

HATE SPEECH AND XENOPHOBIA



HATE SPEECH XENOPHOBIA

MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

2014-2015

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

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INTRODUCTION

The Media Development Foundation (MDF) has conducted media monitoring within the framework of Advancing National Integration in Georgia program. The aim of monitoring is to identify sources of hate speech, xenophobia, homophobia, gender discrimination and stereotyping, and anti-Western attitudes in media and public domain, in general.

This study covers the period of one year (17 February 2014–18 February 2015) and it exposes hate speech and discrimination on various grounds. The monitoring report represents a set of three editions: the first edition combines expressions of hate speech and xenophobia. For its part, the section on xenophobia is divided into subsections on a) various ethnic and national groups; b) Turkophobia/Islamophobia; c) Armenophobia; and d) religious discrimination. The second edition covers homophobic, discriminatory and stereotyped approaches to gender identity. The third edition reflects ant-Western attitudes.

All the three editions have identical structure arranged according to the following sources: media, political parties and public organizations affiliated thereof, representatives of current and former authorities, religious servants, and other representatives of public i.e. all those respondents that are not grouped as a separate category.

The monitoring covers six newspapers (Asaval-Dasavali, Rezonansi, Prime Time, Kviris Qronika, Alia, Kviris Palitra¹), main news programs and talk shows of five TV channels (Georgian Public Broadcaster, Imedi, Rustavi 2, Kavkasia and Maestro), primetime talk shows of the media union Obiektivi and the Tabula TV company, and six news and information websites (Sakinformi, InterpressNews, Netgazeti, PirWeli, Reportiori, Geworld.ge).

Apart from media outlets being under observation, this study includes examples of other randomly selected programs that were aired on above mentioned TV channels (Nanuka's Show and Midday Show of Rustavi 2) and some other media (Versia newspaper, Facebook [source YouTube]), which were considered worth reacting to because of public attention they attracted and influence they had.

QUANTITATIVE DATA

The first edition contains the total of 573 expressions of hate speech and various types of xenophobia which were observed over the reporting period. The most of those expressions account for Turkophobia/Islamophobia (200) whereas the least of them account for Armenophobia (36).

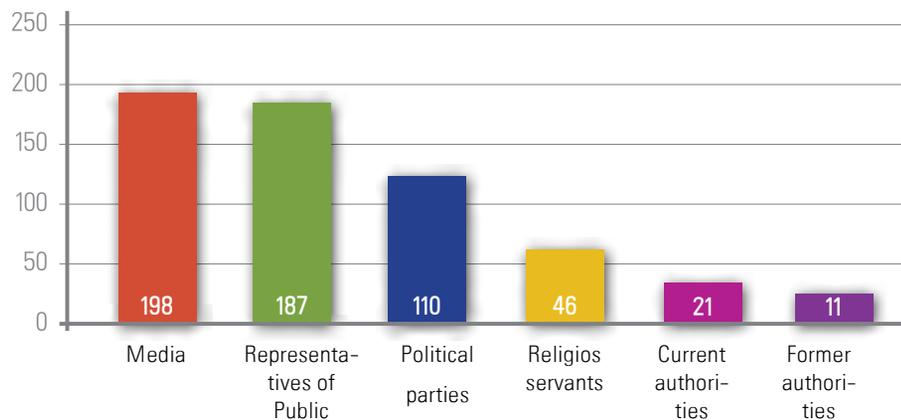
¹ Since December 2014, the monitoring switched from print version of the newspaper to online version.

Table 1. Expressions of hate speech and xenophobia

| | Media | Political parties | Representatives of authority | Former represent. of authority | Religious servants | Other respondents | TOTAL |
|-----------------------------|------------|-------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Hate speech | 44 | 30 | 6 | 4 | 11 | 42 | 137 |
| Intolerance of other groups | 49 | 26 | 1 | 8 | 8 | 41 | 133 |
| Turkophobia/slamophobia | 53 | 52 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 77 | 200 |
| Armenophobia | 25 | 1 | | 1 | 3 | 6 | 36 |
| Religious discrimination | 27 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 16 | 21 | 67 |
| TOTAL | 198 | 110 | 11 | 21 | 46 | 187 | 573 |

By sources of discrimination, the highest number of discriminative expressions was found in media (198) which was followed by other representatives of public (187), politicians (110), religious servants (46), former (21) and current officials (11).

Chart 1. Hate speech and xenophobia by sources



Asaval-Dasavali newspaper was in the lead by the number of violations (53), followed by media union Obiektivi (37); news websites Sakinformi (24) and Geworld.ge (22); Kviris Qronika newspaper (19), Kavkasia TV channel (14), newspapers Alia (12), Rezonansi (6), Kviris Palitra (4), Rustavi 2 TV company (2), newspaper Prime Time (2), news websites PirWeli (2) and the Georgian Public Broadcaster (1).

Table 2. Hate speech and xenophobia by media outlets

| MEDIA OUTLET | AMOUNT |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Asaval-Dasavali | 53 |
| Obiektivi | 37 |
| Sakinformi | 24 |
| Geworld.ge | 22 |
| Kviris Chronika | 19 |
| Kavkasia | 14 |
| Alia | 12 |
| Rezonansi | 6 |
| Kviris Palitra | 4 |
| Rustavi 2 | 2 |
| Prime Time | 2 |
| PirWeli | 2 |
| Georgian Public Broadcaster | 1 |

In case of political parties, the most outstanding for discriminative statements is the Alliance of Patriots (36). The next in the ranking are: People’s Council which is affiliated with Nino Burjanadze–United Democrats (26), the Georgian Dream (20) largely because of the use of hate speech against political opponents, Nino Burjanadze–United Democrats (14), Labor Party (6), United National Movement (2), Free Georgia (2), People’s Party (2), Union of Traditionalists (1), Imedi (1) and a former member of the Alliance of Patriots and current independent deputy of Tbilisi city council (1).

Table 3. Hate speech and xenophobia by political parties

| MEDIA OUTLET | AMOUNT |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Alliance of Patriots | 36 |
| People’s Council | 26 |
| Georgian Dream | 20 |
| Nino Burjanadze–United Democrats | 14 |
| Labor Party | 6 |
| United National Movement | 2 |
| Free Georgia | 2 |
| People’s Party | 2 |
| Other | 3 |

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HATE SPEECH

INTRODUCTION

Hate speech is any form of expression which is likely to cause offence or distress to a person or a group of persons on the basis of race, gender, age, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, language, ideology, social standing, activity, appearance, mental abilities or other traits.

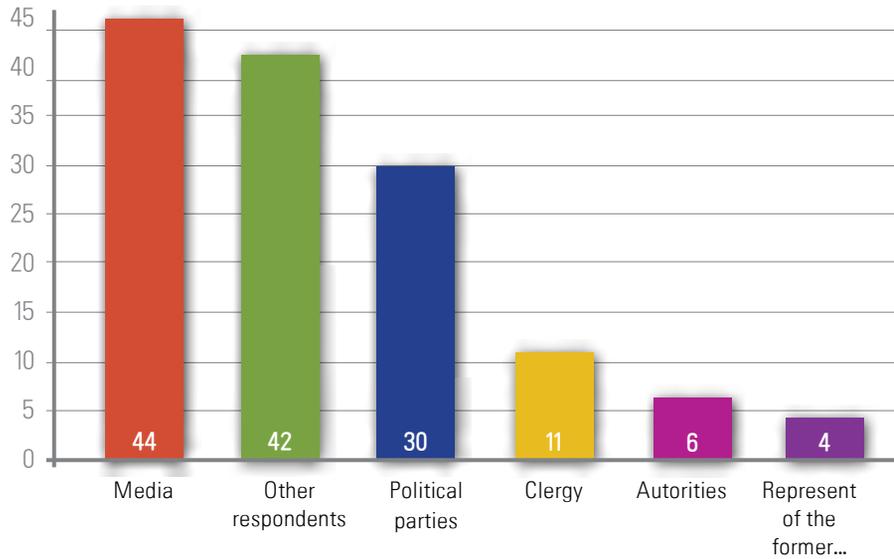
Hate speech on the grounds of ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation is broadly discussed in a separate section of this edition, dedicated to xenophobia and homophobia. This section deals with the hate speech largely applied by media and respondents against political groups or groups of people with specific worldview in relation to their activities or public statements that media and respondents disapprove of. This section also discusses instances of incitement to hatred and encouragement of violence against separate individuals because of their belonging to certain groups, which also stems from intolerance of these groups or is related to separate activities of these groups.

MAIN FINDINGS

- According to the monitoring results, apart from separate ethnic and religious groups, hatred in its various forms was largely expressed against the United National Movement and LGBT community and on separate occasions, against a group of Georgian writers, concrete individuals (incitement to hatred against individuals), the West, Ukrainian fighters and other groups;
- A separate category that may be singled out is the so called “liberperverts” – a term introduced by Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, representing a combination of two words – a “liberal” and a “pervert” (pejorative for gay); this term is used to denote not a sexual identity of a person but rather a civic stance on liberal values and fundamental human rights;
- The newspaper Asaval-Dasavali was most distinguished among media outlets for its intolerance; the Internet-portal, Sakinformi, incited hatred against the West and the US by spreading lies (trade in human organs in Ukraine and Georgia) and misinterpreting facts (portraying the Richard Lugar Laboratory as threat);
- The call of clerics and congregation on population to join a protest march against the adoption of antidiscrimination law, which was published in the Rezonansi newspaper, was assessed as an attempt to incite social hate;
- Incitement to hate against political parties was mainly directed against the United National Movement; separate political officials were doing the same not only against the United National Movement but also LGBT representatives, inter alia, through encouraging violence;

- In case of religious servants, the main target of hate speech was LGBT community whilst other representatives of society were intolerant of not only representatives of this community but also the United National Movement.

Chart 1.1. Sources of hate speech



1. MEDIA

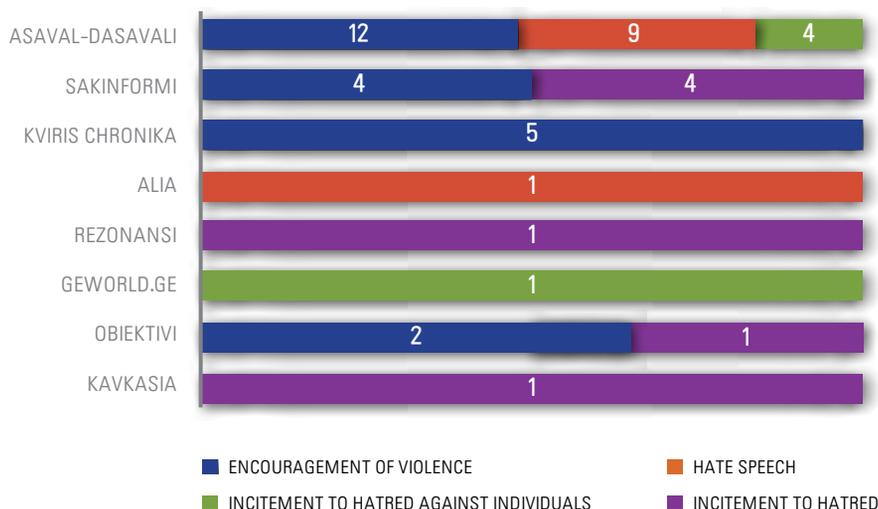
Hate speech, incitement to hatred and encouragement of violence on the basis of intolerance were most frequently observed in the print media (31), followed by online media (9) and broadcast media (4). The chart below summarizes all the three types of expression.

The most distinguished by expressing hate was Asaval-Dasavali newspaper – 25, followed by the Internet portal Sakinformi – 8, Kviris Chronika newspaper – 5, newspapers Rezonansi and Alia – 1 each, media-union Obiektivi – 3, Kavkasia TV company – 1, and Geworld.ge – 1.

Note: In case of media-union Obiektivi, the hate speech includes not only discriminatory statements of presenters but also those of viewers expressed during phone-ins because it is the opinions of respondents that are mainly aired by the TV channel with program presenters agreeing to them.

Types of violations are shown in the chart below.

Chart 1.2. Types of violations by media outlets



PRINT MEDIA

ASAVAL-DASAVALI NEWSPAPER

The newspaper Asaval-Dasavali, which is in the lead by the number of violations, stirred up intolerance mainly towards the United National Movement, UNM (15), followed by LGBT representatives (3) and a group of Georgian writers (3). A separate group may also be distinguished of so called “Liberast” (“liberperverts”), a term introduced by Asaval-Dasavali newspaper itself, combining two words – a “liberal” and a “pervert” (pejorative for gay). The newspaper uses this word in reference to not a sexual identity of a person but rather to people with liberal values whom we refer to as liberals; three instances of hate speech towards liberals in the newspaper were observed. Hate speech was also applied towards the West (1).

Separate examples of hate speech by addressees:

Incitement to violence towards LGBT persons

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “So, Skott Esk – the colleague of our old friend John McCain evasively admitted that lynching the gays is “quite fear” treatment of them.” (June 23-29, 2014).
- **Dimitri Chubinidze:** “After this brigadier of hens and pederasts Irakli Vacharadze made a statement about nuns, if someone makes him answer for it, will he be a “terrorist”?” (19-25 January, 2015).

- **Dito Chubinidze:** “If anyone deserves liquidation and destruction, it is that rascal... sodomite Mamuka Kvedeliani”.... (23 January, 2015).

Incitement to violence towards UNM members

- **Dimitri Chubinidze:** “Spit on the devil and behead the sect of Bokeria and Targamadze ! If you don’t do it now... there will be a long civil war in Georgia. There will be bloodshed, fight between the honest Orthodox Georgia and the dirty sectarians, it is going to end miserably!” (27 October – 2 November, 2014).
- “Kill him before he burns us [Mikheil Saakashvili]!” (31 March – 6 April, 2014).
- **Dimitri Chubinidze:** “ Those who raped 26 000 thousand Georgian men and stuck the brooms in their backs, they do deserve to be hooked on stick and then to be hung on the walls of National Movement headquarters, right on the way to the airport!” (11-17 August, 2014).

Hate speech towards UNM members

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “Can be a National considered to be a human being at all?!” (21-27 April, 2014).

Individual Hatred

- **Dimitri Chubinidze:** „Rid Georgia of the party flag, coat of arms and anthem of the head of the Georgian sodomites and zonder rapists – disgusting Saakashvili [addresses Prime Minister Gharibashvili]!“ (20-26 October, 2014).

Hatred towards Zurab Karumidze was related to his literary work and unacceptance of his appointment as an ambassador of Georgia to the UK.

- **Dimitri Chubinidze:** „All Britain and Europe are reading the lesbo-homosexual and zoophyte dirt-filled junk of these three men [Zura Karumidze, Zaza Burchuladze and Lasha Bughadze]... Do you think these all-reading European bosses will not impose the “pederasts’ law” on us after this?“ (26 May –1 June, 2014).

Hate speech towards liberals

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “... Georgian Church is mobilizing with the hallows of the holy fathers all of Georgia against the most cruel and ruthless liberast-globalist international and its local servants, to repel the general attack!.. Their goal is clear and was written in the Allen Dalles doctrine! It is total infidelity and turning of human beings into animals!” (24 February–2 March, 2014).

Hate speech towards the West

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “I will explain for the especially dumb Nationals and National-oriented liberasts: this bloody Kiev cutlet was ordered by the Euromaidan cannibals who have in their hearts the sick plan of dividing Ukraine in two parts and taking ownership of one part!.. Stalin saved the mankind not just from the Nazi plague, but he also

postponed for the long time this disgusting human-hating globalist cancer, which is as bad evil as Hitler's Nazism for the Adam's offspring" (24 February – 2 March, 2014).

KVIRIS CHRONIKA NEWSPAPER

The newspaper was inciting violence not only towards UNM members (3), but towards other individuals – Nodar Ladaria, professor of the Ilia State University (1) and participants of protest-performance “needs disinfection” in front of Patriarchy.

Below are some examples:

- **Gela Zedelashvili:** “Yes, but where are the animals’ rights defenders? Why don’t they beat down this Ladaria?” (22-28 September).
- **Nino Samkharadze:** “Misha [Saakashvili] thinks Ukrainian criminals are like Georgian lazy ones... You Georgian Chikati, I want to warn you that they will make you eat your own meat in Ukraine and then make you take your evil head in your hands!” (15 December, 2014).
- **Khatuna Elbakidze:** “People on Facebook congratulated one another about Tsiklauri [Nugzar, UNM MP] been beaten up and were elated that Tsiklauri, after all, received what he deserved?” (7-13 April, 2014).

REZONANSI NEWSPAPER

Incitement to social hatred

On May 16th, 2014 Rezonansi cover page featured a calling by clergy and parish to mobilize rally on 17 May against anti-discrimination law that was assessed by non-governmental organization Identoba as inciting social hatred².

ALIA NEWSPAPER

Hate speech towards a group of writers

- **Dito Chubunidze:** “They [Georgian writers] from their youth stared at their own feces in toilet and all this is as close to them as filth to a swine!.. Yes, LGBTs or fags insulted Svaneti loved by Queen Tamar so much, when they put the statue of some horrible hellish thing instead of Queen Tamar in Mestia Great Konstantine Gamsakhurdia could not know that those like crazed Lasha Bugadze, Zaza Burchuladze, Zurab Karumidze and Erekle Deisadze would attack with their dirty pens our holy things – parent-child relationship, Orthodox religion, Queen Tamar... A man who thought and wrote such a thing may be himself a pederast“ (25-28 April, 2014).

² <http://identoba.com/2014/05/16/rezonansi-3/>

SAKINFORMI

4 instances of hatred and 4 incitement of violence were observed in online portal Sakinformi.

Incitement to hatred

Sakinformi incited hate towards Americans by spreading misleading information about Richard G. Lugar Laboratory established in Tbilisi within the framework of cooperation in the field of biological security between Georgia and the United States.

- **Headline:** “Take-off phase and Richard G Lugar death factory” (5 May, 2014).

This news and information website also incited hate towards Ukrainians by spreading allegations about human organs being removed from soldiers in the Ukrainian army with the involvement of foreign doctors. The edition linked these allegation with unfounded reports of Asaval-Dasavali newspaper about the former First Lady of Georgia, Sandra Roelofs, being engaged in the trade in human organs, on the one hand, and on the other hand, with the process of European integration:

- “Foreign doctors were spied in the Ukrainian army and in the Right Wing, they carry special equipment and remove organs from the bodies of the killed and seriously wounded... It is highly possible that some of the supporters of Euro integration may end up in Europe earlier than anybody else, but part by part” (24 June, 2014).

The online portal was also inciting hatred between Georgians and Russians:

- **Arno Khidirbegishvili, editor-in-chief of Saqinformi:** “The fascists [meaning Ukrainian combatants] are already in Georgia! Tomorrow they will invade our homes and tear the medals with St George ribbons from the old people – just like today they are terrorizing Russian tourists, who soon will not come to Georgia any more! They will ambush anyone who speaks Russian and who they think is pro-Russian, they will abuse them in all ways, torture and abuse their children! (27 August, 2014).

On 26 March 2014, the edition, alongside Asaval-Dasavali, Eurasia Institute and media-union Obiektivi, carried a statement about an alleged plot that groups associated with Saakashvili would murder influential persons and people with dissenting opinions in Georgia:

- “To settle scores with those having different views before Saakashvili’s return, which he once again announced in

an interview to his loathsome TV company Rustavi 2, these people will be killed – some will be shot at their houses, others in streets, and the rest will be killed in car accidents, wounded by knives or stoned to death by a crowd” (26 March, 2014).

Incitement to Violence

Targets of violence were Abkhazians and Ossetians, members of Pussy Riot, Prime Minister of Ukraine Arseniy Yatsenyuk and Security Council Secretary of Ukraine Oleksandr Turchynov and members of the United National Movement.

- “Go to the forest, go ahead and start guerilla wars, why don’t you go ahead and kill Abkhazians and Ossetians, rather than be killed for the sake of dollars as a hired soldier in Donetsk airport!” (29 January, 2015).
- “Good job, Cossacks!” [headline] “The Kuban Cossacks stopped the activity of the punk group Pussy Riot in Sochi... The soloists Nadezhda Kolokonnikova, Maria Alyokhina and their colleagues were beaten with whips and pepper-sprayed by the Cossacks” (21 February, 2014).
- “‘Yatsenyuk and Turchinov must be killed for that. They must be knocked with a hammer on their heads,’ the director of Lev Gumilev center, Pavel Zarifulin, posted on social networks and provided a link of material with a title of detective type – Yatsenyuk Took Out Scythian Gold to America” (17 March, 2014).
- **Arno Khidirbegishvili:** „Imprisonment alone is not enough for these butchers – very soon the people’s patience will end and the Mishists [Saakashvili supporters] will be lynched! This is a matter of days, not months“ (20 October, 2014).

GEWORLD.GE

Individual Hatred

Individual hatred was expressed against members of the United National Movement in relation to the attack on MP Nugzar Tsiklauri, in which, according to Tsiklauri, electroshock was used against him.

- **David Mindiashvili:** „As to electroshock, find a pig of your [Nigzar Tsiklauri, UNM MP] weight (it should not be hard), touch it with electroshock once and see what happens to it. If you cannot find a pig, you can experiment on Givi Targamadze [UNM MP]“... (2 April, 2014).

BROADCAST MEDIA

OBIJEKTIVI, TALK-SHOW NIGHT STUDIO

Incitement to violence towards UNM members (2) and hatred towards LGBT persons (1) were observed in media-union Obiektivi talk-show Night Studio.

