

KYRGYZSTAN

Early Presidential Election 2021

Social Media Monitoring

Final report **(19 November 2020 – 9 January 2021)**

8 February 2021
Bishkek, Bratislava

This project was supported by the National Endowment for Democracy



I. INTRODUCTION

Between 19 November 2020 and 9 January 2021, Media Development Center, a Kyrgyz media organization, and MEMO 98, a Slovak non-profit specialist media-monitoring organization, monitored social media in the run-up to the 10 January early presidential election. The monitoring included 67 different actors (subjects) within 7 various categories (candidates, politicians, political parties, official authorities, media, influencers, and public groups) with accounts on Facebook (50) and Instagram (56).¹

MEMO 98 and Media Development Center (MDC) monitored social media prior to the 4 October parliamentary elections when they [concluded](#) that “*there was an active and engaged audience on social media, particularly on Instagram, but few political actors made it a focus in their political campaigns. There was no highly professionalized digital operations or significant spending on advertising, which are now commonplace in elections the world over. However, the fact the Chon Kazat’s victory on social media did not translate to the ballot box suggests social media may not be the key to winning in Kyrgyzstan as it is elsewhere.*”

Similar to the monitoring prior to the parliamentary elections, the main purpose of this monitoring was to determine the impact of social media on electoral integrity and the extent to which social media provide important information that voters need in their decision making.² Television is the primary source of information about politics, but the growing relevance of social media has to be acknowledged, and so we continued to monitor Facebook and Instagram with an aim to determine to what extent social media are used in Kyrgyzstan before and during an election campaign³.

The monitoring also focused on how the media report on candidates in their Facebook accounts and what topics and issues are discussed by different actors in the context of elections. From a wider perspective, we also wanted to assess the overall role of social media in the elections and their potential impact on election integrity, particularly the level of public trust and confidence in the process.

¹ Out of 67 total actors, there were 58 individual pages and accounts (18 candidates, 9 politicians, 5 parties, 3 state institutions, 15 media outlets, 8 influencers) and 9 public groups. 48 of the individual accounts have presence on both monitored platforms (including all 18 candidates), while 10 other subjects are present only on one of them (2 on Facebook, 8 on Instagram). Public groups (9) are available only on Facebook.

² [2020 World Press Freedom Index](#) from Reporters Without Borders ranks Kyrgyzstan as 82 (out of 180 countries, +1 from 2019, and +6 from 2015), assessed as a country with ‘*problematic situation*’ (there are two higher and two lower categories).

³ According to the *Digital 2020 (Kyrgyzstan)*, a research conducted annually by We Are Social and Hootsuite, there is 39 per cent of social media users in the country.

Monitored political entities (candidates, politicians, parties, state authorities) produced a total of 1,739 posts on Facebook (1,269 posts by candidates' pages) and 1,485 on Instagram (1,131 posts by candidates' accounts).⁴ These posts generated as many as 427,563 interactions on Facebook (398,153 on candidates' pages) and 1,021,816 on Instagram (759,538 on candidates' accounts).⁵

The monitoring consisted of two equally long periods – 26 days before the campaign (19 November – 14 December 2020) and 26 days of the actual election campaign (15 December 2020 – 9 January 2021).⁶ Overall, in most of the monitored categories, there were no significant differences in activity – on Facebook, there were some 290 posts more during the official election campaign (10,311 posts before vs. 10,602 posts during the campaign), while on Instagram some 140 more posts (4,618 posts before vs. 4,761 posts during the campaign). Notably, the only category with significantly higher activity during the campaign was the category 'candidates' - on Facebook 83.9 percent of their posts (1,065 out of 1,269 posts) and on Instagram, 77 percent of posts (871 out of 1,131 posts) were published during the campaign period.⁷

Social media in Kyrgyzstan

There are estimated 2.5 million social media users in Kyrgyzstan – 39 percent of the population (compared to 22 percent of social media users in the Central Asia region) – with a 2.1 million Instagram audience and 610,000 Facebook audience (people that can be reached by ads on the platform). Despite Instagram's larger potential reach, 50 individual actors monitored on Facebook showed higher activity, with 20,913 posts during the whole monitoring period (52 days), compared to 9,379 posts on Instagram (by 56 actors); the difference caused primarily by the media outlets (see footnote #4).⁸ However, Instagram posts

⁴ Accounts of traditional media produced 19,134 posts on Facebook and 7,315 on Instagram, whereas accounts of followed influencers produced 40 posts on Facebook and 579 on Instagram. Monitored Facebook public groups produced 113,987 posts.

⁵ There were in total almost 2.4 million interactions of media posts on Facebook and almost 17.23 million interactions on Instagram. Accounts of followed influencers produced 5,992 interactions on Facebook and 6.09 million on Instagram. Monitored Facebook public groups produced 4.11 million interactions.

⁶ The official election campaign regulates campaign activities of candidates and other relevant subjects, including the coverage of traditional media (broadcast and print) and online media, while individual accounts on social platforms were not subject to any campaign regulations. Thus, division of periods (pre-campaign and campaign) was solely motivated by research purposes, without any legal implications.

⁷ Interestingly, on both Facebook and Instagram platforms, lower activity during the campaign was noted at accounts of followed media outlets. While in Facebook there were some 600 posts less during the official campaign (9,861 posts before vs 9,273 posts in the campaign), in Instagram it was some 500 posts less (3,899 posts before vs 3,416 posts during campaign).

⁸ In the period from 4 July - 3 October 2020 (92 days), prior to the 2020 parliamentary elections, 46 different actors produced 11,695 posts on Facebook and 6,623 posts in Instagram.

recorded close to nine times as many interactions during the given period, with more than 24.35 million engagements compared to Facebook's 2.83 million interactions.⁹

Media background

As reported by the ODIHR's Limited Election Observation Mission (LEOM), "*the vibrant media environment is constrained by a small advertising market that became further reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the legislation does not contain caps on awarded material damages in civil defamation lawsuits, significant compensation claims risk having a chilling effect on impartial, analytical, and investigative reporting, and could potentially lead to the closure of a concerned media outlet. Recent physical and verbal attacks on journalists, including in social media, at times directly instigated by a presidential candidate, further contribute to self-censorship. Most private media outlets that the ODIHR LEOM met with noted difficulties in obtaining information from public institutions, alleging preferential treatment of state-affiliated media. Moreover, the broad interpretation of the articles of the Criminal Code that prohibit incitement of racial, religious, or interregional enmity, resulted in blocking a number of websites, including change.org, and the detention of bloggers within the past years*".¹⁰

Political background

An early presidential election in Kyrgyzstan was called against the backdrop of the political crisis that arose in the country after the parliamentary elections. It was the publication of preliminary voting results, indicating that the new parliament would be dominated by pro-presidential parties, which triggered the protests. As a result, the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda (CEC) on 6 October 2020, declared the results of the parliamentary elections invalid. The country has been shaken by a political crisis resulting in an unstable situation and power struggles between a wide range of forces.

It should be noted that the post-election situation in Kyrgyzstan in 2020 differs from the events of 2005 and 2010. The confrontation and power struggles in 2020 were tough, with the use of illegal methods. At the same time, all state institutions did not take any action, which led to absolute anarchy. The power actually passed into the hands of protesters, with the opposition being unable to agree peacefully and legally, so the struggle continued with the use of physical force and threats. The

⁹ In the period from 4 July - 3 October 2020 (92 days), prior to the 2020 parliamentary elections, Instagram posts of monitored actors (46) saw close to seven times as many interactions, with almost 21 million engagements to Facebook's 3.2 million.

¹⁰ OSCE/ODIHR Limited Election Observation Mission, [Statement on Preliminary Findings and Conclusions](#), 11 January 2021.

opposition was divided into two main groups, as far as the post of the prime minister was concerned, with one of which proposing Sadyr Japarov¹¹ (former member of parliament) and the other Ömürbek Babanov (served as Prime Minister in 2011-2012).

On 6 October, members of parliament approved the appointment of Sadyr Japarov that night. On 9 October at the Ala-Too square, there was a clash between supporters of Sadyr Japarov, Almazbek Atambayev, and Ömürbek Babanov. On 13 October, then-President Sooronbay Jeenbekov rejected Japarov's appointment as prime minister due to proxy voting occurring and requested for the parliament to reconvene and vote again for the nomination.¹² On 14 October, after again winning parliamentary nomination Sadyr Japarov was approved as prime minister by President Jeenbekov.¹³ The supporters of Mr. Japarov continued to demand the resignation of President Sooronbay Jeenbekov, who did so on 15 October.

The powers of the president were transferred to Prime Minister Japarov. Further personnel reshuffles began with practically the entire cabinet of ministers being replaced, and with the heads of law enforcement agencies being replaced too. Also, Sadyr Japarov proposed to postpone the parliamentary elections to a later date and prioritized the holding of the presidential election and the constitutional reform with the aim of transitioning to a presidential form of the government in a referendum. More specifically, citizens in the referendum to be asked to determine the form of governance - presidential or parliamentary - or choose a third "against all" option.

This statement caused an ambiguous reaction from the public, with many experts and the legal community criticizing him and declaring a number of violations of constitutional norms in the decisions made by the authorities. On 10 December, the deputies of the *Jogorku Kenesh* (Kyrgyz Parliament) adopted, in the second and third readings, a draft law on holding a referendum on the state structure. The adoption of such an important bill in a short time caused a wave of criticism. Nevertheless, an early presidential election and a referendum were scheduled for 10 January 2021 (with an early presidential election called on 24 October). Sadyr Japarov resigned on 14 November to be able to stand as a candidate in this election.

On the eve of the elections, several new amendments were introduced to the electoral legislation, with an effect for the later parliamentary elections, not the upcoming 10 January presidential election. Those changes included, *inter alia*, the lowering of

¹¹ In June 2013, during the protests against *Kumtor* gold mine in Karakol (capital of Issyk-Kul region) the protesters tried to kidnap the region's governor (akim) Emilbek Kaptagaev and take him hostage. The Kyrgyz authorities accused also S.Japarov of organizing the plan, who, denying his involvement, fled Kyrgyzstan. In March 2017 when he attempted to return to Kyrgyzstan, he was detained at the Kyrgyz-Kazakh border and sentenced to 11 years and 6 months in prison in the above-mentioned case of allegedly attempting to kidnap Emilbek Kaptagaev. On 6 October protesters released him from a seized government building.

¹² *RFE/RL*, 13 October 2020, see more at <https://www.rferl.org/a/kyrgyz-president-rejects-parliament-s-decision-on-new-prime-minister/30891284.html>

¹³ *Al Jazeera*, 14 October 2020, see more at <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/14/kyrgyz-president-confirms-new-pms-appointment>

the threshold for political parties to enter the parliament (from 7 to 3 percent), lowering the electoral deposit (from 5 mil to 1 mil KGS, approximately 49,200 EUR to 9,800 EUR); and also eliminated the possibility for voters to change their electoral addresses inside the country. Also, the parliament adopted a law eliminating the possibility to conduct a repeat presidential election.

The registration of presidential candidates finished on 14 December, with the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda registering 18 candidates. The election campaign began on 15 December and ended on 9 January 2021 (at 08:00, 24 hours before the start of voting). The president is elected for a single six-year term by direct universal suffrage. If no candidate receives more than half of the votes in the first round, a runoff takes place between the two candidates with the most votes within 20 days.

II. FINDINGS

- Approximately every second Kyrgyz has access to the internet, and some 39 percent of citizens are social media users.
- The monitoring was conducted from 19 November until 9 January (the day before the election) and focused on 58 individual accounts of political subjects (candidates, politicians, political parties, official institutions), media, influencers across Facebook and Instagram; as well as 9 Facebook public groups. A total of 48 actors, including all presidential candidates, had a presence on both platforms.
- Monitored Facebook accounts (50 individual pages and 9 public groups) together produced a total of 134,900 posts, with 20,913 posts (15.5 percent) on individual pages and a total of 113,987 posts (84.5 percent) on Facebook groups. **Political subjects produced 1,739 posts, candidates 73 percent of them (1,269 posts).** All Facebook posts together generated as many as 6,942,969 interactions, with the groups contributing to it with 59.2 percent, media with 34.6 percent, and political subjects with 6.2 per cent (monitored influencers produced only 0.1 per cent of all interactions). When considering only political subjects (427,563 interactions), presidential candidates' posts generated 93.1 percent of these interactions (398,153).
- Instagram accounts of the same entities (56 accounts) produced a total of 9,379 posts, of which the political subjects generated 1,485 posts (15.8 per cent, for Facebook posts, this share was 8.3 per cent). **When considering the activity of candidates, they produced 1,131 posts (76.2 percent of political subjects' posts).** All Instagram posts together generated as many as 24,346,857 interactions, with the media contributing to it with 70.8 percent, influencers with 25 per cent, and political subjects with 4.2 per cent. If only political subjects are considered (1,021,816 interactions), presidential candidates produced 74.3% of these interactions (759,538).
- **The interaction rate on Instagram was remarkably high**, in particular in the case of media (17.23 million), influencers (6.09 million), but also the candidates' posts (759,500 is about twice as many as 398,000 on Facebook). Instagram posts generated close to nine times as many interactions as Facebook's posts.
- **All 18 candidates registered for the elections had public Facebook pages or Instagram accounts. The activity of candidates increased significantly during the campaign** (since 15 December), with 83.9 percent of their posts (1,065 out of 1,269 posts) in this period. Candidates were most active during the week before elections (297 posts). A similar

trend was observed on Instagram, where 77 percent of posts (871 out of 1,131 posts) were published during the campaign period, the biggest number – 237 posts – during the week before elections.

