heretics have their stand with literature in broad daylight... And now, they are letting Jehovah’s Witnesses to hunt for our children’s souls.” (Giorgi Gigauri, Asaval-Dasavali journalist)⁴³.
- **ONLY ORTHODOX RUSSIA CAN PROTECT US FROM JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES:** “Upon demand of Orthodox Russia’s Justice Ministry, the Supreme Court banned the activities of Jehovah’s Witnesses, citing the latter’s “extremist activities.” Russia is the only defender of the World Orthodox Church. No Russia – no Orthodoxy. No Orthodoxy – no Georgia!” (Davit Mkheidze, Georgia and World journalist)⁴⁴.

2.2. POLITICIANS

Among political parties, hate speech comments were most frequently made by members of the Alliance of Patriots (197), followed by representatives of Georgian Troupe (40), Democratic Movement – United Georgia (31) and Georgian Idea (26). Members of the ruling Georgian Dream party made 28 discriminatory statements during the monitoring period, followed by members of the opposition United National Movement with 11 comments; Free Georgia – 10; Neutral Socialist Georgia – 7; Labor Party and the Whites made equal number of discriminatory statements (4 each).

CHART 13. SOURCES OF HATE SPEECH BY POLITICAL PARTIES

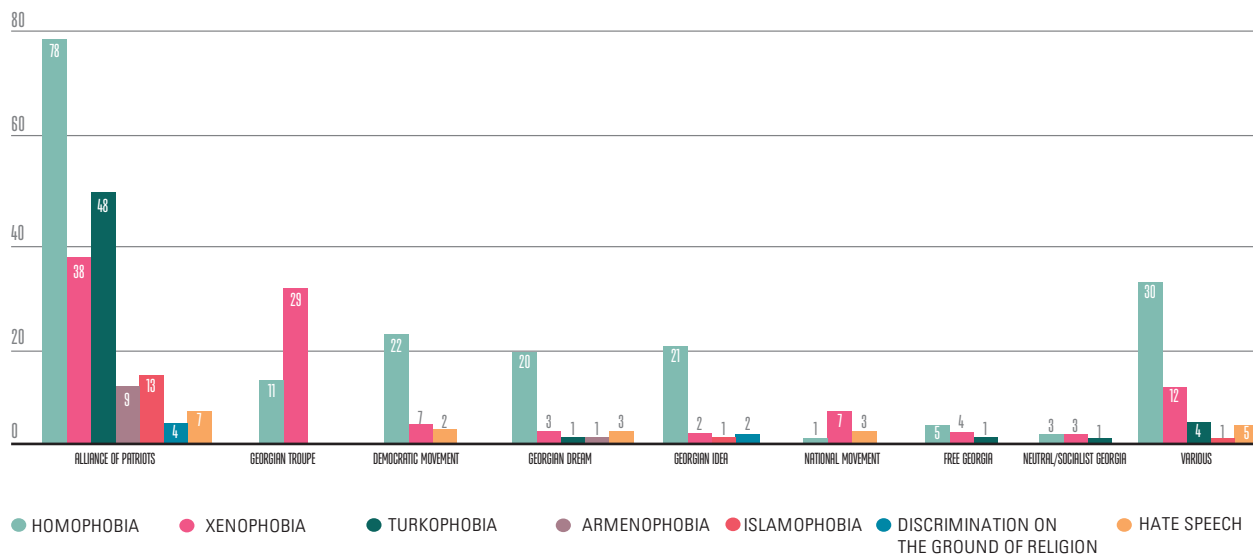


Most of discriminatory statements made by politicians were homophobic (191), followed by xenophobic statements (170). Xenophobic statements unite anti-migrant (84), Turkophobic (55), Anti-Azerbaijani (19) and Armenophobic (10) messages. 15 Islamophobic and 6 other instances of discrimination on the ground of religion were also revealed.

⁴³ Asaval-Dasavali, April 15–21

⁴⁴ Georgia and World, April 4, <https://bit.ly/2ON0qJ6>

CHART 14. TYPOLOGY OF HATE SPEECH BY POLITICAL PARTIES



HOMOPHOBIA

Most of homophobic statements were made by members of the Alliance of Patriots party (78). Number of comments made by Georgian Idea (21) and Democratic Movement – United Georgia (22) was almost equal. The ruling Georgian Dream party members were the sources of homophobic statements in 20 instances.

