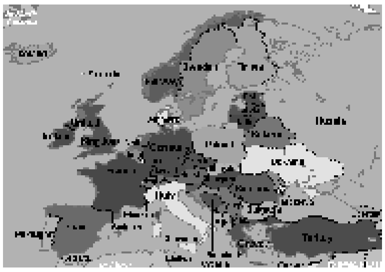
European Federation of Journalists

EASTERN EMPIRES

FOREIGN OWNERSHIP IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN MEDIA:
Ownership, Policy Issues and Strategies



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PREFACE

In 2002 the EFJ published a report entitled *European Media Ownership: Threats on the Landscape*. The report was part of an EFJ project about the impact of globalisation on European media, focusing on a survey of media ownership within, mainly, European Union countries.

This second report complements the other by analysing media ownership in Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, including the countries, which will form part of an enlarged European Union. The report presents startling details on the extent of foreign ownership and highlights a number of important trends and policy issues that are having an impact on the development of media policy and media ownership within these CEE countries and in the European Union in general.

Foreign investment in CEE countries can bring benefits in terms of greater resources, improved management and increased independence from national political elites. However, there are also strong indications that aggressive commercial policies are being pursued at the expense of journalistic standards, threatening pluralism and undermining journalists' professional and social rights. Journalists in CEE countries are particularly vulnerable to this downward pressure due to the weaknesses of their trade unions.

In response to such threats, the EFJ is demanding an urgent trade union building campaign with the support of established unions in the parent companies. In particular, the EFJ promotes the use of European Works Councils in order to develop trans-national bodies for staff representatives.

Another concern is the role and impact of US media within Europe. This has been the subject of intense debate over the years, starting with the rise of Hollywood, the international popularity of its films from the 1940s and its impact on filmmaking in European countries, through to the emergence of global media groups like Viacom, AOL Time Warner, Disney and News Corporation today.

This report analyses both the encroachment of major European media groups into the CEE countries and the extent of US media ownership and influence within the region. The report also focuses on CEE countries media as the enlargement of the European Union begins; the potential threat of the new round of General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) negotiations to public service broadcasting; the shape and content of a revised *Television Without Frontiers* directive; and the lobbying by US government, media and advertising organisations to ensure media policy outcomes favourable to their interests.

Sections of the report, dealing with European ownership in CEE countries, were diligently researched and written by **Adrien Collin,** who worked for three months at the EFJ/IFJ. **Granville Williams** added to this material, contributed the introduction and material on US media ownership in CEE countries, and edited the final text for publication.

This work demands regular updates, as changes in the structures of media ownership occur almost daily and thus the EFJ and IFJ will produce regular web-based updates (www.ifj.org). A difficulty in finding correct data is another problem found especially in South Eastern Europe, where lack of transparency is still the rule and not the exception.

The report is a product of the IFJ's Media for Democracy in Southeast Europe project, which is supported by the European Commission.

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June 2003

INTRODUCTION

Donald Rumsfeld, the U.S. Defence Secretary, made his controversial remarks about 'Old' and 'New' Europe when he divided CEE countries into sceptics and supporters of U.S. policy towards Iraq. He briefly drew attention to a region of Europe which otherwise receives scant attention either in news coverage or in the business press. But an enlarged European Union will include 450 million citizens and accrue 20% of global economic activity. Indeed one CEO (Chief Executive Officer), Jeffrey Immelt of General Electrics, believes that the new states joining the European Union could prove, in the short term, to be a more lucrative market than China. (*Media Tenor*, 2/2003, p 15)

This report is one contribution to closing the information gap and building awareness of one aspect of economic activity in CEE countries, which few people are aware of – the growing domination of the media by foreign media groups through a process of market colonization which has taken place since 1989. This report provides dramatic evidence of the sheer scale and domination of sections of the media by foreign media groups, which have moved into many CEE countries. The old state monopoly of sections of the media, particularly the press, has been replaced by commercial monopolies.

The enlargement of the European Union poses particular problems and raises issues in terms of media concentration and the promotion of policies to protect media diversity. The CEE countries, which will form part of an enlarged European Union, comprise: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. (The other countries, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey fall outside the remit of this study).

Within these CEE countries there are wide variations in attitudes and policies towards media regulation, ownership, and the status of public service broadcasting. For example, in Poland a parliamentary inquiry has been taking place since February into allegations that Lew Rywin, a film producer, solicited a bribe of some $17.5m on behalf of the ruling (ex-communist) Democratic Left in return for amendments to a proposed media law that would let Agora, publisher of Poland's best-selling daily newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, move into television. The inquiry is exposing murky ties between politicians, media companies and regulatory officials.

The regulatory bodies that have been established to oversee broadcast media are, in many CEE countries, appointed by political elites who want to ensure continuing control over areas of the media. This trend raises issues of democratic accountability and transparency in the appointment of people to oversee the work of these bodies, and the basis for the allocation of broadcasting licences.

The report documents the role and involvement of foreign company ownership of the media in the CEE countries poised to join the EU. The main investors are media groups from Germany, Scandinavia and Switzerland. However there is an increasing presence of US-based global media groups (Viacom, Disney, AOL Time Warner), other US-owned groups (Scandinavian Broadcasting Services, Central European Media Enterprises), along with a plethora of advertising agencies and lobbying groups keen to pursue policies which promote growing commercialisation and deregulation of the media and challenge restrictions on advertising. This aspect of

American activity and influence conflicts with the principles, which have guided the development of media policy within the European Union.

One of these principles, embodied in Article 10.1 of the European Convention on Human Rights, guarantees the right to freedom of expression. Judgements by the European Court of Human Rights give increasing weight to the social, cultural, political and democratic role of the media. As a recent report comments, 'Article 10 of the Convention not only enshrines an individual right to media freedom, but also entails a duty to guarantee pluralism of opinion and cultural diversity of the media in the interests of a functioning democracy and of freedom of information for all. Pluralism is thus a basic general rule of European media policy.' (*Media Diversity in Europe*, Council of Europe, 2002, p.7)

Cultural diversity, and the importance of European media reflecting cultural diversity as an integral part of European identity, is also an important concept. It was one reason for the *Television Without Frontiers* directive, first implemented in 1989, which required broadcasters to transmit at least 50% of European originated programmes on their channels. There was an important qualifier, 'where practicable', which has allowed U.S. film channels and channels aimed at children like Nickelodeon, Fox Kids and Cartoon Network, transmitted by cable and satellite, to ignore this. It is also important to remember that the phrase was inserted as a result of a heavy piece of American lobbying when President Ronald Reagan telephoned Margaret Thatcher asking her to intervene in the directive's wording. It was the then Foreign Secretary, John Major, who had the clause inserted. (John Cole, *As It Seemed To Me*, 1995, p.247)

The view of American media groups, and successive American governments, has been that broadcasting should be treated like any other commercial activity, (for example goods or services), and that quotas such as those imposed by the *TWF* directive are anti-free trade and should be discarded. There is at present an intense effort going on to weaken the *TWF* directive (already delayed – it was meant to be revised and implemented in December 2002 and the new deadline is the end of 2003). This is relevant to the CEE countries joining the enlarged EU because, as part of the accession process, they are required to incorporate the directive into their own broadcasting law.

One of the key areas lobbyists are focusing on is advertising. Advertising is at the centre of a commercialised culture, but it doesn't just happen; it requires advertiser-friendly policies and regulations to allow it to flourish. One objective of groups like the World Federation of Advertisers is to move from regulation to self-regulation and get what it sees as the restrictive controls and limits on advertising removed from a future *TWF* directive. This issue has generated lobbying activity from a coalition of interests, including companies, which use television to advertise their products to children, advertising agencies, and global media groups with a proliferation of channels aimed at children.

It is clear that the U.S. commercial broadcasting model stands in stark contrast to the concepts of media pluralism and diversity, which still shape debates on media policy in Europe. The U.S. has also been a driving force on trade liberalisation through the WTO (World Trade Organisation) and GATT (General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs).

In the current round of GATS negotiations its position is that it favours complete liberalisation of trade in audiovisual goods so that the sector would be treated like any other commodity or service. The European Union on the other hand believes that the audiovisual field has a special position, and should be totally exempt from any liberalisation measures. There is also a concern that liberalisation would also accelerate the 'Americanisation' of culture and the loss of European national and regional cultural values.

What is interesting however is that the main focus of US-based media groups has been in the film and audio-visual areas of the media, rather than the print media. Indeed Marty Pompadur, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation European chairman, has explicitly excluded this area for expansion: 'We are not interested in non-English language publishing – it's too political to own newspapers in some European markets.' It has been European-based media groups, which have been in the forefront of expansion into print media ownership in CEE countries.

PRESS CONCENTRATION: THREATS TO PLURALISM

There is a clear issue of concern about the high levels of ownership of local, regional and national newspapers and magazine publishing in CEE countries by European media groups. For example, the domination of the German print media group, Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung (WAZ), in Bulgaria and a number of other CEE countries and the Bavarian-based PNP in the regional press of the Czech Republic and Poland. Bertelsmann also have maintained a presence through their print division, Gruner + Jahr. The Norwegian media group, Orkla, owns or has a majority share in one national and 13 local newspapers in Poland. Other Scandinavian groups are active in the Baltic CEE countries and the Finnish media group, Sanoma, through its magazines division, operates in five CEE countries.

In some CEE countries European media groups have taken control of national newspaper titles but in the main the dominance rests in regional press ownership. The regional press plays a crucial role in the dissemination of news and information. Indeed the key democratic notion of local and regional newspapers is that they have their roots in the locality, and are identified and report on the range of life – social, political, economic and cultural – of the town or region they are based in. If local papers are part of larger foreign-owned groups, key decisions about investment and staffing are likely to be taken by owners in another country, and this crucial relationship is weakened or disappears as commercial considerations become dominant.

In addition there is the danger that as media groups from elsewhere in Europe acquire newspapers in CEE countries, they do not pay enough attention to training, pay and the status and independence of journalists in carrying out their work. The gap between practices in the country of origin, where social partnership agreements with journalists and their trade unions may be well established, and those in media operations in CEE countries, can be very wide.

Of course the ownership of large sections of regional and local newspapers by one newspaper group is not specific to CEE countries. Horizontal integration is common in all newspaper markets, particularly regional markets. Chain ownership of clusters of titles spreads the costs of producing a newspaper because printing, marketing, advertising sales and other tasks can be centralised and cost savings achieved across the production chain for all newspapers owned by the organisation. We can see this clearly in operation by analysing the strategies and ownership patterns of newspaper companies, which have moved into CEE countries.

Where media groups do own national newspapers in CEE countries they have other important responsibilities in terms of the role of the press as a watchdog and investigator of abuses of power by political groups, governments, business or other agencies. There are particular problems in the transition of ownership from newspapers formerly under the strict control of the state in Communist regimes. It is important for editors and journalists to have a clear sense of their vital democratic role to provide accurate, independent reporting, free from political pressures, but also to resist the temptation, for political or commercial considerations, to self-censor reports which might cause problems with power structures within a country.

THE MAIN PRINT MEDIA GROUPS IN COUNTRIES

Passauer Neue Presse (PNP)

This group is one of the largest publishers of regional newspapers in Europe. Apart from its operations in Germany (*Passauer Neue Presse*: 15 local editions and a daily circulation of 180,000) and Austria (*Oberösterreichische Rundschau*: a weekly with 12 regional editions in upper Austria and a Sunday free paper delivered to 500,000 households in the same region) the group has furthered its ownership of titles in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia.

VGP are based in the Bavarian city of Passau, (near the border to Austria and the Czech Republic), and from 1990 started to acquire regional daily publishing rights in Bohemia. In the mid-1990s, it obtained titles in Prague and in 2001 the last independent regional titles in Moravia coupled with two national dailies in Prague, giving it almost 100% of the regional newspaper market, and a part of the national newspaper market.

WAZ

The German media giant, **Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung (WAZ)**, has a European empire of more than 130 newspapers. The group expanded through the acquisition of regional papers in West Germany and Austria and, post-1989, in CEE countries. It is the second largest German newspaper publisher, after Axel Springer.

One of WAZ's four managing directors, Bodo Hombach, and the former coordinator of the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe, is clear about the potential for further commercial expansion in the enlarged EU, possibly in cooperation with other German publishing houses. Recently WAZ, already co-owner of the Belgrade daily, *Politika*, acquired the Podgorica daily, *Vijesti*, and there are reports that it wants to acquire another Serbian paper, the Novi Sad daily, *Dnevnik*.

In terms of his approach to publishing, Mr. Hombach stresses a much sharper commercial approach and also highlights cooperation with advertisers. He believes that regional newspapers have to change from being just carriers of local and regional news in order to attract more readers.

WAZ sits in a dominant position in Bulgaria due to its ownership of **the Bulgarian News Group** and through its control of the **168 Chasa Media Group and Media**

Holdings. It has the two largest and most influential dailies, *24 Tschassa* and *Dneven Trud*, and dominates regional newspapers and magazine publishing.

In Croatia WAZ has a 50% stake in **Europa Press Holdings (EPH)** and publishes two dailies, and 11 magazines, including the weekly news magazine, *Globus*. The Trade Union of Croatian Journalists (TUCJ) has recently signed an important collective house agreement with EPH.

WAZ also publishes five dailies in Hungary and has a stake in two Romanian newspapers.

Axel Springer Verlag

Axel Springer Verlag claims to be the largest newspaper publishing company in Europe. *Bild* is the best selling national daily in Europe, with sales of around 4.5m. There are reports that the company intends to launch a Polish edition of *Bild* in about 12 months time. Apart from Hungary, where Springer publishes eight daily regional papers and one Sunday title, its main focus in CEE countries is magazine publishing. It publishes 16 magazines in Hungary, 14 in Poland and 8 in Romania but it is active in other CEE countries as well.

Ringier

In the late '80s, Switzerland largest publishing house Ringier, took advantage of the opportunity to invest in Central and Eastern Europe's newly liberalised markets. Today, Ringier publishes more than 20 newspapers and magazines in Romania, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

Orkla

Orkla Media is a division of a Norwegian conglomerate. It has newspaper interests in Denmark, Norway and Sweden and owns the largest regional newspaper in Lithuania, *Kauno diena*. It also owns two regional newspapers in the Ukraine.

In Poland Orkla owns 51% of **Presspublica**, publisher of the Warsaw-based national broadsheet daily, *Rzeczpospolita*. It also owns 13 local daily newspapers, and recently purchased *Gazeta Lubuska*, one of the country's largest local newspapers, making it one of Poland's biggest media groups with a market share of 23%.

A European Works Council was established in March 2001, covering Denmark, Sweden and Norway and links are now being built to bring the Polish employees of Orkla into the EWC. **Orkla Media** have also issued an important document stating its publishing principles, which are very relevant to the environment within which newspapers operate in CEE countries, but especially regarding its papers in the Ukraine.

PUBLISHING PRINCIPLES FOR ORKLA MEDIA

- Orkla Media is dedicated to defending freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of information and the values of democracy.
- Orkla Media respects, within this framework, the identity and local traditions of its publications and, regardless of ideology, defends and supports their freedom and independence.
- Orkla Media respects the principles of journalism in the democratic world and, within the framework of the objects clause of its individual publications - as well as joint editorial declarations - defends the independent position of the

editor. Neither governments, owners, advertisers nor any other interest groups are entitled to interfere.

