

Media Landscape of Albania: Legal Framework

Gent Ibrahimi and Agron Loci¹

INTRODUCTION

This research paper focuses on newspapers, magazines and broadcasters not only as media outlets *per se* but rather in their institutional capacity. The main part of the study is a detailed analysis of the normative framework applied in the sphere of media. The analysis highlights three important points in that respect:

- Certain problems in the media legislation arise because the media legislation has not come into effect *en bloc*.
- Existing regulatory bodies have failed to enforce adequate standards of media conduct.
- Regulatory interventions are erratic, i.e. they are mainly prompted by individual instances of misconduct on the part of media rather than the structural requirement to regulate this public sphere.

The first part of the paper sketches out rough contours of the Albanian media scene and its political, economic and social environment. For better understanding of Albanian media landscape, it is necessary to be familiar with certain terms and abbreviations that mark the Albanian public discourse in this field.

Private media are print and electronic media owned by a single person, group or company, as opposed to state institutions.

Public media herein refers primarily to the former state television Albanian Radio and Television (ART) that has been transformed in a public service by law. By the beginning of January 2001 they will receive only a part of their budget from the government, intended for the

¹ Gent Ibrahimi is the Director of the Institute for Public and Legal Studies. As a lawyer and researcher specialised in media legislation, he prepared the detailed analysis, which is the bulk of this study. Data that present the basis of the first segment of the study were collected and elaborated by Agron Loci, a media researcher at the Albanian Media Institute (AMI). The authors are grateful to Remzi Lani, Director of AMI, and his Deputy Diana Kalaja for their valuable contribution.

renovation of the new technology, and supporting the Albanian program for Albanians living abroad.

State media are those that fully depend on financial support by the government.

NCRT – National Council of Radio and Television.

AMI – Albanian Media Institute

1. OVERALL SOCIOECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SITUATION IN ALBANIA

Albania is one of those ex-communist countries that have undergone most sweeping changes upon the fall of the communist regime. The years of post-communist transition proved to be somewhat a shock for the state of Albania as well as its society. Once an abandoned and isolated Stalinist country found itself exposed to global trends and influences. The rise of anti-communist opposition in 1990, toppling of dictator Hoxha's monument in 1991, unquestioned victory of democratic opposition in 1992, rejection of the draft Constitution introduced by Berisha in 1994, harshly criticized elections of May 1996, the pyramid investment scheme crisis in 1997, violent events of September 1998 and Kosovo War in Spring 1999, all these events paint the Albanian transition in rather dramatic colours – the exit from communism was not that rosy and festive after all.

As it is the case in most of the ex-communist countries, the transition proved to be most painful in the economic sphere. Despite the fact that Albania is the country that has received more aid *per capita* from the European Union over the last nine years than any other, it remains the poorest country in Europe. It is renowned for ramshackle infrastructure and roads in appalling condition, and it suffers from an acute lack of power and water. Paradoxically enough, Albania continues to boast the strongest currency of all Eastern countries. However, stable Albanian *Lek* and zero inflation are not results of successful economic policy – it is rather that the country receives around \$1 million a day through remittances sent by half a million Albanian emigrants now working in Greece and Italy, and also that large amounts of hard currency are circulating in the country through illegal traffic in drugs and stolen cars, prostitution and other criminal activities.

While the market has experienced a rapid development, paralysis of domestic production has been rather protracted. Although it was primarily an agricultural country up to 1999, Albania

imported a major part of agricultural products and food. But 1999 witnessed significant intensification of local production. In an attempt to boost its economy, Albania adopted very liberal legislation on foreign investments but those were rare due to the turbulent situation in the region and successive crises that the country experienced. However a growing interest of Greek and Italian businesses to invest in Albania has been noted of lately. What is helping ordinary Albanians through such grave economic problems is Albanian diaspora, proportionally the largest among all ex-communist countries, that provides support to relations in the homeland.

The political transition towards democracy has its own zigzags, passing intermittently through the stages of authoritarianism or anarchy, the latter being aggravated even further by the condition of 'armed peace' – nearly half a million arms and a considerable amount of ammunition remain in the hands of population. In addition, the political transition from dictatorship towards democracy is paralleled by belated social transition from rural community to urban society. Thousands of village people headed towards big cities in a completely unchecked move. The outcome was not urbanization of villages but ruralisation of cities.

However, tortured political transition in Albania is a consequence not only of socioeconomic crisis but political landscape of the country. Albania lacks a strong nationalistic subtext that would convert communist authoritarianism into a nationalism-based authoritarianism as done by Tudjman's regime in Croatia. But, more importantly, the country lacks any initial or rudimentary democratic institutions as were present in Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, facilitating the development of a genuinely democratic state. This has resulted in a highly unstable political arena – Albania has been run by nine different cabinets in the last nine years and it has not yet mastered the art of smooth political succession.

Albanian democracy thus remains reflected only in frequent elections of debatable transparency and credibility. The spectrum of political options and programmes has not widened the least in these last ten years since the overthrow of communism, and it continues to revolve around two dominant autocratic characters – ex-President Berisha and ex-Premier Nano. Political discourse has not evolved at all since the early days of 1991. The only consensus in Albanian politics concerns its foreign policy that, despite all inner conflicts, remains Western-oriented and supportive of European and regional integrative processes.

2. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEDIA SCENE

2.1. Print Media

There are 12 daily newspapers with a total daily circulation amounting to about 95,100 copies. Among the most circulated are *Shekulli* and *Koha Jone*. There is no subscribing system in the country and even those newspapers aspiring to nation-wide readership are distributed only in the cities due to the poor distribution system. As some 60 per cent of the population live in the countryside, it can be concluded that less than a half of the population gets the newspapers in the place of residence. As to periodicals, there are 12 weekly newspapers and 6 weekly magazines. There is only one quarterly magazine – *Dy Drina* that is distributed mostly in the northern part of the country with a circulation of about 1,000 copies.

2.2. News Agencies

Albanian Telegraphic Agency (ATA) is the only Albanian news agency in the country. ATA is a government-owned agency that has a round-a-clock service and a service in English. The agency news cover the entire territory of the country as it has developed a nation-wide stringer. ATA exchanges information with other foreign agencies such as REUTERS, AFP, AP, ANSA, DPA, ANA Greek News Agency, Anatolia Turkish News Agency, Egyptian News Agency MENA and Chinese Agency HISINUA. International news agencies such as REUTERS, AFP and Associated Press have opened their offices in Tirana.

2.3. Broadcasters²

Regarding broadcasters, the situation remains unclear. All broadcasters are currently operating on a temporary license. In August 2000, the NCRT launched verification of the documentation submitted by all applicants for local and national broadcasting licenses. Ultimately, 17 radio stations will be issued local broadcasting licenses and only 2 will receive national broadcasting licenses.

