

## **ESI MANUAL**

# **THE RUSSIAN DEBATE ON THE SOUTH CAUCASUS: WHO IS WHO?**

### Part 3: Russian Audiovisual Media

Berlin – Istanbul, April 2010



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This section provides an overview of relevant Russian media, editors and journalists with an interest in Russian neighbourhood policy and the Southern Caucasus. Most of the journalists speak English. Some TV channels or radio stations have English-language websites.

## 1. TELEVISION

Key TV channels and important political and news programs:

Channel One Первый Канал		Novosti – Новости (News) Vremya – Время (Time) Odnako – Однако (However) Pozner – Познер	6 pm (every day) 9 pm (every day) Sometimes after Time – Время Monday 11.40 pm – 00.40 am
Russia TV Россия		Vesti – Вести (News)	11 am, 2, 5, 8 pm (every day)
NTV Television НТВ	News 	Segodnya – Сегодня (Today)	7 pm (every day)
REN TV РЕН ТВ		Novosti „24“ – Новости «24» (News)	9.30 am, 4.30 pm, 7.30 pm (Monday – Friday) 12.30 pm every day
TV Center ТВ Центр		Sobytiya – События (Events)	11.30 am, 2.20 pm, 5.50 pm 8.30 pm (every day)
Petersburg – Fifth Channel Петербург – Пятый Канал		Seychas – Сейчас (Now) Glavnoe – Главное (Essential)	10.30 am, 1.30 pm, 4.30 pm, 7.30 pm every day 6.30 pm on Saturdays
Russia Today		News	Every 30 minutes

Average audience share of Russian TV channels, week of 8-14 March 2010 (between 05:00 and 20:00):



Source: <http://www.tns-global.ru/rus/data/ratings/tv/> (First seven channels with the highest audience share are: First Channel 18 percent; Russia TV 17.2 percent; NTV 14.9 percent; STS 8.9 percent; TNT 7.1 percent; Ren TV 4.3 percent; TV-Tsentr 3.1 percent.)



**Channel One**  
**Первый Канал (Perviy Kanal)**  
[www.1tv.ru](http://www.1tv.ru)

**Channel One**, Russia's main television channel, based at the "Ostankino" Broadcasting Centre in Moscow, is a state-controlled TV station with the highest audience share. The Russian government controls 51 percent of shares, the remaining 49 percent belonging to private shareholders such as the little-known ORT Bank Consortium, RastrKom 2002 and EberLink, all believed to be controlled by oligarch Roman Abramovich.

Channel One also owns some digital-only television channels. The Channel One Digital TV family includes Cinema House (movies), Channel One Music, Time (20th century history), TV Nanny (children's programming) and Television Café (food). The channel retains an audience share of almost 20 percent.

The channel's "Novosti" and "Vremya" news programs are the source for political information for most Russians. The website of Channel One is only in Russian.

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 Tel: +7 495 617 73 87

#### Senior management



**Konstantin Ernst** has been General Director since October 1999.



**Alexander Fayfman** is Deputy Director and General Producer.

#### First Channel news department:



**Kirill Kleymenov** is Deputy General Director and head of the news department. He has worked with Channel One since 1997, when he became head of the news department. Before graduating from the Romanic-German department at Moscow State University he worked for State Radio of the Soviet Union. He also wrote for the Russian news agency Interfax. In 2004 he worked as press officer for the Russian oil giant Lukoil.

#### Main evening news

"Vremya" (40 minutes starting at 9 pm every day) is Channel One's flagship news program, presenting the world through the Kremlin's eyes. Having first aired in January 1968 and having survived the tectonic shifts in the Russian media landscape since the 1990s, it is one of the most influential TV news programs in Russia. Vremya has the largest audience share of any Russian news program.



**Ekaterina Andreeva** is one of the two anchors of “Vremya”. She is said to be one of President Vladimir Putin's favourite TV news journalists.<sup>1</sup> She studied law and history at Moscow State University. In 1991 Andreeva started working in television. She has been on air since 1995. (See also [ESI picture story Mainstream views on Russian TV](#))

Channel One's main news program “**Novosti**” is re-broadcast at 5 am and 9 am, as well as at 12 pm, 3 pm and 6 pm. The last news broadcast “Nochnye Novosti” (Night news) comes on at 11.30 pm or 0.30 am. Channel One also runs news and interviews during its morning show “Telekanal Dobroye Utro” (the Good Morning Channel) from 5.05 to 7 am. When the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute started in January 2009, the program broadcast nothing more than official statements – by Putin, Medvedev and Alexei Miller – while avoiding commentary by journalists.

### Opinion programs



After the news program “Vremya”, **Michail Leontiev**, Russia's most famous TV-commentator, presents “**Odnako**” (“However”), which has been on air since March 1999. In April 2001 Leontiev joined the Eurasia movement whose leader, Alexander Dugin, is one of the most influential ideologists of Russian expansion and nationalism. Leontiev once described himself as a voice of the Kremlin. “I am one of the propagandists of the regime. I am a part of the team in the power,” he was quoted as saying by the *Nouvel Observateur* in September 2008. Leontiev has been a member of the pro-Putin United Russia party since December 2002. He is also the founder of the weekly magazine “Profile”.