The company intends to implement these principles throughout the whole organisation through seminars and briefing meetings, and violation of the principles will not be tolerated. They provide a model, which other international media groups operating in CEE countries should emulate.

US MEDIA GROUPS: OWNERSHIP AND STRATEGIES

In terms of U.S. exports, film and television products rank with aircraft sales as the top categories. The U.S. government, trade organisations like the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), and global media groups like Viacom and AOL Time Warner, are not disinterested bystanders in terms of the way legislation at national and European level develops. They all actively lobby in different ways to ensure the protection of U.S. media interests. Four factors are important in assessing the role and impact of U.S. media within CEE countries.

First of all, one of the unintended consequences of the 1989 *TWF* directive was that the policy to allow Europe-wide satellite networks was seized by a new generation of broadcasters, and this resulted in the development of a number of satellite and cable channels which relied heavily, or exclusively, on U.S. programming. Many U.S. media groups based their Europe-wide operations in the United Kingdom because during the 1980s the Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher adopted broadcasting deregulation.

Secondly, there are a number of U.S. media companies which own television, radio, publishing and other media outlets, like outdoor advertising, within Europe. These we document below.

Thirdly, there is the promotion and sale of U.S. television programming to different media organisations, which want to show U.S. films and television series on their own national channels. The *TWF* Directive has the 50% quota on European broadcasting for economic and cultural reasons precisely because there was a fear that otherwise US programming would become dominant over European broadcasting systems.

Finally, there is the link between what is a central feature of U.S. media – the delivery of audiences to advertisers to sell their products – and the concerns of U.S. advertising and media groups to lobby for the relaxation of advertising controls both on terrestrial television and on new media, including the Internet and interactive TV, within the European Union. Whereas some European CEE countries limit or even ban advertising on programmes watched by young children, U.S. media groups see children as an important commercial market, and oppose such limitations on advertising. Globalisation means that brands seek to find new ways to reach audiences including product placement, and the marriage of editorial/entertainment and commercialism. In the U.S. Robert McChesney and John Bellamy Foster have documented the disturbing extent of this commercial tidal wave and its impact on U.S. media. (*Monthly Review*, March 2003)

U.S. MEDIA GROUPS

Viacom

It is one of the top five global media groups, providing a number of thematic channels across CEE countries.

MTV has a 'think globally, act locally' philosophy and **MTV Europe** was launched in 1987, and distributed by cable, satellite and terrestrial services. It is now broadcast on every digital platform in Europe and in May 2002 launched its latest, **MTV Romania,** which combines locally-produced Romanian-language programming, a music play-list tailored to Romanian music tastes combined with MTV's international programme inventory.

Other channels include **Nickelodeon** and **Noggin** for children, **Comedy Central**, the movie channels **Showtime** and **The Movie Channel**. All of these channels can draw on the films and programmes which Viacom has through its ownership of **Paramount Films**, the U.S. **CBS** television network and a huge array of publishing, radio and other media assets.

The Walt Disney Company

A paradigm of the global media company, present in every sector of media activity: film and television production (owners of the U.S. television network, **ABC**), broadcasting (both free-to-air and thematic), home video, licensing, merchandising and theme parks.

The Disney Channel was launched in the UK in 1995 and its strategy is to either make a local language feed available, (beamed in via satellite), or to place a block of programming on a network, which is branded with their name.

Disney also acquired **Fox Family Worldwide** in 2001 and has a majority stake in **Fox Kids Europe**, based in Amsterdam. It has channels in Poland and Romania, and is also the largest distributor of children's programming in Europe, with distribution in over 50 CEE countries in Europe and the Middle East.

AOL Time Warner

Loaded down by a massive burden of debt and the collapse of the share price value of AOL, the company is still a major global player. **AOL Time Warner Europe** is the division, which coordinates its European operations.

The following divisions are active in CEE countries:
- **HBO** is available in Bulgaria, Czech republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia;
- **New Line Cinema** Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland;
- **Time Inc** Hungary, Poland, Romania;
- **Turner Broadcasting**. **Cartoon Network** draws on the Hanna Barbera, Warner Bros and MGM animation library. It started satellite feeds in Europe in 1994, has eight branded channels and is available across all CEE countries;
- **Warner Bros Entertainment** Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland;
- **Warner Music** Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia.

Liberty Media

Based in Denver, Colorado the company is run by John Malone, who built up his cable empire, TCI, in the U.S. before selling it to the giant telecoms group, AT&T, for $54bn in 1999. Liberty Media has a 76% stake in the pan-European cable group, **UPC**, through its cable subsidiary, **UnitedGlobalCom (UGC)**. **UPC** also has a 20% stake in **SBS** (see below). However UPC, the largest cable company in Europe, is in a precarious financial position and is going through a financial restructuring which will leave Malone with a 50% share. Liberty's head of investment, Mike Erickson, said, 'When we first looked at Europe the pie was quite big; unfortunately it isn't anymore. Fundamentally we're an opportunistic company and opportunities are now cropping up in the U.S. that weren't there before.'

UPC is present in 17 European markets and in May 2002 had about 8.5m subscribers to its cable services. In CEE countries it is active in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Slovak Republic. John Riordan, the President of the European Cable Communications Association (ECCA), is also the CEO of UPC. The ECCA conference in Prague (9-11 April) had the theme *Broadband Cable in an enlarged eEurope*.

Central European Media Enterprises Ltd (CME)

A Bermuda-based company, run by Chief Executive and multimillionaire, Ronald Lauder, operates commercial television stations in CEE countries, with controlling interests in five leading stations: Slovakia, **Markiza TV** (80%) and **KANAL A** (90%); Slovenia, **POP TV** (86%); Romania, **PRO TV** (66%) and Ukraine, **Studio 1+1** (60%)

CME also started **TV Nova**, in the Czech Republic in 1994, as a joint venture with six Czechs and Slovaks. The station, broadcasting popular programming, (including pornography), accounted for an astounding 70% of the audience at one stage. Vladimir Železný one figure who came to prominence, took control of the TV station from CME.

Lauder filed a complaint in August 1999 against the government for a breach of an investment treaty signed with the US government in 1991. The long and tortuous dispute with the Czech government and regulatory authorities for compensation was completed when an international arbitration panel ruled in March 2003, that the Czech government must pay CME compensation of €270m ($355m) for failure to protect CME business activities in the Czech Republic. Fred Klinkhammer, CME chief executive, said it was unlikely that that CME would resume operations in the Czech Republic but hinted that CME would bid for a TV licence in Croatia and explore other opportunities in Latvia, Poland and Hungary.

Scandinavian Broadcasting System SA

A Luxembourg registered company but U.S.-controlled and run by Executive Chairman, Harry Sloan. SBS was founded in Scandinavia, where it has 19 radio stations in Denmark, Sweden and Finland. It expanded by buying TV stations in Belgium and the Netherlands. From 1998, it began to acquire stations in Hungary and Slovenia, followed by Poland, Romania and Hungary.

In its 2001 report, filed by the Securities and Exchange Commission in May 2002, **UPC Investments**, a subsidiary of the cable company **UPC** owned by John Malone's **Liberty Media**, had a 21.2% share in the company. Another investor is **CanWest** (7.2%). The company has 12 television and 20 radio stations across 11 CEE countries in Europe and claims a 'European broadcasting footprint reaching 140 million people' with 'entertainment driven programming focusing on young target groups'. In CEE countries, it has interests in three television stations which all have the same formats and approaches as entertainment and game shows like *Who Wants To be A Millionaire?*, *Kids Say The Darndest Things* and blockbuster movies. SBS has deals with major Hollywood studios like Warner Bros and Dreamworks, and rights to ENDEMOL formats, which enable it to do this. SBS has a policy of group-buying, which enables it to use television and film products acquired internationally on its different channels. The company report states that 80% of programming hours were filled with international acquisitions, while locally produced programming only accounted for 20%. Interestingly the report states that this 20% of locally produced programming represented 61% of total programming costs but 'locally produced programming generates an audience magnet effect' and reinforces the local image of the station.

The SBS report also goes into detail about another service, i.e. as a leading provider of subtitling and localization services in Europe, through a company, Broadcast Text International, which has approximately 35% of the international broadcast sub-titling market in Europe. 'Feature films and successful international series are acquired and then subtitled or dubbed into the local language. Their suppliers include: Paramount, Dreamworks, the Walt Disney Company, Sony Television, Universal Studios, Time Warner, 20th Century Fox, the BBC (United Kingdom), Beta-Taurus (Germany), Venevision (Venezuela) and Protele (Mexico).'

SBS also have an agreement with **Viacom** to broadcast rights of the Paramount Television group which gives access to 14,500 series episodes and 2,000 films. Clearly SBS is a major conduit for the provision of a range of US programming for its own stations across Europe, but also for other stations wanting dubbed or sub-titled US films and television programmes.

In **Hungary**, **TV2** was the first commercial broadcaster in the country. SBS has a 49% voting interest and an 84% economic interest in the station. The station 'provides entertaining and informative programmes targeted at the young, urban population'. According to figures in the company report, out of an average broadcasting day of 21,5 hours, locally produced programming represented an average of four hours, and the remainder American-produced programmes broadcast in Hungarian such as *The A-Team*, *Friends* and *Hercules*. Leading advertisers include Procter and Gamble, Unilever, Sara Lee, Henkel and Beierdorf.

In **Romania**, SBS has a 40% stake in the **Prima TV** channel, which covers 87% of the country through satellite-to-cable distribution. The balance between foreign-produced programmes subtitled in Romanian, and locally-produced programmes of *Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?* and *Kids Say The*

Darndest Things was 50%. Advertisers, apart from mobile phone companies, included Kraft Foods, McDonald's and Wrigley's.

In **Poland** SBS has a 33% stake in the **TVN** station. American-produced programmes are subtitled, voiced-over or dubbed in Polish. Leading advertisers include Unilever, GlaxoSmithKline, Danone, Colgate Palmolive, Coca Cola, SC Johnson and Nestle.

MEDIA GLOBALISATION

One of the charges against global corporations is that they offer the same products everywhere, benefiting from global economies of scale in production, distribution, marketing and management with the result that products are standardised and a homogenized global culture is emerging. It is a charge made against US-based global media groups like AOL Time Warner and Walt Disney, particularly after they stated their intention to move more aggressively to expand their markets in Europe and the Asia-Pacific regions. Has this happened?

The evidence suggests that global media corporations have become acutely aware that the 'one size fits all' approach, which production of a standardised global product implies, does not make commercial sense in certain areas, particularly television programming, where cultural and other factors are important in determining the viewing choices of audiences.

It is not the intention, in focusing on the role of US media in CEE countries, to present a stark warning that they will sweep European originated programming away. Indeed the evidence suggests that although there has been an explosion in the number of domestic and transnational programmes and channels, domestic audiences have tended to watch a limited number of channels with a preference for nationally produced programmes in prime time. U.S. media companies have, in some cases, recognised the resistance to purely American material. CNN, for example, is now 'de-Americanised'. Whereas in 1996, 70% of the English-language version of CNN was American, the share now is 8%. However it is the case that, for example, on the thematic children's channels they invest relatively little in local production, preferring to use their channels as an outlet for the new output from U.S. studios or for archive programming.

The strategy of 'think globally, act locally' is evident in the way News Corporation operates in CEE countries. Marty Pompadur is Rupert Murdoch's European Chairman, and a member of his inner-circle group who briefs the media mogul on possible deals, industry trends and potential regulatory and political risks. In a revealing profile of Pompadur, the *Financial Times* (20 May, 2003) commented: 'He acts as Murdoch's envoy and dealmaker in EC countries such as Italy and Germany, and increasingly in Russia and Eastern Europe. 'From a venture capital point of view, News Corp strategy remains directed to Eastern Europe,' Pompadur says. News Corporation has acquired a leading position in outdoor advertising, and is the largest outdoor advertising company in Russia. It has the leading commercial TV company in Bulgaria, BTV, claiming 40% of audience share and 65% of the advertising market, and a news report announced in May 2003 that News Corporation has submitted an application to operate a newly privatised radio and television channel in Croatia in association with a Croatian telecoms and industrial group. The report said that the plan was to create CTV as a broadly based local station depending on local news and content.

I. BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

The media in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) are an exceptional case. After ten years of violence and war, things are only changing slowly. The Communications Regulatory Agency (CRA) is the independent agency, which operates as the regulator in the field of broadcasting. When running the process of granting licences, the CRA makes the distinction between media financed through public or private funds and whether they are domestic or foreign. That is because the licensing process is different for private and public broadcasters in Bosnia. Foreign companies who wish to work in BiH have to register with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

For the moment, no foreign companies have interests in the broadcasting sector except Radio Yugoslavia on short wave. That is the only foreign media licensed by CRA. SFOR stations operating in the country with special status could also be considered as foreign broadcasters.

In the past, foreign institutions and funds have been invested in Bosnia in order to rebuild the media landscape. An example of that foreign involvement is TV OBN (Open Broadcast Network), founded and financed by several countries. The management was exclusively in the hands of foreigners. Another example is the radio network FERN. FERN began broadcasting in 1996 with the aim of breaking the information blockade in Bosnia-Herzegovina and providing independent and objective information about the implementation of the peace agreement and the election campaign. The radio's good start persuaded its foreign donors, among them the government of Switzerland and later the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), to support the radio until the 2001 elections[i]. Radio FERN was considered a popular and trusted countrywide news and information radio network.

Radio FERN is now integrated into the Public Broadcast Service (PBS) of Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with elements of Radio Bosnia and Herzegovina and Radio RTRS. The radio service operates under the name Bosnia and Herzegovina Radio1[ii].

II. BULGARIA

Bulgaria will accede to the EU in 2007 if it maintains its policy of structural reforms. It was one of the last East European CEE countries to pass a broadcasting law in July 1996, after some six years of preparation. As a result of this delay and in the absence of proper legislation, the expansion of commercial operations and the proper development of the public sector suffered a great deal. There were serious criticisms about lack of transparency in the licensing of broadcast media and allegations of corruption against politicians responsible for prices and regulation.

A new Radio and Television Act in 2001 created the Council for Electronic Media (CEM), the regulatory body responsible for overseeing public service broadcasting and the licensing and regulation of commercial broadcasting. Representatives are chosen by the Parliament and the President, and it has been accused of acting in the interests of the ruling party. The CEM has been accused of dismissing directors of Bulgarian National Television and Bulgarian National Radio, and replacing them with ruling party supporters.

An independent body called the Bulgarian Media Coalition (BMC), representing media owners, organisations in press and broadcasting, campaigns for improved media transparency, the rights of journalists, and the independence of regulatory bodies.

The Union of Bulgarian Journalists is a member of the BMC whereas the Union of Journalists of Bulgaria (Podkrepa) left it in may 2003. The two unions run the Bulgarian Media Observatory that promotes ethics and journalists rights and is lobbying for a national self-regulatory body for the media.

