

BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD: **CRAFTING THE IDEAL JOURNALISM CURRICULA FOR SOUTH EAST EUROPE**



Communication and
Information Sector



SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND
PUBLIC RELATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Journalism in South East Europe (SEE) region is currently at such a state of crisis as has never before been witnessed. Corporate interests and those of media owners are usually placed above the public interest. The existing ties between political elites in power and media owners are influencing editorial policies and the freedom of journalists to critically observe developments in society. Quite often, political yes-men are appointed to major editorial positions and those demonstrating individuality and independence in their work are being marginalized¹

As the Special Report of the OSCE on the Media Situation in South East Europe region, a great number of media outlets in South East Europe are owned by dominant businesses or political interests in the region.² The report also states that the chief issue characterizing the media situation in SEE region is corruption. The media in the region are prevented from reporting freely due to various political and business interests interfering with their work.³

The media freedom ratings in the SEE region have been steadily declining over

the last few years. Out of all countries in the region, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been ranked lowest (111th) by Reporters without Borders in its World Press Freedom Index rating list⁴. On the same list, Montenegro has been ranked at the 106th spot, whereas Kosovo (administered by the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1244) (82nd), Albania (76th), Serbia (66th) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (65th) have received better ratings, although there is a drop in the ratings of most of these countries in this respect when compared to previous years.

According to the Freedom of the Press Report published by Freedom House, politicians all across Europe have expressed contempt for the media over the last year, attempting to publically portray critically oriented journalists as enemies of the state. The report⁵ claims that political leaders across the Western Balkans have been placing independent media under pressure, asserting their control over national broadcasting companies (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), labeling investigative journalism-oriented media as foreign-funded trouble instigators (Serbia), and threatening journalists (Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)).

1 Media Sustainability Index, IREX, 2017, available at <https://www.irex.org/sites/default/files/pdf/media-sustainability-index-europe-eurasia-2017-full.pdf>
 2 South East Europe Media Conference Special Report, OSCE, 2014, available at <http://www.osce.org/fom/111405?download=true>
 3 Ibid

4 2017 World Press Freedom Index, Reporters without Borders, available at <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>
 5 Press Freedom Report, Freedom House, 2017, available at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/freedom-press-2017>

Such a state of affairs in the media sphere is seriously impacting journalism education and its capacities. However, despite of all that, journalism is still ranking highly among young people as an attractive proposal for pursuing a future career. Hence, journalism education must teach journalists how to maintain high professional standards when finding themselves under excruciating (political and business) pressure. Never before has there been such a need for programs which are supposed to be based on knowledge, skills, ethics and responsibility in the area of journalism. According to the World Journalism Education Congress, *journalism education provides the foundation as theory, research, and training for the effective and responsible practice of journalism.*⁶ The role of formal journalism education in advancing democratic process and media rights and freedoms has to date never been thoroughly analyzed in the SEE region. Therefore, the need for answering this question has been the key motive for conducting this research.

Research methodology

The chief goal of the research is to create a **set of indicators** to evaluate study curricula in journalism across the SEE region. These indicators are to assist journalism faculties in the region in ascertaining whether their curricula in journalism correspond to the overall state of the media in their countries and whether they enable students to acquire adequate journalism skills to help them maintain high professional and ethic standards throughout their future careers as professionals working in journalism. The research was conducted in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), from February 2016 to February

2017. The key sources used to create the indicators for evaluating journalism curricula in the region were the Tartu Declaration⁷, the UNESCO Model Curricula for Journalism Education⁸ and the BBC Digital Journalism Skills Academy⁹.

The end result that this research strives toward is to improve journalism education in the region by encouraging higher education institutions to adhere to the recommendations outlined in the document drafted and assess and modify their journalism curricula by following the indicators listed in this research.

The initial plans for this research envisaged analyzing the journalism curricula and the state of media in Turkey as well. Nonetheless, the tense political situation in that country in the period when the research was being conducted prevented us in our attempts to analyze journalism studies in Turkey and conduct any in-depth interviews. The mass arrests of journalists, editors and members of the academic community at that time led to us having extensive difficulties in trying to conduct interviews with such individuals relevant to the matter at hand. Owing to this, the integrity and reliability of the data acquired by applying the research methods planned were both brought into question. Hence, we decided to exclude Turkey from this research.

The questions which are the focus of this research are disaggregated per separate units relevant to both formal and informal education in each of the countries investigated. In order to meet the objectives it has set for itself, the research has attempted to provide answers to the following questions:

7 <http://www.ejta.eu/tartu-declaration>

8 <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/model-curricula-for-journalism-education/>

9 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/skills/digital-journalism>

6 Journalism Education and Professional Practices, <http://www.upm.ro/ldmd/LDMD-01/Jou/Jou%2001%2006.pdf>

What is the state of formal and informal journalism education and what is the level of quality of journalism education?

- a. At what level of education are journalism studies delivered?
- b. How much are journalism faculties cooperating with media and media organizations in the country?
- c. Does the teaching staff possess enough knowledge and experience in the field?
- d. Are students sufficiently prepared to work in newsrooms after graduation?
- e. How much does informal education contribute to improving the quality of the professional journalism and the state of media?

Does formal journalism education have an impact on the democratic process in the specific state and, if so, in what way?

- f. What type of role do journalism faculties play in improving the democratic process and the state of the media?
- g. Do journalism curricula correspond to the on-going democratic process and state of the media? Are students exploring the influence that political and business interests exert over editorial policies of the media over the course of their studies? Are they being taught about the corrosive effects of clientelism over media rights and freedoms?
- h. How much do journalism informal education and training courses contribute to improving the democratic process and the state of media?

In what way and by which measures can journalism education in the SEE region be improved?

This research relies to a great extent on analyses made over reports, publications, documents, as well as on secondary data produced by prior research on journalism education in South East Europe and the state of the media across the countries in the region. Below are the methods applied to attain the objectives of the research.

A secondary analysis of data was used to explore the work of organizations working in the area of media and journalism and media, as well as existing research on this topic conducted in both the EU and SEE region (research conducted by the Media Observatory of South East Europe, as well as by UNESCO and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation), while also investigating what recommendations has this research produced to improve journalism education in each country. Reports of IREX, Freedom House, Reporters without Borders and other organizations were also used in the research as background for investigating journalism education and the degree of media freedom in each of the countries analyzed. In addition, the activities of civil society organizations working in the area of media and journalism in the SEE region were also analyzed.

The research **analyzed a total of 26 separate journalism curricula** in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244). The analysis was focused on issues such as what is the level at which journalism studies are delivered (i.e. whether it is at undergraduate or postgraduate level), which faculty departments offer such studies, what the ratio is between theory and practice-based courses, what qualifications do the journalism teaching staff possess, what types of journalism courses are being offered, as well as what technical and scientific research capacities, as well as facilities do journalism faculties dispose of.

Furthermore, **a total of 60 qualitative (semi-structured) interviews were conducted** to collect primary data over the course of the research. Ten interviews were conducted in each country with interlocutors belonging to each of the following three categories: members of the academic community, jour-

nalists and editors, and representatives of civil society organizations working in the area of media and journalism. The interviews provided an insight into their views, perceptions and beliefs as regards the current condition of journalism education countries, the state of professional journalism and media rights and freedoms, as well as the ways in which they feel journalism education can be improved in their countries. Each separate interview was recorded and a written transcript made of it subsequently. All interviewees were asked if they allowed having their identities revealed or would rather remain anonymous. Some of them asked for full anonymity and, as a result, their names have been omitted in this publication.

In its first part (Approaches to Journalism Education), the research provides an outlook on current approaches to informal journalism education worldwide, as well as on the various academic approaches to the way in which formal journalism education is delivered. This section also analysis international standards on journalism education and the different organizations and institutions working in the field of journalism education (e.g. EJTA, the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, and others). The analysis further reflects on prior research conducted on this topic such as the UNESCO Model Curricula for Journalism Education and the competences and skills that the document lists as being paramount for future journalists.

In one of its further sections, the research explores journalism education in the SEE region (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Serbia, and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)). The section analyses the work and activities of civil society media organizations and the types of informal journalism education they offer. Moreover, it investigates the manner in which formal journalism

education is implemented while analyzing the journalism curricula on offer in universities in the region. The analysis also provides a consideration of the outcomes of the interviews conducted with the members of the academic community, journalists and editors, and representatives of civil society organizations working in the field of media. The results from these interviews provided a wider spectrum of different outlooks on the general state of journalism education (both formal and informal), as well as media freedoms (or the lack thereof) and rights in the SEE region.

The research further offers key observations as to the manner in which journalism education is delivered in South East Europe, listing vital elements that the journalism study curricula in SEE region lack. Furthermore, the research touches on the challenges the universities, civil society, and media organizations face in their efforts to remedy the deficiencies of the journalism education system, as well as on the ways in which the cooperation between all these different stakeholders can be advanced, all with a view to improving the overall state of the media in their countries.

Being one of its chief goals, at its very end, the research outlines the Indicators for Evaluating Journalism Curricula in the SEE region. These indicators are to help journalism faculties and universities across the region to evaluate their curricula and determine whether they correspond to the current state of the media and professional journalism in their countries. Using these indicators will provide them with an opportunity to assess whether, over the course of their studies, students are acquiring the necessary skills to enable them to work in editorial desks after graduation and, even more poignant, whether they are learning the skills required for them to successfully maneuver the troubles-filled journalism sphere in the SEE region.

The indicators have been disaggregated to several different categories:

1. Indicator on the content of journalism curricula;
2. Indicator on the role that journalism faculties play in society;
3. Indicator on methods of funding and conducting scientific research;
4. Indicator on student practice in media and media organizations during journalism studies;
5. Indicator on literature and teaching material used in studies; and
6. Indicator on the teaching staff and administrative conditions in implementing journalism studies.

Each indicator contains a subset of several different questions. The answers to these questions demonstrate how much journalism curricula reflect

the state of professional journalism in each specific country and whether journalism education actually contributes to the improvement of the democratic process in society.

The research “**Back to the Drawing Board: Crafting the Ideal Journalism Education Curricula for South East Europe**” was conducted by the School of Journalism and Public Relations from Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as part of the EU-UNESCO supported project **Building Trust in Media in South East Europe and Turkey**. The goal of the project is to restore public trust in the media by adhering to professional journalist standards and reinforcing self-regulation mechanisms in journalism, as well as to strengthen media freedom of expression in South East Europe and Turkey.



JOURNALISM AND JOURNALISM EDUCATION

It is a historical fact that journalism education began in the United States in 1912, at the Columbia School of Journalism, established at the suggestion of the renowned journalist and medium owner Joseph Pulitzer, even though his business (the yellow press) managed perfectly well without a trained journalistic staff. He would characterize journalism as one of the most complex occupations, requiring a broad and in-depth knowledge, as well as a strong personality, and therefore a necessary formal education (Adam, 2001). Since then, every country in the world has offered journalism education, institu-

tional or alternative, involving different education traditions and resources, in different cultural and political environment. In the meantime, education programs would undergo numerous, major or minor changes, aimed at improving education and training of future journalists.

In the last ten years, mostly due to globalisation, economic crisis, and new media technology, journalism and journalism education have faced yet another challenge. It concerns not only technology and the informatization of modern journalism, but also the fundamental changes that information soci-

ety brings about in the broad social and cultural surroundings. “New media offer new ways of presenting information, enabling the emergence of new actors, blending old forms of public communication into new ones... creating interactivity, mobility, a culture of free and easily accessible information, civic engagement, all of which transform the traditionally-perceived role of the media...” (Jakubowicz, 2009). Therefore, if the role of the journalist 100 years ago was to find information, shape it into a story, and report it to the mass audience through the mass media, “... today information is no longer scarce, breaking news is no longer the province of professional journalism, mass media are declining in influence and news is easily professionalized” (Mensing 2010:511). What journalism needs in order to address these challenges and respond to the deep structural changes in the surroundings, is a “new direction” that would provide competences and skills with key aspects, such as critical thinking, innovation, and entrepreneurial skills.

1.1.

The different models of journalism education

In practice, there are various approaches to journalism education, as well as different and opposing stands on the methods of acquiring journalism training. Broadly speaking, there are five different types of journalism education in the world: (1) a model of training at schools and institutes generally located at universities (Finland, Spain, USA, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, South Korea, Egypt, Kenya, Argentina), (2) a mixed model of stand-alone and university-level train-

ing (France, Germany, India, Indonesia, China, Brazil, Turkey, South Africa), (3) a model of journalism education at stand-alone schools (The Netherlands, Denmark, Italy), (4) a model of on-the-job training by the media industry, for example through apprenticeship (Austria, Japan, Great Britain, Australia), and (5) all of the models above, and particularly commercial programs at universities, as well as training by media companies, publishers, trade unions, and other private or government institutions (Eastern Europe, Cuba, North and Central Africa, the Middle East) (Deuze, 2006: 22).

On the other hand, different academic traditions, as well as different social and political context of the states around the world, determine the conceptual approach to journalism education, rendering it therefore inevitably different (Zelizer, 2006). The result is a division of journalism education into a Central European, Western European, and an American model of journalism education, followed or copied by other regions or states worldwide. Differences, as well as dominant approaches, can be observed in all of the three models.

The Central European model focuses primarily on the theoretical, general knowledge of disciplines, such as philosophy, sociology, political sociology, political theories, political systems, international relations, media law, ethics, and theories of culture, while directing very little attention to the practical training that can be obtained through practice. Studies are usually carried out at the faculties of political sciences, philosophy, and law. However, there has been an increase in the amount of practical work and training due to students’ interest and inclusion in the alternative forms of education.

Contrary to that, **the Western European model is chiefly concerned with communication and media knowledge (methodology, media sociology, media systems, international communication, media law, media ethics), as well as with disciplines that have journalism as their focus (journalism genres, the press, radio, television, agency and online journalism).** The program is primarily structured around practical instruction and training. Nevertheless, the last decade has witnessed a gradual “approximation” of the programs characteristic of these two models. The tendency towards a single model of journalism education is mainly related to the Bologna system of education.

The American model of journalism education comprises studies which are similar to the Western European model, as well as studies focused on practical instruction. Students learn about journalism genres and skills, use of new media technology, audio and video recording and montage, filing live reports, running live TV shows, production. Carrying out journalistic contributions every day, they learn about the local self-government, public institutions, the judiciary, the economy, healthcare, education, the police force, ecology, whereas under the instruction of experienced professors and trainers, they acquire professional rules and journalism ethics (Veljanovski, 2013:355).

Worldwide, journalism education is further divided into models of traditional i.e. conservative, general, and completely specialized journalism education. The first model (conservative) maintains that journalism education should be based on editing practice. Of course, professional journalists are required to have university education, but not necessarily one in journalism, so other professions are ac-

ceptable. Hence, beside the usual editing practice (acquiring of journalism techniques), universities offer two-semester courses specializing in subjects from the communication field (communication, theory and practice of public opinion research, media legislation, journalism ethics). The model includes even the counsel of various professionals, but due to today’s explosion of new media and communication centers on the media market, it has fallen behind in the shaping of an independent and professional journalist because of the time required to acquire professional and editing experience.

The second model is carried out by forming separate journalism groups/departments at the faculties of humanities (philosophy, sociology, law, political sciences). Students acquire a specific professional profile (a major in law, sociology, political sciences), with a minor in journalism. Two-thirds of the courses are dedicated to original disciplines of the faculty where the major is being done (courses in political sciences, sociology), while a third of the courses are reserved for the professional journalistic field, half of them theoretic, and half practical. This curriculum structure shortens the time period between graduation and complete inclusion of journalists in the media, but often fails to prepare them for a successful inclusion in the complex allocation of editing activities.

The third model encompasses graduate schools of journalism/faculties of journalism, modeled after the *Lille Graduate School of Journalism* (L’Ecole superieure de journalisme de Lille), with one third of the curriculum being dedicated to general education courses, another third to courses from the study field of communication, and the last third to practical journalistic work (practical work during the studies

and training in editorial offices), while students can also specialize in different fields (such as the press, radio, TV, agency and online journalism). Graduates receiving a BA in journalism (a professional degree acquired upon graduation) are trained to redraft agency news, report live, and conduct analytical research on any given theme/issue. The model fits within the theoretical and practical conceptualization of the content of the mass communication as a mirror of reality, and today, despite the criticism expressed from different viewpoints (teleological, ethical, axiological), it is considered the most acceptable among those aware of the importance of journalists' higher education (Miletič, 2005: 373-375).

However, the debate about what is crucial to the acquisition of journalism knowledge has not been resolved yet. Opinions vary between university education and practical training. Some maintain that journalism is an academic discipline deserving of a theoretical research and higher education, while others believe it is a professional skill and not a field of great theoretical importance. Journalists advocating practice argue that journalistic skills are the easiest to acquire through practical work and outside of the classroom, and that universities cannot properly prepare future journalists for the reality of the journalistic profession. The counter claim to this theory insists that journalists need theoretical knowledge to perform the work because it is theory that encourages practice. Not only is the university responsible for the transfer of journalistic knowledge/skills, but for the shaping of the journalist's identity as well. Therefore "journalism should be taught as an academic discipline, not simply a vocational training: in order to accomplish their role, beside the necessary skills, journalists

must possess intellectual confidence which comes from the knowledge acquired through university education" (De Burgh, 2003: 110).

Journalism is still torn between practice (media industry) on one side, and education and research (university) on the other. Hence, a very important question arises about whether journalism education has developed its own disciplinary conceptual tool which is accepted by both universities and the media industry. The debate is concerned with how to structure education offered by journalism curricula, whether it should focus on the acquisition of the practical, or instead on the more general and humanistic knowledge, and whether universities should primarily teach practical journalistic skills, or initiate critical thinking leading to changes. The solution is not overemphasizing theory nor relying on practice at any cost. Flooding the curriculum with theoretical courses does not help prepare future journalists to carry out journalistic work, whereas the insistence on acquiring skills but lacking fundamental understanding of the social processes, as well as professional and ethical standards, overlooks important social values.

The same is also put forward by David Mould, a supporter of Bill Kirtz's views, a former journalist, editor, publisher, and a journalism professor today who states that the best journalists are the educated journalists, those who apply research skills, academic rigor, and high ethical standards to their profession. "They need the type of knowledge that is at the core of the liberal-arts tradition, to be found in courses that explore history, culture, politics and science... A narrowly-educated journalist – one with only technical skills or with only theoretical knowledge –

cannot define “news” intelligently or determine its significance... cannot distinguish a fad from a trend without the historical and cultural context...” (Mould, 2009:48).

Apart from the debate about the most suitable method for journalism training, the focus of academic disputes is also on the issue of the acquired knowledge, i.e. the competences for conducting high-quality journalism work. At the beginning of the 20th century, stress was placed on the personal traits of the journalist, such as talent and personality, but today this practice has been abandoned in the academia. The emphasis, instead, is on the content, professional, and communication competences of future journalists, which means that journalists should be “knowledgeable about the area being covered, able to express themselves clearly, be thoroughly acquainted with the various journalism genres, and to be aware of the functions of journalism and journalistic autonomy, as well as reflexivity” (Poler Kovačič, Erjavec, Milosavljević, Vobič, 2013:400). In addition, according to Stuart Price, a representative of the British viewpoint on journalism education, the goal should be to create a study program based on an integrated model of theory and practical work, an interaction between form and content, and knowledge of theoretical disciplines, which if practiced properly, would transform students into socially useful communicators, able to respond to every professional challenge. (Price 2011) This has given rise to the standpoint that disputes about theory and practice interfering with each other should be abandoned, and instead be replaced with “critical self-reflective identification of the role and content of journalism education programs” (Deuze 2001:15).

1.2.

International Standards in Journalism Education

On the scientific and professional scene, among researchers, professors, and trainers, there is a continuing discussion about the role, content, and purpose of journalism education. (Comrie, 2003; Deuze, 2006; Dickson in Brandon, 2000; Macdonald, 2006; Foote, 2008; Mensing, 2010). Furthermore, several international (journalistic, media) organizations have come up with a “list of competences”, summing up what “good” journalism education stands for, with skills and abilities applying to all journalists, regardless of the local conditions under which they operate.

EJTA - *The European Journalism Training Association* – founded shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, unites sixty schooling institutes from 25 European countries and is characterized by diversity (different types of institutions, different types of media systems, different cultures). Recognizing the need for building quality standards in journalism education, at the annual assembly held in Tartu, Estonia, in 2006, the Association’s members would adopt the so-called Tartu Declaration, a document setting out what journalism education should encompass. However, due to swift changes in society, it would undergo a revision in 2013, keeping pace with media development, and in that sense, attempting to “unite” instruction and practical work. The Declaration consists of 10 key journalistic qualifications, a combination of knowledge, skills, and professional attitude while carrying out professional assignments. Each qualification consists of five indicators of

what the student is expected to know/understand and/or be able to demonstrate after the completion of studies.

Qualifications relate to (1) *The competence to reflect on journalism's role in society* (commitment to democratic society, know the legal and ethical framework of journalism, developing a grounded personal view of journalism, understanding the values that underlie professional choices, linking the local with the national and the global), (2) *The competence to find relevant issues and angles* (know current events and their context, know the characteristics of different media, determine the relevance of a subject for different audiences, stimulate broad participation in debate, discover newsworthy issues on the basis of in-depth research), (3) *The competence to organize journalistic work* (make a realistic work plan, work under time pressure, adjust to unforeseen situations, organize contributions from the public, work within budget limits), (4) *The competence to gather information swiftly* (have a wide general knowledge, have a more specialized knowledge in a field, find multiple perspectives on an issue, evaluate sources, interact with the public), (5) *The competence to select the essential information* (distinguish between main and side issues, select information on the basis of reliability, select information on the basis of relevance, select information in accordance with the media platform, interpret the selected information), (6) *The competence to present information competently* (outstanding linguistic competence, good visual competence, use different types of story-telling techniques, present content in effective combinations of words, sounds and visual, make journalistic use of technology), (7) *The competence to account for journalistic work* (clear idea of the required quality of journalistic products,

evaluate own work, willing to take criticism constructively, to take responsibility for the choices made during the process, to take responsibility for the impact of the product), (8) *The competence to cooperate in a team* (good social skills, be reliable, present ideas convincingly, find solutions, show insight into roles and relations within a team), (9) *The competence to act as an entrepreneurial journalism* (show initiative, understand the economic conditions underlying the profession, recognize market opportunities, develop new product/formats, know the practical aspects of being a freelancer), (10) *The competence to contribute to the renewal of the profession* (reflect on the future of journalism, define a complex practical/professional problem, adopt scholarly methods of data collection, adopt trustworthy methods of analyzing and processing data, provide workable solutions for complex practical issues.¹⁰

The idea is also endorsed by the *Poynter Institute for Media Studies*, highlighting what is crucial to starting a journalism carrier in the digital era in its research conducted by educators and professionals. The competences and skills that are expected of future journalists are hence divided into four key categories: (1) Knowledge, attitudes and personal features, (2) News gathering skills, (3) News production skills, (4) Technical and multimedia production skills. Each category consists of several indicators. The first category includes curiosity, accuracy, handles stress, deadlines and criticism well, broad general knowledge, good social skills, be a team player, journalistic ethics, knowledge of other cultures, knowledge of government, understand the media landscape, be familiar with copyright and journalism laws, knowledge of the business of media, good news judg-

10 SEE region: <http://www.jour.auth.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/The-Tartu-Declaration-EFTA.pdf>

ment, knowledge of current events, select information based on reliability, be a team leader, ability to embrace change and innovation. The second one comprises analyze and synthesize large amounts of data, network, make contact and develop sources, search online information on an advanced level, master interview techniques, search for news and check sources without the use of the Internet, look at news with a historical perspective, interpret statistical data and graphics. The third one covers storytelling, write in a fluent style, write using correct grammar, master various forms of journalistic writing, understand audience expectations and needs, speaking skills, and the fourth one involves ability to work with HTML or other computer languages, shoot and edit video, shoot and edit photographs, record and edit audio, ability to tell stories with design and visuals.¹¹

At the same time, in 2007, as a result of previous thorough research, UNESCO would prepare a Model Curricula for Journalism Education of future journalists, which is today the education basis for journalists in more than 60 countries and 70 journalism education institutions worldwide. Experts elaborating on the model apply a three-dimensional approach to journalism education: "...the development of journalism practice (the first axis) is informed and enriched by the study of journalism in society (the second axis) and by the acquisition of methods and content marking modern knowledge through courses in other disciplines (the third axis)" (UNESCO, 2007:11).

Moreover, during each of the three academic years, the model attributes a specific level of difficulty to each of the categories - professional practice,

journalism studies, and arts and sciences. In percentage terms, 47% of the courses are designated for professional practice, 10% cover journalism studies, and 43% are reserved for the arts and sciences. Consequently, if the first year of studies centers on the arts and sciences, they are given almost the exact emphasis during the second year, while the third year of studies focuses on professional practice. This way a "balance" between theory on one hand, and practice on the other, is achieved. More precisely, the first-year curriculum includes courses covering the foundations of journalism (writing – narrative, descriptive and explanatory methods; logic, evidence and research – incorporating critical thinking; national and international institutions, general knowledge – basic knowledge of national and international history and geography, introduction to contemporary social and other issues), reporting and writing (basic news), media law and arts/science courses. The second-year curriculum consists of courses that involve *reporting and writing* (in-depth journalism), *broadcasting reporting and writing* (radio and television), *journalism ethics*, *multimedia/online journalism and digital development*, *media and society*, *arts/science courses*. The third year-curriculum focuses on *reporting and writing* (specialized journalism), *newspaper workshop* (reporting, editing, design and production, with basic instruction in photojournalism) or *broadcast workshop* (radio or TV editing, production, and performance), *arts/science courses*. The model predicts the necessity of the internship (between the second and third year of studies), at least a four-week placement within a professional newsroom (UNESCO, 2007:11.13).

The model is based on several key competences: (1) An ability to think critically, incorporating skill in com-

¹¹ SEE region: http://www.newsu.org/course_files/StateOfJournalismEducation2013.pdf

prehension, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of unfamiliar material, and a basic understanding of evidence and research methods, (2) An ability to write clearly and coherently using narrative, descriptive, and analytical methods, (3) A knowledge of national and international political, economic, cultural, religious, and social institutions, (4) A knowledge of current affairs and issues, and a general knowledge of history and geography (UNESCO, 2007:8). Similar competences are outlined by Adam Stuart who states that the curriculum should be “designed” “...to promote the capacity of making wise judgements on the significance of events and ideas as they occur and drawing appropriate attention to them, encourage an understanding of the methods of evidence-gathering and fact assessment, perfect the linguistic and narrative capacities of individuals and encourage the best methods of visual representation and examine carefully methods of criticism and the structure, application, and assessment of ideas” (Adam, 2001:325).

Six years later, in 2013, UNESCO would amend the curriculum by adding a few specialized courses to reflect the diversity of the journalism practice, and to particularly underline the importance of journalism education in improving the individual and institutional journalistic practices. They can be implemented in the undergraduate and postgraduate modules, as part of the compulsory or optional group of courses. The curriculum includes the following courses: (1) *Media sustainability* (understanding of the environments in which media organizations operate, legislation, licensing the media, digital media, the role of media management, media professionalism, ethical standards), (2) *Data journalism* (introducing quantitative and qualitative methods

in journalistic practice, statistics and methodology), (3) *Intercultural journalism* (competences to produce stories in a culturally diverse way, cultural identity, multiculturalism, globalization), (4) *Community radio journalism* (principles, concepts, models, practices and future of community radio), (5) Global journalism (impact of globalization on media, global news challenges in local markets, media ethics, media concentration and ownership, the internet, social media), (6) *Science journalism*, incorporating bioethics (health reporting, the environment and climate change), (7) *Gender and journalism* (the importance of gender analysis in journalistic practice), (8) *Humanitarian journalism* (the aspects related to human rights in reporting, mostly in conflict situations), (9) *Reporting human trafficking* (international labor migration and labor exploitation in terms of human trafficking), (10) *Safety and journalism* (topics on digital safety, freedom of expression or threats against journalists). (UNESCO, 2013)

The same postulates are still true, their dynamics and amount varying in practice. To quote Robert Picard, director of research at the *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism* in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the *University of Oxford*, **“Journalism education can only survive and succeed if it becomes much more aggressive in seeking change. It has to become far more innovative than it ever has been. It is not a matter of thinking outside of box, because the box no longer exists. What is required is deciding what will replace the box or how to get along without one”** (Picard, 2015:10).

1.3.

Non-formal
journalism education

“University or higher journalism education has become the prevailing trend in journalism education worldwide” (Deuze, 2006: 22), whereas alternative education is considered an “efficient” improvement or advancement, though not its replacement. Internationally, a great deal of organizations, associations, federations, and centers organize trainings and courses for journalists, journalism professionals, and educators. Their primary focus is on the promotion of media freedom, development of independent media, media pluralism, journalistic professionalism and ethical standards, advancement of freedom of expression and human rights, defense of freedom of speech, protection of journalists, representation of media rights, promotion of fair media laws and reforms, building of journalistic capacities...

Among the oldest is the *International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)*, founded in 1926 in Paris, but present in its current form since 1952. IFJ is the largest organization of journalists in the world, representing nearly 600,000 members from 140 countries. As “the global voice of journalists”, the federation promotes human rights, democracy and pluralism, media freedom, supports journalists and their trade unions in the fight for their rights, and stands against any form of discrimination. It collaborates and has a consultative status in the United Nations, UNESCO, European Council, and European Union. Its activities include a large degree of research around the world, as well as various trainings for journalists and media professionals. IFJ has three key

strategic areas of focus - safety (risks that journalists face while performing their duties), security (concentration of media ownership by key players as a threat to editorial independence and professional journalistic standards), and building the capacities of journalists’ trade unions, especially helping journalists confront new challenges in a swiftly-changing profession.¹²

Its counterpart, the regional center in Brussels, *The European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)*, which is primarily concerned with the media sector in Europe, also defends the right to freedom of speech and information, the development of quality and independent journalism, and journalists’ right to join trade unions. Apart from conducting a large amount of research (about rights and jobs in journalism, media freedom in Europe, building strong journalist unions in Eastern Europe, building trust in media in South East Europe, advancing gender equality in media industries, confronting austerity in journalism...), it also provides various journalism trainings. In the last several years, their focus has been on challenges presented by new technologies, particularly cyber security, digitalization of the workplace, etc.