² For more information on the outcome of licensing in Albania, see article by the *Media Online* correspondent from Tirana *Protests by Broadcasters in Albania* at: <http://www.mediaonline.ba/mediaupite/upit3/tekst.htm?zanr=3&&sifra=444>

There are 50 TV stations applying. At the NCRT meeting on 17 August 2000, it was decided that only 28 of them would enter the finals. Out of those 28, only 4 have so far met the criteria for a national TV license. The others are yet to complete their applications and associated documentation if they are to meet the standing criteria. For this reason, the NCRT has decided to postpone its final decision until 18 October 2000 when the Council will decide which of the candidates will receive national TV license or local TV license respectively. There are going to be only two private national TV stations in addition to a single existing public TV – Albanian Radio and Television – which is already considered a national TV station as its signal can be viewed almost in 90% areas of the country. Appendix to this text contains the list of broadcasters applying for a license that passed the first round of selection. The Council may decide to add some more to this list at the forthcoming NCRT's meeting should they meet the requirements in the meantime.

2.4. Use of the Internet

The Internet in the Albanian media has been present only of recent. Two years ago, the Internet access was a rarity and one could have easily counted those who had an e-mail address. These days all the daily newspapers have the Internet access. However, all these dailies are Tirana-based while the situation is significantly different in other areas of the country where the Internet remains *terra incognita*.

The first media to create a homepage was the newspaper *Albanian Daily News* in August 1996. At the moment, 15 newspapers and broadcasters have their own homepages. Information presented on these pages are updated almost daily despite certain technical problems that inevitably arise. Others have email addresses.

As to the Internet facilities, Albanian Media Institute owns an Internet club with 10 computers, all with a 24-hour Internet connection. This service is offered to journalists free of charge.

2.5. Professional Organizations and Associations

There are two associations of journalists in Albania: the League of Albanian Journalists and Association of Professional Journalists of Albania, both members of IFJ. Members of these two associations are not only journalists but also publishers – moreover, their leaders are

publishers of the main newspapers and magazines in the country. The associations have overcome certain tensions in their relationship and they have developed close cooperation.

Association of the Newspapers' Publishers was established in 1998 but it has remained inactive ever since. The Association is also a member of World Association of Newspapers but it has not participated in any of its activities so far.

In August 1999 the Syndicate of Journalists of Albania was established with the aim of protecting the rights of journalists. A year has passed since but it has not yet come into effect.

The Albanian journalists have also organised themselves in smaller associations, depending on their more specific interests, such as "Massmedia and the Environment", Association of Environmentalist Journalists, Association of Economic Journalists, Association "Women in the Media" and Association of Francophone Journalists.

2.6. Education of Journalists and Media Professionals

Building of a new education system in the field of journalism followed the birth of free press in Albania, after the fall of communism. Since 1977, there were no schools of journalism in Albania. In 1992, the Department of Journalism was reopened within the History and Philosophy School of the University of Tirana. Two generations of journalists have already graduated from this School but the School remains in a rather unconsolidated condition despite efforts invested.

In eight years of its existence the Department of Journalism has received considerable foreign assistance, mostly from the US universities, the Danish School of Journalism in Aarhus and School of Journalism in Strasbourg in France. The teaching staff has specialized in various journalism schools in France, USA, UK, Denmark, etc. The most important achievement of the Department of Journalism is perhaps the fact that the majority of journalists of the Albanian press nowadays come from this very Department and not from other fields of education. Yet, its weakest aspect remains an unconsolidated curriculum and the lack of facilities such as studios, computers, etc.

Albania also lacks postgraduate education for journalists. The field of mid carrier training, however, has experienced rapid progress and greater interest. Principal organizations involved in training of journalists are the following:

1. Albanian Media Institute (AMI), established in December 1995, with the support of the Danish School of Journalism and the Danish Government. AMI offers training courses for

journalists and trainers, seminars, conferences and roundtables on media, and research studies on media development. At the moment, AMI is involved in a 2-year project, seeking to build a common strategy in the training of journalists from the Balkan countries and to create a network of trainers. This project involves media organizations from Sarajevo, Tirana, Bucharest, Plovdiv, and Skopje, and it is implemented by a network of media centers and institutes in the region of South East Europe. The network entitled South East European Network for Professional Media is composed of 17 press and media centers and it aspires to connect media centers and institutes in the region for the purpose of developing highly professional, free and independent media in the region. The network organizes training courses, media research and monitoring, publication and translation of books, study trips and exchange of media professionals, and curriculum development.

2. SOROS Media Center acts an information center for training programs. Priorities of this center are programmes primarily for private televisions, since the center possesses the state-of-art TV equipment. SOROS also supports training programmers of other media organizations.

3. IREX (International Research and Exchange Board) develops training programs for newspapers and radio management. It also assists in the formulation of the curriculum for the Department of Journalism of the University of Tirana. One of its priorities is also the implementation of the recently approved Law on Broadcasters.

AMI, Soros and IREX collaborate in a number of projects. They have created a cooperation forum in order to coordinate their activities and to avoid duplication of efforts. They have also started publishing a series of new books and handbooks on journalism. From the beginning of 1999, they publish a periodical entitled *Albanian Media*.

2.7. Media Regulation and Self-Regulation

After ten years of pluralism that witnessed the rise of the whole spectrum of newspapers – right and left wing, party papers, governmental papers and semi-independent newspapers – and almost identical situation in the broadcasters, the struggle to regulate the conduct of media professionals continues. The first attempt to ensure a certain standard of conduct by media professionals took place in 1993 when the People's Assembly adopted the Law on Press. The

Law however was very much contested by the entire journalistic society for including certain repressive and restrictive provisions. In 1997 it was abolished and a new one approved. The Law in effect reads the following: “The press is free. Freedom of press is protected by Law.”

In September 1998 the Law on Public and Commercial Broadcasters in the Republic of Albania was adopted. Until the present day all commercial broadcasters have been operating on a temporary license. National Council of Radio and Television (NCRT) is the body entitled to issue licenses to all broadcasters that meet the criteria set and this is in the process at the moment. The legal framework also incorporates regulations on defamation, confidential state documents, privacy, access to information and copyrights.

As a result of protracted debate, the Albanian media community finally put together the Code of Ethics for Journalists in 1998. This document places upon journalists more of a moral obligation to observe certain standards of profession. It deals with issues such as accuracy, right of reply, privacy, confidential records, journalist’s identification, pressure, personal matters, hospitals, lawsuits and courts, innocent friends and relatives, crime victims, cases of sexual violence, interviewing and photographing of children, discrimination, financing, confidential sources and public interest. In this light, the Code is indeed a significant step forward towards more professional media but there has so far been no body to supervise its implementation although the document was met with unanimous approval by the media.

Article 12 of the Law on Labor obliges all employers, including the owners of print media or broadcasters, to hire employees on the basis of legal employment contracts as under the Law. But ever since December 1995, when the Law on Labor came into force, the employment of journalists has not been done through legally prescribed contracting process in over 80 percent of the Albanian media. Independent press, coming out for ten years now, and new broadcasters, on air for three years, have not introduced employment contracts in the relationship between publishers on one hand and reporters or editors on the other. While only 20% of all journalists in the private media have contracts – maximally on 2 years – the situation is completely different at the Albanian Radio and Television and Albanian Telegraphic Agency as their still state-funded. All their employees have contracts but their salaries are considerably lower than salaries paid by the commercial media.