Noteworthy that the assessments made by representatives of Georgian Dream and National Movement, also Georgian Dream and Alliance of Patriots regarding certain issues were identical:

Message: The film with gay protagonists propagandizes the rule of non-traditional life/represents a provocation

GEORGIAN DREAM

MP Gia Volski: „I do not support propaganda of a certain rule of life with such films [And Then We Danced]. There are established, traditional relations in the society and that’s typical not only for Georgia.⁴⁵”

NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Mikheil Saakashvili, ex-President of Georgia: “As for the films, dear friends, Georgia is the country based on Christian values. Christian values mean tolerance, humanism, openness towards many things, but there is something that goes beyond the limits of Christianity and let nobody be offended that some people may have their own views. As for what is happening now, I think, **it has been completely inspired**. Does not Georgia face other problems right now rather than to debate on films?!” Mtavari Arkhi

⁴⁵ Interpressnews, November 5, <https://bit.ly/2EbBOU7>

Message: Anti-occupation protest = protest of homosexuals/gay revolution

GEORGIAN DREAM

Sopo Kikacheishvili: „Gays, lesbians, pederasts and members of the National Movement were participating [in the June 20 rally]! Was there anybody normal there? How can LGBT people be compared to Bidzina Ivanishvili?!“⁴⁶”

ALLIANCE OF PATRIOTS

Irma Inashvili: „We are not making this assessment, Rustavi 2 TV has made it, calling this process [anti-occupation rally] a **gay revolution** and who the organizers of this process appear to be? – Gay revolutionaries. So, you, young Georgians – how can you stand beside these gay revolutionary parties and politicians?“⁴⁷”

GEORGIAN DREAM

- **LGBT MARCH OF DIGNITY IS THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT’S TARGETED PROVOCATION:** “Representatives of these people, this minority are directly linked to the National Movement leaders... It is a staged provocation and the government should give it an adequate response ... **Dignity has nothing to do with that march...** I address the representatives of this minority – do not irritate other members of the society, members of the majority. Why? Because they [LGDB community] actually face no problems in Georgia...” (Irakli Garibashvili, Georgian Dream’s political secretary)⁴⁸.
- **HOMOSEXUALITY IS PERVERSION:** “**I would call it perversion.** Probably, the church thinks the same that it is utterly grave and incorrect agitation for our young people” (Revaz Arveladze, Georgian Dream)⁴⁹.
- **PROPAGANDA OF HOMOSEXUALITY SHOULD BE BANNED:** “Gambling should be banned; emigration rules should be tightened; propaganda of homosexuality and similar perversions should be prohibited and special attention should be paid to pregnant women and large families” (Alexander Erkvania, Georgian Dream)⁵⁰.

FREE GEORGIA

- **MARCH OF DIGNITY IS PROPAGANDA OF PERVERSION:** “The party believes that respect of family traditions should be the cornerstone of Georgian state, and it is unacceptable to propagandize perversion and attack traditional values under the pretext of minority rights protection” (Kakha Kukava, Free Georgia)⁵¹.

GEORGIAN IDEA

- **HOMOSEXUALITY IS A SODOMITE SIN:** “Both sides are trying to promote more tolerance towards Sodomite rule of life in the society. Does it matter whether you make such statements dressed in rainbow colors or clerical clothing?!” (Levan Chachua, Georgian Idea)⁵².

⁴⁶ Rustavi 2, Kurieri, July 1, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3815944>

⁴⁷ Obieqtivi TV, Dgis Bolos, July 16, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3822847>

⁴⁸ Imedi, Pirispis, June 20, <https://www.imesi.ge/ge/video/39345/pirispis-spetsialuri-gamoshveba--natsili-1#!?type=1&page=1> (0:30:05)

⁴⁹ Rezonansi, June 17

⁵⁰ Pirveli news agency, October 15, <https://bit.ly/2MjbbTH>

⁵¹ Interpressnews, May 17, <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/546978-tavisupali-sakartvelo-ojaxis-sicmindis-dges-dagegmil-msvlelobas-uertdeba/>

⁵² Georgia and World, July 17

XENOPHOBIA

Most of xenophobic statements made by politicians were targeting migrants; however, discriminatory comments were also made against other groups.