As the Russian-Georgian war broke out, Leontiev was on air every evening between 10 and 14 August 2008. He accused Georgia of aggression, characterized Saakashvili as a war criminal and never referred to the actions of the Russian army as something other than peacekeeping.

More “Odnako” programs can be found on:

[http://www.itv.ru/owa/win/ort6\\_main.main?p\\_news\\_razdel\\_id=100&p\\_pagenum=4](http://www.itv.ru/owa/win/ort6_main.main?p_news_razdel_id=100&p_pagenum=4)  
(in Russian only)



**Vladimir Pozner** is one of Channel One's most influential journalists and sharpest commentators. Since November 2008 he hosts his own political talk show, “**Pozner**”, which airs every Monday evening at 11.30 pm. Until the autumn of 2008 he was the anchorman of the weekly political show “Vremena” (Times). His



new show, besides its focus on politics, covers social and cultural issues. Born in 1934 in Paris, Pozner lived with his family in France, in the USA and in the Eastern part of Berlin until he was 18. At the request of his father, the family returned to the Soviet Union in 1952, one year before Stalin's death. Going back to France was impossible since none of the family members, other than Pozner's mother, had a French passport.

<sup>1</sup>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/inside-story-now-back-to-you-tetsuya-416448.html>



**Maxim Shevchenko** hosts the political talk show **Sudite Sami** (“Judge for yourself”). He is considered as one of the leading Russian journalists and experts on ethno-cultural and religious issues. Besides his work as anchorman for Channel One, he hosts “O Glavnom”, (The Essential) on state-owned Radio



station Vesti FM, as well as the weekly program “Special Opinion with Maxim Shevchenko” for Echo of Moscow. Shevchenko graduated from the Moscow Aviation Institute in 1990. He was a special correspondent in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Chechnya, Dagestan, former Yugoslavia, Israel and Palestine, editor-in-chief of the “NG-Religion” section of “Nezavisimaya gazeta”, and author and editor-in-chief of “Sense” magazine. In 2000, he created the Center of Strategic Research of Religion and Policy of the Modern World. He is a Member of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation. See also ESI picture story [“Judge for yourself: Maxim Shevchenko and the Caucasus”](#).

“Judge for yourself” can be seen on Channel One: <http://www.1tv.ru/pr/si=5691&im=2>

Article on mass media on <http://www.archipelag.ru/authors/shevchenko/?library=2278>

### Southern Caucasus Coverage:



**Anton Stepanenko**, based in Moscow, covered the Russian-Georgian war as special correspondent. On the first day of war he reported on Southern Ossetia and Tskhinvali.

On 23 August 2008, Stepanenko produced a 30 minute documentary on Tskhinvali, The Wounds of Tskhinvali - Rany Tsinvali (“Раны Цхинвали”)

<http://rutube.ru/tracks/949505.html?confirm=d1e10da639304084e3536821c54b1a1a&v=109b228c1f9c4387d7f2d9ffa9d5b85c>

Yevgeni Baranov’s report on Abkhazia on 24 May 2009.

<http://www.1tv.ru/news/polit/144307>

According to its website, Channel One has correspondents across Russia, in the CIS countries and countries like France (Shanna Agalakova) and Israel (Sergey Auslender). Channel One also has bureaus in Georgia and Armenia.

### Correspondents in the Southern Caucasus

**Georgia: Mikhail Robakidze**, 380076 Tbilisi, M. Kostava Str. 86

Tel: +995 32 95 75 24

Report 11 May 2009: <http://www.1tv.ru/news/world/143469>

**Armenia: Levon Grigorian**, First Channel, cameraman and correspondent:

Yerevan Tel./Fax: +374 10 52 95 42; +374 10 56 64 08; +374 10 56 70 77,

**E-mail:** [1tvurm@mail.ru](mailto:1tvurm@mail.ru)



**Russia TV**  
**Россия**  
[www.rutv.ru](http://www.rutv.ru)

**Russia TV**, formerly RTR or Channel 2, is the second national channel. It is run by state-owned Vserossiyskaya Gosudarstvennaya Televizionnaya i Radioveshatel'naya Kompanya (All Russian State Television and Broadcasting Company, or VGTRK), an umbrella organisation for six nationwide TV channels such as Rossiya, Vesti, Sports, a children channel, and RTR-Planeta. The holding also runs radio stations such as Radio Russia and Mayak, as well as over 80 regional channels. Russia TV was founded in 1991 in an effort to give Russian president Boris Yeltsin an outlet independent of the Soviet TV channels. Russia TV has the second largest audience in Russian television. In a typical week it is viewed by 75 percent of urban Russians, compared to 83 percent for the leading channel, Channel One. RTR-Planeta, the program for the CIS and Baltic states, has an audience of 50 million people. Vesti, which appears at 8 pm, is Russia TV's news flagship and – after Channel One's Vremya – the second most important source for information for the Russian audience. Its website is only in Russian.

