

Election scanner

Local Elections North Macedonia 2025

Report 20.10.2025-30.10.2025

Elections as topic. Following the first round of local elections held on 19 October, both media and social media activity remained exceptionally high during the first half of the two-week runoff campaign. Between 20 and 30 October, more than **6,200 election-related media articles** and around **740 social posts** were published, driving over **140,000 interactions** across platforms. The narrative shifted from celebratory and result-driven coverage to renewed campaigning in municipalities heading to a second round on 2 November. Attention centered on post-election coalitions, strategic endorsements, and promises for continuity and reform, marking the transition from electoral rhetoric to governance-oriented storytelling.

Narrative driver: Runoff momentum and realignment.

The week was defined by **VMRO-DPMNE's consolidation phase** after its strong first-round results. The party dominated coverage with more than **260,000 interactions**, shaping a discourse centered on efficiency, local development, and stability. **SDSM**, while visible, entered a phase of repositioning and coalition outreach, securing around **120,000 engagements**. **DUI** sustained a focused campaign emphasizing continuity and governance experience, while **Levica** remained active in online debate, using short-form digital commentary to sustain ideological engagement among younger audiences.

Where engagement concentrates.

The concentration of audience attention remained consistent with previous patterns. **Infomax** continued to lead with **126,836 Facebook interactions**, followed by **Kanal 5 (65,320)**, **4News (40,535)**, **24 Info (32,346)**, and **Fokus (30,493)**. These five outlets accounted for the majority of politically engaged content during the week. Meanwhile, **Sloboden Pечат**, **Kurir**, and **Vecer** were the most prolific in terms of article output, yet their engagement efficiency remained lower, confirming that digital-native and hybrid platforms now shape public perception more decisively than traditional print or broadcast media.

Mayoral spotlight.

As campaigns resumed for the second round, individual candidate visibility surged again. **Orce Gjorgjevski** dominated with over **145,000 interactions**, maintaining narrative control through local leadership and infrastructure themes. **Amar Mecinovic** and **Bilal Kasami** followed with **59,000** and **55,000 interactions**, respectively. **Izet Mexhiti**, who secured election in the first round, remained prominent through governance and coalition-related coverage, while figures like **Maksim Dimitrievski** and **Goran Gerasimovski** sustained moderate but steady attention as the focus of runoff debates in their municipalities.

Platform dynamics.

Engagement continued to vary strongly by platform. **TikTok** remained the most potent channel for audience mobilization, averaging **600 interactions per post** and proving crucial for younger voter outreach. **Facebook** retained its role as the central discussion arena, while **Instagram** continued to be used primarily for visual storytelling and community framing. The week also saw a gradual normalization of tone, as campaign content became more issue-based and less confrontational.

Issue agenda.

The thematic balance of coverage began to tilt from election mechanics to public-interest issues. **Education** (1,922 articles) and **schools** (1,066) emerged as the most discussed policy areas after local elections (4,426), combining for over **110,000 engagements**. Debates around **EU integration**, **local governance**, and **digital innovation** gained additional traction, reflecting citizens' expectations for reform and modernization. On social media, **education**, **children's health**, and **innovation** collectively generated more than **60,000 interactions**, signaling a pivot toward performance-based narratives.

Toxicity snapshot.

Online hostility persisted but did not escalate, averaging **6–12%** of total comments across monitored candidates. The most visible figures – **Gjorgjevski**, **Mecinovic**, and **Kasami** – absorbed the bulk of hate-speech activity, mirroring their engagement peaks. Smaller candidates such as **Fatmir Dehari** and **Bujar Osmani** showed higher proportional toxicity ($\approx 11\%$), confirming that limited exposure can concentrate negativity. Hate speech was primarily tied to ethnic and identity framing rather than ideological confrontation.

Beyond elections.

Outside the campaign narrative, several non-political events drew significant national attention. The **Prilep hospital arrest** became the week's most-covered story with **205 articles** and **2,900 engagements**, symbolizing renewed public scrutiny over corruption and accountability. Other widely circulated stories included **Mickoski's meeting with King Charles III**, **Trump's comments on Ukraine and Russia**, and the **Skopje waste-management scandal**, which generated over **2,000 engagements** from **135 articles**. Collectively, these stories illustrate the gradual normalization of the news cycle, as political competition gave way to broader debates on governance, integrity, and international affairs heading into the final campaign stretch before the **2 November runoff**.

Local elections in the focus

Between 20 and 30 October 2025, the topic experienced a dynamic but uneven visibility and engagement trajectory across both media and social media platforms. The data reveals an initial surge in attention, driven primarily by media articles, followed by a gradual decline and several minor rebounds toward the end of the observed period.

