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Media Environment

The media situation in Serbia

Media monitoring performed by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation shows that during the election campaign the print media has not reported on the so-called "big issues" like the state of the economy, European integration, Kosovo or retirement funds. Even when such topics were mentioned by politicians themselves, the media did not explore the issues beyond the boundaries of the political propaganda. Out of all examined interviews in six daily newspapers, three interviews got the lowest possible mark, while the others were of mediocre value and without added value. "In the print media, politicians failed to mention young people, who are an important segment of society, and the media exhibited similar attitude", said Tamara Skroza. Analysis of articles, reports and interviews published during this period has showed that some of the media outlets were visibly biased in favor of one political party. In the words of Professor Miroljub Radojkovic, "behavior of journalists has once again proven that journalists are frightened, that they lack power and reputation, and that what we call inertness is an expression of self-censorship with regard to the present government, as well as preventative self-censorship with regard to the future government."

(Pravda, Blic, Informer, 18.05.2012)

No less than three quarters of journalists in Serbia are of the opinion that there are problems related to the freedom of expression in the country, while only four out of 27 criteria used by the Council of Europe to measure the freedom of expression are successfully realized in Serbia – this is the result of the research "Freedom of the Media in Serbia in the European Mirror". The research included 240 editors-in-chief of news media outlets from 79 places in Serbia; 69 media owners; 40 political party officials from 10 cities in Serbia; 50 members of nine national minorities; and 26 representatives of governmental, regulatory and self-regulatory bodies in the media sector. The research showed that only four out of 27 criteria used by the Council of Europe to assess the freedom of expression were fulfilled in Serbia: the freedom of entry into journalism; the freedom of access to the Internet and the foreign media; separation of participation in the executive branch of government from professional activities in the media field; and (un)limited right of the media to exclusively report on important events. However, the report notes significant deviation from European standards in the area of media economy and independence of the media from political influence, as well as in the field of labor and social rights and safety of journalists.

(Dnevnik, Informer, Radio Boom 93 19.05.2012)

Assessments of the current media situation in Serbia

A former Croatian journalist, Tomislav Jakic, said that news journalism in the region had "died" and transformed into political propaganda. He added, however, that there were exceptions among journalists. In his words, the slow disappearance of news journalism is a "global trend", although serious media outlets are still present in developed countries. He strongly criticized the hybrid, "infotainment" form of journalism, which offers information in the form of entertainment.

(Beta, NDNV, 14.05.2012)

The president of the Executive Board of the Independent Journalists' Association of Vojvodina (NDNV), Nedim Sejdinovic, says that Serbian politicians perceive the media only as a tool to achieve their goals. "They do not understand that the media should hold the government accountable, and they threaten the media if it fails to report in accordance with their wishes". In his words, it is of crucial importance that journalistic associations have reacted to cases of direct violations of the freedom of the media, but the problem is that such cases usually do not end up in court. The media scene in Vojvodina is dominated by Belgrade media, which is, in the opinion of Sejdinovic, the result of centralization of money and power in Belgrade.

(Beta, NUNS, NDNV, 15.05.2012, Danas, UNS, Pravda, 16.05.2012)

The ruling political parties in Serbia are the main source of pressure exerted on the media (47 percent of cases), followed by the executive branch of government (32 percent of cases), opposition political parties (26 percent of cases), while advertisers in the form of private and state-owned companies negatively affect the independence of the media (16 percent of cases each), said the president of the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS),

Vukasin Obradovic. He spoke at the presentation of the report "Freedom of the Media in Serbia in the European Mirror". In his words, 242 litigations against the media were initiated in the last year: 93 percent of these cases were related to requests for compensation for damage of dignity and reputation, while 7 percent of the cases were related to requests for publication of corrections. The largest number of cases were initiated against the print media, while some of them involved television stations B92, RTS, Pink and the web portal *E-Novine*. Demanded damages range from three and 100 million euros.

(Ebart Media Archive, NUNS, 20.05.2012. Danas, UNS, 21.05.2012.)

