

MEDIA, ELECTIONS AND PUBLIC

2017

**Bureau for Social Researches
BIRODI**

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INTRODUCTION

We marked the five-year anniversary of BIRODI's media monitoring by concentrating on our activities. For the first time since 2012, BIRODI monitoring team had the opportunity to monitor the media outside an election period, on the same sample and in connection with the same actors. In that way, we had the opportunity to see a bigger picture and show the status of public interest in the media. Although the term "public interest" is present in strategic documents, laws, and public communication, the public has quite vague understanding of this term.

According to the present Media Strategy, public interest is construed as „the realisation of the public's right to be informed. The free development of independent, professional media and the media system is to ensure the widest satisfaction of the needs of Serbia's citizens for information and content from all walks of life without discrimination: politics, economy, culture, art, education, environmental protection, sports, entertainment, etc. Public interest also entails the provision of diverse and quality media content to all individuals and social groups of all professions, ages and education levels and all minority groups: ethnic, religious, linguistic, sexual groups, groups with special needs, and others“¹.

In addition to the content-related meaning of the term „public interest“, we will also explain its meaning when applied in practice. At the practical level, the Media Strategy explains the public interest as the production and publication of: general news media content, specialised media content on politics, culture, education, religion, economy, entertainment and other issues of relevance to the lives and work of the citizens, general news and specialised media content of relevance to the lives and work of citizens in local and regional communities, media content for children and youths, media content of relevance to the preservation of cultural heritage and content promoting artistic and cultural creativity and the work of cultural institutions, investigative reporting content and other complex journalistic forms, original audio-visual and radiophonic works in the Serbian and national minority languages provided that the production and publication of such content is relevant to the: realisation of the right to information in the Serbian and national minority languages, preservation and advancement of media pluralism and media content diversity, encouragement of media literacy, preservation of the cultural identities of the Serbian nation, national minorities and ethnic groups living in the Republic of Serbia, encouragement of media creativity and creativeness, development of science and advancement of education at all levels, including adult education, promotion of the rule of law and social justice, the principles of civic democracy, human and minority rights and freedoms, and adherence to European principles and values.

A part of public interest also relates to media professions, largely the journalists. Thus, the public interest in the media means „...the upgrading of media and journalistic professionalism, the advanced professional training of journalists and editors, the encouragement of journalistic autonomy and self-regulation within the media and the promotion of media literacy and research in the media field“, as well as „the production and publication of media content for blind and visually impaired persons, persons with hearing impairments and other persons with special needs, as well as the development and advancement of the technical infrastructure facilitating their access to media content.“

¹ <http://nuns.rs/reforma-javnog-informisanja/strategija.html>

The Declaration expressed in the Media Strategy is regulated in Article 15 of the Law on Public Information, where public interest in the media is defined as: truthful, unbiased, timely and complete informing of all the citizens of the Republic of Serbia; truthful, unbiased, timely and complete informing in the mother tongue of the citizens of the Republic of Serbia who are members of the national minorities; informing in the Serbian language of the members of the Serbian people living outside of the territory of the Republic of Serbia; preservation of cultural identity of the Serbian people and national minorities living in the territory of the Republic of Serbia; informing of the foreign public in foreign languages where it is of interest for the Republic of Serbia; informing of the persons with disabilities and other minority groups and support to the production of media contents with the aim of protecting and developing human rights and democracy; improving of legal and social state; free personal development and protection of children and the young; development of cultural and artistic creation; development of education, including media literacy as a part of the education system; development of science; and development of sports and physical culture and protection of the environment and human health, that is, improvement of media and journalistic professionalism.

Article 16 of the same Law defines the institutional framework for the realisation of the public interest in the media as: establishing public services at the national and provincial levels in compliance with the law, establishing an institution with the aim of exercising the right to public information of the population in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, enabling the national councils of the national minorities to establish institutions and companies with the aim of exercising the right to public information in the language of the national minority, i.e. foundations with the aim of achieving the generally useful objective of furthering of public information in the language of the national minority in compliance with the law, and by co-financing of projects in the field of public information with a view to realising the public interest.

From the research perspective, the public interest in the media has three dimensions: the interest of institutions, which also includes the media, the interest of journalistic and other media-related professions, and the interest of citizens in the media. If we were to concretise this, the public interest in the media would contain three components:

- Regulation
- Self-regulation
- Media habitus of citizens

Realising the public interest in the media at the level of regulation is reflected in the development and observance of the legislation on the media. This is not the goal by itself, but the means for building and preserving media diversity and public as the basis of a democratic society. Another cornerstone of public interest in the media is self-regulation. The public interest in the media means that there is an effective professional organisation of journalists aimed at protecting and advancing journalistic expertise (special knowledge) and the Code of Ethics. Namely, the division of labour in society which resulted in the need for professions necessitates professional associations with the goal to effectively preserve and improve journalistic knowledge and professional and ethical principles.

And last but not least element are citizens who have needs for media contents, depending on their social roles, rights, needs and interests. When such needs are met, public interest in the media is realised.

Table 1 Elements of public interest

Regulation	Self-regulation	Media needs of citizens
Media functionalism		
Hybrid public	Active public	Passivized public

Hybrid public comprises of those media and actors whose goal is to use white or black propaganda, promote an actor, topic, or priority to the level of adoration, or resort to the media attacks to the extent and in the manner not punishable by the law. In that way, they turn the actor into a legitimate target, make a topic banned, and turn a priority into a destructive one. Structurally, hybrid public is comprised of the media which may be dubbed: means of propaganda and retaliation, bot information, pseudo-political analysts, and pseudo-pollsters. The priority of such „public “ is to not only to undermine the public as such but also to facilitate the devastation of institutions and impose control over one-way flow of information. The goal of hybrid public is to maintain or change attitudes of message recipients, that is, to produce and preserve particular behaviour, knowledge/experience, or emotions.

Hybrid public has an internal hierarchical structure which serves the efficiency of one-dimensional distribution of information. If the society has room only for one (real) hybrid public, the exchange of information can happen between two (unfriendly actors) who use „communication “ for (media) duels, without regard to (media) consequences. These are media wars with media trenches and media army. There are four attitudes toward hybrid public. The first is collusion with hybrid public, the second is opportunism, the third is self-marginalisation which also includes migration, and the fourth is civic and/or professional rebellion against the (re)production of hybrid public.

Participation and preservation of active public is also a type of rebellion. The priority of such public is to research the reality of citizens’ lives with the aim to objectively analyse and take stock of priorities and, through deliberation process conducted in different fora, define the priorities advocated through democratic procedures with the aim to include them in policies and/or laws in a transparent and lawful manner. Active public is recognised by the fact that it preserves institutions and public as such. The pillars of free public are the media – public service to citizens, free citizens, and the institutions of knowledge and title. As opposed to hybrid public, which aims to control society, active public strives for freedom through the participation in a public dialogue where the media represent an information exchange platform where public interest, comprised of reconciled individual interests, is crystallized.

Passive public actually negates the public. It is a product of political anatomy and depoliticization of society resulting in society’s atomization and desocialisation. Passivization of the public occurs in situations when social processes render any political actions senseless, that is, when institutions, which serve as guarantors of democracy and freedom, have a low level of integrity. That is a situation in society where citizens keep to themselves and consequently, egotism is growing whereas society becomes atomized. Instead of reaching for regulatory mechanism provided by institutions, a need appears for a “firm-hand leader”,

scapegoats, and enemies. Spirit of rationality yields to mythomania. This entire process occurs in the presence of the media which support the process of the disappearance of the public. Soldiers of hybrid public are recruited from among the passive public members and such soldiers are ready to become one of the troopers in the media war theatre.

Media functionalism occurs under the mutual influence of regulation, self-regulation and media needs of citizens, as well as in the prevalent situation (transition) in the Serbian society. Namely, in addition to their evident function of informing, the media may also have latent functions in which they can partly or fully become: bulletins, advocates, tabloids, propagandists, and servicemen. It should be noted that the functionalism of each media reflects not only the situation in the media sphere but also the general situation in the society.

Using this approach, we developed a functional typology of the Serbian media. This classification is ideally typical, as is the case with every classification. Therefore, it may happen that our classification of media into particular types deviates from media reality. However, it is up to us to develop and continually advance the criteria that will improve objectivity, systematicness, and precision of the media functional typology. The proposed classification of the media is not only aimed at precisely measuring the media quality but also at focusing attention on (adverse) media diversity which resulted from unsuccessful and incomplete media transition and overall social transition and eventually produced the mentioned media types.

Functionalism of the media has two components: journalistic and content-related. These components are not separated but quite the contrary, they intertwine because they exist in the field of media and communications. Journalistic component relates to the actions of journalists as members of the profession, more precisely, it relates to how they use their professional knowledge (expertise). Content-related component relates to communication, that is, the content offered to the recipient, which is reflected in the representation and tone of presenting the actors, toponyms, events, arguments and values. Using this analytical division, we wish to separate the inseparable in the media monitoring, namely, to separate the observance of the rules of journalistic profession from the media content where a medium, as a broadcaster and/or a message sender wishes to achieve something with the message recipients. In this way, two key tasks of media monitoring are achieved: evaluation of the actions of the members of journalistic profession and the analysis of the content of media communication.

We perceive the functional typology of the media in Serbia as an instrument of civic evaluation of the media that should be conducted by civil society organisations and academic communities with the help of self-employed journalists. In this way, we achieve two, in our opinion, important goals.

Firstly, through the civil society organisations and academic community, the citizens are able to have a particular control over the media contents the production of which is financed by public money allocated for the realisation of the citizens' public interest in the media. Secondly, in this way we can avoid the ethical conflict of interest in the media monitoring, which occurs by the participation of permanently employed journalists who find themselves in a situation where they directly or indirectly evaluate their colleagues from competitive media and colleagues from the media where they are employed or where they are the (co)owners,

which represents a conflict of interest in the research and is contrary to the international standards.

On the other hand, professional self-evaluation is an important instrument of professional self-regulation. This is why it is important to separate civic from professional evaluation and thus obtain two media monitorings that are methodologically relevant, where both of them, in their own right, help to verify the achievement of public interest.

When it comes to the functional typology of the media in Serbia, as in every classification, this classification also used particular criteria. We chose the following:

- Representation of analytical and dialogical genres compared to the informative genre forms;
- Representation of private and alternative sources compared to the etatist and pro-governmental sources;
- Representation of international sources compared to domicile ones;
- Representation of events organised by the community compared to those organised by the state;
- Representation of pseudo-events;
- Representation of discourses: informative-analytical, bulletin-like, advocative, tabloid, promotional, propagandist, servicemen-like;
- Representation of actors within the following corpus: Authorities and Regulatory Bodies; the Government and the Ministries, the Prime Minister and Ministers; Political Leaders; Political Parties /Movements; Social Actors; Brussels process; International actors;
- Tone of presenting the actors: Authorities and Regulatory Bodies; Ministers and Ministries; Political Leaders; Political Parties /Movements; Brussels Process; International Actors; Social Actors;
- Satisfaction of citizens with media reporting

Based on the above criteria, we made a hypothetical functional classification of the media which recognizes the following media types in Serbia: informative-analytical service, advocates, bulletins, tabloids, propagandists, and servicemen.

Informative and analytical service (IAS), as a type of media, largely addresses the topics relevant for all citizens, that is, those which are part of the public interest. Genre structure of IAS is reflected in a pronounced presence of analytical and dialogical forms. The news items feature the actors relevant for particular news topics. Journalists and actors use relevant, clearly visible, objective and verifiable sources. Sources and arguments are used for the purpose of analysis, explanation and information.

Authors of news items are quite often clearly visible. In connection with events and occasions based on which media contents are made, predominant are the events which are the consequence of “social spontaneity” and/or are organised by the community, whereas the events organised by the state are less represented. This type of media contains a very small number of news items which are the result of pseudo-events, or does not contain them at all. It is characterised by diverse actors. The actors are given a particular length of time depending on the relevance of information relating to an actor and on the extent of actor’s relevance for

the topic. In terms of actors' presentation, the tone is functionally distributed. This type of media observes codes of ethics of journalistic profession.

Advocates are the type of media promoting and advocating particular values, ideals, policies, but not necessarily the actors. This is what determines the choice of a source, arguments, topics and actors. Majority of topics are relevant for a social group and/or media owners and related actors. News items of such media feature actors who advocate something rather than their opponents. The authors of these news items are also visible in this type of media, whereas somewhat more focus is placed on (pseudo) events organised by actors, or the actors are those who are close to the editorial policy of the media. The tone and time length are distributed according to the closeness to the editorial policy in the context of values and priorities advocated by the media. Closeness to the editorial policy of the media largely determines the representation and tone of actors' presentation. Advocates as the media rarely breach professional and ethical standards of journalistic profession.

Bulletins are quite opposite from IAS. They serve to promote the media owners. They also may (in)formally promote the state and/or actors related to the media owner. The genre structure is dominated by news and reports or the reports with a statement. The selection of actors, topics and sources is "in line with" the promotion and production of optimism. The same applies to the arguments of journalists which serve such promotion. Pseudo-events as the subject of news items are highly represented. The identity of a journalist is mentioned, although a news item may remain unsigned. Tentatively, media "owners" and related actors are, as a rule, the most represented and highly favourably presented. The diversity of actors is low and reserved for selected actors who are functionally connected to the media owners and their related actors.

Tabloids are the media characterised by high representation of actors from the entertainment business and their discourse is entertainment-related, which means that the aim of the media content is entertainment, entertaining presentation of actors in the media, or the promotion of actors in the area of entertainment business. Genre structure of tabloids is relatively broad, ranging from news and reports to interviews. Sources have low objectivity and verifiability and are very often personal. In this type of media, the news items featuring pseudo-events are considerably present. The selection of actors is determined by their popularity. The tone of presentation is either predominantly favourable or predominantly unfavourable.

Propagandists promote or gloss over particular values, ideals, policies and actors who are their agents. The selection of source, arguments, topics and actors serves to panegyriser a particular actor, and is very often personalised. Majority of topics are relevant for the actor, but the attempt is to bring them in connection with the largest possible number of citizens. The news items leave no room for hearing the other side or for the facts which question the propagandist content of such items. The authors of these news items are visible. The most represented occasions/topics of such news items are pseudo-events, in addition to the events organised by the owner or related actors, notably, the state, political party, or the buyer of advertising space. Particular actors have at their disposal the whole media time where they are predominantly presented positively. Propagandists breach professional and ethical standards of journalistic profession.

Servicemen are the media guard of the media owners and related actors, notably of the authorities, political parties and those who buy advertising space. The role of the servicemen is to retaliate against actors who stand in the way of the media owner's or related actors' interests or point to the unlawful conduct. Servicemen use a wide array of genres because the format of the news item poses no obstacles for the operations of the servicemen. The topic of servicemen's news items is relevant for the media owners and their interest-related actors. Unlike propagandist media, where actors are predominantly positively presented, in the servicemen's media main actors are predominantly negatively presented. All sources and arguments serve the purpose of actors' adverse presentation and condemnation in the media. One of the servicemen's tasks is to bring such actors to media trial. Their other function is media ostracism of those who are not favoured by the media owners and /or related actors. Servicemen permanently breach journalistic codes.

Our media analysis is comprised of two parts. The first part relates to the election period, and the second to the period beyond elections. The same media monitoring method was used in both periods. The subject of the research were prime time current affairs (hereinafter: News) on television stations with national coverage (RTS, TV Pink, TV Happy, TV Prva, TV O2 and cable TV N1).

In parallel with the analysis of contents of the aforementioned central news on the said TV stations, citizens were polled with the intention to establish how the reporting of the said TV stations is perceived by the public in the election period and in the period beyond elections. In that way, we wanted to determine the media i.e. informative culture, that is, the media needs of the Serbian citizens.

Dražen Pavlica

**2017 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
MIRRORED IN THE MEDIA**

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Since 2012, the Bureau for Social Research has continuously monitored the media in the pre-election period, notably television stations. In this year's Serbian presidential election, we continued our already well-established research mission. In this media monitoring, the core research team of the Bureau was comprised of Zoran Gavrilović, Snežana Đapić, Slavica Jovanović, Radule Perović, and the author of this text.

On this occasion, in addition to the television stations with national coverage, our sample included TV N1. For precisely four weeks - from 3 March to 30 March (until the day of mandatory electoral silence) – we monitored the following TV stations: 1. **RTS 1**; 2. **TV B92**; 3. **TV Prva**; 4. **TV Pink**; 5. **TV Happy**; 6. **TV N1**. Primetime news included in our sample were: 1. **Dnevnik 2**, 19.30h (RTS 1); 2. **Vesti**, 20h (TV B92); 3. **Vesti**, 18h (TV Prva), 4. **Nacionalni dnevnik**, 18.30h (TV Pink); 5. **Telemaster**, 18.30h (TV Happy); 6. **Dnevnik**, 19h (TV N1).

In terms of their average length, the majority of analysed programmes lasted for about forty minutes. This average length was exceeded by TV Pink, with approximately more than fifty minutes of National News (Nacionalni dnevnik), whereas RTS fell short of it, with approximately thirty four minutes of News 2 (Dnevnik 2) on average. Our analysis included the total of 2.159 news items, which approximately amounted to the average of seventy seven news items per day, that is, some thirteen news items per programme a day. The order of news items is as follows: 1. Dnevnik 2 (*News 2*) RTS 1 (391); 2. Vesti (*News*) TV B92 (376); 3. Vesti (*News*) TV Prva (397); 4. Nacionalni dnevnik (*National News*) TV Pink (339); 5. Telemaster TV Happy (362) and 6. Dnevnik (*News*) TV N1 (294). As in the parliamentary election of 2016, News of TV Prva led in the number of news items, although, this time, the difference was smaller than before. Even a cursory glance was sufficient to see that in particular cases, there was no proportion between the programme length and the number of news items. Thus, for example, News 2 of the Public Broadcasting Service, was among the programmes with the largest number of news items, despite its shortest length. When it came to National News of TV Pink, this proportion was quite the opposite. Namely, the programme with strikingly longest length, recorded the under average number of news items.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The central part of the research was dedicated to measuring the time allocated to actors who, directly or indirectly, were the part of election infrastructure. Thus, we did not only focus on the direct election rivals, but also included those actors who, by the nature of things, had a significant influence on voters or yet, who in the election procedure had a strictly delegated role.

In addition to their shares in airtime, important was to see the manner in which the actors were presented in the news items. Having regard to the specific nature of television as a medium, when determining how an actor was presented in a relevant news item, we had to pay attention to the interaction between words and images. We were again met with obvious intentions of a message sender to resort to (de)contextualisation in order to produce a certain effect on its receiver (viewer). When attaching a certain value to it, it was necessary to keep in mind the mutual relationship between the election actors and the entire social and media context. Mere quantum of someone's presence in the media by itself is not that meaningful if we do not know how this presence is distributed according to the assigned values. In the

analysis of news items, recording of airtime (second was taken as a unit of time) and assigning the values were connected with the actor. We paid particular attention to the appearance of certain actors in a double role – in this presidential election this solely related to Aleksandar Vučić, who doubled as the Prime Minister and a candidate.

Detecting topic configurations which prevailed in the analysed media was equally interesting for the research. The topics on our preliminary list composed from our previous related researches, were supplemented as they appeared during the research process². In the prevailing media discourse, we could learn a lot from the most represented topics, and even more from their coverage and presentation. It was to be expected that the most represented actors would insist on particular thematic circles created according to their (narrow) group interests. The question is posed to what extent did the media attempt to deconstruct this, harmful for the public, homology between the actors and topic configurations? Failing to take the opportunity and adopt a more independent attitude to actors /topics, the media eventually failed both their own mission and public interest.

In addition to actors and topics, it was important to monitor the genre structure, since that could help discern how much media kept to their professional ethos and whether they sought to take an autonomous position. We identified the following genres: news, report, report with statement, interview, commentary, analysis, reportage, studio guest, live report from the scene, topic (media package), statement, visualised voice-over. The fourth dimension of our research was to detect the mechanisms for generating image in the media, more precisely, to monitor on which sources this image was shaped³. Composition, diversity and (lack of) transparency of information sources spoke a lot of the nature of the relevant media and their position in relation to the environment outside media.

Finally, our findings will be largely considered in the comparative framework and compared with the findings of 2016 parliamentary election. Not losing sight of the fact that those were two different types of elections, there is much to support the assumption that the comparative method will be of invaluable assistance to our research. Having mentioned the comparison, we would like to stress that both in last year's parliamentary election and in this year's presidential election, our monitoring lasted for twenty eight days.

Table 1 Actors on all television stations (in seconds and percentages)

Actor	N	%
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	29.250	26.5
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	22.491	20.4
Vuk Jeremić	5.367	4.9
Saša Janković	4.969	4.5
Journalist	4.532	4.1
Vojislav Šešelj	4.481	4.1
RIK	3.752	3.4
Nenad Čanak	3.489	3.2

² Itemising the grouped topics would take up too much space, so it is better to refer to the related table.

³ Similarly to topic categories, the itemization would be too long, so for the list of sources please refer to the related table.

