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SERBIA

For Serbia, 2015 was another turbulent year politically and economically and the media sector was not immune from the effects. In December, EU membership negotiations began, following the agreement for normalizing relations between Serbia and Kosovo. Another development was the one million refugees passing through Serbia without incident—a display of benevolence and care from the Serbian citizens and the government.

The prime minister and his party continued the “one man, one party” rule as they steered policies and government decisions. This put significant pressure on the ombudsman, the commissioner for information of public importance and personal data protection, and the commissioner for the protection of equality; all of them performed extraordinarily throughout 2015.

With a modest GDP growth rate of 0.8 percent and the budget deficit around 2.4 percent lower than in the previous year, some financial experts say that the Serbian economy is out of its recession. However, the economy still has visible problems, the greatest of which are public debt growth reaching 75.5 percent of GDP, the postponed restructuring of the state economy, and the persistent withholding of state subsidies. In all, the Serbian economy experienced the lowest growth rate of all former-Yugoslavian countries in 2015.

Throughout 2015, the media sector was characterized by the collapse of law, ethics, professionalism, and social norms. Constitutional laws as well as ethical standards were violated. The media privatization process formally ended in 2015, but several important media outlets have not completed the transition from state ownership. The new financing system, in which media outlets may secure funding from municipalities, was a disappointment to many. Media members expected these long-awaited reforms to be a remedy for higher independence in local areas. However, the new system has many voluntary requirements, which is undermining progress and improvements in these media.

In an extreme example of politicians’ behavior toward journalists and the media, the defense minister made a vulgar and sexist remark about a TV B92 journalist who knelt near him in order to avoid blocking cameras. This event triggered protests from many journalists, but in a positive sign there were consequences: the prime minister fired the defense minister, despite the fact that he is believed to be a close political ally. Another bittersweet development was that, after a 16-year delay, the trial for the murderer of journalist Slavko Ćuruvija finally started.

The long-term deterioration of media law implementation and enforcement, together with worsening economic conditions and withering political pressures, forced panelists to assess Serbia’s media sector with the lowest marks since the MSI began in 2001.

SERBIA at a glance

GENERAL

- > **Population:** 7,176,794 (July 2015 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Capital city:** Belgrade
- > **Ethnic groups (% of population):** Serb 83.3%, Hungarian 3.5%, Romany 2.1%, Bosniak 2%, other 5.7%, Unknown 3.4% (2011 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Religions (% of population):** Serbian Orthodox 84.6%, Catholic 5%, Muslim 3.1%, Protestant 1%, atheist 1.1%, other 0.8%, Unknown 4.5% (2011 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Languages:** Serbian (official) 88.1%, Hungarian 3.4%, Bosnian 1.9%, Romany 1.4%, other 3.4%, Unknown 1.8% (2011 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **GNI (2014-Atlas):** \$41.51 billion (World Bank Development Indicators, 2016)
- > **GNI per capita (2014-PPP):** \$12,150 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2016)
- > **Literacy rate:** 98.1%; male 99.1%, female 97.2% (2011 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **President or top authority:** President Tomislav Nikolić (since May 31, 2012)

MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- > **Number of active media outlets:** Print: 818; Radio Stations: 284; Television Stations: 175; (Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media); Internet News Portals: 334 (Agency for Public Registers)
- > **Newspaper circulation statistics:** Not Available. Top four dailies by readership *Informer, Kurir, Blic, Alo* (*Ipsos*)
- > **Broadcast ratings:** Top four TV stations by average viewers per day: RTS1 (public service, 3.3 million); TV Pink (2.7 million); TV Prva (2.6 million); TV B92 (2.5 million) (Nielsen)
- > **News agencies:** Beta and FoNet (private), Tanjug (state owned, closed in late 2015)
- > **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** €155 million to €160 million (2014 est. Nielsen)
- > **Internet Usage:** 3.6 million users (2014 est., *CIA World Factbook*)

MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: SERBIA



MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX 2016: OVERALL AVERAGE SCORES



CHANGE SINCE 2015

▲ (increase greater than .10) □ (little or no change) ▼ (decrease greater than .10)

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.

Scores for all years may be found online at http://www.irex.org/system/files/EE_msiscores.xls

OBJECTIVE 1: FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Serbia Objective Score: 1.89

Constitutional and legal protection of freedom of speech is incorporated in three basic media laws; however, this right is often violated with little reaction from civil society. In 2015, several popular political talk shows in which opinions and attitudes were confronted came to an end. Some investigative series also were canceled. Balkan Investigative Reporting Network research showed that 80 percent of all state spending on media was channeled through subsidies or direct contracts, and only 20 percent of the funding was the result of a competitive process.

Research conducted by the Journalists' Association of Serbia (commonly known by its Serbian acronym, UNS) from a sample of more than 1,000 journalists revealed unsatisfactory results on freedom of speech perception. Sixty-two percent of respondents said that Serbia has no freedom of speech in Serbia and only 13 percent said that they believe the contrary. As much as 77 percent said that they believe that the state controls media, and only 5 percent disagreed. During the year, the safety of journalists was under further threat. Journalist safety is a requirement for freedom of speech, so this development is alarming, panelists said.

LEGAL AND SOCIAL NORMS PROTECT AND PROMOTE FREE SPEECH AND ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION.

FREE-SPEECH INDICATORS:

- > Legal and social protections of free speech exist and are enforced.
- > Licensing or registration of media protects a public interest and is fair, competitive, and apolitical.
- > Market entry and tax structure for media are fair and comparable to other industries.
- > Crimes against media professionals, citizen reporters, and media outlets are prosecuted vigorously, but occurrences of such crimes are rare.
- > The law protects the editorial independence of state of public media.
- > Libel is a civil law issue; public officials are held to higher standards, and offended parties must prove falsity and malice.
- > Public information is easily available; right of access to information is equally enforced for all media, journalists, and citizens.
- > Media outlets' access to and use of local and international news and news sources is not restricted by law.
- > Entry into the journalism profession is free and government imposes no licensing, restrictions, or special rights for journalists.

Nebojša Samardžić, an attorney at Živković/Samardžić Law Office explained, "Generally, courts are not acting independently, but in line with authorities' wishes. The same is true for regulatory agencies."

