

**MEDIA**

**SUSTAINABILITY**

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**2005**



**IREX**

A NEW LIBERAL LAW ON ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS WENT INTO PLACE, AND A DRAFT LAW ON THE PERFORMANCE OF BROADCASTING ACTIVITY WAS PREPARED FOR PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE. THE GOVERNMENT ALSO INITIATED PREPARATIONS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES THAT SHOULD PROVIDE THE FOUNDATION FOR CRITICALLY NEEDED JUDICIARY REFORM.



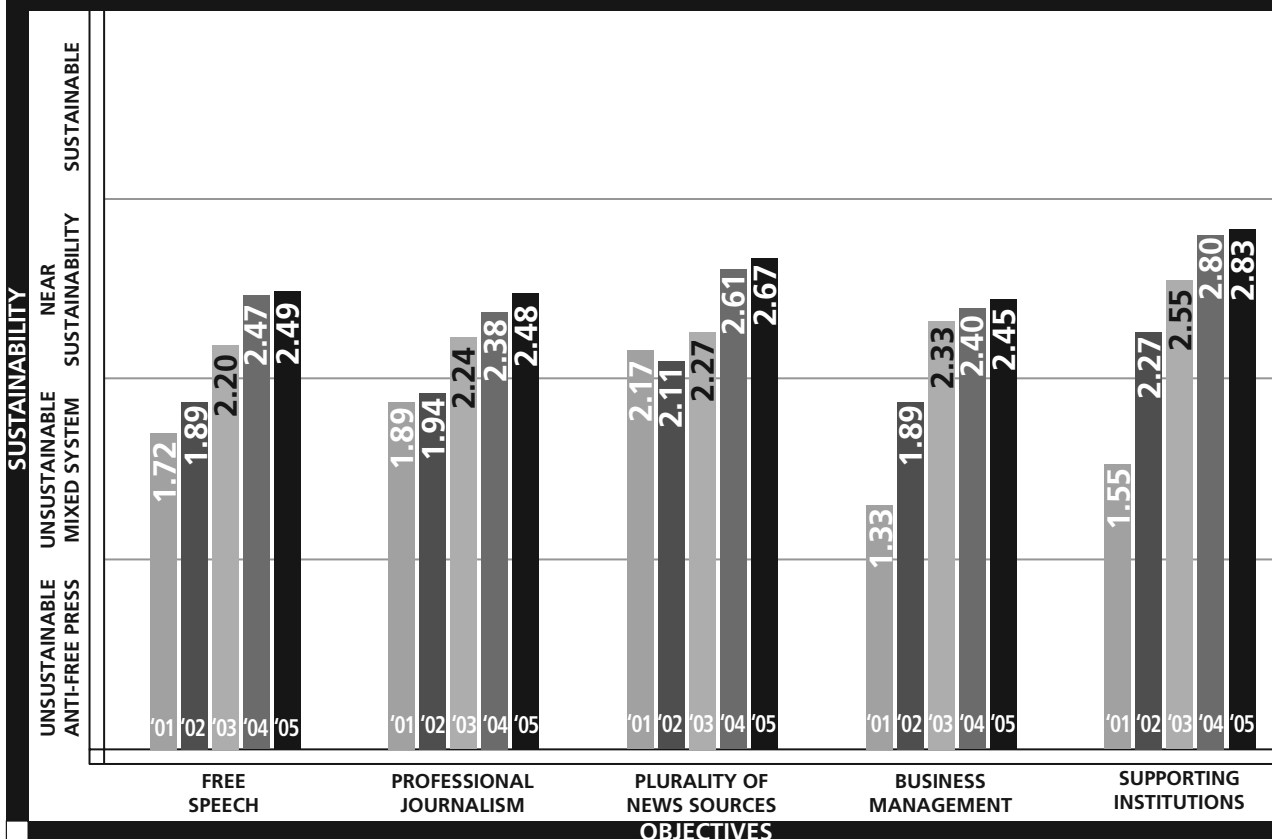
European integration procedures were the focus of 2005 in Macedonia. The key event was the completion of the questionnaire delivered by the European Commission (EC) to the Macedonian government, one of the key formal stages required for the process to move forward. This resulted in a wave of legislative activity as Macedonia started on major changes required in its laws, including those related to the media.