A notable representative is *The European Journalism Training Association (EJTA)*, integrating more than 60 journalism centers, schools, and universities, in 25 European countries. In partnership with the European Commission and UNESCO, and through mutual collaboration, it works on improving journalism education in Europe. As the name suggests, its primary activity is the training of journalism students. To that end, it conducts projects and research to trace the right professional approach to journalism education and training,

¹² SEE region also: http://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Website_pics/IFJ_Brochure.pdf

the most worth mentioning of which are those involving new technologies in European journalism training (1995), curriculum development in European journalism (1997), the Tartu declaration (2006). Also, EJTA is focused on the Bologna Declaration and its implementation in journalism training. One of their recent trainings (2016) was focused on “Making Media and innovative Journalism”, in order to explore new tools and ways to report news in the “Digital Era”, with lectures and workshops on best practices, formulas and technologies useful to improve both the quality and economic sustainability in producing editorial projects and journalistic reporting.

Journalism training is also provided by two world-renowned organizations: *Reporters Without Borders* and *Article 19*. Both aim at protecting and promoting the freedom of speech and information on a global level. *Reporters Without Borders* has a consultant status at the United Nations. They provide information about the media freedom situation worldwide in many languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Russian and others), and each December they publish an annual overview of events related to freedom of information and the safety of journalists. The World Press Freedom Index, compiled by the organization, evaluates the level of freedom available to the media in 180 countries. It also organizes trainings for journalists and media professionals with a primary focus on their physical and digital safety.

Article 19, named after article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, deals with activities related to freedom of expression, media regulation, freedom of information, censorship, violence & press freedom, governance & democracy, discrimination,

defamation, conflict & security. Collaborating with 90 partners around the world, the organization performs monitoring, research, analysis, draws up recommendations and legal standards aimed at strengthening the media role and protecting pluralism, as well as media independence and diversity. With the support of UNESCO or the European Commission, it has carried out numerous journalism trainings, focusing primarily on the physical and digital safety of journalists (developing strategies on safety and protection), international and national legal frameworks regulating freedom of speech and media ethics, journalistic professionalism, freedom of speech and equality (media responsibility in promoting diversity, pluralism, and intercultural understanding).

International Media Support (IMS) and *Media Diversity Institute* are also worthy of recognition in the area of journalism education. IMS is mostly concerned with supporting and conducting trainings for journalists and educators on key issues related to new media and technology, professionalizing journalism, media business development, safety in journalism (protect themselves and report professionally under pressure), media law reform (with journalists, civil activists, media lawyers, public officials, judges). Their activities are focused on integrating the best practices in journalism and training materials in national media education curricula. MDI, as a promoter of an “inclusive and accurate media”, aims to promote understanding between different groups and cultures and prevent the media from advertently or inadvertently encouraging bias, intolerance, and hatred, which may lead to social tensions, disputes, and violent conflicts. For this reason, the organization has carried out various forms of educa-

tion practices involving a broad range of actors: journalists, editors, media owners, civic/non-governmental organizations, journalism professors and students. For example, journalists can attend separate workshops offering theoretical and practical training on diversity and minority and human rights issues, students and professors can attend courses on “reporting on diversity” at institutions of higher education or faculties, whereas civic organizations may undertake trainings on using the media for restoring a negative and inaccurate portrayal of their organizations. A large amount of literature and guidebooks has been published as a result of these activities.

Promotion and advancement of free, professional, and plural media, as well as freedom of speech act as the focus of *The Global Forum for Media Development* (GFMD), an international membership network of media assistance group. Its analysis, research, and training are aimed not only at professional journalists, the media and media organizations, but also at citizen journalists, investigative journalistic networks, civil society organizations, and the academic sector. With the intention of establishing common ethical standards for media activity and growth, GFMD improves methods, best practices, and new technologies for media operation through shared learning, trainings, and evaluation. The primary emphasis therefore is placed on issues related to hate speech in journalism and the struggle against it, censorship and self-censorship, self-regulation, propaganda, journalism ethics, public information, conflicts of interest, and media corruption.

The *Center for International Media Assistance* (CIMA) conducts similar activities, aimed at supporting and en-

hancing the growth of independent media worldwide. It has carried out a vast amount of projects and research on journalist security in the digital world, public service broadcasting’s place in the information ecology, soft censorship globally, the politics of media development, media in the age of cyber surveillance, the boom in business journalism, governmental advertising and soft censorship, supporting internet freedom, media literacy, hate speech, blasphemy and the role of news media, media owners and journalism ethics, information in the internet age, global investigative journalism. Most of these issues are addressed in the training carried out by the center, particularly those related to the digital and social media revolution, their effect on the change of style and content of the media worldwide, professional journalism standards, legal obstacles and legal protection aimed at ensuring a free and independent media sector, access to information, and use of media regulation to restrict media freedom.

These are not the only organizations concerned with the media, journalists, and media industry. However, what their educational activities have in common, is the shared focus on two types of problems: the “old” ones, dealing with well-known issues such as freedom of speech, media independence, journalistic professionalism, censorship and self-censorship, as well as the “new” ones, arising from the challenges and changes brought about by the new information technologies in the media world. Moreover, it seems that this is the way to achieving the “necessary” balance between the theoretical (academic) and practical journalism education.

1.4.

Journalism education in
South East Europe

European countries have a different history in organizing journalism education. Until recently, theory recognized two “typical” models of journalism education, the western on one hand, and the eastern on the other, with a few specifics varying from one country to another. For example, the German model places a heavy focus on theoretical courses and content from the field of communication, history, and law, whereas a relatively few lessons are reserved for practical training in journalism skills. Then, there is the French model adhering to three principles in terms of the content: general media education, practical professional education, and thematic specialization (Plavšak, 2002). Furthermore, the Scandinavian countries have implemented the so-called “integrated model”, its curriculum consisting of a large number of academic courses, as well as practical courses in the media. (Hovden, Nygren, Zilliacus-Tikkanen, 2016:15). Nevertheless, the general tendency is towards broader general education combined with journalism courses, as opposed to the American curriculum which favors specialized journalistic education.

Research conducted in the last decade (for example, Grieves, 2011) suggests a gradual approximation between “national” curricula or the surpassing of boundaries of national journalistic cultures, although it is too early to talk of a single European journalistic culture. Moreover, the inclination towards applying a “unique” approach to journalism education is closely related to the Bologna education system. Not only do European universities adopt the Euro-

pean credit and grading system, they also adapt their journalism curricula to the international standards, particularly those of UNESCO and EJTA models (Mould, 2009).

A shared feature of journalism education between the countries in South East Europe - Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) is a system based on the eastern model, also known as the soviet model. Education of journalists was always carried out at the universities of social sciences (faculties of political sciences, law, and philosophy), comprising primarily theoretical content, and very little practical journalistic work. Due to their conceptual shortcomings, most of them were often known as “party-political journalism schools”, a definition which can be traced back to the communist era. Social and political changes in the 90s would initiate a “transformation” in journalism and journalism education, although burdened by many factors which determined their profile, level, and possibilities.

The lack of journalism education of any kind (for example, Montenegro and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)) or “outdated” university education, unsuitable to respond to the new needs, dire economic situation, shortage of qualified professionals, as well as the permanent and “uncontrolled” growth of the media and “demand” of journalists on the labor market, would encourage people to take up journalism without having the necessary qualifications or experience (including even high school graduates). Likewise, the undeveloped non-governmental sector, due to its absence from university curricula and its dependence on foreign donations as a “counterpoise” to the development of a self-

sustainable education system, makes the long-term planning process of development of journalism education exceptionally hard, full of dilemmas and reexamination, success and failure.

Today, the transformation of university education in these countries has reached different stages, depending on the specific background of each country. This applies to the quantity of journalism studies on offer, as well as to the profile of the curricula. Hence, in some parts of the region, journalism is taught at only one faculty/university (Montenegro), in others, at two or three faculties of journalism (Albania, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)), whereas some countries offer a larger number of journalism degrees (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia). This is not a question of whether this number reflects the needs of the current society or perhaps the “wild” attempts to bridge the discrepancy between the increase in the number of media on one hand, and the poor number of educated journalists on the other, regardless of whether this media number is realistic or sustainable. It might even be the result of a country’s good/bad education policy in its attempt to open the “market” for private education institutions. In practice, journalism studies face poor financial status, a lack of necessary equipment, inadequate balance between theoretical and practical courses (to the detriment of practical courses), as well as insufficient collaboration between professional journalists and media companies.

Journalism education takes place at government and private faculties/universities, as well as separate journalism schools. However, journalism studies never comprise an independent institutional unit, but are instead organized into individual departments (1) within

faculties of related scientific fields, or (2) within faculties with a combined name (embodying two or three departments). The first type of journalism studies are integrated into state faculties of law or political sciences, faculties of philosophy, or faculties of social sciences, implemented as journalism studies or journalism and communication studies (normally in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and Albania). The second type of journalism studies are carried out at private faculties of journalism and communication and faculties of media and communication as journalism studies, or media and journalism studies (in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), Serbia). There are also faculties providing specialized studies that cover specific journalistic fields, as it is the case with the private Faculty of Sports in Serbia, which offers sports journalism degrees, or the state Faculty of History and Philology in Albania, which integrates three study programs - political journalism, economic journalism, and social and cultural journalism.

Journalism studies have shown inconsistency (disagreement) in the use of terminology. This is characteristic not only of South East European countries, but of other universities worldwide. Furthermore, an increasing number of university studies in the European Union, and other countries in the developed world, have been using the term communication sciences (Communications, Kommunikationswissenschaft, Scienza della Comunicazione), and since recently, journalism and mass media study programs have adopted the term media studies. Hence, university programs offer journalism studies, media studies, and communication studies, as well as their combinations. The analysis of their study programs shows that they are generally similar, regard-

less of how they are named. Additionally, an increasing number of authors believe that it is impossible to separate these study fields, suggesting the need for “blending of journalism and mass media curricula at the faculties and allowing the transfer between programs in order to respond to the challenges of the 21st century that we still haven’t predicted” (Royal, Schmitz Weis, 2013).

Studies at almost all higher education institutions are modeled after the Bologna education system, following the principle of a three-year bachelor’s degree and a two-year master’s degree (3+2), or a four-year bachelor’s degree and a one-year master’s degree (4+1). Its implementation would bring about a change in the existing curricula and a need to balance the so-called general courses (covering social and political sciences) with the theoretical courses from the media field, including the practical courses. This, however, does not mean a balance has been achieved between theory and practice in journalism studies. Additionally, most of the faculties offer master programs in journalism - specializations, which are most often carried out at state universities. Structurally, based on the syllabuses and curricula, this is the so-called “mixed model” of journalism studies, a balanced distribution of theoretical and practical courses.

a) Non-academic journalism education in South East Europe

Foreign donors have invested considerable resources in the region of South East Europe, while the end of the 90s has seen a rapid growth in institutions and non-governmental organizations and their undertaking of numerous projects concerned with the education of journalists and media professionals. In the last couple of years, a few organizations among the many can be singled out for their

years-long experience and consistent strategy involving journalism education. They are practice-oriented, flexible, in close collaboration with media companies and intensive regional collaboration with each other, exchanging experience all the while.

Among the most committed is the *South East European Network for Professionalization of Media* (SEENPM), incorporating 18 media centers and institutions from 12 countries in Central and South East Europe. SEENPM promotes excellence in journalism through policy initiatives, research and training. It aims to protect and defend freedom of the press, support the development of independent media and journalism professional standards, and strengthen relations among journalists. Since its foundation in 2000, SEENPM has conducted a vast range of media research and analysis, as well as a number of educational projects intended for journalists and other media workers. It has also organized a fair amount of journalism training: online video training platform for journalists, violence as reports of attacks on women journalists, journalist who want to create their own multimedia platform, investigative journalism, protection of journalism and the safety of journalists, economic and political reporting, ethical guidelines for online media, professionalization of media, media freedom and advocacy, media against hate, media literacy, improving reporting on children in local media, journalism in the digital age, reporting taboos, reporting on vulnerable groups and other.

Equally important is the *Balkan Investigative Reporting Network* (BIRN), a network of non-governmental organizations promoting freedom of speech, human rights, and democratic values. Operating in the Balkans, it has branches set up in Albania, Serbia, Bosnia

and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), as well as journalistic networks in Montenegro, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, and Moldavia. BIRN has implemented a broad range of programs and projects directed at journalism training, publishing, monitoring, and collaboration with civic organizations. It targets a wide range of stakeholders, from the general public, journalists and media in general, to decision makers, both national and international, and civil society organizations. The training it manages is specifically targeted at online reporting, quality reporting, sustainable journalism, assessing self-censorship, cooperation between media and civil society, especially investigative reporting and online investigative journalism.

The group also includes the *Konrad Adenauer-Stiftung* (KAS) foundation, or the *Media Program South East Europe*, established in 2005 as part of KAS, which has been focused on supporting free and independent media, and the strengthening of their role in the process of democratization and transformation. As a result, *Media Program* has carried out trainings, research, and dialogues involving journalists and editors from every medium, owners/managers of leading media companies, non-governmental organizations, media lawyers, communication experts, and politicians. Its key areas of activity are: journalistic qualification (program teaches teaching skills and knowledge in the areas of democracy, ethical standards in media), media freedom and plurality of views (the influence of political and economic interests, the increasing concentration of media, the lack of transparency of media) and a modern, professional and responsible political communication. A great amount of research has been conducted as part of the pro-

gram, particularly noteworthy being the one on university education in the region of South East Europe, as well as the training on investigative reporting, reporting in time of crisis, media ethics and practical training in universities.

Similar activities have also been undertaken by the *Center for Media, Data and Society* (CMDS), a research center for the study of media, communication, and information policy and its impact on society and practice. CMDS was founded in 2004 as part of CEU's School of Public Policy. Its research interests and priorities include European media and journalism, media and transition, community media and development, freedom of expression and human rights, privacy and data protection, civil society and technology. Furthermore, the *Center for Media, Data and Society* conducts training for journalists concerned with the fundamentals of media and freedom of expression, law in the digital age, strengthening journalism in Europe (tools and networking), creative approaches to living cultural archives (promotion of European collaboration between community media organizations), etc.

South East European Media Observatory (SEEMO) as a regional partnership of civil society organizations, is focusing on enhancing media freedom and pluralism, democratic development of media systems and influencing media reform in the countries in the region of South East Europe. *Media Observatory* particularly addresses the problems with integrity of media and journalism, especially on harmful patterns of media ownership and media finances. In recent years it has concentrated on media integrity in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia by providing regional instruments for

media research and monitoring, support to investigative journalism and civil society engagement.

The *Media Program South East Europe* on the other hand, founded by leading chief editors, media directors, and journalism professors in Southeast and Central Europe, organizes forums, conferences, projects, and trainings that address a broad range of topics: media business today, investigative journalism, old and new media, right to access information, data journalism, privacy and the protection of sources, self-regulation and standards of quality reporting. The organization integrates a network of editors and journalists from prominent newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations, news agencies and new media, advocates independent journalism and focuses on providing help for journalists placed under a physical or death threat.

Each of these organizations has played a significant role in journalism education in the region of South East Europe. However, the presence of many similar organizations and donors in the same environment, their activities often (unnecessarily) overlapping, genuinely burdens the process of long-term planning and development of a strategy for journalism education. On the other hand, their almost complete reliance on foreign donors, does not assure endurance and self-sustainability. Contrary to that, a mutual regional collaboration seems a realistic “alternative” for sustainability of the alternative system of journalism education. An even better alternative would be the strategic decision by some of them (an already known practice) to rebrand to a standard form of postgraduate practical and specialized journalism education and become complementary to university education.

b) Reasons behind low media professionalism in the region

It is clear by now that journalism cannot be carried out solely by people interested in attracting the public’s attention (that inevitably goes along with journalism), regardless of how well-educated and literate they are, or whether they are getting around in the trade. The emergence of standards and rules, professional and ethical, related strictly to journalism, reflects the need for a systematic interdisciplinary education of journalists, which in the modern world is usually carried out at universities, although many forms of alternative education are also available and mostly conducted by the media, and media and journalism associations and organizations. However, everybody agrees on the fact that journalistic trade has reached one of its most serious turning points in history. The parallel technological, economic, and social changes are certainly a reason enough for conducting an in-depth reexamination of the journalistic profession, particularly journalistic professionalism.

Generally speaking, the level of professionalism in the countries of South East Europe is very low. The reason seems to be rooted in poor journalism education, especially insufficient instruction on journalism ethics, or the lack of practical training in the educational process. All countries in the region face the troubling issue of being a professional journalist in societies deeply divided by politics or in media divided into two conflicting groups, “pro-governmental” and “opposing”. It extends to topics such as how journalism should cope with political and economic pressure, regardless of whether it is exerted by the state (the government), economy, or media owners, or how journalists should keep their professional working standards despite

not having an acceptable social status, having low salaries, no union protection, being pressured by chief editors, often attacked, threatened, imprisoned, even liquidated. In such conditions, the lack of necessary journalism qualifications becomes a minor, even an irrelevant issue.

There are many media (especially electronic) present on the media market, a concept normally defined as media pluralism and diversity. These processes appeared in the 90s and were on the rise everywhere. However, it is media pluralism and professionalism that have marked a decline in every way. This is further confirmed by data from the World Press Freedom Index, published by *Reporters Without Borders* for 2016. The majority of states in the region have a very low ranking, especially The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro (ranked 118 and 106 respectively), followed by Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) and Albania (ranked 90 and 82 respectively) and finally, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia (ranked 68 and 59 respectively).¹³ Meanwhile, even though there is a considerable number of faculties and schools of journalism available, many of them have closed down, which progressive minds interpret as journalism slowly but surely becoming an obsolete profession. However, upon a closer look, certain particularities can be observed in each of these countries.

In *Albania*, media professionalism is directly related to or determined by problematic media ownership, the intrusion of business interests into editorial policies, journalists' low salaries and the pressure they face in their work. Such media environment does not encourage journalists to do better work because:

"...in the end, media owners are mainly interested in the propaganda, using newspapers as a means of fulfilling business interests. The quality of the reporter is of little importance. What they want is a reporter willing to work hard enough, one they can easily use to pursue their interests."¹⁴

In fact, the major issue is the close relationship between journalists and owners due to the owners being very powerful. It causes a direct decline in professional journalistic standards. Owners create new media, but are not interested in complying with professional standards. Therefore, young journalists cannot make much use of learning ethics and the importance of ethical reporting which are largely covered in their education. Even though they have good theoretical knowledge, the first time they confront their journalistic duties and the pressure in newsrooms, as well as the poor economic situation, they fail to deliver what they have learned in their journalism studies: "It is not that they forget what they have been taught, but owners tell them to ignore the rules and ethical principles and do as they are instructed."¹⁵

In addition, many (of the interviewees) say that the issue with the concept of ethics is down to a personal choice. A book should not be telling journalists what is right and what is wrong, nor there is a particular need for courses on ethics, since it is very easy to discern the ethical from the unethical in journalism as journalistic ethical principles are well established. Thus: **"If you are asked to do something that violates journalism ethics, it is unethical to stay, but rather it is ethical to leave."**¹⁶

13 World Press Freedom Index for 2016 published by Reporters Without Borders, available at: <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>

14 Interview with Besar Likmeta, editor, BIRN Albania, conducted on 27.10.2016

15 Interview with Mark Marku, University of Tirana, conducted on 28.10.2016

16 Interview with Alfred Lela, director of MAPO, conducted on 28.10.2016

In *Bosnia and Herzegovina*, journalism is regarded as a profession requiring passion and a great deal of dedication. However, in reality, "...the media does not often follow the ethical rules of the profession, and even though this may not always depend on the journalists, but rather on the editors, it is nevertheless a profession where everyone should undertake to be a better reporter for their own sake."¹⁷ It is also highlighted that no other profession has changed as much as journalism. "In fact, now you cannot tell the media and journalists apart. Everybody is a journalist, everybody can be one, and everything can be considered a medium... and people see this as a form of journalism. Journalism, however, is a system of values determined by professional standards."¹⁸

Due to the settings in which the media operate, as well as the pressure in the media, what is taught about ethics and professional standards at the faculties is very difficult to apply in practice. Nevertheless, on a federal level, the highest professional standards are still upheld by the public broadcasting service, and regardless of the problems or crises it may face, it is still the leading media in Bosnia when it comes to observing ethical standards. This is not the case with the other (cantonal) broadcasting services. "For instance, simply take a look at a few daily news programs by the public broadcasting service of Republika Srpska, and you will encounter nothing but a media regime. Where is the ethics there?"¹⁹

Likewise, the online media are also working unprofessionally and not carrying out their tasks as real media. "The information shared is not checked or it is out of context. This shows an inability

to manage available information. At the end of the day, someone must account for what has been broadcasted."²⁰ However, the situation see to be the worst with the print media:

"The situation in the print media is disastrous, with instances of the media promoting radical ideas openly, even hate speech... and taking this up with them, they say that they are aware of the standards, but when they open the newspaper in the morning, there is nothing left of their article except for their signature and some literal facts."²¹

In *Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)*, due to the poor economic state of the media, journalists' low income, media owners' political affiliation and the intrusion of business into media's editorial policies, the entire media and journalistic environment are in a very unfavorable state. "Journalists in Kosovo fear for their safety and their jobs. This turns them into conformists"²² That is why they fail to fulfill their role as the guardians of public interest. Journalists are not able to make a great difference in newsrooms because others lay down the medium's editorial policy. The major problem is that:

"...students undergo professional journalism training for three to five years, but when they enter the market, they are confronted with the editorial policy of those who finance the media. The issue therefore is not whether young journalists realize the importance of democracy, but whether the medium is controlled by political oligarchies and relies on their financial support."²³

17 Interview with Rubina Čengić, journalist at Start magazine. Conducted on 01.12.2016.

18 Interview with Boro Kantić, director of Media Centar, Sarajevo. Conducted on 30.11.2016

19 Interview with Stefan Blagić, Frontal magazine, conducted on 30.11.2016

20 Interview with Aladin Abdagić, Editor in Chief, Center for Investigative Reporting, Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016

21 Interview with Lejla Turčilo, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo, conducted on 01.12.2016

22 Interview with Hasan Saliu, professor at the AAB College, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), conducted on 12.12.2016

23 Ibid.

There is also the issue of journalists remaining professional “... when they earn a very low income and have to obey certain politics or individuals and businesses in order to be able to survive.”²⁴ It is difficult for journalists to get by since they have debts and are forced to keep their jobs at any cost. “You can easily fire anyone and have a new, equally skilled journalist in your office the very next day, someone who is going to be more loyal to the editorial policy.” This is why the importance of teaching ethics during the studies is being highlighted.²⁵ It is crucial on many levels because it helps students realize why they are here and what they are trying to accomplish, whether they are fighting for a better life, or merely filling a spot.²⁶

In the last five to six years, *The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* has marked a significant decline in media freedom, facing an extremely complex situation for quite some time, the media and reporters being among the biggest victims, but also actors in the so-called political and criminal union present in the media as part of that whole process. Journalism is a profession that is often subjected to lawsuits for libel and slander. Until a few years ago, before libel and slander were decriminalized, journalists had the sword of Damocles hanging over their heads for whatever they published since they were risking being criminally prosecuted, especially by the highest authorities, and paying massive fines unprecedented before in the annals of journalism history. The biggest threats to the name and integrity of journalism and journalistic professionalism are considered to be the so-called specialists, anonymous

people planted in the media to fulfill a particular political mission (instead of doing journalistic work), who will afterwards continue their career as administrative workers or at party-political bodies. The climate in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia creates a hostile attitude towards journalism and marginalizes professionals, promoting instead people lacking in ethics and scruples who use journalism as a means of making money and connecting with the political elite in order to attain other privileges in the society. Nevertheless:

“A considerable number of journalists have prevailed in keeping their dignity and integrity, refusing to be abused by politicians, but the majority is now either unemployed or earning a modest salary working for online sites.”²⁷

Certainly, the quality of journalism education is related to the level of media freedom and journalistic professionalism. This is not the only factor though. There are instances of journalists who have had poor education, but managed to improve and make up for what was missing in their formal education. However, once they come under various sorts of pressure in practice, they are faced with other problems. In some cases, the best students prove to be weak reporters. That is why ethics is so important for the preservation of integrity. It is being taught as a separate course at the faculties, but usually by “philosophy professors whose area of expertise is general philosophical questions”²⁸, while applied ethics is missing from the curriculum.” It is therefore legitimate to question to what extent young reporters recognize the importance of ethics, even in such

24 Interview with Violeta Oroši, journalist, conducted on 23.12.2016

25 Interview with Arben Salihu, Association of Journalists of Kosovo, conducted on 16.12.2016

26 Interview with Naser Miftari, Center for Social Research Analitika, conducted on 24.11.2016

27 Interview with Biljana Petkovska, director of the Macedonian Institute of Media, Skopje, conducted on 10.11.2017

28 Interview with Jasna Bačovska, Head of the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Law “Justinianus Primus” in Skopje, conducted on 24.10.2016

cases when they receive “small gifts” that entail the return of favors later.

In *Montenegro*, media freedom is ranked very low and marks a decline. Society is polarized, the media are politically divided into government and opposing (that consider themselves as independent), while journalists are paid below the average salary, having no choice but to act upon the orders of newsrooms. In addition, attacks on journalists and media are becoming more frequent, and none of those cases are being resolved. It is hard to work in the media in Montenegro today, even harder to take a personal stand, since newsrooms impose censorship, demanding work to be done in a certain way, or not to be done at all. It is very difficult to prevent corruption in journalism in such circumstances. It is unlikely that things would change in the foreseeable future, even less likely that the young (journalists) can be the initiators of change. Perhaps if more attention was devoted to ethics in the education process, the media would have performed more professionally. However:

“Deficient education cannot be used as an excuse; they are all acquainted, educated enough, and have had enough practice. Additional education is not going to change anything, since they are all pursuing their own agenda, disregarding ethics and professional standards.”²⁹

The majority of people who live by ethical standards are going to apply them in their journalistic work, regardless of whether they have learned ethics, but if they have, it is a winning combination.” Education can be a vaccine against a virus, but receiving one does not mean that you are going to

have an easy time.”³⁰ Furthermore, students may score the highest grade in media ethics, but without the courage, knowledge, and competences needed to assert themselves as good journalists, they would not be able to apply it. The owner would compel them to write negatively or positively from his viewpoint, instead of an ethical viewpoint, telling them they do not need ethics. The tougher ones stand greater chances, but it all depends on the medium they work for. However, one thing remains certain, “Owners do not need well-educated journalists, but rather journalists who are easy to manage.”³¹ In such cases, the question arises as to how journalism education can have an impact on the level of media freedom if in reality journalists are confronted with newsrooms working unprofessionally and unethically. “It is not journalism, it is cheering. Reporting on the same case from different angles is manipulation and derision of the public.”³²

In *Serbia*, as in the other countries in the region, the media face poor labour rights conditions, and journalists and media workers cannot attain the average wage level in the country. They also withstand considerable political pressure, resulting in the replacement of journalism staff with the change of government, either local or national. A large number of media are closing down or being acquired by individuals - tycoons, which causes journalists to lose their jobs or be replaced by servile workers. All of this inevitably affects the professionalism in performing the work.

In such a closed circle, it is uncertain to which extent formal education can

29 Interview with Marijana Camović, president of the Trade Union of Media in Montenegro, conducted on 01.11.2016

30 Interview with Zvezdan Vukanović, visiting professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Podgorica, conducted on 31.10.2016

31 Interview with Nataša Ružić, Assistant Professor at the Media and Journalism Studies Department at the Faculty of Political Science with the state University of Podgorica, conducted on 30.10.2016

32 Ibid.

1 affect the degree of media rights and freedom. The opinions of experts vary. Some believe that continual instruction on moral and professional principles has a positive effect, i.e. "...if this knowledge is acquired at the faculties or newsrooms as something to adhere to, it will have an effect on the entire system."³³ Furthermore, "...students have a good theoretical knowledge, and they understand the importance of media in the society, their mission, and what is expected of them."³⁴ Others do not see a connection between the quality of formal education and the degree of media freedom. "The degree of media freedom in Serbia is determined by the availability of financial resources on the market, and given the fact that we have a poor market, the media struggle to obtain finances the way they can, and since it is the state that generally controls the funds that the media receive, the media side with the various political options in power in order to secure some of those funds or obtain them indirectly from companies affiliated with the government."³⁵ Moreover, the content that dominates the media, does not only speak of those who work there, but of their education and knowledge. Hence, "We are drowning in yellow press...It is not even yellow press, but rather a blend of yellow press and crime stories. The tabloids here are not the tabloids found normally around the world. These are media used to persecute and attack. Televisions are not real televisions; they do not practice professional journalism."³⁶

Furthermore, ethics is considered as among the key factors in eradicat-

ing unethical and unprofessional practice in the media and journalism, as it is learning ethics from the point of view of science, as well as practice and practical dilemmas. Hence, "...students should be learning journalism ethics in one semester and doing practical work in the media in the next one in order to see how ethics is being breached and assume what they would do in such a position, then later discuss each case with their professors, who would explain to them the rights and responsibilities of the journalists working in a medium that violates ethics, so they could decide for themselves whether they are going to work that way or not."³⁷ In reality, faculties teach ethics at the beginning of the studies, but neglect it afterwards. "By the time you start working in a newsroom, you forget what you have learned or discussed, so perhaps it should be covered later in the studies or be integrated in a number of courses."³⁸

Poor labour rights conditions where journalists are under control and pressure of media owners - the economic crisis of the media sector - the decreasing media freedom situation in the region - the fact that media ethics is only taught at the beginning of the journalistic studies are some of the main reasons for low media professionalism in the SEE region.

c) *The role of media education in the democratization process of the region*

It is beyond doubt that journalism is one of the most important institutions in a democratic society. In the foreword of its "Model Curricula for Journalism Education," UNESCO points out that "journalism and the education programs that enable individuals to practice and upgrade their journalism skills are essential tools for the underpinning of

33 Interview with Zoran Stanojević, editor at Radio Television Serbia (RTS), conducted on 16.11.2016

34 Interview with Snežana Miličević, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade, conducted on 24.11.2016

35 Interview with Vladimir Radomirović, editor at Pištaljka magazine, conducted on 16.11.2016

36 Interview with Jovana Polić, programme manager at Media Centre Belgrade, conducted on 16.11.2016

37 Ibid.

38 Interview with Milica Stojanović, Center for Investigative Journalism, Belgrade, conducted on 15.11.2016

key democratic principles that are fundamental to the development of every country” (UNESCO,2007: 5). Similarly, the preamble of the Tartu Declaration sets forth that the members of the European Association for Journalism Education (EJTA) educate or train students/ participants from the principle that journalists should, among other things, serve the public by “stimulating and strengthening democracy at all levels”.

