

MONITORING OF THE MEDIA SCENE IN SERBIA

FOR THE MONTH OF JULY 2024

INTRODUCTION

Monitoring of the media scene is carried out with the aim of continuous monitoring of events and processes affecting the state of media freedom in the Republic of Serbia. The authors of the monitoring deal with: freedom of expression; monitoring the implementation of existing regulations; adopting of new regulations, also by amending and supplementing the current ones - from the field of media as well as from other areas directly or indirectly affecting the freedom of the media; and also by analyzing SLAPP lawsuits (strategic lawsuits against public participation) directed against journalists and media.

Publicly available data, data obtained from journalists, editors and other media workers, journalist associations and media associations, as well as state and non-state bodies are used for monitoring.

I FREEDOM OF SPEECH

When it comes to cases of attacks on journalists, according to the statistics of the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office, a total of 35 cases were established during the year 2024 (intersection made at the end of July). 31 media workers were affected by the events in relation to which the cases were formed, of which 17 were men and 14 women. The largest number of cases was opened in March (10 cases), and the smallest number in July (one). Of the total number of cases, the largest number is in the Special Public Prosecutor's Office for high-tech crime (62.86% of the total number of cases). As of July 31, 2024, one conviction was rendered; in one case, it was resolved using the institute of opportunity; in two cases, the court proceedings are ongoing; in two cases, a decision was made to dismiss the criminal complaint; in three cases, it was determined that there is no place to initiate criminal proceedings; in one case, evidentiary actions are being conducted; and in 25 cases, a request was submitted to collect the necessary information.¹

In the mentioned period, the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) recorded a total of 84 attacks on journalists - seven physical attacks, 44 verbal threats, 31 pressures and two attacks on the property of media workers.²

Starting in 2024, Serbia and other candidate countries in the process of joining the European Union are included in the publication of annual reports on the state of the rule of law. For EU member states, that reporting was introduced four years ago, with the aim of monitoring compliance with the rule of law and pointing out potential risks. The reports on the state of the rule of law in the candidate countries will complement the regular annual Progress Report, which the European Commission prepares to assess the reform process in the candidate countries (the level of their preparation and compliance with European standards, including those concerning media freedom).

In the second half of July, NUNS and OBC Transeuropa (OBCT) published the report "[The Rule of Law and Media Freedom in Serbia - Shadow Report 2024](#)" as their contribution to monitoring the rule of law. The European Commission's reports on the state of the rule of law cover four (main) areas:

1. judicial system;

¹ [VJT statistika napada na novinare od 2016. do kraja jula 2024](#), source: bezbedninovinari.rs

² [Novinari treba da prijave sve pretnje i napade iako ih institucije neretko odbacuju](#), author: Ivana Kragulj, article published on August 8, 2024 at NUNS portal.

2. legal framework for the fight against corruption;
3. media freedom and pluralism, and
4. other institutional issues related to the system of mutual verification and control.

The shadow report is mostly devoted to the issue of media freedom and media pluralism. It provides a picture of the media scene in Serbia, indicates steps taken in the right direction, as well as challenges that need to be worked on. The analysis also contains a set of recommendations intended for state bodies and relevant associations from the civil sector. The authors of the report pointed out that the adoption of the [“Strategy for the Development of the Public Information System in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2025”](#) represented a positive step towards the harmonization of national legislation with the legal acquis of the European Union. However, the implementation of the Media Strategy proved to be slow and incomplete. When it comes to the Regulatory Body for Electronic Media (REM) and the Press Council, it was stated that it is necessary to strengthen the position of these bodies and ensure their independence. In the part related to the transparency of media ownership and state interference, it was concluded that the latest amendments to the law (the Law on Public Information and Media and the Law on Electronic Media) eased the way for the return of state ownership in (private) media. The return of the state to the ownership structure of the media represents a serious threat to media pluralism, which results in jeopardizing independent and critical reporting, the Report stated. When it comes to the allocation of state funds for advertising and other protective measures against state/political interference, the necessity of providing adequate information on the manner in which state funds are distributed, as well as the necessity of working on the transparency of project co-financing, was explained. Also, the urgency of amending the regulations (the Law on Public Information and Media and the Law on Electronic Media) was highlighted, in order to ensure compliance with the Code of Journalists of Serbia and strengthen the role of the Press Council, all with the aim of directing public finances towards media that respect journalistic and ethical standards. The Report said that journalists are not guaranteed sufficient safety, that laws are not adequately enforced (which ensures impunity for those who intimidate journalists), and that politicians create a hostile atmosphere against journalists. The authors underlined that it is necessary to ensure safety for journalists and ensure a faster investigation of an attack if it does occur. When it comes to free access to information of public importance, the Report

