

MEDIA

SUSTAINABILITY

INDEX

2004



IREX

"THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE MEDIA IS CONNECTED DIRECTLY WITH THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY. CURRENTLY, THE ECONOMY IN KOSOVO IS NOT DOING VERY WELL, AND CONSEQUENTLY MEDIA ARE NOT SUSTAINABLE," SAID BLERIM KRASNIQI.



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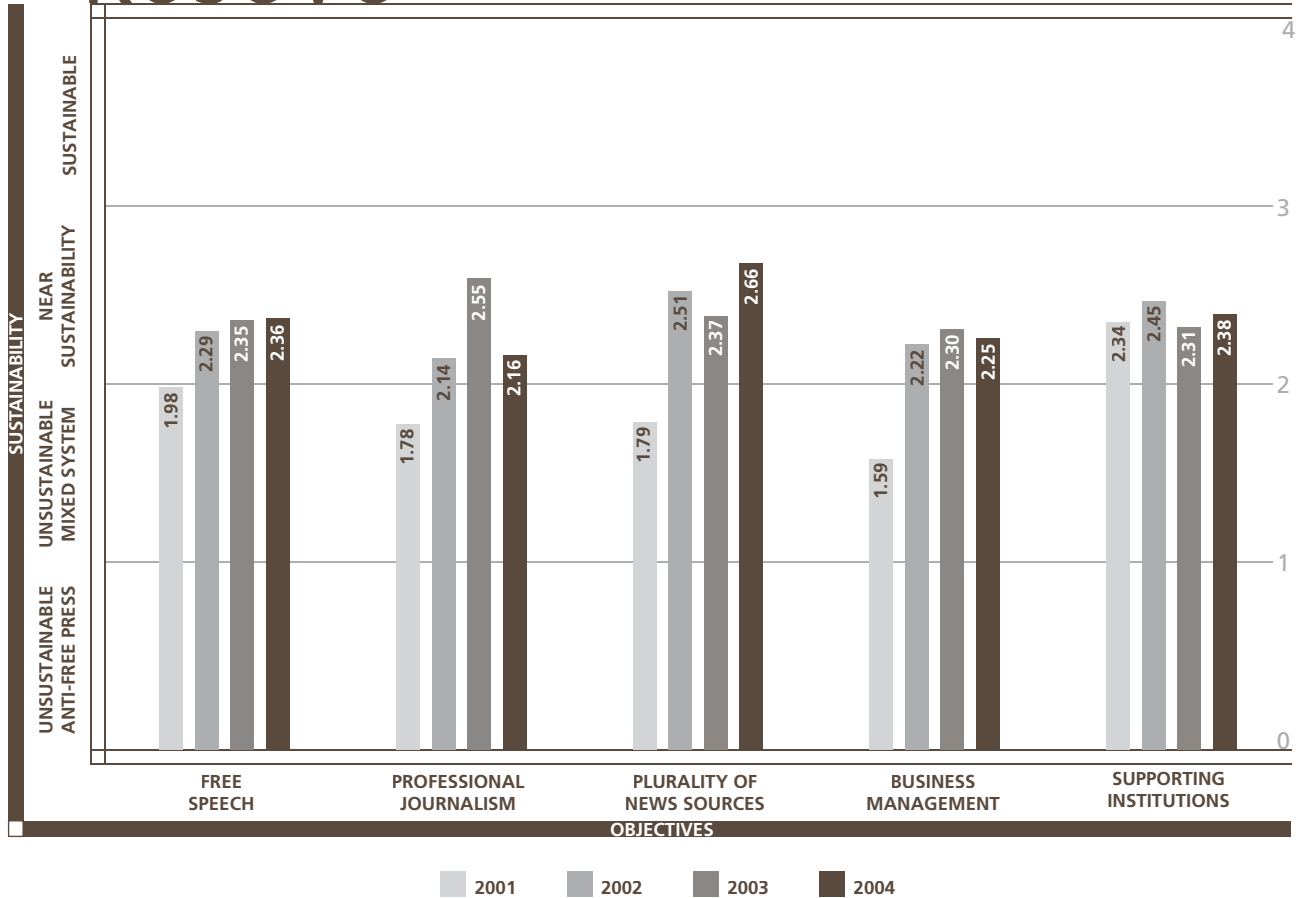
ore than five years after NATO troops entered Kosovo on June 12, 1999, ending a decade of oppressive rule by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, the territory remains under the administration of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, directed by the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG). After two municipal and two Kosovo-wide elections, some powers have transferred to the Kosovo Provisional Institutions of Government (PISG). But the SRSG still holds authority on vital issues such as external relations, the administration of public, state, and socially owned property and enterprises, protection of the rights of minorities, and security. Regulation of the media also continues to be overseen by the international community, with authority vested in the Temporary Media Commission (TMC) by the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Long-awaited legislation replacing the TMC with a locally run Independent Media Commission inched forward during 2004. By early 2005 it had been approved in principle by the Kosovo National Assembly and was ready for an article-by-article discussion. If approved, the legislation would also require the signature of the SRSG before going into effect.

