



**FUNDACJA
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Report from monitoring of selected TVP information newscasts at the time of local elections 2006

1. Summary

The report presents Batory Foundation autumn 2006 media monitoring project, under which two nationwide Polish public TV news bulletins and five local news bulletins were being monitored at the time of local elections.

The main conclusions of the monitoring are as follows: in her news programmes Polish public TV devoted much more attention to the government side than to the opposition side; in the main news bulletin the ruling party was being shown twice as frequent as the main opposition party and three times more than any other party.

In local TVP programmes the incumbents were also being shown preferentially, but only if local authorities were from the party ruling nationwide (Law and Justice – PiS). In towns where other parties were ruling: Gdansk – Citizens Platform, PO and Cracow – social democrats, LiD, their presence in TVP local news was smaller than the presence of PiS.

This is not enough, though, to say that the current TVP is closer to the authorities than it used to be in the past, because no such independent media monitoring projects were conducted before. However, TVP has her own data of Program Monitoring Unit, which it may like to share. It is also not known how different TVP coverage is from the treatment of political parties by her leading competitors, private TV stations Polsat and TVN, because the comparison media monitoring studies were also not done yet.

The Batory Foundation Media Monitoring project brought also examples of missing important news by TVP and manipulation of texts and pictures in the election campaign coverage. The observers noted lack of in-depth information about self-government and its responsibilities.

The monitoring results gave enough ground to ask national broadcasting authority (KRRiT) about proper fulfilling of public media role by TVP, especially in keeping the balance of equal access to TVP for the political parties. Thanks to the coverage in the media the monitoring project already caused a correction of local TVP programme in Warsaw to the more balanced one.

2. TVP's own monitoring

TVP's Programme Monitoring Unit registers time of presence in TVP programmes of state authorities (president, prime minister, cabinet members), politicians, trade and employers unions' leaders. It also registers the presence in information bulletins and other political programmes of TVP of political parties representatives, ministers, prime minister, president and officials from their chancelleries and marshalls of both chambers of Paliament.

In October 2006 these data proved that the most frequently shown on TVP were: PiS politicians, ministers, PO politicians, prime minister, LPR (coalition party) politicians, Samoobrona (coalition party) politicians, SLD (opposition party) politicians.

Table 1

Politicians in TVP nationwide information bulletins, October 2006

	PiS	Minist.	PO	PM.	LPR	Sam.	SLD	Pres.	Pres. Chanc.	PSL	Sejm Marsh.
Time	1:14:49	1:02:56	0:32:27	0:25:15	0:23:49	0:23:05	0:13:06	0:13:05	0:11:45	0:09:19	0:01:49
Percent.	25	22	11	9	8	8	5	4	4	3	1

Source: TVP's Programme Monitoring Unit.

If you add the shares of the government, ruling coalition political parties, the president and Sejm marshall (all from the ruling coalition) they add to 81 percent, while the biggest opposition party PO had 11 percent.

TVP's Programme Monitoring Unit also monitored presence of politicians in nationwide TVP information programmes from Oct. 16 to Nov.25, 2006 (election time).

Table 2

Politicians in nationwide TVP information programmes from Oct. 16 to Nov. 25, 2006

	PiS	PM.	Govt.	PO	Pres.	LPR	SLD	Sam.	Center party.	Pres. Chanc.	PSL
Time	3:25:54	2:55:05	2:41:19	1:12:15	1:06:31	0:55:44	0:28:58	0:25:18	0:22:59	0:12:47	0:08:53
Percent	25	21	19	9	8	7	3	3	3	2	1

Source: TVP's Programme Monitoring Unit.

Added shares of PIS and coalition parties (LPR and Samoobrona), prime minister, other ministers, the president and his chancellery were 85 percent. By the coveraghe PiS beats PO 3:1 and SLD 8:1. However, this accounting did not include the popularity factor: party's presence for one minute at midnight equaled its one minute presence in prime time. There were examples of pushing opposition politicians into worse time slots, when the audience is minimal.

3.1. Electronic media monitoring method by Batory Foundation

The monitoring method was based on American National Democratic Institute (NDI) textbook: „Media Monitoring to Promote Democratic Elections”.

Batory Foundation focused on news programmes of TVP because of their high popularity; only the parties represented in the Parliament were accounted for plus local parties, if they had candidates in local elections. The time was also accounted for the parties when their politicians serving as ministers, mayors, prime minister and others, were on the air. Only the president's time was counted separately, however one can discuss it because the president is a twin brother of prime minister and they both look very much alike. During the monitored period the president's P/Vs (picture plus voice) took 395 sec. in TVP1 news (he was shown 23 times) and 255 sec. in TVP2, shown 14 times.