For more than ten years, the region of South East Europe has undergone a comprehensive and diverse process of democratization. Only Croatia and Slovenia became part of the European Union, whereas others signed accession partnership agreements. These events entailed changes and the approximation of the national legislation with the European, the adoption of European and international standards, as well as the securing of unimpeded development of the media sector. This would initiate a media reform process in many countries in the region, with a primary focus on the development of environment for independent media. However, the 2016 report on media independence published by Freedom House would rank the media in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Montenegro, and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) as “partly free”, whereas in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as “not free.”³⁹ In some countries, the situation has since worsened, as in the case of Serbia and Montenegro, where media have been demoted from “free” to “partly free”, and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with the media dropping from “partly free” to “not free”. The question then arises as to how media can assist the democratization of society. Does the answer lie in journalism education, and the encouragement of the critical thought of journalists in the educational process?

The media in *Albania* is only partially free, creating a bleak outlook for the development of the democratic processes. Politics is deeply rooted in the media, so journalists can hardly be expected to act as “the guardians of public interest and democracy”. Nevertheless, formal higher education can help change the situation, mainly through the introduction of additional “relevant” courses (dealing with macro level developments) into the journalism curricula, as well as through training and workshops that will prepare students for the advancement of democracy. That way, they will understand that being a journalist is not an ordinary task:

“It is a responsibility, a social responsibility. It is unlike other professions. Nonetheless, the majority of students are unaware of the responsibility that journalists have in preserving democracy.”⁴⁰

Essentially, education and the educated can contribute and work towards the development of democracy. The same goes for journalism. Hence, “... good journalism works in favor of democracy, while bad journalism works against democracy.”⁴¹ That being said, good schools, good education programs, and quality education are beneficial to the development of democratic processes.

On the other hand, the immersion of politics in the media leads young journalists and students to believe that political journalism is a way to earn a good profit. Some are even convinced that the affiliation to a political party is the only way to a bright future. This is what deters them from being ethical, and why (according to the majority of interviewees) they choose to adjust to the circumstances and turn a blind eye when they are expected to do something against the es-

39 2016 report on media independence published by Freedom House, available at: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2016>

40 Interview with Rrapo Zguri, professor at the University of Tirana, 28.10.2016

41 Interview with Remzi Lani, director of the Albanian Media Institute, conducted on 28.10.2016

established principles and rules of ethics, such as those laid out in the Albanian Code of Journalistic Ethics.

Experts state that in *Bosnia and Herzegovina*, both formal and informal journalism education can affect the democratic processes in the country. However, politicization in the media field prevents the potential effect from realization, because "...most of the media are politically controlled ...and not just online sites, but also national televisions that are directly dependent on politics."⁴² In fact, "...the media are the extended hand of the government and Bosnia is no longer a single-party system, but three single-party systems, each employing its own journalists,"⁴³ (since Bosnia is the home of three constituent peoples). Universities are also politicized and "...a lot of professors are politically engaged, with tenures that never seem to end."⁴⁴ As a matter of fact, all education levels in Bosnia face politicization. "The educational system is directly influenced by politics. This means that children are being turned into political pawns ever since primary school."⁴⁵

Experts state that journalism should be the fourth pillar of democracy, so faculties and students should behave accordingly. In the media, democratic processes are threatened by capitalism and all that it entails because everything is being commercialized. In other words, it is the yellow press that is now in demand, the tabloids. It weakens the power of the people, blocking other information. Consequently:

"...when students enter newsrooms, their souls have already been sold... they know that it is the sensation that sells. We instruct students on the importance of these processes in the so-

ciety... that the media are very much responsible for what they publish. However, we are still a developing country. And a lot of work needs to be done on raising the social awareness"⁴⁶

However, even though faculties do not contribute significantly to a more effective democratization of the society, there is a degree of potential that can be realized through the use of educational measures. "Education on democracy and corruption is necessary. The young should be taught to fight corruption in order to be able to exercise their own rights. The education currently does not help to achieve this."⁴⁷

In *The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, formal education is considered to have an undeniable effect on the democratization of society. It helps recognize social phenomena and occurrences, discover and expose different forms of crime, corruption, nepotism, wrong matrices of political behavior, and discrimination in society. Only educated staff can educate the public and "nothing can cause instrumentalization as much as ignorance, and it is harder to turn clever people into slaves."⁴⁸ However, this does not mean that education alone can lead to democratization:

"It can help create individuals who are more free-minded, more critically oriented, and better equipped with tools to carry out their work professionally ...and with integrity, but if they start working in a newsroom that upholds various unprofessional journalistic standards, their worlds will collide and they can never win. They are going to stick out..."⁴⁹

42 Interview with Rubina Čengić, journalist at Start magazine. Conducted on 01.12.2016.

43 Interview with Vuk Vučetić, senior teaching assistant Faculty of East Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016

44 Interview with Lejla Turčilo, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences at the University in Sarajevo, conducted on 01.12.2016

45 Interview with Radenko Udovičić, director of Media Plan Institute and professor at the University of Mostar, conducted on 02.12.2016

46 Interview with Vuk Vučetić, senior teaching assistant at the Faculty of East Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016

47 Ibid.

48 Interview with Jasna Bačovska, Head of the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Law "Justinianus Primus" in Skopje, conducted on 24.10.2016

49 Interview with Zoran Dimitrovski, Editor in Chief of the Focus weekly magazine and lecturer at the School of Journalism and Public Relations, conducted on 27.10.2016

However, it is uncertain whether and how appropriately journalism faculties educate future journalists. They are criticized for not being able to devise a model that would create professionals capable of working in a democratic society, because “the freedom of media, their democratic role, the freedom of speech, they are all being relativized”.⁵⁰

In *Montenegro*, university education is perceived as fundamental to the establishing of democratic society in the country, but it lacks the most important thing, the promotion of critical thinking. There are plenty of dilemmas. If the professors are not thinking critically, “neither can it be expected from the students because they do not have a role model to follow.”⁵¹ However, even if students were taught to think critically, they would confront various kinds of pressure (political, economic, existential) the moment they enter the newsroom, and for this reason not many of them decide to take the risk and fight for their ideals. Society shows only faint traces of journalism, the rest of it being propaganda, marketing, spin, a conglomerate that confuses and disorients, a means for silencing citizens. And the number of media obstructing democracy is on the increase in Montenegro. This brings up the question of what needs to be done to encourage journalists to think critically, not to mention write critically, if they do not undergo even a simple training on composing news:

“The emphasis is placed on the theoretical knowledge contained in books and old theories from the ‘50s and ‘60s that present a media with no aspiration towards developing critical awareness. It is left to the discretion of the individual. Those who decide to undertake this will make good reporters, but only due to their own efforts.”⁵²

There is no doubt that if the University and the media are strong enough, collaborating and working for the public interest, they can have an immense influence on the social processes. “It would mean having independent media, independent critical thinking, greater freedom, and better rights.”⁵³ Their goal should be serving the public interest, rather than transforming into machines that obey political parties or their programs. Of course, the media can have newsrooms inclined towards a particular political party. This, however, does not mean that their professionalism is conditioned by the political party. “They have to remain objective, truthful, up-to-date, and by doing so, contribute to the advancement of democratic processes.”⁵⁴

In *Serbia*, according to the majority of interviewees, there are many ways in which journalism education can help improve the country’s democratic processes. First of all, through quality education, i.e. the investigative work being a component of great importance. If professors and faculties do not conduct investigative projects from which to obtain new knowledge... and serve as the basis for developing programs... they cannot be innovative.”⁵⁵ Then, by conducting research about the situation in the media, as well as research work that can assist the creation of media policy. Another important factor is the so-called symbolic elite, comprised of lecturers and professors at the faculties. “They communicate their viewpoints and beliefs to target groups, forming thereby a discourse that can be democratic, but not necessarily. If professors promote pluralism and a multicultural approach, students will follow suit, and if not, the opposite happens. That is why these symbolic elites matter. Uni-

50 Interview with Sefer Tahiri, assistant professor at the South East European University, Tetovo. Conducted on 28.10.2016

51 Interview with Marijana Camović, president at the Trade Union of Media in Montenegro, conducted on 01.11.2016

52 Interview with Aida Ramusović, director of the Nomen non-governmental organization, 30.10.2016

53 Interview with Zvezdan Vukanović, visiting professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Podgorica, conducted on 31.10.2016

54 Interview with Dejan Lučić, part-time associate at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Podgorica, conducted on 30.10.2016

55 Interview with Snežana Miličević, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade, conducted on 24.11.2016

versity professors and journalists are the first echelon of the symbolic elites.”⁵⁶ “Or more precisely put,

“...they should prepare students for thinking freely and acting freely and critically in their surroundings, rather than create political agitators.”⁵⁷

There is even the general belief that faculties ought to influence democratic processes and media rights and freedom. It is their duty. “If your specialty is political sciences, to observe the social and media anomalies, it is your duty to engage in it...to conduct research in the field. You should be following the media community closely and using your experience to help students find a way to improve this profession. The role of professional staff at the faculties is to help students, to open their door so they could find their own way.”⁵⁸ However, there is also the notion that journalism faculties provide only the basic education, whereas it is the role of the informal education to teach students or young journalists about the democratic processes, human rights etc. “What journalists could find useful is being educated about the various kinds of reporting on human rights and being able to learn from experienced people in the civil sector and other renowned experts.”⁵⁹

In *Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)*, journalism education can influence democratic processes through the appropriate education of future journalists. “If students are properly educated on carrying out investigative journalism, they will later discover corruption, where and how it comes about, and expose the corrupted.”⁶⁰ However, the drawback

here, among other things, is the politicization of the universities, which is what stops them from contributing to the advancement of the democratic processes in the country. Universities could have an impact, but that is not the case.

“That is the sad truth. Intellectuals, masters or doctors of sciences, professors, should have a proactive role in the society and assist the changes and the democratization process, but, unfortunately, since universities are usually under government’s control, professors are only concerned with doing the job and getting paid, a lot of them not showing any interest in what is going on in the society.”⁶¹

In this sense, not even young journalists can be expected to make a significant difference if the faculties produce staff which is not prepared to protect the public interest. “Not much attention is given to making journalist the servants of public interest, the ones who would fight for equality and justice.”⁶² Meanwhile, neither journalists nor the media realize their role in society. “It is evident through the editorial policies -with a few exceptions - that the media are not aware of their role and how the information they are communicating and broadcasting in a particular context would be perceived.”⁶³

56 Interview with Dubravka Valić Nedelković, professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, conducted on 17.11.2016

57 Interview with Dragana Bjelica, Journalists’ Association of Serbia, conducted on 16.11.2016

58 Interview with Milica Jevtić, RTS, conducted on 24.11.2016

59 Interview with Jovana Polić, programme manager at Media Centre Belgrade, conducted on 16.11.2016

60 Interview with Anamari Repić, programme manager at Radio Television Kosovo (RTK), conducted on 07.12.2016

61 Interview with Sanja Sovrlić, journalist and Editor-in-Chief at RTV Mir, conducted on 08.12.2016

62 Interview with Naser Miftari, Center for Social Research Analitika, conducted on 24.11.2016

63 Ibid.



REGIONAL OUTLINE OF JOURNALISM EDUCATION

Journalism education in the SEE region shares a similar academic tradition, as well as a short history of realizing journalism studies (especially in Albania, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), and Montenegro). Until the '90s, only a few faculties (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) offered education in journalism, as opposed to today's boom (a total of 28 journalism faculties and schools)

of a variety of journalism studies and study programs. They are the most widespread in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ten of them) and the least widespread in Montenegro (just one). Almost everywhere, standard journalism education integrated as a separate department at the faculties of law, philosophy, and political sciences at state universities faces competition from private education, which is easily recognized by the names of the faculties and their innovative curricula. Hence,

the name of the faculty points to its field of study, for example, Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies, Faculty of Mass Communication and Journalism, or Faculty of Media and Communication. However, none of these journalism programs constitute an independent university unit, but rather a discipline within the faculties of social sciences, or media and communication faculties.

2.1.

Albania

a) University Education of Journalists

Albania belongs to the group of countries without a consolidated tradition of journalism education. The first journalism program in socialist Albania was founded in 1962 at the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences in Tirana and was shaped after the so-called “soviet model”, only to be shut down in 10 years. Twenty years later, in 1992, in light of the social and political changes in Albania, the journalism program would be reopened as part of the Faculty of History and Philology, due to the increase in media number and the need for a journalistic staff. Many international organizations would take part in the devising of the study program. Several years later (in 1997), two more departments would open at the Universities in Shkoder⁶⁴ and Elbasan. Today, journalism education in Albania can be obtained at five universities, three of them state and two private. All of them observe the ECTS system, based on the principle of three-year graduate degree and two-year postgraduate degree programs, but only three of the faculties (two state and one private) offer postgraduate degrees. It is important

to note that journalism programs are organized within the faculties of social or human sciences (faculties of history and philology), all of which offer either journalism studies or journalism and communication studies.

Organization of the Higher Education. The students at the Faculty of History and Philology of the State University of Tirana can choose to obtain education from three different departments – Political Journalism, Economic Journalism and Social and Cultural Journalism, despite the programs being almost completely the same, with the exception of a small number of elective classes. The curricula are mostly made up of theoretical and practical journalism courses. Hence:

- **In the first year of study, all three departments offer: Theoretical Models of Communication, Linguistic Culture, Media History, Basic Writing in News Reporting, Agency Journalism, Basics of Semiotics, Introduction to Political Communication, Media Research Methods, Writing News Reporting in the Print and Web, Media Design and Layout;**
- **In the second year of study, the curricula consist of: Epistemology Communication/Analysis of Film Language, Editing Media, Media Genres, Grammar for Journalists, the News in the Audiovisual Media, Processed Photographic Illustration, Online Journalism, Investigative Journalism, Radio and Television Journalism, Sociology of Communication.**
- **In the third year of study, the curricula encompass: Media Landscape in Albania, Media in Diplomacy, TV Journalism, Radio Journalism, Multimedia and Editing in TV, Editing in Multimedia and Radio.**

⁶⁴ The study programs at the Shkoder University as well as the Alexander Xhuvanni University, related to Journalism/Communications/Media were not available for access and are therefore not subject to analysis for the purposes of this research.

In terms of elective courses, the Department of Political Journalism offers Political Parties, Modern History, Civil Society, and Public Spaces or Publicity Campaigns, the Department of Economic Journalism includes Theories of Economics, Management Basics or Marketing Basics, and the Department of Social and Cultural Journalism comprises Anthropology, Genre Film, Criticism Art, or Photo Media. Ethics is a compulsory course and it is integrated in the third year of study. Students undergo practical training each semester, while in the third year of study, they attend printing workshops, public relations workshops for journalists, and news media workshops.

At the private Beder University, journalism studies can be attended at the Faculty of Humanities. The curriculum of the three-year graduate program maintains a balance between general education and communication courses at the expense of journalistic courses. The structure comprises:

- **General education courses: Social Psychology, Introduction to Sociology, History of Albania, Basic Informatics, Constitutional Law, Introduction to Political Science, Public Law, Research Methods and Academic Writing and;**
- **Communication courses: Introduction in Mass Communication, Public Relations, Media History, Communication Theories, Economic Journalism, Communication Philosophy, Bases of Semiotics, Media Marketing;**
- **Journalism courses: News Writing and Reporting, Introduction to Speech Analysis, Public Speaking, Interviewing.**

Media Ethics is taught in the third year of study, at which point students are also required to undertake profes-

sional practical training. Courses such as Print and Online Media, Organization Communication, Intercultural and Interpersonal Communication, History of Civilizations, Introduction to International Relations, Integration History and EU Institutions, and History of Political Thought are elective. The two-year postgraduate degree programs include some of the same compulsory and elective courses integrated in the graduate program. Students are instructed in Advanced Research Methods 1 and 2, Political Marketing – Tools, Techniques, Strategies, Aesthetic Thought and Relationship with Art, Media and Politics, Identities and Mass Communication, Media and Ethics, Communication and Management of Institutions, Brand Identity, Epoch and Intercultural Brand, Media Marketing, Translation Theories, News, Power and Truth Relationship.

Quality of Higher Education. Expert opinion is divided on the condition of journalism education in Albania. First and foremost, there is a difference between the education offered at state universities and the education offered at private universities. State university professors claim that the state universities offer better journalism education. Private universities professors on the other hand, claim the contrary, pointing out the frequent visits and check-ups carried out by competent authorities of the state, expressing however their disagreement that the Ministry of Education is inclined towards state universities. Opinions also vary on the quality of education. Some claim that formal journalism education in Albania has marked a steady improvement in the last two decades, while others believe that changes (reforms) are still very much needed in order to create journalistic staff ready to enter the media machinery. The need for change applies not only to the curricula and

the need for implementation of study programs designed according to the practices of the world's best ranked universities (such as Georgetown University, Columbia University, New York University), but to the staff as well, especially when it comes to employing competent part-time professors. Even though "...the last couple of years have seen an improvement in terms of the programs and hiring of high-quality professional staff"⁶⁵, the lack of will and dedication to the implementation of serious reforms in journalism education still remains.

In addition, faculties have problems securing compulsory practical training in the media for the students. They are trying to establish collaboration with the media in order to provide students with hands-on practice in newsrooms. However, collaboration is unsatisfactory: "We have difficulties arranging internships for the students...and when they finally begin training in the media, they are not being included in the work processes of the paper, radio or television, but are merely by-standers."⁶⁶ The reason for this seems to be the lack of resources in the media needed to dedicate proper attention to the students, or in other words, because of the crisis, the media cut back on human resources and have less available work space to offer their employees. Meanwhile, even though faculties invite journalists, editors, and chief editors to participate in the lectures, the need for engaging even greater number of experienced instructors is still underlined, because this is how students learn first-handedly about the difficulties and challenges that journalists in newsrooms face on a daily basis. This by no means diminishes the role and value of the professors

teaching at the faculties, but the reality is "that they have never practiced journalism out in the field."⁶⁷

b) Informal Journalism Education.

Albania has a small number of non-governmental organizations with activities aimed at training and preparation of journalists and media workers. The most active in the area are two non-governmental organizations, the Albanian Media Institute and BIRN Albania. The Albanian Media Institute, founded in 1995, is among the most important journalism training institutions in Albania and the Balkans. Its activities include not only the training of journalists, but also the conducting of seminars, debates, research in the media field, media monitoring, and publishing. It has carried out a large amount of training, but the topics or issues covered in the training vary in line with the priorities of international donors in the region. In other words, if fifteen years ago, "...three or four training sessions on ethics were conducted in a week, the same number of sessions is still carried out weekly, but their focus is on investigative journalism or access to public information."⁶⁸ As a member of the network of non-governmental organizations in the Balkans, BIRN Albania is concerned with supporting the development of high-quality journalism and the civil society, thus contributing to the advancement of democracy. Its activities are also chiefly focused on providing training in investigative journalism.

Collaboration between University and Alternative Education. Journalism workshops and trainings organized by the non-governmental sector are considered an important part in the education process of young Albanian

65 Interview with Remzi Lani, director of the Albanian Media Institute, conducted on 28.10.2016

66 Interview with Mark Marku, head of the Department of Journalism and Communication at the University of Tirana, conducted on 28.10.2016

67 Interview with Erjona Rusi, journalist at Report TV, conducted on 27.10.2016

68 Interview with Remzi Lani, director of the Albanian Media Institute, conducted on 28.10.2016

journalists, as well as the development of journalistic skills in Albania in general. However, the collaboration experience with universities varies. On the one hand, the Albanian Media Institute collaborates actively with the state university, employs engaged journalists, and never excludes students. An example of this was the recent laboratory for investigative journalism intended for journalism students, which was supported by the U.S. Embassy, attempting to teach students “that digging up information is not always essential because the information might already be there, but it needs some connecting.”⁶⁹ On the other hand, private universities are mostly media-oriented, where students can receive in-house training, and even employment after the training.

However, the majority of the academic interviewees is skeptical about the role of the non-governmental sector in journalism education. They comment on the way training is carried out and on its structure, neglecting the fact that “today the needs of Albanian journalists are different from what they used to be 20 years ago.”⁷⁰ They also point out to the unprofessional practice that non-governmental organizations exercised some years ago: “It suited them to claim that journalism faculties did a fair job because they needed investments to conduct training.”⁷¹ Nevertheless, significantly less training is being conducted today than before, one of the major reasons being the change in financing trends of international donors.

Nonetheless, the conclusion remains that “informal and formal education can coexist and they complement each

other.”⁷² Moreover, journalism training is very useful, especially if taken into account that the media in Albania very rarely, if ever, conduct in-house training for their journalists. This is due to the poor financial and human resources in the media which prevents them from organizing workshops and training for the staff, “These are big expenses for the media owners...despite the fact that their medium would benefit immensely.”⁷³ However, the real question is whether the media cannot afford this, or they simply do not want to invest in training. They “...would spend millions of euros on the upgrade of equipment and technology, and not a single cent on training...”⁷⁴ At the same time, not even journalists are particularly interested in professional improvement since they believe it would not be of great benefit for them.⁷⁵

c) *The Future of Journalism Education*

The Albanian media market is swamped with print and electronic media. Most of them cannot keep afloat due to the country’s poor economic condition, so journalists are increasingly considering changing their profession, particularly if they are working in public relations. If there were no unemployed journalists ten years ago, there are plenty of them today, which directly affects young people’s decision on choosing journalism studies. To put it more precisely, “...if at the beginning of 2000, there was a great demand for journalism studies, the opposite is true today...”⁷⁶

Nevertheless, if there is any hope for the future of journalism, “...it should be based on formal education, as well as journalism schools, which teach the foundations of the profession. Journalists

69 Interview with Erjona Rusi, journalist at Report TV, conducted on 27.10.2016

70 Interview with Mark Marku, head of the Department of Journalism and Communication at the University of Tirana, conducted on 28.10.2016

71 Ibid.

72 Interview with Remzi Lani, director of the Albanian Media Institute, conducted on 28.10.2016

73 Interview with Erjona Rusi, journalist at Report TV, conducted on 27.10.2016

74 Interview with Lutfi Dervishi, freelance journalist and trainer, conducted on 28.10.2016

75 Interview with Besar Likmeta, editor at BIRN Albania, conducted on 27.10.2016

76 Ibid.

coming from any other sectors are bound to lack important integral parts of the profession.”⁷⁷ In fact, experts agree that informal education in the form of training and career advancement contributes to the journalistic profession as much as formal education. However, the curricula need to change. Both state and private universities lack appropriate training in the basic skills for young reporters, particularly reading and writing. The students and journalists of today are mediators for the public and they should show deep understanding of different subjects, which entails a lot of reading (beside the compulsory literature). Said otherwise, writing skills should be developed precisely through practical work during the studies:

“They should be allowed to write a story, an article, and to make mistakes, so they can be corrected and instructed on how to improve, instead of just being read at and told what a former professor of journalism had to say about journalism.”⁷⁸

Likewise, curricula should increase the focus on new technologies and new media, but not on the expense of theoretical knowledge of human rights, freedom of speech, media freedom, as well as knowledge of the journalistic profession and journalism in general. Furthermore, more practical training is needed than what universities currently offer. This is the only way students could be prepared for work in the newsrooms following their graduation. Even longer periods of practical instruction are being suggested: “Students could learn theory, do practical work for a year, then return to learning theory in the last year of study. By doing this, they would know what to expect and could familiarize themselves with their future profession.”⁷⁹

77 Interview with Rrapo Zguri, professor at the University of Tirana, conducted on 28.10.2016

78 Interview with Alfred Lela, director of MAPO Tirana, conducted on 28.10.2016

79 Interview with Lutfi Dervishi, freelance journalist and trainer, conducted on 28.10.2016

2.2.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

a) University Education of Journalists

Bosnia and Herzegovina is the region’s leader in the number of faculties offering journalism education. Future students can choose from ten institutions to obtain education, five state and five private, eight of which are faculties and two of which are colleges. Journalism programs at state level are being integrated within faculties of political sciences and philosophy, whereas private faculties are established as independent faculties of media and communication or faculties of journalism and communication. A possible explanation for the massive expansion of faculties is the high number of media in the country and the need for a journalistic staff. However, the complex state administrative system and the decentralization of the education sector have clearly brought about various education policies and the fragmentation of university education (KAS, 2014:12). The first institution for journalism education was the Faculty of Political Sciences at the state University of Sarajevo, founded in 1971 (at the request of Radio Television Sarajevo and the Oslobodjenje news agency). Fifteen years later, journalism programs would open at the faculties of philosophy at the universities in Tuzla and Banja Luka (founded in 1998), the Faculty of Pedagogy (founded in 1997/98), and the first private College of Communications in Banja Luka (founded in 2000).

Organization of the Higher Education. The oldest journalism/communicationology studies could be pursued at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo. The first major alterations of the studies since the opening of the de-

partment would take place in 1992, followed by several others later on. Today, the undergraduate curriculum (since 2015/2016) balances between:

- **Communication courses: General Communicology, History of Communication, Media Theory, Information Theory, Business Communication, Modern Communication Systems, Mass Media Marketing, Public Relations, Media Regulation, Opinion Journalism;**
- **Journalism courses: Radio Journalism, Journalism Stylistics, Print Journalism, Online Journalism, Television Journalism, Rhetoric and Speech Culture;**
- **General education courses: Introduction to Sociology, Introduction to Philosophy, Political Systems of Bosnia and Herzegovina, History of Civilization, International Relations, Demographics, Methodology, Political Parties and Interest Groups.**

Ethics as a course, “ethics of public communication”, is implemented in the second year of study, while the compulsory practical training is reserved for the last (sixth) semester of study. In contrast, the postgraduate degree programs in journalism can be better characterized as a specialization in communication (especially if they incorporate subjects such as Modern Communication Theories, Methodology, Media and Politics, Sociology, Media Culture, Media and Society, Basics of Propaganda), but certain other courses should also be incorporated within the undergraduate curricula (Public Opinion, Investigative Journalism).

Journalism studies at the Faculty of Philosophy in Tuzla, a more recent educational institution, are not encumbered by the previous political system, which the program clearly re-

flects. The studies are based on the 4+1 principle. The general focus of the four-year graduate degree program (2015/16 program) is on theoretical and practical journalism education (80 percent of the curriculum), whereas general education courses make up a bare minimum of the program and are implemented in the first year of study. The program incorporates all specialized journalism courses, as well as courses of significant importance for the profession, such as Media Literacy and Civil Journalism. Ethics is taught in the third year of the studies. The program encompasses:

- **Communication courses: Introduction to Communicology 1 and 2, Theory of Information 1 and 2, Media Literacy, Modern Systems of Public Communication, Media Policy, Verbal Communication, Introduction to Public Relations, Interpersonal Communication, Intercultural Communication, Public Relations Management, Business Communication, Media Management, Political Communication;**
- **Journalism courses: Writing for the Media 1 and 2, Fundamentals of Print Media, Journalistic Photography, Print Journalism, Radio Fundamentals, Communicology of Online Media, Radio Production, Citizen Journalism, Radio Journalism, Online Journalism, News Agency Journalism, Television Fundamentals, Investigative Journalism, Television Production, Television Journalism, Specialized Journalism: Individual Project;**
- **General education courses: Introduction to Political Sciences, Contemporary Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian Language, Sociology 1 and 2, Political Systems of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sociology of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Society,**

Methodology of Social Research (including elective courses such as Psychology, Social Politics, Cultural Studies, Economic Politics, Political Philosophy, Civil Society).

Graduating from the one-year postgraduate programs, students obtain an M.A. Degree in journalism. The curriculum includes courses in the field of communication: Contemporary Communication Theories, Communicology, Corporate Communication, Communication Research Methods, including Ethics in Public Communication.

The Faculty of Philosophy in Mostar offers three-year graduate degree and two-year postgraduate degree programs in journalism. General education courses make up 25 percent of the graduate program, whereas communication and journalism courses comprise 75 percent. Journalism Ethics is taught in the third year of study. The curriculum consists of:

- **Communication courses: Communicology, Introduction to Journalistic Science, Croatian Language – Language Skills, Political Communication, Fundamentals of the Art of Expression, Corporate Communication, Media Law, Public Relations, Theory of Law and Comparative Review of the Law of Public Communication;**
- **Journalism courses: News Agency Journalism, Croatian Language and Journalism Stylistics, Media Convergence, Investigative Journalism, New Media;**
- **General education courses: Informatics, Political Systems, Outline of History of Philosophy, Scientific Methodology, Contemporary History of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, Philosophical Anthropology and Ethics, International Relations.**

The list of elective courses, beside the group of courses in general education (such as History of Religion, History of Central and South East Europe during the 19th and 20th Century, Political Philosophy, Introduction to Theory of State and Law) and communication courses (such as Media Sociology, Theory of Conflicts and Information Warfare, Politics and Internet, Rhetoric, Media and Violence), comprises highly relevant journalism courses, such as Journalism Writing Techniques, Fundamentals of Online Journalism, Photojournalism, History of Journalism, Media and Gender Roles, Public Presentation.