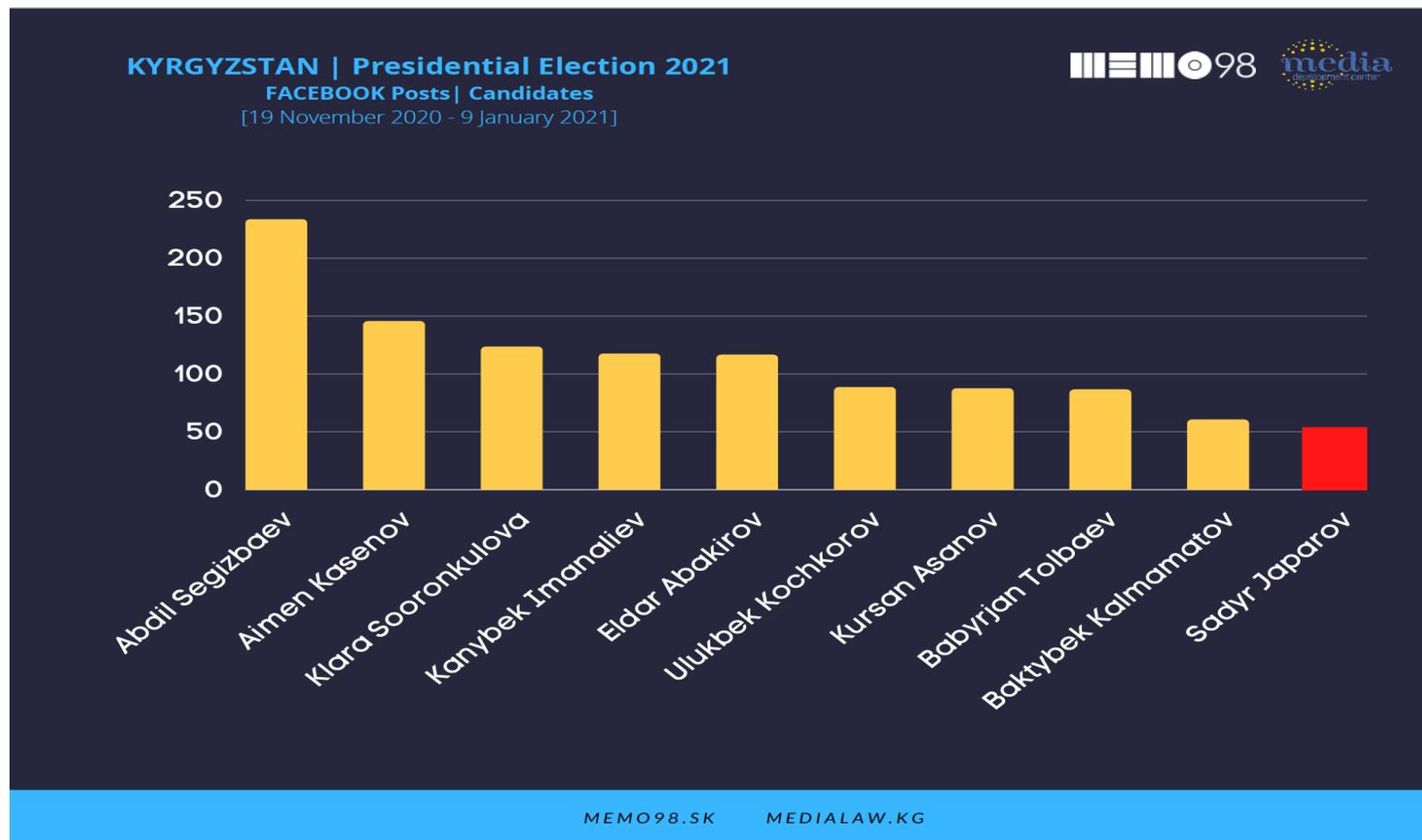
- **The most active candidate on Facebook was Abdil Segizbaev (233 posts), followed by Aimen Kasenov (145 posts) and Klara Sooronkulova (123 posts).** While two other candidates promoted their candidacy through at least 100 posts (Mr. Abakirov and Mr. Imanaliev), the frontrunner Sadyr Japarov was less active (10th), with 55 posts during the whole monitoring period. **Monitoring of Instagram showed a comparable outcome, again with Abdil Segizbaev (165 posts) and Aimen Kasenov (162 posts) being the most active,** followed by Eldar Abakirov (105 posts). These were the only three candidates with at least 100 posts. Sadyr Japarov was also less active on this platform (7th), with 66 posts throughout the whole monitoring period.
- **Posts of Abdil Segizbaev attracted the highest number of candidates-related interactions on Facebook (some 66,700),** followed by Sadyr Japarov with as many as 59,500 interactions. **As for Instagram posts, those of Aymen Kasenov were the most popular (some 152,500 interactions),** followed by Myktybek Arstanbek with as many as 136,300 interactions, the only two candidates attracting over 100,000 interactions.
- Among political parties, the **Butun Kyrgyzstan produced the highest number of posts on Facebook - 23.** It was followed by Reform (21 posts) and Chon Kazat (19 posts). **Parties generated a smaller number of posts on Instagram (54 vs. 73 on Facebook), with Chon Kazat (34) and Reform (17) being the only parties active.** One post throughout the whole period was produced by Mekenchil Party (the party has only a Facebook page).
- Despite having a smaller number of posts, **Chon Kazat's activities, similarly as during the parliamentary elections, generated the highest number of interactions** on Facebook (as many as 5,432), followed by the Reform party (2,389) and Butun Kyrgyzstan party (1,285). This was even more visible on Instagram, where Chon Kazat posts generated 25,917 reactions, while Reform and Butun Kyrgyzstan together received some 9,000 interactions.
- The monitoring also focused on 15 official pages and accounts of traditional media, with 13 of them having a presence on both platforms. **On Facebook, the online publication *Kyrgyz Today* was by far the most active (4,044 posts),** followed by *24.kg* (1,875 posts) and *Jetinchi TV* (1,824 posts). **On Instagram, the official account of *Next TV* was most prolific (1,364 posts),** while four other media produced between 820 and 930 posts (*Kaktus Media, News.kg, Azattyk, the Kyrgyz office of RFE/RL, and Sputnik, the Kyrgyz version of Russian state outlet*). It should be noted that a number of posts on media accounts were not related to elections.

- Eight media Facebook pages (out of 15 monitored) provided their online audiences with some coverage of presidential candidates. *Jetinchi TV* brought nearly as many posts about candidates (106) as all other media outlets together (113) – with *Next TV* and *Azattyk* being also fairly active. **Campaign frontrunner Mr. Japarov dominated social media posting of all eight media outlets** (in total with 163 posts out of 219 – **some 75 percent**). **The media pages presented him mostly in a critical or neutral tone, however, the page of *Jetinchi TV* showed him primarily in a positive manner.**
- Instagram accounts of nine media (out of 14) covered presidential candidates, with *News.kg*, *Next TV*, and *Azattyk* being the most active ones (they presented 51 out of 72 total media posts about candidates). **Sadyr Japarov was the most presented candidate on Instagram pages of six media** (43 posts out of 72 – **some 60 percent**). While *Kabarlar News* showed him in an overwhelmingly positive tone, *News.kg* offered its readers the most critical coverage of Mr. Japarov.
- When looking at the three important official Kyrgyz institutions, **the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda (CCER) was the most active**, in particular on Facebook (207 posts), followed by the Government (96 posts). On the contrary, officials used Instagram much less - they produced altogether 66 posts (divided equally between the CCER and the government) compared to 320 on Facebook.
- Similar to the October parliamentary elections that took place against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, this topic was regularly present also prior to the presidential election. Nevertheless, political matters (election, referendum) dominated the campaign alongside personalized addresses of contestants, with some attention to the economy, education, and culture.
- While **most presidential candidates appeared to use advertising** on the Facebook-owned platforms (at least 13), **only three of them spent higher amounts of funds** – Babyrkan Tolbav, Aimen Kasenov, and Kursan Asanov (all around 2,000 USD). At the same time, **Eldar Abakirov promoted the highest number of ads among candidates (74)** using a smaller aggregated amount of funds (some 950 USD). Victorious candidate Sadyr Japarov did not use a paid promotion at all. The total amount spent by various actors prior to the presidential election (around 16,000 USD, for some 1,740 ads) was significantly smaller in comparison with the online advertising prior to the October parliamentary elections (62,700 USD).
- Cases of disinformation, inauthentic behavior, and inflammatory language were noted in social media during the campaign period. **Problematic content was noted in particular on Facebook groups supporting Sadyr Japarov.** There is an absence of legal provisions regulating disinformation or hate speech on social media (the Bill on Manipulating Information was halted by the President in summer 2020). A need to introduce realistic self-regulatory mechanisms and digital media literacy programs in the online space is even more urgent after the 2021 election.

III. CHARTS

FACEBOOK

Charts 1-2: Number of posts (entire period, campaign) | *Candidates*



Media Development Center | MEMO 98

www.medialaw.kg, www.facebook.com/Центр-Медиа-Развития-1995092810629708, +996 312 663006

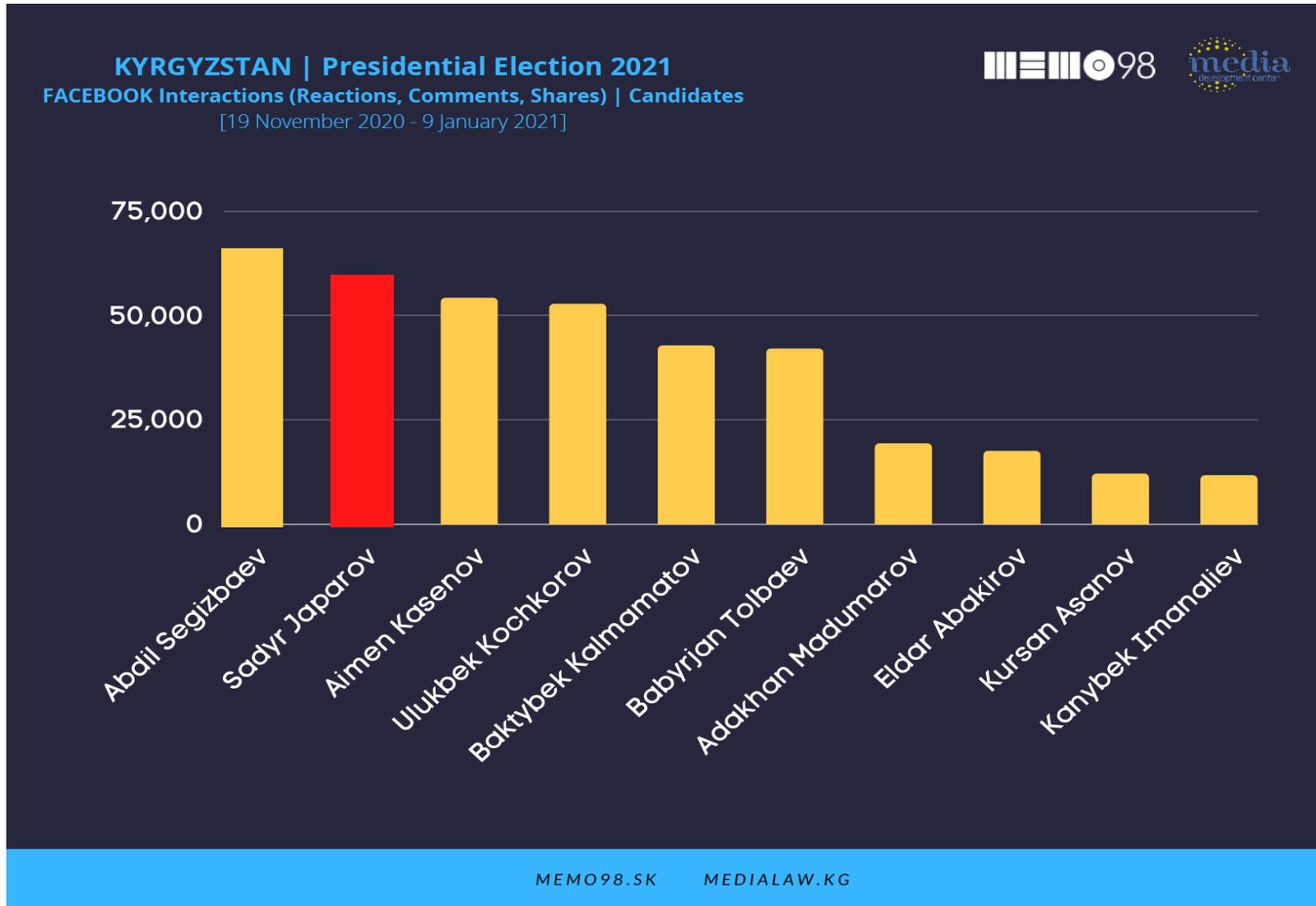
www.memo98.sk, memo98@memo98.sk, www.facebook.com/memo98.sk, +421 903 581 591

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL POSTS > 12/15/20 - 01/09/21

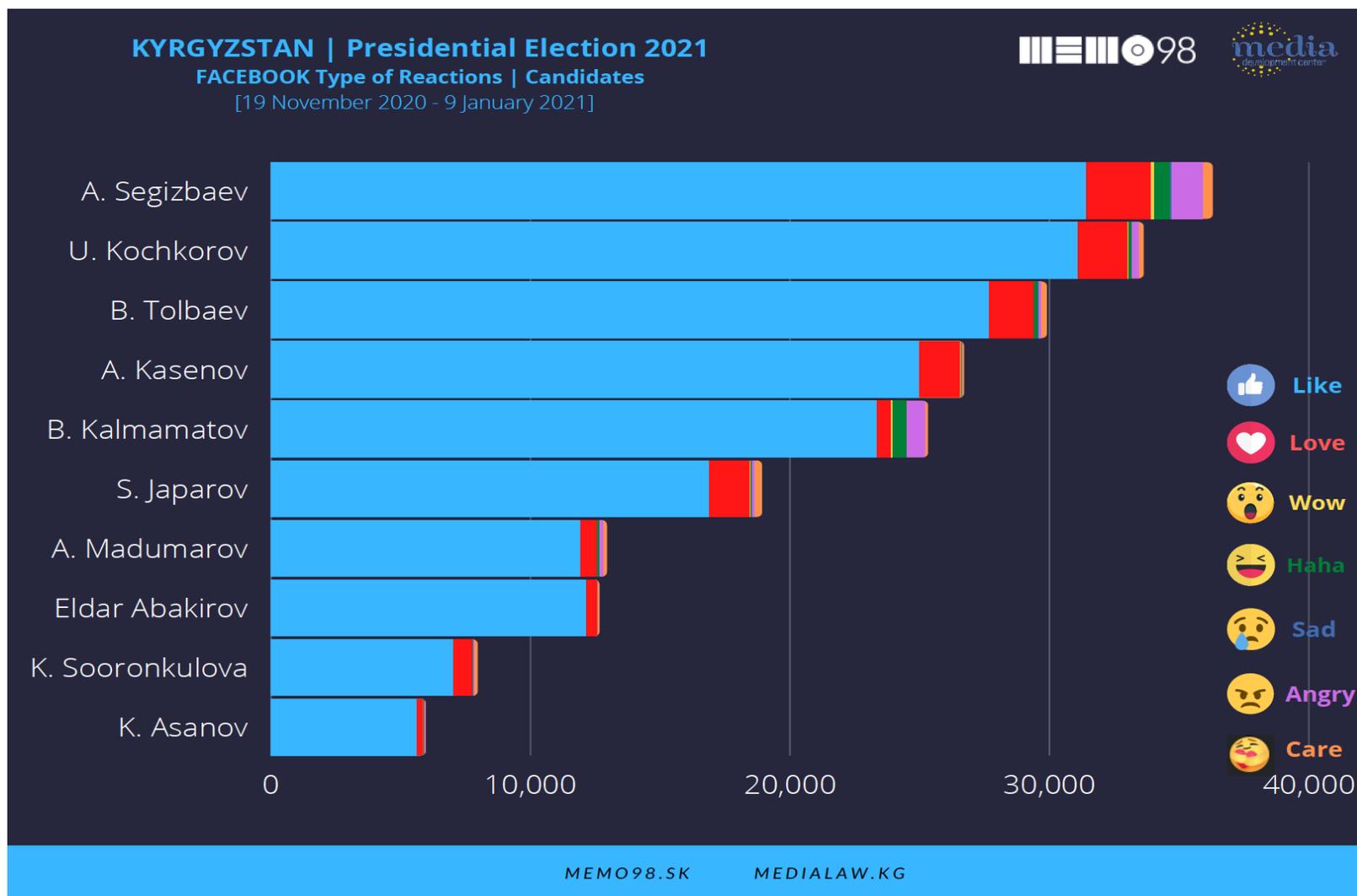
> TOTAL POSTS | AVG. WEEKLY POSTS
1.1K | 1,065

NAME	TOTAL	%	
Рашид Тагаев	30	2.82%	
Ravshan	5	0.47%	
Канатбек Исаев	0	0.00%	
Жапаров Садыр	55	5.16%	
Улукбек Кочкоров	83	7.79%	
Арстаналай Алтын...	0	0.00%	
Абдил Сегизбаев	202	18.97%	
Мыктыбек Арстанб...	6	0.56%	
Эльдар Абакиров ...	100	9.39%	
Клара Сооронкуло...	82	7.70%	
Аймен Касенов	111	10.42%	
Женишбек Байгутт...	40	3.76%	
Имамидин Ташов -...	0	0.00%	
Бабур Тольбаев /...	76	7.14%	
Курсан Асанов	78	7.32%	
Страница «Бактыб...	49	4.60%	
Каныбек Иманалие...	108	10.14%	
Адахан Мадумаров	40	3.76%	