Incitement to violence

- **Bondo Mdzinarashvili:** „I agree, let them (the public) go out to the streets and categorically demand the punishment for the National criminals, even by physically beating them” (6 September, 2014).
- **TV Viewer:** “They [UNM members] are the group of maniacs and sadists, any kind of measures against them is allowed” (July 4, 2014).

Incitement to hatred

- **TV Viewer:** “I don’t think homosexuals are ill, they are Satanists, they worship evil. They have to be fully eliminated from the public, they are no human, and they have no personality” (May 18, 2014).

KAVKASIA TV, TALK-SHOW SPEKTRI

Incitement to hatred

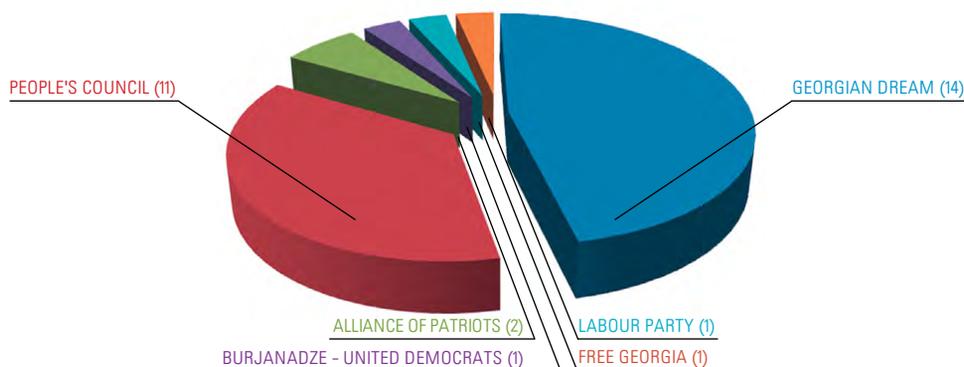
- **David Akubardia:** “They should have gone to Abkhazia and wage guerilla war there... why are they fighting there [in Ukraine], let them fight here, go and do in Moscow what Chechens did to hit Russians”... (9 February, 2015).

2. POLITICAL PARTIES

The Georgian Dream was most active among political parties in applying hate speech, inciting hatred and encouraging intolerance-based violence against its political opponents(14). It was followed by the People’s Council (11), Alliance of Patriots (2), Nino Burjanadze – United Opposition (1), the Labor Party (1), and Free Georgia (1).

Note: A public movement, Peoples’ Council, which is affiliated with Nino Burjanadze–United Opposition, was grouped with political parties.

Chart 1.3. Hate speech, hatred and incitement to violence by political parties and affiliated organizations.



The Ruling Georgian Dream coalition representatives were mainly inciting violence towards UNM members (6); only in single case it was targeted toward the member of Free Georgia political party; 4 cases of hate speech were addressed to the UNM; individual hatred was directed to the Fady Asly, Chairman of the International Chamber of Commerce (1) and Lasha Bugadze, writer (1); Incitement to ethnic hatred was based on individual criminal case.

Some examples:

Incitement to ethnic hatred

- **Soso Jachvliani:** “Two days before adopting this law [Antidiscrimination Law], 15 year old boy was raped by the Iraqis; it was broadcasted on all TV channels, why the society did not react that day? Three days later we had to adopt the Anti-Discrimination Law. What if 200 people protested it in the streets and held those Iraqis responsible? Apparently they were the agents too” (Alia, 20-13 June, 2014).

Hate speech towards UNM members

- **Irakli Gharibashvili, Prime Minister:** “All of you happened to see how they tortured and raped the boys and the men. This is National Movement who brought about the sexual rape of men!” (Netgazeti, May 18, 2014).

Incitement to violence

- **Murman Dumbadze³:** „During the last 5-6 months we cannot perform our duties because of this sick man (Head of Khelvachauri organization of the Free Georgia Party Merab Ghoghoberidze). He is insane... I will name the people who have beaten this man during the last three days.... When someone insults your mother, you must respond... I don't prohibit my son, or brother, or friend, or supporter, or any citizen from beating a person who insults a mother, such man must be beaten“ (Rustavi 2, Imedi, 10 March, 2014).
- **Soso Jachvliani:** “You know what?! We wouldn't have ended up in this situation if we had kicked the “Nationals” out of the parliament by giving them some drubbing on the way... people long for justice so much, that they are craving for blood. One person even asked why we did not draw blood out of “Nationals”. All these, is the result of impunity!” (Kviris Palitra, 27 January, 2015).

Individual hatred

- **Gogi Topadze:** “That someone Mr. Fady Asly who have arrived from somewhere... He turned us into a country of bananas... Had you been impaled when you deserved it, you would not have talked so much now... Why this infidel did not speak up back then” (Kavkasia, Spektri, 27 March, 2014).

³ Murman Dumbadze was the member of Georgian Dream coalition while making this statement. The statements made after he left the coalition are discussed separately.

- **Soso Jachviani:** “This nonentity who is enemy of holiness [Lasha Bugadze] calls me an odious person?!... You know where these Bugadzes, Karumidzes, Burchuladzes feed? These rascals get money for fighting against Georgian holy things, spirituality, Orthodox religion, mother Church! They are ideological bastards of Allen Dulles and executors of his dirty doctrine!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 31 March – 6 April, 2014).

PEOPLE'S COUNCIL

Out of 4 instances of incitement of violence targets were: LGBT persons, individuals who “fight against Orthodoxy”, UNM members (2). In all cases hate speech was directed against the UNM, individual hatred – both towards UNM and Georgian Dream members and writer Zurab Karumidze.

Some examples:

Hate speech towards UNM members

- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “The Nationals are not people, but devils, none of them is born out of mother’s belly... A person is different from an animal because of his morality, and the Nationals are not any different from animals...” (Geworld.ge, 18 February, 2015).

Individual hatred

- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “Vano Merabishvili must be punished as a cannibal for 26 May” (Asaval-Dasavali, 24 February – 2 March, 2014).
- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “Levan Berdzenishvili should be hanged on the Jehovah Witnesses’ Christmas tree for such anti-Georgian statements!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 29 December–11 January, 2015).

Incitement to violence

- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “I have never killed a chicken in my life, but now, I am so fed up with those parasites, that I am ready to pluck out the eyes of all the Nats with this pen!... It was too late to bit up Zurab Chiaberashvili, it should have happened twenty years ago, when he insulted the Mother of Georgia [statue]!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 2-8 June, 2014).
- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “I will never ever tolerate the establishment of LGBT society in Georgia! I disgust those people, I will deal with them physically and spiritually wherever I encounter with them!” (Kviris Chronika, 30 June – 6 July, 2014).

OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES

Representatives of other political parties also mainly targeted UNM members:

Alliance of Patriots’ - Incitement to violence (2):

- **Vaja Otarashvili:** “You’ve got to stone everyone who comes out there on 15th! [Protest “No to Occupation” organized by National Movement] (Obiektiv, Night Studio, October 28, 2014).

Burjanadze–United Democrats – Hate speech (1):

- **Jondi Baghaturia:** „The National Movement is a tumor, with metastases in both government and opposition!“ (Asaval–Dasavali, 20–26 October).

Free Georgia – Incitement to hatred (1):

- **Aleksandre Shalamberidze:** “I would kick them out from their rally location” (Pirveli, 27 October, 2014).

Only exception was representative of Labour Party inciting to violence towards the former sheriff of the police of Borjomi.

- **Giorgi Giuashvili, member of Borjomi Sakrebulo:** “His family members separated us, or I would have break Khvedeliani’s head with a stone, like that of a snake” (Asaval–Dasavali, 9–15 February, 2015).

3. REPRESENTATIVES OF CURRENT AND FORMER AUTHORITIES

HIGH POLITICAL OFFICIALS, PUBLIC SERVANTS

From among current high political officials, hate speech were used by the Minister of Culture and Education of Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia (2), Deputy State Minister on Diaspora Issues (3) and Deputy Rector of Police Academy of the Interior Ministry who is currently a member of parliament from the Georgian Dream coalition.

Dima Jaiani, Minister of Education and Culture of Abkhazia was inciting violence towards LGBT persons and UNM members:

- **Dima Jaiani:** “You non-men! Don’t madden the people or the last year’s 17 May will seem a cakewalk for you! The government must do everything for the Rustaveli cinema, where for decades works of the great masters of our culture were being demonstrated, not to be perverted by apologia of buggery!” (Asaval–Dasavali, 21–27 April, 2014);
- **Dima Jaiani:** “It is better for Vano Merabishvili to stay in prison as long as possible, because there is a huge line of people ready to slaughter him!.. The people will not forgive this gang anything!” (Asaval–Dasavali, 3–9 March, 2014).

The ground for incitement of individual hatred from Deputy State Minister for Diaspora Issues Sandro Baramidze in one case was political stance of Ghia Nodia, professor of the Ilia State university and in another case the critical statements of Irakli Vachardze, the head of organization “Identoba” about the Patriarch:

- **Sandro Bregadze:** “Gia Nodia – an animal resembling human being, who hates Georgian Church and shows open aggression towards it. This is the enemy of Georgia and Georgians. The force that must be removed from the political arena as quickly as possible“ (Asaval–Dasavali, 24 February – 2 March, 2014).

- **Sandro Bregadze:** “Unfortunately there are lots of ill minded people, like this single-cell creature [Irakli Vacharadze, “Identoba”]. Insult of Orthodox religious feelings make their heart happy... There definitely has to be a legal case against him! If it does not happen, I am sure some group of people, will use force against him! due to aggravated emotions. Their work should be limited, because they are extremists, they do not facilitate the development of the country” (Kvirispalitra.Ge, 25 October, 2014).

Luka Kurtanidze, Deputy Rector of the MIA Police Academy and currently member of the Georgian Parliament was inciting violence towards UNM members.

- **Luka Kurtanidze:** “If Saakashvili gets hit by 10 bullets, one of these bullets will certainly be from Luka Kurtanidze. One of the people who does not succumb to him and makes him answer will be Luka Kurtanidze. This does not concern Saakashvili only. There are many Saakashvilis in this country in the persons of Minashvili, Gabashvili, Ugulava, Taktakishvili... Let no one think that the fight is over” (Alia , 15 April, 2014).

FORMER HIGH OFFICIALS

Out of four instances of hate speech two were expressed by former members of parliament and two by former local self-government officials. Three of these four instances represented the hate speech (1) and encouragement of violence against the United National Movement whilst the remaining fourth statement was the incitement to hatred against those Georgian citizens who were fighting in Ukraine.

Individual examples:

Hate speech

- **Tengiz Kublashvili, former member of the Supreme Council:** “For Georgians, it is quite habitual to have politicians with cleft lip, cleft palate and crossed eyes. Also the politicians with speech disorder, prognathous chin, eyes moving side to sides and sadists. Neither the politicians with sexual perversion, megalomania and persecution mania is new for the Nats Politicians” (Geworld.ge, 14 November, 2014).

Incitement to violence

- **Oleg Iadze, former governor of Kaspi:** “I will become a Kamikaze, there may be about ten people like us, which is more than enough to terminate the group of 30-40 people in Nats movement, who creates all the ugly plans” (Asaval-Dasavali, 13-19 October, 2014).

INCITEMENT TO HATRED

- **Valery Gelbakhiani, former MP:** “When 5000 Georgian are leaving the country... when he goes to serve another country, he cannot be kind to our country... So now there is an attempt for genetic Georgians to become our enemies” (Kavkasia, Spektri, 9 February, 2015).

4. RELIGIOUS SERVANTS

Of 11 instances of hate speech two targeted political groups (the United National Movement and the Georgian Dream), one incited hate against an individual on the ground of political affiliation whilst the remaining seven instances of hate speech, incitement to hatred and encouragement of violence targeted LGBT representatives. The topic of LGBT was basically exploited in relation to the adoption of antidiscrimination law, anti-Western sentiments, the celebration of the International Day Against Transphobia and Homophobia in Tbilisi on 17 May and the criticism of Patriarch by the head of Identoba NGO.

Some examples:

Hate speech towards political groups

- **Elizbar Diakonidze, deacon:** “I will always criticize that brain-frozen corpse that is called Dream and Nationals together, you don’t deserve anything else, because you want my country to fall “ (Alia, 29 April, 2014).

Hatred

- **David Isakadze, dean:** “Adoption of this law may cause a great conflict. If this is EU’s demand for us to have liberal visas with European countries, then we better have them not, rather than provoke a conflict between people by this, and cause such perversions as: homosexuality, pedophilia, incest, making same-sex marriages a norm” (Interpress-news, 16, 2014).

Incitement to violence

- **Basil Akhvlediani, dean:** “When Georgia needed, the Church blessed warriors to kill adversaries on a battlefield to save the Georgian people and the Church. In this case, however, we are talking about a deadly sin. It is difficult to wipe out with blood a Sodomite, perverted propagandist reasoning and mode of life... John Chrysostom said: if you see a friend having taken to a square go and teach him, but if he fails to understand, beat him and your right hand will be blessed... Homosexuality is one of elements of Satanism” (Geworld.ge, 26 March, 2014).
- **Elizbar Diakonidze, deacon:** “Wherever I see that Vacharadze [had of NGO Identoba], I will break his nose and mouth personally. I warn him, if he sees me, he should move to another side of the street and beware not to meet me!.. This will be an example for others, that all those who ridicule the Patriarchate and His Holiness get punished. If we the Georgians do not do this, then nothing can save us” (Asaval-Dasavali, 19-25 January, 2015).

5. OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF SOCIETY

Of total 42 instances observed some 19 may be qualified as hate speech with nine amongst targeting the United National Movement; six statements were made against LGBT representatives, two against the West and the United States, one against Ukrainian fighters and one against a group of Georgian writers; out of 16 instances of encouraging

violence 10 targeted the United National Movement, three – LGBT community, two – representatives of incumbent government and one statement was directed against people loyal to Russia. All the seven instances of inciting hate against individuals targeted separate representatives of the United National movement.

Some examples:

Hate speech towards UNM

- **Giorgi Shengelaia, film director:** “Many view them as a political problem, but I view the United National Movement as a biological problem!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 14–20 July, 2014). “Everyone in the United National Movement is equally evil physiologically and by expression of their faces” (Rezonansi, 9 July, 2014).
- **Leliko Japaridze, Singer:** “...We disgust members of the National Movement, they make me feel sick, I’d rather look at the snake and drink poison, rather than look at the “Nationals!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 23–29 June, 2014).
- **Koba Arabuli, Poet:** “Ivanishvili managed to amnesty the monkeys coming out of Saakashvili’s brains (head of a devil), some of those remained to be monkeys, some of them turned into lizards, hyenas and hippopotamuses. All of them who were amnestied attacked him back all together!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 29 September – 5 October, 2014).

Incitement to violence towards UNM members

- **Khatuna Zhordania, singer:** „As to the 10-lary unwashed, dirty Nationals’ puppets.... I call on the whole Tbilisi, those who think like me – whenever you see these smelly ones – beat them, spit on them, and don’t forget the kicks... I will begin doing this from tomorrow” (Reportiori, 22 October, Kviris Chronika, 27 October – 2 November, 2014).
- **Rezo Amashukeli, poet:** “The foremost crime is that they did not exterminate them [the Nationals] in the first day...” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 21 January, 2015).
- **Rezo Amashukeli, poet:** “... He [Giga Bokeria] must be crushed like a snake’s head!.. Before you [Roland Akhalaia] saw anything I had been grown in the street, I have seen everything, and I will shoot the head off your family!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 6–12 October, 2014).
- **Lali Antia, former prisoner:** “We should act exactly as [David] Bakradze hailed during the war; we should come out with our hoes, spades, spoons and forks, we should beat them up [representatives of National Movement] until they are crippled!..” (Asaval-Dasavali, 1–7 December, 2014).

Individual hatred was directed alongside to the UNM members to the former First Lady of Georgia, Sandra Roelofs, regarding allegation that she was engaged in using prisoners and their organs as experimental animals for medical reasons.

Hate speech towards LGBT persons

- **Kakha Kakabafze, “St George” group:** „We will go against a bullet but that disgusting people won’t prosper in Georgia!.. All the people must stand up!.. I am talking about reasonable and genetically formed males” (Asaval-Dasavali, 19–25 May, 2014).

- **Omar Maglakelidze, rally participant:** „Before, we had to defend ourselves against Seljuk Turks and Arabs, and now – against these pederasts and worthless people“ (Rezonansi, 19 May, 2014).

Incitement of violence against LGBT persons was directed against this group in general and in particular case against Irakli Vacharadze – the head of organization “Identoba” for his critical statements about the Patriarch in social networks.

- **Rezo Amashukeli, poet:** “Hereby, I would like restate my faith and my devotion towards Irakli [Gharibashvili] and remind him about the law adopted by his namesake, the great king of Georgia also named “Little Kakhi”: “homosexuals, those who are rebellions of lord, unforgivable, loathsome, to be burned in eternal fire. Roosters but still the hens should be punished publicly and die in torture!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 5-11 May, 2014).
- **Nikoloz Mjavanadze, Human Rights Defenders Union:** “These ill people [Irakli Vacharadze, Identoba, Young Lawyers Association and other organizations] curse the Patriarch. Who do you think is going to be responsible, if people gather around them and start breaking their heads?” (Asaval-Dasavali, 3-9 November, 2014).

Hate speech towards the west and United States was expressed in connection to the UNM and developments in Ukraine:

- **Rezo Amashukeli, poet:** “Now, when I see a person speaking foreign language, I think he is a pederast (I apologize to both you and the readers)! The West is so associated with the National Movement and these zombies that I came to hate them!.. There are several forces, which I would call one-gender people – they lean on each other to fight against this man [Irakli Garibashvili]!” (Saqinformi, 17 February, 2014).
- **Hamlet Chipashvili, political scientist:** “...Just like it happened in Georgia in 2003, America assigned the clan of sick people in the power of Ukraine. This is because Americans themselves are sick. Who do you think would oppose all these? – Off course Putin and Russia, the Orthodox world in General” (Geworld.ge, 18 June, 2014).

Various

- **Incognito respondent:** “We will ambush Kakha Kaladze somewhere and tie him up and then hold him to account whilst throw Molotov cocktails at those new minibuses and burn them down – Is it that they want to eat and do not care that they will make our families left in streets?!” (Kviris Chronika, 7-13 April, 2014).
- **Otar Koberidze, Actor:** “I have said it before, about those who go to Russia and kneel in front of them, who speak to them softly and sing for them...they all have to be hanged. Newspapers severely criticized me for that statement... but yes, one should beat them with a stick, pull their pants down and then beat them on their backs, so that they are unable to sit for a while” (Kviris Chronika, 1-7 December, 2014).

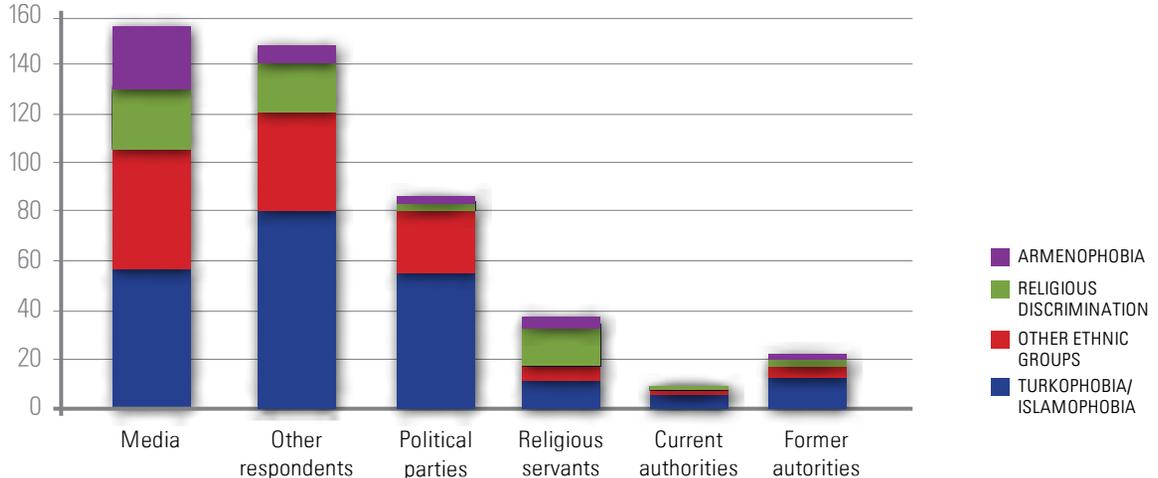
XENOPHOBIA

This section deals with various expressions of xenophobia and is divided into four subsections: the first subsection contains examples of discrimination against various ethnic and national identities. The second subsection deals with Turkophobia and Islamophobia that was observed in abundance. In this section we combined Turkophobia and Islamophobia because it was rather difficult to draw a clear line between ethnic and religious identities. The third subsection reflects Armenophobic attitudes, whilst the final subsection deals with discrimination on religious grounds though it does not reflect those expressions of Islamophobia which we discuss in conjunction with Turkophobia.

