

Quarterly Report: Public Media Monitoring

*Based on M1 news broadcasts at 7:30 PM
February–April 2025*

A REPORT BY REPUBLIKON INSTITUTE



May 2025

INTRODUCTION

The core function of public service media is to provide impartial, reliable, and varied information to society. Their responsibility is to support the functioning of democratic public life, ensure pluralism of opinion, and make cultural, educational, and other public interest content easily accessible. In addition, public service media play a key role in fostering national and minority identities and strengthening social cohesion. Hungary's Act CLXXXV of 2010 on Media Services and Mass Media (the so-called Media Act) defines public service media as follows:

“a) its operations are independent both from the state and from economic agents, and the managers of public service broadcasters and those involved in the performance of their operations have professional autonomy – within the applicable legislative framework;
b) its system ensures accountability and the existence of social control”

The independence of public broadcasting is governed not only by Hungarian legislation but also by EU regulations. The European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), which came into effect on May 7, 2024, also addresses the independence and impartiality of public service media. The Hungarian public broadcaster, MTVA, has been subject to recurring criticism over its alleged bias in favor of the governing parties, the Fidesz-KDNP alliance. Such critiques seem to be supported by the fact that a court ruled in 2014 that Dániel Papp, the current director of MTVA, could legally be called a “news falsifier” due to his distortion of a 2011 news report and that Balázs Bende, head of the foreign affairs desk at MTVA, made unmistakable references to the political orientation of public media in a leaked audio recording from an internal meeting ahead of the 2019 European Parliament elections.

Republikon aims to examine in an objective and factual manner the extent to which the accusations of partiality and bias frequently leveled at Hungary's public

broadcaster (and in particular its news shows) are well founded. On February 1, 2025, Republikon began monitoring the evening news shows at 7:30 PM on M1, the public broadcaster's main television channel, on a daily basis. The goal of the project is to evaluate the validity of claims that the Hungarian public broadcaster's programs serve primarily to amplify government messaging rather than to provide objective information.

Our research examines M1's evening news broadcasts from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. In this report, we present the findings from the first quarter (February, March, April), along with the trends and changes observed over the three-month period.

METHODOLOGY

In our project, we made use of both qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze M1's newscasts. The analysis focused exclusively on the M1 evening news broadcast that airs at 7:30 PM, as this time slot traditionally attracts the highest viewership among the channel's daily news shows.

Each news show was analyzed individually, with each news item examined separately. The daily results were compiled into monthly data sets; this study presents an analysis of the first three months.

Our research rests on three thematic pillars: the representation of political actors, the choice and framing of topics covered, and news sources. In terms of the representation of political actors, we examined the following:

- Politicians' time on screen
- Perception of the portrayal of Hungarian politicians
- Perception of the portrayal of foreign politicians
- Frequency of politicians' names
- Common expressions appearing in the context of politicians' names (the 9 words before and after each mention)

Regarding the topics covered in the news shows, we considered the following:

- Number of speakers providing a narrative frame for the news
- Political affiliation of these speakers
- Frequency of expressions central to the government's narrative
(for this, we used randomly selected episodes of RTL's evening news show as a reference point)

For the news sources, we studied the following:

- Number of press outlets cited
- Political affiliations of these outlets
- Number of corrections issued

To analyze word frequencies and the context in which politicians' names appeared, transcripts were generated for each daily newscast using software tools. These transcripts were then processed and analyzed using the Voyant Tools text analysis program.

DATA

The length of the news shows is relatively consistent, ranging from around 45 to about 60 minutes. While the broadcasts do not consist exclusively of political news, such content makes up the majority of the program: the proportion of political news was 81% in February, 76% in March, and 75% in April.