ALLIANCE OF PATRIOTS

- **REIGNITING HISTORICAL TRAUMA IN RESPECT OF MIGRANTS:** “Were our ancestors fighting to achieve the resettlement of aliens to our lands? Let this government answer: why was Shah Abbas resettling Tatars to our soil? It is an aggressive policy pursued by Iran and Turkey.” (Vazha Otarashvili, Alliance of Patriots)⁵³.

GEORGIAN TROUPE

- **AGAINST ASIAN AND AFRICAN MIGRANTS:** “We, the whole nation, will gather not to allow mass resettlement of Asians and Africans to Georgia” (Jondi Bagaturia, Georgian Troupe)⁵⁴.

NATIONAL MOVEMENT

- **DISCRIMINATION AGAINST VARIOUS ETHNIC GROUPS:** “What Georgian Dream did in Marneuli was Chechenism, and let us keep distance from Chechenism.⁵⁵” “[Bidzina] Ivanishvili has turned people in Georgia into Gypsies and homeless people.” (Mikheil Saakashvili, National Movement)⁵⁶.

TURKOPHOBIA

Like in previous years, Alliance of Patriots was the source of most Turkophobic statements (48). The majority of these statements promoted an opinion that Turkey is carrying out an expansion in Adjara, it has occupied Georgian territories and if “Russia is an occupier, Turkey is an occupier too.”

- **THE PROCESS OF TURKIFICATION IS UNDERWAY IN ADJARA:** “We are witnessing the loss of Adjara. Turkification is underway, i.e. complete expansion is taking place in Adjara and nobody says a word about it. It concerns not only Batumi, but also Akhaltsikhe, Ozurgeti.” (Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi, Alliance of Patriots)⁵⁷.
- **NEUTRALITY IS A GUARANTEE TO SUSPEND TURKISH EXPANSION:** “It [neutrality] is the key to stopping Turkish expansion in Adjara. Not only Adjara, I mean Batumi, Akhaltsikhe or Meskhети, Ozurgeti or Guria.” (Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi, Alliance of Patriots)⁵⁸.

⁵³ Georgia and World, February 13, <https://bit.ly/2S20oel>

⁵⁴ Obieqtivi TV, News, February 13, https://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=3748285

⁵⁵ Imedi TV, Imedis Kvira, February 24, <https://bit.ly/3kPWLd0>

⁵⁶ Rustavi 2 TV, P.S., April 21, <http://www.rustavi2.ge/ka/video/42166?v=2>

⁵⁷ Obieqtivi TV, Dgis Bolos, April 15, https://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=3777738

⁵⁸ Obieqtivi TV, Dgis Bolos, May 31, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3798927>

- **IF RUSSIA IS AN OCCUPIER, TURKEY IS AN OCCUPIER TOO:** “A person is walking with an inscription on a T-shirt “Russia is an occupier.” I have told them for million times: if you have such an inscription “Russia is an occupier” then write that “Turkey is an occupier” too.” (Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi, Alliance of Patriots)⁵⁹.
- **TURKEY THE TREATY OF KARS POSES A THREAT TO THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY:** “All our neighbors, both good and bad, decided that Georgia is being dissolved and let’s grab its parts... They could not have ever dreamt about what they are doing now; the Turkish Foreign Ministry made this statement that if Batumi is bombed, it would take care of it. Yes, it is written in the Treaty of Kars that Turkey will be a guarantor of Adjara autonomy during the war.”(Gubaz Sanikidze, Victorious Georgia)⁶⁰.

ARMENOPHOBIA

Among political parties, Alliance of Patriots was the source of most Armenophobic comments (9).

- Armenia is carrying out Armenization of Abkhazia and is hostile to Georgia: “What Armenia is doing in Abkhazia is nothing but hostile attitude towards Georgia... Artificial resettlement of Armenians to Abkhazia should be stopped; artificial growth of Armenian diaspora should be stopped and, I would say, artificial Armenization of Abkhazia should be stopped.”⁶¹

DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUND OF RELIGION

Most of discriminatory statements made by politicians on the ground of religion (15) were Islamophobic; however, several comments were also made against Jehovah’s Witnesses and other confessions.