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Tel: +7 495 232 63 33  
E-mail: [AKasianikova@vgtrk.com](mailto:AKasianikova@vgtrk.com) (Press office)

#### Senior management of Russia TV



**Anton Zlatopol'skiy** is General Director of Russia TV.  
E-Mail: [rtr@rtr-tv.ru](mailto:rtr@rtr-tv.ru)



**Yulia Rakcheyeva** is Deputy Director of Russia TV and General Manager of news programs.  
E-Mail: [rtr@rtr-tv.ru](mailto:rtr@rtr-tv.ru)

**Pyotr Fyodorov** is Director of the department for international relations  
E-mail: [pfyodorov@vgtrk.com](mailto:pfyodorov@vgtrk.com)

**Andrey Polivanchuk** is Head of the foreign news desk.  
E-Mail: [apolivanchuk@vgtrk.com](mailto:apolivanchuk@vgtrk.com)

## Main news programs



“Vesti” at 8 pm is the main news program, with an audience share of about 15 percent..

Other news programs also operate under the title “Vesti” ([www.vesti.ru](http://www.vesti.ru)). One of them is Dobroe Utro, Rossiya, (Good Morning, Russia) which airs from 5 to 8.30 am. At 11 am, 2 and 5 pm, “Vesti” continues with regular news. There are also Vesti v Subbotu (Vesti on Saturday) and Vesti Nedeli (Vesti of the Week).



The main analytical news program is “Vesti Nedeli” ([www.vesti7.ru](http://www.vesti7.ru)) presented by former NTV correspondent **Yevgeny Revenko**. The program airs on Sunday evening at 8. According to tns-global, it retained an audience share of 15.1 percent in the week from 26 October to 1 November.

News website: <http://www.vesti7.ru/archive/news?id=12526>

E-mail: [vesti-press@vgtrk.com](mailto:vesti-press@vgtrk.com)

## Analysis and opinion programs



**Arkadiy Mamontov** is a popular journalist and one of four documentary makers for “**Avtorskaya Programma Spetsialniy Korrespondent**” (The Author’s Program Special Correspondent), a program that prides itself on reporting “objective reality”. Mamontov previously reported for NTV from places like Chechnya and Dagestan. He came to prominence in 2006 after producing footage purporting to show a British diplomat exchanging classified information with local agents through a device disguised as a rock on a street in Moscow. A year later,

Mamontov claimed in another documentary that the CIA was funding Russian opposition groups in order to foment popular uprisings of the sort that took place in Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. On 5 April 2009 Russia TV aired a film accusing the U.S. of using an air base in Kyrgyzstan to spy on Russia and China.

On 1 February 2009 Russia TV aired “Svoy – Chuzhoy” (Friend vs. Foe), a documentary in which Mamontov alleged that Ukraine had participated in the Russian-Georgian war in August 2008. The film

was widely discussed in the Russian press. “In his film Arkadiy Mamontov has absolutely ceased to trouble himself with such trifles as working with facts,” complained Arina Borodina in *Kommersant*. Mamontov repeatedly used phrases like “according to some information” and blurred the faces and identities of a number of his interlocutors.



“**Avtorskaya Programma Spetsialniy Korrespondent**” airs on Sunday evenings at 9.05 pm on Russia TV.

E-mail: [amamontov@vgtrk.com](mailto:amamontov@vgtrk.com)

Documentary on Tskhinvali on 17 August 2008:

<http://www.rutv.ru/search.html?d=0&q=%C3%F0%F3%E7%E8%FF>

The Documentary “Svoy – Chuzhoy” (Friend vs. Foe) on Ukraine’s alleged involvement in the Georgia war aired on 1 February 2009: <http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=248571>



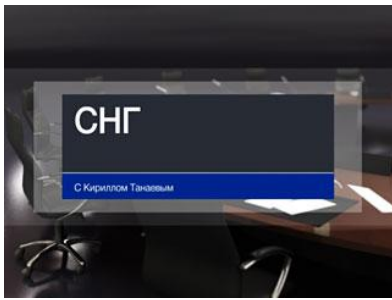


**Dmitri Kiselyev**, born in April 1954, is Deputy Director of VGTRK Holding and, since 2006, the anchorman of “**Natsionalny interes**” (**National Interest**), a political talk show aired on the Russian Information Channel “Vesti”. The program brings together high-ranking politicians to discuss (from a nationalist perspective) major issues in Russia’s development. National Interest is broadcast live every Saturday at 11.20 am.



On 14 March 2008, in an article published by the investigative newspaper Novaya Gazeta, Kiselyev defended the channel’s policy of sidelining opposition activists: “(Vladimir) Ryzhkov was endlessly on air, Yavlinsky and Nemtsov in great profusion. But later on, as these heroes’ ratings fell, people didn’t want to see them anymore!”

