



ANTIGENDER

AND **ANTI LGBTQI**

MOBILIZATION IN GEORGIA

ANTI GENDER AND ANTI LGBTQI MOBILIZATION IN GEORGIA



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INTRODUCTION |

In parallel to the rising populism, the manipulation of public opinion around gender and LGBTQI identity-related topics has become a challenge not only in terms of human rights but in politics as well. Harmful information, which by appealing to sensitive topics, aims at creating public confrontation, influencing its values and political systems, poses a threat to society and is often related to foreign information interventions, as well as polarization within the country. Along with the anti-liberal discourse, targeted discreditation campaigns against political opponents, journalists, and activists are also prevalent, which are being carried out by anonymous and malicious actors.

The purpose of the following study is to identify the anti-gender and anti-liberal discourse in Georgia, as well as to map the main actors who try to securitize identity-related issues to mobilize public opinion on these topics.

Part I of the report reviews the quantitative data and terminology of sexist hate speech/gender stereotyping and homophobia, followed by a qualitative analysis based on the same indicators in Part II. Part III maps the main messages disseminated to mobilize society around identity, values, the institution of the family and the protection of children. Part IV reviews the legislation that anti-liberal groups advocate for revision or initiation. Part V brings together individual examples of Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI), as well as selected examples of gender-based disinformation identified during the monitoring process. The final part provides information about the key actors, who happened to incite sexist language, homophobia, and anti-liberal sentiments the most.

| METHODOLOGY

The primary aim of the research is to study the anti-gender and anti-liberal discourses in Georgia, in addition to mapping the main actors who present gender and identity-related topics in false and manipulative contexts.

The research is carried out using a mixed methodology, involving both desk research and media monitoring. Analysis of media monitoring data is carried out using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

DESK RESEARCH. This particular method deals with legislative initiatives that have been registered in the parliament to change the current liberal legislation in Georgia.

MEDIA MONITORING. Facebook's analytical tool Crowdtangle has been used for social media monitoring. In addition to social media monitoring, the findings of traditional media (TV, online media, print media) monitoring has also been included in the research.

The subjects of observation are the manifestations of gender-based discrimination/stereotyping by

- Thematic
- Typology of violation
- Sources
- Targets
- Terminology

The quantitative part includes statistics by categories of violations, thematics and sources (monitoring traditional media and Facebook accounts, parties, clergy, public organizations, society), as well as by the targets of sexist hate speech and the terms used.

Thematic includes both broad issues such as politics, legislation, education, gender and etc, as well as specific issues that have been identified based on previous studies conducted by the Media Development Foundation and include the following:

- Protection of families
- Protection of children
- Protection of values
- Protection of identity

Based on previous studies conducted by the Media Development Foundation, a specific theme related to the legislation was also defined, which includes laws that are in place and requests for changes in legislation. In particular:

EXISTING LEGISLATION / INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS	LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES
Anti-discrimination Law	Prohibition of Gay Propaganda
Law Against Domestic Violence	Prohibiting Abortion
The Code on the Rights of Children, Juvenile Law	Prohibition of non-governmental organizations / restriction of funding from abroad
Istanbul Convention	Other

The qualitative part entails the typology of messages, examples of sexist hate speech forms and indicators, as well as types of visual (video and photo) manipulation. The typology of violations is determined according to the gender barometer indicators, which, in turn, were developed by the organization “Sapari” based on expert focus groups. The present study uses 6 indicators from this methodology, which were used most often during the pre-election research. In particular:

- **Misogyny / sexism** – attacking women, in general, and women’s rights;
- **Offence / ridicule on the ground of appearance** – offending and ridiculing on the ground of body, appearance, manner of talk, clothing;
- **Ageism** – discriminating on the ground of age;
- **Offense / ridicule on the ground of mental abilities** – diminishing intellectual capacity, skills, experience, competences;
- **Attacks based on moral criteria** – attacking on the ground of moral values;
- **Criticism on the ground of gender stereotypes** – attacking on the basis of stereotyped perceptions of women’s role, behaviour, function, activity or other traits.

SELECTION OF MEDIA MONITORING SUBJECTS. 10 traditional media outlets (TV – 5, print – 3, online – 2), as well as 149 Facebook accounts (Facebook pages – 130, Groups – 6, Individual accounts – 13), have been selected as monitoring subjects. It should be noted that the traditional media includes those television stations authorized by the Communications Commission, which broadcast on television frequencies as well as on the Facebook page.

The following subjects were selected from the traditional media:

- **TV Channels:** The talk shows of leading TV channels based on TV ratings – TV Imedi’s “Imedi Live” and Mtavari Arkhi’s “Ghamis Mtavari”, which have different editorial policies and represent binaries of political polarization (government, opposition). Talk shows with anti-liberal and pro-Kremlin editorial policies, some of which operate more actively on Facebook. These platforms are: “Obieqtivi” (Studio N8) linked to the pro-Kremlin “Alliance of Patriots” party, and “Alt-Info” (Alt-Analytics), linked to the Conservative Movement party, as well as Sezoni TV (Summary of the day with Nikoloz Mzhavanadze), owned by former boxer Giorgi Kandelaki, a Stalinist and a member of the movement “Together for a strong Georgia.”
- **Newspapers:** “Asaval-Dasavali” and “Alia” – newspapers with anti-liberal and anti-Western editorial policies.
- **Online outlets:** Pro-Kremlin “Georgia and World” (www.geworld.ge) and its affiliate Split News (www.spnews.io/ge).

Apart from traditional media, Facebook accounts of the following actors were selected as monitoring subjects:

1. **Far-right, Anti-liberal / pro-Kremlin groups:** Facebook accounts linked to a) Levan Vasadze, the representative of Georgia at the World Congress of Families; b) Alt-Info / Conservative Movement; c) The Alliance of Patriots; d) The Georgian March; d) “Georgian Idea” e) Primakov Russian-Georgian Center; f) Nation and State and etc.
2. **Religious Groups:** Facebook pages and individual accounts of individual clergy, religious Facebook pages
3. **Various Anti-liberal / Conservative platforms**
4. **Accounts linked to the ruling party**
5. **Accounts linked to the opposition**

The full list of Facebook accounts subject to monitoring, which is updated periodically, is available on the Genderbarometer website: <https://genderbarometer.ge/methodology/>

Indicators of sexist hate speech developed by Sapari are available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3j6Tp9y>

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KEY FINDINGS |

- The monitoring identified a total of 987 discriminatory contents on the subject of gender and LGBTQI affiliation, the majority of which were of homophobic content (64.6%), while those containing elements of sexist hate speech and gender stereotypes were relatively less (35.4%);
- Among the indicators of sexist hate speech/stereotypes, sexism and misogyny take the top spot, followed by the cases of criticism on the ground of moral criteria and gender stereotypes;
- Out of 193 cases of sexist hate speech/stereotypes identified in traditional media during the monitoring period, the majority directly concerned the topic of gender. Discriminatory statements related to politics were mostly directed against female politicians;
- The topic of gender-related legislation was largely related to legislation on violence against women and conveyed the idea that the prosecution of men and their portrayal as perpetrators was unfounded and deliberate;
- Both sexist hate speech and homophobic comments were not always determined by identity and were often used in a discriminatory manner within the realm of political opposition or civil activism;
- The anonymous Facebook account linked to the opposition was more likely to resort to ridicule on the basis of external characteristics within the framework of political opposition, while the accounts linked to the ruling party were more likely voice attacks based on moral criteria;
- If the terms related to adultery were used against women because of their political activity, the terms related to gender identity (Shemale, Of undetermined gender) were directed against both politicians and civil activists; Supporters of liberal ideology were referred to as “liberasts” (a combination of liberal and paederast);
- Offensive rhetoric against women was primarily linked to their socio-political activity, where sexist and misogynistic terms were used to oppose them;
- The most number of insulting terms against women were used in relation to attacks based on moral criteria;

- Female politicians from the opposition were at the receiving end of the insulting rhetoric the most often (22.9%), followed by representatives of non-governmental organizations/activists (14.9%) and female diplomats and Western politicians (14.5%);
- Insulting comments were most often directed against the US Ambassador to Georgia, Kelly Degnan, followed by the President of Georgia, Salome Zurbishvili, and the leader of the opposition party “Droa,” Elene Khoshtaria.
- Offensive terminology used against LGBTIQ people was related to their behaviour and identity. Anti-Western homophobic terms equated Europe/the West with homosexuality and depravity.

SEXIST HATE SPEECH / STEREOTYPIZATION

- Attacks on women based on sexism/misogyny were, on the one hand, linked to their political or social activities, and to women’s rights issues in general, on the other;
- Demonstrations held in Tbilisi in support of the Iranian human rights defender triggered attacks on women’s rights and political manipulations, during which was argued that solidarity with Iranian women is not an issue of rights, but a reflection of the US’s interest to change the government through a revolution;
- Attacks based on moral criteria, these types of messages were mostly related to women’s political and social activities with the aim of damaging their reputation and reprimanding them with moral and ethical criteria. These attacks were not limited to the component of sexuality: Female politicians and non-governmental sector representatives were often accused of anti-national actions, espionage and greed;
- As for the cases of criticism on the ground of gender stereotypes, on the one hand, women were referred to as “beings of uncertain gender” due to their unfeminine appearance or behaviour, and on the other hand, widespread comments defined the standard of behaviour of a “real woman” stereotypically;
- Attacks on women on the grounds of mental abilities entailed questioning their intellectual abilities, competence and experience by using the terms such as “ignorant,” “stupid,” “foolish,” and “dumb.”

MOBILIZATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF IDENTITY, VALUES, THE INSTITUTION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN

- Anti-liberal groups utilized four specific gender-related topics (Identity, Values, the institution of Family, Children) to mobilize the society;
- Out of the 398 comments analyzed, the theme revolving around the protection of values (32.4%) and identity (31.7%) was almost equally predominant;

- Women appeared mostly in family-related messages and partly in topics related to children, where the protection of women's rights was equated with the violation of that of children. In parallel, representatives of the LGBTQI community appeared in relation to both identity and values-related topics, and partially in children-related discourses.
- The majority of the messages concerning values were of anti-Western nature, pro-Kremlin actors used the technique of false dilemma, portraying Orthodox Russia as a counterweight to the “perverted West”, where the latter was presented as a fighter for the “LGBT-zation” of the world, while the former was given the mission of protecting faith, traditions and the institution of family;
- Russia's military intervention in Ukraine was also discussed through the prism of identity protection, which aimed to shift the focus from Russia's responsibility to more sensitive topics;
- The largest share of messages mobilizing under the pretext of identity protection was of anti-Western content and sought to convey the idea that integration into the West contained the danger of losing gender identity;
- Homosexuality was presented as a rebellion against the will of God, a disease and a deadly sin; and the self-expression of the LGBTQI community – as an attempt to destabilize, provoke other people and promote homosexuality;
- When it comes to topics related to the institution of family, messages concerning abortion were predominant, during which termination of pregnancy in all forms was considered a sin and murder. In addition, feminism and women's rights issues were presented as a threat to the family and demography, while the interference in family affairs was deemed as an action against traditions and Orthodoxy;
- Liberals and LGBTQI people, as well as the propaganda of homosexuality, were named as the main danger to children. A large part of the topic concerned the teaching of equality issues and sexuality education in formal and non-formal education and the anti-discrimination law, which was presented as an infringement of children's rights.

LEGISLATION

- Out of the legislative initiatives registered in the parliament, which concerned the initiation of amendments to 8 existing laws, 1 was related to abortion, 1 concerned blasphemy, while 6 opted for violation of the rights of the above-mentioned groups on the basis of gender and sexual identity;
- Pro-Kremlin parties/organizations, Anti-liberal organizations and selected MPs appeared as the authors of the mentioned legislative initiatives;
- During the monitoring period, the demands for revision of the legislation voiced by the monitored platforms were linked to the limitation of the rights of LGBTQI groups, limitation of the non-governmental sector, and the revision of legislation related women's and children's rights;

- In this context, issues related to the LGBTQI community were predominant, which entailed demands on banning “gay propaganda”, restriction of the freedom of expression and assembly;
- The changes initiated in the Georgian Law on Broadcasting, which implies the transfer of hate speech from media self-regulation to regulation, became the subject of judgment, was interpreted as a limitation of the freedom of expression of Christians and was presented as an imposed directive by the European Union;
- When it comes to women’s rights, in addition to the demand for the criminalization of abortions, the issues of revision of domestic violence and femicide legislation were also present;
- The legal norms of prosecuting men were presented as an obligation determined by the Istanbul Convention and the 12 point recommendations by the European Union, labelling it as the deliberate policy to destroy the Georgian gene pool.

FIMI AND GENDER-BASED DISINFORMATION

- The identified examples of disinformation and manipulative content, on the one hand, discuss the case of Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) and addresses the anti-liberal discourse and geopolitical context, and, on the other hand, involves cases of gender disinformation that have been deliberately disseminated against women, members of the LGBTQI community, and politicians in a homophobic context.
- The monitoring revealed one case related to the anti-liberal discourse, which was disseminated in Georgia, Russia, Belarus and other post-Soviet countries in a coordinated manner and through various communication channels in relation to the war in Ukraine. The purpose of the instance was to divert attention from the topic of war to other sensitive issues as identity and aimed to change the prevalent narrative around Russia’s intervention in Ukraine with the one about the religious war between the US and Russia;
- Other cases of gender-based disinformation were directed against both women and members of the LGBTQI community. In addition, they were used to discredit politicians;
- Three cases of gender-based disinformation aimed at criticizing women based on moral criteria. In two cases, the target was the First Lady of Ukraine, Olena Zelenska, and the information was mostly spread through social media for the purpose of discreditation;
- One case revealed during the monitoring period was related to Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze’s decision to award Balenciaga’s creative director Demna Gvasalia with the title of honorary citizen of Tbilisi, which was followed by homophobic comments due to Gvasalia’s sexual identity;
- The representatives of the LGBTQI community are not always the sole targets of homophobic disinformation, as sometimes LGBTQI identity is used against politicians to discredit them.

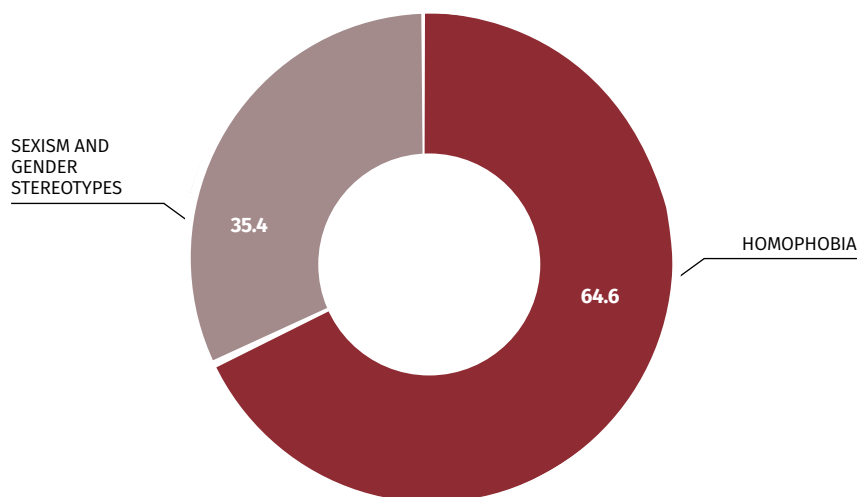
I. SEXIST HATE SPEECH / GENDER-BASED STEREOTYPIZATION AND HOMOPHOBIA

1.1. GENERAL QUANTITATIVE DATA

During the research period (August 15 – November 15, 2022), a total of 987 discriminatory contents on the subject of gender and LGBTQI affiliation were identified among the monitored media subjects, of which 646 comments were retrieved from traditional media and 341 posts from social media (Facebook). Notably, selected TV broadcasters that were included in the category of traditional media (Alt-Info, Sezoni TV) and have a broadcast license, also actively broadcast on social media and distribute broadcast content on various platforms.

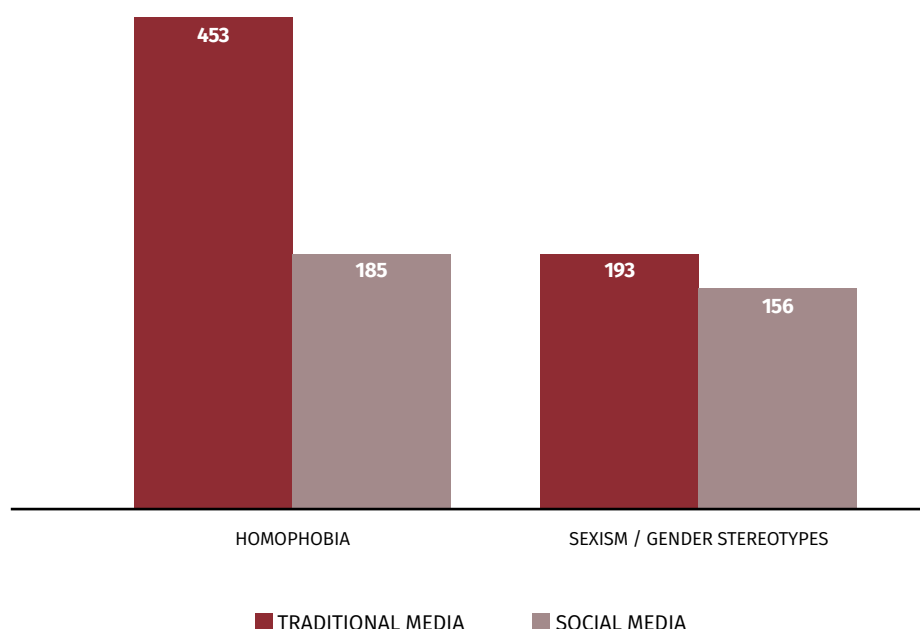
Out of 987 comments, the majority were of homophobic content (64.6%), while those containing elements of sexist hate speech and gender stereotypes were relatively less (35.4%).

CHART 1. TOTAL NUMBER OF ANTI-GENDER AND ANTI-LGBTQI COMMENTS/POSTS



When it comes to the typology of media outlets, homophobic messages were more present in traditional media (453) compared to social media (185); However, sexist hate-speech and gender stereotypes were almost equally represented in traditional (193) and social media (156) with a slight difference.

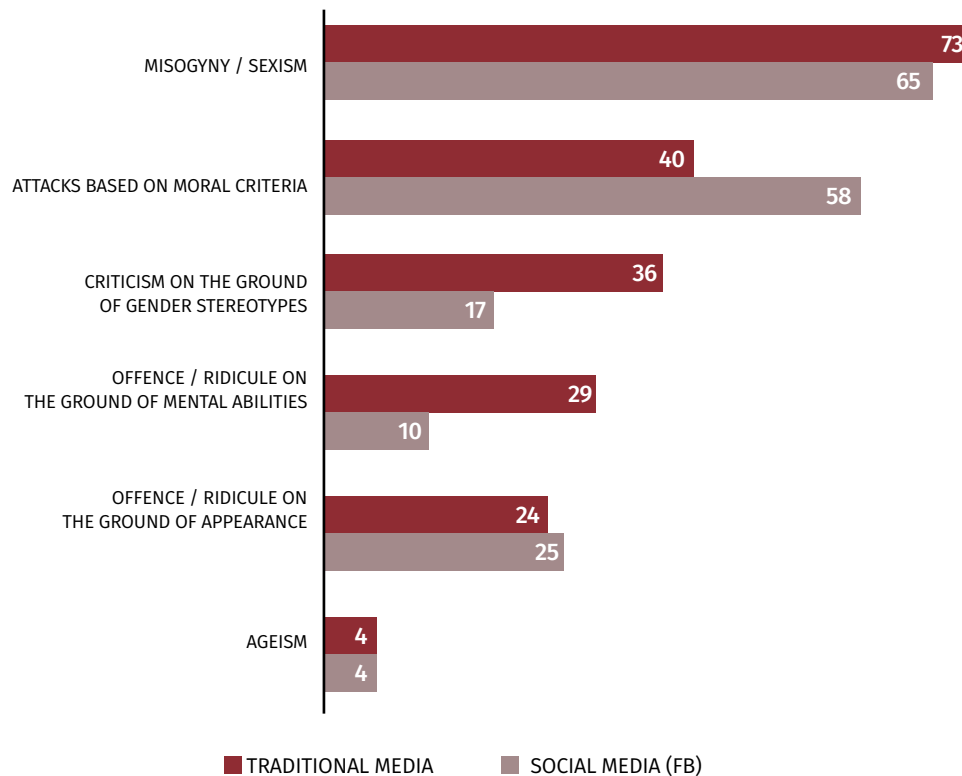
CHART 2. ANTI-GENDER AND ANTI-LGBTQI COMMENTS / POSTS BY TRADITIONAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK)



1.2. SEXIST HATE SPEECH / GENDER-BASED STEREOTYPIZATION

Out of the 349 sexist hate speech, and gender stereotyping comments observed during the three-month monitoring period (August 15 – November 15), the largest share (193) came from traditional media, followed by Facebook with a slight difference (156).

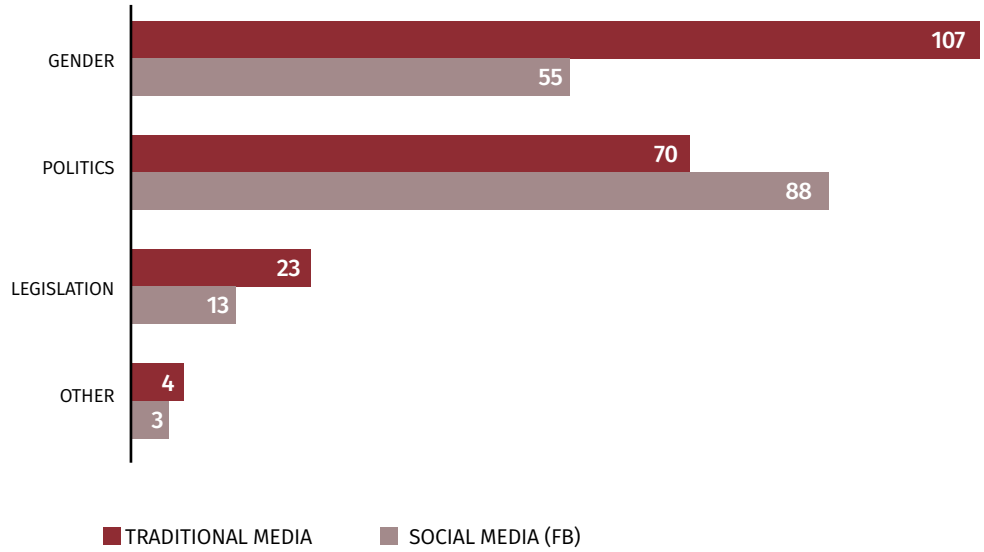
TYPOLGY OF VIOLATION. Among the indicators of sexist hate speech/stereotypes in both traditional (73) and social (65) media, sexism and misogyny take the top spot, combining examples of attacks on women and women’s rights. Cases of criticism based on moral criteria are less common in traditional media (40) compared to Facebook (58). The cases of criticism on the ground of gender stereotypes in the traditional media (36) exceed that of Facebook (17); a similar trend was also revealed in the case of mocking women on the ground of mental abilities (Traditional – 29; Facebook – 10). The number of instances of offence/ridicule on the ground of appearance towards women was almost equal (Traditional 24; Facebook – 25). Notably, the cases of ageism in both traditional (4) and social (4) media were the least common.

CHART 3. TYPOLOGY OF SEXIST HATE SPEECH / STEREOTYPES IN TRADITIONAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK)

THEMES. Out of 193 cases of sexist hate speech/sterotypes identified in traditional media during the monitoring period, the majority (107) directly concerned the topic of gender, while on Facebook, the value was almost halved (55). Discriminatory statements related to politics were mostly directed against female politicians and were slightly more present on Facebook (88) compared to traditional media (70).