Boško Obradović	3.121	2.8
SNS	2.742	2.5
Milan Stamatović	2.581	2.3
Aleksandar Popović	2.522	2.3
Saša Radulović	2.521	2.3
Miroslav Parović	2.313	2.1
Analysts	2.153	2.0
NGOs/CSOs	1.503	1.4
Luka Maksimović	1.350	1.2
Public figures	853	.8
Government of Serbia	848	.8
EU officials	828	.8
Ivica Dačić	723	.7
Vladimir Rajčić	694	.6
Ethnic minority parties	673	.6
Actors from the region	584	.5
Russian/Chinese officials	422	.4
Pollsters	403	.4
Dragan Vučićević/Informer	372	.3
Aleksandar Vulin	326	.3
Citizens, workers, farmers	303	.3
Businessmen, foreign and Serbian	281	.3
Other parties	279	.3
“DOS candidates”	254	.2
Prosecution	245	.2
Chamber of Public Notaries	241	.2
SPS	241	.2
Bogoljub Karić	226	.2
Dosta je bilo (<i>Enough is Enough</i>)	195	.2
LDP	173	.2
Betting shops	171	.2
Rasim Ljajić/SDP	170	.2
PUPS	160	.1
DS	129	.1
Tomislav Nikolić	123	.1
Other international actors	120	.1
SRS	106	.1
Dušan Janjić	105	.1
REM	102	.1
Dveri (<i>Doors to the Altar</i>)	92	.1
Deputy Ombudsman	71	.1
Serbian ambassadors	66	.1
Foreign media	59	.1
Dragan Marković, JS	58	.1
DSS	52	.0
Anti-Corruption Agency	49	.0

LSV	49	.0
Sanja Prlja	46	.0
SDS	46	.0
Marko Matić, Media Network	39	.0
Danijela Sremac	34	.0
Slobodan Petković	27	.0
National Bank of Serbia	21	.0
Students	20	.0
Serbian Assembly	1	.0
Total	110.217	100.0

Table 2 Actors in seconds on RTS (actors with more than 1%)

	N	%
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	4508	32.7
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	1141	8.3
Vuk Jeremić	845	6.1
Saša Janković	758	5.5
Vojislav Šešelj	708	5.1
Boško Obradović	629	4.6
Milan Stamatović	621	4.5
Nenad Čanak	570	4.1
Aleksandar Popović	562	4.1
Saša Radulović	546	4.0
Miroslav Parović	484	3.5
Journalist	399	2.9
RIK	326	2.4
Luka Maksimović	325	2.4
SNS	251	1.8
EU officials	138	1.0

Table 3 Tone of presenting presidential candidates on RTS (in percentages)

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	80.3	9.2	10.5	100.0
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	97.6	1.3	1.1	100.0
Saša Janković	96.3	3.3	.4	100.0
Vuk Jeremić	95.5	2.0	2.5	100.0
Vojislav Šešelj	97.5	2.4	.1	100.0
Boško Obradović	99.5	.5	.0	100.0
Milan Stamatović	99.8	.2	.0	100.0
Aleksandar Popović	99.1	.9	.0	100.0
Nenad Čanak	95.6	4.4	.0	100.0
Saša Radulović	97.1	2.9	.0	100.0
Miroslav Parović	100.0	.0	.0	100.0
Luka Maksimović	98.5	1.5	.0	100.0

Table 4 Actors in seconds on TV Pink (actors with more than 1%)

	N	%
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	14.795	36.2
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	14.388	35.2
Vuk Jeremić	1.353	3.3
Analysts	1.268	3.1
Saša Janković	1.092	2.7
Journalist	851	2.1
Vojislav Šešelj	706	1.7
Government of Serbia	511	1.2
Nenad Čanak	500	1.2
Ethnic minority parties	449	1.1
NGOs/CSOs	432	1.1

Table 5 Tone of presenting presidential candidates on TV Pink (in percentages)

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	99.6	.3	.1	100.0
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	95.9	4.1	.0	100.0
Saša Janković	44.9	6.0	49.2	100.0
Vuk Jeremić	30.2	1.8	68.0	100.0
Vojislav Šešelj	97.2	2.0	.8	100.0
Boško Obradović	89.8	.0	10.2	100.0
Milan Stamatović	94.5	5.5	.0	100.0
Aleksandar Popović	99.4	.6	.0	100.0
Nenad Čanak	88.6	11.0	.4	100.0
Saša Radulović	54.4	28.1	17.5	100.0
Miroslav Parović	99.2	.8	.0	100.0
Luka Maksimović	28.8	8.7	62.5	100.0

Table 6 Actors in seconds on TV Prva (actors with more than 1%)

	N	%
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	3.434	22.4
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	2.411	15.8
SNS	998	6.5
Saša Janković	761	5.0
Journalist	748	4.9
Vojislav Šešelj	646	4.2
Vuk Jeremić	639	4.2
RIK	464	3.0
Boško Obradović	463	3.0
Nenad Čanak	416	2.7
Saša Radulović	416	2.7
Aleksandar Popović	415	2.7
Milan Stamatović	350	2.3
Analysts	327	2.1

Miroslav Parović	326	2.1
EU officials	256	1.7
Luka Maksimović	173	1.1
Actors from the region	153	1.0
Pollsters	150	1.0
Ivica Dačić	146	1.0

Table 7 Tone of presenting presidential candidates on TV Prva (in percentages)

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	91.6	3.9	4.5	100.0
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	95.9	2.8	1.3	100.0
Saša Janković	72.0	12.9	15.1	100.0
Vuk Jeremić	79.3	12.7	8.0	100.0
Vojislav Šešelj	97.8	2.0	.2	100.0
Boško Obradović	98.1	1.5	.4	100.0
Milan Stamatović	99.1	.9	.0	100.0
Aleksandar Popović	96.6	3.4	.0	100.0
Nenad Čanak	98.1	1.7	.2	100.0
Saša Radulović	89.4	6.7	3.8	100.0
Miroslav Parović	99.7	.3	.0	100.0
Luka Maksimović	87.3	12.7	.0	100.0

Table 8 Actors in seconds on TV B92 (actors with more than 1%)

	N	%
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	2.574	21.1
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	1.812	14.9
Vuk Jeremić	767	6.3
Saša Janković	616	5.1
Vojislav Šešelj	612	5.0
RIK	531	4.4
Boško Obradović	472	3.9
Nenad Čanak	468	3.8
Aleksandar Popović	458	3.8
Saša Radulović	439	3.6
Milan Stamatović	432	3.5
Miroslav Parović	381	3.1
Journalist	370	3.0
SNS	304	2.5
Luka Maksimović	265	2.2
Analysts	209	1.7
Prosecution	182	1.5
Betting shops	149	1.2
Vladimir Rajčić	141	1.2

Table 9 Tone of presenting presidential candidates on TV B92 (in percentages)

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
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Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	92.7	4.3	3.0	100.0
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	97.7	1.3	1.0	100.0
Saša Janković	97.6	1.8	.6	100.0
Vuk Jeremić	92.6	6.3	1.2	100.0
Vojislav Šešelj	95.4	.5	4.1	100.0
Boško Obradović	98.9	1.1	.0	100.0
Milan Stamatović	100.0	.0	.0	100.0
Aleksandar Popović	99.3	.7	.0	100.0
Nenad Čanak	100.0	.0	.0	100.0
Saša Radulović	98.6	1.4	.0	100.0
Miroslav Parović	97.1	2.9	.0	100.0
Luka Maksimović	98.1	1.5	.4	100.0

Table 10 Actors in seconds on TV Happy (actors with more than 1%)

	N	%
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	3.024	24.4
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	1.598	12.9
Vuk Jeremić	694	5.6
Nenad Čanak	671	5.4
RIK	611	4.9
SNS	548	4.4
Saša Janković	541	4.4
Vojislav Šešelj	534	4.3
Boško Obradović	455	3.7
Milan Stamatović	434	3.5
Aleksandar Popović	398	3.2
Miroslav Parović	346	2.8
Ivica Dačić	320	2.6
Saša Radulović	237	1.9
Journalist	213	1.7
Aleksandar Vulin	183	1.5
Pollsters	161	1.3

Table 11 Tone of presenting presidential candidates on TV Happy (in percentages)

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	90.9	6.2	2.9	100.0
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	99.8	.2	.0	100.0
Saša Janković	85.2	4.8	10.0	100.0
Vuk Jeremić	74.4	6.2	19.5	100.0
Vojislav Šešelj	96.6	3.0	.4	100.0
Boško Obradović	98.9	.9	.2	100.0
Milan Stamatović	99.8	.2	.0	100.0
Aleksandar Popović	99.2	.8	.0	100.0
Nenad Čanak	99.6	.4	.0	100.0
Saša Radulović	96.6	2.1	1.3	100.0

Miroslav Parović	92.2	7.8	.0	100.0
Luka Maksimović	87.5	10.9	1.6	100.0

Table 12 Actors in seconds on TV N1 (actors with more than 1%)

	N	%
Journalist	1.951	12.4
RIK	1.562	10.0
Vojislav Šešelj	1.275	8.1
Saša Janković	1.201	7.7
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	1.141	7.3
Vuk Jeremić	1.069	6.8
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	915	5.8
Nenad Čanak	864	5.5
Boško Obradović	769	4.9
NGOs/CSOs	731	4.7
Saša Radulović	609	3.9
Milan Stamatović	433	2.8
Miroslav Parović	420	2.7
SNS	348	2.2
Aleksandar Popović	343	2.2
Luka Maksimović	338	2.2
Public figures	288	1.8
Analysts	273	1.7
EU officials	165	1.1

Table 13 Tone of presenting presidential candidates on TV N1 (in percentages)

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Aleksandar Vučić, candidate	55.0	19.5	25.4	100.0
Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister	84.8	7.8	7.4	100.0
Saša Janković	94.3	5.4	.2	100.0
Vuk Jeremić	87.0	9.9	3.1	100.0
Vojislav Šešelj	97.3	2.4	.3	100.0
Boško Obradović	96.5	3.1	.4	100.0
Milan Stamatović	99.3	.7	.0	100.0
Aleksandar Popović	98.3	1.7	.0	100.0
Nenad Čanak	99.3	.6	.1	100.0
Saša Radulović	93.8	5.9	.3	100.0
Miroslav Parović	98.1	1.9	.0	100.0
Luka Maksimović	71.3	28.7	.0	100.0

TOPIC CONFIGURATIONS

More than it was the case in parliamentary election, the media discourse of presidential election was increasingly built on candidates' personal equations. Different (de)personalised simulacra pushed to the background the values and content of political programmes of rivals in presidential election. Here, there was a certain kind of collusion between the pre-election

strategy of (majority) candidates and increasingly deep-rooted media approach. However, the aforementioned in no way means that the image created by the media in this presidential election, however shallow, did not offer certain thematic structure. For clarification purposes, the following findings will be notably expressed in the percentages of airtime given to a particular topic. Eventually, we will offer a somewhat different view of represented topics through the lens of the number of news items. It is of vital importance for the research to get an insight into the distribution of the total airtime allocated to a topic, however, the number of news items dedicated to a certain topic is just as much important.

When we take into account all television stations combined, four topics exceed ten percent of representation. Of these, two have more than twelve percent – election procedure (24.3%) and economy (22%). So high percent achieved by election procedure can be explained by the fact that some candidates encountered difficulties when registering their candidature. Media did not miss the chance to dedicate really excessive attention to this event. Criticism aimed at other presidential candidates (18%) and Kosovo (11.5%) closed the circle of the topics exceeding the said ten percent. Finally, the topic of providing support to a presidential candidate almost reached the said ten percent with 9.4% of representation.

The layout of topic configurations was considerably contributed by the following topics: announcing better future (7.8%), democratisation (6.1%), stability in the region (6%), relations with Russia (5.3%), and foreign policy (5.2%). The topic of European integration as a kind of oppositional geopolitical macrotoponym of Russia, recorded 2.7% of representation. Judging by the image created in the media in this year's presidential election, the pendulum sharply swung towards Russia.

This year's election addressed the topics at different levels of representation and these topics were, in a way, highly prominent. It is important to note that this quantitative prominence by no means provided guarantees that the relevant subject would be addressed more profoundly. This election, in comparison to the previous one, more graphically exemplified that (over)representation does not generate a better sharpened eyepiece of the media.

This was the outlook of topic configurations after we had compiled the findings from all television stations in our sample. Now it remains to be seen what kind of image was generated by individually laid out topical sections. The topic of election procedure, which was generally most represented, already showed multiple departures. While on TV N1 it soared to above-average 47.8% of representation, TV Pink (13.4%) and RTS (20.2%) dedicated to it less time than to some other topics. In the representation of the topic of election procedure, the remaining television stations did not challenge its first position but even managed to make this percent somewhat higher compared to the consolidated findings.

As it could already be noticed, the topic of election procedure was considerably less covered by TV Pink than by all other television stations. This posed a question toward which topics this shortage in the National News of TV Pink slanted. At first glance, it could be noticed that the topic of economy strikingly rose to almost 35%, Kosovo reached as much as 18.4% of representation, whereas TV Pink abundantly announced better future (15.8%). In proportion to investments and economic growth, according to the present media and political logic, better future in Serbia was becoming increasingly certain.

RTS, like TV Pink, placed the topic of economy first (24.2%). The remaining television stations, except for TV N1, did not threaten the second place of the topic of economy,

however, its percent dropped compared to the average value. TV N1 resorted to radically different treatment of the topic of economy, which is supported by the fact that the representation of this topic was almost seven times below the average. Thus, when it comes to two first-ranked topics, TV N1 showed crucial departures from the average values. The fact that the topic of economy was brushed aside from the media discourse of TV N1 is particularly interesting. If we include in the explanatory formula the finding that the topic of criticizing the Government recorded 11.2%, and thus was second by representation, we are on the right track to get to the nucleus of media discourse of TV N1 in this election.

Now, we will go back to consolidated findings to wonder about the third topic. How much was the topic of criticizing other presidential candidates present on each of the analysed television stations? It turned out that TV Pink provided a crucial contribution to the length of representation of this topic (34.9%), whereas on other television stations, this topic had a share of less than 10%.

Kosovo, generally speaking, took the fourth place by representation, largely owing to the fact that it was TV Pink that exceeded the average and opened its screen for the said topic. In addition to the mentioned 18.4% of TV Pink, TV Happy also exceeded ten percent of presence of Kosovo topic. It is interesting to note that TV Happy recorded identical percent of representation (11.5%) as in the general findings. Other television stations dedicated to the topic of Kosovo between 4.6% (TV B92) and 7.9% (RTS). Developments outside media obviously made their impact and the media could not but mirror the topic of Kosovo.

In consolidated findings, the fruitful topic (and not just from the research perspective) of supporting a presidential candidate took the fifth place by representation. The common logic may lead us to believe that the television station which took the lead in criticising other presidential candidates would provide the same amount of support to a presidential candidate. However, in case of TV Pink, findings do not support this because TV Pink devised its media strategy so that the focus was placed on (open) criticism instead on the overrepresented support. TV Prva (16.5%) and TV Happy (12.9%) mostly opened their screens for the topic of support to a presidential candidate.

We have already seen that the media discourse of TV Pink had strong hopes for better future, but how about other television stations? In the case of TV N1 (0.9%) and TV Prva (1%) things were quite different and, additionally, other television stations dedicated to the topic of a better future the percent which was three times lower than that of TV Pink.

When we outlined media discourse of TV N1, we mentioned the percent that this television station dedicated to the topic of criticism aimed at the Government. Being the topic through which the course of political and media rating can be undeniably traced, our focus will be redirected to the criticism aimed at the Government. TV N1, as we know, did not spare its airtime on the topic of criticising the Government, but we wanted to see if there were any other television stations which followed suit. To that extent, TV B92 (8.9%) and RTS (5.9%) could be singled out, whereas TV Happy and TV Prva recorded the same percent (4.3%). Finally, 0.2% of representation regarding the topic of criticising the Government on TV Pink clearly spoke of the role that television station played opposite the holders of (executive) authority. Only eighty two seconds of 40.892 in total which TV Pink dedicated to the topic of criticising the Government can by no means be called a coincidence.

As we have announced in the introductory sentences of this chapter, we will redirect the attention on the number of news items dedicated to the mentioned topics. The distribution of topics by news items provides markedly different research findings than the distribution of topics based on airtime. The largest number of news items related to the election procedure and thus, almost every third news item, 677 in total, fully or partly related to the said topic. No other topic, when measured through the news items, managed to exceed more than ten percent of representation. However, there was a whole set of topics which were represented between 7% and 10%, such as, in top-down order, economy, criticising the Government, support to a presidential candidate, criticising other presidential candidates, national interest, Kosovo, and democratisation. All in all, when the topics are classified according to the number of news items, we get a much more balanced distribution. It turns out that the parameter of the total airtime possesses a higher differentiating research capacity than the classification according to the number of news items.

When we compare the findings of 2016 parliamentary election with the findings of this year's election, we can see a whole number of similarities, but also considerable departures. This year, just like in 2016, three most represented topics according to the number of news items were election procedure, economy, and criticizing the Government. Even the percentages do not significantly differ, except in case of the election procedure (19.7% in 2016 as against 31.4% in 2017). However, in 2016, the topics of better future and facing the past recorded 5.6% and 5% of news items respectively, as four- and five-ranked topics. In this year's election, the topic of better future was covered in considerably less news items (2.9%), whereas the topic of facing the past was almost absent from the media discourse (0.7%). In general, in 2017 election, there were considerably more topics with representation between 5% and 10%, whereas in 2016, those were only two previously mentioned topics.

After classifying our findings by television stations, we can see that except for election procedure, not many topics managed to exceed 10% on any of the analysed television stations. Among all television stations combined, TV N1 recorded the largest number of news items (17%) for a topic, that is, for the criticism aimed at the Government. Almost every sixth news item aired in the primetime news of TV N1 contained the said topic of criticising the Government.

Table 14 Topics by television stations (in seconds)

	RTS	Pink	Happy	Prva	B92	N1
Election procedure	2.776	5.488	3.077	4.602	3.322	7.501
Economy	3.333	14.210	1.731	2.304	2.197	518
Criticising the Government	806	85	534	654	1.088	1.764
Better future	681	6.459	574	152	598	148
Facing the past	129	57	59	36	118	25
National interests	723	742	745	456	893	896
Human rights	310	2.224	154	564	132	270
Infrastructure	184	346	147	13	84	.
Relations with the surrounding countries	398	1.890	519	677	240	212
Kosovo	1.082	7.529	1418	866	562	1.198
European integration	578	1.305	358	153	201	328

Unemployment, poverty	154	673	31	145	236	228
Problems of youth	568	1.038	275	250	452	376
Corruption, criminal	513	612	301	520	318	435
Democratisation	779	2.980	560	489	719	1215
Village, agriculture	261	117	299	179	330	214
Senior citizens, pensioners	231	1.011	227	168	213	345
Security	537	1.799	355	908	284	563
Decentralisation, regionalisation	74	157	64	37	38	76
Relations with Russia	1.274	2.040	581	749	506	651
Culture	279	346	155	154	253	184
Problems of workers, strikes	94	2.172	75	71	118	130
Health care	93	53	89	37	9	63
Foreign policy	1.275	2.318	818	846	392	136
Environmental protection	63	41	22	39	33	72
Religion	67	9	51	.	59	64
NATO	234	260	69	81	175	237
Support to the Government	168	850	227	389	153	24
Public administration reform	.	.	.	20	.	.
Sport	265	1.425	46	105	234	185
Utility problems	.	.	49	.	.	23
Stability of Serbia	553	2.909	531	267	557	148
Regional stability	1.054	4.432	342	572	106	104
Support to a candidate	828	3.573	1.602	2.526	1.029	750
Criticising other candidates	972	14.268	1.198	1.199	922	1.320
Criticising Vučić by non-actors	.	73	16	.	.	49
Criticising other candidates by non-actors	.	1.903	180	94	.	20
Total	13.773	40.892	12.377	15.286	12.181	15.691

Table 15 Topics by television stations (percentages of the number of news items – multiple answers)

	RTS	Pink	Happy	Prva	B92	N1
Election procedure	28.6	26.5	35.4	30.5	29.3	39.5
Economy	10.2	12.4	7.2	10.1	10.6	6.1
Criticising the Government	8.4	1.5	6.1	8.1	12.2	17.0
Support to a candidate	5.6	8.6	11.0	10.1	8.2	6.8
Criticising other candidates	7.9	11.5	8.8	4.8	6.1	10.2
National interests	7.9	8.0	7.7	5.5	11.7	5.8
Kosovo	7.9	9.4	9.9	6.0	5.9	7.5
Democratisation	8.2	7.7	6.4	6.5	8.8	8.5
Relationships with Russia	4.3	4.7	3.6	5.0	4.0	5.1
Foreign policy	3.8	7.1	6.1	4.5	2.9	1.7
Corruption, criminal	4.1	3.2	3.0	5.5	3.7	4.4
Problems of youth	4.6	2.4	1.7	3.3	4.3	3.7
Security	1.8	3.8	2.8	4.0	1.6	3.4
Better future	4.1	4.1	2.2	2.0	2.9	1.7

Village, agriculture	3.1	1.8	2.8	2.8	3.2	2.4
European integration	3.1	3.8	2.5	2.0	1.9	2.7
Human rights	2.8	2.7	2.2	2.8	1.3	3.1
Culture	2.8	2.4	1.9	2.3	2.4	2.4
Relations with surrounding countries	1.3	2.9	1.7	3.5	1.6	3.1
Senior citizens, pensioners	2.0	1.8	2.2	1.8	2.4	2.7
Regional stability	1.5	3.2	1.7	2.5	1.1	.7
Stability of Serbia	2.3	2.9	1.9	1.0	1.3	1.4
NATO	2.0	2.4	.8	1.3	1.3	2.4
Sport	2.3	1.2	.8	1.5	1.6	1.7
Criticising other candidates by non-actors	.0	5.3	1.7	.8	.0	1.0
Support to the Government	1.5	2.1	1.7	1.3	1.3	.3
Unemployment, poverty	1.8	.9	.3	1.5	1.6	1.7
Problems of workers, strikes	1.0	1.2	.8	1.3	.8	1.4
Health care	1.0	1.2	.8	.5	.3	1.4
Decentralisation, regionalisation	.8	1.8	.8	.5	.5	.7
Facing the past	.3	1.2	.6	.5	1.3	.3
Religion	.8	.3	.6	.0	1.1	.7
Environmental protection	.8	.6	.3	.5	.5	.7
Infrastructure	.8	.9	.3	.3	.5	.0
Criticising Vučić by non-actors	.0	.3	.3	.0	.0	.3
Utility problems	.0	.0	.3	.0	.0	.3
Public administration reform	.0	.0	.0	.3	.0	.0

GENRE STRUCTURE

The pattern identified in all our monitorings of electronic media during election cycles was not broken this year. Report with statement is still unchallenged and in the genre structure of consolidated findings participates with more than 55%. If added by the report, this makes over 66% of all news items relating to the election process. As expected, news was the second represented genre in the image created by the media in this year's election. Only the mentioned three genres exceeded ten percent of representation, while among other genres, only media package recorded an enviable result (5.9%).

When we consider only those news items where journalists take more active approach to actors or topics, findings are discouraging. Here, we can even speak of a particular regress and not just mere stagnation of the media discourse in comparison to the previous election cycles. Commentaries, reportages, analyses, and different forms of talk shows featuring credible and well-informed guests were really lacking. What we call media package, which was represented above average, put the media into a somewhat more independent and active role.

However, let us see what impression each of the six television stations/programmes produced when analysed individually. RTS gave the biggest contribution when it came to reports with statement, since it had as many as 290 news items of the said genre. In this election, News 2 considerably increased its percent of reports with statement (74.2%) compared to 2016 (58.3%). Namely, RTS sought to display, through its media filter, a direct statement of the actor covered in the relevant news item. Even TV B92, with 66.5%, considerably leaped according to the number of reports with statement compared to the consolidated findings, which is undeniable rise compared to 2016 (49.9%). Except for TV Pink, all other television stations aired reports with statement in more than half of the total number of news items.

