



Content

Events

Media on media

Press releases

Vacancies

Forthcoming events

Free Media Help Line

Media in era of modern slavery

By: *Andrijana Pisarević*

Professional status and position of journalists in BiH under the load of poorly developed media market

By: *Borislav Vukojević*

Freelance journalists in their fight for the truth and/or fight their own lives and survival

By: *Eldin Hadžović*

Consequences of media market anomalies in BiH and their impact on pluralism of opinions, public and approach by citizens to objective, fair and balanced information

By: *Dragana Trninić*

Genuine democracy aimed commitment of political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina tested through public broadcasting system

By: *Najil Kurtić*



This project is financed by the European Union

The contents of this E-Journalist are the sole responsibility of authors and BH Journalists Association and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

Editorial

Journalists in BiH: (Media) Workforce Deprived of the Rights in the Media Industry

As a consequence of an unregulated media market in Bosnia and Herzegovina and non-transparent financial flows to the media, media outlets remain financially dependent. The financial dependency of the media necessarily contains the requirements of political loyalty and service to certain political, national, economic or other lobbies rather than the public. Very often this financial dependency may challenge the public reputation of the media, its credibility and the trust of citizens in published contents. Non-transparent and undemocratic relations between politicians and the media are being established as a result of non-transparent allocation of public budget funds for media funding in all governing structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Under the burden of such relations, which came out due to the lack of legislation that would establish policies of ownership transparency and transparency of media funding and advertising, journalists and citizens suffer the most. Citizens are deprived of professional and independent reporting and true media pluralism. On the other side, if we measure the state of the media industry by the reputation, status and rights of its driving forces - journalists as workers, then we can rightly claim that the media market in BiH, even 22 years since the establishment of peace in BiH, is at the very beginning of its development.

Lack of regulation of the media market in BiH; the unclear ownership structure of televisions, newspapers, radio stations and portals and political influences and pressures on journalists have significantly contributed to the state of extreme dependence of media professionals. Questions like: „How many journalists are there and how much work they are doing? How many journalists is working on more than one engagement? What is the fee for freelancers, how many of them receive the royalties and are their earning subject of taxation? - are questions on which democratic society (the system) could give an answer simply by establishing legal regulation on media ownership as well as legal and transparent ways of financing and advertising in the media.

48th edition of E-Bulletin examines severe consequences on journalists and citizens that arise from non-transparent media financing. The authors of the texts are: **Andrijana Pisarević**, journalist from Banjaluka; **Eldin Hadžović**, freelance journalist from Sarajevo; **Borislav Vukojević**, Senior Assistant at the Department of Journalism and Communication Studies at the Faculty of Political Sciences Banja Luka; Docent **Dragana Trninić**, Head of the Study Program at the Department of Journalism and Communication at the Faculty of Political Sciences Banja Luka and Dr. **Najil Kurtić**, full-time professor at the Faculty of Philosophy at University of Tuzla.

Arman Fazlić, E-journalist Editor

Events

2 Nov 2017

40 % of cases of assaults on journalists in BiH were not preceded through courts during last year

31 Oct 2017

Presentation of proposals / recommendations regarding the advancement of Election Law and Media responsibilities, including journalists' responsibilities, during the election process

31 Oct 2017

Mostar - 10th workshop held in Mostar regarding the issue of "Reporting about gender based violence"

Press releases

6 Nov 2017

BH Journalists ask for determination of responsibility in BHRT

3 Nov 2017

Stop the Impunity: 380 assaults on journalists in the Region since 2014

26 Oct 2017

BH Journalists demand from BHT officials to provide thorough and detailed explanation regarding the case of the interview with Dr. Sebjica Izetbegovic

03 Oct 2017

Protest against Zenica City Council due to assaults on journalists

Media on media

10 Nov 2017

EU & Western Balkans Media Days in Tirana: The EU can help, but the change has to be made by journalists

3 Nov 2017

Bojić: Present state of Media Freedoms / liberties in BiH worse than in previous years

1 Nov 2017

From the beginning of this year, 56 journalists throughout the world had died

16 Oct 2017

BHRT claim debt over BAM 37.0 million

11 Oct 2017

Round table on open questions / issues regarding the SSP implementation process, covering the subject of "Information Technology society / community and media", held in Neum

Media in era of modern slavery

By: *Andrijana Pisarević*



It would indeed be encouraging if the issue of rights of journalist in 21st Century would primarily be covered and analyzed in terms of the elimination of censorship and auto censorship, including the incensement of free and liberated non – biased reporting and associated fairy tales.

Unfortunately, until this dream becomes true, we must, in the first place, face painful facts, indicating that we are in fact at the very initial stage of the media development process.

First of all, we have no information about basic facts and have no information regarding the fundamental statistical data such as; the number of journalists operating in BiH media market, number of media houses operating in BiH market as well, their (media houses) ownership structure (on who – owns – whom/what basis) and information about wages / salaries journalists (should) receive while performing their duties and doing their work. We don't know how journalists live nowadays, how many of them are engaged in more than one / single project, how much do freelancers earn, who amongst them receives tax - free money based on cash-in-hands payments and how many of them work on copyright contracts basis as well. What else we don't know? Can journalists afford to receive proper medical treatment and to be hospitalized if necessary and how can this be done? Are they victims of mobbing methods imposed against them by their editors and media entrepreneurs? How many hours a week they have to work, do any of them receive overtime money, bonuses etc. How many journalists have to work over the holidays and do any of them receive extra bonuses for that? How many journalists have to work as photographers as well? How many reporting stories can they make per month and how many days off they have during single month?