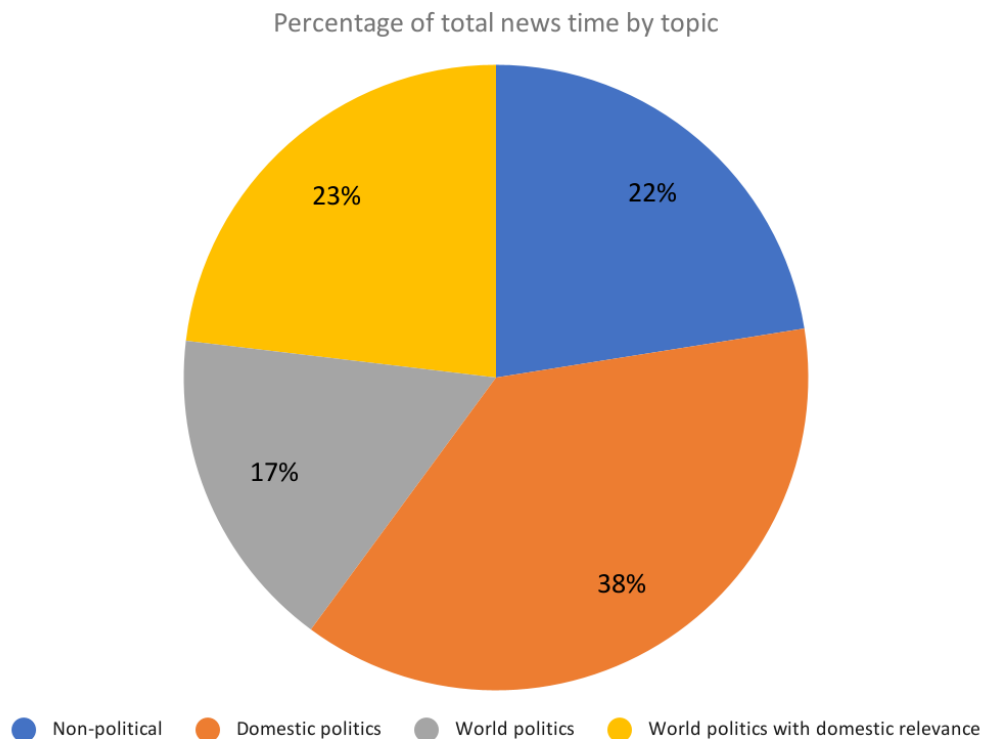


Figure 1

We categorized political news into three types: purely domestic political news, purely foreign political news (world politics), and foreign political news with domestic relevance (world politics with domestic relevance).

The proportion of political news made up by each of these three types varied somewhat across the three months examined. In February, the share of purely foreign political news was relatively high at 31%—in part due to the early actions of U.S. President Donald Trump. By March, however, this figure had dropped to just over 18%, and by April, it had declined further to 16%.

The monthly distribution of political news time by topic is illustrated in the chart below.

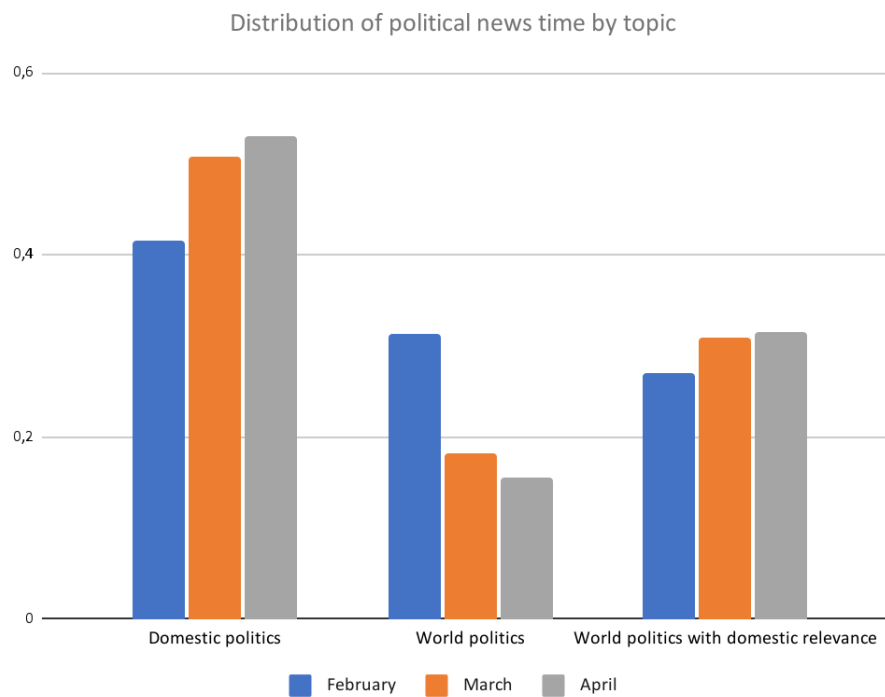


Figure 2

The data clearly show a steady increase in the emphasis on domestic political news during the spring months, coinciding with a shift towards domestic affairs in the Hungarian government's discourse. Thus, the observable shift in news focus reflects a similar move by Fidesz.

REPRESENTATION OF POLITICIANS

An important element of our study was the representation of politicians, which we examined in several ways. The most straightforward method was analyzing politicians' time on screen, as determined by the length of time for which a politician's image appeared on screen or a politician's voice was audible. Each appearance of a politician was then categorized as positive, negative, or neutral.

In making these classifications, we considered various factors, such as the context of the politician's appearance, the narrative and framing of the newscast, the politician's role in the news item, and whether expert commentary supported or contradicted the politician's statements.