Pressures on the press come from both government and criminal organisations. In 2001, the Bulgarian Prosecutor's Office harassed two Sofia-based papers, *Dnevnic* and *Capital*, based on their investigations into the 20-year criminal record of the brother of a highly-placed government official. Violence against journalists from the Bulgarian mafia is accompanied by death threats to the journalists for meddlesome reporting.

Mafia links are also suspected. In 2000 Michael Chorny, a Russian citizen and publisher of three newspapers, was extradited because of his links with the Russian mafia, but he continues to operate the three newspapers.

Foreign media investors entered Bulgaria at the beginning of 1997 when the German **WAZ** group bought **168 Chassa pressGroup**, the owner of several titles and dailies. In effect, the old state newspaper monopoly gave way to a foreign corporate monopoly. Rupert Murdoch became the second foreigner when he launched the first private TV (*bTV*) in 2000. By January 2003 it had become the most popular channel, with 49% of viewers. In the same year, the Antenna Group from Greece bought 100% of *Nova Televisiya* and *Radio Express*.

A. GERMAN OWNERS

WAZ

The biggest owner in the Bulgarian market is the German media group Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung (WAZ). In 1997, WAZ bought the two largest and most influential dailies *24 Tschassa*, the first private paper in Bulgaria and *Trud*. However, it was necessary to bankrupt them first. There was a lawsuit in which WAZ was accused of attempting to monopolise the publishing, distribution, advertising and printing as well as regional press markets. During recent years, the regional and local newspapers have flourished. This has occurred in spite of the limited advertising market, which remains a huge obstacle for the financial survival of regional and local papers. WAZ, through Zeitungs Gruppe Bulgarien, has a strong position financially and operationally. In fact, in recent years, the local editions of WAZ have put many of the local newspapers out of business[iii].

The national magazine market is also dominated by WAZ. Attempts to establish social and political quality magazines have been unsuccessful leaving magazines containing domestic and foreign gossip and news about celebrities dominate this market[iv]. Even if WAZ is suspected of organising a monopoly, pluralism of views is evident in Bulgarian newspapers. They are often extremely critical of the government, a stance also taken by the two biggest dailies owned by WAZ[v].

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership share
24 Tschassa	Newspaper	150000	100%
Utro	Newspaper		100%
Dneven Trud	Newspaper	320000	70%
Nosten Trud	Newspaper	50000	70%
Jalt Trud	Magazine	380000	100%
Auto trud	Magazine	20000	100%
Lud trud	Magazine	31000	100%
Zeitung für die Frau	Magazine	120000	100%
168 Tschassa	Magazine	80000	100%
Bulgarische farmer	Magazine	45000	100%
Hi-Club	Magazine	35000	100%
Ideales Haus	Magazine	20000	100%
Mediya Sviyat	Magazine		100%
Zeitschrift für die Frau	Magazine	10000	100%

SPRINGER

Springer is the other German player in Bulgaria and it publishes an "import" magazine called *Auto Bild Bulgaria*, the national version of the famous German published magazine *Auto Bild*.

B. GREEK OWNERS

ANTENNA GROUP

The Greek Antenna TV SA[vi] is currently the third largest foreign investor in the country after WAZ and News Corporation. In 2000, the media group owned by the businessman Minos Kiriaku, bought shares in *Nova Televisiya* (Nova TV) and *Radio Express*. Originally launched in 1998, *Nova TV* broadcast the first news programme on a private channel and the first 24-hour programme in the capital Sofia. Antenna TV SA also confirmed its intention to stay in the Bulgarian market and to improve Antenna's presence in Bulgaria.

Recently, a Bulgarian court ordered the withdrawal of the national broadcasting licence won by *Nova TV*. The court decision came after an appeal from the consortium, Media Broadcasting Services, which included the Swedish Modern Times Group. Media Broadcasting Services accused the authorities and *Nova TV* of lacking transparency in terms of the criteria for selection in the licensing procedure. *Nova TV* was awarded the licence for national broadcasting after an auction in November 2000 and having been acquired by Antenna in August 2000[vii].

C. NON-EUROPEAN OWNERS

NEWS CORPORATION

News Corporation, owned by Rupert Murdoch is also present in Central Europe and particularly in Bulgaria. The giant media company holds 100% of *bTV* through Balkan News Corporation, a subsidiary of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation. *bTV* was launched as the first national private television on Efir2 frequencies (Efir2 was the second channel of Bulgarian National Television), which ceased broadcasting on June 1, 2000. On October 1, 2000 *bTV* started broadcasting an 18-hour day programme containing news, sports and entertainment. Through Balkan News Corporation, Murdoch has had the *bTV* broadcasting license for the last 10 years.

EUROCOM

Close to 60% of Bulgaria's TV householders (1.76m) are cable customers. US financier George Soros entered the Bulgarian cable market through the Southeast Europe Equity Fund (SEEF), run and sponsored by Soros Private Funds Management. SEEF bought a majority interest in cable operator Eurocom in November 2001, and is committed to spending USD10 million to develop its networks and broadband access. The main focus of its investment has been around the capital, Sofia but it is expanding in other towns.

Eurocom offers a standard cable package of 68 channels, of which 20 are Bulgarian.

D. CONCLUSIONS

WAZ monopolised the newspaper market through a dumping policy on prices, distribution and advertising. The German group also built a new printing house and started to publish local supplements for its dailies. After several months of domination, other newspapers started to consolidate their position and a new structure called Bulgarian Newspaper Publishers Association was established to fight the domination of WAZ. Most of the big national newspapers and some local editions created web issues as an innovative approach to compete with WAZ.

Public television is under pressure partly from the success of bTV. By January 2003 BNT's viewing share had fallen to 20.7%. There is also the problem of funding because BNT and Bulgarian National Radio (BNR) receive most of their budget from state funding and both are perceived to be under the control of the ruling coalition and lack editorial independence.

III. CROATIA

The Croatian constitution provides for the freedom of the press, speech, public expression and the freedom to establish media. Whilst the media in Croatia now enjoys considerable freedom after years of restrictions and control this freedom is selectively available to the owners and editors, but doesn't extend to the conditions under which journalists have to work.

The regulatory body, the Council for Radio and Television, has responsibility for overall regulation and supervision of terrestrial television and radio broadcasting, and for awarding licences. The Parliament has control of the body through its selection of members of the managing council of the body.

The state-run radio and television system, HRT, is the dominant source of information for the bulk of the population and the government exerts excessive control over its operations. However its audience share is being challenged by Nova TV, which is backed by Croatia's main newspaper publisher, EPH. The third channel of HRT is to be sold in June 2003, and Styria Group is among the applicant companies.

Unlike many other CEE countries in the region, the Trade Union of Croatian Journalists (TUCJ) has succeeded in negotiating a collective agreement with EuropeaPressHoldings (50% owned by WAZ). The agreement was signed in May 2002 and provides for a five-day week, holidays, paid overtime, professional rights and other issues. The TUCJ received assistance from the two German journalists unions in negotiating the agreement. It represents a model that other unions should be following.

A. GERMAN OWNERS

WAZ

In Croatia, WAZ owns 50 percent of the Zagreb Europa Press Holding Company, which publishes the daily *Jutarnji List*, the weekly *Globus*, numerous specialized magazines for women and teenagers, and the Croatian editions of *Playboy* and *Cosmopolitan*.

Title	**Type**	**Circulation**	**Ownership shares**
Jutarnji List	Newspaper	125 000	50%
Cosmopolitan	Magazine	30 000	50%
Globus	Magazine	80 000	50%
Gloria	Magazine	80 000	50%
Arena	Magazine	50 000	50%
Mila	Magazine	50 000	50%
Autoklub	Magazine	25 000	50%
OK	Magazine	30 000	50%
Playboy	Magazine	30 000	50%
Astro Magazin	Magazine	20 000	50%

BURDA

Burda has interest in one magazine called *Lisa*. Burda (80%) together with RCS Editori (20%) owns the magazine and distributes it around Eastern and Central Europe. *Lisa* has a circulation of 20,000 in Croatia.

B. FINNISH OWNERS

SANOMA

SanomaWSOY's magazines sector, Sanoma Magazines, decided in 2001 to set up a joint venture in Croatia. The Finnish group created the limited liability company, Sanoma Magazines Zagreb, with the participation of four parties: Sanoma Magazines International B.V., Adriatic Net Investors Ltd., Iskon Internet d.d., and Vladimir Tomic. Sanoma Magazines International owns 65% of the shares in the new company. The joint venture in Croatia represents the first international expansion to be carried out by Sanoma Magazines International since SanomaWSOY's acquisition of VNU's Consumer Information Group and its merger with SanomaWSOY's magazine publisher, Helsinki Media. After that acquisition, Sanoma Magazines became Europe's fifth-largest publisher of consumer magazines and, with the addition of Croatia, is active in 10 markets across Europe with some 300 titles in its portfolio.

Sanoma Magazines Zagreb launched the Croatian edition of the leading women's fashion magazine *Elle* at the end of 2002 after having signed a licence agreement with Hachette Filipacchi Presse S.A. earlier that year. The Croatian version is the first edition among the ex-Yugoslavian CEE countries after Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Romania. Sanoma also publishes the monthly magazine *Klik* and the weekly star magazine *Story*.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Story	Magazine		65%
Klik	Magazine		65%
Elle	Magazine		65%

C. AUSTRIAN OWNERS

Styria Media Group is the third biggest media group in Austria. The group acquired the Croatian newspaper, *Vecernji list*, in December 2000. Styria publish *Vecernji list* through Tiskara Zagreb, Styria's printing company. The paper is the most widely read and has the highest daily circulation in Croatia with an average of 712,000 readers daily. Since February 2003, the edition has been restructured as follows: 8 regional editions, 1 International edition and 1 edition for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its layout has also been redesigned.

D. CONCLUSION

Croatia has experienced a considerable encroachment of foreign capital in recent years. Journalists in Croatia are facing new challenges due to commercialisation and concentration within the media sector. Increased casualisation amongst journalists is a particular symptom as they are increasingly forced into freelance and unstable employment arrangements. Despite this, the success of the Trade Union of Croatian Journalists in negotiating a collective agreement with EuropaPress Holding (EPH), is a very positive sign for journalists throughout the region

Rows, scandals and lawsuits have dominated Czech broadcasting in the recent past, mainly because the regulatory institutions are weak and open to influence by the main political parties. Foreign media owners see an expanding media market and are keen to exploit commercial possibilities. Commercial stations like TV Nova attract audiences through populist programming, including Latin American telenovelas in the afternoons and early evening prime time. Such programmes also attract powerful advertising brands such as Proctor and Gamble, Unilever and Nestle. TV Nova has an audience share of around 50%.

The Czech press is dominated by German publishing groups.

Vltava-Labe-Press (VLP) is a joint venture by VGP with another German group, the **Rheinische Post** group who have a 20% stake in VLP. VLP brings together all the company's operations in the Czech Republic, which include 11 regional dailies, 13 regional weeklies, a TV-listings magazine, its printing operations and a media agency, **Inzert Media**, which plans and organizes media campaigns in newspapers, magazines and the electronic media.

In addition, along with **Ringier**, the **Rheinische Post** group, and **Sanoma Magazines** it owns the **Post and Newspaper Service (PNS)**. The four companies – two German, one Swiss, one Finnish – between them control 80% of newspapers and magazines in the Czech Republic and have an exclusive distribution deal with PNS. The only competing firm, **MediaPrintKapa (MPK)** will no longer be allowed to distribute them and its existence is now under threat.

Irena Valova of the Czech Media Observatory points out, 'The whole market of the Czech Republic will be dependent on the monopoly in the distribution of the press which will be held jointly by a few publishers.' The Media Observatory also believes the PNS deal eliminates competition: 'Their vertical integration, their fusion into a monopoly on the territory of the Czech Republic limits, or totally eliminates, the access of other European publishers, let alone the Czech ones, to the Czech market.'

The irony is that PNS, when Czechoslovakia was part of the Eastern bloc, was the monopoly distribution agency for the Communist Party's press operations – and now a commercial monopoly has replaced it.

The public service broadcaster, **Ceska Televize (CT)**, was the focus of a bitter dispute when the Czech Television Council, appointed as chief executive Jiri Hodac, a former BBC journalist. Open rebellion by CT, led by the news and current affairs department, emotive broadcasts and public protests took place between December 2000-January 2001 and Jiri Hodac was deposed. The CRTV fined CT 2 million crowns for the behaviour of its employees during the rebellion. Jiri Balvin was elected after Jiri Hordac, but since the end of 2002 Czech TV has only had a temporary General Director.

There are real problems with the funding of the two national channels. The services are funded through a modest annual licence fee, advertising sales and other commercial activities. However the regulator limits advertising and the lack of funding inevitably has had an impact on the production of programmes and as a result audiences have shifted to commercial channels. The audience share for CT1 is below 20% and for CT2 8%.

Commercial broadcaster **TV Nova** began in 1994 and achieved a remarkable 70% audience share but then became the subject of an ongoing ownership dispute between Vladimir Zelezny and the station's US backers, CME, owned by Ronald Lauder. He filed a complaint in August 1999 against the Czech government for its failure to protect his investment in TV Nova. After three years, CME has won compensation for the loss of its Czech operations. An international arbitration court ruled in March 2003 that the Czech government must pay CME €270 million compensation.

There are currently 15 satellite broadcasters and 94 cable TV broadcasters in the Czech Republic. Foreign companies head the three most influential cable consortia:
UPC Ceska Republika is owned by United Pan-Europe Communications in the Netherlands, which in turn is owned by John Malone's US-based Liberty Media. It has around 400,000 subscribers.
Intercable CZ is owned by the Netherlands telecoms company KPN, and has over 200,000 subscribers.
TES Media is part of Central Europe Cable Holdings, owned by ING Baring, USA, and has about 100,000 subscribers.

US companies with channels in the Czech Republic include MTV Europe (cable and satellite) and NBC Europe, CNN International and HBO (all satellite)

A. GERMAN OWNERS

German media companies are well established in the Czech Republic. Foreign media investment started in 1990 when **Passauer Neue Presse (PNP)** decided to invest.

PASSAUER NEUE PRESSE

The involvement of PNP in the Czech Republic was initiated in 1990 when the group started to plan an eastward expansion with the purchase of regional daily papers. Today, all the company's operations are combined in the Vltava-Labe-Press publishing group. PNP has chosen to create a joint venture with another German group, Rheinische Post, (which owns 20% of Vltava-Labe-Press). The company has at least 11 regional dailies and 13 regional weeklies making it one of the biggest publishing houses in the country. With its dailies the group reaches a circulation of more than 825,000 copies a day, and the weeklies 335,000 copies.

