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# The Phare and Tacis Democracy Programme

The Phare and Tacis Democracy Programme was launched by the European Commission in 1992 to help promote democratic societies in the countries of central and eastern Europe, and the New Independent States and Mongolia.

It covers the following countries: Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia (countries eligible for Phare) and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan (countries eligible for Tacis).

Phare and Tacis are the names of the European Union's initiatives which support the development of harmonious and the prosperous economic and political links between the European Union and the above partner countries through the provision of grant finance to support the process of transformation to market economies and democratic societies.

The Democracy Programme forms part of the European Democracy Initiative of the European Parliament. Its general objective is to promote the concept of democratic society governed by the rule of law in central and eastern European countries and New Independent States and Mongolia. In particular, it aims to support

- increased knowledge of democratic practices at local and national level
- the work of non-governmental organisations which promote pluralist democratic societies
- the transfer of specific expertise and technical skills concerning democracy and the rule of law to professional groups and associations in these countries.

Some specific initiatives are taken by the Commission to meet these objectives: support for the monitoring of the Russian Duma elections, including media monitoring, was one such initiative.

This objective is also supported by providing grants to non-state, non-profit making bodies for projects in areas related to the Programme.



# 1 Introduction

The Russian process of transition in the last 10 years culminated on 16 June and 3 July 1996 in another milestone. The electorate voted in their country's second presidential elections, which were the sixth open elections in modern Russian history. As such, the elections deserve to be judged as a new chapter in the story of Russia's passage from a totalitarian government towards a new system which attempts to conform to universally accepted standards of democratic practice.<sup>1</sup>

The role of Russian journalism in clarifying the problems, changes, candidates' records and positions in order to enable voters to make a fair and informed choice is considered crucial in this process.

Russia's first contested elections in recent times took place in March 1989, when Soviet citizens chose candidates for a Soviet Congress of People's Deputies. The elections contained three flaws. Only two-thirds of the seats were open to all candidates (the rest were reserved for special groups, such as Communist Party candidates, members of the Writers' Union, the Academy of Science and so on). Secondly, the then USSR still had a one-party system. Thirdly, the two national television channels and all the print media were under Communist control.

Nevertheless there were factors which mitigated these flaws. Candidates were running in local constituencies and the Communist party was itself split into unofficial but fiercely antagonistic factions. In most areas it did not campaign for specific candidates. With no experience of having to compete in an election, the Communist party played no real organising role. Candidates ran as individuals rather than as party members. In most constituencies several Communists ran against each other. There were also hundreds of independents. In spite of still being nominally a one-party system, at least thirty senior party figures including one member of the Politburo were defeated.

By the time of the next election in March 1990, this time for the Russian Congress of People's Deputies, the system had improved. There were no longer any reserved seats for special interest groups. Every seat was open to any candidate.

The Presidential election of June 1991 marked a further step forward. By then the country was no longer officially a one-party system. However, the big difference from the two previous elections was the role of television. Since voters were choosing a President, local issues were of little importance, as indeed was personal campaigning. The crucial factor was access to the national networks, and the way in which they covered the candidates.

Six candidates ran. Four of them were Communists, Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy were not. Under new laws, every candidate had equal time for unpaid commercials on the two national networks. This was a major boost for the relatively unknown people such as Zhirinovskiy. The two national networks took different editorial stands. Gosteleradio, the Soviet state-owned company, broadly opposed Yeltsin and tended to favour the official Communist candidate, Nikolai Ryzhkov, though it must be said the bias was not pronounced. Gorbachev, the then Soviet president, who had appointed the director of Gosteleradio, was not a Ryzhkov fan. The second national network, the newly-formed Russian channel, RTR, was strongly pro-Yeltsin.

In broad terms, therefore, one could say that taken together the two networks marginalised the four candidates other than Yeltsin and Ryzhkov, but when it came to these two candidates, Yeltsin had one channel behind him and one against. Viewers did not get very professional or dispassionate coverage on which to make their choice, but at least they could switch between the two channels to get something approaching alternative views on two of the candidates.

By the time of the Parliamentary elections of December 1993 and 1995, the system had evolved a long way. Dozens of parties had been formed, and candidates ran on a mixed system. Half of the

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<sup>1</sup> Although the mission of the EIM-Team in 1996 has only been focused on the monitoring of the media coverage of the 1996 presidential elections in this introduction we want to put this event in relation to a broader historical background. The remarks concerning previous elections are primarily based on observations of Jonathan Steele as a long-term observer of Russian developments.

seats were chosen by party lists according to proportional representation, and half were contested in local constituencies. The system of local voting reduced the power of television. Because Parliament had few powers, compared to the President, the stakes were not high.

Nevertheless, in December 1993 state-owned television began to revert to the monopolistic tendencies of the old Soviet era in its coverage of the campaign for the draft new constitution which was submitted to a referendum on the same day as the Parliamentary poll. Both state-owned networks campaigned vigorously for a Yes vote. Opponents of the constitution were virtually shut off the air. Parliamentary candidates who opposed the new constitution were warned not to do so on television and at one point President Yeltsin said they would forfeit their right to be candidates if they campaigned against the Constitution.

By December 1995 NTV, a privately owned channel, was firmly established and willing to challenge the official line. Its coverage of the Chechen war, in particular, was more critical than that of the state-owned channels. This must have played a role in the poor performance by the pro-Government party, Our Home is Russia, in the December 1995 elections<sup>2</sup>.

Although he did not campaign for any party, not even for Our Home is Russia, the December election results were a severe blow to President Yeltsin<sup>3</sup>. After almost five years in power, it was clear there was an enormous protest vote against his record. The Chechen war was only one factor. More important was the situation in the economy. Industrial production had slumped by almost 50 per cent since 1991, and millions of workers were either out of work or not being paid on time. Although inflation had come down considerably since its 1992 peak, and the shops were full of goods, many people could not afford the new prices.

The United Nations Children's Fund compiles the best evidence of standard of living changes in Russia and Eastern Europe. It found that average consumption of meat, fish, milk and other dairy products in Russia had gone down by roughly a fifth since the peak year of 1989. Real wages went down by 36 per cent between 1989 and 1994. The crisis led to a drop in life expectancy for men and women, as well to a rise in other indicators such as divorce and suicide rates. There was a sharp increase in crime.

However the path to the market economy was clearly irreversible and although many Russians spoke of the stability of the last two decades of Communism under Brezhnev with nostalgia, few said they favoured a return to the old system. The dominant political mood was apathy, often coupled with despair. The majority of Russians appeared to want something akin to "transition with a human face". They did not want to restore state ownership of industry or have private property banned, as it had been in the past. But they did want the government to play a greater role in safeguarding the welfare system, preserving the advantages of universal state-funded education and health services, and preventing corruption in the process of privatisation. In the elections of 1993 and 1995 parties which advocated strategies on these lines won the overwhelming number of votes.

The 1996 presidential election offered a further chance for Russians to discuss and debate how best and how fast to proceed along the path towards market reform and a revival of economic growth. Because of the great power conferred on the Presidency under the new constitution, the election was far more important than the parliamentary contests. Yeltsin's announcement in February that he had decided to run again invested the 1996 poll with even greater significance.

In the election of March 1989 and most of the subsequent ones, Russians were voting for totally new institutions. Everything was being done for the first time. What made the 1996 election unique was that Russians had the chance to pass judgement on an incumbent candidate's record. They could either choose a person for a second term or they could bring in a new team. In established democracies this is, of course, the normal state of affairs at election time. It is not a matter of great drama. Voters weigh up the rival parties' promises, decide whether they are more or less satisfied

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<sup>2</sup> In detail see the „Final report on monitoring the media coverage of the 1995 Russian parliamentary elections“, 15 February, 1996, produced by the European Institute for the Media.

<sup>3</sup> In detail see the „Final report on monitoring the media coverage of the 1995 Russian parliamentary elections“, 15 February, 1996, produced by the European Institute for the Media.



with the incumbent party's or coalition partners' performance, and calculate whether the opposition leader has the experience or talent for doing a better job. In the summer of 1996 Russians had their first opportunity to do the same thing.

The challenge facing the Russian media, was to aid and abet the process to the best of their democratic ability. It was a crucial moment. Russian print journalism has always been long on polemics and short on objective analysis. Newspapers have for decades seen their role as propagandists rather than impartial purveyors of news and views. The line which separates fact from comment was blurred. Nevertheless, within this overall paradigm, signs had begun to emerge of a less partisan and fairer type of reporting, as well as of opinion pages which allowed for debate. Would the 1996 election campaign enhance these tendencies or reverse them?

For television the challenge was even greater. The economic crisis of the 1990's had caused a heavy fall-off in newspapers' circulation. Most of the Russian electorate depended on national television for its access to national news and views. Radio played a small role, but was no substitute for the power and penetration of television. Would TV offer news and current affairs programmes which presented voters with a clear picture of the various candidates' views and promises? Would it give fair coverage of every candidate? How would it handle the complex issue of reporting an incumbent President in a re-election campaign? Would it find a mechanism to offset an incumbent's natural advantage?

In no democracy is this an easy task. The Russian election system, at least, made it simpler in one respect. By providing a two-round process with a run-off between the top two candidates it made the broadcasters' task a good deal easier in the final phase. Faced with nine candidates and an incumbent in the first round, it is hard for any editor to find a perfect solution. Some candidates are clearly less mainstream than others. Can one really give the same attention to a rank outsider with no public profile as one gives to a serving President? These decisions can have a big impact on who gets into the run-off. They involve complex judgements which can never be perfect. At least, in the second round, the picture is clearer, and a responsible editor should have no great difficulty in organising coverage and monitoring current affairs programmes so that the two candidates are treated equally.

Against this background, the European Institute for the Media monitored the media coverage of the June 1996 presidential elections. The mission followed similar monitoring exercises conducted prior to the 1993 and 1995 parliamentary elections, and therefore represented an excellent opportunity to measure the possible progress towards democratic media and sound election coverage in the Russian Federation.

This continuity and, consequently, knowledge and understanding of the Russian media, are reflected in the list of staff provided below. For three members of the current team (Professor Bernd-Peter Lange, Richard Schoonhoven and Alexei Pankin) this was their third monitoring mission of Russian election coverage. Two members (Benedicte Berner and Yasha Lange) participated for the second time, and Jonathan Steele for the first time.

The monitoring team was based in Moscow, and assessed whether there was free and fair coverage of the presidential elections in the press, radio and television. The analysis included a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the media coverage of the elections, as well as an assessment of the legal framework for the broadcast and print media in the electoral campaign.

## 1.1 Staffing

**Professor Dr. Bernd-Peter Lange** (Germany), Director-General of the European Institute for the Media, was the project director and monitor in Moscow.

**Ms. Benedicte Berner** (Sweden), expert on the media in central and eastern European countries, was the monitor prior to the first round of voting.

**Mr. Jonathan Steele** (United Kingdom), assistant editor of The Guardian and former correspondent in Moscow, was the monitor prior to the second round of voting.

**Mr. Richard Schoonhoven** (Netherlands), former Director, Catholic Broadcasting Organisation (KRO), has researched the relations between politics, media and new financial structures.

**Dr. Alexei Pankin** (Russia), Director of the East-West Cooperation Programme of the European Institute for the Media, organised the coordination of the mission.

**Mr. Yasha Lange** (Netherlands) was the project manager with the team in Moscow and the editor of this report.

Under the supervision of the monitors from western countries the infrastructure for the monitoring was provided by the Mass Media Research Centre SREDA in Moscow, which is headed by **Ms. Anna Pouliaevskaya**. The quantitative monitoring was coordinated by **Mr. Semyon Liberman**, checked against the methodology developed over many years by the EIM.

Finally, the monitoring team cooperated with the Russian-American Press and Information Centre (RAPIC) to receive additional information on the media coverage in eleven other regions: Bryansk, Kaluga, Kemerovo, Sergiyev Posad, Murmansk, Novgorod, Novosibirsk, Orenburg, Perm, Tatarstan and Tyumen. A questionnaire was sent to the correspondents in these regions. As a result the regional team was able to also evaluate the specific developments in the regional media coverage of the campaign.

## **1.2 Background of the mission**

The European Institute for the Media is a non-governmental policy-orientated independent research body operating in the field of European media development. It has significant previous experience in the field of media monitoring, and since 1992 has monitored the media coverage of elections in Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Moldova, Ukraine (both Parliamentary and Presidential elections), Belarus (both Parliamentary and Presidential elections), Russia (Parliamentary elections 1993 and 1995), Hungary, Macedonia, Estonia, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Currently, the EIM operates a Media Monitoring and Assistance Unit for the CIS, on behalf of the EU's Tacis Democracy Programme. The Unit researches the progress towards independent and democratic media in the countries of the former Soviet Union on a continuous basis and is developing a programme of assistance in this respect. An Annual Report on the State of the Media in the CIS is due in February 1997.

The current mission was part of the work of the Media Monitoring and Assistance Unit for the CIS and was funded by the European Union's Tacis Democracy Programme. The Tacis Democracy Programme was approved by the European Union as part of the EU's Tacis Programme, which provides grant finance for know-how to foster the development of market economies and democratic societies in the New Independent States and in Mongolia.

This is the final report of the Institute's Russian media-monitoring mission. It contains information on the structures of the media and on the background to the elections. It presents the findings of the monitoring team on the election coverage, and on the broader situation of the Russian media. Finally, it seeks to make some recommendations which may stimulate discussion within Russia. The report will be translated into Russian. It is the ambition of the Institute, that this report, like the previous ones, will help to foster transparency concerning media developments in Russia not only on the EU level and that it will help to promote fruitful discussions on the improvement of media structures in Russia itself and in the EU. The monitoring team has worked together on a continuous and constructive basis with EU and OSCE representatives.

The findings and recommendations of this report are the sole responsibility of the EIM. The monitoring team assessed the media coverage of the presidential elections in both rounds against the legal background, which Russia has developed in recent years itself, as well as against universally accepted norms for democratic elections. The team was aware of the unprecedented nature of the second-round choice between a candidate from a communist party and the incumbent president. At the end of this report the team discusses some possible objections to its evaluation in the light of this fundamental alternative.

This report contains only a part of the material and information gathered by the monitoring team in the process of arranging and completing the mission. Anyone who wishes to have further information or to examine the original materials in greater detail is invited to contact the Institute in Düsseldorf.

### **1.3 Acknowledgements**

Thanks for the successful accomplishment of the mission go to the following: the staff of the Mass Media Research Centre Sreda in Moscow; the correspondents from the regions; the staff of RAPIC; Andrei Rikhter from the Moscow Media Law and Policy Centre for consulting the team on the legal situation of the Russian media; Dr Sergey Oznobishev, director of the Institute for Strategic Assessments, Russian Scientific Foundation for support in monitoring the print media; the staff of the Tacis Democracy Programme in Brussels; the monitors and the members of the EIM staff who were involved in the project. The monitoring team would also like to thank all the people interviewed during the course of the mission for their cooperation.

Prof.Dr. Bernd-Peter Lange

Düsseldorf, 30 September 1996



## 2 Monitoring methodology

The *quantitative* monitoring of the federal TV and radio networks commenced on 6 May 1996 and concluded on the day of the second round of voting - Wednesday 3 July 1996.

The team monitored prime-time news and current affairs programmes on the four television networks (state-owned RTR, 51% state-owned and effectively state-controlled ORT, private NTV and TV-6) and four radio stations (Radio Russia, Ekho Moskv, Radio 1 and Svoboda). The details of each programme were put into tabular form.

The team focused on *editorial time*, which was defined as “those programmes and articles which are prepared by the journalists of the media outlets or presented as such”.

Besides measuring the time allocated to each individual candidate, the team also counted positive and negative references, in order to assess the attitude of the programmes towards the candidates. For instance, if a journalist or an opposing candidate would remark “Yeltsin has no idea of the economic problems in this country”, “Yavlinsky does not care about the working people”, “Zyuganov has no experience”, these would be considered negative references. Positive references could be things like “Yavlinsky launched a *good* plan to attract foreign investment”, “Yeltsin made a *successful* visit to a region”, “The president shows that he cares about the working people”.

A positive or negative reference was only counted if the monitoring team judged it to be unequivocal and clear to a large segment of viewers. Subtle references were not included. The figures regarding the positive and negative references, provided in the chapter on quantitative analysis, are cumulative and therefore give an indication of the *overall* tone of the coverage. Four favourable, five unfavourable and three neutral references to a candidate would add up to minus one in the graphs.

Additionally, monitors spent hours daily watching television and reading the newspapers, which allowed them to pass a *qualitative* judgement on the media coverage and the professionalism of journalists. The figures may speak for themselves in this particular monitoring exercise, yet it is often impossible to quantify “partiality”. Moreover, it is rather difficult to analyse scientifically whether news and comments are mixed, if commentary is based on facts or ideology or if a certain feature film is aimed at reminding viewers about the gloomy past. Systematically absorbing the media output, combined with an understanding of genuinely fair and balanced election coverage, does provide this information.

The qualitative analysis was therefore most instrumental in assessing the performance of the journalists and the various media outlets. The information based on these observations is contained in the chapters on *Professionalism of journalists*, *Media strategies* and *Qualitative analysis*.

Finally, the monitors interviewed a number of personalities from the media, political and regulatory fields. They devoted particular attention to areas of concern such as the impartiality of the coverage and the ability of the media themselves to report freely and fairly.

The interviews were instrumental in getting examples of pressure put on journalists, in comprehending the reasons behind the voluntary cooperation of journalists, in researching the influence of the owners on the conduct of the outlet, in mapping the media strategies of the different candidates, in understanding the background of the complaints filed by various candidates and in getting general inside information regarding the methods employed by media outlets and the authorities.

The analysis and information based on these interviews are contained in the chapters *Media strategies*, *Professionalism of journalists* and *Reasons behind Yeltsin's dominance*.



### 3 Background to the presidential elections

On 16 June and 3 July 1996 Russia voted in the first and second round of the country's second democratic presidential elections. It was the first time the Russian electorate could choose their leader in a broad pluralistic environment, since the presidential elections of June 1991 took place within the confines of the former Soviet Union and under the old constitution. The current constitution, adopted in a national vote on 12 December 1993, gives the president a dominant executive status.

On 24 March 1995, the State Duma adopted the "Federal Law on Election of President of the Russian Federation". Article 34 of the law stipulates that: "[...] a candidate for the office of President of the Russian Federation, must collect no less than one million voters' signatures in his/her support, with no more than seven per cent of the required total coming from one of Russia's regions". The deadline for submission the lists with signatures was 16 April 1996; on 26 April the Central Election Commission (CEC) announced the officially registered candidates.

Eleven candidates were registered to run in the presidential election. Six others claimed to have obtained the one million signatures necessary to comply with the electoral law, but the CEC ruled them out on the grounds that a significant proportion of the signatures were forged.

The eleven represented a broad range of views. Nearly all could be classified on a scale that compares with the Western European distinctions of left and right as regards economic policy and the role of the state (given that such definitions are increasingly fluid even in Western Europe). It was much harder to define their views on other themes, such as Russian nationalism, law and order, and respect for democratic rights, since mostly they avoided detailed commitments in favour of 'sound-bite' politics.

The difficulty of labelling inevitably makes the following list of candidates somewhat schematic. In classifying them we have emphasized their views on economic policy and the role of the state.

- Vladimir Bryntsalov, a State Duma deputy and multi-millionaire. Centre-right. Claimed support from business groups.
- Svyatoslav Fyodorov, a State Duma deputy, founder of the Party of Workers' Self-Government. Famous eye surgeon and entrepreneur. He was often mentioned as one of the three leaders of a possible third force along with Lebed and Yavlinsky, which would join to fight both Yeltsin and Zyuganov. His party appeared to be centre-left on economic policy since it supported cooperative methods of running the economy with a large role for workers in the running of their own companies.
- Mikhail Gorbachev. Former president of the Soviet Union. Centre-left. Gorbachev's views appeared to be broadly social-democratic. He criticised the IMF's deflationary strategy but supported an open economy with minimal protectionism for Russian manufacturers. Firm in the protection of civil liberties. Favoured negotiations on Chechnya.
- Alexander Lebed. Retired General. Volatile views on economic policy, at times favouring an open economy, at times protectionism. He based his campaign on the need for a war on corruption, and seemed willing to reduce civil liberties in order to fight crime.
- Martin Shakkum. General director of the "Reform" think tank of prominent academician Stanislav Shatalin. Centre-right.
- Aman Tuleyev. Chairmen of the legislature of Kemerovo oblast. Centre-left. (Withdrew in favour of Zyuganov).
- Yuri Vlasov. Former world champion weight lifter. Patriot, economic views unclear; turned democratic activist during Gorbachev era and then turned nationalist after 1991.

- Grigory Yavlinsky. State Duma Deputy and leader of Yabloko block. Centrist. He broadly supported the IMF strategy, though he said he wanted to do more to preserve the social safety net and criticised the way privatisation had been handled by Yeltsin. He also said it had been a mistake to liberalise prices. Favoured negotiations on Chechnya. Firm defender of civil liberties.
- Boris Yeltsin. President of the Russian Federation. Centre-right. He implemented the IMF's deflationary strategy and the open economy. In spite of regular talk of preserving the social safety net, did little to carry this out. Favoured strong executive. Pursued a hard line on Chechnya; promised peace during the campaign.
- Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. Leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR). Right-wing. Broadly supported the IMF strategy but talked loudly of the need to stamp out corruption in the privatisation process. Openly supported restricting civil liberties. Hard-line on Chechnya.
- Gennady Zyuganov. Leader of Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF). Centre-left. Criticized IMF's deflationary strategy and favoured some form of protectionism. In his speeches accepted market economy but was vague on future of privatised enterprises. Favoured stronger role for state in economic management, possibly including some price controls to protect poor people. Supported negotiations on Chechnya.



### 3.1 Results of the elections

On 16 June, 69,81% of the eligible voters cast their ballot in the first round of the elections. The official results, as released by the CEC, are provided below.