Chart 3: Number of interactions (entire period) | *Candidates*



Charts 4-5: Type of interactions | *Candidates*



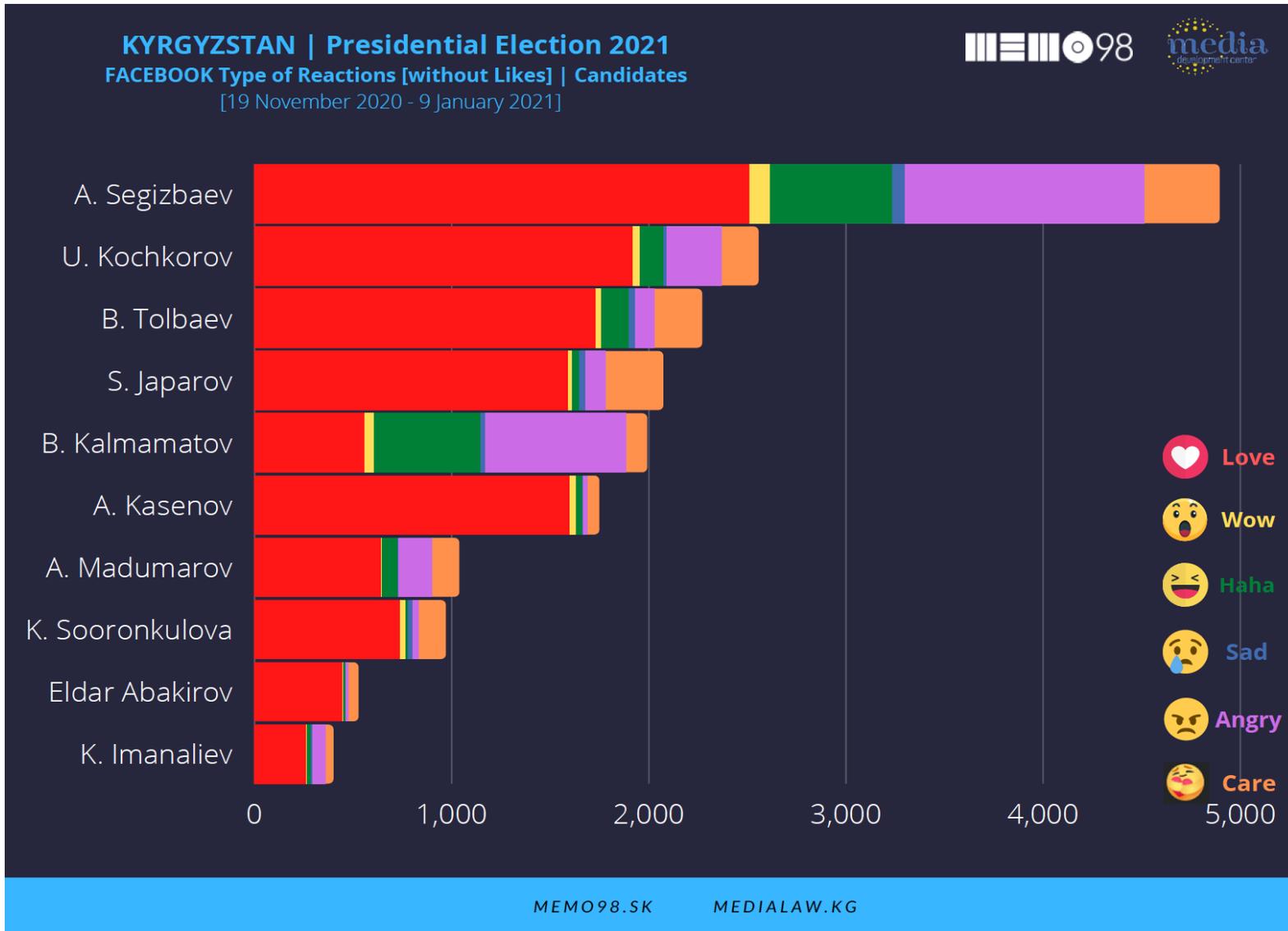


Chart 6: Number of posts | *Media about candidates (Tone)*

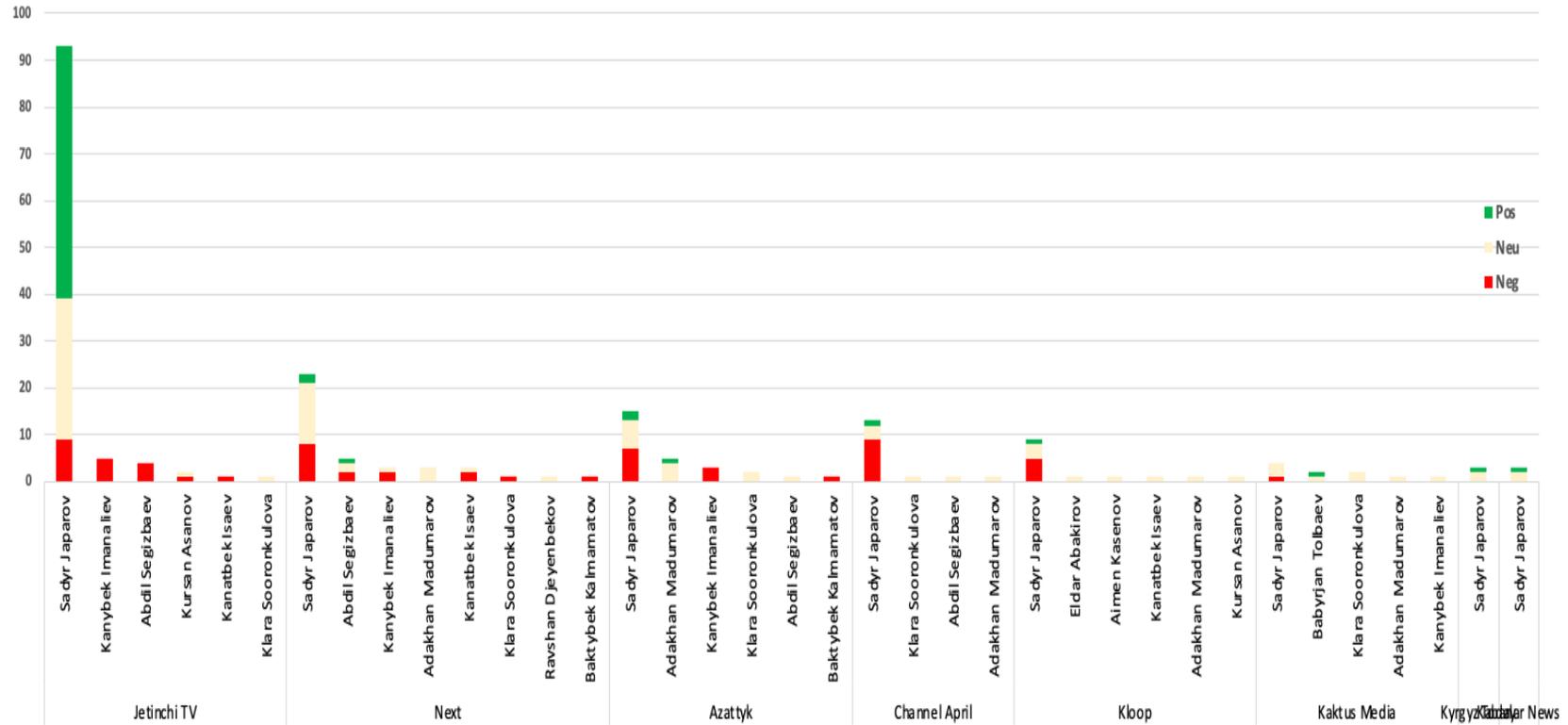


Chart 7: Number of posts | Parties

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL POSTS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21

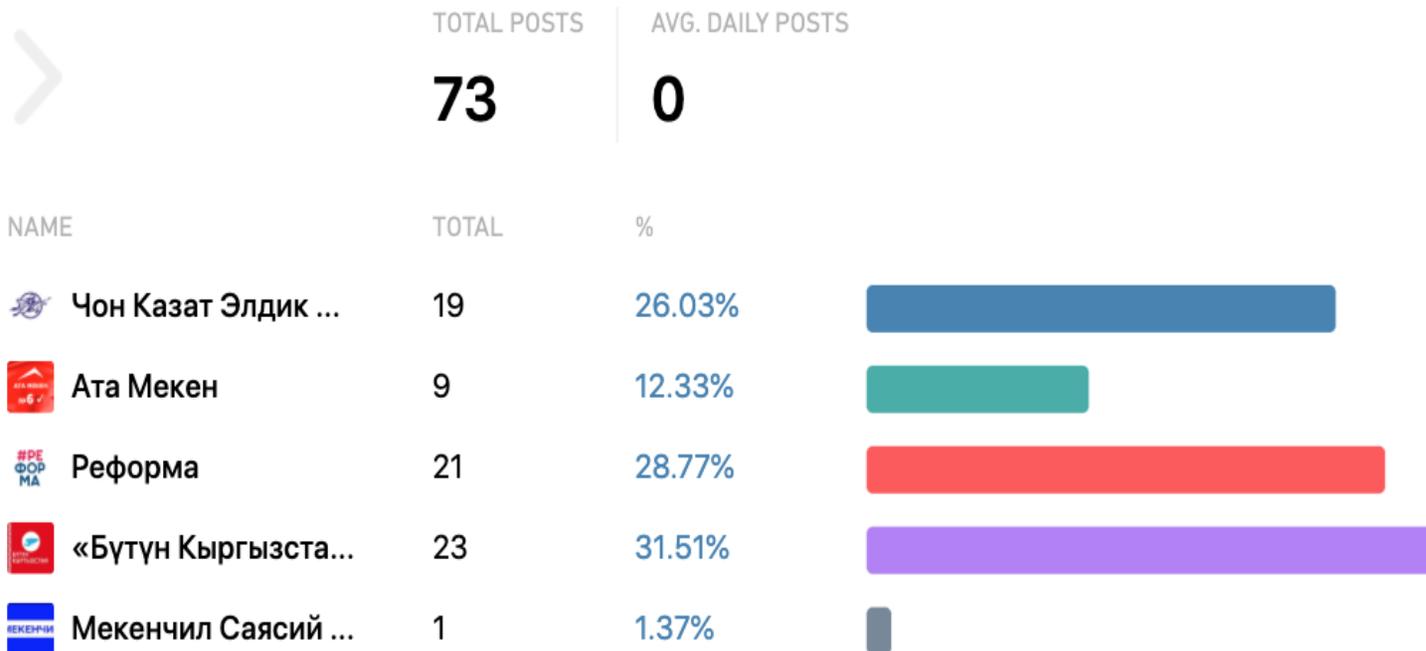
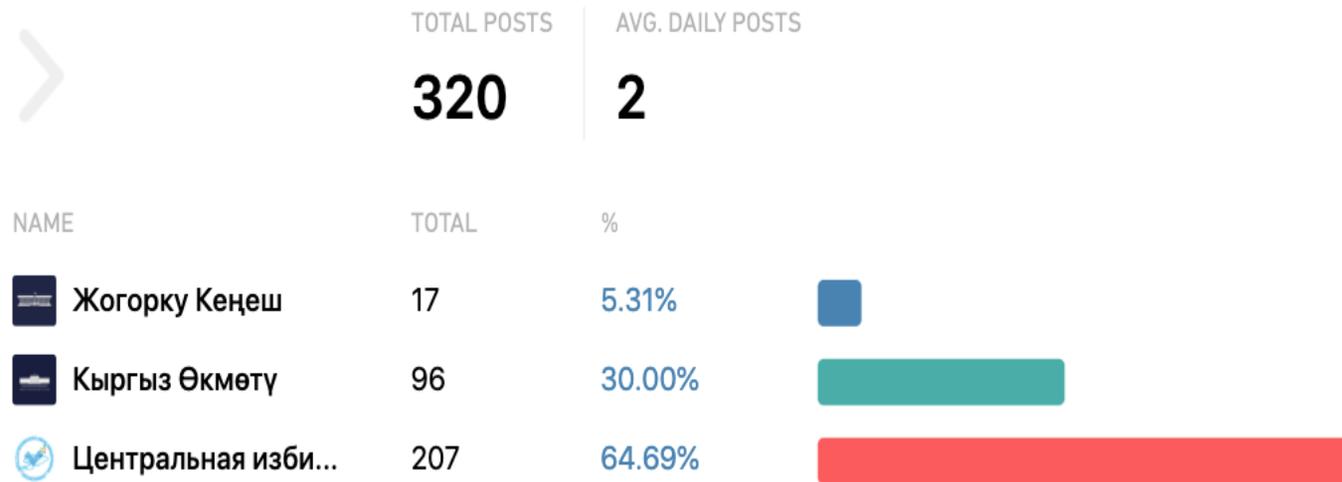
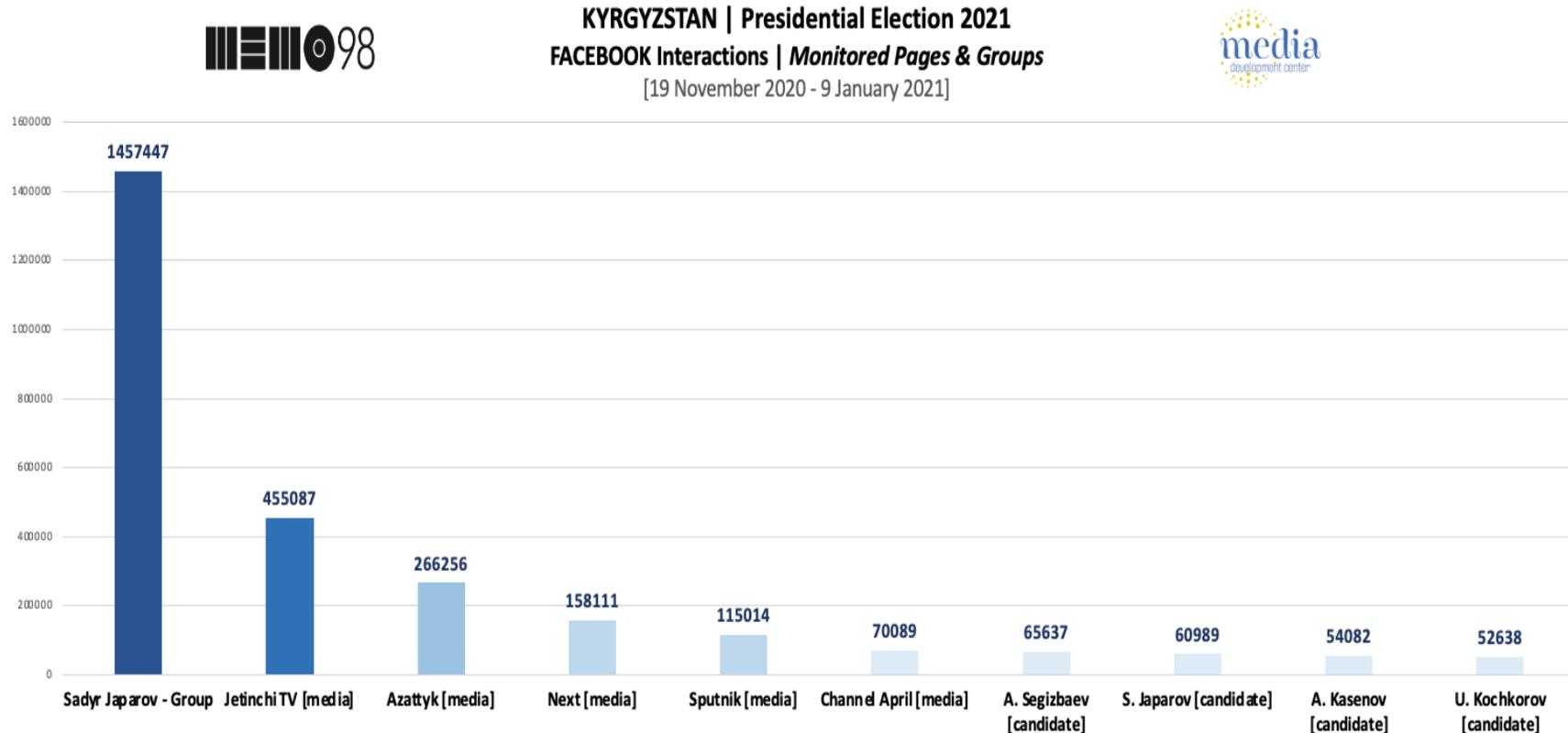


Chart 8: Number of posts | *Authorities*

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL POSTS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21



Charts 9-10: Number of interactions¹⁴ | *All monitored subjects (with Groups, without Groups)*



¹⁴ Number of interactions shown for media outlets reflects only top 200 posts within the category 'media' (with the highest number of interactions). For categories candidates, politicians and political parties all the posts were taken into consideration.