Title	**Type**	**Circulation**	**Ownership shares**
Svoboda	Newspaper		80%
Vecernik Praha	Newspaper	125000	80%
Jihoceske Deniky Bohemia	Newspaper		80%
Stredoceske Deniky Bohemia	Newspaper		80%
Zapadoceske Deniky Bohemia	Newspaper		80%
Severoceske Deniky Bohemia	Newspaper		80%
Vychodoceske Deniky Bohemia	Newspaper		80%
Olomoucky den	Newspaper		80%
Zlinske Noviny	Newspaper		80%
Rovnost	Newspaper		80%

Vysocina	Newspaper		80%
13 regional weekly papers	Newspaper		80%
Moravskoslezsky Denik	Newspaper		80%
TV Magazyn (supplement)	Magazine	1700000	51%
Top weekend (supplement)	Magazine		51%
Hobby (supplement)	Magazine		51%
@ Magazyn (supplement)	Magazine		51%
Novi Bit	Magazine		51%
Ratselzeitschrift	Magazine		51%

GRUNER+JAHR

Gruner+Jahr have a 25% share in three Czech major dailies: *Blesk, Lidove Noviny*, etc. The Swiss group Ringier owns the other 75% (see below).

Title	**Type**	**Circulation**	**Ownership shares**
Blesk	Newspaper		25%
Lidove Noviny	Newspaper		25%
Sport	Newspaper		25%
Abc	Magazine		25%
Blesk magazine	Magazine		25%
Reflex	Magazine		25%
TV plus	Magazine		25%
TV Revue	Magazine		25%
Televize	Magazine		25%

BURDA

The Hubert Burda group expanded in Central and Eastern Europe creating the Burda Verlag Osteuropa (BVO), responsible for all publishing operations in this region. BVO is the product of a partnership between Burda and the Italian publishing group RCS Editorri. It concerns the periodical activities of both groups. Burda owns 80% of BVO and RCS 20%. In the Czech Republic, Burda Prague operates the magazine market.

Title	**Type**	**Circulation**	**Ownership shares**
Neilepsy recepty	Magazine	180000	80%
Neilepsy recepty special	Magazine	180000	80%
Katka	Magazine	220000	80%
Nasa krasna zahrada	Magazine	90000	80%
Anna	Magazine	60000	80%
Betynka	Magazine	75000	80%
Burda	Magazine	105000	80%
Svet Zeny	Magazine	250000	80%
Bydlime s kvetinami	Magazine	100000	80%
Katka Krizovky	Magazine	150000	80%
Autohit	Magazine	80000	80%
Cinema	Magazine	75000	80%
Nasutulny byt	Magazine	95000	80%

SPRINGER

Axel Springer Verlag has entered the Czech market through its own subsidiaries and in cooperation with other publishers.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Popcorn	Magazine		100%
Top divky	Magazine		100%
Auto exclusive	Magazine		100%
Auto profi	Magazine		100%
Auto tip	Magazine		100%
F1	Magazine		100%
Playboy	Magazine		100%
Svet motoru	Magazine		100%

BAUER

Bauer is only present in the magazine sector. It fully owns 10 weeklies. The strategy of Bauer is to offer to Czech readers the same magazines as in Poland or Romania. Bauer produces uniform magazines with country pages. The German company has worked on the direct recognition of the title page of their magazines so that every reader around Eastern Europe can identify the weeklies easily and buy them.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Bravo	Magazine		100%
Bravo girl	Magazine		100%
Bydleni	Magazine		100%
Chvilka pro tebe	Magazine		100%
Divka	Magazine		100%
Napsano zivotem	Magazine		100%
Praktik	Magazine		100%
Rhythmus zivota	Magazine		100%
Tina	Magazine		100%
Zena a zivot	Magazine		100%

BERTELSMANN

Bertelsmann has its own interest in the Czech market with 37% ownership of shares in 6 magazines. The media giant company is associated in this adventure with Passauer Neue Presse group, which owns 51% of the magazines.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
TV Magazyn	Magazine	1700000	37%
Top weekend	Magazine		37%
Hobby	Magazine		37%
@ Magazyn	Magazine		37%
Novi Bit	Magazine		37%
Ratselzeitschrift	Magazine		37%

OTHERS

Holtzbrinck publishes one daily called *Zapadoceske Noviny* together with Dow Jones. The group has also an interest in *Economia*, a business and information magazine, through Handelsblatt, which owns 44%. Handelsblatt is a joint venture between Holtzbrinck and Dow Jones.

The Rheinische Post group owns a major participation in two dailies called *Lidove noviny* and *Mlada fronta dnes* (circulation of 300 000).

Motorpresse owns 100% of two motorcycle magazines called *Auto motor a sport* and *Motocykl.*

B. SWISS OWNERS

RINGIER

Ringier CR was founded in 1990 and has been 100 per cent owned by Ringier since 2000. The company is the leading and most important publisher in the Czech Republic. Ringier publishes ten newspapers and magazines including *Blesk*, a tabloid with the largest daily sale in the country. Bertelsmann's Gruner +Jahr has a 25% stake. Ringier also owns the Ringier Print a.s. print works in Ostrava. Ringier currently also owns 27 percent of the share capital of PNS, a national press distribution company.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Abc	Magazine	68000	75%
Blesk	Press	428000	75%
Blesk Magazin	Magazine	497000	75%
Nedelni blesk	Sunday press	264000	75%
Reflex	Magazine	64000	75%
Sport	Magazine	58000	75%
TV Plus	Magazine	138000	75%
TV Revue	Magazine	148000	75%
Tydenik Televize	Magazine	192000	75%
Volno Sport	Magazine	58000	75%

C. FINNISH OWNERS

Sanoma Magazines International (SMI) has a strong position in the Czech Republic. SMI entered the Czech Republic in 1992 through the acquisition of a 60% stake in Mona Praha. SMI bought the remaining 40% in 1993. Sanoma Magazines is the market leader in consumer titles in the Czech Republic, with a 26% market share. *Vlasta* is the country's largest women's magazine. In 2001, SMI acquired Roof, which publishes home decoration titles. Sanoma magazines also fully own Strategie Praha and became the market leader in B2B market in the Czech Republic. Strategie's publications are focused on the marketing and communication business.

In addition SMI, through Sanoma Stratosfera, owns stakes in Stratosfera, a joint venture between Sanoma Stratosfera (30%), Hearst (20%) and a private investor (25%). Through Sanoma Stratosfera, SMI holds a 25% stake in Hearst.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Ring	Magazine		100%
Kvety	Magazine		100%
Puls	Magazine		100%
Prekvapeni	Magazine		100%
Vlasta	Magazine		100%
Vlasta specials	Magazine		100%
Story	Magazine		100%
Prakticka Zena	Magazine		100%
Pracktika special	Magazine		100%
Prakticka Zena do kapsy	Magazine		100%
Beau Monde	Magazine		100%
Men's health	Magazine		100%
Strategie	Magazine		100%
Zdravotnicke noviny	Magazine		100%
Sestra	Magazine		100%
Strecha	Magazine		100%
Koupelna	Magazine		100%
Kuchyne	Magazine		100%
Pudni byt	Magazine		100%
Nové byty, domy a pzemky	Magazine		100%
Cosmopolitan	Magazine		25%
Cosmo girl	Magazine		25%
FHM	Magazine		25%

D. FRENCH OWNERS

LAGARDÈRE GROUP

Lagardère has important stakes in the Czech radio market. It fully owns *Europa 2*, the first private radio in the Czech Republic. *Europa 2* was also the first radio to start co-operation with Czech TV stations. Lagardère owns the radio *Frekvence 1* which started to broadcast in 1993. This station has a daily audience of 1 million listeners. Programmes mainly consist of music, information and entertainment.

In the press sector, Hachette Filipacchi 2000 spol is the joint venture of the French group for magazine activities. Lagardère owns a stake of 51% in the joint venture in association with the local Komunikace 2000 (49%). Lagardère is also involved in the printing plants sector where CZ Press is one of the most important distributors.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership share
Elle	Magazine	70 000	51%
Première	Magazine	20 000	51%
Quo	Magazine	30 000	51%
Marianne	Magazine	50 000	51%

E. CONCLUSION

The Czech market has attracted a number of big media groups. The Germans are major investors with a total of seven companies including Springer Verlag, Bauer and Burda. Swiss Ringier and Finnish Sanoma also have interests in the Czech Republic. Media companies have also penetrated the magazine market through their portfolio activities (Burda and Bauer). In terms of foreign media, the Czech Republic has the largest investment after Poland. Investment was made because of the potential market growth, especially in the magazine sector but the economic situation of the press is currently difficult because of a fall in the advertising revenue of newspapers.

The fact that the bulk of the press is in foreign hands has implications for the Czech Republic. One is the failure of Czech newspapers to exercise the important role of public watchdog because the foreign owners do not want to cause controversy through investing in investigative journalism or criticising the government in times of crisis. The other is the lack of diversity. All Czech and Moravian regional press are controlled by a German publishing firm, which produces regional newspapers centrally, with only minor variations in each regional paper.

It is also clear that the transition of Czech Television from a state-controlled broadcaster to a public service broadcaster, with independent news and current affairs and quality programming, is incomplete. At the same time there has been a failure to regulate effectively the development of commercial television both in awarding and maintaining oversight over channels, which abandon the promises made when they were awarded licences.

The Czech Republic has no restriction on foreign media investing in the market, allowing the multinationals to penetrate the market with ease. The law on radio and television serves as the basic instrument covering the broadcast media in the Czech Republic. It was adopted in 1991, but has been amended six times since then. It requires licensing of broadcasters. Cable operators and periodical publishers only have to register with the Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting or the Ministry of Culture, respectively. Foreign ownership is permitted, and indeed is prevalent, in all forms of media. However, the operator of an enterprise must be a legal entity in the country. That is why all the big European companies have branches in the Czech Republic.

V. ESTONIA

The Estonian media market is one of the smallest in Europe. The population of Estonia is only 1.46 million, of which 70% are Estonians. Immediately after liberation from censorship and state control, an enormous expansion of the press market took place, in terms of circulation numbers as well as the number of titles. Before 1998 foreign ownership of the Estonian press was minimal. Sweden's Bonnier Group had been publishing the business daily *Äripäev* for several years.

The Baltic media landscape has completely changed since investments of foreign companies in 1998. Sweden's Marieberg (part of Bonnier) and Norway's Schibsted made important acquisitions in Estonia. As a result of this concentration, seven out of ten top newspapers by circulation belonged to these two corporations. They owned the ten top magazines too. According to the data of the Estonian Newspaper Association, they produced 75% of the total circulation of daily newspapers and 35% of the circulation of semi-weeklies and weeklies. In 2001, Bonnier left the Estonian market and their stake in the Ekspress Group[viii]. Ekspressgrupp is now 100% owned by Hans Luik, a national investor. Today, there is only one big foreign media company, which is involved in the Estonian market: Eesti Meedia Group[ix] (part of Schibsted).

A. NORWEGIAN OWNERS

SCHIBSTED

The Norwegian company Schibsted entered the Estonian market in 1995. At first, Schibsted acquired 24% of the shares of the television channel *Kanal 2*. Schibsted acquired 33% of AS Postimees[x] and increased their share in *Postimees* to 92.5% by the end of 1998. *Postimees* became a unit of Schibsted's corporation under the name AS Eesti Meedia. It is the largest media group in the country. Eesti Media Group is present in the broadcasting sector with a full ownership of *Kanal 2*. In the press, it owns seven newspapers[xi] including *Postimees*, five supplements and 11 magazines. Eesti Media Group has also built a new printing plant. It is called Kroonpress. It is the largest and probably the most-up-to-date printing plant in the Baltic States. This investment is very profitable and printing capacities are very high. Kroonpress is the leader or even the monopolist in this area.

The Norwegian Group also created a joint venture (50% each) with the Swedish newspaper publishing company Marieberg (part of the Bonnier Group). It is called Ekspress Group. Now, Bonnier has left but Ekspress group is still the second largest publisher in Estonia. It retains a portfolio of four newspapers, ten magazines and five free city papers. Ekspress Group publishes *SL/Õhtuleht*, the largest newspaper in Estonia. This daily is the product of a merger between *Sõnumileht* (wholly owned by Eesti Meedia) and *Õhtuleht* (wholly owned by the Ekspress Group). The tabloid newspaper is equally owned by Eesti Media Group and the Express Group, with a 50% stake each.

Schibsted has also created with Marieberg a joint-venture magazine branch called The Estonian Magazine Group through Eesti media Group and Ekspress Group. Estonian Magazine Group dominates the market in Estonia and produces a variety of magazines and specialised publications. The largest magazine is *Kroonika* with a weekly circulation of around 70 000 and approximately 300 000 readers[xii].

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership stake
Kanal 2	TV		100%
Tartu radio	Radio		100%
SL/Õhtuleht	Newspaper	80 000	50%
Postimees	Newspaper	70 000	100%
Parnu Postimees	Regional newspaper	16 000	100%
Valgamaalane	Regional newspaper	4000	100%
Virumaa Teataja	Regional newspaper	10 000	56%
Sakala	Regional newspaper	12 000	50%
Järva Teataja	Regional newspaper	7000	50%
Kodukiri	Magazine		50%
Eesti Naine	Magazine		50%
Stiil	Magazine		50%
Pere ja Kodu	Magazine		50%
Jana	Magazine		50%
Stiina	Magazine		50%
Anne	Magazine		50%
Nadal	Magazine		50%
Teleleht	Magazine		50%
Saladused	Magazine		50%
Tallin This Week	Magazine		50%
Autokataloog	Magazine		50%
Tervis +	Magazine		50%
Kroonika	Magazine		50%
Sloleht	Magazine		50%

B. SWEDISH OWNERS

BONNIER

The Swedish media company Bonnier has several interests in Estonia. In 1994, the company acquired that year the business daily *Äripäev* (circulation of 17 000), which is still a high profile newspaper in Estonia.

In 1998, the owner of AS Meediakorp, second publisher in the country, started negotiations with the Swedish newspaper publishing company Marieberg, which is part of the Bonnier Group. Finally, a joint-venture with Schibsted was created. The new company was called Ekspress Group and had a portfolio of four newspapers, ten magazines and five free city papers. Through Marieberg, Bonnier was part-owner of the second-biggest daily *Eesti Päevaleht*, the biggest weekly *Eesti Ekspress*, a tabloid evening paper, ten magazines and four free papers. Finally, in 2001, the Swedish group decided to sell their part in Ekspress Group in order to concentrate on their major markets, which are Scandinavian countries.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership share
Äripäev	Newspaper		100%
Eesti Päevaleht	Newspaper		50%
Eesti Ekspress	Magazine		50%

Bonnier with a stake in Alma Media retains the *Baltic News Service* and the *Business Information Group*. Baltic News Service is based in Tallinn. It distributes daily 1000 news headlines in five languages: Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Russian and English. The Business Information Group specializes in business information.

MODERN TIMES GROUP

The Swedish Modern Times Group (MTG) is active in television. Through Viasat, the company broadcasts eleven free to air TV in the Baltics. It is the market leader in the Baltic CEE countries in terms of shares with *TV 3 Estonia* being the largest commercial channel in Estonia. Viasat is broadcast from the UK. MTG owns also two radio stations in Estonia: *Star FM* and *Power Hit Radio*. *Star FM* reaches 70% of the population and about 85% of the advertising market in Estonia. Each week, the network captures 87 000 listeners.

C. CONCLUSION

Eesti Media Group (Schibsted) is the major player in Estonia with operations in the regional and local newspapers. The group was also active in the free newspaper sector where it has made major gains in 2000. However adverse market conditions have made this less attractive. The free monthly newspaper *KesKus*, has converted to paid-for sales.