Kosovo, a region with approximately 2 million inhabitants, hosts one of the highest concentrations of media outlets in southeastern Europe. The media map includes three national television stations, 34 local television stations, four national radio stations, and 76 regional radio stations. The strongest media outlet in Kosovo is public broadcaster RTK, comprised of a national television station and two radio stations, Radio Blue Sky and Radio Kosova. In addition, seven daily newspapers and several magazines, all private, are published in Kosovo.

March 2004 saw the bloodiest day in Kosovo since NATO forces entered in 1999. The media were viewed as playing a role in fomenting the tensions that continue to divide the population, which is more than 90 percent ethnically Albanian and about 5 percent Serb, with the rest made up of other minorities. On March 16, three Albanian children drowned in a river near the ethnically divided town of Mitrovica in northern Kosovo. Initial media reports, particularly on television, said that the children had been

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KOSOVO



Unsustainable, Anti-Free Press (0-1): Country does not meet or only minimally meets objectives. Government and laws actively hinder free media development, professionalism is low, and media-industry activity is minimal.

Unsustainable Mixed System (1-2): Country minimally meets objectives, with segments of the legal system and government opposed to a free media system. Evident progress in free-press advocacy, increased professionalism, and new media businesses may be too recent to judge sustainability.

Near Sustainability (2-3): Country has progressed in meeting multiple objectives, with legal norms, professionalism, and the business environment supportive of independent media. Advances have survived changes in government and have been codified in law and practice. However, more time may be needed to ensure that change is enduring and that increased professionalism and the media business environment are sustainable.

Sustainable (3-4): Country has media that are considered generally professional, free, and sustainable, or to be approaching these objectives. Systems supporting independent media have survived multiple governments, economic fluctuations, and changes in public opinion or social conventions.

threatened by Serbs from a nearby village whose dogs had so frightened them that they fled to the river, where they perished. Tensions heightened the next day when Albanian schoolchildren protested against the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), claiming not enough protection was being offered to Albanians in the village of Çabra, which is surrounded by Serbian villages and was destroyed during the war. After UNMIK intervened, protests grew in Mitrovica and other parts of Kosovo. In all, 19 people—nine Serbs and 11 Albanians—were killed. In the aftermath, the TMC critiqued the television coverage of the events as inaccurate, biased, and even irresponsible.

The Media Sustainability Index (MSI) panel concluded that the role of the international community in Kosovo continues to color all aspects of the environment for journalists, media businesses, free-speech advocates, and organizations working with newspapers and broadcasters. Although the panelists detected modest improvement in the availability of news sources and the supporting institutions for the media, there was some regression in the professionalism of the journalism practiced and the management of media businesses. The panelists predicted that the unresolved status of Kosovo and the strong role of non-Kosovar players would continue to impede any significant advances in the development of the media.

OBJECTIVE 1: FREE SPEECH

Kosovo Objective Score: 2.36 / 4.00

Freedom of speech is one of the main principles of Kosovo's Constitution. However, UNMIK views freedom of speech from a peacekeeping and security perspective rather than as a human-rights issue, particularly in cases of interethnic conflict, said MSI panelist Arben Qirezi, a media analyst. The distinction between freedom of speech and abusive conduct or hate speech is not clearly defined legally, and there is continuing conflict between some media and the TMC regarding this issue.

Panelists agreed that a proposed law establishing an independent media commission is badly needed, but progress has been blocked by politics. Critics blame the Kosovo government, led by the Partia Demokratike e Kosovës (PDK), for keeping it bottled up for more than a year and say that the OSCE and the PISG failed to cooperate with several attempts to pass the new law in 2003 and 2004. Creation of the new commission would cost the government and international community control of the media. However, MSI panelists agreed

Legal and social norms protect and promote free speech and access to public information.

