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**MONITORING OF ELECTIONS COVERAGE BY PRINTED
MEDIA
(GENERAL ELECTIONS, 5. OCTOBER 2002)**

FINAL REPORT

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FINAL REPORT

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The first days of the campaign for the general elections in BaH held on 5 October 2002 demonstrated that the media war, supporting of certain and disputing of other political leaders moved from the electronic to the printed media. With the begin of the pre-elections race questions arose as weather these media would overcome the pressure, keep the professional and objective approach during the elections campaign, and in which way would they succeed to “cover” the elections. Already in the early beginning there were rumors and public criticisms as to the character of the media pre-elections campaign, and many critics of the noticed reporting trends on the elections expressed their suspicion as to respect of the basic ethical and professional standards of journalism.

The performance of the printed media and the news agencies during the elections campaign is primary regulated by the existing ethic rules defined by the *Press Code and* are monitored by the *Press Council*, having its meetings just once quarterly and therefore were not able to follow thoroughly the behavior of the media during the elections campaign.

Therefore, *Co-ordination of Journalists Associations* considered it necessary to carry out a detailed and systematical monitoring of reporting by the printed media and agencies on the elections process. In this context the aim of monitoring was to offer:

- 1) A systematical and precise review of coverage of the campaign by the printed media,
- 2) Analysis of respect of the objectivity principle and the basic propositions of a professional journalism,
- 3) Analysis of an equal accessibility of all political parties and candidates to the printed media.

Expressed in other words, the aim of this monitoring was to offer data as to which extent did the media in BaH respect the principles of professional journalism during the elections campaign and to which extent did they improve the citizens' level of information on the political parties and their programs.

1.2 ANALYTICAL RESEARCH FRAME

In order to provide an analytical insight into a general elections campaign coverage by the printed media we need to define clearly what are the duties of the press relating to the elections coverage manner, and how could these duties be analysed in a systematical and objective way. To have this clearly determined, we started from

Press Code that provides for duties and professional standards of the printed media in BaH. Analyzing the Press Code and bringing it in connection with the basic principles of this research, we may say that we are primarily interested in to which extent and on which way do the printed media respect the General provisions envisaged by Article 1 of the Press Code, that reads as follows:

Journalists and their publications have an obligation to the public to maintain high ethical standards at all times and under all circumstances. It is the duty of journalists and publishers to respect the needs of citizens for useful, timely and relevant information and to defend the principles of freedom of information and the right of fair comment and critical journalism.

(...)The press is to protect the rights of the individual while at the same time upholding the right to know which is in the public interest. (...)

Article 15 of the Press Code provides a precise notion of „public interest“:

Public interest in the meaning of this Code is to be defined as action and information intended to assist the public in making their own judgements and decisions about issues and events, including efforts to detect or expose crime or serious misdemeanour, and to prevent the public from being misled by some statement or action of an individual or organisation

According to these provisions of Press Code and within the context of the pre-elections campaign it is very simple to define the two general key duties of the printed media towards the public:

- It is necessary to respect the ethical standards of professional journalism.
- Media are obliged to satisfy the public's need for useful and relevant information on political parties and candidates enabling the citizens to make their own decisions for whom to vote.

Thus, the media were obliged to meet the four basic functions during the pre-elections campaign in order to assist the voters in making their decision for whom to vote. The functions are as follows:

- Presentation of the parties' and candidates' programs.
- Critical analysis of the parties' and candidates' programs (analysis of meaningfulness, logical quality, relevance, realization possibility of program as well as competence of the candidates to carry out their programs).
- Providing an equal treatment for the parties and the candidates.
- Respect of the basic professional standards of objectivity and impartiality during the coverage of elections activities.

The aforementioned items make the basic analytical research dimensions. The research tried to provide an answer to the question how did the printed media carry out their four elections duties. For achieving this, the research will try to provide answers to the following questions: First of all, was there a debalance in focusing on these four dimensions? Was there an unequal treatment of the parties and candidates? How are the presented information relevant? About what were the parties, candidates, independent sources and the journalists themselves speaking about when mentioning

the elections and how relevant is that what they were speaking about? How much could the public learn about the candidates, parties, their programs and intentions?

Special analytical problem is the objectivity issue. In the concrete text, or in a row of texts dealing with a certain topic or a party, the objectivity and impartiality is first of all shown in the way of presentation of the parties, equality of approach and the devoted printing space, quantity of presentation of own opinions, especially in case of controversial topics or criticisms. It is also very important how many and which information resources did the journalists use, and who had or did not have the possibility to present his/her own viewpoints.

1.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology that was applied in this project is a classic quantitative analysis of the contents of the printed media. The notion of content analysis shall here be understood as a systematic analysis of certain texts characteristics on elections campaign in selected printed media.

Sample and analysis period

Media encompassed by the project are divided in three groups: (1) daily newspapers, (2) weekly political magazines and (3) news agencies. The processed individual media are the following:

1. Daily newspapers: Oslobodjenje, Dnevni avaz, Nezavisne novine, Glas srpski, Jutarnje novine and Dnevni list.
2. Weekly magazines: BH Dani, Slobodna Bosna, Reporter, Start and Front slobode.
3. News agencies: Fena, Onasa and Srna

The research period took place from 1 September to 15 October 2002 and can be divided into two analytical and in substance different sub-periods, taking into account that the elections were held on 5 October 2002:

1. Pre-elections period (1 September – 5 October 2002)
2. Post-elections period (6 – 15 October 2002)

The research encompassed all issues of the mentioned media in the aforesated period. All texts were registered and coded, of all gens related to the campaign, wither directly or indirectly. This means that into consideration were taken all texts directly mentioning (a) politic parties participating in the elections race, (b) independent candidates, (c) key candidates of the political parties (lists bearers), (d) coalition and (e) the elections issue in general.

Texts reporting on bearers of the executive authorities functions (such as Minister of Foreign Affairs) who could have been connected directly with the corresponding party were not considered, unless they directly and clearly spoke about the elections or issues directly related to the elections.