We don't have precise answers to any of the above questions. Instead, we only have approximate and partial, but unreliable information concerning insignificant number of journalists and how they work and live, while the majority of them struggle while being forced to work without contracts and associated rights, often being blackmailed and forced to work for modern slaveholders with no rights to have their own say.

Establishing of vast number of media houses (apparently there are over 1100 media houses in BiH including around 1000 news – based web sites), with minimum investing, links and ties between commercial and political interests, the growing and increasing ownership concentration, inferiority in technological terms have altogether resulted in the present situation concerning almost all journalists in BiH.

Furthermore, there has been no difference in terms of whether BiH journalists work for public broadcasting services and agencies or work for private media houses. Their treatment is practically the same regardless to whether their entrepreneurs are "public" (state appointed) persons or some recent rich "businessmen"; either way their rights are denied often with mobbing included, their wages and salaries are miserable and not in paid in time, superannuation (pension and retirement funds) payments also almost do not exist and the quantity of duties they are assigned with is continually increasing.

Based on all of the above listed reasons and facts, one could conclude that present and current journalism in BiH has become a field of total exploitation of thousands of people working in one of the most stressful and most demanding area and their say and their voices cannot be seen or heard nor they are "registered" as workers or employees. Additionally, the fact that media entrepreneurs and their editors have access to unlimited number of students (which they may engage any time they like), unemployed journalists with degrees in journalism and graduates with similar and relevant social degrees knowing that almost all of them would be happy to write or make reports for symbolic amount of money, does indeed outline the current situation as far as journalism in BiH is concerned. Watching for an opportunity to prove themselves and get proper job and work as journalists or public relations officers, journalists often spend entire decade being engaged as underrated casual employees with absolutely no possibility to make career advancement whatsoever.

Media disorder in BiH, unclear ownership structure of TV houses, radio stations and web sites, political influences and pressures imposed against journalists, including the vast number of people that would accept to work for minimum amount of money in order to grab the opportunity to eventually become full time employees in few years time, have altogether resulted in a complete instability and uncertainty, as far as

Journalism in BiH has become a field of total exploitation of thousands of people working in one of the most stressful and most demanding area and their say and their voices cannot be seen or heard nor they are "registered" as workers or employees

Vacancies

Competition / Contest on reporting about gender based violence open for male and female journalists, male and female bloggers

Deadline for application is 25 Nov 2017

[Details](#)

Journalism award for reporting on LGBT rights and culture

Deadline for application 25 Nov 2017

[Details](#)

Competition / Contents for the UN-FPA award

Deadline for application 17 Nov 2017

[Details](#)

Forthcoming events

- A series of events in the framework of project **“Switch off violence – Media against violence against women”** with the support of UN Women office in BiH: Journalist Academy for students (19-21 Nov 2017); Meeting with professors and assistants (21-22 Nov 2017), Workshop for bloggers (27 Nov 2017); Meeting with editors (30 Nov 2017); consultative meetings with stakeholders

Media scene development in BiH is therefore based on the exploitation of employed journalists and other associated workers (staff) in media field, with deliberate creation of chaos and imperative of political influence. As a result, one could, taking into consideration the above mentioned chaotic conditions, speak about the commencement of media scene which should actually begin with its initial stage and shape its profile.

the journalists' existence in BiH is concerned. Considering the nature of their work, completely unrealistic deadlines they are forced to comply with and great, but unreal expectations from their editing offices; employees are, at the end of the month, left with paid money (which in fact is less than what low – profile workers and people with very limited educational background get paid on monthly basis) and they are consequently forced to use whatever time left they have to seek for additional work thus earning extra money elsewhere.

Journalists work a lot more than they get paid, their wages and salaries are often not paid in time and they also receive partial payments. They are forced to look for additional work because they are economically ruined, blackmailed and left out with very low level of self – confidence. They live very stressful lives; they are imposed with pressure at different levels, frustrated and fear for their jobs they dare not to even speak about their statuses and positions thus wasting significant time and years of their lives. More absurdly, journalism is gradually turning into a female occupation in BiH and this accordingly produces economic and financial position female journalism employees are in actually displaying the reflection of the above mentioned attitude and facts.

The following, rather legitimate question emerges accordingly: “How come journalists are then not fighting for their own rights when they are aware about workers' and labor rights of other workers in other fields (being heavily violated), about which journalists make regular reports?”

One of the answers to this question may include the fact that they (journalists) have been blackmailed and disarmed (whilst spinning few coins in their rather empty pockets) being, at the same time overloaded with work they had been assigned with and deadlines that are always met just in time, journalists find very difficult to think thoroughly about their own (labor) rights. On the other hand, journalism, as an occupation, is not considered and generally treated as proper job at all, instead, it is generally treated as hobby and some kind of additional, extra or simply (part time) job and anyone with talent in journalism is thus not considered as genuine journalist, instead he / she is generally and often publically treated and declared as public star.

Ironically speaking, one could not expect from journalists to make reports about their own (violated) rights, when there are other “priorities” to handle such as: most teachers in BiH (including both primary and secondary schools), medical workers (including doctors, nurses, technicians and others) and other workers (various fields and branches) about whose rights journalists make reports on regular basis. Journalists are obviously more concerned about rights of others that about their own rights.

Unfortunately, they become aware about their violated rights when it is already too late to regret and think about it; that is, they begin to think and are seriously concern about this whole issue when they get sacked, when they lose their jobs, jeopardize and endanger their good health (often losing both, job and good health), when they become parents, get children and when they begin to stress out about bank loan repayments they have to pay and so on.

