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**Education of Journalists in Southeast Europe:  
A Step Closer to Professionalism**

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## Foreword

These articles were written within a research project, started in September 2001 by Media Plan Institute from Sarajevo, whose goal was to collect basic information on education of journalists and media staff in countries of Southeast Europe (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FR Yugoslavia, Macedonia, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova).

In each of these countries there are different levels and types of education of journalists and media professionals. However, there is no systematic analysis or database on what is going on in this education field. Therefore, these reports are supposed to offer an overview of the existing forms and projects in education of journalists.

We hope the reports will be useful to those who work in the education of journalists.

The articles were previously published at [www.mediaonline.ba](http://www.mediaonline.ba) as the Special Reports.

## **Towards Modern Education of Journalists in South East Europe**

Tarik Jusic

*It is nowadays a matter of fact that professional media are the axis of modern democratic society. Modern democracy cannot be even thought without a developed system of professional media in the capacity of a watchdog to the government as well as the main source of information to citizens. But if such a mass media system in service of the public is to exist in the first place, professional journalists within the system must live up to the challenges of this demanding profession. The graver the situation of society gets, the more desperately is professionalism needed in journalism. Well educated, professional journalists play a key role in the development of media system in societies that are undergoing painful liberation from the chains of authoritarianism and are trying to find their own place in the family of democratic states. And these are the very societies that we are talking about here – societies in transition.*

### **Education of journalists in transition countries**

Dissolution of Soviet Union, the fall of the Berlin Wall and collapse of socialist Yugoslavia are all events of historic significance that marked the death of communism and birth of constitutional democracies in the countries of Central, East and South East Europe. However, the movement out of authoritarianism into democracy has certainly not been painless, especially not so in the countries of South East Europe. Despite relatively swift introduction of foundational principles of constitutional democracy – such as constitutional protection of human rights, rule of law, separation of power, political pluralism, emergence of independent public sphere and development of independent media, etc. – the very building of more or less liberal democracy in these countries was very complex and often laboured. In extreme cases, such as the case of former Yugoslavia and its successor states, this process was characterised by violent conflicts and most ferocious battle between progressive and reactionary forces that stretches to the present day.

Media reform and development of professional independent journalism have played a very important role in these processes. Namely, the bearing of media on transition – but also the bearing of transition-related problems on media development – is being reasserted daily.

This is why media reform has encountered many of the difficulties related to transition in general, especially through development of public broadcasting service, struggle for independence of regulatory agencies, liberation of media from the claws of wartime propaganda and new/old political options later on, etc. In the light of all these complex processes, creation of a strong community of independent professional journalists has proved to be one of the keys to successful media reform since only such journalists can face sweeping changes of society as a whole and equally painful media transformation. This is how education of journalists as well as other media professionals has come to be recognised as one of the preconditions for successful media transition in these societies.

A series of factors determine the character, level and development prospects of education in the field of journalism and media under trying circumstances of overall transition. First of all, outdated academic courses of journalism and inflexible universities cannot meet the needs of the new age. Grave economic situation precludes investment into education by media themselves as well as individual journalists, since bare survival is the absolute priority. On the other hand, the lack of trainers halts the development of education even when other necessary conditions are in place. Despite inability of institutions to deal with education accordingly, media simply mushroom in transition, which amplifies the demand for journalists in a very short term and makes a number of young people, lacking both adequate education and experience, enter the profession, often right after the high school prom. At the early stage of transition, these problems are coupled with underdevelopment of non-governmental organisations, which additionally hampers efficient development of extra-institutional forms of education and requires large investments into NGOs themselves before they can make any more significant contribution. Hence the dependency on international donations, which obstructs the rise of self-sustainable education system and prevents long-term planning of overall education development. Absence of vision diminishes the long-term effect of individual projects, no matter how useful they may be in short term.

All these factors, as well as many others that we have omitted herein, have made the education of journalists in transition societies exceptionally hard, burdened with doubts and insecurities, which are fuelled by constant interplay of successes and failures. This is what keeps education years and miles away from satisfactory quality and scope.

### **Education projects must be monitored systematically**

Regardless of the very grave situation, a lot has been done in education of journalists in all countries of South East Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia,

Yugoslavia, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania and Slovenia) over the last ten years or so. International donors have invested enormous amounts of money in this field, and a number of educational institutions, non-governmental organisations and other projects involved in education of journalists and media professionals have developed rapidly. This is what launched the transformation of academic courses in journalism, which will certainly have – or possibly already has – long-term effect on the quality and structure of education in this field.

Major steps have thus been taken but many major steps are yet to be taken. Different countries have different experiences of the road that seems to be heading towards the same or very similar aim. Regardless of these circumstantial differences, all experiential knowledge is valuable for it forms the basis for future development of education. Unfortunately, there is at the moment no central database or web site where more or less detailed reports on various projects can be accessed while any more systematic analysis of all the efforts in the field is lacking altogether. In this light, Media Plan Institute launched a project in September 2001. The project was primarily intended for collection and systematisation of relevant information on education of journalists and media professionals in the countries of South East Europe (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Yugoslavia, Macedonia, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova). We have, of course, been under no illusion that we can offer any comprehensive overview of all which has been done in the field so far, and we have thus confined our efforts to providing an insight into trends and developments.

Case studies were primarily intended to produce a descriptive analysis. Our researchers wrote their papers on the basis of the following standardised structure:

**Part 1. *Education Level of Journalists and Media Professionals***

The key problem concerns the existing education level of journalists and media professionals in the given country. It is therefore necessary to establish how education is structured and then to assess requirements of the media themselves as well as the development prospects.

**Part 2. *Classical University Education***

In exploring the state of universities, researchers were required to explain the basics of journalism studies, including the curricula, the ratio between practical training and theoretical education, financial condition and all this in the context of overall university transformation.

**Part 3. *Alternative Forms of Education***

Overview of alternative forms of education – independent schools, seminars, courses, workshops etc. Description of their methods and structure, funding modes, relationship with state institutions, key problems and success stories.

**Part 4. *International Donors, Non-Governmental Organisations and Education of Journalists***

Position and policy of international factors in education – long-term strategy or interim solutions, funding drain, developed or undeveloped cooperation with local organisations and media, etc.

**Part 5. *How Local Media and Journalists Perceive Education Programmes***

How do local journalists, editors and other professionals assess existing education programmes and projects? What are the problems, and what causes them? What makes the success stories of these projects?

**Part 6. *What Next***

Reports finally attempted to answer the question on possible new trends in education of journalists.

**Part 7. *The List of Major Organisations Involved in Education of Journalists***

Apart from descriptive analysis, each report also contains a list of major organisations involved in education of journalists and media professionals. The list compiles the basic data on these organisations (address, phone and contact persons).

This quite firm structure defined the research framework rather strictly and allowed for a comparative analysis of research findings.

**On lessons learned**

**Quantity at the Expense of Quality.** Following the fall of Communism, countries of South East Europe experienced a media boom. Once monopolised by few state- and party-controlled media, media arena was suddenly flooded by commercial media outlets, multiplying sometimes at almost unbelievable pace. The number of Romanian media for example jumps up to several thousand after 1989, and it is now consolidated to approximately 1,000 print media, around 300 radio and over 150 TV broadcasters (Avadani, 2001). Situation in other countries of the region is not much different: there are over 300 papers and 141 broadcasters in Macedonia of the day while Albania, which had only one opposition daily and one state-run TV back in 1991, now boasts 15 dailies and around 70 commercial broadcasters. A similar trend has thus marked the last decade in the entire region of South East Europe, from Slovenia to Moldova.

This boom of media outlets has naturally caused a rapid increase in demand of journalists and media professionals at the media market. However, the market lacked adequately trained professionals in those days. As a consequence, a large number of young journalists in newly born media has benefited from hardly any training in journalism, while

only few among them have ever graduated in any field, let alone journalism. Bearing in mind the complexity of journalism as vocation and its dependence on professional expertise, it gets much clearer why and how media boom resulted in very low quality of media products.

### **Education Level of Media Professionals in the Countries of South East Europe**

In the light of this problem, education of journalists gains in importance. However, due to a chronic absence of strategy that would guide development of the entire media system, which itself emerged rather erratically, there has never been a strategy in the field of education for journalists and media professionals (Šopar, 2001). As a consequence, the current education level among media professionals in nearly all countries of South East Europe is rather low.

Generally speaking, the level is far from being satisfactory – it is characterised by unharmonised education structure, depending on media type, and mostly unsatisfactory percentage of journalists and media professionals holding a degree. For example, there are media in Bosnia and Herzegovina employing even as many as 50 to 70 percent of journalists without any BA (Dedovic, 2001). Situation in other countries does not differ a great deal. The biggest broadcaster in Macedonia, Macedonian Radio and Television, employs a total of 1658 people, out of whom only 576 hold a BA, whereas as many as 708 have got only a high school diploma. Among those 1658 employees of the national broadcaster, there are 439 journalists, but only 280 of them hold BA degrees, whereas 30 have been through colleges and 129 have only a high school diploma (Šopar, 2001). Figures in Croatia are quite similar. Education structure of full members of Croatian Association of Journalists, who hold full-time jobs in media, is well illustrated by the following figures from year 2000: 663 journalists have only a high school diploma, 116 have a college diploma, while 900 of them hold a BA degree. There are only 9 MAs and 6 PhDs among them (Malovic, 2001a). A majority of Slovenian journalists holds BA degrees as well. According to statistical records of active Slovenian citizens, 535 out of the total of 872 employed journalists hold a BA degree. The figures among editors are even higher - 597 out of 620. (Kotnik, 2001)

At a glance, the situation seems almost good. Still, although a majority of journalists holds a BA degree, the figures are quite low when we know how demanding journalism as vocation is. By contrast, the vast majority of journalists in the USA holds BAs whereas only an insignificant number of the older ones among them have never been to university (Malovic, 2001b). Reasoning behind this is very clear:

"Journalists are very much aware of the fact that only by observing professional standards can they maintain their own profession at a satisfactory level of performance. But how to observe these standards is taught only at relevant schools and university departments. This is why fewer and fewer among journalists are some uneducated youngsters, who march into newsrooms straight from the street, and ever larger number of them are highly educated people." (Malovic, 2001b)

Inadequate education level of journalists in the region of South East Europe is most certainly a consequence of specific circumstances which surrounded the development of media arena in these countries. For a start, Communist regimes were much in favour of employing politically correct and loyal journalists rather than the trained ones. That practice, common to all ex-Communist countries, has inevitably had a far-reaching impact on education level and professionalism of journalists. The fall of Communism did however cause turbulent changes in media themselves, but new governments fired and hired editors and journalists at their own discretion and without any consideration for criteria of the profession. This is how many a young and inexperienced journalists, often without a degree, but loyal to the point of blindness, have ended up in a newsroom.

Naturally, one cannot blame only politics for inadequate education of journalists and media professionals. Economic factors have played their role: young and inexperienced journalists are less demanding in terms of financial stimuli. And this is certainly tempting for media that suffer from grave financial difficulties and operate at an underdeveloped market.

But we should not overlook one other important factor that contributed to low education level of journalists in transition countries. Namely, all these countries have experienced a media boom, and this has led to an enormous increase in demand for new, young journalists. As things go, universities are almost by definition inert, while undergoing transition themselves, and they simply lack the capacities to produce a sufficient number of young professionals. As a consequence, many young, inexperienced and, above all, uneducated journalists have got their chance.

Yet there is hope, as trends in some countries of South East Europe indicate. Above all, these are the trends in Slovenia but also Croatia, where media outlets nowadays tend to employ only journalists who hold a BA degree – and them only. Croatian Association of Journalists thus decided not to admit any more journalists without BA as of year 2001. Croatian Union of Journalists has adopted an even more rigid approach, and thus the new draft of collective contract reads that journalists must hold a BA degree if they are to be employed at all (Malovic, 2001a).

University education is however not the only education modality in journalism. A remarkable number of journalists from South East Europe have been through various specialist seminars, workshops and lectures, organised mainly by international and local non-governmental organisations, but also media companies themselves, over the last ten years. According to a survey done by Albanian Media Institute (AMI) in Albania last year, over a half of respondents attended various seminars organised by AMI and other similar educational institutions (Bejtja, 2001). Although we have no relevant data for other countries of the region, we can rightly assume that a significant number of journalists attended similar seminars, given a large number of the seminars and courses on offer.

**Developing Modern Education of Journalists.** Whatever path we take in thinking through all the problems related to education of journalists, we are bound to ‘stumble’ over transformation of universities. In long-term prospect, development of modern undergraduate journalism studies in the countries of South East Europe is the key to problems which education of journalists and media professionals encounter. One however should not overlook the need to develop alternative forms of education under auspices of non-governmental organisations as efficient appendix or supplement, but never a substitute, to university studies.

Transformation of universities is underway in all the countries covered by this research, but its progress varies, depending on specific circumstances in each of the countries. This refers not only to the number of journalism departments but also the contents of curricula. There are countries where journalism can be studied at only one university (Slovenia, Yugoslavia, Albania and Moldova), while Croatia and Macedonia have two such universities each. Bosnia and Herzegovina has 5 universities that run journalism courses, Bulgaria 7 and Romania as many as 20. Still, irrespective of the figures, one problem common to all these countries and their journalism departments is grave economic position and, consequently, lack of necessary equipment, disproportion between theoretical and practical courses at expense of the latter, limited number of trained teachers and underdeveloped cooperation with professional journalists and media outlets. Since the transformation is indeed underway in all these countries, one can anticipate that academic education of journalists will be fundamentally reformed in the near future.

Academic education of journalists must necessarily be supplemented through development of alternative, extra-institutional and practice-oriented forms of education and training. The latter has experienced rapid growth over the last ten years, and one can nowadays note gradual consolidation in this field as well. Amongst numerous organisations

involved in education projects for journalists and media professionals over the last few years, those most successful ones stand out, and they are all invariably characterised by years-long experience and consistent education strategy. *Peace Institute, Union of Slovenian Journalists* and *Association of Slovenian Journalists* are the most important such organisations in Slovenia (Kotnik, 2001). *Association of Croatian Journalists, Journalists' Workshop, International Centre for Education of Journalists, Academy of Journalism EPH* and *Interregional Workshop of Journalists* have the lead in Croatia (Malovic, 2001a). *Media Plan Institute* with its *High School of Journalism, Media Centre* and *Internews* stand out in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while *Media Centre Belgrade, Novi Sad School of Journalism* and *ANEM* are most highly regarded in Yugoslavia. Macedonian *Media Institute* and the *Search for Common Ground* are the most prominent media-related NGOs in Macedonia (Šopar, 2001) while *Albanian Media Institute* is by far the most important one in Albania (Bejtja, 2001). The most prominent Bulgarian organisation is *Media Development Centre* from Sofia, accompanied by *Broadcast Training Centre*. Bucharest-based *Centre for Independent Journalism* is most esteemed organisation of the kind in Romania (Avadani, 2001), while *Independent Journalism Centre* from Chisinau boasts the same standing in Moldova (Marin, 2001).

These alternative modes of training have considerably contributed to education of journalists and media professionals. The key advantages of this form of education relate to its practical orientation, flexibility, close cooperation with media outlets and regional cooperation, which helped exchange of experience at international level as well. Two already strong networks for media professionalisation in South East Europe are a success story in this respect: Tirana-based *Southeast European Network for Professionalisation of the Media* (SEENPM) and *Media Initiatives* from Sarajevo that gather respectively 17 and 12 strongest independent educational institutes and media organisations in the region. Network members implement numerous joint training projects for journalists and other media professionals.

Still, alternative education by independent organisations has its downsides. First of all, such education remains fragmented despite all the efforts, and this is particularly noticeable in areas where a more substantial number of organisations and donors are active. It is difficult to make any long-term plans and to devise education strategy, which would include all existing projects and organisations, in such an environment. This necessarily leads to harmful overlapping, unhealthy rivalry and, eventually, waste of donations. The situation also makes it most difficult to differentiate valuable projects from those less deserving, since too many

factors play a role in deliberation process. Certain unhelpful rivalry among donors emerges on top of all this.

Another deficiency of these alternative forms of education concerns their next to absolute dependency on external donations. Practically not a single one of organisations mentioned here has achieved self-sustainability that would ensure its survival once donors have pulled out. And this *withdrawal of donors* makes an everyday issue for discussion in the countries of South East Europe – donors move on to crisis areas, pursuing their own goals and changing their policy to given organisations or entire countries based on their own assessment. Donors are evidently pulling out of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina for example, while visibly flocking in burning crisis areas such as Kosovo or Macedonia. Such situation prevents planning and long-term development of alternative education, and reduces all efforts to bare survival. Some of these organisations, such as Media Plan High College of Journalism at Sarajevo, have devised a strategy to develop as an element of institutional postgraduate practical and specialist training of journalists, thus complementing university studies. Small and often artificially limited media market stimulates organisations involved in alternative education of journalists across the region to work closely together.

Naturally, this makes it inevitable to ask what can be done in order to build efficient education of journalists and media professionals in these countries, when known how inadequate academic education is and what degree of uncertainty marks the future of alternative education. In place of answer to these questions, we can recommend some points for action in the light of all that has been said so far.

- First of all, it is essential to finalise the reform of universities as soon as possible so that a new system, corresponding with up-to-date global norms of education for journalists, is finally in place (see Malovic, 2001b).
- Cooperation between universities and independent organisations involved in education must be fostered if more theoretically oriented academic education is to be adequately complemented by practical training within alternative educational organisations.
- It is necessary to develop further local and regional cooperation among all agents involved in education of journalists and other media professionals. This should include opening of existing institutions to attendees from all countries of the region as well as exchange of teachers and coordinated specialisation of

schools in order to avoid overlapping of programmes and to amplify their diversity.

- All international efforts should be directed to enhancement of capacities of local independent, that is, non-governmental organisations involved in education of journalists, so that these organisations would soon achieve self-sustainability in terms of teaching expertise, equipment and financial resources. This however requires the state to take greater interest in this form of education and even subsidise it through certain benefits (cheaper or even free rental premises for example).
- Strategic guidelines of education for journalists and media professionals must be defined in consultation with donors, thus ensuring uninterrupted support to organisations that boast the best project record and have their own vision of development.
- Involvement of journalists in the process of their own education is crucial to success of these projects. It is therefore essential to promote education among journalists and other media professionals, editors, managers and media owners, so that a certain habit or even culture of continuous education is created. Media professionals ought to recognise the importance of lifelong education.

These are naturally only some of the factors of relevance for development of journalists' education, and those are the very factors that case studies under this research project have already pointed to. It is clear though that this list of recommendations is not definite – but this has never been our objective. Our objective has however been to encourage further exploration of these issues and possibly to initiate much more detailed and comprehensive research projects in this field. Long-term education policy in journalism can be developed only on the basis of reliable data, collected through systematic research in each and every country of the region.

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## **Education of Journalists in Albania**

**Andi Bejtja, Ilda Londo and Agim Doksani**

*Alongside the boom of media outlets, a new generation of journalists emerged in the 1990s, rich in passion and ambitions but poor in professional skills. Proper education for journalists in Albania was nowhere in sight during the Communist period. The Journalism Department got closed down in 1973, but even this limited education was ideological rather than professional.*

### **Education level of journalists and media professionals**

Albanian media have gone through many stages of development since the publication of the first opposition newspaper *Rilindja Demokratike* in 1991. By contrast to year 1991, when there was only one opposition paper and only one state-owned TV station, there are now over 15 daily national newspapers. Seventy percent of those are private-owned. There are also five national weekly magazines and dozens of other smaller local newspapers and magazines, some of which are NGO papers and bulletins. In addition, there are about 70 private TV and radio broadcasters throughout the country. While print media scene seems somewhat consolidated, given the fact that printing was the only full gear working industry in the last ten years, broadcast media have been around only in the last four years, and they are therefore facing much greater difficulties.

Alongside this boom of media outlets, a new generation of journalists emerged in the 1990s, rich in passion and ambitions but poor in professional skills. Proper education for journalists in Albania was nowhere in sight during the Communist period. The Journalism Department got closed down in 1973, but even this limited education was ideological rather than professional.

In early 2001 the research department of Albanian Media Institute did an extensive research project on broadcast and print media situation in Albania in 2000. Among other data collected in the course of research, researches assessed the education level of journalists working in the print and broadcast media. According to this survey, carried out with assistance of directors of the broadcast media and publishers, there were 1,366 journalists working in Albania last year. Out of these, only 8.2% held the BA degree of the Department

of Journalism. At the same time, the percentage of journalists who had completed postgraduate education (usually not related to journalism) is as low as 0.07. The percentage of working journalists with only high school diplomas is 0.06. This percentage tends to be higher for local media outside Tirana, which in most of the cases have very small newsrooms and work with limited staff. According to the same survey, more than half of the interviewed journalists have gone through different training courses run by *Albanian Media Institute* (AMI) and *Soros Media Centre* (SMC).

Around 100 students work in different newsrooms of Albanian media. Most of them are employed in Tirana, which boasts the greatest concentration of media outlets in the country. Most of the students employed by media come from the Department of Journalism. Students majoring in journalism often work with local media in their original places of residence over summer school holidays. These local media are keen to take on board young people, as professional as they can be, since the competition level on both local and national media market is getting harsher everyday. This early employment, however, interferes with the progress in studies of these students: while working experience is beneficial, their work without firm background that completed studies provide is usually of lower quality than it would have normally been upon their graduation.

The overwhelming portion of people currently working in the media who have not majored in journalism is a strong indication of how badly needed the training for journalists in the country is.

### **Classical university education**

Albania does not have a consolidated tradition in the field of journalism education. The first school was the one established within the Department of Political and Legal Sciences, fashioned after the Soviet model. This school lasted for ten years to be succeeded later on by different kinds of courses, taught by the very same teachers.

The new school, part of the Department of History and Philology, was opened in 1992. Its foundation was perceived as a necessity due to rapidly increasing number of newspapers of different orientations and profiles, and their desperate need for new journalists. As in other post-communist countries, the Albanian press during the transition period has experienced gradual transformation from propagandistic journalism to informative. Journalism now tends to be a business and, as such, it aspires for professionalism.

*The School at the Department of History and Philology*, the only journalism school in the university system for the time being, has so far produced six generations of journalists.

Meanwhile, a great part of the current students are employed in various media outlets. More than 100 students from Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro are currently enrolled. Over 30% of the students cover a significant share of work in Albanian newspapers, magazines, radio and TV broadcasters.

The Department employs 6 full-time teachers. The remainder of the departmental staff consists of visiting lecturers. In addition, a US instructor is affiliated with the Department, teaching the allocated courses. There is only one classroom, which can conditionally be termed a computer lab. That is where the writing classes are taught and the *Reporteri*, student newspaper, is done. There is also one teachers' office. The department-owned equipment includes: 15 computers, four printers, one scanner, one computer for layout practising, one TV set, videos and cameras, few books in English and even fewer in Albanian. As humble as it is, even this lab had to come as a donation from AMI, IREX, IOM, and Press Now.

Considering that these facilities are insufficient for regular practice by students, other modalities have been sought, mainly through TVSH (Albanian Public TV), *Radio Ime* and Albanian Media Institute.

With regard to the relationship between practical and theoretical education, theory and practice are well interwoven in those more practical courses (News Writing; News Reporting; Media Analysis; Media Ethics; Radio Journalism; TV Journalism; Editing; Comment/Analysis; Professional Practice (working on *Reporteri* newspaper); Editorials; Photojournalism; Investigative Journalism). The course opens up with a theoretical introduction (a 2-hours class) whereupon the class splits up into smaller groups that then work on application of theoretical elements in practice. Practical education sometimes also includes joint broadcast productions, as is the case with the private radio station, Radio Ime, that airs live news prepared by the students.

However, insufficient technical capacities remain an obstacle to continuous practical exercises by students despite inventiveness of their teachers, who organise practical classes outside the Department.

Another fact worth mentioning is that a number of students work at different newsrooms of print and broadcast media, but this practice has its downside as well as advantages. The advantage of working in these media is that the students become familiar with the job and its various techniques and in so doing they gain experience and professional

skills. On the other hand, there is the risk of obtaining 'deformed' *ad hoc* knowledge, which is not based on sound theoretical foundations.

There are many problems and difficulties, but one to be noted is certainly the scarcity of practical experience. Class attendance is a real problem since many of journalism students already work for various print and broadcast media. This is accompanied by the lack of a specialised staff and technical resources, no postgraduate studies and last but not the least - a tremendous scarcity of relevant literature in foreign languages, but especially in Albanian. Publications on mass media and related issues are extremely few. The fact that the situation in the newsrooms of various media outlets where a considerable number of students work differs significantly from the one depicted by lectures at school leads students to experience difficulty in applying the knowledge acquired. However, it can be said that students do possess basic journalism skills and clear professional orientation upon their graduation.

### **Alternative forms of education**

Albania of the day is not abounding with organisations providing alternative forms of education in addition to training offered by the Department of Journalism at the University of Tirana. The only organisation offering continuous training for journalists at the moment is the Albanian Media Institute (AMI). This non-profit, non-governmental organisation emerged from the merger of two mother-organisations, the previous Albanian Media Institute and the Soros Media Centre (SMC) that decided to join forces in April 2001. These two organisations had been the main actors in the field of training for media professionals during the first decade of transition.

*Albanian Media Institute* (AMI) and SMC used to implement various joint projects in order to avoid overlapping. In this way, AMI and SMC acted complementary prior to their merger: AMI had been more active in Radio Training while SMC focused on TV training. Their collaboration stretched to print media projects as well.

AMI was registered as an NGO in December 1995 upon an agreement between the *Albanian League of Journalists* and the *Association of Professional Journalists*. At the beginning AMI was funded by the *Danish School of Journalism* through a grant of the Danish Government (DANIDA). After that AMI received a grant from UNESCO, which aimed at setting up a digital radio studio to be used as a training facility for radio journalists.

The main objective of AMI is development of professional standards of journalism and support to free and independent media in Albania. AMI has organised numerous training

courses, seminars, roundtables, conferences and research projects with these objectives in mind.

The *Soros Foundation* through its *Media Centre*, established in 1993, strongly supported but also initiated training of journalists abroad and in the country, and publication of books on Albanian media. Soros Media Centre (SMC) organised hundreds of professional training courses for operators, sound technicians, cameramen, mostly held at the SMC premises where a fully equipped TV studio was located. Extensive collaboration with BBC and Deutsche Welle allowed SMC to organise a training with Albanian trainers, especially those from broadcasting media. SMC has continuously facilitated improvement and preparation of media legislation in Albania, and it has also organised workshops focused on media legislation issues. All this experience of working with and for Albanian media enabled SMC to produce a database on Albanian media between 1993 and 1998.

