

Annex C

Strategic Media Development – Sustainability by networking

Preliminary list of participants: TV ERA – Skopje
TV TERA – Bitola
TV ART – Tetovo
TV ZDRAVKIN – Veles
Further stations to be included

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT

Since the independence of the Republic of Macedonia, four types of media were differentiated:

1. Public broadcasters - broadcasting program on a national and local level. These broadcasters are under the strong control of the governmental bodies (Government and Parliament) that appoint editorial and managerial staff.
2. Private media without a license that broadcast pirated programs and, as a result, disturb the market with their marketing activities.
3. Private media that have acquired a license but do not comply with the existing legislation. These media, from a program point of view, are usually music and film stations. Because of that, their costs are small, thus they use dumping marketing strategies.
4. Private media that have invested in equipment, premises, human resources and the training of staff, as well as in-house production (news, current affairs, documentaries etc.). Stations in this group of media have the greatest costs because of which they cannot compete with the other low-cost groups. That is the reason why these TV stations have exhausted themselves financially in their struggle to survive on the market. As a consequence, one of the partners has already become bankrupt.

However, despite the unfair conditions on the market, the intentions of these TV stations are to keep investing in news and current affairs programming and continue to be strong competitors of the public and national network. Due to the fact that these 4 TV stations cannot afford to link to a specific network and exchange articles, pictures, programs and projects (the Law provides for only two national private networks), an ideal way to enable the exchange of news, stories and video reports on immediate and interesting events is through telecommunication connection of the 4 TV stations. This will give them an opportunity to compete with the national networks with their news and current affairs programs from all over the country. The advantages will be coverage of national news with footage and not just bare information read by the reporter (as is the case at the moment). With such coverage, the 4 TV stations will be highly competitive on the field of news and current affairs.

The stations included in the project for longer-term development and networking (see description below) shall be supported in their capacity building in marketing and management, journalist professionalism and infrastructure as to bring them to an more equal stand on higher level. In the same time the infrastructure and know-how shall be provided to build up a network on potential commercial interest, based therewith on the interest of the stations involved. The networking shall allow common marketing (selling air-time), common acquisition of outside productions, common productions and exchange on daily basis. Telecommunication linkage for broadcasting audio and video reports related to immediate events nationwide. These TV stations cover a large percentage of the strategically important regions in the country:

- **TV ERA** - located in the capital city Skopje. TV ERA covers the place where the most important events of the social and political life in the country, both nationally and internationally, take place.
- **TV TERA** - covering the southwestern region, located in the second largest city in Macedonia, and second important place for social and political events. Geographically, it is situated only 16km from Greece, to the South, and 50km from Albania, to the West.
- **TV ART** - covering the northwestern region of Macedonia, with viewers of different ethnic background (Albanians, Macedonians, Romas, Turks), and also the seat of the two biggest political parties of the Albanians in Macedonia.
- **TV ZDRAVKIN** – located in the central region with the polluting industry and the target of political parties due to the fact that Veles, according to statistical data, is the most polluted town in Europe.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE TV STATIONS INVOLVED

2.1. TV ERA – Skopje

Name of company: TRD TV ERA DOOEL – Skopje

Name of owner: Abdula Memetaj

Established: 04.04.1994

Address: ul. Cairska br.38

Telephone number: 091/136-553, 237 087

Fax number: 091/136-553

e-mail: rtvera@freemail.org.mk

Background, history and aims of the station: TV ERA is the only station in Skopje, the capital of the Republic of Macedonia, that produces programs in Albanian language. The program schedule of TV ERA incorporates news and current affairs program, educational program, cultural program, sports, children's program, entertainment etc.

The purpose for the establishment of TV ERA, since the very beginning, was to fill in the gap for Albanian language programming, produced by an independent television.

Editorial policy: The main focus of the editorial staff of TV ERA is on news and current affairs program. Almost all of the staff of TV ERA is involved in the production of this program, bearing in mind that most of the events happen in Skopje as the capital city.

Rate of the own production programs: from a total of 13-14 hours of programming, approximately 50% is in-house production.

News and current affairs programs: consists of 4 news editions, in four time slots (3 p.m., 5.30 p.m., 9 p.m. and 12 midnight). The first editions run for 15-20 minutes, the "News Bulletin 21" lasts a minimum of 30 minutes, while the midnight news consists of flash news items that last 5-10 minutes. The agencies MIA, MAKFAX, QIK, KosovaPress, and ATA are used as sources of information.

In addition, two current and political programs are broadcasted in the weekly schedule. One of them is a debate program, with a guest in the studio from the political scene of our country, while the other program is dedicated to the immediate political situation and local level problems, meaning the city of Skopje and the nearby local self-government units.