The Serbian media system's foundation is the three constitutional and judicial laws protecting freedom of speech. The laws focus on public information and media, electronic media, and public services. Legislators announced a fourth law on advertising, but it was not passed in 2015. The laws align with international standards for protecting human rights and freedom of expression, but their implementation is weak. Tamara Skrozza, a journalist at *VREME*, stated that "law norms are in line with European standards, but the real obstacle to freedom of speech and public information availability is currently dominant social norms. For example, current standards in social communication influence media and journalists in ways that do not always align with the law. Subsequently, law provisions are ignored."

The domination of political interests and motives in media can be seen in editorial policies, especially in local areas of Serbia. Political pressures come from the ruling Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) in the form of official announcements directly condemning journalists that express their attitudes or question politicians' practices. Recently, Olivera Kovačević, an editor for Radio Television of Serbia (RTS), was targeted for expressing comments on the selective practice of the police, in which they question only one instead of all actors in political matters. In an official announcement, SNS described his comments as "brutal political intervention in police investigation by Kovačević, one of the most powerful editors in RTS public service TV."

In cases of freedom of speech violations, media members have difficulty finding protection under the law, due to the huge deviations in practice and the judicial system that is under control of the authorities. The only channel for defense is either public outrage or, more commonly, journalists and media associations making modest public protests. Nebojša Samardžić, an attorney at Živković/Samardžić Law Office explained, "Generally, courts are not acting independently, but in line with authorities' wishes. The same is true for regulatory agencies."

Serbian law guarantees the protection of source information, but in practice, journalists have challenges.

In several cases, the government, including the judiciary, voiced strong pressure for journalists and bloggers to reveal their sources. Investigative reporting in Serbia is very rare, without adequate financial or editorial backing and under strong opposition of political structures. Radio Boom 93 CEO Milorad Tadić stated that in Serbia, “the atmosphere of fear, censorship, and self-censorship is permeating. Many different pressures are used to silence investigative journalism.”

Regarding indicator 2 (licensing and registration of media protects a public interest and is fair, competitive, and apolitical): Serbian print outlets, Internet media, electronic media broadcasting through the Internet, and public services do not require licensing. For other broadcasters, including cable service, direct to home (DTH), and Internet protocol television (IPTV), permission can be acquired through a competitive bidding process or by request.

Predrag Blagojević, CEO at Juzne Vesti, commented on the uneven distribution of media across the country. “Southern Serbia is a huge region without public television. Any television stations in that area are in the process of closing down, as they cannot afford to pay for digital licenses, equipment, digital broadcasting, or taxes. Internet is an important substitute, but in rural areas, Internet usage is not yet widespread.”

The Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media (REM) Council is the body that distributes licenses, but it has not formulated precise by-laws or guidelines. Regulatory agencies such as REM are not immune from political control, and the licensing decision-making process is not transparent, given the unclear selection criteria. REM’s composition enables political influence, and in late 2015, the Serbian parliament elected new council members, despite two candidates from the civil sector receiving more votes.

Compared to other industries, media tax structures and market entry are neither significantly different nor limited. Print media and electronic media have dissimilarities, however, given their different tax bases. The state also provides certain media with tax incentives, including huge tax debts that are tolerated due to particular programs that favor the government. Meanwhile, some independent media outlets have had their accounts frozen due to tax debts.

Authorities sometimes use taxes as a means to pressure individual outlets, ultimately influencing editorial independence. According to Samardžić, “Print media are taxed a preferential VAT rate of 10 percent; the standard rate is 20 percent. Other tax subsidies are given to eligible media. Here again, the implementation deviates from the law. Such practices prevent professionalism and media suffer from political pressures.”

Indicator 4 addresses crimes against media professionals, citizen reporters, and media outlets as well as the rate of prosecuting such crimes. Throughout 2015, crimes against journalists, bloggers, and photographers continued, with some cases from 2014 remaining unresolved. Journalists commonly experience repudiation, insults, threats, harassment, and physical assaults, with mild reactions from law enforcement and the judicial system. NUNS registered 34 attacks on professional journalists in 2015; among them were 20 verbal threats, 10 physical assaults, and three attacks on property. Ten criminal charges came from these attacks and only two have been resolved. They both resulted in court orders for psychiatric treatments for the attackers.

As Blagojević reported, “In 2015, the situation worsened as there were no verdicts for threats to journalists. All courts were rejecting criminal charges for threats to journalists, and judges are categorizing threats to journalists as threats to civilians, for which weaker sentences are anticipated. In southern Serbia, an explicit threat made by the president of the local ruling party was not prosecuted and the investigation was terminated, as prosecutors could not find any proof.”

Official government announcements against journalists can mislead prosecutors, resulting in their inactivity. The panelists gave one example of a prosecutor’s poor judgment: In the town of Leskovac, the prosecutor concluded that the sentence “I’d put a bullet in your forehead” is not a threat.

Further, the Serbian people lack awareness of attacks and threats to journalists, and public condemnation is completely absent. Srdjan Djurdjević, Senior Program Assistant at OSCE Media Department, commented, “Especially aggressive campaigns are against those who criticize the Prime Minister’s policies. They are described by the authorities as ‘foreign mercenaries’ and ‘foreign spies.’”

Serbian law protects editorial independence and does not favor public or state media; however, the autonomy of public services and minority language media is not guaranteed. “The management of state or public media is appointed with political criteria,” Tadić said. “But also, private media are under pressure despite the laws protecting editorial independence, as the financing of media by the authorities is not transparent and the funds are distributed in a way that does not prevent political control.”

Many media members had high hopes for 2015, as the year started with financial reform mandating that local authorities finance media from local and town budgets through competitive bidding. Unfortunately, there has been malpractice, and outlets that support the authorities tend to fare better. Skrozza revealed that “Serbian law forbids political misuse of stations with national coverage, but the owner of TV Pink put the station in service of the ruling party.

This is a much safer way to survive, [rather] than to depend on law protection.” Another drastic example was when Miroslav Milakov, editor-in-chief of newly privatized RTV Pancevo, suggested that journalists and editors join the ruling SNS party if they want to keep their jobs at that television station.

