

# HOMOPHOBIA AND GENDER IDENTITY







# HOMOPHOBIA AND GENDER IDENTITY

MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

2014-2015

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

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The report is prepared by Media Development Foundation within the framework of the project “Advancing National Integration in Georgia” implemented by United Nations Association of Georgia with the support of the United States Agency for International Development. The content of the report is responsibility of Media Development Foundation and do not necessarily reflect the views of the USAID and UNAG.

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ISBN 978-9941-0-7731-9

# INTRODUCTION

This publication is the second of the series of reports on monitoring which was conducted by the Media Development Foundation (MDF). It is dedicated to homophobic expression as well gender discrimination and stereotyping.

The monitoring covers the period of one year, from 17 February 2014 to 18 February 2015 and involves the following media outlets: newspapers Asavali-Dasavali, Rezonansi, Prime Time, KvirisQronika, Alia, and KvirisPalitra<sup>1</sup>; main news programs and talk shows of five TV channels – Georgian Public Broadcaster, Imedi, Rustavi 2, Kavkasia and Maestro; also primetime talk shows of the media union Obiektivi and the Tabula TV company, and online editions – Sakinformi, InterpressNews, Netgazeti, PirWeli, Reportiori, Georgia and World (Geworld.ge).

Apart from monitored media outlets, this study includes examples of other randomly selected media outlets, which were considered important because of public reaction to them and the influence they had on public.

The data is classified by following sources: media, political parties and public organizations affiliated thereof, current and former officials, religious servants, and other representatives of public i.e. all those respondents that are not grouped as a separate category.

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





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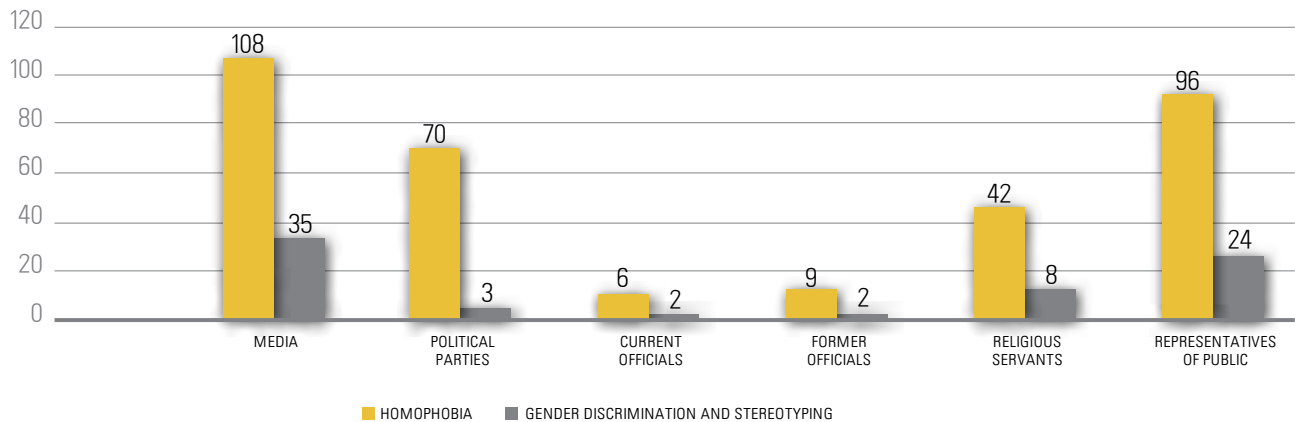
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# INTRODUCTION

## QUANTITATIVE DATA

During the monitoring period, some 331 expressions of homophobia and 74 gender discrimination and stereotyping were observed, that is, 406 facts in total.

Chart 1. Homophobia, gender discrimination and stereotyping by sources



Representatives of media were in the lead by sources of discrimination (the total of 145 expressions) with other representatives of public (120) following.

The most outstanding in homophobia, gender discrimination and stereotyping was Asaval-Dasavali newspaper (59) with Kviris Chronika (25) and online edition Geworld.ge (13) trailing.

Table 1. Homophobia, gender discrimination and stereotyping by media outlets

Media outlet	Homophoba	Gender discrimination and stereotyping	Total
Asaval-Dasavali	53	6	59
Kviris Chronika	18	7	25
Geworld.ge	11	2	13

Sakinformi	8	1	9
Media union Obiektivi	8	1	9
Alia	3	2	5
Prime Time	2	2	4
Rezonansi	1	4	5
Kviris Palitra	1	3	4
PirWeli	2	4	6
Kavkasia TV	1	1	2
Rustavi 2		1	1
GDC		1	1

Top three of political parties include: Burjanadze-United Democrats, Georgian Dream and Alliance of Patriots. They mainly engaged in homophobia. Moreover, these topics were intensively exploited in a clear anti-Western context in reference to European countries and US; they were less focused on the rights of LGBT and women. Consequently, the statistics below does not include these data.

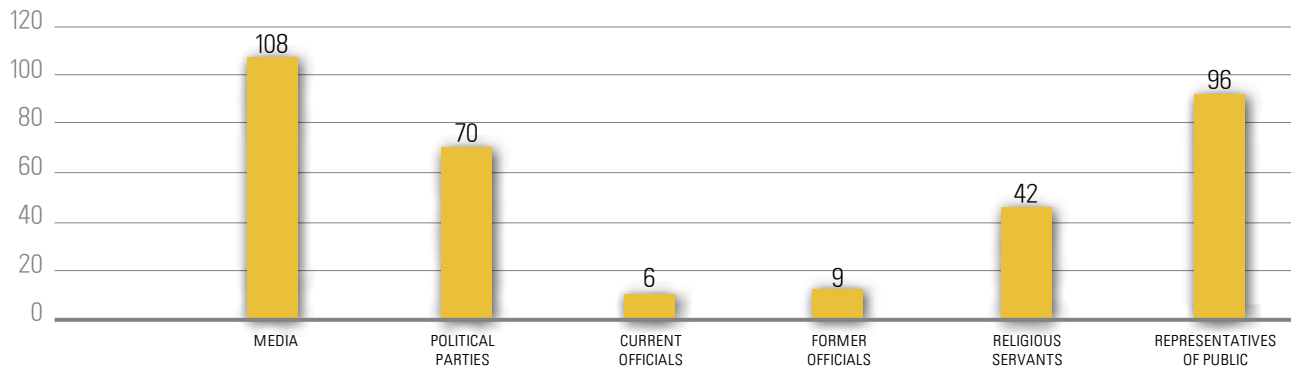
**Table 2. Homophobia, gender discrimination and stereotyping by political parties**

Media Outlet	Homophobia	Gender discrimination and stereotyping	Total
Burjanadze-United Democrats	20		20
Georgian Dream	16	1	17
Alliance of Patriots	12		12
Labor party	7		7
Free Democrats	1		1
People's Councill	4		4
Free Georgia	4		4
Various	5	2	7
People's Party	1		1

## MAIN FINDINGS

Homophobia – negative attitudes toward LGBT people or their lifestyle or culture and in general, towards people of different sexual orientation – can be expressed by antipathy, contempt, animosity, aggression, discomfort or fear, including hate speech, et cetera. We combined all these expressions under the category of “homophobic expression.”

Chart 2. Sources of homophobic expression



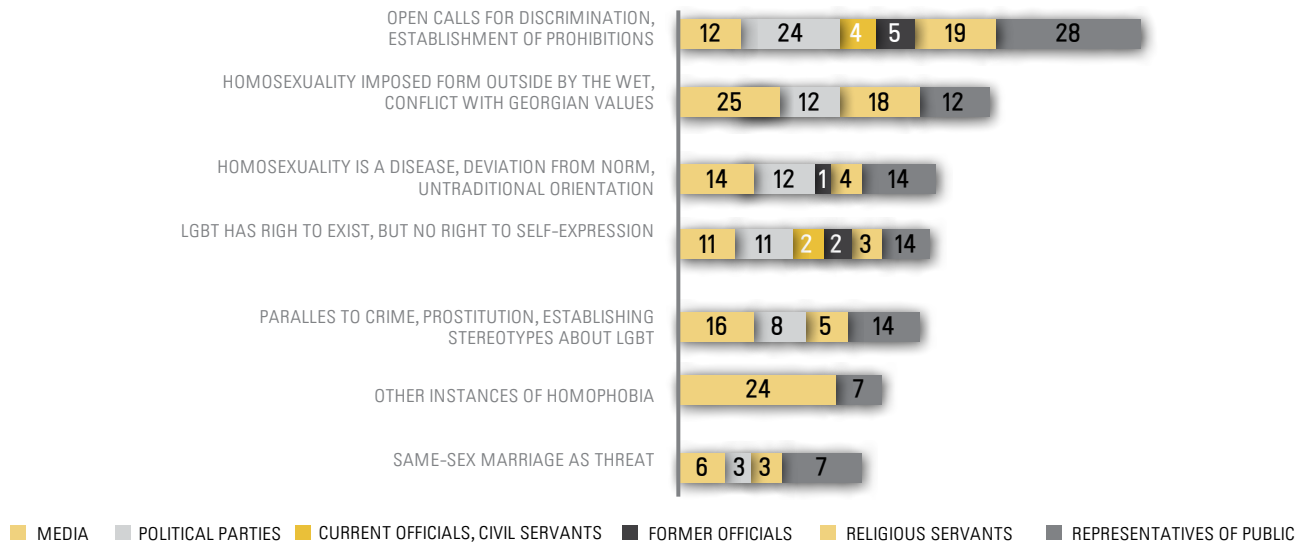
We classified examples of homophobia into thematic groups. Although all groups involve discrimination and stereotyping, we outlined the following streams of discourse:

1. Discussing of homosexuality as disease, deviation from norm, choice, non-traditional behavior;
2. Drawing parallels between LGBT persons and criminals as well as prostitutes. We included in this stream such stereotypes that did not fit into any other group and called it “establishment of stereotypes;”
3. Viewing homosexuality as a vice imposed by the Western liberals; a sin that conflicts with and endangers national traditions;
4. Portraying same-sex marriage as an inevitable stage in the protection of LGBT rights and a danger to national and religious values of Georgia;
5. Encouraging discrimination, establishment of prohibitions or open calls against antidiscrimination law; also encouraging violence;
6. Promoting opinion that self-expressions of LGBT persons is a propaganda and violence against the majority, that LGBT persons may exist but they do not have the right to self-expression;

7. Using hate speech, preaching violence and homophobia. We grouped these examples and called “other examples of homophobia.”

The study showed that the highest share of such expressions accounts for calls for discrimination and violence, sharp criticism of antidiscrimination law and linking it to LGBT. The next by intensity is the opinion that this topic is imposed from outside. The third is the attempt to stigmatize LGBT community and draw parallels between homosexuality, on the one hand, and crime and immorality, on the other.