### Special programs on the Caucasus



The Russian Information Channel “Vesti” runs a special program titled “**SNG s Kirillom Tanayevym**” (The CIS with Kirill Tanayev). During the program, Tanayev, the General Director of the Foundation for Effective Politics (see Think Tanks and Academia section), takes stock of developments in the twelve countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. On weekends he talks to party leaders, politicians, experts and political scientists. Tanaev recently edited a book on the war in Georgia entitled “Ossetian tragedy. White book of crimes against South Ossetia, August 2008”. <http://europublish.ru/eng/allbooks>

### Correspondents in the South Caucasus

**Georgia: Iya Bersenadze**, Correspondent of news program “Vesti”  
M. Kostava Str. 68, 380076 Tbilisi, Tel: +995 32 98 63 55; +995 32 36 85 58

**NTV Television****HTB**[www.ntv.ru](http://www.ntv.ru)

**NTV Television**, owned by gas giant Gazprom, is the third federal channel. It retains an audience share of some 15 percent. Founded in 1993, NTV was owned by Vladimir Gusinsky's Media Most holding until January 2001. During the 1990s, when freedom of speech in Russia was almost unlimited, NTV – known for its independent reporting and its criticism of government policy, notably in Chechnya – quickly developed into one of Russia's best TV channels. NTV was also home to Russia's best known and most popular journalists, including Yevgeny Kiselyov, Marianna Maksimovskaya, Mikhail Osokin and Viktor Shenderovich. Shenderovich became famous for *Kukly* (Puppets), a 10 minute political satire show broadcast on Saturday evening. Things changed for the worse when Vladimir Putin came to power. When NTV did not relent in its criticism of government policy, the company was restructured and sold. Today not much remains of the old NTV. The programming consists of little more than entertainment, crime and soap operas. Only one analytical program, "K Barryeru" (On the stand), has survived. The show's host Vladimir Solovyev is regarded to have close links to Vladimir Putin.

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**Senior Management**

**Vladimir Kulistikov** is General Director of NTV. He started his career with NTV where he was the first Deputy Director General in 2000. After the channel's sale he moved to the Vesti (RIA Vesti) news agency, a subsidiary of VGTRK state television. In 2001 he returned to NTV as Deputy Director General.



**Alexander Nechayev** is Deputy Director General of NTV since March 2008. He was previously the channel's marketing director and responsible for strategic planning. In 2004-2006 he worked for Channel One's international programme.

## Main news programs

**Segodnya** (Today) is NTV's main news programme. It is broadcast 10 times a day on weekdays and 5 times a day on weekends. The program is presented by 24 anchormen.



Since 2005 **Kirill Pozdnyakov** hosts the news programme **Segodnya – Itogovaya Programma** (Today – Final Issue), aired on Sundays at 7 pm. Pozdnyakov has worked with NTV since 1998. **Yekaterina Kopylova** and **Tatyana Sopova** are the show's chief editors.



News on Georgia: <http://news.ntv.ru/theme/5064/> (in Russian only)

## Analysis and opinion programs



**Vladimir Solovyev** hosts “**K Barryeru**” (On the stand), the only remaining analytical programme on NTV. The show features “an intriguing direct debate format between two opposing viewpoints,” wrote Nikolai Petro in March 2005.<sup>2</sup> Solovyev, regarded as close to the administration of Vladimir Putin, is known for his sharp, polemical and often scandalous statements on a range of issues including politics, economics, religion, sports, and journalism.

E-mail: [pr@tabriz.ru](mailto:pr@tabriz.ru) or [pr@treli.ru](mailto:pr@treli.ru)

NTV has 13 foreign correspondents in places like New York, Brussels and Germany. It has one correspondent in Georgia (Nuzgar Kereselidze) and one in Armenia (Hovhannes Hakobyan).

## Correspondents in the Southern Caucasus



**Georgia:** Nugzar Kereselidze  
Sh.Rustaveli Prospekt 42, 380008, Tbilisi  
Tel. +995 32 99 03 62

**Armenia:** Hovhannes Hakobyan

<sup>2</sup>

<http://209.85.129.132/search?q=cache:sGC0ZIWrfKYJ:www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/9107-6.cfm+Vladimir+Solovyev+NTV&cd=8&hl=tr&ct=clnk&gl=tr>



**REN TV**  
**PEH TB**  
[www.ren-tv.com](http://www.ren-tv.com)

**REN TV**, owned mainly by the National Media Group (68 percent of shares) and the German Media house Bertelsmann RTL (30 percent), is one of the largest private federal channels in Russia. According to tns-global, REN TV retained a 4.3 percent audience share during the week of 8-14 March 2010. The channel was launched in the beginning of 1997. Its programs are now broadcast to a potential audience of about 113.5 million viewers in more than 700 Russian cities. After its January 2001 sale, NTV hired some of Russia's most renowned journalists such as Marianna Maximovskaya, a former presenter of the interview show *Geroy Dnya* (Hero of the day) and Mikhail Osokin, presenter of the *Segodnya* news program. The channel – featuring interviews with leaders of Other Russia, an organisation gathering opponents of former President Vladimir Putin – gained a reputation as the last bastion of independent TV reporting. In mid-October 2009 the owner of REN TV, who also controls the independent Petersburg Channel 5, announced the restructuring of the National Media Group's top management. Both channels are worried about a possible merger and the possibility of meddling by the state-owned RT, which is reportedly expected to produce news for REN TV.

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### Senior Management



**Alexander Ordzhonikidze** is General Director of REN TV.



**Alexei Abakumov** is Editor-in-chief of REN TV.

## Main news programs



“24” is the main news program of REN TV. It is broadcast on weekdays at 9.30 am, 12.30 pm, 4.30 pm and 7.30 pm.



**Mikhail Osokin** hosts the “*Itogovyy vypusk ‘24’*” (Final Issue “24”) news program, which airs Monday to Thursday at 11.30 pm. Osokin was one of the leading anchormen at NTV before the channel’s sale to Gazprom.