After a long struggle, libel (indicator 6) was finally decriminalized. Now libel is widespread in Serbian media. However, civil litigation can be a difficult and lengthy process, possibly lasting years, individuals and organizations have limited options to defend themselves against this unprofessional and unethical practice.

Free access to information (indicator 7) is protected in the constitution as the right to be informed. In spite of the law, access to information is difficult and not all journalists have equal opportunity. One problem is the outdated practices and authorities’ desires to hide unflattering information, and another is growing centralization, so local areas have few reliable sources of information. Svetlana Kojanović, editor in chief of ObjektivNo1, stated that “in spite of local and regional [access to information] laws, it is extremely difficult to get any information of public importance, even in cases of disasters, in local areas. The process of acquiring information is complicated and long, and often the information is limited. The authorities are avoiding direct contact with journalists and often do not allow questions at press conferences. Concerning availability of information, this is the worst period ever.” Yet another problem is that individual media have privileged treatment by public enterprises and authorities, panelists said.

Serbian law places no obstacles or limitations on foreign sources of news, except for print media from neighboring countries when they publish sensitive themes regarding Serbia. Plagiarism frequently occurs, as a consequence of incomplete copyright regulation and due to copying and pasting from the Internet.

No law or code defines who is a journalist, so in principle, everyone reporting to the public can be treated as journalist and enjoy the protection inherent to the profession. Even without formal limitations, authorities have created definitions in an effort to exclude certain individuals from reporting. The idea of licensing journalists appeared after the authorities, specifically the state secretary for media within the Ministry for Culture and Media, attempted to identify the source used in an article published by *Teleprompter* about alleged wiretapping of political opposition leaders. Discussion by officials reasoned that if journalists were licensed, those who would be uncooperative in revealing sources—or otherwise—could face loss of their license. So far, this discussion has not amounted to any action.

Authorities have assessed a number of journalists and deemed them politically ineligible to continue performing their job. Panelists reported several cases of journalists from the capital whose jobs have been hindered by government interference, yet this is not exclusive to the capital and largely affects journalists in local areas as well. Zoran Sekulić, the CEO for FoNet News Agency, explained that “there is a difference between ones permanent job and the right to work. An individual’s permanent job is rarely endangered, but the right to work may be forbidden for editorial or political reasons.”

OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Serbia Objective Score: 1.30

With increasing governmental pressure on media, reporting is becoming less objective or well-researched. The Serbian media sector has two distinct groups. One group, the larger, is not following ethical standards and is supporting the authorities, either actively or passively, as other media or political opponents are persecuted. The smaller group is struggling to remain independent and professional in their approach to reporting. This pressure on media produced results in censorship and self-censorship. Most journalists say that they believe that self-censorship is prevalent among Serbian journalists out of fear of losing a job. Kojanović explained, “Due to difficult financial positions of media, ‘understandings’ between media and authorities are increasing and critical thinking and public interest 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 and retain qualified personnel within the media profession.
- > 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 exist (investigative, economics/business, local, political).

Blagojević emphasized, “There is absolutely no expert analysis of news. Recently, authorities announced that the 2016 Serbian budget will be more restrictive than 2015. All Serbian media published the announcement, but none included comments or analysis.”

media is becoming a rare phenomenon.” Furthermore, many journalists receive lower salaries than bus drivers. As a consequence of political influence, job security, and pay level, niche reporting is rare and diminishing.

Professional journalists report on facts, check information from multiple sources, and investigate the backgrounds of events or stories. However, many journalists are lowering their reporting standards in an attempt to tailor content to the audience. Sensationalism is spreading quickly from print media to television stations, as journalist professionalism has long been on a downward trend. “The clear political sway in Serbia has become a source of self-censorship, such that the balance between different attitudes and thoughts is lost. In the environment of financial hardship, journalists’ specializations are disappearing and it is very difficult to identify any experts in the field, with few exceptions mainly in bigger media,” according to Dejan Radosavljević, research director at Ipsos.

A recent research study conducted by Ipsos sampled 1,000 readers and found that 83 percent believe the newspapers have too many scandals and 69 percent think that all newspapers are similar. The research also highlighted negative views on daily newspapers, with four national coverage dailies receiving completely negative scores, only two with positive scores, and one neutral rating. Blagojević emphasized, “There is absolutely no expert analysis of news. Recently, authorities announced that the 2016 Serbian budget will be more restrictive than 2015. All Serbian media published the announcement, but none included comments or analysis. In local areas, there are even fewer opportunities to identify individuals who can give expert opinions on events or information.” Radosavljević agreed that journalism is on the decline. “Professional reporting standards are perhaps at the lowest level in last 20 years.”

The Serbian Journalists’ Code of Ethics is controlled by the Press Council of Serbia, UNS, and NUNS courts of honor, and does align with international standards. However, these standards are often violated. Skrozza stated, “Within eight months in 2015, the Press Council of Serbia found, on

average, 10 daily violations within national print dailies. The presumption of innocence provision, usage of assumptions as facts, and the usage of data of unknown origin are the most common violations.

Even media owners have been confronted regarding the abandonment of the boundaries of decency, objectivity, and impartiality. Print media reporting, in particular, has dropped to the lowest standards.

Svetlana explained the consequences of the failing ethics. “Both personal and professional credibility [are] reduced. In struggling economies, media are looking for any revenue to survive and are therefore vulnerable to corruption and negligence of principles.”

There are numerous examples of editors restricting journalists’ freedom to write openly. Research conducted by UNS showed that 35 percent of its members have been exposed to censorship, 44 percent to self-censorship, and even 28 percent of respondents admit to practicing strict self-censorship. “Journalists and editors are forced to self-censor due to the fear of losing their job, client, or funding from the local authority. Editors amplify that pressure on journalists and photographers to turn to self-censorship,” according to Tadić.