Media scene development in BiH is therefore based on the exploitation of employed journalists and other associated workers (staff) in media field, with deliberate creation of chaos and imperative of political influence. As a result, one could, taking into consideration the above mentioned chaotic conditions, speak about the commencement of media scene which should actually begin with its initial stage and shape its profile. This may actually occur only if we stop overstepping the stairs and begin with taking one step at the time: eventually it may stop once we gather around and become massive in terms of numbers, just as workers in other fields do. Associations and Journalists' Clubs, (unions/syndicates in particular), indeed represent perfect initial points to launch and begin the fight for gaining decent work / labor conditions for all journalists. The present state officials (considering their will to help) will certainly not take care of those that fail to take care about themselves, particularly they will definitely not express their concerns and take care about journalists, since they consider journalists as obstacles, rather than regular and decent workers.





Professional status and position of journalists in BiH under the load of poorly developed media market

By: Borislav Vukojević

Media market in BiH could be looked at and observed in two different ways: on one hand, the content on “on the paper” basis seems satisfactory because the number of media houses is quite large considering that Bosnia and Herzegovina is rather small transitional country. On the other hand, the same media market (in BiH) is in chaotic state if we take into consideration all problems that public broadcasting services are facing recently, including the problems with political impact imposed on media houses and economical influences that have become daily routine as well. A journalist is, in such system, mostly placed in a position where he / she should balance between solid and socially acceptable way existence that may eventually provide him with decent journalists’ salary and earnings on one hand, and on the other hand, journalists’ ethical and professional fundamental principles that he / she should (not) follow. This text is exactly about this sensitive issue where we shall test and examine the position of journalists in terms of applicable financial, professional and ethical standards.

Let us begin with the public service broadcasters whose legal operations are regulated and defined by existing laws. Public broadcasting services in BiH have particular obligations and duties towards general public in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As far as BHT is concerned, we can witness, on daily basis, everyday problems of this particular media house that has been operating as public broadcasting service provider in entire BiH territory (not just the Entity operator), which is why BHT’s significance is crucial for regional democracy and constitutional system in BiH. No one is certain whether BHT shall manage to sustain with their work and for how long will they be able to operate and work properly, which puts all journalists working with this media house in an awkward position as they are indeed worried and concerned about their jobs and don’t know if they would even go to work next day (as a result of this uncertainty regarding the future of BHT). Entity public services are not facing these kind of difficulties and serious problems so far, although there have been some indicators outlining possible and eventual forthcoming and potential problems, regarding the two entity public broadcasting service media houses. For instance, the public had the opportunity to once again see the letter being released publically by the unsatisfied staff / employees of RTRS (Republic of Srpska public media house) ([letter of dissatisfied workers](#)) where they outlined serious issues and problems including the following: unpaid tax and contributions, obstruction in acquiring legal rights for having medical insurance and also, information about too many employees being engaged with this particular entity media house.

However, despite these, to some extent, contextual factors, we should still point out and highlight the professional status of journalists in BiH. We witnessed that FTV and RTRS often violate journalists’ rules of being and operating as non – biased professionals, which is best reflected through reports broadcasted in central news programs. Journalists often appeared as mere microphone holders acting as puppets for ruling governing coalition officials, without balanced and professional analysis that should serve public interests in the first place. Naturally, having in mind complete chain of media production, a journalist is indeed in a position of primary information and data collection, but complete tone and color of the story is still selected and chosen by editors / general managers. Comparative analysis of News 2 (primary time) broadcasted at RTRS and BN TV station, during the pre – election period in 2014 ([A media picture: Studies on responsible journalism](#)) outlined that these two most influential television houses at the territory of Republic of Srpska bespeak significant biasing and imbalance as well. We should bear in mind that journalists are imposed with multiple pressures in the production chain under such circumstances, especially as far as the entity public broadcasting services are concerned.

Does this mean that journalists are not responsible at all? We firmly declare that journalists do bear certain responsibility for such situation, because so far, there was not a single attempt by any journalist recorded, in order to make some affirmative and positive changes and eventually improve the overall situation. Frankly speaking, we should not generalize and make stereotypes and prejudices about this issue, because public services do broadcast programs that are tailored in accordance with all rules based on journalism standards, but the problems are mostly evident during central news and daily news programs. Still, most viewers spent the time in front their TV’s between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. therefore, a complete and correctly defined and conceived program may eventually be

Free Media Help Line

Actual cases:

Sunčica Šehić, TV SA - Mobbing - While making a report on Days of Health in Sarajevo Canton, one of the round table subjects included the issue of mobbing in public health system. The report was, at the suggestion and recommendation of a female producer mounted to 1 (one) minute length and at the end this report was not even broadcasted in TV SA Central News Program. According to request by Mrs. Šehić, Free Media Help Line received her official complaint and if necessary, FMHL shall provide her with legal aid, including all available mechanism required.

Adnan Džonlić, web portal Zenicablog - Political pressures – During Zenica City Council meeting session, Fuad Kasumović, Zenica City Mayor had publically released several lies and incorrect allegations (including allusions) that encourage violence against Adnan Džonlić, a local journalist, including the encouraging of violence against other persons as well. Consequently, the members of BH Journalists Board of Directors issued a press release and Free Media Help Line sent several enquiries to official institutions. The entire case is submitted to Zenica Cantonal Prosecutor’s Office for further proceedings.

Edin Borovina, sport journalist at Fokus.ba, local web site - Other cases - Football Association of BiH deprived official accreditation passes to Fokus.ba journalists, required for live reporting from football match between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Belgium. Football Association officials explained this action by stating that there was impossible to issue any more official accreditation passes for journalists. Members of BH Journalists Board of Directors issued a press release expressing their open and public protest against the depriving of official accreditation passes for journalists of Fokus.ba, by Football Association Officials.