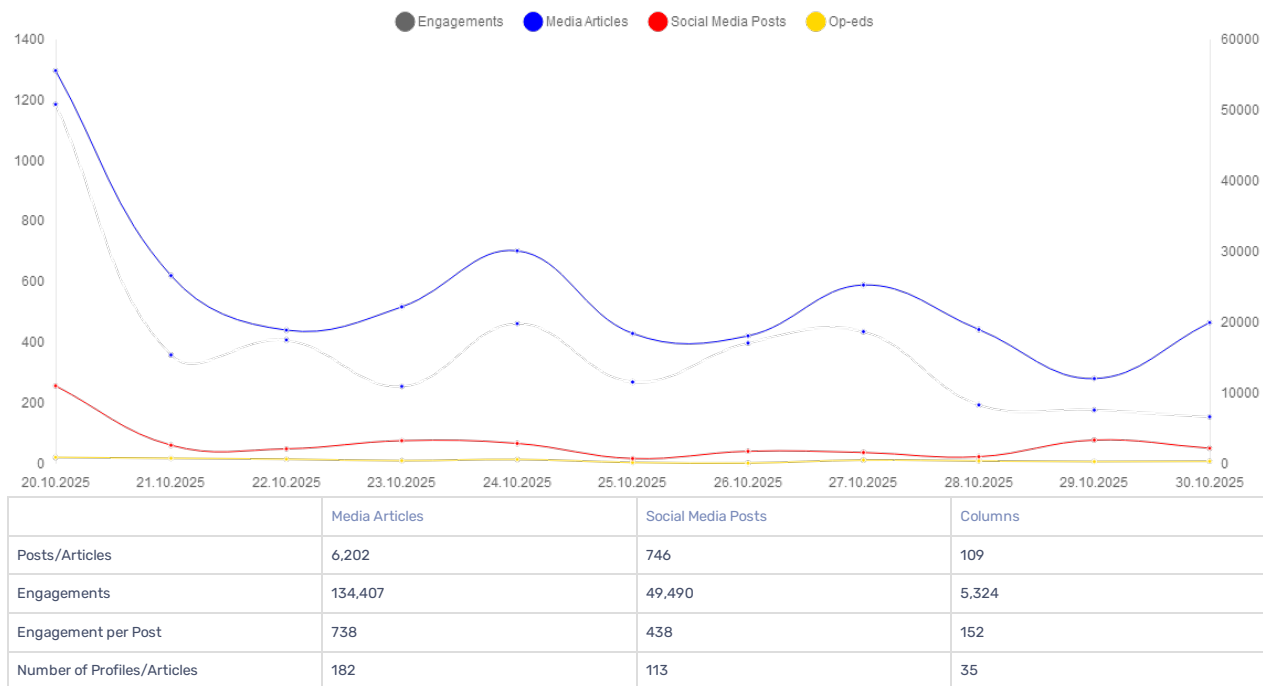
At the beginning of the timeframe, on 20 October, visibility and engagement reached their highest point. More than 1,200 media articles were recorded, coinciding with an engagement peak that likely reflected a strong public reaction to a major political or societal development. The following days saw a sharp drop in both media output and audience interaction, suggesting that the initial wave of coverage exhausted the primary news value of the event. Between 22 and 27 October, the trend stabilized at a moderate level, with smaller spikes on 24, 26, and 28 October, indicative of renewed attention likely triggered by follow-up stories, public statements, or related campaign developments.

Throughout the period, traditional media dominated the information landscape. A total of 6,202 media articles generated 134,267 interactions, representing nearly three-quarters of all engagement recorded. Social media remained an important complementary space, with 746 posts attracting 49,475 interactions. Although social media content represented only a fraction of the total volume, it proved relatively efficient in generating engagement, averaging 438 interactions per post compared to 738 per article. This points to the greater viral potential and immediacy of social media content, even when overall activity is lower.

Op-eds and columns played a minimal role in shaping public discussion. With only 109 pieces and 5,324 engagements, their contribution to total visibility was marginal. However, their presence helped sustain analytical or opinion-driven perspectives during quieter days when overall posting and engagement were subdued.

The alignment of engagement trends with media output suggests that traditional outlets continue to drive the online conversation rather than follow it. Peaks in engagement coincide closely with spikes in article publication, indicating that public attention still responds to the media agenda. The relatively lower but more efficient activity on social media shows that individual posts can amplify or extend media narratives but rarely initiate them independently.

Media and Social Media Coverage: Visibility and Engagement Trends



Key Articles on Election Discourse

During the observed week, the media environment was dominated by a small group of outlets and narratives that achieved exceptional reach and engagement on Facebook. The most engaging content originated primarily from Infomax, Kanal 5, and Kurir, which together accounted for the majority of online interactions.

Infomax maintained an unchallenged lead, generating 24,104 engagements across 81 posts—nearly four times more than any other outlet. Its coverage was characterized by emotionally charged and provocative topics, such as national identity and political criticism. The article “Шокантни бројки: Македонците веќе се во ЕУ – 216.000 граѓани имаат бугарски пасоши” exemplifies this pattern, blending sensational framing with issues of sovereignty and EU integration. This tone, combining nationalist sentiment and indignation, proved highly effective in mobilizing social reactions.

Kanal 5 followed with 6,977 engagements, driven by exclusive political content and institutional updates. The most engaged article—reporting on Minister Филипче’s announcement of leadership changes within SDSM after the second round of local elections—garnered over 5,300 interactions alone. Its success illustrates how political accountability stories continue to attract public attention when tied to concrete post-election developments.

Kurir, Fokus, and 4News filled the mid-tier segment, each maintaining engagement levels between 5,000 and 6,800 interactions. Their coverage contributed to sustaining visibility for political and social debates but with less viral intensity. Meanwhile, 24 Info, Lider, and Vecer maintained steady but secondary positions, reflecting their stable audience bases but limited reach beyond regular readers.

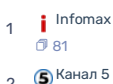
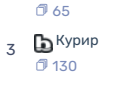
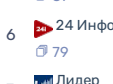
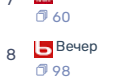
In contrast, Sakam Da Kazam and A1on—both known for commentary and mixed-format journalism—showed modest but notable engagement, particularly through opinion and personal reflection pieces. The article “ГЛУВЦИ И ЛУЃЕ,” published on Sakam Da Kazam, achieved significant resonance with over 1,300 interactions, suggesting that introspective or satirical commentary retains an audience niche amid a politically saturated landscape.

