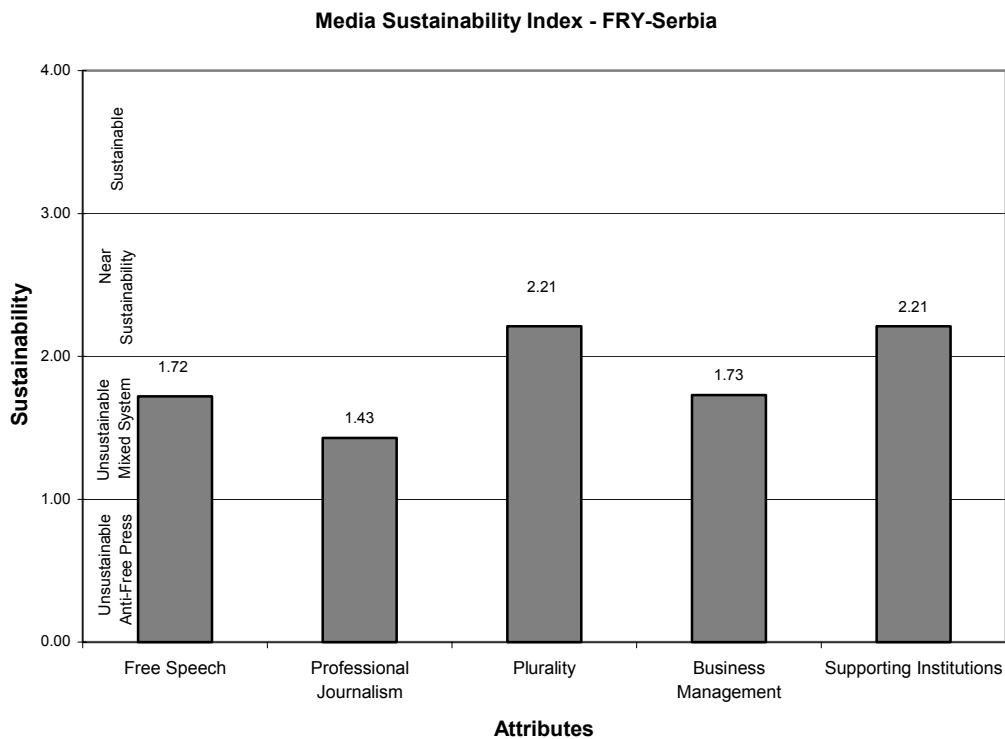


Serbia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia)

Introduction

Serbia remains in transition from the Milosevic regime to some form of democracy and market economics that remains to be determined. The media likewise remains in transition. Overnight, state media (republic and local) went from pro-Milosevic to pro-Kostunica or pro-Djindjic. Private media previously allied with Milosevic became strong supporters of the ruling Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) coalition in their news programs. Much work remains to ensure that the media become independent, professional, and financially sustainable. A series of laws needs to be redrafted, professional standards need to be raised, the media market needs to be rationalized, media need to learn to operate as businesses, and the supporting infrastructure needs more development.

The fall of Slobodan Milosevic's regime on October 5, 2000 altered Serbia's media scene almost beyond recognition. Under the Socialists, state and independent media had been divided into two bitterly opposed camps. They held conflicting political views and obviously did not strive towards the same professional standards. As Milosevic's hold weakened, the independent media gained influence, ratings, and circulation. His government's attempt to counterattack with a draconian Public Information Act and other repressive measures failed due to the combined effects of steady financial assistance to independent media from foreign donors, as well as journalists' refusal to be intimidated. After the democratic opposition triumphed on October 5, independent media had cause to celebrate with the new leadership. The euphoria was short-lived; not only did cracks soon show in the relations between former "comrades-in-arms," as opposition politicians and independent journalists had come to view themselves during the Milosevic era, but other stark realities of his legacy also came to light.



Scoring System

- 0** = Country does not meet indicator; government or social forces may be actively opposed to its implementation.
1 = Country minimally meets aspects of the indicator; forces may not be actively opposed to its implementation but business environment may not support it and government or profession not fully and actively supporting change.
2 = Country has begun to meet many aspects of indicator but progress may be too recent to judge or still dependent on current government or political forces.
3 = Country meets most aspects of indicator and implementation of indicator has occurred over several years and/or change in government, indicating likely sustainability.
4 = Country meets the aspects of the indicator; has remained intact over multiple changes in government, economic fluctuations, changes in public opinion and/or changing social conventions.