A new liberal Law on Electronic Communications went into place, and a draft Law on the Performance of Broadcasting Activity was prepared for parliamentary debate. The government also initiated preparations for constitutional changes that should provide the foundation for critically needed judicial reform. However, the Media Sustainability Index (MSI) panel detected no significant progress in the Macedonian media sector during 2005, with its overall ranking essentially unchanged at 2.58, compared with 2.53 in 2004. No regression was seen for any objective, but the greatest gain, for the professionalism of journalism, was only 0.10, to a ranking of 2.48 for 2005 from 2.38 for 2004.

Municipal elections held in March marked the start of the decentralization process in Macedonia. The ongoing transfer of powers from the central government to local authorities appeared to be proceeding relatively smoothly. There was potential for some serious problems to arise related to ownership of land and infrastructure as well as the organization of some services on the local level, such as education and health care.

The political situation appeared to have stabilized, and hawkish nationalistic rhetoric seemed to have been pushed away from public discourse. Over the course of the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, which ended fighting between government security forces and ethnic Albanian forces in 2001, it was evident that interethnic tensions remained. But their inflammatory potential appeared to have weakened as the agreement's last stages were put into force in 2005.

## MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: MACEDONIA



**Unsustainable, Anti-Free Press (0-1):** Country does not meet or only minimally meets objectives. Government and laws actively hinder free media development, professionalism is low, and media-industry activity is minimal.

**Unsustainable Mixed System (1-2):** Country minimally meets objectives, with segments of the legal system and government opposed to a free media system. Evident progress in free-press advocacy, increased professionalism, and new media businesses may be too recent to judge sustainability.

**Near Sustainability (2-3):** Country has progressed in meeting multiple objectives, with legal norms, professionalism, and the business environment supportive of independent media. Advances have survived changes in government and have been codified in law and practice. However, more time may be needed to ensure that change is enduring and that increased professionalism and the media business environment are sustainable.

**Sustainable (3-4):** Country has media that are considered generally professional, free, and sustainable, or to be approaching these objectives. Systems supporting independent media have survived multiple governments, economic fluctuations, and changes in public opinion or social conventions.

The performance of the Macedonian economy, however, did not see the same improvement. Macedonia remained a country with insignificant foreign investment and high levels of corruption—factors that undermine the stability of government institutions and efforts at reform. The MSI panelists suggested that corruption and poverty appear to be the biggest challenges for the democratic processes in Macedonia in the coming years.

**OBJECTIVE 1: FREE SPEECH**

**Macedonia Objective Score: 2.49 / 4.00**

The legal framework that secures freedom of expression derives from the constitution of the Republic of Macedonia. The large number of media outlets and the existing legislation suggest that freedom of expression is generally respected. However, there are still obstacles that limit media freedom. The MSI panelists said considerable work remains to be done in terms of media legislation and its implementation as well as the reform of the judiciary, and recorded no significant change in the ranking for the objective.

The lack of effective access-to-information statutes, the categorization of defamation and libel as criminal offenses, and the politicization of the licensing procedure for broadcasters were considered the three main problems. The sophisticated manipulation of the media conducted through the relations between media owners and political leaders also limit media freedom, panelists said.

The lack of a law on free access to information not only limits the media’s ability to conduct thorough reporting and fully inform the public but, by limiting the factual information available, also contributes to the tendency to prosecute journalists under defamation clauses in the penal code, panelists said. “It is unacceptable for the state to prosecute me on defamation charges while, on the other hand, its institutions are not legally bound to provide me with the information,” said Naser Selmani, a journalist at the daily *Vest* newspaper.

Furthermore, the government’s hesitation to introduce this legislation creates the danger of a new type of pressure on the media: the threat of prosecution on charges of disclosure of state or trade secrets and confidential information. The first case of this type was noted in 2004 when a journalist was brought to court on charges of disclosure of company secrets. The case became a more complex test of media rights when the company that filed the lawsuit offered to drop the case if the journalist involved would disclose the identity

of the source that provided the documents. The MSI panel agreed that the access-to-information law should be adopted as soon as possible, but said some major changes in the pending draft prepared by the Ministry of Justice were necessary to safeguard journalists’ sources.

