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Media News

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Press Self-Regulation

Press Council Soon to Start Working

Preparations for the constitution of a Press Council of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is to have a regulatory role in creating professional standards in print media, are coming to an end. At an OSCE conference on March 13 in Sarajevo, a document was presented which was made by the Independent Media Commission (IMC) and Media Self-Regulation Working Group and which specifies the composition and jurisdiction of the Press Council. If journalist associations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Syndicate of Professional Journalists of the BiH Federation, which have earlier accepted the idea of having a Press Council at state level and which have been actively involved in developing it, ratify this document, Bosnia-Herzegovina will get an institution which exists in most democratic countries in the world and which self-regulates and professionally articulates the conduct of print media. Practically, this will complete the process of media regulation in the country as the IMC almost two years ago assumed a regulatory role in the work of broadcasters.

The Press Council, according to this proposal, shall have two functions – appellate and advisory. The Council's appellate function shall be carried out in that it will be open to complaints filed by those who are referred to in a story published in the press and who are dissatisfied or hurt by it. Third persons shall have the right to complain only if they raise an issue of public interest. However, such a wide rule and different interpretations of what a public interest is, may lead to disagreements within the Council and therefore it cannot be ruled out that this position will in the end either be precisely regulated or left out altogether. As stipulated by the founding proposal, the Council shall settle all complaints on the basis of fairness, common sense, in a civilized manner, and using journalistic means only. One of those means, that is to say sanctions, shall be to print the Council's findings in full in a prominent place in the publication whose writing is the subject of dispute. According to this proposal, the Council shall not have the power to pronounce fines on media.

The Press Council shall be composed of 13 members, including a representative of the international community as chairman. Six members shall be representatives of the press, and six shall be prominent figures from Bosnian-Herzegovinian public who shall not be journalists and who, needless to say, shall not be politically affiliated. The main criterion of appointment shall be professional qualification and experience.

As to status, the Council shall most likely be established as a non-profit, non-governmental organization. Initially, the Council shall be financed by IMC and OSCE, and later it would most likely receive support from IREX.

However, at the above mentioned journalist gathering in Sarajevo, disagreements arose among members of the Print Media Self-Regulation Working Group concerning the Council's composition and method of work. Working Group President Vlatko Menigs of the Association of Croat Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina maintained that the Council should have national parity, and even a degree of consensual decision-making. He justified his position with the present reality of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is composed of two entities and three constituent peoples. According to him, if this principle is not accepted, the result could be that media from the Republika Srpska and the Croat part of the Federation will not accept decisions imposed by the Bosniak majority. This position was opposed by representatives of the Association of Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina and, especially, by the Union of Independent Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina from Sarajevo. Union President Mehmed Husic even threatened that his association may withdraw from the whole project if parity and any kind of national consensus are introduced because that would completely block the Press Council's work. The Sarajevo meeting was not attended by representatives of the two Republika Srpska associations which participate in the Working Group, and their opinions could not be heard. However, Media Plan Institute, based on earlier conversations with these associations, is aware that their views are similar to those of Menigs.

OSCE Senior Media Advisor Regan McCarthy, as a meritorious person representing the international community, agreed that any kind of consensual decision-making would make the Press Council inefficient. However, she said that one cannot shut one's eyes to the reality of Bosnia-Herzegovina and that national representation should be taken into account in appointing the Council members. A questionnaire was made available to journalists who attended the OSCE press conference in which, among other things, they could choose how the Council should vote. The offered options were consensus, two-thirds majority, relative majority or simple majority. This shows that the method of decision-making is yet to be decided.

The Press Council should remain immune to the current internal journalist animosities present both in the Federation and the Republika Srpska, and to different interpretations of what is ethical, tendentious and inflammatory. True, the Press Council will follow the Press Code adopted by all journalist associations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, even the Code leaves a lot of room for interpreting so-called border areas when it is necessary to distinguish when standards of privacy are violated, when political predictions end and political speculation and tendentiousness start. Therefore, the future Press Council needs to be composed of true professionals and people who do



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not fall under the influence of current political trends in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Unfortunately, some journalists in Bosnia-Herzegovina have not remained immune to the political reality in the country. The Press Council is being established precisely to prevent damaging influence on the general public by politicized or irresponsible journalists. Of course, under the condition that they do not first exert this same influence on the Council. (Radenko Udovicic)

M o n i t o r i n g

Visual Presentation of Political Parties in BiH Daily Press

Photograph as a Political Stand

This monitoring project was made with the intention of opening a new perspective in monitoring and research of principles of political party and figure presentation in local media. In that context, this article focuses on the character of presentation of important political figures and parties on photographs published in daily press. The aim of research is to examine the principles of visual presentation and presence of these political subjects in the election period which recently started. (Local elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina are due on April 8).