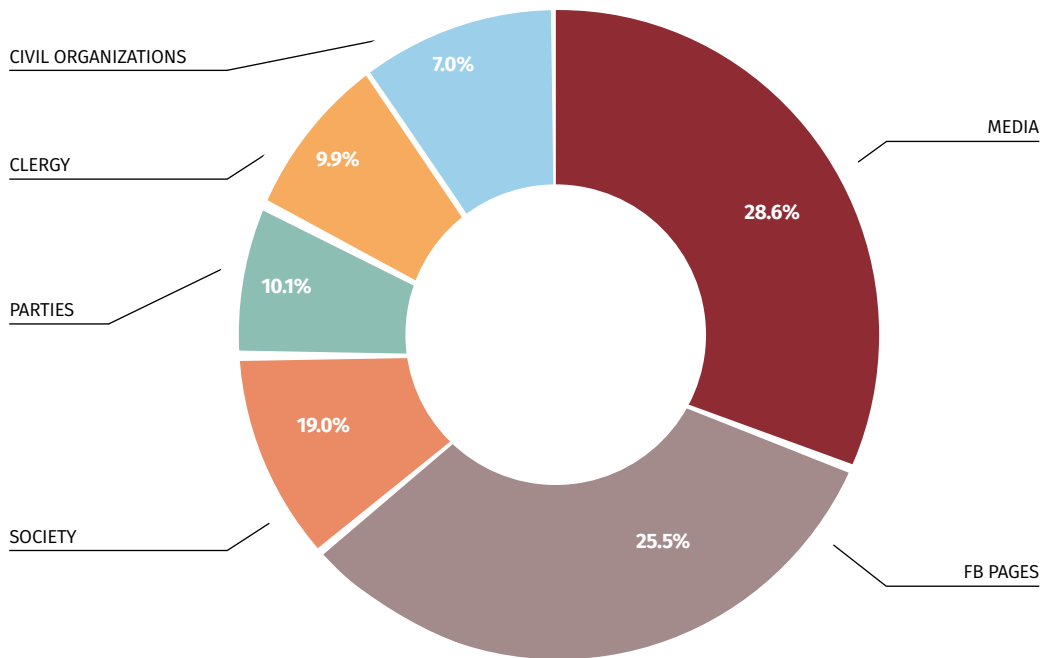
Both traditional (23) and social media (13) featured the topic of gender-related legislation, which, among other things, was largely related to legislation on violence against women and conveyed the idea that the prosecution of men and their portrayal as perpetrators was unfounded and deliberate. The topic of criminalization of abortions was dominant on social media.

CHART 4. THE THEMES OF SEXIST HATE SPEECH / STEREOTYPES IN TRADITIONAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK)



SOURCES. The largest share of sources of sexist hate speech came from the subjects of monitored media (110), followed by various Facebook pages (98) and comments/posts from members of the public (73). Gender-problematic comments from the pro-Kremlin and far-right parties (39), as well as clergy (38), were almost equally represented; Such comments by public organizations were present the least (27).

CHART 5. SOURCES OF SEXIST HATE SPEECH/STEREOTYPES



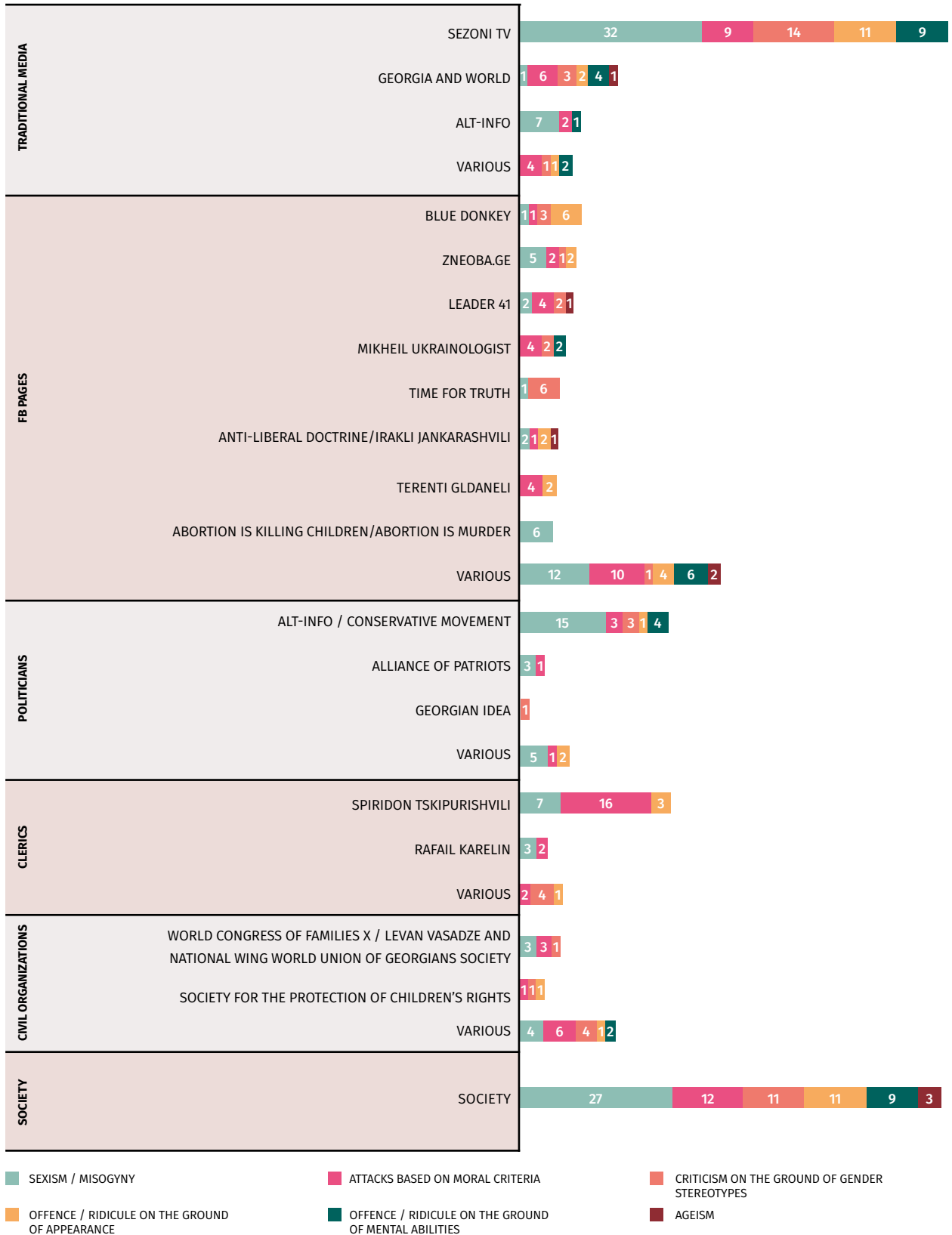
Among the monitoring subjects, sexist hate speech/gender stereotypes were found most often in Nikoloz Mzhavanadze's TV program on Sezoni TV (75), followed by the Kremlin-linked online publication "Georgia and World" (Geworld.ge) (17) and the pro-Kremlin Conservative Movement-linked "Alt-Info" TV (10), on the air of which the party leaders themselves appear as sources of discriminatory comments, and this data is included separately in the section of politicians, where the majority of sexist comments are ascribed to this very party (26).

The analysis observed violations of all 6 categories of sexist language and gender stereotypes in relation to Sezoni TV and "Georgia and World." In the case of "Alt-Info" (media), sexism and misogyny were more dominant, similar to the case of the Alt-Info/Conservative Movement party. Sexism and misogyny were dominant in the case of Sezoni TV as well, while attacks based on moral criteria were mostly found in the case of Archbishop Spyridon Tskipurishvili, who was the most active among the clergy (26).

When it comes to civil organizations, where the picture is fragmented in terms of actors, we find Levan Vasadze's organization Ertoba, Raoba, Imedi (ERI), which is linked to the Kremlin and the Russian Church, and is presented on various platforms, including the Georgian-language page of the conservative World Congress of Families. In this case, we find separate cases of both sexism and misogyny, as well as attacks with moral criteria.

In the case of Facebook pages, sexist language/gender stereotypes were present on the opposition (Blue Donkey – 11), also on anti-liberal (Zneoba.ge – 10) and incumbent Georgian Dream-affiliated (Leader 41 – 9; Mikheil Ukrainologist – 8, Terenti Gldaneli – 6, Time for the truth – 7) Facebook pages. It should be noted that "Blue Donkey," which is linked to the United National Movement, within the context of political opposition, was more likely to resort to ridicule on the basis of appearance, while accounts linked to the government (Leader 41, Mikheil Ukrainologist, Terenti Gldaneli, Time for the Truth) used attacks based on moral criteria.

CHART 6. TYPOLOGY OF SEXIST HATE SPEECH / STEREOTYPES BY SOURCES



1.3. HOMOPHOBIA

As mentioned above, out of 638 homophobic messages, the majority (453) were found among traditional media, which is twice as much (185) as that of comments found on social media (Facebook).

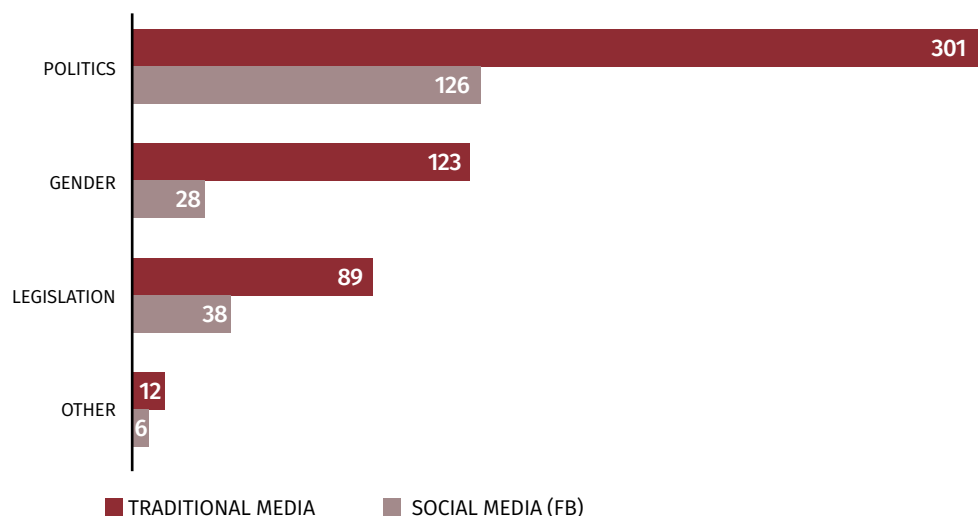
THEMES. In contrast to sexist hate speech, the largest share of homophobic messages in both types of media was related to politics, although traditional media (301) accounted for the largest share of such messages. The number of homophobic messages on social media was almost half (126). Statements related to politics, along with discriminatory content towards the LGBTQI community, were of anti-Western nature and amplified the idea that the West imposes homosexuality and fights against traditional identity.

Apart from politics, the topic of gender identity and gender self-identification was also present, where both traditional (123) as well as social media (28) underscored the unacceptability of different gender identities.

Actualization of issues related to legislation (Traditional – 89; Facebook – 38), on the one hand, was related to the changes initiated in the law on broadcasting,¹ which entails the transfer of hate speech from self-regulation to regulation, on the other hand, to the legislative initiative of the radical Alt-Info/Conservative Movement party on the restriction of the freedom of speech and expression, as well as on the freedom of assembly of LGBTQ persons.²

When it comes to the “various” category, education issues were dominant, where the teaching of equality issues and sex education in schools was equated with child perversion.

CHART 7. THE THEMES OF HOMOPHOBIC MESSAGES IN TRADITIONAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK)

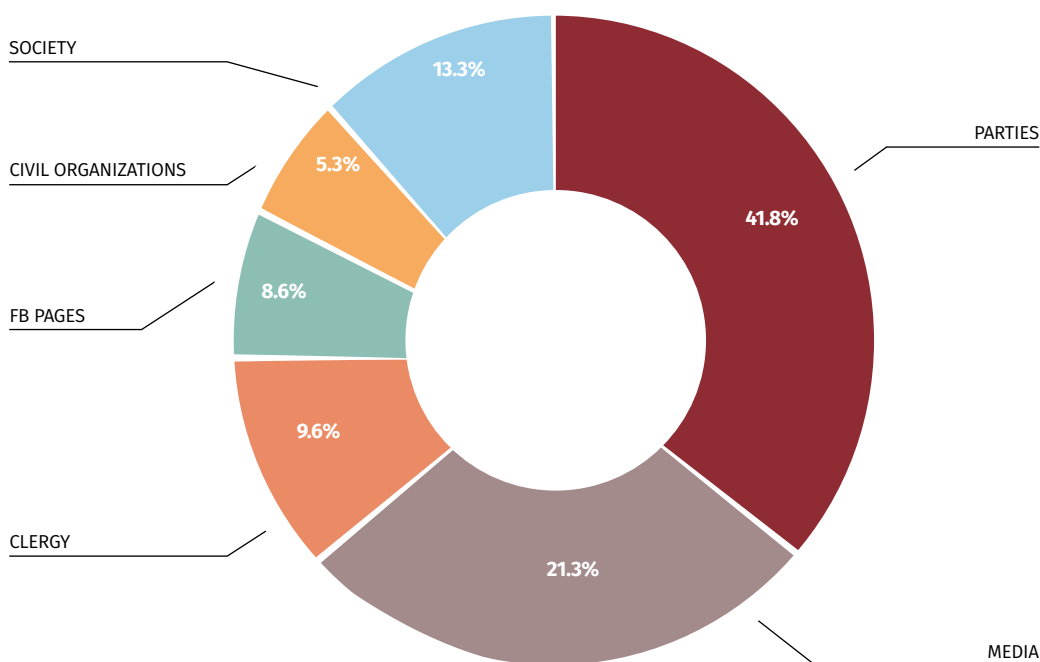


¹ Legislative initiative on amendments to the Law on Broadcasting, September 7, 2022 <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/305437>

² Legislative initiative of the citizens' initiative group (Giorgi Kardava, Zurab Makharadze, Irakli Morgoshia, Shota Martinenko, Konstantine Morgoshia), November 7, 2022 <https://parliament.ge/legislation/25062>

SOURCES. The main source of homophobic statements were political parties (41.8%), followed by media (21.3%) and society (13.3%). The data of clergy (9.6%) and Facebook pages (8.6%) are almost equal. The least amount of homophobic comments was observed among civil organizations (5.3%).

CHART 8. SOURCES OF HOMOPHOBIA



Among political parties, the biggest number of homophobic comments were voiced by the Alt-Info / Conservative Movement (201), compared to which the data of the Alliance of Patriots (35) and the Georgian Idea (12) are relatively small. In terms of media, Sezoni TV (73) and Georgia and world (30) take the lead, and from the clergy – Archpriest Spiridon Tskipurishvili (33), who is a supporter of the Alt-Info / Conservative Movement and often appears on the air of “Alt-Info.” Tskipurishvili often publishes videos of Alt-Info on his personal Facebook page.

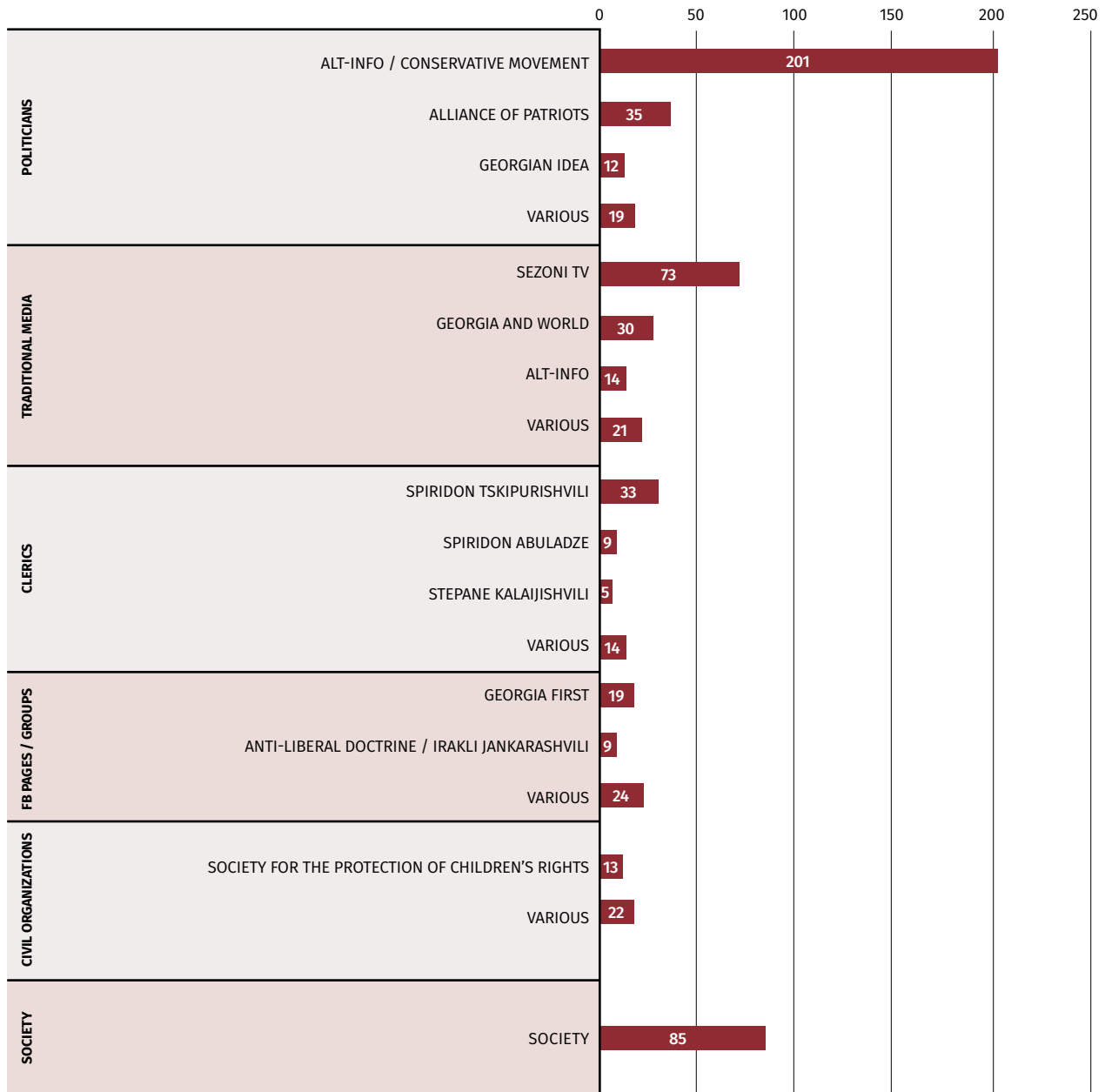
Among Facebook pages, anti-liberal (“Georgia First”³ – 19) and pro-Kremlin (pages related to Irakli Jankarashvili⁴ – 9) were the most actively distributing homophobic posts. The entries united in the “various” section mostly combine a fragmented spectrum of anti-liberal and pro-Kremlin accounts.

³ Myth Detector, The profile of “Georgia First”
<https://mythdetector.ge/ka/profiles/saqarthvelo-upirveles-qhovlisa/>

⁴ Myth Detector, 10 June, 2020 “What do Irakli Irakli, Antiliberal Doctrine, News Front and Tvalsazisi.ge Have in Common?”
<https://mythdetector.ge/en/what-do-irakli-irakli-antiliberl-doctrine-news-front-and-tvalsazisi-ge-have-in-common/>

Among civil organizations, the most homophobic comments were found in the case of the Society for the Protection of Children’s Rights”⁵ (13), whose board chairman, Guram Palavandishvili⁶, is notorious for his extremist activities and is linked to the “Georgian Idea” party.

CHART 9. SOURCES OF HOMOPHOBIA BY MONITORING SUBJECTS



⁵ Myth Detector, The profile of Society for the Protection of Children’s Rights

<https://mythdetector.ge/ka/profiles/bavshvtha-uphlebebis-datsvis-sazogadoeba/>

⁶ Myth Detector, The profile of Guram Palavandishvili <https://mythdetector.ge/en/profiles/guram-palvandishvili/>

1.4. TERMINOLOGY

The monitoring results showed that both sexist hate speech and homophobic comments were not always determined by identity-related topics and were often used in a discriminatory manner within the realm of political opposition, civil activism or in the process of rights protection. If the terms related to adultery were used against women because of their political activity, the terms related to gender identity (Shemale, Of undetermined gender) were directed against both politicians and civil activists; Supporters of liberal ideology were referred to as “liberasts” (a combination of liberal and paederast).

ANTI-GENDER. The derogatory terminology used against women varied between normative vocabulary and profanity.

The grouping of terms according to 6 categories of sexist and gender stereotypes revealed that most terms were used in relation to attacks based on moral criteria, which, as can be seen in the table below, were divided into several categories:

- Slut-shaming;⁷
- Unacceptable moral behaviour, which partially includes the “slut-shaming” category;
- gender identity-related;
- Anti-national/religious;
- Anti-state/Mercantile, which was mostly directed against Elene Khoshtaria, the leader of the opposition party “Droa,” and was manipulatively related to the fact that her family member received royalties from Russia, which often had the character of a coordinated discreditation campaign;⁸
- Anti-liberal, when the term liberal was used in a negative context mostly when referring to civil activists.

⁷ “Slut-shaming” refers to criticizing people, mostly women and girls, when their behavior, appearance or dress does not correspond to the gender norms and sexuality-related ideas established in the society. Such behavior or appearance includes, for example, sexy, provocative attire, requests for access to contraception, premarital sex, or casual sex. Slutshaming also often involves blaming the victim of sexual violence in whole or in part for provoking the violence through their behavior or dress. Slutshaming is used to shame and stigmatize women.