Across all outlets, the week’s engagement patterns reveal a polarized yet predictable structure: politically charged content, particularly that blending nationalism, governance critique, or election narratives, continues to dominate social interaction. Emotional intensity and clear opinion framing consistently outperform neutral reporting. The data also suggest that mainstream television outlets like Kanal 5 remain powerful agenda-setters, while digital-first platforms such as Infomax translate that visibility into higher online mobilization.

Most Engaged Articles

1		Канал 5 Филипче најави кадровски промени во раководството на СДСМ во вториот круг од локалните избори ↗ 5,310 eng. ↻ 1,153 □ 550 ↻ 3,607 ⌚ 5 days ago 619
2		Infomax Ранѓеловиќ: Излезноста во Кочани манифестира најголема мизерија во оваа држава, наместо тој народ да бојкотира за децата кои ги ↗ 3,993 eng. ↻ 3,504 □ 395 ↻ 94 ⌚ one week ago 275
3		A1on Мицкоски: Во недела масовно да излеземе на избори, да го заокружине бројот 9 за Тони Тоневски и за развој на Пробиштип. ↗ 1,398 eng. ↻ 1,354 □ 28 ↻ 16 ⌚ 4 days ago 595
4		Сакам Да Кажам ГЛУВЦИ И ЛУЃЕ ↗ 1,398 eng. ↻ 1,245 □ 94 ↻ 59 ⌚ 7 days ago 900
5		Infomax Шокантни бројки: Македонците веќе се во ЕУ – 216.000 граѓани имаат бугарски пасоши ↗ 1,218 eng. ↻ 609 □ 573 ↻ 36 ⌚ 7 days ago 334

Most Engaging Media Outlets on Facebook

1		Infomax 📄 81 ↗ 24,111
2		Канал 5 📄 65 ↗ 6,977
3		Курир 📄 130 ↗ 6,833
4		Фокус 📄 74 ↗ 5,519
5		4News 📄 37 ↗ 5,465
6		24 Инфо 📄 79 ↗ 5,031
7		Лидер 📄 60 ↗ 4,743
8		Вечер 📄 98 ↗ 4,722
9		Сакам Да Кажам 📄 28 ↗ 4,273
10		A1on 📄 68 ↗ 3,683

Top Political Parties by Media Presence

During the observed period, political visibility and engagement were clearly concentrated around five major parties, with VMRO-DPMNE emerging as the undisputed leader both in volume of coverage and public interaction.

VMRO-DPMNE dominated the media and social media landscape with 5,624 articles, 643 social posts, and an impressive 387,027 engagements—more than double that of its nearest competitor. The content related to the party was primarily anchored in topics surrounding the 2025 local elections, local governance, and education, reflecting a strong narrative alignment with grassroots and community concerns. The party's communication strategy during this period combined high output across traditional and digital channels with consistent message framing around reform, accountability, and local leadership renewal. This created a steady rhythm of visibility that translated into sustained engagement momentum.

The governing SDSM followed at a distance, recording 3,133 articles and 295 social posts, generating 165,178 engagements. Its coverage focused heavily on institutional performance, particularly in the context of education and local government, but without the emotive resonance or mobilizing tone observed in VMRO-DPMNE's messaging. The engagement gap suggests that while SDSM maintained broad visibility, it struggled to convert coverage into public interaction, possibly due to a more defensive or administrative communication posture.

DUI secured the third position with 2,756 articles, 197 social posts, and 112,538 engagements. Its presence was largely defined by the waste management crisis and other localized governance issues, reflecting a more reactive media strategy. Engagement remained concentrated within its traditional constituencies, indicating limited crossover appeal despite relatively high visibility in certain regions.

Levica achieved strong relative performance given its lower output. With 1,404 articles and 95 social posts, it reached 95,748 engagements, suggesting an efficient engagement-to-volume ratio. This confirms Levica's continued ability to spark disproportionate online attention through ideologically charged or oppositional narratives, often centering on referendum debates and anti-establishment themes.

Finally, Alternativa (AKI) maintained a modest but visible presence with 2,638 articles, 96 social posts, and 43,724 engagements. Its discourse revolved around local elections, appealing mainly to a defined segment of the electorate rather than the wider public.

Top 5 Parties

Parties	Articles	Social Posts	Engagements
VMRO-DPMNE Topics: Local Elections 2025 (2921), Local issues (654), Local government (439), Education (413)	5,624	643	387,147
SDSM Topics: Local Elections 2025 (1808), Local government (333), Local issues (259), Education (230)	3,133	295	165,841
DUI Topics: Local Elections 2025 (1471), Local issues (146), Waste Management Crisis (146), Local government (95)	2,756	197	112,468
Levica Topics: Local Elections 2025 (688), Local government (115), Local issues (109), Referendum proposal (65)	1,404	95	95,890
AKI Topics: Local Elections 2025 (1274), Local issues (113), Local government (109), Ilinden (64)	2,638	96	43,724

Election Spotlight: Most Visible Mayoral Candidates

The visibility and engagement data for mayoral candidates in the observed period shows a clear hierarchy of influence, with Orce Gjorgjievski leading the conversation both in media coverage and digital engagement, followed by Amar Mecinovic, Bilal Kasami, and Izet Mexhiti, who already won in the first round.

Gjorgjievski dominated the landscape with 1,580 media articles, 286 social media posts, and a total of 229,414 engagements. His narrative focused on local elections, community governance, and waste management, reflecting his ability to frame highly visible issues with strong emotional and civic resonance. The combination of consistent coverage and message coherence positioned him as a central figure in shaping the local election debate.

Amar Mecinovic followed with 902 articles, 94 posts, and 103,244 engagements, signaling a solid campaign performance centered on local governance and public transport. His communication was largely localized and pragmatic, appealing to urban audiences but lacking broader emotional amplification. Similarly, Bilal Kasami, with 1,161 articles, 129 social posts, and 82,545 engagements, maintained a stable visibility grounded in institutional themes such as education and administrative transparency. His tone remained formal and issue-focused, generating steady attention but limited virality.