MAIN FINDINGS

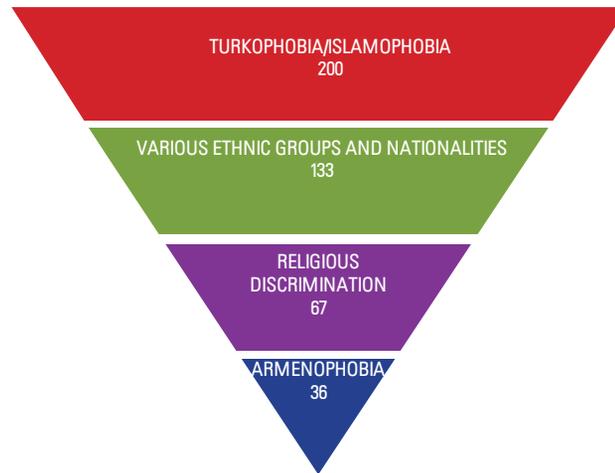
- Out of 436 instances of xenophobia observed during the monitoring period, the main sources of discrimination were media itself (154) and other representatives of public (145), which were followed by political parties (80), religious servants (35), representatives of former (17) and current (5) authorities.

Chart 1.4. Sources of xenophobia



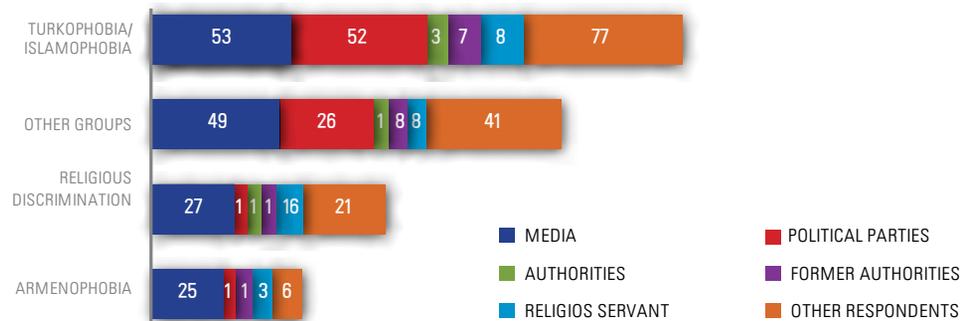
- By types of discrimination, the most wide-spread was Turkophobia and Islamophobia (200), followed by phobias towards various ethnic groups and nationalities and foreigners, in general (133), discrimination on religious grounds (67) and Armenophobia (36).

Chart 1.5. Xenophobia by types



- In regards with the sources of discrimination on various grounds, the situation looks as follows: **Turkophobias** most intensively used by representatives of public falling under the category of other respondents (77), which is followed by media (53) and political parties (52), religious servants (8), representatives of former (7) and current (3) authorities. Sources of discrimination against **various groups** are: media – 49, other respondents – 41, political parties – 26, religious servants – 8, representatives of former government – 8, and a high-ranking government official - 1. As for discrimination on **religious grounds**, the ranking is the following: media - 27; other representatives of public – 21; religious servants -16; political parties – 1; representatives of current (1) and former (1) authorities. As regards **Armenophobia**, it is used by media – 25, representatives of public – 6; religious servants – 3; political parties – 1; a representative of former authorities – 1.

Chart 1.6. Types of xenophobia by sources



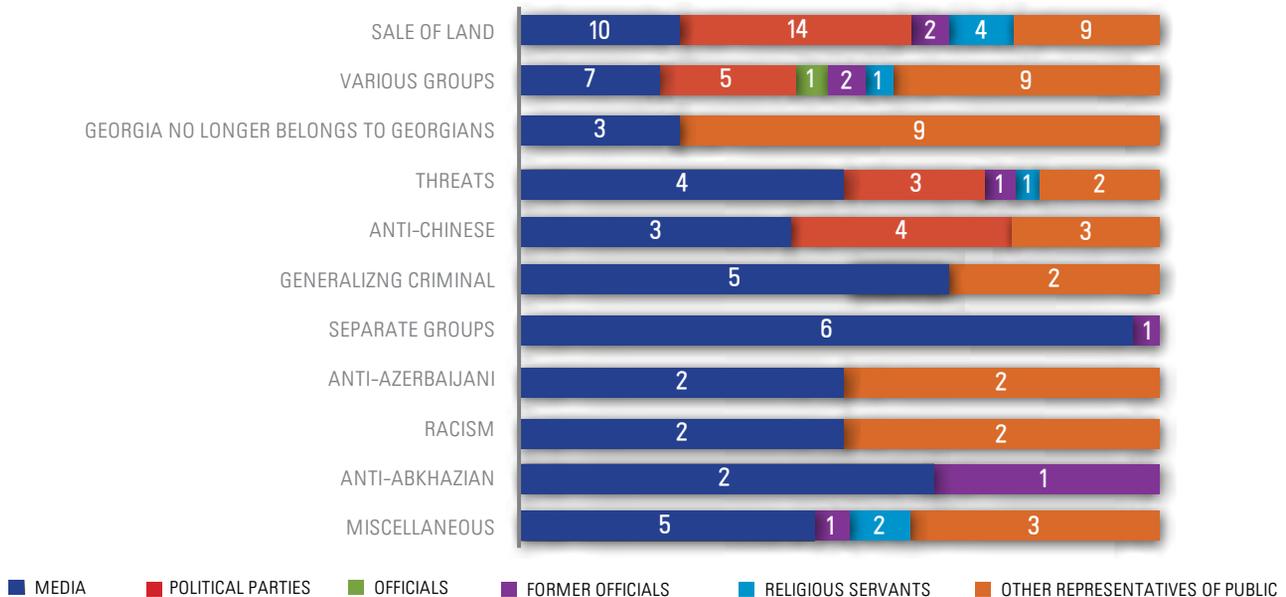
- The monitoring also showed that xenophobic attitudes are mainly revealed when it comes to the sale of land to foreigners; intolerance of various ethnic groups is also quite conspicuous; foreigners, especially those from eastern countries, are portrayed as threat and the generalization of separate criminals on them is observed; anti-Chinese attitudes are also expressed.
- The highest-ranking government official who made a xenophobic comment of somewhat racist connotation about citizens of concrete countries (Chinese, Iraqis, Iranians and Egyptians) is the Justice Minister.
- Turkophobia/Islamophobia is mainly observed in relation to the construction of mosques, portrayal of Turkey as threat, its alleged economic, cultural and religious expansion.
- At the same time, Turkophobia has a political component, often promoting an opinion that Turkey is as much an (historical) occupier of Georgia as Russia is today. Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration, the opening of NATO training base in the country is linked to the threat of deploying Turkish army in Georgia and bears anti-Western connotation. These opinions are largely promoted by the Alliance of Patriots and media union Obiektivi affiliated to it.
- Muslim citizens of Georgia are often – especially, during religious incidents – portrayed as people pursuing Turkish interests.
- Armenophobia is mainly manifested in referring to Armenian identity in a negative context and in this regard, the key target of media are politicians, especially former officials of the United National Movement government, who currently hold official posts in Ukraine as well as other former high officials of the United National Movement government.
- Armenophobia is also manifested in regards with disputed religious buildings which the Armenian Apostolic Church demands from the state of Georgia to be returned.
- The most marginalized among religious groups are Jehovah's Witnesses and all those groups that do not belong to the Georgian Orthodox Church. Media and respondents often brand them as sectarians and torturers.
- Discrimination against separate groups is mainly related to the exercise of rights by these groups or civil and public activities thereof. For example, Pentecostals became a target of media and separate respondents, including a representative of an extremist group⁵, because of the conduct of International Evangelistic event, Festival of Hope, in Tbilisi; representatives of the Evangelical Baptists Church were targeted because of their civil and public activities, including the award of Bishop Rusudan Gotsiridze with a prize by the government of United States which, in addition, was portrayed in anti-Western context.
- The only anti-Semitic statement was made by a representative of Nino Burjanadze-United Democrats.
- Religious neutrality was neglected by representatives of self-government during separate incidents that occurred between the Orthodox Christian congregation and Muslims as well as Orthodox Christian congregation and Jehovah's Witnesses.

⁵ Giorgi Gabedava who was released from the prison with a status of political prisoner. He served his sentence for religion-motivated physical violence committed during a live talk show on the Kavkasia TV channel on 7 May 2010.

1. VARIOUS ETHNIC GROUPS AND NATIONALITIES

Media, political parties, former public officials, religious servants and other representatives of public all considered the issue of sale of land to foreigners as something extremely unacceptable (39); various sources expressed intolerance of different groups, including Iranians, Chinese, Indians and others (24); moreover, negative attitudes were individually expressed towards representatives of separate ethnic groups (9) with anti-Chinese attitudes amongst standing out (10); the opinion that dominated was that Georgia no longer belongs to Georgians (12); a segment of respondents (11) portrayed separate ethnic groups and nationalities as threat; generalizing separate criminals on the entire ethnicity were observed on seven occasions; there were four instances of expressing phobias towards Azerbaijanis, four instances of racism, three instances of discrimination against Abkhazians and 11 instances of discriminative expressions on various topics.

Chart 1.7. Expressions of xenophobia by various sources



1.1. MEDIA

Discrimination against various ethnic groups is most frequently observed in print media (21), followed by broadcast (17) and online (11) media. By indicator of discriminative statements, the newspapers are ranked as follows: Asaval-Dasavali (6), Rezonansi (4), Kviris Chronika (4), Alia (3), Kviris Palitra (3), Prime Time (1). Among TV channels the most distinguished for discriminative expressions are Kavkasia TV channel (8) and the media union Obiektivni (7); Georgian

Public Broadcaster and Rustavi 2 TV company used discriminative language once each. As regards online media, the picture is the following: Geworld.ge (6); Sakinformi (3); PirWeli (2).

Table 4. Types of xenophobia by media outlets

| TOPICS | BROADCAST MEDIA | | | | PRINT MEDIA | | | | | | ONLINE MEDIA | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|----------------|------|------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| | KAVKASIA | OBIEKTIVI | PUBLIC BROADCASTER | RUSTAVI 2 | ASAVAL-DASAVALI | REZONANSI | KVIRIS CHRONIKA | KVIRIS PALITRA | ALIA | PRIME TIME | GEWORLD.GE | SAKINFORMI | PIRWELI |
| Sale of land to foreigners | | | | | 3 | 1 | | | 2 | | 4 | | |
| Intolerance of various groups | | 1 | | | 2 | | 2 | | 1 | | 1 | | |
| Anti-Chinese attitudes | 2 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Anti-Azerbaijani | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Other separate groups | 5 ⁶ | | | 1 ⁷ | | | | | | | | 1 ⁸ | 1 ⁹ |
| Racism | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Portrayal as threats | | 2 | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | |
| Associating separate criminals to the entire group | | | 1 | | 1 | | | 3 | | | | | |
| Georgia no longer belongs to Georgians | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Miscellaneous ¹⁰ | | | | | | 2 | | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 |

BROADCAST MEDIA

KAVKASIA TV, TALK SHOW SPEKTRI

The talk show Spektri of Kavkasia TV channel is distinguished not only for the frequency of violations (8), but also the variety of phobias: the host of this talk show expresses discriminatory opinions about Azerbaijanis, Chinese, Abkhazians and Ossetians, Iranians and Slavs.

⁶ Anti-Abkhazian (2), anti-Ossetian, anti-Iranian, anti-Slavic attitudes

⁷ Russophobia

⁸ Anti-Iranian attitudes

⁹ Roma in negative context

¹⁰ Intolerance of foreign investors; coverage of emigrants in negative context; marginalizing a person on the ground of genetic properties

Separate examples:

Anti-Azerbaijani attitudes

- **Davit Akubardia:** “In 15- 20 years this city [Rustavi] will become an Azeri city. If we don’t stop it now, if we don’t save it now... we have to save it right now, it has to remain as a Georgian city. This is not just my idea, but it was Stalin’s idea... It is a quite awkward topic to talk about, step by step they are approaching, this city retains them, otherwise we would have had another border-line right in Ortachala... the number of population has decreased to half, everyone who has bought apartments on the first floor of the buildings, they all own apartments in Baku... Economic discrimination of Georgians has started... two Azeri banks give out credits for apartments only to Azeri’s... Georgians are oppressed and their number is reduced... Erosi, This is how territories get lost... the method of actual population. Remember Kakhi, Balaqani, Zakatala... if you look into the agreement with Russia dated May 1920, you will find, that those territories were recognized as Georgia by that time. Then they have instigated the method of actual population and that is how we lost them. If we don’t come to our senses soon, we are going to lose Rustavi exactly the same way” (14 May, 2014).

Anti-Chinese attitudes

- **Davit Akubardia:** “We existed during Mongols, existed during Shah Abbas and thousands of other invaders and will always exist... even if Chinese come to our doors, we will still exist” (9 April, 2014).

Anti-Abkhazian attitudes

- **Davit Akubardia:** “We will have to talk with Russians; no one asks Abkhazians anything, they are a failed nation, uneducated; the primary education is a norm there; the number of people with higher education does not exceed 200. They have distorted reasoning” (14 May, 2014).

Anti-Ossetia attitudes

- **Davit Akubardia:** „Antsukhelidze case – this is a triumph of phenomenal courage and mind, Antsukhelidze overwhelmed with his mind that rats there, Ossetian rats...” (24 November, 2014).

Anti-Iranian attitudes

- **Davit Akubardia:** “We withstood Shah Abbas! We won after all... Have you ever spoken to the Persians? They are banished, as if exiled right?! No Persian, Iranian can even develop his business here” (19 December, 2014).

Anti-Slavic attitudes

- **Davit Akubardia:** “Slavs there [in Yugoslavia] massacred each other... This is a somewhat inbred quality of Slavs [when talking about the events in Ukraine]” (12 February, 2015).

OBIKTIVI, TALK SHOW NIGHT STUDIO

The media union Obiektivi was mainly engaged in inciting Turkophobia/Islamophobia which will be discussed in the following subsection. As regards attitudes towards other groups, the host of the talk show made two discriminatory statements (racism and intolerance of other groups) and agreed to five discriminatory opinions expressed by viewers during phone-ins. Taking into account that viewers' comments during this program are similar in their content, the diversity of opinions existing in society is missing from the program and the hosts agree to the opinions of viewers, we considered opinions expressed by viewers in phone-ins as an editorial policy of the talk show itself.

Separate examples:

Racism

- **Bondo Mdzinarashvili:** "If anyone has one or two hectares, he will not sell it to any foreigner. He may sell it to the neighbor or a relative, but never to an African" (2 July, 2014).

Towards different groups

- **Bondo Mdzinarishvili:** "In fact, Georgia survived invasions of Arabs, Mongols, Ottomans, Persians... Tbilisi was an absolutely, or almost absolutely, Armenian city, but the picture today is fundamentally different, is it not? Neither descendants of those Persians that live here nor Turks or others.... What I want to say is that Georgian genes is not destined to reconstructed no way!" (3 July, 2014).

In their phone-ins, viewers promote the opinion that Georgia does not belong to Georgians any longer and it is being taken over by foreigners who represent a threat to the country. The references in this context were made to Chinese, Turks, Indians and Arabs.

Separate examples:

Georgia no longer belongs to Georgians

- "Georgia is a sacred country and all those foreigners are undermining its holiness, we let them invade us, look at Akhalkalaki, look at Kvishkheti, Chinese and Turkish companies are building the hydro power stations wherever they want. We handed over our country to foreigners to rip it apart" (21 June, 2014).

Portraying as threats

- "Our country has become smaller, in few days it may fully disappear, and then Indians will throw us in some kind of a camp and will visit us from time to time..." (25 June, 2014).
- "There is a war, the genocide of Georgian nation underway to drive the Georgian nation out of Georgia and to allow Chinese, Arab to settle here" (20 July, 2014).

GEORGIAN PUBLIC BROADCASTER

Associating a separate criminal with the entire group

Based on comments of local residents, a journalist, in his editorial text, generalized a concrete criminal (an Iraqi citizen suspected in committing sexual violence against a minor) on minorities, in general. Such an assessment is further dramatized with accompanying video featuring dark-skinned people walking in the street.

- **Nika Molodinashvili, journalist:** “As local residents say, fearing of not to violate the rights of minorities, they cannot even reproach foreign citizens gathered in their courtyard who are often inebriated and breach public order. Local residents contend that in often cases their rights are infringed, not those of minorities” (Moambe, 29 April, 2014).

RUSTAVI 2

A discriminatory comment made by a presenter of Other Midday Show on Rustavi 2 regarding the shot down Malaysian Boeing 777 on the territory of Ukraine, near the border with Russia, was emotion-driven and soon thereafter, the presenter Dima Oboladze apologized for that comment.

Russophobia

- **Dima Oboladze:** “They are pigs [Russians], nothing else, with [Russian] fighters saying the plane was shot down by mistake. I no longer believe that their rugby players are good guys. I am sure they are all identical. I do not want to hear a word, even a single word whatsoever, in Russian here, in our studio. The country of pigs” (18 July 2014).

PRINT MEDIA

ASAVAL-DASAVALI NEWSPAPER

Out of six discriminatory statements in Asaval-Dasavali, three were against the sale of land to foreigners, two expressed intolerance of various groups, portraying them in a negative context, and one involved the generalization of a single criminal on the entire group. As noted in the section on hate speech, the term “liberpervert” was used here as well not in as a reference to sexual identity but to a group of people with liberal views to portray them in a negative context – as traitors of the homeland.

Separate examples:

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “Our Liberasts ignored the guidance of our Patriarch again and canceled the moratorium on selling the land to the foreigners, it happened two days before signing the Association agreement!” (30 June – 6 July, 2014).

Unacceptability of various nations

- **Dito Chubinidze:** “Certainly, when whole Georgia is in the hands of Chinese, Indians, Arabs, Iranians and Turks, Globalization cannot be anyhow a friend or a protector to a country with lost territories and deprived of any rights!” (30 June – 6 July 6, 2014).

Associating a separate criminal with the entire group

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “Three citizens of Iraq attempted to sexually assault 15 year old boy!.. Georgian society should request severe punishment of those pederasts and pedophiles! Government should strictly control every foreigner who crosses the Georgian border, (especially from the Islamic countries) obviously the pederasts and the pedophiles are mostly among them...” (5-11 May, 2014).

REZONANSI NEWSPAPER

There were four types of violations made by journalists in the Rezonansi newspaper.

Branding emigrants as beggars

- **Headline:** “Georgia has turned into a refuge for immigrant beggars”
Elza Tsiklauri: “Thus, Georgia has gradually become a refuge for immigrant beggars. The state has not taken any counter-measures against them so far“ (30 April, 2014).

Unacceptability of foreign investments

- **The heading:** “The threat” **Headline:** “Pseudo-liberals hinder employment of the Georgian citizens “ **Subtitle:** “Investment does not mean we must reject everything national“ (13 February, 2015).

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Maka Kharazishvili:** “Foreigners will no longer miss a chance to buy land plots of for a pittance. Until the parliament adopts the land management code, thousands of land plots will become owned by citizens of foreign countries” (1 July, 2014).

Anti-Chinese attitudes

- **Headline:** “Chinese Tentacles have already reached Tskaltubo” (10 June, 2014).

KVIRIS PALITRA NEWSPAPER

Associating a separate criminal with the entire group

Kviris Palitra generalized a crime committed by an individual offender (an Iraqi citizen suspected in committing sexual violence against a minor) on foreigners, in general, and manipulated statistical data. A report on this incident included

statistics on the detention of foreigners. Although the data itself allowed to figure out that the majority of detained foreigners serve their sentences for illegal crossing of the state border and financial fraud, the newspaper unjustifiably linked this data to a far graver offence – a sexual violence.

- „Recently Tbilisi was shocked by a terrible fact – several citizens of Iraq attempted to rape a 15 year-old boy. Unfortunately, this is not the only case when foreign citizens get arrested for various violations in Georgia... According to the data for March of this year, 188 foreign suspects and convicts were kept in Georgian prisons” (26 May – 1 June, 2014).
- Uta Bitsadze [refers to the Indians living in Georgia, who were physically assaulted by local population]: “There was an attempt to sexually abuse a child, don’t you think it is enough reason for people to be furious?” (5-11 May, 2014)

An interview discussing the problem of child prostitution and citing various facts based on only a single source, unjustifiably associated the crime with Iranians, thereby linking the problem of child prostitution in Georgia with one ethnic group.

- **Title:** “The Iranian, who was involved in child prostitution in Georgia, was expelled from the country by the Iranian Embassy here” (2 December, 2014).

KVIRIS CHRONIKA NEWSPAPER

Kviris Chronika portrayed the election of Azerbaijanis to local self-government bodies (1) and the ratification of Council of Europe’s Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1) as threat of separatism and also, expressed intolerance of various ethnic groups (2).

Anti-Azerbaijani attitudes

- **Khatuna Elbakidze:** “They don’t care much, which party representative wins in the elections, unless he is Azeri. They hope, that their candidate will support independence of Borchalo County. By the way, Azer Suleimanov openly states that in each region, there should be Azeri heads (Gangebeli)... Law on local government was adopted in a matter of seconds, they even ignored the appeal of the Patriarch. God forbid to let the separatists fulfill their plans, in this case, it is going to be the biggest misfortune of the country. I would never imagine that this law would have become so dangerous for the country in just two months. But this is the truth; Antidiscrimination law is a weapon in the hands of the power who knows how to use it against Georgia. Azeri will be the first to do it... they have directly stated to the majoritarian candidates of Georgian Dream that no matter who the employee is a person or a tree, now one can ever dismiss him from work if he is an Azeri!” (12-18 May, 2014).

European Charter of Regional Languages

- **Giorgi Jikiashvili:** “Let’s imagine what may separatists like Vahagan Chakhalian, the enemies of the Georgian state, do, when they see this text [in the Council of Europe resolution, regarding the status of regional languages]?! Or what kind of motivation this will be for the Adjaran Muslims, for whom more than 300 mosques is not enough and who demand construction of new ones?!” (6-12 October, 2014).

