

# ON STUDENT AND UNIVERSITY BROADCASTING

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**Development of higher education and society by creating a collaborative environment in the field of arts and media through regional student partnership in production of audio/video content - StudAVP**

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# On Student And University Broadcasting

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# ON SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT PRODUCTION IN WB REGION

(activity 6.6 of the workplan)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of students in our culturally enhanced society has been studied and deliberated upon for countless times and no matter at which point in time such a musing took place the results were always the same. Students are the future of any intellectual and scientific opinion, their views, honed by years of studying and listening to sources from all levels of humanity have paved the way of what we now consider scientific excellence and cultural inheritance for generations to come. The students of today will lead the world of tomorrow and their opinions, ideas, ambitions, dreams, wishes and pathways will shape the field for some future students, who will build upon that intellectual foundation.

Students always found ways to have their youthful and energetic voices heard and thus, during the times that passed since the inception of higher education they found various means to express, or rather broadcast these opinions to the outside world, utilising any available resources that were at hand, were being widely available and used, and are extensively being deployed even today. What in early days was achieved with student newsletters, newspapers and later college radio stations, is nowadays being broadcast in a multiplied instance by other broadcasting facilities and instruments, many of which are based on the internet platform, but still incorporating the same traditional uninhibited expression format that was typical for college based endeavours. Podcasts, YouTube channels, Facebook and Twitter accounts dedicated to schools, universities and even classes use the modern technology to not only communicate, but to broadcast their opinions and ideas, to express their concerns and fears, to influence the youth and adult population of today and leave their mark in today's society. The importance and influence capacity seems rather limitless and the status of such college broadcast facilities cannot be stressed enough in any modern, civilized country, where the freedom of speech is still deemed a vital part of the free world and not a mere empty phrase to score political points.

## 2. STUDENT PRINTED MEDIA

“There is no invention or idea that makes us Germans as proud as the invention of book printing, which elevated us to be the new spiritual leaders in teachings of Christianity, all divine and worldly science and therewith to benefactors of the entire humanity” – Jakob Wimpheling [1].

It should be no of surprise to note that the first printed media that students released on campuses and that were published by University run presses originated in Germany. While there were plenty of attempts to publish such local newsletters, most of them were plagued by censorship and lack of funding. It took until the first “Studentenverbindungen” were established, a symbiosis of a fraternity and alumni organisations, when long lasting newspapers, published by campus-located associations such as the Kyffhäuserverband, became a common student opinion broadcasting tool. Many of the old “Studentenzeitungen” are still publishing as of today, most of them located in the area of former East Germany. Hans Bohrmann, who was a leading expert on the history of German student publications, noted that most of the topics the original papers were pushing, were of a political and religious nature, besides the local news and campus news factor, a fact that remained valid until today. [2]

In the UK, student newspapers have been encouraged and financed either by the University, by a student union or are even fully independent, like the Cambridge University’s Varsity.

Up almost until the World War II, no attempts were made on any of the West Balkans Universities to start any printed media outlet that was run by students. Right before the World War II, the leftist movement in Serbia started with the publication of the newspaper “Naš Student”, later just “Student” in 1937, which was led by the Croatia-born future war hero Ivo Lola Ribar, a student on the Faculty of Law, University of Belgrade. Almost immediately, as an answer to the communist danger, organs of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia started publishing a “Studentski Glasnik”, also a student led newspaper, to counteract the popular “Student” and provide political views that were more appropriate. Insinuating that either paper was independent would be blatantly untrue, clear agendas of political movements were behind either of the two, whereby after the war the “Studentski Glasnik” was extinguished and only “Student” remained, which was severely censored by the new communist regime.

During the awakening of the student movement in the former Yugoslavia, the “Student” attempted to support the student movement and was



very often banned and even discontinued for a while. After the totalitarian regime of Josip Broz Tito ended with his demise, other newspapers started sprouting all over Yugoslavia, most of them were local, signifying the impending break-up of the SFRJ into independent states. Belgrad had “Vidici”, Slovenia had “Mladina”, Croatia “Polet” and so on. Again, none of these were free of government censorship, most of them were clearly separatist and aided in the build-up of the necessary hatred that fuelled the senseless wars of Yugoslavia in the nineties. The “Student” became the official gazette of the SPS, the party of Slobodan Milošević, which remained until the year 2000.

West Balkans still struggles to overcome the iron-fist government structures, where the local, up to state-wide government functionaries control many aspects of social functioning. This attitude is significantly less pronounced in Slovenia, which is now in the EU, but in Croatia, which is also a member state, the remains of government control are still very perceivable and local student publications are struggling to follow the call of the free press. In Serbia, the “Student” is deemed free and independent, but in view of recent developments, that independency falls under doubt.

### **3. STUDENT RADIO BROADCASTING**

Student radio broadcasting originated in the United States, where Colleges and Universities started with experimental broadcasting in physics labs as early as 1920 on AM radio stations. First registered such endeavours were the college radio station WRUC, an independent educational programme that was founded and is now owned and operated by students of the Union College in Schenectady, New York; and WHUS – formerly WABL and WCAC – where WHUS stands in for UConn HUSkies, the student radio station owned by the Board of Trustees of the University of Connecticut and is operated around the clock by students, 365 days every year. The so-called college radio was extremely popular in the US before the Internet took off, so much in fact that most breakout music artists in the late eighties and nineties depended on college radio to make it into the music business. The importance of student broadcasting becomes evident, when you consider that there is already an Intercollegiate Broadcasting System in place in the US, which has an annual conference and helps members start a new radio station including helping out with FCC regulations; then there is another trade association, the National Association of College Broadcasters, which received initial funding by the CBS Foundation and was started by students from the Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island and morphed into the College Broadcasters Inc.;

and that there is a National Campus and Community Radio Association in Canada doing similar work.

In Europe, the first to start with student radio were countries that were plagued by a communist regime, like Poland and East Germany, both starting with student broadcasts as early as 1950. In Poland, the Radiosupel station at the Białystok Medical University is the oldest student radio in Poland, broadcasting even today. The Uniradio Hochschulefunk, today radio HSF, was founded on the Technische Universität Ilmenau, which itself is located in Ilmenau, Thuringia in Eastern Germany and was founded in 1894. Their Hochschulefunk radio station started broadcasting in 1950 and interestingly enough could have a political programme every Wednesday that was entirely free of any censorship.

United Kingdom entered the student radio scene in 1960, when the University of Herfordshire founded the Crush Radio – initially named Campus Radio Hatfield – which was a pirate radio station, that had no license to broadcast. The first legitimate, licensed student radio station was founded quite a bit later, in 1967, by students of the University of York, the URY, or University Radio York, at that time it was called Radio Heslington. Just like most of the British college radio stations, their programme was very versatile, but mostly about music and happenings around the campus.

In West Germany, the frequencies were and still are strictly regulated by the local government, thus, in Germany there were college radio stations possible only where the local government permitted it. Even today most Universities choose to opt for Internet Broadcasting solutions, rather than entangle into a bureaucratic fight to get a local frequency awarded. Nowadays the licensing of Hochschulradio as it is called is deemed for non-commercial purposes and has a dedicated class of licensing, which limits the extent of free air space and allows some radio stations to broadcast only during permitted on-air hours. In Baden-Württemberg, for instance, all student radio stations share the same frequency with other community radio stations, in Bavaria students get dedicated programmes within existing local radio station programmes, Nordrhein-Westfalen allows licenses for 24-hour broadcasting to student radios and so on.

In Austria, the first Austrian Uniradio started broadcasting in 1994, in Salzburg, but was incorporated within the public broadcaster ORF. Independently broadcast student radio as such, where students are in charge and it is located on a University campus exists only on the internet. Broadcasting are, however, the Campus & City Radio 94.4, which is a Fachhochschule – University of Applied Sciences, which is not considered a

“traditional university” and Radio NJOY 91.3 in Vienna, which is also a UAS, where students of their management and communication department are in charge of the programming.

Except for the time during the communist era of some European countries, the student radio did not encounter any peril or censorship. Some legal restrictions still apply, but these are of a more technical, bureaucratic nature. Student radios have no limitations as to what themes they handle, most of the time proper conduct is encouraged and sometimes enforced, but in regards to politics, environment, voicing of opinions and free speech, there are no perceivable limitations. Most stations provide, besides critical thinking and campus news, music, entertainment, info regarding cultural and entertainment happenings in the area and similar, but currently, except in the UK regarding Brexit, there are only sporadic sparks of controversy notable, like for instance regarding the migrant crisis. Campus radio was, is and remains one of the focal points of social interaction and information gathering between young adults and students of all ages, because if it was not on campus radio, it is not happening.

#### **4. STUDENT TV BROADCASTING**

There used to be plenty of educational programming ever since TV was invented, but student TV broadcasting started getting traction rather late. In fact, most of the student stations broadcast over the internet, using various streaming and recorded video streaming providers that are nowadays available at no cost. Real student TV stations, run by students and broadcast terrestrially were rare and are nowadays as good as extinct, ever since the switch to digital broadcasting standards.

It is incidentally in Germany, on the Technical University Ilmenau, within the Forschungsgemeinschaft elektronische Medien, a student association, where students own, run, produce, control and broadcast a real student TV station, digitally, into the air. The iSTUFF has a fully equipped and completely professionally functional TV studio at their disposal, where real student TV is being made every day and broadcast into the world, available to be watched on the internet, but also per DVB-T antennas. It is furthermore available through the campus cable TV network, but also through several cable providers locally, mostly in the city Ilmenau. Every project requires fully equipped staffs that handle the project, or to be exact, any project is being produced, that assembles enough people required to make it. Thus, students come together with a unified agenda, working together with the goal to provide

a programme that will be interesting for students, but also to any client that watches the channel. There are no other restrictions. Over 200 such projects have been completed since the founding of iSTUFF in 1999. [3]

There is also a HD Campus TV, located in Baden-Württemberg, that has a LFK licence and is being broadcast through the KabelBW cable TV provider throughout the region. It features student TV programmes that have been provided by several Universities and Colleges in Germany, some of that material has been previously broadcast on their own channels, mostly online.

In the United Kingdom, there are many student television stations, in fact the UK has a National Student Television Association, or NaSTA for short, that is currently counting more than forty affiliated stations, that are all made and broadcast by students and this is and this number is only a fraction of all existing stations countrywide. The student TV in the UK has gained so much importance, that the National Union of Students decided to award exceptional content and notable personnel. Even “The Guardian”, formerly the Manchester Guardian, the British newspaper giant, hosts a yearly Student Media Award ceremony. The NaSTA stations covered, for instance, the 2016 US presidential election. Of course, due to the high costs of a license for conventional broadcasting frequencies of a terrestrial channel, many of the student TV stations opt to broadcast by streaming over the internet.

The Netherlands have established an CampusEurope student TV network, with the slogan “Because a European Generation deserves a European Media”. While removing the national biases from its agenda, CampusEurope attempts to unify Europe through media and working together to create a truly European media portal. All topics are welcome, from politics to education, from lifestyle to news and opinions on everything today’s European student is interested in or what matters in general. It is located in Maastricht and was developed by a local student TV, BreakingMaas, during their attempts to make it a sustainable project.

All over Europe, there are plenty of student TV stations, most broadcasting online, but some of them also locally, some through local free TV channels, like public TV and some through cable providers. Besides the already mentioned, there are plenty of student run TV stations in Sweden, Belgium, France, Italy, actually all over the EU and even some in Ukraine, which were heavily involved in the Crimea conflict and provided some staggering insight, including footage of soldiers speaking American English, which went viral on the internet. While many student TV channels are focusing on local affairs and campus oriented news, every single one of them provides entertainment news, political views and also live coverage of campus events.

The political debate is sometimes very active, French Ma Chaine Etudiante or MCE for short, has, for an example, very broad views that sometimes veer considerably away from mainstream, yet are not less comprehensive and thought provoking than other news of more moderate nature.

As an interesting and probably unique variant of a campus TV channel, Viacom Media Networks started in 2002 a channel called MTV University, which was supposed to be provided only to on-campus television systems. It was to compete with Burly Bear Network, ran privately until purchased by National Lampoon in 2002, which simply dissolved it. MTVU targets students directly and broadcasts music videos, but has segments that were produced by students, but not many and with very limited freedom regarding content. This is the first time a major commercial entity such as MTV Networks and Viacom have founded a channel that is directly targeting students only.

## **5. STUDENT INTERNET BROADCASTING**

Most student generated broadcasting and programmes can be found on the internet. Scores of various student TV endeavours are available on all possible providers such as YouTube, Vimeo, Metacafe, Vine and many others, but also on social networks or various amalgamations such as Facebook, Twitter, Twitch, Instagram, Snapchat, but also podcasts on Soundcloud, iTunes and so on. For podcasts, most popular is Soundcloud, for video content YouTube.

“Ever since ratings and political discussions started putting higher education facilities under pressure, the need to justify everything has risen exponentially. Thus, it does make sense to use colourful pictures out of research and science to portray preparedness and innovative power of some Alma mater by putting it masterfully in a scene.” [4]

Generally, a University will have an official website, where most of the information is located in regards to the functioning of the campus and also broad information regarding the curriculum and the staff, but also plenty of links pointing towards the associated social media presence. Nowadays it is mandatory that a University has to have a social media directory for various faculties and also a strong presence on the net, including at least one media broadcasting outlet. The strong integration of today's youth with social networks in particular and the internet in general practically requires modern educational institutions to have a versatile approach towards broadcasting content to end users and provide social interconnectivity between students and

the university staff, but also an outlet for students to voice their opinions, offer insight, communicate and be socially active on as many levels as possible.

Internet broadcasting very often includes a YouTube channel, where regular posts provide not only information, but current event all over campus, news of the world, news from the students' points of view and much, much more. Most of the universities do not censor these channels, although a certain etiquette is required and actually controlled by YouTube, the so-called rules of conduct. The direct YouTube search for University Channels provides over 21,000,000 results. Furthermore, it is very often possible to find whole lectures uploaded as either videos or podcasts, some of which are invitation only, either on YouTube or on other sites.

Some notable institutions that have powerful and incredibly interesting internet outlets include, for instance, the University of Vienna, which has four channels associated to its name, only on YouTube. Furthermore, there is a very informative and active Facebook page, there is an official Twitter account and an official Instagram account. The official page also provides a link to a Flickr account; all are maintained well and have ample traffic. Several of the faculties have their own internet presence, some of which are maintained by the staff, some by students, but there are also additional social media accounts that are run by students alone and these are more casual. The completely student run portal, okto.tv called UniWienBroadcast, makes a 24-hour streaming programme that has original material and produced programme as well. It streams live on their website. Eva Jantschitsch, a renowned musician and composer, part of the music project "Gustav", stated regarding this broadcasting portal: "Okto is a social necessity". [5]

There are many other examples like this, for instance the Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main with their UTV Frankfurt, another student run TV station, that has a wide variety of social media pages, including a YouTube channel, Twitter account, Facebook page, Tumblr account, Instagram account and then there is also a student radio station named dauerWelle.

There is one thing all the university internet broadcasting channels have in common – students are in charge, they make the program, they provide information and opinions to the students and there is also ample room for free expression, free speech and vocal rebellion against anything that is deemed wrong. Students need, even have the right to express their voices, opinions to each other, through media, broadcasting views and influencing the next generation of policy building individuals. All healthy societies need the insurgence of the young, need the rejuvenating of core values, need the

freedom in action, in order to function as a free, healthy and compact, diverse, understanding and stable culture.

## **6. STUDENT BROADCASTING IN WEST BALKANS**

Student broadcasting in West Balkans is so sparse, compared to student broadcasting in other parts of Europe. Right after the World War II, Yugoslavia was formed and the totalitarian regime of Josip Broz Tito did not prove to be a very good breeding ground for free speech media. The government controlled JRT – Yugoslav radio and television – and later RTS, established the first student radio in the early 1970 called “Indeks 202”. The frequency it broadcast on was 202, thus the moniker; it was ment to be an independent program, one hour a day, where students under the strict supervision of the Belgrade University had one hour to produce satirical and humorous episodes that tried to a certain extent to do a satire of the circumstances in Yugoslavia. Some level of independence was achieved only after Tito's demise, where “Indeksovo radio pozoriste”, a humorous programme, gained notoriety for the acidy satire of the political world in Yugoslavia.

During the student demonstrations in 1992, the University radio “Indeks” was founded and it was more or less a pirate station that functioned until 1998, when Slobodan Milošević ordered the eviction of the staff from the station premises and confiscated all the equipment. The first truly free and sometimes quite censorship free student radio station in Belgrade ceased to exist.

Yugoslavia went through various conflicts during the nineties, all of which were happening when former states that comprised SFR Yugoslavia broke away from Serbia. The first state that became independent also provides the first truly free student radio station named Radio Študent, which apparently existed in some form ever since 1969, originally founded by the association of student unions of Slovenia. At that time the censorship was still oppressing, but finally, since 2012, it has finally received the status of an independent student programme with a dedicated FM frequency. During the post-communism era, various incarnations of Radio Študent were broadcasting, including one project called Cross Radio, together with the Belgrader b92 commercial radio station, attempting to build bridges and promote cultural ties with countries of former Yugoslavia.

In Croatia, despite the membership in the EU, many of the old elite that came to power during the end of communism and the inevitable war, still hold

vital positions within Croatian power structures, so completely free broadcasting is next to impossible. On the internet, several student radio and television stations are attempting to provide some inclination of the newly achieved freedom, but the results are weak. The faculty of political sciences, led by the former politically tied journalist Tena Perišin, helped put together the TV Student and together with the former colleague from the national television HRT, Igor Mirković, these two helped students put together a comprehensive programme, which is, nevertheless, not appearing to be truly independent. Former students complain that censorship is being done daily and that several themes, including the culpability of Croatia during the recent Balkan wars, are off limits. On the other hand, Radio Student was formed from a donation by USAID and actually started broadcasting in 1997. While it has a FM radio frequency at 100.5, it also broadcasts live over the internet.

In Serbia, the student broadcasting facilities are in an even worse shape. There are a few online TV student stations, such as Radio Televizija Studentski grad, which broadcasts for already fifteen years. It has a YouTube channel, Twitter and Facebook accounts. The RTSG veers far away from any controversy and keeps the themes handled within the allowed parameters, namely entertainment, education, student and academic life, but it does not talk about politics and it also attempts to get distribution in the local cable network. The quality of the produced material is poor in comparison to standards even common to average YouTubers, but the weak attempt to create something that could one day become real student television is being made. Another brave attempt to create an online student TV, named Studentska televizija 10k, is being made by Visoka škola elektrotehnike i računarstva strukovnih studija, where at least better equipment is being used and censorship is not as apparent, since that the themes handled are also being kept away from every day's life and politics.

The students of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade have made an attempt at creating student radio, with its radio experiment called the FIST radio, but for now it remains only a short lived experiment and only an example of good practices.

In Bosnia and Hercegovina, UNMBiH (United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Hercegovina) supported the students of BiH in creating the Student radio eFM, which now serves as the only student electronic media in Bosnia and Hercegovina. Their program is based on educational content but this station is held by an NGO, rather than a student organization, or a university.



Albania has no notable tradition of student electronic media. We hope that the Tempus project StudAVP will serve to promote awareness of the importance of student media in Albania.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

Some of the states of former Yugoslavia, nowadays referred to as West Balkans seem to have found a way towards some degree of freedom of speech, like Slovenia, which has very much advanced towards a state resembling a humanitarian society; and Croatia, which has managed to become a member in the EU, but still fights the internal war against the war-time legacy and the need to be a totalitarian regime, a need that is so much more pronounced in Serbia.

The freedom of the press is compromised in Serbia and Bosnia and Hercegovina. The independent media are quite dependent on funding that is governed by interest groups.

Students have been the voice of reason and the source of critical thinking ever since higher education became available to citizens anywhere. Student broadcasting facilities, no matter if on a radio frequency, television, on the internet or as some YouTube channel, are vital for the healthy functioning of a nation, vital for a country to flourish, to learn to care, to provide the right to choose, to facilitate free speech and basic human rights for every single person living in such a country. Perhaps precisely for those reasons, legislation in Serbia has essentially made it illegal for student organisations, faculties and universities to own broadcasting services, thus preventing for the student voice from being heard. This does not apply to privately owned universities, but given the difference in strength, resources and tradition that state universities have as compared to private universities in Serbia, it is quite understandable that any serious student broadcasting initiative has to come from state universities. Due to EU regulations, such legislature that allows for student broadcasting services to be created has been established in Croatia and Slovenia, but all the other WB countries do not have any such legislative measures in place.