2.8. Economic Situation in the Media Scene

Economic situation of the print media is flawed in all its aspects. Firstly, the cost of newspapers' production is extremely high compared to average incomes of Albanians. Raw material (paper, films, dyes and other necessary accessories) are imported and the publishers are obliged to establish prices with a small margin over the cost or to fix prices lower than the actual production cost. This is what makes the prices of newspapers and magazines unbearable for average Albanians. For instance, the daily newspaper *Koha Jone*, printed on 32 pages and in a tabloid format, costs 50 leks or 35 cents per copy. Given that average income of a pensioner amounts to around 4,000 leks per month, or that of a teacher's salary is not over 10,000 leks, it turns out that a pensioner should spend some 30 % of his monthly pension to buy the paper regularly while a teacher should allocate 13 % of his monthly salary for the same purpose. Interestingly enough, *Koha Jone* is among the rare papers, or possibly the only one, which has a fixed market price, reflecting the costs of production and distribution, various taxes and tariffs, as well as the profit margin of about 20 %. Needless to say that such profit is unlikely to be achieved for the circulation rate is constantly going down due to its high price, as is the case with all other newspapers.

Secondly, advertisements revenues remain limited. Albanian economy in general is suffering the consequences of a substantial trade deficit. Albania imports around 850 million USD of various goods and exports less than 150 million USD. The trade of imported goods is far ahead production investments. Ads in fact perfectly illustrate the model of Albanian market, which is based more on mutual agreement among trade companies on the market division than competition. Under these circumstances, traders do not deem it necessary to advertise their goods. Ads of private companies in the Albanian press are often published on altruistic grounds, as a form of support to press, and for this reason commercial subjects fix the ads rates. Similarly, ads of the public institutions, which make up the bulk of revenues for the printing press, are often granted with the purpose of politically influencing or rewarding the media. A typical illustration of this is the advertising campaign of the Albanian Telecom, the only player in this particular field, at the time when an ordinary Albanian citizen ought to wait for months, and even pay a certain amount of bribery, to have a telephone line installed in his house.

Thirdly, the press managers complain continuously on a number of heavy taxes but until now not a single study has been done to demonstrate the bearing that taxes have on the financial

condition of newspapers. Last year, the government was determined to revise its press taxation policy on the condition that there would be a greater degree of transparency in terms of newspapers' financial sources. The owners of newspapers have however kept silent and the Government has not insisted on the issue although it has taken some practical steps towards relieving the tax burden: the previous 15 % tax on ads has been lifted and the 5 % customs tax on paper has been cut down. Country's fiscal authorities turn a blind eye in relation with the printing press, and as a result the papers do not pay part of the taxes. It is thought that the lifting of all taxes and tariffs on the press through a legal act would not have any considerable impact on the improvement of the Albanian printing press financial situation.

Finally, the system of press circulation is still the old one. The subscription system is almost inexistent. Thus the people living in the countryside, i.e. around 50 % of the total population, encounter newspapers only randomly and casually for the newspapers are delivered in the cities only. The press delivery and selling services are separated and the country is lacking an agency to comprise delivery, sale and subscription services.

Economic situation of broadcasters is still vague. Apart from the national public broadcaster Albanian Radio and Television, which is mainly financed through subsidies from the state budget, all commercial broadcasters are supported by other businesses and do not make any significant profit. The situation will continue to be unclear for as long as the licensing process is ongoing.

3. GENERAL PROBLEMS OF THE MEDIA REGULATION IN ALBANIA

Regulation of the media in the Republic of Albania has been followed very closely by the public opinion, stirred by the media in most cases. Perhaps one of the biggest problems of the regulatory reform affecting the media in Albania has been the fact that such reform did not come *en bloc*. As a consequence, fragmented pieces of legislation failed to give responses to several issues of interest for the media. Whereas this is perfectly normal for it takes different laws to regulate copyright, defamation, secrecy, broadcasting and so on, it has prompted a general feeling of mistrust in the ability of the regulatory reform to regulate the media conduct in a fair manner. Further down the line such mistrust has been the premise for weak implementation standards, which sometimes culminate to absolute lawlessness. It is only at the beginning of the year 2000

that the legal framework was completed and answered most of the questions that the media professionals were faced with.

Apart from the fact that the regulatory reform has been progressive, hence unable to clarify all the issues simultaneously, the failure of the regulatory bodies to enforce standards of conduct has been yet another problem for media regulation in Albania. The map of the regulatory bodies and the respective laws that have incorporated them is the following:

- The National Council of Radio and Television (NCRT) - Law on Broadcast Media;
- The Directorate for the Security of Classified Information (DSCI) - The State Secrecy Law;
- The National Association for the Protection of Copyright (NAPC) - The Copyright Act;
- The Ombudsman - The Freedom of Information Act;
- The Ombudsman - The Protection of Personal Data Act

It is important to note here that some of these bodies are truly regulatory in the sense that they are expected to issue secondary rules, within the scope of the respective legislation, in an attempt to regulate the behaviour of the interested parties in more details. Namely, the NCRT and the DSCI, have purely regulatory powers. On the other hand, the Ombudsman and the NAPC perform a soft supervisory role. Enhancement of performance for the regulatory, or quasi-regulatory, bodies is expected to bring about an enhanced implementation of legislation by media professionals.

The third problem related to regulatory reform in Albania, potential rather than actually present, is the fact that regulatory interventions on the media are occasionally prompted by populist perceptions of media misbehaviour rather than substantial need to regulate these issues in accordance with the principles of the rule of law. Such potentiality has come true at least once, in the case of the Printed Press Act of 1993, which had a profoundly chilling effect on the work of the Albanian media.

Since August 2000, the licensing of broadcasters is at full swing in the Republic of Albania. Following the requirement of the Law No. 8410 dated September 2000, the National Council on Radio and Television launched bidding for the allocation of available frequencies to broadcasters. Private broadcasting is a real life fact in Albania since 1997. It is a fair say that between 1997 and 2000 the conduct of broadcasters has been in sharp contrast with the standing legal requirements. Namely, some of the broadcasters have been bluntly partial in relation to

Albanian politics. Pornography, piracy and low technical standards have been commonplace. Nevertheless, the NCRT has made it clear that past “sins” will not be taken into account for the sake of the licensing process. Despite their past records, the broadcasters will be judged only on the ground of their assets, investment plans, planned programming and internal organization.

However, it is almost certain that the NCRT will keep a close eye on the media in the context of the electoral campaign for the election of local administration due to commence on September 1, 2000. The argument of NCRT seems to be that, although broadcasters are not licensed yet, they are in an advanced stage of the licensing process and therefore should observe the requirement for political impartiality. In addition to the fact that the licensing process is complex *per se*, the NCRT itself is suffering internal problems because the opposition is boycotting it and the remaining members find it more and more difficult to find common ground. But, despite all these hurdles, commercial broadcasting in Albania is moving back – slowly but steadily – into the rails of legality and professionalism.