- **YOUTH EDUCATION AT MUSLIM SCHOOLS IN ADJARA SERVES TURKISH INTERESTS:** “I once again put the issue on the agenda: to launch inspection of these unlicensed, unauthorized educational institutions, religious institutions, I mean Quran Centers opened in Adjara region with Turkish and Arabic money, as a result of which we are losing our youth. I also drew attention to the fact that about 3-4 thousand young people have received education in Ankara in recent years. Our students are not taken to Turkey to study mathematics or software development, but they are taken massively to attend classes at religious institutions.” (Irma Inashvili, Alliance of Patriots)⁶².
- **A THREAT OF ISLAMIZATION IS REAL:** “[Turks] are actually depriving us of our youth and changing their religion! The religion with which our ancestors brought Georgia up to date and with which Iliia Chavchavadze welcomed the return of Mother Adjara to the rest of Georgia.” (Vazha Otarashvili, Alliance of Patriots)⁶³.
“Quite soon, newly arrived Muslims, who are buying apartments in Georgia, will overwhelm Georgians.” (Levan Chachua, Georgian Idea)⁶⁴.
- **JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES ARE INFRINGING UPON THE RIGHTS OF ORTHODOX PEOPLE:** “How can you talk about violation of human rights in the country, where a stand with sectarian literature of so called Jehovah’s Witnesses is placed in the middle of

⁵⁹ Obieqtivi TV, Dgis Bolos, July 12, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3821222>

⁶⁰ Marshalpress, November 23, <https://marshalpress.ge/archives/267159>

⁶¹ Obieqtivi, Dgis Bolos, May 2, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3785179>

⁶² Obieqtivi, Dgis Bolos, May 3, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3785630>

⁶³ Obieqtivi, Gamis Studia, March 7, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3759725>

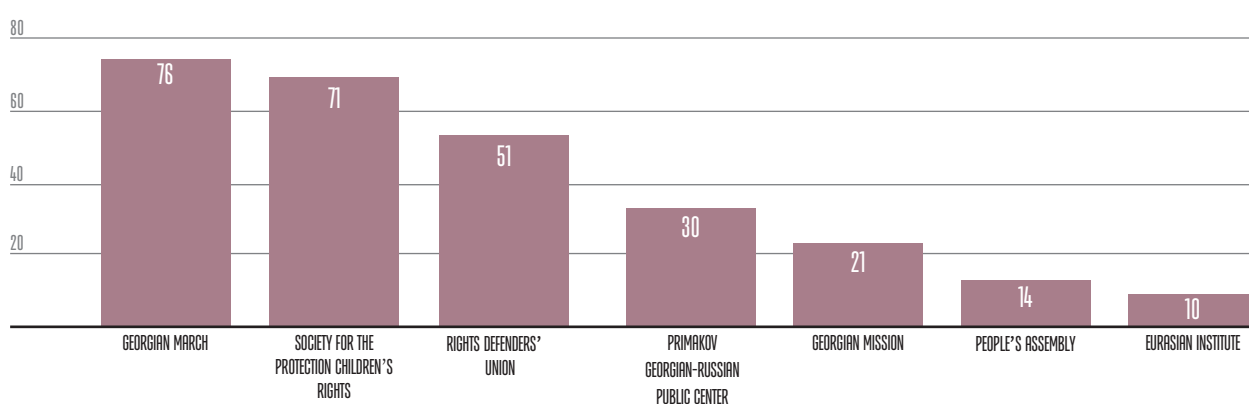
⁶⁴ Asaval-Dasavali, November 4-10

the street and aggressive proselytism is underway? Only the rights of Georgians are violated in this country and only Orthodoxy is being discredited.” (Levan Chachua, Georgian Idea)⁶⁵.