**Chart 3. Types of homophobic expression**



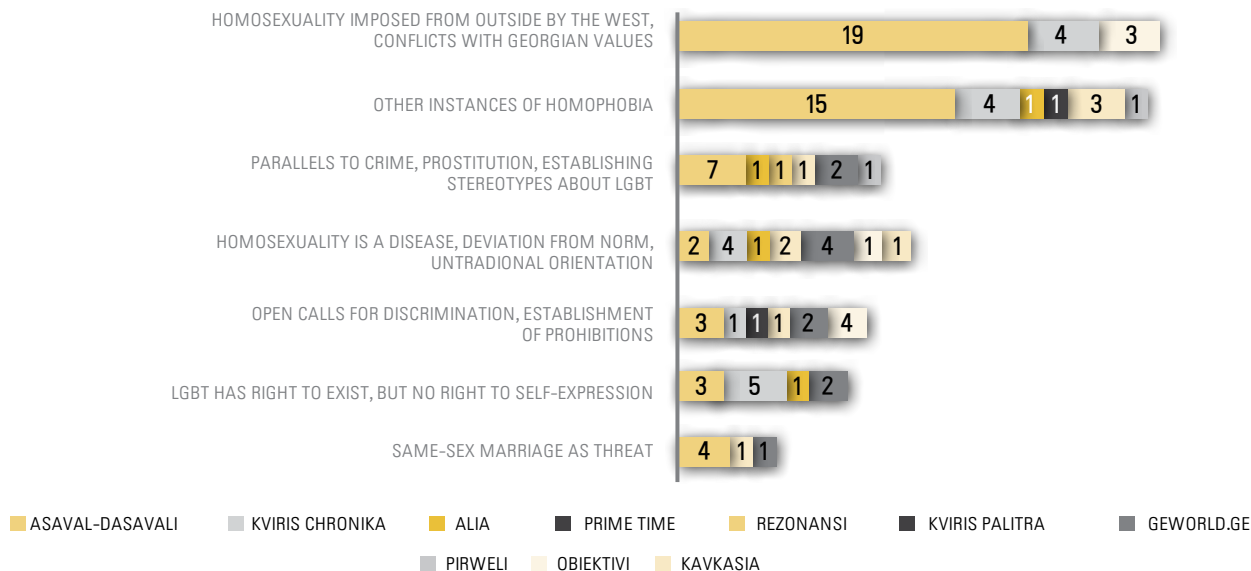
### 1.1. MEDIA

The monitoring showed frequent violations of journalistic standards by media and media representatives when covering the LGBT topic; even more, media representatives often represent themselves sources of homophobia. In this regard, one should note 108 facts of media coverage which included homophobic expressions by journalists or in titles thereby indicating editorial policy; violation of journalistic standards, mismatch of titles with the text or other breaches were observed in a number of cases.

The highest number of homophobic expressions were observed in media (78), followed by online (21) and broadcast (9) media.

The most outstanding by homophobic expressions was Asaval–Dasavali newspaper (53), followed by Kviris Chronika newspaper (18), online editions Geworld.ge (11) and Sakinformi (8); broadcast media union Obiektivi (3), Alia newspaper (3), Prime Time newspaper (2); news agency PirWeli (2), rezonansi newspaper (1), Kviris Palitra newspaper (1) and Kavkasia TV channel (1).

Chart 4. Types of homophobic expression by media outlets



It is noteworthy that journalists often use more aggressive and hateful language in their expressions than their respondents. They often apply pejorative terminology towards LGBT representatives as well as political groups whom they often call representatives of LGBT group; anti-Western statements are also made in regards with the protection of LGBT rights.

During the monitoring period, MDF jointly with nongovernmental organization TDI filed a complaint against homophobic expression in Rezonansi newspaper with the Georgian Charter of Journalists Ethics. On 10 April 2015, the Charter held on this complaint that Rezonansi newspaper, by publishing on 12 March an article titled “Stars of Hollywood that Hate Homosexuals,” violated Article 1 (Accuracy) and Article 7 (Discrimination) of Charter of Journalistic Ethics (see examples, p. 17)

On 8 August 2014, some 11 nongovernmental organizations released a statement regarding a discriminative coverage by Georgian Public Broadcaster, which heightened stereotypes (see examples, p. 20).

### ASAVAL-DASAVALI NEWSPAPER

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper especially stood out for violations and homophobic expression, accounting for half of the violations observed in Georgian media (53 out of 110). The rhetoric involved the promotion of idea that homosexuality is imposed by the West and contradicts Georgian values (19) as well as other homophobic expressions and hate speech (15).

Separate examples:

#### Parallels to prostitution, establishment of stereotypes about LGBT persons

- **Zaza Davitaia:** “A territory adjacent to circus is almost entirely seized by representatives of sexual minorities... What is more appalling is that they do not experience any shortage of customers. During night they consider themselves patrons of that place and emboldened by support of liberal-pederast nongovernmental organizations of various faiths, they launch attack on honest citizens... It is worrying that the wantonness of sexual minorities has reached its peak. The dignity of those selling their bodies appeared to have developed to such a point that they deem photographing them as the offence” (14-20 July , 2014).

#### Homosexuality as deviation from norm

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “If the pederasts have a right to donate blood, why those ordinary people don’t have a right to know that they are getting the pederasts’ blood?” (24 February – 2 March, 2014).

#### Homosexuality is imposed by the West and liberals, conflicts with Georgian values

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “Defilement of our country with something that is called Konchita, is shameful. It is as disgraceful, as holding a gay-parade on the central street of the capital! Yes, it doesn’t really matter what depraves the international musical contest, that is so important for your country. It can either be Konchita or the march of pederasts on the main street of your capital?!.. The main motivation for granting the victory of the Eurovision contest to this creature of unidentified sexual origin, was to announce the start of an “New LGBT era” throughout Eurasia!” (Asaval-Dasavali, July 21-27).

#### Same-sex marriage as threat

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “I consider it a success of ‘Asaval-Dasavalization’ that Prime Minister Garibashvili stated at the government meeting on 28 March they would make changes in the Constitution of Georgia, according to which the state recognizes as a family only that of a man and a woman!.. So this means that soon same-sex marriage will be constitutionally prohibited in Georgia!.. Asaval-Dasavali protects the motherland, mother-Church and the people



from the pink and gay troubles... I consider it a success of “Asaval-Dasavalization” that there will be no LGBT gay rally on Rustaveli on 17 May!” (31 March – 6 April, 2014).

**LGBT representatives have the right to exist, but do not have the right to self-expression in public space.**

- **Giorgi Gigauri:** “Everyone must know that so many whores and perverts seen on TVs and them propagating immorality is a well funded and thought out propaganda campaign!” (17-23 March, 2014).

**Calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions**

- **Zaza Davitaia:** “If we fight against the criminal mentality as an anti-state one, it would be good to spread this battle on other anti-state mentalities too and stop, for instance, LGBT mentality propaganda, because it opposes our traditions and values!” (24 February -2 March, 2014).

## **KVIRIS CHRONIKA NEWSPAPER**

The dominating opinion in Kviris Chronika newspaper (18 violations observed during the monitoring period) was that homosexuality is imposed by the Western liberals which runs counter to Georgian values. LGBT people are portrayed as threat to the national identity. Apart from this dominating topic, all other main trends were also observed in the newspaper.

Separate examples:

**Homosexuality is a disease, deviation from norm**

- **Gela Zedelashvili:** “Mr. Giorgi, none of the laws imply that they are ill, or in need of our protection. It is already accepted as a normal phenomenon and is even being propagated... Whatever you have underlined in your speech, exactly the same is written in the decree of Ruis Urbnisi church assembly – they are ill” (5-11 May, 2014).
- **Newpost:** “The list of diseases, with which people cannot get driver’s license has been renewed in Russia. Among such diseases are now faults of the gender identity, which concerns transsexuals and transvestites” (12-18 January, 2015).

**The West and liberals impose homosexuality which conflicts with Georgian values**

- **Giorgi Jikiashvili:** “Even in Holland, where the protection of rights of representatives of that damned LGBT community is implemented on the highest level, people with common sense are in a very bad situation... God forbid, sodomites step up their activity to such a level that the congregation has to defend sacred things from their attacks; but if we look with open eyes at the processes going on around us, this time is not too far. Quite the contrary, the threat has already approached our doors and the disaster is inevitable” (7-13 July, 2014).

**LGBT people have the right to exist, but do not have the right to self-expression in the public space**

- **Giorgi Jikiashvili:** “The first gay club is opening in Tbilisi, to be more precise the shelter of witches, of the people

obsessed with the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah... I guess [Irakli] Vacharadze together with his “team of chickens” will not feel happy until they have organized a group clucking on Rustaveli Avenue on May 17, they need to walk on the avenue by shaking along their cloacs. If they are allowed to do this than the whole Georgia’s rights is violated Moreover, the Association Agreement obliges us to secure the rights of the minorities, so that they feel themselves protected. This means that there should be a gay club in the country, they should be able to organize gay parades and should be able to marry each other too. This is where Georgia is heading to” (8-14 December).

#### Calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions

- **Tamar Okruashvili:** „It’s about the homosexuals, that they may corrupt our youth and children... Tristan Tselashvili tells me he is a military officer and does not want to be commanded by a homosexual in the army. The Parliament should have adopted a law to treat them, the problem is they are inside the Parliament too and that is why they adopt such laws” (19-25 May, 2014).

#### ALIA NEWSPAPER

Three instances of homophobia were seen in Alia newspaper.

#### LGBT people have the right to exist, but do not have the right to self-expression in the public space

- **Gela Zedelashvili:** “Irakli Vacharadze the protector of LGBT rights and the leader of the NGO “Identoba” once managed to fulfill his aim; because of his deeds the Australian Opera terminated employment of the world famous soprano Tamar Iveri.... Sandro Bregadze was his next target, he is neither an opera singer, nor the ballet dancer, he cannot organize concerts for the “Pederasts” It is interesting how can he avoid the attack of “soft” people” (31 October – 3 November, 2014).

#### PRIME TIME NEWSPAPER

#### Unjustified reference to sexual identity

- The newspaper reported unconfirmed information about GiorgiSabanadze, the executive director of nongovernmental organization Citizen, and other employees of public library, associating them with LGBT community in a negative context: “Last week, an interview with former employees of Sabanadze was published in one of editions, where they recall Sabanadze’s gay past and accuse him of organizing an LGBT gay pride which was thwarted last May... According to the interview of former employees of the public library, after the gay pridewas frustrated, the director of the public library, GiorgiKekelidze, and employees of the library, GiorgiSabanadzeand EmzarJgerenaia, treated LGBT representatives in the so called French Hall of the library with a cream cake which had the form of phallus” (17 February, 2014).

### Discrimination

- **Eka Chikvaide:** If you think this way, why did not you go to Rustaveli in 17 May last year with a stool?” (24 November, 2014).

### REZONANSI NEWSPAPER

On 12 March 2014, Rezonansi newspaper, in its entertainment section, published an article titled “Stars of Hollywood who Hate Homosexuals.” It should be noted that the title and content of the article did not match each other. The article contained opinions of those stars (Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie) who demand additional legal guarantees for LGBT representatives, while opinions of other Hollywood stars about LGBT people, provided in the article, were not homogeneous and could not be assessed as the expression of hate. The Georgian Charter of Journalists Ethics held on a complaint, which was filed against this article by Media Development Foundation and Tolerance and Diversity Institute, that the title of the article encouraged hatred towards LGBT people as well as discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation and therefore, constituted the violation of Article 7 (Discrimination) of Charter of Journalistic Ethics which states: “The journalist shall be aware of the danger of discrimination being furthered by the media, and shall do the utmost to avoid facilitating such discrimination based on, among other things, race, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinions, and national or social origins.”

