

HATE SPEECH

2016 REPORT

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This report “Hate Speech” by Media Development Foundation is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) within “Promoting Integration, Tolerance and Awareness Program in Georgia [PITA], implemented by the UN Association of Georgia. The contents are the responsibility of [the authors or its sub-recipient] and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government and UNAG.



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INTRODUCTION

In partnership with the United Nations Association of Georgia (UNAG) and with the financial support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Media Development Foundation (MDF) participates in implementing the Promoting Integration, Tolerance and Awareness (PITA) Program. Within the framework of the program, Media Development Foundation (MDF) implements a media component, which involves monitoring of hate speech in media and public space and reacting on possible violations, as well as analyzing how media outlets observe professional standards in covering the above mentioned issues.

The present report covers the period from January 1, 2016 to October 15, 2016. Its introductory part involves key findings, methodology, review of hate speech regulations and aggregate quantitative data by types of hate speech. Part I covers homophobic expressions by types and sources; Part II unites xenophobic expressions, which in turn involves 2.1. Turkophobia; 2.2. Discrimination on grounds of religion; 2.3. Xenophobia against various ethnicities or nations; 2.4. Armenophobia and 2.5. Racism; Part III unites the cases of intolerance on political and other grounds and calls for violence and IV part presents information on those channels and subjects who most frequently appeared as a source of hate speech.

KEY FINDINGS

The monitoring of hate speech and its sources in media (1 January – 15 October, 2016) revealed the following tendencies:

Overall data

- Out of total 868 discriminatory comments, 454 contained homophobia, 324 contained xenophobia of various types (Turkophobia, Armenophobia, racism, et cetera) and 90 showed intolerance on political and other grounds.
- The source of most frequent hate speech of all categories was Asaval-Dasavali newspaper (101), which was followed by Gerowld.ge (69). Among political parties, the Alliance of Patriots was in the lead (77) with the Georgian Dream following (54).
- The abundance of civil organizations (17) established between 2012 and 2016 was observed, who encouraged hate speech and fanned anti-Western sentiments by exploiting homophobic and ethno-nationalistic motives.

Homophobia

- Out of total 868 discriminatory expressing, the largest share – 52% (454 cases) accounted for homophobia.
- Among the government members, the highest number of homophobic statements was made by the Deputy State Minister for Diaspora Issues.
- The most homophobic media outlet was Asaval-Dasavali newspaper. The most homophobic political party was the Democratic Movement – United Georgia and its associate People's Assembly (39), followed by the ruling political force – Georgian Dream (34). The most homophobic civil organization was the Demographic Society XXI (6); the founders of this organization are representatives of influential business companies and media businesses. The most homophobic religious servant was Basil Mkalavishvili (6).
- The most homophobic message was that the West imposes homosexuality on Georgia.

Turkophobia

- Some 17% (148) of hate speech was Turkophobic.

- The highest number of Turkophobic comments was published by Geworld.ge (22); the highest number of Turkophobic comments of respondents was broadcast on TV Obiektivi (47) without any editorial remark. The most Turkophobic political party was the Alliance of Patriots (44).
- The most widespread Turkophobic messages were: Turkey carries out expansion in Georgia (37), Turkey is an occupier (18) and historical enemy (15).

Discrimination on religious ground

- Discrimination on religious ground comprised 8% (71) of overall data.
- The highest number of comments containing discrimination on religious ground was published by Geworld.ge (7). A political party most frequently resorting to discrimination on religious ground was the Alliance of Patriots (8) whereas a religious person most frequently discriminating on religious ground was Davit Isakadze (5).
- The highest number of discriminatory statements concerning religion was made by religious servants of the Orthodox Church (19) with the topic of anti-Catholicism dominating (12) in September in relation to the visit of Pope of Rome.
- In total, the highest number of discriminatory comments were made with regard to Islam (31).

Xenophobia towards various groups

- Xenophobic statements in relation to various groups accounted for 8% (64) of the overall data.
- In terms of media outlets, Asaval-Dasavali was in the lead (6) while in terms of political parties, the Alliance of Patriots was second to none (10)
- Among government members, Interior Minister Levan Izoria, who currently holds the position of Defense Minister, compared foreign students with terrorists.
- The highest number of statement involving discriminatory attitudes towards several nationalities and ethnicities (23) was followed by the calls to restrict sale of land plots to foreigners (13).

Armenophobia

- Armenophobia comprised 3% (26) of the overall data.
- Most frequently Armenophobia was seen in Asaval-Dasavali and Sakinformi online edition; political parties made two Armenophobic statements and in both cases the source was the ruling coalition Georgian Dream.
- Most frequently Armenophobia manifested in referring to Armenian origin without any justification in discriminatory context (12); this was followed by stereotyping statements according to which Armenians misappropriate benefits of others (8).

Racism

- Racism made up 2% (15) of the overall data.
- Among the government members, it was the Ambassador of Georgia to the USA who made a racist statement. Among political parties, racist language was applied by Erovnulebi (Nationals) (3) and the Alliance of Patriots (2). Among media, racist comment was published by Geworld.ge

Intolerance on political and other grounds

- Intolerance on political and other grounds accounted for 10% (90) of total hate speech instances.
- Among media outlets, Asaval-Dasavali (10) while among political parties, the Georgian Dream (15) were the leaders in expressing political intolerance, which included calls encouraging violence, against the United National Movement.

METHODOLOGY

In order to create a comprehensive picture about the sources and types of hate speech, both mainstream and tabloid media outlets were selected as the subjects of monitoring.

The monitoring covers the following media outlets:

- News and news magazines of eight televisions: Georgian Public Broadcaster (Moambe); Rustavi 2 (Kurieri, P.S.); Imedi (Kronika, Imedis Dro, Imedis Kvira); Maestro (Contact at 8pm); Tabula (Focus); GDS (20:30), Kavkasia (Dges, 20:30). The list was further expanded in a pre-election period by adding news program aired by Obiektivi TV¹ from June 1.
- Talk shows of six televisions: Rustavi 2 (Archevani); Imedi (Gia Eteri, Politika, Kronikis Studia); Maestro (Gamis Kontakti, Maestros Faktori); Obiektivi (Gamis Studia); Kavkasia (Barieri, Spektri); Tabula (Teorema).
- Seven online editions: Sakinformi; Netgazeti; Interpressnews; Georgia and the World (Geworld.ge); PIA; Kviris Palitra. Pirveli Radio and Marshalpress were monitored in addition from April 1.
- Four newspapers: Rezonansi; Prime Time; Asaval-Dasavali; Alia

The monitoring was conducted to detect the types of hate speech on various grounds (sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, national identity, race, politically motivated intolerance, etc.). The findings of monitoring are grouped according to the following sources: media; political parties and public organizations affiliated thereof; clerics; representatives of the public and public organizations; present and former authorities. Public organizations affiliated with political parties are grouped in a relevant political group. Taking into account political migration in the process of monitoring, discriminatory expressions are categorized in a group, to which the author belonged at the moment of making a relevant statement.

The monitoring reflects both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative part involves the types of discriminatory messages and discusses the facts of violation of media standards in separate cases.

¹ Obiektivi started to air news programs in May and it fell under monitoring starting from June 1.

HATE SPEECH REGULATIONS

According to the recommendation adopted by the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers in 1997, the term “hate speech” shall be understood as covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin.

Georgian legislation does not criminalize hate speech except those cases, when it creates a threat of immediate, irreversible and apparent violence. Programme restrictions related to hate speech are envisaged only in case of broadcasting. According to Article 56.3 of the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting,

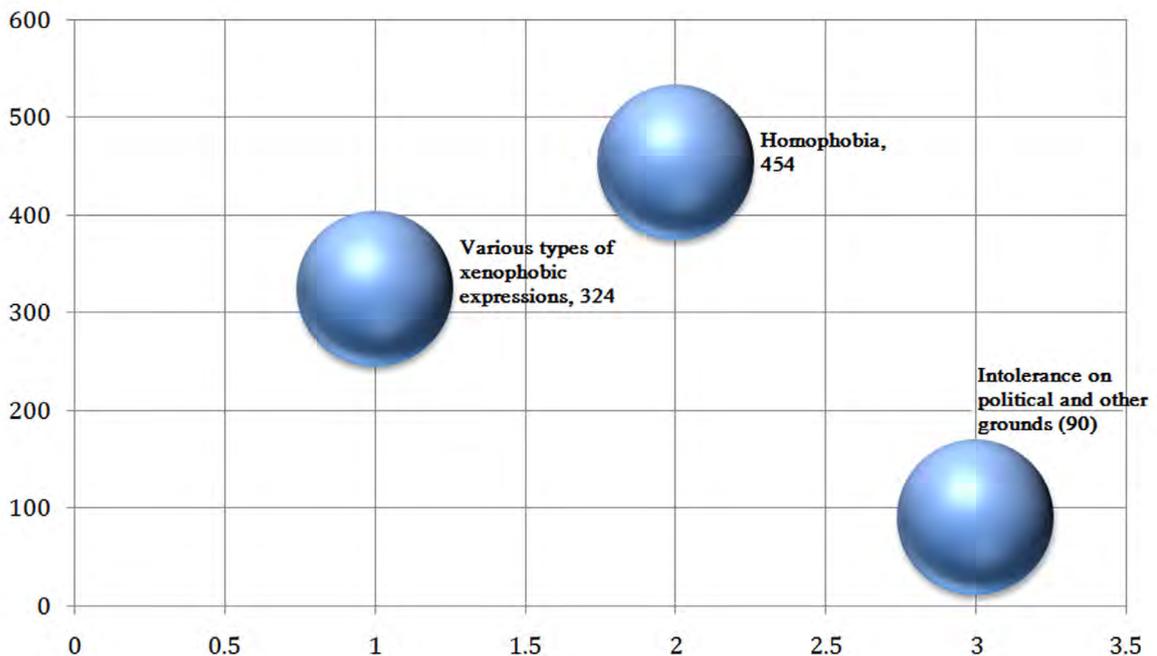
“Broadcasting of programmes intended to abuse or discriminate against any person or group on the basis of disability, ethnic origin, religion, opinion, gender, sexual orientation or on the basis of any other feature or status, or which are intended to highlight this feature or status, are prohibited, except when this is necessary due to the content of a programme and when it is targeted to illustrate existing hatred”.

Hate speech restriction standards are also set by the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters, Code of Conduct of the Georgian Public Broadcaster and Charter of Journalistic Ethics. The Code of Conduct for Broadcasters has been adopted by the Georgian National Communications Commission (GNCC) as a normative act. Pursuant to the code, self-regulatory mechanism (commission and an appeal body) has been created in the broadcasters since 2009 to deal with violations. According to the CoE report, the effectiveness of the self-regulatory mechanisms is hampered by the different definition of “affected party” among different broadcasters when NGOs and representative of the certain groups are deprived a right to lodge a complaint.

OVERALL QUANTITATIVE DATA

868 expressions of hate speech by various sources were observed during the monitoring period (January 1 – October 15, 2016) with 454 cases related to homophobia, as shown on chart 1, followed by various types of xenophobic expressions (324) and intolerance on political and other grounds (90).

Chart 1. Types of hate speech



Comparison of xenophobia with various types of hate speech shows (chart 2 and table 1) that following homophobia (454), Turkophobic sentiments (148) are most intensive, followed by intolerance on political and other grounds (90), religious discrimination (71), xenophobia against various groups (64), Armenophobia (26) and racism (15).

Chart 2. Types of hate speech

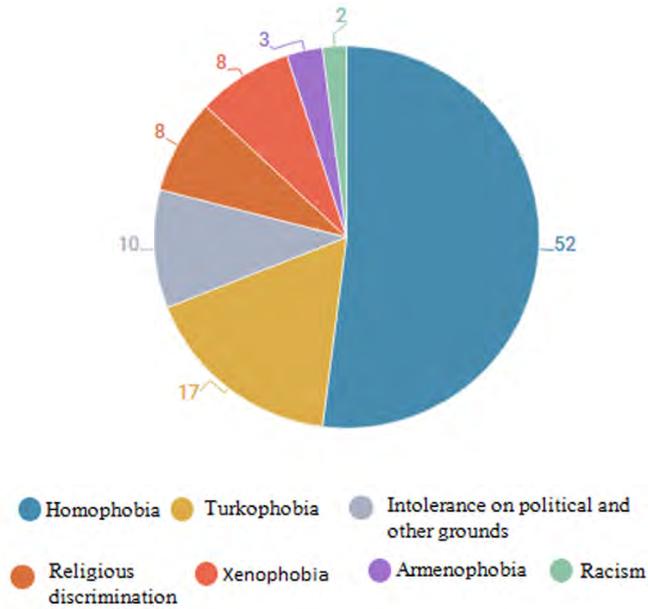


Table 1. Types of hate speech by sources

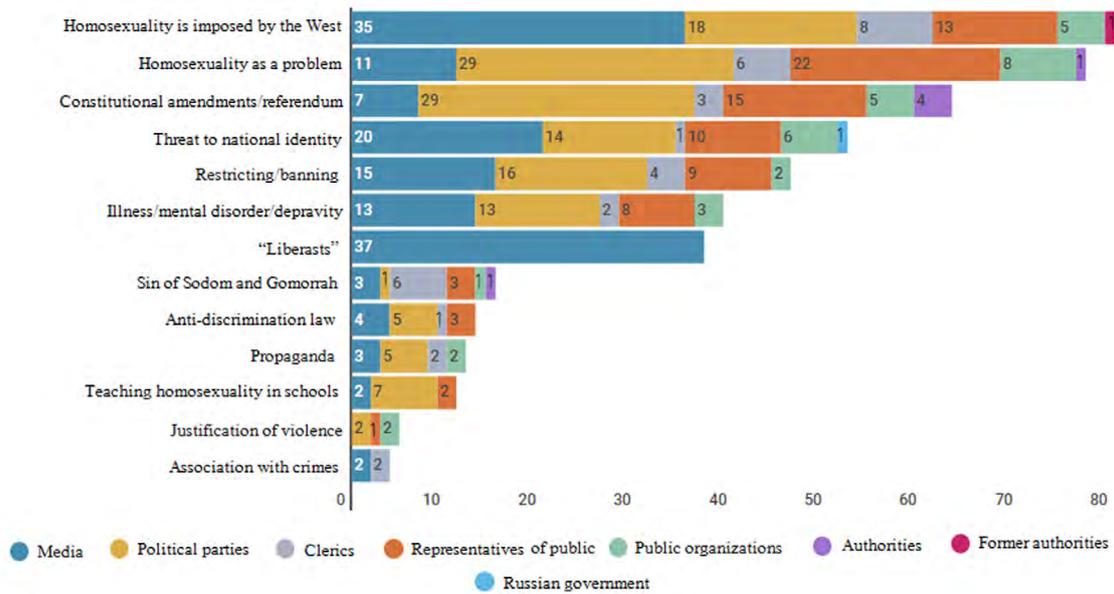
Sources	Homophobia	Turkophobia	Intolerance on political and other grounds	Religious discrimination	Xenophobia against various groups	Armenophobia	Racism	Total
Political parties	139	57	28	11	16	2	5	258
Media	152	41	18	16	16	10	1	254
Representatives of public	86	28	34	16	24	12	7	207
Public organizations	34	17	5	6	6	2	1	71
Clerics	35	2		19				56
Authorities	6				1		1	8
Russian government	1							1
Former authorities	1	3	5	3	1			13
Total	454	148	90	71	64	26	15	868

I. HOMOPHOBIA

QUANTITATIVE DATA. As table 1 shows, among 454 homophobic expressions, which were covered by media 459 times, media representatives were in the lead (152), followed by political parties (139); representatives of public (86); public organizations (34); clerics (35); present (6) and former authorities (1), as well as representatives of the Russian government (1).