FREE-SPEECH INDICATORS:

- > Legal/social protections of free speech exist and are enforced.
- > Licensing of broadcast media is fair, competitive, and apolitical.
- > Market entry and tax structure for media are fair and comparable to other industries.
- > Crimes against journalists or media outlets are prosecuted vigorously, but occurrences of such crimes are rare.
- > State or public media do not receive preferential legal treatment, and law guarantees editorial independence.
- > Libel is a civil law issue; public officials are held to higher standards, and the offended party must prove falsity and malice.
- > Public information is easily accessible; right of access to information is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
- > Media outlets have unrestricted access to information; this is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
- > Entry into the journalism profession is free, and government imposes no licensing, restrictions, or special rights for journalists.

that until such a body exists, media outlets in Kosovo will be unable to grow in a stable environment. Pristina University professor and media analyst Ibrahim Berisha observed that many issues regarding the media are still regulated by old Serbian laws approved during the Milosevic regime. As an example, Robert Gillette, the Temporary Media Commissioner, noted that although

“Many journalists and officials do not know this law [Freedom of Information Law] exists, and they do not know how to use it,” noted Ramush Tahiraj.

“serious people” are interested in developing digital broadcasting, there is no regulatory mechanism for moving forward and no inclination on the part of the SRSG to amend outdated existing statutes.

The broadcast licensing process is apolitical in the sense that it is regulated by the TMC, an institution established by OSCE. Local politicians cannot influence

decisions on who receives a license and who does not. Panel participants agreed, however, that Kosovo needs a law that will prevent media owners from obtaining multiple licenses and creating monopolies, and that there is no fair and competitive process for awarding licenses. Blerim Krasniqi, an advisor to the IREX media development program, noted that in the beginning the TMC office gave licenses to anybody who applied. These awards have never been reviewed, although many holders violate the licensing rules, including by renting out frequencies to other television companies and running pirated films. There was particular concern about national licenses because only three have been awarded, creating a lack of competition in this area.

Kosovo has a law protecting freedom of speech, and the panel agreed that Kosovar society regards the concept of freedom of speech as valued and correct. However, postwar tensions and political uncertainty have resulted in limited acceptance and understanding of the law, and violations of the right to freedom of speech cause very little, if any, public outcry.

The panelists felt that the government views and treats the media the same as other businesses, and media are not subject to any particular financial pressure. However, the taxation system does present a problem. Broadcast and print outlets must adhere to the same rules regarding the value-added tax (VAT) as any other enterprise. This has resulted in decreased revenue, already a major problem for the media sector. MSI panelist Robert Gillette said that Kosovar outlets pay possibly the highest rates in Europe—15 percent for print media, which is the same as for other goods in Kosovo—while in some European Union countries, print media pay 25 percent (or less) of the rate for other goods.

The question of journalists' safety was also raised, as several have been killed since the end of the war without police and prosecutors ever conducting sufficient investigations to determine if the attacks were related to their profession or to other factors. In September 2004, *Koha Ditore* journalist Fatmire Terdevci, the author of a number of investigative stories, was shot and wounded while riding in a car. The police have never established whether the attack was related to Ms. Terdevci's work, and no arrests have been made. Journalists also face frequent verbal threats, and panelists said that in some cases, political parties, government ministers, and businesses use these means to influence editorial policy and the work of editors and journalists. Journalists, aware of the danger of retribution, may retreat to self-censorship.

Journalists were under threat from law enforcement as well. After the March riots, police went to television

stations demanding tapes of edited and raw footage they intended to use to identify the organizers and participants. In at least one case, in which the chief editor refused to give up his tapes, a search warrant was issued and executed by international police. Journalists and technicians were then taken to police headquarters for questioning. Based on what police saw on the tapes, a number of people were later arrested. MSI panel members expressed concern that confiscation of the tapes and their use as a prosecutorial tool endangers journalists and news crews, destroying their credibility as unbiased observers and the protection that comes with that status.

The panelists also noted that journalists in Kosovo face assorted other challenges. For example, they work without insurance, and few have signed contracts with media owners. In many cases, the panelists said, media owners use journalists to suit their needs and do not allow them the opportunity to work on a professional basis. A legal framework for employment in Kosovo that would cover all workers was approved late in 2004, but its potential to protect journalists through labor law has not been tested.