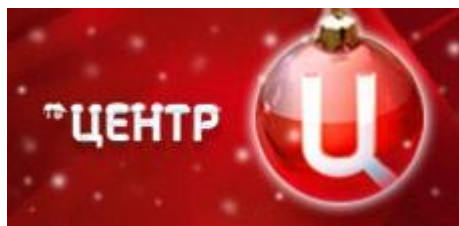


**Marianna Maksimovskaya** hosts the weekly program **Nedelya (Week)**, an analytical news program. She also is Deputy Editor-in-chief of REN TV. Before joining the channel in 2002 she was the host of NTV’s *Geroy Dnya* (Hero of the day), one of the best interview programs in Russian television. Maksimovskaya left NTV when the channel was acquired by Gazprom.

**Editor-in-chief** of *Nedelya* is **Svetlana Elina**.

## Correspondents in the Southern Caucasus

**Georgia:** Ivan Shlamov, Tbilisi



**TV Center**  
**ТВ Центр**  
[www.tvc.ru](http://www.tvc.ru)

**TV Center** was founded in June 1997 and is owned by the administration of the city of Moscow. It covers mostly local news, including reports about Moscow's mayor Yuri Luzhkov and his administration. Its target audience consists of conservative people aged over 40. By its own account the channel can be viewed in 76 regions by about 95 million people; overall, it retains roughly a 3 percent audience share. It also airs in the CIS countries, the Baltic States, Europe, Israel, USA, New Zealand and Australia.



Anchorwoman **Kira Proshutinskaya** hosts the political talk show “**Narod khochet znat**” (People want to know). In September 2007, prominent political analyst Mikhail Delyagin was digitally erased from the show after he had criticised Vladimir Putin. The technicians who removed Delyagin but left his disembodied legs in one shot, however.

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### Senior Management



**A. S. Ponomaryev** is General Director of TV Center since 2006. He was previously Deputy Director of the state television holding VGTRK and the director of the cultural channel “Kultura”.  
 E-mail: [web@tvc.ru](mailto:web@tvc.ru)



**Viktor Tsoy** is chairman of the advisory board, press officer for Moscow's administration and the mayor's spokesperson.  
 E-mail: [web@tvc.ru](mailto:web@tvc.ru)

First Deputy General Director is **Vyacheslav Mostovoy**  
 E-mail: [wmostowo@tvc.ru](mailto:wmostowo@tvc.ru)

### Main news programs



The main news program is “**Sobytiya**” (Events), which is aired every day at 11.30 am, 2.30 pm, 5.30 pm and 8.30 pm.

E-mail: [infcool@tvc.ru](mailto:infcool@tvc.ru)



Together with **Vera Kuzmina**, **Ilya Kolosov** hosts the weekday news programme **Sobytiya 25y chas** (Events at the 25th hour), which summarizes the main news of the day.

E-Mail: [infcool@tvc.ru](mailto:infcool@tvc.ru)



### Analysis and opinion programs



Since 1999 **Alexei Pushkov** hosts the analytical programme **Post Scriptum**. Pushkov previously worked for ORT, which was later transformed into Channel One, and as a commentator for “*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*”. He is also a member of the presidium of the influential Russian Council on Foreign and Defense Policy. **Post Scriptum** features interviews with politicians,



scientists or analysts from Russia and abroad. Guests have included former Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov, the liberal politician Grigori Yavlinsky or Condoleezza Rice. **Post Scriptum** is aired every Monday at 11.45 am. E-mail: [ps@tvc.ru](mailto:ps@tvc.ru)



Another program titled “*Politicheskaya kuchnya*” (Political Kitchen) is presented by **Konstantin Zatulin**, First Deputy Chairman of the Duma’s committee for CIS affairs and communication with compatriots. He is also Director of the Institute of CIS countries. While cooking, Zatulin talks politics with politicians, journalists or artists. The show airs every Sunday. In September 2008, shortly Russia recognized the independence of Abkhazia, Abkhazian president Sergei Bagapsh awarded Zatulin honorary citizenship.

E-mail: [zatulin@zatulin.ru](mailto:zatulin@zatulin.ru)

### Correspondents in the Southern Caucasus

**Georgia:** Iya Chumburidze, Tbilisi, Tel: +995 32 98 63 25

**Armenia:** Grigory Petrosyan, Yerevan, Tel: +374 10 56 77 27



**RT**

[www.russiatoday.com/en](http://www.russiatoday.com/en)

**RT**, a round-the-clock English-language news channel, started broadcasting on 10 December 2005 and is available worldwide via satellite. The TV station is funded by the state owned RIA-Novosti news agency. By its own account RT regularly airs news as well as “many aspects of Russian history, culture and opinions. Our special projects are specifically tailored to accustom the international audience with the Russian perspective.” In general it is steering clear of criticism of the President and the government, and the Russian opposition is not given a platform to air its views. (See also [ESI picture story Mainstream views on Russian TV](#))

During the 2008 Caucasus War, William Dunbar, a journalist at Russia Today, resigned from RT after criticising the channel’s pro-Russian bias. He told the Moscow Times that a series of video satellite feeds that he had scheduled for 11 August had been scrapped because they reported the Russian bombing of targets inside Georgia. “The real news, the real facts of the matter, didn’t conform to what they were trying to report, and therefore, they wouldn’t let me report it. I felt that I had no choice but to resign”, Dunbar was quoted as saying. One senior journalist at Russia Today called Dunbar’s allegations of bias “nonsense”. “The Russian coverage I have seen has been much better than much of the Western coverage,” he said. “My view is that Russia Today is not particularly biased at all. When you look at the Western media, there is a lot of genuflection towards the powers that be. Russian news coverage is largely pro-Russia, but that is to be expected.”

