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## Public Broadcasting

# A Time Will Come When the National Radio and TV Will Have to Cross a Threshold

*Vitalia PAVLICENCO, PhD in Philology  
former member of Moldovan parliament*

The need to turn the National Radio and TV into a public institution appeared after the proclamation of Moldova's independence. This need sometimes could be felt stronger, and sometimes less so. The loosening of the freedom of expression, the break-up of the total monopoly over news, the expression of alternative viewpoints at the National Radio and TV started along with the Movement for National Rebirth and Liberation. This Movement was part of the *perestroika/post-perestroika* in the Soviet space. Later on, the pressure to turn the National Television into a public institution meant most often the struggle of opposition political forces for access to airwaves. The parliament's actions regarding access to radio and television programs always meant censorship, but which was short of absolute monopoly.

For instance, during the tenure of the first three parliaments the population had the possibility—despite limited access—to know a wider range of politicians speaking from the screen. During the first parliament—one can draw here a parallel with the situation in Russia at the time—parliament sessions were broadcast live, and not necessarily only the festive sessions. At that time the forces that had sprung up from the communist *nomenklatura* retreated to wait, which eased the tension. This turned out to be beneficial at the beginning. It is worth remembering that a parliamentary resolution was adopted back then, on 18 November 1991, which has not been rescinded to the present day, concerning *the free use of air time at the National Radio and TV by political parties and other social-political organizations*. The resolution stated that, “in order to regulate the use of air time at the National Radio and TV and to ensure fair access for all parties and other social-political organizations, the Presidium of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova hereby decides: All organizations operating in accordance with the law on political parties and other social-political organizations have the right to use at no charge the air time at the National Radio and TV, on the same day and the same hour for the same amount of time (30 minutes on the radio and 20 minutes on television monthly; during elections additional 15 radio minutes and 10 TV minutes will be granted weekly). The parties and other social-political organizations shall submit their requests to the management of the National Radio and TV for such air time at least 7 days in advance for radio and 10 days in advance for TV. The form of the request shall be defined by the management of the National Radio and TV.” The character of this resolution shows the high interest in the access to radio and

television, which were called back then “National” and later became “Moldovan.”

During the tenure of the parliament that was elected in 1998 no taboo was imposed on the access to radio and television by different political formations and the civil society, and the parliamentary resolution mentioned above neither worked nor was, in a way, neglected. It was during this period that legislative initiatives came from parliamentary groups and the Union of Journalists to transform the National Radio and Television into a public institution. The unwillingness to lose influence over this state medium, which exercised a strong political impact, unfortunately prevented the adoption of an appropriate law, although the deputies came very near to doing it. This aspect has been an almost constant subject of negotiations between parliamentary factions.

When the communists came to power, they eliminated from the national broadcaster everything that, in their opinion, could remind of the existence in society of other political options. The demonic censorship instituted by communist puppets made some journalists—at the cost of demotion and hence of a worsening of their financial situation—oppose this situation, go on a strike, which was supported by political forces and a part of the civil society. Before the strikes, the extraparliamentary liberals picketed the National Television. Placed in the context of resistance to other decisions taken by the communist parliamentary majority and government, the journalists' protests drew the attention of the international community, Europe's political leadership, as well as of Washington. As they were receptive to problems of access to information and violations of the freedom of expression, the European parliamentarians became actively involved in monitoring, prevention and even punishment of Moldova by a Resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Moldova was given clear terms and required to transform the national broadcaster into a public institution, which would offer access to as many segments of society and political parties as possible, so they could express their visions on the situation in the country. How can the population understand the plans of the civil society and political parties if they do not have the possibility to express their viewpoints in public debates that would elucidate what's good and what's bad, where we are going and where we should be going? How can the population express conscious political options if it has no possibility to compare and choose between different models?

During the political conflict between PCRM and PPCD, but especially in the context of monitoring the implementation of the PACE Resolution concerning the

functioning of democratic institutions in Moldova, adopted on 24 April, the parliamentary group Braghis Alliance initiated in Chisinau a Permanent Round Table (MRSP), which brought together parties and NGOs for a political and social dialogue. The majority of the declarations adopted by this political forum have referred to the lack of access to the national broadcaster of political forces other than the Communist Party, that is of parliamentary and extraparliamentary opposition; such access is needed to avoid the one-sided information of the population, its manipulation for political and, hence, gainful purposes.

MRSP wrote a letter to the director general of Teleradio-Moldova, which was not answered as of July 1. As I have already said, the 1991 Resolution of the Parliament of Moldova, concerning the free use of airtime at the national broadcaster by political parties and other social-political organizations is still valid but not observed. The communist parliamentary majority initiated, when its attention was drawn to this fact, a draft law on the access of the parliamentary opposition to free airtime. The Braghis Alliance proposed amendments shortly afterwards, by which access should be permitted also to extraparliamentary opposition. It is regrettable that not all parliamentary factions, or at least the opposition ones, showed political solidarity towards the access of political forces of different orientations to the possibility to inform the population about other viewpoints regarding the political, economic and social situation, as well as about the current government. Thus, the draft law proposed for a first reading, which was withdrawn because of the proposed amendments and the MRSP declaration that condemned the non-inclusion of the extraparliamentary opposition, suggested that air time on radio and television be given to every parliamentary faction and 120-minute TV talk shows be organized with the obligatory participation of all parliamentary factions and journalists from other media. The amendment proposed by the Braghis Alliance contained a special item saying that "extraparliamentary political organizations, which act lawfully, should be granted air time every month: 20 radio minutes and 10 TV minutes." As I have said, the majority faction withdrew from the agenda this draft law, which would have also canceled the 1991 parliamentary resolution.

The current NRT management have declared that the creation of a public company in Moldova is the only way. Should this be so, one can only ascertain the existence of political will for change and all that's left to be done is to apply working models that would ensure the independence and adequate operation of this institution.

It is true that communist decision-makers maintain that only a part of society and certain political forces want such a transformation. This is part of the eternal dilemma of governments—once in power, they have to mold themselves on the expectations of the population or to inform and mold the population itself in order to gain its support in advancing towards new transformations

meant to bring the country closer in line with recognized democracies. It is clear that the communists are not from the second category, because they gained power by cunning, lies and an exploitation of the population's low level of information due to poverty. But destiny wanted it so that the communists should perform this important transformation, as punishment from God, but also as punishment for raising, together with PPCD, the electoral threshold so as to secure for themselves 71 seats in parliament. Although, who knows, if the parliament's composition had been different, maybe the question of a public radio and TV would not have been raised at all. Since they twisted in the meanest way the hands of journalists and society, the communists were placed not only in the field of vision but actually under the microscope of the international community which, to the pleasant surprise of the democratic portion of society, holds them in a permanent check and prevents them from playing communism when capitalism is all around. Besides, the international community also prevents the communists from continuing their experiments on a Latin population with a European calling, which they use only as a guinea pig.

On different occasions the communists have launched various hallucinating and aberrant ideas such as, "those who want a public television are free to create one," or such as "the Moldovan peculiarity." This "peculiarity" has held us on the fringes of Europe in the last decade, has hindered our development on the model of the Baltic states, which are also on the fringe of Europe (if we are to exclude Russia from the political Europe) but which have gone far. We have capitalized on our "peculiarity," and that's all we've got now. This is because we have followed bad rather than good models.

Theoretically, it is possible to create an alternative television in Moldova. But only theoretically, even just hypothetically. This is because on the practical side Moldova no longer has national frequencies, and a fierce struggle is going on between manipulating forces. The most wealthy of these forces, which represent pressure groups tied to the Mafia, will allow no alternative. Businesses do not invest in this enterprise because the population is poor and advertising cannot cover the expenses; besides, businesses immediately become a sort of lepers for the authorities, which start persecuting them fiscally, financially, and penally. As there is no justice in Moldova—a fact that has been recognized in recent years at the highest levels and confirmed by purges performed by communists on the unloyal—nobody dares challenge the authorities and risk to fail at "the court," whither they are summoned for a clean-up of their brains. For as long as the power is tied to business, the vicious circle will persist. The communists know and use this because so far they have failed to understand a clear thing: nothing that is artificial is durable. And a time will come when a threshold will have to be passed, as the Romanian bard said. ■

# The Transformation of the State Company “Teleradio-Moldova” Into a Public Institution

*Anticommunist rallies of earlier this year raised, among other matters, the issue of censorship and monopoly at the state radio and TV by the ruling Communist Party. Although the authorities vehemently denied it, this was confirmed by the rapporteurs of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, who visited Chisinau twice. At its April 24 session, PACE passed a resolution, among other recommendations, aimed at defusing the social and political tensions in Moldova, on the transformation of the State Company Teleradio-Moldova into a public institution. At first, the parliamentary majority leader, the President, and the Prime Minister all vowed to conform to that recommendation, only to renege later on that promise, quoting the “specifics” of our state, which, in their*

*vision, would require the existence of a state television. President Vladimir Voronin declared in an interview on TV Moldova: “Why transform [the Teleradio-Moldova Company] into a public institution, when it belongs to the whole country anyway? Whoever wants to set up a public television is free to do so. We have no objections.” (BASA-Press, June 4, 2002). The controversial issue is being widely debated in the press. Some media are advocating for it and some against it, subject to their relationship with the authorities. A survey carried out in early June showed that 40.4 per cent of the population believed that “the state and the authorities must get involved in the editorial process of the media, while only 36.3 per cent were against it. It’s true though, that in urban areas this ratio is the other way around.*

On June 26-27 in Chisinau, the Association of Electronic Media (APEL), with the support of the Council of Europe, held a seminar entitled “Transformation of State Company Teleradio-Moldova Into a Public Institution”. Below are some of the contributions to that seminar.

## **The view of the specialized parliamentary commission on the transformation of the State Company Teleradio-Moldova into a public broadcasting service.**

*Vladimir DRAGOMIR, chairman of the  
parliamentary commission for culture, science,  
youth, sport, and the media.*

I want to start by saying that no one objects to a public institution that is impartial and independent in every respect. This is a requirement of the times, but we must keep in mind the specifics of our country, its experience in the matter, the specifics of security. This transformation must take place to the advantage of our state, its sovereignty and independence. Speaking of the specifics of our society, we must be aware of the fact that our wishes don’t always coincide with the state’s possibilities, and then we must answer the question: “Who is going to guarantee the institution’s impartiality and independence in a situation when so many issues are being solved with the help of the ‘greenback.’”

The issue of turning the state television into a public

institution has been the focus of debates for some time now, but it was this year that it took on a high profile, particularly due to the events in the country and even inside the television. Note that starting with March, a special commission, set up by parliament and made up of experts in the area, has been working and has developed a concept for the improvement of the company’s work. This concept is based on three underlying principles: democratization; funding; freedom of expression and opinion; and the removal of censorship, which has been discussed widely.

We decided to introduce amendments to the existing broadcasting law. This draft law on amending and complementing the broadcasting law is in line with the CoE requirements. Speaking of the ways in which the broadcasting law should be amended, in our opinion paragraph 1 of art. 7 [the state company Teleradio-Moldova is a public institution and cannot be privatised] must be changed—you see the play of words, the state company is a public institution. Then, after amendments have been made, the word “state” shall be removed. In this context, I would like to remind you about paragraph 2 of art. 7 [the president of the company shall be appointed for a term of 5 years, and can be dismissed early by the Parliament upon suggestion of the

company's board of observers and the BCC], i.e. a board of observers is needed, which is going to be an autonomous body made up of 15 members, including:

- 3 people appointed by parliament, representing different political factions
- 3 members appointed by the president
- 3 members appointed by the government
- 1 member elected from the staff of the company
- 3 members elected by professional unions
- 1 member elected by Moldovan trade union confederation.

That membership should be based on a rotation principle, and the numbers confirmed by Parliament. The chairperson, deputy chair, and the secretary should be elected by a majority vote of the board, thus there will be no interference from parliament, the board being an independent organisation. The board of observers works according to its regulations approved by parliament, and must monitor the topic area covered and the professional level of radio and TV programs. The members sit on the board on a voluntary basis, except for the secretary, who is part of the company's staff and is paid by it.

Besides the board of observers, there should be an administrative board, which would be a collective body made up of 7 people and chaired by the president of the company.

Art. 3 stipulates that within 2 months the board of observers should submit to parliament for approval the regulations of the project. Art. 4 emphasises that the board of observers should have its first meeting upon proposal of the Speaker within 10 days from the creation of the company. Art. 1 provides a new definition of public institution, "The institution is financed by the state budget, civil society, advertising revenues, and other extra-budgetary sources; it is institutionally autonomous, independent, reflecting the interests of all citizens and social groups and covering at least 95 per cent of the country's territory".

Another aspect would be the funding of the public institution coming from the public in its majority, in other words "autonomous independent institution, which reflects social interests, and whose organisation, constitution, operating, and development expenditures are supported by the entire society through direct funding". We think such funding would be difficult, given the present situation in Moldova, i.e. the specifics of the society, and there is no guarantee that by transforming the state company into a public institution we will not be making a mistake and that it would not fall under the influence of political powers to further their interests. Now a question arises, which country's experience should Moldova follow and what model should it adopt to secure the independence of the public radio and television service?

## **The process of transformation of the State Company Teleradio-Moldova into a public broadcasting service in the light of the PACE resolution: legislation and organisation**

*Eugen CIBOTARU, CoE Media Division*

The Council of Europe took a clear position in this regard, saying that the fundamental condition for instituting a democratic radio broadcasting service is the transformation of the state radio broadcasting service into a public one, which would serve the entire social spectrum without any demands on the part of government authorities concerning its activity, especially in the development of programs. Positioned in the midst of political developments, such a public service constitutes a forum for pluralist debate, enabling the whole society to participate in political developments and concurrently follow the work of government and political leaders. The public radio service also has the role of encouraging citizens to get more actively involved in political life. The role of this service during elections is, on the one hand, to cover the campaign in a comprehensive manner that would allow a well-informed vote by the citizens, and on the other hand, it's the guarantee of free access to public air time, which a commercial station is not obliged to provide. Another role is that of a moderator or crystallizer of society, since by addressing a wider audience the public service promotes social cohesion, integrates the groups and communities of a society, facilitating integration and mutual tolerance.

The public service has a special vocation in the cultural and educational domains, and, moreover, it is a way to cultivate the listener, a tool for promoting his cultural identity. All this is based on the assumption that the public service should have qualified staff, sufficient financial and technical resources. I want to stress that an adequate financial framework, provided by public authorities, would enable the service to independently carry out these tasks.

To avoid possible political conflicts, the funding mechanism should be transparent and operated by an independent entity to secure the independence of the public service from the authorities – its work ought to be supervised by a council independent from the government, parliament, political parties, and made up of members representing the entire society. Also, the principle of editorial independence must be guaranteed through law.

The independence of the public service does not exclude its transparency and accountability to the public, especially in respect to the management of funds, as the

whole of society participates in the funding of the public service. It should offer the public the opportunity to express its opinion in this respect.

The position of the CoE regarding the public radio service has been expressed repeatedly, but I want to mention just two crucial documents:

1. Recommendation 10 of the Committee of Ministers addressed to member states concerning the guarantee of independence of the public service;
2. Resolution 1 of the media ministerial conference, held in Prague in 1994.

The CoE makes certain recommendations to member states:

1. to provide at least one public service, which would comprise informational, cultural, educational, and entertainment programs accessible to the public;
2. to clearly define the role, function, and responsibility of the public radio.

### **State or public? Affinities and differences. Why public?**

*Victor OSIPOV, Executive Director of the Association of Electronic Media (APEL)*

The Council of Europe has three documents with recommendations to this end. The first, issued by the Prague ministerial conference of December 7-8, 1994 – “Resolution 1 on the Future of Public Radio Service”. The second, of the Committee of Ministers on the “Guarantee of Independence of Public Radio Service” – Recommendation no. R(96)10 dated September 11, 1996. And the third, of the Parliamentary Assembly, on the “Functioning of Democratic Institutions in Moldova” – Resolution 1280 (2002) dated April 24 of this year.

But is it these developments, which determined PACE to insist on the implementation of European norms, that determine the appropriateness of this debate with a pre-determined outcome – state or public?

Teleradio-Moldova is currently somewhere between the two concepts, both in terms of the current legal framework, and functionally. The Broadcasting Law simultaneously proclaims both categories – the company is state-run, but it is also qualified as a public institution. Several observers have noted a contradiction in the terms stipulated by the law. The definition it gives to the status of public broadcasting institutions is very narrow – based only on the economic participation and the state’s ownership right, which must be prevailing in the enterprise’s capital.

In fact, the budget for Teleradio-Moldova is being drawn up and administered according to the same scheme as for all other state agencies, without any special guarantees for sufficient funding appropriate for an autonomous media institution of a major public interest.

The Company’s management is appointed directly by Parliament. The current ruling party has further centralized this scheme, compared to the previous one, where the Parliament appointed the President, and also the Directors General of the Radio and Television. The latter thus had their own legitimacy, and therefore relative autonomy. In any event, the political power has always controlled the top personnel policy, and through the people it appointed directly influenced the company’s internal affairs. The proof is obvious – the Teleradio-Moldova management always changed along with shifts in the ratio of forces in parliament. Other legal regulations concerning the activity of this extremely important media institution just aren’t in place.

The law provides no guarantees for the representation of the public in the management of the company, of society in its diverse and pluralist entirety. Neither are there any mechanisms through which the editorial policy would serve primarily the interests of all social groups – there is an overall lack of a special legal framework developed for this institution.

What is then, in its present legal, functional, and financial condition, Teleradio-Moldova – I think it is essentially a State Company *par excellence*, with just a few peculiarities that set it apart by virtue of its political importance, its social and informational role. Its public nature can barely be noticed, being only partial and undefined, as it is projected indirectly – i.e. through the supreme legislative body, which is public, albeit absolutely political.