Izet Mexhiti stood out as a distinctive case. With 1,152 media articles, 89 social posts, and 76,912 engagements, his campaign appeared more modest in volume but far more precise in outcome. He focused on waste management, urban regulation, and governance efficiency, topics directly tied to the local electorate's priorities. His narrative lacked the dramatization and high-frequency posting typical of top contenders, yet it resonated deeply with voters in his constituency.

Mexhiti's media profile reflects an efficient, localized, and message-disciplined communication strategy. Instead of seeking mass engagement or emotional spectacle, his campaign prioritized community trust and concrete performance themes. The relatively moderate engagement numbers therefore indicate targeted resonance, not weak visibility. He benefited from strong local credibility and focused storytelling that mobilized support without noise—proving that precision in narrative and authenticity of focus can outperform volume in municipal elections.

In comparison, Gjorgjievski's dominance illustrates the power of volume-driven visibility to shape wider discourse, while Mexhiti's victory demonstrates the power of message efficiency and local alignment to secure electoral success. Together, they capture the dual logic of modern municipal campaigning: the race for attention and the race for trust.

Mayoral candidates



Political Presence vs. Public Response: Platform Trend

Social media activity among mayoral candidates during the observed election period displayed sharp contrasts in both strategy and impact across platforms. The data reveals that while candidates maintained presence across several channels, the intensity of engagement varied strongly by platform, confirming that not all networks serve the same communicative purpose in a political campaign.

YouTube was the most frequently used platform, with an average of 14 posts per politician, reflecting its role as a repository for long-form content such as speeches, interviews, or campaign recaps. However, despite consistent posting, average engagement remained moderate (342 interactions per politician), suggesting that while it provides credibility and visibility, it is less effective in generating immediate interaction or viral traction.

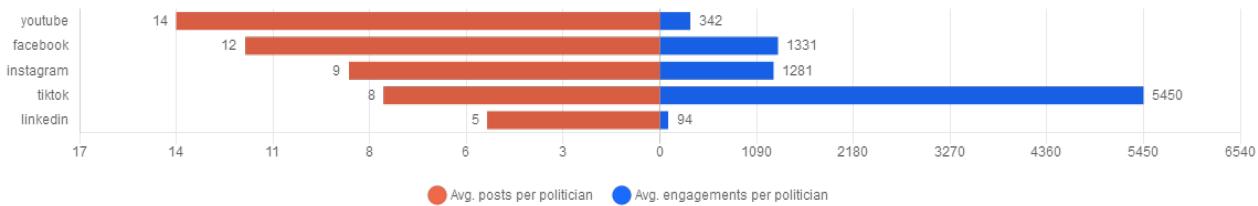
Facebook and Instagram were the primary arenas for real-time engagement and narrative amplification. Politicians posted on average 12 times on Facebook and 9 times on Instagram, generating 1,333 and 1,281 engagements per politician, respectively. These platforms maintained similar engagement efficiency, with Facebook slightly ahead in reach and comment-based interaction, while Instagram excelled in visual storytelling and emotive communication. Their combined influence shaped the daily rhythm of campaign communication, with Facebook serving as the base for political discourse and Instagram as the channel for personal branding and relatability.

TikTok, although the least used (8 posts on average), demonstrated extraordinary engagement efficiency. It generated an average of 5,375 engagements per politician and 606 interactions per post, far exceeding other platforms. This confirms TikTok's role as the most impactful network for reach and virality, especially among younger demographics and undecided voters. The short, dynamic video format proved ideal for amplifying campaign messages and humanizing candidates, suggesting that those who strategically leveraged TikTok achieved disproportionate visibility with minimal content volume.

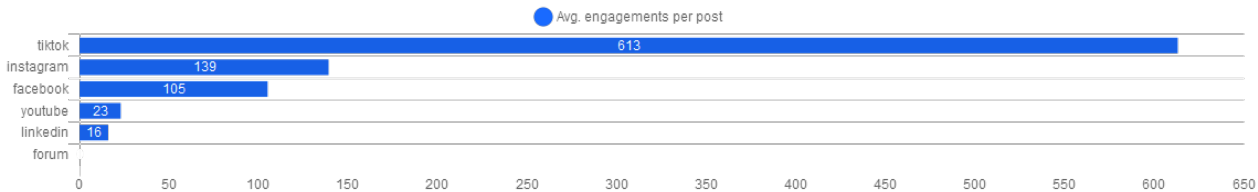
LinkedIn and online forums appeared only marginally in the communication mix. Politicians averaged five posts on LinkedIn, with limited audience interaction (94 engagements per politician), reflecting its niche use for credibility, institutional updates, or donor-facing communication rather than voter mobilization.

In synthesis, the data underscores the divergence between content volume and engagement quality. YouTube and Facebook dominate by frequency, sustaining visibility and message control; Instagram provides visual appeal and emotional tone; while TikTok, despite minimal activity, emerges as the engagement powerhouse, capable of driving exponential reactions through fewer but more resonant posts. The results highlight that effective campaign communication in 2025 depends not on omnipresence but on platform-specific precision—matching message format, tone, and frequency to the audience behavior of each network.

Politicians on social media



Politicians on social media



Topic Spotlight: What Mayoral Candidates Stand For

The topic correlation chart highlights how mayoral candidates were positioned within the wider media narrative and which themes dominated their coverage. The visualization makes clear that the 2025 Local Elections were the central framing context, but beneath this, there was significant differentiation in how individual candidates were associated with specific local issues and governance themes.

