

THE ELECTORAL MEDIA PERFORMANCE DURING THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 2022






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Maharat Foundation's Report on the Performance of TV Media in the Election Process

2022 Parliamentary Elections

1- Introduction

Maharat Foundation has published an inclusive report on the performance of TV media in the election process, specifically during Lebanese Parliamentary elections, which ended on May 15, 2022. The study is a summary of local TV monitoring conducted between February 1 and election day. Maharat Foundation has strived to keep pace with Lebanese media through monitoring in order to examine the performance of media, which plays a major role in Lebanese politics, represents public freedoms and is a tool for monitoring the political life.

It is commonly known that the media plays a fundamental role in democratic systems. It constitutes a pillar of liberal political system and today, admittedly, there is “no democracy without free media.” The role of the media is manifested during the elections, mainly through building communication channels between candidates and the public, allowing candidates to present their proposals and public vision and introducing those candidates to the people for them to select the ones they deem fit. The media also plays a major role in educating the public, specifically through voter education, as part of its mission to build a conscious public opinion that would select the best candidates, as well as hold accountable those responsible for public affairs and monitor their performance.

Monitoring TV performance was crucial. In fact, TV still plays the most important role, given its various characteristics. It is also seen as the maker of political actors and leaders, hence the importance of its performance during this period. Maharat Foundation has monitored the performance of Lebanese TV channels during the 2022 elections with the help of a fully trained team. It has previously published many reports regarding the electoral process in Lebanon, including the 2009 and 2018 Parliamentary elections.¹

In this context, Maharat Foundation has developed the present study about monitoring the media in the 2020 election process. The study is inclusive and follows an open source methodology, by allowing researches and those interested in media in the election to access the collected data “remotely” (online).

¹ Visit Maharat Foundation's website to access the periodic reports

2 – Study Methodology

This study has kept pace with Lebanese channels coverage of the Parliamentary election process until May 15, 2022, as a means to discover the different roles that those channels have played and the extent to which they comply with the applicable laws, mainly the electoral media and advertisement law. The study also monitors the extent to which these channels comply with the principle of equality during coverage and achieve their national role in the process of political renovation, by encouraging voters to fulfill their electoral duty and making room for candidates to present their projects, enabling voters to compare them with others.

2-1 – Study Objectives

The integrity of the electoral process is not limited to the wellbeing of the elections and the preceding or complementary procedures. In fact, the media plays a crucial role in ensuring competitiveness among candidates, through balanced and diverse media coverage of opponents, and the presentation of ideas and candidate programs without interference, promotion or endorsement, which are the result of bias that undermines the voter's freedom of choice. In addition, commitment to professionalism and media ethics requires from the media to refrain from using abusive and hate speech.

As a result, the media plays a major role in observing the implementation of the voting law with regard to the required procedures, candidatures, coalitions, keeping up with the electoral campaigns, broadcasting and publishing all materials related to the electoral process, as well as with regard to the decisions arising from the Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE), voter education material and surveys conducted. The media also adheres to the obligations imposed on it by virtue of the provisions set out in the new Electoral Law, which relate to the proper coverage of electoral campaigns and all news pertaining to candidates and electoral lists, as well as to the maintenance of the integrity of the electoral process without misusing media platforms for electoral profits or as a means to influence voters through misleading and dishonest methods.

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- Ensuring that TV channels are keeping up with the elections calendar and the elections management procedures;
- Ensuring that the media is broadcasting voter education programs and other programs related to awareness-raising;
- Identifying the type and size of elections coverage;
- Measuring equality in media coverage among opponents;

- Measuring the extent to which candidates are given the opportunity to appear in the media and present their projects;
- Identifying women's political participation through their TV appearance;
- Identifying the usage of TV channels for political propaganda;
- Identifying the media tone in order to highlight the abusive and hate speech that appeared during the elections;
- Monitoring the media's commitment to the principle of electoral silence stipulated by the law.

2-2 – Monitored TV Channels

The study monitored news bulletins, interviews and different programs broadcasted by Lebanese TV channels. One can argue that TV still plays the most important role during electoral campaigns, as it addresses the majority of public opinion and is the most-watched media. Therefore, it is considered the first public opinion maker during the elections, which highlights the importance of examining how Lebanese TV channels covered the elections.

The monitoring process included 7 local channels: MTV, LBCI, Al Jadeed, Al Manar, NBN, OTV and TL. Those channels have covered over 16 hours a day and are distributed across all Lebanese territories, keeping pace with the news and political developments through periodic news bulletins and various programs.

2-3 – Monitoring Timeframe

The period of monitoring and analyzing data related to TV channels coverage of campaigns and topics pertaining to the elections extended from February 2022 to May 15, 2022, as electoral campaigns and political marketing may begin weeks before the submission of candidacies and the announcement of electoral lists.

Those TV channels were monitored on a daily basis during the above period, between 10am and midnight. The period was divided into time slots, making it easier to compare data and draw out the results. The time slots came as follows:

- 1st slot: Throughout the monitoring period between February 1 and May 15,
- 2nd slot: From April 1 to May 15,
- 3rd slot: The last 2 weeks preceding the elections, from May 1 to May 15.

2-4 – Corpus:

The monitoring included the following programs and content:

- The afternoon and evening news

- Political and social talk shows
- Interviews
- Programs dedicated to the elections
- Live coverage of electoral festivals
- Electoral media and advertisement programs
- All other programs that cover content related to the elections, such as entertainment programs or political satire shows and others.

2-5 – Data Collection and Analysis

The study findings were based on the analysis of all programs broadcasted by TV channels. The programs monitored over the span of three months and a half were collected and documented in one database, for ease of methodological study and analysis. A coding system was used in the analysis, by filling a record template, and then using a table that summarizes the main political changes that can be used for analyzing, counting and classifying media coverage.

All media coverage of political actors (Officials, political parties, candidates, lists, electoral management body...) were monitored, even when they were not talking about the elections, which helped identifying the extent to which candidates and officials invested in their positions for electoral purposes. The monitoring encompassed all political actors, including political parties and groups and not only candidates.

The data analysis adopted a quantitative and qualitative analysis approach. A quantitative analysis helps identifying the size, type, form, and distribution of coverage, in addition to those benefiting from it (Actors), their positions and the role they play (their status as speakers or the topic of coverage). It also helps measuring the spaces dedicated to those actors, women's participation and appearance in the media, the media's commitment to respecting pluralism and diversity of ideas, as well as the extent to which emerging political movements are granted access to media and are allowed to present their programs or introduce themselves.

As for the qualitative analysis, it entails a methodological collection of remarks regarding media coverage, such as the journalistic style, dealing with surveys, media bias, voter education, media tone and other aspects.

This analysis reveals the role that TV channels undertake through their coverage, the programs they broadcast and the way they deal with public opinion. It also identifies the extent to which those channels are neutral, or involved in electoral campaigns, by being biased in their coverage or providing direct support to one party at the expense of another. The qualitative analysis includes the media discourse of the different parties involved in the political process, and the limits for the media tone that could include hate speech and the categories that such speech could target.

The monitoring team and the analyzers abided by a code of ethics that ensures neutrality and unbiased data documentation by adhering to the main professional and scientific regulations.

3 - The Field Context: political, Economic and Social

3-1- The political Climate Preceding the Start of Electoral Campaigns

Ever since the uprising of October 2019 started, and as protests dominated most Lebanese regions, the country has been confined to a state of political turmoil, economic downturn and serious social crises as local political forces have been consumed by mutual accusations of corruption and responsibility over the global state of collapse in the country.

As the uprising continued, new voices emerged as “Forces of Change,” seeking to claim a role in the political and media landscape. In parallel, the legislative elections, scheduled for 2022, were perceived as a milestone to hold the political class accountable and to kick start the process of addressing present challenges. Accordingly, many voices appealed to voters to assume their responsibility and properly choose their parliamentary representative.

Throughout that period, doubt prevailed over the actual holding of these elections and the possibility that the political class would eventually report them. While many actors voiced doubts that the political class would actually hold the elections on time, Mikati’s government, that was formed on September 10, 2021, after 13 months of governmental vacuum, immediately took executive measures in preparation of the electoral race following the regulatory delays.

The public debate on parliamentary elections was accompanied by a series of events that escalated the political discourse, namely the Beirut Port explosion of August 2020 and the Tayyouneh incident of October 2021. What started as a demonstration in protest of the course of investigation related to the Beirut Port explosion culminated into frictions between Shia Hezbollah and Amal supporters on one hand, and Christian residents of Ain Rimmeneh who are, for the most part, supporters of the Lebanese Forces Party and the Kataeb Party on the other. Armed clashes ensued leading to a number of deaths and injuries in a climate reminiscent of the civil war and heated cross talk involving hate speech and instigation to violence.

3-2- The Election Course

In its session of September 18, 2021, the Council of Ministers approved the transition to a new biometric identity card to be used in the election process and endorsed the proposal made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to establish a mechanism, allowing for the registration of the diaspora members wishing to participate in the elections.

On September 28, Abdallah Bou Habib, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Immigrants launched the immigrants' registration mechanism open to those wishing to vote abroad starting from upcoming October 1 until November 20, 2021, by adopting the methods of electronic registration or in person visits to the local diplomatic missions.

On October 13, 2021, the Lebanese cabinet sessions were interrupted due to disagreement among different components with regard to the dismissal of the head of Beirut's criminal court in charge of investigating the 2020 Beirut Port explosion for allegedly politicizing the case. Sessions were interrupted until January 15, 2022, yet this did not affect the procedure for registering the diaspora for the elections. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the number of diaspora members registered to participate in the elections reached 245,000.

In its legislative session convened on October 19, 2021 which studied the proposals for a new Electoral Law presented by MPs and different parties and which would amend Electoral Law No. 44/2017, the women quota proposal, which suggests allocating 26 parliamentary seats for women, was dropped. The date of the elections was rescheduled to March instead of May 2022. Article 122 of the Electoral Law, which limits the number of MPs for whom diaspora members are able to vote down to 6, was suspended and the same voting system was adopted for both residents and the diaspora participating in the selection of 128 MPs. The additional 6 seats allocated for the diaspora were canceled.

On October 22, the President brought about new amendments to the Electoral Law once again. They included repeating the voting process for rescheduling the date of the elections due to many oppositions related to the weather, the deprivation of a large Lebanese segment from voting, and the effect it has on the voting process for the diaspora. However, the political arm-wrestling among different parties has pushed the Parliament to reaffirm the amendments previously voted for, dismissing the proposals made by the President who became obliged to issue the amended law as per the constitutional deadlines.

Despite the issuance and implementation of the law, the President promised not to sign the invitation to the voters until May. This has pushed the Minister of Interior to announce May 15 as the date of elections. Electoral campaigns officially kicked off upon the signature of the

decree that invites voters to the elections by the President on September 29, 2021 following the call for submission of candidacy by the Minister of Interior on January 10.

Number of competing lists: The number of registered electoral lists reached 103, 64 of whom included women. This number was remarkably higher than the one recorded in 2018 (77 lists only). The 103 lists included 718 candidates, among whom 118 were women.

3-3 – The Socio-economic Situation

Preparations for the parliamentary elections kicked off at the backdrop of a dire socio-economic environment due to the unprecedented economic collapse that Lebanon had been enduring since 2020 at a quick pace. All this has pushed the country into a huge crisis, one “which we estimated to potentially rank among the top three most severe economic collapses worldwide since the 1850s,” according to the World Bank 2021 report ([Lebanon Economic Monitor: The Great Denial](#)). The report states that this crisis would lead to “national fragmentation and a breakdown of the social peace,” while indicating that the GDP has decreased from around 52 billion USD in 2019, down to 21.8 billion USD in 2021, a contraction of around 58.1% that “represents the highest contraction in a list of 193 countries.”

The Lebanese Lira has lost more than 90% of its value, leading to an unprecedented inflation and a collapse in the Lebanese purchasing power, as food prices have skyrocketed by over 550% between August 2020 and August 2021.

The UNESCWA report has indicated a high increase in poverty rates among the population, classifying 80% of the Lebanese people as poor. The removal of subsidies on basic items, such as fuel, medicines and several food items, mainly bread, in addition to the severe power outage and the large increase in power generator subscription fees, which is also subject to power cuts.

According to UNICEF, more than half of the Lebanese households have at least one child who is not receiving one of the daily meals. What also exacerbated the situation is the crisis endured by the banking sector that has prevented people from withdrawing money from their account.

The crisis has led to a large migration wave, mainly from the health sector following the migration of a large number of doctors (around 40%) and nurses.

The deteriorating economic crisis was also exacerbated further by the implications of COVID-19, followed by the Beirut Port blast on August 4, during which more than 230 people were killed, thousands of others were injured and thousands of apartments and establishments were destroyed, leaving thousands of other people homeless and causing many enterprises to cease to operate.

3-4 – The Media

Given their diversity, variety and high ratings, Lebanese TV channels constitute the first media pillar. They cover all Lebanese areas, can be watched for free, and broadcast general content, including series, news, talk shows, as well as a variety of programs targeting different social classes. These channels have kept pace with the technological advancement in the media and communication sector, whereby most of them are broadcasted through satellites. They have also extended their broadcasting mechanisms to digital technology, allowing people to keep up with their programs through the internet network and smart phones. The prevalence of these channels is determined by the content they broadcast and the extent to which their program hosts are famous.

One should note that, similarly to most other countries, Lebanese TV is still considered the number one media, especially during the election phase, given its various characteristics, inclusivity of its content, its wide prevalence and high ratings. All this explains the major role that Lebanese TV channels undertake during the election phase, and the reason why candidates seek to be featured on them.

Although the distribution of TV channels ownership seems to depict the Lebanese sectarian and political diversity, it allows private ownership of TV broadcasts by individuals and parties. The Audiovisual Media Law issued by the government in 1994 has led to fragmentation of TV licenses among political powers at the expense of Tele Liban (TL), the only State-led national TV channel that is fighting for persistence in light of the authorities' neglect it is facing.

The current TV channels landscape seems to be politically divided into different sects depending on the owner. Some channels are possessed by specific political parties, such as OTV (the Free Patriotic Movement), Al Manar (Hezbollah), NBN (Amal Movement), in addition to channels owned by people with specific political orientation, such as Al Jadeed (Tahseen Khayat who is against the current political class) and MTV (Michel El Murr who is close to Opposition Christian parties), LBCI (Pierre El Daher, formerly owned by the Lebanese Forces). Given the distribution of channels over private ownerships, it seems that their owners decide who they should give airing space to, while TL remained unable to compete with other channels or serve the public.

The common denominator for these channels is the financial crisis that the Lebanese media sector is facing, especially in light of the economic crisis that led to the thorough collapse of the advertising industry, which was partially financing these channels. This financial crisis has prevented channels from self-finance, pushing them to look for external financing resources. As a result, political and electoral financing became an important source of income.

The electoral media and advertising law aims to regulate channels' coverage of electoral campaigns and electoral advertising in order to ensure transparency and equality among candidates as well as to control private channels.

The applicable electoral system that was issued under Law 44/2017 is based on the proportional election system on the basis of closed electoral lists, whereby voting takes place using pre-printed official ballot papers drawn up by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities.

The 128 parliamentary seats that make up the Lebanese Parliament are divided equally between Christians and Muslims, and electoral lists are composed accordingly on the basis of the sectarian distribution of seats in each of the 15 electoral districts. The Electoral Law also grants each voter the right to make a preferential vote, giving advantage to these candidates over others upon distribution of electoral threshold among rival lists. However, some candidates who win very few preferential votes may also win a share in the parliament, which is considered one of the flaws of current Electoral Law.

The division of electoral districts that is not based on scientific and demographic grounds also constitutes discrimination between candidates and voters in different districts. South Lebanon I consists of 5 parliamentary seats and 129,317 voters, while Mount Lebanon IV consists of 13 parliamentary seats and 346,561 voters.

The high electoral threshold system, which is not unified among districts, leads to the marginalization and non-representation of political forces and a large segment of voters. These amount to about 43% in the North I, which comprises 63,508 voters out 148,626. As for North III, this rate reached about 1%, which comprises only 1,204 voters out of 122,311. The electoral quotient that determines the number of seats that each list wins varies among the 15 districts. It is calculated by dividing the number of voters in each district by the number of seats in a single district, excluding the number of votes cast for lists that did not exceed the electoral threshold.

One of the characteristics of the Electoral Law is that it addresses candidates and lists and not political parties. Candidacies are submitted on a personal and not partisan basis. In fact, the new law did not cancel the role of traditional or independent leaders, politicians or public figures who wish to enter the parliament, since the electoral system is based on individual and not partisan candidacy. Therefore, a group of candidates who do not belong to any party have the ability to form an electoral list.

4- Monitoring and Supervising the Electoral Process

4.1 Ministry of Interior

The Ministry of Interior and Municipalities organizes the electoral process and prepares and implements most of its stages. The Ministry similarly plays a key role in organizing and managing the diaspora voting and electoral process, and in announcing the results, and it is assisted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the matter. Despite the continuous recommendations to establish an independent commission to manage the electoral process, first mentioned in Fouad Boutros' draft law of 2006, which proposed the establishment of an "Independent National Commission for Elections." However, this fundamental reform fell through, and the task of organizing and supervising the elections remained in the hands of the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities without any controls to ensure the integrity of the electoral process, especially when the Minister of Interior himself is a candidate for the parliamentary elections, as was the case in 2018, with the then-Minister of Interior Nouhad al-Machnouk running for the elections for Beirut II district.

The Electoral Law assigns the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities a pivotal and essential role in managing the electoral process, announcing the results, enabling candidates and voters to exercise rights stipulated in the law by running for elections and voting, or preparing and executing logistical and administrative arrangements to complete the electoral process and announce official results. The law places human, logistical and financial abilities and resources in the hands of the Ministry of Interior enabling it to run the electoral process entrusted to it.

Since 2009, at the end of every parliamentary elections the Ministry of Interior emerges as the authority that was able to organize and conduct elections despite the unstable political, security and economic conditions in the country and despite ample observations and flaws in the electoral process. These mainly include the lack of sufficient deadlines to access, review and modify electoral lists, determining the number of polling stations and training the staff manning those stations, ensuring easy access to polling stations for persons with disabilities, facilitating the transportation and movement of observers, and delegates of candidates and lists throughout the Lebanese territories and to polling stations, encouraging participation and increasing voting percentage by undertaking motivating and boosting measures such as the "mega-center," the magnetic card and electoral education.

4.2 Electoral Campaign Period

The electoral campaign period starts from the opening date for nominations and ends at the closing of the ballot boxes (Article 56 of the Electoral Law).

Electoral campaigns started early in this round of elections, specifically since January 10, 2022, when Minister of Interior Bassam Al-Mawlawi issued Circular No. 1/M/2022 dated 05/01/2022, opening the door for nominations, and making the electoral campaign period subject to the provisions of the Electoral Law around four months until May 15, i.e., the date of the general elections. With the start of electoral campaigns, the Electoral Law imposed a number of restrictions aimed at ensuring the integrity of the electoral process, the most important of which are related to electoral spending ceilings, electoral media, paid electoral advertising and propaganda, opinion polls and hate speech. Some candidates tend to delay submitting their candidacies until the end of the nomination period, taking advantage of a loophole in the Electoral Law, which does not require, in calculating the electoral expenses of a particular candidate, the adoption of the date of opening of nominations instead of the date of candidacy submittal as is the case according to the current text.

4.3 Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE)

The new Electoral Law did not delegate the task of monitoring the integrity of the electoral process in terms of electoral spending by candidates, lists and parties, and the use of media for political propaganda to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities.

When Electoral Law (No. 25 of 2008) failed to adopt the proposed reforms in the Fouad Boutros draft law in terms of establishing an independent body to manage the entire electoral process, and in what can only be described as a misstep, a body called the “Supervisory Commission for Elections.” SCE does not enjoy neither a legal personality, nor administrative and financial independence and is linked to the Minister of the Interior, who has the right to attend its meetings without voting. Subsequent calls for bolstering the independence of SCE in Electoral Law No. 44/2017 and activating its role did not succeed despite a more tempered text that redefined the SCE’s relation to the MOI, whereby the clause “linked to the Minister of Interior” was amended to “in coordination with the Minister of Interior,” who still “oversees the works of the SCE, chooses its headquarters, and attends its meetings when necessary, without participating in the voting” (Article 9 of the Electoral Law in force).

In return for the tasks entrusted to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, the current law has assigned the SCE with tasks of monitoring the electoral campaigns of candidates and lists in terms of spending, media appearances, and paid electoral propaganda. In light of the current Electoral Law and the politicized media, electoral spending and media campaigns are key factors

for political parties and candidates in influencing the integrity of the electoral process and leveling the playing field between candidates.