During the project the main news bulletins of TVP1 (Wiadomosci) and TVP2 (Panorama) were monitored, as well as five local TVP newscasts in Warsaw, Bialystok, Gdansk, Szczecin and Cracow. Each programme was evaluated by three journalists - observers, and their grades were averaged. The observers noted number and length of all political stories in the news bulletin, their order in the programme (first, second,...), whether it was announced in the headlines (if yes - for how many seconds), number and time of full coverage (P/V) for each political party. In local news all election materials were accounted for plus other stories, if the candidates were present in them. In nationwide news all political materials were accounted for with elections materials as a part of them. The time was accounted for a political party also when her minister/mayor was on air. The time of a story included its introduction by the anchor. All P/V's were measured and accounted for, but only politicians P/Vs were allotted to political parties.

In qualitative analysis the observers evaluated: the tone (positive, neutral, negative on scale from +2 to -2), level of detail (scale 1-3), level of understanding by viewers (scale 1-3), balance with other voices and points of view (scale 1-3), up to date (no or yes if news was from the last 36 h.) and manipulation understood as willingly and secretly done infringement of proper information rules done to achieve a certain goal. The observers also noted omissions of important news of the day, as a prime form of manipulation.

3.2. Execution of monitoring

The monitoring took place from October 16, 2006 until November 26, 2006 with exception of Gdansk, where the mayor was elected in the first round, on November 12th. TVP publishes the news bulletins on her webpage (www.tvp.pl), so it was easy to measure the stories and P/Vs on the screen with stop function in. All watched programmes were recorded on DVD discs and archived. The observers were sending their daily observation Word sheets by e-mail to Batory Foundation, where the results were averaged and introduced into tally sheets in Excel. The comments were stored separately in Word sheets. All primary observation forms were archived; the accuracy of hand transfer of data into Excel was verified on a daily basis.

After the first week of observation additional column of "Majoring party" was added to the tally sheet. It was the party the piece was about in majority. Without that all qualitative data were to be allotted to all parties, whose representatives were quoted in the material, which would make the qualitative analysis irrelevant.

3.3. Selling it to the media

On November 5th (Sunday) the press conference was organised in Batory Foundation to present the first results of media monitoring project. Four tables were presented to the media:

1. What we see? The coverage of political issues connected with main political parties by percentage of air time and numbers
2. Who speaks own voice? The comparison of political parties' shares in the number and time of P/Vs
3. Who is promoted? The comparison of political parties shares in headlines
4. What is the order? The comparison of political parties place in the news order

The journalists were also presented with some grossly unbalanced newscasts from local Warsaw TVP news bulletin. Later the updated results of observations were e-mailed to interested journalists twice and also put on Batory Foundation webpage. Media published over 30 news items about media monitoring project, one of them in English (Poland Monthly). The projects coordinator was invited to radio talk shows and TV news.

4. Monitoring results

Conclusions from quantative measures

The results shown in the tables below have to be interpreted keeping in mind the fact that percentage shares add to more than 100. For instance in the main TVP1 newscast "Wiadomości" there were 105 political news items during the observed period. Allocation of them to political parties were as such: PiS (the main ruling party) – 80, PO (main opposition party) – 43, Samoobrona (junior ruling party) – 19, LPR (junior ruling party) – 25, LiD (junior opposition party) - 23, local parties- 9, which adds up to 199. Why? Because in majority of news items not only one party was referred to and quoted in. Because of that the sum of percent shares adds not to 100, but to 188. Therefore the comparison of numbers is more important than the numbers themselves.

Table 3

What we see?
Political parties shares in the TVP's selected newscastes number of stories and their time

		Wiadomości TVP1	Panorama TVP2	Białystok TVP3	Gdansk TVP3	Kraków TVP3	Szczecin TVP3	Warszawa TVP3
PiS	% number	75	73	37	42	34	36	68
	%time	78	74	39	42	43	41	76
PO	% number	41	38	27	25	39	50	36
	% time	43	39	27	26	44	48	30
Samoobrona	% number	18	13	9	6	7	14	3
	% time	23	16	7	6	10	15	5
LPR	% number	24	18	10	21	7	10	7
	% time	25	21	11	23	13	9	8
LiD	% number	22	32	9	11	29	48	32
	% time	23	35	8	10	32	51	29
Lokalne	% number	8	12	19	12	20	31	15
	% time	10	14	24	11	31	34	10

When you look at the position of the main ruling party, PiS, her share was the biggest one in „Wiadomości” and in „Panorama”, the main nationwide newscasts, which is explained by the fact that naturally more attention is being paid to the activities of the ruling party.

