

**MEDIA**

**SUSTAINABILITY**

**INDEX**

**2004**



**IREX**

“WHY SHOULD THE MEDIA BE HOSTAGE TO THE COUNTRY’S POLITICS?” NOTED ACO KABRANOV.





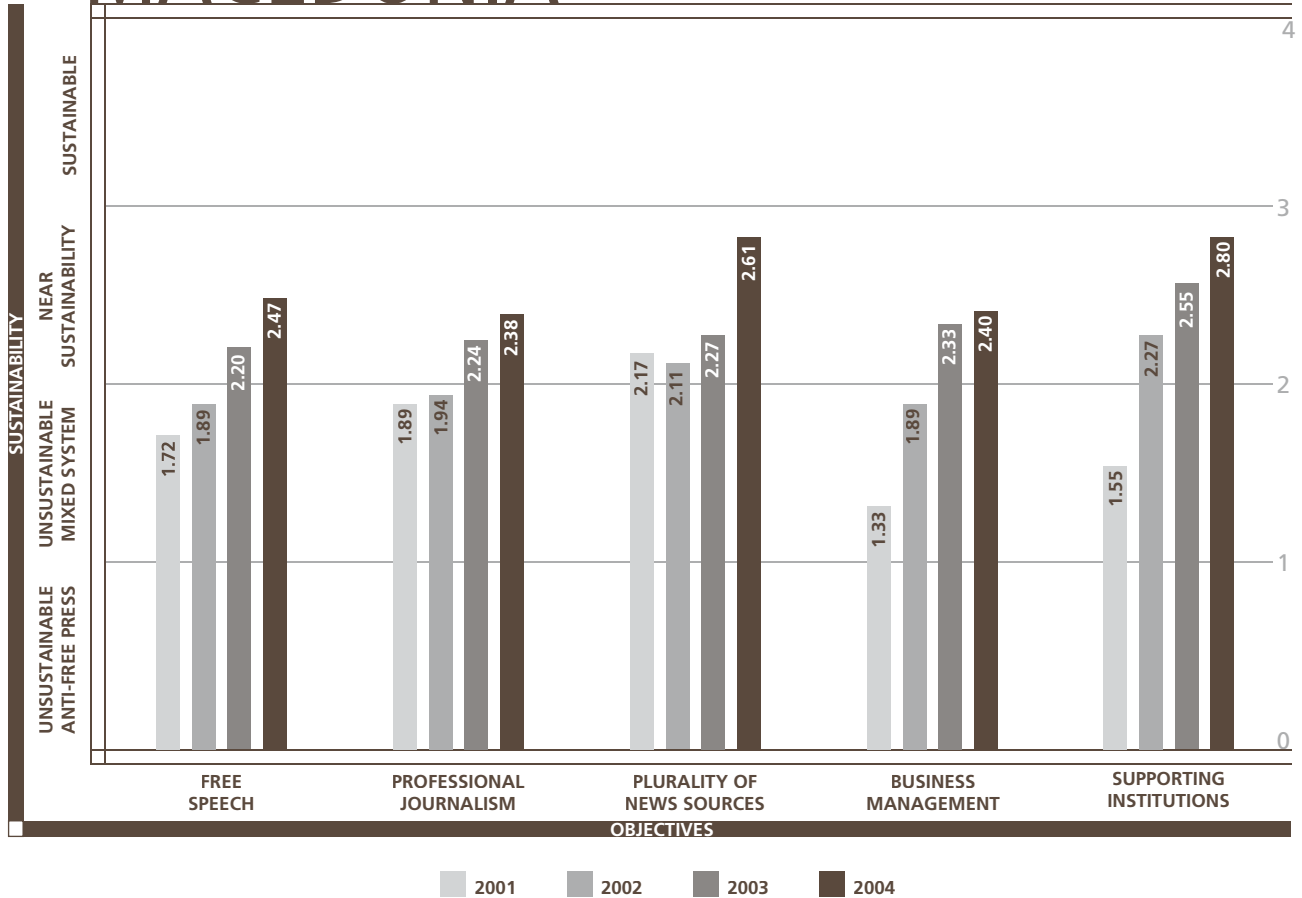
The year 2004 was one of upheaval for Macedonia. The shocking death of President Boris Trajkovski in a plane crash on February 26 caused political turmoil. Many were concerned that the country's stability would be jeopardized, but Macedonia came through the ordeal intact.