<http://www.pri.org/theworld/?q=node/20092> (an interview with William Dunbar)

According to RT’s website the channel set up a bureau in Tskhinvali, the capital of South Ossetia, after the August 2008 conflict.

### Senior Management



**Margarita Simonyan** is General Secretary and Editor-in-chief and the youngest head of a global news and entertainment TV channel. RT, she says, was born out of the desire to present an “unbiased portrait of Russia”. (See also [ESI picture story Mainstream views on Russian TV](#))

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Fax: +7 (495) 926 27 61

E-mail: [producers@rttv.ru](mailto:producers@rttv.ru)

Margarita Simonyan, only 25 when she became Editor-in-Chief of *RT*, has dismissed accusations that the channel is too pro-Kremlin: “Whatever comes from Russia, especially if it gets government support, is going to be bad, bad propaganda. Is anyone worried that the BBC is getting its funding from people's taxes? Nobody seems worried by that.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2008/oct/27/russia-today-youth-served/>





**Channel 5 (5-tv)**  
**Пятый Канал**

[www.5-tv.ru](http://www.5-tv.ru)

**Channel 5** (formerly known as Petersburg - Channel 5), founded in 1992, is a federal television channel based in St. Petersburg. The channel is owned by Yuri Kovalchuk's National Media Group (NMG), which also controls Moscow-based REN TV. The largest shareholders in NMG are Bank Rossiya and Surgutneftegaz, a major Russian oil and gas company. Kovalchuk has close connections to Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. Channel 5 has an audience share of approximately 2 percent and is one of the last independent Russian channels to air critical views of the government and independent analysis.

In March 2010, Channel 5 substantially changed its broadcasting strategy, launching a number of new programmes and inviting well-known anchors such as Alexander Vainshteyn and award-winning journalist Svetlana Sorokina, who also hosts the "Circle of Light" on the *Ekho Moskvy* radio station. According to NMG representatives, Channel 5 is different from others because it provides "substantive, contemporary, and intelligent programming and is not excessively dependent on the mass audience."<sup>4</sup>

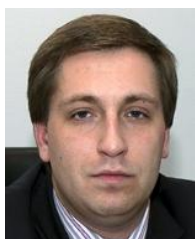
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### Senior Management



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**Vladimir Tyulin** is Director of the analytical program department.  
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<sup>4</sup> Arina Borodina, "I Wasn't Asked to Come Just to Walk Around Doing Nothing" (in Russian), *Kommersant Online*, 4 March 2010. <http://kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?fromsearch=8df843dd-f413-4c01-858f-dd71a13674f4&docid=1331629>



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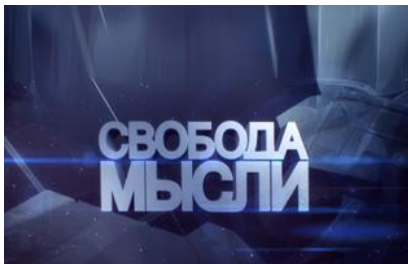
### Main news programs



**Seychas** at 7.30 is Channel 5's main news program. Its anchors are **Olga Bolkova, Vitali Voronin, Yevgeni Gusev, Vitali Lukashov, Irina Petrova** and **Olga Nagornaya**.



**Aleksandr Anuchkin** is anchorman of the weekly analytical news program "**Glavnoe**" (Essential).



"**Svoboda mysli**" (Freedom of Thought) is the recently launched daily prime-time talk show on Channel 5. It aims to address a broad range of political, social, economic and other issues. Channel 5 invited two well-known and distinctly different figures to host "**Svoboda mysli**." Alexander Vainshtein is a former scientist, sports commentator, and an award-winning producer and journalist, whereas Ksenia Sobchak is a media star and former reality show host who has often been described as a "Russian Paris Hilton." "**Svoboda mysli**" airs Mondays through Fridays at 9 pm.



**Ksenia Sobchak** and **Alexander Vainshtein**, the hosts of the talk show **Svoboda mysli**



**“Programma peredach Svetlany Sorokinoy” (Programme with Svetlana Sorokina)** is a newly launched interview programme on Channel 5. Svetlana Sorokina, the host of the programme, is a famous TV anchor and journalist who was closely involved in the development of Russian television after the fall of the Soviet Union.

“Programme with Svetlana Sorokina” is described as a “programme about life and the history of Russia told through the history of the development of television.” The programme focuses in particular on the perestroika times and

on the 1990’s and on those TV programmes that played a key role in shaping the public opinion in the Soviet Union and Russia.



