

Zoran Gavrilović

INDUSTRY OF POPULISM



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BIRODI
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Introduction

Eight-year long monitoring of notably prime time current affairs programmes of six television channels, five with national coverage (RTS, Pink, Prva, Happy, B92) and cable TV N1, produced a research material that enables us to additionally test our research findings and start to theoretically generalise the media system in Serbia. We started to present the contours of the theoretical model during the first media monitoring in 2012. At that time, we introduced the term *officials' campaigning* which today constitutes an integral part of election glossary in Serbia.

What is an *officials' campaigning*?

It is a media promotion of the violation of Article 29 of the Law on the Anti-Corruption Agency. The consequence of this type of promotion is an increase in positive reporting, which results in the violation of Article 47, paragraph 1 of the Law on Electronic Media that guarantees the right to true, timely, and objective information.

Part of the media deviations and violations are so-called party cameras. Specifically, it is when PR services of political parties and journalists take over non-media i.e. propaganda content and air it in the central newscasts, especially in the so-called electoral slots during the election campaign. This violates Article 47, paragraph 1 of the Law on Electronic Media and the Code of Journalists of Serbia, which prohibits a journalist from broadcasting political propaganda.

In the same year 2012, drawing on our research findings we created a Reporting Matrix of central newscasts which, luckily for us as researchers but not luckily for the society, has proven accurate to this day. Media matrix of the current affairs programme is characterised by:

- Promotional reporting on state officials and uncritical reporting on topics that are treated as "sacred", state topics. Reporting and promotion is the dominant way of media conduct, followed by the fabrication of enemies;
- Informative-analytical reporting on social events and phenomena without naming those responsible for harmful consequences and without encouraging investigative journalism, because those responsible are either not mentioned or are presented in abstract terms;
- Predominantly gloomy world news, especially news from the region (Montenegro, B&H excluding Republika Srpska, Albania, Macedonia and EU countries), although some parts of Serbia are also presented through predominantly negative news (Sandzak and Bujanovac, Presevo and Medvedja),
- Significant presence of low culture media content (entertainment and jet set) and high culture content (ethnic and national) lacking media content in the area of international culture and science,
- Significant presence of media content in the area of sport which, after the success of Serbian athletes, promotes (banal) ethnic nationalism through laudatory reports and interviews.

Analysing the actors in the mentioned Matrix, media landscape in Serbia can be divided into: systemic, alternative and excluded.

The main actors in the systemic part of the media landscape are state and political officials, members of the entrepreneurial-tycoon elite, entertainment business, patriots and politically acceptable artists, cultural workers and scientists, representatives of traditional religious communities with less equal Serbian Orthodox Church, and athletes. Traditional media are the core of information structure of this part of the media landscape.

The alternative space is dominated by the political and social alternative which largely communicates through new media, mostly populated by representatives of the political and social alternative in the form of "small" parties, NGOs, civic activists and representatives of the alternative cultural scene.

Exclusion from the media is a method of (not) informing about social groups so that social exclusion is enhanced or maintained. Namely, it does not promote social inclusion of a certain social group. This means that the reporting in the media does not increase the availability of information that is essential for a successful use of social resources and rights of marginalized social groups. The groups excluded by the media are notably: Roma, persons with disabilities, people discriminated against because of their age and gender, forced migrants (refugees and internally displaced persons).

However, socially and economically marginalized citizens are also excluded from the media and left to be lulled by the entertaining media content which anesthetises their real world.

At that point, we concluded that such media coverage creates authoritarian, isolated, and apolitical society where sport, entertainment, and nationalism are good anaesthetics for a blocked transition. We pointed out that such media and social reality benefit those who use the media as an instrument to protect their interests that more often than not are opposite from the public interest.

During the second monitoring in 2014, we created media classification which, with subsequent "fine-tuning", has become a part of BIRODI methodology. Namely, the media in Serbia may be divided into those serving to inform, analyse, inquire and hold authorities accountable and into those serving to promote, entertain, disseminate propaganda, and retaliate.

Informative and analytical service (IAS) as a type of media, largely addresses the topics relevant for all citizens, that is, the issues of 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 greater 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 may also (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 subjects 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, more often than not, are 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 panegyris 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 that would 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 positively presented. Propagandists breach professional and ethical standards of journalistic profession.

Servicemen are the media guards of the media owners and related actors, notably of the authorities, political parties and those who buy advertising space. The role of 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 topics of servicemen’s news items are relevant for the media owners and actors related to their interests. Unlike propagandist media, where actors are predominantly positively presented, in the servicemen’s media, the 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.

Subsequent monitoring only added arguments for this typology. This is especially true for media coverage during the parliamentary elections in Serbia, which took place in the spring of 2016. That was the year when the “equal and more equal” (2012) model of time and tonality distribution was replaced by the “one and unequal” model. The key actors in this new model were the President of the Serbian Progressive Party, who has meantime become the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vucic, and the national broadcaster Pink, which during the 2017 presidential election campaign took over the role of Aleksandar Vucic's main media service.

Observing media subsystem or, more precisely, public interest in the media, we can conclude that there are three dimensions:

- Interest of institutions, which also includes the media,

- Interest of journalistic and other media-related professions and
- Interest of citizens in the media.

From our point of view, there are three (self) regulatory levels when it comes to attaining the public interest in the media:

- Regulation
- Professional self-regulation
- Media culture and media needs of the audience

Realising the public interest in the media at the level of regulation is reflected in the development and observance of legislation on the media. This is not an end in itself, but the means for building and preserving media diversity and the public which constitutes 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 the media content, depending on their social roles, rights, needs and interests. When such needs are met, public interest in the media is realised.

During the period in which we monitored the media and researched the public, the public began to fade with the apathy of citizens who witnessed media retaliation against those who reasonably used their constitutionally guaranteed right (Article 46) to express their views.

The public was divided into three parts: hybrid, passive, and active.

Hybrid public comprises 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 not only to subvert 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, and transparently and lawfully include them in policies and/or laws. 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 knowledge-based institutions. 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 anomie and depoliticization of society resulting in society's atomization and desocialisation. Passivation 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 out for regulatory mechanism provided by institutions, a need arises 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.

Before presenting the findings of our monitoring, we will show the international and domestic normative framework.

The issue of media freedom may be perceived from two angles. The first one, media-related i.e. the angle concerning the rights of journalists and media owners (media industry) and the second one, public angle i.e. the rights and needs of those consuming (informational) content media. The subject of this report is the relationship between the media and stakeholders, namely, to what extent the media help citizens to exercise their rights and meet their needs. In light of the foregoing, we will present relevant international and domestic normative framework.

The Universal Declaration on Human Rights of 1948, in Article 19, guarantees to everyone the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.” In the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, also Article 19, the States Parties undertake to guarantee the right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media. The exercise of the rights may be subject to certain restrictions, as provided by law and necessary for respect of the rights or reputations of others, and for the protection of national security or of public order, or of public health or morals.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights prohibits any propaganda for war i.e. any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence. Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights [3] prescribes that everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right includes freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. The States have the right to require the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises. Paragraph 2 of this Article of the European Convention of Human Rights stipulates that the exercise of these freedoms may be subject to restrictions in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

On 7 November 2007, the Committee of the Ministers of the Council of Europe, in accordance with the Statute of the Council of Europe, Article 15.b, adopted the Recommendations [4] insisting that:

- During electoral campaigns, regulatory frameworks (body, legislation or by-law framework) should encourage and facilitate the pluralistic expression of opinions via the broadcast media. With due respect for the editorial

independence of broadcasters, regulatory frameworks should also provide for the obligation to cover electoral campaigns in a fair, balanced and impartial manner in the overall programme services of broadcasters. Such an obligation should apply to both public service broadcasters as well as private broadcasters in their relevant transmission areas.

- Where self-regulation does not provide for this, member States should adopt measures whereby public and private broadcasters, during the election period, should in particular be fair, balanced and impartial in their news and current affairs programmes, including discussion programmes such as interviews or debates. No privileged treatment should be given by broadcasters to public authorities during such programmes. This matter should primarily be addressed via appropriate self-regulatory measures. As appropriate, member States might examine whether, where practicable, the relevant authorities monitoring the coverage of elections should be given the power to intervene in order to remedy possible shortcomings.

The above international normative framework signed by Serbia guarantees the right to freedom of thought and speech and also addresses the issue of the quality of information based on which citizens form their attitudes or formulate their personal opinions and thus exercise rights, including the right to elect and be elected.

The present Constitution of Serbia in Article 51 guarantees the right to be informed. Operationalization of this Article of the Serbian Constitution created Article 47 paragraph 1 of the Law on Electronic Media which stipulates that media service providers shall provide free, true, objective, complete and timely information.

NON-ELECTION MONITORING

In the period from 1 September 2019 to 31 January 2020, BIRODI had the opportunity to repeat its first non-election monitoring carried out in 2017. As two years earlier, the sample was comprised of the television stations with national coverage (RTS, TV Pink, Happy, Prva, B92) and N1 as a cable television with notably informative and political programme.

Table 1. Monitored television stations

RTS1
TV Pink
TV Prva
B92
TV Happy
N1

The subject of monitoring were news items in central newscasts which mentioned public officials and institutions at the level of the Republic, political parties and their leaders, international actors, actors of Kosovo, and other social actors.

Time analysis included measuring of the representation of actors in news items, expressed in seconds.

Tonality analysis¹ included measuring of the tonality time where in the analysed news items actors were presented in positive, negative and neutral tone.

Positive time - the time expressed in seconds, where an actor is presented, by himself or by another actor, through conveying positive assessments, facts, arguments, results, accomplishments and attributes,

Negative time – the time expressed in seconds, where an actor is presented, by himself or by another actor, through conveying negative assessments, facts, arguments, results, accomplishments and attributes, hate speeches, untrue facts and spinning.

Neutral time – the time expressed in seconds, where an actor is presented, by himself or by another actor, through conveying neutrally connoted facts, namely, the facts expressed in the form of analyses, researches, inquiries into presented views, assessments, arguments, results, and accomplishments in the presence of at least two sides.

In addition to the above, a part of our methodology was the analysis of journalistic work through: behaviour in the news item, genre structure, and analysis of the nature of events underlying the news item.

¹ Analysis of the tone of the media coverage is part of the media monitoring methodology described in the document of the Venice Commission (Council of Europe), ODIHR (OSCE) Directorate General Human Rights (European Commission). For more details - [https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD\(2009\)031-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD(2009)031-e) (page 23)

Table 2. Conduct of journalists in news items

	Television					
	RTS	TV Pink	TV Happy	Prva TV	O2	N1
Conveys information OFF	77.2%	79.0%	86.3%	68.7%	77.0%	62.7%
Conveys information ON	20.7%	17.6%	11.4%	26.5%	22.6%	21.1%
Promotes the position of a participant	0.1%	1.1%		0.4%		0.1%
Advocates		0.4%				
Supports		0.2%		0.1%	0.2%	
Criticizes – ideologically		0.2%				
Entertains, trivializes		0.1%				
Acts as a serviceman		0.1%				
Passive conduct of journalists	98.0%	98.8%	97.8%	95.8%	99.8%	83.9%
Analyses	0.7%	0.2%	0.2%	3.0%		14.8%
Asks additional questions	1.1%	1.0%	2.1%	1.2%		1.2%
Criticizes – ideologically		0.2%				
Criticizes - factually					0.2%	0.1%
Active conduct	1.8%	1.5%	2.2%	4.2%	0.2%	16.1%

The above Table no. 2 shows that, with partial exception of TV N1, the reporters in all other television stations were passive actors in their news items.

Table 3. Genre structure in the current affairs programme

	Television					
	RTS	TV Pink	TV Happy	Prva TV	O2	N1
News	10.0%	9.6%	8.6%	10.2%	15.7%	2.9%
Report	8.7%	8.8%	12.9%	11.5%	13.3%	10.2%
Report with statement	42.4%	41.0%	55.0%	46.6%	56.5%	36.4%
Informative genres	61.1%	59.4%	76.5%	68.4%	85.4%	49.5%
Studio guest, interview	2.4%	3.4%	3.5%	2.8%	.5%	1.7%
Topic, media package	31.6%	25.6%	16.9%	21.1%	12.4%	34.0%
Analysis, reportage, commentary	3.2%	10.5%	3.0%	4.5%	.7%	12.3%
Debate-analytical	37.2%	39.5%	23.4%	28.5%	13.7%	48.0%

Genre analysis of the observed media speaks of the fact that two thirds (66.7%) were of the informative nature and only 1/3 accounted for debates and analytical genre. The journalists of TV N1 were almost equally informative, debating and analytical in their news items.

At the end of this part of measuring, we will present the findings on the nature of events underlying news items in the analysed current affairs.

Table 4. Typology of events

	Television					
	RTS	TV Pink	TV Happy	Prva TV	O2	N1
Current event organised by government institutions	60.1%	46.1%	60.7%	46.6%	50.5%	35.1%
Pseudo-event, generating media attention	8.8%	16.1%	9.9%	15.4%	16.9%	15.3%
	69.0%	62.2%	70.6%	62.1%	67.4%	50.4%
Media initiatives, interviews, commentaries	11.7%	27.8%	12.4%	24.0%	20.6%	27.2%
Event not organised by government institutions	17.5%	8.3%	14.3%	12.6%	11.1%	19.9%
Current spontaneous event	1.7%	1.7%	2.7%	1.2%	.9%	2.5%
	30.9%	37.8%	29.4%	37.8%	32.6%	49.6%

The newsroom of TV N1 also had the most favourable results in this category, namely, in the relationship between the types of events within the entire analysed segment. It is worth noting that RTS had the smallest number of pseudo-events and media initiatives. TV Pink had the fewest news items dealing with the events not organised by government institutions.

We will now proceed with the analysis of time and tone of the monitored news items. Two thirds of the analysed time was positive. This means that the actors had the opportunity to express their views and opinions and by doing so, present themselves in a positive light.

Table 5. Summarized tone of reporting in current affairs programmes

Total							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
106:55	66.8%	36:22:38	22.7%	16:52:01	10.5%	160:09	100.0%

Within two thirds of positive representation on average, the News of TV Pink and TV O2 stood out with a higher percent of positive time allocated to the presentation of actors.

Table 6. Tone of reporting depending on the television station airing the current affairs programme

RTS							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
13:02:25	67.8%	5:32:32	28.8%	0:38:55	3.4%	19:13:55	100.0%
TV Pink							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
47:53:06	77.9%	5:22:40	8.8%	8:10:27	13.3%	61:26:14	100.0%
TV Happy							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
12:16:45	67.0%	5:39:42	30.9%	0:23:28	2.1%	18:19:57	100.0%
Prva TV							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
11:47:39	64.4%	4:59:36	27.3%	1:30:44	8.3%	18:18:00	100.0%

O2							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
8:13:38	71.3%	2:36:03	22.5%	0:42:45	6.2%	11:32:26	100.0%
N1							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
13:41:31	43.7%	12:12:02	39.0%	5:25:38	17.3%	31:19:13	100.0%

The data presented in the Table no. 7 show that there were no statistically significant deviations in relation to the tone of reporting. On average, two thirds of the analysed media reported positively. December was the only month when this tone of reporting exceeded the average.

Table 7. Tone distribution by months

September 2019							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
26:37:42	63.6%	11:04:53	26.5%	4:08:56	9.9%	41:51:31	100.0%
October 2019							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
22:35:27	63.6%	8:39:07	24.3%	4:18:12	12.1%	35:32:47	100.0%
November 2019							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
20:48:20	64.9%	7:12:45	22.5%	4:01:49	12.6%	32:02:54	100.0%
December 2019							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
20:45:55	75.6%	3:56:16	14.3%	2:45:06	10.0%	27:27:18	100.0%
January 2020							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
16:07:44	69.4%	5:29:34	23.6%	1:37:58	7.0%	23:15:17	100.0%
Total							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
106:55	66.8%	36:22:38	22.7%	16:52:01	10.5%	160:09	100.0%

The Table no. 8 below shows that one third of the observed time was dedicated to the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić - 55 hours 54 minutes and 51 seconds. The Prime Minister of Serbia, Ana Brnabić, took the second place with ten times less time. Among the most represented actors, government actors i.e. executive authorities were predominant. This relates to the Ministers who were more represented than the Ministries as institutions. Within the executive power, the force ministries were predominant (Ministries of Interior and Defence) and the Ministries of Finance and Energy. The Ministry in charge of European Integration and other Ministries were on the margins of reporting in central newscasts of TV stations with national coverage. In presenting themselves, some of the Ministers used their public functions and/or presented themselves using their party functions at the same time (Dačić, Stefanović, Vulin, Nedimović, Trivan, Antić, Popović ...).

When positive time is added to the seconds, Aleksandar Vučić was unparalleled as the most influential actor.

On average, the actors in this cluster were represented with 2/3 of positive time, while only 7% of negative monitored time was allocated to this group of actors. The Provincial Government was leading among the negatively represented actors with 45% of negative time.