The impact that student broadcasting has on society in countries that have such legislative regulations and where students can freely voice their concerns, ideas, feelings, political views and whatever else they deem fit, is significant and necessary for any society that wants to go forward and that sees its future in its youth. The fact that student broadcasting is likely to promote social change (as it has done time and time again in the past) is not something to be feared, but is something to be welcomed and supported.

With Serbia holding the infamous first place for youth brain drain in Europe, and BiH following right behind, it is critical for the authorities, in order to keep their youngest and brightest, to listen to the voice of its youth. The youth that feels muted and incapacitated to operate will inevitably try to find a place where they can express themselves and develop new societies. If we do not want to miss out on the new societies and on our own children, we need to let them speak and we need to let them make a society in accordance to their own beliefs.

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# ON LEGISLATIVE CHANGES SUPPORTING STUDENT RTV

## (activity 7.4 of the workplan)

The previous research on the social importance of student media has undoubtedly shown the benefits that such production could have on students, youth and the society in general.

As the papers prepared for the conference titled „Legislative and Productional Models of University and Student Radio and Television Broadcasting“ have shown, one of the mayor reasons why such production is sparse in the WB region is the legislation that is quite unfavourable to student broadcasting endeavours.

The most interesting thing about the legislative change is that it does not need a lot of effort, just some political will. The fact is that some draft versions of the Law on Electronic Media RS had in them ample provisions for the media that would be established by student organisations or HEI institutions. However, due to the lack of political will and probably due to the need for full control of the media, the legislator decided to remove those provisions from the final versions of relevant laws.

What we are proposing at this point is for the legislators to return to the draft versions and to harmonise laws in WB countries with laws of EU countries.

For example, it is illogical for the state to allow for private universities to establish media, but to, at the same time, render it illegal for state universities to establish the same sort of media. This constitutes a form of student discrimination which is problematic and unnecessary.

Our suggestion would be for the KONUS (Conference of Universities in Serbia), the Rectors Conference of BiH, and the Conference of Universities in Albania to propose to their respective legislators to harmonize their legislation with EU legislation in the respect of student and university broadcasting. After much research, the legislative solution that seems most appropriate and easy to handle is to give student and university broadcasting the same status as civil society media services. Those solutions would be the subject of public debates, but the conference that we have organized can be seen as the first real effort in making this issue into an issue of true social importance.

Furthermore, the StudAVP project presented both universities and media partners with a glimpse of the possibilities that such broadcasting possibilities could hold.

The practice of previous student media that were formed at public media proved also to be effective, although short lived. The main difference between the present time and the time 30 or more years ago is that the technical conditions and facilities, thus the overall budgets for establishing a broadcasting service have been greatly diminished. For this reason, it is no longer necessary for the student and university broadcasting to seek the patronage of public media service providers. Still, such cooperation could prove to be quite efficient and beneficial for all the parties involved: for students, who would benefit from experience and exposure, the public media service provider that would benefit from fresh ideas, insight into new available talent and affordable programs, and the general public, for getting the views, perspectives and the driving energy of young people.

Selected papers from the conference titled „LEGISLATIVE AND PRODUCTIONAL MODELS OF UNIVERSITY AND STUDENT RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING“ pertaining to the objectives of the Tempus project "Development of higher education and society by creating a collaborative environment in the field of arts and media through regional student partnership in production of audio/video content" (StudAVP), project number: 544108-TEMPUS-1-2013-1RS-TEMPUS-JPHES

# IMPACT OF THE LEGISLATIVE MESURES BY THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA ON ESTABLISHING AND OPERATING STUDENT ELECTRONIC MEDIA

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**Abstract:** The tradition of radio programs created by students and intended for students as a target group in Serbia that dates back to 1971, when it started as an hourly program titled "Index 202", which was created daily by the editorial team that bore the same name, through the radio channel "Beograd 202" which was a part of the national Radio Beograd station. When it comes to the transformation of the media system in Serbia in the last quarter of a century, it is directly linked to the political, social, economic and overall transitional changes whose initialisation was related to the adoption of new media laws. The legislation adopted in the last decade of the XX century could be regarded as oppressive and discouraging to any initiative that left the authoritarian policy framework, which meant that there were no possibilities left for initiating student organizations in the field of media. The regulatory environment after the year 2000 went strongly in the direction of affirmation of democratic and European standards in terms of opening legislative possibilities for the establishing media, radio and television stations governed by the civil sector, that could serve as a good model for the student media. By analysing legislations pertaining to the field of electronic media in Serbia, especially the Law on Electronic Communications (2014), and by comparing the draft and final version of this law, it can be concluded that the legislator had some intent to open the possibility for universities to establish media, but for some unknown reasons these features have not found their place in the final version, thus rendering any student initiative in establishing their own media completely futile.

**Key words:** electronic media, legislation, Serbia, student media, transition,

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The idea of the existence and functioning of student media, as in media founded by and broadcasting programs created by students, is largely related to the phenomena of social activism and its capacity to promote and develop participatory democracy. In terms of implementing these ideas along with public broadcasters that have the potential to carry out these trends and act in accordance with the needs of the public, the civil sector media, community media<sup>2</sup> which have become a reality of media legislation after the adoption of the Law on Broadcasting in 2002, have been recognized as a space, a niche through which certain social groups could have the means of asserting and exercising their basic rights to information and communication. Said normative act clearly defined that the media, the civil sector broadcasters are "... the broadcasters that meet the specific interests of certain social groups and citizen organisations"<sup>3</sup>. A similar strategy to stimulate the civil sector of the media was continued in subsequent legislation, including the Law on Electronic Media from 2014<sup>4</sup>.

The legal regulation and the establishment of community media showed unambiguously that the domestic, Serbian media legislation, including media practice, is responsive to the needs and interests of various minority groups defined by criteria such as nationality, religion, ethnicity ... and even age (youth), or even membership in a particular social group (student), which is a step towards the affirmation of democratic principles and values. Those are the media which were supposed to serve as channels through which social groups that do not have enough space and do not belong to the social mainstream would exercise their right to communicate and express their opinions, to promote various forms of diversity, strengthen two-way communication between media - for the entire and for parts of the public, enhance citizens' participation and ultimately develop democratic mechanisms important for anybody, especially for companies that have survived the war conflicts, civil wars and aggression. Although the media laws in Serbia after 2000 opened the civil sector media space, these legislative solutions were not accompanied by supporting acts that would lead to the firmer existence and social reality of these media. What is important in the context of student and university electronic media, is the fact that the final version of the Law on Broadcasting from 2002 and its implementation since 2006, did not provide the possibility for universities and faculties (as their integral components) to establish electronic media organized as media service providers in the civil

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<sup>2</sup> Participatory, free, alternative, independent, national, radical pirate...

<sup>3</sup> The Law on Broadcasting RS, Belgrade: The Official Gazette No. 42/02, Article 95

<sup>4</sup> The Law on Electronic Media RS, Belgrade: The Official Gazette No. 83/14, Article 44 defines media service providers including civil sector media service providers singled out in paragraph 3.



sector which would provide an open space for some form of social activism, a place for young and progressive individuals to participate in the overall development of society and draw attention to the needs of their group. These media would be an excellent model and a way for the specific expertise that students are in the process of mastering to be put into practice, which would be of great significance for the students of the Faculty of Political Sciences (Department of Journalism), Faculty of Dramatic Arts (Departments for film and TV production and the Department for theatre and radio production), Faculty of Electrical Engineering etc. However, the “crude” provisions of the Law on Broadcasting from 2002, can be seen in the Article 42 where it was made clear that the holder of a broadcasting license can not be “1) a company, institution or other legal entity founded by the Republic of Serbia or the Autonomous province, except for the institutions of public broadcasting service” which clearly prevents the universities and faculties founded by the RS to establish and run their own electronic media. On the one hand, it is understandable for the legislator to limit the excessive powers of all institutions, including the University, founded by the Republic, but on the other hand, Universities and students are some of the most progressive parts of the society and they should not be placed in the same rank as any other company due to the large potentials that the future social elite that holds with its knowledge and ideas. This legislative solution could also be perceived as discriminatory given the fact that private faculties and universities were allowed to own and operate media in various ways - as means for education, as well as typical media outlet.

## **1. THE TRADITION OF STUDENT MEDIA IN SERBIA**

The practice of radio programs that are designed for high school students and young people in Serbia, has been present since the seventies and is related to the programs of Radio Studio B, first through the radio snow “Prekobrojni čas” and then through the show “Ritam srca”, that dealt with content and topics that were interesting to young people, but in the professional sense, they served as a training ground for future radio and TV hosts. When it comes to TV projects, in the nineties TV Studio B initiated a program titled “Teenage TV” that offered a program based on the “Youth for Youth” model.

The practise, and afterwards the tradition of radio programs created by students and intended for students as a target group in Serbia that dates back to 1971, when it started as an hourly program titled “Index 202”, which was

created daily by the editorial team that bore the same name, through the radio channel “Beograd 202” which was a part of the national *Radio Beograd* station, which became the *Radio Televizije Beograd*. In a broader social context, it is interesting to note that this kind of democratization of the media was essentially established after the tumultuous events of 1968 and in the light of general social changes, thus opening a space for critical thinking for which young and progressive scholars had a leading role. The “Indeks 202” and especially “Indeksovo radio pozorište” presented the audiences with a specific form of dramatic performance which was based on ironic and satirical texts, parodying reality, often the political reality, making them into a symbol of independent media mediation in socialist terms, that was run by students themselves. (Nikolić 1990).

The fall of the Berlin Wall (November, 1989) and the beginning of the transition process in a large number of socialist European countries, coincided with the integration of editorial boards of the “Indeks 202” (Beograd 202, Radio Beograd) and the “Ritam srca” show (Radio Studio B) when the *Omladinski radio B92* was founded in May 1989. This station could have rightfully been treated as a civil sector media, although without sufficient normative justification<sup>5</sup>, since that its official founder was the Belgrade Youth Council, as one of the bodies of the Council of Socialist Youth of Yugoslavia which was the reason why the headquarters of the station were placed within the Home of the Belgrade Youth.

The executive editor of the new radio station was Nenad Cekić („Indeks 202”), and the editor in chief was Veran Matić („Ritam srca”). Due to disagreements on concepts, some members of the editorial board of “Index 202” pulled out from “project” which ended with the “Indeks” returning within the frames of Beograd 202<sup>6</sup>, while the Radio B92 changed its course little by little from of urban, alternative, youthful to engaged and anti-regime radio.

Yet the idea of the existence of an authentic student radio remained. During the student protests in 1992, a university, student radio “Indeks” was founded following the initiative of the University of Belgrade and University of Arts in Belgrade, which started broadcast on 19th of June 1992 from the XV studio of Radio Beograd in Makedonska Street, on the basis of a contract on technical and business collaborative with RTS. In November 1998, the “Indeks” has denied the use of the radio studio space in Radio Beograd due to the anti-regime content in its program. This situation has led to an ownership transformation in August 1999, whereas a new private, commercial stations

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<sup>5</sup> Civil media as such were not recognised in media legislation of the time.

<sup>6</sup> [http://petarlazic.rs/radio\\_index\\_istorijat.html](http://petarlazic.rs/radio_index_istorijat.html), accessed on 25. of July 2016.

“Radio Indeks” was established, with a new programming concept, in new facilities and with a new personnel structure.

Termination of the “Indeks” radio as a student radio marks the termination of student media in Serbia in general, which was understandable given the very turbulent political situation. In the subsequent years student media occurred sporadically, such as the *TV Metropolis*, a Megatrend university station, or the “BU radio” which operated at the Faculty of Political Sciences for a brief period of time and which was supposed to serve as an educational training ground for students of journalism, as well as the Belgrade University (BU) newsletter. Unfortunately, due to the clear provisions of the Law on Broadcasting of 2002, the *BU radio* had to stop broadcasting since, by that law, the universities founded by the Republic of Serbia can not own their own media. In the absence of a platform for practical work and promotion, students of the Faculty of Political Science have found a niche for their practical TV journalism exercises in the public RTV Studio B, which was once more rendered impossible after the company was privatised. Among other student initiatives in Serbia, we should mention the student radio of the Faculty of Media and Communications (Singidunum University) and the experimental fortnightly internet broadcasting of the FIST radio, done by the students of the Department for Management and Production in Theatre, Radio and Culture and the Department for sound recording and design of the FDU in cooperation with students from other study groups.

Recapitulating the history and the genesis of student and youth radio and TV programs and stations in Serbia, we can conclude that these programs have a relatively long tradition in Serbia, but that their existence was conditioned by the constraints of the socialist society, then by the discouraging social conditions, including the civil war, ethnic conflicts, isolation and fear. The new, pro-democracy environment after the year 2000 opened some space for new program and production models of media in which the civil sector media could have become one of the appropriate forms of student electronic media organization.

## **2. MODERN MEDIA LEGISLATION IN SERBIA AND STUDENT MEDIA**

Since the political changes in 2000, the basic characteristic and the imperative of Serbian society is the transition and intensive harmonization of all segments of society in accordance with the process of European integration. The new political and economic environment was undoubtedly faced with the

need for a number of transformations including the media system, particularly in the field of electronic media. The primary task which is set before the Serbian media and the creators of policies and norms was their compliance with the recommendations of European institutions and good practices such as: the existence of independent regulatory bodies, deetatisation of state media, regulating advertising and prohibiting media concentration.

The transformation of the media system began with passing the Law on Broadcasting (2002), which suffered several changes (Law on Amendments to the Law on Broadcasting - 2004, 2005, 2006) and which represented a solid framework for the regulation of broadcasting. Additional legislation pertaining to broadcasting included the Telecommunications Act (2003), the Law on Public Information (2003), the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance (2004) and the Law on Advertising (2005).

The basic characteristics of the first phase of the transformation of the media system in Serbia is the simulation of changes and the lack of political will and strength to change, considering the fact that the necessary legal acts were adopted, but their entry into force did not really start until 2006, following the transformation of RTS from a public enterprise into a public broadcasting institution and in 2014 into the public media institution.

The phase that started in 2006 and lasted until the political changes in 2012, has been marked with stagnation in the sphere of normative regulation of the media by way of only passing minor corrections of existing laws, although some new laws were adopted such as the Law on Electronic Communications (2010)<sup>7</sup>. During this period, the media were under the jurisdiction of: The Ministry of Culture and Media and the Ministry of Culture, Media and Information Society, Ministry of Capital Investments and the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications.

The political changes in 2012/13 marked the beginning of a new stage in the development of media. During this phase, the media are put into some sort of stalemate position that marks the expressed suppression of media freedom, but without significant resistance from the members of the profession and the public, followed by an increase in censorship (direct and indirect) and self-censorship, and a decline in the quality of media content and overall media offerings. In 2012, the obligation of payment of RTV subscription was suspended (without legal basis) as populist measure of the authorities, which

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<sup>7</sup> By passing this Act, the Law on Telecommunications and the Law on Amendments to the Law on Public Information (2009), which is one of the worst media laws in the period after 2000, cease to be valid.

opened the space for possible political and financial pressures on the public service.

Three new media laws were adopted in 2014 under the influence from international institutions: The Law on Electronic Media (2014); The Law on Public Media Services (2014) and the Law on Public Information and Media (2014).

Before the adoption of the definitive versions of these laws, public debates were organised that focused on the drafts of these laws. The possibility for students to set up and manage the work of some electronic media, either as independent civil sector media, or rather the civil sector media service provider, or perhaps as a special form of experimental radio and TV station with a basic educational function, was addressed in some articles and provisions of the Draft of the Law on Electronic Media, but when the law was adopted these issues were quite differently addressed.

In particular, if one would compare the Draft of the Law on Electronic Media from August 2013 and the Law which was adopted in 2014, one would find that the part of the law that addresses the issue of the regulatory body for the electronic media, right after the list of institutions that have the authority and duty to nominate members of the Council, the Draft stated that "The authorized nominator referred to in paragraph 1, item 1 of this article proposes candidates for the two members of the Council, whereas one of those two candidates must be a person that lives and works in the territory of the Autonomous province of Kosovo and Metohija" (Article 10). In the version of the Law that was adopted it is stated that "the authorized nominator referred to in paragraph 1, item 1 of this Article shall nominate two candidates for members of the Council, taking into account the equitable territorial representation of candidates" (Article 9), which clearly reflects how the political discourse reflected the formulations. At the same time, in the final version of the Law it is stated that the nominators of a candidate for member of the Council are the "accredited universities in the Republic of Serbia, by mutual agreement" whereas the term "mutual agreement" was an addition to the text in the Draft. What is positive both in the Draft and in the final version of the Law, is that the representatives of the University were given the possibility to nominate a member of the regulatory body thus affecting its work and protecting the interests of this institution.

As regards to the Chapter III of the Law where the general provision of media services are specified, media service providers are defined in the Article 47 of the Draft as: „1. public media service institution; 2. commercial media service provider; 3. civil sector media service provider“, while adopted version

of the Law in Article 44 reiterates the existing classification and adds: "Providers referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article provide media services on the whole territory of the Republic of Serbia or its part", which refers to further defining the scope for national and provincial public media services.

The issues of audio-visual media services of the civil sector are defined in the IV chapter of the Draft and the final version of the Law. In the Article 72 of the Draft it is clearly pointed out in paragraph two that the civil sector media service provider "may be an association, university, endowment, foundation, church and a religious community," but in the final version of the Law the only thing that was dropped from the definition was the word "university", which indicates that the university as an institution unable to be a founding member of a civil sector media service provider. It is interesting that in the same article, paragraph 4 of the Draft it is stipulated that the civil sector media may provide media services on a local, regional and, in exclusive cases on a national level, while in the final version of the Law the possibility of civil sector media broadcasting on the national level was completely excluded. The paragraph 8 of the same article of the Draft states that the media provider "can not change its program concept and it can not be the subject of legal transactions", which was omitted from the final version.

One of the possibilities for student initiatives and actions in radio or television broadcasting is definitely the option of live internet broadcast streaming, as is defined in the Article 73. The permits and approvals for the provision of media services are differentiated in the Draft as follows: „(1) Media Services are provided without prior permission: 1. if they are provided solely via the global computer network (web casting, live streaming, etc.), or 2. in case of re-broadcasting services in accordance with the provisions of the European Convention on Transfrontier Television. (2) The requested media services are provided on the basis of the approval.“ Article 74 of the final version of the Law defines that, without obtaining permission, the broadcasters can be: public media services, media service providers who act exclusively through the global information network, but adds the provision that these media have to be entered into the media registry; then those who are re-broadcasting programs on the RS territory "in accordance with the provisions of the European Convention on Transfrontier Television", and eventually adding the provision that the media service provider "can not be a person who, under the provisions of this law, can not be a license holder". This directly disqualifies students, student organizations, universities to initiate even on-line broadcasting via web casting or live streaming.

Yet, the most interesting difference between the Draft of the Law on Electronic Media and its final version, is found in the Article 80, which defines

who can hold a licence for a media services provider. In the first paragraph of Article 80 of the Draft it is clearly stated that a license holder can not be “1.a company, institution or other legal entity founded by the Republic of Serbia, autonomous province, or local government except for the public service broadcaster, universities founded by the Republic of Serbia or an autonomous province, for training students in connection with the activities pertaining to media on a non-profit basis”. In the same article, in paragraph three and four it is stipulated that a a licence holder can not be a “legal entity for which it is not possible to determine the ownership structure of the founding capital” or “a person who does not meet the technical and organizational conditions for the production of media services prescribed by the Regulator “. The two mentioned paragraphs and the part of the first paragraph that give the universities founded by the Republic or Province the opportunity to broadcast programs on a non-profit basis and with a purpose of education are completely absent from the finally adopted version of the Law which is a fact that had a largely negative impact on the promotion of student radio or television broadcasting whose primary function was supposed to be training students for technical or program and production related aspects of the preparation and realization of media services. In this way, the state universities were unjustly deprived of the opportunity to create a stimulating environment for their students and their education.

Media legislation and especially the Law on electronic media in its drafting stage demonstrates the initiative to improve some of the existing solutions related to the possibility that students, faculties and universities to establish their electronic media. Unfortunately, in the final stages, all the provisions that were positive for the academic community were not met with an approval, whether because of the will of local, political stakeholders or the European institutions and thus the proposed solutions did not make it into the final version.

### **3. SERBIAN MEDIA LEGISLATION - SUPPORT OR AN OBSTACLE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STUDENT ELECTRONIC MEDIA**

The transformation of the media system in Serbia in the last quarter of the century, was directly linked to the political, social and economic changes and was initially linked to the adoption of new media laws. The legislation adopted since the nineteen nineties could be regarded as oppressive and discouraging to any initiative that goes beyond the authoritarian policy

framework, which means that it has not opened up opportunities for any form of student organizations in the field of media. After 2000 the legislation was strongly developing in the direction of affirmation of democratic and European standards and principles in terms of which opening legal opportunities for the civil sector media, radio and television stations could have been a good solution for the student media.