Candidate	Per cent
Yeltsin	35,28%
Zyuganov	32,03%
Lebed	14,52%
Yavlinsky	7,34%
Zhirinovskiy	5,70%
Fyodorov	0,92%
Gorbachev	0,51%
Shakkum	0,37%
Vlasov	0,20%
Bryntsalov	0,16%
Against all*	2,97%

The CEC had to schedule a run-off between the two front-runners within two weeks after announcing the official results. The process was quickened and the second round was scheduled on Wednesday 3 July; a unique event in Russian voting history, since all previous elections took place on a Sunday. The Law on Elections stipulates that voting should take place on a free day, so a national bank holiday was arranged on 3 July. Observers reckoned this was done to ensure a high turnout, considered beneficial for Yeltsin (people who would go to their datcha on Sunday were thought to be largely in favour of the incumbent president). The turnout was nevertheless slightly lower than in the first round namely, 68,89%. It was more than enough for Yeltsin, who won with a comfortable lead.

Candidate	Per cent
Yeltsin	53,82%
Zyuganov	40,31%
Against both	4,83%
Invalid ballots	1,04%

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\* Voters on their ballot paper also had the official possibility to vote against all of the candidates.



## 4 The regulatory framework for media coverage

The role of the mass media in covering the elections was governed by at least six different statutes. Apart from the Constitution which prohibits censorship and the Media Law which lays down general principles on access to information, there were four laws which dealt specifically with elections.

Firstly, the Federal Law of the Russian Federation "On the Main Guaranties of the Electoral Rights of the Citizens of the Russian Federation" (henceforth referred to as The Law On the Main Guaranties) marked a new stage of development of Russian electoral legislation. This Law contains the norms ensuring protection of electoral rights of Russian citizens by state agencies, municipal bodies and their officials, as well as by judicial bodies. Chapter VI of The Law On the Main Guaranties is devoted to the rules for the realisation of the election campaign and also for the mass media.

Secondly, the acceptance of the Federal Law of Russian Federation "On Entering Changes and Additions in the Criminal Code of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialistic Republic (RSFSR) and the Code of the RSFSR On Administrative Transgressions" is the next stage of formation of the Russian electoral legislation. The Law has established criminal and administrative responsibility for action hindering free realisation of electoral rights by Russian citizens. Responsibility for infringement of the conditions of an election campaign in mass media as well as for infringement of terms of the campaign was established by the Law .

Thirdly, on 24 March 1996, the Duma signed the Federal Law of the Russian Federation "On Election of the President of the Russian Federation" (henceforth referred to as The Law On Elections). Chapter VI of this Law is devoted to the rules of the election campaign in mass media.

Fourthly, on 5 April 1996, according to Article 40 of The Law On Elections, the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation (CEC) approved the Instruction No. 86/716-II "On the procedure for granting air time on channels of state television and radio companies to candidates for the President of the Russian Federation, electoral associations, initiative groups of voters and publication of election campaign materials in periodicals" (henceforth referred to as the Instructions of the CEC).

The legal regulation of the election campaign in the mass media was executed on the basis of the above legislative and normative acts.

All media were subject to the overall requirements not to subvert the constitution or break the laws on incitement or libel. The Instructions of the CEC and most of the provisions contained in the Law on Elections applied solely to the state-run television and radio and state-owned publications.

### 4.1 Relevant laws and instructions in detail

The concept of election canvassing is given in Article 2 of The Law On the Main Guaranties. It is defined as: "the activity of the citizens of the Russian Federation and public associations on the preparation and distribution of information for the purpose of making voters participate in balloting for or against one or another candidate".

In both Article 26 of The Law On the Main Guaranties and Article 38 of The Law On Elections it was stipulated that the election campaign began from the date of the candidate's registration and ceased at midnight - local time - the day before the eve of elections. So election campaign material was not distributed in the mass media on 15-16 June and 2-3 July 1996. Pursuant to Article 26 of the Law On the Main Guaranties, publication of public opinion poll results, forecasts of election results and other research, connected with elections was prohibited three days prior to and on election day.

The Law On Elections stipulated that the main formats of election canvassing for radio and television are: public debates, "round tables", press-conferences, interviews, statements and political advertising. However, the above list is not comprehensive. In the same Article 40 it is established that election canvassing can be executed in any other forms not forbidden by law.

#### **4.1.1 Free time**

The main principle of the election campaign is the principle of equal access to state mass media for the candidates. Pursuant to Article 24 of The Law On the Main Guaranties, candidates had the right to receive free television and radio air time on state and municipal channels on an equal basis. The concept of "equal basis" is stipulated in Article 47 of Law On Election. Pursuant to it, the air-time should be free of charge and granted in equal quantities to each candidate. The time for such broadcasts should be identical.

Granting free time on state television and radio channels was realised in accordance to scheduling by the CEC and regional election commissions, based on the results of lotteries (Paragraph 2.9. of the Instructions of the CEC).

Before the first round of voting each candidate was entitled to 30 minutes of free time on each of the state channels (RTR, ORT and TV-5). In the run-off, the two candidates received another 30 minutes per day on these channels for four days. Candidates were free to divide their ten minutes on each channel as they pleased. They could choose, for example, two five-minute slots, one ten-minute slot, or five two-minute ones. We have no evidence that these stipulations were violated. There were no complaints.

#### **4.1.2 Paid time and space**

Candidates could purchase additional air-time. On the state and municipal channels a maximum of thirty minutes was set while no limits applied to the non-governmental channels, except that the maximum expenditure on all aspects of the campaign could not exceed \$2.9 million per candidate.

The maximum expenditure was the laws on campaign financing which sought to put a ceiling on the amount of money a candidate could spend in commercial advertising and electioneering. Article 28 of The Law On the Main Guaranties stipulates that only money resources accumulated in the electoral fund may be used for the purposes of the election campaign. Pursuant to Article 46 of Law On Elections, the amount of the fund should not exceed the minimum monthly wages more than by 250 thousand times (not more than a rouble equivalent of \$2,9 million).

For newspapers and periodicals founded (co-founded) by state or municipal bodies, state enterprises, institutions, and organisations, as well as for those periodicals which are financed completely or in part by the federal budget or budgets of a subject of the Russian Federation, the CEC Instruction introduced the following rule: if they granted one candidate space, they had no right to deny to other candidates advertising space under the same conditions.

The amount of space provided could not exceed 10 per cent of the total space of a given issue. Space in periodicals with state participation had to be paid for.

An exception was made for publications, founded by legislative (representative) bodies, executive and judicial authority, as well as by bodies of local self-government, which are exclusively for official messages and materials, documents and other statutes. Pursuant to Article 41 of The Law On Elections, they had no right to publish election campaign materials.

#### **4.1.3 General requirements**

Article 1.3 and 2.27 of the Instructions of the CEC dealt with the problem of unbalanced coverage. Article 1.3 obliged the state-run media 'to refrain from preferential treatment of any candidate while he is participating in events related to election campaigning'. Article 2.27 stated that 'TV and radio news programmes while broadcasting information related to the campaign shall not be entitled to give preferential treatment to any candidate'. The context made it clear that this also applied only to state-run media. The role of the CEC in observing adherence to these particular provisions is discussed in detail below.

Pursuant to Article 23 of The Law On the Main Guaranties, all citizens of the Russian Federation and public associations have the right to take part in the election campaign. The Law On Elections stipulates several "subjects" that cannot take part in election campaigning:

- Federal branches of the Government, branches of the Government in the subjects of the Russian Federation, municipal governments, as well as their officials while performing their official duties;
- Military formations, military institutes and organisations;
- Charitable organisations and religious associations;
- Members of election commissions.

During the election campaign it is forbidden for journalists or officials of mass media who are candidates, or confidants of a candidate, or members of election commissions, to conduct television and radio news programs, and to participate in coverage of election campaign through a given mass media. Pursuant to Article 22 of The Law On the Main Guarantees, candidates working for state or municipal bodies as well as working for the mass media should be freed of their official duties.

It is also forbidden to use the advantages of an (official) position . However, the exception in Article 37 of The Law On Elections is that the President of the Russian Federation may take part in the election campaign. He may continue to execute his official duties but should not use the advantages of it.

Political campaigning in mass media is to an extent guided by the general legislation of the Russian Federation. Pursuant to Article 4 of The Law "On Mass Media" (1991), use of mass media for purposes of crime, for disclosure of information that exposes state secrets or other secrets protected by law, for appeals for the seizure of power, for violent change in the constitutional order and integrity of the state, for inciting national-, class-, social- or religious prejudice or intolerance and for propaganda of war, is not allowed.

The responsibility for similar infringement was established by The Criminal Code of the Russian Federation - Article 70 provides criminal responsibility for appeals to seizure of constitutional order; Article 71 establishes criminal liability for propaganda of war; Article 74 for infringement of equality on the basis of race, nationality, or attitude to religion; Articles 75, 76, 124, 135, 184 for disclosure of state and any other secrets protected by law. Also established were criminal liability for libel (Article 130) and insult (Article 131) in mass media. Article 140 of The Criminal Code establishes criminal responsibility for violation of the rights of the journalists - for the hindrance in any form of the legal professional activity of journalists and for forcing journalists to disseminate or refuse to disseminate information.

Article 402 of The Code of Administrative Transgressions of the Russian Federation establishes responsibility for political advertising while it is prohibited. Article 403 of this Code establishes administrative responsibility for spreading false information about the candidate with the purpose of influencing the outcome of the elections.

And, lastly, pursuant to Article 4 of The Law On Mass Media, journalists and mass media are responsible for the abuse of their own rights. During an election campaign, such misapplication could be spreading rumours under the guise of reliable information, falsification of publicly significant information, spreading information for the purpose of defaming a citizen exclusively on the basis of sex, age, racial or national affiliation, language, attitude toward religion, profession, place of residence and work and political convictions.

Administrative responsibility for infringement by mass media and journalists on conditions of the election campaign has been established by Article 40. In addition to responsibility for the violation of requirements set forth in, journalists and mass media and non-compliance with their responsibilities set in The Law .

During the election campaign the CEC and regional election commissions are responsible for observance of the election campaign rules. Disputes connected with violation of those rules in mass media are considered by the Judicial Chamber on Information Disputes under the President of the Russian Federation, as well as by the courts. The role of the CEC and of the Judicial Chamber are discussed below.

## 4.2 The Role of the Central Election Commission

The Instructions of the CEC gave the CEC the task of monitoring compliance. The CEC was required under the election law to monitor the candidates' expenditure. In its statements on this point the CEC only concerned itself with the official bank accounts used by the candidates for their campaign. It did not investigate indirect donations by supporters or research the apparent discrepancy between the amount of electioneering for Yeltsin and the official limit of \$2.9 millions.

We conclude that the law requires clearer accounting of campaign donations by supporters in cash and kind and, in the case of incumbent Presidents running for re-election, a proper system of calculating and publicly recording partisan spending as opposed to the expenses involved in normal governmental activities.

The risk of unfairness arising from incumbency was an issue where the CEC's regulations and its own performance caused us serious concern. As stated above, Articles 1.3 and 2.27 of the CEC's own regulation obliged state-run media to abstain from preferential treatment of any candidate.

Before the first round a number of candidates complained that they were being denied equal treatment and that Yeltsin was given excessive coverage. Grigory Yavlinsky, Mikhail Gorbachev and Gennady Zyuganov talked of an 'information blockade'. Before the second round the Communist candidate sent the CEC a series of complaints based on content analysis of various broadcasts.

In a relatively brief four-page reply on 1 July, two days before voting, the CEC rejected the charges. In a subsequent interview with the team, Alexander Shabanov, the official in charge of ideology in the Communist party, said the party had not expected to get satisfaction from the CEC, nor did it intend to take the matter further. His remark reflected a sense of defeatism and hopelessness which was also noticeable in the conduct of the first-round candidates who did not even go as far as the Communists in forwarding specific complaints to the CEC. Many candidates viewed the CEC as ineffective or lacking in impartiality.

The CEC based its rejection of the complaints of preferential treatment on a single point. It quoted Article 1.3 of the rules (mentioned above) highlighting the phrase, 'while participating in events related to election campaigning'. The CEC argued that Yeltsin's activities as President were separate from his election campaigning and that the impression of a lack of balance was entirely due to the fact that state TV had to cover everything the President was doing.

While incumbents in any country attempt to use their position at the helm of state to create an advantage over their challengers, the national networks in some democracies are under strict rules which require that equal time be given to the main candidates and parties regardless of the fact that one is already in power. In other democracies the networks recognise informal conventions to give more or less equal time.

As will be made clear in this report, the imbalance given to the incumbent Russian President exceeded, in our view, the accepted standards of democratic and fair media coverage. The CEC did not show any willingness to address the problem of counteracting the advantages of the incumbent and even failed to admit the existence of a problem.

The CEC's reply to the Communists did not deal with Article 2.27 of its own rules. The CEC did allude to Article 40 of the Federal Election Law which calls for election news to be covered separately in news bulletins 'without any comment'. The CEC said it had drawn the attention of the directors of the networks to the need to observe this point. But the CEC did not make clear when or how frequently it had given this warning, nor did it suggest it needed stronger powers to enforce compliance, nor how seriously it viewed the issue.

The CEC's warnings to the TV companies sounded vague and inconsequential. The concept of a separation of election news from other news was breached on TV broadcasts night after night. The ban on any form of comment was routinely violated. Moreover, the tone of the comments, as our findings in the next section of this report make clear, was overwhelmingly positive towards Yeltsin and negative towards all other candidates with the exception of Lebed in the last few days of the first round.

***In general, our conclusion is that the CEC's handling of the issues of preferential treatment and campaign expenditure was incomplete and unconvincing. If anything, it raises doubts about the powers, independence, and partiality of the CEC.***

### 4.3 The Judicial Chamber on Information Disputes

The Judicial Chamber on Information Disputes under the President of the Russian Federation (henceforth referred to as the Chamber) was set up by the President in December 1993 after the first elections to the new Duma. Its aims included 'guaranteeing the objectivity and reliability of information [...] and the principle of pluralism'. As a permanent institution, the Chamber's work is not exclusively tied to election campaigns. It is meant to look at issues of press freedom and fairness in general. However, during election campaigns, it is available to give advice or expert opinion to the CEC on request.

On July 5, two days after the election, Anatoly Vengerov, the chairman of the Chamber, expanded in an interview with us on some of the complaints of bias made by candidates. He pointed out that the Chamber deals with complaints relating to newspapers as well as broadcasting. The CEC had sent to the Chamber several papers supporting Zyuganov which had run headlines or comments which compared Yeltsin to Hitler. He mentioned a short piece in *Sovietskaya Rossiya* which used Church Slavonic script for a phoney prayer saying "God Save Russia from Yeltsin".

The Chamber had not yet had time to deal with all the complaints Mr. Vengerov said. If it finds a newspaper has used offensive, insulting, or inciting language, it can call for an apology. But the chamber cannot fine or otherwise punish a newspaper which ignores the ruling. All the Chamber can do is publish its own judgement in the official government paper, *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*. Mr Vengerov mentioned one complaint against a paper supporting Yeltsin. This was a free-sheet, *God Forbid*, which was distributed to millions of households around Russia. The paper did not specify who the publisher or the editor was. This omission was corrected in *God Forbid's* final issue on the eve of the second round, where the names and photographs of the editors and contributors were given on the last page.

On the matter of alleged television bias, Mr Vengerov defended the CEC's conclusion. He argued that the various articles in the rules which banned preferential treatment only referred to news programmes. Discussion programmes or analytical programmes were not bound by the same rules. There was no requirement of balanced comment when it came to this kind of broadcast.

Mr Vengerov also defended the large amount of coverage given to President Yeltsin on TV as he travelled round Russia, making promises or announcing financial benefits to depressed regions or groups of voters. This could only be described as electioneering if the President directly called on voters to support him on polling day, he said. Mr Vengerov expressly drew our attention to Article 1.5 of the CEC's rules which defined election propaganda. However, the clause in question is open to a number of interpretations. It describes 'election propaganda through the mass media's activities of citizens and candidates aimed at encouraging voters to vote for or against any candidate'. This is not as narrow as a specific call for votes.

We conclude that the Chamber's rejection of the complaint of TV bias was excessively narrow. It appeared to us that both the Chamber and the CEC were not taking the allegations sufficiently seriously. They did nothing during the campaign to have the bias reduced or corrected. Our view is that they sought to find the strictest possible interpretation of the letter of the law so as to rule the complaints out of order. In any campaign candidates are bound to complain and some of their complaints may well be exaggerated or unfounded. Yet the volume of the complaints from almost every candidate in both rounds of the election that the Yeltsin side was getting an unfair advantage surely required a more open-minded response from the CEC and the Chamber.





# 5 Campaign strategies

## 5.1 Boris Yeltsin

The amount of paid advertising, the rock concerts, the campaign posters, leaflets and direct mail campaign, the concealed yet paid advertising material in the regional media, the gatherings of regional media editors in Moscow, etc. etc. combine to provide a clear indication that the presidential apparatus was utilised to the utmost. Moreover, Yeltsin had by different means direct control over the national television networks. Without any doubt whatsoever, the resources used by the incumbent president far exceeded those available to other candidates. On top of that, the president's sense of timing, the well orchestrated media coverage, the techniques used and the appropriateness and effectiveness of the messages all testified to a highly professional campaign staff.

Moreover, a remarkable feature of the election campaign was the dynamic, energetic and increasingly confident performance by President Yeltsin prior to the first round (he fell ill afterwards). The president thus managed a startling come-back from December of last year when he had an approval rating of merely 6% in the polls. Yeltsin ran an intensive campaign, playing on ancient Russian conceptions of a benevolent czar surrounded by incompetent aides who were to be replaced once he had won the election. Yeltsin thus tried to create the impression that whilst previously ill-advised, he would set things straight. The portrayed image was that of a strong, charismatic and confident leader. "I have made mistakes", he told electoral rallies. "but I know better than anyone else how to correct them".

Helped by media, the presidential apparatus and associates, Yeltsin generated fear about a return to the communist past and stressed his own capacity to create a better, more stable, free and prosperous future.

### 5.1.1 Political messages

During the last month before the first round, Yeltsin took a series of well timed and extensively publicised initiatives: negotiations on Chechnya, visit to Grozny, a plan for on a professional army and the scrapping of conscription. He also presented a sweeping programme for social renewal with promises for higher wages, better social benefits and four years of stability. He used to the utmost and without any inhibitions the power of incumbency to distribute favours to the specific groups that he visited.

To illustrate, some promises made in April are enumerated. On 8 April, Yeltsin pledged to eliminate pension arrears and issued a decree ordering the government to grant a six-month loan of \$818 million to the pension fund. The same day, he ordered the partial repayment of savings (wiped out by inflation). The next day, the president decreed that supporting small businesses should become a priority and he guaranteed in total over \$300 million. On 15 April, Yeltsin promised to double the compensation payment to pensioners. A similar initiative from the Duma had been repeatedly blocked by the government. The same day, he also pledged support for the scientific community.

Yeltsin's political messages were frequently populist, differed from audience to audience, and were sometimes contradictory or simply unbelievable. This was neither scrutinised nor criticised by the media. Two examples to illustrate. Firstly, a day after signing a compromise cease-fire agreement with the Chechen resistance leader in Moscow, Yeltsin flew to Chechnya, spoke to Russian troops outside Grozny and hailed the war as a Russian victory (which was obviously untrue). Secondly, large state support for the loss-making coalmines and help to socially disadvantaged was promised, whilst liberal economic policies entailing budget discipline were confirmed.

### 5.1.2 Media techniques.

As will be discussed below, intensive and well-organised contacts had been established between the president's staff and the most important decision makers in the media field (owners, editors-in-chief and selected journalists). Changes were made in key media positions, in order to fortify the already existing positive attitude towards the president's candidature. Key figures from regional mass media

outlets and regional heads of administration with an influence on the media were also approached and actively involved in the campaign.

The president's own public appearances were well staged and various modern techniques were used (e.g. prompters), which ameliorated Yeltsin's performance in the media. Efforts were made to target the political messages. For instance, 5-minute interviews with Yeltsin discussing problems in various regions were sent to 80 local and regional radio stations concerned. Mass distribution of "personal" letters with the president's signature were directly mailed to veterans and young men of recruitment age. State television became a virtual arm of the Yeltsin campaign; perhaps stretching the rules pertaining to hidden propaganda.

Yeltsin was portrayed as if he maintained a special bond with the Russian people. He was shown wading through crowds, seemingly enthusiastic, engaged in friendly conversations and listening to complaints. He even joined in an on-stage dance with a rock-band. Special attention was given to young voters: "Vote or lose" was a standard message during prime-time TV. It aimed to encourage young voters, known to be against the communists but not motivated to vote, to go to the ballot. Prior to the second round, an even stronger emphasis was placed on increasing the turnout.

## 5.2 Gennady Zyuganov

While early in the electoral process the communist campaign seemed to work well, the offensive launched by Yeltsin's team created considerable uncertainty and sharpened internal conflicts among the various groups supporting Zyuganov. Moreover, Zyuganov lacked both the dynamism, financial resources, appeal to voters, access to the media and professional campaign staff available to Yeltsin.

His style may have spurred confidence in his pragmatism and modesty, yet appeared rather pale, bureaucratic and uncharismatic to the monitoring team.

### 5.2.1 Political messages.

Zyuganov tried to convey an image of a moderate leader, employing low-key rhetoric with general and reassuring pronouncements. He offered cooperation to all except Yeltsin and promised to set up a coalition government with "third force" participation.

Statesman-like moderate and conciliatory remarks were mixed with sharp criticism of Yeltsin's policies. Those, Zyuganov alleged, had made life almost unbearable for normal people, while favouring the "new Russians". He outlined for his audience who were mostly elderly, the effects of the Yeltsin era: lost savings, miserable wages, unemployment, alcoholism, rapidly rising criminality, low birth- and high mortality rates. All due to the failure of Yeltsin's reforms he said. The campaign was generally negative, directed to produce a vote *against* the incumbent president rather than *for* a credible alternative.

Zyuganov's policies were described in general terms in an economic plan unveiled by the Communist Party three weeks before the first round. The plan called for restoring the leading role of the state, with a large state sector in the industry (35-40%), industrial, social and agricultural subsidies, protectionist trade policies and a "mixed economy" with only some private property (apartments, garden plots and small business). The programme promised protection of Russia against a "unified world super-government" that would otherwise overwhelm Russian culture and national identity.

### 5.2.2 Media techniques.

The communist party's campaign techniques differed from other candidates. Essentially, they relied on the well-organised communist infrastructure of activists, party members and volunteers. After all, their "door-to-door and heart-to-heart" campaign, attempting to use personal persuasion, had proved successful in the parliamentary elections.