However, unlike the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, the SCE lacks the necessary human and financial resources and decision-making authority.

The Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE):

The Council of Ministers appoints the members of the SCE, which performs tasks specified in the Electoral Law, independently and in coordination with the Minister of Interior.

The SCE monitors the compliance of candidate lists, candidates and media outlets with the laws and regulations that regulate electoral competition in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Law, especially in terms of electoral spending, media coverage, opinion polls, media and electoral advertising.

It also grants the necessary permits to media outlets wishing to cover the vote counting and polling operations, and to international and local observers wishing to monitor the electoral process, in addition to other competencies and tasks entrusted to it by law.

At the end of its mandate, the SCE shall submit a report on its work to the President of the Republic, the Speaker of the Parliament, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Interior and Municipalities and the President of the Constitutional Council.

The said report shall be published in the Official Gazette.

4.4 The Political Authority and the SCE

Practices on the part of the government and the MOI have proven that there is a desire to weaken the SCE and not recognize its pivotal role in monitoring electoral media, advertising and expenditure. The latest parliamentary elections showed a lack of seriousness by the political authority in dealing with the SCE, despite the importance of its role as stipulated in the Electoral Law. This can be deduced from the government's delay in appointing a new Commission to oversee the electoral process with the beginning of diaspora voters' registration as of October

1, 2021. The government's delay in announcing a clear position on the SCE raised question marks regarding the seriousness and legitimacy of the electoral process in view of the approaching elections set for May 15, 2022.

The doors for submitting candidacy for the parliamentary elections was open without the government having appointed a new Commission. Before its amendment, Article 11 of the Electoral Law states that the mandate of the Commission's members expires six months after the end of the general parliamentary elections, and that the government must appoint a new Commission one month prior to the end of their mandate, which was not the case after the 2018 elections.

As a result of the government's failure to appoint a new Commission in accordance with the legal deadlines, the aforementioned Article 11 was amended by virtue of Law No. 8 issued on 03/11/2021, which states that the government shall appoint the members of the Commission six months prior to the end of the mandate of the Commission on May 21, 2022. The existing Commission shall continue to exercise its functions until a new Commission is appointed. This amendment has increased the ambiguity and lack of clarity regarding the appointment of the Commission's members and their mandate. Despite this, the government did not adhere to the new deadlines for the appointment of the Commission, and the issue of whether to appoint a new Commission or extend the mandate of the existing one was not resolved except in the Council of Ministers session on February 25, 2022, i.e. more than a month and fifteen days after the start of the electoral campaigns. During that session, "the Council of Ministers decided to extend the mandate of the previous Commission, and appoint three new members to replace those who submitted their resignations."

5- Access to Media During Elections: Legal Provisions

The new Electoral Law allowed lists and candidates to use all forms of media, whether public or private, visual, audio, print or electronic "no matter what technology is used" (Article 68 of the Electoral Law).

Each list or candidate may organize a variety of legitimate events to present their electoral platform in an appropriate approach and manner consistent with the laws and regulations (Article 69 of the Electoral Law). As for broadcasting electoral material related to political parties apart from candidate lists and candidates, these are not restricted by the current text, but are subject to the provisions of general principles and texts.

Televised political talk shows constitute an important electoral platform. They provide the candidate with an hour or more of air time, during which the candidate is usually having a one on one conversation with the show host. The candidate takes advantage of this precious air time to present his electoral program and his positions on the topics and issues of the hour.

When regulating electoral media and propaganda, the legislator realized the importance of media appearances in these TV shows and programs, and the extent of their impact on the principle of fairness and balance in electoral competition. Therefore, every candidate was granted the right to request the Commission to oblige the media outlet that hosted his opponent to host him on the same conditions.

Paragraph 2 of Article 72 of the Electoral Law stressed that “The Commission shall ensure respect for freedom of expression of various opinions and thoughts in the media programs during the electoral campaign period, by issuing binding recommendations to the media, so as to ensure a fair, balanced and impartial treatment for all candidates and candidate lists.”

The Law stipulates that live coverage of electoral events, political talk shows, interviews, meetings, dialogues and round tables shall be free of charge. Also, the media should refrain from supporting any candidate and should observe fairness, balance and impartiality in dealing with candidates as much as possible.

5.1 The Legal Framework for Electoral Media and Advertising

Article 71 of the Electoral Law stipulates a number of obligations to be observed by the media and candidates regarding electoral advertising and campaigning, mainly:

- Media outlets wishing to participate in paid electoral advertising and campaigning shall submit a declaration of intent to the Commission.
- Media and advertising outlets shall clearly state during the transmission or publication of electoral advertisements that such advertisements are paid, and specify the client who requested their transmission or publication.
- Media and advertising outlets are prohibited from accepting free advertising or advertising for a fee not consistent with the price list provided by them.
- The candidate and their legal representative shall submit to the Commission a copy of the electoral advertisement material, at least three days prior to the date specified for the first broadcast or publication of these material.

However, many problems arose during implementation. The practices of the successive Commissions and the behavior of media outlets and candidates during electoral campaigns have proven that there are differences between the media and the Commission on major issues that form the core of the Commission’s work in terms of media oversight, advertising and electoral propaganda, including:

- The first issue relates to controlling advertising and paid electoral propaganda.
- The second issue is related to TV programs dedicated to electoral campaigns, whether these are new programs or part of the network's regular programming and the hidden electoral propaganda for candidates and lists that could be found in these programs (the law is clear in terms of prohibiting free advertising and obligating the media outlet to declare any paid election advertisement or propaganda).
- The third issue is about ensuring balance in media appearance between candidates and to allocate television programs that allow the expression of different opinions and thoughts.
- The fourth issue is related to media discourse and content that includes explicit violations of the Electoral Law, such as broadcasting and publishing positions and statements that include slander, libel and defamation, hate speech, electoral promises, and breaking electoral silence.

5.2 SCE's Authority in Controlling Media Coverage

The law granted the SCE the authority to monitor television and radio media outlets that broadcast political programs and news, which is broader in scope than monitoring and censoring newspapers and news websites, and includes:

- Respecting the freedom of expression of individuals with different opinions and thoughts in media programs during the electoral campaign period.
- Ensuring fairness, balance and impartiality in the treatment of candidates and candidate lists.
- Ensuring equal media visibility for all candidates and candidate lists, such that when a media outlet hosts a candidate or list representative it is required to host in return their opponents in similar conditions in terms of timing, duration and program type.

During the electoral campaign period, all media outlets, including electronic media, must abide by the following obligations:

- Refrain from declaring their support for any candidate or candidate list.
- Refrain from committing defamation, libel and slander against any of the candidates and candidate lists.
- Refrain from broadcasting any material that incites confessional, sectarian or ethnic strife, provokes violence or riots, or promotes terrorism, crime or subversive acts.

- Refrain from broadcasting any material that would constitute a means for exercising pressure, intimidation, intimation of disloyalty, accusation of unbelief, hint of bribery or promise of material or moral gain.
- Refrain from distorting, obscuring, falsifying, omitting or misrepresenting information.

5.3 Gaps in the SCE's Control of Electoral Media and Advertising

Contrary to the important oversight role that the law entrusted to the SCE, it seems to be unable to take executive decisions that would guarantee the fulfilment of its role. Hence, there were many gaps that emerged while the Commission exercised its functions, including:

- The SCE did not specify, before the start of the electoral process, the precise criteria that allow distinction between electoral media and electoral advertisement in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 7 of Article 72 of the Electoral Law. It merely reminded in its statement No. 4 dated 25/01/2022 its right to verify whether any media show or program hides any illegal electoral advertising under the guise of electoral media.
- The SCE did not determine the programs or maximum slots for media outlets to broadcast or publish informative or promotional material related to candidates or candidate lists, and did not specify the time broadcasting or publishing these such slots in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (b) of Article 71 of the Electoral Law No. 44/2017.
- The SCE did not issue binding recommendations to the media, in order to ensure fairness, balance and impartiality in the treatment of candidates and candidate lists, as stipulated in paragraph (2) of Article 72 of the Electoral Law.
- The SCE did not take urgent measures to consult with the Publications Court and refer media outlets that violated the requirements of media coverage during the electoral campaign period.
- The SCE did not adopt the principle of transparency while undertaking its tasks, and refrained from announcing the types of complaints it received during the electoral process, the authorities to whom these complaints were addressed, and the verification process.
- The SCE did not adopt the principle of transparency regarding the measures taken against media outlets, opinion polling companies, and candidates, in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Law.
- The SCE did not exercise the educational and awareness raising role entrusted to it under Article 19 of the Electoral Law in terms of spreading electoral knowledge, guiding voters and promoting democratic practices by all available means.

- The SCE failed, be it directly or indirectly, to inform the candidates of the special measures and procedures related to media appearances, which depend on the request of the candidate himself².

5.4 The Role of Civil Society

Article 20 of the Electoral Law on “monitoring elections” permits competent civil society organizations, under the supervision of the Commission, to monitor the elections and their progress, provided they meet certain conditions and requirements.

Civil society assists in monitoring the elections through the activities of some organizations, such as the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) that sends delegates to the polling stations to monitor the voting process, after obtaining the approval of the Commission.

However, the Commission “expanded” its interpretation of Article 20 to place restrictions on civil society organizations monitoring the electoral process. What happened with Maharat Foundation confirms this practice used by the Commission and its deviation from the legal text.

Maharat Foundation is an organization concerned with issues of media, diversity, safeguarding and ensuring freedom of expression and democratic participation for all through the media. It specializes in media monitoring and issues relevant periodic reports and studies. Since the 2009 elections, Maharat has been monitoring media coverage of electoral campaigns and issuing reports in this regard.

Given the extensive experience of Maharat in media monitoring, the Commission requested its assistance in 2018 to train the Commission’s media monitoring team and provide technical support for media monitoring during the electoral campaign period. The Commission acknowledged the role of Maharat in its 2018 report.

Maharat continued to publish dozens of studies related to media coverage and media performance, and in the 2018 elections, while providing support to the SCE in the exercise of its duties, it continued its work in monitoring media coverage from a gender perspective focusing on women candidates and women’s participation in politics, and issued its report, published on its website.

The organization was surprised by a letter addressed to it by the SCE referenced 975/H and dated 13/04/2022, in which the Commission considers that the media coverage reports issued by Maharat fall within the framework of “observing and monitoring the elections without submitting a request to the Commission,” which requires the organization to request approval

² The preliminary report of the European Union Election Observation Mission in Lebanon states: “The SCE did not act in an impartial, independent, transparent, consistent manner to ensure compliance of the media with relevant regulations. In general, the SCE has not shared sufficient information on media related violations with the public or with the EU EOM.” EU EOM Lebanon 2022 Preliminary Statement_AR A4

from the SCE in accordance with the provisions of Article 20 of the Electoral Law, as cited by the Commission.

Maharat responded in a letter dated 14/04/2022 and addressed to the SCE, in which it considered that the text of Article 20 of the Electoral Law invoked by the Commission did not apply to electoral media monitoring activity, which is a desk job that does not require the organization to hire local observers to work on the ground and visit polling stations.

In its response to the Commission's letter, the summoned organization considered that the attempt to subject Maharat's activity to the provisions of Article 20 of the Electoral Law is a violation of the organization's rights to achieve its legitimate goals in expressing opinion, undertaking scientific research and issuing studies and shadow reports that serve the public and interested parties in accessing information related to electoral media and advertising and their role in influencing public policies, the democratic process, equal opportunities and the integrity of elections.

Despite the aforementioned clarification, and despite the Commission's knowledge of the nature of Maharat's work, it insisted, according to a second letter, No. 1002/H, dated 20/04/2022, on what was stated in its first letter, and considered that Maharat's work fell within the framework of observing and monitoring elections, and deemed that the organization is acting without legal justification and with no legal capacity to carry out monitoring work, which will entail legal consequences.

The Commission has published the text of the two aforementioned letters in the "Statements and Decisions" page on the website dedicated to the Lebanese elections, in a manner that suggests that Maharat Foundation is engaging in an illegal activity. Maharat considered that the Commission's behavior aims to defame the organization, undermine its credibility, and disrupt its role as a civil society organization whose objective is to monitor medial performance during electoral campaigns.

The Electoral Reform Coalition, which includes, in addition to Maharat, the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE), the Lebanese Transparency Association - No Corruption, and the Lebanese Physically Handicapped Union, issued a statement condemning the restrictions imposed on civil society organizations and the assault on their rights enshrined in the constitution to issue and publish studies, and express opinions without any prior censorship or permission from anyone.

This requires a re-examination of Article 20 of the Electoral Law in the context of reviewing electoral reforms and clarifying the role of the SCE towards civil society organizations that seek to issue shadow reports on various practices related to media affairs.

6. Results of TV Channels Coverage Study

Since February 1, the study has monitored the broadcasts of the seven targeted TV channels, and the total coverage of political actors these seven TV channels, from February 1 to May 15, 2022, reached a total of 3,066,643 seconds (about 850 hours). The data was collected, analyzed and classified into 10,718 “recording units” in preparation for quantitative and qualitative analysis³.

6.1 Distribution of Coverage Slots

TV coverage slots, measured by the second, include all TV programs from 10 AM to midnight for the period from February 1 to May 15. This included coverage of the appearance and statements of political actors: the President of the Republic, the Speaker of Parliament, the Prime Minister, political parties, coalitions, candidates, candidate lists, party representatives and clerics, as well as the slots allocated for broadcasting information related to electoral affairs, awareness, education and electoral campaigning.

The volume of broadcasting per each channel came as follows (Chart No. 1):

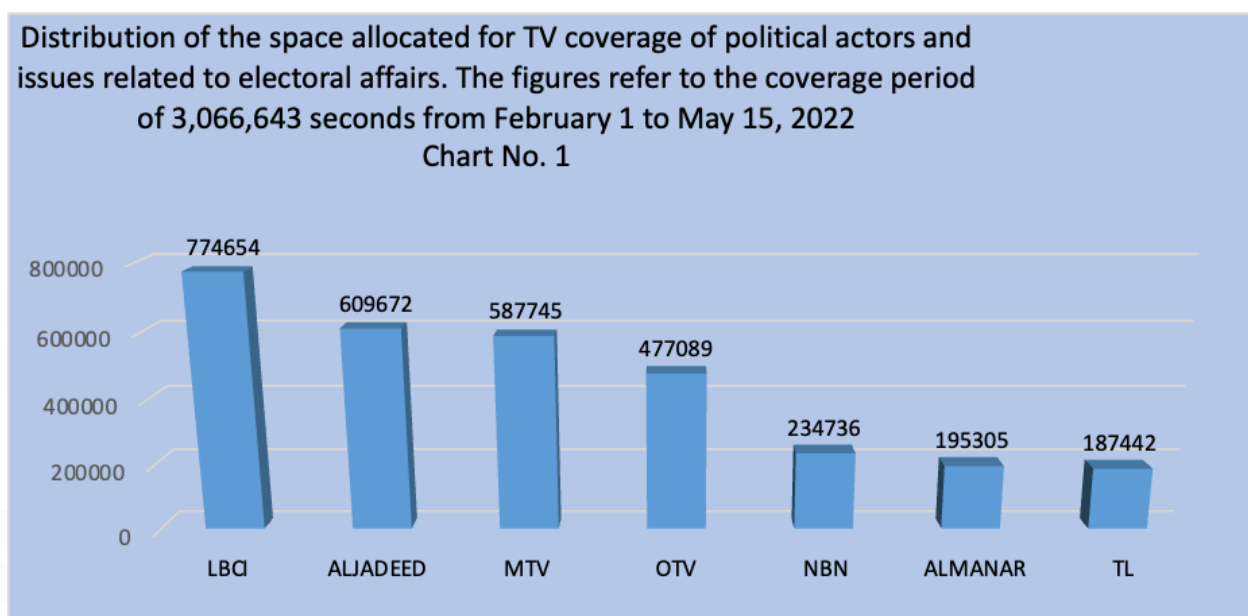
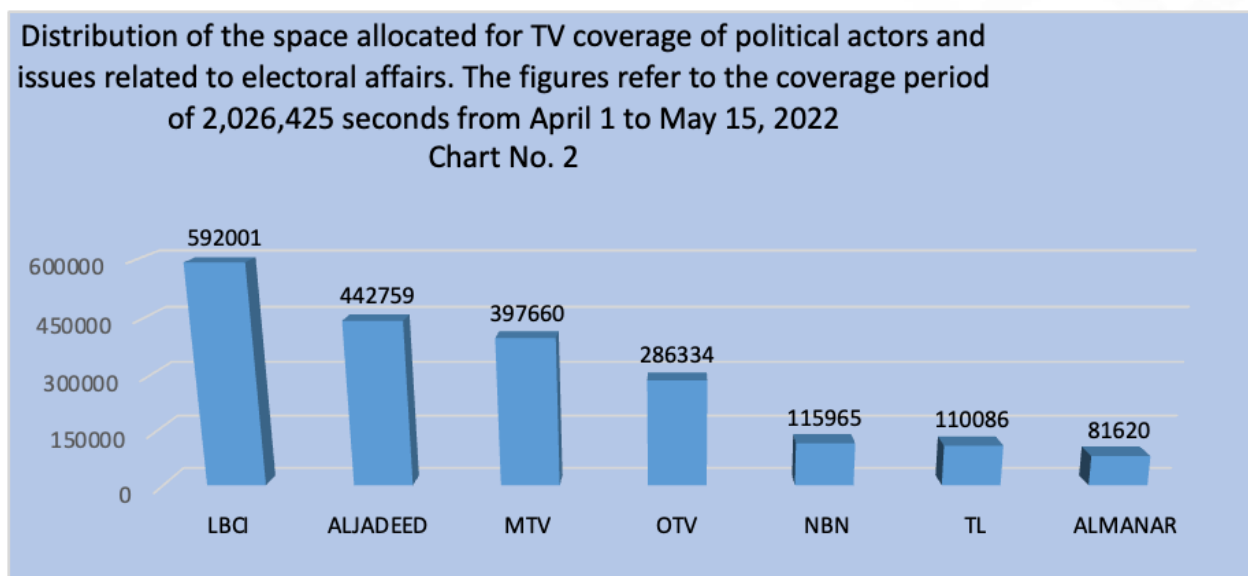


Chart No. 1 reveals the volume of coverage related to the elections from February 1, 2022 to election day per each TV channel, measured in seconds. LBCI ranked first, recording 25% of the total broadcasting on all channels, followed by three channels: Al Jadeed (20%), MTV (19%) and

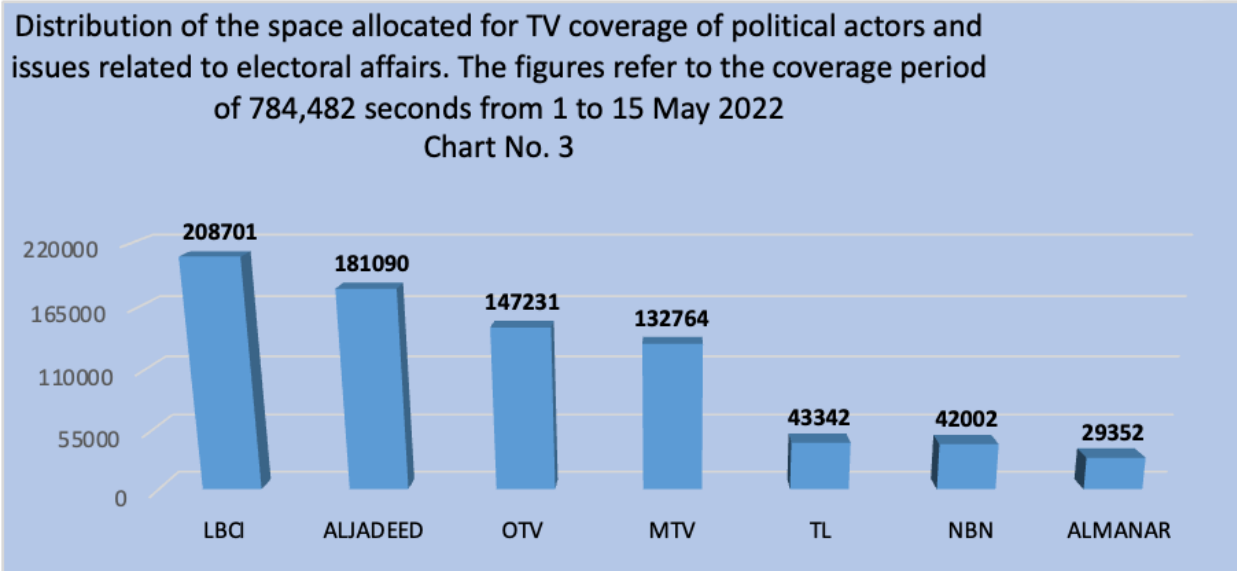
³ It should be noted that the programs or covers were not calculated in their re-broadcast, and were calculated once.