Ever since 2013, the relevant Ministry started activities related to the adoption of new media regulations that were supposed to fully harmonize national legislation with the European legislation in the field of media. Adoption of the Law on Public Information and Media, the Law on Public Media Services and the Law on Electronic Media in 2014 was supposed to regulate in almost all segments media business practices. Though the analysis of current media regulations, especially the Law on Electronic Communications (2014), and through comparing the draft and the final version of the law, it can be concluded that the legislator had the intention to open the possibility for universities to establish media, but for unknown reasons this provision has not found its way to the final and the adopted version of the law, rendering student initiatives in establishing their own media for the purpose of education and/or social engagement completely futile.

Since the legal framework does not provide adequate space for student media and students in general, one of the possibilities to fulfil this vacuum is to create powerful connections through direct and indirect stimulation of cooperation between the public media services and universities where students are studying, among other things, for professions related to electronic media. In this regard, the revision could pertain to the Law on public media services in the sense of introducing provisions that would strongly insist on the collaboration between public media and higher education institutions, but should certainly be aimed to adopting new and amending the existing internal documents of the public media which would define the principles of this cooperation in more detail. The cooperation between institutions of public service media and primarily state of universities and faculties<sup>8</sup>, could go in several directions. First of all, a slot should be opened in the program schedule for the placement of student TV and film productions that could be treated as independent productions that the whose public broadcasting service is required to air anyway. As regards to other modes of cooperation, those could be: the continuous practice of students in different organizational segments of the public service, the involvement of students in the conceptualization and

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<sup>8</sup> The fact that private universities are not mentioned does not come from the intention to discredit them, but rather from the fact that there is a legal possibility that these institutions to establish their media, which is not the case for universities and faculties founded by the Republic of Serbia



implementation of programs, the introduction of volunteering practices in public service media as a process of acquiring professional experience which would be useful for raising professional capacities of other commercial media that will employ students in the future<sup>9</sup>; development of youth and education oriented employment policies that will be oriented towards employing young artists, journalists as well as engineers (ETF, FON, PMF), which is absolutely in line with the imperatives of general digitization and new media environment.

Not to tie everything only to the public sector, students should include in the work of commercial broadcasters, similarly to the idea of dual education related to higher education. In that sense, market-oriented media may participate in the education of students and can provide them with the opportunity to be involved in shaping the program as students, and afterwards as professionals. In this respect, one could deliberate on tax incentives or benefits in the area of project financing for private, commercial media that would include students in the production of its own programs or provide its own programming space for the dissemination of results of student productions.

In any case, the electronic media in any society have great potentials not only in terms of creating the image of reality but also the initiation and implementation of changes. When the media are entrusted to young, ambitious and often uncompromising academics and future intellectuals, exceptional results can be expected that are almost certain to guarantee creativity, engagement, progress and quality. Therefore, statutory provisions of media laws, internal documents of both public service and commercial media have to be modified or act towards the goal of providing students with ways for reaching the audience, if not as independent then at least as guided creators of media content. The benefits would certainly be numerous: in terms of effective education, efficient programs and stimulation of total transformation and the improvement of society, especially companies that still have to develop their cultural level, their communications and finally their democratic values. Young people, students, who are educated and media literate have the knowledge and the ability to carry this through. What they need is a chance.

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<sup>9</sup> The public media service represents the most complete and well-rounded program and a production model, with the most advanced system management that should be a standard of production in general.

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# DO RULES ON THE PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS EXTEND TO MEDIA WORKERS ENGAGED IN CAMPUS AND STUDENT BROADCASTING ORGANISATIONS?

Dr Ana Knežević Bojović<sup>1</sup>, Dr Vesna Ćorić<sup>2</sup>, Dr Marina Matić Bosković<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract:** Free flow of information and ideas lies at the heart of the very notion of democracy and is crucial to effective respect for human rights. Freedom of expression and the right to information are exercised, *inter alia*, through pluralist media – newspapers, audio and visual broadcasting systems, but also through electronic media. An ideal broadcasting system comprises the public service, commercial and community broadcasting. Community broadcasting responds to the social and cultural needs of a defined community, usually in opposition to mainstream media. Campus and student broadcasting organizations are a form of community broadcasting, and are also a powerful educational tool. Student or campus broadcasting organizations can therefore simultaneously empower learners and expand democracy.

In recent years, media workers have been increasingly targeted around the world and there is disquieting evidence of the scale of such threats. In an attempt to mitigate this problem, global and regional organizations have developed legal instruments and mechanisms to advance the protection of journalists. On global level, the United Nations are at the forefront of these efforts, while, on the regional level, Europe has developed most advanced legal instruments aimed at the protection of journalists.

Threats similar to those sustained by media workers employed by public or commercial media can also affect those engaged in campus or student radio and TV stations. This can be particularly problematic if national legislations recognize the necessary level of protection only to registered journalists.

The paper will analyse global and regional standards for the protection of journalists and media workers as well as best practice models from European countries. The authors will investigate whether national legislations

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and jurisprudence protect media workers in student broadcasting systems in the same manner as registered journalists and formulate recommendations for improvement of legislation and practice based on this analysis.

**Key words:** community media; journalist; freedom of expression

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Free flow of information and ideas lies at the heart of the very notion of democracy and is crucial to effective respect for human rights.[1] This notion has been confirmed a number of times by international and regional human rights authorities.[2] For instance, the Human Rights Committee has stated in its General Comment No. 34 that the freedom of opinion and the freedom of expression "constitute the foundation stone for every free and democratic society"<sup>4</sup> A similar position had previously been affirmed by the European Court of Human Rights in the case *Handyside v UK* in 1976, "freedom of expression constitutes one of the essential foundations of such a society, one of the basic conditions for its progress and for the development of every man."<sup>5</sup> Freedom of expression and the right to information are exercised, *inter alia*, through pluralist media – newspapers, audio and visual broadcasting systems, and also through electronic media.

An ideal broadcasting system comprises the public service, commercial and community broadcasting. Community broadcasting is a form of broadcasting particularly important because responds to the social and cultural needs of a defined community, usually in opposition to mainstream media. It has developed in response to the needs of grassroots social movements and community based-organisations to find accessible and affordable means to express their own issues and concerns.[3] Campus and student broadcasting organizations are a form of community broadcasting, as well as a powerful educational tool. Student or campus broadcasting organizations can therefore simultaneously empower learners and expand democracy.

In recent years, media workers have been increasingly targeted around the world and there is disquieting evidence of the scale of such threats.[4] In an attempt to mitigate this problem, global and regional organizations have developed legal instruments and mechanisms to advance the protection of journalists. On global level, the United Nations are at the forefront of these efforts, while, on the regional level, Europe has developed most advanced legal instruments aimed at the protection of journalists. International and regional instruments promulgate a series of standards related to various mechanism of journalist's protection, covering issues such as protection of confidentiality of sources, guaranteed right to free legal aid in criminal and civil

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<sup>4</sup> Human Rights Committee, General Comment No 34 on Article 19 on freedom of opinion and expression, CCPR/C/GC/34, 11 September 2011, para 2

<sup>5</sup> Application No 5493/72, Judgment 7 December 1976 at para 49

proceedings, decriminalization of defamation and improved police protection of journalists. Many of these principles are reaffirmed in national legislation. However, what national laws seem to be lagging behind in, compared to supranational instruments, is the response to the changing landscape in which the freedom of expression and freedom of information is exercised – traditional media reporting and journalistic work is increasingly complemented or even replaced by online media content, which is not necessarily created by journalists. It is therefore legitimate to ask whether all those who create media content, regardless of whether they are registered journalists, citizen journalists, bloggers or students creating media content to be used by campus or university broadcasting service, are equally protected against threats to freedom of expression and freedom of media.

This paper will first provide an overview of the most important legal instruments on global and European level that concern the protection of journalists and other media workers. It will then explore the best practices regarding the definition of a journalist in legal acts governing the protection of journalists. In the end, it will consider the implications of such regulation to student/campus broadcasting organisations.

## **2. INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS ON PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS – GLOBAL AND REGIONAL**

As explained before, there is a number of supra-national legal instruments that envisage some level or form of protection of journalists. This is an overview of such instruments on global and European levels:

(1) Universal Declaration on the Rights of Man – envisages freedom of opinion and expression in its Article 19. This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media.

(2) Geneva Conventions of 1949 – regulate the treatment of civilians, including journalists, and other persons who do not directly participate in armed conflict. Article 19 of Additional Protocol I states that "journalists engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered as civilians"

(3) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights<sup>6</sup> envisages the right to hold opinion without interference and the right to freedom of

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<sup>6</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

expression in its Article 19. In 2011, this Article was a subject of the General Comment of the Human Rights Committee No. 34<sup>7</sup>, which imposes on the states the obligation to adopt adequate laws and good practices and mechanism in order to protect the freedom of opinion and freedom of expression.

(4) Human Rights Council Resolution 21/12<sup>8</sup> - Condemns in the strongest term all attacks and violence against journalists, expresses its concern that there is a growing threat to the safety of journalists posed by non-State actors.

(5) Resolution 12/16<sup>9</sup> on freedom of expression, which voices a concern over violations of the freedom of expression and the right to ask, which continue to occur, and include extrajudicial killing, arbitrary detention, torture, intimidation, persecution and harassment, discrimination, and censorship against persons who exercise and seek to promote these rights, including journalists, writers, other media workers, internet users and human rights defenders.

(6) Special procedures of the Human Rights Council – are one of the mechanisms put in place to protect freedom of expression. In 1993 the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression was established. In its 2012 report, the Rapporteur has given most attention to the rights of journalists, given the increase in the number of journalist who were killed that year (104).

(7) UN Security Council Resolution 1738<sup>10</sup> - underscores that states must comply with the relevant obligations under international law to end impunity and to prosecute those responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law. In addition, the Resolution reminds parties to armed conflicts of their obligations to protect journalists, those working in the media and associated personnel, and to prevent acts of violence and retribution.[5]

(8) Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors – This recommendation can be considered as the sublimation of current best practice in adopting laws and mechanisms to protect journalists. The Recommendation, adopted on April 13, 2016, provides

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<sup>7</sup> Human Rights Committee 102nd session Geneva, 11-29 July 2011, General comment No. 34.

<sup>8</sup> Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council 21/12 Safety of journalists.

<sup>9</sup> A/HRC/12/L.14/Rev.1 30 September 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Security Council Resolution 1738 (2006) of 23 December 2006, S/RES/1738.

guidelines that are "designed to meet the many-faceted challenge of ensuring the effective protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors". The guidelines are divided into four categories, based on subject-matter: prevention, protection, prosecution, promotion of information, education and awareness raising. Firstly, the Recommendation orders the states to ensure independence of the media and safeguard media pluralism, including the independence and sustainability of public-service media and community media. The states should particularly re-examine its legislation in order to ensure that the effective exercise of these principles is ensured through regulatory and administrative mechanisms. The Recommendation stresses the need to decriminalize defamation, or, if defamation is incriminated, the need to ensure freedom of expression safeguards that comply with all relevant international instruments. When it comes to protection, the Recommendation reads that states should take appropriate preventive operational measures e.g. providing police protection, particularly if such protection is requested by media actors. The Recommendation stresses it is imperative for everyone involved in killings of, attacks on and ill-treatment of journalists and other media actors to be brought to justice. The states are obliged to ensure effective investigations of such cases. It is important that the Recommendation extends this requirement to "ill-treatment of journalists and media actors", reaffirming the idea that not only physical threats to the safety of journalists require adequate prosecution – states should protect journalist particularly having in mind their vulnerability, especially when they report on politically sensitive topics. In addition, states should eliminate all barriers that prevent journalists from collecting and publishing information of public importance.

(9) Vilnius Recommendations on Safety of Journalists, 8 June 2011 include a set of guidelines for national governments, legislatures, law-enforcement agencies and the media to ensure safe working conditions for journalist. They stress the need for speedy and effective investigations in cases of violence against journalists, improvements of national regulatory frameworks in order to ensure media freedoms, free access to information of public importance and protection of sources of information, alongside the need to establish good practices that would ensure the safety of journalists.

The obligations the states have as a part of their duty to ensure effective exercise of human rights, including the freedom of expression and freedom of opinion, regardless of whether they impose positive or negative obligations on the state, can be grouped in the following manner:

Preventing that measures related to tax treatment, registration and accreditation of journalists, and the termination of employment from being



implemented in an arbitrary manner, since such actions would result in the prevention of freedom of expression<sup>11</sup>

Protection of confidentiality of journalist's sources<sup>12</sup>

Protection of journalists' business and living premises<sup>13</sup>

Establishment and development of media self-regulation bodies and initiatives<sup>14</sup>

Prevention of gender-based violence against female journalists<sup>15</sup>

Guaranteed right to free legal aid to journalists in civil and criminal proceedings<sup>16</sup>

Adoption and effective implementation of media ownership regulations<sup>17</sup>

Control of national regulatory framework and practice by independent bodies<sup>18</sup>

Establishment and promotion of mechanism resulting in effective investigation and prosecution of those involved in attacks against journalists<sup>19</sup>

Decriminalisation of defamation<sup>20</sup>

Improved police protection of journalists<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> COE Recommendation, 2016, p.2-6, para 13, para 37; EU Guidelines, p. 16; European Charter on Freedom of Press

<sup>12</sup> COE Recommendation, 2016, para. 2, p.1 and Article 4, European Charter on Freedom of Press; Recommendation 1950 (2011) of the CoE Parliamentary Assembly on the protection of journalists' sources; Recommendation No. R (2000) 7 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the right of journalists not to disclose their sources of information; Resolution of the European Parliament on confidentiality for journalists' sources and the right of civil servants to disclose information, (adopted in 1993, A3-0434/93, reported in The Official Journal of the European Communities on 18 January 1994, No. C 44/34); CSCE Concluding Document of 1986 Vienna Meeting.

<sup>13</sup> ECtHR 27 November 2007, Tillack v. Belgium, application no. 20477/05.

<sup>14</sup> EU Resolution, para. 9, p. 8

<sup>15</sup> COE Recommendation, 2016, para.2, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> COE Recommendation, 2016, p. 6 , para 36.

<sup>17</sup> COE Recommendation, 2016, para. 15, p.5; EU Guidelines, p.8.

<sup>18</sup> COE Recommendation, 2016, p.2, para. 4.

<sup>19</sup> UN Human Rights Committee General Comment No. 34, General Assembly Resolution 68/163 of 18 December 2013, A/RES/68/163.

<sup>20</sup> COE Recommendation, 2016

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*.

### 3. DEFINITION OF JOURNALIST – BEST INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL PRACTICES

The question of who can be classified as a journalist is significant not only because certain rights and privileges flow from the title of “journalist”, but also because certain individuals may be targeted by virtue of playing or being identified with that role.[6] The response to that question, however, is complicated because of the changing media landscape and the ever-increasing online presence of traditional media, which also feature users's comments and own contributions, to media contents developed and intended to be used only online and dissemination of information and creation of media contents through social networks and community media. International and regional human rights instruments have, in response to this challenge, adopted a broad and functional approach to the notion of journalist.<sup>22</sup> Consequently, the definition of a journalist has opened up to include other types of media workers. [7] Thus, for instance, the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression, Frank la Rue, stated in the 2012 Report of the Special Rapporteur to the Human Rights Council on the protection of journalists and media freedom<sup>23</sup> that "journalists are individuals who observe and describe events, document and analyse events, statements, policies and proposition that can affect society, with the purpose of systematizing such information and gathering of facts and analyses to inform sectors of society or society as a whole. Such a definition of journalists includes all media workers and support staff, as well as community media workers and so-called "citizen-journalists" when they momentarily play that role." The Human Rights Committee has, however, focused on the practice of journalism – in General Comment No. 34 interpreting Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Committee stated that "journalism is a function shared by a wide range of actors, including professional full-time reporters and analysts, as well as bloggers and others who engage in forms of self publication in print, on the internet or elsewhere, and general State systems of registration or licensing of journalists are incompatible with paragraph 3".[8] This broad interpretation of the notion of a journalist has also been supported in the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. Namely, in its decision in the case *Társaság a Szabadságjogokért v. Hungary*<sup>24</sup> the Court recognised "the civil society's important contribution to the discussion of public affairs", and recognised that a non-governmental organisation involved in matters of public interest is

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> A/HRC/20/17, available at <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G12/137/87/PDF/G1213787.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>24</sup> Application no. 37374/05

exercising a role as public watchdog, which is of similar importance to that of the press, and that the limitation of its access to information constituted a violation of Article 10 of the ECHR. This principle was confirmed in the cases of *Animal Defenders International v. the United Kingdom*<sup>25</sup> and *Youth Initiative for Human Rights v. Serbia*<sup>26</sup>. This position was reaffirmed in the 2016 Recommendation of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers to member States on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors. The Recommendation expressly states that the definition of media actors has expanded as a result of new forms of media in the digital age, and that it includes others who contribute to public debate and who perform journalistic activities or fulfil public watchdog functions.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, the Recommendation has emphasised that "Ongoing technological developments have transformed the traditional media environment, as described, *inter alia*, in CM/Rec(2011)7 on a new notion of media, leading to new conceptions of media and new understandings of the evolving media ecosystem. Advances in information and communication technologies have made it easier for an increasingly broad and diverse range of actors to participate in public debate. Consequently, the European Court of Human Rights has repeatedly recognised that individuals, civil society organisations, whistle-blowers and academics, in addition to professional journalists and media, can all make valuable contributions to public debate, thereby playing a role similar or equivalent to that traditionally played by the institutionalised media and professional journalists".<sup>28</sup>

It is therefore clear that international and regional human rights instruments award protection not only to journalists who are registered as such or who are employed by traditional media, but also to media workers more generally, particularly to those who perform the function of a public watchdog.

National legislations in some countries have followed the same line of reasoning, either in their regulatory acts or in their jurisprudence. However, most European national legal systems (including Eastern European) do not contain a legal definition of "journalist".[9] In the Eastern European region, the Republic of Croatia and the FYROM do represent an exception in that respect.

The Belgian Act on the Confidentiality of Journalistic Sources of April 2005 included provisions that enabled journalists not to disclose their sources and consequently has prohibited investigative measures against journalists

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<sup>25</sup> Application no. 48876/08

<sup>26</sup> Application no. 48315/06

<sup>27</sup> Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4, paragraph 4.

<sup>28</sup> Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4, paragraph 9.

that could jeopardize the confidentiality of their sources. Article 2, paragraph 1 of the Act defined journalists as "every employed or self-employed person and legal entity who regularly and directly contributes to the collection, edition, production or distribution of information to the public through a medium". After the Act came into force and started to be implemented, an action for annulment was brought before the Belgian Constitutional Court. It was filed by a person who occasionally wrote contributions for newspapers and also published online, and these contributions were sometimes based on information from sources who wanted to stay anonymous.[10] The applicant challenged the restrictive definition of journalist in the above-mentioned Act, claiming it was discriminatory and that it constituted a violation of the freedom of expression, as guaranteed by Article 19 of the Belgian Constitution. The Belgian Constitutional Court ruled that everyone undertaking journalistic activities could invoke the rules of the Act that guarantee the freedom of the press.<sup>29</sup> The Court decided that Article 2, paragraph 1 of the above-mentioned Act violated the Belgian Constitution and also Article 10 of the ECHR by its restrictive definition of journalist. The Court annulled a part of Article 2 of the Act, which then read that the Act applied to "everyone who directly contributes, edits, produces or disseminates information aimed at the public via a medium". This broad definition would imply that, e.g. bloggers, but also those working in campus and community media, would also be protected.[11]

USA Free Flow of Information Bill of 2013 provides statutory protection for the "reporters' privilege" — legal rules which protect journalists against the government requiring them to reveal confidential sources or other information. Article 11 of the Bill defined "covered journalist" as a person "who is, or on the relevant date, was, an employee, independent contractor, or agent of an entity or service that disseminates news or information by means of newspaper; nonfiction book; wire service; news agency; news website, mobile application or other news or information service (whether distributed digitally or otherwise); news program; magazine or other periodical, whether in print, electronic, or other format; or through television or radio broadcast, multichannel video programming distributor, or motion picture for public showing". The definition was criticized since it was interpreted that it only covers traditional and online media, it draws the line at posts on Twitter, blogs or social media from non-journalists.