In the very essence of this kind of research is the presumption that each photograph is rich in potential meaning and that the very choice of photographs, manner of presentation and their location in print media have political implications for the messages conveyed. The photograph is the key element of attracting attention to the articles along which they are printed. It, therefore, is a selective mechanism characteristic of media and it serves to classify the importance of information and figures which articles are about. In other words, a daily paper may treat most political figures equally in its articles, but the photograph is the one which will highlight “important” articles, while at the same time “singling out” those less important from the overall supply. We can therefore say that the photograph is some sort of a political statement: the photograph will point us to important information, important figures and important political positions. It is a visual bridge towards information presented in the article.

However, the photograph is more than a pure “advertisement” for articles and political positions. It itself is a message. It is by no means the same if a paper prints a picture on the first or on the last page, nor is the dimension of the photograph unimportant. The photograph also has a different effect if it is placed at the very top of a page and in big format or if its dimensions are minimal, placed in a corner at the very bottom of a page. The issue of photograph selection is also important: which photographs are printed, and which are not (which may be even more important), and why that is so.

Proceeding from these basic presumptions, we analyzed five daily newspapers in Bosnia-Herzegovina: *Dnevni avaz*, *Oslobodjenje*, *Vecernje novine*, *Glas srpski* and *Dnevne nezavisne novine*. Depending on technical conditions, we analyzed photographs published in five or seven editions of these media in the period between March 4 and 10. The monitoring project analyzed the frequency of appearance of political party photographs in these media, dimensions of photographs, their position on the page and the whole edition, and character of association with the article (positive or negative). Each photograph was rated on these dimensions to give a “visual value” of presentation of the featured political figures.

***Dnevni avaz* – Visual Dominance of SDA**

By the number of printed photographs (105), *Dnevni avaz* is far ahead of all other media. Of that number, 40 photographs, or 38 percent, featured different politicians from the Democratic Action Party (SDA). Of all 40 photographs related to the SDA, only three were related to articles which

showed negative aspects of this party. The Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) took second place on the scale of visual presentation in *Dnevni avaz*. However, the character of this presentation differs considerably from that of the SDA. Namely, of a total of 21 photographs, 9 referred to negative implications from articles. If we put aside photographs of Mladen Naletilic – Tuta and Tihomir Blaskic, there were still five other photographs referring to articles of a negative character. Representatives of the Party for BiH (SBiH) were on 10, and figures from SDP BiH were on seven photographs of which all referred to articles with a positive character. Of other political parties in the Federation, the New Croat Initiative (NHI) and Civic Democratic Party (GDS) were represented by three pictures each. Other parties were shown on one or two photographs or were not shown at all. Of parties from the Republika Srpska, five photographs were printed which referred to the RS Socialist Party (SPRS), and five others referred to the Party of Independent Social-Democrats (SNSD). In the case of SNSD, two photographs accompanied articles with a negative character.

It can be noticed that, in the visual sense, *Dnevni avaz* clearly prefers the SDA to other political actors. However, we must take into account the fact that a large number of featured photographs presented SDA members in their official capacity in the authorities, which inevitably makes them more relevant than other political figures. That is why it is perhaps of greater significance that, percentage-wise, members of “non-Bosniak” parties (HDZ and SNSD) were shown more in a negative context, which was not the case with parties from that part of the Federation which is still controlled by the SDA. Generally speaking, a greater percentage of photographs featuring non-Bosniak politicians were shown in a negative context than those with Bosniak figures.