The scores for all indicators are totaled and averaged for each objective.

Each of the objectives can receive a score from 0 to 4:

- Above 3: Sustainable and free independent media
2-3: Independent media approaching sustainability
1-2: Significant progress remains to be made; society or government not fully supportive
0-1: Country meets few of indicators and government/society actively opposing changes
-

Independent media found themselves competing against an array of “liberated” state outlets whose journalists, well versed in the art of political submission, were eager to ingratiate themselves with the new authorities (DOS) and win a political rehabilitation of sorts. Clamoring new voices competed for DOS politicians’ attention and favors. It is no surprise that after rising sharply in October, many dailies’ circulation took a downward plunge as early as November 2000. It wasn’t just that the Serb media were no longer sharply divided on ideological and professional grounds; they could barely be told apart.

The fall of the old regime also exposed the extent to which all state media had been neglected during Milosevic’s final years. State media are technologically backward and its journalists are politically inexperienced, professionally untrained, and nearly computer and/or Internet illiterate. Milosevic-era constraints upon them may have been lifted, along with the climate of intimidation and fear, but dismantling Milosevic’s negative legacy in the media will require an altogether different kind of effort than the October 5 burning of the Federal Parliament building. The independent media are better equipped to deal with the challenges of the post-Milosevic era, if only because they are bolder, leaner, and healthier organisms, for the most part not weighed down by oversized staffs left over from the era of socialist budget subsidies. Serbia’s media audience long ago lost its political innocence under a string of governments cynically abused the media for political gain.

Determined to reject the legacy of tight government control over the media in deed as well as word, Serbia’s new (October 2000) authorities pledged to pass new media laws in their first year in office, including the Telecommunications Act, the Broadcast Act, and the Public Information Act. As of May 2001, the first two laws had already been drafted by independent experts, professional associations and NGOs, and vetted by European bodies. The Public Information Act is to follow; first drafts promise to remedy many of the ills of the infamous Public Information Law enacted under Milosevic in October 1998, but independent legal analysis by experts at the Washington, DC-based law firm of Covington & Burling shows that the draft laws still allow unnecessary government involvement in the media. At the same time, the Serb government has announced a new tender for broadcast frequencies, promising to redistribute them according to fair and equal conditions and standards for all electronic media in Serbia.

The February Wilton Park Conference held in Belgrade, called “The Media in Serbia: Managing The Transition,” brought together international media experts and media stakeholders from throughout Serbia for several days of discussions. The conference made the following recommendations:

- The transition of Serbian media should be pursued in line with European standards with a view to promptly creating the conditions enabling them to fully contribute to democratic change in society.
- The media transition must observe the demands of this era of information revolution, implying the introduction of modern technology, digitalization, etc.
- Bearing in mind the importance of media transition for general developments in society, its implementation requires the full cooperation of media organizations, government and its component ministries, the parliament, media professionals, the public, and NGOs.
- Successful transition necessitates the adoption of legal regulations to create modern conditions for business operations and the transparency of investments in general, and to create a proper market environment for all stakeholders, including media operators.
- Ownership relations in the media sector, as well as the possible cases of illegal operation in the past, have to be examined and appropriate legal regulations adopted to protect pluralism and prevent any abuse of cross-media ownership to acquire monopolies in the media market.
- A regime of temporary frequencies should be promptly established for all radio and TV stations. This should be followed by the adoption of broadcast licensing procedures based on the following main criteria: (1) quality of program content; (2) financial capacities; and (3) technical quality of the media.
- A special regulatory body should be established within a year that would be independent, autonomous, and transparent in issuing or extending operating licenses for radio and TV stations.
- The whole body of tax regulations applicable to the media ought to be reexamined. In particular, the taxes charged on the returns of print media should be cancelled and the quotas for newsprint imports abolished.
- Any property seized from the independent media under the previous regime must be returned to its proper owners completely and without delay. Funds collected from fines imposed on the media under the repressive Information Law should be returned, or cancelled in the form of tax relief equal to the amount of fines paid.
- Media houses should carry out a thorough and open discussion about their accountability for the work under the previous regime and, at the same time, define the ethical and professional standards for their future operation. The Media Center and the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (IJAS) will organize a round table to address this specific topic.
- In view of the scope of institutional reforms intended to secure a plural and independent media market, donor organizations believe that substantial medium-term support of the international community is required.
- The process of media transition in Serbia demands continuous monitoring and coordination of its various segments and stages, as well as the establishment of regional cooperation.