### KVIRIS PALITRA NEWSPAPER

#### Homophobia

- A journalist of Kviris Palitra put a discriminatory question to a neighbor of a deceased person and in the title put an emphasis on the sexual identity of the deceased. The title: “Murder on the Beijing Street: The Deceased Always Wore Women’s Clothes, No One had Seen Him in Trousers.” A journalist, Eter Eradze [asking the neighbor]: “according to reports the man was transgender; did this cause aggression among neighbors?” (KvirisPalitra.ge, 11 November, 2014).

## ONLINE MEDIA

### GEWORLD.GE

During the monitoring period 11 homophobic expressions were detected in online edition Geworld.ge. Among them the most frequent were instances of stereotyping LGBT representatives, drawing parallels between homosexuality and crime and prostitution (4).

Separate examples:

#### Parallels to crime, prostitution, establishment of stereotypes about LGBT persons

- **Armaz Sanablidze:** „This form of immorality [porno and sex websites] is lobbied by the lesbian, homosexual and transgender societies, who actively demand implementation of the early sexualization of children, and achieve this too... Police arrested a 41 years old man for cannibalism. In front of a video camera he killed and ate a 42 years old man... with that latter one’s agreement. They explained this crime by the proclivities of both men towards homosexuality and cannibalism“ (25 December, 2014).

#### Homosexuality is a deviation from norm, non-traditional orientation

- **Eka Naskidashvili:** „Why did they kill Zhvania? If he had a sexual deviation, as his teammate Nationals say, would this be the cause for murder?.. “What is greater shame – that the Prime Minister has a different sexual orientation, or that the Prime Minister gets murdered?“ (18 February, 2015).

#### Calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions, violence, opposition to antidiscrimination law

- **Iakob Lezhava:** „There were the plague and “Spanish” influenza directed against humanity... And today the colorful plague in the colors of the rainbow is spread over all continents in the gigantic rainbow... Everything in the nature (including alcohol and narcotics), even natural disasters, has two sides – the positive and the negative, everything, except the cigarettes and homosexuality!..“ Our “enemy” Russia prohibited propaganda of homosexuality. Would it be bad for us to adopt the same law?“ (15 January, 2015).

### SAKINFORMI

Sakinfromi journalists expressed homophobia eight times when talking about LGBT topic. Those expressions involved stereotyping, calls for the establishment of prohibitions, aggressive statements about LGBT people.

Separate examples:

#### Parallels to crime, prostitution, establishment of stereotypes about LGBT persons

- “Special torturers – gays, sadists – so called Law Enforcement Agencies, the sadist employees of the Ministry of the Internal Affairs and Military, everyone from the Saakashvili’s Penis-tential system abuse young people” (11 December, 2014).

#### Homosexuality is a deviation from norm, non-traditional orientation

- **Nino Kartvelishvili:** “Physicians of all countries know that only 5% of the so called sexual minorities are born that way... They should have the same rights as cripples and people with the Down syndrome and other illnesses... From

the perspective of ethics and moral, such relations were considered immoral by the society! But in the past nobody gave grants, good jobs for its propaganda, nor did the law (antidiscrimination) protect them. Did anyone advertise such proclivities?!” (19 December, 2014).

#### Calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions

- **Arno Khidirbegishvili:** “If Garibashvili wants to remain as a the Prime Minister and prosperity of Georgia, the Parliament should adopt immediately the similar laws as Putin did in Russia: particularly, the law on propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations among minors; the law prohibiting operation of foreign non-governmental organizations... in such case there will be no high circulated publications of these ill and pervert people” (12 May, 2014).

#### PIRWELI

#### Establishment of stereotypes about LGBT persons

- “There was a video disseminated in the internet about gay couple living together... according to the scientific research, children who were brought up by gay couples are more inclined to venereal diseases and to the suicide” (May 16, 2014).

## BROADCAST MEDIA

#### OBIEKTIVI

The opinion dominating the talk show Night Studio aired on the media union Obiektivi was that the protection of LGBT rights runs counter to Georgian values and is imposed by the West and liberals.

Separate examples:

#### Homosexuality is imposed from the West by liberals, conflicts with Georgian values

- **Bondo Mdzinarashvili:** “The Mayor of Berlin was homosexual... the same in the case of the Mayor of Paris. I apologize for this inappropriate correlation, but how do you imagine electing a homosexual as a mayor in Georgia, where electing a mayor originally not from Tbilisi was met with so much resistance?” (July 31, 2014).

#### Calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions, opposition to antidiscrimination law

- **Valery Kvaratskhelia:** “Should the propaganda of this [homosexuality] be prohibited by law, or should not be?.. I personally cannot be understanding towards the propagandists of this phenomenon [homosexuality], to those who are trying to impose this on the society” (28 December, 2014).

## KAVKASIA

### Homosexuality is a deviation from norm

- **David Akubardia:** “We know Hoover was a homosexual, and has some personal relationship or sympathy with Eisenhower, so because of pathological twists this man made a card index of people like him” (9 September, 2014).

## GEORGIAN PUBLIC BROADCASTER

### Unjustified reference to sexual identity

- On August 6, the main news program of Georgian Public Broadcaster, Moambe, reported a fatal incident caused by the negligence of parents, which took place in the US state of Kansas. A 10-month-old child died after being left by parents in the car under 30C degree heat. The US source of this information reported about one parent whose negligence led to the death of the child. The First Channel of GPB, however, placed emphasis on a “same-sex couple” without mentioning that the couple had 5 children. The anchor of the news program said: “the gay couple left 10-month-old daughter in a car – child died because of the heat.” According to Washington Post reports, only in 2014, at least 21 children have died after being left in cars in the heat in the US. The editorial board of news program of the GPB, however, selected just one tragedy suffered by the same-sex couple and left other 20 cases unmentioned in its report.

Eleven nongovernmental organizations<sup>2</sup> saw in this coverage an unjustified reference to sexual identity, distorted interpretation of facts and encouragement of intolerance towards LGBT persons and released a joint statement.

### Incitement to hatred

- On 19 April 2014, when commenting on a religious ritual broadcast on the Georgian Public Broadcaster, a religious servant talked about the antidiscrimination law adopted by the Georgian parliament and used discriminatory and pejorative language towards LGBT people (“perverted relationships”). In particular, the religious servant said that “this will be an offence of that preaching and tradition which this church and this nation have and this will definitely trigger clashes among the nation”, “because of these sins people will be punished with rain of sulfur and fire.”

For this comment, members of the “No to Phobia” platform filed a complaint with the self-regulatory body of the GPB.<sup>3</sup> The GPB held against the complaint and justified the comment as the freedom of expression.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://mdfgeorgia.ge/geo/view\\_statements/79](http://mdfgeorgia.ge/geo/view_statements/79)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.mdfgeorgia.ge/geo/view\\_news/27](http://www.mdfgeorgia.ge/geo/view_news/27)

## IMEDI TV COMPANY

Imedis Kvira program produced a report on the killing of transgender Sabi who, according to official theory, was murdered because of disagreement over the debt repayment. The report on this crime unjustifiably included archived material which concerned a sexual orientation of the deceased. In particular, in that fragment, Sabi said: “I experienced an internal fight which was very difficult and I managed to overcome it – I like men.” This actuality was followed by a still from a court case of the suspect in this murder, which could create an incorrect impressions about the motive of the crime (Imedis Kvira, 16 November 2014).

### 1.2. POLITICAL PARTIES

During the monitoring period, some 70 instances of homophobic expression by political parties were observed in media. This data does not include instances of anti-Western rhetoric, which involved political speculations on LGBT topic, as well as instances of applying LGBT terminology in the form of hate speech against political opponents for the aim of offending them.

The leader in homophobic expressions was the political union Burjanadze-United Democrats (20) together with People’s Council (5) which affiliated with the former; that is in total 25 instances. These were followed by the Georgian Dream (16) and the Alliance of Patriots (12) with Labor Party (7), Imedi political party (5), Free Georgia (4), Free Democrats (1) and People’s Party (1) trailing.

Chart 5. Homophobia by political parties and groups affiliated with them

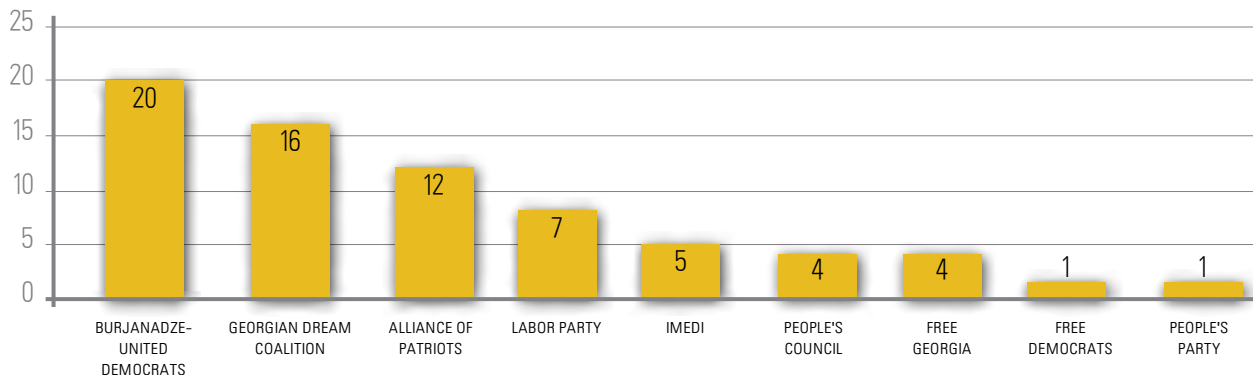
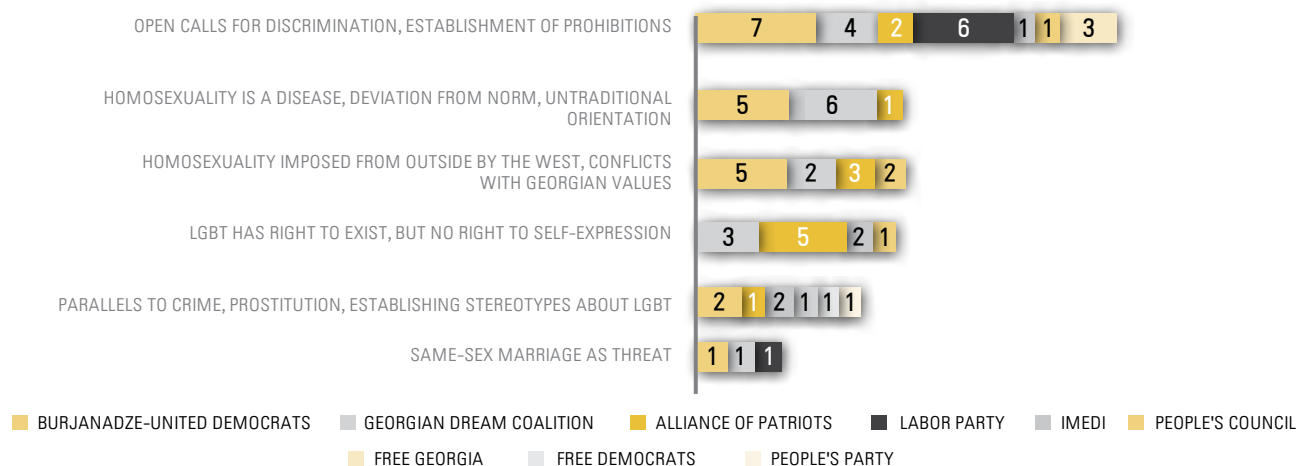


Chart 6. Main trends in homophobic expression by political parties



### THE GEORGIAN DREAM COALITION

During the monitoring period, representatives of the Georgian Dream coalition voiced homophobic messages 16 times.