Brochures with Zyuganov's political programme were distributed widely. National TV was generally antagonistic, yet Zyuganov used his free time fairly effectively. The communist party employed testimonials from prominent supporters within the cultural scene; for instance film-maker Govorukhin

made the final campaign pitch heaping scorn on pop stars, actors and directors in the Yeltsin camp: "they do it all for money coming out of the state coffers in this sick society corrupted by Yeltsin".

A prominent theme in Zyuganov's campaign was strong criticism of the electronic media. Their partisan, pro-Yeltsin, bias was lambasted by the communist candidate. The national TV was accused of providing false information, negative treatment of Zyuganov and other candidates and ignoring everyone but Yeltsin. Zyuganov tried to fortify the already latent distrust of media messages within the Russian population.



# 6 Media coverage on television

## 6.1 Free time

Prior to the first round voting, between 14 May and 14 June, each candidate received altogether 30 minutes of free time on each of the three state-run national television networks: ORT, RTR and St Petersburg Channel 5, as well as on state-run radio companies<sup>4</sup>. Compared to the December 1995 Duma elections, the total amount of free time was reduced to a third in an attempt to diminish the expenditures of the state-owned TV and radio.

Prior to the second round of voting, the two remaining candidates were allotted another 30 minutes on ORT; RTR and TV-5 for four days.

The allocation of time slots to the different candidates was decided by lottery. **To the best assessment of the monitoring team, the slots were appropriated as stipulated in the regulations and no complaints were received.**

### 6.1.1 Usage of free time

Candidates could use the free time according to their own preferences and were responsible for the content. The time slots were not interrupted by journalists. Most candidates applied a mixture of monologues and video material (regarding the candidates' life and record or interviews with supporters). In general, the free time slots were used more professionally than prior to the 1995 Duma elections.

Little information was provided concerning the (economic and social) platforms of the candidates. Instead, the political advertisements attempted to appeal more emotionally to the population. Nonetheless, the free time still did not encourage voter enthusiasm a great deal. In a poll regarding the alleged influence of television, voters quite unequivocally indicated that the free time was considered uninteresting and of hardly any influence.

In contrast to the other candidates, Yeltsin never appeared in his own free time advertising. Instead, the campaign team decided to rely heavily on both well-known actors and common people. One actor warned that if Zyuganov came to power, he and the people around him would carry out "another revolution, another perestroika". Another actor argued that there were many good things during the communist era in Russia, yet these existed inspite of the political system<sup>5</sup>.

Another series of advertisements showed ordinary people telling the story of their life. The ads were very professional and natural; more shot like short documentaries than advertisements. People spoke about the hardships, the changes and the possibility of living a life in freedom. A return of the Communists would endanger the improvements in their life and the opportunities for more positive change. The psychological identification evoked by these testimonials was sophisticated and appeared highly effective.

Zyuganov used his free time to talk to the camera in an informal setting. In one time slot, the Communist candidate, surrounded by his family, took the viewers on a tour of his home village. He described his army service and career as a teacher and emphasised the moderate character of his career. In his free time, Zyuganov did not discuss his party leadership or ties with nationalist organisations. Like Yeltsin, Zyuganov also relied on celebrities. For instance, N. Gubenko, director of the well known Taganka theatre and former Minister of culture under Gorbachev, as well as the famous filmmaker S. Govorukhin expressed their support for Zyuganov during his free time advertising.

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<sup>4</sup> Reference to the structure of Russian broadcast see Annex „Structures of Russian broadcasting“

<sup>5</sup> Open Media Research Institute, Daily Digest.

Gorbachev focused on the problems faced by the Russian people and on the responsibility of the communists for Russia's poverty. "It is not the time for an experiment; your choice is between Yeltsin and Gorbachev". At the end of his monologues, videos on his time as Head of State were shown.

Yavlinsky used the similar straight-to-the-camera techniques, yet his monologues varied from rather formal ones (explaining the role of the president and the voting procedures) to more informal ones (recalling his childhood and the years he spent as a worker in a factory). "I know how people work", Yavlinsky stated in one of the more informal advertisements. The message was clearly aimed at "ordinary people", in an attempt to enlarge support among them.

Zhirinovskiy stayed with monologues. Though accusing all the other candidates of corruption and stressing the present collapse of the Russian army and economy, Zhirinovskiy's nationalistic appeals were less aggressive than previously. His recurrent themes were advocacy of democracy, socialism, patriotism and family values.

Lebed's message was built around one simple slogan "Truth and Order". In colourful and plain language he described how he would root out corruption and set things straight. "It's not the market that is to blame, it's the bandit state. We don't want a prison order, but a civilised order".

## 6.2 Paid time

Candidates were allowed to purchase additional air-time. A maximum of 30 minutes was set for each of the state-controlled TV channels while no limit applied to the independent channels, except that the maximum expenditure could not exceed 2,9 million dollars. The question of expenditure was discussed more extensively in the chapter *Regulatory framework for media coverage*.

### 6.2.1 Usage of paid time

Contrary to the rather dull and unfocused political advertisements broadcast prior to the 1995 parliamentary elections, most candidates this time used television in a more subtle, imaginative and professional way.

**The candidates quite clearly did not have similar financial resources to buy time on television. President Yeltsin without doubt spent most on political advertising. Lebed, Yavlinsky, Shakkum, Zhirinovskiy and Bryntsalov also bought advertising time on television. It should be noted that a proportionally high number of spots for Lebed appeared in the final week preceding the first round of voting. Zyuganov did not spend money on electronic electioneering, nor did the other candidates.** Considering the rather high price for television advertising on the main networks (from \$10,000 to \$30,000 per minute depending on the time of the day), they preferred to invest in other campaigning strategies such as leaflets, posters, personal letters and door to door campaigning.

Yeltsin's team had contacted advanced focus-group-research, analysed polling data and consulted political advertisers, which led to the decision not to show the president in his own advertisements. The result was an effective and professional advertising campaign based on identification and emotional appeal and aimed at various social groups.

The president's team used three different types of advertising. The first one featured testimonials from "common" people, who described the difficulty of life under the Communist regime. In one spot, a worker from Yaroslavl claimed that if the communists returned to power, people would be forced to use ration coupons as in the late 1980's and early 1990's. All these advertisements carried the pay-off "I believe, I love, I hope" or "Choose with your heart" accompanied with Yeltsin's signature. The second type featured old photographs from Yeltsin's childhood and his family life. The third type were part of the campaign "Stars have made their choice" where well-known musicians who appeared in rock concerts organised by Yeltsin's campaign managers all across the country, gave their unconditional support to the incumbent president.

In contrast to all the other candidates, Zyuganov did not run any ads on national television whatsoever, relying more on old style rallies, leafleting and canvassing and conforming thus to the taste of his electorate which in general dislikes advertising.

The many short spots for Shakkum were illustrative of the political advertising culture in Russia. The brevity of the spots (10 sec) did not allow for any explanatory content; the number of them made Shakkum one of the main spenders on political advertising. One spot featured a truck stuck in the mud, surrounded by a group of men shouting advice on how to get it out, their voices strikingly similar to some of the better-known candidates. Shakkum arrives in a battered Zhiguli and tells the driver to put planks under the wheels and swiftly the truck is rolling again. "Everybody talks, he acts" says the tag-line.

Lebed was featured prominently on television, especially in the last week of the campaign when rumours abounded concerning his links to Yeltsin. He ran a series of advertisements with footage of common people - blacksmiths, fishermen and the like - who wondered where to find a man to stand up for them. Subsequently, they are informed there is such a man; Lebed. One of his video clips showed the ravages of war. Then Lebed appeared in his medal-bedecked uniform to convince voters that they will be in safe hands if he becomes president: "I am a Russian officer, I know what war is".

Yavlinsky's advertising campaign was less successful, although his team ran numerous clips on television. However, the spots were sometimes weird and did not appeal to young people, who should have been his main target audience. One ad featured a young couple dancing around with a new-born baby, singing about how they were going to name him Grisha, after the new president!

### 6.3 Editorial time

Due to the dwindling circulation of the national newspapers, most Russian citizens rely for national news on the main television networks. **Due to their enormous penetration and nation-wide focused content, these channels (ORT, RTR, TV-5, NTV) were the most important media in the campaign.** The existence of some 90 regional television channels (governed by the local authorities) as well as the hundreds of local independent channels (which usually have little interest in national politics and focus on films and entertainment programmes), have not radically changed the impact of the national television on the population.

Free and paid political advertising on these channels played their part, yet it gave politicians a free hand. It goes without saying that the editorial time was pivotal in holding the candidates accountable for their platforms, in investigating the issues and personalities and providing explanatory information to the viewers to enable them to make a well-considered choice.

Unfortunately, the networks chose (or were forced to chose) not to do so. The assessment below is clearly corroborated by the quantitative findings presented in the following chapter.

**In contrast to the December 1995 parliamentary election, the media played a crucial role in structuring the debate and perhaps even in influencing the results. From the start of the campaign, the elections were defined as a race between Communists and non-Communists. Since Yeltsin was portrayed as the undisputed leader of the "reformers" and non-Communists, and since the other candidates were marginalised, it was effectively turned into a race between Yeltsin and Zyuganov, in a race between "a step forward" and "a step backward".**

The "two-phase approach" (firstly marginalising the other reform-oriented candidates and subsequently stressing that a vote for Zyuganov would mean a return to Communism while a vote for Yeltsin was a choice for a better future) appeared to have been most effective. Alexander Minkin, a well-known columnist of democratic conviction, criticized the media's marginalisation of other candidates. In an interview with OMRI's Laura Belin, he stated:

"To be against the Communists does not mean to be for Yeltsin. Before the first round, we really did have other options. [...] This senseless propaganda - 'either Yeltsin or Zyuganov' did its job. [...] This was done by the authorities, by the Kremlin. They did everything to eliminate and undermine all other competitors, so Yeltsin would remain the lone defender of democracy".<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Belin, L. (1996). *The press has lost the trust of readers*. Open Media Research Institute, Transition, Vol 2, No. 18.

### 6.3.1 First round

The national networks collaborated with Yeltsin. They reported Yeltsin's new and popular decrees extensively and uncritically, yet left the proposals of the opposition candidates aside. They avoided discussion of Yeltsin's record over the five years of his presidency, preferring to concentrate on the Soviet period of Russia's history and claiming that it would be repeated if Zyuganov won. They did not discuss the details of either Yeltsin's or Zyuganov's proposals, whether this involved the economy, defence policy, the war in Chechnya, or the role of the state in regulating the market, let alone more specific smaller issues.

A regular newsprogramme during the campaign would open with lengthy footage of the president's visit to a region, the enthusiastic welcome by a large crowd, Yeltsin's promises to pay everyone's wages and increase pensions, and, occasionally, reports about the economic perspectives and the low inflation. The networks also stressed that the president was making successful efforts to protect Russia's internal and external security and, importantly, they encouraged Russia's young people to vote.

The most prominent political programmes were also clearly pro Yeltsin. The president appeared on well-staged interviews, yet refused to participate in any debates. All channels frequently contained interviews with celebrities coming out in support of Yeltsin. Zyuganov however did appear on some prominent television programmes ("Odin na Odin", ORT; "Zerkalo", RTR; and "Itogi", NTV), which gave him the possibility to refute some of the attacks on his candidature and to present the ideas of his party.

The pro-Yeltsin media bias assumed many forms. RTR for instance, broadcast a new programme entitled "Komu verit?" or "Who is to be trusted?". In the programme, the handwriting of the presidential candidates were assessed by graphologists. Not surprisingly, the handwriting of the incumbent president was judged the best.

The president's private life was also given ample and positive coverage. Emphasis was placed upon his life as a normal citizen. For the first time, the president's wife was frequently shown on television. In an interview on RTR, she praised her husband's personal virtues, which apparently included washing the dishes and cooking Siberian dumplings.

"I'd like things to be as they are here, now, in nature - rest, pleasure, family, a small grandson who is almost nine months - that is, the normal human life that I have never lived" said Yeltsin in an outdoor interview on ORT, a few days before the elections. The rest of the interview was less idyllic and contained unusually tough questioning of the president, who was clearly irritated. The programme was the only departure from polite and non-aggressive reporting of the president.

A very important deviation from the normal programming schedule was the choice of entertainment programmes, feature films and documentaries prior to the elections. Numerous broadcasts were clearly aimed at reminding the viewers of the communist past. The final week preceding the first round of voting, several anti-Communist films and documentaries regarding the grim Stalinist era were shown. This attempt to influence the results of the elections by broadcasting non-news programmes with a clear political message reached an astonishing peak on the night before the first round. ORT showed "Burnt by the Sun", the harrowing 1995 Oscar-winning film about Stalin's terror, NTV broadcast a 1992 thriller about the ties between organised crime and the Communist party and RTR aired a movie based on one of Bulgakov's novels about the atrocities during the Revolution and the ensuing civil war. In prime-time television, on the day before the elections in apparent violation of the ban on campaigning, all three main national networks broadcast a film about the gloomy and repressive Communist past. Russia was effectively covered with an electronic blanket of anti-Communist material.

Zyuganov, on the other hand, was largely ignored in the early phase of the campaign. When he made his first campaign tour as presidential candidate in Southern Siberia, he was followed around by 14 journalists, but only one of them was a Russian reporter. His visit was not referred to on any of the TV channels. NTV's deputy news director explained: "We didn't have a bureau nearby".

Zyuganov then complained about "an information blockade" and subsequently he was indeed interviewed several times on prime-time television. However, instead of hiding their personal



preference, most journalists did not conceal their contempt for Zyuganov. A well-known journalist on RTR, for instance, during an interview launched an attack on Zyuganov, for comparing Russia's current plight with the Great Patriotic War.

One of many typical examples of different treatment of the candidates was a comment made on television on Yeltsin's decrees to increase the allowances for pensioners: "A proof that the president cares for the elderly". A similar initiative proposed by the communist party was criticised as "populist electoral propaganda".

The other main candidates received remarkably little attention on national television. This is corroborated by the quantitative findings presented in the following chapter. Zhirinovskiy complained that access to the airwaves was denied. Yavlinsky was particularly invisible on most television news and current affairs programmes. The only exception was NTV's analytical programme "Itogi" which hosted Yavlinsky twice, thus allowing their previous favourite politician to voice his views. Yavlinsky's decision not to join Yeltsin (when the president allegedly offered him a government post if he would withdraw) subjected the Yabloko leader to much negative treatment.

At the end of the first round, Lebed became the sole exception. He received somewhat more positive coverage. Lebed was interviewed at length on the highly rated ORT talk-show "Vzglyad" in the final week before the first round. Many interviewees informed us that the favourable coverage given to Lebed was organised by Yeltsin's team. Firstly, in return for Lebed's decision not to form a 'third force' with other candidates but to come out in support of Yeltsin and secondly as a way of drawing 'law and order' votes from Zhirinovskiy and Zyuganov.

The remaining candidates Shakkum, Gorbachev, Brintzalov, Vlasov, Fyodorov and Tuleev were virtually invisible. The monitoring team understands that fringe candidates cannot expect parity, but they certainly could have been given more coverage than they had.

### **6.3.2 Second round**

In the second round the networks sharpened their attacks on Zyuganov. They gave weary coverage to the issue of endorsements from the first-round losers. Great play was made of Lebed's joining the Yeltsin side. Yavlinsky was repeatedly quoted advising his first-round voters not to vote Communist and saying that a vote for nobody would help Zyuganov. Calls by Zhirinovskiy and Gorbachev to vote for neither candidate were ignored.

The networks next concentrated their fire on Zyuganov's proposals for a coalition government. In the final days, they suggested there were splits in the Communist camp, apparently hoping to create a mood of defeatism among Communist voters. The clear split in the Yeltsin camp, caused by the sacking of Korzhakov, Barsukov, and Soskovets was quickly dropped as a campaign theme a day or two after it happened.

Most importantly, the networks failed to report adequately about Yeltsin's disappearance from public view in the final week of the campaign, even though the health of a candidate and his capacity to serve out a full term was an obvious issue of legitimate concern for voters. Zyuganov was occasionally shown raising the matter, yet the networks' unwillingness to investigate the critical point of Yeltsin's physical state once again appeared to be a partisan move to protect the president. The conclusion, two months later, that he suffered a heart attack could have had a profound effect on voters. This information was suppressed.

The press became full of exhortations for people to vote, after the Yeltsin administration calculated that a higher turnout would benefit their candidate.

At almost no time during the entire campaign did the media run detailed stories or current affairs programmes about Yeltsin's economic and social policies, let alone those of his opponents. Partly this was a result of the unprofessional tradition of Russian journalism, which has never been good at calmly analysing alternatives. Partly, it was because Yeltsin could only win if the election was portrayed as an apocalyptic rendezvous with destiny. The president's record was downplayed and the campaign was turned into a choice between reform and reaction, or even between democracy and dictatorship.



# 7 Quantitative analysis of electronic media coverage

The observations of the various sections of this report are unequivocally confirmed by the results of the quantitative monitoring. As explained in the methodology, the figures are based on the monitoring of the prime-time (19.00-22.00) news and current affairs programmes on ORT, RTR and NTV in the period 6 May - 1 July<sup>7</sup>.

The time allocated to candidates was only counted when candidates were actually mentioned and the procedure for calculating these figures should be self-explanatory. The data on which the graphs below are based are annexed to this report.

It should be mentioned that the graphs concerning the division of time actually reflect the situation rather modestly. Firstly, statements supporting one candidate without mentioning his name were not taken into account; most of such statements were (indirectly) in favour of president Yeltsin. Secondly, the entertainment programmes, the documentaries and the feature films which were clearly aimed at encouraging a Yeltsin vote are not included in the calculation. Had these broadcasts been taken into account, the one-sidedness would have been reflected even more accurately and distressingly.

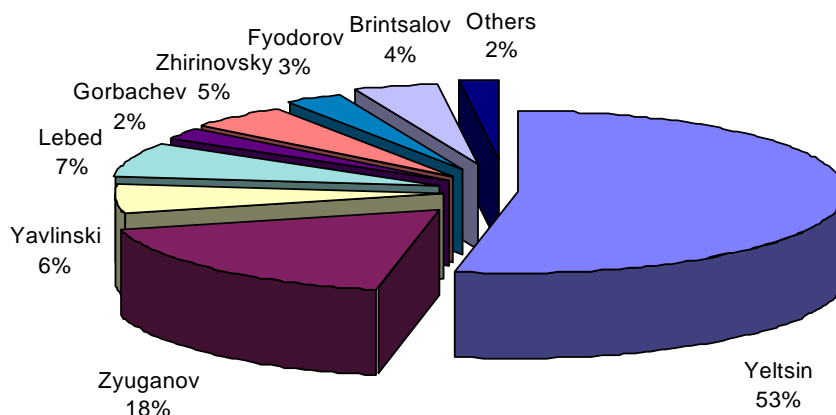
Thirdly, as explained in the section on the methodology, the positive and negative references to candidates were only counted if we judged them to be unequivocal and clear to a large segment of viewers. Also, it should be restated that the graphs show the *cumulative* figures and provide an indication of the *overall* tone of the coverage towards the various candidates.

## 7.1 First round

Prior to the first round, the networks had to deal with ten candidates of which five could reasonably<sup>8</sup> expect some parity (Lebed, Yavlinsky, Zhirinovskiy, Zyuganov and Yeltsin). The remaining five were understandably considered fringe candidates not likely to make it to the second round.

However, the first graph reveals the unbalanced situation of the coverage on the three networks combined. It shows the percentage of time devoted to the main candidates on NTV, ORT and RTR in the six weeks from 6 May to 16 June. Very little attention is devoted to other candidates than Yeltsin and Zyuganov, Yeltsin having a clear advantage over the other contestants.

**Time devoted to candidates 6 May-16 June**



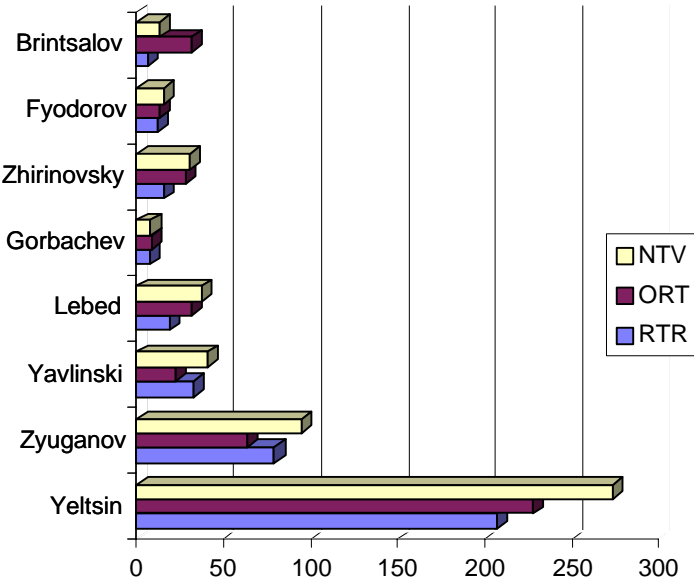
© The European Institute for the Media 1996

<sup>7</sup> The broadcast of election related material was prohibited on 2 and 3 July, pursuant to the Law on Elections.

<sup>8</sup> Strict application of the law means to treat all candidates alike in the media

Since this particular graph shows the percentages of time devoted on the three channels combined, it is interesting to separate the allocation of time per channel. The following graph illustrates that approximately the same pattern of media attention was visible on the three networks.