Unacceptability of various nations

- **Gela Zedelashvili:** “Today they often say that only ethnic Azeris work in Georgia, and now there are also Chinese and Indians. But what do they care for? They work and work on land in our country... They have no idea, how our hearts hurt about this and how we suffer...When they [EU] come, we’ll say proudly that we are dissolving clouds by our ph... us and allow minorities to preserve their harvest from nature” (19-25 January, 2015).

ALIA NEWSPAPER

Out of three materials published in Alia newspaper two concerned the sale of land to foreigners whilst the remaining one involved intolerance of various nationalities which was expressed in a question of a journalist.

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Jana Asanidze:** “Mr. Gogi, Constitutional Court has cancelled the moratorium [decision that recognized moratorium on selling land to the foreigners as anti-constitutional], now tenfold of foreigners will swarm like locusts at Georgian lands and will start buying them...” (26 June, 2014).

Unacceptability of various nations

- **Jana Asanidze:** “ Georgia has imposed a stricter visa policy. Government of Saakashvili granted a visa-free entry in Georgia to 118 countries. Most of these countries are so called “starved” countries. Tbilisi is crammed by the people of unidentified origin, maybe this was the reason for applying the stricter visa-regime?” (Alia, 8 August, 2014).

PRIME TIME NEWSPAPER

The newspaper published comments made on social networks concerning the non-Georgian origin of the actor Duta Skhirtladze.

„Skhirtladze is his mother’s surname, and he is Valitsky, so what Georgianness or loss of it does he talk about?!” (7 April, 2014).

ONLINE MEDIA

GEWORLD.GE

Out of six instances four concerned the unacceptability of the sale of land to foreigners, one stirred up unjustified fears and one involved intolerance of various groups.

Separate examples:

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Keti Khomeriki:** “One day we wake up and we will find out that our neighbors are Iraqis and Turks...” (2 July, 2014).

Unjustified reference to the threats

- **David Mkheidze:** “Destabilization that starts in Tbilisi will spread all over Georgia, our neighbors will use it, some of them will take Javakheti, others – a large part of Kvemo Kartli, still others – Adjara and Batumi, the Abkhazs (meaning Russia) – Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti. The reduced Georgia will not have territorial claims against anyone, we will be made happy by the NATO membership, and may even “marry” the EU” (10 September, 2014).

Unacceptability of various groups

- **Jaba Zhvania:** „All kinds of weed flourish in this dysfunctional country – the Turks have started creeping religious expansion in Adjara, Armenians have begun to take over Georgian historical monuments, Azerbaijan has voiced claims to our territories” (22 January, 2015).

SAKINFROMI

Materials of the news agency expressed unacceptability of results of the immigration policy of former government (1), anti-Iranian attitudes (1) and racism (1).

Unacceptability of immigration policy

- “As a result of the anti-national activities of the “revolutionaries” more than 2 million (more than a third of the local population) persons left, while thousands of migrants from China, India, Pakistan and other countries settled here. The same process will soon happen in Ukraine too, the good lands of which will soon be taken over by the foreigners” (24 September, 2014).

Anti-Iranian attitudes

- “Kill Russians who prevented our children to be sold to some Persian harems to satisfy their needs! On the other hand, today we are without Russians and our wives go to work for Persians voluntarily” (29 January, 2015).

Racism

- “The Doubts about the representative of Homo negritosus specie was said to be stolen from the local ethnographic museum by the Ukrainians, according to the initial version of the news it was taken as a souvenir by armored vehicle. Nevertheless this presumption was canceled due to the clothes of the Ukrainian Nationalist found in the

vehicle. Apparently the dark-skinned man decided to use his natural camouflage. Once he tried to speak in Georgian, all the doubts cleared away. This rare breed used to be the advisor to Saakashvili’s Army” (5 August, 2014).

PIRWELI

The news agency PirWeli stigmatized Roma in one of its materials and marginalized a person on genetic grounds in another material (1).

Stigmatizing Roma

- “During the high season, when streets are crammed with tourists, we see lots of gypsies among them, they know how to rip off the last dollar from a tourist, and they can do it much better than poor retired people” (17 May, 2014).

Marginalizing a person on genetic grounds

The agency published Facebook comments regarding a TV program of the actor Duta Skhirtladze and used one of such discriminatory comments – “Duta, you earringed, stop talking about Georgian genetics” – as a title of the material, thus illustrating the editorial stance.

- „Skhirtladze is his mother’s surname, and he is Valitsky, so what Georgianness or loss of it does he talk about?!” (5 April, 2014).

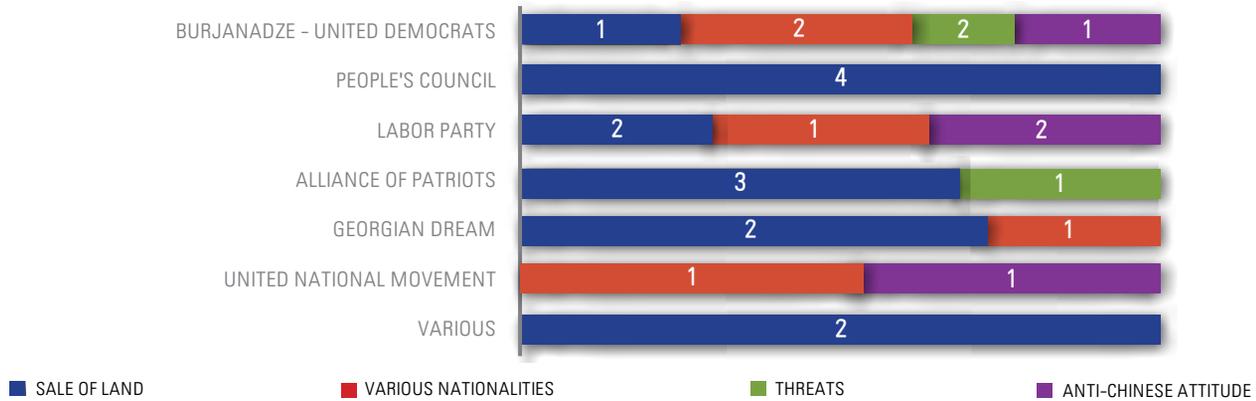
1.2. POLITICAL PARTIES

Of total 26 xenophobic expressions six are made by representatives of Nino Burjanadze–United Democrats movement whilst four by People’s Council which is affiliated to the former; these are followed by Labor Party (5), Alliance of Patriots (4), Georgian Dream (3), United National movement (2) and Union of Traditionalists (1). The author of one such expression is the former member of the Alliance of Patriots and current independent deputy of Tbilisi city council, Soso Manjavidze.

Note: Soso Manjavidze represented the Alliance of Patriots till September 2014 and therefore, the statements which he made before withdrawing from the party are included in the statements of the Alliance of Patriots; after September 2014, he is quoted as an independent deputy of Tbilisi city council.

Of those 26 statements 14 were against the sale of land to foreigners, five expressed intolerance of various nationalities, four statements fanned anti-Chinese sentiments whilst three stirred up unjustified fears.

Chart 1.8. Types of xenophobia by political parties



NINO BURJANADZE-UNITED DEMOCRATS MOVEMENT

Political parties falling within this alliance spoke against the sale of land to foreigners (1), expressed intolerance of various nationalities (2), incited anti-Chinese sentiments (1) and unjustified fears (2).

Examples:

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Temur Shashiashvili:** “I checked it and they told me that indeed, the area near Gelati gate has been sold [to Iranians], where Georgians are selling the handmade things... All that is national and traditional is under such an attack in Georgia, that I deem a rebellion will happen!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 15-21 December, 2014).

Anti-Chinese attitudes

- **Temur Shashiashvili:** “I can recall how the members of Soviet Politburo were standing in queues to obtain the furniture of Kutaisi for their families, but now we are the slaves of Chinese people” (Kviris Chronika, 30 June – 6 July, 2014).

Unacceptability of various nations

- **Jondi Bagaturia:** “Georgia is where they pray and write in Georgian, and if we let Turkish and Arabian and Mongolian banners on Plekhanov Ave., we’ll get a small Turkey or Mongolia in the middle of Tbilisi” (Kavkasia, Dges, 14 April, 2014).

Unjustified reference to the threats

- **Jondi Bagaturia:** “Singaporization means that we, Georgians, will no longer be owners of this land. There will be someone else, a different ethnos. Probably part will be owned by Turks, another part by Chinese and the third part by Indians...” (Obiketivi, Hight Studio, 18 July, 2014).

PEOPLE’S COUNCIL

People’s Council, which is affiliated to Nino Burjanadze–United Democrats movement, spoke against the sale of land to foreigners in all its four statements.

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “Adoption of Anti-Discrimination Law was aimed at our moral devastation, but selling Georgian land to the foreigners is aimed at our physical termination!... When a foreign landlord takes over our land, will he demolish and sweep us away?!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 30 June – 6 July, 2014).

LABOR PARTY

Labor Party spoke about unacceptability of the sale of land to foreigners (2), fanned anti-Chinese sentiments (2) and showed discriminative attitudes towards other nationalities (1).

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Shalva Natelashvili:** “...When internal occupier sells our land legally to a Pakistani, Iranian or South African, nothing can remedy these result, this occupation is forever” (Public Broadcaster, First Studio, 6 February , 2015).

Unacceptability of various nations

- **Paata Chikladze:** “We mentioned the factories that were sold out. Today Chinese and Indians are the owners and Georgians have become their hired workers”... (Tabula, Focus, 10 June, 2014).

Anti-Chinese attitudes

- **Shalva Natelashvili:** “It is important that there is a request and an assignment to the MPs of Samgori region – not to allow representatives of any other race to take a rule on the China town, we cannot afford Chinese expansion” (Georgian Public Broadcaster, Studio One, 4 June, 2014).

ALLIANCE OF PATRIOTS

In most cases, the Alliance of Patriots was xenophobic with regard to the sale of land to foreigners; in one case, it also incited unjustified fears.

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Vaja Otarashvili:** “This is an occupation of a Georgian land, there is no second thought about it... You can visit the website of Ministry of Economy, you will see that 130 000 hectares of land is for sale...Georgian man is practically left without any land... Yes, it is genocide of a Georgian nation... It is so unfortunate that we see an invasion of faithless people in the country of such an Orthodox culture” (Geworld.ge, 2 July, 2014).

Unjustified reference to the threats

- **Vaja Otarashvili:** „I don’t remember that during history of Georgia any of our neighboring countries sent us an army of help... So we must be ready for everything – we are threatened from Russia, Armenia, as well as from Turkey and Azerbaijan“ (Rezonansi, 4 April, 2014).

GEORGIAN DREAM

The ruling coalition made two statements against the sale of land to foreigners; one expression involved intolerance of various nationalities.

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Gogi Topadze:** “Can you imagine the results of land dispossession? We will never be able to satisfy the appetite of Indians, who have a shortage of land. Lots of Indians Turks and Chinese are buying the lands here... Economy may benefit or not, but our descendents, our children will always be hired workers on their own land” (Alia, 26 June, 2014).

Unacceptability of various nationalities

- **Gogi Topadze:** “It was unpleasant to see so many Arabs in Paris, France. Paris had lost its charm with so many foreigners there” (Netgazeti, 15 May, 2014).

UNITED NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Xenophobic speculation regarding Chinese was made by the former President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili (1) and another discriminatory statement during a protests rally against bars owned by Turkish and Iranian nationals in Tbilisi belonged to Ilia Malazonia, candidate from the United National Movement standing for the 2014 local elections in Ozurgeti constituency.

Anti-Chinese attitude

- **Mikheil Saakashvili, former President of Georgia:** “...And whom are they giving it to [building of Batumi Technical University]?! To the Chinese! I am asking – are not these the people who had been talking for such a long time that we gave everything away to the foreigners?! Turning the source of Georgian education into a usual Chinese hotel, in the center of Batumi, in the best place on boulevard” ... (Rustavi 2, 12 January, 2015).

Unacceptability of various nationalities

- **Ilia Malazonia:** “Georgia without Turks. Georgia is not a place for Iranians” (video was disseminated in social media)¹¹.

VARIOUS

The Union of Traditionalists as well as an independent city council deputy (a former member of Alliance of Patriots) portrayed the sale of land to foreigners as threat.

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Akaki Asatiani, Union of Georgian Traditionalists:** “A recent lift of moratorium on the sale of land will have terrible implication – they will buy everything; if there is a visa-free travel to the European Union no Georgian will be left in Georgia... The population will be driven out of the country and the land will be left to foreigners. When enemy invaded, this was exactly what it did here...” (Geworld.ge, 16 July, 2014).
- **Soso Manjavidze, Tbilisi Sakrebulo member:** “By adoption of this law [on land] we shall soon be left without lands. We have the enclaves in the territories bordering Azerbaijan, Armenia, also Russia and Turkey...Specifically China has strategic interests regarding the silk road” (Alia, 12 February, 2015).

1.3. REPRESENTATIVES OF CURRENT AND FORMER AUTHORITIES

HIGH-RANKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

Justice Minister Tea Tsulukiani was the highest-ranking government official of the ruling party who made xenophobic statements about citizens of concrete countries (Chinese, Iraqis, Iranians and Egyptians) and divided tourists to Georgia into well-wishers and bad-wishers.

- **Tea Tsulukiani, Minister of Justice:** “Not everybody can be happy with the large-scale reform... For example, the agency of tourism is not [happy]... When this [visa and migration] reform was enforced on September 1, it caused decline in the inflow of tourists by 42,000 people in the last four months of 2014 – Chinese, Iraqis, Iranians, and Egyptians... Therefore, as we slashed [these numbers] and as we achieved success in Brussels [referring to EU’s decision to launch second phase of visa liberalization action plan with Georgia], we are expecting some kind of success at the [Eastern Partnership] Riga Summit – not everything can be done at a single summit, but it should be [declared at the summit] that a perspective of [visa-free travel with the EU] is opened. After that we will be able to control within the set framework and let those who are our country’s well-wishers, tourists, or, most importantly, investors in [the country]” (Imedi, Chronika, 18 February, 2015).

¹¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDPZ8jWpUCY&feature=youtu.be&t=2m34>

FORMER OFFICIALS

The total of eight xenophobic statements were made by representatives of former authorities: two involved intolerance of various nationalities, one incited unjustified fears, two were against the sale of land to foreigners, one expressed anti-Abkhazian attitudes (archive materials), one anti-Russian and one involved an unjustified reference to ethnic identity.

Separate examples:

Anti-Abkhazian Attitudes

- **Zviad Gamsakhurdia, former President of Georgia:** „The Abkhaz people never existed historically... The Abkhaz people where Georgian people, West Georgian people. And the old Christian Abkhazs, Georgian Abkhazs, do not exist today... Apsua are a North Caucasian Circassian tribe... If this tribe or tribes understand this, we shall help them, but with the condition that they restore historical justice and give us our land, and establish themselves where they came from“ ([from the archive], Obiektivi, Night Studio, 15 January, 2015).

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Nana Devdariani, former public defender:** “Today the lands are no more occupied by weapons... When foreigners buy the land they take away the most productive parts, they take it abroad and sell it... This means to be at war, we are losing the country” (Alia, 1 July, 2014).

Unacceptability of various nationalities

- **Kakha Targamadze, former Minister of Internal Affairs:** „It seems that the Turks, Indians, Arabs are more important for the country. I am a citizen of Russia and I will stay Russian citizen. You Georgians should worry, since you have such a President, and I have no problems“ (Maestro, 9 O'clock News, 18 August, 2014).

Unjustified reference to the threats

- **Tengiz Kitovani, former defense minister:** “What happens right here in Kemo-Kartly is that Azeri people are practically taking away our territories, Turkish militaries have entered the Khelvachauri, Adjara region and they are taking away the Georgian land” (Alia, 3 June, 2014).

Russophobia

- **Irakli Machavariani, former representative of the President Shevardnadze in conflict settlement issues:** “Russia wants everything!.. They are idiots. This is a sick nation... They have maniacal temptation with enlarging their territory” (Kavkasia, Spektri, 28 November, 2014)

Unjustified reference to the ethnic identity

- **Oleg ladze, former governor of Kaspi:** “It is not surprising from him [Lado Vardzelashvili, former minister of the Sport and Youth Affairs], his father is Akofov [Armenian surname] right?! He thinks that by changing his second name and his nationality he can avoid his guilt? Be careful of me, Vardzelashvili!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 13-19 October, 2014).

1.4. RELIGIOUS SERVANTS

Out of 8 xenophobic expressions 4 were against the sale of land to foreigners, 2 were referring to the need to protect the majority from minorities, 1 was about unjustified reference to the threats and 1 about the unacceptability of particular ethnic groups.

Separate examples

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Ilia II, Patriarch of Georgian Orthodox Church:** “...This is the loss of our most valuable treasure, loss of our land. And our citizens are becoming just the servants. This should not happen, the local population is granted with all the rights to use local wealth. We should not allow that Georgian man had no access to local entrepreneurial resources” (Interpresnews, 2 July, 2014).

Need to protect majority from minorities

- **Ilia II, Patriarch of Georgian Orthodox Church:** “We quite often hear that the rights of minorities must be protected – those of small people, having small religion, being in minority; but we must ponder on who will protect Georgian people. God will protect and shield Georgian people” (Georgian Public Broadcaster, Moambe, 13 April, 2014).

Unjustified reference to the threats

- **Giorgi Andriadze, Chairman of the Patriarchate University Supervisory Board:** “Today Georgia is the body brought out for sale, and everyone wants to own it. Azeris think about it, Russians are taking something away, Armenians claim churches, because they must claim something too” (Alia, 11 February, 2015).

1.5. OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF SOCIETY

Of those statements made by other respondents nine were xenophobic with regard to the sale of land/property to foreigners; nine promoted the idea that Georgia no longer belongs to Georgians; the other nine incited to hatred of different nationalities. Anti-Chinese sentiments were fanned in three statements whilst anti-Azerbaijani sentiments in two. Unjustified fears were stirred up in two statements and separate incidents were generalized on the entire group also

in two statements. Two statements involved racial segregation, one involved Russophobia and three marginalization on various grounds.

Unacceptability of sale of land to foreigners

- **Alexandre Chachia, Moscow based political observer:** “Georgia that has lost territory and does not have a lot of land generally is still selling its lands to foreigners because of its government. And the people below the poverty line escape abroad to get their bread, because they cannot afford to cultivate land” (Geworld.ge, 26 November, 2014).

Georgia no longer belongs to Georgians

- **Zviad Iremadze, Anti-Globalization Centre “Iverians”:** „Georgia does not belong to Georgians any more. Walk on Plekhanov at 10 p.m., and you will see whose this country is – ours or the foreigners’. This avenue is full with Arabs, Iranians and Iraqis” (Geworld.ge , 28 May, 2014).
- **Misha Gomiashvili, actor:** “The whole city is full with various tribes and they have opened brothels in the city center... They behave so that I think myself a guest in my own city” (Kviris Palitra, 10 February, 2015).

Hatred towards different nationalities

- **Giorgi Imasashvili, residing at #2, Zandukeli str:** „It stinks all around here because of them... nobody dares to say anything, people are afraid that police may catch them and demand to show respect towards the foreigners. Who do you think should I respect? Those, who does not let me sleep at nights, or those who chase children to rape them?” (Kviris Palitra, 5-11 May, 2014).
- **Gia Maisahvili, economist:** “...those dirty, bare feet people walking around here”[meaning: immigrants in Georgia (Kavkasia, Spektri, 6 May, 2014).

Anti-Chinese attitudes

- **Zurab Bigvava, psychologist:** „China was made red [by Stalin] and now China is making the wider world yellow. Bismarck made a prediction: “attention, yellow menace!” (Kavkasia, Spektri, 19 November, 2014).

Anti-Azerbaijane attitudes

- **Anzor Meskishvili, economic scientist:** “In the 19th century Vachnadze family settles 3 Azeri families in Lagodekhi to look after their cattle. Now that 3 families have turned into 46 000 residents and village Kabali is the largest in Georgia. And the largest Georgian village Martkopi is only third... The tolerance has led us to have more than 50 ethnicities in our country. And everyone demands more attention than Georgians” (Geworld.ge, 11 February, 2015).

Associating a separate criminal with the entire group

- **Giorgi Burjanadze, Anticorruption Union:** “Since “Plekhanov” street is overcrowded by Turks, I have given up my right to take a walk in the street with my kids... the next day juvenile was raped. Do you remember that Iraqian, he sneaked out from right here” (Kviris Chronika, 21-27 July, 2014).

Racial segregation

- **Giorgi Tavdgiridze, military expert:** “We can bring 10 Negroes from Tanzania, and make them serve in the army for the money we would use on 1 Georgian, but its value will not be 1/10 as effective” (Kavkasia, Spektri, 19 February, 2014).
- **Gela Nikolaishvili, lawyer:** „Very few people come to Georgia from Europe and civilized countries. Mostly they come from the African countries – Nigeria, from Asian countries, and we see them everywhere, they beg or commit crimes when they have no means to exist. These people can be seen even in the markets, they work for minimal salaries and take potential jobs from the already unemployed population“ (Kviris Chronika, 1-7 September, 2014).

Marginalization of the person on the ground of ethnic origin

- **Leliko Japaridze, opera singer:** “Who is David Kezerashvili? A worthless son of the Jewish people!” (Asaval–Dasavali, 17-23 February, 2014).