Following a state funeral, organized quickly and attended by leading international diplomats, presidential voting was held in two rounds on April 14 and April 28. Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski was elected president, and Hari Kostov replaced him as prime minister of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia coalition government. However, Kostov resigned five months later, and the parliamentary majority elected a new government led by Vlado Buckovski. Throughout the turbulent year, government struggled to pass essential laws in accord with the Framework Agreement of 2001 that officially ended Macedonia's brief internal conflict, and to continue the process of stabilization and harmonization with the European Union (EU).

The most important measures covered the territorial organization of local self-government for the country's 2 million people—64 percent ethnically Macedonian, 24 percent Albanian, and the rest Turks, Roma, Vlach, Serb, Bosniak, and other groups. The government's proposed solution included boundary changes to the ethnically mixed areas of the capital, Skopje, as well as Struga and Kicevo municipalities that gave the Albanian population a majority in some areas, including Struga, where that had not been the case previously. Where a minority population reaches 20 percent of the total in a municipality, its language becomes an official one along with Macedonian; therefore, the changes allowed for bilingualism in Macedonia's capital. More than 40 local referendums were organized against the draft law, with some Macedonians seeing the changes as an erosion of their culture and status. On November 7, a nationwide referendum was organized that threatened to derail the entire Framework Agreement. Again, many observers feared for the country's stability. However, the referendum failed because voter turnout fell below the necessary 50 percent plus one to give it legitimacy.

# MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

## MACEDONIA



**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.

The United States recognized Macedonia under its constitutional name just days before the referendum, viewed locally as a significant step. Also in 2004, Macedonia formally applied for EU membership and began efforts to answer the EU questionnaire required to allow the country to gain the status of "candidate country."

Macedonia maintains a small economy with a gross domestic product of \$4.5 billion, or about \$2,243 per capita. Macedonia's economic growth rate was expected to reach 4 percent in 2004. Unemployment remains crippling high, especially outside Skopje. The official figures are a staggering 37.7 percent of the workforce, about 322,000 people.<sup>1</sup> However, many employers prefer not to report their staff to the government in order to avoid paying social benefits and retirement benefits to the state. This greatly distorts the official figures, and the unemployment rate is thought by experts to be closer to 20 percent.

In the media sector, 2004 saw many changes. For example, new concessions for television and radio were awarded, and new newspapers were launched. In the broadcasting sector, three national and 21 local broadcasters joined the existing 126 concessionaires. Of the three new private national television concessions, one was for an Albanian-language broadcaster, TV AlSat-M (which by the end of 2004 was not yet broadcasting). Also awarded national concessions were the Macedonian-language Telma TV and Channel 5, which began broadcasting during 2004.

Although much criticized in some Macedonian media circles, the so-called print monopoly in which all three major Macedonian-language daily newspapers, *Utrinski Vesnik*, *Dnevnik*, and *Vest*, are owned by the German media giant WAZ did not deter new competition from entering the market. Two new Macedonian-language dailies, *Vreme* and *Vecer*, started in 2004. In the Albanian language, the daily *Flaka*, a one-time state-owned title, resumed publishing along with dailies *Koha Ditore* and *Bota Sot*, versions of Kosovo titles with a local production team producing about six insert pages of Macedonia news. However, *Bota Sot* and *Flaka* stopped publishing shortly before the end of 2004, and it is not clear whether they will restart.

Little changed in the public broadcasting sector, despite continued attempts to reform the state-owned Macedonian Radio Television. There were personnel reductions and restructuring, but major reform was on hold pending passage of a new Broadcast Law that would enshrine independent editorial and financial

<sup>1</sup> Macedonian Government: Statistics Agency, September 2004

control and remove those powers from the government.