Licensing for the broadcast media continued in 2005 to rely on the central government, and the law that would introduce changes in the procedures remained pending in the parliament. In addition, unlicensed media continued to create illegal competition in the already overcrowded media market. Nebojsa Karapejovski from TV Menada in Tetovo pointed out that there the licensing authorities adopt “a populist approach,” allowing large numbers of private electronic media that may create many information outlets but also produce sustainability problems in the market. The MSI participants agreed that the tax structure and market entry are fair and in line with the general standards applicable to other businesses.

There were no new recorded cases of attacks or other crimes against journalists or media outlets, with this kind of pressure falling to its lowest level for several

**Legal and social norms protect and promote free speech and access to public information.**

**FREE-SPEECH INDICATORS:**

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

years. "The public in Macedonia is more and more sensible to the pressure on the free speech," said Erol Rizaov, editor-in-chief of the daily *Utrinski Vesnik* newspaper. Nonetheless, several cases from the past remained unresolved, such as the wire-tapping of journalists' communications that emerged in 2001 and has not been closed by the relevant court, and there is a general reluctance on the part of the government to tackle these problems institutionally.

Changes in the penal code mean government officials and people in the public eye no longer receive special protection from journalistic coverage compared with ordinary citizens. The last case prosecuted under the previous legislation was completed in mid-2005, when a journalist at *Utrinski Vesnik* was prosecuted by the public prosecutor on behalf of the ex-speaker of the parliament. Libel, however, remains a part of the Criminal Law.

There are no limitations imposed by the government or any other body on the availability of international media, or on entering the journalism profession.

## OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

**Macedonia Objective Score: 2.48 / 4.00**

The MSI panelists agreed that the level of professionalism in the media has not yet reached acceptable standards. In addition, said Naser Selmani, "There is some problem within the profession: The journalists believe that we don't need anybody to tell us how to do our work." Panelists detected numerous reasons for the lack of professionalism, among them inaccessible sources, little attention to fact-checking, market pressure, inexperienced journalists, and bias resulting from the open political affiliation of certain outlets. Salaries are low, creating the possibility of corruption penetrating the profession.

The reporting is described as generally aggressive but lacking in terms of credible and detailed sourcing. "The last media monitoring shows that there is a lack of named and identified sources of information, as well as increased use of anonymous sources," said Biljana Bejkova from the NGO Infocentre. "The lack of official sources forces us to write and base our reporting on anonymous sources, or not write at all," added Naser Selmani.

The panelists noted that there is a generalized fear of journalists among the public, and even ordinary people are anxious when asked to speak to the media. "The unfair treatment scares the people, and we can't blame them," said Roberto Belicanec from the Media

Development Center. "Journalism, in general, lacks proper editorial behavior and control ... A 22-year-old person with a microphone in his hand suddenly becomes a judge in the name of the public." With so many anonymous sources being used, journalism takes on an aura of speculation. According to the panelists, the absence of an access-to-information law contributes significantly to this situation.

The panelists noted that not only official institutions are closed, but also big businesses and other economic players. The pressure to use anonymous sources and little checked information also stems from the competition among media outlets and their understaffed newsrooms. "Now we enter the phase of aggressive journalism looking for exclusive news and readership or audience ratings. What worries me the most is that the audience is not reacting to such coverage," said Robert Popovski, the Secretary General of the Association of Journalists of Macedonia. Erol Rizaov said that although there is less and less self-censorship, the interests of big companies are more notable in most of the media.

A general ethics code is in place, developed by the Association of Journalists. The association established a self-regulation body in charge of overseeing compliance with the code, and the panel has been quite active in recent years. Its assessment of the media community tends to be conducted exclusively within the profession, however, and rarely extends to include the public in

### Journalism meets professional standards of quality.

#### PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM INDICATORS:

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

the discussion, panelists said. For their part, the MSI panelists concluded that the level of adherence to the ethical and professional standards is still rather low. It was the panel's opinion that the journalistic community should clearly indicate who "deserves" to be considered a journalist and who doesn't.