AMI nowadays possesses high-quality training facilities (complete radio & TV studios, Internet connection) as well as didactic materials available in the Institute's library. This enhances its possibility to implement various projects of practical nature rather than purely theoretical programs.

It is important to note that there are no independent schools offering continuous training for journalists. Although there are sporadic courses or seminars run by different organisations, none of them offers consistent and continuous education.

AMI does organise frequent training and systematic courses aimed at further professionalization of journalists, but this form of education lacks the continuity and degree-awarding nature of the university system. However, it offers an alternative to university-sponsored education. The courses are taught mainly by renown and experienced foreign journalists, PR and IT experts, etc. Another advantage of these courses/seminars/workshops is discussion which they inspire among participants, something that Albanian education has always lacked.

In this regard, the Institute has always aspired to form teams of local trainers so that training becomes more convenient and accessible, and thus more frequent in the future. For instance, one of the most successful projects implemented by AMI and *Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development* is the Radio Training Project, which resulted in the creation of a team of local radio trainers. These trainers can now be considered fully qualified to tutor

local radio journalists, and they are available all the time, without dependence upon foreign experts for satisfaction of media training needs in the country.

Funding-wise, Albanian Media Institute remains dependent on external sources. Since this organisation is both non-government and non-profit, support from other organisations or governments is and will be crucial for the future of its training activities.

By contrast, the Soros Media Centre has been a branch of the Open Society Foundation and as such has benefited from funding provided by its overarching foundation. However, now that the two main training institutions have merged, they will operate under the principles of Albanian Media Institute so far, namely – near to full dependence on external support.

It is important to point out that official state institutions have provided no support whatsoever to projects and training run by AMI and SMC. As a matter of fact, support runs the other way: the University of Tirana or, more specifically its Department of Journalism, has been donated equipment by these two non-governmental organisations. However, the faculty staff has always readily taken part in various projects implemented by Albanian Media Institute and Soros Media Centre.

### **International donors, non-government organisations and education of journalists**

As already pointed out, international donors have played a crucial role in the education of journalists done by training centres in the country. Nowadays, six years since the foundation of AMI and eight years of SMC's operation, these two organisations, now merged together as AMI, have relatively stable partners for different projects and training courses aimed at media development in general and education of journalists in particular.

This long-lasting cooperation is an indication that long-term strategy has been designed and implemented. This is especially true for the cases where training was devised to source a team of local trainers who could then pass on their knowledge and skills to local journalists. For example, trainers in different fields have emerged from the activities of the *South East European Network for Professionalization of the Media Network* (SEENPM). In a broader sense, these particular activities constitute a test of validity and success of training projects organised by, and with the support of, international donors, and consequently probe their long-term strategy. On a finer note, a new trend seems to be taking over in the relationship between local training organisations and their international donors. While international donors used to be the ones to have the last say on the form of projects, methods

and target, their requirements and recommendations now tend to be more relaxed, transferring more real power (and implicitly trust) to locally based training institutions. This new trend is a natural product of successful long-standing cooperation among international donors, implementing centres and local media organisations that have for years now enjoyed good and mutually beneficial relationship.

This tendency indicates the increasing confidence of international donors towards their local partners, as well as further strengthening and consolidation of the latter. These organisations are gradually assuming more responsibilities related to the designation of different projects. Already quoted example of the team of radio trainers illustrates this tendency rather well: their skills and knowledge will be tested during the second phase of the project. AMI has been given a considerably great freedom to determine the shape and target of the project. During the following phase they will do *in-house* training for several local radios. In this way, besides transferring their knowledge to the others, the team of trainers will hopefully start to establish a tradition of continuous training, independent of the presence of foreign experts.

### **How local media and journalists perceive education programs**

For many understandable reasons, training activities tend to be primarily located in Tirana. Consequently, primary beneficiaries are Tirana-based journalists. Local media outlets outside the capital are constantly plagued by severe economic conditions, lack of proper equipment, and fierce competition by both national and Tirana-based media. Struggling with these problems, while lacking proper organisation, contacts and funding for training activities, local media are constantly dependent on national training institutes based in Tirana. These institutes invite local media representatives to participate in different courses and workshops whenever possible. For example, during the electoral campaign for local elections last year IREX started encouraging and supporting local media to air open debates among election candidates. *Press Now* has also supported publishing of a newspaper in Gjirokastra and a printing house in Berat.

Moreover, there are courses and workshops designed specifically to the benefit of local media. Apart from the *in-house* training project, targeted only to local radios, another example of training aimed at local media only is training program for young cameramen working for local TV broadcasters. Equipment of local broadcasters is lagging behind the

capital-based broadcast media, and so is most of the staff using them. In the light of this situation, local media remain a top priority of all training efforts.

The small number of people employed by local media outlets and acute lack of coordination on their part has impeded opening of a regional training institute. There is only one other media-training institute in the country apart from AMI - the *Regional Centre for Media Studies and Training* (RCMST). Founded in early 2001, this organisation directs its activities to media in Southern Albania. Although RCMST sets an example for similar efforts in other parts of the country, this organisation has a long way to go before surmounting all immediate difficulties and getting a good record of significant activities in assisting the local media. Aspiring for this, it will be hard for RCMST to grow self-sustainable and independent of bigger, national training institutes such as AMI.

### **What next**

One of the key preconditions for development of efficient and modern system of education for journalists in Albania is rapid transformation and modernisation of overall university education, including improvements both in curricula and in technical capacities.

It is also of crucial importance to advance projects and institutions that promote alternative forms of education and training of journalists and media professionals as a supplement to insufficient academic education of journalists. Hence future development of education in the field of journalism is inseparable from further strengthening of existing training institutes. These institutes have gained significant experience in training, and they already possess the *know-how* as well as the necessary facilities. They are therefore most qualified to offer alternative forms of education for journalists, complementing the study programs run by the University of Tirana.

Another possibility for advancing education in this important field is to create highly professional teams of local trainers, equipped and qualified of continuous intervention in education of media professionals independently of international agencies and trainers. In other words, building local training capacity seems to be another strong possibility for advancing educational efforts in media sphere.

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## **Overview of Journalist Education in Bosnia-Herzegovina**

Melisa Dedovic

*Commercialisation of the media market, establishment of a large number of independent media organisations, events that marked the previous decade, democratisation of the society and greater opportunities to observe world trends "up close" touched upon, among other issues, the issue of the problematic level of journalist education in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Older and more experienced journalists reproach younger colleagues for indolence towards self-education. Young people are more inclined to speak about perspectives of Bosnian-Herzegovinian journalism from the viewpoint of organisation, material satisfaction and the point of staying in the profession in the current political situation. However, both are united in criticising classical university education of journalists. Problems are reflected in insufficient training of graduated journalists for practical work in the media, influence of politics on staffing and editorial policies in media organisations, nepotism and inability to provide adequate stimulation for journalists.*

### **Structure of journalist education**

The educational structure of journalists in the Bosnia and Herzegovina's media is uneven. There are media outlets whose newsrooms mostly employ journalists with university degrees, but there are also organisations that employ as much as 50 to 70 percent of journalists with high school education, or even trade qualifications. This conclusion is a result of data collected by surveying a number of media outlets. It must be noted that it was difficult to obtain data in this way as editors and media owners generally refused or were reluctant to speak about the educational and staffing structure of their respective media outlets. Here are some illustrative examples.

In the daily newspaper *Glas Srpski* (Banja Luka), 23.4 percent of journalists have a university degree and 17 have an advanced school degree. The percentage of journalists with a high school degree is 59,5 percent, of whom 8,5 percent have trade qualifications. According to data received from the Banja Luka-based *Reporter* magazine editorial board, 44 percent of journalists have a high school degree. The editorial boards of the Sarajevo dailies *Jutarnje novine* and *Oslobodenje* claim that most of employees in their respective newsrooms

have a university degree. Journalists working for NTV *Hayat* (Sarajevo) are either students (most of them studying journalism) or they have a high school degree.

The most common cause of imbalance that is given is: wartime and post-war events in the past decade, brain-drain, impossibility to produce young journalists of good quality, poor financial situation of journalists, circumstances that bring people to newsrooms because they are unable to find job elsewhere, and policies of incumbent authorities in a certain period.

Generally speaking, journalists employed with Bosnia and Herzegovina's media fall into four educational categories: (1) journalists with a university degree; (2) students and those who have interrupted their studies; (3) journalists with a high school degree, and (4) journalists with a degree of an alternative school of journalism.

Unevenness in the level of journalist education and a relatively high percentage of the members with only a high school degree arise as evident in the data obtained through analysing of admission forms of three associations of journalists in Bosnia-Herzegovina: *Association of Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina*, *Association of Croat Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina* and *Independent Association of Journalists of Republika Srpska*. We did not receive data from the *Independent Union of Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina* and *Association of Journalists of Republika Srpska*. (See Tables 1, 2 and 3).

**Table 1:** Educational Structure of Members of Association of Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina

<b>Education</b>	<b>Number of Journalists</b>	<b>%</b>
Trade	1	0,4
High School Degree	94	37,6
Advanced School Degree	20	8,0
Bachelor's Degree	131	52,4
Master's Degree	2	0,8
Doctor's Degree	2	0,8
<b>TOTAL ADMISSION FORMS:</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100</b>

**NOTE:** The structure is based on 250 Association admission forms.

**Table 2:** Educational Structure of Members of Association of Croat Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina

<b>Education</b>	<b>Number of Journalists</b>	<b>%</b>
Trade	3	2,0
High School Degree	38	25,2
Advanced School Degree	19	12,5
Bachelor's Degree	87	57,6
Master's Degree	3	2,0
Doctor's Degree	1	0,7
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS:</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3:** Educational Structure of Members of Independent Association of Journalists of Republika Srpska

<b>Education</b>	<b>Number of Journalists</b>	<b>%</b>
Trade	8	5,3
High School Degree	60	40,0
Advanced School Degree	30	20,0
Bachelor's Degree	50	33,4
Master's Degree	2	1,3
Doctor's Degree	0	0
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS:</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100,00</b>

There is an obvious need for additional education of journalists in language, culture and literacy, free-mindedness and journalist ethics which obliges one to operate with facts rather than to promote the policies of incumbent authorities, and very often even in the very ABC of the profession, for example, news writing and its intelligibility. Of course, we must not forget the essentiality of profiling and specialisation of journalists in the Bosnia and Herzegovina's media, which has not been the case so far.

## University Journalist Education in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Analysis of the data available in admission forms received by journalist associations in Bosnia-Herzegovina on the kind of university degree obtained shows that most degrees are from the University of Sarajevo's Faculty of Political Science, at least in this city of Sarajevo. According to the results of the analysis of admission forms for the Association of Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which contain details on the faculty which awarded the applicants with diploma, almost half the journalists from the sample – 49.3 percent, graduated from the Department of Journalism at this faculty.

Members of the Association of Croat Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina attended journalism studies in a far lower percentage. The Independent Association of Journalists of Republika Srpska did not include details on the faculty the applicants graduated from in its admission forms. (See Table 4).

**Table 4:** University Education of Journalists in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Faculty Degree	Association of	Association of Croat
	Journalists of B-H	Journalists of B-H
	%	%
Faculty of Philosophy	18,8	19,8
Faculty of Political Science	49,3	18,8
Law Faculty	11,6	12,0
Teacher Training College	1,5	23,1
Faculty of Economics	8,7	25,3
Other	10,1	1,0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**NOTE:** Data were systematised on the basis of available details on degrees obtained from university institutions in admission forms of the Association of Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Association of Croat Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Independent Association of Journalists of Republika Srpska did not include details on university degrees obtained in its admission forms.

There are five scientific and educational institutions that provide university education for journalists presently operating in Bosnia-Herzegovina: (1) University of Sarajevo Faculty

of Political Science, Department of Journalism; (2) University of Tuzla Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Journalism; (3) Communication Faculty of Banja Luka, privately owned by Prof. Dr. Aleksandar Bogdanic; (4) Journalism Studies at the Mostar University Teacher Training College, and (5) University of Banja Luka Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Journalism.

Such a large number of journalism faculties and journalism departments is not a result of the real needs of media and communication institutions; it is rather a consequence of the country's atomisation into entities and cantons, and even more a consequence of ethnic divisions in the country. We may say that all authorities, that is to say, all ethnic political structures, educate 'their own' journalists for themselves.

*The Journalism Department at the University of Sarajevo Faculty of Political Science* is the oldest scientific and educational institution of its kind in Bosnia-Herzegovina. As the shortcomings of these studies, similar to a "partisan journalism school" (from either the communist or post-communist period), were noticed a long time ago, the Department of Journalism has started preparations to transform the curriculum which has been in use since 1992. It is being adapted to the curricula and teaching methods applied in Western European and American universities. Using 20 curricula applied by American, Western European, Turkish and Malaysian universities as a model, the Faculty of Political Science in Sarajevo is developing its own curriculum.

Now, on average, the ratio between theoretical content and practical work is 75:25. More practical work in journalism studies is one of the focuses of the curriculum transformation. The aim is to have at least 50 percent of practical training as opposed to theoretical classes. The present situation has been somewhat improved by Internews Agency, which started providing a practical foundation for classes last year. As of the 2002-2003 school year, the new curriculum at this faculty should be fully harmonised with Western European standards. In the meantime, cooperation has been established with lecturers from Europe and the United States, but the need to rejuvenate domestic teaching staff is becoming more and more evident. Due to limited resources in the Sarajevo Canton budget, the Faculty of Political Science is unable to hire a sufficient number of new university instructors.

From the 1996-1997 to the 2001-2002 academic year, the Faculty enrolled 1,424 full-time students and 550 part-time students. In the period between 1992 and 2001, 191 students graduated. Student employment with international organisations and media outlets is a cause of a very low graduation rate at the faculty.

*The Department of Journalism at the University of Tuzla Faculty of Philosophy* has an advantage over the University of Sarajevo Faculty of Political Science in that, being a younger department which has been in existence only since 1998, it does not carry the burden of education from the previous social system. According to assessments made by the faculty's lecturers, some of whom come from the University of Sarajevo Faculty of Political Science, the curriculum is more contemporary and focuses on practical training of future journalists (50 percent as opposed to theoretical classes). The Faculty has been giving considerable attention to establishing a technical foundation for education. In their second year, students take a course called "Methods and Techniques of Journalism", in which they have practical exercises two hours a week. Without passing successfully these exercises, students cannot take examinations. Exercises in broadcast and print media are compulsory in the third and fourth years. Students practice on semi-professional (SVHS) equipment and a modest quantity of professional TV equipment, they edit and publish their own newspaper and have a computer centre which they use, among other purposes, for creating an Internet radio web site. The Faculty is currently analysing the positive results of curricula from American and Western European universities and will use them as a model to develop a new curriculum for the Department of Journalism at the University of Tuzla Faculty of Philosophy. The aim, according to the department's lecturers, is to produce a Journalists!

Lecturers also assess that courses in the field of philosophy, although essential in journalist education, take up a big part of the curriculum and should be reduced in favour of courses on, for example, democracy and basic human rights. These subjects are already being studied in Tuzla. From its very establishment, the Department of Journalism has been hosting visiting professors from American and Western European universities.

In a period between 1998 and 2000 academic year, the Department of Journalism at the University of Tuzla Faculty of Philosophy enrolled 197 students: 117 full-time and 80 part-time students.

*The Journalism Department of the Mostar University Teacher Training College* was established in the 1997-1998 academic year as two-year comparative studies. In line with this, 40 students enrolled in the third year of studies (first year of journalism) in the 1997-1998 academic year, of whom 24 journalists graduated. In these two-year studies, students studied 25 subjects in the field of different media, journalistic and communication sciences, methods and techniques. In the 2000-2001 academic year, journalism studies were attached to the

University of Mostar Teacher Training College, within which they operate as a separate section of the faculty and have been transformed into four-year journalism studies. Thirty students were enrolled in each of these two academic years. The first year of studies consists of compulsory technical and elective courses, whilst in the second year, in addition to these two categories, a number of compulsory general education courses are introduced in the fields of political communication and political systems and contemporary history of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the first year students choose three out of the offered elective courses – philosophy, economics, introduction to political science, general history and general psychology. In the second year students choose two elective courses from those that are offered – political philosophy, methodology of researching social studies and contemporary literature. For the time being, the faculty does not have a curriculum for the entire period of studies. A curriculum has been developed for the first two years and the curriculum for the third and fourth years will have been developed when the first generation of students completes the first two years of studies.

At the Journalism Department of the Mostar University Teacher Training College, students receive practical classes in a very modest way. As these are new studies, there is no doubt that hardly any investments were made. Considerable investments cannot be identified even in the period when journalism studies were operating as two-year studies at the University. According to some assessments, the hiring of staff, at least as far as the journalistic profession is concerned, is quite questionable at the four-year journalism studies at the Teacher Training College. Classes are held by teachers and assistant lecturers who have very little in common with these studies and who can do little to help create journalists.

*The Communication Faculty in Banja Luka* was established in 2000 and it is the only private scientific and educational institution of its kind in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Twenty-three students are enrolled in the Faculty. In the 2001-2002 school year, 10 students enrolled in the first year and 13 in the second. Admission of students in the first year of studies is limited to 15. Studies are four years long, namely eight semesters, and the cost per semester is 1,400 EUR. Post-graduate communication studies have not been organised due to the lack of staff and candidates. The Faculty is financed solely from tuition fee.

The founders of the faculty say the curriculum is fully implemented, especially with regard to general communication science. Most students attend this group of courses. The curriculum itself is oriented towards courses in the field of communication, rhetoric, journalism and a course called "Media and Society".

Classes are based on an interactive study model. The Faculty prefers a modular education system similar to the American education model.

In the first two years of studies, practical classes take up 80 percent and the rest of classes are theoretical. In the next two years theoretical and practical classes are almost balanced. Student training in media organisations, government information offices and similar places is envisaged in the third and fourth year, five and 10 hours a week respectively. Communication Faculty lecturers and professors are mostly domestic teaching staff (around 60 percent). A number of professors come from Sarajevo and other from former Yugoslav republics. Foreign lecturers, most of them from the United States, visit regularly. Most of the students enrolled in the Faculty are from Banja Luka. Their age is between 20 and 30. Several students come from other towns in the Republika Srpska and one student comes from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Some students used to work or still work for international organisations.

Students maintain that studying at the Communication Faculty in Banja Luka is too expensive for the local living standards, but they agree that it offers much more than the existing faculties in the Republika Srpska, namely in Banja Luka. The state verifies the diploma issued by the Communication Faculty in Banja Luka.

*The Department of Journalism at the University of Banja Luka Faculty of Philosophy* was founded in 1998 and enrolls 264 students. Twenty students were enrolled in the 2001-2002 academic year. Tuition fee for full-time students is symbolic, approximately 15 EUR per semester. The fee for part-time students and students who are not financed from the budget is approximately 115 EUR. A total of 31 courses are taught, and almost all technical courses, such as theory of journalism, analytical journalism, stylistics, international relations, and radio and TV journalism, are taught by visiting professors from Serbia. Students particularly complain about this kind of work because professors' visits and lectures are irregular, examination periods are rare, and professors prefer lecture blocs in which material for an entire semester is taught in a week.

Practical classes at the Faculty are insufficient and inadequate. However, in this segment of education, students have pointed out the BBC School of TV Journalism as a positive example. The School was organised last year and lasted for three weeks. Students had an opportunity to learn about TV work and to do concrete journalist assignments, which meant working with a camera, editing items, etc. A number of students are already working for media organisations as journalists and program hosts. They believe that lack of

opportunity to work for a media outlet is a major handicap for students who are not from Banja Luka. On the other hand, professors complain that employment prevents many students from attending lectures and exercises.

### **Alternative forms of journalist education**

Alternative forms of journalist education practically did not exist before the war. Journalists mostly acquired general know-how at faculties, and upon arriving in media outlets they were "thrown into the fire" and either became journalists or left the profession. Practical journalist training was developed after the war in an effort to provide urgent assistance to media outlets in their professional transformation. In addition to this, the old-fashioned concept of journalism studies was recognised. Upon completion, students often did not have a single day of practical journalistic experience.

The most developed schooling centre is *Media Plan Institute* Sarajevo, which runs a one-year-long *High School of Journalism*, organised up to the standards of similar contemporary schools in Europe. The school admits students from the whole region of Southeast Europe who speak Bosnian, Serbian or Croatian language.

The school was founded in 1998 in cooperation with the *High College of Journalism from Lille*, France. It provides systematic education of young journalists, offering a total of 1,014 working hours a year, of which 70 percent are practical classes and 30 percent theoretical. Nine-month-long classes are divided into three trimesters. In the first trimester students learn about the High College of Journalism education concept, ethics and codes of journalism, media situation in Southeast Europe and Europe in general, as well as media genres, investigative procedures in the media and specifics of audio-visual expression. At the end of the first trimester, candidates are selected for media specialisation.

In the second and third trimesters education is carried out in the form of specialised thematic classes and practical work in the chosen medium – press, radio or television – with the aim of improving journalistic and production-technical skills in the chosen medium. Through workshops and seminars, in a combination of lectures and practical work, during their thematic improvement students learn about different ways of covering issues and events. The following thematic courses are planned for the 2001-2002 school year: international relations and European integration, reporting from conflict and post-conflict areas, reporting from government institutions, reporting on cultural events, investigating and reporting on corruption and human rights.

At the end of their education, students produce under supervision of their mentors a radio and TV news program, a daily newspaper, a magazine and an electronic newspaper. A part of classes is held in the so-called crisis newsroom which reacts to breaking news. In the end, students select themes for their graduation works and develop them in the media genre in which they obtained specialised media experience during the year. Students who complete the school with success receive a diploma verified by the Media Plan Institute Sarajevo and High College of Journalism Lille, France.

In order to meet the admission criteria, a candidate must have a university degree or the status of a final-year student in one of the faculties, a predisposition for working in the media, citizenship of one of the countries of Southeast Europe and good knowledge of the Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian language and one of the world's languages. Each year, based on entrance examinations, 22 students are admitted. So far 65 students from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Yugoslavia, Croatia and Macedonia have graduated. The school's lecturers are prominent journalists, experts and university professors from the region, France and other European countries.

The school is a private Bosnian-Herzegovinian institution, although a big part of its costs is still covered by international grants (Government of France, European Union) and Media Plan's commercial activities. Students who come from outside Sarajevo receive scholarships from the Government of France. Education per student costs 7,500 EUR annually. Students' participation fee is envisioned and it will gradually increase over the next three years from 250 to 1,000 EUR annually.

Media Plan Institute has also organised specialised seminars and workshops for young, as well as experienced journalists, editors and other media staff, and a Summer Media School in Neum, which is attended every year by 150 professionals from Southeast Europe. In 2001 it organised a Media Management School.

The most eminent training centre is the *BBC School of Journalism* in Sarajevo. The school is a joint project of BBC World Service Training (BBC WST), British Government Department for International Development (DfID) and Media Centre (which was created by the Soros Media Centre) in Sarajevo. Through the Know How Fund, DfID provides resources for training activities. BBC World Training creates and composes the training program and selects and provides journalism and management trainers. Selection of journalist applicants is carried out through interviews, and upon admission participants pay a tuition fee of

approximately 75 EUR. At first lecturers used to come from Great Britain, but now the project greatly relies on domestic professionals who have undergone training for trainers.

Since 1996 the main objective of the BBC School has been to provide a high quality of training for radio and television professionals and organisations from all parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Journalists who pass the final test receive a certificate of successful attendance of the School's courses.

The BBC School also organises specialised three-week courses and shorter, usually one-week, workshops for journalists, editors and other professionals from radio and TV stations. Courses organised by the BBC School of Journalism are integrated into practical journalism training for students from the Faculty of Political Science in Sarajevo, University of Mostar Journalism Department and Communication Faculty in Banja Luka. Curricula are developed in cooperation with each one of these three faculties and are in harmony with their needs. Target groups are full-time students from the third and fourth years of studies.

Generally speaking, courses organised by the BBC School of Journalism, from basic and beginner courses to advanced and highly advanced levels, provide editorial, production, technical, managerial and commercial skills in the broadcasting sector which are immanent to the Western European market.

### **International donors, non-government organisations and journalist education**

From 1995 to 1999 international donors preferred short courses and training for journalists with the ambition of achieving quick effects in media transition and professional training of journalists. The effects of these activities were limited and in disharmony with the immense financial investments. The international community, which has reduced its involvement in Bosnia-Herzegovina over the past few years, has generally abandoned these short-term training programs and now prefers to develop local training centres and provide systematic practical journalist education either through journalism studies or permanent education institutions, such as the Media Plan High College of Journalism. Still, some international organisations have retained direct influence on journalist education.

Through the US Embassy *Office of Public Affairs* (OPA), the Government of the United States is conducting public diplomacy in Bosnia-Herzegovina which covers, among other things, the mass media and information programs and activities. With the aim of building self-sustainability, management, marketing and production capabilities, since 1996 USAID has been supporting independent broadcasters and print media in Bosnia-Herzegovina

by investing resources in technical assistance, training and equipment for alternative TV and radio stations. Upon defining the annual budget, training of journalists is organised each year in the form of international exchange programs and seminars for a certain number of professionals from the Bosnian-Herzegovinian media. Through media analysis and direct interviews, the specific needs of certain media outlets in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the professionals they employ are identified. These findings are essential for developing program contents. Programs are implemented in two ways. First, each year four professionals from Bosnia-Herzegovina have an opportunity to go to the United States and, in a three-week program in line with their own role in the media, to learn about the work of American journalists, producers, hosts, etc. Secondly, workshops are organised in Bosnia-Herzegovina itself and the number of media professionals who undergo this kind of training is increasing.

Towards the end of 1999 USAID signed a three-year cooperation contract with the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX). This project envisions technical assistance, training and some assistance in equipment and resources and the creation of a more secure financial foundation for independent operators. Training programs and conferences on efficient business and strategic management, as well as provision of objective factual information along with Internet training, are organised within the project. *IREX ProMedia* organises short-term, usually three-day, seminars for individual local broadcasters and print media, attended by 15 to 20 media professionals. The content of seminars covers a broad field from essential journalism to specifics of reporting from The Hague and conflict reporting.

*Internews BiH* is a member of Internews Network Inc., a non-profit media development corporation financed by private and public foundations. Currently, Internews BiH is the official student-training centre for the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Political Science in Sarajevo. This organisation has organised workshops on radio and TV news production, documentary production, marketing sales, management of broadcasters, etc. In addition to training, Internews has provided the local media with equipment and programs.