Stereotypization

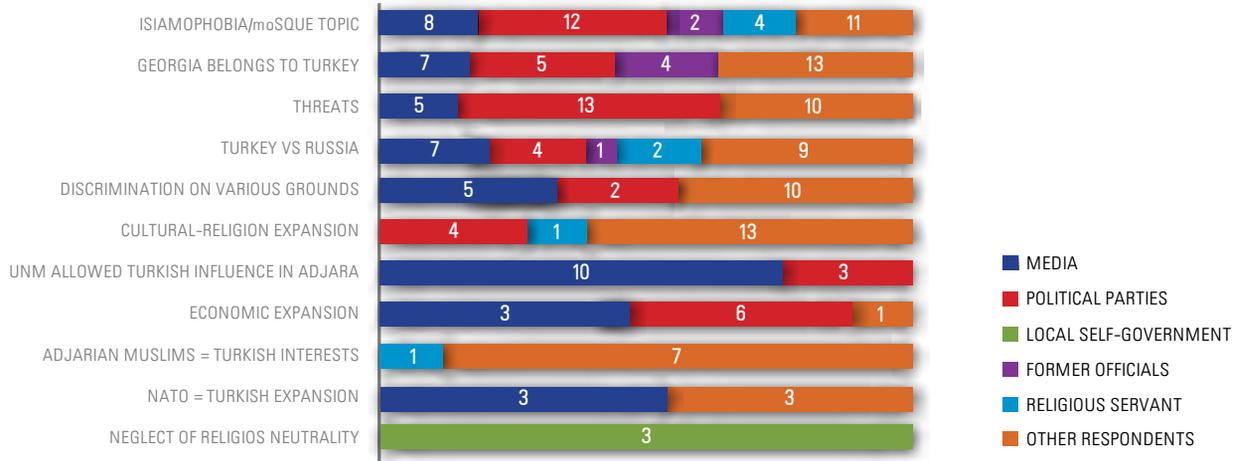
- **Vladimer Tabaghia, lawyer, former head of prisons and colonies:** „I had worked in the penitentiary system for 40 years and never saw a Georgian torturer. They were only Ossetians and Russians” (Kviris Palitra, 16 February, 2015).

2. TURKOPHOBIA/ISLAMOPHOBIA

As the monitoring showed, Turkophobia/Islamophobia is most intensively applied by respondents whom we grouped under the category of “other representatives of public” (77). Media itself also represents a source of such discrimination (53), followed by political parties (52), religious servants (8), former public officials (7). Local self-government officials neglected the principle of religious neutrality (3).

In terms of topics, Islamophobic attitudes (37) are revealed when it comes to the construction of mosques; that Georgia no longer belongs to Georgians and is occupied by Turkey is quite a widespread opinion (29). Popular trends include the portrayal of Turkey as threat (28) as well as using Turkey’s historic occupation of Georgia as a counterweight to current Russian occupation (23) and giving certain preference to Russia as to a co-religious country. Examples of discrimination on various grounds (17) also include the talks about biological superiority, portraying Turkey as a cause of various problems in the country, and other interpretations. Other instances involve talks on cultural and religious expansion of Turkey (18) and allegations that the United National Movement allowed the spread of Turkish influence in Adjara (13); speculations about economic expansion of Turkey (10), portrayal of Muslim citizens of Georgia as defenders of Turkish interests (8) and Georgia’s Euro-Atlantic integration as expansion of Turkey (6), as well as neglect of religious neutrality by self-government officials by emphasizing the primacy of majority (3) and other topics (8) are also observed.

Chart 2.1. Turkophobia by various sources

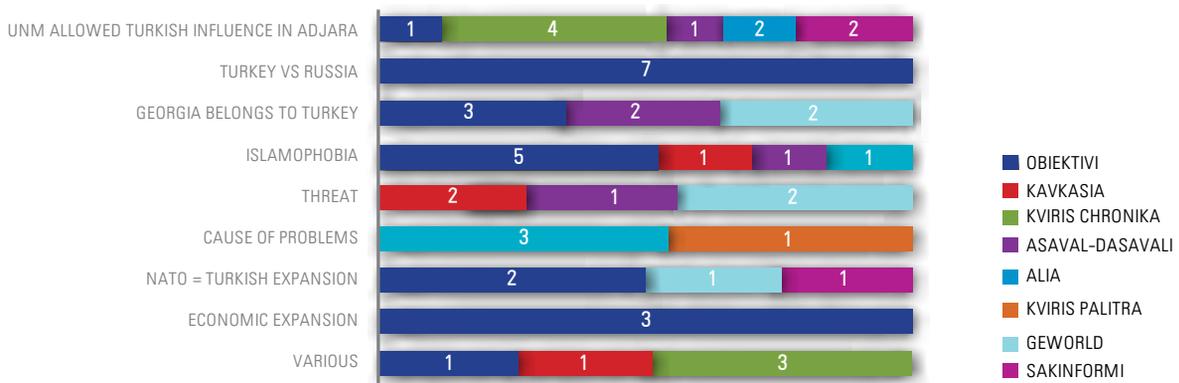


2.1. MEDIA

Among TV talk shows the most distinguished for inciting Turkophobia and Islamophobia is Night Studio of the media union Obiektivi (22). This is followed by Spektri of Kavkasia TV channel (4). The similar ranking in terms of print media is the following: Kviris Chronika (7), Asaval-Dasavali (5), Alia (4), Kviris Palitra (1). Among news websites the leader in Turkophobia and Islamophobia is Gewrold.ge (7) with Sakinformi (3) trailing.

Opinions promoted by various media outlets are shown in Chart 1.

Chart 2.2. Turkophobia by media outlets



MEDIA UNION OBIEKTIVI, TALK SHOW NIGHT STUDIO

Coverage of Turkey and Turkish people in negative light is a clear-cut editorial policy of Night Studio of the media union Obiektivi. Opinions promoted by presenters of Obiektivi include: Turkey and Russia are identical threats (6); economic expansion of Turkey is underway (3); the United National Movement allowed Turkish influence in Adjara (1); Turks are uneducated people (1). Viewers, for their part, promote the following opinions which are unreservedly shared by presenters: politics of separate representatives of former [United National Movement] government are unacceptable because of threat of Islam they contain (4); Georgia is owned by Turkey (3); in case of Georgia's integration into NATO, Turkey will occupy Georgia (2); Turkey annexed Georgia much like Russia did (1); Orthodox Russia protects Georgia from Islamification (1).

Turkey and Russia pose identical threat

- **Soso Zaalishvili:** „On the one hand there is Russia, and on the other Turkey, and there is serious aggression against Georgia from both, and there is nothing unclear for me in the fact that now the Abkhazs have made this agreement with Russia...” (25 November, 2014).

Economic expansion

- **Soso Zaalishvili:** “Have you noticed on Rustaveli Street, it is visibly written Hallal, Hallal. This is an economic expansion...” (1 July, 2014)
- **Nino Ratishvili:** “We have serious problems in Adjara, because we all agree that the land of Achara has been sold and its owners are not Georgians any more. Most of Adjara is owned by foreign countries and mostly by Turkey” (14 March, 2014).

United National Movement allowed Turkization of Adjara

- **Bondo Mdzinarashvili:** „[The National Movement] has done everything for the Georgian city of Batumi and Georgian region Adjara to become Turkish and to be threatened“ (27 November, 2014).

Portraying Turks as uneducated nation

- **Soso Zaalishvili:** “Anna, our population is farther more educated than the Turkish population. 70% of them are illiterate; otherwise they would not have elected Erdogan” (1 July, 2014).

A tendency which has outlined both during the study conducted in 2013¹² and current monitoring shows that viewers mostly express identical opinions in phone-ins and they coincide with the opinions of presenters and invited respondents.

¹² <http://mdfgeorgia.ge/uploads//Hate%20Speech-Publication-ENG.pdf>

All in all, this is tantamount to manipulating public opinion and thus represents a violation of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters,

Opinions promoted by viewers include:

Islamophobic assessments of religious incidents, activities of former and current officials

- “We Christians are unlike Barbarians, unlike fanatic Muslims or Ku Klux Klan members; we will not hold an inquisition against them, but they will receive their own inquisition. By the way I am against it” (26 July, 2014).
- „I am talking about the mosque issue, these people are obviously encouraged by the Turks. This is felt in Batumi very much, and our President helped this too, giving a lot of suspicious citizenships...” (24 October, 2014).
- “That young man (Irakli Alasania) once dared and let the Georgian army be blessed by Molah in the mosque, he should not have done that...” (17 August, 2014).

Adjara belongs to Turkey

- “Adjara is today without Adjarians... they settled Turks in Adjara and they commend and prevail” (12 December, 2014).

Integration in NATO will result in Turkish occupation

- „We may want to join NATO and station here their troops and their air defense systems, but who will provide maintenance for this? It will be Turkish army, which is a NATO member... They will bring Turks here, and while Mr. Alasania said we must station the defense systems – does he want to turn Georgia into a polygon?” (30 May, 2014).

“Turkish Anexation” vs. Russian Anexation

- „Clearly, to press Russia about annexation, and applaud and hug Turkey, this would be absurd... Clearly, when they see we are a stupid nation and don’t worry about the Turks, they will take what falls into their hands...” (27 November, 2014).

Orthodox Russia protects Georgia from Islamification

- “Are they [viewers] not afraid that Turkey and Iran – our bitter enemies – will swallow up Georgia? Had it not been for Russia, we would have been Muslims now and would not have had either traditions or Orthodox Christianity... Are they neither afraid that the North Caucasus is our bitter enemy?!... Azerbaijan is our enemy too as well as Armenia” (30 March, 2014).

KAVKASIA TV CHANNEL, TALK SHOW SPEKTRI

The presenter of talk show Spektri portrayed Turkey as threat (2), engaged in wrong contextualization of historical events (1) and talked about biological superiority (1).

Turkey as threat

- **David Akubardia:** “We prevail over them [Turks], or they will “eat” us” (24 February, 2014).
- **David Akubardia:** “It is horrible if we don’t integrate the sea region, believe me, and I am not even talking about 1400 mosques built in Georgia by the Turks. They will come here and take over those places “(5 March, 2014).

Unjustified historical contextualization

- **David Akubardia:** “Shah Abbas was a madman for Georgia. He killed 6 000 clergymen in David Gareji, and when? On the Christmas eve... A well-known story is that they cut the heads of 30 000 Lazs... They brought an army of 50 thousand to the gorge saying they would kill those who don’t embrace Islam. And they killed them. I am sorry, while we are giving them all those mosques, did any Turkish official apologize to Georgia about those 30 thousand Lazs?... Or did any of our Iranian brothers and historical neighbors apologize for cutting the throats of 6 000 clergymen?... For some reason they demand tolerance from these cowards Christians. Is this message coming from there?... Why was it needed to transport [the minaret] from Turkey?... That minaret in that village had been financed. It should not be financed, projected from a foreign country, there should be some barrier...” (26 December, 2014).

Segregation by biological origin

- **David Akubardia:** “We improved the breed of the Turks...” (16 December, 2014).

PRINT MEDIA

KVIRIS CHRONIKA NEWSPAPER

There were seven violations observed in Kviris Qronika newspaper, with journalists promoting opinions that Saakashvili contributed to the spread of Turkish influence in Adjara (4); that literary works of Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk incite hatred (2). In one case, offensive language was used (1).

Saakashvili contributed to the Turkization of Adjara

- **Giorgi Jikiashvili:** “In the last days of his constitutional term [Saakashvili] gave Georgian passports to about 10 thousand foreign Muslims, and turned Adjara, already facing the danger of Turkization, into a Turkish share. Today everyone knows that certain part of these citizens fights under Islamic State in Syria and commits numerous terrorist acts”... (19-25 January, 2015)

Portraying literary works of Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk in the context of national hatred

- **Gela Zedelashvili:** “...it came to no one’s head to ask Pamuk why he is dreaming about the demise of our compatriots?! But they do not dare to ask him because he is the Noble Prize winner... I do not know how others feel, but I do not give a damn to what (prize winner) is a person who intends to destroy Georgians!” (17-23 March, 2014).

Segregation by ethnic identity

- **Gela Zedelashvili:** “...then I get drunk and start uncontrollable cursing of Turks and their mothers!” (1–8 June, 2014).

ASAVAL-DASAVALI NEWSPAPER

There were five instances of opinionated assessments by journalists, which were of clear Turkophobic and Islamophobic nature: Adjara is the property of Turkey (2); the historic enemy is trying to restore the Ottoman Empire (1); religious incidents are associated with the former President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili and his family (1). Moreover, the issue of religious buildings (1) is discussed from the standpoint of reciprocity.

Adjara is the property of Turkey

- **Irina Gogosahvili:** „I am asking Georgia – what was more Georgian, the fact that in the period of Aslan Abashidze not a piece of land was sold to the Turks, there was not a single Turkish restaurant in Adjara and there were 2 or 3 mosques, or is it more Georgian that today they have made Adjara look like cosmodrome of Islam?!.. If this goes on, soon Adjara may even not be part of Georgia!“ (20–26 October, 2014).

The historic enemy is trying to restore the Ottoman Empire

- **Jaba Khubua:** “Yes, Turkey, which was our historical enemy, for whatever reason, has become a “big friend” now, and the only thing they do for us is that they try their best to annex Adjara! The current Prime Minister of Turkey – Davutoğlu is the one, who had announced while being the minister of Foreign Affairs that he should restore the Ottoman Empire that should include Adjara!” (10–16 November, 2014).

Religious incidents are associated with the former President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili and his family

- **Dito Chubinidze:** “All the incidents, and all those issues in villages Chela, Mokhe, Nigvziani and Qobuleti, also nailing the head of a pig, or may be of Nugzar Tsiklauri’s [MP from UNM] head, on the door of a mosque. All these were instructed by Saakashvili – the enemy of Georgian people and by his mother’s friends. Most probably they have connections to Turkish Special Forces.” (27 October – 2 November, 2014).

Discussing religious buildings from the standpoint of reciprocity

- **Zaza Davitaia:** “There is an upsurge of mosque construction in Georgia. And some dispute our ownership of dozens of churches...” (2–8 February, 2015).

ALIA NEWSPAPER

Out of four statements three portrayed Turkey as a cause of various problems (ecological, food, trafficking) whilst one involved allegations about the religious expansion of Turkey.

Turkey as a cause of various problems

- **Tamar Okruashvili:** “When I was in Turkey, one man showed me a potato and said, my neighbor is sending this potatoes to your country, but if his wife dears to put it on their dinner table, he will cut her dead off. He does not want to be intoxicated?” (12 June, 2014).

Religious expansion

- **NEWPOST:** “The locals say that opening a Muslim education center is part of their secret expansion process. In those buildings they are not just planning to open a boarding school, but it will serve as Medrassa. They are planning to breed future religious leaders there” (17 September, 2014).

KVIRIS PALITRA NEWSPAPER

The newspaper associated problems in fishing with Turkey.

Turkey as a cause of various problems

- **A provoker:** „About Turkey: it is our brother and dear friend, but sometimes it hugs us too “deeply and closely”, and it is not very pleasant sometimes... The Turks don’t care if after their license is out we have any fish left or not – I am not surprised”(12 February, 2015).

ONLINE MEDIA

GEWORLD.GE

This news and information webpage promoted the opinion that the integration of Georgia into NATO is tantamount to Georgia’s subordination to Turkish influence (1) whilst the award of Georgian citizenship to Turkey’s citizens of Georgian origin was tantamount to Islamification of Georgia (2). Turkey was portrayed as threat and Adjara as a property of Turkey – eachon two occasions.

Georgia’s integration into NATO tantamount to Georgia’s subordination to Turkish influence

- **Iakob Lezhava:** “Tomorrow, after we join NATO, Turkish influence over Georgia (by entrance of the military forces too, under NATO auspices) will undoubtedly increase and the government, even if it wants to, won’t be able to stand up to our NATO member neighbor, which dreams about great Turkey and publicly stated its claims on Adjara many times. It is no secret that they have their eye on the rest of Georgia too. We know that they treat Georgians that go to work to Turkey like slaves, but they dare the same thing in Tbilisi – they don’t let Georgians into the cafes on the main street of the capital, Turkish investors swear at the Georgian doctors and they even try to tear down the Patriarch’s picture! Further advance of the Turkish arrogance will happen after we join NATO...” (18 April, 2014).

Turkey as a threat

- **Eka Naskidashvili:** „Political observers think the hot region is Adjara, where because of the Turks getting bolder the local people have a great problem, there are even ethnic conflicts noted already, but Samtskhe–Javakheti is not a less problematic territory, and about it they say that it is an “unplayrd card” (26 November, 2014).

Saakashvili facilitated Islamification of Georgia

- **Jaba Jzvania:** “The leader of the National sect had been doing everything he could for 9 years to bury the national identity, in the end he gave Georgian passports to the 10 thousand Turkish citizens, and turned Adjara, who already was an object of Islamic expansion, into a Turkish share“ (22 January, 2015).

Adjara belongs to Turks

- **Maia Gelashvili:** “Increased number of Turks in Batumi creates discomfort for the population of Batumi...” (4 June, 2014).

SAKINFORMI

Three publications of Sakinformi promote the following opinions:

Saakashvili subordinated Georgia to Turkey’s influence

- **Title:** Saakashvili gave the Georgian land to the Turks (20 June, 2014)
- **Arno Khidirbegishvili:** “In Georgia [Mikheil Saakashvili] destroyed the Russian language – to kick the Russian-speaking population from Georgia and to bring 300 thousand Meskhetian Turks instead” (15 December, 2015).

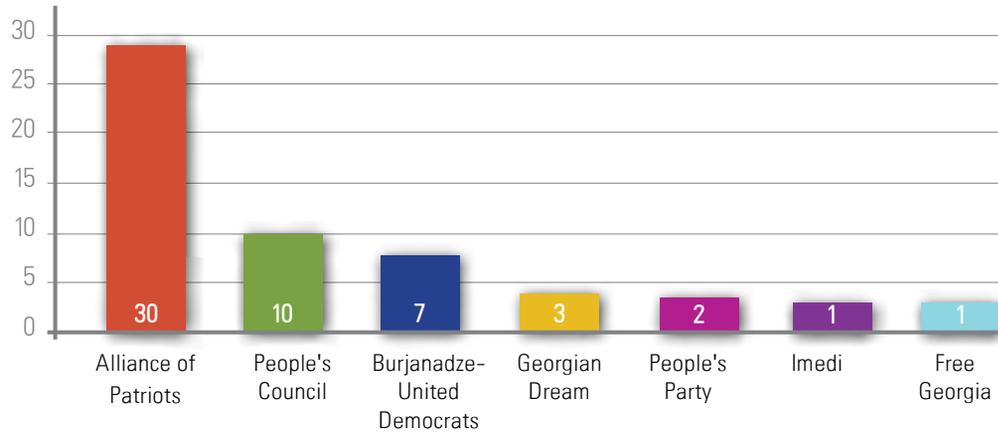
Turkey along with the United States is plotting chaos at Russia’s border

- “Considering the regional specifics and pro-Russian slogans, this demonstration [in Sokhumi] may have been directed by Turkish and American special services, they are still developing their strategy of chaos” (2 June, 2014).

2.2. POLITICAL PARTIES

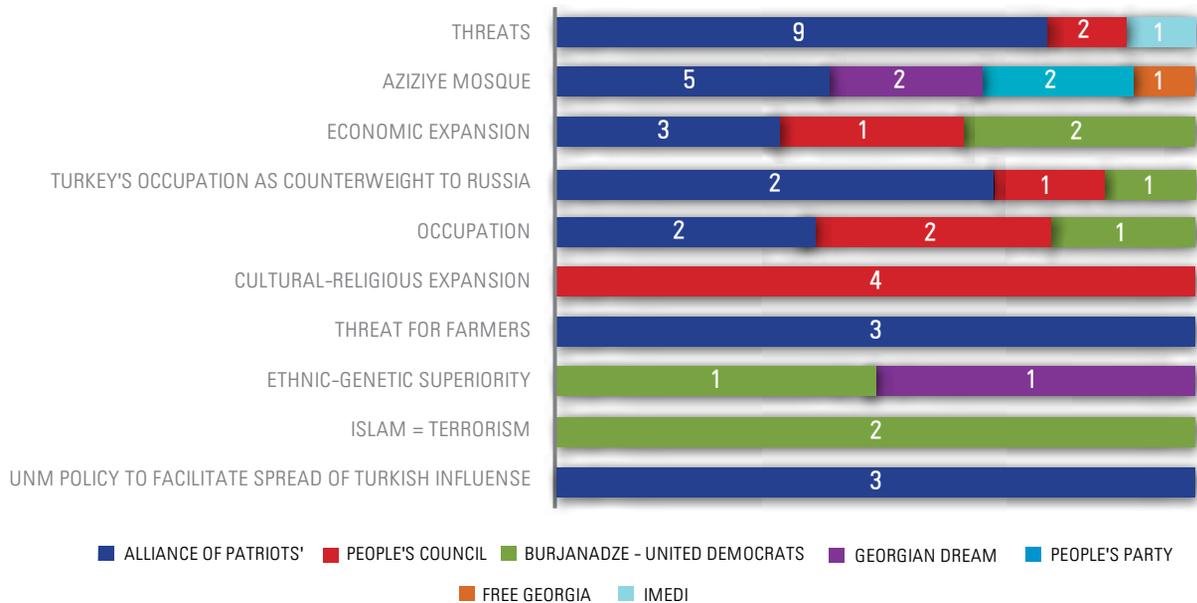
Among political parties, Turkophobia and Islamophobia was most frequently applied by the Alliance of Patriots (30), followed by the People’s Council (10) and Nino Burjanadze–United Democrats (7), Georgian Dream (3), People’s Party (2), Free Georgia (1) and Imedi (1).