But in Białystok, where the mayor was from another party, PiS also had the biggest coverage. The same was true for Gdansk and Cracow, which mayors were from parties other than PiS, but PiS had there more coverage than the ruling parties, PO in Gdansk and LiD in Cracow. In Warsaw, where PiS was ruling the town, the coverage for PiS was overwhelming.

Table 4

Who speaks with own voice?
Parties shares in TVP's selected newscasts P/Vs number and time

		Wiadomości	Panorama	Białystok	Gdańsk	Kraków	Szczecin	Warszawa
PiS	% number	13	14	16	16	7	9	15
	% time	21	31	29	27	16	18	28
PO	% number	7	7	10	8	6	10	6
	% time	12	6	15	10	15	17	9
Samoobrona	% number	3	2	5	2	0	3	0
	% time	3	2	7	2	0	3	0
LPR	% number	5	3	3	4	1	2	2
	% time	13	4	3	6	1	3	2
LiD	% number	5	6	3	3	6	7	6
	% time	12	4	3	5	9	10	8
Lokalne	% number	2	2	8	4	4	4	2
	% time	4	4	9	5	5	5	3

Observation time: 16.10.2006 – 25.11.2006; for Gdańsk until 11.11.2006. Percents sum up to 100.

Analyzing the data one can see that PiS politicians not only dominated the P/Vs in all monitored programmes, but also talked longer than the others, which one can deduct from division of number of P/Vs by the time of them. PiS had the highest P/Vs time factor in Cracow and in “Panorama”, news of TVP2. In “Wiadomości” it was the modest 1,6. In Warsaw, where the electoral fight for the mayor’s position was going on between PiS acting president and PO candidate, PiS had three times more P/Vs than PO.

Tabela 5

Who is announced?
Parties shares in TVP's selected newscasts headlines

		Wiadomości	Panorama	Białystok	Gdańsk	Kraków	Szczecin	Warszawa
PiS	% number	81	81	33	64	38	52	88
	%time	83	83	35	60	40	57	89
PO	% number	37	38	17	27	38	52	36
	% time	38	40	22	19	40	51	36
Samoobrona	% number	16	16	8	6	0	14	8
	% time	19	19	8	5	0	20	9
LPR	% number	29	19	17	30	5	5	8
	% time	29	19	15	22	5	4	9
LiD	% number	19	31	8	6	33	71	36
	% time	21	34	1	5	35	64	36
Lokalne	% number	8	12	33	6	24	38	8
	%time	10	16	18	5	26	42	7

Observation time: 16.10.2006 – 25.11.2006; for Gdańsk until 11.11.2006. Percentage does not sum up to 100.

PiS dominates the headlines all over the board, especially in Warsaw local TVP news and in nationwide “Wiadomosci” and “Panorama”.

Tabela 6

What is the order?
Position of a story connected to a political party in TVP's selected newscasts

	PiS	PO	Samoobrona	LPR	LiD	Lokalne
Wiadomości	3	3	3	2	3	4
Panorama	3	3	3	3	3	2
TVP3 Białystok	4	5	6	4	6	5
TVP3 Gdańsk	4	5	4	4	6	5
TVP3 Kraków	3	3	2	2	4	3
TVP3 Szczecin	3	3	3	3	3	4
TVP3 Warszawa	3	3	2	4	3	4

Observation time: 16.10.2006 – 25.11.2006; for Gdansk until 11.11.2006

4.2. Results of qualitative measurements

Table 7 presents qualitative measures observation results for “Wiadomosci”, the main TVP newsbulletin. They are allotted to “majoring party”. It was possible to pick it up in 79 out of 105 monitored stories (three quarters).