The Access to Information Act lacks consistent implementation, and the panelists placed the responsibility for that on all government institutions from the prime minister's office to the ministries. Furthermore, the panelists found that UNMIK's governing style continues to be characterized by a lack of transparency and demands for confidentiality in almost all major issues of public interest. The panelists assessed limits on access to information as equal for all media, regardless of ownership, and said the motives for restricting access vary from political concerns to the personal relations and preferences of the officials involved. Ramush Tahiraj, an experienced journalist and media advisor to the Kosovo parliament speaker, said that although the Freedom of Information Law ensures there are no legal restrictions on access, "many journalists and officials do not know this law exists and they do not know how to use it."

Libel is a criminal offense due to the lack of a civil code in Kosovo, and panelists said this has a chilling effect on journalists and needs to be rectified. They also said the copyright law approved by the Assembly without public hearings needs to be revised due to a range of shortcomings, including vesting too much power in a single agency that would implement its provisions and failing to outline an arbitration mechanism to challenge this entity's decisions.

Although both public and independent media based in the capital city, Pristina, receive the same degree

of cooperation from government and international institutions, the situation is different in the regions, according to the panel. Regional media appear to be viewed as unimportant, and their access to key players and organizations is limited, the panelists said. In one 2004 case discussed by the panel, Kosovar-Albanian journalists in Mitrovica, the least stable region of Kosovo, were banned by UNMIK from its press conferences because they were considered to be asking “improper questions” about the mission’s relations with local residents.

There are no legal restrictions in using international information or Internet services. Satellite broadcasts are easily accessible by the public, and media have unrestricted access to international news. Still, the panelists found that few media outlets incorporate international stories in their news coverage. One panelist noted that the public broadcaster RTK receives six hours of edited news from the European Broadcasting Union, but only uses approximately three minutes on the main news bulletin.

Although no restrictions are imposed on entry to the journalism profession and the government does not award special privileges to specific media or journalists, participants observed that UNMIK indirectly restricts the work of journalists by issuing press cards only to those it considers to be bona-fide journalists. Without this credential, journalists can be prevented from working at any time by the police or military.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Kosovo Objective Score: 2.16 / 4.00

The continued poor economy in Kosovo has an adverse effect on professional journalism, starving news organizations of the resources needed to do probing and comprehensive reporting. The panelists found that the media too often need to find the least expensive ways to produce news coverage, with journalists seeking the easiest and fastest way to cover stories. Very little investigative journalism, which requires time for research, is practiced in this environment.

Specifically, the panelists found that inadequate staffing in newsrooms creates additional deadline pressures. Journalists do not have time to cover a story from all angles using multiple sources of information, leading them to opt, for example, for producing coverage from a single news conference. A lack of relevant and reliable sources further complicates the situation.

Although Kosovo has a professional code of conduct under the TMC that covers the fundamentals of

Journalism meets professional standards of quality.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM INDICATORS:

- > Reporting is fair, objective, and well sourced.
- > Journalists follow recognized and accepted ethical standards.
- > Journalists and editors do not practice self-censorship.
- > Journalists cover key events and issues.
- > Pay levels for journalists and other media professionals are sufficiently high to discourage corruption.
- > Entertainment programming does not eclipse news and information programming.
- > Technical facilities and equipment for gathering, producing, and distributing news are modern and efficient.
- > Quality niche reporting and programming exists (investigative, economics/business, local, political).

responsible and professional reporting, most panelists expressed the opinion that it is frequently broken.

Widespread riots broke out in March after the broadcast news reports that claimed Serbs had chased Albanian children into a river near Mitrovica.

Subsequent assessments from OSCE and the TMC were critical of the television media, particularly public broadcaster RTK, for their inaccurate and even irresponsible reporting.

The panelists agreed that

“The salaries of journalists in Kosovo can lead to corruption,” Leke Musolli said. “Because of this, donors should also concentrate on regional media more than they have in the past.”

many mistakes were made by all sectors of the media, especially the leading television stations, and that journalists tend to revert to their ethnic identities when it comes to reporting on issues involving Albanians and Serbs. The chairman of the Association of Professional Journalists of Kosovo (APJK), Naser Miftari, said this practice represents a significant problem and that journalists do not appear to know how rectify it. He noted that the same issue appears to challenge the media in Serbia.