Table 8. Analysis of time and tone of actors within executive power

	Total time	Positive time	Neutral time	Negative time
Aleksandar Vučić President	55:54:51	91.2%	6.7%	2.1%
Ana Brnabić Prime Minister	5:30:09	84.9%	10.9%	4.2%
Nebojša Stefanović Minister of the Interior /Deputy Prime Minister	4:05:06	79.4%	9.4%	11.2%
Ivica Dačić Minister of Foreign Affairs /Deputy Prime Minister	2:36:24	79.6%	17.9%	2.5%
Office for Kosovo-Metohija	2:10:09	86.3%	9.2%	4.6%
Siniša Mali Minister of Finance	2:08:02	68.3%	13.7%	18.0%
Aleksandar Vulin Minister of Defence	1:54:46	88.4%	8.6%	2.9%
Zorana Mihajlović Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	1:37:38	79.9%	12.5%	7.5%
Aleksandar Vučić President of SNS (Serbian Progressive Party)	1:18:15	90.4%	9.2%	.4%
Ministry of the Interior	1:05:35	45.1%	49.8%	5.0%
Serbian Government	0:53:30	25.1%	58.0%	16.9%
Zlatibor Lončar Minister of Health	0:52:10	70.4%	28.4%	1.2%
Aleksandar Antić Ministry of Mining and Energy	0:50:47	78.5%	20.8%	.7%
Zoran Đorđević Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs	0:41:41	81.3%	18.1%	.6%
Mladen Šarčević Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:40:42	59.4%	32.2%	8.4%
Maja Gojković	0:37:12	85.8%	9.5%	4.7%
Goran Trivan Ministry of Environmental Protection	0:35:43	72.9%	23.6%	3.5%
Branislav Nedimović Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	0:32:50	79.8%	20.1%	.1%
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	0:23:49	50.5%	38.8%	10.8%
Rasim Ljajić Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications /Deputy Prime Minister	0:23:29	88.8%	11.1%	.1%
Ministry of Defence	0:23:08	32.7%	58.6%	8.7%
Authorities in general	0:22:08	2.1%	10.1%	87.8%
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:21:31	45.9%	54.1%	0.0%
Cabinet of the President	0:20:11	68.0%	19.8%	12.2%
Nela Kuburović Ministry of Justice	0:16:42	80.8%	16.7%	2.5%
Ministry of Culture and Information	0:16:26	34.3%	47.0%	18.8%
Ministry of Justice	0:15:18	29.5%	70.5%	0.0%
Milan Krkobabić Minister without Portfolio	0:15:15	81.6%	10.3%	8.2%
Branko Ružić Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	0:15:09	69.7%	28.3%	2.0%
Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications	0:14:13	62.7%	37.3%	0.0%
Jadranka Joksimović Minister of European Integration	0:12:48	84.1%	15.9%	0.0%
Nenad Popović Minister without Portfolio	0:11:52	89.7%	10.3%	0.0%
Ministry of Environmental Protection	0:11:47	10.2%	62.1%	27.7%
Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:11:39	57.2%	40.3%	2.4%
Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs	0:11:30	43.0%	37.7%	19.3%
Slavica Đukić Minister without Portfolio	0:10:56	68.8%	30.9%	.3%

Nebojša Stefanović SNS (Serbian Progressive Party)	0:10:24	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Ministry of Health	0:09:51	20.8%	78.8%	.3%
Ivica Dačić SPS (Socialist Party of Serbia)	0:07:29	91.8%	.4%	7.8%
Vanja Udovičić Minister of Youth and Sport	0:07:21	66.7%	27.4%	5.9%
Provincial Government	0:07:20	43.4%	10.7%	45.9%
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	0:05:51	59.7%	34.9%	5.4%
Vladan Vukosavljević Minister of Culture and Information	0:05:13	65.2%	34.8%	0.0%
Ministry of Finance	0:05:09	32.9%	64.8%	2.3%
Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	0:04:40	45.9%	54.1%	0.0%
Milan Krkobabić PUPS (Party of United Pensioners of Serbia)	0:03:48	87.7%	12.3%	0.0%
Goran Knežević Minister of Justice	0:03:45	95.6%	0.0%	4.4%
Ministry of Economy	0:03:30	66.8%	33.2%	0.0%
Ministry of Mining and Energy	0:02:41	35.4%	64.6%	0.0%
Zorana Mihajlović SNS (Serbian Progressive Party)	0:02:19	82.7%	5.0%	12.2%
Nenad Popović SNP (Serbian People's Party)	0:02:15	73.3%	26.7%	0.0%
Ministry of Youth and Sport	0:01:34	54.3%	45.7%	0.0%
Ministry of European Integration	0:01:02	40.3%	32.3%	27.4%
Rasim Ljajić Social Democratic Party	0:00:44	56.8%	43.2%	0.0%
Goran Trivan SPS (Socialist Party of Serbia)	0:00:42	61.9%	38.1%	0.0%
Goran Knežević SNS (Serbian Progressive Party)	0:00:24	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%
Aleksandar Antić SPS (Socialist Party of Serbia)	0:00:23	95.7%	4.3%	0.0%
Aleksandar Vulin Movement of Socialists	0:00:21	90.5%	9.5%	0.0%
Branislav Nedimović SNS (Serbian Progressive Party)	0:00:17	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Jadranka Joksimović SNS (Serbian Progressive Party)	0:00:13	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

In the group of actors which constitute a part of judicial or so-called fourth branch of government, the most time was given to the Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media, while the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality was most positively presented. The most negatively presented actors were prosecutors and the Judges' Association.

Table 9. Analysis of time and tone of actors within legislative and judicial power and regulatory authorities

	Total time	Positive time	Neutral time	Negative time
Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media	0:09:02	45.8%	30.4%	23.8%
Anti-Corruption Agency	0:06:05	6.0%	67.4%	26.6%
Ombudsman	0:02:23	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection	0:01:37	46.4%	53.6%	0.0%
Commissioner for the Protection of Equality	0:10:12	91.5%	8.5%	0.0%
Fiscal Council	0:08:01	21.4%	72.1%	6.4%
Courts/judges	0:00:54	5.6%	94.4%	0.0%
State Prosecutorial Council	0:03:44	18.8%	49.1%	32.1%
Prosecutors	0:04:18	33.7%	14.0%	52.3%
Judges' Association	0:01:48	0.0%	55.6%	44.4%
Prosecutors' Association	0:01:48	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Serbian Assembly	1:04:49	55.5%	42.8%	1.7%

Within the group of political parties, there were three tendencies. Firstly, the Serbian Progressive Party was the most represented party, followed by a part of opposition calling for a boycott of elections. The second tendency related to the fact that in most cases, current affairs programmes covered the leaders rather than political parties of those leaders. The third tendency was reflected in the negative presentation of the opposition that pointed out the adverse electoral conditions and called for a boycott.

Table 10. Analysis of time and tone of actors at the level of political parties

	Total time	Positive time	Neutral time	Negative time
Pro-boycott opposition	0:01:51	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Dragan Đilas	3:18:59	9.8%	1.4%	88.8%
Marko Bastać	1:19:51	7.5%	4.0%	88.5%
Boško Obradović	1:13:28	22.5%	6.1%	71.4%
Serbian Right Miša Vacić	0:17:48	30.0%	3.1%	66.9%
Alliance for Serbia	2:26:02	21.7%	14.2%	64.0%
Opposition in general	1:16:55	14.2%	25.6%	60.1%
Sergej Trifunović	0:27:48	39.9%	11.9%	48.2%
Party of Freedom and Justice	0:39:02	50.0%	11.4%	38.7%
Vuk Jeremić	0:30:53	60.5%	1.6%	37.9%
Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak (SDA Sandžaka) Sulejman Ugljanin	0:01:39	58.6%	4.0%	37.4%
Vojislav Šešelj	0:15:51	57.1%	6.7%	36.2%
Dveri (The Gates)	0:03:36	39.8%	30.6%	29.6%
Borko Stefanović	0:09:15	50.5%	25.6%	24.0%
Boris Tadić	0:05:28	76.0%	1.5%	22.5%
People's Party	0:24:05	63.4%	14.6%	22.0%
Serbian Radical Party	0:15:59	68.3%	10.3%	21.4%
Socialist Party of Serbia	0:34:29	67.7%	14.5%	17.8%
Democratic Party of Serbia/Jovanović	0:05:05	66.6%	15.7%	17.7%
Serbian Progressive Party	3:56:59	74.4%	9.0%	16.6%
Pro-election opposition	0:01:09	0.0%	85.5%	14.5%
Zoran Lutovac	0:13:25	67.7%	18.3%	14.0%
1 of 5 Million Movement	1:49:04	42.8%	44.7%	12.6%
Democratic Party	0:59:45	57.8%	32.1%	10.2%
Zoran Živković	0:18:46	83.5%	10.0%	6.5%
Serbian Patriotic Alliance (SPAS) Party Šapić	0:04:32	24.3%	71.0%	4.8%
United Democratic Party	0:06:00	61.1%	34.7%	4.2%
Together for Serbia Zelenović	0:04:04	86.5%	9.4%	4.1%
Čedomir Jovanović	0:14:45	93.8%	4.1%	2.1%
Đorđe Vukadinović	0:12:12	69.8%	28.1%	2.0%
Movement of Free Citizens	0:19:45	62.2%	37.6%	.3%
Do not Let Belgrade Drown	0:16:09	81.1%	18.9%	0.0%
Aleksandar Šapić	0:09:17	88.9%	11.1%	0.0%
Party of Modern Serbia	0:05:43	92.2%	7.8%	0.0%
Dragan Marković Palma	0:05:30	93.0%	7.0%	0.0%

New Party	0:03:40	89.5%	10.5%	0.0%
Bosniak Democratic Community Muamer Zukorlić	0:03:05	27.0%	73.0%	0.0%
Nenad Čanak	0:02:29	96.6%	3.4%	0.0%
Metla (Broom)	0:02:23	38.5%	61.5%	0.0%
Party of United Pensioners of Serbia	0:02:20	95.7%	4.3%	0.0%
Liberal Democratic Party	0:02:07	59.1%	40.9%	0.0%
Social Democratic Party of Serbia Rasim Ljajić	0:01:44	8.7%	91.3%	0.0%
Movement of Socialists	0:01:05	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Local Front	0:00:44	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina	0:00:41	57.1%	42.9%	0.0%
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians Istvan Pastor	0:00:31	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
United Serbia	0:00:27	81.5%	18.5%	0.0%

In the analysed current affairs programmes, the presentation of actors from Kosovo coincided with the relations that the authorities in Serbia have with political actors, mostly within the negotiations in Brussels.

Table 11. Analysis of time and tone of actors from Kosovo*

	Total time	Positive time	Neutral time	Negative time
Serbian List	1:15:49	82.10%	16.60%	1.30%
Kosovo officials	0:43:41	9.80%	11.90%	78.30%
Kosovo institutions	0:25:44	3.70%	5.20%	91.10%
Albin Kurti	0:24:30	8.60%	10.30%	81.20%
Hashim Thaci	0:13:22	27.00%	51.40%	21.50%
Ramush Haradinaj	0:06:19	36.10%	49.90%	14.00%
Kosovo Government	0:02:56	14.20%	1.10%	84.70%
Kosovo police	0:01:37	0.00%	72.20%	27.80%
Kadri Veseli Democratic Party of Kosovo	0:00:54	18.50%	29.60%	51.90%

The Serbian List, which was most positively presented, received the most time in the observed period. On the other hand, most negatively presented actor was Albin Kurti and the Government of Kosovo, while Hashim Thaci was presented neutrally.

Table 12. Analysis of time and tone of international actors

	Total time	Positive time	Neutral time	Negative time
Other foreign politicians	0:59:58	85.90%	14.10%	0.00%
Politicians of EU countries	0:44:16	75.00%	17.10%	7.90%
Russian politicians	0:36:30	88.40%	11.60%	0.00%
US Ambassador	0:35:18	57.30%	36.80%	5.90%
EU in general	0:27:03	44.90%	38.10%	16.90%
American politicians	0:24:32	16.80%	83.20%	0.00%
Matthew Palmer	0:21:53	47.10%	36.30%	16.60%

European Parliament	0:15:21	51.10%	46.70%	2.20%
Richard Grenell	0:14:37	44.40%	55.60%	0.00%
Sem Fabrizi, Head of the European Union Delegation to Serbia	0:13:13	53.00%	47.00%	0.00%
Angela Merkel	0:12:38	68.10%	31.90%	0.00%
Josep Borrell, EU's Foreign Affairs and Security	0:12:26	87.30%	12.70%	0.00%
Politicians from China	0:11:45	92.10%	6.50%	1.40%
Tanja Fajon	0:11:24	54.70%	18.10%	27.20%
Russian ambassador	0:10:24	84.10%	15.90%	0.00%
European Commission	0:08:41	35.70%	45.50%	18.80%
OEBS/OSCE/ODIHR	0:08:20	45.00%	55.00%	0.00%
German politicians	0:07:55	83.80%	16.20%	0.00%
Vladimir Putin	0:06:57	79.40%	20.60%	0.00%
Vladimir Bilcik	0:06:25	13.00%	87.00%	0.00%
Emmanuel Macron	0:05:42	33.90%	63.70%	2.30%
International organisations	0:05:27	80.20%	19.80%	0.00%
UN/UNESCO	0:04:11	35.70%	64.30%	0.00%
Donald Trump	0:04:03	36.10%	63.90%	0.00%
German ambassador	0:02:28	78.40%	21.60%	0.00%
Frederica Mogherini	0:02:19	28.60%	67.90%	3.60%
NATO/KFOR	0:02:02	57.40%	42.60%	0.00%
French ambassador	0:02:10	61.50%	38.50%	0.00%
Security Council	0:01:51	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
French politicians	0:01:49	89.00%	11.00%	0.00%
Johannes Hahn	0:01:32	95.70%	4.30%	0.00%
Jean Claude Juncker	0:00:40	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
European Council	0:00:24	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Council	0:00:24	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%

Table no. 12 shows that the largest number of international actors were positively presented. This is particularly true for the European Council, Johannes Hahn, politicians from France, China, Germany, the USA and Russia, but also for the ambassador of Russia to Serbia. On the other hand, the politicians from the EU, who are tied to Serbia by their work (Tanja Fajon, Matthew Palmer), stood out among negatively presented actors together with the institutions of the European Commission.

According to the data shown in the Table no. 13, in the analysed media, within social actors, the most represented were civil society organizations. Citizens took the second place followed by soldiers, local or foreign businessmen, or corporations that, incidentally, were the most negatively presented of all actors.

Table 13. Analysis of time and tone of social actors

	Total time	Positive time	Neutral time	Negative time
OECD	2:03:27	56.80%	42.50%	0.70%
Citizens	1:33:20	66.80%	33.10%	0.10%
Soldiers	0:26:09	50.90%	49.10%	0.00%
Local businessmen	0:18:41	68.50%	20.00%	11.50%
Foreign businessmen /corporations	0:14:19	44.90%	28.30%	26.80%
Serbian Orthodox Church	0:14:00	59.00%	31.90%	9.00%
Athletes	0:12:20	98.90%	1.10%	0.00%
Chambers of Commerce	0:12:07	83.50%	16.50%	0.00%
Other trade unions	0:10:07	41.80%	55.20%	3.00%
Professors	0:09:55	61.30%	38.70%	0.00%
Association of Employers	0:08:03	42.00%	58.00%	0.00%
Alliance of Independent Trade Unions	0:07:38	45.90%	54.10%	0.00%
Roman Catholic Church	0:04:32	28.70%	71.30%	0.00%
Students	0:02:26	49.30%	50.70%	0.00%
Professional associations	0:01:34	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Pupils	0:00:52	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Workers	0:00:51	76.50%	23.50%	0.00%
UGS Nezavisnost (United Branch Trade Union Independence)	0:00:38	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Pensioners	0:00:23	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Islamic community	0:00:08	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%

Thematic, rhetorical and argumentative framework of news reporting

General thematic framework of the analysed news items consisted of three theme groups: approaching elections and improvement of electoral conditions, including the situation in the media, dialogue with Kosovo i.e. developments in and about Kosovo and, eventually, political fights between the government and the opposition in Serbia.

In addition to this political set of themes, there were also: fight against corruption, money laundering and abuse of office, regional relations, citizen activism, infrastructure and economic development. The issue of European integration was marginalized, either generally or in relation to a particular Chapter. If findings are analysed in the state-society continuum, it is clear that the themes are rather the product of the state's needs (in 20-year long transition) than of the needs of the society.

Table 14. Themes in news items

Themes	Number of appearances
Elections in Serbia / negotiations/dialogue/boycott/	998
Political infotainment, ad hominem arguments, tug-of-war	916
Belgrade-Priština dialogue/Brussels Agreement/ dialogue-new format....	906
Corruption, money laundering, abuse of office	854
Regional relations	665
Citizen activism, description of actions	638
Infrastructure, construction and revitalization	617
Elections in Kosovo	524
Army, police, security	504
Media and circumstances in the media	437
Dialogue for the return to the National Assembly	394
Foreign affairs in general	368
Economic development and investments	311
Environment /environmental protection/climate changes /pollution	301
Fight against crime	296
Marking of historical events /anniversaries/	261
Party life, inter-party relationships, conflicts, discussions	254
Current affairs and politics in Kosovo	243
Foreign policy in relation to the rest of the world	240
Current affairs and politics	234
EU integration	211
Foreign policy toward Russia	206
Social issues, unemployment, pension level	202
Economy/trade/tourism/transport	196
National issue, national identity, national vulnerability	192
Foreign policy toward the EU	176
Budget, fiscal policy, loans	166
Human rights /minority rights	161
Education, science	154
Health, medicine, healthcare	153
Workers, workers' rights, raising wages, minimum wage	153
War crimes in Kosovo	141
Relations with Croatia	128
Energy, energy crisis, oil	125
Foreign policy toward the USA	118
Safety of the Serbs in Kosovo/human rights of the Serbs in Kosovo	108
Relations with Republika Srpska	103
IT development	96
Finance sector, results of the change	80
Sport	72

Inter-confessional relations	69
Agriculture	68
Abuse of exported weapons, arms export	66
Culture	64
Judicature	62
Fees and lifting fees on Serbian goods in Kosovo	61
Youth	59
Peer violence, domestic violence, mobbing and other forms of violence	58
Communal issues	57
Legal solutions, legal procedures, legal initiatives, public debates	57
Speeches at meetings, mix of topics (in relation to live broadcasts and footages of meetings and appearances of politicians)	53
Campaign for withdrawal of Kosovo's independence recognition	53
Kosovo in the Interpol	46
Promoting boycott	44
Road traffic safety	42
Physical attacks on political opponents, witch-hunt	42
Politicians, anecdotes, jokes, tales	41
Population politics, migration propensity, emigration	41
Inauguration of new buildings, opening ceremonies	39
Endeavours, successes, achievements	36
Accidents, natural catastrophes, fires,	36
Cultural heritage in Kosovo	34
EU negotiating chapters	30
Summary of more than one topic	28
Foreign policy toward Germany	22
Implementation of laws, enforcement	21
Criticizing politics of Aleksandar Vučić	21
Medals, awards, presents	20
Delineation as a solution	19
Personal stories of citizens	18
Internal political issues of Kosovo	17
Public Opinion Polls	17
Improvement of local government and administration	17
War crimes, indictments	16
Natural catastrophes	11
In memoriam	10
Foreign policy toward France	9
Criticizing circumstances in the country / pointing out that young people are emigrating	7
Illegal construction, legalization	6
Pre-election campaign	6
Strikes	4
Request of citizen activists, group of citizens, activities of civil society organisations	4

In the monitoring, we analysed the discourses used by the observed actors, namely, the discourses that were conveyed by the media.