Printed media in BiH are not in envious position, because printed issues as media have weaker influence which often results in low salaries / wages, numerous “casual” staff etc. Journalism professionalism has been regulated by the Code of printed and online media house, but without significant consequences, taking into consideration the self – regulatory body with no possibility to implement highlighted sanctions imposed.

Još uvijek ne postoji zakonska regulativa koja bi na neki način definisala šta je potrebno da se javno glasilo na internetu proglasi „novinarskim portalom“.
Blogovi, dnevници, portali sa lažnim vijestima, portali sa očiglednim huškačkim namjerama – sve su to oblici medijskog izražavanja koji se mogu upotrebiti i zloupotrebiti.



ruined by a single inappropriate central news program broadcasted in the above mentioned period. Additionally, researches conducted and aimed to discover (un) hidden mechanisms of influences / impacts against journalists have mainly been unsuccessful, since it was expected that no person would actually admit that he / she had been subject to auto censorship or that he / she was not doing his / her work properly. We often hear excuses such as “we may not do our work in best possible way, but there are others whose work is worse than ours”, but still this is not a solid, persuasive and valid argument. Should journalists express their determination and will to fight for better position and status on public broadcasting services, this change must be mutual and consensual based, rather than being sporadic and spontaneous.

As far as commercial media houses are concerned, their position is to some extent different, considering that media houses (if not referring to public media service broadcasters) are actually companies with profit making as one of their main and crucial motif and aim (goal). Also, we should take into consideration the fact that during the period of last few years in BiH, two crucial media “players” appeared on BiH scene: regional offices of two media conglomerates (N1 and Al Jazeera Balkans). Journalists’ position in these two global media houses is significantly better comparing to local media houses and Al Jazeera Balkans journalists / staff confirmed this fact ([testified by journalists at AJB](#)). Regular wages (salaries), freedom in their own work, editing policies delivered in written, and more security for journalists are just some of many characteristics that are considered more important for journalists that the fact they work for media houses with foreign capital being injected in BiH. Many would say that journalists working for foreign media houses are somehow under foreign influence. However, is there a journalist that isn’t under someone’s influence? If we accept the attitude that most media houses are under certain influence and pressure, in that case journalists working for N1 and AJB are surely in better position.

Printed media in BiH are not in envious position, because printed issues as media have weaker influence which often results in low salaries / wages, numerous “casual” staff etc. Journalism professionalism has been regulated by the Code of printed and online media house, but without significant consequences, taking into consideration the self – regulatory body with no possibility to implement highlighted sanctions imposed. Printed media sustained the epithet which is widely considered as most appropriate in order to get some “real” practice in journalism, and therefore is still considered as best initial point for the beginning of career in journalism, especially for young and junior journalists.

Still, there are still weekly magazines covering social issues and themes in more details and their existence is considered as firm proof of journalistic professionalism.

At the end, we shall mention some characteristic positions of journalists in chaotic online universe. Legal regulation that would somehow regulate and define necessary requirements in order to declare public advertiser as “news internet web site”, still does not exist in our country. Blogs, dairies, web sites with false and incorrect news, web sites with obvious and clear agitating intentions – these are all shapes and forms of media expressions that can be used but can also be misused. If we talk about “proper and real” media web sites (“Klix, Nezavisne, Buka, Avaz etc”) – web sites with transparent information regarding their ownership shares or structure – we could conclude that the position of journalists is somewhat more favorable. Regardless to the level of influence and impact they impose, but at the same regardless to the fact that they could become target for those requiring such impact on public, the web site (internet) journalism still preserved certain level of professionalism on web sites. This should on the other hand not be confused with web sites whose goal and purpose is unscrupulous propaganda or spreading and sharing the entertainment and false news. These kinds of “media – based” do not deserve to be even mentioned in the context of journalists’ position, because journalists do not work there, but someone else does their work instead (and they surely do not work for general public interest, but for the benefit of their entrepreneurs).

We could say that the position of journalists in BiH is not satisfactory looking from many different perspectives. Firstly, as we have already seen, journalists have been under constant political pressure, economical pressures or some other pressures based on personal interests. Secondly, journalists have quite broad – wide definition of their own occupation, as anyone can do journalists’ work these days and with the development of the internet, any individual is potentially “advertiser” in the original and genuine meaning of this word. Thirdly, media market is experiencing its own problems influencing the situation in media market: non – transparency of necessary information regarding ownership shares and ownership structure, poor and weak economic media capacity, political impact and influence imposed against editors / entrepreneurs, media saturation and similar occurrences. Still, we should not be pessimistic, because professional journalists should indeed work very hard and remain stubborn in working for public interest which proves that many things depend on their own work as well.

The position of free journalist is very similar to the position of any other precarious worker. Boris Postnikov, during particular occasion gave excellent description of freelancing: "Precarious work: inbox overloaded, missed calls, few hours until deadline. Precarious work: consciousness attack, breached deadlines, sudden adrenalin flow. Precarious work: honorary money payment being late, waiting for honorary money payment to be paid, uncertainty in front of an ATM machines, applications, forms, competitions, planners filled in, multitasking, e-banking, contract data, credit / loan incompatibility. Unsafe uncertainty..."

Freelance journalists in their fight for the truth and/or fight their own lives and survival

Not working by strict operating time rules means not having free time either; free time to go on holidays at any time at the same time means life with no annual and regular holiday either. Also, just as not being employed on full time basis, it at the same time means accepting any work provided, since one should always think about the "peanut season" that inevitably appears every single year.

