

Issue No. 30

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The media situation in Serbia

In more than 72 percent of polled media outlets, the average salary amounted to 30,000 dinars, while media employees had a salary exceeding 50,000 dinars in only three percent of all media outlets. Almost four of the five million euros of government funds was expended on financing of activities of four publicly-owned media companies, while one million euros was spent on projects in than more than 200 media outlets – says the report on media freedom in Serbia in 2011. The report "Media Freedom in Serbia in the European Mirror", based on 27 indicators for evaluation of freedom of the media in the member countries of the Council of Europe and prepared by media associations ANEM (Association of Independent Electronic Media), NUNS (Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia), NDNV (Independent Journalists' Association of Vojvodina) and Local Press, says that only four out of 27 European professional standards have been successfully achieved in Serbia. The report also says that 26 percent of TV stations and 25 percent of radio broadcasters are publicly-owned; that 14 percent out of 240 interviewed executives in news media are opposed to privatization of media outlets (with 60 percent of them coming from state-owned media, and 40 percent from private media outlets); that 14 percent of them do not have a clear position on un/desirability of state ownership over the media. 73 cases of drastic violations of media freedoms and rights have been registered: nine physical attacks on journalists, 18 threats against physical integrity, and four removals from position of editors-in-chief or media directors. The research showed that only two percent out of 240 interviewed editors-in-chief of news media outlets were of the opinion that media freedom and journalists' rights had been fully realized during the year. The report says that trade unions of journalists exist only in publicly-owned media outlets, while those that exist in private media outlets were inherited from the pre-privatization period. At the same time, 72 percent of interviewed editors of news media outlets consider that the existing public service broadcasters are not protected from political influences in their everyday activities, while 66 percent believe that the principle of no clear political affiliation in higher executive positions is not upheld. The report notes that 70 percent of interviewed political party officials, both from the ruling parties and the opposition, were of the opinion that the media did not adhere to the principle of non-bias in political reporting, while 92 percent of editors-in-chief said that their media outlets were not biased. Only 13 percent of editors-in-chief of radio and TV stations were of the opinion that regulatory bodies were unbiased and efficient; 88 percent of the interviewees engaged in national councils of national minorities or the minority media did not know of a single successfully privatized media outlets in a minority language; 72 percent of them said that national councils of national minorities did not have necessary instruments to significantly improve activities and development of the minority media. The research used publicly available data about the media sector, with additional interviewing of 240 editors-in-chief of news media outlets from 79 cities in Serbia, 69 media owners, 40 political officials from 10 cities in Serbia, 50 members of nine national minorities, as well as 26 representatives of state, regulatory and self-regulatory bodies whose areas of authority include the media sector.

(Vesti Uzice, NUNS, NDNV, 31.05.2012)

In hindsight, it is clear that each vote counted in the run-off of the presidential election in Serbia. The Digital Vote of Serbia began its monitoring of social networks, forums and other more or less significant websites already at 6 AM. The full report and graphs.

(MC, 16.05.2012)

A fierce debate about political pressure on the media took place recently. The following individuals participated in the debate: Nebojsa Krstic, Bosko Jaksic, Ljiljana Smajlovic and Dragoljub Zarkovic:

Dokaz je medijski Srbistan ("Media Serbistan is the Proof") (Politika, UNS, NUNS, 30.05.2012),

Neka Jaksic dokaze tvrdnju ("Jaksic Should Prove His Claims") (Politika, UNS, NUNS, 29.05.2012),

I dalje bez dokaza ("Still No Proof") (Politika, 31.05.2012),

Vlast i mediji, još jednom ("The Government and the Media, Once Again") (Politika, 31.05.2012),

Puce tikva 2 ("The Break-Up"), (Politika, NUNS, 06.01.2012),

Celicenje medija ("Strengthening of the Media") (Politika, NUNS, 06.01.2012)

In order to harmonize domestic media legislation with European legislation and keep pace with the expansion of new technologies and markets, a work group led by Professor Rade Veljanovski has prepared a draft Law on Electronic Media. The work group has delivered the draft Law to the Ministry of Culture, Media and Information Society. (Media Center, 07.06.2012)

Assessments of the current media situation in Serbia

Using hidden contracts signed without public contests or criteria, the city government in Nis pays hundreds of millions of dinars to the media each year, shows a research conducted by *Juzne Vesti*. In the last four years, media outlets in Nis have signed contracts worth 300 million dinars with representatives of various state institutions, which constitutes almost 30 percent of the total revenue of NTV, *Narodne Novine*, TV Belle Amie, TV Zona, TV5 and Kopernikus. The president of the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia, Vukasin Obradovic, says that in the situation characterized by transition and impoverished market, on the one hand, and too many media outlets, on the other hand, the state, municipalities and cities have become the main patron in this area. "By giving away the taxpayers' money without any public contests, clear criteria, or independent committees, and by offering at the same time contracts with publicly-owned companies, they have clearly made it known that only sycophantic media outlets with a 'constructive' approach towards the local self-government will be financed".