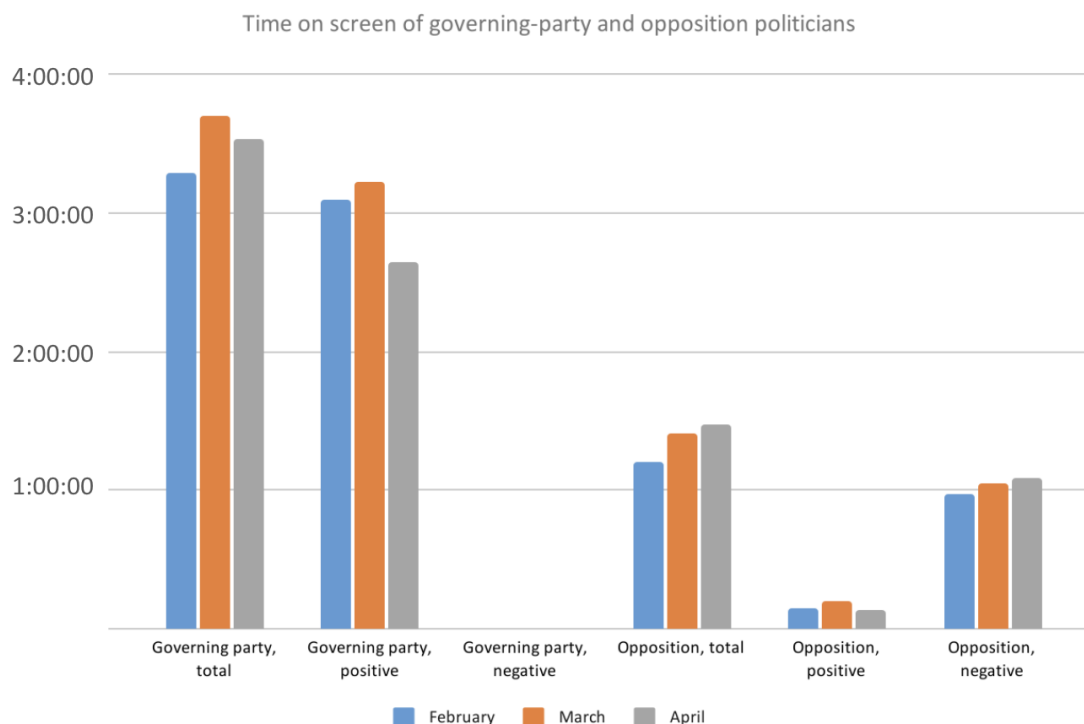


Figure 3

In all three months of the first quarter, politicians from the governing parties clearly received more time on screen than opposition politicians. An interesting trend, however, is that after February, opposition politicians' time on screen increased in both March and April (see Figure 3).

It is important to note that not a single instance of governing party politicians appearing on screen in a negative light was recorded over the three months examined, with their negative time on screen remaining at 0 seconds in February, March, and April.

Time on screen of governing-party and opposition politicians (3-month total)

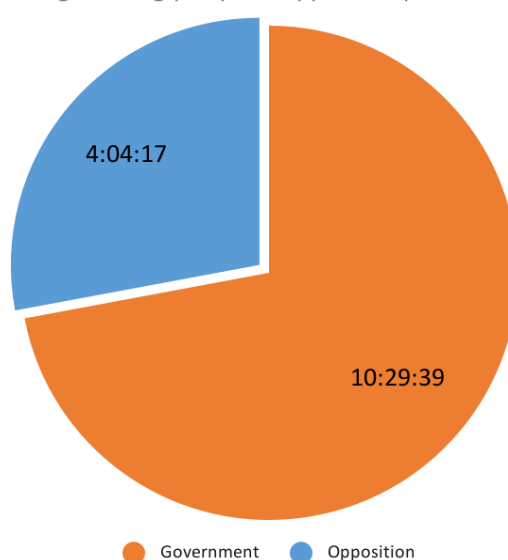


Figure 4

In contrast, the portrayal of opposition politicians was far more mixed. For example, politicians from the Tisza Party appeared almost exclusively in a negative context, while politicians from other opposition parties were generally presented neutrally. Opposition politicians portrayed positively were most commonly from Our Homeland (Mi Hazánk) and Jobbik.

Representation can also be measured by how often a politician's name is mentioned in the newscasts. To that end, we selected seven key "main characters" and tracked how often their names were mentioned, as well as the context of those mentions (positive, negative, or neutral). It is important to note that we only counted explicit name mentions—not titles or substitute terms. Thus, for Viktor Orbán, we only counted uses of "Orbán Viktor" or "Orbán," excluding terms like "miniszterelnök" (prime minister) or "kormányfő" (head of government).

There were several reasons for drawing a clear line between names and titles. For one, repeating a name is a much more direct method of building political identity and enhances public recognition more than using titles. In addition, from a practical point of view, it is difficult to decide which alternate terms should count. For instance, should nicknames (e.g. “Brussels Péter”) be included? Where do we draw the line with titles (e.g. “national leader”)? What about phrases involving adjectives (e.g., “the convicted politician”)? And how many mentions is “Prime Minister Viktor Orbán” worth—one or two?

For these reasons, we felt the cleanest methodological approach was to only count name mentions. In addition to seven Hungarian political figures, we also tracked how often the name of Donald Trump—who took office in January—was mentioned in M1's evening newscasts. We encoded the context of each mention as follows: (1) for positive, (-1) for negative, and (0) for neutral.

The average values for each person by month are presented in the following table.