The person which the highest visual presentation was Alija Izetbegovic, who was shown on seven photographs, as a party member or as chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The second most featured figure was Ante Jelavic with four photographs (one in a negative context), while Zivko Radisic was shown on only one photograph. Milorad Dodik was shown on five photographs of which two referred to articles with a negative character. Haris Silajdzic (SBiH), Sulejman Tihic (SDA) and Edhem Bicakcic (SDA) were shown on four photographs each with positive connotations.

There were considerable differences not only in the choice of figures and topics, but also in the very location of photographs. It was found that 20 percent of all “SDA photographs” were featured on the front page, while this percentage for the HDZ reached 14 percent, for the SBiH 10 percent, and for SDP BiH 0 percent. A similar balance appeared in distribution of photographs on other pages, with the SDA having the highest percentage of photographs printed on the second and third pages, and the lowest percentage of those placed in less visible locations, i.e. after page 5. If we add to all this the fact that the SDA spatially occupied the most space in *Dnevni avaz*, then its supremacy over other parties becomes evident. Namely, on the basis of this it can be concluded that the SDA is visually the most dominant party in *Dnevni avaz*.

***Oslobodjenje* – In Search of a Balance**

With *Oslobodjenje*, the situation is a bit different. Namely, the SDA is the mostly presented party, which is logical as it is the main holder of power in the BiH Federation, but articles that these photographs refer to much more often have a critical character towards this party. Of a total of 28 photographs, eight, or 28.57 percent, were related to articles with a negative character. In the case of the HDZ, the situation is more or less the same as in *Dnevni avaz*: of 14 photographs, eight, or 57 percent, had a negative character. Of other parties, the most presented were the BiH Social-Democratic Party (SDP) with seven photographs, SNSD with four, and Serb People’s Alliance (SNS) with three photographs. Of figures, Alija Izetbegovic holds first position with seven appearances (one with a negative character), followed by Edhem Bicakcic with five appearances, of which three had a negative character. It is interesting to point out that the other two BiH Presidency members appeared only three times, of which twice on joint photographs referring to the establishment of Brcko District. Generally speaking, *Oslobodjenje* has a somewhat more balanced approach to showing the negative sides of different political figures, with the exception of the HDZ (in this period partly thanks to the heated atmosphere concerning the war crimes tribunal in The Hague and

the Blaskic and Naletilic trials). However, the SDA still dominated with regard to occupied space and location, although it did not dominate on front pages.

***Vecernje Novine* – Poor Visual Presentation**

The poorest visual presentation was certainly offered by *Vecernje novine* with a total of only 22 relevant photographs. Of that number, nine referred to the HDZ (if we count Mladen Naletilic – Tuta and Tihomir Blaskic, who we directly associate with this party), and only three had a positive character. The SDA appeared on seven photographs, of which one was of a negative character. Of other parties, the only ones featured were SDP BiH and SPRS with two each, and the RS Radicals and SNSD with one photograph each. With *Vecernje novine* it is really difficult to speak about the importance of these photographs which is degraded by their poor quality. Still, it can be concluded that the dominant position here is held by the SDA (in a positive context) and HDZ (in a negative context).

Similarity Between *Dnevne Nezavisne Novine* and *Glas Srpski*

In the case of *Nezavisne novine*, the situation is considerably different from that of daily newspapers from the Federation. There is far less imbalance between the featured figures, which is probably a consequence of lesser concentration of power in the hands of a single political party. In other words, the participation of a greater number of political parties in the authorities and inter-party struggles in the parliament open for these parties access to the media, which is then reflected on the scope of their representation in the press. During the analyzed period, a total of 47 relevant photographs were printed. Of that number, 12 showed the SPRS, but seven of those photographs were of a negative character (which is a result of turmoil in this party and probably not a realistic reflection of the situation). The SNSD and SDPBiH (as a result of an interview with the party leader, Zlatko Lagumdžija, which was accompanied with three photographs) had seven photographs each. In the case of the SNSD, there were also two paid advertisements, while the SNS, Democratic Progress Party (PDP), Serb Democratic Party (SDS) and HDZ were represented with four photographs each. One photograph each showed the SDA, Liberal Bosniak Organization (LBO), SBiH, RS Radicals and NHI.