Postgraduate degree programs place an emphasis on communication and journalism courses, such as Methods and Techniques for Public Opinion Research, Internet Communication, Radio 3 - Practical Journalism Training, Television 3 - Practical Journalism Training, Interpersonal Communication, Media and the Globalization Process, Media Analytics, Media Semiotics, Holistic Communication. Elective courses Include: Theory of Mass Media, Ethics in Business Communication, Political Public Relations, Classical Theories of Social Development, Contemporary Theories of Social Development, Political History, Identity and Reputation of the State (electing a total of four, one in each semester).

Journalism studies at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of East Sarajevo are structured as four-year graduate degree programs and one-year postgraduate degree programs. Graduate degree programs maintain a balance between general education and communication courses, whereas journalism courses make up a very small share of the program. The structure includes the following courses:

- **General education courses: Introduction to Philosophy, Introduction to Sociology, Fundamentals of Economics, Contemporary Philosophy, Political Sciences, Political System of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Contemporary History, Social Psychology, Sociology Of Culture and Religion, Political Culture, Marketing Psychology, Social Politics, Economic System of Bosnia and Herzegovina-Republika Srpska, European Integration, International Relations;**
- **Communication courses: Introduction to Communication and Information, Theory of Media, History of Journalism, Information Systems of Bosnia and Herzegovina -Republika Srpska, Stylistics and Culture of Speech, History of Serbian Culture, Public Opinion, Methodology of Communication Research, Public Relations, Sociology of Mass Communication, Propaganda in Communication, Media Regulation, Media and Politics, Media Management;**
- **Journalism courses: Journalism Methods and Techniques, Journalism and Print Media, Journalism and Electronic Media, Investigative Journalism, Media Literacy.**

The program incorporates courses that are atypical of this type of studies, such as Social Pathology, Political Geography, Literary and Theater Criticism, and Introduction to Literature. Compulsory practice is undertaken in the third and fourth year of study and it takes place in news agencies, new media, radio, and television, while Ethics, the journalistic Deontology, is taught in the fourth year of study. Postgraduate degree programs are divided into two strands, Journalism and Communicology, which contain the same mandatory courses (Theory of Communication and Culture, Methodology of Scientific Work

and Language in the Media), whereas the remaining courses are elected at each department separately until the 60-credit limit is reached. These courses in the journalism program are the following: Political Relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Forms of Documentary Journalism, Contemporary Investigative Journalism, Interest Groups and Lobbying, Globalization and National Identity, Media and Society, Media Analysis, Media, Journalism and the Public. Practical Training in online Journalism or Photojournalism is elective course as well.

The Journalism and Communication Program at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Banja Luka is also structured according to the 4+1 principle. In the first year of study, the graduate curricula mostly comprise general education courses (Introduction to Political Sciences, Introduction to Philosophy, Introduction to Sociology, Introduction to Social Politics, Fundamentals of Economics, Foundations of Law, Contemporary History and Fundamentals of Psychology) and one communication course (Introduction to Communicology and Information), whereas the remaining three years center on communication and journalism courses (more than 60 percent of the total number of courses), with a chief focus on journalism courses:

- **Journalism courses: Radio Journalism, Print Journalism, Television Journalism, News Agency Journalism, Investigative Journalism and courses which are rarely or never offered by journalism programs, such as Literary Journalism, Online Journalism, Editorial Journalism;**
- **Communication courses: Media Theories, Language in the Media, Information Systems, Media Regulation, Public Opinion, Media Management, Public Relations.**

Ethics is taught as a separate course in the last semester of the studies. The faculty too offers two postgraduate degree programs, one in journalism and one in communicology. The Journalism study program provides solid specialization with courses such as Communication Theories, Media Analysis, Journalism and Politics, Internet and New Media Technologies, Media and Globalization, Forms of Documentary Journalism and Methodology of Scientific Work.

The group of private faculties includes the Faculty of Media and Communications in Travnik. The Media and Journalism study programs are based on the 3+2 or 4+1 principle. The three-year graduate program (study program of 2015/16) is mostly made up of communication and journalism courses, and a small number of general education courses:

- **Communication courses: Introduction to Media and Communication, Theory of Media and the Public, Psychology of Communication, Media, Politics and Democracy, Public Opinion;**
- **Journalism courses: Film and Photography, Media Literacy, Radio and Television, Theory and Technology of the Press, Academic Writing and Media Styles, Media Management, Journalism Techniques, Editorial Policy;**
- **General education courses: Informatics, Sociology, Fundamentals of Law, Fundamentals of Economics, History of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Statistics.**

Ethics is included in the third year of the studies, along with practical training. The same year, students can choose two from a list of elective courses, some of which should be even made com-

pulsory, as in the case of Investigative Journalism: Radio Journalism, Contemporary and Global Media, Internet and New Media, Radio Journalism, Television Journalism and Narrative, Crisis Reporting. Postgraduate studies encompass Methodology of Scientific Research, Communication Strategies, Semantics and Pragmatics of Communication, Journalism in Print Media, Editorial and Program Practice of Media, Editing and Public Relations, Media Development around the World and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Language and Style of Creative Writing, Investigative Journalism, as well as three elective courses that include Media Analysis, New Media, Modern Technology of Media, Television Advertising, Digital Communication, Media Education, Online Journalism, and News Agency Journalism.

The 4+1 program is almost identical to the 3+2 program, with the exception of the final year, which integrates new courses such as Journalism in Print Media, New Media, Media System of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Social and Political Ecology, Investigative Journalism (Television), and two elective courses that include Investigative Journalism: Press, Investigative Journalism: Photography, News Agency Journalism, Online Journalism And Marketing. The one-year postgraduate program incorporates some of the same courses from the graduate program, such as Methodology of Scientific Research, Language and Style of Creative Writing, Media Education, Investigative Journalism, as well as two elective courses among which are Media Analysis, Political Communication: Electoral Campaigns, Online Journalism, Editing and Media, Media Ethics.

The Faculty of Journalism and Communication at the University of Business Studies, with campuses in Novo Saraje-

vo, Banja Luka, and Bijeljina, offers only three-year journalism degrees. The study focus of the curriculum is on courses in journalism and communication (80 per cent of the total number of courses), including a very small number of courses in general education, particularly ones that are culture oriented. The structure comprises the following courses:

- **Journalism courses: Journalistic Forms and Presentation Techniques 1,2 and 3, Photography and Illustration 1 and 2, Graphic and Web Design 1 and 2, Creative Writing 1 and 2, Investigative Journalism, Electronic Media and Radio Journalism, Information Technology in Journalism;**
- **Communication courses: Language and Communication, Stylistics and Rhetoric, Public Opinion Research, and Media Marketing;**
- **General education courses: History and Culture of Civilization: History of Ideas, Sociology and Social Anthropology: Visual Culture, Didactic Aspects of Social Anthropology: Media Culture, History and Culture of Civilization: Cultural Groupings of the South Slavic People.**

The studies offer courses in Specialized Journalism 1, 2 and 3, as well as practical training in editorial houses or independent journalistic work. Students can also choose from courses which are not available at other faculties, such as Economics and Journalism, Law in Journalism, Entrepreneurship in Journalism, Financial Management of Media Companies, and Event Management. Ethics is not implemented as a separate course.

In contrast, the journalism program at the Faculty of Political Sciences at the European University at Brcko can hardly stand for journalism. The faculty offers various study programs, such as Politi-

cal Sciences, International Relations and Diplomacy, and Journalism, but they are almost completely the same (with the exception of one or two courses). The Journalism course is the only course related to the studies, and it is being taught in the third year. Students take up the following courses:

- **First year of study: Political Theories, Introduction to Philosophy, as well as Rhetoric and Fundamentals of Economics as elective courses;**
- **Second year of study: Political Sociology, Constitutional Law, Contemporary Political Theories, Comparative Politics, as well as Fundamentals of Informatics, Management, and Office Skills as elective courses;**
- **Third year of study: Political Anthropology, Political Parties, Fundamentals of Theory of Foreign Politics, International Relations, as well as Marketing, Sociology of Religion, and Entrepreneurship as elective courses.**

There are two colleges offering journalism degrees in Bosnia and Herzegovina, located in Banja Luka. Banja Luka College organizes four-year degree programs in media and communication, which are divided into two strands, Public Relations, and Journalism and Multimedia. Following graduation from the Journalism and Multimedia strand, students acquire a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism. The program is a balanced blend of general education, communication, and journalism courses, giving prominence to general education courses at the beginning of the program, and journalism courses in the final years of the studies. Business Ethics is covered in the third year of study, while practical training takes place in the final (eighth) semester. Students are instructed in:

- **General education courses: Fundamentals of Law, Macroeconomics, Informatics, EU Acquis, Microeconomics, Methods and Techniques for Writing a Research Paper, Management of Culture and Cultural Politics, Project Management (or Logistics, Strategic Management), Business and Copyright Law, Arts Management;**
- **Communication courses: Introduction to Media and Communication, Communication Theories, Public Relations and Communication Management, Marketing, Media Law, Modern Communication Language, Media Aesthetics, Multimedia;**
- **Journalism courses: Organization and Production, Journalism Genres, Radio, News Agency Journalism, Investigative Journalism, Internet and New Media, Television, Technology of Print Media and Print Forms, Photography.**

At the second college, the College of Communication Kappa Phi, established in 2000, the program in Communication Studies (the college also offers study programs in English Language and Design) is divided into four strands, Communication (four years), Public Relations, Journalism, and Advertising (three years). Students graduating from the Journalism strand obtain a Bachelor of Communication in Journalism. The program is almost entirely made up of communication and journalism courses (50:50 ratio), along with two general education courses (Applied Informatics 1 and 2). Journalism courses include Media Writing 1, 2, 3 and 4 (or Written Communication 1, 2, 3 and 4) and Journalism 1 and 2, as well as Photography and Television, while communication courses comprise Introduction to Communication, History of Social Communication, Visual Communication, Public Relations, Mass Communication, Communication Re-

search Methods, Verbal Communication. Ethics is not implemented as a separate course. Furthermore, the programs in Journalism, Public Relations and Advertising are identical. The only difference is the substitution of one Journalism course with a Public Relations course in the Public Relations strand, and its substitution with an Advertising course in the Advertising Strand.

Quality of Higher Education. All journalism programs follow the Bologna education system, which is structured as three-year/four-year graduate and two-year/one-year postgraduate degrees. However, the curricula usually differ immensely between faculties and reflect inconsistency. Similarly, there is divided opinion on whether state or private universities offer better education. The public sector is criticized for lacking practical training and not keeping pace with modern trends, while the private sector is criticized for lacking tradition and experienced instructors. It is important to note that the enormous number of journalism faculties in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not a result of the need for journalists, rather than the fact that "...Bosnia and Herzegovina is ethnically divided, ...and in light of new national developments, among other things, the need was felt for opening national journalism faculties, and therefore a need for national journalists."⁸⁰ This is why "the state of the education cannot be separated from the state of the society...and developing countries everywhere pay little attention to education, which accounts for its poor condition."⁸¹

Furthermore, excessive theoretical education is underlined as the key issue with formal journalism education, not in terms of the number of courses,

80 Interview with Boro Kontić, director of Media Centar, Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016

81 Interview with Vuk Vučetić, senior teaching assistant at the University of East Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016

rather than “...the approach that scientific knowledge is crucial, while practical experience can be obtained through work... but it is the students’ lack of practical training that diminishes their chances of finding a real job.”⁸² According to the majority of interviewees, most faculties do not provide any practical training, which is why students reach editorial houses unprepared. This is why the quality of education has been declining for the past few years. The major contributors to the situation are the insufficient collaboration between the academia, the media, and the non-governmental sector, the poor economic state of the media, the assignment of enormous work load to journalists, the small editorial houses. Moreover, faculties, especially state faculties, lack the technical conditions for providing students with practical training (workshops, studios, student paper), so it is of no surprise that “journalism graduates have never seen a studio in their entire life, nor have they learned how to do footage editing or operate a camera”.⁸³

Human resources and their lack of actual experience in the trade are no lesser issue at both state and private universities. “No more than one professor at each of these faculties used to be a journalist. All the others are going to say that they worked as reporters for two months. It is unacceptable, but it is a closed circle... no one is allowed to break it open. It is a serious issue.”⁸⁴ In addition, the law in Bosnia and Herzegovina states that “a professor instructing students in the classroom must have a Ph.D. degree, so experts with experience in the field can teach as guest lecturers, but only one third of the course content. There are people who are willing to do more for the

students, but they are impeded.”⁸⁵ As far as the curricula are concerned, despite being altered several times (for example, the curriculum of the Faculty of Political Sciences has undergone changes three times for the last twelve years), the key issue is the “lack of strategic planning”. A question arises of how to bring closer what students are being taught, for example, about the inner workings of the journalistic profession, and the everyday practice where they are told, “...forget everything that you have learned – my house, my rules.”⁸⁶ The answer lies in the instructors’ attempt to teach students that nowadays, regionally, but also globally, what goes by the name of editorial policy is actually a type of advocacy journalism which they have been forced to practice.

b) Informal Journalism Education

As opposed to the great number of faculties that offer journalism education, Bosnia and Herzegovina boasts only a few specialized non-governmental organizations concerned with the training of journalists. The first to be mentioned is the Media Plan Institute, the first private organization for media development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, founded in 1995. The institute’s chief activities are in the field of education, research, and production. So far, the Institute has organized a number of trainings in the fundamentals of informational writing, news writing skills, video journalism, reporting on multicultural values, etc. It is the founder of the Advanced School of Journalism and its one-year program, structured as a nine-month curriculum, 70 percent of which is dedicated to practical training and 30 percent to theory, enrolling students from the entire Southeast region. The institute has also founded the non-governmental organization Media Initiatives (in 2005), aimed at rais-

82 Interview with Lejla Turčić, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo, conducted on 01.12.2016

83 Interview with Mirna Buljugić, BIRN Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016

84 Interview with Radenko Udovičić, director of Media Plan Institute and professor at the University of Mostar, conducted on 02.12.2016

85 Ibid.

86 Ibid.

ing the public awareness about the importance of the development of democracy and the tolerant public dialogue, as well as the respect for human rights and differences. The association would take over the Advanced School of Journalism and transform it into a Center for Practical Education in Communication. Today, Media Initiatives is focused on conducting research, seminars, media conferences and training aimed at supporting the development of modern media and professional standards and ethical norms. The association has carried out a good amount of research, particularly on the development of journalism education and distance learning, as well as training in writing for the print and electronic media, online journalism, etc.

Also founded in 1995, Media Center Sarajevo has had a prominent role in the history of journalism education. The center's primary focus is on the development and support of independent and professional journalism and the enhancement of media freedom in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It boasts a long tradition of journalism training and since its foundation, it has organized more than 230 trainings, attended by more than 2000 participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region. The list of training programs is extensive and beside basic training in the fundamentals of journalism (in print and electronic media), writing skills, radio journalism, and television journalism, it includes training in investigative journalism, media management, internet for journalists, computer assisted reporting (car), business reporting, data journalism, as well as training in specific issues and problems in society, such as human trafficking, organized crime, protection of the environment and human rights. The program is devised as interactive in order to enable the exchange of experience between media professionals in

the print, electronic, and online media, conducting professional training, as well as training of journalism students.

Another organization that should not be overlooked is BIRN Bosnia and Herzegovina, founded in 2005 in support of the development of quality media and civil society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Apart from undertaking research and analysis of the current political, economic, and social issues, the organization conducts training for journalists and media houses through specialized workshops. Topics vary and may include: online reporting, data journalism and fact-checking, new technologies, social networks, video editing, video analytics systems. Special attention is given to investigative journalism and investigative reporting, where journalists learn how to creatively structure stories and use various databases and other investigative tools. The realization of these activities involves a significant number of participants. Hence, as part of the Transparency of Judiciary and Responsibility of Media program, more than 70 workshops were organized in the local communities, which included the participation of representative of the judiciary and the media.

The Association of BH Journalists and the Press Council are also active in the field, having organized a significant number of journalism trainings. The Association of BH Journalists, founded in 2004, unites journalists, freelance journalists, journalism students, and other media workers. Its primary goal is the protection and the advancement of the freedom, rights, and responsibilities of journalists, the protection of the reputation and dignity of journalism, and the advancement of the public's right to be informed about the developments in the society. The training it conducts focuses on current issues and topics such as:

promotion of dialogue and multiculturalism through media content, diversity reporting as a journalistic input to the strengthening of peace, tolerance and stability, and reporting on minorities and LGBT communities. In addition, the association has set up the Journalists' Helpline in order to assist them in protecting their rights and freedoms during the undertaking of their everyday activities. The Press Council (for print and online media) is concerned with the enhancement and protection of the journalistic profession, following closely the application of professional standards, media freedom and freedom of information. Even though it primarily deals with protecting the public from unprofessional and manipulative reporting, the Press Council has a rich history in conducting journalism trainings. Some of those trainings are aimed at the challenges of self-regulation of the media and online journalism, media ethics for young journalists and journalism students from the South East Europe, freedom of information, the strengthening of journalism, reporters for radio programs, etc.

Similarly, many media organizations can be found in Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as the Independent Trade Union of Public Service Workers (founded in 2014), the Trade Union of Media and Graphic Workers of Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Association of BH Journalists (legal successor of the Journalists' Association), the Association of Croat Journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Journalists' Association of Republika Srpska.

Collaboration between University and Alternative education. It seems that the large number of faculties in Bosnia on the one hand, and the well equipped non-governmental sector providing additional education for journalists on the other, is not enough to secure collabo-

ration. In that sense, faculties are often criticized for being extremely difficult to collaborate. "Before I became a professor, I was trying to start a collaboration with the faculties, but they are sort of a closed circle...afraid to have their position of educators threatened."⁸⁷ Not only are they not willing to undertake initiative, they are not even interested in initiating collaboration with the non-governmental sector. In practice, everything is being done sporadically and without a plan. "The key problem is the fact that we are the only ones showing any initiativefaculties will never take the first step because they consider themselves superior, a level above us...and you need a large amount of energy to break into their circle."⁸⁸

If there happens to be some sort of collaboration, it is occasional, informal, and it is being done individually, between professors. In fact, "...faculties are passing up the chance to take advantage of these alternative forms of education... they fail to see that they have fallen behind...whereas we are out in the field all the time...changing daily, as if we were a small private company...we are completely in sync with the digital world, while they are still stuck writing with a goose quill pen."⁸⁹ Formally, there are no memorandums of collaboration, but there has to be a more intensive collaboration with guest experts from the field because "...sending off five to six students to editorial houses has proved unsuccessful. They are nothing but an inconvenience",...while everyone is minding their own business and having their hands full. That is why bringing guest lecturers can be more effective for the transfer of knowledge.⁹⁰

87 Ibid.

88 Interview with Boro Kantić, director of Media Centar, Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016.

89 Ibid.

90 Interview with Ljiljana Zurovac, executive director of the Press Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina, conducted on 30.11.2016

However, it should be observed that there have been efforts and ideas for collaboration and the connection of the formal to the informal education. For instance, there was a suggestion for integrating practical training in non-governmental organizations into one of the study years at the faculty. “We tried to achieve this by comprising...we would record the training undertaken by the students in an attachment to their diplomas, which proved an additional incentive. Unfortunately, the idea was short-lived.”⁹¹ Nonetheless, this led to the conclusion that organizations offering this type of informal education are a perfect complement to formal education.

c) *The Future of Journalism Education.*

The media setting in Bosnia and Herzegovina is deeply politicized. Not even universities and faculties are immune to politicization, which affects students’ interest and motivation to take up journalism. “The young are aware that education is not appreciated, and that the only way to finding employment is by being well connected or affiliated to a party.”⁹² Today, studying journalism offers no future, the media is in poor condition, and journalists are underpaid. However, practice shows that the number of students interested in journalism is still very high and there are many who want to take up journalism, even though this might not coincide with the reality in the media industry. In fact, “...faculties are swarming with students, but the actual need for journalists is not as great... nor there are enough funds to employ so many people.”⁹³ This might explain why the last couple of years have seen an increase in the interest among journalism students to undertake public relations,

and a decrease in the interest for classic journalism. They “...see less opportunities and financial means in journalism, whereas public relations offer different kinds of privileges.”⁹⁴

Contrary to that, in the past few years, formal journalism education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and particularly state universities, has shown a trend in adopting scientific discourse:

“...journalism studies are increasingly more oriented at media studies, rather than education in journalism, which is due to the competition from other study programs in social sciences and the attempt to introduce scientific discourse in the communication studies, but this is merely a way of distancing from the institution’s role as the provider of formal education suited to the needs of the journalism labor market.”⁹⁵

However, experts and academics are still divided on and even “...disagree about the idea and the concept of whether the studies should be more practice oriented or rather treated as a media science.”⁹⁶ On one hand, theory is underlined as an important education element that students need the most. “Journalism students must possess broad knowledge, an understanding of economics, politics, sociology, and philosophy in order to broaden their horizons and apply that knowledge to their work. Skills can be easily acquired, but a journalist needs to have substance.”⁹⁷ However, faculties are also being criticized for not providing students with the necessary theoretical knowledge, which is why “...they gradu-

91 Interview with Lejla Turčilo, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo, conducted on 01.12.2016

92 Interview with Vuk Vučetić, senior teaching assistant at the Faculty of East Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016

93 Interview with Boro Kantić, director of Media Centar, Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016

94 Interview with Lejla Turčilo, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo, conducted on 01.12.2016

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid.

97 Interview with Vuk Vučetić, senior teaching assistant at the Faculty of East Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016

ate from the faculty as media illiterate, unable to conduct a single decent media research.”⁹⁸ On the other hand, the need for placing practical experience in the primary focus of formal education is being highlighted. The lack of practical training is an issue shared by all universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is why students who graduate from journalism faculties are not prepared for work. “Faculties give solid theoretical basis, they discipline students to learn, do research, acquire methodological approach to certain topics, but they only acquire practical journalism when they graduate from the faculty.”⁹⁹

At institutional level, criticism is also aimed at the lack of education in journalism basics, i.e. writing and reading, or more precisely, orthography and grammar. Investigative journalism is also absent from the media in Bosnia and Herzegovina and faculties should give it a special focus. Similarly, attention should be paid at media literacy so that journalists are not led to believe that “everything that is written should be taken for granted.” Likewise, faculties need to popularize education on human rights, women’s rights, LGBT community, the disabled, or any other category. Ethics should also have prominence in journalism programs. “Ethics is everything. Not only journalists, but citizens too should be educated in ethics and morals, especially ethics and morals in journalism.”¹⁰⁰ In other words, “ethical and professional standards should be deeply rooted in students’ consciousness”,¹⁰¹ regardless of what awaits them in the editorial houses. Throughout the educational process and as part of every course, students

should be encouraged to think critically as this is an important aspect of journalistic work. “They should learn how to connect the dots logically and critically. There is no use knowing how to record or edit footage if they do not have anything to say.”¹⁰²

Despite its shortcomings, formal education provides the opportunity for acquiring the fundamentals, whereas professional improvement occurs in the period following graduation. “A professional degree is an entry ticket for the labor market...it lays the foundations which should be further refined through practical work...the one cannot be separated from the other.”¹⁰³ Leaving theoretical education to the faculties, experts and academics give several different suggestions concerning journalism training. The first one is the establishment “...of a training center in the major media”,¹⁰⁴ or more precisely, the public broadcasting service, which would allow for continual training of current and future journalists. The second one is the devising of a model which would enable students to learn through practical work, “...one semester entirely dedicated to practical work, made possible through collaboration with non-governmental organizations...they are willing to collaborate and there is room for cooperation.”¹⁰⁵ The third one is the engagement of external professors and lecturers in practical lessons, so instead of conducting a pro-form practical training in the media, “...a more intensive collaboration is needed, such as having guest experts in the practical training sessions at the faculties.”¹⁰⁶

98 Interview with Slobodanka Dekić, Media Center, Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016

99 Interview with Ljiljana Zurovac, executive director of the Press Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, conducted on 30.11.2016

100 Interview with Maida Bahto Kestendžić, Press Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, conducted on 30.11.2016

101 Interview with Stefan Blagić, Frontal magazine, conducted on 02.12.2016

102 Ibid.

103 Interview with Maida Bahto Kestendžić, Press Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, conducted on 30.11.2016

104 Interview with Boro Kantić, director of Media Center, Sarajevo, conducted on 30.11.2016

105 Interview with Leja Turčilo, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo, conducted on 01.12.2016

106 Interview with Ljiljana Zurovac, executive director of the Press Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina, conducted on 30.11.2016

2.3.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

a) University Education of Journalists

University studies in journalism were first introduced in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 1977, being offered as interdisciplinary studies at the faculties of law, economy and philology at the then only state university in the country. Later on, during the 1980s, journalism studies in the country would evolve into a separate and independent study program at the Faculty of Law with the same university, remaining to function in that same capacity to this very day. It is precisely that faculty that would produce most leading editors and prominent professional journalists in the country. The issue of professional training and education of journalists would become ever more topical upon The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia gaining its independence and especially in the period between 1994 and 1997, when a large number of commercial media would start operating on the Macedonian media market. Today, journalists can acquire professional education and training at three state universities and one private school of journalism. Departments of journalism at all universities in the country form part of their faculties of law, whereas the school is a higher education institution specifically specializing in journalism and public relations.

Organization of the Higher Education in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The oldest study program in journalism in the country is the one provided by the Faculty of Law at the state Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, being currently

set up under the Bologna model and in three of undergraduate and two in postgraduate academic years of studies. At undergraduate level, the study program is a “mixture” of general education, communicology, and journalism studies, with the curricula offering the following courses:

- **General education courses: An Introduction to Law, Contemporary European and Macedonian History, Economics, Introduction to Political Science, Fundamental Public and Private Law Institutions, Applied Economy, Political Systems, Human Rights and Freedoms in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, EU Institutions and Acquis, and Public Administration;**
- **Communication courses: Macedonian Language and Journalism Styles of Expression, Communication Science, Communication Theories, Public Opinion, Journalism Theories, Intercultural Communication and Media, and Public Relations;**
- **Journalism courses: Journalism Genres, Journalistic Information Genres, Printed and Electronic Media Journalism, Journalist Analytics Genres, and Freedom of Expression.**

However, what seems to be of greater significance in this respect is the fact that a large number of key journalism courses are offered in the curriculum as elective ones with such, for example, being Investigative Journalism, E-Journalism, Agency Journalism, Printed Media, Radio Journalism, TV Journalism, Graphics and Design in Journalism, and Peace and Military Journalism. Ethics, i.e. Ethics in Journalism is a course offered in the second academic year, with a practicum set of courses offered in

the third, being represented in separate units such as Reporting in Journalism, Editing in Journalism, Media Genres and Technology, and Setup of Media. Postgraduate studies in media and communications offer programs of genuine specialization in the area through courses such as Communication Theories, Media and Globalization, Media Law, Sociology of Communications, Design and Advertising in Media (Practicum), Marketing and Media, Media Research, Media Management, Press Agencies, Audience Research, Media Culture, and New Media.

At its Faculty of Law, the state Goce Delčev University in Štip provides a study program in journalism and public relations which started operating in 2012 and follows the templates of separately offering 3+2 and 4+1 academic years of studies. The three-year undergraduate studies are dominated by communicology and journalism courses, taking up nearly 60% of the entire curriculum, whereas the general education courses fall within the group of elective courses, all arranged in the following order:

- **Journalism courses: History of Journalism, Information Genres in Journalism, Public Relations Techniques, Printed Media Journalism, Electronic Media Journalism, Electronic Media Journalism, and Analytic Genres in Journalism;**
- **Communication courses: Communications Basics, History of Journalism, Communication Culture, Public and Public Opinion, Public Relations, Protocol Basics, and Media and Society;**
- **General education courses: History of Law, Economy Basics, Civil Society, Human Rights, Public Administration, Local Self-Government, Family Law, Law of Diplomacy and Consular Relations, Applied Economy, Philosophy of Law, and Labor Law.**

The focus in the fourth year of academic studies is placed on General education courses (International Relations, Human Resources, European Institutions, EU Policies, International Organizations), as opposed to communication-related ones (Communication in Public Administration, Media Law). Ethics is a compulsory course, being offered in the first year of studies. Student practical work is conducted at the University itself, with it having its own radio, IP television, a newspaper, and web page. Both the one-year and two-year programs of postgraduate studies in mass communication and media management offer the same set of courses in their first year (Theory of Mass Communication, Methodology of Social Research, Media Management, and Globalization and Media as compulsory courses, as well as European Union Institutions and Acquis, Political Parties, and European Business Law as elective). The curriculum for the second year of these postgraduate studies includes courses such as Regulations and Ethics in Public Relations, Analysis of Media Discourse, Intercultural Communication, Crisis Communication, and New Media, as compulsory courses, while Copyright and other Relating Rights, Ethics and Business Communication, Insurance Rights, and others are taught as elective.

Studies in journalism and media at the state University of Tetovo are provided by its Faculty of Law. They are conducted within a four-year program, with it being focused on communication and journalism courses (covering as much as 90% of the overall program). The following is a list of courses that the program of this University offers to students:

- **Communication courses: Mass Communication Basics 1 and 2, Semiotics in Media 1 and 2, Information and Propaganda,**

Communication Psychology, History of the Albanian People and Press 1 and 2, Communicology Theories, Public Opinion and Public Relations, Culture of Public Debating, Advertising and Marketing Strategies, Public Relations Strategy, and Media and Interpersonal Relations,

- **Journalism courses: Media Genres, Media Critique, News Writing and Publishing 1 and 2, TV Journalism, Methodology of Audio and Visual Production, Camera Operating, Editing and Work in Television, On-line Journalism, Photography and Photojournalism, Media Editing, and Television Spectacles;**
- **General education courses: International Relations, Social Psychology, Methodology of Social Research.**

Aside from general education courses (such as Introduction to Public Law, European Civilization, Modern History, Constitutional Law, Introduction to Political Science, Theory of State and Law, Introduction to Economy, Political Systems, Political Parties, EU Institutions) and communication courses (Sociology of Communications, Public Speech, Philosophy of Communication, Globalization and Cultural Identity, Media and Intercultural Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Academic Writing, Theories of Modernism and Global Media, Law in Media), the list of elective courses at the Tetovo University includes quite important journalism courses such as Web Design, Investigative Journalism, Military Conflicts Reporting, Information Agencies, The Internet as a Source of Information, and Graphical Design and Editing in Printed Media. Ethics is taught as a compulsory course in the third year of studies, whereas Practice in Printed Media, Practice in Radio and

Practice in Television which are taught in the last (eight semester) of the studies are also compulsory.