There are cases of editors preventing journalists from reporting on certain events. Journalists are not free to report on specific events regarding security, supporter groups, crime, corruption, Kosovo, or the economy. Some events that more traditional media do not cover are often covered by social networks, including citizen reporters. Sekulić gave his perspective on media quality. “Journalists do cover key events, but to what standard? I refuse to even assess the quality of media content from national tabloids and national television stations. Perhaps they are the most influential and have the widest range, but that is not the only journalism in Serbia. I see a difference between professional journalists and those that simply call themselves journalists. If journalists allow themselves to drop to the level in which their profession is meaningless and self-respect depreciated, they cannot be called journalists. If I assess my job and score a zero, I will give up my job,” he said.

Freelance journalists are often more critical, but their products are published by very few media outlets. Most bloggers support themselves with a small amount of personal funds but a large share of enthusiasm.

Overall, media salaries are not sufficient for a decent lifestyle or for the average journalist’s living standards. It is common for journalists to work for several media organizations or to do other jobs on the side to supplement

their salaries. There is a large gap between the salaries of state and private media professionals. In general, journalism is among the worst paid professions in Serbia. Kojanović noted, "Research by UNS showed that salaries of journalists are equal to railway workers salaries, and are lower than salaries of bus drivers. Due to financial pressure and fear of job loss, journalists and editors succumb to censorship and self-censorship. This is a doubtless proof that journalism in Serbia is easily subject to corruption—not only journalists, but the whole media sector."

RTV counselor Siniša Isakov pointed to a related problem: "A new development is the "renting" of individuals by public service TV channels; these act as journalists or as their correspondents—even giving them credentials—on a volunteer basis in spite of the fact that they have no formal connection with the public TV channel. This is tolerated by the government and the parliament. Voluntary content creation is replacing an organized network."

In a country with a population of more than 7 million and 1,600 registered media, theoretically, people can access the news they need, when they need it. However, tabloid journalism and entertainment contents are more prevalent compared to informative, documentary, analytical, or investigative content. Samardžić described TV B92 as a prime example. "This station has a program structure of 50 percent entertainment and 50 percent informative content. Since the new owner, entertainment now overwhelms all other content." Tadić agreed that "entertainment and news are not balanced in most media, with [the] obvious tendency that entertainment surpasses serious content."

Indicator 7 reviews the modernism and efficiency of media facilities and equipment for gathering, producing, and distributing news. In Serbia, there is a lack of capacity as well as equipment, influencing the quality of media products. The poor technical facilities are more evident in local media. As Isakov described, "In 2015 the only equipment acquired was the required digitalization equipment."

He also added that Internet subscriptions are popular among local consumers. "In Vojvodina, Pickbox, an online streaming service with direct media content on the Internet, was introduced. This is a new and robust competitor to all television stations."

Regarding Indicator 8, whether quality niche reporting and programming exist: Serbian media cover specific themes, but they do not report on many critical societal issues, or only cover them superficially. Out of focus are issues including economic development problems, deindustrialization, agriculture development, national debts, war veterans' issues, budgetary spending on Kosovo, foreign investments, growing poverty levels, widespread unemployment, and

corruption. On the other hand, highly influential politicians are imposing different, often marginal, themes and media are reporting on them.

The main problem with niche reporting is its scarcity, less than its quality. According to Tadić, "Some journalists are specialized in certain topics like health, business, or investigative stories. Managers, media owners, and editors think that such reporting is too expensive and that the audience is uninterested."

Three main obstacles for good niche and investigative reporting are funding issues, political power, and self-censorship. In several traditional media organizations, there are still journalists capable of and experienced for this kind of reporting. "In mainstream media, investigative reporting has practically disappeared, except Insider on TV B92," according to Samardžić. "Alternative networks for investigative journalism exist, such as Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, Crime and Corruption Reporting Network, and CINS [Serbian Center for Investigative Journalism], dealing mostly with corruption. Findings and reports from these groups are sometimes quoted in traditional media, but not sufficiently and they are often targeted by authorities."

OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS

Serbia Objective Score: 1.84

Technically and legally, there are no formal obstacles to the access of public or private news sources. International media are available and news production is not limited to public or national coverage media. A number of local media produce their own news, covering international, national, and local topics. The main problem is the reliability of news as well as the different interests that can bias the news. News is often low quality or copied, so most media have similar and sometimes identical news. Due to generally unsatisfactory professionalism in media, and political pressures that burden media with self-censorship, often news does not reflect all different social or political interests. This goes for most print and electronic media and most news portals.

Formally, Serbia has a pluralism of media sources, with more than 1,600 registered media. Positives include the mobile capabilities to distribute news, the right of citizens to choose any platform, and the number of blogs and social networking tools. Tadić assessed pluralism in this way: "There are not enough unique sources of information. Rare are media that have editorial policy that enable expressions of several attitudes, as most media force one political

opinion. On the other hand, citizens have the choice of private, local, public, and social networks news.”

Pluralism of media content seems questionable when considering that, for example, four national coverage radio stations copy program concepts from each other, and all national television stations now have some form of reality program, according to panelists. Radosavljević commented, “Though the availability of sources is expansive, digital channel usage has increased substantially, while national electronic and print media are not offering a substantial range of ideas, political views, attitudes, or interests. Informative programs are relatively poor, similar to each other, and uniformed, so that the distinction in coverage of the same events in different platforms of media has disappeared.”

After the privatization movement, only two public services exist (RTS and RTV), in addition to media that the National Councils of National Minorities in Serbia has established. It is important to stress that even after privatization, many former state media in local municipalities have kept their privileges and still receive some funding on a preferential basis. Previously under state control, Belgrade TV Studio B, received 23 million Serbian dinars immediately after privatization, despite its failure to comply with bidding rules.

During 2015, Serbian media were clearly polarized: those that supported and those that opposed the activities of

the Serbian government and prime minister. As a result, citizens were not able to see expressions of different views and analysis. According to Skrozza, social media are providing some balance of opinion. “Social networks reach a status of being valid sources of information, so that even traditional media now refer to them in reports. In any case, social networks are more or less reliable *vox populi*, as the majority opinion.”

The main challenge that restricts citizens from accessing media is deteriorating buying power. Serbian law does not restrict access to domestic or international media, nor does it block content, social networks, or applications on the Internet. However, there is a digital gap in the technical approach to new telecommunication technologies, in addition to the generational gap. After digitalization in June 2015, around 95 percent of the population can reach media products free of charge. Depending on the zone, citizens can watch up to 20 television channels, including all with national coverage.