The polemic around this subject often slips into incoherence. Representatives of political power have repeatedly stated that a state company is equivalent to a public broadcasting institution, which I believe to be an error. The state is the organisation of the population in a certain territory, which exercises authority over that territory – a common definition. Public means a large community of people. The two concepts aren’t mutually exclusive, but don’t totally overlap either. Especially since the state is embodied in a system of interrelated institutions, each with its own working areas and instruments. Within a democratic system it carries out its functions to further the interests of the citizens, but does not represent the totality of the public. The latter is much wider and more diverse than even the number of citizens with a right to vote, not to speak of the number of active voters, and incomparably larger than those whose vote determines the political structure of the government. Being a state-run media institution means representing primarily the options of the electorate who had voted for the parties which won the elections. Whereas a public broadcasting institution has the mission of expressing

and satisfying the interests of the entire spectrum of the population resident in the area covered by it. That includes the interests of the voters supporting the ruling party (i.e. those who run the state), but also of the voters for the opposition, and the civil and cultural society at large.

A truly democratic option points to a clear orientation – the maximum possible broadening of the number and segments of the population served. In other words, orientation to a genuine status of public institution for the current State Company Teleradio-Moldova. The democratic instruments for the achievement of this objective are available to us in a multitude of forms, and with sufficient opening to allow adaptation of appropriate regulations to local conditions and specifics. Ultimately, the creation of a genuine public institution by no means conflicts with state interests and is very useful, including for the implementation of national policies. Just note that this convergence is only possible in a truly democratic state, based on the rule of law, and which builds its policies on the basis of the genuine interests of the public at large rather than on petty group interests.

### **Funding for the public radio service in Moldova: challenges and perspectives**

*Constantin PIRTAC, programming director Stil-TV, former TV Moldova director*

Of all the issues related to public television, two are the most widely discussed:

1. Who is going to be represented on the board?
2. The funding model.

In a public institution the state guarantees adequate and efficient funding, and society provides it.

In Eastern Europe, with the exception of Romania, there were no fees until the 90's. The transformation and funding conditions vary from country to country, as some have come to accept mixed funding, i.e. state budget and fees. All these countries have introduced fees gradually, for example Bulgaria passed the law in 1998, but fees will start being collected in 2003.

When we discuss the issue of funding for public television today, we must consider that it faces a special mission, but it also requires decent funding.

The stages of transition towards a public television were debated as early as 1996, but there were two reasons that prevented this: the political element and the introduction of license fees.

We must realise that introducing the fees is a serious challenge for any party or administration, as the population may reject the fees. Is public television incompatible with budget funding? It isn't. Thus, we

should advise the government not to use fee introduction as a way to block the creation of a public television, because current state funding is not enough for a decent public television, which would exercise 80 per cent of its mission. The advantage of state funding is secure money, and the disadvantage is the dependence on the state budget and the fact that the public sees that dependence.

A problem faced by the 1600 employees of the company is that their salaries are tied to those of the state machinery, and therefore I want to stress that regardless of the funding mechanism, salaries must be tied to other criteria.

I have some suggestions concerning the funding of the public institution:

1. Keep budget funding at the level the state can provide, and ensure that broadcasting covers the entire territory of Moldova.
2. Find a way to introduce a fee other than per household.
3. Journalists must totally change the way they see their programs and work for the public, not the state.

### **How can the independence of public radio and television be guaranteed in Moldova?**

*Dumitru TURCANU, former TV Moldova director, APEL member*

The concept of public radio, so clear to those in the West, is seen here differently by the representatives of different political segments. There is no common understanding in this respect, even among local specialists.

The justice minister speaks of the need to found (from scratch) a public television. His excellency suggests that the Moldavian state (with an annual budget of about 400 million US dollars) should have two televisions – one state-run (?), and another public (?). There can be only one aim – to set up a new television, totally under the authorities' control, and to simultaneously disable the existing national broadcasting company, which is to be subsequently privatized by circles affiliated with or subordinated to the interests of the current authorities.

The idea of taking the words "state-run" out of the title of the existing institution, thus giving it the desired public nature, is both shocking and insulting. The independence of a broadcasting company must be seen as a real autonomy of the body in its editorial activity, as well as in the management and economic realms. We must identify the mechanisms and instruments that could guarantee this real autonomy for the broadcaster.

## What do we currently have in this respect?

1. The Broadcasting Law, the Press Law, the Law on Access to Information, the Statute of the State Company Teleradio-Moldova... The Broadcasting Law, having undergone numerous amendments over the past 7 years, which have increasingly undermined the independence of the institution, is, in fact, a document that regulates primarily the issuing of licenses. The Statute of the company is also a stillborn paper.

2. Editorial autonomy can be guaranteed through financial and economic autonomy of the broadcasting company. State funding was and still is conditional on the promotion of the governmental line on radio and TV. The powers that be, unhappy with the way the state company Teleradio-Moldova is promoting its interests, can cut funding at any moment, delay salaries, stop the modernization process. Advertising is underdeveloped, as is the entire economy. New funding mechanisms are needed, both budgetary and extra-budgetary, given that the option of introducing fees must be dropped from the outset. Of course, a public broadcasting institution needs a modern management.

3. Just as important in this respect is to provide a high technological level of the public service. If this factor is overlooked, if other stations advance technologically (the digital system, satellite broadcasting/reception, etc.), there won't be any guarantees of the television's real independence worth speaking of. As things stand now, our national television is 15-20 years behind the technological performance achieved by broadcasting institutions in the West.

4. As in many other post-Soviet countries, what we would like to call public television in Moldova is in a way a monopolistic institution, through its area of coverage. Only two other stations can "challenge" it – the Russian ORT and the Romanian TVR1. Competition with other stations – private, or local public ones – would intensify the process of building a public service. As a matter of fact, I believe that tougher competition should be introduced inside the public service as well, which would allow people to be valued by things other than the number of bows in front of bosses of all leagues – from the television ones to the President – for example by their intellectual potential, appreciated by the public.

5. The human dimension. Our journalists have become so "partisan", that if they were to find themselves working for a public television overnight, facing all the requirements accepted and welcomed in Europe and America, few of them would resist the temptation not to further certain interests, either under pressure from officials, or by virtue of our traditional nepotism and back rubbing, or because they support

certain political parties. Selection, training, building a team of high quality through competition are all necessary prerequisites for the independence of the public institution. In this respect, we also need an efficient legal protection mechanism for the journalists, which would define both their duties and their rights. (Access to information, right to voice one's opinion, etc.)

6. A principal factor in securing the autonomy of the public service is who should assess its editorial policy, and how. Who should approve the programming schedules and thematic orientation, and how. Who should develop the editorial concept, and to what extent it is subject to intervention by officials. If editorial policies allow for political or other interventions, if civil society has no access to the determination of the broadcasting concept, if the public service doesn't have adequately functioning administration councils, boards of directors, or editorial councils – there is no independence of the broadcaster to speak of.

7. The Broadcasting Coordinating Council, by virtue of the Broadcasting Law's narrow provisions, and due to the way this authority has been set up, is engaged primarily in the licensing process (not always impartially) rather than in providing stable guarantees for an uninterrupted and independent functioning of the public broadcasting service.

These factors, meant to secure and guarantee the broadcasting institution's independence, can be achieved only provided there is political will in the government, which never understood the requirements of a democratic society and the efforts of the civil society. ■



## The Internet

# Online Journalism: The Operation Dilemma

*Nelly HARABARA*

It seems that there is no doubt that the Internet is the future of journalism. How plausible and how close is this prospect for online journalism in Moldova? To be sure, only a sound economic revival will be able to support an appropriate development and spread of online press; that is, current and future online publications should not be the privilege of a narrow circle of intellectuals and students, but should rather be accessible to and read by the public at large. However, so far 5 or 10 dollars a month needed for Internet access, let alone the price of a computer, are a problem for the majority of the population.

Consequently, the somewhat “elitist” nature of online journalism in Moldova is conditioned not by a high performance addressed to an elevated public, nor by the expression in the electronic media of ideas too sophisticated for an untrained mind, but rather by the access afforded only by a limited number of users, who are mostly young people familiar with the Internet.

It is true that besides the possibility to become informed in a modern way, the vast majority of users are captivated by the Internet’s interactive possibilities; they are committed to participating in various forums, opinion groups, vox pops and other features offered by almost all online publications. It is a platform for a free exchange of opinions and ideas, and even of strong words, which point to the mood and spirit of various social environments.

Concerning the use of the Internet by young people as a source of information, I ought to mention one aspect deserving full attention and being hazardous of Internet distortions: more often than not online publications try to replace traditional media and to include on their sites—besides news—various other kinds of information that seems to cover the different needs of knowledge. Since young consumers of electronic media limit themselves only to Internet reading under the illusion that this places them abreast of the times and of everything that’s new and current in society and the world, sometimes we become witnesses to tragic-comical situations such as the one in which a reader asked in a Moldova Azi interview with one of the leading Moldovan writers Emilian Galaicu-Paun: *hum...I am a bit intrigued...I hear your name for the first time...where did you come from and who are you? Where on the I-net can I read your work?*

By virtue of their belonging to modern technologies, whence their attraction for consumption, online information products manage to eclipse easily the traditional sources of information—the printed newspaper, the magazine, the book—in the consciousness of the new generation; they obviously offer information of a different quality and a different depth. There are so-called “entertainment portals,” which are a kind of substitutes for more information sources. In addition to a whole package of information about everything and everybody often addressed to consumers of doubtful pleasures, they also include online publications such as *Internet Gazeta (Press Obozrenie)* at Try.md. They seem to paint a comprehensive informational picture—domestic and international news and other current information, along with sections such as “accidents, society, sports, technology, excitement, mish-mash, interviews, on everybody’s lips, the news strip, best 20 stories,” etc., which monopolize the need to be informed and implicitly also the information supply, which is not always of the best quality.

I was saying that the consumers of online journalism in Moldova are mostly the young, but the electronic publications themselves are produced most often also by young people. Their intention to create an online publication is commendable, but oftentimes they fail to realize that this undertaking requires not only courage but also a sound background. Thus, while the news taken from wires salvage their somewhat vulnerable position, the editorials written by a publication’s staff are not up to any standards and readers sometimes have to read texts such as these: “Experts at the Ministry of Agriculture found out back in 1999 about the existence of special EU lists of countries from which it was allowed to import meat and animal produce,” “...then during the ‘cold war’ between the CIS communists and ‘brothers from across the Prut,’ the suspension of egg and dairy imports provoked an explosion,” “Moldovan officials ‘woke up,’ but after the suspension of imports producers might ‘fall asleep’ for ever” (Pressbox.md, 19 June 2002). Online journalism has specific characteristics, it is true, conditioned by its immediate visual character and a closer proximity to the spoken language imposed on it by this century of technology, which demands short and simple sentences. But the young directors of electronic newspapers must see the difference between simple expression and puerile expression (in terms of language and meaning), - for juggling with pejorative stereotypes

such as “brothers from across the Prut” does nothing but stress the dubious quality of a publication.

While materials from printed newspapers pass through the hands of copy editors, in the case of online publications this is not done most of the time, and many of these publications entertain their readers by “gems” of spelling and expression that jump at you even at a superficial reading.

In Moldova, as well as everywhere else, online journalism is still developing and the teams of electronic papers must understand how different they are from traditional media and then capitalize on their potential. Online journalism is actually a hybrid between printed press and broadcasting; visitors first want to see the news and other stories, looking at the screen as if they were watching TV, while the novel quality of the Internet to archive materials and monitor events allows readers to access the information they want any time they want by navigating the site and clicking on what they want to see, as if they were flipping through the TV channels.

The interactive character of online journalism is another essential difference. Readers send messages expressing any point of view and drawing attention to mistakes or technical problems, which have to be resolved promptly, in real time; the visitor is not someone from outside, far away, but this is rather a real person who asks for an improvement or an answer. Online interaction is the best opportunity to communicate with the reader and find out immediately his opinion on a story. It is true, however, that our readers are more actively involved in topics announced in forums, in which they can express not only their opinions but also pour out all their negative emotions and ignore the invitation to participate in discussions on a specific story.

In order to understand what the online publications in Moldova are, we shall present briefly (in alphabetical order) the most important electronic periodicals, ignoring the multitude of sites and Web pages that contain only elements of a newspaper.

**InfoMarket.md**—this is an online daily, specialized in business stories, which creates a very good impression by its serious and professionally developed information classified into news, commentaries, interviews, currency market, banking, capital market, insurance market, real estate, energy, communication and transportation, agriculture, taxes, laws, etc., which is interesting to a demanding reader. This is the only online publication (also produced by young people with big ambitions) that is financially self-sustainable, which defies the general opinion that in Moldova, where the audience is small, it is difficult to run a publication that would cover its own expenses.

**IST.md**—this is a site that fails to hide its obviously political pro-CIS and pro-Russian motivation veiled under the name of Institute of Social Technologies. The publication is run by political scientists and claims that it is a “social, nongovernmental and noncommercial” publication. The goal of the site is to promote the viewpoint of the governing party on the most sensitive and discussed subjects, among which granting the official status to the Russian language, the issue of the Bessarabian Metropolitan Church, relations with Romania (which enjoy a permanent section run by the tireless anti-Romanian Vasile Stati; there are also other permanent sections explaining the authorities’ vision on the foreign policy, the Social Pact Initiative, etc.).

**Pressbox.md**—this is a news and opinion agency of the Association of Business Journalists, which focuses on the economy while containing also news and commentaries on political and social issues. The “Infobusiness” section tries to draw the attention of business people by publishing information on seminars, business offers, sales, purchases; these sections don’t always work, and for now they remain on the level of good intentions.

One can notice the effort of the staff to earn a living from their publication if one looks at the “Services” section, which publishes multiple self-ads on the whole package of services offered, among which: “monitoring the press and events, drafting press releases and disseminating them to over 200 addresses, organizing press conferences in the most prestigious premises, consulting on the layout and publication of advertising materials, etc.” The publication is easy to navigate. The information is in two languages—Romanian and Russian. The concept and design are dynamic. One can notice the ambition to offer readers a wide and varied range of media products, but the quality of the copy, especially in commentaries, requires a lot of improvement, which diminishes the value of this publication. The indispensable accessory of almost all publications are the interactive discussions with readers. Pressbox features a section named “Humor,” with a subsection “Official Humor,” whose heading reads: “Comical situations and blunders of our politicians.” These, along with the dirty jokes placed by readers, remind one of the expression: “The Internet is a waste pit.”

**Press.try.md**—*Press-obozrenie* publishes information on events in Moldova somewhat selectively, dedicating a major part of the news to events in Russia and the near east. The authors don’t bother to arrange information geographically, and the news classified by sections (society, economy, politics) look like a salad of country flags, where the Russian tricolor is the most preferred

component. The publication does not produce its own news; it takes its news, commentaries and interviews from the Russian press or the Infotag news agency. *Press-obozrenie* is part of the “information and entertainment” portal Try.md and is clearly removed from the realities of Moldova. The site features news that are more sensational than cognitive and are gathered from all over the world, and which cohabitate peacefully with sections on scandals, jokes, horoscope, various aberrations about sex, etc.—all the accessories of a magazine which strives to cater to all tastes but which in reality caters only to quite specific ones. The discussions on the site forum lack any decency and respect for the opinion of future opponents, who hardly participate in the monologues of a single party.

**Reporter.md**—this is an online daily that publishes news, commentaries and interviews on politics, economy, society, and events from all over the country. Visitors can see only the headlines, and in order to see the entire story or commentary, most of which are original products, one must pay a monthly fee of \$20. At first sight Reporter.md tries to be an impartial news site, but the way questions are formulated in surveys, for example, “Should the government register the Bessarabian Metropolitan Church?”; or commentary headlines “Who needs a public television?” betrays the site’s effort to manipulate the public opinion into a certain direction, which destroys any impression of impartiality.

**www.azi.md**, *Moldova azi* is an electronic magazine published in three languages (Romanian, English and Russian). This is a joint project of the Independent Journalism Center, the DNT Association, and the Institute for Public Policies, funded by the Soros Foundation. The site tries to inform the local and foreign readers on the most important events in Moldova in politics, economy, and social life. The news are updated daily, and commentaries on the most sensitive issues in Moldova are published weekly and written by reputable journalists for all three sections. Besides, the site features three more sections—investigations, studies, analyses—which is a good opportunity for journalists to publish an investigative story or a comprehensive study; such genres are not always wanted by printed publications because of their editorial policy or lack of space. The Interviews section offers visitors a possibility to address questions to a given interviewee, who is usually a public or political personality.

**Moldova Cyber Community** is maintained by the Megadat.com, Ltd. This is a “national portal” that contains the most important cultural events and describes places of interest for eventual visitors to Chisinau. It also

contains information on the city transportation, weather, horoscope, TV and radio listings, currency exchange rates. It also has a daily section named “The news of the day,” which contains information from Basa-press agency on the economy, politics, international news, social issues, business. The “Headlines” section contains only the headlines of the Basa-press news package. There is also a digest of the most important headlines and a forum that usually reflects the differences between speakers of Romanian and Russian as the two main languages of the country. This is not an online magazine but rather an information portal with quite a modest performance as concerns information and analysis.

**YAM.Ro**, *Youth Attitude Magazine*, is a site addressed to young people and published by young enthusiasts who try to fill in an online media niche for this category of people. The site is remarkable not so much for its information as for its intention to become a platform for free opinions (the few news items offered pro bono by Deca-press news agency, as well as personality news taken from other sites are not enough to call it a news site). Many issues concerning culture, inter-ethnic relations, politics, economy, and many other aspects of life are discussed here from the viewpoint of the young. They are thirsty for knowledge, which they state awkwardly in their “About Us” section: “Yammers are a species, whose representatives are constantly hungry for information.”

Some of these publications, which do not have a permanent source of income, represent someone’s own business that can survive only by attracting advertising and whose product must be sellable. Very few online publications, similarly to print ones, meet these requirements. Most continue to depend either on foreign money or on the money of some political forces. ■

# The Online Press in the Republic of Moldova— A Beneficial Explosion at the Turn of the Century

**Oleg BREGA**

I will list and analyze the landscape of the online press in this “space” (conventionally speaking, since a newspaper published in the village of Bubuieci may be read in Brasov, Romania, and even in Boston if it should be in English or if the readers in Boston should read Romanian). To this end I have consulted the most important local directories and corresponding Internet sites, as well as local statistics and traffic data, in order to get an impression about the number of readers of such publications. Where such information is public, anyone can find out where the readers are from, how many pages they have read, how much time they have spent on the site. I have left such details for a different occasion and a different researcher. Nevertheless, given all this information and the nature of the publications detected and accessed during this study, I can categorize Moldovan electronic publications as follows:

Printed periodicals or broadcast media, and their electronic versions.