TV Pink did not just depart from other television stations in our sample according to this genre indicator, but also considerable changes occurred compared to the year of 2016. While in 2016 election, National News had more than 50% of the reports with statement in the total number of news items, this year that percent was only 18.6%. This, so to speak, deficit in reports with statement on TV Pink slanted towards news (39.2%) and reports (25.1%). If the finding that TV Pink aired more analyses (2.7%) and commentaries (1.8%) than all other analysed television stations was to be decontextualized, we could be caught in a trap of research formalism. Strictly and formally speaking, those really were the analyses and commentaries, but the bias in those news items was more than obvious.

Although in 2016 election, TV B92 steamed ahead (7.3%) of other television stations, this year, TV B92 blended with the media drabness. In twenty eight days of our monitoring, only three analytical news items were aired on TV B92. After already mentioned TV Pink, TV N1 recorded the highest percent of analytical news items (2%), however, those were only six news items. It should be pointed out, not losing sight of the fact that the programmes differed among themselves, that on each of the analysed programmes, there were simply too few news items of such or similar genre.

There is one more genre determinant which deserves more detailed analysis. Namely, media package had a considerable percent of representation and in that respect, there were certain variations by television stations. While, on the one hand, there was below-average representation of the media package on RTS (2.8%), on TV N1, on the other, it reached as much as 13.6%. In this year's election, all television stations unanimously recorded a higher percent of media package than in parliamentary election of 2016.

Table 16 Genres by television stations (in percentages)

	RTS	Pink	Happy	Prva	B92	N1	Total
News	13.3	39.2	25.7	21.9	16.2	10.2	21.1
Report	5.6	25.1	16.0	7.1	5.9	8.2	11.1
Report with statement	74.2	18.6	52.2	58.4	66.5	59.5	55.5
Interview	.3	.3	.0	.5	.0	.3	.2
Commentary	.0	1.8	.3	.5	.0	.3	.5
Analysis	.3	2.7	.3	1.3	.8	2.0	1.2
Reportage	.0	.3	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Studio gest	.8	1.8	.6	.0	.8	.0	.6
Media package	2.8	5.9	3.9	5.5	5.3	13.6	5.9
Statement	.5	1.2	1.1	.3	2.9	.0	1.0
Visualised voice-over	.0	.3	.0	.0	.0	1.4	.2

Live report from the scene	2.3	.9	.0	3.8	1.6	4.4	2.1
Live report	.0	2.1	.0	.8	.0	.0	.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

GENERATING MEDIA DISCOURSE

It was clear from our first day of monitoring that the direct election actors were sending ready-made materials to the television stations. When analysed in parallel, it was easy to conclude that identical news items were aired on different television stations. At the same time, it was obvious that among the submitted material, a part which eventually made concrete news item on a television station was solely selected by the hand of an editor. Thus, this was not just mechanical insertion into a visibly limited election block. From the comparative perspective, it was undeniable that through the mechanisms of selection and accentuation, the television stations made their decisive mark on the materials sent from parties' Campaign Staff. TV N1 was the only television station to considerably break this rule, whereas RTS consistently attempted to cut to the core of what the relevant candidate was saying.

In terms of media source, those news items were classified as „journalist“, because there was nothing to indicate that those materials were sent by the election rivals. Thus, there was an extremely low percent of news items where, in addition to implicitly included journalist, any other media source was mentioned. This is one of the things that should be regulated so that a particular media source can be unambiguously identified, and least of all for research purposes. It is a viewer who should be informed about who shaped a particular media content and to what extent.

In our previous monitorings we paid particular attention to Tanjug and in this election, we continued with this research practice. Since it notably appears through a visual sign, the nature of Tanjug, as a media source, should be previously explained. The character of particular number of news items was, among others, based on a visual contribution of Tanjug. The drop in the percent of Tanjug's representation, identified in previous election, continued in this year's election, but to a somewhat smaller degree.

Compared to the year 2016, all television stations recorded a lower percent of news items where Tanjug was the media source. This was notably pronounced in National News, where from 8.4% in 2016, Tanjug went down to 4.4% in this year's election. It is interesting to mention that two television stations, TV Happy and TV N1, did not have Tanjug as the media source in any of their news items. To that extent, TV Happy remained consistent since in 2016, Tanjug also did not take part in the image generated in the media by Telemaster.

Party press releases also considerably participated in the image created by the media in the election of 2016. This is understandable having in mind that at that time, those were parliamentary elections. Although this time we monitored presidential election, party press releases were again among those media sources which had the highest percent of representation. If viewed in percentages, National News of TV Pink was the programme to mostly open its screen for such press releases (2.7%). Here we need to exercise caution since TV Pink was highly selective when deciding about the person and form in which it would allocate its airtime. Suffice it to say that for some time now, TV Pink has been in a strong media synergy with the holders of power.

All in all, in this election we can hardly speak of any diversity of media sources. The situation was not much better in 2016 election, however, now, we witnessed the growing reduction in the media sources. What Serbian television stations proverbially lack is that no media source is even close to being sufficiently transparent. One of the crucial media principles is that the source of a particular information should be made unequivocal. Even if we were to be a bit naive and attribute this invisibility of sources to sloppiness or, maybe, inertness of media workers, this has become a practice which needs to be strongly discouraged.

Table 17 Sources by television stations (in percentages)

	RTS	Pink	Happy	Prva	B92	N1	Total
Tanjug	1.5	4.4	.0	2.8	4.3	.0	2.2
Beta	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.3	.0
Fonet	.3	.6	.0	.0	.0	.7	.2
TV Pink	.0	.6	.0	.0	.0	.3	.1
B92	.0	.0	.0	.0	.5	.0	.1
RTS	.0	.0	1.1	.0	.0	.7	.3
Statements of candidates	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Večernje novosti	.0	.3	.0	.0	.0	.3	.1
Blic	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Press releases of the ministries	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Foreign media	.0	.0	.3	.0	.3	.0	.1
Press releases of the Ministry of Internal Affairs	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Press releases of the Government of Serbia	.3	.0	.0	.5	.0	.3	.2
EU officials	.0	.3	.0	.3	.0	.0	.1
USA officials	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Public opinion research agencies	.0	.0	.6	.0	.3	.0	.1
Press releases of CSOs	.0	.9	.6	.0	.0	.0	.2
Sandžak press	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Insajder net	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Party press release	1.0	2.7	1.7	1.0	.5	1.7	1.4
RIK	.8	.6	1.9	.5	.5	.3	.8
Journalist	96.2	89.7	93.9	95.0	93.6	95.2	94.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

RESEARCH PANORAMA

Since we made a particular classification of (quantitative) research findings, it is equally necessary and desirable that we eventually offer a particular kind of research panorama. Now we should take a summarised and, somewhat, wide-ranging research view in order to obtain the fullest and deepest possible idea of the media grammar used in this year's presidential election. In this section we will partly let our research imagination roam because, you will agree, no research can be quite complete without it.

Obviously, the presented analytical approach requires the findings to be put in a relevant context. What makes our contextualisation more delicate and challenging is the fact that we must have in mind that the findings are put into a dual context. To this end, it is not expedient to remove the findings from the identified media context without paying attention to the political and social environment. Even if that were possible, we do not see why we should omit to include in our analytical approach clearly descriptive and critical plane. When presenting the findings on the media discourse we cannot help but wonder what it should and/or could look like.

Here, we will again have the opportunity to use the comparative method, because we will refer to the general conclusions reached in 2016 election. At that time, we offered a particular anatomy of the media in the pre-election period, but we assumed that the circumstances we identified would be of a more permanent character. Outlining research panorama of this election will, at the same time, serve as a confirmation whether the media discourse we detected in 2016 election have remained unchanged. Accordingly, the string of our observations will considerably touch upon the general comments made in our last year's study.

In the beginning, we would like to single out an additional characteristic of media presentation in the Serbian presidential election campaign. To describe this year's election, we will borrow the term "quantophrenia" from the sociologist Pitirim Sorokin. From the first day of our monitoring, there was a lot of speculation if one of the presidential candidates would manage to exceed 50% of the votes in the first round. The whole pre-election campaign operated in the long shadow of this figure, which pushed the programmes and social values of presidential candidates into the background.

The identity of the presidential candidate, who was constantly the subject of speculations whether he would reach the crucial percent of votes in the first round, was a common knowledge. That was Aleksandar Vučić, a key (media) protagonist of 2016 and 2017 election cycles. Vučić's media portrait in this election only became hypertrophied in comparison to what we had already identified in 2016 election. Highly increased presence, double media incarnation, use of all media and political capacities he had available as the Prime Minister, and many other things, certainly did not hinder Vučić from exceeding 50% in the first round.

Media favouritisation of Vučić over other presidential candidates certainly was a medal which had its own reverse. Just as we noticed in 2016 election, media drama in this election was based on the logic of antagonisation. However, this time the logic of antagonisation was multiple and thus, three candidates qualified for the role of the arch antagonist in the media: Vuk Jeremić, Saša Janković and, least of them all, Luka Maksimović. It was already obvious that TV Pink took the lead in media defamation. Its National News did its best to make Vuk Jeremić the main pretender for a „favourite“ antagonist of the media discourse in this year's presidential election.

This election was characterised by deeply rooted We-They dichotomy, which we also recognised in 2016 election. It seems that the said dichotomy assumed I-They form, and not just because that was about presidential election. Therefore, the media positioned Vučić against ten opposing candidates. In that process, it was not taken into account that the opposing candidates were very diverse and not all of them qualified as actual opponents of Aleksandar

Vučić. In accordance with the media, Vučić also based his approach on the fact that alone, he would bravely engage in a combat against the other ten.

We used the word “combat” which, at least remotely leads to the conclusion that the election contained, among others, face-offs, debates and discussions among the presidential candidates. In fact, never before in any other election did we witness the lack of will to nourish the spirit of political debates and political dialogue. As viewers, we were systematically deprived of the news items showing presidential candidates face off. Even the programmes other than the primetime news easily succumbed to the fact that election rivals were kind of self-sufficient media actors.

As known in the modern theory and practice of democracy, critical public is supposed to make a creative impact in the areas of power and authority. Generally speaking, the media are irreplaceable in that respect, however, this time they completely failed. A group portrait of analysts, public figures, and civil society organisations gave off an extremely sad impression. There was not even a hint that in the near future media would attempt to revive a silenced and deconstructed critical public. Quite the opposite, the demobilisation of critical public we identified in 2016 parliamentary election only became broader and deeper.

The permanent undermining of all inner capacities of the media to functionally perform their social role was quite concerning. Just when we thought that the position of the media could not get more dependant and reactive than in 2016, we were reassured. At that time we stressed that the media found themselves in a trap of lacking self-reliance and being passive. Uncritical attitude toward (ruling) political actor and current social state of affairs in this election contained something grotesque. Interests linked to capital and political power were reflected in the media in a very contradictory manner and put editors and journalists in a devastating state of heteronomy.

With this state of affairs, it would have been naïve to expect that any impartial and well-informed analysis of the current media image would take roots. This was not about oversights on their part, the analysed television stations avoided any view of the current media reporting. To support this, we can take our example. Namely, among the analysed television stations, the findings of the Bureau for Social Research were covered only on TV N1. If this applies to the critical view from the outside, then there is probably the lack of any kind of media self-reflection. The lack of impartial view from the outside and the reluctance to self-reflect on the media role from the inside, in the current election process could only lead to one result. The function of consolidating, strengthening, and making the dominant social and political structures legitimate was a logical outcome of such media strategy.

Arbitrary formalism, repetitiveness, and construction of trivialities, reached its peak in this election, both individually and collectively. Vivisecting the analysed programmes on a daily basis, we came to the conclusion that the media carefully sought to prevent those contents which would act subversively in relation to the well-established media discourses. The analysed media did not even consistently stick to formalism. Here, deviations were also allowed due to particular reasons outside media. It was not just that almost identical news items were aired on different television stations, but sterile repetitiveness became the master of screens. In view of the aforementioned, it was only logical that the programmes were full of different banalities which, in turn, received a disproportional public attention.

It was to be expected that the personal equations of candidates would find themselves at the epicentre of the media, however, they also went to excess. Different (de)personalised simulacra met in the media orbit and pushed into the background whatever was advocated by the presidential candidates, at least on principle. Here there was a kind of collusion between the pre-election strategy of (majority) presidential candidates and increasingly deep-rooted media approach. To seek the culprits of such useless depersonalisation solely in the political actors would be hypocritical of the media workers. There was a whole set of reasons, those from the inside and those imposed from the outside, that led to the fact that media easily gave in to the personalistic matrix.

The monitored programmes did not offer a nuanced, integral, and in-depth presentation of the programmes offered by the presidential candidates. Thus, it will not be too soon to say that the viewers of these programmes did not receive sufficient information to be able to rationally decide who to vote for. This was about an essential legitimacy because voting involves the insight into an offered choice. Several mentioned terms – such as formalism, simulacrum, banalities – support the conclusion that in this election, the media wasted the opportunity to mirror the social reality in an incorruptible manner. Even more than it was the case in 2016 parliamentary election, this election reduced social complexity. Truth be told, this could have been expected since presidential election included less differentiated approach to potential voters.

Finally, we found that there was a whole group of actors, agents and (extra)media environment which prevented major breakthroughs in the media. Insufficient resources and current media infrastructure were mentioned as somewhat false pretence for the fact that the media did not play their role in the most expedient way possible. To restore their lost public dignity and invaluable social role, the media and their representatives must find the way to go back to their vital mission.

Zoran Gavrilovic

**PUBLIC, PUBLIC OPINION AND INTEGRITY OF
ELECTORAL PROCESS**

In this part of the publication we will firstly present post-election media monitoring, and subsequently inform you of the polling findings on the media needs of the Serbian citizens and of the evaluation of their (dis)satisfaction.

Journalistic analysis

Genre structure of reporting in the news mirrors editorial practice. At the same time, it provides and nourishes a particular informative culture for the audience, which puts a recipient in a role of one-sidedly informed person and/or a person who can choose his/her own version of truth through the dialogical forms.

Table 1 Relation between informative and dialogical and analytical genre forms

	RTS	Pink	Happy	Prva	B92	N1
News	24.4%	24.8%	23.4%	26.7%	29.0%	19.9%
Report	12.0%	8.7%	11.8%	10.4%	5.9%	7.5%
Report with statement	39.2%	42.2%	44.5%	34.8%	36.6%	35.1%
Informative genre forms	75.6%	75.7%	79.8%	71.9%	71.4%	62.5%
Dialogical-analytical genre forms	24.4%	24.3%	20.2%	28.1%	28.6%	37.5%
Studio guest, interview	2.1%	3.8%	2.6%	1.6%	2.5%	1.0%
Topic-media package	18.5%	13.8%	14.6%	18.4%	21.0%	24.8%
Analysis/reportage/commentary	3.7%	6.7%	3.0%	8.1%	5.0%	11.8%

The above findings show that the highest dialogism and analytics is displayed in the news of TV N1. The news of TV O2 and TV Prva take the second place.

News of RTS, TV Pink and TV Happy are on the other end, with a lower level of dialogism and analytics. One of the indicators of media functionalism is the representation of alternative compared to etatist sources and representation of domestic compared to international sources.

Table 2 Relation between pro-state/pro-governmental sources compared to alternative sources

	RTS	Pink	Happy	Prva	B92	N1
Etatist sources	54.30%	55.20%	0.03	52.40%	47.40%	14.00%
Alternative sources	6.50%	6.50%	34.30%	12.40%	14.10%	34.70%

As opposed to Table 2, where we presented the relation between pro-state/pro-governmental sources compared to alternative sources, in Table 3 we will present the extent to which domestic and foreign sources are represented.

Indicator 3 Relation between domestic and international sources

	RTS	Pink	Happy	Prva	B92	N1
Foreign sources	30.4%	18.9%	50.7%	26.7%	26.9%	19.0%
Domestic sources	35.9%	51.2%	9.0%	48.6%	38.5%	35.5%

Percent of reporting on the type of event indicates the editorial policy of the News. For that reason, we chose to compare the events organised by the state and the events organised by the community.

Table 4 State and community in the News

	RTS	Pink	Happy	Prva	B92	N1
Events that occurred spontaneously and /or were organised by the community	11.3%	6.3%	9.2%	7.3%	10.1%	9.0%
Value of indicator per TV station	0,20	0,15	0,17	0,17	0,23	0,32
Events organised by the state	54.6%	42.8%	54.0%	41.9%	42.6%	28.2%

Monitoring findings speak of the fact that all analysed News provided reporting from and about the events organised by the state, whereas the events organised by the community were less covered. The score in favour of state-organised events was the lowest on TV N1 and the highest on TV Happy, RTS and TV Pink.

The presence of pseudo-events in the News is a clear indicator of media readiness to accept and produce propaganda.

Table 5 Pseudo-events

	RTS	Pink	Happy	Prva	O2	N1
Value of indicator per TV station	12.3%	27.6%	16.5%	22.9%	17.4%	23.3%

In the analysed period, TV Pink had the largest number of news items covering pseudo-events. TV N1 came second, whereas TV Prva took the third place. RTS had the least events of this kind. A more precise analysis of this indicator requires the findings on the tone of actors' presentation and topics addressed by those actors. As opposed to pseudo-events, media initiative was also the occasion for a news item.

Table 6 Media initiative

	RTS	Pink	Happy	Prva	O2	N1
Value of indicator per TV station	21.8%	23.4%	20.2%	27.9%	29.8%	39.5%

In the central news, the highest level of media initiative was shown by the journalists and editors of TV N1, and the journalists and editors of TV Prva and TV O2. Observing the discourses of the news broadcasted in current affairs, on average, half of them had an informative character. The second most represented discourse was promotional. Analytical and critical discourse were less represented than the promotional.

Table 7 Discourses of news items by television stations

	RTS	Pink	Happy	Prva	O2	N1
Informative	54.4	44.2	52.0	54.0	56.6	51.2
Promotional	18.4	24.0	20.0	17.9	10.0	7.6
Advocative	11.6	8.0	10.7	6.9	7.1	8.5
Propagandist	3.4	13.4	6.2	3.9	3.5	2.9
Servicemen-like	0.1	1.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Analytical/critical	11.8	7.3	10.4	15.7	21.3	28.5
Tabloid	0.0	1.5	0.2	1.3	1.0	0.5
Dialogical	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.6

Analysing the findings by television stations, it can be clearly seen that the News of TV Pink contained the largest number of promotional and propagandist content. TV N1 is found on the other end, with the least promotional and propagandist news items and the highest number of analytical and critical news.

Content analysis

After journalistic we moved on to the actors' component to analyse the time length and the tone of presenting the actors.

In the total number of actors analysed within a corpus of actors, the representation of actors will be divided into those represented up to 20%, 40%, 60%, 80% and over 80%.

From 81% to 100%	Absolute representation
From 61% to 80%	High representation
From 41% to 60%	Medium representation
From 21% to 40%	Low representation
From 0% to 20	Minimum representation

We will divide the tone of presenting the analysed actors in a similar fashion.

From 61% to 100%	Highly positive representation	Highly negative representation	Highly neutral representation
From 31% to 60%	Medium positive representation	Medium negative representation	Medium neutral representation
From 0% to 30%	Low positive representation	Low negative representation	Low neutral representation

At the level of television stations, the actors will be grouped into corpuses:

- Authorities and regulatory bodies;
- Government and ministries;
- Prime Minister and Ministers;
- Political leaders;
- Political parties/movements;
- Social actors;
- Brussels process;
- International actors;

Radio Television of Serbia

In its reporting on the actors within the corpus "Authorities and Regulatory Bodies", in its central news, RTS aired the news items in the total length of 17016 seconds. The analysis of actors featured by this television station speaks of the asymmetrical representation of actors within the corpus "Authorities and Regulatory Bodies".

The presence of Aleksandar Vučić in RTS News was not diminished by his switch from the office of a Prime Minister to the office of a President. At the corpus level, 62% presence of the President of Serbia and 28% presence of the Prime Minister, in the aggregate account for 90% presence of the executive power. As opposed to them, the representatives of judicial and legislative power, that is, regulatory bodies, were marginalized by the media and within this corpus, their presence was 4% and lower. The President Aleksandar Vučić and the Prime Minister Ana Brnabić had 92.4% and 93.9% of positive presentation time and were the most positively presented actors in this corpus. On the other hand, the Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection and the Prosecutor's Office were, for the most part, neutrally presented. On TV RTS, the National Assembly of Serbia was more negatively presented than the rest of the actors within this corpus.

Table 8 Representation and tone of presenting the actors at the level of corpus “Authorities and Regulatory Bodies” in the News 2 of RTS

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić	10671	63.0%	92.4	7.5	0,1
Ana Brnabić	4592	27.0%	93.9	6.0	0,1
Government of Serbia	738	4.0%	52.3	47.0	0,7
Assembly of Serbia	431	2.5%	0.0	65.2	34.8
Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection	134	0.8%	41.0	59.0	0.0
Protector of Citizens - Ombudsman	109	0.6%	91.7	8.3	0.0
Anti-Corruption Agency	85	0.5%	76.5	23.5	0.0
Fiscal Council	86	0.5%	76.7	23.3	0.0
Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Commissioner for Protection of Equality	59	0.3%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Prosecutor's Offices	50	0.3%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Courts	61	0.3%	60.7	0.0	39.3

Within the corpus “Ministries and Ministers”, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the most represented actor which, in the four-month period was given 166 (small) seconds and 100% of positive time. The Ministry of Health takes the second place with 153 seconds and 98.7% of positive time. At the time of the heated debate on the freedom of media in Serbia, the Ministry of Culture and Information was positively represented in 92.9% of the time, 141 seconds in total!

The ministers, who were also political leaders, were generally more represented than the ministries as the institutions they manage. This notably relates to Ivica Dačić who, in the analysed period, was present in the News of RTS for 1967 seconds and in 93.9% of that time was positively presented. Aleksandar Vulin, the Minister of Defence, came second with 1375 seconds received from RTS of which, 96% were positive. He is followed by the Minister of Finance, Dušan Vujović, with 907 seconds of positive time relative to the total time, and by Marko Đurić, the Director of the Office for Kosovo and Metohija who from mid-July to mid-

November was present on RTS with 778 seconds, which in the total time accounts for 93.4% of positive presentation.

