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Police intervention in Novi Sad on 05. Sep. 2025.
(photo: Gavriilo Andrić)

MONITORING OF THE MEDIA SCENE IN SERBIA FOR SEPTEMBER 2025

INTRODUCTION

The monitoring of the media scene is conducted to continuously track events and processes affecting media freedom in the Republic of Serbia. This monitoring focuses on freedom of expression; monitoring the implementation of existing regulations; the adoption of new regulations, as well as amendments to current ones, both in the media field and other areas that directly or indirectly impact media freedom; and the analysis of lawsuits considered by experts to be SLAPP suits (strategic lawsuits against public participation) targeting journalists and media outlets.

Publicly available data, information obtained from journalists, editors, and other media professionals, journalistic associations, and media organizations, as well as from governmental and non-governmental bodies, are used for monitoring.

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I FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

PEN Centres from the countries of the former Yugoslavia, together with International PEN, sent an open letter to the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, the President of the European Council, António Costa, and the European Commissioner for Enlargement, Marta Kos. In the letter, they expressed serious concern over the alarming situation regarding freedom of expression and other fundamental human rights in Serbia, calling for the European Union's urgent and decisive support. The signatories urged EU leaders to take a firm and unambiguous stance concerning the unstable and unpredictable situation in Serbia, where the authorities "brutally suppress freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and other fundamental rights, deliberately escalating violence and maintaining entrenched impunity."¹

According to the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) report on the state of media freedom in Europe for the period January–June 2025, Serbia ranks first in the number of recorded violations of media freedom. The report states that since November 2024, media workers have faced increasing pressure and repression from the authorities. Following the MFRR solidarity mission to Serbia in April 2025, the situation has continued to deteriorate. The report concludes that in light of the emergency situation confronting media workers in Serbia, warnings and recommendations are no longer sufficient.²

Journalist associations and media organizations strongly reacted to the statement issued by the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation (SVR), which accused several local and national media outlets — FoNet, RAM Network, Vreme, Južne vesti, Slobodna reč, Boom 93, Podrinske, Free Media, Indija, SOinfo, FAR, Storyteller and the NGO Link — of allegedly attempting, with the support of the European Union, to provoke a "Serbian Maidan." The associations warned that unfounded statements of this kind put media outlets and journalists in direct danger and stressed that they must not become collateral damage in political conflicts.³ The European Commission denied the SVR's claims.⁴

The Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM) and the Center for the Development of Local Media (CRLM) published a report titled Media Reporting in Sandžak. Journalists' safety in the region was rated 3 on a scale where 5 is the maximum score. The report notes that open attacks have transformed into "more subtle but equally forceful" economic and legal mechanisms of pressure. Journalists face threats, targeting, online harassment, occasional field incidents, and SLAPP lawsuits. Experiences with relevant institutions vary: some police responses are swift but often remain inconclusive, while other proceedings drag on for so long that they create a sense of ineffective protection.⁵

Due to the publication in August of an audio recording and transcript by the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) and the investigative portal KRIK — allegedly a conversation between Sten Møller, CEO of United Group, and Vladimir Lučić, CEO of Telekom Srbija — several criminal complaints were filed.

On suspicion of influence peddling under Article 366(3) of the Serbian Criminal Code, the association Ustavobranitelji (Constitution Defenders) filed a criminal complaint against the President of the Republic of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, and Vladimir Lučić. The complaint, signed by attorneys Jovan Rajić, Čedomir Kokanović, and Ivan Ninić, was submitted to the Public Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime. The section discussing potential benefits for the President from replacing certain individuals in the company reads as follows: "It is certain that the editorial policy of the few remaining free media outlets in Serbia, which are still not under the de facto control of the executive branch, would change. The already dire situation on the Serbian media scene would further deteriorate, leaving virtually no critical voices against the current regime."⁶

A separate criminal complaint was filed by United Group with the Special Anti-Corruption Department of the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade against "several individuals."⁷ While not disputing the existence of the conversation between Lučić and Møller, the company rejected allegations of threats to the editorial independence of N1 TV and Nova S and emphasized that editorial decisions rest solely with their newsrooms and that there were no plans to sell the outlets.⁸

Vladimir Lučić announced that he had filed criminal charges over the publication of the recording of his conversation with Møller, demanding verification of the recording's authenticity, claiming that the published material was not entirely genuine.⁹

In its statement, the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) consortium expressed shock over the content of the recording and condemned any form of political interference that could undermine independent broadcasters.¹⁰

The incident was recorded in the MFRR's monitoring database.¹¹

Further details on the recording and transcript can be found in the [Monitoring of the Media Landscape in the Republic of Serbia – August 2025 report](#).