⁸ Radio Liberty, 16 June, 2022. Elene Khoshtaria Answers “Imedi” about the reception of money from Russia for a family member <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31900869.html>

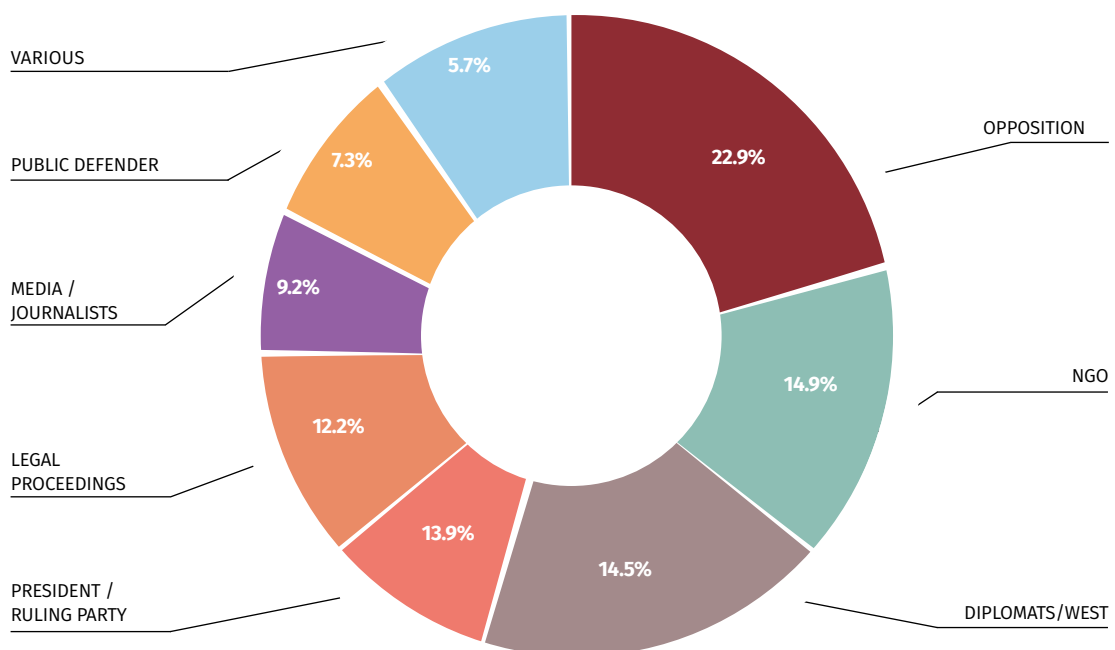
TABLE 1. THE DEROGATORY TERMINOLOGY ACCORDING TO 6 CATEGORIES OF SEXIST AND GENDER STEREOTYPES

TYPOLOGY OF VIOLATION	TERMINOLOGY
<p>Attacks based on moral criteria</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adultery: Slut; Sluttery; Whore; Whore wives; Prostitute; Hustler; Hooker; Chick; TV sex diva; Sex diva, Perverted women; Pervert; thirsty for d*ck, Sexually Unsatisfied Woman, Attack of hormones, People rolling in Saakashvili’s bed; Misha’s women; sexually over-active woman; immoral woman; Pedophile; ■ Unacceptable moral behaviour: man-eating mother (on abortion), Disgraceful woman, Bitch, Depraved, Morally depraved, unruly, Disgraceful person, immoral woman; Impudent, Bastard, Scums of society, Polished riff-raff, Scoundrel in a woman’s form, Whistleblower, Advanced whistleblower, Full of hate, loser, Unwashed civil toilet bowl, Horrible. ■ Gender identity: Being of uncertain gender, Genderless, Of uncertain orientation, Uncertain gender identity, Female or Male, Shemale. ■ Anti-national/religious: Enemy of the people, Stateless, Hater of Georgians, Woman of unknown origin, Embodiment of filth and statelessness, Agent, Spy, Soros’ witch, Alien woman, American bitch, Native of Mankurts, Satanist, Satan incarnate, Sect, Sectarian women, Neo-Bolshevik, ■ Anti-state/Mercantile: Rublovna [in relation to Russian rubles], Ms Rublovna, Fat with rubles, Russian spy, Her family - fat with Russian money, Raised with Russian money, Russian money lover, Rubles of Khoshtaria’s family. ■ Anti-liberal: Liberast [Liberal + pederast], Liberasty, Messenger of the liberast wing, Neoliberast, Tolerantization.
<p>Offence/ridicule on the ground of appearance</p>	<p>Baba Yaga [Witch]; Garden scarecrow; Bed bug woman; Zombie; Cows; Clown; Comic woman; Nose-bitten; Disfigured woman; Fairy; Unsightly woman; Bare-chested; Stripped [nude];</p>
<p>Criticism on the ground of gender stereotypes</p>	<p>Witch; Hysterical woman, Bad-tempered; Obstinate, Merry, Pussies; Blabbermouth, Cunts, Hidden behind woman’s undies; Cowardly; Dedagatkhovili*; Weaker sex; Easy; Bean-whipper, Meaty Ukrainian woman.</p> <p>*[Someone whose mother got re-married]</p>

TYPOLOGY OF VIOLATION	TERMINOLOGY
Misogyny/sexism	Feminist, Feminists, Ugliness of Feminists, Ugly feminist of colour; Zonder*-feminist; Inti-feminist, Fascist-feminist Zonder gang; Notorious genderization, Lobbyist of LGBT feminists, Females, Gender police; Men-hating.
Offence/ridicule on the ground of mental abilities	Imbecile; Stupid, Foolish women; Daft/Silly; Imbecile woman; Dumb woman; Stammerer; Blockhead; Inadequate; Anomalic patient of Freud; Crazy woman, Sick woman
Ageism	Humpbacked woman sitting at a fireplace; Old Humpbacked woman; Flatulent granny; French President's old wife; Malicious pensioner; Old slut;

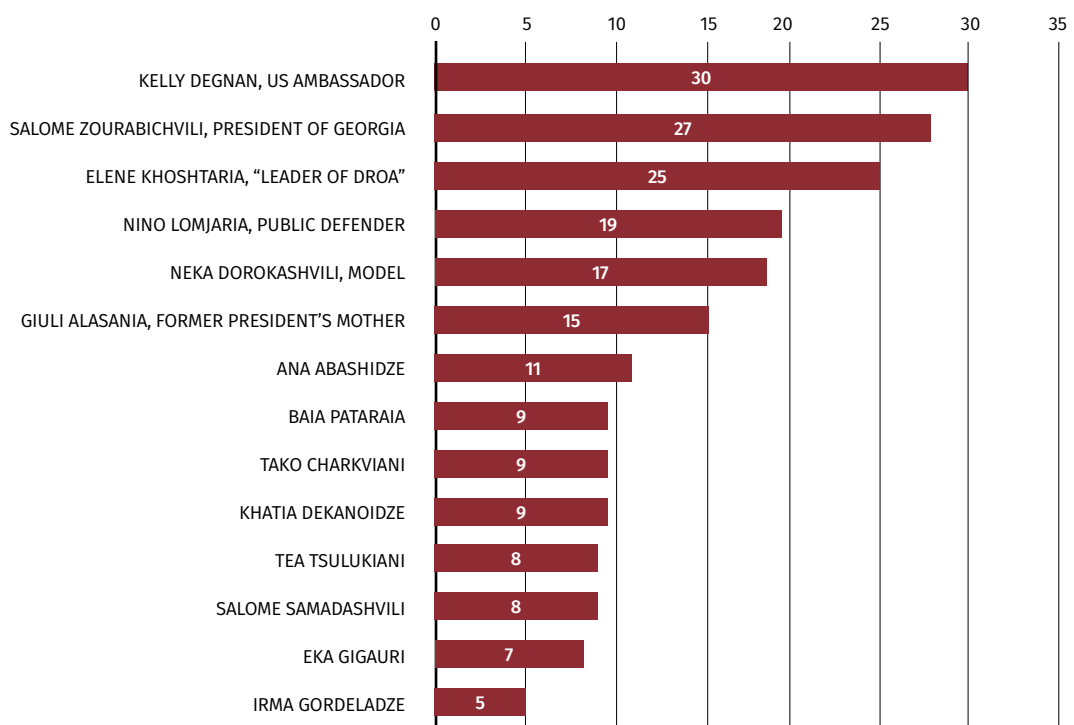
TARGETS. Female politicians from the opposition were at the receiving end of the insulting rhetoric the most often (22.9%), followed by representatives of non-governmental organizations/activists (14.9%) and female diplomats and Western politicians (14.5%). Next are the President and the Minister of Culture, Sport and Youth (13.4%), where, as indicated on Chart 10, President Salome Zurbashvili takes the lead. They are followed by women related to legal processes in various forms (Neka Dorokashvili, Giuli Alasania) (12.2%), the representatives of the media (9.2%) and the public defender (7.3%).

CHART 10. TARGETS OF INSULTING LANGUAGE BY THEIR INSTITUTIONAL AND OTHER AFFILIATION



Insulting comments were most often directed against the US Ambassador to Georgia, Kelly Degnan (30), followed by the President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili (27), and the leader of the opposition party “Droa,” Elene Khoshtaria (25). They are followed by the Public Defender Nino Lomjaria (19).⁹ Due to ongoing legal processes, model Neka Dorokashvili (17), who sued her husband, prominent Georgian tennis player, Nikoloz Basilashvili, for domestic violence, as well as President Mikheil Saakashvili’s mother, Giuli Alasania (15), became the target of insulting rhetoric. The targets of offensive comments were human rights defenders and civil activists, namely, Ana Abashidze, one of the candidates for the Ombudsperson, (11), Baia Pataria (9), a feminist activist and the head of “Sapari,” and civil activist Irma Gordeladze (5). The representatives of the opposition – Tako Charkviani, Law and Justice (9), Khatia Dekanoidze, United National Movement (9), Salome Samadashvili, Lelo (8), as well as the Minister of Culture, Sport and Youth Tea Tsulukiani (8), were the targets of such rhetoric. Director of Transparency International Georgia, Eka Gigauri (7) and other female representatives of non-governmental organizations (39 in total) were also targeted.

CHART 11. FEMALE TARGETS OF INSULTING RHETORIC (MOST FREQUENT CASES)



Offensive rhetoric against women was not always motivated by gender identity and was primarily linked to their socio-political activity, although sexist and misogynistic terms were used to oppose them. For example, we find the term “pocket whore” in relation to opposition MP Khatia Dekanoidze

⁹ During the monitoring period she still occupied the position of the Public Defender.

and Salome Samadashvili; the term “Shemale” in relation to Elene Khoshtaria; the term “poisonous woman” in relation to US Ambassador, Kelly Degnan, President of Georgia, Salome Zurabishvili and Public Defender Nino Lomjaria. At the same time, the term “spy” was used for representatives of both the opposition and non-governmental organizations, while Elene Khoshtaria was associated with Russian interests by referring to her as a “rublovna”. In addition to calling civil activists “feminist Zonders” (Baia Pataria) and “The witches of Soros” (Ana Abashidze, Ana Arganashvili), terms such as “gender theory activist” and “liberast” were used against the US ambassador.

The sources behind the insulting terms against the US ambassador were pro-government experts, as well as Kremlin and anti-liberal groups. Opposition-linked pages were also active against the President of Georgia, along with pro-governmental and pro-Kremlin Facebook accounts.

ANTI-LGBTQI. By analyzing the offensive terminology used against LGBTQI people, 4 main categories were identified:

1. Terms related to behaviour;
2. Referring to people of LGBTQI identity with offensive variations of different terms;
3. Identity-related;
4. Anti-Western;

In turn, terms related to homosexual behaviour included the following subcategories:

- Equating homosexuality with sin;
- Considering homosexual relationships as immoral/depraved;
- Considering homosexuality as an illness/deviation from the norm;
- Perceiving the freedom of expression of members of the LGBTQI community as propaganda of homosexuality;
- Terms related to same-sex marriage;
- Equating homosexuality with incest/pedophilia.

People of the LGBTQI+ identity were referred to by different terms such as pederasty, sodomy and etc. Identity-related terms combined gender self-identification with derogatory and dehumanizing words. And anti-Western homophobic terms equated Europe/the West with homosexuality and depravity.

TABLE 2. HOMOPHOBIC TERMS

TYOLOGY		TERMS	#
Terms related to behaviour	Sin	Sodom-Gommorah / Sodomy / Depravity and Sodomy / Sodomites / The sin of Sodom-Gommorah / Sodomization / Propaganda of Sodomy / The flag of Sodomy / Half-Sodomite / Sodomite marches / The fallen part / Blasphemy of God / Hell	117
	Depravity / immoral behaviour	Perversion / Perverted man / Moral Degradation / Gay perversion / Depraved / Ideology of depravity / Filthy gender (LGBT) theory / Morally degraded ideology / Protector of perversion / Immorality / Unbridled immorality / Morally decayed / Moral deaden / Dissoluteness / Defilement / Acceptance of defilement / Vileness / Odiousness / Despicable / Filthiness / Calamity / Evil / Inhuman / Orgy	72
	Illness / deviation	Ill / Perverts / Freaks / Maniacs / Deviant psyche / Crazy / Pathological sexual orientations / Non-traditional sexual orientation / Inclinations / Sexually perverted forms / People with sexual deviance / Declaration of deviance as the norm / Actions deviating from the norm / Anti-natural	46
	Propaganda of homosexuality	LGBT Propaganda / Draconian LGBT Propaganda / Perversion Prides / Propaganda of Perversion / Gay Propaganda / Propagandist / Propagation of Non-Traditional Values / Inculcation of Sexual Perversion / Propaganda of Sexuality / Corrupting the Next Generation / Perverting the Consciousness of Children and Adolescents / Normalizing Homosexuality / Gay Ultimatums	41
	Right to marry	Men-wife / wife to a man / The land of Demna Gvasalia / Gay-marriage / Legalization of marriage between two women and two men	16
	Incest / pedophilia	Pedophile / Pedophile-Pederast-Transgender Prides / Pedophile LGBT Abomination / Incest and Pedophilia / Decriminalization of Incest and Pedophilia	15
Referring to people of LGBTQ+ identity with offensive variations of different terms	LGBTQI	Tentacles of the LGBT Community / Collective LGBT / LGBT Sect / LGBT tricks / LGBT Flag / "Manly men" of the LGBT Community / LGBT Mafia / LGBT Activist / LGBT Parades / LGBT Agenda / LGBT-zation / LGBT-ish / LGBT Clowns	90
	"Pederasty"	Pederasts / Pederast camp / Unity of Pederasts / Pederast / pederasted / Pro-pederast / Gay NGO pederasts / Whores and pederasts / Becoming pederasts / Pedziks	84
	Transgender	Transgenderism / Transgender / Crazy Transgender / Transgender Admiral / Geopolitical Transgenderism / Transgender Society / True Woman / Conchita / Ear Pierced Conchita / Swollen Lips Queen of Conchitas / Empress of ass-loving Sodomites	41

TYOLOGY		TERMS	#
	Queer, Lesbian and Bisexual	Lesbian / Bisexual / Born Males by pondering and Vice versa / Male to Females / Blue / Becoming Blue / Pink / Queer People / Queer and Intersex / Chickens / Famous Homosexual / Mother / Lesbianism / Unseemliness / Corrupted	39
	Gay	Gayness / Gay Parliament / Gay Armband / Gay Carnival / Gay Designer / Gay Rights / Gay Organizations / Gay Trans-Liberal Jihad / Gay Terrorist / Gay Feudalism / Someone Gay / Armenian Gay / Georgian Gay / Gay Sauna / Famous Gay / Gay Actor / Gay liberal / Gay activism / Rage of Gay activists / Gay fascism / Gay clown	34
	“Homosexuality”	Homosexuality / Out homosexual / Officially homosexual / Openly homosexual / Homosexual girlfriend	16
Identity-related	Undefined gender / identity	Gender Ideology / Genders / Gender 70 / Gender X / Gender Police / Gender Madness / Undefined Gender / Person of an Undefined Identity / Uncertain Gender Being / Undefined Gender Identity / Person unsure in its own Gender / Non-gendered / Uncertain Orientation / Undefined Being / Habitus Women or Men of undefined habitus / Parent N1, N2, N3 / Numbering of parents / Citizen X / Many genders / No gender / Both genders / Biological sex	48
	Ridicule on the grounds of identity	Flamboyant people / Parade of colorful underwear / boys with pony-tails / colorful feudalism / colorful Stefane / colorful girls and boys / Such people / people of such sexual orientation / such	29
	Dehumanization	Cattle (animal) / animalistic values / the level of animals / A primate of human physiological needs / An investment made in the a*s / Giving ass (intercourse between men) / Satanic ideology / Zonder gang of provocateurs	9
Anti-Western	Anti-liberal	Liberast / libertast crowd / Mess / Lliberasty/ NGO-liberast / Ultra liberast / Globalist-liberasts / globalist Globalist-liberast ugliness //Soros-liberast/ Neoliberalast / Russian liberast / Rainbow liberast Georgia	101
	Gay Europe / Perverted West	Gay Europe / Liberast Europe / Sodomite Europe / Pride / Western-made People / Filthy Propagandist Europe / LGBT Anglosaxes	16

II. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF SEXIST HATE SPEECH / STEREOTYPIZATION

2.1. SEXISM / MISOGYNY

As underscored in the previous chapter, among the indicators of sexist hate speech/stereotypes, media monitoring revealed the most cases of sexism and misogyny (Traditional media – 73; Facebook – 65). Attacks on women were, on the one hand, linked to their political or social activities, and to women’s rights issues in general, on the other.

DEMONSTRATION OF SOLIDARITY TO AN IRANIAN WOMAN. The death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in Iran, which concerned her arrest by the “Morality Police” for wearing a hijab, was followed by protests in Georgia as well¹⁰. Demonstrations held in Tbilisi in support of the Iranian human rights defender triggered attacks on women’s rights and political manipulations, during which the following messages were identified:

- **The protest is baseless/Among the Muslim world, women’s rights are best protected in Iran:** “Are Iranian democracy and how a woman wears a hijab, is so important to you that you would think about it?”¹¹ “Iran is the country with the most rights for women in the Muslim world. Women’s rights are not protected in any country, as it is in Iran. There are women in the parliament; they work in the police and in many other places; that’s why the hysteria about these women, pretending that they are suffering in Iran, etc. This is all madness.”¹²
- **Solidarity with Iranian women is not an issue of rights, but a reflection of the US’s interest to change the government through a revolution:** “[the goal] is to overthrow the government in Iran,

¹⁰ Radio Liberty, 24 September, 2022. A Demonstration Held in Tbilisi in Support of the Women in Iran <https://bit.ly/3XbbeCc>

¹¹ Malkhaz Topuridze, Alliance of Patriots. Obieqtivi, Studio 8, 23 September, 2022 <https://bit.ly/40tl31v>

¹² Ermile Nemsadze, 23 September, 2022 “Iranian Revolution” of Baia Pataraias <https://bit.ly/3l2rj8Z>

so that Iran, which is one of the most powerful countries in terms of energy, will confront Russia; otherwise, the US does not care if one walks with a headscarf or without it.”¹³

- **The West is encouraging demonstrations, as it fights against traditional religions:** „Are they only fighting Orthodoxy? This is also being done against the Muslim religion. Do you see what is happening in Iran? These traditional Iranian people; women are taking off their hijabs and burning them in the middle of the street in Tehran, right? The reason for this indignation is quite reasonable – a young girl died there because of wearing hijab incorrectly, but this is also, according to the Iranian authorities, connected with the West. Even in my opinion – if Western organizations manage to covertly operate there, rebellions and demonstrations are being incited by their influence...”¹⁴
- **The events in Iran are linked to Soros/Feminism:** Obviously, now it is not about personal freedom, but about complete neoliberal Western degeneration. Who invented “feminism”? (These are not really healthy people). The Soros Foundation supports unrest in Iran.”¹⁵ “Instead of taking off the hijab, Iranian women actually want to expose their breasts.”¹⁶ “We witnessed in Georgia that Georgian women came out on Rustaveli and shouted “My pussy is my choice,” and they became the flagships of women’s rights in prosperous Georgia, and these people now declare solidarity and support for Iranian women. They feed on Soros’ milk, but Iran has a very high level of control of financial flows in their country, control of information... and that’s why they can’t arrange anything there.”¹⁷

LEGISLATION AND WOMEN’S RIGHTS. Attacks on women’s rights were also made in relation to various legislative initiatives and existing legal definitions. Along with the unacceptability of women’s quotas, which was considered a counterweight to professionalism (“No gender quotas, professionals should enter the parliament!”¹⁸), women’s mental abilities were also questioned. In general, the process of imposing quotas was considered a difficult perspective for Europe:

Hamlet Chipashvili, Political Scientist: “What awaits Europe? The outlook is very grim. What caused all this? Ingenuity and these foolish girl-boy prime ministers and inclusion of women in the parliament with quotas. I am never against women, but I am always against stupid women.”¹⁹

¹³ Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, Host. Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, 27 September, 2022 <https://bit.ly/3jzzAbj>

¹⁴ Iliia Chachibaia, Host at “Obieqtivi”. Obieqtivi, Studio 8, 4 October <https://bit.ly/3x4Hsol>

¹⁵ Maia Tvaltvadze, 4 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3DH4fdB>

¹⁶ Lasha Chincharauli, Individual profile, 27 September, <https://bit.ly/3X4GYsZ>

¹⁷ Ermile Nemsadze, 23 September, 2022 “Iranian Revolution” of Baia Pataraias.” <https://bit.ly/3Yq0ilq>

¹⁸ Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, Host. Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, 26 October, <https://bit.ly/3Xbxpse>

¹⁹ Alt-Info, Alternative Vision, 12 October, <https://bit.ly/3RCIUyO>

Along with the denial of femicide (“the term femicide itself is incorrect, incorrectly used because fortunately, in Georgia, that is, no one attacks a lady passing by on the street”²⁰), there were calls²¹ to completely remove articles concerning femicide from the legislation.

Issues related to legislation are discussed in greater detail in chapter four.

2.2. ATTACKS BASED ON MORAL CRITERIA.

Following sexism and misogyny, most violations were detected in the form of attacks based on moral criteria (Traditional media – 40, Facebook – 58). These types of violations were mostly related to women’s political and social activities with the aim of damaging the reputation of the targets and reprimanding them with moral and ethical criteria.

SLUT-SHAMING. A form of sexist hate speech, namely “slut-shaming,” was commonly used during attacks based on moral criteria to berate the targets for appearance, dress, or behaviour that did not conform to stereotypes.

Notably, in the political context, slut-shaming was used in relation to the political activities of female politicians, during which their personal lives were evaluated through the lens of morality. For instance, the host of the pro-Kremlin “Sezoni TV” used the following expression while negatively evaluating the activities of the President of Georgia:

Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, “Sezoni TV” Host: “Georgia is a small country, and the whole country knows the moral and ethical face of this woman [Salome Zurabishvili], who is she – married a hundred times, can’t even speak Georgian and is morally corrupt. And if a person is a prostitute in the flesh, he/she is also a prostitute in the spirit as well.”²²

Anonymous accounts have been using sexist comments against Khatia Dekanoidze, a member of the opposition United National Movement Party, in relation to the events in Ukraine. Such comments were, on the one hand, related to Dekanoidze’s criticism of the position of the Georgian government on the sanctions imposed on Russia, and on the other hand, to the position of the former advisor to the Ukrainian president’s administration, Oleksiy Arestovych on the occupied territories.

²⁰ Giorgi Mariamidze, Institute for the Protection of Citizens. Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, 26 October, <https://bit.ly/3YyqESp>

²¹ Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, 26 October, <https://bit.ly/3YbT8BF>

²² Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, 14 November, <https://bit.ly/3l3G23N>



“A whore compared to you [Khatia Dekanoidze] is an angel! You are a blabbermouth and a traitor! You won’t get away with this!!!!”²³

“Project your power in bed with Khatia [Dakanoidze], Oleska [Oleksiy Arestovych]. Two fools.”²⁴

In relation to Khatia Dekanoidze, labelling the activities of female politicians as adultery took place in relation to other opposition candidates as well. In particular, “Droa” party leader Elene Khoshtaria and “Lelo” member Salome Samadashvili became targets of slut-shaming:

Tristan Tselashvili, Military Expert: „Khatia Dekanoidze is Saakashvili’s pocket whore. Not only Khatia but Khoshtarias, Samadashvilis too.”²⁵

Giuli Alasania, the mother of Mikheil Saakashvili, the imprisoned third president of Georgia, was also at the receiving end of attacks based on moral criteria, where anonymous pages related to the government systematically spread unconfirmed information of identical content and memes about her alleged marriage with Giorgi Chaladze, a member of the United National Movement.²⁶

²³ Fatuli Kaia, “2012” Make the Georgian Dream Come True Together !!!!!!! 7 September, 2022 <https://bit.ly/3RL6aDF>

²⁴ Time for Truth, 21 September, 2022 <https://bit.ly/3l017vV>

²⁵ Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, 9 September <https://bit.ly/3HwOiaY>

²⁶ Mikheil Ukrainologi, 5 September, <https://bit.ly/3YMg0Yr>

Mikheil Ganubajebeli, 5 September, <https://bit.ly/3RA8Zra>

Mikheil Ukrainolog, 11 November, <https://bit.ly/3lh5REh>

Leader 41, 11 November, <https://bit.ly/3XaQ4UT>

Mikheil Ganubajebeli, 11 November, <https://bit.ly/3DKsHe5>

Bldzina Ivanishvili Supporters, 11 November, <https://bit.ly/3jxEx4u>

Terenti Gldaneli, 12 November, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=467442885379785>


Time for Truth, 12 November, 2022 <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=647421330427243>

მიხეილ უკრაინოლოგი
 Sep 5, 2022 at 1:58 PM

შვილობილზე ნერვიულობს, მამაად ეკუთვნის რაც არ უნდა იყოს 😊

Giorgi Chaladze • გიორგი ჩალაძე
 4 mins

გუშინ ჩვენს მეგობარ ევროპარლამენტარ ანა ფოტიასთან შეხვედრაზე, ვისაუბრეთ პრეზიდენტ სააკაშვილზე და ჩვენი ქვეყნის ევროპულ მომავალზე. !! ცვლდა ვთანხმდებით რომ, საქართველოს მომავალი ევროპაშია და პრეზიდენტ სააკაშვილს უნდა მივცეს თავისუფლად მკურნალობის შესაძლებლობა, რაც შეიძლება მალე.