Name of Politician	Viktor Orbán	Péter Magyar	Gergely Karácsony	Ferenc Gyurcsány	Government or gov't members	Fidesz-KDNP members	Opposition or opposition politicians	Donald Trump
February - Incidence	302	297	23	37	478	212	252	346
February - Context	1	-1	-0.9	-1	1	1	-0.69	1
March - Incidence	260	353	23	25	482	288	257	228
March - Context	1	-0.96	-0.5	-0.73	1	1	-0.7	0.93
April - Incidence	222	448	13	26	632	246	746	134
April - Context	0.93	-0.97	-1	-0.93	1	1	-0.93	0,96
Three Months – Incidence	784	1.098	59	88	1.592	746	1255	708
Three Months- Context	0.98	-0.98	-0,8	-0.88	1	1	-0.78	0.96

Table 1

Over the three months examined, some interesting trends emerged in how often certain individuals were mentioned. One of the most notable shifts was in the

coverage of opposition politicians. While in February and March, the government or its members were mentioned far more often, by April this ratio had reversed. However, this change was caused not by a decrease in the number of mentions of the government and governing-party politicians, but rather by a near-tripling of the number of mentions of opposition politicians. Tellingly, the already not-so-positive representation of the opposition became even more negative in April, reflecting the governing Fidesz' party's narrative and communications at the time. Indeed, Magyar Péter's Tisza Party appeared much more frequently than before in newscasts in April, usually as the target of criticism from Fidesz-KDNP politicians speaking on camera.

The rising trend in the mentions of the Tisza Party strongly coincides with the new communications strategy of Fidesz and associated media outlets. After an extended period of avoiding direct mentions of his challenger, Orbán has begun to speak about the Tisza Party and Péter Magyar; parallel to this shift, the number of mentions of Péter Magyar and the opposition (primarily the Tisza Party) on M1's evening news shows has skyrocketed. Newscasts have also reflected government talking points, suggesting, for example, that Szabolcs Bóna, the Tisza Party's agricultural expert, played a role in the spread of foot-and-mouth disease. However, the focus remains on Péter Magyar, who is frequently portrayed as a scandal-ridden politician.

It is worth considering the representation of Tisza Party politicians in greater detail, as the public broadcaster was devoting more attention to them than to Fidesz politicians by April, generally adopting narratives about them similar to those propagated by the governing party. At the end of February and in March, the focus was mainly on Kriszta Bódis (accused by Fidesz of being an "LGBTQ activist") and Romulusz Ruszin-Szendi (accused by Fidesz of having used public funds to get a liposuction). By April, however, the focus shifted to Kinga Kollár, a Tisza MEP presented as a traitor due to a speech in the European Parliament in which she reflected upon the effectiveness of EU rule-of-law proceedings against Hungary, in mid-April, Kollár appeared among the top three most frequently mentioned politicians five times. In each case, the focus was on statements she made during

the April 7 hearing of the European Parliament’s Committee on Budgetary Control. The framing of these news reports closely matched Fidesz’s communication (e.g., “Kollár thinks it’s good if Hungarians live poorly,” comparisons to the 2006 Őszöd speech of former PM Gyurcsány, or the notion of a Tisza-Brussels pact).

Donald Trump’s name was mentioned very frequently in February (346 times), but less often afterwards, with 228 mentions in March and only 134 in April. This drop also reflects a broader decline in the length of the foreign affairs segment of the news broadcast from month to month.

We also studied the context in which certain foreign politicians were mentioned in news broadcasts over these three months, recording each mention as positive (1), neutral (0), or negative (-1). The results are displayed in the chart below (the number of occurrences is not shown here).