The School of Journalism and Public Relations was established (in 2008) as an inevitable necessity dictated by the media market. Studies in journalism at this School have been designed in cooperation with the Danish School of Journalism, but are currently suspended as a program due to the ever decreasing interest in studying journalism among the young. The program is primarily focused on journalism courses as opposed to communication and, especially, general education ones. Compulsory Practice, as well as Ethics, are part of the curriculum in the third year of studies at this School, but both are listed as elective courses. The journalism program at this School includes the following courses:

- **Journalism courses: Journalism Basics, Writing, Printed Media, Multimedia, Radio Journalism, On-line Journalism, TV Journalism, Media Concepts and Political Reporting, Investigative Journalism, and Economic Reporting, as compulsory courses, as well as Photography, Graphics, Design, Journalist Writing, Creative Thinking and Writing as elective;**
- **Communication courses: Public Opinion, Media and Society (compulsory), and Event Management and Budgeting, Media law, Communication Theories, Crisis Communication and Situation Management, and Research Planning (elective);**
- **General education: Political Systems and Global Relations (compulsory), Organization and Management, Introduction to Economy, Contemporary History, and International Business (elective).**

Quality of Higher Education. Formal education in journalism in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is characterized by a modernization of program structures in an effort to bring it into compliance with the needs of the media market. Nonetheless, in the views of the professional and academic community, following an inertia inherited from the previous system, education in journalism is still exceedingly theory-based, which would denote that “it stems from the empty notion which implies that an educated journalist should be a universally educated individual commanding knowledge in various areas... whom we then called universal dunces which meant people having a bit of knowledge on everything possible and ultimately on nothing – having a sort of an encyclopedic knowledge, but nothing thorough that would help them be a professional journalist.”¹⁰⁷ Hence, the craft, i.e. the practical part of journalism, which is one of the key elements required for being a professional journalist, is something which has remained a problem to this very day in the journalism education process. In actual terms, it means that there are students who lack the skills to handle and operate basic journalist equipment and “get to be introduced to what a microphone and a television camera are, as well as what the camera produces, when they actually start working.”¹⁰⁸ Moreover, universities lack adequate laboratories where they could exercise practical skills.

In actual fact, the Law on Higher Education makes practical training of students compulsory for all universities, and students of journalism are required to attend thirty days of practical training in media outlets or other entities.

However, that is often circumnavigated by students, being reduced to “my uncle owns a business and he will provide me with a certificate confirming that I have attended practice for fifteen days in his company.”¹⁰⁹ At universities, the problem consists of the media not being open to becoming involved in the education process and “lacking the will to hire student volunteers even for a short period which leaves us with having to overcome this handicap by cooperating with civil society organizations and signing various memoranda of cooperation.”¹¹⁰ On the other hand, the media have a huge workload to deal with while simultaneously being understaffed, which is an environment that prevents students from learning the craft in genuine terms. That would entail that “there is no professional already working in those outlets who has the time to provide them with the necessary time and attention, seeing as it is not enough for them to merely sit around in the office, attend some event and write a report from it from time to time. They need a thorough mentored process of advancement,”¹¹¹ i.e. a mentorship-based system that would go a long way towards producing self-sufficient and professional journalists which, moreover, “already existed across editorial desks in the country around fifteen years ago as a tradition which has since absolutely vanished, forcing the profession to cope with mere improvisations.”¹¹²

In general terms, as some of the interviewees state, the situation has seen marked improvements in comparison to approx. ten years ago.

107 Interview with Zoran Dimitrovski, Editor in Chief of the Focus weekly magazine and lecturer at the School of Journalism and Public Relations, conducted on 27.10.2016

108 Interview with Vasko Popetreski, Editor, Alsat-M TV, conducted on 28.10.2016

109 Interview with Sašo Ordanovski, Visiting Professor at the University of South East Europe in Tetovo, conducted on 25.11.2016

110 Interview with Jasna Bačovska, Head of the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Law “Justinianus Primus” in Skopje, conducted on 24.10.2016

111 Interview with Zoran Dimitrovski, Editor in Chief of the Focus weekly magazine and lecturer at the School of Journalism and Public Relations, conducted on 27.10.2016

112 Interview with Tamara Čausidis, President of the Independent Union of Journalists and Media Professionals (SSNM), conducted on 14.10.2016

Solid capacities for journalist education have been developed in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia market which are part of the non-profit sector in the country and apply best practices used by international institutions and higher education institutions.

This shift forward has had a motivating impact on universities, prompting them to invest in the contents they offer in their journalism programs. “It is safe to say that, overall, solid capacities for journalism education have been developed in the country both in formal terms and by applying informal toolsets and concepts designed to tackle that specific issue. All things considered, our country is not far behind either the other countries in the region, or even perhaps some European ones in terms of what it has to offer in that respect.”¹¹³

b) Informal Journalism Education

There is a great number of non-governmental organizations operating in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the main activities of which are closely related to the education of journalists. The oldest one among those is the Macedonian Institute of Media (MIM) which was jointly established in 2001 by the Danish School of Journalism, USAID, Irex Pro Media and the Macedonian Press Centre. Its primary role is to support both the media and media professionals, but also civil society organizations and institutions, and provide them with access to emerging knowledge in the area of media work. Aside from being involved in research and production, the Institute also hosts training courses for journalists predominantly focused on freedom of expression, investigative journalism, professional and ethical reporting, reporting on human rights issues, lobbying and advocacy, civil ac-

tivism and multimedia, media literacy, public relations and communication with the media, presentation skills, and interethnic inclusiveness. Another organization of no lesser importance in this context has been BIRN Macedonia, having been established in 2004 as part of the regional organization Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN). The organization has hosted numerous local and regional projects, analyses and research, round tables and training courses for the media, dedicated, first and foremost, to international journalist standards, ethics, conducting interviews, information sources management, cooperation between journalists and the non-governmental sector, investigative journalism, etc. Investigative journalism is a specific area of interest to the Center for Investigative Journalism SCOOP-Macedonia which was established with the assistance of the Danish Association for Investigative Journalism and the Investigative Journalism Centers Network. Its primary goal is to encourage and advance investigative journalism as a vital tool in the fight against organized crime and corruption, as well as to strengthen the democratic and professional capacities in journalism. The projects and trainings it has been pursuing have all been dedicated to tackling precisely those issues. Another organization dealing in these matters has been the NGO Infocenter, which was established in 2003 and has been active in the area of communication, public advocacy, media, good governance, the rule of law, freedom of expression and freedom of information. It is a leading organization in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the area of media monitoring, whereas its training courses for journalists have primarily been dedicated to investigative journalism.

¹¹³ Interview with Biljana Petkovska, Director of the Macedonian Media Institute (MIM), conducted on 13.10.2016

An organization which has been quite active in this context has also been the Center for Civil Communications (CCC), which was established in 2005. Its operations have been focused on the following two interrelated activities: (1) monitoring government institutions and issuing recommendations on measures and policies to advance their work, good governance, economic development and reduction of corruption, and (2) advancing the abilities of journalists, media outlets and non-governmental organizations in combating corruption, as well as increasing transparency, responsibility and accountability in government institutions. To those ends, apart from working on numerous projects, the Center has provided training to more than 250 journalists working in both national and local media outlets on areas such as investigating and reporting on corruption, access to public information, improving professional skill sets in reporting on matters of local interest, reporting on local authorities, and media outlets and non-governmental organizations involved in the fight against corruption. In parallel to all these organizations, ever since its establishment, the Media Development Center (MDC) has been involved in analyzing media-related legislation in the country and providing legal assistance to journalists and media outlets by assigning to them its own team of lawyers. Aside from research work, the Center has also been conducting trainings for journalists, primarily aimed at offering insight into statistics-based journalism to journalists working in new media.

An organization which particularly stands out in this respect is the Institute of Communication Studies (ICS), which was established in 2013 as a science-and-research-oriented organization focusing on areas such as journalism studies, the media, public relations,

and political, as well as corporate communication. Its main focus has specifically been placed on the following two areas: (1) to use and develop academic and applied research to advance science and provide support to practitioners, and (2) to use postgraduate studies to build a network of young researchers to be able to strengthen the pillars of these scientific disciplines. Aside from pursuing numerous research projects on issues such as strengthening civil society, expressing public interest, the role of the media in conflict situations, the audio and visual industries in the country, improving journalists' skills and multimedia abilities among young people, professional reporting on inter-ethnic and interreligious topics, the Institute has recently conducted a training course on academic blogging.

In this context, other organizations worth mentioning are also the Association of Journalists of Macedonia (AJM), which was founded in 1946 as a promoter and guardian of professional journalist standards and freedom of expression, followed by the Macedonian Association of Journalists (MAJ), which was established in 2002 with the goal of advancing journalism, safeguarding freedom of thought and expression, protecting journalists and the interests of the profession, as well as strengthening solidarity among journalists. The Independent Union of Journalists and Media Professionals (SSNM) is of no lesser significance in this respect, having been established in 2010 and focusing on representing, presenting, advancing and protecting the economic and professional interests of media employees. An organization that has been quite active since 2013 has been the Council of Media Ethics of Macedonia, having been acting as a media self-regulatory body aimed at protecting freedom of the media and the right of the public to being informed, promot-

ing quality of media contents, creating a public ambiance of media self-criticism, self-awareness and accountability, as well as promoting the journalist code of ethics.

Collaboration between University and Alternative Education. The cooperation between journalism departments at faculties on one hand and civil society organizations and the media on the other has been poor and is, most often than not, being pursued in the shape of joint projects, research and debates and much more seldom in the shape of training courses. “The cooperation is not and has never been at a satisfactory level, and I cannot see any evidence to attest that the situation in this respect is going to improve in the period ahead either. The faculty departments are employing conservative methods and outdated work templates.”¹¹⁴ When considering, on the other hand, the issue of the engagement in the education process of practitioner journalists, whom the law has defined as expert practitioners, it is discernable that the responsibility for taking some initiative in this respect has been left solely to university professors themselves, which would imply that there is no systemic approach or policy being implemented in this regard in the country, neither there is a clear notion of who exactly would be included in such a list of expert practitioners to be involved in the education of journalism students, even though journalist practitioners have stated the following on the matter: “When we ourselves signal our interest to deliver a lecture or host a meeting with students, we have never been refused by the academic community, but such meetings have been difficult to organize.”¹¹⁵ Finance and funding such expert involvement is something

that faculties point out as a significant problem in this respect, stating that “journalism studies are minor non-commercially oriented and benefitting studies, enjoying very little financial support from the government apparatus and, hence, experts have been applying to take part in the practical training of students solely on enthusiastic grounds,”¹¹⁶ whereby it has been a regular practice for experts to cooperate with journalism study programs on a strictly volunteer basis.

On the other hand, the expert and academic community see informal journalist education as being of vital importance for enabling young journalists to advance their professional training, especially in a situation in which most universities offering studies in journalism conduct very little, if any, practical work and exercises. It has even been emphasized that “it is the most important type of education which is, in several of its aspects, even more important for journalists, seeing as it helps them to remain up-to-date and in shape, as well as providing them with a platform for life-long learning.”¹¹⁷ Yet, interest in informal education and professional advancement training has, as of late, been declining, owing to the presence of “negative selection in the media and the fact that if particular journalists are good at their jobs, it does not necessarily mean that their editorial staff would valorize that and allow them to advance their careers. What has actually been taking place is a process developing in completely the opposite direction, seeing as it has been instrumentalized by politics.”¹¹⁸

114 Interview with Biljana Petkovska, Director of the Macedonian Institute of Media (MIM), conducted on 13.10.2016

115 Interview with Naser Selmani, President of the Association of Journalists of Macedonia (AJM), conducted on 12.10.2016

116 Interview with Jasna Bačovska, Head of the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Law “Justinianus Primus” in Skopje, conducted on 24.10.2016

117 Ibid.

118 Interview with Biljana Petkovska, Director of the Macedonian Institute of Media (MIM), conducted on 13.10.2016

In comparison, although the need remains for students to be able to attend practical work in media outlet newsrooms, a solution which seems to be able to produce better consistency in this regard would be to establish journalist laboratories at faculties where students would be offered an opportunity to work under professionals in the field, taking into account that “newsrooms are so busy and very much full of dynamics that it does not necessarily mean that if a student sits there for a week, someone from the professional staff would actually dedicate their attention to them. That week should provide students with an insight into how a newsroom functions, as opposed to them learning, for example, how to edit video or audio content.”¹¹⁹ Furthermore, an idea that is currently at its inception in the non-governmental sector is to employ students and such who have already graduated in writing texts on a volunteering basis in order for them to genuinely put what they have learned at the university into practice (particularly by doing volunteer-based writing work at organizations such as the Council of Media Ethics of Macedonia). “An initiative has even been raised to launch a summer school specifically dedicated to ethics in journalism, to involve both university professors and students who have completed their studies.”¹²⁰

c) Challenges for journalism and media education

Interest in journalism education is declining among students in Macedonia. At this point, journalism is not a desired professional calling in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Interest among the young people for studying journalism is ever more declining, given that “they are very much

in tune with what has been going on in this industry and are aware of the problems that journalists today are facing, and they can see that there is currently a genuine crisis taking place in this field.”¹²¹ Even “the number of candidates wishing to enroll in journalism studies is dramatically declining and there is an apparent declining trend in the number of young people expressing interest in formal journalism education”.¹²² Those who wish to join this profession and behave in a decent manner have no future in it. Examples of journalists being pressurized, bullied, blackmailed, and threatened have also been countless. Even active journalists have been abandoning the profession by their growing numbers, regardless of the fact that there is a great number of media outlets and especially electronic ones that are active on the market at this point in time. Today, it is a line of work which is seen as bringing neither financial gains, nor status or integrity.

In that context, **formal journalism education has been left facing two vital issues: a lack of professional teaching staff with experience in the field who would be able to adequately impart their knowledge to students, coupled with a lack of practical training and instruction for students.** When it comes to the issue of the teaching staff, there is also a deficit of staff specialized in the specific courses taught at universities. “We have very few academics holding PhDs in communication sciences.” Nevertheless, the question also remains if journalism courses and especially professional ones should at any cost be taught by PhD-holding teachers. “As we are aware, it is the current practice all across Europe and,

119 Interview with Nazim Rašidi, journalist, Alsat-M TV, conducted on 12.10.2016

120 Interview with Marina Tuneva, Director of the Council of Ethics of Macedonia (CMEM), conducted on 18.10.2016

121 Interview with Sefer Tahiri, assistant professor at the South East European University, Tetovo. Conducted on 28.10.2016

122 Interview with Tamara Čausidis, President of the Independent Union of Journalists and Media Professionals (SSNM), conducted on 14.10.2016

by all means, the world, for journalists holding low or no academic titles whatsoever to be teaching journalism at universities, although they are not allowed to formally sign student documents. This type of flexible education should be applied here as well, and it can also be adapted to the ECTS through a set of lectures and exercises.”¹²³

The issue of what degree of quality those who graduate in journalism have come out of universities with is a much more serious one. “Our education system produces students who succeed in graduating without possessing the sufficient general ability for critical thinking. It is a result of an education system which produces people who are not used to think in a critical manner, whereby, in these very academic degree-producing factories, we fail in reaching the level necessary to produce individuals who would form the critical mass in society and would, as such, be able to conceptualize society in a critical manner”¹²⁴ It is precisely critical thinking that needs to be the objective of formal education. However, very few faculties are offering their students such type of education and most “do not offer any course whatsoever in their curricula that, in turn, would, in a way, teach students to keep an open mind and a widely stretching view of society.”¹²⁵ A journalist should also possess a spirit of curiosity and have a predisposition towards activism, being someone who belongs to the very profession which stands out as the watchdog of democracy and public institutions in any given country. Universities should find a way to encourage students to nurture precisely that thinking process while “placing an emphasis on the craft itself and the ethical values relating to journal-

ism. When it comes to other general knowledge which no human being has, in one way or the other, ever been able to fully master, it is enough to acquire a basic degree of learning.”¹²⁶

Apart from that, students must be enabled to learn certain skills to facilitate them in handling the specific challenges that the profession presents. **“They should, first of all, be able to clearly discern what writing for different types of media specifically entails, i.e. why writing for television is different to writing for a newscaster, the radio, or online media outlets.”**¹²⁷ “There are people who are able to tell captivating stories, be curious and patient, or uncompromising in unearthing a specific story, but lack the ability to put those stories in writing.”¹²⁸ Moreover, it would be a good idea for faculties to offer students opportunities for specializing in a certain narrower area, i.e. for them becoming able to work on one specific area in order to adequately relay important information in that area to the public by employing a type of “sector-based education, whereby a specific journalist would, for example, be trained to be a court reporter, which would mean that the journalist in question would have to, if anything, take on courses dealing with criminal law, with them being relevant to that specific area of reporting.”¹²⁹ “If you want to specialize in reporting on areas such as health, law, politics or economy, you should be able to know what terms such as budget and securities stand for, or, should you, for example, decide to specialize in law as a reporting area, you should know what court reporting actually involves, etc.”¹³⁰

123 Interview with Zoran Dimitrovski, Editor in Chief of the Focus weekly magazine and lecturer at the School of Journalism and Public Relations, conducted on 27.10.2016

124 Interview with Sašo Ordanovski, Visiting Professor at the University of South East Europe in Tetovo, conducted on 25.11.2016

125 Interview with Sefer Tahiri, assistant professor at the South East European University, Tetovo. Conducted on 28.10.2016

126 Interview with Vasko Popetreski, Editor, Alsat-M TV, conducted on 28.10.2016

127 Interview with Sefer Tahiri, assistant professor at the South East European University, Tetovo. Conducted on 28.10.2016

128 Interview with Zoran Dimitrovski, Editor in Chief of the Focus weekly magazine and lecturer at the School of Journalism and Public Relations, conducted on 27.10.2016

129 Ibid

130 Interview with Jasna Bačovska, Head of the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Law “Justinianus Primus” in Skopje, conducted on 24.10.2016

Certainly, studying ethics is an inseparable part of the education process and “one of the key pillars upon which the integrity of a professional journalist rests, and must form part of both formal and informal journalist education.”¹³¹ That would entail that studying ethics is necessary in the education and training of all future professionals and should also be disaggregated into different tailor-made areas such as the following:

“Ethics and ethical behavior in investigation, ethics of journalist reporting in different genres, ethics of treating interlocutors and interviewees, ethics of treating information sources, etc.”¹³²

Hence, ethics should be incorporated into different courses forming part of a journalist’s education, rather than be taught as one separate course, as is the case at this point. Moreover, the education system has failed in “producing” a complete professional if that professional graduates without becoming acquainted with “human rights, labor relations rights, and professional standards,”¹³³ as well as public opinion, media freedoms, etc. In essence, the type of education that needs to be implemented in the country is one of “all-encompassing knowledge that should prepare one for reaching a higher level of understanding the processes taking place in society while considering them from all possible angles such as their political, cultural, and technology aspects, whereby the craft itself can be incorporated into a one-year curriculum, being offered as a mode of furthering professional education and training in that specific line of work.”¹³⁴

131 Interview with Biljana Petkovska, Director of the Macedonian Institute of Media (MIM), conducted on 13.10.2016

132 Interview with Marina Tuneva, Director of the Council of Media Ethics of Macedonia (CMEM), conducted on 18.10.2016

133 Interview with Tamara Čausidis, President of the Independent Union of Journalists and Media Professionals (SSNM), conducted on 14.10.2016

134 Interview with Sašo Ordanovski, Visiting Professor at the University of South East Europe in Tetovo, conducted on 25.11.2016

2.4.

Montenegro

a) University Education of Journalists

Journalist education in Montenegro is among of the youngest in the region. Up to 15 years ago, “there was no higher, nor any other type of formal or informal education offered to journalists and other media professionals in the country” (Vuković, 2002: 72). Education of journalists was considered to be quite a neglected area, whereas young people were not encouraged to enroll in journalism studies at the universities across the former Yugoslav federation. Furthermore, Montenegro would start building its higher education system a lot later than the other republics of the former Yugoslavia, launching studies in law and economy first. It is precisely the Faculty of Law at the state University of Podgorica that would launch an initiative in 2001 to establish studies in journalism. The project would be warily tested among academic and political circles, falling short, however, to evoke greater interest amongst journalists, the media and the general public, and hence ending in failure. Two years later (in 2003), the Department of Political Science would be founded at the same faculty, evolving in 2006 into a separate university unit offering study programs in the following four major disciplines: diplomacy and international relations, journalism, and political science, administration and social work, while adding European studies as an independent discipline later on.

Organization of the Higher Education in Montenegro. The only education institution offering a study program in journalism in the country are the journalism studies at the Faculty of Political Science, although, as of 2008,

the private Donja Gorica University (established in 2007) started offering, among others, studies in communication and media. Undergraduate studies take three academic years to complete, whereas the curriculum is predominantly focused on courses of general education character, i.e. on courses in the disciplines otherwise offered by its parent faculty. Such courses mostly prevail in the curriculum of the first academic year, but also form part of the curricula of the second and third year of academic studies. Courses in the field of journalism are offered in the second and third year, with theoretic prevailing over practical ones. Journalist ethics is taught in the third year of studies, with the overall curriculum listing the following courses:

- **General education courses: Introduction to Political Science, Sociology, Philosophy, Law Basics, Contemporary Political History, Political Sociology, Political Anthropology, Human Rights, Contemporary Political Systems, Contemporary Legal Systems, International Relations, Psychology of Politics, Psychoanalysis of Politics, and Political Marketing;**
- **Communication courses: Introduction to Journalism, Public Opinion, History of Journalism, Media in Crisis Situations, Psychology of Media;**
- **Journalism courses: Journalism Theories and Techniques, Radio Journalism, Television Journalism, Printed Media and Press Agencies.**

After completing undergraduate studies, the Faculty offers one-year specialized studies in journalism and a degree of Specialist in Journalism, with the curriculum on offer including courses which are otherwise vital for undergraduate studies such as Globalization, Investigative Journalism, Media Law,

Political Science Methodology, Mass Communication Theory, Aesthetics, On-line Journalism, Political Culture, Political System of Montenegro. Later, students can enroll in one-year master studies in Modern Trends in Journalism where they are offered courses such as Deontology of the Journalist Profession, Media and Integration Processes, Media and Public, Public Relations Models and Techniques, Political Science Methodology, Business Communication, and EU Enlargement Policy. It is a four-level system of studies arranged in the following order: undergraduate + specialist + master + PhD studies (i.e. 3+1+1+3) which is the same system that is being applied across all departments at the University (aside from the Faculty of Medicine), being a system that would be found as being rather unique among most other European countries, hence creating problems in the recognition of diplomas and grading methodology (which is aligned with the Bologna model) and in terms of being able to be incorporated within the integrated education system. This is why the University has decided to restructure its university units, to be brought in line with the Pan-European system of education, while simultaneously developing a new model of studies incorporating practical training, new interdisciplinary study programs, and establishing links with the labor market.

This overall restructuring will also concern the journalism study program, with the initial idea having earlier been to abolish it altogether, while later shifting the focus, however, towards actually advancing the program. Undergraduate studies are to be renamed into Media Studies and Journalism, while the existing one-year specialized and master studies are to be transformed into two-year master studies. The program is to be contemporized by adding a greater

number of both theoretical and practical journalism courses, being offered as part of the undergraduate studies, as well as a balanced mixture of theoretical and practical knowledge, being introduced to the master studies program. In the first year, the predominantly general education-based courses are to be replaced by a greater number of journalism courses (History of Journalism, Communication Science, Introduction to Journalism, Psychology of Communication, Printed Media and Press Agencies), while introducing, as well, compulsory practice in printed media outlets. This trend of reforms is to stretch to both the second year program, too (by introducing courses such as Political Communication, Radio Journalism, TV Journalism, and Practice in Electronic Media), and third-year program (by introducing Public Opinion, Media Culture, Political Marketing, Media Management, Reporting on Crisis Situations, Journalism Ethics, On-line Journalism and New Media, and Practice in On-line Media as courses). Master studies will take on a completely new structure with primarily journalism courses (such as Investigative Journalism, Language and Media Styles, Mass Communication Theory, Media Law, On-line Production, Media Culture of Diversity, Media and Society, Design Research, Analysis of Media Discourse, and EU Media Policies) now taking up a larger part of the curriculum, as opposed to reducing the number of general education courses that are to be offered in the overall program (with such courses now being Methodology of Social Sciences, Political Parties and Party Systems, Visual Culture, Analysis of Public Policies). In the meantime, a Cooperation Agreement is being drafted, to be signed with the Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana, allowing for professors from the Slovenian faculty to teach in the Podgorica journalism studies program,

as well as enabling students who graduate from the program to be awarded a double degree.¹³⁵

Quality of Higher Education. While assessing the current status in formal journalism education in Montenegro, the expert community has emphasized that it does not suit the needs of the market, rendering both the media industry and graduating students unprepared for working in editorial desks, owing to the fact that the studies they have attended followed an outdated model and have not been sufficiently attuned to the practical aspects of the profession. “You have to educate them on media convergence, i.e. on media outlets which incorporate a number of elements of different media platforms such as television, radio, printed media, as well as the internet, within a single media product.”¹³⁶ This is precisely what has been lacking in the university education of journalists, preventing journalism students who have completed their studies from coming into editorial desks while often being unprepared to perform simple tasks such as:

“writing a news report or browsing for information, let alone having the knowledge for engaging in more serious forms of communication as are conducting interviews, debating with interlocutors, and others.”¹³⁷

A serious shortcoming of the current journalism studies is the lack of practical training, but also the manner in which the existing one is being conducted. There are no professional journalists to lead students throughout the work process in newsrooms. “They

135 Interview with Nataša Ružić, Assistant Professor at the Media and Journalism Studies Department at the Faculty of Political Science with the state University of Podgorica, conducted on 30.10.2016

136 Interview with Dejan Lučić, part-time Associate Professor at the University of Montenegro, conducted on 30.10.2016

137 Interview with Aida Ramusović, Director of non-governmental organization Nomen, conducted on 30.10.2016

are there without mentor oversight and that represents idle movement, seeing as they perform very little actual work or work with journalists of poor professional quality who do not possess what it takes to teach them anything practical.”¹³⁸ Hence, the need arises for carefully selecting the media outlets where students would undergo practical training. “You have to pay close attention to selecting the adequate media outlet to send them to practice to, having in mind that there are media outlets that are extremely unprofessional and unethical in the way they operate and we would not wish for students to acquire their first experience in such environments.”¹³⁹

Yet, it is of no lesser issue that students are not being taught to think critically, which is paramount for journalism. **“If you are not able to think critically, if you take what people say at face value and without healthy doubts as to everything that is taking place around you, you cannot be a journalist.”**¹⁴⁰ In that context, it is precisely active professors, rather than the students themselves who are being singled out as the main culprits for this current situation. Perhaps this is where the skepticism as regards the concept of formal journalism education that some interviewees have expressed is stemming from, with them following the line of reasoning that “people who hold an interest in journalism and have already become experts or boast a university degree in another area such are, for instance, economy, law or other humanities, would find it easy to learn the craft anyway.”¹⁴¹

b) Informal Journalism Education

Montenegro does not possess a strong network of alternative journalism education. Until the beginning of the 1990s, classical editorial-desk-based trainings of young journalism interns were being put in place, shortening the time needed for young journalists to master both the fundamentals of the craft and the profession’s ethical norms. The first relatively serious attempts at offering young journalists practical education were made in Podgorica in 1993. With the support of the Alternative Information Network (AIM) and the George Soros Foundation, a several-month-long training would be hosted, offering lectures and practical work with renowned journalists. Later, on several different occasions, AIM would also host basic-level journalist training (both theoretical and practical work), having been attended by students in the final year of their university studies at some of the Montenegrin faculties (Vuković, 2002: 73).

With the establishment of the Montenegro Media Institute (IMCG) and its incorporation within the South East European Network for the Professionalization of the Media (SEENPM), possibilities were open for Montenegrin journalists and media professionals to attend specialized journalism courses abroad as well. Its activities encompass conducting research, publication, production, media consulting, as well as providing assistance to transitioning media, and launching legislation initiatives. The Institute has especially been focused on training journalists and other media professionals by employing to that end foreign experts and prominent local professionals. Education of journalists takes part over five-day courses, placing an emphasis on imparting practical knowledge and professional skills. For the purpose of

138 Interview with Dragoljub Vuković, journalist, conducted on 31.10.2016

139 Interview with Nataša Ružić, Assistant Professor at the Media and Journalism Studies Department at the Faculty of Political Science with the state University of Podgorica, conducted on 30.10.2016

140 Interview with Mihajlo Jovičić, Editor-in-Chief of Vijesti newspaper, conducted on 31.10.2016

141 Ibid

hosting these courses, the Institute has acquired modern equipment such as a digitalized radio studio and a TV studio boasting latest TV equipment, as well as a multifunctional PC classroom. However, according to latest information, over the last few years, providing training in journalism has stopped being in the Institute's focus.