Among Georgian Dream messages a dominant opinion was that homosexuality is a disease, a deviation from the norm, untraditional orientation (6); they also promoted the idea that LGBT persons have the right to exist, but no right to self-expression in the public space; they also assessed the protection of LGBT rights as the violence against the majority (3); encouraged discrimination and spoke against the antidiscrimination law (4); maintained that homosexuality was imposed from the outside, by the West, and ran counter to Georgian values (2); and portrayed same-sex marriage as threat (1).

Separate examples:

#### Homosexuality is a disease, a deviation from the norm, untraditional orientation

- **David Patsatsia:** “The law says not to deprive a person because he/she is ill. This is how I understand it. This is an illness, which is genetic or caused by certain conditions” (Obektiv, Night Studio, July 1, 2014).
- **Nukri Kantaria:** “For me, personally, this is obviously abnormal. It is definitely a sin from religious point of view, but it is also against the nature...” (Obektiv, Night Studio, 5 May, 2014).

#### Homosexuality runs counter to Georgian values

- **Zaza Papuashvili:** “They can do all they want at home. I call on the people of untraditional sexual orientation to defend interests of the country where they live” (Interpressnews, 29 April, 2014).



### Encouragement of discrimination and unacceptability of antidiscrimination law

- **Omar Nishnianidze:** “This was our parties main concern, we even swore an oath to oppose to any request about voting for such law in future; honestly saying my hand was trembling when we were adopting the law. But we also have to compromise sometimes in order to save the country, to save it from “Ukrainization” (Geworld.ge 4 June, 2014).
- **Omar Nishnianidze:** “Why?.. don’t you see the difference between faggots and respect of parents? I am sorry, but this is something different, but that is horridness... “ (Netgazeti, May 16, 2014).
- **Murman Dumbadze:** “We have adopted anti-discrimination law, even a homosexual has been made equal with any human being, and what problem is the membership of a political party?” (Rezonansi, 14 February, 2014).

### LGBT people have the right to exist, but no right to self-expression in the public space

- **Zaza Papuashvili:** “I have other things to do instead of following some homosexuals and beating them... I will never support its legalization and propaganda, but we must see the reality, such people exist around us, but on the issues like same-sex marriage or adoption of children, I will die before supporting propaganda of this”( Kavkasia, Today, 29 April, 2014).
- **Gogi Topadze:** “Would you be pleased to see two men on the wedding, coming out of the registry office and hugging each other?...” It [the law] states: do not raid them. Yet, if you want democracy and freedom, you will have to endure them. Nevertheless loud publicity of this lifestyle is unacceptable” (Netgazeti, May 15, 2014).

### BURJANADZE-UNITED DEMOCRATS

Messages voiced by representatives of Burjanadze-United Democrats (20) most frequently involved discrimination, calls for the establishment of prohibitions, and opposition to antidiscrimination law (7); also they promoted opinions that homosexuality is imposed by the West and runs counter to Georgian national and religious values (5), and is a disease, deviation from norm and untraditional orientation (5); parallels between homosexuality and crime and prostitution and stereotyping were also observed (2); same-sex marriage was portrayed as threat (1).

Separate examples:

### Parallels between homosexuality and crime and prostitution and stereotyping

- **Jondi Baghaturia:** „Massive rapes and tortures of prisoners – all who took part in it were homosexuals. A different kind of man just does not do it...“ (Public Broadcaster, Moambe, 30 April, 2014).
- **Irakli Batiashvili:** “This is a fundamentally wrong philosophy. It is wrong to put sexual orientation in the same category as people who are different based on their skin-color, belief, race or the way of thinking... Government should protect everyone, including murderers, prisoners; they should be punished in the name of law. It doesn’t matter if he is a pederast or anybody else, he is a human... if we follow the same logic and group of Satanists start requesting the same, I am curious to know, will they also be called as a discriminated group?” (Kavkasia, Barieri, May 14, 2014).

### Homosexuality is a disease, deviation from norm

- **Jondi Bagaturia:** „Is incest a norm? Is pedophilia or necrophilia a norm? This is a deviation from the norm, right? So let us say that people who deviate from the norm, like a drug addicts or the sexual deviation that a person has” (Kavkasia, Today, 29 April, 2014).

### Homosexuality is imposed by the West and conflicts with Georgian values

- **Dimitry Lortkipanidze:** “I totally disapprove the definition of homophobia – the way it is cultivated in some of the EU member states... the imposition of wrong sexual lifestyle in the name of freedom of speech and freedom of expression... has to be definitely condemned. We have to ban propaganda with gay parades and performances. I will safeguard the rights of Georgian citizen!” (Rustavi2 , Theme of the week, May 18, 2014).

### Open calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions

- **Nino Burjanadze:** “...It is quite possible, that we have people working at schools and kindergartens, who openly state their sexual orientation. They may start assuring children that there is nothing wrong in being a sexual minority. This is something that I will oppose” (Rezonansi, May 12, 2014).
- **Guram Palavandishvili:** “We can do it, we will unite in the parliament and with assistance from Mr. Dima all the propaganda of homosexuals, gay parades, disgusting images, and photographs and so on will be forbidden” (Georgian Public Broadcaster, First Studio, May 16, 2014).

## PEOPLE’S COUNCIL

Four homophobic expressions by the People’s Council were detected during the monitoring period. Two of them promoted the opinion that the West imposes unacceptable values, “everything immoral” on Georgia. Portraying same-sex marriage as threat (1) and referring to homosexuality as immorality (1) were also observed.

Example:

- **Elizbar Javelidze:** “We have signed the Association Agreement and it also emphasizes the approach that we are expected to raise our children so that from the age of 14 they decide themselves on their gender identity. Children should perceive same-sex marriage and they must perceive this disease as something normal“ ...10 years ago they adopted such amendments to the law; there was a big fuss kicked up but no one knew back than that this would be followed by a same-sex marriage; that is where we are heading for” (Alia, 11-14 July, 2014).

## ALLIANCE OF PATRIOTS

Representatives of the Alliance of Patriots were also distinguished for their homophobia. Some 12 instances of homophobic expression were observed during the monitoring. Main platforms used by the Alliance of Patriots to promote their homophobic ideas included: Obiektivi, Geworld.ge, Asaval-Dasavali and Imedi TV channel.

Homophobic expression was especially intense in the context of adoption of antidiscrimination law. One could hear radical statements against the antidiscrimination law and its supporters involving calls to cancel the law (2); a conspicuous trend of discourse was that LGBT people have the right to exist, but not the right to self-expression in public space (5); the main line of discourse the representatives of the Alliance of Patriots followed was underscoring negative European influence and its fight against Georgian values (3). For example, “If all this is maintained, there will emerge an issue of prohibiting the masterpiece of Georgian literature “The Knight in Panther’s Skin” in Georgia...” This political party is also the only one which, during the monitoring period, said that putting LGBT minority and ethnic minority on an equal footing was an offence of ethnic minorities. One could also observe parallels to crime and prostitution, stereotyping LGBT persons (1) as well as portraying homosexuality as a disease (1).

### Homosexuality imposed by the West

- **Vaja Otarashvili:** “We don’t need Europe that promotes the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah. I prefer to let the country be destroyed to the ground zero, rather than hand it to lesbians and pederasts” (Geworld.ge, 8 May, 2014).

### Same-sex marriage as threat

- **Vaja Otarashvili:** “If he needs it so badly, let Usupashvili give us an example publicly by marrying his boy to a boy and marrying his daughter to a girl. All 112 members of parliament, who vote for the law, could do the same. This parliament has betrayed us and I am ashamed of it” (Geworld.ge, 8 May, 2014).

### Calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions

- **Mamuka Gobechia:** “The first thing we are going to do is – to send this law far away... If nothing changes during the next ten or fifteen years, trust me, the legendary piece of literature “Knight in the panthers skin” will be banned... they have heterosexual relationships... they may even ban “The elder of the ravine – Gocha”, or even “Dry beechwood” and this is when our spirituality will be lost” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 4 June, 2014).

### LGBT people have the right to exist, but not the right to self-expression in public space

- **David Tarkhan-Mouravi:** “In fact everyone knows today that the so called sexual minorities are less than 3% in the world. But they are disturbing the whole world. Disturbing with these endless demands of theirs... Truth is, they also want to impose their ideology on us... We must not take this lightly” (Obiektivi, Night Studio, 30 December, 2014).

## LABOR PARTY

Representatives of Labor Party resorted to homophobic expression seven times during the monitoring period. The Labor Party’s rhetoric with regard to LGBT rights and antidiscrimination law was rather aimed at personal discrimination and political opposition (against businessman Levan Vasadze, Bidzina Ivanishvili, Georgian Dream and United National Movement). This topic was also used for discrediting businessman Levan Vasadze and police officers. Topics that were relatively lesser exploited by this party included portrayal of consequences of the protection of LGBT rights as a negative phenomenon and the underscoring of outside factors in the imposition of those rights.

Separate examples:

#### Calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions, unacceptability of antidiscrimination law

- **Shalva Natelashvili:** „Historians will remember not that he [Bidzina Ivanishvili] built Trinity Cathedral, but that he had antidiscrimination law adopted and held a gay parade, at least he did not hinder it. And he will also be remembered for holding Kazantip“ (Kviris Chronika, 24–30 November, 2014).
- **Giorgi Khorganashvili:** “I will not allow those LGBTs to hang out here, I will manage somehow, and I think I will succeed, to completely disallow them in Tbilisi, together with their “Kots” (Georgian Dream supporters), not necessarily the “Nats” though (National Movement supporters)” (Georgian Public Broadcaster, May 15, 2014).

#### IMEDI POLITICAL PARTY

The political party Imedi portrayed homosexuality as something tantamount to cannibalism and drew parallels between homosexuality and vegetarianism. It spoke about threats posed by the protection of LGBT rights to Georgian traditions. This topic was exploited for the aim of opposing the United National Movement as well.

#### Parallels to crime

- **Irina Sarishvili:** “Cannibalism is the same type of mental anomaly [as homosexuality]. According to your logic, I am addressing so called “advanced” people, if a cannibal is invited at a dinner, is it going to be a violation of their rights if their favorite dishes are missing on the table? It is not an exaggeration; this is where we are heading to!” (Reportiori, 12 June, 2014).