states that the regulations, although they are quite strong in themselves, are incompletely and unevenly implemented. Lawsuits against journalists as a system of intimidation (including SLAPP lawsuits and lawsuits by government officials) – were rated in the Report as highly concerning.³

At the end of July, the European Commission published the Report on the Rule of Law in 2024. Among other things, the Report pointed out that the Regulatory Body for Electronic Media (REM) does not fully use its mandate to protect media pluralism and professional standards. Serious concerns were also expressed about the independence of that body. In the Report, it is recalled that in 2022 REM renewed the license for all four television channels with a national frequency, despite the fact that they were given warnings for violating legal obligations. Some of those channels continued to violate relevant regulations in 2023. The European Commission pointed out that the fifth national frequency has not yet been assigned. The deadline expired, and the explanation was missing. According to the conclusion of the European Commission, REM is not effective in countering foreign manipulation of information related to the war in Ukraine. Although the new Law on Electronic Media strengthened the mandate and regulatory powers of the REM – giving it a new ability to impose fines – this mechanism is not being used. The European Commission expresses its doubt that the amendments to the Law on Electronic Media, which depoliticize the process of appointing members of the REM Council and the requirement that the new REM Council be appointed within one year from the date of entry into force of the law (by November 4, 2024) - sufficient to ensure the independence of REM in relation to the state administration. The law also introduced shorter deadlines for REM to act on complaints during election campaigns, but, the OSCE/ODIHR concluded in its report on parliamentary elections in December 2023, REM “maintained a passive approach”.

The European Commission states that before the adoption of the new Law on Public Information and Media, print media which violated the Code of Ethics most frequently, according to the Press Council, were not prevented from receiving funds for co-financing projects in the field of public information, which was especially visible at the local level. The necessity of monitoring the effective implementation of the provisions of the new law was recorded. Measures to solve the problem of transparency in ownership structures and advertising financed by state funds, measures proposed by the Media Strategy - have not yet been implemented.

³ “[The Rule of Law and Media Freedom in Serbia - Shadow Report 2024](#)”, authors: Massimo Moratti, Serena Epis, Thomas Law, co-authors: Rade Đurić, Tamara Filipović Stevanović. Published by NUNS and OBCT in July 2024.

Political and economic influence on the media remains a concern. The process of privatization of the media has not ended. Recent changes in the law lifted the ban on state-owned enterprises owning the media, which, due to the increased influence of the state, caused concern among the interested public - journalist associations and civil society organizations. When it comes to free access to information of public importance, the European Commission notes that journalists are still faced with the frequent refusal of public authorities to provide them with access to such information, as well as with the refusal to respond to their requests at all. The safety of journalists remains a concern. There is increasing pressure caused by the filing of vexatious lawsuits. Cases of defamatory campaigns, threats and verbal and physical violence against journalists continue, both at the state and local levels. Journalists' associations recorded an increase in the total number of registered attacks (137 in 2022, 183 in 2023). The Report emphasizes that the statements that high officials repeat about the daily and investigative work of journalists - endanger the freedom of the media. According to the opinion of the interested public, the greatest pressure comes from politicians. Also, there is an increased number of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP), initiated by members of the government. These lawsuits exhaust the financial and personnel capacities of the media. In cases of attacks and threats against journalists - the Permanent Working Group for the Safety of Journalists enables the police and prosecutor's office to respond quickly. However, according to journalists' associations, after the initial quick reaction, a small number of cases result in final verdicts. Despite the work of the Commission for Investigating Murders of Journalists, the murder of Slavko Ćuruvija remains unpunished even after 25 years. The previous year, the Public Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime again declared itself incompetent in the case of the murder of journalist Milan Pantić, the Report concludes.