KYRGYZSTAN | Presidential Election 2021
FACEBOOK Interactions | *Monitored Pages*
 [19 November 2020 - 9 January 2021]

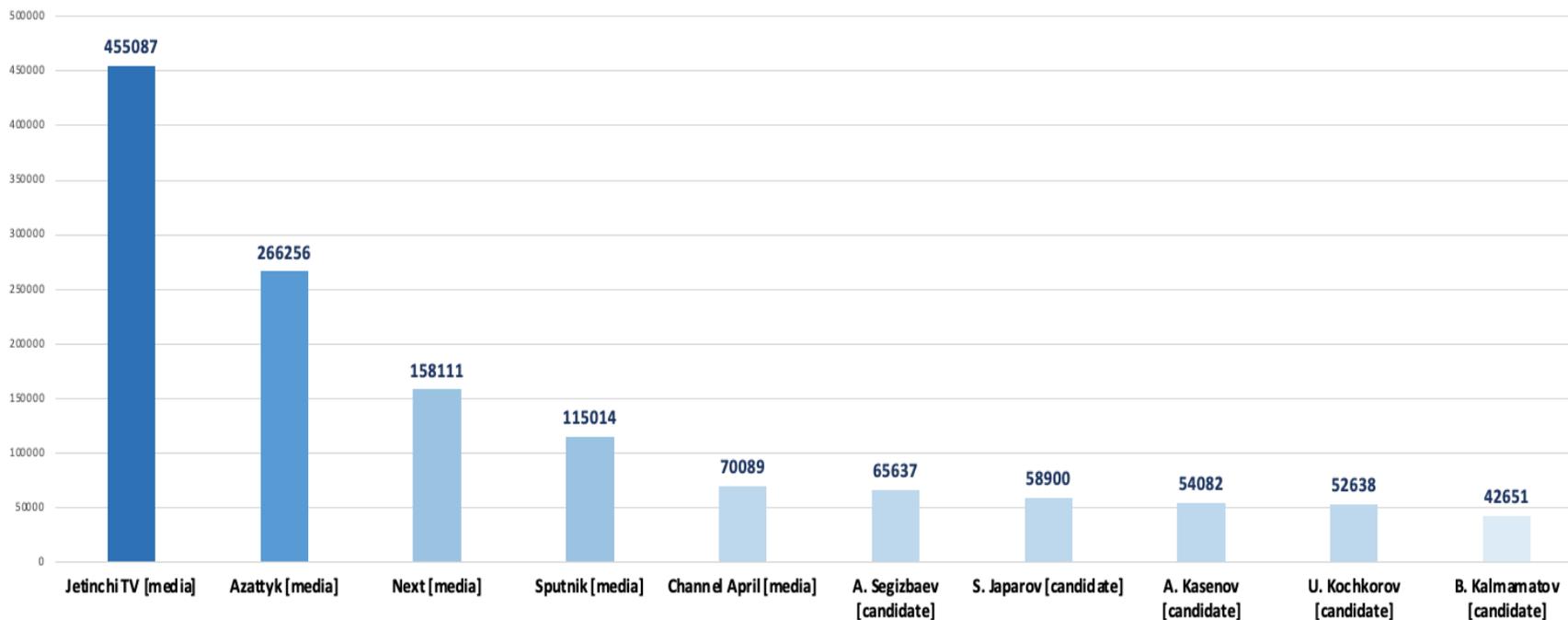


Chart 11: Number of interactions | Parties

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL INTERACTIONS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21



NAME	TOTAL	REACTIONS	COMMENTS	SHARES	
 Чон Казат Элдик ...	5.4K	3.7K	809	927	
 Ата Мекен	1.0K	700	169	142	
 Реформа	2.4K	1.8K	171	448	
 «Бүтүн Кыргызста...	1.3K	923	78	284	
 Мекенчил Саясий ...	1	1	0	0	

Chart 12: Number of interactions | *Politicians*

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL INTERACTIONS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21



NAME	TOTAL	REACTIONS	COMMENTS	SHARES	
Janar Akaev	445	360	54	31	
Омурбек Текебаев	4.9K	2.9K	1.1K	862	█
Наталья Владимир...	4.2K	3.2K	507	531	█
Камчыбек Ташие...	0	0	0	0	
Талант Мамытов	0	0	0	0	
Жапыкеев Сыймык	0	0	0	0	
Акылбек Жапаров	0	0	0	0	
Акылбек Жапаров	343	226	68	49	█

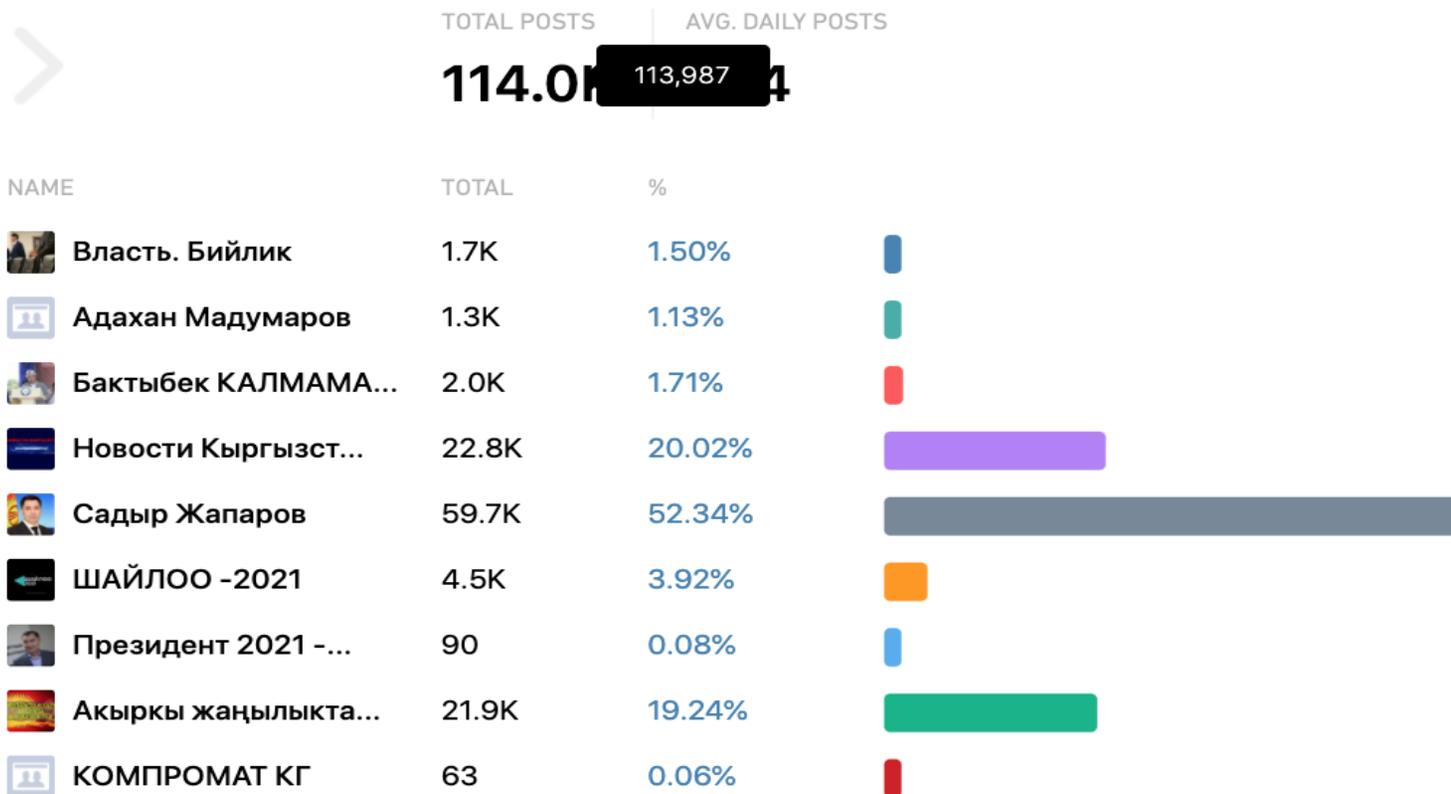
Chart 13: Number of interactions | *Media*

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL INTERACTIONS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21

	TOTAL INTERACTIONS	AVG. DAILY INTERACTIONS	DAILY INTERACTION RATE		
	2.40M	2,399,149 K	0.32%		
NAME	TOTAL	REACTIONS	COMMENTS	SHARES	
 БИРИНЧИ РАДИО	0	0	0	0	
 KyrgyzToday/Кырг...	21.7K	14.1K	4.6K	3.0K	
 Sputnik	339.6K	237.4K	52.7K	49.6K	■
 Газета "Супер-Ин...	911	793	27	91	
 Телеканал «Апрел...	152.5K	87.8K	39.9K	24.8K	■
 Kyrgyz Azattyk U...	434.3K	280.5K	109.1K	44.7K	■
 БИРИНЧИ РАДИО	26.5K	12.5K	1.4K	12.6K	
 24_kg	136.5K	89.3K	28.4K	18.8K	■
 АКИpress	77.7K	53.5K	15.7K	8.5K	■
 Kabar News Natio...	1.8K	709	84	997	
 Kloop	92.6K	63.6K	17.5K	11.5K	■
 Жетинчи канал	625.6K	422.4K	113.5K	89.7K	■
 Kaktus Media	123.0K	74.1K	32.5K	16.4K	■
 Кабарлар Новости...	37.1K	25.8K	6.3K	5.0K	
 Next TV	329.2K	164.2K	129.9K	35.2K	■

Charts 14-15: Number of posts & interactions | *Public groups*

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL POSTS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21



ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL INTERACTIONS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21



TOTAL INTERACTIONS

AVG. DAILY INTERACTIONS

DAILY INTERACTION RATE

4.11M

4,110,265

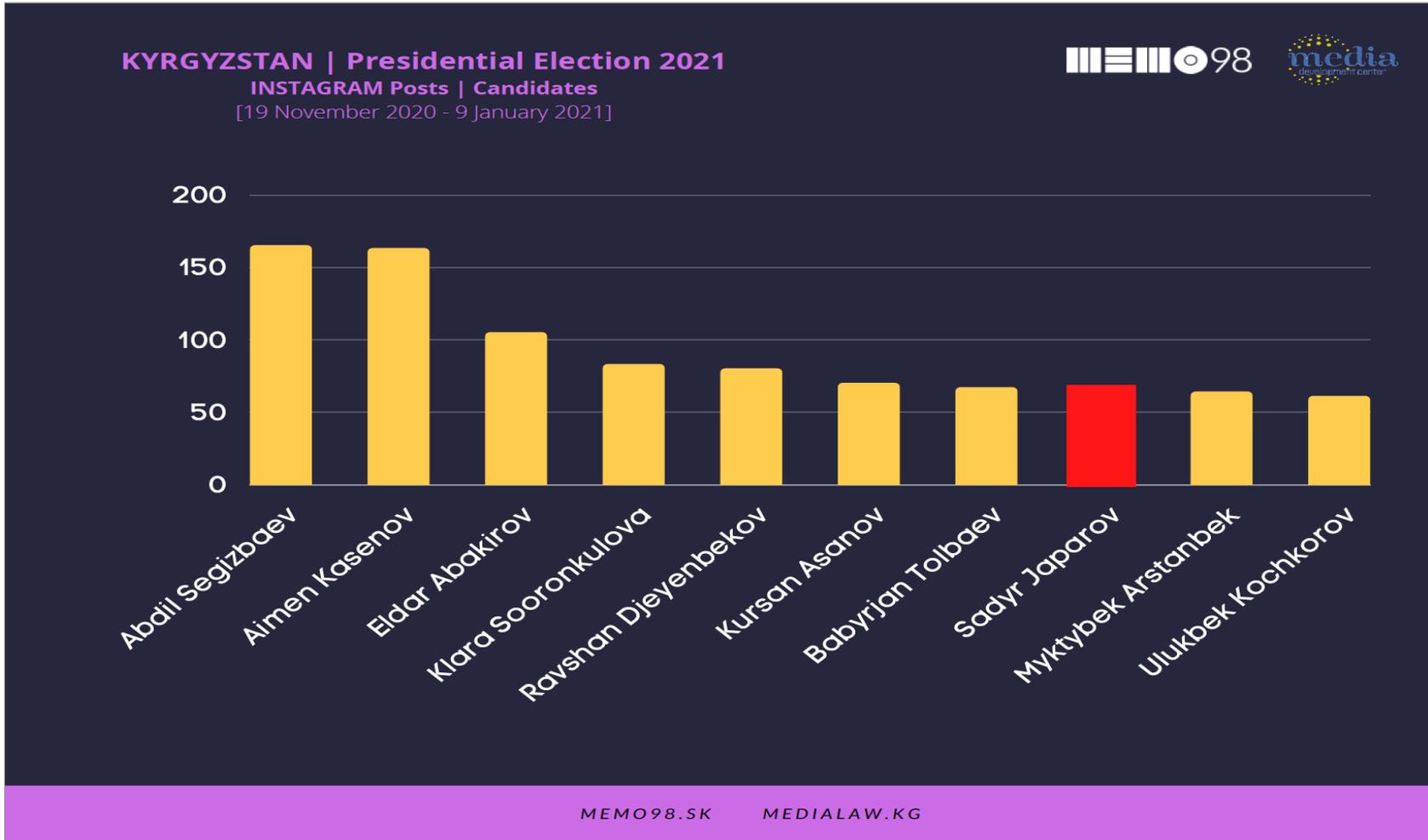
3K

0.05%

NAME	TOTAL	REACTIONS	COMMENTS	SHARES
 Власть. Бийлик	3.1K	1.6K	1.0K	436
 Адахан Мадумаров	16.9K	12.6K	2.8K	1.4K
 Бактыбек КАЛМАМА...	101.4K	58.9K	32.5K	9.9K
 Новости Кыргызст...	152.7K	89.2K	49.4K	14.1K
 Садыр Жапаров	3.65M	2.47M	881.1K	306.1K
 ШАЙЛОО -2021	25.0K	13.2K	10.0K	1.8K
 Президент 2021 -...	115	90	7	18
 Акыркы жаңылыкта...	153.8K	80.2K	61.2K	12.3K
 КОМПРОМАТ КГ	4.9K	2.8K	1.4K	668

INSTAGRAM

Charts 16-17: Number of posts (entire period, campaign) | *Candidates*



ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL POSTS > 12/15/20 - 01/09/21



TOTAL POSTS

871

AVG. WEEKLY POSTS

12

NAME

TOTAL

%

NAME	TOTAL	%	
isaev_kanatbek	0	0.00%	
sadyr_japarov_of...	49	5.63%	
klarasooronkulov...	64	7.35%	
abdyldaevvarstanb...	0	0.00%	
tagaev_rashid_ba...	30	3.44%	
aymenkasenov	121	13.89%	
myktybek.arstanb...	47	5.40%	
jenishbek_baigut...	40	4.59%	
imamidin.tashov	44	5.05%	
baktybek_kalmama...	46	5.28%	
za_asanova	60	6.89%	
kanybekimanaliev	19	2.18%	
za_djeyenbekova	46	5.28%	
eldar_abakirov	66	7.58%	
uluk.kochkorov	55	6.31%	
tolbaev_2021	0	0.00%	
abdil.segizbaev	136	15.61%	
madumarov_adahan	48	5.51%	