However, in 2014, in the *Obsidian Finance Group v. Crystal Cox* case, the US court found that even though someone might not write for the "institutional press," they're entitled to all the protections the Constitution grants

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<sup>29</sup>Constitutional Court decision 91/2006 of June 7, 2006.

journalists. This ruling extended application of the statutory protection of journalist and made bloggers legally equivalent to journalist. Judge Andrew Hurwitz explained that the protections of the First Amendment do not turn on whether the defendant was a trained journalist, formally affiliated with traditional news entities, engaged in conflict-of-interest disclosure, went beyond just assembling others' writings, or tried to get both sides of a story.[12] As the Supreme Court has accurately warned, a First Amendment distinction between the institutional press and other speakers is unworkable: "With the advent of the Internet and the decline of print and broadcast media the line between the media and others who wish to comment on political and social issues becomes far more blurred."

Beside Federal Free Flow of Information Bill, the US states adopted their own legislation in this regard. The definition of journalist is different from state to state. Instead of defining who qualifies to invoke the reporter's privilege based upon a particular medium, some states embrace a definition of reporter based on the function of journalism. While some state statutes only provide the reporter's privilege to persons employed by an established media entity, other states apply it to any "person who is or has been directly engaged in the gathering, procuring, compiling, editing, or publishing of information for the purpose of transmission, dissemination, or publication to the public".<sup>30</sup> State legislatures have rightly extended the privilege to all persons who gather and disseminate news to the public rather than limiting protection to only professional journalists.

State courts have also wrestled with whether a reporter's privilege covers non-traditional journalists, including freelance writers,<sup>31</sup> authors,<sup>32</sup> documentary filmmakers,<sup>33</sup> academics,<sup>34</sup> and independent research consultants.<sup>35</sup> Hawaii is the only state to specifically include whether bloggers are protected by its shield law if certain conditions are met: "Non-traditional news gatherers, e.g., bloggers, are protected if (1) the individual invoking the

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<sup>30</sup> Minnesota State § 595.023 (2004).

<sup>31</sup> See *People v. Von Villas*, 13 Cal. Rptr. 2d 62, 78-79 (Cal. Ct. App. 1992) (holding California privilege applied to freelance author).

<sup>32</sup> See e.g., *Shoen*, 5 F. 3d at 1290-91.

<sup>33</sup> See *Silkwood v. Kerr-McGee Corp.*, 563 F.2d 433, 436-37 (10th Cir. 1977) (holding privilege applied to documentary filmmaker whose "mission...was to carry out investigative reporting for use in the preparation of a documentary film").

<sup>34</sup> See *Cusumano*, 162 F.3d at 714.

<sup>35</sup> See *Summit Tech., Inc. v. Healthcare Capital Group, Inc.*, 141 F.R.D. 381, 384 (D. Mass. 1992)(holding independent research consultant was "engaged in the dissemination of investigative information to the investing business community" on "matters of public concern," and was therefore "entitled to raise the claim of privilege").

privilege regularly participates in reporting or publishing news of significant public interest, (2) the person holds a position similar to a traditional journalist or newscaster, and (3) the public interest is served by extending the protection of the statute.”<sup>36</sup>

The definition of journalist contained in Article 2 paragraph 8 of the Media Law of the Republic of Croatia<sup>37</sup> is not sufficiently broad, as it solely refers to the professional journalists. More precisely, it encompasses natural persons involved in collecting, processing, designing or classifying information for publishing through the media provided that the journalist is employed with the media publisher on the basis of a work contracts, or perform journalist activities as an independent profession in accordance with law.<sup>38</sup> In other words, it implies that certain categories of media actors other than professional journalists are not protected by the Croatian Media Law. Therefore, the key shortcoming of the notion of journalist as it is referred to in the Media Law relates to the fact that other categories are covered neither by the definition of journalist in the sense of the Media Law, nor by creation of the separate category of „other media actors“ to whom would be guaranteed the equal level of protection.

This definition is not in line with the abovementioned Council of Europe and United Nations documents. Apparently, the mere referral to the European Convention on Human Rights made in Article 1 of the Media Law *per se* does not constitute strong safeguard nor provide sufficient guidelines for the strict compliance with the Council of Europe instruments.<sup>39)</sup>

The restrictiveness of the definition of journalist in the sense of Article 2 of the Media Law recently also gave rise to initiation of the proceeding for review of compliance of this provision with the Constitution before the Croatian Constitutional Court. The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia rendered the ruling in June of 2016, finding that the definition of journalist limited to the category of professional journalists set by Article 2 of Media Law is in line with the journalists’ right to freedom of reporting stipulated by the Croatian Constitution.<sup>40</sup> By doing so, the court implicitly opted for the approach

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<sup>36</sup> See Privilege Compendium, <http://www.rcfp.org/privilege/index.php?op=browse&state=HI>

<sup>37</sup> Media Law (Consolidated version, Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia 59/04, 84/11, 81/13).

<sup>38</sup> Media Law, Article 2, para. 8.

<sup>39</sup> Article 1 paragraph 2 of the Media Law stipulates that the provisions of this Law shall be applied and interpreted in line with the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

<sup>40</sup> Ruling of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia of 3th of June 2016, no: U-I-578/2013.

whereby the protection guaranteed to professional journalists should differ from the protection guaranteed to other categories of journalists and media actors.

The recently adopted Law on Media of the FYROM contains almost identical wording as the aforementioned Media Law of the Republic of Croatia.<sup>41</sup> The restrictiveness of this definition which implicitly excludes all media actors except professional journalists already received considerable criticism from the expert community. [13]

Freedom of expression in the Netherlands is safeguarded under Article 7 of the Constitution, and free and independent media operate throughout the country. The Netherlands still lacks specific national legislation ensuring the right of journalists to protect their sources, [14] despite a landmark *Autoweek* judgment<sup>42</sup> of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) of 14 September 2010 ruling that media premises are exempt from police searches, and that police may not seize journalistic materials unless they obtain a warrant. Based on the of the ECHR decision it is necessary that the use of a coercive measure by which sources may be revealed is always tested in advance by the court. This requires an amendment of the law. In November 2012, the ECHR reinforced this principle with a ruling that the Netherlands had violated the European Convention on Human Rights when police used coercion to force two journalists to surrender documents in 2006.

The Board of Procurators General amended the text of its "Instructions for Use of Coercive Measures against Journalists".[15] The new regulation entered into effect on 1 March 2012. This concerns coercive measures such as monitoring and following journalists, searches of editorial premises and seizure of journalistic material. These new Instructions are an improvement of the journalists' position. The starting point is that the use of coercive measures against journalists to retrieve the identity of a source is not permitted. The use of a coercive measure is only permitted in the event of the detection and prevention of very serious offenses: crimes which may seriously damage the life, security or health of people, such as tracking down explosives in the event of an imminent attack, or detecting a suspect of whom it is suspected that he will commit serious crimes again. When there is no such 'very serious offense', no coercive measures may be used against journalists.

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<sup>41</sup> See. Article 2 paragraph 5 of the FYROM's Law on Media adopted in 2013: "Journalist shall mean a person who collects, analyses, processes, edits and/or classifies information published in a media and is employed by the media publisher or has an employment contract with the latter, or is a person who provides journalist activities as independent profession (freelance journalist) ".

<sup>42</sup> Cases of *Sanoma Uitgevers B.V v the Netherlands* (Application no. 38224/03)

In the Netherlands, the concept of 'journalist' includes everyone who professionally occupies himself with the collection and subsequent dissemination of information via the media. This includes members of the editorial staff, camera and sound crew. New media such as news sites and professional bloggers are also mentioned explicitly.

Italian law gives journalist the right to protect their sources.[16] But in Italy, journalist can work full time only if they are on the profession register and if they are properly trained and have passed professional exams before they can register and practice. Obtaining a license from Order of Journalist (ODG) is a lengthy procedure in which applicants must pass a professional qualification test, which generally costs about €400, after serving as an intern for at least 18 months. In Italy, one can work as a journalist if he or she is 21. Journalist can be removed from the registry if they violate code of the profession [17]. Such professional registration, "licensing" of journalist through an Order of Journalist is Italian specifics. Compared to other professional unions for journalists elsewhere in Europe, however, the Order of Journalist is quite a unique institution. In the rest of Europe, the journalistic profession is not regulated and limited by any external body. Journalists set up their own associations and unions, such as the National Union of Journalists in the UK and Ireland. These organizations are self-regulated like the ODG but they are not under the supervision of the Minister of Justice, nor do they require mandatory membership in order for one to practice journalism.

Media legislation in Sweden is based on a strong tradition of press freedom. It is all regulated in a basic law, Freedom of the Press Act dating back to 1766. Freedom is granted for the content of radio and television by a parallel basic law, the Freedom of Expression Act. Additional laws regulate organisational and technical conditions. Internet is generally treated like the press, meaning there are legal freedoms to establish sites and no restriction on contents. The Freedom of the Press Act provides protections to journalists' sources and guarantees access to information.<sup>43</sup> The basic laws on press freedom also grant citizens' access to public documents.

#### **4. IMPLICATIONS FOR CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY MEDIA**

Community media are understood as independent, civil society based media that operate for social benefit and not for profit.[18] Community media create an alternative both to national public broadcasters, which are often

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<sup>43</sup> Freedom of the Press, 2016 Report, Freedom House.



under government control, and to private commercial media. They play an important role in many countries, often in the form of community radio stations. Campus media are very similar to community media, particularly since they have very similar roles – both are almost always focused on local concerns and news, in a manner that is much more micro-oriented than conventional media [19]. In doing so, community and campus media play an important role within the national broadcasting systems, as they engage citizens and help shape the public debate. However, both community and campus media rely largely on the work of volunteers, i.e. unpaid labour and expertise of local residents and students who are not professional journalists, but rather citizen journalists. And while it is evident that campus and community media play an increasingly important role in the modern broadcasting systems worldwide<sup>44</sup> [20], [21], it does not seem to be evident that those engaged at community and campus media should be awarded the same level of protection that is granted to professional journalists. If that were not the case, their role in informing and engaging their communities, documenting and dissemination news, would be jeopardized, if not made impossible.

It is therefore imperative to ensure that national legislators, legal practitioners and law enforcement officials comply with the UN and COE interpretation of the freedom of expression, the result of which, as explained above, is that online journalists, citizen journalists, and organisations that seek, receive and impart information, are awarded the same level of protection as professional journalists. It is important to ensure that this interpretation is used irrespective of the definition of a journalist in national legislation and national jurisprudence, which, as shown above, can range from very broad to very narrow. To facilitate the transition from a restrictive interpretation of the notion of journalist to an interpretation that recognises the technological developments and the various forms of media in a pluralist society, information related to norms regulating the status of journalists and citizen journalists and the implications of the recent developments on international and regional level should be made accessible to the widest circle of media actors. Informed legislators, prosecutors, judges, law enforcement officials, journalist and citizen journalists can work together towards creating a pluralist and democratic broadcasting system of any country, in which campus media can effect both their educational role and their role in promoting a pluralist society.

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<sup>44</sup> According to Steve Buckley, there are indications that there are over 2000 community radio stations in the European Union alone.

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# SCIENTIFIC-EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM – A STUMBLING STONE FOR NATIONAL TV BROADCASTERS

Iva Beleslin<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** The paper considers the question of the status of scientific-educational content in programs of national television broadcasters – both public and commercial, as well as the relationship of the audience to these contents. The public service media, whose mission is to fulfil its social role of being a general "communication asset" [1] which creates public values and sets standards for the entire media "industry" is obliged to produce contents of scientific-educational character. On the other hand, commercial broadcasters have no such obligation, even when they hold the license of a national television. Thus, for example, the national broadcast company (*Radio Television of Serbia*) broadcast as much as 140 times more scientific-educational programs than the most watched commercial television station with national coverage in Serbia - *TV Pink*.

A study on the attitude of the audience to scientific-educational programs presented on Serbian television stations with national coverage, which has been conducted on a sample of 502 individuals, showed that the popularity of the scientific-educational program lags behind that of the film, news, series, sports and entertaining-musical programs. However, there is an encouraging finding that more than 80% of respondents from all socio-demographic categories expressed a desire to increasing presence of scientific-educational contents, particularly themes in the field of latest scientific achievements, history, health, documentaries presenting various geographic areas, but also themes related to maintaining youth and beauty.

**Keywords:** scientific-educational TV program, public service media, commercial televisions, audience, Serbia.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

TV stations with national coverage are required to comply with the genre diversity of programs they broadcast, with pronounced differences depending on the type of broadcaster, defined by the laws of the Republic of Serbia, primarily the *Broadcasting Act* and the *Law on Public Media Services*.

The main activity of the public service media includes [... production, purchase, editing and broadcasting of informative, educational, cultural, artistic, children's, entertainment, sports and other radio and TV programs in the general interest of citizens, and especially those aimed at realization of human and civil rights, exchange of ideas and opinions, nurture of political, gender, interethnic and religious tolerance, as well as preservation of national identity, and providing video and audiovisual media services and publishing electronic editions as a service of public interest ...] (Law on Public Media Services [2], Article 3, Paragraph 1). Therefore, the public media service has a social role of maintaining a general communication asset [1] and has to set standards for the entire media industry [3].

In contrast, commercial broadcasters follow the logic of profit – "money metric", which defines the most important aesthetic and production parameters of commercial televisions [4]. The program which is broadcast panders the tastes of audience in order to achieve a high rating, which contributes to maximizing profits. The Broadcasting Act [5] (Article 68) requires of broadcasters to comply with standards in terms of the program content, referring to the production and broadcasting of quality programs both from a technical point of view, and from the standpoint of content, applying international and national standards. Among the other things, broadcasters are required to submit documentation relating to the program concept (Article 52), but solely this documentation is not a necessary and sufficient criterion for obtaining a license for national coverage.

## 2. PRESENCE OF SCIENTIFIC-EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS ON TELEVISION WITH NATIONAL COVERAGE

Scientific-educational program, as one of eleven program types broadcast on televisions with national coverage, along with children's, cultural, artistic, documentary and sports broadcasts, falls into the category of "sensitive" programs (RRA [6], 2013: 23) . It includes the broadcast of all science shows, as well as shows of popular science: zoology and botany, medicine and psychology, engineering sciences, other natural and social sciences, as well as information and communication technology [7].

National broadcasters are obliged to broadcast them (although their share in total annual time of broadcast program is undefined), but because of their content and specifically profiled target group, their high rating cannot be guaranteed. Their production is primarily based on satisfying educational role of public media; however, in today's system of values and the struggle for market dominance, it fails to provide them with a basis for long-term success. Therefore, commercial televisions offer a noticeably low rate of scientific-educational content, while the *Radio Television of Serbia* as the national public service broadcasts all of its non-commercial programs (cultural, artistic, scientific, educational, documentary, religious, child) on its Channel Two (*RTS 2*).

The analysis of participation of scientific-educational programs in the total annual time of broadcast program<sup>2</sup> on televisions with national coverage, including the two channels of *Radio Television of Serbia* (*RTS 1* and *RTS 2*), and four commercial broadcasters (*B92*, *Prva*, *Pink*, *Happy*), for a period of five years (2011 – 2015), suggests that this type of program is one of the least-present. Notably, in some periods of time, some commercial broadcasters have even not broadcast any scientific-educational content (Table 1).

The total average share of this program type over the period from 2011 –2015 on all five televisions with national coverage was 2.98%. The annual average shows a slight increase in the share of scientific-educational content on all televisions with national coverage in the period from 2011 – 2013 (2011 – 2.45%; 2012 – 3.02%; 2013 – 3.28%), which is followed by a slight decrease (2014 – 3.23%; 2015 – 2.94%).

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<sup>2</sup> Article 73 of the Broadcasting Act defines the total annual broadcasting time as premiere content which does not include reruns, sports events, games, advertisements, teleshopping, nor news programs, except in the case of self-produced news.

Table 1. Participation of scientific-educational programs in the total annual time of broadcast program on television with national coverage [8]

Broadcaster		Scientific-educational program / share (%)					Average share (%)
	Year	2011.	2012.	2013.	2014.	2015.	
RTS 1		0.81	1.49	1.64	2.68 <sup>3</sup>	2.03	1.73
RTS 2		11.36	12.48	13.22	13.8 <sup>4</sup>	11.74	12.52
TV B92		2.43	1.98	3.10	2.56	2.72	2.56
TV Prva		0	1.88	1.48	0.33	0.01	0.74
TV PINK		0	0.04	0	0	0	0.008
TV Happy		0.08	0.23	0.23	0.02	1.11	0.33
Annual share (%)		2.45	3.02	3.28	3.23	2.94	2.98%

Compared to all other TV stations, the Second Program of *Radio Television of Serbia* (RTS 2), has had the highest presence of scientific-educational programs – 12.52%. In the period of 2011 – 2014, the share of this program slightly increased, while in 2015 it dropped by almost 2% compared to the maximum which was reached in 2013 (13.8%). RTS 2 has a well balanced program structure, so that science and education content makes almost one tenth of the total broadcast program, which is neither the case with the First Program of Radio Television of Serbia (RTS 1), nor the commercial broadcasters.

The second place, with nearly five times lower rate of such contents, is taken by the TV B92, with the average of 2.56%. The presence of programs with scientific-educational content on this TV has a tendency of stagnation, rather than increase. There were minimal deviations in 2013, when it reached the maximum presence (3.1%), and in 2012, when the share of scientific-educational programs was the lowest (1.98%).

The first program of Radio Television of Serbia (RTS 1), although being obliged as a public media to broadcast necessary and sufficient number of scientific-educational programs, had no pronounced share in the percentage of presence of this program type at annual level. With the 1.73% of average annual share in the scientific-educational program, RTS 1 takes only the third place. The highest share of these shows was in 2014 (2.68%) and 2015 (2.03%), while the minimum was in 2011 (only 0.81%).

In the last five years, the *Prva Srpska TV* achieved an average share of 0.74% in broadcasting scientific-educational programs in the total annual broadcast time, while in 2011 it did not broadcast this type of program at all. In

<sup>3</sup> The report on compliance with legal and programming obligations of the public media service of Radio Television of Serbia in 2014 (RRA, 2014) was made for the period from 1 January to 12 August 2014, so that the analysis included only eight months of that year, and not 12 as is the case in all other reports.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

2012, it reached the maximum presence of 1.88%, which dropped in subsequent years, leading to the rate of presence in 2015 which can be expressed at the level of statistical error – 0.01%.

*Happy TV* also showed no interest in including scientific-educational shows in its program schedule, so that the annual share of this program type exceeded 1% only in 2015 (1.1%).

In this period *TV Pink* had the lowest share of scientific-educational contents, which can be expressed at the level of statistical error – 0,008%. In 2012, this share was only 0.04%, which is a minimum deviation from all the other years during which this station did not broadcast scientific-educational programs at all.

The year in which all six televisions with national coverage broadcasted the most scientific-educational programs was 2013, when the annual average was 3.28%.

### **3. THE ATTITUDE OF AUDIENCE TOWARDS SCIENTIFIC-EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Given the dominance of entertaining and informative program contents, it is not surprising that the educational function of the media has been marginalized and perceived as the least important. Meeting the statutory minimum makes the maximum involvement of broadcasters when selecting programs in this domain, and it is not surprising that the scientific-educational program is under-represented in all televisions with national coverage.

In this regard, the question is if there is a need of the audience for increasing the presence of these programs on a daily basis. An extensive study, aimed at determining the attitude of participants to program types broadcast by TV stations with national coverage [9] also included a segment devoted to scientific-educational programs. It revealed the following: a) there is a need to increase the number of scientific-educational programs on TV stations with national coverage; b) the most desirable themes in the scientific-educational program; c) the type of production of these programs; d) the most appropriate terms for the broadcast; and e) the frequency of broadcast.

#### **3.1. Research sample**

The sample consisted of 502 respondents of which 55.6% were females, 44.4% males. The survey was conducted on the territory of the Republic of Serbia (excluding Kosovo and Metohija), in regions of Central



Serbia – 55.2%, Vojvodina – 26.5%, Belgrade – 18.3%. 56.3% of participants were from urban, 43.7% from rural areas. Regarding the age of respondents the distribution was as follows: 28.5% of respondents was over 60 years of age, 26.4% of them 45-59 years, 24.8 of them between 30 and 44, while 46 of them (20.3%) 15 – 29.

Regarding the level of education, 40.7% of participants were with completed four-year secondary school, grammar school or specialization, with 24% of them being only with or without elementary school completed.

The majority of participants was unemployed (33.9%) or retired (26.5%). Among the employed respondents (23.5% of the sample), 7.8% were employed in public, 14.3% in private sector. 38% of participants were without any income. Average monthly income over RSD 50.000 was reached by only 4.9% of respondents.