Chart 1.1 shows those key messages, which were homophobic in nature: there was a dominant opinion that homosexuality was imposed by the West (80); homosexuality was described as a problem (77); the issue about the need of constitutional amendments/referendum to define marriage as a unity of a man and a woman became topical (63); homosexuality was described as a threat to national identity (52); statements were made on restricting and even banning LGBT rights (46); homosexuality was portrayed as an illness, mental disorder and depravity (39); all those groups or individuals, who are in favor of LGBT equality, were described as “liberasts” – a combination of “liberal” and “pederast”. The term was first introduced by newspaper Asaval-Dasavali. Among the key targets were President Giorgi Margvelashvili, National Movement, Republican Party, non-governmental sector and separate public figures (37); homosexuality was described as the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah (15); the anti-discrimination law approved by the Parliament was perceived as an attempt to legalize same-sex marriage (13); freedom of expression of LGBT persons were perceived as a propaganda (12); a school subject “Me and Society” was slammed as an attempt to teach homosexuality in schools (11). In five cases, violence against this group was justified and in four cases, homosexuality was associated with various types of crimes.

Chart 1.1. Types of homophobic messages



Quantitative data of homophobic expressions by their sources are reviewed below and Part IV provides the examples of hate speech by separate sources and types.

MEDIA. Among media outlets, most cases of homophobic expressions were observed in Asaval-Dasavali; this newspaper is in the lead as the source of hate speech (70) and by number of homophobic respondents (92). Asaval-Dasavali is followed by online edition Geworld.ge (Georgia and the World), where along with homophobic editorial position (33), some homophobic statements made by respondents are also provided (26). The list of other media outlets looks as follows: Alia Holding, uniting newspapers Alia and Kviris Kronika (editorial text– 19; respondents – 31); Sakinformi (editorial text – 14; respondents – 12); Obieqtivi (editorial text – 11; respondents – 26); Marshalpress (editorial text – 5; respondents – 30).

Chart 1.2. Media sources of homophobic messages

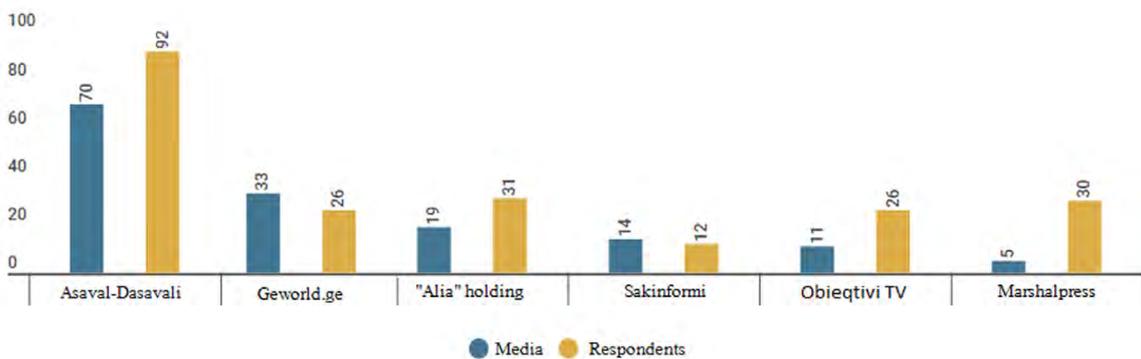
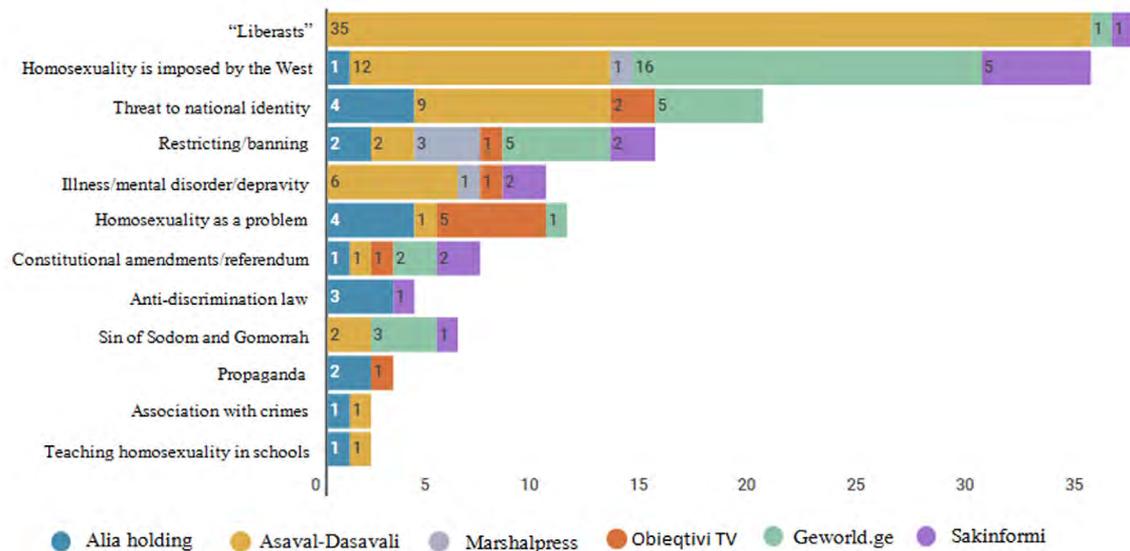


Chart 1.3 reflects the types of homophobic messages, where media itself is the source of hate speech. The most widespread homophobic expression was related to inadmissibility of those groups and individuals, who protect LGBT rights. The term “liberasts” (combination of liberal and pederast), which was first introduced by newspaper Asaval–Dasavali, was most often used by media in a homophobic context (37), followed by an opinion that the West imposes homosexuality on us (35).

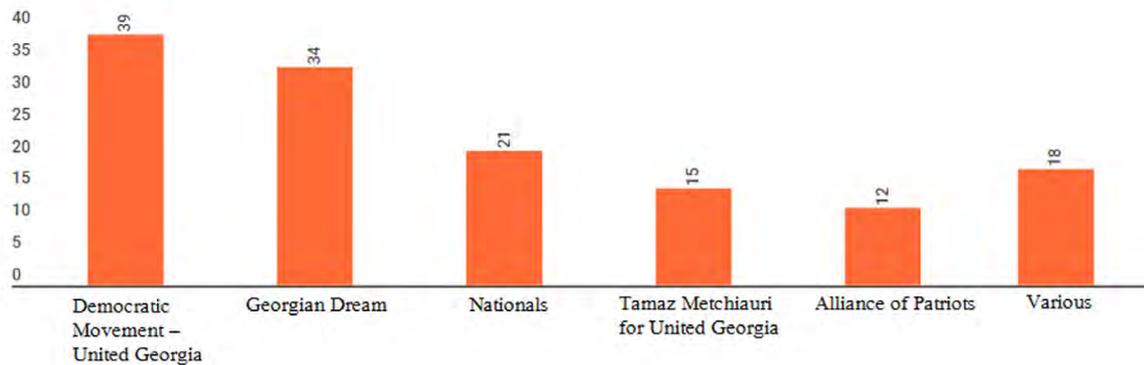
Chart 1.3. Typology of homophobic messages by media sources



If mainstream media covered the expressions of hate speech by officials to illustrate the problem, several media outlets were observed, who represented the source of homophobia and simultaneously covered expression of hate speech by other sources.

POLITICAL PARTIES. 139 cases of homophobia were observed with representatives of various political parties being the sources. The majority of these cases (39) were related to Nino Burjanadze’s Democratic Movement party and its affiliated People’s Assembly, as well as the party’s majoritarian MP candidate during the 2016 parliamentary and 2014 local elections, Guram Palavandishvili (34), who is behind the initiative to define marriage in the constitution as a union of a man and a woman. The movement Nationals made 21 homophobic statements. Its leader, Sandro Bregadze was Deputy State Minister for Diaspora Issues till February 19, 2016 and in his previous capacity he frequently used hate speech in his statements, which will be discussed in the part related to the government. He is followed by Tamaz Mechiauri – For United Georgia (15), former member of the ruling Georgian Dream coalition (he quit the coalition in late May); Alliance of Patriots made 12 homophobic statements and the category “various” involves independent member of the Tbilisi City Council (Sakrebulo) Soso Manjavidze (4), who entered the Sakrebulo through the party list of Alliance of Patriots and quit the party in 2014; also Free Georgia (3); Our Homeland (3); Neutral Georgia (2); Kartuli Dasi (Georgian Troupe - 2); National Forum (1); Labor Party (1); Industrialists (1) and People’s Party (1).

Chart 1.4. Sources of homophobic messages by political parties



In case of political parties, the issue of constitutional amendments on defining marriage and holding a referendum (29) was especially topical and it was basically lobbied by the movement Nationals, Georgian Dream and Democratic Movement – United Georgia. Homosexuality as a problem was also discussed in 29 cases, while in 18 instances there was a dominant opinion that homosexuality has been imposed by the West. This opinion was basically voiced by Nino Burjanadze’s Democratic Movement (8) and Nationals (4). Some statements were also made about restricting the rights of LGBT persons (16), homosexuality representing a threat to national identity (14), where it was portrayed as illness and depravity.

SOCIETY. 86 homophobic statements were made on the part of separate representatives of the society. The majority of them discussed homosexuality as a problem (22); focus was made on the need for constitutional amendments and referendum (15) and there was a dominant opinion that homosexuality was imposed by the West (13).

CLERICS. The clergy of the Georgian Orthodox Church made 35 homophobic statements. There was a dominant opinion that homosexuality has been imposed by the West (8); it is the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah (6) and represents a problem (6). The majority of homophobic statements were made by Basil Mkalavishvili (6), who was arrested in 2004 for masterminding and carrying out organized violence against religious minorities and burning the religious literature of Jehovah’s witnesses; he was sentenced to six years in jail. Mkalavishvili was excommunicated by the Georgian Orthodox Church in 1996.

PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS. Representatives of public organizations made 34 homophobic statements. Most active among them were the following pro-Russian organizations: Eurasian Institute (Gulbaat Rtskhiladze); Society of Erekle II (Archil Chkoidze); Public-Patriotic Union ‘Russia is Our Neighbor’; Stalin Society. Homophobia was also incited by ethnic-nationalist groups – Demographic Society of Georgia XXI; Georgian Mission (Gia Korkotashvili); Georgian Legion; Union of Adjarian Patriots; Free Generation; Youth National Alliance (Giorgi Gabedava); Union of Human Rights Defenders (Nikoloz Mzhavanadze) and other newly established organizations.

In case of public organizations, homosexuality was again described as a problem (8), a threat to national identity (6) and a phenomenon imposed by the West (5).

PRESENT AND FORMER OFFICIALS. Government officials made six homophobic statements; four of them were related to the need of constitutional amendments and referendum with Deputy State Minister for Diaspora Issues, Sandro Bregadze being the source. The latter quit the post on February 18, 2016 and returned to the movement Nationals. In one case, the Education Minister used homophobic term “buggery” in a negative context when talking about a school subject “Me and Society.”

Newspaper Asaval-Dasavali published some assessments by Russian President Vladimir Putin, where he spoke about incompliance of homosexuality with traditional identity.

One homophobic statement was made on the part of former government officials and ex-Security Minister Valeri Khaburdzania was its source.

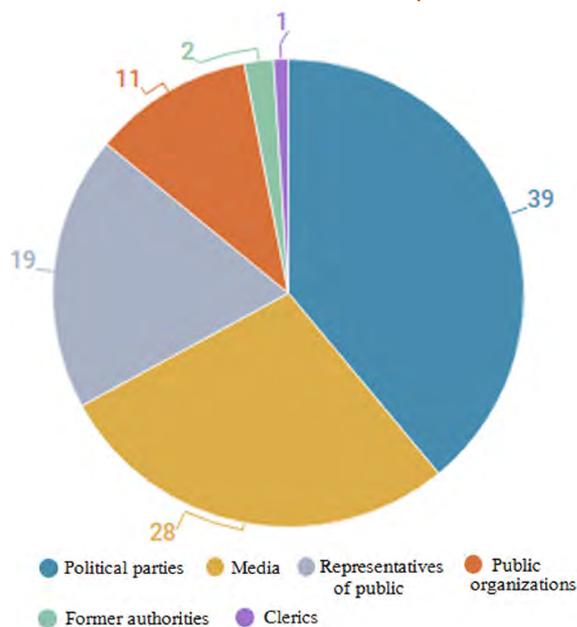
II. XENOPHOBIA

Out of 324 various expressions of xenophobia, the majority – 148 expressions – accounts for Turkophobia, followed by religious discrimination (71), xenophobia against various groups (63), Armenophobia (26) and racism (15).

2.1. TURKOPHOBIA

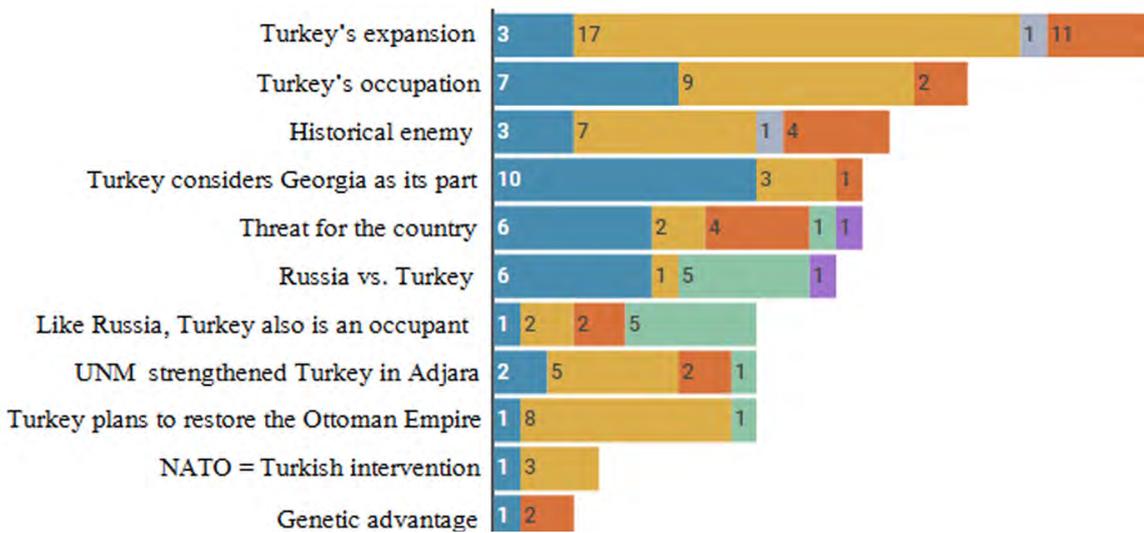
AGGREGATE DATA. Out of 148 Turkophobic statements, which were covered by media 155 times, 57 were made by political parties with Alliance of Patriots being in the lead. Media is the next with 41 statements, followed by the public (28), public organizations (17), former officials (3) and Orthodox Church (2). It should be noted that Islamophobic sentiments (31) are discussed in the part of religious discrimination that was frequently made in a Turkophobic context and was related to the role of neighboring Turkey in the issue of constructing a mosque for Muslim citizens of Georgia.

Chart 2.1. Sources of Turkophobia



There was a dominant opinion about Turkey’s economic and educational expansion in Georgia (37); Turkey was portrayed as an occupant (18) and a historical enemy (15), which considers Georgia as its part (14) and represents a threat for the country (14). There was an established opinion that only Russia restrains Turkey from capturing Adjara that is guaranteed by the Treaty of Kars¹, which according to the presented sources expires soon and respectively, a threat increases; emphasis was also laid on the role of Russian army in liberating Adjara (13). There was an opinion that historical occupation of Georgia by the Ottoman Empire is a current problem and it is equal to Russia’s temporary occupation – “Like Russia, Turkey also is an occupant” (10). There was an established opinions that United National Movement strengthened Turkization of Georgia (10) and Georgia’s NATO membership would have led to Turkish intervention into Georgia (4).

Chart 2.2. Typology of Turkophobic messages



MEDIA. Media itself represented a source of 41 Turkophobic remarks with Geworld.ge (22) being in the lead. If according to the 2014–2015 monitoring report, Obieqtivi TV was in the lead in terms of Turkophobic sentiments (22)², in 2016 Turkophobia expressed by Obieqtivi anchors has sharply decreased (3), but there is a great number of those respondents (47), who circulated Turkophobic sentiments through Obieqtivi TV and its talk-shows. In addition, the hosts of TV programs did not oppose their respondents and did not indicate that their opinions were discriminative in nature as it is envisaged by the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters.