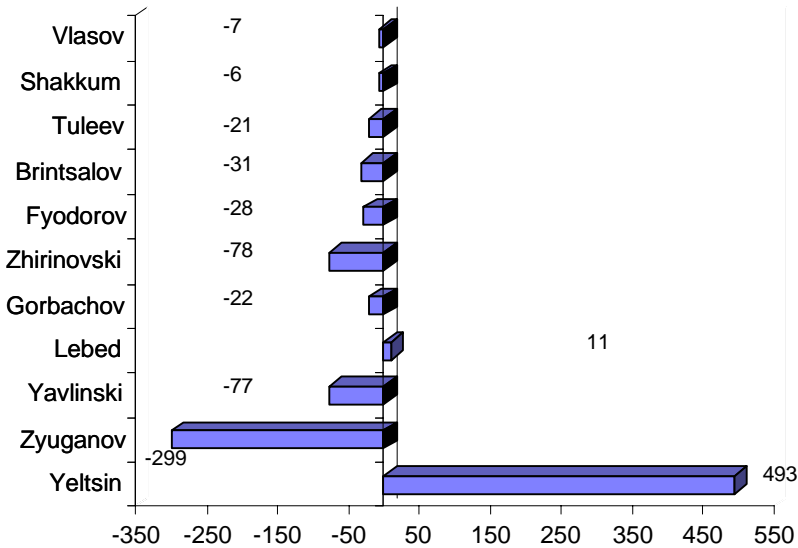
**Time (in minutes) devoted to candidates per channel 6 May-16 June**



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The third graph concerning the media coverage on television prior to the first round shows the number of times the candidates were mentioned positively and negatively. The graph hardly requires elucidation. The contrast between the coverage of Yeltsin and Zyuganov is self-explanatory. Noteworthy too are the negative coverage of Yavlinsky and the positive balance of Lebed. Apart from Yeltsin, the retired general was the only candidate not referred to negatively most of the time.

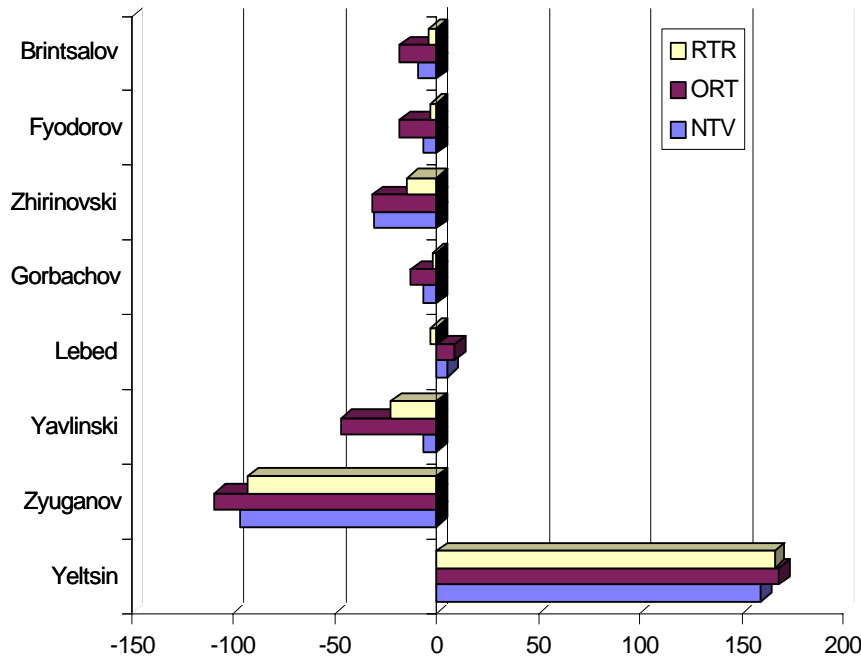
**Positive and negative references to candidates 6 May-16 June**



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Similarly to the division by time, references to candidates can also be viewed per channel. Although there are some minor differences (Yavlinskiy was covered more negatively on ORT and RTR than on NTV), the overall pattern is once again strikingly similar.

### Positive and negative references to candidates per channel 6 May-16 June



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## 7.2 Second round

In a run-off between two candidates, television channels have a considerable obligation to provide fair and balanced information.

The run-off between Yeltsin and Zyuganov offered the television channels a relatively simple opportunity to oblige. Whilst it may be difficult to find a reasonable allocation of time when a whole range of candidates participates, a contest between two contestants can be covered fair rather easily.

The series of pie-charts shown below indicate that the pattern of unequal allocation of time, visible prior to the first round, was apparent in the first week of the campaign for the second round as well. In the final week preceding the second vote, the pattern changed. Instead of receiving average 28% in the first week on the three channels, Zyuganov got 53% during the second week.

The pie charts also illustrate that this sudden change appeared equally on both ORT, RTR and NTV.

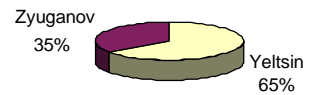
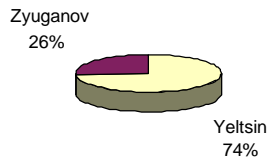
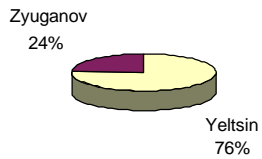
### Percentage of time devoted to candidates 17 June-1 July

#### First week

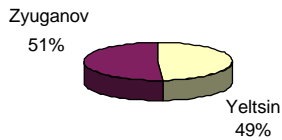
RTR

ORT

NTV



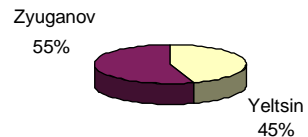
**Second week**  
*RTR*



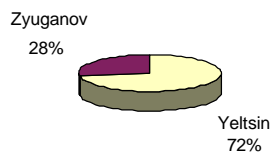
*ORT*



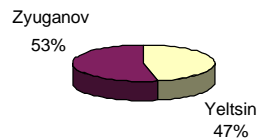
*NTV*



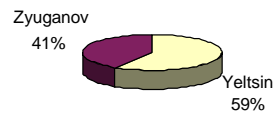
**First week -**  
*NTV, ORT, RTR*



**Second week -**  
*NTV, ORT, RTR*



**First and second week**  
*NTV, ORT, RTR*

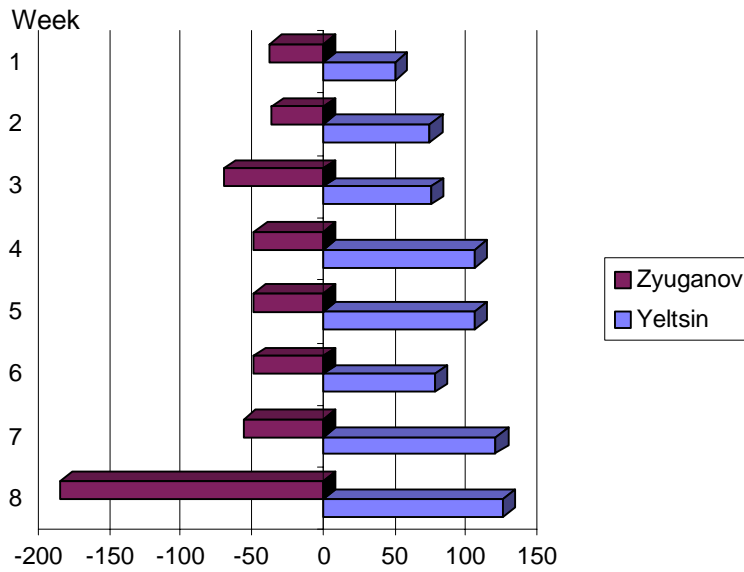


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It was unclear to the monitoring team whether the abrupt change in time devoted to Yeltsin and Zyuganov due to orders was coming from the president's team afraid for instance of over-exposure, to the illness of Yeltsin (he was absent from public life and could not be filmed in action) or to other reasons.

Content analysis of the tone of these broadcasts provides an explanation. Zyuganov extra coverage in the final week, amounted to more negative coverage. The ratio of positive references to Yeltsin versus negative references to Zyuganov was significantly worse than in earlier weeks. **This climax to a thoroughly unfair campaign in the electronic media is illustrated in the graph below.**

### Positive and negative references to candidates 6 May - 3 July



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The graph shows the cumulative positive and negative references to Yeltsin and Zyuganov during the eight weeks of the official campaign period. The number of positive references to Yeltsin increased steadily in the course of the campaign, from 50 in the first week (on ORT, RTR and NTV combined), to 126 in the final week preceding the second round.

The number of negative mentions of Zyuganov was more or less equal throughout the whole campaign (around -50 per week), with the exception of the final week preceding the second round (-184). As said, the time devoted to Zyuganov increased during that week, yet the number of negative references to his candidature multiplied proportionally.

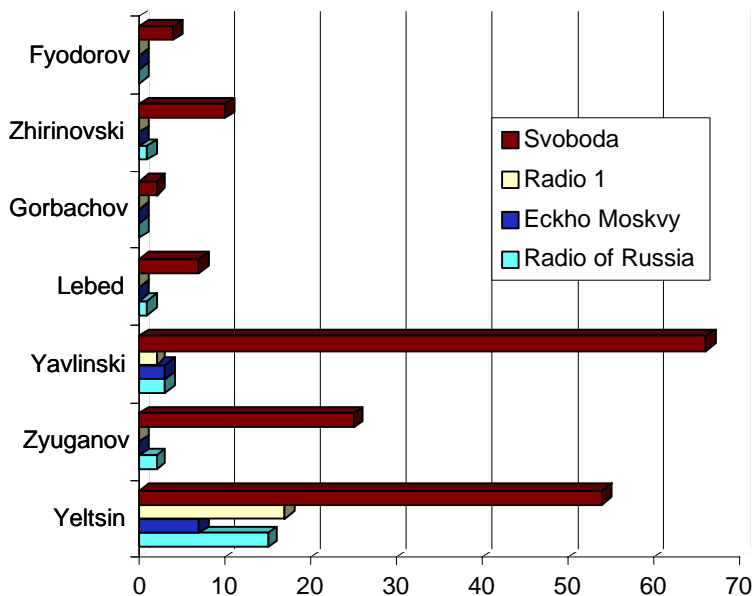
### 7.3 Radio

Four radio stations were included in the quantitative monitoring. The state-owned *Radio Rossii* (Radio of Russia, part of RTR) broadcasts to nearly 60 million people; state-owned *Radio 1* is one of the principal radio stations and reaches about 100 million people; *Eckho Moskvyy* broadcasts in Moscow and the surrounding area. The audience of the non-governmental *Svoboda* is unknown.

Since the team could not listen to the four stations 24 hour a day, a selection of programmes was monitored. The 8.00 a.m. information programme on *Radio Rossii* was included, the 9.00 a.m. bulletin on *Eckho Moskvyy*, the 10.00 a.m. news programme Novosti on *Radio 1* and the 20.00 p.m. bulletin on *Svoboda*.

The graphs below indicates that most of the stations devoted little time to the candidates. It appears that Yeltsin received more time on *Radio 1* and *Radio Russia*, and that Yavlinski and Yeltsin were both given ample time on *Ekho Moskvyy*, yet the figures hardly allow for reliable conclusions. In fact, only the coverage of *Svoboda* was significant enough to interpret the data.

#### Division of time (in minutes) per radio channel 6 May-16 June

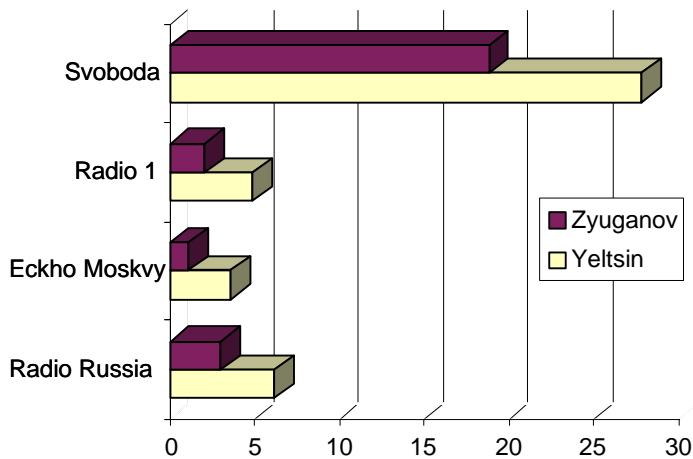


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A similar pattern (few coverage on *Radio 1*, *Ekho Moskvyy* and *Radio Russia*; somewhat more on *Svoboda*) was visible in the two weeks preceding the second round of voting, as is illustrated by the graph on the following page.



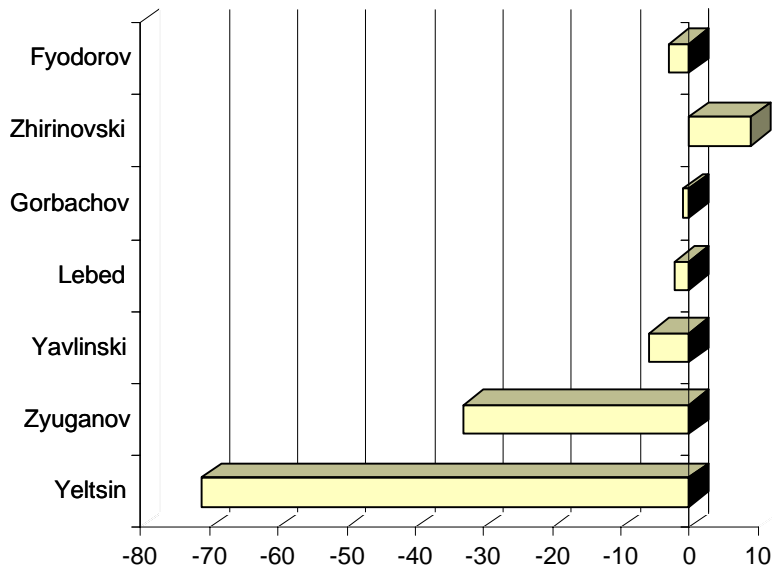
**Division of time (in minutes) per radio channel 24 June-1 July**



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The time devoted to the candidates on *Radio 1*, *Ekho Moskv* and *Radio Russia* do not allow valid conclusions regarding the tone of the coverage. The data is therefore not provided. Therefore, only the number of positive and negative references to candidates on *Svoboda* are provided below.

**Positive and negative references on Svoboda 6 May-1 July**



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As shown on the graph, the radio station was overwhelmingly negative towards all candidates, except Zhirinovski. Yeltsin received most time on *Svoboda*, yet was also referred to negatively most times.



## 8 The central press

**In contrast to the electronic media, the Moscow-based print media gave a more multi-faceted picture of the campaign. Different papers represented different candidates. However, the dominant part of the central press favoured Yeltsin.**

The general tone in articles on the election campaign course varied but can be described as quite strident. It is part of Russian journalistic practice that comments and factual description are often interwoven in the same article and therefore criticism, particularly of Zyuganov but also of other opponents to Yeltsin, was included in news articles. Anti-Communist propaganda was tough with various claims being made in different newspapers: "the economy will be nationalised, the lines for sausages and bread will reappear, students will be conscripted to the army for four-year terms, they will suppress the freedom of speech and cancel liberal confession rights, the machine of repression will be introduced again, they will attempt to restore the USSR and shed blood, they will turn the country backwards". Editors rarely gave the Communists the right to reply .

Propaganda against Yeltsin in the newspapers aligned with Zyuganov was similarly harsh and one-sided.

The most commonly applied method to diminish the chances of Yeltsin's opponents was to ignore them. Yavlinsky's statements, interviews and polemics with other candidates, for instance, were seldom discussed in the central press (let alone the regional press). If special attention was paid to Yavlinsky, it was regularly damaging for his candidature; his refusal to cooperate with Yeltsin was for instance discussed in length. The Moscow newspapers focused on the price Yavlinsky required (the job as Prime Minister) and the tone of the articles can be considered as an attempt to lower Yavlinsky's ratings by showing his unscrupulousness.

Zhirinovskiy was treated as an extremist and dangerous politician and it was alleged that he was closely related to organised crime. He was generally neglected though, like most other opponents. Only Lebed had a successful, yet short interaction with the metropolitan press. He was ignored in the beginning of the campaign, but the press began devoting attention to him in late May and early June, due to political motivation and his colourful language.

The conduct of the Moscow based print outlets during the electoral campaign can roughly be divided into three categories: (a) newspapers clearly supporting Yeltsin; (b) more balanced and objective newspapers supporting "democratic" candidates, yet with a pro-Yeltsin tendency; and (c) newspapers supporting Zyuganov.

### 8.1 Pro-Yeltsin

The first group comprises the official papers which clearly supported the incumbent president. *Rossiiskaya Gazeta* (circulation around 500,000) and *Rossiiskie vesti* (130,000) are respectively the organs of the Russian government and the Russian president. As such they were expected to back Yeltsin. Their credibility is consequently rather low.

*Izvestiya* (circulation 600,000) is generally regarded as one of the best and most serious Russian dailies. Currently the paper is classified in this group since *Izvestiya* gave unequivocal support to Yeltsin. The paper has a history of conflicts with communists and the president's conservative opponents. It has earlier supported other democratic candidates, yet in the presidential campaign devoted limited and fairly neutral attention to Yavlinsky, in a clear attempt to divert votes of intellectuals to Yeltsin. *Izvestiya* carried critical and negative articles regarding Zyuganov and generally positive ones concerning Yeltsin.

To illustrate what "pro-Yeltsin coverage" practically implies, one issue of *Izvestiya* (11 June 1996) is described in detail below. Of the eight pages, over two are taken up by (non-political) advertisements. Two thirds of the editorial material relate to the elections.

The lead article on the cover describes how ordinary people in eight cities intend to vote. Interviews with a sample of residents with the same address, Pushkin street 2 (present in all Russian cities),

were made and the inhabitants express their preference for Yeltsin and their negative attitude towards Zyuganov. Also on the cover, a report concerning Yeltsin's visit to Kazan, capital of Tatarstan. The president is shown in excellent health and amidst an enthusiastic audience. Another article contains a statement of 13 leading businessmen retracting an earlier statement which had indicated that they wanted the authorities to make a deal with Zyuganov. The 11 June statement strongly criticises the Communist' candidate's economic programme.

The remaining space on the cover is to approximately 70% filled with short news items, mostly advantageous for Yeltsin. The mayor of Moscow, Luzhkov, expresses confidence in Yeltsin's victory, the Communist-led city of Ulyanovsk had failed with its food-rationing system, the Internet now connects students in major Russian cities with the whole world.

The entire second page is devoted to the elections. It opens with an opinion poll showing Yeltsin had taken a clear lead. A large article describes the public mood in the oil town Koralim, where Zyuganov did not have any sizeable support. The economic reforms had taken off and positive results were visible, yet the communists want to turn back the clock and destroy everything. "Koralim [...] is a typical example of a city which could greatly profit from reforms [...]".

The third page is devoted to international news, yet Russia is given a prominent place in world affairs and much positive international attention. For instance: "The Germans admire our espionage organisation" and a remark that central European leaders consider Russia's full participation in European cooperation essential. Also on page three, a prominent advertisement for Yeltsin.

Page four and five do not relate to the elections. Page six has an article on electoral behaviour in eight cities. An article written by the composer/director Rostropovich, an idol for the Moscow intelligentsia, concerns his visit to South Korea. He describes how market economy has made the south rich, while the communist North Korea is poor and bankrupt. The director of a well-known Moscow theatre, states his view: "If the communists come back, everything will be like before, only much worse".

The financial supplement carries an extensive analysis of Zyuganov's economic programme. It describes how his presidency will change the economy back to Soviet style and devote major resources to military investments.

*Moskovski Komsomolets* (circulation about one million) is normally an ironic and sarcastic paper criticising *all* politicians. It aims at a young audience, specialised in crime investigation, and does not have a clear political preference. In the course of the campaign, however, *Moskovski Komsomolets* carried many articles which criticised Zyuganov. The material emphasised the extreme, ultra-left, groups in his camp. The newspaper thus became politically involved and devoted space to political and election matters in a blunt, uncompromising and fairly rough manner.

Finally, special mention should be made of the propaganda paper *Ne Dai Bog* (God Forbid), especially created for the elections, printed in full colour, four issues, ten million copies each, and distributed free of charge throughout the Russian Federation. The paper was fiercely anti-Communist. For instance, it compared Zyuganov's speeches to Adolf Hitler's rhetoric in his book "Mein Kampf". It accused Zyuganov of stirring up hatred and extremism in the country. It denounced over and over again the Communists party programme and alleged that if the Communists came to power: "Tanks will appear on the streets, Moscow will differ from Grozny only in size, ruins, hungry dogs, corpses of children [...]. It would be the end of democracy and freedom". The paper regularly used testimonials from well-known Russians to stress the point.

## 8.2 More balanced, yet with a pro-Yeltsin tendency

Firstly, some small circulation newspapers with relevance for the political debated in the capital will be discussed.

*Segodnya*, linked to the Most bank group, has traditionally been friendly to Yavlinsky. In the campaign, the paper was fairly balanced, concentrated less on the elections than several other papers and carried reasonably objective analyses. However, a critical attitude towards the communists and a positive treatment of the Yeltsin campaign was noticeable.

*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, under the prominent leadership of its chief editor, Vitaly Tretyakov, is known for earlier harsh criticism of Yeltsin. In the course of the campaign, the paper provided balanced information and analysis. A few days before the elections, for example, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* carried a quite objective and neutral description of all the main candidates on three pages. The information concentrated on the elections and had small print descriptions and analyses of issues in the campaign. The general news coverage tended to favour Yeltsin, though. For instance, a week before the elections a prominent front page article alleged Communist plans for a violent take-over in case of defeat at the polls and communist contacts with the Chechen separatists. The veracity of the information was never confirmed.

*Obschaya Gazeta* was pro-Yavlinsky, yet of course also anti-Communist.

Special mention should be made of the two biggest Russian newspapers, the daily *Trud* (circulation 1,3 million) and the weekly *Argumenty i Fakty* (circulation three million). *Trud* is generally non-political and maintained this during the campaign. *Argumenty i Fakty* had short and accurate descriptions of day-to-day problems, often in response to readers' questions.

*Komsomolskaya Pravda* (circulation about 1,2 million) has a glorious recent past as a highly professional paper, excellent both in substance and style. Unfortunately, these standards were not always visible in the campaign. *Komsomolskaya Pravda* was quite clearly pro-Yeltsin, although it attempted to be more or less balanced. The paper created a scandal by publishing a "secret KPRF economic programme" of extremist nature. The Zyuganov camp threatened to go to court on the grounds that the document was fake. The paper had a similar "scoop" with a document from the Lebed staff, which was, however, not particularly damaging to its purported authors.

### 8.3 Pro-Zyuganov

The pro-Zyuganov central press has a limited circulation and did not appear to play a major role in the campaign. The regional press might have had a larger impact, since Communist papers are widespread throughout Russia.

*Zavtra*, known as *Den* before it was closed by Yeltsin after the 1993 putsch, is currently a mouth-piece for the patriotic groups and probably their most effective organ. Apart from the central edition, it publishes several special editions for Russian citizens living abroad (e.g. in Moldova or in the Baltic countries).