The presence of actors within the corpus “Political Leaders” was negligible on RTS. This conclusion also applies to political leaders of parties in power and opposition parties. In the analysed period, political leaders accounted for 781 seconds. The President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, did not appear on TV RTS in the capacity of the President of the Serbian Progressive Party. In 120 days of our monitoring, among political leaders of ruling parties, RTS News dedicated most time to Dragan Marković Palma from the United Serbia (135 seconds) and Bogoljub Karić from the Strength of Serbia Movement (31 seconds).

From among the opposition party leaders, within four months, Dragan Šutanovac received the most time in the News 2 with 171 seconds. In our monitoring, Boško Obradović took the second place with his presence of 132 seconds, whereas Saša Janković, a leader of the Movement of Free Citizens, took the third place with 101 seconds. All politicians were more or less positively presented.

Table 9 Representation and tone of presenting political leaders in the News 2 of RTS

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić SNS	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ivica Dačić SPS	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dragan Marković Palma	135	17.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Nenad Popović SNP	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin PS	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bogoljub Karić PSS	31	4.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Vuk Drašković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dragan Šutanovac	0	22.0%	94.2	0.0	5.8
Boško Obradović	132	17.0%	87.1	12.9	0.0
Vojislav Šešelj	47	6.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Miloš Jovanović	21	2.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Boris Tadić	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Zoran Živković	0	1.3%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Saša Radulović	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Čedomir Jovanović	41	5.0%	97.6	2.4	0.0
Nenad Čanak	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Saša Janković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Vuk Jeremić	5	0.6%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Dragan Đilas	12	1.5%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Aleksandar Šapić	101	13.0%	73.3	2.0	24.8
Stamatović Milan	61	7.8%	96.7	3.3	0.0
Beli Preletačević	5	0.6%	0.0	0.0	100.0

In the monitoring period, the Serbian Progressive Party was the most represented political party in the RTS News (275 seconds). Other parties were actually neglected by the

Public Service! This is supported by the fact that in the analysed period, out of 672 seconds in total, the News of RTS gave half of that time to the ruling Serbian Progressive Party. If we were to add the time given to the biggest coalition partner, the Socialist Party of Serbia, we would get the information that RTS gave half of the dedicated time to the parties in power.

Table 10 Representation and tone of presenting political parties in the News 2 of RTS

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	275	41.0%	98.2	1.8	0.0
Socialist Party of Serbia	62	9.0%	91.9	8.1	0.0
Party of United Pensioners of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
United Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Serb People's Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Socialists	5	0.7%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Strength of Serbia Movement	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Social Democratic Party of Serbia	28	4.2%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Democratic Party	46	6.9%	95.7	4.3	0.0
Serbian Movement Dveri	33	4.9%	45.5	54.5	0.0
Serbian Radical Party	45	6.7%	33.3	66.7	0.0
Democratic Party of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Social-Democratic Party	22	3.3%	0.0	100.0	0.0
New Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Enough is Enough	12	1.8%	66.7	16.7	16.7
Liberal Democratic Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina	5	0.7%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Don't Drown Belgrade	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Free Citizens	87	13.0%	69.0	31.0	0.0
People's Party	52	8.0%	61.5	0.0	38.5

The ruling parties (Social Democratic Party, the Serbian Progressive Party, and the Socialist Party of Serbia) and an opposition party (the Democratic Party) were most positively represented in the News 2. The Serbian Radical Party and the Serbian Movement Dveri were most neutrally portrayed in the central news, whereas the Movement of Socialists and the People's Party were most negatively portrayed.

Kosovo corpus of actors was given 1273 seconds by RTS News. The aforementioned clearly shows that the Serbian List is a predominant actor. In addition to this list, in the representation within the Kosovo corpus, Kosovo officials generally stood out: Oliver Ivanović, Ramush Haradinaj, the Assembly of Kosovo and Hashim Thaci. The Serbian List and the mayor of North Kosovska Mitrovica, Goran Rakić, were most positively presented.

Other actors, except for Behgjet Pacolli and Ramush Haradinaj, were mostly neutrally presented.

Table 12 Representation and the tone of presenting Kosovo actors in the News 2 of RTS

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian List	306	24.0%	79.7	20.3	0.0
Goran Rakić	55	4.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Slavko Simić	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Oliver Ivanović	190	15.0%	22.1	77.9	0.0
Rada Trajković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Serbian local elections candidates	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hashim Thaci	149	12.0%	31.5	68.5	0.0
Ramush Haradinaj	190	15.0%	8.9	59.5	31.6
Albin Kurti	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Behgjet Pacolli	2	0.2%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Assembly of Kosovo	152	12.0%	14.5	85.5	0.0
Government of Kosovo	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kosovo officials	229	18.0%	45.9	54.1	0.0

In its tone of reporting on international actors, RTS used two approaches. The first was positive and related to Russia, the USA and China, whereas the second was neutral and largely dedicated to the EU. The exception was made in case of Donald Trump, who was presented largely neutrally.

Table 11 Representation and tone of presenting international actors in the News 2 of RTS

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
EU officials	631	0.18	47.9	52.1	0.0
Federica Mogherini	156	0.04	35.9	64.1	0.0
David McAllister	103	0.03	0.0	100.0	0.0
Franco Frattini	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Russian officials	498	0.145	89.4	10.6	0.0
Putin Vladimir	75	0.022	92.0	1.3	6.7
USA officials	687	0.20	76.3	17.9	5.8
Trump Donald	179	0.05	15.6	84.4	0.0
Chinese officials	227	0.07	95.6	4.4	0.0
UN	438	0.13	54.1	45.9	0.0
UNESCO	119	0.03	0.0	100.0	0.0
NATO	75	0.02	26.7	73.3	0.0
EU European Union	238	0.07	30.3	69.7	0.0

In the central news of RTS, the most represented were the USA officials with 687 seconds and 76.3% of positive time and Russian officials with 489 seconds and 89.4% of positive time. The officials of the European Union were represented with 631 seconds or 52.1% of neutral time.

Table 12 Representation and tone of presenting social actors in the News 2 of RTS

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Citizens	1191	18.0%	81.3	18.7	0.0
Experts	1017	15.0%	34.9	64.1	1.0
Foreign companies	750	11.0%	63.3	36.7	0.0
Trade Unions	731	11.0%	40.5	56.6	2.9
OECD	702	10.0%	67.7	32.3	0.0
Cultural workers	280	4.2%	90.0	10.0	0.0
Business associations	248	3.7%	28.6	71.4	0.0
Serbian Orthodox Church	232	3.5%	97.8	2.2	0.0
Workers	215	3.0%	42.8	57.2	0.0
Lawyers	199	3.0%	47.2	52.8	0.0
Farmers	184	3.0%	83.7	16.3	0.0
Criminals- suspects	155	2.0%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Hague convicts	152	2.0%	0.0	81.6	18.4
Athletes	119	2.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ethnic minorities	114	2.0%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Public figures	114	2.0%	39.5	60.5	0.0
Professional association	101	1.0%	30.7	69.3	0.0
Youths	80	1.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Journalist Association of Serbia (UNS)	43	0.6%	79.1	20.9	0.0
Pensioners	38	0.5%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Serbian Academy of Science and Arts (SANU)	20	0.3%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Independent Journalist Association of Serbia (NUNS)	7	0.1%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Independent Journalist Association of Vojvodina (NDNV)	6	0.1%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Showbiz persons	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0

Out of 6698 seconds given in total to the actors within social actors' corpus, most time was given to the citizens of Serbia. Experts took the second place and were followed by foreign companies and trade unions. During the monitoring conducted by BIRODI, the most positive social actors were youths, pensioners, athletes, Serbian Orthodox Church, and cultural workers.

PINK

The analysis of actors within the corpus of authorities and regulatory bodies shows that out of 67628 seconds given to Aleksandar Vučić in all analysed television stations, a half totalling to 36205 seconds was given by TV Pink. In the same News, in 120 days of our monitoring, the same actor received only 14 negative seconds, which is one second less than on RTS. The percent of positive time reached the record of 99.1%. In the same News and on the same TV station, the Prime Minister Brnabić had 2689 seconds, of which 98% of the time was positive. Other actors had a considerably lower presentation. Except for the National Assembly of Serbia and the Anti-Corruption Agency, which were largely presented in a neutral tone, other actors were positively presented in the National News of TV Pink.

Table 13 Representation and tone of presenting executive, legislative, judicial power and regulatory bodies in the National News of TV Pink

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić	36205	89.0%	99.1	.8	.0
Ana Brnabić	2689	6.7%	98.4	1.6	0.0
Government of Serbia	431	1.0%	87.7	8.8	3.5
Assembly of Serbia	419	1.0%	36.5	63.5	0.0
Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection	17	0.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Protector of Citizens- Ombudsman	53	0.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Anti-Corruption Agency	22	0.1%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Fiscal Council	100	0.2%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media	150	0.4%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Commissioner for Protection of Equality	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Prosecutor's Offices	64	0.1%	53.1	39.1	7.8
Courts	144	0.4%	18.1	81.9	0.0

The most represented ministry in the National News was the Ministry of Interior with 359 seconds. The Ministry of Defence took the second place with 295 seconds, whereas the Ministry of Foreign Affairs came third with 287 seconds. Except for the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and the Ministry of Finance, vast majority of ministries were highly positively presented. Out of all ministers, Aleksandar Vulin, the Minister of Defence, had the highest representation in the National News with 2798 seconds. The Minister of Interior, Nebojša Stefanović, took the second place with 1558 seconds.

Unlike the News 2 of RTS, where political leaders had (extremely) low, but positive presentation, Pink's central news mostly presented the actors from among the opposition parties. Namely, Saša Janković had 1815 seconds with 87.5% of negatively toned time. Aleksandar Vučić took the second place as the President of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) and was extremely positively presented – out of 1160 seconds of his appearance, his

presentation was 100% positive. He was followed by negative presentation of oppositional leaders such as Dragan Đilas, Boško Obradović, Vuk Jeremić and Saša Radulović.

Table 14 Representation and tone of presenting political leaders in the National New of TV Pink

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić SNS	1160	18.4%	100.0	0.0	
Ivica Dačić SPS	15	0.2%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Dragan Marković Palma	34	0.5%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Nenad Popović SNP	52	0.8%	55.8	44.2	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bogoljub Karić	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Vuk Drašković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dragan Šutanovac	10	0.2%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Boško Obradović	993	15.7%	3.0	1.1	95.9
Vojislav Šešelj	18	0.3%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Miloš Jovanović	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Boris Tadić	18	0.3%	0.0	55.6	44.4
Zoran Živković	117	1.9%	16.2	0.0	83.8
Saša Radulović	205	3.2%	34.1	0.0	65.9
Čedomir Jovanović	343	5.4%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Nenad Čanak	135	2.1%	13.1	.7	86.2
Saša Janković	1815	28.8%	12.5	0.0	87.5
Vuk Jeremić	305	4.8%	2.0	.3	97.7
Dragan Đilas	1001	15.9%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Aleksandar Šapić	33	0.5%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Beli Preletačević	42	0.7%	85.7	0.0	14.3

Analysing the National News of TV Pink, we found that the same model of reporting was used for political parties and movements. The ruling Serbian Progressive Party was the most represented actor among all political parties that were monitored. This party was positively presented in 94.2% of the time (861 seconds in total). The Serbian Movement Dveri took the second place with its presence of 467 seconds, of which 93.6% were negatively toned. The Party of United Pensioners took the third place with 236 seconds, all of which were positive.

Table 15 Representation and tone of presenting political parties in the National News of TV Pink

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	861	40.1%	94.2	0.0	5.8
Socialist Party of Serbia	120	5.6%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Party of United Pensioners of Serbia	236	11.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
United Serbia	31	1.4%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Serb People's Party	5	0.2%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Movement of Socialists	26	1.2%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Strength of Serbia Movement	5	0.2%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Social Democratic Party of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Democratic Party	185	8.6%	4.9	1.6	93.5
Serbian Movement Dveri	467	21.8%	.9	5.6	93.6
Serbian Radical Party	52	2.4%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Democratic Party of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Social-Democratic Party	31	1.4%	25.8	74.2	0.0
New Party	10	0.5%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Enough is Enough	26	1.2%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Liberal Democratic Party	1	0.0%	0.0	100.0	0.0
League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina	1	0.0%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Party of Democratic Action of Sandzak	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Don't Drown Belgrade	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Free Citizens	48	2.2%	41.7	0.0	58.3
People's Party	40	1.9%	0.0	0.0	100.0

At the level of actors which constitute a part of Kosovo corpus, the most represented were the Serbian List and the mayor of North Kosovska Mitrovica, Goran Rakić. In the National News, the Serbian List received 463 seconds, and all of them were positively toned. The same goes for the mayor Rakić, who had 311 seconds, all of which were positive. Behghjet Pacolli was also among those positively presented, and had minor 43 seconds of which 65.1% were positive. Among those who received most negative seconds was Oliver Ivanović with 163 seconds of which 74.2% were negative. Hashim Thaci, Ramush Haradinaj and Albin Kurti had less negative seconds than Ivanović.

Table 16 Representation and the tone of presenting political parties in the National News of TV Pink

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian List	463	26.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Goran Rakić	311	17.9%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Slavko Simić	51	2.9%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Oliver Ivanović	163	9.4%	25.8	0.0	74.2
Rada Trajković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Serbian local elections candidates	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hashim Thaci	130	7.5%	24.6	18.5	56.9
Ramush Haradinaj	233	13.4%	10.3	48.1	41.6
Albin Kurti	35	2.0%	0.0	71.4	28.6
Behghjet Pacolli	43	2.5%	65.1	34.9	0.0
Assembly of Kosovo	67	3.9%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Kosovo Government	85	4.9%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Kosovo officials	152	8.8%	71.1	28.9	0.0

From among international actors who were a part of the sample, that is, of the corpus, the EU officials took 2/3 of the time. The USA officials took the second place with 10.9%, and the Russian officials took the third place with 6.6% of the time. All actors had either positive or positive-to-neutral presentation. Chinese officials, Franco Frattini, Vladimir Putin and the EU officials had positive presentation with more than 90 percent.

Table 17 Representation and tone of presenting international actors in the National News of TV Pink

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
EU officials	2729	61.8%	92.2	6.0	1.8
Federica Mogherini	149	3.4%	10.7	89.3	0.0
David McAllister	86	1.9%	43.0	57.0	0.0
Franco Frattini	32	0.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Russian officials	290	6.6%	86.6	13.4	0.0
Putin Vladimir	188	4.3%	94.7	5.3	0.0
USA officials	481	10.9%	86.7	12.3	1.0
Trump Donald	127	2.9%	60.6	39.4	0.0
Chinese officials	233	5.3%	100.0	0.0	0.0
UN	50	1.1%	0.0	100.0	0.0
UNESCO	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
NATO	17	0.4%	0.0	100.0	0.0
EU European Union	31	0.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0

In the National News of TV Pink, the most represented actors within the social corpus were experts with 1358 seconds, where half of this time was positively toned. The citizens of Serbia took second place with 786 seconds, whereas civil society organisations took the third place and were positively presented. Equal positive presentation was given to the persons from the world of crime, that is, those suspected of crime. They were followed by foreign companies and trade unions which were largely presented in a neutral tone.

Table 17 Representation and the tone of presenting social actors in the National News of TV Pink

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Orthodox Church	14	0.2%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Trade unions	304	5.3%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Foreign companies	372	6.5%	86.3	13.7	0.0
NUNS	81	1.4%	34.6	22.2	43.2
UNS	52	0.9%	11.5	0.0	88.5
NDNV	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
OECD	555	9.8%	42.7	10.6	46.7
Citizens	786	13.8%	97.2	2.8	0.0
SANU	10	0.2%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Athletes	248	4.4%	96.0	4.0	0.0
Cultural workers	24	0.4%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Public figures	293	5.1%	61.4	4.4	34.1
Showbiz persons - entertainment business	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Experts	1359	23.9%	56.4	43.6	0.0
Farmers	186	3.3%	78.0	22.0	0.0
Ethnic minorities	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lawyers	134	2.4%	46.3	53.7	0.0
Business associations	225	4.0%	21.8	78.2	0.0
Professional associations	15	0.3%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Workers	139	2.4%	89.2	10.8	0.0
Hague convicts	198	3.5%	40.4	59.6	0.0
Criminals- suspects	484	8.5%	0.0	58.9	41.1
Pensioners	175	3.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Youth	37	0.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0

TV HAPPY

The tandem of executive power, Vučić - Brnabić, were the most represented actors within the prime-time current affairs of TV Happy. Aleksandar Vučić, as the President of Serbia, accounted for 55.8% of the total time dedicated to actors within the corpus of authorities and regulatory bodies. At the level of this corpus, the Prime Minister, Ana Brnabić, took the second place with 30.7% of the time. When analysed together, these two actors account for 86.3% of the time at the corpus level. The other actors had low and positive presentation, or their presentation was positive-to-neutral.

Table 18 Representation and tone of presenting the executive, legislative, judicial power and regulatory bodies in the News of TV Happy

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić	5291	55.8 %	91.1	8.7	.2
Ana Brnabić	2910	30.7 %	91.2	8.8	0.0
Government of Serbia	352	3.7%	30.4	69.6	0.0
Assembly of Serbia	526	5.5%	67.3	32.7	0.0
Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ombudsman	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Anti-Corruption Agency	92	1.0%	48.9	51.1	0.0
Fiscal Council	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media	25	0.3%	60.0	40.0	0.0
Commissioner for Protection of Equality	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Prosecutor's Offices	30	0.3%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Courts	46	0.5%	0.0	78.3	21.7
Aleksandar Vučić	218	2.3%	56.4	43.6	0.0

Within the corpus of ministers and ministries, the Ministry of Health was most represented in the Central News of TV Happy with 551 seconds or 28% of the total time at the corpus level. The Ministry of Interior was represented in one fifth of the time, or with 399 seconds, whereas the Ministry of Science, Education and Technological Development took the third place with one tenth of the total time, or more precisely, with 209 seconds. All three ministries were positively portrayed in more than 80% of the time.

Out of all actors at the corpus level, Zorana Mihajlović was the most represented Minister with 1479 seconds or 11%. The Minister of Defence, Aleksandar Vulin, had somewhat less seconds (1442) and took the second place, the third place was taken by the Minister Nebojša Stefanović with 974 seconds, whereas Ivica Dačić took the fourth place with 965 seconds.

The most represented politician in the prime-time current affairs of TV Happy was Bogoljub Karić who, out of 1021 seconds got one fourth of the time within the corpus of political leaders and was positively presented in 100% of the cases. Within this corpus, the former President and the present leader of the Opposition, Boris Tadić, took the second place with ¼ of the total time. The tone of his presentation was neutral 100%. The President of the Serbian Progressive party (SNS), Aleksandar Vučić, took the second place with 100 seconds and 100% of positive time. It is important to note that Saša Janković was the only politician who was negatively presented in the News of TV Happy.

Table 18 Representation and tone of presenting political leaders in the News of TV Happy

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić SNS	100	9.8%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ivica Dačić SPS	2	0.2%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Dragan Marković Palma	60	5.9%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Nenad Popović SNP	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin	2	0.2%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Bogoljub Karić	281	27.5%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Vuk Drašković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dragan Šutanovac	53	5.2%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Boško Obradović	74	7.2%	97.3	2.7	0.0
Vojislav Šešelj	48	4.7%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Miloš Jovanović	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Boris Tadić	254	24.9%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Zoran Živković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Saša Radulović	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Čedomir Jovanović	18	1.8%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Nenad Čanak	93	9.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Saša Janković	23	2.3%	0.0	39.1	60.9
Vuk Jeremić	10	1.0%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Dragan Đilas	3	0.3%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Aleksandar Šapić	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Beli Preletačević	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Milan Stamatović	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0

At the level of the corpus of political parties, the Serbian Progressive Party was the most represented party with 64.7% of the total time. During our monitoring, the Socialist Party of Serbia received 10% of the total time given to the political parties in the prime-time current affairs of TV Happy. Somewhat more than 5% of the time was given to the Serbian Movement Dveri which, among the political parties and movements presented in the News of TV Happy was the only actor that was negatively presented. The other parties, those in power and in opposition, were presented to a minor extent but in a positive and neutral fashion.

Table 18 Representation and tone of presenting political parties /movements in the News of TV Happy

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	1037	64.7%	95.7	4.3	0.0
Socialist Party of Serbia	161	10.0%	98.8	1.2	0.0
Party of United Pensioners of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
United Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Serb People's Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Socialists	21	1.3%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Strength of Serbia Movement	78	4.9%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Social Democratic Party of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Democratic Party	40	2.5%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Serbian Movement Dveri	85	5.3%	80.0	11.8	8.2
Serbian Radical Party	17	1.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Democratic Party of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Social Democratic Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
New Party	26	1.6%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Enough is Enough	18	1.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Liberal Democratic Party	6	0.4%	0.0	100.0	0.0
League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina	5	0.3%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Party of Democratic Action of Sandzak	49	3.1%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Don't Drown Belgrade	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Free Citizens	58	3.6%	100.0	0.0	0.0
People's Party	2	0.1%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Serbian Progressive Party	0		0	0	0

Out of 1264 seconds given to the actors of Kosovo corpus, the mayor of North Kosovska Mitrovica, Goran Rakić, had the highest representation of 186 seconds and 100% of positive time. The Serbian List took the second place with 166 seconds and 71% of positive time. Except for Ramush Haradinaj, who was negatively presented in one fifth of the time, the other actors were mostly presented positively or neutrally.

Table 19 Representation and tone of presenting the Kosovo actors in the News of TV Happy

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian List	166	13.1%	71.1	28.9	0.0
Goran Rakić	186	14.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Slavko Simić	13	1.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Oliver Ivanović	83	6.6%	61.4	38.6	0.0
Rada Trajković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Serbian candidates	22	1.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Hashim Thaci	233	18.4%	24.5	71.2	4.3
Ramush Haradinaj	374	29.6%	18.2	60.4	21.4
Albin Kurti	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Behgjet Pacolli	38	3.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Assembly of Kosovo	30	2.4%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Kosovo Government	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kosovo officials	119	9.4%	100.0	0.0	0.0

Within international actors, the EU officials were most represented. From the editors and journalists producing the News on TV Happy, they received 684 seconds or 32.6% of the time at the corpus level, where in 56.1% of the time they were presented neutrally. The USA officials took the second place. Within 403 seconds, they were neutrally presented in 52% of the time. The same ratio of positive and neutral presentation is present in connection with Russian officials. This also applies to the USA and Russian Presidents who, although disproportionally presented (Putin 100 seconds and Trump 5 seconds), were portrayed with extremely positive tone.