Table 15. Discourse of appearance of the analysed actors

	N	Percent
Informative	2459	24.7%
Promotional	4336	43.6%
Advocating	387	3.9%
Propagandist	245	2.5%
Servicemen-like	188	1.9%
Analytical/critical	2155	21.7%
Tabloid	41	.4%
Dialogical	116	1.2%
Quasi-dialogical	13	0.1%
Total	9940	100.0%

This finding also supports the thesis that the Industry of Populism exists. Almost every other statement of actors has a positive i.e. promotional discourse. When added the fact that 24.7% of statements were of informative nature, we can say that the analysed current affairs programmes serve as platforms for the promotion of (government) actors. This conclusion is also supported by the finding that every fifth statement is of analytical i.e. critical nature.

When current affairs programmes are analysed, the News of TV Happy, RTS, and TV O2 were much more promotional, also followed by Pink and Prva. As opposed to the current affairs programmes broadcast by television stations with national coverage, the News of cable TV N1 were most analytical among the observed current affairs.

Table 16. Discourses of monitored actors by TV stations

	RTS	TV Pink	TV Happy	Prva TV	O2	N1	
Informative	516	336	363	406	251	587	2459
	26.1%	17.5%	27.7%	27.6%	26.1%	25.5%	
Promotional	1037	885	690	633	483	608	4336
	52.4%	46.1%	52.7%	43.0%	50.2%	26.5%	
Advocating	77	31	38	45	38	158	387
	3.9%	1.6%	2.9%	3.1%	3.9%	6.9%	
Propagandist	15	100	16	37	25	52	245
	.8%	5.2%	1.2%	2.5%	2.6%	2.3%	
Servicemen-like	3	87	3	31	7	57	188
	.2%	4.5%	.2%	2.1%	.7%	2.5%	
Analytical/critical	286	441	184	298	138	808	2155
	14.5%	23.0%	14.1%	20.2%	14.3%	35.2%	
Tabloid	1	15	2	1	6	16	41
	.1%	.8%	.2%	.1%	.6%	.7%	
Dialogical	39	24	12	17	12	12	116
	2.0%	1.3%	.9%	1.2%	1.2%	.5%	
Quasi-dialogical	5	0	1	4	3	0	13
	.3%	0.0%	.1%	.3%	.3%	0.0%	
Total	1979	1919	1309	1472	963	2298	9940

Together with the discourse, the arguments used in actors' statements were a part of the content analysis.

Table 17. Arguments

Arguments	Number per argument
Attitude of politicians	6458
Attitude of institutional representatives	942
Facts, data	647
Attitude of journalists	366
Attitude of analysts	347
Attitude of experts	300
Attitudes of citizens / stakeholder	186
Strategy/policy	144
Attitude of OCD	143
Legislation	109
Personal attitude	79
Attitude of a public figure	41
Government statistics	22
Contract	22
Researches	19
Attitude of church	12
Total	9837

In almost two thirds of the analysed statements, the actors used politicians' statements as arguments. Somewhat less than 10% of the statements were supported by the arguments of institutional representatives and thus, we can conclude that in the presentation of arguments, the News were one-sided.

When the data are segmented by News, we can conclude that the attitude of politicians was a predominant argument. Those types of arguments mostly appeared in the current affairs of TV O2. Almost three fourths of the observed statements were based on such arguments. In relation to the representation of politicians' statements as arguments, the current affairs of TV Prva took the second place, whereas TV Pink took the third place.

Table 18. Arguments used by the observed actors, by TV stations

	RTS	TV Pink	TV Happy	Prva TV	O2	N1	
Attitude of citizens / stakeholders	35	42	13	25	8	63	186
	1.8%	2.2%	1.0%	1.7%	.8%	2.8%	
Attitude of institutional representatives	244	124	162	113	73	226	942
	12.5%	6.5%	12.6%	7.7%	7.7%	9.9%	
Attitude of experts	58	68	37	32	9	96	300
	3.0%	3.6%	2.9%	2.2%	.9%	4.2%	
Government statistics	5	6	0	3	5	3	22
	.3%	.3%	0.0%	.2%	.5%	.1%	
Researches	1	0	2	4	9	3	19
	.1%	0.0%	.2%	.3%	.9%	.1%	
Legislation	26	13	14	18	2	36	109
	1.3%	.7%	1.1%	1.2%	.2%	1.6%	
Strategy/policy	32	22	43	24	12	11	144
	1.6%	1.2%	3.4%	1.6%	1.3%	.5%	
Contract	5	2	4	8	2	1	22
	.3%	.1%	.3%	.5%	.2%	.0%	
Facts, data	138	80	85	91	72	181	647
	7.0%	4.2%	6.6%	6.2%	7.6%	7.9%	
Attitude of politicians	1291	1253	837	1004	709	1364	6458
	65.9%	66.0%	65.2%	68.6%	74.8%	59.7%	
Attitude of analysts	20	127	33	45	7	115	347
	1.0%	6.7%	2.6%	3.1%	.7%	5.0%	
Attitude of a public figure	4	19	3	8	1	6	41
	.2%	1.0%	.2%	.5%	.1%	.3%	
Attitude of journalist	65	103	31	53	24	90	366
	3.3%	5.4%	2.4%	3.6%	2.5%	3.9%	
Personal attitude	9	17	3	15	3	32	79
	.5%	.9%	.2%	1.0%	.3%	1.4%	
Attitude of church	1	2	1	4	3	1	12
	.1%	.1%	.1%	.3%	.3%	.0%	
Attitude of OCD	25	21	15	17	9	56	143
	1.3%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	.9%	2.5%	
	1959	1899	1283	1464	948	2284	9837

ANALYSIS OF THE BREACH OF ARTICLE 47, PARAGRAPH 1 OF THE LAW ON ELECTRONIC MEDIA

One of the monitoring functions is to monitor the implementation of compliance with the law. For the purposes of the analysis, we designed two types of reporting and based on the level of their representation, we can highlight the indications that there was a breach of Article 47, paragraph 1:

- Positive reporting – media presentation of an actor in a news item where, through his/her speech and actions, speech and actions of another actor, visual and audio content in one news item or show, he/she receives more than 50% of positive time within the total time given to that actor during a news item or a show.
- Negative reporting - media presentation of an actor where, through speech and actions of another actor, including that of a journalist, visual and audio content, presence of hate speech, breach of presumption of innocence, presentation of untrue facts, an actor is presented with more than 50% of negative time within the total time given to that particular actor during a news item or a show.

We are of the opinion that any positive reporting on an actor exceeding 50% of the total time given to such actor during a news item or a show represents a breach of Article 47 paragraph 1 of the Law on Electronic Media².

Such manner of reporting tells us that the news item does not present the other, alternative side to the facts, views and opinions i.e. that a journalist produces a news item reducing his or her job to holding the microphone or to retelling and supporting promotions or propaganda presented by the actor.

Such manner of reporting is not sufficiently objective, true and complete when it comes to conveying information about an actor or the facts or actions of such an actor presented by others, as required from the broadcaster in Article 47 of the Law on Electronic Media.

The same holds true for negative reporting where actors, as the subjects of negative reporting, other persons, or a journalist are either not given the opportunity or are reluctant to respond by presenting counterarguments to the presented (negative/untrue) views, evaluations, opinions, insults, or false accusations about the actor who is an (in)direct participant in the news item.

According to the monitoring results of RTS News (at 19.30 h) obtained in the period 1 September – 30 November 2019, the following was established:

² https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_elektronskim_medijima.html

Table 19. Time and tone of reporting on political actors in RTS News from 1 September to 30 November 2019

	Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
	time		time		time		time	
	Sum	Sum %	Sum	Sum %	Sum	Sum %	Sum	Sum %
Aleksandar Vučić President	2:58:21	81.7	0:39:50	18.2	0:00:10	.1	3:38:20	100.0
Aleksandar Vučić President of SNS	0:03:46	97.4	0:00:06	2.6		0.0	0:03:52	100.0
Serbian Progressive Party	0:04:44	75.1	0:00:56	14.8	0:00:38	10.1	0:06:17	100.0
Socialist Party of Serbia	0:02:22	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:02:22	100.0
Dragan Marković Palma	0:00:31	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:00:31	100.0
Serbian Radical Party	0:00:41	70.7	0:00:17	29.3		0.0	0:00:58	100.0
Vojislav Šešelj	0:01:09	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:01:09	100.0
Democratic Party	0:00:37	46.3	0:00:43	53.8		0.0	0:01:20	100.0
Zoran Lutovac	0:00:54	69.2	0:00:24	30.8		0.0	0:01:18	100.0
New Party	0:00:40	97.6	0:00:01	2.4		0.0	0:00:41	100.0
Zoran Živković	0:02:03	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:02:03	100.0
People's Party	0:00:06	23.1	0:00:20	76.9		0.0	0:00:26	100.0
Boško Obradović		0.0				0.0		
Borko Stefanović	0:00:32	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:00:32	100.0
Dragan Đilas		0.0		0.0	0:00:29	100.0	0:00:29	100.0
Alliance for Serbia	0:00:17	20.7	0:00:45	54.9	0:00:20	24.4	0:01:22	100.0
Sergej Trifunović		0.0		0.0	0:01:01	100.0	0:01:01	100.0
Movement of Free Citizens	0:00:37	61.7	0:00:23	38.3		0.0	0:01:00	100.0
Čedomir Jovanović	0:00:55	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:00:55	100.0
Liberal Democratic Party	0:00:21	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:00:21	100.0
League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina	0:00:05	83.3	0:00:01	16.7		0.0	0:00:06	100.0
Do not Let Belgrade Drown		0.0	0:00:10	100.0		0.0	0:00:10	100.0
Serbian Patriotic Alliance Šapić		0.0	0:00:01	100.0		0.0	0:00:01	100.0
Opposition in general	0:01:46	32.2	0:03:17	59.9	0:00:26	7.9	0:05:29	100.0
Marko Bastać		0.0	0:00:10	100.0		0.0	0:00:10	100.0
1 of 5 Million	0:02:13	30.4	0:03:38	49.9	0:01:26	19.7	0:07:16	100.0
Boris Tadić	0:00:20	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:00:20	100.0
Democratic Party of Serbia/Jovanović		0.0	0:00:01	100.0		0.0	0:00:01	100.0
Đorđe Vukadinović	0:01:11	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:01:11	100.0
Party of Modern Serbia	0:00:06	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:00:06	100.0
Social Democratic Party of Serbia	0:00:09	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:00:09	100.0

According to the monitoring results of RTS News (at 19.30 h), in the period from 1 September to 30 November 2019, it was established that:

- In the three months of monitoring, the President of Serbia was represented with 81% of positive time within the total of 3:38:20.
- The Prime Minister, Ana Brnabić and/or Ivica Dačić, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, had an extremely positive presentation.
- In incomparably shorter period of time, positively presented (more than 50% of positive time) on RTS were the following opposition politicians: Vojislav Šešelj, Zoran Živković, Đorđe Vukadinović, Boris Tadić and Zoran Lutovac.
- Negatively presented (more than 50% of negative time) political leaders were: Dragan Đilas and Sergej Trifunović.
- Censored: opposition leaders, representatives of minority political parties, opposition MPs, Sasa Radulović.

Table 20. Time and tone of reporting on political actors in the News of TV Pink from 1 September to 30 November 2019

	Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
	time		time		time		time	
	Sum	Sum %	Sum	Sum %	Sum	Sum %	Sum	Sum %
Aleksandar Vučić President	19:59:10	98.7	0:15:01	1.2	0:00:56	.1	20:15:09	100.0
Aleksandar Vučić President of SNS	0:39:49	96.4	0:01:29	3.6		0.0	0:41:18	100.0
SNS	1:26:30	99.7	0:00:15	.3		0.0	1:26:44	100.0
SPS	0:03:17	51.4	0:00:06	1.6	0:03:00	47.0	0:06:23	100.0
PUPS	0:00:21	91.3	0:00:02	8.7		0.0	0:00:23	100.0
SRS	0:00:50	92.6	0:00:04	7.4		0.0	0:00:54	100.0
Vojislav Šešelj	0:01:11	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:01:11	100.0
DS	0:02:11	41.2	0:01:35	29.9	0:01:32	28.9	0:05:18	100.0
Zoran Lutovac		0.0		0.0	0:00:32	100.0	0:00:32	100.0
New Party		0.0	0:00:04	100.0		0.0	0:00:04	100.0
Zoran Živković		0.0		0.0	0:01:13	100.0	0:01:13	100.0
People's Party		0.0		0.0	0:00:06	100.0	0:00:06	100.0
Vuk Jeremić		0.0		0.0	0:07:16	100.0	0:07:16	100.0
Dveri		0.0		0.0	0:00:12	100.0	0:00:12	100.0
Boško Obradović	0:00:28	1.7	0:00:24	1.4	0:26:45	96.9	0:27:36	100.0
Borko Stefanović	0:00:34	44.7		0.0	0:00:42	55.3	0:01:16	100.0
Dragan Đilas	0:00:30	.4		0.0	2:14:04	99.6	2:14:34	100.0
Party of Freedom and Justice	0:00:15	10.9		0.0	0:02:03	89.1	0:02:18	100.0
Alliance for Serbia	0:00:05	.1	0:00:06	.2	1:04:38	99.7	1:04:48	100.0
Sergej Trifunović	0:01:22	18.2	0:00:28	6.2	0:05:40	75.6	0:07:30	100.0
Movement of Free Citizens	0:00:26	78.8	0:00:04	12.1	0:00:03	9.1	0:00:33	100.0
Čedomir Jovanović	0:01:40	81.3	0:00:04	3.3	0:00:19	15.4	0:02:03	100.0
Nenad Čanak	0:01:50	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:01:50	100.0
LSV	0:00:19	100.0		0.0		0.0	0:00:19	100.0
SDA of Sandžak Sulejman Ugljanin		0.0	0:00:04	11.8	0:00:30	88.2	0:00:34	100.0
Aleksandar Šapić	0:00:27	47.4	0:00:30	52.6		0.0	0:00:57	100.0
SPAS Party Šapić		0.0	0:00:20	100.0		0.0	0:00:20	100.0
Opposition in general	0:00:16	1.3	0:00:35	2.7	0:20:27	96.0	0:21:18	100.0
Marko Bastać	0:01:08	2.2		0.0	0:51:05	97.8	0:52:13	100.0
1 of 5 Million	0:01:06	21.6		0.0	0:03:58	78.4	0:05:05	100.0
Boris Tadić		0.0	0:00:03	4.6	0:01:02	95.4	0:01:05	100.0
Serbian Right Miša Vacić	0:00:03	23.1		0.0	0:00:10	76.9	0:00:13	100.0
Together for Serbia		0.0		0.0	0:00:10	100.0	0:00:10	100.0
DSS/Jovanović	0:00:21	91.3	0:00:02	8.7		0.0	0:00:23	100.0

Populism

Our analysis of the News aired by TV Pink in the same period of time produced the following findings:

- In three months, within 20:15:09, the President of Serbia was represented in the primetime News of TV Pink with 98.1% of positive time
- Positively presented (more than 50% of positive time) were: Vojislav Šešelj, Nenad Čanak, Čedomir Jovanović, Miloš Jovanović...
- Negatively presented were: Zoran Lutovac, Zoran Živković, Vuk Jeremić, Dragan Đilas, Boris Tadić, Boško Obradović...
- Censored: political leaders of the opposition and MPs: Saša Radulović, Đorđe Vukadinović, representatives of minority parties.

Based on the above findings, we can conclude that there are indications that in the period from 1 September to 30 November 2019, Article 47 paragraph 1 of the Law on Electronic Media was breached by the two most influential media service providers, thus depriving citizens /viewers of objective, true, timely and just, fair and impartial and balanced reporting on political actors.

Our recommendation is that the Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media (REM), within its competence, ensures legality in accordance with the Law on Electronic Media, namely, ensures that Radio Television of Serbia and TV Pink comply with Article 47 paragraph 1 and, when reporting on all relevant political actors, strike the time and tone balance in their central newscasts.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF YEARS 2017 AND 2019

In the introductory part, we mentioned that this is the second non-election monitoring of media reporting. When positive seconds are observed, it can be noticed that their number almost doubled in the case of Aleksandar Vučić, whereas when it comes to Prime Minister Brnabić, this number was slightly lower. These figures were also reduced for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ivica Dačić, Zoran Lutovac, Vuk Jeremić, Čedomir Jovanović, Nenad Čanak etc.