Attribute #1: Legal and social norms protect and promote free speech and access to public information

Indicators
1. Legal/social protections of free speech exist and are enforced
2. Licensing of broadcast media is fair, competitive, and apolitical
3. Market entry and tax structure for media are fair and comparable to other industries
4. Crimes against journalists or media outlets are prosecuted vigorously, but occurrences of such crimes are rare
5. State or public media do not receive preferential legal treatment, and law guarantees editorial independence
6. Libel is a civil law issue, public officials are held to higher standards, offended party must prove falsity and malice
7. Public information is easily accessible; right of access to information is equally enforced for all media and journalists
8. Media outlets have unrestricted access to information; this is equally enforced for all media and journalists
9. Entry into journalism profession is free and government imposes no licensing, restrictions, or special rights for journalists

Legal norms protecting free speech did not exist under Milosevic. Repressive laws with politically targeted implementation undermined the Yugoslav and Serbian constitutional commitments to free speech. Milosevic's Public Information Act, judged by international experts to be repressive, was

repealed in February 2000 but no further government reforms have been instituted. Constitutional and legal protections of free speech are continuing subjects of political debate as the governmental transition proceeds. The MSI panel was in agreement that significant progress remains to be made in the translation of constitutional language into full legal protection of free speech and access to public information. Both political and social attitudes were cited as reasons for needed change.

Politically, the country is in the midst of creating new laws dealing with free speech, including public information and broadcast regulations. Socially, the public has come to accept a low standard of reporting and expresses little outrage when freedom of speech is attacked. Constitutional protections for freedom of speech existed prior to the October 5th revolution, but under Milosevic a repressive public information law was used to circumvent constitutional protections. Although the law has been repealed, a number of long-standing libel laws remain in the criminal code. MSI panel participants agreed that libel laws should be revised and made part of the civil code, and the group expressed fear over recent reports that the new Minister of Justice wants libel laws to remain part of the criminal code. Some felt that the legal objective of the MSI deserved the lowest rating because the country finds itself in a vacuum as parliament attempts to form new laws. The group was only moderately optimistic about the content of the new laws being drafted. The International Press Institute and its affiliate, the South East European Media Organization, issued a March 26, 2001 report and letter calling on the Serbian government to review and amend articles in the Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia concerning freedom of expression.

Several of the participants felt that different standards for free speech, comparable to those in Western countries, were needed in Serbia, especially where hate speech is concerned. They indicated that hate speech in Serbia aimed at race and nationality could result in strong state control of press.

Market entry is an item of current political debate: in this transition time, there are too many broadcast stations (600 radio and 300 TV) to survive in a market economy. Most have no license and follow no rules. Yugoslav Telecommunications Minister Boris Tadic describes the allocation of radio and TV frequencies as "a house on fire." In Belgrade, the FM dial is jammed. A new competition for frequency allocation will be announced after a plan for frequency allocation is drafted. Before the competition, Tadic says, "all broadcasting licenses will have been revoked." All broadcasters now remain on hold and do not know if they will be allowed to continue after the new rules go into effect.

The issue of licensing broadcast media was of particular interest to the MSI discussion group. Acknowledging that 600 radio stations and 300 TV stations were far too many to survive in a market economy, and that there were simply not enough frequencies to go around, the group criticized the Federal Ministry of Communications as inefficient and slow to address the problem. The government continues to develop plans for a workable licensing system, but stations that were anti-Milosevic do not have the resources of the previously pro-Milosevic stations to compete for licenses. The government is looking at ways to compensate the media who were fined an estimated 1.5 million dollars under the Milosevic regime. One municipal broadcaster in the discussion group complained that the government has failed to respond to requests to return equipment confiscated under that regime: "Our equipment seized under the old regime has not been returned, there is no explanation of where it is.... Where is the compensation?"