Beyond the coverage of interethnic relations, however, the panelists felt journalists were working on an increasingly professional level in their reporting of other topics such as crime and politics. They did, however, note that political commentary continues to creep into reports provided by certain outlets associated with particular factions. And they said that there is a tendency toward sensationalism. *Koha Ditore* and *Zeri*, leading newspapers representing about half the national circulation, were evaluated as the most professional and least biased in the print sector.

One consequence of criticism of the media following the March riots was a greater sense of caution, according to the panel. Caught between local sentiments that the reporting was proper and the critique from the international community, some journalists seemed to have opted for self-censorship, particularly on issues regarding minorities.

Self-censorship can be economically motivated as well in Kosovo, the panelists said. Editors may prevent journalists from covering certain stories because they are sensitive to the interests of major advertisers. Cited as an example was the lack of probing reporting on the mobile telephone tender involving the company Mobikos, which is linked to powerful Serbian economic interests. Panel members felt that editors did not pursue the story aggressively because the company is a large advertising client. Another example of less-than-professional conduct motivated by economic self-interest mentioned by the panel concerned editors and owners of cash-strapped outlets accepting holiday trips from travel agencies in return for positive reports on the destinations. Finally, the panelists expressed concern that media employees received gifts in return for including businesses in news bulletins and other programs.

A crucial daily task for the media is determining the news agenda. The panelists felt that the Kosovar media applied the wrong criteria for choosing stories and that some decisions represented the political, economic, or personal interests of the media owners but not the information priorities of the public. As examples, the panelists said that in the party-supported *Bota Sot*, the activities of President Ibrahim Rugova have a home on the front page, and if there is a dedication of a war memorial, then RTK will make coverage a priority. Or, they said, if *Koha* Company owner Vetton Surroi made a statement about an issue, it would appear on the front page of his newspaper *Koha Ditore* and in the main headlines of his television station, KTV. The same practices also apply to Blerim Shala and his newspaper *Zëri*, and to RTK director Agim Zatriqi, the panel said.

On the issue of wages paid to journalists, panelists reported a significant discrepancy based primarily on location, with those in Pristina paid better than their counterparts in smaller communities. Journalists generally receive low salaries, and panelists agreed that some of the most skilled reporters and editors in Kosovo left the business because they could earn more money elsewhere. The panel felt that public broadcaster RTK paid the highest wages. An experienced journalist and radio-station owner noted that low pay can present serious ethical problems. "The salaries of journalists in Kosovo can lead to corruption," he said. "Because of this, donors should also concentrate on regional media more than they have in the past."

Panel members expressed concern that although journalists and other media professionals are poorly paid, the owners of media are comparatively very wealthy. Some media owners who five years ago had nothing now claim to be worth millions. Panelists said more transparency is needed, and that more of the return should be invested in journalists and other media outlet staff. Some also wondered how three or four media owners who enjoy relative wealth can continue to ask for donor money to support their operations, which were built from international assistance.

Media analyst Ibrahim Berisha told the panel that whereas broadcasters once tried to attract audiences through high-quality news programs so that professional people would watch them and businesses would buy advertising, the stations' priorities have changed. An example cited was the public broadcaster RTK's lengthy bingo broadcasts, now being copied by stations KTV and RTV 21.

OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES

Kosovo Objective Score: 2.66 / 4.00

There is little to distinguish among the national news programs that appear on the three national television stations or even the coverage provided by regional television stations. Most news coverage on the private national stations (KTV and RTV 21) is Pristina based, with little information on what is happening in the rest of Kosovo. The coverage itself is heavily protocol news, with an emphasis on political visits, meetings, and announcements. The panelists felt the national stations focused on this type of coverage because it is relatively inexpensive. Regional stations cover much more national news than stories from their own communities or region.

IREX television advisor Blerim Krasniqi suggested there is something of an identity crisis at work in Kosovar

Multiple news sources provide citizens with reliable and objective news.

PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES INDICATORS:

- > A plurality of affordable public and private news sources (e.g., print, broadcast, Internet) exists.
- > Citizens' access to domestic or international media is not restricted.
- > State or public media reflect the views of the entire political spectrum, are nonpartisan, and serve the public interest.
- > Independent news agencies gather and distribute news for print and broadcast media.
- > Independent broadcast media produce their own news programs.
- > Transparency of media ownership allows consumers to judge objectivity of news; media ownership is not concentrated in a few conglomerates.
- > A broad spectrum of social interests are reflected and represented in the media, including minority-language information sources.

television news. "It seems that neither national nor local television stations understand their role," he said. "While the national television stations, which have a mandate to cover the whole country, act as local stations covering only the events occurring in the capital city, the local stations, instead of covering current affairs and other issues from their municipalities, focus on national stories."