The meeting of the Permanent Working Group for the Safety of Journalists in Zrenjanin and the observed irregularities in the actions of the courts

In July, a meeting of the Permanent Working Group for the Safety of Journalists was held in Zrenjanin. The meeting was attended by local prosecutors and representatives of the police, journalists and media. They talked about the problem of media and journalist discrimination, a problem that causes a hostile work environment, affects safety, but also the mental health of journalists. There was also

talk about individual cases of attacks, about the pressures that are put on journalists, and about the dangers that threaten them due to the increasing number of SLAPP lawsuits. Attention was also paid to the weaknesses of the media scene in Serbia, developed in the atmosphere produced by leading politicians, discrimination in the area of project co-financing and the reduction in the number of media that engage in professional journalism.⁴

On the occasion of the legally concluded court proceedings conducted due to threats sent to the editorial staff of Television N1, it was noted that the court did not act in accordance with the provisions of Article 50, paragraph 1, point 3, according to which the injured party in court proceedings has the right to be informed of the outcome of the proceedings and to be delivered final judgment. Veran Matić, a member of the Permanent Working Group for the Safety of Journalists, announced that the issue will be the topic of discussion with court representatives and proposed that the Permanent Working Group establish a contact point from the court in order to adequately resolve similar situations.⁵

Threats and pressures

The case of Tamara Skrozza, deputy editor-in-chief of the FoNet news agency

Almost two months after giving interview for the show “Da sam ja neko” (“If I was someone”, Television N1), Tamara Skrozza found herself the target of the tabloids. In a conversation with a journalist, Skrozza said the following:

That night between October 5 and 6, in my opinion, now post festum, should have looked completely different. I won't say how now, so that we don't get into trouble, but as far as I'm concerned, that night was supposed to be completely different, something like what we learned in history books. If that night had been different and if on October 6 we had woken up in a different Serbia, a Serbia without some people, I think this would be a completely different story today, and we are actually living in the nineties. I am now putting myself in a situation where I am living a 'groundhog day',

⁴ [Solidarnost među novinarima i efikasno i brzo kažnjavanje nasilnika, najvažniji u zaštiti novinara](#), article published on July 4, 2024 at Javni servis portal.

⁵ [Sudovi obavezni da dostavljaju presude oštećenim novinarima i medijima](#), author: Veran Matić, article published on July 19, 2024 at Bezbedni novinari portal.

writing the same texts for 30 years, speaking the same sentences for 30 years, doing the same things I did 30 years ago. It is an abnormal situation.

Her words were tendentiously interpreted, so that what she said was replaced by what Tamara Skrozza never said.

The first news with the reinterpreted statement of the journalist was published by Novosti online. The text is titled [“Vučić should have been killed on the night between October 5 and 6, 2000”](#) According to the text, “opposition” journalist Tamara Skrozza indirectly said that the people who are in power today should have been liquidated during the October 5 coup, when the current President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, was the Minister of Information.

The text with the same content and the same title was also published on the portal of the newspaper [Alo](#), a slightly modified version was also published by [Politika](#), and then the portal [24sedam.rs](#). On TV Pink it was said “Monstrous. Vučić should have been killed between October 5 and 6, 2000, said opposition journalist Tamara Skrozza.” The next day, the campaign was continued by tabloid Informer.

In order to clarify her words, and thus free them from malicious interpretation, Tamara Skrozza stated:

I really think that everything would have been different if that night on October 5 had gone differently. At the same time, I was not thinking of any murders. I think that all the people from the government at the time who were responsible for the events of the 90s should have been brought before the competent judicial authorities. Responsibility of those people was never determined. And that is all that is behind my statement.

Tamara Skrozza announced the filing of lawsuits against the media who accused her of calling for the murder of the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, shootings and mass murder.