OTV (15.5%). As for NBN, Al Manar and TL, they recorded a limited rate (6.5%, 6.5% and 6% respectively).

The ranking of these channels did not change in the last six weeks preceding the elections, despite the increased intensity of electoral campaigns and the fact that these channels have dedicated more slots to the topic of elections. Chart No. 2 reveals the volume of broadcasting from April 1 until election day. In fact, LBCI remained in the lead, with a rate of 29%, surpassing the overall rate, while Al Jadeed reached around 20%, MTV maintained its rate at 19% and OTV at 15%. As for NBN and TL, they remained at the bottom with a rate 5.5% for each, while Al Manar ranked last, with a rate of 4%.



In the last two weeks preceding the elections (May 1 to May 15), LBCI and Al Jadeed remained in the lead, recording 26% and 23% respectively, while OTV moved to the third place with a rate of around 19%, replacing MTV (17%). TL and NBN's coverage declined down to around 5% while Al Manar recorded a remarkably low rate at 3.74% (Chart No. 3).

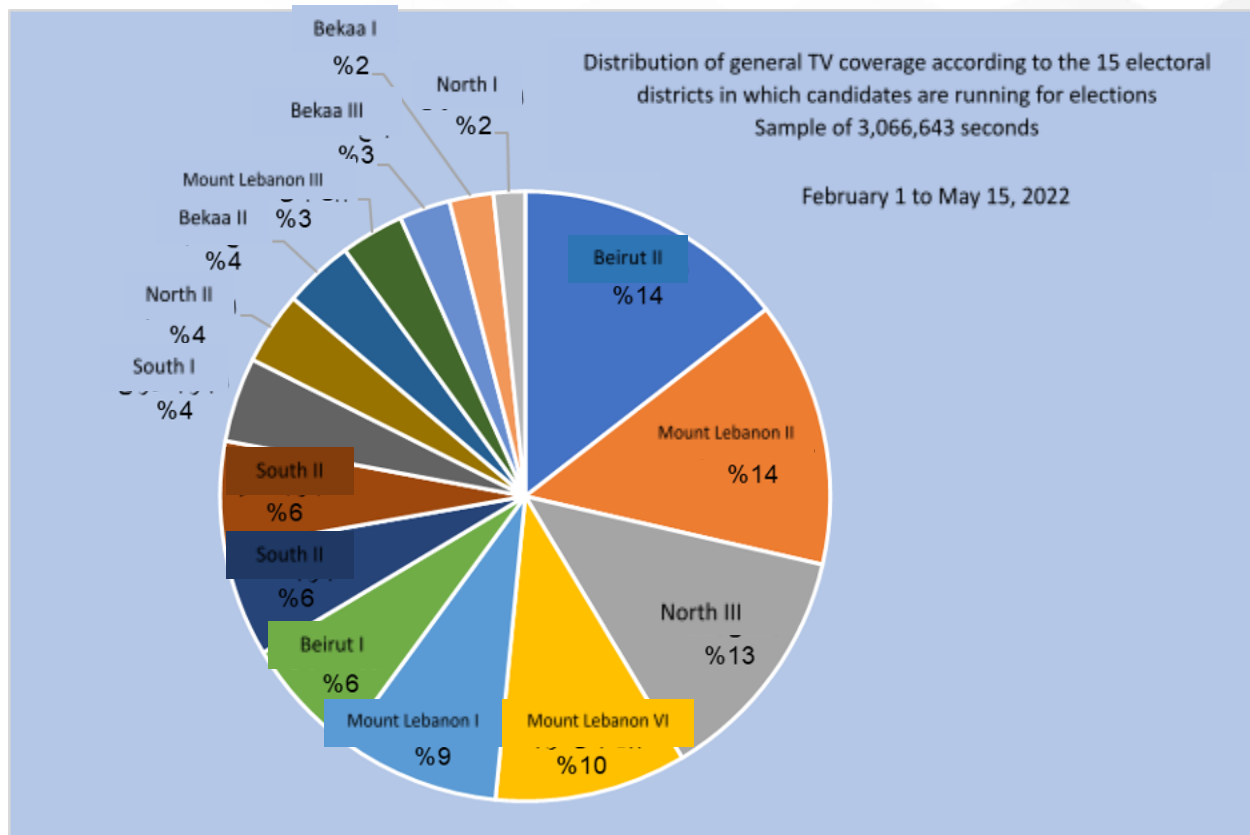


It is commonly known that the last two weeks preceding the elections are crowded with advertising campaigns and characterized by candidates' efforts in an attempt to gain more voters, which affects the volume of TV coverage. This was clearly reflected in the election coverage by OTV and Al Jadeed, which reached in the last two weeks around 30% of their total coverage during the last three months and a half, or the monitoring period. LBCI recorded around 26%, while MTV and TL reached around 23%. As for NBN and Al Manar, they reached around 18% and 15% respectively.

2-6 – Distribution of Coverage by District

Candidates are distributed among the 15 districts. Based on the period of coverage granted to candidates, the study attempted to discover the distribution among the 15 districts of the candidates with the highest appearances, and thus the distribution of appearance rates per candidates among those districts.

Based on the rates recorded by candidates, the below chart illustrates the distribution of these rates by district. It also illustrates the intensity of the electoral battle in these districts, as well as the efforts made by candidates and their political parties to achieve the highest rates of TV appearance. The two districts in which the candidates acquired the highest rates of TV appearance were Beirut and Mount Lebanon (14% each), followed by North III (13%), Mount Lebanon IV (10%) and Mount Lebanon I (9%). As for North I and Bekaa I, they recorded the lowest rates (2% each).



7- Media Tone

The media tone is based on the orientation of TV coverage of political actors and candidates across the monitored TV programs. In fact, this tone is either a positive, a negative or a neutral reflection of political actors' media appearance.

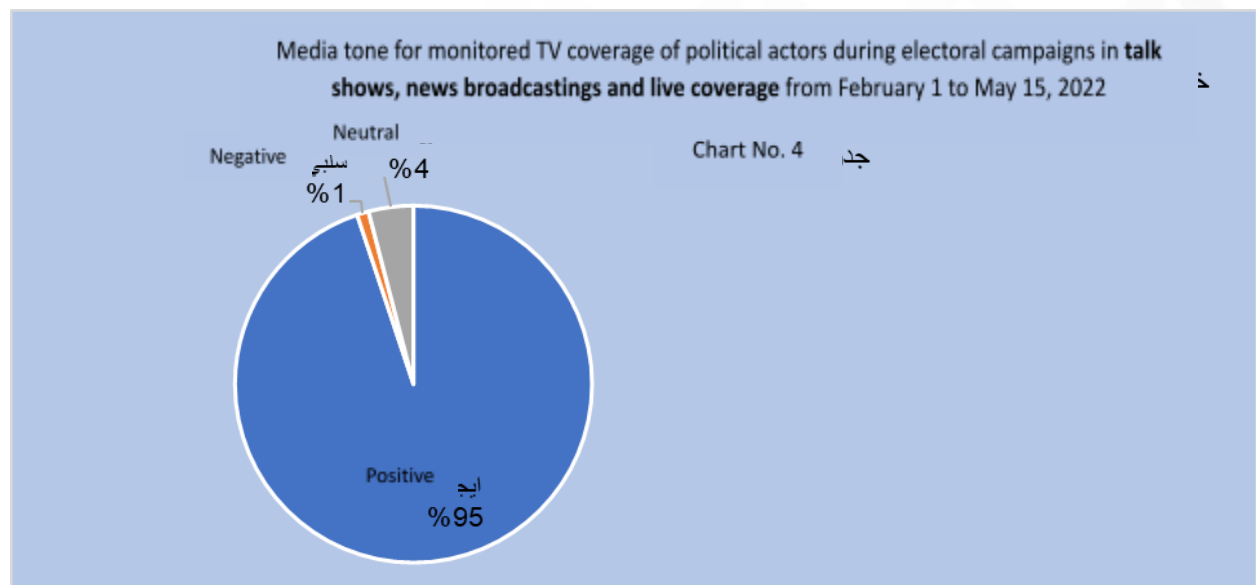
The study attempted to monitor the negative tone on three levels:

- The total coverage for each channel.
- The content of coverage in talk shows and news broadcasting.
- Satire shows.

1. Distribution of Negative Media Tone based on the Content of Coverage

Out of all TV coverage, including news broadcasting, talk shows and live coverage, the negative tone reached 1%, while the positive tone reached 95% and the neutral tone 4% (Chart No. 4).

Positive media tone reached 95% of the total TV coverage, including news broadcasting, talk shows, live coverage and satire shows. The negative tone seems relatively low, although it

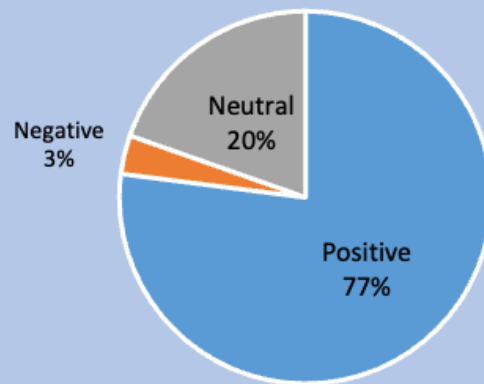


indicates a limited critical discourse adopted by the TV media against political actors.

By monitoring the media tone in political actors' appearance in news broadcasting per each channel during the examined period (Chart No. 5), it appears that a positive tone has prevailed, with a rate of 77%, against a 3% rate for the negative tone. This indicates that news broadcastings have been a platform for political actors to showcase their activities and positions.

20% of the media tone in news broadcastings was neutral, which is how news broadcastings should be in general.

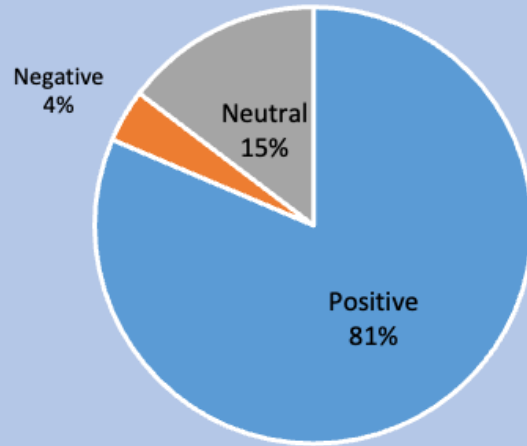
General media tone during TV coverage of political actors in electoral campaigns in news bulletins from February 1 to May 15, 2022 Chart No. 5



In the last two weeks preceding the elections, the negative media tone increased from 3% to 4%, while the neutral media tone decreased from 20% to 15%. As for positive media tone, it has seen an increase from 77% to 81% (Chart No. 6).

General media tone during TV coverage of political actors in the electoral campaigns in news bulletins from 1 to 15 May 2022

Chart No. 6

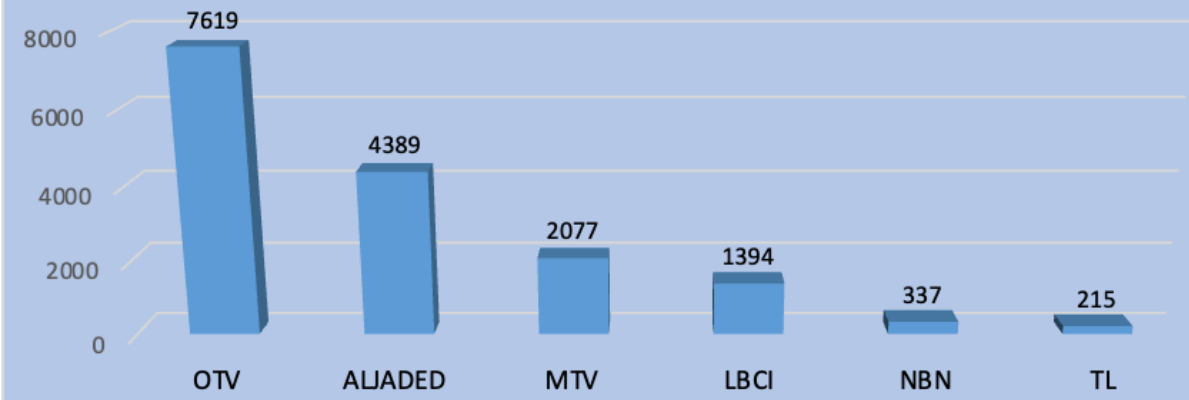


7-2 – Negative Media Tone in News Broadcastings

What's intriguing about Chart No. 7 illustrating the distribution of negative media tone in news broadcastings among TV channels is the absence of Al Manar channel, which refrained from adopting a negative tone unlike all the other channels. This can be explained by its minimal rate of elections coverage compared to other channels, which implies a weak involvement in electoral campaigns.

OTV seems to be among the channels with the highest rates of negative media tone in covering political actors, ranking first with a rate of over 47% of the total coverage including a negative tone. Al Jadeed came second with a rate of 27%, followed by the remaining channels that scored a much lower rate: MTV (13%), LBCI (around 9%), NBN (around 2%) and TL (around 1.3%).

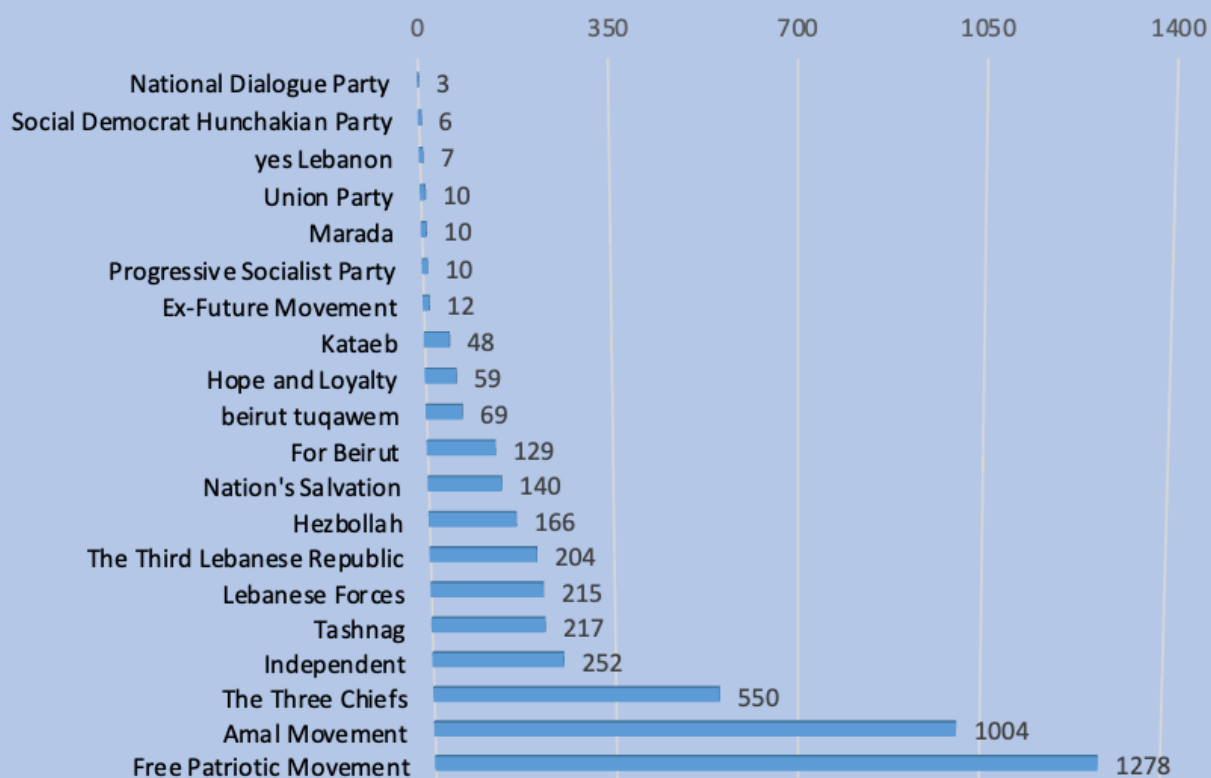
Distribution of the negative media tone used by TV channels in news bulletins. The numbers refer to the negative coverage period of 16,031 seconds
Chart No. 7



7-3 – Distribution of Negative Media Tone: Source and Target

Al Jadeed: The negative media tone adopted by Al Jadeed throughout the monitoring period across various programs seems to be targeting the Free Patriotic Movement (29%), Amal Movement (23%) and in the third place the three presidents representing the power (12.5%). It also targets the independents, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), the Lebanese Forces, the Third Republic of Lebanon, Hezbollah, etc. (Chart No. 8)

Negative media tone targeting political actors
AL JADEED
From February 1 to May 15, 2022
The numbers indicate the coverage period per second
Chart No. 8



LBCI:

The first target in LBCI's coverage seems to be Hezbollah (33%), followed by Amal Movement (17%), the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) (14%), the Lebanese Forces (13%) and the Free Patriotic Movement (11%) (Chart No. 9).

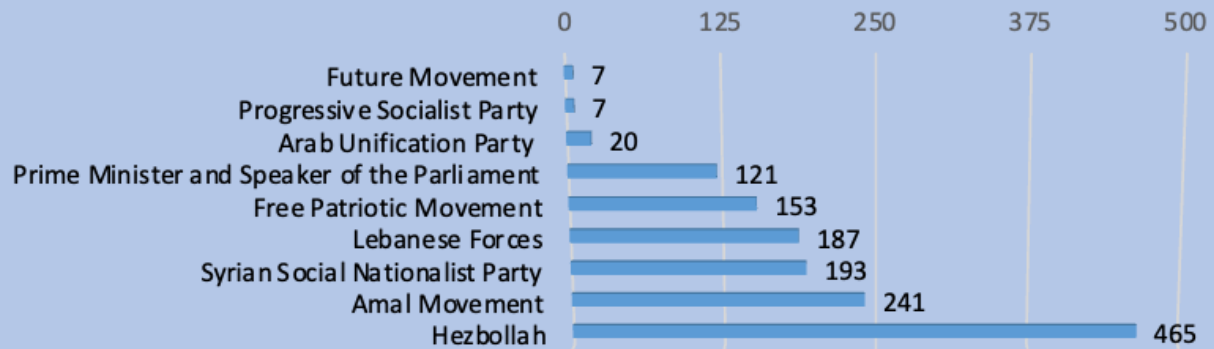
Negative media tone targeting political actors

LBCI

From February 1 to May 15, 2022

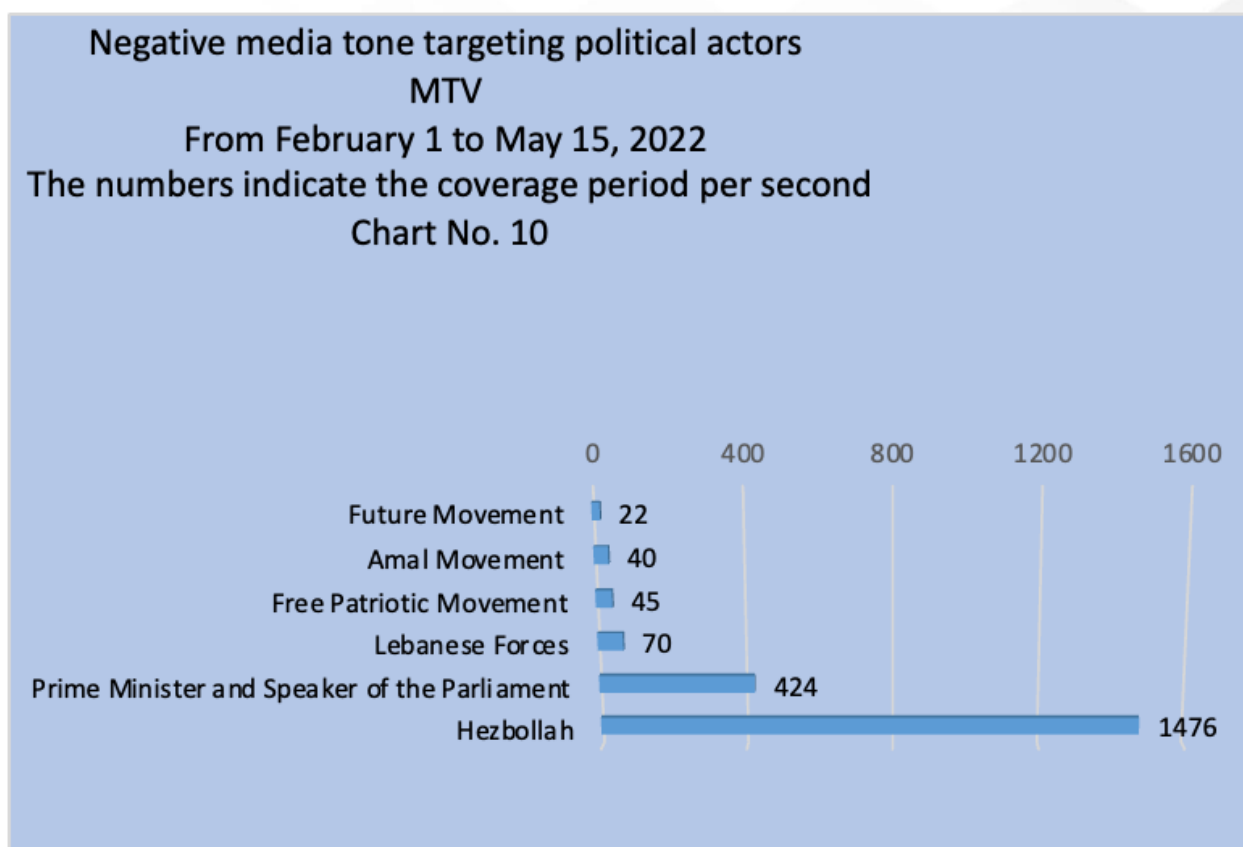
The numbers indicate the coverage period per second

Chart No. 9



MTV:

The negative media tone on MTV seems to be targeting Hezbollah in the first place, scoring 71% of the total negative tone, followed by the Prime Minister and the Speaker (20%), and a lower rate for the Lebanese Forces (3%) and the Free Patriotic Movement (2%).