## **3.2. Research method**

The empirical data were collected through the participants' individual statements using the method of interviewing, i.e. formalized Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing technique (CATI). The results were analyzed using basic methods of statistical processing, or quantitative statistical analysis contained in the SPSS 17.0 software package, as well as the analysis of descriptive statistics and the chi-square test as the test of difference between the target groups. The survey was conducted in 2013<sup>5</sup>, with the average survey lasting 14 minutes per respondent.

## **3.3. Research results**

The results are presented in the same order as the questions, including the statistically significant differences on each question individually separately as a function of the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics.

### **3.3.1. Increasing the presence of scientific-educational programs on TV stations with national coverage**

The largest number of participants (81%) and from almost every socio-demographic category (80%) showed a desire for increasing the number of scientific-educational content in television stations with national coverage. Less

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<sup>5</sup> Due to minor differences in the total annual broadcasting time of scientific-educational programs on televisions with national coverage in 2014 and 2015, compared to the previous three years, the data obtained in the survey are still relevant.

than a fifth of respondents (19%) felt that these contents are already present in a sufficient degree, of which 45.1% have not watched the scientific-educational program due to lack of time, uninteresting content, or for any other reason. The fact that 2.2% of respondents watched scientific-educational content through foreign television channels should be also taken into account.

### 3.3.1.1. Statistically significant differences as a function of the participants' socio-demographic characteristics

The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference as a function of the level of education, where  $p = 0.024$  ( $p < 0.05$ ), and  $\chi^2 = 9.430$ . Increasing levels of education implied increasing number of respondents who have shown interest in increasing the scope of scientific-educational content on TV stations with national coverage.

Also, there was a statistically significant difference as a function of settlement in which the participants lived, where  $p = 0.035$  ( $p < 0.05$ ), and  $\chi^2 = 4.421$ . The number of respondents from urban areas who wanted the rate of scientific-educational content to be increased was higher than that of respondents from rural areas (Table 2).

Table 2. Statistically significant difference as a function of increasing the presence of scientific-educational programs on TV stations with national coverage

GENDER		AGE		EDUCATION		EMPLOYMENT STATUS	
$\chi^2$	Sig	$\chi^2$	Sig	$\chi^2$	Sig	$\chi^2$	Sig
.095 <sup>a</sup>	.758	2.244 <sup>a</sup>	.523	<b>9.430<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>.024</b>	12.124 <sup>a</sup>	.146

MONTHLY INCOME		TYPE OF SETTLEMENT		REGION	
$\chi^2$	Sig	$\chi^2$	Sig	$\chi^2$	Sig
7.279 <sup>a</sup>	.201	<b>4.421<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>0.35</b>	3.259 <sup>a</sup>	.196

### 3.3.2. The most preferred themes in the scientific-educational program

As most desirable topics within scientific education program the following stands out: "scientific achievements" – 28.6% (67.6% of males and 63.1% of urban dwellers), "health, care and nutrition" – 24.7 % (82.9% of females and 52.3% of urban dwellers), "history and geography" – 18%, "travel documentaries" – 16.8%, "religious contents" – 5.4%, "school program", as well as topics that are dedicated to the protection of flora and fauna – 4.4%. This question was not answered by 2.1% of the participants from this group of respondents.

### 3.3.2.1 Themes in the context of scientific-educational programs on TV stations with national coverage as a function of the participants' socio-demographic characteristics - statistically significant differences

The results showed that there were statistically significant differences among participants when it comes to opting for the most desirable themes within the scientific-educational program, primarily as a function the respondents' gender, but also their age, education level and employment status (Table 3).

Table 3. Statistically significant difference as a function of increasing the presence of specific themes in context of scientific-educational program on TV stations with national coverage

GENDER		AGE		EDUCATION		EMPLOYMENT STATUS	
$\chi^2$	Sig	$\chi^2$	Sig	$\chi^2$	Sig	$\chi^2$	Sig
60.906 <sup>a</sup>	.000	43.033 <sup>a</sup>	.001	37.849 <sup>a</sup>	.004	73.627 <sup>a</sup>	.010

MONTHLY INCOME		TYPE OF SETTLEMENT		REGION	
$\chi^2$	Sig	$\chi^2$	Sig	$\chi^2$	Sig
39.050 <sup>a</sup>	.125	8.378 <sup>a</sup>	0.212	12.859 <sup>a</sup>	.379

Regarding the gender of respondents, there is a statistically significant difference, where  $p = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.01$ ), and  $\chi^2 = 60.906$ . Male respondents showed more interest in broadcasting a larger number of shows from the fields of science, technology and inventions, as well as history and geography, while the females were more interested in increasing the number of shows dedicated to travel, health, care and nutrition.

A statistically significant difference of  $p = 0.001$  ( $p < 0.01$ ), and  $\chi^2 = 43.033$  was observed in relation to the age of respondents. Respondents aged 30 – 44 years were mainly interested in increasing the number of contents dedicated to science, technology and inventions, as well as themes in the field of history and geography. Respondents aged 45 – 59 years were mainly interested in increasing the number of scientific-educational programs about travel and religious topics, while participants older than 60 have shown the greatest interest for increasing the presence of scientific-educational content on topics dedicated to health, care and nutrition.

A statistically significant difference also existed as a function of the level of education, where  $p = 0.004$  ( $p < 0.01$ ), and  $\chi^2 = 37,849$ . All types of scientific-educational contents has been watched by more respondents with

secondary four-year education, grammar school or some kind of specialization, than by those with lower or higher levels of education.

There is also a statistically significant difference as a function of the respondents' employment status, with  $p = 0.010$  ( $p < 0.05$ ),  $\chi^2 = 73.627$ . Contents dedicated to science, technology and inventions are mostly watched by the respondents employed in the private sector, contents dedicated to travelling are watched by pensioners, while contents of devoted health, care and nutrition, religion, as well as those dedicated to themes from history and geography are watched by the unemployed.

### **3.3.3. Production of scientific-educational program**

The majority of participants (81%) who have shown interest in increasing the presence of scientific-educational programs in channels with national coverage think that it should be of domestic production (62.9%). A much smaller percentage of them (24.6%) have shown interest that such programs should be of foreign production, while this sub-question was unanswered by 12.5% of the respondents.

An increased interest for scientific-educational contents of domestic production, i.e. which were produced in the country, and which were not produced or co-produced by the broadcaster [6] has mainly been showed by female respondents (56.5%) and individuals who live in urban areas (59.3%).

In contrast, male respondents (50.5%) and individuals holding college or higher education degree (38.9%) show interest in broadcasting a larger number of scientific-educational contents of foreign production, i.e. which were produced outside the country, by foreign radio, television and film companies [6].

#### **3.3.3.1. Type of production of scientific-educational programs on TV stations with national coverage as a function of the participants' socio-demographic characteristics – a statistically significant difference**

The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference of  $p = 0.025$  ( $p < 0.05$ ), and  $\chi^2 = 14,447$ , as a function of the participants' level of education regarding the preferred choice of production of scientific-educational programs. Increasing the number of scientific-educational shows of domestic production in Serbian language and their broadcasting on television with national coverage is associated with the need of higher number of individuals with a four-year secondary school, grammar school or some kind of specialization. In contrast, individuals holding higher education degree have

shown interest in broadcasting a larger number of programs of foreign production in some foreign language (Table 4).

Table 4. Statistically significant difference as a function of producing a scientific-educational program on TV stations with national coverage

GENDER		AGE		EDUCATION		EMPLOYMENT STATUS	
x <sup>2</sup>	Sig	x <sup>2</sup>	Sig	x <sup>2</sup>	Sig	x <sup>2</sup>	Sig
1.405 <sup>a</sup>	.495	8.868 <sup>a</sup>	.181	<b>14.447<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>.025</b>	15.392 <sup>a</sup>	.496

MONTHLY INCOME		TYPE OF SETTLEMENT		REGION	
x <sup>2</sup>	Sig	x <sup>2</sup>	Sig	x <sup>2</sup>	Sig
9.323 <sup>a</sup>	.502	3.852 <sup>a</sup>	0.146	3.400 <sup>a</sup>	.493

### 3.3.4. The most suitable time schedule and frequency of watching scientific-educational program

In the opinion of 43.4% of participants, the most suitable time schedule for watching scientific-educational programs is between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m., while the period between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. was estimated as the most suitable for watching these programs by 21.3% of respondents.

64.8% of participants are able to watch scientific-educational program two or three times a week, while only 16.4% of them could watch this type of program every day. This finding can be interpreted in terms of the respondents' attitude towards the scientific-educational program as contents that require higher attention and a certain intellectual engagement, or "rested spectator".

## 4. CONCLUSION

The analysis of presence of scientific-educational contents in the past five years on TV stations with national coverage on one hand, and the results of the presented survey of the audience on the other, point to the imbalance between the actual situation and the wishes and needs of the audience. Also, the results of the study [10] which was conducted among employees in four different sectors within the public broadcasting service (top management, production, marketing, journalists) showed that only a third of the participants think that the creation of program offering is based on the results of surveying the needs and interests of the audience. Due to insufficient reliance on information obtained through audience survey, neglect of the educational function of the media, and therefore the lack of scientific-educational content, the spectators most likely satisfy their need for information on topics in this field

through other media – specialized TV channels, social media, press, books and so on. All this contributes to the dispersion of television audience, leading to denial of the right to be educated through the most influential traditional media.

From a legal point of view, there are no deviations from statutory standards when it comes to program diversity (it has not been even precisely defined), other than in a radical case of the commercial *TV Pink* channel, which did not broadcast any scientific-educational program during 2011, 2013, 2014, and 2015. Other commercial television broadcasted a minimum number of programs dedicated to science and education, as well as the First program of the Radio Television of Serbia. The Second program of the Radio Television of Serbia has fulfilled the legal obligation, broadcasting in the observed period on average more than 11% of scientific-educational programs in its overall program on annual basis.

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# NEW MEDIA LAWS IN REPUBLIC SERBIA, PURSUING THE EU MEDIA LEGISLATIVE - EXPERIENCE OF THE PUBLIC MEDIA INSTITUTION RTV VOJVODINA

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**Abstract:** On August 2nd, 2014 the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia adopted three new media laws, which entered into force as of August 13th, 2014. The adopted laws significantly democratised the media scene in the Republic of Serbia and they are a result of much effort by the people who took part in the creation of the Media Strategy which paved the way to the adoption of these laws. The laws should protect the public interest, ensure the freedom of the media and introduce international standards. The laws were adopted after a positive evaluation by Brussels, which is important in the context of the Serbian EU integration process, since the media are among the priorities listed in the EU Enlargement Strategy.

The deadline for the implementation of all three laws was one year, yet the whole work had been completed before the deadline. These laws provided for the withdrawal of the state from ownership in the media to allow for privatisation; financing of media by the state only through projects; abolishment of RTV subscription fee and its replacement with the mandatory monthly TV tax; creating conditions for digitalisation in broadcasting; and transformation of the regulatory body – Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) into the Regulatory Agency for Electronic Media (RAEM). These should establish equal position of media on the market and the control over media financing from the state budget, to allow for financing the projects of the public interest instead.

As Provincial Public Media Service, JMU RTV is an autonomous and independent legal person, i.e. legal entity. By carrying out its basic activities, the Media Service is acting in the public interest in the field of public informing providing general and wholesome media services which include informational,

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educational, cultural and entertainment content intended for all segments of the society.

**Keywords:** media laws, public informing, electronic media

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Serbia's Constitution of 2006 defined it as a state of the Serbian people and all citizens who live in it, including ethnic minorities, whose rights are guaranteed by the seven statutes of the said Constitution, the Law on National Councils of National Minorities and the Law on Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities. In Serbia, there are 26 national minorities, and most have formed national councils, whose competence is primarily related to education, media and culture. The region Vojvodina is ethnically extremely diverse and represents a mosaic of different peoples, religions, languages and cultures, which according to the last census from 2011, confirmed the fact that Serbs make up two thirds of the population (66.8%), while ten national minorities participate with over 0.5%. In numbers, Vojvodina had the Hungarians as the largest minority (13.0%), followed by Slovakia (2.6%), Croats (2.4%), Roma (2.2%), Romanians (1.3%) and Montenegrins (1, 2%), while other ethnic communities individually account for less than 1%, among which the most significant were Bunjevci (0.85%), Rusyns (0.72%), Yugoslavs (0.63%) and Macedonians (0.54%). Approximately 4.2% of the entire population did not want to declare their nationality [1].

AP Vojvodine prema popisu iz 2011.

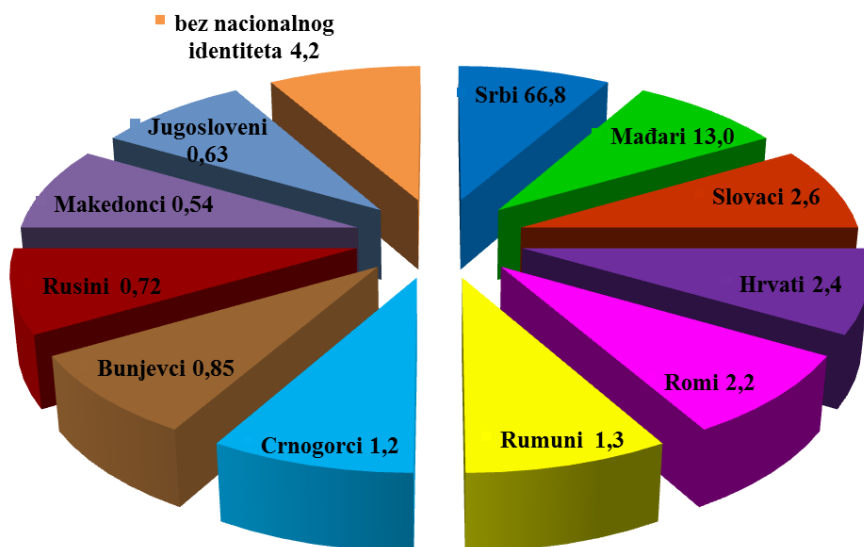


Figure 1. Region Vojvodina according to the 2011 census [2]

According to these numbers, in Vojvodina there are 21 minorities that have the right, according to European and media regulative, to have the use of their mother tongue facilitated and to receive news in their own native

language. The legislative framework of these rights is monitored by the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, Public Administration and Local Government, and the Department for minority rights within that ministry.

The obligation of the state of Serbia is that the public service provides informational, cultural and educational programs in the languages of national minorities. In addition to these, the Law on Public Information [3] and the media provides and regulates the right of national minorities to information in their own language as well. The public media institution Radio Television of Vojvodina, as the provincial media service of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina has the highest rated tradition, quality, audience and viewership. This part of the public system broadcasts programs in twelve languages on radio, television and via the Internet.

## **2. PUBLIC MEDIA INSTITUTION RADIO TELEVISION OF VOJVODINA**

### **2.1. History of the PMI RTV Vojvodina**

Radio Television of Vojvodina commenced with the foundation of Radio Novi Sad following the Chief Executive Committee decision of the National Assembly of Vojvodina in 1949. Radio program was designed to be broadcast in five languages from the very start: Serbo-Croatian, Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian and Rusyns. Radio Novi Sad has gained an excellent reputation in Eastern Europe, because it gave space to modern music with uninhibited ideology, which was quite uncommon at that time.

Studio M of the Radio Novi Sad, a representative concert hall, was built in 1965 and has one of the best acoustic properties of radio studios in Europe. The old logo of the Radio Television Novi Sad, five colours of the rainbow represented the different languages of ethnic minorities of Vojvodina.



Figure 2. Logo RTV Novi Sad, which was valid since the founding until 2000 (five colours of the rainbow represented the different languages of ethnic minorities of Vojvodina)

The workers' community council of the Radio Novi Sad declares a resolution in 1971 proclaiming the founding of an independent working unit - the Television Novi Sad. Assembly of AP Vojvodina in 1972 made a decision to transfer the radio into the Radio-Television Novi Sad (RTNS). The television broadcasts commenced with emissions on the 26. of November 1975 from the newly erected building on Mišeluk. On the first day of broadcasting there was a special broadcast on the TV Novi Sad, and on the next day, 27th of November, viewers in the broader region of Vojvodina had the opportunity to watch the first news and political newscasts in Serbo-Croatian and Hungarian. Initially, the TV station broadcast in five languages: Serbo-Croatian, Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian and Rusyn, and later in Romani and Ukrainian.

Republican Act of 1991 changed the status of electronic media in the direction of their centralization and nationalization. During the 90s of the last century and beginning of this, PMI RTV operated within the national system, Radio-Television Serbia (RTS) until the adoption of the Broadcasting Act [4], in 26.05.2006, when, on the basis of Article 94, it again became an independent legal entity established for the purpose of performing activities of public service broadcasting in the territory of the Autonomous province of Vojvodina.

According to the Law on Public Media Services [5] of 13.08.2014, it continues to operate under the name Public Media Institution Radio Television of Vojvodina (RTV PMI).



Figure 3. Logo RTV today

## **2.2. Current state of affairs**

“Public service is a non-profit, independent radio and television broadcasting organization established in the name of the general public and financed from public funds, which is diverse and well-balanced, which with high-quality programs meet the needs of the largest possible number of citizens, and the general public, impartially and without discrimination.” 6] “It is free from political interference and pressure from commercial forces. With secured pluralism, programming diversity, editorial independence, appropriate funding, accountability and transparency, public service can serve as the foundation of democracy”[7]

The main activity PMI RTV (Public Media Institution Radio-Television of Vojvodina), is the production, purchase, processing and broadcasting of television and radio programs, informational, cultural, educational, children's, entertainment, sports, religious and other content in 11 languages, 24 hours a day, which meet the needs of a wide audience in Vojvodina and beyond, which are of public interest for citizens, aimed at the realization of human rights and freedoms, to exchange ideas and opinions, nurturing values of a democratic society, improving the political, gender, inter-ethnic and religious tolerance and understanding, as well as the preservation of the national identity of the Serbian nation and national minorities, as well as providing audio and audio-visual media services and publishing electronic editions as a service of public interest. In addition, as an extra activity RTV performs marketing activities, such as the production and broadcasting of advertisements, production and sale of audiovisual programs, advertising on the website, organizing concerts and other events, as well as other various marketing activities.

The basic requirements that must be met in order to achieve long-term goals of the institution is to become the most important medium in APV and that programs are accessible to all citizens of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, without any limitations, also to meet the needs of society and to be available in the technical sense. The strategy that is the base of current operations of the institution is as follows:

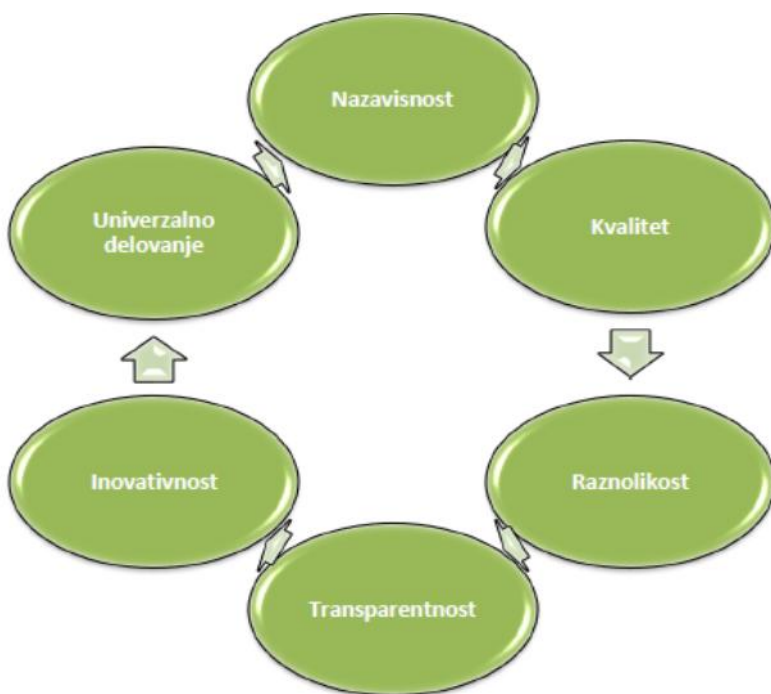


Figure 4. Business strategy PMI RTV

During 2013, the Strategy of development RIV RTV 2013-2017 [8] was adopted, in which the vision and mission of the house was defined and the general directions of the development were determined. In the Strategy of the Radio-Television of Vojvodina it can clearly be seen that they are aware of the importance of a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multilingual character of the area for which the program prepares and broadcasts: "RIV RTV (Broadcasting Foundation, until August 2014 and the application of the Broadcasting Act [4], this was the title of the Act and a change of name was changed to PMI - the public media institution) is a public service broadcaster for the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, which provides all-day broadcasting program on two television and four radio stations as well as via the internet portal. With about 18,000 hours a year of broadcast programming, 51% of which is in-house production, this house belongs to the "golden middle" of programming offered by European national public services and compared to regional services it is among the top five in Europe. What makes this house particularly proud and separate from the rest in the region, but also Europe-wide, are the program contents and channels in the languages of ethnic minorities - as many as 11 members of the national ethnic minorities independently prepare programming in their own languages. "

Content that is broadcast is informing the entire general public, as well as meeting the needs of ethnic minorities living in Vojvodina, it is triggering communication within ethnic communities, between different ethnic communities, but also with the ethnic majority in Vojvodina, where the Serbian language serves as a bridge for mutual understanding. Also, the programs in the Serbian language, among other things, deal with problems of national ethnic minorities.