The Media Legal Framework

Since 1990, after decades of governmental tutelage of the press, the Albanian media faced new horizons of freedom. The advent of independent media, quite naturally, was duly characterised by the mounting political pressure on them and severe lack of professionalism among the journalists. These phenomena, to a considerable extent, were to be ascribed to the absence of a proper regulatory framework.

The first legislative interventions attempting to regulate the conduct of media professionals, took place back in 1993 when the then People's Assembly (the Assembly), adopted Law no. 7756, date 11.10.1993 on Press. Nevertheless, the legislative process, which led to the adoption of the Law No. 7756, was affected by serious flaws as the concerned actors, namely media company owners and journalists, were not given a chance to influence the content of the legislation. As a consequence, the media people were soon faced with the unpleasant reality of a repressive legislation.

Law No. 7756 was repealed in its entirety by the new legislature. Several other laws that have an impact on the standards of media profession either directly or indirectly, such as the Law on Broadcasting, Freedom of Information Act, Data Protection Act, Classified Information Act

and others, are now adopted by the Assembly following a more transparent and participatory process.

At present, a web of regulations and several regulatory agencies make up the framework within which the Albanian media operate. Whereas in the early 1990s the Albanian media only started exploring freedom, at the end of the decade they are facing ever-stringent requirements of legality.

A Printed Press Act for Albania: Pros and Cons. In 1993, the then People's Assembly adopted the Printed Press Act. The Law was inspired by the German model with little (if any) effort to adapt it to the Albanian context. Very soon the media were faced with repressive legislation. This is a historical explanation of the attitude taken by the new legislature that, immediately upon inauguration in September 1997, repealed the old Act in its entirety. The symbolic gesture of the socialist controlled legislature, in fact, heralded a serious liberalisation of the so far tense relationship between the media and government.

Present Albanian legislation on printed media consists of merely 2 articles. The first article stipulates the following: "The Press is Free. Freedom of Press is protected by Law". The rest is merely jargon. This is clearly pathetic and inspired by the US model. As a consequence, the very same legislature is now considering a new, comprehensive law on the print media. There exists a commonly shared opinion in today's Albania that a new law on print media is needed. Those who advocate the idea of a new law for the print media, i.e. the Parliamentary Commission on Media and a local, legal affairs think tank, claim to base their conclusions on their monitoring of the daily performance of the Albanian print media, the problems that affect the print media as well as the reactions of citizens on presumed media misbehaviour. On the other hand, the developing jurisprudence that has been produced by the European Court of Human Rights on the freedom of expression provides answers to many pending questions concerning the media profession. According to the supporters of a print media act, it makes lots of sense to try and entrench those principles in Albanian domestic legislation.

An interest group, made up of journalists for the most part, seems to support some kind of a *laissez faire* doctrine according to which any regulation of print media would, in fact, restrict freedom of press. Their opponents – the group here being more colourful since it brings together legislators, policy makers and a large portion of the public – maintain that such a law would *inter alia* help avoid, to the extent possible, the use of criminal law in matters involving journalists,

pushing instead for the use civil law procedures in order to get satisfaction in cases of defamation. In addition to this, they believe that specific legislation would enable journalists to report more safely on political figures and high public officials, to secure better access to administrative and judicial proceedings as well as several other privileges, such as the right not to disclose sources of information, the right not to undergo any form of accreditation etc, which are questioned for the moment.

Journalism and Defamation. Reconciling journalistic freedom with the right to individual dignity has proved a major challenge for national legal systems and the work of international courts. The Albanian society, perhaps even more than other societies in Europe, needs its media to actively perform their "watch dog" role. Constructive public criticism, exposure of corruption and government inefficiency are but some of the many desired effects of free media. On the other hand, the right to individual dignity and reputation lies at the core of democratic societies. This is why defamation laws have been introduced in order to prevent the media from abusing their public standing at the expense of the reputation of individuals. Since defamation, by its very nature, is one of the sins commonly committed by journalists, it is worth dedicating the following lines to existing defamation law in the Republic of Albania. Defamation legislation is present in the Republic of Albania both in its criminal and civil form

Criminal Defamation. Unfortunately, criminal law constitutes the primary means for injured parties to obtain redress in cases of unwarranted attacks by the media on the reputation of persons in Albania. On the other hand, Albanian criminal law concerning defamation is fair in its scope as it aims to protect individual reputation in the first place. The *travaux preparatoires* for the preparation of the Criminal Code clearly indicate that the intent of the legislator was to provide protection to the reputation of individuals rather than other, impersonal interests. Articles 119 and 120 of the Criminal Code materialise the concept of the legislator that reputation is strictly linked to a physical person and may not be commonly applied to juridical persons and even less to objects. Article 119 (Defamation) reads the following: "Intentionally defaming a person constitutes criminal contravention and is punishable by a fine or up to six months of imprisonment. When this act is committed publicly, it constitutes criminal contravention and is punishable by a fine or up to two years of imprisonment." Article 120 (Libel) reads the following: "Intentionally spreading rumours, and any other knowingly false information, which affect the honour and dignity of a person, constitutes criminal contravention and is punishable by a fine or

up to one year of imprisonment. The same act, committed publicly, constitutes criminal contravention and is punishable by a fine or up to two years of imprisonment."

However, there are strong reminiscences of past times when defamation used to be linked to official persons and objects. The most important exceptions to the presumption that criminal defamation provisions are primarily intended to address unwarranted attacks on personal reputation are the following:

- Article 227 - insulting representatives of foreign countries;
- Article 229 - insolent acts against the anthem and the flag;
- Article 268 - defamation of the Republic and its symbols.

Whereas journalists become increasingly aware of the limits imposed on journalistic freedom for the sake of protection of the reputation of individuals, they question the appropriateness of having defamation provisions in place for the protection of objects such as the national flag and other symbols. Also there is a growing dissent concerning Article 227 which aims to award to foreign dignitaries special protection from defamation. Clearly, all these provisions are somewhat distant from the original concept of the drafters on defamation as an injury against simple individuals. As such, these provisions have prompted a hot scholarly debate.

However, Albanian criminal defamation law is not exceptionally harsh as it provides all necessary substantive and procedural guarantees to journalists (for that matter, to anybody) who happen to defame. Namely, the burden of proof is strictly put on the claimant who is invited to prove defamation beyond reasonable doubt. Furthermore, the law makes it clear that defamation shall be considered committed only when the falsity of the statement, the intention to defame as well as actual knowledge of falsity are proved beyond any reasonable doubt (article 120).

Civil Defamation. Although criminal law remains the primary means for obtaining redress in cases of unwarranted attacks on personal dignity and reputation, civil remedies are possible under Albanian law as well and, what is more, civil remedies are increasingly resorted to by the aggrieved parties. However, there are certain flaws of civil remedies against defamation in the context of the Albanian legal framework. Whereas criminal sanctions are predictable to a considerable extent, Albanian courts have not, up to date, established tests that would make the outcome of a civil proceeding against defamation as predictable. Nevertheless, this is a fully

evolving body of law and the courts seem to have mastered adjudication considerably over the last 6 years since the adoption of the Civil Code.