OTV:

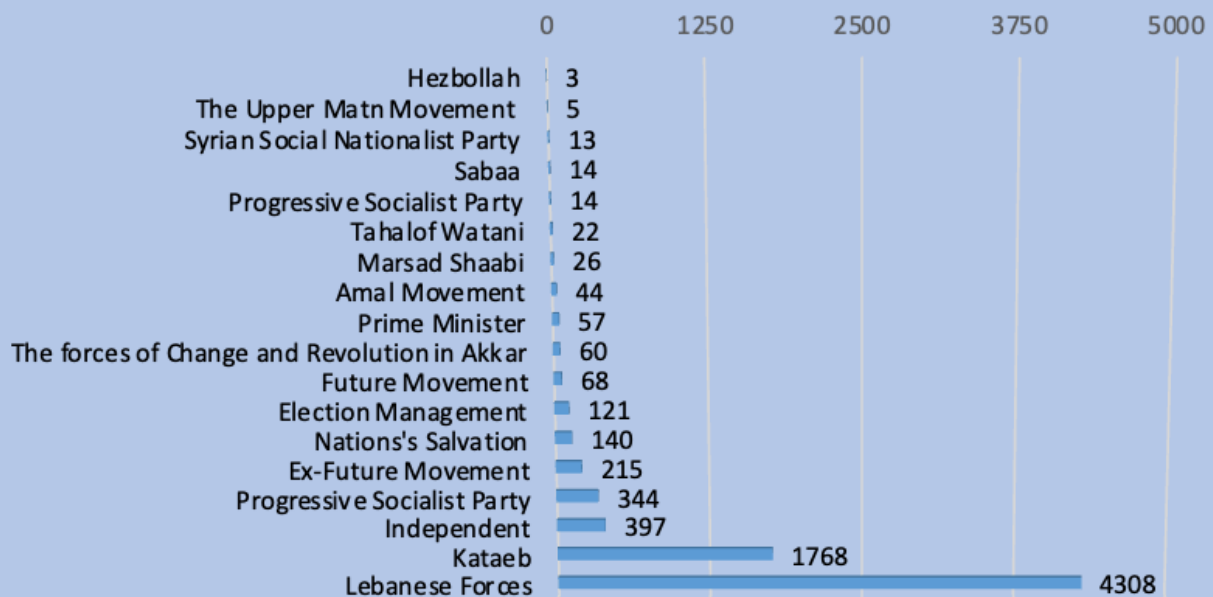
Ranking first with its negative media tone, OTV mainly targeted the Lebanese Forces and Kataeb (56% and 23% respectively). It also targets other parties with a lower rate: Independents (5%), the Progressive Socialist Party (4.5%) and Ex-Future movement (2.8%) (Chart No. 11).

Negative media tone targeting OTV political actors

From February 1 to May 15, 2022

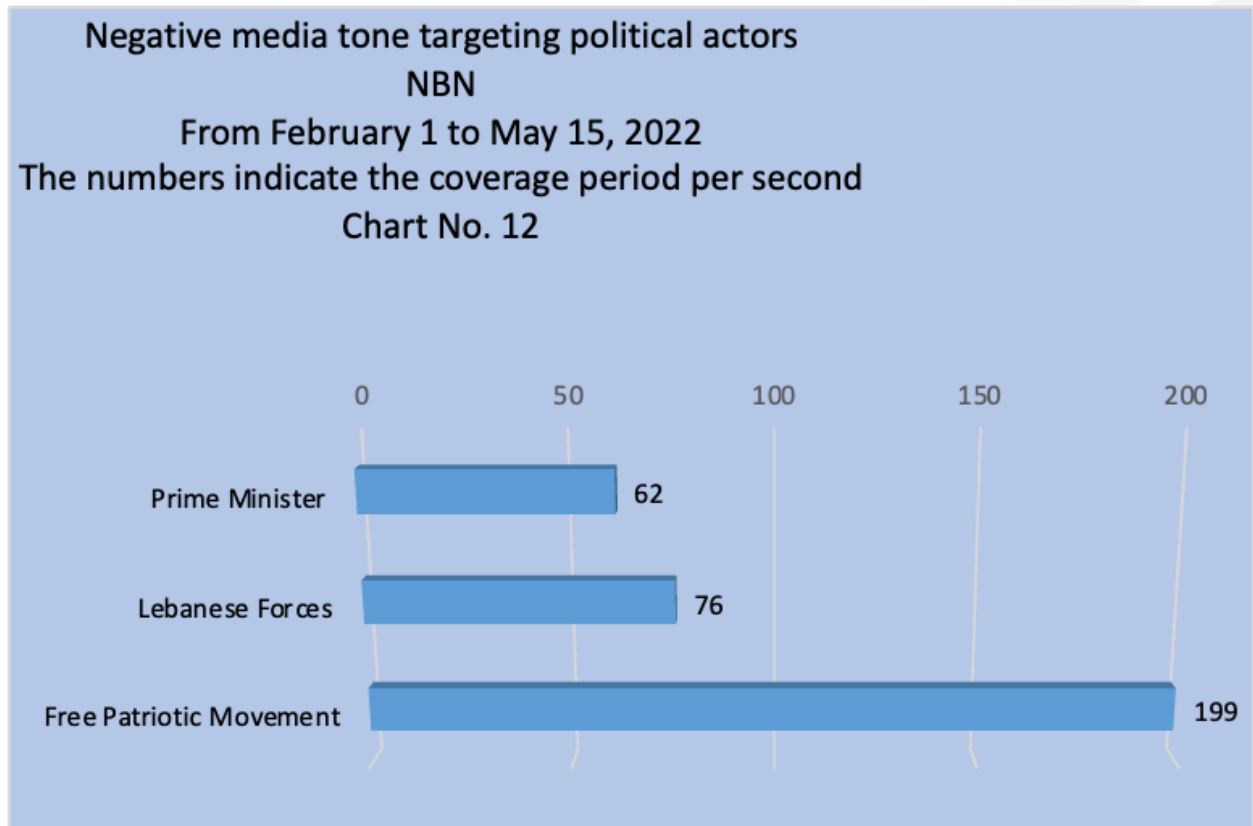
The numbers indicate the coverage period per second

Chart No. 11



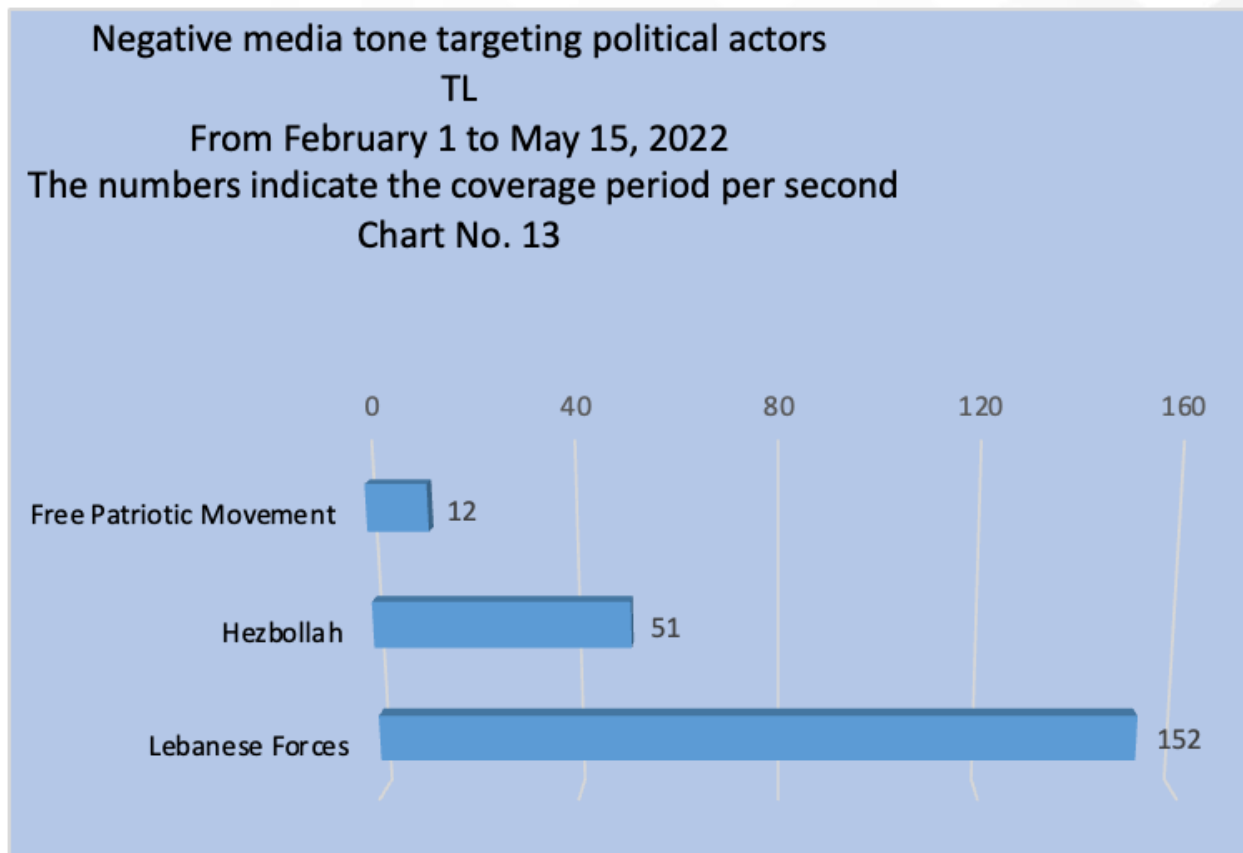
NBN:

The negative media tone on NBN mainly targets the Free Patriotic Movement (59%), followed by the Lebanese Forces (22%) and the Prime Minister (18%) (Chart No. 12).



TL:

The low negative media tone adopted by TL mainly targeted the Lebanese Forces (70%), Hezbollah (23%) and the Free Patriotic Movement with a lowest rate (Chart No. 13).



7-4 – Negative Media Tone in Political Satire Shows

Political satire shows are a major tool during electoral campaigns, given the criticism and sarcasm that they include, as a means to convey a political message and propaganda.

Political satire shows broadcasted during electoral campaigns by TV channels were monitored. They include the following shows:

“M2akhar Bel Leil” and “Haki Sadek” on MTV

“Mish Alil” on OTV

“Fashit Khele2” on Al Jadeed

These programs were analyzed and the negative media tone prevailing on the three channels was tabulated according to their timeline.

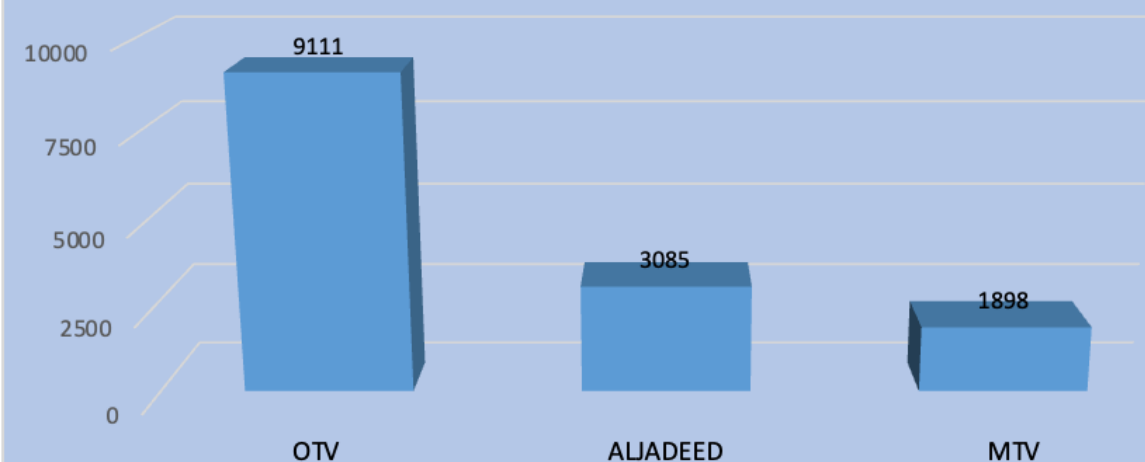
Chart No. 14 illustrates the period of time that this negative media tone occupied on each channel. OTV ranked first with a high rate of 65% of the total negative media tone on these shows, followed by Al Jadeed (22%) and MTV (13%).

Negative tone targeting political actors in political satire programs

From February 1 to May 15, 2022.

The numbers indicate the coverage period per second

Chart No. 14



Satire Shows on Al Jadeed

The negative media tone identified in “Fahsit Khele2” on Al Jadeed mainly targets the Lebanese Forces (22%), then the Ex-Future Movement (16%), followed by the Amal Movement (12%), then the Free Patriotic Movement (10%). The Future movement, Kataeb and independents are also targeted by this program by 8% each, followed by the Prime Minister (8%) and Hezbollah (5%) (Chart No. 15).

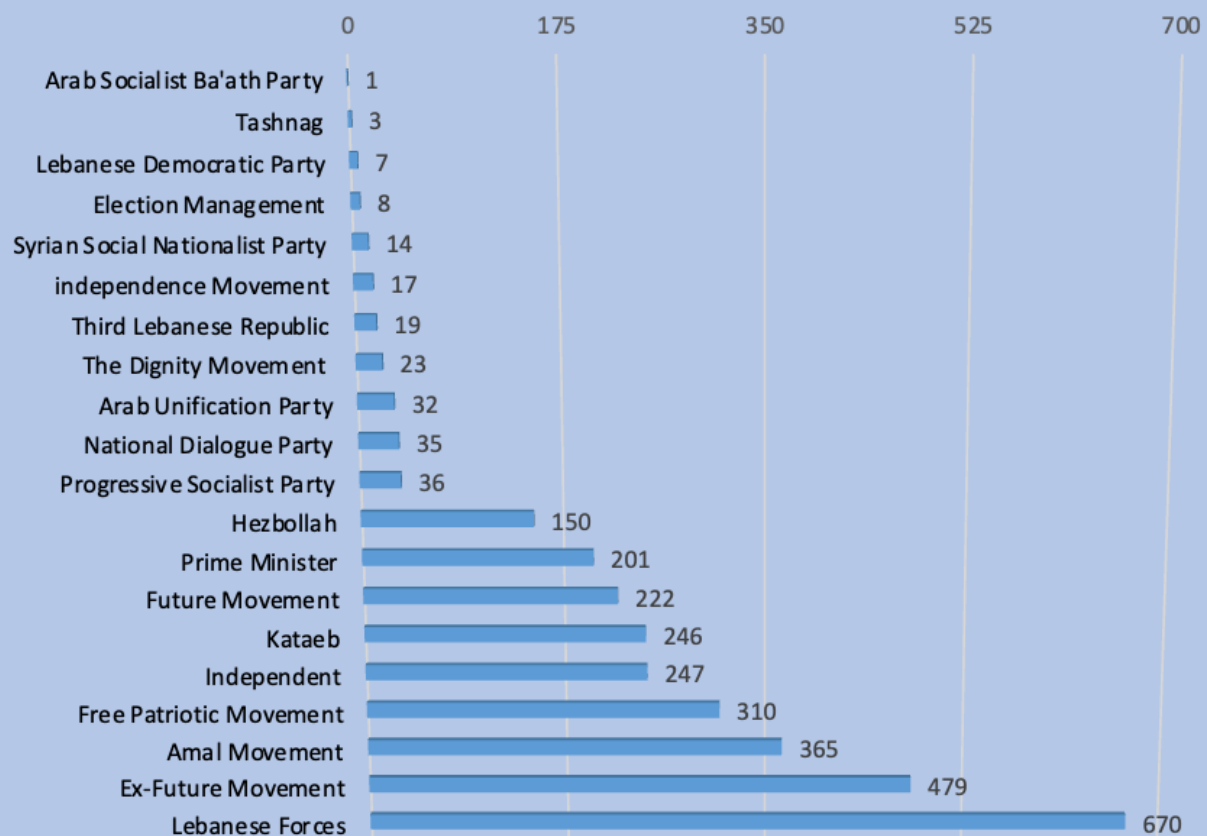
Negative media tone targeting political actors in "Fashet Khele2"

aired on
AL JADEED

From February 1 to May 15, 2022

The numbers indicate the coverage period per second

Chart No. 15



Satire Shows on MTV

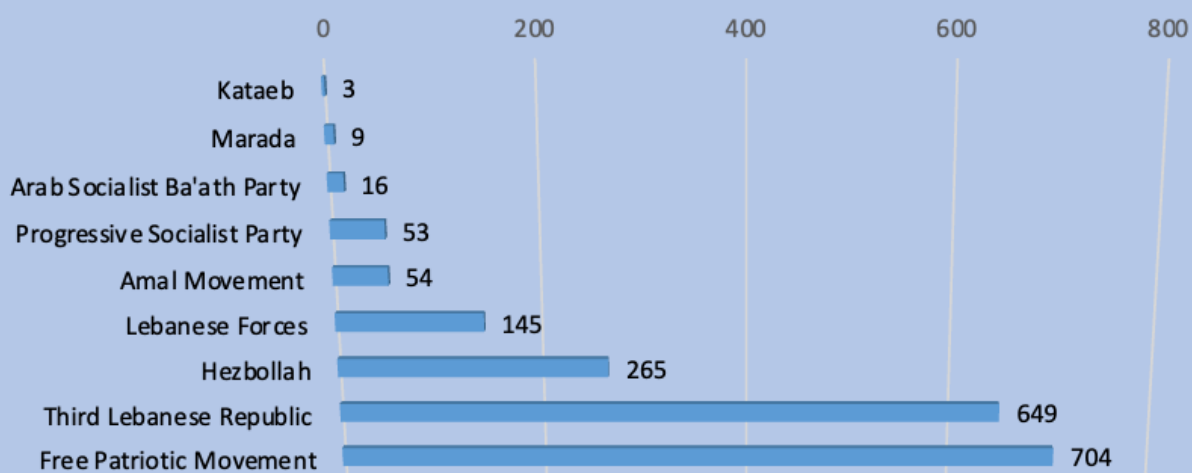
The negative media tone in "Haki Sadek" and "M2akhar Bel Leil" on MTV mainly targeted the Free Patriotic Movement and the Third Republic of Lebanon (37% and 34% respectively). It also targeted Hezbollah (14%), the Lebanese Forces (around 7.5%), the Amal Movement and the Progressive Socialist Party (around 3% each) (Chart No. 16).

Negative tone targeting political actors in “Haki Sadek” and “M2akhar Bel Leil” aired on MTV

From February 1 to May 15, 2022

The numbers indicate the coverage period per second

Chart No. 16



Satire Shows on OTV

Around half of the negative tone on “Mish Alil” on OTV targeted the Lebanese Forces (47%), followed by Kataeb (15%) and the independents (13%).