Journalists are no longer persecuted since the change in government, but many panelists agreed that journalists who attempt investigative reporting are still in danger. It is viewed as a risky business, especially in southern Serbia. The panel also voiced concern that journalists have little or no editorial support and authorities in the new government still pressure journalists to stay away from investigative reporting. As one panelist put it, "There is not enough investigative reporting in Serbia, there is not enough editorial support, and journalists are not strong enough to stand up." Those wishing to do investigative reporting must take the consequences themselves, usually without support from their media outlets. The related issue of libel is presently an issue of government debate. The so-called "insult laws" have a chilling effect on freedom of expression and deprive citizens of their right to be fully informed. As

stated earlier, the International Press Institute has called on the government to repeal these articles from the criminal code.

Editorial independence is not guaranteed. Municipal newspapers and broadcasters are often controlled by the party in majority and managed by party-appointed officials. The government is debating how to make this system work. Media allied to the former regime have the advantage of years of good income with which to capitalize, valid licenses, and good coverage, while independents made little or no money. There is a cry from the latter for a level playing field. Many potential advertisers remain politically controlled, and independent media complain that these operations remain afraid to advertise or just don't understand how it will help them.

Public information is not easily accessible, and news reports tend to center on press releases and news conferences. Police reports are hard to obtain; they were not available prior to the revolution so there is no established practice of publishing them. Many reporters don't know how to find public information. It was pointed out that in developed countries, authorities must make information available to the public, and even corporations have public disclosure obligations. Such requirements do not exist in Serbia. The irony is that this indicator can be rated highly for the "equality of unavailability of basic information needed for research by journalists." Press members complained that even the simplest information must be obtained from official government sources and it is not readily available. There was a call for a new, unambiguous law to make information available to the public, and to protect the public as it seeks information. Because state media have priority in accessing sources of information, there is a perception that they receive other kinds of preferential treatment. Local politicians have powerful influence over the local press, and the panel expressed the opinion that people were afraid to go against them.

Journalists are not licensed. Media houses are ruined in terms of finances, technology, and skilled journalistic staff. Due to nonexistent criteria, the quality of journalism has deteriorated, rather than improved; in other words, anyone can be a journalist.

Attribute #2: Journalism meets professional standards of quality

Indicators
1. Reporting is fair, objective, and well sourced
2. Journalists follow recognized and accepted ethical standards
3. Journalists and editors do not practice self-censorship
4. Journalists cover key events and issues
5. Pay levels for journalists and other media professionals are sufficiently high to discourage corruption
6. Entertainment programming does not eclipse news and information programming
7. Technical facilities and equipment for gathering, producing, and distributing news are modern and efficient
8. Quality niche reporting and programming exists (investigative, economics/business, local, political)

The quality of journalism in Serbia is mixed, with a core cadre of professional journalists working at major independent media outlets. However, the overall quality of the profession is weak. Training is very much needed. Often reports are based on a single source—a legacy of government-controlled media. Station managers often say their reporters simply don't know how inquisitive they are allowed to be when asking questions. The panel agreed that significant progress remains to be made in journalistic quality and professional standards, but that the situation was not disastrous.

With a large number of mass media organizations available in Serbia, the quality of journalistic output is diverse, ranging from poor to good. State-owned media were described as poor in terms of balance and objectivity. Many quality problems were seen as being directly related to the poor economic conditions countrywide, which depress salaries for the journalism profession. Niche reporting and programming is not considered sufficiently developed, and offers minimal investigative, business and economics, and local reporting.

The Union of Independent Journalists of Serbia (NUNS) adopted a code of ethics in February 2001. The code is in line with world standards and the panelists felt this code was good for most reporters and journalists. An organization of private broadcasters, SPEKTAR has developed its own code for broadcast journalists, which has gained some acceptance, and was used during the December post-revolution elections. It was pointed out that while many independent reporters were NUNS members, others, particularly those working for state-owned media, are not members and thus not formally bound by world standards.

Although everyone was in agreement that there currently exists no compelling reason for journalists to practice self-censorship, they agreed that it was present. It was pointed out that some journalists simply fear losing their jobs by reporting on sensitive issues. The panel did feel that reporters no longer had a fear of being killed, as existed under Milosevic.

Journalists are not well paid and the door is therefore open to corruption. The nation's economy is a shambles and there is little money to pay journalists, or buy their publications. The panel felt this contributed to a lack of in-depth reporting, and several said they knew of many cases where journalists would accept money to broadcast news, regardless of its source or veracity.