The OSCE *Media Section* of the Democratisation Department (until recently Department of Media Affairs) is working on protection of journalist rights and their application in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In 2001 the media office worked on projects promoting journalist professionalism, especially projects on correct and investigative reporting,

organising training and conferences on protection of journalists and their rights, training for government/ministry spokespersons, and roundtables and/or seminars for journalists on media self-regulation and the role of media audiences and readers in Bosnia-Herzegovina in creating programming and editorial policy. The purpose of organising this kind of training is to contribute to reinforcing the transparency of work of government bodies, as well as to help establish public relations offices at state, entity, cantonal and municipal levels. The OSCE media office continues to organise training for IPTF (International Police Task Force) and local police officers in Bosnia-Herzegovina with focus on police relations with the media and media relations with the police, their rights and responsibilities. The OSCE will reduce its involvement in this field as of 2002, expecting that local organisations will take over most of these responsibilities and authorities.

*World Bank Institute* also offers opportunities for education of journalists and communication experts from governmental and non-governmental organisations from countries in transition in the form of programs and training courses on interpretation of stories from the field of economics. The goal of these training programs is intelligible stories and reports engaging the citizens in the transition process. The Institute also offers basic and advanced courses, i.e. investigative journalism workshops, implemented by distance learning technologies. A 10-week interactive course encompasses basic and advanced elements of journalism. Candidates independently apply for these courses and finance their own attendance.

In addition to the mentioned organisations, the Government of France has considerably participated in supporting education projects, coordinating its engagement in media development in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the region through its *Office for Audio-visual Cooperation* based in Sarajevo. In this context considerable resources have been allocated to support the education of journalists and media staff via a network of 12 local organisations in the region operating under the name *Media Initiatives* and coordinated by Media Plan Sarajevo. In October 2001 *the First Communications University of Southeast Europe* was held under the auspices of the Government of France and Council of Ministers of Bosnia-Herzegovina and organised by Media Plan Institute. The event was called “Communications – Key to Development” and was attended by more than 250 journalists and media and communication experts. More than 40 roundtables, debates and presentations were held on issues of relevance to the media and development of communication society.

Media from Bosnia-Herzegovina, via Media Centre Sarajevo and Media Plan Institute Sarajevo, have been sending their journalists and trainers to attend training programs organised by a Tirana-based network of education centres from Southeast Europe (*Southeast European Network for the Professionalization of the Media – SEENPM*) with financial assistance from the Government of Denmark.

*Alternative Information Network* (AIM) operates a school of journalism in the Republika Srpska for journalists who matured during the war. Four of these schools have been held so far. The network, which covers all states and regions that used to make up the former Yugoslavia, as well as Albania, Bulgaria and Greece, was established in October of 1992 by independent journalists from across former Yugoslavia. AIM has bureaux in Athens, Banja Luka, Belgrade, Ljubljana, Podgorica, Pristina, Sarajevo, Skopje, Sofia, Tirana and Zagreb. Around 120 journalists regularly work for the network.

AIM's training program is implemented in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. The training program mission specifies that the main aims are to build ethical criteria of independent journalism and writing that foster inter-ethnic understanding and regional cooperation. AIM has a close partnership relationship with the European Civil Forum. It has received financial assistance from a wide range of institutions, governments, foundations and non-governmental organisations. The two largest and main sources of financing have been the European Union and Council of Europe, the Governments of Austria, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland, the Swedish Helsinki Committee, European Civil Forum and Norwegian People's Aid.

The following organisations have also been involved in training journalists through short courses, seminars and workshops: NED (USA), Westminster Foundation (Great Britain), PRESS NOW (the Netherlands), SIDA and Swedish Helsinki Committee (Sweden), CIDA (Canada), Deutsche Welle, Friedrich Ebert and Konrad Adenauer Foundations (Germany). Except for Deutsche Welle, these Foundations have mostly implemented their education programs via local associations.

## **Position of local authorities, editors and journalists on existing forms of journalist education**

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Although independent journalism schools are welcome, long absences of journalists from newsrooms are not especially liked by editors and media owners. Newsrooms are reluctant to send their best journalists for additional education because they have no one to do their work. This, of course, is a shortsighted policy, but it exists because there is no developed media market in which editors and media owners would try to get the best-qualified journalists and send good journalists for "professional refreshment". It is for this reason that education organisers are still not thinking of asking the media to participate in educating their people even if they are "prosperous". Changes in attitude will have to follow with increased media competition.

The position of local authorities on schools and forms of alternative education is tacit more than official. As these forms of education have generally been financed by donations from Western European countries, which insisted on professional independence of the media, authorities in Bosnia-Herzegovina often viewed them with suspicion, obstruction and lack of interest. It is illogical that they have received no support and that school participants have been treated with lack of sympathy even by the media under the influence of the authorities and ruling political parties. In most of Bosnia-Herzegovina following the 2000 elections, this position has changed in a moral sense, but there is still no support in providing school premises, stimulating taxes or subsidies. In accordance with this, the "educational authorities" behave as if this kind of education does not even exist.

Faculties that have journalism departments unnecessarily emphasise the alleged competitive ambitions of training centres and schools that provide practical training as opposed to academic institutions. The position taken in conferences on new education paths for journalists in Southeast Europe (Neum 2000, Sarajevo and Ljubljana 2001) is that these two forms of education are complementary.

The media public is increasingly interested in this kind of education, in particular with regard to preparing future journalists who have just graduated from university. Interest in so-called crash courses has diminished. So-called mobile educators are well received, who go to newsrooms in the capacity of trainers and work with journalists in everyday production.

In the qualified local media community, the engagement of international donors and non-governmental organisations in the education of local journalists is viewed in two ways. Seminars, courses and workshops are considered a good opportunity to go beyond one's own framework, to acquire new skills and as an opportunity for comparison with other standards. However, the impression that one often gets is that certain programs and projects exist for

their own sake and finally die away. Although cooperation of local media with international donors and non-governmental organisations can be assessed as good, they reproach them for failing to check specific needs of newsrooms and then organising seminars and workshops. Donors often do not trust local forces. People of doubtful professional skills and experience or experts in journalistic skills for which local trainers already exist come to Bosnia as trainers. Due to this, some projects were suddenly shut down as soon as donations stopped coming and foreigners withdrew. Support provided by the Government of France is considered to have been successful. It has given financial support to Media Plan Institute from Sarajevo and members of the Media Initiatives network, on the one hand, and the High College of Journalism in Lille, on the other, which cooperate as equal partners in the process of education and have independent programs.

### **Possible paths of development of journalist education**

Certainly one of the most significant steps in further education of journalists and media staff in Bosnia-Herzegovina is transformation of existing journalism studies at university level in accordance with contemporary world standards. This means first of all introducing contemporary curricula, increasing the share of practical training as opposed to theoretical education, introducing modern forms of holding classes with bigger student participation and preferring discussion to the previous one-way communication. This also means procuring state-of-the-art equipment for students' practical work.

An integral part of any education system are educational institutions and projects outside universities that offer more flexible and above all more practical approaches to education. This is certainly true of journalist education. It is of key importance to maintain and further develop the existing non-governmental and private sector dealing with systematic education of young and experienced journalists. These are projects such as continuous schools, for example the Media Plan High College of Journalism, and modern training centres, such as Media Centre Sarajevo – as well as other projects that offer a systematic approach to journalist education.

As we can see, emphasis is placed on systematic journalist education, rather than improvised and uncoordinated efforts of fragmented journalist education such as the one we have often seen. Namely, education is above all a complex and sensitive process which requires long-term planning and vision; certainly not temporary solutions and speculations. In this context, it would be good to gather in one place all information on previous, present and

above all future forms of journalist education in order to avoid unnecessary overlapping and repetition and to create preconditions for long-term planning and better quality of education centres.

The next important aspect of successful journalist education is stimulation of cooperation among educational institutions and organisations, on the one hand, and the media themselves, on the other. Development and strengthening of such cooperation will have a double, long-term effect on the quality of journalist education. First, journalism students will have an opportunity to acquire practical knowledge in newsrooms, whilst active journalists will have an opportunity of continuous improvement through targeted training programs in which contemporary experiences are exchanged and new technological achievements presented. Along with these forms of cooperation, it is also very important to stimulate cooperation among university journalism departments and independent, practice-oriented, journalism schools in order to achieve a better balance between theoretical know-how and practical skills in educating young journalists. The first important steps in this field have already been taken. In addition to the already mentioned Internews, which offers practical training to journalism students of the University of Sarajevo, Media Centre Sarajevo has also started cooperating with the universities of Tuzla, Banja Luka and Mostar, whilst the High College of Journalism is planning to offer, along with the basic one-year program, specialised and possibly even post-graduate studies in cooperation with faculties and academies.

If we look at the specific forms and approaches of educational projects, additional and continuous education in the form of specialised training, self-education and internal work with young journalists whose older colleagues serve as mentors are the most frequently mentioned possibilities in the context of journalist education in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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It is important to continue with international support to these projects. Support should be selective: aimed towards efficient, modern and perspective self-sustainable projects based on local initiatives and capabilities. Foreign donors and professional organisations should prefer continuous transfer of know-how towards local institutions, which should help them develop into educational institutions up to the high Western standards.

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## **Training and Education of Journalists in Bulgaria: Current Situation and Basic Trends of Future Development**

*Bulgarian print and broadcast media function in a strongly competitive environment and under accelerated liberalisation of regulation mechanisms over the last several years. This has produced an increased flow of information and hence the demand for advanced professional skills on the part of all media professionals. The overall dynamics of political, social and cultural changes in the country has set new, higher professional standards and is pushing for radical improvement in training and education of journalists.*

*This survey provides a descriptive analysis of how Bulgarian media people are trained these days as well as the main trends that frame Bulgarian education in this field with a view to confronting challenges of the future.*

### **Level of education of journalists and media staff**

Statistics shows that although journalism in Bulgaria is regarded as highly prestigious profession many a professional is not quite comfortable with technological innovations and state-of-the-art media kit. Nor can media professionals meet the up-growing demands and requirements of their audience. An overall view of the existing print and broadcast media outlets would suggest that forms of journalistic writing often get mixed up contrary to the elementary conventions of journalism, while violations of editing standards and values are not lacking either.

Journalism, especially local journalism in the country, also exemplifies past models and experience rather than tendencies and practices of contemporary journalism and society in general. The reason for this dire discrepancy lays in several facts of journalism: education lacks sufficient funding, quite a small number of media apply scientific methods in management and production, and last but not least – those best trained in the field, would prefer other course of personal professional development to building-up and promoting the fourth estate in the country.

### **Classic education in journalism**

Classic education in journalism in Bulgaria is concentrated in *the Department of Journalism and Mass Communications at Sofia University*, the oldest academic institution in the country founded in 1881. More than 5,000 students have got their degree in journalism from the foundation of the Department in 1952 until the present day. It has been two years

now that the education is structured to mirror the Western three-level model: BA, MA, PhD. The Department offers both full-time and part-time courses, and there have been attempts to carry out training, based on distant and continuous professional education, since 1999 as part of a joint program within the framework of the TEMPUS project.

The BA track lasts for 4 years and includes courses such as theory in mass communications, languages, stylistics, ethics in journalism, history of journalism, social theory, creative writing and text-writing, advanced humanities - sociology, cultural anthropology, economics etc.

After the first year of general education students are profiled according to their wishes: radio-journalism, TV or print media. Their further study is shaped along the respective choice. Courses include specialised disciplines like press-journalism, broadcasting techniques, TV and radio technologies, graphics design, talking in front of the microphone, media language and communication. Once they embark upon the third year of their studies, students are required to choose a field of their future expertise among domestic politics, economic reporting, culture and international affairs. The course of their studies is thereof tailored to their chosen expertise. The completion of the BA degree depends on successful defence of their final paper, which students present before the Academic Committee of the Department.

MA degree in journalism involves another year of studies in the course of which students are obliged to pursue special research, finalised by MA thesis. Students from other departments are eligible to apply to this MA programme as well. The entry requirement is a BA degree in any other academic field, but in their case MA programme in journalism lasts two years. It is also completed by an MA dissertation.

PhD programs require additional three years of study following the MA course. From this academic year, however, BA's also can apply for PhD. The logic is that only a few of the graduates perceive academic carrier and chances to find job if one has only a BA are considered weaker than with an MA degree. By 2001 the average number of BAs and MAs that graduate per year amount to approximately 70. It is not unlikely, however, than the number of MAs will decrease due to the relaxation of PhD entry requirements. The number of PhD graduates hardly exceeds half a dozen per year.

Teaching at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication of Sofia University is done by nearly 50 academics, half of whom are either associated or full-time professors.

Students have access to a TV studio for training, but the studio is hardly of any use for their professional development for the equipment available is outdated. There are two radio studios for training but they also fail to meet the standards of modern training. At the same time, there is a Students' Radio at the Department, and this radio station facilitates to some extent professional development of those who wish to go into radio broadcasting.

Print media journalists can advance their professional skills at the Departmental Publishing Centre, but this is hardly sufficient.

Education in journalism at Sofia University includes several internship programs for students in different Sofia-based broadcast and print media. This allows students to get some training in real conditions. Regretfully, however, the lack of any official agreement between the Sofia University and the media often turns students into 'errant schoolboys' rather than trainees or interns. This considerably diminishes professional motivation of these students and more or less directly affects their professional development.

The Department of Journalism and Mass Communications at Sofia University maintains good contacts with various foreign universities and academic centres. Traditionally strong links are those with schools and universities in Munich, Lille, Strasbourg, Liverpool, Krakow, St. Petersburg, New York and Oklahoma. The Department also takes part in implementation of joint projects under the TEMPUS Program. Low academic wages, inability of the state to allocate sufficient funds for training and education, along with the declining prestige of Bulgarian education in general, acts however, as a major obstacle to future development. Another major problem concerns certain old-fashioned style of training and insufficient practical orientation.

What is encouraging, however, is the reputation of the University as the most prestigious academic institution in Bulgaria. In addition, although university education is no longer free of charge as it used to be up until recently, tuition fees at the Department of Journalism remain stimulatingly low: students enrolling for BA in Journalism have to pay annual fee of approximately 93 EUR whereas MAs and PhDs are bound to contribute approximately 100 EUR and 155 EUR of annual fee respectively. Foreign students are required to pay much more substantial sums ranging from \$2,500 to \$3,200.

Another Bulgarian institution of classical education in journalism is *American University in Blagoevgrad* (AUBg). It was opened in 1991, and its communications studies program attracts considerable number of students both from the country and abroad.

Basically, the four-year teaching program at AUBg offers professional education in print and broadcasting journalism, PR and advertising industry. Students, enrolled to pursue studies in one of those fields, have to take 12 courses in literature, social studies, culture, humanities and arts. They are also obliged to take courses in mass communications, information technologies, editing, graphics design, history of mass communications, media laws and regulation, and rhetoric. Refreshing innovation is summer practical training that all students are required to undergo in various Bulgarian print and broadcast media. Teaching is invariably done in English. Students pass entry exams in TOEFL, SAT and essay writing. The minimum number of credits required for enrolment is 900, but admission is hardly possible with less than 1,300.

Each year some 15 - 25 students graduate in journalism. Two full-time professors teach communications studies, complemented by three associate professors and some other 10 - 15 part-time employed PhD lecturers. The University also runs the University Radio *Aura*, where students embark upon practical training. There are also several academic newspapers published by the students and academic staff. The major advantage that this University boasts over other schools of journalism in the country is its up-to-date approach to education and a considerable number of foreign lecturers. All this significantly contributes to good reputation of the University in the region of South East Europe.

All this however does not come free of charge. The downside of this school of journalism is certainly to do with extremely high costs of study. Annual tuition fees amount to \$10,000. Low interest 15-year loans (6% per year) of \$1,000 - 1,200 are offered to students.

High education in journalism and communications can alternatively be obtained at several other private Bulgarian universities.

*The New Bulgarian University* (1991) also hosts a Department of Mass Communications, offering BA degrees in Public Relations, Broadcasting and Production, and Editing in all media. The course of education lasts from 4 to 5.5 years. BA courses are four years long while MA degree requires additional 1.5 year of studies. Admission to MA programme is however offered only to the best among the graduates by a decision of the academic staff. PhD program was recently introduced, with so far only one person enrolled. The assessment is credit-based where each credit equals 15 classes. The course includes 2 years of general studies. Students can not take more than 18 hours per week. To complete the general study phase undergraduates have to acquire 80 credits. Additional 170 credits are required for BA degree and another 45 for the MA. PhD degree requires of students to obtain

another 120 credits following the completion of their MA course. Both MA and PhD degrees involve both specialised research and dissertation.

Three full-time professors teach communications studies at this department. The rest of the academic staff are part-time PhD lecturers, coming from other Bulgarian academic institutions. Each course at the Department, comprised of 30 classes, equals 2 credits and costs 60 DEM.

The major advantage of this University is its liberal enrolment procedure and qualified academic staff. Main shortcomings include rather crudely structured training courses and the lack of academic reputation.

*The Free University in Varna* since 1994 offers 2 programmes in communications: in Journalism and in Public Relations, both at BA level. So far some 200 people have graduated at these two departments. Specialised courses are offered in sport journalism, economic journalism, political journalism, film journalism, photojournalism and PR. The University has a training radio studio, a training publishing centre, and a training TV studio. Students also undergo internships at Varna-based broadcast and print media outlets.

The main advantage of this university is free access to education. What is problematic is the lack of qualified journalism teachers as well as rather low academic reputation.

There are two other Bulgarian universities that offer specialised education in communications. *Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv* runs a two-year course in journalism. It is open to students regardless of their academic background once they have completed successfully 3 years of study in their respective field of studies. They are then offered minor in journalism. It is usually students of languages, social sciences and humanities, and economics that pursue this course of study. So far, the minor is offered only at BA level.

Practical training is carried out at Radio *Plovdiv*, Plovdiv TV Regional Station and at local newspapers. The good thing about this training model is that it provides young graduates with a good professional start. Graduates, however, need lots of additional training and practice.

*The Free University of Burgas* also offers journalism as a minor to its students. The two-year course is done at the BA level. The programme was launched back in 1997 and some 30-40 students graduate every year since 1999. The specialisation is paid for, but fees

do not exceed 250 EUR for the whole course of studies. So far, however, the State Academic Committee has not officially certified and accredited this programme in journalism.

Training in journalism and mass media is offered also at the *University for National and World Economy in Sofia*. The course consists of 120 classes, and it is taught as a minor to students from different academic disciplines. Classes are taught in the evening or during weekends, and the course stretches over some 5 semesters. The course focuses on introduction to journalism and communications, economic journalism, legal aspects of journalism, media management, rhetoric and PR. Education is paid for, and amounts to 300 - 325 EUR.

The main advantage of this programme is that it provides basic journalism training to students of economics. It can however hardly serve as a good enough base to embark upon a career in journalism.

Since 1997 there is a specialised MA course in *British and American Mass Media*, taught at the *English and American Studies Department of Sofia University*. It is free of charge and is accessible by choice to students in their 5<sup>th</sup> year of education. The training lasts for 60 academic hours and is focussed on contemporary mass communication theory, British and American press and broadcasting, media regulation/deregulation in Britain and USA, and civil society as projected by the media in these two countries. Students finish their studies with a research project, which they defend at the end of the course. Due to their advanced knowledge of English, many a graduate who has done this course ends up with a job at international newsrooms of Bulgarian print and broadcast media. They do however require further training in basic journalistic skills and information technologies.

### **Alternative forms of education**

Alternative forms of professional training for mid-career journalists and media professionals are offered by the Media Development Centre, Sofia and ProMedia-funded Broadcast Training Centre – both registered as NGOs.

*The Media Development Centre*, Sofia is the only facility in the country equipped to provide professional hands-on training to practising journalists and media managers from all media, as well as students of journalism. It is mainly foreign experts provided by Deutsche Welle Radio Training Centre, Deutsche Welle Television Training Centre, the Guardian

Foundation, Fulbright Commission and Knight Foundation who run courses, usually in the form of workshops. Training includes participation of eminent Bulgarian experts, who assist foreign trainers by contextualising the course in specifically Bulgarian environment.

The Media Development Centre has a modern digital radio studio equipped with the DALET, CuBase, Raduga and other up-to-date software for radio production as well as SONY DV camcorders with portable video-editing suites. There is also a computer room with high-speed Internet connection available to 10 working stations. These facilities allow training for radio, TV and print journalists. Courses are offered to both journalists and managers. Course programmes cover development of professional skills in areas such as political and economic reporting, elections coverage, news and current affairs production, investigative journalism, and print and broadcasting management. The courses are structured and offered on the basis of extensive sociological research on Basic Needs for Additional Training in Journalism, carried out by one of the major Bulgarian sociological research and survey agencies. Training courses also build on the expertise and consulting by international media organisations such as the BBC and Deutsche Welle.

Other specialised courses offered by the Media Development Centre include online journalism and English language training for journalists. Tuition is covered through donations by various governmental and private funds. Trainees have of recently started to contribute to the running costs of the respective course. A course is normally run for 12-14 trainees at the time and lasts for about 5-6 days.

The Media Development Centre Sofia is implementing a three-year *Support for the Media in South East Europe* since 2000. The project is funded by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany within the framework of the Stability Pact for South East Europe. This project aims at improving professional skills of journalists and media managers from the region while building bridges and cooperation among them. The Media Development Centre from Sofia is a member of the *South East European Network for Professionalisation of the Media*, comprising 19 media training centres throughout the region. The Network *inter alia* facilitates the recruitment of participants for regional training courses as well as flow and exchange of information among journalists from SEE countries. The Media Development Centre intends to run 33 courses, training some 450 journalists and media managers from Bulgaria and South East Europe in 2001 and 2002.

The second alternative form of training for journalists in Bulgaria is the ProMedia-funded *Broadcast Training Centre*. It specialises in TV broadcast training. Foreign and

Bulgarian trainers carry out the training and teaching, usually as a part of bigger international projects aimed at the promotion of highly professional TV journalism. Courses last between 1 and 3 weeks during which period trainees are required to take leave of absence. The Centre has a state-of-the art TV studio and newsgathering equipment. Trainers from the US, the BBC, and Bulgaria teach courses in all facets of TV news, from camera work to production. The Centre was established in conjunction with the *Bulgarian Media Coalition*, an NGO that will take over operation when the ProMedia programme ends.

### **International donors, non-government organisations and education of journalists**

The first few years after 1989, when the overall political changes in the country commenced, witnessed the increased interest of various foreign media organisations and institutions in education of local journalists. Short and mid-term internships were offered to a limited number of Bulgarian journalists in countries such as USA, UK, France and Germany. The main idea was to acquaint Bulgarian media professionals with the way in which media and state coexist in the context of developed democracy and civil society. All these training activities proved most useful, as there was a clear need for better understanding of media in the condition of democracy. They were nevertheless very formal and generally informative while failing to provide the participants with real practical skills. BBC, Deutsche Welle, RFI and VOA were especially active at this stage.

The next stage brought prominent Western academics to Bulgaria in the capacity of visiting lecturers. These scholars would lecture for a day or two Bulgarian journalists – the trouble with their lectures was however that they were much more West-oriented with little or no relevance for the local reality. They were also pretty ineffective in terms of proactive approach to teaching and made the education process too academic. All this led to the conclusion that a new approach to training of journalists was needed. What was essential was a design of long-term training strategy with focus on practice-oriented Bulgarian-based courses. It was believed that only such approach would make possible a smoother transformation of local media landscape along Western lines.

### **How local media and journalists perceive education programmes**

When asked about education in their field, all media professionals in Bulgaria - reporters, editors and management – invariably agree that current academic education in journalism should be supplemented by regular vocational training, run outside the media organisations themselves. The reason for it is that most media channels apply a certain

editorial policy, which sometimes does not allow 'fresh blood to' penetrate into the routine daily activity. In general, both print and broadcast media function on the basis of rules and principles that change slowly and often lag behind the requirements of the day.

Stereotypes, pseudo-authorities and general approaches thus hamper promotion of modern journalism. In many cases, one and the same reporter covers different social areas and issues. This does not allow him/her any more focused specialisation and ranking with latest developments. Areas such as environmental reporting, reporting diversity, scientific journalism, financial and business reporting etc. are covered by people who lack professional understanding of these issues. Needless to say that foreign language proficiency and adequate computer literacy are desperately needed in all newsrooms. In this respect, short-term workshops organised by media training NGO's are most welcome. In all the surveys carried out during the last 3-4 years, media people insist on the necessity to run practical seminars and workshops. It is encouraging that this requirement is to some extent met by existing media centres with the assistance of foreign funds and expertise over the last two years. This is filling some gaps in the education system for the moment.

### **What next**

It will not be an exaggeration to conclude that journalism continues to be regarded as a highly prestigious profession in Bulgaria. Students enrolling in journalism courses are more often than not among those with highest entry exam scores. The best among them do not find it too hard to find employment in the major Bulgarian media. However, due to the lack of fully qualified teachers, some faces seem to appear as trainers of journalism at almost all of the institutions. This harmfully effects their teaching and assessment criteria as well as creative potential and directly results in inadequate qualification of graduates, who end up training themselves in the course of their daily work or taking additional training courses. In this respect journalists consider professional training offered by NGOs as 'priceless' since they combine leading Western expertise with the experience of very qualified local experts.

This indicates that extensive training programs provided by NGOs and aimed at undergraduate students of journalism boast very good prospects for future development. These programmes can combine theory with practice and from the very beginning will coach future journalists along the paved way of Western experience in this field. Regretfully, however, journalism departments in Bulgaria do not have funding to facilitate any such programmes for their students at the moment. Nor do donors prove willing to give money

towards education of undergraduates. A joint project in this respect could therefore prove most useful and produce incredibly quick results.

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**Croatia's bitter-sweet experiences:  
Education of journalists in Croatia**

Stjepan Malovic

*Efforts have been made for decades to give education of journalists in Croatia some satisfactory structural form, but the outcome is not satisfactory despite tremendous labour, numerous activities and – paradoxically – good results. The reason is almost identical to the general world trends and the eternal dilemmas: what kind of education should a journalist have and what is the best way to provide it?*

*There are two university journalism studies in Croatia today and a dozen or so different regular and occasional forms of additional professional training, of which some have attained high international level. Still, the educational structure of journalists is unsatisfactory, the professional level of journalistic knowledge and skills is low, and constant demands for new educational activities are sweeping over journalism educators.*

*The purpose of this work is to show the real situation and the educational level of journalists and to give an overview of university education and other forms of professional training, influence and presence of international institutions dealing with journalist education, and journalists' views on education.*

## **Historical background**

In the former, socialist Yugoslavia education of journalists was considered to be one of important links in training the "cadre", as journalists were called in the old communist manner which at the same time determined and restricted the role of journalists in the authoritarian and centralised communist rule. **Mosa Pijade**, a leading party ideologist, said in 1955 on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Union of Journalists of Yugoslavia: "...this is a profession that requires not only talent, competence and swiftness... but also knowledge and a very developed feeling of responsibility..."<sup>1</sup>

In the early fifties there was an Advanced Journalism School operating in Zagreb under the auspices of the Society of Journalists of Croatia, and a High Journalism-Diplomatic School operating in Belgrade. Both worked for only a few years, until 1952, and their name shows that their purpose was to train already tested party cadre for new duties. The Yugoslav Journalism Institute was founded in 1962 in Belgrade with the task of organising three-month education of journalists in Belgrade, one-year correspondence courses for journalists from the rest of the country, and a whole series of symposiums, roundtables and other similar activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Collection of Memoirs *Vjesnik 1940-1990*, NISPRO Vjesnik, Zagreb, 1990, p. 196.