Table 20 Representation and tone of presenting international actors in the News of TV Happy

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
EU officials	684	32.6%	43.9	56.1	0.0
Federica Mogherini	83	4.0%	21.7	78.3	0.0
David McAllister	26	1.2%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Franco Frattini	62	3.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Russian officials	259	12.4%	47.9	52.1	0.0
Putin Vladimir	100	4.8%	97.0	3.0	0.0
USA officials	403	19.2%	47.9	52.1	0.0
Trump Donald	5	0.2%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Chinese officials	325	15.5%	78.8	21.2	0.0
UN	37	1.8%	40.5	59.5	0.0
UNESCO	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
NATO	5	0.2%	0.0	100.0	0.0
EU European Union	106	5.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0

Within social actors, the prime-time current affairs of TV Happy mostly presented the experts, with 1157 seconds and 50.4% of positive presentation, then civil society organisations with 977 seconds which predominantly accounted for 87% of the time, and trade unions with 778 seconds and 69.7% of positive time. Among social actors that were most positively presented

were the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Serbian Academy of Science and Arts, athletes, and cultural workers.

Table 21 Representation and tone of presenting social actors in the News of TV Happy

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Orthodox Church	96	1.8%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Trade unions	778	14.8%	69.7	30.3	0.0
Foreign companies	140	2.7%	58.6	41.4	0.0
NUNS	32	0.6%	0.0	100.0	0.0
UNS	41	0.8%	0.0	100.0	0.0
NDNV	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
OCD	977	18.6%	87.7	11.3	1.0
Citizens	725	13.8%	91.3	8.7	0.0
SANU	22	0.4%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Athletes	21	0.4%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Cultural workers	110	2.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Public figures	41	0.8%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Showbiz persons - entertainment business		0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Experts	1157	22.0%	49.6	50.4	0.0
Farmers	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ethnic minorities	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lawyers	98	1.9%	53.1	46.9	0.0
Business associations	117	2.2%	53.8	46.2	0.0
Professional associations	194	3.7%	24.2	75.8	0.0
Workers	105	2.0%	65.7	34.3	0.0
Hague convicts	274	5.2%	96.0	4.0	0.0
Criminals- suspects	217	4.1%	0.0	82.5	17.5
Pensioners	114	2.2%	78.1	21.9	0.0
Youth		0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0

O2

Within the total of 5769 seconds given to the actors within the corpus of authorities and regulatory bodies, more than three fourths of the time with highly positive presentation belonged to the President and to the Prime Minister.

This notably relates to the President, Aleksandar Vučić who, within the corpus, accounted for two thirds and was positively presented in 91.5% of the time. When added the time given to the Prime Minister, Ana Brnabić (1448 seconds or 25.8%), we can see that the executive power was predominant on TV O2. Unlike other actors, the Government of Serbia, as an institution, was the only actor that was mentioned in all three contexts - negative, neutral and positive. In the positive and neutral context mentioned were the Prime Minister Brnabić, the National Assembly of Serbia, the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection and the courts.

Table 22 Representation and tone of presenting executive, legislative and judicial power and regulatory bodies in the News of TV O2

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić	3719	64.5%	91.5	8.4	0.1
Ana Brnabić	1488	25.8%	78.8	21.2	0.0
Government of Serbia	59	1.0%	45.8	44.1	10.2
Assembly of Serbia	148	2.6%	79.7	20.3	0.0
Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection	48	0.8%	37.5	62.5	0.0
Protector of Citizens- Ombudsman	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Anti-Corruption Agency	119	2.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Fiscal Council	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Commissioner for Protection of Equality	63	1.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Prosecutor's Offices	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Courts	89	1.5%	69.7	30.3	0.0
Aleksandar Vučić	36	0.6%	100.0	0.0	0.0

Within the total time given to the corpus of ministers and ministries, the most represented Ministry in the News of TV O2 was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with 38.9% (279 seconds). The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development took the second place with 147 seconds or 20.5%, whereas the Ministry in charge of traffic and construction took the third place with 91 seconds (12.7%).

Ivica Dačić was by far the most represented Minister in the News of TV O2. With 8881 seconds he accounted for 22.9% of the total time given to all Ministers of the Government of Serbia. Jadranka Joksimović took the second place with 12.3% of the time which the News of TV O2 allocated to the Ministers of the Serbian Government, whereas Branko Ružić, the Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, took the third place with 12.2% of the time.

Within the corpus of political leaders shown in the News of TV O2, Dragan Marković Palma was the most represented actor. He was followed by Beli Preletačević, Čedomir Jovanović, the leader of LDP, and Saša Janković, the leader of the Movement of Free Citizens. Unlike Marković, who was presented positively all the time, the second-ranked Beli Preletačević was positively presented in only 34.9% of the time. The third-ranked Čedomir Jovanović was positively presented in 74.5% of the time. Saša Janković was positively presented in 69.7% of the time.

Table 23 Representation and tone of presenting political leaders in the News of TV O2

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić SNS	39	3.5%	12.8	87.2	0.0
Ivica Dačić SPS	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dragan Marković Palma	191	17.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Nenad Popović SNP	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bogoljub Karić	41	3.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Vuk Drašković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dragan Šutanovac	120	10.7%	65.8	34.2	0.0
Boško Obradović	69	6.2%	44.9	55.1	0.0
Vojislav Šešelj	17	1.5%	88.2	0.0	11.8
Miloš Jovanović	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Boris Tadić	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Zoran Živković	35	3.1%	42.9	57.1	0.0
Saša Radulović	9	0.8%	66.7	33.3	0.0
Čedomir Jovanović	165	14.7%	74.5	24.2	1.2
Nenad Čanak	2	0.2%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Saša Janković	155	13.9%	69.7	13.5	16.8
Vuk Jeremić	25	2.2%	4.0	88.0	8.0
Dragan Đilas	29	2.6%	86.2	0.0	13.8
Aleksandar Šapić	53	4.7%	56.6	43.4	0.0
Stamatović Milan	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Beli Preletačević	169	15.1%	34.9	65.1	0.0

As on the majority of television stations, the Serbian Progressive Party was the most represented party on TV O2 during the analysed period. In the News of O2, this party was not predominantly positively presented. The Democratic Party was represented more than the other parties. From among all parties, it received 25.5% of the total time in the absolute amount of 235 seconds, of which 79.6% were positive.

Table 24 Representation and tone of presenting political parties /movements in the News of TV O2

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	367	39.8%	59.9	40.1	0.0
Socialist Party of Serbia	97	10.5%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Party of United Pensioners of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
United Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Serb People's Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Socialists	6	0.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Strength of Serbia Movement	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Social Democratic Party of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Democratic Party	235	25.5%	79.6	18.3	2.1
Serbian Movement Dveri	70	7.6%	44.3	55.7	0.0

Serbian Radical Party	53	5.8%	43.4	56.6	0.0
Democratic Party of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Social Democratic Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
New Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Enough is Enough	25	2.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Liberal Democratic Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Party of Democratic Action of Sandzak	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Don't Drown Belgrade	13	1.4%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Free Citizens	55	6.0%	63.6	36.4	0.0
People's Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0

Among Kosovo Actors, Hashim Thaci was most represented on O2 with 214 seconds. Out of that time, he was neutrally presented in 86%. Ramush Haradinaj was represented with 91% of the positive time, with 123 seconds he received in total. The most represented Serbian actor was Oliver Ivanović with 122 seconds, where in 78.7% of the time he had neutral presentation.

Table 24 Representation and tone of presenting Kosovo actors in the News of TV O2

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian List	110	14.5%	81.8	9.1	9.1
Goran Rakić	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Slavko Simić	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Oliver Ivanović	122	16.1%	78.7	21.3	0.0
Rada Trajković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Serbian candidates	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hashim Thaci	214	28.2%	14.0	86.0	0.0
Ramush Haradinaj	123	16.2%	91.9	4.1	4.1
Albin Kurti	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Behghjet Pacolli	5	0.7%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Assembly of Kosovo	22	2.9%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Kosovo Government	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kosovo officials	162	21.4%	37.7	62.3	0.0

In its news, TV O2 gave most time to the USA officials (523 seconds). Half of this time had positive and the other half neutral tone. The EU officials, who were predominantly neutrally presented, took the second place. Namely, out of 406 seconds, they were neutrally presented in 71.2 seconds. The Russian officials were considerably less represented and just every other second was positive.

Table 24 Representation and tone of presenting international actors in the News of TV O2

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
EU officials	406	27.7%	28.8	71.2	0.0
Federica Mogherini	119	8.1%	0.0	100.0	0.0
David McAllister	2	0.1%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Franco Frattini	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Russian officials	117	8.0%	51.3	48.7	0.0
Putin Vladimir	5	0.3%	100.0	0.0	0.0
USA officials	523	35.6%	48.9	40.9	10.1
Trump Donald	168	11.4%	63.7	36.3	0.0
Chinese officials	51	3.5%	100.0	0.0	0.0
UN	25	1.7%	0.0	100.0	0.0
UNESCO	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
NATO	22	1.5%	0.0	100.0	0.0
EU European Union	30	2.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0

Within the corpus of social actors, most represented were citizens with 34.6%, civil society with 12.6% and experts with 12.5% of the time. The citizens were positively presented in 70.1% of the time. Popular NGOs were positively presented in the News of TV O2 in 78.3% of the time, whereas experts received 53.0% of positively toned time.

The Serbian Orthodox Church and athletes were among the actors who were highly positively presented.

Table 26 Representation and tone of presenting social actors in the News of TV O2

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Orthodox Church	31	0.6%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Trade unions	388	7.2%	77.3	22.7	0.0
Foreign companies	275	5.1%	6.9	93.1	0.0
NUNS	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
UNS	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
NDNV	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
OECD	683	12.6%	78.3	21.7	0.0
Citizens	1872	34.6%	70.1	29.9	0.0
SANU	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Athletes	161	3.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Cultural workers	36	0.7%	41.7	58.3	0.0
Public figures	110	2.0%	80.0	20.0	0.0
Showbiz persons - entertainment business	30	0.6%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Experts	676	12.5%	53.0	47.0	0.0
Farmers	242	4.5%	49.6	50.4	0.0
Ethnic minorities	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lawyers	168	3.1%	8.3	91.7	0.0
Business associations	119	2.2%	77.3	22.7	0.0
Professional associations	51	0.9%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Workers	320	5.9%	36.9	63.1	0.0
Hague convicts	101	1.9%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Criminals- suspects	98	1.8%	3.1	96.9	0.0
Pensioners	29	0.5%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Youth	24	0.4%	100.0	0.0	0.0

PRVA

The executive power reflected in the personalities of the President and the Prime Minister was presented in the News of TV Prva with more than 90% of the time given to the corpus of actors that we called “Authorities and Regulatory Bodies”. In four months of our monitoring, the President Aleksandar Vučić was presented in the News of TV Prva for 6971 seconds or 67% of the total time at the corpus level. Out of that time, he was positively presented in 87.8% of the cases. In the same News, on the same television station, the Prime Minister, Ana Brnabić, was present for 2608 seconds or one fourth of the time given to all the actors comprising this corpus, whereby in 91% of the time she was presented positively.

Table 27 Representation and tone of presenting executive, legislative, judicial power and regulatory bodies in the News of TV Prva

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić, President	6971	67.0%	87.8	12.0	0.1
Ana Brnabić, Prime Minister	2608	25.1%	91.8	8.0	0.2
Government of Serbia as institution	217	2.1%	82.9	17.1	0.0
Assembly of Serbia	298	2.9%	10.1	48.0	41.9
Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection	48	0.5%	37.5	62.5	0.0
Protector of Citizens- Ombudsman	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Anti-Corruption Agency	119	1.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Fiscal Council	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media	63	0.6%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Commissioner for the Protection of Equality	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Prosecutor’s Offices	53	0.5%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Courts	25	0.2%	0.0	100.0	0.0

The other actors which comprise the corpus of authorities and regulatory bodies had a considerably lower representation. The Assembly of Serbia was present with 289 seconds of which 10.1% of that time was positive, 48% was neutral, and 41.9% was negative. The Government of Serbia, as an institution, was represented with 217 seconds and 82.9% of positive time. Among regulatory bodies, most time was received by the Anti-Corruption Agency. It was given 119 seconds and was positively presented in 100% of the time.

In the News of TV Prva, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was most represented with 233 seconds and 86.7% of positive time. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management took the second place with minor 85 seconds of which 83.5% were neutral. The other ministries were negligibly presented in the Central News of TV Prva.

In the analysed period, Ivica Dačić, as a Minister of Foreign Affairs, was the most represented Minister in the Government of Serbia. He was represented with 1505 seconds of which 72% of the time was positive. Aleksandar Vulin took the second place with 793 seconds of which 703 were positive. The Minister of Construction and Transport, Zorana Mihajlović, was presented with 674 seconds of which 82.9% were positive, whereas the Minister of Interior, Nebojša Stefanović, took the fourth place with 634 seconds of which 64% were

positive, 16.7% were neutral, and 19.2% were negative and thus, Nebojša Stefanović became the most criticized Minister in the News of TV Prva.

The most represented politician in the News of TV Prva was Bosko Obradović. In the analysed period, he was given 165 seconds or 17.4% of the total time within the corpus of political leaders. Out of that time, he was positively presented in 36.4% of the cases and negatively presented in the same percent, whereas his presentation was neutral in 27.2% of the cases. During our monitoring, Čedomir Jovanović was present for 163 seconds. His presentation was positive in 66% of the time and negative in 25.3% of the time. For the remaining time he was neutrally presented. In the same News, Dragan Šutanovac was given 133 seconds, of which 72.9% were positive, and 27.1% were negative.

Table 28 Representation and tone of presenting political leaders in the News of TV Prva

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić SNS	59	6.4%	57.6	42.4	0.0
Ivica Dačić SPS	9	1.0%	88.9	11.1	0.0
Dragan Marković Palma	29	3.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Nenad Popović SNP	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin	1	0.1%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Bogoljub Karić	80	8.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Vuk Drašković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dragan Šutanovac	133	14.4%	72.9	0.0	27.1
Boško Obradović	165	17.9%	36.4	27.3	36.4
Vojislav Šešelj	5	0.5%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Miloš Jovanović	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Boris Tadić	2	0.2%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Zoran Živković	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Saša Radulović	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Čedomir Jovanović	162	17.6%	66.0	8.0	25.9
Nenad Čanak	121	13.1%	95.0	5.0	0.0
Saša Janković	49	5.3%	77.6	6.1	16.3
Vuk Jeremić	52	5.6%	53.8	32.7	13.5
Dragan Đilas	8	0.9%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Aleksandar Šapić	21	2.3%	61.9	0.0	38.1
Stamatović Milan	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Beli Preletačević	25	2.7%	100.0	0.0	0.0

The Serbian Progressive Party had 434 seconds and was positively presented in 83.6% of the time, thus becoming one of the most represented actors on TV Prva among political parties and movements. The Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak took the second place with 126 seconds of which 77.8% of the time was negative. The Serbian Radical Party took the third place. Out of 120 seconds in the prime-time current affairs, 62.5% of the time was neutral.

Table 29 Representation and tone of presenting political parties and movements on the News of TV Prva

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	434	38.9%	83.6	16.4	0.0
Socialist Party of Serbia	97	8.7%	75.3	24.7	0.0
Party of United Pensioners of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
United Serbia	2	0.2%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Serb People's Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Socialists	35	3.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Strength of Serbia Movement	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Social Democratic Party of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Democratic Party	88	7.9%	90.9	9.1	0.0
Serbian Movement Dveri	83	7.4%	67.5	14.5	18.1
Serbian Radical Party	120	10.8%	18.3	62.5	19.2
Democratic Party of Serbia	29	2.6%	79.3	20.7	0.0
Social Democratic Party	25	2.2%	0.0	80.0	20.0
New Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Enough is Enough	5	0.4%	0.0	0.0	100.0
Liberal Democratic Party	2	0.2%	0.0	100.0	0.0
League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina	5	0.4%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Party of Democratic Action of Sandzak	126	11.3%	4.0	18.3	77.8
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Don't Drown Belgrade	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Free Citizens	36	3.2%	100.0	0.0	0.0
People's Party	28	2.5%	0.0	100.0	0.0

Within Kosovo actors in the News of TV Prva, most seconds were given to Kosovo officials. They were represented with 376 seconds of which 75.7% were neutral. Hashim Thaci took the second place with 323 seconds that were in 24.5% of the time positive, in 59.4 % of the time neutral, and in 16.1% of the time negative. In four months of our monitoring, the Serbian List was presented in 133 seconds of which 96.2% were positive. Ramush Haradinaj was the actor who received most negative time. Within 194 seconds, he was negatively presented in 44.3% of the time.

Table 30 Representation and tone of presenting Kosovo actors in the News of TV Prva

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time	Total time
Serbian List	133	9.2%	96.2	5	3.8	0.0
Goran Rakić	25	1.7%	100.0		0.0	0.0
Slavko Simić	19	1.3%	57.9	8	42.1	0.0
Oliver Ivanović	94	6.5%	35.1	61	64.9	0.0
Rada Trajković	0	0.0%	0.0		0.0	0.0
Serbian candidates	38	2.6%	100.0		0.0	0.0
Hashim Thaci	323	22.3%	24.5	192	59.4	16.1
Ramush Haradinaj	194	13.4%	12.9	83	42.8	44.3
Albin Kurti	0	0.0%	0.0		0.0	0.0
Behghjet Pacolli	75	5.2%	49.3	38	50.7	0.0
Assembly of Kosovo	173	11.9%	24.3	131	75.7	0.0
Kosovo Government	0	0.0%	0.0		0.0	0.0
Kosovo officials	376	25.9%	32.4	254	67.6	0.0

Among international actors, mostly represented were the USA officials. During our monitoring, they were present in the News of TV Prva with 1068 seconds. The EU officials took the second place with 409 seconds which in the total time given to the corpus of international actors, accounts for 14.1%. The Russian officials took the third place with 364 seconds or 12.6% share in the total time.

Table 32 Representation and tone of presenting international actors in the News of TV Prva

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
EU officials	409	14.1%	34.0	66.0	0.0
Federica Mogherini	210	7.2%	30.5	69.5	0.0
David McAllister	168	5.8%	22.6	77.4	0.0
Franco Frattini	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Russian officials	364	12.6%	62.1	37.9	0.0
Putin Vladimir	110	3.8%	100.0	0.0	0.0
USA officials	1068	36.8%	42.6	56.0	1.4
Trump Donald	233	8.0%	32.6	33.5	33.9
Chinese officials	64	2.2%	68.8	31.3	0.0
UN	125	4.3%	16.8	83.2	0.0
UNESCO	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
NATO	23	0.8%	0.0	100.0	0.0
EU European Union	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0

As in the majority of the News that we analysed, the citizens were the most represented actors on TV Prva within the corpus of social actors.

Out of 2094 seconds in total, the citizens were positively presented in 61% of the time, whereas in the remaining 39% they had neutral presentation. During the analysed period, civil society organisations were represented with 1003 seconds and the same number of seconds were given to experts. These two groups had an equally neutral presentation. Civil society organisations received 50.7% of the time, and experts received 46.3% of positive time. The

Serbian Orthodox Church was highly positively presented on this television station, although its presence was very low. Such presentation on TV Prva was also enjoyed by public figures, showbiz persons, and the Hague convicts.

Table 33 Representation and tone of presenting social actors in the News of TV Prva

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Orthodox Church	102	1.3%	80.4	0.0	19.6
Trade unions	628	8.3%	64.0	36.0	0.0
Foreign companies	561	7.4%	40.6	59.4	0.0
NUNS	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
UNS	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
NDNV	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
OCD	1003	13.3%	50.7	49.3	0.0
Citizens	2094	27.7%	61.0	39.0	0.0
SANU	26	0.3%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Athletes	895	11.8%	35.9	64.1	0.0
Cultural workers	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public figures	109	1.4%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Showbiz persons - entertainment business	10	0.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Experts	1030	13.6%	46.3	53.7	0.0
Farmers	273	3.6%	11.0	89.0	0.0
Ethnic minorities	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lawyers	296	3.9%	20.3	79.7	0.0
Business associations	135	1.8%	48.9	51.1	0.0
Professional associations	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Workers	131	1.7%	44.3	55.7	0.0
Hague convicts	76	1.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Criminals- suspects	114	1.5%	2.6	55.3	42.1
Pensioners	58	0.8%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Youth	16	0.2%	100.0	0.0	0.0

N1

Analysing the data obtained by watching the News of TV N1, we came to the result that this television station was the first among the analysed television stations to present the President Vučić in a considerably less positive tone, despite his significant presence in 50% of the time at the corpus level. Namely, in the News of TV N1 he was positively presented in (only) 48.9% of the time. The same conclusion can be drawn about the Prime Minister Brnabić, who was presented in one third of the time given to all actors of the corpus of authorities and regulatory bodies. However, on average, every other second was positive.

Table 34 Representation and tone of presenting the executive, legislative, judicial power and regulatory bodies in the News of TV N1

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić, President	4767	50.6%	48.9	39.0	12.1
Ana Brnabić, Prime Minister	2967	31.5%	52.3	46.2	1.4
Government of Serbia, as institution	389	4.1%	34.4	30.6	35.0
Assembly of Serbia	302	3.2%	6.6	93.4	0.0
Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection	175	1.9%	90.9	9.1	0.0
Protector of Citizens - Ombudsman	43	0.5%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Anti-Corruption Agency	144	1.5%	72.2	27.8	0.0
Fiscal Council	130	1.4%	88.5	11.5	0.0
Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media	41	0.4%	36.6	0.0	63.4
Commissioner for the Protection of Equality	31	0.3%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Prosecutor's Offices	120	1.3%	58.3	25.0	16.7
Courts	215	2.3%	41.9	58.1	0.0

The Ministry of Interior was the most represented ministry in the News of TV N1. Within 390 seconds, half of that time (53.6%) was negative. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development took the second place with 308 seconds and 35.1% of positive and 37.3% of negative time. The Ministry of Justice, with two thirds of positive time relative to the total of 142 seconds, was the third Ministry by representation.