Overall, the media situation was in satisfactory condition. Journalists enjoy constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech. There are no legal restrictions on access to public information, international news, or employment as a journalist. There is competition in the media market and open access to anyone who wants to set up a print media outlet. There is plurality and a wide range of sources of information. People in Macedonia have free access to international publications, broadcasts, and the Internet, aside from normal market and financial restrictions. The 2004 Media Sustainability Index (MSI) panel discussion noted some improvement, particularly in terms of increased plurality. Panelists agreed that there are no restrictions to access to domestic and international sources. The panel also said journalism practice had reached a generally higher professional level, even though self-censorship continued along with some overemphasis on politics and an absence of issue-based reporting on social and cultural concerns.

#### OBJECTIVE 1: FREE SPEECH

Macedonia Objective Score: 2.47 / 4.00

Article 16 of the Macedonian Constitution gives basic protection of freedom of speech. However, Macedonia lacks a law on access to information. There are no restrictions on accessing public information or international news, or on working as a journalist. Licensing and concessions for the electronic media are still susceptible to political influence, however, because recommendations of the Broadcast Council still must get parliament approval. Although 2004 saw a number of criminal charges brought against journalists, prosecution rarely resulted because of the ineptness of the judicial system. Macedonian Radio Television lacks full status as a public broadcaster because the law does not guarantee the independence of its editorial policies.

The panelists agreed that the constitutional guarantees for freedom of speech are insufficiently enforced. "A person who finds himself in a position where his right to free expression is denied cannot fight for that right in the courts," said Media Development Center director Roberto Belicanec. With no access to information law, there is no protection for officials who give out official information, and many resist doing so for fear of losing their jobs.

The panel insisted that media licenses are not managed without political influence. According to the present broadcasting law, the government makes the final

**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.

decision, and concessions received in this way always bring certain "obligations" to the benefactor, the panelists said.

However, they disagreed over the wisdom of the latest concessions awarded. For example, Aco Kabranov, editor-in-chief for Channel 5 TV, which won a national concession in 2004, said, "I do not accept the attitude

that we have too many media outlets, nor do I accept the defense that by awarding new concessions the marketing pie for the existing broadcasters will be reduced.

***"A person who finds himself in a position where his right to free expression is denied cannot fight for that right in the courts," said Roberto Belicanec.***

The media owners in the past 10 years took money from advertising, but they invested nothing in the development of the industry." He also rejected Roberto Belicanec's argument that it would have been better

to hold off on issuing licenses pending adoption of the new broadcasting law, which was expected to remove government's role in the process. But with passage uncertain, Kabranov said, "Why should the media be hostage to the country's politics?"

In Macedonia there are many court processes against journalists, most often for libel and defamation. The panelists agreed that journalists should be punished for violating professional standards, but the punishment should be based on legal regulations and fair legal procedures. Naser Selmani asked, "If I as a journalist am prosecuted for libel, will the holder of a public function also be criminally prosecuted if he refuses to release public information?"

In the past two years, many court procedures have been launched, but they were all left unfinished. According to Roberto Belicanec, the goals of those who sue are to ensure that their statements are made public and to discredit the journalists. However, Erol Rizaov, director of private daily *Utrinski Vesnik*, disagreed, arguing that unprofessional reporting deserved to be challenged in court. "According to what is reported by the newspapers lately, even more rigid punishments are needed," he said. "The articles which are based on speculation directly harm the media industry and are becoming more and more frequent."

Journalists have free access to events. However, this is not the same for the smaller media outlets. According to BTR TV editor Muhadzer Sulejman, his private Roma station in Skopje has difficulty obtaining information about important events and getting statements or interviews with officials from the executive and legislative government. There are no restrictions on access to international sources and news. However, subscriptions to cable networks, information agencies, and the Internet are beyond the means of the vast majority of individuals and businesses.

There has been considerable talk about regulatory reforms regarding Macedonian Radio Television (MRT), but with little effect. The panel said the main problem was that while the MRT leadership may take reforms seriously, the state will not. Every political party that comes into power exerts pressure on the state media. In addition, MRT has no internal regulation to ensure independence, and the newsrooms and editorial management generally remain partisan, with managers and staff having a choice of shifting their loyalty after each government change or losing their jobs. The problem stems in part from the fact that many who work at MRT have been there for two or more decades and are accustomed to a system of cronyism, self-censorship, and frequent opposition to reform.



## OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Macedonia Objective Score: 2.38 / 4.00

The journalism market in Macedonia is highly competitive. However, there is still a lack of quality journalists. The MSI panel characterized journalism practice as often subjective, largely due to political influence or an interethnic lack of understanding and prejudice, and frequently mixed with commentary, especially in television news programs. According to Naser Selmani, "Journalists are subjective, and the citizens know this. So, as an ethnic Albanian journalist, I am going to report what the Albanians want to hear." At private media, owners use pressure and censorship to protect their interests. Public-sector journalists have the lowest salaries, while private-sector journalists have the greatest job insecurity because they lack employment contracts. Key events are generally well reported, but the media cover too many political topics.

Panelists criticized professionalism in reporting in Macedonia, saying news is not presented neutrally, there is no clear demarcation between facts and commentaries, and both sides of a story are rarely presented. Ljupco Zikov, director of the *Kapital* weekly, said that professionalism among the journalists appeared to have deteriorated during the past two to

three years. "The owners keep hold of their media in order to gain some political or economic benefits in the business they originally created. This is where the lack of professionalism of the journalists is coming from," he explained.

According to the panelists, there is significant self-censorship. Journalists, especially the local Albanian media, still are pressured and even threatened by political, business, and criminal forces. Editors also can and do censor information, especially at the smaller local media, where economic and political pressures are greater. "We are trying to be professional, but we air only the information that we know will not bring consequences," said BTR TV's Muhadzer Sulejman.

Panelists agreed that self-censorship at the state broadcaster, MRT, results from old habits still practiced by the staff. However, Aco Kabranov argued that private media are subject to greater pressure and that there is an even

greater lack of professionalism and censorship from the owners, perhaps in response to commercial pressures. Erol Rizaov suggested that this presents an opportunity for the state to develop the public media to reflect quality standards, which would then prod private media to improve.

In general, major events such as the death of President Trajkovski in February are well covered with no restrictions. Naser Selmani noted that MRT has not been able to create one common newsroom for all its language services, an inefficient system. "Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, and Roma journalists all cover the same event," he said.

Panelists expressed concern that journalism in Macedonia is far too preoccupied with political topics. The economy, local events, and especially investigative journalism are seldom present. A1TV is consistently the top-rated station featuring the most watched and most influential evening news show. "We live in a political age, and we are all mostly interested in politics," said Erol Rizaov. "Entertainment and especially documentary programs are expensive. If a media outlet is really oriented toward such programs, public interest would drop, and the media outlet could not take this economic risk."

***"The owners keep hold of their media in order to gain some political or economic benefits in the business they originally created. This is where the lack of professionalism of the journalists is coming from," noted Ljupco Zikov.***

### 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).

Journalists' salaries are dismally low, especially in the public sector, where salaries are roughly €200 per month. In the private sector, wages fall in the range of €150 to €400 per month. However, senior staff and editors at leading outlets may earn as much as €1,000 or more per month.

A poor supply of technical equipment, especially at television media, is a hindrance to quality programming, especially at local media, according to the panel. State-owned MRT was viewed as having the worst equipment, with poorly trained personnel who lack knowledge in modern digital technology.

**OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES**

**Macedonia Objective Score: 2.61 / 4.00**

Macedonia has a clear plurality of media with 171 broadcasters, including five private national television stations, three state television channels, three state radio channels, three private national radio stations, 10 serious daily newspapers, more than 60 magazines, and a growing cable network. The year 2004 also marked a significant improvement in the plurality of the Albanian-language media. A private Albanian

**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 concession was awarded, and three more private Albanian-language daily newspapers entered the market, although two are not currently publishing for financial reasons. People have good access to international programs through rebroadcasts and satellite television and radio. Internet access, while restricted by individual economic constraints, is growing rapidly.

In terms of content and programming, however, the quality is too often poor and monotonous. News programs are of poor quality, lack planning, and are far too political in content. Many social groups are marginalized, including rural communities, minorities, and the handicapped. Important social and cultural issues are underreported or poorly reported.