The strategy envisages increasing the number of programs in the languages of ethnic communities, which is technically and technologically feasible, but as with other planned objectives raises the question of economic viability, due to the general economic situation, the relatively small value of marketing, the very high costs of introducing and incorporating new technologies, the high cost of education and training of human resources to work with these new technologies.

### **2.3. State of technology in the PMI RTV Vojvodina**

Over the years, due to the embargo, dwindling numbers of staff and damages taken through bombing campaigns, when the building was completely destroyed and transmitters blown up, PMI RTV Vojvodina has endured with great effort, support and enthusiasm of the employees. Technical functioning of PMI RTV after the total destruction during the bombing in 1999 was facilitated with the remainder of the undamaged equipment and the installation of temporary rented premises under inadequate conditions for the functioning of a professional TV station. Pulling on own resources during the 2009/10 period, PMI RTV managed to implement full digitalisation of the infrastructure.

National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia adopted in 2014 a set of new important laws pertaining to new media programming, organizational and technological solutions, as well as new broadcasting technologies that bring with them up to date with dynamic and rapid changes in the operation and functioning of the media sector. Internet, digital TV, mobile media, Ipad ... [9], they become part of everyday life and fundamentally change the current way of understanding the media and the attitude of individuals towards media content [10].

In accordance with the newly adopted the law, the digitization process, or rather the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting was completed on 18.05.2015.

Currently being prepared is the system for digital archiving; all existing analogue audio and video archived content is being digitalised. Current systems are multifunctional, with a high degree of integration of radio, television, internet and mobile applications, which enable interactivity, reliability, cost effectiveness, modular and phased feasibility, scalability, sustainability and coherence.

## **2.4. Organisational structure PMI RTV Vojvodina**

The management team of the Public Media Institution Radio Television of Vojvodina consists of experts with long experience in the fields of television and radio programs. Management organs of PMI RTV consists of the Board of Directors (nine members) and the Director General. Furthermore, the institution, along with the management, has an advisory body of RTV (Program Council), which has 15 members, elected by the Governing Board on a proposal from the board of the Assembly of AP Vojvodina in charge of public information. The term of office of members is four years and they can be elected to the Council only once. Program Council consider the implementation of the program concept and considers the quality of program content of RTV.

Media service of the PMI RTV has following business units:

- Business Unit Programming (coordination of all media programs of RTV, planning, scheduling and purchase of all program content - realization of program concept),
- Business Unit Production (production and realization of program contents and of the program itself),
- Business Unit Engineering and Technology (technical-technological capabilities and support for production, post-production and broadcasting) and
- Business Unit Business Support (finance, accounting, bookkeeping, public procurement, payroll, taxes, planning and analysis).

In addition to these four BU (business units), there are three organisational units, as follows:

- Cabinet of the Director General (administrative and professional tasks that facilitate smooth operation of the Director General and other organs of the institution),
- General Secretariat (helps coordinate operations of organizational units: International Relations, project planning,



monitoring and implementation of global standards in the field of media, for corporate promotion, public opinion research, corporate security, and ensuring the legality of business except in the domain of financial operations and public procurement). It is headed by the Secretary-General, who reports to the Director General directly and

- Internal Audit (supervises the legality of work and business, led by the internal auditor, reports to the Managing Board (Board of Directors) and the Director General).

Internal organizational units, which make up the structure of business units are: Centres, Departments, the Editorial Boards, Departments, Sections, Divisions and Sub-sections. Shown below is the macro-organizational chart of the PMI RTV (Figure 5. Macro organizational structure), which was implemented in 2015 and was created as a result of the adoption of the Law on public service media [5] as well as in accordance with the Strategy PMI RTV in 2013 [8]. Organigram was made by taking into account the prevailing good practices in European public services (PBM) and the specificity of internal environment and the result was with compliance by the management during the creation of the strategy.

Including the internet portal, which provides all the content in English, PMI RTV broadcasts in 12 languages, and on seven media platforms: First, Second and Third program of Radio Novi Sad, the first and second program of Television Vojvodina, WEB TV and internet youth radio "O radio". The first channel RTV Vojvodina broadcasts in Serbian, the second TV channel in 11 languages of national communities, the first program of Radio Novi Sad broadcasts in Serbian, the second program RNS (Radio Novi Sad) in Hungarian and the third program RNS in other languages of ethnic minorities, since the 29.11.2014 the youth radio "O radio" is broadcast via the Internet in Serbian and English.

Each of these seven media units are being helmed each by one Chief Editor of the Media programme. Their task is to supervise in accordance with the law and organize and coordinate the program in accordance with the principles laid down by legislative stipulations, all in public interest.

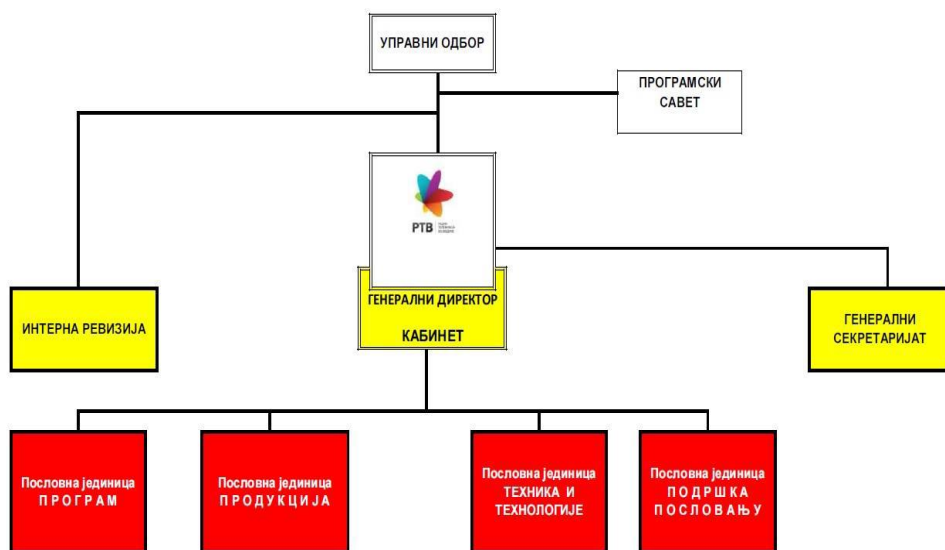


Figure 5. Macro-organisational scheme PMI RTV Vojvodina (1)

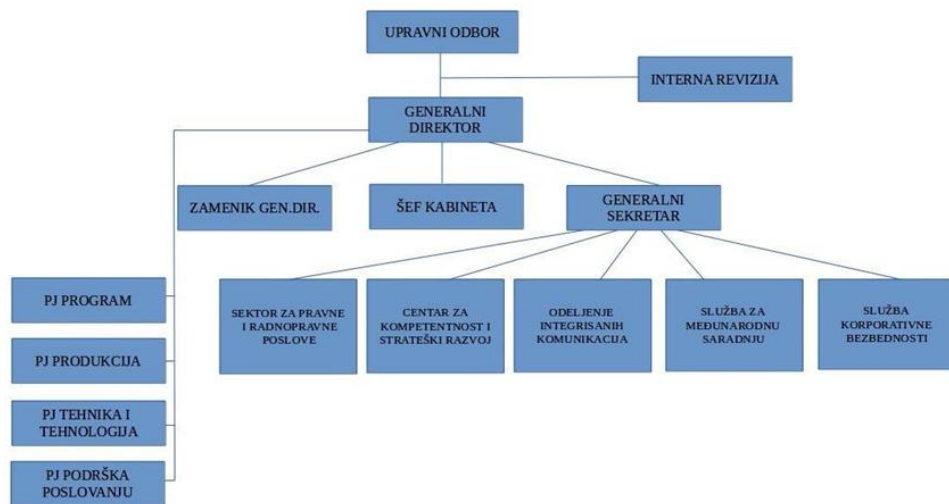


Figure 6. Macro-organisational scheme PMI RTV Vojvodina (2)

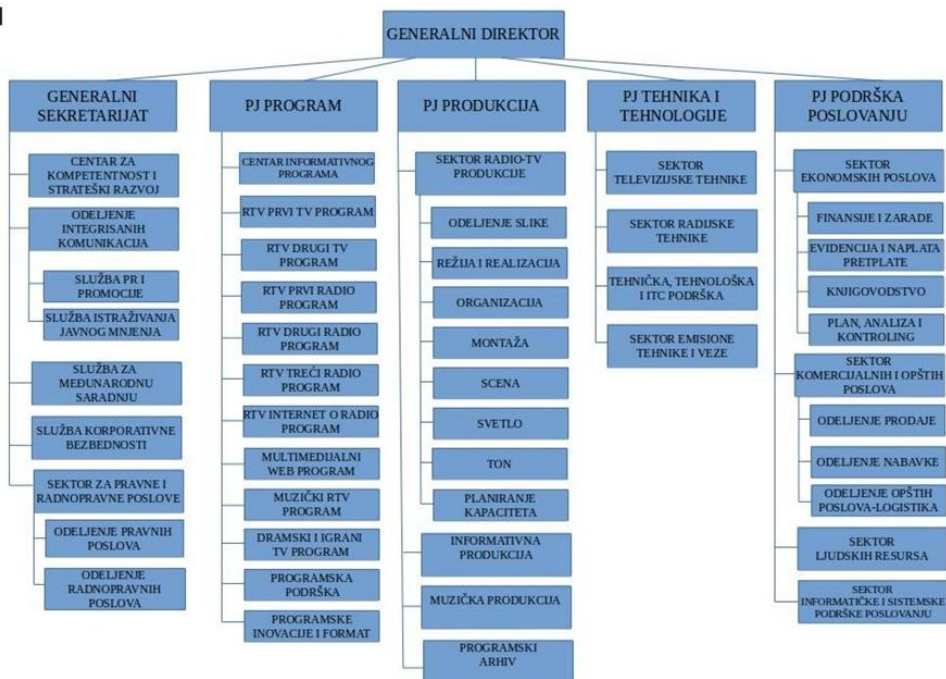


Figure 7. Organisational scheme PMI RTV

In addition to a clearly defined business vision, PMI RTV Vojvodina has a clearly defined mission, which primarily involves the broadcasting of content, which in addition to being required to inform the public, must also contribute to the enrichment of knowledge and the development of citizen participation in all spheres of society. With the mission of the RTV, also defined is: "Promotion of creativity, culture and identity of Vojvodina and their perception in Serbia and abroad, nurturing and connecting national minorities in Vojvodina with their home countries, activity in regional and international professional organizations and associations, especially within the Danube region." [8].

### 3. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE OPERATION OF THE PUBLIC MEDIA INSTITUTION RADIO TELEVISION OF VOJVODINA

#### 3.1. Media laws

The Assembly of the Republic of Serbia adopted a set of new media laws on the 2. August 2014, which became enforceable on the 13. August same year. The adoption of the media laws was planned with the media strategy in 2011. These three new media laws were adopted in order to protect

the public interest of citizens, ensuring of media freedom and implementation of international standards.

Adopted laws are as follows:

- LAW OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND MEDIA
- LAW OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA and
- LAW OF PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA.

These laws were adopted after a positive assessment from Brussels, which is important in the context of European integration of Serbia, due to the fact that media is among the priorities of the EU Enlargement Strategy. These new laws brought the media in Serbia predictability and the ability to operate under equal conditions and with clear standards.

This set of laws is also a step forward towards the introduction of regulatory practices, which comply with European standards, and with the by-laws, the establishment of mechanisms, strengthening of self-regulatory mechanisms and judicial practice. These laws are the basis that guarantees freedom of speech, freedom of the media and the efficient functioning of informing citizens.

### **3.2. Intentions of the new media laws**

LAW ON PUBLIC INFORMATION AND MEDIA [3] - creates conditions for the free development of independent, professional media and media system that should enable the broadest needs of citizens, without discrimination, to information and content from all areas of social life. Stipulated is also the withdrawal of the state from the media, except for specially regulated cases, as well as clearly defined public interest in the field of public information.

These laws regulate:

- The powers of an editor,
- Protection of journalists' rights and support for journalistic associations,
- Transparency of media ownership,
- Establishing of a media registry and
- Protection of media pluralism by preventing unauthorized mergers in the field of public information.

The transition from direct budgetary financing of certain media is also implemented, towards a project financing system, co-financing all media, and media publishers who are enrolled in the registry of the media, legal persons and entrepreneurs who have registered for the production of media content, as well as other legal entities.

Law [3] for the first time covers protection of victims of violence, regulates the publication of private facts and personal records, as well as introduces rules relating to conditions when disclosure of private life and personal written records is permitted. An important novelty is the provision which states when consent to the disclosure of information from private life is not needed (public interest to be informed, which outweighs the interest of preventing its publication) is precisely covered by this law.

Also, an important novelty of the Law on Public Information [3] is that the term “public media”, included in his bill, is replaced by the name “medium” and exhaustively defines what it is and under what circumstances something is considered media, and what is not.

Public information is realized only through the media, in terms of the Act [3] medium is defined as a means of informing the public with words, images, or sound, transmitting editorially designed information, ideas and opinions and other content intended for public dissemination and an unspecified number of users.

The media in terms of this law includes in particular daily and periodic newspapers, news agencies services, radio and television broadcast programs and electronic editions of these media and independent electronic publications (editorially formed Internet sites or internet portals), which are registered in the registry of the media, in accordance with this law.

Publisher of media may be any natural or legal person, they must be registered with the competent republic authority for carrying out activities, and the medium may establish any domestic or foreign natural or legal person, in accordance with the law. Established Registry of Media is operated by the Agency for Business Registers.

Transparency of ownership is required, which means that there should be documents registered, which contain information on legal and natural persons who directly or indirectly hold more than 5% stake in capital shares. The public was given the insight into the money sums the media gets from the state, because that information is also entered in the register. This was established to equate the situation of the media market and to establish control

over the financing of the state provided media money, so that projects of public interest can be financed.

LAW ON ELECTRONIC MEDIA [11] - precisely defines the jurisdiction of the Serbian legislative over providers of audio-visual media services due to the transition to digital broadcasting. New technical developments expect that all EU member states have until 2015 to switch from analogue to digital broadcasting, and that in this area of programming content providers are viewed as providers of audio-visual media services and not as broadcasters.

Law [11] harmonises terminology and definitions of terms determined in accordance with the Directive on Audiovisual Media Services, normative regulation of labour, the powers and duties of the regulatory authorities in the field of electronic media, taking into account the changed circumstances that will occur transition from analogue to digital broadcasting.

The most important innovation of this law is the transformation of the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) in the Regulatory Body for Electronic Media (REM), which lays down the rules, controls the operation and imposes fines on providers of media services, but has to submit an annual report to the Assembly of Serbia about its work. The broadcasting license issued by the regulatory body for eight years, but has the right to revoke, if it finds irregularities.

Law on electronic media [11] is a prerequisite for the digitization process which was supposed to be implemented by 17 June 2015.

LAW ON PUBLIC MEDIA SERVICES [5] Is a special law, i.e. "lex specialis"; this law regulates, in accordance with European standards and international documents in the field of electronic media, the operations of public media services and public media institution, "Radio-Television of Serbia" and public media institution," Radio-television of Vojvodina ", their activities and the principles that regulate the execution of activities, public interest they adhere to, public operations, the method of electing staff leadership and their authority, passing by-laws, as well as providing the tools and methods of their financing.

The law specifies that their funding, beginning with year 2016, will originate from taxes for public media service, from the budget, and commercial revenue. The fees shall be collected on an evidentiary account at the Treasury Department. Funds collected within the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina shall be distributed in the manner where 70% of the funds collected are distributed to RTV and 30% of funds are allocated to the RTS. The public media service carries out commercial activities adhering to the regulations on

the protection of competition, and in particular does not provide commercial services, including services of publication of advertising messages or other forms of audio-visual commercial communications, at prices that are lower than the market average, and not when buying the rights to broadcast sports events by offering payments that are above the market average.

Public Broadcasting Service provides at least 10% of the annual program schedule or at least 10% of the annual program budget for the audio-visual works of European independent productions, excluding time scheduled to news, sports events, games, advertising, teletext and TV sales.

Furthermore, emphasized is the respect for professional standards and codex in realising the public interest, which includes the production, purchase, processing and publishing, radio, television and multimedia content, especially news, educational, cultural, arts, children, entertainment, sports, religious and other content that is of public interest to citizens.

Also, this law [5] emphasizes that public media service realises public interest, respects the requirements of the public and for their actions is accountable to that public and accountability of the public media service is realized through the process of publicly appointing the authority of the public service broadcaster.

Act [5] created the prerequisites for the smooth functioning and further improvement of the functions of public media service.

#### **4. MEASURES TAKEN AFTER ADOPTION OF NEW MEDIA LAWS**

PMI RTV as a provincial public service broadcaster is an independent legal entity, or rather it has the form of a legal person. Operating under its core business purpose, it fulfils a task of public interest in the field of public information and provides general and comprehensive media services that include informational, educational, cultural and entertainment content, aimed at all sections of society. PMI RTV was established as the Broadcasting Institution of Vojvodina “Radio-Television of Vojvodina,” with the Broadcasting Act [4], in accordance with the Law on Public Media Services [5] and it continues to operate as a public media institution “Radio-Television of Vojvodina”, where the law sets out the conditions and mode of operation, as well as other issues of importance to the work of RTV.

Adopting the set of media laws has created a need for harmonization of existing general and specific legal acts, as well as the adoption of the new

legislature, that are included in the new legislation. Based on the above, activities commenced with the purpose of meeting this objective.

The Board of Directors of the Public media institution “Radio-Television of Vojvodina,” on the 142. session, held on 11.12.2014 declared: THE STATUTE OF THE PUBLIC MEDIA INSTITUTION “RADIO -TELEVISION OF VOJVODINE”, is hierarchically the highest legal act of the institution. Thus, the first condition for further implementation of legislative measures was met. The statute regulates the internal organization, mode of operations of the public media institution, “Radio-Television of Vojvodina” and its bodies, the adoption of general legislation, the authority to dispose of assets which it operates, the procedure of appointment of the Director General, editors in chief and director of the program, as well as other issues of importance for the operation and functioning of the PMI RTV.

The public interest, in accordance with the law governing public information [3], which RTV as a public service is realizing through its program content, is:

- genuine, timely, complete, impartial and professional provision of information to the citizens and facilitating the free formation and expression of opinion of listeners and viewers on the territory of the Republic of Serbia, AP Vojvodina and local self-government;
- respect and representation of basic human rights and freedoms, democratic values and institutions and promoting the culture of public dialogue;
- respect for privacy, dignity, reputation, honour and other fundamental rights and freedoms of humanity;
- meeting the needs for information of all parts of the society without discrimination, with particular attention to socially vulnerable groups such as children, young and old, minority groups, people with disabilities, socially and medically challenged, etc.;
- meeting the needs of citizens for program content that ensure the preservation and expression of cultural identity of the Serbian people as well as national minorities, making sure that national minorities can follow certain program segments in their native language and alphabet;
- impartial treatment of political, historical, economic, social, health related, cultural, educational, scientific, environmental



and other issues, enabling equal representation of different points of view;

- the development of media literacy in the public;
- domestic production of documentary and feature film programs;
- the development of culture and artistic creativity;
- Informing of our citizens abroad, as well as members of the Serbian people who live outside of the territory of the Republic of Serbia;
- etc.