Text processing – Coding Sheet

An individual coding form (hereinafter: Coding Sheet) was developed for the text analysis. The development of the Coding Sheet was carried out in three phases: first of all a preliminary version was made that was tested on concrete texts. Thereinafter,

following the tests, a second version was created that was finally adapted during the training of the monitoring team.

The final version of the Coding Sheet for the printed media consists of more than 45 variables and consists of six pages in total. The Coding Sheet was developed in such a way that enables the registration of the following text characteristics:

- General text characteristics: media, date, rubric, genre, page of the published text, appearance on the title page, length of the text, length of the heading, etc.
- Graphic support of the text: Size of the heading and photography
- Text subject
- Text source
- Parties appearing in the text, heading and photos
- Presentation manner of the parties in the text and the heading (positive, neutral, negative)
- Treatment of the parties: access denied, offered space, title page, frequency, etc.

Monitoring Team

A group of nine (9) persons – monitors-analysts (hereinafter: the coders) was created by a careful selection carried out through the held interviews and tests on political knowledge, disposal of information, and analytical capability. All coders attended a two-days training in which they were introduced with the Coding Sheet, nature and methodology of the project and the principles of the analysis of media contents in general.

The analysis process itself and the text coding activities were carried out under permanent monitoring by the project co-ordinator. In order to avoid systematic mistakes, all coders examined in alteration all media. Enabling the coders to work full concentrated and with the purpose of reduction of possible mistakes, their working duties were limited up to maximum five to six hours daily.

Statistic Data Processing

All data out from the Coding Sheet were entered into a statistical data processing computer program, known as SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists) and were in that way processed.

1.4 PARTICULAR REMARK

This report provides first of all a descriptive analysis of the manner in which the printed media covered the elections campaign in BaH. This means that its target was not to evaluate the performance of individual media, or to judge the validity of the manner in which the media covered the elections.

By its nature the analysis of content is as a method not able to provide the reasons for the content as such. Analysis of content hence analysis only, in this case the texts of the printed media, providing a systematic description their character, without any aspiration to explain the reasons for certain occurrences and characteristics of certain texts or media.

We also need to stress that the content analysis as well as the most of other research methodologies in social sciences proves to be subject to mistakes and not so exact like the methods applicable in the natural sciences. Therefore, it should be taken into account that mistakes in such operations are unavoidable present, and the designers of the methodology are to make their attempts to reduce them to the least and the most acceptable extent. Hoping that the readers of this report will have the mentioned in their minds while going through the tables and figures that will try to describe the performance manner of the media during the pre-elections campaign for the October elections held in BaH in 2002.

Finally, the aim of this analysis is first of all to assist the journalism community, the newspapers, editors and the media itself encompassed by this analysis (and hopefully also those who are not here mentioned) to get the best possible insight into elections coverage manner in own media as well as in others, let us say also in the “rival” media and on that base of that insight to find eventually modes for improvement of their work and to raise own and the general level of the journalism professionalism in BaH. In the long run, a characteristic of professionalism is exactly the self-analysis and further improvements. We would like this report to be considered just as a contribution towards a constant improvement and development of journalism in BaH.

CHAPTER 2

SCOPE OF REPORTING ON THE CAMPAIGN

2.1 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN BaH

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BaH) is expressively a complex country when speaking about its territorial and political organization. BaH consists of two entities, the Federation of BaH and the Republika Srpska, and both entities have their own institutions and authorities, while the Presidency of BaH, Council of Ministers, BaH Parliament and BaH House of Peoples are at the state level.

According to the complex structure, characteristic to BaH are also the numerous election levels for the General elections. Namely, in the General elections held on 5 October 2002, the parties and the candidates competed for the votes at the following levels:

- Presidency of BaH (3 members: Bosniak, Serb and Croat)
- House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BaH (the candidates are elected separately from the Federation of BaH and the Republika Srpska)
- House of Representatives of the Federation of BaH
- Presidency of the Republika Srpska (President and Vice-president)
- National Assembly of the Republika Srpska
- Cantonal Assemblies in the Federation of BaH (10 Cantonal assemblies)
- Žepče Municipality Council (Federation of BaH)

The elections results are available on the internet page of *Election Commission of BaH*: <http://www.izbori.ba>

2.2 GENERAL ON ELECTIONS COVERAGE BY PRINTED MEDIA

For the very complex elections, with a large number of candidates, parties and election levels, and for the great importance of these elections for the whole of BaH, it is to be expected that media itself will give significant space to the election problematic. According to our research these expectations have shown to be true since large number of texts relating to election problematic were published.

2.2.1 Elections and daily newspapers

Daily newspapers did offer a number of texts on election problematic. In six daily newspapers, for the total pre election and post election period, from 1 September to 15 October, 4070 texts were registered. Out of that number in the pre election period from 1 September to 3 October, total of 3115 texts were published and in the period of pre election silence (4 and 5 October) 121 text, while in the post election period, from 6 to 15 October, 834 texts were published. That means that the daily newspapers for the whole period of monitoring published every day around 15 texts, which were in a way related to election thematic.

The majority of texts related to election problematic were published by *Dnevni list*, total of 982 texts, out of which 737 texts in the pre election period (1 September to 3 October), 39 texts in the period of pre election silence (4 and 5 October) and 206 texts in the post election period.

Nezavisne novine is on the second place with 728 published texts, i.e. 592 texts in the pre election period, 24 in election period and 112 in the post election period.

Then comes *Dnevni Avaz* with 678 texts relating to election problematic, followed by *Oslobodjenje* with 564 texts and *Glas Srpski* with 514 texts about elections.

For further information see the table in Annex 1.

2.2.2. Elections in weekly press

Weekly newspapers were also intensively involved in election problematic. They published total of 279 texts for the period from 1 September to 15 October 2002. In the pre election period they published total of 231 text and 48 texts related to election problematic in the post election period.

BH Dani published the largest number of text (111) relating to elections. This weekly newspaper published 89 texts in the pre election period and 22 texts in the post election period.

Slobodna Bosna is on the second place with total of 76 texts out of which 66 were published in the pre election period and 10 in the post election period.