The Ministry of Information and Telecommunications joined the campaign that seriously questioned the safety of the journalist:

It is difficult to escape the impression that Mrs. Skrozza, in the part of the previously quoted statement that refers to the fact that Serbia was supposed to be “without some

people” on the night between October 5 and 6, 2000, and that that night should have been “something like what we learned in the history books”, implicitly expressed regret that in those dramatic circumstances some state officials were not deprived of their lives. Any subsequent clarification of this rather clear statement would represent loading into Ms. Skrozza's words what they originally did not contain.

Bearing in mind this example of hate speech and/or calls to, i.e. expressing regret for the missed opportunity to commit violence, as well as numerous others that fill the public, especially the media space, the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications again appeals to everyone to refrain from statements that explicitly or implicitly represent hate speech or a call to violence.

Therefore, the Ministry of Information contested every explanation of the journalist's words, in such a way that the only possible interpretation was offered by the tabloids, which was, in fact, not true.

Reacting to the Ministry's announcement, the Coalition for Media Freedom announced:⁶

The latest announcement by the Minister of Information and Telecommunications, Dejan Ristić, is shameful and shows a level of deep misunderstanding of the concept of preserving freedom of speech and advocacy for the safety of journalists, and paves the way for further persecution and endangering the safety of journalist Tamara Skrozza.

Reporters Without Borders took the position that, in case something happens to Tamara Skrozza, they will hold the Government of RS and its media representatives responsible.⁷

Journalists who are part of the Permanent Working Group for the Safety of Journalists underlined that the loading and terrible tabloid interpretation of the journalist's statement most seriously threatens her safety.⁸

The group Female Journalists against Violence against Women expressed their deepest solidarity with their colleague, who is being harassed by certain tabloids and television stations with a national

⁶ [Koalicija za slobodu medija: Ministar nastavio hajku na Tamaru Skrozzu, nedostojan funkcije](#), announcement published on July 31, 2024 at NUNS portal.

⁷ [Reporteri bez granica: Ako se nešto desi Tamari Skrozi, smatraćemo odgovornim vladu i njene medijske izaslanike](#), article published on July 30, 2024 at NUNS portal.

⁸ [Eskalacija napada na novinarke i novinare - Saopštenje novinarskog dela SRG povodom kampanje protiv novinarke Tamare Skrozze](#), article published on July 30, 2024 at Javni servis portal.

frequency:

The work of Tamara Skrozza largely established the fundamental values and principles on which the Group Female Journalists Against Violence was founded. That is why we join the request of her editors and call on the competent institutions, the Permanent Working Group for the Safety of Journalists, journalist and media associations, and all organizations that advocate for media freedom and the safety of journalists to react and protect our colleague from attacks and threats.⁹

The case of journalist Srđan Škoro

Commenting on the situation in Serbia on June 25, on KTV, Srđan Škoro suggested that Aleksandar Vučić's son "be sent to Majdanpek and Bor, to a mine, to work there. Without Cobra unit to protect him, for cameras to record him, and Željko Mitrović (owner of Pink media) can come and make reality shows", and for Danilo Vučić to show "in that way what Obilić he is". He added that, "as far as Kosovo is concerned, Danilo Vučić can also go there, but independently - not at the expense of the state, not at the expense of what (Aleksandar) Vučić is silent about, that Cobras and special forces go to ensure that the kid can watch the football game", says Cenzolovka.¹⁰

Because of what he said - and he did not say anything more and nothing beyond the above - the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade reacted, ordering the First Basic Public Prosecutor's Office to form a case in order to examine whether Škoro's statements contained elements of the criminal offense of Endangering Security, committed against the President of the Republic of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić and his son Danilo Vučić.

Regarding Srđan Škoro's statement - groundlessly concluding that the journalist called for the murder of the President's son - the Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of Serbia and the Minister of Internal Affairs Ivica Dačić spoke out:

Justifying threats to the family of President Aleksandar Vučić that come from various

⁹ [Solidarnost grupe "Novinarke protiv nasilja prema ženama" sa Tamarom Skrozom](#), article published on July 30, 2024 at Bezbedni novinari portal.