Between the two rounds of the presidential election, major media outlets in Serbia exhibited bias in favor of the candidate of the Democratic Party (DS), Boris Tadic, while the amount of non-critical reporting could be compared only to the media in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan, it was pointed out today at the presentation of the report of media monitoring by the BIRODI organization. Ivan Godarski from the Slovakian organization MEMO 98, which monitors the media during election campaigns worldwide, pointed out that journalists in Serbia were not ready to ask politicians difficult questions, although journalists are required to ask such questions, instead of serving as politicians' press department. The research covered the main news programmes of television stations B92, Radio-Television Serbia (RTS), Prva, Pink, Studio B, and Television Vojvodina, as well as the daily newspapers *Politika*, *Blic*, *Vecernje Novosti*, *Danas* and *Pravda*. The research is available on the website www.mediamonitor.rs

(Beta, UNS, NUNS, 22.05.2012, Pravda, Danas, Tanjug, Politika, 23.05.2012)

The state and the media

Gordana Susa says in an article published by daily newspaper *Blic*: "The Law on Electronic Communication was an attempt by the previous convocation of the National Parliament to allow the security services and internal affairs authorities to have access to electronic communication data without court orders, and to jeopardize the right of journalists to protect the confidentiality of their sources. Luckily, after criticism from the EU, the attempt to introduce in the parliamentary rulebook the possibility of removal from position of the commissioner for information of public importance or the protector of citizens has not been successful. The Culture and Information Committee has never independently initiated a public debate on the freedom of the media, without regard for the needs of the Serbian democratic society. However, the leadership of both the ruling and opposition political parties have not refrained from "pressuring the media", in the words of two thirds of 240 interviewed editors of news programmes in Serbia.

(Blic, 19.05.2012)

Public service broadcasters

Investigative journalist from the Novi Sad School of Journalism, Dejan Pralica, said that media monitoring of new programmes aired on six languages by TV Vojvodina showed that most of the airtime had been dedicated to the Democratic Party (DS), followed by the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), the United Regions of Serbia (URS) and the Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP). Pralica criticized the editors of the public service broadcaster for reporting on statements and activities of state and province officials during the pre-election silence, which constituted a disguised political campaign. In his words, the media mostly exhibited a passive approach to reporting on the political campaign.

(Beta, NDNV, 22.05.2012)

Threats, attacks and legal proceedings against journalists; media-related trials

The leader of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), Tomislav Nikolic, demands damages in the amount of no less than 200 million dinars from the daily newspaper *Kurir*, an amount that would result in closing down of the newspaper, says a report published in *Kurir*. The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) and the Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) have strongly condemned Nikolic's move. The deputy president of the SNS, Aleksandar Vucic, at first claimed that the lawsuit was worth two million dinars, not 200 million. After we sent him a copy of the claim, with a figure of 200 million dinars, he said that was "a mistake".

(Kurir, UNS, 11.05.2012)

The leader of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), Tomislav Nikolic, criticized the media, saying that after his election victory he would tell journalists what to report on, reports daily newspaper *Kurir*. The editorial team of RTS responded, noting that Nikolic had abused the decency and professionalism of the TV host and "made a series of accusations, threats and untruths" about the public service broadcaster.

(Kurir, UNS, 15.05.2012)

Yesterday morning, the employees in the local media company RNJP Paracin found the company car "Zastava 101" in the middle of the river, with front doors wide open and its windscreen broken. The vehicle had been jointly used by journalists working for the radio, the local newsletter and the municipal television.

(Vecernje novosti, NUNS, UNS, 11.05.2012)

The vice president of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) in Novi Sad, Vladimir Galic, filed a lawsuit before the Higher Court in Novi Sad against the news and publishing company "Agenda 2020", which publishes the weekly magazine *Novi Magazin*, and the editor-in-chief of the magazine, Milorad Ivanovic, demanding one million dinars in damages because of the claims made in the article "Which Politicians Are Behind Controversial Privatizations?"

(Novi magazin, NUNS, 17.05.2012)

The former director of the Security Information Agency (BIA), Rade Bulatovic, is representing the Republic Agency for Electronic Communication (RATEL) in a legal process initiated by the SOS channel because of the allocation of a non-functional frequency during a public contest. At the same time, the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA), which is the second defendant in the case, pointed out its passive participation in the dispute. The RRA considers that it is not its fault that RATEL included in the list of available channels the channel 36, which has been used by the Second Channel of the Romanian Television for years. According to unofficial sources of the daily newspaper *Alo!*, Rade Bulatovic is also a friend of the president of the managing board of RATEL, Professor Jovan Radunovic.