Reporter is on the third place with 43 published texts (30 in the pre election and 13 in the post election period), while *Front Slobode* is on the fourth place with total of 37 texts in the pre election period (by the end of monitoring period we were not able to get a number of text that Front Slobode published in the post election period).

Start is the last one with total of 12 texts dedicated to elections, out of which 9 texts were published in the pre election and 3 in the post election period.

For further information see the table in Annex 1.

2.3. CONCLUSION

From the above-mentioned it can be concluded that media had intensively covered the election events, no matter whether those were agencies, daily newspapers or weekly newspapers. The number of texts published, certainly reflect the importance of these elections and their complexity, whether they related to the level of authority or a number of parties and candidates who competed for those levels.

But it is to be seen to what extent the quality was offered in that vast number of texts about elections, to what extent professional efforts were involved, and finally to what extent the readers themselves could benefit from those texts when making decisions as to whom to vote for in the October elections.

CHAPTER 3 GENERAL REPORTING MANNER ON THE CAMPAIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is about general characteristics of the way of reporting on the campaign, i.e. quality of coverage of pre and post election activities in daily and weekly newspapers as well as in the agencies of BaH. The objective of this analysis is to establish to which extent and in which way media reported on important aspects of the campaign in order to offer the audience as relevant information as possible on the base of which they could make rational and factually based decisions as to whom to vote for on the elections.

The base of this analysis is the assumption that media in the frame of campaign coverage should give special attention to how and to which extent the parties and candidates talk about the topics that are of key importance for survival and well being of the BaH citizens.

Besides, the special attention should be given to the programs of the parties and candidates. That means that media should report about programs and plans of the parties, about what they would do once they come into power regarding the burning social, economic and political issues, as well as about the extent of their competence and ability to fulfill their promises and put the presented programs into operation.

In order to make this analysis in our research we focused to two aspects of media reporting. Firstly, we registered the main topics of all analyzed texts. Besides, we also registered whether those texts gave information on programs, i.e. we analyzed the programs of parties and candidates.

3.2 TOPICS IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

BaH is the state that is going through double transition at the same time: from the war destroyed to post war society of joint life and peace, and from former socialistic country characterized by completely destroyed economy, inefficient institutions, inadequate social protection, unfavorable international position, high level of unemployment, etc. to marketing economy and European integration.

It is to be expected that media is regularly and in details involved in this problematic in their everyday reporting and especially in the period of pre election campaign. Logic that stands behind these expectations is very simple. During the pre election campaign the parties and candidates are trying to prove that they are the right choice for the citizens of the country in question. The duty of the media should not be just to report about statements of certain candidates and parties but to put in context as much texts as possible and to try to give information on relevance of what the candidates and parties tell in public, on meaningfulness of their statements and programs, and on their viewpoints on burning issues of everyday life with which those very candidates, if elected, would have to fight for in the near future.

In our efforts to establish as precisely as possible the topics and thematic spheres media reported on while following the pre election campaign we registered the main topic (thematic unit) of each text. The main topic is considered to be the topic the text is primarily dealing with and which as such is emphasized in the title and in the “lead” and which occupies the most of the space in the text. We have defined total of 12 thematic units, which are mutually exclusive, and registered them as such in all texts included in the monitoring.

Thematic units included in the research

1. Economy – employment, inflation, prices, market, taxes, etc.
2. Social issues – education, health care, sport, culture, family, pensioners, etc.
3. National issues – survival of ethnical groups, national pride, national belonging, national and ethnical relations, etc.
4. Organization of BaH – organization of BaH and the entities, organization of the FBaH cantons, issues of territorial character, issues of reform of the Dayton Agreement, military reform, organization of the political system institutions ...
5. Ideology – liberalism, conservatism, extremism, religious issues, etc.
6. About campaign – course of the campaign, campaign financing, character of the campaign, behavior of the parties and candidates in the campaign, relations between the candidates, relations between the parties, etc.
7. Foreign Policy – foreign policy issues and European integration
8. Crime and corruption in general - crime and corruption
9. Character of personality – competence, credibility, integrity, respect, etc.
10. Involvement of the candidates in criminal and corruption – involvement of personality, candidates and members in criminal and corruption.
11. Legislation reform – Reform of laws, constitutional issues, judiciary system reform, police reform, etc.
12. Election results – election results, post election coalitions and options, debate on implementation of the elections and division of mandates.

The results of research show that media included in this monitoring primarily dealt with issues of campaign and the elections in general while in the election reporting they completely neglected the key issues on which outcome depend the future of this country as a whole. Analyses of thematic representation in certain media are what follows.

3.2.1 Daily newspapers and thematic representation

Daily newspapers and the pre-elections period (1 September – 5 October 2002)

Namely, in the pre-elections period the total of 3236 texts related to election problematic in general were published in the daily newspapers. Out of that number 2466 texts or 76,2 % of them primarily dealt with the issues relating to the campaign. Problems of national character are on the second place (141 text or 4,4 %) and then issues of the BaH organization with total of 127 texts (3,9 %).

The economy appears as the primary topic in only 123 texts (3,8 %), followed by social issues (109 texts or 3,4 %), criminal and corruption in general (61 texts or 1,9 %), foreign policy (58 texts, 1,8 %) and legislation reform (56 texts, 1,7 %). These

four, in our opinion key topics, appear, therefore, in only 407 texts or 12,6 % out of total number of published texts in the pre election period. At the very bottom are issues of character of personality (44 texts, 1,4 %), connection of the candidates with corruption (30 texts, 0,9 %) and the ideological character topics (21 text, 0,6 %).

Following the same model, the individual media put priority on the issues that primarily concern the very campaign (relations between and inside the parties, staff policy, the very election rules, etc.), and they significantly neglected the topics such as economy, social policy and international policy.

For further information see tables in Annex 2

Daily newspapers and the post-election period (6 October – 15 October 2002)

In the post election period in daily newspapers we registered total of 834 texts related to election problematic in general. Out of that number there was a total of 660 texts (79,1 %) dedicated to the election results, what is quite logical reaction of media. Besides, 104 texts or 12,5 % primarily dealt with the very campaign and relations between the candidates and parties.

