Technical Assistance for
Civil Society Organisations

Disclaimer
This document has been prepared for the European Commission however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

'TRAFFIC LIGHTS REPORT' 2017 SERBIA

Monitoring Report of the 'EU Guidelines for Media Freedom and Media Integrity 2014-2020' for 2017

1. Introduction

In 2017, TACSO was responsible for establishing a monitoring system and conducting the monitoring, in coordination with other stakeholders, relevant to the constituting parts of the Results Framework[1] of the '*EU Guidelines for Media Freedom and Media Integrity 2014-2020*' **(Media Guidelines)**. The Media Guidelines is a monitoring tool that serves as an important source providing useful information on the European Union's (EU) political and financial support for media development in the region and enabling governments and media communities in the EU enlargement countries to use the comprehensive data for their own policies and actions. The aim of the monitoring exercise is to provide a systematic, comprehensive and efficient assessment of the situation in the EU enlargement countries by applying the same methodology and approach in all the countries concerned. The monitoring was conducted in six countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

The following report contains the monitoring methodology and information about the situation according to the indicators of the Results Framework of the Media Guidelines in Serbia.

2. Methodology for the monitoring

The methodology for monitoring the Media Guidelines was primarily developed by a team of media consultants and professional researchers; some instruments used for the monitoring were developed in consultation with key media experts and media professionals from the six countries included in this project.

The main features of the monitoring system include the following:

- The need for a unified methodological approach in all countries of the region;
- Regional comparison and tracking of national progress;

---

[1] *In addition to representatives of the EU, elements of the Results Framework were developed in 2013 through regional and national consultations encompassing media experts and media professionals from the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey.*

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

- For the majority of the indicators, no data is available from reliable sources of information in the region;
- The need for a synthetized and comparative way of presenting the monitoring findings;
- Sound and reliable research methodology, along with innovative and participatory approaches.

Information collected for the purpose of monitoring was developed from the following sources:

1) Expert panel country meetings, discussing and assessing the full list of indicators;
2) On-line survey with members of expert panels, assessing the full list of indicators;
3) In-depth interviews with representatives of relevant interest group organisations/ institutions, assessing selected indicators from the full list;
4) On-line survey with representatives of relevant interest group organisations/ institutions, assessing selected indicators from the full list;
5) General population survey among adult citizens in all target countries.

For the purpose of information collection, survey instruments were developed for each part of the methodology:

- The questionnaire used in the expert panel country meetings, as well as the on-line survey of experts and representatives of relevant interest group organisations/ institutions;
- The interview guide used for the in-depth interviews with representatives of relevant interest group organisations/ institutions;
- The questionnaire used in the general population survey.

The basis for all survey instruments was the 'EU Guidelines for Media Freedom and Media Integrity 2014-2020' (Media Guidelines), which specifies 4 objectives and 20 indicators. The survey instruments are in fact an operationalisation of the Media Guidelines.

In order to quantify indicators, in the process of monitoring media freedom and media integrity in the region, an index system was developed. The main purpose was to include all the gathered data, to summarise it and calculate measures, i.e. indices that enable comparison between the target countries on all indicators.

Each of the listed methodological sections is explained in Annex 1, along with the instruments developed and the process of index creation.

Given that the Media Guidelines (which formed the basis for the survey instruments) do not provide us with target values for items or indicators (nor for different countries in the region), the best possible solution was to create a system allowing comparison between the target countries on all indicators, in order to identify those areas where the situation seem to be the most favourable, but also those areas where the situation is critical and requires rapid intervention. This is why the system of indices is a relative system, which depends on the countries included in the calculation, as well as the indicators, which are compared altogether. All results ought to be considered relative to other countries included in the survey and relative to other indicators being covered.

The monitoring report for each country therefore incorporates the results of quantitative analysis of the survey, which are presented in the main graph and in the colours specified near each indicator and objective. The colours indicate the following:
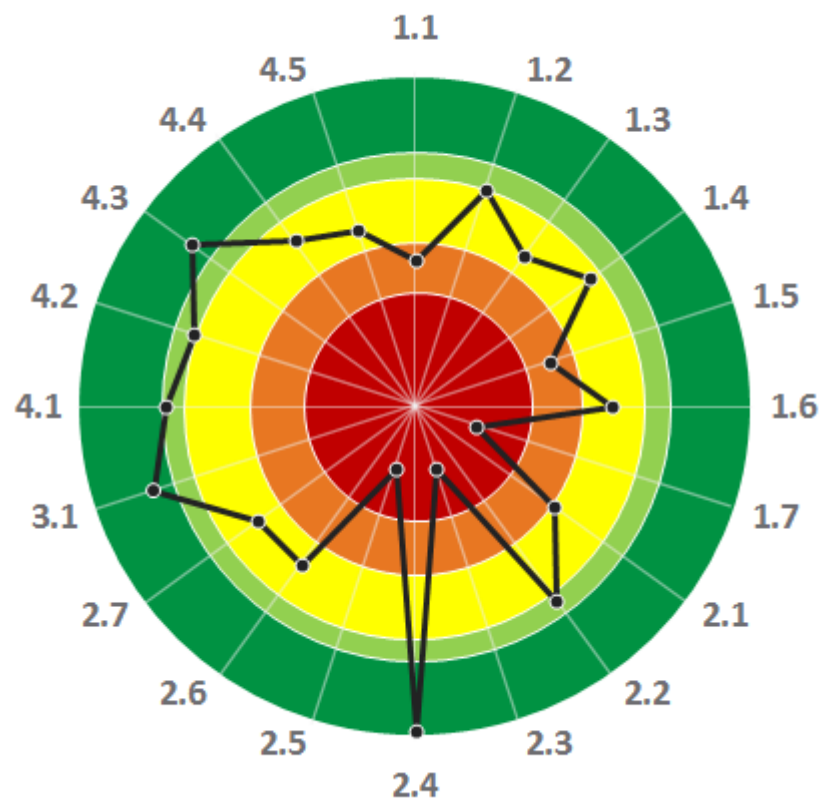
Red		The worst evaluated indicators in the region
Orange		The second worst evaluated indicators in the region
Yellow		The middle of the regional ranking
Light green		The second best evaluated indicators in the region
Green		The best evaluated indicators in the region

At the same time, the monitoring report summarises the results of the qualitative methods applied: i.e. the main points from the assessments presented during the expert panel meetings and in-depth interviews with representatives of relevant interest group organisations and institutions.

It is important to note that some items within certain indicators are excluded from the quantitative analysis (index creation/traffic lights) in all target countries, given the small number of quantitative answers provided by the experts and representatives of relevant interest group organisations and institutions. On the other hand, those items might have been discussed during the expert panel meetings and in-depth interviews with relevant interest groups and therefore covered by qualitative analysis. The whole list of indicators and items, regardless of whether they are included in both quantitative and qualitative analysis, or qualitative analysis only, is listed in an Annex 1 providing detailed explanation of the methodology used for the monitoring. It is clearly marked which items were included in quantitative analysis and which ones were excluded.

All findings provided in the narrative report are based on information and assessments provided by the experts and relevant interest groups in all target countries. The final technical review of the text and its composition was done by the project team.

3. Quantitative and qualitative findings obtained by expert panel and representatives of relevant interest group organisations/ institutions - Serbia

1.1. Legal guarantees and review of their implementation

1.2. The judiciary acts in conformity with Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and applicable case law

1.3. State institutions ensure media pluralism and their independence; law enforcement in media outlets and access to information of public character

1.4. Independent and professional regulators preserve media pluralism and prevent unfair competition in the media market

1.5. State institutions and public authorities stimulate public demand for quality journalism

1.6. Public Service Media – ensure content pluralism in the media environment in an independent and accountable manner

1.7. Initiative and creativity by state institutions in using tools at their disposal to promote free speech and media diversity

2.1. Media outlets voluntarily adhere to principles of transparency

2.2. Media outlets voluntarily subscribe to and implement adequate labour standards

2.3. Self-enforcement of ethical norms and professional standards

2.4. Structures strengthened for basic and continuous training and education of journalists and journalist students on professional standards, freedom of expression and media integrity

2.5. Media outlets promote professional training (including in professional ethics)

2.6. Investment in professional management of companies

2.7. Regaining audience confidence

3.1. Improved conditions for quality investigative journalism including modern/innovative approaches to increase the quality and credibility of investigative journalism

4.1. Media organisations/journalists' associations act on the basis of long-term vision and strategies to achieve impact. Productive dialogue with authorities established

4.2. Regular dialogue within the media community established on press freedom and integrity issues

4.3. Media organisations monitor and evaluate the results and impact of their own work

4.4. Platforms (journalists' professional organisations, CSOs, media owners and editors) set up and actively promote professional standards and ethics

4.5. Labour standards developed and upheld

	1.1. Legal guarantees and review of their implementation - parliaments (and governments) in enlargement countries: put forward and adopt policy and legislative proposals in line with the European Convention on Human Rights / conduct periodic assessments of the state of media freedom

The Constitution and legislation are in line with Article 10 of ECHR, but practice shows that the legal framework is not by itself sufficient to ensure freedom of expression. During the previous period, three major policy measures were realized: media privatisation was practically completed; digitalisation was accomplished; and the new system of public interest project co-financing of media content production was introduced. In all three segments, the laws were not applied properly, and serious deviations from legal solutions were recorded. The gap between what is written in the law and practical appraisal emerges in cases like that of the irregular status of the Tanjug news agency, in the toleration of non-payment of taxes by individual media, in the fact that, from a total of 191 bids for co-financing media projects of public interest, 132 have involved irregularity and resulted ultimately in a problem with the regulatory body (Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media, REM), whose conduct disregards the law. No state institutions have seriously analysed this problem of systematic non-compliance with laws and regulations. The respondents taking part in the monitoring believe that in a more favourable political environment, implementation of the legal guarantees would be better.