The most represented Minister in the News of TV N1 was Ivica Dačić with 1410 seconds, where he was positively presented in 51.3% of the time. The Minister of Defence, Aleksandar Vulin, took the second place and in the prime-time current affairs of TV N1 he was represented with 1153 seconds. In half of that time he was positively presented in 52.6% of the cases and had 11% of negative presentation. The Minister of Police, Nebojša Stefanović, took the third place and within the total of 930 seconds, he was negatively presented in 38% of the time, whereas his presentation was neutral in 50.3% of the time.

In the News of TV N1, the most represented actor was Saša Janković with 604 seconds of which he was given 67.9% of positive time. Dragan Šutanovac took the second place with 287 seconds of which 90.2% were positive. In the analysed period, Zoran Živković was present in the News of TV N1 for 219 seconds or 72.1% of positive time. Among negative characters, there were the President of the Serbian Progressive Party, Aleksandar Vučić, who was represented in 176 seconds of which negatively toned time accounted for 89.2%. Sasa Radulović received 218 seconds on TV N1 where he was negatively presented in 22.5% of the total time. On the other hand, Dragan Đilas was given 204 seconds and was negatively presented in 25.5% of the time.

Table 34 Representation and tone of presenting political leaders in the News of TV N1

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić SNS	176	5.8%	10.8	0.0	89.2
Ivica Dačić SPS	76	2.5%	46.1	40.8	13.2
Dragan Marković Palma	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Nenad Popović SNP	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin	8	0.3%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Bogoljub Karić	1	0.0%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Vuk Drašković	11	0.4%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Dragan Šutanovac	287	9.5%	90.2	1.0	8.7
Boško Obradović	423	14.0%	94.3	4.0	1.7
Vojislav Šešelj	86	2.8%	70.9	29.1	0.0
Miloš Jovanović	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Boris Tadić	194	6.4%	56.7	24.2	19.1
Zoran Živković	219	7.2%	72.1	23.3	4.6
Saša Radulović	218	7.2%	66.1	11.5	22.5
Čedomir Jovanović	169	5.6%	94.7	4.1	1.2
Nenad Čanak	105	3.5%	81.0	0.0	19.0
Saša Janković	604	19.9%	67.9	27.8	4.3
Vuk Jeremić	188	6.2%	80.3	18.6	1.1
Dragan Đilas	204	6.7%	64.2	10.3	25.5
Aleksandar Šapić	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Stamatović Milan	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Beli Preletačević	62	2.0%	87.1	0.0	12.9

The Serbian Progressive Party was the most represented party in the News of TV N1. In the observed period, it had 1505 seconds or one third of the time given to all the parties. As opposed to other television stations, the tones of presentation in connection with the Serbian Progressive Party were differently distributed on TV N1. Out of the total time, the Serbian Progressive Party was positively presented in 39.9% of the cases, in 39.3% of the time its presentation was neutral, and in 29.1% of the cases it had negative presentation. On the other hand, the Democratic Party was the second party by representation. Within 992 seconds, it was positively presented in 84.8% of the time. The Socialist Party took the third place by representation in the News of TV N1 with 217 seconds, of which 44.2% were positive, 46.5% were neutral, and only 9.2% were negative.

Table 35 Representation and tone of presenting political parties and movements in the News of TV N1

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	1505	39.9%	39.3	29.1	31.6
Socialist Party of Serbia	217	5.8%	44.2	46.5	9.2
Party of United Pensioners of Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
United Serbia	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Serb People's Party	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Socialists	71	1.9%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Strength of Serbia Movement	13	0.3%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Social Democratic Party of Serbia	24	0.6%	37.5	62.5	0.0
Democratic Party	922	24.5%	84.8	10.0	5.2
Serbian Movement Dveri	66	1.8%	65.2	22.7	12.1
Serbian Radical Party	210	5.6%	67.6	32.4	0.0
Democratic Party of Serbia	12	0.3%	83.3	16.7	0.0
Social Democratic Party	111	2.9%	17.1	82.9	0.0
New Party	35	0.9%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Enough is Enough	166	4.4%	42.8	57.2	0.0
Liberal Democratic Party	62	1.6%	100.0	0.0	0.0
League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina	39	1.0%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Party of Democratic Action of Sandzak	24	0.6%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	3	0.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Don't Drown Belgrade	122	3.2%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Free Citizens	109	2.9%	81.7	0.0	18.3
People's Party	59	1.6%	100.0	0.0	0.0

Within the corpus of Kosovo actors, the News of TV N1 allocated most time to the Serbian List - 329 seconds. Out of that time, in 25.2% of the cases it was presented positively, in 59.6% of the cases neutrally, and in 15.2% of the cases negatively. The second-ranked actor by representation were Kosovo officials who were represented with 275 seconds, of which 68.7% were positive and 31.3% were negative. Hashim Thaci and Ramush Haradinaj took the third place. They received almost the same amount of time, but Ramush Haradinaj had 19% of negative time whereas Tachi did not have a second of negative time.

Table 35 Representation and tone of presenting Kosovo actors in the News of TV N1

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian List	329	17%	25.2	59.6	15.2
Goran Rakić	84	4%	54.8	45.2	0.0
Slavko Simić	55	3%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Oliver Ivanović	186	9%	82.3	17.7	0.0
Rada Trajković	47	2%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Serbian candidates	205	10%	75.6	24.4	0.0
Hashim Thaci	248	13%	23.4	76.6	0.0
Ramush Haradinaj	263	13%	22.8	58.2	19.0
Albin Kurti	0	0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Behghjet Pacolli	70	4%	51.4	48.6	0.0
Assembly of Kosovo	146	7%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Kosovo Government	55	3%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Kosovo officials	275	14%	68.7	31.3	0.0

Despite the public perception of this television station as “ the American television”, the most present actors in the News of TV N1 were the EU officials. They were present with 1342 seconds or almost half of the time allocated to international actors. Out of that time, their positive presentation accounted for one third, whereas two thirds were dedicated to their neutral presentation. The USA officials took the second place with 16.4% of the total share or 462 seconds in 120 days, where 58.9% were positive and the remaining 41.1% were neutral. Pro-European orientation of TV N1 is supported by the fact that the European Parliament rapporteur for Serbia, David McAllister, took the third place with 335 seconds and 86.4% of neutral time.

Table 36 Representation and tone of presenting international actors in the News of TV N1

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
EU officials	1342	47.7%	30.3	67.4	2.2
Federica Mogherini	191	6.8%	13.6	86.4	0.0
David McAllister	335	11.9%	13.4	86.6	0.0
Franco Frattini	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Russian officials	135	4.8%	51.1	3.7	45.2
Putin Vladimir	54	1.9%	90.7	9.3	0.0
USA officials	462	16.4%	58.9	41.1	0.0
Trump Donald	51	1.8%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Chinese officials	34	1.2%	26.5	73.5	0.0
UN	76	2.7%	50.0	50.0	0.0
UNESCO	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
NATO	29	1.0%	31.0	69.0	0.0
EU European Union	106	3.8%	85.8	14.2	0.0

Civil society organisations were the most represented actor within the corpus of social actors. With 2218 seconds, popular NGOs accounted for 17.9% of the total time given to all social actors in the News of TV N1. When it comes to the representation of actors, experts were

side by side with NGOs. Namely, experts received 2156 seconds where they were neutrally presented in 63.1% of the time.

NGOs were presented positively in somewhat less than ¼ of the total time. Trade unions took second place by representation. They received 1820 seconds and had 71.6% of positive time.

Table 37 Representation and tone of presenting social actors in the News of TV N1

	Total time	Share in corpus	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
SPC	176	1.4%	36.4	11.4	52.3
Trade unions	1820	14.7%	71.6	27.9	.5
Foreign companies	119	1.0%	52.1	47.9	0.0
NUNS	153	1.2%	58.8	41.2	0.0
UNS	187	1.5%	59.4	40.6	0.0
NDNV	40	0.3%	0.0	100.0	0.0
OECD	2218	17.9%	72.4	26.9	.7
Citizens	1564	12.6%	67.1	32.9	0.0
SANU	64	0.5%	0.0	100.0	0.0
Athletes	17	0.1%	100.0	0.0	0.0
Cultural workers	132	1.1%	83.3	16.7	0.0
Public figures	786	6.4%	73.7	26.3	0.0
Showbiz persons - entertainment business		0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Experts	2156	17.4%	36.9	63.1	0.0
Farmers	245	2.0%	71.0	29.0	0.0
Ethnic minorities		0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lawyers	520	4.2%	68.1	31.9	0.0
Business associations	235	1.9%	40.4	59.6	0.0
Professional associations	305	2.5%	70.8	29.2	0.0
Workers	369	3.0%	41.2	58.8	0.0
Hague convicts	256	2.1%	46.5	22.3	31.3
Criminals- suspects	593	4.8%	0.0	41.1	58.9
Pensioners	267	2.2%	76.0	24.0	0.0
Youth	151	1.2%	31.1	68.9	0.0

	RTS	Pink	Happy	O2	Prva	N1
Authorities and regulatory bodies	17016	40294	9490	5769	10402	9430
Ministers	9266	10351	10911	5228	3714	6623
Ministries	1706	1792	2091	692	658	1340
Political leaders	591	6296	102	1119	921	3031
Political parties and movements	672	2145	1603	921	1115	3770
Kosovo	1273	1733	1264	758	1450	1963
International community	3426	4413	2095	1468	2774	2815
Community	6698	5691	5259	5414	7557	12373

Zoran Gavrilovic

**POST-ELECTORAL MONITORING AND PUBLIC INTEREST
IN MEDIA**

Introduction

The public integrity and the integrity of the public opinion are the prerequisites of democratic and fair elections. When we speak of the public integrity and of the integrity of the public opinion, we actually speak of the functional integrity vis-à-vis public interest. This means that there are institutional and normative structures which, through dialogue and deliberation, guarantee free and participatory exchange of relevant facts and views, and develop diverse opinions among different actors. In this way, public opinion develops, that is, each citizen is given the opportunity to, in accordance with their interests, rights and habitus, and based on the relevant information and facts, evaluate the state of affairs and make decisions which will serve their interests.

Schema 1 Public and public opinion integrity

Elements		Function	Compromising the public and public opinion integrity
Interests and rights of citizens	Citizens' habitus	Personal evaluation of the state of affairs	Depoliticisation, disideologisation of citizens
Public opinion – attitudes to the state of affairs			
The public – platform for participatory exchange of information, views and facts on socially relevant topics		Developing diversity of opinions through dialogue and deliberation	Deinstitutionalisation of the public, discontinuing dialogue and deliberation
Professions serving the public		Collecting, processing and analysing in accordance with the law and ethical standards	Deprofessionalisation of journalistic, research-polling profession, changing the purpose of the media
Facts	Attitudes		
Reality			

The public, and thus the public opinion, rely on reality, that is, on social life. Reality is reflected in the facts (objective reality) and in the attitudes to reality (subjective reality). Facts and attitudes are collected, published and analysed by the “professions serving the public”, as we will call them here. These are journalistic and research – polling professions. In accordance with the law and professional and ethical standards, these two professions “produce” the content for the debate conducted in the media and fora - broadly defined as the institutions of the public.

More precisely, the existence of true, objective, and accurate information relevant for the citizens, the one that is debated in the media by relevant representatives of social groups, is a sign that the public does exist. The public is a prerequisite for building the public opinion as the sum of citizens' attitudes to stakeholders, processes, problems, priorities, events, and policies formulated based on relevant information and attitudes of relevant actors. Attitudes of citizens partly depend on their interests and needs, but also on their habitus, that is, on social and psychological characteristics.

The integrity of the public and of the public opinion is challenged by the industry of populism comprised of:

- disideologised political parties, to be more precise, party bureaucracy and its leader (God-Leader),
- marketing agencies increasingly assuming the role of a creator of political programmes at the expense of parties' political advice,

- agencies and pollsters researching public opinion in a reductionist manner, that is, focusing on the ratings.
- media turning into the means of propaganda, retaliation, but also protection (regiment) and
- bot factories and manufacturers of fake news
- parts of society living on political, economic and social margins.

Industry of populism has several goals i.e. strategies.

The first is to personalize politics. Personalisation of politics is reflected and developed at two levels. *First* is to look for, and focus on the dissatisfaction and fears which help to legitimize authority by disregarding the context of elections and ideological identity of election participants. The industry of populism boasts the product of indifference to politics, that is, of removing ideology from the politics. Campaigns present solutions devoid of ideology that exclude ideological values which define the ideological identity of candidates i.e. an ideological approach to addressing social problems.

The second level of personalising politics relates to finding a leader whose personal characteristics and, notably, charisma will be that of a superhuman capable of leading society into a “Golden Age”⁴.

The election campaign, created by the industry of populism, places its present focus on the far future where after the acclamation, the “God-Leader”⁵ will take people to the Golden Age.

The industry of populism aims at turning elections into acclamation. Authorities intend to use the campaign to motivate the voters to vote “for”, whereas the opposition, accepting this model, invites the voters to vote “against”, that is, to vote for a person/individual who will also lead the society to the “Golden Age”, but along a different road or in a different direction.

The industry of populism relies on the system comprised of:

- The head: God-Leader whose aura keeps on glowing owing to the media;
- The body: party bureaucracy, often combined with state bureaucracy, intending to expel the state bureaucracy from state institutions and take control of the state by subjugating public institutions and perpetuating kleptocratic system;
- The right hand: the media as the forms of propaganda and entertainment;
- The right leg: citizens at social margins which comprise the biggest support base of the God-Leader;
- The left leg: professional and reformist bureaucracy with the task to “manufacture” solutions for changes;
- The right hand: international actors lending the external legitimacy to the system

In such an ambiance, the election results are known in advance and achieved in the circumstances which are far from being regular, fair, legally compliant, and overseen by independent institutions in charge of the integrity of election process.

Outside the described system there is a dysfunctional public, to be more precise, their pillars: citizens, media, civil society, University, and researchers. Some of them:

- chose to cooperate with the system;

⁴ Girardet, R. (2000) *The Political Myths and Mythologies*; XX vek, Beograd

⁵ God-Leader is the amalgamation of citizens’ perceptions and concept created by the propaganda, which has produced a semi-mythical being as a combination of unworldly God and earthly leader. The unworldly quality, which is praised in the verses of the national anthem God of Justice, was discussed in the Serbian sociological, cultural, and religious literature by Veselin Čajkanović, Sreten Petrović, and Bojan Jovanović. The earthly leader, as the personification of personal form of power, was described in the articles of Todor Kuljić

- chose self-marginalisation;
- have modest resources which prevent them from introducing changes.

Public and public opinion integrity in the electoral process

To better understand the interrelations between the public and public opinion integrity on the one hand, and the integrity of electoral process on the other, we will use the concept of a ‘‘bird’s nest’’ which emerged in Australia in 2010. Its author is A.J. Brown, a professor of Griffith University⁶ and a member of Transparency International branch in Australia.

According to this concept, there is a National Integrity System (NIS) at the level of society which is composed of interconnected institutions that may cooperate with one another at three levels.

The first level is mutual control of elements i.e. straws of the bird's nest. The second level involves work on ensuring lawfulness and improvement, and the third level is the cooperation in sanctioning and risk mapping by integrity. This means that each straw in the nest of integrity can, by its actions, and with the help of the surrounding straws, prevent the breach of laws, ethical standards, or the violation of the public interest on the part of the other straw in the nest.

Concretising the bird’s nest concept at the level of Serbian elections, we get to the nest of electoral integrity which is comprised of:

- Republic Electoral Commission
- Anti-corruption Agency
- Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media
- Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia
- Public media services and private media
- Courts and prosecutors’ offices
- Political parties
- Civil society organisations dealing with media monitoring
- Public opinion research agencies
- Marketing agencies
- Donors
- Voters
- Members of electoral commissions
- Electoral candidates

According to its mandate and purpose in electoral process, one straw in the nest of electoral integrity may control the other straw, in cooperation with other straws. However, they may join their efforts to enforce electoral legislation, implement professional and ethical standards, and collect and initiate the sanctions for the breach of electoral procedure and for the disturbance and prevention of fair and just elections.

In this context, we will focus on the opinion polls as the element of integrity and one of the public pillars⁷.

⁶<https://www.griffith.edu.au/business-government/centre-governance-public-policy/staff/aj-brown>

⁷ The circumstances of the public and public opinion in the electoral process cannot be analyzed without media monitoring, but also without the monitoring of opinion polls. As opposed to the monitoring of media reporting during the election period, opinion polls are not the subject of (systematic) analysis of monitoring missions, the missions organized by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, more precisely, its Office for Democratic

Public opinion research agencies/pollsters are one of the straws in the electoral integrity nest which, by conducting public opinion polls according to professional and ethical standards, strengthen the integrity of other nest elements.

This notably concerns voters, election candidates, electoral administration, media, and political parties. Similarly, regulatory bodies (Anti-Corruption Agency), media, and civil society organisations may boost the integrity of agencies /pollsters and thus of electoral process by making the work of agencies/pollsters public, identifying and/or preventing any misuse in the area of opinion polling, and by using opinion polls for a dialogue during the election campaign. Misused opinion polls result in the violation of laws, ethical and professional standards, and influence the voting behaviour of respondents - either in their decision who to vote for or whether to vote at all.

Generally speaking, the polling integrity in the election process has three dimensions: financial, functional and professional.

Financial dimension of polling integrity is reflected in the transparency of funding, that is, in the public availability of information, in who commissioned the polling, and also in the connections of agencies/pollsters with the participants in the electoral process. Here, this notably concerns the connections with people in power, but also with the persons who have political and financial ties with such people. Availability of this information contributes to the integrity of agencies /pollsters and provides insight into the existing ties and into the nature of non-research motivation in the polling and analytical actions of agencies /pollsters. This is why the public needs to know if an agency /pollster was commissioned as an advisor to a high state official/body, or what conditions the agencies researching public opinion needed to meet to be awarded contracts in public procurements.

The public needs to know if there is any connection between the commissioning of agencies/pollsters and (in)visible donors of particular parties (in power), that is, if there are any connections between agencies/pollsters and other actors in the electoral process (media, civil society organisations, bodies of electoral administration, state bodies and authorities ...).

Visibility of cash flow, activities, and mutual impact of agencies/pollsters during elections, particularly of those present in the media, represent one of the elements of electoral integrity.

The second dimension of research integrity relates to the **functionality** of opinion polling, that is, what is its purpose from the perspective of the public and of the public interest.

Opinion polls in the election process may have three roles:

First is shallow and measuring, reflected in measuring the ratings of the participants in electoral process, in accordance with professional and ethical standards. In this way, opinion polls provide information of the ratings of political parties.

However, if opinion polls are reduced to mere measuring of the odds of achieving the expected election results by particular election rivals, then opinion polls give only a part of contribution they are able to give to the public and to the strengthening of public opinion, that is, to the creation of a democratic atmosphere during elections.

The polling contribution would be much greater if the subjects of polling were the needs/priorities of citizens and the assessment of election ambiance with the focus on election bids and circumstances in which election is held.

Thus, we come to the **second** role of opinion polling, which is analytical and dialoguing. This means that the opinion polls serve the purpose of providing the best possible insight into the context of elections. The focus is not placed only on participants' ratings but also on voters' (political) priorities, their political culture, assessment of regularity, and quality of election

Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODHIR), or of non-governmental organizations. In the monitoring of election process, opinion polls, namely, the agencies researching public opinion were undeservedly left out.

campaign, more precisely, on the qualities possessed by candidates and their programmes. Let us repeat one more time that opinion polls are particular instruments for the supervision of election processes where the focus shifts from measuring the ratings to the means of communication between the voters and candidates, jointly moderated by agencies/pollsters and journalists.

In this way, the election gains legitimacy because voters are subjectivised and their political priorities, attitudes, and solutions as to who is the best candidate and why become the key topic of election, whereas the candidates' campaign staff are prevented from dictating the topics of the election campaign.

As opposed to the above role, there is the **third**, propagandistic role. This role is reflected in the misuse of opinion polls. There are several forms of misusing opinion polls. The most drastic one is when non-existent opinion surveys are published.

The other form of misusing opinion polls is somewhat more sophisticated and represents a misuse of survey by giving advantage to, or disfavouing any of the participants in the electoral process. This misuse is reflected in the willingness of pollsters to, unpunished by their profession, put their professional knowledge in the service of spinning the research data and/or methodology by favouring an actor or decreasing his/her odds for a good result in the election. This is a classic sell-out of one's expertise, that is, the corruption of profession.

Professional aspect of polling integrity is reflected in the observance of research methodology when collecting, processing, analysing, and interpreting data. The risk posed to polling integrity, reflected in an unfinished professionalization of this profession, results in pollsters "entering" the profession without having adequate knowledge and skills that enable them to guarantee for the quality of the research.

For that reason, there is a need for a professional association which would oversee the research quality in terms of used and implemented polling methodology. Preservation of professional knowledge (expertise) is a key task of a professional association. It represents a watershed between those whose occupation has grown into a profession distancing itself from laymen and those who see opinion polls as the means of (political) propaganda and fast and (il)legal profit.

Being aware of all the risks involved, in this text we intend to present the arguments aimed at opening a debate in the Serbian research community on the need for regulation and /or self-regulation of public opinion surveys. The need for initiative arises from minimum two reasons.

Firstly, the democratization process in Serbia has reached the level which requires the efforts on the development of the public i.e. on the strengthening of the public opinion. No matter how tautological this may sound, there is no democratic election without the developed public and public opinion. One of the ways to develop the public and public opinion are dialogue-oriented opinion polls which explore the topics that citizens consider current and relevant. The results of these polls should initiate the debate on key social processes and challenges. Experiences in the field of deliberative democracy⁸ support this approach to opinion polling.

Namely, the professor James Fishkin of the Centre for Deliberative Democracy in Stanford University has developed methodology which through opinion polls and subsequently organised debates results in the reconciliation of views of the topics and problems regarding which there was no sufficient consensus⁹.

The second argument concerns the future of the very polling profession. Regulation or self-regulation mandated to a professional association is of an existential relevance for the

⁸<http://cdd.stanford.edu/>

⁹In cooperation with the professor Fishkin, at the initiative of a member of Mongolia's parliament, Gombojav Zandanshatar, Mongolia was the first country to legally adopt deliberative polling practice. <http://www.stanforddaily.com/2017/05/04/mongolia-adopts-deliberative-method-developed-by-stanford-professor/>

profession. Let us be reminded that the profession exists if it has the opportunity to establish, preserve and improve its professional knowledge through schooling system and organisation of professionals. In addition, a profession exists if the society is in need of its expertise, that is, if the profession manages to acquire its status in the division of labour.