Table 7

Qualitative measures
The tone, level of detail, understanding, balance, up to date and manipulation
in stories with majoring party in TVP „Wiadomosci”

Tone:

		PiS		PO		Samoobrona		LPR		LiD		Lokalne	
		neutral		neutral		v. negative		negative		v. negative		v. negative	
		Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%
v. negative	-2	1	4	0	0	1	100	2	25	1	100	2	100
negative	-1	5	22	0	0	0	0	3	37	0	0	0	0
Neutral	0	11	48	3	100	0	0	3	37	0	0	0	0
Positive	1	4	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
v. positive	2	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sum		23	100	3	100	1	100	8	100	1	100	2	100

Level of detail:

		PiS		PO		Samoobrona		LPR		LiD		Lokalne	
		Detailed		Detailed		In depth		In depth		Detailed		In depth	
		Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%
Superficial	1	3	13	1	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Detailed	2	17	74	1	33	0	0	4	50	1	100	1	50
In depth	3	3	13	1	33	1	100	4	50	0	0	1	50
Sum		23	100	3	100	1	100	8	100	1	100	2	100

Understanding:

		PiS		PO		Samoobrona		LPR		LiD		Lokalne	
		Medium		Medium		Medium		High		Medium		Medium	
		Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%
Ogólna													
Low	1	4	17	1	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medium	2	6	26	1	33	1	100	4	50	1	100	1	100
High	3	13	57	1	33	0	0	4	50	0	0	0	0
Sum		23	100	3	100	1	100	8	100	1	100	1	100

Balance:

		PiS		PO		Samoobrona		LPR		LiD		Lokalne	
		Medium		High		Medium		Medium		Low		Medium	
		Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%
General													
Low	1	5	22	0	0	0	0	3	38	1	100	0	0
Medium	2	11	48	1	33	1	100	2	25	0	0	2	100
High	3	7	30	2	67	0	0	3	37	0	0	0	0
Sum		23	100	3	100	1	100	8	100	1	100	2	100

Up-to-date:

		PiS		PO		Samoobrona		LPR		LiD		Lokalne	
		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		No		Yes	
		Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%
General													
No	0	5	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100	0	0
Yes	1	18	78	3	100	1	100	8	100	0	0	2	100
Sum		23	100	3	100	1	100	8	100	1	100	2	100

Manipulation:

		PiS		PO		Samoobrona		LPR		LiD		Lokalne	
		No		No		Yes		Yes		No		No	
		Mat.No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%	Mat. No.	%
General													
No	0	15	68	2	67	0	0	4	50	1	100	2	100
Yes	1	7	32	1	33	1	100	4	50	0	0	0	0
Sum		22	100	3	100	1	100	8	100	1	100	2	100

Observation time: 16.10.2006 – 25.11.2006;

4.3. Manipulations

Manipulations noted by observers were of special interest of the media, sensitive to such heavy accusations. Omissions were treated as especially hideous form of manipulation, because these were the cases when something was not reported on purpose, based on political favouritism. In case of TVP it was the grave sin because of the overwhelming influence of this medium over the viewers.

Observers also noted and reported unfair way of shooting different candidates, using wide angles or short plans, applause or stable, monotonous pictures to support or lower the politicians' message. There were also cases of language manipulations, either supporting the candidate with optimistic, vivid descriptions of his/her actions or reporting them with a distance, using the "promises" language. Especially in Warsaw local TVP programme numerous manipulations were noted, such as: no presence of parties other than PiS in the headlines, derogatory comments by journalists, partisan choice of P/Vs, overexposition of marginal events where the incumbent was present.

Among omissions there were cases in Warsaw, Bialystok and Szczecin of not reporting about opposition candidates positions on important issues.

5. General conclusions

Batory Foundation monitoring of TVP main information programmes before 2006 local elections proved that the ruling party (PiS) had a dominating presence in all nationwide news bulletins and in majority of local ones. In the main news bulletin the ruling party was being shown twice as frequent as the main opposition party and three times more than any other party.

Explanation that those in power naturally required more attention in the newscasts did not hold water. It was true only nationwide; locally it was so only there where the power belonged to PiS, as in Warsaw. In Bialystok, Cracow and Gdansk, where other parties were ruling, TVP still gave the most attention to PiS, as if it was at the helm.

In the most persuasive form of message – direct P/V – the ruling party also had the best results, having at least twice more of them than any other party. PiS dominated headlines, too, especially in local TVP program in Warsaw, where PiS P/Vs were by average three times longer than P/Vs of the rival PO, the main opposition party.

Qualitative analysis said a lot about the attitude of the main news bulletin “Wiadomosci” toward political parties: PiS was presented there mostly neutral but often unbalanced, PO was covered neutral and balanced, while the other parties, both from coalition and opposition alike – critically and unbalanced.

The monitoring results set up a good base for public discussion about the fulfillment of public medium duties by TVP at the time of elections.

Project’s coordinator

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Warsaw, March 12, 2007