Civil defamation law in Albania is characterised by yet another problem. Namely, bringing an action in court on grounds of alleged defamation is practically not subject to any limitation period. Article 113 of the Albanian Civil Code stipulates that actions aimed at achieving satisfaction for injuries caused by the violation of personal, non pecuniary rights (where reputation falls clearly into this category) could be raised at any time. Such an arrangement brings about a state of general uncertainty, as journalists could be held liable at any time for very early statements. On the other hand, the journalists' capacity for proper defence would be severely diluted by the fact that their case is judged long after the time when real life facts prompted the contested journalistic statement.

Although no serious study on existing case law concerning civil defamation exists, it may be safely maintained that civil redress is becoming an increasingly commonplace as injured parties have come to experience the reluctance of the courts to award criminal penalties in cases of defamation. Last but not least, the injured parties have come to appreciate the real comfort financial compensation may bring about. In one of the most celebrated cases, a cabinet minister obtained a serious compensation following a court proceeding against an opposition newspaper. The public opinion remains divided over the rightfulness and considerable incidence of compensations awarded in cases of defamation. Some argue that this is an indication of an increasing pressure on free press, an attempt to prevent legitimate criticism of officials or the exposure of government wrongdoings. Others, a perceived majority, believe that such high incidence of court rulings in favour of injured parties is but a reflection of the fact that the media are highly unethical.

Yet another controversial issue concerning civil defamation in Albania is that Albanian law enables individuals to sue for damages on behalf of deceased people. Article 625 paragraph b of the Civil Code states that the surviving spouse or relatives up through the second scale may seek compensation if the memory of a dead person is desecrated. This provision is believed to have the potential to prevent journalists from making critical historical analysis, thus depriving the society from an important set of information. Traditionalists, on the other hand, tend to stick to the present arrangement arguing that ethical journalism is the ultimate guarantee of journalistic freedom, preferring it to any the reshaping of the legal system.

Journalism and State Secrecy Law. Recent Albanian history, relevant to the use of classified information has been tainted by several bitter events. Some of these events have also involved journalists. Whereas the need for a certain relaxation of the severe state secrecy rules inherited from communism was felt among media professionals, regulating the issue of classified information became imperative if smooth functioning of the state was to be ensured. The absence of legislation and jurisprudence, where jurisprudence is still minimal, used to cause serious difficulties, which impaired both freedom of expression and legitimate state secrecy. A relatively long process of raising awareness led to the adoption of a specific law on classified information in 1999.

Law No. 8457, dated 11 February 1999, regulates the notion of classified information in the Republic of Albania. Such Law provides the rules for classification, usage, storage and declassification of information related to national security that is considered " a state secret". According to Albanian legislation, official information may only be classified for the sake of national security. On the other hand, national security is intended to include the country's territorial integrity, its institutions, national economy and culture as well as foreign relations of the Republic of Albania.

Albanian legislation envisages 3 levels of classification, namely "top secret", "secret" and "confidential" which indicate a different potential of harm if the information is disclosed. The most important element in any classified information legislation is the capacity to classify, in other words, the classifying authority. The Law entrusts the following officials with the authority to classify information: the chairman of the Council of Ministers; the principals of central agencies authorised by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers; any governmental official who receives such authority through delegation by the authority of original classification. Furthermore, every citizen in the Republic of Albania has the right to suggest that certain information undergo classification by the relevant government institution.

It is prohibited to classify information that is not related to national security in order to conceal any violation of law, administrative inefficiency or mistakes; to circumvent the citizens' right for information, etc. The Law provides procedural details on declassification and devaluation of classified documents and their storage. In order to manage the storage and administration of classified information, a so-called Directorate for the Security of Classified Information has been set up at the Council of Ministers.

Whereas the Albanian law on classified information meets most international standards, it still fails to answer a question that is of paramount importance for the work of a journalist. Namely, is the journalist to be held liable if classified information is extended to him/her by the public official who is supposed to protect such information? Most media professionals expect the forthcoming law on the printed press to give a definite answer to this question. However, scholars of law believe that it is the duty of court jurisprudence to shed some light on this blurred issue.

Journalism and Private Life. In the immediate aftermath of the communist era, the general human right to a private life did not receive proper attention from legislators and policy makers. On the contrary, several pieces of legislation, which can be loosely referred to as lustration law, were adopted in an attempt to keep the former nomenclature out of governmental positions. At the same time, certain communist era practices such as unauthorised telephone tapping, interception of mail etc were still pervasive. On the other hand, the newly found freedom of expression grew rapidly abusive, as journalistic reporting did not spare even the most sacred corners of private life such as health, family life and personal finance. In one of the most celebrated cases involving lack of journalistic ethics, the personal correspondence of a deceased person was divulged indiscriminately. The ratification of the European Convention on Human Rights, back in 1995, and especially the new Albanian Constitution of 1998 laid the ground for stricter observance of the right of the citizens to private life. Clearly, the sphere of private life is wide. So far, Albanian legislation has only tackled the protection of stored personal data, i.e. interception of mail is a criminal penalty.

On 22 July 1999, the Albanian Assembly adopted Law No. 8520 on the Protection of Personal Data. This is a frame law, intended to introduce the most basic notions and principles of privacy. The purpose of Law No. 8520 is to provide protection to personal data as well as to secure that, if personal data are used, they are used for a legitimate purpose and in a procedurally correct way. Namely, Law No. 8520 imposes the following requirements on personal data processing:

- personal data shall be processed in a way that is compatible with Law No. 8520;
- personal data shall be processed for a clearly defined and legitimate purpose;
- only updated personal data shall be subject to processing;
- the processing of personal data shall not go beyond the original scope of processing;

- the processing of personal data shall be conducted in a way that would avoid damages on the respective files;
- only those personal data that are relevant for the purpose of the processing shall be processed.

Additionally, the Law requires that the data subject be preliminary notified as to the processing, the identity of the processor, the purpose of the processing, the categories of data that are being processed, the eventuality of data transfer and measures taken for the physical safety of the respective file. The Law imposes specific duties on the person in charge of data processing, invariably a public authority, as well as any other persons that might happen to process the data following an authorisation from the person in charge.

Law No. 8520 provides specific regulations concerning safety in data processing and modalities of data transfer. The Law recognises to the data subject all classical guarantees such as the right of preliminary consent, the right to access personal data and the right to object processing. There is however something peculiar about the Albanian data protection legislation. Namely, whereas individuals are clearly free to appeal administratively and judicially in order to object the processing of their personal data – tort claims are also applicable – Law No. 8520 gives the Ombudsman a special role in the field of data protection. The Ombudsman is expected to set up a register of data protection and is also vested with general supervisory powers for the implementation of Law No. 8520.

Journalism and Access to Information. Access to information is the first, indispensable premise of journalistic freedom. Whereas the political branches of the Albanian government have become increasingly open to the media, the judiciary still remains inscrutable. Over the last few months even the judiciary has given the first signs that it is opening up slowly but steadily – of course, one needs to take into account the specificity of the judicial functions. In June 1999, the Assembly of the Republic of Albania adopted Law No. 8503 on the Freedom of Information on Official Documents. As a matter of fact, the general right to the freedom of information was already enshrined in Article 23 of the new Albanian Constitution of 1998. The article provides the following:

- the right to information is guaranteed;
- everyone has the right, in compliance with law, to get information about the activity of state organs, as well as persons who exercise state functions;

- everybody is given the possibility to follow the meetings of collectively elected organs.