მიხეილ განუბაკებელი
 September 5

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Giorgi Chaladze • გიორგი ჩალაძე
 4 mins

გუშინ ჩვენს მეგობარ ევროპარლამენტარ ანა ფოტიასთან შეხვედრაზე, ვისაუბრეთ პრეზიდენტ სააკაშვილზე და ჩვენი ქვეყნის ევროპულ მომავალზე. !! ცვლდა ვთანხმდებით რომ, საქართველოს მომავალი ევროპაშია და პრეზიდენტ სააკაშვილს უნდა მივცეს თავისუფლად მკურნალობის შესაძლებლობა, რაც შეიძლება მალე.



მიხეილ უკრაინოლოგი
 September 5

შვილობილზე ნერვიულობს, მამაად ეკუთვნის რაც არ უნდა იყოს 😊

მიხეილ უკრაინოლოგი
 Nov 11, 2022 at 1:05 PM

მამა ენაცვალოს 🤪🤪



მიხეილ განუბაკებელი
 November 11 at 1:24 PM

👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍



მიხეილ უკრაინოლოგი
 November 11 at 1:05 PM

მამა ენაცვალოს 🤪🤪

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ლიდერი 41
 Nov 11, 2022 at 2:18 PM

პარტია ერთიან ნაციონალურ მოძრაობას თავმჯდომარეობის ერთი კანდიდატი გამოუჩნდა ნიკა მელიას კონკურენციას გიორგი ჩალაძე გაუწევს PS (ჩალაძე ისაა, გიული ალასანიას ყველგან ცუგასავით რომ დაჰყვება)

ბიძინა ივანიშვილის მხარდამჭერები
 Public group · 37.8K members

Discussion People Media Files Saved Reels

ლიდერი 41 shared a post.
 November 11 at 2:20 PM

ტერენტი გლდანელი
 Nov 12, 2022 at 3:08 PM

მიშას უცნაური ოჯახი 😊 დედა, მეორე ცოლი (იასკო), პირველი ცოლის პირველი შვილი, მეორე მამა (ჩალაძე) 😊

სიმართლის დროა
 Nov 12, 2022 at 3:27 PM

მიშას ზღაპრული ოჯახი: მეორე მამა, მეორე ცოლი, პირველი შვილი 🤔🤔🤔

In one case, “TV Pirveli” journalist Inga Grigoli has also become the target of slut-shaming. This example is discussed in the chapter on disinformation due to its manipulative content.

ANTI-STATE/ANTI-NATIONAL/AVARICIOUS ACT. Attacks based on moral criteria did not only include the component of sexuality but often nested on the criteria such as altruism, loyalty to the country and etc. In some cases, female politicians and representatives of the non-governmental sector were accused of anti-national actions, espionage, protecting the interests of a foreign country in exchange for money, and harming the interests of the country. In this category, the most frequent targets were the US Ambassador to Georgia, Kelly Degnan; President of Georgia, Salome Zurbishvili; Public Defender, Nino Lomjaria; Head of Transparency International Georgia, Eka Gigauri; Members of the opposition parties Khatia Dekanoidze, (UNM), Elene Khoshtaria (Droa) and Salome Samadashvili (Lelo).

- **Basil Mkalavarishvili, Cleric:** “The army of Georgian traitors has three captains: Degnan, Lomjaria and Zurbishvili.”²⁷
- **Koba Arabuli, Writer:** “Indeed, which three poisonous rivers come from these three women, poisoning the Georgian political field?!”²⁸
- **Dimitri Lortkipanidze, Primakov Georgia-Russia Public Center:** “Subversive activities are being carried out by collective Gigauris, Lomjarias and others who are morally depraved.”²⁹
- **Arno Khidirbegishvili, Editor-in-Chief of Saqinform:** “Spies like Dekanoidze, Samadashvili, Khoshtaria, Gigauri and Lomjaria, are financed not only by the West, but also from Ukraine, through their de facto leader, Arakhamia.”³⁰

In selected cases, the reason for the attack based on moral criteria was female politicians’ open support for the rights of the LGBTQI community, which was considered an unacceptable act.

Tatia Gabrichidze, Host at Alt-Info: „We have not forgotten this **disgraceful woman** [Tako Charkviani, Law and Justice] with her one-person party! Nor will people forget, because we will constantly remind everyone on the air that it was this disgraceful being who signed the gay memorandum demonstratively with 14 other parties.”³¹

²⁷ Basil Mkalavarishvili Cleric, Asaval-Dasavali, 12–18 September, 2022

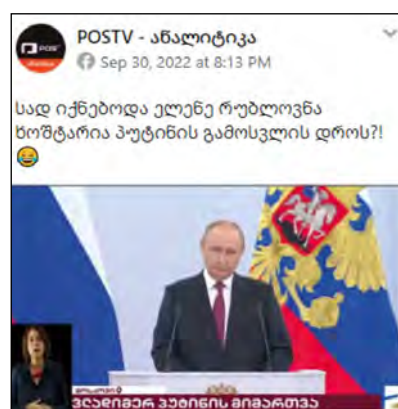
²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Georgia and World, 12 September, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3l4oDYB>

³⁰ Georgia and World, 13 September, <http://geworld.ge/ge/arno-xidirbegishvili-2/>

³¹ Alt-Info, Alternative Vision, 29 August, <https://bit.ly/3jGKmFp>

The attacks on the leader of the opposition “Droa” party had a form of a campaign, which, as mentioned in the previous chapter, reprimanded the politician with moral criteria due to her family member receiving royalties from Russia. Anonymous Facebook pages that aim at discrediting the opposition, as well as media outlets with pro-governmental editorial policies, tried to discredit the politician by labelling her as a conductor of Russia’s interests. In addition to the fact that the terms “Rublovna”, “Russian money lover”, “Russian agent,” and others were systematically used in Khostaria’s address, there were also posts containing visual manipulations. In certain cases, there were attempts to devalue the politician’s protest against Russia in the context of the war in Ukraine (“Tomorrow, Elena Khoshtaria will prevent the withdrawal of conscripts on Putin’s instructions.”³²



³² Terenti Gidaneli, 24 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3JQnS6X>
 Fifth Column, 27 September, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3RF0I5i>
 POS-TV Analytics, 30 September, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3Xgixgm>
 Terenti Gidaneli, 11 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3DSCn6d>
 Protest, 11 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3Xkec7v>
 Go Georgia for a Better Future, 11 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3leptcl>

2.3. CRITICISM ON THE GROUND OF GENDER STEREOTYPES

Cases of criticism on the ground of gender stereotypes in traditional media (36) outnumbered Facebook data (17) and included examples that framed women's roles, functions and responsibilities within the established stereotypes.

In this regard, the discriminatory statements made against women were divided into two parts: on the one hand, women were referred to as “beings of uncertain gender” due to their unfeminine appearance or behaviour, and on the other hand, widespread comments defined the standard of behaviour of a “real woman” stereotypically.

1. Criticism for stereotypical unfeminine appearance/behaviour

Elene Khoshtaria, the leader of “Droa” party was the object of attacks for inappropriate behaviour and appearance. In some cases, similar comments were made in relation to Ana Abashidze, who was nominated by non-governmental organizations for the post of Public Defender.

- **Against Elene Khoshtaria:** „Shemale Khoshtaria³³ “Khoshtaria, sometimes called “Khoshteria” [Shteri – stupid in Georgian] by people, is a creature of uncertain gender identity, and what path should she lead Georgia to?”³⁴
- **Against Ana Abashidze:** “Ana Abashidze, who is openly lesbian and who was very active in the process of closing the Ninotsminda orphanage and through her efforts, the orphanage was, in fact, closed. She was also Archbishop Spiridon’s nemesis. I don’t know whether to say ma’am or sir; I don’t know that much, so I won’t say anything.”³⁵

2. Stereotypes about the role and function of women

A man brings money to the family, a woman should take care of the house and children: „He [Nikoloz Basilashvili] is going somewhere, he’s some kind of mega champion, he earns a lot of money, he brings it to the family, and he demands something from you, for example, take care of the house and look after the children... if you don’t want to, then leave.”³⁶

³³ Lia Krialashvili, National Guard of Georgia, Asaval-Dasavali, 14–20 November

³⁴ Anzor Totadze, Demographer. Asaval-Dasavali, 17–23 October

³⁵ Marika Kublashvili, Journalist, Alterinfo, 30 September, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3RF2jlk>

³⁶ Zurab Makharadze, Conservative Movement. Alt-Info, Alt Analytics, 21 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3JUDXs7>

A woman should be bashful, while a man should defend her: “A girl is judged by her modesty, her tenderness, not by her boldness and arrogance. The boy is valued for his courage and respect for his word. [...] A man should be a defender of a woman, a girl.”³⁷

A woman should dress modestly and cover the nudity of her body: “Women’s clothing, of course, should always be modest. A woman should always try to cover the beauty of her body, no matter how beautiful a body she has from God... When a woman does not cover her flesh, then a man does not have the opportunity to see and discern her soul in relation to the naked flesh.”³⁸

2.4. OFFENSE/RIDICULE ON THE GROUND OF MENTAL ABILITIES

Attacks on women on the grounds of mental abilities entailed questioning their intellectual abilities, competence and experience. In the 39 cases identified under this category, the targets were mostly politicians and human rights defenders, and in selected cases – journalists as well.³⁹ Words such as “ignorant,” “stupid,” “foolish,” and “dumb” were used, and in the case of President Salome Zurbashvili, emphasis was placed on her problems in speaking Georgian.

Zura Makharadze, Conservative Movement: “How do we start the war? We should understand that the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Salome Zurbashvili, listens to the briefing of our generals, and then she should come out and call the nation and the army that we are starting a war!” Knowing Mrs Salome’s eloquence, there’s a good chance the army won’t be able to figure out where to attack, but whatever!⁴⁰

Khatuna Khoferia, Former MP: „What do they want from Kelly Degnan? Let her be; she is one stupid woman; the US will not forgive our stubbornness...”⁴¹

Pro-governmental Facebook accounts directed insults/ridicule against women candidates for Public Defender’s office – Ana Abashidze, Marika Arevadze and Sofio Demetrashvili. On October 27,

³⁷ Spiridon Tskifurishvili, Archpriest. Archpriest Spyridon Tskifurishvili, October 12, 2022 <https://bit.ly/3x6wRcv>

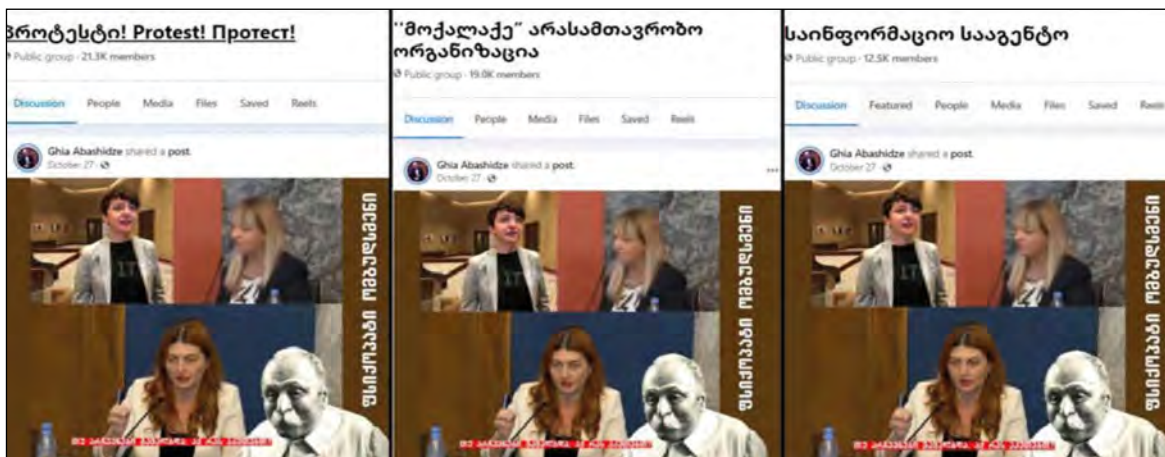
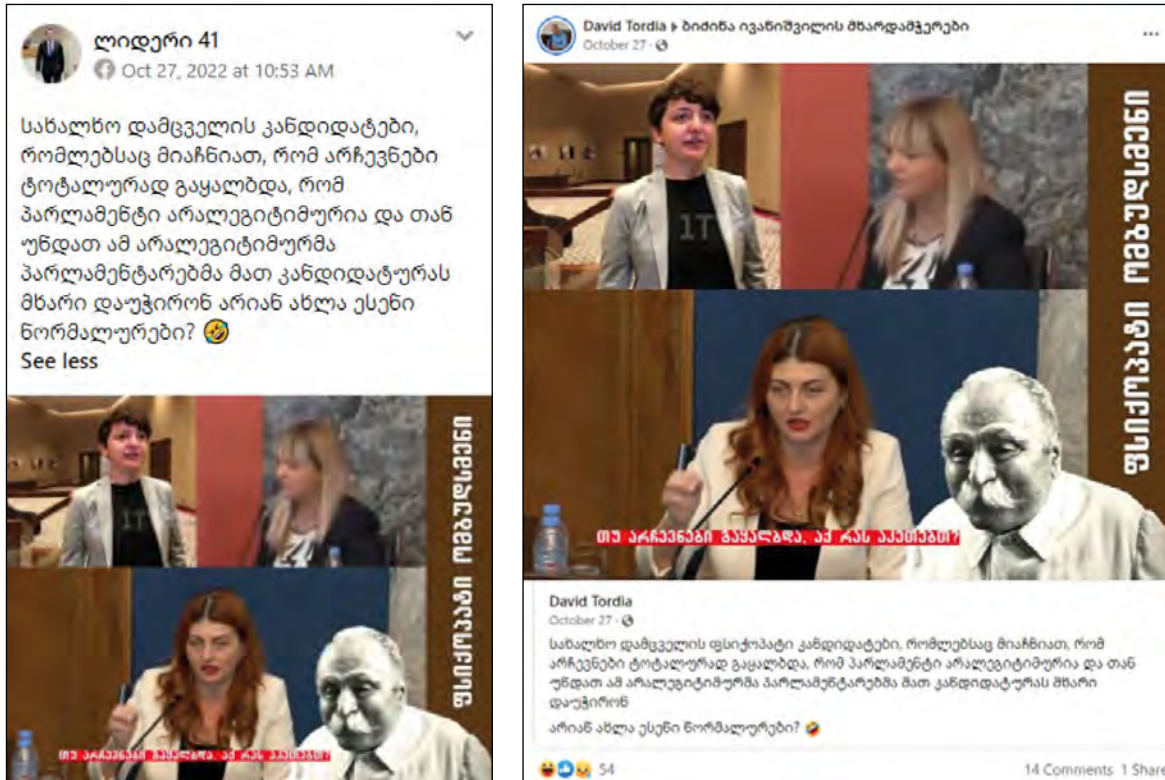
³⁸ Saba Chikaidze, Archpriest. Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Savior of Tbilisi in Vake, August 20, 2022 <https://bit.ly/3jH3Sce>

³⁹ Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, Host: “...Now, of course, this is unacceptable for a dumb woman [Nanuka Zhorzholiani].” Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, 14 September, <https://bit.ly/40BEc1c> Grisha Oniani, Society Stalin: “Well, if there is such a stupid woman [Maka Razmadze], what should we tell her?” Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, 19 September, <https://bit.ly/40BFEk5>

⁴⁰ Alt-Info, Alt-Analytics, 12 September, <https://bit.ly/3l5rgcM>

⁴¹ Alia, 10-16 October, 2022

the Facebook page “Leader 41”⁴² published a photo collage of these candidates with the caption, “Psychopath Ombudsman”, which was shared in groups related to the ruling party – “Information Agency”,⁴³ “Citizen”⁴⁴ and “Protest! Protest! Protect!”,⁴⁵ as well as “Supporters of Bidzina Ivanishvili”⁴⁶ in a coordinated manner.



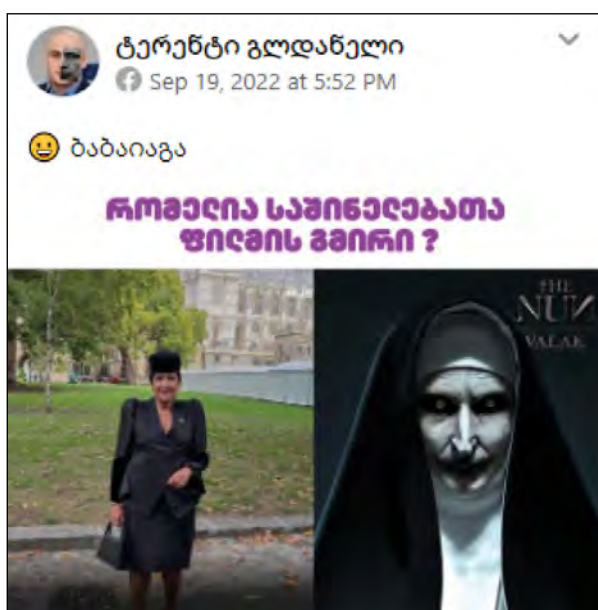
⁴² Leader 41, 27 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/40FjEEV>
⁴³ Informational Agency, 27 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3XfyxLe>
⁴⁴ Citizen, Non-governmental organization, 27 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3ldmwIV>
⁴⁵ Protest, 27 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3HMWlJW>
⁴⁶ Bidzina Ivanishvili Supporters, 27 October, <https://bit.ly/3YpZXPI>

2.5. OFFENSE/RIDICULE ON THE GROUND OF APPEARANCE

Cases of offense/ridicule based on appearance and physical characteristics were detected almost equally in traditional (24) and social media (25). Both government and opposition platforms used this method against political opponents. In one case, the religious page was the source of ridicule based on appearance.

The attire of President Salome Zurbashvili at the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II became the target of ridicule, both from government-related and opposition-related anonymous accounts.

ACCOUNTS LINKED TO THE GOVERNMENT. “Terenti Gldaneli,”⁴⁷ an anonymous page related to the Georgian Dream, published a photo of Zurbashvili in London, accompanied by a shot of a character from a horror movie, with the caption “Which is the hero of a horror movie?” The post was accompanied by the inscription “Baba Yaga”. Later on, accounts related to the “Georgian Dream” published the mentioned photo together with the visuals of opposition members (Elene Khoshtaria, Tina Bokuchava) and with different interpretations (“Zurbashvili’s hat fits everyone,” “Zurbashvili’s trendy hat was hyped up by the UNM”).⁴⁸



⁴⁷ Terenti Gldaneli, 19 September, 2022
<https://www.facebook.com/122635296660483/posts/402003895390287>

⁴⁸ David Tordia, Bidzina Ivanishvili Supporters, 19 September, 2022
<https://www.facebook.com/406487456718075/posts/1063360247697456>
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=180775784510729&set=a.130307479557560>
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=180776741177300&set=a.130307479557560>
Bidzina Ivanishvili Supporters, 19 September, 2022
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/406487456718075/posts/1063350641031750/>

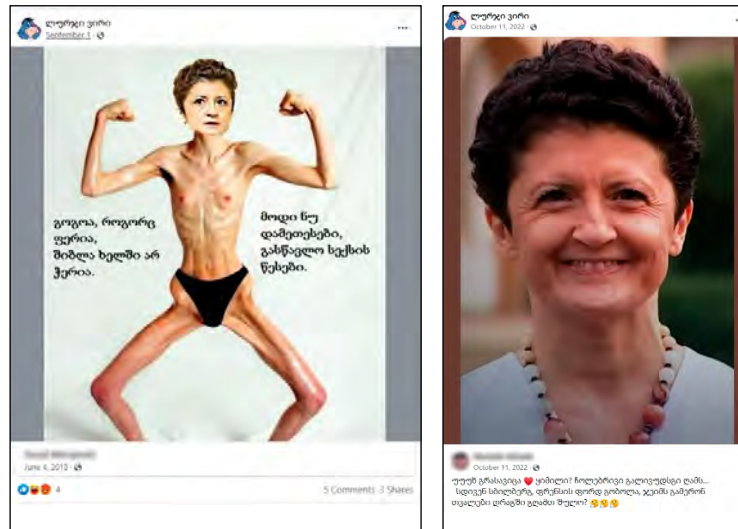


A PAGE LINKED TO THE UNITED NATIONAL MOVEMENT. On its part, “Blue Donkey,” an anonymous Facebook page linked to the United National Movement, has disseminated the photo of President Zurabishvili in London in the context of discrediting the government, based on various individual posts, where Irakli Gharibashvili,⁴⁹ Bidzina Ivanishvili and Irakli Kobakhidze⁵⁰ were photoshopped into.⁵¹



Minister of Culture Tea Tsulukiani also became the target of “Blue Donkey,” whose sexist photo manipulation was spread based on an individual Facebook account in order to insult/make fun of the minister’s appearance.⁵² The same page published an insulting comment against the Minister of Culture to ridicule her based on her appearance.⁵³

⁴⁹ Blue Donkey, 20 September, 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/100063747994459/posts/493376686130594>
⁵⁰ Blue Donkey, 20 September, 2022, https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=493446289456967&id=100063747994459
⁵¹ Blue Donkey, 20 September, 2022, https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=493446289456967&id=100063747994459
⁵² Blue Donkey, 1 September, 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/105608390900542/posts/638764364251606>
⁵³ Blue Donkey, 1 September, 2022, https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=514599704008292&id=100063747994459



RELIGIOUS PAGE. One case of offense/ridicule based on appearance was found with a religious Facebook page, “Vardigori Fathers’ Monastery,” which published a photo of a transgender woman who won a beauty contest in one of the US states. The page, which is linked to the radical cleric Spiridon Tskifurishvili, published the photo of the winner with the following stereotypical description: “Liberals! In what competition was the winner identified? Beauty or wrestling?”⁵⁴



⁵⁴ Vardigori Fathers’ Monastery, 13 November, 2022
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1140827973209466&id=100018468233527

2.6. AGEISM

Out of the 8 cases of discrimination based on age, the vast majority was directed against the President of Georgia, Salome Zurbashvili, who was referred to as a “malicious pensioner” and “flatulent granny.” One statement referred to the wife of the French President Emmanuel Macron as “the old wife of the French President”,⁵⁵ and the comment containing age discrimination against Tako Charkviani belonged to the Minister of Culture of Georgia, Tea Tsulukiani.

Tea Tsulukiani, Minister of Culture: “Today is apparently Mrs Tamar [Charkvian]’s birthday. Mrs Tamar, congratulations on your birthday; it’s also an anniversary; I don’t know why people decide to enter politics at this age, but let’s not offend her today...”⁵⁶

Pro-Kremlin Facebook accounts published Salome Zurbashvili’s vaccination photo with the caption “malicious pensioner”, which was related to her statement, where Zurbashvili calls the accusations about Georgia being dragged in the war a complete lie.⁵⁷



⁵⁵ Splitnews, 19 September, 2022 “Japaridze came to the studio with unshaved hairy legs, Arakhamia was sitting at the meeting with a “cap”....” <https://split.spnews.io/ka/archives/148396>

⁵⁶ Splitnews, 23 September, 2022. „Breast-exposed person is trying to revolutionize mattresses on the street“ – Tsulukiani made fun of Tako Charkviani” <https://split.spnews.io/ka/archives/148711>

⁵⁷ “Irakli jankarashvili, 3 September, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3HK4u90> Jeni Burjanadze-post in the group “Georgians for Georgia,” No longer available.