Competition among media companies reached its height in 1998 when Schibsted from Norway and Marieberg from the Swedish Bonnier Group became the core owners of the biggest Estonian media groups. Before 1995, foreign investors had shown little interest in the Estonian media market. The first foreign investor, Bonnier Group, however, had successfully established a business weekly in 1989. After the successful start in Estonia, Bonnier established similar business papers in Vilnius, Riga and St. Petersburg. Estonia is the leading country in terms of foreign investment in the Baltic region.

As Allan Alakula, the Chairman of the Estonian Union of Journalists, emphasized, the level of concentration in Estonian media reached a very high level. The working conditions are not very good, journalists don’t have collective agreements in private media and there is no place to talk about agreements or bargaining on the company level.

In 1989, most of the direct government subsidies to the media were removed leaving it to develop independent commercial activity. Foreign ownership of the Hungarian national newspaper market stood at 83% in 2001, based on circulation figures. Foreign investors began entering Hungary's print media sector soon after the old system of licensing was abolished in 1989. In 1996, foreign investors held a controlling interest in 60 percent of the daily newspaper market. Also during that year, the radio and television broadcasting law was adopted. It provides a minimum level of Hungarian ownership in a company. The two national channels, TV2 and TV3, were merged into TV2 in February 2000 by **Scandinavian Broadcasting System** (which in spite of its name is US-owned). Bertelsmann has the other main channel, RTL-Klub.[xiii].

Magyar Television (MTV) is the public service broadcaster but it is in a parlous state. An International Federation of Journalists report was scathing, following a visit early in 2001. 'Political manipulation and wilful neglect by the responsible authorities' had seen the collapse of the viewing share of the flagship channel, MTV1 to just 10%.

Hungary is heavily cabled, with over half of all households receiving their TV services via cable. **UPC Magyarorszag**, part of the Netherlands-based group UPC, owned by John Malone's **Liberty Media**, is the dominant provider.

The concentration of foreign ownership in the national press is pronounced and only a minority of the national daily press remains Hungarian-owned or government subsidized. The situation of the weekly and monthly press is also highly polarized between government supported and privately-owned economic groups[xiv]. Some publications can afford to operate on a non-commercial basis, funded by state sponsorship or private foundations. In all publications, editors have significant power in determining the line they take on issues[xv].

A. GERMAN OWNERS[xvi]

BERTELSMANN

Bertelsmann is active in different media and especially TV and magazines. In television, the media giant owns *RTL Klub*. It is the leading commercial television station in Hungary. The network was launched in 1997 by RTL Group, which owns 49 % of the shares of the broadcasting company. The network covers more than 85% of the country. In addition to broadcasting activities, *RTL Klub Enterprises* manages the Internet, teletext and audiotext businesses of the commercial television station.

Bertelsmann also owns several magazines and one newspaper through Gruner+Jahr. *Tele Magazyn* is owned by the Deutscher Supplement Verlag branch of Bertelsmann. This magazine focuses on television and human-interest topics. Bertelsmann has a 17.2% stake in the newspaper *Nepszabadsag* published in Budapest through Gruner+Jahr.

AXEL SPRINGER VERLAG

Axel Springer Verlag is very active in the Hungarian market, with significant shares in several magazines and newspapers. It has eight daily regional titles and one Sunday title but its main focus is magazine publishing. Springer publishes 16 magazines in Hungary. These include TV listings guides (4), women's magazines (2), puzzle magazines, cookery, interior design titles and two youth titles.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Uj Dunantuli Naplo	Newspaper	53000	93%
Heves Megyei Hirlap	Newspaper	20000	93%
Bekes Megyei Hirlap	Newspaper	24000	93%
Uj neplap	Newspaper	28000	93%
Tolnai Nepujsag	Newspaper	23000	93%
Somogyi Hirlap	Newspaper	40000	93%
24 Ora	Newspaper	24000	93%
Petofi Nepe	Newspaper	50000	93%
Vasanarp Reggel	Newspaper		93%
Vilaggazdasag	Newspaper		100%
100X Szep	Magazine		92%
Auto Motor	Magazine		92%
Csok es konny	Magazine		92%
Gyongy	Magazine		92%
Holgy	Magazine		92%
Lakaskultura	Magazine		92%
Kiskegyed	Magazine		92%
Kiskegyed Konyhaja	Magazine		92%
Recept-Tar	Magazine		92%
Popcorn	Magazine		92%
Szines Kethetes	Magazine		92%
TV kethetes	Magazine		92%
Tvr-het	Magazine		92%
TV Uksag	Magazine		92%
Ugyes	Magazine		92%

WAZ

The group concentrates on newspaper activities, publishing five different dailies.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Naplo	Newspaper		100%
Zalai Hirlap	Newspaper		100%
Vas Nepe	Newspaper		100%
Fefer Megeyei Hirlap	Newspaper		100%
Dunaujvarosi Hirlap	Newspaper		100%

OTHERS

Heinrich Bauer Verlag publishes four magazines in Hungary (100% of ownership shares): *Bravo, Bravo Girl, Buci maci and Tina* (women). Burda is a small player publishing one magazine *Csodakert* (circulation of 20,000). It is jointly owned by Burda (80%) and by RCS Editori (20%).

B. FINNISH OWNERS

Sanoma Magazines Budapest Kiadoi's operations were founded in 1992. Through the acquisition of the prestigious publishing house EKH/VICO, Sanoma Magazine Budapest became the market leader in Hungary, with 34% of the market shares. Women's magazines, entertainment titles, and TV magazines are the heart of the portfolio. Sanoma Magazines also operates the country's leading portal.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Figyelo	Magazine		100%
Mediafygyelo	Magazine		100%
Figyelo Trend	Magazine		100%
Meglepetes	Magazine		100%
Story	Magazine		100%
Story napfeni	Magazine		100%
Fules	Magazine		100%
Poenvadaszat	Magazine		100%
Nok Lapja	Magazine		100%
Evszakok	Magazine		100%
Szines RTV	Magazine		100%
RTV Magazin	Magazine		100%
Vasarnapi Hirek	Magazine		100%
Tina	Magazine		100%
Bravo	Magazine		100%
Bravo Girl	Magazine		100%
Buci Maci	Magazine		100%
Fakanal	Magazine		100%
Hazi Praktika	Magazine		100%
Beau Monde	Magazine		100%
Otthon	Magazine		100%
Csaladi Lap	Magazine		100%
Kismama	Magazine		100%
Atrium	Magazine		100%
Stilus es Minoseg	Magazine		100%
Wellness	Magazine		100%
Best	Magazine		100%
FHM	Magazine		50%
Cosmopolitan	Magazine		50%

C. SWISS OWNERS

RINGIER

In Hungary, Ringier publishes *Blikk*, the second daily newspaper, *Vasarnapi Blikk* which is a Sunday paper, as well as the old-established daily sports paper *Nemzeti Sport*, the third-placed daily newspaper. Ringier also owns the Hungarian quality paper *Magyar Hirlap*. The Swiss company has also an important level of participation in the newspaper *Nepszabadsag* through the creation of a joint venture with Axel Springer Verlag and Bertelsmann. In the magazine sector, Ringier started the magazine *Kape* and *TeleSzuper.*

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
TeleSzuper	Magazine	-	
Nepszabadsag	Newspaper	204000	
Magyar Hirlap	Newspaper	38000	
Blikk	Newspaper	208000	
Nemzeti Sport	Newspaper	65000	
Vasarnapi Blikk	Newspaper	180000	

MARQUARD

Marquard Media AG has a presence in Hungary with its branch JMG Magazine Publishing Company. This branch publishes six magazines and is fully owned by the Swiss group.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Joy	Magazine	55 000	100%
CKM	Magazine	40 000	100%
Shape	Magazine	40 000	100%
Playboy	Magazine	63 000	100%
Fitt Mama	Magazine	14 000	100%
Men’s Fitness	Magazine	18 000	100%

Marquard Media AG also has interests in two radio stations. *Radio 1* is the major radio station of the group. It is one of the first commercial radio stations in Hungary. It started broadcasting in 1996, in Budapest, when the Hungarian Broadcasting Council allowed the establishment of commercial radio stations. Marquard owns 50%. Marquard also holds a 15% stake in *Slager Radio*.

D. FRENCH OWNERS

LAGARDÈRE GROUP

The French media group is the part-owner of *Radio 1*. This radio station was created in 1996 and targets the young generation. Lagardère owns 50 % of Radio 1 through the branch called Eurozet.

In the print sector, Lapker is the Hungarian branch of Hachette Distribution Services Group. Lapker is active in terms of distribution and corner shop sales. It distributes *Elle Hungary* (circulation of 75 000), which is also owned by the Lagardère Group.

E. LUXEMBOURG OWNERS

TV2 started broadcasting on 4 October 1997, covering 98 % of the Hungarian population. It is one of the two new nation-wide private stations in Hungary. The private TV is owned by the joint venture MTM-SBS Televízió Rt formed by Luxembourg based and American financed Scandinavian Broadcasting System S.A[xvii]. MTM Kommunikáció Rt.[xviii] and Germany's Tele-München Gruppe[xix]. SBS owns 49% while Tele-München has 39% of the joint venture. *TV2* was financially supported by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) which allocated a €28 million loan.

F. SWEDISH OWNERS

MODERN TIMES GROUP

The Swedish Modern Times Group (MTG) is active in Hungary through Viasat, with eleven free to air TV stations. MTG owns *Viasat 3* in Hungary. Viasat is broadcast from the UK.

G. CONCLUSION

In terms of media ownership, state ownership decreased dramatically as a result of privatisation and liberalisation. However, there were considerable differences between various media sectors in terms of the speed and extent of ownership changes. Changes in broadcasting were slow. The market was partly liberalised in 1997 by selling national frequencies to private companies. International elements were influential in terms of television content and ownership of cable companies throughout the post-communist era. Following the partial liberalisation of the sector foreign ownership became significant, as the major shareholders of the two most popular channels were foreign companies.

In the print media, ownership changes were more striking as privatisation and liberalisation took place within a relatively short period of time following the fall of the communist regime. The 1990s saw a series of ownership changes in the markets through sell-offs, mergers and acquisitions. Foreign media ownership became a dominant factor in the sector by the end of the 1990s.

In post-communist Hungary the dominance of foreign ownership in many media sectors did not initially cause public concern. This was partly because many people were not aware of the ownership structure of media markets, and partly because the advantages of foreign ownership were seen as significant. Particularly during the first stage of the post-communist era foreign media ownership was viewed as contributing towards lessening the influence of the state and political forces in the previously over-politicised media. In fact one of the main reasons why foreign media ownership was welcomed among journalists and the public was that it was perceived to provide publishers with the much-desired independence from political parties and organisations. However, as the 1990s proceeded, concerns were raised about the economic power of foreign media companies, and the lack of effective oversight of the government and state institutions by media whose primary concerns were commercial, rather than political or social. They were not seen as threats to the Hungarian political process [xx].

In Hungary, there is a general freedom from unfair practise, monopolies and oligopolies. Publishing houses feel free to make use of the weak social guarantees. On all levels, there is a precarious employment of journalists for tax reasons and in order to avoid large fixed staff. The general practise is for journalists to work self-employed with no job security and insufficient social protection.

VII. LATVIA

Latvia's geographic position makes it a commercial, financial and transport hub for the Russia/Baltic region. Latvian is the country's official language but most residents speak Russian and a third of the population are ethnic Russians, so that both the public broadcaster, Latvian Television (LTV) and the commercial channel TV3, owned by Modern Times Group (MTG) broadcast in Latvian and Russian. Latvian Independent Television re-transmits the Russian station ORT.

A. SWEDISH OWNERS

BONNIER

Bonnier, through its stake in Alma Media, has a share in the *Baltic News Service* and the *Business Information Group*. Baltic News Service is based in Tallinn. It has a daily distribution of 1000 news headlines in five languages: Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Russian and English. The Business Information Group specializes in business news. Bonnier is one of the two biggest publishers in Latvia through AS Diena, a joint stock company between Bonnier (49% stake) and local private shareholders[xxi] (51%). Diena AS publishes *Diena*, *Dienas Bizness*[xxii](circulation of 10 000), *Spogulisa* and five other regional newspapers. *Diena* has a very strong position and it is one of the most read newspapers in Latvia with a circulation of approximately 54 000 copies.

MODERN TIMES GROUP

The Swedish Modern Times Group is active in Television through Viasat, which enables it to transmit to the three Baltic States. It is the market leader in Latvia in terms of market share with *TV 3 Latvia*. MTG also owns *Star FM*, one of the largest radio stations in Latvia with a weekly audience of 323 000 listeners.

B. CONCLUSION

The press and the broadcast media in Latvia generally operate freely, with few legal restrictions on their work and a wide range of political viewpoints are represented in more than 200 newspapers. After independence in 1991, dozens of television channels emerged but the number fell dramatically following the introduction of the 1995 Broadcasting Law. Latvia's broadcasting law is being harmonised with the European Union's *Television Without Frontiers* directive. The legal framework, and the enforcement of laws, remains weak and Latvia needs a sound legal basis to determine the role of public TV and protect it against state influence[xxiii].

A. NORWEGIAN OWNERS

ORKLA

Orkla has a small presence in Lithuania through Orkla Press, which is taking charge of Orkla's current newspaper operations in Central Europe. Established in 1991, the branch has grown to be one of the leading newspaper groups in Central Europe. Orkla Press has a Baltic newspaper division called Dzienniki Kraje Baltyckie, which fully owns the regional paper *Kauno diena* (circulation of 40 000).

B. SWEDISH OWNERS

BONNIER

The Swedish media company Bonnier plays a small role in terms of market shares in Lithuania with only one newspaper published under the name *Verslo Zinios* (circulation of 9 000). The business newspaper is moving into the daily press market, increasing editions from one to five per week in recent years[xxiv].

Bonnier has a broadcasting activity with *LNK TV*[xxv], the second TV station broadcasting nationwide in Lithuania. This private company's main stock is owned by Marieberg, part of Bonnier media company.

MODERN TIMES GROUP

The Swedish Modern Times Group owns *TV 3 Lithuania,* which is one of the largest commercial channels in Lithuania. MTG owns also *Tango TV.*

C. CONCLUSION

International companies from Norway and Sweden target the Lithuanian media landscape. Foreign companies are supporting a policy of investment in television rather than in the daily press or magazine. In terms of investments in the media sector, Lithuania is the second Baltic country but far behind Estonia, which captures the majority of European investment.

IX. POLAND

In 1989, Poland began developing independent media. Censorship was lifted, the Communist party's newspaper chain was dissolved and a new press law was passed in Parliament. Newspapers were privatised and commercial radio and television stations received their licences. As a consequence, foreign media companies began investing in Poland, although the existing regulations still imposed some limitations on the amount of foreign investment in the audio-visual media in Poland. In fact, the number of foreign investors in the Polish media market has been growing for several years, and almost 80% of the press is in the hands of foreign capital. The Press Freedom Monitoring Centre (CMWP), a non-governmental watchdog organization established by the Polish Journalists Association, monitors the Polish press. Andrzej Krajewski, chairman of CMWP, says that whilst the print media market has been opened up to foreign investors, editorial independence from owners and advertisers remains a major issue. Public radio and TV are also politicised and commercialised.

