# This is a smear campaign! (who stands behind the media you read?)

Submitted on 25 Nov 2013 by Karolis Granickas

Don't we sometimes think that 'someone' is behind the media articles we read? It is not shocking that media can be 'bought' in many countries around the world. But how do you really know who is behind the media you read?

We, here at Transparency International in Lithuania, have implemented an interesting idea. We took the media ownership data and created a tool that allows Lithuanians to quickly and conveniently find out who owns the internet portals, newspapers, tv & radio stations and news agencies in Lithuania since 1996. Not only that – it also allows for accessing visualized networks of how media and business are interlinked in Lithuania. See it yourself @ **www.stirna.info**.
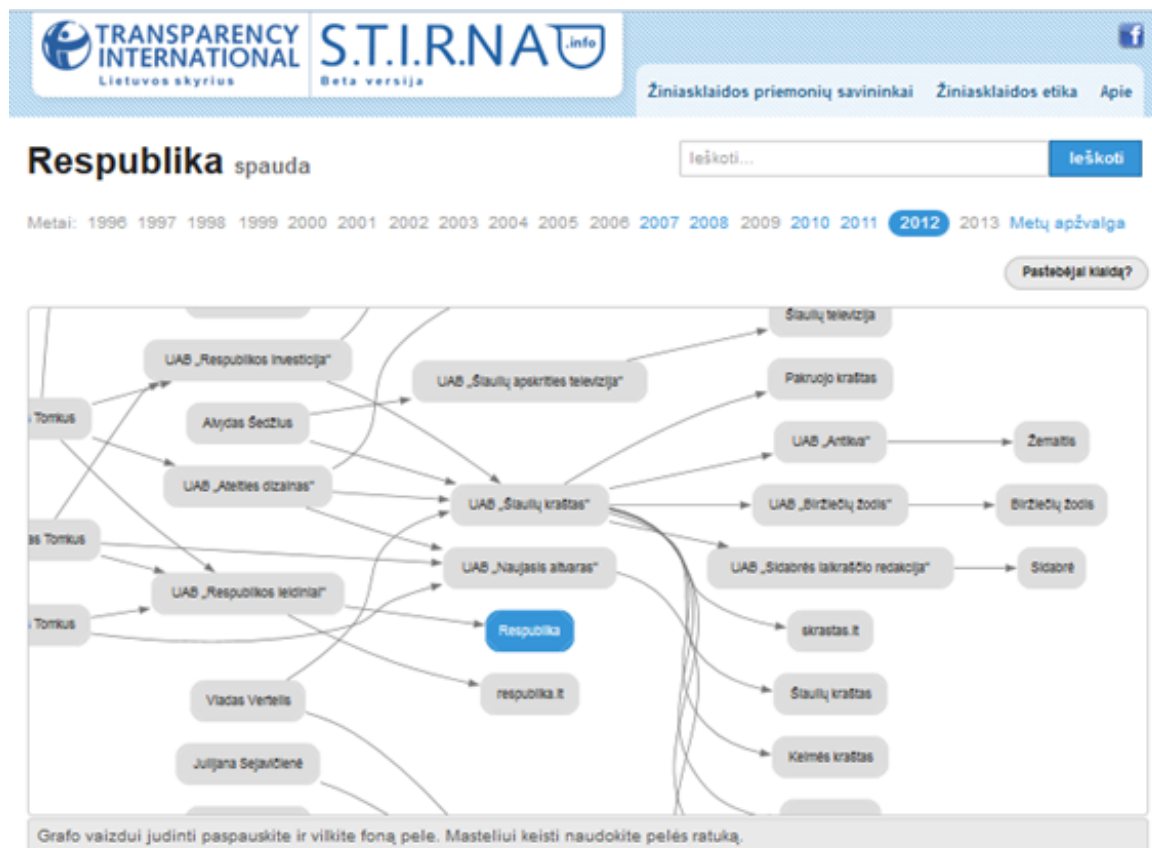
It's worth mentioning that had the media ownership data been available, it would have taken a month to create such a tool. It took us 10 months scraping the data from public authorities' websites and actually re-typing it from printed reports of Radio and Television Commission to get the data ready to re-use. We will now work to change the way authorities in charge provide media ownership data in Lithuania.

In Lithuania the tool received very high traffic numbers – this effectively means that Lithuanians now have a starting point of reference when reading the media with a critical eye. We encourage anyone interested to take our code and replicate the tool in their own countries!