Chart 18: Number of posts | *Media about candidates (Tone)*

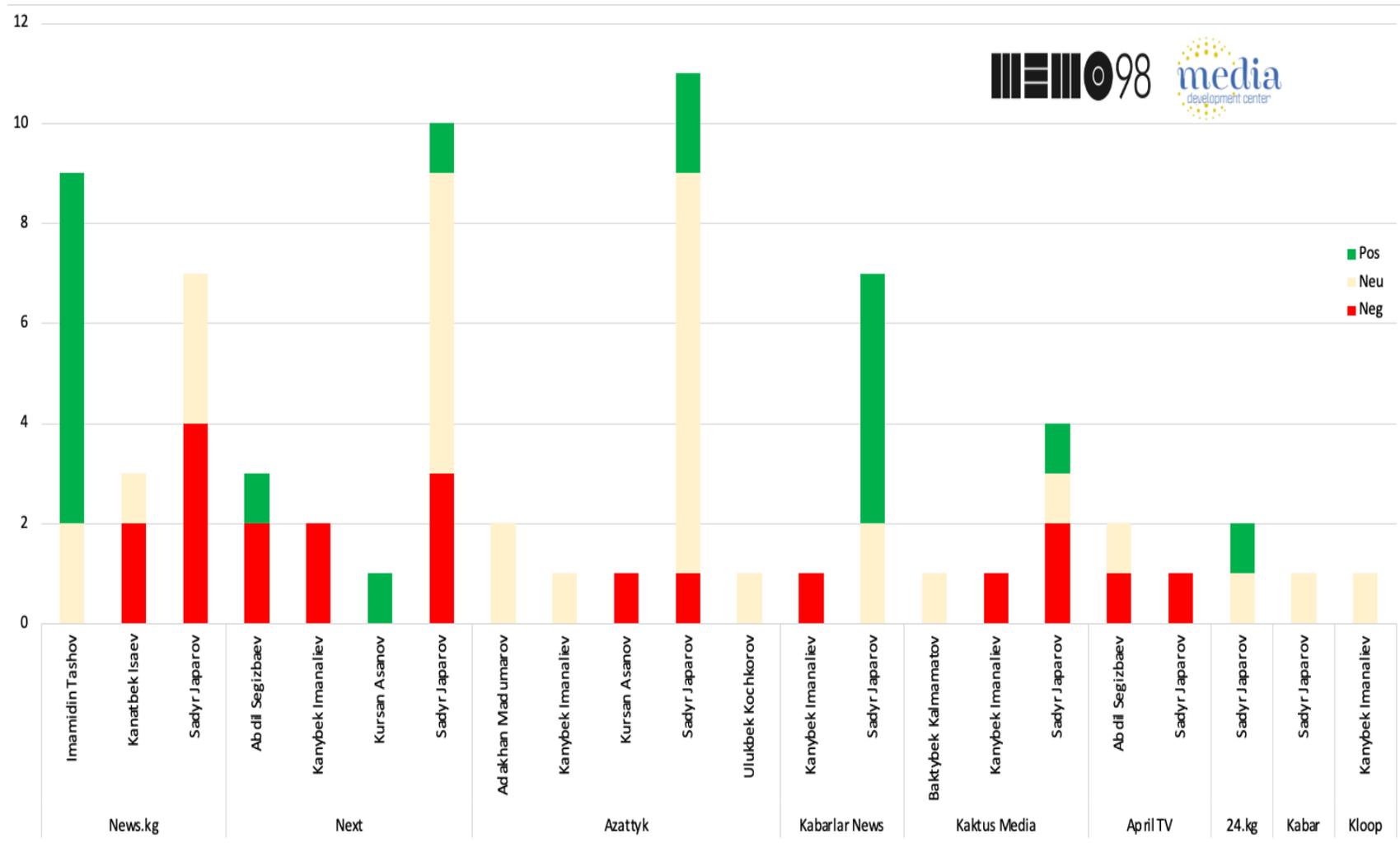


Chart 19: Number of interactions | *Candidates*

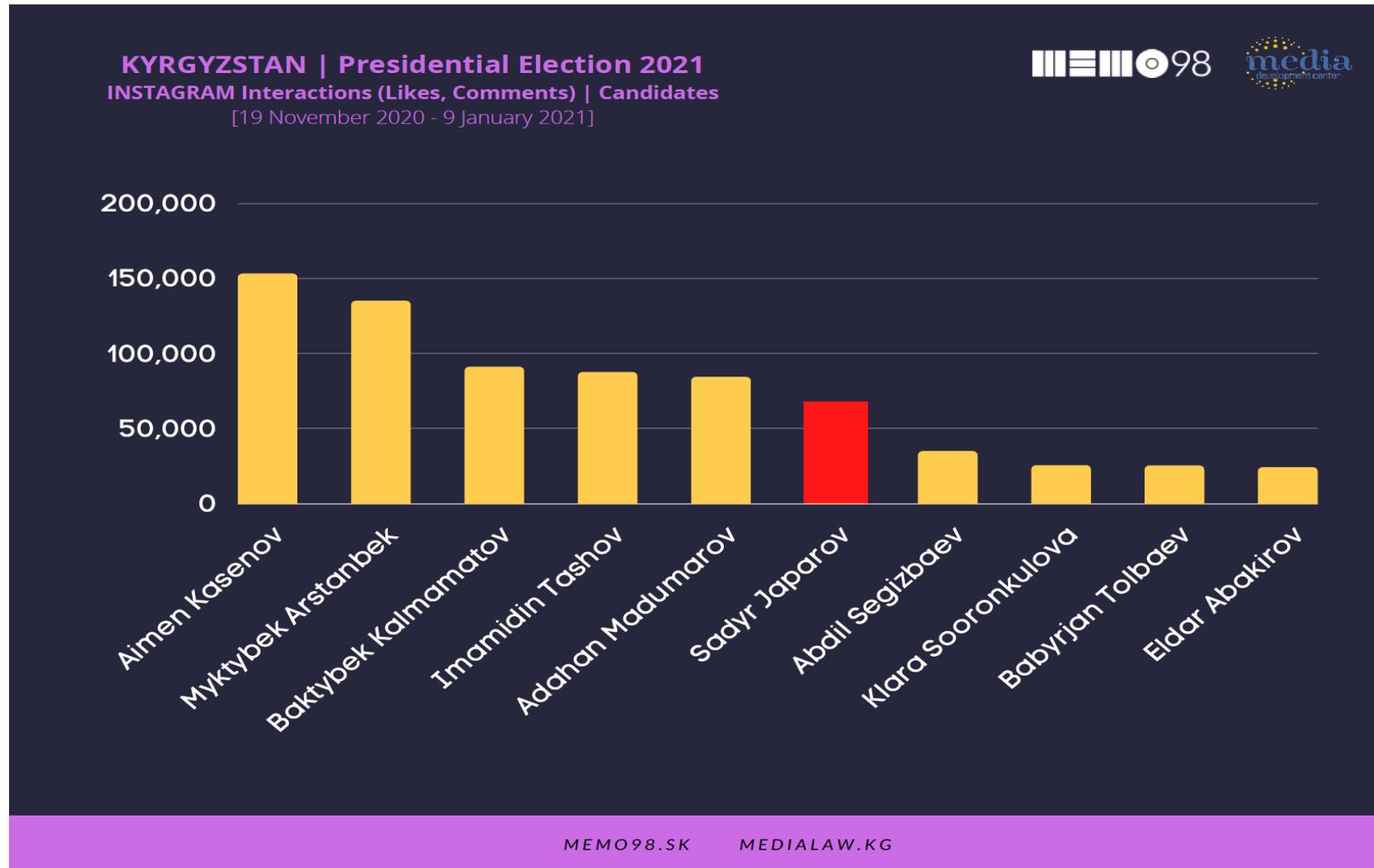


Chart 20: Number of interactions | *Politicians*

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL INTERACTIONS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21



NAME	TOTAL	LIKES	COMMENTS
nvnikitenko	4.6K	4.2K	429
tekebaev.omurbek...	665	565	100
talant_mamytov_o...	7.3K	7.0K	324
syimyk.japykeev	108.5K	100.2K	8.3K
janarakaev	36.4K	32.9K	3.5K
japarov_akyibek	1.7K	1.2K	503
kamchybek_tashie...	158	143	15
artem.novikov_of...	34.8K	33.2K	1.6K
dastan_bekeshev	30.7K	28.0K	2.7K

Chart 21: Number of posts | Parties

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL POSTS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21

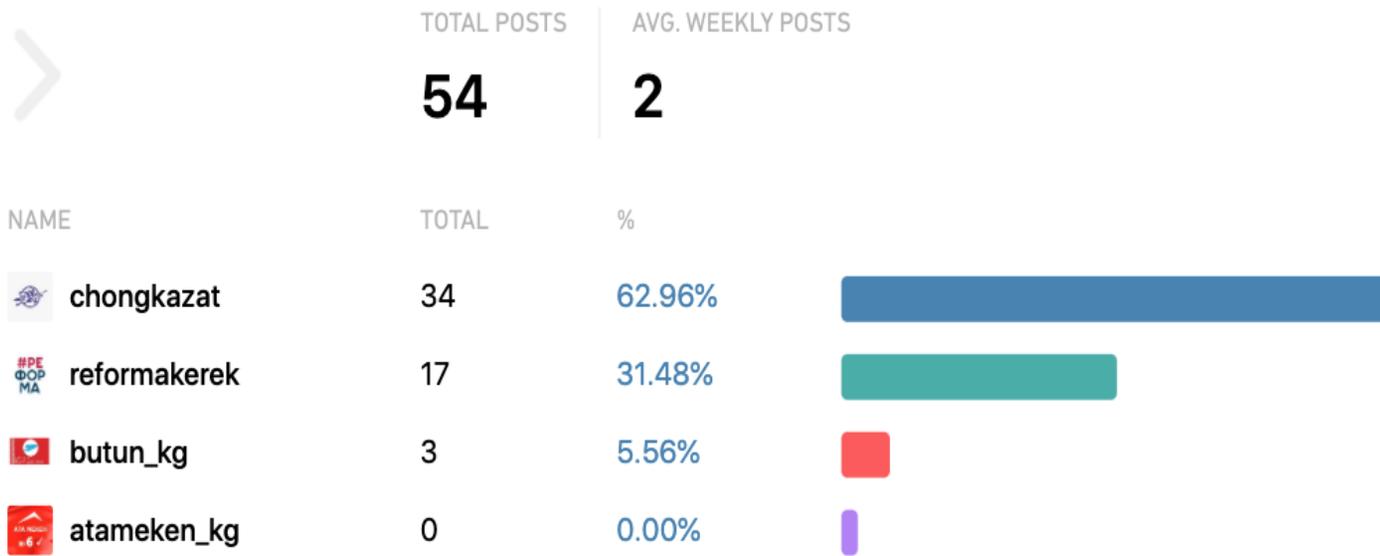
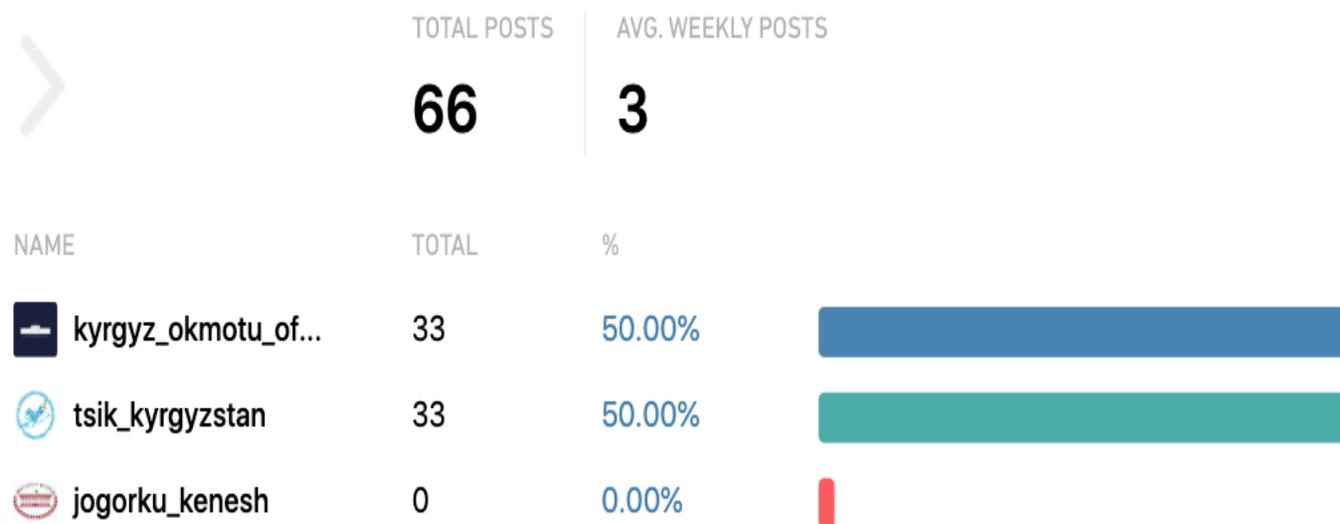


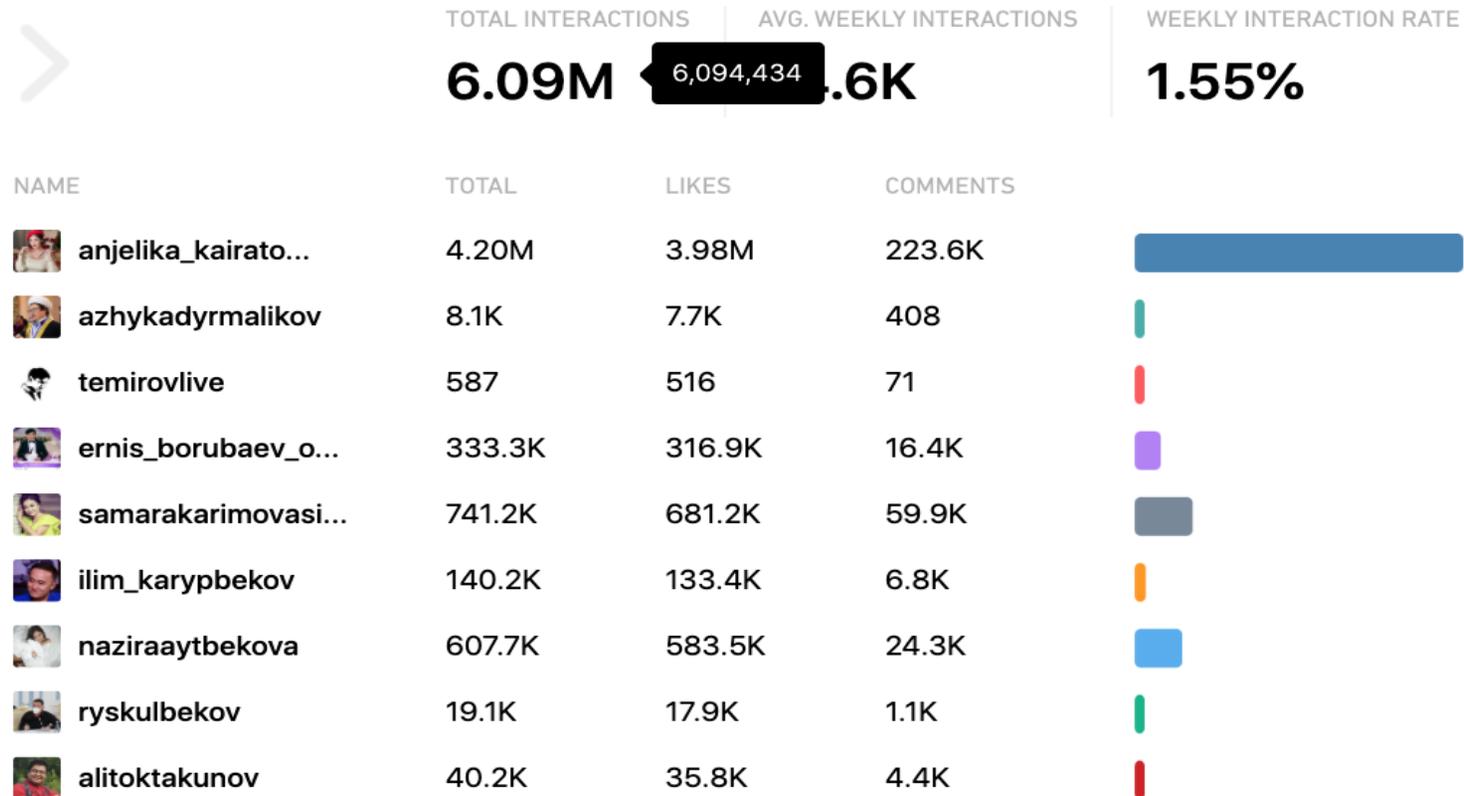
Chart 22: Number of posts | *Authorities*

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL POSTS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21



Charts 23-24: Number of interactions¹⁵ | *Influencers, Media*

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL INTERACTIONS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21



¹⁵ Number of interactions shown for media outlets reflects only top 200 posts within the category 'media' (with the highest number of interactions). For categories candidates, politicians and political parties all the posts were taken into consideration.