The board of directors of the public media institution “Radio-Television Vojvodina” conducted in the period from 01. January 2015 to 31. December 2015, 14 meetings and 3 joint sessions with the board of directors of the public media institution “Radio-Television of Serbia (RTS)”. Accomplishments made: decisions, general acts and conclusions of importance for current operations of PMI RTV. In order to facilitate current operations for a better and program of a higher quality, the Director-General received the mandate:

- to conclude agreements on co-productions, productions of television programs, transfer of broadcast rights of musical works;
- to conclude the Agreement with PC Broadcasting Equipment and Communications, which regulates the manner and procedure of transfer of immovable property and broadcasting infrastructure assets of the RTV (implementation of new laws);
- to execute procurement contracts, contracts with banks and others.

In accordance with the provision of the public service media law [5] (Article 19, paragraph 1, item 10) and the Statute of RTV, the regulative handbook on Organization and systematisation of affairs of the public media institution “Radio Television of Vojvodina” was approved (No. 182 dated 22.01.2015.) and the regulative handbook pertaining to the amendment to the handbook on the organization and systematisation of operations of the PMI RTV (No. 182/1 dated 23.06.2015. and 182/2 dated 10.12.2015).

In accordance with Article 57 of this Act [5], which prescribes the obligation to harmonize internal acts with this Law the board of directors made several regulatory handbooks, such as:

- Rules on retirements and disposals of fixed assets, inventory and materials owned by the PMI RTV;
- Rules on conditions for the use of copyrighted works and items controlled by related rights in broadcasting;
- Rules on annual awards to employees in the PMI RTV;
- Code of Ethics - Code of conduct for employees;
- Pricing of production-technical services and rental of production and technical capacities of the RTV and similar

From internal documents, relevant to current operations RTV, the board of directors has also defined as follows:

- Handbook on amendments to the regulatory handbook on accounting and accounting policies of the RTV;
- Rules of conduct regarding the requests for exemption from the obligation to pay taxes for public service, and others.

Adopted were plans and reports, highlighting only a few:

- Procurement plans for the public media institution “Radio Television Vojvodina” for the year 2015;
- Report on the programme broadcast by the Radio Television of Vojvodina during the period from 01.01.2014 until 31.12.2014;
- Report of the board of directors PMI RTV for 2014;
- Financial report of the public media institution “Radio Television of Vojvodina” for the period January-March 2015;
- The business plan of the PMI RTV for 2016, which includes a work schedule for RTV in 2016, RTV Financial Plan for 2016 and the Investment Plan for 2016.

In accordance with the provision of the public service media law [5] (Article 21, paragraph 1, item 7. and Article 43.) adopted were several projects proposals (listed only some):

- The project proposal Vojvodina and its diversity (feature film-omnibus)
- The project proposal for the erection of business premises PMI RTV,
- The project proposal RTV HD News Project,

- The project proposal for the youth radio is being viewed,
- Project proposal for the digitization of audio-visual archive material of the RTV.

As well as further information:

- Information on program activities PMI RTV for 2015;
- Information on the production of the TV series “Vere i zavere” based on the novel by Aleksandar Tišma;
- Information on the filming of the TV series “Pomeri se s Mesta”, directed by Slobodan Šuljagić;
- Information on the implementation of Articles 15 and 60. of the Law on Public Media Services;

In addition to these decisions, internal documents, conclusions, the board of directors made:

- A decision on publishing the tender for appointing: Program Director, Editor in Chief of RTV, First Channel TV, Second Channel TV, the first radio program, the second radio program, the third radio program, editorial board for the multimedia program - WEB and Internet radio “O radio”;
- Decision to approve the financial statements for the RTV business Year 2014, etc.

In accordance with the provisions of the law [5], at a joint meeting of boards of directors of the RTV and the RTS following decisions were made:

- Decision on determining the amount of the fee for public service;
- Decision that defines the content and form of a uniform format for the collection of taxes for individuals and legal entities and the content and form of a uniform format for exemption from tax for individuals and legal entities;

## **5. CHANGING THE LAW - THE WAY TO MODERNIZATION OF THE ORGANIZATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH EU VALUES**

Performing its legally defined activities, the goal of PMI RTV was to implement the set of new media laws that in the reporting period (2015) and

further, is operating to strengthen the public service broadcaster of the province by:

- increasing the quality of the aired program
- increase in viewership
- increase in commercial revenue
- the strengthening of dialogue, consensus and a wider public support.

In parallel we worked on securing firm funding in 2015, the preparation and implementation of a secure payment system for TV fees for the next period, with the support of all the relevant factors of the society.

Constant analysis and application of mechanisms to improve the quality of program content through interactive processes, using all available tools of stimulating creative ideas of associates, with implementation of guidelines and objectives as defined in the documents of the Government of the Republic of Serbia in the direction for rationalization of all expenses to the limits without endangering core activities, such as making a perfect organization that will enable the achievement of the PMI RTV mission.

Adoption and implementation of the new organization and systematization and development of human resources in the direction of vocational education, as well as developing positive values and business ethics among employees of the RTV, this is an aspect of rationalization. Adopted form of organization was tasked to ensure the optimal use of existing human resources, while preserving the vital functions and reducing the number of levels in decision-making. Also, rationalization is reflected in the implementation of digitalization of production and broadcasting, the modernization of the business and the operating system, the introduction and implementation of new procedures and software solutions that provide support for all processes in the institution and meet regulatory and legal requirements. These requirements include the separation of organizational units that carried out tasks related to the emission technologies and transmitters, as well as hiring of employees and property formerly owned by PC Broadcasting equipment and communications.

The realization of the scope and structure of programs with a tendency to increase the room for independent production is also another aspect of the changes in order to respect the new legal framework.

Statistical data provided by specialized services of the RTV regarding the aired program and an analysis of the regulatory body for electronic media,

show that in 2015 the RTV programs aired a total of close to 960,000 minutes of television and 1,576,800 minutes (with internet Oradio: 2,102,400 minutes) of radio program on two television channels and three (four with Oradio) radio channels. The share of European audiovisual works in the total annual published RTV1 program amounted to 60.85% and 54.80% on RTV2, which means that the RTV at its first and second channel fulfilled the obligation under the Law on electronic media [11] (Article 65 paragraph 1), as well as met the mandatory quota of in-house production (Article 70 thereof [11]).

At its first and second television channel, compared to previous years, RTV considerably increased the airing of premiere programmes, which in case of RTV1 amounted to almost 51%, and for RTV2 about 38%. In the case of the first radio program this figure is even more impressive, as much as 97% of radio programs on Serbian language aired were premieres.



Figure 8. The share of European audio-visual productions in programs of the PMI RTV



Figure 9. Ratio of aired premieres to aired reruns on programs of the PMI RTV

All data indicate that in 2015 PMI RTV has made a significant step forward towards the fulfilment of not only legal obligations, but also towards

strategic objectives, the vision and mission that were, as a public service for all citizens of Vojvodina, it posed for itself, implementing a new set of media laws and advocating their enforcement.

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# WHAT CAN TRADITIONAL RADIO LEARN FROM STUDENT ONLINE RADIO PROJECTS –FIST RADIO PARADIGM

Ana Martinoli<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** This paper attempts to answer the question if there is a future for radio, from a young audience perspective (16-25), as well as to analyse the needs and new media habits of young people that are interested to purchase/enjoy the content provided by the media. The initial hypotheses will be based on quality research conducted on 100+ students of the University of Arts and the Faculty of Political Sciences. The research will show that the so-called *digilife* radio generation, unfortunately, perceives it as a *jukebox*, mp3 player, without a particularly important position within the spectrum of their media habits and without a more intensive emotional bond to the content. This paper will show that when we talk about the young audience, “old” rules and traditional strategies for programming do not provide the required results anymore and generate no attentive listening. In order to attract young viewers, radio stations need to provide a rich, multimedia experience and more relevant content, converting the “background” radio into “I require your full attention” medium. Student radio projects are exactly the vehicle to propel these limits forward and to define a completely new radio model that will introduce the future of radio. Conscious of the data acquired during the research, the second part of the paper is introducing the FIST radio, a online student radio project taking place at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts as an innovative force for creating new radio forms, but still applying theoretical knowledge for the realisation of practical initiatives. The development and the incarnation of the FIST radio shows that traditional radio, in order to stay and remain relevant for the young audience - which is in focus of this research - needs to invent new ways to produce and present content, but more than that, it needs to reinvent the way it communicates with the audience; furthermore, stretching the availability to include social networks and the internet, way beyond an FM receiver, bringing thereby the radio in the midst of the contemporary dwelling place of the modern student, the internet.

**Key words:** Radio, internet radio, audience, digilife generation, FIST radio

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Student radio, college radio, campus radio, those are just a few of the names that describe a broad area in which young people, students, within their universities and faculties decide to pursue various audio-based projects, starting with an around-the-clock programme down to the production of single episodes or program segments. When speaking about the student radio it is often understood that it is supposed to promote the new, independent, daring, investigating, push boundaries in production, content and program format. The colourful history of the American college radio testifies that this production model is a unique, vital voice, which matters not only to the students, but for the whole marketplace as well, providing new, innovative, daring and original audio content; complemented is this by the British counterpart, which rates the student radio as a community service, which advances the society as a whole. Their listeners can include just a fraction of the surrounding area, counting some thousand people, but it also can cover whole regions, with antennas as strong as 100.000 Watts (like for instance one of the premier college radio stations in the USA, WRAS radio, which after 20 years in 2014 switched from terrestrial broadcasting to the internet).

Regarding the importance of the student radio, even the President of the United States, Barack Obama, held a speech<sup>2</sup>:

By keeping the legacy of college radio stations alive and strong, students on campuses from coast to coast experience the thrills of sharing and discovering media and creating stimulating programming. In doing so, they are lending their talents to a tradition that has been unfolding for generations and inspiring others to join in the work of shaping our future's course.

There are many issues regarding student, college, university radio that need to be addressed:

- legislative solutions need to be defined, established and implemented in order to define the framework within which such a radio station can be founded and operated, the broadcasting license guidelines need to be defined, coverage limits, if any and who is not allowed to finance and own such a station.

- capacity of the media and radio marketplace to accept, support such a radio station. Survival directly depends on the needs of the audience, in this case a very specific, young one, the understanding of their habits and needs, and furthermore, the capacity of the market to facilitate sustainability, financial and programming, to such a project.

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<sup>2</sup> Tuning In: The Future of Radio, URL: <https://futureofmusic.org/blog/2015/09/28/tuning-future-radio>, retrieved on 12. August 2016

- technical and technological, when the best form of production for a station of this type is being considered, if it will be broadcast internet-only, will it be an analogue station with a local, regional frequency, will it be a “closed circuit” radio station, with an internal feed, dedicated to students of a particular campus only.<sup>3</sup>

- programming, in regards to the decision if the structure will be a 24-hour daily program, or production that will broadcast the content through podcasts, serials of single episodes, which can be made available online or through other, commercial stations or the public broadcasting service.

- establishing of an appropriate management style, leadership that will enable efficacy and rational planning of the production and realisation of the programme, taking care of the financial and human resources, but at the same time be sufficiently flexible towards the framework of expressing and supporting student activities.

In a highly commercialized radio environment, responsibility and role of the student radio are high, so there must be a significant requirement posed towards the regulators on how to define stipulations, criteria and support for such projects. Student radio, thus, exceeds the mere form of a radio station and becomes an independent public initiative and a unique cultural institution.

The student radio will be the first one to discover new music, new performers, new genres for its audience, uninhibited by stern music formatting and opinion polls. Student radio will be first to promote and introduce colloquialisms into the radio “talk”, hosting style will be more authentic, more sincere than anything the commercial, dominant marketplace can offer to their audiences. The power of the student radio will not be measured in *reach and shares*, but in loyalty of the chosen audience, the power of the emotional bond that has formed on relation listener-content, the trust and importance to life, student community. At the same time, the fact that the student radio is not under the pressure of market requirements, not being led by a media corporation and that the program is not created by consultants, this does not mean that this is an audio project left to be carried by the stream, lacking core elements and principles of radio programming, strategic planning and evaluation. Thus, student radio becomes the ultimate playground for testing traditional principles of management, combining the requirement for being innovative, original, flexible, with the need to plan, control and systematically

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<sup>3</sup> For instance, the Union of middle schools in Serbia created an interesting project, which is a high school radio that is supposed to broadcast through the internal public address system during the breaks, produced by the students themselves.

organise every programming and production activity. Finally, the existence of the student radio as the area for education and training of future media professionals largely can be responsible for the development and advancement of the quality of the media scene of a territory.

Finally, student radio needs to accept the reality of the digital media environment and offer innovative ways of communication with listeners, new forms of producing and distributing content. "In the era of social networks and digital communication, radio needs to strengthen its traditional advantages and qualities and additionally reinforce them by using all the capabilities a new era of media is bringing with it. In order to remain and stay relevant medium for the young, radio needs to offer more intensive, multidimensional media experience, which transcends the traditional linear, one-dimensional programming. Radio cannot be only *on air* content, but needs to develop into a societal and cultural movement, clearly defined in values, which continues to be present outside of the studio and which provides the listeners with an emotional experience as well." (Martinoli, 2015)

## **1. STUDENT RADIO IN SERBIA**

The time of socially and politically engaged student radio stations in Serbia's history, had their last boom in the 90s, when, as part of the wider socio-political mission, it gathered young, progressive, interested, involved people on both sides of the microphone and speakers. Starting with programs like Studio B (Ritam Srca), down to Index radio and B92, these programmes tended to key values of a student radio and created during the nineties the image of a freedom fighter in every possible meaning of the term. At the time this paper was concluded, there were no legislative frameworks that would allow founding of a student radio station by any of the universities that are state-owned. Right now, the only happenings that could be viewed as close to a student radio are projects Slušaonica 6, which is being produced by the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade and the student radio at the Faculty for Media and Communications in Belgrade. In terms of productions, allow me to single out the project Centriranje, which was made by Centar E8 in 2013, about which their initiators have to say the following: "We believe in the importance of the medium for young and the medium created by young people. We always wanted to engage in informing the youth in some way. Radio is of particular importance to us, because we believe that because of production facilities, easier workloads, communication facilities, implementing of music, it can be very good for young people. Our motivation to start with the programme "Centriranje" was derived from the need to educate the young pertaining to the

media, give them a chance to voice their opinions and views, to inform others about possibilities, but also to make a programme for the aether in Serbia that can influence the public opinion from the point of view of the youth. Later, Centar E8 Vranje started also the community internet radio station “Osam”, which did broadcast for a whole year in Vranje.”<sup>4</sup>

Centriranje was a program targeting young people, but also others who with their decisions and actions have influence on the quality of young people<sup>5</sup>. Every episode of the serial had a separate topic, which was selected in the same manner as journalist teams do, but also in consultation with the E8 team. Some of the topics included: youth and spelling, societal position of young Romani, Serbia and Albania through art, entrance exams on faculties, discrimination of Romani, humanity, children of the street...<sup>6</sup>

## **2. RADIO AND YOUTH – MEDIA HABITS ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE MEDIA**

Initially it is important to analyse and understand the media ambient in which student radio is trying to survive. On one side, this is the reality of the analogue radio marketplace, hyper-commercialised, bare-boned down to music formats, very predictable and absent of any experimenting. Spoken or *news* content does not exist on commercial stations, while such content exists in programming of the public broadcasting systems, but even when they do target youth and students, they do not attract any attention - produced archaically, monotone, no excitement, inappropriate, put into schedules that are unsuitable, all with the burden of the overall perception that the public systems are only meant to satisfy the needs of the older population.

On the other side, it is vital to understand the attitude of young people and students towards the radio as a medium. Is the analogue radio still a part

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<sup>4</sup> Interview with Vojkan Arsić from Center 8 was conducted for purposes of this paper in August of 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Programme «Centriranje» was hosted by Jelena Janković who was also the editor, promotion was done by Marina Ugrinić, coordinator of the project was Adnan Cviko, and the team included further 10 young people who studied together with Jelena Janković and who created all the content together. 10 of the 13 co-workers on the project Centriranje were volunteers, three did get paid.

<sup>6</sup> 51 produced episodes can be watched on the YouTube channel here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLOyDmW1AVAfDEzEJ9Ex3T3249e7ACaZwc>

The programme was broadcast on 40 radio stations, 39 of which were local stations where the programme was aired once a week; radio B92 initially did follow the once weekly concept, but later opted to split the programme in 5 segments, which ran daily.

of student media habits today, of the youth, or do they fulfil their needs mostly online, choosing their content from the unlimited and endless streaming options, podcasts? How relevant is this medium today, for this target audience, how much time do they spend listening to radio, what content do they choose, what do they expect to get there? Musing about what kind of expectations young audience can have towards the radio cannot be ignored, when they never truly had a chance to meet programming that exceed mere jukebox functionalities, service information and some gossip about the show business between two songs.

During the spring 2016 a quality pilot research was conducted with 105 students of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Cetinje and Faculty of Political Arts in Belgrade, with the goal to discover media habits of millennials, the urban audience from 19 to 25 years of age, in order to define the potential targets of future research. In the following part some results of this research, relevant to the topic of this paper will be introduced<sup>7</sup>.

Insight into the structure of media habits reveals that young people have, towards traditional and analogue media, a restrained and significantly less intensive relationship, when compared with digital and mobile channels and platforms. The use of smartphones and the internet dominate the daily media life of this particular audience, while watching TV and listening to the radio is within the activities of a mere third of all test subjects, which is clearly visible in the results of this research (Figure 1).

#### Koja od sledećih aktivnosti je deo vaših svakodnevni medijskih navika?

(105 responses)

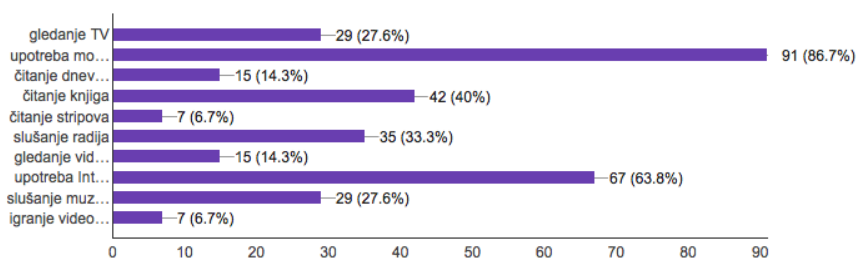


Figure 1: Daily media life of youth - use of the media, media channels and platforms

The very beginning of research reveals that understanding the media habits of young people must move in the direction of distinguishing types of content that they access and use, much more than media types - segmentation

<sup>7</sup> The entire research was published in the paper *Medijske navike mladih – kako milenijalci menjaju medijski pejzaž* (Zbornik FDU, 2016), but in this paper only a part of the research is shown.

on radio, television and newspapers for young audiences is almost no longer relevant, and the contents of these three traditional media units for the part of the audience, which was the subject of this research, are becoming key in structuring the media daily life and meeting their media needs. This statement confirms an insight into the ways of spending time on TV - laptop or PC dominated as devices that comprise the experience of watching TV content, and an interesting hint of the future is revealed by the habits of consumption and the percentage of TV content viewed over the mobile phone, which is the choice of almost a fifth of all respondents.

Research conducted on a selected sample of test subjects shows that this part of the audience showed relatively little interest in radio programs - over 60% of respondents say they listen up to an hour of the daily radio program, while almost 10% do not listen to the radio at all.

At the same time, review of the data related to the length of time that subjects spend on some of the online platforms or devices that procure the access thereto shows that almost 60% of young people is investing more than 4 hours per day to online media (Figure 2).

#### **Koliko dnevno vremena provedete online (računar, laptop, tablet i mobilni telefon zajedno)?**

(105 responses)

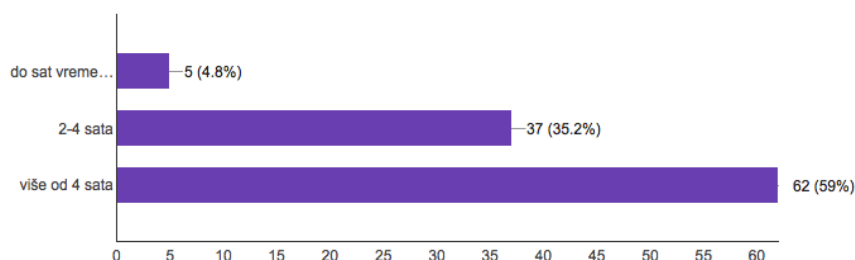


Figure 2. Time spent online during the day

Watching movies, the use of a mobile phone, listening to the mp3 player and social networking, are cited as media habits that young people would miss the most. On the one hand, these responses reveal the primary needs and expectations of young people of the media and media channels - entertainment and communication - and on the other, this re-emphasizes the increasing irrelevance of traditional media channels, which in this study, due to the low percentages, was noted in regards to watching TV, listening to the radio, reading daily newspapers and reading books.