Thanks to the above mentioned interview, Zlatko Lagumdžija was visually most dominant, but it is to be assumed that he belongs to a group of less represented politicians, which is usually true of figures from the other entity. This means that actually the most dominant was Milorad Dodik (SNSD) with four photographs, while Biljana Plavšić (SNS) was in second place with three. It is interesting to notice that not a single photograph was printed of the collective state Presidency, while only one photograph of Zivko Radisić was printed. This may be explained with the still insufficient significance that Bosnia-Herzegovina has as a whole among citizens of the Republika Srpska and the resulting low level of identification with common state institutions, as well as the split within the Sloga coalition, which the RS Socialist Party (Zivko Radisić) has walked out of.

Analysis has shown almost identical characteristics of visual presentation in *Glas srpski* with presentation in *Dnevne nezavisne novine*. *Glas srpski* printed 37 photographs relevant for this analysis. Of that number, 11 photographs referred to the SPRS (four photographs with a negative connotation related to internal turmoil), nine photographs of the SNSD, and eight of the SNS. The HDZ had three, and the SDA two photographs. Other political parties were represented with one photograph each.

As for figures, the person with the biggest presence was Milorad Dodik with six photographs, followed by Zivko Radisić with four, and Biljana Plavšić with three photographs. One picture of the collective Presidency was printed. Looking at the distribution of photographs in the paper itself, it can be concluded that it reflects the above structure of party representation.

Political Aggressiveness of the Photograph

Several important conclusions may be drawn from this analysis about the role of the photograph in presenting political parties and their ideological options. First, it is clear that visual presence of a party is proportionate to its political significance, which is logical. However, it is a fact that the significance of a party is not the only method using which selection is made. An excellent example of this is the lack of photographs of other important figures, such as members of the BiH Presidency – this is a reflection of the general political atmosphere in which common institutions of Bosnia-Herzegovina still do not enjoy enough support among political actors, and even among the population of this country. It is also obvious that there are no principles for selecting photographs in accordance with the significance that a certain article attaches to a certain party or figure. In other words, certain political parties or options may be systematically presented in a negative light, or completely ignored, if they are in contradiction with the political climate in which a given medium functions. The photograph gives considerable contribution to such negative marking of certain figures (for example, negative presentation of figures from another ethnic group, another territory, total lack of anything “different” in the visual field, etc.).

In this context, the photograph in press has a very aggressive character: it focuses readers’ attention to selected articles. In that way the photograph to a certain extent predetermines the set of information that the reader will process: the photograph creates a framework which determines the order of reading, it underlines what is important and at the same time makes the unimportant marginal. To a certain extent, the photograph alienates the power of selection from the reader. If, therefore, selection and distribution of photographs is carried out systematically and purposefully, it may become a very important tool for promoting certain political ideas.

(Media Plan Monitoring Center – Tarik Jusic).

Ownership Transformation of Media in Slovenia

A Time of Media “Strongmen”

(by Petra Subic, Ljubljana)

Slovenia is one of the rare countries in transition in which foreign capital has only recently entered print media, but that does not mean that local investors are not attracted to owning media.

Although in Slovenia it is not yet possible to speak about big media globalization, we can still speak about “sensitivity” for ownership trends. Among the most prominent media events was last fall’s news on the transfer of ownership of the weekly *Mag* to the group *Salomonov oglasnik*. In Stajerska it echoed that the Maribor daily *Vecer* merged with *Novi tednik* and Radio Celje. In late November a Swedish owner, the eminent business daily *Dagens Industri* which is part of the powerful media concern Bonnier, walked into the business paper *Finance*. In the spotlight in December were events in the business building of *Delo* of the largest Slovenian daily *Delo*, as well as the largest publisher of magazines *Delo Revije*.

Last year one of *Delo Revije*’s institutional owners became the company SDC International Slovenia, which bought 26 percent of its shares on the unorganized market. We will find the new owner in the court register under the name SDC – Communications, Society for Telecommunications and Publishing. It was founded by SDC International LTV from the capital city of Bermuda, a virgin heaven in the western Atlantic, and the local media “strongman” Marijan Jurenc, the head of Pro Plus, which invested \$420,000 in the Slovenian SDC.