ALL POSTS > COMBINED TOTAL INTERACTIONS > 11/19/20 - 01/09/21



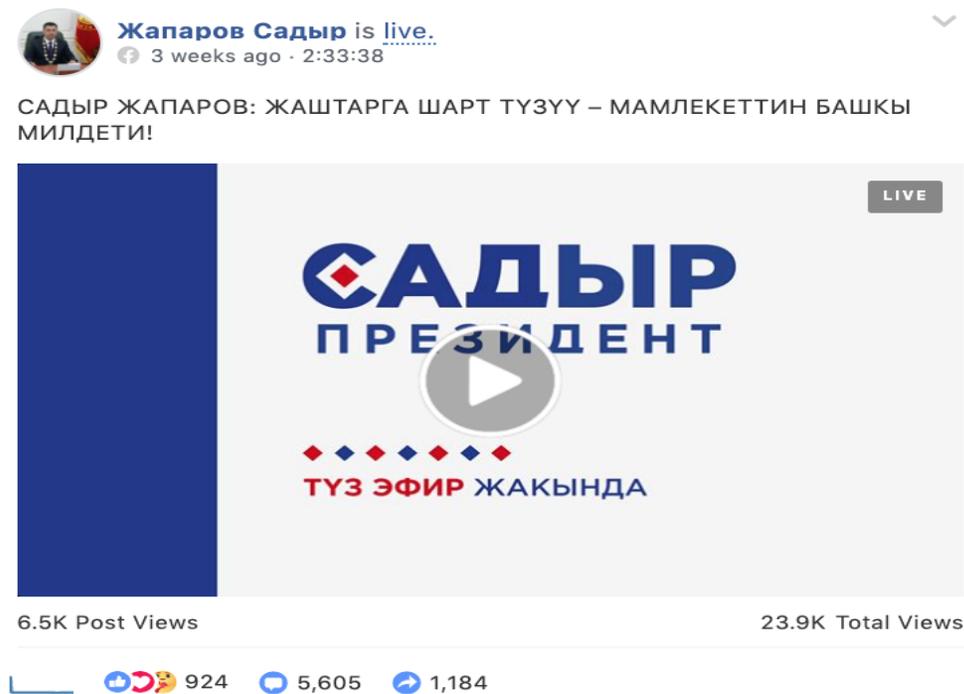
TOTAL INTERACTIONS | AVG. DAILY INTERACTIONS | DAILY INTERACTION RATE
17.23M 17,230,607 **.7K** **0.56%**

NAME	TOTAL	LIKES	COMMENTS	
kabar_agency	36.2K	33.1K	3.1K	
nexttv_kg	876.3K	715.0K	161.3K	
birinchi_radio	69	69	0	
kyrgyz_today	292.1K	289.5K	2.6K	
kabarlar.kg	943.5K	877.6K	65.9K	
kloopnews	81.0K	72.9K	8.1K	
kaktus__media	1.35M	1.22M	132.6K	
sputnik.kg	786.5K	724.6K	61.9K	
april.tv.ru	232.2K	201.6K	30.6K	
akipress	211.3K	195.6K	15.7K	
24_kg	391.0K	337.5K	53.5K	
azattyk.kg	2.32M	2.10M	220.1K	
super_info_offic...	565.0K	547.1K	17.9K	
news.kg	9.14M	8.88M	264.9K	

IV. TOP POSTS

Facebook | *Candidates*

The most popular candidates' posts on Facebook (in terms of interactions) were produced by the candidate Sadyr Japarov (3 out of the top 5). The first one was a live broadcast of his speech at the youth forum. This post received over 920 Reactions, 5,600 Comments, about 1,200 Shares (some 7,710 Interactions) and 23,900 views in total.



Sadyr Japarov: Creating conditions for youth is the main duty of the state!
«САДЫР ЖАПАРОВ: ЖАШТАРГА ШАРТ ТҮЗҮҮ – МАМЛЕКЕТТИН БАШКЫ МИЛДЕТИ!»

Among popular candidates' Facebook posts were also those posted by Baktybek Kalmamatov (#3) about the unity of youth and Babur Tolbaev (#4) with New Year's greetings. While these posts received a total of some 6,030 and 5,640 Interactions, respectively, both videos were highly watched (a total of 125,000 and 106,000 views, respectively). It was more than videos from the most popular posts of Sadyr Japarov (two of his videos, if combined, recorded some 35,500 views).



Страница «Бактыбек Калмаматов» posted a video.

3 weeks ago · 4:20

Жаштар бириге турган учур келди! №16  Бактыбек Калмаматов



65.2K Post Views

125K Total Views

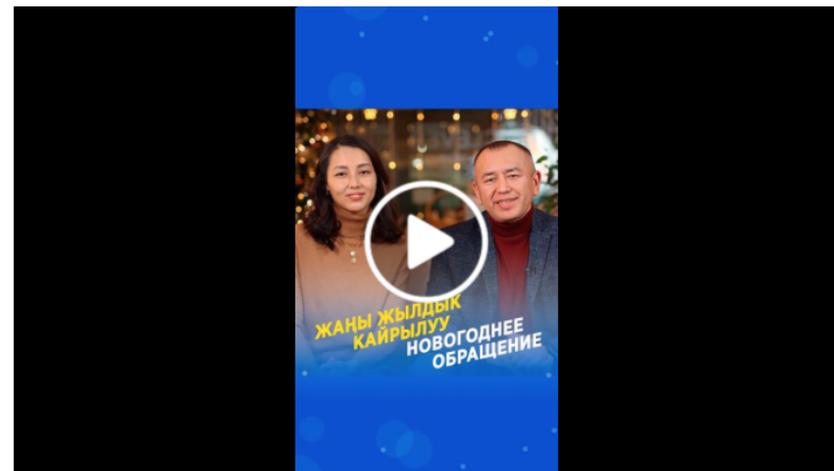
 2,720  2,178  1,137



Бабур Тольбаев / Babur Tolbaev

4 weeks ago · 2:20

Жаңы жылыңыздар менен куттуктайм! Сиздерге ден-соолук жана бакубаттуулук каалайм. Бул жыл бизге көптөгөн сабактарды берди ... Эң башкысы, болгон нерсенин бардыгынан туура жыйынтык чыгаруу керек.... [See More](#)



96.3K Post Views

106K Total Views

 4,535  730  374

FACEBOOK | *Politicians*

Among the monitored politicians, posts of Omurbek Tekebayev were the most popular ones (top 4). Two posts on the interview concerning his meeting with Sadyr Japarov, about the Megacom, Jetim Too, and other cases, became the most popular ones, gaining in total some 1,420 and 910 Interactions, respectively, and the video some 21.1 views in total.

 **Омурбек Текебаев**
1 month ago

“КОРКПОЙМ. КАЧПАЙМ. ЫРАЙЫМ СУРАБАЙМ!” - Омурбек Чиркешович, Садыр Жапаров жакында “7-каналда” берген интервьюсунда сиз менен 4 жолу жолуктум, үйүнө чейин барып, жакшы сүйлөштүк, ал мени колдойм, макул... [See More](#)



   601  455  367

 **Омурбек Текебаев** posted a [video](#).
1 month ago · 27:10

КОРКПОЙМ. КАЧПАЙМ. ЫРАЙЫМ СУРАБАЙМ!



5K Post Views 21.1K Total Views

   496  161  248

“I’m not afraid. I won’t run. I don’t ask for mercy!”
“КОРКПОЙМ. КАЧПАЙМ. ЫРАЙЫМ СУРАБАЙМ!”

FACEBOOK | Political parties

The most popular posts among political parties were those produced by the Chon Kazat party (all top 5 posts). The one that received the highest number of interactions was addressed to a party leader Syimvk Japykeev, more precisely, a video wishing him a speedy recovery. The post, not-related to the presidential election, received a total of some 1,440 Interactions and a total number of 33,800 views.



Чон Казат Элдик кыймыл posted a [video](#).
3 weeks ago · 3:51

От всего движения Чоң Казат, желаем скорейшего выздоровления Сыймыку Асылбековичу!

12.3K Post Views 33.8K Total Views

949 196 302

FACEBOOK | *Authorities*

In comparison with Instagram, authorities used their Facebook pages more frequently. Subsequently, also the interaction was notably higher. The post from *Jogorku Kenesh* (parliament) about the visit of the speaker of Jogorku Kenesh Talant Mamytov (at the given moment the Acting president) to see repair works of the parliament building received the highest attention, with a total of some 1,600 some Interaction, and additional 76,400 total views.



Жогорку Кеңеш posted a [video](#).

2 months ago · 1:13



Бүгүн, 20-ноябрда Кыргыз Республикасынын Президентинин милдетин аткаруучу, Жогорку Кеңештин Төрагасы Талант Мамытов парламент имаратында жүргүзүлүп жаткан оңдоп-түзөө иштери менен таанышты. Учурда... [See More](#)



74.7K Post Views
76.4K Total Views





1,379

134

83

FACEBOOK | Media

Among the media, *Sputnik* (the Kyrgyz office of the Russian state outlet) and *Azattyk Media* (the Kyrgyz office of the RFE/RL) were most popular (shared top 4 posts), however, none of them were election-related. The Sputnik posts about rescuing a kitten by garbage man and a live broadcast of Diego Maradona’s farewell memorial service

Sputnik ✓ posted a [video](#).
 3 weeks ago · 51 seconds

For some, 2020 wasn't all that bad. While sorting through #garbage, a man came across an usually squirmy bag. He tore it open with his trusty knife and.. Now the #cat's literally out of the bag! The #animal did not look like a stray as it poked its head out for some air. Things weren't looking too bright for this kitty until it was #rescued. We are glad... [See More](#)

4.04M Post Views 4.22M Total Views

40,962 1,807 5,043

Sputnik ✓ is [live](#).
 2 months ago · 3:41:21

LIVE: Thousands say their last goodbyes to Diego Maradona at Casa Rosada

142.6K Post Views 653.7K Total Views

9,153 4,526 6,348

These posts of Azattyk Media were about a caring father who independently made a carriage for his daughter and the second one about a resident of the Kochkor region with a disability who makes a toy transport from iron.



Kyrgyz Azattyk Unalgysy ✓ posted a [video](#).

2 months ago · 7:16

Кыздарын ханбийкедей караган велосипедчен ата Максатбек Абдишев кызына чакан карета жасап берип, велосипедге чиркештирип алып, мектепке ташыйт. Төрт кыздын атасы Максат кыздарды тарбиялоодо атанын ролу жогору болушу керек деп эсептейт. Ал кыздарынын ою менен болуп, кыялдарын орундатууга болгон аракетин жумшап келет.



366.8K Post Views

665.5K Total Views

26,384 1,849 4,677



Kyrgyz Azattyk Unalgysy ✓ posted a [video](#).

1 month ago · 4:57

Эски темирге экинчи өмүр берген уста Кочкорлук Талант Ташматов 2-топтогу майып экенине карабай, жараксыз темирге экинчи өмүр берген тубаса уста. Ал жасаган турдүү оюнчуктарга кызыккандар көп. Уста... [See More](#)



1.11M Post Views

1.30M Total Views

27,468 1,241 3,764

FACEBOOK | *Influencers*

Post of Kadyr Melikov was about the call for spiritual and ideological education by the imams among the population, since there are "bad processes" among people of more political nature and external influence.

Кадыр Маликов posted a video.
2 months ago · 57 seconds

Отрывок из моей речи на кыргызском языке.

2K Post Views 6.6K Total Views

331 66 66

The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook post. At the top left is the profile picture of Kadyr Melikov. The post text says 'Кадыр Маликов posted a video.' followed by '2 months ago · 57 seconds'. Below this is the text 'Отрывок из моей речи на кыргызском языке.' and a video player. The video player shows a man in a dark coat and a fur hat speaking. Below the video player, there are view statistics: '2K Post Views' and '6.6K Total Views'. At the bottom, there are icons for likes, comments, and shares with their respective counts: 331 likes, 66 comments, and 66 shares.

FACEBOOK | *Public groups*

Among public groups, the most popular and active were the groups created in support of Sadyr Japarov. The most popular throughout the monitored period were various posts expressing support for S.Japarov from various angles – the most popular one recorded a total of some 12,030 Interactions.

The image displays three Facebook posts by Sadyr Japarov, each with a different visual and text overlay. The first post features a photo of Japarov at a podium with a blue overlay asking for support. The second post features a photo of him speaking with a white overlay asking if he is the only worthy candidate. The third post features a family photo with a black overlay asking for likes. Each post shows engagement metrics like reactions and shares.

(#1) Kyrgyzstanis, more than 70% is supporting Sadyr Japarov. Will you also support?

(#2) The only worthy presidential candidate is Sadyr Japarov, who will not sell his country and will not sell himself.

Are there those who consider Sadyr Japarov as president?

(#3) Let's see how many people will click like to Sadyr Japarov

INSTAGRAM | *Candidates*

On Instagram, the most popular candidates were Myktybek Arstanbek (four out of the top 5 posts among candidates) and Baktybek Kalmamatov, who received the highest number of reactions.

The most popular posts belonged to presidential candidate Myktybek Arstanbek, in which he shared excerpts from his speeches during a televised debate – “Our people have the right to be happy. This requires 5 things!” (“Элибиз бактылуу болууга укуктуу! Ал үчүн 5 нерсе зарыл!”).

In his speech, M.Arstanbek proclaimed his views concerning the nation, that every person has the right to be happy, about the moral components of happiness in a religious context. The first video was viewed over 191,000 times, received over 10,200 Likes, and left over 500 Comments (a total of some 10,730 Interactions), while the other one was viewed over 42,000 times and received a total of some 9,130 Interactions). The comments were mostly in a positive tone, however, there were also comments in support of Sadyr Japarov.



myktybek.arstanbek

📍 МЫКТЫБЕК АРСТАНБЕК · 1 month ago

Go to Video



▶ 0:00 / 0:58

"Элибиз бактылуу болууга укуктуу! Ал үчүн 5 нерсе зарыл! Алар..."
Тасмадан толук көрүңүз. Агай айткан бул сөздөрдү ЗИРЕК АДАМДАР гана түшүнөт. Сиз түшүндүңүзбү? @myktybek.arstanbek @myktybek.arstanbek @myktybek.arstanbek

▶ 191,566 ❤️ 10,212 💬 511



myktybek.arstanbek

📍 МЫКТЫБЕК АРСТАНБЕК · 3 weeks ago

Go to Video

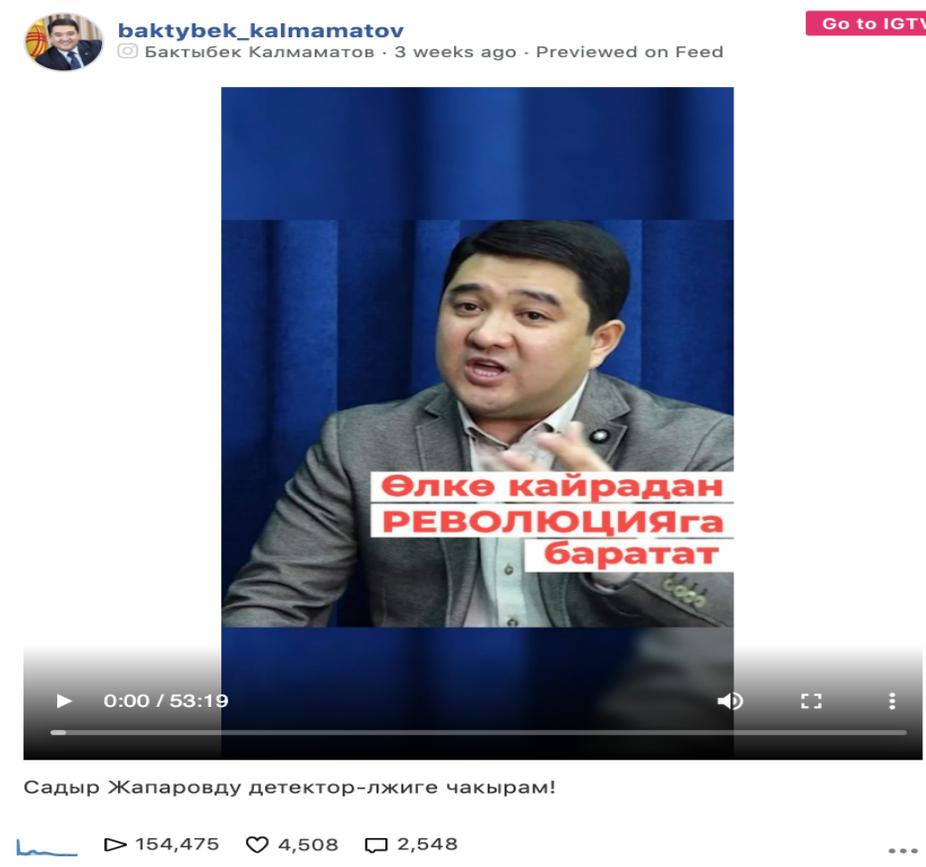


▶ 0:00 / 0:58

Мен мусулман элинин уулумун жана элим Жаратуучусунун алдына барганда "Оо Аллахым, мен сенин диниңди тандамакмын, диниңе добуш бермекмин! Бирок, эч ким чыккан жок!" дебесин деп мен чыктым! #3 - Мыктыбек Арстанбек КР Президенттигине талапкер @myktybek.arstanbek @myktybek.arstanbek @myktybek.arstanbek #мыктыбекарстанбек