(Juzne vesti, 30.05.2012)

TV Vojvodina has begun airing the documentary series "The Media in Serbia: The Chronicle of Destruction", authored by Slavisa Lekic, which depicts the ruination of the media in the last twenty years – from the beginning of the rule of Slobodan Milosevic to this day. The series, consisting of seven episodes, will be aired each Friday.

(Politika, 25.05.2012)

The ruling structures have succeeded in institutionalizing self-censorship in Serbian media, which was evident during the election campaign and contributed to abstinence of some voters, says an article published in *Magyar Szo*, adding that the media in Serbia has ceased to act as controllers of the government structures, and that the blame lies on the political elite, which believes that the media should publish only favorable news about it.

(Magyar Szo, NDNV, RTV, NUNS, Politika, UNS, 27.05.2012)

At a round table entitled "Serbia and Europe 2020, Recommendations and Experiences of Slovenia in Stimulating Fast-Growing Companies in Serbia", the representative of Slovenia in the European Parliament, Jelko Kacin, commented on the freedom of the media in Serbia. He said that was not a single media outlet in Serbia that was independent from companies whose advertisements they publish.

(Pregled, 29.05.2012)

A former prime minister of Serbia and a high-ranking official of the Democratic Party (DS), Zoran Zivkovic, said that "DS is exerting strong pressure on the media", which made him, a member of the party, "feel ashamed".

(Danas, 31.05.2012)

The 32nd monitoring report about the media scene in Serbia in April 2012 has been published. All monitoring reports, publications and reports from round tables on monitoring are available within the Media Scene Monitoring section from the homepage of the Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM).

(Medija Centar, 01.06.2012)

Public service broadcasters

In its programme, Radio-Television Vojvodina offers a significant role to national minorities and allows them to express and communicate in their own languages. All ethnic minorities have to be given an adequate representation in the media, which a complex task that demands major effort, it was said during the opening of the conference entitled "The Role of Public Service Broadcasters in Multi-Ethnic Environments". One of the key conclusions reached at the event was that it was necessary to adopt a model that would preserve individual characteristics but at the same time prevent ghettoization. In words of the director of RTV, Sinisa Isakov, the conference should contribute to innovation and improvement of programmes in various languages of national minorities. The conference was attended by representatives of public service broadcasters from the region, representatives of the Hungarian and

French embassies, as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations, national minorities and media experts.

(Dnevnik, NUNS, 25.05.2012)

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

In the municipality of Sabac, a meeting took place between heads of the police in Sabac and representatives of local communities from several villages of Posavina. The meeting was organized by the president of the municipality, Vladica Markovic, but only reluctantly and after repeated urging. The meeting was dedicated to several incidents that occurred in the area. Immediately before the beginning of the meeting, the media entered the hall together with local citizens and the local priest. The villagers complained of the lack of public lighting, which made the scattered homes an easy pray for criminals. Markovic looked annoyed at these words and his face showed expressions that were difficult to interpret. Visibly upset, the president of the municipality left the room but soon returned and "politely" asked the media to leave because "the policemen won't enter before you leave, and they don't have a place to sit while you are here". During a heated discussion between the representatives of local communities and Sabac policemen, the local citizens were presented a list with 200 criminal and misdemeanor charges against 15 local criminals, none of which have seen an epilogue in court. The last of the attacked persons was the driver of a minibus who had previously been interviewed by a local TV station. Locals believe that he was attacked by criminals who wanted to take revenge on him.

(Vecernje Novosti, 30.05.2012)

The commissioner for information of public importance and protection of personal data, Rodoljub Sabic, said that the public statement issued by the First Primary Court in Belgrade, which insinuated his responsibility for the unfavorable media reports about the Court, constituted an irresponsible attempt to divert the attention of the public from inexplicable acts committed by the Court.

(Politika, 31.05.2012)

The editorial team of the programme *Zdravoskop* visited the cities of Bor and Majdanpek recently, invited by the local Human Rights Committee to participate in a public discussion about the rights of medical patients. The event took place in the center of Majdanpek, in the premises of the Health Care Center, and the only media report about the event was prepared by a private TV station from Bor. NGO activists complained that a media war between political activists was evident in the media.

(Web portal *Zdravoskop*, 26.05.2012)

"The medical profession in the period 2007-2011 was not presented objectively in the print media", said Tatjana Radosavljevic, the director of the Medical Chamber of Serbia, during the yesterday's press conference that took place in Belgrade. She noted that the number of published articles that reported about the Serbian health care sector and doctors in a negative light was greater than the number of favorable articles.

(Pregled, UNS, NUNS, Press, Politika, 30.05.2012)

While the officials are still trying to identify those who are responsible for cutting of trees near the Sports and Culture Center "Sumice" in Belgrade, Ratko Bukvic, the former director of the company "Bwine", which contracted the construction of the football field at the location, seriously threatened yesterday the journalist with the *Alo!* daily newspaper. The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) condemns the threats made by Bukvic.