In 2017, the main challenge for media policy development in Serbia has been the new media strategy drafting. The Ministry of Culture and Information was late in starting work on the new media strategy, and no analysis of the results of the previous strategy was published. The work on the strategy is highly politicized, and all representatives of the media and journalists' associations decided to leave the working group. Their assessment was that the authorities had imposed a process of work in the group that had been rendered meaningless. The journalists' associations believe that the intention of the authorities is to adopt a new media strategy that will propose new media laws to reintroduce solutions from previous non-democratic periods.

Overall, the implementation of legal guarantees for media freedom is hampered by a lack of state interest in comprehensive analysis of the media system and especially media freedom, and even less in introducing a functional system for collecting data on the media and improving transparency in the media system.

	1.2. Judicial acts in conformity with article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and applicable case law.

The Judicial Academy offers courses on freedom of expression for judges and prosecutors under the auspices of the Council of Europe. According to the respondent with media law expertise, there are several courts in Belgrade with competence over cases related to media freedom, where five or six judges are involved. Progress is evident. However, most judges are still unfamiliar with the standards of the European Convention and other relevant international documents, producing uneven jurisprudence. Some judges also exhibit resistance, as they believe in the priority of free judicial assuredness. Judicial processes take too long, and there is political influence.

There is no transparent data on court cases; apart from the court case registration number, there is no other relevant information to identify the specific case. According to respondents, there are more than 400 media-related legal cases a year in Serbia. However, interest is lacking from state bodies in analyses of the cases related to media freedom. Journalists' associations do collect data on court cases against journalists and media, but only the courts have reliable data.

One of the most serious problems affecting media freedom in Serbia is the insufficient and inconsistent judicial treatment of threats towards and attacks on journalists.

	1.3. State institutions, public authorities and others influencing self-censorship in the media or restricting access to information by the media

The data from the research on the program content of the public service media RTV, done after politically-motivated changes among editors and the management in May 2017, showed rapid elimination of programs dealing with themes such as corruption, public spending and similar critical political and economic issues. Most other media, editors and journalists avoid politically controversial themes. According to respondents, several factors influence the growth in self-censorship: editors and journalists' fear of losing their jobs; direct physical attacks; threats to journalists and their families; accusations by high-level politicians that the media are foreign mercenaries, and other forms of political pressure. The omnipresent culture of self-censorship is a result of financial control over media either by political structures or by major advertisers.

Rules on access to information are defined by law and are completely in line with the Council of Europe and other European standards. However, the authorities commonly refuse to disclose information they consider politically unfavourable. The Commissioner for Information of Public Importance is taking actions to counter such practices, playing important and positive role. The three prominent investigative journalism centres in Serbia – CINS, KRIK and BIRN – reaffirm such a role for the Commissioner by saying that, without the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance, investigative journalism in Serbia would not be possible. The number of Commissioner's interventions is impressive, but the trend of successful procedures is declining (from 96% to 92% in the last two years). That small 8% includes important information hidden from the public, mostly information on corruption and crime.

	1.4. Independent and professional regulators preserve media pluralism and prevent unfair competition in the media market

The appointment procedure for the governing body of the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media (REM) and its decisions illustrates the problems with independence and professional conduct of regulators in Serbia. Members of the REM Council were appointed by the National Assembly contrary to the procedure prescribed by law. The Assembly refused to appoint a representative of the non-governmental sector, and did not elect the proposed representative from Vojvodina Province. The non-governmental organisations united to propose a joint representative in the REM Council, but this candidate was not appointed. Instead, the National Assembly appointed persons who accord with the interests of the parliamentary majority. Similarly, the REM role in appointment of the governing bodies of both public service media (RTS and RTV) was not implemented in accordance with conflict of interest rules.
REM has not conducted an analysis of the programs licensed by the authority; neither has REM even established the methodology for this task.
Therefore, despite formally independent institution that has a defined legal framework, financial sustainability and all the necessary professional staff, the regulator is not performing its functions, or is failing to perform them in accordance with the legal procedure. Its deficient performance is negatively affecting media freedom and media integrity particularly in terms of its passivity in the protection of media pluralism and prevention of complete political control.
REM publishes annual reports on its activities and these are available to the public. REM is financially sustainable; even more, the fees it collects from the media make a surplus income, which at the end of the year is paid into the state budget.

The advertising by state authorities and public companies is not regulated by a special legal act. That is considered a gap that opens the possibility of influencing media content indirectly, by directing or deflecting state advertising funds to target certain media. For electronic media, REM made a special Rulebook on Advertising and Sponsorship, which regulates this area but fails to cover state or public company advertising. Advertising by state and public enterprises is being implemented through the system of public procurement. Moreover, this aspect of redistribution of funds through state advertising is formally controlled by the competent ministry, meaning that the state controls only the regularity of the implementation of the rules and procedures of public procurement but is not using other parameters that would ensure a transparent and fair distribution of public funds.

Privatisation of Serbian media is practically complete 13 years after the deadline proscribed by law. Still, there are some unclear roles for the state in certain media ownership situations; the exemplary case is the state-owned agency Tanjug, which has been officially deleted from the registry of companies but still plays a very active role as a state agency, thanks to financing from the state budget and routine use by the government as a mouthpiece.

	1.5. Stimulate public demand for quality journalism. Increase media literacy and understanding of the role of professional and ethical journalism in off-line and online media.

In 2017, there were no programs introduced by the state to promote media literacy in Serbia.

There is no regulation seeking to block or filter Internet content. However, several respondents pointed out that the state had been in negotiations to purchase a spyware for Internet monitoring.

	1.6. Public Service Media – ensure content pluralism in the media environment in an independent and accountable manner.

The professional integrity of the two public service media in Serbia (RTS and RTV) is mostly reflected through the news programs they broadcast. A recent study has shown that in the RTV daily news, after the political changes of editors, the incidence of news items related to culture grew from 3.4% to 30%, in parallel with the complete disappearance of controversial subjects. The case of RTV is clear evidence that there are in fact no adequate legal and practical mechanisms to protect the independence of public service media editorial policy in Serbia.

Although the law stipulates that public service media governing bodies should be composed to represent diverse social groups and actors, in practice, the ruling majority decide the composition of the governing Board.

There is a legal obligation for the public service media to publish an annual account and financial reports, which are published on the web site of RTS and RTV and in the database of the Business Register Agency. There is no internal Code of Ethics for public service media, but they conform to the Ethical Code of Journalists in Serbia. In the public service media in Serbia, there is no in-house mechanism to deal with complaints by viewers, listeners or web site users, nor have investigative journalism units been established.

According to the law, public service media are financed from license fee paid by households, but the fee collection system is not efficient, and the funds collected are not sufficient. The state is financing both public service media from the state budget with around 80 million euros per year. That system of budget financing is not based on clear parameters; therefore, it allows the government to arbitrarily define the funding amount.

Within the public service media in Serbia, there are still positive examples of public interest content and programs. The respondents highlighted the public radio channels in Belgrade as such examples.

	1.7. Initiative and creativity by state institutions in using tools at their disposal to promote free speech and media diversity

There is no visible initiative by state institutions in Serbia to develop or use tools to promote free speech and media diversity. On the contrary, majority of respondents believe that the state is eroding free speech and media diversity.

The exception to the rule has been the actions and decisions of several independent state bodies, such as the Information Commissioner, Ombudsman and Anti-corruption Council.

	2.1. Media outlets voluntarily adhere to principles of transparency. Professional associations of media owners/publishers have been established.

No state institution is specially obliged to collect data about corporate governance and finances from one or more different types of media (radio, TV, print, online). As with all other registered business entities in Serbia, media companies are required to submit a balance sheet to the Business Register Agency at the end of the year.

The data on ownership structure can be found in the Business Register Agency, but only formal owners are registered.

Data on financial sources in the media are non-transparent, as is the income received by the media from the state budget.

There are no data on market share of individual media in Serbia.

Several media industry associations operate in Serbia, aiming to promote the interests of and improve conditions for various types of media, including most recently the association of online media, established in 2015.

	2.2. Media outlets voluntarily subscribe to and implement adequate labour standards. Labour relations are no longer a factor in self-censorship.

In Serbia, there is no strong union of journalists or media workers, but other type of journalists' associations are very active in defence of rights and freedoms. Working conditions of journalists are therefore often addressed by these journalists' associations.

There are no systematic data about working contracts and working conditions in media in Serbia. Several recent studies have shown that average salaries for journalists are below the national average salary. The media workers are often not paid pension and health insurance despite such provisions in the labour regulations.

Freedom of workers to join trade unions is stipulated by law, but in some media companies, such workers' association is not allowed by the owners. The low level of unionisation and protection of labour rights for journalists in Serbia is caused not only by employers, but also by union inactivity. Collective agreements have been made only in the two public service media, but the unions in these media are also inactive.