Orce Gjorgjevski stood out as the most frequently mentioned figure, appearing in connection with over 1,996 references, primarily linked to Local Elections 2025, waste management, and local governance. His communication strategy appears to have been built around highly visible and citizen-centric issues such as infrastructure and community management, positioning him as the focal point of post-election debate and performance scrutiny. These themes positioned him as an assertive, reform-oriented candidate who successfully framed himself as the principal challenger to the ruling structures.

In social media discourse, Gjorgjevski's name appeared frequently in both **positive mobilization contexts** (citizen action, local reforms) and **critical discussions** (accountability and environmental management). His narrative capitalized on emotional proximity to citizens, using a tone of urgency and civic responsibility. The framing of his campaign leaned toward populist pragmatism—high visibility, strong local rhetoric, and a focus on measurable results rather than ideological debate.

Bilal Kasami and Amar Mecinovic also maintained strong topical visibility, with Kasami connected to over 617 mentions, mostly concerning education and local administrative efficiency, while Mecinovic appeared in 903 references, often linked to public transport and urban issues. Both leaned heavily on governance and service delivery topics, reinforcing an image of practical administrators rather than populist communicators. Bilal Kasami coverage largely revolved around **education policy, school infrastructure, and municipal service delivery**. The tone of the mentions suggested institutional trust and pragmatic engagement—he was often framed as an incumbent leader focused on continuity and problem-solving rather than controversy or polarization.

Kasami's occasional inclusion in discussions on **digital governance and transparency** further reinforced his image as an administrator open to modernization. However, his narrative lacked emotional amplification; while respected, it did not spark broad social media virality. His campaign communication emphasized stability, inclusivity, and gradual reform—qualities that resonated with a steady but less reactive voter base.

Amar campaign narrative was grounded in **public transport, urban management, and citizen participation**, with a relatively strong emphasis on urban quality-of-life topics. While his social media footprint was moderate, it was **notably concentrated in local Facebook discussions**, indicating direct community interaction.

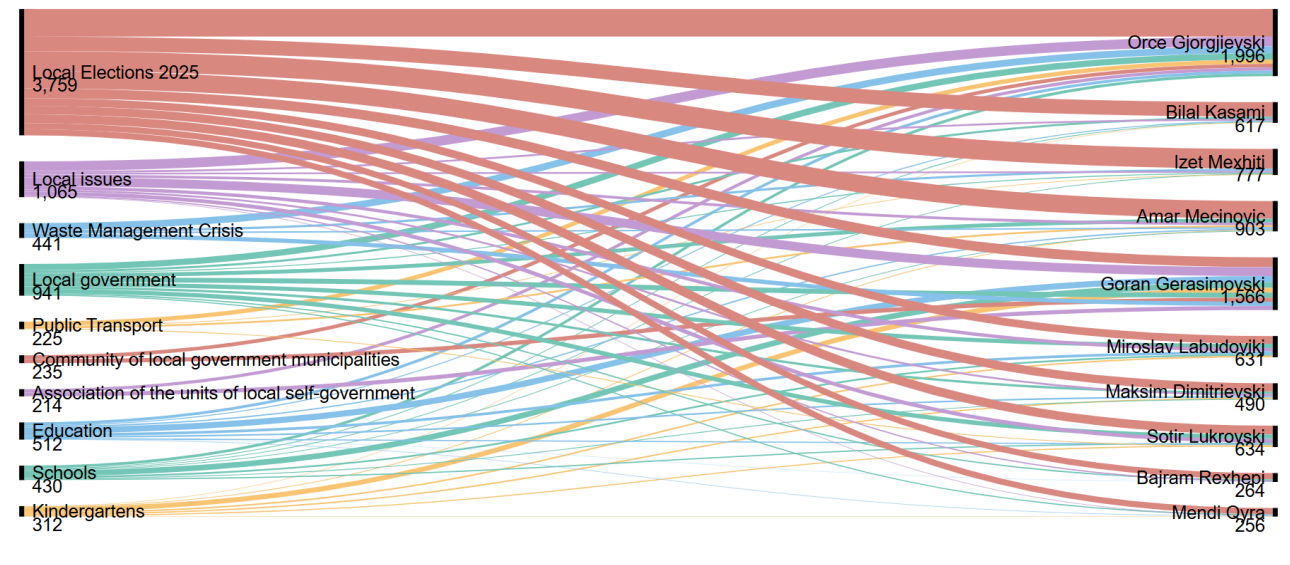
Mentions of Mecinovic in the transparency and digitalisation dataset were limited, though they occasionally aligned him with discussions on **urban modernization** and **digital service delivery**. His visibility grew around debates on **infrastructure and inclusivity**, positioning him as a credible, solutions-oriented candidate appealing to an urban electorate seeking pragmatic governance rather than ideological alignment.

Izet Mexhiti, with 777 mentions, was most prominently linked with heavily policy-oriented—he was often referenced in discussions of **urban planning, illegal construction control, and environmental oversight**. In the context of transparency and digitalisation, he appeared sporadically but positively, usually in association with governance modernization and responsible leadership. His case demonstrates how focused communication anchored in tangible governance outcomes can outperform attention-driven campaigns.

Other candidates such as Goran Gerasimovski (1,566 mentions) and Miroslav Labudovikj (631 mentions) were also connected to education, school infrastructure, and community issues but lacked a singular defining topic, which may explain their more moderate public engagement levels.

Overall, the topic flow demonstrates that candidates who framed their messaging around tangible, local governance concerns—especially waste management, infrastructure, and education—achieved stronger narrative consistency and electoral relevance. While Gjorgjevski led the conversation through visibility and controversy, Mexhiti exemplified message discipline and outcome efficiency. Together, these patterns illustrate two successful but contrasting campaign models: one driven by media dominance, the other by focused policy resonance and localized trust.