#### LGBT people have the right to exist, but not the right to self-expression in public space

- **Irina Sarishvili:** “...I cannot limit the rights of anybody’s existence or living, but the rights of homosexuals or vegetarians should never prevail my rights” (Asaval-Dasavali, June 16-22, 2014).

#### FREE GEORGIA

The political party Free Georgia resorted to homophobia four times. Representatives of the party promoted the idea that homosexuality and pedophilia should be considered as similar phenomena; that homosexuality is unacceptable in European countries too (which is a very rare attitude among those observed during the monitoring period) and that the punishment of representatives of majority for offending LGBT individuals is unacceptable.

Example:

- **Kakha Kukava:** “Sexual orientation means a million of other monstrosities besides homosexuality, like for example necrophilia, pedophilia, etc. This is not specified in the law. It just says “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” (Rezonansi, 3 May, 2014).

## FREE DEMOCRATS

Only one representative of Free Democrats, Viktor Dolidze, made it into the list of homophobic expressions. The respondent spoke against violence though at the same time describes homosexuality as something “contradicting nature.”

### Homosexuality contradicts nature

- **Viktor Dolidze:** “Had any citizen ever caused any problems for the national or sexual minorities in Georgia? I honestly cannot remember many such cases, I cannot even remember few. Nobody has a right to use violence because of person’s private views, even if a person goes against nature and chooses such way of life, any violence against this person must be prevented“ (Netgazeti, 6 April, 2014).

## 1.3. REPRESENTATIVES OF CURRENT AND FORMER AUTHORITIES

Current political officials made six homophobic statements during the monitoring period: LGBT people have the right to exist, but not the right to self-expression in public space (2) and calls for discrimination, prohibitions and violence (4).

The highest incumbent official who made a homophobic statement was Davit Darakhvelidze, the Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia. In an interview he particularly said:

- **Davit Darakhvelidze:** “Homosexuals are diseased people and should only be pitied. These people, however, organize rallies whilst those people who support them and are of absolutely normal sexual orientation, earn living by means of these rallies. We are not even able to promote the job we are doing and fully inform society about it and why should a person with sexual deviation publicize this?!” (Vesria newspaper, 9 May, 2014).

Homophobic statements by incumbent high officials also include statements of the Minister of Culture and Education of Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, Dima Jaiani (4).

- **Dima Jaiani:** “You non-men! Don’t madden the people or the last year’s 17 May will seem a cakewalk for you! The government must do everything for the Rustaveli cinema, where for decades works of the great masters of our culture were being demonstrated, not to be perverted by apologia of buggery!” (Asaval-Dasavali, 21-27 April, 2014).

Hate speech and intolerance to self-expression of LGBT community as well as the conduct of gay pride was also observed in the rhetoric of the Rector of Police Academy, and the MP Luka Kurtanidze:

- **Luka Kurtanidze, Vice-rector of Police Academy:** “Pederasts and gay life, this is what you were teaching, were not you? Was not it you who wanted to organize a (gay) parade?! I am telling you, don’t let this Saakashvili or Saakiani control you” (Rustavi 2, P.S., 5 October, 2014).

## FORMER OFFICIALS

Nine instances of homophobic expression by former officials were observed during the monitoring period. In the majority of cases (5) they involved calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions and opposition to antidiscrimination law; the opinion that LGBT people have the right to exist, but not the right to self-expression in public space (2) was promoted as well as the idea that homosexuality is a choice (1) and imposed by liberals of the Western (1).

### Discrimination on sexual ground

- **Vakhtang Rcheulishvili, former Deputy Speaker of Parliament:** „In my youth there was a joke question: if behind you there are man’s genitals and in front of you a knife – whence will you move? I would move aside. If you don’t learn this and if you want to make a choice, moving on either a knife or man’s genitals, then you will always lose, you will be either a pederast or a dead man...” (Kavkasia, Speqtri, 5 September, 2014).

### Calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions, opposition to antidiscrimination law

- **Tengiz Kitovani, former Minister of Defense:** “This is the parliament that has adopted the law for homosexuals, this kind of parliament should be abolished immediately, it should not exist in Georgia” (Imedi, Kronika, May 17, 2014).
- **Tamaz Vashadze, the former Tbilisi Mayor:** “These villains toppled Zviad (Gamsakhurdia) and destroyed the country – homosexuals have taken over Georgia! Watch archive materials from the 1st channel what Kitovani told Zhvania at a parliament session: ‘Be grateful that I toppled Zviad or otherwise, had he remained in power you and people of your ilk would have been incarcerated in #8 prison cell together with Mamed!’” (Asaval-Dasavali, 14-20 July, 2014).
- **Valeri Gelbakhiani, former member of the parliament:** “If someone is a homosexual, does it mean he can have more advantages than I have?” (Asaval-Dasavali, 5-11 May, 2014).

### LGBT people have the right to exist, but not the right to self-expression in public space

- **Valery Khaburdzania, former Minister of Security:** „In our country there is propaganda of immorality under the cover of the fight against discrimination. Look what is happening in Georgia! There is no series in which the LGBT topic is not put in artificially!.. In some cases they violate the rights of the majority themselves“ (Asaval-Dasavali, 19-25 May, 2014).

## 1.4. RELIGIOUS SERVANTS

When studying homophobic expression we set aside religious servants as a separate group and those emphasis and opinions which they made in their statements in media regarding LGBT community.

The total of 42 homophobic expressions by religious servants were observed in the monitoring period. The majority of authors of those statements were representatives of the Orthodox Church.

The leader among media outlets giving platform to these respondents was Asaval–Dasavali newspaper. Other media outlets also often giving their platforms to religious servants and their homophobic statements were Alia, Sakinformi, InterpressNews and PirWeli.

Religious servants were especially active in the run up to 17 May 2014 and also in June when antidiscrimination law was debated in the parliament. This group, given its specifics, placed main emphasis, along with stereotyping LGBT representatives, on such topics as sin, spirituality and fight against the Church and various tribulations brought about to the country as a result of sin; moreover, in addition to accusing the West, liberals were portrayed as the enemy who impose on the country the protection of LGBT rights, legalization of same–sex marriage and antidiscrimination law. Religious servants called for prohibitions of the law and the protection of LGBT rights in the form of rallies as well as violence against LGBT persons and defenders of their rights.

Examples:

#### Parallels to crime, prostitution, stereotyping LGBT community

- **Elizbar Diakonidze, deacon:** „Can the parliament members tell me, who are the sexual minorities – only lesbians and sodomites? How about pedophiles? Zoophyte? Necrophilia? Gerontophilia? So all “philiias” are there, and when I fight by Constitution against pedophilia, which is punishable by laws of all countries, why do you let such person to schools and small children? What made them love these pederasts, someone explain to me? And should not people protest this in the streets?“ “Why should I be grateful to him [Bidzina Ivanishvili], because he built Trinity Cathedral? Why does he destroy my soul? Can a sodomite enter cathedral? Who did he build Trinity for?“ (Alia, 29 April, 2014).

#### Homosexuality as disease, deviation from the norm

- **Giorgi Razmadze, deacon:** “... When a men calls himself a woman, we have to medicate him, rather than protect his rights” (Alia, 9–12 May, 2014).
- **Theodore Gignadze, deacon:** “There may be a person who does nothing wrong, but he is still sinful, because his nature is distorted. Homosexuality is a sign of distorted nature” (Reporter, May 18, 2014).

#### Homosexuality imposed from outside, opposes Georgian values

- **Spiridon Abuladze, Archbishop:** “What are they thinking about when they come and propagate homosexuality and the sin of Sodom? Are not they even worse than Rukhnaddin or group of demons?.. They come here; they finance Georgia and then force people to become homosexuals. In case you don’t turn into a shameless and sinful homosexual, they threaten not to give any more grants. Are we the offenders after all?“ (Alia, 9–21 May, 2014).

#### Same–sex marriage as threat

- **Giorgi Razmadze, deacon:** “Our parliamentarians were saying that we should not be afraid, there would be no mar-

riages, and if there will be, we will leave the Parliament. Now I will remind Beselia, Kobakhidze and others – where is the fulfillment of the promise? Why are they still in the Parliament? There already is the fact – a man has married another man, a woman has married another woman, a man with an animal. Why are they silent?” (Alia, 2 September, 2014).

**LGBT people have the right to exist, but not the right to self-expression in public space, protection of LGBT rights is the violence against majority**

- **Ilia II, the Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church:** “Our modern mode of life got heavier and ill, because there is massive incitement of the propaganda of sin. There has never been such a large-scale attack of the evil before... and the modern pseudo-liberalism wants to destroy the notion of sin... They attack morality, which today means battling not just religious rules, but general values of humanity as well. In fact, they offer society the way of life lower than that of animals even, and push it towards total moral degradation“ (Interpressnews, 21 April, 2014).

**Calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions, opposition to antidiscrimination law**

- **David Isakadze, dean:** “It would probably be good to have a plebiscite, where people would express their opinions about the same-sex marriage and LGBT propaganda, which would later pass into law, with everything being set into right places... Preaching homosexuality equals the country’s genocide and the Georgian people must not allow this (Asaval Dasavali, 10-16 March, 2014).
- **A petition of clerics to the parliament speaker:** “Please, ban the preaching of homosexuality and any perversion in Georgia, such as LGBT prides and public marches. Also, please, ban screening of a Georgian film about Georgian homosexuals. All this aims at perverting and degrading our children, youth and the entire nation. We ask members of parliament to legalize the ban on LGBT propaganda in streets, public spaces, higher educational institutions and schools” (Interpressnews, 13 April, 2014).

## 1.5. OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF PUBLIC

Some 96 instances of homophobic expression on the part of other representatives of public were observed. Top ten included poet Rezo Amashukeli (10), businessman Levan Vasadze (6) and actor Misha Gomiashvili.

Sources of homophobic expression in society were quite diverse. The study showed that most outstanding by homophobia was a group of so called political prisoners, organizations established by them as well as nongovernmental organizations Free Generation, Eurasian Union, Mother tongue, Motherland and Faith (the total of 18 instances).

Among media outlets Asaval-Dasavali newspaper was the one which most broadly covered homophobic expressions (34). This was followed by Obiektivi TV channel (14) and Geworld.ge and Kviris Chronika newspaper.



When speaking about LGBT community, other representatives of public, in fact, employed those stereotypes and trends which were observed in case of politicians. In this particular case, however, violent calls for the restriction of the LGBT rights protection and the opposition to the antidiscrimination law were more intensive; a group of doctors and psychologists actively promoted the idea that homosexuality is a mental disease; the protection of LGBT rights was basically viewed as a prerogative of LGBT persons or people “bought” by foreigners.

Examples:

#### Establishing stereotypes about LGBT people

- **Simon Mskharashvili, historian:** “When you give prize on the Cannes festival to “Adel”, to the film about the love of two lesbians, and let the film about underage lesbians win – you will not be able to raise a Napoleon, or a courageous man... The main pain of the humanity – two lesbians, whores...