Another big example of foreign capital in Slovenian print media is the re-capitalization of the paper *Finance* which became an independent paper, owned 55 percent by the shareholding group *Gospodarski Vestnik* and 45 percent by the Swedish owners of the business daily *Dagens Industri*.

Concerning this event, Faculty of Social Sciences Professor Sandra Basic Hrvatin says that, unlike most countries in central and eastern Europe, Slovenia is a rare example: until that case foreign capital had not yet entered print media. Due to former social regulation of the media market, newspapers in Slovenia, which had been strongly protected by the regime, were abandoned on the market immediately after privatization and only the strongest survived. An example of the desire of a state in transition to get rid of loosing newspapers is the wave that splashed against Hungary, in which print media were completely sold out and usually ended in German and French hands.

What Do Foreign Buyers Want?

Unlike the rest of eastern and central Europe, Slovenia was more cautious with newspapers, that is to say more protective, although a bigger inflow of foreign capital can be expected in the future. That is why it would be good, Basic maintains, if the state were to define the limits of pluralism, but not only using economic categories, as it has been doing so far. "Namely, there is also pluralism of content, and it would be good to specify this before selling out," she suggested. It is soon to be expected that "Pooblastene investicijske družbe" – PID (Authorized Investment Societies) will buy "everything possible" in order to then sell stock to foreigners. If investment funds become owners, it would be good to clarify this relationship beforehand.

For Basic the arrival of foreign capital does not seem disputed in itself. She says that, for example, the newspaper *Finance* received an opportunity to absorb experience and know-how from its foreign partner, unlike in the case of so-called horizontal concentration of capital, in which foreigners only buy and do not offer any additional development values. Basic, therefore, underlines the issue of how foreigners will start to change media, and adds that the Slovenian market is simply too small for this type of horizontal concentration.

Basic also points out that a clear media ownership structure is imperative. From that viewpoint, placing *Delo's* shares on the Ljubljana stock exchange was a useful move. It prevented deals from being concluded on the black market under the table or by telephone, ownership was transparent, and all this increased the interest of independent shareholders.

Last November the public were disturbed by news that "Krekova služba" (Krekovo Society) had increased its stock in *Delo* d.d. by one fourth. Speculation started, but the danger remains that the largest media house may be subject to "enemy" takeover. It would not be possible to avoid speculation that the generally left-orientated daily will politically move towards the right. Both *Delo* and Krekovo Society deny the possibility of this kind of takeover. As with other large media, *Delo's* management says it has "excellent" cooperation with its most important institutional owners.

On the other hand, local print media as a rule would rather see internal shareholders among their owners. *Dolenjski list* from the very start of privatization tried to place ownership into its own hands since it saw this as an opportunity for easier management and a guarantee of an independent business and editorial policy. Now *Dolenjski list* is completely in the hands of its employees and retired staff who used to work there. The newspaper last year for the first time in its 50-year history succeeded in buying its own business premises, which Drago Rustja says was done thanks to the fact that ownership is in the hands of employees.

Similar to this, in mid-1998 DZU Triglav abandoned the Murska Sobota-based Information Company. Three-tens of this media house's shares were sold to its employees. Now one-tenth of the company is owned by a damages fund, 33 percent of internal owners are organized into an authorized society, and the remaining stock is fragmented. It will remain like this for some time, because little stock is being sold.

The biggest external owner of *Primorske novic* is KBM Infond, which has the longest list of media houses among its portfolio investments. In its hands is 24 percent of *Primorske novic*, while the owner of eight percent is a capital fund, and the remaining two-thirds are owned by internal owners. The ownership structure may considerably change in re-capitalization. According to director Barbara Verdnik, *Primorske novic* continues to maintain business ties with other smaller media, and is not thinking of capital ones yet.

Ownership of *Gorenjski glas* is divided among internal and external stockholders in a 60:40 ratio. Director Marko Valjavec says its ownership structure is equal to what was decided under an ownership transformation program four years ago. The National Financial Society purchased from the then-Development Fund 30 percent of ownership, and later, by exchanging a contract with the Retirement Fund, got another tenth.