By: Eldin Hadžović

In country with extremely high unemployment rate, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina¹, we often hear, see and encounter free lancers, precarious workers that actually seek any work and feel discomfort when being asked : "What do you do (in your life)", and when they have to reply by saying: "Nothing, I am unemployed".

It seems that the term Freelancer sounds significantly easier to say, it sounds better for one's self – confidence and it also sound tougher, doesn't it? Free Lancer. "No person is bossing me around and no one can tell me when I should turn up for work. No working time either. I have breaks anytime I feel like, work when and where I want and do what I like to do. I enjoy absolute freedom, with no censorship and auto censorship".

However, freedom is not free of charge; in fact it is rather very expensive.

In wonderful words spoken by Barbara Matejčić, a female journalist from Split (Croatia), freelancing is actually only better name for unemployment. Still, her name (Barbara Metjčić) is a synonym for successful female journalist and author who she has been much respected reputable regional journalists and author, but also, in several occasions, she has been awarded female journalists outside Croatia.

Today, in its freelance manner she claims: "This June marks the eighth anniversary of my freelance work and mainly I feel well and hard working. However, sometimes I cannot avoid the feeling when my shaking heart feels just like the cat that is pushed against the wall by angry dogs, with no tree around where she could climb up and safe herself. Those dogs metaphorically mark all my fears and real threats of my bleak future period. What will happen if I get ill? Pleurisy will do it; no need for more serious illness here. When will I stop working and how shall my elderly days look like? Will there be any media house left that I would be willing to work for?"

She reminded us of Zygmunt Bauman, a Polish sociologist who spoke of two basic and unnecessary conditions required for decent living conditions: safety and freedom. According to Bauman, their relationship represented the game with zero as result which means that one could get more safety for the price of giving away part of his own freedom, and more liberty can be obtained at the price of an increased insecurity.

"In fact, we need both", claimed Matejčić. "Considering that I live in rather unsafe environment, we could ask ourselves if this can really display a decent life.

And this is of course not my concern only, but also represents concerns of an in-

¹ In February this year, the unemployment rate decreased to 40.55%, comparing to 40.58% which was January result. During the period of last ten years, from 2007 to 2017, average unemployment rate in BiH was around 42,94% with the highest rate in February 2013 when it amounted 46,10% and lowest rate in May 2008 when it was 39,03%.



The problem with freelancers is the fact that their social, material or health insurance uncertainty places them in vulnerable position where they often become subjects to all forms and shapes of flammable and burning populism, from both right and left hand sides.

creasing precarious class. Ever since the beginning I realized that the price of my present freedom is evitable almost certain poverty period during my future and forthcoming retirement days.”

The position of free journalist is very similar to the position of any other precarious worker. Boris Postnikov, during particular occasion gave excellent description of freelancing:”Precarious work: inbox overloaded, missed calls, few hours until deadline. Precarious work: consciousness attack, breached deadlines, sudden adrenalin flow. Precarious work: honorary money payment being late, waiting for honorary money payment to be paid, uncertainty in front of an ATM machines, applications, forms, competitions, planners filled in, multitasking, e-banking, contract data, credit / loan incompatibility. Unsafe uncertainty...”

There are theoreticians that see precarious workers as new class within standard labor class. This class is now facing great challenges that lay before them, although prior to the Berlin wall fall, while free and liberate world was still hoping for brighter future, the freelancing was treated as emancipating movement which resulted in an increasing number of freelancers, not only in the field of journalism, during the 80's (eighties) in last century.

The problem with freelancers is the fact that their social, material or health insurance uncertainty places them in vulnerable position where they often become subjects to all forms and shapes of flammable and burning populism, from both right and left hand sides.

Their fear is based on true and real facts, their frustration is part of their everyday life and their struggle and fight for survival is constant. Not having strict working and operating hours could also mean not having free time either; free time to go on holidays at any time at the same time means life with no annual holiday. Also, just as not being employed on full time basis, it at the same time means accepting any work provided, since one should always think about the “peanut season” that inevitably appears every single year.

Where is the “battle for freedom” in all of this? This battle obviously lives in pompous announcements and auto marketing advertisements and video clips resembling American media which is something that many TV houses use and misuse especially in former Yugoslavia countries. Freelancers have no time from bombastic word exchanging and discussions, particularly about the subjects and issues regarding the processes that are constituent parts and without which the journalism, as occupation, represents nothing but mere propaganda. They must fight for their own dignity and professional integrity. This must be done immediately and now.

—



Consequences of media market anomalies in BiH and their impact on pluralism of opinions, public and approach by citizens to objective, fair and balanced information

By: Doc.dr. Dragana Trninić

Considering the number of printed, electronic and new media sources, we cannot say that media market in Bosnia and Herzegovina is prose and keel, that there is no media pluralism, but also media pluralism that does not follow pluralism in media. Namely, there are 43 television stations in Bosnia and Herzegovina broadcasting their program through ground radio diffusion transmission and three are 38 TV stations broadcasting their program through other network sources²; 138 radio stations³, nine daily newspapers and 106 magazines⁴, eight news agencies⁵ and tens of internet web sites and other publications. However, media quantity (number of media houses) has never resulted in different approaches and sources, during the process of providing public with informa-

2 Users of television licenses for broadcasting via ground radio diffusion, <http://www.medijskeinicijative.ba/?jezik=bos&x=52> (31 Oct 2016) and Users of television licenses for broadcasting via other networks, <http://www.medijskeinicijative.ba/?jezik=bos&x=52> (posted / published on 16 Jan 2017).

3 Users of television licenses for broadcasting via ground radio diffusion, <http://www.medijskeinicijative.ba/?jezik=bos&x=52> (posted / published on 13 Feb 2017).