(Alo!, 25.05.2012)

A legal process against Zoran Petrovic Petrika from Pozarevac, the owner of the cafe "*Sansa*", began before the Primary Court in Pozarevac because of a insults and an attack on journalist Momcilo Veljkovic.

(Danas, NUNS, 25.05.2012)

The web portal *Pistaljka* condemns the threats against it made by the minister of defence, Dragan Sutanovac, because of [its reports about the Development Fund](#). The web portal says that it has informed UNS, NUNS, EU Delegation in Belgrade, Council of Europe Office and the OSCE Mission about the threats. The threats will not

prevent the website from continuing to expose and publish all available information about abuses.

(*Pistaljka.rs*, UNS, NUNS, 29.05.2012)

The editor-in-chief of *Jugpres*, Ljiljana Stojanovic, wrote an open letter to highest state officials and representatives of the EU and OSCE Mission to Serbia because of threats made by the commander of Serbian Liberation Anti-Terrorist Movement, Mikan Velinovic, reports RTV Vranje. The threats were made after *Jugpres* published electronic messages sent by Velinovic to Saip Kamber, the recent president of the municipality of Bujanovac, after recent Albanian protests.

(RTV Vranje, Vranjske, NUNS, 31.05.2012)

Milena Vidojkovic, a journalists from Nis with 30 years of experience, has been fired from TV Niska because of, in her words, "insulting the employer". Vidojkovic claims that she has not insulted anyone and that the whole case relates to mobbing. Web portal *Juzne Vesti* called the director of TV Niska, Dragana Nikolic, but she declined to comment.

Milena Vidojkovic has contacted all journalistic associations in Serbia, including the Associations of Journalists of Nis, and got assurances that SEEMO was informed about her case. She said that she intended to protect her rights in a court of law.

(*Juzne vesti*, 31.05.2012)

A court session was held today in the Higher Court of Novi Sad in relation to the lawsuit filed by the former director of the Privatization Agency and the vice president of the Novi Sad branch of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), Vladimir Galic, against the weekly magazine *Novi Magazin* from Belgrade. Galic, who did not appear in court today, demands damages in the amount of one million dinars because of "huge damage to reputation and honor". Legal representatives of *Novi Magazin* presented evidence that the newspaper had based its story about the controversial privatization of "Azotara" Pancevo on facts and on documents from the Privatization Agency.

(Beta, NDNV, 01.06.2012)

The president of the Republic of Srpska, Milorad Dodik, verbally attacked a journalist with the Beta news agency, Ljiljana Kovacevic, during the yesterday's press conference held in Banjaluka. He criticized her journalistic reports and told her not to enter the building of the President of the RS anymore. The director of Beta, Ivan Cvejic, told B92 that this was not the first such incident by the president of the Republic of Srpska. He intends to complain to journalistic associations in Serbia and the Republic of Srpska.

(*Dnevnik, Alo!*, 04.06.2012)

The president of the Republic of Srpska, Milorad Dodik, said today that he had no intention of apologizing to the correspondent of news agency Beta from Banjaluka, Ljiljana Kovacevic, for his verbal attack during the press conference held in the presidential palace of the RS.

(Beta, NUNS, 04.06.2012, *Politika*, UNS, 05.06.2012)

The news agency Beta demanded today that the ministries of culture and foreign affairs of Serbia intervene with the authorities in Bosnia & Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska in response to the verbal attack by the president of the RS, Milorad Dodik, on the Beta correspondent from Banjaluka, Ljiljana Kovacevic.

(Beta, NUNS, UNS, 05.06.2012, Beta, *Danas*, NUNS, 24 sata, UNS, 06.06.2012)

A sports TV station from Belgrade, TV SOS, received a verdict from the Higher Commercial Court in Belgrade, resulting from the demand filed by the Republic Agency for Electronic Communication (RATEL), ordering the station to pay 4.5 million dinars. The owner and director of TV SOS, Dragisa Kovacevic, said to *Politika* daily that the verdict constituted a form of pressure and that it threatened the freedom of the media. "They want TV SOS to close down before the end of the judicial process. For five years, TV SOS has been one of the parties in the legal dispute with RATEL and the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) because we had been allocated a non-functioning national frequency", said TV SOS. RATEL did not want to comment on an ongoing judicial process. "We will make a public statement after the completion of the process", said a representative of RATEL.

(*Politika*, NUNS, UNS, 29.05.2012, *Alo*, 30.05.2012)

The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) demands that the authorities stop the legal violence committed against TV SOS by the Republic Agency for Electronic Communication (RATEL) until the completion of the legal proceedings before the Commercial Court in Belgrade in relation to the lawsuit filed by TV SOS against RATEL and the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA). UNS considers it unacceptable that a media outlet should pay the government any fees for a resource that has been unusable due to the mistake committed by the authorities. UNS warns that such legal practice, which is contrary to European conventions, may result in closure of media outlets.