The panelists were unanimous in their position that there are no restrictions on access to domestic and international sources in Macedonia. Cable operators offer rich and diverse programs, citizens can buy foreign newspapers, and anyone who can pay can get an Internet connection. However, the quality of Macedonia-made programming was judged as seriously lacking. The panel agreed that the state broadcaster at least tried, albeit not entirely successfully, to cover a broad spectrum of topics and to report on events in a fair and balanced manner across the range of its programs. Macedonia's state-owned local broadcasters are no longer supported to the extent they once were, and those outlets have all but lost their significance and influence. Two news agencies, one the private Makfax and the other state-owned MIA, struggle in the weak financial market.

Independent program production in Macedonia is limited in quantity and quality. "Apart from news programs, there is very little independent programming," said Roberto Belicanec. He particularly cited the state broadcaster, which receives funds specifically for independent program production but produces far too little.

International donors have supported the production of a number of high-quality programs on diverse topics. However, these are primarily short-term projects, and the panel again noted that media are addicted to political subjects. As Ljupco Zikov explained, "In newspapers, the most read pages are those focused on politics. This is not inspired only by the media, but also by the government. Politics dictate the agenda, and it is followed both by the opposition and the media. With the television news at 17:00, 18:00, 18:30, 19:00, and 20:00, the media become de facto players in the political game."



The particularly poor Albanian-language programming is leading that population to turn increasingly toward television programs aired from Kosovo and Albania, which are perceived to be of much better quality.

"This will boomerang because public opinion, or part of the public opinion in Macedonia, will be shaped by someone outside of Macedonia, and we are not doing anything to change this," said Naser Selmani.

The panel agreed that social topics are largely neglected. "When it comes to the Roma people, it is always events related to criminal activities that are covered, but never topics concerning their everyday life, culture, and society," noted Muhadzer Sulejman. According to Naser Selmani, "The media still function in parallel universes. They are satisfied with themselves and closed within their own ethnic spaces, which certainly does not enhance democratic values in society." On the other hand, according to Roberto Belicanec, the country has enabled the creation of media outlets for specific, "marginalized" groups such as the Roma, and "this means that they are not left on their own."

Panelists expressed the view that social-issue coverage cannot be seen only from an ethnic point of view because most of the Macedonian population is ignored by the media. Also, the thinking of common citizens is unknown because of the media's focus on politicians and experts, with the occasional economic story. Eleonora Serafimovska, from the Institute for Sociological, Political, Juridical and Legal Research, mentioned that the print media offer somewhat greater diversity in coverage than the broadcast media's mix of political and entertainment programs. "Social topics are superficially covered within the information programs, and for these we need to have special programs," she said.

The panelists agreed that both the broadcast and the print media are extremely nontransparent in terms of ownership. No one knows the ownership structures. Roberto Belicanec highlighted the problem of the concentration of several business conglomerates in the press. As an example, he referred to the domination of large business entities like Makpetrol on Telma TV, or Sileks on Sitel TV. He said this influence, which is not overt but generally known, jeopardizes free speech.

#### OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Macedonia Objective Score: 2.40 / 4.00

Macedonia has too many media outlets for the size of its media market, and this number has continued to increase since the conflict of 2001. International investment is low in the media as well, and the state has ceased directly subsidizing the print media. The broadcasting tax, used to subsidize the state (and some private media via a special media fund), is gathered from only 50 to 60 percent of the population due to inefficiency in collection and the efforts of citizens to avoid paying.

The private media mainly survive on advertising revenue. But as the number of broadcasters and major newspapers has increased, the economy has remained stagnant, making it even more difficult for private media to survive. The year 2004 was also the first during which the state did not provide direct subsidies to the print media. The state-owned MIA news agency was allocated about €230,000 for 2004, with the government rationalizing this expenditure as covering the costs of providing information to government institutions.

The panel criticized the government's decision to cut subsidies to the newspapers. Panelists mentioned that small publications, particularly those covering minority issues, suffered the most. The panel recommended

#### 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.

following the example of many European countries that support specialized media through dedicated funds.

Media are ranked by advertising companies, with ad prices set accordingly and ad revenues increasingly linked to ratings success. Advertising companies are profitable despite the weak market, but panelists claimed there was a lack of transparency. Although there is considerable discussion in the media community about various advertising deals, the panelists said, the ad revenues that the media are earning are not known "publicly."