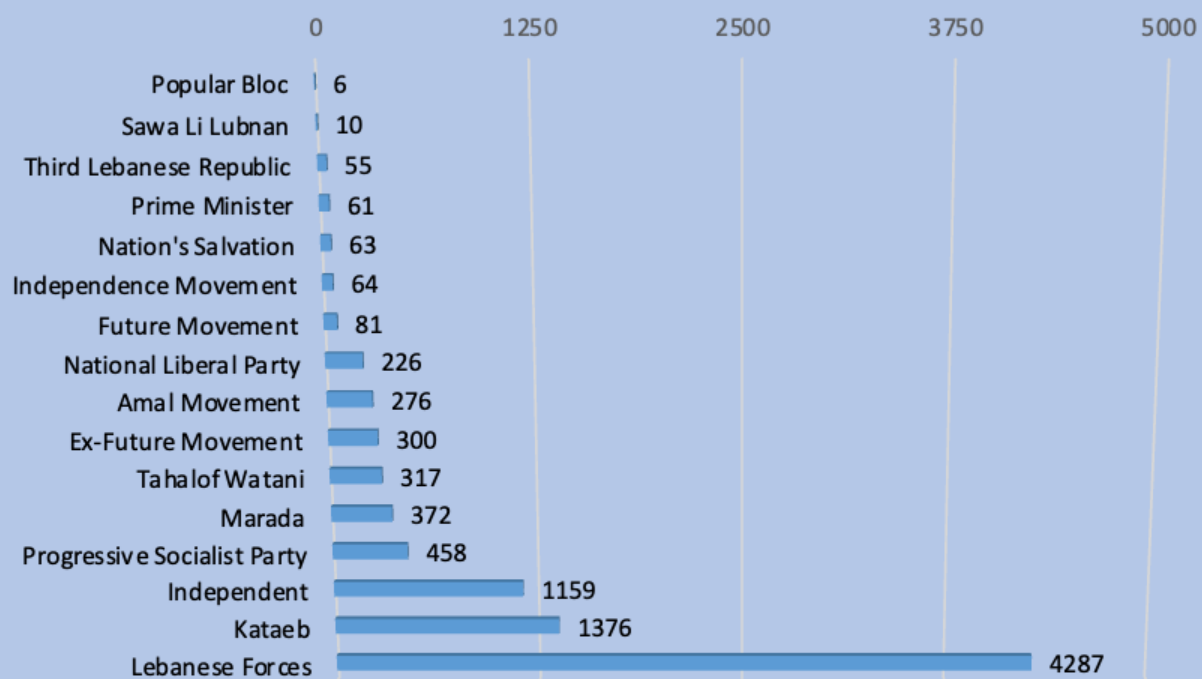
This tone also targeted the following parties, respectively: The Progressive Socialist Party, Marada, Tahalof Watani, Ex-Future movement, Amal Movement, the National Liberal Party, with rates ranging between 2.5% and 5% (Chart No. 17).

Negative media tone targeting political actors in the "Mish Alil" on OTV

From February 1 to May 15, 2022

The numbers indicate the coverage period per second

Chart No. 17



8- Equality in Accessing Electoral Advertisement

TV channels are a platform for political parties and candidates that allow them to introduce their programs and promote their proposals. As a result, TV appearance increases their chance to win the elections, hence the importance of guaranteeing equal opportunities in the media, granting all parties access to the voters to explain their programs.

8-1 – Advertising Slots Granted to Political Parties and Candidates in News Broadcastings

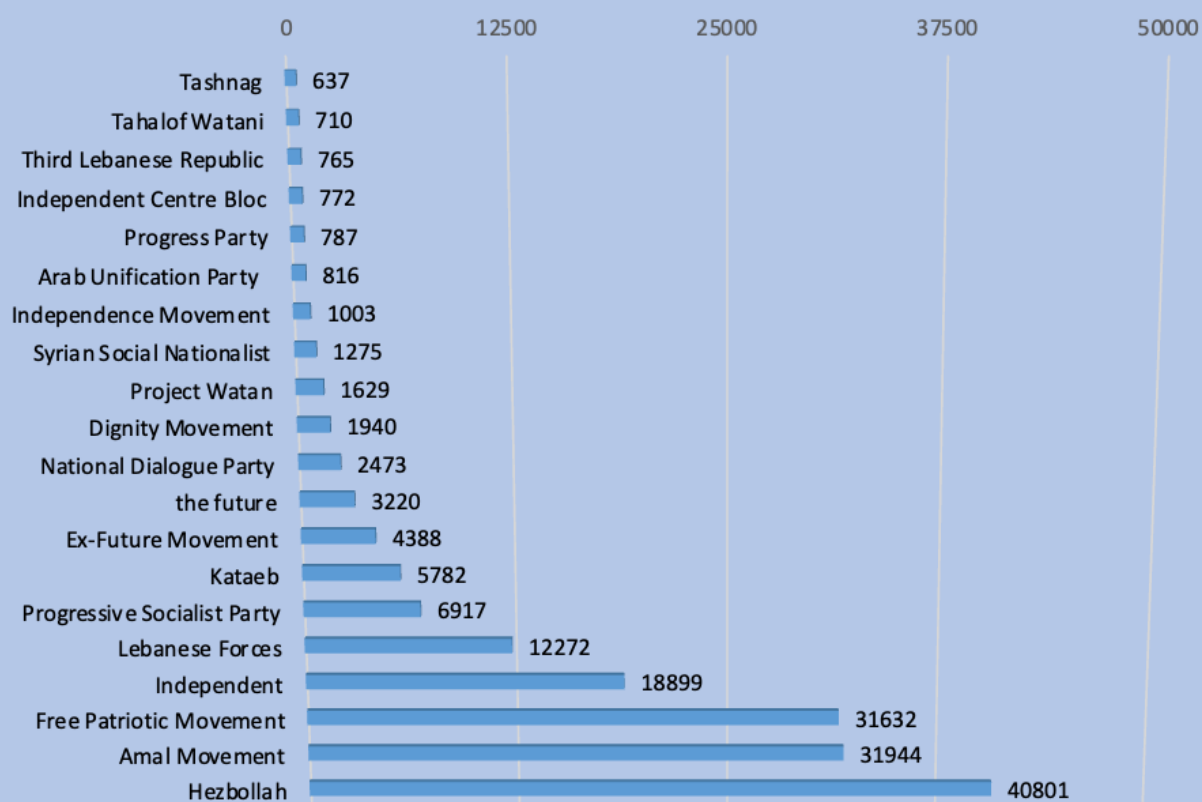
The study monitored TV appearance of political parties on local channels news broadcastings from February 1 to election day. Direct access by these parties and coalitions to news broadcastings during this period has reached 177,619 seconds (around 49.33 hours).

66 political parties or coalitions were monitored, the most important of which are illustrated in Chart No. 18 according to the volume of coverage that they were granted.⁴ Hezbollah acquired the highest level of coverage, followed by Amal Movement and the Free Patriotic Movement. The independents preceded the Lebanese Forces, which were followed by the Progressive Socialist Party and Kataeb. It is important to note that the independents include dozens of individuals and activists who do not belong to any political party.

Chart No. 18 illustrates the huge discrepancies among political parties with regard to time allocated for them in TV news broadcastings.

⁴ See Annex 1: Live appearance of political parties in news broadcastings from February 1 to May 15. 67 political parties appeared in news broadcastings from February 1 to May 15.

The 20 parties with the most live appearances in TV news bulletins
The sample refers to the 66 parties or coalitions with the most live
appearance in news bulletins
From February 1 to May 15, 2022
The numbers indicate the coverage period per second
Chart N



8-2 – Top 20 Political Parties with the Most Appearances in News Broadcastings from April 1 until May 15

The study monitored the size of coverage granted to political parties in the last six weeks preceding the elections. It monitored the 20 political parties with the most appearances during this period. Direct access by parties and coalitions to coverage has reached 81,272 seconds (22.57 hours).

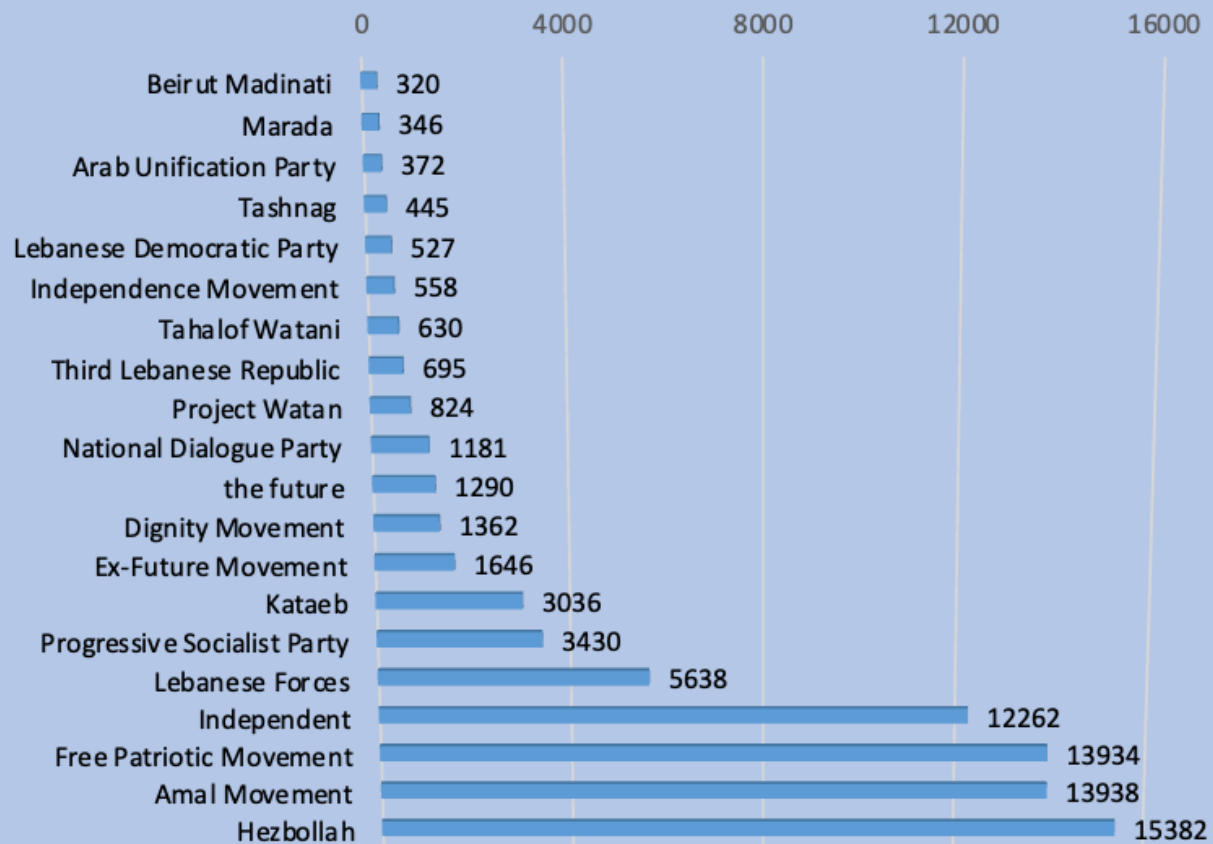
Their ranking seemed to be similar to the one recorded in the overall monitoring period from February 1 to May 15: Hezbollah (19%), Amal Movement (17%), the Free Patriotic Movement (17%), Independents (15%), the Lebanese Forces (7%), the Progressive Socialist Party (4%), Kataeb (3.75%), Ex-Future movement (2%), the Dignity Movement (1.68%), Future Movement (1.59%), the National Dialogue Party (1.45%), etc. (Chart No. 19).⁵

It should be noted that the TV appearance of Hezbollah General Secretary, Nasrallah, was part of Hezbollah's overall TV appearance.

⁵ See Annex 2: Live Appearance of Political Parties in TV News Broadcastings from February 1 to May 15; Annex 3: Appearance of Political Parties in News Broadcastings by TV Channels.

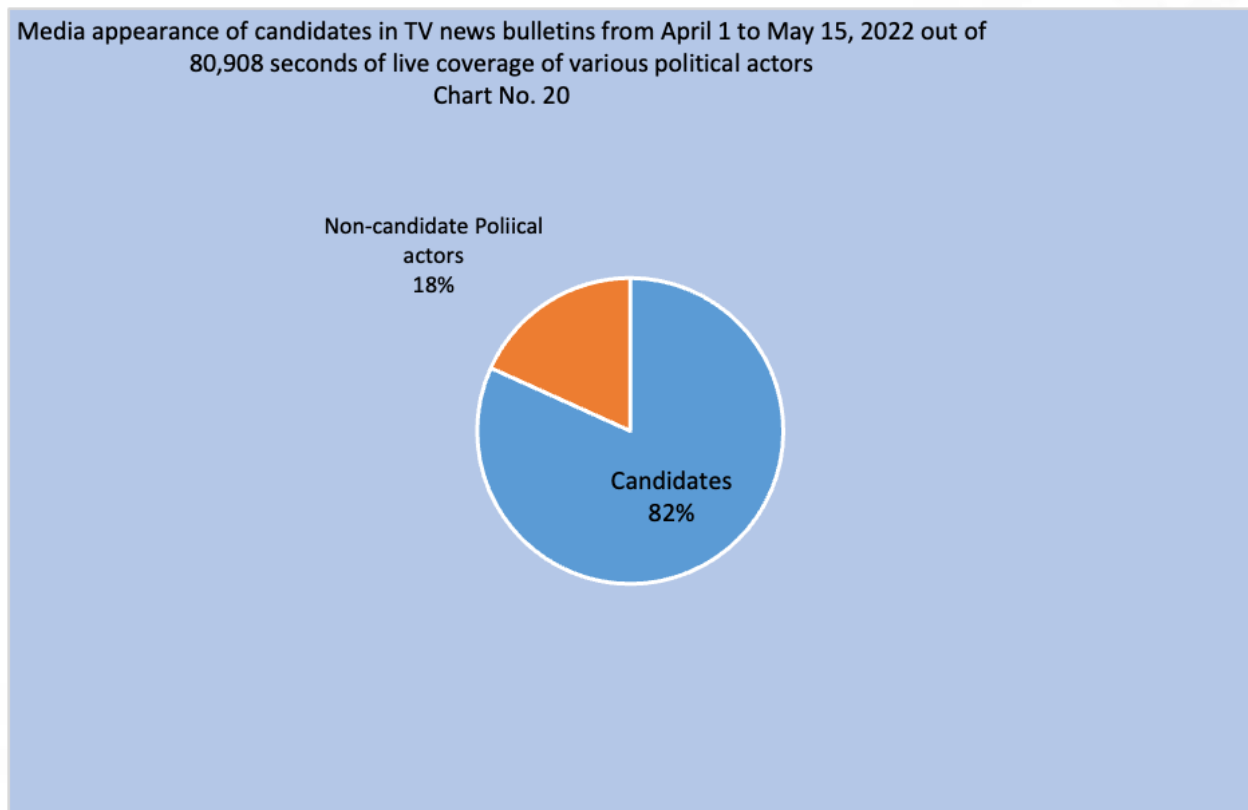
The 20 parties with the most live appearance in TV news bulletins. The sample includes the 49 parties or coalitions with the most live appearance in news bulletins from April 1 to May 15, 2022. The numbers refer to the coverage period per second

Chart 19



8-3 – Slots Allocated to Candidates in News Broadcastings

Live appearance of candidates in news broadcastings from April 1 to May 15 equaled 66,145 seconds out of 80,908 of the total live appearance of various political actors, candidates and non-candidates. A month and a half before the elections, around 82% of speakers in news broadcastings were candidates, whereas 18% were non-candidate political actors (Chart No. 20).



8-4 – Candidates with the Most Appearance in News Broadcastings

The 30 candidates with the most live appearance in news broadcastings from April 1 to May 15 were counted (Chart No. 21). The table reveals that the Head of the Free Patriotic Movement has the most appearance on TV news, recording 13% of the total candidates' appearance. Bassil was followed by Muhammad Raad (4.52%), President Berri (3.85%) Elie Ferzli (3.29%), Ibrahim Kanaan (3.16%), Hani Kobeissy (2.73%), Georges Adwan (2.50%), in addition to Ali Hassan Khalil,

Hassan Fadlallah, Samy Gemayel, Faisal Karami and Taymur Jumblatt with relatively similar rates⁶.

Chart No. 21 (The 30 candidates with the most live appearance in news broadcastings from April 1 to May 15)

Candidate Name	AL JADEED	AL MANAR	LBCI	MTV	NBN	OTV	TL	Total
Gebran Bassil	844	272	948	259	263	5980	319	8885
Muhamma d Raad	776	1271	373	45	213	0	316	2994
Nabih Berri	267	177	160		1523	69	354	2550
Elie Ferzli	264	173	120	66	990	328	256	2197
Ibrahim Kanaan	811	167	114		58	889	57	2096
Hani Kobeissy	366	237			1142		61	1806
Georges Adwan	705	320	196	177	78	64	114	1654
Ali Hassan Khalil	59	110	106		1284		69	1628
Hassan Fadlallah	540	498	215	108	180		50	1591
Samy Gemayel	713		482	186			61	1442
Faisal Karami	836	118	408					1362
Taymur Jumblatt	375	26	402	242	83		99	1227
Hussein Hajj Hassan	274	641	87		210			1212
Fouad Makhzoumi	632		359	156			34	1181

⁶ You can go back to Annex 4 to see the appearance of all candidates in newsletters depending on TV channels.

Ghayath Yazbeck				1116				1116
Wael Abou Faour	613	20	205				115	953
Nadim Gemayel	401		329	143		0	73	946
Ghazi Zaiter	174				652		94	920
Kabalan Kabalan					777		69	846
Inaya Ezzeddine	61				589		113	763
Farid Boustany	40		100		22	550		712
Omar Harfouch	630			65			0	695
Neemat Frem	475		189	26				690
Fares Souaid	285		333	71				689
Hassan Izz-Al-Din		598	58		32		0	688
Georges Okeis			92	280	78	49	132	631
Ali Mekdad		591						591
Nasser Jaber		71			510			581
Nasri Lahoud						580		580
Michel Moawad	142	40	227	116			33	558

9- Slots Allocated for Political Parties and Candidates in Talk Shows

The total number of TV talks shows aired since the beginning of the monitoring period reached 58, divided between political and social talk shows, or even satire and entertainment shows revolving around the elections, as illustrated in Chart No. 22. These shows were analyzed in order to identify their airing time, the guests and discourse adopted in them.