A start of capital ties among print media is to be expected. We have already mentioned the merger between *Vecer* and the Celje-based company NT & RC which will certainly provoke a lot of attention this year. In this game, foreigners will also play an important role. The German enterprise WAZ (Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung) is now trying to win over the good will of *Delo* and *Vecer*, which have turned down the offer, but the German attempt will certainly not be a lone example.

Ownership Transparency

In many countries in transition, it is not simple to obtain information on ownership relations in media. Slovenian practice, despite the fact that an unorganized market is still functioning, has more or less overcome this problem. Here is the ownership structure of the three largest daily newspapers:

Ownership Structure of *Delo* (participation in percentages)

PID Zvon 1 and PID Zvon 2 (Krekovo Society).....	25.04
Slovenski odškodninski sklad, d.d. (Slovenian Damages Fund).....	11.70
Kapitalski sklad PIZ, d.d., (Capital Fund).....	11.70
LB Maksima, d.o.o.	1.95
Maksima 1, d.d.	1.17
Nova Ljubljanska banka, d.d.	2.39
PID Infond Zlat (KBM Infond)	1.86
Poteza, d.d.....	1.48
PID Mercata, d.d.....	0.98
Mercata 1, d.d.	0.33
Delo Prodaja, d.d.	1.00
Internal Owners	33.00

Source: *Delo*

Ownership Structure of *Vecer*

PID Infond Zlat (KMB Infond)	30.00
Slovenski odškodninski sklad, d.d. (Slovenian Damages Fund).....	10.00
DZU Triglav and DZU Probanka	4.23
Small shareholders.....	55.76
- employees.....	38.04
- former employees.....	7.50
- pensioners.....	10.13

Source: *Vecer*

Ownership Structure of *Dnevnik**

PID Kmecka druzba (Village Society).....	25.35
Delo Prodaja, d.d.	9.25
Kapitalski sklad PIZ, d.d. (Capital Fund).....	8.01
Slovenski odškodninski sklad, d.d. (Slovenian Damages Fund).....	8.01
Mobitel, d.d.....	2.96
Luka Koper, d.d.	1.80
Poteza, d.d.....	2.11
DZS, d.d.....	1.76
AC-Borznoposredniska hisa, d.d. (Stockbrokers)	1.68
BTC, d.d.	1.35

PID Infond Zlat (KBM Infond)	1.34
External Owners (former employees).....	14.39
Internal owners (employees)	19.34
* - data as of end of November 1999	
Vir: KDD	

I n t e r n e t C o n t r o l – Y e s o r N o (5)

Today we conclude our series on possibilities of Internet regulation, initiated by discussions during the Conference on the Internet held in October of 1999 in Paris under UNESCO auspices. The conference gave a “visa” for initiating a regulation procedure, although many dilemmas and warnings were heard. A number of scientific workers, journalists and Internet experts presented their opinions in Media News. Most maintained that at this moment the Internet cannot be (and need not be) regulated. For the final part of our series, we feature M.S. Lenart Setinc of the Institute for Media Law, Ljubljana.

Where are the Limits of Freedom of Expression on the Internet?

Freedoms and rights of the individual are limited by the freedoms and rights of other individuals! This means that the right to place content on the Internet must not violate, for example, copyrights, rights to safeguarding personal data or the rights of children, or other rights provided by penal and other laws. What is an offence, or a violation of rights and freedoms guaranteed by the constitution and laws, is quite clearly defined, although there are still some differences in legislation in different countries. These differences are smaller and smaller since more and more countries are entering into international agreements. But this does not mean that **prevention of Internet access** will be an easy and problem-free task. The first issue is competence of repressive bodies: who has the right to sanction an offence, committed by a person through his or her content on the Internet while visiting country A, who then sends the incriminating text into the net via a server in country B, while the “victims” of this act live in countries, C, D, E... Which legal system to apply? What is the location of the committed criminal act? Who will carry out sanctions? It is certain that Internet access cannot be prevented without an international “global” agreement on preventive measures and sanctioning of access.