Estimates of the size of the advertising market cover a range, but Analytica/Media & Advertising in Skopje put it at about €68 million, including the value of barter arrangements. Of that, revenue from television ads represented €53 million, and revenue from print media

ads was just over €7 million. Radio received €3 million, and outdoor €4.7 million, according to the company's figures.

For several years now, marketing surveys have been

conducted in Macedonia. The leading organizations are BRIMA Gallup and the Strategic Marketing and Media Research Institute. The broadcast surveys are increasingly reliable. IREX, in partnership with the Association of Private Electronic Media of Macedonia and the Association of Journalists of Macedonia, conducted several surveys that provided ratings to the broadcast and print media during the past four years. However, panelists claimed that despite extensive training, the media still do not use the data with any sophistication to improve their programming and marketing. According to Roberto Belicanec, the explanation "is in the fact that many owners have opened media outlets not in order to make profits from the media, but to use media in order to achieve other personal and business goals." Were that not the case, Belicanec said, "They would have learned to use research data by now."

***"...many owners have opened media outlets not in order to make profits from the media, but to use media in order to achieve other personal and business goals," noted Roberto Belicanec.***

## OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Macedonia Objective Score: 2.80 / 4.00

In Macedonia, there are numerous institutions that support various aspects of the media. Both the print and the electronic media have representative associations and organizations. The national Journalists Association has six regional centers. The panel agreed that associations cooperate well. However, panelists said the Association of Journalists of Macedonia (AJM) is losing influence, and its Council of Honor, a self-regulatory body for the media, is inactive. Journalists working at AJM do so almost entirely on a voluntary basis, and there is a need for paid full-time staff to move the organization forward, the panelists said. They also agreed that an effective journalists' union is still lacking in Macedonia.

Journalism education at the university level remains weak and largely theoretical. The panel agreed that the existing journalism studies program at the Faculty of Law at St. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje are out of date. According to the panelists, it is scandalous that graduates from the faculty of journalism have never been in front of a camera.

### 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.

A new professional journalism school opened at the Macedonian Institute for the Media in 2004. Its one-year journalism “diploma” program is a modern and practical multimedia training regime set up and supported by IREX in conjunction with the Danish School of Journalism. According to Eleonora Serafimovska, this represented significant progress. “This project deserves to be supported...(although) the results are yet to be seen,” she said. “Still, in general, I do not see any progress. What should be basic skills in journalism are still not present in the media. For example, the use of sources and presenting both sides of a story are missing.”

Although a satisfactory level of professionalism may not yet have been achieved, there have been significant improvements in the quality and number of training programs for the practicing media. However, training for camera operators and producers in business journalism, for the Albanian media, and for the media of Macedonia’s other ethnic communities is greatly needed, panelists said.

Macedonia has several private printing houses that operate effectively and without pressure from the state. Distribution is also in private hands and generally unrestricted. For example, the distribution services of the WAZ group are open to the rival dailies *Vreme* and *Vecer*.

## Panel Participants

**Aco Kabranov**, journalist, editor-in-chief at Channel 5 TV (private national Macedonian-language broadcaster)

**Ljupco Zikov**, journalist, director, *Kapital* (weekly Macedonian-language business and political-affairs magazine)

**Eleonora Serafimovska**, psychologist, assistant at the Institute for Sociological, Political, Juridical and Legal Research

**Muhadzer Sulejman**, editor, BTR TV (Roma-language television station based in Skopje)

**Erol Rizaov**, editor-in-chief, *Utrinski Vesnik* (Macedonian-language daily newspaper; part of the WAZ group)

**Naser Selmani**, journalist, *Vest* (Macedonian-language daily newspaper; part of the WAZ group)

**Sarah Broughton**, OSCE Media Development Officer, Macedonia

**Arben Ratkoceri**, journalist, TV AlSat-M (private national concessionary; Albanian-language broadcaster)

**Roberto Belicanec**, director, Media Development Center (local NGO specializing in media law); chairman, Stability Pact Working Group for Macedonia