The following situation has been revealed in other media outlets: newspaper Asaval–Dasavali (journalist – 8, respondent – 17); Sakinformi (journalist – 6, respondent – 1); Alia Holding (journalist – 1; respondent – 4). Although Adjara TV was not subject to monitoring, one Turkophobic assessment by the journalist from this TV channel in Asaval–Dasavali fell under the category of television.

¹ The Treaty was signed between Turkey and Soviet governments of the South Caucasus states in the city of Kars on October 13, 1921 and it was ratified in Yerevan on September 11, 1922. Under the treaty, a part of Adjara including the city of Batumi, as well as the Armenian city of Gyumri was ceded by Turkey to the Soviet Union; in exchange, it received Kars, Artvin and Ardahan.

² MDF (2014–2015), Hate Speech and Xenophobia <http://mdfgeorgia.ge/uploads//library/Hate%20Speech-2015-ENG-web.pdf>

Chart 2.3. Media sources of Turkophobia

There was a dominant opinion in media outlets that Turkey discusses the territory of Georgia as its integral part (10); Turkey was portrayed as an occupant (7) and a counterbalance to Russia (6).

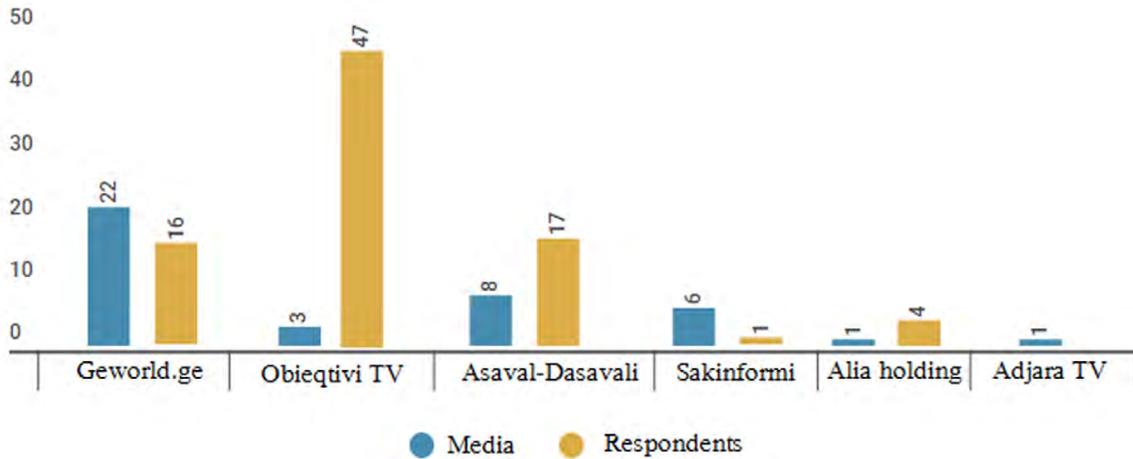
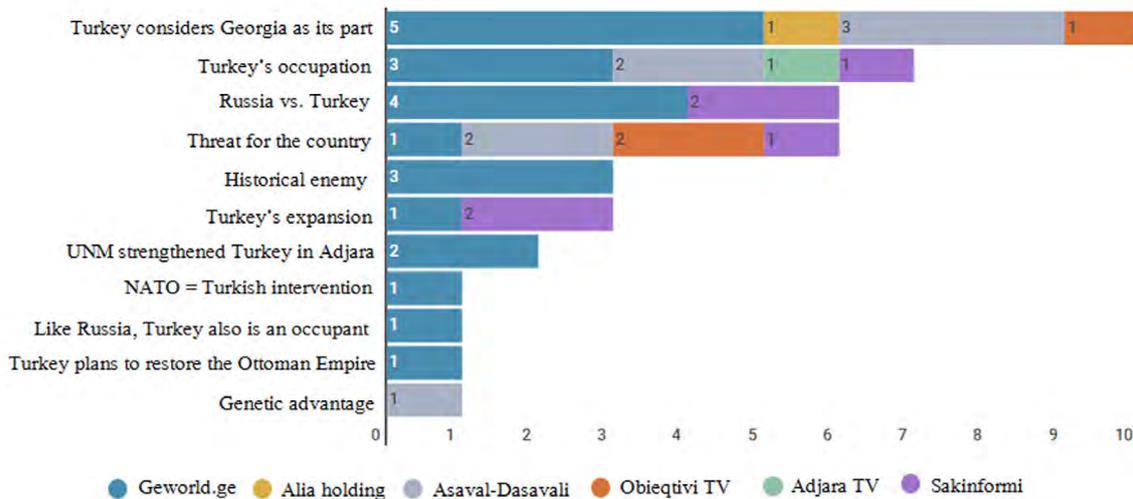
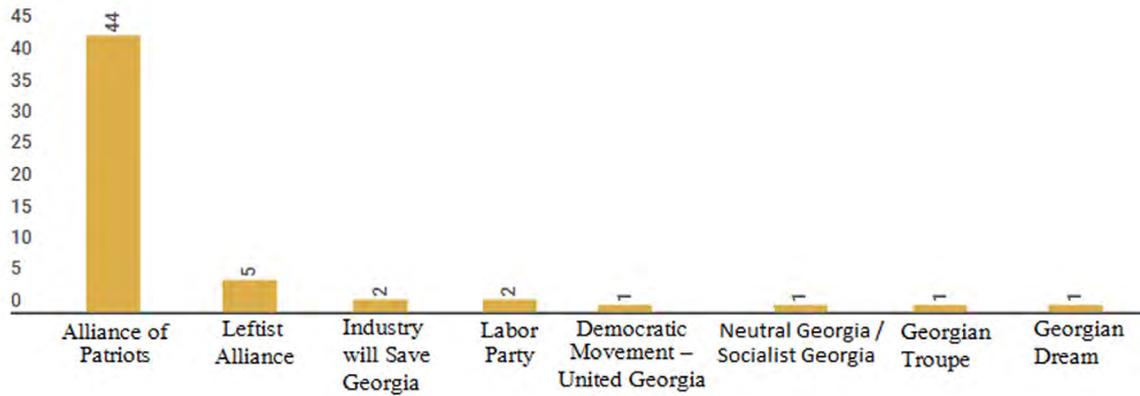


Chart 2.4. Typology of Turkophobic messages according to media sources



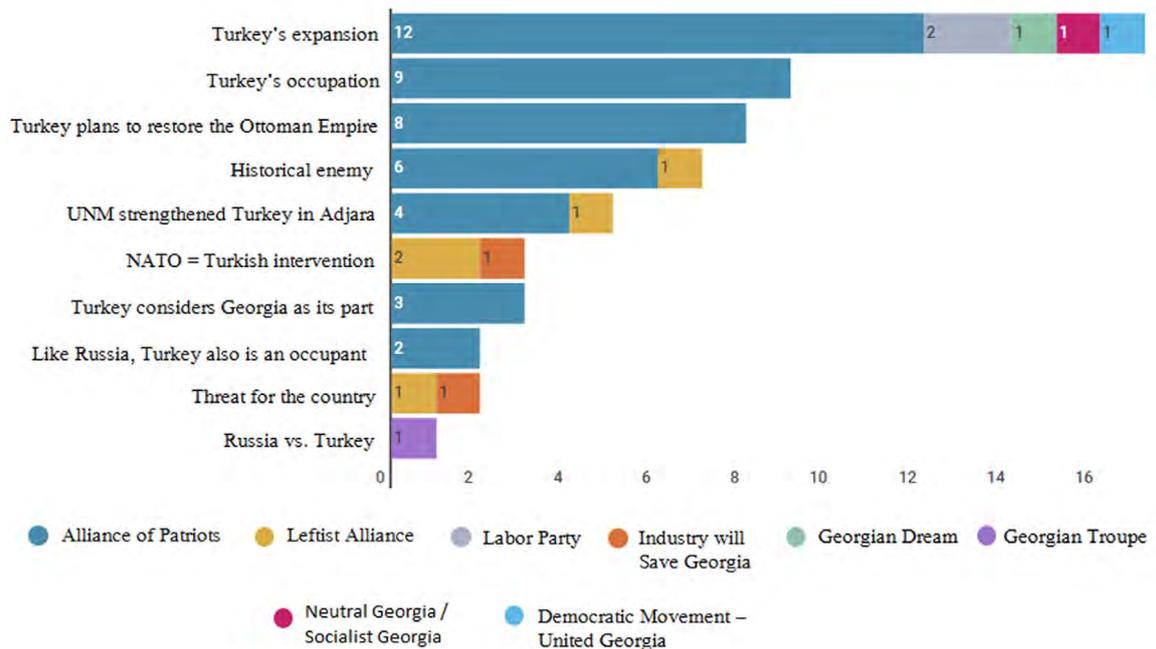
POLITICAL PARTIES. Among political parties, Alliance of Patriots made the majority of Turkophobic statements (44), which were voiced on its affiliated TV – Obieqtivi. It is followed by Leftist Alliance (5), Industry will Save Georgia (2), Labor Party (2) and one statement by each of the following parties: Democratic Movement – United Georgia, Neutral Georgia/Socialist Georgia, Georgian Troupe and Georgian Dream.

Chart 2.5. Sources of Turkophobia by political parties



The key messages made by politicians were related to Turkish expansion (17), portrayal of Turkey as an occupant (9), who plans to restore the Ottoman Empire (8). Along with the statements on historical enmity (7), some remarks were made claiming that the National Movement strengthened Turkey’s positions in Adjara (7). Leftist Alliance and Industrialists portrayed Georgia’s NATO integration as Turkey’s intervention (3). A thesis – if Russia is an occupant, why is not Turkey? – was developed by Alliance of Patriots, which portrayed the Ottoman Empire-old reality as identical to modern Russian occupation.

Chart 2.6. Typology of Turkophobic messages according to political parties



PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES. 28 Turkophobic comments made by public representatives were related to the issue of Turkish expansion (11), historical enmity (4), threats (4), strengthening of the Turkish citizens in Adjara with the support of the National Movement (2), genetic advantage (2), occupation (2), portrayal of Turkish occupation as a counterbalance to Russia’s occupation (2).

PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS. There was a dominant opinion in 17 Turkophobic statements made by various organizations that if Russia is described as an occupant, Turkey should also be considered an occupant (5); Russia was portrayed as a counterbalance to Turkey (5) and this opinion was mostly voiced by pro-Russian organization Eurasian Institute. Union of Human Rights Defenders and Union of Adjarian Patriots were also distinguished by making Turkophobic statements.

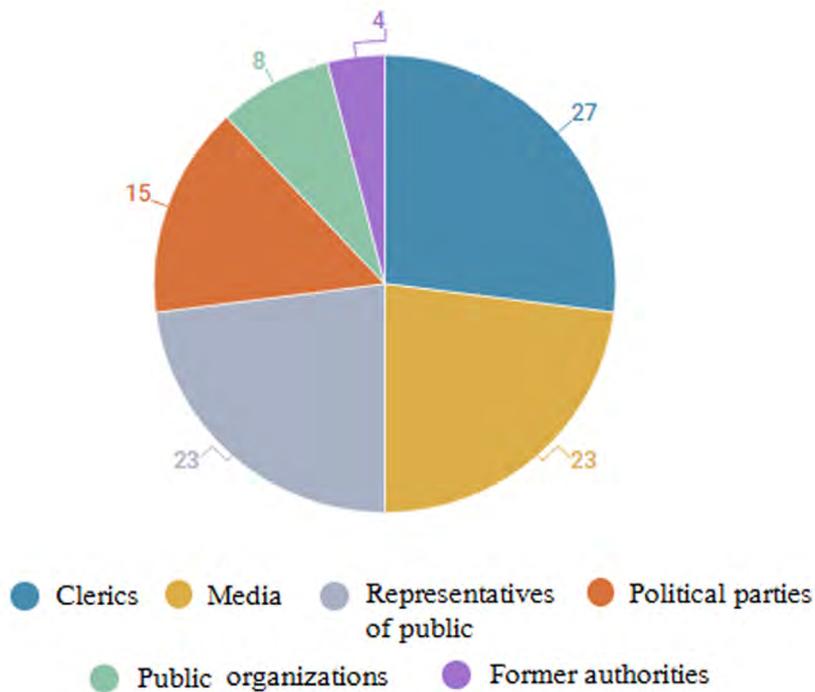
FORMER AUTHORITIES. Three Turkophobic statements made by former authorities were about Turkish expansion, portrayal of Russia as a counterbalance to Turkey and the latter’s portrayal as a threat. Among the sources there was ex-Defense Minister Tengiz Kitovani, who served on this position in 1992-1993 and who currently lives in Moscow; the second statement was made by Georgia’s former representative to the Russian Federation, Leonardo Devdariani (1993-2000) and the third statement was made by Jemal Putkaradze, member of Adjara’s Supreme Council, who was expelled from Georgian Dream faction in 2015.

CLERICS. The both statements related to Turkish expansion and historical enmity were made by Georgian cleric, Elizbar Diakonidze.

2.2. RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

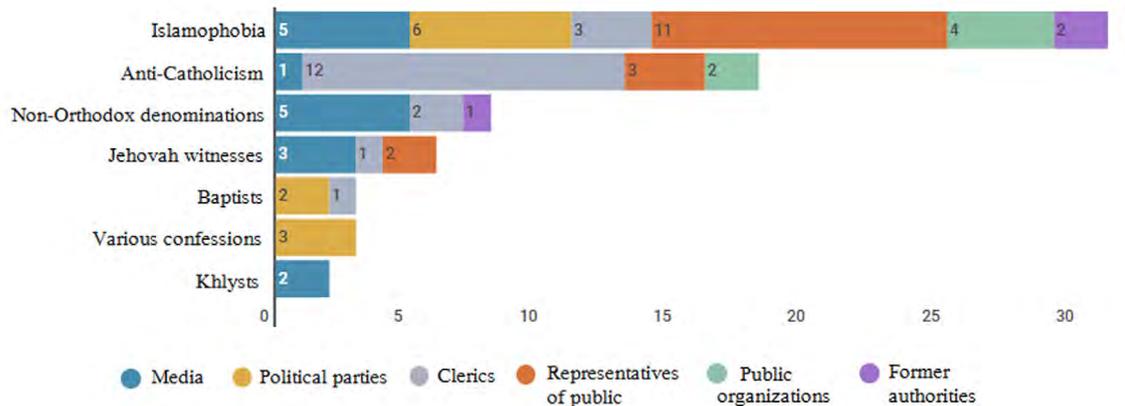
AGGREGATE DATA. Out of 71 cases of religious discrimination, which were covered 72 times, most cases (19) account for the clergy of the Orthodox Church, followed by media (16) and society (16); political parties (11), public organizations (6), representatives of former authorities (3).

Chart 2.2.1. Sources of religious discrimination



As for the types of discriminative expressions, Islamophobic sentiments were most powerful (31), followed by anti-Catholicism (18), that was related to the visit of Pope Francis to Georgia in September. Along with discrimination of non-Orthodox denominations (8), discrimination of Jehovah witnesses (6), Baptists (3), various confessions (3) and Khlysts was also observed.

Chart 2.2.2. Types of religious discrimination by sources

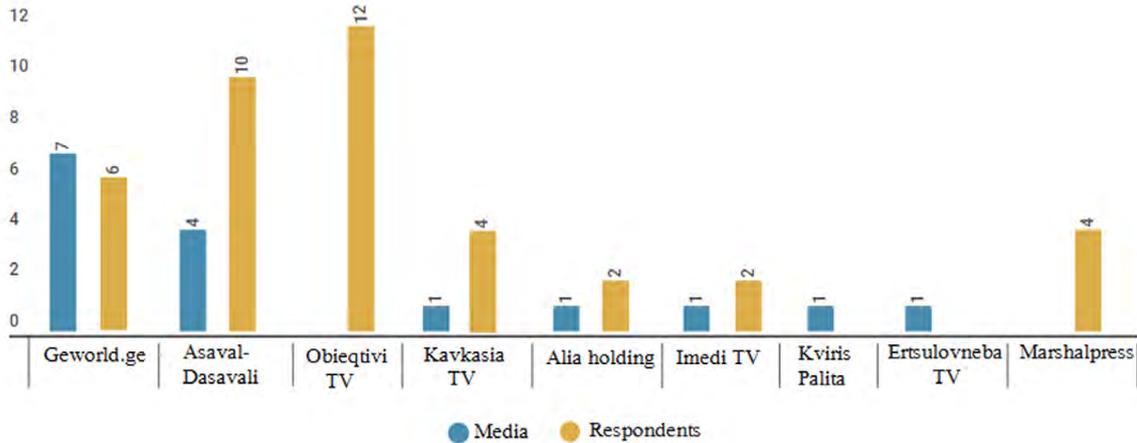


The clergy of the Georgian Orthodox Church made 35 homophobic statements. There was a dominant opinion that homosexuality has been imposed by the West (8); it is the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah (6) and represents a problem (6).