Key political events are sometimes covered, but important economic issues are not, and niche reporting in general is weak. One reason is the lack of trained journalists to pursue specialized fields and a lack of market funds to support small target audiences. Recent events in Macedonia and along the Kosovo border were scarcely covered by the national stations, which instead carried reports from the BBC and others. This failure is due to a lack of trained reporters, equipment, and funding. During the standoff and subsequent arrest of former President Milosevic in Belgrade, viewers saw only a few live television images of the event, and there was little or no live reporting. Local stations carried voiceover translation of the live CNN and Sky News coverage. The Serbian *Ekonomist* magazine has recognized the need for professional development and has proposed training for financial reporters. The public does not expect economic reporting, despite fostering a political revolution partly against on dire economic conditions.

Entertainment programs often overshadow information programs. Information programs tend to be simple studio interviews. People have come to accept news as being controlled. With little or no competition under the prior regime, news media had little reason to fight for readers, listeners, or viewers. The large entertainment broadcast media have begun for the first time to broadcast news; these flashy productions are shallow in content, and may only be designed to ensure consideration when a new system for granting licenses is in place. Small radio stations often rewrite the content of local newspapers. Large TV stations often broadcast images of the newspaper headlines while music is played in the background.

TV Pink was cited as an example of entertainment overshadowing news. This nationwide TV station prospered under the Milosevic regime by having the right connections and correct behavior. The station was able to buy the most popular programs, and earn the most money. Now that the regime has changed, Pink still has the viewers by virtue of having the money to buy the best programs. The new regime has indicated it will close all broadcast operations and reopen only a reasonable number of them. One criterion for re-licensing will be the quality of news programming. Pink is seen as changing its stripes by now offering news. Pink news was judged by the panel as flashy with little substance—an attempt to make entertainment into news. In contrast, some local stations were accused of having too much news and attempting also to make news into entertainment.

Some media outlets are well equipped; most are not. Private media that allied themselves with the previous regime made money and can afford good equipment. Of the municipal stations, some were heavily subsidized, but most were not. Most media organizations say they are using outdated equipment and those who have new equipment need training on how to use it. At a roundtable discussion entitled "What Kind of Law for the Jungle in the Air," representatives of the private broadcast media claimed to be disadvantaged when compared with the stations that used to be close to the former regime and had

plenty of opportunity “to get rich and equipped with costly broadcasting and studio facilities,” which they (the private media) could not afford after years-long repression.

The panel’s assessment of the technical facilities used by the media in Serbia resulted in consensus that print is in bad shape. Radio stations, especially those affiliated with the Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM) are in good shape; other radio operations are in catastrophic shape. TV stations are in poor condition with the exception of stations that enjoyed privileges under the old regime. The panel saw TV as being technologically inferior to Western standards. In addition it was pointed out the state radio and television service suffered as a result of having been bombed by NATO.

Printing presses were said to be out of date and described as devastated, resulting in high printing costs and expensive newspapers for consumers. One participant said that the printing press industry has collapsed, and others said that it was difficult to start new printing houses because there was no possibility of obtaining loans. Distribution of print media was described as bad, with some 200 private distributors and one parallel state owned distributor. The panel called for government regulation of distribution of print media.

Attribute #3: Multiple news sources provide citizens with reliable and objective news

Indicators
1. Plurality of public and private news sources (e.g. print, broadcast, Internet) exist and are affordable
2. Citizens’ access to domestic or international media is not restricted
3. State or public media reflect the views of the entire political spectrum, are non-partisan, and serve the public interest
4. Independent news agencies gather and distribute news for print and broadcast media
5. Independent broadcast media produce their own news programs
6. Transparency of media ownership allows consumers to judge objectivity of news; media ownership is not concentrated in a few conglomerates
7. A broad spectrum of social interests are reflected and represented in the media, including minority-language information sources

There are many newspapers and magazines available throughout the region. In some areas, such as Belgrade, the radio and TV spectrum is saturated with stations. In general, broadcast media is free but papers and magazines are expensive for most citizens in the current weak economy. Those wishing to start new publications are seeking donor funds, because scarce capital makes lending institutions reluctant to give loans. The state news agency Tanjug claims to have changed management and is now requesting close to US \$600,000 in donor funds to repair and replace outdated equipment. State-operated printing presses are 35 years old and in bad shape.