Chart 2.3. Turkophobia/Islamophobia by political parties



Key messages in Turkophobic/Islamophobic statements of political parties are classified in Chart 2.4.

Chart 2.4. Types of Turkophobia/Islamophobia, by political parties



ALLIANCE OF PATRIOTS

The Alliance of Patriots was in the lead among political parties by the frequency of Turkophobic and Islamophobic statements (30) making them on the Obiektivi TV channel as this media union is founded by members of this political party. Of these 30 statements only six were made via other media outlets (Imedi TV and Kavkasia TV channels, Rezonansi newspaper, news websites Reportiori and Geworld.ge). The most active among party members was Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi (20).

The Alliance of Patriots was engaged in promoting the following opinions: the construction of Aziziye mosque is an attempt of religious and military expansion of Turkey (5); Turkey is a threat including in terms of Treaty of Kars (9); NATO training base in Georgia means allowing Turkey to enter Georgia (3); Turkey's occupation as counterweight to Russia (2); Turkey poses threat to Georgian farmers (3) and carries out economic expansion (3); the United National Movement facilitated the subordination of Adjara to Turkey's influence (3); a border incident (which was not confirmed by official sources) (1) and the repatriation of Meskhetians (1) endanger the country.

Construction of Aziziye mosque as attempt of religious and military expansion

- **Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi:** “Aziziye mosque was the evil in a religious disguise. It was the intelligence center of Turkey; an educational center of Turkey which would brainwash people... They obtain education [in Turkey] and then come back believing that Georgia has never had as closest a friend as Turkey”... (Kavkasia TV, Barieri, 14 July, 2014).

Portrayal of Turkey as a threat including in the context of the Treaty of Kars

- **Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi:** “They have a simple plan: as many Turks as possible should be born there, they are intending to change the demographic picture, they will try to have enough Turks there to create a party, they may even have a Turk Mayor in Batumi. It is important to note that Turks are constantly thinking about the year 2021 – hundred year's anniversary to the Kars Agreement, this is when they hold the referendum” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 8 June, 2014).
- **Soso Manjavidze:** “It is Turkey here, which is also dangerous” (Kavkasia, Barieri, 1 April, 2014).

Association of NATO training base with Turkey

- **Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi:** „In these [NATO] training centers the trainers won't be Americans, or French, or Germans... Mostly they will be the Turks... Just like there mostly were Turks until now, which I never liked and still don't” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 6 September, 2014).

Turkish “occupation” vs. Russian occupation

- **Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi:** “For example, it has been 95 or 96 years now that Turkey has had 30 percent of our territory occupied... Our territory has been seized by Russia as well as by Turkey” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 26 March, 2014).
- **Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi:** „Never during its existence Turkey has been Georgia's friend... They conquered Georgia many times and spilled a sea of blood... Never did Turkey any good for either Georgia, any European country, or

anyone else in the world. For all its history Turkey was a conqueror country which was destroying states and peoples... Turkey wants to conquer Georgia again, and it does not hide this“ (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 20 May, 2014).

Turkey poses threat to Georgian farmers

- **Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi:** “Georgian pheasants no longer exist, the country have been destroyed. A third rate Turkish goods are imported and billions [of GEL] flow out of Georgia... We pay money and they bring in rubbish... And we say that it is our strategic partner. It is a strategic vampire rather than a strategic partner, which takes out money earned through labor of Georgian people“ (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 21 March, 2014).

Portrayal of Turkish investments as economic expansion

- **Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi:** “Lots of Turks have arrived in Adjara, their government financed them to rent real estate property, they pay three times more than actual price, Georgians become their servants. They create an illusion of creating jobs, but the reality is different. As a result 37 000 Turks are residing in Batumi today. I suppose it is an occupation of a country” (Imedi, Reakcia, May 16, 2014).

The United National Movement sold Adjara to Turks

- **Irma Inashvili:** “He [Giorgi Baramidze] got involved in embarrassing business of selling Adjara to Turks” (Reportiori, 15 September, 2014).
- **Vaja Otarashvili:** “...Not to mention the pro-Turkish state, or “family” orientation of Saakashvili’s fascist government, or Georgian TV air time overloaded with Turkish soap-operas, while Georgian cinematography is counting its days....” (Geworld.ge, 14 August, 2014).

Portraying unconfirmed reports about Turkish border guards crossing the border in Adjara as threat

- **Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi:** “We will not give up anything to anyone and if we have to break the heads of those Turkish border guards, we’ll break those heads. It is violence when a Turkish border guard is telling you to get out, and when I am there, I will beat him to a pulp“ (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 30 and 31 May, 2014).
- **Vaja Otarashvili:** “Some foreigner came over to Georgia, who had been destroying you for three centuries, who began to abolish kingship in Georgia in 1723, and now is approaching you like a friend”... (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 31 May, 2014).

Linking the repatriation of Meskhetians with the Treaty of Kars

- **Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi:** “My opinion is very negative [about granting citizenship to Muslim Meskhetians]. I believe that Mikheil Saakashvili was trying to sell Adjara to Turkey; to this end, he tried to award citizenship to as many Turks as possible – which is an adventure, in my opinion – in order to enable them to demand a new referendum under the Kars agreement in 2021” (Kavkasia, Barieri, 14 July).

PEOPLE'S COUNCIL

The second after the Alliance of Patriots by the frequency of Turkophobic and Islamophobic statements was the People's Council (10), the organization affiliated with Nino Burjanadze–United Democrats.

The opinions promoted by the People's Council included: Turkey, much like Russia, has occupied Georgian territories (1); the disintegration of Russia will enhance the threat of Turkey for Georgia (1); Turkey is occupier (2); Turkey carries out economic expansion (1) as well as cultural and religious expansion (3); Islamification of Adjara is underway (1).

Turkish “occupation” vs. Russian occupation

- **Gia Burjanadze:** “Does not Turkey occupy Georgia?.. Your government [National Movement] helped Turkish expansion in Georgia. You have double standards – Russia is an occupation force, and Turkey is not?” (Imedi, Reaktsia, 21 February, 2014).

Disintegration of Russia to enhance threat of Turkey

- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “If Russia disintegrates... quite a serious threat will come from Turkey. I have said once and repeat it now that Turkey has not yet got used to the idea that it lost Adjara. There are forces who demand the return of Adjara. Bad processes are under way in Adjara. Tens of thousands of Turks were granted Georgian citizenship during Saakashvili's rule” (Kviris Chronika, 17–23 March, 2014).

Turkey as an occupant

- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “Today there is great Turkish expansion in the country, which had been led by Saakashvili from the very beginning... Go to Adjara, see what is going on there, it has been turned into Turkey... This is a peaceful conquest of territories. Davutoglu said that they won't attack Georgia with weapons, but will take back Adjara through economic means, followed by a referendum” (Kviris Chronika, 19–25 January, 2015).

Economic expansion of Turkey

- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “They invaded, and what is happening? Economy... is all theirs. The first floor has been taken by the Turks in Germany even, so won't they take it here in small Adjara?” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 29 December, 2014).

Cultural and religious expansion of Turkey

- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “If they continue to construct buildings so intrusively, all of them must be turned down... We are not attacking the mosques, but enough is enough. We are protecting our religion; we encounter mosques after every ten steps. It is not that they require so many mosques; this is just a tool to banish our Christianity. If you look at our TV programs, you will not find a single channel that does not circulate Turkish soup operas. What can that mean?.. It is us, who has to eliminate these (Turkish soup operas), Turks are not losing anything This is how territories are lost, by influencing on religion and culture” (Alia, 16 September, 2014).

Islamification of Adjara

- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “There was a real Christianity in Adjara when Aslan Abashidze was heading it... What is happening in Adjara today? Around 32-33 thousand families of an alien semen are registered in Adjara, which is around 150 foreign owners of a property here. This is our tragedy! Most of them are Turks” (Asaval-Dasavali, 8-14 December, 2014).

NINO BURJANADZE-UNITED DEMOCRATS

Politicians from Nino Burjanadze-United Democrats (7) made Turkophobic and Islamophobic statements of the following content: Turkey is as much a threat as Russia (1); Turkey has occupied historical Georgian territories (1); economic expansion is underway (2); Islam feeds the ideology of terrorism (2); Georgians have improved genetic properties of Turks (1).

Threat of Turkey vs. the threat from Russia

- **Jondi Bagaturia:** “You think that Turkey is not a threat?... why it is so shameful to be a Russian agent, and it is not too shameful to be a Turkish agent?.. All the provocations that take place between the Orthodox and Muslim people is instigated and financed by Turkish Special Forces” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 27 October, 2014).

Turkey as an occupant

- **Temur Shashiashvili:** “Aren’t you forgetting that significant part of Turkey historically used to be an integral part of Georgia. Each and every Turk knows about it very well” (Asaval-Dasavali, 15-21 September, 2014).

Economic expansion of Turkey

- **Temur Shashiashvili:** „When you are in the Georgian Parliament and have some self-respect, should you be washing feet of a Turk businessman here? You see what is going on in Adjara? In Turkey they say that Aghmashenebeli Avenue is theirs” ... (Alia, 9 September, 2014).

Seeing Islam as the threat of terrorism

- **Jondi Bagaturia:** “What if we desire to build an Orthodox Spiritual Seminary in Hopa in Trabzon, in Samsun or in any other Turkish city, would the Turkish government allow this?.. They are also speaking of the Azizea temple, including Medrassas and an Educational Center. This is how terrorism starts? Exactly, Terrorism is an Ideology isn’t it? Imagine the mind of a juvenile, when their ideology is in the process of shaping, and suddenly it is influenced by some fanatic ideas, they become inclined and assured in something, then they are being used as cannon fodders” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 15 September, 2014).

Genetic advantage

- **Gigla Baramidze:** “Where was that northern empire when we were selling out our blood and flesh... We improved the breed of the Turks, the Persians” (Kavkasia, Spektri, 16 December, 2014).

GEORGIAN DREAM

Representatives of the Georgian Dream stressed the unacceptability of the construction of Aziziye mosque (2) also, intolerance of Turkish products and anything Turkish, in general.

Unacceptability of Aziziye mosque

- **Murman Dumbadze**¹³: „I was few years ago and still remain categorically against religious building being built from abroad. “(Rustavi 2, PS, 14 September, 2014).

Unacceptability of Turkish

- **Gogi Topadze**: “Which thing that is Turkish is good?! They will send nothing good here... Nobody, if Europe does not send anything good, will Iran send it?! “ (Kavkasia, Spektri, 22 September, 2014).

OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES

Among statements of other political parties three were made against the construction of Aziziye mosque: People’s Party (2), Free Georgia (1); one statement (Imedi political party) portrayed Turkey as threat.

Unacceptability of Aziziye mosque

- **Mamuka Giorgadze, Peoples Party**: “We are not particularly against the mosques, but we are against the Turkish expansion” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 14 November, 2014).
- **Merab Gogoberidze, Free Georgia**: “When Dumbadze supported the construction of a mosque, I took a maquette of the mosque to his three-story house and told him ‘why should a mosque be built in the center of Batumi, let you give your house to Turks’...” (Kviris Chronika, 17-23 March, 2014).

Turkey as a threat

- **Irina Sarishvili, Imedi Party**: “Crimea will not stay in Ukraine... Turkey will rule in Crimea and if you don’t know what will follow it, ask your parents... Some people may know what it brings to Georgia – no one will remember Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region then, there will be new problems, especially since our homeland is already filled with the Turkish “businesses” and serials!!! Maybe someone thinks it is support of Ukraine that they will give out Turkish passports there?!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” (Geworld.ge, 4 March, 2014).

¹³ Murman Dumbadze is not member of Georgian Dream Coalition currently.

2.3 REPRESENTATIVES OF FORMER AND CURRENT AUTHORITIES

Representatives of local self-government

Discriminative statements by representatives of local self-government were related to a fact of religious intolerance in Kobuleti, when a local Orthodox Christian congregation, on 10 September 2014, slaughtered a pig in protest against the operation of Muslim madrasah and pinned the head of pig on its door. In their statements concerning the incident, the head and the deputy head of Kobuleti municipality spoke about the primacy of the religious majority, thereby breaching the principle of religious neutrality of public officials.

- **Sulkhan Evgenidze, head of Kobuleti municipality:** “However, this people got irritated about the statement of Muslims who claimed that they were going to build a minaret. In reality, there was no plan to construct a minaret... Local Christians were verbally offended, although Muslims said they had nothing to do with that and some strange people were doing that... I respect every denomination but the opinion of population is also very important” (Rezonansi newspaper, 15 September 2014).
- **Irakli Tsetskhladze, deputy head of Kobuleti municipality:** “The constitution affirms this right to those people who, for example, plan to open a madrasah here, but for me, as the deputy head of municipality, the opinion of population is very important too. Most important for me personally and as a representative of a state body, in general, is to avoid conflict among the congregation” (Maestro, news program, 10 September).
- **A paraphrase of statement by Giorgi Kokhodze** [head of police department in the Mokhe village]: “By his action during the events in Chela, he [Giorgi Kokhodze] offended not only local Muslims but Muslims throughout the world – he swore using the word ragheads” (Teimuraz Mikeladze, a local of Mokhe, Rustavi 2, news program, 16 February 2015).

FORMER HIGH OFFICIALS

Former high officials – the former defense minister (1); the former MP (2) and former public defender (1) spoke about the threat of subjecting Adjara to Turkey’s influence; a former deputy of high council stressed a threat of Islamification of Georgia in the event Russia disintegrates (1); a personal representative of President Shevardnadze in conflict settlement issues made Islamophobic statements (2).

Turkization of Adjara

- **Tengiz Kitovani, former Defense Minister:** “Batumi is saturated, with Turks and our citizens are feeling segregated. I am a patriot of my country; all the other patriots who love their country will come out here to stand for it. They can’t just come and cut off the lands like this” (Interpressnews, 2 June, 2014).
- **Valeri Gelbakhiani, former member of the Parliament:** “I was being stopped by people in the streets, pleading for help, saying that Batumi has turned into a Turkish city... This is an extremely dangerous process... By all means; we

have to take security measures about this issue. Whole Batumi population has turned into Turks starting from 2004 to 2010. When 150 000 people enters the country it is called an expansion” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 1 December, 2014).

- **Nana Devdariani, former Public Defender:** “Let us look at internal Georgian market and see that Turkey covets not just Adjara but its citizens also feel at home in the center of the capital – on Aghmashenebeli Avenue!.. Today there are more genetic Georgians in Turkey than in Georgia! But Georgians in Turkey have no choice besides Islam! Moreover, in their passports they have written nationality – “Turk!”... Georgian people will never allow Adjara to be turned into a Turkish vilayet!” (Asaval–Dasavali, 22–29 September, 2014).

Threat of Islamification of Georgia in the event of Russia’s disintegration

- **Tengiz Kublashvili, former member of the Supreme Council:** “If Russia weakens or breaks down, Georgia will become an arena for Muslim raids; if someone does not accept Islam or does not betray his nationality will be killed, or will be sold (Beautiful girls and women have better chances for survival, they might as well become first wives of some influential terrorists” (Geworld.ge, 14 November, 2014).

Islamophobia

- **Irakli Machavariani, former representative of the President Shevardnadze in conflict negotiations:** “The more of those Georgian citizens that go [to Syria] do not come back... I never denied that I would prefer our country to be consolidated not just nationally, but also religiously!” (Kavkasia, Spektri, 5 February, 2015).

2.4. RELIGIOUS SERVANTS

The total of eight statements were made by religious servants of which three were against the construction of a mosque; one statement portrayed Adjarian Muslims as defenders of Turkish interests; one statement described the operation of madrasah as religious expansion of Turkey whilst one statement was the expressions of religious intolerance in general. Apart from religious statements, clerics made political assessments too: on two occasions, Turkish occupation was used as a counterweight to the Russian occupation.

Turkish occupation vs. Russian occupation

- **David Kvividze, archpriest:** “Tao-Klarjeti, where they won’t allow us Georgian liturgy, is occupied. Not only Abkhazia is occupied and not only Russians are the occupiers. Tao-Klarjeti was Georgia. We can’t have a liturgy in Kakhi and Belakani. This is because of our weakness and because we have forgotten God” (Netgazeti, 29 April, 2014).

Unacceptability of construction of mosques

- **Elizbar Diakonidze, deacon:** „The Muslims plan to build a mosque in Belarus... I wonder, what is the matter with the Christians and the world, so that they pursue cartoons and don’t pay attention to the strengthening of the Muslims” (Geworld.ge, 22 January, 2015).

Portrayal of Adjarian Muslims as defenders of Turkish interests

- **Basil Mkalavishvili, priest:** “Most of Muslims in Adjara are implementing policy of Turkey... When were the rights of Muslims violated in Georgia? To the contrary, the door of Georgia is open to anyone and that is why we are in such a situation” (Alia, 23 September, 2014).

Assessing the operation of madrasah as religious expansion of Turkey

- **Giorgi Razmadze, deacon:** “I can say directly, that this [opening of a Muslim boarding school] is religious expansion, implemented by the Turkish government. They are catching up with their plans that they have started during the “Nationals” (Kviris Chronka, 29 September – 5 October, 2014).

Religious intolerance

- **Giorgi Razmadze, deacon:** „Now they have begun showing Turkish serials and there godless people, the Turks address us Christians. Godless, they are making us forget God“ (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 30 April, 2014).

2.5. OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF SOCIETY

Some 77 discriminative statements made by respondents promoted the following ideas: Adjara and the entire Georgia is under Turkish influence (13); religious and cultural expansion is underway (13). There were instances of incitement to hate and religious intolerance with regard to separate religious incidents (11); a segment of respondents talked about Turkey’s territorial claims towards Georgia (10); Turkey was discussed as a counterweight to Russia (9); Muslim Georgian citizens from Adjara were portrayed as defenders of interests of Turkey (7); Turkey and Turkey’s citizens of Georgian origin were represented in negative context (7); Turkophobia/Islamophobia was incited in the context of Euro-Atlantic integration (3); respondents also tried to portray historic hostility in the current context (3) and spoke about economic expansion (1).

Separate examples:

Turkeyization of Adjara and whole Georgia

- **Mamuka Areshidze, expert:** “In Adjara a person of another tribe feels more comfortable than a citizen of Georgia. People from Adjara are fighting in Syria and Iraq. In Kvemo Kartli there is a fight between representatives of various states to cloud people’s minds and religious fundamentalists are very active there” (Rezonansi, 7 February , 2015).
- **Central Union of the Labor and Military Veterans:** “Adjara is in danger, by the efforts of Saakashvili there is a new wave of “Great Turkish Invasions”. Today one third of Batumi population is aliens” (Geworld.ge, 30 October, 2014).

Religious-cultural expansion

- **Tamaz Imnaishvili, Analytical Center of the Georgian Generals Club:** There is cultural and religious expansion going

on in Georgia. There are Turkish series every day on every TV channel and I am sure these Turkish series are created based on the 25th frame principle. There was such a case this year: in a church in Lanchkhuti district a woman was saying her confession and told the priest – let Allah bless you, father” (Geworld.ge, 20 November, 2014).

- **Tamaz Bakuradze, representative of NGO:** „Do you know who is financing this boarding school? Is Turkey financing it? The question is – why? There are more than 56 boarding schools in Adjara, so this is a mine purposely laid by a foreign country. No one knows when it is going to blow up the way we had seen...” (Rustavi 2, PS, 14 September, 2014).

Incitement to hatred, religious intolerance

- **David Zoidze, Kobuleti citizen:** “We will sacrifice ourselves to oppose the rule of Turks in Adjara... Our fathers and grandfathers were forced by the sword to turn Muslim, they may try to do it again. Actually, they are doing it with money now, instead of a sword. Do you know what does it mean to build the mosque of Aziza? They build mosques on their conquered lands; they are trying to prove to us that Batumi belongs to Turkey. Therefore, the population of Adjara should stand together; whole world should see that Adjara does not esteem to become Tatars!” (Geworld.ge, 1 October, 2014).
- **Zhuzhuna Kaladze, a resident of Kobuleti:** „When a child prays in a Muslim way here, what will my child hear?! What will he learn? Those children, when they go out will be in contact with us Christians. They will lose their attachment to Georgia“ (Rustavi 2, PS, 14 September, 2014).

Turkish claim on Georgian territories

- **Alexandre Chachia, political observer residing in Moscow:** “The Turkish national elite (political, intellectual, military) always considered Adjara to be their historical territory... If the Turks decide to construct a mosque, they will construct it, and if protest rallies grow into ethnic and religious confrontation, Turkey will not be too ceremonious“ (Geworld.ge, 24 December, 2014).
- **Simon Kiladze, expert:** “Turkey considers Adjara as their own territory, they don’t deny that, they just let it be for a while. There might be an issue with this any time and we are welcoming them with open heart, we have even built an Airport for them” (Geworld.ge, 28 January, 2015).

Turkey vs. Russia

- **Alexandre Chachia, political observer residing in Moscow:** “So many Turks have never lived in Adjara, even when it was in the Ottoman Empire... While in the past we had Russia behind us and we could not to pay great attention to the Islamic factor, today it has become a very important factor in our reality. We have forgotten this for 200 years, but Turkey and Iran remember very well that for centuries Georgia was their vassal territory“ (Geworld.ge, 24 December, 2014).
- **Mamuka Areshidze, expert:** “If we are going to prohibit Russian TV channels, we certainly must prohibit Turkish and Azerbaijani TV channels as well, because often the information spread by them is not really for Georgia” (Imedi, Time of Politics, 15 April, 2014).