CLERICS. Largest number of comments of religious discrimination were made by clergy of the Georgian Orthodox Church (19) and most of them were against Catholics related to the visit of Pope Francis to Georgia (12). Islamophobic sentiments were at the next place (4) and single cases of discrimination of Jehovah witnesses, Baptists and non-Orthodox denominations were also observed. Baptists were discriminated with reference to Public Defender, Ucha Nanuashvili, when his belief was groundlessly identified. From clergy, the most discriminatory commentaries were made by David Isakadze (5), Nikoloz Chkhikvadze (3), David Nozadze (3).

MEDIA. Media was the source of religious discrimination in 16 cases with Geworld.ge being in the lead (media – 7 and respondents 6); it is followed by newspaper Asaval-Dasavali (media – 4, respondents – 10); one case of religious discrimination was observed in each of the following media outlet: Kavkasia TV (respondents – 4); Alia Holding (respondents – 2); Kviris Palitra, as well as the Georgian Patriarchate’s channel Ertzulovneba; although the latter is not a subject of our monitoring, other media outlets prepared a story about its discriminative video clip. One Islamophobic assessment by Imedi TV anchor, which was released in Alia, fell under the category of the television, represented by the anchor.

Chart 2.2.3. Religious discrimination by media sources

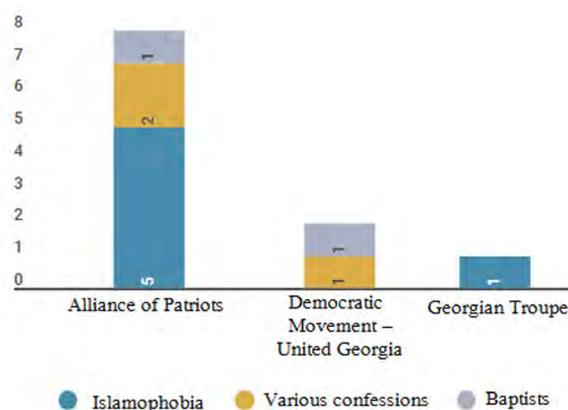


As a common tendency, most cases of hate speech in media (6) are related to Islamophobia, as well as to discrimination of non-Orthodox denominations (5), Jehovah’s Witnesses (3) and Khlysts (2); one case of religious discrimination was related to the visit of Pope Francis and the author from Geworld.ge was involved in it.

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES. 16 cases of religious discrimination were observed on the part of public representatives with 11 cases related to Islamophobia. Islamophobic sentiments were revealed during confrontation between Muslims and local Orthodox population of Adigeni in connection with a local cemetery, as well as during a trial related to slaughtering a pig at the entrance of the building intended for the Muslim school in Batumi and nailing its head to the door. In one case, Muslims were identified with terrorism. Three statements made against Catholics reflected the protest expressed during the visit of Pope Francis. Two cases involved discrimination of Jehovah’s Witnesses.

POLITICAL PARTIES. Out of 11 discriminative comments made by representatives of political parties on religious grounds, eight were made by Alliance of Patriots with five being Islamophobic in nature. Two remarks were discriminative against various confessions and one – against Baptists. Representatives of Democratic Movement – United Georgia made discriminative remarks against Baptists (1) and various confessions (1). The leader of Georgian Troupe made an Islamophobic assessment.

Chart 2.2.4. Religious discrimination by political parties



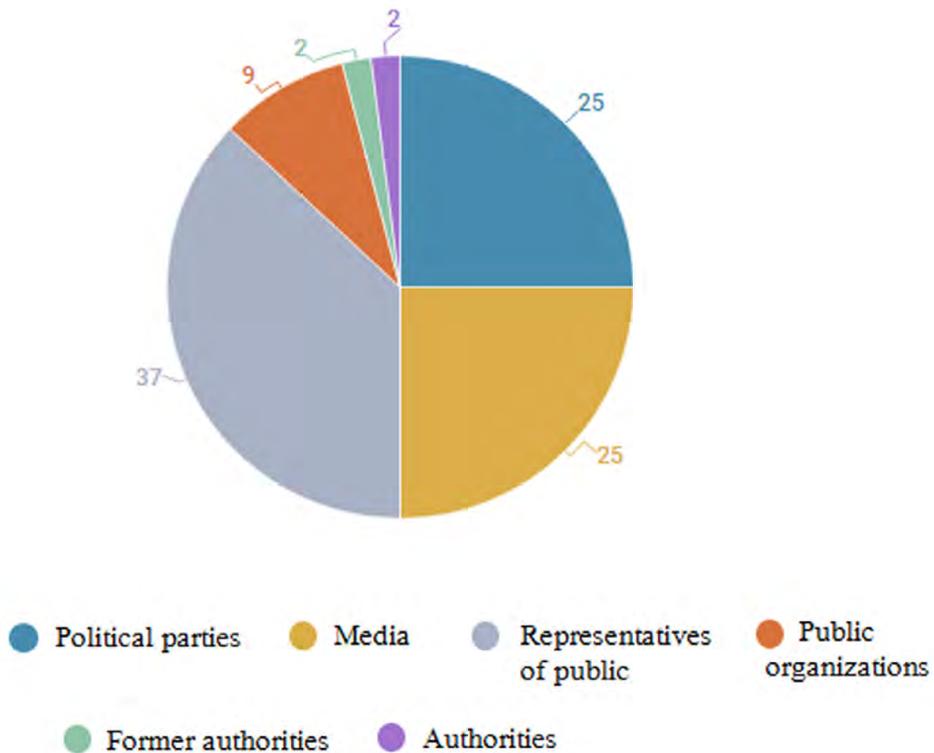
PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS. Out of six statements made by representatives of public organizations, four were Islamophobic in nature; two statements were made against Catholics. Two Islamophobic statements were made by the head of the Union of Human Rights Defenders; one of them reflected the opinion that only Orthodox Russia will protect Adjara against Islamization. The author of one of these statements was pro-Russian organization Eurasian Choice. Two statements against Catholics were made by the Union of Orthodox Christian Parents.

FORMER AUTHORITIES. Three discriminative statements were made by former officials on religious grounds. One statement was made against Baptists, where unjustified hints were made about the Public Defender’s religious identity; moreover, the Baptists and the Public Defender were portrayed as odious sectarians. The author of this comment was former Deputy State Minister for Diaspora Issues, Sandro Bregadze, who resigned on February 18, 2016. Two Islamophobic statements were made by ex-Defense Minister Tengiz Kitovani (1992-1993) and the adviser of ex-President Eduard Shevardnadze in conflict resolution issues.

2.3. XENOPHOBIA AGAINST VARIOUS GROUPS

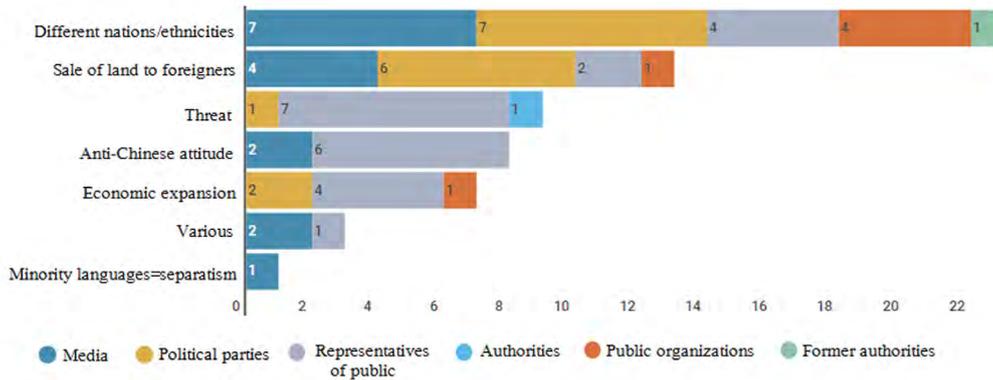
AGGREGATE DATA. Out of 64 cases of xenophobia against various groups, public representatives account for the majority (24 cases), followed by media (16) and political groups (16), public organizations (6); one case of discrimination was revealed from each present and former governments.

Chart 2.3.1. Sources of xenophobia against various groups



As for the types of messages, the majority of cases (23) were related to discrimination of various nationalities and ethnic minorities, followed by comments related to the restriction of sale of agricultural lands to foreigners (13). Foreigners and minorities were identified with threats (9); anti-Chinese sentiments were incited (8) and economic relations were portrayed as expansion (7). The category “other” unites the statements related to genetic advantage, inadmissibility of serving foreigners and possible loss of national identity after removing ethnicity from identity cards (3).

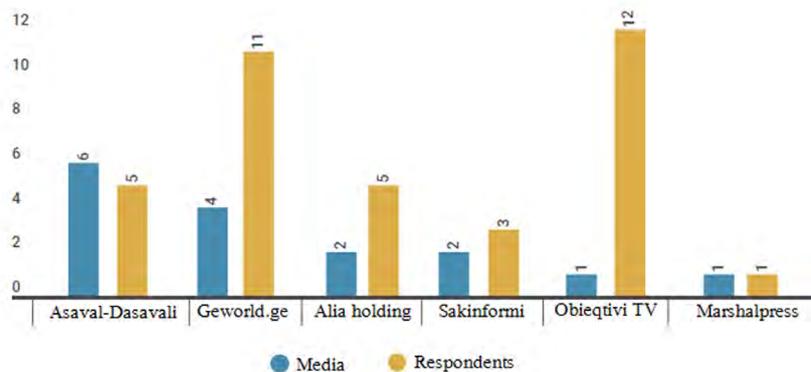
Chart 2.3.2. Types of xenophobic messages against various groups



SOCIETY. Out of 24 xenophobic expressions against various groups, in most cases (7) foreigners and various ethnic groups were identified with threats; anti-Chinese sentiments (6), discrimination on ethnic grounds (4), statements about economic expansion mostly in connection with foreign investments (4) were also observed. Respondents also focused on inadmissibility of selling agricultural lands to foreigners (2) and genetic advantage (1).

MEDIA. Out of 16 xenophobic assessments made in respect of various groups, six were made by newspaper Asaval-Dasavali (respondents – 5); respondents made the majority of xenophobic statements on Obiektivi TV (12, media – 1) and Geworld.ge (11, media – 4), during which journalists did not indicate xenophobic nature of respondents’ opinions. Such assessments were made in Alia Holding (media 2, respondents – 5) and Sakinformi (media -2, respondents – 3), as well as on Marshalpress (media – 1, respondent – 1).

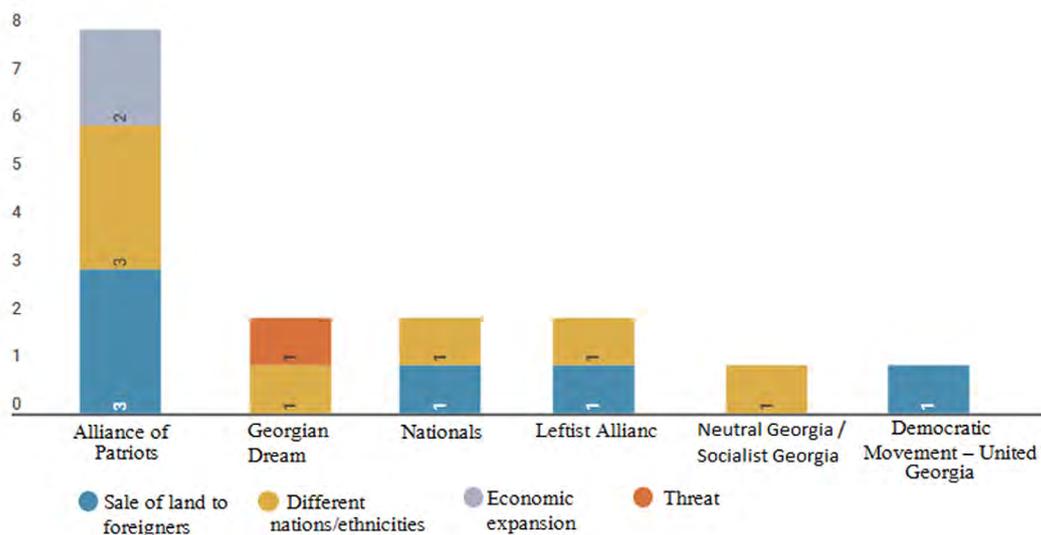
Chart 2.3.3. Media sources of xenophobia against various groups



As far as the types of messages are concerned, emphasis was laid on discrimination of various nationalities and ethnicities (7), as well as restrictions on sale of agricultural lands to foreigners (4) and other topics. In one case, linguistic rights of the minorities were identified with the country’s disintegration and threat of separatism.

PARTIES. Out of 16 cases related to political parties, Alliance of Patriots was leading with 8 – the party was mostly distinguished by the idea of restricting the sale of agricultural lands to foreigners (3) as well as by discrimination of various nationalities and ethnicities (3). The ruling political team resorted to discrimination of ethnic groups (1 case) and also identified foreigners with a threat (1 case). One case of discrimination of Baptists was also observed on the part of the ruling party. Other parties presented on Chart 2.3.4 called for restricting the sale of agricultural lands to foreigners and were also involved in discrimination.

Chart 2.3.4. Sources and types of xenophobia against various groups and by parties



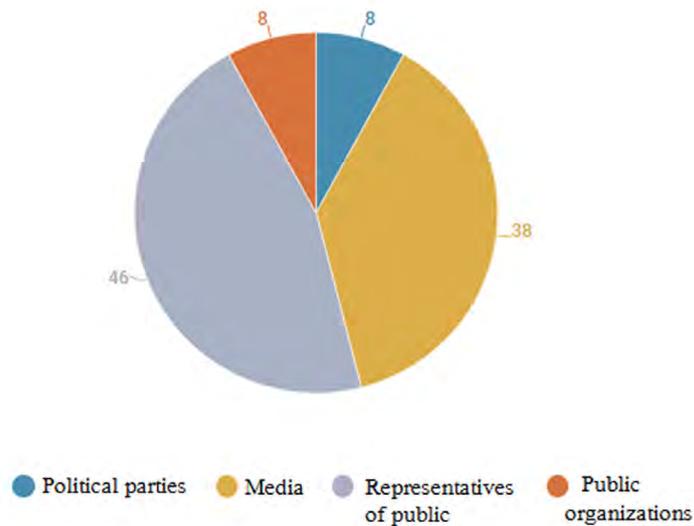
PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS. Out of six xenophobic statements made by public organizations, discrimination on ethnic/national grounds was observed in four instances; one statement was about inadmissibility of selling agricultural lands to foreigners and one about economic expansion.

FORMER AND PRESENT OFFICIALS. Deputy Interior Minister Levan Izoria made a statement, in which he linked foreign students with a threat of terrorism. In one case, discrimination of various nationalities was observed on the part of former member of the Supreme Council of Georgia, Taniel Putkaradze.

2.4. ARMENOPHOBIA

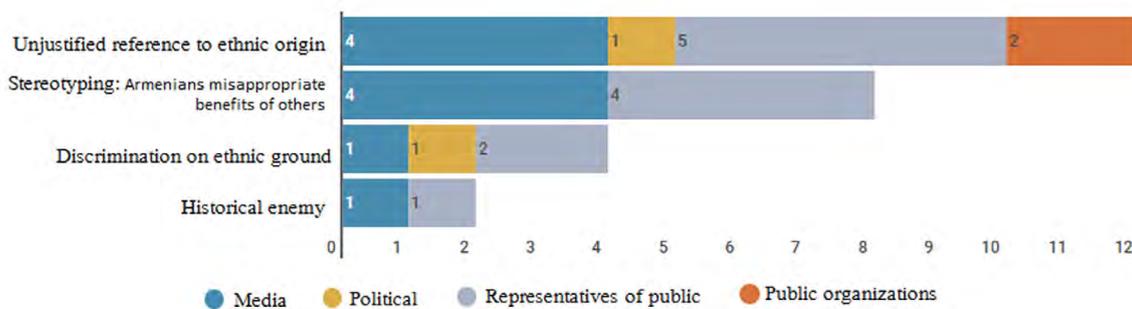
Among 26 cases of Armenophobia, the society has the largest share (12), followed by media (10), political parties (2) and public organizations (2).