Firstly, it should be noted that in Serbia, this profession is already partly professionalised. Namely, majority of agencies/pollsters are the members of international associations, notably of ESOMAR¹⁰. With their membership, agencies/pollsters undertook to observe the International Code. Initiation of the missing monitoring of the ESOMAR Code implementation could be a starting point for building professional self-regulation of Serbian agencies /pollsters. The second step should include modification or adjustment of the ESOMAR Code to the national context and needs.

In this way, a mechanism would be established with the aim to preserve the need of society for the polling profession. In other words, a mechanism would be created to help this profession achieve its role in the division of labour and serve the public interest by developing democratic public and critical public opinion, in the manner and according to its own professional and ethical standards which stem from theoretical achievements and statistics and methodology of social sciences.

When we speak of the existing sources which are relevant for the analysis of professional integrity of the polling profession and public opinion research agencies, we notably have in mind the practice of ESOMAR and WAPOR¹¹.

The ESOMAR Code is based upon three principles:

- When collecting personal data from data subjects for the purpose of research, researchers must be transparent about the information they plan to collect, the purpose for which it will be collected, with whom it might be shared and in what form;
- Researchers must ensure that personal data used in research is thoroughly protected from unauthorised access and not disclosed without the consent of the data subject;
- Researchers must always behave ethically and not do anything that might harm a data subject or damage the reputation of market, opinion and social research.

The ESOMAR Code covers the following areas: duty of care; children, young people and other vulnerable individuals; data minimisation; primary data collection; use of secondary data; data protection and privacy; responsibilities to clients; transparency; responsibilities to the general public; publishing findings; responsibilities to the research profession; professional responsibility; legal responsibility, compliance and implementation of the Code.

Article 1 of the ESOMAR Code insists on preserving the research integrity, that is, on separating non-research activities from research. The section on research profession specifies in Article 9 that researchers must be honest, truthful and objective and ensure that their research is carried out in accordance with appropriate scientific research principles, methods and techniques. It is stressed that researchers must always be ethical and must not do anything that might unjustifiably damage the reputation of research or lead to a loss of public confidence in it. To achieve this objective, it is necessary that researchers are straightforward and honest in all of their professional and business dealings and not make false or otherwise misleading statements about their skills, experience or activities.

However, the content of the EOSMAR Code does not contain expressly written text/articles governing the conduct of agencies/pollsters during the election period.

¹⁰<https://www.esomar.org/>

¹¹<http://wapor.org/>

ESOMAR/WAPOR Guideline on Opinion Polls and Published Surveys¹² (hereinafter: “Guide”) is the result of global cooperation between ESOMAR and WAPOR. The Guide points out that public opinion is a critical force in shaping and transforming society, that is, opinion polls and surveys give citizens an opportunity for their voice to be heard and their views to be considered by public officials and politicians.

The authors of the Guide draw attention to the fact that pre-election polls make up only a minority of published surveys and represent a public test of sampling theory and survey research in action. On the other hand, polls which appear to be wrong get extensive media coverage with a very negative impact on the image of opinion polls and surveys and opinion research in general. The guide also stresses that special care must be taken to ensure that results are accurately and fairly reported.

Researchers and journalists are jointly responsible for the above.

Journalists require a sufficient level of knowledge about opinion polls and methodologies to understand why some polling results need to be treated with caution (e.g. because of timing, small sample sizes, low response rates, biased question wording or coverage).

On the other hand, agencies /pollsters have the obligation to educate the public through the style of their presentation, which also includes ensuring that the interested parties have access to research reports and that the public has the opportunity to express their attitudes to research findings.

In Section 4, *Relationships with Participants*, agencies/pollsters are expected to clearly distinguish and separate their research from non-research activities. One of such activities is telemarketing or gathering data for compiling or updating lists/databases on citizens-respondents-safe votes.

Similarly, researchers must not engage in (negative) campaigning that is disguised as a political poll, which aims to persuade large numbers of voters and affect election outcomes. The same section points out the importance to observe research procedures so that rights of the respondents are protected in the collection and processing of data, whereas answers should be collected in the circumstances relevant for the research, without influencing the respondents.

In the subsequent Section 5, *Relationship with General Public*, authors of the Guide point out that agencies/pollsters must not act in a way that could bring discredit on the profession or lead to a loss of public confidence in it. Opinion polling largely depends on the public’s willingness to participate, and public confidence in the accuracy and reliability of opinion polls and published surveys. This means that agencies/pollsters must be transparent about sampling, including the variables used for weighting, data collection techniques, question wording and timing of the opinion poll.

The Guide stresses that the opinion polls are conducted, among others, for publication of the results in the media. This is why it is important that agencies /pollsters deliver and insist on the publishing of data of a particular survey.

This helps the media and the public to differentiate between unprofessional and professional surveys. Key information which, according to the Guide authors must be available to the public, is:

- The name of the organisation which conducted the poll and its sponsor, the organisation or person who paid for the poll. If internal campaign polls are made public, it must be indicated that the data originally were collected for a political entity;

¹²<http://wapor.org/esomarwapor-guide-to-opinion-polls/>

- Who was interviewed, whether the poll sample included all adults or only eligible or likely voters, the geographic range of the poll (country, province, state, electoral district, city) and whether certain groups were excluded from the sampling process;
- The actual sample size (number of completed interviews included in the reported findings) and the geographical coverage;
- The dates of fieldwork;
- The sampling method used. For quota samples and other non-probability samples, provide the characteristics by which the sample was selected. For probability samples, additional information, including the response rate;
- The method by which the poll was conducted (face-to-face, telephone interview, internet access panel, mixed mode etc.);
- The percentages of respondents who give ‘don't know’ answers (and in the case of voting-intention studies, of those who say they will not vote). This information must always be given when it is likely to significantly affect the interpretation of the findings.
- Whether weighting was used to adjust the results and the general demographic or behavioural characteristics used for the weights (e.g. known voting distributions from previous elections).
- When comparing findings from different surveys, any changes (other than minor ones) in these percentages must be indicated. There are many occasions on which the interpretation of particular findings will be quite different if the level of ‘don't know’ answers is 5% or 50%.
- The relevant questions asked. In order to avoid possible ambiguity the actual wording of the question should be given unless this is a standard question already familiar to the audience, such as an approval rating of the government or the government's leaders.

In the event when secondary reporting of opinion poll results are published in the media by individuals, other than the original client and, additionally, the data or research methodology are published incorrectly or inaccurately, research agencies should issue comments or information as may be necessary to correct any cases of misreporting or misuse of results.

Further in the text we will present the findings of the survey conducted by WAPOR in 2002 and 2012 with the aim to establish the existing practice of publishing opinion polls conducted during the election process. Unlike in 2002, the 2012 survey included Serbia.

In 2012 survey conducted on the sample of 84 countries, almost half of the countries (46%) had blackout periods during which pre-election poll results could not be published. In comparison with the year 2002, when the survey covered 66 countries, the percent of restrictions on the publication was almost the same. Thirty countries reported having embargoes on the publication of findings from political polls before an election. Comparing the findings of 2002 and 2012, it can be seen that ten countries did not lift restrictions on publishing poll findings, in 13 countries the black-out period increased, whereas in 11 countries the restrictions were liberalized or lifted. Twenty six countries were stable in not having an embargo in 2002 and 2012.

The countries with the longest black-out period for opinion polls are: Honduras - 45 days, South Korea - 21 days, Macau, Ukraine and Italy 15 days each, and Taiwan - 10 days. The countries where the period of restriction on publication of opinion polls was increased are: Honduras (45 days), Argentina (15 days), Ukraine (15 days), and Taiwan (10 days). Among the countries which reduced embargo period were notably those that, in that period, joined the

EU (Slovakia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovenia), and “old democracies” such as France and Switzerland.

Main enforcers of restrictions on publishing results of opinion polls are government agencies (87%), independent bodies (5%), broadcast and press regulatory agencies (3%).

The presented findings show that there is no single answer to the question which information of the survey must be published and in what way so that the public can be sufficiently informed of the integrity and correctness of methodology. According to the research findings, ethical standards (as a mechanism of professional self-regulation) were most often defined as the information of the polling that should be published, whereas the regulation i.e. the obligation to publish was left out.

Table 1 Type of (self)regulation in publishing polling information (absolute values)¹³

Information to be published	Legal	Code of ethics	No restrictions
Name of agency	30	40	23
Geographical coverage	21	49	19
Dates of interview	21	49	20
Margin of error	20	42	28
Question wording	18	42	29
Characteristics of the sample	17	47	24
Mode of interview	16	47	25
Response rate	13	32	41

In (only) seven countries it was reported that exit polls could not be conducted at all, whereas 12 reported that they cannot be conducted both inside the polling station and outside near to the polling station, 13 reported that exit polls can neither be conducted near the polling station nor inside the polling station. Among 82 countries which participated in the research, 24 reported no restrictions on conducting polls for the citizens who in addition to voting, are willing to express their vote one more time by filling out the survey and putting it into a specially designated box. Seven countries reported no restrictions, but exit polls were never conducted.

Concerning the publication of exit polls, the results could not be published in half of the surveyed countries until all polls were closed, whereas in 38% of the countries there were no restrictions at all.

The subject of the study was also the restriction on publishing questions, that is, what questions respondents can be asked.

Restriction on publishing questions existed in 12 countries: China, Chile, El Salvador, Fiji, Jordan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Nepal, Qatar, Singapore, and United Arab Emirates. Most frequently those were the questions relating to royalties and political leaders, religious and ethnic issues, health, foreign policy and defence, armed conflicts, political issues, values and lifestyle, and voting intentions between elections. According to the findings of the study, the reasons for those restrictions were national security, the right of privacy, and protection of democratic processes.

In the end of WAPOR study, the participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the manner in which the media covered the polling results. Every third respondent was not satisfied with the way in which media presented the polling results to the public.

Restriction on publishing exit polls in Serbia is defined by the law. The media, supervised by the Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media, may not publish the polling

¹³ Table was taken from the WAPOR study

results during the three days of electoral silence. Estimations of turnouts are allowed on the election day, whereas the estimations of the election outcome can be made after the expiry of the electoral silence, on the election day.

Self-regulation (involving the existence of a particular code and professional association which oversees its implementation) is non-existent in Serbia. It can be said that in Serbia, there is a “professional disorganisation” of research profession and thus, the issue of integrity self-regulation is reduced to individual professional integrity of agencies and pollsters. This results in the possibility that the compromised integrity and profession of pollsters and opinion polls during the election process will go unpunished by the profession.

The only instrument of professional self-regulation in Serbia is the ESOMAR Code of Ethics for member agencies/pollsters of Serbia. However, it should be borne in mind that in Serbia, there is no mechanism for their monitoring.

This is supported by the fact that ESOMAR did not receive the findings of the Anti-Corruption Council¹⁴ regarding the suspected breach of law in awarding the public procurement contract for public opinion survey.

The practice of avoiding to step on someone’s toes and fear that one might be recognized as a fighter against corruption/whistleblower causes unease that one will be the subject of retaliation, that is, excluded from public procurement schemes. In its report on possible impact of public sector institutions on media, the Anti-Corruption Council highlighted the methods of simulation.

„In 2012, the Information Service of the City of Belgrade, concluded a contract “on cooperation in information-advertising activities” with Ipsos Strategic marketing doo from Belgrade. The subject of the contract was: “market research – Belgrade 2012 public opinion project” and the contract value was 1.6m RSD, including VAT. Conclusion of the agreement was preceded by a low-value public procurement procedure, in which two more bidders, besides the winning company, participated - Ebart doo and Synovate doo from Belgrade. All of the bids arrived in the City Administration Office on 2 July 2012 at 10:18h. The bid submitted by Ebart doo was evaluated as invalid since it did not contain all of the necessary documentation: memorandum of association and the original letter from the bank on issuing bank guarantee. The bid of Synovate doo was also evaluated as invalid since it did not contain the original letter from the bank on issuing bank guarantee. It should be noted that three months before their bid was submitted in the mentioned public procurement procedure, Srđan Bogosavljević was appointed a director of Synovate doo (SYNOVATE Limited, Cyprus – 100%), who, at the same time, was also the director of Ipsos Strategic marketing doo (owned by IPSOS STRATEGIC PULS, France). It can be concluded, from the above stated facts, that these are associated legal entities, not real “competitors” and that neither of the two companies, Ebart doo and Synovate doo, had serious intention to compete in the procedure“¹⁵

The lack of effective actions on the part of the public sector institutions (Anti-Monopoly Commission, Public Procurement Administration, Anti-Corruption Agency, Administration for the Prevention of Money Laundering ...) silenced the Serbian ESOMAR members (who were not the subject of the Report written by the Anti-Corruption Council) and made them reluctant to turn to this organization and present the report findings, despite being provided that opportunity by the ESOMAR Code, which promotes such action as an obligation.

Since a professional association does not exist, and thus there is neither the Code of pollsters nor the report on the observance of ESOMAR’s Code of Ethics, we chose an appropriate sample of 18 texts published in the daily newspapers during the campaign period

¹⁴<http://www.antikorupcija-savet.gov.rs/izvestaji/cid1028-3007/izvestaj-o-mogucem-uticaju-institucija-javnog-sektora-na-medije-kroz-placanje-usluga-oglasavanja-i-marketinga>

¹⁵

<http://www.antikorupcija-savet.gov.rs/Storage/Global/Documents/izvestaji/Izvestaj%20o%20medijima%20konacna%20verzija.pdf>

from 1 March to 1 April, to explore to what extent the recommendations of ESOMAR-WAPOR Guide are followed.

Research findings show that daily newspapers presented the opinion polls conducted by research agencies. The texts were focused on showing the ratings of presidential candidates, more precisely, on showing the (unreachable) advantage of Aleksandar Vučić over the other candidates.

Table 2 Breakdown of reporting on opinion polls

Newspaper	Date	Agency	Topic
Danas	1.3.	IPSOS	Ratings of a presidential candidate, Aleksandar Vučić, and misuses of opinion polls
Blic	1.3.	IPSOS	Ratings of opposition candidates /competing for second-place position in the context of the second round
Kurir	1.3.	IPSOS	Ratings of opposition candidates /competing for second-place position in the context of the second round
Novosti	1.3.	IPSOS	Ratings of presidential candidates with the focus on huge advantage of Aleksandar Vučić
Blic	10.3.	Faktor Plus	Ratings of a presidential candidate with the focus on the announcement of first-round victory of Aleksandar Vučić
Danas	17.3.	Demostat	Certainty of the second round
Blic	18.3.	Demostat	Ratings of presidential candidates with the focus on huge advantage of Aleksandar Vučić
Srpski Telegraf	18.3.	Demostat	Ratings of presidential candidates in the context of the second round
Dnevnik	18.3.	Demostat	Ratings of presidential candidates with the focus on huge advantage of Aleksandar Vučić
Blic	20.3.	IPSOS	Ratings of presidential candidates with the focus on huge advantage of Aleksandar Vučić and Janković and Preletačević in race for the second position
Blic	23.3.	Ninamedia	Ratings of presidential candidates with the focus on huge advantage of Aleksandar Vučić
Kurir	23.3.	IPSOS	Ratings of presidential candidates with the focus on huge advantage of Aleksandar Vučić
Alo	23.3.	IPSOS	Ratings of presidential candidates with the focus on huge advantage of Aleksandar Vučić
Politika	23.3.	Ninamedia	Ratings of presidential candidates with the focus on huge advantage of Aleksandar Vučić
Alo	24.3.	“from one relevant agency”	Ratings of presidential candidates in the context of a certain victory of Aleksandar Vučić
Blic	25.3.	Faktor plus	Ratings of presidential candidates with the focus on huge advantage of Aleksandar Vučić
Politika	26.3.	Faktor plus	Ratings of presidential candidates in the context of a certain victory of Aleksandar Vučić
Informer	30.3.	IPSOS Faktor Plus Demostat	Ratings of presidential candidates in the context of a certain victory of Aleksandar Vučić

The manner in which the results were presented, as well as the interpretations of the pollsters, where such that the winner was known even before the first round of election was held.

According to the opinion poll conducted in the beginning of the election campaign by the Bureau for Social Research, 57% of Serbian citizens over the age of 18 believed that the second round would not take place. (see ANNEX 1)

According to voters’ preferences in the last year’s election, the belief that there would be the second round was poorly represented among the voters of opposition parties. The voters of the Democratic Party and of the coalition around the Doors to the Altar (Dveri) and the

Democratic Party of Serbia put least faith in the fact that Serbia would have a president in the first round (one third).

Table 3 Perception of first-round certainty in presidential election, depending on the voting in 2016 (%)

	SNS	SPS- JS	SRS	Dosta je bilo	DS	DSS- Dveri	LDP- SDS- LSV	Ethnic minority party	Any other party	Blank vote
Serbia will have a president in the first round	75,00	53,33	46,99	46,53	30,00	32,14	53,57	38,46	52,94	57,14
There will be second round of presidential election	12,04	30,00	28,92	39,60	50,00	67,86	46,43	50,00	47,06	28,57
Can't form an opinion (do not read)	12,96	16,67	24,10	13,86	20,00	0,00	0,00	11,54	0,00	14,29

The certainty of the first-round victory of a presidential candidate, Aleksandar Vučić, was not only true for the voters of this candidate but also for the voters of opposition candidates who believed that Vučić would win in the first round, which (could) additionally impact the absenteeism of opposition voters.

Lack of opinion surveys on the nature of support to Aleksandar Vučić, electoral absenteeism, and voters' attitudes to election circumstances helped the candidate who entered the race for election with enviable advantage. The presence of the above topics would have served as the basis for a debate which would by all means influence the public opinion and possibly the outcome because it would create a more favourable ambience for a higher turnout rate.

Pollsters and media deprived the voters of information which would help them answer the question: how do the citizens of Serbia see extremely high ratings of the presidential candidate, Aleksandar Vučić; what motivates the Serbian citizens to vote for this candidate; what parts of electorate support this candidate. In addition, the presence of electoral absenteeism in Serbia, which was even articulated through „blank votes“, was either not interesting or is the result of (self)censorship of journalists. Revealing of socio-demographic characteristics of absentees would have identified the nature of support to the presidential candidate, Aleksandar Vučić.

Generally speaking, save for the efforts of Danas daily, namely of Srećko Mihailović, all other dailies served the purpose of non-inquiring dissemination of information about high ratings of Aleksandar Vučić and of the analysts who skipped the analyses of election ambience, that is, of political and electoral culture of citizens, thus turning themselves into the messengers of Aleksandar Vučić's first-round victory. On the other hand, analysts were critical of the opposition candidates.

Among 18 analysed texts, 11 had the title of an informative and 4 of a promotional nature in the positive portrayal of Aleksandar Vučić. It should be noted that among 11 titles of informative connotation, majority highlighted high percentages of public support to Aleksandar Vučić.

The results were discouraging regarding the observance of standards for publication of polling information. The most represented data was the name of agency that conducted the survey (17), followed by the sample size (5) and the date of survey (5). The data collection technique was mentioned in considerably smaller number of cases (3), telephone interview was mentioned two times and fieldwork once. Other data were not mentioned. None of the analysed texts contained the information about who financed the opinion poll.

The topic addressing the information availability regarding the funding of opinion polls again remained hidden in the campaign and thus damaged the integrity of agencies/pollsters. The media did not show who financed the polls. Namely, to the question about the source of funding the poll, the answer was „from own sources “. For that reason, it makes no sense that research findings do not exist beyond ratings. Investing money for promotional purposes only to show almost the same thing and in the same manner as competitors cannot be considered a proper business decision. Naturally, if there are own funds for financing surveys, one could expect that a professional motivation would drive them to explore the other phenomena relating to the electoral process, and show to the potential clients a whole range and mastery of research. Admittedly, the question remains whether such reduced approach to research and the policy of “not rocking the boat” is a good business policy in such a market of polling services.

Some data on financing the opinion polls can be obtained from the reports on financing the election campaign submitted to the Anti-Corruption Agency by the participants. However, all the data are not visible in those reports because the costs of opinion polls can be presented as marketing services for which political parties usually commission marketing agencies.

According to the data of the Anti-Corruption Agency, in this presidential campaign, IPSOS Strategic Marketing (hereinafter: IPSOS) received from the presidential candidate, Aleksandar Vučić, 3.333.371, 40 RSD allocated for the costs of commissioning a marketing agency.

Table 6 Breakdown of costs for services of marketing and opinion polls in 2017 presidential election campaign.¹⁶

Candidate	Type of cost	Agency	Amount
Aleksandar Vučić	Costs for commissioning marketing agency	IPSOS	3.333.371,40
	Costs for commissioning polling agency	-	0
Saša Janković	Costs for commissioning marketing agency	Srebrn-Tuš doo	121.944
	Costs for commissioning polling agency	-	0
Ljubisa Preletacević Beli	Costs for commissioning marketing agency	-	0
	Costs for commissioning polling agency	-	0
Vuk Jeremić	Costs for commissioning marketing agency	<i>Initiative media</i>	3.559.932,13.
	Costs for commissioning polling agency	-	0
Aleksandar Popović	Costs for commissioning marketing agency	Marketing United Team	300,000
	Costs for commissioning polling agency	Jadar	800,000
Boško Obradović	Costs for commissioning marketing agency	-	0
	Costs for commissioning polling agency	VIVID DOO	1.267.722,28
	Costs for commissioning press clipping agency	NINA MEDIA	29.752,30
Milan Stamatović	Costs for commissioning marketing agency	Delight studio	660.000,00
	Costs for commissioning polling agency	-	0
Saša Radulović	Costs for commissioning marketing agency	-	
	Costs for commissioning polling agency	Partner Research Solutions	867.020,00

Thus, we can identify several facts. *Firstly*, marketing services of IPSOS were commissioned by one presidential candidate. *Secondly*, during the campaign, IPSOS presented opinion polls leaving out the information of the funding body as well as the information about

¹⁶ <http://www.acas.rs/acasPublic/pretragaTroskoviKampanje.htm>

their contractual relationship with one of the presidential candidates. *Thirdly*, during the entire election day, IPSOS presented the estimated turnout on the Radio Television of Serbia, as well as the prediction of election outcome, not providing the information of the manner of data collection. The aforementioned raises a question whether IPSOS is prejudicing the integrity in relation to the rules defined in the ESOMAR Code and ESOMAR and WAPOR Guide.

The mentioned documents define the opinion poll information the public needs to know, that is, the appropriate conduct of an agency/pollster so as not to damage the confidence in opinion polls. In addition, the same documents prescribe the separation of research and non-research activities. From the submitted information it is not clear whether IPSOS implemented marketing activities or conducted opinion polls (and which ones) and who paid for them.