Along the lines of the Constitution, Law No. 8503 details the notions and procedures whereby such freedom becomes available to ordinary citizens. The Law provides that freedom of information is the presumption and withholding of information is the exception to the rule – what is more, withholding information may be only authorised by law. The basic principle is that a citizen does not need to show personal interest on an issue in order to be entitled to consult an official document. According to Law No. 8503, if a public official declines to provide a citizen with the requested information, such official should issue a statement whereby explanations and the legal basis for the negative reply should be provided.

Law No. 8503 imposes on the administration the duty to provide updated information and in a manageable format. The Law identifies certain categories of information that should be available to the public without any request. Furthermore, the Law envisages specific time lines for the refusal of the request for information, the satisfaction of the request and procedures for the reinstatement of time lines. As for the tariffs for the provision of information, the Law embraces the principle that tariffs are acceptable as long as the derived money is directed towards the coverage of actual costs incurred by the administration.

When the draft Bill was first presented by the Government, journalists were furious because of the timelines envisaged by the law for the provision of information. Their argument was that journalism is time bound and receiving information some 10 days following the submission of the request would profoundly impair good journalism. The Government responded to such claims by saying that the Freedom of Information Act was not designed for the specific purpose of facilitating journalism. The primary objective is to improve the average citizen's access to official documents. Journalists are supposed to have their personal, preferential channels of information that allow them to react promptly to events. Nevertheless, when journalists need to investigate and consult a considerable amount of documents, this law gives them the certainty that they will receive official documents from the Government in 10 days. In other words, the Freedom of Information Act is only marginally relevant for the work of media professionals.

As in the case of the Data Protection Act, here again, a special role is recognised to the Ombudsman who is expected to exert a general supervisory role on the state of affairs with

freedom of information. This does not exclude the alternative of administrative or judicial appeal for the interested parties.

Journalism and Copyright. The Albanian Copyright Act goes back to the month of May 1992 when the then People's Assembly adopted Law No. 7564. Certain amendments are now being considered. Although the regulatory intervention took place quite soon after the start of the democratisation process, actual observance of copyright has been a plague of Albanian journalism. Piracy in all its possible forms has flourished over the last decade. In one of the most followed court proceedings, two news agencies litigated over the copyright on certain pieces of news. On that occasion the court had a good chance to spell out important principles. In yet another case from 1996, a former Miss Albania sued for compensation a major weekly magazine, which failed to ask for her permit before putting semi-nude photo of her on the cover page. Here again the court emphasised the important principle according to which, if the picture as such would be able to increase the circulation of the magazine, the character in the photo was entitled to compensation from the magazine. However, the most spectacular cases of copyright violation have happened at the hands of broadcasters. The Albanian public has regularly followed major sports events and recent Hollywood movies thanks to the unscrupulous piracy of broadcasters. Little changed even after the adoption of the Law on Broadcast Media and the incorporation of the National Committee on Radio and Television (NCRT). Over the last few months, however, one of the private broadcasters purchased from FIFA the broadcasting rights for soccer matches of the Champions League. Needless to say, such broadcasters are determined to enforce their rights through court proceedings. They have already filed suits against several violators. As a consequence, the copyright issue has come back to the stage and hope is rising that the combined effect of private interests, i.e. interests of the purchaser of TV rights, and the pressure from the NCRT will improve copyright protection in Albania.

What is the content of the Albanian copyright act anyway? The basic principle of Law No. 7564 is that protection is awarded to authors regardless of the form of expression, the quality or the purpose of their work and that ideas, principles or innovations contained in the materialised work do not enjoy protection as such. The scope of protection provided by Law No. 7564 extends to the following forms of intellectual products: written works, including software; lectures, speeches, predications and other orally expressed works; musical works, with or without text; theatre works; choreographic works and dumb shows; audio-visual products; fine art works such

as drawings, paintings, sculptures, carving and lithographs; architectonic works, photography; works of applied arts; illustrations, maps, plans, schemes and three dimensional works in the field of geography, topography and science. Law No. 7564 extends its protection also to the so-called derived works such as translations, adoptions, collections of folk art, encyclopaedias etc.

Authors are protected both in their moral and economic rights. Whereas no limitation applies on the moral right of authors, their economic rights do not apply if their works are reproduced for personal use, cited, used for teaching purposes, reproduced with a view to entering archives or libraries, reproduced in the context of judicial proceedings, disseminated in the media or publicly performed within the premises of the educational institutions. Additionally, the Law provides, for different works, specific time lines upon which completion economic rights of the author do expire – moral rights never expire.

In order to protect the rights of authors collectively, a national association has been set up by the same Law. Its competencies and procedures are also provided in the Law. There is a clause intended to provide protection to foreign authors as well. According to the clause, rights of foreign authors are protected both by the provisions of the Albanian Law and International Conventions adhered to by the Republic of Albania.

The Electronic Media Act Dated September 1998. The then People's Assembly adopted Law No. 8410 on Public and Commercial Broadcasting in the Republic of Albania. As indicated by the very title, the Law extends its regulations both on public and commercial broadcasters. Following the definition of broadcasting, the Law proceeds to lay down the basic principles governing broadcasting in the Republic of Albania. Namely, it is envisaged in Articles 4 and 5 of Law No. 8410 that, while broadcasting in the Republic of Albania is free, it is conducted in compliance with the requirements for impartiality, respect for the political and religious convictions of others and privacy. The same Law guarantees editorial independence.

In the part of the Law dedicated to commercial broadcasting, the National Council of Radio and Television (NCRT) is set up. The NCRT is the licensing authority and the supervisor of legality in private broadcasting. The NCRT is elected by the Parliament and is totally independent in its activity. The Law provides for the competencies of NCRT, the modalities for the election of its members and actual membership, the internal organisation of NCRT, its funding and incompatibilities pending on members of NCRT. A so-called Board of Complaints is attached to the NCRT.

Chapter 4 of the Law No 8410 provides details on licensing of commercial broadcasters. It is stipulated that licenses for commercial broadcasting are awarded based on a bidding system and that the respective decisions of NCRT are made public. Also, the Law provides requirements of territorial coverage for local and national broadcasters, internal organisation of national broadcasters, content of the request for a license, time lines for the award or the refusal of the license and so on. Regulations contained in chapters 5, 6 and 7 concerning programming, advertisement and sponsorship respectively is applicable both to private and commercial broadcasters. Chapter 8 deals with the organisation and funding arrangements for the Public Albanian Broadcaster. It also contains a pathetic Declaration of Intent for the Public Broadcaster. Chapters 9, 10 and 11 deal with cable TV, signal repetition facilities and satellite transmission respectively.