1. Newspapers and magazines
2. Radio and TV stations
3. News agencies.

Sites of organizations and institutions. I have included these in the survey only when they publish regular news about domestic and international events in their area of interest. These can be seen as specialized journals.

Electronic newspapers proper:

1. Portals
2. Agencies
3. Personal or volunteer undertakings by groups.

Obviously, the latter category will be granted the most attention and space in this analysis, and that’s where I will start.

## Portals

**www.pressbox.md.** At the beginning it was called Voxpress, but after a short and inexplicable hesitation the standing name became [www.pressbox.md](http://www.pressbox.md).

Published in Romanian and Russian. The abundance of advertising on the site shows that this is a commercial project. The average number of visitors—just above 100 a day—shows that the business is not very profitable; this is nevertheless a success as the trend is towards growth.

The site features hourly news from its own correspondents as well as from wires and official press services. The information is structured as follows: topic of the day, politics, economy, social issues, foreign

news. Besides the interview and commentary of the day sections there is also an interactive section “Vox Populi”, which features reader opinions, as well as jokes and weekly surveys.

Less than a hundred voters participate in surveys with three possible answers: *yes*, *no*, and *don’t know*, which means that this is the approximate number of active readers.

The site is easy to navigate, all the news are placed on the same page, which is easy to read and offers sufficient information (plus images) for all categories of readers.

There is no news archive. The news are kept on the site for maximum 3-4 days.

The section “Infotop” features e-mail addresses of media outlets in Moldova, Romania, Ukraine, and Russia.

**www.reporter.md.** The site tells us that *Reporter.md* is a news agency. It has two identical versions, but the main page is not in the official language but in the language of *inter-ethnic communication*. The first thing to catch one’s attention is the photo of the day (copyrighted by Reporter.md, hence made by the agency’s photographer) and the news of the day. The information is divided into sections: politics, economy, and events; only several of the news items on the site can be accessed for free, the others can be accessed only by subscribers. All headlines, the day and hour of publication are available for free.

There is an archive of the last 7 days.

Articles and commentaries are divided into the following categories: politics, economy, and social issues. All are available for free. The article archive includes all articles published since the site opening, structured by months and years. About 2-3 articles are written every week for each area.

The contact address indicated is [info@reporter.md](mailto:info@reporter.md), but no one answers at the other end. There is almost no advertising. The information about the number of visitors is not public.

It seems that this project too is supported by the same ZINGAN.COM Solutions for Hotels&Resorts.

It is significant to note that the TRI.md site, which had existed for 15 months, was dissolved and its staff moved to Reporter.md, where they are producing several permanent sections.

**Yam.ro Community.** YAM—Youth Attitude Magazine—is officially registered as part of MAPSS (Association of Political Science Students), but in fact this is a joint initiative of several young enthusiasts, who

are willing to express themselves and apply in real life what they learn in universities or even high-schools (many of them were students at the Gheorghe Asachi high school when the site was launched). The site offers news from Deca-press, an agency located in Balti specializing in local news. Editors also include news from other agencies and various sources, especially news concerning Moldova or the most important world events. This category represents the social-political news. There are also sections called miscellaneous, sports, and library. These are updated less regularly and include information from various sources as the magazine's staff seldom report their own news.

The Yam forum is the most active section. In fact there are two forums, but only on one of them the debates are more heated—anonymity is permitted here and the subjects are not structured, moderated, or limited. This is the spirit of the young generation of Internauts.

Articles are published rarely, they are not structured by topics, and the subjects vary depending on the author's preferences and on events, from politics to sports. Many authors are accidental contributors, who are not part of the team. This section also features interviews with famous young people.

At the end of 2001 this site received the largest number of prizes at the contest organized by the Soros Foundation-Moldova for the best local Internet sites. The site content and visual quality were appreciated, as well as its political section *The Page of European Integration*.

**Europa.yam.ro.** European Integration is the name of the page produced by several members of the Yam community, who are enthusiasts, volunteers, and students. This publication has a narrower specialization. The site features news, commentaries, articles on and surveys of the social, economic, and political situation in the country from the perspective of integration into European bodies.

This page also has a forum, where the debates are quite active and serious. News and surveys are often commented on by readers, who are relatively numerous. In a Romanian catalogue I found this site among the first ten in the area of politics.

There is also another section with studies in this area, signed by reputable or beginning authors and published periodically in electronic format.

The page offers a subscription for those who want to receive information on the new texts placed on the site in their e-mail boxes, in the form of an "Euronews" bulletin published with a varying frequency.

Other sections: European institutions, expansion, pre-accession, documents, useful links.

The following sites are also part of the Yam community: Moldova.net, which is a crowded forum; acasa.md, a site under construction; and design.yam.ro.

**Press.try.md.** This magazine is published only in Russian, but it has more visitors than other bi- or multilingual publications. When translated from Russian, *Press obozrenie* means "press review," while its subtitle, *internet gazeta*, is translated as "Internet newspaper." Indeed, the news are collected from news agencies and other publications, and offer exhaustive information. All areas of interest are covered, and while there is a special section that justifies the ".md" ending in the publication's name, the rest of the information covers the entire world. The publication uses an original way to mark the news: by using the flag of the country from which a news item originates. But one is puzzled by the fact that the news from Transnistria give the staff a reason to display on the first page the flag of this unrecognized state.

In any event, this happens quite rarely. In general, the site has serious partners: Basa-Press; the Russian service of the BBC; a Jewish source of information in Russian; news sites from the Baltic States, Ukraine, Russia, and the USA.

The main menu offers news, commentaries and interviews structured into a number of approximate sections: Moldova, CIS, the Near East, Politics, Economy, Accidents, Society, Technology, Sports, Interesting, etc.

The site has little advertising, but one can nevertheless say that this is a commercial enterprise since it is part of a larger portal, TRY.md, which features various services from matrimonial ads to the horoscope, jokes, classifieds, weather, exchange rates, and other topics of attraction for various Internet users. The counter shows two - three hundred visitors a day for all the pages of the portal, but it is difficult to find out how many of them read the online magazine Press.try.md.

**Moldova Azi at www.azi.md.** This might be the only site that has been around for a long time, which is reliable, with no technical problems and in all three languages announced: Romanian, Russian, and English.

This may be explained perhaps by the serious organizations supporting the publication: the Independent Journalism Center as editor and the DNT Association as technical assistant.

At the beginning, there was a site, news.ournet.md, which was very popular with the Internet readers and had a good reputation. Now the page features 5-6 of the most important news from local news agencies, which are structured into three categories: politics, economy, and social issues.

There is also a commentaries section, updated weekly, as well as an interviews section. The latter section features monthly—perhaps even more frequently—an interviewee (sometimes a group of interesting personalities) and site visitors can ask them questions. This method is a good innovation and the section is popular with readers, since fragments from interviews are often published in printed magazines and newspapers.

The discussion forum of the *Moldova Azi* magazine is quite popular too. Debates take place in all three languages. Surveys are made on the site quite rarely, but when a survey is made questions feature three possible answers: *yes*, *no*, and *don't know*. However, respondents are not very numerous and therefore the results are not relevant.

The headlines are published also on the home page of the [www.ournet.md](http://www.ournet.md) site, maintained by the DNT Moldova Association. This organization also hosts the entire portal, *Moldova Azi* as well as many other experimental projects from the virtual space of Molodva.

The commercial Internet site [www.moldova.cc](http://www.moldova.cc) features on its home page the most important news of the day taken from the Basa-Press agency. The Digest section features headlines and excerpts from the most important newspaper stories, especially from publications that also have an electronic version. It is significant that the information is in three languages. Moldova.cc has given up some time ago the name "Moldovan" to denominate the official language, and now the visitors of this most important site (according to the site staff as well as to statistics) can use interfaces and read information in Romanian, English, and Russian. In surveys and the forum too all information is accessible in three languages.

In directories one can find many Web sites, but many of them no longer exist or are not updated. This may be due to the fact that either the money or the enthusiasm of the staff have run out—reasons can be many—but the result is the same. For instance, a news site appeared in Balti in 2001, which was very useful and interesting and which published news from the local press and Deca-press agency, but now the page can no longer be accessed after it has been frozen for several months featuring news from the last day when it had funding.

## Agencies

The site of the marketing agency Media FOR Grup, which appeared on 15 April 1998 at <http://for-media.md>, started well by planning to monitor the news in the media of Moldova. Together with the Institute for Social Technologies, Media FOR featured a section of analysis, news, prices, and other useful information. The site also featured commercial and corporate news, but the entire adventure ended in early 2002 either for financial reasons or for lack of impact. The site was published in three functional languages, but the sources were most often Russian and the materials were translated into Romanian and English. Even the indispensable links list referred only to sites ending in *.ru*, i.e. from Russia. Their goal was commendable: "...to provide Moldovan businesses with an opportunity to enjoy a wide range of quality marketing services—from market research to developing a brand to advertising campaigns to public relations—in order to help local

businesses strengthen their position and the capacity to compete in foreign markets." Here is a quote from further down the page: "Cooperation on developing a professional marketing environment and the media market in the Republic of Moldova to the level of world standards, according to the requirements of foreign investors who come to the Moldovan market."

So, everything was promising at the beginning, but the lack of money or other latent reasons made this initiative ineffective.

The above-mentioned Institute of Social Technologies has its own site at [www.ist.md](http://www.ist.md), which is only in Russian: little news (1-2 items a day) and commentaries and analysis on political-social topics. There is a specialized section on Transnistria, another one on the CIS, and a section on geopolitics. Most often the news are of a general character, collected from official news agencies; articles are collected from the Russian-language press, mostly from the governmental *Nezavisimaia Moldova*. The site informs us, in the official language of the country and in English, about the organization behind this project: "The Center for National and International Research 'Perspectiva,' which was created in September 1995 by a group of political science and sociology professors from higher-education institutions." We also learn that in 2000 the Center was reorganized into the Institute of Social Technologies (IST). "IST is a social, nongovernmental, and non-commercial organization." Concerning the goals and activity strategies of the Institute, we learn that it has many plans (that is, had many plans), but besides the digest of the governmental press that I have already mentioned, I have not seen any other achievements in the last few years.

From about the same area of interest we find the following:

**[www.pro.md](http://www.pro.md).** This seems to be an Internet news agency. This publication of the Higher School of Anthropology has news, commentaries, and political analyses, all in Russian. Much of the information is signed by Pro.md, but the news are collected from official agencies and the state printed press. It is difficult to say how many visitors the site has, but since the news archive shows long pauses and sporadic breaks, it is quite possible that the site has few readers, and is published depending on the free time and the money that its authors have, or vice-versa—the lack of permanence left the site almost unknown to Internet users.

**[www.mediapmr.com](http://www.mediapmr.com).** This is a self-proclaimed Media Forum—a publication monitoring the press in Moldova and the Transnistrian region in a strange context of the ex-Soviet information space, perhaps due to cooperation with the Moscow-based Center for Journalism in Extreme Situations.

The site is the result of a project, which started in 2001 to monitor the press situation in Transnistria, hence

the Web address that contains the Russian acronym of the unrecognized state by the Nistru river. The new version has news exclusively in Russian, collected from the local and international press.

**www.tvc21.md.** The local station TVC21 broadcasts only by cable as part of a package of channels, hence it is accessible to few people in Chisinau. It has a Web page that is full of information and quite popular. The diverse news from all areas are updated constantly and are reported sometimes by the site staff, but most often they are collected from local news agencies, especially since the station covers only the capital.

**www.idea.md** was launched recently by a commendable effort of a Forum NGO, which protects the intellectual property and the copyright. Even though there was a lot of noise in the press around this site, two months later after it appeared visitors can still see only the first issue of the information bulletin in PDF format. I have to mention, however, that the magazine is in color and is published in Romanian and Russian. The PDF format is used often on the Internet, especially by pretentious literary magazines and art sites, which allows them to make public certain information and protect the authors' rights, as in this format it is relatively difficult to "steal" an image or a text.

## Commercial magazines

There are very many electronic commercial magazines, specialized in business and economy, but only the following stand apart in terms of popularity and quality:

**www.infomarket.md.** It is in three languages: Romanian, Russian, and English. The site contains many sections. It has specialized and timely news collected from various sources as well as from its own correspondents. There are also very knowledgeable commentaries, which are updated almost daily, as well as articles and studies written by the InfoMarket staff, interviews with business people, decision makers, specialized opinion polls.

The home page features the exchange rates: the official one set by the National Bank as well as the average across commercial banks and exchange offices. One can also find on the site useful information from stock exchanges, prices of raw materials, etc.

The project seems to be a good business, since they seem to trust their contributors and are partners of AP Demimax Grup InfoMarket.MD and companies such as Voxel, SGS, Western Union, and reputable commercial banks in Moldova.

InfoMarket is also a trustworthy site, since it is the most visited as compared to similar online magazines, and also because it has managed to survive in the virtual

space for longer than two years and even managed to expand its coverage. Besides the section "news of the day and Internet news," there is also a special one, "news from the InfoMarket.md site," which contains information about new features of and contests on the site, all of this being updated quite frequently, which is a sign that the magazine has a "busy" life.

**www.eloffice.com.** This is a magazine about the world of electronics, the Internet and information technologies. It is published in Russian and English. This is in fact the electronic version of a promotional brochure of a publishing house specializing in computers and the Internet, called *Eelektronnyi offis*. The publisher prints on paper several monthly magazines and maintains this Web site, which is updated very frequently and is heavily visited. Cyber navigators can find there hourly information, news from various sources but in the same field, good articles collected from the international press or written by the staff of the publishing house, and the magazines that can be bought in news stands across town.

The site has two more sections: forum and classified ads.

**www.ok.md.** This is also a site about everything. It is meant to have versions in two languages, but the English one is still unfunctional, and the site is therefore only in Russian. The news section has news from the local press: from *Komsomolskaia Pravda* to *Nezavisimaia Moldova*, news agencies Infotag, Interlic, Deca-press. No images are used, and the news seem to be selected randomly—a sort of top of the day featuring one or two items.

From among commercial sites there is also **www.boss.md**; although the number of visitors is very small, the site is visually attractive and professionally done, news are selected rigorously in line with the publication's general orientation: everything is for business people. Articles are well-written, or rather well-chosen from the Russian-language press in Moldova and abroad. Maybe because we have few entrepreneurs, the page is not very popular. As concerns Russian as the language of the site, it is clear that this is the staff's mother tongue and the only language they accept for communication.

From the same category of not very popular but well-made publications one can point out: **www.welcome.md**, which features old news from official sources, only in English and Russian, possibly for foreign tourists interested in Moldova. Another one, **www.mafia.md**, is in Russian; it cites online agencies and other Russian sources specializing in news and information for business people, and those linked directly or indirectly to the underworld.

All the sites mentioned so far have been commercial projects, but statistics on the site show that they are not

very profitable and therefore are updated only occasionally.

<http://www.mednet.md> is a well-done project, perhaps useful but not very visited—just above 50 visits a day. This page has existed for almost four years. Now it features articles on medicine collected from the local press, news from similar sites from all over the world, official acts. This is what the site tells us about itself: The Medical Information Portal aims at facilitating the free access of the medical community to information from various areas of medicine. In time the site plans to cover most or even all of the information regarding medical news, published works and scientific papers from Moldova. This will concentrate in a single place medical resources needed both by the users of this center and any other people interested in issues of medicine and healthcare in Moldova.

The healthcare press can be found at <http://press.mednet.md>. This section hosts articles in Romanian and Russian on medicine. The section is updated daily. It has been operating since March 2001, but it features an archive of published work starting in August 2000.

Another project also from the field of medicine is [www.medicina.md](http://www.medicina.md). It has about ten visits a day. The medical information system iMED, shown online in five

languages, is meant to help Internet users with information on various areas of medicine. It seems to be a commercial enterprise, but it is certainly a loss-making one.

On the whole, I have found 16 registered sites in the online-press section at [www.ournet.md](http://www.ournet.md), of which only a few mentioned here still function. The resources section on the Web site of the Independent Journalism Center shows 14 online publications; about some of them I have not read anywhere else, although they are quite active and popular, while others froze long ago, and some of the addresses lead nowhere. Perhaps there are other electronic publications too, which are not registered in local directories because they have chosen a different way to advertise, but since I have not come across them, not even by accident, I am sorry I couldn't include them in this survey.

It is significant that online publications appear and disappear, just like the printed and broadcast press, or maybe even more frequently. The up-side is, however, that more and increasingly diverse online sites appear, so that anyone who wants to find out something about our country or about the world in languages spoken here, can find almost anything they want. From now on the struggle will be around quality, timeliness, and professionalism. ■

## Issues of Copyright Protection on the Internet

*Olivia PIRTAC*

### I. Introductory aspects

The appearance of the Internet has simplified considerably the transmission of information, contributing in an important way to the development of science, an increase in the level of general culture and easier interpersonal communication; however, this has also generated a number of legal problems.

By its nature the Internet is an integrated, supra-state, anarchic and unstable information system. Its technical character, especially the flexibility of electronic data and the anonymity of the persons who place information on the Web has transformed this information system into fertile ground for various violations of the law: slander, abuse, intentionally false advertising, pornography, copyright violations, etc.

In what follows we shall examine the issue of copyright violations on the Web. This subject has triggered various debates and has been approached conceptually in various ways.