(UNS, 29.05.2012, Politika, 30.05.2012)

The Sports Union of Serbia (SSS) and the Association of Sport Journalists (USN) called on all relevant institutions to solve the problem related to TV SOS and allow the station to have operate under the same conditions as all other broadcasters in Serbia. "By allocating an unusable frequency to TV SOS, RATEL has deprived the station from the right to work and prevented all sports fans to watch the programme of the only sports television which promotes domestic sport", says their statement.

(Beta, NUNS, 05.06.2012, Politika, UNS, NUNS, Kurir, 06.06.2012)

Legal representatives of Stanko Subotic Cane, who is wanted by Interpol, filed criminal charges yesterday for extortion of testimonies against heads of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Special Prosecutor's Office, the editorial team of daily newspaper Blic, and the Democratic Party (DS) officials.

(Blic, NUNS, 06.06.2012)

Investigations of murders of journalists

On the day of the murder of Slavko Curuvija, the former head of the Belgrade department of the National Security Agency, Milan Radonjic, was giving orders that Curuvija be followed and monitored while he was located at the then headquarters of the political party The Yugoslavian Left (JUL), reports daily newspaper *Blic*. However, at the hearings during the pre-criminal proceedings, the former head of the Agency did not mention that he was making orders from the headquarters of the political party founded by Mira Markovic, the wife of the then president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milosevic.

(Blic, UNS, NUNS, 29.05.2012)

No new information has become available in relation to the murder of Slavko Curuvija, apart from information that has already been known two or three years ago, said lawyer Rajko Danilovic, in response to media reports that Milan Radonjic was giving orders that Slavko Curuvija be followed while situated in the then headquarters of The Yugoslavian Left (JUL).

(Danas, UNS, NUNS, 30.05.2012)

The minority media

The president of the National Council of Hungarians, Tamas Korhec, said that it was "outrageously cynical" not to allow the National Council to have authority over the management of Hungarian programmes of Radio-Television Vojvodina (RTV). In an article published by today's issue of the *Magyar Szo* newspaper, Korhec rejected the claims that the authority of the National Council of Hungarians over the programme of RTV would jeopardize the independence of the Hungarian programme.

(Beta, NDNV, 28.05.2012)

The general director of Radio-Television Vojvodina (RTV), Sinisa Isakov, said today that the president of the National Council of Hungarians, Tamas Korhec, was exerting "unnecessary pressure" on the management of the provincial public service broadcaster. In his press statement, Isakov said that the Law on National Councils was being directly implemented in cases when it did not contradict the Law on Broadcasting, which constitutes the founding statute of the RTV. He explained that current editors-in-chief of the programmes in Hungarian language on RTV were appointed in 2008, while the Law on National Councils was adopted in 2009.

(Beta, Magyar Szo, 28.05.2012)

The deputy chief of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, Thomas Moore, said that it was apparent that certain national councils of national minorities were trying to exert control over the media whose founders they were. "Each attempt to

control the content of the media is problematic", warned Moore at an event dedicated to the activities of national councils held in the Assembly of Vojvodina in Novi Sad. The conference entitled "National Councils of National Minorities in Serbia – Evaluation of Activities, the Present Situation and Future Prospects" was organized by the Center for Regionalism from Novi Sad within the project of evaluation of activities of national councils of the Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian, Bulgarian and Roma national minorities. The project was supported by the Fund for an Open Society of Serbia.

(Danas, 25.05.2012, Beta, NUNS, Autonomija, 04.06.2012, Dnevnik 05.06.2012)

The minority media outlets should coordinate their actions in the advertising market, and the headquarters of such a media pool that would offer necessary information and services to interested companies should be located within the news company Magyar Szo – this is the conclusion reached by the participants in the round table held in the premises of Magyar Szo in Novi Sad. The purpose of this effort is to increase the profile of the minority media in the advertising market and this event could be viewed as the first step in that direction. The event was attended by representatives of significant marketing and other companies, including McCann Group, AGB Nielsen, Media Research, Coca Cola, Mediabrands, ABC Serbia and IAB Serbia, while the initiative was supported by Telecom Serbia.

(Magyar Szo, NDNV, 26.05.2012)

Professional standards

The election campaign in Serbia was superficial and flashy, politicians behaved as show business stars, while the media and the civil society, who are supposed to act as controllers of the democratic process, failed in their mission – this is the conclusion reached by the participants of the conference "The Election Process Monitoring 2012". During the recent election process, organizations Transparency Serbia, Biljana Kovacevic Vuco Fund and the Bureau of Social Research examined the financing of election campaigns, the degree of implementation of democratic principles and legislation, as well as the reporting of the media during the election campaign.

(Pravda, 25.05.2012)

Communicologist Jelena Klaut said today that poverty and social isolation were not sufficiently represented in the media, and added that research showed that "the media portrait of the poor was faceless". "Instead of a realistic picture, we are being offered a simplified, stereotypical and one-dimensional picture of the impoverished", said Klaut at the international conference entitled "The Media, Poverty and Social Exclusion" held at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad.