(Alo!, 19.05.2012, NUNS, 21.05.2012)

After an almost-five years-long dispute with the SOS channel, thanks to efforts of its legal representative, Rade Bulatovic, who is a former director of the Security Information Agency (BIA), the Republic Agency for Electronic Communication (RATEL) has managed to win a court verdict in its favor ordering a forced collection of the debt in the amount of 4.5 million dinars for usage of the channel 36, despite the fact that a court expert was of the opinion that the channel was not usable, causing huge damage to SOS. The verdict passed by the First Primary Court is executive and SOS cannot appeal it. In an informal discussion, Bulatovic told the director of the SOS station that RATEL represented the state and that he should not expect a lot of success in this case. SOS informed yesterday all the relevant institutions in the country, as well as the EU, OSCE and the embassies of UK and USA. Despite the fact that a report made by the court expert confirms that the SOS channel was given a faulty frequency, and that the TV station demands more than 650 million dinars in damages, RATEL, "has been trying everything in their power to destroy and close down the SOS channel before the completion of the legal process". The Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA), which is the second defendant in the case, has proposed a settlement, but RATEL is opposed to the proposal. The next session of the Commercial Court is scheduled for June 15.

(Danas, UNS, NUNS, 23.05.2012)

Rights of journalists

"I support the reduced service years for retirement for journalists, as proposed in the Tamara's Law", said the minister of internal affairs, Ivica Dacic. "They have a very difficult and responsible job, and the state has to offer them strong support". The secretary general of the Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS), Nino Brajovic, is of the opinion that reduced service years for retirement should be allowed to all journalists and editors of daily news editorial teams, as well as photoreporters and cameramen. The president of the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS), Vukasin Obradovic, says that journalists should enjoy this benefit because of the difficulty of their job.

(Kurir, 18.05.2012)

The minority media

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) has strongly condemned the act of Mikan Velinovic, the founder and commander of the Serbian Liberation Antiterrorist Movement, who sent a letter to "JUGpress" accusing its editor-in-chief, Ljiljana Stojanovic, of "making servile justifications for the unambiguous support of representatives of local self-governments to arrested terrorists exhibited during the recent protest in Bujanovac". In the same letter, Velinovic accuses the majority of journalists in Serbia of "being ignorant, criminal, extremely selfish, professionally deformed..., immoral, addicted to alcohol, irresponsible, unconscientious..., semi-literate..." NUNS says that the letter constitutes impermissible pressure on the media, especially on the editorial team of "JUGpress", which does its job professionally and informs citizens in Serbian, Albanian, Romany and Bulgarian languages.
(NUNS, Beta, NDNV, Juzne vesti, 10.05.2012)

Professional standards

During 2011, 25 criminal charges were filed in Serbia against seven individuals because of suspected practice of medical charlatany and unauthorized prescription of medication. Despite the fact that it is illegal to engage in fortune-telling, soothsaying, and clairvoyance, "Psychic Djina" had for a long time advertised in the electronic and print media. So-called "healers" are not allowed to advertise or appear on TV programmes, however, they usually broadcast their shows from neighbouring countries via cable providers.

(Vecernje Novosti, 13.05.2012)

The deputy president of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), Aleksandar Vucic, confirmed that the president of the party, Tomislav Nikolic, met with the US Ambassador and that he informed her about the electoral fraud and behavior of the media during the election campaign.

(Kurir, 15.05.2012)

The president of the press department of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), Vuk Fatic, said that during the election campaign Radio-Television Serbia (RTS) had allowed "a brutal abuse of authority by Democratic Party (DS) officials", and that the ratio of airtime dedicated to DS and SNS during the election campaign, respectively, was given 4:1.

(Blic online, UNS, 15.05.2012, Blic, 16.05.2012)

The Complaints Committee of the Press Council has not been able to decide whether the daily newspaper Politika had violated the Journalistic Code of Serbia by publishing the article "Only Thieves Are Diligent". It was not possible to reach a two-thirds majority in favor or against such decision. The Regional Center for Minorities, which had filed the complaint in this case, said that the article had violated provisions of the Code of Journalism pertaining to obligation of journalists to protect rights and dignity of disadvantaged groups. The Committee asked Politika to publish its decision, and the daily newspaper fulfilled this request although it was not under obligation to do so.

(Politika, UNS, NUNS, 16.05.2012)

As of May 25, Radio-Television Vojvodina will begin airing the documentary TV series "The Media in Serbia: The Chronicle of Destruction". The series, which has seven episodes and is authored by Slavisa Lekic, is a chronology of ruination of the media during the last 20 years – from the rise to power of Slobodan Milosevic until today.