**David Akubardia, anchor:** They were not whores...

**Simon Mskharashvili:** If she is a lesbian, how can she not be a whore?!” (Kavkasia, Spektri, 28 August, 2014).

#### Same-sex marriage as threat

- **Levan Vasadze, businessman:** „During the last 30 years, in some regions of the world, more specifically in the Western countries, the propaganda of immorality has become something like an aggressive religion... Notably, almost always the sodomites want to adopt a boy, while lesbians want a girl. Later, many of these poor children have suicide attempts, and almost all of them have problems with drugs and alcohol, since when they become teenagers, often their “two fathers” or “two mothers” satisfy their sexual wishes with them... While at first they are used to this abomination, that instead of father and mother they have “two fathers” or “two mothers”, they discover that in truth they have two cynical immoral beasts” (Kviris Palitra, 20 January, 2015).

#### Homosexuality as a disease, deviation from the norm

- **Giorgi Shengelaia, director:** “Human is a biological creature, some are born with this flaw, some ill and some healthy“ (Rezonansi, 1 May, 2014).
- **Givi Merabishvili, psychologist:** “This is the problem of psychological disorder... I can say it is an illness” (Obiektivni, Night Studio, May 18, 2014).
- **Levan Vasadze, businessman:** „The minority multiplied as a result of the unnatural corruption has no connection to the natural minorities. There is no scientific proof that this is genetically necessary cross for a person... This is a norm of person’s behavior, a conscious choice that is directed at the dirty lust“ (Imedi, Reaktsia, 30 May, 2014).
- **Gia Korkotashvili, Radio host:** “They can open a gay school, If they want, and it will be lustrated. Why should we allow one dirty pig infect thousands others. How can we allow a person obsessed with immoral thoughts, work in the society, were we nourish new and healthy generation?.. People, we can let those ill people live in our country, but we cannot set them in an equal position to other normal people. Leave them alone and let them be in their circle.

Whenever we notice that they propagate their lifestyle, we have to intervene immediately. Any promotion of their lifestyle should be treated in the frames of criminal justice... We don't want a civilized country, for which we have to pay with our own bottom!" (Geworld.ge, 8 May, 2014).

### Homosexuality imposed by the West

- **Nodar Mgaloblishvili, actor:** "This is unacceptable! I don't want such Europe or America! If we lose our traditions and values, what is the sense in such existence?!.. On 17 May all of Tbilisi must go out on Rustaveli Avenue and without any mess, quietly protest against this!.. Let the whole world see that people and clergy won't allow gay parades in Georgia! This is not for us – that's it!.. And if they won't allow us to Europe because of this, then good bye to them" (Asaval-Dasavali, 3-9 March, 2014).

### Homosexuality is a propaganda, violence against majority

- **Maka Nikolaishvili, participant of rally:** "The gathering of these people with un-reined hormones here is indeed a shameful fact. We, baptized Christians in Orthodox Christian country of Georgia, will not give them the right for same-sex marriage and will fight to the last drop of blood to prevent these people from conducting propaganda to our children" (Kavkasia, 29 March, 2014).
- **Sopo Toroshelidze, singer:** "You! Homosexuals, how come there are so many of you suddenly! You are disclosing everything... Well, they do no harm to me at all, but I am just surprised, they suddenly don't give a darn on anything, they don't hide anything anymore. What's going on, maybe there is something I don't know"( Pirveli, 25 June, 2014).
- **Rezo Amashukeli, poet:** "If you try to convince us all the time, that we have to protect human rights and you propagate loudly that homosexuals are the good guys, then why do you hide that you are pederasts and homosexuals?... or maybe you are embarrassed of your homosexuality, my friends? if not why can't you keep your mouth shut and seize the propaganda and advocacy of LGBT!" (Asaval-Dasavali, 11-17 August, 2014).

### Calls for discrimination, establishment of prohibitions

- **Archil Chkhoidze, The Eurasian choice:** "We request to punish each propagator of homosexuality under the criminal law. It is going to rotten our youth. Homosexuality and its advocacy is even bigger sin than drug addict is" (Reportiori, 5 May, 2014).
- **Hamlet Chipashvili, political scientist:** "I fully agree with the president of Russia, who has legally banned the propaganda of gays! I don't and will never like the backwards way of life of pederasts and lesbians, but I am a normal person, so I have to face their existence... Act now you chick men and male females, but without any commercials and propagation!" (Asaval-Dasavali, 1-7 December, 2014).
- **Levan Vasadze, businessman:** „By this law you have prohibited to name filth as filth, ignominy as ignominy. The most shameful behavior of a person is to threaten people with putting them to jail and destruction of their property and business... Take any mention of legitimization of filth out of it, however they may be ordering this to you from the West, and prohibit propaganda of filth in Georgia" (Asaval-Dasavali, 26 May – 1 June, 2014).

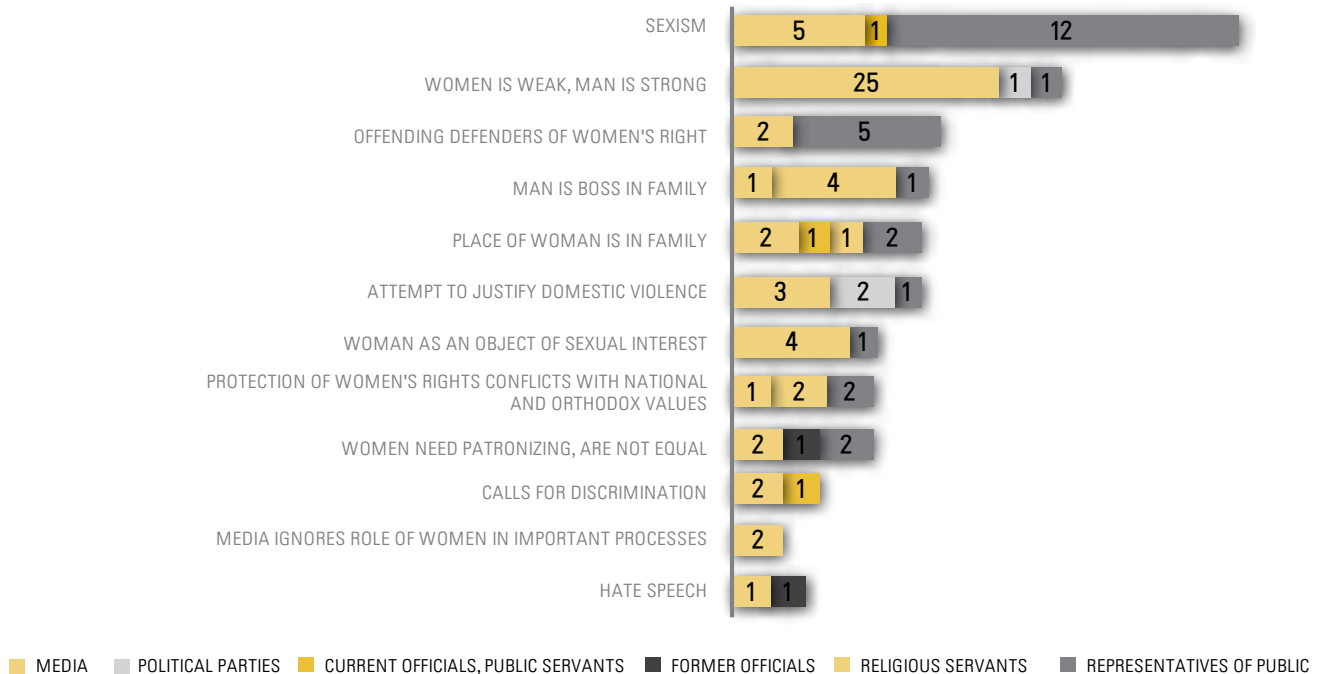
# GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND STEREOTYPING

## MAIN FINDINGS

A variety of violations may be observed in media in the coverage of issues related to gender identity. We divided these violations into two main groups, those of 1) gender discrimination, in which we grouped open calls for gender discrimination and 2) gender stereotypes, in which we included stereotypes strengthening inequality towards women, traditional perceptions on the roles of women and men as well as sexist expression. One should note here that it is difficult to draw a clear line between these two trends as almost every expression involved sexism, calls for gender discrimination and gender stereotyping.

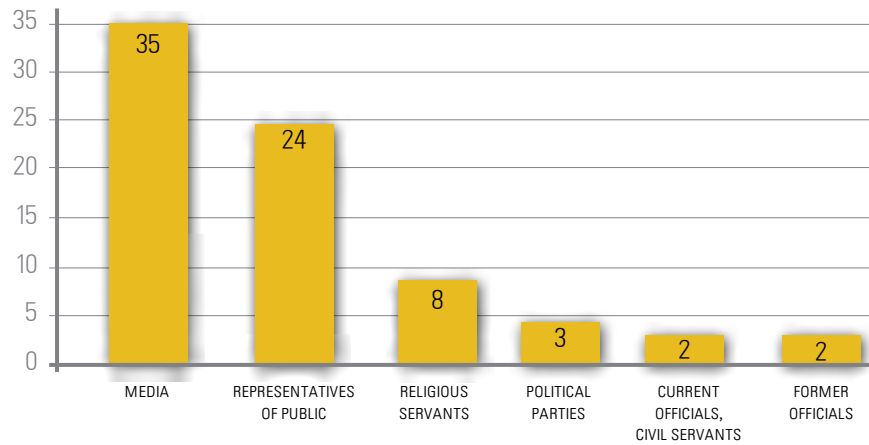
The total of 74 instances of distorted coverage of gender topic, gender discrimination and stereotyping.

Chart 7. Gender discrimination and stereotyping



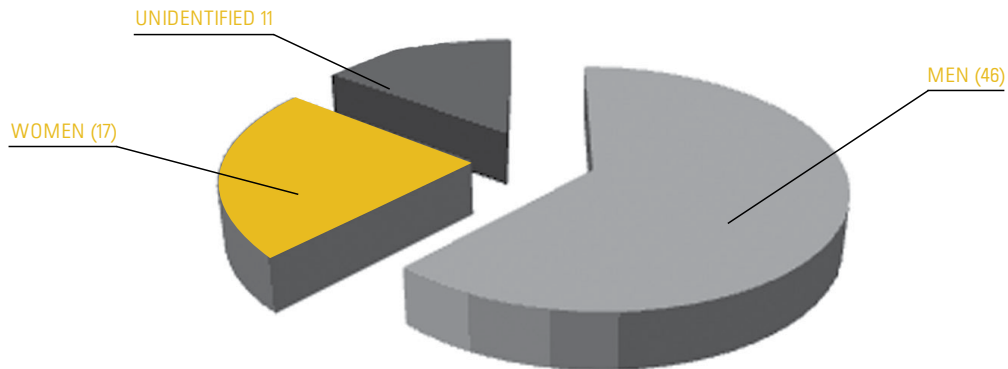
Main sources of discrimination and stereotyping in media were journalists themselves (35), followed by representatives of public (24), religious servants (8), political parties (3), high political officials and public servants (2), former officials (2).

**Chart 8. Gender discrimination and stereotyping by sources**



An interesting fact is that among sources of gender discrimination and stereotyping, the number of women was three times less than that of men. In 46 instances the source was male whilst in 17 – women; in 11 instances the sex of sources was unidentified (discrimination in titles, incognito respondents, et cetera).