Chart No. 22

Al Jadeed	W Halla2 Shou	LBCI	Eshreen 30	MTV	Sar El Waat	OTV	Darouri Nehki
Al Jadeed	Al Hadath	LBCI	Sawt el Nas	MTV	Beirut Al Yawm	OTV	Rah Neb2a Sawa
Al Jadeed	Houna Beirut	LBCI	Nharkom Said	MTV	M2AKHAR BEL LEIL	OTV	Hiwar Al yawm
Al Jadeed	3al Bernemij	LBCI	Su2al Entikhebi	MTV	Nabad Beirut	OTV	Bi-diplomasiya
Al Jadeed	Fashet Khele2	LBCI	50/50	MTV	BERNEMJAK	OTV	Nabad Beirut
Al Jadeed	Btefro2 3a Watan	LBCI	Hiwar Al Marhala	MTV	TALK OF THE TOWN	OTV	3al Makchouf
TL	Loubnan Al Yawm	LBCI	Fi Male	MTV	Haki Sadek	OTV	Mish Kalil
TL	with Walid Abboud	LBCI	Ras Bi Ras	MTV	Machrou3 Dawle	OTV	Se3t Al Hakika
AL Manar	Hadith Al Sa3a	LBCI	Elections 2022	MTV	BI ESM EL CHAAEB	OTV	Man to Man
AL Manar	Ma'a Al-Hadath	LBCI	Nos el Mazeh Jad	MTV	Alive	OTV	Agenda
AL Manar	Nahar Jadid	LBCI	Warta	MTV	MECH BI LAYLE W DOU7AHA	NBN	Al Sulta Al Rabi3a
AL Manar	Panorama Al yawm	LBCI	Lahon W bas	MTV	40	NBN	Siyasat Al Yawm

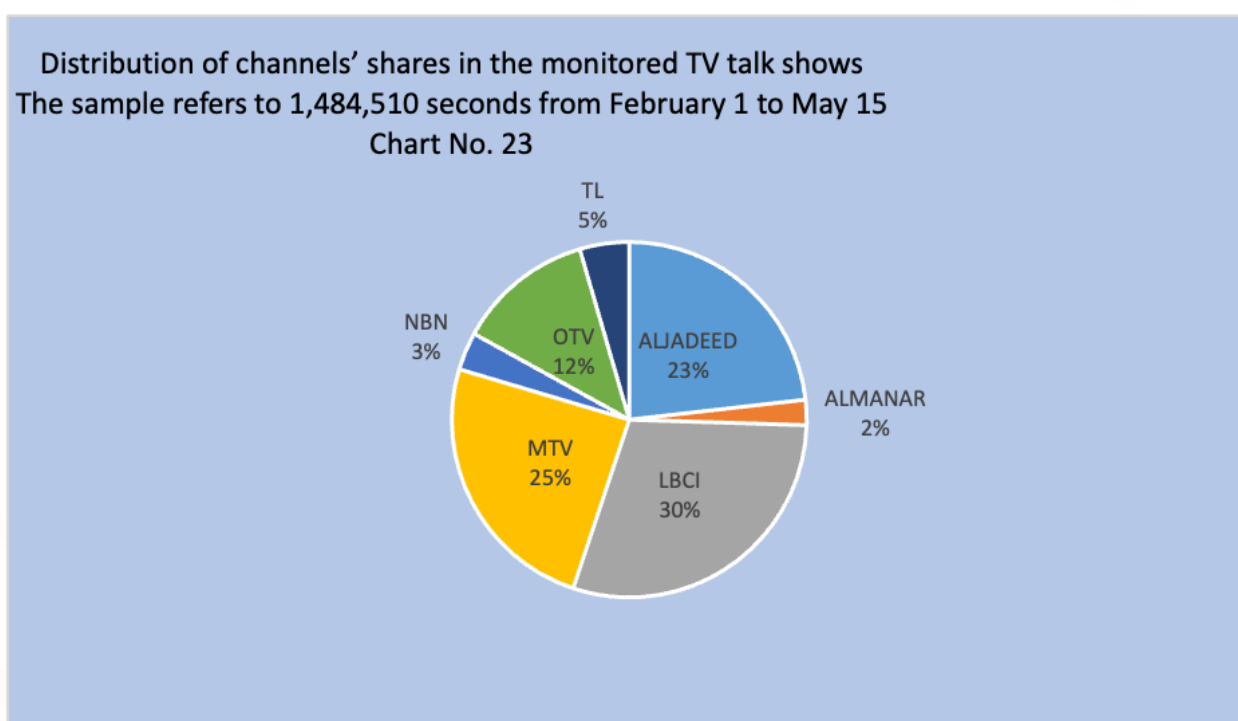
AL Manar	Al Fasad Wal Kadaa	LBCI	In 30 minutes	MTV	Haki Sadek	NBN	Ninety minutes
AL Manar	Ishrakat	LBCI	Ekhir Kelme	MTV	Ta3a Nensa	NBN	Akher Kalam
				MTV	Bisifatak Min	NBN	Na7wa Al Barلمان

9-1 – TV Channels Share from Talk Shows

The overall public space acquired by candidates from February 1 to May 15 equaled 1,484,510 airing seconds (around 412 hours)⁷, distributed among TV channels as follows:

LBCI, MTV and Al Jadeed outweighed other channels in terms of the time allocated for candidates' appearance in their talk shows, recording 30%, 25% and 23% respectively.

OTV was among the two categories of channels recording an average rate of 12% (Chart No. 23).



By comparing the previous months, the rates recorded by these programs were as follows:

- February and March: 109 hours
- April: 172 hours

⁷ The number excludes programs that were rerun and only includes the first airing

- Last 2 weeks in May: 131 hours

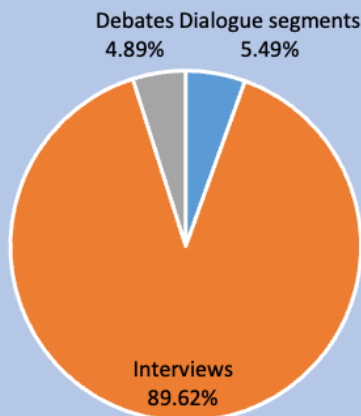
This illustrates the escalating rhythm in covering the elections as the election day came closer.

9-2 – Forms of Talk Shows

Talk shows varied among interviews, dialogue segments and debates. In total, those talk shows were aired for 1,484,510 seconds (around 412 hours), around 89% of which were interviews, around 5.49% were dialogue segments and 4.89% were debates.

Dialogue segment	81,465
Interview	1,330,481
Debate	72,564
Total	1,484,510

Distribution of the monitored TV talk shows
The sample refers to 1,484,510 seconds from February 1 to May 15
Chart No. 24



9-3 – Candidates' Share from Talk Shows

Candidates did not have equal appearance in talk shows, but rather huge discrepancies were recorded. Chart No. 25 monitors the 35 candidates with the most live appearance in talk shows

on the monitored TV channels from February 1 to May 15. Samy Gemayel came first, followed by Fouad Makhzoumi, Gebran Bassil, Farid Boustany, Salim Sayegh and Omar Harfoush.⁸

Chart No. 25

The 35 candidates with the most live appearance on talk shows from February 1 to May 15								
Candidate Name	AL JADED	AL MANAR	LBCI	MTV	NBN	OTV	TL	Total
Samy Gemayel	3756		23366	47				27169
Fouad Makhzoumi	11666		8434	4971				25071
Gebran Bassil			12629			12006		24635
Farid Boustany			8464	2940	5662	7501		24567
Salim Sayegh	3351		12363		835	3545	2482	22576
Omar Harfoush	7014			11132		2760		20906
Suleiman Frangieh	4683		5996	7757				18436
Fares Souaid	10551		6384	1036				17971
Elias Hankach	1658		7202	5851	840		1864	17415
Paula Yacoubian	7892		5009	4449				17350
Elias Bou Saab	480		4080	3419		8948		16927
Ibrahim Kanaan	4804		3971	3758		3890		16423
Mustafa Alloush	2914		10627	2220				15761

⁸ See Annex 5 to check all the candidates' TV appearance in talk shows broadcasted on the monitored channels from February 1 to May 15.

Abdul Rahman Bizri	9016		6239					15255
Wael Abu Faour	4366		10349					14715
Majd Harb			8656	5892				14548
Michel Helou	5871		3331	1387			3207	13796
Neemat Frem	3264		2193	5270			3030	13757
Josephine Zgheib			6591	4199		2782		13572
Wiam Wahhab	9632					3750		13382
Faisal Al Sayegh	7112		2366			3721		13199
Michel Moawad			7269	5854				13123
Edy Maalouf	703				4785	6948		12436
Farid Khazen			3138	7980	1186			12304
Khalil Helou			8197	1200			2479	11876
Edgard Traboulsi	717		1190			9838		11745
Mark Daou	6285		4204	1140				11629
Mazen Shbaro	3407		4321	3737				11465
Amir Mokdad	3563		2065	2882			2773	11283
George Shahwan			3818	2905	600	3932		11255
Bilal Abdallah	5523		3330		1375	523		10751

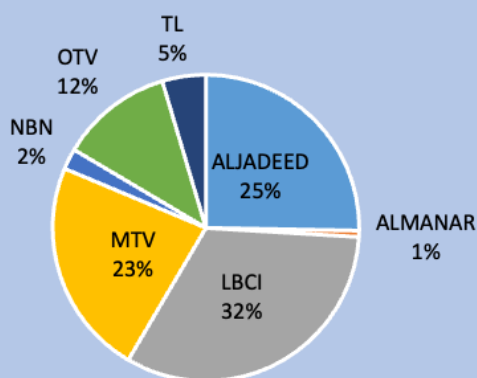
Hassan Keshli	3982		2056	4055				10093
Samir Saliba	1387		2634	6054				10075
Waddah Sadek	7888			2062				9950
Pierre Bou Assi				7150			2626	9776

9-4 – TV Channels Share from Talk Shows in the Last Six Weeks Preceding the Elections

The public space allocated by channels between February 1 and May 15 to host candidates through various talk shows amounted to 1,128,928 seconds (around 313 hours). Chart No. 26 illustrates the extent to which TV channels are involved in the electoral battle, as well as the time allocated to candidates during the last six weeks preceding the elections.

Al Jadeed, LBCI and MTV remained at the top of the chart with extremely high records compared to other channels, whereas OTV and TL maintained the same rate (12% and 5% respectively). Al Manar and NBN recorded a remarkable decrease down to 1% and 2% respectively, which was surprising amidst electoral campaigns.

Distribution of candidates' appearance in the monitored TV talk shows
The sample refers to 1,128,928 seconds from April 1 to May 15 Chart No. 26



9-5 – Candidates’ Appearance in Talk Shows During the Last Six Weeks

Chart No. 27 illustrates the 35 candidates with the most TV appearance from April 1 to May 15. Surprisingly, Al Manar did not host any of the candidates, while NBN only hosted 3 candidates: Farid Boustany, Georges Shahwan and Edy Maalouf. As for TL, it only hosted 2 candidates: Ziad Akl and Michel Helou.

The chart also reveals that the 4 channels that gave the floor to candidates at high rates are LBCI, Al Jadeed, MTV and OTV. The following is a list of the 35 candidates with the most appearance, classified according to the time allocated to their appearance on TV channels, specifically in talk shows during the last six weeks preceding the elections.⁹

Chart No. 27

The 35 candidates with the most appearance on talk shows from April 1 to May 15								
Candidate Name	AL JADEED	AL MANAR	LBCI	MTV	NBN	OTV	TL	Total
Fouad Makhzoumi	7429		8434	4971				20834
Farid Boustany			8464	2940	4590	3651		19645
Gebran Bassil			12629			4120		16749
Ibrahim Kanaan	4804		3971	3758		3890		16423
Salim Sayegh	3351		8706			3545		15602
Abdul Rahman Bizri	9016		6239					15255
Samy Gemayel	3756		11242					14998
Wael Abou Faour	4366		10349					14715
Paula Yacoubian	3606		5009	4449				13064

⁹ The charts included a limited number of candidates with high or indicative rates of appearance. You can access the full lists of the candidates along with their rates in the Annexes attached hereto.

Elias Bou Saab			3052		8948		12000
Fares Souaid	8541		3279				11820
Edy Maalouf	703				3845	6948	11496
Mazen Shbaro	3407		4321	3737			11465
George Shahwan			3818	2905	600	3932	11255
Suleiman Frangieh	4683		5996				10679
Michel Moawad			4764	5854			10618
Omar Harfouch	4648			5867			10515
Josephine Zgheib			3471	4199		2782	10452
Elias Hankach			7202	3054			10256
Hassan Keshli	3982		2056	4055			10093
Samir Saliba	1387		2634	6054			10075
Ziad Akl	2331					3085	4351 9767
Wiam Wahhab	9632						9632
Myriam Skaff	6447			3174			9621
Faisal Al Sayegh	7112		2366				9478
Marwan Hamadeh	4962		2308	2160			9430
Ali Wehbe	5110		4077				9187
Bushra Khalil			1402			7752	9154

Karim Chebaklo	3262		2139	3737			9138
Michel Helou	2271		2130	1387		3207	8995
Simon Abou Fadel	719		2577	5610			8906
Nabil Naja	3329		2523	2940			8792
Neemat Frem	3264			5270			8534
Salim Hani	1556		2075	2650		2245	8526
Hassan Khalil						8478	8478

9-6 – Candidates’ Appearance on Talk Shows During Peak Time

- April 1 to May 15

Media appearance is not of the same importance among TV channels, as ratings vary according to the airing time. It is well known that “peak time” on TV channels starts in the evening, mainly with the start of evening news broadcasting, until late at night. Thus, this time is considered “peak time” in terms of ratings, and as a result, a valuable time. It seemed relevant to calculate it separately.

Chart No. 28 illustrates the 40 candidates with the most appearance in talk shows during **peak time** from April 1 to May 15, with Fouad Makhzoumi, Samy Gemayel, Gebran Bassil and Paula Yacoubian in the lead¹⁰.

Chart No. 28

The 40 Candidates with the most appearance on talk shows during peak time from April 1 to May 15							
Candidate Name	AL JADEED	AL MANAR	LBCI	MTV	NBN	OTV	Total
Fouad Makhzoumi	3505		8434	4971			16910
Samy Gemayel	3756		11242				14998

¹⁰ See Annex 6: Candidates’ appearance in talk shows during peak time from April 1 to May 15

Gebran Bassil			9501			4120	13621
Paula Yacoubian	3606		5009	4449			13064
Wael Abou Faour	4366		8284				12650
Elias Bou Saab				3052		8948	12000
Fares Souaid	8541		3279				11820
Suleiman Frangieh	4683		5996				10679
Michel Moawad			4764	5854			10618
Ibrahim Kanaan	4804			1658		3890	10352
Myriam Skaff	6447			3174			9621
Wiam Wahhab	9357						9357
Abdul Rahman Bizri	5085		3837				8922
Neemat Frem	3264			5270			8534
Hassan Khalil						8478	8478
Farid Boustany			3046			3651	6697
Georges Adwan	3285			3314			6599
Cesar Abi Khalil						6583	6583
Majd Harb			3858	2280			6138

Salim Sayegh			1757			3545	5302
Ghassan Atallah	1298					3950	5248
Marwan Hamadeh	4962						4962
Simon Abi Ramia				1800		3152	4952
Mohammad Raad		4800					4800
Edy Maalouf	703					3995	4698
Nabil Badr	4645						4645
George Shahwan					600	3932	4532
Asma Andraos	1391		3135				4526
Bushra Khalil						4422	4422
Ali Wehbe	2303		1896				4199
Najat Saliba	1436		1944	694			4074
Mark Daou	1825		995	1140			3960
Layal Bou Moussa	2079		1210	660			3949
Fadi Abou Rahal						3865	3865
Asaad Dargham						3715	3715
Razi El Hajj	672					3041	3713
Ali Nour						3642	3642

Halimé Kaakour		3622				3622
Nasri Lahoud					3525	3525
Mazen Shbaro	3407					3407

9-7 – Candidates Appearance as of May 1

In the last 2 weeks preceding the elections, the intensity of the political scene increases as candidates attempt to strengthen their bonds with voters. Candidates also become more involved in the electoral process that is getting closer.

Chart No. 29 illustrates the 50 candidates with the most live appearance in talk shows on the monitored TV channels from May 1 to May 15 (Chart No. 30)

Chart No. 29

The 50 Candidates with the most appearance on talk shows from May 1 to May 15							
Candidate Name	ALJADEED	LBCI	MTV	NBN	OTV	TL	Total
Ibrahim Kanaan	4804	3971	2100		3890		14765
Samy Gemayel		11242					11242
Suleiman Frangieh	4683	5996					10679
Fouad Makhzoumi	7429	2932					10361
Farid Boustany		7322	2940				10262
Gebran Bassil		5209			4120		9329
Elias Bou Saab					8948		8948
Salim Sayegh		5011			3545		8556
Paula Yacoubian	3606	3572					7178
Michel Fallah	4023		1761				5784

Mazen Shbaro	3407		2297				5704
Waddah Sadek	3210		2062				5272
Nada Boustani		2988			2064		5052
Ziad Akl					3085	1860	4945
Michel Moawad		4764					4764
Majed Dimashkieh	3368		1110				4478
Hassan Izz-Al-Din				4446			4446
Randa Abboud				956	3440		4396
Youssef Melhem EL-FAKHRY			1369			3022	4391
Wiam Wahhab	4296						4296
Iman Tabbara	1415	2781					4196
Samir Saliba	1387		2765				4152
Hadi Abou El-Hassan		4109					4109
Nabil Naja	2583		1500				4083
Wael Abou Faour		4042					4042
Riad Al-Asaad	1625	2356					3981
Ziad Assouad					3954		3954
Wassef El Harakeh	3876						3876
Fadi Abu Rahal					3865		3865
Salim Hani	1556				2245		3801

Asaad Dargham					3715		3715
Tony Matta					3687		3687
Osama Saad	3626						3626
Halimé Kaakour		3622					3622
Ara Bardakjian		3600					3600
Fares Souaid	3600						3600
Faisal Al Sayegh	3593						3593
Eid Azar	771	2757					3528
Nasri Lahoud					3525		3525
Samir Al-Halabi			3486				3486
Ghassan Karam					3440		3440
Saad Eddin Al-Khatib		2265	1140				3405
Khaled Kabbani	3389						3389
Bushra Khalil					3330		3330
Nasri Lahoud		2219	1105				3324
Georges Adwan	3285						3285
Malik Moloy		396	2880				3276
Ali Murad	2785	481					3266
Sheikh Abbas Al-Jawhari			3265				3265
Simon Bou Fadel			3246				3246

9-8 – Candidates' Appearance in the Last Two Weeks during Peak Time

Chart No. 30 illustrates the 60 candidates with the most live appearance in talk shows during peak time, in the last two weeks preceding the elections (May 1 to May 15). The following candidates are the ones who got the most appearance: Samy Gemayel, Suleiman Frangieh, Elias Bou Saab, Ibrahim Kanaan and Gebran Bassil.

Chart No. 30

Candidates with the most TV appearance on talk shows during peak time from May 1 to May 15					
Candidate Name	AL JADEED	LBCI	NBN	OTV	Total
Samy Gemayel		11242			11242
Suleiman Frangieh	4683	5996			10679
Elias Bou Saab				8948	8948
Ibrahim Kanaan	4804			3890	8694
Gebran Bassil		3412		4120	7532
Paula Yacoubian	3606	3572			7178
Fouad Makhzoumi	3505	2932			6437
Michel Moawad		4764			4764
Wiam Wahhab	4296				4296
Fadi Abu Rahal				3865	3865
Asaad Dargham				3715	3715
Halimé Kaakour		3622			3622
Fares Souaid	3600				3600

Salim Sayegh				3545	3545
Nasri Lahoud				3525	3525
Mazen Shbaro	3407				3407
Georges Adwan	3285				3285
Hassan Khalil				3228	3228
Simon Abi Ramia				3152	3152
Asma Andraos		3135			3135
Michel Daher		3118			3118
Ziad Akl				3085	3085
Farid Boustany		3046			3046
Sami Fatfat		2991			2991
Nada Boustani		2988			2988
Faisal Karami	2951				2951
Tony Frangieh		2940			2940
Iman Tabbara		2781			2781
Myriam Skaff	2724				2724
Ali Wehbe	2303				2303
Tony Kreidy				2176	2176
Abdul Rahman Bizri	2106				2106
Leon Semerjian	2010				2010

Wael Abou Faour		1977			1977
George Shahwan				1667	1667
Mark Daou	597	995			1592
Salim Hani	1556				1556
Eid Azar	771	729			1500
Wissam Abou Fakher	1301				1301
Yusra El-Tannir	1301				1301
Michel Helou		1192			1192
Hassan Keshli	1119				1119
Nabil Naja	1119				1119
Ali Murad	597	481			1078
Randa Abboud			956		956
Ibrahim Mneimneh		932			932
Zeina Al-Masry	916				916
Abdel Rahman al-Mubasher	916				916
Michel Fallah	916				916
George Bouchikian	894				894
Fadi Alama			812		812
Omar Halablab	810				810
Dima Abou Daya	766				766

Majd Harb		629			629
Jad Ghosn	597				597
Najat Saliba	597				597
Wassef El Harakeh	597				597
Maguy Aoun		583			583
Hassan Mourad			570		570
Raed Berro			550		550

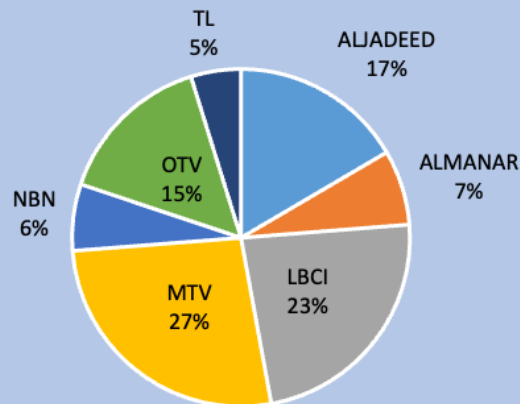
10 – Candidates' Live appearance During Live Coverage

TV channels reported live candidates' activities, especially during the announcement of their electoral lists or during live public speeches. Al Manar and NBN recorded a remarkably high rate compared to their previous rates (7% and 6% respectively), while TL sustained a low rate (5%). MTV recorded the highest rate of live coverage (27%), followed by LBCI (23%), Al Jadeed (17%) and OTV (15%).