In 2015, legislation changed in order to prolong media financing from public budgets. The prime minister announced that subscriptions for public services in the coming year will be 150 Serbian dinars per month, despite the law stating that subscription fee amounts are services’ own decisions. Public services RTS and RTV proposed 500 Serbian dinars. The sources of funding have dominating influence on state and public media, possibly lessening independence from authorities. Public outlets are only partially open to alternative views and comments, according to Tadić. “Most state media avoid reporting on more serious social themes...by far, most of their time is spent on reporting on authorities, especially on the activities and promises of the prime minister. The reporting is far from balanced. Rare are media that have editorial policy featuring several opinions, as most media focus on one.”

In some political debate broadcasts, guests include analysts that criticize the government and prime minister; but in other programs, critical thought is absent. In some cases, critics have made statements on public television and strong political pressure immediately follows. The responses include harsh insults against the journalist and media outlet. According to data from 2014, the prime minister was on the front page of daily newspapers 877 times. The political opposition is not visible in media, but this is a consequence of the opposition’s weak support in the country. The only media outlet that is systematically reporting on the opposition is the daily *Informer*, but they are doing so in an entirely negative manner.

MULTIPLE NEWS SOURCES PROVIDE CITIZENS WITH RELIABLE, OBJECTIVE NEWS.

PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES INDICATORS:

- > Plurality of public and private news sources (e.g., print, broadcast, Internet, mobile) exist and offer multiple viewpoints.
- > Citizens’ access to domestic or international media is not restricted by law, economics, or other means.
- > State or public media reflect the views of the political spectrum, are nonpartisan, and serve the public interest.
- > Independent news agencies gather and distribute news for media outlets.
- > Private media produce their own news.
- > Transparency of media ownership allows consumers to judge the 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
- > The media provide news coverage and information about local, national, and international issues.

Regarding Indicator 4, that independent news agencies gather and distribute news for media outlets, until late October 2015, only three main agencies existed. These include the state-owned Tanjug and the private FoNet and Beta, which are independent and nondiscriminatory. Their challenge is the limited purchasing power of most Serbian media. According to Tadić, "Media [have] no money to finance domestic or foreign agencies services."

Tadić also commented on news production at private outlets. "There are some local print, electronic, and online media that produce decent editorial local news." But overall, news production in private media has deteriorated, with most sources coming from other media, Internet, and news agencies. Private media produce their own local news, but the levels of quality and professionalism are low and qualitative informational programs are expensive. Kojanović gave an example. "After digitalization in the town of Cacak, viewers can now watch all national stations as well as seven local and regional television stations. But when program content of those seven stations is analyzed, it can be concluded that all seven have nearly identical informational programs that are not tailored to the viewers' interest and are not produced in a professional way. It is highly possible that such stations will not be able to survive."

The Law on Public Information and Media prohibits monopoly over sources of information and limits the concentration of media owners. Media consumers have access to information on media ownership via the Serbian Media Registry. However, the credibility of this information is dubious. According to Tadić, "Ownership of media is not transparent and owners are often unknown. There are laws and regulations that call for publicly known ownership, but in practice the full information is not available." Samardžić added, "The property ownership of media can be faked easily and very often the real owner is concealed," while Skrozza said, "The media ownership is not transparent, especially for traditional daily *Politika* and for all important Internet portals. Oligarchy is present, especially in electronic media where the most influential media are in the hands of only a few owners. Interestingly enough, that practice expanded during the privatization process, so one owner has bought many local media around Serbia."

Most new media owners are also new to the media sector and are closely linked with political structures, appointing managers and editors who are politically similar. In print, privatized media with new owners are forcing journalists to produce reports without creation, initiative, or critical thought, and they have laid off many journalists. Radosavljević gave examples of questionable transparency.

According to Skrozza, social media are providing some balance of opinion. "Social networks reach a status of being valid sources of information, so that even traditional media now refer to them in reports. In any case, social networks are more or less reliable *vox populi*, as the majority opinion."

"In spite of the fact that the media privatization process is formally finished, there is still unclear ownership in two national coverage dailies *Vecernje Novosti* and *Politika*, and the position of agency *Tanjug* is also unclear."

The National Councils of National Minorities have legislative approval to establish media that will educate in the national minority language. Also, national minorities have the right to establish electronic civil sector media in their local area, with some subsidies from the state. Public services have an obligation to produce and broadcast programs devoted to national minorities in Serbia, but currently only RTV in the Vojvodina province is fulfilling this obligation. RTV's Isakov stated, "The national minorities have lost a good deal of their media coverage with the privatization and state withdrawal from media. That is especially the case in Vojvodine province, where most of the national minority populations reside. The state withdrawal closed a number of stations with programs in minority languages. Other sensitive groups are only sporadically represented in programs."

According to Tadić media do not delve into public interest issues. "Reporting on different social problems in media, such as gender issues, ethnical issues, religious issues, sexual orientation are very rare. Few local media cover a wide spectrum of social interests in local areas."

Citizens can access information related to their towns, other regions in the country, and international development. There are media with national coverage such as TV N1 and Al Jazeera Balkans that reports on interesting events from the whole Balkan region. State and public media devote little time to local problems. Samardžić emphasized that "concerning local news, there is a huge number of local media informing citizens on local themes, but the quality of that news is questionable, mainly due to pressures from local politicians. Serbian citizens do have access to information on international events though."

OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Serbia Objective Score: 1.39

The main economic problem within Serbian media is saturation: Approximately 1,600 registered media organizations are serving a country of 7.2 million people. That number would be difficult to sustain even in an average-sized market. Currently, there are up to 4,500 consumers to one media outlet. That unsustainability is clear to everybody except politicians, REM officials, and the Ministry for Culture and Media. In 2015, there was no consolidated data on government spending nor was information on allocation transparency available for analysis.