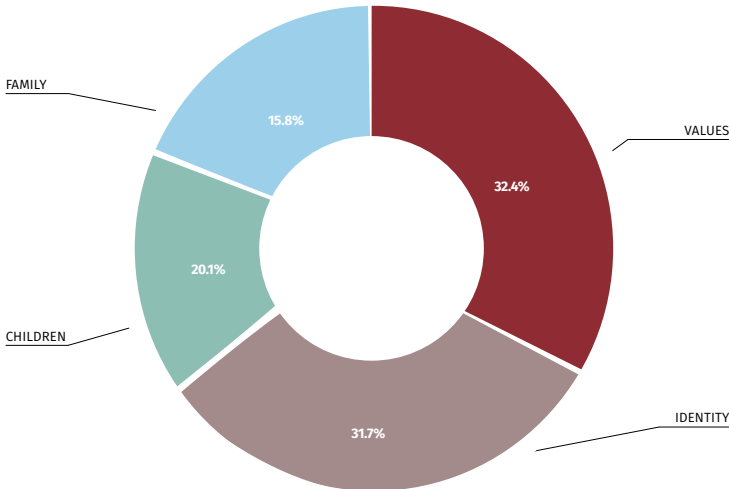
III. MOBILIZATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF IDENTITY, VALUES, THE INSTITUTION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN

Based on the previous studies conducted by the Media Development Foundation, we identified four specific gender-related topics, which were utilized by anti-liberal groups to mobilize society. Namely:

- 1. Identity
- 2. Values
- 3. The institution of Family
- 4. Children

Out of the 398 comments analyzed, the theme revolving around the protection of values (32.4%) and identity (31.7%) was almost equally predominant, followed by the issue of protecting the institution of family (20.1%) and children (15.8%) from threats.

CHART 12. THE SHARE OF 4 SPECIFIC GENDER-RELATED TOPICS



Notably, women appeared mostly in family-related messages and partly in topics related to children, where the protection of women’s rights was equated with the violation of that of children. In parallel, representatives of the LGBTQI community appeared in relation to both identity and values-related topics, and partially in children-related discourses. In general, the issues of gender self-identification were dominant.

3.1. PROTECTION OF VALUES

The majority of the messages concerning values were of anti-Western nature, seeking to convey the idea that neither Western values nor liberalism are compatible with a moral/Christian society (39). At the same time, pro-Kremlin actors used the technique of false dilemma, portraying Orthodox Russia as a counterweight to the “perverted West”, where the latter was presented as a fighter for the “LGBT-zation” of the world, while the former was given the mission of protecting faith, traditions and the institution of family (12). Moreover, in selected cases, the protection of Christianity and traditional identity was used as a justification for Russia’s military intervention and hostilities in Ukraine, while the political elite of Ukraine was presented as sodomites that fight against the Church (6).

The amendments initiated by the incumbent “Georgian Dream” party in the Georgian Law on Broadcasting,⁵⁸ which entails transferring hate speech from media self-regulation to the sphere of regulation, were presented as a restriction of the freedom of expression of Christians, destroying the possibility of judging homosexual relations and immoral values from the prism of Christianity (22). At the same time, a portion of the messages voiced by the respondents shared the opinion about the need for a legal restriction of the “propaganda of depravity” as an unacceptable value, (9) as well as the annulment of the anti-discrimination law imposed by the West as an act against Orthodoxy and morality(8).

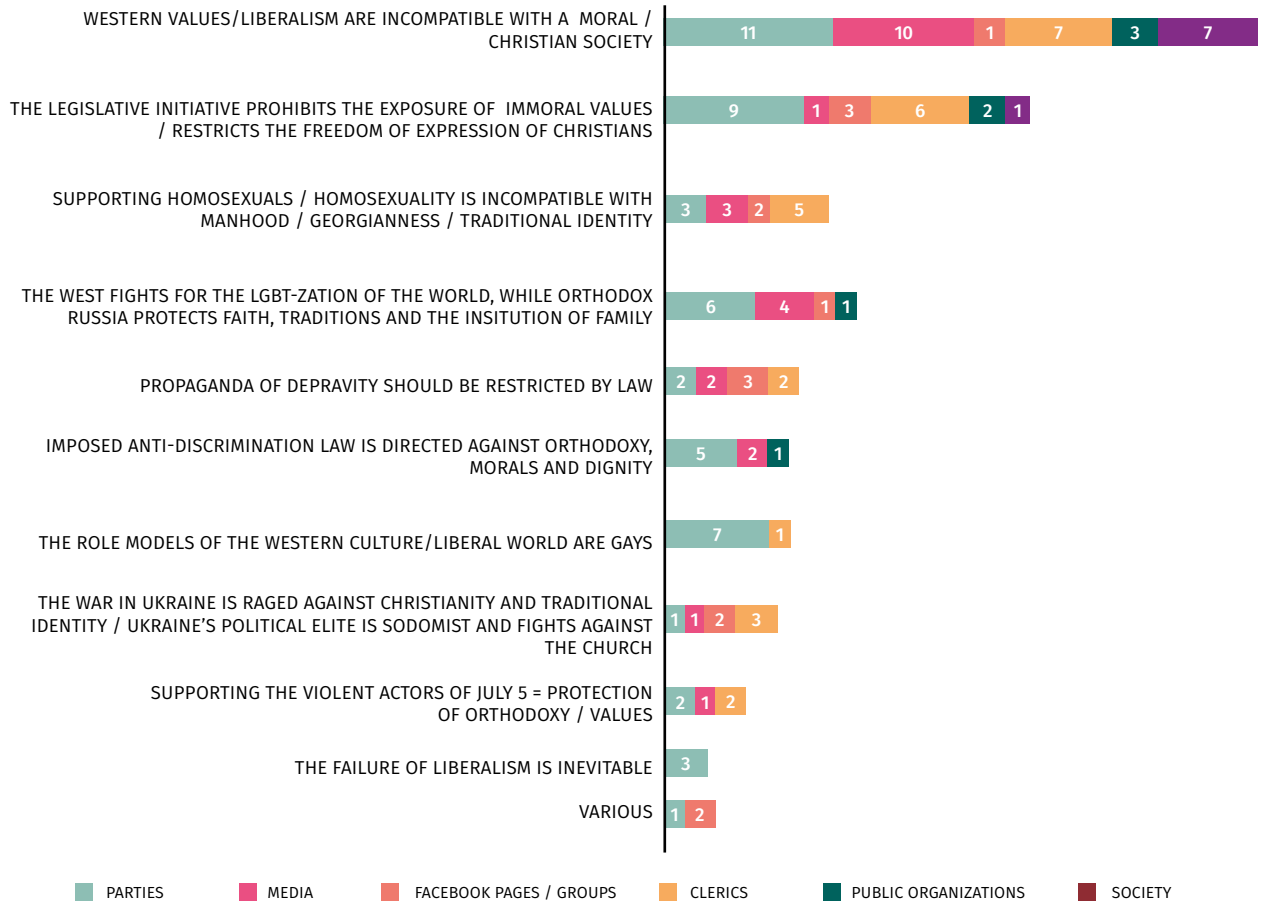
As indicated on Chart 13, other messages were as follows:

- Supporting homosexuals/homosexuality is incompatible with manhood/Georgianness/traditional identity (13);
- The role models of the Western culture/liberal world are gays (8);
- Supporting the violent actors of July 5⁵⁹ = Protection of Orthodoxy/values (5);
- The failure of liberalism is inevitable (3).

⁵⁸ Parliament of Georgia, on the amendments to the “Georgian Law on Broadcasting” <https://bit.ly/3XFh8w0>

⁵⁹ On July 5, 2021, against the “March of Dignity” planned as part of the Tbilisi Pride Week, radical violent groups staged a counterattack, vandalized the offices of the civil activist organization “Sirskhvilia” and “Tbilisi Pride”, as well as the opposition tents spread out in front of the Parliament. 53 journalists were physically assaulted. The Ministry of Internal Affairs initially arrested 31 people on the grounds of violence. <https://bit.ly/3WR0kBP>

CHART 13. MESSAGES RELATED TO THE PROTECTION OF VALUES



False Dilemma: Orthodox Russia vs Perverted West

The discourse related to values was predominantly anti-Western, emphasizing the imposed nature of feminism and homosexual values. At the same time, using the false dilemma technique⁶⁰, it aimed at creating a dichotomy that contrasted the “depraved” and valueless West with the Orthodox Russia that defends its identity and traditions:

WEST / LIBERALISM	RUSSIA / ORTHODOXY
<p>Aleksandr Dugin, Far-right Philosopher: “The influence of the Western society, which appears to gain predominance in Georgia gradually, destroys Georgian traditions and endangers the Georgian identity. Gay parades and the legal-</p>	<p>Aleksandr Dugin, Far-right Philosopher: “... And despite the fact that Russia cannot be an alternative for Georgians with this status, Georgians are already choosing differently. They are not choosing between Russia and</p>

⁶⁰ The false dilemma i.e. an “either/or” reasoning means claiming that there are only two options of a situation, and giving preference to either of the two, ignoring any additional option. <http://milllab.ge/en/mil-resources/any/16/any/any/1/>

WEST / LIBERALISM	RUSSIA / ORTHODOXY
<p>ization of Cannabis, along with other benefits of Western civilization, are already starting to irritate the Georgian society itself.”⁶¹</p>	<p>the West; they are choosing between the West and Georgia.”⁶²</p>
<p>Giorgi Kardava, Alt-Info/Conservative Movement: “It establishes liberalism, it establishes feminism, it establishes an anti-religious society, it propagates LGBT lifestyle, it establishes depravity, what are they going to do with such a society?”⁶³</p>	<p>“Georgia and World:” “The West is fighting for the LGBT-zation of the world, which means that it fights against God itself. Russia, on the other hand, is an Orthodox Christian empire – a power that protects things that the perverted West seeks to destroy: Faith, traditions, the institution of family... everything that was created by the will of god.”⁶⁴</p>
<p>Alt-Info: “The violent campaign of imposing homosexual values is directly related to the issue of territorial integrity of Serbia.”⁶⁵</p>	<p>Georgia First: “May God protect Orthodox Russia from Western scumbags, homosexuals, hags and those who want to control the world! .. May God protect Russia, which has never been my master, has not threatened me with perverting a whole generation, nor has suggested having sex with a man as a norm of life!”⁶⁶</p>
<p>“Asaval-Dasavali:” “A significant segment of the Georgian society believes that this [anti-discrimination] law, which the Georgian authorities were forced to adopt as a result of external pressure, contradicts the traditional values of the Georgian nation, the way of life established over centuries, morals, dignity and the Orthodox faith!”⁶⁷</p>	<p>“Asaval-Dasavali:” “The government of Georgia should take advantage of the current international political situation and persuade the Russian ruler Vladimir Putin to unite the country! Otherwise, Georgia will die, and the termination of “Mtlasha-Mtlushi”[vulgar kissing] with gay Europe and the ass-exposed West will not harm the country; on the contrary, it will cleanse it from Sodom and a thousand calamities!”⁶⁸</p>

⁶¹ World Congress Of Families X Tbilisi, <https://bit.ly/3XzQNQI>

⁶² Ibid

⁶³ Alt-Info, Alt-Analytics, 15 November, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3wuldGO>

⁶⁴ Davit Mkheidze, Georgia and World, 12 September, 2022, “The fight all against one”, <https://bit.ly/3XBpZQ1>

⁶⁵ Alt-Info, Alternative View, 29 August, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3jaREYS>

⁶⁶ Gocha Kharanauli, Georgia First, 23 September, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3XYogUq>

⁶⁷ Jaba Khubua, Asaval-Dasavali, 10-16 October, 2022

⁶⁸ Dito Chubinidze, Asaval-Dasavali, 22-28 August, 2022

False Dilemma: The war in Ukraine is between Orthodox Russia and sodomites to protect identity

Russia's military intervention in Ukraine was also discussed through the prism of identity protection, which aimed to shift the focus from Russia's responsibility to more sensitive topics.

The messages voiced by the Georgian clergy, claiming that the war in Ukraine is raged against Christianity and traditional identity, and the political elite of Ukraine are sodomists that fight against the church, were in line with the statement of the Russian Patriarch Kirill, according to which the cause of the war in Ukraine is liberal Western values and the Donbas people's unwillingness to accept gay parades.⁶⁹ The same messages were amplified by the pro-Kremlin party Alt-Info/Conservative Movement and the online publication "Georgia and World", as well as individual Facebook accounts, which was also consistent with the deliberate disinformation disseminated by Russian-language social networks and other pro-Kremlin publications during the war.⁷⁰

Davit Isakadze, Archbishop: „...[Lobbyists] are systematically trying to replace the moral way of life in traditional nations with depravity. First of all, I refer to the United States of America, from which, in fact, Europe and the whole world are governed. The ongoing war in Ukraine is a sharp manifestation of this confrontation.”⁷¹

“Georgia and World: “...Every conflict, big or small, between the collective West and Russia, including this war, is a battle between orthodox Christianity and aggressive neoliberalism or LGBT perversion, if you like.”⁷²

Giorgi Kardava, Alt-Info/Conservative Movement: “They [Globalists] want a liberal Ukraine, with gay parades and multiculturalism, where women will be radical feminists; where Mykola would no longer teach little Taras because Taras would be taught by some transgender Oleg... Because, are Globalists fighting for a nationalistic Ukraine?! Putting billions for Ukraine to be super-conservative and Christian?!”⁷³

⁶⁹ The Moscow Times, March 7, 2022. Russian Church Leader Appears to Blame Gay Pride Parades for Ukraine War, <https://bit.ly/3R67oJd>

⁷⁰ Media Development Foundation, 2022. Russian Information Warfare – 2 Months After the Invasion in Ukraine, pg. 16. <https://bit.ly/3ZYUIrQ>

⁷¹ Asaval-Dasavali, 12-18 September, 2022

⁷² Davit Mkheidze, Georgia and World, 19 September 2022. “Putin’s ‘Secret Weapon’ – General Winter”, <https://bit.ly/3kHtIIW>

⁷³ Alt-Info, Alt Analytics, 18 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3R8JFrV>

In addition, holding gay parades in Ukraine, and President Zelensky's sodomism and hostility towards Christianity were named as the reasons for the emergence of the war.

Spiridon Tskipurishvili, Archpriest: “A gay parade is planned in Kharkiv in September. This is what the war is about. The forces, the ideology, whichever ideology is on one side, the liberal west, their goal is to celebrate gay parades after victory.”⁷⁴

“Ukraine, where it is announced to hold a gay parade in wartime, is doomed to perish. The current, fascist Ukraine, which stands on the depraved youth of the gay clown and drug addict Zelensky, will not last long. So, the tragic finale of the age of the Antichrist's children and grandchildren is near.”⁷⁵

Spiridon Abuladze, Archbishop: “Poor Zelensky was a clown all his life and lived as an anti-Christian; He is a terrible sodomite and a terrible enemy of the Christian Church and the teachings of Christ.”⁷⁶

Sarkrazmelebi: “These LGBT clowns are threatening with war.”⁷⁷

The representatives of the pro-Kremlin Alt-Info/Conservative Movement party claimed that:

- The role models of the liberal world are homosexuals, and idealized dictators as their counterweights (“here was Stalin, but here we have Demna Gvasalia, man!”⁷⁸);
- Liberalism tries to weaken Christianity as much as possible, because in their proposed liberal model, “gender police should be run wild in the country, and constant propaganda should be run on television that, pederasty and immorality are not reprehensible.”⁷⁹
- “Liberalism is a dying ideology that will soon actually end altogether.”⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Archpriest Spiridon Tskipurishvili, 14 September, <https://bit.ly/3JhYbf4> [31:20]

⁷⁵ Davit Gareji Protection Group, 19 September, Jeni Burjanadze, <https://bit.ly/3j5uwLw>, <https://bit.ly/403JoKQ>

⁷⁶ Georgia First, 13 October, <https://bit.ly/3Hu5sXO> [4:40]

⁷⁷ Sarkrazmelebi, 21 October, 2022 <https://bit.ly/3HuVGor>

⁷⁸ Shota Martinenko, Alt-Info, Alt-Analytics, September 19, <https://bit.ly/3R786pH>

⁷⁹ Shota Martinenko, Alt-Info, Alt-Analytics, 1 November, <https://bit.ly/3H2Wfo9>

⁸⁰ Irakli Martinenko, Conservative Movement, Alt-Info, Alt-Analytics, September 26 <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/4140430> [22:21:48-22:23:39]

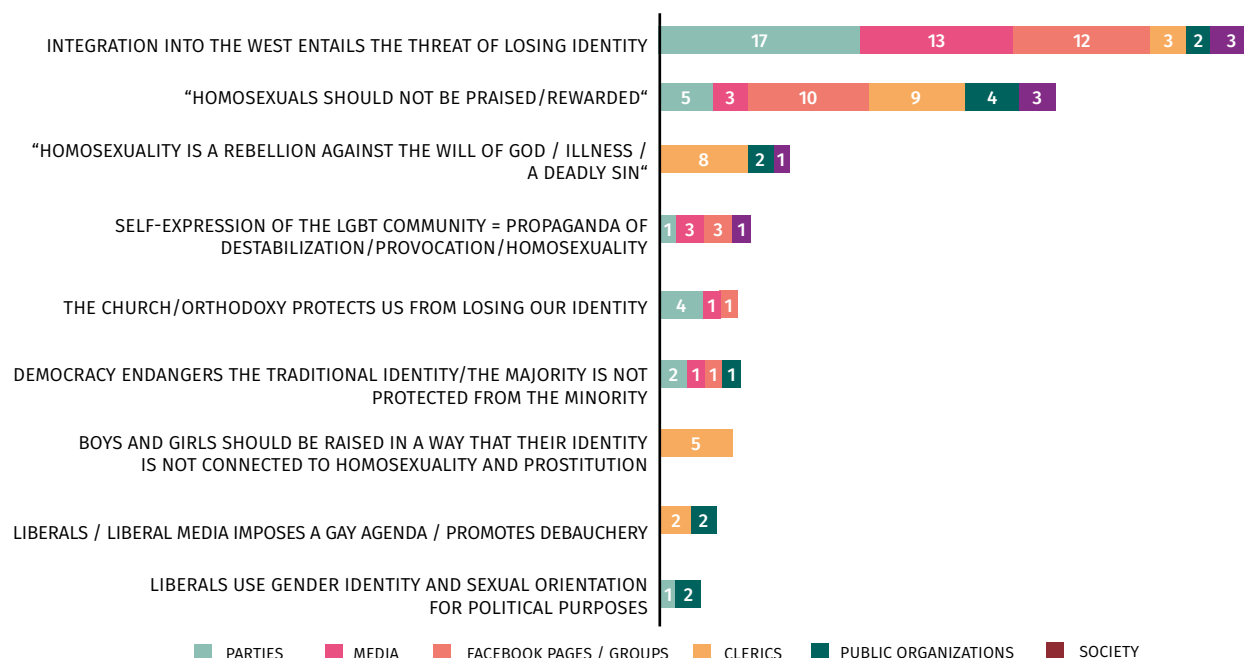
3.2. PROTECTION OF IDENTITY

Similar to values, the largest share of messages mobilizing under the pretext of identity protection was of anti-Western content and sought to convey the idea that integration into the West contained the danger of losing gender identity (50). This opinion was cultivated almost equally by radical, anti-liberal parties, media and Facebook accounts. At the same time, democracy (5) and the agenda of liberal media (4) were equated with the threat of losing identity.

During the monitoring period, one of the controversial issues among the ultra-radical groups was the decision⁸¹ of the mayor of Tbilisi, who awarded the status of an honorary citizen of Tbilisi to Demna Gvasalia, the creative director of the fashion house “Balenciaga.” This decision was criticized by various actors, most of all anti-liberal Facebook accounts (10) and clergymen (9), because of the sexual orientation of the designer and the idea that a person of homosexual identity should not be praised/appreciated (34).

Homosexuality was presented as a rebellion against the will of God, a disease and a deadly sin (11), and the self-expression of the LGBTQI community – as an attempt to destabilize, provoke other people and promote homosexuality (8). The role of the Church and Orthodoxy was especially emphasized (6) when it comes to combatting the threat of losing identity. On the other hand, the clergy talked about the preferred gender roles of men and women, so that their identities would not be equated with homosexuality and/or profanity (5).

CHART 14. MESSAGES RELATED TO THE PROTECTION OF IDENTITY



⁸¹ Tbilisi City Hall (2022). Honorable Citizens of Tbilisi, <https://tbilisi.gov.ge/page/3187>

Instead of considering it as a biological state of being, homosexual identity was presented as an acquired behaviour, a “rebellion against God,” and a deadly sin, mostly by the clergy. Among them, the texts of the Russian archimandrite Rafail Karelin were most often translated into Georgian:

Archimandrite Rafail Karelin: “Homosexuals are not born that way – they become ones. This sin contradicts the laws of nature; it is foreign to the human mind; It is a rebellion against destiny and the will of God; a choice for eternal death, a secret bond that unites men with Satan. Therefore, the demonstrations held by sodomites are no declaration of human rights and freedoms – but the propaganda of sin and depravity, violence against conscience and morality.”⁸²

At the same time, members of the clergy predominantly talked about the need of preserving the traditional identity of boys and girls and the necessity of defining their roles during upbringing, as well as what moral criteria should be used to judge adultery:

Spiridon Tskipurishvili, Archpriest: “We will undoubtedly manage to build a state in which laws will be based on morals and ethics, and this state will raise generations to be brave, manly and not feminine, girls to be mothers of families and not prostitutes, and to be strong Christians.”⁸³

Spiridon Tskipurishvili, Archpriest: “The word prostitute no longer means a prostitute... A woman who left her husband and ran away, found someone else; she is no longer considered a prostitute, but a person who is in love, who fell in love and started a new life. She is an ordinary prostitute; she is one. We are not naming these things anymore, it is being promoted on TV; he had a wife, he turned out to be a homosexual, he left his wife and got married to a man, then he became a transgender, and they let him sing.”⁸⁴

The largest share of the messages was related to the threat of losing one’s identity in case of integration in the West, and in addition to clergy, parties, media and various Facebook pages were actively involved in the amplification of the message:

Alterinfo: “The question is whether the Georgian nation wants a **propagandistic Europe of depravity, immorality and dirt**, which hides behind the name of democracy, but in reality, with constant **gay ultimatums**, tries to take away the existing and firmly established values from the country along with its future.”⁸⁵

⁸² ZNEOBA.GE, 5 November, <https://bit.ly/3kGvPB4>

⁸³ Archpriest Spiridon Tskipurishvili, <https://bit.ly/3XzMzs1>

⁸⁴ Archpriest Spiridon Tskipurishvili, <https://bit.ly/3WzEK4A>

⁸⁵ Alterinfo, Alt-Info, 24 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3kJoOze> [7:03]

Malkhaz Topuria, Alliance of Patriots: “I would be the happiest man on earth to see Mercedes open, Rolls-Royce open, American investments here. But I don’t want to these investments made in the “rear.”⁸⁶

Vazha Otarashvili, Alliance of Patriots: “We were, are and will always be Orthodox Christians; we cannot match them, because **their LGBT propaganda will destroy Georgia**. We should not enter the European Union, because we will perish; they will destroy us.”⁸⁷

“Asaval-Dasavali”: „...The president of the US **forces the whole world to legalize same-sex marriage!** Not to mention the notorious genderization and homophobia that ultimately equated the United States with Sodom and Gomorrah!”⁸⁸

In addition, the realization of the rights of the LGBTQI people, including the right to assembly and demonstration and self-expression in public spaces, was equated with the threat to civil stability, which was presented as a tool for the West to destabilize various countries. Notably, in this respect, parallels were drawn with Serbia:

Alterinfo: “The examples of both Serbia and Georgia and other traditional countries make it evident that the LGBTQI community of the liberal West has formed into a group of provocateurs, which are successfully used to destabilize countries at the most critical moments.”⁸⁹