The overall space allocated to candidates through live coverage from February 1 to May 15 equaled 287,831 seconds (around 80 hours), distributed among TV channels as follows (Chart No. 31):

Distribution of the channels' coverage in the monitored live coverage periods, the sample refers to 287,831 seconds from February 1 to May 15

Chart No. 31



10-1 – Candidates' Share from Live Coverage

Chart No. 32 illustrates the candidates with the highest rates of appearance in live coverage from February 1 to May 15. It also illustrates their appearance per TV channel.

Gebran Bassil surpassed all other candidates by more than 20% of the total coverage allocated to each candidate. He was also the only candidate who appeared live on all TV channels.

Samy Gemayel came second, recording 6% of the total coverage and appearing on three channels, followed by Nadim Gemayel (3.29%) on four channels and Nabih Berri (3.17%) on five channels. The following chart illustrates the appearance rates of each candidate and their distribution per channel. You can review the annexes which includes an overview of all TV channels coverage for all candidates.

Chart No. 32

Candidates' live TV appearance in live coverage from February 1 to May 15, 2022								
Candidate Name	AL JADEED	AL MANAR	LBCI	MTV	NBN	OTV	TL	Total
Gebran Bassil	555	11759	14716	483	820	22980	6844	58157

Samy Gemayel	3547		8281	6331				18159
Nadim Gemayel	1627		3155	3170			1528	9480
Nabih Berri	572	1065		1502	4514		1500	9153
Michel Moawad	2170		2655	2916			525	8266
Hassan Fadlallah		4597			2460			7057
Rashid Rahme	300		4257	300				4857
Ibrahim Kanaan				488	1167	3066	84	4805
Georges Adwan	547	481	547	1088	550		657	3870
Wael Abou Faour	703		2195	491			125	3514
Fouad Makhzoumi	963		943	1388				3294
Ihab Hamadeh		1503			782	488	472	3245
Mohammad Al Qarawi	959		959	959				2877
Elias Hankach	1105		1105	635				2845
Ziad Hawat				1759			850	2609
Tony El Mardini	833		833	833				2499
Brigitte Khair	582		1322	582				2486
Jawad Boulos	811		811	811				2433

Majd Harb	319		1684	358				2361
Neemat Frem	1193		302	543			302	2340
Ghassan Skaff	770		770	770				2310
Alain Aoun					196	1914		2110
Antoine Habashi				2072				2072
Hussein Hajj Hassan					2061			2061
Rima Njeim	581		937	530				2048
Paula Yacoubian	699		699	648				2046
Michel Daher	682		682	682				2046
Charles Fakhoury	647		647	647				1941
Chamel Roukoz			302	302		1333		1937
Taymur Jumblatt	530		632	557			190	1909
William Tawk			911	911				1822
Kabalan Kabalan					1810			1810
Elie Ferzli	613			876	251		18	1758
Ziad Abi Chaker	589		589	537				1715
Mohammad Raad		1200				441		1641

Farid Boustany					97	1534		1631
Maggie Nanjian	529		529	483				1541
Samir Saliba	505		505	505				1515
Salim Sayegh	180		649	649				1478
Simon Abou Fadel	622		622	178				1422
Brigitte Chalabian	489		489	436				1414
Hassan Mourad	1412							1412
Farid Khazen			383	1002				1385
Mona Sukkar Labaki	539		539	225				1303
Ziad Abs	425		425	425				1275
Elie Sharbashi				1187				1187
Omar Harfouch	585			585				1170
Khalil Helou			546	588				1134
Myriam Skaff	1130							1130
Nazih Matta	382			728				1110
George Shahwan			93	1004				1097
Riad Tawk	279		279	539				1097

Antoine Sfeir				1059				1059
Asma Andraos	529			529				1058
Ibrahim Azar					1053			1053
Ziad Akl	518		518					1036
Michel Douaihy	231		231	531				993
Wassef El Harakeh	495		495					990
Layal Bou Moussa	255		255	476				986
George Okais				970				970
Adeeb Abdel Massih	322		322	322				966
Simon Bechwati	235		235	475				945
Rabih El Chaer	214		214	509				937
jihad farah	310		310	310				930
Charbel Maroun						869		869

10-2 – Live Appearance in News Broadcastings

Chart No. 33 illustrates the live appearance of the 60 candidates with the highest rates of live TV appearance in news broadcastings, monitored from February 1 to May 15. Gebran Bassil came first, surpassing Mohammad Raad, Ibrahim Kanaan, Hassan Fadlallah and Nabih Berri.

See the charts and annexes attached to the study to check the distribution of coverage by channel. Similarly to the difference in the time allocated to candidates, there seems to be large discrepancies in the choice of candidates by each channel to go live on their news broadcastings. Some candidates only appeared on one or two channels, while others appeared on a large number of channels.

Chart No. 33

Candidates with the most live appearance in news broadcasting from February 1 to May 15								
Candidate Name	AL JADEED	AL MANAR	LBCI	MTV	NBN	OTV	TL	Total
Gebran Bassil	1864	552	1542	589	433	11790	668	17438
Mohammad Raad	2242	2533	1164	348	1074	881	647	8889
Ibrahim Kanaan	1355	261	335	376	1066	3093	462	6948
Hassan Fadlallah	2054	1623	705	283	516	412	523	6116
Nabih Berri	363	527	235	84	3025	166	491	4891
Hani Kobeisy	989	237	0		2696		291	4213
Elie Ferzli	603	238	157	259	1728	658	530	4173
Ali Hassan Khalil	222	204	284	30	2790	91	94	3715
Samy Gemayel	1130		896	612		0	430	3068
Georges Adwan	928	443	344	476	185	355	216	2947
Inaya Ezzeddine	258	301	49		1806		178	2592
Taymour Jumblatt	548	72	762	603	257	90	245	2577

Hussein Hajj Hassan	423	1043	372		434	169	78	2519
Fouad Makhzoumi	1208	0	845	228		0	192	2473
Ali Khreis	142	0	0		1957		71	2170
Farid Boustany	50		196		257	1599	0	2102
Faisal Karami	1040	263	500			0	137	1940
Ali Fayyad	189	634	60		545	342	147	1917
Ehab Hamada	61	1205	58		292		82	1698
Wael Abou Faour	770	20	291	160		33	279	1553
Neemat Frem	835		312	176		0	162	1485
Ghazi Zaiter	174	0	0		1119		94	1387
Hassan Izz-Al-Din	137	772	90		258		129	1386
Ayoub Hmayed	63		0		1143	0	57	1263
Nadim Gemayel	468		377	143		0	185	1173
Ghayath Yazbeck			0	1153			0	1153
Amal Abou Zeid	237	319	0	0	0	546		1102
Kabalan Kabalan			0	0	963	0	69	1032
Ashraf Rifi	396		17	503		20	85	1021
Michel Moawad	252	40	295	356			60	1003

Elias Bou Saab	55		0	352	101	482	0	990
Salim Sayegh	151		338	380		0	114	983
George Okais			92	630	78	49	132	981
Majd Harb	166		438	255			90	949
Wiam Wahhab	791		6	0		25	0	822
Bilal Abdullah	278	75	42		300	10	110	815
Jamil Al Sayyed	637		0			148	19	804
Ali Bazzi	21	40		0	737			798
Omar Harfouch	630			135			0	765
Assaad Dargham	167		0			554		721
Fares Souaid	285		333	71		0		689
Alain Aoun	34	166	19	63	26	348		656
Edy Maalouf	208		0	315		114	0	637
Mustapha Allouch	91	10	54	100	0	174	204	633
Hadi Abou El Hassan	114		61	143	169	0	142	629
Ibrahim Mousawi		541	0		74			615
Fadi Alama	53	14			301	45	193	606
Ali Mekdad		591	0					591
Nasser Jaber		71			510			581

Nasri Lahoud						580		580
Osama Saad	487	19	55	0		0		561
Nicolas Sehnaoui			0			527		527
Edgard Traboulsi	126	16	0		95	273		510
Michel Elias Murr	253		107		140		0	500
Amin Sherri	84	235	22		124	0	30	495
Marwan Hamadeh	376		69	0		0		445
Assaad Hardan		70	97	0	202	0	74	443
Ziad Hawat	23		51	182		0	179	435
Muhammad Khwaja	87	22			322			431
Paula Yacoubian	203		116	110		0		429

11- Participation of “Forces of Change” in TV Coverage

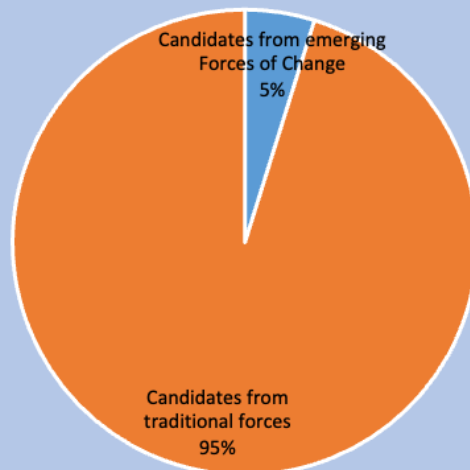
Candidates’ TV appearance seems to be of utter importance in order to introduce themselves, their proposals and projects to the public, especially the emerging forces that have appeared following the 2019 uprising. They sought parliamentary representation despite not being known to voters, while the traditional forces have their own supporters, fighters, social and political structure. Consequently, knowing the size of coverage granted by TV channels to emerging forces and the opportunity to for them to introduce and promote themselves was important.

11-1 – Participation of “Forces of Change” in News Broadcastings

By monitoring direct access of emerging forces (Forces of Change) in news broadcastings from February 1 to May 15, it appeared that these forces have only acquired 5% of coverage, compared to 95% of appearance recorded by the traditional forces (Chart No. 34). This is due to

not only neglecting emerging forces but also to the fact that traditional forces are the ones that control the events given their control over the States administration.

Live appearance of candidates from "Forces of Change" vs. "Traditional Forces" in news bulletins from February 1 to May 15, out of a total of 135,584 seconds
Chart No. 34



11-2 - Participation of "Forces of Change" in Talk Shows

Candidates highly depend on talk shows as a means to introduce themselves and their proposals to voters. Emerging forces' appearance seems to be of utter importance in order to compete with traditional forces.

In talk shows aired between February 1 and May 15, the rate of appearance acquired by emerging forces was high compared to their appearance in news broadcastings. It reached 37% versus 63% for traditional forces, partly due to paid advertising slots that some candidates from "Forces of Change" who wish to enter the parliamentary scene have sought (Chart No. 35).

Live appearance of candidates from "Forces of Change" candidates vs. "Traditional Forces" in TV talk shows from February 1 to May 15, out of a total of 1,484,510 seconds
Chart No. 35

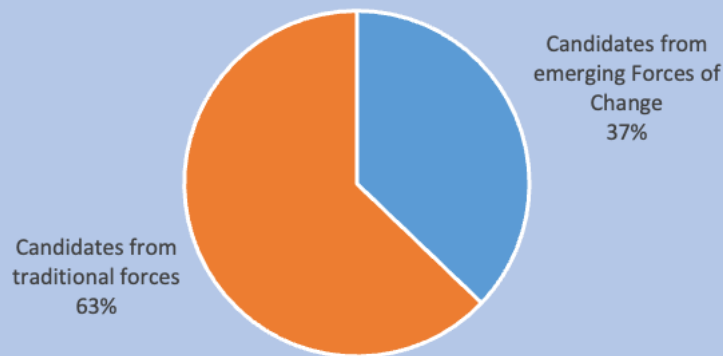


Chart No. 36 illustrates the 45 candidates of emerging forces with the most live appearance in talk shows on TV channels from February 1 to May 15. Omar Harfouch, Paula Yacoubian, Michel Helou, Josephine Zgheib and Mark Daou were in the lead.

Candidates from Forces of Change with the most appearances in talk shows from February 1 to May 15							
Candidate Name	AL JADEED	LBCI	MTV	NBN	OTV	TL	Total
Omar Harfouch	7014		11132		2760		20906
Paula Yacoubian	7892	5009	4449				17350
Michel Helou	5871	3331	1387			3207	13796

Josephine Zgheib		6591	4199		2782		13572
Mark Daou	6285	4204	1140				11629
Mazen Shbaro	3407	4321	3737				11465
Amir Mokdad	3563	2065	2882			2773	11283
Hassan Keshli	3982	2056	4055				10093
Waddah Sadek	7888		2062				9950
Ziad Akl	2331				3085	4351	9767
Najat Saliba	1436	7103	694				9233
Ali Wehbe	5110	4077					9187
Karim Chebaklo	3262	2139	3737				9138
Maguy Aoun	1954	1517	5591				9062
Nabil Naja	3329	2523	2940				8792
Salim Hani	1556	2075	2650		2245		8526
Hani Saliba		5351	3163				8514
Zeina Majdalani	1464	5629	1260				8353
Ibrahim Mneimneh	3918	2886	1505				8309
Julie Daccache	3435	3476	1246				8157
Lina Hamdan		6669	1470				8139
Layal Bou Moussa	3828	3438	660				7926

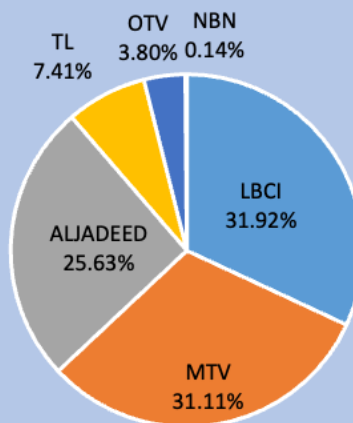
Camille Morani	1521	6400					7921
Zeina Monzer	4772		2713				7485
Youssef Melhem EL-FAKHRY			1369			6022	7391
Olfat El Sabeh	2320	1986	2981				7287
Halimé Kaakour	3030	4111					7141
Eid Azar	771	6049		315			7135
Rania Ghaith	2994	2902	1075				6971
Nicolas Saba	3546		3214				6760
Jihad Farah	803	1823	4053				6679
Ghada Eid			6607				6607
Michel Douaihy	946	1813	3754				6513
Najwa Bassil	3039	3298					6337
Wassef El Harakeh	4818		1500				6318
Ali Murad	2785	1118	2233				6136
Verena El Amil		4332	1413				5745
Nawfal Nawfal		2389			3223		5612
Ali Khalifeh	1521	2195	1800				5516
Lina Tannir	1438	2360	1440				5238
Iman Tabbara	2275	2781					5056
Jad Ghosn	3407	1067					4474

Nada Sehnaoui		4444					4444
Rima Njeim		2189	2171				4360
Hicham Hayek			4228				4228

11-3 – Distribution of “Forces of Change” by Channels

LBCI and MTV have hosted more than any other channels candidates from the “Forces of Change” in talk shows, with a rate amounting to 30%, followed by Al Jadeed (25%). While Al Manar was completely off the scene, NBN barely hosted any similar candidates, with a rate amounting to 0.14%, similarly to OTV, which recorded 3.80%, and TL (7.41%) (Chart No. 37).

Distribution of candidates' appearance from "Forces of Change" in talk shows on TV channels from February 1 to May 15
The sample refers to 551,323 seconds
Chart No. 37



12 – Political Electoral Advertisement

The Electoral Law stipulated that electoral advertisement in the media shall be paid. As a result, any electoral media or advertisement aired through TV shall be part of electoral expenses, which shall be declared by candidates, electoral lists and media shall before competent authorities. The media shall also clearly label this type of advertisement to inform the audience that they are paid. Some channels used the label “SP” as a means to identify paid advertisement, while other channels ignored the issue.

Channels have broadcasted several types of electoral advertisement, including:

- Live coverage, mostly during the announcement of electoral lists
- Promotion of and introduction to electoral lists
- Participation in talk shows
- Promotional segments
- Promotional advertising
- Dialogue interviews

12-1 – Appearance of Candidates and Electoral Lists in Paid Live Coverage

Live coverage declared as paid equaled 495,000 seconds (137.5 hours).

Electoral live coverage on LBCI and Al Jadeed declared as paid in favor of electoral, lists without mentioning candidates' names, were monitored (Chart No. 39). This coverage equaled 8,157 seconds (2.26 hours), distributed as follows:

Chart No. 39

TV space by means of live coverage declared as paid in favor of electoral lists

Electoral List	AL JADEED	LBCI	Total
Beirut Needs a Heart	120	2994	3114
The North of Confrontation		1743	1743
Shamaluna	516	516	1032
The Heart of Independent Lebanon	98	512	610
Metn the Change	219	219	438
This is Beirut	403		403
Independent National Decision		326	326
Partnership and Will		321	321
Beirut Lil Taghyeer	130		130
Beirut Confronts	40		40
Total	1526	6631	8157

The table also reveals the absence of major political parties.

12-2 – Candidates’ Appearance in Paid Talk Shows

LBCI was the only channel to broadcast dialogue interviews declared as paid, using the label “SP” on screen to identify them. LBCI dedicated a program that included all paid electoral advertisement called Elections2022, in the form of a talk show that hosts candidates in order to discuss their views and electoral programs. Special paid episodes were dedicated to candidates and scheduled to be aired during peak time.

The total airtime for paid talk shows equaled 74,019 seconds (20.56 hours).

12-3 – Promotional Interviews

Many candidates depend on televised interviews as a means to introduce themselves and promote their proposals. They seek to buy time slots from TV channels to be hosted on their interviews, using pre-prepared questions that help promote those candidates. The monitored time slots for these interviews equaled around 369 hours. One cannot assert that all these interviews are paid, yet the majority of them allow the hosted candidate to express themselves without any interruption or objection, while showing favoritism, which gives the impression that they are promotional. Interviews declared as paid did not exceed 5.56%, while those not declared as paid amounted to 94.43% (Chart No. 45).

Interview declared as paid	74,019
Interview not declared as paid	1,256,462
Total airtime in seconds	1,330,481

Rate of interviews with candidates, sample of 1,330,481 seconds, from February 1 to May

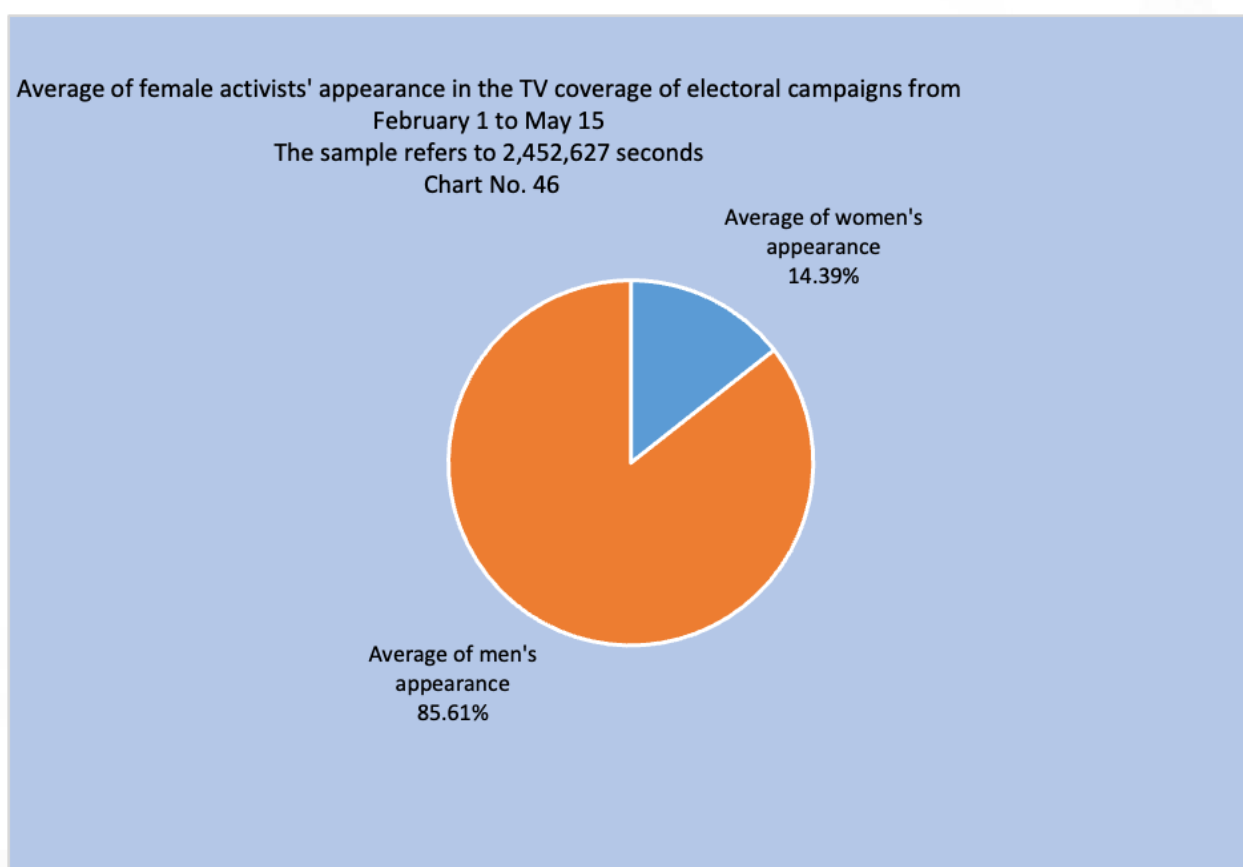
15

Chart No. 45



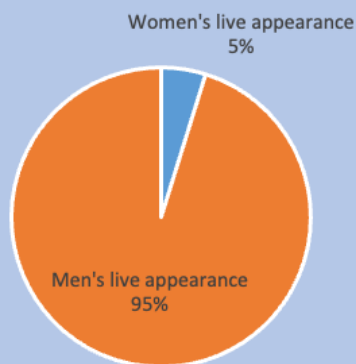
13 – Women's Appearance on TV

The average of female activists' share from the total monitored TV coverage between February 1 and May 15 equaled 14.39% versus 85.61% for male activists, out of the total live appearance of both male and female political actors, which amounted to 2,452,627 seconds (Chart No. 46). This highlights the ongoing marginalization of women in the media. It is also important to note that the number of female candidates was extremely low compared to that of male candidates, whereby the 103 registered lists included 718 candidates, 600 of whom were men and 118 were women. As a result, the rate of female candidates amounted to 16.43%, which implies that they did not acquire an appearance rate that equals their weight.