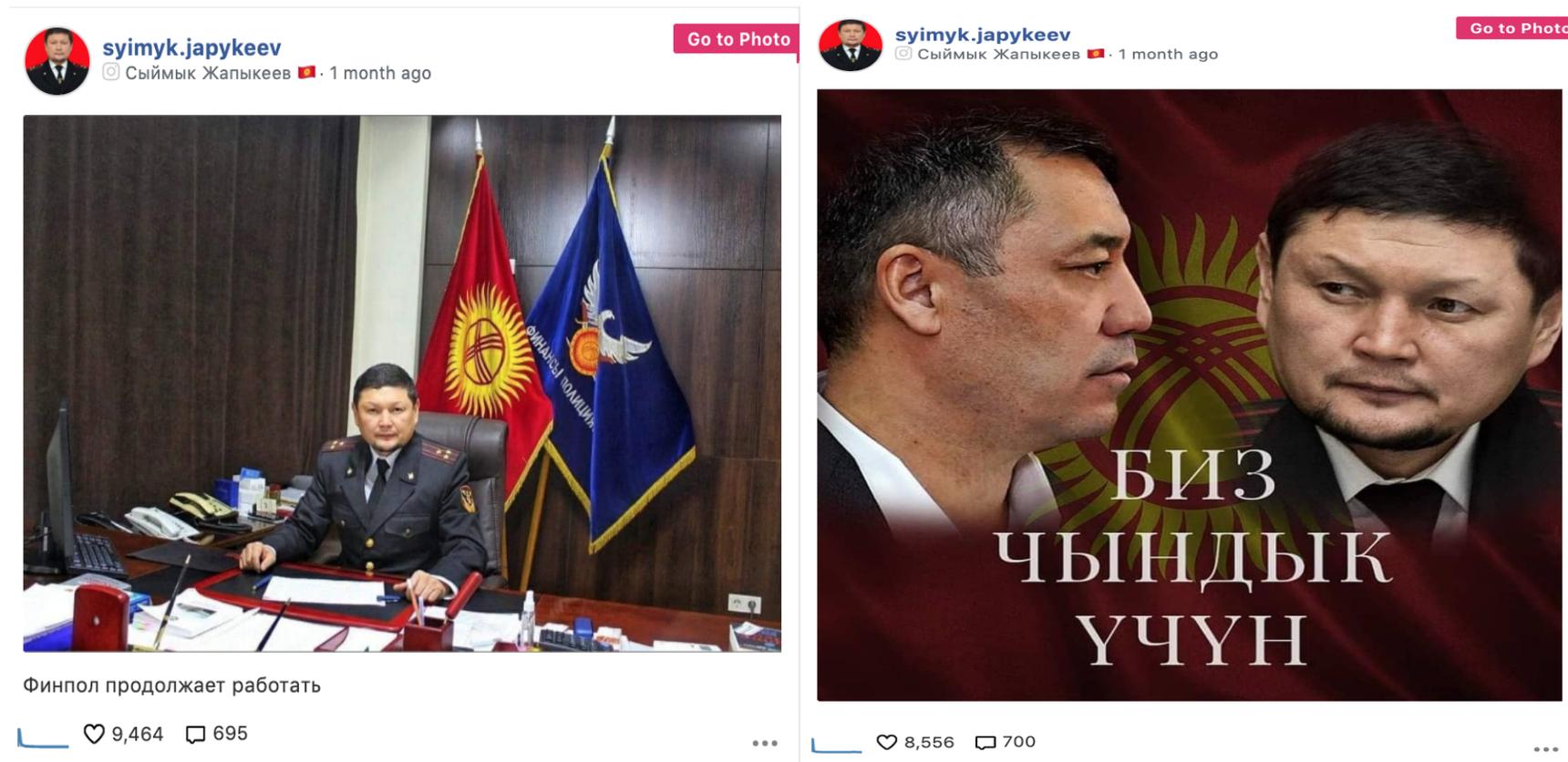
▶ 42,405 ❤️ 8,532 💬 589

Another popular post was the Baktybek Kalmamatov's video-post "The country is heading for revolution again" ("Өлкө кайрадан РЕВОЛЮЦИЯга баратат") - a broadcast program "Face-to-face interview" ("Маңдай-тескей маек") viewed more than 154,000 times, and with a total of 7,50 Interactions). The description for the post reads as follows: "I invite Sadyr Japarov to go through the lie detector!" ("Садыр Жапаровду детектор-лжиге чакырам!"). In the video, Baktybek Kalmamatov talked about the elections, authorities, the usurpation of power, corruption, oligarchs. It should be noted that most of the comments were negative in relation to B. Kalmamatov himself, and on the contrary, in support of S.Japarov, who was criticized in the video.



INSTAGRAM | *Politicians*

Syimyk Japykeev was a very popular politician on Instagram, with all top 5 posts within this followed category. He holds the post of chairman of the State Service for Combating Economic Crimes under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (Financial Police), and the post promoting him in this position became the most popular (with a total of 10,160 Interactions). During the campaign, he published a post “We are for the truth” (“Биз чындык үчүн”) presenting him together with the presidential frontrunner Sadyr Japarov. This post received over 8,550 Likes and 700 Comments, mostly positive in their tone.



INSTAGRAM | *Political parties*

Among political parties, similarly to the parliamentary elections, Chon Kazat party turned out to be most popular when it comes to social media, including on Instagram, interactions. The most popular post was a video with an interview with the party leader Syimyк Japykeev, where he talked about criminal cases, in particular about the Sarpashev case. This video was viewed around 69,600 times, received some 2,750 Likes and over 200 Comments (a total of 2,953 Interactions).



INSTAGRAM | *Authorities*

There was a relatively modest activity of three official institutions on Instagram. The government posts received some interaction, however, in very small numbers. The post reflects the visit of prime-minister to Naryn oblast



INSTAGRAM | Media

The *News.kg* posts (4 out of the top 5 media posts) were most popular among the media accounts. The top one informed about a congratulatory video of the Bishkek police filmed on the Old Square. The video has been viewed over 300,000 times, received some 51,000 Likes and over 1,800 Comments (a total of some 52,660 Interactions).



news.kg
 @Новости Кыргызстана №1 · 1 month ago · Previewed on Feed

Go to IGTV

Милицонеры Бишкека
 эффектно поздравили горожан
 с Новым годом
 www.smi.kg

НОВЫЙ ФИЛИАЛ! ПANDORA 0704 55 0000
 БЕСПЛАТНАЯ ДОСТАВКА! ТЦ Космопарк

0:00 / 1:36

ГУВД Бишкека опубликовало поздравительное видео, снятое на Старой площади. На кадрах видно, как милицейские авто сначала выстроились в форме елки, а затем - в виде огромных цифр 2021. В своем поздравлении ГУВД отметило, что уходящий год был для многих очень трудным и печальным. "Есть люди, которые могут подумать, что будут встречать Новый год одни, но это не так. Даже в самые тяжелые времена мы всегда рядом с вами, потому что вместе у нас есть вера и надежда. Пройдут и эти мрачные дни, после которых настанет новый рассвет", — говорится в поздравлении. #общество_newskg

▶ 302,220 ❤️ 50,791 💬 1,874

V. AD LIBRARY

Facebook's Ad library that offers data about ads on Facebook-owned platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Audience Network, and Messenger) has been operational in Kyrgyzstan from August 2020.

Ad Library

The ad library provides advertising transparency by offering a comprehensive, searchable collection of all ads currently running from across Facebook apps and services, including Instagram.

Search Ads
Choose a category to start your search.

Issues, Elections or Politics Search all

Search ads from candidates for public office, as well as ads about any election, ballot initiative or social issue.

Search for ads by keyword or advertiser name

More ways to search and filter ads about social issues, elections or politics

- Report**
Explore, filter and download data for ads about social issues, elections or politics. Also find the spending tracker and spending totals by advertiser and location.
- API**
Perform customized keyword searches of active and inactive ads about social issues, elections or politics.

According to the Ad Library, various actors promoted some 1,740 ads on social issues, elections, or politics in the last three months period (from 19 October 2020 until 16 January 2021).¹⁶ The total amount spent on these ads was around 16,000 USD.

While in total, some 300 actors used advertising on the Facebook-owned platforms, including at least 13 presidential candidates (victorious Sadyr Japarov did not promote his candidacy through paid ads), only a few of them dedicated significant amounts of funds to this feature. In comparison to the 4 October 2020 elections, the total amount of funds spent was significantly smaller (prior to October elections, during the less than the 3-month period, the total amount spent on 3,555 ads was 62,700 USD).

The most active users of paid advertising in this period according to the total amount of funds spent were as follows:

- **Babyrjan Tolbaev** (presidential candidate) – around 2,170 USD (38 ads)
- **Aimen Kasenov** (presidential candidate) – less than 2,000 USD (52 ads)
- **Kursan Asanov** (presidential candidate) – some 1,800 USD (68 ads)
- **Eldar Abakirov** (presidential candidate) – some 950 USD (74 ads)
- **Ulukbek Kochkorov** (presidential candidate) – some 900 USD (16 ads)
- Jenishbek Nazaraliev – some 890 USD (5 ads)
- **Baktybek Kalmamatov**¹⁷ (presidential candidate) – some 650 USD (11 ads)
- Politmer.kg – some 590 USD (142 ads)
- Zilaliev Duishbenbek Teksherbekovich¹⁸ – some 480 USD (38 ads)
- Duishenbek Zilaliev – some 390 USD (35 ads)

Other 16 subjects spent between 100 – 350 USD. Furthermore, the remaining actors who also used paid online advertising spent around 1 – 100 USD each during this three-month period.

¹⁶ Facebook's Ad Library for Kyrgyzstan does not enable to specify precise timeframe, the presented timeframe is a 3-month period covering the most important period after 4 October parliamentary elections and subsequent events to one week after 10 January presidential election.

¹⁷ His ads were running without any disclaimer.

¹⁸ The ads of this [account](#) (of Deputy Prime minister of Kyrgyzstan in 2017) of are no longer available, Ad Library indicates that the page and ads were deleted, and the note attached to deleted ads informs that "ad was taken down because it goes against Facebook Advertising Policies".

The presidential candidates listed according to the number of posts promoted via paid advertisements on Facebook and/or Instagram were as follows:

- Eldar Abakirov – 74 ads
- Kursan Asanov, Za Asanova, Za #13 – 73 (68+5) ads
- Aimen Kasenov – 52 ads
- Babyrjan Tolbaev – 38 ads
- Abdil Segizbaev – 24 ads
- Ulukbek Kochkorov – 16 ads
- Kanatbek Isaev – 14 ads (10+4) ads
- Ravshan Djeenbekov – 13 ads
- Rashid Tagaev – 13 ads
- Baktybek Kalmamatov – 11 ads
- Zhenishbek Baiguttiev – 11 (7+4) ads
- Klara Sooronkulova – 3 ads
- Adakhan Madumarov – 1 advertisement.

V. DISINFORMATION

In Kyrgyzstan, as in other countries, being part of the global information space, the influence of social networks is growing, and different actors who spread disinformation have a wider space to operate. While television remains the main source of information for the majority of citizens, especially in the regions, the growing popularity of social networks began to have a high degree of impact on the formation of public opinion and, subsequently, on the socio-political situation in the country.

The presence of unverified news presented as sensation, stuffing, or fake information has been growing in Kyrgyzstan during election campaigns over some time already. The 2021 presidential election was no exception. Former Prime minister Sadyr Japarov was considered the favorite in the presidential race, hence, a large number of misleading news focused on him. Noteworthy, however, such false news were not only targeting him, but persons supporting Mr. Japarov were also often disseminating inaccurate information.

It is interesting to note that the most visible supporters on social networks were those of Sadyr Japarov, with the audience of some Facebook groups promoting his candidacy reaching up to 200,000 subscribers. These **pro-Sadyrov groups were using manipulation and misinformation in order to glorify their candidate, or to discredit opponents**. On social networks, Japarov's supporters often generalized with messages projecting that the entire population of Kyrgyzstan supports him, while often using profanity and resort to intimidation of opponents. It is also worth noting that news agency "*Kaktus Media*" published material that the ["troll factory" of the Matraimovs and Jeenbekovs began working for Sadyr Japarov](#)".

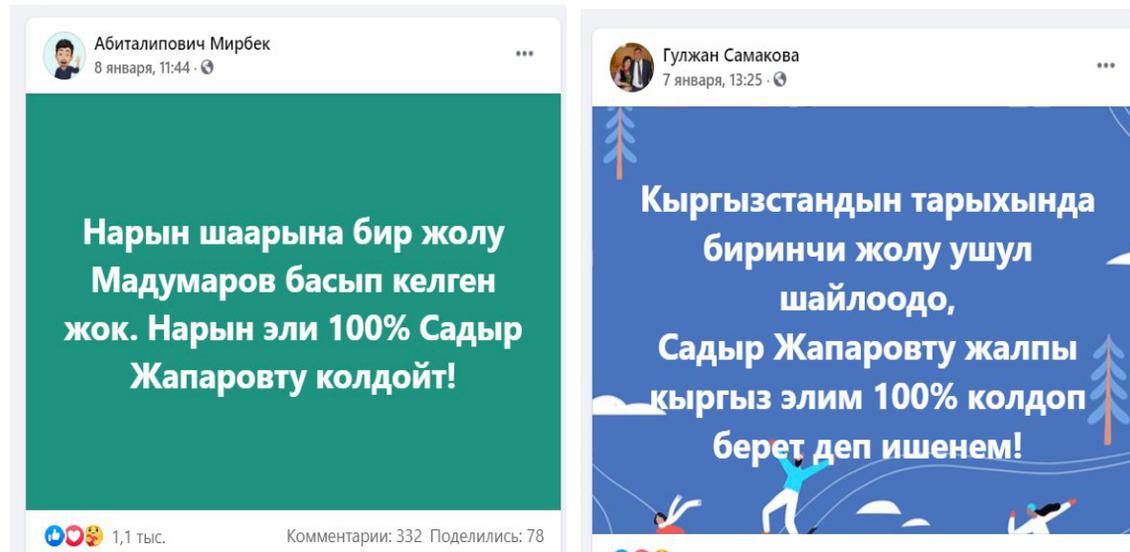
Here are some most notable examples:

A member of the Sadyr Japarov Facebook group used black PR, namely, a post-collage was published with the image of another presidential candidate Abdil Segizbayev behind bars.



*In a dream, I was in prison without becoming president.
«Тушумдо президенттикке отпой турмодо отуруптурмун»*

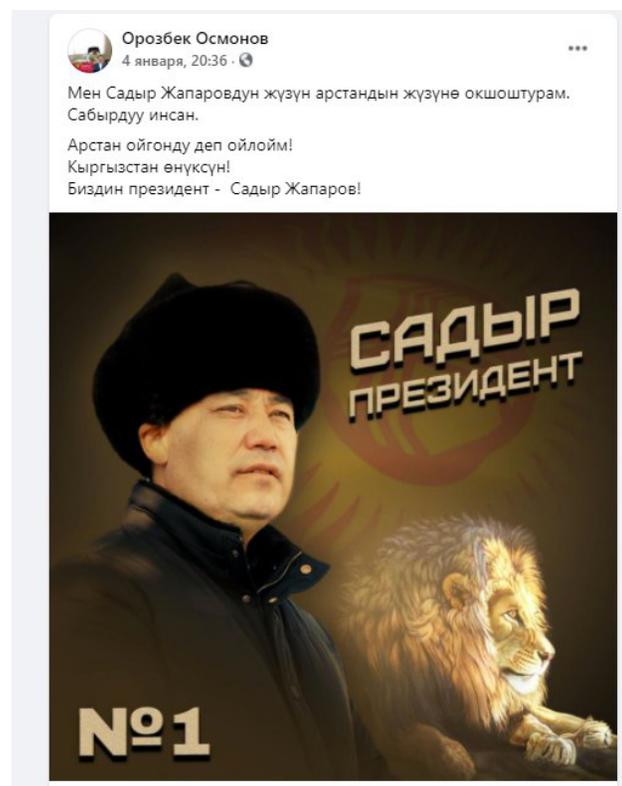
A lot of members of the Sadyr Japarov Facebook group praised and supported their candidate S.Japarov typical methods of PR – exaggeration, generalization and repetition (such as a permanent use of phrase "100% support") with an evident aim to make an impression of nationwide and uncompromised support for Sadyr Japarov.