4 Printed media houses in BiH http://vzs.ba/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=5&Itemid=8.

5 News agencies in BiH http://vzs.ba/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=203:novinske-agencije-u-bih&catid=5:tampani-mediji-u-bih&Itemid=8.

there is a great number of news information that does not represent public interest. There are also sensational, false news which create imaginary information and awareness. The audience keeps receiving great number of information, but there is very limited number of those that can in fact be seriously considered as utterly useful and beneficiary for end users (consumers). Internet has provided the public with faster and easier access to media contents, but it has not made impact to its usage and credibility (authenticity) for most viewers; on the contrary, in their aspiration to obtain more views of contents posted on the net, the administrators and web editors post the news whose titles attract the audience and viewers, although the content would remain completely useless.

tion. As final outcome, there is significant number of very similar, repeated information in different media houses with completely identical contents.

In this information misbalance, it is difficult to come across and find out objective, true, complete, verifiable and confirmed information. Original and authentic media contents seem to be missing as far as this issue is concerned. On the other hand, there is a great number of news information that does not represent public interest. There are also sensational, false news which create imaginary information and awareness. The audience keeps receiving great number of information, but there is very limited number of those that can in fact be seriously considered as utterly useful and beneficiary for end users (consumers). Internet has provided the public with faster and easier access to media contents, but it has not made impact to its usage and credibility (authenticity) for most viewers; on the contrary, in their aspiration to obtain more views of contents posted on the net, the administrators and web editors post the news whose titles attract the audience and viewers, although the content would remain completely useless. Media bear most responsibility although viewers should, to some extent, feel responsible as well.

Media entrepreneurs and their financiers have been completely orientated and aimed towards profit making in the first place; in fact, they would determine and define editing policies and rules of media house they finance. Journalists' space here is limited for their autonomy while reporting, although in performing their tasks and duties assigned, they would still remain professional with dignity and would take responsibility towards the public and audience. Additionally, their work would be based on ethical values and honesty however possible that may be at certain points.

This implies that they are more focused on personal profit - making based interest, rather than being focused on general public interest and this outlines the lack of journalists' responsibility, because of emerging deadlines that must be met, futility and complete search for something new, regardless how unimportant that may appear, personal interest based on profit making still remains a priority comparing to general public interest.

Still, the good news is that media users are not left helpless and on their own. Any individual may have better sight of wider media context and learn to interpret, value, analyze and even create media contents through educational programs regarding on media contents (programs), including media functioning and operating, ownership, legal delegations, types of reporting, criteria regarding news values, professionalism included etc. One could actually recognize and identify poor, false and useless content in media and protect oneself from this on one hand, and use media in the way it best suits him / her on the other hand; he / she could communicate through media, take active part in public discourse and improve their social position (status). All of this is considered as media literacy issue, which, considering the existing media scene in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not only important, but also considered required and rather necessary. Taking into consideration that media educational programs are not constituent parts of educational system Bosnia and Herzegovina, that there are no media educational programs for adults either, that, (with an exception of certain non - governmental projects on the state level), there are no activities taken regarding the media literacy implementation programs for public, media houses are consequently left with self - education only. If one has minimum knowledge of information technology and internet sources using, he or she could have access to great number of textual, audio and video contents regarding media literacy, thus creating at least minimum media education steps for him / her.

Therefore, there is media pluralism, but there is no pluralism in media in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Media houses are completely financially dependent which directly impacts the quality of their work. Profit making has become key imperative which reduces the space for the truth, responsibility and ethical values. Media literacy is most logical and most useful solution for audience; it is only a matter of to what level would the state and governing authority officials show interest in its implementation, since governing officials, through the use of media sources may manipulate with the public, unless the public is not aware about media literacy and its importance.

—



Genuine democracy aimed commitment of political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina tested through public broadcasting system

By: Dr.sc. Najil Kurtić

The approach and course, manifested by ruling political parties, including the opposition and (almost with no exception) their conduct towards the public broadcasters in Bosnia and Herzegovina, questions their true and genuine commitment to democratic constitution of BiH, including the policies through different social spheres, guided by the idea of public interests and people living in Bosnia and Herzegovina, regardless to any existing and given sub-identity.

Existential crisis that has been causing the turbulence through the period of last few years in public broadcasting system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has emerged as a consequence of two incomplete and unfinished processes: constitutional and legal political reconstruction in Bosnia and Herzegovina from federal unit (Republic in former Yugoslavia) into a sovereign and independent state of Bosnia and Herzegovina and transformation of public broadcasting service from state (and one – party based system) into a civil and democratic guided system (liberal and plural social system). Both of these processes declined somewhere half their way; although they did manage to move forward from their starting positions, so the return to their initial point was impossible and, to some extent, out of the question, and, on the other hand, it seemed very distant from being finished and completed, so as a result, its final outcome has still been considered very uncertain. Least common denominator here has been a congestion and delay in fundamental transition from single – party based society (in fact, bureaucracy - aimed society) into a liberal and plural society, with the focus on every single citizen (including her and his needs, requirements, priorities, values) or in simple terms, with the focus on true models of reality.