	2.3. Self-enforcement of ethical norms and professional standards.

In-house mechanisms to deal with complaints by readers, viewers, listeners and users are practically non-existent in media in Serbia, and no internal media ombudsman has been established. There are rare internal ethical codes in individual media, but most of them declare commitment to the code on the national level: the Code of Ethics of Journalists in Serbia.

	2.4. Structures strengthened for basic and continuous training and education of journalists and journalism students on professional standards, freedom of expression and media integrity. No legal restrictions on the profession of journalism. Fair, transparent and politically independent accreditation procedures in place.

The underlying problem of university education for future journalists is traditional way of teaching students theoretical knowledge. The level of practical knowledge among college graduates is so low that some journalism centers organise complex, six-month training courses for them. Journalism training courses are organised through donor support for media development projects.
Journalists are often reluctant to attend such training courses, either because editors are preventing them from leaving work or because they see no possibility of applying the new knowledge in practice.
At the same time, there is decreasing interest in studying media and journalism at private faculties, which are losing a basis for existence.

	2.5. Media outlets promote professional training (including in professional ethics)

Apart from the public service media, the media in Serbia do not have human resources departments or own programs for professional development. Only a few media outlets promote professional training that includes instruction on professional ethics, and that is done mostly in the public service media.

	2.6. Investment in professional management of companies. Improved economic performance of the outlet in changing markets

According to respondents, an extremely low percentage of media outlets develop business plans. The larger media companies use business plans for managing business, while small media do that only if they are so obligated in executing projects financed by donors.

The media market in Serbia is dominated by non-economic influences. Improvement in economic performance of the media is not expected, given the situation of permanent market deterioration. The media market in Serbia is dysfunctional. It is oversaturated with approximately 1,800 registered media operating in the circumstances of diminishing income from commercial advertising, increasing role of the state budget in financing of media activities and unequal treatment of individual media by the tax authorities resulting in unfair competition.

	2.7. Regaining audience confidence.

The general population survey shows that trust in the media in Serbia is below the regional average. As much as 57% of the population do not trust the media. Only Bosnia and Herzegovina has a somewhat worse result. That freedom of speech as a fundamental human right should be strictly protected is believed by 88% of respondents, that media freedom is a precondition for a free democratic society by 86%, and 19% think that the government should be allowed to restrict media freedom.

	3.1. Improved conditions for quality investigative journalism including modern/innovative approaches to increase the quality and credibility of investigative journalism

In Serbia, with the exception of the program Insajder on former TV B92, investigative journalism has never attracted major media that reach mass audiences. The current authorities began to discourage it seriously, leaving only the online sphere for dissemination of investigative journalism reports. Only a very few traditional print media regularly publish investigative stories.

Investigative journalism centers have quintupled the number of visits to their online platforms, using social networks to attract attention. For investigative journalism in Serbia, the issue of dissemination is highly important. Investigative journalism centers work at the highest international standards, receive prestigious international awards, and at the same time are demonized by the government and other parties involved in investigative findings, so that it has become dangerous to participate in this activity. Investigative journalists and their families have been exposed to heavy pressure, including active abuse of the law and repressive apparatus, with the clear aim of suppressing investigative journalism in Serbia.

Investigative journalism in Serbia is funded exclusively through donations. According to some of our respondents, international donor funds have fallen to one-quarter of the level recorded 15 years ago. When donors introduce their media development programs, they sometimes do not want problems with the government and therefore hesitate to open the programs of financial support to investigative journalism.

The work and impact of the investigative documentary TV program Insajder had contributed to the remarkable development of investigative journalism in Serbia. Today in Serbia, there are at least 4 organisations that are professionally engaged in investigative journalism. There are some local media using an investigative journalism approach to deal with topics important to local communities. Their working conditions are even more difficult than in the capital, and the repression is even worse.

A serious obstacle for investigative journalists is obstruction of the access to information of public character. They are relying on the appeal procedure through the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection. According to respondents, one investigative organisation alone sends over 1000 requests per year for information of public character to public bodies and institutions in Serbia.

	4.1. Media organisations/journalists' associations act on the basis of long-term vision and strategies to achieve impact. Productive dialogue with authorities established.

There are several organisations in the media industry and several journalists' associations in Serbia. These have improved their communication and cooperation by striving together to improve the media sector enabling environment. Following the 2017 initiative of the Government for development of a new media strategy, all representatives of media and journalists' associations resigned from the working group for preparing a media strategy. Their step was explained as a counter-act to the intention of the authorities to create a strategy that would restore state ownership in the media and enable even stronger control over the media sector.

In such circumstances, dialogue with the Government was interrupted. However, it was reopened at the meeting between the Group for Media Freedom and the Prime Minister.

	4.2. Regular dialogue within the media community established on press freedom and integrity issues. Broad platforms (journalist's professional organisations, NGOs, think-tanks, editors and owners) formed.

In 2017, for the first time in the recent period, an important part of the media community in Serbia has united around issues of media freedom and media integrity and established a Group for Media Freedom. In November 2017, the Group presented 13 requests to the Prime Minister of Serbia, who said that in two weeks the Government would respond to the requests. This was the first time that formal dialogue between the journalists' community and the Government has been initiated on the issues of media freedom and media integrity. The platform of the journalists' requests is broad, starting from an appeal to Government officials and the authorities to stop discrediting journalists, a request for improved data on court cases against journalists and media, a request for dissolution of the REM Council and a request to effectively safeguard financial and editorial independence of the media, as stipulated in media laws and other relevant regulations.

	4.3. Media organisations monitor and evaluate the results and impact of their own work.

Practically all media industry organisations and journalists' associations have annual assembly meetings where accounts and financial reports are presented to the organisations' members.

	4.4. Platforms (journalists' professional organisations, CSOs, media owners and editors) set up and actively promote professional standards and ethics.

The Media Coalition is a platform of five professional associations. It was established and has succeeded in combining a minimum of common interests in order to improve the conditions for work of media and journalists, and for implementation of professional standards.

Journalists' associations traditionally also act individually in the same direction. The journalists' associations' membership fee comprises the smallest part of their funding, and associations generally survive though projects funded by donors.

The Press Council in Serbia – founded by several media industry organisations and journalists' associations in 2009 – deals with complaints related to violations of ethical norms specified in the Code of Ethics of Journalists in Serbia. Recently, the Association of Online Media (AOM) joined the self-regulatory body, and the Press Council adapted the Code of Ethics to be applicable for online media also. The Press Complaints Commission of the Press Council occasionally holds public sessions in different cities around Serbia, contributing to public awareness. The mechanism for online submission of complaints was developed in late 2017. However, any impact of the self-regulatory body on overall compliance of the media in Serbia with standards of ethical journalism has been limited.

	4.5. Labour standards developed and adhered to.

Labour standards in the media in Serbia have not been adequately developed and the problems in this area have not been sufficiently addressed. Freedom of association of media workers in the trade unions is stipulated by law, but union protection for journalists in Serbia is at an unnoticeable level, owing to employer obstruction but also because existing trade unions are negligible. In practice, other journalists' associations address the problems related to labour standards on a regular basis.

There is reliable data neither on how many journalists have employment contracts, nor on the level of their salaries and social status. Recent studies on journalists' working conditions indicate the increasingly precarious character of the work and life of journalists in Serbia. The social situation of journalists is described as poor, even drastically so, thus contributing to the working culture of fear and self-censorship.

4. General population survey on the perception of media freedom and media integrity[2]

News consumption: About half of Serbian citizens follow the news on a daily basis which is somewhat lower compared with the regional[3] level. On the other hand, 5% of the citizens don't follow news at all.

Trust in media in general: Only 40% of the citizens trust media in Serbia, compared to 57% of those who don't have trust. On average, 53% of the citizens in the region express trust in media and Serbia is among the countries with the lowest trust.

Access to information through the media: Similarly, 40% of citizens in Serbia state that information about relevant issues are completely accessible or accessible to a large degree through the media in their country.

Freedom of media to report critically and express their view: Slightly less than a half of the citizens in Serbia believe that journalists and media outlets in their country are free to express their views and report critically about relevant news. Situation in Serbia seems to be somewhat better compared with the regional average.

Current state of media freedom - pressure on journalists and media reporting: Three out of ten people in Serbia state that there is a high pressure on journalist/media reporting in their country, which is in line with the regional average. Additionally, almost every second citizen believes that pressure is present to some degree.

Self-censorship: More than a quarter of the citizens believe that public officials in Serbia often gave statements which might possibly influence journalists and/or media not to publish their information.

Importance of freedom of speech and media freedom: Almost 90% of people in Serbia agree that freedom of media is a precondition for a free democratic society as well as that freedom of speech as a fundamental human right should be strictly protected. On the other hand, one out of five people state that the government should be allowed to restrict media freedom.

Familiarity with investigative journalism: Two thirds of the citizens note that media in Serbia are engaged in investigative reporting, at least to some extent. However, only 11% believe that media are engaged in investigative reporting to a sufficient extent. Additionally, according to citizens, only a few media outlets are engaged in investigative reporting.

Awareness of journalists' professional associations: Although countries in the region vary greatly when it comes to their awareness of journalists' professional associations, they mostly agree that the work of journalists' professional associations contributes to better situation of media and journalists in their country – it is the case with 53% of citizens in Serbia.