¹⁰ [Ministarstvo informisanja i REM pokrenuli postupke protiv KTV zbog izjava Srđana Škora o Danilu Vučiću](#), author: Danica Đokić, article published on July 10, 2024 at Cenzolovka portal.

opposition groups and individuals like Đilas's party is just as much a crime as Srđan Škoro's threat and call for the murder of Danilo Vučić.

As in the case of Tamara Skrozza, in the case of Srđan Škoro, [the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications](#) gave its “judgment”, by taking Škoro's statement out of context, giving it a completely different, malicious tone and character. On the website of the Ministry, you can read:

The Minister of Information and Telecommunications, Dejan Ristić, strongly condemns the frightening and morbid views of Srđan Škoro, expressed in a program broadcast on KTV. Obviously completely filled with hatred towards the President of the Republic and members of his family, Škoro called for a public lynching of Danilo Vučić, whom he characterized as “the image and example of his father”. He would soon send the child of the President of the Republic to the mine, and then “shower him with uranium”. However, even that is not enough for the enraged Škoro, but he would send the son of the President of the Republic, having previously deprived him of the protection he is legally entitled to, to the territory of the Province of Kosovo and Metohija so that he would be exposed to the violence of Albanian separatists, which would put his life in danger.

In this regard, the Ministry welcomes the timely reaction of the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade in connection with this worrying case, and will only without delay initiate the procedure to determine the possible existence of liability of the editor-in-chief of KTV and other persons due to the broadcast of media content in which they were publicly announced multiple monstrous threats to the safety of the child of the President of the Republic, i.e. due to the spread of hate speech and violation of personal dignity.

Srdjan Škoro confirmed that during his guest appearance on KTV, he did not issue any threats to the son of the President of Serbia, Danilo Vučić.

The Regulatory Body for Electronic Media (REM) initiated [a procedure](#) against KTV, and the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications initiated an inspection procedure, referring to the provisions related to the prohibition of hate speech and incitement of discrimination or violence in the program.

Lawyer of the Association of Journalists of Serbia reacted: “If the prosecution does its job properly,

when it looks at what Škoro really said, and not what was taken out of context, it will see that there really are no elements of the criminal offense of endangering security.”¹¹

The Independent Association of Journalists of Serbia also reacted to the announcement of the Ministry:

In the statement, the Ministry does not quote but interprets Srđan Škoro's statement and concludes that it is about “hate speech”, “violation of personal dignity” and “call for lynching”.

Since the competent prosecutor's office, as reported by the media, has already formed a case in the mentioned case, we expect that they will determine which of the above is an “invitation to work in a mine”, bearing in mind that many citizens of Serbia actually work in a mine.

Journalist and columnist Nenad Kulačin also came to the defense of his colleague, and then received a series of threats, sent in direct messages via Facebook, because of the article “Hang Škoro”, published in the daily newspaper Danas.¹²

Kosovska Mitrovica — attacks and pressure on journalists

A new threat was sent to the editors of the KoSSev portal, which was followed by numerous insults. According to the information available in the NUNS database of attacks on journalists, the messages were sent by the same person who has been insulting the editor and the newsroom and threatening them for a long time.¹³

In July, Politika journalist Biljana Radomirović and Jedinstvo journalist Zoran Vlašković were physically attacked. The attack took place on the main city bridge over the Ibar river. An unknown person, in a drunken state, without reason, physically attacked the journalists and threw a beer bottle at them. The journalists were on a work assignment. After the incident, the person moved away towards the southern part of the city. The Association of Journalists of Serbia (UNS), which has a branch in Kosovo

¹¹ [Advokat UNS-a Konstantinović: Škoro nije izvršio krivično delo ugrožavanje sigurnosti, niti bilo koje drugo krivično delo](#), author: A. Ničić, article published on July 9, 2024 at UNS portal.