Newspapers were credited with providing significantly more news from regions and municipalities. Reporting on social issues was frequent but superficial, panelists said, with one-source stories designed to evoke an emotional response rather than increase awareness or spur action.

Despite the poor economy, panelists agreed that most people can afford to buy newspapers since a single copy does not cost more than €0.30. However, mostly local papers are sold because there are few places where foreign publications are sold.

Virtually every household has a satellite dish and thus is able to watch international stations in addition to Kosovar channels. Yet nearly 30 percent of the population is unable to receive a terrestrial signal from the national television stations. The Kosovo Terrestrial Telecommunications Network (KTTN) does not have

adequate equipment to reach all the territories, particularly remote villages and those in the mountains. Cable television is in its infancy, and some systems operate illegally. Internet use still is primarily an urban activity, although there are no restrictions to access.

One panelist noted that since Kosovo has only one public broadcaster (RTK TV, Radio Kosova, and Radio Blue Sky), people have not been able to discern any political bias because they have nothing to compare it to. Overall, however, the panelists generally agreed that given the number of sources of information, people in Kosovo can check the accuracy of one report against another.

Two news agencies, KosovoPress and Kosova Information Center, were established by political parties. A third, KosovaLive, is independent, but panelists said it does not fulfill the needs of all its subscribers because it does not offer audio or video material. They also said KosovaLive functions too much like an office-hours-only bureaucracy and not enough like a news agency that responds to breaking developments.

Panel participants were confident that the public is aware of who owns the national television stations and some of the major newspapers. But panelists said that in other cases, such as with newspapers *Epoka e Re* and *Pavaresia*, ownership is not apparent to readers due to a lack of transparency.

Serbian-language newspapers are primarily produced in Belgrade and delivered only to Serb communities in Kosovo. US Agency for International Development (USAID) representative Argentina Grazhdani said that in Kosovo about 23 percent of all electronic media outlets belong to Serbs, most established by the Serbian government. Public broadcaster RTK offers television and radio programs in all minority languages (Serbian, Bosnian, Turkish, and Roma).

"It seems that neither national nor local television stations understand their role. While the national television stations, which have a mandate to cover the whole country, act as local stations covering only the events occurring in the capital city, the local stations, instead of covering current affairs and other issues from their municipalities, focus on national stories," explained Blerim Krasniqi.

OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Kosovo Objective Score: 2.25 / 4.00

A number of major media outlets reported substantial improvements in business performance during 2004. Temporary Media Commissioner Robert Gillette said that up to three of the seven daily newspapers

“There are no necessary databases developed by the agencies and media. Most of the services provided are ad hoc for a particular project,” said Genc Meraku.

“have achieved profitability and two Kosovo-wide broadcasters are either approaching profitability or have achieved it. The financial status of local broadcasters is

generally not known, although nearly all appear to be sustaining themselves with little or no donor support.”

Distribution of publications is considered free, fair, and efficient. APJK chairman Naser Miftari noted that the two main distributors—Rilindja, which has not yet been privatized, and Koha Ditore, which has—are considered successful. Private printing houses are also considered self-sustaining and professionally operated.

Independent media are well-managed businesses, allowing editorial independence.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT INDICATORS:

- > Media outlets and supporting firms operate as efficient, professional, and profit-generating businesses.
- > Media receive revenue from a multitude of sources.
- > Advertising agencies and related industries support an advertising market.
- > Advertising revenue as a percentage of total revenue is in line with accepted standards at commercial outlets.
- > Independent media do not receive government subsidies.
- > Market research is used to formulate strategic plans, enhance advertising revenue, and tailor products to the needs and interests of audiences.
- > Broadcast ratings and circulation figures are reliably and independently produced.

Advertising has become an important part of broadcasters’ efforts to become profitable, although not always through traditional methods. Many stations sell private greetings to individuals as well as traditional commercial advertising. But even though there are success stories, one panelist expressed the majority view that “the advertising market remains primitive and few media outlets use the services of advertising agencies.” The panelists also noted that direct donor support of media has become more limited and selective. While support to RTK, RTV 21, and KTV has been reduced, other broadcast outlets cannot secure donor funds, they said, and this division has reduced the ability of the smaller outlets to compete.