The same Law has laid down all the legal guarantees for transformation of the Albanian Radio and Television into public broadcaster. Namely, the governing body of the public broadcaster, the Steering Council, is elected directly by the Parliament. Its members are given fixed terms and good guarantees for their irrevocability. Further down the line, it is the Steering Council that appoints the general manager. Hence it is fair to say that all governing bodies of the Albanian public broadcaster are elected in a way that makes them independent from the executive power of the government.

Apart for these organizational arrangements, funding schemes make up the other big avenue posing risks to the independence of the public broadcasters. On the other hand, funding of public broadcasters is secured, for the most part, by a direct fee imposed on TV set owners. Such fee is collected once a year together with the electricity bill and is calculated to make up the biggest part of the overall budget of the broadcaster. The fee is provided for by the law and, consequently, the Government can do nothing to alter that. Another major funding source for the public broadcaster is its commercial activity, which is not different in scope from that of commercials broadcasters. Several scholars tended to argue that the public broadcaster should not get involved in advertising, leaving it to commercial broadcasters since the public broadcaster is supposed to live on the tax and partial government subsidies anyhow. Despite such argument, the Law in its final version does not prohibit the public broadcaster from making profit on advertisements on the ground that the tax is too small and it would not suffice to support the public broadcaster's activity.

The Law permits governmental subsidies to the broadcaster only in two situations: for those foreign language programs that are intended to reach foreign audiences and for satellite broadcasting intended to reach Albanians living abroad. In other words, the Albanian public broadcaster relies only slightly on government subsidies and is therefore financially independent from the Government.

Despite these significant guarantees of independence, the Albanian public broadcaster suffers from poor management. It has got extremely swollen personnel and several moribund branches that erase its economic efficiency. Additionally, poor programming has caused the loss a large share of viewers to vibrant private competitors. Unless the governing bodies of the public broadcasters do not change the present state of affairs, the effects of the two major guarantees of independence will be diluted to the point of annihilating their impact. Therefore, improving management is the pending challenge that lies ahead of the Albanian public broadcasters. Attempt to address this problem are already under way as public pressure increases.

CONCLUSION

Albania nowadays has 12 daily newspapers and around 50 TV and radio channels that are running for a license. There is however a growing concern as to the future of the press and possible ways of overcoming the crisis are being debated. One of the solutions may be to cut down the taxes on raw materials used for the newspapers' production and to reform the distribution. On the other hand, transformation of newspapers into share holding companies with numerous shareholders, especially if they originate from the business world, would be the best solution for sharing the losses, improving the financial situation of the newspapers and ensuring investments.

In the sphere of broadcasting, the situation will not be any less foggy until licensing of broadcasters is completed. The likelihood is that, whatever the decision by NCRT, it will be challenged, contested, even ignored but it will have to be observed eventually. The law also envisages transformation of the state-owned ART into a public broadcaster. The process has been launched but it is already encountering difficulties due to the lack of a limpidity and willingness to reform the ART radically. Currently, the state budget covers around 70 % of the ART expenditures.

The new media legislation has given a new dimension to the freedom of press in the country but it has also left uncovered many issues related to misuse of press, violation of professional ethics, right to reply, status of journalists in relation to employers, etc. The requirement for a complete and democratic press law, which would demonstrate all the rights and obligations of press towards the public without infringing the essence of freedom of expression, is becoming ever more evident. The awareness that an effective implementing mechanism would be essential in addition to legal and ethical framework is growing. Finally, strengthened positions of media professional organizations and associations should create an environment for the truly independent and objective press.

ANNEX

Table 1: Daily Newspapers (6-7 issues per week)

No.	Title/ founding year	Affiliation	Frequency	Daily Circulation	Distribution Scope	Format
1.	<i>Koha Jone</i> 1991 Tirana	Private (Nikolle Lesi)	6 x week	13000	National wide and abroad	Tabloid format 32 pg
2.	<i>Shekulli</i> 1997 Tirana	Private (Koco Kokedhima)	7x week	22000	Nationwide and abroad	Tabloid format 24pg
3.	<i>Gazeta Shqiptare</i> 1995 Tirana	Edisud Company in cooperation with italian capital	6 x week	7600	Nationwide	Tabloid format 24 pg
4.	<i>Albania</i> 1995 Tirana	Private Foundation Faik Konica	6 x week	11000	Nationwide and abroad	Tabloid format 12 pg
5.	<i>Republika</i> 1991 Tirana	Republican Party	6 x week	7000	Nationwide	Tabloid format
6.	<i>Zeri Popullit</i> 1945 Tirana	Socialist Party	6 x week	12000	Nationwide and abroad	Tabloid format 24pg
7.	<i>Rilindja Demokratike</i> 1991 Tirana	Democratic Party	6 x week	6000	Nationwide and abroad	Tabloid format
8.	<i>Ekonomia</i> 1998, Tirana	AEDA Albanian Economic Development Agency	6 x week	1000	Nationwide	Tabloid format 16pg
9.	<i>Gazeta 55</i> 1997 Tirana	Private Fahri Balliu	6 x week	4500	Nationwide	Tabloid format 16pg
10.	<i>Tema</i> Tirana	Media Enter Association Private	6 x week	5000	Nationwide	Tabloid format 16pg
11.	<i>24 Ore</i> Tirana	1992-1996 2000 Government	6 x week	5000	Nationwide	Tabloid format 16pg
12.	<i>Albanian Daily News</i> Tirana	Private April 1995	6 x week	1000	Local – Tirana-based	Tabloid format 12 pg

Information updated on 20 September 2000

Table 2: Weekly Newspapers (1 issue a week)

Nr.	Title / year of foundation	Affiliation	Circulation	Distribution scope
1.	<i>Celesi</i> 1997 Tirana	Private Ylli Sula	10000	Nationwide
2.	<i>Intervista</i> 1992 Tirana	Private Artan Kristo	33000	Nationwide and abroad
3.	<i>Rimekembja</i> 1995 Tirana	Party paper <i>Rimekembja</i> <i>Kombetare</i> - Abdi Baleta	500	Nationwide
4.	<i>Drita</i> 1901 Tirana	Association of Writers and Artists	1000	Nationwide
5.	<i>Orakulli I Tomorrit</i> 1998 Berat	Private –“The Association- Jonalda”	1500	Regional
6.	<i>Fier Times</i> 1997 Fier	Private Eduard Zenuni	1000	Regional – South West
7.	<i>Korca</i> 1998 Korce	Private Vehbi Furxhi	1000	Regional – South East
8.	<i>Dita Jug</i> 1997 Lushnje	Private Engjell Seriani	1200	Regional – South West
9.	<i>Hapesire mendimi</i> 1998 Lushnje	Private Halil Jacellari	1000	Local – South West
10.	<i>Gazeta Nositi</i> 1998 Pogradec	Private Afrovit Gusho	1500	Local – South East
11.	<i>Start</i> 1998 Vlore	Business School	500 – 1000	Local – South
12.	<i>Librazhdi</i> 2000 Librazhd	Association AKS Haxhi Balliu	1000	Local – East