(NUNS, 15.05.2012)

A research on media reporting on decentralization, regionalization and constitutional and legal position of Vojvodina during the pre-election period was conducted on two occasions between March and May 2012 by the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NDNV), as a part of the project "Public Debate on Decentralization" with support from the National Endowment for Democracy. The monitoring covered the following daily and weekly newspapers: Press, Kurir, Blic, Danas, Politika, Dnevnik, NIN, Vreme and Novi magazin. Reports are available on the NDNV website.

(NDNV, 11.05.2012)

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NDNV) has presented the results of monitoring of media reports published during the election campaign by five daily newspapers – Danas, Politike, Blic, Press and Dnevnik. The monitoring shows that the majority of these newspapers were biased in favor of the Democratic Party (DS) and its presidential candidate Boris Tadic, while the "reports published by daily newspaper Danas were most balanced". The research also included three media outlets in Hungarian language, out of which Magyar Szo and Het Nap were heavily biased in favor of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (SVM). The content of the weekly supplement

published by Blic was dominated by SVM and DS.
(Danas, 16.05.2012)

Assessments, awards, training courses and competitions

Caricaturist for the newspaper Narodne Novine from Nis, Sasa Dimitrijevic, is the recipient of an international award. The topic of the exhibition was "Tourism", while 394 authors from 54 countries took part in the contest.
(Juzne vesti, 11.05.2012)

Photographer Zoran Petrovic from the Tourist Organization of Kragujevac is the recipient of the popular award at the ninth Beta Photograph of the Year public competition.
(Beta, NUNS, 15.05.2012)

SEEMO announced that Serbian journalist Igor Pavicevic won the 2012 SEEMO Human Rights Photo Award. The winning photograph, "Ručak na barikadi", (Lunch at the Barricades), shot on Sep. 18, 2011, in Jarinje, Kosovo, was selected by the SEEMO jury, headed by Radomir Licina (Danas daily, Belgrade, Serbia). Pavicevic works as a photojournalist for the Belgrade-based Press daily. The SEEMO Human Rights Award is part of the Beta Photo Award Competition. The winners of the 2012 Beta Photo Award are: Sanja Knezevic, Amnesty International, Serbia; Vadim Ghirda, AP, Romania; and Milos Cvetkovic, Blic, Serbia. A special award for best sports photograph, sponsored by Telekom, went to Bulgarian photographer Kostadin Andonov.
(SEEMO, Press, 18.05.2012)

Journalist Lidija Obradovic, who is a member of the Serbian language editorial team of the China Radio International, has won the third prize at the competition of foreign writers "I Love China".
(UNS, 15.05.2012)

Experienced and successful journalists can become excellent professional educators, if they are exposed to most efficient methods of transfer of knowledge and skills. With financial support from IREX/USAID, the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) will train for free 12 journalists to be professional educators. Additional information is available on the phone number 011/3343-255 from Dragan Janjic.
(MC, 15.05.2012)

Training for journalists "Reporting on Confiscation of Property Acquired via Criminal Activities" will take place on Thursday 24 May 2012 in the premises of the Media Center Vojvodina of the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NDNV). Experts from the Council of Europe, representatives of the Republic Public Prosecutor and the Ebart Archive will take part in the training.
(NDNV, 21.05.2012)

On May 28, after several months of preparations, the Media Association, the OSCE Mission in Serbia and IREX will launch a seminar dedicated to improvement of quality of reporting on economy. In the first three series, lectures will be held by leading domestic experts on economy and representatives of major business systems. They will be joined by experienced lecturers from Europe. The first 12 attendees of the seminar will have a chance to visit the World Bank, editorial offices of major international newspapers covering economy-related topics, as well as stock markets.
(ASMEDI NEWSLETTER, May 2012)

"Dan Graf d.o.o." has decided to announce a public contest for the annual journalistic award "Stanislav Marinkovic". The award is given for journalistic courage and special achievements in investigative and analytic journalism. All journalists working in the territory of Serbia are eligible for the award and candidates can be nominated by all editorial teams, professional associations and individuals. Proposals for the award have to be delivered to the jury not later than 1 June 2012 to the address of Danas, Alekse Nenadovica 19-23, 11000 Beograd, with a label saying "Za nagradu 'Stanislav Marinković'", or via email to uprava@danas.rs
(Danas, 22.05.2012)