The Internet at its beginning seemed an insignificant (from an economic and legal aspect) self-regulated system of civil society. Today, **serious and relevant business deals are made via the Internet**, not to mention the importance of the Internet in free flow of know-how and information. In a way it is possible to compare the development of the Internet with the development of free market: liberal understanding of free trade in the contemporary world has been replaced by state and social regulation of the flow of goods and services. Since the Internet-based market of goods and ideas is becoming more significant by the day, it is possible to expect serious regulatory intervention on the part of the international community. The issue of Internet control will, in my opinion, not only be an issue of how to prevent criminal acts or offences on the Internet. It will be more and more an issue of regulation of the commodities market and the information market.

Another important, but not more significant issue is the issue of **valorization of information and data quality on the Internet**. I am convinced that development of the information supply on the Internet will go in the direction of introducing measures aimed at boosting content quality, information and data reliability control, and identification of untrue, unreliable and useless content. The information supply on the Internet is experiencing such an expansion that the average user will need reliable navigation services to find and valorize relevant information that the user needs. Navigation and valorization on the part of information specialists will at the same time present a very important form of professional control of content on the Internet.

The romantic days of Internet freedom and self-regulation will certainly in the near future be replaced (sanctioned!) by **responsibility for published content**. I do not agree with some Internet

experts that Internet control and regulation is technically not feasible: it is feasible and essential, and probably also expensive. It will depend on international agreement and a joint stand taken by Internet-developed countries. In the meantime, Internet users will enjoy wide freedoms of the virtual world on the Internet, and unfortunately there will be misuses, fraud and different perversions. The issue of freedom of the Internet will in the future depend on the eternal dilemma: who will control the controllers... (Lenart Setinc)

News

Private TV Opens in Brcko

Brcko Mayor Sinica Kisic opened the first private television studio in the city on March 2, officially registered as "MIB" Television. According to a *Glas srpski* report of March 3, the opening of the station, owned by Milan and Bogdan Nikic, was attended by numerous prominent guests, representatives of public and cultural life in Brcko, and representatives of international organizations including Brcko Supervisor Robert Farrand.

In his welcoming remarks the mayor of the district said the television will serve citizens and will considerably fill the local media space.

With the constitution of Brcko District the idea grew to establish a united radio-television of the district, which could be formed through merger of the three existing radio and TV stations which now have an ethnic character.

Vladimir Bilic Director, Fahro Balvanovic Deputy Director of FTV

Vladimir Bilic was appointed director-general of Federal Radio-Television, and Fahro Balvanovic his deputy, according to an FRTV Council decision made at a session held in Sarajevo on March 8.

Bilic came to this post from the position of editor-in-chief of Radio Station "Vrhbosna." He has a degree in journalism and he was born in Sarajevo in 1953. He also worked for Radio Sarajevo and as editor for TV Sarajevo and TV BiH, and recently he has lectured at Media Plan's School of Journalism.

"We will try to employ young staff who will be the backbone of the program," Bilic told *Oslobodjenje*.

Fahro Balvanovic, outgoing technical director of TVBiH where he has worked for many years, has a degree in electrical engineering and he was born in Banja Luka in 1942. He was one of the designers of the very successful television coverage of the Winter Olympic Games in Sarajevo in 1984.

"We want to create program for all citizens of FBiH and all people living in it," Balvanovic said.

Lower Fees for Private Radio and TV Stations

License fees for radio and TV stations now directly depend not only on the output power and the number of the emitters operated, but also on the status of the broadcaster, i.e. public or private, as defined by IMC rules, the Independent Media Commission Council decided at its regular session on March 10, 2000, adopting amendments to the Broadcasts License Fees, which had entered into force on January 1, 2000.

Private broadcasters will be granted 20 percent reduction on the total monthly fee payable by a public broadcaster and fees for private broadcasters will be phased-in.

Monthly Fees:

Up to 100 W	TV 50 KM	Radio 25 KM
From 100 to 250 W	TV 100 KM	Radio 50 KM
From 250 to 500 W	TV 200 KM	Radio 100 KM
From 500 to 1000 W	TV 400 KM	Radio 200 KM
From 1000 to 2000 W	TV 600 KM	Radio 300 KM
From 2000 to 5000 W	TV 1000 KM	Radio 500 KM
From 5000 to 10000 W	TV 1500 KM	Radio 750 KM
Above 10000 W	TV 2000 KM	Radio 1000 KM

Equal Treatment of Language in Media

The Association of Croat Journalists and the Association of Croat Media in Bosnia-Herzegovina addressed an open letter to the Office of the High Representative, Independent Media Commission, Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and offices of all international organizations and all embassies in the country, requesting equal treatment of language and media of all three constituent peoples in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The associations requested that the division balance of facilities and equipment belonging to public broadcasters in Bosnia-Herzegovina be completed, that RTV BiH cease to operate, that Federal TV start to operate and that its management be appointed.