In addition to the limited potential market audience, media are faced with a shrinking annual advertising budget as well as diminishing purchasing power of Serbian citizens. The media sector is among the worst hit by the economic crisis. In 2015, the Serbian advertising market is expected to be only €155 million, which is considered extremely small for 1,600 media. An important fact is that most advertising budgets, due to audience preferences, go to television. Radosavljević stated, "The estimation that the 2015 advertising budget will be similar to last one, between €155 and €160 million, shows too small a total for salaries, technical capacities innovations, and needed materials for so many media. Such modest turnover on 1,600 media proves non-sustainability of the media market."

MEDIA ARE WELL-MANAGED ENTERPRISES, ALLOWING EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT INDICATORS:

- > Media outlets operate as efficient and self-sustaining enterprises.
- > 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.
- > Government subsidies and advertising are distributed fairly, governed by law, and neither subvert editorial independence nor distort the market.
- > Market research is used to formulate strategic plans, enhance advertising revenue, and tailor the product to the needs and interests of the audience.
- > Broadcast ratings, circulation figures, and Internet statistics are reliably and independently produced.

Sekulić of FoNet News Agency also provided statistics on distribution. "The market is shrinking for print media. In 2015, for the first time, the total sold daily circulation fell under 500,000—as much as 30 percent lower than in 2013. Now only one newspaper has circulation rates above 100,000."

The system of media financing is neither stabilized nor balanced, so most media depend on state budget funds, either through subsidies, projects, or advertising from state companies and institutions. Since the beginning of 2015, only state financing on the basis of project co-financing has been regulated. State public advertising, public procurement of media services, nontransparent financing of public services, tax programs for media, and similar subsidies are given to media on a more charitable basis without strict rules or criteria.

According to the panelists, most media are on the verge of nonexistence; they do not work efficiently and are not as well-managed today. The market is deteriorating and creating biased competitions, making any long-term financial planning impossible. Though there are few media with good management and strong organizational structures, the majority are surviving by working outside their professional standards. As Kojanović explained, "What we have today are economically unsustainable media as well as economically and socially endangered journalists, poor and dependent on state or individual owner interest. Traditional business models have collapsed and many media did not survive or are not surviving. Unfortunately, most credible and professional media that understand public interests are disappearing."

State enterprises' media financing is non-transparent and without public control. This creates space for financial pressures to sway editorial policies. The new solution of co-financed projects from the state budget cannot save all media outlets; if it was done properly, this system could only improve media contents, according to panelists. Commenting on the co-financing concept, Skrozza stated that it "is obviously spiced with corruption and political interests. The example of Belgrade media is characteristic, where of the total funds for a project, more than half went to Studio B, privatized by a friend of the authorities, for a program that had already been broadcast. Another substantial portion was allocated to the agency that proposed monitoring the work of the mayor. Some of the members of the commission that was assessing the projects

were in obvious conflicts of interest; some of them were even employees of the media outlet who bid for money.”

Taking everything into consideration, it is clear that media have uncertain financial sources, the market is too weak for survival, certain projects make outlets vulnerable to political attacks, and the project co-financing system has turned into improvised donations.

Some media units bid on funding from international organizations. In 2015, authorities attacked media using foreign funding in tabloids, calling these organizations traitors and discrediting their reporting. Radosavljević commented, “The financing of public services and other state and publicly-owned media is not transparent and depends on ad hoc approaches. In that sense, public services are in an awkward position and also face uncertainties. That fact creates a foundation for pressures on public media.” Tadić also confirmed the financial and editorial shortfalls: “Media could realize revenue from a multitude of sources, but none are sufficient for independent editorial policy or for guaranteed survival, so all media are subject to influences (state owned, public, private, and local).”

Serbia has a number of advertising agencies, two of which hold primacy. Agencies work with media selectively and are focused on the capital along with several other large cities. Most of them ignore local media. Samardžić explained, “Sustainability is especially problematic for local media who do not have access to marketing agencies or big advertisers. On the other hand, advertising agencies represent the more professional side of the media industry, but it is necessary to say that even agencies are not free from political influence and political dependence.”

Besides decreasing, advertising budgets are changing structure. Around 10 percent of the television advertising budget is spent on cable programming, and domestic stations are losing advertising due to inferior content. According to Vanda Kučera, chief governance officer with McCann Erickson Group, “The advertising industry is faced with a problem of discrepancy in knowledge. Today, agencies are much more professional than most media. Agencies are acquiring new knowledge and their professionalism is improving, while most media are stagnating. No market regulations, no basic professionalism, no ethics. New media, Internet and cable, are acquire bigger budgets due to their higher professionalism than traditional media.”

Advertising agencies act dynamically and structurally, and this has a positive modernization and developmental effect. Radosavljević mentioned, “The reduction of advertising budgets hit mostly print media and radio. This also forced media to turn again to the state, lobbying for funds from state companies and state institutions.”

Sekulić of FoNet News Agency also provided statistics on distribution. “The market is shrinking for print media. In 2015, for the first time, the total sold daily circulation fell under 500,000—as much as 30 percent lower than in 2013. Now only one newspaper has circulation rates above 100,000.”

State media are allowed to advertise and are raising funds from advertising agencies and individual advertisers. There are no formal obstacles for advertising in any media, but authorities are not advertising in media that are not useful to them. In Serbia, subscriptions for print media are practically nonexistent; however in 2016 obligatory subscriptions for two public services will be introduced for all television owners.

Panelists pointed out a problem in how the state advertises: Legislation on advertising is still in the developmental phase, making state advertising policies unclear. Isakov explained, “The buying power of people is smaller, and number of goods and services that need advertising is shrinking. It is necessary to pass a law on advertising, as it is the one that is missing in a set of media laws.”

Local authorities use subsidies, public procurement, public advertising, and other financial subsidies to increase pressure on critical media or to reward loyal media. State authorities are among the biggest advertisers in Serbia. The government provides subsidies such as direct financing or state credit guaranties for private media, but these are distributed unevenly and with no transparency. Tadić commented, “Project financing did not solve any of the primary problems in production of media content. Media content and public interest was not a priority in municipality’s decision on the disbursement of state funding, as the law stipulated. Instead of improving the situation, the state is still in control. The decision resulted in the abandonment of equal opportunities for bidders.”