After ten years of evolution and rearrangements, German investors have become a power on the magazine market. In fact, 50% of shares on the market for colour magazines are distributed among the following German press giants: Passauer Neue Presse, Axel Springer Verlag, Bauer and Gruner+Jahr. Other foreign press companies have invested in dailies as well. Norway's Orkla Media, one of the top two foreign press investors, spent around $50 million in Polish investments according to the Polish Agency for Foreign Investment (PAIZ).

About 40 % of foreign investment in the Polish media goes to the press. The press is dominated by German publishing concerns. In terms of print run, Axel Springer Verlag, Bauer and Gruner+Jahr together hold almost 50 percent of the colour magazine market, which they have created to a large extent. Specialized publications are also in German hands, mostly those of Vogel International Verlags GmbH and Deutscher Fachverlag GmbH. However, there is little information on the amounts publishing houses have invested. The Polish market is divided between three major foreign publishers: Orkla, Passauer Neue Presse and Bauer.

PNP moved into Poland in 1994 when it acquired some regional dailies and founded **Polskapresse**. It now owns 12 regional newspapers with sales of 1.3m, which are printed at presses in Gdansk, Poznan, Lodz, Wrozlaw and Krakow. It also prints three TV magazines with total sales of 2.6m

In addition it has its own distribution service for its print products, a direct marketing company, **Eurodirect**, a media agency, **Media Tak**, and an online classified ad site, gratka.pl.

Poland’s public service broadcaster is **Telewizja Polska (TVP),** with two national channels and twelve regional channels. It faces a crisis of funding partly because the growth of commercial broadcasting has hit audience shares. Also the revenue from the licence fee has dwindled due to the low collection rate, and it has become increasingly reliant on advertising revenue, which generates 80% of its income.

Commercial broadcasters are taking a greater share of the market in both terrestrial television, and cable and satellite, and they are represented by Polish and foreign media interests. Poland has the largest cable market in central Europe and the largest cable operator is **UPC Telewizja Kablowa**, with over a million subscribers in

Poland's eight largest cities as well as smaller towns. It was acquired by the Netherlands-based UPC in 1999. UPC is in turn owned by John Malone's US global media group, Liberty Media.

There is a great deal of controversy as the Polish government shapes changes in media laws, and particularly on regulations to limit media concentration. The existing law also makes it possible for politicians from the major parties to influence and control the management of public radio and television.

A. NORWEGIAN OWNERS

ORKLA

Orkla is the leader in the Polish newspaper market through Orkla Press, which is responsible for newspaper operations in Poland. Established in 1991, the branch has grown to be one of Poland's leading newspaper groups with a market share of 23% and circulation of 621,721[xxvi]. Since 1991, Orkla Press has taken ownership shares in 13 regional or national dailies.

Orkla Press owns 51 percent of Presspublica, publisher of the national daily, *Rzeczpospolita*, circulation 199,078. Orkla is the second biggest investor in Poland with shares in 13 local daily newspapers as well. They have recently bought publishing house Wydawnictwo Lubpress, which publishes *Gazeta Lubuska* daily, one of the country's largest local newspapers with an average circulation of 65,000. It employs 140 people and also has a state-of-the-art printing house.

Title	**Type**	**Circulation**	**Ownership shares**
Rzeczpospolita	Newspaper	199000	51%
Gazeta Lubuska	Newspaper	56000	100%
Gazeta Pomorska	Newspaper	105000	100%
Nowa Trybuna Opolska	Newspaper	37000	53%
Slowo Polskie	Newspaper	25000	100%
Wieczor Wroclawia	Newspaper	21000	100%
Gazeta Wspolczesna	Newspaper	22000	100%
Kurier Poranny	Newspaper	20000	100%
Glos Koszalinski	Newspaper	30000	100%
Tygodnik Ostrolecki	Newspaper	18000	
Dziennik Wschodni	Newspaper	25000	100%
Glos Sczecinski	Newspaper	21000	100%
Glos Pomoroza	Newspaper	25000	100%
Nowiny	Newspaper	36000	64%

B. GERMAN OWNERS

PASSAUER NEUE PRESSE

The German Passauer Neue Presse (PNP) adopted another strategy to gain market shares in Poland. The goal of the German company is to try to make all its titles similar in terms of form and content. In September 1994, PNP bought the Polish publications of the French Hersant group, which had eight regional newspapers, including *Dziennik Bałtycki, Dziennik Łódzki, Trybuna Śląska* and *Gazeta Krakowska*. In 1996, the German group purchased 95 % of the shares in the Fibak Investment Group, publisher of two dailies: *Gazeta Poznańska* and *Express Poznański*[xxvii]. The Polish company created by Passauer Neue Presse, Polskapresse, has expanded to become one of Poland's most important publishing houses. It owns 12 regional newspapers and Polskapresse is also active as an advertising agency, in terms of distribution and on the Internet[xxviii].

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Gazeta Olsztysaka	Newspaper	35000	100%
Gazeta Wroclawska	Newspaper	30000	100%
Dziennik Baltycki	Newspaper	70000	100%
Dziennik polski	Newspaper	75000	100%
Dziennik Zachodni	Newspaper	95000	100%
Gazeta Krakowska	Newspaper	40000	100%
Gazeta posnanska	Newspaper	50000	100%
Express illustrowany	Newspaper	75000	100%
Trybuna Slaska	Newspaper	65000	100%
Super Tele	Magazine		100%
Moto express	Magazine		100%
Tele Magazyn	Magazine	2000000	100%
TV Pilot	Magazine		100%

BAUER

Bauer invested approximately $40-50 million in the Polish magazine market in 2001. It is now the market leader in terms of revenue (€140.7 millions) and market share (22%) in Poland.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Auto dzis I jutro	Magazine		100%
Bravo	Magazine	500000	100%
Bravo Girl	Magazine	325000	100%
Bravo Sport	Magazine	200000	100%
Chwila dla ciebie	Magazine	700000	100%
Click	Magazine	175000	100%
Filipinka	Magazine		100%
Imperium TV	Magazine	325000	100%
Swiat kobiety	Magazine		100%
Swiat Seriali	Magazine	275000	100%
Tele Tydzien	Magazine	2000000	100%
To I Owo	Magazine	700000	100%
Twoj Styl	Magazine		100%
Twist	Magazine	200000	100%
Twoj Weekend	Magazine		100%
Twoje Imperium	Magazine	375000	100%
Votre Beaute	Magazine		100%
Zycie Na Goraco	Magazine	980000	100%
Tele swiat	Magazine	700000	100%
Tina	Magazine	425000	100%

SPRINGER VERLAG

In Poland, Springer owns fourteen titles including a women's weekly, *Pani Domu* (500,000) a women's monthly, *Olivia* (470,000) and two monthly youth titles *Dziewczyni* (180,000) and *Popcorn* (150,000). This portfolio of magazines allows Springer to be a major player with an 11% market shares and revenues of €70 million.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Auto Suckces	Magazine		100%
Auto Swiat	Magazine	41000	100%
Cienie I Blaski	Magazine	325000	100%
Dziewczyna	Magazine	250000	100%
Komputer Swiat	Magazine	200000	100%
Na zywo	Magazine	300000	100%
Newsweek Polska	Magazine		100%
Olivia	Magazine	700000	100%
Pani domu	Magazine	1000000	100%
Play	Magazine	69000	100%
Popcorn	Magazine	225000	100%
Profit	Magazine		100%

BERTELSMANN

Bertelsmann owns, through RTL Group, the commercial television *RTL 7*. This TV station was launched in 1996. Its programmes are broadcast from Luxembourg by cable or satellite. RTL 7 is wholly owned by RTL, and targeted at young people. The website of RTL 7 is also well known in Poland. Poland has the largest online market in Eastern Europe. *RTL 7* opened its Internet site in 1998, and has built it into one of the leading Polish TV sites

GRUNER+JAHR

Bertelsmann through Gruner+Jahr also has a strong position in the Polish magazine market. According to statistics, the company Gruner+Jahr has invested over $11 million in Poland. It is currently the third largest publisher in Poland with a 9.6% market share and €61.7m revenue.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Claudia	Magazine	1000000	100%
Focus	Magazine	250000	100%
Galka	Magazine		100%
Ladnie Mieszka	Magazine		100%
National Geographic	Magazine	400000	50%
Moje Gotowanie	Magazine		100%
Moje Mieszkanie	Magazine	175000	100%
Naj	Magazine	475000	100%
Rodzice	Magazine		100%

BURDA

Hubert Burda, through Burda Verlag Osteruropa (BVO), is active in Poland. BVO is the product of a partnership between Burda (80% stake) and Italian publishing group RCS Editori (20%). In Poland, Burda Polska, a subsidiary entirely controlled by BVO, publishes the magazines of the PNP Group.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Moj piekny Ogrod	Magazine	200000	80%
Moj piekny Ogrod Special	Magazine	100000	80%
Sol I Pieprz	Magazine	80000	80%
Burda	Magazine	75000	80%
Anna	Magazine	30000	80%
Twoj Relaks	Magazine	600000	80%
Dobre Rady	Magazine	500000	80%
Dobre Rady Recepty	Magazine	100000	80%
Kwiaty w domu	Magazine		80%
Dobre Rady Kwiaty	Magazine	100000	80%

C. SWISS OWNERS

EDIPRESSE

Edipresse has been operating in Poland since 1995. In February 1997, Edipresse Polska launched the bi-monthly magazine *Viva!* - the Polish equivalent of *Paris-Match*. The magazine was successful with an average of over 250,000 copies of each issue sold. The Group has also strengthened its leadership by buying in *Twoje Dziecko*. Today, Edipresse Polska[xxix] is the country's leading magazine publisher in terms of advertising revenue and the third in sales. It publishes about ten publications. Edipresse publishes the leading magazine in the women's press, *Przyjaciółka*. The magazine is published with a regular print run of over 1,000,000 copies. In 2001, advertising turnover increased by 59% compared with the previous financial year. In the beginning of 2002, Edipresse Poland acquired two monthly women magazines, *Pani* and *Uroda*.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Viva	Magazine	307000	
Viva moda	Magazine	68000	
Vita	magazine	157000	
Uroda	magazine	45000	
Tvoje dziecko	magazine	55000	
Przekroj	magazine	48000	
Dom&Wnetrze	magazine	27000	
Pani	magazine	45000	
Przyjaciolka	magazine	655000	

MARQUARD

Marquard Media AG is present in Poland with its branch JMG Magazine Publishing Company. JMG publishes nine titles overall including sport dailies and magazines. It publishes *Cosmopolitan* in co-operation with the Hearst Corporation.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Cosmopolitan	Magazine	131 000	50%
CKM	Magazine	102 000	100%
Shape	Magazine	35 000	100%
Playboy	Magazine	82 000	100%
Voyage	Magazine	33 000	100%
Magazyn Sportowy	Magazine		100%
Sport	Newspaper		100%
Tempo	Newspaper		100%
Przeglad sportowy	Newspaper		100%

D. SWEDISH OWNERS

BONNIER

Bonnier has been in Poland since 1999 where the company has made some big investments. Bonnier's Polish activities are in a joint venture with Marieberg[xxx] that publish the daily *Superexpress* and *Puls Biznesu* (circulation 20,700). In 2001, *Puls Biznesu* was selected as the Newspaper of the Year in Poland. For the future, the group is planning long-term investments and is slowly building its position on the financial press market[xxxi].

E. FRENCH OWNERS

VIVENDI UNIVERSAL

Vivendi Universal is present in Poland through the Canal+ Group, which specialises in pay TV and content production. Canal+ launched pay TV in Poland in 1996. It is called *Canal+ Polska* and it has 253,000 subscribers. It is available as a terrestrial pay service and by cable and satellite. After the difficulties of Vivendi Universal, and the restructuring of the Canal+ Group, it was envisaged to sell *Canal+* Polska. Canal+ also launched its digital platform under the name of *Cyfra+* (278,000 subscribers). Canal+ Group also produces two thematic channels called *Planete* (adventure) and *Seasons*.

LAGARDÈRE GROUP

Andrezj Woyciechowski founded Radio Zet in September 1990. The founder was a well-known Polish journalist who worked several years for the newspapers *Libération* and *Le Monde*, and also the news agency AFP. *Radio Zet* is one of the most popular radios in Poland and it was also the first private radio in Warsaw. In 1994, the station became national. Today, *Radio Zet* claims over 200,000 listeners. Lagardère has also some interests in a second radio station called *Radio Stacja.*

In the press sector, Lagardère is present through Hachette Filipacchi Polska, which publishes 4 different magazines. *ELLE* is maybe the most famous magazine in the country that the French group publishes. It has been in the market for eight years and today, has a circulation of 125,000.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership share
Elle	Magazine	110 000	100%
Elle deco	Magazine	25 000	100%
Samo Zdrowie	Magazine	87 000	100%
Maxim	Magazine	64 000	100%
Film	Magazine	63 000	100%

Lagardère also owns several printing plants and distribution companies. The most important factory is called HDS Polska (1997), a branch of Hachette Distribution Service. HDS Polska owns a press distribution company, Inmedio Lodz, which distributes publications in the centre and the north of Poland.

F. LUXEMBOURG-BASED OWNERS

SBS

Luxembourg-based and American-financed Scandinavian Broadcasting Systems acquired a 33% interest in *TVN*, Poland's third largest television station. *TVN* was launched in October 1997 following an agreement by TVN SP z.o.o and TV Wisla Sp.z. to create a joint channel featuring regional and local programming. Since then, *TVN* has become one of the largest broadcasters, covering 83% of the country. *TVN* has grown and became the third most important channel in Poland with 19.8% market share. Since 2000, SBS has been a minority shareholder (33%) with the Warsaw-based ITI Group owning 67% [xxxii].

G. CONCLUSION

Press ownership laws in Poland are very permissive towards foreign investors. The country's former radio and television monopoly was terminated with the enactment of the 1991 broadcasting law. It is estimated that private media now accounts for 85% of the market. Foreign investment in print media is not restricted, and is estimated to be involved in 40% of the country's publications. In broadcasting, however, a restriction exists on the permissible extent of foreign ownership in a company.

German groups, Bertelsmann-Springer Verlag and Bauer, and Swiss groups, Edipresse and Ringier, own the majority of magazines. The Norwegian Orkla Press has concentrated more on newspapers. The German companies are trying to create global magazines for the whole of Central Europe. Magazines like *Tina* and *Bravo* are distributed throughout Eastern Europe. Orkla Press have chosen a different approach. They are more aware of the social and cultural differences between regions and are producing papers, which relate to the specific issues and concerns of the region where the newspapers are published.

The main problem for the Polish press sector is its independence. Foreign companies are trying to impose their Western management in a completely different environment. Laws protecting journalists are weak and large media groups take advantage of this. For example, foreign publishers deny the role of organisations representing journalists, set low wages and royalties, and avoid signing collective employment agreements[xxxiii].