Memorandum on the Agreement of National Forces: “We consider it dangerous to exercise such “rights” that threaten civil stability and are condemned by traditional local morality, or by all historically existing religions.”⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Obieqtivi, Studia 8, 11 November, 2022,
<https://bit.ly/3kLBOUY>

⁸⁷ Georgia and World, 17 October, 2022 “Vazha Otarashvili: Georgia joining Europe will lead to economic collapse, us becoming slaves... we will be slaves of the 21st century”,
<https://bit.ly/3kK3ppB>

⁸⁸ Dito Chubinidze, Asaval-Dasavali, 14-20 November, 2022

⁸⁹ Alterinfo, Alt-Info, 29 August, 2022,
<https://bit.ly/3Df5osF>

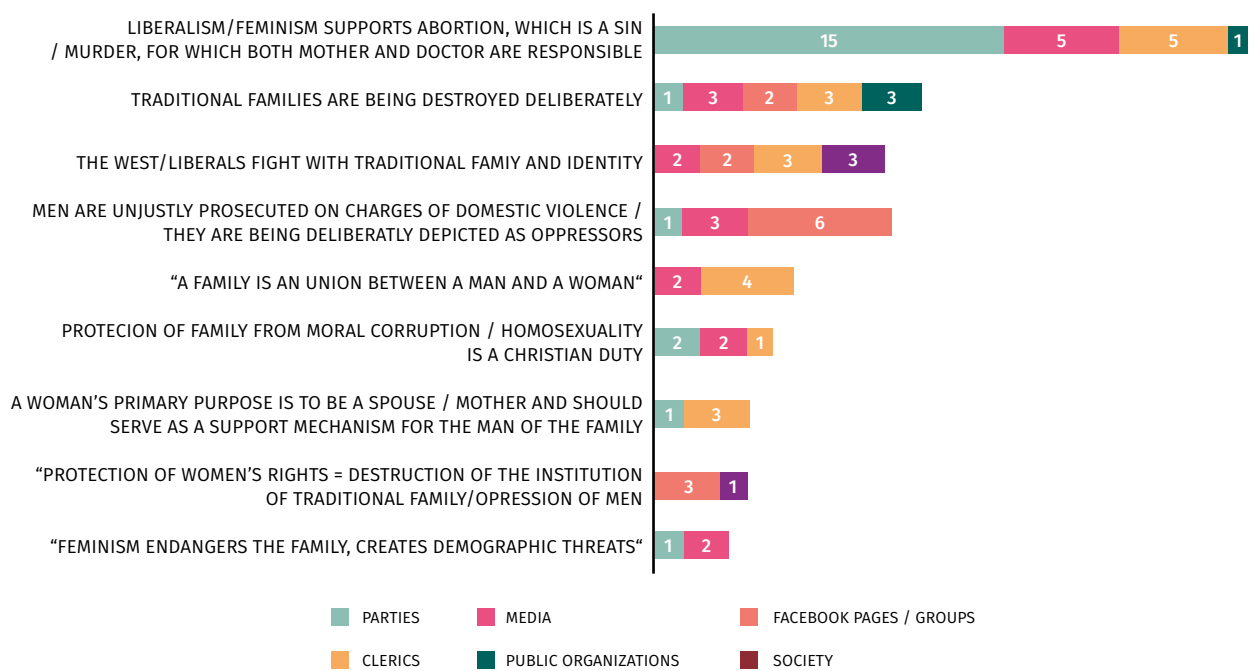
⁹⁰ Georgian Idea – qartuliidea.ge, 13 September, 2022,
<https://bit.ly/3WE3Xe5>

3.3. THE INSTITUTION OF FAMILY

When it comes to topics related to the institution of family, messages concerning abortion were predominant (26), during which termination of pregnancy in all forms was considered a sin and murder, blaming mostly the mother and the doctor for it. Messages concerning the deliberate destruction of traditional families (12) and the Western/liberal fight against both the traditional family and identity (10) were also identified. Some sources argued that the portrayal of men as oppressors is deliberate and that the prosecution of men on charges of domestic violence is unjustified (10). In addition, in certain cases, protection of women’s rights was presented as violence against men and violation of the traditional family (4), while the primary purpose of a woman was claimed to be marriage/motherhood, where women had to fulfil the function of a man’s support mechanism in the family (4). Feminism was named as a threat to the family and the cause of demographic problems (3).

Clerics, as well as politicians in some cases, considered the family as a unity between a man and a woman (6) and protecting the family from moral corruption/homosexuality – as a Christian duty (5).

CHART 15. MESSAGES RELATED TO THE PROTECTION OF THE INSTITUTION OF FAMILY



ABORTION. The theme of abortions was highly present in messages related to the protection of traditional family institutions, where the responsibility for terminating the life of the fetus in any form was mainly ascribed to the mother (woman) and the doctor. Notably, the responsibility of the man (father) was completely neglected in this discourse. At the same time, abortion was mainly discussed

in religious-moral terms, and not in socio-economic or legal-judicial terms, during which the following specific messages were highlighted:

Termination of pregnancy is a sin / murder, for which both mother and doctor are responsible.

Abortion is a murder of a child: “Gynecologist Stojan Adasevic is the first Serbian doctor to publicly state that artificial termination of pregnancy is murder, the responsibility of which is shared equally by the mother of the child and the doctor who performs the surgery.”⁹¹

Archimandrite Rafail Karelin: “In order for a mother to kill her child, she must first destroy the natural love in her head, which involuntarily binds her to her own child. At such a moment, she already rejects Christ and sins... Until physical death and torture, the infant who is in its parent’s womb already experiences the mercilessness of its mother’s judgment, the horror of death.”⁹²

Archimandrite Rafail Karelin: “Why are children-killing mothers so belligerent against their own homeland? Doesn’t the murder of a child equal the destruction of the country’s future? The smiley teeth of the modern cannibal mothers reflect the death of their own children.”⁹³

Archpriest Basil Akhvlediani: “Abortion diminishes the dignity of a woman. The blood of a murdered baby always cries out to the mother’s conscience: “My mother, why did you put me in the hands of the executioner?”⁹⁴

Liberals protect animals / gay couples but kill children:

Giorgi Kardava, Alt-Info/Conservative Movement: “What is the problem for a liberal? They can’t kill children, women can’t kill unborn children anymore, and gays cannot marry anymore.”⁹⁵

Abortion is a murder of a child: “A liberal feels sorry for homeless animals, but supports the killing of unborn children – abortions!”⁹⁶

⁹¹ Abortion is a Murder of a Child, Zneoba.ge, 8 November, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3XDeveG>, <https://bit.ly/3WGDdcS>

⁹² Abortion is a Murder of a Child, 1 November, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3j3Kk1j>

⁹³ Abortion is a Murder of a Child, 20 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3Hs4dlG>

⁹⁴ Archpriest Basil Akhvlediani, 19 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3R8725a>

⁹⁵ Alt-Info, Alt-Analytics, 3 September, <https://bit.ly/3RcEV19>

⁹⁶ 24 October, <https://bit.ly/3wsMQkN>

The right to take someone's life is guaranteed by law:

Archimandrite Rafail Karelin: “The law legalized an outrageous injustice – the right to take life.”⁹⁷

Christians of the Last Advent: “Under Georgia law, any mother who wishes to kill her own child may do so within 12 weeks of conception... Abortion is the killing of unborn children.”⁹⁸

Feminism confronts traditional families and propagates murder of children:

Davit Lortkipanidze: “Feminism, which directly confronts the traditional family and promotes the killing of children (abortions), openly violates the principles mentioned in the basic law on family values, threatens the institution of the family itself, motherhood, society, the reproduction of the nation, and is aimed at the genocide and degeneration of the nation.”⁹⁹

In addition, women's rights issues and feminism were considered as a threat to the family and demography, while the interference in family affairs was perceived as an action directed against traditions and Orthodoxy:

Feminism endangers the family, creates demographic threats

Zura Makharadze, Alt-Info / Conservative Movement: „Where feminism is present in a higher degree, there is one child per family, statistically speaking, and those cultures where there is strong feminism are on the decline.”¹⁰⁰

Davit Lortkipanidze: “Feminism is a rebellion against God (and the first rebel we know was Satan) and is directed against the traditional family as the foundation of a healthy society.”¹⁰¹

Protection of Women's rights = Destruction of the institution of traditional family

Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, Sezoni TV Host: “If someone in your family raises their voice, call [hotline] Baia Pataraya!..¹⁰² If families are destroyed, if families are torn apart, this country will follow!”¹⁰³

⁹⁷ Abortion is a Murder of a Child, 20 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3XQi3Ki>

⁹⁸ Christians of the Last Advent, 24 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/4022WPL>

⁹⁹ ZNEOBA.GE, 18 October, 2022. “The Real Face of Feminism”, <https://bit.ly/3R6ZaAw>

¹⁰⁰ Alt-Info, Alt Analytics, 6 September, <https://bit.ly/3YdHSV5>

¹⁰¹ Zneoba.ge, The Real Face of Feminism, <https://bit.ly/3JfXyTk>

¹⁰² Feminist and Women rights activist, Organization “Sapari”

¹⁰³ Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavandze, 14 September, <https://bit.ly/3ZVv8Ed>

Interference in family affairs is against orthodoxy/traditions

Levan Chachua, Georgian Idea: “Prying into the private life of a foreign family, and even more so, of a husband and wife, should be totally unacceptable for an Orthodox Christian. As a rule, it should be uncomfortable for brothel-televisions to expose and impose other people’s family relationships on others.”¹⁰⁴

Prosecution of men on charges of domestic violence was considered to be an interference in family affairs and targeted action against men, while actions against the traditional family as the foundation of the state were attributed to the West and the legislation imposed by it:

Men are unjustly arrested on charges of domestic violence

Shota Martinenko: “In Georgia, the establishment of feminist norms in the legislation reaches a completely catastrophic level. Now a catastrophic number of prisoners are serving sentences without any evidence, just because, according to the wife, he was angry, etc. The tendency to destroy the family as the main centre of statehood, the main formula and the value that is formed around the idea of the family, is clearly observed in the legislative actions of the West.”¹⁰⁵

Davit Lortkipanidze: “The artificially created significance of the topic of domestic violence and putting it above other crimes is a propaganda tool of feminism. Feminism lies and is dishonest about “domestic violence” – millions in grants are being received from the West to promote this topic.”¹⁰⁶

Spiridon Tskipurishvili, Archpriest: „It is by no means accidental, my dears, my Georgians, that such an attack on the family is carried out by forces with a liberal ideology... because liberalism itself is a satanic ideology... the first union of people, blessed by the high God, is the family, and what the evil spirit fights first of all through its obedient servants is the institution of family.”¹⁰⁷

In addition to the representation of the family as a unity of man and woman, the clergy, as well as other anti-liberal groups, saw the traditional role of women as mothers, wives, and supporting mechanisms of men in the family:

¹⁰⁴ <https://bit.ly/3H52yr5>

¹⁰⁵ Alterinfo, 3 November (RT), <https://bit.ly/3Je7kFr>

¹⁰⁶ Zneoba.ge, The Real Face of Feminism, <https://bit.ly/3JaGgHh>

¹⁰⁷ Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavandze, 14 September, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/4137514>, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/4137516>

A family is a union between a man and a woman

Porfirije, Patriarch of Serbia: „The Bible states that God created a male and a female – therefore, marriage and the family, from the beginning of the world to the present day and until the end of the world, are defined as a union formed by the love between a man and a woman... Our people have been faithful to these traditions for centuries, and now they are experiencing a deep constant danger.”¹⁰⁸

A woman’s primary purpose is to be a spouse/mother and should serve as a supporter for the man of the family

Saba Chikaidze, Archpriest: “It is a huge mistake when a woman believes that her main job is to be professionally fulfilled. This is a devil’s lie. The primary purpose of a woman, where she could realize her whole potential, is within a family. God will judge you based on what kind of a wife and mother you were and not how many higher education institutions you went to, how many dissertations you wrote or how many people you managed at work. Because the primary purpose of a woman is to be a wife and mother and to have the right attitude towards a man, a respectful one that is.”¹⁰⁹

Spiridon Tskipurishvili, Archpriest: “Girls should be raised as supporters of their husbands, fathers, brothers.”¹¹⁰

Davit Lortkipanidze: “The role of a woman, a mother, has always been a proud one in the society (as the one who raised the next generation for the country). Today, this value is being discredited, we are faced with such a socio-economic environment where the roles of men and women are changing, and thus the foundations of traditional society are being violated (even the same dirty gender (LGBT) theory).”¹¹¹

Guram Palavandishvili: “If the head of the family is not a man, the family is diminished.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ World Congress Of Families X Tbilisi, 7 September

<https://bit.ly/3j3PKJG> ERI Media, 8 September, <https://bit.ly/3XBnTQ9>

¹⁰⁹ Vake Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Savior in Tbilisi, 26 August, <https://bit.ly/3HsqOoE>

¹¹⁰ Archpriest Spiridon Tskipurishvili, <https://bit.ly/3ZUV5nj> [35:15]

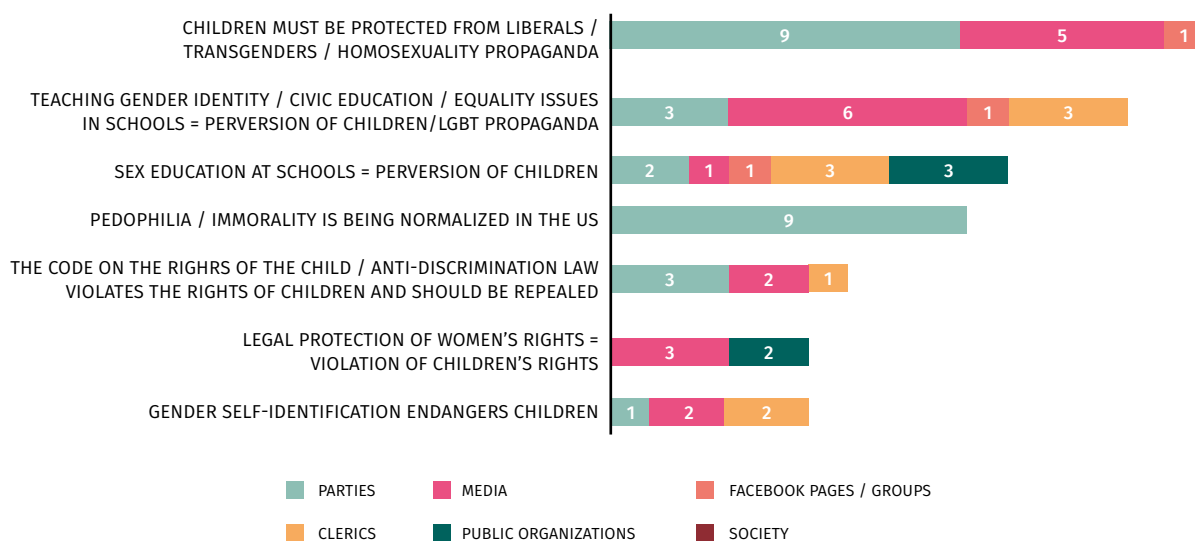
¹¹¹ Zneoba.ge, The Real Face of Feminism, <https://bit.ly/3HuINvA>

¹¹² Guram Palavandishvili, 20 October, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3GYxs4w>

3.4. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Liberals and LGBTQI people, as well as the propaganda of homosexuality (15), were named as the main danger to children. Teaching issues such as gender identity, civic education and equality topics (13), as well as sex education (10) in the school education space, have been equated with child perversion and LGBTQI propaganda. Alt-Info/Conservative Movement (9) talked about the normalization of pedophilia and immorality in the US the most. Legislation such as the Children’s Code and the Anti-Discrimination Law was discussed in the context of violating children’s rights; thus, demands for their annulment were also voiced (6). Protection of women’s rights was considered an infringement of children’s rights, mainly in relation to the legal dispute¹¹³ between the Georgian tennis player, Nikoloz Basilashvili and his ex-wife Nelli Dorokashvili, which concerned domestic violence (5). Gender self-identification, which was linked to the issue of sex change in minors, was also considered a threat (5).

CHART 16. MESSAGES RELATED TO THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN



A large share of topics related to children concerned the teaching of equality issues and sex education in formal and informal education institutions, as well as the anti-discrimination law, which was presented as an infringement to children’s rights:

¹¹³ Netgazeti, 22 October, 2022. „Verdict for Georgian women” – court verdict on Basilashvili and its evaluation” <https://netgazeti.ge/life/637041/>

Teaching gender identity / civic education / equality issues in schools = Perversion of children / LGBTQI propaganda

Movement Dzlevai Sakvirveli: “...They have unanimously adopted the so-called “Anti-discrimination law”, on the basis of which the Sodom-Gomorrah filth and gender theories are taught in kindergartens, schools and colleges as the normal way of life!”¹¹⁴

Vazha Otarashvili, Alliance of Patriots: “They introduced this vile subject, civil society, into schools. Which Europe are we moving towards?... Let no one think that sodomite Europe is a move towards civilization. It is the death of the Georgian state.”¹¹⁵

Sex education at schools = Perversion of children

Giorgi Kardava, Alt-Info/Conservative Movement: „In reality, the usual libertarian agenda is being imposed in order to fully establish the worldview of the sexualization of children, the establishment of perversion... We, our parents’ generation, and our grandfathers’ generation were not taught such lessons by anyone, and in my opinion, they were the normal ones... On the contrary, there were fewer problems among them in sexual crimes and other issues.”¹¹⁶

Guram Palavandishvili, Organization for the Protection of Children’s Rights: “... when a teacher talks about this [sex education], there is a moment of pedophilia... Pedophiles are mainly the ones to talk to children about sex. This is the same as pedophilia.”¹¹⁷

Spiridon Tskipurishvili, Archpriest: “The first thing liberal ideology did was to expel the church from schools. Prayer is categorically forbidden, and after that, there is that [sex education] and then the “doctor’s hour.” Here, the doctor comes in because he wants to teach sexology and sexual relations to the teenage generation... The church is the one that exposes the propaganda of the perversion that you want to instil and bring into the schools to pervert the next generation. And you do this because you have funding from the West, and in particular, it is managed by the US Embassy.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Movement Dzlevai Sakvirveli, 20 September, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3XBAMts>

¹¹⁵ Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavandze, 20 October, <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/4144582>

¹¹⁶ Alt-Info, Alt-Analytics, 3 November, <https://bit.ly/3Wv0Jru>

¹¹⁷ Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavandze, 31 October, <https://bit.ly/3WDMoL0>

¹¹⁸ Archpriest Spiridon Tskipurishvili, 12 October, <https://bit.ly/3H9EjZ1>

The anti-discrimination law violates the rights of children in the educational space and protects the interests of homosexual teachers

Asaval-Dasavali: “According to the anti-discrimination law, for example, a private or state kindergarten or school does not have the right to refuse employment to a citizen just because he is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transsexual! If the parent does not want her/his kid to have a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transsexual teacher, the only solution remains – to look for a school or kindergarten where the child will not have gay, lesbian, bisexual or transsexual teachers and educators!”¹¹⁹

Gender self-identification endangers children

Giorgi Kardava, Alt-Info / Conservative Movement: „If someone is sick like that, he will tell your son that maybe you are a boy, but that is not reality, you can become a girl... and you can't do anything. If you have a girl, they will raise your child as a boy, maybe they will give her some hormone therapy.”¹²⁰

Children must be protected from / transgenders / homosexuals

Shota Martinenko, Alt-Info / Conservative Movement: “[Transgenderism] is an abomination... it's immoral, it's such a depraved, immoral and psychologically pathological position that such people cannot be allowed near children.”¹²¹

Pedophilia / Immorality is being normalized in the US

Giorgi Kardava, Alt-Info / Conservative Movement: “Similar to how it is attempted to normalize the LGBT issues in Georgia... the next step will be this, that is, as the talk of normalizing pedophilia is already going on in the US...some people in that family believe that pedophilia is not bad at all, that these are people who are attracted to minors.”¹²²

Legal protection of women's rights = violation of children's rights

Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, Sezoni TV Host: “Now she [Neli Dorokashvili] does not care about her child at all! I don't wish anyone to have a mother like this!... and this person [Nikoloz Basilashvili] is really successful, and then no one has said that he is guilty... Aren't the rights of the child violated by spreading this kind of information? The child looks at how his father is being cursed, criticized and portrayed as an oppressor.”¹²³

¹¹⁹ Jaba Khubua, Asaval-Dasavali, 10-16 October, 2022

¹²⁰ Alt-Info, Alt-Analytics, 13 September, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3WD4qNI>

¹²¹ Alt-Info, Alt-Analytics, 13 September, <https://bit.ly/3H6G755>

¹²² Alt-Info, Alt-Analytics, 6 September, <https://bit.ly/3WGDnB0>

¹²³ Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, 8 September, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3Y0au41>

IV. LEGISLATION

4.1. ANTI-LIBERAL LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Demands to review the existing liberal legislation and impose restrictive norms on vulnerable groups have been part of the anti-liberal discourse for years now. Within the framework of the research, we studied the legislative initiatives registered in the Parliament of Georgia at different times (2014-2022), which were predominantly aimed at restricting the fundamental rights of women and the LGBTQI community.

Out of the legislative initiatives registered in the parliament, which concerned the initiation of amendments to 8 existing laws, 1 was related to abortion, 1 concerned blasphemy, while 6 opted for violation of the rights of the above-mentioned groups on the basis of gender and sexual identity. The majority of the initiatives were aimed at removing the terms “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” from various laws, primarily from the Anti-discrimination law. Legislative initiatives registered in the Parliament by various persons/organizations regarding gender and sexual identity can be divided into three categories:

- 1. Limiting access to legal mechanisms:** Annulment of the norm on the protection of citizens against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity;
- 2. Restrictions on employment:** Legal restrictions on the appointment of LGBTQI people to leadership positions in public structures, cultural and educational institutions;
- 3. Restriction of freedom of expression, assembly and manifestations:** Restriction of assembly and manifestation for people of the LGBTQI identity; Restriction of forms of expression, assembly and manifestation which may be unacceptable to religious groups; Limiting any person’s expression that is perceived as offensive to religious sentiments.

Noteworthy that the legislative initiative registered by the pro-Kremlin Alt-Info/Conservative Movement, on amendments to the Law of Georgia on Assemblies and Demonstrations, is currently being discussed by the parliamentary committees. Other initiatives registered so far, which are indicated in the table below, were not reflected in the law. In one case, the initiator of the amendment, MP Soso Jatchvliani, withdrew the project on blasphemy himself.

The following groups are the authors of the discussed legislative initiatives:

- **Pro-Kremlin parties/organizations:** Alt-Info/Conservative Movement; “National Congress of the Slavic Peoples of Georgia” and “Anti-Fascist Coalition of Multinational Georgia”;^{124,125}
- **Anti-liberal:** Demographic Development Foundation (Zviad Tomaradze),¹²⁶ The Union of Families in Georgia¹²⁷; In the Name of God – God is our truth!¹²⁸
- **Members of the Parliament of Georgia:** Members of the “Georgian Dream fraction – Soso Jatchvliani and Emzar Kvitsiani; Independent MP, Former member of the “Georgian Dream” fraction – Aleksandre Erkvania.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ Media Development Foundation, 2019. Russian World in Georgia
<https://mdfgeorgia.ge/eng/view-library/117/>

¹²⁵ Национальный конгресс славянских народов Грузии [National Congress of the Slavic Peoples of Georgia]
<https://www.facebook.com/slavyanskiy.kongress>
Antifascist Georgia
<https://www.facebook.com/antifa.ge>







¹²⁶ Currently – organization “Nation and State”. Myth Detector, Zviad Tomaradze profile.
<https://mythdetector.ge/en/profiles/tomaradze-zviad/>

¹²⁷ Civil.ge, 16 May, 2014. The Demonstration against “LGBT Propaganda” and the “Day of the Sanctity of the Family” on May 17
<https://old.civil.ge/geo/article.php?id=28191?id=28191>

¹²⁸ Union of public and political organizations „In the name of God – God is our truth“
<http://www.ufali.ge/>

¹²⁹ Party affiliation is indicated by the submission of the legislative initiative.