### II. Concepts

According to one of the concepts, the publication of materials on the Internet deprives such materials of copyright protection, whereby the author has no right to challenge the illegal copying of materials. One of the supporters of this approach has stated: "Those who designed the Internet, as well as its first users, were scientists who (either on purpose or due to negligence) developed it (especially the TCP/IP protocol) based on a scientific rather than legal vision. TCP/IP is not adapted to copyright protection (the information sent to a destination can be changed by the receiver), but it can protect the priority fairly well (the arrival of the information is confirmed by the date and the hour of arrival). Moreover, the scientific community generally doesn't even understand the concept of 'copyright violation.' The uncontrolled quotation (in publications) and the dissemination (at seminars and conferences) of somebody else's work, as well as the use of data developed by other researchers represent an inherent part of scientific work. The expression 'copyright violation'



always includes a motivation of greed. But why should a sane person disseminate for profit materials that can be accessed freely (i.e. publicly and without pay) from their first source? The ethics of the scientific community is simple: if you want priority, publish your results in a verifiable form. Online magazines publish not only articles (i.e. the reflections and conclusions of their authors) but also collections of primary data that can be used by anyone who wants to verify the accuracy of the said reflections and conclusions. Hence the Internet was initially conceived and developed as a means of free distribution of information.”<sup>1</sup>

The second concept, which is gathering today more and more supporters, promotes the idea that the copyright must be protected even in the case of the Internet: “It has been suggested that—given the technical simplicity of uncontrolled copying of materials from the Internet—certain exceptions from the copyright law should be legalized (by analogy, it can be proposed that an exception be legalized for the owners of powerful cars to allow them to drive at speeds higher than 80 km/h).”<sup>2</sup>

### III. Copyright: Fundamental aspects and applicability to the Internet

In general, the copyright appears when a work of art, science or technology is produced. Hence everything on the Internet—photographs, paintings, analyses, literary and scientific works, and the Web site as a whole—represents an object of the copyright law. A person can enjoy the protection of copyright by virtue of his/her creative activity. Although it is possible to register the work, neither this nor any other formality is required. Laws protect the copyright of works that exist in an objective, perceptible form, and texts do not necessarily have to be published but only written.

In the Republic of Moldova there has been so far no legal-normative provision to give the Internet a special legal status concerning copyright violations: everything that is generally a violation is also a violation in the case of the Internet. Hence, all normative acts dealing with copyright protection in general (with appropriate and objective exceptions) are applicable to the Internet too; protection against such violations is done by general, traditional methods: civil, administrative and criminal legal recourse.

The legal relationships in the area of copyright are subject to complex regulations, covering national and international normative acts; domestically the key law is the Law on Copyright and Related Rights<sup>3</sup> (henceforth Law). According to this law the author enjoys two categories of rights: economic and non-economic (personal, moral).

The following rights fall under personal rights: a) the right to authorship—the right of a person to be

recognized as author and to require such recognition, including by identification by his name of every copy of the published work, or during public interpretations of the work, if this is possible; b) the right to the name—the right of the author to decide how his name will appear should the work be disseminated (the author’s real name, a pseudonym or anonymously); c) the right to the work’s integrity; d) the right to respect of reputation—to protect the work against any distortion, disfigurement or any other change that may endanger the author’s honor and dignity; e) the right to advertise his/her work or to allow (forbid) its publication in any form, including the right to withdraw the work (art. 9 of the Law). Personal rights do not have a specified length of time for defense; they are permanently valid and inviolable.

The second category of rights, the economic rights of an author are characterized by the exclusive right to use the work (in any form and by any method) and involve the right of the author or of the copyright holder to perform or to allow or forbid the following actions: a) reproduction of the work; b) distribution of the work’s copies, including by sale, rent or other methods; c) importing copies of the work for distribution, including the copies produced under permission of the author or any other copyright holder; d) public display of the work; e) public interpretation of the work; f) public communication of the work; g) translation of the work; h) transformation, adaptation and other such changes done to the work (art. 10 Law). The economic rights, according to general rules, are protected for the entire life of the author plus 50 more years after his/her death (the Law provides for exceptions when the term may be extended or shortened for certain categories of work). After the copyright protection term expires, the work becomes a public good. Thenceforth, the work may be reproduced freely as long as the moral rights are respected (to the name, integrity, etc.).

However, in art. 20 the Law provides that reproductions of the work are authorized for strictly private use. But here too there are certain restrictions, for instance it is not permitted to reproduce books in their entirety, as well as music scores, data bases, etc. “The provision forbidding the entire reproduction of books is not observed on the Internet (because it doesn’t take into consideration the specificity of the Internet), but their use for private purposes is not challenged by authors, for why should an author place his/her work on the Internet unless it is to be read. ... In principle, the placement of a piece of work on a Web site is an act of publication performed by the author and it would make sense if the legislation equaled this placement on the Web to publication, so as to exclude from the Internet the restrictions concerning the use of works for private, scientific and educational purposes.”<sup>4</sup> It is permitted to quote from the original work and from its translations without the author’s consent, but with a reference to his/her name and to the source of the quote. Quotation

without paying author fees is permitted within a certain volume set by the law (art. 22).

The rule is, however, that any reproduction and dissemination will be performed under a contract with the author or the copyright holder. Copyright holders have the right to point out to this rule by using the copyright symbol, which is to be printed on every copy of the work and consists of three elements: a) the letter C in a circle—©; b) the name of the copyright holder; c) the year when the work was first published. The use of these elements is not mandatory; this is rather a right and, hence, the absence of these elements does not automatically allow the work to be reproduced.

The following are not objects of the copyright and may be reproduced freely: a) official documents (laws, court rulings, other official acts), as well as their official translation; b) a state's symbols and insignia (flags, coats-of-arms, medals, currency signs, etc.); c) folk art; d) informational releases concerning various events and facts (art. 7). Concerning the latter, one should remark that the copyright does not protect raw, uncommented information, which reflects an occurred fact or event. The information that also includes a commentary contains a creative element (the commentary) and is protected under copyright.

#### IV. Issues

When he expressed his disagreement with those who believed that the observation of the copyright on the Internet slowed down its development and hindered its expansion, researcher V. Naumov stated: "It is the absence of a real protection that often prevents authors from placing their materials on the Internet. And should such regulation be adopted [partial exclusion from copyright protection—a.n.] the Internet will become *de jure* a black hole for intellectual work, and the consequences thereof will be felt not only in the virtual world but in the real world too. Besides, one cannot make exceptions in the legislation concerning only the Internet. The right of the author on works of science, literature and art appears by virtue of their creation and does not change when such materials are represented on the Internet."<sup>5</sup>

While opinions differ concerning the need to protect the copyright on the Internet, it is obvious that such protection is a difficult task. The Internet, which is an open and generally accessible information system, is a favorable and even inciting ground for copyright defiance. Violations are also difficult to identify. Physically, the violator and the author may be thousands of kilometers apart. Given the delinquent's anonymity, he/she may not be identified, and even if he/she should be identified, it is difficult to bring legal action against him/her—both in terms of issuing and enforcing court rulings—if he/she lives in a different country.

It is true that there are commercial sites on the Internet too, and the access to them is controlled by technical means and copying is not possible without paying a fee. However, the majority of the sites are not commercial and have no control mechanisms against the actions of users, which encourages users to undertake various illegal actions: works are copied from one site and placed without authorization on other sites, both identifying the author as well as not, and in some cases another name than the author's is used; in some cases the integrity of works is violated, when alien elements, damaging texts or any other types of changes are added to them; in some cases the works are published and sold without agreement from and remuneration to the copyright holder, and sometimes other names and titles are used; etc. The copyright holder can challenge *a posteriori* any such illegal actions, having a chance to secure substantial compensation, but prevention is the best method. Prevention does not require a lot of effort, but the lack of prevention may complicate things in a very unpleasant way. According to V. Naumov, one cannot blame only the delinquent in such cases: "The author and any organization holding certain rights have to be prepared for possible copyright violations and in the case of important materials they must know how to protect their rights, given the fact that the information on servers can be changed and it will be quite difficult to prove that 'that thing was surely there.' And given the [current] practice, it will be very difficult to oppose a plaintiff who says, 'it was published in the media' compared to the victim who says 'it was published on the Internet'."<sup>6</sup>

We recommend that before placing on the Web important material, authors should secure proof that will help them defend their rights and that confirms doubtlessly or at least sufficiently their intellectual property over the given work. One also has to take into consideration that the Internet, which is a more or less recent innovation, creates a general confusion concerning legal regulations and the application of law, while judges will most clearly show uncertainty when judging such cases. According to some authors, the legal regulation of the Internet "has so far been insufficient or, sometimes, not quite proper,"<sup>7</sup> while the chaos that exists requires the development of a special normative act.

#### V. Solutions

In order to prevent violations as well as to ascertain them, one can use the traditional institution of *securing evidence*. If there is no court proceeding, the interested person may approach a notary, and after the suit starts the person may approach the court. During the examination of evidence, material proof and written documents will be examined, evaluations may be made, and minutes should be drawn on the basis of established circumstances. According to art. 62 of the Civil

Procedures Code of R. Moldova, evidence should be secured when the subject has reasons to fear that the presentation of evidence will become impossible or difficult later.

In order to prevent violations, the most effective means are the technical ones, and the Internet operator has an especially important role in this. The operator must at least suggest technical methods by which to make copying more difficult, and also to facilitate the search for works stolen from the Web or Web links to certain elements of the alien site that creates a mistaken impression about the ownership of the copyright. In the USA Internet operators have the most important role in preventing copyright violations: "Thus when a contract is signed with a site owner, a clause is always included, which obliges the site owner to refer to the sources of the materials placed on a Web page. It is forbidden to disseminate commercially any materials without the prior consent of the author. When this prescription is violated, the operator may rescind the service contract unilaterally and prohibit the subsequent renewal of contractual relations for a given period of time stipulated in the first contract."<sup>8</sup> To be sure, the person who has been disconnected from one operator may make agreements with others, but usually operators inform each other on delinquents, and the new operator will keep closer control over the culprit.

In order to find and prove copyright violations various signs are used (and sometimes the absence thereof), which work, although they are not obvious. Modern methods of information protection allow for a detection not only of text plagiarism but also image plagiarism and of any other files that can be used in multimedia technologies. Many methods are based on the use of "watermarks." Upon a normal visual examination of the image the user cannot see any codified sign: the copyright sign, author's name, year of publication. But when a certain program is run on the material it is possible to prove that the files contain additional information referring to the person who created them. An important design particularity of watermarks is their stability under any operations performed on the image—change of size, format, color. It is recommended<sup>9</sup> that the authors of photographs, paintings, other types of images do not place on the Web images of high quality, because they can become victims of copyright violators; they should also place their hidden signs and the author's personal data wherever they can on the site, in case someone may need a quality original.

The protection of the copyright on the Internet can be done very effectively by the electronic signature, which ensures the authentication and identification of an electronic document. "Such an electronic document may be copied many times and each copy will have legal power. But if someone should introduce in this document even a minor change (for instance, a new point or paragraph), this specific copy of the electronic document

will lose its legal power. The use of an electronic-digital signature allows for a link to be created between the content of the document and its accessories, thus confirming its legal power. In fact, the degree of protection of an electronic document is much higher than that of a traditional document on paper."<sup>10</sup>

Depending on traditions and Internet development, different countries do or do not recognize by law the electronic signature. In Moldova this area started to come under law when the Law on Informatics<sup>11</sup> was passed on 22 June 2000, whose art.art. 31-34 define the status of an electronic document: "The electronic document containing an electronic signature is equated to a document with handwritten signature, both in terms of its status and procedural effects." But it seems that these provisions of principle are insufficient for the introduction of the electronic signature into the national information system, since special normative-legal acts on the electronic signature are needed, which should define a number of technical and legal elements needed for the authorization of the signature.

A new method of Internet copyright protection is to record information from Web sites onto a CD and to deposit the CD in storage places. This method suits completely also any other products of intellectual work, as well as the protection-related rights and the legal protection of non-traditional objects (for instance, of trade or professional secrets). This method protects the information on the Web, preventing possible challenges. Russia is currently testing and approving a new service (initiated by private individuals)—the Web depository,<sup>12</sup> which is meant to protect the content of Internet publications, the copyright and associated rights by an unconditional recording of the clients' Web sites and their storage in a special place. This service will expand the possibility to prove during differences the priority concerning the date and accuracy of the content, but it can also be abused as anyone can copy an alien site and place it on a CD. Although the copyright does not operate with the notion of "priority", which is used in other objects of intellectual property (for instance invention). Given the ease with which materials can be placed on and copied from the Internet, the issue of "who deposited the publication first" can become very important, and the date of the deposition will serve as proof that at that moment the petitioner held a copy of the object. Some authors are quite pessimistic about this service: "This method can solve the problem, but it will require a new bureaucratic body not quite submissive to automation, and substantial expenditures to create the deposits and maintain the depository, which does not correspond to the current requirements of information systems nor to the basic principle of Internet users—to work without intermediaries."<sup>13</sup>

In any event, it is not priority that lies at the root of copyright, but rather the fact of creation. The legislation does not limit the types of evidence in cases involving the

copyright; one can use any evidence—work materials, a contract with the person who has commissioned the work, etc. However, art. 8 of the Law sets the presumption that the author is the person under whose name the work was published, and in case of litigation the registration can serve as a presumption of authorship. The presumption will be seen as a fact unless it is refuted by convincing evidence. In the Republic of Moldova the state registration of works of literature, art and science is performed by the State Agency for the Copyright. Recently, the government adopted a resolution concerning the state registration of works protected by copyright and associated rights,<sup>14</sup> which defines a procedure for registering authors' works in order to enhance their level of protection, and to prevent and diminish the number of copyright violations. In principle, in accordance with this procedure any works placed on the Web could be registered — even Web pages, which by their complexity can and must be seen as a new type of copyrighted objects.

## VI. Conclusions

Before placing a text or an image on the Web, they should be recorded on traditional carriers. Violations cannot be excluded even in this case, but it will become much easier to prove them. Otherwise, and concomitantly, one should use technical means (watermark, electronic signature). If an author places on

the Web a material that has not been published before, is not protected and not recorded in registers of works of art, science and technology, he/she should be aware that he/she becomes vulnerable in the face of possible violations. To be sure, in this case too the author will be able to prove his/her authorship based on manuscripts, drafts, contracts, depositions by providers, etc., but essential complications cannot be excluded in this case. ■

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## Ethics and Professionalism

# Precision in Journalism

*Natalia ANGHELI*

In the age of a veritable information explosion telling the story quickly, comprehensively, and, at the same time, accurately, becomes more and more of a journalistic challenge. We are overwhelmed with opinion polls, surveys, and reports of all sorts. We hear lots of contradictory information and see lots of conflicting numbers. We usually run out of time trying to sift, distill, and organize our stories. And yet despite these pressures, the core journalistic values remain unchanged. Overwhelmed or not, we are expected to show commitment to accuracy, balance, fairness, and to be of value to the whole community.

To err is certainly human, but the consequences of journalists' mistakes are often too far-reaching. A journalist dispensing questionable health tips and "prescribing" wrong medication in a newspaper can put

someone's life in danger. A reporter providing incorrect data about new employment possibilities abroad can play into the hands of human traffickers. A media professional supplying erroneous information about new tax breaks, can cause a lot of trouble to tax payers. Obviously, such mistakes can hardly be "forgiven."

Journalism is interpretive in the sense that it often means supplying context, analysis, and looking for patterns and motives. At the same time, misinterpretation and over-statement are among the most common journalistic pitfalls. As Philip Meyer, veteran US reporter and author of the famous book *Precision Journalism*, wrote: "Journalists... usually tend to err in the direction of over-interpretation... The reason for this professional bias is self-evident: you usually can't write a snappy lead upholding the negative. A story purporting to show that apple pie makes you sterile is more interesting than the one that says there is no evidence that apple pie changes

your life.”<sup>1)</sup>

Reporters are not in the business of producing fiction. Even though dramatic writing is a journalistic asset, our main duty is to provide reliable and coherent information to our readers, listeners, and viewers. Unfortunately, the news one gets from our media is often incoherent and unreliable. It is often the result of a sloppy and careless reporting and writing. Lack of precision in facts and in numbers remains a serious drawback of present-day Moldovan journalism.

One of the major problems is lack of clarity in writing. “Confusion in writing is a direct result of confusion in thinking,” one of my US journalism professors once said. Indeed, lack of understanding, especially of multiple facets of complex issues, often leads to misleading interpretations.

For example, in early May a Moldovan news agency disseminated a story about the government’s decision to reduce penalties for the “non-repatriation” of foreign currency. Among other things, the story said that the terms for transferring currency earned from business transactions with Russia would be extended. Then the story literally said the following: “Will be exempted from payment of penalties for the non-repatriation on time of the means earned from transactions carried out on the basis of inter-governmental contracts.” Not surprisingly, the person who had to translate this Romanian text into English took this to mean “any inter-governmental contracts,” whereas the translator into Russian understood it as referring only to contracts with Russia.

Journalists are expected to test assumptions rather than make them. In an ideal journalistic world this means refraining from disseminating unsubstantiated claims and unproved allegations. And yet unsubstantiated claims often find their way into the work of our journalists. For example, in late May a Chisinau-based weekly carried a story about an “erotic bestseller” written by a Moldovan journalist. Even though the initial print run of the book was just 120 copies, and negotiations about re-printing it were still under way, the author of the story kept referring to it as a “bestseller.”

Quoting, too, remains a serious problem. The most common drawback is using quotes out of context, which sometimes totally changes their intended meaning. Besides, quotes used by our journalists often attempt to tell the whole story rather than illustrate a point. As a consequence, they are frequently too long and bulky. In many cases they lack attribution.

In early June, I ran across the most bizarre example of the latter. One of our national newspapers carried a story about the most recent population estimates in Moldova. The story started with three paragraphs detailing how many old, young people there are in Moldova, what the ratio of those living in Transnistria is, and how much the life expectancy has changed in recent years. The following paragraph started with the phrase: “According to the same sources...” However, nowhere

in the story was it mentioned where the data had been taken from.

How to go about verifying quotes? How to make sure that they are relevant and precise? The simple rule is that if the quote does not provide any interesting and new information, it should be excluded (“don’t quote for the sake of quoting.”) As to confirming the accuracy of quotes, some newsrooms advise their reporters to read direct quotes back to the interviewees to make sure they have been understood correctly.