In this election campaign, the public had the opportunity to see a video clip recorded and shared on social media by a former member of the Serbian Progressive Party and former President of the Town Assembly of Zaječar (Saša Mirković). The video shows his discussions with two men (who identified themselves as the pollsters of the Centre for Free Elections and Democracy (CESID)) claiming that they were recording who turned out to vote and who did not. Subsequently, CESID negated that those pollsters were commissioned by them, however, they did not say if they initiated any proceedings against them for false representation and undermining the reputation of this research organization. This case also represents the example of misusing research agencies (without their knowing) and thus prejudicing the trust in opinion polls.

These two cases, which occurred in this election campaign, are but a part of the inherited practice which may undermine the confidence in opinion polls and damage an important profession capable of playing a significant role in building the public and public opinion not only in the election process but also generally, in building democratic public.

All of the above speaks of the need to constitute a professional association as an instrument for professional self-regulation in the area of opinion polls. The current trend of deprofessionalisation could have devastating consequences for opinion polling and turn it into the means of promotion and propaganda instead of the means of research. In that way, polling profession would take the path of journalistic profession which, according to the data of BIRODI's monitorings, ensures its „economic“ viability notably by reporting reduced to the means of promotion and propaganda. A code of ethics regulating activities in the electoral process is a minimum to be agreed by agencies/pollsters, civil society organisations, and press clipping agencies.

Pre-election research

Ideal monitoring of media reporting during election cannot be imagined without the survey of the attitudes of media audience. The reason for this lies in the fact that behind a project term “media monitoring” there is a method of content analysis which, according to its most general definition, is the analysis of communication between the message sender and the message recipient. For that reason, we conducted two researches during the election campaign – one in the beginning and the other at the end of campaign – to add to the media monitoring the data that would provide a deeper and broader insight into electoral behaviour of Serbian citizens and its effects on the perception of media reporting on elections. (see Annex 1).

The subjects of pre-election research were attitudes to the freedom of speech, opinion polls, methods of being informed about politics, voting motivation, ideological self-perception of respondents.

We will firstly present the findings relating to the attitudes of our respondents to the freedom of speech. Namely, one of the questions was “Is it a sensible thing these days to speak your mind?” Half of the respondents agreed with this wording!

Table 7 Attitude to the freedom of speech (%)

When socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents were analysed (gender, age, education level), it was established that there were no (statistically significant) differences in relation to the attitude to the freedom of speech and voting choice in last year's election.

Table 8 Attitude to the freedom of speech depending on voting in 2016 (%)¹⁷

Exception to the above is the finding that the respondents living in Southern and Eastern Serbia somewhat better perceive the freedom of speech, namely, smaller percent of them think that it is not sensible to speak one's mind.

Table 9 Attitude to the freedom of speech depending on the regional affiliation of respondents (%)

Opinion polls are a type of communication through intermediaries (pollsters). This is why we asked our respondents how much they believe in opinion polls. Half of the surveyed individuals stated that they believed in opinion polls, whereas every third respondent did not believe them and every sixth did not have an attitude.

Table 10 Attitude to opinion polls (%)

Somewhat more than 43% of the respondents who think that it is not sensible to speak one's mind also do not believe in opinion polls. This is exactly where one should probably look for respondents' insincerity in the survey.

Table 11 Attitude to opinion polls and to the freedom of speech (%)

Seeking to understand, at least in part, the nature of such huge support to Aleksandar Vučić, we asked our respondents if they agree with the attitude that at present times, Serbia needs a leader with a firm hand. Eight out of ten respondents agreed with the said attitude.

Table 12 Attitude of the respondents to the need for a leader with a "firm hand" (%)

Analysing the distribution of answers by age structure of the respondents, we could see that there was no statistically significant difference. The same applies to the gender structure, however, women respondents were somewhat more ready to accept this attitude (79% of men, 89% of women)

On the other hand, respondents with primary and lower education agreed with the stated attitude at a statistically significant level, whereas a considerably lower percentage of respondents with college and higher education supported the need for a „firm hand“.

Table 13 Attitude of respondents to the need for a leader with a "firm hand", depending on the educational level (%)

Table 14 Voter motivation (%)

This is my citizen's duty	39,5
None of the mentioned, I am not interested in politics	16,8
Quality of presented programmes	10,1
Quality of candidate	8,9
Belief that my candidate will win	7,4
Regularity of election in terms of observing the prescribed procedure	7,1
Existence of a candidate who supports the same ideological values as I do	6,2
Possibility to get all the information I want about all the candidates	2,6
Smear campaign	0,8
Hope that my candidate will qualify for the second round	0,6

¹⁷ Findings and conclusions in relation to crosstabulation of political parties with previous election results of below 5% should be taken with caution due to the sample size, because the actual sample size does not allow us to make precise but rather illustrative conclusions. The same applies to presidential candidates who, in this year's election, won less than 5% of the votes.

The obtained results speak of the fact that four out of ten respondents see their motivation to vote in fulfilment of their civic duty. Quality of election programme takes the second place which, coupled with the quality of candidates, as motivation, makes one fifth of the sample. For 7% of the respondents, certainty of a candidate's victory represents a (decisive) motivation to vote in election. The same percentage of respondents find the regularity of electoral process important. Only every fifteenth respondent is interested in the ideological profile of election participants.

From the above it can be concluded that voter motivation is notably routine, i.e., it is incorporated in the awareness of the civic duty. Quality of the bid reflected in programmes and candidates takes the second place, whereas the regularity comes (only) third, followed by ideology of candidates which takes the fourth place.

If the data are analysed by educational groups, it can be seen that the quality of candidates as the criterion of voter motivation is statistically relevant for the respondents with college and higher education

Table 15 Voter motivation and educational level of respondents (%)

The analysis of voter motivation by age of respondents shows that for young respondents (up to 29 years of age) major motivators for voting are: regularity of election and possibility to find out anything they consider relevant about candidates.

Table 16. Voter motivation and age of respondents (%)

Observing the findings by political parties, we can see statistically significant differences in terms of voter motivation. Thus, the voters who voted for *Dosta je bilo (Enough is Enough)* a year ago, find a statistically significant voting motivation in ideological proximity. The same goes for voters of the *Democratic Party*. On the other hand, when it comes to the *Socialist Party of Serbia*, the election regularity is almost insignificant for the voter turnout, whereas the voters of *Dosta je bilo (Enough is Enough)*, *Dveri (Doors to the Altar)* and the *Democratic Party of Serbia* found the regularity to be an important motivator. Belief that their candidate would win the election was a dominant voting criterion for those who in 2016 voted for the coalition around the *Liberal-Democratic Party*.

For more than a third of respondents, politics is either uninteresting or they are against its practicing, whereas each fourth respondent sees herself/himself as a socialist or a social democrat. Interestingly (for the society that chooses the parties on the right of the political spectrum), less than 10% of the respondents see themselves as right wingers, nationalists or conservatives.

Table 17 Ideological self-perception of respondents (%)

I am apolitical/not interested in politics	30,4
Socialist	13,9
Social Democrat	13,6
I am anti-political/against politics	7,2
Communist	6,3
Right-winger/Nationalist	5,9
Democrat	3,9
Conservative	2,5
Liberal	2,3
Greenist	1,5

Observing ideological self-perception of respondents and who they voted for in the last year's parliamentary election, it can be concluded that with the exception of the *Socialist Party of Serbia*, voters' indifference to politics is predominant among all other political parties, including (expected) "blank votes". Similarly, the consistency between ideological self-identification and (formally) proclaimed party ideology is the highest with the *Socialist Party*

of Serbia. Its voters see themselves almost entirely on the left part of ideological scale (socialists, social democrats, communists).

The voters of the *Serbian Progressive Party* notably see themselves as apolitical and as socialists. Below one tenth of the respondents supporting the *Serbian Progressive Party* see themselves in a right-wing conservative discourse, which is also the ideological discourse of this party. The supporters of the *Radical Party* expressed a high degree of indifference to politics, however, on the other hand, they had a clear right-wing nationalist and conservative self-identification, with the presence of social democracy. *DSS* and *Dveri (Doors to the Altar)* belong to the same type of ideological legitimisation because among their voters, there are also two types of respondents: social democrats and right-wing nationalist conservatives.

Regarding the *Democratic Party*, a particular degree of ideological homogeneity was recorded. In 2016, its voters saw themselves as social democrats, although a significant number of them identified their ideological profile with the name of the party. Ideological homogeneity was recorded among the respondents who stated that they voted for the movement *Dosta je bilo (Enough is Enough)*. It should be noted that ideological self-identification of respondents supporting this movement differs from its socialist and liberal ideological position. The majority of persons who in 2016 voted for *Dosta je bilo (Enough is Enough)*, saw themselves as social democrats and communists (!?), whereas part of them stated that they were democrats.

Table 18 Ideological self-perception of respondents depending on the voting in 2016 parliamentary election (%)

When it comes to information about politics, television is still a predominant way of informing the Serbian public. Internet i.e. relevant documents take the second place, whereas cable and internet televisions come third. The percentage of those attending gatherings organised by political parties is below half percent.

Table 19 Sources of information about politics (%)

On TV stations with national and regional coverage	40,7
On the Internet and through relevant documents	20,7
On cable and internet television	16,6
I don't get informed about politics, I am not interested in politics (do not read)	11,1
Through daily press	4,0
Through the people whose opinion I appreciate	3,3
On the radio stations with national and regional coverage	2,6
Through weekly press	0,6
Attending political gatherings	0,4

When the obtained findings are compared by age of the respondents, it is clear that there is a difference among generations.

Table 20 Sources of information depending on age

Survey participants of up to 29 years of age get less information about politics from television stations and use more the Internet to search for the relevant documents. Among the age group of over 60, the situation is quite the opposite. Television, as the source of information, is statistically more represented, whereas for 60-year-olds, the Internet has lower statistical significance. The same finding, but measured with different question wording, was obtained in the survey conducted in 2016.

In addition to the findings relating to age structure, the findings of educational structure of respondents also speak of the fact that for younger and more educated population, classic media, as sources of information, cannot keep up with the online media. As in the last year's survey that BIRODI conducted on the same subject, there is a considerably higher percentage of respondents with college and higher education, who collect the information from the

Internet, than those with primary and lower education who use television stations as the main source of information.

The respondents who in 2016 voted for the *Serbian Progressive Party* are those who, in a statistically significant percent (55%), largely use television to inform themselves about politics, whereas there is a lower percent of those who voted for the movement *Dosta je bilo* (*Enough is Enough*) and used television stations as information source.

The percentage of respondents who voted for the *Serbian Radical Party* and who stated that they do not inform themselves about politics (1/3 of them) was lower than that of the other respondents. The Internet as means of obtaining information is significantly more used by those who, a year ago, voted for the coalition around *Liberal Democratic Party*.

Table 21 – Sources of information depending on the education level

Post-election research

It should be stressed that in Serbia, there is no practice of conducting post-election research as an introduction to a debate on the character of electoral process. In the developed democracies, the electoral integrity is helped by subsequent surveys, mostly conducted by universities. This is the best way to build the public opinion on the electoral process. This practice has become widespread and resulted in the formation of the Centre for Political Studies at the University of Michigan, USA and the research platform GESIS of Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences within the project Comparative Studies of Electoral Systems¹⁸.

At the level of the European Union, within the elections for the European Parliament, post-electoral surveys have been conducted since 1979. This practice involves surveys not only with citizens but also with the participants in electoral process, including the very candidates.

In Serbia, academic community i.e. institutes and agencies for public opinion research do not see professional or commercial interest in conducting and publishing post-electoral surveys which would serve as the basis for a debate on ended elections.

For this reason, we chose to conduct a post-electoral survey within the media monitoring and to focus on the attitudes of respondents to the campaigns of presidential candidates, attitudes to the regularity of electoral process and assessment of media functionality i.e. functionality of television stations in the election period (Annex 2).

When the campaign is assessed from the perspective of respondents, that is, from their perception of who represented /promoted their interests, Aleksandar Vučić appears as the convincing winner of this election. According to the respondents, he had the best campaign. The other candidates were even defeated in the option „None “and „Don’t know“.

Table 22 – Which presidential candidate addressed in his campaign the topics you consider relevant? (%)

Together, they make one third of respondents covered in the survey. On the other hand, comparing the findings and the actual outcome, the best result was achieved by Saša Janković, whose campaign was evaluated four times worse than was his actual election result.

When the evaluation of election campaign quality is crossed with the age of respondents, we can see that Aleksandar Vučić was best evaluated by the respondents older than 30, whereas evaluations of those younger than 29 were not as good, in a statistically significant percent. Ljubiša Preletačević, as well as the candidates on the right of the political spectrum - Parović, Stamatović and Obradović - were best evaluated by respondents of up to 29 years of age. Vuk Jeremić was seen as the candidate best promoting the interests of respondents between 30 to 44 years of age and of those aged 60 and above, whereas Saša Janković was best scored by the respondents between 45 and 59 years of age.

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Table 23 Which presidential candidate addressed in his campaign the topics you consider relevant, depending on age (%)

It is worth noting that all candidates were given the best scores for their campaigns by the most educated part of population supporting them.

Table 24 Which presidential candidate addressed in his campaign the topics you consider relevant, depending on education level (%)

Regional analysis of respondents' campaign evaluation indicates that each part of Serbia has at least one of its own favourites. Thus, Vučić was best scored in the South and East of Serbia, but also in Belgrade. The same distribution of positive scores was received by Saša Janković and Vuk Jeremić. Šešelj, Čanak, Radulović, Obradović and Popović were best scored by citizens of Vojvodina, whereas Stamatović was best evaluated by the respondents from Western and Central Serbia.

Table 25 Which presidential candidate addressed in his campaign the topics you consider relevant, depending on the region (%)

One of the topics in “new democracies” is the regularity of election. This is why we asked our respondents in different towns if there were any pressures aimed at changing the electoral will of citizens. Almost six among ten respondents stated that in their town, there were no attempts to influence their will. One sixth of the respondents stated that pressures were exerted as before or were greater than before. Each fifteenth respondent thought that there were less pressures than before. Every tenth respondent stated that this was the job of the relevant state bodies.

Table 26 In your town /municipality, were there any irregularities of the electoral process or events that could influence people who to vote for? (%)

No	58,5
Yes, more than before	12,9
Yes, the same as before	12,2
I don't want to talk about it, it is a job of the relevant bodies	10,3
Yes, but less than before	6,2

The respondents with primary and lower education thought, in a statistically significant percent, that there were more pressures than before.

At the regional level, there were no statistically significant differences, however, the data speak of the fact that the majority of Vojvodina citizens fell under “No” category (meaning that there were no pressures) but also under the category “more than before”. When it comes to election irregularities, the citizens of Belgrade and of Southern and Eastern Serbia had similar attitudes.

In your town /municipality, were there any irregularities of the electoral process or events that could influence people who to vote for, depending on the region (%)

At the end of the text, we will compare the findings of opinion polls and of our monitoring in relation to the behaviour of television stations.

According to the opinion of the surveyed respondents, RTS and Pink are the media which provided to its audience the most information about rights and obligations in the

electoral process. On the other hand, the finding of media monitoring was such that the predominant subject of monitoring were electoral procedures, Republic Electoral Commission, and opinion polls focused on ratings. Educational content relating to voting and voters' rights and obligations, as well as to possible misuses and ways of protection were almost non-existent. **Table 28 Which TV stations provide to the citizens the information of rights and obligations in the electoral process? (%)**

The next indicator is the overview of positive and negative sides of candidates and programmes.

Survey findings show that RTS and Pink were the TV stations which mostly contributed to viewing positive and negative characteristics of candidates. However, as in the case of the previous finding, the results of our monitoring differed.

All analysed TV stations promoted candidates solely by taking over non-media (campaign) content from their campaign staff, adjusting its running time, and airing it as media content. As a consequence, the tone of presentation was extremely positive and did not leave room for any negative sides of the presidential candidates.

Table 29 Which TV stations help in seeing positive and negative sides of the candidates and their programmes? (%)

In the survey, the respondents expressed their attitudes that RTS and Pink were the TV stations which largely gave the same space and time to all candidates. Again, in this case, respondents saw something that BIRODI monitors did not.

Table 30 Which TV stations equally report on all candidates? (%)

A presidential candidate, Aleksandar Vučić, was considerably more represented than other candidates. When we sum up the (positive) time received by this candidate, the imbalance against other candidates throws into doubt the evaluation that the election was just and fair.

According to media monitoring of BIRODI, the Prime Minister, Aleksandar Vučić, violated the Anti-Corruption Agency Act (Article 29.2), which prohibits the use of public office for election purposes. More precisely, he took advantage of the events in which he spoke of election not as a presidential candidate but as the Prime Minister.

On 10 April, BIRODI submitted the findings of its monitoring to the Anti-Corruption Agency.

Table 31 Events

Date	Current Affairs	Event
3.3.	News, RTS	Visit of F. Moghereni to the National Assembly of Serbia
12.3	National News, Pink	Visit to Velika Plana in the capacity of a Prime Minister
13.3.	National News, Pink	Visit to the new Centre of Etihad in the capacity of a Prime Minister
17.3.	National News, Pink	Visit to the farm "Ćira Agro", Titel in the capacity of a Prime Minister
19. 3	National News, Pink	Presence and speech at the opening of athletic stadium in Novi Pazar
20.3	Master, TV Happy	Press conference in the building of the Government of Serbia
26.3	News, B92	Interview given for Der Standard newspaper from Vienna in the capacity of a Prime Minister

One of the media functions during elections is to ask the questions that citizens would ask. According to research findings, majority of respondents thought that the reporters of RTS and TV Pink asked the questions they would have asked the candidates. In this case, the data obtained in the monitoring and those from opinion polls again did not match because journalists displayed a passive attitude to candidates, allowing them to promote themselves and impose the topics.

Table 32 Which TV stations, in their interviews with candidates, address the topics that citizens find relevant? (%)

According to the research findings, it is clear that the respondents either do not understand the term debate or were able to see what our monitors did not capture. Namely, except for RTS, which had one TV debate participated only by the opposition representatives, no other TV station held TV debates. Nonetheless, our respondents saw debates on all other TV stations, notably on Pink and Prva.

Table 33 Which TV stations enable the candidates to face each other in a debate? (%)

The above findings seriously question both our data collection methodology and political literacy of citizens who participated in our survey.

The argument which speaks in favour of our methodology is the finding of 2016, when we had the same type of mismatch between what the respondents saw and what they answered in the telephone interview conducted by the same polling agency. Despite being aware of methodological limitations of telephone interviews and ambiance in which they were conducted (notably in terms of citizens' fear to express their opinion and their distrust in telephone surveys), we would like to raise a question whether this represents a specific citizens' denial of the state of affairs presented by the media which, in their minds created a picture of the media which does not correspond to the factual state, or they simply did not understand the terms used in the survey.

Conclusion

Research results speak of the fact that the presidential election in Serbia was held in the ambiance characterized by:

- Strong support to firm-hand leadership
- Strong indifference to politics and attitudes against politics with the existence of two steps of ideological self-perception continuum:
 - Conservative and declarative left-wing politics,
 - Populism personified in the combination of right-wing conservatism/nationalism and social democracy.
- Strong and routine electoral motivation personified in the attitude that voting is motivated by civic duty rather than by the quality of programmes and candidates, regularity of elections, and ideological affiliation of candidates
- Strong support to firm-hand leadership
- Strong fear of the freedom of speech and thought, self-censorship of citizens

The existing ambiance is determined by the behaviour of the media which, through the lack of monitoring on the part of the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media, have become the means of promotion and propaganda. Pollsters, with a few honourable exceptions, reduced their approach to measuring consequences i.e. candidates' ratings without analysing the context, and turned themselves into "a scribe Pera from the administrative department" (a character from *The Cabinet Minister's Wife* by Nušić, who brings the news of Živka's husband being appointed the minister), that is, into messengers of Vučić's victory.

This is followed by topical irrelevance and lack of debate between candidates on the relevant topics which are within the mandate of the President of the Republic.

When the mentioned scheme of public and public opinion integrity is applied to the elections in Serbia, it is clear that the lack of professional integrity of journalists and pollsters, and the dysfunctional instruments of the public, notably of the media, result in suspending the public from the electoral process. The Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media was also a party to such suspension. This ambience favoured the industry of populism, preventing depersonalization of politics and its ideologisation, that is, starting the processes which prejudiced the industry of populism. The media, with their propagandistic and promotional content, took from the public their rightful place and sought to mobilise the electorate of Aleksandar Vučić and provoke absenteeism of those who intended to vote for the opposition candidates. With their shallow surveys, pollsters were partakers because in an environment far from fair and just election, they measured candidates' ratings and remained silent about the rest.

The industry of populism has won. Serbia has been given a God-Leader, the public has been additionally compromised by fear of the freedom of speech and (self)transformation of media into the means of promotion and propaganda. The public opinion has been made indifferent to politics and disideologised, with the tendency to become reduced to a mass and crowd, whereas the electoral integrity was compromised to the extent to which not only the legitimacy of electoral process but also its legality was prejudiced.

Negative influence of populism industry, as shown in our research, is best seen in the fact that a divided society was created which, due to different methods of informing and communicating, shares the same space only physically.

The voter motivation of Serbian citizens of over 45, with primary and lower education, depends on the quality of programmes, possibility to be informed about all actors, and belief that their candidate will win. They are characterized by above-average support to leadership, as well as indifference to politics, and wide range of ideological values (in their conservative and older versions). These are the same citizens who in 2016 parliamentary election voted for SNS, SPS, SRS and in 2017 presidential election, for Aleksandar Vučić and Vojislav Šešelj.

As against this audience, there are those up to 29 years of age with college and higher education. Their motivation to vote was determined by regularity and agreement with ideological values of candidates. Leadership, as political discourse, is present below average. In terms of ideology, majority of young people favour the values of social democracy or conservatism, and indifference to politics is also present. In 2016 parliamentary election, they voted for DJB, DSS-Dveri, and DS. In this year's presidential election, a significantly lower percent of them voted for Vučić, and for Saša Janković and Vuk Jeremić they voted in a significantly higher percent. They also voted for Boško Obradović and Saša Radulović. (note: Preletačević was not measured because in the beginning of the survey he was not a candidate).

Apparently, the industry of populism drove young population away from classic to online media. Good news is that this gave birth to the public - the public which creates a new attitude to politics and political identification.