Media visits

[United Kingdom Ambassador to Serbia Michael Davenport and his associates visited the editors-in-chief and directors of media companies that are members of the Media Association.](#)

(ASMEDI NEWSLETTER, maj 2012)

[Israeli Ambassador to Serbia Yossef Levy visited the Color Press Group, which is a member of the Media Association. The Ambassador was informed about operations of the media in Serbia in times of economic crisis, while Robert Coban informed him about the history of CPG, which celebrates its 20th birthday this autumn.](#)

(ASMEDI NEWSLETTER, maj 2012)

The control department of the Republic Agency for Electronic Communication (RATEL) organized on 25 April 2012 a visit of a group of students of the Faculty of Electronics in Belgrade, Department of Telecommunication and IT, to the Control and Measurement Center "Belgrade" in Dobanovci. After a lecture on principles of control of usage of the radio frequency spectrum, the students examined the latest-generation measuring instruments and vehicles. The students were also informed about the activities performed by RATEL controllers in the Center and in the field.

(Ratel, 10.05.2012)

The media audience

Alo! is the second most-read daily newspaper in Serbia, shows the research conducted by the Ipsos Strategic Marketing agency. The average number of readers in the previous week amounted to no less than 543,870 readers. Only the daily newspaper Blic had a larger number of readers – 839,785. Blic is also published by the company Ringier Axel Springer.

(Alo!, 19.05.2012)

Media transfers

As of today, Branko Zujovic, who had until recently been the editor-in-chief of the newspaper Suboticke Novine and the vice president of the Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS); Radoslav Berbatovic, who works as a journalist with daily newspaper Pravda; and the long-time musical editor of TV Gornji Milanovac, Zoran Rankovic, will begin working in the editorial team of the Serbian language section of China Radio International (CRI).

(UNS, 17.05.2012)

Anniversaries

B92 has always been one of the popular radio stations in the capital city. In this year, the popularity of B92 has been on the increase in the whole territory of Serbia. Marking its 23rd anniversary, Radio B92 will offer gift and surprises to its loyal listeners.

(B92 online, UNS, RTV B92, NUNS, 15.05.2012)

Radio B92 celebrated yesterday its 23rd birthday by organizing a party for its friends, partners and listeners in the Cultural Center "Grad". With more than 150,000 listeners every day, Radio B92 is the third best-rated commercial station in Serbia.

(Press, 18.05.2012)

Other news

Around 500 editors and journalists from Europe attended the 13th European Journalistic Congress held in Vienna under the auspices of the company Japan Tobacco International. During the two days of the congress, the journalists, including the representatives of the daily newspaper Kurir, exchanged experiences and ideas and discussed the current European trends in journalism and online communication. During the congress, awards were given to best European newspapers.

(Kurir, NUNS, 21.05.2012)

In Memoriam

The editor-in-chief of the newspaper Sremske Novine, Jovanka-Beba Zurkovic, passed away in Sremska Mitrovica. She began working for Sremske Novine on 1 April 1987, while between 2005 and her untimely death she was the editor-in-chief of the newspaper. She was also a long-time correspondent of the daily newspaper Danas.
(UNS, NUNS, 10.05.2012)

Associates, friends and admirers of the former editor-in-chief of the free-thinking weekly magazine Naplo, Karolj Keseg, gathered to mark 15th anniversary of his death in Padej, near his resting place. During the following memorial event, annual awards were given to winners of the traditional contest for best media reports. The contest is organized to honor Keseg's achievements.
(Magyar szo, NDNV, 21.05.2012)

Media business operations

According to media reports in Macedonia, the local Broadcasting Council has decided to revoke the broadcasting license belonging to TV Pink 15 from Skopje. According to same sources, several months ago, the owner, Zeljko Mitrovic, met with the employees of the station, whose salaries are eight months late. He promised to pay a half of the debt as of 1 May, which did not happen.

(Politika, NUNS, UNS, 17.05.2012)

In 72 percent of the interviewed media outlets, the average monthly salary amounted to no more than 30,000 dinars, while only three percent of the media had salaries exceeding 50,000 dinars, says the report on freedom of the media authored by Civil Rights Defenders, ANEM, NUNS, NDNV and Local Press.