Generally speaking, the journalists do cover the key issues. The problem lies in the tabloid approach to the coverage and the fact that this approach is spreading to the mainstream media. "What was an excess in the past has become the mainstream now," said Aco Kabranov, editor-in-chief of information programs on TV Kanal 5.

Journalists' salaries have remained at the same level for several years and are not increasing, which creates a potential for corruption. "There are no proven cases of corruption amongst the Macedonian journalists, in spite of the fact that influences of certain political and business circles on some commentaries, opinions, and articles in the media are quite visible. In my opinion, it is impossible for the high level of corruption in the country not to be reflected in journalism," said Erol Rizaov.

The news remains the key programming for the major television stations. The entertainment presents no danger to the news because of two main factors: the highly politicized society and the low quality of the entertainment programs. Information programming on radio remains problematic because most stations in Macedonia have a music format and the public has not developed the habit of turning to radio as a valid source of news.

There is ongoing improvement in the technical working conditions in the print media, especially after the 2003 entrance of Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung (WAZ) into the market. One of Germany's media empires, WAZ now owns three Macedonian dailies—*Dnevnik*, *Utrinski Vesnik*, and *Vest*—and has invested in new equipment, including newsroom systems. The broadcast media, television stations in particular, find themselves in a far worse position. "Huge numbers of television stations still work on the same equipment they had on the day they began broadcasting in the first place," said Aco Kabranov.

The participants in the panel agreed that the quality of specialized journalism is worth mentioning only in terms of business and economy coverage. The situation is the worst regarding film and literature criticism, and coverage of culture in general. The responsibility for that lies with the ownership of the biggest private broadcasters, the panelists said. With most broadcasters owned by big companies primarily in order for them to act as mouthpieces for these companies, the panelists said, it is quite natural that economic journalism was the only niche that developed over the years.

### OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES

Macedonia Objective Score: 2.67 / 4.00

There are multiple news sources available in Macedonia, and it seems at first glance that there is media pluralism in place. However, most of the media outlets are small municipal radio and television stations with insignificant shares of the market. The situation on the national level is somewhat different: There are a good number of relatively high-quality information and news programs and newspapers, but the number is beyond what the market can sustain. The penetration of the Internet is at about 10 percent of the population, which eliminates the Web as a news source for most of the population. There are only pioneering attempts to create online media, while the traditional media maintain Web pages that mirror their print editions. The cable television penetration in the country is at a relatively high percentage: almost one third of the households are connected on cable, which allows them to follow foreign programming. The circulation and sale of foreign press is low, but it is available.

Subject to the most comments by the MSI panel was biased coverage of topics related to the interests of

#### Multiple news sources provide citizens with reliable and objective news.

##### PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES INDICATORS:

- > A plurality of affordable public and private news sources (e.g., print, broadcast, Internet) exists.
- > Citizens' access to domestic or international media is not restricted.
- > State or public media reflect the views of the entire political spectrum, are nonpartisan, and serve the public interest.
- > Independent news agencies gather and distribute news for print and broadcast media.
- > Independent broadcast media produce their own news programs.
- > Transparency of media ownership allows consumers to judge objectivity of news; media ownership is not concentrated in a few conglomerates.
- > A broad spectrum of social interests are reflected and represented in the media, including minority-language information sources.

media owners, particularly their political inclinations. But despite the evident biases in the media, the diversity of media allows news consumers to make up their own minds. The transparency of ownership is not a legal obligation for the media, but the public knows who owns each media outlet. One prevailing problem is the lack of transparency in terms of media financing. There is little knowledge of how the media finance their operations, and from what sources.

***“The domestic media do not have a strategy for use of Internet as an information service,” said Roberto Belicanec.***

The Internet, like radio, is not perceived as a source of information in the traditional sense of the word.

“The domestic

media do not have a strategy for use of Internet as an information service,” said Roberto Belicanec. There are no administrative measures to limit access to the Internet, but the price of Internet access, combined with the conservative, anti-technological mindset of the majority of the population, produces a “digital divide.” This makes the Internet information market too small to support the launch of specialized services. The other, traditional media are accessible and have a stable audience and readership. Television is the most influential source of information, followed by the print media. Radio is perceived more as entertainment media.