Funnily enough, sloppiness in quoting often goes hand in hand with excessive trust in the news sources, especially those from political and business elites. A good reporter is usually skeptical even about those news sources that are generally considered reliable. He or she will take the time to double-, and, if necessary, triple-check the information provided by the news sources. A good reporter will also ask five key questions: (1) who says so; (2) how does the news source know the information; (3) does the information make sense; (4) is anything significant missing; and, most importantly – (5) why does the news source offer the information (i.e. what does he or she stand to gain or lose from providing it). Unfortunately, very few of our journalists go that far.

Sloppiness with personal and geographical names, as well as with different specialized terms is another problem. Wrong titles, misspelled first and last names, mistakes in capital cities and even in the names of countries – the list is very long. There are scores of examples when names, especially those of foreign officials, have appeared in our media in several spelling “versions.”

For example, on several occasions Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov was “baptized” Sergei Ivanov (the mistake is all the more serious because Sergei Ivanov happens to be Russia’s defense minister). Similarly, some of the women ambassadors to Chisinau have been referred to as “Mr.”

Such obvious solutions as calling the foreign ministry, the local office of the relevant international organization or the embassy, or just checking the Web sites of international bodies don’t seem to occur to many of our reporters.

Specialized terms, too, are often misspelled and misused, and one gets the impression that many of our journalists have a strong aversion to all encyclopedias and dictionaries.

However, the worst “enemies” of our journalists seem to be numbers. Much of what journalists write about is based on numbers. Stories about elections, budgets, employment – all demand figures. And yet operating with precise numbers is what our colleagues seem to hate the most, and this is what they get wrong most often.

Here is a recent example. In a story about the decision of the Romanian authorities to stop the imports of meat and eggs from Moldova, it was mentioned that the decision dated back to 20 May. Several paragraphs later it

was said that the decision was taken on 20 March !!!???

It is true that stories that rely on numbers too heavily can be deadly for newspaper readers, and even more so for radio listeners and TV viewers. It is also true that broadcast journalists are generally advised to “round up figures.” But what exactly does this mean? If the number of participants in a rally was 5,001, it would be somewhat misleading to say that “there have been more than 5,000 participants in the rally.”

What is the magic formula for using numbers/statistics, etc., in stories, and “how much is too much”? The basic rule is that enough numbers should be used to provide the necessary context, background, and perspective.

Here is just one example taken from a story published last year in a popular Moldovan weekly. The writer attempted to describe new taxes for motorists, which had been introduced in Central and Western Europe, without using the appropriate numbers: “Highway taxes have increased in Slovenia, the cost of using the ferries has gone up in Denmark.” The story was obviously intended for Moldovans traveling across Europe by car for business or pleasure. It was, however, hardly of any use to them because they would not be able to find out from it how much exactly they were supposed to pay when accessing highways in Slovenia or attempting to use a ferry in Denmark.

The unusualness of statistical information and its impact on people is what make the story interesting. Such information can often be found in polls and surveys. On the other hand, polls are full of hidden traps and can be the source of grave journalistic mistakes.

First of all, one has to distinguish between opinion polls that have been carried out strictly respecting all statistical norms, and the so-called SLOPS (Self-selected Listener Oriented Public Opinion Surveys). If an Internet site asks its visitors to say if Moldova’s future is with the CIS or the European Union, or a talk show host requests viewers to phone in and choose the most trustworthy politician – all of these are SLOPS. The major problem with SLOPS is that there is no way to find out how statistically correct their findings are. Consequently, there is no way to assess their reliability.

But even “genuine” opinion polls are full of hidden pitfalls and have to be analyzed with painstaking care. For example, a pre-election poll shows a difference of three percent in the approval ratings of two politicians. Does that mean that the first politician is more popular than the second? Not necessarily so, if the margin of error in the poll is around three percent.

Actually, there are several basic rules for analyzing election polls: (1) if the sampling error in a poll is more than the margin between the candidates, neither of them is leading the race; (2) if the margin between the candidates is greater than twice the sampling error, then the candidate with the greatest level of support is leading; (3) if the difference between the candidates’ level of

support is more than the sampling error margin, but less than twice the sampling error, then the candidate with the greatest support can be said to have a small lead in the race.<sup>2)</sup> In fact, these rules can be applied to analyzing other types of polls as well.

Careful and precise use of numbers is a sign of journalistic competence. A competent journalist will spot an implausible number quickly, and will have enough basic knowledge of mathematics and statistics to confirm his or her suspicions.

Lack of precision in facts and figures raises the question whether the journalist, who commits these errors, has the necessary competence to do his or her job. Frequent inaccuracies and errors obviously reduce the impact of reporter’s work and his or her credibility.

Many of the problems cited above are the result of “telephone” journalism. It is very easy to get a number, name, or a quote wrong over the telephone. In a telephone interview conducted from a crowded and noisy newsroom it is not easy to obtain the necessary context, background, and establish patterns and motives. Yet this form of journalism, which I would equate with “lazy” journalism, is becoming more and more popular. Picking up the phone to call someone is definitely easier than conducting a “proper” interview. However, this ease often translates into lack of depth and precision in journalism.

The development of new technologies has certainly made many journalistic chores much easier. Electronic databases and the Internet have given a new dimension and a new depth to journalism. Computer-assisted reporting has become the cornerstone of investigative journalism. Thanks to the wondrous effects of new technologies there are now new journalistic sources and new story topics.

On the other hand, the tidal wave of information one gets from the Internet makes it very difficult to distinguish between genuine news and spoof. For our journalists, the Internet is the main source of news, especially on international developments. Now that almost anyone can publish a professional-looking Web site with literally “any thing” there, journalists have to exercise extreme caution. It is extremely difficult to verify information online, i.e. to prove its authenticity and the identity of those who disseminate it.

Precision is both a journalistic goal and a journalistic benchmark. It is a sign of professional competence and of social responsibility. It is essential if we value our credibility, and want the press to become a real power in Moldova. ■

1) quoted here from *News and Numbers*. Victor Cohen. Ames: 1989, p. 5

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# Journalists Uncover Women Trafficking

Larisa UNGUREANU

Women trafficking has been widely discussed at local and international seminars and symposia. Moreover, on 1 January 2001 an International Organization for Migration (IOM) office was opened in Chisinau. On 3 September 2001, the Chisinau IOM Office launched a new network to assist trafficked and IOM repatriated women. Centers for the rehabilitation of trafficked women were opened, grants were given to NGOs to prevent trafficking through information campaigns. The media were involved too. Some publications, such as the *Zece Plus* bulletin of Female Journalists' Club and the Information Bulletin of the National Research and Information Center for Women Issues had approached this topic long before assistance to women, who had fallen victims to traffickers, commenced. They tried to raise the public awareness of this phenomenon. Other publications—national, local, regional, independent or those published by governmental bodies—took up this topic somewhat later, when the issue became stringent and could no longer be avoided.

In 2001 billboards started appearing on the streets of Chisinau, which carried the following inscriptions: *Don't let yourself be trafficked* and *You are not merchandise*. The billboards also had a quite suggestive design. The first kind of billboards contained reproductions of newspaper advertisements saying that a young woman could earn a lot of money in a week, all she had to do was to call an indicated number. I think that every one of us has read at least once such advertisements in the press, in postings on fences and light posts, asking oneself how could a young woman earn such fabulous money. The second billboard had a clear and accessible design: a big, hairy, stretched-out hand held a very small girl in its fist, while another hand with a massive gold bracelet held a stack of 100-dollar bills. The message was clear: money was offered for the girl. Fliers, calendars, posters carrying this design were distributed in city minivans and other public transportation among youth in villages, etc.

This billboard, *You are not merchandise*, was also published in newspapers. I saw it in a number of national publications. But it was not published in a sequence of issues during a month or a week, as an ad with such social impact should be. It was rather published once or twice in six months (in the *Capitala* weekly, for instance, it was published in the first half of 2002). This is an extremely low frequency, since the reader who did not buy the newspaper on that given day would not see the warning, would not pay attention to its message, would not have a chance to remember whether she had seen it somewhere else, to discuss this message

with her family and neighbors.

Thus, *Capitala* of 2 March 2002 published on the last page the announcement, in full color, reading *Don't let yourself be trafficked*, where one could very clearly read in Russian, "Young women—\$800 a week." Inside the newspaper, on page 9, there was a story called "You are not merchandise," which said that a local radio station, Antena C, started a program about a situation which "is more than alarming and we have started to blow the whistle." Then the author of the story, Tania Iozhita, wrote on: "Had we done it earlier, human trafficking would not have existed." At least not here and not to such an extent, because there is trafficking in the world anyway, as this is a global problem. It is true that in our country we did not know about trafficking and the population had no idea that at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a woman could be sold like cattle. It was due to lack of information that young women let themselves be lured by fabulous earnings, without suspecting that they were deceived and trapped in a labyrinth from which there was almost no escape. The goal of the above-mentioned program was to inform the girls about the "chain of horror," which many trafficked women had to go through, in order to save "many from the temptations offered by traffickers." It was hoped that the program would be listened to by a large audience and would thus reach its goal.

According to the IOM Chisinau staff, at present about 100,000 Moldovan women are victims of trafficking. This is an approximate figure, since no state or nongovernmental institution knows exactly how many women have been deceived and sold, from what communities, of what age and from what social category. What is known with precision, though, according to statistics collected abroad by various organizations (UN, IOM), is that Moldova has beaten everyone else. The poorest country in Europe has the highest number of women trafficked to Kosovo, Macedonia, Albania, Yugoslavia, Italy, Turkey, Greece, Russia.

It was also in *Capitala* (30 March 2002) that another article was published, titled "The Slaves of Moldovan Gypsies Die on Russian Land," written by Andrei Rusu. Although the story was horrible, it had no follow-ups, sounding like a single violin in a choir of basses. A lot has been written about deceptions contrived by Gypsies, and the National Radio has broadcast many stories about children and elderly people whom Gypsies recruit in Russia's large cities and force to beg, but the state authorities have not done anything about that so far.

Thus, from March till May *Capitala* published two stories on trafficking, the first one being more of an introduction to the topic, and the second approaching a

well-known subject avoided by law. I have seen no reactions or attitudes to those stories on the pages of *Capitala*.

I went on with *Saptamina*, looking at issues from March to May 2002. This weekly had adopted a different information tactic. In the issue of 1 March, on page 26, in a corner below, the *You are not merchandise* note was published, the page being headed “Stars too become fed up with playing in films.” It is difficult to understand why the note, carrying such a message, was placed on that page, among smiling stars who, I believe, never heard about our poor trafficked girls. In the issue of 8 March, although the note was not repeated, on the page titled “Why Are They Better than Us?” there was a story, “Trafficked to Macao” (about “Russian women used as sexual slaves”). From the middle of the page Lavrentii Beria was staring at me. It is difficult to guess the role Beria had on that page, but this is what *Saptamina* is all about: its journalists are trying only to shock you. I am asking myself: How often has this publication talked with the readers about women trafficking in Moldova, to feel certain that the reader was aware of the phenomenon of trafficking? But we believe that this publication is only now trying to look into this issue. The assumption that the reader is more informed than we think, oftentimes puts to sleep the alertness of journalists, who let themselves be carried away by day dreaming. Today’s journalism, in its race for sensationalism, focuses its attention on new phenomena. But it also does not forget for a single moment about the major issues of society, bugging the reader all the time by going back to the same topic with new information, details, facts, events. This happens issue after issue, in regular columns written by knowledgeable people.

Some continuity—albeit a timid one—in the topic of trafficking can be seen in *Saptamina*, while, for instance, *Faalia*, which is a weekly specialized in educational information, opinion, and culture, did not publish a single piece on trafficking from January to May 2002. This weekly is read by teachers and high-school students—that is the environment from which victims are often being recruited. Haven’t the *Faalia* journalists heard the desperate shriek of the 15-18-year old girls who managed to escape the slavery of trafficking and return to Moldova? Going back to *Saptamina*, I would like to mention another story on this topic, “A Coffee and a Girl,” published on 19 April on page 8 under the column heading “The Need for a New Partnership for Development.” This was a translation from a Glasgow newspaper *The Scotsman*. Although the story does not lack the thrill of news (in a Kosovo brothel a client can pay a \$50-note for a coffee and he will be given a girl for change), the numbers are important. We thus learn that in 2000 the number of girls brought to Kosovo tripled as compared to previous years. From the former Soviet Republic of Moldova 401 girls were brought, followed by Bulgaria (268), Albania (104), Romania (91). Some girls, the Scottish daily writes, know where they are going and what they will be doing, but have no idea of the

conditions they will be kept in and that they will be slaves. The same daily writes that in Belgrade there is a human market, where the starting price for an 18-year old girl is \$1250. According to Yugoslav law, prostitution is a “bad habit” (just like in Moldova, by the way). This attitude “leads to a growth of human trafficking as part of organized crime.”

The value of this story would have been much higher if it had been commented by an expert in the field or accompanied by an interview with a person assisting victims of trafficking. But the fact that a story was selected whose subject focuses on a geographical area where our girls are taken, makes this phenomenon more credible to the readers. This phenomenon is tackled by a number of international organizations, which are trying to find the criminals and the trafficked girls by raiding the places where they are kept.

*Saptamina*, unlike other publications, often reprints from other sources stories about human trafficking. Other publications, such as *Luceafarul* or *Flux*, concentrate on specific trafficking cases and publish stories—which are often dramatic and even tragic—about the fate of our fellow citizens who have been trafficked.

Several years ago one could sometimes see stories written in an ironic style or with complete misunderstanding of the phenomenon, in which the victim would be accused to boot: “Bad habit,” “She is in the oldest profession,” “She found what she had been looking for,” “It’s her fault” and other such expressions coming not only from readers but also from journalists. In the last two years, however, thanks to the Center for Women Trafficking Prevention, IOM and other organizations, as well as due to a number of seminars on trafficking attended by journalists too, the tone of the stories has changed: trafficked women are no longer blamed, and they are treated as victims of an important social phenomenon, who need to be protected. Journalists uncover women trafficking and thus draw the public’s attention to it, informing readers on the various methods pimps use and drawing the parliament’s attention to the absence of a law on combating human trafficking.

At present the press are trying to overcome a feature characteristic for anything, which is at an initial stage: a certain slowness, passivity, lack of experience in approaching a totally new topic for our journalists. It is important to inform the reader of various trafficking cases. The stories of the victims of trafficking are read in a single breath, but this topic ought to be approached also at a different level: an analysis of the phenomenon is in order, for instance by publishing stories about the attitude of public officials and involvement of state bodies, since the issue of trafficking in our country is of major importance. This number—100,000 trafficked girls—should give to all of us, including politicians and governmental officials, something to think about. ■



## The Broadcasting Coordinating Council

# BCC – an Autonomous Public Authority?

**Valentina LUCA,**  
**Victor BOGACI,** *deputy director*  
*BCC Department of assessment, licensing,*  
*and monitoring*

The Moldovan Broadcasting Coordinating Council was set up on January 1, 1996, after the Broadcasting law no. 603-XIII (*Monitorul Oficial* no. 70 of December 14, 1995) was passed. According to art. 14 of that law, “the Broadcasting Coordinating Council is being set up as an autonomous public authority, which works under the provisions of this law”.

Chapter VII, “The Broadcasting Coordinating Council”, art. 31. – (1) of the Broadcasting Law stipulates that “the Broadcasting Coordinating Council is made up of 9 members appointed by:

- a) Parliament – 3 members (including an expert in broadcasting);
- b) The President of the Republic of Moldova – 3 members (including an expert in broadcasting);
- c) The Government – 3 members (including an expert in broadcasting).

The members of the Broadcasting Coordinating Council are appointed for a 5-year term. They are guarantors of the public interest in broadcasting and do not represent the authority that has appointed them”.

The law doesn’t clearly stipulate what “an expert in broadcasting” means. Does it mean education in broadcasting? Or maybe extensive experience in the area? Only two BCC members – Ion Strasnic and Valeriu Soltan – have been educated in broadcasting or communications.

According to art. 33 of the Broadcasting Law, “The members of the Broadcasting Council shall suspend their activity in their political parties for the duration of their mandates. They shall not be involved directly in the production of programs in any broadcasting institution over that period.” The provisions of that article have been flouted repeatedly and openly. To be specific, it was BCC members Ion Mihailo, Iurie Tabarta, Sergiu Cibotari, Sergiu Drobot, Andrian Usatii, Constantin Pirtac, Vasile Botnaru, Andrei Strimbeanu, Constantin Rotaru, who were or still are employed by various media outlets.

Art. 31 – (4) stipulates that “Members of the Broadcasting Coordinating Council shall be recalled by the authority that has appointed them when this law has been violated, or when criminal offences, confirmed by a final court ruling, have occurred.”

The following people have been recalled from the first membership of the BCC: Andrian Usatii and Andrei Strimbeanu, as well as Vladislav Gusev and Andrei Lozovan from the second membership, albeit for reasons not stipulated by art. 31 – (4) of the Broadcasting Law. Adrian Usatii and Andrei Strimbeanu – for political reasons, and Vladislav Gusev and Andrei Lozovan were given no explanations.

The BCC statute was approved by Parliament Resolution no. 988-XIII, dated October 15, 1996 (*Monitorul Oficial* no. 78-79, of December 5, 1996), art. 3 thereof stipulating that “members and employees of the Council are subject to the Law on the Civil Service.” Although the respective law (art. 11, “Restrictions” to the Law on the Civil Service, par. 3) stipulates that “Civil servants shall not: a) simultaneously hold two positions, or have a part-time job, contract or agreement based in enterprises, institutions or organisations ... the work of which is controlled, subordinated, or is to some extent related to the mandate of the authority employing them.” Nevertheless, BCC member Ion Mihailo simultaneously worked as BCC chair and director of the Moldovan office of the Mir TV company, thus collecting two salaries.

The state fee for the broadcasting license no. 127, issued by BCC to the Moldovan office of the Mir TV company, amounting to over 10 thousand lei, has never been paid to the state budget, while on March 12, the license in question was revoked by the BCC, chaired by I. Mihailo himself. Could that possibly be an attempt to get rid of the evidence?