Similar activities have been pursued by the Independent Organization for the Professionalization of the Media, Nomen, which has been established in 2011. Its basic activity is to provide education for journalists and interested members of the public with the aim of developing modern media outlets that would be grounded upon the rules and ethical norms of the profession, as well as hosting academic events, courses, seminars and trainings for journalists, media professionals, and individuals from the business, while enabling cultural and public circles of Montenegro to communicate with the public on a regular basis, coupled with conducting research and applying new technologies in the development of media. Nonetheless, when selecting the topics to be covered by the trainings (relating to specific political and economic issues), most often than not, the wishes of donors are being given preferential treatment. Interest in furthering professional training is very high among the media. There is also interest in journalist ethics, but such a project has never been brought into fruition in spite of the amendments that were recently made to the Journalist Code of Ethics. Apart from these, other organizations that are operating in Montenegro at this point are the Association of Journalists, the Association of Sports Journalists, the Media Union (established in 2013) and the Association of Professional Journalists, which was recently formed

with the aim of promoting the professional standards, protecting freedom of public speaking, and advancing the status of journalists, photo reporters and camera operators.

Collaboration between University and Alternative Education. Not only has the number of non-governmental organizations covering the media industry in the country been small, but the cooperation of the existing ones with the journalism studies program is both erratic and neglectable in its scope. Initiative is mainly being provided by the non-governmental sector, while whenever they host relating workshops, they are forced to beg the Faculty to send students to take part in these free-of-charge courses. All this has led to journalism becoming an ever less desirable occupation in Montenegro, seeing as students often decide to pursue careers in public relations and marketing, rather than ones in investigative journalism, which is something that is altogether bound to have a devastating effect on the future of journalism and the media industry in the country as a whole.

In the views of the members of the professional community, informal education cannot serve as a replacement for a formal one. They see it as a good opportunity for furthering professional training, but, as they claim: "A fifteen-day or three-month course or school does not suffice for what you can learn at the university."¹⁴² On the other hand, they see it as an excellent component in the education of journalists due to it allowing "peers in their line of work to establish networks which is further important for strengthening the professional community in its entirety".¹⁴³

142 Interview with Nataša Ružić, Assistant Professor at the Media and Journalism Studies Department at the Faculty of Political Science with the state University of Podgorica, conducted on 30.10.2016

143 Interview with Dejan Lučić, part-time Associate Professor at the University of Montenegro, conducted on 30.10.2016

Congruently, informal education brings great benefits to both currently active and future journalists. However, aside from higher education institutions displaying a low interest in cooperation, the media outlets, too, have not been interested in allowing their employees to attend various workshops and trainings. Global trends of life-long learning are also being overlooked, with the capacity of the non-governmental sector to participate in such events remaining largely unutilized. Education of journalists should be viewed as a continuous process of furthering professional education of both young, as well as senior journalists holding executive posts across the various media outlets:

“All trainings are absolutely welcome, but they would be rendered ineffective if only the young are the ones being trained while the elder stuck-in-their-ways journalists are left acting solely as trainers, seeing as the younger would forget everything they have learned there.”¹⁴⁴

c) Challenges for journalism education

Journalism has to this day remained quite an attractive occupational calling in Montenegro and the number of young people enrolling in the journalism studies program is quite large. In that context, according to most members of the professional community, university education plays a pivotal role, taking into account that the university is precisely the venue where future journalists have been able to receive continued education in the field. Nonetheless, when considering this issue, one cannot overlook views (as, first and foremost, held by journalists themselves) stating that, while formal education in the profession is currently gaining appeal among the general public, there is no actual of it in the country, given the minuteness

of the Montenegrin media market. “It is an East European model of education which, in its day seemed to be viable, but, has in modern times lost its feasibility.”¹⁴⁵ Coupled with this, there is a widely held view that “those who are interested in journalism can quickly learn the craft, provided that they have already acquired a university degree in another area such as economy, law, or other humanities.”¹⁴⁶

On the other hand, in spite of non-governmental organizations sporadically hosting trainings for journalists, **the best way forward would nevertheless be to combine university with alternative education.** However, to pursue such a course of action, it would require a great number of conditions to be met. **Reform of the journalism department at the University of Podgorica is a necessity** (which is already on-going), putting greater effort into improving the quality of the teaching staff there, establishing connections with universities in the region and beyond, as well as developing strong relations of partnership with non-governmental-organizations-led education. As regards the teaching staff: “They have to employ established PhD-holding professors who have lectured and shared their knowledge at renowned venues across the world. Knowledge is the most expensive thing in the world today. It is not capital, but rather a clear understanding, as well as information coming in the purest form.”¹⁴⁷ Currently, only one professor and one assistant are working in the journalism studies program, while the others are outside associates on a part-time basis – all professors with adequate education degrees coming from both the

145 Interview with Dragoljub Vuković, journalist, conducted on 31.10.2016

146 Interview with Mihajlo Jovičić, Editor-in-Chief of Vijesti newspaper, conducted on 31.10.2016

147 Interview with Zvezdan Vukanović, visiting professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Podgorica, conducted on 31.10.2016

144 Interview with Aida Ramusović, Director of non-governmental organization Nomen, conducted on 30.10.2016

country and the region. When it comes to the program on offer, after ten years of being implemented, it is finally expecting a genuine shakeup, which is to begin in 2017, with students enrolled in it being able to conduct practical work and draft articles as early as in the first year of their studies, which would allow of journalist education to advance as further as possible as a whole over the period ahead. Practice has not been introduced into the program for purposes of merely keeping up with global trends in journalist education, but with the idea of “kick-starting creativity and making students enjoy their work, since they can always learn theory from their books. The fundamentals of the profession entail finding a way to get to the core of things and discover what is new. It is both practical and a lot more important.”¹⁴⁸

However, in designing the program, special care should be dedicated to basic knowledge of article writing and reporting, as well as video and audio editing, photography and developing investigating skills. As regards preferences, politics or economy need not be the only desired fields of interest, with entertainment being one of the others on offer, but students must learn the methods of doing investigative work. Moreover, it is not only the young, but also experienced journalists who lack the ability for critical thinking. “They come to press conferences, they turn on their dictaphones and when the minister finishes his address, they turn them off and leave the room, without asking as to the reasons why someone has said something or why they have said it in some particular manner. In fact, they all lack a critical way of thinking.”¹⁴⁹ This has particularly been true due to

the fact that, in practice, the public is often more media savvy and literate than journalists. Ethics has particularly been singled out as a course that has to be made a fundamental and irreplaceable course in the program. It should be taught from the moment students step into a university right until the time when they complete their studies.

“We teach students philosophy of ethics spanning a period from Plato and Aristotle to this very day and when they start working for owners who have never in their lives attended a single course in media ethics later orders them to write in one way or another and, if they fail to comply, they would lose their jobs.”¹⁵⁰

It would even be much better if a separate module is established, entailing a certain separate element of media ethics being taught each individual semester instead of being part of one single course throughout the studies. The least desirable image would be to allow students to be taught ethics by a professor who has on numerous occasions been suspected of plagiarizing his academic papers (doctoral thesis and book), which is how the situation stands at the faculty at this instance.

Moreover, apart from formal literacy, future journalists should acquire general education too, as well as studying courses such as Political Systems, Human Rights Theories, Public Opinion, Media Law, and Media Legislation. Why is this a fact? First and foremost, because, someone simply delivering a piece of news cannot be considered a journalist. In order for journalists to be good in their jobs, they have to be well-acquainted with the separate topics they cover, as well as be in tune with what would hold the public’s interest most, and how impor-

148 Interview with Dejan Lucić, part-time Associate Professor at the University of Montenegro, conducted on 30.10.2016

149 Interview with Marijana Camović, President of the Trade Union of Media, Montenegro, conducted on 01.11.2016

150 Interview with Zvezdan Vukanović, visiting professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Podgorica, conducted on 31.10.2016

tant contextualizing actually is. “Should something be placed in the wrong context or in no context at all, it leads to a completely erroneous message being sent out. For journalists to be able to adequately contextualize everything, they need to possess basic knowledge of the political and economic system they live and work in.”¹⁵¹

Aside from the aforementioned elements, young journalists need to specialize in specific areas. “They cannot continue reporting a little bit on politics here and a little bit on the economy there. They should be provided with a possibility to select a certain area or several areas to specialize in and never stop continuously expanding their knowledge on those areas, since everything changes as technology develops or, in other words, they need to take the approach of life-long learning.”¹⁵² However, some thought has also been paid to developing a program based on the principle of learning by doing which would entail that “for journalists to master certain minimal skills allowing them to start working and become part of a certain editorial desk, they would only be able to do so if they start working, writing news articles and reporting from their very earliest age and stages of education”.¹⁵³

2.5.

Serbia

a) University and Alternative Education of Journalists

Serbia has had a 48-year-old tradition in organizing journalism studies. Studies in journalism commenced immediately after the foundation of the Faculty of Political Sciences at the state university in Belgrade in 1968. The curriculum was largely adapted from the Political Sciences one, while the courses in Journalism Theories and Skills were taught after the second year of study. The same model was applied at the faculties of political sciences in Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Sarajevo in the rest of the federal units of then Yugoslavia. Until 16 years ago, this was the only Serbian institution where journalists could receive university level education. Ever since 2000, by dint of the reforms in the higher education, and hence in the education of journalists, and the introduction of the new studying system – the Bologna Process – the Faculty of Political Sciences has lost its monopoly, and the number of journalism study programs has been increasing steadily through the years. It peaked in 2007, when programs in journalism were offered by twelve state and private faculties, while in 2012/2013, this number dropped to five. (KAS, 2014:47). Nowadays, six Serbian faculties, of which three state, and three private provide education for journalists. The state faculties include: the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy in Niš, and the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, where the journalism study programs offered consist of four years of undergraduate studies, followed by one year of postgraduate studies (4+1). All of the private faculties are situat-

151 Interview with Dragoljub Vuković, journalist, conducted on 31.10.2016

152 Interview with Nataša Ružić, Assistant Professor at the Media and Journalism Studies Department at the Faculty of Political Science with the state University of Podgorica, conducted on 30.10.2016

153 Interview with Vladan Micunović, Montenegro Institute of Media (MIM), conducted on 31.10.2016

ed in Belgrade: the Faculty of Sports at the Union Nikola Tesla University, which also includes a special stream in sports journalism, Faculty of Media and Communications at Singidunum University, which includes a special stream in Broadcasting (Radio, TV, Video) and Web Journalism starting from the second year of study, and the Faculty of Media and Communications at the John Naisbitt University, which offers a journalism stream.

Organization of the Higher Education. Although the study program of four-year undergraduate studies in journalism at the Faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Belgrade received its accreditation in 2015, it still bears the traces of the source faculty program structure. Half of the courses in the curriculum are categorized as general education (Political Science), 30% belong to communicology, while the least portion, 20%, are of the field of journalism. The students are offered the following:

- **Courses in general education: Introduction to Political Theory, The Political System in Serbia, The Political System in the EU, Political Sociology, International Relations, Comparative Politics, Political Anthropology, and Political Behavior;**
- **Courses in communicology: Communicology, Rhetoric, Media System in Serbia, Information and Communication Systems, Political Communication, Media Law and Media Policy, International Communication, Stylistics, Public Opinion, and Public Relations;**
- **Courses in journalism: Introduction to Journalism, Television Journalism, Theories and Techniques of Journalism, Radio Journalism, Press Journalism, and Fundamentals of Investigative Journalism.**

The courses in general education are also predominant on the list of electives. More importantly, though, this group also includes other, quite significant subjects for future journalists, such as: Agency Journalism, Online Journalism, Investigative Journalism: Radio, Investigative Journalism: TV, Investigative Journalism: Photography, and Content Analysis. A course in Ethics is taught in the first year of study, but no mandatory practical training has been offered in the curriculum. As regards the postgraduate studies, their primary focus is on two mandatory courses – Cultural Anthropology and Media Management, as well as the preparation and writing of the final (master's) thesis. The studies also focus on four electives, of which the students select three, and they include the following: Documentary Journalism Forms in Print Media, Documentary Journalism Forms in E-Media, Introduction to Theory of Media and Journalism Genres, Internet and New Media Technologies, of which at least the last two should constitute a part of the undergraduate studies.

Similarly, the studies in journalism at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Niš are organized according to the 4+1 principle. Yet, the four-year undergraduate studies here are structured differently from those in Belgrade. With more than 75%, the courses in journalism and communicology predominate. They are taught as early as the first year, whereas the second and third year curricula place a heavier emphasis on courses in journalism, while communicology is in the focus of the fourth year of study. One to two courses in general education are taught a year. The curriculum comprises the following courses:

- **Communicology: Communicology, Introduction to Journalism, Theory of Public Opinion, Theory of Media, Methodology of Media Research, Investigative Journalism, Intercultural Communication and the Media, Sociology of Mass Communication, Culture of Communication, and Contemporary Media Systems;**
- **Journalism: Journalism Genres, Contemporary Media Technologies, Rhetoric, Agency Journalism, Journalism in the Print Media, Print and Online Genres and Forms, Radio Journalism, Television Journalism, History of Journalism, Television Genres and Forms, Journalistic Stylistics, and New Media;**
- **General education: Serbian Language and Orthography, Contemporary Serbian Language, Fundamentals of Sociology, Information Science, Political System, Social Psychology, and Contemporary Politics.**

This study program also offers rather interesting electives, such as: Music in Media: Psychology of Media, Art in Media: Media Discourse Analysis, Diction: Introduction in Sociolinguistics. Journalism Ethics is taught in the second year, while Deontology is taught in the fourth year. The curricula for the last two study semesters prescribe mandatory practical training. The postgraduate studies represent an advancement of the education hitherto offered, and the following courses are studied: Aesthetics of Communication, Contemporary Journalism, Media Culture, Conflicts and Public Management, Education and Media, and Yugoslav Arts of the 20th Century in a European Context.

The Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Novi Sad has established four-year studies in journalism (intro-

duced in 2004). The curriculum predominantly aims at the study of journalism, therefore 70% of the courses offered are journalistic (or, rather, journalism and communicology constitute more than 90% of the courses). The following subjects are taught during these studies:

- **Journalism: Journalism Genres 1 and 2; Agency Journalism; Journalism in the Print Media; Diction; Photography and Media; Radio Journalism; Reporting on the Other; Television Journalism; Reporting in Crisis; Introduction to New Media; Media Discourse Analysis; Desk, Editorial House, and Management; Online Journalism; and Investigative Journalism;**
- **Communicology: Communicology 1 and 2, Sociology of Mass Culture, Media System in Serbia and Media Law, Introduction to Journalism, and History of Journalism;**
- **General education: Information Science, System of Government in Serbia, and Introduction to Economics.**

The students can also choose from a truly wide array of electives, such as Rhetoric, Public Speaking and Performance, Fundamentals of Audio-Visual Expression, Informatics Literacy, Forms of Linguistic Communication, Aesthetics, Bioethics and Media, Media Literacy, Basic Academic Writing, Debate, Web Design, Media and Music, Media for Children, Sports and Media, Media and Religious Communities, Documentary TV Reportage, Archaeology and Media, Non-Verbal Communication, and Journalism and Politics. Journalistic Ethics is studied in the first year, while a great deal of attention is devoted to practical training, which is a mandatory element of the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth semesters.

At the private John Naisbitt University, the Faculty of Culture and Media offers four-year undergraduate and one-year postgraduate studies in journalism. The courses in the four-year studies are divided into three groups, of which the courses in the communicology group are the most numerous, followed by the general education group, and finally, the journalism group, with the fewest courses. The students attend the following courses:

- **Communicology: Communicology, Psychology of Creation, Marketing in Culture and Media, Media Analytics, Stylistics and Rhetoric, Theory of Public Opinion, Literature and Journalism, Public Relations, and Introduction to Visual Culture;**
- **General education: Fundamentals of Management, History of Culture and Civilization, Contemporary Political Systems, Business Information Science, Law and Intellectual Property, Theory of Modernity, and Intercultural Management;**
- **Journalism: Journalism in Print, Theory of Genres, Radio and TV Journalism, Investigative Journalism, and Digital Communication.**

In addition, students can choose from a decent range of electives, the majority of which should, in fact, be mandatory courses, such as: Sociology of Culture and Art, Theory of Art, History of Media, Agency Journalism, Creative Writing, and Reading and Interpretation. The faculty does not offer a course in Ethics, and no data is available on mandatory practical training of the future journalists. As far as the postgraduate studies are concerned, their curriculum represents a certain mixture of various disciplines. Mandatory are the courses in Cultural Policy and Cultural Action, Methodology of Applied Research, Communication

Strategies, Media System in Serbia, and Journalism in Conflict and Crisis, while optional are the courses in Culture of Graphic Communication, and Media Geopolitics. The study of the subjects is followed by academic research and a graduate thesis.

On the other hand, the Faculty of Media and Communications at Singidunum University only offers three-year and four-year studies in Broadcasting (Radio, TV, and Video) and Web Journalism. The study program has been synchronized with the program offered by the University of West London, giving students an opportunity for a joint degree. They attend specialized courses aimed at comprehension and acquiring of skills particularly in Broadcasting and Web Journalism. That is, except for several communicology courses, the rest are aimed at obtaining standard journalism skills, as well as skills of e-journalism. The curriculum comprises the following subjects:

- **Communicology: Media Law, Theories of Media and Debates, Principles of Journalism, Management in Film, and Television and New Media;**
- **Journalism: Writing for Radio and Television, Skills in Media Presentation, News and Current Information, News Broadcasting, and Print Media and Magazines;**
- **Online: Podcasting; Digital, Film, Video and TV Image; Online News; and Digital Postproduction.**

Additionally, the curriculum contains several specific subjects in the area of dramatic arts, such as Film, Video and TV Directing; Acting in Feature Dramatic Forms; and Interactive Dramaturgy. The students also attend Media and Business Ethics, and also receive mandatory practical training in media.

The Union University Nikola Tesla and

its Faculty of Sports, which offers the Sports Journalism stream, is the only institution of its kind in the region of South East Europe. The studies last for four years and the students obtain a specialization in sports journalism. This is evident from the curriculum, which comprises specific general education courses related to sports, as well as communicology and journalism courses, also directly related to sports. The communicology and journalism courses predominate and take up more than 60% of the entire curriculum. Ethics and Journalism Code is taught in the fourth year, which is also the year when mandatory practical training should be carried out. The students attend the following courses:

- **General education: Information Science with Sports Statistics, Introduction to Management, Sociology of Sports, Theory of Sports, Sports Management, Theory of Sports Training, Philosophy with Sports Biochemistry, Human Resources Management, Sports Marketing and Promotion, Rules in Individual Sports, Rules in Collective Sports, and History of Sports and Olympics;**
- **Communicology: Communicology, Stylistics and Rhetoric, Journalism Law, Fundamentals of Journalism, Public Opinion, Business Communication, and Public Relations in Journalism;**
- **Journalism: Journalism Theory and Techniques, Written and Oral Expression, Journalism Forms, Developing Research Skills in Journalism, Sports Journalism in Print Media, Agency Journalism, Sports News and Reporting, Sports Journalism in Online Magazines and on the Internet, TV Sports Journalism, Radio Sports Journalism, Multimedia and Graphics, Media Management, and Editorial Policy.**

Quality of Higher Education. The journalism studies in Serbia are organized according to the Bologna system. To a certain degree, the curriculum strikes a balance between theory and practice (in the number of theoretical, and journalism and media courses offered), providing the students with mandatory practical work. Nonetheless, the studies are still far below the necessary level, and many areas can benefit from improvement. It is evident that the studies fail to prepare the students for work following graduation. According to some experts, “the faculties do not design their curricula according to market requirements. There is a study program that “manufactures” a type of students who will then orient themselves towards finding certain employment, yet they receive no preparation whatsoever for what awaits afterwards”.¹⁵⁴ On the other hand, others consider the students’ lack of preparation for post-graduation employment a normal phenomenon: “... neither can they graduate from the Faculties of Law or Economics, enter work in a company, and be familiar with the working process... they only know the techniques”.¹⁵⁵ Another view is that “the concept of studying in Serbia is old-fashioned and does not follow media requirements; the professor, and not the student, still takes centre stage”.¹⁵⁶ It is even deemed that, back in the day when there were fewer schools of journalism, the media were better and more professional, and their employees had a higher level of education. “Nowadays there are almost illiterate or totally illiterate rookies who finish all these schools and flood the media scene with extremely bad content. So, the media in Serbia are in a desperate

154 Interview with Zoran Stanojević, editor at Radio Television Serbia (RTS), conducted on 16.11.2016

155 Interview with Milica Jevtić, RTS, conducted on 24.11.2016

156 Interview with Vladimir Radomirović, editor at Pištaljka magazine, conducted on 16.11.2016

state, while the number of faculties is enormous, and if we do the math then we'll see the lack of proportion, where the number of faculties is disproportionate to the media quality".¹⁵⁷

One of the most frequent critical comments of the media representatives is the lack of effort on the part of the universities, particularly private ones, to provide quality practical training for their students. "There isn't much practical work, very few practical skills, training, and exercises, such as news writing, creating content and other practical skills they will need after graduation."¹⁵⁸ Comments also refer to the academic staff who teaches at the faculties of journalism, and who lack necessary journalism experience. "The staff that teaches at a great deal of the journalism departments across Serbia have very little to no journalism experience whatsoever."¹⁵⁹ The professors include communicologists, theorists of journalism, sociologists, but no journalists. "Someone could come and give a guest lecture, or hold a two or three-day workshop that we would arrange, but all of this has to be supervised by a professor. Without this hurdle our studies would be of a much higher quality."¹⁶⁰

Part of the experts also emphasize the issue of the severe lack of textbooks and students' books, despite the existing translations from foreign languages, which are insufficient. Various books are used at the faculties, and there is no single literature database for the education in journalism in Serbia.

"There is no standard... Everyone does their own thing. No single corpus of literature exists, so students can't say that everyone who studies journalism in Serbia can learn the same. And can then proceed to develop their knowledge."¹⁶¹

b) Informal Journalism Education

In the South East European region, Serbia has the largest number of non-governmental organizations that operate in the area of media. Regardless of whether these are non-governmental organizations or professional journalist associations, all of them organize training for journalists, although to a greater or lesser extent. One of the most active in this sphere is the Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM), founded in 1993 by a few radio stations in Serbia and Montenegro. In the present, its membership consists of more than 100 media, both local and regional. Its objectives include improvement of the conditions for media development and freedom of expression, as well as protection of the interests of its members. The Association has organized numerous training workshops on various current issues and topics, such as: writing media content on different platforms, reporting on cultural differences of ethnic minorities, reporting on corruption, reporting for radio and TV stations during election campaigns (for local, regional, parliamentary, or presidential elections), the Law on Public Information in practice, digitization and its implications for local and regional stations, working online, understanding the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, investigative journalism, etc. Another one is Media Center – Belgrade, founded in 1994 by the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia as the only multimedia organization that is concerned with the

157 Interview with Jovana Polić, programme manager at Media Centre Belgrade, conducted on 16.11.2016

158 Interview with Dino Jahić, Center of Investigative Journalism, conducted on 15.11.2016

159 Interview with Vladimir Radomirović, editor at Pištaljka magazine, conducted on 16.11.2016

160 Interview with Stanko Crnobrnja, full professor at the Singidinum University in Belgrade, conducted on 16.11.2016.

161 Ibid.

region of South East Europe. Its objective is protection of independent media and promotion of freedom of speech. The Center's activities are oriented towards social and human rights and the freedom of media. It has provided the non-governmental sector, students, and media with numerous training opportunities on: reporting on economic topics; documentary photography in the press and on online platforms; advancement of working online; text formatting for web documents; online business communication; collecting, processing, and placement of content; basic principles of economic journalism; and communication with online media.

The Novi Sad School of Journalism, founded in 1996, centers on the development and professionalization of the media sphere in Serbia and the wider region, showing consideration for values, knowledge, and a critical approach in a multilingual, multicultural, and multinational environment, and fostering a balanced and tolerant dialogue. Its activities aim at increasing the professional capacities in the media sector, monitoring and analysis of media content, education of various target groups regarding media literacy, as well as democratization and development of the civil society, and promotion of European values. The education that the School provides journalists and students of journalism with comprises numerous topics: improvement of professional and ethical standards of communicating public information to people with disabilities; media and teaching – media literacy; professional advancement of Ruthenian journalists and editors; reporting on the environment; improvement of journalism skills and organization of the newsrooms; public interest in the media of national minorities; commercialization of media; raising professional standards of

journalists concerned with fighting corruption; journalism and editorial skills in the print media; and reporting on differences.

The Journalists' Association of Serbia is the largest and most significant association of professional journalists in Serbia, founded in 1881 under the name of Serbian Journalistic Society, and is one of the oldest journalists' associations in the world, with more than 6000 members. Its objectives include: improvement of Serbian journalism, defense of freedom of thought and speech, protection of journalists' interests, and strengthening journalists' solidarity. It provides journalism workers with education in several ways. First of all, by operating the School of Journalism (established in 1997), primarily intended for beginners who wish to become professional journalists, as well as for everyone who wishes to gain additional knowledge and skills. Attendees study the rules and responsibilities of journalists, sources of information, and freedom of information and expression in the field or in real-life situations. Furthermore, it also operates the School of Web Journalism (established in 2008), where journalists, students of journalism, PR and marketing professionals gain specialization in the area of new media. Finally, it operates the School of Video Journalism, where, through theoretical and practical training, one can obtain skills in independent video production of television and radio programs.

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia was founded in 1994 by journalists who were dissatisfied with the work of the Journalists' Association of Serbia. It advocates for free journalism and pluralist media, improvement of professional and ethical standards, and protection of the rights and interests of

journalists. Apart from work on projects, the Association also offers training for journalists, media trainers, and students on various topics, such as: hosts of television political debates, media and decentralization, reporting on migration, European journalism in the digital era, investigative journalism, digital journalism, investigative journalism for local print and online media, reporting on labor rights, search engine optimization, etc. A Center of Investigative Journalism was founded within the Association in 2007, which branched off as an independent body in 2012. It is primarily dedicated to investigative journalism, and the projects and training it carries out are concerned with precisely this field.

Similarly to the other countries in the region, the non-governmental organization BIRN Serbia also operates in Serbia, and was founded in 2004. It deals with monitoring and analysis of social and political processes, especially with the role that media play in said processes. Apart from carrying out numerous projects, BIRN also offers training and seminars to local and national media, as well as to representatives of the civil sector, minority communities, local self-government, and state administration. Despite journalistic courses in strengthening media liberties; data-driven journalism; development of journalists' skills in reporting on the EU; reporting on the economy; web journalism; improvement of objective, balanced, and accurate reporting; and investigative journalism, it has also carried out a large number of specialized courses in reporting on European integration, covering issues of importance to minority communities, reporting on public finance, local budgets and good management, and informing the citizens of conflict prevention. BIRN also carries out regular in-house training for its journalist-members.

The Association of Local Independent Media "Local Press" was founded in 1995 in order to unite local media with the goal of fulfilling their needs. Besides a number of projects, the Association has held various workshops for raising the professional and technical standards of the profession. The thematic focus of such education is on the gaining of knowledge and skills in photojournalism, investigative journalism, media literacy, and the practical implementation of various laws (Law on Public Information and Media, Law on Copyright). Also active on a local scale is the Media and Reform Center Niš, founded in 2005, whose goal is to support the work and increase the visibility of the activities of civil associations, as well as enhancing professionalism in the media regarding reports on issues that contribute to the development of civil associations. In partnership with other non-governmental organizations, the Center has carried out a great deal of research and analyses of media and their content, as well as training, primarily for the local media, on topics related to investigative journalism, matters of public interest, improvement of professional and ethical standards, multimedia, agency journalism, photojournalism, camera and video editing, etc.

Also active in Serbia are the Press Council, Journalists' Union of Serbia, Association of Media, Association of Media Photographers of Serbia, Association of Journalists of Vojvodina, Independent Association of Journalists of Vojvodina, Media Coalition ZUM, and the Coalition of Journalists' and Media Associations, which unites the Journalists' Association of Serbia, Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia, Association of European Journalists of Serbia, Serbian Sports Journalists Association, and the Association of Independent Electronic Media.

Collaboration between University and Alternative Education. There is no doubt among the academic and professional public in Serbia that professional and personal advancement must be undertaken by all journalists, both current and future, and, in this respect, non-governmental organizations play a most valuable role. It is evident that all must receive continuous education. “This requires a combination of the two forms – formal and informal. People in the 21st century must update their knowledge. There is a market demand nowadays for continuous education.”¹⁶² Therefore, the fact that faculties “are inert institutions that are slow to implement change, which is a good trait as it enables them to maintain standards, shows the need of further education, which cannot be directly obtained from the studies”.¹⁶³ A journalist must be a multi-faceted person, “to further their knowledge throughout their entire life, be broadly educated, and have a wide range of knowledge”.¹⁶⁴ In other words, a journalist “can never be sufficiently educated... even if they graduate from a faculty, be it of journalism, law, or philosophy, they should then spend their lives on furthering their knowledge through various training”.¹⁶⁵

However, there is little interest among the media and journalists in Serbia for participation in workshops. This is caused by a number of reasons. “One of the reasons is the large-scale of daily media machinery, where a journalist has to attend three or four promotions, press conferences a day, etc. Some of the attendees have to take a day off work to participate in the training, which sometimes lasts up to 4 or 5 days. Another

reason is the fact that currently there is a large number of pro-government media in Serbia, which aren’t interested in providing their journalists with training in the topics covered.”¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, **“journalists no longer wish to undergo life-long education, they are disinterested in training, consider it a waste of time, while editors believe that they don’t need to send their journalists to training even when the training is topic-specific and allows journalists familiarization with new issues”**.¹⁶⁷ “It would be excellent if our studies in journalism offered better quality and practical training to their students, yet not even the best universities in the world can teach their students everything they need to know.”¹⁶⁸

On the other hand, the majority of the faculties have signed co-operation agreements with the media. Thus, Singidunum University of Belgrade has already established cooperative relations with most media and organizations where its students have the opportunity of receiving practical training. “As a faculty, we have signed co-operation agreements, and our students can undergo practical training in over 50 agencies, newspapers, and media.”¹⁶⁹ Next, the Faculty of Political Sciences collaborates with local radio stations and the Radio Television of Serbia, whereby “students have enough room to try their hand at journalism and production work as early as during their studies”¹⁷⁰, although this is incomplete, since “there is no system for precise allocation of the students”¹⁷¹.