- **Nikoloz Mjavanadze, Human Rights Defenders Union:** “Do not forget that apart from Russia, Turkey also has occupied our historical lands. I will hereby remind you the statement of Turkish foreign affairs minister David-Oghlu: “Turkey will try to restore its historical borders!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 3-9 November, 2014).
- **Kirnati village local:** “Isn’t it better to be Russified , than to turn into Turks?” (Imedi, Imedis Kvira, 1 February, 2015).

Portrayal of Adjarian Muslims as defenders of Turkish interests

- **Avtandil Ungiadze, the Union of Orthodox Parents:** “Part of Adjarian Muslim population is implementing the policy of Turkey.... Speaking of Adjarian Muslim population, they come out on the streets and claim to be Georgians and our brothers, how on earth can they be Georgians, when they just serve as implementers of a Turkish expansionist policy?” (Geworld.ge, 18 September, 2014).
- **Nikoloz Mjavanadze, Human Rights Defenders Union:** “Has anyone thought about those Georgian kids who are taken away from Adjara to Turkish Madrasas? They bring them up there? They create best living conditions for them and they breed real Muslims out of them, with Turkish mentality. They turn them into committed parishioners of Islam. They just have Georgian names and surnames, otherwise their ideology, belief, mentality, culture and identity is Turkish!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 8-14 December, 2014).

Portrayal of Turkey and ethnic Georgian citizens of Turkey in negative context

- **Levan Chaganava:** “In short, Georgians worked like slaves for Turks in Dapna!” (Geworld.ge, 28 March, 2014).
- **Giorgi Popkadze, journalist (former journalist of Obiektivi and since November of 2014 correspondent of the Public TV in Brussels):** „40 thousand passports are given to the Turks. If they are brought in.. What, are not they Georgian citizens?” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 21 February, 2014).

Incitement of Turkophobia/Islamophobia vs. Euro-Atlantic Integration

- **Aleksandre Abdaladze, Armenologist:** “Turkish troops will trigger serious processes against the Georgian national awareness. First, this means religious intervention and resistance because there is a real threat today that Islamic circles will strengthen Islam in Georgia. Let alone historic animosity which remains an unhealed wound for our country. Therefore, the Euro-Atlantic integration, along with other issues, threatens us to be turned into a military base of Turkey. I, as well as any reasonable Georgian, am against any integration” (Geworld.ge, 26 March, 2014).
- **Tamaz Imnaishvili, Analytical Center of the Georgian Generals Club:** „It is Erdogan’s idea to create a Muslim NATO” (Geworld.ge, 20 November, 2014).

Historical hostility

- **Rezo Amashukeli, poet:** “Persians and Turks used to import tobacco in Georgia, to stupefy the generations in Georgia; the term “gatriakebulia” means stunned, when person is out of mind and there is no hope for that person... this is part of the National Movement plan!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 9-14 June, 2014).

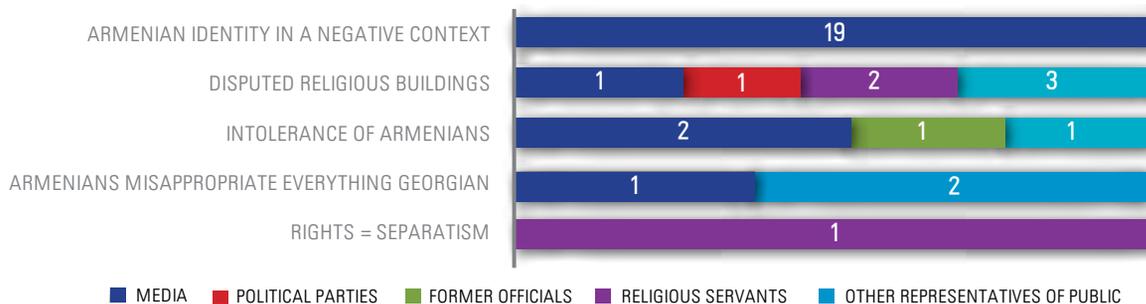
Economic expansion of Turkey

- **Davit Chichinadze, businessman:** “How do you think expansion happens?! Today the wars are not happening with only bullets and guns. It is time of economic wars and expansions now, with taking control over the markets. Turks have fully occupied the Georgian market, on the other hand Iran is entering the market, there will not be space for Georgians soon” (Kavkasia, Spektri, 2 October, 2014).

3. ARMENOPHOBIA

As the monitoring showed, Armenophobia is not widespread as compared to discrimination on other grounds and politicians do not exploit this topic intensively for speculations. Media refers to Armenian identity in a negative context mainly in relation to political actors (19); another sensitive topic is associated with the demand of Armenian Apostolic Church for the return of disputed religious buildings to the Armenian congregation (7). General intolerance of Armenian community is expressed in four statements whilst three statements allege that Armenians are trying to misappropriate everything that is Georgian. One statement illustrates an attempt of linking the issue of exercise of rights by a group of different ethnic identity with the threat of separatism.

Chart 3.1. Armenophobia by sources



3.1. MEDIA

Armenophobia in media is basically expressed in print and online editions.

PRINT MEDIA

ASAVAL-DASAVALI NEWSPAPER

Apart from two Armenophobic statements in Asaval-Dasavali, there were five instances when the newspaper referred

to Armenian identity in a negative context in relation to political processes and political actors regardless of whether the addressees were of Armenian origin. Such an approach was mainly applied towards the former president of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili, the former prime minister of Ukraine Yulia Tymoshenko and a writer Zurab Karumidze.

- **Dito Chubinidze:** “Mr. Otar, [a journalist criticizes in his article the evaluation of a movie director Otar Ioseliani, where he states that: “Tbilisi has always been an Armenian city and was constructed by the Armenians”] the point you brought up was exactly the reason why the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist party – Aghasi Khanjian was shot by Lavrenti Beria in his own office!
You can be calm about it Mr. Otar, neither Beria nor Stalin is alive today. There is not even a single Georgian in this stagnated country, who will run after you with an axe, or someone who shoots you, because you “Armenized” Tbilisi – the city that was cherished by the king David the Builder!” (28 July 28 – 3 August, 2014).
- **Doctor Jaba:** „It is ecological disaster nowadays in Georgia. That is why there are so many deaths from tumors. By the way, the danger is high in street markets too. Armenians learnt guile and let us eat vegetables grown near the nuclear station“ (17-23 November, 2014).

Unjustified reference to Armenian identity

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “Yes, but what experience can Saakashvili and his uncle share with Grigyan’s [Yulia Timoshenko] government, which soon will be deprived of Crimea and Eastern Ukraine by Russia?!” (10-16 March, 2014).
- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “Armenologist has told me that this Zurab Karumidze, with a high probability, is an Armenian with changed surname! According to him “Kar” means a “stone” in Armenian and Armenians have surnames such as Karimyan which derives from Muslim name Karim!... He also added that it is quite possible that with some transformation Karimyan became Karumidze! Just like Ter Saakiantz became Saakashvili!” (24-30 March, 2014).

KVIRIS CHRONIKA NEWSPAPER

An unjustified reference to Armenian identity was observed three times in Kviris Chronika newspaper.

- **Giorgi Jikiashvili:** „Yes, Ivanishvili’s Georgia is shamed and humiliated, because Ter-Saakyan’s [Armenian surname] bloody butchers, instead of sitting in Gldani and Matrosovo [prisons], are comfortably in the Parliament and have the status of lawmakers!“ (Kviris Chronika, 24-30 November, 2014).

ONLINE MEDIA

GEWORLD.GE

News and information website Geworld.ge had five Armehophobic statements: one statement promoted the idea that Armenians are trying to turn Tbilisi into an Armenian city, three statements concerned the topic of disputed religious buildings whilst one statement involved the reference to Armenian identity in a negative context.

Examples:

Armenians try to turn Tbilisi into an Armenian city

- **Title:** “Armenians are trying to turn Tbilisi into an Armenian city” (23 July, 2014).

Disputed churches

- **Jaba Zhvania:** „The Armenian lobby is preparing the grave for us... The Dashnaks now claim not 5, but 450 Georgian churches, they take from us our historical sacred places and... this is when they say – the masterless church got mastered by devils”... (22 January, 2015).

SAKINFORMI

The news website Sakinformi constantly applied Armenian surnames – Saakian, Avakian and Grigian, to refer to the former President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili, the Interior Minister of Ukraine Arsen Avakov and former Prime Minister of Ukraine Yulia Tymoshenko, respectively.

Examples:

- “The Armenian-born Georgian führer was screaming [about Mikheil Saakashvili]” (19 February, 2014).
- **Arno Khidirbegashvili:** “[David] Cramer was partly right about this – Misha Saakian and Yulia Grigorian, have much more in common, than just Armenian origins” (18 August, 2014).

3.2. POLITICAL PARTIES

PEOPLE’S COUNCIL

The only instance of Armenophobia belongs to People’s Council which is affiliated with Nino Burjanadze–United Democrats and it concerned the topic of disputed religious buildings.

- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “Even during the time of Lasha–Giorgi the Armenians had claims on Georgian churches, Lasha–Giorgi kicked out their chief priest. Do you know what claims Armenians have? That Sakdrisi is Armenian historical and cultural monument” (Kviris Chronika, 19–25 January, 2015).

3.3. REPRESENTATIVE OF FORMER AUTHORITIES

- **Irakli Machavariani, former representative of the President Shevardnadze in conflict negotiations:** “Armenia is playing the double game, and Armenians are sly people and this is a different thing” (Kavkasia, Spektri, 28 November, 2014).

3.4. RELIGIOUS SERVANTS

Out of three instances two concerned the topic of disputed religious buildings whilst one linked the right of religious organizations to get registration and to receive budget funding with separatism.

Examples:

The topic of Armenian religious building in discriminatory context

- **Giorgi Andriadze, former parliamentary secretary of the Patriarchate:** “When the Russian Empire came to the South Caucasus it settled very large Armenian diaspora... Armenian churches were actually built during the period of Russian occupation, but the question is – if that occupation was justified, then the return of these churches is also justified?.. Churches without masters always get mustered by devils, so the problem here is on the Georgian side” (Alia, 21 January, 2015).

Linking the right of religious denominations to register and to receive funding from state budget with separatism

- **Rostom Lortkipanidze, dean:** “It is a big mistake to accept Armenian Church and other religions as equals to the Georgian Orthodox Church, it is a big mistake to finance them from the national budget. If three districts – Akhatsikhe, Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda unite into one diocese tomorrow and an Armenian bishop makes his seat there, then Samtskhe-Javakheti is lost for us! Does the government consider these threats when it finances Armenian Church from the budget of Georgia?!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 17-23 February, 2014).

3.5. OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF SOCIETY

Other representatives of public made six discriminatory statements. In three of them they declared that the demands of Armenian Church for the return of religious buildings were unfounded; in two statements they promoted the idea that Armenians misappropriate everything that is Georgian whilst one statement concerned the intolerance of Armenians in general.

Examples:

Demands of Armenian Church for the return of churches are unfounded

- **Giorgi Sichinava, writer:** “Armenians have started to search for their “lost territories” in Georgia. Once again, they raised the issue of “existence” of 365 Armenian churches, as if they were “taken away” by us. They want to repos-

sess them along with surrounding land. This amount of churches together with their lands can cover half of Georgia. Unlike those Dashnaks, Armenian Church has decided to appropriate Georgian lands with a new “peaceful” method” (Geworld.ge, 14 November, 2014).

Armenians misappropriate everything that is Georgian

- **Jemal Chkuaseli, artistic director of Erisioni ensemble:** “The Armenians call churchkhela [Georgian desert] “Armenian miracle”, there was a case when they claimed Shota Rustaveli not to be a Georgian, and claimed samples of our national treasure to belong to other people... I remember, after a concert in San-Francisco and Armenian woman gave me a disc on which it was written in English and Armenian: “Armenian national songs”... That woman knew very well that there were Georgian songs, but blatantly claimed them to be Armenian” (Kviris Palitra, 17-23 February, 2014).
- **Alexander Abdaladze, historian:** “Armenian church and Armenian people in general have always been very ungrateful to Georgians. Armenian Church managed to harass the part of local population and even managed to turn them into Armenians” (Geworld.ge, 23 July, 2014).

Intolerance of Armenians

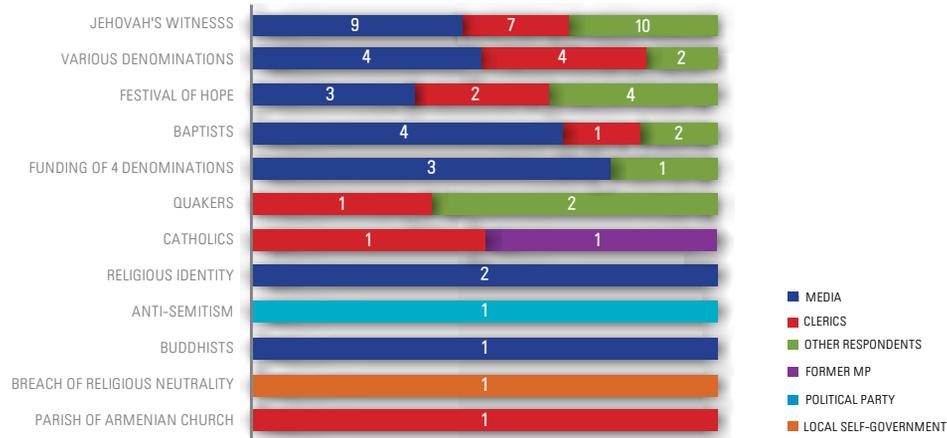
- **Modest Kolerov:** “They [Armenians] lived in the Syrian desert and could not even put forcemeat into vine leaves. Because they had neither. They had camel’s manure which they gathered, dried and fried.. In the 1970s Armenians destroyed the Sardar palace in order to delete from memory Yerevan’s Muslim past... People identify history by the works of literature, which Armenians simply do not have” (Alia, 22 January, 2015).

4. SOURCES OF RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

MAIN FINDINGS

The findings of one-year monitoring show that among various religious denominations the most stigmatized group is Jehovah’s Witnesses with the discriminatory statements against them standing at 26, followed by other denominations often referred to as sectarians – at 10. Separate activities of religious denominations also caused negative attitudes and the third by negative statements (9) was the international Evangelistic event, Festival of Hope, held in Tbilisi, which is followed by the Evangelical Baptist Church (7), the state funding of four religious denominations (4), Quakers (3), Catholics (2), unjustified reference to a religious identity in a negative context (2), anti-Semitism (1), Buddhists (1); breach of religious neutrality by representative of local self-government (1); intolerance of the parish of Armenian Church (1).

Chart 4.1. Discrimination of various denominations on religious grounds



Main sources of religious discrimination are media representatives themselves – 27, various representatives of society – 21, religious servants – 16, a representative of local self-government – 1, a representative of political party, and a former member of parliament – 1.

In terms of topics, the following tendencies have been revealed:

Jehovah's Witnesses

- Jehovah's Witnesses are the most stigmatized among religious groups. Sources of their discrimination include: various representatives of society (10); media (9) and religious servants (7). Negative attitudes are partially related to the exercise of their rights (translation of the Bible in Mengrelian dialect, putting up stalls in streets of Tbilisi to display promotional materials, a decision by Strasbourg Court ordering the state to pay compensation for damages to them), the associating of this group with several representatives of the United National Movement, and a public statement of a participant in the Got Talent show on Rustavi 2 TV channel, Gevork Petrosian, in which he declared that he abandoned this denomination. While the majority of respondents branded Jehovah's Witnesses as "sectarians", various media outlets were engaged in inciting negative sentiments towards them by using such words and expressions as "menacing," "hazardous for health! Harmful and destructive for spirit," "suspicious activity of the sect," "servants of darkness and Jehovah's Witlesses," (Asaval-Dasavali newspaper), "zombied" (Rustavi 2).

Festival of Hope

- Negative attitudes towards the conduct of the International Evangelistic event, the Festival of Hope, in Tbilisi were expressed by various respondents (4) as well as media (3) and religious servants (2). Respondents referred to

Pentecostals as sectarians whilst media described the event an “anti-Christian torturing assembly,” “festival with ambiguous titles” (Alia newspaper), “the effort to introduce sectarianism into the country” (Rezonansi newspaper).

Evangelical Baptist Church

- Statements against the Evangelical Baptist Church targeted personalities and concerned civil or public activities of those personalities. For example, in case of Bishop Malkhaz Songulashvili, the Asaval-Dasavali newspaper described his steps taken to protect Muslims’ rights as well as his participation in the dismantling of Stalin’s statue in Telavi alongside the Tabula magazine and his academic activity at the Ilia State University as unacceptable. Also, media (Geworld.ge), clerics as well as other respondents evaluated the award of Bishop Rusudan Gotsiridze with the 2014 International Women of Courage Award by First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama as a wicked act of the USA and Europe against Georgia, while a person who was released from the prison with a status of political prisoner (Shota Apkhaidze), when discussing this fact in a negative light, demanded that suspicious sects be banned under the law and their funding be subject to control. Sources of discrimination against Baptists mainly comprised of media – 4, various representatives of society – 2 and a cleric.

State financing of four religious denominations

- A decision of the government to fund, apart from the Georgian Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church, four other denominations proved unacceptable for media (3) and one respondent. In covering this issue media (media-union Obiektivi) placed emphasis on the unacceptability of equalizing other denominations with the Orthodox Church.

Other denominations and separate religious groups

- All those groups which do not belong in the Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church were, as a rule, covered in a negative light;
- Separate religious groups such as Quakers, Buddhists, and Armenian Orthodox Christians were referred to in a negative context.

Anti-Semitism

- The author of the only one anti-Semitic statement was a candidate for Mtatsminda constituency from Burjanadze-United Opposition election bloc.

Neglecting religious neutrality

- A representative of the local self-government showed his neglect to religious neutrality during a conflict between the majority and minority (Jehovah’s Witnesses) religious groups.

Religious identity in a negative context

- Prime-Time newspaper and media-union Obiektivi unjustifiably identified a religious belonging in a negative context, referring to religious minorities as sectarians and intruding their privacy.

4.1 MEDIA

Religious discrimination expressed by journalists prevailed in print media (17) followed by broadcast (7) and online (3) media.

In terms of topics, the following tendencies were revealed:

Table 5. Religious topics in negative context by media organizations

| TOPICS | ASAVAL-DASAVALI | OBIEKTIVI | ALIA | GEWORLD.GE | REZONANSI | KAVKASIA | RUSTAVI 2 | PRIME TIME | TOTAL |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Jehovah's Witness | 6 | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 9 |
| Evangelical-Baptists Church | 2 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | 4 |
| Various denominations | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 4 |
| Festival of Hope | | | 2 | | 1 | | | | 3 |
| Funding of four denominations | | 2 | 1 | | | | | | 3 |
| Religious identity | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| Quakers | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Buddhists | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Total | 10 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 27 |

Examples of discrimination are provided below by media outlets and topics.

PRINT MEDIA

ASAVAL-DASAVALI NEWSPAPER

Expressions of intolerance towards Jehovah's Witnesses (6), Evangelical-Baptist Church (2) and various groups ("sectarians," Adventists, Pentecostals, "Satanists") (2) were observed in this newspaper.

Unacceptability of Jehovah Witnesses

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** "In one night in Tbilisi large signboards appeared on the wall of the house, which popularize the dark activities of the Jehovah's Witnesses! ... This Jehovah movement is a classic total sect! Dangerous for the health of people! Damaging and destructive for the soul!" (Asaval-Dasavali, 25-31 August, 2014).
- **Dito Chubinidze:** "The servants of darkness and secret or obvious agents of the Jehovah's Witnesses have been defeated in the ideological battle and the debate with us, so now they want to destroy us with courts and financial sanctions!" (19-25 January, 2015).

- **Jaba Khubua:** “Dear reader, just like Gevorq Petrosyan, because of poverty and desperation, how many honest people slipped into the Jehovah’s sect, in how many people this sect killed the talent, and took from them the opportunities to realize their abilities! (24–30 November, 2014).

Unacceptability of Evangelic-Baptist Church

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “Taking into account what Saakashvili did with ‘liberated-from –Aslan–Abashidze’ Adjara, one can easily guess what was a bitter enemy of Georgian Orthodox Church [Malkhaz] Songulashvili doing there and why a muezzin’s prayer from a minaret in Qatar sounded like a lullaby (or to be more precise, a Halloween song) to him!...

“Yet another fact which shows full well who Malkhaz Songulashvili is: on 31 December 2013, upon the decision of Telavi municipality manned with pervert liberals from the Republican party and with the participation of one of the founders of Tabula magazine, the Foundation for Civic Education, the statue of Stalin, which was restored by citizens, was dismantled in Telavi!” (17–23 March, 2014).

Unacceptability of various confessions

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “Then the “Adventists”, “50iers”, “Satanists” will just freely post their own signboards in the capital. No one can hinder these Jehovah’s Witnesses from gathering in their private property, but putting advertisement signboards on the walls – this is too much!” (25–31 August, 2014).