Candidates mentioned in Topics



Between 20 and 30 October 2025, the media landscape was dominated by the theme Local Elections 2025, yet the data reveals that interest extended far beyond electoral coverage into issues of governance, education, and community well-being. Traditional media outlets published over 6,200 election-related articles, accumulating 134,000 engagements across 182 outlets, marking the most visible topic of the period. However, education and local issues steadily gained traction as secondary but enduring areas of public attention, together generating more than 6,000 articles and close to 160,000 engagements. This shift illustrates how, once the immediate intensity of election reporting faded, audience interest migrated toward everyday governance topics with tangible social relevance.

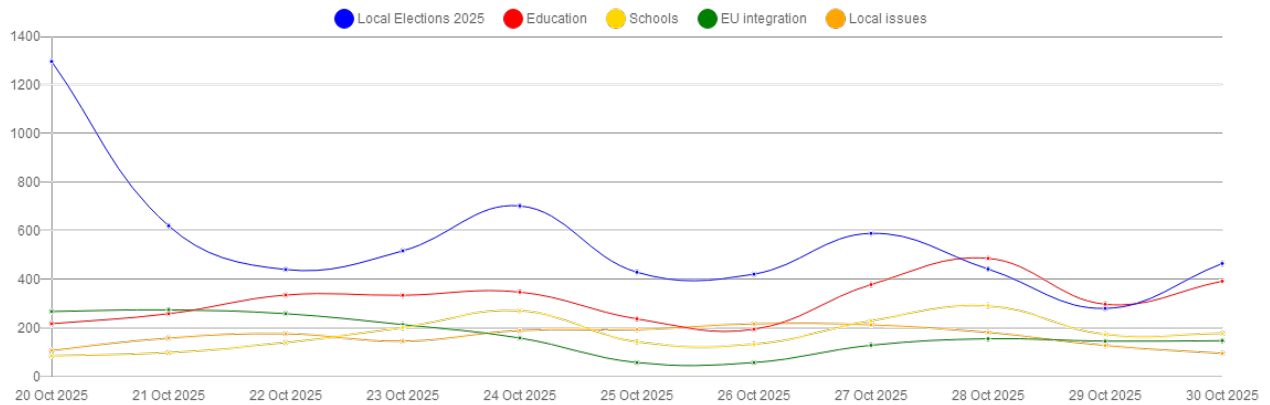
Education, schools, and local issues formed the backbone of sustained coverage throughout the ten-day period. Education was discussed in 3,475 media articles, with a total of 67,000 engagements, while stories about schools generated nearly 46,000 interactions. These topics proved highly resonant with audiences, achieving stronger engagement rates per article than the broader election category. Local issues – urban infrastructure, service delivery, and waste management – appeared in fewer articles (1,798) but ranked highest in engagement efficiency, confirming that citizens remained most responsive to stories with visible community impact. EU integration, though smaller in scale, contributed a steady flow of analytical and forward-looking coverage, often framed through the lens of modernization and institutional reform.

In social media spaces, the topic hierarchy resembled that of traditional media but the emotional tone and interaction density were more pronounced. Education overtook electoral coverage in engagement, amassing over 84,900 interactions from 716 posts, while the elections themselves reached 49,000 interactions across 746 posts. Schools and local infrastructure issues continued to attract active community responses, reflecting the ongoing importance of these themes in post-election discussions. Interestingly, two additional topics—Children's Health and Digitalisation and Innovation—emerged as smaller but highly engaging clusters. Despite their limited posting volume, they achieved some of the highest engagement-per-post ratios (28 and 36 interactions respectively), suggesting that modernization, technology, and child well-being resonate strongly with select online audiences.

The temporal trends show a clear pattern: visibility peaked sharply on 20 October, corresponding to immediate post-election coverage, then declined before gradually rebounding on 24 and 27 October as education and governance-related themes rose in prominence. This pattern highlights a classic feedback loop in the information ecosystem—where social media discussions follow and amplify traditional media narratives with a short delay of one to two days. The cycle also demonstrates how citizens' attention evolved from campaign outcomes to the policy and governance implications that followed them.

Key topics discussed in media

Export

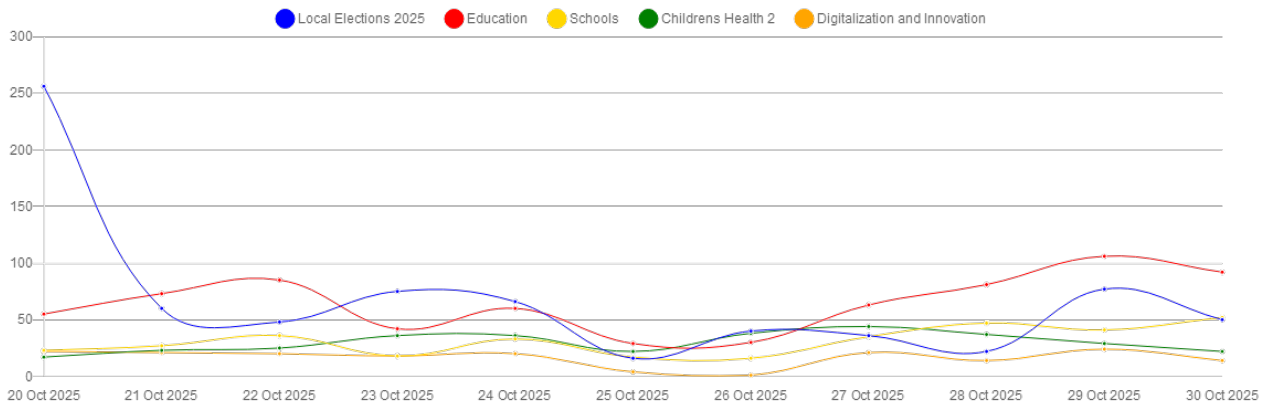


General Statistics

	Local Elections 2025	Education	Schools	EU integration	Local issues
Articles:	6,202	3,475	1,934	1,859	1,798
Engagements:	134,407	67,296	46,013	25,152	46,072
Engagement per Article:	21.67	19.37	23.79	13.53	25.62
Number of Outlets:	182	224	161	160	151

