

## Inside Georgia's Anti-Western Media: Narratives and the Economics Behind Them

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### Abstract

This study maps how anti-Western narratives are constructed and amplified by two high-reach, pro-government Georgian outlets—Imedi TV and POSTV, which are closely aligned with the ruling Georgian Dream party—and how economic ties to Russia help sustain those messages. Using mixed-methods content analysis (quantitative coding and qualitative framing) of 16 prime-time TV programs (~25 hours) and ~700 Facebook cards published between 1 June and 20 July 2023, and comparative desk research on Russian media (25 items, 2022–2023), we identified 19 recurring frames that together form a coordinated anti-Western pattern.

Editorial selection systematically highlighted crises in the West while omitting Russia's economic troubles, and Georgia-based narratives closely synchronized with Russian outlets over time. Linking content to political economy, we argue that Georgia's dependencies—energy and trade exposure, tourism/migration/remittance flows, and a small, concentrated ad market with heavy state/para-state spend—raise the opportunity cost of contradicting Kremlin-aligned frames.

We conclude that as these dependencies intensify, anti-Western framing becomes more prevalent and harder-edged. Mitigation requires economic diversification; transparency and deconcentration of state/SOE advertising; independent audience measurement; robust election-period monitoring of TV and social feeds; and sustained support for fact-checking, plural newsrooms, and media literacy.

### Keywords

Anti-Western propaganda, Georgian media, Russian media, Economics.