2.3. CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

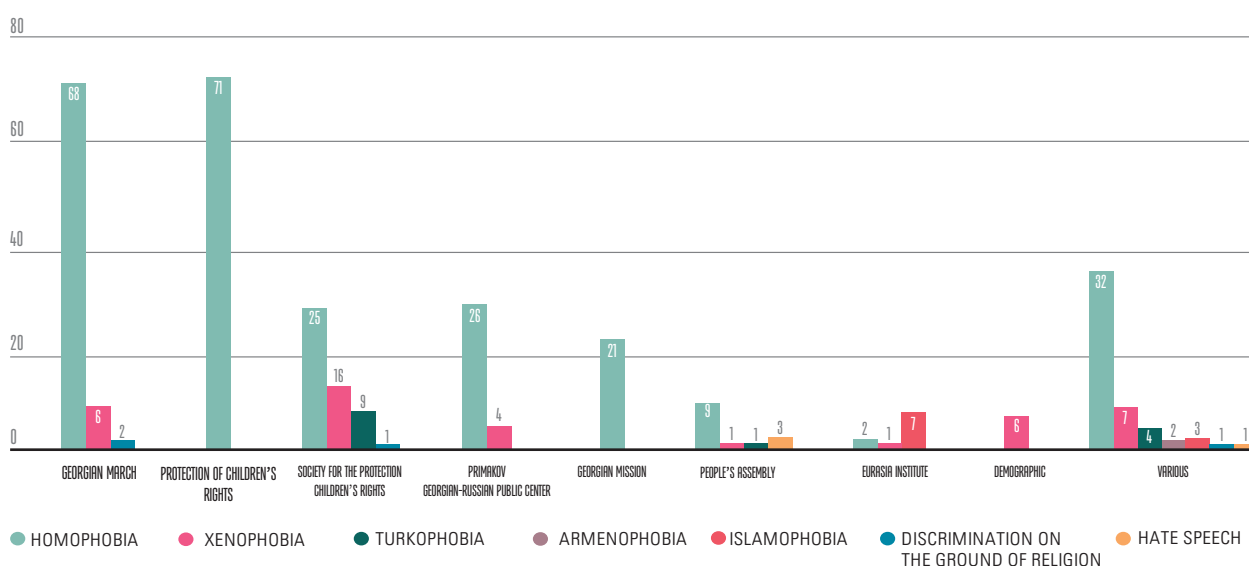
Eight civil society organizations were identified using hate speech most frequently, with Georgian March and Society for the Protection of Children’s Rights taking the lead (76 and 71, respectively), followed by Rights Defenders’ Union (51), Primakov Georgian-Russian Public Center (30), Georgian Mission (21), People’s Assembly (14) and Eurasian Institute (10).

CHART 15. SOURCES OF HATE SPEECH BY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS



Most of the statements made by the above civil society organizations (254) were homophobic with 71 comments made by the Society for the Protection of Children’s Rights. Moreover, xenophobic (57), Islamophobic (10), hate speech comments on various grounds (7) and racist (1) statements were also made.

CHART 16. TYPOLOGY OF HATE SPEECH BY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS



⁶⁵ Georgia and World, March 13, <https://bit.ly/2T5oXK6>

HOMOPHOBIA

Most of the statements made by civil society organizations promoted an opinion that LGBT activities propagandize perversion (43). Some also contained calls for restricting the freedom of their expression (42). In some instances, the June anti-occupation protests were groundlessly linked to LGBT community and gay pride.

- **PROTEST AGAINST PM GAKHARIA WAS LINKED NOT TO THE DISPERSAL OF THE JUNE 20 ANTI-OCCUPATION RALLY, BUT GAKHARIA'S REFUSAL TO ALLOW A GAY PRIDE:** “Why is Gakharia being punished??? It became clear that rubber bullets are simply a pretext, while the reason is quite different – the reason is that Gakharia refused twice to allow a gay pride!!! Yes, homosexuals, organizers of gay prides, those people, who are doing their utmost to hold a gay pride, are trying to punish Gakharia!!! It is known psychologically that LGBT people are most ruthless and brutal people, who spare no efforts to destroy their enemies! The situation is quite simple – if Gakharia is defeated, homosexuals will win and if Gakharia wins, homosexuals will be defeated!!!” (Sandro Bregadze, Georgian March)⁶⁶.
- **LGBT GATHERING IS PROPAGANDA OF PERVERSION:** “We observe the law and police promote propaganda of perversion. Police go beyond the limits of constitution. If it is perversion, police should prevent its propaganda.” (Guram Palavandishvili, Society for the Protection of Children’s Rights)⁶⁷.
- **GEORGIAN CITIZENS WILL NEVER TOLERATE PROPAGANDA OF PERVERSION:** “How do you think, will the country the majority of whose population perceives the implementation of policy perverting future generations as a tragedy tolerate the legalization of homosexuality?! Or what kind of cordon or fence will protect a handful of people propagandizing perversion, if hundreds of people take to the streets?!” (Dimitri Lortkipanidze, Primakov Georgian-Russian Public Center)⁶⁸.