Chart 2.4.1. Sources of Armenophobia



In the majority of Armenophobic messages (12), Armenian origin was mentioned in a negative context and such messages were mostly made in respect of ex-President Mikheil Saakashvili (Saakyan, Saakov). Eight cases involved a negative stereotype as if Armenians were misappropriating benefits of others that was frequently based on unchecked information or was made through generalization of separate cases to the entire nation. Four cases involved discrimination on ethnic grounds and two cases were about historical enmity.

Chart 2.4.2. Types of Armenophobic messages

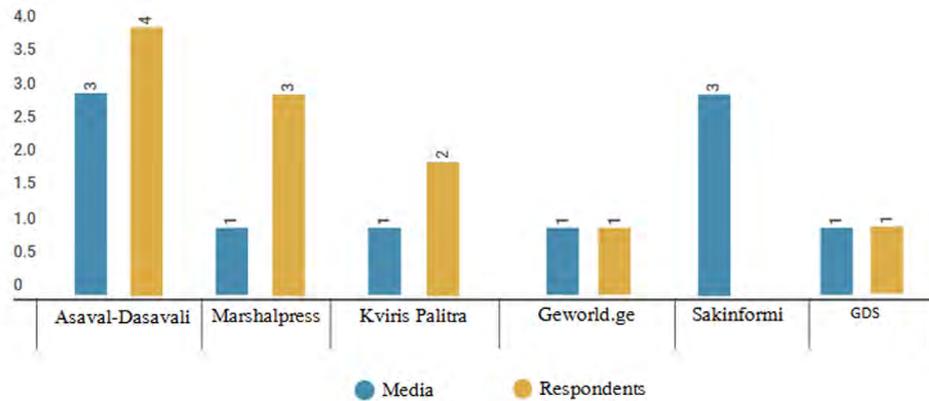


SOCIETY. The majority of Armenophobic statements (12) were made by representatives of the public, during which negative connotation of Armenian ethnicity (5) and a stereotype that Armenians misappropriate benefits belonging to others (4) were dominating. In two cases discrimination on ethnic grounds was observed and in one case reference was made to historical enmity.

MEDIA. Like in case of the society, in respect of 10 Armenophobic coverage by media there was a dominant approach related to misappropriation of other nations’ benefits by Armenians (4) and mentioning Armenian ethnicity in a negative context (4). One case of pointing at historical enmity and one case of discrimination were also observed. Most cases were covered by newspaper

Asaval-Dasavali and online portal Sakinformi. GDS, Marshalpress and Kviris Palitra released materials, which promoted the idea that Armenians are misappropriating the benefits belonging to others.

Chart 2.4.3. Media sources of Armenophobia



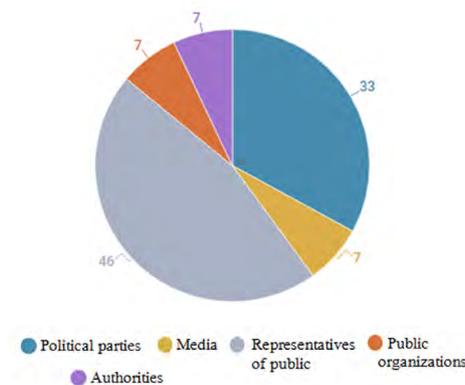
POLITICAL PARTIES. The both Armenophobic comments were made by the members of the Georgian Dream coalition. In the first case, Tamaz Mechiauri resorted to discrimination on ethnic grounds and in the second case, Omar Nishnianidze hinted at ex-President Mikheil Saakashvili’s Armenian origin in a negative context and without any grounds.

PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS. In the both cases (Stalin, National Liberation Movement of Caucasus) Armenian origin was used in a negative context against ex-President Mikheil Saakashvili.

2.5. RACISM

Out of 15 racist statements, the most (7) were made by public and political groups (5). Among political parties, the movement Nationals (3) and Alliance of Patriots (2) made racist statements. As for media outlets, one racist statement was made by Geworld.ge. Georgian Ambassador to the United States, Archil Gegeshidze, who already does not serve on this position, also made one racist statement; one statement was made by the group Bergman.

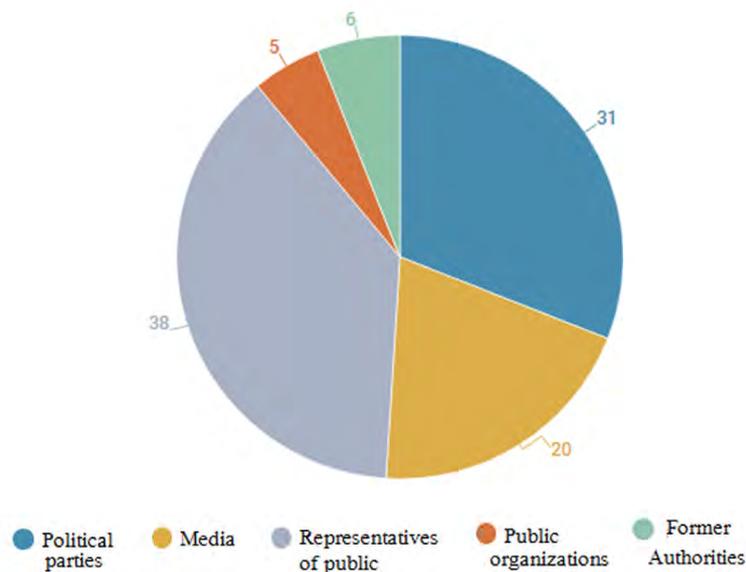
Chart 2.5.1. Sources of racist statements



III. HATE SPEECH ON POLITICAL AND OTHER GROUNDS

Some cases of using hate speech on political and other grounds were also revealed, which sometimes contained the calls for violence and were covered by media outlets 98 times. Most frequently the society was the source of hate speech (34), followed by political parties (28), media (18), public organizations (5) and former officials (5).

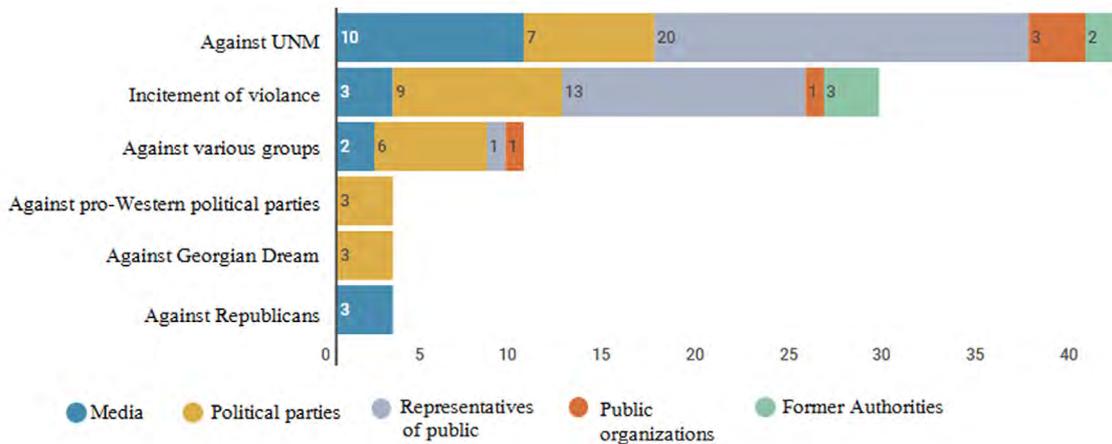
Chart 3.1. Hate speech on political and other grounds by sources



Most frequently, hate speech (42), as well as calls encouraging violence (29) were used against the United National Movement in relation to the incident in the village of Kortskheli, when opposition UNM party leaders and activists were beaten up by ruling GDDG party members and supporters. Calls for violence and hate speech were also observed in respect of UNM’s majoritarian MP candidate in Zugdidi single-mandate constituency, Sandra Roelofs. The category “various” unites hate speech used against the President of Georgia, U.S. presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton, non-governmental

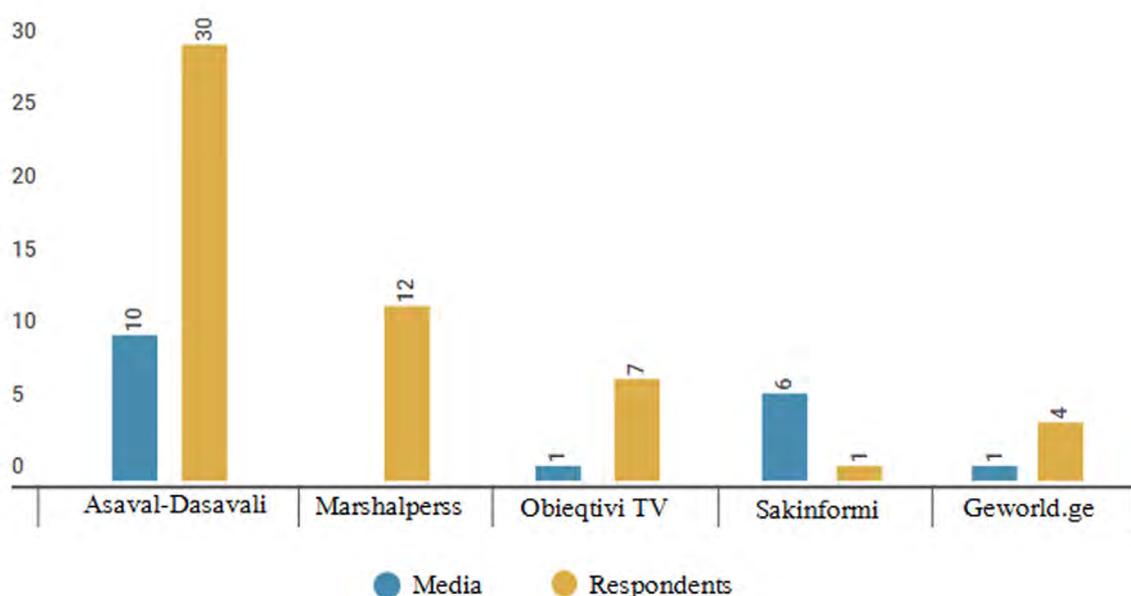
organizations and media (10). Two or three cases of using hate speech were observed in respect of the Republican Party, Georgian Dream and pro-Western political parties.

Chart 3.2. Types of messages in case of hate speech on political and other grounds by sources



MEDIA. Out of 18 media statements containing hate speech, the most (10) were made by Asaval-Dasavali, which along with expressing intolerance towards the National Movement (5) was directly inciting violence (2). Asaval-Dasavali is followed by Sakinformi, where out of six cases one was directed against Hillary Clinton and 5 against UNM party. The anchor of Obiektivi TV made one comment against the Republican Party; violence against ex-First Lady Sandra Roelofs was encouraged on Geworld.ge. Newspaper Asaval-Dasavali was also frequently disseminating the opinions of those respondents, who used hate speech (30); the same tendency was also observed on Marshalpress (12) and Obiektivi TV (7).

Chart 3.3. Hate speech on political and other grounds by media sources



SOCIETY. Out of 34 cases of politically motivated hate speech on the part of the society, 20 were directed against the National Movement; 13 statements were made on encouraging violence; in one case hate speech was used against President Giorgi Margvelashvili.

POLITICAL PARTIES. Out of 28 cases, the most statements containing hate speech (15) were made by Georgian Dream; in seven cases, the latter justified the violence against UNM leaders and supporters during the Kortskheli incident; two cases were directed against the National Movement; one case against a journalist and 5 cases – against the President during which the people with Down syndrome were stigmatized. Hate speech was also used against Georgian Dream – in two cases by the National Movement and in one case by the Labor Party. A representative of the Neutral Georgia/Socialist Party used hate speech against pro-Western parties and the sponsors of legislation banning Soviet symbols (3).

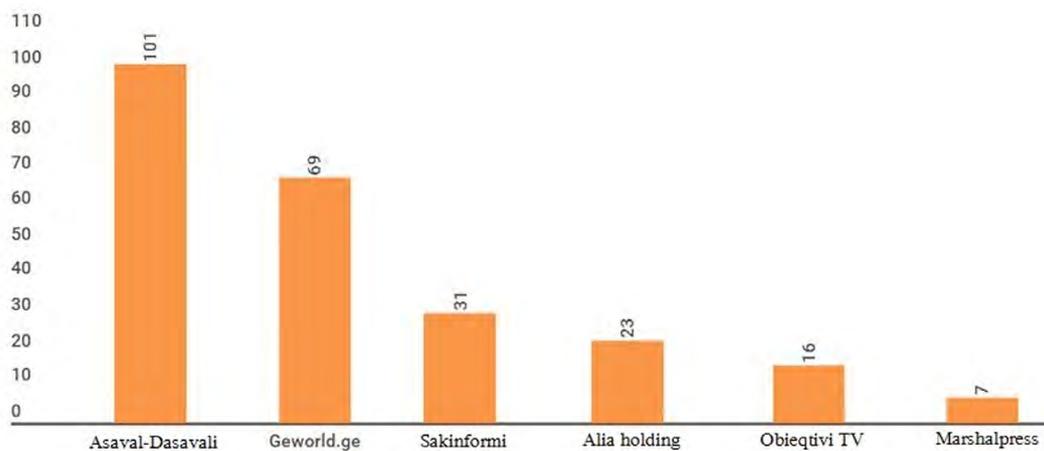
FORMER OFFICIALS AND PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS. Former officials mostly used hate speech against the National Movement (5), during which they called for violence. Public organizations used hate speech against the National Movement and Rustavi 2 TV.

IV. SOURCES OF HATE SPEECH

The following chapter provides information about the subjects, who most frequently appeared as a source of hate speech. There is also presented illustrative examples according to sources.

4.1 MEDIA

6 media outlets were revealed, which most often appeared as a source of hate speech. Also, different phobias were most frequently circulated by respondents on the abovementioned platforms.



ASAVAL-DASAVALI: The newspaper Asaval-Dasavali was established on 3 March 1992. It is a weekly paper published every Monday. The owner of 100 percent of the shares in the newspaper is Lasha Nadareishvili who also acts as the editor-in-chief. According to the report of Transparency International Georgia, Lasha Nadareishvili owns shares in several other companies all of which are connected with the publication of the newspaper. Nadareishvili is also the owner Georgian Telegraph Agency LLC and a member of the board of the Georgia Press Association.

The newspaper is ill-famed for its hate speech towards various ethnic, religious and LGBT groups, as well as towards groups with different worldview and political identity, more precisely, towards the United National Movement. Apart from openly declared xenophobic and homophobic content, the edition also stirs anti-Western sentiments. The newspaper's platform is more of an ethno-nationalist, however, as a research of the Media Development Fund reveals, the content is identical to the narrative of openly pro-Russian media outlets.

In 2016, Asaval-Dasavali proved to be the most homophobic edition, as the amount of homophobic comments made amounted to 70 for journalists and 90 for the respondents, **with the total number of editorial comments containing hate speech reaching 101.**

EXAMPLES

Homophobia

Asaval-Dasavali, 21-27 March

GIORGI GIGAURI, journalist: „Our liberasts eventually became just like cattle, which, as noted above, are ready shamelessly and publicly to merge with animals like of them! “

Asaval-Dasavali, 20-26 June

GIORGI GIGAURI, journalist: How dares America lecture us, while it cannot look after its own gays and where sodomites kill 50 gays there?!

Turkophobia/genetic advantage

Asaval-Dasavali, 15-21 August

DITO CHUBINIDZE, journalist: “One should say a bitter truth – Turks and Persians openly declared the hunt for the most beautiful Georgian girls and boys to improve their genetics.”

Discrimination on religious ground/Jehovah's Witnesses

Asaval-Dasavali, 19-25 September

JABA TKEMALADZE, doctor: “Any type of movement is closed and narrow in its nature, thus they very much look like Jehovah's Witnesses, rockers, Satanists, and UNM members!