(Danas, UNS, NUNS, 10.05.2012)

The public has finally been given access to data on financial results of companies, including the media, in 2011. With regard to the print media, the last year was financially positive for publishing companies Ringier Axel Springer, Politika Novine i Magazini, Danas, Vreme and Kurir. The following companies suffered losses: Politika AD, Kompanija Novosti, NIN and Press. All publications issued by the publishing company Ringier Axel Springer (Blic, Alo, Blic Zena...) were financially successful in the last year, achieving profit in the amount of 525 million dinars. The number of employees of the company increased from 251 (in 2010) to 313.

(Danas, UNS, e-kapija, 10.05.2012)

Out of all commercial television stations with a national frequency, only Pink International ended the year with a net profit, which in the last year amounted to around 75.6 million dinars, which is around one quarter of the profit achieved in 2010. Pink reduced the number of employees from 713 to 692. TV Fox ended the last year with a net loss amounting to 14.5 million dinars, which is significantly less than in 2010, when the loss was 359.4 million dinars. The number of employees has been reduced from 207 to 172. TV B92 ended the last year with a loss of 333.3 million dinars. The number of employees was reduced from 357 to 289. The accumulated losses of the company below and in excess of the capital amount to 643.5 million and 598.8 million dinars, respectively. In the last year, TV Avala suffered losses amounting to 409.4 million dinars. The number of its employees was increased from 132 to 133. The accumulated losses of the station are huge: losses below and in excess of the capital amount to 207.6 million and 2.6 billion dinars, respectively. Finally, TV Happy suffered a net loss of 56.3 million dinars in the last year. TV Happy has only one employee. Accumulated losses of the TV station below and in excess of the capital amount to 223,000 dinars and 149.9 million dinars, respectively.

(Danas, UNS, NUNS, 11.05.2012)

Out of five million euros of government funds, almost four million have been used to finance the activities of four state-owned media companies, while one million euros was expended on projects in more than 200 media outlets, says the report on the freedom of the media in Serbia in 2011.

(Beta, 11.05.2012, Danas, 12.05.2012)

The program director of Transparency Serbia, Nemanja Nenadic, says: "The United Regions of Serbia (URS) political party spent the largest amount of money on TV advertising during the parliamentary election campaign, amounting to more than 620 million dinars. It is followed by the coalition "Choice for Better Life", which spent slightly more than 425 million dinars, and the coalition "Let's Move Serbia Forward", which spent around 209 million dinars on its TV campaign. The coalition led by SPS, Dveri, SVM, and LSV had no expenses at all for television advertising during the parliamentary election campaign. During the presidential election campaign, the coalition headed by DS spent the largest amount of money – slightly more than 337 million dinars.

(Pravda, Alo!, 12.05.2012)

Privatization and state-owned media

Belgrade businessman Milan Beko said today that his companies which own the Belgrade newspaper company "Novosti" won the arbitration process against the German media company WAZ. WAZ had filed nine arbitration claims against companies that own "Novosti", claiming breach of contract and damage to business interest of WAZ. (Beta, E kapija, 17.05.2012, Fonet, Press, Pravda, Danas, Vecernje Novosti, Alo!, Blic, Politika, 18.05.2012)

Media conglomerate WAZ said on 19 May 2012 that it had not lost the arbitration process and denied the statement issued by Milan Beko. "It is true that the media conglomerate WAZ has initiated the arbitration process against the aforementioned companies in accordance with the rules of the International Chamber of Commerce. WAZ announced its withdrawal from Serbia in June 2010, which means that the company had no further interest in continuing the arbitration proceedings", says the announcement. Milan Beko and his companies that are owners of the Belgrade newspaper publishing company "Novosti" reiterated on Saturday 19 May, in their reply to the statement issued by the German media conglomerate WAZ, that they had won the arbitration process against WAZ in Vienna.

(Beta, Tanjug, E Kapija, 19.05.2012, Vecernje Novosti, Danas, NDNV, UNS, Kurir, Politika, 20.05.2012, NUNS, 21.05.2012)

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS)

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) is concerned because of lawsuits filed by the president of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) and presidential candidate, Tomislav Nikolic, and the amount of the claim for compensation because of alleged damage to his reputation. Nikolic filed a lawsuit against the daily newspapers *Blic* and *Kurir*, demanding 200 million dinars from each. These damage claims are the result of articles about suspicions regarding Nikolic's university degree which he earned recently. In the case of *Blic*, the published articles were the result of investigative journalism, while *Kurir* had published a statement issued by one of the parliamentary political parties.