Table 21. Number of positive seconds

	12 August 2017 to 14 November 2017	1 September – 30 November 2019
Aleksandar Vučić	62427	109542
Ana Brnabić	14734	10146
Ivica Dačić	6184	5058
Vojislav Šešelj	41	340
Dragan Šutanovac/Zoran Lutovac	649	385
Zoran Živković	2	568
Vuk Jeremić	277	165
Boško Obradović	707	445
Dragan Đilas	176	686
Saša Janković/Sergej Trifunović	868	434
Čedomir Jovanović	791	543
Nenad Čanak	373	120
Boris Tadić	110	163
Saša Radulović	220	0

The analysis of data presented in the Table no. 19 speaks of the fact that with the exception of the former President of Serbia, the percent of positive time given to other actors slightly/considerably decreased.

Populism

Table 22. Percent of positive time

	12 August 2017 to 14 November 2017	1 September – 30 November 2019
Aleksandar Vučić	92.3	91.1
Ana Brnabić	85.3	84.3
Ivica Dačić	80.3	79.8
Vojislav Šešelj	63.8	54.1
Dragan Šutanovac/Zoran Lutovac	83.8	70.8
Zoran Živković	53	76.2
Vuk Jeremić	43.2	26.0
Boško Obradović	38.1	18.0
Dragan Đilas	14.1	6.9
Saša Janković/Sergej Trifunović	31.6	35.8
Čedomir Jovanović	88.1	90.8
Nenad Čanak	81.8	96.0
Boris Tadić	23.5	67.4
Saša Radulović	50.9	0

According to the findings presented in the Table no. 20, the number of negative seconds went up for Dragan Đilas, Boško Obradović, Boris Tadić and Vuk Jeremić.

Table 23. Number of negative seconds

	12 August 2017 to 14 November 2017	1 September – 30 November 2019
Aleksandar Vučić	632	2065
Ana Brnabić	53	310
Ivica Dačić	61	118
Vojislav Šešelj	2	227
Dragan Šutanovac/Zoran Lutovac	81	45
Zoran Živković	108	73
Vuk Jeremić	278	468
Boško Obradović	1019	1861
Dragan Đilas	1050	9169
Saša Janković/Sergej Trifunović	1664	581
Čedomir Jovanović	46	19
Nenad Čanak	77	0
Boris Tadić	47	74
Saša Radulović	184	0

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Apart from the increase in absolute amounts, negative time also went up relative to the percentages of seconds given to Dragan Đilas, Boško Obradović, Boris Tadić, and Vuk Jeremić.

Table 24. Percent of negative time

	12 August 2017 - 14 November 2017	1 September – 30 November 2019
Aleksandar Vučić	0.9	1.7
Ana Brnabić	0.3	2.6
Ivica Dačić	0.8	1.9
Vojislav Šešelj	0.9	36.1
Dragan Šutanovac/Zoran Lutovac	10.5	8.3
Zoran Živković	28.4	9.8
Vuk Jeremić	43.4	73.7
Boško Obradović	54.8	75.2
Dragan Đilas	84	91.9
Saša Janković/Sergej Trifunović	60.6	47.9
Čedomir Jovanović	5.1	3.2
Nenad Čanak	16.9	0.0
Boris Tadić	10	30.6
Saša Radulović	42.6	0

PRE-ELECTION MONITORING (1 FEBRUARY TO 14 MARCH 2020)

After non-election monitoring, the Bureau of Social Research embarked on the pre-election monitoring which included the same sample of current affairs programmes and actors of the elections planned for 26 April 2020. However, the state of emergency over the COVID-19 epidemic was declared and electoral activities ceased, while we were forced to change the subject of our analysis of 15 March and focus on the issue of COVID-19, with almost the same actors.

In the period preceding the outbreak of Covid-19, the reporting in the media was marked with the drop in positive time that spilled over to neutral i.e. the lack of negative time. Compared to the period until 31 January 2020, the average positive time dropped from 66.8% to 49%.

Table 25. Summary of the tone of reporting in the current affairs programmes

Total							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
17:54:33	49.0	16:30:56	45.2	2:07:04	5.8	36:32:33	100.0

When observed by TV News, the most positive reporting could be seen on TV Pink, whereas the News of TV N1 had the least positive reporting.

Table 26. Summary of the tone of reporting in the current affairs programmes by television stations

RTS							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
2:01:32	46.7	2:17:10	52.7	0:01:34	.6	4:20:17	100.0
TV Pink							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
5:43:59	63.5	2:50:13	31.4	0:27:21	5.1	9:01:34	100.0
TV Happy							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
2:52:51	48.0	3:04:46	51.3	0:02:14	.6	5:59:52	100.0
Prva TV							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
2:14:58	43.0	2:49:07	53.8	0:10:02	3.2	5:14:08	100.0
B92							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
1:43:46	52.2	1:30:37	45.6	0:04:19	2.2	3:18:42	100.0
N1							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
3:17:26	38.1	3:58:59	46.1	1:21:35	15.7	8:38:00	100.0

Populism

Radio Television of Serbia (RTS)

In the observed period, the most represented actor on RTS was the Serbian President, Aleksandar Vučić, but this time with (considerably) reduced percent of positive time, which spilled over to neutral time. It is worth noting that the Ministers of the Serbian Government were the actors that were more present than their Ministries. Among public officials, Aleksandar Vučić and Ivica Dačić were featured as party leaders.

As a President of the Serbian Progressive Party, Aleksandar Vučić had a modest but extremely positive presentation. Ivica Dačić had similar presentation, namely, low and positive.

Table 27. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) in RTS

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Republic	1:21:08	64.4	34.4	1.2
Ana Brnabić Prime Minister	0:24:37	59.6	40.4	0.0
Ivica Dačić Minister of Foreign Affairs /Deputy Prime Minister	0:11:01	43.1	56.9	0.0
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Serbian Progressive Party	0:07:47	98.7	1.3	0.0
Zlatibor Lončar Minister of Health	0:07:35	19.1	80.9	0.0
Ministry of Health	0:07:26	0.0	100.0	0.0
Serbian Government	0:06:57	0.0	100.0	0.0
Siniša Mali Minister of Finance	0:03:59	41.8	58.2	0.0
Maja Gojković	0:03:59	60.3	39.7	0.0
Nebojša Stefanović Minister of the Interior /Deputy Prime Minister	0:03:31	64.9	35.1	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin Minister of Defence	0:03:22	23.8	76.2	0.0
Ivica Dačić Socialist Party of Serbia	0:03:15	71.3	28.7	0.0
Zorana Mihajlović Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:02:47	59.3	40.7	0.0
Zoran Đorđević Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs	0:02:22	30.3	69.7	0.0
Office for Kosovo and Metohija	0:02:14	83.6	16.4	0.0
Rasim Ljajić Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications /Deputy Prime Minister	0:02:08	73.4	26.6	0.0
Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications	0:01:31	0.0	100.0	0.0
Mladen Šarčević Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:01:28	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:01:28	0.0	88.6	11.4
Provincial Government	0:01:26	0.0	100.0	0.0
Aleksandar Antić Minister of Mining and Energy	0:01:17	18.2	81.8	0.0
Ministry of Environmental Protection	0:01:08	100.0	0.0	0.0
Cabinet of the Republic President	0:00:54	0.0	100.0	0.0
Goran Trivan Minister of Environmental protection	0:00:54	100.0	0.0	0.0
Branko Ružić Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	0:00:54	100.0	0.0	0.0
Vladan Vukosavljević Minister of Culture and Information	0:00:50	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs	0:00:48	0.0	100.0	0.0
Slavica Đukić Minister without Portfolio	0:00:46	0.0	100.0	0.0
Branislav Nedimović Serbian Progressive Party	0:00:35	100.0	0.0	0.0

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Ministry of Justice	0:00:34	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Economy	0:00:33	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:00:31	0.0	83.9	16.1
Ministry of Defence	0:00:28	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	0:00:20	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	0:00:12	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of the Interior	0:00:06	0.0	100.0	0.0
Jadranka Joksimović Minister of European Integration	0:00:04	0.0	100.0	0.0
Branislav Nedimović Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	0:00:02	0.0	100.0	0.0

Among the political parties, the Serbian Progressive Party was given the most, mostly neutral time in the RTS News. The Socialist Party of Serbia took the second place with twice less time. When it came to the electoral lists of candidates, before the state of emergency was declared, the most time was given to the list "Aleksandar Vučić - for our children". This list was positively presented for almost two thirds of the time.

Opposition parties and leaders, whether calling for a boycott or for the elections, were respectively present for about a minute or less, whereas the other actors were positively or neutrally represented, except for Bosko Obradovic, whose presentation time was 45% negative.

Table 28. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) in RTS

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	0:07:22	20.4	79.6	0
Socialist Party of Serbia	0:03:12	21.9	78.1	0
Aleksandar Vučić - For our Children	0:04:06	59.3	40.7	0
Democratic Party	0:01:59	96.6	3.4	0
Serbian Radical Party	0:01:54	29.8	70.2	0
Ivica Dačić – Socialist Party of Serbia, United Serbia Dragan Marković Palma	0:01:46	34.9	65.1	0
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians Ištvan Paštor	0:01:31	39.6	60.4	0
Party of Modern Serbia	0:01:16	50	50	0
Alliance for Serbia	0:01:01	29	71	0
Zoran Živković	0:00:54	59.3	40.7	0
1 of 5 Million	0:00:50	100	0	0
New Party	0:00:49	0	100	0
People's Party	0:00:48	100	0	0
Boško Obradović	0:00:48	54.2	0	45.8
Vojislav Šešelj	0:00:46	52.2	47.8	0
United Democratic Party	0:00:43	0	100	0
Bosniak Democratic Community Muamer Zukorlić	0:00:31	0	100	0
Opposition in general	0:00:30	93.3	6.7	0

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Dragan Marković Palma	0:00:22	90.9	9.1	0
Zoran Lutovac	0:00:22	100	0	0
For the Restoration of the Kingdom of Serbia	0:00:22	54.5	45.5	0
Liberal Democratic Party	0:00:19	0	100	0
Đorđe Vukadinović	0:00:16	0	100	0
Movement of Free Citizens	0:00:10	0	100	0
United Serbia	0:00:08	0	100	0
Enough is Enough	0:00:06	0	100	0
Milica Đurđević Stamenkovski Serbian Party Oathkeepers	0:00:03	0	100	0
Serbian Patriotic Alliance	0:00:02	0	100	0

Populism

TV PINK

The reporting on TV Pink was marked by a predominant role of the President of Serbia and of the Serbian Progressive Party whose presence, in the observed period, accounted for more than six hours. However, this time he was given one third less positive time. Other actors coming from the public sector had a minor presentation that was either positive or neutral.

Aleksandar Vucic, Branisav Nedimovic and Ivica Dačić were also presented as party leaders.

Table 29. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) in TV Pink

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Republic	6:01:04	69.2	30.6	.1
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Serbian Progressive Party	0:08:53	88.9	11.1	0.0
Nebojša Stefanović Minister of the Interior /Deputy Prime Minister	0:08:33	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ivica Dačić Minister of Foreign Affairs /Deputy Prime Minister	0:07:50	49.1	50.9	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin Minister of Defence	0:07:27	86.1	11.2	2.7
Ana Brnabić Prime Minister	0:06:37	59.4	40.6	0.0
Office for Kosovo and Metohija	0:04:53	85.0	15.0	0.0
Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:03:22	0.0	92.6	7.4
Serbian Government	0:03:06	0.0	100.0	0.0
Rasim Ljajić Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications	0:03:02	44.0	56.0	0.0
Siniša Mali Minister of Finance	0:02:48	98.8	1.2	0.0
Zlatibor Lončar Minister of Health	0:02:45	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Health	0:02:26	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of the Interior	0:02:08	91.4	8.6	0.0
Milan Krkobabić Minister without Portfolio	0:01:56	100.0	0.0	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin Movement of Socialists	0:01:53	44.2	55.8	0.0
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	0:01:24	0.0	100.0	0.0
Aleksandar Antić Minister of Mining and Energy	0:01:01	67.2	32.8	0.0
Ministry of Defence	0:00:49	69.4	30.6	0.0
Branislav Nedimović Serbian Progressive Party	0:00:48	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ministry of Environmental Protection	0:00:34	0.0	100.0	0.0
Provincial Government	0:00:32	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	0:00:26	0.0	100.0	0.0
Mladen Šarčević Minister of Education, Science and Tech. Development	0:00:25	0.0	100.0	0.0
Nela Kuburović Minister of Justice	0:00:24	100.0	0.0	0.0
Maja Gojković	0:00:24	0.0	100.0	0.0
Rasim Ljajić Social Democratic Party of Serbia	0:00:19	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ivica Dačić Socialist Party of Serbia	0:00:13	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:00:10	0.0	100.0	0.0
Branislav Nedimović Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Managem.	0:00:02	0.0	100.0	0.0
Branko Ružić Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	0:00:02	0.0	100.0	0.0

Populism

With its reporting, TV Pink divided the election actors into those in favour of the boycott, who had negative and considerable presentation (Obradovic, Djilas, Sergej Trifunovic, the Party of Freedom and Justice, Vuk Jeremic ...) and those in favour of the elections, who had minor but positive or neutral presentation and were led by the Serbian Progressive Party.

Table 30. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) in TV Pink

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	0:14:10	86.6	13.4	0
Boško Obradović	0:05:32	7.2	2.1	90.7
Dragan Đilas	0:04:47	0	0	100
Sergej Trifunović	0:03:06	0	12.9	87.1
They, those, Opposition mentioned in third-person plural	0:02:29	0	0	100
Party of Freedom and Justice	0:02:11	0	0	100
Alliance for Serbia	0:01:57	0	0	100
Democratic Party	0:01:54	70.2	0	29.8
Zoran Živković	0:01:39	79.8	20.2	0
Aleksandar Vučić - For our Children	0:01:37	49.5	50.5	0
Party of Modern Serbia	0:01:16	94.7	5.3	0
Serbia 21	0:01:02	67.7	32.3	0
Metla (Broom)	0:00:56	100	0	0
Pro-boycott opposition	0:00:55	0	0	100
Opposition in general	0:00:50	0	0	100
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians Ištvan Paštor	0:00:45	48.9	51.1	0
Đorđe Vukadinović	0:00:42	100	0	0
People's Party	0:00:41	0	0	100
Together for Serbia Zelenović	0:00:39	0	0	100
Serbian Radical Party	0:00:26	100	0	0
New Party	0:00:24	0	100	0
United Democratic Party	0:00:23	0	100	0
Vojislav Šešelj	0:00:19	0	100	0
Movement of Socialists	0:00:17	100	0	0
Vuk Jeremić	0:00:15	0	0	100
Ivica Dačić - SPS JS Dragan Marković Palma	0:00:14	0	100	0
Dragan Marković Palma	0:00:12	0	100	0
Borko Stefanović	0:00:10	0	0	100
Čedomir Jovanović	0:00:04	0	100	0
Nenad Čanak	0:00:04	0	100	0
Serbian Patriotic Alliance	0:00:04	0	100	0
Socialist Party of Serbia	0:00:04	0	100	0

Populism

TV HAPPY

In the observed period, Aleksandar Vučić was the most present actor in the current affairs programme of TV Happy, however, with significantly less positive time.

Other actors, except for the Minister of Education, Mladen Šarčević, were presented positively and/or neutrally. Among the public officials, the following appeared as party officials in the current affairs programme of this television: Aleksandar Vučić, Ivica Dačić, Aleksandar Vulin, Milan Krkobabic, Aleksandar Antic and Rasim Ljajić.

Table 31. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) in TV Happy

	Total time	% of positive time	% of neutral time	% of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Republic	1:25:55	52.3	47.7	0.0
Ivica Dačić Minister of Foreign Affairs /Deputy Prime Minister	0:26:49	38.0	62.0	0.0
Zlatibor Lončar Minister of Health	0:23:14	28.0	72.0	0.0
Ana Brnabić Prime Minister	0:14:54	36.4	63.6	0.0
Nebojša Stefanović Minister of the Interior /Deputy Prime Minister	0:12:04	95.2	4.8	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin Minister of Defence	0:11:46	81.3	18.7	0.0
Ivica Dačić Socialist Party of Serbia	0:08:46	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ministry of the Interior	0:07:49	58.0	42.0	0.0
Ministry of Health	0:07:39	.9	99.1	0.0
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Serbian Progressive Party	0:07:32	76.3	23.7	0.0
Siniša Mali Minister of Finance	0:06:37	66.0	34.0	0.0
Aleksandar Antić Minister of Mining and Energy	0:06:10	69.7	30.3	0.0
Zorana Mihajlović Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:05:42	100.0	0.0	0.0
Maja Gojković	0:05:36	71.4	28.6	0.0
Mladen Šarčević Minister of Education, Science and Tech. Development	0:04:49	0.0	69.6	30.4
Office for Kosovo and Metohija	0:04:21	65.5	34.5	0.0
Serbian Government	0:02:42	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	0:02:40	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:02:34	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Defence	0:02:13	0.0	100.0	0.0
Slavica Đukić Minister without Portfolio	0:02:04	0.0	100.0	0.0
Aleksandar Antić Socialist Party of Serbia	0:01:56	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:01:49	0.0	100.0	0.0
Rasim Ljajić Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications	0:01:47	8.4	91.6	0.0
Provincial Government	0:01:31	65.9	34.1	0.0
Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	0:01:10	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	0:00:38	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs	0:00:30	0.0	100.0	0.0
Cabinet of the Republic President	0:00:28	0.0	100.0	0.0
Rasim Ljajić Social Democratic Party	0:00:24	83.3	16.7	0.0
Branislav Nedimović Serbian Progressive Party	0:00:15	100.0	0.0	0.0

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Ministry of Environmental Protection	0:00:04	0.0	100.0	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin Movement of Socialists	0:00:04	0.0	100.0	0.0
Milan Krkobabić Party of United Pensioners of Serbia	0:00:04	0.0	100.0	0.0
Nenad Popović Serbian People's Party	0:00:04	0.0	100.0	0.0

In terms of representation and tone of reporting on parties, leaders and lists of candidates, TV Happy diverged in several segments. In addition to the most represented Serbian Progressive Party, Dragan Markovic Palma and the movement Serbia 21 took the second place.