But, the topics such as legislation reform, social and economic issues were totally marginalized in the texts that dealt with the elections. Namely, 14 texts (1,7 %) were published on legislation reform, 7 texts (0,8 %) on social issues and only 6 texts (0,7 %) on economy.

For further information see the tables in Annex 2

3.2.1. Weekly press and thematic representation

Weekly newspapers and the pre-elections period (1 September – 5 October 2002)

As already said, weekly newspapers in the course of pre election period, included in this research, published the total of 231 text related to the election problematic in general.

Out of that number 136 texts (58,9 %) primarily dealt with the problems of the very election campaign while 20 texts (8,7 %) dealt with the problems of character of personality of certain politicians and candidates. The national issues were on third place (10 texts, 8,2 %), immediately followed by texts, which primarily dealt with the problem of criminal and corruption in general (16 texts, 6,9 %).

On the other side, the issues such as social policy, foreign policy, economy and legislation reform are at the very bottom of the list of primary topics in weekly newspapers. Thus, the social policy was primary topic in 12 texts (5,2 %), foreign policy in 5 (2,2 %), economy in 2 (0,9 %) and legislation reform also in 2 texts (0,9 %).

For further information see the tables in Annex 2

Weekly newspapers and the post-election period (6 October – 15 October 2002)

In the post election period weekly newspapers that we monitored published total of 48 texts, which dealt with the election problematic. Out of that number, 35 texts (72,9 %) primarily dealt with the election results and additional 7 texts (14,6 %) dealt with other issues related to the campaign.

On the other side, not a single text that primarily deals with topics such as economy, social issues or legislation was published.

For further information see the tables in Annex 2

3.3 REPORTING ON THE PROGRAMS OF THE PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

Besides coverage of the election topics, the decisive characteristic of the election coverage was whether media reported on the programs of the parties and candidates. Namely, in order that the readers on the base of enough information could make decision as to whom to vote for on the elections it was necessary that they were offered information on programs of the parties and candidates, match and analyze the same. In the same context we have simply registered for all daily and weekly newspapers whether the texts dealt with post election programs and plans of the parties and candidates.

The results that we got were more than disappointing. Out of total of 3236 texts about the elections, published in the pre election period in daily newspapers, only 837 (25,9 %) dealt with the programs of the parties and candidates. In the post election period daily newspapers published the total of 834 texts about the elections. Out of that number only 64 texts (7,7 %) dealt with the programs of the candidates and parties.

Situation in weekly newspapers is even worse. During the pre election period the total of 231 texts related to the election thematic was published. Out of that number only 17 (7,4 %) texts dealt with the programs and plans of the parties and candidates. In the post election period out of totally 48 registered texts about the elections only 2 of them dealt with the programs of the parties.

For further information see the tables in Annex 2.

3.4 CONCLUSION

Even though the media included in this research generally speaking offered a number of texts related to the problematic of the elections in general, we cannot be satisfied with their overall information value. Instead of writing about the elections in a way to constantly bring them in connection with economic, social and political reality in BaH the journalists primarily dealt with the general issues of the campaign, staffing of the parties and relations and conflicts between the parties and the candidates.

As a consequence of that there is a small number of texts dealing with social, economic and political programs of the parties, meaningfulness of such programs, their application and good and bad implications they will have for the overall development of BaH if their promoters come into power.

CHAPTER 4 JOURNALISTS' OBJECTIVITY AND TREATMENT OF THE PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

In this chapter we will offer analysis of treatments of certain parties and candidates in media included in this research. In that context we will focus on three basic aspects of media coverage of the elections regarding the treatment of the parties and candidates. Firstly, we will give detailed analysis of the very approach of media, i.e. we will establish which parties and candidates were given opportunity and to what extent to express their views in certain media. Then we will deal with the overall treatment of the parties and candidates regarding the values with which they were presented in the texts. And finally, we will establish whether and to what extent media and journalists gave possibility to certain candidates to defend themselves from critics in their text, i.e. to what extent the right to speech was secured for the parties and candidates.

All results will be matched between media, parties and candidates in order to establish possible aspects of impartiality and inadequate treatment in the registered texts.

4.1 SOURCES

One of the key problems which is directly connected with the issue of objectivity of the journalists and with the guarantee of equal approach to media for all relevant parties (in the case of elections those are primarily parties and candidates) is the question: *Who is speaking?* That is exactly the question this chapter 4 is dealing with.

For the purpose of this research we used the working definition of sources of information on the base of which the monitors established the number of sources that one text had and the type of sources. The definition is as follows: The source of information is defined or anonymous individual who gives certain statement, who claims something and expresses his/her opinion; then an organization, institution, media, other journalist, document, report and other similar materials used in the text for argumentation building, that certain theses, positions and similar are supported or denied. The questions that help in identification of the sources of information are: On which sources the text is based? Who is substantiating the statements of the text and with what?

In that context the list of categories of different sources of information was made and used during the research.

List of categories of sources of information

- Party sources (statements and interviews of candidates and party officials, spokespersons, press releases)
- Other journalists (statements and conclusions of journalists published in other texts and/or other media)
- Anonymous sources (emphasized anonymous sources)
- Documents (special reports, result of publicity surveys, quotations of the statements of the citizens in the survey)
- Independent experts and expert organizations (ICG, NDI)

- Officials of the International Community
- Officials of the Election Commission
- Groups and organizations (civil organizations, associations, NGO-s interest groups, etc.)
- Government institutions and officials (Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, etc)
- Other (other than above stated, citizens or population as a whole)
- There is no sources of information (the author of the text is the only source)

4.1.1. Number of information sources per text

In order to quantitatively establish the level of objectivity of media, first of all we were interested in how much different information could be found in certain texts. The assumption is that objective and professional journalism should present all angles of a story and allow all parties to express their views on certain and for them important topic the text at issue is dealing with.

Since genres such as comment, introduction and interview in its character normally have one or no sources of information we have here focused only on newspaper reports and analyses – genres that by their nature should have more sources of information.