In Slovenia the significance of educating journalists was realised quickly and in 1963 the news organisation *Delo* organised a two-month course for field correspondents from local communities. The importance of educating journalists was also understood in Croatia and the largest news and publishing house *Vjesnik* started the prestigious Journalism School in 1964, which produced generations of eminent journalists from 1964 to 1970 who left a strong imprint on *Vjesnik's* journalistic rise.

The founder and director of the Journalism School was the eminent journalist **Zlatko Munko**, teacher by vocation, which is why he was given the duty of organising educational activities for journalists. Here is how he describes the school's results:

"Finally, what one could say about the results of all those efforts? Perhaps that out of some 100 students of *Vjesnik's* Journalism School selected in competitions from 1964 to 1970, only one candidate was expelled from the school... more than 60 students of the school from those years found full-time employment with *Vjesnik*, *Vecernji List*, *Sportske Novosti*, and various journalistic and other work in the house."<sup>2</sup>

The Journalism School later became the Centre for Education of Journalistic Cadre (CINK), while the *Vjesnik* organisation actively encouraged the establishment of a journalism department at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb, which started in the early seventies as a two-year course and as of 1986 it has operated in the form of four-year journalism studies.

### Level of education of journalists

The level of education of Croatian journalists is not satisfactory. According to data from the Croatian Journalist Society (HND) technical service, the education structure of HND members as of March 14, 2000 was as follows in Table 1:

**Table 1:** Level of education of Croatian journalists

Status	High School	Advanced School	Bachelor's	MS	Ph.D.
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<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 198.

Regular Members, Full-time Employment	663	116	900	9	6
Regular, Free-Lance Journalists	291	31	318	4	1
Regular, Retired Journalists	271	55	193	3	2
Total Regular Members	1225	202	1411	16	9
Probationary Members	224	11	108	1	-
Associated Members	47	13	68	2	6

Earlier research did not show favourable results of the education structure of Croatian journalists either. In April and May of 1997, the agency PULS<sup>3</sup> carried out a research project encompassing 419 members of the Croatian Journalist Society. With regard to the level of education, a deviation of the sample from the population parameters was registered in that advanced education was proportionately higher in the sample than in the population, while journalists with a high school diploma were less represented in the research.

**Table 2:** Education structure of Croatian journalists

<b>Education</b>	<b>Sample %</b>	<b>Population %</b>
<b>High School Degree</b>	23.4	43.8
Advanced School Degree	16.9	7.2
Bachelor's Degree	55.1	48.7
Master's Degree	3.4	0.1

<sup>3</sup> *Novinar*, paper published by the Croatian Journalist Society and Syndicate of Journalists of Croatia, Zagreb, issues 6-7, 1997.

Doctor's Degree	1.2	0.2
<b>UKUPNO:</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Although the number of journalists with a university degree is higher than the number of people with university education in the total population, this is still too little for such a demanding profession. The causes go far back to a time when journalists were hired according to political criteria instead of their knowledge and capabilities. In the socialist Yugoslavia, the notorious “moral and political suitability” was a requirement for full-time work which usually tipped the scales against knowledge. But the Law on Associated Labour strictly required university education as a condition for employment, so in the eighties Yugoslav journalists had to get a degree urgently in order to fulfil the formal employment requirements. True to say, no one with insufficient education lost their position, but they could not compete for a new position or post of editor-in-chief, foreign correspondent or a similar job if they did not formally meet this criterion. Due to this, the Faculty of Political Science organised a part-time course enabling hundreds of journalists from all over Yugoslavia to get a university diploma.

New, democratic changes in the nineties and the establishment of a new Croatian state had a negative reflection on the state of Croatian journalism. The new government also introduced a certain kind of journalists’ suitability. Hundreds of established professional journalists lost their jobs overnight or were moved away from real production, and their positions were filled by young journalists, very often directly from universities, even high schools. These young journalists were thrown directly into the fire, which required tremendous effort, but at the same time prevented them from continuing their regular education. The result is today’s unfavourable education structure of Croatian journalists. For this reason a broad campaign was started by the Croatian Journalist Society and Syndicate of Journalists to improve the education structure.

In 2001 the Croatian Journalist Society stopped admitting journalists without a university degree into probationary and full membership. This is a rigorous decision, as almost 50 percent of the members do not meet this requirement. The Syndicate is even more drastic. The proposed new Collective Contract, which is supposed to be signed by the Croatian Government, employers and Syndicate, requires a university diploma as a condition of employment. This has caused panic among 1,500 journalists who do not fulfil this requirement, and even more among free-lancers who quit their studies to work in news organisations, and who now cannot even dream of getting a full-time job.

The Collective Contract does not say in what field journalists must have a degree, but it is believed that without university education one cannot carry out complex journalistic work today.

### **Classical university education**

The already mentioned research carried out by the agency PULS<sup>4</sup> gives a breakdown of the faculties from which journalists have graduated. The results reflect the overall situation in the journalistic profession. Younger journalists usually have a degree from the Faculty of Political Science while older journalists are more inclined towards the Faculty of Philosophy, what used to be called Yugoslav Language and Literature Studies and what is today called Croatian Language and Literature.

<b>Faculty Degree</b>	<b>%</b>
Faculty of Philosophy	34.3
Faculty of Political Science	31.4
Faculty of Law	11.0
Faculty of Education	5.5
Faculty of Economics	5.1
Other	12.7
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100</b>

Although employers do not have any preferences with regard to faculties when deciding to employ a young journalist, which is accepted by the new draft Collective Contract, young journalists are still more inclined towards journalism studies. This is proven by the large number of enrolment applications every year when thousands of high school graduates apply to take the enrolment examinations for journalism studies.

There are two university journalism studies in Croatia. One is organised by the Faculty of Political Science and the other by Croatian Studies. Both studies are part of the University of Zagreb, which is involved in heated discussions with the Croatian Ministry of Science regarding parallel studies and justification of such studies. The aim of this overview is not to go into discussions on the justification of individual studies, but only to present their activities.

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<sup>4</sup> *Novinar*, paper published by the Croatian Journalist Society and Syndicate of Journalists of Croatia, Zagreb, issues 6-7, 1997, and 6-7, 1998.

Journalism studies at the Faculty of Political Science enrolled 2,555 students between the 1986/87 school year and the 2000/01 school year. A total of 581 students graduated by November 20, 2000. This figure shows why the general education structure of Croatian journalists is poor. According to *ad hoc* research carried out in 1977 among third year journalism students, out of 78 students as many as 53 regularly contributed to a media organisation. This means that news organisations were attracting young journalists and engaging them in different media. The reasons are manifold: students are willing to work, they are very enthusiastic, they do not ask for high fees, sometimes they are happier to publish something than to get paid on time and in accordance with professional journalists' standards. This tendency is also shown by the number of students enrolled in the 2000/01 school year, according to data from the Faculty of Political Science Student Section.

<b>Year of Study</b>	<b>Full-Time Students</b>	<b>Part-Time Students</b>	<b>Total</b>
First Year	43	105	148
Second Year	61	128	189
Third Year	39	38	77
Fourth Year	32	19	51

The number of senior students is rapidly declining, which is only partly caused by the difficulty of studies and selection. It is caused much more by the students' engagement in media organisations and conscious neglect of studies in favour of work. The new employment regulations will probably bring changes in this regard.

The Faculty of Political Science started applying a new curriculum for journalism studies in the 2000/01 school year which has been fundamentally changed in comparison to the previous curriculum. Instead of classical journalism studies based on a combination of communication studies, political studies and other theoretical disciplines such as philosophy, economy, etc., the new curriculum introduces far more practical, journalistic courses. Namely, the journalist community was very unhappy with the level of journalistic knowledge and especially the skills of graduated journalism students. They often said as an anecdote that the first thing a graduated student must be taught after being hired by a media organisation is how to report from a food market.

The new curriculum is a combination of theory and practice. In the first two years students take theoretical courses required for their future work. There are also three media fields: press, radio and television, but on a theoretical level.

In the third year the studies are divided into courses. Students select two of four offered courses: press, radio, television and public relations. Each course is very practical. Classes are held for smaller groups so that teachers can work individually with students and teach them how to write the basic journalistic types and forms. One-semester-long mandatory practical work in a media organisation is introduced in the fourth year. Before the latest changes, there had been one-month-long practical work, but it had turned into filling out a form in which the news organisation confirms that students did practical work there, although very often they did not come even close to their offices. One-semester-long practical work is carried out in cooperation with media organisations and editors, which gives students an opportunity to learn about work in editorial offices and to implement in practice what they learned at the university. The editor takes part in evaluating the student's work.

The new curriculum also requires the engagement of more teachers with practical knowledge, which poses a problem because the University is strict on who can participate in university education. Few journalists have a Ph.D. enabling them to apply for full-time scientific research positions.

The Faculty of Political Science has parallel journalism studies. Students from any of the faculties of the University of Zagreb are able to take two-year journalism studies parallel with their regular studies. This enables excellent combinations of knowledge, as a result of which some graduated jurists, economists, even foresters receive an additional degree in journalism. The two-year program is adapted to their needs and is generally based on technical journalistic courses. Some 30 students enrol each year and the percentage of those who get a degree is high. The motivation of these students is also high.

The Faculty of Political Science introduced new, two-year journalism studies in the 2001/02 school year popularly called "additional schooling." Namely, motivated by the low education structure of journalists and the new professional requirement for a faculty diploma, the Faculty of Political Science proposed, and the University and Ministry of Science accepted and approved new studies for journalists who had completed two years of some other studies. In these two years they take technical journalistic courses and obtain the degree of a graduated journalist. These studies are now at a stage of announcing the new school year and collecting enrolment applications. Classes are due to start at the end of 2001. As most of the enrolled students will consist of employed journalists, classes will be held on weekends.

The Faculty of Political Science Department of Journalism has initiated the launching of post-graduate studies called “Media and Society” with the intention of educating a critical mass of new holders of master’s degrees and future doctor’s degrees, who will develop journalism from a theoretical point of view and who will be able to raise the education of journalists in Croatia to a higher level.

*Croatian Studies* were launched in 1992 as two-semester university comparative studies of Croatian philosophy and society. What, actually, are Croatian Studies?

“The idea of Croatian Studies appeared soon after democratic changes for several reasons. First of all, important dimensions of democracy, freedom and the market needed to be institutionalised in the field of science and the university, and more spiritual focal points had to be created, particularly if one knows that a lot had been forbidden and hushed in social studies and the humanities since 1918.”<sup>5</sup>

New studies were soon launched as part of Croatian Studies, including journalism studies in 1996. Croatian Studies from the very start provoked a lot of reaction that has been going on to this day. These studies have been disputed, attacked and fiercely defended, not only by the Croatian public. They are also the cause of a lot of disagreement between the Ministry of Science and the University. Some studies are questionable, among them journalism studies. The first generation of students has reached their diplomas, but the university rector is refusing to recognise them. The fate of journalism studies is uncertain and students are the biggest victims.

The journalism studies curriculum was based on similar premises as the former curriculum of the Faculty of Political Science, which means more theory than practical work. It is indicative that a large number of Faculty of Political Science professors were also involved in classes at the Croatian Studies. It is paradoxical that the same University and the same Ministry are forcing the heads of journalism studies at the Faculty of Political Science to retire, after which they become heads of journalism studies at the Croatian Studies! There is no doubt that the decision will be a difficult one and that the overall situation is affecting the development of journalism studies in Croatia.

### **Alternative forms of education**

It can be seen in the introductory remarks, and especially in the historical background, that alternative forms of education of journalists have been more present than institutional, university forms. This trend continues today. Alternative forms of education, various courses,

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<sup>5</sup> [www.hrstud.hr](http://www.hrstud.hr): Degrees and ways of studying.

schools and academies, are only a supplement to journalism studies and should not be viewed as a substitute for regular university education.

A distinction should be made between beginner courses and various courses providing additional professional training intended for already established professionals who need to develop in line with new trends in their profession. Both are very important and considerably present in Croatia.

The *Croatian Journalist Society* (HND) made a decision, during Days of Croatian Journalism in 1997 in Zaton, to launch educational activities, which have in the meantime been strongly developed and have resulted in the establishment of an interest association called ICEJ, which organises and coordinates different types of professional training of journalists in Zagreb and Opatija. The reasons were simple: the profession was threatened by various forms of pressure, primarily from the ruling party, while new ownership structures preferred young, uneducated journalists who were easier to manipulate and who did not have the strength to demand their earned salaries and working conditions in line with the requirements of the profession.

*Journalist Workshop* was established in 1997 when the first cycle started in October and by the end of 2000 six cycles were held for 200 participants, of which 159 journalists graduated. The participants were young journalists aged 25 to 35 working full-time or freelancing for different Croatian news agencies. News agencies were equally represented in terms of size, ownership and editorial policy, as well as geographically.

The lecturers were eminent local and foreign journalists, journalism professors and media experts. More than 80 lecturers participated in the six workshops held so far, of which some participated in all six, while others, mostly foreigners, in one or more.

The workshops were sponsored by international media institutions, among which we must underline Press Now, Open Society Croatia, European Union, IREX ProMedia, The Freedom Forum, Embassy of Germany and Embassy of France in Croatia, and others. Thanks to donations and HND efforts, the classroom used by the Journalist Workshop is today state-of-the-art, computerised and equipped with all equipment required for contemporary classes.

The curriculum was constantly developed, but the backbone remained the same: learning how to get information, writing news and reports, interviewing, editing and selection, using computers and the Internet, ethics, legal regulations and relations with authorities.

Unfortunately, international assistance has dried up and young Croatian journalists still do not have a financial status strong enough to afford to pay for additional training themselves. This is why the workshop was not held in 2001.

*The International Centre for Education of Journalists (ICEJ)* was founded in 1998 as a joint project of the Opatija City Council, Open Society Institute Croatia and the HND. It has organised 80 different gatherings so far in which around 1,000 journalists from the country and abroad participated. Due to the quality of its courses and seminars, the ICEJ has become attractive for numerous international institutions, such as Thomson Foundation, High College of Journalism from Lille, BBC Training Trust, European Journalism Centre, Council of Europe, EBU and others.

The ICEJ organises journalism courses for young journalists, but a big part of its activities is intended for professional journalists who receive professional training in the application of new professional knowledge and skills, such as investigative journalism, application of computers in journalism, court reporting, digital photography and other topics. Lecturers are foreign and local experts, usually prominent journalists or journalism professors.

In addition to this, the ICEJ organises roundtables, public panels and international gatherings on key media and journalism issues, such as ethics, media freedom, relations between the state and media, war reporting, media and science, and others.

Eminent international institutions such as The Freedom Forum, European Broadcasting Union (EBU) and Regional Journalist Association for Central Europe (ZEUG), have organised their gatherings in cooperation with the ICEJ.

The ICEJ is one of the founders of the South East European Network for Professionalization of the Media (SEEPNM), a network of 19 media training centres from 10 countries in the region, which operates with support of the Government of Denmark, Open Society Institute Regional Office, Government of Switzerland and other media donors. The SEEPNM organised a series of 40 different courses over a two-year period for journalists from the whole region.

*EuropaPress Holding*, the largest private publishing company in Croatia which publishes about 10 very successful newspapers, such as *Jutarnji List*, *Globus*, *Glorija*, *Arena*, *Playboy*, *Cosmopolitan* and others, decided in 2001 to start its own school to ensure an influx of new, good journalists.

The Journalism Academy curriculum was based partly on earlier highly regarded programs of the Workshop for Journalists organised by the Croatian Journalist Society and educational programs of the International Centre for Education of Journalists (ICEJ) in Opatija. However, as this is the first time a journalism school was opened for a particular media company, its curriculum was adapted to its needs and developed with EPH officials.

The main goal of the Workshop's three months of work is to provide professional training for young journalists to enable them to start working for EPH news agencies. In the second part of the program, Academy students are supposed to use their newly acquired knowledge during one-month-long practical work under the supervision of older colleagues – mentors.

The procedure of recruiting journalists was a very important and sensitive issue. The procedure was public, transparent and open. The fact that a large number of candidates applied for the workshop admission exam showed how much interest there is in journalism. The requirements (fourth year students from different faculties of the University of Zagreb or candidates who already have a university degree) were met by around 180 applicants. Most of them took the written part of the admission exam. After the first round of exams to test the applicants' general knowledge, in addition to journalism knowledge and skills, 45 most successful candidates were selected. After that each candidate was interviewed. Although the selection process was not easy, the committee members selected 24 best candidates.

The Journalism Academy lasted 120 working hours, classes were three months long and were held twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. The Academy was held at the computer-equipped journalist workshop of the Croatian Journalist Society.

The school consisted of theoretical and practical work. Theoretical work was based on practical knowledge and journalistic skills, taught by experienced journalists working for *EuropaPress Holding*. Practical work consisted of constant writing, exercises and rewriting to polish up the ability to write the basic journalistic types.

The topics covered by the school are: news sources, news writing, reporting, interviewing techniques, investigative journalism, basic editing and selection, functioning of newspapers, Internet as a source of information, use of information technologies in journalism, creating data bases, legal regulations, how to avoid court suits, journalism ethics, relations with spokespersons and authorities. Advisories were prepared for students about the topic discussed each day for each thematic unit.

Twenty-one students completed the Academy successfully. All of them got a work contract or scholarship to complete their studies. A new generation starts classes at the end of 2001. The EPH is also launching a number of courses for additional professional training of journalists.

*An Inter-Regional Journalist Workshop* was launched in the second half of 1997 and lasted until March of 2000. It was attended by about 100 young journalists – Croats and Serbs – who learned the basic journalistic forms and at the same time had an opportunity to establish contacts broken by the war and to start to coexist on new foundations.

At the beginning of 2000 a new cycle was launched, encompassing some 20 journalists from Croatia, Vojvodina and northeast Bosnia. The first two cycles were held in Osijek, the third is being held right now in Tuzla, at the University of Tuzla Faculty of Philosophy Journalism Department, and the fourth will be held in Novi Sad. Lecturers come from all three regions and the program lasts six weekends with 120 school classes.

Young journalists, in addition to acquiring basic journalistic knowledge, also have an opportunity to develop good inter-regional cooperation, which is already evident in the media. The workshop is financed by the *Alternative Information Network* (AIM) and Council of Europe, local authorities and journalist associations.

### **International donors, non-governmental organisations and journalist education**

A large part of alternative forms of education of journalists could not have been held without abundant assistance from international donors. Unfortunately, or fortunately, this kind of assistance temporary and mostly depends on the internal political situation in a country. The international public redirects its attention from one crisis point to another. Crisis points determine international assistance. While Croatia was threatened by war and subjected to pressure from Tudjman's authoritative regime, assistance was arriving. The crisis then moved to Bosnia, and then to Kosovo and Montenegro, and with the fall of Milosevic, to Yugoslavia. Now Macedonia is in the limelight, but they have all been overshadowed by Afghanistan after September 11, 2001.

As the crisis point moves, the usual, stereotype approaches appear. International donor institutions very often do not acknowledge local specifics and try to impose quick solutions that have been tested in different cultural communities. They often seek rapid results and time is measured by the budget year. It is nice to show in the annual report that the money spent resulted in visible progress in the media. Unfortunately, nothing changes overnight, especially

the professional level of journalism. Education gives results in the long run, but these are far-reaching results that are successful in the long run. Donors have no patience for mid-term and long-term plans and insist on quick, and often insufficiently developed solutions. Mistakes are therefore frequent and the remedy used is to withdraw resources instead of changing the strategy. Huge resources have been spent in Croatia to start the informative-political paper *Tjednik*, although local experts warned the investment was unjustified. A big investment in OBN television in Bosnia-Herzegovina did not fare any better.

Very often donors maintain that a change of the ruling political party and fall of an authoritarian regime is enough in itself to improve the situation in the media. Croatian and Yugoslav experiences speak differently. But in Croatia donors such as Press Now have withdrawn considering their work done. It is symptomatic that new international initiatives have been started, such as the Southeast Europe Stability Pact, which were pompously announced but their results have been insignificant.

Some eminent and important donors such as Soros are changing their concept and redirecting their activities and new donors are rarely coming.

There is no doubt that international assistance cannot last forever and that a long-term solution is possible only by relying on one's own forces. Still, the general economic situation is such that it is difficult to organise educational activities on the basis of self-financing. This is almost impossible even in world relations. The majority of international educational media institutions enjoy strong financial support.

On the other hand, there have been many attempts of abuse of international donations, sale of false projects, failure to carry out contractual obligations, poor results in project implementation, etc. It is evident that the stabilisation of the situation is leading to a new era of serious and professional work as only that can justify international assistance.

### **What local media and journalists think about education programs**

Croatian journalists clearly expressed their position on education at their annual assembly in 1997. Most educational activities were launched after this clear expression of views. Due to the great importance of additional professional training and education of journalists, as well as insufficient information on what the profession thinks about this, the author of this article carried out a research among participants in the annual assembly of the Croatian Journalist Society held in October 1998 in Opatija.

The respondents were unanimous in answering the first question: “Do you think Croatian journalists need additional professional training?” There was no dilemma – without additional professional training there can be no professional progress. When asked to select a grade between 1 and 5 to answer this question, the respondents marked the need for additional professional training with 4.7.

The surveyed journalists were also unanimous in answering the second question: “Are you satisfied with the current opportunities for additional professional training of journalists?” The answer was “It will do” which is the equivalent of the grade 1.7. This evident disproportion between a clear need for additional training and dissatisfaction with the current opportunities will probably be used well by creators of educational programs.

We have already said that there are two university journalism studies in Croatia. We wanted to know what the surveyed journalists think about them. To the question “Are the present journalism studies the right way to educate journalists,” they answered “Better to have something than nothing,” which is equal to the numerical grade of 1.9 on a scale of 1 to 5. Asked to rate the two studies, the one at the Faculty of Political Science fared better with the grade 1.6, while journalism studies at Croatian Studies were graded 1.3. We were interested to know if journalists think some other forms of university education should be introduced. The following answers were offered: associate college of journalism; post-graduate studies; advanced school of journalism; and something else (list what).

The answer was surprising: post-graduate studies. After such clearly expressed dissatisfaction with the existing journalism studies, we expected a different solution. However, the journalists only selected a higher level of the existing education system. But analysis of respondents established that the majority of them have a university degree (as many as 28), that they have more than 20 years of work experience, and that they have a bigger natural need to continue their education. Journalists showed interest in obtaining a master’s degree, especially now that there are no longer appropriate post-graduate studies in Croatia. This is evidently a void that should be filled and this is how we should view the answer to the question of what other forms of education the journalists want. An associate college and an advanced journalism school did not appear to be attractive for journalist education.

### **What next**

The development directions of education of journalists in Croatia, despite evident difficulties, are clearly marked: a combination of university education and additional

professional training gives the best result. In introducing classes one should rely on proven local forces, but at the same time international experts should be used in order to maintain contact with journalistically more developed communities. Financing must in time become part of the production expenditures of owners of media companies. They have slowly started to realise that a good journalistic product cannot be made without good professionals. And good professionals cannot be found in the street; they must be educated. The present development of educational activities in Croatia confirms this trend.

We must certainly not neglect the role of science because without valid scientific research projects it would be difficult to determine the development of media and the profession. Research of media processes, analysis of media and authors, coverage of issues, application of new technologies, research of public opinion, the public and the economic situation may certainly determine the future of the media. And thorough research cannot be carried out without good scientists, who must be educated... The circle is clear and fixed, it only takes time, resources and a lot of effort to shape good media.

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## **Journalist Education in Montenegro: A Foundation Yet To Be Built**

Dragoljub – Dusko Vukovic

*With regard to education of journalists, as well as other media professionals, Montenegro was and still is a rather neglected region. Inadequate level of journalist education is partly a*

*consequence of the fact that Montenegro has never had a university level school or any other formal or informal journalist education school. It has never had a planned practice of stimulating young people from Montenegro to enrol in journalism studies that existed in universities in the former Yugoslavia. Young people did this on their own initiative, led by their own wishes and affinities. After completing their studies they often did not return to Montenegro, nor did they get jobs in the media based in Montenegro.*

### **Level of education of journalists**

Destructive political processes in the past 10 to 12 years in Montenegro and around it, coupled with general impoverishment of society, additionally reduced the chances of journalists and other media professionals to get formal and informal education in Montenegro or outside it. After all, both the post-communist government and the opposition political parties cared more about controlling journalists and the media than about promoting their professional standards. Individual private media owners, on the other hand, preferred to employ uneducated, even untalented young journalists, because they were easier to please with low salaries or fees.

The virus of political divisions in Montenegro has attacked journalists and their associations and there has been no stimulation from that side for more organised and systematic education of journalists, nor has there been any motivation to establish stricter standards of hiring journalists. Everything came down to occasional enthusiastic attempts of education, financed by foreign donors.

Occasional seminars, courses and other forms of informal education for those who have already started working in journalism and those who intend to do so could not make up for the lack of serious and systematic education. This lack is all the more obvious in view of the disproportion between the number of broadcasters and print media on the one hand, and the number of solidly educated professional journalists and other media staff, on the other.

Bearing in mind the dynamics of appearance of new media and ways of hiring young people for journalistic and other positions (large number of part-timers), the task of producing a sufficiently precise map of educational structure of journalists and other media staff is quite difficult and unrewarding, particularly because no one so far has conducted a comprehensive and continuous research into this field in Montenegro.

True, some data provide a relatively clear picture of the existing situation, which is a result of a 10-year process, very dramatic and painful for Montenegrin society, media and

journalists, of transition from communist to democratic society. One of the rare research projects was carried out at the end of September 1999 by the *Centre for Media Development* (CERAM) and *Alter Modus*. Their survey encompassed 43 of the then 56 active media outlets in Montenegro (press, radio, television, agencies) and 197 journalists, or 51 percent of the total number of employees. According to data obtained through the research, 63 percent of journalists had a university degree, whilst 37 percent had a degree from an advanced school or high school. With regard to journalists with a university degree, only 17 percent of them had completed journalism studies at one of the faculties of political science in the former Yugoslavia.