On the other hand, most of the pro-boycott parties were censored or neutrally or negatively presented when, in addition to being called by a common name, they were the opposition.

Table 32. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) on TV Happy

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	0:06:42	69.9	30.1	0
Dragan Marković Palma	0:04:32	100	0	0
Serbia 21	0:03:42	68.5	31.5	0
Socialist Party of Serbia	0:03:01	0	100	0
Together for Serbia Zelenović	0:03:00	16.7	83.3	0
Party of Democratic Action of Sandzak Sulejman Ugljanin	0:02:42	100	0	0
Aleksandar Šapić	0:01:54	71.1	28.9	0
United Serbia	0:01:50	0	100	0
Dveri (the Gates)	0:01:36	0	100	0
Čedomir Jovanović	0:01:24	100	0	0
For the Restoration of the Kingdom of Serbia	0:01:24	28.6	71.4	0
Democratic Party of Serbia/Jovanović	0:01:22	73.2	26.8	0
United Democratic Serbia	0:01:09	100	0	0
Serbian Patriotic Alliance	0:00:59	0	100	0
Bosniak Democratic Community Muamer Zukorlić	0:00:56	100	0	0
Movement of Free Citizens	0:00:52	100	0	0
Zoran Lutovac	0:00:50	100	0	0
Aleksandar Vučić - For our Children	0:00:48	100	0	0
Serbian Radical Party	0:00:46	100	0	0
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians Ištvan Paštor	0:00:45	91.1	8.9	0
United Democratic Party	0:00:43	30.2	69.8	0
Alliance for Serbia	0:00:36	0	100	0
Democratic Party	0:00:35	71.4	28.6	0
Ivica Dačić Socialist Party of Serbia, United Serbia Dragan Marković Palma	0:00:35	31.4	68.6	0
Movement of the Free Serbia	0:00:34	0	100	0
Opposition in general	0:00:30	0	0	100
Zoran Živković	0:00:24	100	0	0

Populism

They, those, the opposition mentioned in third-person plural	0:00:16	0	0	100
1 of 5 Million	0:00:12	0	100	0
Sergej Trifunović	0:00:08	0	100	0
Boško Obradović	0:00:04	0	100	0
Boris Tadić	0:00:04	0	100	0
Đorđe Vukadinović	0:00:04	0	100	0
Party of Modern Serbia	0:00:04	0	100	0
Nenad Čanak	0:00:02	0	100	0
Metla (Broom)	0:00:02	0	100	0
Milica Đurđević Stamenkovski Serbian Party Oathkeepers	0:00:02	0	100	0

Populism

TV PRVA

The current affairs programme of TV Prva used the same model of editorial policy regarding the issue of positive reporting on the (executive) government.

Aleksandar Vučić was the most dominant actor with more than 50% of positive time. The Ministers Zorana Mihajlović and Mladen Šarčević were most negatively presented ministers of the Serbian Government. During the monitoring of the current affairs programme of TV Prva, Aleksandar Vučić, Ivica Dačić and Nebojša Stefanović were featured in the role of party leaders.

Table 33. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) on TV Prva

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Republic of Serbia	1:26:53	52.1	47.2	0.7
Ana Brnabić Prime Minister	0:24:55	75.7	24.3	0.0
Ivica Dačić Minister of Foreign Affairs /Deputy Prime Minister	0:10:48	15.3	84.7	0.0
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Serbian Progressive Party	0:08:33	70.0	30.0	0.0
Cabinet of the Republic President	0:08:03	72.5	27.5	0.0
Nebojša Stefanović Minister of the Interior /Deputy Prime Minister	0:07:52	89.4	10.6	0.0
Serbian Government	0:05:12	.6	99.4	0.0
Ministry of Health	0:04:45	0.0	100.0	0.0
Mladen Šarčević Minister of Education, Science and Tech. Development	0:04:26	0.0	92.9	7.1
Ministry of the Interior	0:04:07	87.4	12.6	0.0
Ministry of Finance	0:04:00	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ivica Dačić Socialist Party of Serbia	0:03:37	100.0	0.0	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin Minister of Defence	0:03:20	81.0	19.0	0.0
Rasim Ljajić Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications	0:03:10	71.1	28.9	0.0
Provincial Government	0:02:52	0.0	100.0	0.0
Office for Kosovo and Metohija	0:02:51	81.3	18.7	0.0
Zlatibor Lončar Minister of Health	0:02:42	0.0	100.0	0.0
Siniša Mali Minister of Finance	0:02:32	32.9	67.1	0.0
Aleksandar Antić Minister of Mining and Energy	0:01:41	27.7	72.3	0.0
Branislav Nedimović Serbian Progressive Party	0:01:17	100.0	0.0	0.0
Zorana Mihajlović Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:01:10	100.0	0.0	0.0
Maja Gojković	0:00:59	39.0	61.0	0.0
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	0:00:58	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:00:54	0.0	100.0	0.0
Goran Trivan Minister of Environmental Protection	0:00:52	0.0	100.0	0.0
Vanja Udovičić Minister of Youth and Sports	0:00:46	0.0	100.0	0.0
Slavica Đukić Minister without Portfolio	0:00:36	0.0	100.0	0.0
Zorana Mihajlović Serbian Progressive Party	0:00:34	0.0	0.0	100.0
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:00:34	0.0	100.0	0.0

Populism

Government in general	0:00:16	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Defence	0:00:12	0.0	100.0	0.0
Nebojša Stefanović Serbian Progressive Party	0:00:09	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ministry of Culture and Information	0:00:08	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Justice	0:00:06	0.0	100.0	0.0
Zoran Đorđević Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs	0:00:04	0.0	100.0	0.0
Branislav Nedimović Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	0:00:02	0.0	100.0	0.0

The Serbian Progressive Party was predominantly represented actor in the News of TV Prva, but only with one third of positive and no negative time. The Democratic Party was the second party in terms of representation with more than a half of positive time. Other opposition parties that were in favour of boycott were given little negative or neutral time. The opposition parties that went to the polls were in most cases positively and neutrally presented.

Table 34. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) on TV Prva

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	0:18:11	36.3	60.6	3.1
Democratic Party of Serbia	0:09:38	55.7	44.3	0
Socialist Party of Serbia	0:02:06	23.8	76.2	0
Party of Freedom and Justice	0:02:09	0	0	100
Alliance for Serbia	0:02:03	0	59.3	40.7
Aleksandar Vučić - For our Children	0:01:59	16	84	0
For the Restoration of the Kingdom of Serbia	0:01:56	31.9	68.1	0
Opposition in general	0:01:47	0	51.4	48.6
Serbian Radical Party	0:01:42	33.3	66.7	0
Dragan Đilas	0:01:20	0	2.5	97.5
Metla (Broom)	0:01:12	16.7	83.3	0
Together for Serbia Zelenović	0:00:59	20.3	79.7	0
1 of 5 Million	0:00:52	0	100	0
Serbia 21	0:00:50	64	36	0
Social Democratic Party Rasim Ljajić	0:00:49	0	100	0
People's Party	0:00:45	20	80	0
Ivica Dačić - SPS JS Dragan Marković Palma	0:00:43	0	100	0
Vuk Jeremić	0:00:42	0	0	100
Boško Obradović	0:00:40	20	0	80
Nenad Čanak	0:00:40	100	0	0
Democratic Party of Serbia	0:00:38	100	0	0
Vojislav Šešelj	0:00:36	94.4	5.6	0
Communists	0:00:34	64.7	35.3	0
Milica Đurđević Stamenkovski Serbian Party Oathkeepers	0:00:33	45.5	54.5	0
Serbian Patriotic Alliance	0:00:32	0	100	0

Populism

Bosniak Democratic Community Muamer Zukorlić	0:00:24	70.8	29.2	0
Zoran Živković	0:00:23	65.2	34.8	0
United Democratic Serbia	0:00:21	0	100	0
Movement of Free Citizens	0:00:18	0	100	0
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians Ištvan Paštor	0:00:17	0	100	0
United Serbia	0:00:14	71.4	28.6	0
New Party	0:00:11	0	100	0
Party of Modern Serbia	0:00:09	0	100	0
Party of United Pensioners of Serbia	0:00:07	0	100	0
Enough is Enough Saša Radulović	0:00:07	0	100	0
Aleksandar Šapić	0:00:04	0	100	0
Movement of Socialists	0:00:02	0	100	0
Zoran Lutovac	0:00:02	0	100	0
Sergej Trifunović	0:00:02	0	0	100
Liberal Democratic Party	0:00:02	0	100	0
Serbian Right Miša Vacić	0:00:02	0	100	0
Leviathan	0:00:02	0	100	0

Populism

TV B92

With its reporting, TV B92 included itself in the group of monitored television stations that applied the same model of editorial policy when it came to the reporting on the government in the current affairs programme. Aleksandar Vučić was the dominant actor, positively presented in the central news of B92, while the other actors were presented in considerably less positive or neutral manner, with no negative time.

Public officials Branislav Nedimović and Aleksandar Vulin were presented as the officials of their own parties.

Table 35. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) onTV B92

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Republic of Serbia	1:37:23	60.8	36.7	2.5
Ana Brnabić Prime Minister	0:12:51	43.3	56.7	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin Minister of Defence	0:10:16	82.3	17.7	0.0
Office for Kosovo and Metohija	0:07:46	81.8	18.2	0.0
Nebojša Stefanović Minister of the Interior/Deputy Prime Minister	0:05:47	93.4	6.6	0.0
Siniša Mali Minister of Finance	0:05:47	64.8	35.2	0.0
Maja Gojković	0:04:54	40.1	59.9	0.0
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	0:04:38	0.0	100.0	0.0
Zlatibor Lončar Minister of Health	0:04:02	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Health	0:03:26	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Defence	0:02:47	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of the Interior	0:02:39	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Culture and Information	0:02:36	0.0	100.0	0.0
Serbian Government	0:02:25	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ivica Dačić Minister of Foreign Affairs /Deputy Prime Minister	0:01:59	0.0	100.0	0.0
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Serbian Progressive Party	0:01:34	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ivica Dačić Socialist Party of Serbia	0:01:14	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:00:58	0.0	100.0	0.0
Rasim Ljajić Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications	0:00:54	0.0	100.0	0.0
Goran Trivan Minister of Environmental Protection	0:00:48	0.0	100.0	0.0
Aleksandar Vulin Movement of Socialists	0:00:44	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications	0:00:35	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	0:00:35	65.7	34.3	0.0
Branislav Nedimović Serbian Progressive Party	0:00:33	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:00:30	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Justice	0:00:29	0.0	100.0	0.0
Slavica Đukić Minister without Portfolio	0:00:18	0.0	100.0	0.0
Cabinet of the Republic President	0:00:14	0.0	100.0	0.0
Branislav Nedimović Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water	0:00:04	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Environmental Protection	0:00:02	0.0	100.0	0.0

Populism

In the News of B92, both through the presentation of the Serbian Progressive Party and through the electoral list "Aleksandar Vučić - for our children", the ruling party was a dominant actor among other political parties. The current affairs programme of B92 also presented actors by dividing them into those presented negatively (Boško Obradović and Dragan Đilas) and favouring election boycott, and those favouring elections, who were presented positively (Čedomir Jovanović and Democratic Party of Serbia) or neutrally.

Table 36. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) on TV B92

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	0:03:33	79.3	20.7	0
Aleksandar Vučić - For our Children	0:03:55	0	100	0
Boško Obradović	0:01:58	0	4.2	95.8
Democratic Party of Serbia	0:01:38	98	2	0
Čedomir Jovanović	0:00:58	96.6	3.4	0
Ivica Dačić - SPS JS Dragan Marković Palma	0:00:22	0	100	0
United Democratic Party	0:00:17	0	100	0
For the Restoration of the Kingdom of Serbia	0:00:13	0	100	0
Socialist Party of Serbia	0:00:08	0	100	0
United Serbia	0:00:04	0	100	0
Serbian Radical Party	0:00:04	0	100	0
Dragan Đilas	0:00:02	0	0	100
Nenad Čanak	0:00:02	0	100	0
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians Ištvan Paštor	0:00:02	0	100	0
Aleksandar Šapić	0:00:02	0	100	0
Serbian Patriotic Alliance	0:00:02	0	100	0
Opposition in general	0:00:02	0	100	0
Movement of Socialists	0:00:01	0	100	0
Social Democratic Party of Serbia Rasim Ljajić	0:00:01	0	100	0

Populism

TV N1

Aleksandar Vučić was also the central actor in the News of N1. However, as opposed to the other monitored current affairs, in the News of N1 Aleksandar Vučić was negatively presented for one fourth of the time. Among the negatively presented public officials were: the Minister of Defence, Aleksandar Vulin, and the Minister of Environmental Protection, Goran Trivan.

The following were presented in the current affairs programmes as party leaders: Aleksandar Vučić, Ivica Dačić, Branislav Nedimović and Aleksandar Antić (negatively) and Nenad Popović (neutrally).

Table 37. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) on TV N1

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Republic of Serbia	1:47:49	47.6	24.0	28.3
Zlatibor Lončar Minister of Health	0:22:40	9.5	87.6	2.9
Ana Brnabić Prime Minister	0:18:48	41.7	47.3	11.1
Aleksandar Vulin Minister of Defence	0:15:40	37.9	9.8	52.3
Ministry of the Interior	0:12:36	0.0	36.5	63.5
Ivica Dačić Minister of Foreign Affairs /Deputy Prime Minister	0:11:32	32.7	63.9	3.5
Serbian Government	0:08:09	0.0	90.8	9.2
Ministry of Health	0:06:50	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:05:59	0.0	98.9	1.1
Government in general	0:05:49	0.0	18.3	81.7
Zorana Mihajlović Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:05:46	29.7	61.1	9.2
Nebojša Stefanović Minister of the Interior /Deputy Prime Minister	0:05:11	46.5	10.9	42.6
Siniša Mali Minister of Finance	0:04:44	30.5	64.6	4.9
Ivica Dačić Socialist Party of Serbia	0:03:38	98.2	1.8	0.0
Goran Trivan Minister of Environmental Protection	0:03:10	72.6	0.0	27.4
Office for Kosovo and Metohija	0:02:57	92.1	7.9	0.0
Maja Gojković	0:02:36	24.4	75.6	0.0
Zoran Đorđević Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs	0:02:22	66.2	33.8	0.0
Ministry of Culture and Information	0:01:52	69.6	30.4	0.0
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:01:40	0.0	38.0	62.0
Provincial Government	0:01:08	0.0	100.0	0.0
Mladen Šarčević Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:01:01	65.6	24.6	9.8
Aleksandar Vučić President of the Serbian Progressive Party	0:00:54	100.0	0.0	0.0
Aleksandar Antić Socialist Party of Serbia	0:00:46	100.0	0.0	0.0
Ministry of Defence	0:00:44	0.0	100.0	0.0
Vladan Vukosavljević Minister of Culture and Information	0:00:36	0.0	100.0	0.0
Branislav Nedimović Serbian Progressive Party	0:00:26	92.3	0.0	7.7
Rasim Ljajić Social Democratic Party	0:00:21	100.0	0.0	0.0
Cabinet of the Republic President	0:00:14	0.0	100.0	0.0

Populism

Ministry of Foreign Affairs	0:00:14	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Environmental Protection	0:00:12	0.0	0.0	100.0
Ministry of Finance	0:00:08	0.0	0.0	100.0
Branko Ružić Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	0:00:08	37.5	0.0	62.5
Nenad Popović Serbian People's Party	0:00:05	0.0	100.0	0.0
Nela Kuburović Minister of Justice	0:00:04	0.0	100.0	0.0
Milan Krkobabić Minister without Portfolio	0:00:02	0.0	100.0	0.0

In terms of presenting political parties, the distribution of time and tonality on TV N1 differed from that of the TV stations with national coverage.

The Serbian Progressive Party was again the most represented actor in the current affairs programme of TV N1, but only with one fourth of positive time and almost a half of negative time. The lists of ruling parties were less positively presented, whereas the pro-boycott opposition parties were less represented but in a more positive and/or neutral manner.