The government does not restrict access to media but foreign news sources are hard to find because people do not have the money to afford them. Donors have been called upon to supply funding for foreign news services. There are several cases of private stations that rebroadcast the BBC and other foreign services in the local language. The Internet operates unhindered but the Telecommunications Ministry reports less than three percent of the entire population has access. Some studies have shown that five people read the average newspaper before it is thrown away. This is the result of a poor economy making it hard for people to afford newsprint, satellite, and Internet access.

The panel unanimously stated that citizens are confused about who owns much of the country’s media. A lawyer on the panel explained that the public register of ownership allows registration of nominal, not true, holders of media property, and is easily manipulated to conceal political influence and foreign ownership. For instance, ownership can be hidden in offshore corporations. He pointed out that expensive analysis is the only way to discover media ownership, and money is lacking. Mechanisms based on the rule of law should be established in order to reduce political influence.

Minority language programs were considered by the panel to be widely available where needed. Examples were cited in Subotica and other cities with large minorities. “Response to minority

programming is good, ghettos are breaking down," according to one of the panelists. Minorities from neighboring countries have difficulties buying homeland newspapers due to cost rather than politics.

Attribute #4: Independent media are well-managed businesses, allowing editorial independence

Indicators
1. Media outlets and supporting firms operate as efficient, professional, and profit-generating businesses
2. Media receive revenue from a multitude of sources
3. Advertising agencies and related industries support an advertising market
4. Advertising revenue as a percentage of total revenue is in line with accepted standards at commercial outlets
5. Independent media do not receive government subsidies
6. Market research is used to formulate strategic plans, enhance advertising revenue, and tailor products to the needs and interests of audiences
7. Broadcast ratings and circulation figures are reliably and independently produced

The panel indicated that the saturation of the market and the lack of clear licensing made it difficult for media to operate as efficient businesses. A hoped-for result of the new broadcasting law will be a thinning of the number of stations to allow a better chance for financial sustainability. It was the feeling of the panel that whoever gets the best frequency allocations will survive.

Regarding the print media, printing plants are seen as slow and old fashioned, with low quality product. Distribution methods are inefficient. The print media receive no government subsidies and the panel attacked a three-percent tax being levied on the import of newsprint as economically damaging. The panel expressed the view that, without the support of donors and new sources of revenue, many print operations would collapse. There was a call for donor organizations to formulate a strategy to help sustain print media until the economy revives.

Concern was expressed that media do not generate revenue from a variety of sources, resulting in the failure of local media in particular. The panel also felt that there are too many media organizations operating in Serbia, and that the impending shakeout by way of the new broadcast law and ongoing economic problems will create a lot of losers. Wealthy companies from the old regime, such as BK, TV Pink, and Palma, dominate the advertising market. They have a nationwide audience, allowing them to monopolize the relatively small advertising market. The panel was in agreement that many of the problems facing media in Serbia are directly related to the country's poor economy.

Media analysts on the panel noted that advertisers in Serbia tend to base their purchase of airtime on the principle of reaching a maximum of viewers with minimum investment. As a result there is great demand for spots on top entertainment programs. It was reported that over 50 percent of all advertising money went to just two TV stations, leaving the remaining 50 percent of the market for all other media including print. Newspaper income was reported at a lower-than-normal 20 percent from advertising, due in part to low-quality layout. In 2000, about US\$ 15 million were spent on advertising in Serbia, and of that almost \$10 million went to TV. Estimates are that spending on advertising may increase by some 50 percent in 2001, but the panel was concerned that most of the increase would continue to go to TV only.

Panel members agreed that there is a general lack of professionalism in the selling of advertising and the creation of ad content. There was a call for the new broadcasting law to restrict TV advertising, with panel members saying that if it continues uncontrolled, TV will become the "shopping channel."

Objective, fair, and honest market research is available in Serbia, but it was reported that only the top ten stations bother to use the information to set their prices. Print representatives said their circulation figures are public, and surveys are not used. The panel called for donors to help make research available to smaller broadcast operations, which cannot afford the research. One participant stated that any kind of requirement that the media respond exclusively to media surveys is "suicide," meaning that it would result in media "filled with trash" (reflecting the lowest common denominator).