Audience/Public aimed at (description/numbers): Potentially over 200,000.

Range/geographical area covered: Skopje and its vicinity.

2.2. TV TERA – Bitola

Name of company: TRD TV Studio TERA DOOEL – Bitola

Name of owner: Zoran Mangovski

Established: 07.04.1993

Address: Milton Manaki 21 Bitola

Telephone number: 097/22-77-31, 22-88-31

Fax number: 097/22-55-31

e-mail: teram@soros.org.mk

Background, history and aims of the station: TERA Television is an independent, private TV station that broadcasts in the southwestern region of the Republic of Macedonia. Therefore, it is a regional TV station whose news and current affairs program is the most dominant program. The program concept of this TV station also focuses on the production of non-commercial documentary projects (inter-ethnic relations, historiography, ethnology etc.), educational programs (environment, children and adult education), as well as other independent current affairs projects that reflect the image of the overall concept of an independent and modern TV subject, very popular in this part of the country. According to the strategic marketing research, TV Tera has been the most dominant media in the region for the last four years.

Editorial policy: The editorial policy of TV TERA arises from its essential organizational structure. TERA is a private TV station funded by the income generated from airtime, a small percentage from sponsorships (commercial programs) and donations. Funding is independent from the editorial and program concept of the

television, especially the current affairs program. This only proves the determination of the television to offer hard facts from all parties involved in an issue and let the audience derive its own opinion concerning a specific issue.

Rate of the own production programs: 16 hours of program broadcasted daily, of which 40% is in-house production.

News and current affairs programs: production (90 minutes per day news allocated in two big editions at 6:30 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and short afternoon and after-midnight news reviews), several current affairs magazines dedicated to immediate social and political topics in the form of interviews, debates, duels etc. presenting the opinions of different stakeholders in support of the program determination for objective, independent reporting free from journalistic commentaries, concentrating only on facts.

Audience/public aimed at (description/numbers): Potentially 300,000-350,000 viewers (Pelagonia region), of which 160,000 are confirmed every-day viewers, according to a survey. Thus, TV TERA ranges second after TV A1 in terms of audience number.

Range/geographical area covered: Bitola, Prilep, Krusevo and neighboring municipalities Dobrusevo, Novaci, Bistrica and Capari.

2.3. TV ZDRAVKIN-Veles

Name of company: TRD Zdravkin

Name of owner: Angel Zdravkin

Established: 19.01.1991

Address: ul. Dimce Mircev br.1 Veles

Telephone number: 093/32-900, 34-900

Fax number: 093/34-900

e-mail: tvzdrav@freemail.org.mk

Background, history and aims of the station: TV Zdravkin is a local TV station focusing on news and current affairs programs that cover economic, educational, cultural, sports and other topics of interest. It is the only legal TV station in Veles.

Editorial policy: The Editor-in-Chief is in charge of the editing and conceptualization of the program, in cooperation with the reporters from the Current Affairs Department. TV Zdravkin is a self-funded and independent medium.

Rate of the own production programs: 4,5 hours daily in-house production.

News and current affairs programs: 20 minutes of local and regional news based on the concept of articles, reviews, commentaries, surveys, etc. are broadcasted daily. Within the framework of current affairs programming, 150 minutes per day are broadcasted on immediate topics from the region covered by the television station.

Audience/Public aimed at (description/numbers): Potentially 60,000.

Range/geographical area covered: Veles, neighboring settlements Prevalec and Basino Selo, and the surrounding villages.

2.4. TV ART – Tetovo

Name of company: PTUP “AR-KOM” – Tetovo

Name of owner: Artan Skenderi

Established: 1991

Address: Ohridska 18, Tetovo

Telephone number: 094/33-15-85

Fax number: 094/33-15-85

e-mail: tvart@soros.org.mk

Editorial policy: Independent

Special programs/ current affairs programs: news, talk shows, political programs, documentaries, women’s and children’s program

Range/geographical area covered: Tetovo, Gostivar/Polog region

Number of potential viewers within range: approximately 320,000

Actual number of viewers reached: 280,000–300 000 (Polog)

Special programs, documentaries, etc. 1,200,000 viewers (for exchanged program)

Satellite broadcasting (special programs) TVSH , RTK- 10–12 million viewers.

2.5. Further stations to be included

The assessment with local TV stations is ongoing as to find out about other possible partners to be included in the project. Stations evaluated up to now include TV broadcasters in Kumanovo and Struga region. The project therefore has to be kept flexible as to show the highest benefit by adapting to the developments.

3. PROJECT REALISATION

Preliminary assessments and talks were held. A preliminary technical project description is available including the budget, but as the networking develops with the stations, the technical standards will have to be revised regularly. The details and ways of cooperation of the TV stations will be defined together with the partners.