Potential of civil position

Only the position of a *citizen* has the potential to deconstruct particular political visions, based on hypertrophied aspects of ethnic and national identities, with the political will and required and necessary internal *consensus of all consensuses* are being captured. These consensuses have been covering the issue of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the final goal of the completion of geopolitical transitional process of former federal unit (Republic) of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Only civilian (citizens') identity is neither discriminatory nor excluding; it is not founded on the "or/or" shape basis. It is vastly complex, complicated and comprehensive, so it sub-summarizes all other identities based on a "and and" form and shaped under one condition, so they would negate and deny the crucial value and fundament of civil and citizens identify: in shortest possible shape and form displayed in Universal Declaration on Human rights and Freedom. In this sense, final continuation of trapped and suspended transitional processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the transition of public broadcasting system as its contained part and most crucial priority, and its transformation into a public system of citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, may be ensured and provided by political and social forces truly orientated in order to achieve and attain civil and citizens' identity. Therefore, neither left – wing nor right – wing political parties, including hybrid so called political center – winged parties (biased more to the right, less to the left or little bit to the left and even less to the right) are not, by definition capable of launching processes from the dead point. *This is not about the lack of will*, as local journalists often claim, including our legendary analysts; it is rather about existential but also about cognitive captivity into *nationalistic particular political orientations*, values and models of social acquisition (ideology).

In specific historically determined geopolitical circumstances, it is hard to expect, in the near future, that the strength and power of political forces would weaken represented by national so called populist parties, founded and established on the attraction of the idea on national geopolitical homogenization gathered around mother – countries in the region, since, it would, in the expectance of geopolitical advantages for executing their historical goals, benefit from inactive and loose, incomplete and excluded from Euro integration process, state society of Bosnia and Herzegovina; that is, frozen process of state constituting. The utopia

Considering that media systems, whose core in European democratic societies are indeed public broadcasters, are products of deliberate political reactions of key political parties un public communication sector, it is clear that the public broadcasting system, especially BHRT had been intentionally brought into a unbearable economic and social situation and position which remains to the present.



Model finansiranja je, skoro u svim zemljama u preispitivanju i nije još uvijek pronađeno rješenje koje bi javne emitere zaštitilo od nužnosti žrtvovanja kvaliteta komercijalnim imperativima.

on unitary Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the state society, primarily based on the three ethnic groups and on the other hand, its citizens as secondary foundation only, but fundamentally from same positions of hypertrophy particular ethnic identities, equally obstructs and prevents the continuation of pre-political ethically defined transitional processes into democratic society, that is, state Dayton based provisory into the republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as common sense and logical outcome of the domination of citizen and civil identity. The continuation of this process is directly related with the end of the process of democratic transition of public broadcasting system.

Scaring subversion of the public broadcasting idea

The idea of public broadcasting system is basically subversive in comparison with political relations and structures that, almost continually for almost quarter of a century, dominate on political scene in Bosnia and Herzegovina. By definition, the function of public broadcasting service operators is to provide stable support to political parties orientated and biased towards the affirmation and accomplishment of democratic relations in the country that prefer common interests and, at the same time, limit the loudness and visibility of political parties that are driven by non – democratic values and practices.

Considering that media systems, whose core in European democratic societies are indeed public broadcasters, are products of deliberate political reactions of key political parties un public communication sector, it is clear that the public broadcasting system, especially BHRT had been *intentionally* brought into a unbearable economic and social situation and position which remains to the present.

Limitation of democratic potentials of public broadcasting services is actually represented and displayed through the power of non – democratic political forces functioning to prevail the acquired positions and undisturbed accomplishments, partial interests and mainly, aimed to remain in power. This is particularly attributive to all non – democratic political structures (political parties, movements and leaders), regardless to ideological pre – sign which serves as their coat and behind which they often hide. In this context, and in this specific time, there is no difference between SNSD, SDS, HDZ and SDA. Not even a symbolic value and attraction of BHRT (as brand) has not been sufficient enough to (nominally speaking) pro – Bosnian political, but also to nationally – profiled political parties, to react and advocate strongly and more convincingly, in order to ensure and provide financing sources and create institutional conditions for the accomplishment of the original and genuine mission of public broadcasters. The way that governing political parties, including the opposition, (and almost without an exception), treat the issue and crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina, questions their genuine and honest dedication to democratic constitution in BiH, that is, the politics in different sectors in the society guided by the idea of common public interests for all people living in Bosnia and Herzegovina regardless to their sub identity. God knows how many times it has been proved and confirmed that media systems have fundamentally been officially considered a phenomenon. They have been created within a process of system fostering, that is, system of suppressing of particular political discourses and mental models of reality interpretation. According to the above mentioned, the engagement regarding the developing of structural conditions for functioning and development of public broadcasters advances further from the designing system of financing that must ensured that 1) public broadcasters, as far as program is guided by the concept of liberal – pluralistic democracy having in mind public interest and citizens as central ideas and targets, which represents the dominant European political orientation; 2) production level should be in the production scope and technological European standard defined by the television broadcasted in the neighboring countries, that is, the television without borders (the completion of passing into digital broadcasting system and adoption of limitations related to hate speech issues, protection of children and commercial advertising) and 3) to ensure the protection of *clientelism* based influences of any kind.

Two, out of these three reasons, under Bosnian and Herzegovinian conditions, are considered questionable as far as the nature of political structure (derived from limited comprehension of democracy reduced to ethnic rights) is concerned and these include liberal and pluralistic concepts of highlighting and outlining the citizens' and civil identity and citizens' position in everyday social and political processes, which would, for ruling national parties, basically mean the abdica-



The way the broadcasters react to changes in media environment lead to their commercializing and, to some extent, lead to their self – destruction.