**Svetlana Sorokina**, host of “Programma Peredach Svetlany Sorokinoy”

## 2. RADIO



### Echo of Moscow (Ekho Moskvy)

Эхо Москвы

[www.echo.msk.ru](http://www.echo.msk.ru)

**Echo of Moscow** is regarded as one of the most independent radio stations in Russia, despite the fact that since 2002 it has been mainly owned by Gazprom Media (66 percent of shares), a subsidiary of state-run gas giant Gazprom. The rest of the shares are owned by the station's journalists. Founded in August 1990, Echo of Moscow broadcasts in many cities in Russia, in some CIS countries, and via internet. By its own account, it reaches about 900,000 listeners per day. According to tns-global, between July and September 2009 the station reached almost 2.5 million listeners – an audience share of 4.2 percent. Despite a relatively small audience, Echo of Moscow is known for the quality of its various analytical programs, political talk shows and journalists, including Yulya Latynina, Yevgenia Albats and its Editor in Chief Alexei Venediktov. Unlike most state-affiliated TV and radio stations, Echo of Moscow tries to provide a forum for diverse points of view.

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**Alexei Venediktov** has been **Editor-in-chief** since 1998. Having studied history at the Moscow Institute of Pedagogics, he worked as a postman for five years and as a history teacher for twenty more. In March 2008 Venediktov was re-elected as Editor-in-Chief. In 2002, when Gazprom took over Echo of Moscow, The Washington Post quoted Venediktov as saying: “I am not going to work for a radio station that belongs to the state. I prefer to keep my reputation but not my job”.<sup>5</sup> In the end, he stayed on board and continued giving opposition politicians and human rights a chance to appear on air. His stance caused friction with Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in August 2008. During a meeting with about 30 representatives of the most influential Russian media, Putin criticised Echo of Moscow’s coverage of the Russian-Georgian war. “You are responsible for everything that goes on at the radio station. I don’t know who they are, but I know who you are,” Putin was quoted as saying by The Washington Post.<sup>6</sup> See also ESI picture story [“Dissenting voices: Ekho Moskvy and Yulia Latynina”](#).

E-mail: [echo@echo.msk.ru](mailto:echo@echo.msk.ru)



**Sergey Buntman** is **First Deputy Editor**. He has his own daily show, “Replika Buntmana”, where he comments on political events.

Comments on Georgia: (in Russian only)

<http://www.echo.msk.ru/programs/buntman/archive/15.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.cdi.org/russia/Johnson/6103.htm>

<sup>6</sup> <http://current.com/124tm4c>

## Analytical programs and opinion



**Yulia Latynina**, born in 1966 in Moscow, is a well-known Russian writer and journalist. She has been on the staff of *Novaya Gazeta* since 2001, writes a column for *EJ.ru* and *Gazeta.ru*, and hosts a program called *Access Code* on *Ekho Moskvyy*. It airs on Saturday evening at 7 pm. She has written extensively on the Caucasus. Latynina's critical coverage of the August 2008 war between Russia and Georgia attracted much attention and controversy in Russia. In December 2008, Latynina received the Freedom Defenders Award from US State Secretary Condoleezza Rice for "exposing corruption and abuses of authority among government officials as well as egregious human rights violations by both government authorities and private actors, particularly in the North Caucasus."<sup>7</sup> (See also [ESI picture story: Dissenting voices: Ekho Moskvyy and Yulia Latynina](#))

Yulia Latynina's writings on South Ossetia are scathing in their treatment of the local elites. In her view, the government of breakaway South Ossetia is an example of a *siloviki*-steered structure (*siloviki* are the representatives of the Russian security apparatus):

"I cannot even describe the regime in South Ossetia as 'separatist'. If you think about it, who would you identify as the separatists there? The head of South Ossetian KGB, Anatoliy Baranov, used to head the Federal Security Service of the Mordovian Republic in Russia; the head of the Interior Ministry, Mikhail Mindzayev, served in the Interior Ministry of North Ossetia; Defense Minister Vasiliy Lunev was a military commissar in Perm; and Security Council Secretary Anatoliy Barankevich used to be the Vice Deputy of the commissar of Stavropol Krai. So who exactly is the Ossetian separatist in this government? Prime Minister Yuri Morozov, perhaps?"



**Yevgeniya Albats** is a well-known political scientist, writer and professor at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow. She hosts the weekly program "All Albats" and writes regularly for "The Moscow Times". During Soviet times she wrote predominantly on physics and astrophysics. After the Soviet Union fell apart, Albats conducted research on the KGB, for which she received a number of threats. She is still on the "death lists" of various groups on the Internet, Albats told "Der Standard" in April 2007.<sup>8</sup> She was a close friend of Anna Politkovskaya.



**Viktor Shenderovich** became famous as a scriptwriter for "Kukly" (Puppets), a popular political satire show that aired on NTV between 1994 and 2002, when the channel was acquired by Gazprom Media. Shenderovich, a strong critic of Vladimir Putin and the war in Chechnya, kept up his criticism of the government in his show "Plavleniy syrok". Shenderovich graduated from the Moscow State Art and Cultural University, where he specialized in "directing volunteer theatrical groups".