---

[2] *Data collection conducted from July to October 2017.*
[3] *The survey was conducted in six countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.*

Annex 1 - Outline of the monitoring methodology

1. Developing survey instruments

1.1 Questionnaire used in the expert panel country meetings, as well as the on-line survey among experts and representatives of relevant interest group organisations/ institutions

Prior to information collection, the survey instrument was developed. The basis for the survey instrument was the Media Guidelines, 2014-2020. It specifies 4 broad objectives:

1) Enabling an environment for and resulting responsibilities of the main actors;
2) Advancing media to a modern level of internal governance;
3) Qualitative and trustworthy investigative journalism available to citizens;
4) Increasing capacity and representativeness of journalists' professional organisations.

These objectives are divided into 20 indicators:

- 1.1. Legal guarantees and review of their implementation;
- 1.2. The judiciary acts in conformity with Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and applicable case law;
- 1.3. State institutions ensure media pluralism and their independence; law enforcement in media outlets and access to information of public character;
- 1.4. Independent and professional regulators preserve media pluralism and prevent unfair competition in the media market;
- 1.5. State institutions and public authorities stimulate public demand for quality journalism;
- 1.6. Public Service Media – ensure content pluralism in the media environment in an independent and accountable manner;
- 1.7. Initiative and creativity by state institutions in using tools at their disposal to promote free speech and media diversity;
- 2.1. Media outlets voluntarily adhere to principles of transparency;
- 2.2. Media outlets voluntarily subscribe to and implement adequate labour standards;
- 2.3. Self-enforcement of ethical norms and professional standards;
- 2.4. Structures strengthened for basic and continuous training and education of journalists and journalism students on professional standards, freedom of expression and media integrity;
- 2.5. Media outlets promote professional training (including in professional ethics);
- 2.6. Investment in professional management of companies;
- 2.7. Regaining audience confidence;
- 3.1. Improved conditions for quality investigative journalism including modern/innovative approaches to increase the quality and credibility of investigative journalism;
- 4.1. Media organisations/journalists' associations act on the basis of long-term vision and strategies to achieve impact. Productive dialogue with authorities established;
- 4.2. Regular dialogue within the media community established on press freedom and integrity issues;
- 4.3. Media organisations monitor and evaluate the results and impact of their own work;

- 4.4. Platforms (journalists' professional organisations, CSOs, media owners and editors) set up and actively promote professional standards and ethics;
- 4.5. Labour standards developed and upheld.

The phase that followed was operationalisation of the indicators into items. Each item constitutes an operationalised benchmark from the Media Guidelines. After an initial list of items was created, it underwent thorough review by a number of key media experts from all of the countries included in the monitoring process. One consultative meeting with key experts from all target countries was held in Tirana on 27 and 28 April, 2017. Certain items were reformulated, some were excluded and new items added, as suggested by the media experts. The final list included 249 items, of which 239 items were to be assessed by expert panels and representatives of relevant interest group organisations/ institutions, and 9 of them examined via a survey among the general population.

Answers on the items were obtained on a range of scales:

- *Items provided by the media experts:*
  - *Yes/No answers*
  - *Scales (three-point, four-point and five-point scales)*
  - *Absolute number*
  - *Percentage*
- *Items obtained from the general population survey:*
  - *Percentage of answers*

The whole process of questionnaire design took place between March and July of 2017.

The questionnaire was prepared in English and translated into each local language, in the period from July to August of 2017. These versions were programmed in July, August and early September in order to be administered online.

Members of the expert panels discussed all these points during country meetings and completed the whole online questionnaire, i.e. they assessed the full list of indicators. Taking into account the specific expertise of different interest groups, their representatives, in contrast, assessed only selected indicators from the full list included in the questionnaire.

1.2 Interview guide used for in-depth interviews with representatives of relevant interest group organisations/ institutions

The interview guide was developed on the basis of the online questionnaire developed for experts and representatives of relevant interest group organisations/ institutions (explained above). As in the online survey with interest groups, the interviewees undergoing in-depth interviews as representatives of interest groups assessed only selected indicators from the full list included in the questionnaire, depending on their specific field of expertise and interest. Additionally, some topics were further developed in order to obtain more in-depth information from interviewees.

1.3 Questionnaire used in a general population survey

The questionnaire used in the general population survey covered several topics, such as news consumption, trust in the media, perception of media freedom, recognition of investigative journalism and journalists' professional organisations.

2. Data collection

2.1 Expert panel country meetings and the online survey with members of expert panels

Six expert panel meetings were held in early October, in each of the target countries: on 2 October 2017 in Sarajevo, on 4 October in Podgorica, on 6 October in Belgrade, on 9 October in Skopje, on 11 October in Tirana, and on 13 October in Pristina. The composition of these expert panels was defined by media consultants within the project team, taking into account the fields of expertise required to assess the full list of indicators. Ten such fields of expertise have been singled out, and approximately ten experts identified in each country and invited to take part in the expert panel and the assessment of the full list of indicators.

Members of the expert panels had opportunity to fill in the questionnaire prior to the meeting, during the meeting or after. During the meeting, main points were productively discussed. Special care was taken to give enough time for experts to fill in the on-line questionnaire – from late September till early November. Extensive efforts were taken to motivate media experts to participate in the on-line survey.

The number of experts per country is provided in the Table 1:

Table 1. Number of members of the expert panels who assessed full list of indicators and those who actually participated in the expert panel meetings, per country

Country	Experts who assessed full list of indicators	Experts who actually participated in the expert panel meetings
Albania	6	4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	10	9
Kosovo	8	2
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	10	9
Montenegro	6	3
Serbia	11	9

2.2 In-depth interviews with representatives of relevant interest group organisations/ institutions

Apart from obtaining information from key experts in target countries, more in-depth information was obtained from personal interviews with relevant interest groups, i.e. representatives of relevant organisations/ institutions. These included the following:

- State/Public officials (from a Ministry or other state body such as an Assembly Committee for media)
- Representatives of the judiciary
- Commissioner for access to public information (Information Commissioner)
- Public service media
- Journalists' professional associations
- Media industry associations
- CSOs - Media/journalism training centres, media institutes
- Media regulatory authorities
- Unions of journalists
- Investigative journalism centres
- Self-regulatory bodies

The number of in-depth interviews conducted per country is provided in Table 2:

Table 2. Number of representatives of interest groups/relevant institutions and organisations who participated in the in-depth interviews, per country

Country	Representatives of interest groups/relevant institutions and organisations who participated in the in-depth interviews
Albania	4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8
Kosovo	8
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	6
Montenegro	9
Serbia	10

This activity was carried out in October and November 2017.

2.3 Online survey with representatives of relevant interest group organisations/ institutions

In addition to in-depth interviews, representatives of relevant interest group organisations and institutions were asked to complete the online questionnaire, which included selected indicators from the full list that were deemed relevant to their field of interest and expertise. Additionally, not only those being interviewed, but a wider list of representatives of relevant organisations/ institutions was asked to participate in the on-line survey. The number of representatives of relevant organisations/institutions per country is provided in Table 3:

Table 3. Number of representatives of relevant interest group institutions and organisations who assessed selected indicators relevant to their field of interest and expertise, per country

Country	Representatives of relevant interest group institutions and organisations that assessed a selected number of indicators
Albania	6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4
Kosovo	5
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	7
Montenegro	7
Serbia	13

2.4 General population survey

The main aim of the general population survey was to obtain information from citizens in target countries regarding their level of trust in the media, their perception of media freedom, as well as their recognition of investigative journalism and journalists' professional organisations. A brief outline of the methodology is presented below:

- *Target population*: entire 18+ population of permanent residents of the target countries;

- *Type of sample*: A three-stage random representative stratified sample (PSU: Polling station territories, SSU: Households, TSU: Household member);

- *Respondent*: Household member 18+ (randomly chosen);

- *Data collection method*: F2F (Face to Face) in home, Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), except in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (telephone interviewing);

- *Sample size*: at least 1000 interviews per country;

- *Weighting*: by region, type of settlement, gender, age and education;

- *Questionnaire length*: completion time estimated to be around 5 minutes (with 5 open-ended questions);

- *Data collection period*: from July to October 2017.

3. Index system development - calculating the indices

In order to quantify indicators, an index system was developed. As established, 4 broad objectives, divided into 20 indicators were operationalised by 246 items (237 assessed by expert panels and interest groups, and 9 examined through the survey among the general population). From all the items, 23 were excluded from further analysis, since the data were provided by an insufficient number of media experts, thus preventing reliable analysis. Finally, 223 items were analysed. The number of items per indicator varies, from 1 to 54. Detailed information is provided in Table 4. The whole list of created items and analysed items, i.e. items included in the index system development, can be seen at the end of this section. The excluded items are given in *Italic*.