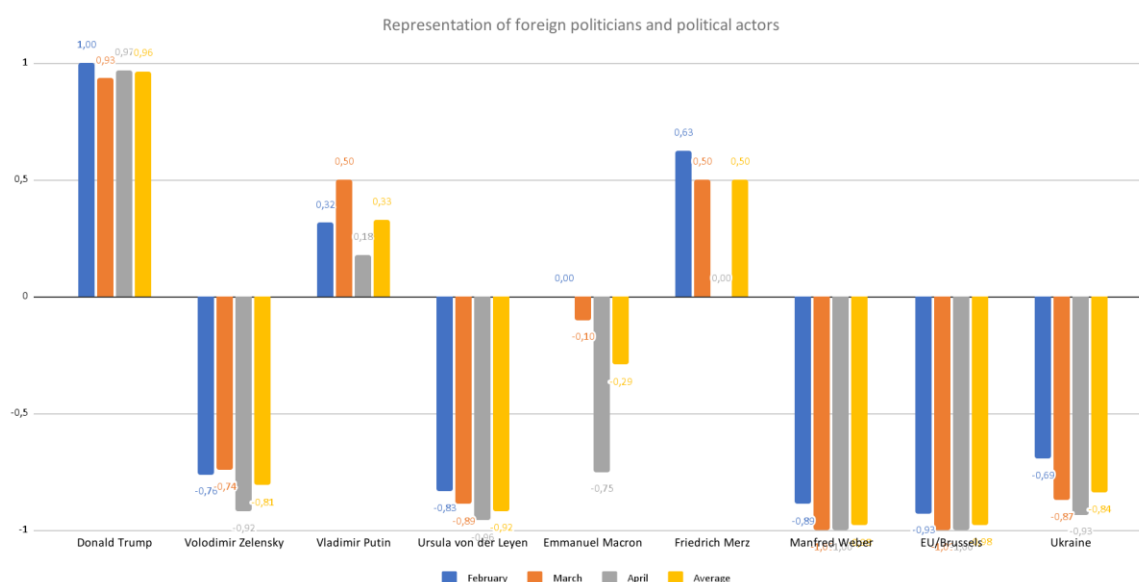


Figure 5

An examination of the results from the three months in question reveals a clear tendency in the representation of political actors generally perceived as being critical of Hungary or, more specifically, the Hungarian government. Indeed, it is apparent that most figures are treated with a certain bias by the public broadcaster: most fall short of a perfect +1 or -1 score only due to the occurrence

of a few neutral mentions. This is notably the case for Donald Trump, portrayed almost always positively, or Manfred Weber, Ursula von der Leyen, and even the European Union itself (often referred to as “Brussels”), portrayed almost exclusively in a negative light. The same applies to Volodymyr Zelensky and Ukraine, as both the country and its leader were typically depicted as obstructing peace negotiations and attempting to accelerate EU accession through backroom deals presented in news broadcasts as contrary to Hungary’s interests.

There are, however, certain politicians whose portrayal clearly became more negative over the course of the three months. One such figure is Emmanuel Macron, who was still depicted in a relatively neutral light in February and March, but by April was almost exclusively shown in a negative context. This was partly due to the French court ruling against Marine Le Pen, which Hungarian public news broadcasts implied may have been politically motivated, and partly due to France’s stance on the Russia-Ukraine war. The criticism in these segments strongly echoed the government parties’ communication—not only in tone but also in messaging—suggesting that Western countries (including France) are encouraging Ukraine to continue the war.

Another politician whose portrayal showed a noticeable shift is Friedrich Merz. In February, Merz was not only frequently featured (in more than half the broadcasts) but generally presented in a positive light. This was largely because he was often contrasted with Olaf Scholz, who was portrayed as a weak, pro-war politician during the German election campaign. In March and April, however, Merz received far less coverage, and with Scholz receding from focus, Merz’s representation moved more toward the neutral category.

A somewhat more ambiguous figure in the public broadcaster’s coverage of international affairs is Vladimir Putin. While he is primarily mentioned in the context of the war, it is striking that he is portrayed much less negatively as a war aggressor than Zelensky, who is fighting for his country’s independence. Despite the nature of his involvement in the war, Putin surprisingly often appears in a positive light—even if, in the majority of cases, his portrayal remains neutral.

Negative representations of the Russian president are almost exclusively tied to instances where the news reports that, according to Donald Trump, neither Zelensky nor Putin is open to a ceasefire.

We also examined which words and expressions appear most frequently alongside individual political figures' names (primarily Viktor Orbán and Péter Magyar) in the news broadcasts. Concretely, we used a text analysis software to collect data on the nine words preceding or following each mention of a politician's name. In this domain, too, a sharp contrast between the portrayal of Orbán and Magyar is

CONTEXT OF THE NAMES OF VIKTOR ORBÁN AND PÉTER MAGYAR

lies in the vocabulary used when either Orbán or Magyar makes a statement. In Orbán's case, across all three months examined, the expressions used are markedly assertive and do not question the authority of his statements. The most common verbs were "said" (108), "announced" (58), and "stated" (52), with others like "emphasized" (33) and "highlighted" (26) also appearing frequently—terms that strongly affirm the speaker's authority.

By contrast, for Péter Magyar, a very different picture emerges: the most frequently used word was "according to," appearing 100 times. While neutral expressions were also used in his case, they appeared roughly as often as more reactive or suggestive terms such as "responded" (24) or "denied" (21), suggesting a fundamentally different tone from the assertive language surrounding Orbán.

Another key difference becomes evident when the words appearing near their names are categorized by topic. Throughout the three-month period studied, Viktor Orbán's name consistently appeared alongside themes aligned with the ruling parties' current narrative. In February—especially in the first half of the month—Orbán's name frequently appeared close to that of Donald Trump, who, as noted earlier, is consistently portrayed in a positive light in the news. Thus, there appears to have been an attempt to build a positive associative link between the two political leaders, even if such joint mentions had significantly decreased by March and April.

In March, the war in Ukraine became one of Orbán's main topics. In February, the word "peace" or one of its variations appeared 21 times near Orbán's name. By March, this rose to 29 (several times as "pro-peace"), while the term "war" appeared 21 times. By comparison, in the same month, Péter Magyar's name appeared near the word "peace" only 4 times, but 23 times near the word "war"—8 of those instances in the form "pro-war." Meanwhile, the adjective "pro-peace" frequently accompanied the prime minister's name.