*Sovietskaya Rossiya* and *Pravda* (total circulation around 300,000), are both edited in traditional Soviet-style, and mainly devoted to official statements from the Communist candidate. Both papers also carried lengthy descriptions of the alleged failures of Yeltsin's presidency.

A disadvantage for Zyuganov was the absence of moderate, less ideological, newspapers, which favoured him mildly and portrayed *him* as the lesser of two evils. The pro-Zyuganov papers are read mainly by a part of the electorate which votes for him anyway. They did not appeal to a wider audience and failed to swing the undecided voters.



## 9 The regions - a bird's eye view

The reports given below indicate that a typical region would have a few "democratically oriented" papers, one paper which supports the Communist party, a regional television and radio company which is controlled by the local government and one or more private television channels. Additionally, there are some non-political papers and small circulation district papers.

In fact virtually all outlets are dependent on the local authorities for one reason or another. Some papers receive significant subsidies, some print their paper in the government controlled printing house, distribution is usually arranged by an official agency, the television channels require a licence, etc.

The regional reports indicate few cases of abuse of this leverage or other interference. In Kaluga oblast, the head of the regional administration cut the financing of *October*. The paper folded, yet reappeared with support from other sources. In Kemerovo, the director of the oblast administration's information and analysis department put out weekly ideological summations, which evaluated the extent to which media outlets helped or hindered Yeltsin. As a result there were several serious talks with editors. In Orenburg, subsidies to the only opposition paper were terminated. In Rostov-on-Don, the authorities attempted to dismiss an editor and close a radio station, yet, interestingly, did not succeed after fierce protests.

All in all, though, these incidents appear exceptions rather than the rule. **Most media outlets supported Yeltsin without significant direct pressure. The governmental electronic media generally backed Yeltsin, the private television channels either did not cover the elections extensively (focusing more on films and entertainment) or attempted to improve their financial situation and use paid material (mainly from Zhirinovskiy, Brintzalov, Yeltsin or Yavlinsky).**

Newspapers supported Yeltsin either since it was in line with the editorial staff's political conviction or since they feared to endanger the subsidies and support. One editor said "the adage 'who pays the piper calls the tune' is still very applicable". **Nonetheless, pro-Communist papers were issued in virtually every region and several newspapers (for instance in Rostov-on-Don and Bryansk) were qualified as balanced and professional.**

In general, though, the regional media did not cover the elections at length, except when a candidate's campaign tour hit the town.





# 10 Bryansk

## 10.1 Brief political background

On 19 June, 1996, the 38-year old Aleksandr Semernev was named head of Bryansk oblast administration by presidential ukase. His political alignment is the current president's and government's course of reforms.

## 10.2 Media and the authorities

Serious conflicts between the mass media and government did not arise. Therefore no governmental influence on the election coverage was evident. However, the State Duma Deputy Yuri Lodkin (KPRF) made a statement concerning the tendentiousness of the local TV/radio station and several democratic newspapers in their coverage of the elections. As a result, on 29 June a Statement from the Bryansk Oblast Election Committee was released. In the statement it was especially stressed that state media should refrain from expressing any preference for any of the candidates in informational, editorial, or any other form.

## 10.3 Media coverage of the campaign

The main media which covered the elections were: State TV/Radio Bryansk, the weeklies *Bryansk Vremya* and *Dobryi den*, the dailies *Bryansk Izvestya* and *Bryansk rabochii*, and regional newspapers.

GTRK Bryansk receives only 25% of its financing from the federal budget, that going for salaries. These funds were at the time of the campaign running two months late. The oblast administration is also a formal co-founder of the channel. However, Bryansk does not receive subsidies from the oblast.

Bryansk was trying to report on the elections in accordance with the laws governing them. Though in its editorial programs an orientation on the present course of reforms was noticeable.

*Bryansk Vremya* is an independent paper of democratic beliefs with a circulation of 30,000. It is owned by an editorial collective and mostly funded by advertising revenues. *Dobryi den* was in opposition to the oblast administration until 19 June - the day Semernev was appointed. The circulation is 15,000 and the paper is financed by stock society Vtormet and Tuban. Founders are the regional divisions of the Russian Social Democratic Party, Russia's Democratic Choice and the social organisation Association in the Name of Man. *Bryansk Izvestya* has a circulation of 22,000 and a liberal orientation. The paper is 40% financed by the oblast administration, who are co-founders. The second founder is the paper's editorial staff. *Bryansk rabochii* is a pro-Communist paper with a circulation of 21,000. The founders are the Bryansk rabochii, the oblast Duma and the oblast association of industrial enterprises.

Of all the above, only *Bryansk Vremya* tried to give balanced information on the course of the election campaign. In volume, GTRK Bryansk gave the most information, trying to be as objective as possible. However, it did not always manage to avoid hidden political ads prepared by the Yeltsin camp. Especially if the material was prepared at the regional division of Our Home is Russia.

The same can be said of *Bryansk Izvestya*. The independent, or more to the point, politically engaged, papers *Bryansk rabochii* and *Dobryi den* spared no effort in agitating for their candidates: Zyuganov and Yeltsin. Every issue was up to 40% propaganda or exposé materials.



# 11 Kaluga Oblast - Obninsk

## 11.1 Brief political background

Oleg Vitalyevich Savchenko was appointed governor by presidential ukase in March 1996. Earlier, he was the presidential representative to the Kaluga Oblast. Savchenko is considered a "democrat" and a representative of the Party of Power.

## 11.2 Media and the authorities

During the pre-election campaign, in May and June, the city Tarusa was home to a heightened conflict between the head of the Tarusa regional administration and the regional newspaper *October*. The administration is a co-founder. The head of the administration Mr Panin cut off financing as he was categorically opposed to the editor-in-chief, the overt oppositional Eduard Maznev. As a result of the administration's not fulfilling contractual conditions, the paper was closed. Its debt to the printers reached 17 million rubbles.

Under pressure from Panin, *October* staged elections for a new editor-in-chief. The majority once more came out in favour of Maznev. However, once convinced of the collective's support, Maznev resigned of his own accord.

At the same time, *October's* plight was being discussed at the oblast level. The oblast's Journalists Union had sought aid for the paper. The oblast press-centre, a co-founder of the *Tarusa* newspaper, covered the deficit, and *October* went back to press. However, the regional head had no official reaction. The paper is still threatened with collapse.

## 11.3 Media coverage of the campaign

4. Two newspapers, *Vest'* and *Znamya*, played the biggest roles. Two TV stations, GTRK Kaluga and Nika-TV, had a lesser impact on voters as their broadcast ranges do not all the regions.

*Vest'* has a circulation of 14,000 and should be considered a semi-official publication. It is used by those in power and a segment of the population. The founder (1991) is the Oblast Legislative Assembly, whence most of its funding. The paper reflects the point of view of the oblast government, yet attempts to be pluralistic in its coverage. *Vest'* leans steadily toward Yeltsin.

*Znamya* has a circulation of 10,000 and is published since 1917. It is read by the opposition and those who need to know what the opposition is thinking. Traditionally, *Znamya* is considered the official newspaper. The founder is an editorial collective, however it was recently privatised. The financing comes from various sources: advertising, a small enterprise the paper owns, private investment. Yet periodically the paper receives funding from the oblast government. In 1995 the oblast administration granted aid totalling 100 million rubbles. The paper openly lobbied for Zyuganov, though it also gave support to Lebed.

The election campaign was mostly covered by the two aforementioned publications. *Vest'* averaged about a quarter of its space. Besides advertising, information tended to favour the current government, which indirectly advertised its position. Also, *Vest'* regularly published material prepared by Yeltsin's election campaign staff.

*Znamya* led an aggressive election campaign, occasionally falling victim to undocumented information. The paper put out appeals and request to voters to support the KPRF leader. It frequently published articles by two Kaluga Duma deputies: Agrarian A. Burdukov and Communist B. Boiko. *Znamya* also regularly reported on their campaign trips through the oblast.

At the regional and city level the picture was quite monotonous. This is easily explained as all the small papers are financed from the budget, and their influence is governed by the careful positions of the local powers-that-be. Wherever the editors tried to take an independent stance, relations became strained.

# 12 Kemerovo Oblast

## 12.1 Brief political background

Mikhail Borisovich Kislyuk was appointed head of oblast administration in August 1991, after the putsch. Kislyuk's political orientation an adherent to the Yeltsin course at a level of personal devotion to the president.

## 12.2 Media and the authorities

Conflicts between the oblast executive powers and mass media arose in the early period of preparations for the elections. The government tried to pre-determine the outcome. The oblast administration demanded the firing of Gennadii Mityakin, representative for GTRK Kuzbass, and the hiring of Mikhail Grebennikov in his place. Mityakin filed suit, yet at the time of writing it still had to come to trial.

In an attempt to control the mass media, the oblast administration began putting out weekly ideological summations. In these, Eduard Volfson, the director of the oblast administration's information and analysis department analysed the oblast's media. He evaluated them in one area - the extent to which they helped or hindered Yeltsin. As a result there were several serious talks with editors from city and regional papers.

The administration took upon itself financing for the oblast-wide paper *Nasha Gazeta* (originally founded by the Kuzbass Soviet of Workers' Committees), knowing it would actively support Yeltsin. While not providing all the required costs, the administration did force the Kuzbass publishing complex to print *Nasha Gazeta* for free. The Kuzbass publisher, as a result, lost almost a billion rubbles.

## 12.3 Media coverage of the campaign

The regional state owned broadcaster GTRK Kuzbass reaches the entire oblast, whilst the private NTSC (New Siberian Television Company) covers a third of the area. The newspaper *Kuzbass* has a circulation of 45,200 and is related to the oblast leadership. *Kuznetski Krai* (circ. 73,000) is more youth oriented, and is formerly an organ of the Komsomol. *Nasha Gazeta* has a circulation of 50,000 and is mainly read by pensioners.

All of the oblast's media were very active in the campaign and all of June was dedicated to the elections. GTRK Kuzbass and the newspapers *Kuzbass* and *Nasha Gazeta* fully supported Yeltsin. *Kuznetski krai* and NTSC attempted to be more objective, yet *Kuznetski krai* regularly showed a slight Zyuganov slant.

Paid material appeared according to political orientation. Thus *Nasha Gazeta* could not and did not have anything in support of Zyuganov.



# 13 Moscow Oblast - Sergiev Posad

## 13.1 Brief political background

Anatolii Tyazhlov was elected Oblast governor on 30 December 1995. He is also head of the Russian Governors Soviet and he holds a clearly pro-Yeltsin position.

## 13.2 Media and the authorities

No controversies between the media and the authorities were observed.

## 13.3 Media coverage of the campaign

There are two main papers specifically aimed at the Moscow suburbs. Firstly, *Narodnaya Gazeta* has a circulation of 173,000 and was founded by the Moscow oblast administration. The paper openly played along with the government, but did not overly push the anti-Communist motif. Secondly, *Podmoskovnye Izvestia* has a circulation of 120,000 and was founded by the Oblast executive department, oblast Duma, and RAO Gazprom. The paper tried to maintain a sense of respectability in its political commentaries by not publishing directly propagandistic material from Yeltsin's competitors.

In their pre-election publications these papers reflected the governor's position. The attitude of oblast television is difficult to define. Its level of professionalism is very low and the local audience has little interest in it.

Of Sergiev Posad's 5 periodicals only *Vperyod* tried to maintain a semblance of objectivity. It made room (gratis) for election materials supporting Zyuganov and Yavlinsky. *Vperyod* also published letters to the editor critical of the present government. At the same time, being a municipal paper, *Vperyod* went along with the pro-Yeltsin propaganda.

Two private newspapers supported Yeltsin. Only the paper *Kolokol*, thanks to unvoiced support from the regional administration, took up a definite pro-Communist position. Private TV station Tonus tried to make a living off the elections, particularly by airing Bryntsalov and Zhirinovskiy material, while refusing to put out its tapes of local debates made prior to the second round of voting.



# 14 Murmansk

## 14.1 Brief political background

Evgenii Borisovich Komarov was elected governor of Murmansk oblast 1991, when he held a position as Representative to the RF Government Committee on the North. Komarov is a former secretary of the Murmansk CPSU Obkom, dealing with the region's industry. He sides with Yeltsin.

## 14.2 Media and the authorities

No serious conflicts between the mass media and government were observed during the Presidential election campaign. Nevertheless, all of Murmansk oblast's media are experiencing the same difficulties, mostly connected with financing problems. However, the government did not attempt to use this to dictate its conditions or influence election coverage.

## 14.3 Media coverage of the campaign

The largest roles in election coverage and advertising for the presidential candidates were played by the regional state owned television channel GTRK Murmansk, the Oblast radio and the newspapers *Murmansk Vestnik* ( circ. - 15,000; founded by the oblast administration and Duma), *Polyarnaya Pravda* (circ. - 30,000; founded by a variety of local non-governmental institutions) and the city paper *Vechernii Murmansk* (circ. - 32,000; founded by the city administration and an editorial collective).

With the exception of *Polyarnaya Pravda*, the oblast's media all receive all or part of their funding from the state, oblast, and city budgets. Their political orientation during the elections was in support of Yeltsin. Most information concerned the president and Lebed, and to a lesser degree Yavlinsky. Information on the other presidential candidates was practically non-existent. All the media had hidden advertising and materials prepared by the candidates' election staffs.

The electronic mass media gave the most balanced coverage of the elections. By law all candidates had the same amount of free air time.





# 15 Novgorod

## 15.1 Brief political background

Mikhail Mikailovich Prusak was elected Novgorod Oblast governor on 16 December 1995. He had held the post as an appointee since 1992. Prusak is a Yeltsin supporter, but inclined to dialogue with all political forces. On the eve of the first round of voting, he came out with unequivocal support of the president.

## 15.2 Media and the authorities

No controversies between the media and the authorities were observed.

## 15.3 Media coverage of the campaign

The regional state-owned television channel Novgorod GTRK Slaviya has an estimated audience of 500-600 thousand. It airs on RTR and its own city channel for Novgorod and is financed by the authorities and advertising revenues. The political orientation is in line with the oblast administration. However, the channel covered all the candidates' visits and gave them air-time.

The local private TV stations Novgorod and readily aired political advertising.

*Novgorod Vedomosti* has a circulation of 33,000 and is published four times per week. It is founded by the oblast administration and a journalists collective. The paper exists on subsidies and advertising revenues and follows the governor's lead. During the campaign, *Novgorod Vedomosti* supported the present regime, but without enthusiasm. Regarding Yeltsin's competitors, the paper published only paid materials and indicated them as advertisements as required by law.

*Novgorod* is a free weekly with a print-run of 87,000 copies. It is founded by the city administration (last year, after chasing out the co-founding journalists collective, the mayors office officially gave the paper the status of Municipal Agency.) *Novgorod* is financed by subsidies and advertising and confirms to the positions of mayor Korsunov, an appointee of the governor. It reported on visits from presidential candidates in greater detail than the oblast paper, but practically without criticism.

The *Novgorod University* paper, with a small circulation of 4,000 was founded by the Novgorod State University and gets by on subsidies. Its most detailed reports were on Lebed and Yavlinsky. The paper also published some openly critical material on the KPRF and its program, some material supportive of Yeltsin, and paid political ads for Lebed and Yavlinsky.



# 16 Novosibirsk

## 16.1 Brief political background

Vitalii Petrovich Mukha was named governor of Novosibirsk Oblast in 1991. In 1993, he was removed 1993 after supporting the parliament, yet in December 1995 he was elected to the post of governor. On a visit to Omsk in 1996, the President awarded him a Medal of Honour.

Mukha holds the communist line, but did not openly support Zyuganov. Upon publication of Zyuganov's proposed government, he felt forced to appear and refute his future participation in it.

## 16.2 Media and the authorities

No controversies between the media and the authorities were observed and there were no attempts to influence coverage of the elections.

## 16.3 Media coverage of the campaign

The state-owned regional channel GTRK Novosibirsk has been on the air since 1957 and is financed by the State budget and advertising. Varying programs have varying orientation: from support of the opposition to full acceptance of the government.

The private channels NTN-4 and NTN-12 were both founded in 1992 by the TOO Interprais, TOO Laboratorium, and private investors and is financed by advertising and sponsors. NTN-4 received political direction from specific groups of local businessmen supporting Mikhail Gorbachev's candidacy. NTN-12 does not have a well defined political orientation and mainly re-broadcasts TV-6.

*Vedomosti* was founded by the Novosibirsk Oblast Soviet of Deputies in 1991 and is 60-65%. It has a circulation of 25,000. *Novaya Sibir* was founded by the civil association Otkrytaya Sibir in 1993. It is self-financing and runs 30,000 copies weekly. *Molodost Sibiri* was founded by the founders and sales, has a democratic orientation and a circulation of 50,000. *Novaya Sibirskaya Gazeta* is a weekly published since 1994, founded by the closed stock company Sibirskaya Gazeta. Financing comes from the founder and sales of its 30,000 copies. The paper is also democratic in orientation. Finally, 51,146 copies of *Soviet Sibir* are printed 5 days a week since 1919. The paper was founded by the Oblast Deputies Soviet, a labour collective in the editorial staff, and a labour collective at the publishing/printing house Sovietskaya Sibir. *Soviet Sibir* is the main pro-Communist newspaper in the region.

Despite the diversity of media outlets, the election campaign in Novosibirsk was surprisingly calm. Notwithstanding the oblast leadership's pro-Communist stance, experts believe undue pressure was not exerted on the media.

GTRK Novosibirsk was dominated by reporting from central TV, but also gave the allotted time to the election teams and candidates' representatives. Extra time was available at 1,200,000 r/minute. The government did not apply any pressure. The private stations covered the campaign with straight news, trying to keep political undertones out of their reports.

Practically all the newspapers supported the current president. The last few issues before the election had up to 3 pages of political information, mostly supporting Yeltsin. The Zyuganov team, citing the high cost of newspaper space, did not publish material in these papers. They conducted their agitation in other ways.

There are only two communist newspapers in Novosibirsk. They are *Vedomosti* and the more influential *Soviet Sibir*. These papers regularly printed advertising and to-order articles from various candidates. However, communist articles clearly outweighed all others. Some experts believe there is evidence the communists did not pay for all of these placements.

# 17 Orenburg

## 17.1 Brief political background

Vladimir Vasilievich Elagin was elected governor in December 1995. He is pro-government.

## 17.2 Media and the authorities

In June, subsidies to the newspaper *Yuzhnyi Ural* were cut off. The paper has a circulation of 43,000 daily and 89,000 weekly and was founded by the oblast legislative assembly. Although it is generally pluriform, the paper is also accused of sympathising with the peoples-patriotic movement.

More than once there were closed meetings for the editors of regional papers, at which they were encouraged to support Yeltsin. There was also a directive to collect all material supporting other candidates and send it to the oblast administration.

## 17.3 Media coverage of the campaign

The state-owned regional channel GTRK Orenburg took a one-sided position of support for Yeltsin from the very start. The commercial TV channel Region and the oblast radio followed the same path.

The daily *Orenburzhye*, an organ of the oblast administration, published mainly material supporting Yeltsin's candidacy. It has a daily run of 20,000 and the weekly edition hits 35,000. The paper exists mostly on subsidies from the oblast administration.

*Orenburg Vedomosti* (circ. 73,000) is a daily commercial city-based paper. Its founder is the Yuzhnyi Ural publishing/printing complex. Towards the end of the second round of elections its political preferences were clearly pro-Yeltsin.

Except for *Yuzhnyi Ural*, all the oblast's media took a one-sided position. Paid advertisements were insignificant, again excepting *Yuzhnyi Ural* which published pages of material supporting Gorbachev, Zyuganov, Lebed, Fyodorov, Yavlinsky. Editorial content in the media was highly ideological, consisting mostly of attempts at discrediting unsuitable candidates.

As a whole, the media did not provide balanced coverage of the election campaign. This was mainly due to the media's financial dependence on local executive powers



# 18 Perm Oblast

## 18.1 Brief political background

Gennadii Vyacheslavovich Igumnov was appointed governor by presidential ukase in January 1996, following then-governor Kuznetsov's election to the State Duma as a member of Our Home is Russia. Igumnov calls himself a centrist. The media regularly give him high ratings as a politician and leader and analysts believe he is almost assured of victory in the gubernatorial elections of 1996.

## 18.2 Media and the authorities

The governor is very cautious in dealing with the media, regardless of their political orientation. Consequently there were no serious conflicts between the media and government. There was no evidence of pressure on the media. Yet this was also unnecessary, since the majority of publications and TV and radio programs were in support of Yeltsin. These positions were those of the editors themselves.

## 18.3 Media coverage of the campaign

State TV/Radio company T7 allotted time to various candidates, including Zyuganov, but officially supported Yeltsin. It several times ran a tape of an exclusive interview with Yeltsin and T7 president Volchek. The private channel VETTA covered Yeltsin's trip to Perm and ran ads for Lebed. The oblast's remaining TV stations (Rifey, Uralinform TV, and others) did not seriously take part in covering the elections.

The daily *Zvezda* was founded by a journalists collective and has a circulation of 94,000. It is democratically orientated and during the elections granted space to Yeltsin, Lebed, Yavlinsky. However, *Zvezda* also covered Zyuganov's visit to Perm.

*Perm Novosti* has a daily print-run of 48,000 and supported Yeltsin from the start of the pre-election campaign. *Mestnoye Vremya* was founded in 1991 by a group of enterprises and is published twice a week (13,200) and on Fridays (50,300). It also supported Yeltsin. The Communist paper *Zapadnogo Urala* printed 50,000 copies during the elections.

The oblast's mass media reported on the visits made by candidates (Zyuganov, Yeltsin, Zhirinovskiy). Most media also ran paid ads from Yavlinsky, Lebed and Yeltsin. There was little information concerning the other candidates.

On the whole, it seems quite clear that the Communists' lack of success in the oblast (Zyuganov got 16.1% in the first round, well below federal average) is due to the antagonistic stance of the media. V. Maltsev, First Secretary of the Perm KPRF Obkom, in an interview with *Profsoyuznyi kuryer*, (No. 26 27/06/96) stated he was very disappointed with the voting results in the oblast. The communists did not put their bets on the mass media for the second round and instead work on apartments and with mobile propaganda points.





# 19 Rostov-on-Don

## 19.1 Brief political background

Vladimir Fyodorovich Chub was named Rostov oblast shortly after August 1991. Yeltsin appointed him to the post, and replaced the former oblast executive committee representative who supported the putschists. Prior to that, Chub had been a representative to the city executive committee.