Moreover, the BCC chair Ion Mihailo, together with another civil servant, employee of the parliament, and BCC member, Gheorghe Madan, traveled to the U.S. between 14.02.2002 and 24.02.2002. Their travel expenses were covered by the Christian charity “The Little Samaritan.” Although “The Little Samaritan Foundation” has the most extensive network of transmitters in Moldova (two transmitters in Chisinau, and one each in Ceadir-Lunga, Ungheni, Cahul, Balti, Edinet, Glodeni, Drochia, Causeni, Rezina, Briceni, and Hincesti), it hasn’t paid its broadcasting license fee to this day.

The first meeting of the Broadcasting Council of the Republic of Moldova was held on February 26, 1996, and the issuing of broadcasting licenses to private media outlets started at the May 7, 1997 meeting. The first membership of the council worked between 01.01.1996 and July 2001, and issued 179 broadcasting licenses

(about 2.67 licenses a month).

By the end of July 2001 the members of the second Broadcasting Coordinating Council were appointed. Between July 2001 and June 2002, the new membership of the BCC issued 13 broadcasting licenses (circa 1.16 licenses a month), which shows that the efficiency of the second Council's work is much lower. That comes as no surprise. At the June 11, 2002 meeting of BCC, of the 40 or so available radio frequencies and TV channels only 3 were assigned, although most had been applied for. The 43<sup>rd</sup> Chisinau channel failed to be assigned for the second time (it had been out of use since February 2001, after the broadcasting license was withdrawn from Catalan TV). It's all about bureaucratic barriers, lack of interest in the development of broadcasting institutions. Viewers and listeners in Moldova are thus being denied the possibility to receive new TV and radio programmes, while the state budget is missing additional funds, since radio and TV frequencies are part of the state assets.

BCC decisions on the results of tenders for available TV and radio frequencies are issued with no accompanying justifications of rejected applications, which is a blatant violation of art. 37 (3) of the Broadcasting Law, which stipulates that: "Debates on granting broadcasting licenses shall be public, and decisions passed shall be made public together with the justifications thereof," and of art. 41 of the BCC statute: "If the application for a broadcasting license has been rejected, the applicant shall be advised of the fact in writing, with appropriate justification." This is not being done at all, and in some cases decisions are being forged by the BCC chair Mr. Mihailo. For example, BCC decision no. 43 dated 11.06.2002 on the outcomes of the tender announced by BCC on March 23 and 30, 2002 contains an article no. 4, which was not discussed at the BCC meeting, and BCC members did not vote for that article of the decision. (The director of the Unda Prutului radio station Tatiana Pruteanu from the Corlateni village, who was repeatedly refused a license, without an explanation, wrote on the way "tenders" are being organised, and licenses "issued" – see article "Who Does the BCC Serve?" in the *Democratia* newspaper no. 29 of June 25, 2002).

Complaints from the public (and even BCC employees) are not being accepted or registered.

According to art. 38 of the Broadcasting Law, "The Broadcasting Coordinating Council shall write a report at the end of each year, concerning its activity and the way in which the holders of broadcasting licenses are abiding by the obligations stipulated by this law." This year, however, chair I. Mihailo decided that the BCC report for 2001 and the way in which broadcasting license holders abide by the provisions of the Broadcasting Law should not be made public.

BCC members are being appointed without prior discussion of the candidates, the job being seen as a nice little earner. As BCC member you can take care of personal business, watch TV, listen to the radio, read the papers, play cards on the computer, while experts in the technical department don't have computers they need to do their jobs.

Practice has shown that BCC's functions can be carried out by a smaller staff – the secretariat of the Council – which should include the assessment, licensing, and monitoring department, and the number of inspectors should be increased to 7. There is no need for all the permanent, salaried BCC members, for expenses for the remuneration of the chair, who, for some reason, also has a car with a driver. (Unpaid members of the first Council Vasile Botnaru and Constantin Pirtac actively contributed to the Council's decisions, their suggestions and arguments always drew a lot of interest.) The external relations service is unnecessary, as are the administrative division and the staff of the BCC press body. Reducing the BCC staff and discontinuing the pay for BCC members will not only bring substantial savings to the budget, but will also enhance the efficiency of the Council's work. ■

## List of BCC members

### The First membership

No.	Name	Experience	Period	App'd by	Notes
1	Ciubasenco Alexei, Chairman	Newspapers: <i>Tinerimea Moldovei</i> , <i>Chisinau: Gazeta de Seara</i> , "Moldova-Film" Studio, BCC	01.01.96 – July 2001	Parliament	
2	Usatii Andrian	President of State Company Teleradio-Moldova	01.01.96- August 1997	Parliament	Member of BCC in violation of art. 33 of the Broadcasting Law (programme presenter)
3	Chifa Svetlana	Head of municipal division for children's rights	01.01.96 – July 2001	Parliament	
4	Pirtac Constantin	Moldovan TV, Stil TV Station	01.01.96 – July 2001	President of RM M. Snegur	Member of BCC in violation of art. 33 of the Broadcasting Law (programme presenter)
5	Botnaru Vasile	"BASA-Press" agency, "PRO-TV Chisinau"	01.01.96 – July 2001	President of RM M. Snegur	Member of BCC in violation of art. 33 of the Broadcasting Law (programme presenter)
6	Strimbeanu Andrei	Poet, Member of Parliament	01.01.96 – July 2001	President of RM M. Snegur	Member of BCC in violation of art. 33 of the Broadcasting Law (political activity), elected MP and dismissed after a lengthy delay
7	Strasnic Ion	Deputy minister of communications and information	01.01.96 – July 2001	Government	Deceased in December 2001
8	Marian Boris	Editor-in-chief, <i>Nezavisimaia Moldova</i> newspaper	01.01.96 – July 2001	Government	
9	Gorlo Anatol	<i>Nezavisimaia Moldova</i> newspaper	01.01.96 – July 2000	Government	Left the BCC member position due to emigration
10	Cibotaru Arhip Ion	Writer, Member of Parliament, BCC	February 1999 – July 2001	President of RM, P. Lucinschi	
11	Rotaru Constantin	Director, State Radio, BCC	November 1997 – July 2001	Parliament	BCC member in violation of art. 33 of the Broadcasting Law (programme presenter)

## The Second Membership

1	Mihailo Ion, Chairman	State company Teleradio-Moldova, broadcasting company Mir, BCC	July 2001 - present	Parliament	BCC member in violation of art. 33 of the Broadcasting Law, having worked as program presenter at the Mir TV and radio company. He is still in violation of art. 33, as he is on the board of the Mir company.
2	Tabirta Iurie	Director of Moldovan TV	July 2001 - present	Parliament	BCC member in violation of art. 33 of the Broadcasting Law (programme presenter)
3	Madan Gheorghe	Consultant to Parliament	July 2001 - present	Parliament	
4	Cibotari Sergiu	Director of TV and radio stations Blue Star, Balti; Balti youth communist organisation	July 2001 - present	President of RM V. Voronin	BCC member in violation of art. 33 of the Broadcasting Law, having worked as program presenter at the Blue Star radio and TV company.
5	Drobot Sergiu	Moldovan TV, NIT TV	July 2001 - present	President of RM V. Voronin	BCC member in violation of art. 33 of the Broadcasting Law (programme presenter)
6	Gusev Vladislav	Graduate of the State University, Media Association, BCC	July 2001 – January 2002	President of RM V. Voronin	Appointed in violation of art. 13 (2) of the Civil Service Law (does not speak the official language). Was dismissed in violation of art. 31 (4) of the Broadcasting Law.
7	Lozovan Andrei	Deputy minister of culture, institute of arts, communist party offices	July 2001 – January 2002	Government	Dismissed in violation of art. 31 (4) of the Broadcasting Law
8	Chifa Svetlana	Head of municipal division for children's rights	01.01.96 – July 2001	Government	
9	Tiscenco Iurie	Editor-in-chief, <i>Nezavisimaia Moldova</i> newspaper	July 2001 - present	Government	Appointed in violation of art. 13 (2) of the Civil Service Law (does not speak the official language)
10	Prigorschi Ion	Moldovan TV	February 2002 - present	Government	
11	Soltan Valeriu	State Communications Inspectorate	March 2002 - present	President of RM V. Voronin	

## The Regional Press

# The Press in Gagauzia

**Ivan TOPAL**

*Editor of the Acik Gez (Third Eye) newspaper*

In Gagauzia, which is an autonomous region created on 23 December 1994, there are governmental as well as private publications.

Governmental newspapers are the same as in the former districts.

1. *Vesti Gagauzii* (Comrat). Regional newspaper published by the Popular Assembly of Gagauzia. Published weekly in Russian, 4 pages, one of which is in Gagauz. Circulation: 5000.

2. *Znamea* (Ceadir-Lunga). Founders: the Gagauz authorities and the paper's staff. Published weekly in Russian, 4 pages. Circulation: 5000.

3. *Panorama* (Vulcanesti). Flier. Founder: the town administration. Published in Russian, 2 pages. Circulation: 500.

4. *Ana seziu* (Chisinau). Has a supplement—children's magazine *Cirlangaci*. General sponsor: Turkish Agency for Cooperation and Development at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey (TIKA). Published twice a month in Gagauz, 4 pages. Circulation: 1000.

5. *Gagauz halki*. Subtitle: "Social-political newspaper." Founder: The Association of Gagauz Culture for Developing Friendly Relations between the Gagauz and other Nations. Published in Transnistria in Russian, 4-8 pages, becomes more active during elections. Circulation: 10,000. This Association of Gagauz Culture is not known in Gagauzia.

6. *Sabaa iyldyzy-magazine*, subtitled: "Ethnicity. Culture. History." Supplement: children's magazine *Giunescic*. Founder: Gagauz local government. General sponsor: TIKA. Printed in Turkey. Almost the entire magazine is in Turkish. The magazine has 65 pages and is published once every three months. Circulation is not indicated.

### Nongovernmental newspapers:

1. *Gagauz ieri*. Subtitle: "Published as needed, almost in Russian." Founder: businessman L. Dobrov. Published on 4 pages, in Russian, irregularly; becomes more active during elections. Circulation: 1000.

2. *Gagauz sesi*. Subtitle: "People's newspaper for Turkish Gagauz." Published twice a month in Gagauz. Sponsors: private individuals from Turkey. Circulation:

1000.

3. *Acik Gez*. Subtitle: "Newspaper for people without party membership." Published irregularly in Russian and Gagauz, 4 pages. Circulation: 500.

Two more newspapers appeared in 2001:

4. *Halk birlii*—the newspaper of the National Gagauz Movement Halk Birlii (National Unity). Editor: F. Marinov. Published in Gagauz. Circulation: 1000.

5. *Novyi vzglead*—published in Russian by the Independent Journalism Center of Gagauzia. Two issues have been published so far. Editor: S. Piron. Circulation: 10,000.

Let's make a short review of some publications.

*Vesti Gagauzii* (editor: D. Marinov). This newspaper is the organ of the Gagauz Popular Assembly. This is the most officious newspaper in the region. A lot of attention is paid to the political and economic life of the autonomous region. It also publishes a supplement, *The Bulletin of Gagauzia's Official Documents*, which contains local laws, resolutions, declarations, etc. There is also a literary page in Gagauz, "Budjac dan erleri".

*Znamea* (editor: L. Goldberg). The first page contains the "Chronicle of Current Events," which are reported in a lively language. Not without humor too. The second page publishes feedback from readers, where they write about "the routine of life." The third and fourth pages are usually filled with advertising, classifieds and congratulations. These pages earn the newspaper money, which allows it to maintain a circulation equal to that of the publication of the Popular Assembly (about 5000 copies). Before 1995 there was a page in Gagauz, "Budjaktan seslear."

*Gagauz sesi* (editor: P. Ialanji). The main focus is on the development of the Gagauz language, literature, and culture. Publishes verses and prose by beginner and established writers. Publishes many photographs from various cultural events, exhibitions, etc., but lacks serious analytical articles. Much attention is paid to relations with Turkish personalities in journalism, literature, and culture.

*Gagauz halki* (editor: V. Koicheva). The newspaper is open about its political sympathies for Transnistria. Special editions have been published, in which all 4 pages were dedicated, for instance, to Transnistria's 10th anniversary. During elections the newspaper put forth much effort to support M. Kendighelean, who ran for the head of the region's administration.

*Gagauz yeri* (editor: L. Dobrov). Focuses mainly on

authorities: either criticizing incumbents furiously or trying its best to replace them. During elections supported K. Taushandji. Pays quite some attention to various political forecasts. Many headlines are shocking. The newspaper's commentator, for instance, has suggested "A Project for the Third Outburst of Independent Thinking":

"...Moldova ought to be governed by one prime-minister. The cabinet of ministers, headed by the prime-minister, ought to adopt itself all the laws and implement them too. The prime-minister should be appointed by a Joint Assembly of County Councils for 1 year (so that this position would not be coveted)... The prime-ministers of Gagauzia, Transnistria, and Moldova should be the highest officials of the country, who should define the country's policies... But for the implementation of this 'absurd' idea, which does not exist anywhere else in the world, A STRONG PERSONALITY IS NEEDED IN MOLDOVA."

Some articles are signed "Your Political Papa."

*Ana seziu* (editor: F. Zanet). The newspaper pays a lot of attention to "meetings at the highest level" in the autonomous region, to various anniversaries and cultural events in Gagauzia. Since it is published in Chisinau, the newspaper naturally can't keep up with local events and pays little attention to everyday local life and has little critical analysis of events in the region, including cultural events. Since the newspaper depends totally on a Turkish sponsor, it is unfortunately not able to support the originality of the Gagauz language. As it is known, in Turkey all the Turkic languages are considered to be dialects of modern Turkish. Gagauz is called there "Gagauz-Turkish," Tartar is called "Tartar-Turkish," Chuvash is called "Chuvash-Turkish," etc. Some Turks tell us to make no difference between nationalities ("We are all Turks!", "We are all Gagauz!"). There have been cases when Gagauz women married Turks and adopted Islam. Men also have changed their names (to Aslan, Suleiman, etc.). The newspaper does not write about this.

One ought to mention though, that the newspaper has not gone Turkish (as *Sabaa iyldyzy* has).

*Acik Gez* (editor: I. Topal). The newspaper of the moderately liberal intelligentsia. It has been published for 6 years now (but without strict periodicity because of financial difficulties).

The first lawful governor G. Tabunshchik, before coming to power, said the following famous words: "The press must be governed!" And the Gagauz TV was headed by the bashkan's (president) press secretary. Of course, such a "government of the press" prevented any other opinions from going on the air. People's complaints and critical notes, which were censored by the Gagauz

TV, found their way into our newspaper. *Acik Gez* did its own journalistic investigations, although they met with many obstacles. The media could contribute to the struggle against corruption in society. The press and the authorities must not grow too friendly with each other. Unfortunately, in Gagauzia the term "court press" was not a swear word but represented the current situation. To be sure, accusations were directed not only at authorities but also at the unscrupulous journalists who wanted to serve them. Many things were based on lies, but the struggle against deception was not encouraged. For instance, when speaking to foreign guests, the authorities mentioned a free newspaper as an example of democracy. But as soon as the guests left, the authorities flooded the courts with letters requesting that the free newspaper be closed. During the governance of G. Tabunshchik the authorities didn't even try to look deeper into the Press Law. The authorities resorted to self-judgment: they banned from Assembly sessions undesired journalists (including the editor of *Acik Gez*), or they didn't allow them in at all, or didn't respond to their petitions. Thus, the newspaper, which was meant by its founders to serve informational and cultural goals, had to allot much of its space to the issues of the "small man," to the difficulties of his social-economic life, protection of consumer rights, and the consumer's protection from the arbitrariness of the seasoned and by now national functionary-bureaucrat.

When D. Croitor came to power, the persecution of journalists stopped. Today the press is supervised by the Popular Assembly of Gagauzia (PAG). One of its standing committees is called the Committee for Procedures, Deputy Ethics, and the Media. The Popular Assembly has a press service. The PA has worked out a regulation on journalist accreditation with PAG. Unfortunately, in Gagauzia the International Day of the Freedom of the Press is not celebrated.

*Acik Gez* has continued to the present day to allow citizens with quite different opinions to voice them ("Meetings in the Street," "Different Opinions," "History in Documents," "Open Letters," "Youth Issues," "Unrusting News," "Know Thy Numbers!", "Food for Thought," etc.).

*Acik Gez* pays serious attention to the development of the Gagauz language, taking a number of perspectives on this issue ("The Gagauz Language...Russification? Romanization? Turkization?," No.23; "The Movement Should Go Both Ways," No.22; "Are the Problems of Gagauzia's Cultural Autonomy Being Solved? Or Is It Used Only as a 'Political Base'?" No.24). The issue of the second, major language, which is so particular to nations with young writing tradition, is also discussed. The newspaper's staff support the preservation of the Gagauz

language and oppose its replacement by modern Turkish.

The newspaper reviews new books on the history, literature and culture of the region (for instance, "White Doves Above the Steppe," No.24). Many articles have been dedicated to the freedom of expression in Gagauzia ("Our Dear Television," No.22), the relations between council members and town mayors ("The Boat of the Deputies Fears No Storms," No.23), consumer rights protection ("Open Letter to the Director of the Comrat Termokom," No.23), economic issues ("How to Solve the Crisis," No.23). Readers have displayed much interest for the ironic piece "Donkey Move," serialized across issues.

*Sabaa iyldyzy* (editor: S. Bulgar). This magazine is printed in Turkey (mostly in Turkish). Much space in the magazine is dedicated to profiles of members of the local government and deputies in the Popular Assembly (10 pages in No.11). Six (!) pages are dedicated to advertising various regions of Turkey, 13 pages to business projects of local organizations. One pleasant

part is that every issue of the magazine publishes old photographs ("The History of the Gagauz People in Pictures").

Unfortunately, there are many grammatical mistakes in the magazine. It was conceived as an aid to Gagauz school and university students, but teachers of Gagauz language believe it has not lived up to this task. The supplement *Giunescik*, which is a children's publication, is published in more or less bearable Gagauz. It is too bad that our dear writers turn into cheap managers. Our poor women have to do menial work in Turkey. It is not proper for our entire creative intelligentsia also to serve Turkey. One should work without giving up human dignity.