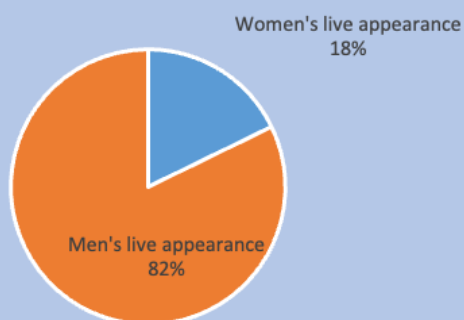
Marginalization of women is further asserted by looking at their appearance in TV news broadcastings. The rate of female activists' appearance in the political landscape on the news monitored between February 1 and May 15 equaled 181,625 seconds (5%), compared to 95% for men of the total live TV appearance of political actors on TV (Chart No. 47).

Women's appearance in TV news bulletins from February 1 to May 15
The sample refers to 181,625 seconds
Chart No. 47



The rate of female activists in the political talk shows from February 1 to May 15 increased to 18% compared to 82% for male activists, out of the total live appearance of political actors, which amounted to 1,729,393 seconds (Chart No. 48)

Female activists' appearance in talk shows from February 1 to May 15. The sample refers to 1,729,393 seconds
Chart No. 48



Upon examination of the distribution of women's participation in talk shows, it appeared that LBCI allocated the biggest space to women, as it organized a talk show, in collaboration with

FiftyFifty, called 50/50, which hosts female candidates, allowing them to introduce their programs and political visions. As a result, many women participated in this show, making the total rate of women's appearance on LBCI 40%, a record high number compared to other channels, such as Al Manar and TL which recorded 1%, and NBN, which recorded 0% (Chart No. 49).

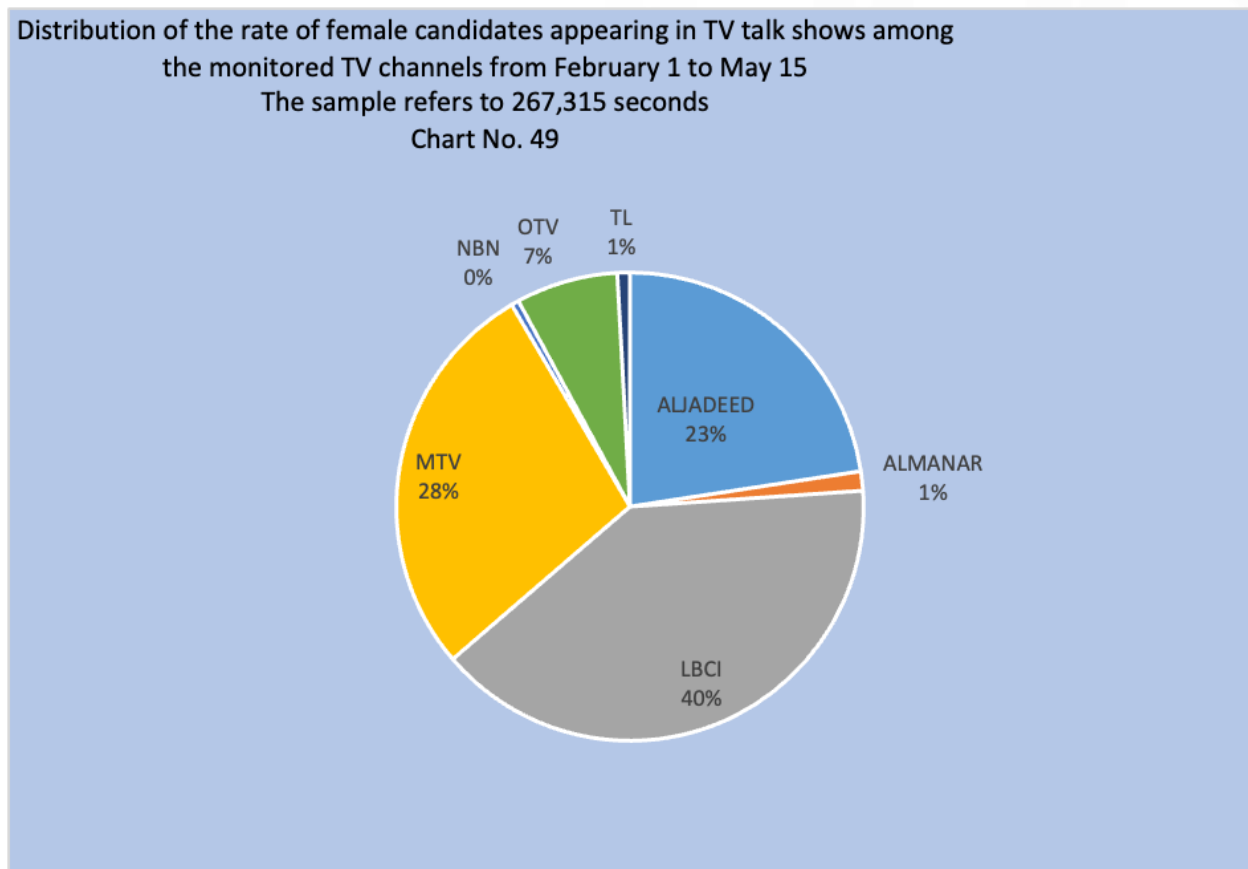


Chart No. 50 illustrates the rate of appearance acquired by 25 female candidates who got the highest rates among any other female candidates in TV talk shows monitored from February 1 to May 15. Paula Yacoubian came first, followed by Josephine Zgheib, Myriam Skaff, Najat Saliba, Bushra Khalil and Maguy Aoun.

Chart No. 50

Female candidates' appearance on TV talk shows								
Candidate Name	AL JADEED	AL MANAR	LBCI	MTV	NBN	OTV	TL	Total in seconds
Paula Yacoubian	7892		5009	4449				17350
Josephine Zgheib			6591	4199		2782		13572
Myriam Skaff	6467			3174				9641
Najat Saliba	1436		7103	694				9233
Bushra Khalil			1402			7752		9154
Maguy Aoun	1954		1517	5591				9062
Zeina Majdalani	1464		5629	1260				8353
Julie Daccache	3435		3476	1246				8157
Lina Hamdan			6669	1470				8139
Layal Bou Moussa	3828		3438	660				7926
Nada Boustani			2988			4869		7857
Zeina Monzer	4772			2713				7485
Olfat El Sabeh	2320		1986	2981				7287

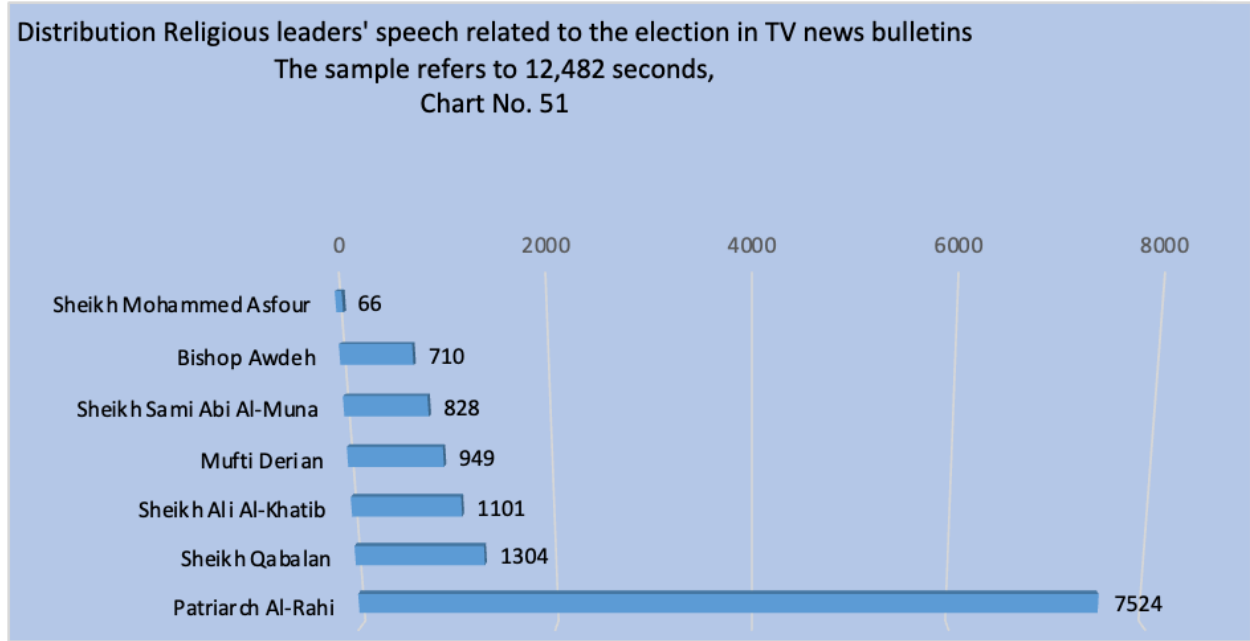
Ghada Ayoub Bou Fadel				4837			2325	7162
Halimé Kaakour	3030		4111					7141
Rania Ghaith	2994		2902	1075				6971
Asma Andraos	1391		5290					6681
Ghada Eid				6607				6607
Rima Njeim			2189	4127		23		6339
Najwa Bassil	3039		3298					6337
Randa Abboud	499		1202		956	3440		6097
Verena El Amil			4332	1413				5745
Lina Tannir	1438		2360	1440				5238
Nada Sehnaoui			4444					4444
Habbouba Aoun	2405		1886					4291

14 – Religion Leaders

Religious leaders were present in TV coverage as political actors, given their positions on a national scale and their influence in public opinion. TV channels shed the light on their activities and cover their public speeches in news broadcastings. Speeches delivered by Maronite Patriarch Mar Bechara Boutros al-Rahi, Grand Mufti Sheikh Abdul Latif Derian, Grand Jaafari Mufti Sheikh Ahmad Kabalan, Sheikh Akl of the Unitarian Druze Community, Dr. Sami Abi Al-Muna, the Most Reverend Greek-Orthodox Metropolitan of Beirut Elias Aude, and the

President of the Alawite Islamic Council Sheikh Mohammad Khodr Asfour were monitored. Chart No. 51 illustrates the size of speeches delivered by religion leaders with regard to the elections in TV news broadcastings from February 1 to May 15, which equaled 3.46 hours. Patriarch Mar Bechara Boutros al-Rahi had the biggest share (60%) from the total coverage of religion leaders.

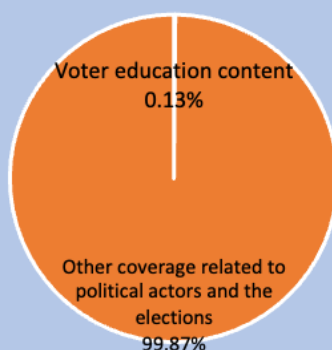
It is important to note that the appearance of Hezbollah officials who are also leaders, such as Hassan Nasrallah and Sheikh Naim Kassem, was not counted as part of this sample, but rather as part of political actors.



15 – Voter Education

LBCI, MTV and NBN have broadcasted advertisements related to voter education, organized by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities in March, April and May. Chart No. 52 illustrates the low rate of official voter education that was aired on all channels, amounting to 0.13% of the total TV coverage allocated for political actors and election-related issues from February 1 to May 15. No voter education material was issued by the SCE.

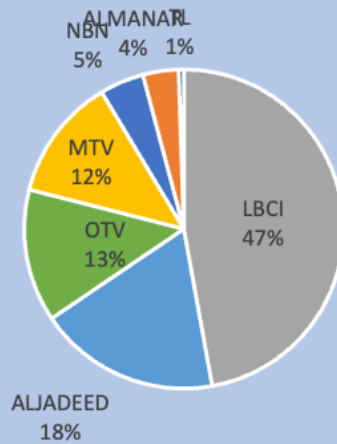
Distribution of TV coverage of political actors and issues related to the elections from
February 1 to May 15
The sample refers to 3,066,643 seconds
Chart No. 52



Different TV channels have broadcasted, in disproportionate rates, educational content in news broadcastings and various programs, which included awareness-raising content and information classified as non-targeted voter education (Chart No. 53). Hosting of experts and specialists to explain electoral issues, such as the Electoral Law, the role of the Ministry of Interior and the election process in polling stations were also classified as part as voter education.

LBCI stood out in this regards in comparison to other channels, recording 47% of the total coverage that includes voter education, followed by Al Jadeed (18%), OTV (13%), MTV (12%), NBN (5%) and Al Manar (4%). As for TL, it recorded only 1%, although it should have been more active in this area given its position as a national TV channel dedicated for public service.

TV media coverage, including voter education, from February 1 to May 15
The sample refers to 110,763 seconds of broadcasting
Chart No. 53



16 – Instigating Violent Discourse

Electoral campaigns involved a discourse that often strayed from the ethics of media coverage that requires respecting the other party, confronting them using arguments and presenting electoral programs that include proposals for public reform. However, coverage included hate speech, direct accusations towards rivals, instigation and slander. It also included defamation and direct insults that neither serve political practice nor public discussions, but rather indicate a very low level of media discourse and incomppliance of speakers with public national interest.

The discourse further included recalling rivals' history in order to distort their reputation and credibility, which could have several repercussions on civil peace required for ensuring cooperation of all forces in order to achieve public welfare. Such discourse gives advantage to instincts instead of rationality in the electoral process.

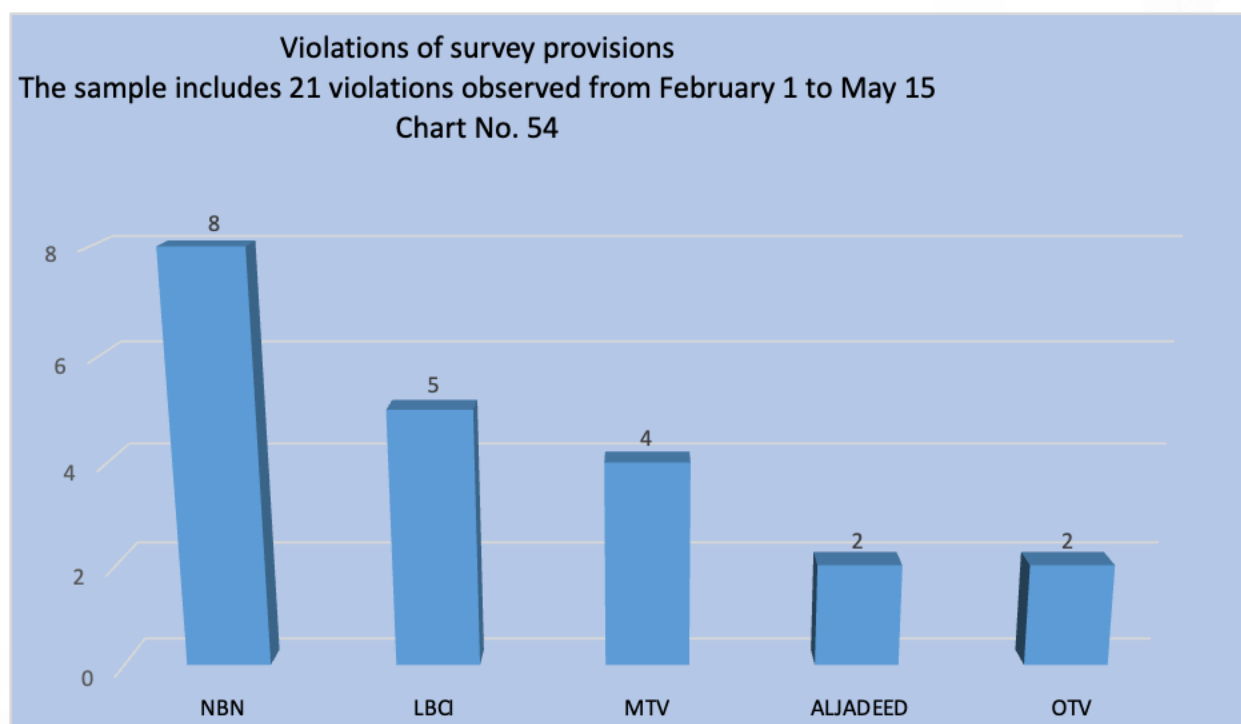
This discourse reached high levels of violence by accusing opponents on a personal level of betrayal, treachery and insanity, as well as on a national level, of being informants and working with the enemy. All this goes against the principle of national work, which requires perceiving opponents as partners in building the country.

17 – Violation of Surveys and Electoral Silence

17-1 - Surveys

The monitoring team detected several violations against the provisions of disseminating surveys through TV coverage, mainly in talk shows that hosted electoral experts who anticipate the results without adhering to transparency criteria as stipulated by the law. This transparency includes broadcasting data related to the funding of surveys and the beneficiaries, the questions, selected sample and other criteria that guarantee transparency of survey conditions.

Chart No. 54 illustrates the breaches that were detected in the surveys broadcasted by TV channels.



17-2 – Electoral Silence

The Electoral Law stipulated, specifically in Article 78 thereof, that all media shall not have the right to broadcast any advertisement or direct call to the elections as of midnight on the day preceding the elections until the closing of polling stations. The electoral silence period extended to 8 days, given that the elections were conducted on 4 phases: 2 phases for the diaspora, followed by employees and lastly the public.

Prohibited electoral media and advertisement during the electoral silence period refers to any promotional advertisement, paid electoral advertisement, as well as issued statements, and contents that aim to promote the elections, regulated by virtue of Section 6 of the Electoral

Law. Any program that implicitly contains electoral advertisement shall also be considered illegal.

Prohibited direct call for elections refers to any direct speech addressed to voters which aims to influence their choices in the elections, pushing them to vote, abstain from voting or boycott the elections. It can be any form of media or any public influencer, such as but not limited to, heads of political parties and coalitions, candidates and religious leaders. Coverage on election day must be limited to the course of the elections.

The study detected constant breaches throughout the electoral silence period by TV channels, especially in their live coverage of the electoral process and through the hosted guests and talk shows.

Such breaches can be classified as follows:

- Announcing support for and promoting certain candidates by the reporter or media.
- Conducting biased interviews with voters, candidates and parties prepared in advance, which implicitly comprise electoral promotion and advertisement.
- Broadcasting interviews with candidates or influencers that contain direct call for elections (Boycott, voting for a specific party, etc.)
- Broadcasting talk shows that aim to direct voters' choices or comprise criticism or insults targeting certain candidates or programs.

One of the interesting speeches of officials that breached the electoral silence was that of the Head of the Progressive Socialist Party Walid Jumblatt during a ceremony organized by Irfan Establishment on May 7, 2022, one day before election day for the diaspora, in addition to the speech delivered by President Michel Aoun the eve of election day.

It is worth noting that Judge Carla Shawah of the Lebanese Urgent Appeals Court has issued on May 12, 2022 a decision that deemed the statement of the SCE regarding the extension of electoral silence to include the diaspora as a violation of freedom of expression.

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