Another major topic for the government in March was "family." The word appeared 14 times near Orbán's name, while related terms like "mother" occurred 8 times and "child" 10 times. The word "economy" or its variations appeared 19 times in proximity to Orbán's name during the month. Interestingly, if we look at the words most often associated with "economy," Orbán's name was the fifth most frequent—after "European," "Hungarian," "Ukraine," and "EU." This suggests that the topic of the economy is closely linked to Orbán in the public broadcaster's newscasts, while an examination of the tone of the news items in which such mentions occur reveals that this association is generally presented in a highly positive way. Orbán is mainly linked to the price cap policy, which is often highlighted as an effective measure to curb inflation.

The Prime Minister most often appears in Friday evening broadcasts, which usually quote extensively from his radio interviews given that same morning. In these interviews, he himself often talks about the economy, identifying Ukraine and the EU as the sources of economic hardship (specifically citing sanctions and Ukraine's potential EU accession). He frequently emphasizes that the government is fighting against these external actors to maintain the stability of the Hungarian economy. This aligns with the narrative of the governing parties, as does the fact that in the context of "inflation," the word "decreases" appears 11 times, while "increases" appears only 2 times and "rises" 5 times. Interestingly, although Péter Magyar frequently brings up economic issues, the word "economy" appeared only twice in connection with him in March.

In March, the government announced a public consultation regarding Ukraine's potential EU accession. In this context, it is unsurprising that the phrase "public consultation" preceded or followed Orbán's name 12 times. Relatedly, the words "Ukraine/Ukrainian" also became more common (43 occurrences near the Prime Minister's name in March compared to only 8 in February). The centrality of Ukraine as an issue is evident not only from the frequency of related terms appearing with Orbán's name but also from similar patterns around Péter Magyar: the words "Ukraine/Ukrainian" and variants such as "pro-Ukrainian" occurred 40 times within nine words of Magyar's name in March.

By April, the use of "Ukraine/Ukrainian" remained steady with Orbán (38 mentions), but significantly increased with Magyar (92 mentions), often in expressions such as "pro-Ukraine"/"pro-Ukrainian". These expressions show that Ukraine became an even more central issue in the news, just as it did for the government. This is further confirmed by the increased occurrence of the words "accession" (18 in April and 11 in March) and "membership" (9 in April and 2 in March) in the context of the Prime Minister's name.

April brought a major shift in the Prime Minister's communication. Following Tisza MEP Kinga Kollár's now-notorious remarks regarding Hungary's frozen EU funds, Orbán began naming the Tisza Party as his primary opponent on his own platforms as well. This was also evident in the news coverage: while in February the party was barely mentioned at all in proximity to Orbán's name, in April, it was mentioned 16 times within 9 words of the PM's name. The impact was also visible in Péter Magyar's coverage: his name appeared alongside Kinga Kollár's 30 times in April. This is partly understandable, as Kollár is less widely known, making it important to associate her with a specific party (and its well-known leader). However, it is clear from the context in which Kinga Kollár appears that the goal of emphasizing this association is not simply to inform, but to link Magyar with a negatively portrayed figure. Kollár's name was often accompanied by terms like

“betrayal/treason” (8), “scandal” (10), “expose” (4), “Őszöd”¹ (6), and even Gyurcsány and Lenin were mentioned as her ideological predecessors.

The news also tried to establish a similar negative association between Magyar and Manfred Weber, as well as the European People’s Party. Weber’s name appeared near Magyar’s 13 times in March and 16 times in April (the EPP appeared 14 and 9 times, respectively). As with Kollár, Weber was uniformly portrayed in a negative light on M1’s news programs.

With each passing month, Péter Magyar’s name increasingly appeared alongside adjectives and terms intended to damage his reputation. For instance, in March, the words “insider” and “shares” appeared 4 and 5 times, respectively, but by April, these had risen to 19 and 20. The term “threaten/threatening” appeared 17 times in April in connection with Magyar, and “scandal” (7), “crime/criminal” (8)—up from just one instance each in March—also became more frequent.

Most striking, however, is how many derogatory expressions appeared near Péter Magyar’s name that only appeared in one news show, never to be used again—though nearly every day featured at least one such term. These expressions were entirely absent from Orbán’s coverage. This includes not only ideologically charged terms used negatively by the government like “leftist” (8 in March, 5 in April), “Pride” (5 in March), “SZDSZ”² (1 in April), or “gender” (March: 3), but explicitly pejorative language. For example, in March alone, the following expressions occurred in proximity to Magyar’s name: “brain-dead” (2), “insider” (4), “stinky/bad breath” (4), “contradiction” (5), “forgery” (4), “agitator” (3), “nonsense” (5), “loyalty oath/declaration” (4), “embarrassing” (3), “bootlicker” (1), or “bug” (3)—a term actually used by Orbán, but never appearing near his name—and “sneaky” (2). In April, meanwhile, the following terms accompanied Magyar’s name: “assaulted” (1), “cynicism” (1), “suspicion” (2), “treason” (1), “incited” (1), “hysterical” (1), “loyalty oath” (1), “nervous” (1), “shouting” (4), “fawning” (2), “caught” (4), “eavesdrop” (2), “deny” (2), “anti-Hungarian” (1), “unworthy” (2),

¹ In reference to a private speech made at a party conference in 2006 by Socialist PM Ferenc Gyurcsány in which he admitted to lying, subsequently leaked to the press

² Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége: Alliance of Free Democrats, a now-defunct liberal political party

“Őszöd” (2), “panic” (6), “foot-and-mouth disease” (2), “personal attacks” (3), “servant/serve” (2), or “bridge occupation/blockade”³ (4)—an event in which neither Magyar nor the Tisza Party participated.