Even The Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government undermined the process by making an official statement that town municipalities are not obligated to act within this law. Several panelists said that state subsidies via project co-financing, are clearly not a solution; on the contrary, often it is justifying corruption. “Through project co-financing, certain privatized media received huge sums, proving that the selecting commissions were behaving corruptively,” Djurdjević stated. Sekulić added,

“Project financing is a well-designed concept, but in the first year, abuses and demolition of the idea compromised the concept. The fault is not on state side only, but also on journalistic associations and not only for not having competent commissions. Lobbying was ubiquitous. The whole thing resulted in everybody getting something, and that will have a poor effect on new media projects, on public interest, and on program content.”

The total amount of money in all budgets for project financing is considerably smaller than the amount the state has spent for media in years past, before privatization. In 2014, Serbian subsidies for media were €5 million. In 2015, the total budget from all municipalities for media project co-financing was around €2.5 million.

Indicator 6 considers whether market research is used to formulate strategic plans, enhance advertising revenue, and tailor the product to the needs and interests of the audience. The current system of verification for results of viewership/listenership/readership is much more professional for electronic media than for print media, according to a Nielsen and Gemius study. Radosavljević stated, “Never before did media order more research by professional agencies and never before were the results so modestly used in practice. The market is changing. In Serbia, the same average time is spent on Internet and on TV watching. Media are not responding to this feedback. The usage of research data for determining market position and for creation of media product is low.”

Serbia has several long-established and reliable research agencies and they are often subject to external evaluation and audits. However, the main obstacle is accessing and analyzing research data is the lack of quality professionals that are able to capitalize on this information and manage its strategic use for business planning. Tadić explained, “All research organizations are under pressure from authorities, from individual media, or from interest groups. Advertisers and media understand rating results, but have little possibility to acquire them.” According to Isakov from RTV, “Viewership ratings provide reliable results for Serbia, but not for specific regions and local areas. There is an obvious trend in rising viewership of foreign television stations, especially in Vojvodina province. In previous years in Vojvodina, domestic programs were watched by 60-70 percent of viewers, while in 2015, the rate dropped to 50 percent domestic and 50 percent foreign. In Belgrade, foreign programs are watched by approximately 40 percent of viewers.”

OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Serbia Objective Score: 2.12

Several trade associations are active in the Serbian media space. Journalist associations that resist attacks on journalists and media are very active, and often exposed to government criticism and threats. Some civil society organizations (CSOs) are helping journalists in this struggle as well, their support should be stronger, panelists—Radosavljević in particular—said. “In this moment, there are no associations, authorities, agencies, or civil sector organizations which could impose applicable standards, [or] decisively influence directly or indirectly on improvement of [the] media environment and media market,” he said.

The Commissioner for Information of Public Importance provided journalists and media with a great deal of support in 2015. However, training and educational opportunities are more modest than in previous years. Regarding new technology in 2015, spending was limited to satisfying the minimum requirements for the transition to digital signal. Channels of media distribution are well developed, but with signs of individual monopolistic tendencies.

SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS FUNCTION IN THE PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS OF INDEPENDENT MEDIA.

SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS INDICATORS:

- > Trade associations represent the interests of media owners and managers and provide member services.
- > Professional associations work to protect journalists' rights and promote quality journalism.
- > NGOs support free speech and independent media.
- > Quality journalism degree programs exist providing substantial practical experience.
- > Short-term training and in-service training institutions and programs allow journalists to upgrade skills or acquire new skills.
- > Sources of media equipment, newsprint, and printing facilities are apolitical, not monopolized, and not restricted.
- > Channels of media distribution (kiosks, transmitters, cable, Internet, mobile) are apolitical, not monopolized, and not restricted.
- > Information and communication technology infrastructure sufficiently meets the needs of media and citizens.

Serbian print media associations are organizations of publishers that successfully advocate for member interests. One of their initiatives was the reduction of VAT from 20 to 10 percent on all print dailies sold. Electronic media have several associations, the oldest being the Association of Independent Electronic Media (commonly known by its Serbian acronym, ANEM). ANEM has ongoing public initiatives for legislative improvements and constitutional court assessments, and is active in communication with REM and organizations protecting copyrights and related rights.

In June 2015, the first Association of Online Media (AOM) was established. After the three media laws were adopted in 2015, the Media Coalition was no longer functioning and had split up. A goal of the Media Coalition was the adoption of the media laws, but after the new laws came into effect, the interests of members were no longer aligned.

The most important journalists associations are NUNS, UNS, and the Independent Journalists' Association of Vojvodina (commonly known by its Serbian acronym, NDNV). Kojanović commented, "The journalists' associations are strong in resisting drastic activities that endanger media and journalists and are sufficiently competent to insist on changes for improvement."

These groups have long traditions of active responses to activities that endanger freedom of expression, including attacks on journalists, threats, and pressure. They support their members to a satisfactory standard; they are lobbying authorities in the name of their members and fight for independence and professionalization of media. They are not self-sustainable through membership fees, however, so they cooperate closely with donors and international associations.

Their other challenge is the modest inclusions of journalists and members in their activities.

In January 2015, the prime minister called the journalists of the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network "liars that were paid to speak against the Serbian government." In April 2015, the mayor of Leskovac offended journalists of TV Leskovac, Beta news agency, *Blic* daily, and news portal *Juzne Vesti*, stating that they are paid to write against him. In October, the prime minister called journalists from *Tabloid* and *Teleprompter* "scum." And in November, the director of the Military Security Agency announced that the secret service has undercover agents in Serbian media. According to Skrozza, "This year we have seen systematic campaigns against journalists, including a number of front-page features with false statements and brutal verbal attacks without motive, creating an atmosphere of fear and journalists that are less willing write the truth or to report threats."

In such an environment, professional journalists associations are intensely present in the public, and constantly and actively protecting the journalism profession as well as the public interest of the society. Their influence is important and visible. But as Isakov pointed out, "Still, there are no other media employees' associations in addition to journalists' association[s.] There should be an association of editors as well, for example."

Serbia has many local CSOs working on freedom of expression. Some cooperate and support media, freedom of speech, and media independence. Djurdjević noted, "CSOs are active and reacted correctly on media problems. Independent institutions such as the commissioner and ombudsman are supporting more qualitative media activities—no doubt more so than the state."