Chub openly supports the president. For instance, he refused to meet with Gorbachev during his visit to Rostov on 14 May, which was generally considered impolite. In another blunt act, during the unveiling of a monument to the dead of Afghanistan and Chechnya on 7 June, Chub prohibited Lebed from appearing. During Yeltsin's tip to the Don on 10-11 June, the president was shown on TV only when accompanied by Chub. The entire city is plastered with posters of Yeltsin and Chub in a grain field and rumours in journalistic circles are that Chub got a reward from the president for election results in the oblast. The governor is up for re-election in November.

## 19.2 Media and the authorities

In spring 1996, the Taganrog city committee on state property tried to remove Boris Slutskii, the editor of the city paper *Taganrog Pravda*. His position had long been a sore point with the city administration. However, he could stay, since the Rostov oblast organisation of the Russian Journalists Union came to his defence.

Another incident occurred 24 April. Rostov Gossvyaznadzor closed Radio Rostov, the only 24-hour station reporting on civil and political topics. The infractions then mentioned by the Gossvyaznadzor representative turned out to be insignificant, and Radio Rostov was back on the air May 16. In its comments on this story Donskaya panorama, quoting well-informed sources, noted that Rostov Gossvyaznadzor was planning further inspections of other local radio stations, mainly in connection with the upcoming elections.

Every even slightly visible publication and radio or television station is dependent on the government, directly or indirectly. On 18 April A. Bedrik, deputy governor for Social Questions, appeared at a conference of the oblast journalists' organisation. He reminded those gathered of the financial aid local media receive from the oblast administration. Among these are the more influential oblast papers *Molot* and *Nashe Vremya*, and the state owned regional channel GTRK Don-TR.

## 19.3 Media coverage of the campaign

The State Television-Radio Company Don-TR broadcasts to the entire oblast during its allotted time on the first and second Russia-wide channels. From 17.00 to 24.00, it also broadcasts on channel 35 (the remainder of air-time on this channel belongs to the private station Tele-IKS Channel 35). The channel's political orientation is pro-president.

Don-TR is of course on a short leash from the oblast administration, but is attempting to keep itself within the bounds of propriety. It tried to maintain the appearance of objectivity and balance.

The oblast has a few dozen other television channels, yet their reception as a rule do not extend beyond their immediate surroundings. Many broadcast only in the evening (8pm-3am) and show imported TV-films and entertainment shows. Informational programs and/or social/political topics are broadcast only by a few and generally with low-quality.

*Nasha Gazeta*. It is aimed at the youth (formerly an organ of the Obkom Komsomol) and supports Yeltsin. The newspaper *Molot* focuses on the elderly, is published three times a week and has a circulation of 36,000. It also supports the president. *Nashe Vremya* and *Molot* carried the official election news (voting region boundaries, candidates appearances, results, etc.) and are considered quality issues.

*Nashe Vremya* reported on the election campaign in detail, but not always efficiently. It tried to remain objective and stick to facts. The paper published various appeals from civil organisations,

national and cultural societies, etc. to support Yeltsin. However, it also allowed other political forces the opportunity to state their point of view.

For example, on 27 April the paper ran a front-page statement from the South Russian Inter-Regional Yavlinsky campaign staff refuting rumours that the Rostov Yabloko movement was supporting Yeltsin's candidacy in the upcoming elections. In the same issue the paper published in full (with scathing commentary) a letter from four KPRF State Duma Deputies. They accused the oblast administration of hindering them in the execution of their duty as Deputies and in organising meetings with voters.

Despite all this, Yeltsin ads (both direct and indirect) and coverage of him in *Nashe Vremya* were several times more common than any of the other candidates. *Molot* covered the campaign in reasonable detail, though to a lesser degree than *Nashe Vremya*. Nonetheless, in many instances the paper's approach and evaluation of events were deeper and more thought through.

*Molot* also printed the above mentioned letter from the communist Deputies, underlining that the very fact of this letter's publication bore witness that they were ready to provide space for anyone. In its commentary, *Molot* did not follow the oblast administration's line as closely as *Nashe Vremya*. In one particular point, regarding the seizure of a KPRF stand by the Rostov militia, *Molot* did not support the government's action, calling it free advertising for the KPRF. In its first issue after June 16, *Molot* noted that Zyuganov's getting support from a third of the voters gives him the right to count on access to the levers of power. *Molot* published material on many candidates, but that supporting Yeltsin was more prevalent.

*Vechernii Rostov* is currently the only daily in the oblast. It has a circulation of 60,347, and is distributed in Rostov-on-Don and surrounding cities. Contrary to the former two papers, *Vechernii Rostov* is a typical street rag. It was founded by the editorial collective and sided with the power that be.

*Vechernii Rostov* did not put much effort into covering the campaign. Whenever it did do something, it was usually negative. The only candidate the paper didn't denigrate was the current president. On 24 May, the paper published an open letter from rectors of universities in Rostov-on-Don calling for Yavlinsky, Lebed, and Fyodorov to remove their candidacies in favour of Yeltsin. Immediately preceding the elections, *Vechernii Rostov* published the full text of 57 voter's questions to the President of Russia.

Newspaper *Krestyanin* is a weekly and the largest single issue in the oblast with a circulation of 129,850. It is distributed through the oblast and beyond, especially to farming regions. The paper is financed from subscriptions, advertising revenues, and probably subsidies from AKKOR, one of the founders. It took a pro-presidential stance in the course of the campaign.

The editorial leadership is staunch, but not irrational, pro-Yeltsin. Long before the start of the election campaign *Krestyanin* warned that the farming regions, which gave their votes in '91, '93, '95 to the Agrarians, Zhirinovskiy, and the Communists, would this time yet again vote against the president. *Krestyanin* readily printed materials from Yavlinsky's and Lebed's staff, yet the most came from Yeltsin. On the whole, however, the paper's position stood out by being well considered.

# 20 Tatarstan

## 20.1 Brief political background

Over half the population of the Republic of Tatarstan (RT) is Tatar - a people of Muslim faith. The percentage is higher in the villages. The question concerning the Republic's sovereignty is a deciding factor in Tatarstan's social-political processes.

Mintimer Shaimiev, RT president, is known for his careful approach to questions regarding relations among the Republic's various peoples. Due to the local government's centrist and moderate position, the RT is not threatened with conflicts arising from nationalistic views. Also, relations between Tatarstan and Russia are civilised and regulated by legal documents. Moscow and Kazan (the capital of RT) have signed an agreement on the separation of spheres of authority.

The Republic's independence in social and economic politics gave the local government the possibility of easing the RT's entry into the world market. This all contributes to the population's trust in Shaimiev. In Tatarstan's presidential elections of March 1996, Shaimiev was the only candidate, since the communist candidate did not receive enough votes to get on the ballot. The local government sees Yeltsin as a guarantee of the Republic's present status. They therefore support him in every way.

Nonetheless, the RT witnessed symptoms of a slow down in democratic reforms, mainly due to the bunker-mentality of the bureaucratic apparatus and especially noticeable at the regional level.

## 20.2 Media and the authorities

Although pressure was not directly applied, the politics of subsidies ensured loyalty to the orientation of the authorities. This was especially true of the Tatar-language press, which does not see high revenues from advertising.

However, Kazan's Tatar-language publications barely covered the campaign at all. Consequently, the government did not attempt to prescribe the course of the papers.

## 20.3 Media coverage of the campaign

The Republic owned GTRK Tatarstan is completely controlled by the government, and has influence in the villages. During the presidential elections its overall tone was in support of Yeltsin. The private Kazan TV Efir actively covered the election campaign, also relaying the pro-Yeltsin mood of the city government.

The results of the parliamentary elections alarmed the Republic's government. At all levels the state media received reprimands concerning their weak reporting on the president's pre-election campaign. In the lead up to the second round Yeltsin propaganda was heightened in both the press and on TV and presidential aides made appearances.

The most active coverage in the press came from the non-government owned *Vechernyaya Kazan* (circulation 80,000) and *Kris* (a free private paper containing advertisements).

*Vechernyaya Kazan* announced it supported Yavlinsky in the first round and Yeltsin in the second. The paper provided mainly information. *Kris*, on the other hand, had a more propagandistic content and actively backed Lebed in the first round. Zyuganov was covered in the large publications and in the small circulation Communist papers. Those are, however, generally weak in content and layout.

Kazan press does not reach the small cities and villages. In those places the old tradition of small raionki, local newspapers, continues. During the campaign their pages were home to advice from pro-Communist veterans.

# 21 Tyumen

## 21.1 Brief political background

Leonid Yulianovich Roketskii was named to the post of governor in 1993. The first gubernatorial elections are set for December, 1996. Roketskii considers himself a democrat and he is currently the leader of the Zapadnaya Sibir movement, an umbrella organisation for a wide range of groups. According to Roketskii, the organisation comprises mostly the reform-oriented groups.

## 21.2 Media and the authorities

There were no serious conflicts between the governor and the media. Generally, he has been careful in his relations with the press, especially the opposition. In fact, Roketskii doesn't even attempt to pressure *Tyumen-2000*, a weekly that is sharply critical of him (with an eye to the upcoming gubernatorial elections). The weekly's leader, a former representative from Tyumen kredit bank, has openly expressed his desire to become governor and expose the skeletons in Roketskii's closet.

Therefore, it should be concluded that during the presidential campaign, the local authorities did not try to influence the media coverage. Such pressure was apparent during the mayoral elections in Tyumen proper. At the time, the press was both bought and sold.

## 21.3 Media coverage of the campaign

The state owned TV Region-Tyumen has the widest reach. The two private channels have weak transmitters and operate mostly for the city.

*Tyumen Pravda* was recently auctioned. It is claimed, though the press hasn't reported on it, that a controlling interest went to a group of employees, close to the editor and his deputy. With a circulation of 46,000, it is the largest newspaper in the region. *Tyumen Pravda* continues to receive subsidies from the oblast, okrug and city budgets, although it has high advertising revenues. It relies on habitual subscription from elderly people in the farming areas. The political orientation is not very easily defined, yet the large number of anti-government articles indicate a "leftist" position.

*Tyumen Izvestia* has an official print-run of 11,000 and subscriptions are dwindling. One of the founders recently backed out due to the insufficient number of subscribers. During the campaign, the paper's position resembled the official line.

*Tyumen kuryer* is a city paper, published by a journalists founders group and the city administration (60/40). The Saturday edition has a circulation of 14-18 thousand. While not voicing its party affiliation, its reporting does favour the present course of reforms, which was visible in the course of the election campaign. Part of its funding comes from the subsidies, the rest from advertising, sales and paid articles (political advertising).

All media took sides in the campaign. Communist-leaning editions wrote about Zyuganov, pro-reform editions backed Yeltsin. Nonetheless, most outlets did publish opposition letters to the editor.



## 22 Reasons for Yeltsin's dominance

Complaints over the unfairness of the media coverage on television and in the press raises an important question: what reasons can be identified to explain the unbalanced reporting of the 1996 presidential elections in Russia?

Below, several obvious and several less obvious factors are discussed in no particular order. Subsequently, an attempt will be made to assess which were most influential.

### 22.1 Structural difficulties

As a general background to the situation in the media, some of the structural difficulties for media outlets in Russia should be enumerated.

Over the past years, newspapers have faced rising costs for printing, paper and distribution. The circulation of the so-called "national" papers decreased significantly, and consequently the income from sales and advertising is limited. Newspapers therefore rely heavily on sponsors, subsidies from the state or political donors (such as the communist party). In fact, almost 90% of the titles receive some governmental subsidies. All these factors may impede their independence and entirely autonomous newspapers appear as yet a distant goal.

Television outlets have to battle with similar difficulties: they require equipment, television production is labour intensive, advertising income is, in particular for the state-run channels, limited, and TV channels need to broadcast their programmes via government-controlled transmitters.

Independent channels operate under licences distributed by the government and these can be withdrawn at any time by the president's administration. Finally, the federal government and the local authorities have retained a controlling stake in many press, radio and television outlets.

**The financial (e.g. subsidies), logistical (e.g. printing, distribution) and administrative (e.g. licensing) dependency were important levers for the government. The general difficulty of operating a financially solvent media outlet was an important lever for owners and sponsors.**

### 22.2 Government interference

Direct government interference in the media was clearly illustrated in the course of the campaign.

On 15 February 1996, Yeltsin dismissed the relatively independent-minded Oleg Poptsov, who had been director at RTR since 1990. Poptsov was accused of an overly critical coverage of the crisis in Chechnya and of "smearing" the transition to a democratic state. In an interview with the team, Poptsov put his dismissal down to two factors, the station's critical coverage of the Chechen war and the less than flattering book, "Life under Tsar Boris", which he had just written. Poptsov was proud to have been sacked. He had already been sacked by Gorbachev and Suslov, Brezhnev's ideological overlord. Poptsov nevertheless remained a convinced Yeltsin supporter.

He was replaced by Eduard Sagalaev, the president of TV6. Sagalaev was urged by Yeltsin to concentrate on the positive developments in Russia. Sagalaev told Izvestiya on March 27:

"I agreed to join the second channel because I think I will be able to have an influence on Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin through direct contact and television programmes, helping him not just to stay in power but to realise what is sensible in his opponents' programmes as well. It is television's job to convince the electorate and Yeltsin's political opponents that his presidency is the best guarantee of the freedom both of Communists and party people".

From February until the last week of the campaign, regular meetings were organised by Vitaly Ignatenko, the first deputy Prime Minister, with editors-in-chief of various media outlets. The editors had a two hour meeting with the president, yet the agenda was not revealed. Viktor Ilyushin, one of

Yeltsin's closest aides regularly summoned senior editors to his Kremlin office to give them instructions and advice. "In May he told them to start supporting Lebed. Our editor was there", A. Kostyukov, deputy editor of *Obschaya Gazeta*, reported. Sources in ORT said there were similar contacts between Ilyushin and television's managers.

An agency of the regional press was established under the auspices of the president and run by Valery Kucher, head of the Department for Information and Propaganda. Kucher, the editor-in-chief of *Rossiiskiy Vestnik*, was appointed on 25 March because he was supposed to have good contacts among democratic minded media in Moscow and the regions.

Valery Kucher made no secret of the fact that the Yeltsin side was not prepared to give fair treatment to its Communist opponents. In an interview with two of our monitors, he said "We're not going to give the Communists equal time and conditions. They don't deserve it. They're an unconstitutional party".

The agency brought editors of regional media outlets to Moscow to discuss how to help Yeltsin's campaign. For instance, a meeting in April was attended by key figures from the president's staff (Nikolai Yegorov, head of the president's administration; Sergei Medvedev, press secretary and various ministers) as well as numerous managers of regional state-owned media outlets. Yegorov stressed that the "activities of the president were covered in a very limited and fragmentary manner" in the regional media and added that "the administration would open up for regional media". Journalists from the regions would get better access to documents worked out in the corridors of power and could travel with the president during his election campaign.

On 6-7 May, the agency brought 80 television and 60 radio journalists to Moscow. They met several high ranking government officials and the president himself. Yeltsin told the journalists that he expected "a responsible attitude towards what is happening in Russia" from the journalists.

We obtained documents showing that articles written for the agency of the regional press were sent to the heads of local administrations in the regions on the authority of Nikolai Yegorov, the head of the president's administration. A covering letter from the regional administrations asked editors to get the pieces published in the local press and report back with the date of the publication. Although Valery Kucher claimed the material sent was entirely factual, we obtained copies of correspondence written to the administration in Saratov. The accompanying pieces were polemical commentaries with a strongly anti-Communist slant. One article headlined "Wipe-out of the Zyuganov camp in the Moscow region".

Finally, editors-in-chief have reported phone calls from high-ranking administrators attempting to influence the course of the media outlet. One source in *Obschaya Gazeta* informed the team that pro-Yeltsin articles were offered and several (not material) benefits were promised in return. Refusing was considered difficult. Some reports came in that journalists had trouble with their editors after having written articles critical of Yeltsin. The case of Alexander Minkin, described below, combined elements of both government interference, pressure from within his newspaper and voluntary cooperation.

Alexander Minkin was one of the few journalists who came under direct pressure during the election. A widely respected and hard-hitting columnist, he wrote a piece in February which accused Mikhail Barsukov, the head of the security service, the FSB, of making racist remarks about Chechens. Some days later two masked men climbed a ladder to Minkin's apartment at around 4 am and beat him up. They were never caught, and Minkin is convinced they were agents of one kind or another. A month later he criticised Barsukov's appointment to Yeltsin's campaign team. The piece argued that the appointment was improper since it implied that other candidates were subversive or would have to be watched by the secret police. Minkin's employers, the newspaper *Moskovsky Komsomolets*, refused to run the article.

Minkin then moved to *Novaya Gazeta*, a low-circulation weekly. He continued to run strong articles about the campaign including a commentary attacking his fellow-journalists for their sycophantic approach to Yeltsin, which he compared to the North Korean press's adulation for Kim Il Sung. Yet even Minkin admitted he was using his own journalism as a weapon. During the Communist period

Minkin was a virtual dissident. He could not get anything published. For this reason, he said, he wanted to do everything to prevent the Communists coming back to power.

### 22.3 Commercial interests

An important aspect of the changing Russian media landscape is the developing relationships between new financial institutions, powerful individuals and the media.

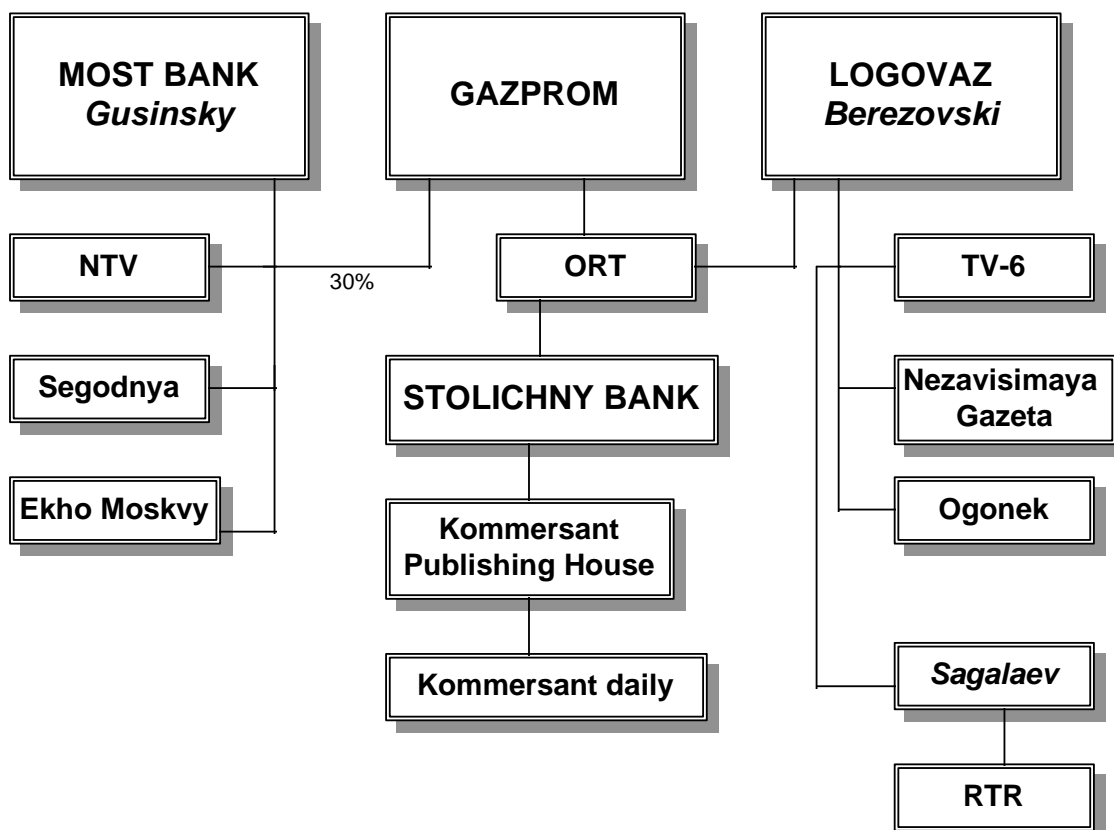
As stated above, few media outlets can survive without sponsors and most are therefore financially dependent. This has created links, and currently several major financial groups share the control over an important selection of media outlets.

One of Russia's largest banks, Most, has stakes in the quality daily *Segodnya*, in the independent television network NTV and in the popular radio station Ekho Moskvyy. The huge energy conglomerate Gazprom acquired during the election campaign 30% of the shares in NTV. Gazprom, formerly headed by prime minister Chernomyrdin, also has shares in ORT.

The co-director of ORT, widely considered to have most influence on the channel, is Boris Berezovski. Mr. Berezovski also heads the company LogoVaz, which has a stake in the independent television company TV-6. Eduard Sagalaev, appointed director of the state channel RTR following the dismissal of Oleg Poptsov, is the chairman of TV-6.

The Stolichny bank also has stakes in ORT. Moreover, the bank is linked to the Kommersant Publishing House, which produces the high circulation newspaper *Kommersant Daily*, as well as several other publications. The publishing house was also responsible for the notorious propaganda sheet *God Forbid*.

The interrelations are shown in the diagram below.





The case of NTV, the most important independent network, is most illustrative for the developing relations between media, politics and money.

During the parliamentary elections 1995, NTV carved out a niche of credibility for itself. Reliable, independent, critical yet fair coverage of political developments and the war in Chechnya ensured praise and respect.

In March, the director of NTV, Igor Malashenko, joined the campaign staff of president Yeltsin. Malashenko himself denied his wearing two hats would compromise the independence of his channel. However, the coverage on NTV changed, as was described above and corroborated by the quantitative analysis.

In June, NTV announced it sold 30% of its shares to the energy conglomerate Gazprom, known to be linked to the authorities, among other reasons since Chernomyrdin was the director before becoming prime minister. It was, therefore, a sign of Yeltsin's willingness to cooperate with important financial forces. A well-known political analyst said the deal indicated "an alliance between the old ex-communist establishment, symbolised by Gazprom, and the new Russian financial establishment". The deal was certainly another sign of an affiliation between the oil and gas lobby (Gazprom) and the Moscow financial lobby, led by the mayor of the capital, Luzhkov, who is closely linked to Gusinsky and NTV.