Political structure of Europe is changing, non – liberal options are getting stronger and their understanding of media freedoms and liberties has become quite different as it does not necessary include public broadcasters.

tion of “unexhausted” sources of their power and denouncing of clientelism influences, the practice of indirect or direct interference into genuine media function of *gate keeping* (the estimate of news values) and *framing* (interpretation of news framework). These are two key reasons used by main political figures when, more or less, they covertly reject or hesitate to launch the continuation of the process of transition of media sub system Bosnia and Herzegovina, that is, congruous and consistent transition of public broadcasting system. Naturally, there is a pragmatic – symbolic value of BHRT dissolution process, that is, interrogative scenario of the completion of constitutional and legal transition process of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Pale and unconvincing engagement by the international community

The relationship and conduct by the politicians towards public broadcasters in BiH is perhaps best seen through the fact that the concept of public broadcasting system *is in fact* going through the crisis and is deeply buried in European framework by the penetration of commercial broadcasting models, including all associated benefits that follow accordingly.

All four pillars of traditional concepts of public broadcasting in European political space have been shaking for a long period of time.

Political support for the survival of public broadcasting which requires public funds financing is weakening within national scope. Inadequate political culture by citizens, as a result of penetration of commercialized contents of Trans – national commercial broadcasters, has reflected through the lack of support by the citizens, regarding the concept of public broadcasting. Effects by the so called “poor journalism” and popular media culture resulted with *the audience of mild and poor taste* which prefers commercialized formats with the declining comprehension for any kind of participation in public broadcasting financing.

Financing model has, in all countries, been a subject to interrogation and the solution is yet to be found in order to protect the public broadcasters from the necessity of required quality, sacrificed to commercial imperatives.

Viewership survey confirmed that the audience more often preferred to watch commercial programs and that *the audience loyalty was decreasing* as they were not ready to pay tax fees for public broadcasting system operators. The following questions in Bosnia and Herzegovina consequently arose: 1) what was the point of having public broadcasting services in most recent media environment with numerous TV channels and programs providing everyone with their needs? 2) Should investing in media commercial offers be justified if the offer contained a variety of elements and if it were considered miscellaneous and what were the possible circumstances of these kind of media houses, including the model of their financing, in relation with the market position of commercial media houses, also including the quality of contents provided and broadcasted by those operators and 3) can the concept of public broadcasters be considered as efficient model that would ensure the freedom of speech, bearing in mind that the problem of limiting media freedoms has been apparent and evident in both, post – communist society and in traditional democratic society?

The way the broadcasters react to changes in media environment lead to their commercializing and, to some extent, lead to their self – destruction.

Political structure of Europe is changing, non – liberal options are getting stronger and their understanding of media freedoms and liberties has become quite different as it does not necessary include public broadcasters.

Taking into consideration the recent global tendencies, we may understand poor and unconvincing engagement of the international community in BiH, regarding the solution of the existing problem of public broadcasting system in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We could hardly identify an imperative – based attitude by the representatives of the international community in relation to the necessity and required need for the sustainability of public broadcasting system. As far as the questions on pre – accession stage are concerned, regarding the European Union demands, the section relating to Informing the society, only two or three of these questions actually concern mass media whereas all other question are focused on the questioning of the conditions for unobstructed spreading of European telecommunication market. Besides, we do have relevant experience regarding how European public reacted when Greek national public broadcasting service



was shut down. All in all, we should not rely on European imposed pressure, in order to sustain public broadcasting service in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Certain collateral benefit may emerge as the side effect of the pressure imposed upon us in order to resume with constitutional, legal and democratic transition in BiH, that would, at the end, result with the alterations of the concept of political governing structure guided and directed towards the domination of civil concept of democracy. Until this occurs, a little encouragement would be useful to us so that the actual existential crisis at the BHRT could be resolved on long – term basis (five - years period) by budget means financing specifically (aimed and directed) to the fund for national broadcasters by the dispersing of VAT collected amount or through the system of shares in fuel or tobacco taxation (excise duties). The least problem of all problems would be to find appropriate institutional protection format; a format protecting from clientelism – based influence by the state representatives on the program production and program broadcasting as well.

It would be even difficult to image that this kind of influence may even increase in comparison with the existing one; the one which has been used by political party officials and the people they appoint in many board of directors as well as unethical appointing of their own people in editorial offices through various positions and functions.

In the meantime, subject of media policies must reply to the following set of questions:

- How and to what extent should public broadcasters be financed?
- How to ensure that they serve the public (citizens) instead of serving particular political structures?
- How to protect the public from aggressive volume of commercial media corporations and penetration of neo – liberal values of economy and politically based Darwinism?
- How to create and provide a universal service (publically accepted) to all social specters if it is ethnically, culturally, politically and socially diverse or even antagonized?
- How to ensure objective, non – biased and even sufficient amount of criticism and skepticism (characteristics and elements expected by well – informed classes of our society upon which the influence, impact and reputation are based) and not to question economy and political support by the ruling official authorities, including the government?
- How to revive public support without abjuring commercial elements and effects to the extent that would not question general mission of serving the common interests, including classical values and functions of professional journalism operations?
- How to coexist with commercial networks respecting the actual and real state of power in media sector instead of following their conceptual positions?
- How to reply to consequences of psycho – demographic splitting and fragmenting the public audience which has been serving for decades for the effectiveness of marketing campaign and aimed linking and bounding of particular civil categories for specific program channels and formats provided by commercial broadcasters? Exposing and consequently providing the public with unique and universal messages and values has become rather difficult at present as they (public) can hardly gather around the same media house (space) of public discourse.

Impressum

BH Journalists Association

Kralja Tvrtka 5/5, Sarajevo, BiH

Tel: +387 33 223 818;

Fax: + 387 33 255 600

E-mail: bhnovinari@bhnovinari.ba;

Web: www.bhnovinari.ba

Bulletin Board of Editors

Faruk Kajtaz

Siniša Vukelić

Borislav Vukojević

Bedrana Kaletović

Amer Tikveša

Editor

Arman Fazlić