Table 38. Representation and tone of presenting public actors (officials and institutions) on TV N1

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Serbian Progressive Party	0:15:37	23.8	29.1	47.1
Boško Obradović	0:11:58	62	17.4	20.6
Alliance for Serbia	0:11:26	15	85	0
Democratic Party	0:11:17	51.8	48.2	0
People's Party	0:08:51	92.1	7.9	0
Serbia 21	0:07:05	55.3	38.1	6.6
Do not Let Belgrade Drown	0:04:39	16.8	83.2	0
Zoran Lutovac	0:04:25	83	17	0
Opposition in general	0:04:16	75	25	0
Movement of Free Citizens	0:04:09	85.9	14.1	0
Pro-boycott opposition	0:04:05	58	42	0
Together for Serbia Zelenović	0:03:34	86.4	6.1	7.5
1 of 5 Million	0:03:30	31.9	68.1	0
Aleksandar Šapić	0:03:26	64.1	35.9	0
Vojislav Šešelj	0:03:17	5.6	22.3	72.1
Socialist Party of Serbia	0:03:14	20.6	79.4	0
Čedomir Jovanović	0:03:05	78.4	21.6	0
Aleksandar Vučić - For our Children	0:03:01	40.3	47	12.7
Dragan Đilas	0:02:58	76.4	4.5	19.1
Zoran Živković	0:02:24	80.7	19.3	0
Serbian Right Miša Vacić	0:02:19	23	77	0
Boris Tadić	0:02:18	94.2	5.8	0

Populism

Sergej Trifunović	0:02:02	100	0	0
United Democratic Serbia	0:01:54	100	0	0
Ivica Dačić – Socialist Party of Serbia, United Serbia Dragan Marković Palma	0:01:47	0	100	0
Vuk Jeremić	0:01:41	96	0	4
Đorđe Vukadinović	0:01:40	40	60	0
Party of Freedom and Justice	0:01:39	100	0	0
Borko Stefanović	0:01:32	91.3	8.7	0
Movement of the Free Serbia	0:01:12	100	0	0
Dragan Marković Palma	0:01:09	88.6	11.4	0
United Democratic Party	0:01:08	32.4	67.6	0
Serbian Radical Party	0:01:02	56.5	43.5	0
Enough is Enough Saša Radulović	0:01:01	100	0	0
Liberal Democratic Party	0:00:59	32.2	67.8	0
Marko Bastać	0:00:55	18.2	52.7	29.1
Movement of Socialists	0:00:46	100	0	0
Serbian Patriotic Alliance	0:00:36	0	100	0
Civic Democratic Forum	0:00:30	60	40	0
For the Restoration of the Kingdom of Serbia	0:00:30	0	100	0
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians Ištvan Paštor	0:00:23	100	0	0
New Party	0:00:20	0	100	0
They, those, Opposition mentioned in third-person plural	0:00:10	0	0	100
Democratic Party of Serbia /Jovanović	0:00:05	0	100	0
Metla (Broom)	0:00:05	0	100	0
United Serbia	0:00:02	0	100	0
Nenad Čanak	0:00:02	0	100	0

THEMATIC AND RHETORICAL FRAMEWORK OF NEWS REPORTING

Thematic framework was dictated by current developments in the area of health and politics, namely, by the imminent COVID-19 epidemic, elections scheduled for 26 April and subsequently cancelled, and by the dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo.

The issues concerning everyday lives of citizens were pushed into the background. The same goes for the issues of the European Integration i.e. international and regional relations.

Table 39. Topics in the current affairs programmes

Health, medicine, healthcare	276
Elections in Serbia /negotiations/dialogue/boycott	179
Human rights /minority rights	64
Pre-election campaign	47
Economy/trade/tourism/transport	44
Army, police, security	39
Media and circumstances in the media	28
Party life, inter-party relations, conflicts, discussions	28
Belgrade-Priština dialogue /Brussels Agreement/ dialogue-new format...	24
Education, science	22
In memoriam	19
Political infotainment, ad hominem arguments, tug-of-war	16
Promoting boycott	15
Youth	14
Economic development and investments	13
Marking of historical events /anniversaries	13
Foreign policy toward the EU	12
Daily politics in Kosovo	10
Budget, fiscal policy, credits	10
Physical attacks on political opponents, witch-hunt	10
Energy, energy crisis, oil	9
Illegal construction, legalisation	9
Infrastructure, construction and revitalization	8
Fighting crime	8
Fees and lifting fees on Serbian goods in Kosovo	7
Foreign policy toward the USA	6
Judicature	6
Corruption, money laundering, abuse of office	5

Populism

Social issues, unemployment, pension level	5
Daily and political developments	4
Citizen activism, description of actions	4
Criticizing Vučić's politics	4
Foreign policy toward Germany	3
Foreign policy toward Russia	3
Regional relations	3
Culture	3
Speeches at meetings, mix of topics (in relation to live broadcasts and footages of meetings and appearances of politicians)	3
Endeavours, successes, achievements	3
Inter-confessional relations	2
Medals, awards, presents	2
EU Integration	1
Foreign policy toward the rest of the world	1
Relations with Republika Srpska	1
Sport	1
Agriculture	1
Workers, workers' rights, raising wages, minimum wage	1
Safety of the Serbs in Kosovo/human rights of the Serbs in Kosovo	1
Dialogue for the return to the National Assembly	1
Personal stories of citizens	1

Monitoring of the actor's statements showed that the informative and promotional discourse of statements was maintained, together with analyticity and criticality, and the lack of offensive language.

Table 40. Discourse of statements in the current affairs programmes

	Number	Percent
Informative	338	60.0%
Promotional	150	26.6%
Advocating	3	0.5%
Propagandist	2	0.4%
Analytical/critical	66	11.7%
Tabloid	3	0.5%
Quasi-dialogical	1	0.2%
	563	100.0%

Populism

When observed by television stations, it can be noticed that statements of informative and promotional nature were predominant in all current affairs, noting that TV Pink and TV N1 had more analytical and critical statements than the other television stations.

Table 41. Discourse of statements in the current affairs programmes by television stations

	Informative	Promotional	Advocating	Propagandist	Analytical/critical	Tabloid	Total
RTS	54	29	0	1	5	0	89
TV Pink	47	23	1	1	16	0	88
TV Happy	61	25	0	0	5	0	91
Prva TV	57	28	0	0	12	1	98
TV B92	44	18	0	0	1	0	63
N1	75	27	2	0	27	2	133

COVID-19 MEDIA MONITORING

After the state of emergency had been declared due to COVID-19 epidemic, BIRODI started to monitor the reporting of current affairs programmes of the television stations with national coverage and of the cable TV N1.

In the course of monitoring, 220 programme hours were analysed. As opposed to previous positive reporting, here, the monitoring findings changed for the first time. Namely, positive time spilled over to neutral. Within the total time, as much as 90.1% was neutrally connoted, 8.7% positively, and only 0.6 was negative.

Table 42. Framework of time and tonality in the current affairs programmes during COVID-19 pandemic

Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
19:11:25	8.7	200:31	90.7	1:25:23	0.6	221:08	100.0

Segmented findings by TV stations clearly show that there is no statistically significant difference in the tone of reporting. However, the difference can be noticed in the allocated time. Current affairs programme of TV Pink, in addition to that of TV Prva, dedicated the most time to reporting on COVID-19 epidemic.

Table 43. Framework of time and tonality of the current affairs programmes during COVID-19 epidemic, by television stations

RTS							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
2:35:50	8.8	26:52:11	91.2	0:00:35	.0	29:28:35	100.0
TV Pink							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
8:20:34	11.9	61:17:40	87.7	0:17:18	.4	69:55:32	100.0
TV Happy							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
1:41:57	7.8	20:00:03	92.1	0:00:20	.0	21:42:21	100.0
TV Prva							
1 Positive		2 Neutral		3 Negative		Total	
4:27:50	9.7	41:17:13	90.1	0:05:28	.2	45:50:31	100.0
TV B92							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
1:33:19	6.5	22:20:20	93.3	0:02:30	.2	23:56:10	100.0
TV N1							
Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
0:31:54	1.8	28:44:15	95.0	0:59:12	3.3	30:15:22	100.0

Populism

Although during the monitoring period the members of the Government and the Crisis Response Team were more represented in the aggregate, individually, Aleksandar Vučić was the most represented actor in the current affairs programme. Representation of Vučić was followed by local self-governments and their crisis response teams, the Serbian Prime Minister, the Ministers of Army and Police and their Ministries.

Table 44. Representation and tone of reporting on public institutions, bodies and state officials during COVID-19 epidemic

Actor	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Aleksandar Vučić Republic President	18:14:42	27.6	70.7	1.7
Local self-governments and crisis response teams	6:03:32	9.5	89.5	1.0
Ana Brnabić Serbian Prime Minister	4:49:57	13.3	85.5	1.2
Siniša Mali Minister of Finance	4:02:45	13.8	85.4	.9
Nebojša Stefanović Minister of the Interior /Deputy Prime Minister	1:34:15	56.4	42.5	1.1
Aleksandar Vulin Minister of Defence	1:27:40	28.3	71.3	.4
Ministry of the Interior	1:22:42	5.9	93.4	.7
Zlatibor Lončar Minister of Health	1:16:43	9.1	90.9	0.0
Branislav Nedimović Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	1:16:24	24.0	76.0	0.0
Serbian Government	1:14:35	1.3	98.7	0.0
Goran Vesic Belgrade Deputy Mayor	1:05:06	25.0	75.0	0.0
Ivica Dačić Minister of Foreign Affairs /Deputy Prime Minister	0:56:42	14.1	85.9	0.0
Zoran Đorđević Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs	0:55:29	1.4	98.6	0.0
Government institution	0:53:13	4.1	95.9	0.0
Mladen Šarčević Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:49:38	7.3	87.1	5.5
Government institutions	0:46:23	6.1	93.9	0.0
Director of a public company /Public company	0:45:51	1.7	98.3	0.0
Ministry of Health	0:45:32	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	0:43:06	0.0	99.1	.9
Provincial Government	0:37:44	9.0	91.0	0.0
Rasim Ljajić Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications /Deputy Prime Minister	0:33:42	.6	99.4	0.0
Administration of the City of Belgrade /crisis response team of the City of Belgrade	0:23:53	3.1	96.9	0.0
Zorana Mihajlović Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:20:24	43.1	56.9	0.0
Ministry of Defence	0:15:53	8.4	91.6	0.0
Crisis response group	0:15:36	0.0	84.6	15.4
Aleksandar Antić Minister of Mining and Energy	0:14:18	13.5	86.5	0.0
Zoran Radojčić Belgrade Mayor	0:12:58	10.9	89.1	0.0

Populism

Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	0:12:41	0.0	100.0	0.0
Office for Kosovo and Metohija	0:12:35	7.3	92.7	0.0
Serbian Assembly	0:09:30	0.0	100.0	0.0
Maja Gojković	0:09:26	12.9	87.1	0.0
Slavica Đukić Minister without Portfolio	0:08:13	40.4	59.6	0.0
Ministry of Justice	0:07:31	23.1	76.9	0.0
Ministry of Economy	0:06:47	62.7	37.3	0.0
Courts/judges	0:06:11	0.0	100.0	0.0
Jadranka Joksimović Minister of European Integration	0:06:08	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications	0:05:19	65.8	34.2	0.0
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	0:05:00	0.0	100.0	0.0
Vanja Udovičić Minister of Youth and Sport	0:04:30	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Culture and Information	0:04:26	13.5	86.5	0.0
Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	0:04:07	0.0	100.0	0.0
Cabinet of the Republic President	0:04:00	0.0	100.0	0.0
Public prosecutors	0:03:52	0.0	100.0	0.0
Milan Krkobabić Minister without Portfolio	0:03:21	0.0	100.0	0.0
Goran Trivan Ministry of Environmental Protection	0:02:31	0.0	100.0	0.0
Road Traffic Safety Agency	0:02:23	0.0	100.0	0.0
Vladan Vukosavljević Minister of Culture and Information	0:01:08	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Environmental Protection	0:01:03	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Finance	0:00:59	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	0:00:52	0.0	100.0	0.0
Nenad Popović Minister without Portfolio	0:00:50	0.0	100.0	0.0
Paunović Mayor of Paraćin	0:00:30	0.0	100.0	0.0
Branko Ružić Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	0:00:30	0.0	100.0	0.0
Republic Election Commission/Local electoral committees	0:00:28	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ministry of Mining and Energy	0:00:06	0.0	100.0	0.0

In terms of actors within medical profession, most time was given to doctors, nurses and pharmacists followed by Dr. Predrag Kon and Dr. Darija Kisić Tepavčević.

Table 45. Representation of tone of reporting on medical profession during COVID-19 epidemic

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Doctors, nurses, pharmacists	12:14:14	10.8	89.2	0.0
Predrag Kon	7:44:39	0.9	99.1	0.0
Darija Kisić Tepavčević	4:37:51	0.0	100.0	0.0
Branislav Todorović	2:07:02	0.0	100.0	0.0
Verica Jovanović	1:59:43	0.0	100.0	0.0
Goran Stevanović	1:40:11	3.6	96.4	0.0
Zoran Gojković	1:38:29	1.2	98.8	0.0
Branimir Nestorović	0:49:24	0.0	100.0	0.0
Srđa Janković	0:48:51	0.0	100.0	0.0
Ivana Karličić Stašević	0:21:26	0.0	100.0	0.0
Sanja Radojević Škodrić	0:19:15	6.1	93.9	0.0
Ivana Milošević infectologist	0:16:35	0.0	100.0	0.0
Crisis Response Team	0:15:36	0.0	84.6	15.4
Mijomir Pelemiš	0:00:30	0.0	100.0	0.0

Our monitoring established that during the pandemic, the following were present as actors and neutrally presented in the News: experts, athletes, civil society, religious communities, workers, trade unions, Serbian Chamber of Commerce, associations of businessmen, students, returning migrants, volunteers, and members of the army and the police.

Table 46. Representation and tone of reporting on media profession during COVID-19 epidemic

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
Experts	3:12:22	4.5	95.0	.5
Athletes	2:57:24	18.0	81.7	.3
Public figures	1:36:14	35.6	60.4	4.1
Serbian Orthodox Church	1:14:10	28.2	70.7	1.1
Pensioners	0:52:08	5.6	94.4	0.0
Civil society organisations	0:43:18	6.7	93.3	0.0
Volunteers	0:41:46	36.4	63.6	0.0
Workers	0:28:49	27.4	72.6	0.0
Chambers of Commerce	0:26:54	1.5	98.5	0.0
Students	0:26:33	15.0	85.0	0.0
Professional associations	0:26:18	3.2	96.8	0.0
Roman Catholic Church	0:21:57	3.0	93.9	3.0
Soldiers, cadets, senior officers, police officers	0:17:48	21.3	69.9	8.8
Professors	0:16:12	13.7	86.3	0.0
Association of Employers	0:14:07	0.0	100.0	0.0
Other trade unions	0:11:30	0.0	100.0	0.0
Foreign businessmen /corporations	0:09:36	0.0	100.0	0.0
Alliance of Independent Trade Unions	0:08:20	0.0	100.0	0.0
Islamic community	0:04:21	0.0	100.0	0.0
Returning migrants	0:04:03	0.0	100.0	0.0
Members of religious communities	0:03:09	0.0	65.6	34.4
UGS Nezavisnost (United Branch Trade Union Independence)	0:01:13	0.0	100.0	0.0

The World Health Organisation was the most represented international actor, followed by the US President, Chinese experts, Sem Fabrizi- Head of the EU delegation to Serbia, EU politicians... Reporting was predominantly neutral. However, it should be noted that the European Investment Bank, Russian Ambassador and the Russian President were most positively presented.

Table 47. Representation and tone of reporting on international actors during COVID-19 epidemic

	Total time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
World Health Organisation	0:49:59	3.6	96.4	0.0
Donald Trump	0:45:56	2.6	86.5	10.9
Chinese experts	0:20:46	23.7	76.3	0.0
Sem Fabrizi Head of EU delegation to Serbia	0:20:06	6.0	94.0	0.0
Politicians of EU countries	0:17:27	9.7	88.9	1.3
Vladimir Putin	0:14:52	31.2	68.8	0.0
Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Council	0:12:00	0.0	100.0	0.0
European Commission	0:11:52	5.6	94.4	0.0
EU in general	0:11:43	12.1	87.9	0.0
Russian Ambassador	0:08:59	51.9	48.1	0.0
US Ambassador	0:08:41	10.0	90.0	0.0
UN/UNESCO	0:06:47	3.9	96.1	0.0
International organisations	0:06:36	0.0	100.0	0.0
Josep Borrell, EU's Foreign Affairs and Security	0:06:04	0.0	100.0	0.0
Angela Merkel	0:06:06	0.0	100.0	0.0
American politicians	0:05:19	0.0	100.0	0.0
Emmanuel Macron	0:03:21	24.4	75.6	0.0
European Parliament	0:03:09	0.0	100.0	0.0
Politicians from Hungary	0:03:05	24.3	75.7	0.0
International Monetary Fund	0:02:08	0.0	100.0	0.0
OEBS/OSCE/ODIHR	0:01:50	0.0	100.0	0.0
Boris Johnson	0:01:24	0.0	100.0	0.0
Tanja Fajon	0:00:55	0.0	100.0	0.0
German politicians	0:00:50	0.0	100.0	0.0
European Investment Bank	0:00:49	75.5	24.5	0.0
European Council	0:00:47	0.0	100.0	0.0
Party of Freedom and Justice	0:00:46	0.0	100.0	0.0
Richard Grenell	0:00:45	0.0	100.0	0.0
Russian politicians	0:00:13	0.0	100.0	0.0
Viktor Orban	0:00:07	0.0	100.0	0.0

The only visible difference when it comes to the reporting in the monitored News can be seen in connection with political parties. Unlike the current affairs programme of RTS where there were no political parties, particularly not the opposition ones, TV Pink presented opposition parties and their leaders, particularly pro-boycott ones, to a considerable extent and in the negative context. At the same time, TV N1 presented all actors neutrally or positively.