162 Interview with Stanko Crnobrnja, full professor at the Singidunum University in Belgrade, conducted on 16.11.2016.

163 Interview with Snežana Miličević, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade, conducted on 24.11.2016.

164 Interview with Jovana Polić, programme manager at Media Centre Belgrade, conducted on 16.11.2016.

165 Interview with Dubravka Valić Nedelković, professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, conducted on 17.11.2016.

166 Interview with Dino Jahić, Center of Investigative Journalism, conducted on 15.11.2016.

167 Interview with Dubravka Valić Nedelković, professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, conducted on 17.11.2016.

168 Interview with Vladimir Radomirović, editor at Pštaljka magazine, conducted on 16.11.2016.

169 Interview with Stanko Crnobrnja, full professor at the Singidunum University in Belgrade, conducted on 16.11.2016.

170 Interview with Snežana Miličević, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade, conducted on 24.11.2016.

171 Interview with Zoran Stanojević, editor at Radio Television Serbia (RTS), conducted on 16.11.2016.

c) Challenges for Journalism Education

The journalist occupation is still a popular one in Serbia, and faculties even receive twice as many student applications as the number of admissions allowed by state quotas. Yet, in Serbia, as well as the region, there is still a tradition of a lack of rights for this profession, both regarding its financial and social status. “The profession is deprived of its social rights, completely crushed economically. Journalists work for miserable pay, with a few exceptions... television stars. Our colleagues in print media work for extremely low salaries, which is truly humiliating. Even if they are the very best journalists, they try to find additional employment and other sources of finances.”¹⁷² At the same time, what is on offer to future students throughout the country is a good and versatile curriculum, although as far as state faculties are concerned, a portion of the academic community regards the faculties of philosophy more suitable places for the studies in journalism because of “the support from various disciplines, which enables a greater richness of the curriculum, as opposed to the political sciences, where the subjects are political... Here there are Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology, multiple languages... which also means a host of experts who are important for journalists, and thus these, so called supporting subjects, are better than [subjects of] other faculties”¹⁷³.

As regards theory vs. praxis in teaching, striking a balance is of utmost importance. Faculties in Serbia have a theoretical and applicative curriculum, which means that students are required to gain sound theoretical and practical knowledge. Thus, “the art lies in designing a curriculum that strikes the right balance between theory and praxis...

which is a 50-50 ratio”¹⁷⁴. Still, the issue of the balance between theory and praxis is a matter of continuous debate. “The media world changes dramatically and if you only insist on vocational training, then you make it impossible for the students to get acquainted with this complicated world that is going to look different as early as tomorrow. It would be very difficult if you were to teach only technical, practical disciplines today, while tomorrow students will come out into a world that looks utterly different.”¹⁷⁵ On the other hand, our interlocutors stress that it would not be beneficial for the curriculum to be solely theoretical. The journalist profession is confronted with new challenges and, nowadays, like never before, it faces the challenge of a major transformation, which is reflected in the study programs themselves.

The aspect that is lacking and the professors should teach their students about is to select, of the multiplicity of phenomena and persons, what the medium should present. “This is the entire point. Separating the redundant from the relevant. Reduction is necessary, but in a way that it doesn’t ruin the gist of the information. And striking a balance. The most difficult part is teaching them how to think. How to reduce a large piece to a two-minute one that will suffice as a good quality product.”¹⁷⁶ Equally important is the acquisition of media literacy, so that students “can understand what the media say and interpret it... to read the language of media”¹⁷⁷. Nevertheless, students also need elementary knowledge of media history, general theory of media and new media, the way in which old me-

172 Interview with Milica Jevtić, RTS, conducted on 24.11.2016

173 Interview with Dubravka Valić Nedelković, professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, conducted on 17.11.2016

174 Ibid.

175 Interview with Snežana Milivojević, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade, conducted on 24.11.2016

176 Interview with Dubravka Valić Nedelković, professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, conducted on 17.11.2016

177 Interview with Stanko Crnobrnja, full professor at the Singidinum University in Belgrade, conducted on 16.11.2016.

dia will integrate with the new, their method of operation, the challenges of the new media, and the role of the journalist. Moreover, apart from intellectual knowledge, students should also gain technical knowledge, concerning, above all, the use of the new technologies they will work with at newsrooms.

Unless a young journalist is able to navigate this digital world, and understand social networks and website administration, and be “multimedia”, then they will fall behind.

Yet, it is necessary to devote particular attention to the study of language and familiarization with grammar, since these are the profession’s basic tools, and especially since the staff in newsrooms hold university degrees, but demonstrate a considerable lack of language literacy.

For the faculties to prepare the youths for serious journalism, they should also provide them with “knowledge of the political systems of their own as well as other countries, along with a study of sociology”¹⁷⁸.

Of course, the study of ethics in journalism never ends and should be constantly upgraded.

2.6.

Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)

a) University Education of Journalists

During the 50-year socialist period as an autonomous province within Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) has had a partially successful attempt to initiate a study program in journalism. In the ‘70s, when journalism studies were being launched in the other Yugoslav republics, the University of Prishtina would set up journalism studies at the Faculty of Political Sciences, producing a single generation of journalists before being permanently discontinued by the authorities at the time. All remaining attempts for renewing a study program in journalism would prove unsuccessful, and the same fate would be shared by the Advanced School of Journalism that was founded in 1996 (Faik Ispahiu, 2002). Sometime later, postwar Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) would witness a massive explosion of state and private faculties, mainly in the field of law, economy, and business administration, as well as in journalism, although with limited success and dubious quality. The first private journalism institution was the Faik Konica College, which would face accreditation problems. Later, in 2005, the Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) Institute of Journalism and Communication (KI-JAS) would be founded and soon closed down (shut down in 2010). The following year, the Faculty of Philology at the state University of Prishtina would set up a graduate degree program in journalism (Qavdarbasha, 2012:11).

Organization of the Higher Education. Today, there are two journalism faculties in Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), one state and one private. The Faculty of Philology at the state University of

Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina” offers three-year graduate degree programs in journalism. The curriculum is mostly made up of theoretical and practical journalism courses, and a very small number of general education courses. The structure encompasses:

- **Communication courses: Introduction to Journalism, Fundamentals of Communication, Fundamentals of Mass Communication, History of European Journalism, History of Albanian Journalism, Sociology of Communication;**
- **Journalism courses: Journalism Genres, Journalism Styles, Print Media, Radio Journalism, Television Journalism, Commentary and Analysis;**
- **General education courses: Investigative Methods in Social Sciences, Political System of the European Union, Mass Culture.**

Journalism Ethics is taught as an elective course in the first year of study, alongside other elective courses, such as Investigative Journalism, New Media and Web Portals, Production and Post-production, Media Management, Media and Politics, Media Education.

The AAB College at the private Faculty of Mass Communication and Journalism in Prishtina offers studies which are structured as three-year graduate and one-year postgraduate degree programs. Graduate degree programs offer theoretical and practical knowledge of the basic issues related to communication sciences in the media field. Throughout the three study years, the program is mostly focused on courses in these areas. The curriculum includes the following courses:

- **Communication courses: Introduction to Communication, Public Relations, Media and Society, International Communication;**
- **Journalism courses: Genres and Techniques of Journalism, TV Presentation, History of Journalism, Radio Journalism, TV Journalism, TV Documentary, Montage, Camera and Photograph, Investigative Journalism, Media Convergence, Online Journalism, Preparation of a TV Advertisement, Production.**

Media Ethics is taught in the third year of study, while practical training takes place in the second and third year of study (Journalism Genres and Television Practice) and makes up one third of the total number of courses. With the completion of the first cycle of study, students receive a Bachelor of Mass Communication – Journalism Program. The postgraduate degree program comprises general education courses, as well as specialized communication courses (Semiotics, Communication Psychology, Media Culture, Scientific Work Methodology, Media and Politics, Structure of Modern Societies, International Public Relations, Social Organization and Society Marketing, Research in Written Journalism, Cross-Cultural and Cross-Religious Communication). Following graduation, students receive the academic title “Master in Mass Communication and Journalism”.

Quality of Higher Education. Experts and academics are critical of the staff that journalism and the rest of the faculties are producing. “The entire educational system of Kosovo has set the bar very low when it comes to exams and obtaining academic titles. If a professor tends to be somewhat stricter, chances are that they are going to be removed from their duty, i.e. they

are going to be replaced.”¹⁷⁹ Otherwise stated, journalism faculties are lacking in practical training, qualified staff, literature, and technical equipment for carrying out instruction. Criticism is mostly leveled against the insufficient level of practical training and practical work, especially at the state university. It lacks the technical conditions for providing students with practical training. “There are a lot of shortcomings when it comes to hands-on journalism practice. In other words, the access to technology is limited. Students do not have the opportunity to apply practical journalism.”¹⁸⁰ In contrast, it is fair to say that the private journalism faculty has dedicated a significant amount of its curriculum to practical training. Hence the criticism against the competitor that “...they do not own a single camera, whereas we, on the other hand, have enough of everything.”¹⁸¹

Due to the lack of suitable practical training, after they complete their education, students are usually not ready to start work in the newsrooms and need more time to acquire certain practical skills needed in order to practice the trade. It is precisely the good command of multimedia skills and techniques that is crucial for the successful practicing of this profession, “... today, the journalists must know how to operate a camera or edit footage, or in other words, they have to be prepared for the multimedia market.”¹⁸²

The quality of the education process is also affected by the small number of lecturers and professors who are experienced in the profession, as well as the lack of appropriate literature on which

to base instruction. **“Professors with practical media experience are very rare, and those who are knowledgeable in media theories are not suitable to teach at postgraduate level due to the ways undergraduate and postgraduate process are organized within departments. So it happens that someone who has some practice knowledge by default is given the opportunity to teach theoretical modules as well, and vice versa. This results in missed opportunities for both practitioners and theory oriented professors to give their best.”**¹⁸³

At the same time, the literature is outdated and no effort has been made to translate new textbooks from the field. “The lack of understanding of the English language exacerbates the problem. Translations are rare. Most of them are of poor quality.”¹⁸⁴ There is a shortage of literature in Albanian and “...students are using handouts or textbooks that professors have found off the internet.”¹⁸⁵ Another problem is the inferior quality of media research conducted at the faculties. “The quality of research is poor, no in-depth evaluation is being done by experts, and no actions are being undertaken to advance media science in the region.”¹⁸⁶

b) Informal Journalism Education.

Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)’s capacities in the area of alternative education are also limited. Although it had significant donor support for journalism training following the war and the establishment of the international administration, it is now very limited. Courses are rare, mostly informal, and even taught by unqualified trainers. The organization with the longest education tradition is the Kosovo Media Institute,

179 Interview with Arben Salihu, Association of Journalists of Kosovo, conducted on 16.12.2016

180 Interview with Naser Miftari, Center for Social Research Analitika, conducted on 24.11.2016

181 Interview with Hasan Salihu, professor at the AAB College in Pristina, conducted on 12.12.2016

182 Ibid.

183 Interview with Naser Miftari, Center for Social Research Analitika, conducted on 24.11.2016

184 Ibid.

185 Interview with Violeta Orosi, journalist, conducted on 23.12.2016

186 Interview with Naser Miftari, Center for Social Research Analitika, conducted on 24.11.2016

founded at the request of the media with the aim of enhancing the professional skills of journalists and media professionals and developing independent, free, and plural media. Conceived as a media training center, the Institute offers journalism training courses, as well as courses on public relations intended for the commercial sector. Apart from the Institute, the non-governmental organization BIRN - Kosovo is also very active in the area, and is mostly concerned with investigative and analytical journalism. Its activities focus on journalism training, research, monitoring of public institutions, media production and publishing along with organizing training for journalists, the civil sector, monitoring of public institutions, research, media production, and publishing. It has conducted numerous trainings, independently or in collaboration with partners in the Balkans, particularly on issues such as multimedia, using social media for investigation, reporting security, data journalism, investigative reporting, accessing public information and documents, reporting on corruption issues.

An organization with similar activities in Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) is the Association of Journalists, focused on promoting professional, free, and independent investigative journalism, social and labor rights of journalists, their protection, and the development of media infrastructure. The Press Council also needs mentioning, its key activities being concerned with the freedom of speech, citizens' right to timely and complete information, observing the Press Code of Conduct, the Association of journalists of Kosovo, and the Association of Sport Journalists of Kosovo.

Collaboration between University and Alternative Education. The collaboration between the two types of journalism education in Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) is irregular and incidental, and it is not based on formal mutual agreements. The non-governmental sector shows bigger interest for collaboration, while the faculties are more reserved, suspicious even, because they believe that "...non-governmental organizations are only here until they get involved in politics...and they lack credibility".¹⁸⁷ This is why BBC trainings carried out in 2000 are still being referenced, but today they are very rare, and specialized trainings in certain areas, such as investigative journalism, are usually organized by non-governmental organizations (particularly BIRN). On the other hand, there is an increased preference for collaboration with the media. In that sense, the private journalism college collaborates with the Koha Radio Television on a regular basis. "We have signed a collaboration agreement for carrying out practical work...Koha directors teach classes at the college and their doors are opened to our students..."¹⁸⁸ Although informal, there is also a collaboration between the faculties and the Radio Television of Kosovo. "We have established a Training Center for Journalists, and journalism graduates are always welcome here."¹⁸⁹

On the other hand, some believe that informal education is superior to formal education in terms of the amount of practical training offered to students. "Informal education has more to offer. It plays an important role because it gives a choice. You choose your own direction and the professionals who are go-

187 Interview with Hasan Saliu, professor at the AAB College in Pristina, conducted on 12.12.2016

188 Ibid.

189 Interview with Anamari Repić, international relations manager at Radio Television Kosovo, conducted on 24.11.2016

ing to train you...”¹⁹⁰ **Hence, universities should include elements of informal education in their curricula in order to provide students with more practical experience.** In other words, “...they can engage foreign experts from renowned media houses to conduct student trainings.”¹⁹¹ Nevertheless, the majority of experts and academics believe that journalists need both forms of education to attain appropriate professional development. “Both are needed to create competent future journalists”¹⁹² Moreover, “...informal education, i.e. the continuous acquisition of additional education, is just as important as high-quality formal education.”¹⁹³ Put another way, “...journalists with formal qualifications should also acquire informal education during the course of their career, because this is a fast-changing industry...there are new requirements and new demands, and the availability of trainings, even informal ones, where these skills can be acquired, is of significant importance.”¹⁹⁴

In that sense, according to the interviewees, one way to improve this collaboration is by “...establishing a specialized organization that would assist universities with the training...students would have their first training with complete equipment...it would benefit everyone.”¹⁹⁵ In a similar fashion, following the example of other developed countries, “...through extracurricular lessons...editors can give lectures on different topics, and thereby exchange practical experience.”¹⁹⁶ Likewise, there is also the suggestion that students’

training programs be postponed until after they graduate, but not on the expense of the two-month training following the first year of study, when students apply what they have learned.

c) Challenges for Journalism Education

The media scene in Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) is marked by real media pluralism, considering the number of media, particularly electronic media, which is the result of a considerable amount of donor funds extended for establishing the media sector in post-war Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244). However, in the last few years, financial aid has been scarce, while poor economic conditions and the small market have threatened the sustainability of numerous media (particularly local media) in the country. “Media and journalists remain financially at a considerably disadvantaged position compared to what would be optimal to ensure a professional working environment and independent and professional journalism.”¹⁹⁷ What is the future of journalism and journalism education in such social and economic conditions?

The theoretical approach, the one that is still insisted upon in formal journalism education, is the dominant approach to journalism education, which “...has been proved useless in practice, “...it dedicates less attention to the acquisition of practical skills, regardless of the fact that the media and media industry have undergone complete changes in the last ten years.”¹⁹⁸ Therefore, the rudimentary practical knowledge is considered the key problem, which can be resolved through formal and informal education, i.e. “...by conducting certain workshops that teach students how to ignore editorial pressures, develop skills for reducing the

190 Interview with Sanja Sovrlić, journalist and Editor in Chief at RTV Mir, conducted on 23.12.2016

191 Ibid.

192 Interview with Albulena Sadiku, Senior Programme Manager, BIRN Kosovo, conducted on 23.02.2017

193 Interview with Andjelka Čup, journalist, conducted on 23.01.2017

194 Interview with Isak Vorgučić, director of Radio Television KIM, conducted on 14.11.2016

195 Interview with Violeta Orošić, journalist, conducted on 23.12.2016

196 Interview with Arben Salihu, executive director of the Association of Journalists of Kosovo

197 SEE region more at: Freedom of Media and Safety of Journalists in Kosovo, <https://www.osce.org/Kosovo/tunder/UNSCR.1244/122390?download=true>

198 Interview with Isak Vorgučić, director of Radio Television KIM, conducted on 14.11.2016

pressures, and keep their standards, along with their jobs.”¹⁹⁹ “What journalism faculties lack is fieldwork, the practice.” Faculties should insist that students undertake practical training and even prevent them from completing a semester without carrying out hands-on practice in newsrooms for a period of 15 to 20 days.”²⁰⁰

Beside practical work, students should also learn how to express themselves properly. They lack “...proper expression skills...and everything crucial for the public appearance of a journalist who is becoming a public person.”²⁰¹ They must possess journalistic writing skills, “...and the ability to write academic and journalistic texts; journalists must be capable of writing in both styles.”²⁰² In addition, they have to be aware of new technologies and their influence on the media industry and journalism as a profession. **“They know nothing about online journalism, or HTML coding. They are ignorant of applications (smart phones) and how they are created.”**²⁰³ Nowadays “... journalists should not only know how to write and hold a microphone, they should also be skilled in using other tools beside the camera, to be able to use a computer, search the internet...”²⁰⁴

The importance of learning Media Ethics is also being underlined. **The curriculum should include compulsory courses such as “...Media Ethics and Media Law, so as to make sure that journalists are aware of their role and their media rights and freedoms, when it comes to reporting on issues of public interest (healthcare, education, economy).”**²⁰⁵ Instruction in Media Entrepreneurship is also suggested, or “...how to start a medium from the scratch”.²⁰⁶ Likewise, obtaining general education in various subjects is advised, “...journalists should be knowledgeable in diplomacy, the workings of the European Union, and the countries from the region.”²⁰⁷

199 Interview with Arben Salihu, Association of Journalists of Kosovo, conducted on 16.12.2016

200 Interview with Andjelka Čup, journalist, conducted on 23.01.2017

201 Ibid.

202 Interview with Anamari Repić, international relations manager at Radio Television Kosovo, conducted on 24.11.2016

203 Ibid.

204 Interview with Isak Vorgučić, director of Radio Television KIM, conducted on 14.11.2016

205 Interview with Naser Miftari, Center for Social Research Analitika, conducted on 24.11.2016

206 Ibid.

207 Interview with Violeta Oroš, journalist, conducted on 23.12.2016



KEY

CONSIDERATIONS

Journalism and journalism education in South East Europe have been undergoing tremendous changes during the past two decades. All of the countries share the fate of social transition, which is reflected in the structure and profile of journalism and the respective education. At the same time, global technological, economic, and social changes impose an inexorable need of their reconception and modernization. In this context, the recent times will be remembered for the numerous reforms of the existing educational system, as well as for its “enrichment” with new study programs

in journalism and schools of journalism. The media market has become flooded with an enormous number of media, greater than is truly necessary, followed by a familiar trend of their commercialization, tabloidization, and sensationalism. This trend has been followed by a crisis in journalism professionalism and responsibility, erosion of the profession, and neglect of ethical criteria, abuse of the media for political, economic, and business interests, and less room for making a career in media. Despite all this, the youth still hold journalism in high esteem, perceiving it as an attractive occupation many would like to work in.

Division between public and private academic programs

Nowadays, in the countries of South East Europe journalism is studied at 28 state and private faculties and schools of journalism. Their number varies among countries, and is the highest in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ten) and Serbia (six), while the lowest number is found in Montenegro (only one). Institution-wise, the education of journalists at all of these faculties and schools is run and organized according to the Bologna educational model, which consists of three-year undergraduate and two-year postgraduate studies (3+2) or four-year undergraduate and one-year postgraduate studies (4+1). In addition, during the last two decades, all journalism study programs have undergone several more or less successful processes of “improvement” and modernization of their curricula, and more than a few programs have been granted accreditation during the last few years as well.

Organization-wise, journalism at the state universities is offered as a study program within the faculties of social sciences (law, political science, philosophy), whereas private universities contain dedicated faculties of journalism and communications, media and communications, or media and journalism. Such terminological diversity can also be found in a number of other universities around the world, but it does not pose an obstacle to a successful implementation of the education in journalism. Apart from this, some faculties include specialized study programs for specific areas of journalism, such as sports journalism (at the private Faculty of Sports in Serbia) or political journalism, economic journalism, and social and cultural journalism (at the state Faculty of History and Philology in Tirana).

Program-wise, the faculties and schools of journalism take different approaches to the study of journalism. Three separate groups may be identified: the first, and most numerous, is a group in which communicology and journalism courses predominate; the second contains even numbers of general education, communicology, and journalism courses; and the third, where theoretical and practical journalism courses prevail. All of these variations are typical of both the state and private faculties. Yet, one more (small) group of several faculties can also be identified, where general education and communicology courses predominate at the expense of journalism ones, which have been reduced to a minimum. More specifically, courses in communicology and journalism predominate in almost all faculties of journalism in Serbia, as well as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while faculties and schools (in most cases they constitute a single institution) with a prevalence of theoretical and practical journalism subjects can be found in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244). Moreover, in the group of journalism courses, the most frequently offered ones are: Fundamentals of Writing and Reporting, Media Genres, Photojournalism, Radio Journalism, Television Journalism, Online Journalism, Agency Journalism, and Investigative Journalism. The same applies to the following communicology courses: Fundamentals of Communications, Public Relations, and Public Opinion, while of the courses in general education, the group of the most widespread ones consists of: Sociology, Economics, Informatics, and Social Psychology. Furthermore, Ethics is a mandatory course at almost all faculties (with one or two exceptions), and is usually studied in the third year.

Consequently, the fact that both state and private faculties and schools of journalism participate in the education of journalists has imposed a division between them concerning which of them offers better education. The public/state sector is criticized for its lack of practical training and modernization, while the private is criticized for the lack of tradition and experienced lecturers. **Still, there is an unequivocal conclusion that, in all countries in this region, which are still experiencing the transition, there is insufficient investment in the education development both at the state and private levels.** Besides, despite all program and structure reforms of journalism education, and the insistence on harmonizing it with the requirements of the media market and with appropriate global trends, the education is “still far below the necessary level and there is room for improvement in a number of sections”.

A key issue is “the lack of strategic planning”, that is, coordination between what is studied about journalism and what works in practice.

Criticism regarding the theoretical inclination of the studies, although not due to the number of courses, but rather due to the view that science can achieve anything, brings to the fore the true problem of journalism education in the region – the lack of practical training, which is one of the key elements of being a professional journalist. It is true that in the present there is almost no faculty or school of journalism in the region whose curriculum does not include mandatory practical training for the students, which is also a legal obligation. However, the issue lies in providing good quality praxis by getting the students involved in the process of operation of a newsroom through a special mentoring system, rather than having them do

internships in the media, which often turn into observation from aside, improvisation, or an easily obtained certificate of completion of the practical training. This condition is explained by the media lack of spatial resources, work overload, small size of the newsrooms to offer the students effective practical training, as well as absence of co-operation contracts between the faculties and media. Therefore, it is no wonder that nowadays students enter the newsrooms unprepared. On top of this, it is uncertain whether the opening of individual laboratories for practical training (in a newspaper, radio or TV studio) at the faculties and schools of journalism (although several real-life instances of this exist), is the right solution to this problem, considering that all faculties of journalism in this region face serious limitations of the material resources necessary for their work.

On the other hand, the quality of the education in journalism both at the state and private faculties is affected by the low number of staff with professional journalistic experience, as well as the insufficient inclusion in the teaching process of external guest lecturers and professors with practical experience in the media (this is especially the case in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia). **The professors who teach at the faculties are most often communicologists, journalism theoreticians, sociologists, but, essentially, not journalists.** In contrast, the practical component is delivered by experienced lecturers-practicing professionals prepared to work with the students, but the law limits the number of lessons for this component, and leaves it to the existing faculty staff to organize and supervise it. **Adding to this is the issue of the severe lack of textbooks and other books for the students of journalism, or rather the use of out-dated literature, studying from**

lecture notes and manuscripts or books that the professors have downloaded from the Internet, as well as the insufficient number of translations of technical literature from abroad. Moreover, there is an almost absolute absence of the insistence on the creation of a specialized literature database for journalism education (in particular in Serbia and Albania).

Weaknesses of journalism education in the region

What is missing in journalism study programs? First of all, basic skills in reading and writing, orthography, and grammar (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia), correct articulation during public performance (Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)), writing for print, radio, television, and online media (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), and compiling news items with relevant data for a specific event or phenomenon (Serbia). Next, investigative journalism and media literacy, which would enable students to understand the language of media (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia); online journalism (Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)), and study of new media, their method of operation, use, and administration (Serbia). What is more, it is impossible for a complete professional to be developed without theoretical knowledge of public opinion, media law (Montenegro), human rights, freedom of speech, freedom of the media (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), as well as elementary knowledge of the political and economic system of the society in which (s)he works (Montenegro, Serbia), and knowledge of diplomacy, the operation of the European Union and the countries in the region (Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)).

Careful attention is paid to encouraging critical thinking in the students, which is an important segment of working as a journalist, and must persist throughout the entire educational process and within all of the subjects of the study of journalism (Bosnia and Herzegovina), since, unless students are capable of critical thinking and healthy skepticism regarding all events around them, then they cannot be good journalists (Montenegro). Quite the contrary, the present-day educational process produces graduates with insufficient capacities of critical thinking (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro). In other words, faculties and schools of journalism offer no courses that would educate journalists in a way that fosters an open mind to and a broad perspective of society, although the very task and goal of formal education is to find a way to encourage this thought process in the students. Also, faculties should offer students opportunities for corresponding specialization, or a kind of sector-specific education, for instance in law, politics, economics, medicine, and other spheres (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). This means that they should have an opportunity to choose a specific discipline and thus gain more in-depth knowledge (Montenegro).

On a related note, the necessity of introducing practical training into the study programs must not arise from the global trends in journalism, but rather with the aim of stimulating creativity in students. They will easily learn theory from their books, but what is fundamental is how to reach the essence (Montenegro). The faculties are expected to adopt a much more serious attitude towards the fulfillment of this obligation to the students, and to control it through specific results (published articles), and even use it as a requirement

for enrolment in the last study semester (Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)). There is even a suggestion to increase the extent and duration of the practical training (from two weeks, as it is currently carried out, to a full month). Thus, following a year of studying theory, the students would undergo practical training during the subsequent year, after which, in the final year, they would return to the study of theory, which would enable them to become better acquainted with their profession (Albania). **However, as regards the staff at the faculties of journalism, the countries in this region still face a lack of specialized lecturers for the courses in journalism and holders of doctoral degrees in Communication Science (especially in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro). Additionally, they have very few professors with full-time employment and, in comparison, a large number of associate professors with contract-based employment, mostly from other countries in the region.**

Although Ethics as a separate subject is part of the curricula of almost all faculties and schools of journalism in the region, still it is stressed as one of the key pillars on which the integrity of the journalistic profession relies (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), as the alpha and omega of the profession, and should be imprinted in the consciousness of the students (Bosnia and Herzegovina) in order to ensure that they would understand their role in reporting on matters of public interest (Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)). Therefore, the study of Ethics should be undertaken and broadened from the moment one enrolls in a faculty all through to the completion of the studies (Montenegro, Serbia). Also, only one subject does not suffice. Rather, **Ethics should be incorporated in various courses, such as Ethics and Ethical**

Behavior in Journalism Investigations, Ethics in Reporting for Various Genres, Ethics in the Manner of Treatment of Interlocutors and Sources of Information, while a separate branch of Media Ethics should even be studied in each semester.

All in all, the question regarding the concept of the studies in journalism remains an open-ended one, as well as the dilemma of whether journalism should be studied via theoretical (scientific) or practical studies, which still persists around the world. On the one hand, theory is pointed to as being the students' greatest need, while on the other, it is emphasized that praxis should predominate in formal education. The arguments supporting theory are that students have a need of sound broader knowledge, while skills can easily be acquired, whereas the arguments in support of praxis state that without it students cannot efficiently integrate into the media market. Undoubtedly, obtaining a degree opens the door to the labor market, and is a basis that afterwards needs to be built on and perfected through practical work, which means that one cannot exist without the other. In other words, skills are necessary, but so is intellectual security which originates from knowledge. In this respect, if theoretical knowledge remains a responsibility of the faculties, then students' practical work can be carried out either through specialized training centers as part of the larger media or through formalized co-operation with the non-governmental sector, without excluding external professors and lecturers from the teaching process. More specifically, it is necessary to strike the right balance between theory and praxis via sound theoretical and practical knowledge as a response to all the challenges faced by the journalism profession nowadays.

Non-academic education needed for life-long learning of journalism and its new challenges

Yet, apart from all criticism and challenges that the formal education in journalism in the region is confronted with, the notion that the process of education does not end with the act of graduation still holds true. In fact, journalists of the 21st century must constantly extend their knowledge, and an important link in this process is provided by the non-governmental sector that operates in the media field. In this regard, experiences vary from one country to the next, and fluctuate between skepticism concerning the role of the non-governmental sector in journalism education (Albania) and reservations about its reputation (Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)), and a view that non-governmental organizations perfectly complement formal education (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and an emphasis of their exceptional (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro) and even invaluable role in the improvement of young journalists (Serbia). The conclusion that formal and informal education can co-exist, and that the one naturally complements the other still applies. Emphasis is placed on the fact that the good quality of formal education and the concept of informal education as life-long learning or additional education that must continue incessantly are equally important. Of course, informal education cannot substitute formal education, yet it is quite useful for further professional development, although, in practice, journalists' interest in their own advancement is increasingly diminishing (especially in Albania and Serbia). Even when it entails thematic trainings where journalists

become acquainted with new themes, they consider it a waste of time and an activity that will not bring them considerable benefit.