Attribute #5: Supporting institutions function in the professional interests of independent media

Indicators
1. Trade associations represent the interests of private media owners and provide member services
2. Professional associations work to protect journalists' rights
3. NGOs support free speech and independent media
4. Quality journalism degree programs exist providing substantial practical experience
5. Short-term training and in-service training programs allow journalists to upgrade skills or acquire new skills
6. Sources of newsprint and printing facilities are in private hands, apolitical, and not restricted
7. Channels of media distribution (kiosks, transmitters, Internet) are private, apolitical, and unrestricted

The panel was in agreement that the presence of institutions supporting media independence was a good sign of sustainability, and that Serbia was well developed in this respect. Under Milosevic, the independent media developed effective institutions to combat repression, including ANEM, NUNS, the Media Center, the Association of Independent Print Media (APEM), the Association for the Development of Private Broadcasting (Spektar), and several human rights organizations that pay attention to free speech issues. These NGOs and associations are seen as playing a vital role in the post-revolutionary transition to a market economy, while media learn to operate by new standards and to survive in an evolving economy.

However, these associations need further professional development and better coordination. A recent Media Center workshop in Belgrade noted the overlapping jurisdictions of associations and trade unions. The workshop suggested that solutions to this issue would be found through cooperation between the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (IJAS) and the Nezavisnost ("Independence") trade union confederation—a process that would encompass views of the International Federation of Journalists and experiences of other countries. The panel also said that trade unions do not function as they do in other countries, and pointed to the Union of Independent Journalists of Serbia (NUNS) as an example of an organization that assists the media. NUNS has given strong support to journalists, including financial aid, scholarships, medical help, and legal aid, and has made forums available for discussion of journalistic issues. This help was seen as very important during the Milosevic years. On the other hand, the State Association of Journalists, operating with state-owned media, was described as a "parasite" organization. The panel stated that now was the time for such associations to define new roles and relationships.

The only major institution able to provide long-term training in journalism is the Department of Journalism of the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade. As a state-run institution, the faculty has been left destitute: it has been deprived of international assistance. It lacks the funds and technical requirements for quality training, its literature collection has become outdated, and the international exchange of professors and students has been discontinued. The faculty has not been included in a single international project under the auspices of the European Union. As a panel member stated, "the university is strained and we have a ten-year shortage of professional people at the same time young people need to be educated." There are also no radio or TV programs at the university. An independent school of journalism is operational in Novi Sad and has graduated some 200 students in the past few years.

The Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM) provides quality short-term training, supported mostly by donor funds. The BBC plans to open a training center, and the panel also noted that international NGOs are providing valuable short-term training to journalists throughout Serbia.

As stated above, the situation concerning newsprint and printing facilities is poor. There are few private facilities, and public enterprises produce most of the output. The panel said the only encouraging development in this area was that state printing presses have now appeared on the market and are offering their services.

Ways of distributing news were discussed for each medium, and there was agreement that the existing system of parallel state and private distribution was inefficient. The use of trains to deliver newspapers and magazines was seen as inefficient and the State Post Telephone and Telegraph (PTT) was criticized for being too expensive to be of use anymore.

Panel members said that telephones continue to be wiretapped and some telephone providers still work for state security organizations. There was a call to abolish the monopoly of PTT and its power to issue Internet provider permits.

List of panel participants

1. Branislav Zivkovic, Attorney of Law, ANEM Lawyer
2. Voja Zanetic, Owner and CEO of a marketing firm, public relations and communications specialist
3. Ofelija Backovic, Editor in Chief, TV Pancevo, Vojvodina
4. Slobodan Kacarevic, Editor in Chief and Director, *Glas Javnosti* daily, Director of Printing House Glas Javnosti
5. Gordana Susa, President of NUNS (Independent Journalists Association of Serbia)
6. Djurdjic Momcilo, Editor in Chief, Radio Pirot - Southern Serbia
7. Sasa Djordjevic, Press and Information Officer, European Union, Delegation of the European Commission
8. Irena Guzalova, *Financial Times* correspondent in Belgrade
9. Darko Brocic, Media Researcher, Strategic Marketing and Media Research Institute
10. Mirkov Nikola, Media Researcher - specialist on media monitoring