¹² ["Ne zaboravi da je Danilu Vučiću kum Vojislav Šešelj": Kulačin dobio pretnje zbog kolumne u Danasu](#), author: Uglješa Bokić, article published on July 10, 2024 at Danas portal.

¹³ <https://bazenuns.rs/srpski/detalji-napada-na-novinara/1542>

and Metohija, condemned the physical attack on the journalists and demanded that the attacker be severely punished.¹⁴

At the session held on July 11, 2024, the Assembly of Kosovo, without the participation of the opposition, adopted the Law on the Independent Media Commission. UNS expressed concern about the adoption of a law that severely limits media freedom. Speaking for the UNS portal, Jelena Petković, a journalist and member of the Press Council, explained that the law practically enables the Independent Media Commission to control online media, through the licensing system, which can easily be abused against any media, especially against media that deal with investigative and critical reporting. “This law puts (the media) under the threat of large fines of up to 40,000 euros, which represents a serious existential threat to any independent online media, and is particularly frightening and can close the door to small independent and critical media,” said Jelena Petković.¹⁵

The case of OK Radio media

Although the competent inspection made a decision in June 2022 to remove the illegally built building that is part of the casino, which walled up OK radio media offices, although later Stefan Ilić (director of the company Colosseum gest doo Vranje) was convicted for illegal construction to one year in prison (which he serves in home conditions, without electronic monitoring) and to a fine (in the amount of 400,000 dinars), while the legal entity of which Ilić is the director is obliged to pay a fine in the amount of 5 million dinars - the City Administration of Vranje didn't knock it down. The violence against the OK radio media continues. At the beginning of July, an unknown person (or several of them) broke the window of the No Comment cafe, which finances the work of OK radio.¹⁶

In the second half of July, information appeared in the media that Dejan Nikolić Kantar from Vranje¹⁷ - who is currently serving an 18-month prison sentence due to threats sent to the owner and employee of OK Radio - filed a criminal complaint against Veran Matić, the president of Association of Independent Electronic Media and a member of the Permanent Working Group for the Safety of Journalists. Nikolić was previously convicted several times for various criminal acts, and he is currently

¹⁴ [Strogo kazniti napadača na Biljanu Radomirović i Zorana Vlaškovića](#), announcement published on July 15, 2024 at UNS portal.

¹⁵ [Jelena Petković o Zakonu o Nezavisnoj komisiji za medije: Napad na medijske slobode](#), author: J. Marković, article published on July 23, 2024 at UNS portal.

¹⁶ [OK Radio ponovo na meti vandala: Razbijen izlog radijskog kafea](#), article published on July 2, 2024 at Javni servis portal.

¹⁷ <https://bezbedni-novinari.mpanel.app/storage/files/documents/2023-08-anem-monitoring.pdf>

on trial for three. Matić was charged with the criminal offense of obstruction of justice.¹⁸

Against the reason with advertising

In the middle of July, tabloids, followed by the media with a national frequency, broadcast a video with very controversial content. In the video, the media that report critically on the current government, as well as the interlocutors of those media, are accused of running a campaign against the President of the Republic of Serbia. The aim of the video is to create the impression in the public that certain persons are calling for the literal or symbolic end of Aleksandar Vučić. Those critical persons, as the video suggests, want to dehumanize the President, and thus create an atmosphere and justify in advance some mentally unstable person who would try to do to him the same thing that Thomas Matthew Crooks did to former US President Donald Trump at the beginning of July 2024.¹⁹

The case of Ana Lalić — the escape of a person with an electronic monitoring device

A citizen of France and Serbia who sent threatening messages to Ana Lalić Hegediš from Paris via Messenger in March was detained after entering the country. The device from which the disputed messages were sent (both to Ana Lalić Hegediš and Dinko Gruhonjić) was found with him. The accused admitted the commission of the crime in the prosecutor's office, after which the court ordered him to be banned from leaving the apartment with electronic surveillance (the prosecution demanded regular detention), and temporarily confiscated his travel documents. The main hearing was scheduled for the beginning of July. The person did not appear at the hearing, he left his place of residence.²⁰ The questions that Veran Matić, the president of ANEM and a member of the Permanent Working Group for the Safety of Journalists, asked regarding the escape of the person and the responsibility of the competent institutions remained unanswered.²¹

¹⁸ [Višestruko osuđivani Dejan Nikolić Kantar iz zatvora poslao krivičnu prijavu protiv Verana Matića](#), author: Veran Matić, article published on July 18, 2024 at Javni servis portal.