In terms of plurality of views on the main topics of the society, the panel agreed that such a plurality does exist. The problem is that it does not result from the professionalism of the media, but from the diverse ownership. To put it simply, the most powerful groups in the society own their own media or manage to influence the media through other means.

There are only two news agencies in Macedonia—MIA and Makfaks. MIA is state owned and is subsidized by the government budget, while Makfaks is a small private news agency that sells news to the media.

Almost all serious broadcasters have news departments that usually produce and broadcast two news programs daily. The problem with the quality of the news is due to mechanisms of the ownership control, which, from time to time, greatly influence the way certain topics are covered. The panel noted a new trend: The media are becoming vulnerable to the pressure that comes from business. “The influence is visible from the manner of coverage of a given event. We know in advance how certain media will cover certain topics,” said Kabranov.

The problem with the topics concerning minority groups arises from the way they are treated by the mainstream media, panelists said. “Minorities become visible in the media only when they make trouble,” said Belicanec. Nebojsa Karapejovski said “local private media produce more programs on minorities, but when they offer to exchange those programs with the national media, they are not interested.” Print and electronic media in the languages of minorities exist as independent media outlets, but they have a limited production capacity and audience.

#### OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

**Macedonia Objective Score: 2.45 / 4.00**

The prevailing opinion is that the media market is overcrowded, which limits growth. There were no foreign investments in the media business in 2005. State institutions do not subsidize the media industry. Collection of the broadcasting tax, designed to finance the public service Macedonia Radio and TV and the Broadcasting Council regulatory body, is at its lowest level ever and is likely to decline further.

The general economic situation in Macedonia, the base for efficient and profit-generating operation of media outlets, is not improving. It is worth noting, though, that there were no cases of media outlets closing, which implies that the media are subsidized from some sources other than the market. It is impossible to estimate the real value of the advertising market with the present accounting and research systems in the country.

The supporting firms, the distribution and printing companies, have been privatized and provide relatively good support to the print media. All the participants agreed that there are no problems related to printing and distribution. There are several distribution networks in the country, as well as multiple options for printing of newspapers and magazines.

Media have various potential sources of revenues, but advertising is the main component. Yet the advertising revenue is not sufficient or sufficiently consistent, especially for smaller and local media. The advertising agencies cooperate mostly with the national broadcast media. “Advertising companies are not interested in the local media, regardless of the fact that they may have good ratings,” said Nebojsa Karapejovski. For that reason, media that serve local communities are in such a precarious situation in the market.

The large number of private media and the weak market resulted in a further decrease of advertising



prices during 2005. A significant number of broadcasters even resorted to violations of legal limits regarding the percentage of advertising in their programs.

The general opinion of the panelists was that advertising revenue is not enough to cover the costs of the media outlets, and they have to seek other sources of financing that can influence the independence of the industry. "It would be a different situation if the media outlets depended solely on advertising-generated income," said Roberto Belicanec.

The panelists agreed that advertising agencies in Macedonia do not work in a very professional manner. "Everything depends on them, so we are sometimes in a situation to broadcast low-quality programs only because of the advertisement embedded in the program," said Robert Popovski.

The government has stopped budget subsidies to print media. The broadcasting tax paid by all citizens is the main source of financing for MRTV, the public-service broadcaster. Ten percent of the funds collected through the tax are used to subsidize the production of "programs of public interest" by private broadcasters and production companies. The new draft of the broadcasting law, currently moving through parliamentary review, proposes to stop this type of financial support.

**Independent media are well-managed businesses, allowing editorial independence.**

**BUSINESS MANAGEMENT INDICATORS:**

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

There are no reliable market-research and audience ratings in Macedonia that could help managers formulate strategic plans and enhance revenues for media outlets. "The problem is the lack of trust in the results of the surveys," said Robert Popovski. "If there is no trust, the results become irrelevant." Even the existing research gets insufficient use at advertising agencies, and media business directors lack the skills to use ratings in their strategic plans. However, Roberto Belicanec said, "There is a positive trend in that there are surveys and there are first signs of actual use of the results." Panelists agreed that creation of a joint industry body focused on research would improve results.

**OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS**

**Macedonia Objective Score: 2.83 / 4.00**

The support system for the media, including industry associations and civil society organizations, has grown steadily during the past several years. Although the panel identified problems, the main trend remains highly positive. The nongovernmental organizations (NGO) and media associations have proved to be tough and respectful lobbyists, perceived as organizations with clear agendas that know how to deliver services and to protect the interests of their members. The same growth was evident in the supporting institutions that arise from the market, such as those providing distribution, printing, and transmission. They proved to be viable businesses in good economic condition.

Panelists said the two associations that represent print and broadcasting media, the Association of Print Media (APM) and the Association of Electronic Media in Macedonia (APEMM) are functioning and representing their members but could further increase their activities. Ljubica Angelkovska-Mangova, of TV Tera in Bitola mentioned that "APEMM should avoid the populist approach to its membership and should select serious broadcasters."

Robert Popovski said that AJM has transformed itself over the past four years into a new, focused association with a number of quality activities, such as the adoption of an ethics code, establishment of the Council of Honor, and other activities. "If we want more than that, we need to have a professional organization—not an organization that will function on a voluntary basis," he said.

The panelists generally agreed that there are a sufficient number of organizations connected to the industry and active in the field of support of free speech. However, they said that communication

## Supporting institutions function in the professional interests of independent media.

### SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS INDICATORS:

- > Trade associations represent the interests of private media owners and provide member services.
- > Professional associations work to protect journalists' rights.
- > NGOs support free speech and independent media.
- > Quality journalism degree programs that provide substantial practical experience exist.
- > Short-term training and in-service training programs allow journalists to upgrade skills or acquire new skills.
- > Sources of newsprint and printing facilities are private, apolitical, and unrestricted.
- > Channels of media distribution (kiosks, transmitters, Internet) are private, apolitical, and unrestricted.

between the media-related NGOs and the media industry are not satisfactory. "The media are not mirrored by the nongovernmental sector; the civic society should force the media to face their public responsibility," Roberto Belicanec said.

"Despite the increased competition in higher education in Macedonia, the Faculty of Journalism is still unable to educate quality journalists," said Erol Rizaov. Nonetheless, the general opinion is that enough training for journalists is available. The one-year journalism school offered by the Macedonian Institute for the Media was commended as quality training. The short-term training programs offer visible benefits to the media. Nebojsa Karapejovski, for example, said his station "is not the same after the in-house training organized by the International Media Fund." Ljubica Angelkovska-Mangova, said in-house training is the most needed form of insistence, but "unfortunately, the international community understood that fact only a couple years ago."

Trainings should not concentrate only on journalism because the growing industry has multiple other needs for its human resources. The panel emphasized that the international donors are withdrawing from the region and warned that financing of trainings could be jeopardized in the near future.

Regarding the sources of newsprint, printing facilities, and kiosks, all the participants agreed that they are

private, apolitical, and unrestricted. This is not the case with some Internet services and transmitters, which are limited. The panel agreed that in the near future, with the digitalization of broadcasting in Macedonia, the fact that the state-owned Macedonian Broadcasting Company owns the main network of transmitters in the country may create a disturbance in the market.