TABLE 3. LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES REGISTERED IN THE PARLIAMENT OF GEORGIA IN 2014-2022

EXISTING LAW	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	INITIATOR
Law of Georgia on Assemblies and Demonstrations	“It is prohibited to hold an assembly or demonstration if it aims or during which there may be a demonstration, promotion and/or propaganda of sexual orientation.” ¹³⁰	Alt-Info / Conservative Movement 
	“It is prohibited to hold an assembly or demonstration if it is aimed at or during which there may be statements and calls that are against any religious movement, that are defamatory and/or contrary to the beliefs of people of any religious denomination; and/or during which there may be propaganda of war and violence, incitement of national, religious or social feud.” ¹³¹	Alt-Info / Conservative Movement 
Administrative Offences Code of Georgia	Fine or administrative imprisonment for violating the above-mentioned rules in the Law on Assemblies and Demonstrations. ¹³²	Alt-Info / Conservative Movement 
Criminal Code of Georgia	“Repeated violation of the above-mentioned rule outlined in the Law on Assemblies and Manifestations is punishable by a fine or community service (180-240 hours) or adjusted work term up to 2 years or imprisonment up to 2 years with deprivation of the right to hold office or work for up to 3 years.” ¹³³	Alt-Info / Conservative Movement 
	“Removal of the terms “sexual orientation” and “gender identity.” ¹³⁴	Author: Zviad Tomaradze (Demographic Development Foundation)/ Legislative Initiative: Georgian Dream MP Soso Jatchvliani, Emzar Kvitsiani 
Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination	“Removal of the entry on “sexual orientation, gender identity and expression” from the law.” ¹³⁵	Zviad Tomaradze/Georgian Dream MP Soso Jatchvliani, Emzar Kvitsiani; Union of Families of Georgia; In the name of God – God is our truth. 

¹³⁰ Legislative initiative of the citizens' initiative group (Giorgi Kardava, Zurab Makharadze, Irakli Morgoshia, Shota Martinenko, Konstantine Morgoshia), November 7, 2022, <https://parliament.ge/legislation/25062>




¹³¹ Ibid

¹³² Ibid

¹³³ Ibid

¹³⁴ Legislative initiative of Ioseb Jachvliani, a member of the Parliament of Georgia, 16 September, 2015, <https://parliament.ge/legislation/10634>; Legislative initiative of Emzar Kvitsiani, a member of the Parliament of Georgia, 7 May, 2018, <https://parliament.ge/legislation/15603>; Legislative initiative of Zviad Tomaradze, a citizen of Georgia, 21 April, 2016, <https://parliament.ge/legislation/12702>

¹³⁵ Ibid. Legislative initiative by Union of public and political organizations „In the name of God – God is our truth,” 8 May, 2014 <https://parliament.ge/legislation/12923>; Legislative initiative by the Union of Families of Georgia, 3 July, 2014 <https://parliament.ge/legislation/12910>

EXISTING LAW	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	INITIATOR
	<p>“Addition of the entry “must not promote and advertise socially unacceptable, immoral, and perverted behaviour.”¹³⁶</p>	<p>Union of Families of Georgia </p>
	<p>“To prohibit both secretly and openly LGBT people from holding any leadership positions in state structures, as well as in all educational institutions (kindergartens, schools, technical colleges, higher education institutions, etc.) and in any cultural-educational institutions.”¹³⁷</p>	<p>“National Congress of the Slavic Peoples of Georgia” and “Anti-Fascist Coalition of Multinational Georgia”</p> 
<p>Civil Code of Georgia</p>	<p>“To prohibit both secretly and openly LGBT people from holding any leadership positions in state structures, as well as in all educational institutions (kindergartens, schools, technical colleges, higher education institutions, etc.) and in any cultural-educational institutions.”¹³⁸</p>	<p>“National Congress of the Slavic Peoples of Georgia” and “Anti-Fascist Coalition of Multinational Georgia”</p> 
<p>Labour Code of Georgia</p>	<p>Removal of the terms “sexual orientation” and “gender identity.”</p>	<p>Zviad Tomaradze/Georgian Dream MP Soso Jatchvliani, Emzar Kvitsiani;</p>
<p>Administrative Offences Code of Georgia</p>	<p>„Making blasphemy punishable:” “Public expression of hatred towards religious sanctities, religious organizations, worshipers and believers and/or publication or display of material, that aims to insult the feelings of believers – will result in a fine of 300 GEL.”¹³⁹ Increasing financial sanctions for repeated actions.</p>	<p>Author: Zviad Tomaradze (Demographic Development Foundation)/ Georgian Dream MP Soso Jatchvliani</p>
<p>Law of Georgia on Health Care</p>	<p>Voluntary termination of pregnancy is allowed only in a licensed medical institution by a certified doctor if the continuation of the pregnancy threatens the life of the woman (including in the case of a pregnancy lasting up to 12 weeks); The list of medical indications that endanger the life of a pregnant woman if the pregnancy continues is determined by order of the minister.”¹⁴⁰</p>	<p>Aleksandre Erkvania, Member of the Parliament of 9th convocation, Member of the fraction “Georgian Dream” till 2019.</p>

¹³⁶ Ibid

¹³⁷ Legislative initiative by “National Congress of the Slavic Peoples of Georgia” and “Anti-Fascist Coalition of Multinational Georgia (A. Zakharova, R.Gogidze), 17 June, 2019 <https://parliament.ge/legislation/18434>

¹³⁸ Ibid

¹³⁹ Legislative initiative of Ioseb Jachvliani, a member of the Parliament of Georgia, 2 December, 2015 <https://parliament.ge/legislation/11089>

¹⁴⁰ Legislative initiative of Aleksandre Erkvania, a member of the Parliament of Georgia, 22 September, 2020 <https://parliament.ge/legislation/20944>

4.2. ADVOCATING FOR THE REVISION OF LEGISLATION IN THE PUBLIC DISCOURSE

During the monitoring period, the demands for revision of the legislation voiced by the monitored platforms were linked to 4 main topics:

1. Limitation of the rights of LGBTQI groups;
2. Revision of Anti-discrimination legislation and limitation of democratic institutions, in particular, the non-governmental sector;
3. Revision of legislation related to women's rights;
4. Revision of legislation related to children's rights.

As indicated in Chart 17, in this context, issues related to the LGBTQI community were predominant, which entailed demands on banning “gay propaganda”, restriction of the freedom of expression, assembly and demonstrations of the LGBTQI community, as well as the revision of the sections related to the protection of their rights in the Anti-discrimination Law. In parallel, the changes initiated in the Georgian Law on Broadcasting, which implies the transfer of hate speech media from self-regulation to regulation, became the subject of judgment. The initiative, as mentioned in the previous chapter, was interpreted as a limitation of the freedom of expression of Christians that made exposing sin from a religious perspective punishable.

Alterinfo: “The section on the prohibition of programs and advertisements containing contempt, incitement and hate speech towards groups of religious and sexual orientation, leaves it unclear on how to protect the interests of one group without violating the rights of another. If we analyze the mentioned fragment more thoroughly, we cannot ignore the fact that all traditional religious denominations in the world consider the propaganda and normalization of the Sodomite sin unacceptable. On the other hand, Sodomite parades are usually openly provocative, aggressive, intolerant and offensive towards the traditional society. Therefore, it is unclear how the authors of the legislative change envision regulating the ban in this case and maintaining a proper balance.”¹⁴¹

Spiridon Tskipurishvili: “Our parliament is now demanded to pass a law... If I or any of you would say that transgenderism is depravity, homosexuality, polygamy is depravity, fornication, adultery and prostitution are depravity, I will be arrested as a lawbreaker. Such a law is being adopted. We will a MP, who, if his son was to marry a man, if we tell him that what he is doing is perversion and debauchery, he will arrest us according to his own law.”¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ ალტ-ინფო, ალტერინფო, 14 სექტემბერი, 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=3349810205345379>

¹⁴² Archpriest Spiridon Tskipurishvili, 26 September, <https://www.facebook.com/100064833605025/posts/458822589622191>

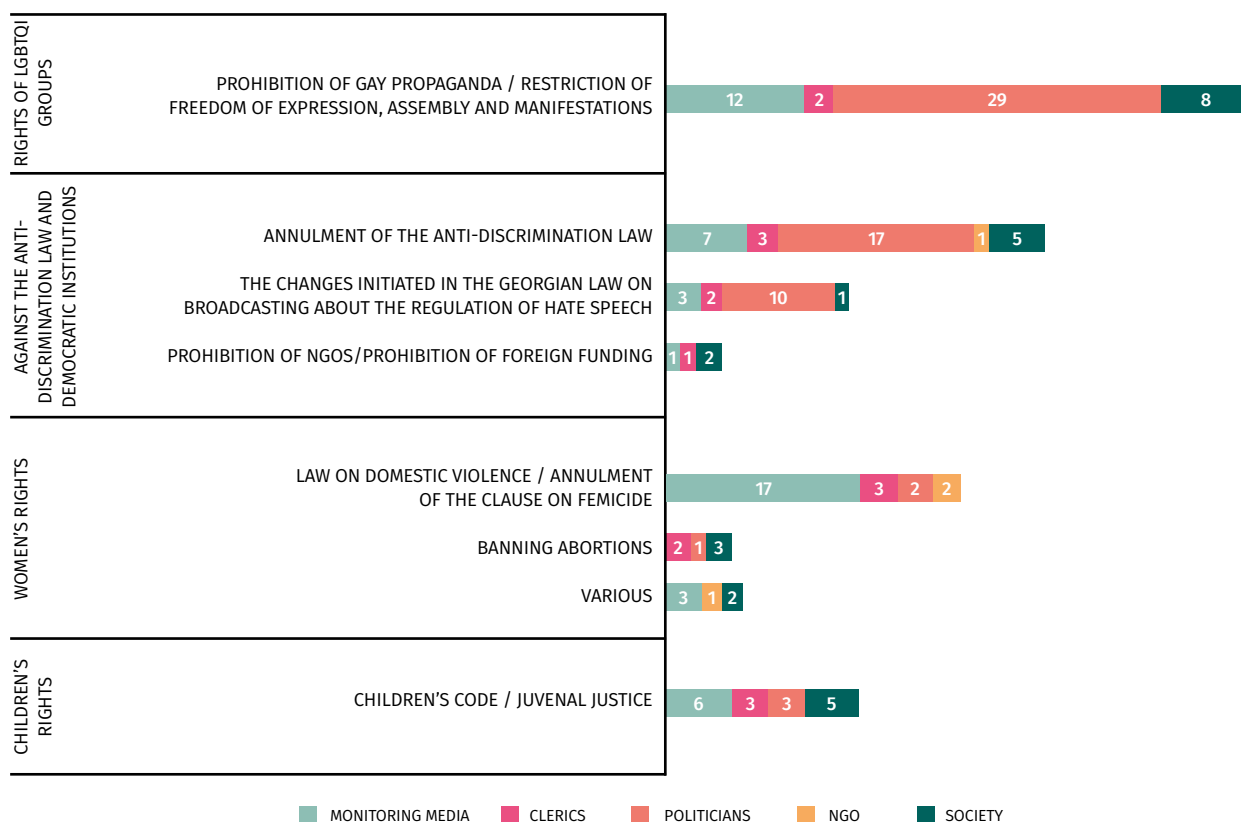
At the same time, the mentioned amendments were presented to be imposed by the European Union.

Conservative Movement Zugdidi: “The European Union forces Georgia to ban criticism of LGBT-perversed ideology! Europe demands gay-fascism... Georgian Dream is fulfilling this demand!”¹⁴³

When it comes to women’s rights, in addition to the demand for the criminalization of abortions, the issues of revision of domestic violence and femicide legislation were also present. The legal norms of prosecuting men were presented as an obligation determined by the Istanbul Convention and the 12 point recommendations by the European Union, labelling it with as the deliberate policy to destroy the Georgian gene pool.

Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, Host: “...This is a policy aimed at destroying the nation’s gene pool. The Istanbul Convention that we signed, then the 12-point recommendations that they are proposing to implement, they all include issues related to this femicide, they are basically asking us to put even more men in prison.”¹⁴⁴

CHART 17. ISSUES CONCERNING THE REVISION OF THE LEGISLATION



¹⁴³ Conservative Movement Zugdidi, 22 September, 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=609327440933344>

¹⁴⁴ Sezoni TV, Summary of the Day with Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, 11 November, 2022 <https://www.myvideo.ge/v/4148485>

V. FIMI AND GENDER-BASED DISINFORMATION

The following chapter deals with the examples of disinformation and manipulative content identified by the fact-checking platform “Myth Detector” from August 1 to December 31, which concern the topic of gender and LGBTQI identity, as well as anti-liberal discourse. The identified examples are grouped into two categories:

- The first category discusses the case of Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) and addresses the anti-liberal discourse and geopolitical context;
- The second category involves cases of gender disinformation that have been deliberately disseminated against women, members of the LGBTQI community, and politicians in a homophobic context. All cases of gender disinformation are linked to persons involved in social-political activities and their professional work.

5.1. FOREIGN INFORMATION MANIPULATION AND INTERFERENCE (FIMI)

The European External Action Service (EEAS) provides the following definition of Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI)¹⁴⁵:

“Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) describes a mostly non-illegal pattern of behaviour that threatens or has the potential to negatively impact values, procedures and political processes. Such activity is manipulative in character, conducted in an intentional and coordinated manner, by state or non-state actors, including their proxies inside and outside of their own territory.”

¹⁴⁵ European External Action Service’s (EEAS) Stratcom division, February 2023. 1st EEAS Report on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Threats, <http://bit.ly/40NYH16>

The monitoring revealed one case related to the anti-liberal discourse, which was disseminated in Georgia, Russia, Belarus and other post-Soviet countries in a coordinated manner and through various communication channels in relation to the war in Ukraine.¹⁴⁶ The purpose of the instance was to divert attention from the topic of war to other sensitive issues such as identity. In addition to **distracting** attention (from Russia's responsibility to the responsibility of the US), the method of **distortion**¹⁴⁷ was also used to change the prevalent narrative around Russia's intervention in Ukraine with the one about the religious war between the US and Russia.

The mentioned incident includes various elements (manipulation, disinformation) and phases (creation-interpretation, dissemination, localization) of informational disorder:

1. Initial Statement: US Congressman Jamie Raskin made a statement¹⁴⁸ in which he called Russia “the world center of hatred” due to violations of fundamental human rights (anti-feminist, anti-gay, anti-trans) and underscored the need to support Ukraine;
2. Manipulative Interpretation: Fox News host Tucker Carlson interpreted the congressman's words in a manipulative way and attributed the words to Jamie Raskin as if he was demanding the destruction of Russia at any cost because of its Orthodoxy: “Russia is an Orthodox country with traditional values, and for that reason, it must be destroyed.”

Coordinated Dissemination: Russian propaganda media outlets ([Russia Today](#), [Царьград](#), [Московский комсомолец](#), [Взгляд](#), [Eurasia Daily](#), [Правда.Ру](#), [Военное Обозрение](#) etc.), Belarussian ([Телеканал ОНТ](#)) and Georgian pro-Kremlin and anti-Liberal platforms ([Alt-Info](#), [Georgia and World](#), [Sezoni TV](#), [Georgia First](#)) disseminated the statement by the US congressman not based on the primary source, but in a disinformative context based on Carlson. In all the headlines, the Russia-Ukraine war was presented as a “religious war” and a global conflict, while the responsibility for the destruction of Orthodox Russia was shifted to the US side: “Because of Orthodoxy, US congressman called for the destruction of the Russian Federation at any cost” ([Geworld.ge](#)); “Russia is an Orthodox country; therefore we must destroy it” ([Georgia First](#)); “Конгрессмен США призвал уничтожить Россию из-за православия” ([The American congressman called for the destruction of Russia because of Orthodoxy, Московский комсомолец](#)), “Ведущий Fox News Carlson: «религиозная война» Байдена на Украине вредит экономической США” ([Fox News host Carlson: “Biden’s “religious war” in Ukraine hurts the American economy,” Russia Today](#)), “The Global War of West and East: Whose Values and Aims Will Win? ОНТ). Tucker Carlson's video with identical content was also widely distributed on social

¹⁴⁶ Myth Detector, 1 November, 2022 “Did US Congressman Raskin Say That Russia Should be Destroyed Because of Orthodoxy?”, <http://bit.ly/3lx01z0>

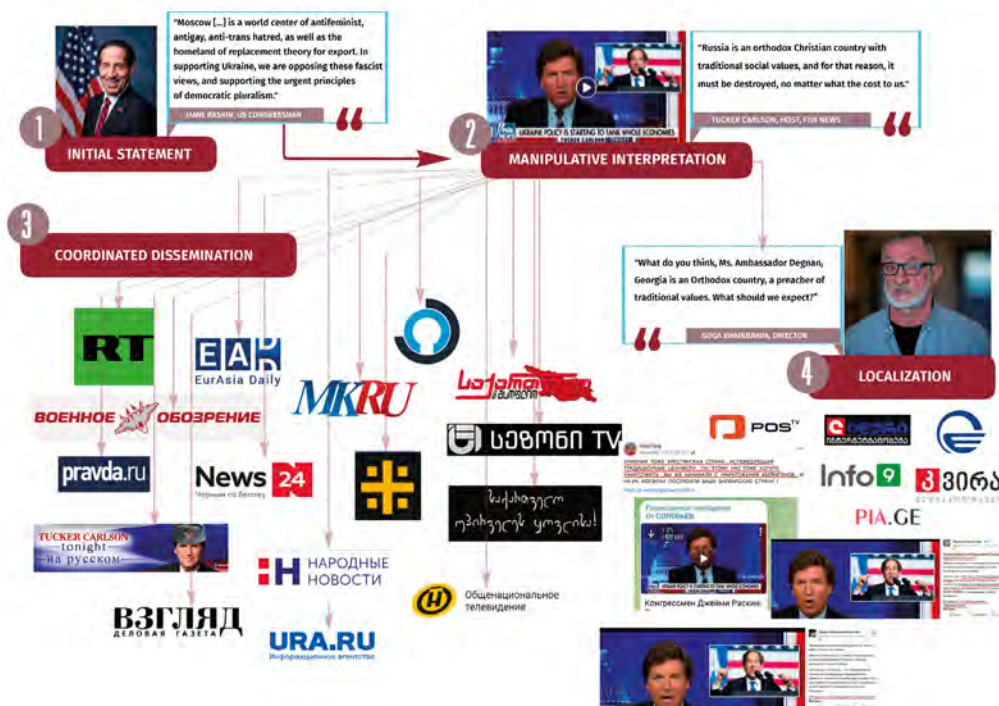
¹⁴⁷ The 5D's (dismiss, distort, distract, dismay, divide), Ben Nimmo, Disinformation Inventory, <http://bit.ly/3YH1UrH>

¹⁴⁸ Raskin Restates the Fundamental Importance of the Ukrainian Struggle For National Sovereignty Democracy and Freedom, 25 October, 2022, <http://bit.ly/3E2aaKi>

platforms, including **subtitled versions** dubbed and translated into **Georgian** and **Russian** languages. Among the distribution channels was the Russian-language YouTube account **Такер Карлсон на русском** (Tucker Carlson in Russian)¹⁴⁹, which dubs the Carlsons’s programs in Russian, as well as Telegram, V Kontakte accounts and individual Facebook profiles. “Myth Detector” identified 212 Russian-language and 62 Georgian-language disinformation cases of this content within the framework of Facebook’s fact-checking program.

Localization: Tucker Carlson’s version, as if the war in Ukraine is directed against Russia as an Orthodox country, was manipulatively disseminated by the pro-governmental actors in Georgia by adjusting it to the local context. Address of one of the supporters of the government to the US ambassador to Georgia – “Georgia is an Orthodox country, a preacher of traditional values. What should we expect?”¹⁵⁰ – was covered by the pro-governmental media (**Imedi**, **POSTV**, **PIA.GE**, “**Kvira**”, “**Info 9**”, **Lider.ge**) without even verifying the authenticity of Raskin’s words. As can be seen in the infographic below, in an identical anti-US context, the video of Tucker Carlson was also shared by social media users in Armenia, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan, asking a rhetorical question, what the Yankees were promising them, as representatives of traditional nations, whether they should’ve expected to be destroyed, as native Americans did back in the day.

INFOGRAPHIC 1. PHASES OF INFORMATIONAL DISORDER AND THE MEDIA ECOSYSTEM OF DISSEMINATING FALSE INFORMATION



¹⁴⁹ 149. Такер Карлсон на русском <https://www.youtube.com/@karlsonstv/about>

¹⁵⁰ 150. Myth Detector, 2 November 2022, False Statement Attributed to a US Congressman Disseminated Among Pro-Governmental Media, <https://mythdetector.ge/en/false-statement-attributed-to-a-us-congressman-disseminated-among-pro-governmental-media/>

Notably, the spread of disinformation that fuels anti-liberal discourse does not always originate directly from Russia, and often malicious actors circulate disinformation narratives based on Western conservative sources. In conditions where the official Kremlin or its affiliate media has a problem with legitimacy, the use of Tucker Carlson's video as the primary source makes it difficult to perceive the message in the context of disinformation from the Kremlin. However, an analysis of the media ecosystem and coordinated distribution provides a better insight into these connections.

The translation and dissemination of Fox News host's videos are not only carried out on Facebook but also on other social networks. For instance, "Tucker Carlson in Russian" is available not only on the YouTube channel, which has up to a million subscribers but also on Telegram, Vkontakte, sponsr.ru and other Russian social platforms. Additionally, propaganda media outlets use Tucker Carlson as a source of information to push their political agenda.



In the context of the war in Ukraine, disinformation and fake videos on the subject of LGBTQI identity have been circulating before as well,¹⁵¹ with the purpose of conveying the idea that Ukraine is losing territories because of sins, and that Georgia should not support an army filled with homosexuals.

5.2 GENDER-BASED DISINFORMATION

The concept of gender-based disinformation is relatively new, entailing a number of definitions, which, in addition to falsehood and malicious intent to harm, also include elements of coordination and gender-related online abuse. This also includes discreditation campaigns, which in some cases may have a factual basis; however, they might still be damaging for the target.

This research utilizes the definition by the EU Disinfo Lab, which defines gender disinformation as follows:

“Gendered disinformation focuses on the intersection between disinformation and gender, where women, gender non-conforming people, and marginalised groups such as LGBTQIA+ individuals are disproportionately targeted and harassed by spreading deceptive or inaccurate content about them. The techniques for diffusing gendered disinformation are diverse, and can comprise misogynist comments that reinforce gender stereotypes, the sexualisation and diffusion of graphic content, online harassment including threats of violence, and even cyber-attacks.”¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Myth Detector, 2 February 2022. Actors Behind the Fabricated Video Disseminated in Lugansk, Russia and Georgia Targeting NATO and the Ukrainian Army”, <https://bit.ly/3YPul6n>

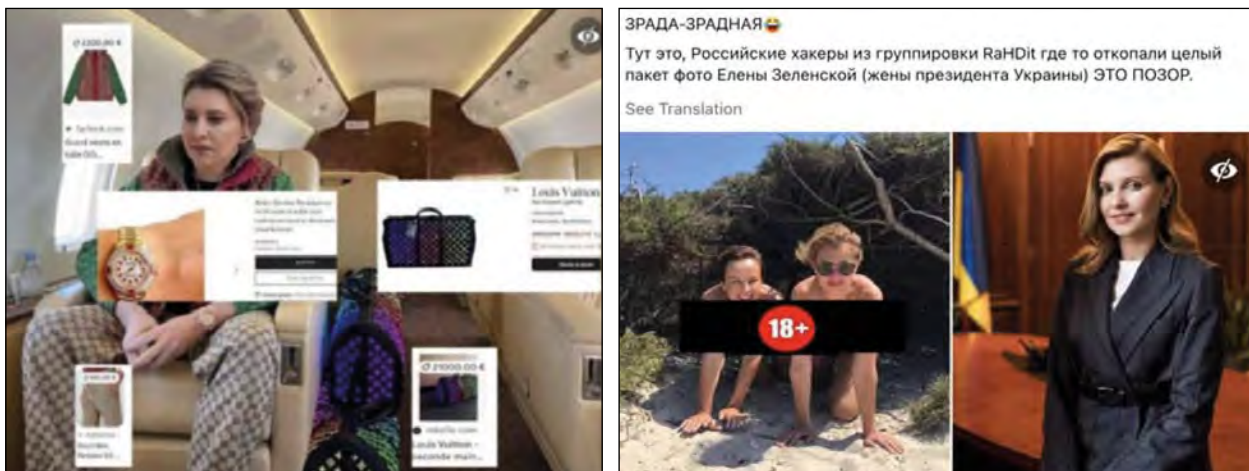
¹⁵² EU DisinfoLab & #ShePersisted, 12 October, 2022. Gender-Based Disinformation 101: Theory, Examples, and Need for Regulation, <https://bit.ly/3JZmtLn>

Cases of deliberate dissemination of false information discussed in this subsection were directed against both women and members of the LGBTQI community. In addition, they were used to discredit politicians.