XENOPHOBIA

Speculations were voiced regarding the UN Global Compact (Marrakesh agreement), which, according to some civil society organizations, imposed an obligation on Georgia to accept migrants:

- **THE UN COMPACT WILL LEAD TO INFLOW OF MIGRANTS AND AGGRAVATION OF CRIME SITUATION:** “People still don’t quite understand how troubling is the fact that they signed the Pact about Migration. Soon, Tbilisi will be filled with African criminals and it will be no longer safe for children and women to go out in the street. Look at what Syrian refugees did to Germany, the crime rate has increased. There is no criminal act they won’t commit, and they commit those crimes with extreme cruelty. Migrants from Africa or Asia won’t behave as angels either.” (Ramaz Gagnidze, Georgian March)⁶⁹.
- **THE UN COMPACT WILL WORSEN THE DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION:** “All this will happen at the expense of the Georgian state budget. And what is most important, this process is aimed at changing the country’s demographic plasma.” (Dimitri Lortkipanidze, Primakov Georgian-Russian Public Center)⁷⁰.

⁶⁶ Marshalpress, June 29, <https://bit.ly/2Q6PabU>

⁶⁷ Interpressnews, June 18, <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/552041-guram-palavandishvili-vapirebt-akcias-cin-davudget-kordonit-shishveli-xelebit-chven-vicavt-kanons-policia-ki-garqvnilebis-propagandas-xels-ucqobs/>

⁶⁸ Georgia and World, March 28, <https://bit.ly/2OxJMwN>

⁶⁹ Alia, February 25 – March 3

⁷⁰ Obieqtivi TV, News, February 2, https://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=3743718

DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUND OF RELIGION

All discriminatory statements made on the ground of religion were Islamophobic; they mainly linked Muslims to terrorism and associated their madrasas to threats.

- **MUSLIM MADRASAS = A THREAT:** “We are closing boarding schools and they [Islamic fundamentalists from a neighboring country] are opening 24-hour madrassas where nothing Georgian is taught.” (Tengiz Tavdgirdze, Muslim and Christian Brothers for Defending the Unity of Georgia)⁷¹.
- **EXTREMISM UNDER COVER OF RELIGION IN PANKISI SHOULD BE RESTRICTED BY LAW:** “Ideological propaganda unrestricted by law is still underway in Pankisi. Our Parliament adopts a lot of useless laws, instead of restricting the extremists acting under cover of religious freedom at a legislative level.” (Gulbaat Rtskhiladze, Eurasian Institute)⁷².

2.4. CLERICS

Four clerics were identified whose discriminatory statements were covered by the monitored media outlets most frequently.

CLERIC	HATE SPEECH
Giorgi Razmadze	30
Davit Isakadze	15
Davit Kvlividze	9
Spiridon Abuladze	7

Most of the discriminatory comments made by the clerics (111) were homophobic, followed by those containing xenophobia (20), religious discrimination (7), inciting hatred (4) and racist (1) comments.

HOMOPHOBIA

- **HOMOSEXUALITY IS A SIN AND IT SHOULD BE RESTRICTED:** “Dear friends, you, who have chosen this path, who have committed the sin of Sodom, just repent, we will support you, but be sure, we will never allow you to propagandize in Georgia. We should observe morality and purity. We will accept you, no problem, we will not push you away, but, please, do not swear at our purity; do not march here, we will not allow it, it’s ruled out.” (Davit Isakadze, cleric)⁷³.
- **HOMOSEXUALITY IS A MENTAL ILLNESS:** “It can’t be qualified as freedom of expression, when man poses as woman and takes part in street celebration wearing a dress. Naked men marching and kissing in the streets can’t be called human rights. These people should be treated in psychiatric hospitals, rather than participating in street manifestations.” (Giorgi Razmadze, cleric)⁷⁴.