Table 4. Number of operationalised items and number of items included in the analysis, per indicator

Indicator	Number of items created	Number of items analysed
1.1. Legal guarantees and review of their implementation	32	32
1.2. The judiciary acts in conformity with Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and applicable case law	8	1
1.3. State institutions ensure media pluralism and their independence; law enforcement in media outlets and access to information of public character	19	13
1.4. Independent and professional regulators preserve media pluralism and prevent unfair competition in the media market	54	54
1.5. State institutions and public authorities stimulate public demand for quality journalism	5	5
1.6. Public Service Media – ensure content pluralism in the media environment in an independent and accountable manner	17	17
1.7. Initiative and creativity by state institutions in using tools at their disposal to promote free speech and media diversity	2	2
2.1. Media outlets voluntarily adhere to principles of transparency	12	12
2.2. Media outlets voluntarily subscribe to and implement adequate labour standards	9	9
2.3. Self-enforcement of ethical norms and professional standards	4	3
2.4. Structures strengthened for basic and continuous training and education of journalists and journalism students on professional standards, freedom of expression and media integrity	4	4
2.5. Media outlets promote professional training (including in professional ethics)	4	4
2.6. Investment in professional management of companies	2	2

2.7. Regaining audience confidence	1	1
3.1. Improved conditions for quality investigative journalism including modern/innovative approaches to increase the quality and credibility of investigative journalism	10	10
4.1. Media organisations/journalists' associations act on the basis of long-term vision and strategies to achieve impact. Productive dialogue with authorities established	21	20
4.2. Regular dialogue within the media community established on press freedom and integrity issues	8	8
4.3. Media organisations monitor and evaluate the results and impact of their own work	8	8
4.4. Platforms (journalists' professional organisations, CSOs, media owners and editors) set up and actively promote professional standards and ethics	10	9
4.5. Labour standards developed and upheld	17	9
TOTAL	**249**	**223**

Answers from all parties involved (media experts, interest groups and the general population) were treated in the same way. However, taking into consideration that the media experts responded to the full list of indicators, while interest groups responded only to selected indicators, and the general population to only 9 items from the questionnaire, it can be concluded that media experts have the greatest impact on the overall results.

Given that a number of media experts and representatives of interest groups per country provided answers to the items, one measure for each item per country was obtained by calculating the share of positive answers among all the answers provided (for a particular item for each country). All negatively oriented items were reoriented in order to a positive direction, so that it is possible to make further mathematical operations between them. In order to obtain one measure per indicator, an average value was calculated for items belonging to one indicator.

Since there is one average value for each indicator (20 in total) for each country (6 countries), there are 120 scores altogether (20 indicators multiplied by 6 countries). These scores/indices are sorted from lowest to highest and categorised into five categories, from the worst evaluated to the best evaluated. The distribution used was 15%; 15%; 40%; 15%; 15%. Although it can be said that this distribution is arbitrary, it has its foundation in probability theory and normal (or Gaussian) distribution, where distribution of values is symmetrical, and most results are situated around the mean. Based on this distribution, cut values were determined, which enabled score categorisation in the following way:

- *15% (from 0 to 0.14) – Red, the worst evaluated in the region;*
- *15% (from -0.36 to -0.06) – Orange, the second worst evaluated in the region;*
- *40% (from -0.05 to 0.49) – Yellow, the middle of the regional ranking;*
- *15% (from 0.50 to 0.81) – Light green, the second best evaluated in the region;*
- *15% (from 0.82 to 1) – Green, the best evaluated in the region.*

The same principle was applied to the objectives. In order to obtain one measure per objective (4 objectives), an average value was calculated for all indicators belonging to one objective. Since there is one average value for each objective (4 in total) for each country (6 countries), there are 24 scores altogether (4 objectives multiplied by 6 countries). These scores are sorted from lowest to highest and categorised into five categories, from the worst evaluated to the best evaluated (15%; 15%; 40%; 15%; 15%).

Note: Although objective number 3 is comprised only one indicator (3.1.) (as specified on pages 2 and 3), different categorisations of countries (i.e. their colours) is possible, given that the cut values for indicators and objectives are different. As already mentioned, there are 120 scores for indicators (20 indicators multiplied by 6 countries) and 24 scores for objectives (4 objectives multiplied by 6 countries), and this is the reason behind the differences.

3.1 The whole list of items included in the index system development

1. ENABLING ENVIRONMENT AND RESULTING RESPONSIBILITIES OF MAIN ACTORS

1.1. Legal guarantees and review of their implementation

1. Is the right to freedom of expression and information through the media guaranteed in the constitution?

2. Is the constitution in line with Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights?

3. Is the right to freedom of expression and information through the media guaranteed under national legislation?

4. Is this law in line with Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights?

5. Are cases in which these rights can be restricted clearly/unambiguously defined by the constitution/law?

6. Are these cases in line with those stipulated in Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights?

7. Are legal guarantees/safeguards regarding freedom of expression and information through the media implemented in a consistent, non-selective manner?

8. Is there a periodic assessment of the state of media freedom (including assessment of the existence and implementation of the legal framework affecting the media, or assessment of other factors influencing freedom of expression and media freedom) conducted by Parliament and/or the Government?

9. If yes, is this periodic assessment of the state of media freedom and of the legal framework done on the basis of indicators listed in the Council of Europe PA Resolution 1636 (2008)?

10. If not, is there an assessment of the state of media freedom (including assessment of the existence and implementation of the legal framework affecting the media, or assessment of other factors influencing freedom of expression and media freedom) conducted by any other state institution/body?

11. If yes, was the last assessment of the state of media freedom (including assessment of the existence and implementation of the legal framework affecting media, or assessment of other factors influencing freedom of expression and media freedom) - conducted by the Parliament/Government/other state institution/body - positive?

12. Are journalists' professional associations, and/or media representatives consulted about and involved in preparing the Parliament's/Government's assessments and follow-up proposals?

13. Is this done in a transparent manner?

14. Is this done in a fair/inclusive manner?

15. Was a report published about the consultation process?

16. Are the proposals by the media and journalists' professional associations taken into consideration by the Parliament/Government?

17. Are independent regulatory authorities* consulted about and involved in preparing the Parliament's/Government's assessments and follow-up proposals? *Independent regulatory authorities are in charge of supervising the implementation of regulations related to electronic media, which usually encompasses the power to license broadcasters, to monitor whether broadcasters are fulfilling their

legal obligations, and to impose sanctions if they fail to carry out those obligations.

18. Is this done in a transparent manner?

19. Is this done in a fair/inclusive manner?

20. Are the proposals by the independent regulatory authorities taken into consideration by the Parliament/Government?

21. Are interested CSOs consulted about and involved in preparing the Parliament's/Government's assessments and follow-up proposals?

22. Is this done in a transparent manner?

23. Is this done in a fair/inclusive manner?

24. Was a report published about the consultation process?

25. Are proposals by the CSOs taken into consideration by the Parliament/Government?

26. Have any laws, strategies, policies and/or measures been adopted in order to improve the situation in the media sector, as a result of such periodic assessment?

27. Have there been any independent assessments of the state of media freedom carried out by non-state actors such as think tanks, international organisations etc. in the past year?

28. Did those assessments contain suggestions for improvement of the current situation in the media sector?

29. Did the Government/Parliament/other state institution/body take into consideration proposals provided in the independent assessments?

30. Did the Government/Parliament/other state institution/body implement any of these proposals?

31. If yes, were these changes based on the periodic assessments of the state of media freedom, including the assessment of the legal framework?

32. If changes in the national legislation were introduced in the past year, have these changes been for the better, for the worse, or has nothing changed?

1.2. The judiciary acts in conformity with Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and applicable case law

1. *What is the number of judges in your country trained in applying ECtHR case law on freedom of expression? Training covers also application of legislation affecting media in line with fundamental rights (including to free expression). (not included in the index system development due to small number of answers)*

2. *What is the number of prosecutors in your country trained in applying ECtHR case law on freedom of expression? Training covers also application of legislation affecting media in line with fundamental rights (including to free expression). (not included due to small number of answers)*

3. *What is the number of the rulings in your country related to media freedom and freedom of expression*

4. *What is the number of cases in your country in which journalists/media representatives were acquitted related to media and freedom of expression (ECtHR case law) in the last year? (not included due to small number of answers)*

5. *What is the number of cases in your country in which journalists/ media representatives were convicted related to media and freedom of expression (ECtHR case law) in the last year? (not included due to small number of answers)*

6. *What is the number of cases in your country in which there were inadequate damages awarded (in comparison to other similar sanctions/cases) in the last year? (not included due to small number of answers)*

7. *What is the number of cases in your country where charges against journalists/media were pushed by public officials on the grounds of defamation law in the last year? (not included due to small number of answers)*

8. Is there a data collection system in your country providing that data on prosecution of journalists/media representatives are systematically collected, updated and made available on a regular basis or otherwise accessible?

1.3. State institutions ensure media pluralism and their independence; law enforcement in media outlets and access to information of public character

1. How often in the past year have public officials (President, Prime Minister, ministers, MPs, government at the local level, public officials, public authorities, directors of state companies, religious leaders, party officials, etc.) made statements that might possibly have a self-censorship effect on the media?

2. In your opinion, how often in the past year have journalists in your country practiced self-censorship for fear of civil lawsuits or criminal prosecution (fines, imprisonment)?

3. In your opinion, how often in the past year have journalists in your country practiced self-censorship for fear of professional reprisals or attacks on their reputation?

4. In your opinion, how often in the past year have journalists in your country practiced self-censorship for fear of threats to their physical safety or that of their family and friends, to their workplace or home?