In a recently published book, "Journalist training and additional training or how to become a poor journalist", a doyen of radio journalism in Montenegro, **Mihailo Miljanic**, provided relatively fresh information (early 2000) on the education structure of journalists in the three state-run media organisations in Montenegro – the daily *Pobjeda*, Radio Montenegro and TV Montenegro. *Pobjeda* had 94 full-time journalists, and 56.6 percent of them had a university degree. (The author of the book mentions a curiosity of one of *Pobjeda*'s journalists being a qualified worker by training.) Of 72 full-time journalists employed with Radio Montenegro, 69.4 percent had a university degree. At TV Montenegro, out of 81 full-time journalists, 69 percent had a university degree.

The latest data which the *Media Institute of Montenegro* (IMCG) obtained through a survey of the majority of the relevant media generally confirmed what earlier research had shown, i.e. that a considerable number of journalists and other media staff do not have a university degree. In October 2001 the IMCG distributed a questionnaire to editors-in-chief and directors of all media outlets in Montenegro which are its founders, as well as the majority of those which are not, with the aim of collecting relevant information needed for planning and outlining future training programs for journalists and other media professionals. The questionnaire was filled out, partly or wholly, by 16 private media outlets, four state-run/public media outlets, and one print media outlet founded by a non-governmental organisation. In media whose editors-in-chief or directors filled out the questionnaire (of the important ones, only TV Montenegro failed to do so), 125 full-time journalists and editors have a university degree, 29 have an advanced school degree, whilst 77 have only a high school degree. Of freelancers who occasionally work for the surveyed media, 48 journalists

and editors have a university degree, 12 have an advanced school degree, whilst 64 have high school education.

One of the possible ways of advancing the education structure of journalists in Montenegro, and with it the level of professionalism and independence of journalists and the media, is to introduce licenses. The idea was tested among journalists by the *Independent Syndicate of Journalists of Montenegro* during a roundtable organised in the first half of 2001. One of the arguments given in favour of introducing licenses is that the Branch Collective Contract in Montenegro contains a provision requiring journalists to have a university degree. A lot of understanding was shown for introducing licenses, although it was also noted that it would be difficult to implement in practice. The problem of this idea, amongst other things, is that it encroaches upon human rights and freedoms, as well as the rights of media owners to conduct a staffing policy they believe to be the most suitable for them.

### **Educational level of other media professionals**

According to data from the IMCG survey, out of all full-time employed media professionals in Montenegro, 63 have a university degree, 12 have an advanced school degree, and 58 have a high school degree. The situation is much worse with regard to freelancers, as only seven of them have university education, five have advanced school education, and 42 have high school education. In order to complete the picture, we will mention here a conclusion reached in 1999 by researchers from CERAM and *Alter Modus* with regard to TV staff (cameramen, cutters, producers). They said that "among the mentioned professions at state television, a negligent number of employees have an advanced school degree", and there are "even less of those with a degree from a specialised school or university." As far as private/independent television stations are concerned, it was noticed that they rely on young staff, beginners, "who generally start doing complex work without previous and thorough professional preparation."

### **Classical university education**

We have already mentioned in the introduction that the unsuitable level of education of journalists in Montenegro, to a large degree, is a consequence of the fact that it has never had a university level school or any other school for educating journalists. Montenegro started building its system of university education later than the other former Yugoslav republics, and it gave priority, in the field of the humanities, to law and economics, and after that to education of high school teachers. Although we do not have precise data, it is quite safe to say

that the largest number of journalists in Montenegro with university education, especially young journalists, has a degree in law or economics.

In the late seventies of the last century, Montenegrin media started to hire the first journalists educated at one of the faculties of political science in the former Yugoslavia, most of them at the faculty in Belgrade. However, there have not been enough of them from that time to this day to form the majority in Montenegrin media newsrooms. Apart from the independent weekly *Monitor*, and even it for only a while, it is impossible to name a media outlet in Montenegro which has a majority of employees with a degree in journalism from a faculty of political science.

In light of the existing education structure of journalists in Montenegro on the one hand, and the dynamics of expansion of the media community and its needs on the other, an initiative was launched last year at the University of Montenegro – or, more precisely, at the Law School – to establish university journalism studies. The project was shyly tested in narrow academic and political circles and did not attract much attention from journalists, media (and their owners) and the general public. For now, that is as far as it got.

### **Alternative forms of education**

Until the early Nineties of the last century, the most frequent form of alternative education of journalists in Montenegro was classical training of interns in newsrooms. As a rule, this task was given to more experienced and affirmed journalists, usually editors. Depending on relations in the newsroom, and even on the profile of the media editor-in-chief, on-the-job training had a more or less serious character. Whatever it may have looked like, this kind of education did help young journalists to master the trade more quickly and easily and to adopt the basic rules and ethical norms of the profession.

The first more serious attempt of non-newsroom education of young people who wanted to work as journalists occurred in 1993 in Podgorica. Training for some 30 participants lasted several months. It was held on weekends and consisted of lectures given by recognised journalists from Montenegro and Serbia and practical work supervised by mentors, also affirmed journalists. Out of these 30 participants who took the course, the majority started to work as professional journalists with more or less success. The course was organised by the Podgorica-based company *Kron*, with support from AIM (Alternative Information Network) and Soros Foundation.

AIM later, on several occasions, organised basic journalist training for young people with little or no professional experience, most of them final-year students at different faculties

in Montenegro. Training was based on theoretical and practical work and lectures were given by experienced journalists from Podgorica and Belgrade.

There have been other sporadic courses for journalists, or *in-house* training, which satisfied current needs of newly established media outlets and which fit into the donor *ad hoc* strategy of media support. With the establishment of the Media Institute of Montenegro and its inclusion into the *Network for the Professionalization of the Media in South East Europe* (SEENPM), an opportunity was given to journalists and other media professionals from Montenegro to attend specialised courses organised abroad. This opportunity has been used so far by approximately 80 mostly young journalists from media outlets in Montenegro.

Among the more serious attempts of education in collaboration with foreigners is training organised for a number of journalists and production staff from Radio Television Montenegro (RTCG) in cooperation with the British BBC and the German ZDF in 1999 and 2000, when a Training Centre was created at RTCG, and continued from September to the end of November 2001.

### **International donors, non-governmental organisations and education of journalists**

*The Soros Foundation*, which opened a branch office in Podgorica in 1993 (since 1999 it has been operating as an independent foundation in the OSIM network), is the first international donor who tried to help alternative forms of journalist education in Montenegro. The foundation provided financial support to the already mentioned course organised by the *Kron* company. It helped organise workshops and seminars, it financed training programs for individual independent media outlets (daily *Vijesti* and TV Montena), and it sent journalists from Montenegro to attend training sessions abroad.

The presence of *IREX ProMedia* has also been noticeable in the past two years, as well as its effort to advance the level of education of journalists in Montenegro. Priority has been given to basic training, investigative journalism and coverage of economic issues. IREX ProMedia organised three specialised seminars on coverage of economic issues, which were attended by 40 journalists, of whom the best then attended a seminar in Bratislava. IREX ProMedia focuses its work on several crucial local partners, the most significant being the Media Institute of Montenegro and *Centre for Enterprise*.

*The Denmark School of Journalism* came to Montenegro to organise a journalism school. Its students were recruited from among young refugees from all parts of the former

Yugoslavia. It later became an important factor in promoting the idea of establishing the non-government organisation called the Media Institute of Montenegro, which is now in the final stage of implementation. By establishing the Institute, whose members became almost all relevant media outlets in Montenegro, international donors wanted to bring together efforts and money and create a permanent institution for training journalists and other media professionals in Montenegro. Justification of donors' joint efforts, which corresponded with the needs of the local media community, is expected to become evident in 2002 with the implementation of an ambitious training plan – which emphasises practical training of journalists and other media professionals – and other activities, among which training of local lecturers is very important.

### **Position of local media and journalists on education programs**

Due to the lack of clearly defined and continuous alternative forms of journalist education, it is still not possible to speak with relative certainty about the degree of interest of journalists in broadening their present knowledge and acquiring new knowledge. The same can be said of the interest of the media in training for their employees or freelancers, occasionally hired to do journalistic and other work.

The earlier mentioned Media Institute survey showed that editors-in-chief and directors of media outlets feel a need to advance the general educational, and especially professional knowledge of their journalists and other media staff. However, two types of problems appear with regard to this – one is related to state-run/public media, whilst the other is more pronounced among media in private hands.

State-run/public media in Montenegro have reached a stage when they have to restructure their ownership and management, to become public services and, consequently, to change their editorial policy. While awaiting the new positioning of these media in the Montenegrin media landscape, it seems that the present management structures and editorial teams are not particularly motivated to be concerned with the training of their employees. This can be expected only after indicated or ongoing changes are completed, which should lead to the awareness of the need to inject "fresh journalist blood", professional intellect and skills.

As for privately owned media, they find themselves in scissors between the desire for better quality of journalists and other staff and the fear that they might lose them as soon as they learn the trade well, become self-confident and more ready to offer their knowledge and skills in the labour market to the highest bidder. Another problem evident in the private media

is the lack of journalists, which is why the media rarely allow them to be absent for training or are reluctant to free them from their assignments during training.

### **What next**

Based on an insight into the present state of matters and a superficial anticipation of the future needs of the media community, which has been rapidly expanding, and also of the needs of Montenegro's democratic development, it is evident that the *ad hoc* improvised approach to education of journalists and other media professionals is intolerable. The establishment of the Media Institute of Montenegro is the first serious activity aimed at meeting present and future needs. It is an effort, in fact, to build a part of the missing foundation, without which a serious education system cannot be created for those who work in the media, primarily journalists.

What Montenegro needs most of all at this moment is to create a foundation for a continuous form of education of new media staff and additional education of those who already have more or less journalistic and other media experience – enough to feel they have chosen the right profession.

One should be rather cautious and think well about whether Montenegro and its media need to establish university journalism studies or perhaps they need a different, well chosen educational symbiosis, with harmony between the already existing university studies of the humanities and informal education institutions, which would build on knowledge acquired at the university through practical forms of education.

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## **Struggles of Journalism Education in Kosovo**

Faik Ispahiu

*Throughout 50 years of socialism and recent years of more repressive rule under Serbia, Kosovars knew only of state-run media and had very limited access to independent sources of information in their own language. Kosovo had few independent media while under direct Serbian control. Therefore, freedom of speech is a highly regarded commodity in Kosovo after years of repression.*

## **The great significance of the small number of media in the last 12 years**

There was only one Albanian-language daily newspaper, *Rilindja (Revival)*, which was shut down when the Milosevic regime took over in 1990. For almost a decade after that, most Albanian-language media in Kosovo were banned. *Bujku* (an agricultural periodical that was used and converted to a daily in order to substitute the former *Rilindja*) continued to publish with questionable legality towards the Serbian regime. In 1997 the private daily *Koha Ditore* was launched, giving Kosovo some degree of media pluralism for the first time in its history.

In general, Kosovo media were one of the strongholds of Kosovo's struggle for democracy, especially since 1990. Although most media in Kosovo were banned by force or taken over by the Belgrade regime in the late 80's, some very few media managed to survive and in various ways eschew the huge pressure from the regime and, despite all difficulties, continue their work.

Thanks to international support and mostly to the hard work and self-sacrifice of Kosovo's journalists, there was at least some reliable information and reporting that filled the information gap of that time and provided a counterbalance to the propaganda of other media that were serving the Belgrade regime.

Because of their work, Kosovo journalists gained a lot of respect among the population of Kosovo. It was very important to get the information out both to the population, as well as to the international community. The surrounding of high density events in Kosovo also required a larger number of journalists in order to ensure proper coverage and flow of information.

Most of these journalists were brave people with a strong sense of patriotism and at least some ability to write and report. Therefore, journalism education and training for this new core of journalists virtually meant being "baptized in fire". Media outlets of that time had to find different solutions to survive the repression (the *Rilindja* and *Bujku* case), to work out financial difficulties, as well as to train new journalists, whose number was continuously increasing.

As the Belgrade regime expelled all of Kosovo's Albanian intellectuals from their jobs – and as the upcoming generation of intellectuals and analysts had almost no other way of expressing themselves and presenting their work – journalism became a very common profession in Kosovo.

On the other hand, due to the importance that the media played in Kosovo and the whole region, the international community was also giving a lot of support to Kosovo journalists. All this resulted in an increase in the already high number of journalists in Kosovo.

### **Struggle for knowledge**

The continuously increasing number of journalists and a need for proper education resulted in the opening of the first private *High School of Journalism "Faik Konica"* in Pristina in May 1996. The school was established and is run by a respected Kosovo publicist, writer and pedagogue Mr. **Ramiz Kelmendi**, with over 50 years of experience as a journalist, reporter and redactor. School was named after one of most famous Albanian publicists Mr. **Faik Konica**. The Advanced School of Journalism offers a two-year curriculum in journalism training through the six three-month cycles. Some of Kosovo's best journalists have been incorporated as teachers in the school. Enormous enthusiasm and very high expectations may be the reasons why the success and quality of the school are sometimes disputed. The fact remains that the Advanced School of Journalism was – and currently is – the only educational facility that provides journalism education training. Today there are approximately 200 students in this school.

The School offers courses on fundamentals of the modern journalism, ethics, models of journalistic expression, history of journalism, practices of journalism, TV journalism, radio journalism, the culture of writing, english language, photography, the Internet, etc.

High School of Journalism has its own newspaper *The Journalist* and so far 5 editions with 24 pages have been published.

On the other hand, the *University of Pristina*, as the only university in Kosovo, still has no Department of Journalism.

Earlier, there was only one partially successful attempt of starting journalism studies in the 70's. This is referred to as a partially successful attempt because, despite all the political obstacles of that time, it managed to produce at least one generation of journalists. At that time, within the Faculty of Law, a branch of journalism was established. But after the graduation of the first generation, the branch of journalism was dismissed by the authorities of that time. All later attempts to start a department of journalism studies within the University of Pristina were unsuccessful.

Similar was the fate of the only advanced school degree in journalism. The only school in Kosovo that offered a journalism bachelor's degree was also closed down by the Belgrade authorities.

Today, journalism is taught only as a subject in the first year of the *Faculty of Albanian Language and Literature*. The focus of the subject is the basics of journalism. As such, it does not meet even minimum requirements for the education of Kosovo journalists.

### **Level of education of Kosova journalists**

The number of active journalists in Kosovo with proper education and a degree in journalism is very low compared to the overall number of journalists in Kosovo. Estimations vary and there are different figures on the number of journalists in Kosovo, ranging from 2,500 to 5,000.

Although the first impression from the above information would most probably be that the level of journalism in Kosovo is catastrophic, positive evaluations by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, which is the media development body authorized by UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo) and positive evaluations by other relevant organizations that follow the media situation in Kosovo must be stressed.

Kosovo analysts, columnists, publicists and others involved in journalism have been a great catalyst of overall positive developments not only in Kosovo, but in the region as well.

This is mainly a result of a positive attitude of the largest number of Kosovo journalists towards their profession and their high professional responsibility. Of course, extensive contacts with international media were also an important factor, together with the training and experience exchanges organized at local, regional and international level, aimed at improving the skills of Kosovo journalists.

The majority of Kosovo journalists with a university degree have a degree in language and literature or other social sciences. These are individuals committed to journalism who have built their experience and knowledge mainly with the help of foreign journalism literature, on their own and with the help of older colleagues.

On the other hand, convincingly the largest number of Kosovo journalists have a high school degree followed by a number of different training programs, courses and other forms of establishing and improving their journalism skills. Additionally, almost without exception,

all Kosovo media apply a procedure of organizing at least two-week training programs for all new staff joining their newsrooms.

Unfortunately, there is no proper and thorough survey on the education level of Kosovo journalists to provide a picture of the complete and real situation regarding the level of education of Kosovo journalists. However, some research shows that of the overall number of Kosovo journalists, some 5% have a proper university degree in journalism; 20% of journalists have other relevant university degrees; 20% of journalists have other relevant two-year faculty degrees; and approximately 55% of Kosovo journalists have a high school degree.

The other interesting information is that the gender representation of Kosovo journalists is quite encouraging. The presence of female journalists in Kosovo is quite high, especially in media based in Kosovo's capital Pristina. This is a very important part not only of overall development of journalism of Kosovo, but also of Kosovo society as well.

A very important factor that needs to be stressed is that almost all Kosovo media apply a pattern of internal on-job training for all new journalists. However, this is mainly done with the help of organizations that provide such training programs as part of their own media development programs and projects in Kosovo and the region.

A lot of effort has been put into providing different kinds of training in order to enhance Kosovo journalism, especially investigative and corporate journalism. These training programs are organized by different governmental and non-governmental organizations such as: OSCE Media Department, Internews Kosova, KFOS (Kosovo Foundation for Open Society), IREX ProMedia, etc.

However, most of these organizations act in an individual and rather unorganized manner, thus lowering the impact of their work.

So far, *Internews Kosova Journalism Training and Education Center* is the only established and equipped facility that deals with media training – with focus on electronic media (especially radio). Internews Kosova is a local NGO (member of Internews Europe) and is mainly funded by the EC, with the participation of other donors as well (WUS Austria, US OTI etc). Internews Kosova is equipped with state-of-the-art audio and IT equipment for training and is heavily involved in training radio journalists and radio technicians, as well as IT training for students of the University of Pristina.

## **However, the university education is the best**

The general problem with “NGO” training is that it cannot replace a proper university level education or degree.

After the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo in June 1999 and the return of the Kosovo education system to their legal buildings, there were serious discussions and attempts to start an education degree in journalism in Kosovo. The two most commonly present ideas on this subject were to establish a master’s degree in journalism and to establish a new Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Philology of the University of Pristina.

The idea of a master’s degree in journalism within the *Institute for Journalism Studies* at the University of Pristina has already exceeded the initial phase of planning and identification of complete funding for its budget is now expected. Internews Kosova has offered its contribution in facilitating the technical/practical part for students of master’s degree studies in journalism. Beginning in October of this year, thirty young Kosovar Albanians will have the chance to learn how to become journalists in a project that has been designed to incorporate the "best practice" of west European universities. It is part of the education rebuilding programme of the Organisation for Security and Economic Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Kosovo.

**Mike Ungersma**, the director of development and a lecturer in journalism at the oldest university journalism institution in Britain, the School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies of Cardiff University in Wales, who has been working with the University of Pristina for the past year in developing the new Masters Degree programme, says that Kosovar journalists are handicapped in two ways: "Older journalists who learned and practiced their craft prior to the war then suffered from a ten-year hiatus and interruption to their careers. They also missed out on the chance to learn and use the huge technological advancements in journalism made during that period – especially in gathering and disseminating broadcast news – and of course, on the Internet. Similarly, but from another age perspective, the young men and women who had hoped to enter journalism in the late 80s and early 90s found the opportunity blocked by the war."

Unlike many existing university journalism degrees in the Balkans, the programme in Pristina will emphasise practical skills training along side academic courses that will provide an intellectual and professional background.

While short courses and seminars are hugely helpful to journalists already well into their careers, Ungersma is certain that a longer term solution can only come from university-

led journalism education and training. "Throughout the western world," he notes, "editors and journalists long ago agreed that the best source of young talent for the media can only come from universities. Either in undergraduate or postgraduate courses, journalism training and education can best be done in the structured setting of a university, where young people have a chance learn their craft while at the same time broadening their knowledge of the world through study of other subjects, from anthropology to zoology and everything in between because it is all 'grist for the mill' of journalism."

Kosovo is a small area with a devastated economy that will take many years to restore, and the process has completely distorted the media market. "With just over two million people, Kosovo has more newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations than most developed west European countries," says Ungersma and finds graduate studies more appropriate since "those students who graduated in three years would find no jobs to go to in a media market that is certain to shrink". He adds that "the feeling is that young people should have a chance to study for any undergraduate degree that interests them, and then have a year or two of intense journalism training and education. That way they are more mature, more focussed and more disciplined than undergrads, and the subject they study as an undergrad will only make them better journalists with a much broader understanding of the world around them."

The new Institute for Journalism Studies at the University of Pristina will take a multi-media approach to training. Over two years, students will have a chance to learn the fundamentals of newspaper, magazine and broadcast journalism as well as electronic journalism.

The Institute is supported by a consortium of British partners which include Cardiff University, Westminster University and the Thomson Foundation. The Institute will be a semi-autonomous unit within the University with its own board and staff made up of a director, two lecturers and a technical demonstrator. The lecturing staff will consist of teachers drawn from the ranks of the Kosovar media.

The other idea of starting a new Department of Journalism is a little bit vague for the time being, mainly due to financial difficulties and lack of properly qualified personnel.

This report would not be complete without mentioning the need for education in other journalism related fields – except short training programs, mainly organized and financed by international and local NGO's, there is no proper training in technical media skills. There is a need for proper education in organizing, management, desktop publishing and printing,

audio/video editing and engineering, etc. It is a common hope that this need will be addressed together with the need for contemporary journalism education.

### **Journalism depends on wider societal context**

Journalism education is an urgent issue in the media scene of Kosovo. Years of scrutiny by Belgrade have left their scars on Kosovo journalists. Lack of proper education and on top of that lack of proper laws and security discourages Kosovo journalists from dealing with “dangerous” topics. There is a great fear of violence in the journalist community; organized crime is almost a taboo subject in Kosovo media for this reason.

It remains to find enough positive energy and highly qualified professionals, who would bear responsibility and put tremendous effort into developing a proper and full scale education system of Kosovo journalism, as well as to establish a healthy environment and opportunity for professional, unbiased and independent journalism based on western standards of contemporary journalism of our days.

This should be a process of much bigger effort and dimension to increase the level of the overall education system of Kosovo – starting with providing an undisputed education service to society, thus overcoming the problem of Kosovo youth and society in proper expression and accurate articulation of their thoughts and ideas.

Effort should also be made to increase the skills of active and already working journalists in contemporary journalism standards. Mid-career specialized training, human rights reporting, investigative journalism and enterprise journalism should also be heavily addressed in the process of media development in Kosovo as part of the overall democratic development of Kosovo society.

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**Education of Journalists in Serbia**

Vladan Radosavljevic

*For a number of years already, undoubtedly one of the biggest and most obstinate problems in the whole sphere of media and information in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has been an inadequate or even extremely low average level of education of journalists and people working in journalism. This having been said, one must bear in mind an almost unbelievable*

*paradox that is apparently not the exclusive feature of the media spaces of Serbia and Montenegro, but can also be clearly discerned in other countries of the region, primarily those formed after the dissolution of former Yugoslavia.*

### **Level of education of journalists and media staff**

In the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its media operates a certain number of journalists who possess a high level of journalist expertise, experience and fully professional media knowledge. These people, who, as a rule, are mostly middle-aged, for long time already have been occupying the leading positions in the quite large body of media, and are committed to leading independent editorial policies, keeping in touch with the latest trends in the profession world-wide and maintaining firm ethical positions and clear editorial concepts in the editorial boards they run or in the media outlets in which they work.

On the other hand, there is a large number of young people without experience, usually with diplomas of one of the social science schools, but lacking sufficient knowledge and general education, almost completely uncultivated in the practice of journalism, inadequately informed of the area they pursue their careers in, without ambition to engage in further professional education, often insecure when it comes to the grammar rules of the language in which they write or speak. These young people landed in editorial boards in various ways and occupied journalist posts, frequently shouldering their way through to the position of column editors or alleged experts for certain topics. This species of journalists were particularly present in those media outlets that used to support Milošević's dictatorship all until the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2000 and the time of democratic changes in Serbia, though they are not rare even in the editorial boards of independent media outlets that endeavour to exercise the skills of the craft in a professional way, maintaining at the same time their political independence.

There are, naturally, myriads of reasons and causes for the situation as it is at present - for many years Serbia has been living in isolation, without direct contact with the world around, and the impact of such closed society meant a general lowering of standards and deterioration of levels of quality of all its limbs. Young people chose rather to study hard sciences that could open the possibilities for them to go abroad, since journalism as a vocation had been already for long time devalued in every sense, to become in course of time one of the most dangerous professions in Serbia. The career in journalism is perceived only as a vehicle to instantaneously and easily gained popularity, preferably in one of the powerful

electronic media outlets, not demanding much effort in apprehending the fundamentals and the secrets of the trade.

According to the data of the Independent Association of Journalists of Serbia concerning its 1680 members, as many as 58% of them possess university education. However, only a negligible number of these continue with the graduate, post-graduate and doctoral studies. The rest possess secondary school education. As for the age structure, the average age of the Independent Association's members is 46. Following this pattern, we could easily assume that the individual media outlets would indicate similar figures. It is almost impossible to obtain relevant data of this kind from the other journalists' association in Serbia. The latter association, owing to the fact that throughout the time of Milošević's regime it operated under the direct control of the regime, is presently in turmoil, with its internal relations being completely unregulated. The same applies to the Federal Association, which is supposed to gather the journalists from Serbia and Montenegro.

The educational background of those working in journalism without being journalists themselves shows a variety of levels and types of education. This refers, above all, to electronic media, radio and TV stations, in which those who work as camera operators, sound recordists, editors, set designers, directors, producers, etc. are for the most part the people who came to such posts just to fill some urgent need, without any system or clear rules, most often without previously having been screened for real knowledge and professional abilities. In the vast majority of electronic media outlets in Serbia, the non-journalist posts are filled by both the qualified staff – graduated camera operators, editors, directors etc. and on-the-job-trained people for whom a camera or a cutting bench previously meant not more than a hobby. The result of this is very frequently a striking difference in the quality of sound on one hand and the video picture on the other - these are of varying quality even within different broadcasts of one and the same TV station. One must also have in mind the fact that journalists acquire their university education in one school, while the cameramen, recordists, editors and directors acquire theirs in completely different schools. There is no mutual link between them established during the university studies.

### **Traditional university education**

The journalists in Serbia can acquire their specialised university education only at one place – the School of Political Sciences in Belgrade. Naturally, the journalists are also

recruited from other university schools, most often from the School of Law, or College of Philosophy or World Literature.

*The School of Political Sciences in Belgrade* was founded in 1968. The school offers four departments in which the students can major in International Politics, Political Sociology, Political Sciences, and Journalism with Communication Science – of which only the latter directly deals with education of future journalists.

Out of the average 350 who take the entrance exam, 140 students are enrolled each year in the first year of *Journalism with Communication Science*. It has been estimated that during the 33 years of its existence, about 1700 students have graduated from this school.