Thus, out of 11 newspapers and magazines, 4 are published in Gagauz, although there isn't a great demand for them "from below," as well as for the papers that are being "resurrected" mainly before elections and distributed for free.■

## Survey

# Mass Media in the Republic of Moldova: Access, Audiences, Preferences, Attitudes

### 1. What radio stations are available in your area?

	Name of station	% of those interviewed	Urban area %	Rural area %
1	Radio Moldova	45.8	31,1	53,1
2	Russkoe Radio	29.7	38,1	23,4
3	Antena C	29.3	13,6	34,6
4	Hit FM	16.0	18,8	13,8
5	Radio Romania 1	11.2	6,4	14,8
6	FM103.5 (Balti)*	8.4	13,4	4,7
7	Free Europe	6.3	4,3	7,8
8	Radio-Nova*	6.2	9,3	3,8
9	Luceafarul	5.8	2,5	5,2
10	Europa Plus*	5.3	8,0	3,3
11	Pro FM*	4.8	7,0	3,1
12	The Little Samaritan	4.3	1,9	4,1
13	Contact*	2.3	2,5	2,0
14	Radio Moldova – Iasi	2.3	1,7	2,8
15	Radio 7 (Na 7 kholmakh)*	2.2	3,5	
16	Sanatatea (Edinet)*	1.9	2,5	1,5
17	Nashe Radio*	1.7	3,7	
18	BBC	1.5	1,9	1,2
19	Avto Radio*	1.4	3,5	
20	Mayak (Moscow)	1.3	1,0	1,6
21	Radio Gagauzia*	1.2	1,4	1,0
22	Vocea Basarabiei (Nisporeni)*	1.2	2,2	

23	Radio Rossiya	1.2		1,6
24	Radio 3*	0.9		1,3
25	Shanson*	0.9	3,5	
26	Serebreanii Dozhdi *	0.9	2,0	
27	Europa FM (Bucharest)	0.8		
28	Maximum*	0.8	1,9	
29	Radio Ukraine	0.7		1,2
30	Tango*	0.5	1,0	
31	Deutsche Welle	0.4		
32	Ekho Moskvyy*	0.4		
33	FM102.6 *	0.2		
34	Golos Rossii	0.2		
35	Monte Carlo*	0.2		
36	Radio 21 (Romania)	0.2		
37	Svoboda	0.2		
38	Ukraine FM	0.2		
39	FM101 (Chisinau)	0.1		
40	FM102.1 (Ceadir-Lunga)	0.1		
41	FM106 (Balti)	0.1		
42	Radio Galati	0.1		
43	Nostalgie*	0.1		
44	Promin' (Ukraine)	0.1		
45	Prosto Radio*	0.1		
46	Radio France 1	0.1		
47	Radio Romania 2	0.1		
48	Sana FM	0.1		
49	Transnistria*	0.1		
50	Voice of America	0.1		

\* Local station

## 2. What TV channels are available in your area

	Name of channel	% of those interviewed	Urban area %	Rural area %
1	TVM	78.9	74,8	82,0
2	ORT	75.1	82,5	69,6
3	TV Romania 1	48.3	33,8	59,2
4	RTR	16.5	33,6	3,8
5	NTV	13.6	27,0	3,6
6	NIT*	11.8	18,6	5,5
7	PRO TV*	11.7	19,4	6,0
8	PMR*	7.3	1,2	10,2
9	1+1 (Ukraine)	7.1	3,5	9,9
10	TV6 Balti*	6.7	9,3	4,7
11	Discovery	5.5	12,6	
12	Inter (ORT Ukraine)	5.5	3,3	7,1
13	BTV (Balti)	5.1	9,3	1,5
14	TV21	3.8	8,5	
15	TV6	2.5	4,3	1,6
16	TNT	2.4	5,2	
17	TV26	2.3	4,3	
18	MTV	2.2	5,0	
19	Ren TV*	2.1	8,5	
20	AVM	1.8	2,1	1,6
21	TV27	1.7	2,5	1,2
22	Acasa	1.4	3,3	
23	Kvant (Cahul)	1.2	2,7	



## Survey

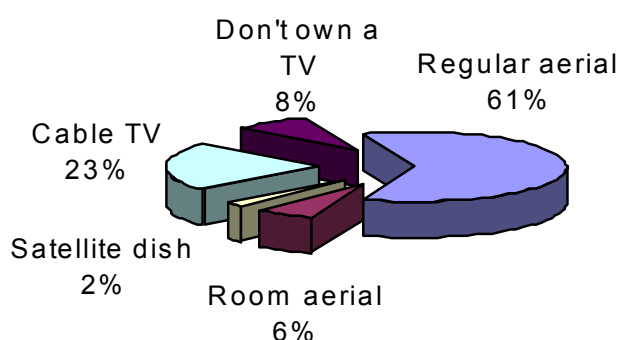
24	Eurosport	1.1	2,5	
25	Enu Ai (Comrat)*	1.3		1,6
26	TV5	0.9	1,0	0,9
27	Elita (Rezina)*	0.8	1,6	
28	TVR2	0.7		1,9
29	TV3 (Ocnita)	0.6		
30	Ain Atic (Ceadir-Lunga)*	0.5	1,0	
32	TVU (Ukraine)	0.4		
33	Atomic	0.3		
34	Mir Kino	0.3		
35	STS	0.3		
36	STB	0.3		
37	TVT	0.3		
38	Cim TV (Cimislia)*	0.2		
39	Flor TV (Floresti)*	0.2		
40	Is TV	0.2		
41	Steluta (Soroca)*	0.2		
42	CNN	0.2		
43	Muz TV	0.2		
44	TSV	0.2		
45	TVK51	0.2		
46	STS	0.1		
47	XXI	0.1		
48	AST	0.1		
49	BBC	0.1		
50	Cartoon Network	0.1		
51	Euronews	0.1		
52	HBO	0.1		
53	Hallmark	0.1		
54	MCM	0.1		
55	Nashe Kino	0.1		
56	Nickelodeon	0.1		

3. What information source do you prefer?	Answers	%
Radio	322	26.8
TV	737	61.3
Printed press	74	6.2
Internet	4	0.3
Radio and TV	12	1
Radio, TV and printed press	7	0.6
TV, printed press	5	0.4
Neighbors, friends, family	13	1.1
NA/DK	27	2.2

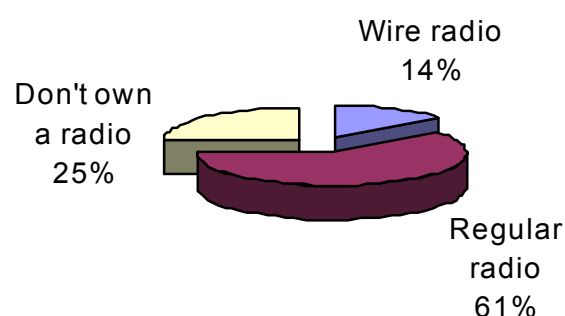
4. Do you receive TV through:	%	Urban area %	Rural area %
Regular aerial	61.1	36,1	79,8
Room aerial	6.3	6,8	6,0
Satellite dish	1.7	3,7	0,1
Cable TV	22.5	49,9	2,0
Don't own a TV	8.4	3,5	12,1

5. Do you receive radio through:	%	Urban area %	Rural area %
Wire radio	14.0	16,5	12,2
Regular radio	60.8	59,8	61,5
Don't own a radio	25.2	23,7	26,3

### Do you receive TV through:



### Do you listen to radio through:



6. How often (on average), over the last 3 months...(urban)	Daily (6-7 days a week)	1-2 days a week	Less than once a week	Not at all over the past 3 months	Don't know/ no answer (DK/NA)
...did you read the papers	10.2	32	18.4	30.6	8.8
... did you follow domestic TV programs (R. Moldova)	50	18.2	11	15	5.9
... did you follow foreign TV programs	65.7	12.7	4	9.9	7.7
... did you follow domestic radio programs	40.8	14.7	8.4	20.7	15.4
... did you follow foreign radio programs	40.4	11.8	6.2	23.1	18.5

7. How often (on average), over the last 3 months...(rural)	Daily (6-7 days a week)	1-2 days a week	Less than once a week	Not at all over the past 3 months	Don't know/ no answer (DK/NA)
...did you read the papers	9.1	26.3	15.1	39.7	9.7
... did you follow domestic TV programs (R. Moldova)	54.8	14.8	8	14.9	7.5
... did you follow foreign TV programs	59.2	11.9	4.4	14.2	10.4
... did you follow domestic radio programs	45.9	13.7	6.5	20.1	13.8
... did you follow foreign radio programs	38.1	9.7	5.1	27.1	20.1

Note: In answer to the question about newspaper reading habits, 39.7% of respondents from the rural areas said that they hadn't read anything in the last 3 months, while the average score for this question is 30.6%. The rural resident watches foreign TV and listens to foreign radio not less than the urban dweller.

## Survey

## 8. At what time of the day do you usually watch TV or listen to the radio?

From:	To:		TV on week days	Saturday	Sunday	Radio on week days	Saturday	Sunday
6.00	6.30	1	2.7	2.5	2.7	12.1	9.6	9
6.30	7.00	2	4.3	2.9	3.6	16.9	14.1	10.6
7.00	7.30	3	5.6	5.1	6	22.8	18	14.1
7.30	8.00	4	4.8	6	8	20.9	19	15.3
8.00	8.30	5	5.2	8.1	12.7	20.8	20.8	18.1
8.30	9.00	6	3.7	9.4	15.9	18	19.8	18.6
9.00	9.30	7	3.5	11.6	19.1	17.8	19.8	19
9.30	10.00	8	3.1	12.1	19.9	17	19	18.5
10.00	10.30	9	2.7	13	22.6	16.9	19.6	19.9
10.30	11.00	10	2.1	11.9	19.7	17.2	20.8	21.9
11.00	11.30	11	2.2	10.9	19.4	16.2	20.4	22.3
11.30	12.00	12	2	10.1	18.9	17.4	21.2	22.6
12.00	12.30	13	2.4	9.8	18.9	21	23.9	24.3
12.30	13.00	14	2.6	8.7	17.3	21.7	24.4	23.5
13.00	13.30	15	2.8	8.1	16.6	24.7	25.9	24.4
13.30	14.00	16	3.2	7.6	15.6	24.3	24.9	23.8
14.00	14.30	17	5	9.8	17.4	23.9	24.4	22.6
14.30	15.00	18	6	9.5	16.5	22.9	23	21.2
15.00	15.30	19	7.2	10.2	16.5	24.2	22.8	21.3
15.30	16.00	20	6.7	10.3	17	21.6	21.5	19.7
16.00	16.30	21	7.3	11.8	18.5	20.9	20.8	18.3
16.30	17.00	22	7.6	12.1	19.4	20.9	20.4	17.9
17.00	17.30	23	9.5	15	23.2	20.9	20.6	18.8
17.30	18.00	24	13.6	17.5	26.5	20	19.5	17.5
18.00	18.30	25	23.4	24.4	33.9	20.3	19.8	17
18.30	19.00	26	26.6	27.6	36.2	19.6	18.7	16.6
19.00	19.30	27	35.7	35.8	43	18.7	18.2	16.6
19.30	20.00	28	38.1	38.8	45.4	17	16.6	16
20.00	20.30	29	48.7	47.8	51.1	17.5	15.8	15.1
20.30	21.00	30	52.5	52.1	54.5	16.2	14.7	14.1
21.00	21.30	31	62.6	61.3	59.3	15.3	13.6	13.7
21.30	22.00	32	59.7	58.1	56.7	13.8	11.9	12.3
22.00	22.30	33	51.6	50.2	49.5	11.7	10.5	10.9
22.30	23.00	34	39.2	40.7	40.4	10.6	9.6	9.7
23.00	23.30	35	29.9	31.9	31.3	9.2	8.8	9.1
23.30	24.00	36	17.2	22.9	23.2	7.4	7.2	7.6
After 24.00		37	10	13.9	15	5.5	6.4	6.7

9. How many days a week do you listen to the radio?	%
1	2.3
2	2.9
3	2.2
4	1.9
5	2.6
6	2.4
7	41.7
Less than once a week	5.8
DK/NA	16.9
Don't own a radio	25.2

10. How many days a week do you watch TV?	%
1	2.9
2	3.3
3	2.2
4	2.1
5	3.1
6	3
7	57.2
Less than once a week	3.5
DK/NA	14.3
Don't own a TV	8.4

11. How many times a week do you read the papers?	%
1	12.4
2	10.1
3	4
4	2.1
5	0.8
6	0.6
7	6.2
Less than once a week	20.1
DK/NA	8.4
Not at all	35.3

12. How many hours a day do you watch TV?	%
One hour and less	6.8
One to two hours	16.7
Two to three hours	23.5
Three to four hours	19.1
Four to five hours	11.6
Five to six hours	6.1
Over six hours	6.9
Don't own a TV	8.2
DK/NA	1.1

13. For how long do you usually listen to the radio?	%
One hour and less	11.6
One to two hours	12.2
Two to three hours	13.2
Three to four hours	10.1
Four to five hours	7.2
Five to six hours	5.2
Over six hours	14.1
Don't own a radio	25.2
DK/NA	1.1

14. What TV channels, radio stations, papers and magazines do you watch, listen to, or read most often? Please give a maximum of three answers for each type of media. (Stations with an audience of min. 1% are listed)

#### Papers

Title	%	Urban areas, %	Rural areas, %
Komsomolskaya Pravda	16	24,7	9,6
Saptamina	10.3	8,2	11,9
Makler	8.8	14,8	4,4
Flux	7.9	8,5	7,4
Argumenty i Facty	5.2	8,2	2,9
Spros i Predlozhenie (Balti)	3.8	7,9	1,5
Trud	3.7	5,8	2,2
Luceafarul	3.6	1,7	4,9
Moldova Suverana	2.8	3,3	2,5
Timpul	2.8	3,1	2,6
Tara	2.7	3,7	2,0
Shans	2.5	3,5	1,7
Antena	2.1	3,9	0,7
Communist	2.1	2,1	2,0
Jumal de Chisinau	1.8	1,4	2,2
Nezavisimaya Moldova	1.7	1,7	1,6
Faclia	1.3	1,0	1,6
Ekonomicheskoe Obozrenie	1.2	2,7	
Literatura si Arta	1.2	1,2	1,3

## Survey

Unghiul (Ungheni)	1,2	2,9	
Kishinevskie Novosti	1,2	2,7	
Moldavskie Vedomosti		1,0	
Realitatea (Soroca)		1,0	0,9
Novoie Vremea	0,7		0,7
Democratia	0,7		0,7
Golos Balti	0,7	1,0	
Plaiul Orhean	0,7		0,7
Spid Info		1,4	
Stil Info		1,4	
Florile Dalbe		1,2	
Cuvintul (Rezina)		1,0	
De Facto			0,9

## TV

Name of channel	%	Urban areas, %	Rural areas, %
ORT	61.8	71,7	54,5
TVM	49.4	30,9	63,2
TVR1	30.8	20,8	38,2
RTR	11.6	22,9	3,1
NTV	9.5	18,6	2,9
PRO TV	9.5	16,9	3,9
I+1 (Ukraine)	5	1,6	7,6
Inter (ORT in Ukraine)	4.6	2,1	6,4
NIT	3.9	5,2	2,9
Discovery	3.8	8,9	
PMR	2.9		4,9
TV6	2.3	2,9	1,9
MTV	2.2	4,9	
TV21	2	4,5	
TV6 (Balti)	1.9	2,3	1,6
TNT	1.7	3,5	
Acasa	1.6	3,5	
Ren TV	1.6	3,5	
BTV (Balti)	1.3	1,2	1,5
Eurosport	1.1	2,5	
TV26	1	1,2	0,9
Mir Kino		1,9	
Kvant		1,7	
Atomic		1,6	
Cim TV (Cimis lia)		1,4	
Muz TV		1,0	
TVR2			1,0

## Radio

Name of channel	%	Urban areas, %	Rural areas, %
Radio Moldova	28.5	15,3	38,4
Russkoe Radio	23.1	31,1	17,2
Antena C	17.8	11,5	22,5
Hit FM	10.1	11,3	9,3
FM103.5 (Balti)	6.3	9,7	3,8
Romania 1	5.2	3,1	6,8
Europa Plus	4	7,4	1,5
Free Europe	3.3	1,2	4,9
Luceafarul	3.3	2,7	3,8
Radio-Nova	2.9	4,7	1,6
PRO FM	2.6	5,0	
Nashe Radio	2	3,7	
The Little Samaritan	1.7	1,0	2,2
Shanson	1.4	2,7	
Avto Radio	1.3	2,9	
Contact	1.2	2,5	
Mayak	1.2		1,7
Radio 7 na 7 Kholmakh	1.1	2,9	
Radio Moldova - Iasi	1.1		1,5
Maximum	1	2,1	
Sanatatea	1		1,3
Vocea Basarabiei (Nisporeni)	0.7		1,3
Serebreannii Dozhdi		1,0	
FM 106,2			2,8

15. Name 5 favorite TV programs and the channel that airs them:  
(programs with an audience of at least 1% are listed)  
first 30 programs:

Program title	%	Urban areas, %	Rural areas, %
Mesager, Telejurnal,(news) TVM	27.8	18,8	34,4
Vremea, Novosti, (news) ORT	21.3	26,8	17,2
Surprize-surprize, TVR1	21.3	16,1	25,1
Pole chudes, (game show) ORT	14.9	15,7	14,2
Who wants to be a millionaire, ORT	12.5	17,5	8,7
Please forgive me, TVR1	11.5	7,0	14,8
Wait for me, ORT	8.6	8,3	8,7
The weakest link, ORT	7.2	9,9	5,2
KVN, (game show) ORT	6.6	9,3	4,5
Motherland, TVM	6.4	1,9	9,7
Movies, ORT	6	6,2	5,8
It's raining stars, TVR1	5.2	3,5	6,5
Chto, gde, kogda? (quiz show) ORT	5.2	5,0	5,2
Bolshaia stirka, (talk show) ORT	4.6	8,3	1,7
Actualitati, Telejurnal, (news) TVR1	3.7	1,9	4,9
Bravo-bravissimo, (game show) TVR1	3.5	2,5	4,2
Rusaskaia ruletka, (game show) ORT	3.5	4,5	2,8
Team 5, TVM	3.3	1,4	4,8
Movies, TVM	3.2	2,1	4,2
News, PRO TV	3.2	6,2	1,0
Vacanta mare (comedy show) PRO TV	2.9	4,5	1,7
Young and gifted, TVM	2.7	1,9	3,3
5 to 10, TVM	2.6	1,0	3,8
Times, (current affairs) ORT	2.4	2,1	2,6
My family	2.2	2,1	2,2
Town of youth, TVM	2		3,1
The weakest link, PRO TV	1.6	2,9	
Zodia norocului, (game show) TVM	1.5	1,6	1,5
Rezonans, (current affairs) TVM	1.4	1,0	1,7
Teo, (breakfast show) PRO TV	1.3	2,5	

16. Name 3 favorite radio programs, and the station that airs them:

Name of program	%	Urban areas, %	Rural areas, %
News, Microfonul actual, Radio Moldova	12.1	8,7	14,5
A song for you, Radio Moldova	10	3,9	14,5
Music, folk music, Radio Moldova	6.8	3,5	6,8
A song addressed to you, Antena C	6.1	2,7	8,6
Russkie prianiki, Russkoe Radio	4	7,2	1,6
La vatra jocului, Radio Moldova	3.5	1,2	5,2
News, Antena C	3.2	1,4	4,7
Stol zakazov, Russkoe Radio	3.1	4,5	2,0
Music, Russkoe Radio	2.5	3,1	2,0
Children's hour, Radio Moldova	2.3	1,0	3,3
Music, Hit FM	2.1	2,1	2,0
Top ten, Russkoe Radio	1.8	2,9	1,0
With love for the elderly, Radio Moldova	1.3		1,3
Breakfast show, Radio Moldova	1.2		1,9
News, Russkoe Radio	1.2	1,7	0,9
Modern club, Radio Moldova	1.1		1,7
Hyde Park, Antena C	0.7	1,0	

## Survey

What TV newscasts do you usually watch? (per cent of those interviewed)

	Best three	First choice
Mesager (TVM)	69.9	47.7
Vremya or Novosti (ORT)	64.5	27.6
Novosti (TV-6) (TVI)	6.4	0.6
Curierul (NIT)	6.5	0.9
Actualitati or Jurnal (TVR 1)	24.6	3.8
Vesti (RTR)	11.6	1.2
Stirile PRO TV	12.9	5.4
Den' (TV PMR)	3.1	0.8
Other	6.7	1.2
Don't watch		11.2

## Urban areas

What TV newscasts do you usually watch? (percent of those interviewed)	Best three	First choice
Mesager (TVM)	62,6	35,1
Vremya or Novosti (ORT)	75,0	40,4
Novosti (TV-6) (TVI)	9,2	1,2
Curierul (NIT)	8,0	0,8
Actualitati or Jurnal (TVR 1)	16,4	1,7
Vesti (RTR)	21,7	2,3
Stirile PRO TV	24,3	11,3
Don't watch		6,4

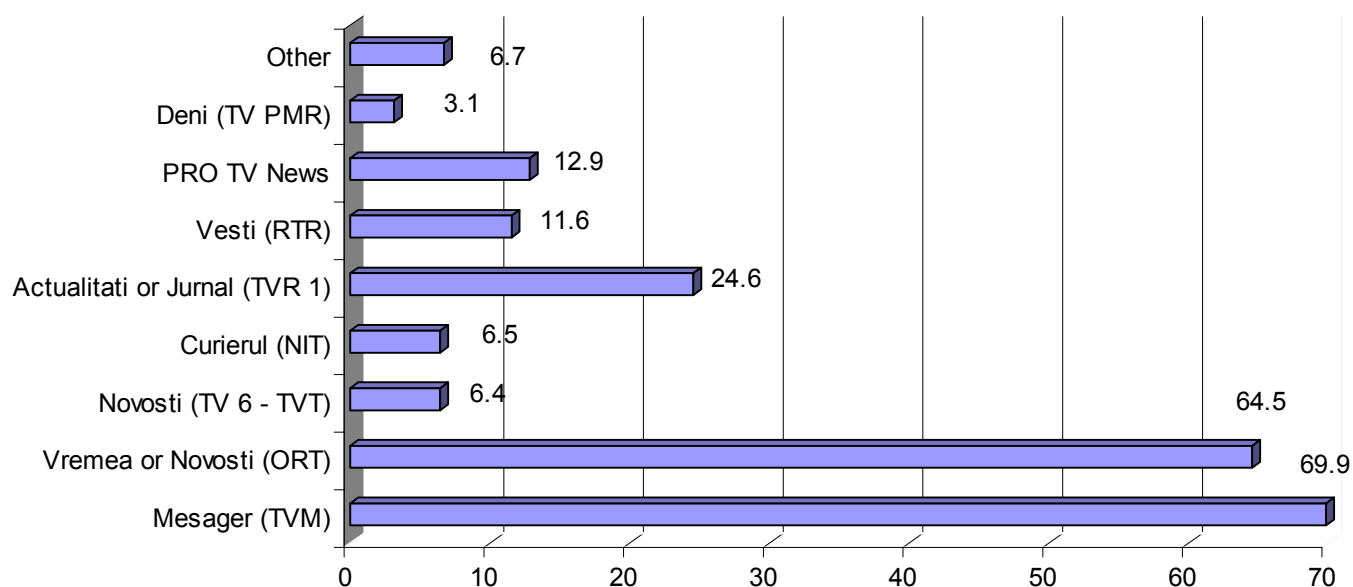
## Rural areas

What TV newscasts do you usually watch? (percent of those interviewed)	Best three	First choice
Mesager (TVM)	75,1	57,1
Vremya or Novosti (ORT)	56,4	18,0
Novosti (TV-6) (TVI)	3,9	0,1
Curierul (NIT)	4,7	1,0
Actualitati or Jurnal (TVR 1)	30,0	5,4
Vesti (RTR)	2,0	0,3
Stirile PRO TV	3,3	1,0
Den' (TV PMR)	3,7	0,6
Don't watch	14,8	14,8

## 17. What radio newscasts do you listen to? (three options)

Name of channel	%	Urban areas, %	Rural areas, %
Radio Moldova	32.8	17.1	44.6
Russkoe Radio	12.6	17.5	8.9
Antena C	12.4	8.6	15.3
Hit FM	5.4	5.9	5
Romania 1	3.2	1.4	4.6
Free Europe	2	2.2	1.9
Radio Nova	1.9	3.7	0.6
FM 103.5 (Balti)	1.6	1.2	1.9
PRO FM	1.2	2.1	0.4
Europa Plus		1.2	
Nashe Radio		1.2	
Avto Radio		1.4	
Don't listen		49.1	37.9
Vocea Basarabiei			1.2
BBC			0.9

## What TV newscasts do you usually watch?



19. What weekly political analysis programs do you usually watch on TV?	First choice	Second choice
Post-factum (TVM)	17.8	4.1
Rezonans (TVM)	13.2	10.6
Avtorskaya Programma (ORT)	14.1	8.9
Prophecies about the past (PRO TV)	1.7	2.6
Analysis programs on TVR1	2.7	4.7
I+1	1.4	1.2
NTV	0.2	0.1
NIT Maxima	0.3	0.1
RTR		0.2
Don't watch	48.6	



## Survey

## Urban areas

To what extent do you trust TV programs:	Fully trust	Predominantly trust	Predominantly don't trust	Don't trust at all	Don't know/don't watch
<b>News</b>					
Mesager (TVM)	18.3	29.8	18.1	3.7	30
Vremea or Novosti (ORT)	30.8	38.4	9.2	0.8	20.9
Curierul (NIT)	4.3	11.1	7.4	1.4	75.9
Jurnal or Actualitati (TVR 1)	7.2	16.1	5.4	1.2	70.1
Vesti RTR	9.9	20.6	6.6	0.8	62.1
PRO TV News	12.8	11.1	3.3	1.6	71.3
Den' (TV PMR)	1.4	4.1	2.5	3.1	88.9
<b>Analysis</b>					
Avtorskaya Programma (ORT)	10.1	20.3	4.3	1	64.3
Post-factum (TVM)	6.4	15.1	4.9	1.4	72.2
Rezonans (TVM)	4.1	16.5	5.4	1.6	72.4
Prophecies about the past (PRO TV)	3.1	8	2.7	1.2	84.9
Analysis programs on TVR1	2.7	9.1	2.7	1.4	84.1

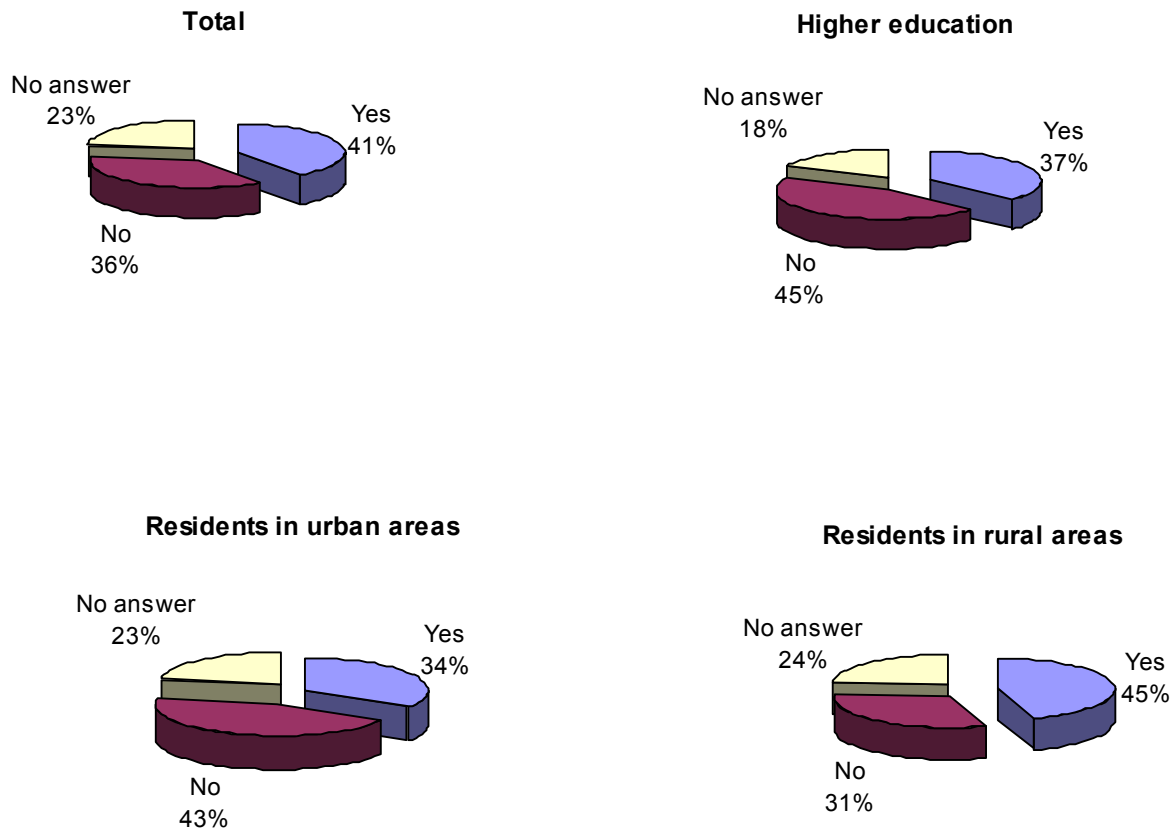
## Rural areas

To what extent do you trust TV programs:	Fully trust	Predominantly trust	Predominantly don't trust	Don't trust at all	Don't know/don't watch
<b>News</b>					
Mesager (TVM)	24.9	34.8	15.7	1.3	23.2
Vremea or Novosti (ORT)	17	35.2	5.4	0.6	41.8
Curierul (NIT)	3.1	5.4	1.9	0.1	89.5
Jurnal or Actualitati (TVR 1)	10.1	17.2	5	1.2	66.6
Vesti RTR	0.9	3.6	1.7	0.9	92.9
PRO TV News	3.1	2.3	0.4	0.3	93.9
Den' (TV PMR)	1.5	2.3	1.6	0.3	94.3
<b>Analysis</b>					
Avtorskaya Programma (ORT)	5.1	7.1	2.2	0.4	85.2
Post-factum (TVM)	6.1	11.8	2.8	0.6	78.6
Rezonans (TVM)	4.8	10.3	3.8	1.5	79.7
Prophecies about the past (PRO TV)	1.3	3.5	0.6	0.4	94.2
Analysis programs on TVR1	2.8	4.2	0.6	0.4	92

Note: In urban areas *Mesagerul* is not watched by more than 30% of the respondents, and by 23.2% in rural areas. Also, city dwellers give less credence than rural inhabitants to the main news program of the National Television.

21. To what extent do you trust radio newscasts:	Fully trust	Predominantly trust	Predominantly don't trust	Don't trust at all	Don't know/don't watch
Antena C	6,7	5,2	1,4	0,7	86,0
BBC	1,7	2,1	0,7	0,7	94,8
Contact	1,6	2,1	1,2	0,7	94,4
Free Europe	4,2	4,6	1,3	0,6	89,3
HIT FM	3,2	4,7	1,6	0,8	89,7
National	4,7	7,2	2,2	1,2	84,8
Pro FM	1,3	2,4	1,5	0,6	94,2
Radio Nova	1,9	2,3	1,0	0,6	94,2
Radio Romania	2,2	4,1	1,3	0,7	91,7
Russkoe Radio	6,1	6,5	0,9	1,0	85,5

## 22. The state authorities must get involved in the editorial activity of media institutions



Note: In urban areas the majority of people with university education are against state involvement in the editorial activity of the media, while in rural areas the situation is reverse

23. Below are several characteristics that could be used to describe a TV channel. For each of them, please choose which channel or channels do you think they fit. You can choose all TV channels, no channels, or some channels.

	TVM	ORT	PRO TV	TV6 (TVT)	RTR	NTV	TVR	NIT	TV21	PMR
Credible	13,5	18,0	3,5	1,9	2,3	2,2	8,1	1,3	0,8	1,3
Impartial (objective)	4,6	6,0	1,8	1,2	2,2	1,9	3,4	1,2	0,7	0,9
For young people	2,7	3,5	2,8	2,7	3,7	2,7	3,7	1,1	2,2	1,7
For all ages	21,9	18,5	3,1	2,7	4,4	2,8	9,1	3,7	1,2	2,1
Outdated	11,4	0,7	0,2	0,4	0,3	0,3	0,8	0,8	0,7	1,5
Interesting	4,7	15,1	2,9	2,6	5,2	3,4	7,1	2,3	3,2	1,7
Professional (high quality)	0,2	4,0	1,2	0,6	1,1	0,5	2,2	0,7	0,3	0,1
To everyone's understanding	4,7	2,7	0,7	1,0	1,5	1,2	1,7	0,7	0,2	0,6
Close	1,2	0,7	0,3	0,3	0,2	0,4	0,6	0,5	0,2	0,2
Modern	0,2	1,3	1,2	0,5	0,5	0,6	0,8	0,6	0,8	0,2
Innovative	0,2	-	0,7	0,4	0,4	0,1	0,3	0,3	0,5	0,5

## Survey

24. Below are several characteristics that could be used to describe a radio station. For each of them, please choose which station or stations do you think they fit. You can choose all radio stations, no stations, or some stations.

	Antena C	BBC	Contact	Free Europe	Hit FM	Radio Moldova	PRO FM	Radio Nova	Radio România	Russkoe Radio
Credible	7,4	2,2	0,7	2,3	3,0	8,9	0,8	0,7	1,4	3,9
Impartial (objective)	2,5	2,1	0,1	1,4	0,5	2,6	0,7	0,1	1,5	1,9
For young people	5,7	0,6	1,5	1,5	8,2	1,7	3,1	4,1	2,0	9,5
For all ages	8,1	1,6	2,6	2,7	2,6	9,9	1,7	1,2	3,6	5,7
Outdated	0,6	0,2	0,3	0,3	0,4	2,5	0,5	0,4	0,9	0,6
Interesting	3,0	0,6	1,0	1,8	2,0	2,3	1,0	1,2	2,1	4,8
Professional (high quality)	0,2	0,3	0,5	1,0	0,2	0,6	0,3	0,5	1,2	0,6
To everyone's understanding	0,7	0,4	0,5	0,3	0,5	1,6	0,2	0,1	0,4	0,3
Close	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,3	0,2	0,3	0,2	0,3	0,2	0,3
Modern	0,7	0,2	0,4	0,2	0,7		0,3	0,1	0,2	1,3
Innovative	-	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,2	0,4	0,2	0,3

Note: *Radio Moldova* “tops” all stations in the “outdated” department. *Russkoe Radio*, *Hit FM*, and to a smaller extent, *Antena C*, are characterized as stations “for young people”. Besides, *Russkoe Radio* is “interesting”, while *Radio Romania* is “professional (high quality)”.

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The survey was commissioned by the Independent Journalism Center in order to gain a better insight into the situation and trends concerning the development of the media in Moldova. It was carried out by Iligaciu SRL sociological firm, and was funded by Soros Foundation - Moldova.

#### Survey methodology:

- Sample size: 1203 people
- Sampling: stratified, probability, cluster
- Representation: for the population of Moldova over 14 years of age, and a 3% error margin
- Randomisation stages: within each layer, a number of towns were allocated to meet the principle of a maximum of 20 interviews per town. Within each layer, the towns were identified through the allocation of random numbers. In each town, a number of sampling points were set
- Interviews were carried out at respondents' homes
- The survey was carried out in the period 20 May - 2 June 2002



## Independent Journalism Center

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Published with the financial support of Press Now Foundation from the Netherlands

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Cover: Colograf-Com SRL

Layout and design: Dan GUJA

Printed at: Chisinau-Prim

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