**Yevgeny Kiselyov** was chairman of the board and one of the leading journalists at NTV. After NTV's purchase by Gazprom Media, Kiselyov became general director of TV 6 and then started working for REN TV. At Echo of Moscow he hosts the weekly program "Vlast" (Power). He also writes a column for *Vedomosti*, an established Russian daily jointly published by the Financial Times and the Wall Street Journal. He contributes to the Russian editions of *Forbes* and *GQ* magazines and writes regularly for *Gazeta.Ru*, a leading on-line newspaper. According to a July 2009 report in the Financial Times, Kiselyov was due to start working for Tvi in Ukraine. "Travelling to Ukraine is

<sup>7</sup> Merle D. Kellerhals Jr, "Russian Journalist, Two Americans Receive Human Rights Awards," US State Department, 9 December 2008. <http://www.america.gov/st/hr-english/2008/December/20081209114917dmslahrellek0.3315241.html?CP.rss=true>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.kontakt.erstegroup.net/report/stories/Issue02\\_07\\_Was+soll+ich+fuerchten\\_dt+en/en](http://www.kontakt.erstegroup.net/report/stories/Issue02_07_Was+soll+ich+fuerchten_dt+en/en)

like going back in a time machine to the 1990s”, Kiselyov was quoted as saying. “In Russia, there is no open political debate any more. The authorities are hermetically sealed we can just hypothesize about the discussion going on inside.” At Echo Kiselyov could only interview political analysts as politicians refused to appear on his show.<sup>9</sup>



**Radio Russia**

**Радио России**

[www.radiorus.ru](http://www.radiorus.ru)

**Radio Russia** went on air in December 1990. In January 1991, it was the only station which reported on the USSR's violent attempt to re-impose Soviet rule in the Baltic States. Today Radio Russia belongs to the state-run umbrella organisation Vserossiyskaya Gosudarstvennaya Televisiionnaya i Radioveshatel'naya Kompaniya (All Russian State Television and Broadcasting Company or VGTRK). Radio Russia is a federal broadcasting station which offers news on economics, politics, culture and sport. According to tns-global, from July to September 2009 Radio Russia had above 6 million daily listeners and retained an audience share of 10 percent. It can be listened to all over Russia.

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### Senior Management

**Vyacheslav Umanovskiy** is **Director** of Radio Russia. He studied educational science and graduated from Moscow State University at age 19.

### Analytical programs and opinion



**Natalya Bekhtina**, who has worked for Radio Russia since its launch in 1990, hosts the daily interview program “**Ot pervogo litsa**” (**First-hand**). The show, which features interviews on current affairs, airs at 12.30 pm on weekdays. The program's coverage of the Georgian war – shows that aired between 26 July and 24 August 2008 – has been removed from the archive. (<http://www.radiorus.ru/section.html?rid=354>)

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<sup>9</sup> [http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/b227a87a-6c20-11de-9320-00144feabdc0,dwp\\_uuid=a712eb94-dc2b-11da-890d-0000779e2340.html](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/b227a87a-6c20-11de-9320-00144feabdc0,dwp_uuid=a712eb94-dc2b-11da-890d-0000779e2340.html)



**Voice of Russia**

**Голос России**

[www.ruvr.ru](http://www.ruvr.ru)

The history of **Voice of Russia** goes back to the year 1929, when its predecessor Radio Moscow began broadcasting. The latter was the USSR's official international broadcasting station and, as such, a communist mouthpiece and an antidote to Voice of America and Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty. After the Soviet Union fell apart, the station was renamed Voice of Russia. Today it belongs to VGTRK, the All-Russian State Television and Radio Company, an umbrella organisation of six nationwide TV channels and various radio stations. According to its website, Voice of Russia informs mainly on the views of the Russian government, as well as on Russian culture and tradition. Voice of Russia currently broadcasts in 24 languages.

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### Senior Management



**Andrey Bystritskiy** is Chairman of Voice of Russia and Deputy Director of VGTRK. He is also Editor-in-Chief of the monthly humanitarian magazine Apology and professor at Moscow State University's Higher School of Economics. Bystritskiy wrote a book titled "Russian intelligentsia during the downfall of the Soviet system" (Germany, 1991). He holds a PhD in Educational Science.

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Coverage of the South Caucasus and former Soviet Union countries on <http://rus.ruvr.ru/world/xsssr/>



**Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty**  
**Радио Свобода**  
[www.svobodanews.ru](http://www.svobodanews.ru)

**Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty** began broadcasting in 1953 – first from Munich and later from Prague, home of its current headquarters. RFL/RL has 19 local bureaus and provides its services to 20 countries in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Russia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, The Middle East and Southwest Asia. By working together with local radio stations in each country, it manages to reach about 25 million listeners and readers. Together with Echo of Moscow the station is one of the remaining independent voices in Russia.

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Read more: [http://www.svobodanews.ru/section/contact\\_us/313.html#ixzz0XPL4JjHW](http://www.svobodanews.ru/section/contact_us/313.html#ixzz0XPL4JjHW)

### Senior Management



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**Yefim Fishteyn** is Director of RFE/RL's Russian Service. He studied journalism at Moscow State University. From 1983 – 1995 he worked for Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty in Prague. Fishteyn is author of two analytical programs – “Vremya and Mir” (Time and the World) and “Vremya Svobody” (Time of Freedom).  
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## Correspondents in the Southern Caucasus

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[www.ekhokavkaza.com](http://www.ekhokavkaza.com), a subsidiary of Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, provides comprehensive coverage of the South Caucasus.

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