5. How many physical attacks on journalists have taken place in the past year?

6. How many threats to journalists have been made in the past year?

7. How many other forms of intimidation of the media have taken place in the past year?

8. Has this number decreased in comparison to the previous year?

9. Are such cases dealt with by law enforcement and the judiciary in a timely manner?

10. *What is the number of complaints raised because law enforcement and judiciary did not deal with these cases in timely manner in the last year? (not included due to small number of answers)*

11. *What is the number of convictions in cases of attacks on journalists in the last year? (not included due to*

small number of answers)

12. Is there a data collection system providing that data on attacks on journalists and on actions taken by the law enforcement bodies in these cases are systematically collected, updated and made available on a regular basis or otherwise accessible?

13. Are rules on access to information of a public character in place?

14. Are these rules in accordance with the Council of Europe and other relevant European standards?

15. Are these rules related to access to information of public character for journalists and media followed by authorities without delay?

16. *What is the number of cases where authorities restricted access to information to media in the last year? (not included due to small number of answers)*

17. *What is the number of cases related to access to information of public character for journalists and media where Commissioner for information of public character/Information Commissioner intervened when the authorities restricted access to media? (not included due to small number of answers)*

18. *What is the number of cases related to access to information of public character for journalists and media where intervention of the Information Commissioner had positive outcome, and the authorities enabled access to information as a result of the intervention? (not included due to small number of answers)*

19. *What is the number of cases related to access to information of public character for journalists and media where intervention of the Information Commissioner didn't have positive outcome, and the authorities even after the appeal procedure didn't enable access to information, or enabled incomplete or delayed access to information? (not included due to small number of answers)*

1.4. Independent and professional regulators preserve media pluralism and prevent unfair competition in the media market

1. Are there Media regulatory authorities* present in your country? *Regulatory authorities are in charge of supervising the implementation of regulation related to electronic media, which usually encompasses the power to license broadcasters, to monitor whether broadcasters are fulfilling their legal obligations, and to impose sanctions if they fail to carry out those obligations.

2. Does legislation provide for independent and professional operation of the Media regulatory authorities in charge of the broadcasting sector?

3. Are Media regulatory authorities or any other professional and independent body (ies) required to contribute to the protection and promotion of freedom of expression and information through the media?

4. Are Media regulatory authorities or any other professional and independent body (ies) required to contribute to the protection and promotion of diversity of opinions and media pluralism - during elections?

5. Are Media regulatory authorities or any other professional and independent body (ies) required to contribute to the protection and promotion of diversity of opinions and media pluralism - outside

election periods?

6. Are Media regulatory authorities or any other professional and independent body (ies) required to protect public interests and media users?

7. Are Media regulatory authorities or any other professional and independent body (ies) required to ensure media ownership transparency?

8. Are Media regulatory authorities or any other professional and independent body (ies) required to regulate/prevent concentration and abuse of dominant market positions by media?

9. Are there rules to ensure that Media regulatory authorities in charge of the broadcasting sector are independent and free from political or other interference when it comes to appointment and dismissal of members?

10. In practice, are Media regulatory authorities in charge of the broadcasting sector independent and free from political or other interference when it comes to appointment and dismissal of members?

11. In practice, are the Media regulatory authorities consulted if the Government initiates changes to the regulations related to their scope of work, competences, rights and obligations?

12. Is the media sector (media industry and journalists' associations) consulted if the Government initiates changes to the regulations related to the scope of work, competences, rights and obligations of the regulatory authorities?

13. Are the recommendations and suggestions from public consultations taken into account?

14. Are there rules to ensure that the government/ other state bodies or officials cannot take actions that might be qualified as interference with Media regulatory authorities' independence when it comes to the decision-making process?

15. In practice, are the Media regulatory authorities in charge of the broadcasting sector independent and free from political or other interference when it comes to the decision-making process?

16. Do the Media regulatory authorities publish or make available all decisions about the measures issued and imposed, with or without justification?

17. Is there an obligation for the Media regulatory authorities in charge of the broadcasting sector to submit an annual report to the parliament or other state institution on performance of its own mission and tasks?

18. Did the Media regulatory authorities in charge of the broadcasting sector submit an annual report on performance of its own mission and tasks in the past year?

19. Is this annual report on performance of its own mission and tasks available to the public?

20. Do the Media regulatory authorities in charge of the broadcasting sector have financial autonomy?

21. Did the Media regulatory authorities publish financial reports for the past year?

22. Does this annual report (annual reports if there are multiple regulatory authorities) include information on the fees paid by media outlets to the regulatory authority?

23. Please assess the efficiency of the Media regulatory authority/authorities.

24. Please assess the independence of the Media regulatory authority/authorities.

25. Do the Media regulatory authorities annually provide accessible records on media ownership?

26. Are these records transparent and credible (in terms of data on real beneficiaries/beneficial owners)?

27. Are economic performance/financial statements of outlets made available by the Media regulatory authorities or any other authority or institution?

28. Is legislation against media concentration and misuse of dominant market position in place?

29. Is legislation against media concentration and misuse of dominant market position properly enforced?

30. Are sanctions regarding media concentration and misuse of dominant market position proportionate?

31. Are enforcement records (data/files on all investigated or processed cases) regarding media concentration and misuse of dominant market position made public?

32. Is State advertising and any other direct or indirect use of public money in the media regulated by legislation in accordance with good governance to guarantee fairness, neutrality, equal treatment and transparency?

33. Are the rules regarding State advertising and any other direct or indirect use of public money in the media enforced by the competition authority or other body(ies)?

34. Is there transparency in State advertising including public campaigns/advertisements by state bodies and local authorities?

35. Are the volume and share of State advertising and, other use of public money per media outlet being published (including public campaigns/advertisements)?

36. Is there transparency in dispatching advertisements by state-owned companies?

37. Is the volume and share of advertising per outlet by state-owned companies made public?

38. Are verified audience measurements implemented regularly?

39. Are publicity campaigns by governments or other state or local authorities developed on the basis of verified audience measurements?

40. Is media sector market analysis conducted regularly?

41. Are regulatory proposals being developed on the basis of media sector market analysis?

42. Is there legal protection in place against informal economic pressure (e.g. cancelation of advertising contracts because of critical reporting) on independent reporting?

43. Do responsible authorities provide periodic sector analysis to disclose any informal economic pressure on independent reporting (e.g. by ad agencies, media owners participating in public procurement, cross ownerships, etc.)?

44. Has the state-owned media been privatised?

45. Has this privatisation been carried out in a transparent way?

46. Has privatisation been carried out with due respect to fair competition?

47. Are there sanctions for the cases that jeopardise the media privatisation process?

48. Are state budget funds foreseen for project co-financing for media outlets?

49. Is the process of funding allocation conducted in a transparent manner?

50. Is the report on funding allocation published annually?

51. Are there measures in place to sanction cases that jeopardise the process of project co-financing for media outlets?

52. Are there any other sources of public funding/money that might be allocated to the media through various funds and mechanisms (subscription fee, taxes payable directly to a designated fund etc.)?

53. Is the process of funding allocation in case of these other financial mechanisms conducted in a transparent manner?

54. Is the report on funding allocation published annually?

1.5. State institutions and public authorities stimulate public demand for quality journalism

1. In the past year, have there been public/state programs to promote media literacy?

2. Has regulation been drafted or adopted to block or filter internet content?

3. In the past year, have there been cases where dissemination of information was prevented by blocking/filtering internet content?

4. In the past year, were there cases where dissemination of information was prevented through blocking/filtering internet content by the state bodies (including prosecutors or courts)?

5. Have the public authorities recently developed strategies or measures for supporting of "new"/online, local and/or alternative media?

1.6. Public Service Media – ensure content pluralism in the media environment in an independent and accountable manner

1. Is the Public Service Media remit defined by legislation?

2. Were there broad public consultations regarding the Public Service Media remit?

3. Does the law provide for editorial independence and against politicisation of Public Service Media?

4. In practice, is editorial independence of Public Service Media efficiently/de facto protected when it comes to political interference?

5. Is there a governing body of Public Service Media composed to represent diverse social groups and actors (e.g. minorities, CSOs, academia and similar)?

6. Please assess the level of independence of PSM considering mechanisms for appointment and dismissal of key personnel (e.g. director general, directors, editors-in-chief etc.).

7. Do the Public Service Media have sufficient funds to perform Public Service obligations (funds sufficient to comply with the PS remit)?

8. Are sources of and mechanisms for funding the Public Service Media provided to allow stable operations and avoid dependence on decisions by the Government/the Parliament over the PSM budget?

9. Is there a legal obligation for Public Service Media to publish annual reports (including financial)?

10. Did the Public Service Media publish an annual report (including financial) in the past year?

11. Is there a Code of ethics for the Public Service Media?

12. Have the Public Service Media developed an in-house mechanism to deal with viewer/listener/user complaints (e.g. an ombudsman, a readers' editor)?

13. Are these mechanisms effective in dealing with viewer/listener/user complaints?

14. Is there an investigative journalism* unit present in the PSM in your country? *Investigative journalism in this survey is considered systematic work on investigation of and reporting on societal issues related to abuse of power, corruption, organised crime and serious violation of fundamental rights that otherwise would not have been brought to the public`s attention.

15. Does the PSM have an annual or multi-annual program and financial plans dedicated to the operation of an investigative journalism unit?

16. Does the PSM (its special unit or without such unit) engage regularly in independent and critical investigative journalism?