The rush of foreign investment into Polish media created lower quality and declining impartiality. The rapid growth of the Polish media in the last few years has also resulted in a decline in the quality of journalism. In order to cut down the costs, publishers often prefer to employ paid amateurs than experienced professionals. But lower standards go together with a widespread demand for sensational, entertainment-style journalism[xxxiv]. We can see that there is a big threat for independent journalism but some observers' think the contrary. In fact, they believe that foreign investors stabilize the Polish press and allow it to remain independent because the western media companies are only interested in profits and revenue. The owners rarely intervene in editorial content and avoid being politically partisan.

However, Poles regard the newspaper, Rzeczpospolita, owned by Orkla as very reliable, with high-quality information and analysis. In some cities, Orkla has invested in two dailies and has preserved the differences between them. Passauer Neue Presse, on the other hand, aims to unify the content and form of the titles it holds.

Existing media companies in Poland are now focusing on securing their place in the market and developing strategies for the future. But this process leads to concentration of media ownership, where the big media companies buy the weaker titles or stations, thereby strengthening their own position. The growing regional and local media market share has become the next target for investors with the big newspaper companies. Others have started to invest in local and regional radio stations in order to build their own chains. Dominant groups in the regional press, such as **Passauer Neue Presse**, have started buying smaller regional and local newspapers. However, small local publishers are making joint efforts to defend their position, which may result in a structured partition of the regional and local market[xxxv].

Liberalisation and privatisation of the broadcast media in Romania have been extensive. During 2000, for example, the National Audiovisual Council (CNA) granted 18 television licences and 20 radio licences, which brought the total number of licensed television and radio stations at the end of 2000 to 173 and 297 respectively. Inevitably this has seen a major expansion of foreign ownership including a number of US media companies (Viacom's *MTV*) or companies like CME and SBS, which are predominantly US-owned.

The state broadcaster Romanian Radio and Television (TVR) was split in 1994 to form two distinct organisations. Before the launch of the commercial channel, *Pro TV*, in 1995 *TVR 1*, the flagship channel, was watched consistently by two thirds of TV audiences but figures for the year 2000 revealed an audience share of 30.5%. The majority of programmes shown on *TVR 1* are in Romanian as the broadcaster allocates only a small percentage of its budget to the purchase of foreign programmes.

Cable companies are also predominantly foreign-owned. **Romanian Cable Systems (RCS)**, the largest cable operator in Romania, is owned by US and Czech investors and operates 60 networks in Romania, Hungary and Slovakia, each carrying between 30 and 44 channels. It has about 800,000 subscribers.

UPC Romania, part of the Netherlands-based group owned by Liberty Media, had 320,000 subscribers in 2002.

A. GERMAN OWNERS

WAZ

WAZ is a small player in the Romanian media market. It opted essentially for the newspaper sector with a 51% interest in the daily *Trustul des Presa National*. WAZ owns also a 50% stake in *Romania Libera* through a joint venture with Trustul Mehrh.
The group expanded influence through interests in regional papers across Eastern Europe.

SPRINGER

Axel Springer Verlag owns 8 magazine titles including *Elle* or *20 Ani*. The strategy is to publish uniformed magazines throughout Eastern Europe.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership share
Avantaje	Magazine		40%
Elle	Magazine		40%
Olivia	Magazine		40%
Inteamplari Adevarate	Magazine		40%
Popcorn	Magazine		40%
Povesta Mea	Magazine		40%
Viva	Magazine		40%
20 Ani	Magazine		40%

BURDA

Burda is the main German player in Romania with participation in 7 weeklies or magazines through the Burda Verlag Osteuropa (BVO), which is taking charge of all publishing operations in this region. BVO is the product of a partnership between Burda and Italian publishing group RCS Editori. Burda owns 80% of BVO and RCS only 20%. The magazines published in Romania through Burda Ofa, a subsidiary entirely controlled by BVO, are the same as in neighbouring countries. Burda tries to standardise the content and the page-layout of their magazines, which cuts production costs and increases profits.

Title	**Type**	**Circulation**	**Ownership shares**
Burda	Magazine	25000	80%
Despre Tine	Magazine	100000	80%
Ioana	Magazine	130000	80%
Secrete bucatariei	Magazine	50000	80%
Cool girl	Magazine	55000	80%
Locuinta mea	Magazine	30000	80%
Gradina Imea de vis plate	Magazine	30000	80%

OTHERS

Some other German players are involved in Romania such as Bauer (1 magazine) and Gruner+Jahr (with *evenementul Zilei*)

B. SWISS OWNERS

RINGIER

Ringier has created a branch called Ringier Romania. It is the leading foreign publisher and market leader in Romania's promising business publications segment. Today, Ringier publishes around ten print products including the tabloid daily paper *Libertatea*.

Title	**Type**	**Circulation**	**Ownership shares**
Bravo	Magazine	98000	
Capital	Magazine	41000	
Libertatea	Press	167000	
Lumea feimelor	magazine	72000	
TV Mania	magazine	159000	
TV Satelit	magazine	69000	
Unica	magazine	52000	

EDIPRESSE

Edipresse has been in the Romanian market since 1998 in association with Antonios Liberis, its Greek partner. The partnership was enlarged at the beginning of 2002 with the integration of the Romanian publications belonging to the Axel Springer

Group. The Romanian Publishing Group (RPG) publishes eight magazines in Romania including well-known international titles like *Avantaje* or *Elle*[xxxvi] onto its market. In 1999 RPG launched the fortnightly magazine *Viva!*, a Romanian adaptation of its Polish cousin, and in 2000 it launched the magazine *20 Ani*.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
20 Ani	Magazine	13634	
Avantaje	Magazine	45000	
Elle	magazine	18000	
Intamplari adevarate	magazine	33000	
Viva	magazine	26000	
Olivia	magazine	30000	
Popcorn	magazine	30000	
Povestea Mea	magazine	39000	

C. FINNISH OWNERS

SANOMA

In 1999, Sanoma Magazines International and Hearst founded Sanoma-Hearst Romania (SHR), in which SMI owns a 65% stake. SHR launched several magazines and was quickly able to gain a leading market share. Business in Romania is at an early stage of development. Sanoma-Hearst Romania publishes four titles, including *Cosmopolitan*, and also operate Romania's leading consumer Internet portal.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Cosmopolitan	Magazine		65%
FHM	Magazine		65%
MAMI	Magazine		65%
Beau Monde	Magazine		65%
TV Story	Magazine		65%

D. FRENCH OWNERS

LAGARDÈRE GROUP

Lagardère has owned *Europa FM* since 2000. The French group also has a stake in *Radio Total*. When Lagardère invested in this radio station, the situation was difficult. After restructuring, *Radio Total* became very popular in Bucharest. The new objective is to become a national radio station because it only broadcasts in the Bucharest area. Lagardère has adopted the French format with programs arranged every day around 40 sections of information intersected by musical parts and entertainment shows.

Lagardère has also created *Radio 21*, a youth station broadcast in Bucharest where the headquarters are. *Radio 21* has now the objective of broadcasting its programmes on 12 local stations so that they can reach almost all the country.

Lagardère group is focused on radio in Romania but they also publish the internationally known *Elle* magazine (circulation 25,000) through the Romanian Publishing Group SRL.

E. NON-EUROPEAN OWNERS

NEWS CORPORATION

The global media group, News Corporation, through Balkan News Service fully owns the digital TV channel *B1TV* (*Bucuresti 1 TV*). The channel was launched in December 2001 and includes news, talk shows and entertainment in addition to cultural, economic and political programmes focusing on Bucharest's life. The company's goal is to officially launch the channel within the entire country and begin satellite broadcasting.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN MEDIA

ProTV was formed as a joint venture between Bermuda-based CME and local Romanian entrepreneurs in 1995. It has an audience share of 25%

F. LUXEMBOURG OWNERS

SBS

Luxembourg-based and American-financed SBS owns 86% of Ameron Ltd., which operate *Prima TV* in Romania. This station was established in 1997 and covers 87% of the Romanian media landscape. The programmes are broadcasted by satellite and cable. Currently, *Prima TV* is the second private television in terms of market shares and audiences.

G. CONCLUSION

One of the clearest tendencies has been media concentration. There are several big players on the media market. Some of them are foreign but the biggest actors still remain Romanian. MediaPro[xxxvii] is the biggest media company followed by Intact[xxxviii], a company founded by a well-known businessman and party founder. Finally, several international media companies hold newspapers, magazines and TV stations. For example the Swiss group Ringier holds the tabloid *Libertatea*, the financial weekly *Capital* and several other specialised magazines.

However, the entrance of international companies into the market has led to improvements in journalism and in the media, after the dire legacy of Nicolae Ceausescu's dictatorship. The difference between tabloid and quality papers has become more clear and TV and radio stations have been offering better and more diverse programming.

In Romania, the audiovisual field was regulated by the Audiovisual Law adopted in 1992. In mid-2000 a new audiovisual law was passed to bring Romanian broadcasting in line with the European Union's *Television Without Frontiers* directive. The law specifies that broadcasters must show at least 40% Romanian produced programmes, 10% of which must be made by independent production companies. Broadcasting laws permit foreign ownership. The National Audiovisual Council (CNA), an eleven-member body elected by Parliament, is responsible for awarding TV and radio licences, monitoring operations and enforcing legislation. Broadcasting licences can only be awarded by the CNA following approval by the Ministry of

Communications. However, the CNA does not have legislative powers, and cannot propose laws to the Parliament[xxxix].

Changes within the Serbian media began shortly before Milosevic fell from power in October 2000 but accelerated rapidly from that day. Once it was clear that he would be replaced, media outlets rushed to announce changes and to denounce the past. Radio-Television Serbia, a Milosevic mouthpiece, was set on fire and senior editors were removed. The station's name changed temporarily to New RTS and new editors were appointed. Similar changes occurred in other media. The former pro-Milosevic media have now been freed of political censorship. Those, which fiercely defended their independence under the previous regime, have continued to report more comprehensively than media, which merely switched sides. The daily *Danas* and weekly *Vreme* are critical of the new government and the weekly NIN and Radio B92 remain confrontational. A degree of self-censorship has replaced government pressure. Various government or political groups control most of the media companies.

A. GERMAN OWNERS

WAZ

The *Politika* newspaper, the oldest daily in the Balkans, has been part of a €25 million deal with the WAZ Media group. The German group created a joint venture with Politika Newspapers and Magazines. The agreement is a 50-50 percent partnership in a new company, jointly formed by Politika and WAZ. The contract between the two companies also includes a detailed distribution of authority: *Politika* will be in charge of editorial policy and WAZ will deal with investment.

The new company will continue to publish all of Politika's current publications, and none of them can be discontinued without the Yugoslav partner's consent. But word is going round that Politika's management has already agreed to shut down most of the current periodicals[xl].

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Politika	Newspaper		49%
Politika Ekspress	Newspaper		49%
Sportski Zurnal	Newspaper		49%
Svet Kompjutera	Magazine		49%
Viva	Magazine		49%
Ilustrovana politika	Magazine		49%
Huper	Magazine		49%

WAZ acquired the Podgorica daily, *Vijesti*, in 2003 and there are reports that it also plans to acquire the Novi Sad daily, *Dnevnik*.

BURDA

Burda has a small presence in the Serbian market, however it still publishes 3 magazines. Just like everywhere else, Burda is associated in the Central European Region with RCS Editori. They publish *Lisa*, the largest women magazine in Serbia. There are two other magazines related to *Lisa*. *Lisa Kulinarske Taine* and *Lisa Kulinarske special* allow Burda to increase financial and circulation numbers.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Lisa	Magazine	170 000	80%
Lisa Kulinarske Taine	Magazine	70 000	80%
Lisa Kulinarske special	Magazine (4 times a year)	70 000	80%

GRUNER+JAHR

Gruner+Jahr has penetrated the Serbian market in collaboration with the Swiss group Ringier. Gruner owns a 51% stake and Ringier the remaining 49%. They publish together *Blic* and *Blic News*.

HOLTZBRINCK

Holtzbrinck has taken the majority share of *Privredni Pregled*, the single Yugoslav economic daily, through the Czech *Economia*, which is a business and information magazine. *Handelsblatt owns Economia*, which is a subsidiary of Holtzbrinck. The deal was agreed in early 2003.

XII. SLOVAK REPUBLIC

In the past months, Slovakia has introduced new laws to extend the rights of journalists and freedom of expression. The Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission (CBR) is responsible for allocating licences to terrestrial and cable TV companies, and monitoring their adherence to the conditions of their licence. The Slovak Television Council is responsible for maintaining the independence and impartiality of the public service broadcaster, Slovak Television. The Broadcasting Law of 2000 required broadcasters to ensure their transmissions meet a number of basic principles, including:

- The universality of information and the plurality of opinion
- Objectivity and impartiality of news and current affairs programmes.

Foreign ownership is permitted, although licensing preference is given to foreign applicants planning to contribute to original domestic programming. Licence conditions impose a limit of 49 % of shares for foreign investors.

Other characteristics of the Slovak market are the significant changes resulting from the arrival of foreign media groups. They oversaw a dramatic change in the Slovakian media landscape with a boom of new publications and private radio stations. Since 1989, the press has flourished despite intermittent attempts by the government to re-impose direct control by increasing newspaper taxes and reducing access to newsprint. Today, all major dailies, magazines and radio stations are private.

Public broadcasting services are weak. Slovak Television (STV) has had to cut budgets and staff. Until the launch of the commercial station, *TV Markíza*, in 1996, *STV 1* had an audience share of 50%. This has now slumped to 13%.

The dominant cable provider, as is the case in many of CEE countries, is the Netherlands-based **UPC**, which has around 300,000 subscribers.

A. GERMAN OWNERS

PASSAUER NEUE PRESSE

Passauer Neue Presse started to invest in the Slovakian market in 1999. Firstly, the eastern Slovakian daily newspaper called *Luc* was purchased. Soon afterwards, PNP bought additional Slovak language dailies and weeklies throughout the country. In 2000, all the portfolio of the German group was brought into a joint venture created with SME Group. This operation allowed PNP to create a joint publishing house for daily and weekly newspapers called Petit Press SA[xli]. Both Slovakian and Hungarian newspapers are published from there.

Petit Press
PNP started to invest in Slovakia in 1999, after the country had spent five years in isolation under the rule of the nationalist authoritarian, Vladimir Meciar. The legacy of that era still remains, with weak institutions unable to challenge corruption in politics, the judiciary system or business arenas.

PNP now has a number of papers, comprising of both regional daily and weekly newspapers, and daily national newspapers, including *SME*. The manner in which

SME reports on Slovakia's problems of transition to a more open and democratic society will be an important test of its independence. Economic and political networks rooted in the Communist era still remain powerful, and *SME* recently reported that 13 of the 100 best-known Slovak companies were run by former state security agents and collaborators, and 23 by informers.

