

Annex B

Media Monitoring

1. Background

Crisis that broke out in spring 2001 has made a strong negative impact on media in Macedonia. One has to acknowledge that independent media in Macedonia indeed try their best in the beginning of the crisis to stick to professional standards in their reporting and to practise responsible journalism. Unfortunately, their coverage considerably changed later on. Biased reporting and even hate speech started gaining the ground and finally became a predominant characteristic of the coverage of the majority of media. Understanding of the own role as justification and defence of the national/ethnic cause of the “own” nation/ethnic group (patriotic journalism) largely prevails over understanding it as professional and responsible journalism.

Ethnically based segregation and polarisation within Macedonian society has never been so intensive as nowadays. Primary reason are developments itself, most of all armed clashes and impotence of political circles to resolve the crisis. However, media contribution is not negligible. By their biased reporting and hate speech against “other”, they contributed to strengthening of prejudices and stereotypes about, fear of and even hate against persons of ethnic and religious background different from “our own”.

Media in Macedonia will have very important role to play in conflict transformation, peace-building, and democratisation processes to take place. Whether their impact will positively reflect on these processes, depends on their readiness and ability to practise journalism that is in compliance with professional standards, ethics and social responsibility. Media monitoring is in this context an important tool to indicate concrete areas and direction of improvements that are necessary to make.

2. Monitoring project design

Project activities and organisation: Project consists of two main parts:

1. conducting monitoring itself – data coding, processing, analysis and producing monitoring reports
2. using reports as tool for rising level of professionalism in local media - distribution of reports within local journalist community, organising debates with local journalists and media analysts about issues that reports indicate as important, presentation of main results in media and thus making them accessible to a broader public

Partners to be local project careers for these project parts are as follows:

1. for the Monitoring activities: *Institute for Sociological, Judicial and Political Research at Skopje University*
2. for presentation and publication: *Macedonian Institute for the Media*, in co-operation with relevant journalist associations (Journalist Association of Macedonia and Associations for Broadcast Media in Macedonia)

Monitoring subject: Monitoring will focus on the following two key-subjects:

1. Reality presented by media in regard with main social and political issues, its main characteristics and manner of presentation;
2. Level of professionalism of media coverage of main social and political issues.

Monitoring goals: Methodology and monitoring instruments would be designed so that they provide data which would enable reliable interpretation and evaluation of the following levels and aspects of media coverage:

1. To what extent and in what aspects does media reality (reality presented by media) correspond to real reality, where do significant differences occur, do they occur occasionally or systematically, do they appear in context of always same issues or not;
2. Differences and similarities among realities presented in media targeting different ethnic communities as their audience: in what aspects, regarding what issues, how significantly;
3. Main images of “us” and “other” (understood as ethnically grounded categories) presented in media;
4. What professional standards are missing or are not enough consequently applied; is it a general characteristic of overall news coverage, or it occurs only or is especially occurring within coverage of some particular issues; what issues;

5. Comparison of all above listed aspects between the press (within it also between the dailies and the weeklies) and the broadcasters in the sample; between state-run and independent outlets; between country-wide and local media as well as, of course, between media in different languages who actually target different ethnic communities as their audience.

Methodology: Unit of analysis for the print media will be one text. For the broadcast media the unit of analysis is one item within news broadcast.

Combination of *quantitative and qualitative analysis* will be applied. In order to get as much as possible reliable data related to monitoring of qualitative aspects of media coverage, we will use *techniques for quantification of qualitative features* and criteria for quantification will be precisely defined. In this way eventual subjectivity of monitors will be reduced on minimum (it can never be completely eliminated). The targeted level of reliability is 80%.

Regarding part of monitoring for whose interpretation *qualitative methodology* will be applied, monitors will be requested only to literally quote parts of content which fall into categories provided in the monitoring sheet and which are precisely defined in instructions. They will simply detect sentences and parts of sentences, guided by written instructions, and then write them down in their monitoring sheet. They will not do any kind of analysis or interpretation themselves. That will be done by persons who will be engaged to work on writing of monitoring reports. The method to be applied is *framing analysis*.

The detailed methodology developed by Ms. Nena Skopljanac, program director at Medienhilfe and political scientist in media research at Berne University is available to donors.

3. Media selected for monitoring (Sample plan)

Criteria for choice of media: Only media with information coverage in a broader meaning (politics, economy, society, culture)

- a) Type of media: print (dailies, weeklies) and broadcast (TV, radio)
- b) Audience range /territorial coverage: country-wide / regional / local
- c) Language (ethnic community): Macedonian / Albanian / Roma
- d) Legal status (only those legally registered): state media / private media with information program

Media included into the sample: Based on the above listed criteria, the following media are selected to be included into the monitoring sample:

- a) print media (totally 8):
 - 1. Dailies: *Vecer, Dnevnik, Utrinski Vesnik, Vest, Flaka, Fakti*
 - 2. Weeklies: *Kapital, Lobi*
- b) broadcast media (totally 21 per month):
 - 1. TV (14): *MTV (M,) MTV (A), TV A1, TV Sitel, TV Telma, TV Kanal 5, TV Era, TVTera, TV BTR¹, TV Art, TV Zdravkin, TV Sutel, rotating 2 stations from various parts of Macedonia*
 - 2. Radio (7): *MR (M), MR (A), Channel 77, Radio Vat, Radio Plusforte, rotating 2 stations from various parts of Macedonia*

Days in the sample

- a) **print media – weeklies:** all issues that appear during period covered by separate reports
- b) **print media – dailies:** each 4th day starting from the 2nd day of a monitoring period, in order to catch specific sections appearing on different days in a week
- c) **broadcast media:** each 4th day starting from the 1st day of a monitoring period, as broadcast media are one day ahead of dailies regarding covering of actual daily developments

¹ Each separate station will not be permanently monitored. Regarding TV stations, 2 sets composed of 3 stations each (1st group: Era, Tera BTR; 2nd group: Art, Zdravkin, Sutel) will be exchanged on a monthly basis.

4. Risk and chances of the project (SWOT-Analyse)

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest professional and scientific standards applied for methodology • Directly rooted in local media community with the participation of the media involved • Direct capacity building and know-how transfer thanks to the cooperation with local partners • High profile and interest in funding shared among all organizations in the International Media Fund • Results directly to be compared in the beginning with another short-term media research financed by the European Commission (only till June 2002) • Project guaranteed for one year till end of 2002 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak local experience and expertise in media monitoring
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve professional standards in journalism • Improve scientific capacities at the University of Skopje • Increased capacities at the Macedonian Institute for the Media MIM • High profile in pre-election period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political clashes and lack of overall perspectives • Ethnic bias at the level of research and/or presentation of the data obtained • Possible attempts for political manipulation by interpreting the data and results presented

5. Results expected and criteria for evaluation (Logframe)

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Result expected</i>	<i>Criteria for evaluation</i>
Monitoring, data processing and interpretation at the University	Development of expertise	Ability to run the project properly
	Building up team of monitors	Monitors selected stay with project
Presentation of results at MIM	Direct participation of the media	Number of people attending
Presentation of results to public in Macedonia	Raising awareness and professionalism in the media	Publication of articles, public debates
Presentation of results to international institutions and public	Raising awareness about situation of the media in Macedonia	Publications, decision making based on expertise
<i>Results for the audience / the whole population:</i>	Higher level of professionalism in the media by self-regulation	Monitoring results
	Higher awareness of the situation in the country and perspectives	Stabilization and political setting of the conflict (elections)