Daily newspapers and a number of sources per text

In the pre election period (1 September – 5 October 2002) in six daily newspapers the total of 2625 texts were published which we marked as reports and analyses. Out of that number 2028 texts or 77,3 % had only one source of information. Two or more sources of information were registered in 484 texts (18,4 %) while in some 113 texts (4,3 %) there were no sources of information, namely that journalist – text writer was the only source.

In the post election period (6 October – 15 October 2002) the total of 660 analyses and reports were registered. Out of that number, 522 texts (79,1 %) had one or more sources of information and 22 texts (3,3 %) did not have any sources of information, namely the author was the only source.

For further information see the tables in Annex 3.

Weekly newspapers and a number of sources per text

The situation in weekly newspapers is almost identical to the situation in daily newspaper. Out of total of 105 registered reports and analyses 40 texts had only one source of information (38,1 %), 26 texts (24,8 %) had two or more sources while 39 texts (37,1 %) did not have any sources of information, namely the journalist was the only source of information.

In the post election period, in three weekly newspapers (BH Dani, Reporter and Slobodna Bosna) there were 22 registered reports (and analyses), which directly dealt with the problematic of the elections. Out of that number 7 texts (31,8 %) had only one source of information, 8 texts (36,4 %) had two ore more sources and 7 texts

(31,8 %) did not have any sources of information, namely the journalist was the only source of information.

In the post election period not a single report on elections was registered in newspaper Start (issued twice a week), and Front Slobode was not at all analyzed for the post election period.

For further information see the tables in Annex 3.

4.1.2. Information Sources – Who is speaking?

As already said, one of the basic characters of treatment of certain parties and candidates is their appearance in the role of the source of information in media. Starting analytical assumption is that those who have better approach to media are in better position since in that way they have more opportunities to promote their views, ideas, plans and similar and they also have more opportunities and space for potential better positioning in respect to competition.

Certainly, appearance in the role of a source does not necessarily mean the positive treatment since in a large number of cases very negative statements were published in media given by certain sources and those very sources were presented in a negative light. But the assumption of this analysis is that total number of appearances of certain sources does speak of their prominence in certain media. Besides, later segments of the analysis will supplement these results in order to get as complete picture as possible on treatment of certain parties and candidates.

It is also important to emphasize that selection of the source in certain texts and media does not only speak about treatment of the parties and candidates. It is very important that apart from politicians and party sources there are also independent experts, non-governmental organizations, government official and other relevant sources which can offer different perspective of monitoring of the events and make texts more relevant and more interesting.

Sources in daily newspapers

In the pre election period (1 September – 5 October 2002), in all daily newspapers, person who appeared as a source in the majority of texts dealing with the election problematic was Mijo Anic (80 texts), followed by Mladen Ivankovic-Lijanovic (70 texts), Tihic Sulejman (54), Milorad Dodik (52), Mladen Ivanic (48), Zlatko Lagumdzija (47) Dragan Kalinic (45), Silajdzic Haris (43), Mirko Sarovic (40) and Dragan Covic (37).

If we look at the appearance of certain parties as sources of information, what involve the sum of all appearances of the candidates, members and organizational components of certain parties, then the situation is rather different. Namely, in the pre election campaign, in the texts dealing with the election problematic, Social Democrat Party of BaH – Social Democrats (SDP) in 227 cases appeared as a source of information followed by Party of Democratic Action (SDA) with total of 187 texts, Association of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) in 162 texts, Party for BaH (158 texts), New Croatian Initiative (NHI) in 142 texts, Serb Democratic Party (SDS) in 141 text, Party

of Democratic Progress (PDP) in 133 texts and Economic Block HDU - For Better (104 texts).

Very often in the texts with the election problematic there appeared the officials of the Election Commission (148 texts), officials of the International Community (143 texts), different groups and organizations (95 texts) and government institutions and officials (89 texts).

In the post election period as a source of information in the majority of cases (151) the officials of the Election Commission appeared followed by the officials of the International Community (109 texts). Then follows SDA (63 texts), SDP BaH (59 texts), SDS (58), Party for BaH (52), SNSD (49) etc.

As far as the candidates and representatives of certain parties are concerned, Dragan Kalinic appeared as a source in 21 text, then Milorad Dodik (18 texts), Mladen Ivanic (16), Hasan Muratovic (16), Sulejman Tihic (15), Safet Halilovic (12), etc.

For further information about the candidates, parties and certain media see the tables in Annex 3.

Sources in weekly press

During the pre election period (1 September - 5 October 2002) weekly newspapers published total of 8 texts with Nijaz Durakovic as the source of information. The same number of texts was published with Zlatko Lagumdzija while Sulejman Tihic, Milorad Dodik, Safet Halilovic and Sejfidin Tokic appeared as sources in 5 texts each, followed by Haris Silajdzic and Mladen Ivanic with 4 texts each, etc.

SDP, i.e. its members appeared as sources in total of 26 texts, SDA in 19 texts, Party for BaH in 18 texts and SNSD in 17 texts.

In the post election period (6 October - 15 October 2002), in weekly newspapers Milorad Dodik appeared as the source in total of 4 texts followed by Nijaz Durakovic and Mladen Ivanic being sources in 2 texts each.

At the same time SDP as the source of information appeared in 10 texts followed by SNSD (5), SDA (5), Party for BaH (4), PDP and SDS in 3 texts each.

For further information see the tables in Annex 3.

4.1.3. Primary Information Sources

Besides being important who and how many times appears as a source of information it is also important to know who and how many times appears as a primary source. Primary source is considered to be a source which gets most of the space for his/her viewpoints, i.e. on whose opinion, arguments, claims and similar the text is primarily based and who to the largest extent confirms the theses expressed in the text on certain problem, person, party and similar.

If it is not possible to establish who the primary source is, we had simply accounted for the space given for the sources and established which of them was given the most of lines, sentences and paragraphs. We have also taken into consideration the fact that the primary source in one text usually appears several times.

Daily newspapers

The results that we got show that in the pre election period, in daily newspaper, SDP had the role of the primary source in 181 texts followed by SDA (148), SNSD (134), Party for BaH (127), NHI (125), PDP (108), SDS (104), etc.