(Beta, NDNV, 02.06.2012)

The international scientific conference "The Media, Poverty and Social Exclusion", held in Novi Sad, will be dedicated to research of media reporting on poverty, the poor and socially excluded groups in the countries of the region. Speakers at the conference include scientists from universities in Skoplje, Sarajevo, Banjaluka, Podgorica, Nis, Beograd and Novi Sad.

(Dnevnik, 01.06.2012, Beta, Danas, 02.06.2012, NUNS, 04.06.2012)

"Serbia has good photographers who good at their work, but they concentrate too much on individual pictures and faces, instead of a wider picture", said Peter van Agtmael, a photographer from the agency Magnum from New York, during the international photography conference held in Nis. The conference, organized by the Center for Development of Photography, was attended by renowned photographers from Serbia and abroad. All the participants agreed that latest technologies have not significantly changed their methods, apart from the fact that today they do not have to worry about running out of photographic film. Expensive and advanced equipment does not guarantee high quality of photographs, while good photographs can be made even by mobile phones. The participants of the conference agreed that documentary photographers have a great responsibility and obligation to objectively present events, since very often they are the main witnesses of historic events.

(UNS, 24.05.2012)

The owner of the television channel PI Kanal from Pirot, Boban Mitic, said yesterday that the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) demanded in January that Telecom not broadcast the programme "Srbija na dlanu" on TV PI, without any explanation for the request. The programme is the result of partnership between Telecom, which is the leading provider in Serbia, the PI channel and TV Galaksija from Cacak. Mitic said that the project had been fully harmonized with future digitalization and today's standards of television broadcasting. The programme is being broadcast Telecom Serbia's web TV.

(Fonet, Politika, UNS, NUNS, 25.05.2012)

The Media Center invites interested young people to apply for volunteer work. The deadline for applications is June 11, 2012.

(MC, 01.06.2012)

The Data.Journalism! conference, organized by the Journalistic and Media Forum Vienna (FJUM) and the European Journalism Center (EJC), will take place in the capital of Austria on June 14-15. Additional information is available at the web page www.fjum-njien.at/njp/ddj-conference-2012

(Danas – Weekend, 06.02.2012)

Awards, training courses and competitions

In most of the all-pervasive commercial media, guided by sensationalism, women are usually depicted as objects of desire or viewing. All boundaries of correctness are being overstepped. The so-called "women's media" offer content about the physical appearance of women or a stereotypical content intended for "housewives". The president of the Managing Board of the Women's Forum of Prijepolje, Mileva Malesic, and a civil-sector television station, TV Forum, are committed to elimination of gender stereotypes and establishment of gender equality in the media. Within the project "The Media and Gender Equality", a two-day seminar was held in Prijepolje for journalists and editors of Serbian local media outlets.

(Vesti – Uzice, NUNS, 25.05.2012)

Seven largest European media foundations have decided to establish the European Press Prize, which will be given to journalists from all 47 European countries. The first prize will be presented in 2012 and the public contest for the prize will be open between July 1 and October 26. The award will be given in four categories, for the best editor, commentator, and reporter, and for innovation in written or television journalism.

(Beta, NDNV, 24.05.2012)

Between April 1 and September 30, 2012, Transparency Serbia will implement a regional project entitled "Legal Leaks". The project aims to assist journalists in obtaining information from authorities by exercising their rights defined by the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance.

(Transparency Serbia, NUNS 25.05.2012)

The Executive Committee of the European Newspaper Publishers Association decided yesterday in Nicosia to hold the next year's General Assembly in Belgrade. The Managing Board of the Media Association will be host of the largest European newspaper association in May 2013.

(Vecernje novosti, Politika, Blic, NUNS, UNS, 26.05.2012)

Which information has to be given to journalists and how should the journalists demand access to it? Answers to this and many other questions are available in the legal guide for media professionals entitled "Yes, You Are Right! for Journalists" published on the website www.upravusi.rs. The project is implemented as a part of the the media support program of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) in cooperation with IREX Serbia.

(Medija Centar, NUNS, 29.05.2012)

After several months of preparations, the OSCE Mission to Serbia and IREX have begun realization of a seminar dedicated to advancement of quality of reporting on economy. The first part of the seminar includes the following lecturers: Prime Minister Mirko Cvetkovic, Governor of the National Bank of Serbia Dejan Soskic, President of MG Group Miodrag Kostic, Acting General Director of the Post Office Serbia Goran Ciric, President of the Managing Board of Hippo Alpe Adria Bank Vladimir Cupic, and President of the Center for Liberal-Democratic Studies Boris Begovic. Experienced journalists Dimitrije Boarov and Milan Culibrk will be moderators of the event. Participants of the seminar will include the journalists from Vecernje Novosti, Blic, Politika, Press, NIN, Vreme, Dnevnik, Color Press Group, Tanjug, Local Info Media Group and Fonet.

(Politika, NUNS, 29.05.2012, Dnevnik, Vecernje novosti, UNS, 30.05.2012, Politika, NUNS, 31.05.2012)

The Press Publishing Group company received the Brand Leader Award in the area of the print media at the Eighth International Brand Conference.