Table 3: 3-4 times weekly newspapers

NR.	Title / Year of Foundation	Affiliation	Frequency of publication	Circulation	Distribution
1.	<i>Sporti Shqiptar</i> 1945 Tirane	Private Firma "2K"	4 times a week	5000	Nationwide
2.	<i>Sport Express</i> 1995 Tirana	Private Nikolle Lesi	3 times a week	8500	Nationwide
3.	<i>Sfidanti sportiv</i> 1998 Tirana	Private Tritan Kokona	3 times a week	5000	Nationwide
4.	<i>Bota e Futbollit</i> 1998 Tirana	Private DenionNdrenika	4 times a week	8000	Nationwide and abroad

Table 4: Monthly Newspapers

NR.	Title / Year Of foundation	Affiliation	Circulation	Distribution
1.	<i>Shpresa</i> 1999 Skrapar	Private Cultural Society "Jonalda" (Zylyftar Plaku)	1000	Local/ Regional South – East
2.	<i>Sinqeritet</i> 1999 Polican	Private Cultural Society "Jonalda"	1200	Local South – East
3.	<i>Nentori</i> 1999 Kucove	Private Cultural Society "Jonalda"	1000	Local South – East
4.	<i>Lulet e Jetes</i> 1999 Berat	Private Cultural Society "Jonalda"	1200	Local South – East

MAGAZINES

Table 5: Weekly and Bimonthly Magazines

(1 time a week) (2 times a month)

Nr	Title /Year of Foundation	Affiliation	Frequency	Circulation	Distribution scope
1.	<i>Klan</i> 1997 Tirana	Private Association “Media 6”	1 x week	5000	Nationwide and abroad
2.	<i>Spekter</i> 1997 Tirana	Private “Spekter” company	1 x week	4000	Nationwide and abroad
3.	<i>Koha</i> 1998 Tirana	Private Publishing House “Koha”	2 x monthly	2500	National and abroad
4.	<i>Femra Moderne</i> 1997 Tirana	Private The association “Clirimi”	1 x week	5000	Nationwide and abroad
5.	<i>XXL</i> 2000 Tirana	Private Top Albania Radio	1 x week	3000	Nationwide and abroad

Table 6: Radio stations

Nr	Name and location	Present coverage	Type of license required
1.	“Radio Stinet” Tirana	Tirana, and central part of the country	Local
2.	“Radio Gras” Gjirokaster	Gjirkaster and some southern parts of the country	Local
3.	“Radio Ime” Tirana	Tirana, and central part of the country	Local
4.	“Radio “Alfa Omega” Tirana	Tirana, and central part of the country	Local
5.	Radio “Club FM” Tirana	Tirana, and central part of the country	Local
6.	“Radio Fier” Fier	Fier, and southwest of the country	Local
7.	“Radio Magic Star” Korce	Korce, southeast of the country	Local
8.	“Radio Calvin” Tirana	Tirana, and central part of the country	Local
9.	“Radio Saranda” Saranda	Saranda, and southern part of the country	Local
10.	“Radio Ngjallja” Tirana	Tirana, and some central parts of the country	Local
11.	“Radio Vale e Kaltert”, Vlore	Vlora, and southern part of the country	Local
12.	Radio “Kontakt” Tirana	Tirana, and central part of the country	Local
13.	“Radio Nesor” Tirana	Tirana, and central part of the country	Local
14.	“Radio Star” Fier	Fier, southwest of the country	Local
15.	“Radio Gramshi” Gramsh	Gramsh, southeast part of the country	Local
16.	“Radio Iliria” Tirana	Tirana, central part of the country	Local
17.	“Top Albania Radio” Tirana	Nationwide	National
18.	“Radio +2” Tirana	Nationwide	National

Table 7: TV stations

Nr.	Name and Location	Present coverage	Type of license required
1.	“TV Klaudiana” Peqin	Peqin, and southeast of the country	Local
2.	“TV Dardania” Elbasan	Elbasan, southeast and central parts of the country	Local
3.	“TV Puka” Puka	Puka, and northeast of the country	Local
4.	“TV Gramshi” Gramsh	Gramsh, and southeast of the country	Local
5.	“TV 2000” Tirana	Tirana, and central part of the country	Local
6.	“TV 6+1” Vlora	Vlora, and southern part of the country	Local
7.	“TV Johaniter” Shijak	Shijak, and central part of the country	Local
8.	“TV Calvin” Tirana	Tirana, and central part of the country	Local
9.	“Media Vizion” Tirana	Tirana, and central part of the country	Local
10.	“TV Amantia” Vlore	Vlora and southwest of the country	Local
11.	“ARV Pogradec” Pogradec	Pogradec, and eastern part of the country	Local
12.	“TV Teuta” Durrës	Durrës, central, western, eastern and some northern parts of the country	Local /Regional
13.	“TV Durrës” Durrës	Durrës, central part of the country	Local
14.	“TV Egnatia” Elbasan	Elbasan, central, southern and eastern part	Local/Regional
15.	“AVN Fier” Fier	Fier, and southwest	Local
16.	“TV Kucova” Kucova	Kucova, and southwest	Local
17.	“TV Onufri” Berat	Berat, and southwest	Local
18.	“TV Shkodra” Shkodra	Shkoder, and northeast	Local
19.	“TV Kombi” Fier	Fier, and southwest	Local
20.	“TV Nesor” Tirana	Tirana, and central part	Local

21.	“TV Bajram Curri” Tropoje	Tropoje, and northeast	Local
22.	“TV + 4” Lushnje	Lushnje, and southwest	Local
23.	“TV Mati”	Mat, and northeast	Local
24.	“TV Era” Erseke	Erseke, and southeast	Local
25.	“TV Arberia” Tirana	Tirana, and north, southwest and east (almost entire territory of the country)	National
26.	“TV Norba” Tirana	Tirana, and southwest, north, partly east (almost entire territory of the country)	National
27.	“TV Shijak” Tirana	Tirana, southwest, north and partly east (almost entire territory of the country)	National
28.	“TV Klan” Tirana	Tirana, east, south, west and north. (almost entire territory of the country)	National
29.	“TVSH” Tirana	The entire territory	National

The following is the list of homepages of the Albanian media

Media	Home page address
Albanian Telegraphic Agency	http://www.ata-al.com
<i>Ekonomia</i> (newspaper)	http://pages.albaniaonline.net/ekonomia
<i>Koha Jone</i> (newspaper)	http://www.kohajone.com
<i>Republika</i> (newspaper)	http://pages.albaniaonline.net/republika
<i>Rilindja Demokratike</i> (newspaper)	http://pages.albaniaonline.net/rd
<i>Zeri I Popullit</i> (newspaper)	http://www.zeripopullit.com
<i>Shekulli</i> (newspaper)	http://www.shekulli.com.al
<i>Albanian Daily News</i> (newspaper)	http://www.AlbanianNews.com
Alba TV	http://pages.albaniaonline.net/albatv/
Shijak TV	http://pages.albaniaonline.net/shijaktv/
Telearberia TV	http://pages.albaniaonline.net/tva/
Teuta TV	http://pages.albaniaonline.net/teutartv/
Top Albania Radio	http://www.topalbaniaradio.com
Radio Tirana	http://www.radiotirana.net
Radio Kontakt	http://www.radiokontakt.com