Title	**Type**	**Circulation**	**Ownership share**
Uj Szo	Newspaper		100%
SME	Newspaper		100%
Gemersky dennik	Newspaper		100%
Kisicky dennik	Newspaper		100%
Presovsky dennik	Newspaper		100%
Spissky dennik	Newspaper		100%
Tztransky dennik	Newspaper		100%
Zemplinsky dennik	Newspaper		100%
Rolnicke noviny	Newspaper		100%
Vasarnap	Newspaper		100%
Domino forum	Newspaper		100%
TV Oko	Newspaper		100%

GRUNER+JAHR

G+J publishes in Slovakia under exactly the same titles as in the Czech Republic. When they invested in the market, those CEE countries were still united as Czechoslovakia. After the separation, the German group separated the edition of magazines but not the production sites.

Title	**Type**	**Circulation**	**Ownership share**
Novy Cas	Newspaper		51%
Eva	Magazine		51%
Rodina	Magazine		51%
Telemagazin	Magazine		51%
Televizia	Magazine		51%
Zivot	Magazine		51%

BAUER

Bauer applies the same strategy as in other CEE countries with uniform magazines like *Bravo, Bravo Girl, Tina*.

Title	**Type**	**Circulation**	**Ownership share**
Bravo	magazine		100%
Bravo Girl	magazine		100%
Bydleni	magazine		100%
Chvilka pro tebe	magazine		100%
Divka	magazine		100%
Napsano zivotem	magazine		100%

Praktik	magazine		100%
Rhythmus zivota	magazine		100%
Tina	magazine		100%
Zena a zivot	magazine		100%

OTHERS

Holtzbrinck publishes the *Hospordarske noviny*, an economic daily paper, together with Dow Jones. The same cooperation between the two groups is in place for the publication *Economia* where Holtzbrinck holds 45% of the ownership share.

Motorpresse owns 55% of *Auto motor a sport* and *Auto Aktual*. Just like other companies, Motorpresse chose to publish formatted magazines across Central Europe.

B. SWISS OWNERS

RINGIER

Ringier has been active in Slovakia since the beginning of the nineties. Euroskop a.s., owned 100% by Ringier, is the market leader in the magazine sector. With a 60% market share, it has the largest proportion of Slovakia's readership. *Zivot* a family magazine with a circulation of some 130,000, and *Eurotelevizia*, a programme guide are among the country's publications with the highest circulation figures.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership shares
Euro televizia	Magazine	167000	
Eva	Magazine	64500	
Tvoja Rodina	Magazine	68000	
Zivot	Magazine	138000	

C. FINNISH OWNERS

SANOMA

Sanoma Magazines Slovakia operates in the Slovakian market. Through the acquisition of Strategie Praha in 1999, Sanoma magazines International gained 51% interest in Strategie na Slovensku. This company is the leader in its respective segments within the B2B market in Slovakia. In 2001, SMI acquired the remaining 49% of Stategie na Slovensku and changed its name into SMAGS (Sanoma magazines Slovakia).

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership share
Strategie	magazine		100%
Obchod	magazine		100%
Zdravotnicke Noviny	magazine		100%
Prekvapeni	magazine		100%
Sestra	magazine		100%

D. UK OWNERS

MILLENIUM ELECTRONICS

TA3 is the first all-news TV channel in Slovakia. It was launched in September 2002. *TA3* opened with a focus on the anti-terrorism war, sending its reporter to Peshawar to become the first Slovak media outlet to have a journalist cover the events in Pakistan. The Slovak *TA3* is looking at a market of just over five million people. The all news TV station made a deal with a British company, Millenium Electronics Ltd, which took a 55% stake in *TA3* in exchange for a $3m start-up capital injection. Millenium's owners, their business activities and a source of their capital remain unidentified. The company is said to be interested in selling out in three to four years time, possibly to a media investor. Millenium has been linked to British offshore firms in the local Slovak press. Today, *TA3* employs some 100 people and airs 17 hours of news a day (13 hours on weekends)[xlii]. *TA3* is broadcast by satellite and cable.

E. NON-EUROPEAN OWNERS

CENTRAL EUROPEAN MEDIA

TV Markíza was launched as the country's first commercial TV channel in 1996, with backing from CME, the Bermuda-based company who have a 70% economic interest in the station. The station had a 58% viewing share in 2001. It has been accused of political bias, openly supporting particular parties and presidential candidates.

F. CONCLUSION

Slovakia's broadcasting sector has changed considerably since the adoption of the 1993 Broadcasting Law. The introduction of commercial television, in particular, transformed the market completely. Today, all the Slovak press is privatised.

In the first stage (1990-1992), editorial staff privatised their newspapers. In this transitory period, editorial staff replaced the former political publishers. In the second stage, the journalist/shareholders entered into alliances with home and foreign investors. The editorial office was separated from the publishing house. Nevertheless, some ties between editors and publisher remained. That is why editors are reluctant to disclose the amount of foreign capital in the Slovak media.

Today, the biggest foreign investors in the Slovak press market are German WAZ, Bertelsmann's Gruner und Jahr and Swiss concern Ringier[xliii]. Foreign capital is extensive in the Slovak private radio market, as well as in the national, regional and cable television markets.

XII. SLOVENIA

Despite Slovenia's small size, foreign ownership is present but strong local players control important sections of the market. In Slovenia, the media field is regulated by the Mass Media Act adopted in 1994. It issues and withdraws broadcasting licences, issues rules, and monitors the stations to see if these rules are respected. The Mass Media Act specifies restrictions on both ownership and cross-ownership. The act permits foreign ownership but this is tightly controlled by regulations. The foreign ownership stake in a media enterprise cannot exceed 33%. Although the media law was restrictive, Slovenians circumvented the law by using funds **to take participation in** media enterprises. The new media law voted in 2001 has now a chapter concerning the regulation of investment funds. Moreover, the Ministry of Culture must approve all acquisitions[xliv].

A. GERMAN OWNERS

MOTORPRESSE

Motorpresse has a small presence in Slovenia with a 10% stake in Moto Media, which publish 3 sports magazines. Moto Media publishes *Auto Magazyn* (circulation of 16 000), *Grand Prix Magazyn* (6500) and *GRIF* (5500).

BURDA

Hubert Burda media produces 200 magazines and newspapers in 28 countries. The group expanded in Central Europe by creating the Burda Verlag Osteuropa (BVO), responsible for all publishing operations in this region. BVO is the product of a partnership between Burda and Italian publishing group RCS Editori. It concerns the periodicals activities of both groups. Burda owns 80% of BVO while RCS only 20%. In Slovenia, Burda Slovenia operates the magazine market. It currently owns 8 titles.

Title	Type	Circulation	Ownership share
Cosmopolitan	Magazine	70 000	80%
Lisa	Magazine	100 000	80%
Men's health	Magazine	20 000	80%
Playboy	Magazine	20 000	80%
Avto Magazin	Magazine	10 000	80%
Avto Magazin/Moto Katalog	Magazine	8000	80%
Nova	Magazine		80%
Connect	Magazine	6400	80%

B. SWEDISH OWNERS

BONNIER

Bonnier has also interests in Slovenia where the group publishes *Finance*, a business paper. Bonnier transformed this weekly into a daily and the circulation rose by 20 percent. This newspaper has found a market interest by specializing in economic issues. *Finance* is owned by Gospodarski vestnik (50%). Bonnier Affarinformation Holding Ab owns for its part 28.8% of Gospodarski vestnik.

C. AUSTRIAN OWNERS

LEYKAM

The Austrian printing house Leykam Medien AG was the first to understand that starting new newspapers in Slovenia was an uncertain project. Leykam preferred to invest in an established newspaper from Maribor called *Vecer*. First it purchased their printing house, which had been separated from the newspaper in the privatization process. It is called Leykam Tiskarna. The printing house has numerous clients in the magazine market and it prints *Vecer*. Later, it managed to gain a 10 percent share in the ownership of the paper itself. Today, the stake of Leykam Medien AG in the daily sector has grown to 19.58%.

D. CONCLUSION

The process of ownership restructuring following the Slovenian Law on Privatization had the same impact on the media sector as on other companies[xlv]. The 2001 Mass Media act, which prevents concentration of ownership, is supposed to protect media independence and pluralism. Namely, restrictions no longer exist apart from the fact that any share in ownership amounting to more than 20 percent must be reported to the Ministry of Culture. Real restrictions exist only in the area of cross-ownership and when, for example, a print media organization wants to take control over broadcasting companies. All in all, these restrictions are not really attractive for foreign capital. Foreign capital has been entering Slovenia’s media space rather slowly. The principal cause of that is that Slovenians are a conservative public who find it hard to break the habit of reading the same newspapers for years.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

The evidence presented in this report leads to some disturbing conclusions, and also points to some examples of hopeful developments. Commentators who believed that after the fall of communist regimes in 1989, there would be a speedy transition to open democratic forms of government, have been sharply disabused. Similarly, the notion that new democratic media would swiftly emerge has only partially been realised.

The reasons are obvious. Damaged and weakened economies could not sustain the kind of investment to develop new forms of media ownership, and European and other media groups began to move into the vacuum created post-1989. A dual system of broadcasting emerged with public broadcasting under threat from political interference, both in the appointment of supporters to key positions but also through the reliance on state subsidies which were inadequate to fund high quality programming. The result was the selling of advertising to fill the revenue gap, and this also reinforced the dilution of programme quality. At the same time new commercial broadcasting stations opened, which rapidly eroded audiences for public television.

What this report demonstrates is the steady encroachment of transnational media into CEE countries. This raises the crucial question of whether media systems in these CEE countries can become representative of public interests and civil concerns when key decisions about investment and even editorial attitudes towards political issues may be decided elsewhere.

Another issue, which is vital to the development of media with high professional standards, is the quality and status of the journalists working in the media. In CEE countries there is very clear evidence of the pressures on journalists: poor pay, low status, insecure contracts or freelance work are prevalent, side by side with weakened notions of media freedom. A Serbian survey revealed journalists identified the lack of media freedom as due to political pressures (45%), self-censorship (33%), political constraints in editorial policy (26%) and lack of courage on the part of editors (23%). (*Journalists' Newsline*, Issue No 8, April 2003)

However the move towards an enlarged European Union does provide the opportunity to:

- Develop strong, independent media trade unions within the various CEE countries;
- Build the transnational links through European Works Councils in companies like Orkla, WAZ, Axel Springer Verlag, Ringier, etc.;
- Develop support for clear statements of publishing principles such as those developed by Orkla.

There is also important work to be done within European-wide institutions, which have a role in influencing public opinion and shaping media policy issues. One particular issue is the shape and content of the *Television Without Frontiers* directive, currently under revision.

The policy document, *Legislating for a Democratic Media in Europe*, produced by the European Federation of Journalists, provides a clear statement of the issues that need to be tackled at a European level.

Section 2 of the document states:

> *The political institutions of Europe must protect the rights of citizens and promote transparency, understanding and participation in the development of policies designed to strengthen the social, economic and political cohesion of communities. The special role of media in this process requires the legal protection for media independence and support for professionalism in journalism should be of the highest priority.*

2.1 The EFJ/IFJ declares that **limiting concentration of ownership/cross ownership and developing antitrust legislation at European level** is a precondition for a democratic and independent media in Europe and should be treated as a priority.

2.2 The EFJ/IFJ considers the implementation of **editorial independence** (editorial statutes) in all European media as a necessity to guarantee the professional independence of journalists and a pluralistic press.

2.3 The EFJ/IFJ believes that creating **structures for dialogue** to bring together legitimate representatives of workforce, management and consumers to discuss the economic and social development of the media and practical implementation of laws, policies and standards is essential to safeguarding a free and democratic media.

Finally, we should not be too virtuous about the condition of the media in the present, pre-accession European Union. Media power either distorts the democratic process, or political power seeks to curtail the independence of the media, in the United Kingdom through the power of Rupert Murdoch's News International; in Italy through Silvio Berlusconi's media group, Mediaset and, as Prime Minister, his interference in the public service broadcaster, RAI; and in Spain where the conservative Prime Minister, José María Aznar, has too much media power and misuses it. An enlarged European Union will confront trade unionists in the media with a number of similar problems, which we will have to face and deal with together.

EFJ POLICY POSITION

The EFJ is not against foreign ownership. Indeed, it is well aware of the potential benefits which investment in the media can bring to the developing economies of the region. However the EFJ believes that clear conditions should be applied in all CEE countries where foreign ownership is allowed:

- *Oblige transnational media enterprises to disclose the full extent of their holdings in each of the CEE countries in which they operate*

- *Oblige transnational media enterprises to respect rights of employees and to engage in a social dialogue as it does in the parent holding*

- *Oblige transnational media enterprises to establish European Works Councils in line with the EC Directive on EWCs*

- *Oblige transnational media enterprises to respect media pluralism and to divest media properties where there are unacceptable levels of concentration*

- *Oblige transnational media enterprises to respect cultural and national particularities of the CEE countries where subsidiaries exist.*

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[iii] **E. ALFANDRI**, *The German concern Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung in Bulgaria*, EJC, Maastricht, 2002

[iv] **V. TABAKOVA**, *Bulgarian media landscape*, EJC, Maastricht, 2002

[v] Trud and 24 Tschassa

[vi] Antenna TV S.A. is a media group that owns and operates
Antenna TV, a television broadcast network and producer of television programming in Greece. The Company also owns and operates a radio station, Antenna FM, and has a controlling interest in a publishing company, Daphne Communications.

[vii] **K.SALTZIS,** *Antenna TV will compete again after losing its licence for Bulgarian TV,* Europemedia, 14/12/2001

[viii] Originally called AS Meediakorp

[ix] Originally called AS Postimees

[x] Publisher of Postimees, the largest daily in Estonia

[xi] Five local newspapers: Sakala in Viljandi, Järva Teataja in Paide, Viru Press, Pärnu Postimees and Valgamaalane.

[xii] **T. TAMMERK**, *Estonian media landscape*, EJC, Maastricht, 2000

[xiii] **W. DUNKERLEY**, *East European media: an enigmatic market* in: The Investors' Journal of Legislative Impact, London, January 1998

[xiv] **C. RODE**, *Press freedom and the Professional standards of Journalists – Case study of Hungary* in: Enlargement: Media freedom and journalists rights, EFJ, Brussels, 2002

[xv] www.opendemocracy.net

[xvi] Media Perspektiven, 9th edition, 2002, Frankfurt

[xvii] Scandinavian Broadcasting System S.A. is a NASDAQ-listed commercial television & radio operator.

[xviii] MTM Kommunikáció Rt. is the largest privately owned audio-visual group in Hungary and a leading producer of Hungarian language versions of several international game shows.

[xix] Tele-München Gruppe is the second-largest electronic media company in Germany.

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xxx Active in the paper industry

xxxi **W. JELONKIEWICZ**, *Hidden Hand Closes Business Pages* in: Warsaw Voice, Issue 560, Warsaw, 1999

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xxxiv **J. PIEKLO**, *Polish Media landscape*, EJC, Maastricht, 2002

xxxv **J. PIEKLO**, ibid.

xxxvi With participation of Axel Springer Verlag

xxxvii ProTV, Acasa networks, the Mediafax news agency, the Radio ProFM, Apropo.ro, ProSport, Ziarul Financiar, Playboy Romania, the Buftea film studios, other print titles and media companies

xxxviii Owner of the Antena 1 TV network, the Romantic FM, the Jurnalul National daily and other titles.

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