They also requested that two separate channels in the Bosnian and Croatian languages be established on public RTV of the Federation, and that the Public Radio-Television Service of Bosnia-Herzegovina be established on a parity principle. Other requests were that Croat Radio Herceg-Bosna be granted a permanent license, that opening of daily newspapers be supported and financial aid be given to the only Croat weekly in Bosnia-Herzegovina – *Hrvatska rijec*, and that allocation of donations to media in the country be examined due to, as they put it, neglect of Croat media.

The associations also requested that an end be put to manipulation that Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina do not have enough professional staff needed for reconstruction of the public broadcasting system, and that an explanation be given for discrimination against Croats in participation in the creation of the media space of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The open letter also expressed dissatisfaction over the forcible closure of the Mostar-based TV station “Erotel” and requested that responsibility be determined for it.

Regional Conference for Local Radio Stations

Opatija, Croatia, hosted on March 12 a conference of local radio station associations from southeast Europe, organized by the Association of Independent Radio Stations from Croatia, International Center for Education of Journalists based in Opatija, and Denmark’s Baltic Media Center. Participants in the conference formed a working group charged with drafting proposals for regional projects in the field of radio production, training of journalists and other radio employees, and in the field of legal regulation of broadcasters. The working group is due to hold its first meeting in May, and the next regional conference is set for September.

***Oslobodjenje* in Pre-War Premises**

The newsroom of the Sarajevo daily *Oslobodjenje* on November 17 moved back to its old building in the Nedzarici neighborhood, which has been partly reconstructed with resources given by Sarajevo Canton, European Union, foreign journalist organizations, as well as numerous local companies. *Oslobodjenje*’s premises are located in Nedzarici at the very end of Sarajevo on what used to be the frontline during the war. The building was completely destroyed, and its burnt and shattered tower which held the business premises still stands as a reminder of the destruction of the besieged Sarajevo.

Oslobodjenje is the oldest Bosnian-Herzegovinian daily founded in 1943. The newspaper was published during the entire siege of Sarajevo. The paper has had an independent editorial policy since 1991 and it succeeded during the war not to succumb to the challenges of warmongering and propaganda journalism, which has won it considerable international support.

Media Curiosities

Italians give up TV to try more talking

VILLAGERS in southern Italy are to try living without television for the next 15 days in an experiment designed to establish whether its absence can restore "a sense of community" by encouraging neighbourly contact and "forcing people to talk to each other".

All the 3,000 inhabitants of Cerisano, near Cosenza in Calabria, have agreed not only to turn off their television sets but also to cover them with specially provided hoods so that they no longer offer a "visible temptation".

The organisers of the experiment, a joint study by the European Research Institute and the Dante Alighieri Foundation, Italy's leading cultural institute, said the aim was to "make family members and neighbours communicate" instead of "engaging in isolated one-way communication with their TV sets".

To compensate for the sudden withdrawal, villagers will be offered street theatre and shows in the main square, with guest appearances by their favourite stars. They will include variety show presenters, quiz show hosts and soap opera actors and actresses.

Giorgio Albertazzi, a leading film and theatre actor and director who is promoting the scheme, insisted it was "not a crusade". "I've got nothing against television, which made me famous," Signor Albertazzi said. "In any case it cannot be disinvented. But we could persuade people to rely on it less."

Sociologists say that, although television is an "addiction" and "anti-social", it has had "positive effects" in Italy, not least by uniting a nation made up of disparate regions. But *Il Messaggero* said that there was no guarantee that those unable to cope without their daily diet of soaps and football would not be tempted to "rip the covers off their TV sets", then lie when the researchers asked them whether the experiment had been a success.

The ban also includes live coverage of the Pope's historic visit to the Holy Land.

(The Times – World News, March 13, 2000)

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