The School of Journalism takes four years (eight semesters) and the education comprises theoretical subjects and the hands-on training. The most important subjects from the first group are the Theory and Techniques of Journalism, Public Opinion and Theory of Media. Other part of the instruction, which is being intensively developed in recent years, implies a system of tutored training – simulation of work in the radio, TV, print media and news agencies editorial boards. The latter type of classes is held by the professors who actually come from media houses, and who organise their lectures and practice classes within the media outlets they originally come from. In this way the school is trying to compensate for its greatest problem, i.e. the lack of technical equipment for training, like cameras, computers, editing units, and similar.

In addition to this, the fourth year students majoring in journalism visit editorial offices where they directly work on news production, publishing papers or creating radio and TV broadcasts. Many of these students stay with the editorial offices in which they had their practical lessons and as the time goes by they finally get employed with these offices.

Other people working in media get their higher education in a completely different university institution – *School of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade*. This school offers four-year courses in movie and TV directing, camera operating, editing and sound recording techniques. The School also tries to combine as much as possible the theoretical and practical work, but here as well the lack of modern equipment presents a major problem. The School of Political Sciences and the School of Dramatic Arts do not engage in any form of cooperation; there is also no link between their curricula.

## **Alternative forms of education and training**

There is extremely large scope of alternative forms of education and training of journalists. However, in this wide and variegated range of forms offered it is very difficult to identify which of the forms of additional and alternative education are of good quality and really necessary. Undoubtedly, the two most significant institutions for alternative and additional training of journalists that are maintaining continuity in their work are the Novi Sad School of Journalism and ANEM Training Centre.

*The Novi Sad School of Journalism*, a non-governmental organisation founded in 1996, concentrates on education in the field of mass media and communication in wider sense. The training of journalists in each of the courses lasts one year and comprises 200 working hours of practical and theoretical instruction. The attendees are the students of the graduate year or students with diplomas in social sciences, who previously must have passed a seriously designed and conducted admission exam. About 30-40 attendees enrol in the Novi Sad School of Journalism each year. According to estimates, about 400 people finished this school and are now mainly working in print and electronic media in Vojvodina. The School also organises courses for high-school students who intend to pursue a career in journalism in future, and it also publishes its internal newspapers *Naše reci (Our Words)* and *Moj prvi rukopis (My First Manuscript)*. The lecturers at this school are the professors from Belgrade, Novi Sad and Central European Universities, as well as renowned journalists.

ANEM (*Association of Independent Electronic Media*) Training Centre, with more than fifty independent radio and television stations, focuses exclusively on the alternative training of journalists and staff working in radio stations. The Training Centre started permanently operating on 1 November 2000, and has up to now organised over 40 courses for journalists, sound recordists, producers and associates in the marketing section of radio broadcasts. The specialised courses take up to 2 weeks, and all the lecturers are either local journalists or experts for certain areas. The courses are organised in Belgrade, but also in the local media centres located in the biggest cities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

From time to time, other educational institutions, associations or media also organise specialised courses in journalism. Particularly active recently is *BBC Training Centre*, which started implementing its ambitious educational curriculum, based primarily on the work of

foreign lecturers or experts in local communities. However, the Centre is planning to start with serious work in autumn this year.

*Press Now, Norwegian People's Aid, Deutsche Welle TV Training Centre, the Swedish Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Open Society Fund Belgrade, Fresta and Danish School of Journalism* also engage in training of journalists in form of occasional courses. These professional and at the same time donor organisations arrange their courses with the assistance of some of the local institutions, usually with the *Independent Association of Journalists of Serbia, ANEM, Association of Private Electronic Media, Local Press and Media Centre*. These courses, as a rule, last several days and follow a program designed for a specific purpose, and are for the most part very narrowly specialised.

A particular program of courses is being organised within the framework of the *South East European Network for professionalization of Media (SEENPM)*. These courses are also specialised in one area each and are prepared by each of its member centres, while the attendees come from all the countries of the region. To date, within the network, there are two courses being organised in Belgrade, one on investigative journalism and another as a general course in journalism.

The previous experience with all the occasionally organised specialised courses proved ambivalent. Both positive and negative. There is no doubt that a large number of such courses is rather welcome in all those environments where the permanent education of journalists, due to different reasons, leaves numerous gaps in their education, or is not enough based on the hands-on work and contemporary experience. On the other hand, the practice up to now shows that what a large number of courses has to offer does not match the real needs, and that the experts from abroad do not understand the specific nature of local environments, or that the courses are not adapted to the level and quality of knowledge of the attendees. Such outcomes are usually the result of inadequately prepared courses, hastily organised, and tending to compensate the quality by quantity.

The occasional courses for journalists and other media staff have an additional shortcoming, not less significant. It is completely logical, indeed, for the organisers of courses, as well as for the media outlet invited to send its representative, to wish to give additional training to the best and the most promising young journalists. Yet the editorial offices need them for everyday tasks, and in view of the lack of such journalists, it is often

quite difficult for media outlets to spare such quality journalists and remove them from their daily work. In other words, the recruitment of journalists for courses or series of courses presents an insuperable problem for which simply there is no solution at this moment.

### **International donors, non-governmental organisations and training of journalists**

This issue has already been to a large extent dealt with in the text above. However, we should once more underline that international donors are far more interested in training of journalists and media staff in Serbia than in any other segment of the media sphere.

Those who organise in practice occasional media courses are most frequently at the same time the major media donors. We have already mentioned some of them: Press Now, Swedish Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Norwegian People's Aid, Open Society Fund, Fresta, Danish School of Journalism, etc. The donors almost never conduct their training programs alone, but rather take some of the local associations or media institutions as partners in organising and implementing the training in practice.

The impression gained, however, is, that apart from some exceptions, such as certainly are the ANEM Training Centre, BBC School and South East European Network for Professionalisation of Media, almost as a rule there is no clearly visible and defined long-term strategy, and that in some cases the resources are unnecessarily spent or that the donor funds are even wasted on wrong things. If such errors and omissions could be interpreted as a necessary collateral damage on the road to finding the appropriate solutions, they can be tolerated, of course. But, if such a method of work grows into a regular practice however, the problems will arise in relation to further promotion of additional training and education of journalists.

One among the previous experiences could undoubtedly serve as a signpost in developing future strategic plans. Those courses that had clearly and precisely delineated a certain topic, a target group and particular methodology always yielded better results and showed as successes. To put it simply, those courses that addressed a very concrete area of journalism, e.g. the technique of reporting from the Hague Tribunal, or how to write about corruption, or what does the work at the journalist desk look like, were better ones than those that for their subject matter took a general education of journalists.

### **Attitude of local media and journalists toward training programs**

The attitude taken by journalists, editors and others involved in additional journalist training or education was in the large majority of cases in principle positive both toward the course programs and toward those who organised such courses.

However, as already mentioned, most often the problem arises in those cases when a good journalist, who carries the workload, has to be taken away from the daily work for a certain period of time. The editors are frequently more concerned with addressing the problem of the lack of their own staff on a day-to-day basis, than in making it their principled and permanent policy to work on the professional improvement of their best collaborators. A problem of its own kind are the courses organised for editors. In the majority of cases, the editors, convinced in their own knowledge, experience and journalist system of values, find it difficult to accept attending the additional professional improvement courses. The usual decision taken in such cases is not to respond to invitation or at best to send someone from the staff who does not meet the criteria.

The media in the backcountry, where additional training of journalists is even more necessary and useful than in Belgrade, prefer to choose courses organised in local communities or cities of the region.

### **What next**

Within the transition of the overall media sphere in Serbia, it is necessary to undertake a comprehensive transition of the system of training of journalists and staff working in journalism. The higher education institutions, the university schools that deal with education of journalists and media staff must undergo a process of detailed and highly professional analysis of their own curricula, then to enter into the process of transformation in accordance with particularly designed projects. Of course, in this stage already, it is completely clear that each of the two university schools in charge of education of media staff – the School of Political Sciences and the School of Dramatic Arts - must urgently be provided with modern technical equipment necessary for their everyday work in practice. At the same time, it is necessary to make a sound program to address their mutual linking and harmonisation of their work, in line with the demands that arise from the exercise of the trade in practice. However, the process of transition of the higher education media institutions has not even started as yet,

and for the moment there are no signs indicating that someone is seriously working on the issue.

In the area of alternative forms of education it is necessary to extend full support to those who have seriously committed themselves to work in this area. In addition to the efforts and resources invested in such centres for the purpose of equipping and staffing them as completely as possible, it is necessary to do everything possible to secure promotion and recognition for their work.

It is necessary to adapt the occasional journalist courses, schools and seminars to the real needs. On the other hand, the donor organisations and institutions who frequently appear as co-organisers and providers of funds for these courses should be careful to form the level of their services in such a way as to fit the actual levels of knowledge in a particular environment. Generalised journalist courses, modelled in accordance with the needs of other regions where donors play an important role usually do not yield any results, or the results are wrong and bad.

Due to big interest of those who organise additional forms of training of journalists and also because of real needs, it is necessary to establish an information centre, either at the Media Centre, Independent Association of Journalists of Serbia or some other journalist organisation. This information centre would collect all the information concerning the demand for training, as well as the information on what is being supplied, not only in Serbia, but in the whole region as well. The best way to communicate with all the stakeholders in the process of training and education would be a web site, but some information could also be made available in a printed form. The information centre would surely be of help in advocating and promoting additional forms of training of journalists, but it would also serve to bring so much needed order in this area, and would become a true place of a two-way exchange of information, i.e. supply and demand clearing house.

Having in mind that the situation in the field of training of journalists is same or similar in almost all the countries of the region, above all in the countries of former Yugoslavia, it is necessary to mutually harmonise all the activities in this field. The existing networks of media centres and journalist institutions are certainly on the way to obtaining good results in this.

Finally, in making young people choose journalism as their future profession and making them decide to become professional journalists one day, it is the journalists

themselves and their media outlets that play a central role. The newspapers, agencies, radio and television that perform their journalists tasks professionally and independently, are indeed the best vehicles of promotion of the profession, journalist trade and journalist code.

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## **Education of journalists in Macedonia**

Vesna Šopar

*The issue of education or the level of education acquired by journalists (and all those working in the media) in Macedonia has become topical with the advent of commercial media, particularly from 1994/1997, when they became a constituent part of political and economic pluralization of the society. But in the absence of a meaningful media policy, no strategy (or a short-term strategy) has been developed to cover education of the necessary staff in this field. One was unwilling (or did not dare) to think what one could do with so many print (over 300 daily, weekly, monthly and specialised newspapers and magazines) and electronic media (141 radio and television stations), let alone the necessary level of education of the whole army of employees in those companies. There are both institutional and alternative forms of education, although they all lack synchronisation and true knowledge about specific needs.*

### **The level of education of journalists and media staff**

It would be very difficult to define with certainty the level of education of journalists and media staff in Macedonia by reason of the lack of official data, while the media themselves are unwilling to analyse the educational structure of their employees (The Broadcasting Council is preparing the database of private broadcasters, including the structure of employees). In view of an overall number of the media, that is a small army in which the staff with secondary school education is dominant. The best proof are the data pertaining to the biggest broadcaster, Macedonian Radio and Television, which has until recently been a quality “raiser” of journalistic and technical staff for other media (on the grounds of its long standing practical experience). Out of the overall number of employees – 1,658 (plus around 700 part-time workers), 576 have a university degree and 708 have a secondary school education. There are 814 employees on the programme staff (journalists, directors, musicians and editors) and the rest is technical and administrative staff. There are 439 journalists, of whom 280 have a university degree, 30 have completed a two-year post secondary school college and 129 have only secondary school qualifications (only some 40 are graduated journalists). On the other hand, private radio and television stations “of the highest calibre” (national *AI* and *Sitel* and local *Kanal 5*, *TV Telma*, *Sky Net* from **Skopje**, **Radio Kanal 77** from Štip, *TV Tera* and *TV Orbis* from Bitola) may take pride in employing journalists with higher education (partly “stolen” from the Macedonian Radio and Television) but having a much less number of employees. This is why older staff with secondary school education (without any interest in advanced training) is dominant at the local level, especially in public broadcasters (29 stations with about 300 employees). The situation is no better in private

broadcasters (around 100, including Skopje) most of which have two or three full time employees (others are part-timers). The ever more present phenomenon of a “man-radio” is worrying.

In the print media there is no news agency the size of which could be compared to that of the Macedonian Radio and Television. This is why the highly educated staff is dominant in the biggest newspaper *Dnevnik* (with a network of a number of editorial offices, printing company, marketing and art and technical department, three feuillets). The staff with secondary school education is dominant among the technical staff in the same newspaper. All journalists have a higher education (lawyers, economists, philosophers, albanologists and agronomists). One half is graduated journalists. The dailies *Vest*, *Utrinski vesnik*, *Vecer*, *Nova Makedonija*, weekly *ZUM*, *Aktuel*, *Fokus*, *Delo*, *Kapital* and magazine *Forum*, all in Skopje, have a similar structure, which is very important, as the situation in the local newspapers is similar to the situation in the local broadcasters. All journalists employed in the Macedonian news agency have a higher education (journalists, lawyers).

### **Classical university education**

The media staff normally receives education at two faculties in Skopje: *the Law School – Journalism* and *the Faculty for Dramatic Arts*.

The studies of journalism still apply a classical methodology: theoretical classes with a minimum of practical work. Over the past ten years there have been no changes to the studies, curriculum or the structure of professors (most of professors are those from the Law School – lawyers and sociologists). Over 1,800 students have enrolled in the university so far (from 1997 up until now, with an interruption from 1987/88 until 1990, while around 630 graduated (this is why there is a lack of graduated journalists in the media). Each year 60 full time students enrol in the university, of whom 30 pay full tuition fee. The only subject (of a total of 33) within which students acquire a practical experience is “theory and practice of journalism“ (the first, second and third year of studies), except for *Stav* newspaper, which is prepared and (occasionally) published by the students themselves (over the past years). This year the students have for the first time their journalistic cabinet (with computers, technical equipment – television, camera and library). IREX ProMedia has launched an initiative to help modernise the teaching programme (a mutual agreement was signed) and engage

professors from the School for Journalism at the University in Missouri, Colombia, in the practical classes at all years of the studies.

Unlike that, the essence of the teaching programme at the *Faculty of Dramatic Arts* (department for direction, established in 1986; department for camera, established in 1991, production, established in 1989, editing, established in 1991 and dramaturgy, established in 1986) is a theory with compulsory practice (students are involved in a film making and editing). The technical possibilities exist as well (the faculty has cameras, editing desks and other technical equipment). A practical work is done within all professional subjects in co-operation with the Macedonian Radio and Television and the Vardar Film. The procurement of technical equipment is done via donations or by help of non-governmental organisations, while the implementation of students' projects is funded by the Ministry of Culture, Macedonian Radio and Television and Vardar Film. The enrolment is restrictive: competition for all groups is invited for a period of four years, with a limited number of students – 7 at most (up to 20 may enrol in the department for production). The faculty will have opened this year a new department for teatrology – education of radio and TV critics.

The novelty in education is *the University for South East Europe in Tetovo* – study of communication science and technology, which will begin in autumn 2002. That will be a modern inter-disciplinary approach to studying based on a combination of the basic academic abilities and a broader technical knowledge. The programme includes the latest trends in the communication science and a practical work with the aim to educate the staff with a broad spectrum of profiles in the field of journalism, digital and interactive communication, multimedia and information technologies, electronic commerce, interactive marketing, internet commercials, management.....

Two institutions provide a possibility for a further improvement in the field of communications: at the Law School, within Political Science and Communications and the Institute for Sociological and Political and Legal Research (“Sv. Kiril i Metodij” University) within communication studies. There is a very small interest in the studies at the Law School, while the fourth generation of post-graduate studies has enrolled in the communication studies at the Institute (10 students per year with full time classes and seminars involving experts from communications, numerous optional classes, a rich library of professional literature), and soon there will be the first masters of communication science. Post graduate studies from

the field of communication science and technologies are also planned at the University of South East Europe in Tetovo.

### **Alternative forms of education**

Since Macedonia became an independent state there has been no "official" independent school for education of journalists. It was not before this year that the newly established *Macedonian Institute for the Media* (MIM) is trying to take over that task: education at all levels (of journalists, cameramen, photoreporters, media management) and a library and centre for documentation and research will be established soon. There seems to be an interest as 73 media, news agencies and professional organisations from Macedonia are involved in the Centre. MIM is a member of the *Network for training centres for professionalization of the media from Southeast European countries* (SEENPM) and receives financial support from the *Danish School for Journalists* and IREX *ProMedia* from Skopje. Official state institutions have their interest in their work and even in the implementation of certain ideas and projects. As far as journalists are concerned, the media owners are often sceptical as they consider themselves to be "the best teachers of their journalists" and do not respect the training offered to them free of charge.

This is why the non-governmental organisations are engaged in the organisation of a dozen of seminars and courses per year on current topics, for various profiles of journalists, the discussion of which involves foreign and national experts – theoreticians and practitioners. The work methodology is almost always a combination of a theory and practice, while the funds come from non-governmental organisations in full or in a combined manner, with a partial compensation by the media or other organisations – sponsors. There are problems: it is difficult to raise funds, journalists of a middle and old generation often lack interest, while the reactions of those who took part in the seminars are positive, especially if the activities were used for journalists in professional terms.

Nevertheless, Macedonian journalism continually and traditionally cherishes an "internal" training of its staff. Previously it was done by NIP *New Macedonia* (once the biggest and the only journalistic giant) and Macedonian Radio and Television, and today by an increasing number of both small and big private newspapers, radio and television stations. The Daily *Dnevnik* conducts periodical (two-week) training of young journalists including practical exercise (for example, news production), thus "producing journalists" in that way. The training is conducted by experienced journalists (editors) who graduated from the Faculty

for Journalism and attended numerous seminars and workshops. Radio *Antena 5* is doing that for hosts, anchors, cameramen, *Forum Magazine* does that for certain topics, TV Tera from Bitola for anchors and producers, Radio *Grom* for journalists, Radio *Vat...* MRTV conducts training as well, often for anchors and reporters, relying on its experienced staff. Some (like *Daily Vest*) acquire practical experience in the editorial office only, through teamwork devoted to the creation of each issue of the newspaper.

Concerning the relations with the state institutions, the biggest number of participants in this activity thinks there is no relation between the state and alternative forms of education of journalists, except for when it comes to international donors or funders requesting from the state certain participation. They say, “the state is self-sufficient and busy with numerous corrupt activities in the interest of its own apparatus and totally uninterested in any initiative coming from the civil society”.

### **Classical alternative and central alternative forms of education**

This is one form of co-operation between university institutions and non-governmental organisations on the one hand, and between the governmental agencies and non-governmental organisations, on the other. The former exists between the Law School, the newly established University for Southeast Europe from Tetovo and the Centre for Strategic Research (along with daily *Dnevnik* and *Forum Magazine*). The *Summer School for Journalists* was organised for the first time this year for students of journalism and young journalists (20 students, 35% were members of minorities in Macedonia), with the assistance of donations from the Dutch Government and *Press Now* non-governmental organisation. The training was a combination of theory and practice, under the principle of “simulation” of a specific situation (for example, press conference in the Macedonian Government), including the participation of theoreticians and journalists-practitioners (national and international). And most importantly (something that other seminars do not provide), students receive certificates (from the Law School and University for Southeast Europe) confirming that they have completed a course which could help them get employment (under a new Law for Higher Education). Donors and Ministry for the Young and Sports, the Broadcasting Council and the media in Macedonia are all interested in this School.

The latter refers to a (periodical) co-operation between the Agency for Information (governmental agency, former Ministry for Information) and various non-governmental organisations. The Agency, as a sponsor, and the Foundation “Open Society Institute” as a donor, organised a seminar for education of journalists in public local broadcasters in

computers, with a view to helping an older generation of journalists who still live and work in “Gutenberg’s time” acquire skills. A similar seminar (for the use of Internet) was organised in co-operation with the Council of Europe Office in Skopje. The preparations of the seminar on “Tolerance in Journalism” are ongoing in co-operation with Pro Media from Skopje.

### **International donors, non governmental organisations and education of journalists**

There are over 180 domestic and international non-governmental organisations and foundations in Macedonia, of which around ten are funding the activities related to education of journalists. International donors invest huge amounts of money and domestic donors are refusing to do so, while the projects are nevertheless implemented. The international community’s position is that real effects are achieved through short-term educational seminars and workshops. But the practice is warning us that the money is wasted as the same “educated” staff is leaving their media and search for better employment. It is a circle, as the media lack funds, appropriate staff and search for new seminars and workshops, while aware of the risk that the same could happen again. No one gets a certificate as a proof that he or she is trained in a certain field.

Numerous seminars, workshops, training sessions for journalists and technical staff (for editing and camera) have been held in Macedonia. Non-governmental organisations involved in human rights and also those covering other spheres (civil society, democracy, conflicts, inter-cultural co-operation), are involved in most cases by reason of their unspent funds by the end of the year or because some of the international donors, accidentally or purposefully planned to step in with (ad hoc) projects for the media (especially when it comes to “acute“ problems related to the media).

The training sessions organised in Macedonia cover a wide range of topics and areas: news, topical programmes for young generations of journalists in a multiethnic society; inter-ethnic relations, digital production; stereotypes and inter-cultural communication; reporting during the war; censorship; self-censorship and objective reporting; professional journalism in a multiethnic society; the use of Internet as a source of information; Desk Management; the media and elections – coverage of pre-election campaign; media interaction – the bridge in simulating communication between ethnic groups; the media and conflicts in the Republic of Macedonia; reporting on differences in various circumstances; a mode of treating minority issues in the media; media freedom – legal protection, media regulations, etc.

Non-governmental organisations participate in international training programmes for Internet, media, inter cultural communication, virtual television, investigative journalism, TV network, and provide financial support to their study visits to CNN, *Voice of America*, BBC, *Institute for Reporting on War and Peace*, *Radio Deutsche Welle*. One should not forget their assistance to technical and computer equipment, Internet service, procurement (translation and printing) of literature in the media. They are assisted by international organisations which they belong to or cooperate with: Network Media Program - Budapest, Foundation Thomson - London, Press Now - Amsterdam, Swedish Helsinki Committee - Stockholm, Foundation Heinz Kuhn Stiftung - Düsseldorf, South East European Network for professionalization of the Media, and many others.

The 2002 strategy is directed to a number of key issues: assistance to the media for development of one own's production and procurement of old programmes (copyrights, translation, titles), assistance to the media in the languages of ethnic groups in the production of quality programmes for economic, cultural and social education of the population in the Republic of Macedonia, assistance to and development of infrastructure of commercial broadcasting systems, assistance to the development of democratic broadcasting laws, PR education of non-governmental organisations, the media and public administrations, assistance to the production of numerous radio and TV programmes devoted to multiethnic tolerance and understanding.

### **Position of the local media and journalists toward education programmes**

The position of the director, editor and journalist in the media may be conditionally divided into: (1) those who support this type of education (often young journalists), (2) those who “thank“ the organisers of the seminars and do not believe that they have achieved a true effect (experienced journalists), (3) those who are unable to express their “pros” and “con’s” as they did not take part in that form of education (mainly the local media in small cities), and (4) those who prefer education in their editorial offices with their own staff (most often directors and editors of the biggest dailies, professional journalists and people who have undergone almost all forms of training).

The problems are as follows: activities are taking place in cycles, without any co-ordination: technical assistance, education of journalists and education of technical staff and

again education of journalists. There is no technical and staff unification of the media – the conflict particularly exists between the small and the big, specifically because the small are unable to respond to the seminar requirements. The local media are affected by the deficit of journalists and they get information about the seminar on rare occasions only – they are usually “skipped“ and Skopje takes it all. When invitations arrive the responsible editors take care of their own participation in the first place. The talented ones after they gain experience transfer to those who pay more. The problem is also international lecturers who lack sufficient knowledge about the media picture of the Republic of Macedonia. This is why the precious time is lost on explaining the situation in the field. Only short time is left for concrete actions.

What is missing? Generally, strategic planning, organised policy of those activities (not under the principle: “this time you were at the seminar, next time it will be someone else“). Specifically: technical, managerial staff, education of new generations (especially of those who happen to do this job because there was nothing else), analysts, graphic editors, graphic designers, photography editors, editors, cameramen. There is a lack of producers, project managers-researchers, marketing specialists, documentation experts. They lack work on common topics, exchange of journalists between editorial offices, seminars with practical exercises, under natural conditions, in the field, in the media, exchange of experience with journalists in other countries.

There are some positive examples, though: (1) seminars with practical work (seminar of the Nansen Dialogue Centre in the realisation of concrete radio and TV live programmes with experienced domestic journalists); (2) common work of journalists from various editorial offices (project *Search for Common Ground*); (3) seminars in co-operation with renown companies - BBC, *Deutsche Welle*, CNN (seminars *Fridrih Ebert Stiftung* with Institute for training of journalists at *Deutsche Welle*); (4) seminars on the spot (IREX ProMedia in TV companies in Macedonia directly with journalists, cameramen, editors); (5) seminars with experienced practitioners and extremely good results (e.g. feature story). The advantage of these seminars is multi-faceted - many new things are acquired, exchange of experience, students learn the mode of work of others, mutual contacts are established. Eventually, they are a part of communication between people from the same profession.

## **What next**

There are and should be roads leading to a further development of education of journalists. What is missing “acutely” is primarily a detailed analysis of the situation in the sphere of the media (staffing, technical, organisational, financial capacities) and a common and co-ordinated activity to determine realistic needs and priorities, which, of course, is not an easy task at all. Besides, this may also imply a revision of the already planned activities of some non-governmental organisations. This could contribute to a review of the initiative launched by the Macedonian Media Institute to organise training sessions for “virtual TV broadcasting”, particularly by reason of the need to procure a highly sophisticated equipment, which can be implemented by some TV stations in Skopje. There are advanced studies for communication available in Prague, offering training sessions of that kind. A number of journalists from Macedonia have already been there.

If there is a general agreement that alternative forms of education of journalists are useful for improvements, although they cannot substitute for university education and that classical education is inefficient (especially the studies of journalism), as it has functioned so far, there is a need for the reform of primarily higher education, which Macedonia committed itself to through the Stability Pact. The need for the so-called “training department” has already been accentuated as a bridge between the faculties (Law School, Faculty for Dramatic Arts and University for Southeast Europe) and as a form which will be conducive to a more successful reform of higher education.

Concerning short seminars (sometimes referred to as “fast literacy courses”), the concrete information reveal that there was at least a modicum of justification for them by 2002. The media have overcome the lack of capacity-that period was over in 1994/1995 when most of the private media were opened (both print and electronic media) in most cases by former editors in the MRTV (quality professionals) who took part in education of their younger colleagues. If anyone needs this type of education, it is young journalists (educated in theory and illiterate in practice) and journalists in the media in ethnic languages, although it should not be unplanned or uncoordinated (Open Society Institute, IREX ProMedia).