(Press, 01.06.2012)

Investigative journalism

Within a project entitled "More Transparency in Local Self-Government", the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS), in cooperation with CIN from Bosnia and Herzegovina, worked intensively with four local media outlets on research of activities local self-governments. The results of the research were published this month in a form of 8-page supplements in the print media, as well as on the internet. Some of the research topics were selected by votes of citizens in Krusevac, Kikinda, Cacak and Nis in October 2011.

(NUNS, 28.05.2012)

A research conducted by the journalistic network Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) and the Center for Investigative Journalism of the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) (www.cins.org.rs) showed that the businessman Bogdan Rodic had business deals with an associate of Darko Saric, as well as Rodoljub Radulovic aka Misa America, who is wanted by the police from several countries because of his activities as the leader of Saric's drug-dealing network, reports the daily newspaper *Kurir*.

(Kurir, 29.05.2012)

The former minister of energy, Goran Novakovic, participated in privatization of companies in Serbia together with people associated with organized crime, reports the daily newspaper *Kurir*. According to information published by the Center for Investigative Journalism of the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS), Novakovic and other "partners" were behind the consortium of companies that bought the company "Zmaj" in 2006 for the sum of one million euros and accepted the obligation to invest another six million euros during the next five years. Immediately after the privatization, buyers ended the production in "Zmaj", thereby violating the contract, which resulted in laying off of workers and ruination of the factory. The Privatization Agency says that the consortium that bought "Zmaj" has not violated any of the provisions of the contract. "They have fulfilled all contractual obligations several months before the agreed deadline", said the Privatization Agency.

(Kurir, 29.05.2012)

In Memoriam

A long-time journalist and a member of the Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS), Nada Erceg, was cremated on May 22 in Belgrade. She began her journalistic career in 1945 as a member of the editorial team of "People's Army" ("*Narodna Armija*"). In the editorial office of the magazine "*Omladinska Rijec*" in Sarajevo, she worked as one of the editors. She was one of the editors in the magazine "*Zora*", the editor-in-chief of "*Banjalucke Novine*", and the editor-in-chief of Radio Sarajevo. She retired in 1973, after which she worked part-time as the editor of the magazines "*Zena Danas*" and "*Faits at tendencies*".

(UNS, 24.05.2012)

After a long and serious illness, renowned Serbian and Yugoslavian journalist Milutin Milenkovic passed away in Belgrade on May 21 at the age of 87. He worked in Radio Sarajevo, Borba and Radio Belgrade, where he was the director and the editor-in-chief of the First Channel. He became famous for his reports on foreign affairs and worked as a special correspondent for Borba, Tanjug and Radio Belgrade from France, Great Britain, Sweden, Poland, USA, Lebanon and Egypt. He was an expert on Middle East and published books "Africa and Major Powers", "With Algerian Rebels", and "Arabs Between Yesterday and Tomorrow". Milutin Milenkovic was an active member of the Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS). He was the president of the Journalists' Union of Yugoslavia in 1977. He won the "Mosa Pijade" Life Achievement Award given by the Journalists' Union of Yugoslavia in 1981, the "Svetozar Markovic" Life Achievement Award of the Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) in 1998, as well as the 7th July Award.

(UNS, 25.05.2012)

A member of the Anti-Corruption Council and an associate of the Institute of Philosophy and Social Theory, Stjepan Gredelj, died on May 30 in Belgrade after a long illness. He was the editor-in-chief of the magazine "Overview of Sociology" and "Philosophy and the Society". Stjepan Gredelj was a regular member of the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS).

(RTV, NUNS 01.06.2012)

"She spoke quietly and thought bravely. There is not enough such people", said the academician and writer Dobrica Cosic during the yesterday's presentation of the book "*Visnja*", which is compilation of articles authored by the renowned journalist Visnja Bozovic Vukotic. Among the attendees of the event were Milos Sobajic, Milan Beko, Radovan Bigovic, Ljiljana Blagojevic, Vuk Draskovic, Merima Njegomic, Ljiljana Kapor, Ratko Bozovic, Milorad Vucelic, Dragan Nedeljkovic, Dragan Dzajic, Dusan Savic, Dragana del Monako...

(Vecernje Novosti, 06.01.2012)

Media business operations

The total cost of the election campaign on television for all elections, according to information from Transparency International, amounted to almost 20 million euros. A third of this amount, i.e. 6.8 million, was spent by the coalition led by the Democratic Party (DS), followed by the United Regions of Serbia (URS) with around 4 millions, while the coalition "Let's Move Serbia Forward" spent around 2.2 million euros. According to Transparency's estimate, public service broadcasters received 5.1 million euros for aired videos, while commercial TV stations (which also aired paid time slots) earned around 14.5 million euros.