(NUNS, 11.05.2012, Kurir, UNS, 12.05.2012)

The regular annual Assembly of the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) will be held in the Media Center on Saturday, 16 June 2012 at 12.00. (Terazije 3/1st floor, Belgrade).

(NUNS, 20.05.2012)

The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS)

The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) has condemned the threats made by the president of the municipality of Backa Palanka, Dragan Bozalo, who threatened to "throw a bomb on the building and the editorial office of *Backopalanacki Nedeljnik*". The president of the municipality denied that he made any threats against the director and editor of *Backopalanacki Nedeljnik*, but he did not deny his phone call provoked by the front page which called him a "former president of municipality". UNS demands that Bozalo apologize for his insults and calls on journalist to criticize public officials on the local level while taking into account the public interest, but also to refrain from exhibiting any political bias.

(UNS, 15.05.2012)

The Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA)

The Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) analyzed at its yesterday's session the television programme "Evening with Ivan Ivanovic", in which the presidential candidate Boris Tadic appeared in live programme. After a detailed analysis, RRA will decide on whether to initiate proceedings against TV Prva, taking into account the fact that participants in the election are not allowed to appear in entertainment TV programmes.

(Danas, 11.05.2012)

The Council of the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) confirmed that it had not banned airing of any programme, nor appearance of any presidential candidate in television programmes.

(Dnevnik, Politika, UNS, NUNS, 11.05.2012)

At a session held today, the Council of the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) considered the [complaint filed by Aleksandar Stankovic](#), an editor and journalist with Croatian Radio-Television (HRT), who demanded that the Agency protect his personal property and protected work, which had been inappropriately used in a video produced by the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS). The Council decided to send to all broadcasters [the note written by Mr. Stankovic](#), so that they would have all relevant information while deciding on whether to broadcast the content.

(RRA, 11.05.2012)

Ivana Vujanov says in an article published by the daily newspaper *Dnevnik*: "During the election, 45 minutes before the end of the pre-election silence, the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) ordered a suspension of broadcasting of the programme of TV stations Studio B, Svet Plus and three cable channels HRT, OBN and BN. The move was explained with 'violation of pre-election silence'. We still don't know what kind of violations occurred, and journalistic associations are still expecting relevant reports. The Law on Broadcasting and the Law on Public Information, which

regulate broadcasting during elections, do not mention media outlets broadcast from abroad. Croatian Radio-Television is not obliged to abide by Serbian laws, including the law that stipulates pre-election silence, and the same applies to Bosnian OBN and BN, which are broadcast from the Republic of Srpska. Not to mention that this act violates the European Convention on Cross-Border Television. If the RRA is correct, why was not this decision applied to reports broadcast by BBC and CNN, for example, which also did not take into account the pre-election silence in Serbia and whose journalists freely aired their comments, assumptions and expectations from Serbian elections? At the same time, there was no 'silence' on the internet – on the contrary. Pre-election silence is enforced in only 15 countries worldwide, out of which six are former Yugoslavian republics."

(Dnevnik – special supplement, 12.05.2012)

The Council of the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) established that the cable broadcaster TV K::CN Svet Plus 3 had violated pre-election silence on Friday evening by broadcasting content that could be characterized as political propaganda, and which was directly related to political campaigning of presidential candidates before the electoral run-off.

(RRA, 19.05.2012, Vecernje Novosti, 20.05.2012, NUNS, 21.05.2012.)

The Council of the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) said today that the congratulatory note sent by the EU to one of the presidential candidates before the closing of polls on the election day, May 20, was not broadcast during the pre-election silence by the media with national coverage. It was later announced that the EU mistakenly published on its website a congratulatory note addressed to Tomislav Nikolic three hours before the closing of polls. The Council of the RRA analyzed the question asked by the Republic Electoral Committee regarding the congratulatory note. After analysis of the programme broadcast by all national TV and radio stations, the Council established that "the message was not broadcast during the pre-election silence".

(RRA, RTV, UNS, NUNS, 23.05.2012)

The Ministry of Culture, Media and Information Society

Since the Ministry of Culture has not replied to the last week's question asked by journalistic associations ("Where has the money for media projects gone?"), the UNS, NUNS, ANEM and Local Press again demand that the Ministry answer the question and explain how the money was spent that was allocated to the media by various committees after the public contest organized by the Ministry of Culture.