Key topics

One of the important elements of our research was to examine the frequency with which certain expressions that occupy a central role in the government’s messaging can be heard in the public broadcaster’s newscasts. The chart below shows the evolution of the number of mentions of some such words and expressions over the course of the three months examined.

Expression	Migrant/ migration	War	Peace	Sanctions	Sovereignty	Soros
February - Total	465	278	209	34	47	90
February - Average per Broadcast	16.61	9.93	7.46	1.21	1.68	3.21
March - Total	182	461	231	25	67	13
March - Average per Broadcast	5.87	14.87	7.45	0,8	2.16	0.42
KEY TOPICS						
April - Average per Broadcast	2.76	11	5.4	0.83	0,9	0.43
Three Months – Total	730	1069	602	84	141	116
Three Months – Average per Broadcast	8.2	12.01	6.76	0.94	1.58	1.3

Table 2

It can be observed that, similar to the trends in February and March, the use of the term “migration/migrant” continued to decline in April. Meanwhile, the topic of war peaked in March but returned closer to the February average by April. Interestingly, the word “peace” was mentioned the least in April. News items

³ A series of protests in Budapest against the government’s Pride ban and restrictions on freedom of assembly, organized by independent MP Ákos Hadházy

related to George Soros or Alexander Soros have barely appeared since February; the name Soros was mentioned only 13 times in both March and April.

We also examined the same terms over the three-month period in several of RTL's evening newscasts. The frequency of these expressions in the RTL broadcasts is as follows:

Expression	Migrant/migration	War	Peace	Sanctions	Sovereignty	Soros
February - Total (3 Broadcasts)	0 (immigrant/immigration: 4)	10	8	5	0	3
February - Average per Broadcast	0 (immigrant/immigration: 1.3)	3.34	2.67	1.67	0	1
March - Total (11 Broadcasts)	0 (immigrant/immigration: 0)	39	20	4	9	3
March - Average per Broadcast	0 (immigrant/immigration: 0)	3.545	1.818	0.364	0.818	0.273
April - Total (14 Broadcasts)	1 (immigrant/immigration: 0)	44	14	15	1	0
April - Average per Broadcast	0.07 (immigrant/immigration: 0)	3.14	1	1.07	0.07	0
Three Months - Total (28 Broadcasts)	1 (immigrant/immigration: 4)	93	42	24	10	6
Three Months - Average per Broadcast	0.04 (immigrant/immigration: 0.14)	3.32	1.5	0.86	0.36	0.21

Table 3

If we compare the average occurrences of key topics and expressions in RTL's newscasts and in M1's newscasts, huge divergences become readily apparent. This is not only because RTL's newscast covers a much more diverse range of topics (e.g., crime news, tabloid stories, non-political news of public interest, etc.), but also because its political news differs markedly from public television in terms of

language use, narrative structure, and other dimensions — they do not follow trajectories that closely align with those of Fidesz.

In the case of domestic political news and foreign political news with domestic relevance, we examined the affiliation of speakers who “framed” individual news items within newscasts. We defined the following categories: government-party politicians, experts associated with the governing party, opposition politicians, experts associated with opposition parties, and independent experts not affiliated with any specific party. We counted only individuals interviewed by the public broadcaster and whose interviews were used to frame a particular story or news item in the newscast. All interviews were counted regardless of their length (for instance, even the interview with Tisza Party’s municipal representative Judit Barna in the February 27 broadcast were taken into account, even though only two of her words were relayed on television).

At the end of the three-month period, we created a word cloud showing the names of the most frequently featured experts and politicians throughout the quarter. The size of the names reflects the frequency of their appearances.



Figure 6

The word cloud clearly shows that interviews with Prime Minister Viktor Orbán appeared the most often in the newscast — often excerpts from his weekly public radio interviews. However, it is also apparent that among the 25 most frequently quoted individuals, only a handful are not politically affiliated with the ruling parties, either as politicians or as experts. The most frequently interviewed experts over the quarter were Géza Sebestyén (Matthias Corvinus Collegium), László Dornfeld (Center for Fundamental Rights), and Zoltán Lomniczi Jr. (Századvég Institute).