What else does the Macedonian journalism need? Investments in the so-called “capacity building” and “institutional building”, which will yield results in a later stage – in the long run. No one is doing that at this stage. Support is needed toward procurement of modern technology which will improve production, make it cheaper, which in turn will ensure higher salaries to journalists and other employees and more money to the management of new investments. This will raise the standard of profession and enough money will remain for paying taxes to the state.

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## **Education of Journalists in Moldova**

**Constantin Marin**

*Education of journalists and other media professionals in the Republic of Moldova differs little, if at all, from the education model set up before the fall of Communism. Although the contents have slightly changed, education remains tied to state institutions.*

### **Education level of journalists and media professionals**

Institutional education of journalists started in 1966 when the Department of Journalism was founded within the Faculty of Philology of the State University of Moldova. The Department transformed into Faculty of Journalism in 1980.

The Faculty included the following departments between 1961 and 1991: the Department of Soviet Press and Party Theory and Practice, the Department of History of Journalism (transformed into the Department of Press, Radio and Television History after 1980), the Department of Elaboration and Editorial Practices. Education of journalists prior to 1990s was determined by the nature of Moldavian political system. The communist state, that is the Communist party, retained monopoly over university studies of journalism and subordinated it to its ideological doctrine. The Faculty of Journalism consequently became the nursery of journalists devoted to the communist doctrine and Soviet-devised media practices. In addition, the curriculum revolved solely around philological and historical studies, which was common to Soviet education in the domain of mass media. All other journalism-related academic fields, such as politics, sociology or communication studies, were very thoroughly ignored.

The fall of Communism, resulting in dissolution of the Soviet Union and independence of the Republic of Moldova (August 1991), freed the university education of predominant ideological influences. The standing curriculum was rid of courses that promoted communist ideology, and courses on standard journalism practices of the West were introduced. The Faculty also got renamed in 1993 – the Senate of Moldavian State University decided to call it the *Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies*. The new name indicated a new course in education of journalists which based it upon the study of communication, politics and sociology.

The Faculty launched a restructuring campaign not longer after – in 1994. The launch coincided with the introduction of a modernisation project within the TEMPUS program (see details in section 4). The essence of the process consisted in adjusting the education of journalists done by the State University of Moldova to European standards of education in this field. One of the major changes involved integration of courses on public relations and

advertising in the official curriculum. The transformation was designed to tailor education to the needs of Moldavian media at the delicate stage of transition from command economy to market economy and from totalitarianism into democracy. As a result, the structure of the Faculty was modified to include three departments: Journalism, Social Communication Studies, and Institutional Communication Studies. Undergraduate studies lead to the degree of Bachelors of Sciences in Communication Studies, specialised in either journalism or social communication studies or public relations and advertising.

Following its transformation, the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies, as a state institution, solicited Moldavian Ministry of Education and Science to amend the list of state-accredited degrees accordingly. But the new scheme was accepted only partly. The Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted only a bill on Bachelor of Journalism in 1999. The Faculty was compelled to comply with this legislation, and it now includes the Department of Journalism and that of Social Communication Studies. The former focuses on journalism, and the latter – on public communication.

The Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies of Moldavian State University nowadays represents the only academic centre officially accredited for degree-programs in journalism (January 2001).

University education in the domain of journalism was financed entirely through state subsidies up until 1995. At that time, the state allocated funds for training of 50 students a year (25 for Romanian media and another 25 for Russian media). Later on, the state funding was cut down considerably – it covered 15 students of Romanian mass media and 5 for the Russian ones (data from 2001). This was partly a consequence of a drastic reduction in state funding for education on the whole. Other factors include the general decrease in the number of media (from some 460 newspapers and magazines in 1997 down to 180 in 2000), and in the state-owned press in particular, accompanied by the increasing number of non-governmental (party, private etc.) papers.

Tuition fees were introduced in 1995 in response to the growing interest of high school graduates into the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies. Already in 2001, the Faculty is among the most popular faculties of the State University. The current ratio between state-sponsored students of journalism and those who pay full tuition fee is 1:4.

Media no longer sponsor students of journalism as a result of their grave financial situation. There have been several attempts to open private universities and faculties of journalism and media studies over the last ten years. The Faculty of Journalism and

Communication Studies has however succeeded in retaining monopoly over education of media professionals in Moldova.

### **Classical university education**

Admission to the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies is based on entry exam that graduates of both secondary and high schools are required to take.

The first part of the course curriculum is directed at professional preparation and encompasses several modules. The general one contains economics, philosophy, political theory, sociology, history of culture, etc. These more theoretical courses are somewhat prevalent in number during the first two years of study, but not so in the two final years of studies at the Faculty. The so-called fundamental module covers main theoretical fields of relevance to journalism and media studies as part of overall communication. This module includes courses like history and theory of communication, theories of media communication, typology of mass media, professional deontology, legislation, socio-linguistics, semiotics, etc.

The special module lasts the longest, and it focuses on more narrowly specialised professional preparation of future journalists. Students select courses from this module towards the end of the second year and pursue them till graduation. The special module is designed to introduce students to both theory and practice of their future profession. Theoretical courses concentrate on the *know-how* of journalism. They include media management in its business and editorial aspects as well as the theory of genres in press and broadcasting. The students also study the topical spectrum covered by the mass media, involving political, economic, social, cultural and other relevant issues. Courses also involve training in press design and layout, editing newspapers, radio and TV production, online publishing, etc.

Practical part trains students to act in different capacities of media production: as author and as editor. This requires of students to write various pieces in the form of news, investigative articles or commentaries on political, economic and social issues. Students also practice design, sound recording, radio and TV production, news agency work, etc. All practical courses are tied to theoretical courses in terms of contents. Before the study of journalism was shortened by one year, the course lasted for 5 years, and practice was done one day per week only, when the students visited newspapers, radio or TV newsrooms where they took part in production and editing. This practice was abandoned when the course was shortened but the possibility to re-introduce it is now being reconsidered.

Practical courses usually take place in the Faculty's labs: TV and radio studios, etc. Various donors provided the studio equipment, which is almost identical to the equipment used by the media. This means that students can work under conditions very similar to those in local media, which makes a good preparation for work in real newsrooms. Students publish their own newspaper *Jurnalitul* as part of their practical classes. They used to train in radio journalism working on the first private radio station in Moldova – *Unda Liber*, founded by the Faculty's partners. The radio station was unfortunately closed in 1998 due to financial difficulties but it is possible that it will be reopened in the near future. Another student newspaper *Zig Zag* used to be published with the support of some US organisations, but it ran out of funding after a short while. These examples suggest that, even when it tries to run practical training for students, the Faculty encounters great difficulties. On the other hand, the Faculty fails to intensify efforts in this part of the studies and to ensure continuity of training.

In addition, the Faculty runs extracurricular training courses in summer time. Based on agreement between the Faculty and media outlets, students spend between 4 and 6 weeks in various newspapers, magazines, radio or TV stations as their trainees. Still, this does not help much in enhancing practical training as part of undergraduate studies at the Faculty: the ratio remains 65% to 35% in favour of theoretical courses, and this lack of balance between theory and practice clearly requires quick and long-term action.

Courses of the special module fall into two categories: compulsory and optional. Their proportion is the following: compulsory make up 70 – 80 percent of the module, while the remainder is optional. This practice is quite new to the Faculty, as it has been introduced only this year. The education process thus becomes more flexible, taking professional preferences of students into consideration and allowing them to tailor their own studies.

The curriculum will be complemented with one more module in 2002 – the complementary module, which will comprise optional courses from other faculties or universities of Moldova or from abroad. Further flexibility of studies will also be facilitated by the system of transferable credits, which was introduced at the State University of Moldova in 2001.

Lecturers of the Faculty (over 20 of them) did their studies in the domain of journalism, and most of them hold PhDs. But majority of them gave up practising journalism as long ago as the Soviet period. Their current contributions to either print or broadcast media are insignificant. For this reason, they often teach students outdated methods of journalism or

use ancient technology, both already abandoned in practice. Involvement of working journalists in the education process is hardly worth mentioning: only 5 had the "honour" in 2001. Their interest for cooperation with the Faculty is in decline due to low financial stimulus, but this should be overcome soon. A way around could stimulate the standing lecturers to practice journalism or to allow larger scale involvement by either Moldavian or foreign journalists in education process.

The study at the Faculty ends with the final project. The project can be a piece of research on Moldavian media or a series of pieces published or broadcast during the last year at the Faculty. After 4 years at the Faculty, young graduates obtain BA in Journalism

Although it is a part of a state-sponsored institution, the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies retains certain independence. The Faculty drafts the curriculum, which comes into force upon the approval by the Senate of Moldavian State University. Local journalists and their organisations do not take part in elaboration of curriculum. This deprives the Faculty of valuable insight into requirements of media, distancing the Faculty from the local media community and making it a target of harsh criticism. The way around this problem would be to incorporate representatives of Moldavian journalists and their organisations, such as the Union of Journalists, the Association of the Independent Press, the Association of Broadcasters or the Independent Journalism Centre in the Scientific Council of the Faculty and allow them a say in the design of journalism course.

### **Alternative forms of education**

There are no independent schools in the Republic of Moldova that would offer a specifically journalism course. There are no institutions that would offer either undergraduate or postgraduate courses in this field, despite the fact that the local media market would be a rather fertile soil since only 25.9% managers of radio stations, 17.6% of cable TV stations and 30.7% of terrestrial TV stations hold a degree in telecommunications or journalism.<sup>6</sup>

Training of journalists is due to commence at the *Academy of International Relations and Diplomacy*, a private university, in 2001. The institution is only at the beginning of its activity, its educational project being at the finishing stage.

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<sup>6</sup> *Mass Media in the Republic of Moldova*, June 2000, p.29.

Since there are no other universities, alternative education is realised through some special courses, seminars and workshops. These forms of training do not have academic profile while certificates issued by their organisers, mainly NGOs, are not officially accredited. Media therefore do not require of their prospective journalists to have completed any of these courses. This however does not diminish the significance of such efforts, especially as both the students of the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies and professional journalists support them.

### **International donors, non-governmental organisations and education of journalists**

Modernising education of journalists within and without the university system is supported by international agencies and donors. This support seemed rather *ad hoc* back in early 1990s when Western journalists and trainers started coming into the country. They used to come to Moldova to deliver lectures or to run workshops, and consulted Moldavian professors on modernisation of teaching methods and curricula. However intermittent this form of education was, it contributed to modernisation of curriculum and teaching methods. Moreover, Western lecturers revealed a different angle of teaching process and professional journalism to both the students and the staff of the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies.

Cooperation with the *European Journalism Training Association* (EJTA) and the corresponding departments of the La Sapienza University in Rome and Complutense University in Madrid – who were partners of the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies between 1994 and 1998 – had a similar effect.

Long-term co-operation with international organisations and institutions started in 1994. Two important projects have so far been implemented. The first project, entitled *Upgrading the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies of Moldavian State University*, was implemented between 1994 and 1998 within the TEMPUS Program sponsored by the Council of Europe. Assistance of universities from Rome and Madrid as well as financial support by the Council of Europe shed a different light on education of journalists: the education is now being based on communication sciences, new normative and special courses are being introduced and modern equipment purchased. Some \$100,000 USD have been allocated to set up an IT lab and purchase TV and radio equipment. But some objectives of this project, especially those that concern the training of public relations and

advertising experts, have been only partly achieved. Nevertheless, the project had a positive impact on understanding the education of journalists as part of wider communication studies.

Another long-term project was implemented in 1999-2000, based on the bilateral agreement between the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies and the *High School of Journalism* from Lille, France. This project was funded by the *French Alliance of Moldova* and the *Soros Foundation*, in cooperation with Independent Journalism Centre from Chisinau. This project was designed to advance technological skills of journalism students. Four workshops on broadcast journalism were held to acquaint students with French broadcasting practices. Soros Foundation donated a computer lab to the Faculty as well as small library of journalism-related literature.

Some non-governmental organisations have also contributed to education in the field of journalism: Association of the Independent Press, Association of Broadcasters, and the Union of Moldavian Journalists. They have organised numerous conferences and seminars (with the support of the Council of Europe), addressing press freedom, national legislation in the domain of mass media, development of the public broadcasting, etc. Those were attended not only by journalists but also by students of journalism. The ultimate objective of these projects is to help understand the role that mass media play in democratic society. One deficiency of these programs concerns the lack of continuity, caused by scarce funding.

*The Independent Journalism Centre from Chisinau*, founded in 1994, is involved in intensive and productive training activities. The primary task of this organisation is to create and implement theoretical and practical training programs for journalists and students of journalism in cooperation with Western experts. Its activities gained in importance and scope after February 2000 when it joined the South East European Network for Professionalization of Media. Independent Journalism Centre nowadays runs over 20 projects a year, mostly training programs. Some of these projects are realised in collaboration with the Association of Independent Press, Association of Broadcasters or the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies. For example, a number of workshops addressing social reporting, and agricultural reporting as well as seminars on local press management and online journalism, including a summer camp on school newspapers, and others were held in 2001. All training sessions are free of charge. In addition, the Independent Journalism Centre offers the students of the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies the possibility of using its web site *Moldova News* (<http://news.ournet.md>).

These projects are funded by different international organisations: Soros Foundation, U.S. Embassy in Moldova, Regional Program Soros for Mass Media (Budapest), Know-How Fund (Great Britain), Dynamic Network Technologies, Press Now (the Netherlands), etc.

International donors and local non-governmental organisations have established good cooperation with local media outlets. This collaboration is in no way obstructed by either authorities or professional organisations in the country.

### **How local media and journalists perceive education programmes**

Generally speaking, local mass media provide no training to their journalists, and this is so for different reasons. Above all, mass media lack funding for training instructors. The other problem is that media outlets have not designed any specific training programs to accommodate their own requirements. Finally, media do not find that professional development of journalists is conditioned upon their additional training.

*National Training Centre for Journalists* was opened in 1999 at the initiative of the Union of Moldavian Journalists. The Centre has the status of a private institution but it has not yet initiated any training activities as it is still lacking offices and funding.

Local editors and journalists usually welcome training offers by non-governmental organisations. They also rarely decline invitations by the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies to take part in different university-sponsored activities such as round tables or to train students.

Still, some mass media do have certain experience in organising training for their own journalists. The news agency *Basa-Press* has thus drafted a set of rules that new employees have to learn and follow very strictly while errors by all journalists are analysed at weekly meetings, which are however common to all newsrooms. PRO TV (a company from Romania with a newsroom in Moldova) also runs some internal training programs. Trainers from Bucharest instructed the Chisinau-based staff on applicable standards. The State Company *Teleradio Moldova* also organised fourteen-day courses for its employees between 1995 and 1998 with the support of BBC, which provided both trainers and funding.

### **What next**

The limited media market in the Republic of Moldova and the limited demand for journalists justify the existence of a single university centre for education of journalists –

namely, the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies of Moldavian State University. This however does not preclude education of journalists within private universities and academic institutions. But development prospects remain gloomy given the lack of teaching staff and funding. Given these difficulties, it seems that a reform of the existing Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies would yield much quicker and more substantial results. If that is the case, the following steps should be taken:

- Review of curricula and their adjustment to European educational models;
- Training of trainers (special courses for teachers of the faculty with the purpose of acquainting them with the new curriculum);
- Inviting more visiting lecturers from Western universities and media;
- Closer cooperation with Moldovan media;
- Development of mid-term career training for media professionals who lack academic background in journalism.

This analysis has also shown the necessity for introducing schools and centres that would run training courses as alternative to academic training at the university. The National Training Centre for Journalists, which, if already officially certified, could be a good starting point in this respect. Nevertheless, in order for this project to succeed much more support will be needed.

It is of great importance to sustain and to intensify contribution by non-governmental organisations to education of journalists, particularly in the form of practical training. Additionally, media themselves must engage much more actively in education of journalists.

Finally, it is necessary to support efforts toward publishing translations of specialised journalism-related literature, which is essential for successful education and training of journalists and media professionals in Moldova.

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Current activities: Training media professionals.

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Current activities: Education in the field of development of international relations and international communication, particularly by mass media.

#### **Union of Moldavian Journalists (1957)**

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Current activities: Development of legal framework to guarantee press freedom, and support to professionalization, free and fair self-regulation mechanisms, consolidation of journalists' organisations, protection and promotion of free press, training of media professionals.

#### **Press Freedom Committee (1994)**

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Head - Alexandru Cantar

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Current activities: Working on legislation to ensure press freedom and free flow of information; supporting independent press and protecting rights of journalists; training media professionals.

#### **Independent Press Association (1997)**

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Phone: 373 2 24 72 39

E-mail: [api@moldtelecom.md](mailto:api@moldtelecom.md)

Head – Ion Ciumeica

Coordinator - Dorina Osipov

Current activities: Running opinion polls and surveys to advance independent press, providing moral and material support to the best journalists within API, helping consolidation and development of independent media, training media professionals.

#### **Broadcasting Association (1999)**

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President – Alexandru Dorogan

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Current activities: Facilitating mass media development through professional training programs for journalists.

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Current activities: Helping children to develop their creative potentials in various fields, including journalism.

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## **Journalism - from Fashion to Profession**

### **Education of Journalists in Romania**

**Ioana Avadani**

*If one is asked to name the most relevant changes brought about by the toppling of the communist regime in Romania in December 1989, he will doubtlessly mention the media. Media outlets mushroomed in the first years after '89, bringing their number to thousands. Publications appeared overnight, some of them operated by people who had sold their colour TV sets in order to gather the needed capital. One room in an apartment, a phone line, a stack of paper and a typewriter were often enough to start a media operation. Radio also boomed, invading the FM, while television, a much more sophisticated and costly industry, came into picture a few years later. All these operations are in private hands, dominating the market.*

### **Level of education of journalists and media staff**

There are only three public media: the public radio, the public TV (both under the control of the Parliament) and the national news agency Rompres (currently under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Information).

Eleven years later, abundance is still the key word in describing the Romanian media. There are over 1,000 publications put out with a certifiable periodicity. There are over 300 radio stations and over 150 TV stations currently operating.

Thus, it is legitimate to say that Romania has a problem with numbers when it comes to media. So many outlets have greatly helped the wide spreading of media products, but sometimes to the detriment of quality. It is obviously difficult to staff so many operations with trained journalists. That is why the issue of journalist education gains particular importance in Romania's case.

In terms of education, there is a clear distinction between journalists who joined the profession in early '90s and the later generations. In early '90s, many people, especially young, coming from various professions, sought jobs with the newly created media. These were the enthusiasts of the first years, with too little (if any) journalism education and with almost no concern for it. They learned by working and this was very visible in their work – for good or for bad. The early '90s were years of a strongly opinionated press, of "revolutionary journalism" - meant to change the world overnight, and "innovative journalism" in which extravaganza was acceptable for the sake of novelty.

After a couple of years, graduates from journalism schools (meanwhile created) appeared on the market - and in newsrooms. They brought with them a more theoretical approach, which did not hold too much water when applied in tough "real life" practice. Owning a diploma did not make someone a journalist - not to say a good (or better) one.

Graduates still had to prove what their diploma was worth through work. At the same time, other young people coming from other fields continued to join the profession.

Moreover, as early as in the second year of university students take on jobs and many newsrooms employ students as part-timers or contributors. Although not very appreciated for the quality of their training, young people are still very "popular" in newsrooms. Many media owners/managers prefer to employ young, inexperienced staff. They are less demanding, more likely to accept lower salaries, less self-confident and they can be controlled more easily. There are reports of media managers taking young people for unpaid "trial periods" ranging from two weeks to three months, only to discard them at the end of this period. The situation is true for both national and local media.

In some small media organisations, one can still find working journalists with no university education, but their number is decreasing as the pressure of the educated work force is increasing.

It is noteworthy that there are still some active journalists who were active even before 1989. At that time, in order to become a journalist, one had to graduate from the only Journalism School in Romania, heavily politicised and strongly controlled by the Communist party. Professional techniques were only part of the curriculum, the bulk being formed by the study of the party doctrine and documents.

### **Classical education**

In Romania, there are some 20 university-level journalism schools - both state and private. Some of them are separate entities, others are just sections at the communications, literature, languages or philosophy departments.

There are six journalism schools at state universities, namely in Bucharest, Cluj, Timisoara, Iasi, Sibiu and Baia Mare. Their governing law is the Education Law (no. 84/1995).

Journalism schools, as all university level schools, have to undergo an accreditation process (based on the Law of Academic Evaluation and Accreditation, adopted in 1994 and updated in 1999). The law provides for a two-step process: authorisation and accreditation. The latter is issued by the National Council, composed of 19 members elected by the Parliament. In order to issue accreditation, the Council considers the academic quality of the faculty, the content of the curricula and the quality of teaching, the premises and equipment owned by the school (there are specific requirements regarding size of classrooms, type of

equipment, library collections, etc.). Out of the six state journalism schools, only four are now accredited.

Journalism education encompasses four academic years. At the end of their studies, graduates are requested to pass a final exam and submit a paper, thereby getting their "license". Graduates completing their four-year studies receive a certificate, but not a diploma. They have the right to take the license exam three times within five years upon graduation.

Curricula include a wide variety of courses, depending on the university. There are general topics (theory of mass-communication, history of media, history of civilisations, semiotics, political science, foreign languages, logic, history of mentalities), as well as skill-based courses (news writing and reporting, media law and ethics, current affairs, feature writing, new media technologies, specialisation in print, TV, radio, photography, news agencies, etc). During the four years of studies, students are (at least in theory) exposed to all kinds of media and have to spend a couple of weeks every year working as interns in professional newsrooms.

The technical facilities of the various journalism schools vary greatly. There are some, such as in Bucharest and Sibiu, which have well equipped laboratories and libraries, while some schools created more recently (for example in Iasi) still strive to complete their assets in order to provide better training for their students. The quality of equipment at a school depends heavily on the ability of the school administration to attract extra-budgetary funds (donations, grants, international programs), as funds provided from the state budget are obviously insufficient.

The most difficult problem related to "classical education" is that it is too classical. Too often courses are too theoretical in their approach. They only ask students to memorize "given ideas" and do not encourage dialogue, initiative, creativity, exchange of ideas. Most courses are far from being hands-on. Thus, in a TV class, a student manages to touch a camera only twice: once for "training", once for the exam. Because the faculty is financially accountable for equipment, they are reluctant to grant students free access to it, to encourage them to "play" with it.

In many cases, professors at journalism schools have an insignificant (if any) journalistic background. According to the Accreditation Law, in order to start a specialised section or to set up a department, the university has to secure a certain number of faculty

members, with high academic degrees (professors, lecturers, etc). These academic degrees can be obtained after publishing a certain number of books and passing exams. There are few active journalists meeting these criteria. That is why, in order to start a journalistic program/department, universities "borrow" academics from fields that can be considered as "related" (sociology, philosophy, etc). This situation affects the quality of journalism curricula and teaching. As a result, graduates are often unprepared for the real demands of their future profession.

Moreover, there is a clear communication gap, even a certain degree of contempt between academics and professionals. Academics complain of media shallowness, their thirst for "dirty news", while professionals complain of the poor quality of journalism education, of academics' lack of understanding for real-life journalism.

A specificity of all journalism schools in Romania is a large number of women who join the profession. Up to 90-95% of students in these schools are women. This rate is not to be found in the profession. At the entry level, some 60% of working journalists are women. The percentage decreases to 30% for mid-level managers and to one-digit figures (at the low end of the range) for top executives. The reasons why so many women are joining journalism are diverse and not always "good". Many women just "love to write" and mistake journalism for "writing". Others want to be journalists in order to become TV stars, to become famous. Only a handful of students are aware of the role of the media and the real challenges of journalistic work, thus making an informed decision regarding their future profession.

Unfortunately, initial misjudgements and lack of attractiveness of journalism classes are a "deadly mixture", resulting in low morale among students. Young graduates are only too often disappointed and unmotivated, which does not help them start a career. The market is already flooded with "journalists with a diploma". If each of the 20 journalism schools puts out to the work force market an average of 60 graduates, this means a lot of people are in search of a job at a newsroom. According to estimations, only some 20% of graduates manage to find work as journalists. The rest turn to PR or communications, advertising or jobs that have nothing to do with their academic training.

In order to increase their chances, students with higher expectations turn to alternative training opportunities, seeking to compensate the theoretical approach of the classical education, to develop practical skills and to connect themselves with the journalistic community.

## **Alternative education**

The media boom in the early '90s was soon mirrored by a boom in alternative schools of journalism in private hands. Thus, in 1994 there were 20 forms of journalistic education at university level. Twelve of them survived the accreditation/authorisation process and market competition.

Private universities can be run only as non-profit entities according to the Education Law. Students are required to pay an annual fee, which ranges from 300 to 1,000 USD, depending on the schools' endowments and quality of teaching.

Private schools vary greatly in attendance. Some of them are able to gather 20 students, while others are overcrowded, with more than 1,200 students.

Technical facilities of private schools in most cases are below that of state universities. Their equipment is poor and resources provided by libraries – modest. Of course, there are notable exceptions. For example, the *Journalism School of the Spiru Haret University* (part of the *Romania de Maine* Foundation) works closely with a TV station belonging to the same foundation and students enjoy access to high quality digital equipment.

A special note should be made on the faculty of private journalism schools. Like state schools, private schools suffer from the same lack of academics with professional background in journalism. Moreover, in order to meet the standards imposed by the Accreditation Law, private schools turn to old professors, most of whom retired from state schools. This has created what some authors call the “gerontocracy of private universities”. This situation does not create emulation among students, it does not encourage new teaching methods and it does not further new domains and new technologies in journalistic studies. The teaching process is further affected by the diverse qualifications of the faculty as most of them are specialised in disciplines only remotely related to journalism. In some schools, the weight of journalistic disciplines in the curricula hardly exceeds 20 percent. This is why most private journalism schools are not perceived as reliable and competitive.

Then why do so many students approach private schools? The answers are manifold. One of them is related to the “sexiness” of the journalistic profession, a profession that young people mostly view as being “easy”, offering multiple possibilities for high connections, a springboard to other, more lucrative positions. Another possible answer pertains to the wish of young people to achieve a superior form of education, to “get a diploma”, without too much concern for its real weight and significance. In many cases, parents push their offspring toward private schools after failure to be admitted in state universities. Some students try to

transfer to state schools after the first year of studies, while others dare to take admission exams again.

Accreditation of private schools is not a smooth process. In order to get accredited, at least 50% of students in the first three series of graduates have to pass graduation exams. Graduation exams are organised by already accredited schools – basically state-run schools. As the teaching standards and curricula are often different, this objective is very hard to meet. This situation stirred protests of both the students and the faculty and administration in private schools, which claimed foul play and accused state universities of creating artificial obstacles in the development of private education.