Rumours circulated that an important reason for Malashenko to join Yeltsin's staff, and for NTV to sell 30% of its shares, was the possibility to obtain a licence for broadcasting 24 hours per day on the fourth channel (NTV currently occupies only the evening slot) as well as a licence for a satellite television network in Russia.

In general, the motives for investing in the media are both economical and political. Media ownership is not always perceived as a mere investment opportunity. It is also buying a voice, or the ability to (let others) use that voice. The media policies of outlets have shown to be dependent on the political alliances of their owner and sponsors with different groups in the (regional) administration.

Although the regional authorities have retained a controlling stake in many local media outlets, a similar development can be seen in the regions, where local organisations and businessmen have invested in the media.

**On the whole, the involvement of the new financial structures linked to media outlets worked to Yeltsin's advantage during the election campaign. The "new Russians" and the prosperous banks and conglomerates wanted to retain the status quo and considered they had nothing to gain from a communists return to power.**

## 22.4 Voluntary cooperation

The term "voluntary cooperation" was expressly coined by the EIM to describe the *unconstrained readiness of journalists to actively devote themselves to the re-election of president Yeltsin*.

**The willingness to support Yeltsin was an important factor in explaining the sheer amount and positive nature of the coverage of the president. Basically, most journalists wanted Yeltsin to win, since they feared a victory of Zyuganov. Consequently, editors and managers used their influence and journalists utilised their direct access to ensure the tone and content of many outlets tipped in favour of Yeltsin.**

Many media professionals who were interviewed by the team stressed similar reasons for their decision to replace professionalism and objectivity for voluntary cooperation. In general, they feared a communist victory would mean the end of their freedom, independence and benefits (e.g. the possibility to travel). They reckoned censorship would return, Viktor Anpilov (considered a hard-line communist) would be put in charge of media matters and quite a number of journalists went as far as considering that democracy itself was at stake.

Voluntary cooperation was present in both “independent” and government controlled media outlets. The editor of an independent newspaper in Irkutsk, for instance, put it quite clearly: “We support Yeltsin, since it is consistent with our political conviction. If we would publish an article about Zyuganov it would most likely be negative”. The editor of *Izvestiya*, Igor Golembiovsky, stated that it was the “overriding civic duty” of journalists to prevent a communist return to power.

Grigory Shevelov, the first vice-chairman of ORT and directly responsible for the political broadcasts, told our team his channel chose to “defend journalistic freedom and support democratic developments”, which in this case meant unconditional support for Yeltsin. Shevelov was convinced hard-line communists would be put in charge of the media and journalists would be dismissed. ORT therefore scheduled several films and documentaries to “make the young generation aware and to bring back memories of the decades under communism”.

Another source inside ORT estimated that at least half the company's editorial staff enthusiastically supported the management line of using the channel to support Yeltsin's re-election bid. This included most of the newscasters. Between thirty and forty per cent backed the line and carried on working normally. Only ten per cent seriously felt it was a distortion of their duties as independent journalists, but they did not resign.

Other interviews we conducted with journalists at various levels made it clear that the majority saw their role as official or unofficial members of Yeltsin's campaign. This was made clear as soon as Yeltsin had been safely elected. On the day after his victory *Izvestiya* ran an article saying: “We did not hide the fact we tried to be honest but not impartial. Stopping the party of revenge was the crucial issue”. It went on to explain the thrust of the campaign: “Recognising that there were few positive arguments for the leader of our reforms, we had to rely on negative arguments against his challenger” In *Segodnya*, on the same day, Dmitri Ostalsky wrote that “Today the fourth estate moves over to where it belongs -- in opposition to the government”.

As said, journalists also feared the Communists would introduce censorship. Whether these fears were realistic is hard to say, but Sergei Markov, a Moscow University political scientist who led a team which studied the revived Communist party for the US-funded Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, told us he felt they were exaggerated. “Eighty per cent of journalists would feel no difference if the Communists came to power”, he said. A Communist president would put his men in charge of the television stations, just as Yeltsin had done, and use financial pressures to influence NTV, the privately-owned channel. But the present wide range of views in the newspapers would not be threatened. On the other hand, in an interview in *Izvestiya*, the CPRF Duma member Yuri Ivanov, threatened that the most vehement opponents to the CPRF would be repressed. Zyuganov himself, however, stated in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* that he hoped the “best representatives of the creative intelligentsia” could help alleviate the “[...] transition to [...] commercial television”.

The Communists had only themselves to blame for their poor standing among journalists, other sources told us. The reasons were the same as those which explained the Communists' lack of support among other sectors of the intelligentsia. Zyuganov and his people presented an anti-intellectual image. They failed to reach out to younger progressive people in the media and the institutes who were unhappy with Yeltsin's performance and the right-wing content of his social and economic policies. It was not so much the substance of the Communist programme, but more the quality of the people around Zyuganov and their narrow-minded style. This also made it hard for journalists to express support for Zyuganov even among their friends, let alone in the columns of their papers or on television. ‘People would be socially ostracised’, Markov argued.

Finally, one should not neglect authoritarian traditions in Russia. The Western liberal enlightenment never penetrated very deep in Russia so it is not surprising to hear Russians argue that “democracy may have to be brought in by undemocratic means”. Some journalists accepted that Yeltsin unfairly manipulated the media, but said this was necessary in a period of transition from Communism to democracy. As monitors, we do not enter into this argument. We only wish to describe how the mechanism worked, and to what extent the role of the media fell short of democratic standards.

Nevertheless, the voluntary cooperation was criticised from within the Russian media scene on several occasions. At a conference on the mass media at Moscow University's Faculty of Journalism Vsevolod Bogdanov, Chairman of the Russian Union of Journalists, said he deplored the example it

was giving small-town journalists. "In the provinces journalists are very pessimistic, when they see the way the national papers are covering the election. We dreamed of press freedom, and when we get it, how do we use it?"

Alexei Simonov, the chairman of the Glasnost Defence Foundation which is concerned with journalists' rights, considered the practice of voluntary cooperation "suicidal". In his opinion it would lead to a loss of credibility and dignity. He added that "the principles of professionalism cannot be put aside temporarily, not even when it seems politically expedient".

## 22.5 Other factors

Some other reasons already discussed in this report also contributed to the unfair media coverage. In the chapter on *Campaign strategies*, it was made clear that the resources used by the president far exceeded those of his opponents. The sheer amount of paid advertising on television (\$15,000 to \$30,000 per minute, depending on the time of the day), the glossy booklets and the number of posters are obvious indications. Moreover, the rock-concerts, the propaganda newspaper *God Forbid* (full colour, four issues, 10 million copies, distributed freely) and the "Vote or Lose" campaign were not officially attributed to Yeltsin's campaign, yet did provide support for him.

Quite importantly, it was also mentioned that Yeltsin had the advantage of the incumbency. The latter point was discussed more elaborately in the chapter on the *Regulatory framework for media coverage*, since the CEC had, in their own regulations, actually ruled out preferential treatment and advantages from official functions.

In summary, it can be stated that financial, logistical and administrative dependency, Yeltsin's incumbency, direct and indirect pressure from the authorities, ample financial resources, voluntary cooperation on the part of journalists and the influence of new financial groups combined to provide Yeltsin with abundant and favourable media coverage.

However, this observation does not shed light on the relative weight of the respective factors. Unfortunately, it remains difficult to assess which factor was most important. Many journalists told us pressure was not applied since most cooperated voluntarily. Grigory Shevelov, quoted above, said "You can only refer to pressure if there is resistance, yet there is not". Was the Kremlin indeed pushing at an open door?

At a superficial glance, it does look like it. However, the dismissal of Oleg Poptsov, the conduct of the agency for the regional press, the resources used by Yeltsin's team and the vital interests of the new financial powers (which had a direct influence on the voluntary cooperation as well) cannot be trivialised. One prominent television journalist told the monitoring team: "We support Yeltsin since it is in our interest. Yet had we not supported him, we would probably have been forced to".

The various factors appear interrelated. It is very likely that the pressure from influential financial backers and the authorities themselves would have been more profound if the cooperation had not been voluntary. In the end the authorities, the conglomerates and businessmen with a stake in the media, the editors and managers and the journalists themselves worked for one and the same goal: Yeltsin's re-election.



## 23 Conclusions

In its preliminary report on the Russian presidential elections, issued on 4 July 1996, the EIM team concluded that *the media coverage marred the fairness of the democratic process*. Currently, after thorough analysis of all the data, extensive discussions on the findings and a period of reflection, the team still holds the same view.

The bias on the national television channels (a breach of the regulations), the pressure on editors and media outlets, the use of the administrative and financial levers, and the excessive utilisation of the President's advantage of being the incumbent combine to provide strong evidence that the candidates did not have an equal opportunity to present their case to the electorate. Moreover the media received and accepted specific instructions on how to cover the campaign.

Voluntary cooperation on the part of journalists was perhaps understandable. The question is whether it is justifiable. The monitoring team does not want to pass a judgement.

Although it is impossible to quantify the relation between media coverage and election results, the team thinks that Yeltsin's use of and influence on the media, the marginalisation of opponents other than Zyuganov, the repeated insistence that Yeltsin was in the end the lesser of two evils, the denunciation of Zyuganov and the portrayal of Yeltsin as the choice for the future, helped to secure Yeltsin's victory.

The monitoring team concludes that in comparison to the 1991 presidential elections and the Duma elections of 1993 and 1995 candidates were less free to get their views across and voters were given less information of a professional and objective nature.

In 1991 the networks did not support one candidate alone. In 1995 commercial television acted as a counter balance to the state controlled media.

The team is concerned about both the lack of media independence and the lack of objective reporting of many journalists and editors.

The absence of major violations in voting procedures and counting arrangements on polling day is not, in our view, enough to declare an election free and fair. A democratic poll has to be judged in terms of the conduct of the whole campaign. The way the media handle the issues is a vital part of the process.

The monitoring team therefore concludes that the media coverage of the 1996 Presidential elections did not represent a step forward in the process towards democracy in Russia but in some respects even presented a less positive picture than before. The arguments that justify this conclusion are discussed elaborately in this report.

Some critical questions should be answered concerning the validity of these conclusions.

Firstly, it could be argued that it is common or logical for an incumbent president to have an advantage. Whilst certainly true, the advantage can be so significant that it becomes unfair. In the opinion of the monitoring team, this was indeed the case. Voters were denied even-handed and dispassionate information about the various candidates, the national television networks were far from impartial and the president had significantly more resources at his disposal. The advantage for the incumbent exceeded, in our view, the accepted standards of democratic and fair media coverage. In countries with independent media structure the journalist can decide, how far they cover an incumbent president as president in the time of a campaign. Under the current Russian circumstances they could not or did not want to decide on their own.

Secondly, the monitoring team was based in Moscow and concentrated on the national media. However, the tremendous penetration of the national networks, the dwindling circulation of national newspapers, the lack of federal news in the regional media and several surveys about the perceived

role of different media indicate the pivotal role of ORT, RTR and NTV in informing the audience about national news. Moreover, the monitoring team received reports from correspondents in the regions, which clearly indicated that the situation was much the same on a local level.

Thirdly, the team judged media coverage against “universally accepted norms of democratic conduct”. Several Russian journalists considered this approach too formal. In their opinion, the particularities of the Russian situation (e.g. the alleged threat of press freedom in case Zyuganov won, the still not stable democracy) should have been taken into account. Ergo, the monitoring team should have understood why journalists supported Yeltsin and our conclusions should have reflected this comprehension.

The monitoring team disagrees with such arguments for a principal reason. A judgement based on sympathy for one or other candidate implies the EIM would be forced to take sides. If we chose to indicate appreciation for journalistic voluntary cooperation and unbalanced and unfair reporting, this would imply we agree that Yeltsin used the right means to secure his victory. However, our judgement would lose validity and relevance if we took sides. As an independent, professional and experienced Institute, the EIM feels it should be and remain impartial yet critical, and loyal to its principles: the voters deserve to be informed in a fair and balanced manner, to enable them to make an informed choice. What the EIM has to evaluate is what the media offered to the public. This offer can only be pluralistic and fair and based on journalistic professionalism, if independent media structures exist. Only then can a democratic election function well.

Fourthly, it could be argued that the wording of the report is rather strong. This is correct, yet in our opinion justified. The quantitative analysis corroborated the qualitative observations unequivocally and several reasons behind the dominance of the incumbent president could only be judged unfair. In the light of the severe problems of the Russian society in this time of transition, in the light of last economic difficulties for many people in Russia and in the light of the force fighting in Chechnia ambiguous language would not have been appropriate.

Finally, the actual influence of the media on voter behaviour could be questioned. After all, a causal relation between media coverage and election results is impossible to prove. Nevertheless, the ratings for president Yeltsin were at an all time low in January. Gradually, Yeltsin's popularity improved and the media did play an important role in guiding the voters to their eventual choice. By continually stressing the two-candidate race, the media effectively curtailed the electorate's choice; other candidates were downplayed and portrayed as a lost vote. Subsequently, Zyuganov's candidature was depicted in very negative terms. By setting the agenda and unequivocally conveying the same message, the media helped indeed to secure Yeltsin's victory. Even if this conclusion is challenged, it cannot be denied that the quality and content of the information which the Russian media offered voters were biased, incomplete and politically loaded. As such, they fall short of what the public in a society which is moving towards democracy has a right to expect from those who own, control or work in the media.

## 24 Recommendations

Further assistance to establish independent and economically sound media outlets with an emphasis on:

-ensuring that existing regulations in Russia are properly implemented

-shaping the additional structures to secure independence of the media, including establishing some kind of public service broadcasting

-improving journalistic professionalism throughout Russia.

Additionally the organisation of round tables (with OSCE and the Council of Europe) in Russia and in the West is needed to raise awareness of the severe problems of the media in Russia.

We recommend that in future foreign assistance to the Russian media should concentrate on structural reforms in the control of the state-owned networks so as to guarantee the real independence of broadcasters and on measures to raise professional standards of journalism.

# Annex 1

## 1 Structures of Russian broadcasting<sup>9</sup>

The Russian Federal Service for TV and Radio Broadcasting (FSTR) is the industry's regulatory body. It was established by a presidential decree of 22nd December 1993 and a prime ministerial directive of 1st November 1994, replacing the Administration for Radio and TV Broadcasting in the former Russian Ministry of Press and Information.

The December 1993 decree stated that the FSTR would be equivalent in status to a ministry. It would coordinate the activity of national and regional state TV and radio broadcasting organisations; assist in the objective reporting of the political, economic, social and cultural life of Russia to the Russian and international communities; and conduct a unified state policy when deciding production, technical and financial matters in the area of TV and radio broadcasting.

The FSTR was given control of the licensing of state and non-state broadcasters. In addition, it is responsible for disbursing government funding to the state broadcasters. It also has responsibilities regarding the transmission arrangements for state broadcasters (see below under Transmission).

Despite its apparent wide-ranging responsibilities, the exact nature in which the FSTR exercises its role and powers is unclear. Major changes affecting state broadcasters tend to be announced in the form of presidential decrees whilst the Ministry of Internal Affairs appears to have powers of closure in respect of private stations.

Five of the FSTR's members are appointed by the president with the other five being nominated by the Federation Council and the State Duma (the upper and lower houses of the Russian parliament respectively). The chairman is appointed by the president and approved by the Duma. The FSTR's first chairman was Aleksandr Yakovlev, a close ally of Mikhail Gorbachev and one of the chief architects of his policy of glasnost. Yakovlev resigned in March 1995 and was replaced by his deputy, Valentin Lazutkin. (Yakovlev has also played an important role in the ORT and Ostankino broadcasting companies - see below.) The current deputy head of the FSTR is Vladimir Makoveyev.

Figures given by the FSTR in summer 1995 indicated that there were over 90 state and over 800 non-state radio and TV companies in the country.

In December 1995 the government ordered the creation of a State Fund for TV and Radio Programs (Gosteleradiofond) which would be responsible for "selecting, forming and storing" programs as part of the country's cultural heritage. The director of Gosteleradiofond is Anatoly Bystrovets.

### 1.1 Funding

The 1996 federal budget allocates R2,100bn to television and radio broadcasting, equivalent to about 460m dollars.

State broadcasters also obtain substantial revenues from advertising and sponsorship. They compete for such private-sector funding with the non-state broadcasters which have opened up since 1990. In August 1995 the country's largest TV station, ORT, stated that it sold advertising time at between 1,500 and 28,000 dollars per minute.

### 1.2 Transmission

Most state broadcasting companies do not own the transmitters which radiate their programs. The transmitters are in the hand of separate enterprises, either state-owned, under the Ministry of

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<sup>9</sup> This material is taken from the BBC guide to Russian Broadcasting (1996) to serve as reference material for the reader.



Communications, or privatised bodies. For example, the state-owned Television Technical Centre (TTTs) undertakes the transmission of a number of TV stations including Russian Public TV (ORT) and the private stations NTV and TV6. In addition, ORT leases its offices and production equipment from the TTTs.

Some private stations have their own transmitters; others hire air-time from the transmission companies.

For some time a major problem affecting state broadcasting has been their inability to pay for the transmission of their output. As of 1st November 1995 the state radio and TV companies owed a total of R706bn to the various firms that operate the transmitters. This has created a knock-on effect: the transmission companies have been unable to pay their electricity bills and so there have been numerous instances of power companies disconnecting transmitting stations.

Similarly, staff at the transmission companies went on strike in February 1994 over the non-payment of their wages and have threatened to repeat the action on a number of subsequent occasions.

The reported incidence of power being cut to transmitting stations fell substantially in November 1995 after Prime Minister Chernomyrdin ordered that such cuts should not take place.

In December 1995 the government made the FSTR responsible for arranging the transmission of state radio and TV. It gave such transmissions "federal supply status" and allocated R20bn to the Ministry of Communications to restore transmissions.

### **1.2.1 Rebroadcasting in the "near abroad"**

These financial problems have also affected the relays of broadcasts from Moscow in the former states of the USSR. There have been disputes over who should pay for these relays - the Moscow-based stations, the local rebroadcasters, Russia or the relevant countries.

The rebroadcasting issue has political overtones. This has been most obvious in the Baltic republics but has also arisen elsewhere: the move in August 1995 by the Ukrainian authorities to move the relays of Russian Public TV to a less favourable channel caused much upset.

### **1.2.2 The CIS**

The Mir Interstate TV and Radio Company was set up as a way of trying to maintain some sort of broadcasting system that covered the former Soviet Union. However, it has no broadcasting network of its own and has to rely on its programs (produced by the radio and TV companies in most CIS member states) being transmitted by third parties.

In July 1995 it was stated that the main aim of the Mir company was to "cover objectively and impartially all aspects of life and international ties between the founder-states of the company, and to inform citizens of events and processes taking place in the CIS" No doubt as a result of a lack of both finance and political will, the activities of the Mir company receive little attention. However, a report on a meeting of the company in Almaty in December 1995 stated that its priorities included a "multi-functional satellite broadcasting system" which would operate via the Intelsat system with ground stations in Moscow, Minsk, St Petersburg, Almaty, Bishkek and Yerevan. The meeting was also said to have discussed the organisation of daily five-hour broadcasts to CIS countries.

## **1.3 The main state-controlled broadcasters**

### **1.3.1 ORT & Ostankino**

The Russian State TV and Radio Company "Ostankino" (Rossiiskaya Gosudarstvennaya Teleradiokompaniya "Ostankino") is the direct successor to the former USSR State Committee for Radio & TV (Gosteleradio), the body which had overall responsibility broadcasting in the country. Prior to 1st April 1995 the Ostankino company was best known as the broadcaster which had the license to transmit via "channel 1" of the Russian TV system.

On 30th November 1994 Yeltsin signed a decree giving control of broadcasting on channel 1 to a new organisation - Russian Public TV (Obshchestvennoye Rossiyskoye Televideniye, ORT). Fifty-one per cent of ORT's shares are federal property and are held by various state bodies, including ITAR-TASS and Ostankino itself. The remaining 49 per cent are owned by a number of separate private shareholders.

In April and May 1995 the State Duma and the Federation Council voted to nullify Yeltsin's decree and suspend the operations of ORT. This was vetoed by Yeltsin. In November and December 1995 parliament passed another law deeming the creation of ORT to be illegal and ordering it to cease broadcasting; once again, this was vetoed by Yeltsin.

In October 1995 Yeltsin issued a further decree saying that the Ostankino company should be "wound up".

ORT was originally scheduled to have begun broadcasting on 1st February 1995. This was later postponed to 1st April 1995.

Despite the launch of ORT, the pattern of broadcasting on channel 1 did not change radically. In addition to being a major shareholder in ORT, Ostankino's relationship with the new company is also that of a program producer/provider, and many of the programs shown on ORT - channel 1 are still produced by Ostankino. ORT's role is largely that of a commissioning broadcaster (along the lines of Britain's Channel Four); in addition to Ostankino material, it also screens programs made by other, independent, TV production companies. ORT's news programs have continued to be produced by Ostankino's news and current affairs division ITA (Television News Agency).

At its first board meeting on 25th January 1995, the chairman of Ostankino, Aleksandr Yakovlev, was elected to the post of ORT chairman. The same meeting elected Vladislav Listyev, a prominent TV journalist, as ORT director-general.

Listyev was murdered on 1st March 1995. It was widely rumoured that his killing was related to a struggle for criminal control of the TV advertising market.

Yakovlev resigned as chairman of Ostankino on 16th March 1995, but remained in post as chairman of ORT. The current chairman of Ostankino is Igor Yakovenko. Sergey Blagovolin was appointed ORT director-general (replacing Listyev) on 20th March 1995.

The first deputy chairman of ORT is Boris Berezovsky, a leading businessman and Yeltsin supporter who also reportedly one of the major private investors in the company. (Berezovsky also owns a stake in the private station TV6 - see below.) The ORT's board of trustees is headed by Yeltsin.

ORT's broadcasts on channel 1 are available in five versions (one for European Russia and four time-shifted versions, Orbita 1 to 4, for areas further east). This allows programs to be seen at convenient local times. ORT's programming is supportive of President Yeltsin and Prime Minister Chernomyrdin. Audience research has shown that ORT is the most watched TV station in the country. ORT also owns 29 per cent of the Independent Ukrainian TV Corporation. In addition to its TV work, Ostankino also operates four nation-wide radio stations: Radio-1 (mainly speech-based), Mayak (music and news), Radio Yunost (youth channel) and Radio Orfey (classical music). Yeltsin's October 1995 decree suggested that Mayak and Yunost might be privatised.