However, other panelists shared the view that the cooperation with CSOs is weak and sporadic. Kojanović commented, "What Serbia is missing is higher engagement of civil sector, CSOs, which should be an important partner for media in the struggle for freedom of speech and journalists' credibility." Blagojević agreed, saying, "In local areas, CSOs did not raise their voices on attacks directed at journalists and media."

Regarding indicator 4, Serbian private and public institutions offer professional journalism education programs, but they are not sufficient. They do not offer practical education for new journalists to enter the profession, and student-led broadcast and print media no longer exist. Student-led media had provided practical experience; now there is no space for students to control journalistic and editorial media content, panelists said.

Serbian media pay less attention to short-term or in-service training for upgrading or acquiring skills. Owners have little interest in this sort of investment, due to the worsening condition of the media market and increasing self-censorship. Young journalists tend to finance their education themselves, and previously had attend now-rare educational training from foreign organizations in Serbia. According to Tadić, "There are some possibilities for short-term education and trainings organized by journalists and media associations, and they are very useful."

Panelists pointed out several other issues related to professional training. Isakov pointed out that "even when investing seriously in journalists' education, it is difficult to keep journalists in the media industry long-term. These educational opportunities are disappearing because fewer individuals and media are interested in short-term training programs. Practical experiences are the most useful, and public services used them extensively." And Kojanović

However, other panelists shared the view that the cooperation with CSOs is weak and sporadic. Kojanović commented, "What Serbia is missing is higher engagement of civil sector, CSOs, which should be an important partner for media in the struggle for freedom of speech and journalists' credibility."

added, "What young journalists see today, in most editorial rooms, is not promising for their professional development."

Regarding Indicator 6, Samardžić said, "It is not difficult to acquire technology and equipment." The government places no undue restrictions on importing or purchasing materials, and the companies that sell these products are managed as efficient businesses. The same goes for printing houses. Information and communications technology have deeply penetrated all society niches and all households. However, the media content at the national level is lagging far behind the technical capabilities and availability of communication channels.

Concerning Indicator 7 and the channels of media distribution, Serbian Broadband (SBB) dominates the market, with about 50 percent of cable market. SBB is an important Internet provider as well. Newly passed legislation allows cable operators to market media content they produce, in addition to distributing media content.

Local television stations are not broadcast on cable; and certain newspapers cannot be found on Štampa, newspaper and magazine distributor kiosks. Therefore, it could be alleged that some business monopolies control aspects of media distribution. As Tadić described, "Pressures on media are exaggerated at the state and local levels by authorities, political parties, and business enterprises through the control of media content distribution." Samardžić added, "According to Serbian law, distributors must distribute in a

non-discriminatory manner for all media. The two biggest distributors SBB and TELEKOM tend to favor certain media in spite of legislative provisions."

The information and communications technology infrastructure, in principle, is adequate. According to the Republic Agency for Electronic Communications (RATEL), distribution of media content is available to 60 percent of all Serbian households. Also, through digitalization, the freely broadcast television is now available to 95 percent of inhabitants. Internet penetration has reached more than 50 percent of Serbian homes and mobile phone penetration is around European averages.

The existing information and communications technology fulfills the needs of the media industry, but is not at everyone's disposal. Media are able to offer products such as digital production, Internet streaming for audio and video, podcasts, and content for mobile telephones (SMS and/or audio-video MMS), but some have the obstacles of low capacity, such as slow Internet and overloaded mobile networks. Due to the significant differences between cities and rural areas, citizens in more remote areas of Serbia experience the majority of these obstacles. Isakov provided statistics: "Independent measurements done in 2015 showed that 42 percent of viewers still watch TV through analog signal. After the digitalization in June 2015, around 30 stations were broadcasting with an analog signal."

In Serbia, only 30 percent of television sets are younger than 4 years, meaning that most households may not yet be equipped to receive digital broadcasts. Also, the transmitting networks are insufficient and new investments are needed to improve the structures. Skrozza explained, "Digital TV and Internet are theoretically available across the entire country, but even in bigger towns, there are places with weak signal and often the system 'breaks down.'" Radosavljević added, "Informative and communication technologies are deeply intertwined in all parts of Serbian society and in all households, but media contents that are produced on the national level are lagging far behind the technical capacities and availability of communication channels."

List of Panel Participants

Tamara Skrozza, journalist, VREME weekly; member, Press Council Complaint Commission, Belgrade

Svetlana Kojanović, editor-in-chief, Objektiv No1, Čačak

Predrag Djurdjević, senior program assistant, OSCE Media Department, Belgrade

Vanda Kučera, chief governance officer, McCann Erickson Group, Belgrade

Milorad Tadić, chief executive officer and owner, Radio Boom 93; president, Association of Independent Electronic Media, Požarevac

Vukašin Obradović, president, Independent Journalist Association of Serbia; director and editor-in-chief, Vranjske, Vranje

Siniša Isakov, counselor, Radiotelevision Vojvodina, Novi Sad

Dejan Radosavljević, research director, Ipsos, Belgrade

Nebojša Samardžić, attorney, Živković/Samardžić Law Office, Belgrade

Predrag Blagojević, chief executive officer, Južne Vesti, online daily, Niš

Zoran Sekulić, chief executive officer, FoNet; president, managing board, Media Association, Belgrade

Moderator

Dragan Kremer, media program coordinator, Open Society Foundation, Belgrade

Author

Goran Cetinić, independent media consultant, Belgrade

The panel discussion was convened on December 15, 2015.

IN MEMORIAM: Darko Bročić



Darko Bročić, a perennial MSI panelist since the first study in 2001, passed away on April 6, 2015 at the age of 50. Bročić was the CEO of Nielsen Audience Measurement in Serbia and one of the founders of Strategic Marketing, the first company in Serbia to introduce professional media research. A graduate in sociology from the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, his research career focused on applied research solutions. He was a visiting lecturer and frequent public speaker in Serbia and abroad. He will be remembered as an exemplary research professional and as a uniquely constructive and pleasant colleague.