The numerical distribution among the different types of speakers was as follows:

	February	March	April	Total
Ruling-party politician	84	86	68	238
Opposition politician	19	18	19	56
<i>of which: Our Homeland</i>	10	6	11	27
<i>Democratic Coalition</i>	4	3	1	8
<i>Tisza</i>	3	1	2	6
<i>Jobbik</i>	2	7	4	13
<i>Hungarian Socialist Party</i>	0	1	1	2
Government-affiliated expert	59	64	66	189
Opposition-affiliated expert	0	0	0	0
Independent expert	22	36	33	91

Table 4

When we break down the group of opposition politicians interviewed by their party affiliation, it becomes clear that certain parties are heavily overrepresented — whether in comparison to the number of parliamentary seats they hold or their results in last year’s European Parliament elections. The imbalances in the party

affiliation of interviewed opposition politicians are clearly illustrated in the chart below.

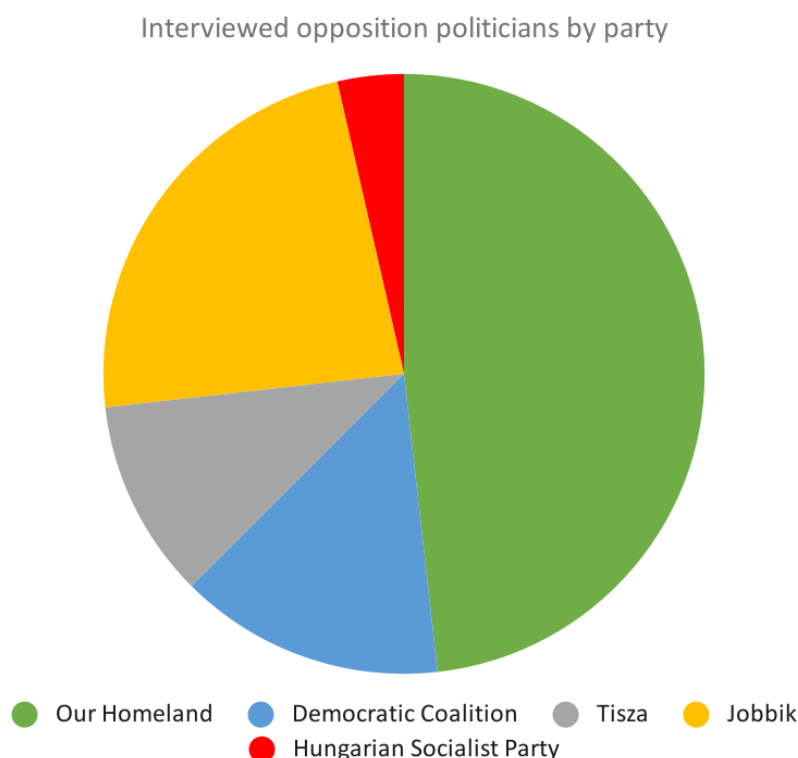


Figure 7

As can be seen, nearly half of all interviewed opposition politicians belonged to the Mi Hazánk party, while Jobbik politicians were also overrepresented compared to their polling or electoral results — in fact, twice as many Jobbik members gave interviews to public television as members of the Tisza Party.

Throughout the three-month period, it was characteristic that experts not affiliated with any party were usually not asked to comment on core public or political issues. The overwhelming majority of such non-affiliated interviewees were experts in areas unrelated to politics (e.g., wood industry expert, seismologist, library director, etc.).

The task of shaping political narratives in the newscast is entrusted almost exclusively to experts and institutes affiliated with Fidesz (e.g., Sovereignty

Protection Research Institute, Nézőpont Institute, Századvég, MCC, Center for Fundamental Rights), while economic news is mostly presented by representatives of NKE (National University of Public Service) and the Ministry for National Economy.

It is also important to examine the sources cited by the newscast. Here, we looked at both the number of references and the political orientation of the media outlets cited. The distribution of cited media sources is shown in the following table:

Month	MTI (Hungarian Telegraphic Office)	Pro-government media outlets	Independent Hungarian media outlets	Foreign media outlets
February	9	73	26	50
March	2	72	25	42
April	6	89	24	41
Total	17	234	75	133

Table 5

The foreign media outlets cited cover a broad political spectrum (e.g., *Fox News*, *Ukrainska Pravda*, *Bild*, *Reuters*, *Politico*, Russian state news agency *TASS*, *CNN*, etc.). However, when examining the references to domestic media, the principle of pluralism is not nearly as evident. Only a small portion of the cited Hungarian outlets are independent from the ruling parties. Excluding the public news agency *MTI*, only 24 percent of the Hungarian references come from non-government-aligned sources.

Moreover, these references are mostly used to support narratives critical of the opposition. The newscast does not cite critical news about the government from these outlets. In rare cases when they do (e.g., in the case of *Direkt36*'s documentary *Dynasty*), the purpose is typically to provide a rebuttal or counter-narrative to criticism directed at the government.

There were no corrections issued during the period under review. Between February and April, the public broadcaster lost one correction lawsuit—against journalist Árpád W. Tóta—but the ruling was not legally binding at the time this report was

completed, and thus the correction had not appeared in the newscast or on the public media website.