17. On a scale from 1 to 4, how much trust do you have in Public Service Media (please insert the specific media provider), when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately and fairly? *(General population survey)*

1.7. Initiative and creativity by state institutions in using tools at their disposal to promote free speech and media diversity

1. Have there been any actions (e.g. awareness campaigns, public hearings or debates) undertaken by state institutions aimed at promoting media freedom and media pluralism/diversity?

2. If yes, please assess the efficiency of any actions undertaken by state institutions (e.g. awareness campaigns, public hearings or debates) aimed at promoting media freedom and media pluralism/diversity.

2. ADVANCING MEDIA TO A MODERN LEVEL OF INTERNAL GOVERNANCE

2.1. Media outlets voluntarily adhere to principles of transparency

1. Is any state institution obliged to collect data about corporate governance and finances from one or more different types of media (Radio, TV, Print, Online)?

2. If yes, are these state institutions able to efficiently collect these data from the media? (Radio, TV, Print, Online)

3. Is the ownership structure made publicly available? (Radio, TV, Print, Online)

4. Are financing sources made publicly available? (Radio, TV, Print, Online)

5. Is income received from the state made publicly available? (Radio, TV, Print, Online)

6. Are balance sheets made publicly available? (Radio, TV, Print, Online)

7. Does any state institution keep track of and provide data (available to the public) about the market share of one or more different types of media (Radio, TV, Print, Online)?

8. Are media outlets obliged to submit a report on their corporate governance and finances to some state institution?

9. What share of media outlets voluntarily provide open access to data about their ownership structure?

10. What share of media outlets voluntarily provide open access to data about their financing sources?

11. What share of media outlets voluntarily provide open access to data about income received from the state?

12. What share of media outlets voluntarily provide open access to data about their balance sheets?

2.2. Media outlets voluntarily subscribe to and implement adequate labour standards

1. What percentage of journalists in your country have long-term employment contracts?

2. What percentage of journalists in your country have fixed-term employment contracts?

3. What percentage of journalists in your country have contracts, but are not in an employment relationship (honorarium-based/piecework contract or service contract, etc.)?

4. What percentage of journalists in your country are freelancers (self-employed, working for different media)?

5. What percentage of journalists have no or insufficient social protection (contributions for social security not paid or paid only on part of the salary)?

6. Are the terms of working contracts a factor in self-censorship? (The terms of working contracts refer to job insecurity, uncertainty of working time, irregular earnings, insecurity of working conditions, legal insecurity and violation of labour rights: non-payment of overtime, work on weekends and public holidays and unpaid sick leave; failure to comply with labour rights in the company where the respondent works, violation of their rights to union organising.)

7. What percentage of media outlets have adopted an internal code of ethics (a document defining ethical conduct)?

8. What percentage of media outlets have adopted statutes (internal acts defining the relations, rights and obligations between owner/publisher, management and editorial office/journalists etc.)?

9. Is freedom of association (i.e. the right of media workers to establish associations and/or unions) clearly spelled out in the labour regulations, or in internal statutes?

2.3. Self-enforcement of ethical norms and professional standards

1. What share of media outlets have developed in-house mechanisms to deal with

reader/viewer/listener/user complaints (e.g. an ombudsman, a readers' editor)?

2. Are these mechanisms effective in dealing with reader/viewer/listener/user complaints?

3. Are public data available about cases of journalists suspended or dismissed on the grounds of critical reporting (despite having complied with the code of ethics)?

4. *What is the number of suspended or dismissed journalists on the grounds of critical reporting (despite being consistent with code of ethics) in the last year? (not included due to small number of answers)*

2.4. Structures strengthened for basic and continuous training and education of journalists and journalism students on professional standards, freedom of expression and media integrity

1. What is the total number of colleges/faculties/schools teaching journalism?

2. What is the number of journalism colleges/faculties/schools that incorporate courses on ethical codes and standards in their curriculum?

3. In the past year, how many media providers have offered/organised training courses and/or internship programs* which include learning about professional standards, freedom of expression, media freedom and media integrity? *These courses/programs are offered to any journalist, not only to those employed/working in that media.

4. In the past year, how many training programs/courses for professional journalists have been organised by Media training centers* that include learning about professional standards, freedom of expression and media integrity? *Media training centers refer to civil society organisations operating separately from any media.

2.5. Media outlets promote professional training (including in professional ethics)

1. What percentage of media have a staff development policy? (Staff development refers to all policies, practices and procedures used to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies of staff.)

2. What percentage of media providers have a human resources department?

3. In the past year, what percentage of media providers have implemented their own professional development programs (for journalists employed/working in that media) that include learning about professional ethics?

4. In the past year, what percentage of media sent their journalists to professional development programs (provided outside their own institution) that included learning about professional ethics?

2.6. Investment in professional management of companies

1. What percentage of media outlets have business plans?

2. What percentage of media outlets implement the business goals defined by their business plan?

2.7. Regaining audience confidence

1. In general, how much trust do you have in the media -- such as newspapers, TV, radio or online news sources - when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately and fairly in your country? *(General population survey)*

3. QUALITATIVE AND TRUSTWORTHY INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM AVAILABLE TO CITIZENS

3.1. Improved conditions for quality investigative journalism including modern/innovative approaches to increase the quality and credibility of investigative journalism

1. How many joint journalist/CSO projects have been created in your country dedicated to investigative journalism in the past year?

2. Are there any awards for investigative journalism in the country?

3. How many cross-border, regional or international joint investigative journalism projects have there been in which journalists from your country took part in the past year?

4. How often are there policy/personnel changes in the investigated institutions/organisations as a consequence of the findings from investigative journalism?

5. How many media outlets have been carrying out investigative journalism* within their outlet over the past year? *Investigative journalism in this survey is considered as systematic work on investigations and reporting on societal issues related to abuse of power, corruption, organised crime and serious violations of fundamental rights that otherwise would not have been brought to the public`s attention.

6. How many TV media outlets have published investigative journalism content in the past year?

7. How many Radio media outlets have published investigative journalism content in the past year?

8. How many Print media outlets have published investigative journalism content in the past year?

9. How many Online media outlets have published investigative journalism content in the past year?

10. Could you please name up to three Media outlets that published investigative journalism stories in the past year? *(General population survey)*

4. INCREASING CAPACITY AND REPRESENTATIVENESS OF JOURNALISTS' PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS

4.1. Media organisations/journalists' associations act on the basis of long-term vision and strategies to achieve impact. Productive dialogue with authorities established

1. Are media industry associations present in your country?

2. Do media industry associations engage in informed dialogue with the authorities in a coordinated manner?

3. Do media industry associations have sufficient funds for continuous and efficient operation?

4. Are sources of funding for media industry associations diverse (membership fees, donations, sponsorships, projects)?

5. Are membership fees the dominant source of funding for media industry associations?

6. Are media industry associations financially self-sustainable?

7. How many advocacy actions or joint policy initiatives (e.g. dialogue meetings with public authorities to suggest or influence upcoming policy or legislation) have been organised and implemented by media industry associations in the past year?

8. Please assess the impact of these actions on policies or legislation regarding the media.

9. Are journalists' professional associations present in your country?

10. Do journalists' professional associations engage in informed dialogue with the authorities in a coordinated manner?

11. Do journalists' professional associations have sufficient funds for continuous and efficient operation?

12. Are the sources of funding for journalists' professional associations diverse (membership fees, donations, sponsorships, projects)?

13. Are membership fees the dominant source of funding for journalists' professional associations?

14. Are journalists' professional associations financially self-sustainable?

15. How many advocacy actions or joint policy initiatives (e.g. dialogue meetings with public authorities to suggest or influence upcoming policy or legislation) have been organised and implemented by journalists' professional associations in the past year?

16. Please assess the impact of these actions on policies or legislation regarding the media.

17. How many journalists are members of journalists' professional associations?

18. Of the total number of journalists in your country, what percentage are members of journalists' professional associations?

19. *What is the number of members having benefited from free legal aid in the last year? (not included due to small number of answers)*

20. Were media industry associations and journalists' professional associations engaged in issue-based coalitions in the past year?

21. In your opinion, does the work of journalists' professional associations contribute to improving the situation of media and journalists in your country? *(General population survey)*

4.2. Regular dialogue within the media community established on press freedom and integrity issues

1. Were there meetings of broad platforms (consisting of, for example, journalists' professional organisations, media industry associations, CSOs/media centers and institutes, think-tanks, journalism schools, investigative journalism centers, editors etc.) organised within the media community on media freedom and integrity issues in the past year?

2. How many meetings of broad platforms were organised?

3. Were there joint conclusions adopted and actions taken at the local, national and/or regional level as a result of meetings of broad platforms?

4. In your opinion, to what extent are journalists and media outlets in your country free to express their views and report critically about relevant news? *(General population survey)*

5. How would you describe the current state of media freedom (newspapers, TV, radio or online news sources) in your country? Chose the statement that best matches/represents your opinion. *(General*

population survey)

6. In your opinion, how often have public officials (President, Prime Minister, ministers, MPs, government at the local level, public authorities, directors of state companies, religious leaders, party officials, etc.) made statements that` might possibly influence journalists and/or media not to publish their information? *(General population survey)*

7. In your opinion, to what extent is information about relevant issues, events and developments made accessible through the media to citizens in the country? *(General population survey)*

8. In your opinion, how frequently do journalists/media in your country fail to publish information they have out of fear of provoking negative reactions from public officials and other important figures? *(General population survey)*

4.3. Media organisations monitor and evaluate the results and impact of their own work

1. Are media industry associations obliged (following internal rules or legal obligations) to make annual reports?

2. What percentage of media industry associations publish their annual reports?

3. Do media industry associations evaluate their projects and programs?

4. What percentage of media industry associations monitored and evaluated their projects and programs using baselines and quality indicators in the past year?