### Panel Participants

**Aco Kabranov**, Editor-in-Chief, TV Kanal 5

**Robert Popovski**, Executive Secretary, Association of Journalists of Macedonia

**Erol Rizaov**, Editor-in-Chief, *Utrinski Vesnik* daily

**Naser Selmani**, Journalist, *Vest* daily

**Sara Broughton**, Head of Media Development Unit, OSCE

**Zerijeta Jajaga**, Editor-in-Chief, RFE/RL (Albanian-language section)

**Roberto Belicanec**, Director, Media Development Center

**Ljubica Angelkovska-Mangova**, Program Director, TV Tera, Bitola

**Nebojsa Karapejovski**, General Manager, TV Menada, Tetovo

**Biljana Bejkova**, Project Manager, NGO Infocentre

### Moderator

**Gazmend Ajdini**, Senior Program Manager, IREX Europe

### Observers

**Melita Cokrevska**, USAID

**Vesna Nikodinoska**, Program Manager, IREX Europe

# MACEDONIA AT A GLANCE

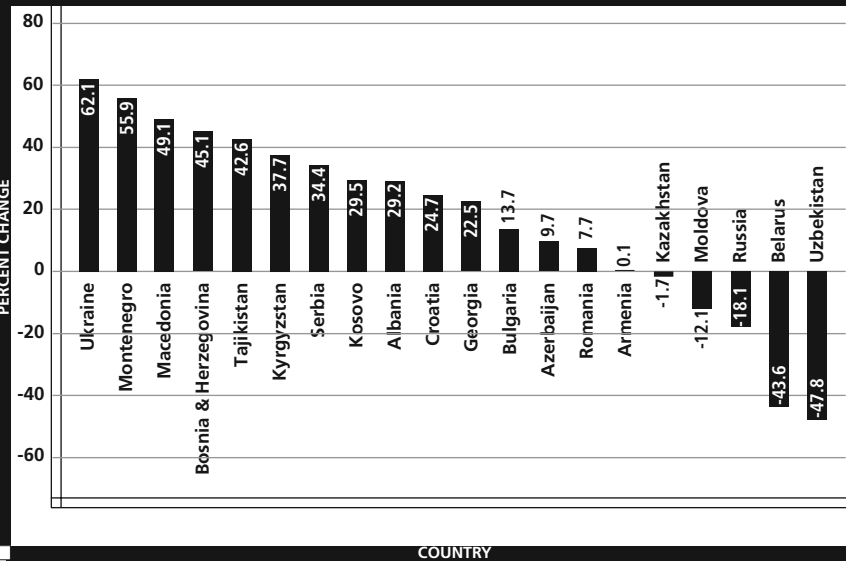
## GENERAL

- **Population:** 2,022,547 *Statistics Bureau, Census 2002*
- **Capital city:** Skopje
- **Ethnic groups (% of population):** Macedonian 64.18%, Albanian 25.17%, Turk 3.85%, Roma 2.66%, Serb 1.77%, Boshnjak 0.84%, other 1.97% *Statistics Bureau, Census 2002*
- **Religions (% of population):** Macedonian Orthodox 64.78%, Muslim 33.33%, other 1.9% *Statistics Bureau, Census 2002*
- **Languages (% of population):** Macedonian 66.5%, Albanian 25%, Turkish 3.5%, Serbo-Croatian 1.2%, Roma 1.9%, other 1.9% *Statistics Bureau, Census 2002*
- **GDP:** 264,599 million Denars (1US\$ = 51 MK Denars) *Statistics Bureau, 2004 est.*
- **GDP per capita:** \$2,230 *Statistics Bureau, 2003*
- **Literacy rate (% of population):** 96.38% *Statistics Bureau, Census 2002*
- **President or top authority:** President Branko Crvenkovski
- **Next scheduled elections:** Parliamentary 2006

## MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- **Newspaper circulation statistics (total circulation and largest paper):** No reliable sources regarding

MSI AVERAGE SCORES—PERCENT CHANGE 2001–2005



circulation. *Dnevnik* is the largest daily paper.

- **Top three ranked television stations:** A1 25.48%, Sitel 12.27%, MTV 1 8.25%

- **Top three ranked radio stations:** Radio Antena 5 14.1%, Kanal 77 7.18%, Macedonian Radio 1 5.01% *Strategic Marketing and Media Research Institute, September 2005*

- **Number of print outlets, radio stations, television stations:** Approximately 600 daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, and periodical editions *Agency for Information* There are 161 radio and television

stations, 3 television channels, 29 local broadcasters, and 6 radio program services. Eight commercial broadcasters have concessions for national coverage. Five of them are television (A1, Sitel, Channel 5, Telma, AlSat), and three are radio (Channel 77, Antena 5, Radio Ros). There are 115 commercial broadcasters with concessions for local area coverage; 50 are television, and 65 are radio. *Broadcasting Council, October 2005*

- **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** No accurate estimates available

- **Number of Internet users:** 126,000 *Sector for European Integration*

- **News agencies:** Macedonian Information Agency (public), MakFax (private)

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