Xenophobia

Asaval-Dasavali, 22-28 February

GIORGI GIGAURI, journalist: „The Georgian government has acknowledged the plan to settle Arab refugees! I am sorry, but the wild Arab refugees for whom women are foreign, for whom all women without hijab are whores. What they do in Europe has been clearly seen on the New Year night in Cologne, where they raped about a hundred women!“

Armenophobia

Asaval-Dasavali, 18-24 January

HEADLINE: The Georgians were cursed first by Armenians and then by Russians!

“Take the fact that after the initiative of Sassanid Persian Shah Khosrow II Parviz (591-628), at the church council in Armenian city of Dvin, Armenian Catholicos Abraam cursed the Georgian Catholicos Kirion and the Georgian people, because we remained faithful to the decisions of the Chalcedon Council and did not betray “the Greek faith”, meaning Orthodox Christianity.”

Hate speech on political ground

Asaval-Dasavali, 8-14 August

Giorgi Gigauri, journalist: “After all, if we treat pigs so seriously, the UNM members are no worse than pigs, are they?!... In short, be it a UNM member, a pig or any other animal, it should be identified and registered!”

GEORGIA AND WORLD. The founder of the newspaper Georgia and World and its online-edition www.geworld.ge is LTD Historical Heritage, that belongs to Taras Gagnidze. Historical Heritage was registered in the public register on January 28, 2009. The newspaper Georgia and World has been published since then.

According to damoukidebloba.com research, “Russian Influence on Georgian Non-Governmental Organizations and Media”⁴, the initiative of the founder of Historical Heritage has been acclaimed by the Former President of Russia, Dmitry Medvedev. The public council of Historical Heritage, the organization that founded [Geworld.ge](http://www.geworld.ge), includes a political scientist, Alexander Chachia that was awarded an order by Dmitry Medvedev in July 2008 for “especial contribution to the sphere of friendship and cooperation with Russian Federation”. Another pro-Russian NGO, Institute of Eurasia, is a partner of Historical Heritage. The editor-in-chief of [Geworld.ge](http://www.geworld.ge) is Irakli Todua, who is also a board member of Creative Union of Journalists of Georgia. Editors of editions such as Asaval-Dasavali, GeorgianTimes, and TV New Georgia are members of the Creative Union.

In 2016, the biggest number of Turkophobic comments (22) was made by the authors of [geworld.ge](http://www.geworld.ge), whilst the sole racist comment voiced in the media is also attributed to this edition. The edition also stood out with its pro-Russian sentiments, while stirring anti-Western feelings. Overall, the edition published 69 editorial comments containing hate speech.

⁴ IDFI, 2015. <http://damoukidebloba.com/assets/up-modul/uploads/pdf/rusuli%20gavlena%20media%20da%20NGO-1.pdf>

Homophobia/banning homosexuality

Geworld.ge, 13 January

DAVID MKHEIDZE, author: „Russia is the only country which prohibited gay parades by law, evicted Soros Fund from the country and put activities of other NGOs under strict control. Thus, Russia is not threatened by the color revolutions, nor by the total pederastization, because it is the world pivot of Orthodox Christianity...”

Turkophobia/historical enemy

Geworld.ge, 30 March

DAVID MKHEIDZE, author: “We have branded co-religious Russia our permanent historic enemy whereas named Turkey – this historically fierce enemy and eradicator of our faith, our permanent historic friend!”

NATO integration = Turkish intervention

Geworld.ge, 30 March

IZA TAMAZASHVILI, author: “No one speaks that the price of joining NATO which Georgia will pay is the sovereignty and lost territories and that the Georgian people will live under the dictate of a Muslim state – Turkey.”

Rstriction of land sale to foreigners

Geworld.ge., 28 September

GIORGI GACHECHILADZE, author: “They [nongovernmental organizations] want: to allow foreigners easily purchase land.... While hundreds of thousands of Georgians emigrate from the country, to grant [Georgian] citizenship to aliens; to declare the state that annexed true lands of our country, a centuries-long reliable friend (and not the occupier).”

Anti-Catholicism

Geworld.ge, 5 October

KONSTANTINE KATAMADZE, author: “A natural and logical question is raised: is the Pope of Rome no longer a torturer that he is taken to Svetiskhoveli and His Beatitude Ilia II, together with Synod, no longer obeys the canons of church fathers of the Council of Laodicea?... A kind invitation of Pope to Svetiskhoveli on 1 October will be yet another black stain of the century which, along with signatories to Synod Protocol of 25.05.2016, who intend to travel to Crete, will add to the modern history of our Church.”

Discrimination of Khlysts

Geworld.ge, 10 February

DAVID MKHEIDZE, author: “Despite opposition from the Patriarch, they have supported the dangerous (as the Patriarch called it) law about equalizing the rights of the Georgian Church not only with traditional religions, but even with satanistic sects either with Khlysts!”

Racism

Geworld.ge, 20 September

VICTOR TSAAVA, author: “Trump is not Obama; he is a fighter, a man with strong principles, goal-oriented and even more so, a white politician who enjoys the support of genuine Americans.”

Incitement to violence

Geworld.ge, 28 September

GIORGI GELASHVILI, author: “It won’t be bad if during one of the meetings in Samegrelo, Sandra will be hit in her nose just like Chiora Taktakishvili was hit. It’s ok if it hurts Sandra; she will bear this pain; has she not tolerated similar pains?!”

ALIA HOLDING LLC was established in 1966 and includes the newspapers Alia and Kviris Kronika. In 2016 publishing of Kviris Kronika is terminated. The owner of 100 percent of shares in the holding is Giorgi Bregvadze. The newspapers pursue a xenophobic and homophobic editorial policy and fuel anti-Western attitudes. The fifth cycle report of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)⁵, based on the research of MDF, gives examples of hate speech from the newspaper and gives recommendation to the government to revise its contracts with the media outlets that have been engaged in carrying out racist or homophobic hate speech. In 2013–2014, the Holding received around 50 000 GEL from the budget through contracts with state entities; a corresponding indicator in 2015 stood at 21 816 GEL.

In 2016, in two member newspapers of Alia Holding, 23 hate speech comments were made by the authors and from them, 19 were homophobic.

Homophobia

Kviris Kronika, 11–17 January

NINO LABARTKAVA, journalist: “I hope it was a woman and we did not become a witness of sexual intercourse between pederasts! She was wearing a gown.”

Alia, 29 January – 1 February

NINO SAMKHARADZE, journalist: “If demands of LGBT representatives are met in Georgia, we will be a black sheep in South Caucasus and will lose our identity, national dignity, traditions; this will not be an example to be followed for our neighboring countries.”

⁵ European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, Report on Georgia, December 8, 2015. <http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Georgia/GEO-CbC-V-2016-002-ENG.pdf>

Turkophobia

Alia, 4-6 March

EDITORIAL BOARD: “What does the commission [ECRI] want? When several representatives of Turkish authorities openly declare that Adjara is the territory of Turkey, when Turks have purchased almost entire streets in Batumi and do not allow Orthodox priests to walk on those streets and we write about these facts, is this xenophobia?”

SAKINFOMI: The owner of 100 percent of shares in the news agency Sakinformi LLC is the editor-in-chief of the edition Arno Khidirbegishvili. During the Soviet period, Sakinformi was a state owned agency; then, in the first years of independence of Georgia, it was subordinated to the Administration of President while in 2004, the agency was abolished. The news agency Sakinformi was restored in 2010. Sakinformi has an openly pro-Russian editorial policy and is engaged in fabrication of information based on Russian media sources (REGNUM, RT, warfiles.ru, Nakanune.RU, Rossiyskaya Gazeta and others). The agency is also known for its xenophobic and homophobic content. According to damoukidebloba.com, the domain of Sakinformi is registered on the name of Taras Gagnidze who is the leader of the pro-Russian organization called Historical Heritage.

In 2016, 34 editorial comments containing hate speech were published on web-portal Sakinform and from them, 19 were homophobic. With regards to the Turkophobic statements, the Russian was presented vs. Turkey and unfounded appeal was being made to Kars agreement.

Homophobia

Saqinform, 9 February

HEADLINE: „Do not turn Georgia into the country of Sodom and Gomorra!“

Sakinformi, 27 June

ARNO KHIDIRBEGISHVILI, editor: “An instinct of self-preservation has awoken among Anglo-Saxons – they refused to transform because of Western LGBT values of old whore Europe; refused to allow Islamist terrorist migrants to rape England and British women; they have become tired of maintaining poor countries of new Europe through their labor and with pound sterling!”

Russia vs. Turkey

Sakinformi, 11 August

ARNO KHIDIRBEGISHVILI, editor: “Russia controls Abkhazia and Samachablo which depend on Russia, while Turkey refrains from annexing Adjara only for the respect to Russia – the guarantor of Treaty of Kars.”

Turkey's occupation

Saqinform 15 January

ARNO KHIDIRBEGISHVILI, editor: "Historical fact: Turks have always been aggressors and occupiers for Georgia. Only Russia prevented Turks from conquering the country of Orthodox Christian Georgians."

Politically motivated hate speech

Saqinform, 18 March

HEADLINE: „Hillary Clinton – lesbian, psychopath, drug addict and the last hope of Saakashvili: the portrait of a U.S. presidential candidate“

EDITORIAL: Physiognomists regard sclera as a measurement of spiritual as well as physical status while specialists of the field of psychiatry have long proved that a person whose sclera is seen both above and below the pupil, has a bad character and easily becomes furious. According to doctors, such eyes are a sign of psychopathy. It is such eyes that the 68-year-old lesbian Hillary Clinton has, who might become the 58th president of United States in November 2016.

MEDIA UNION OBIEQTIVI was founded in August 2010. Secretary General of Alliance of Patriots of Georgia (APG), Irma Inashvili was co-founder of the TV channel. Since 2014 she has not been involved in the channel's management. Several anchors of Obieqtivi (Bondo Mdzinarashvili, Vakhtang Begiashvili) were nominated by Alliance of Patriots as a candidates for the 2016 parliamentary elections. According to various surveys, Obieqtivi carries out an anti-western, Turkophobic and homophobic editorial policy. Discriminatory editorial policy of the Obieqtivi talk-shows were mentioned in the fifth monitoring cycle report of the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), which recommended the Georgian authorities "to review their contracts with media outlets and cancel or not renew them in cases where media are known to engage in racist or homo-/transphobic hate speech." The TV channel launched its pre-election news programs in May 16, 2016. Media Union Obieqtivi was not included in TVMR Georgia TV ratings in 2015. According to the financial declarations published on the website of the Georgian National Communications Commission (GNCC) for the 2016 (January 1 – June 30), among 8 TV Companies which are in lead on media market in terms of revenues, Media Union Obieqtivi is the only TV company with highest donation share (31 %).

In 2016 there 16 instance of hate speech by Obieqtivi anchors and journalists were revealed and most of them (11) were homophobic. Though in 2016 Turkophobia expressed by Obieqtivi anchors has sharply decreased (3), a number of respondents who circulated Turkophobic sentiments through Obieqtivi Channel were highest (47) among monitoring subjects. In addition, the hosts of TV programs did not oppose their respondents and did not indicate that their opinions were discriminative in nature as it is envisaged by the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters.

Homophobia

Obieqtivi, Night Studio, 28 April

BONDO MDZINARISHVILI, presenter: “I say that it is unacceptable for military servicemen, inmates, children or even students in schools, military units, penitentiary facilities and kindergartens to know that their teachers – let me put in this way to avoid an offensive phrase – are different from their mothers or fathers.”

Illness, mental disorder and depravity

Obieqtivi, Batumi Studio, July 21

MERAB BLADADZE, host: “How should a parent guess that a child, for example, a boy has a certain deviation towards homosexuality? They are now repeating over and over again that it is good, but be sure, I had lived in Europe for decades and it is considered a tragedy for a family to have an LGBT child or a Lesbian daughter.”

Xenophobia

Obieqtivi, Political Night, 8 September

NINO RATISHVILI, anchor: „Today the problem is not just in Batumi, but in Tbilisi as well. One can walk on Aghmashenebeli Avenue without hearing one’s own language. The same problem is in Adjara and Batumi.“

Hate speech on political ground

Obieqtivi, Night Studio, 4 May

BONDO MDZINARISHVILI, presenter: “... deflated toad – this is how Mr. Rezo Amashukeli called Levan Berdzenishvili. Evil is oozing out from his inner world, leaving unpleasant trace on his face.”

MARSHALPRESS. A web portal Marshalpress appeared in media space on February 18, 2015. Marshalpress.ge is issued by Marshalpress Ltd, which, as of 6 May 2015, was wholly owned by Otar Stepanishvili, former journalist from Info 9. As a result of changes carried out on November 24, 2015, the shares were redistributed between Otar Stepanishvili (49%) and Luka Antidze (51%).

Marshalpress often provides space for press conferences to various persons, who are active supporters of pro-Russian and anti-Western policies; among them are Archil Tchoidze, leader of Neutral Eurasian Georgia party, and Hamlet Chipashvili, permanent respondent of Media Union Obiektivi.

In 2016 Marshalpress published 7 articles containing editorial hate speech and widely disseminated hate expressions of respondents. Editorial board was disseminating hate speech without any comments and indication of discriminative nature of the content. Besides 2 homophobic photo manipulation, there were cases when materials were mainly titled with homophobic and discriminatory quotes of respondents.

Homophobic headlines and content

Marshalpress, 17 May

HEADLINE: “Do you know what these degraded people did?” – Mikiashvili

Marshalpress, 13 July

HEADLINE: “They say there will be a pill which will be administered to a pregnant women and a baby will not be born as homosexual.”

Marshalpress, 9 May

HEADLINE: “Gay manifesto: We will seduce your children in their own schools.”

EDITORIAL COMMENT: A clearly extremist attitude expressed in this material towards persons with ordinary sexual orientation is evidenced by other materials too, which contain the propaganda of homosexuality.

Anti-Chinese attitudes

Marshalpress, 1 October

TITLE: Representatives of a Chinese company cutting the dog’s throat – (video) +16.

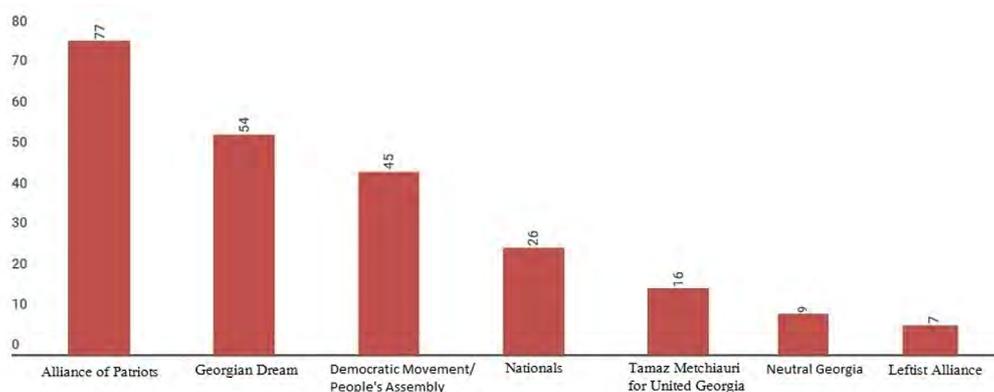
Armenophobia

Marshalpress, 19 May

“How can Armenians make claims for not only neighboring lands, but also for Ukrainian cities (Kiev, Lviv) and southern Russia (Stavropol, Krasnodar, Armavir), when they steal other people’s music, culinary, engage in real plagiarism and other shameless immoral dealings. The author of these lines has seen many times that this brilliant phrase of a social network user is correct: “First there were Armenians on Earth, and later humans“.

4.2. POLITICAL PARTIES

Seven parties with the most frequent use of hate speech were revealed:



ALLIANCE OF PATRIOTS. Alliance of Patriots of Georgia was founded on December 19, 2012, and was registered in the Public Registry in January 2013. In the 2014 Local Self-Government elections, the party managed to gain representation in Sakrebulo (city assembly) for the first time (5.37%), while in 2016 Parliamentary Elections it received mandates in the country's legislative body with 5.01% of votes.

Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi is the Head of the party, while Irma Inashvili is the General Secretary. Inashvili is one of the founders of the media-union Obiektivi, however, she has not officially appeared in its management since 2014.

The party attributes itself to right-conservative ideological direction. Section named "Our Vision & Program" of the English version of the website of Alliance of Patriots (not available in Georgian), defines patriotism as "thinking and pondering, speaking and discussing, acting and behaving in conformity with the national spirit, which in our case is the Georgian spirit"⁶. According to the party's vision, the tolerance of Georgian spirit implies readiness to adopt everything good from other nations, however, at the same time, the importance of everything that is native Georgian is emphasized.

The English version of the party's website declares will to integrate into the European Union, while expressing skepticism towards the reality of the prospect of Georgia integrating into NATO.

According to 2014-2015 researches of MDF⁷, the party stood out by stirring anti-Western sentiments, Turkophobia and homophobia. 2016 Hate Speech Monitoring reveals that the Alliance of Patriots

⁶ <http://patriots.ge/our-vision-program/>

⁷ Anti-Western propaganda. <http://mdfgeorgia.ge/eng/view-library/15>

Hate Speech and xenophobia. <http://mdfgeorgia.ge/eng/view-library/19>

Homophobia and gender identity. <http://mdfgeorgia.ge/eng/view-library/17>

leads by hate speech (77) and from all such statements, the most of them fall on Turkophobic sentiments (44), followed by homophobia (8), and discrimination by religious (8) and other means (5).

Turkophobia

Obiektivi, Night Studio, 3 August

DAVID TARKHAN-MOURAVI, Alliance of Patriots: „Turkey has always been a threat for Georgia, always has been a conqueror, an enemy of Georgia, Turkey made the Black Sea red with the Georgian blood. And they took away young girls and boys instead of money, each year. They have bled us dry for a thousand years. 33% of our lands are in Turkey today. There are half a million Georgians who lost their faith, Georgian identity, who are losing their language and don't know their names and surnames anymore. Turkey will never be a friend to us, and even now Turkey says that it wants Batumi, Ozurgeti, Akhaltsikhe. We must understand that it will always be an enemy state.“

Kavkasia, Barrier, 1 September

BONDO MDZINARISHVILI, the Alliance of Patriots: “I think the occupier is not Russia alone, and we may come to find ourselves in a situation when, after 95 years, people in Georgia will say that Russia is not the occupier – much like today there are people who after 95 years say that Turkey is our friend, not the occupier.”

Obiektivi, The News; 21 September

IRMA INASHVILI, Patriots' Alliance: “Opening of the Turkish school in Batumi means ideological expansion. Opening, within the Georgian state, of the Turkish school with teachers from Turkey, and teaching in accordance to the Turkish educational system. This does not serve our country's interests.”

Racism

Obieqtivi, Night Studio, 23 August

ZAZA MAMALADZE, Alliance of Patriots: „Look at Saburtalo, our place, I do not anymore want to even walk there. Do you know why? Because, thanks to this Medical University of ours, every black person on earth has descended here... Come on now...It should not be allowed to let these things to come in and be accepted without exams, come one now. How is this done, how is this even possible? And I do not even want to walk there anymore?! And that is why I... You know, there used to be a song on “what stinks, it stinks and stinkystinkystinky...” Now Saburtalo has the same situation. We will take care of this man! Not like that some, I mean let every one be fine in their own Iraq and India and whatnot man, give me back my city and my country! I will somehow take care of it myself, please!”

Islamophobia

Obieqtivi, Political Night, 29 September

BONDO MDZINARASHVILI, Alliance of Patriots: „Father Ion recently said during a sermon: how can the ruler of the Georgian people pay 10, 20 and 30 million for construction of a mosque?.. This means destroying the country we say this not because we hate Turks, but because we love our country.“

Homophobia

Asaval-Dasavali, 1-7 February

IRMA INASHVILI, Patriots Alliance: „I state this openly: this filth – same-sex marriage – will not be legalized in Georgia!„

Obiektivi, Gamis Studia, July 13

DAVIT TARKHAN-MOURAVI, Alliance of Patriots: “...It is being proved that it [homosexuality] is a disease. The U.S. laboratories claim that a gene has been discovered, which confirms that if it is modified in an embryo, a child will definitely be a homosexual. And now they say that there will be a drug in ten years and if a pregnant mother is treated with this drug, this gene will be corrected; so, the problem may be settled once and forever.”

GEORGIAN DREAM – DEMOCRATIC GEORGIA. Georgian Dream was founded and financed in February 2012 by a Georgian billionaire – Bidzina Ivanishvili. The Head of the party is Giorgi Kvirikashvili, Kakha Kaladze is the Secretary General, while the Executive Secretary of the party is Irakli Kobakhidze. The party was registered in the public register in May 2012. In the 2012 Parliamentary Elections, the Georgian Dream Coalition won with 54% of the votes, received the parliamentary majority and created the first precedent of changing the government through elections.

Six political subjects were united in the Georgian Dream Coalition: Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia, Republican Party, Our Georgia – Free Democrats, National Forum, Conservative Party and Industrialists. Particular subjects united in the coalition stood out with their anti-Western, homophobic and xenophobic statements. Prior to the 2016 Parliamentary Elections, the coalition was disbanded.

An initiative of Georgian Dream to introduce a definition of family, that would define it as a union between man and woman, in the constitution, became a part of the campaign of the parliamentary elections. In the 2016 Parliamentary Elections, Georgian Dream received the constitutional majority and plans to fulfill the given constitutional initiative.

According to the 2016 monitoring, Georgian Dream comes after Alliance of Patriots with overall 54 statements containing hate speech. The given data includes both the statements made by the former members of the coalition that were its members while making the statement and those made after the disbanding of the coalition. Homophobic statements (34) were dominating, mostly due to the constitutional initiative, together with politically motivated hate speech (15), which was mostly directed at the oppositional United National Movement and was inciting violence. The violence was incited specifically regarding Kortskheli incident, during the by-elections, when activists of the Georgian Dream physically abused leaders of

United National Movement. Two cases of Armenophobia, two cases of xenophobia and one case of Turkophobia also took place.

Homophobia

Imedi, IPN, Netgazeti, Marshalpress, 27 May

NUKRI KANTARIA, the Georgian Dream: “There has never been Romeo and Romeo, and Juliet and Juliet, has it? ... This still does not raise any compassion; it does not raise compassion because it is not natural; it is a deviation. Sometimes it is a mimicry, sometimes – a disease, but it is not organic”.

Kavkasia, Dges, 5 May

ZVIAD DZIDZIGURI, Georgian Dream/Conservative Party: “Children have the right to have women as mothers and men as fathers. We must protect the rights of children, It is necessary to do this in the world where societies for the protection of butterflies, lizards, ants are set up” (5 May, GPB, Tabula, Kvkasia, IPN, Netgazeti).

Armenophobia

Netgazeti, 23 January

TAMAZ METCHAIURI, Georgian Dream: “I didn’t know he was Mr. Arthur... If I had known who he was, I may have... more strongly [about physical assault of protest participant Arthur Arutinov”.

Turkophobia

Maestro, Kontakti; Rustavi 2, Kurieri; Imedi TV, Chronika; Public Broadcaster, Moambe; Pirveli, Interpressnews, 9 March

GOGI TOPADZE, „Georgian Dream – Industrials“ coalition: „So, Russia has take over our territories and we cannot talk to Gazprom. You can sell greens and wines though, and if you take this approach, we import so much rubbish from Turkey, and have not they taken over our territories too?“

Xenophobia

Imedi, Politika, 11 March

IRAKLI SESIASHVILI, Georgian Dream, Chairman of the parliamentary Defence and Security Committee: „A great lot of foreigners study at Tbilisi University... Unfortunately, there are some attempts to recruit our youth, that is why counterintelligence activities there were justified...“

Incitement of violence

Tabula, Focus, 25 May

OMAR NISHNIANIDZE, Georgian Dream: “They [UNM] should had been beaten already, if they were

punished in the past, this would not have happened today. They must not be beaten on the election day and during election period, but otherwise they should be beaten... All Georgia blesses the hands of those who beat up Bokeria and others, so how can we punish them?"

DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT UNITED GEORGIA/PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY. Former Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia, Nino Burjanadze, separated from the United National Movement's government prior to the Parliamentary Elections scheduled on May 21, 2008, in April. Political party she is the head of currently, United Democratic Movement, was registered one month before, on March 19, 2008, according to the Public Registry data. Democratic Movement – United Georgia, which was a part of Burjanadze's electoral block in 2016 election, was registered on December 23, 2008. Burjanadze's electoral block became a qualified subject for the 2014 Local Self-Government Elections, however, it failed to overcome the 5%-barrier in the 2016 Parliamentary Elections.

Nino Burjanadze is the second Georgian politician, after Zurab Nogaideli, who met with Vladimir Putin after 2008 Russo-Georgian War, in 2010. In the light of the 2016 elections, she came up with an initiative of a non-bloc status that implied making an amendment in the constitution that would state that Georgia will not become a member of any international military bloc or alliance.

According to the 2014 and 2015 researches of MDF, Democratic Movement, as well as its majoritarian candidate in 2014 Local Self-Government and 2016 Parliamentary elections – Guram Palavandishvili and People's Assembly, directly linked with the party, expressed anti-Western sentiments and promoted hate speech.

The 2016 monitoring identified 45 hate speech cases and out of them, 39 were of homophobic nature.

Homophobia

Public Broadcaster, Moambe, 16 February

DIMITRI LORTKIPANIDZE, United Democratic Movement: "This ('Me and Society' school subject) is propaganda of sodomy, which is conducted both secretly and openly".

Kavkasia, Barieri, 9 March

GIORGI AKHVLEDIANI, Democratic Movement: "I cannot support proclaiming abnormal to be normal... This is immoral and a sin both religious and civil... This is an pervert relationship".

Turkophobia

Asaval-Dasavali, 5-11 September

ELIZBAR JAVELIDZE, People's Assembly: "Aslan [Abashidze] did not let a single Turk into Adjara, but now this ancient Georgian regions looks like a Turkish wilayah!"

Discrimination on religious ground

Geworld.ge, 6 April

ELIZBAR JAVELIDZE, People's Assembly: „Our Public Defender is a sectant. None of his ideas are shared by the people, he has deviations and perhaps that is why they elected him as a Public Defender... Georgia is being eaten by sectants”.

MOVEMENT – “NATIONALS” is registered on February 8, 2016. According to the statute, one of the goals of the movement is to protect and strengthen Orthodox Christian values. Alexander (Sandro) Bregadze, Kakhaber Migineishvili and Zurab Eukidze are the founders of the movement.

Sandro Bregadze was appointed as Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia; while on October 1, 2014, he became the Deputy State Minister of Georgia for Diaspora Issues. While holding a public political position, he was often making homophobic statements that resulted in a civic platform No to Phobia! to address the Prime Minister twice with request to dismiss him. In February 2016, Sandro Bregadze resigned, stating his stance towards legalizing same-sex marriage as the reason.

According to the 2016 monitoring, 26 statements containing hate speech were made on behalf of the movement – Nationals. Out of them, 21 statements were homophobic, 3 were racist and 2 – xenophobic.

Homophobia

Asaval-Dasavali, 26 September–2 October

SANDRO BREGADZE, Nationals: “They will tell the Georgian society that if we don't marry a man to another man and a woman to another woman, they will not let us into EU and NATO. The foreigners forced the anti-discrimination law on the Georgian Parliament and they will force them to adopt same-sex marriage just like that!”

Racism

Asaval-Dasavali, 12-18 September

SANDRO BREGADZE, Georgian Idea: We must take away the right to reside in Georgia from the representatives of Asian and African countries and deport them. We must create new strict immigration laws”.

TAMAZ MECHIAURI FOR UNITED GEORGIA. Registered on February 27, 1998, according to the Public Registry data. Tamaz Mechiauri is the Head of the party. Tamaz Mechiauri entered the

parliament in 2012 through the list of Georgian Dream Coalition. In 2016 Parliamentary Elections, he participated independently, through his own party. According to his party's statute, its goals include uniting Georgian nation and strengthening and protecting national worldview and traditions.

The 2016 monitoring revealed 16 cases of hate speech coming from this party and out of them, 15 were homophobic.

Homophobia

Tabula, Focus, 27 May

TAMAZ MECHIAURI, for United Georgia: It is necessary [defining marriage in the Constitution] to prevent certain liberasts from making different interpretations.

West imposes homosexuality

Geworld.ge, 17 September

TAMAZ MECHIAURI, For United Georgia: "You have seen what happened about same-sex marriage - all this occurred through America's pressure, the American ambassador was giving interviews with a happy face, so it is clear where this request is coming from."

NEUTRAL GEORGIA/MOVEMENT SOCIALIST GEORGIA. The party of a host of TV Obieqtivi, Valeri Kvaratskhelia, Neutral Georgia, was registered on February 29, 2008. In 2016, due to usage of Soviet symbols during the pre-election campaign, Valeri Kvaratskhelia's movement - Socialist Georgia, was warned by the State Security Service and was reminded of Freedom Charter that makes such actions illegal. In 2016 Parliamentary Elections, Valeri Kvaratskhelia participated from United Communist Party of Georgia, as his party's registration was cancelled due to insufficient documentation provided.

The 2016 monitoring revealed 8 cases, when Valeri Kvaratskhelia, on behalf of the party, made statements containing hate speech.

Homophobia

Asaval-Dasavali, 4-10 July

VALERY KVARATSKHELIA, Neutral Georgia: Let's use red flags to kick out of the Georgian politics the bastards with gay and rainbow flags and the philosophy-ideology of butt! Kick the satan's servants out of the Georgian TV channels, out of the American channels, and the American channels - out of Georgia!

Hate speech on political ground

Obiektivi, Gamis Studia, Marshalpress, July 31

VALERI KVARATSKHELIA, Socialist Georgia: “We will cut your tongues with this sickle and crack your stupid heads with this hammer, because you, who have deprived our working people of their subsistence right, are their sworn enemies.”

LEFTIST ALLIANCE. Registered on June 5, 2013 with chairmanship of former Labor Party members, Kakha Dzaganian and Ioseb Shatberashvili. For the 2016 Parliamentary Elections, the party presented an author of Geworld.ge (Georgia and World), Bakur Svanidze, as the majoritarian candidate in Vazisubani district, Tbilisi.

In 2016, the 7 hate speech cases of the alliance included 5 Turkophobic and 2 xenophobic statements.

Turkophobia

Geworld.ge, 7 September

BAKUR SVANIDZE, The Left Alliance: “In fact, Russia is opposed here not by American and European democratic values, but the Ottoman Empire under the cover of the NATO... Why are we surprised that Russia, which treated the conquered Georgian territory and population much more humanely 100 years ago compared to another much more dangerous enemy – Turkey, is now regretting its “humanity” and thinking that it should had destroyed everything Georgian on the conquered Georgian lands, prohibit Georgian language, destroy their identity, perhaps then Georgians would proclaim me [Russia] their historical friend too, or at least I would then keep their territories without problems.”

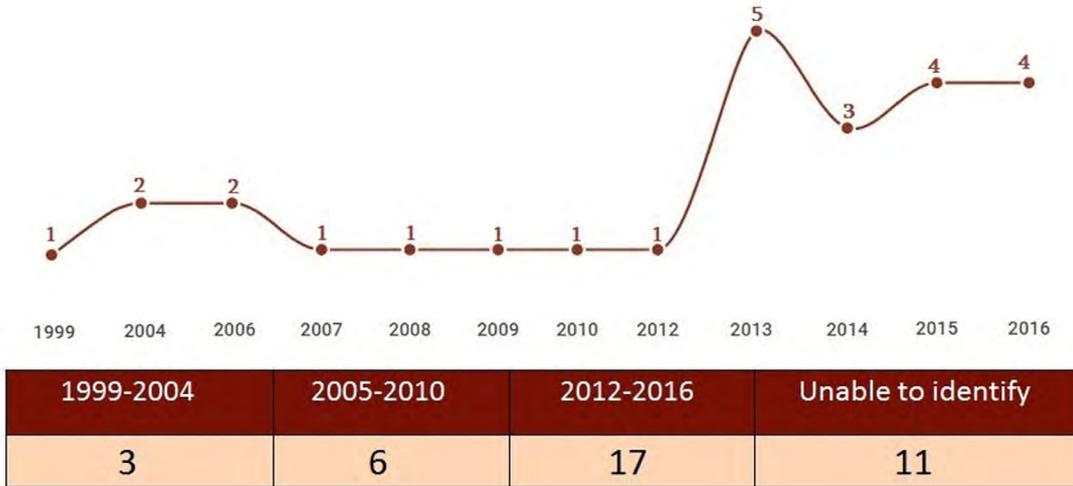
Asaval-Dasavali, 20-26 June

SOSO SHATBERASHVILI, The Left Alliance: Adjara, sold by Saakashvili to the Turks, is a very good example of why selling land to foreigners should be prohibited in Georgia!