In the post election period the leading position was taken by the officials of the Election Commission (140 texts), followed by the officials of the International Community (90 texts), SDP and SDS (44 texts each), Party for BaH (9), SDA (6) etc.

In the post election period SDP party appeared as the primary source in 5 texts (all in BH Dani), then SDA (2) and other big parties in one text each.

Interviews with the candidates and party representatives

In daily newspapers the most interviews were given by Nijaz Durakovic (3) followed by Alija Behmen, Haris Silajdzic, Emir Zlatar, Milan Jelic, Ivo Lozancic and Ilija Simic who gave two interviews each. Then followed the other leading party persons with one interview each.

When it comes to number of interviews the leading newspaper was Nezavisne novine (total of 40), then Avaz (21), Dnevni list (9) and Oslobodjenje (2). We have not registered a single interview in Glas Srpski and Jutarnje novine.

For other periods and other media as well as for all details see the tables in Annex 3.

4.1.4 Who is speaking? – Additional remarks

From this analysis of sources it can be concluded that the most powerful parties and most prominent candidates were given most of the space for their opinions.

When it comes to whom the approach in the texts was given, media primarily focused on parties and candidates from “their” entities, i.e. to parties which (potential) voters were reading that newspaper.

It could also be said that there is a greater need for the texts in which independent experts appear as sources. Namely, in the pre election period in six daily newspapers, which published total of 3236 texts, independent experts were the sources of information in only 46 texts

4.2 ASSESSMENT OF VALUE AND PRIMARY OBJECT

The next step is to analyze presentation of parties in certain media. The way of presenting involved assessment of value – positive, neutral, or negative - with which the parties were presented in the text. This analysis will give guidelines on preferences of certain media when it comes to parties which competed at the elections.

In order to make this analysis, we had firstly registered all primary objects in the published texts and then we established in which context they were shown (positive, negative, neutral). The primary objects are those parties, candidates, or members of the parties to whom majority of space in the text is given (sentences, lines, paragraphs) whether those are parties, candidates, members or their activities. If in the text parties and candidates only give statements on certain topics and problems and they themselves are not object in the text, i.e. nothing is said about them, they are not considered to be primary objects.

4.2.1 Primary object and treatment

Therefore, we focus here on individual media and the way in which they treated parties, which appeared as primary objects in individual texts. For the large number of media involved in the monitoring, as well as for the large number of parties and candidates, we will analyze only the treatment in that particular media and those who achieved significant election results. Besides, since all results show that the newspapers primarily dealt with the parties and candidates from “their” entity that also will be one of the principles of selection. In addition, we will deal only with the pre election period and only with daily newspapers.

That means that for the newspapers from the Federation we will analyze the way in which they treated SDP, SDA, Party for BaH and HDZ while for the newspapers from Republika Srpska we will analyze the way in which SDS, SNSD and PDP were presented.

For all parties, weekly newspapers and both periods the data from the table in Annex 4 is at your disposal.

***Oslobodjenje*, primary object and treatment of the parties**

Lets start with *Oslobodjenje*. According to our results, this daily newspaper gave significant support to SDP, which as the primary object appeared in total of 26 texts. Out of that number four texts had negative connotations, 7 were neutral and total of

15 texts presented SDP in the positive light. At the same time SDA was presented as primary object in 18 texts out of which 15 were negative, 5 neutral and 6 positive (not applicable for other 2 texts – which means that party was presented both positively and negatively). Similar treatment as the one for SDA was given to Party for BaH. This party had the role of primary object in 15 texts out of which 7 were negative, 6 positive and two neutrals. And finally, HDZ party was given the most unfavorable treatment with total of 7 texts, all of which were negative. The position of HDZ approved a little through presentation of the Coalition of HDZ – Demo Christians-HNZ that was primary object in 4 texts out of which 1 was neutral and 3 positive.

Here, it is important to mention that in the tables the attention should be drawn to the way of presentation of the Alliance for Changes, which was basically negatively presented, and it is very often presupposed that those critics were directed directly to SDP as a creator of the Alliance for Changes.

***Dnevni Avaz*, primary object and treatment of the parties**

Next media that was subject to our analyses was Dnevni Avaz. Totally contrary to Oslobodjenje, Dnevni Avaz gave its total support to Party for BaH which as the primary object appeared in 30 texts. Not a single text out of that number had negative character, 20 texts were positive and 10 neutral. Note that this was for the period of 35 days, from 1 September to 5 October 2002. SDA also had a rather positive treatment but not as positive as Party for BaH. Namely, SDA appeared as the primary object in total of 21 texts. Out of that number only 3 were negative, 8 neutral and 10 texts were positive. It would be very interesting to give here data on SDP. This party appeared in Dnevni Avaz as the primary object 43 times; on 11 occasions it was presented positively, 13 times neutrally and even 17 times negatively (two text were not applicable). HDZ alone was presented once positively and once negatively and 5 times neutrally (one text was not applicable) while the Coalition with Demo Christians and HNZ was presented 3 times positively and twice neutrally.

***Jutarnje novine*, primary object and treatment of the parties**

There are no such drastic differences in the treatment of parties in the case of Jutarnje novine as in Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz. SDP was presented neutrally 5 times, 10 times positively and 12 times negatively. At the same time SDA was the primary object in 3 neutral texts, 7 positive and 5 negative while Party for BaH in the role of primary object was presented 4 times positively, once neutrally and once negatively (one text was not applicable). At the same time HDZ alone was presented once positively, once negatively and twice neutrally.

***Dnevni list*, primary object and treatment of the parties**

The most unfavorable treatment in Dnevni list was given to HDZ with 2 neutral, 2 positive and 18 negative texts (one text was not applicable). But when it comes to HDZ Coalition, Demo Christians and HNZ then the presentation was very positive. This Coalition was presented 11 times positively, 6 times neutrally and only 2 times negatively (two texts were not applicable). At the same time SDP was presented 7 times positively, 8 times neutrally and 10 times negatively. SDA was presented

negatively 5 times and 3 times neutrally while Party for BaH was presented once positively and twice negatively (one text was not applicable). It is to be concluded that in this daily newspaper the focus was placed on happenings among Croat people and political turmoil around the parties with Croat sign.