⁷¹ Obieqtivi TV, News, February 6, https://www.myvideo.ge/v/3745016&tracker=subscribe_log

⁷² Sakinformi, March 12, <https://bit.ly/3iPnjth>

⁷³ Marshalpress, July 8, <https://marshalpress.ge/archives/248756>

⁷⁴ Georgia and World, February 27

DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUND OF RELIGION

- **CATHOLICISM IS A HERESY, WHILE COOPERATION WITH CATHOLICS – A TROUBLE:** “The results are especially grave when a senior cleric compromises with a top cleric of Catholic heresy. By this reason, the church itself may face some troubles. Catholicism is deviation from the church dogma and heresy. A cycle of troubles started for the Russian church after Russian Patriarch Kirill and Pope Francis signed a joint declaration in Cuba three years ago. The Russian Patriarch was looking in the eyes of Pope Francis with admiration.” (Davit Isakadze, archpriest)⁷⁵.

RACISM

- **BLACK PEOPLE ARE SUCCESSORS OF THE PEOPLE PUNISHED BY GOD:** “You are Ham [Petre Tsaava], you are doing the same what Ham did. If you do not turn back and repent, you will become exactly the same. The Negroes have become Ham’s successors and those who follow you will also turn black.” (Bishop Spiridon)⁷⁶.

2.5. SOCIETY

Like in the instance of clerics, most of the statements made by representatives of society were homophobic (249), followed by xenophobic comments (94), statements inciting hatred (34), religious discrimination (16) and racial comments (3).

Businessman Levan Vasadze leads the list of statements made by representatives of society.

SOCIETY	HATE SPEECH
Levan Vasadze	88
Obieqtivi TV viewer	17
Guram Kartvelishvili	16
Tamar Kiknadze	13
Rezo Amashukeli	13
Gia Gabrichidze	9

HOMOPHOBIA

- **THE ANTI-OCCUPATION RALLY IS A PROVOCATION LINKED TO GAY PRIDE:** “This is a tragedy of our nation. I still believe that these two developments are the rings of one chain – it began with pride and continued there. It is a targeted provocation staged very clumsily, aiming to destabilize the Georgian state... Those people, who are firing bullets and spitting into the souls, allowing a pride and promising to give a seat to the Russian MP – such people are not people for me.” (Levan Vasadze, businessman)⁷⁷.

⁷⁵ AsavaI–Dasavali, January 21–27

⁷⁶ Rezonansi, January 16, http://www.resonancedaily.com/mobile/index.php?id_rub=4&id_artc=63616

⁷⁷ Interpressnews, June 21, <https://bit.ly/3iVPIn4>

XENOPHOBIA

- **SALE OF LANDS TO FOREIGN NATIONALS IS EQUAL TO TREASON:** “So, they developed this treacherous draft organic law [on lands], which actually legalizes the sale of our strategic wealth to aliens! This is nothing but treason!” (Gela Gligvashvili, professor)⁷⁸.
- **MIGRANTS WILL TAKE THE PLACE OF GEORGIANS:** “Now imagine, what will happen in Georgia after they bring really “fruit-bearing” ethnos here. Georgia will end its existence; refugees in question are really aggressive people. We see it every minute after the example of Europe. Refugees will come to our country in order to expel us from this country. It is the goal of any refugee, especially as we talk about such paradise like our country.” (Guram Kartvelishvili, historian)⁷⁹.

DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUND OF RELIGION

- **THE ACTIVITIES OF JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES SHOULD BE BANNED BY LAW:** “I think Georgia, like other countries, should adopt a law and ban the activities of Jehovah’s Witnesses... They are sectarians and their door-to-door visits should be ended!” (Nino Mikiashvili)⁸⁰.

⁷⁸ Asaval-Dasavali, March 18–24

⁷⁹ Georgia and World, January 31, <https://bit.ly/2MIFr9d>

⁸⁰ Asaval-Dasavali, May 13–19