(UNS, NUNS, NDNV, 10.05.2012, Beta, Danas, 11.05.2012)

SEEMO

One week before the second round of presidential elections in Serbia, scheduled for May 20, 2012, one of the presidential candidates, Tomislav Nikolic, said that he needed to be president in order to tell journalists what to report on. SEEMO expressed dismay at Nikolic's warning. SEEMO Secretary General Oliver Vujovic said: "I hope that whoever wins the presidential elections in Serbia guarantees press freedom."

(SEEMO, 16.05.2012)

The Media Association

Renowned publishing company Attica Media Serbia, founded in 2004, has been a new member of the Media Association since mid-May. The company is a part of the Greek media company Attica Publications S. A., whose majority owner is the largest Italian publishing company, Mondadori. Attica Media SRB publishes five magazines which are among the most popular in Serbia – Grazia, Playboy, Maxim, CasaViva and Sale & Pepe. The magazines are sold on around 12,000 newsstands in Serbia, and are also distributed in the markets of Montenegro, Macedonia and the Republic of Srpska. After the entry of Attica Media Serbia in the Media Association, the members of the Association now distribute and sell around 90 percent of all magazines in the Serbian market.

(ASMEDI NEWSLETTER, maj 2012)

Media-related news

A new daily newspaper, *Informer*, was launched in Serbia today. The newspaper's founder is the Belgrade journalist Dragan J. Vucicevic. Using a 32-page tabloid form and Latin script, the newspaper offers news on politics, economy, world events, crime, music and sports. The newspaper was originally supposed to be called *Insajder* ("The Insider"), but TV B92 secured court protection of the brand of the same name used by its news programme for years. After the launch of *Informer*, Serbia has 15 daily newspapers, with two of them of regional character – *Dnevnik* from Novi Sad and *Narodne Novine* from Nis, as well as two sports newspapers – *Zurnal* and *Sport*, one specialized in economy – *Privredni pregled*, and one free newspaper – *24 Casa*.

(Beta, NUNS, 10.05.2012)

For the first time in history, Sremski Karlovci will have its own radio station. Thanks to a project financed by the European Youth Foundation, local radio programme will be launched in Karlovci as of May 21. In the words of the coordinator of the Youth Office in Karlovac, Nemanja Tenjovic, the idea to establish an online radio in Karlovci is a result of the recommendations of the Peace Ambassadors Conference. The regional radio will be called "The Balkan Youth" and will be available on the website www.mladibalkana.fm. In the beginning, news programme will be broadcast four hours a day, between 18.00 and 22.00, while music will be broadcast 24 hours a day.

(Dnevnik, 12.05.2012)

In cooperation with the US Ambassador to Serbia, the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) organized a seminar entitled "New Media, New Challenges". The seminar was dedicated to dramatic changes in traditional journalism after the explosive development of the new media, especially with regard to the role played by social networks like Facebook or Twitter. A lecture at the seminar, William Silcock, one of the pioneers of investigative journalism at a global TV network, who has received numerous awards and works as a professor at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, pointed out that in the last three years the media had been influenced by applications for mobile phones and tablets. "Today, everything is available on the web and you can access information 24 hours a day, seven days in week. The most significant thing now is to be able to tell a story, while at the same time being accurate, truthful and ethical, which are actually the fundamental principles of journalism". He also emphasized that in the age of web journalism the audience has become more active, and that readers can make personal choices, search for other sources, and tell journalists what they want. "All these choices have not turned the readers into journalists. They think that they are journalists if they can write blogs or 'spread' the story. However, they are not journalists 'because they are not trained to be principled, ethical and to separate truth from fiction".

(NUNS, 23.05.2012)

Digitalization

Radio-Television Belami is the only regional television that broadcasts a digital TV signal, after receiving a necessary approval from the Council of the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA).

(Pravda, NUNS, UNS, 22.05.2012)

- Abbreviations - www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin-abbreviations.2317.html#104230
- Sections - www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin-abbreviations-and-sections.2317.html
- Archive - www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin-archive.2381.html
- Media News Bulletin home - www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin.2298.html

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Media News Bulletin is a short account of media reports on the situation in the media. It has been created with the aim to register the information about the media published in the previous 14 days in Serbia, shortened to reflect the basic message of media reports and grouped in thematic subsections. The editors convey the news without changing the essential meaning of media reports on the media. For the readers interested in the complete published article, its source and date of publishing are given.

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