¹⁹ [Kampanja na nacionalnim televizijama: Emitovanje spota protiv N1 i Nove uz optužbe za „hajku“ na Vučića](#), author: Nenad Nešić, article published on July 16, 2024 at N1 portal.

²⁰ [Optuženi za ugrožavanje bezbednosti novinarke Ane Lalić Hegediš pobjegao iz kućnog pritvora](#), author: Veran Matić, article published on July 4, 2024 at Javni servis portal

²¹ [Hitno utvrditi propuste koji su omogućili bekstvo optuženog za pretnje novinarke Ani Lalić Hegediš](#), author: Veran Matić, article

The case of Belarusian journalist Andrei Gnyot

European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), its members in Serbia: Association of Journalists of Serbia (UNS), Independent Association of Journalists of Serbia (NUNS), Union of Journalists of Serbia (SINOS) and Branch Union of Culture, Arts and Media "Nezavisnost", journalist organizations in Serbia: Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM), Independent Association of Journalists of Vojvodina (NDNV), Association of Independent Local Media (Local Press) and Media Association of Serbia - sent a letter to the Minister of Justice, Maja Popović, asking her to oppose the extradition of Belarusian journalist Andrei Gnyot. The letter was sent a second time, because the first one was not answered.²² You can read more about the case of Andrei Gnyot in [the Monitoring of the media scene in Serbia for June 2024](#). The Council of Europe registered his case on the Platform for the Protection of Journalists and Safety of Journalists (COE platform).

II MONITORING OF THE PROCESS OF ADOPTION OF NEW LAWS

There were no significant news in the field of adopting new laws or amending existing ones.

III IMPLEMENTATION OF EXISTING LAWS

Project co-financing

UNS has published research related to the funds allocated in the competition for co-financing projects for the production of media content in the field of public information in 2024. The competition was announced by the Provincial Secretariat for Culture, Public Information and Relations with Religious Communities. At the competition, 4,950,000 dinars were awarded to the project of the Mediakult Cooperative of Media and Cultural Creators, for the podcast, Novosadska priče (Novi Sad Stories), which will be broadcast through the media whose operational editor is also a member of the

published on July 5, 2024 at Javni servis portal.

²² <https://europeanjournalists.org/blog/2024/07/05/serbia-journalist-andrey-gnyot-must-not-be-extradited-to-belarus/>

committee in charge of allocating funds (Vojvodina Journalist Portal, published by the Association of Vojvodina Journalists). The member of the commission was elected at the proposal of the same association.²³

IV SLAPP LAWSUITS DIRECTED AGAINST JOURNALISTS AND THE MEDIA

The lawsuit of Ratko Romić, a former member of the Security Intelligence Agency (SIA), against the Slavko Ćuruvija Foundation and the lawsuit of Miroslav Kurak, a former member of the SIA, against the editorial office of NIN

Ratko Romić, a former member of the SIA, sued the Slavko Ćuruvija Foundation. Like Miroslav Kurak, Milan Radonjić also filed a claim for compensation for non-material damage due to injury to honor and reputation due to the statement in which the Foundation expressed its disagreement with the decision of the Court of Appeal in Belgrade. With the court's verdict, the plaintiffs were acquitted of the charge of murdering the journalist Slavko Ćuruvija. As a reminder, even though it is the same announcement, all the plaintiffs initiated the proceedings separately. The amount of compensation they claim is 500,000.00 rsd each.

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²³ [Sukob interesa u odlučivanju na medijskom konkursu u AP Vojvodini – Društvo novinara Vojvodine samo sebi dodelilo skoro 5 miliona dinara](#), author K. Kovač Nastić, article published on July 23, 2024 at UNS portal.