(Vecernje Novosti, 25.05.2012)

During the election campaign for the presidential election run-off, the largest amount of money spent by the campaign of the candidate of the Democratic Party (DS) was expended on advertising on TV Prva (more than 300,000 euros), followed by advertising on TV Pink (around 270,000 euros), reports the daily newspaper *Danas*. According to information from the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA), election marketing of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) was not aired on TV B92, TV Avala and TV Happy. With regard to the First Channel of Radio-Television Serbia (RTS), the coalition "Choice for Better Life" paid at least around 92,000 euros for advertisements, while the SNS expended around 34,000 euros for the same purpose.

(Danas, 02.06.2012)

Two months after the end of the strike (on February 22, 2012) caused by unpaid salaries and author's fees, the employees of TV Avala suspended the airing of "live" programme on May 4, 2012. The employees demand that the Republic Broadcasting Agency explain how it is possible that a TV station with national coverage is allowed not to air locally produced programme, which is one of requirements for the national broadcasting license.

(TV Avala 24.05.2012, Tanjug, Pregled, Pravda, Blic, 25.05.2012)

Employees of TV Avala demand that the Republic Broadcasting Agency explain how it is possible that a TV station with national coverage is allowed not to air locally produced programme, which is one of requirements for the national broadcasting license. According to the rules on national coverage in 2006, each television station is obliged to broadcast at least 25 percent of its own production. A member of the Council of the Republic Broadcasting Agency and a professor at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Goran Pekovic, says that the structure of programme is evaluated at the annual level. "Periodic variations in the programme are evident in programmes of TV stations that do not have difficulties in operations", said Pekovic. The company "Greenberg Investment" owns 48 percent of Avala, businessman Danko Djunic owns 46 percent, while Zeljko Mitrovic owns 5 percent of the station. The Economic Institute from Belgrade is in possession of 1 percent of the TV station's shares.

(Politika, NUNS, UNS, 25.05.2012)

Employees of TV Avala and TV Pink 15 from Skoplje protested yesterday in front of the building of TV Pink in Belgrade because of unpaid salaries. Employees of TV Avala have not been paid four salaries, while those working for TV Pink 15 from Skoplje have not received eight salaries.

(Alo, Dnevnik, Politika, Kurir, 02.06.2012)

The owner of TV Pink, Zeljko Mitrovic, told the daily newspaper *Politika*, commenting on the [protest of employees in TV Avala](#) and the Macedonian TV Pink 15, that due to a change in the business policy in Macedonia he had given up on terrestrial broadcasting of programme and offered four cable channels to the local market. "This is why the employees in TV Pink 15 have lost their jobs. They have to understand that the company does not exist anymore and that they should seek new jobs", said Mitrovic. On the other hand, Mitrovic said to employees of TV Avala that all their questions should be addressed to majority shareholders.

(*mondo.rs*, NUNS, 02.06.2012)

Belgrade weekly magazine *Ekonomist* has ceased publication, and the magazine's editorial team began striking because of six unpaid salaries and the employer's failure to pay taxes and contributions, announced the editorial team of the magazine yesterday. The announcement points out that the official owner of the magazine is Media

International Group, headquartered in the USA, but that its real owner is the former vice president of the Government of Serbia, Bozidar Djelic.

(Beta, 01.06.2012, Danas, Alo, Press, Politika, Informer, 02.06.2012, Alo!, Zaposleni Ekonom: east Media Group, UNS, 04.06.2012)

We asked Bozidar Djelic, an official of the Democratic Party (DS), whether he has ownership share in the magazine *Ekonomist*. "Since I became a member of the government five years ago, I have not owned or co-owned, nor had any financial interest in any company in Serbia", said Djelic to *Politika* daily newspaper.

(Politika, UNS, NUNS, 06.06.2012)

The daily newspaper *Pravda* has been closed down and the last issue of the newspaper was published today. The newspaper was founded by the newspaper publishing company Pravda Press, registered in Belgrade in 2006. Co-owners of *Pravda* are Nemanja Stefanovic (48 percent), Jugoslav Petkovic (47 percent) and Nikola Petrovic (5 percent).

(Beta, 01.06.2012, Alo, Press, Večernje novosti, Politika, 02.06.2012)

Representatives of employees of TV Avala, employees of newspapers *Pravda* and *Ekonomist*, and the Journalists' Union of Serbia will submit a request tomorrow for a meeting with the president of Serbia, Tomislav Nikolic.

(Tanjug, NUNS, 06.06.2012)

Media visits

A visit to national media outlets, organized by the Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) for 17 students of journalism from Nis on Thursday, May 31, began with a tour of the editorial offices of Ringier Axel Springer, where the integrated editorial team of the newspapers *Blic*, *24 Sata* and *Alo!* are located. Students also visited the editorial offices of the magazines *Blic Zene*, *Puls*, *Auto Bild* and *NIN*. In the premises of UNS, the president of the Association, Ljiljana Smajlovic, held a lecture on foreign affairs journalism to students from Nis. One of the founders of RTV B92, Sasa Mirkovic, took the students to a tour of the company.