Table 48. Representation and tone of reporting on political parties and leaders during COVID-19 epidemic

	Total time	RTS			Pink			N1		
		Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time	Percent of positive time	Percent of neutral time	Percent of negative time
A. Vučić President	18:14:42	31.5	68.3	.2	31.0	69.0	0.0	6.4	78.1	15.5
Alliance for Serbia	0:09:12	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.8	94.2	0.0	100.0	0.0
Serbian Progressive Party	0:08:23	0.0	0.0	0.0	27.8	72.2	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Dragan Đilas	0:07:26	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	82.7	17.3	0.0
Boško Obradović	0:04:31	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Democratic Party	0:03:36	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Zoran Živković	0:02:59	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Do not Let Belgrade Drown	0:02:08	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
United Democratic Serbia	0:01:56	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Sergej Trifunović	0:01:42	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Nenad Čanak	0:01:35	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Vojislav Šešelj	0:01:12	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Čedomir Jovanović	0:01:07	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Together for Serbia Zelenović	0:00:51	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina	0:00:46	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Party of Freedom and Justice	0:00:46	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Socialist Party of Serbia	0:00:37	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
B. Nedimović Serbian Progressive Party	0:00:37	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bosniak Democratic Community M. Zukorlić	0:00:36	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Zoran Lutovac	0:00:33	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Pro-elect. opposition	0:00:31	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Boris Tadić	0:00:30	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Borko Stefanović	0:00:23	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Democratic Party of Serbia	0:00:22	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
United Democratic Party	0:00:20	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Đorđe Vukadinović	0:00:16	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
A. Vušin Movement of Socialists	0:00:10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Opposition in general	0:00:09	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Movement of Free Citizens	0:00:05	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1 of 5 Million	0:00:02	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

BAROMETER OF PUBLIC OPINION INTEGRITY

In an effort to improve public opinion research, BIRODI has established the Public Opinion Integrity Barometer - an instrument that measures the integrity of public opinion through the following indicators of the attitudes toward politics: apolitical, anti-political and ideological self-perception i.e. voter criteria when deciding who to vote for: integrity, power, expertise, charisma and values.

INDIFFERNECE TO POLITICS AND IDEOLOGICAL SELF-PERCEPTION

The subject of this analysis is the ideological self-perception of the respondents on the scale: apolitical, anti-political, don't know / no answer, socialist, social democrat, conservative, nationalist, liberal, the green and the communist. I would like to stress that this is not an analysis of respondents' attachment to political parties, but to ideologies.

This research analyses the quality of politicalness: whether it is apolitical, anti-political or has its own ideological substrates and how they are distributed depending on age, education, information, and electoral behaviour of the citizens of Serbia.

The findings on the sample of 1006 respondents show that four out of ten respondents are apolitical, whereas every sixth does not know, that is, has no answer to the question about his/her ideological orientation. Every twentieth respondent is anti-political. All things considered, somewhat less than two thirds of the respondents (59.2%) are (anti)political, whereas slightly more than 1/3 are ideological.

Table 49. Ideological self-identification

Number of respondents	1006
Apolitical	39.4
Don't know, no answer	14.5
Democrat	10.8
Socialist	6.7
Socialist Democrat	5.9
Anti-political	5.3
Conservative	4.6
Nationalist	4.2
Liberal	2.2
Green	2.2
Communist	2.1

Analysis by age of respondents

When analysed by age groups, it can be observed that the respondents aged 18 to 29 (197 respondents) mostly perceived themselves as Democrats (13.3%) and Socialists/Social Democrats (10.9%). The same type of identification was most prevalent among 162 surveyed 30-year-old men and women who were anti-political. Democrats were the most represented in the group of 164 respondents aged 40 to 49, while among 285 respondents aged 50 to 64 Socialists and Socialist Democrats were predominant together with Conservatives. Out of 197 respondents older than 65, almost every third stated not to know the answer, that is, they did not answer the question about ideological orientation, which is twice as much as the average at the level of the entire sample. Even in this age group, most respondents saw themselves as Socialists and Social Democrats.

The data by age groups show that in all these groups the majority respondents said that they were apolitical, particularly those aged between 30 and 39 or between 50 and 64.

In addition to being apolitical, it should be noted that the respondents aged 30 to 39 were significantly anti-political when compared with all the respondents.

Table 50. Ideological self-identification

Age groups		18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+
Number of respondents	1006	197	162	164	285	197
Apolitical	39.4	40	50.2	35.6	40.3	31.6
Don't know, no answer	14.5	12.6	9.6	15.6	7.5	29.6
Democrat	10.8	13.3	20.2	21.6	3.5	2.2
Socialist	6.7	6.8	1.7	3.6	10.8	7.1
Socialist Democrat	5.9	4.1	2.6	3.2	10.9	5.4
Anti-political	5.3	5.2	9.2	2	5.2	5.3
Conservative	4.6	6.6		1.8	9.3	1.6
Nationalist	4.2	3.2	5.6	5.4	4.2	3.1
Liberal	2.2	2.1	0.0	2	3.4	2.7
Green	2.2	3.8	0.0	2.6	3.4	0.4
Communist	2.1	2.2	0.2	0.8	1.5	5.7

Populism

Analysis by education level of respondents

Out of the 328 respondents with primary and lower education, which accounts for one third of the sample, 35% are apolitical, while every fifth respondent does not know or has no answer. Among the respondents with secondary school education (504), 38.7% are apolitical, and 13.1% do not know or have no answer to the question about ideological orientation. Every sixth respondent who has a secondary education says that he is a Democrat, and 7.8% say that they are Social Democrats. In the aggregate, 8.8 of those with secondary education described themselves as Conservatives or Nationalists.

Largely apolitical (48.5%) were 174 respondents with college and university education. This is the first education group which includes more of those who perceive themselves as right-wing (Nationalists/Conservatives) 11.3%. 8.6% defined themselves as Democrats, and 9.2% as Leftists (Socialists and Social Democrats).

Table 50. Ideological self-identification by education level of respondents

Education of respondents		Primary and lower	Secondary	College and University
N	1006	328	504	174
Apolitical	39.4	35.5	38.7	48.5
Don't know, no answer	14.5	22.6	13.1	3.2
Democrat	10.8	2.8	16.8	8.6
Socialist	6.7	14.5	2.6	3.5
Socialist Democrat	5.9	3.1	7.8	5.7
Anti-political	5.3	5.6	5.1	5.5
Conservative	4.6	5.5	4.5	3
Nationalist	4.2	1.9	4.3	8.3
Liberal	2.2	1.7	1.6	5
Green	2.2	2.3	2.7	0.6
Communist	2.1	1.9	2.4	1.6

Analysis depending on the respondents' source of information

After the socio-demographic analysis, we will show how our respondents inform themselves, depending on their preferred ideology. The common feature of all television stations is that they are the apolitical majority. It is highest on TV O2.

Out of 386 respondents who stated that they informed themselves by watching current affairs programme of RTS, 34.8% were apolitical and 15.1% were those who did not know or did not have an answer. In terms of ideology, the News of RTS were watched by the Socialists (10.1%) and the Nationalists (7.4%). Out of 128 respondents who stated that they informed themselves through TV Pink, 35.9% presented themselves as apolitical, and every fourth did not know or did not have an answer to the question about his or her ideological orientation. Quite similar percentage was present among 91 respondents who were informed through the News of TV Prva, where 22.4% did not know or did not have an answer to the question about ideological affiliation. This television had the highest percent of anti-political viewers. Similarly, in the case of TV Happy (27 respondents), every fifth respondent did not know or did not have an answer to the question about their ideological orientation. Four out of ten viewers of TV Happy said that they were socialist-oriented. In addition to the fact that the News of TV O2 (33 respondents) had the most apolitical viewers, the current affairs programme of this TV was mostly watched by those respondents who defined themselves as the Democrats. Among 109 respondents who claimed to watch the current affairs programme of TV N1, 24.2% were the Social Democrats, and 14.5% the Democrats.

Table 52. Ideological self-identification by source of information

		RTS1	Pink	Prva	B92	Happy	N1
N	1006	386	128	91	33	27	109
Apolitical	39.4	34.8	35.9	38.3	50.4	21.4	37.5
Don't know, no answer	14.5	15.1	23.8	22.4		20.6	7.2
Democrat	10.8	9.3	7.6	0.1	31.4	9.6	14.5
Socialist	6.7	10.1	2.8	6.1		39.8	1.8
Socialist Democrat	5.9	5	7.6	1.4			24.2
Anti-political	5.3	4	6.9	15.6	5	1.5	3.5
Conservative	4.6	5.8	5.9	13			3.6
Nationalist	4.2	7.4	2.9	1.2	11.5		2.9
Liberal	2.2	1.5	0.8	0.3			4.7
Green	2.2	2.7		0.1	1.3		
Communist	2.1	3.1	2.2	0.2	0.3	6.3	0.1
Monarchist	1.4	1.1					

Analysis by electoral behaviour

Among 111 of indecisive voters, half were apolitical (53.2%), 19% did not know the answer to this question, and 15.2% defined themselves as the Democrats. Out of the 193 who would not go to the polls, 39.3% were apolitical, and more than one fourth had no answer about their ideological affiliation, while one in ten claimed to be a Conservative.

As for the Serbian Progressive Party, four out of ten respondents, 356 of them, presented themselves as apolitical, and 15.4% did not know or did not have an answer to the question about their ideological identity. However, it is interesting to note that 8.8% of those who would vote for the SNS presented themselves as the Democrats, despite the fact that the Democrats were not on the list. Namely, the respondents independently mentioned the Democrats. 9.8% of SNS voters said they were the Socialists. The SPS had only 11.7% of apolitical supporters, but also a significant number of those who did not have an answer to the question about ideological orientation (21.2%). It should be pointed out that 35.1% of 42 respondents described themselves as Socialists and 12.1% as Communists. As in the case of the SPS, the Alliance for Serbia had a significantly smaller number of apolitical supporters (18.5%), with 30% of those who declared themselves as Democrats and 21.2% as Socialist Democrats. In addition to the SPS and the Alliance for Serbia, the Serbian Progressive Party had a relatively strong ideological nucleus, where 76.7% expressed themselves as the Nationalists. The same goes for the Liberal Democratic Party where 38.8% of potential voters said that they were Liberals, in addition to 44% of those anti-political. One of the interesting findings was that 49.2% of those who would vote for the SPAS led by Aleksandar Šapić presented themselves as Democrats, and 17.9% as Conservatives. The voters of the Movement of Free Citizens and the Civic Front defined themselves as apolitical: 58.6% and 68%, respectively.

Table 53. Ideological self-identification and election behaviour

		Indecisive	Won't go to the polls	SNS	SPS	Alliance for Serbia	Movement of Free Citizens	SRS	Civic Front	LDP	SPAS
N	1006	111	193	356	42	107	27	17	37	23	29
Apolitical	39.4	53.2	39.3	42.8	11.7	18.5	58.6		68	16.8	26.8
Don't know, no answer	14.5	19	27.7	15.4	21.2			0.3	7		
Democrat	10.8	15.2	0.7	8.4		30	25		13.7		49.2
Socialist	6.7	1.8	1.4	9.8	35.1	6.7		3.5			
Socialist Democrat	5.9	2.4	0.4	8	6.1	21.2			5.7		
Anti-political	5.3	2.1	8.8	2	1.2	7	1.7	11.4	5.6	44.4	4.5
Conservative	4.6		10.1	3.5			14.4	8			17.9
Nationalist	4.2	6.2	3.6	1.3	2	5.2		76.7			
Liberal	2.2		1.4	2.4	0.4	2.1				38.8	
Green	2.2		0.1	3.6	10.2	4.1	0.2				1.5
Communist	2.1		6.3	1.1	12.1						

CRITERIA FOR VOTING IN ELECTIONS

Public opinion polls on voting criteria show that Serbian citizens prefer those who respect the law, keep their promises and have sufficient expertise or the charisma to implement their programs and plans.

Table 54. Criteria for elections voting

N	1006
I vote for those who respect the law and keep their promises	45.6
I vote for those whose candidates are highly qualified	17.5
I don't vote	13.3
I vote for a leader with the greatest charisma	9.7
I vote for those with sufficient power and influence to fulfil their promises	7.7
I vote for those who respect the law and keep their promises	2.9

Analysis by gender of respondents

When the gender of the respondents is observed, it can be noticed that men more significantly base their voting choice on the respect of law and fulfilment of promises (51.7).

The criteria which includes leader's charisma is statistically more significant in women (13.6%) than men (5.4%) and sample average (9.7). Women, more than men, prefer the politicians who have power.

Table 55. Criteria for elections voting by gender

Gender of respondent?		Male	Female
N	1006	483	523
I vote for those who respect the law and keep their promises	45.6	51.7	40
I vote for those whose candidates are highly qualified	17.5	17.8	17.2
I don't vote	13.3	14	12.7
I vote for a leader with the greatest charisma	9.7	5.4	13.6
I vote for those with sufficient power and influence to fulfil their promises	7.7	5.9	9.3
I vote for those who respect the law and keep their promises	2.9	2.6	3.3

Populism

Analysis by age of respondents

When it comes to the age of respondents, the respect of the law and fulfilment of promises is the most represented voting criteria in all age groups, noting that more than a half of the respondents older than 65 use this criteria when choosing who to vote for.

As regards expertise as the voting criteria, it was most represented among the respondents aged 18 to 29 and 40 to 49.

An interesting finding is that for the respondents over the age of 65, the professional skills of politicians and parties are much less important than when the average answers are observed in relation to the entire sample. In addition, for this age group, the charisma of politicians is an important factor when choosing who to vote for.

Table 56. Criteria for elections voting by age

Age of respondent		18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+
N	1006	197	162	164	285	197
I vote for those who respect the law and keep their promises	45.6	36.2	44.7	44	46.5	55.8
I vote for those whose candidates are highly qualified	17.5	22.6	16.5	23.6	16.1	10.3
I don't vote	13.3	15.4	17.5	11.2	14.4	8
I vote for a leader with the greatest charisma	9.7	10.6	3.2	10	10.2	13.1
I vote for those with sufficient power and influence to fulfil their promises	7.7	8.7	10.7	8	7.9	3.5
Don't know, no answer	2.9	4.3	5.2	0.1	0.4	5.8

Analysis by educational level of respondents

Viewed from the perspective of the respondents' education, we have two opposite ends. The first are the respondents with primary and lower education who found important that the politicians they vote for are the persons who will respect the law and the promises made (53.6%) and have the charisma (16.2), while at the second end are the respondents with college and university education who equally appreciate the expertise (32.6) and the respect for the law and fulfilment of promises (34.3%).

Table 57. Criteria for elections voting by education

Education		Primary and lower	Secondary	College and university
N	1006	328	504	174
I vote for those who respect the law and keep their promises	45.6	53.6	44.3	34.3
I vote for those whose candidates are highly qualified	17.5	5.3	20.3	32.6
I don't vote	13.3	13	13.9	12.2
I vote for a leader with the greatest charisma	9.7	16.2	6.2	7.4
I vote for those with sufficient power and influence to fulfil their promises	7.7	7.6	8.1	6.4
Don't know, no answer	2.9	2.8	2.5	4.5

Analysis by place of residence of the respondents

There are two opposite ends in this analysis, as well. One is comprised of Belgrade and Vojvodina, whose residents equally value the respect for law, fulfilment of promises and expertise, and on the other end are Western Serbia and Šumadija i.e. Southern and Eastern Serbia, where much more attention is paid to respecting the law and fulfilling promises than to the expertise of politicians and political parties. It is important to emphasize that the charisma of politicians is very important for the respondents from the Eastern and Southern Serbia.

Table 58. Criteria for elections voting by place of residence

Region		Vojvodina	Belgrade	Western Serbia and Šumadija	Eastern and Southern Serbia
N	1006	271	235	285	215
I vote for those who respect the law and keep their promises	45.6	31.7	37.5	60.8	52
I vote for those whose candidates are highly qualified	17.5	31.9	21.6	6.3	9.8
I don't vote	13.3	14.8	18.3	11.7	8.2
I vote for a leader with the greatest charisma	9.7	5.7	6	10.4	17.7
I vote for those with sufficient power and influence to fulfil their promises	7.7	7	6.3	10.4	6.4
Don't know, no answer	2.9	2.6	6.3	0.3	3.2

Analysis by source of information

For viewers of the RTS News, observance of the law and keeping promises is a key voting criterion. As far as TV Pink is concerned, in addition to respecting the rule of law and promises, the viewers value the power, that is, the influence of politicians to carry out the promise. For the viewers of TV Happy, N1 and those who do not watch current affairs programmes, legality, fulfilment of promises and expertise are equally important.

Which of the specified current affairs programmes you watch the most?		RTS	Pink	Prva	O2	Happy	N1	I don't watch
N	1006	386	128	91	33	27	109	232
I vote for those who respect the law and keep their promises	45.6	52	61.1	35.9	30.1	36.1	32.5	39.6
I vote for those whose candidates are highly qualified	17.5	15.3	1.1	4.6	9.3	22.7	32.9	28.7
I don't vote	13.3	6.5	13.2	20.3	2.2	6.9	17.4	22.5

Populism

I vote for a leader with the greatest charisma	9.7	9.9	8	12.7	45.2	30.3	10	1.5
I vote for those with sufficient power and influence to fulfil their promises	7.7	9.4	5.3	25.2	0.3	4	0.9	3.8
Don't know, no answer	2.9	3.4	4.3	0.9			3.3	2.9

Analysis by electoral behaviour

When it comes to electoral behaviour, it is clear that the criterion of candidate's expertise was predominant among indecisive voters, while those who did not want to state their main voting criterion appreciated the respect for law and made promises.

Observed by parties, predominant voting criteria for the Serbian Progressive Party were legality, fulfilment of promises and charisma. The structure of the criteria was similar for the Alliance for Serbia, but it should be noted that expertise was more represented than in the case of the Serbian Progressive Party. Potential voters of the Movement of Free Citizens had almost the same criteria, with a somewhat more pronounced criterion of charisma. The LDP voters can also be said to have similar criteria structure, however, the power of politicians to realize their promises was more pronounced than the expertise and charisma. The importance of political power was also pronounced in the case of the SPS, along with the respect for the law and the promises made. For the SPAS, two criteria were expressed, namely, legality or keeping promises and the charisma of politicians. And finally, as far as the voters of the Civic Front are concerned, two criteria were crucial: legality and fulfilment of promises on the one hand, and expertise on the other.