On the other hand, of key importance for the entire educational system, and hence for the journalism education, is its role in the development of democratic processes in the country, especially if one considers that journalism is one of the most significant institutions of a democratic society. In this respect, the influence of the journalism education would be limited if it did not produce free, independent, and plural media in parallel. Thus, the issue at hand is not only whether pluralism has been established in the educational system in the region, but also how and to what extent this system prepares students to become active participants in the advancement of democracy in their respective environment. However, the countries in the region face politicization of their entire societies, which is a process that does not pass by or spare the studies in journalism (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)). Faculties and professors, instead of being the first instances to prepare students for freedom of thinking and critical observation of society (Serbia), and proactively contribute to developing the processes of democratization, are confined within the formal fulfillment of their educational duties (Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)). **There is unquestionable agreement between academics and professionals in the countries of the region that it is precisely the faculties that must influence the democratic processes and media rights and freedoms, and that "it is what they do" (Serbia).** Yet, it remains a fact that they do not manage to establish a model that will produce professionals capable of working in a democratic society, which, above all, is caused by the

relativization of the democratic role of the media, the freedom of media, and the freedom of speech. Simultaneously, the academic community claims that it can create open-minded individuals, individuals who have integrity, are critically inclined and equipped with all necessary tools to professionally do the job of a journalist, but these cannot win in a world where media and newsrooms have defined unprofessional journalistic standards.

In this context, the reality in which the media in the region work nowadays poses a real threat to the image of journalism education. Namely, the media are deeply divided into pro-government and pro-opposition, and are placed under enormous political and economic pressure (by the government, business sector, media owners), while journalists perform their work without a secured social status, for low salaries, without any union protection, under the pressure of the editor-in-chief, and exposed to attacks and threats. Therefore, the question of how one is to remain professional amidst such working conditions is quite realistic, and even more so when the reputation of the profession is tarnished by nobodies brought into the media to accomplish a certain political mission (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). In a similar vein, nowadays one can hardly define what a medium is, and what a journalist is, that is, anything and anyone can be either, which then people perceive as some sort of journalism (Bosnia and Herzegovina), where professionals are marginalized, and the unscrupulous are endorsed (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). Each change of government brings about a change of journalism staff, both at a local and at a national level, while the “obedient” ones usually remain (Serbia). Not only is it difficult to be a media employee, but

it is even more difficult to have an individual opinion amidst the control and censorship of the newsrooms, where, unless one works according to the established rules, one loses one’s job (Montenegro). This is why theoretical preparation is of no great help to young journalists, since in the newsrooms they cannot demonstrate what they have studied (Albania), let alone be the vehicles of social change (Montenegro).

These conditions of the media sphere exert major influence on the education in journalism and its capacity. Thus, instead of coming to terms with a “basic” education of the future journalists, it is necessary for the studies in journalism to become more engaged with another quite significant component: research. Namely, unless faculties and professors work on research projects from which to derive new knowledge (about conditions, processes, and trends in the media field), they cannot be innovative or modernize their curricula. In addition, not only will inclusion of the students in research activities objectify and make more concrete the theoretical knowledge (in many subjects), but it will valorize its importance, all the while preparing the students for work in newsrooms and media. However, the fact is that competent ministries in the countries of the region dedicate only meager resources to scientific and research work. It is still true that the improvement of university education in journalism does not represent an end in itself, but more than ever before we need programs that are based on knowledge, skills, ethics, and responsibility.

INDICATORS FOR EVALUATION OF JOURNALISM STUDY PROGRAMS IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

Journalism as a profession currently finds itself at a key turning point in its history. The on-going simultaneous shifts in technology, economy, and society provide a cause enough for thoroughly reevaluating journalism and, more precisely, professionalism when working in journalism as a specific field. The new challenges in practicing journalism professionally have necessarily brought about a transformation of university education in this area as well. University education in journalism is in turn at different stages of development in the countries

of South East Europe and Turkey, all depending on the specific circumstances each of these countries is finding itself in at this point in time.

In that context, it seems that a feature that the SEE region²⁰⁸ share in view of journalism studies is the fact that university studies in this specific area in the region are facing poor material conditions, a lack of the necessary equipment, an inadequate balance between theory and practice-based courses (with practice-based courses

²⁰⁸ The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244).

taking a up a considerably lesser percentage in the curricula in comparison to theory-based ones), a limited or insufficient number of professional teaching staff, as well as insufficient cooperation with professional journalists and media outlets.

Should the generally low degree of professionalism in all these countries be added to that, then the nearest reasons for such a poor state could only be the poor education of journalists and particularly the issue with the insufficient studying of journalist ethics, as well as the lack of practical instruction in the education process. The issue which is key in all countries in the region is how to be a professional journalist in a situation of deep divisions in society along political lines, as well as divisions in the media on various different grounds. Another key issue in this context is how to make journalists adhere to and maintain professional standards in a situation when their employment status is unclear, they receive low salaries, have no labor unions to protect them, are placed under pressure by both their editors-in-chief and media owners and are at the same time quite often victims of attacks, threats, incarceration and even paid assassinations.

Journalism is one of the most important facets of any democratic society. In the foreword to its Model Curricula for Journalism Education, UNESCO has stated that *journalism, and the educational programs that enable individuals to practice and upgrade their journalistic skills, are essential tools for the underpinning of key democratic principles that are fundamental to the development of every country* (UNESCO, 2007:5). The media in the region can and must contribute to the democratization of society. Journalists should serve the public's interests while encouraging and strengthening democracy at all levels possible. A

part of the solution to this also lies in the education of journalists and stimulating critical thinking in them.

The indicators that the research over the on-going state of journalism education (both formal and informal) in South East Europe has produced should help identify the deficiencies of existing curricula in undergraduate studies in journalism across the region. As such, they are exclusive to the region and are drawn from the analysis made over the state of journalism education, freedom of expression and the media, and the degree of journalist professionalism in the region countries, as well as from the information provided on this matter by the civil society sector and its activities aimed at supporting the development of both journalism and the media.

Each indicator contains a subset of individual questions which should provide answers as to whether journalism curricula reflect the situation in which professional journalism is currently at in the specific country and whether journalist education is able to support the democratization of society in it.

The results from the research are grouped in the following 6 (six) main indicators:

1. Indicator on the content of journalism curricula;
2. Indicator on the role that journalism faculties play in society;
3. Indicator on methods of funding and conducting scientific research;
4. Indicator on student practice in media and media organizations during journalism studies;
5. Indicator on literature and teaching material used in studies; and
6. Indicator on the teaching staff and administrative conditions in implementing journalism studies.

INDICATOR ON THE CONTENT OF JOURNALISM CURRICULA

The indicator on the content of journalism curricula is both elementary and most important in this series of indicators which can help gauge the quality of journalism education in South East Europe. In this region, as well as all across the world, a valid dilemma is still ongoing as to what is pivotal to acquiring knowledge in journalism, i.e. whether it is university education or journalist practice. While some see journalism as an academic discipline requiring theoretical research, others feel it is acquiring professional skills that journalism education should be focusing on. Prac-

tioners feel that journalism is best learned outside of classrooms rather than at universities, which they think are ill suited to equip future journalists to successfully deal with the realities they would be facing over the course of their potential careers as professional journalists. On the other hand, those providing a counterargument to this are of the view that future journalists must possess the necessary theoretical foundations when pursuing careers in journalism, believing that theory is precisely what provides the drive for practice in the first place.

The role of universities is not merely imparting students with knowledge or skills in journalism, but also shaping their identities. The best journalists are those who are best educated, as well

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE COURSES

- Does the curriculum provide courses in political science and political systems, constitution and constitutional order?
- Are courses being provided which reflect the specific democratic process taking place in the given country (e.g. relating to human rights, EU integration, the judiciary, transparency, etc)?
- Is the mother tongue of the specific nation, as well as a foreign language, being taught as separate courses in the curriculum?
- Are general education courses which form part of the journalism curriculum adapted to the journalist profession?
- Are research and research methods taught as part of the curriculum?

COMMUNICATION COURSES

- Are courses relating to public opinion, communication science, intercultural communication, and media literacy being offered in the curriculum?

Are courses being provided dealing with media-related legislation, media effects on society and freedom of expression?

- Is ethics being taught as a separate course and what is the manner in which it is being taught?
- Is ethics included in the syllabi of other courses and, first and foremost, journalism and communication courses?

JOURNALISM COURSES

- Are radio, television, on-line, printed media, and multimedia journalism being offered as separate courses?
- Does the curriculum offer courses encouraging students to develop critical thinking and analytic writing?
- Are there separate courses focusing on research and analysis-based journalism?
- Are journalist skills such as operating a television camera, editing, photography, and design being taught and in what manner?
- In what way are practical training lessons being conducted within journalism and communication courses?

as who use research skills, knowledge in academic disciplines and high ethical standards in their work. Personal qualities such as talent and character are indeed vital, but the importance of future journalists developing sufficient content management, professional and communication skills and abilities cannot be understated in that respect. They should possess wide-ranging knowledge on the topics they report on, be able to use adequate wording, as well as be aware of what the purpose of journalism in society is, and what role they play as a service to citizens.

The question that proves to be central in this context is whether over the course of their journalism studies, students should be placed an emphasis on practical as opposed to general knowl-

edge and developing an acumen in the humanities, as well as whether it is possible for them to be simultaneously taught journalist skills or be encouraged to develop critical thinking. The answers listed for this first indicator provide the necessary guidelines on how to strike a true balance in courses providing sufficient theoretical knowledge on the journalist profession, as well as key abilities and values that all journalists should possess in order for them to do their jobs in a professional manner and be the carriers of social change.

The questions under this indicator are disaggregated as per the specifics of each course, i.e. whether such courses belong to either the group of general education, communication or journalism ones within the overall curriculum.

INDICATOR ON THE ROLE THAT JOURNALISM FACULTIES PLAY IN SOCIETY

Journalism education must also be perceived through the role that faculties where it is being taught play in society. It is only by having active faculties and faculty teaching staff guiding journalism students across the labyrinth of values with a view towards them reaching professional and high ethical standards that the role of journalism as an active stakeholder in building the democratic process of a country can be fostered. Journalism is one of the most important institutions of democratic societies, whereas the impact of journalism education is bound to be limited if it fails to simultaneously produce free, independent and pluralist media. Hence, the indicator on the role that journalism faculties play in society is of paramount importance and provides an answer to the question of whether the education system prepares students to become active participants in promoting democracy in their own countries.

The countries in South East Europe are facing a situation in which their entire societies are being completely politicized in all their aspects and journalism studies have not been spared from this phenomenon, rendering both faculties and teachers unable to do anything other than merely formally performing their educational functions, rather than being the first to prepare students to think freely and observe society in a critical manner. Both the academic and professional communities in the region agree that it is precisely the faculties that have to impact the democratic process and media rights and freedoms, but have to date failed to build a model to produce professionals able to work in a

democratic society and handle the ever more frequent relativization of the democratic role of the media, their freedom and the freedom of expression.

The questions listed under this indicator should provide answers as to the public status and position of the journalism academic community and faculties in their respective countries.

- **Are journalism faculties active participants in the public domain?**
- **Are their representatives and academic staff able to publicly present their views on the status of media and freedom of expression in their respective countries?**
- **Do journalism faculties offer solutions to issues relating to media freedoms and rights?**
- **Have journalism faculties established steady cooperation with civil society and particularly journalist associations and labor unions working on advancing and professionalizing media-related vocations?**

INDICATOR ON METHODS OF FUNDING AND CONDUCTING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

The indicator on the methods used to fund journalism faculties and scientific research is important to determine to what the degree are faculties free to offer instruction and conduct scientific research, as well as to assert whether institutions offering journalism studies are satisfied with providing future journalists with only basis education or are they rather assuming a proactive role in pursuing the necessary scientific research as a vital component in the work of all such institutions. Innovation in higher education can only produce knowledge and progressive attitudes by being grounded upon research projects assessing developments, on-going processes, trends and disruptions in the media sector. Without scientific research, the curricula cannot be modernized, whereby involving students in research activities helps them put their theoretical knowledge to practical use and hence helping them understand the value of that type of knowledge to their future work.

The questions listed under this indicator should reaffirm the conclusion that improving university education in journalism is not a goal in and of itself, but it rather requires holistically composed curricula, to be based on knowledge, research, ethical behavior, skills, professional moral and responsibility.

- **What is the method used to fund the specific journalism faculty? Is that faculty self-sustainable and how is that being gauged?**
- **Are research projects being pursued and, if so, how often? In what way are such projects funded?**
- **Are students involved in conducting research projects?**
- **Are results stemming from scientific research subsequently incorporated in the curricula and, if so, in what way?**
- **Are students provided access to results produced by scientific research?**
- **Is the specific faculty taking part in any regional or international scientific research projects?**

INDICATOR ON STUDENT PRACTICE IN MEDIA AND MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS OVER THE COURSE OF JOURNALISM STUDIES

Complaints as to journalism studies relying too much on theory-based education not only when considering the sheer number of such courses offered in the curricula, but also the generally theoretical approach to education as a whole, also brings to surface the problem of the lack of enough practical instruction in journalism studies all across the region, seeing as it is one of the key elements for becoming a professional journalist. There is nearly no faculty or journalism school in the region that has not incorporated compulsory student practice within their curricula, with it being even a legal obligation for such institutions in some of these countries. However, where problems occur is in providing quality practice and involving students in the work process in editorial desks by offering them an adequate mentorship-based system. Internships in media often turns into merely observing the work process from a distance, improvising or acquiring certificates for completed practical work on the spot without actually doing any. Explanations for such a state of affairs range from the media declaring a lack of space and human resources to accommodate interns, to them claiming to be overloaded with work, having too ill-equipped editorial desks to provide students with effective practice, as well as having no memoranda or agreements of cooperation signed with faculties to regulate such student programs.

The questions listed under the indicator on student practice in media and media organizations are focused on assessing to which degree are journalism

faculties prepared to be proactive in attempting to resolve this issue, which is often seen as one of a merely marginal importance, even in spite of most professional journalists and editors all agreeing that it is one of the most important prerequisites for having quality journalism education.

- **Is student practice over the course of the studies compulsory and how many hours of practice in total must students attend over the course of one academic years?**
- **What regulations are in place on student practice in the specific country and which stakeholders are required by law to provide student practice?**
- **Have faculties concluded cooperation agreements with media and media organizations?**
- **Is there a student career counseling centre or a centre providing assistance to students in finding practical work at the specific faculty and, if so, in what way are they operating?**
- **What are the methods used to evaluate the quality of student practice completed?**
- **Are students awarded ECTS credit points or partial/full grades for student practice completed?**

INDICATOR ON LITERATURE AND TEACHING MATERIAL USED IN STUDIES

Journalism faculties in the region have been facing a serious lack of student textbooks and other literature even in cases when such literature is compulsory reading, i.e. in courses which should be seen as basic within journalism curricula. Outdated literature, as well as copied material and study guides or books that teachers have discovered on-line are quite often used in the education process. In addition, there is a lack of enough translations of foreign professional literature, as well as an often complete lack of specialized database and collection of reference literature to be used in journalism education across faculties.

The indicator on literature and teaching material used in journalism studies relates to questions focusing on the manner in which students are provided with the necessary literature, as well as and quality of the teaching material used over the course of journalism studies as a whole.

- **Does the specific journalism faculty print its own textbooks and relating material?**
- **Are textbooks offered for each specific course? Do teachers provide students with their own authorized works (printed lectures) or textbooks?**
- **Is additional literature being made available to students?**
- **Are there any translations of books by foreign authors that form the basis of journalism curricula?**
- **How often does the specific faculty publish textbooks and other journalism-related literature?**

INDICATOR ON THE TEACHING STAFF AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS IN PURSUING JOURNALISM STUDIES

In addition to all these factors, another element that also has an effect on the quality of journalism education is the number of teaching staff, both the academic staff and those with professional experience in journalism, with the number of foreign guest lecturers and practitioner teachers having a further impact on the quality of education in this discipline, as well. The limit that the law imposes on the number of lessons delivered by professionals working in the area is something that poses an additional problem to faculties in their efforts to ensure quality instruction and particularly such within the practical context.

The lack of adequate studying conditions and holding classes is a further factor speaking of the level where journalism education finds itself in at each faculty. Should the number of students simultaneously attending each specific course be added to this, a more complete picture can be created on the manner and quality of studying as a whole.

The question further arises whether by having their own practical classes laboratories, faculties can solve this problem, particularly when taking into account that nearly all journalism faculties in the region are facing the issue of having quite limited material resources to conduct such work.

The indicator on the teaching staff and administrative conditions in pursuing journalism studies deals with questions expected to provide answers

as to what the quality of teachers in journalism studies is, factoring in their academic qualifications and the type of professional experience they have had. Moreover, this indicator tackles the issue of the quality of the facilities where students are attending journalism studies, while also providing information that should answer the question of teaching approach, i.e. whether it is theory or practice-based.

- **Does the faculty employ teachers on a full-time basis? If so, how many of them teach journalism-related courses?**
- **How many teachers from the faculty of law or the political science faculty, i.e. from faculties in the other humanities, deliver lectures in the capacity of visiting professors?**
- **How many of the active teaching staff possess professional work experience in journalism?**
- **How many expert practitioners have been involved in teaching journalism?**
- **Do journalism faculties possess their own separate facilities to conduct classes?**
- **Do journalism faculties operate specialized laboratories (for TV/radio/multimedia) to conduct practical work?**
- **How large a student groups in faculties and especially those in journalism courses?**

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Organizations and associations

- Article 19, <https://www.article19.org/index.php?lang=en>
- Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA), <http://www.cima.ned.org/>
- Center for Media, Data and Society (CMDS), <https://cmds.ceu.edu/>
- European Audiovisual Observatory, <http://www.obs.coe.int/web/obs-portal/home>
- European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF), <https://ecpmf.eu/>
- European Journalism Centre, <http://ejc.net/>
- Freedom Forum, <http://www.newseuminstitute.org/freedom-forum/>
- Freedom House, <https://freedomhouse.org/>
- Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD), <http://gfmd.info/>
- International Media Support (IMS), www.media-support.org
- Journalismfund.eu, <http://journalismfund.eu/>
- Media Diversity Institute, London, <http://www.media-diversity.org/en/index.php>
- Open Society Foundations, <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/>
- Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso (OBC), <http://www.balcanicaucaso.org/eng>
- Reporters without Borders, <https://rsf.org/en>
- South East European Network for Professionalization of Media (SEENPM), <http://seenpm.org/>
- The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), <http://www.ifj.org>
- The European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), <http://europeanjournalists.org/>
- The European Journalism Training Association (EJTA), <http://www.ejta.eu/>

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

ALBANIA	
Name of interviewee	Organization
Besar Likmeta	Editor, Balkan Investigative Research Network (BIRN)
Ornela Liperi	Editor-in-Chief, Monitor Magazine
Alfred Lela	Director, MAPO Tirana
Erjona Rusi	Journalist, Report TV
Dr. Ramadan Çipuri	Head of Communication Sciences Department, University of Beder
Lutfi Dervishi	Freelance Journalist and Trainer
Rrapo Zguri	Lecturer, University of Tirana
Remzi Lani	Director, Albanian Media Institute (AMI)
Jonila Godole	Lecturer, University Tirana
Mark Marku	Head of the Journalism and Communication Department, University of Tirana

MACEDONIA	
Name of interviewee	Organization
Sasho Ordanovski	Visiting Professor, SEE University in Tetovo
Zoran Dimitrovski	Editor in Chief, Fokus Magazine
Nazim Rashidi	Editor, Alsat M TV
Sefer Tahiri	Ass. Professor, SEE University in Tetovo
Jasna Bacovska	Head of the Department of Journalism, Faculty of Law, Skopje
Tamara Chausidis	President, Trade Union of Macedonian Journalists and Media Workers
Naser Selmani	President, Association of Journalists of Macedonia (AJM)
Vasko Popetreski	Editor, Alsat M TV
Biljana Petkovska	Director, Macedonian Institute of Media (MIM)
Marina Tuneva	Director, Council of Ethics in Media in Macedonia (CEMM)

MONTENEGRO	
Name of interviewee	Organization
Daliborka Uljarević	Executive Director, Centre for Civic Education
Natasa Ruzić	Ass. Professor, University of Montenegro
Dejan Lucić	Part-Time Associate, University of Montenegro
Zvezdan Vukanović	Ass. Professor, University of Donja Gorica
Petar Ivezić	Deputy Ombudsman of Montenegro
Vladan Micunović	Montenegro Institute of Media (MIM)
Dragljub Vuković	Journalist
Marijana Camović	President, Trade Union of Media of Montenegro
Aida Ramusovic	Director, NGO Nomen
Mihajlo Jovičić	Editor in Chief, Vijesti Newspaper

SERBIA	
Name of interviewee	Organization
Dino Jahić	Editor in Chief, Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ)
Milica Stojanovic	Journalist, Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ)
Vladimir Radomirović	Editor, Pitaljka Magazine
Jovana Polić	Programme Manager, Media Centre Belgrade
Zoran Stanojević	Editor, Radio Television Sarajevo (RTS)
Milica Jevtić	Radio Television Sarajevo/University of Belgrade
Dragana Bjelica	Journalist, Association of Journalists
Stanko Crnobrnja	Professor, University of Singidinum, Belgrade
Dubravka Valić-Nedeljković	Novi Sad School of Journalism
Snijezana Milivojević	Professor, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	
Name of interviewee	Organization
Ljiljana Zurovac	Executive Director, Press Council BiH
Vuk Vučetić	Senior Teaching Assistant, Faculty of East Sarajevo
Radenko Udovičić	Director, Media Plan Sarajevo
Boro Kontić	Director, Media Centre Sarajevo (MCS)
Aladin Abdagić	Editor in Chief, Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ)
Mirna Buljugić	Balkan Investigative Research Network (BIRN)
Anonymus respondent	The respondent requested for full anonymity
Lejla Turčilo	Professor, Faculty of Political Sciences, Sarajevo
Stefan Blagić	Frontal Magazine
Rubina Cengić	Journalist, Start Magazine
Slobodanka Dekić	Senior Project Coordinator, Media Centre Sarajevo

KOSOVO (under UNSCR 1244)	
Name of interviewee	Organization
Anamari Repić	Programme Manager, Radio Television Kosovo (RTK)
Andjelka Čup	Journalist
Isak Vorgučić	Director, Radio Television KIM
Hasan Saliu	Professor, AAB College
Naser Miftari	Center for Social Research - Analitika
Albulena Sadiku	Senior Programme Manager, Balkan Investigative Research Network (BIRN)
Arben Salihu	Lecturer in Journalism
Violeta Oroshi	Journalist
Sanja Sovrlić	Journalist and Editor in Chief at RTV Mir
Anonymous interviewee	The respondent requested for full anonymity

THAT OFFER JOURNALISM OR COMMUNICATIONS EDUCATION

ALBANIA

Name of institution	University	Degree title	First cycle of studies	Second cycle of studies	ECTS	Link
Public Faculties						
Faculty of Social Sciences	'Aleksandar Xhuvani' University	Journalism Journalism (Master's) Sports Journalism (Master's)	Provided	Provided	ECTS system	http://www.uniel.edu.al/index.php/en
Faculty of History and Philology	University of Tirana	Political Journalism Economic Journalism Social - cultural Journalism European and International Journalism (Master's)	Three year studies	Provided	ECTS system	http://www.fhf.edu.al/Planet_gazetari.html
Faculty of Social Sciences	'Luigj Gurakuqi' University, Shkoder	Journalism and Communications	Provided	Not provided	ECTS system	http://www.unishk.edu.al/sq
Private faculties						
Faculty of Human Studies	Beder University	Journalism	Three year studies	Two year studies	ECTS system	http://www.beder.edu.al/en/
New York University in Tirana	New York University in Tirana	Communications and Journalism	Three year studies	Not provided	ECTS system	http://unyt.edu.al/

Note: "The list includes Faculties that offer some form of journalism or communication studies. Faculties that don't offer information on the type of studies they offer as well as don't provide info about their curricula on their websites are not included in the list."

MONTENEGRO

Name of institution	University	Degree title	First cycle of studies	Second cycle of studies	ECTS	Link
Public Faculties						
Faculty of Political Sciences	University of Montenegro	Journalism	Three year studies	Two year studies	ECTS system	http://www.fpn.co.me/index.php?jezik=lat

MACEDONIA

Name of institution	University	Degree title	First cycle of studies	Second cycle of studies	ECTS	Link
Public Faculties						
Law Faculty "Iustinianus Primus"	University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius	Journalism, Media and Communications (MA)	Three year studies	Two year studies	ECTS	http://www.pf.ukim.edu.mk/
Faculty of Law	University of "Goce Delcev", Stip	Journalism and Public Relations Mass Communication and Media Management (MA)	Three year studies Four year studies	One year and Two year studies	ECTS	https://www.ugd.edu.mk/index.php/mk/
Faculty of Law	State University in Tetovo	Journalism	No info	No info	ECTS	http://unite.edu.mk/mk/
Faculty of Languages, Culture and Communication	South East European University	International Communication (BA and MA)	Three year (BA) studies	Two year (MA) studies		http://www.seeu.edu.mk/en/faculties/LCC
Private Faculties						
School of Journalism and Public Relations	School of Journalism and Public Relations	Journalism	Three year studies (BA)	/	ECTS	vs.edu.mk/vs.edu.mk/en

SERBIA

Name of institution	University	Degree title	First cycle of studies	Second cycle of studies	ECTS	Link
Public Faculties						
Faculties of Political Sciences	University of Belgrade	Journalism	Four year studies	One year studies	ECTS system	http://www.fpn.bg.ac.rs/
Faculty of Philosophy	University of Nish	Journalism	Four year studies	One year studies	ECTS system	http://www.filfak.ni.ac.rs/
Faculty of Philosophy	University of Novi Sad.	News Reporting	Four year studies	Not provided	ECTS system	http://www.ff.uns.ac.rs/index.html
Private Faculties						
Faculty of Culture and Media	'John Nesbitt' University	Journalism	Four year studies	One year studies	ECTS system	http://fkm.naisbitt.edu.rs/
Faculty of Media and Communications	'Singidunum' University	Broadcasting (Radio, TV and video) and WEB Journalism	Three year studies Four year studies	Not provided	ECTS system	http://www.fmk.singidunum.ac.rs/
Faculty of Sports	'Union - Nikola Tesla' University	Sports Journalism	Four year studies	Not provided	ECTS system	http://www.fzs.edu.rs/

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

Name of institution	University	Degree title	First cycle of studies	Second cycle of studies	ECTS	Link
Public Faculties						
Faculties of Political Sciences	University of Sarajevo	Communication Sciences	Three year studies	Two year studies	ECTS system	http://fpn.unsa.ba/bs/
Faculty of Philosophy	University of Mostar	Journalism	Three year studies	Two year studies	ECTS system	http://ff.sve-mo.ba/
Faculty of Philosophy	University of Tuzla	News Reporting Journalism	Four year studies	One year studies	ECTS system	http://www.ff.untz.ba/
Faculty of Philosophy	University of East Sarajevo	Journalism	Four year studies	One year studies	ECTS system	http://www.ffuis.edu.ba/
Faculties of Political Sciences	University of Banja Luka	Journalism and Communication Science	Four year studies	One year studies	ECTS system	http://www.fpnbl.org/index.php
Banja Luka College	Banja Luka College	Journalism and Multimedia	Four year studies	Not provided	ECTS system	http://www.blc.edu.ba/
Faculty of Media and Communications	International University Travnik	Media and Journalism	Three year studies Four year studies	One year studies Two year studies	ECTS system	http://www.iu-travnik.com/bs/
'Kappa Fi' Communications College	'Kappa Fi' Communications College, Banja Luka	Journalism	Three year studies Four year studies	/	ECTS system	http://kfbl.edu.ba/
Faculty of Journalism and Communication Science	Business Studies University	Journalism	Three year studies	Not provided	ECTS system	http://www.univerzitetps.com/index.html
Faculty of Political Sciences	European University - Brcko	Journalism and Communication Science	Three year studies Four year studies	/	ECTS system	http://evropskiuniverzitet-brcko.com/Novi/

KOSOVO (under UNSCR 1244)

Name of institution	University	Degree title	First cycle of studies	Second cycle of studies	ECTS	Link
Public Faculties						
Faculty of Philology	'Hasan Prishtina' University of Prishtina	Journalism (BA and MA)	/	/	ECTS system	http://uni-pr.edu/page.aspx?id=2,1
Private Faculties						
Faculty of Mass Communications and Journalism	AAB College	Mass Communications and Journalism	Three year studies	Two year studies	ECTS system	http://aab-edu.net/en
University of Business and Technology	University of Business and Technology	Media and Communications	Three year studies	Two year studies	ECTS system	http://www.ubt-uni.net/?cid=1,1

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The “Building trust in media in SEE and Turkey” project aims to strengthen freedom of expression, access to information, and free, independent and pluralistic media, ensuring that journalists and media organizations in South East Europe and Turkey are key drivers for democratic, sustainable and peaceful development in the region. The goal is to build trust and restore confidence in the media in South East Europe and Turkey.

The focus is on improving media accountability mechanisms, media internal governance, and media and information literacy among citizens to strengthen civil society support for the media and demand for qual-

ity media. This project builds on previous cooperation between the EU and UNESCO. It will thus benefit from the experiences and lessons learned from the project “Alignment to International Standards in the Media Sector of South East European countries” implemented by UNESCO from 2009 to 2011, and the project “Media Accountability in South East Europe”, implemented from 2013 to 2015. Both projects supported the creation and strengthening of voluntary media self-regulation mechanisms, such as press councils and news ombudsmen in South East Europe and Turkey. They also provided a forum for discussion on adapting professional standards to the digital era and including online media in the process of self-regulation.



Communication and
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BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD: CRAFTING THE IDEAL JOURNALISM CURRICULA FOR SOUTH EAST EUROPE



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