ALIA NEWSPAPER

Against the International Evangelistic event, the Festival of Hope

- **Jana Asanidze:** „They say that on 6–8 June there is the ‘sectarian’ gathering in Tbilisi Sports Palace, covered under the form of a “festival”. This is a usual anti-Christian heretical gathering and no one should attend it!“ (28 May, 2014).
- **Jana Asanidze:** “Father (addressing to Giorgi Razmadze), strange sectarian gatherings, festivals with obscure names have become quite frequent. It must not be a coincidence, right?” (10 June, 2014).

Regarding state financing of four religious denominations

- **Jana Asanidze:** „2–3 years ago when they were adopting the Law on Religion, they were saying it was not dangerous, and now, since all religions are equal to the Orthodox religion, they must be financed from our budget, so tomorrow or day after tomorrow we may owe something to these sexual minorities?“ (30 April, 2014).

Unacceptability of Quakers

- **Tamar Oqruashvili:** “Ok, that’s what we were missing – the Quakers...” (8–4 December, 2014).

Unacceptability of Baptists

- “They distributed fliers printed by the eparchy, which recounts a brief history of Evangelist-Baptist sect” (9 July, 2014).

REZONANSI NEWSPAPER

The author of an article in Rezonansi newspaper assessed the conduct of the Festival of Hope as an attempt to sectarianize the country.

Against the International Evangelistic event, the Festival of Hope

- **Tatia Chapichadze:** “It was an intention to turn Georgians into sectarians. Instead of Sports Palace three-day international Evangelistic festival – Imedi Festival was held in the church, named after the faith in Bible, located in Didube” (9 June, 2014).

PRIME TIME NEWSPAPER

Prime Time published article unjustifiably referring to the religious identity of Public Defender in negative context.

Unjustified reference to the religious identity in negative context

- **Erekle Sturua:** “They wrote in the social networks that Ucha Nanuashvili belongs to a religious minority, this means he belongs to some unknown small sect. It is interesting that neither Nanuashvili, nor his press office responded to this information. When he was being appointed Ombudsman, Ucha Nanuashvili was directly called a sect member and the Parliament was called not to confirm his candidacy because of the Orthodox religion” (17 February, 2014).

BROADCAST MEDIA

OBIKTIVI, TALK SHOW NIGHT STUDIO

Presenters of talk show Night Studio deemed the state funding of four religious organizations unacceptable (2); one instance involved the portrayal of religious identity in a negative context, one statement concerned Jehovah’s Witnesses and one concerned various confessions.

Re: state financing of four religious denominations

- **Nino Ratishvili:** “Now imagine that Orthodox and Muslim religions are equally financed in Turkey?! We are a minority there, or where are we at all, right? And in the small Georgia this must be decided according to the congregation, right? And now such a sacrifice, bowing our heads before the West“... (24 February, 2014).
- **Ilia Chachibaia:** “Let’s support sects than”... (30 April, 2014).

Unjustified reference to the religious identity in negative context

- **Bondo Mdzinarashvili:** “...To which church do you belong? Are you an Orthodox? A Catholic? A Gregorian? A Muslim? A Judaist? A Baptist? An Evangelist? I don’t know, are you a Pentecostal? An Adventist? A Jehovah’s Witness? Who are you?”

TV viewer: “I am a Christian...”

[after the end of the viewer’s call]

Bondo Mdzinarashvili: “Mr. Zurab, known for his theological exploits, is a representative of a well-known sect. I wanted him to say this. I am not sure, he is a Baptist or an Evangelist...” (12 October, 2014).

Unacceptability of Jehovah Witnesses

- **TV viewer:** “Some part of Georgians became members of the Jehovah’s sect, and these people hinder the feeling of being Georgian, the process of development, which our ancestors achieved through great deeds. I don’t know, who can give them the right direction for their thinking and development” (17 January, 2015).

Unacceptability of various confessions

- **TV Viewer:** “For whom are we building this country? whose country are we building here? are we building it for non-Christians or we are building a real Georgian orthodox country? those are the questions I want to pose” (5 August, 2014).

RUSTAVI 2, NANUKA’S SHOW

A discriminative statement against Jehovah’s Witnesses on Nanuka’s Show of Rustavi 2 made it into this study only because of the reaction it caused among society as this monitoring covers only news programs and political and current affairs talk shows of this company and not its entertainment programs. It should be noted that self-regulation commission of Rustavi 2 satisfied the complaint initiated by MDF, TDI, GDI and EMC regarding this case and confirmed violation of the anti-discriminative provisions of the Code of Conduct.

Unacceptability of Jehovah Witnesses

- **Nanuka Zhorzholiani:** “Are not the Jehovah’s Witnesses are aggressive, lest they attack me”... “Can you give me the word that Jehovah’s Witnesses won’t attack me here”, “...You did well to leave them”, “...Jehovah’s Witnesses, are they brainwashed?”, “...to recruit [into Orthodox Christianity] is a wrong word, it is to convert”, “I am very afraid lest they hypnotize me” (26 November, 2014).

KAVKASIA, TALK-SHOW SPEKTRI

Against Buddhist

- **Davit Akubardia:** “Here are the Chinese, they are few, but there used to be about 30 thousand of them, then later they will demand construction of the Buddhist temples” (26 December, 2014).

ONLINE MEDIA

GEWORLD.GE

Unacceptability of the award of Bishop Rusudan Gotsiridze with the 2014 International Women of Courage Award by First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama

- **Eka Naskidashvili:** “And this has happened while Stephan Fule was meeting Ilia II, promising him they would not touch our values and the Church, ... When should the small nation with great traditions ring the alarm? When our own government is getting us closer to Europe or America with the motive of destroying the Georgian language, identity and spirituality, suffocating and ridiculing everything national?” (12 March, 2014).

Unacceptability of Jehovah Witnesses

- **Davit Mkheidze:** „His Holiness is the Patriarch of Orthodox Georgians, not of Jehovah heretics!” (26 November, 2014).

Unacceptability of other confessions

- **David Mkheidze:** “In these churches (Lutheran, Protestant, Roman Catholic) the implanted agents have managed and made liberal them, those who once had been promoters of conservative ideology! The proof of this is multiplication of female priests and the precedents of the same-sex weddings” (11 February 2015).

4.2. POLITICAL PARTIES

Excluding cases of Islamophobia, which we included in the section on Turkophobia and Islamophobia, political parties were way more restrained towards other denominations when discussing religious topics and the only exception here was a candidate for Mtatsminda constituency standing for the 2014 local elections from Burjanadze-United Opposition election bloc, who made a negative statements about a public celebration of Hanukah.

Antisemitism

- **Guram Palavandishvili:** “When they celebrate Hanukah in the street, they turn us Orthodox Christians into participants of this process. Imposing this holiday on us is a cause of conflict. Anyone may do whatever they want in their

homes, but when you bring this to the street and you want to make an Orthodox Christian celebrate rejecting the Christ this is unacceptable. Maybe all this is coming from foreign rabbis and is not a wish of the Georgian rabbis... Like we defended our values on 17 May, we'll do the same thing. We are against the idol that insults us. If they protect it so that we cannot overthrow it, we'll throw something from afar. Of course no weapons will be used. I repeat, if they don't take our request into consideration, this will be followed by a conflict" (Alia, 23 October, 2014).

4.3. REPRESENTATIVES OF CURRENT AND FORMER AUTHORITIES

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

Like it was in the case of dispute regarding the construction of Muslim madrasah, during a protest voiced by local population of Terjola against the construction of religious building of Jehovah's Witnesses, a representative of the local self-government violated the religious neutrality, stressing the need to resolve the dispute in accordance with the opinion of the religious majority.

Discussing construction of the religious belding of Jehovah Witnesses in accordance of primate of majority

- **Malkhaz Gurgenzidze, Terjola Municipality head (Gangebeli):** "Today I was told that there are several violations made during the construction, this will result into termination of the construction process, we will be considering the opinion of the majority of Terjola population in this process" (Maestro, 9 PM News, 3 June, 2014).

FORMER MEMEBER OF THE GEORGIAN PARLIAMENT

Unacceptability of Catholics

- **Valeri Gelbakhiani:** "Georgia and Orthodox religion are a different civilization for the West and Catholic world. God save us from Ivanishvili being a missionary of another country and another religion" (Asaval-Dasavali, 17-23 February, 2014).

4.4. RELIGIOUS SERVANTS

Clerics the majority of whom represent the Georgian Orthodox Church as well as a defrocked priest Basil Mkalavishvili, who was indicted for attacks on Jehovah's Witnesses and Baptists in 2004, fanned intolerance towards the following groups: Jehovah's Witnesses – 7, various denominations – 4, Armenian Christians – 1, Catholics – 1. At the same time, negative attitudes were expressed towards the conduct of international Evangelistic event, Festival of Hope in Tbilisi (2) and the award of Bishop Rusudan Gotsiridze with the 2014 International Women of Courage Award by the US government (1).

Some examples:

Unacceptability of Jehovah Witnesses

- **Elizbar Diakonidze, dean:** „Where will the country go if those who think like Jehovah’s Witnesses will become even a quarter of population?“ (Geworld.ge, 2 April, 2014).
- **Basil Mkalavishvili, Priest:** “You must have heard about the raid in Saint Barbare Church, this vandalism was committed by the sectarians of Jehovah, this really is a horrific fact... Haven’t we also been attacked by the Jehovah witnesses – by the gangs of Saakashvili?!” (Reportiori, 15 October, 2014).
- **Basil Mkalavishvili, priest:** “The blood-spilling Saakashvili registered this sect as soon as he came to government... I have always been opposed to the Jehovah’s Witnesses, because this satanic sect has been violent in the ancient Christian country, was proselytizing, which is prohibited. Bokeria was their defender” (Alia, 13 February, 2015).
- **Thoma Tsetskladze, priest:** „God bless you Giorgi [Rustavi 2 TV show Nichieri participant Gevorq Petrosyan]. For 10 years he was a member of the organization which today is called Jehovah’s Witnesses... He saw the real face of that Satanist organization, left this organization of the Satan’s servants ruled from Brooklyn, and now is an Orthodox Christian“ (Alia, 19 November, 2014).

Unacceptability of various confessions

- **Ilia II, Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgian Orthodox Church:** “It is unacceptable for residents of Mtskheta to be non-believers, not baptized and not married in church; it is unacceptable to live in a saint city and not pray before going to bed and in the morning. All this is necessary for happiness” (8 April, 2014).
- **Giorgi Razmadze, priest:** “One day they run to Armenians for Christmas greetings, later they run to Catholics, finally they run to the Patriarch and stand there with candles in their hands. I would like to ask one question to those people through your newspaper: When are they honest? At the Patriarchs office, at Armenians’ or at the Catholic Church? Tolerance does not necessarily mean to tolerate heretics” (Alia, 10 June, 2014).

Against the International Evangelistic event, the Festival of Hope

- **Giorgi Razmadze, priest:** “They are not longing for salvation [organizers of Imedi festival], because they do not believe in God. Their attitude to humanity is very different” (Alia, 10 June, 2014).

Unacceptability of the award of Bishop Rusudan Gotsiridze with the 2014 International Women of Courage Award by First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama

- **Elizbar Diakonidze, dean:** „This fact [award given by the State Department to the Bishop of Evangelical-Baptist Church Rusudan Gotsiridze] is both dangerous and ironic. Obama thinks that giving award for abusing our soul is a recognition?.. I have seen a Muslim in the Georgian army, but never an Evangelist-Baptist, Jehovah’s Witness, because their faith prohibits this to them. This fact gives me the right not to recognize them as a church?“ (Geworld.ge, 2 April, 2014).

Unacceptability of Catholics

- **Vakhtang Davitashvili, priest:** „The Church never persecutes anyone they should look for this in the Catholic Church, where the fires of inquisition were lit“ (Obiketivi, Niht Studio, 30 April, 2014).

Unacceptability of Armenian Church parish

- **David Lasurashvili, deacon:** „...This is the place of Orthodox people, only Orthodox should be praying here [the case of a priest who made an Armenian child to leave the church, because he crossed himself there]” (Rustavi 2, Kurieri, 12 June, 2014).

4.5. OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF SOCIETY

Religious intolerance revealed by other representatives of society show the following picture: Jehovah’s Witnesses – 10, the conduct of international Evangelistic event, Festival of Hope in Tbilisi – 4, the award of Bishop Rusudan Got-siridze with the International Women of Courage Award by the US government – 2, Quakers – 2, state funding of four denominations – 1, various denominations – 2.

Some examples:

Unacceptability of Jehovah Witnesses

- **Rezo Amashukeli, poet:** “Once the idiot father of this squint Giga Bokeria told me – “why cannot a Georgian be Jehovah’s Witness?” He cannot, because Orthodox Christianity saved us!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 6-12 October, 2014).
- **Rezo Amashukeli, poet:** “Everyone should know that Orthodoxy is the integral part of the Georgian nation and it is the only way to survive biologically. Whenever this shameless Zurabishvili proves that any Georgian can be a Jehovah’s Witness, this will be my answer to him: Let them be, but Orthodoxy is my way of salvation!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 5-11 May, 2014).
- **Merab Shatirishvili, Georgian Reality – Assembly of Wise Men of Nation:** “How dare Jehovah’s witnesses to translate their sectarian magazines into Megrelian and Svan languages?! How may the state turn a blind eye to that?! “... If we should be happy about the association with the EU ensuring that sects will be given carte blanche in Georgia and conduct their activity undermining the Georgian statehood, then this is not something to be happy about and celebrate - this is a tragedy!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 7-13 July, 2014).
- **Gevroq Petrosyan, Nichieri TV show participant:** „I got an opportunity to say loudly that the sect in which I was [Jehovah’s Witnesses] is malicious.” (Prime Time, 24 November, Asaval-Dasavali 1-7 December, 2014).
- **Boria Gogishvili, participant of the demonstration:** “Entire Terjola will stand up for it, we will burn down their temple. There is no place for them here. I was born here, I grew up here and my children will grow up here. I cannot allow my family to be looking at this” (Pirveli, 3 June, 2014).

Against the International Evangelistic event, the Festival of Hope

- **Giorgi Gabedava, former convict, released under the status of political prisoner:** “They are doing the same as Jehovah followers did with Georgian Orthodox people. Because they were poor, they were ready to trade their belief in

bread. They are doing the same now... they are deceiving people as if it is a festival [Imedi festival] Franklin Graham is a rich man, he said he will invest in Georgians, but he needs critical mass of people for that. They are intending to turn Georgians into sectarians, just like Jehovah supporters did, but they were angels compared to those” (Rezonsi, 9 June, 2014).

Unacceptability of the award of Bishop Rusudan Gotsiridze with the 2014 International Women of Courage Award by First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama

- **Shota Apkhaidze, person released as a political prisoner:** “By this step America has shown us that it will always support its allies, that it prefers Evangelical-Baptist Church over the Orthodox one... We must establish that activities of the sects are anticonstitutional, threaten the citizens, undermine Georgia, and must be banned legally... Activities of all suspicious organizations must be investigated, their finances must be controlled. We should remember that they actively participate in politics, they want revenge and support Saakashvili” (Geworld.ge, 12 March, 2014).
- **Irakli Ubilava, member of the Young Political Scientists Club:** “This award was given while Stephan Fule was meeting the Patriarch and assuring him and the Georgian society that integration of Georgia in the Transatlantic space does not threaten Georgian values and way of life, but, as we see, they say one thing, but do another” (Geworld.ge, 12 March, 2014).

Unacceptability of Quakers

- **Nikoloz Mjavanadze, the Rights Defenders’ Union:** “If the Constitutional Court accepts the complaint by the Quakers and agrees with it, Georgian Orthodox Church will be destroyed, because it will not survive the 20% tax, and compared to the sects who get dozens of millions as grants from the foreign countries, Georgian Orthodox Church will be in a weaker humiliating position“ (Asaval-Dasavali, 17-23 November, 2014).

Unacceptability of state financing of four religious denominations

- **Giorgi Germanidze, Global Tendencies Research Institute:** “This government is, maybe not explicitly, but in fact, continuing the policy of the former government. This can be said, for example, because of the decision they made about financing religious communities... I repeat: this is part of the new world order and its main goal is to destroy the united monolithic society, to confront minorities with the majority, or to put it simply, use the principle of divide and conquer. That’s it, they use this principle on every level“ (Geworld.ge, 3 March, 2014).

Unacceptability of various confessions

- **Lia Tskhomelidze, neighbor of the deceased person:** „He had his soul sold to the Satan... The woman really went to some sect, always talked about fortune-tellers and curses, and they made her finally crazy...” (Kviris Palitra, 22 January, 2015).
- **Goga Elibego, Global Brinji:** “He [Valery Permyakov] is one of those called the Pentecostals, that sect... Somehow there is the expert’s conclusion already that on 12 January, when he committed that crime, this is somehow connected to this sect, that day specifically, there is something behind that” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 19 January, 2015).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Media. Results of the monitoring show that the journalistic culture, values and norms regarding reporting on the issues of ethnic and religious minorities is very polarized. On the one hand, there is radical media which itself is a source of discrimination and a platform for dissemination of the extremist groups' intolerance. On the other hand, there also is the media where xenophobia is not part of editorial policy, but, while reporting on the minorities' issues, we see some cases of violations of professional standards, which helps the atmosphere of intolerance. At the same time, there is the category of value-based media outlets¹⁴ on the media map, which not only refrain from supporting various phobias, but are notable for inclusive and ethical value-based reporting. Instances of intolerance that happen in the society are used by such media outlets for illustration of existing problems and for discussion on these issues.

Recommendations:

- It is important for the media to differentiate between the hate speech stemming from a public persons and the hate speech by a private individuals, and to refrain from covering the latter. At the same time, even in the case of public persons, journalists should have a critical approach to what respondents say and check the validity of the facts they mention and assessments they make.
- A journalist should adequately assess the context and the economic, social and political atmosphere in which specific statements are made. A journalist should pay particular attention to the pre-election period, when political parties use hate speech for their political goals and electoral purposes. Professional approach means assessing whether the expressions are fact based and reasonable in the circumstances.
- Media can cover not just on conflicts and divisive issues, but also reflect the existing diversity and support integration through inclusive approach. Reporting on the minorities' issues should be done not only in connection to negative events, such as conflicts, incidents, hate and such, but on all issues that are common for all citizens of Georgia as equals.
- Inclusive approach does not mean only separate isolated instances of covering minorities' holidays, but presenting perspective of the minority representatives on the current affairs (such issues as criminalization of abortion, health-care reform, etc.), in order for the media to provide public forum for all groups of the society, and also to demonstrate to the society the common things that can unite people of different identity.

Accountability and self-regulation of media. Improving the level of reporting on the issues of diversity is dependent on the development of effective accountability and self-regulation mechanisms in media. The situation has been gradually changing lately in this regard. Separate cases of accountability¹⁵ can be considered positive examples, but mixed practice of the Broadcasters Code of Conduct and review of complaints requires assessment of these mechanisms efficacy. While TV companies Rustavi 2¹⁶ and Imedi¹⁷ reviewed the complaints filed to their self-regulation agencies on the basis

¹⁴ Among the media outlets under the monitoring Tabula TV and internet portal Netgazeti are notable in this regard.

¹⁵ For instance, internet portal Ambebi.ge took down from their web-site the material which covered a crime in a xenophobic context, after a statement by NGOs.

¹⁶ http://mdfgeorgia.ge/geo/view_news/65

¹⁷ http://mdfgeorgia.ge/geo/view_news/339

of the Broadcasters' Code of Conduct, Kavkasia TV avoids adoption of this standard, by which it ignores the mechanism envisioned by the law and the practice established by other TV companies.

Recommendations:

- A serious research is required in order to assess whether the requirements of broadcasting law are fully followed regarding the functioning of self-regulation institutional mechanisms.
- It is important for the Communications Regulatory Commission to take more vigorous approach to the broadcasters' accountability regarding self-regulation, publicize the broadcasters' reports, and react on the cases when the broadcasters ignore the procedures established by law.
- It is important for the NGOs to continue media monitoring, finding violations and filing complaints on them to the self-regulation institutions, and also support media literacy, so that the citizens are more informed on the complaints mechanisms and media standards.

Media Education. Naturally, a journalist cannot have special knowledge about religious or ethnic groups, but he or she must be able to find the necessary sources, check facts, and avoid dissemination of false facts or interpretations, as well as stereotypes.

Recommendations:

- It is important for media schools to pay particular attention to teaching diversity reporting and journalist ethics.
- It is important to cooperate with NGOs and ethnic/religious community organizations in order to check facts and to provide society with in-depth reporting;
- Because of the growing Turkophobic and Islamophobic sentiments it is necessary to provide the society with correct information about Muslim citizens of Georgia and the friendly state of Turkey. Also, it must be made totally clear that Georgian Muslims are Georgian citizens with full rights and identifying their interests with the interests of any other country is wrong, as well as putting disseminated information in such context.

Political Parties and the Government. Political parties, especially the ruling political team and high-level officials, as well as representatives of local administrations, must acknowledge the damage brought by hate speech and the special responsibility they have in this regard.

Recommendations:

- Representatives of the legislative, executive and local government must refrain from making statements that deepen intolerance, incite violence towards various groups, or violate the state's religious neutrality.
- Since instances of xenophobia connected to social problems are especially frequent during the pre-election period, and in Adjara regions the focus is on the negative context of the Turkish and Muslim identity, it is important for the political parties to work out and sign a joint declaration rejecting use of hate speech, xenophobia, Turkophobia and other discriminatory rhetoric prior to the 2016 parliamentary election.
- It is important to develop public servants' code of conduct, establishing institutional responsibility of the officials in the cases of the use of discriminatory language.