### Koja od sledećih medijskih aktivnosti bi vam najviše nedostajala? (zaokružiti najviše 3 odgovora)

(105 responses)

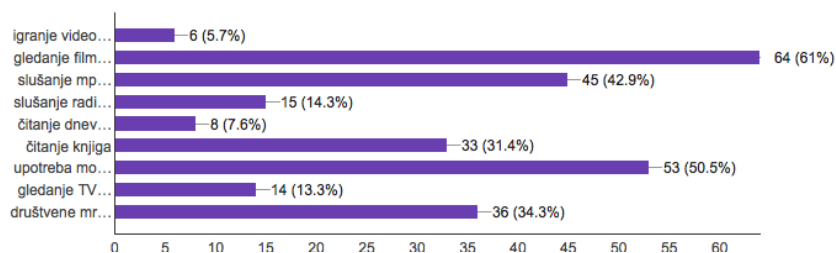


Figure 3: Dedication of the young people to various media, devices and platforms

The next question further highlighted the results obtained in the previous question - Mobile phones and computer devices are the things from which the young people would separate most unwillingly or absence of which they would miss the most.

### Koji uređaj bi vam najviše nedostajao? (105 responses)

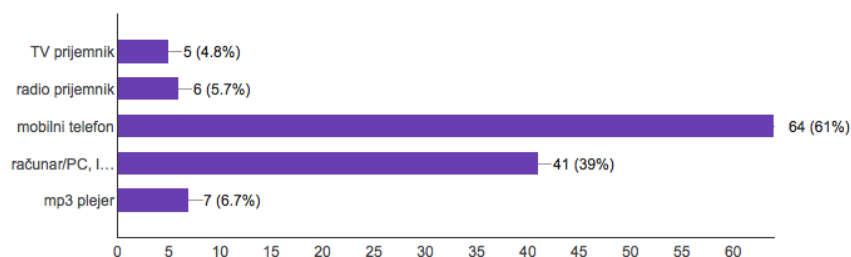


Figure 4: Dedication of the young people to various media, devices and platforms

Computers and mobile phones have become multifunctional multimedia devices where the function, purpose and method of use overlap. By example, this research shows the trend of the overlapping media not only on technical and technological levels, but also regarding media content - the youth simultaneously get informed and have fun, all the while communicating with each other and creating new media content.

### 3. **FIST<sup>8</sup> RADIO – FROM ARTIVISM<sup>9</sup> TO DEALING WITH IT<sup>10</sup>**

Student radio, for its program functions, is closest to *community* radio stations, stations for the civilian sector, which provides media services in order to meet specific interests of certain social groups (ethnic minorities, youth, the elderly, the disabled, etc.) as well as citizens' organizations, and is not deemed an organisation for profit (the Law on electronic media of the Republic of Serbia (2014), Article 72). The current law in Serbia, however, does not recognize the possibility that state owned colleges or universities can be founders, not even of non-profit radio stations, which potentially makes it difficult for student initiatives and ideas tied to radio production to achieve their formal and sustainable implementation through the institutionalized forms of action. (Martinoli, 2015)

FIST radio is a online student radio project that was established in 2007 as parallel content of the Festival of International Student Theatre (FIST). Designed as space for practical exercises of students Radio production and Recording and sound design, with regular support provided by students of other majors at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, primarily acting and dramaturgy.

Designed as a practical student exercise that has a limited time frame (total of 15 days of broadcasting, 7 of which include talk radio and programme with full production equipment and sound identification elements), FIST radio has the ambition to give students the opportunity to workout the production of entire program contents, passing through all phases of the station programming, from defining program objectives, through the planning of production, music programming and spoken content, to the final evaluation.

FIST radio operations run just like common radio station editorial boards - staff assignments are done horizontally or according to types of content that are to be made (music, entertainment, culture, news), daily and weekly planning, hierarchically organised staffing structure with a clear job

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<sup>8</sup> Although named after the aforementioned festival, the name of radio-FIST, was translated from English, has served in 2014 as a nice play on words in promotional material - its involvement, program policies and basic mission are a kind of "fist" in the face of commercial radio, which went "off the grid" for the young audience as a medium long time ago, as a medium that encourages, engages, mobilizes and provokes them. During the 2016/2017 season FIST radio changed its name to FLUX, thereby separating their identity from the said festival.

<sup>9</sup> Artivism and Dealing with it are just some of the slogans under which the Festival of International Student Theatre was organised, which also was adopted by the FIST radio program for their initial seasons.

<sup>10</sup> Some segments of this chapter were previously published integrally as parts of the paper Future of radio: How to save the young radio - a case study of the online student FIST radio, published in the Zbornik FDU, June 2015.



description for every programming and production position and sharing the responsibility between programming and sound technical sector.

Already during the planning phase, programme editors expressed the desire to offer the audience, students, content that is missing from airwaves - interviews, debate, news, radio dramas, eclectic music content that is not dictated by music opinion polls - as well as, by means of chosen slogans, identification messages and sonic identity, create a firm direction and send a message regarding the values and programming goals FIST radio is willing to promote and realise.

Program schedule planning entailed adhering to basic principles of programming and allocation of key time spots, with taking into account of habits and expectations displayed by target groups - morning programme from 9 to noon, talk radio, debates and entertainment content until 18h and after that somewhat more dominant music content with live events from the FDU studio.

Production wise, FIST radio has shown in the past few seasons one of the most valuable characteristics of the student radio - research and creation of new programme forms, promoting of fresh and authentic speech, unconventional approach, originality and uniqueness. Although during 7 days of broadcasting through various programming segments and shows many contemporary topics in the areas of society, culture, sports and even politics were handled, it was done in a manner and language familiar to those who prepared that program and the audience it was produced for - the students.

Programme directors and music editors engaged in the previous and forthcoming season of FIST radio, for the purposes of this paper, summed up their impressions as follows:

“My vision for the upcoming season is to create an even more serious program - in the professional sense, compared to last year, and one of the key issues is the name change - with the goal to redefine the brand and open up towards even a broader audience, being that I noticed that if something is tightly connected with the FDU, it is not interesting to other people, they feel it is something exclusive, only for FDU students. Regarding the programme, I would prefer it if the series of excellent original shows I realised with some colleagues from class last year - to emphasize that notwithstanding that students are creating these shows, we are capable to critically review contemporary societal topics, but also are able to do quality entertainment - with intelligent humour, fast and fun programme, but additionally to stress that not the entire generation is enslaved by turbo folk, in terms of music preferences. There is one thing why I would single out the FIST radio, why it is different from all out there, why I am proud of being a programme director here,

there is one word for it - freedom. I believe that the quality programme created by FIST radio staff is, among other things, a result of us being unburdened and devoid of conditional pressures: Pressures conditioned by a disorganised market, (lack of) taste of broad masses, programme profitability and lack of advertising budgets - thus, by the end of the day, unburdened by all of this, content can be created that is truly meaningful, which truly reflect the interests of creators that make it - not just toiling for a pay day, then I believe, with last year being the most vividly palpable, programs can be created, where without any real competition on air that is dedicated to advertising and music, aired by the FDU, original programming content is being created, that could as easily be heard on any larger station. “ (Mario Perovic, director FIST radio 2016)

“FIST radio is a very specific platform for students of radio productions. During the first two years of studying, we quite closely monitor the radio scene in Serbia, so that in the third year, while producing shows for FIST radio, students already have an idea of what is missing and what is not getting the attention it deserves in the media. FIST provides an opportunity to share with the public what is important to us and to talk about slightly different topics. First of all, these were talk radio shows, mostly entertaining in nature, which no longer exist on radio stations in Serbia, at least not adapted to interests of our generation. In addition to talk radio, the music programme was completely adapted to fit preferences of people that are our age (18-25), yet still being a little more alternative and more unusual than what is usually played on Serbian radio stations.” (Eva Skoric, director FIST radio 2015)

“The music program was designed in accordance with the core idea of the FIST radio, which was created as an independent student media, and from the outset has fostered alternative spirit and broadcasts music that is mostly not played on any other radio station. Broadcast were music genres like indie and alternative rock, with some pop music mixed in. In the music program renowned bands were equally represented, but listeners had the opportunity to hear musicians who are not often played on any other radio station. A part of the programme was comprised of local bands and musicians, some contemporary, new and some already established. I wanted to introduce bands to listeners I like to listen to myself, but only the ones that fit the concept FIST radio stands in for, which is designed for young people wanting to hear something new and different. “ (Tamara Milovanović, music editor FIST radio 2016)

Musings of students that were responsible for management and the creative concept for previous two seasons of the FIST radio shows how highly they valued the creative input, talk radio content and eclectic music choices,

thus, they tried to affirm precisely these elements they felt were missing in broadcasts of commercial radio and even the public service radio.

Further analysis of past seasons of FIST radio indicates several important innovations related to production, but also to marketing and distribution of the programme.

FIST radio is where the audience is...<sup>11</sup>

According to UNESCO, 26% of the young people will prefer listening to radio online (World Radio Day, 2015). Social networks and mobile phones are from the perspective of young listeners sources from which they get information, communicate, share impressions and recommendations, create and share content, read or listen to the news and the latest music.

Bearing these habits of young listeners in mind, program content and promotional campaigns FIST 2014 were created - where the radio left the studio premises and became alive, became directly connected with listeners. Recreating the space and experience of a radio studio with a box that "travelled" all over the city, in which intimate, close, one on one communications between guests and "hosts" were conducted, a recognisable campaign was created that drew the attention of not only future audiences, but from competing media. The main idea of the campaign was to make FIST radio visible even before the broadcast, but also to connect the experience of traditional radio with the possibilities offered by new technologies - interviews in the FIST studio box became parts of the regular set-up of the FIST radio as audio recordings, from which promotional jingles were created for the radio programme and the video versions were distributed through the YouTube channel.

For the future development and survival of the radio, it will be necessary to make its content omnipresent - radio stations should not be limited to one platform or channel.

*"...Adapting the radio to the new media environment, finding new business, but also programming models, establishing of new forms of communication with the audience and furthermore, the creation of new kind of experiences that will entice people to listen to the radio will be crucial for the survival of this medium. For starters, it is important to know the benefits and opportunities of the new, digital media environment, and then to understand the*

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<sup>11</sup> This part of the paper, in a longer version, was already published as a part of the paper *Budućnost radija: How to save the young radio - a case study of the online student FIST radio*, published in the Zbornik FDU, June 2015.

*new habits and new expectations of the audience that has evolved in parallel with the development of technology." (Martinoli, 2015: 248)*

When a program for the FIST radio was created, it was important to consider the possibilities of parallel placement of all produced programming content through various channels - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, audioBoom, YouTube. Each network and every channel brought on different requirements, thus, it was necessary to further adapt the content for each of them, but at the same time each additional channel meant potentially new audience and a more listeners to the FIST radio.

#### **4. ATOMIZATION OF CONTENT AS A NEW STRATEGY FOR RADIO PROGRAMME PLACEMENT**

The common practice of radio stations, for many years, is to enable listeners to follow broadcast programs delayed, on demand, via a website or mobile application. Whether it was streaming or podcast content, most of the produced content, especially talk radio, were archived and made available to listeners whenever and wherever they wanted to hear them.

The next step in adapting to new needs and habits of the audience was the atomisation of program content - creating mini continent bits that can exist separately as a standalone unit, which also could serve as an announcement, teaser, promotion or a particular program segment, show or an entire program unit. The importance of content atomisation can be clearly fathomed when the vast amount of applications and services offering this type of broadcasting distribution is being considered (*audioBoom, MixCloud...*).

The young audience's habits are dominated by multitasking and a split media attentiveness. Providing them with exciting, fast media "bits" for a period of only a few minutes, means providing content for their attention span and at the same time giving them programming content produced in such a manner, that it can be easily shared through social networks or sent to friends. Such mini-bits of program content are an excellent format for further promotion material of best and highest rated program parts - such as parts of an interview, live call-in from a listener or reporter into the program, or an exclusive news story.

## 5. SOUND IS JUST ANOTHER PART OF THE “PUZZLE”

The young audience likes and wants to follow multiple media narratives, divided attention is their usual mode of operation. Therefore, sound, audio content, is only one piece of the puzzle to them. Around it, there must be additional content woven in, complementing the basis thread, elevating it, opening new directions and pathways to explore and learn, engage the listener through new channels of communication. This environment requires the producer to evolve into a fully fledged *community manager*.

Listeners to the station need to have the additional opportunity to take part in a broader, wider storyline, which is created simultaneously through radio waves, social media profiles, pages on mobile application interfaces. By creating additional narrative around the original audio content, listeners are provided with a new perspective and new context pertaining to selected stories, facilitating their understanding and explaining the relevance. Finally, by providing the audience with the possibility to find out more about the same content, follow the developments and broaden the dimensions through multiple platforms, the station widens the chance to keep the listeners interested even then, when the radio station is not turned on.

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# POSSIBLE USE OF BROADCASTING IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN ORDER TO PROMOTE STUDENT CREATIVITY THROUGH PREPARATION OF PROMOTIONAL AUDIO-VISUAL CONTENT

Dr Dejana Prnjat<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** The possibilities offered by electronic media to the education system are extremely wide. Many universities treat media as a focus of their studies at some study programmes and the electronic media have been used as an educational tool ever since the last century. As the electronic media develop along with broadcasting methods, new possibilities for their use in the classroom, such as distance learning, are opening every day. This does not mean that the traditional media have lost their place, but are rather combined with new forms of broadcasting.

Students of art faculties, being that they chose to study in the field of arts, harness significant creative energy and the need to express themselves creatively, and work with the media and allows them to do so. A large number of researchers points to the problem of capturing the interests and the attention of young people, as a result of the frequent simultaneous use of multiple media. We consider that this to be a compelling reason to continue adapting educational methods to new generations of students and to develop challenging tasks to occupy their attention and allow them to express themselves in a way that is familiar to them.

At faculties like the Academy of Arts students are given assignments to create audiovisual content using electronic media. However, electronic media can be used in education which traditionally does not involve these kind of tasks, in order to allow students to better understand the message (in our case, promotional) and develop to creativity.

**Key words:** electronic media, higher education, student advertising, creativity, Academy of Arts

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The essence of media is to be transfer, and sometimes only to record messages. According to the *Report on the ownership and control of media in Serbia* of the Anti-corruption Council, there are nearly fifteen hundred media at this time in Serbia. According to the report, in Serbia in 2014 there were 1319 newsletters, of which “711 print media, 237 radio stations, 208 internet media, 130 TV stations and 20 news agencies, while the registered media that fall while other categories include 9 media and 4 electronic editions.”(1) in addition to these, we should not forget that there are a number of media that have not been registered in Serbia, which can be followed and which publish a variety of content via the internet.

On line media are most vigorously discussed media in scientific circles today. This media has proved to be the most difficult to control by, because we are faced with the phenomenon of overproduction of the internet content. The essential difference, in comparison to earlier media lies in the fact that the process of creating media content is no longer reserved for professionals, rather it is available to everyone, and such content is immediately available to the general public. In other words, the electronic media have drastically facilitated the creation, distribution and consumption of media content, and the most in-depth understanding of media messages is achieved by training for their production. This is especially important for young people, students, and so the authors of the article “Past, present and future of media literacy education” consider that we must continually help students to become active authors of media messages, using a range of digital media technology tools that allow them to express themselves, represent and educate themselves.”(2)

## 2. MULTITASKING GENERATION

The meaning of the term *literacy* has changed and now it includes also the media literacy, rendering the media education necessary in order to control the process of media influence. (3) Masterman stated that the key reasons for its introduction are:

- “High level of media consumption and over-saturation that envelops us
- The ideological character of the media, especially taking into account advertisements



- The emergence of information management in companies (government departments, political parties, ministries, etc.).
- The growing penetration of media into democratic processes (elections are, above all, media events);
- The growing importance of visual communication and information in all areas (except in school, which gives priority to printed materials, communication systems are mostly visual by character);
- The expectations of young people to be educated so that they can understand their own life (what is the meaning of education and the build up of individual culture, if we carefully avoid new technologies and question the value of our time?);
- The national and international increase of the privatization rate of all information technologies (when the information becomes a product, its role and its properties are changed)". (4)

Young people of today, and most members of the middle generation rarely use only one medium at any given moment, and thus the issue of multitasking becomes increasingly significant. Scientists have different opinions on the impact that this phenomenon has on us, but everyone agrees that it can have an impact not only on our behavior, but also on our thought processes. Attention deficiency is seen as one of the negative consequences of this phenomenon. As a parody on the problem, the Independent has written the, in the year 2012 the average attention span was 12 seconds and now it is around 8 seconds, with a comical referral to the goldfish, that has a 9 second attention span. (5)

All humour aside, it appears that performing several tasks simultaneously, unless one of them is routinely done, takes more time than if they were done one at a time, while the introduction of a third parallel task may cause a large number of errors. The author of the book *Digital dementia* states that the human "brain is constantly changing depending on how we use it," (6) and that the virtual world reduces the possibility of its development, and is therefore committed to the abolition of computers in schools for students younger than 17 years of age. There are those scholars, such as Professor Daphne Bavelier, that claim that digital media can enhance certain mental abilities, such as the identification of details on a complex image, easier tracking of multiple moving objects and so on. (7)

Author of the book titled *Shallow* highlights in his inspiring study the problem of attention deficit and its effect on the use of multimedia technology,

since a large number of concurrent stimuli reduces the concentration and the ability to understand messages. “The notion of that what do on the computer, a simple tool, could have a profound and lasting consequences on what happens to my head seemed to me a frivolous one. But I was wrong. As neuroscientists have discovered, the brain, and mind it begets, is never quite fully formed. “(8)

Despite all the criticism of the Internet, it has enabled a qualitative shift in the learning process in the form of distance learning. The authors of the article “Student Media Usage Patterns and Non-Traditional Learning in Higher Education” indicate the tendency that such learning is increasingly common, due to the fact that there are more and more non-traditional students, or adults who can not devote themselves to studies in a traditional way ( 9) and Bok believes that the number of specialized courses available for distance learning needs to be extended in particular to the field of technology. (10)

### **3. ENCOURAGING STUDENT CREATIVITY THROUGH THE CREATION OF PROMOTIONAL AUDIO-VISUAL CONTENT**

The media are widely used as a teaching tool, but the possibility for students to create their own media content as part of their class work presents them with a challenge that they approach very seriously and with great enthusiasm. “Another aspect of media education is also learning to deal with the media and creatively participate in its creation”, marks Djordjevic. (11)

Many students have some experience in creating audiovisual content usually because they were uploading such content to their Facebook profiles, YouTube channels and the like, not only to notify their “friends” about interesting life events, but also to show their professional successes and works. For example, a student of directing who was involved in making a commercial in 2016 for the Academy of Arts, placed it on Facebook on June 9th 2016 and three months later that video had received more than 5200 views.

A few years ago, as part of the subject course Production for art and the media at the Academy of Arts in Belgrade, after learning in theory about the marketing in culture and art, which has a significant place in the program for the second year of study, students were given a semestral task to independently author a printed, audio or audiovisual advertisement for an art event of their own choosing. Marketing is an important part of their future work and the chance to develop an advertisement allows them to better

understand its content and to better communicate with professionals in the field, after having a more in-depth experience in the field.

Students of Production are, at some instances, not encouraged enough to perform creative explorations of this kind, but are rather directed at finding solutions that enable students from other departments to complete their authoring projects. Since the point of the exercise was to develop an idea, not to reach technical standards, students were encouraged to use their mobile phones as audio and video recording devices.

At the agreed time, the students brought commercials that were recorded, edited, some even subtitled, although they were never trained to do so. Apart from a few students who brought their commercials in the form of advertising posters, most brought audiovisual forms, and all works were very imaginative, witty, original. This might indicate that students see the creation of audio-visual content as something that is close and familiar to them.

The fact that the results were almost identical (original, humorous works in audiovisual form were created) when the task was repeated with the next generation of students, contributes to the notion that this form of expression is something that students are kin to and feel enthusiastic about.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Children and young people often use multiple media simultaneously, which is a trend that is somewhat followed by the middle-aged, while the elderly are significantly lagging behind, and for the first time in the history of mankind, grandchildren have more knowledge and skills than their grandparents, who in traditional societies were the epitomes wisdom and experience.

That responsiveness to new media might come at a price, as some researchers suggest, rendering students less responsive to traditional education methods. In order to capture the attention of students we need to adapt to them and devise tasks that will present challenges for them and will allow them to creatively express themselves, whenever possible. Creating media content can be practised in a number of cases including the subject that traditionally do not involve that sort of work, as is the case with exercises on the subject of production in art and media, and replacing passive with active learning in order to contribute to their better understanding and adoption of knowledge.

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