The panelists found that independent media outlets are moderately well-managed businesses but lack deep capacity, professionalism, and management skills. The advertising industry sector, both within agencies and the media outlets, lacks both sophistication and transparency. The stations regularly accuse agencies and their competitors’ marketing departments of selling commercial time below the accepted market rates.

As for the agencies themselves, the panelists found that some may use the “agency” moniker but in reality offer neither capacity nor professionalism. They have limited knowledge of the industry, and their managers do not understand fundamental marketing concepts. Genc Meraku, from the advertising agency CITY Group and American University in Kosovo, told the panel: “There are no necessary databases developed by the agencies and media. Most of the services provided are ad hoc for a particular project.” Because of Kosovo’s unresolved political status in relation to Serbia, Meraku said, advertising companies in Serbia, without having their businesses registered in Kosovo, can go directly to Kosovo television stations with ad sales. IREX media advisor Blerim Krasniqi agreed: “The sustainability of the media is connected directly with the economic development of the country. Currently, the economy in Kosovo is not doing very well, and consequently media are not sustainable.”

Private media in Kosovo do not receive government subsidies, although some outlets continue to receive donor support from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The KTTN, which is responsible for the transmission of all national radio and television signals, relies on donor support as a major source of income.

One commercial firm does conduct market research in Kosovo, but very few in media understand its value, buy the data, or use the information to tailor programming to meet advertisers’ needs. Almost no reliable data are available on newspaper circulation,

but numbers frequently mentioned indicate that none of the daily newspapers sell more than several thousand copies a day. Rudimentary data are available quarterly on audience ratings for the main broadcasters, but few of them use it effectively, panelists said.

OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Kosovo Objective Score: 2.38 / 4.00

Trade associations are functioning in Kosovo, but the panelists believe they are not cohesive organizations that systematically protect and represent the interests of the media. Specifically, the panel found that the associations' advocacy skills are not sufficiently developed. For example, they noted that even three years since the initiation of a collective contract, the Independent Trade Unions of Kosovo could not persuade the government to implement it.

The panelists said associations offer limited services because their representatives do not have the knowledge or interest to engage in projects that would provide for their sustainability. Temporary Media Commissioner Robert Gillette observed: "An initial attempt to create a publishers association in 2003 appears not to have succeeded. AMPEK, the broadcasters association, is well-staffed and

active in lobbying to improve legislation that affects broadcasters. However, it has not held a membership or board meeting in nearly a year, and no active effort is apparent to expand the membership of AMPEK beyond the 30 or so stations that currently belong to it, or about one-fourth of all broadcasters."

Media advocacy activity in the NGO sector is limited, as is cooperation among the media associations and advocacy NGOs, panelists said. Human-rights organizations engage in sporadic advocacy on freedom of speech and access to information,

"[APJK's] activities have been limited mainly to pronouncements issued on various media issues publicized by its executive director. Membership services have not been apparent, thus making APJK appear static," explained Robert Gillette.

but these efforts appear to lack substance. The panel members said establishment of cooperative projects between media associations and NGOs is necessary to enhance the influence of both, and there also should be better cooperation between the trade-union and media associations.

Gillette also noted that only one of the three journalism associations established after 1999 still exists, APJK. He said that APJK's "activities have been limited mainly to pronouncements issued on various media issues publicized by its executive director. Membership services have not been apparent, thus making APJK appear static."

The numerous training opportunities provided during the past four years by international organizations have had "a positive effect, upgrading journalism skills in all types of media including online journalism, television, radio production, and print media," said independent media consultant Arben Qirezi. However, he said, other areas such as feature-story coverage and documentary production remain at a low level because of lack of training, and on-the-job experience remains the main source of professional development.

Short-term training programs are provided by IREX and OSCE. However, IREX training activities were sharply curtailed in 2004 because of a lack of funding. The panelists said that OSCE training programs are sporadic and that their long-term value has proven questionable.

Supporting institutions function in the professional interests of independent media.

SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS INDICATORS:

- > Trade associations represent the interests of private media owners and provide member services.
- > Professional associations work to protect journalists' rights.
- > NGOs support free speech and independent media.
- > Quality journalism degree programs that provide substantial practical experience exist.
- > Short-term training and in-service training programs allow journalists to upgrade skills or acquire new skills.
- > Sources of newsprint and printing facilities are private, apolitical, and unrestricted.
- > Channels of media distribution (kiosks, transmitters, Internet) are private, apolitical, and unrestricted.