Nezavisne novine, primary object and treatment of the parties

Nezavisne novine had clearly set their relation towards leading parties in Republika Srpska. Thus, SDS as the primary object was presented twice neutrally, 6 times positively and 15 times negatively (one text was not applicable). At the same time PDP had 2 positive, 5 neutral and 8 negative texts (two texts were not applicable). On the contrary SNSD as the primary object was presented 15 times positively, 3 times neutrally and only once negatively.

Glas Srpski, primary object and treatment of the parties

In the case of Glas Srpski, the difference in treatment of three leading parties when in function of the primary object, i.e. when text primarily dealt with them, was not significantly expressed. But it can be said that to some extent SDS party had privileged status with total of 19 positive, 8 neutral and 6 negative texts. At the same time PDP had 15 positive, 4 neutral and 3 negative texts (3 texts were not applicable) while SNSD had 9 positive, 3 neutral and one negative presentation.

In Annex 4 you can see detailed tables on treatment of the parties when they appeared in the role of primary object.

Even more detailed survey of the way of treatment of the parties is offered in the tables in Annex 5. Those tables contain survey of the way of treatment of the parties in all texts in which they appeared.

4.4 OPPORTUNITIES FOR REPLY

One of the basic aspects of the objective journalism is respect of right of “other party” to offer its viewpoints on certain topic or problem in a text which touches the interests of that “other party”. This right should first of all be respected in case of controversy, when direct critics are directed to that person, organization or institution or when their responsibility is implicated for certain happenings. That means that a journalist who is writing such a text should offer to all interested parties and especially to those that are criticized and called for responsibility, to give their opinion of the story. If happens that such a person refuses to give his/ her comment, then that is clearly indicated in the text.

Led by this idea that journalists should provide equal treatment to all parties involved in a story, we tried to establish to which extent the daily newspapers in BaH enable the candidates to give their opinions and defend themselves from the critics directed on their account.

By monitoring we have thus tried to established whether and to what extent the candidate or party about which negative value judgement was expressed by authors or

third parties was given the opportunity to express their opinion, defend their position, or explain what it was about in a way that would be of their interest. This expression of the opinion can be in a form of quotation or paraphrase but it clearly has to refer to negative claims, statements and judgements expressed about party or candidate at issue.

It is also important to emphasize that this segment of the monitoring we applied only on the reports and analyses, not taking into consideration other journalism genres. The reason for that is a very simple one: In the interviews, news, comments or introductions it is not expected, and it is mainly not possible, to give opportunity for reply in the very text but such an opportunity is eventually given later. At the same time, even if in the case of reporting and analyses there is also possibility for additional reply for the articles in the text, it is still expected from the journalists to put in the text all interested parties in order to respect the principle of objectivity and equal treatment in the best possible way.

As we have assumed, practically in all media analysis, both weekly and daily, in almost all cases when negative opinion or judgement was expressed about the certain candidate (or other person) that candidate was not given the opportunity in that same text to defend himself/herself or to give his/her viewpoints on the problems.

Thus, for example, Zlatko Lagumdžija was criticized in Dnevni Avaz in 18 reports and he was not once given the opportunity to defend himself. At the same time he was criticized 12 times in Jutarnje novine and was only given one opportunity to reply in the same text.

Practically identical situation is for other media and candidates. Ivanic Mladen was criticized in Nezavisne novine 17 times and was given only one opportunity to respond to those critics in the same text. The same luck and in the same media had Mirko Sarovic who in 13 negative text did not have the opportunity to defend himself from the attack.

Haris Silajdzic was criticized 6 times in Oslobođenje and was given the opportunity to defend himself only once in the same text. Sulejman Tihic was negatively presented in 7 texts of Glas Srpski and in 5 texts of Dnevni Avaz and was not given a single opportunity to express his viewpoints to the problem in the same text.

This list could be continued indefinitely and it would remain consistent for all candidates and all media involved in this monitoring. For the limited space in this report, detailed data on negative presentation and opportunities for reply of certain candidates you can find in the tables offered in Annex 6.

4.5 CONCLUSION

On the base of all above mentioned several key conclusions could be drawn in this chapter on the level of objectivity of daily newspapers and on the extent to which

different political parties and candidates were treated in certain media included in this monitoring.

First of all, it is possible to conclude that the level of objectivity was certainly brought into question for extremely low percentage of the texts (reports and analyses) which were based on two or more sources of information while texts with only one source of information were dominant. For the overall period of the monitoring, from 1 September to 15 October 2002, in daily newspapers for example there were 4% of reports on the elections without sources of information, around 18% of them had two or more sources while some 78% were based on one source of information. In the same period the situation in weekly newspapers was to some extent better (for details see section 4.1.1 of this chapter and the table in Annex 3).

If attention is drawn as to who was given the opportunity to express his/her opinion and viewpoints in printed media, it is clearly visible that those were primarily large parties and prominent candidates who at these and on previous elections achieved significant results. Smaller parties and less known candidates rarely appeared as sources of information.

It is also important to note that media primarily dealt with those parties and candidates whose potential voters make audience of those media. That means that reporting was to the large extent conditioned by entities and thus media from the Federation of BaH as sources and primary objects primarily used those parties and persons who act in that entity while media from Republika Srpska gave its attention primarily to election scene of that entity.

As far as the very treatment of certain parties is concerned the results of the research clearly showed that media that we analyzed primarily expressed political preferences, supporting more or less certain political options and at the same time criticizing the others (for details see section 4.2.1 of this chapter and Annexes 4 and 5).

And finally, the result of the research show that in almost 100% of cases when negative value judgements and critics were given about certain candidates those candidates were not given the opportunity to express in the same text their opinion on the problem and to eventually defend themselves from the critics (section 4.4 of this chapter and Annex 6).