WOMEN. In the period from August 1 to December 31, the fact-checking portal “Myth Detector” identified three cases of disinformation aimed at criticizing women based on moral criteria.

In two cases, the target was the First Lady of Ukraine, Olena Zelenska, and the information was mostly spread through social media for the purpose of discreditation:

- In the first case, Olena Zelenska was featured in expensive attire and accessories on the photo, which was, in fact, altered by computer software. The authentic version of the photo features the American businessman Richard Heart. The said visual, with the message – the members of the family of the Ukrainian authorities get rich at the expense of the donors – was deliberately disseminated on social networks, including in Western countries. The falsehood aimed to attack the First Lady of Ukraine using moral criteria and to undermine Western support for Ukraine.¹⁵³
- The second case of disinformation is an example of slut-shaming. A photo of Olena Zelenska covered with an 18+ sign was circulated on Georgian and Russian social networks with the wrong description, as if the Russian hacker group RaHDit obtained naked photos of the Ukrainian first lady. In fact, in the photo, the first lady of Ukraine is wearing a swimsuit.¹⁵⁴



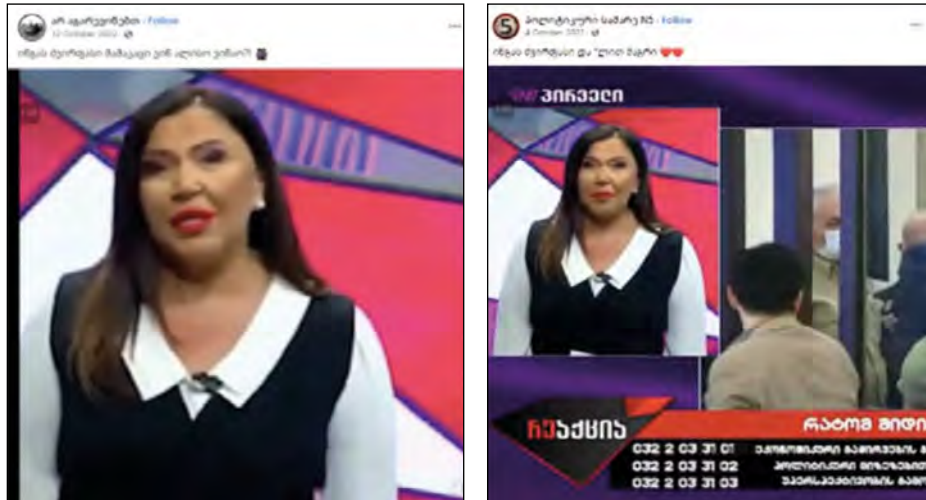
TV Pirveli journalist Inga Grigolia also became the target of slut-shaming, where anonymous pro-governmental Facebook pages published an altered video¹⁵⁵ where the words of Saakashvili’s partner,

¹⁵³ Myth Detector, 9 January 2023. “Olena Zelenska or Millionaire Richard Heart – Who is actually Depicted on the Fabricated Photo?”, <https://bit.ly/3YK6PaB>

¹⁵⁴ Myth Detector, 12 December 2022. “Disinformation as if Hackers Leaked a Private Photo of Olena Zelenska”, <https://bit.ly/3E41qmR>

¹⁵⁵ Myth Detector, 8 February 2023. “Liza Yasko or Inga Grigolia – Who Called Saakashvili “My Dear Man”?”, <http://bit.ly/3Y1Z6K7>

Lisa Yasko, MP of the Ukrainian Rada, were attributed to Grigolia. As a result of the montage, one gets the impression that the journalist called the ex-president “my dear man,” which, together with the accompanying audio-video montage, where the footage of President Saakashvili during the trial is overlaid with a man’s voice (“I want a woman, you understand”), bears the appearance of slut-shaming.



Human rights defenders have also become targets of gender disinformation. Fake quotes in the name of feminist activist Baya Pataraya have been circulated in the past as well to ridicule the issue of women’s rights. A fake quote disseminated during the monitoring period, as if Pataraya is demanding the renaming of the metro station Nadzaladevi [Forceful in Georgian] and calling it “consensual”, was followed by aggressive comments on social networks.¹⁵⁶



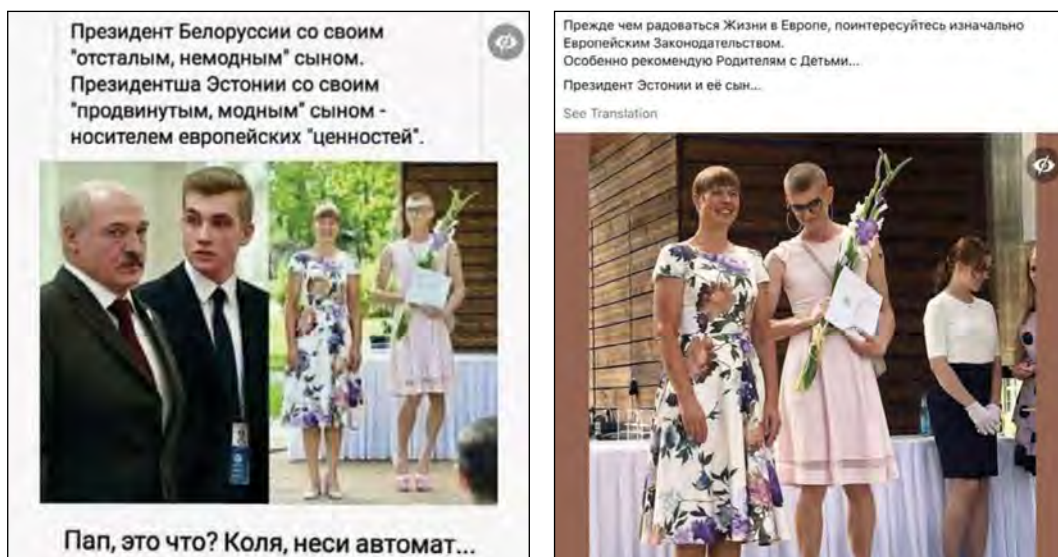
LGBTQI. One case revealed during the monitoring period was related to Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze’s decision to award Balenciaga’s creative director Demna Gvasalia with the title of honorary citizen of Tbilisi, which was followed by homophobic comments due to Gvasalia’s sexual identity. In this context, a software-edited visual was disseminated on social networks, where the designer was depicted pregnant on the cover of Elle magazine.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ Myth Detector, 23 August, 2022 “Does Baia Pataraya Demand to Rename the Metro Station “Nadzaladevi?”, <https://bit.ly/3ljmV5G>
¹⁵⁷ Myth Detector, 31 October 2022. “Altered Cover of ELLE Magazine to Discredit Demna Gvasalia”, <http://bit.ly/3RSyQuA>



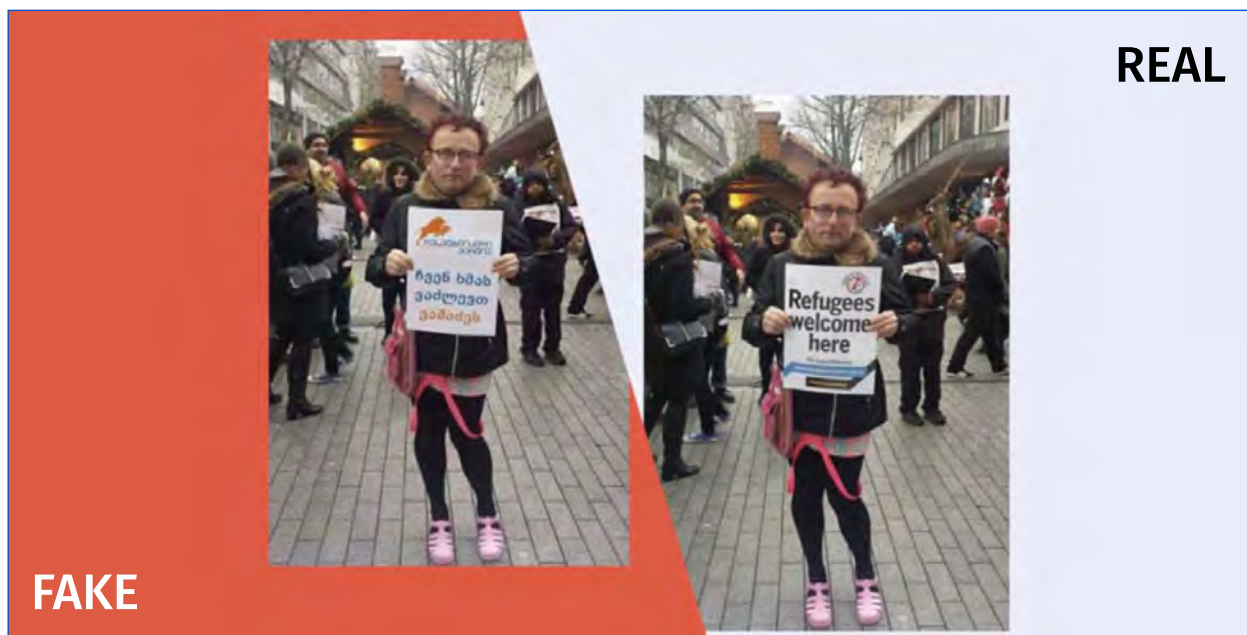
The representatives of the LGBTQI community are not always the sole targets of homophobic disinformation, as sometimes LGBTQI identity is used against politicians to discredit them.

After Estonia decided to stop issuing visas to Russian tourists as part of wartime sanctions against Russia, an old photo manipulation was actively disseminated on both Georgian and Russian Facebook accounts, claiming that the photo showed former Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid and her son dressed in a dress. Part of the shared photo collage featured Belarusian President Lukashenko and his son,¹⁵⁸ creating a dichotomy that the alternative to European values is a traditional family, which was represented by the visual of the Belarusian president and his family member.



¹⁵⁸ Myth Detector, 12 August, 2022. "The Real Identity of the Person Presented as the "Surveillance Chief" and the Son of the Estonian President?", <http://bit.ly/40LFaIp>

The second disinformation case that had a homophobic connotation was directed against Giorgi Vashadze, the leader of the opposition Republican Party and “Strategy Agmashenebeli.” A photo was disseminated among Georgian social media users, showing a man dressed in a dress holding a poster with the inscription “We vote for Vashadze” and the logo of the Republican Party.¹⁵⁹ The purpose of spreading the photo manipulation was to show that the voters of the leader of “Strategy Agmashenebeli” are homosexual Republicans.



¹⁵⁹ Myth Detector, 14 November 2022. “Altered Visual Supporting Vashadze Circulating on Social Media”, <https://bit.ly/3E2Aggj>

VI. KEY ACTORS

PRO-KREMLIN AND CONSERVATIVE ACTORS. Among political parties, the pro-Kremlin Alt-Info/Conservative Movement party, its affiliate TV channel “Alt-Info,” and various Facebook accounts were the most active in both homophobic and anti-gender contexts.¹⁶⁰

The party and its communication platforms openly advocate for direct dialogue with Russia. They have close ties with the founder of the Eurasianist movement, the far-right Russian philosopher **Aleksandr Dugin**. The Alt-Info/Conservative Movement was also involved in mobilizing and organizing extremist actions, when, on July 5, 2021, within the framework of the “Tbilisi Pride” week, 53 journalists were brutally beaten, and the activists’ office was ransacked.¹⁶¹



THE LEADERS OF THE “ALT-INFO/CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT” IN MOSCOW



THE HOSTS OF ALT-INFO TV AT THE VIOLENT DEMONSTRATION ON JULY 5. SOURCE: PUBLIKA

Another leader of the radical-extremist group is **Levan Vasadze**, the founder of the “Unity, Essence, Hope” (ERI) movement, who has close ties with the Kremlin, the Russian Orthodox Church and Alek-

¹⁶⁰ Media Development Foundation, 2022. “The Anatomy of Violent Groups- One year since the events of July 5”, <https://mdfgeorgia.ge/eng/view-library/229/>

¹⁶¹ Publika, 13 February, 2022. “The “Organization” of July 5”, <https://publika.ge/video/5-ivlisis-organizeba/>

sandr Dugin.¹⁶² Vasadze is also associated with international conservative movements. He is a representative of Georgia of the **World Congress of the Families (WCF)**, a **Christian-evangelical organization**, which fights against the spread of LGBT rights on the premise of defending the “natural family.” In turn, The World Congress of Families has ties with a Russian oligarch **Konstantin Malofeev**,¹⁶³ who is under US sanctions, also to Alexey Komov, the official representative of the World Congress of Families in Russia and the CIS.



IN THE PHOTO, ON JANUARY 22, 2020, LEVAN VASADZE PARTICIPATES IN THE XXVIII INTERNATIONAL CHRISTMAS EDUCATIONAL READING HELD IN MOSCOW



IN THE PHOTO, ALEXEY KOMOV (LEFT) AND LEVAN VASADZE (RIGHT) AT THE WORLD CONGRESS OF FAMILIES

Another pro-Kremlin actor is the “Alliance of Patriots”¹⁶⁴ party and its affiliate media outlet TV “Obieqtivi.”¹⁶⁵

Sezoni TV,¹⁶⁶ which, in addition to anti-liberal sentiments, stirs up Turkophobia and considers Russia as the only force restraining Turkey in the region, is a regional television owned by former boxer and Stalinist Giorgi Kandelaki. Sezoni TV actively broadcasts on Facebook.

The monitoring period revealed other pro-Kremlin and anti-liberal actors, as well as the anti-gender, homophobic and anti-liberal messages voiced by platforms affiliated with them. Namely:

- The political organization “Georgian Idea,” which is linked to the “Russian World” foundation;¹⁶⁷
- “Primakov Georgian-Russian Public Center” and “Historical Heritage,”¹⁶⁸ which owns the pro-Kremlin online outlet “Georgia and World.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶² Myth Detector, Profile of Levan Vasadze, <https://mythdetector.ge/en/profiles/vasadze-levan/>

¹⁶³ Myth Detector, 28 May, 2018. “Russian Links of World Congress of Families”, <https://mythdetector.ge/en/russian-links-of-world-congress-of-families/>

¹⁶⁴ Myth Detector, Profile of Alliance of Patriots, <https://mythdetector.ge/en/profiles/alliance-of-patriots-of-georgia/>

¹⁶⁵ Myth Detector, Profile of TV Obieqtivi, <https://mythdetector.ge/en/profiles/obieqtivi/>

¹⁶⁶ Myth Detector, Profile of Sezoni TV, <https://mythdetector.ge/en/profiles/sezoni-tv-2/>

¹⁶⁷ Myth Detector, Profile of Georgian Idea, <https://mythdetector.ge/en/profiles/georgian-idea/>

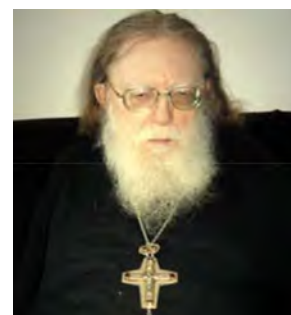
¹⁶⁸ Media Development Foundation, 2019. “Russian World in Georgia”, <https://mdfgeorgia.ge/eng/view-library/117/>

¹⁶⁹ Myth Detector, Profile of Georgia and World, <https://mythdetector.ge/en/profiles/geworld-ge/>

- Split News,¹⁷⁰ which is linked to “Georgia and World”, as well as the Georgian version of News Front. Split News also pursues a pro-governmental editorial policy.
- Society for the Protection of Children’s Rights,¹⁷¹ whose head, Guram Palavandishvili, was arrested several times due to extremism and who ran for the 2020 elections for “Georgian Idea”. Facebook pages “Zneoba.ge”¹⁷² and “Abortion means killing Children” are also linked to them.
- The newly-created conservative platform “Georgia First,” whose publishers are also people connected to the government, and which, in addition to the US conservative media, relies on the US-sanctioned Strategic Culture Foundation (Фонд стратегической культуры) as a source.¹⁷³
- Irakli Jankarashvili and Facebook accounts linked to him.¹⁷⁴

CLERICS. One of the ideologues of the anti-liberal, conservative groups is Archimandrite Rafail Karelin. Georgian translation of his works on abortion and homosexuality was most often published by Zneoba.ge.

Rafail Karelin is an archimandrite of the Georgian Orthodox Church, who was ordained as a monk in 1954.¹⁷⁵ In 1975–95, he was engaged in teaching activities at the Tbilisi Theological Seminary and Theological Academy, where he taught the Slavic languages, asceticism, the basics of theology and the history of religions. He has published a number of articles and books,¹⁷⁶ most of which have been translated into Georgian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Romanian and other languages.¹⁷⁷



Karelin, who has been awarded the Order of St. Nino by the Patriarchate of Georgia, openly criticizes liberalism and considers it a satanic ideology created against Christianity, which serves the sole purpose of enslaving and zombifying people mentally and spiritually.¹⁷⁸ Karelin claims that in the name of “civilization,” people are morally degraded and separated from the Christian way of life, which leads

¹⁷⁰ Myth Detector, 2 July, 2021. “Spaces” for Pro-Russian and Governmental Experts are funded from the State Budget, <https://mythdetector.ge/en/spaces-for-pro-russian-and-governmental-experts-are-funded-from-the-state-budget/>

¹⁷¹ Myth Detector, Profile of Society for the Protection of Children’s Rights, <https://mythdetector.ge/ka/profiles/bavshvthaphlebebis-datsvis-sazogadoeba/>

¹⁷² Myth Detector, Profile of zneoba.ge. <https://mythdetector.ge/en/profiles/zneoba-ge-2/>

¹⁷³ Myth Detector, 19 December, 2022. “What did Merkel Say About Ukraine in the Interviews with Der Spiegel and Die Zeit??” <http://bit.ly/3lwe3AS>

¹⁷⁴ Myth Detector, 10 June, 2020. What do Иракли Иракли, Antiliberal Doctrine, News Front and Tvalsazrisi.ge Have in Common? <http://bit.ly/3XwqJVM>

¹⁷⁵ Архимандрит Рафаил, “Биография архимандрита Рафаила,” Accessed 12 February, 2023, <http://karelin-r.ru/about/219/1.html>

¹⁷⁶ Pravoslavie.ru, “Архимандрит Рафаил (Карелин),” Accessed 12 February, 2023, <https://pravoslavie.ru/83461.html>

¹⁷⁷ Архимандрит Рафаил, “Книги архимандрита Рафаила,” Accessed 12 February, 2023, <http://karelin-r.ru/books/index.html>

¹⁷⁸ Pravoslavie.ru, “Современный Враг Христианства,” Accessed 12 February, 2023, <https://pravoslavie.ru/38268.html>

the world to the sin of Sodomy.¹⁷⁹ Karelin considers abortion to be murder and opposes the teaching of sex education in schools.¹⁸⁰

Among the clergy, the most number of homophobic and anti-gender statements were made by Archpriest Spiridon Tskipurishvili. Tskipurishvili is the Archpriest of the Vardigori Fathers' Monastery. He is characterized by openly anti-Western and homophobic rhetoric. Tskipurishvili was actively involved in the campaign against the "March of Dignity" in traditional and social media,¹⁸¹ and on July 5, 2021, together with other clergymen, was present at the violent rally, making violent calls towards the participants of the march.¹⁸²

Tskipurishvili is a supporter of the pro-Kremlin "Alt-Info/Conservative Movement" party and is a frequent guest of "AI-Info" programs. He shares recordings of "Alt-Info" programs both on his own page, as well as on the Facebook page of the Vardigori Fathers' Monastery.¹⁸³



Priest **Spiridon Abuladze** was also actively involved in voicing homophobic and anti-gender messages. Spiridon Abuladze is a member of the Holy Synod and the former director of the Ninotsminda Children's Shelter, whose activity was investigated due to violence against children. Notably, the admission of state representatives to the shelter became possible only as a result of the intervention and vast efforts of Public Defender Nino Lomjaria. Back in the 80s, Abuladze was convicted twice, including one for arson.¹⁸⁴

Similar to Spiridon Tskipurishvili, Abuladze also encouraged the July 5 violence,¹⁸⁵ and called Russia's intervention in Ukraine God's punishment, citing the election of a gay activist as president and holding annual gay parades in Ukraine as the reason.¹⁸⁶

¹⁷⁹ Pravoslavie.ru, "Неужели Содом — Наш Будущий Дом?" Accessed 12 February, 2023, <https://pravoslavie.ru/69443.html>

¹⁸⁰ Zneoba.ge, "About the Perversion of the Youth – Archimandrite Rafail (Karelin)," Accessed 12 February, 2023, <https://zneoba.ge/1197/>

¹⁸¹ Myth Detector, "Radicalization in the Name of Religion and against Political Opponents – by whom and what Reason is the Pride March used for?" 6 July, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3YM0LOY>

¹⁸² IFact, "Priests on a Violent Demonstration," 26 July, 2021, <https://ifact.ge/mghvdlebi/>

¹⁸³ Media Development Foundation, 2022. "The Anatomy of Violent Groups- One year since the events of July 5", <https://mdfgeorgia.ge/eng/view-library/229/>

¹⁸⁴ Radio Liberty, "Gocha or Grigoli or priest Spiridon – the lock on the Shelter," 4 June, 2021, <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31290919.html>

¹⁸⁵ Radio Liberty, "Priest Spiridon on the violence of July 5: You even survived", <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31376250.html>

¹⁸⁶ Radio Liberty, "Silent and loud supporters of Putin in Russia and Georgia," 14 March, 2022, <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31752815.html>

As for Stepane Kalajishvili, he is the Metropolitan of Chkondidi, who is also infamous for his anti-Western and homophobic messages. At various times, he was involved in discrediting campaigns against the Public Defender Nino Lomajria¹⁸⁷ and Tbilisi Pride.¹⁸⁸



ANONYMOUS FACEBOOK ACCOUNTS LINKED TO THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPOSITION.

Anonymous accounts, which voice the interests of the government or the opposition, mostly appear around the topic of gender. Their targets were mainly female politicians. In the case of the government-linked accounts, female journalists and human rights defenders were targeted as well.

The following Facebook pages were identified to be involved in discrediting campaigns or spreading disinformation:

- **FB accounts linked to the ruling party:** Leader 41, Mikheil Ukrainologist, Tiem for Truth, Terenti Gldaneli, Political Grave.
- **FB account linked to the opposition UNM party:** Blue Donkey.

¹⁸⁷ Myth Detector, “Radicalization in the Name of Religion”, <https://bit.ly/3YM0LOY>

¹⁸⁸ Myth Detector, “Who Joined Discrediting Campaign against Public Defender?” 15 June, 2021, <http://bit.ly/3jX1ZYZ>

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