### **1.3.2 All-Russia State TV and Radio Company (VGTRK)**

Note: VGTRK (Vserossiyskaya Gosudarstvennaya Teleradiokompaniya) is often known as "RTR" (Russian TV and Radio). VGTRK was formed in 1990 in a move to give the Russian Federation its own voice, independent of the then Soviet channels. VGTRK operates via "Channel 2" of the Russian TV system. This service is often referred to simply as "Russian Television" (Rossiyskoye Televideniye). Like ORT, it is available in five versions (one for European Russia, and four time-shifted versions, Dubl 1 to 4, for the areas further east).

One of the main problems that Russian Television faces is that in many parts of the country it has to share channel 2 with regional broadcasters. There have been reports in the Russian press that Russian Television is actively seeking to swap channels with ORT, arguing that as the former is wholly

state-owned , whilst ORT is only 51 per cent state-owned, it should have the use of the principal broadcasting network.

VGTRK also operates the educational station Russian Universities TV, which shares "channel 4" with the independent TV station NTV. There has been friction between the two stations over this arrangement (see under NTV below). In December 1995 President Yeltsin signed a decree providing for Russian Universities TV to change its format from an educational station to one covering both education and sports. The new format is to be introduced by 1st July 1996. This new service is headed by Tatyana Nikolayeva.

VGTRK's former chairman, Oleg Poptsov, was sacked by Yeltsin on 15th February 1996 and replaced by Eduard Sagalaev, director-general of the private station TV6 (see below). (In August 1995 Sagalaev had been elected president of the newly-formed National Association of Non-State Television Broadcasters, whose members include 36 non-state companies and , despite its name, eight state companies, including ORT.) Poptsov's dismissal followed accusations by Yeltsin that the Russian TV channel had been painting a "black" picture of developments in the country.

Shortly afterwards, VGTRK Director-General Anatoly Lysenko was appointed first deputy chairman of the company whilst night-club owner Miroslav Melnik was appointed second deputy chairman.

VGTRK also operates two radio stations:

- Radio Rossii (for domestic audiences). This is reported to be the most listened to station in the country. It began broadcasting in December 1990.
- Golos Rossii (Voice of Russia, a Russian Language short-wave external service). Rather confusingly, this Voice of Russia service has nothing to do with another "Voice of Russia" (formerly "Radio Moscow"). which is the country's main foreign-language external service and is controlled by a separate company.

### **1.3.3 Petersburg Channel 5 State Radio and TV Company**

This company is owned by the St Petersburg municipality. It operates St Petersburg Channel 5 TV. Despite its name, this is transmitted widely in Russia, including in Moscow, on "channel5" and is said to be available to about half the country's population. However, its audience ratings are low.

Yeltsin's October 1995 decree gave the company "all-Russia" status (alongside ORT and VGTRK) and suggested, without giving any details, that it might be used as the basis of a "regional all-Russia TV broadcasting channel". A new chairman of the station, Oleg Rudnyy, was appointed in June 1995, replacing the controversial Bella Kurkova.

### **1.3.4 Regional TV**

A number of regional and local governments operate TV stations. The broadcasts from nearly all of these stations only cover a limited area. One exception is the Sakhalin Teleradiokompaniya which broadcasts via satellite to the Russian Far East from Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.

In October 1995 Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said there were plans to establish a new channel-TV-Region - which would focus on coverage of regional news. In December 1995 a charter was approved for a "Model Regional State TV and Radio Broadcasting Organisation", which would be subordinate to the FSTR.

## **1.4 Other broadcasters in Moscow**

**2x2 TV**, which carries a mixture of news and entertainment programming, is funded by the advertising agency Video International. Its director-general is Vladimir Troyepolskiy. In Moscow, 2x2 TV shares "channel 3" with the MTK (Moskovskaya Telekompaniya) TV station. 2x2 is also relayed via satellite.

**MTK TV** is operated by a joint stock company in which Moscow City Council has an interest. MTK has the use of channel 3 during the evening prime time period. It focuses on reporting developments in the city. Its director-general is Aygar Misyanyan.

In November 1995 MTK reported that the municipal authorities had launched Moscow Cable TV, a channel designed to encourage dialogue between the city authorities and its residents.

**NTV** is a news-oriented station which began broadcasting on a restricted basis in October 1993 and more fully in January 1994. It shares "channel 4" with Russian Universities TV (operated by VGTRK). This gives it coverage of over half the population of the Russian Federation, but limits its broadcasts to the period between 6 p.m. and midnight (Universities TV occupies the channel in the morning and afternoon). NTV has frequently expressed its wish to broadcast around the clock and has often criticised Russian Universities TV for its allegedly inefficient use of the channel.

The controlling share in NTV is held by Vladimir Gusinsky, the chairman of Most Bank, who is also the financial backer of the news-based *Ekho Moskvy* (Moscow Echo) radio station and the newspaper *Segodnya*. The director-general of NTV is Igor Malashenko.

NTV's programming supports reformist policies. It is often critical of the authorities (this was particularly noticeable during the 1994-95 war in Chechnya).

**TV-6** Moscow was originally a joint venture between Russian interests (including leading businessman and Yeltsin supporters Boris Berezovsky) and Ted Turner's TBS of Atlanta, Georgia, USA. Its programs, which are entertainment-oriented, can be seen by about half the country's population. In February 1996 TV6 Director-General Eduard Sagalaev was appointed chairman of the All-Russia State Radio and TV Company (VGTRK, see above).

Tele-Express 31, which is funded by the Evrosib company, aims to provide coverage of news from outside Moscow. Channel 51 began broadcasting in March 1995, at which time it was operated by the Kosmos-10 company. In September 1995 it was reported that programming on Channel 51 was now controlled by two "major entertainment industry moguls".





## Annex 2 Data of election coverage on TV

Time (in minutes) devoted on RTR to candidates 6 May-16 June

Date	6/5-12/5		13/5-19/5		20/5-26/5	
Programme	Vesti	Zerkalo	Vesti	Zerkalo	Vesti	Zerkalo
Yeltsin	20	8	29	15	33	12
Zyuganov	4	21	4	5	9	5
Yavlinski	4	1	3	9	4	4
Lebed	3	0	1	0	4	0
Gorbachov	1	0	0	0	1	0
Zhirinovskiy	2	0	1	0	3	0
Fyodorov	1	1	2	2	2	0
Brintsalov	0	0	0	0	1	0
Tuleev	0	0	0	0	0	1
Shakkum	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vlasov	0	0	0	0	0	0

27/5-2/6		3/6-9/6		10/6-16/6		6/5-16/6
Vesti	Zerkalo	Vesti	Zerkalo	Vesti	Zerkalo	Total
29	10	20	7	23	1	207
7	3	9	6	5	1	79
4	0	1	0	2	1	33
3	2	1	4	0	1	19
1	0	2	0	1	1	7
1	1	3	0	3	1	15
2	0	1	0	1	0	12
2	0	2	0	1	0	6
0	0	2	0	2	0	5
0	0	1	0	0	0	1
0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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**Time (in minutes) devoted on ORT to candidates 6 May-16 June**

<b>Date</b>	<b>6/5-12/5</b>		<b>13/5-19/5</b>		<b>20/5-26/5</b>		
<i>Programme</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	<i>Days</i>	19.59	<i>Days</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	<i>Days</i>
Yeltsin	24	2	4	4	36	40	5
Zyuganov	5	1	1	2	5	16	0
Yavlinski	3	0	1	1	3	5	0
Lebed	4	0	4	0	3	4	0
Gorbachov	2	0	1	0	1	3	0
Zhirinovskiy	1	1	0	1	3	4	0
Fyodorov	2	0	0	0	3	2	0
Brintsalov	1	9	0	1	1	3	4
Tuleev	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shakkum	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Vlasov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

<b>27/5-2/6</b>		<b>3/6-9/6</b>		<b>10/6-16/6</b>	<b>6/5-16/6</b>
<i>Vremya</i>	<i>Days</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	<i>Days</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	<b>Total</b>
36	4	29	1	42	227
10	0	8	1	14	63
3	0	4	0	2	22
3	10	1	1	1	31
0	0	1	0	1	9
2	0	7	1	8	28
3	0	1	0	2	13
5	3	2	1	2	32
1	0	3	0	2	6
2	0	2	6	1	12
1	0	0	0	0	1

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**Time (in minutes) devoted on NTV to candidates 6 May-16 June**

Date	6/5-12/5		13/5-19/5		20/5-26/5	
Programme	Segodnya	Itogi	Segodnya	Itogi	Segodnya	Itogi
Yeltsin	25	14	25	16	33	17
Zyuganov	7	4	5	7	10	8
Yavlinski	3	2	6	5	5	5
Lebed	1	1	4	1	1	1
Gorbachov	3	1	0	0	1	0
Zhirinovskiy	2	0	2	7	2	4
Fyodorov	2	2	5	1	2	0
Brintsalov	0	0	2	1	1	6
Tuleev	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shakkum	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vlasov	0	0	0	0	0	0

27/5-2/6		3/6-9/6		10/6-16/6		6/5-16/6
Segodnya	Itogi	Segodnya	Itogi	Segodnya	Itogi	Total
26	34	25	3	16	39	273
13	9	11	2	12	7	95
3	3	2	1	4	2	41
2	18	2	1	3	2	37
1	0	1	1	0	0	8
1	2	4	0	4	2	30
2	0	1	1	0	0	16
2	0	1	0	0	0	13
0	0	1	0	2	0	3
0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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**Summary Time (in minutes) devoted to candidates 6 May-16 June**

Candidates	RTR	ORT	NTV	Total	Percentage
Yeltsin	207	227	273	707	53%
Zyuganov	79	63	95	237	18%
Yavlinski	33	22	41	96	6%
Lebed	19	31	37	87	7%
Gorbachev	7	9	8	24	2%
Zhirinovskiy	15	28	30	73	5%
Fyodorov	12	13	16	41	3%
Brintsalov	6	32	13	51	4%
Tuleev	5	6	3	14	1%
Shakkum	1	12	0	13	1%
Vlasov	0	1	0	1	0%
Total	384	516	444	1344	100%

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**Time (in minutes) devoted on RTR to candidates 17 June-1 July**

Date	17/6-23/6		24/6-1/7		Total
<i>Programme</i>	<i>Vesti</i>	<i>Zerkalo</i>	<i>Vesti</i>	<i>Zerkalo</i>	
Yeltsin	29	33	20	29	111
Zyuganov	10	10	21	32	73

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**Time (in minutes) devoted on ORT to candidates 17 June-1 July**

Date	17/6-23/6	24/6-1/7	Total
<i>Programme</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	
Yeltsin	50	29	79
Zyuganov	18	31	49

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**Time (in minutes) devoted on NTV to candidates 17 June-1 July**

Date	17/6-23/6		24/6-1/7		Total
<i>Programme</i>	<i>Segodnya</i>	<i>Itogi</i>	<i>Segodnya</i>	<i>Itogi</i>	
Yeltsin	33	15	22	11	81
Zyuganov	15	9	30	11	65

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**Summary Time (in minutes) devoted to candidates 17 June-1 July**

Candidate	NTV	RTR	ORT	Total	
Yeltsin	81	111	79	271	59%
Zyuganov	65	73	49	187	41%
Total	146	184	128	458	100%

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**Positive and negative references to candidates on RTR 6 May-16 June**

<b>Date</b>	<b>6/5-12/5</b>		<b>13/5-19/5</b>		<b>20/5-26/5</b>	
<i>Programme</i>	<i>Vesti</i>	<i>Zerkalo</i>	<i>Vesti</i>	<i>Zerkalo</i>	<i>Vesti</i>	<i>Zerkalo</i>
Yeltsin	13	4	19	9	18	10
Zyuganov	-5	-10	-5	-5	-12	-13
Yavlinski	-3	0	-2	-6	-3	-8
Lebed	-1	0	0	0	0	0
Gorbachov	-1	0	0	0	0	0
Zhirinovski	-3	0	-4	0	-2	0
Fyodorov	0	0	-2	0	0	0
Brintsalov	-1	0	0	0	-1	0
Tuleev	0	0	0	-1	0	-1
Shakkum	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vlasov	0	0	0	0	0	0

<b>27/5-2/6</b>		<b>3/6-9/6</b>		<b>10/6-16/6</b>		<b>6/5-16/6</b>
<i>Vesti</i>	<i>Zerkalo</i>	<i>Vesti</i>	<i>Zerkalo</i>	<i>Vesti</i>	<i>Zerkalo</i>	<b>Total</b>
23	13	18	10	27	2	166
-10	-7	-8	-9	-8	-1	-93
-1	0	0	0	0	0	-23
-3	0	-1	1	0	1	-3
-1	0	0	0	0	0	-2
-2	-2	-2	0	0	0	-15
0	0	-1	0	0	0	-3
0	0	-1	0	-1	0	-4
0	-1	0	0	-3	0	-6
0	0	0	0	-1	0	-1
0	0	0	0	-1	0	-1

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**Positive and negative references to candidates on ORT 6 May-16 June**

<b>Date</b>	<b>6/5-12/5</b>			<b>13/5-19/5</b>		<b>20/5-26/5</b>	
<i>Programme</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	<i>19-59</i>	<i>Days</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	<i>Days</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	<i>Days</i>
Yeltsin	20	5	-3	25	0	26	4
Zyuganov	-8	-3	1	-11	0	-28	-2
Yavlinski	-7	-4	0	-6	-1	-12	-3
Lebed	-4	0	1	-2	0	-1	0
Gorbachov	-3	-2	0	-2	0	-5	0
Zhirinovski	-3	-2	0	-5	0	-4	0
Fyodorov	-4	0	0	-1	-2	-5	0
Brintsalov	-2	0	1	-2	-2	-5	0
Tuleev	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shakkum	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vlasov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

<b>27/5-2/6</b>		<b>3/6-9/6</b>		<b>10/6-16/6</b>	<b>6/5-16/6</b>
<i>Vremya</i>	<i>Days</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	<i>Days</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	<b>Total</b>
28	2	27	1	33	168
-18	1	-13	-1	-27	-109
-5	0	-6	-1	-2	-47
0	12	0	3	0	9
0	0	0	0	-1	-13
-3	0	-7	-2	-6	-32
-4	0	-1	0	-1	-18
-4	0	-1	0	-3	-18
-1	0	-2	0	-5	-9
1	0	0	0	0	1
0	0	0	0	0	0

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### Positive and negative references to candidates on NTV 6 May-16 June

Date	6/5-12/5		13/5-19/5		20/5-26/5	
Programme	Segodnya	Itogi	Segodnya	Itogi	Segodnya	Itogi
Yeltsin	10	2	12	10	10	8
Zyuganov	-9	-3	-6	-9	-8	-7
Yavlinski	-2	0	-4	-2	-4	-1
Lebed	-1	-1	-2	-1	-3	0
Gorbachov	-2	1	-2	-1	0	0
Zhirinovski	-3	0	-3	0	-2	1
Fyodorov	-1	0	0	-2	-2	0
Brintsalov	0	0	0	-1	-1	-2
Tuleev	0	0	0	-1	0	-1
Shakkum	0	0	0	-1	0	-2
Vlasov	0	0	0	-1	0	-2

27/5-2/6		3/6-9/6		10/6-16/6		6/5-16/6
Segodnya	Itogi	Segodnya	Itogi	Segodnya	Itogi	Total
18	22	8	42	15	2	159
-17	-9	-7	-11	-12	1	-97
-1	2	2	2	1	0	-7
0	8	1	2	1	1	5
-2	0	0	-1	0	0	-7
-3	-6	-5	-5	-5	0	-31
0	0	-1	-1	0	0	-7
-2	-1	0	-2	0	0	-9
0	0	-1	-1	-2	0	-6
0	-1	0	-2	0	0	-6
0	-1	0	-2	0	0	-6

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### Summary positive and negative references to candidates 6 May-16 June

Candidate	NTV	ORT	RTR	Total
Yeltsin	248	168	52	468
Zyuganov	-135	-109	-42	-286
Yavlinski	0	-47	-13	-60
Lebed	18	9	-8	19
Gorbachov	-8	-13	-4	-25
Zhirinovski	-52	-32	-7	-91
Fyodorov	-9	-18	-5	-32
Brintsalov	-12	-18	-4	-34
Tuleev	-10	-9	-2	-21
Shakkum	-9	1	-3	-11
Vlasov	-9	0	-3	-12

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**Positive and negative references to candidates on RTR 17 June-1 July**

Date	17/6-23-6		24/6-1/7		17/6-1/7
Programme	<i>Vesti</i>	<i>Zerkalo</i>	<i>Vesti</i>	<i>Zerkalo</i>	Total
Yeltsin	33	12	38	17	100
Zyuganov	-12	-2	-44	-18	-76

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**Positive and negative references to candidates on ORT 17 June-1 July**

Date	17/6-23-6	24/6-1/7	17/6-1/7
Programme	<i>Vremya</i>	<i>Vremya</i>	Total
Yeltsin	52	52	104
Zyuganov	-34	-68	-102

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**Positive and negative references to candidates on NTV 17 June-1 July**

Date	17/6-23-6		24/6-1/7		17/6-1/7
Programme	<i>Segodya</i>	<i>Itogi</i>	<i>Segodya</i>	<i>Itogi</i>	Total
Yeltsin	18	6	12	7	43
Zyuganov	-6	-2	-41	-13	-62

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**Summary positive and negative references to candidates 17 June-1 July**

Candidate	ORT	RTR	NTV	Total
Yeltsin	104	100	43	247
Zyuganov	-102	-76	-62	-240

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## Annex 3 Data of election coverage on Radio

### Time (in minutes) devoted on Radio Russia to candidates 6 May-16 June

Date	6/5-12/5	13/5-19/5	20/5-26/5	27/5-2/6	3/6-9/6	10/6-16/6	Total
Yeltsin	4	2	3	2	1	3	15
Zyuganov	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Yavlinski	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
Lebed	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Gorbachov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zhirinovski	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Fyodorov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brintsalov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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### Time (in minutes) devoted on Ekho Moskvyy to candidates 6 May-16 June

Date	6/5-12/5	13/5-19/5	20/5-26/5	27/5-2/6	3/6-9/6	10/6-16/6	Total
Yeltsin	1	2	1	1	1	1	7
Zyuganov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yavlinski	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
Lebed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gorbachov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zhirinovski	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fyodorov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brintsalov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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### Time (in minutes) devoted on Radio 1 to candidates 6 May-16 June

Date	6/5-12/5	13/5-19/5	20/5-26/5	27/5-2/6	3/6-9/6	10/6-16/6	Total
Yeltsin	3	2	3	2	3	4	17
Zyuganov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yavlinski	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Lebed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gorbachov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zhirinovski	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fyodorov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brintsalov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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**Time (in minutes) devoted on Radio Svoboda to candidates 6 May-16 June**

Date	6/5-12/5	13/5-19/5	20/5-26/5	27/5-2/6	3/6-9/6	10/6-16/6	Total
Yeltsin	16	4	4	12	4	14	54
Zyuganov	5	3	1	1	8	7	25
Yavlinski	7	11	24	3	19	2	66
Lebed	3	2	1	0	0	1	7
Gorbachov	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
Zhirinovski	5	1	0	0	2	2	10
Fyodorov	3	1	0	0	0	0	4
Brintsalov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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**Summary Time (in minutes) devoted to candidates 6 May-16 June**

	Radio of Russia	Eckho	Radio 1	Svoboda	Total
Yeltsin	15	7	17	54	78
Zyuganov	2	0	0	25	25
Yavlinski	3	3	2	66	71
Lebed	1	0	0	7	7
Gorbachov	0	0	0	2	2
Zhirinovski	1	0	0	10	10
Fyodorov	0	0	0	4	4
Brintsalov	0	0	0	0	0

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**Time (in minutes) devoted on Radio Russia to candidates 17 June-1 July**

<b>Date</b>	<b>17/6-23/6</b>	<b>24/6-1/7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yeltsin	2.3	3.9	6.2
Zyuganov	1.2	1.8	3

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**Time (in minutes) devoted on Ekho Moskvyy to candidates 17 June-1 July**

<b>Date</b>	<b>17/6-23/6</b>	<b>24/6-1/7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yeltsin	1.8	1.8	3.6
Zyuganov	0.5	0.6	1.1

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**Time (in minutes) devoted on Radio 1 to candidates 17 June-1 July**

<b>Date</b>	<b>17/6-23/6</b>	<b>24/6-1/7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yeltsin	2.4	2.5	4.9
Zyuganov	1.3	0.8	2.1

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**Time (in minutes) devoted on Svoboda to candidates 17 June-1 July**

<b>Date</b>	<b>17/6-23/6</b>	<b>24/6-1/7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yeltsin	9.6	16.2	27.8
Zyuganov	10.7	8.1	18.8

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**Summary Time(in minutes) devoted to candidates 17 June-1 July**

	<b>Radio Russia</b>	<b>Ekho Moskvyy</b>	<b>Radio 1</b>	<b>Svoboda</b>	<b>Total</b>	
Yeltsin	6.2	3.6	4.9	27.8	42.5	63%
Zyuganov	3	1.1	2.1	18.8	25	37%
	9.2	4.7	7	46.6	67.5	100%

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**Summary positive and negative references to candidates on Radio Svoboda**

	<b>6/5-12/5</b>	<b>13/5-19/5</b>	<b>20/5-26/5</b>	<b>27/5-2/6</b>	<b>3/6-9/6</b>	<b>10/6-16/6</b>
Yeltsin	-2	-6	-8	-15	-11	-9
Zyuganov	-5	-3	-2	-2	2	-4
Yavlinski	-2	0	-2	0	-1	-1
Lebed	-3	0	1	0	0	0
Gorbachov	1	0	0	-3	0	1
Zhirinovski	0	0	0	0	2	7
Fyodorov	-3	0	0	0	0	0
Brintsalov	0	0	0	0	0	0

	<b>17/6-23/6</b>	<b>24/6-1/7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yeltsin	-8	-12	-71
Zyuganov	-5	-14	-33
Yavlinski			-6
Lebed			-2
Gorbachov			-1
Zhirinovski			9
Fyodorov			-3
Brintsalov			0

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