5. Are journalists' professional associations required to make annual reports?

6. What percentage of journalists' professional associations publish their annual reports?

7. Do journalists' professional associations evaluate their projects and programs?

8. What is percentage of journalists' professional associations monitored and evaluated their projects and programs using baselines and quality indicators in the past year?

4.4. Platforms (journalists' professional organisations, CSOs, media owners and editors) set up and actively promote professional standards and ethics

1. Have self-regulatory bodies been established in your country?

2. Do these self-regulatory bodies have relevant representation from the media community regarding the number of media outlets that have joined the self-regulatory body and submitted to its rules and procedures?

3. Do these self-regulatory bodies have relevant representation from the media community regarding the impact or influence of media outlets that have joined the self-regulatory body and submitted to its rules and procedures?

4. Do these self-regulatory bodies have relevant representation from the media community regarding the market share of media outlets that have joined the self-regulatory body and submitted to its rules and procedures?

5. Do you consider the rules agreed and implemented by these self-regulatory bodies to be effective?

6. Were there any decisions taken against their members?

7. *How many decisions were taken against their members? (not included due to small number of answers)*

8. Has the number of decisions made by self-regulatory bodies regarding violations of the agreed rules decreased in the past year?

9. Are the funding sources (membership fees, donations, sponsorships, projects) of self-regulatory bodies diverse?

10. Have financial contributions (membership fees or similar contributions) from the media community, outlets and media owners to self-regulatory bodies increased, decreased or remained the same over the past year in comparison to the year before?

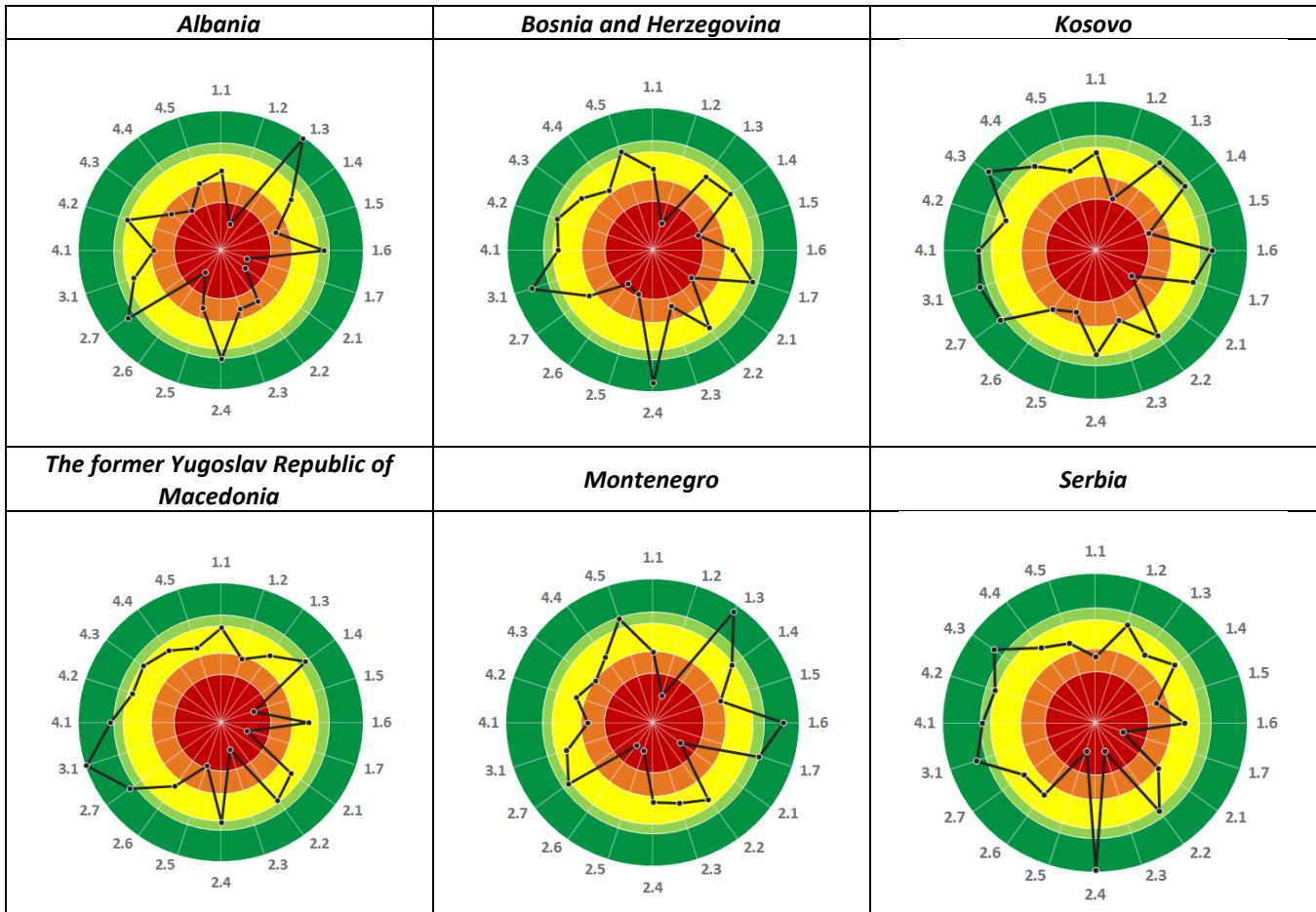## 4.5. Labour standards developed and upheld

1. *What is the number of journalists who reported obstacles to freedom of association in the last year? (not included due to small number of answers)*

2. *What is the number of journalists reporting inadequate working contracts with insufficient social protection? (not included due to small number of answers)*

3. In your country, are there collective agreements on the level of single media outlets, on the level of certain types of media, or a collective agreement covering all the media in the country?

4. Are trade unions recognised as partners in negotiating collective agreements?

5. *What is the number of media outlets where collective bargaining between trade unions and employers took place in the past three years? (not included due to small number of answers)*

6. *What is the number of media outlets where collective bargaining between trade unions and employers took place with a positive result in the past three years? (not included due to small number of answers)*

7. Please assess the quality of agreements reached (against the backdrop of labour standards).

8. How many advocacy and lobbying activities by unions and other organisations regarding labour standards have taken place in the past year?

9. Please evaluate the implementation of national labour laws (in media outlets) and how they are reflected in the collective agreements.

10. Do the media industry/media employers' associations play a role in negotiations on a collective contract with journalists' trade unions?

11. Do the media industry/media employers' associations contribute to achieving satisfactory labour standards?

12. *What is the number of journalists associated in journalist unions? (not included due to small number of answers)*

13. *Out of the total number of journalists in your country which percentage is a member of journalist unions? (not included due to small number of answers)*

14. *What is the number of journalists with irregular/temporary employment status such as fixed-term*

contract basis, honorarium-based or freelance that are members of journalist unions? (not included due to small number of answers)

15. Out of the total number of journalists in your country which percentage are journalists with irregular/temporary/precarious employment status such as fixed-term contract basis, honorarium-based or freelance that are members of journalist unions?

16. Were there any attempts at unionisation (new initiatives to establish unions) at media outlets or on the local/regional/national level in your country in the past year?

17. Were there any attempts at de-unionisation (closing down or collapsing of unions) at media outlets or on the local/regional/national level in the past year?

Annex 2 – Traffic lights for all countries

Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia

1.1. Legal guarantees and review of their implementation

1.2. The judiciary acts in conformity with Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and applicable case law

1.3. State institutions ensure media pluralism and their independence; law enforcement in media outlets and access to information of public character

1.4. Independent and professional regulators preserve media pluralism and prevent unfair competition in the media market

1.5. State institutions and public authorities stimulate public demand for quality journalism

1.6. Public Service Media – ensure content pluralism in the media environment in an independent and accountable manner

1.7. Initiative and creativity by state institutions in using tools at their disposal to promote free speech and media diversity

2.1. Media outlets voluntarily adhere to principles of transparency

2.2. Media outlets voluntarily subscribe to and implement adequate labour standards

2.3. Self-enforcement of ethical norms and professional standards

2.4. Structures strengthened for basic and continuous training and education of journalists and journalist students on professional standards, freedom of expression and media integrity

2.5. Media outlets promote professional training (including in professional ethics)

2.6. Investment in professional management of companies

2.7. Regaining audience confidence

3.1. Improved conditions for quality investigative journalism including modern/innovative approaches to increase the quality and credibility of investigative journalism

4.1. Media organisations/journalists' associations act on the basis of long-term vision and strategies to achieve impact. Productive dialogue with authorities established

4.2. Regular dialogue within the media community established on press freedom and integrity issues

4.3. Media organisations monitor and evaluate the results and impact of their own work

4.4. Platforms (journalists' professional organisations, CSOs, media owners and editors) set up and actively promote professional standards and ethics

4.5. Labour standards developed and upheld