CHAPTER 5 NEWS AGENCIES AND THE ELECTIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this part of the monitoring is to offer basic insight in the amount and way of coverage of the campaign in news agencies FENA, ONASA and SRNA in order to find out what those agencies, as one of primary sources of material for media, were offering to printed media that we analyzed. Therefore the method of monitoring of the agencies was simpler than the method of monitoring of daily and weekly newspapers. Primary objects, assessments and topics were registered with the agencies in order to find out about whom and in what way they reported as well as on what these three news agencies were reported. At the same time, all other aspects of the research are the same as with printed media.

5.2 ELECTIONS IN THE AGENCIES

Total of 45 days of work of the agency services was taken into consideration. ONAS was the only agency that offered specialized election service while FENA and SRNA followed the elections within the frame of their general daily services.

In the monitored period of 45 days total of 3678 texts dealing with the election problematic were registered. In the pre election period from 1 September to 3 October 2904 texts were published and 242 texts in the period of the election silence (4 and 5 October). In the post election period from 6 to 15 October total of 532 texts dealing with the election thematic were registered. We can say that during the monitoring period of 45 days these three agencies published daily an average of 27 texts on the elections.

SRNA published the majority of texts out of 1435 with the election problematic. In the pre election period (1 September to 3 October) this agency published 1167 texts and in the post election period (6 – 15 October) 268 texts.

FENA published total of 1262 texts out of which 1120 in the pre election period and 142 in the post election period. At the same time ONASA published total of 981 text out of which 859 in the pre election period and 122 in the post election period.

For more details see the table in Annex 7.

5.3 NEWS AGENCIES AND THEMATIC REPRESENTATION

In the pre election period (1 September – 5 October 2002) three news agencies, FENA, SRNA and ONASA, published total of 3146 texts with the election problematic. Out of that number the majority of texts, 2247 or 71,4% dealt with the issues of the campaign (the very campaign, relations between the parties, etc.), 193 texts (6,1%) dealt with national issues and 178 texts (5,7%) with social issues. Out of total number of published texts 176 dealt with economic issues.

Distribution of the topics in the post election period was significantly changed since the focus was placed on the election results (461 text or 86,7% out of total number of the texts on the elections) while the other topics were marginally presented.

For further details see the table in Annex 7.

5.4 NEWS AGENCIES AND PARTIES TREATMENT

Unlike printed media it can not be claimed that news agencies had unequal treatment of certain parties. It is obvious that the majority of texts offered were on large parties while the smaller parties were presented in considerable smaller number of texts.

As with printed media, the agencies also put greater emphases to the parties from “their” entities.

It can be assumed that the amount of texts published and the way of presentation of certain parties were to a large extent expression of power of their public relations department and that is probably more expressed with independent agencies then with printed media.

For further details see the table in Annex 7.

5.4 CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the three new agencies placed extreme emphases on pre election and post-election activities publishing jointly total of 3678 texts during 45 days involved in the research what makes an average of 81 news on the elections daily.

As far as the topics covered in the offered texts are concerned, there is obvious similarity with printed media. Namely, in agencies’ reports on the elections the dominant position was taken by the texts which primarily dealt with the election problematic in general while a small number of texts were published about economic, social and other aspects of engagements and programs of certain parties and candidates.

On the base of the research results we can not claim that certain agencies had obvious partial treatment of certain parties.

CHAPTER 6 FINAL REMARKS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This research was initiated with the aim to offer detailed and systematic analysis of the published reports and agencies on the election procedure. There are three aspects of reporting that we focused on:

1. Informative quality of the campaign coverage in printed media,
2. Respect for the principle of objectivity and basic aspects of professional journalism,
3. Treatment of political parties and candidates in printed media.

For the methodological, analytical, time and financial requests we limited ourselves only to some indicators of the way of reporting: thematic representation (what was reporting about), sources (number of information sources, types of information sources), treatment (positive, neutral and negative treatment of the parties and candidates in the texts) and right to reply (right to reply in case of critics in the reports and analyses)

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

The media evolved in the research intensively followed the election events whether those be agencies, daily newspapers or weekly newspapers. This is in the best way shown in the number of published texts.

But even though the media published a large number of texts on the election events their overall informative value is considerably limited with neglect of the themes such as economy, social issues, and similar. In other words, media primarily dealt with general issues of the campaign, staffing policy of the parties, and relations and conflicts between parties and candidates not writing enough about economy, social and other aspects of engagements of certain parties and candidates.

In addition, relatively small number of texts dealt with party programs and their activity plans if they eventually come into power.

Objectivity of reporting was limited with extremely small percentage of texts (reports and analyses) based on two or more sources of information while the texts with only one source of information were dominant.

Although all parties were given possibility to approach media only large parties and prominent candidates were those who dominated in the election reporting.

The reporting was to a large extent conditioned by entities which means that media from the Federation of BaH as sources and primary objects primarily had those parties and persons who act in that entity while media from the Republika Srpska gave attention primarily to the election scene of that entity. This is easily explained by the

market law since media publish what the audience wants to read and the audience of the printed media is primarily differentiated by the entities.

The printed media that we analyzed had mainly expressed political references, supporting more or less certain political options and criticizing at the same time the others (for details see section 4.2.1. of this report and Annexes 4 and 5). At the same time we can not claim that certain agencies had partial treatment of certain parties.

And finally, the result of the research show that in almost 100% of cases when direct negative value judgements and critics were given in the reports and analyses of printed media about certain candidates, those candidates were not given the opportunity to express in the same text their opinion on the problem and to eventually defend themselves from the critics. This certainly questions the objectivity and professional reporting in general in such cases.

6.3 INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

If this research has given at least minimal contribution to overall understanding of media scene in BaH and especially understanding of media functioning in the election period, then we are satisfied with the results. We are aware of limitation of quantitative analysis but the purpose of this report was not (nor that would be possible) to give final conclusion on this problematic but to offer another way of looking at it.

Therefore we hope that the research has helped the overall research and analytical efforts in the sphere of BaH mass media and that it will eventually influence further researches in that field. The number of analytical approaches in examining behavior of media in a campaign is unlimited: quality analysis of the pre-election discourse in media, analysis of the parties presentations on photographs, analysis of headlines of daily newspapers, analysis of caricatures, interviews, way of expression, analysis of women representation in election texts, etc.