Table 60. Criteria for elections voting and election behaviour

		Indecisive	Won't go to the polls	SNS	SPS	SzS	PSG	SRS	Civic Front	LDP	SPAS
N	1006	111	193	356	42	107	27	17	37	23	29
I vote for those who respect the law and keep their promises	45.6	32.3	30.4	64.2	31.4	48.2	51	11.5	38	39.5	37.7
I vote for those whose candidates are highly qualified	17.5	45.7	12.3	5.4	8.7	25.6	33.3	8.6	35.5	16.1	17.9
I don't vote	13.3	5.9	51.4	2.5	19.2	7.7	0.4	18.7	0	0	0
I vote for a leader with the greatest charisma	9.7	0.9	1.1	16.5	1.9	11.4	15.3	0.6	12.2	0	37.1
I vote for those with sufficient power and influence to fulfil their promises	7.7	0	2.2	7.9	37.7	2.7		51.1	14.3	44.4	7.3
Don't know, no answer	2.9	11.2	1.4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

CONCLUSION

Based on the conducted monitorings it can be concluded that the reporting matrix defined in 2012 has remained almost the same. There is still promotional reporting on state officials and uncritical reporting on topics that are treated as "sacred", state topics. Reporting and promotion is the dominant way of media conduct, followed by the fabrication of enemies. In addition, we can still see informative-analytical reporting on social events and phenomena where naming those responsible for harmful consequences is avoided whereas investigative journalism is not encouraged, because those responsible are either not mentioned or are presented in abstract terms. Gloomy news predominantly come from the region, although some parts of Serbia are also presented through predominantly negative news (Sandzak and Bujanovac, Presevo and Medvedja). A part of negative reporting relates to a particular portion of the opposition gathered around pro-boycott parties. The trend of significant presence of ethnic and national culture in the media content continues, whereas there is the lack of media content in the area of international culture and science. Media content in the area of sport still promotes (banal) ethnic nationalism through laudatory reports and interviews that follow the success of Serbian athletes.

Campaign of officials, which, for us means promotional reporting (more than 50% of positive time in the observed reporting) on (non)illegal activities of public officials that (does not breach) breaches Article 29.2 of the Law on the Anti-Corruption Agency for all public officials except for the President of Serbia, who is subject to Article 27 of the Law on the Anti-Corruption Agency, is still a phenomenon perpetuated both in and beyond the election campaign, but this time is reserved for a smaller number of public officials, notably for Aleksandar Vučić, Ana Brnabić, Aleksandar Vulin, Nebojša Stefanović, Zoran Mihailović, Ivica Dačić, and Aleksandar Antić.

Party cameras have remained the unresolved issue, thus enabling the candidates on the electoral lists to appear on TV News and present their PR content as the media content and be supported by all monitored TV stations except for TV N1 which accepted the suggestion of BIRODI and asked the candidates on party lists the questions that are in the interest of citizens i.e. that may help citizens decide whether to vote and who to vote for.

Within the structure of actors, it can be said that irrespective of the monitoring subject, Aleksandar Vučić has remained the most represented actor in the current affairs programmes of the analysed television stations, with a noticeable decline in positive reporting after the end of January 2020. And it is precisely this kind of "change" that has taken place in the atmosphere of EU mediation and can be used as an argument for controlling the media with national coverage. TV Pink, with its reporting i.e. share in the analysed material, largely influences the creation of a positive image in the media, notably of Aleksandar Vučić, but also generates a negative media image of the opposition parties gathered around the Alliance for Serbia. Namely, these parties are more represented in the current affairs of TV Pink than in the current affairs programmes broadcast on TV stations with national coverage, however, their presentation is negative. Unlike the current affairs programme of TV Pink, in the non-election period, the News of RTS largely ignore the opposition.

Among the international actors, four are predominant: USA, EU, Russia and China, noting that Russia or its government representatives and China and its representatives are represented most positively but to a lesser extent, while the USA and the EU are more and less positively presented.

Reporting on actors from Kosovo is highly positive when it comes to the Serbian List, mostly neutral on actors participating in the negotiation process with Serbia (primarily Hashim Thaci), and more negative on the Kosovo Government or the Prime Minister Kurti.

Populism

The thematic structure of the monitored news items is characterized by the fact that they mostly reflect the interests of the state i.e. the executive branch and the current situation. The choice of topics is only an upgrade to the informative and promotional role of prime time current affairs programmes. The issues that are of interest to society i.e. that reflect everyday life and arise from the media's watchdog role and should "hold the government accountable" are either pushed to the background or are not present in the national current affairs programmes, with the exception of TV N1.

The public is increasingly divided into passive, active and hybrid.

Active public, which has increasingly fewer opportunities for expressing views in the media that reach a wider audience, namely, on the television channels with national coverage, is given such opportunity on the margins of the media system, namely, can present its views on the cable TV N1 and TV Nova, Danas daily, weeklies Vreme, NIN and Nedeljnik, and on the research websites (BIRN, CINS, KRIK). The lack of opportunity to communicate ideas, suggestions and opinions has led to occasional protests caused by an event or action of government representatives. Protests usually turn into turmoils of limited duration and inadequate influence on the government, and thus on the desired result. With such "blowing off steam", citizens play into the hands of the authorities, but also of the extremist movements and parties.

As opposed to active public, there is hybrid public. According to the available data, the Serbian Progressive Party manages the website www.castle.rs i.e. the Bot Centre in Belgrade through which it creates and distributes „positive-promotional“ content, namely, carries out its activities on the online media and social networks. When considered necessary, such media retaliate against the actors who point out the negative sides of the rule of the President Aleksandar Vučić and power he epitomizes. This is supported by the fact that Twitter has removed somewhat more than 8000 accounts that were linked with the ruling party in Serbia. Media retaliation is carried out by the tabloids financed by, among other things, the money obtained through public tenders, as can be found in the research of the Consortium of BIRN, NUNS and Slavko Ćuruvija Foundation carried out in 14 local self-governments, where it was established that the money intended for the protection of public interest in the media was awarded to the uncritical and promotional media. The analysis has shown that half of the projects supported by local self-governments related to a so-called topics that did not step on anyone's toes such as history, culture, population policy, agriculture, life in the country, successful women, status of the youth, and the like. In such media content, actors were given promotional presentation. The topics that could be interpreted as media “stepping on local-government's toes” (rule of law, human rights, fighting corruption) are marginalized.

Partner of the hybrid public is passive, depoliticized public which perceives itself as apolitical or anti-political, namely, supports the attitude that Serbia needs a firm-hand leader and that today, it is not wise to speak your mind.

In particular, the authority personified in the figure of Aleksandar Vučić has built media infrastructure tasked with promoting and labelling and thus producing legitimacy of (charismatic) power. This infrastructure is comprised of TV Pink and the media bought and maintained largely owing to the money of citizens awarded in the public tenders announced as a support to public interests in the media sector. Part of this mechanism are the factories of bots that pin labels on „unruly“ members of society.

Anyone who, after inquiring, publicly presents anything that does not suit the authorities becomes an enemy allowed to be targeted and „shot“ by the media, with the sole aim to be excluded from society by loyal structures of party bureaucracy that will unpunishably deny rights and suspend laws, procedures and practices of the rule of law i.e. the administration of justice.

If there ever was any dilemma whether the industry of populism actually exists, the supporting arguments were given by Aleksandar Vučić himself, in the text *The Elite and the Plebs* published in *Politika* daily, in the summer of 2019. This text was not a usual public address provoked by the published opinion poll results where BIRODI presented the findings of socio-demographic analysis of the voters of the Serbian Progressives. It was the Manifesto of media propaganda where Vučić presented his concept of enemy fabrication and media retribution, including his messianic role.

Having attributed (social and political) power to any critic of such power which that critic cannot realistically possess, and having placed such critics in the role of haters of their (own) people or citizens, Vučić openly called for (media) hunt. This mechanism is not subtle but commonplace. It includes labelling in the media, carried out by controlled media staff or propagandists, party personnel or public officials, all the way up to the MPs. Their task is to label. After labelling, bot structures, loyal analysts, and journalists continue with harassment in the media aimed at making the critic(s) of power inadequate member(s) of society, namely, declaring them unacceptable members of society and thus socially acceptable for (media) hunt. In that way, other citizens are prevented from taking a critical view of the government. As a consequence of this mechanism, the public becomes subverted. This is supported by the finding of the public opinion poll conducted in 2018 by BIRODI, according to which every other citizen of Serbia holds that “Today, it is not wise to speak your mind”.

The effects of this mechanism were also felt by the authors and participants of the film *The Ruler* which analytically and critically reframed Aleksandar Vučić as a politician and public official. In response, the television Pink showed the film *Persecution* which is a particular screen version of the text *The Elite and the Plebs*. And it was precisely the film that, with its participants and with what was spoken in it, depicted the nature of power personified in Aleksandar Vučić more colourfully than any other media monitoring or (power) analysis. In the society where the media are dominated by Aleksandar Vučić, a film emerged that offered the other side of the coin i.e. the criticism of power exercised by Aleksandar Vučić.

In *Persecution* personal dimension is predominant, whereas the dimension of social structure is set aside. Presenting their personal views as dominant arguments, film participants tentatively criticize a mythical creature called the elite of Serbia claiming that the elite has no parliamentary legitimacy because it does not participate in the elections but only knows how to criticise by turning Aleksandar Vučić and former power figures into devils. Participants of the film *Persecution* depict the participants of the film *The Ruler* as unsuccessful politicians who, if they wish to analyse, should firstly get involved in politics and win the elections. Actually, they are considered a self-proclaimed elite that do not like Serbia, deny democracy, and grew up in the period of communism, contained in their own world from which they hate toothless and ignorant people. One of the goals of the film *Persecution* is to fabricate the fear of the film *The Ruler*. The participants of the film *Persecution* feel that those who criticise Aleksandar Vučić actually criticise his voters. Those who hate Aleksandar Vučić hate Serbia i.e. the toothless people. The participants and the authors of the film *The Ruler* are turned into enemies that cause disturbances because they criticise the leader at the personal level. The participants of the film *Persecution* attack the imaginary elite and imaginary opposition and turn Aleksandar Vučić into a victim and Messiah, but also entitle him to be a persecutor.

The film depicts Vučić as God from the national anthem God of Justice i.e. the leader of people (transitional losers) who fights /wages war against the false elite that, in this mythical setup, was given the role of the devil. From voters' point of view, the false elite constitutes a minor part of society, however, when considered in terms of economy and social influence, this elite is very powerful. Its intention is to use its tremendous power, visible

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only to the President of Serbia and the Serbian Progressive Party, to come to power by prohibiting going to the polls to those who, according to Vučić, were proclaimed not worthy of elections. In this way, the author of the text, Aleksandar Vučić, projects his vision of the state of affairs and describes reality he has created through the media and the analysts he has subdued.

All of the above led to the key phenomenon of eight-year media monitoring – Industry of Populism that emerged in 2014.

The industry of populism is a technology for producing a system and structure of power based on emotionalization of relationship between the ruler, the power he personifies and the legitimisers i.e. a part of society that supports the ruler accepting him as a (pagan) deity, with the aim of dividing society into two hostile groups, where one group is the victim (the people) whereas the other group is the enemy against whom the ruler is waging decisive and fateful battles to protect the people who spawned him. The aim of the industry of populism is the subversion of public scrutiny and institutional integrity so that a form of personal power could be maintained. This produces the consequences, such as:

- Deinstitutionalisation (reduced institutional integrity),
- Disideologisation/indifference to politics (neutral or negative attitudes to politics and /or public involvement)
- Departisation (political parties do not have the capacities in terms of finance, organisation and staff); a large number of political parties is registered under the Act on Associations of Citizens
- Dominance of the narrative of power and informality over the narrative of the rule of law and the dominance of the narrative of conflicts and labelling over the narrative of dialogue and deliberation
- Dominance of mechanical solidarity over the organic one i.e. dominance of power as the regulator over the law
- Change of media functionality which from means of information, research, analysis and deliberation turns into the means of promotion, propaganda, and media retaliation;

The industry of populism is a ruling tool aided by emotionalization, personalization or discretion in politics, uprooting anything rational, impersonal and general as a precondition for public scrutiny and the republic i.e. the state.

Only the public scrutiny and the integrity of institutions, specifically the media, can stand in the way of the industry of populism. Current Serbian society holds the Regulatory Agency for Electronic Media (REM) responsible for media integrity, because it does not act in full accordance with its competencies, despite some self-critical assessments of the work of this body that came from its newly-elected members. Public service, RTS, goes hand in hand with this body and, instead of being a deliberative platform, it drags itself around the corners of the local media space, trying not to step on anyone's toes.

Their exercise of legally defined competencies is a way to create a deliberative environment that will turn the existing social conflicts and tensions into positive enticements for social dialogue about different interests and values and be a barrier to the creation of a society which digs media trenches and produces "enemies" i.e. which introduces growing social divisions that prevent any development - not only societal development but any discussion whatsoever.

An alternative solution is professional self-regulation through the Press Council. However, its scope is limited, because its competence is not recognized by all print media, which are also the biggest violators of ethical and

professional standards. Professional associations do not have sufficient influence on either the profession or the government. There is also a noticeable growth trend in the number of professional associations, some of which are newly formed and influenced by the media owners and their capital. The upward trend of deprofessionalization of the journalistic profession due to pronounced precariat of journalists, atomization of the profession - professional socialization, and development of the integrity of the profession depends on individual journalists and media newsrooms. Newsrooms lack effective mechanisms that would protect the rights of journalists. This notably refers to editorial evaluation.

Such atmosphere calls into question the exercise of citizens' rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia and its Article 46 - Freedom of Thought and Expression and Article 51 - Right to Information, which are further operationalized in Article 15 of the Law on Public Information, and Article 47 paragraph 1 of the Law on Electronic Media. This thesis is supported by the findings from two public opinion polls conducted by BIRODI in 2015 and 2019 where both surveys showed that every fifth respondent trusts the national media.

The citizens of Serbia inform themselves about the most important issues in two ways. Firstly, they inform themselves in a conventional manner, notably by watching television stations with national coverage that broadcast reports in the service of the President of the Republic of Serbia and the President of the Serbian Progressive Party and can be described as promotional and propagandist. The second type of obtaining information can fall under online (self) information on online platforms and social networks where particular media confrontation takes place between those in power that constitute a part of bot structures and active and critical public that is often subjected to threats and retaliations. Currently, such media conflicts exist only on social networks, primarily Twitter, where a culture of conflicting communication is cultivated without any idea and intention to establish an argumentative dialogue.

The situation so described will result in a further division of the public into hybrid (bots and buses), rescue/self-informing, and active public (public pockets), growth of media and civil (self) censorship (in discussions) and further socio-political activism, growth of apolitical or anti-political population, abstention, lack of social solidarity, and anomie. In a word, a process of desocialization is taking place and will directly result in the collapse of two building blocks of a democratic society: publicity and integrity, that is, it can be said that the industry of populism still "controls the situation on site."

The cure for this "virus" can be found in the Regulatory Body for Electronic Media (REM) as the supreme authority in the field of electronic media in Serbia, and in RTS as a public service.

As the author of the research that caused a stir, on the anniversary of the publication of the text *The Elite and the Plebs*, I wrote to the Presidency of Serbia in my capacity of the director of BIRODI, with the intention to show the will for a dialogue and present the actual research results that made me the subject of defamation.

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Dear Mr. President of the Republic of Serbia,

Last year, on this date, you published the text *The Elite and the Plebs* on the front page of *Politika* daily <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/433411/Elita-i-plebs> where you indirectly (not naming), by quoting the title of the text

<https://www.danas.rs/drustvo/srbija-postaje-socijalna-deponija-bolesnih-i-korumpiranih/> initiated the witch-hunt where I and the organisation headed by me as a director were made a target, a target that was threatened with beatings, a target that was mentioned on the national television by pro-government activists who demanded from the state to act against me, a target that was proposed to change its name to the Josef Mengele Institute because we conducted a fascist research, a target against which bot structures were organized www.castle.rs, and a target to which professors, business partners of the Serbian Progressive Party sent offensive e-mails that, in their rhetoric, referred to your text.

Below are the links for the content of the texts which emerged after the text you authored and which continue to pin labels but do not deny the research findings.

<https://www.ekspres.net/vesti/zivotinjska-farma> (10.7.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4xgniJfU1k&feature=youtu.be&t=8> (17.07.)

<https://www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/politika/aktuelno.289.html:806023-ANALITICAR-MEDIJA-ISTVAN-KAIG-Politicki-istrazivaci-javnog-mnjenja-iliti-segregacija---slobodomisleci-bot> (13.7)

All of the above came about after the public prosecutor was called upon by an MP to act against BIRODI.

<https://www.bizlife.rs/aktuelno/vesti-dana/martinovic-u-istrazivanju-o-glasacima-sns-vidi-krivico-delo/> (9.7.)

My text is a sociological analysis that considers the nature of the government before 2012, that is, the reason for its fall and the nature of the production of government legitimacy you epitomise. A reasonable debate on any research would require you to present your research findings that refute my findings and/or highlight my methodological errors and/or wrong conclusions based on my research material (public opinion polls, media monitoring and statistics on the state of corruption in Serbia, demography and health statistics). Instead, your response is reduced to labels and indications who should become the subject of a witch-hunt, as previous media reports have shown. I enclose the entire public opinion survey, which I conduct once a year and on which I spend about 1,500 Euros, the amount sufficient for me to achieve my research objective and analyse the state of public opinion in Serbia to the extent I determine necessary.

Respectfully,

Zoran Gavrilovic