**Chart 9. Gender discrimination by sexes**



We classified media expression by topics, each of which is briefly overviewed below:

## GENDER DISCRIMINATION

**Justifying domestic violence** – The period of monitoring was marked with a high rate of domestic violence against women in Georgia, including the killing of women. Therefore, the topic of domestic violence was intensively covered in media. During the monitoring period there were nine instances observed of justifying or downplaying domestic violence for various reasons. In two cases, sources of such attitude were journalists, in another two cases – political party representatives, whilst in five cases – representatives of public.

**Offending defenders of women’s rights** – Five cases were observed when advocates for women’s rights and gender equality were offended either by respondents or journalists themselves, calling them “whores,” “circus women,” women-turned-into-men. Among these sources two were journalists (including one woman), two representatives of public and one a deacon.

**Protection of women’s rights conflicts with national and Orthodox Christian values** – “The fight for gender equality comes from a devil” – this is one of opinions evaluating the fight for women’s rights as a sin, an action against Orthodox Christianity and national values. Such statements were basically made in the context of domestic violence and consequently, we classified them as discriminatory.

**Calling for discrimination** – Open calls for discrimination were also detected in the media (ban to hire unmarried women, to give space to women; opposition to more women representatives in the parliament).

## STEREOTYPES

**Woman represents weak sex whereas man – strong sex** – The opinion that women represent a weak sex (or men a strong sex) is basically promoted in media by media representatives themselves. Out of 12 such instances authors of 10 were journalists including female journalists in five instances.

**Women need to be patronized as they are not equal** – Woman is not an equal interlocutor (the former defense minister Davit Tevzadze: “do not force me to talk with a woman, please”); a woman needs to be patronized – “although you are a woman,” “give me your word, as to woman” (Tamar Chiburdanidze from Foundation of Democratic Revival) – such expressions were detected four times during the monitoring period. In addition to above cited examples, in two other cases the sources were journalists.

## TRADITIONAL ROLES OF WOMEN AND MEN

**Man is the boss in family** – One of main sources of the attitude that man is the boss in a family were representatives of Orthodox Christian Church. Out of such eight instances four were authored by the Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgia Ilia II. This opinion was also promoted by Dean Davit Isakadze; in two other cases sources were representatives of public whilst in one case the source was a journalist. These opinions were basically expressed in the context of domestic violence.

**Appropriate place for women is in family** – In a number of instances detected during the monitoring, an opinion was promoted that women must stay in family, their main function is to be mothers, take care of their families, be good cooks, et cetera. One may come across phrases in media such as: “do you not have anything to do? go and give birth to children;” “how disgraceful that they cannot cook soup;” and the like.

**Sexism** – Although sexism is seen in the majority of cases, in this group we included instances of stereotyping women. For example: “a dog as loyal as the wife,” “they acted like a women who becomes a whore and nothing can stop her,” “Saakashvili started to gossip like a woman,” “women’s desires have no limits,” “even a woman would not have behaved like this,” so on and so forth. Sexism also included cases of viewing women as objects of sexual interest. For example, an opinion that men were not required to look after himself as much as women because it is women’s obligation to attract men;” women’s activity was explained by the “lack of sexual satisfaction,” et cetera.

**Media ignores women’s role in important processes** – Two noteworthy cases were observed during the monitoring period in which the role of women in important social process was diminished or/and ignored, for example, the award of Bishop of the Evangelical Baptist Church Rusudan Gotsiridze with the 2014 International Women of Courage Award by the government of United States. Rezonansi newspaper (5 March) reported about the nomination of only a Ukrainian singer, activist of EuroMaidan, Ruslana, for this award in its entertainment section, which represents a stereotypical attitude according to which a woman singer is perceived as an object of entertainment and not as a political activist which she was awarded this prize for.

An attempt to diminish women’s role was also seen in the opinion of anchor of the Kavkasia TV channel, in which he said: “Madam Zghuladze is... I feel a sort of inconvenient saying that but she is like a doll there [in Ukraine] and in reality, other forces will do there everything.”

## 2.1 . MEDIA

Gender discrimination and stereotyping concerning the gender identity were mainly observed in print media. In particular, 24 instances were detected in newspapers, seven in online media and five in broadcast media.

The highest number of such expression was observed in Kviris Chronika newspaper (7), followed by Asaval-Dasavali (6).

The table below shows the types of gender discrimination by media.

Table 3. Gender discrimination and stereotyping by media outlets

Gender discrimination and stereotyping by media representatives	TOTAL	PRINT MEDIA						TV MEDIA				ONLINE MEDIA		
		ASAVAL-DASAVALI	KVIRIS CHRONIKA	KVIRIS PALITRA	REZONANSI	PRIME TIME	ALIA	RUSTAVI 2	KAVKASIA	OBIKTIVI	GDC TV	GEWORLD.GE	SAKIN-FORMI	PIVELI
<b>Discrimination</b>														
Attempt to justify domestic violence	3			2	1									
Offending women's rights defenders	2		2											
Defending women's right conflicts with national and Orthodox values	1											1		
Calls for discrimination	2	1	1											
Hate speech	1	1												
	9	2	3	2									1	
<b>Stereotypes</b>														
Woman – a weak sex, man – a strong sex	10	1	1		2	1	1							4
Man is boss in family	1			1										
Place of woman is in family	2			1			1							
Sexism	9	3	2			1	1			1	1			
Woman need patronizing, is not equal	2							1		1				
Media ignores role of women in important processes	2				1				1					
	26	4	4	1	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	2		4
	35	6	7	3	4	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	4

Out of discriminatory statements made by journalists themselves during the monitoring period, those worth mentioning are the following:

## PRINT MEDIA

### ASAVAL-DASAVALI

#### Woman represents a weak sex

- **Nino Godziashvili, journalist:** „What kind of woman is successful? They one who got lucky and has a good husband, or is she a magician? What can a member of the weak sex do, when she has not a man by her side?“ (24-30 November, 2014).

#### Sexist expression

- **Ketevan Khamitsashvili:** “Apart from crime topics, something which is often recalled in relation to Maka Chachua is those stills from the film Keep Smiling directed by Rusudan Chkonia, in which she is featured in a rather embarrassing scene together with Tornike Bziava, a year before Giorgi Margvelashvili engaged in presidential race and she tried a cloak of the First Lady. Moreover, the society negatively assessed President of Georgia’s girlfriend featured in the same movie wearing a swimsuit and walking half-naked with a smile on her face in front of the competition jury” (24-30 March, 2014).

### KVIRIS CHRONIKA

#### Sexist expression

- **Tamar Okruashvili:** “He has an old mother, two sons, ‘devoted-as-adog’ wife and ‘devoted-as-a-wife’ dog” (17-23 March, 2014).
- **Gela Zedelashvili:** “Well, my dear Shota, if we elaborate on this, there are can be pipe-women, or engine-women, there are utensil – women, drum-women... When there are psychological problems, and people speak about gender equality on every occasion this has encouraged prostitution. Your clothes? Who will wash your filthy socks? Yeah, keep on killing women; keep killing wives, what are you going to do then?” (27 October – 2 November, 2014).
- **Gela Zedelashvili:** „Almost all women say – I must break stereotypes, I am proud to be a whore!“ (10 March 2014).

#### Protection of women’s right conflicts with national and Orthodox Christian values

- **Giorgi Jikiashvili:** “Once they adopted an anti-discrimination law, now they want to popularize the idea of domestic violence and mess up the brains of the women. On the other hand, this poor Georgian woman who is supposed to be the symbol of the holy family and the dignity, now wants to free herself from moral standards” (27 October – 2 November, 2014).



### Calls for discrimination

- **Gazeta.ua:** “The author of a book “A Woman in Islam” Muhammed Kabal Mustafa thinks that a woman must be beaten so that she is tormented spiritually, not physically. There are even practical recommendations in the book. Specifically, “she must be hit in the sensitive parts of the body – stomach, breasts, face, and so on“... Another author advises men, that in beating a wife the main thing is for a man not to get hurt” (12–18 January, 2015).

### KVIRIS PALITRA

#### Justification of domestic violence

- **Merab Metreveli:** “It will be probably impossible to totally eliminate such facts [domestic violence], but it will definitely be less if women think more about their choices. Men who kill their wives are disgusting, but women, before you wed to someone, get to know him well, you should not go with any madman!” (20–26 October, 2014).

#### Man is the boss in a family

- **Ether Eradze:** “Only the head of the family, 38–years old Arazakh Medov, was at home, watching TV” (24 January, 2015).

### PRIME TIME

#### Women are weak sex, men are strong sex

- **Tamar Gongadze:** “The target audience of channel “Marao” is woman, but the director of the channel does not exclude the possibility of including the men in the lines of weak sex” (15 September, 2014).

### REZONANSI

#### Women are weak sex, men are strong sex

- **Mariam Aptsiauri:** “An interest to this [riding motorcycle] is growing in the representatives of the weak sex too“ (31 May, 2014).

### MEDIA IGNORING ROLE OF WOMEN IN IMPORTANT PROCESSES

The award of Bishop of the Evangelical Baptist Church Rusudan Gotsiridze with the 2014 International Women of Courage Award by the government of United States. Rezonansi newspaper (5 March) reported about the nomination of only a Ukrainian singer, activist of EuroMaidan, Ruslana, for this award in its entertainment section, which represents a stereotypical attitude according to which a woman singer is perceived as an object of entertainment and not as a political activist which she was awarded this prize for.

### ALIA

#### Place of women is in family

- **Headline:** “Do not let your wife clean the floor, or you will be arrested!” (Alia, 25 December, 2014).

## ONLINE MEDIA

### PIRWELI

#### Women represent weak sex

- „As the scientists have found, the representatives of the weak sex need really little to be happen” (14 September 2014).

### SAKINFROMI

#### Protection of women’s right conflicts with national and Orthodox Christian values

- **Arno Khidirbegishvili:** “Is this a struggle for gender equality or it is the struggle against the government, family and Orthodoxy? Saakashvili and Margvelashvili ordered a new PR campaign against Ivanishvili and Gharibashvili! (27 October, 2014).

## BROADCAST MEDIA

### OBIEKTIVI

#### Women need patronizing, are not equal

- **Ilia Chachibaia:** “And let’s give the right of the first question to Nino [Ratishvili], as a lady” (Night Studio, 24 February, 2014)

### RUSTAVI 2

#### Women need patronizing, are not equal

- **Nino Shubladze:** “Despite the fact that you are a lady [Eka Beselia]... I will start with Mr. Nugzar because your leader has already spoken“ (Rustavi 2, Pozitsia, 25 April, 2014).

### KAVKASIA

#### Media ignoring role of women in important processes

- **Davit Akubardia:** “Madam Zguladze... I hesitate to say, is a puppet or doll in Ukraine, other forces will do everything in reality” (Spektri, 17 February, 2015).

### GDS TV COMPANY

Even though this TV company was not among those media outlets which were monitored, the Media Development Foundation and 28 nongovernmental organizations reacted with a joint statement to a program “Apartment 18” aired on the GDS TV company on 9 July 2014, in which women’s bodies were used as drums.