(UNS, 05.06.2012)

Privatization and the state-owned media

"*Stampa Sistem*" has not given up on the purchase of "*Futura Plus*", although we withdrew our previous application submitted to the Committee for Protection of Competition. The reasons behind this were procedural, said the general director of "*Stampa Sistem*". In combination with a new visual identity, the newsstands of "*Stampa*" will become recognizable shopping locations with a modernized service, says "*Futura*".

(Novosti, E-Kapija, 29.05.2012)

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS)

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) strongly condemns the threats made by the president of the Republic of Srpska, Milorad Dodik, against a journalist with the news agency Beta from Banjaluka, Ljiljana Kovacevic. NUNS will inform all international associations about the incident and demand full protection for the journalist. We demand that the president of RS and other state institutions of RS immediately allow our colleague Ljiljana Kovacevic unhindered work and reporting, says the statement. It is especially worrisome that removal of Ljiljana Kovacevic from the press conference constitutes a continuation of several years-long oppression against her, and that her colleagues, who were present when Ljiljana Kovacevic was insulted and removed from the press conference, expressed no solidarity with her. NUNS is also shocked that Dodik attacked the journalist of the news agency Beta at joint press conference with the minister of internal affairs of Serbia, Ivica Dacic.

(NUNS, Beta, B92, 03.06.2012, Alo, 04.06.2012)

The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS)

The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) has invited all single mothers to apply for a free training course that includes computer literacy.

(UNS, 25.05.2012)

The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) condemns the insults made today against the journalist with the newspaper *Alo!*, Filip Balunovic, by the former director of the company "Bwine", Ratko Bukvic. The public company in charge of green areas in the city filed charges against "Bwine" because of a suspicion that the company's management was responsible for the recent destruction of trees near the Sports Center "Sumice". The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) condemns the insults and threats made by Milorad Dodik against the correspondent of the news agency Beta from Banjaluka.

(UNS, 02.06.2012)

The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) is shocked by the behavior of the basketball player Vladimir Dasic, who forced the reporter of the daily magazine *Alo!* to delete photographs from his camera, and demands that the police investigate the incident.

(UNS, 02.06.2012)

The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) is of the opinion that the closure of newspapers *Pravda* and *Ekonomist*, as well as TV Avala, is not a result of the economic crisis, but of the speculative ownership structure and hiding of the fact that media outlets are often founded in order to promote political and business interests. UNS demands that the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) identify the real owners of TV Avala and investigate the business operations of the founders of *Ekonomist* and TV Avala.

(UNS, 04.06.2012)

Journalistic trade unions

The Journalists' Union of Serbia supports the protest of employees of TV Avala. The Union's president, Dragana Cabarkapa, demands that the authorities order the owners of TV Avala to pay the employees and part-time workers all their salaries and author's fees as soon as possible, in accordance with law.

(Informer, 02.06.2012)

The Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA)

The Council of the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) has established that the congratulatory note, sent by the EU to Tomislav Nikolic before the closing of polls in the run-off of presidential elections on May 20, was not aired in the electronic media with national coverage during the election silence. Three hours before the closing of polls, the EU published on its website a congratulatory note to Tomislav Nikolic by Herman van Rompuy and Jose Manuel Barroso.

(Danas, Vecernje novosti, Pravda, 24.05.2012)

South East Europe Media Organization (SEEMO)

SEEMO called on Milorad Dodik, president of Republika Srpska, the Serbian entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to respect press freedom as an essential democratic right. On June 2, 2012, Dodik asked Ljiljana Kovacevic, the local

correspondent of the Belgrade-based Beta News Agency, to leave a press conference and to not return. Using disrespectful language to address the journalist, Dodik also called her a liar. Friday's incident was not the first time that authorities in Republika Srpska have targeted Kovacevic, who has been a target since 2009 when she published a report on allegedly misspent public funds.

(SEEMO, Center for International Media Assistance– CIMA Daily Media News, 04.06.2012)

The South East Europe Media Organization (SEEMO) calls on the president of the Republic of Srpska, Milorad Dodik, to respect the freedom of the press as one of the fundamental democratic rights.

(Beta, NUNS, 05.06.2012)

Media-related news

After a 15-month break, renowned weekly magazine from Kragujevac, *Svetlost*, will continue publication today.
(Danas, UNS, NUNS, 24.05.2012)

The Youth Office from Blac will begin publication of a magazine with both a printed and an online edition. The project is being implemented in cooperation with the British Council in Serbia and the municipality of Blace. Partners in this project are TV Blace and the High School, while the municipality of Blace will contribute 120,000 dinars to the project. Young people from Blace will have a chance to practice journalism, said Milos Vasic, the coordinator of the project "Active Citizens".
(Juzne vesti, 31.05.2012)

The "Know How" company organized an event, attended by a large number of businessmen, media representatives and internet professionals, to celebrate the launch of the web portal www.mpn.rs. The portal, whose name is an acronym for "My Business Supply", has a mission to create a completely new way of communicating demand and supply in order to allow business search for products and services.
(Pregled, 04.06.2012)

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- 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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