Key topics discussed on social media

Export



General Statistics

	Local Elections 2025	Education	Schools	Childrens Health 2	Digitalization and Innovation
Articles:	746	716	345	329	179
Engagements:	49,490	84,955	57,162	9,368	6,457
Engagement per Article:	66	119	166	28.47	36.07
Number of Outlets:	113	329	193	40	96

Mayoral Candidates Under Fire: Hate Speech and Public Backlash

During the observed period, the analysis of online discourse surrounding mayoral candidates revealed not only differences in visibility and engagement but also the tone and quality of public interaction. The data shows a complex communication climate where public interest was coupled with polarization and instances of hate speech.

In the first group of candidates, Fatmir Dehari, Bilal Kasami, Bujar Osmani, Stevco Jakimovski, and Goran Stojanovski collectively generated several thousand comments across their social media presence. Among them, Bilal Kasami and Stevco Jakimovski stood out as the most commented figures, with 4,343 and 4,821 comments respectively, each having a hate speech ratio of around 8–10%. Fatmir Dehari also faced a notable level of negativity, with 174 hate speech comments, representing 11% of total comments. These levels indicate a generally polarized discussion space where candidates with strong public exposure tend to attract proportionally higher volumes of toxic or hostile speech.

When observing the second group – including Orce Gjorgjievski, Amar Mecinovic, Bilal Kasami, Stevco Jakimovski, and Izet Mexhiti – the same pattern persisted but at a larger scale. Orce Gjorgjievski emerged as the most discussed figure with over 18,000 comments, of which more than 1,000 contained hate speech, although his relative ratio (6%) was among the lowest compared to other candidates. Amar Mecinovic, with 9,784 comments and a higher 8% hate speech share, faced a more confrontational audience dynamic. Bilal Kasami’s online presence again showed a significant number of hate speech comments (438), confirming that he was repeatedly exposed to online hostility across multiple monitoring periods.

The analysis highlights a few consistent patterns. First, high visibility correlates with increased exposure to hate speech, particularly for candidates who maintain active digital campaigns and provoke strong partisan reactions. Second, while the overall percentage of hate speech ranged from 6% to 11%, the majority of discourse remained within the bounds of political debate rather than personal attacks, suggesting moderate toxicity rather than systemic online aggression. Third, the candidates with localized or niche communication strategies, such as Izet Mexhiti and Goran Stojanovski, experienced fewer overall comments but still faced measurable negativity, reflecting that smaller-scale political figures are not insulated from polarizing rhetoric.

Top 5 Mayoral Candidates

Politician	Hate Speech Comments	Hate Speech %	Comments	Social Posts
Fatmir Dehari 24info.mk (42/226), INFOMAX.mk (30/292), Anima Mundi – здружение за заштита на животни (21/139), Горгџија Сајкоски (17/162)	174	11	1,545	25
Bilal Kasami INFOMAX.mk (196/1460), Bilal Kasami (41/1415), Фокус (32/250), Alfa Televizija (30/140)	438	10	4,343	100
Bujar Osmani Bujar Osmani (8/76), Alfa Televizija (5/32), Фокус (3/40), Zoom.mk (3/15)	20	11	188	5
Stevco Jakimovski Stevco Jakimovski (275/3531), 4NEWS.mk (27/244), 24info.mk (21/145), INFOMAX.mk (17/240)	403	8	4,872	63
Goran Stojanovski Патриотско друштво (6/71)	1	8	1	2

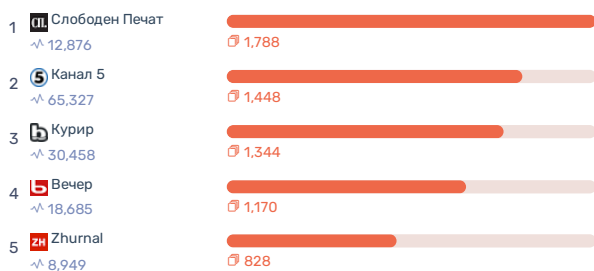
Beyond Elections: Media Dynamics in North Macedonia

On the activity side, Sloboden Pечат, Kanal 5, and Kurir lead the landscape as the most prolific publishers. Sloboden Pечат recorded the highest number of articles (1,788), reflecting its role as a general-interest and news-driven outlet that sustains daily coverage across multiple topics, from politics to social issues and culture. Kanal 5 and Kurir followed closely with 1,448 and 1,344 published items, maintaining high frequency and broad thematic diversity. Outlets such as Vecer and Zhurnal, though smaller in scale, remained consistently active, focusing on current affairs, local reporting, and human-interest stories. These results highlight a stable media core that keeps publishing at high intensity even when electoral narratives subside.