## Moderator

**Vesna Sopar**, Institute for Sociological, Political, Juridical and Legal Research

## Observers

**Melita Cokrevska**, USAID

**Gazmend Ajdini**, IREX ProMedia

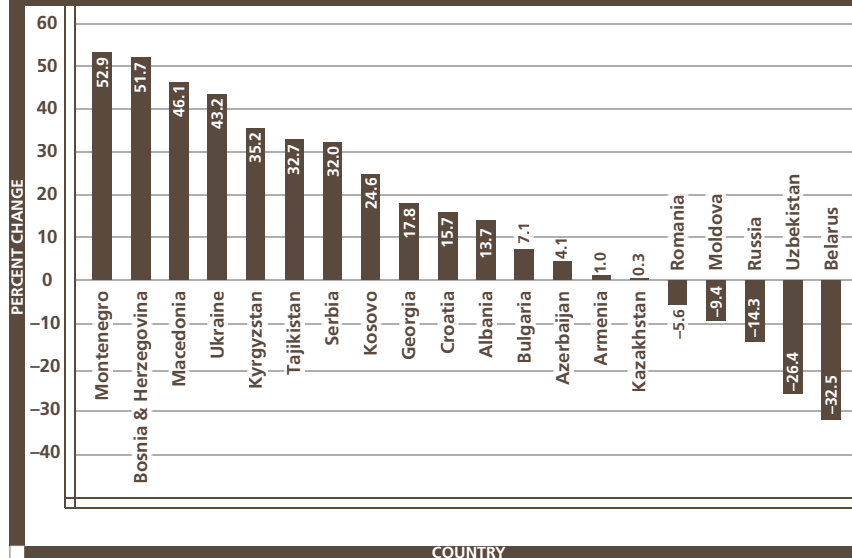
**Vesna Nikodinovska**, IREX ProMedia

# MACEDONIA AT A GLANCE

## GENERAL

- **Population:** 2,022,547 *Statistics Bureau, Census 2002*
- **Capital city:** Skopje
- **Ethnic groups** (% of population): Macedonians 64.18%, Albanians 25.17%, Turks 3.85%, Romas 2.66%, Serbs 1.77%, Boshnjaks 0.84%, other 1.97% *Statistics Bureau, Census 2002*
- **Religions** (% of population): Macedonian Orthodox 64.78%, Muslim 33.33%, other 1.9% *Statistics Bureau, Census 2002*
- **Languages** (% of population): Macedonian 66.5%, Albanian 25%, Turkish 3.5%, Serbo-Croatian 1.2%, Roma 1.9%, other 1.9% *Statistics Bureau, Census 2002*
- **GDP:** US\$4,546 million; GDP per capita: US\$2,243 in 2003 *Statistics Bureau*
- **GNI:** 241,939 million Denars in 2002 (or about US\$5,150 million) *Statistics Bureau* (No data for 2003 and 2004)
- **Literacy rate** (% of population): 96.38% *Statistics Bureau, Census 2002*
- **President or top authority:** President Branko Crvenkovski
- **Next scheduled elections:** Parliamentary 2006

## MSI AVERAGE SCORES—PERCENT CHANGE 2001–2004



## MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- **Newspaper circulation statistics (total circulation and largest paper):** The largest daily according to circulation is *Dnevnik*, with an average of 60,000 to 65,000 copies. *Media Print Macedonia*
- **Broadcast ratings (top three ranked stations):** According to an IREX-funded BRIMA-Gallup survey in September 2004, the most-viewed television stations are A1, Sitel, MTV 1, and MTV 3. The radio stations most listened to are Antenna 5, Macedonian Radio (first program), Radio Haracina

(local radio in Skopje region), and Channel 77.

- **Number of print outlets, radio stations, television stations:** 600 (est.) daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, and periodical editions. *Agency for Information*. There are a total of 170 radio and television stations. Macedonian Television has three public channels, and Macedonian Radio has three channels as well as 29 local radio stations. In the private sector, there are five national television stations (A1, Sitel, Channel 5, Telma, and AlSat M) and three radio stations (Channel 77, Antenna 5, and Radio Ros), while there are 54 local television stations and 73 radio stations. *Broadcasting Council*

- **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** NA

- **Number of Internet users:** The number of Internet lines is 3% to 5% of the total population, or about 100,000. *MT Net*. There are 61,169 Internet lines in Macedonia. *Statistics Bureau*

- **Names of news agencies:** Makfax is privately owned, and MIA is state-owned.

## MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: MACEDONIA