4.3. PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

The monitoring revealed 37 public organizations that stood out with various forms of hate speech. According to the Public Registry data, majority (17) of these organizations were registered in 2012-2016. Interestingly, in 11 cases, it was impossible to find information on the founders (see Table and Diagram 2).

Table and Diagram 2. Foundation Dynamics of the Public Organizations, Revealed by the Hate Speech Monitoring



Below is given the information on those 5 public organizations out of 37 that had relatively more hate speech cases compared to the others, based on the monitoring.

EURASIAN INSTITUTE/EURASIAN CHOICE AND EREKLE II SOCIETY. The Eurasian Institute was founded on September 22, 2009 by Gulbaat Rtskhladze and Giorgi Vekua. According to the research by damoukidebloba.com, one of the partners of the Eurasian Institute is a Russian organization, Lev Gumilev’s Center, which was founded by Eurasian Center in Moscow in 2011. The center states that popularization of “Eurasianism” is the way of resolving ethnic conflicts. One of the members of the Eurasian Institute is Shota Apkhaidze, who was released from prison with a political prisoner’s status. Apkhaidze was serving a sentence for intrusion to TV Caucasus together with members of Orthodox Parents’ Union and National Orthodox Movement and conducting extremist acts there in 2010.

Eurasian Choice, founders and board members of which include Archil Chkoidze, Maia Khinchagashvili and Boris Manzhukov, is also connected with the Eurasian Institute. Boris Manzhukov, according to the research of damoukidebloba.com, is the Head of Georgian Bureau of a Russian TV Mir. The organization was registered on May 30, 2013.

Archil Chkoidze is, at the same time, the Head of Erekle II Society, founded on December 31, 2008. The main goal of the organization is to popularize Russian culture and art in Georgia and normalize relations with Russia.

The 2016 monitoring revealed 8 discriminative statements which include cases when the representatives of the aforementioned organizations resorted to Turkophobia (4), homophobia (3) and religious discrimination (1).

Turkophobia

Kavkasia, Barieri, 9 May

ARCHIL CHKOIDZE, Eurasian Institute: „I am not saying that Russia was the best of neighbors, of course not. But in Russia there still live Georgians, there are Georgian churches, there are Georgian dancing courses, meanwhile in Turkey, which we now accept as a very friendly and brotherly country, they don't even recognize Georgian churches as cultural monuments, and have turned them into stables.“

Homophobia

Kavkasia, Barieri, May 9

ARCHIL CHKOIDZE, Eurasian Institute: “The cleverest people live in villages and regions, though they are believed to be silly, and they know better than others what to watch – Jajanidze's show, where pederasty is being propagandized, and Nanuka's show, where no one knows what is actually propagandized, or Russian channels and films. It is up to those people to decide and they have this right.”

GEORGIAN DEMOGRAPHIC SOCIETY XXI was registered on March 18, 2014 with the name of Demographic Development Fund. In November 2015, its name was changed and it was registered as Georgian Demographic Society XXI.

The founders of the organization include: businessman Levan Vasadze that accumulated his capital in Russia, as well as shareholders of TBC Bank, Mamuka Khazaradze and Badri Japaridze and a businessman, Lasha Papashvili. Another founder of the organization is a shareholder of Palitra Holding and the founder of Tri-Media Intelligence, Giorgi Tevdorashvili. Currently, the Head of the organization is Zviad Tomaradze who was a member of an initiative group that demanded a referendum on marriage prior to the 2016 Parliamentary Elections. Tomaradze himself was coordinating the collection of signatures. In 2015, an MP of Georgian Dream, Soso Jachviani, submitted two legal bills prepared by Georgian Demographic Society XXI to the parliament: one concerned removing terms “sexual orientation” and “gender” from the Anti-Discrimination Law, whereas another one demanded to make “insult of religious feelings” punishable by the Administrative Code of Georgia.

The 2016 monitoring revealed 7 discriminative statements of the organization that ended up in the media and from them, 6 were homophobic, while 1 was Turkophobic.

Kavkasia, Barieri, 2 March

ZVIAD TOMARADZE, Georgian Demographic Society XXI: “Indeed, homosexuality is a disease! We are facing extinction as a nation, and as to the traditional family, its interests must be protected by this state. And this is a disease!!!

RIGHTS DEFENDERS' UNION was registered on August 2, 2012 in the Public Register. The Head of the union is Nikoloz Mzhavanadze.

The 2016 monitoring revealed 7 discriminative comments, of which 3 were Turkophobic, 2 – homophobic and 2 – religion-based.

Islamophobia

Asaval-Dasavali, 8-14 August

NIKOLAZ MZHAVANADZE, the Rights Defenders' Union: Saakashvili did everything Turkey wanted in Adjara, did not he?! The people that the patriotic movement brought back to Christianity in the highland Adjara, Saakashvili pushed them back to Islam and sent our blood and flesh to the madrasahs! The situation is most difficult... There is only one solution – Russia must become the guarantor of Adjara's unity with the Georgian homeland!

POPULAR-PATRIOTIC UNION – RUSSIA IS OUR NEIGHBOR was registered in Public Registry on June 16, 2015. The Head of the organization is Ramaz Lursmanashvili, while the board members are Valeriane Kochiashvili, Teimuraz Makaridze, Tsitsino Babutsidze, Teimuraz Kochiashvili, Guram Simonishvili and Vladimer Chubinidze.

According to its statute, the organization aims to: form and develop the civil society; restore justice in the state; restore territorial integrity of the country; spread love between people etc.

The 2016 monitoring revealed 4 discriminative comments made by the organization in the media (homophobia, Turkophobia, xenophobia and politically motivated hate speech).

Turkophobia

Geworld.ge, 28 January

REVAZ LURSMANASHVILI, Russia is Our Neighbor: “Russia is occupant – says majority of our government. If Russia is occupant, what about Turkey? This country seized 23 thousand square meters of our territories with its population and ancient cultural monuments. We have our own state because of Russia.“

SOCIO-POLITICAL MOVEMENT GEORGIAN MISSION was founded on March 6, 2015 by Giorgi Korkotashvili, Giorgi Zarnadze and Archil Shvelidze. The Executive Director of the organization is Giorgi Korkotashvili who participates in the events organized by the Eurasian Institute and makes supportive statements concerning the normalization of relations with Russia.

The 2016 monitoring revealed 4 discriminative statements, of which 3 were homophobic and 1 was Turkophobic.

Homophobia

Asaval-Dasavali, May 23-29

GIA KORKOTASHVILI, Georgian Mission: “We have the only demand – do not popularize immorality! If you [LGBT people] decide to organize parades, we will break those parts of your body, which you use for this purpose; I kindly advise you – keep aloof from us!”

4.4. CLERICS

Clerics of Orthodox Church made 56 comments containing hate speech, 35 out of them were homophobic, 19 discrimination on religious ground and 2 Turkophobic. Most active among clerics were David Isakadze (8), Basil Mkalavishvili (7), Antimoz Bichinashvili (5), David Kvlividze (5) and Giorgi Razmadze (5).

Homophobia

Asaval-Dasavali, 16-22 May

DAVID ISAKADZE, archpriest: “Sodomy is not just religious sin, it is a powerful genocidal weapon against any nation!”

Asaval-Dasavali, March 14-20

BASIL MKALAVISHVILI, protopresbyter (excommunicated priest): “It is just the U.S. Embassy that lobbies legalization of same-sex marriage in Georgia ... Let’s look at those countries, where this depravity has been legalized – floods, storms and fires are destroying everything! Let us not to look like them and let us disclose Georgia’s betrayers in order to avoid the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah!”

Sunday Alia, 4-10 April

ANTIMOZ BICHIKASHVILI: “Sin cannot be legalized, whether it is sodomy, or pedophilia, or adultery between souses and so on.”

Anticatholicism

Asaval-Dasavali, July 25-31

NIKOLOZ CHKHIKVADZE, archpriest: “Today the Patriarchate is under a huge pressure; otherwise, the Patriarch would not have invited a heretic. He is the greatest enemy of orthodoxy; greater than Islam and do you know why? Islam tells you directly – I am your enemy; and he portrays himself as your well-wisher and simultaneously digs a grave for you. He is a wolf in sheep’s clothing and his arrival will bring nothing good. It will be a great danger and we will see it quite soon.

Netgazeti, 30 September

DAVID ISAKADZE, archpriest: The Pope is the greatest heretic. We don't want his preaching, let him preach in Vatican".

Islamophobia

Asaval-Dasavali, 6-12 June

NIKOLAZ CHKHIKVADZE, priest: "...When a soldier goes to war he is blessed by a priest, so what do we do now, should we let a mullah bless our army? They call others someone's agents while in truth they are agents themselves, Tina Khidasheli is an agent of Islam".

4.5. REPRESENTATIVES OF PUBLIC

207 discriminative comments by various representatives of public were disseminated in media and most of them (86) were homophobic. There were 34 cases of discrimination on political and other grounds; Turkophobia (26) and xenophobia (24) was almost equal, followed by 16 cases of religious discrimination, 12 of Armenophobia and 7 racist.

Homophobia

Saqinform, 21 June

ALEXANDER CHACHIA, political observer: „When they legalize same-sex marriage... Last year an Abkhaz deputy said: “Thank God that we have timely freed ourselves from the Georgian influence, if we were in Georgia now, they would impose homosexuality on our youth. Who needs pederasts in Abkhazia?!”

Asaval-Dasavali, June 13-19

LENA VASADZE, Georgian emigrant: There is no justification for the government, who will impose this depravity, same-sex marriage on its population. God save Georgia against taking this step. I would rather die than hear about it.

Homophobia, anti-Western attitudes

Obieqtivi, Night Studio, May 3

REZO AMASHUKELI, poet: What should they teach us?! Mother gets married to her son and pederasts become Lords, sorry for this expression. If it is a traditional country, be so kind and act decently, no matter whether it is England or other country... They will prompt us break the heads of all Europeans here. Let them not insult us.”

Xenophobia

Marshallpress, 27 June

MISHA GOMIASHVILI, actor: Is it only me who sees what is happening in our city? Georgian girls, 15-16-17 years old, Georgian gene fund who should become mothers and give children to Georgia, become lovers of Turks, Iranians and others.

Turkophobia

Obiektivi, Night Studio, May 6

TV VIEWER: Our territory has been seized by Russians, as well as by Turkish, largely stemming from their barbaric values.

Discrimination on religious ground

IPN, 29 September, Marshallpress, 30 September

PARTICIPANTS OF THE RALLY AGAINST THE POPE'S VISIT TO GEORGIA: "This confirms our suspicions about the Pope visiting to preach his heretical false teaching, the so called papism in Georgia, in order to proselytize, which insults our educators, the apostles – St. Andrew, Matthias and Simon Kananeli, the name and works of St. Nino. This is directed against Orthodox Christianity".

Armenophobia

Kviris Palitra, 25 January

BONDO ARVELADZE, historian, Armenologist: "In Armenia there are musicians, actors, writers, historian, who have the disease of "sick historicism"... They claim that Leonardo da Vinci and Alexander Suvorov were Armenians, and that Noah spoke to God in Armenian language on the Ararat mountain. They claim that "The Knight in the Panther's Skin" was written by Armenian, and that Akaki Tsereteli translated "Suliko" from Armenian and then Georgians burned the original. "

Racism

Obiektivi, 10 January

TV VIEWER: "You know well that he (former Prime Minister) did not adopt same-sex marriage in the Constitution, he did not sell out to the ugly Indians and stinking blacks. He did not sell lands to the Negroes and that is why Masons got rid of him. I know this from you even better than I used to believe it."

Hate speech on political ground

Marshalpress, 12 March

MANCHO GIORGOBIANI (addressing the UNM): „Hitler would suit you well, putting you and your followers into a single ship, you mutant sectants!!! You have ugly souls in your ugly bodies... You are not worth to be kept alive, just like lepers you all must die!!!

4.6. AUTHORITIES

There were 8 discriminative statements by representatives of Georgian government, out of them 6 was homophobic, 1 racist, and 1 xenophobic. Among the government members, the highest number of homophobic statements was made by the Deputy State Minister for Diaspora Issues Sandro Bregadze, 1 was made by Minister of Education. Ambassador of Georgia to the USA made a racist statement and one xenophobic comments was expressed by deputy minister of Internal Affairs. Newspaper Asaval-Dasavali also published homophobic statement of Russia's president Vladimir Putin.

Racism

Rustavi 2, Tabula, Netgazeti, Georgian Public Broadcaster, Imedi, GDS, July 6

ARCHIL GEGESHIDZE, Georgian ambassador to the United States: “The fact is that we do exist and if it were not that treaty [Treaty of Georgievsk], we would have had black eyes and hair like charred log as the Persians have. It is the merit of our ancestors that we are called Georgians, we have Georgian consciousness and are identified as the nation.”

Xenophobia

Geworld.ge, 30 March

LEVAN IZORIA, former Deputy Head of the State Security Service: “When you have students from a foreign country were terrorism has been established, it is interesting, why are they here, what are their goals?!”

Homophobia

Asaaval-Dasavali, 1-7 February

SANDRO BREGADZE, Deputy Minister of Diaspora Issues: Indeed, ahead of 2016 parliamentary elections Georgian people will know which politicians support legalization severe sin [homosexuality] and pervert life in holy land.

Netgazeti, 19 February; Asaval–Dasavali, 22–28 February

SANDRO BREGADZE, former Deputy Minister of Diaspora Issues: “I have resigned! They did everything for me to resign, because they categorically demanded that I deny my principles. Yes, same-sex marriage will never be legalized, nor will anyone be able to insult the Church and the Patriarch, and we shall have a national state.”

GDS, 20:30, 10 February

TAMAR SANIKIDZE, Minister of Education: „If there was such intensive work going on, is the Patriarchy, Ministry of Education, went through it word by word and improved the standard, then why did not they discover such issues as, let the public forgive me, sodomy, safe sex, identity?... No version contains anything like this...”

Homophobia/Russia’s president

Asaval–Dasavali, July 4–10

VLADIMIR PUTIN, Russian President: Europeans are on the verge of extinction. Same-sex marriage will create no generation. Those people, who support legalization of same-sex marriage, reject any morals and traditional identity – national, cultural, religious and even legal ones.

4.7 FORMER AUTHORITIES

Representatives of former government made 13 discriminative comments, out of them 5 was based on political ground, 3 was Turkophobic, 3 on religious ground and single cases of homophobia and xenophobia.

West imposes homosexuality

Asaval–Dasavali, 1–7 February

VALERY KHABURDZANIA, former Minister of Security: „If we listen to Bokerias and Saakashvilis, we must become one of American states and reject even Georgian alphabet. Let them even say that legalization of same-sex marriage and rule of the country by this ideology is the only chance for economic success.”

Islamophobia

Asaval–Dasavali, August 1–7

TENGIZ KITOVANI, ex-defense minister: They have committed the gravest crime against Georgia – over 3 million Georgians have become Muslims. I remember that during my visit to Istanbul together

with [ex-President Eduard] Shevardnadze, chief of security policy talked to me in Georgian and said – we have passed a difficult road, we were deprived of our language, religion, names and now we, the Georgians, are identified as Turkish. I will never forget these words. How can you trust the state, which turned so many Georgians into Turkish?!

Hate speech on political ground

Kavkasia, Spektri, July 4

IRAKLI MACHAVARIANI, President Shevardnadze's representative in conflict resolution issues: I would say that those persons, who represent the National Movement and its elite, are animals. I would hunt these animals, as they pose a threat to human beings. I would issue a license on killing them!

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