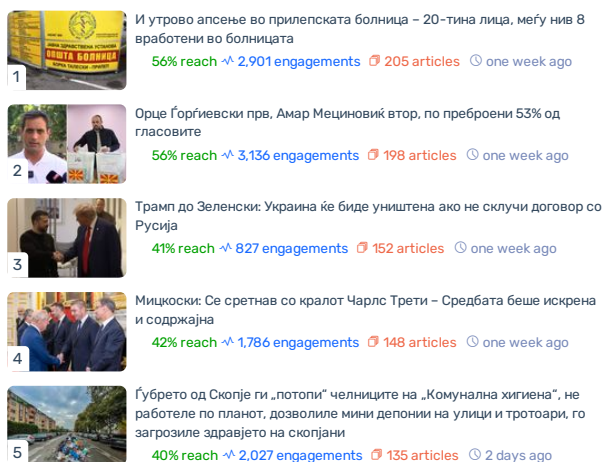
In contrast, when measuring public engagement, the attention landscape shifts sharply toward digital-first and opinion-driven platforms. Infomax dominates Facebook interactions with 126,836 engagements, doubling Kanal 5’s performance (65,320) and far exceeding other outlets. Infomax’s success lies in its strong social media integration, emotionally charged headlines, and commentary style that stimulates reactions and shares. The next most engaging outlets—4News, 24 Info, and Fokus—combine online immediacy with investigative or analytical tones, producing between 30,000 and 40,000 interactions each. These figures indicate that platforms with sharper editorial identities and higher digital adaptability outperform traditional outlets in online resonance.

Taken together, the data points to a dual structure of media influence beyond the elections. Traditional broadcasters like Kanal 5 and Sloboden Pечат continue to anchor the informational landscape through steady volume and credibility, while digital-first media such as Infomax and 4News drive the emotional and viral layer of public conversation. This divergence reflects the evolving nature of media consumption in North Macedonia: quantity and institutional presence ensure visibility, but engagement and narrative sharpness determine impact.

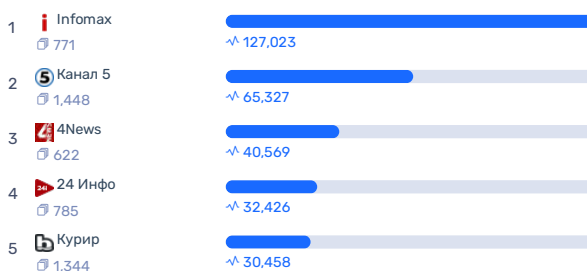
Most Active Media Outlets



Top 5 Events



Most Engaging Media Outlets on Facebook



The most prominent story was the arrest at the Prilep hospital, which generated 205 articles and more than 2,900 engagements, achieving an impressive 56% reach increase. Its prominence stems from the combination of criminal, institutional, and moral dimensions—a corruption-like scandal tied to public health facilities. The coverage extended beyond Prilep, resonating nationally because it touched on public trust in healthcare institutions, one of the most sensitive areas of governance. The story's virality highlights how allegations of malpractice or criminal activity in public services remain a reliable catalyst for both media output and online outrage.

The second most covered and equally engaging story was the local election outcome in which Orce Gjorgjievski ranked first and Amar Mecinovic second.. With 198 articles and 3,136 engagements, this event matched the hospital scandal in both reach and engagement efficiency (56% reach). Its success reflects how electoral results still drive intense interest, especially when framed through competition and symbolic victory. However, the focus quickly shifted from party politics to personal narratives of leadership and legitimacy, as media emphasized the candidates' post-election positioning rather than procedural details.

The third-ranked story brought an international dimension: a meeting between Donald Trump and Volodymyr Zelensky, reported under the headline “Ukraine will not be destroyed if it doesn't make a deal with Russia.” With 152 articles and 827 engagements, this coverage shows that global events maintain consistent visibility in Macedonian media, though with a lower engagement-per-article ratio compared to local stories. The story's emotional tone—conflict, diplomacy, and tension—contributed to its reach, but the engagement figures indicate that domestic audiences remain primarily drawn to local relevance.

The fourth story featured Hristijan Mickoski's meeting with King Charles III, generating 148 articles and 1,786 engagements. The coverage framed the meeting as formal and constructive, emphasizing state-level diplomacy and personal representation of national interests. While engagement was moderate, the story's framing leaned toward credibility and leadership signaling, reinforcing Mickoski's international visibility without eliciting controversy.

Finally, environmental and urban management issues appeared in fifth place, with the report on Skopje's waste management failures and flooding linked to “Komunalna Higiena.” This story, published in 135 articles with 2,027 engagements, achieved high public resonance (40% reach), reflecting a growing trend in civic-oriented media attention. It combined environmental risk, urban neglect, and public accountability—issues increasingly resonant with urban audiences.

Methodology

This report is produced using Pikasa Analytics, a highly localized and real-time media intelligence platform developed by Pikasa, a North Macedonia-based company. The reporting period will be from September-November 2025. Leveraging a network of over 2,500 media outlets across 30+ countries, Pikasa integrates real-time data streams from digital news sources and all major social media platforms to provide actionable, data-driven insights.

The findings presented here are based on daily monitoring and analysis of over 6,000 news articles from more than 250 media outlets, along with content from thousands of Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube channels. The platform combines advanced machine-learning algorithms, automated content analysis, and custom dashboards, supported by Pikasa's team of experienced research analysts. Pikasa's methodology focuses on understanding six key dimensions of the digital information space: Audience (where media consumption is concentrated), Voices (who is speaking and which voices dominate), Topics (what narratives are emerging), Influencers (who drives engagement and why), Content (what type resonates most), and Platforms (where the conversations happen). All data is securely stored, encrypted, and segregated in compliance with GDPR standards.

This hybrid approach—merging AI-powered analytics with expert validation—ensures a nuanced and accurate reflection of Macedonia's evolving media and social media ecosystem in the lead-up to the 2025 elections.