“Madumarov has never visited the Naryn city. The people of Naryn will 100% support Sadyr Japarov!”
 «Нарын шаарына бир жолу Мадумаров басып келген жок. Нарын эли 100% Садыр Жапаровду колдойт!»

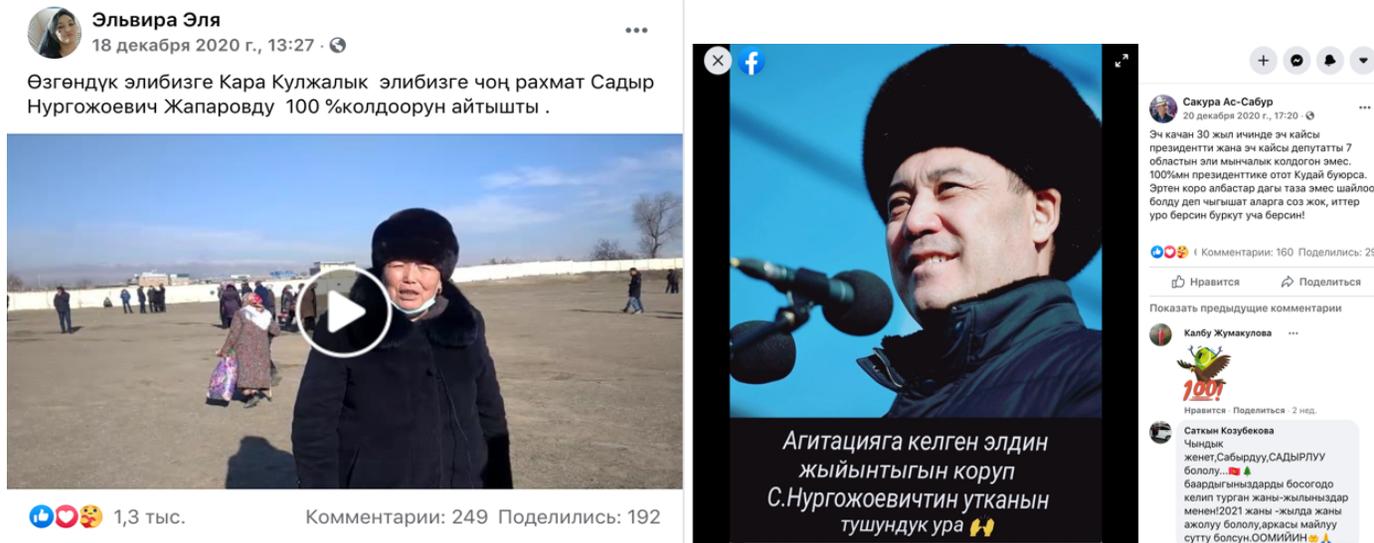
“For the first time in the history of Kyrgyzstan, at these elections, I believe that the entire Kyrgyz people will 100% support Sadyr Japarov!”
 «Кыргызстандын тарыхында биринчи жолу ушул шайлоодо, Садыр Жапаровту жалпы кыргыз элим 100% колдоп берет деп ишенем!»

In another classical PR tactics Japarov's supporters promoted him as the king, the leader of the nation, trying to present their own candidate on an entirely different level, incomparably better than other candidates.



"I compare Sadyr Japarov with a lion. A self-possessed personality. I think the lion has woken up. Let Kyrgyzstan develop! Our president is Sadyr Japarov!"

«Мен Садыр Жапаровдун жүзүн арстандын жүзүнө окшоштурам. Сабырдуу инсан. Арстан ойгонду деп ойлойм. Кыргызстан өнүксүн! Биздин президент – Садыр Жапаров!»



A video post in support of S.Japarov about 100 percent support of the people:
"Many thanks to our people from Ozgon and Kara Kuldja who support Sadyr Japarov for 100%."

A post of unparalleled support provided countrywide to Sadyr Japarov:
"Never in 30 years, people of all seven regions did support any president, any deputy in this way. God forbid he will run for president with 100% support. Tomorrow the dissatisfied people will again come out with a claim about the lack of transparency of the elections, no words, let the dogs bark, and the eagle fly!"



*“You support SADYR JAPAROV as the president of the Kyrgyz people”
САДЫР ЖАПАРОВ Кыргыз элине президент болуусун колдойсузбу*

According to a preliminary analysis of fact checking initiatives¹⁹, one third of accounts expressing support to Sadyr Japarov were fake ones. The posts and comments of such accounts were mainly aimed at discrediting opponents, accompanied by attacks, insults, and labeling opponents. Many posts in support of S.Japarov are written and provided as *"on behalf of the entire nation,"* which is a vivid example of manipulation. Groups and accounts in social media in support of S.Japarov are trying to create a positive image of the candidate as a *"last hope,"* obviously exaggerating the capabilities of one person.

¹⁹ Factcheck.kg, 8 December 2020, see more at <https://factcheck.kg/kak-rabotaet-internet-trolling-v-kyrgyzstane/>

Social media users closely monitored how much money and from whom came the support of candidates' campaigns. Thus, information appeared on social networks that a bank transfer in the amount of 1 million KGS (approximately 9,850 EUR) from a local Kyrgyz company “Hua-Er” LLC, was made in support of Sadyr Japarov.



Initially, a Chinese citizen, Huan Jianhong, was listed as the director of this company. It should be noted that according to Kyrgyz legislation, sponsorship and charitable support to presidential candidates from citizens of foreign countries is prohibited. Therefore, this information caused a negative reaction on social networks. However, it was later revealed that Huang Jianhong is a citizen of Kyrgyzstan, and a copy of his Kyrgyz passport was posted online.

The presidential candidate Abdil Segizbayev on his page, as well as during debates on the public television, gave information regarding the connection of candidate Sadyr Japarov with the former president Kurman Bakiyev, who is on the run.

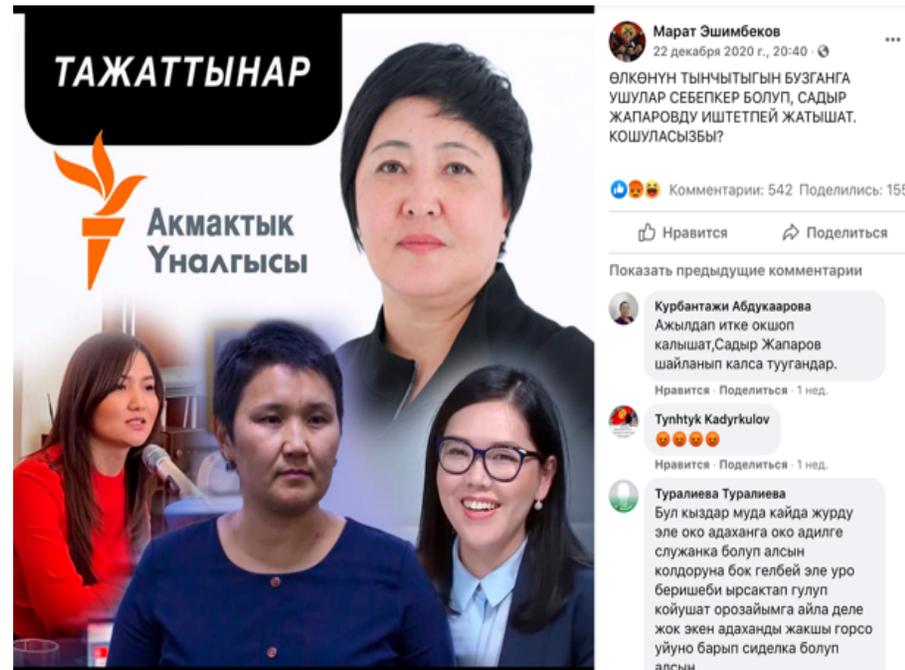


The topic of TV debates was actively discussed on social media, in particular, due to the fact that Sadyr Japarov did not participate in any of the debates. Many opponents began to raise the question of the need to legally oblige candidates to participate in televised debates, as this may affect the final expression of the will of citizens. On the other hand, Japarov's supporters began to discredit the debate, reducing its relevance to a minimum.

“People know who is who without debate. Those who praise debate are gossips and liars”

«Дебаты жок эле кимдин ким экенин эл дагы жакшы билет! Дебатты туу туткандар алар оозу м норок оргон, калпычы ушакчылар!»

An example of the denigration of one of the candidates and representatives of civil society opposing the referendum.



“TIRED OF. Being the cause of the troubled situation in the country, they interfere with Sadyr Japarov's work. Are you joining this?”

Black PR against opponents - Baktybek Kalmamatov and Adakhan Madumarov ("gossip-based program"):
"Strong people discuss ideas, and common people discuss stories! Small people turn out to live by rumors! These two gentlemen have no program other than rumors."



Inauthentic Behavior

According to Facebook's [report](#) on Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior from December 2020, there were multiple occasions of such behavior observed by the pages and groups in Kyrgyzstan, already dating back to 2017.²⁰ Most recently, Facebook removed 121 Facebook accounts, 46 Pages, 7 Groups, and 41 Instagram accounts that originated in Kyrgyzstan and targeted domestic audience.²¹ A Facebook investigation found links to individuals in Kyrgyzstan with a background in media and government, and also a media company called Media Center.

“The people behind this activity used fake accounts to drive people to off-platforms domains, manage Pages posing as news entities, post in Groups and comment on other people’s content. Some of the Pages claimed to be supporting particular politicians while other Pages posed as critical of the same political figures. This activity primarily centered around the 2020 Parliamentary election and 2021 snap presidential election while playing on multiple sides of the political debate at once. This network posted primarily in Kyrgyz and also in Russian about political news and current events in Kyrgyzstan, including the October 2020 election, supportive commentary about former Presidents Japarov and Atambayev, and also criticism of both of these politicians”.

²⁰ The report mentions three major clusters of Inauthentic Coordinated Behavior originating in Kyrgyzstan, one around the 2017 presidential election when Facebook removed 193 Facebook accounts, 246 Pages, 50 Groups and 30 Instagram accounts, another related to domestic news and current events, including elections between 2017-2020 when Facebook removed 92 Facebook accounts, 4 Pages, 11 Groups and 30 Instagram accounts and the third cluster concerns October 2020 and January 2021 elections.

²¹ The report suggests that around 31,000 accounts followed one or more of these Pages, around 11,000 accounts joined one or more of these Groups and around 8,800 people followed one or more of these Instagram accounts. As for promotion, around 1,250 USD was spent for online ads on Facebook and Instagram for these accounts.

METHODOLOGY

The applied methodology consists of quantitative and qualitative analysis of the selected social media content.

The quantitative analysis focuses on the number of posts generated by political actors (candidates, parties, politicians, with the assistance of [CrowdTangle](#)²²) or other monitored entities and the tone of the coverage (in media posts). In case they promote them, we track it as positive; in case they criticize them, we track it as negative. In case they only introduce these issues or stories without stating their positions, we track it as neutral. The monitoring also focused on the thematic structure of the posts.

Social media **posts** served as a reference and monitoring unit that was further analyzed by monitors. For categories of media, influencers, and groups, only the top200 posts (according to their interaction) were analyzed.

List of monitored parameters

Political subjects

Candidates (18)

Abakirov Eldar
Abdyldaev Arstanbek
Arstanbek Myktybek
Asanov Kursan
Baiguttiev Zhenishbek
Djeyenbekov Ravshan
Imanaliev Kanybek
Isaev Kanatbek
Japarov Sadyr

²² CrowdTangle (a social media analytics tool owned by Facebook) “tracks public posts on Facebook, Instagram and Reddit, made by public accounts or groups. The tool does not track every public account and does not track private profiles or groups, so this data is not representative of performance across the entire platform. The numbers shown here reflect public interactions (likes, reactions, comments, shares, upvotes and three second views), but do not include reach or referral traffic. It does not include paid ads unless those ads began as organic, non-paid posts that were subsequently “boosted” using Facebook’s advertising tools. Because the system doesn’t distinguish this type of paid content, note that some high-performing content may have had paid distribution. CrowdTangle also does not track posts made visible only to specific groups of followers.” The tool was applied on the published posts after three-days period so that the interaction generated by the post is relatively stabilized.

Kalmamatov Baktybek
Kasenov Aimen
Kochkorov Ulukbek
Madumarov Adahan
Segizbaev Abdil
Sooronkulova Klara
Tagaev Rashid
Tashov Imamidin
Tolbaev Babyrjan

Political parties (5)

Ata Meken
Butun Kyrgyzstan
Chon Kazat
Mekenchil (Facebook)
Reform

Politicians (9)

Akaev Janar
Bekeshev Dastan (Instagram)
Japarov Akylbek
Japykeev Syimyk
Mamytov Talant
Nikitenko Natalia
Novikov Artem (Instagram)
Tashiev Kamchybek
Tekebaev Omurbek

Influencers (8)

Aitbekova Nazira
Bekbolieva Kairatovna Anjelika
Borubaev Ernis (Instagram)
Karimova Samara (Instagram)
Karypbekov Ilim (Instagram)
Malikov Kadyr
Temirov Bolot (Instagram)
Toktakunov Ali (Instagram)

Media (15)

AKIpress
Birinchi Radio
April TV
Jetinchi TV (Facebook)
Kabar News Agency
Kabarlar News
Kaktus Media
Kloop News
Kyrgyz Azattyk
Kyrgyz Today
News.kg (Instagram)
Next TV
Sputnik Kyrgyzstan
Super Info newspaper
24.kg

Authorities (3)

Central Commission for Elections and Referenda
Government
Parliament (Jogorku Kenesh)

Public Facebook Groups (9)

Authority
Japarov Sadyr
Kalmamatov Aktybek - Our president!
Kompromat KG
Last News
Madumarov Adakhan
News of Kyrgyzstan
President 2021 - Ravshan Djeenbekov
Shailoo - 2021

Topics

Agriculture
Army/military
Business, economy
Culture
Catastrophes, incidents, accidents
Charity
Corruption
Crime
Society (incl. civil society)
Education, science
Environment
Foreign Affairs (no relevance to Belarus)
Foreign Affairs (related to Belarus)
Health care
IT, digitalization
Judiciary
Media
Minorities
Politics
Religion
Social issues
Sport
Transport, infrastructure
Elections
Referendum
Covid-19
Others



ABOUT

Media Development Center

The public foundation Media Development Center is a non-profit organization established in 2002 with the aim of promoting freedom of speech and expression in Kyrgyzstan, as well as to help build the capacity of the media and journalists by encouraging best practices in journalism, promoting professional ethics, institutionalizing dialogue between the state, media and civil society, as well as the promotion of media networks in Kyrgyzstan. Since 2010, the Media Development Center has been monitoring the media during the parliamentary and presidential elections in the Kyrgyz Republic. The Media Development Center is one of the first organizations in the Kyrgyz Republic that monitors social media platforms during the election period.

MEMO 98

An internationally recognized, independent, and non-profit specialist media institution with 22 year-long of experience conducting media monitoring and research and assisting civil society groups. Using tested and approved methodologies and tools, we provide media analysis and media monitoring with tangible results, in particular during election periods. Having participated in more than 120 election observation missions and about 150 media & election-related projects and training in more than 55 countries (in the Commonwealth of the Independent States and the Balkan countries, but also in Africa, Asia, South America, and the Middle East), our experts provide assistance on media & electoral and other democratic arrangements.

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This research was funded by the National Endowment for Democracy. Media Development Center and MEMO 98 assume no responsibility for facts or opinions expressed in this publication or their subsequent use. Sole responsibility lies with the authors of this publication.

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