The statement said that the program “contained degrading visualization of woman’s body. This section of the program represented an openly sexist interpretation of the role of women and men and further promoted distorted stereotypes existing among the society.”

## 2.2. POLITICAL PARTIES

Gender discrimination and stereotyping was also observed on the part of political parties and former and current officials. There were three such instances.

### GEORGIAN DREAM

In her speech, a representative of the Georgian Dream, Manana Kobakhidze, contributed to strengthening the stereotype that a woman is weak and needs to be patronized.<sup>4</sup> In particular, on 12 September, the parliament vice-speaker Manana Kobakhidze who simultaneously chairs the gender equality council of the parliament, released a statement on her Facebook page about offending statements made by politicians in social networks. In particular: “[...] when absolutely unknown men swear at a woman and address a woman with absolutely immoral statements then let no one be surprised that her husband, brother or son shoots that man in the head and let no one start complaining that the crime situation aggravates; people definitely do not have the obligation to tolerate offence and swearing, politicians are people too, by the way!”

In two other statements by representatives of political parties (Burjanadze–United Democrats and Imedi) one can observe the attempt to justify violence:

#### Attempt to justify violence

- **Irina Sarishvili, Imedi Party:** “The debauchery is when a young woman [Ninia Kakabadze] appears on TV and talks to the audience of millions of people about how husbands kill wives in Georgia, that we should create some kind of a society to protect poor wives. It is debauchery when 12-13 or 14 year old children are listening to this” (Obiectivi, 9 June, 2014).
- **Jondi Bagharuria, Burjanadze–United Democrats:** „When a husband confronts his wife, this is not the government’s fault. Domestic violence is shameful, but this is happening not only in Georgia... I call on the certain part of the electronic media – do not try to present the Georgian people as a low-level people, as the country where husbands are killing wives” (Reportiori, 20 October, 2014).

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<sup>4</sup> A joint statement of nongovernmental organizations regarding MananaKobakhidze’s statement involving gender stereotypes: [http://www.mdfgeorgia.ge/geo/view\\_statements/75](http://www.mdfgeorgia.ge/geo/view_statements/75)

## 2.3. CURRENT AND FORMER OFFICIALS

### PUBLIC SERVANTS

Public servants express gender stereotypes though they are not sources themselves but convey or expose others' attitudes.

#### The place of women is in family

- **Lia Madzgharashvili, the head of village Tibaani administration:** “He [Otar Aladashvili, participant of the competition for the post of the head of administration] came in person and told me – you see you are a woman, so this job is not for you, a woman must not have this job, so get out of here“ (Rustavi 2, Kurieri, 14 January, 2015).

#### Calls for discrimination

- According to the head of the territorial administration of Bredza, Atotsi and Tchvrinisi Mariam Gulisashvili, the minister [of Health] advises her to avoid employing unmarried women in the village ambulatories (Pirveli, 1 April, 2014).

### FORMER OFFICIALS

Former officials were mainly engaged in stereotyping:

#### Women are not equal, need patronizing

- **David Tevzadze, former Minister of Defense:** „Please do not make me dispute with women“ (Imedi, Reaktsia, 21 November, 2014).

#### Sexism

- **Tengiz Kitovani, former Minister of Defense:** “Just like a woman becomes a whore and then nothing can stop her, Jaba was exactly of that type” (Asaval-Dasavali, 24-30 March, 2014).

## 2.4. RELIGIOUS SERVANTS

Sources of eight expressions of gender discrimination and stereotyping were religious servants. These statements were mainly made when religious servants discussed domestic violence and emphasized that a man is the boss in a family and a woman has her predetermined place in a family. There was also an opinion that gender comes from devil and is imposed from the outside (conflicts with values):

Examples:

### Man is the boss in a family

- **Ilia II, the Patriarch:** “Husband is the head of the family, for he has received from God the responsibility to protect his wife and children as required, to be faithful leader and producer; And woman has no less purpose. Her main function is to have children, to bring them up and to take care about the family, which does not exclude the possibility of her public activity” (Public Broadcaster, Moambe, 7 January, 2015).

### Place of a woman is in a family

- **Elizbar Diakonidze, dean:** „God gave women the best place. In our country women also pursue spiritual road, but they stay nuns, they are not tasked with saving other people’s souls. When a woman must become a mother, this is the best blessing. You really think Eva bit at an apple? Maybe that was the poison, which strengthened by Michelle Obama’s award? Let’s think about it. If real apple was meant there, it would not be considered a lenten product“ (Geworld.ge, 2 April, 2014).

### Protection of women’s rights conflicts with national and religious values

- **Basil Akhvlediani, deacon:** “Infidelity of both spouses is definitely a deadly sin, but there is one small detail – infidelity of a man cannot become the reason for divorce... If a husband divorces a wife and she leads dissolute life, than the husband is responsible for her sins... All those movements about gender are inspired by the evil to cause a misbalance, about which I discussed earlier. Women became equal to man not in the name of God, but functionally. This disrupts the human harmony“ (Geworld.ge, 29 October, 2014).

### Sexist expression

- **Elizbar Diakonidze, deacon:** “The only thing that happens on TV is that the law-quality whores try to present themselves as the high-quality whores” (Kviris Chronika, 16-22 February, 2015).

## 2.5. OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF PUBLIC

Some 24 instances of gender discrimination and stereotyping were observed during the monitoring period. The main trends outlined in these statements are as follows: women are unequal and need patronizing (2); attempt to justify violence (1); women are weak sex whereas men – strong (2); woman as an object of sexual interest (1); place of women is in family (2); man is the boss in a family (2), sexism (9); offense of women and women’s rights (5); protection of women’s rights conflicts with national and religious values (2).

Examples:

### Justifying violence

- **Anri Jokhadze, singer:** “Women! Choose your life partner correctly, so that your mistake is yours to regret... It is the mental problem of women that in the end they choose their own killer.” (Pirveli, 21 October, 2014).

### Woman is a weak sex, man is a strong sex

- **Sopho Partskhaladze, pharmacist [wife of a parliament member David Saganelidze]:** „I always believed that a man must be senior to a woman so that you can feel yourself strong, trust him. A man must be strong“ (Prime time, 17 November, 2014).

### Sexism

- **Giorgi Lazashvili, respondent:** “A girl should look after herself, but is not mandatory for a boy....I want to have a slim and beautiful woman beside me. It is not nice when a woman is overweight. Woman are created to be jewels of this world, but men do not share this responsibility” (Rezonansi, 9 May, 2014).

### Place of woman is in family

- **Melor Vachnadze, a person released as a political prisoner:** “Let us elect girls... Go and find occupation, give birth to children, why do you care about Misha, you are such a grown up girl, are you not ashamed?! Look at her hairstyle... Hey, girlie, do you not have anyone who cares about you at home? Who let you out from home?” (Asaval-Dasavali, 24-30 March).

### Man is the boss in a family

- **Respondent:** “Women should never go over men’s head, they deserve everything that happen to them, they should know where they belong...” (Rustavi 2, Post Scriptum, 19 October, 2014).

### Sexism – stereotyping

- **Talk show Teorema of Tabula TV company, respondent:** The talk show showed a recording in which a respondent, Giorgi, used stereotypes against an employee of Tabula TV channel who reported a wrongdoing to law enforcement authorities. This recording was aired on Tabula TV and Rustavi 2 for illustration purposes.  
**Giorgi [a citizen]:** Do you have father? Have you been brought up by a man?  
**Tornike Ustarashvili, Tabula lawyer:** Does this matter?  
**Giorgi:** It does with regard to your behavior, even a woman would not have behaved in such a way... I think a man should not report wrongdoing to patrol police. (Teorema on Tabula and Archevani on Rustavi 2, 27 January 2015).
- **Gia Khukhashvili, expert:** “Badri had his wife and another wife in Russia. I remember, at one meeting even Saakashvili started to gossip about this like a woman” (Asaval-Dasavali, 31 March – 6 April, 2014).

### Offending defenders of women’s rights

- **Rezo Amashukeli, poet:** “... How can they dare this against the Patriarch, these feminists, these whores, and I am not saying this word figuratively, let them watch their shows and see that their shows stink, they stink because that corrupted the whole country by their misbehavior and now they come out and say that it is all government’s fault” (Alia, 23 October, 2014).

### Protection of women's rights conflicts with national and religious values

- **Levan Vasadze, businessman:** “When a man must look like a man, a woman must look like a woman”...(Imedi, Reaktsia, 13 February, 2015) “Listening devices, domestic violence are all artificial issues... Promoting the issue of domestic violence is a tool for the NGOs and media to strengthen the fascist juvenal justice and the role of social services, and to weaken the families”.(Imedi, Reaktsia, 13 February, Interpressnews, 14 February, 2015).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Media.** The study revealed that the source of almost one third (35%) of homophobic expression, gender discrimination and stereotyping was media and its representatives themselves. Moreover, a concrete group of media outlets was outlined (Asaval-Dasavali and Kviris Chronika newspapers, Sakinformi and Geworld.ge online editions and media union Obiektivi) whose journalists were especially active in this regard (out of 118 instances 90 accounted for these media outlets). The situation was analogous in terms of reporting homophobic and discriminatory statements of respondents, which proves that such expression is an integral part of the editorial policy of these media outlets. It should be noted also that there were several media outlets under monitoring which did not violate any standard when covering LGBT and gender issues (for example, Netgazeti, Maestro TV and Tabula TV). There was yet another group of media outlets which did not resort systematically to homophobia and gender stereotyping, though separate cases were observed in them.

### Recommendations:

- It is necessary to continue media monitoring of topics discussed in this report and hold public discussion on detected violations as well as conduct educational activities for media and society. It is important to raise the sensitivity on LGBT topics, gender identity issues. This process must contribute to the improvement of professionalism of journalists;
- It is important to use existing self-regulation mechanism, which will contribute to initiating professional consideration of violations and also intensify discussion among society;
- Responsible media should not seek homophobic respondents and deliberately strengthen stereotypes; it should refrain from reporting discriminatory statements except in cases when sources of such statements are public figures and they influence large groups of society. Such coverage begs for initiating discussion on this problem rather than merely repeating hate speech;
- The study showed that media including those who do not violate standards, are not keen to organize issue- and fact-based discussions on these topics. For example, sexual orientation and gender identity are often discussed in entertainment formats rather than in social and political talk shows. Media must treat its role in combatting stereotypes with higher responsibility and avoid strengthening them.

**Political parties and government.** The study showed that around 20% of sources of homophobia, gender discrimination and stereotyping was the political class, including members of parliament and representatives of the ruling party which is a matter of serious concern.

Political parties, especially the ruling party and high officials of the government as well as representatives of local self-governments must realize that harm which homophobic expression, calls for gender discrimination and stereotyping cause to society. They must also realize that their responsibility is especially high.

**Recommendations:**

- Representatives of legislative, executive and local governments must refrain from discriminatory, stereotyped and homophobic statements that fan intolerance, encourage discrimination and violence against various groups.
- It is important to draw up a code of ethics for public servants, which will determine the liability of public servants in case of discriminatory statements.