In a recent development, relations between state and private education were further tensed by a decision of the Government which asked private schools to give part of their revenues to the state educational system. In another recent move, the Government accredited by ordinance a couple of private schools, skipping the whole process of accreditation stipulated by the law. The decision was taken only weeks after a number of universities were denied accreditation based on poor evaluation issued by the National Council for Academic Accreditation. Putting all these developments in a broader context, one can conclude that the accreditation process was politically flavoured and that it diverted from its initial goal: to secure equal standards of quality. This can only have a negative effect on the credibility of private education, to the detriment of its development.

### **Vocational education of journalists**

Looking at the media market in Romania, and at its large journalistic community, one would expect to see a lot of various mid-career training providers, lots of programs of vocational education. But Romania again has a problem with numbers, but this time it is the other way round: only one such institution still exists on the market – the Centre for Independent Journalism in Bucharest. A similar operation, the BBC School, was closed down in June 2001.

*The Centre for Independent Journalism* is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation supporting free and independent media. The Centre was set up in 1994 by the New York-based Independent Journalism Foundation, alongside sister-centres in Budapest, Prague and Bratislava.

CIJ provides short-term courses for active journalists and students in journalism or related fields (political sciences, economics, law, etc.). In two sessions every year, starting in

February and October, CIJ offers courses in news writing and reporting, writing skills, interviewing techniques, political reporting, business reporting, photojournalism, media law, media management, computer assisted reporting, radio and TV news production. Courses are 6 to 12 weeks long, usually one session per week, and they have a very interactive, hands-on approach. Experienced journalists, reputed for their professional standards and equidistance, act as trainers. Course fees range from 15 to 30 USD, and students (from both state and private schools) have a 50% discount. Course graduates receive a diploma, unrecognised by the Ministry of Education. However, due to the reputation of the Centre itself and its trainers, these diplomas are highly regarded by many media outlets.

CIJ “exports” similar courses to other parts of the country, in condensed format, usually weekend courses. Local media or journalist associations act as local partners in such courses, helping to advertise the course, recruit participants and with logistical arrangements.

Apart from Romanian trainers, CIJ also offers courses and targeted assistance conducted by international trainers, most of whom are American media professionals. They hold either workshops open to a variety of journalists, or in-house, custom-tailored training, upon request of media organisations. Such courses are usually free of charge.

CIJ has worked extensively with journalism schools all over Romania. Universities in Bucharest, Iasi, Sibiu, Cluj and Timisoara have benefited from CIJ trainers and resources.

In 1999, the Centre launched a curricula development program, as part of the Pro Media Program, funded by USAID. After a serious evaluation of needs and capabilities, the journalism school of the University of Bucharest was selected to host an English-language course offered to selected students in their third year of studies. A team of US professors teaches news writing and reporting, media law and ethics, new media, and photojournalism and holds a series of professional seminars which give students the opportunity to meet media professionals (journalists, media managers, advertisers, etc.). These courses amount for half the credits the students must gather for one year. Students in the English course follow other courses in Romanian, together with their colleagues.

The Centre has a fully equipped computer lab, with Internet connection, a radio lab and a TV lab, with both analogous and digital technology. It also hosts the Freedom Forum News Library, with its unique collections of books, periodicals and CD-ROMs. In addition to educational programs, CIJ is involved in programs related to media legislation, strengthening journalist associations, promoting young Roma journalists. It also works with high school students, offering them introductory courses in journalism.

*The BBC School* was founded in 1994 as an operation supported by the British Government. Its standard program was 14 weeks long, it was taught by reputed British journalists and it covered both editorial and managerial aspects. The school also offered shorter courses (4 or 6 weeks), taught by Romanian professionals. The courses were very appreciated by journalists, especially by those living outside Bucharest. Many broadcast professionals owe their career to training received from the BBC School. Unfortunately, as the priorities of the British government and the BBC Training Service changed, the funding for the school in Bucharest dried out. Consequently, the operation was closed down in June 2001.

The only long-term, strategic program for the media in Romania is the *ProMedia* Program. The program is run by IREX (Washington DC) and *the Independent Journalism Foundation* (New York), while CIJ is the local implementing agency. The program will end in June 2002.

*The South East European Network for Professionalization of the Media* (SEENPM), of which Romania is part, offers media professionals many courses in various topics (political reporting, computer assisted journalism, investigative reporting, business reporting, environmental reporting, election coverage, etc.)

*The Open Society Foundation* closed all of its media programs a couple of years ago. There are no long-term programs for professional media run by the European Union. There are a couple of regional programs, which include Romania, but they are not educational or informative; they deal more with protection of journalists and liberalisation of media legislation:

- Legal Assistance for Journalists Program, run by the *International Federation of Journalists*, funded by the European Commission. Partners in Romania: *Society of Romanian Journalists* (SZR), *Media Monitoring Agency Academia Catavencu*, and CIJ;
- Democracy in Practice Program, run by Article XIX (London), funded by the European Commission. Partners for Romania: *The Romanian Helsinki Committee* and CIJ.
- EU programs for universities (SOCRATES, ERASMUS) are still available.

- Other agencies (*Council of Europe, World Association of Newspapers, UNHCR*) occasionally organise short-term courses for media professionals on very topical issues (reporting diversity, advertising, repatriation of refugees, etc).

Also occasionally, journalists are offered the opportunity to apply for courses, programs or scholarships offered by international organisations: European Centre for Journalism (Maastricht), Alfred Friendly Program, Knight Fellowship for Eastern Europe and German Marshall Fellowship program.

Several international journalism schools (i.e. in France, UK, Spain, The Netherlands, Sweden, USA and others) offer Romanian students a wide range of programs (scholarships, summer programs, student exchanges, etc). Unfortunately, such programs are not advertised enough and not all students can take advantage of them. Moreover, some of them ask future participants to contribute a certain amount of money, which is a serious limitation for many students. As a result, only well-off students can afford to apply for such programs, which leads to the apparition of a “well off, well educated” layer, not necessarily consisting of the best and most deserving students.

### **Local media and journalists’ position on education programs**

The attitude of journalists toward educational programs has changed several times since the early ‘90s. In the beginning, people were more eager to work than to learn and therefore “learning through work” was the most common approach. Many journalists with a couple of years of experience considered themselves knowledgeable enough and regarded training opportunities offered to them as a personal offence. For them, learning more was the same as “not knowing enough” and they considered training as something that lowers their professional status.

But little by little, many journalists discovered the quality of educational programs offered to them – and the benefits emerging from these programs (new skills, new angles, new contacts and, why not, new employment perspectives). This change of attitude was triggered, among other factors, by the spreading of foreign media products, especially cable TV. Romania has one of the highest rates of cabled households in Europe, which has made channels such as CNN, BBC, Euronews, ABC, NBC, RTL, TF1 largely available to virtually everybody. Journalists have rearranged their professional standards and looked at educational programs as a possible source of acquiring desired skills.

Currently, there is a clear distinction between the attitude of journalists in mainstream media and those in local media. As most training opportunities were (rather forcibly) based in Bucharest, mainstream media have lately reached a “training fatigue”, doubled by a certain arrogance (the “too good to be trained” syndrome). At the same time, there is a real thirst for training in other parts of the country, with media professionals outside Bucharest becoming an ever more eager “training consumption” community. Trainers who have taught courses both in Bucharest and in the interior are unanimous that, even if the level of skills is somehow lower in the interior, the focus and feed-back provided by journalists in local media is respectable.

The same goes for media outlets. Local media, forced to live in small markets, often overcrowded and poor most of the time, are more inclined to improve both their editorial content and their business abilities, in a strive to take the lead. As mentioned in the opening remarks, many media operations have been founded by people with no previous training in either media or business. For a while, common sense and enthusiasm could make up for lack of structured education. But in the late ‘90s, people realised that media are a game with specific rules and that only the best who are prepared to cope with them will survive. That is why a number of local media have turned to vocational education providers for advice and training. The fact that training thus received was usually free of charge helped small media operations to consolidate their positions in the market, without carving out their funds.

As for mainstream media, they have developed professional business departments, which enabled them to stay in the market. Moreover, due to their influential position, many of them enjoy “political sympathy,” which means preferential advertising contracts or “friendly” taxation. They have also developed a style of their own and sometimes they do not ask more from their journalists than to “follow the line”. Due to this, most of them are not interested in educating their journalists. The most frequently invoked reasons are lack of time and lack of staff, but even an answer such as “we are working here, we don’t have time to play” is not rare. In one case, a media manager said he was absolutely not interested in the quality of small radio stations affiliated to his network as long as they stay on air and manage to keep their broadcasting licenses.

Over the past several years we have witnessed a stagnation in the evolution of quality of Romanian press. The ailing economy has not helped the advertising industry and the battle for circulation/audience has become fierce. Many media maintain that all means are acceptable in this battle, which has led to a visible decline of professional standards. Thus, the

very idea of professional performance was affected and even the youngest journalists do not perceive professional proficiency as “the” tool for building a successful career. For their part, many editors and publishers do not encourage competence as they prefer to work with less educated (and, by way of consequence, less paid) staff. Basically, mid-career training has become more of a personal option than an institutional requirement.

A noteworthy exception is public media. Both public radio and public TV have special departments for human resources, which also deal with journalist training. Both institutions have established in-house training programs, based on the skills of their most talented employees. At the same time, they have established links with foreign institutions (from Germany and The Netherlands, for example) and ‘imported’ training courses from their partners.

It is also true that training opportunities offered to journalists and other media professionals tend to be repetitive in topic and content, which may trigger, sooner or later, the same “training fatigue”. But, given the dimensions of the media community in Romania and the decreasing number of educational programs, this perspective is still far away.

### **What next**

The future of journalist education in Romania depends on various factors. The long-term objective would be to create a culture of training, a culture appreciative of “perpetual education” – a concept still (unfortunately) alien to many Romanian media professionals.

Universities should pay more attention to their curricula in order to secure a better connection between the academic environment and the profession. New disciplines, new, more hands-on, more participating teaching methods and introduction of new technologies would help greatly the furthering of this objective. At the same time, the media industry should become more aware of its role in the development of journalist education and should take some responsibilities. Unfortunately, the poor economic state of most media outlets, together with a poor sponsorship tradition and rather discouraging legislation, are not factors that are likely to boost the industry’s interest in academic education of future journalists.

Vocational training is heavily dependent on funding. As many international donors are shutting down media programs in Romania, a whole big community risks to remain almost unattended. Media organisations are either too poor or uninterested in supporting training programs for the benefit of the community. Associations of journalists and media professionals are not strong enough to sustain training programs and, in the few cases when

they are interested in improving the skills of their members, they also turn to the non-profit sector for help.

In a country where the average monthly salary remains around 100 USD (and journalist salaries are not much higher than average), the issue of self-sustainable training programs/centres seems like wishful thinking. Valuable training, whether we like it or not, is expensive, especially at a time when media technologies are becoming more and more sophisticated. If the local economy maintains the current rate of growth, it will take some time until the industry is able to sustain training programs – assuming that it will commit itself to it.

A desirable evolution would be for institutional education (state or private schools) and non-institutional forms to cooperate rather than compete. As they attend different needs of the media community, they are complementary, not antagonistic. They should engage in dialogue and find ways to put resources together in order to advance the standards of the journalistic profession.

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## **Education of Journalists in Slovenia**

**Alenka Kotnik**

*The education level of journalists in Slovenia has been gradually moving up to the level of BA in the last decade. Media tend to employ more and more graduates, but not necessarily of journalism. According to the Statistical Register of Active Citizens, there are 872 journalists and 620 editors employed in Slovenia.*

## **Education level of journalists and media professionals**

Majority of journalists (535) hold a BA degree, and out of those, 203 graduated at the Faculty of Social Sciences while 96 hold degrees of the Faculty of Arts. One hundred seventy-seven journalists have secondary school education only, and 159 hold high school diploma. Only one person holds a Master's degree from the Faculty of Social Sciences. The situation with editors hardly differs at all. Vast majority (597) hold a BA from one of the departments of the Faculty of Social Sciences (200) and Faculty of Arts (128). There are 14 editors with secondary school diploma only and 6 with high school education. Three editors hold a Master's degree, one in economics, one in social science and one in arts.

And what are the current needs? According to the Slovenian Employment Agency, there were 103 vacancy notices in year 2000 and another 44 job opportunities in the first half of 2001. Thirty-six journalists are registered as unemployed in this year, while 39 were in the position last year. Majority of journalists does however not apply formally for the job, but get the job through different channels, mostly unadvertised notices.

Slovenia hosts numerous free lance journalists. One example only suffices to illustrate the trend towards employment of freelancers. The biggest media house in Slovenia, National Radio and Television of Slovenia (RTV Slovenia), employs 348 journalists and editors. About half of them have a BA degree, whereas journalists employed prior to 1995 mainly hold secondary school diplomas only. In addition to these full-time employees, there are also part-time journalists, that is – freelancers. An estimate, according to the head of RTV Slovenia's personnel department, is that there are 600 of those. Additional employees are practically not required, e.g. there were only 12 new employees this year, the majority of whom were hired to cover for employees on maternity leave.

The two journalists' organisations, the Union of Slovenian Journalists and Association of Slovenian Journalists, hold no records on education of their members. But an interesting survey on education and education requirements of media professionals was done by the Union two years ago. Fifty percent of 300 professionals covered by the survey have undergone classical university education and hold a BA degree, only 3 percent have done some sort of specialisation or Master's degree, and 25 percent are still undergraduate students. This suggests that further education is essential. But, only one third of the participants in this survey think they should participate in some form of education (whether a seminar or something else) while the vast majority of 66 percent believe themselves in no need of any further education. Only a third of the respondents paid for their own education.

Problems arising from the fact that part-time employees make up a majority of media staff are mainly social ones. Freelancers have a low social standard, and they tend to miss opportunities for further education.

There is also a growing belief that university education in journalism is redundant since it fails to produce good, that is experienced journalists and produces students with too broad, mainly general knowledge.

### **Classical university education**

*The Faculty of Social Sciences* is the only one in Slovenia running undergraduate course on journalism. More than 4,000 students enrol in 20 undergraduate programs at this faculty. There are 4 major departments (Sociology, Political Science, Cultural Studies, and finally – Communication Studies, which comprise journalism course). Faculty of Social Sciences was established in 1961 as *The School of Political Sciences*. Total full-time student enrolment in year 2000/2001 was 3,201 students, 1,009 at *Communication Studies Department*. There were 98 graduates at the Communication Studies, which has three tracks: Media Studies, Marketing Communications and Journalism. Many graduates from this department end up working as journalists.

Students can enrol once they have graduated from secondary/high school. They pay only enrolment fee (around 7,5 EUR), but no tuition fees are charged. The Faculty offers a study of journalism only or in combination with different courses at the Faculty of Arts. The Department of Communication Studies runs an interdisciplinary course combining theory and methodology with practical training. Journalism track offers courses on basics of communication as well as linguistics and social science methodologies. There is a strong emphasis on theoretical skills: media studies, analyses of foreign media systems, economics, politics, social psychology, anthropology, ethics of journalism, history of journalism, communication rights, Slovenian language and culture, general stylistics and one foreign language. Practice is rated second in the curriculum since the general belief is that students can work on that once they start their career. Practical courses on offer include: introduction to media (print, broadcast and new media), writing courses covering different genres (news, interview, feature, column, review) and broadcasting techniques (editing, recording, newscasts). The Department often hosts visiting lecturers, who are mainly foreign experts, Slovenian media professional, journalists, commentators and editors.

The full list of courses is the following: Advertising, Communication Rights, Media Systems, Basics of Marketing, Basics of Visual Communication, History of Journalism,

Integrated Market Communication, Introduction to Communication, Introduction to Journalism, Discourse of Journalism, Language and Advertising Styles, Market Research, Marketing Management, Mass Media, Media Culture, Methods of Communication Research, Political Communication, Politics of Images, Psychology of Communication, Psychology of Communication and Marketing, Public Opinion, Public Opinion Polls, Radio, Rhetoric, Semiology, Slovenian Language and Slovenian Military Vocabulary, Speech Culture, Slovenian Syntax, General Stylistics, Social Ethics and Ethics of Journalism, Stylistics of News Reporting, Television, Theory of Argumentation.

As already mentioned, the general complaint regarding undergraduate studies of journalism concerns the lack of practical training. There are also those who believe that journalism course is redundant altogether, since a graduate of any other faculty can be taught the basics of journalism at work. But a professor of the Faculty of Social Sciences has recently counter-argued this point very effectively: firstly, employer does require a certain level of practical knowledge, no matter how limited, from a young reporter – otherwise, by the time the reporter specialises, the reporter is no longer a *young* reporter, and secondly, there is no practice without theory.

### **Alternative forms of education**

There have been four major sources of alternative education for journalists over the last five years: Soros Foundation (now the Peace Institute), Slovenian Government, the Union of Slovenian Journalists and Association of Slovenian Journalists. Apart from the Peace Institute and internal education in various media outlets, there are practically no training programs at all.

*The Union of Slovenian Journalists* organised various public discussions and round tables under the PHARE program (EU funds) for two years. They also featured few international union workshops.

*Association of Slovenian Journalists* received no international donations but it financed *Gorjup Days*, annual gatherings of journalists, with membership fees. This manifestation is however more of a gathering than a form of education, although they feature some debates.

Only the *Peace Institute* organises various forms of education on the national level. The Institute holds at least one seminar a year where international visiting lecturers from Guardian Foundation, BBC, *Financial Times* etc. are invited. Those seminars are always free of charge. Seminars by the Peace Institute present a combination of lectures and group activities in the form of special debates on a certain topic. The seminars usually last two days.

The Peace Institute in cooperation with the other two organisations of Slovenian journalists organises various public debates in Cankarjev Dom. Couple of those held recently addressed the new media law in Slovenia.

The Peace Institute joined the *Southeast European Network for Professionalisation of Media* (SEENPM) in 2000. This Network offers up to 20 seminars every year. One Slovenian journalist, recommended by the Peace Institute, attends each seminar. The Institute also organises a seminar for the SEENPM once a year. Seminar participants are journalists from the region while the lecturers are usually Slovenes. All seminars are designed as a combination of lectures, practical exercises and visits to media houses and various other organisations and institutions.

Another alternative form of education, which proved to be very effective, is the program of study visits to media abroad, financed by the Guardian Foundation. Journalists select one media organisation and spend up to one month there. The 'student' works intensively with a fellow journalist in the latter's professional environment. There are also fellowship programs for visits of foreign journalists to media in Slovenia, but they are few.

Another positive example is so-called *journalists' evenings*. There are around 10 every year. These are short debates, addressing one topic at a time, and they usually have international participation. This may not be education in the common sense of the word, but journalists are educated through debate and participants are often students of journalism.

The State itself has never given any funding towards education of journalists, nor has it contributed to any of the existing education programs. *The Public Relations and Media Office* of the Government of Slovenia however has recently got funding from European Union to educate journalists in reporting the EU enlargement and NATO-related issues. The Office selected a few journalists and sent them to Brussels on a study visit to major EU institutions.

There are a number of problems with education of journalists, the major one being that there is no training centre in Slovenia. Mid-career journalists, students and freelancers would

considerably benefit from such a centre. However, media privatisation ran too quickly, media themselves do not invest in education, and foreign donors are not interested in financing such training centre (see section 4). That is what makes education of journalists only a secondary activity of different institutions.

The other problem, according to the program director of the Peace Institute, is the lack of interest in education among journalists themselves. There has always been a problem with motivation. Some journalists have problems with editors, who do not allow them leave of absence. Many study visits are done in journalist's own time off, mainly annual holidays. On the other hand, some mid-career journalists lack the enthusiasm and feel self-sufficient. Younger journalists are generally more interested in education but are mostly employed part time, and their absence from work necessarily entails salary deduction. It seems that harsh conditions of market competition make only the visible and immediate media product count – long-term investments into professional advancement of the very journalists do not seem to appeal to media owners and managers.

One must again recall the example of Slovenian national broadcaster, RTV Slovenia in this regard. RTV Slovenia provides training in speech and camera appearance. They also offer study visits abroad. Funds mostly come from EBU (*European Broadcasting Union*). Many journalists have so far visited the United Kingdom (BBC), Germany (ARD, ZDF), Austria (ORF) and Italy (RAI). But journalists generally agree that there should be more opportunities for study visits abroad and training in the use of new technologies.

A very important issue concerns also education of freelancers. Freelancers seem to be essential for Slovenian media, and yet there is no organisation investing in their education and protection of their rights. The rights protection part is to an extent covered by the Union and the Association of Slovenian journalists, but both fail to provide any education programs. Since the trend to employ freelancers part-time is evident over the last few years, these journalists must be better educated in order to work in print, broadcast and new media. Let alone the fact that it would be essential to educate them in their rights as authors as well as economy of their survival on the media market.

### **International donors, non-governmental organisations and education of journalists**

The theme of donations and their visible insufficiency marks any discussion of education in media arena. The Peace Institute enjoys support of the following donors: OSI Network (Soros Foundation), the Guardian Foundation and governments of Denmark and

Switzerland. Some donations have come from European Union under the Phare program for the Union of Slovenian Journalists and for the Public Relations and Media Office.

There are several reasons for the lack of funding for alternative forms of education; e.g. there are no regular nation-wide organised training and education programs, while most of the organisations mentioned here cannot afford to consider education programs as priority, given its low profitability. But the main reason is that Slovenia is generally seen as economically strong and could/should come up with its own sources of funding.

The strategy of the Peace Institute is to keep working within the SEENPM, since the Soros funds are shrinking. The Peace Institute also intends to go on organising one to two seminars annually and ten or more evening debates while providing fellowships to journalists and media experts.

New programs are however being introduced in Slovenia, and various funding is coming from European Union for education in all areas of EU enlargement. But there are only a few programs intended for media especially. Media should therefore apply to programs on democratisation, institution building, human rights issues, etc. There is little other hope for funding of specifically journalism-related educational programs in the future.

The university system will change as well. Predictions are that enrolment fees will soon rise to the level of those charged in Western countries, which will make the university studies much less accessible.

### **How local media and journalists perceive education programmes**

Slovenian Association of Local Televisions was established in 1992. It comprises 9 members that join forces in purchasing the necessary equipment, marketing and exchanging ideas. But the Association has so far not organised any training because, according to its president, the Association seriously lacks funding. Some local televisions run internal programs in the form of lectures in attempt to supplement rather limited knowledge of their staff. The main problem is that these journalists do not know how to use image as an instrument of journalism and the prime advantage of television over other media. This evidently calls for special, nation-wide training in TV journalism but there is sadly no such program for the time being. The Faculty of Social Sciences does a course on television journalism at the Communications Studies Department but many TV reporters have not done a degree in journalism.

Similar to this *Association is the Association of Local Non-commercial Radios*. The president of this association is disappointed in how little is being done for further education of journalists. Non-commercial radio stations employ between 3 and 6 journalists but do not provide them with any training opportunities. They naturally learn in the course of their daily work but there are no special workshops or seminars organised on the national level. The Association itself does not run any programs of the kind either. Some of the local broadcasters do provide certain internal training, but there is no official record on these programs. Most often journalists attend the few seminars organised by the Association of Slovenian Journalists. Journalists from local radio stations also attended seminars on speech organised by the national broadcaster RTV Slovenia.

The difficulties involve, as already mentioned, the lack of organised national system of education and problems of classical university education. As the head of the Association of Local Non-commercial Radio Broadcasters said, “the Faculty of Social Sciences tends to educate journalists for coverage of ‘great, important themes’. Hence their disappointment when they end up covering petite local problems one day.” Local editors and the Faculty should be working more closely to resolve these problems but they hardly have any relationship whatsoever these days. The solution would be to develop some cooperation programs.

Another problem with local broadcaster is the state of their finances. Due to numerous complications in implementation of new media law, local stations are running out of funds and not only will they not be able to employ new, young journalists, but will have to fire some of their present staff.

### **What next**

The future of education of journalists in Slovenia is uncertain. Classical university education seems to be insufficient. For the time being, everything depends on journalists and their own will and enthusiasm. The Faculty of Social Sciences is changing very slowly. Thanks to few ambitious professors, at least some changes to the better have been made. Efforts are invested in getting a radio and television studio for practical training of students. There are also writing courses in the first and second years of studies that are quite good, mainly due to the creative potential of the young teacher. The student newspaper *Bonus* is also a positive example of cooperation between students and experienced journalists. The course on TV journalism, run in the third year of the studies, is very practical and useful as well.

An interesting idea is introduction of supervision for students of journalism. Renowned journalists would act as tutors of few students and help them with writing. The supervision should be statewide, but could develop into an international project later on. But it is just an interesting idea for now.

There should also be a special form of education for freelance journalists, since there are so many and seem to be essential for Slovenian journalism, given that they create a fair share of programming and newspaper articles.

Both the Union of Slovenian Journalists and Association of Slovenian Journalists should take a more active approach to education of their members. Finally, but maybe most importantly, the climate in media outlet should change toward promoting education. New technologies will hopefully compel the media to invest in education of their staff.

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Activities: Faculty of Social Sciences offers classical university education, but also a possibility for students to study abroad, depending on scholarships available. Education is free of charge.

### **Peace Institute, Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Science**

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E-mail address: [info@mirovni-institut.si](mailto:info@mirovni-institut.si)

Activities: Peace Institute, Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Science organises seminars within SEENPM, study visits and internship programs at media organisations abroad in cooperation with Guardian Foundation, gatherings, debates and round tables. All forms of education are free of charge.

### **Union of Slovenian Journalists**

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Activities: The Union of Slovenian Journalists is a professional association, which gets funding from the European Union under PHARE program. It organised few seminars in the past two years. The Union charges a certain membership fee.

**Association of Slovenian Journalists**

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Web page: <http://www.vir.si/sindikati/sns/index.html>

E-mail address: [d.n.s-slo@siol.net](mailto:d.n.s-slo@siol.net)

Activities: Association of Slovenian Journalists is similar to the Union, but receives no international donations. Membership fees are source of funding for round tables and annual congress, which this association organises.

**Public Relations and Media Office, Government of the Republic of Slovenia**

Slovenska 29, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Phone: + 386 1 478 26 30

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Web page: <http://www.gov.si/uvj>

Activities: Public Relations and Media Office, Government of the Republic of Slovenia, is a governmental agency, which could hardly be related to education of journalists, but it got funding from European Union to train journalists in reporting on EU enlargement and NATO-related issues.

**Economic Association of Local Television Stations**

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Activities: Economic Association of Local Television Stations focuses on educating technical staff, rarely journalists.

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