No university-level journalism training programs exist in Kosovo. The private Faik Konica School continues to operate a three-year course despite pressure from the Education Ministry, which contends the school does not have the competency to be licensed.

Panel Participants

Ibrahim Berisha, media analyst, university professor

Robert Gillette, Temporary Media Commissioner

Argentina Grazhdani, USAID

Lekë Musolli, experienced journalist, Radio Alba owner

Visar Hoti, Radio Tema

Blerim Krasniqi, IREX media advisor for television

Mustafa Eriq, OSCE media advisor

Naser Miftari, APJK chairman

Fatmire Tërrdevci, investigative journalist

Ramush Tahiri, Senior Media and Political Advisor to Kosovo Parliament Speaker

Arben Qirezi, independent media advisor

Genc Meraku, CITY Group advertising agency, university professor

Moderator

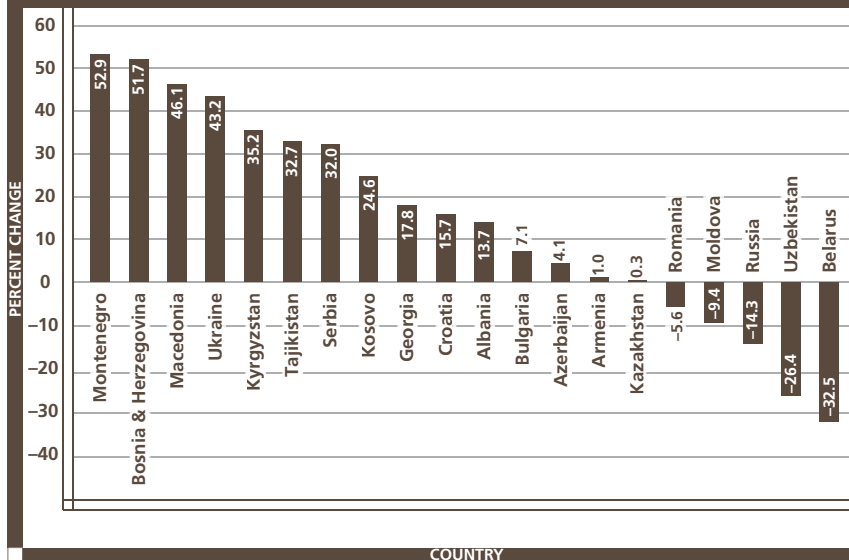
Behar Zogiani, IREX Training Coordinator

KOSOVO AT A GLANCE

GENERAL

- **Population:** 1.9 million *UNMIK*
- **Capital city:** Pristina
- **Ethnic groups (% of population):** Albanians 88%, Serbs 6%, Muslim Slavs (Bosniaks, Gorani) 3%, Romas 2%, Turks 1% *UNMIK*
- **Religions (% of population):** Islam, Christianity
- **Languages (% of population):** Albanian, Serbian
- **GDP:** Projected 2,530 million euros *UNMIK*
- **GDP/GNI per capita:** US\$1,053 *GESource World Guide*
- **Literacy rate (% of population):** 93%
- **President or top authority:** President Ibrahim Rugova, Prime Minister Bajram Kosumi
- **Next scheduled elections:** Presidential 2005, parliamentary 2007

MSI AVERAGE SCORES—PERCENT CHANGE 2001–2004



MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- **Newspaper circulation statistics (total circulation and largest paper):** Circulation statistics are not available. Estimates place total circulation at 25,000 to 30,000 copies per day. *Koha Ditore* is the largest newspaper.
- **Broadcast ratings (top three ranked stations):** Television: RTK 29.1%; KTV 12.5%; TV21 51.2% (February 2005 weekly share of audience) Radio: Radio Dukagjini 10.3%; Radio Kosova 6.9%; Radio 21 0.8% (weekly share of audience) *Index-Kosovo first-quarter survey of 2005*

- **Number of print outlets, radio stations, television stations:** There are eight daily and two weekly newspapers. There are 22 television stations and 89 radio stations.
- **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** NA
- **Number of Internet users:** According to Index-Kosovo research, 6% of households have Internet service; 6% of people claim daily Internet use, and 5% claim frequent use.
- **Names of news agencies:** *KosovaLive* is independently owned, *Kosovapress* is aligned with political party PDK, and QIK is aligned with political party LDK.

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