II ATTACKS, THREATS AND PRESSURE

Attacks on journalists in Novi Sad during the “Serbia, Can You Hear Us?” protest



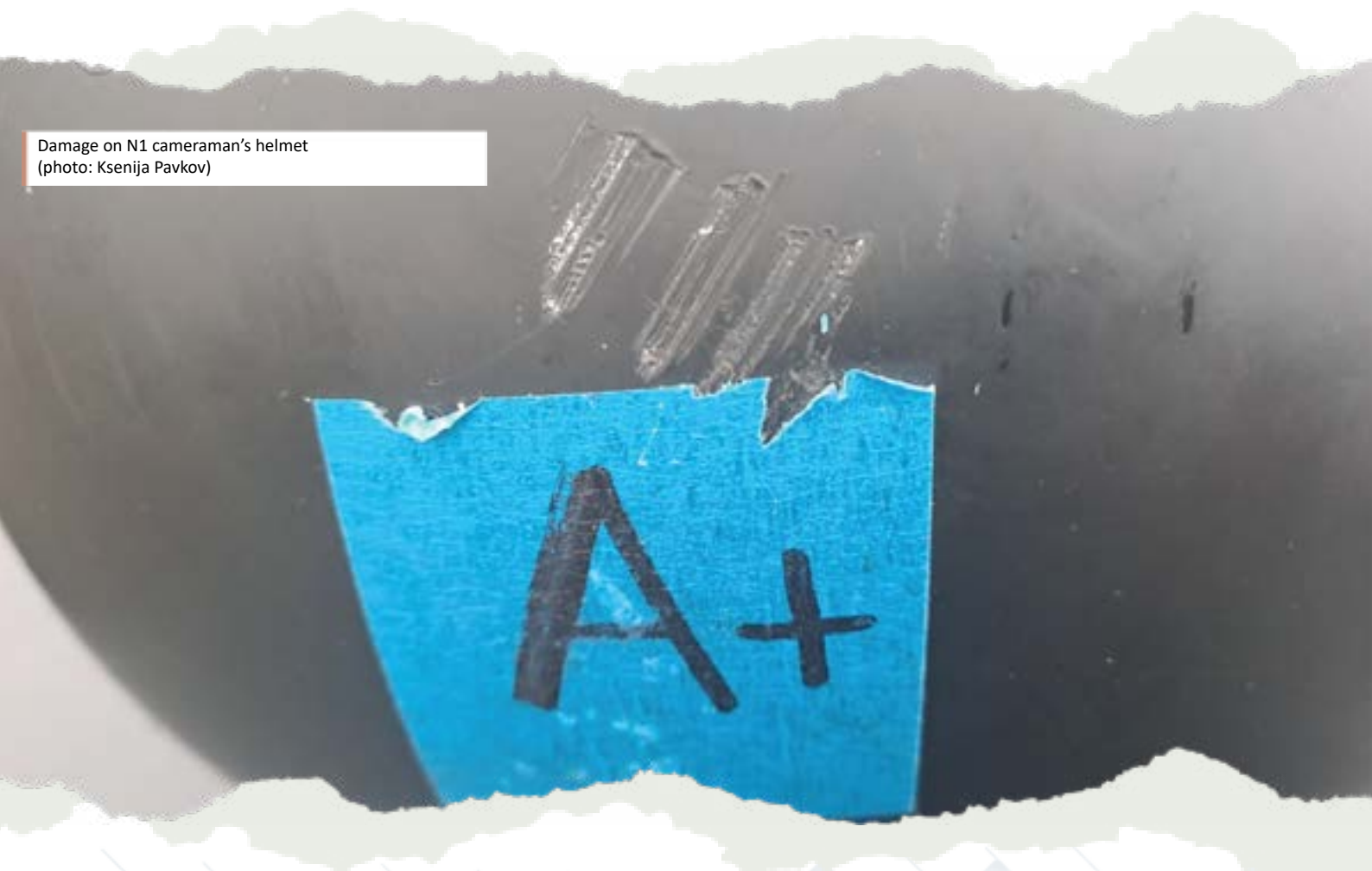
Police intervention in Novi Sad on 05. Sep. 2025.
(photo: Gavriilo Andrić)

In Novi Sad, on 5 September, during the protest “Serbia, Can You Hear Us?”, a large number of police officers forcefully attacked peacefully gathered citizens. Publicly available information indicates that police used force against demonstrators, members of the first aid medical team, and journalists. The authorities blamed protesters for provoking the unrest, while eyewitnesses described the police as the main perpetrators. Several people were injured and detained that night.¹²

During the operation, police units stormed the University campus and began pushing back students and other citizens, many of whom sought shelter inside the Rectorate building and the Faculty of Sciences.¹³ After the intervention in that area ended and Dr Zoran Đinđić Street was almost entirely cleared, a platoon of Gendarmerie officers — numbering several dozen — advanced toward the Rectorate plateau, where TV N1 journalist Ksenija Pavkov and cameraman Aleksandar Milovanović were present, along with several demonstrators and first aid personnel. The journalist saw one of the gendarmes, who was wearing a mask and body armor, throw a stone toward her colleague. The cameraman, who was wearing a helmet that saved him from serious injury, later showed a dent caused by the impact — without the helmet, the blow would likely have been fatal. Pavkov pointed out to Milovanović the face of the officer who had thrown the stone. The cameraman managed to identify him and record the moment when the same gendarme threw additional objects at the gathered citizens.

A large amount of tear gas was used. The Gendarmerie's intervention against peaceful protesters and clearly identifiable medical personnel was extremely brutal. As a result, the journalist crew felt unsafe. Since the campus was surrounded by police, they could not evacuate and considered it too risky to leave by passing through the police cordon.

Damage on N1 cameraman's helmet
(photo: Ksenija Pavkov)



After eventually descending from the plateau, the cameraman, assistant, and journalist stopped in Dr Zoran Đinđić Street within the campus to film events for their program. No one else was in the street at that moment. From the direction of the Faculty of Philosophy, a group of Gendarmerie officers approached them quickly. When they were just a few steps away, one officer drew his baton, swung it toward the journalist, and before physically pushing her aside, shouted: “Move!”

Journalist Ksenija Pavkov was wearing a helmet marked “PRESS,” with her press ID clearly visible, and holding a TV N1 microphone. Cameraman Aleksandar Milovanović also had visible press markings. Neither as a crew nor individually did they obstruct the police operation (at the time of the incident, no active police action was even taking place). The street was wide enough for the officers to pass without difficulty had they wished to do so.

Ksenija Pavkov and Aleksandar Milovanović filed a complaint with the Ministry of Interior’s Internal Control Sector regarding the conduct of the Gendarmerie officers. They provided video and photographic evidence supporting their claims. The procedure is ongoing.

That same night, during the same protest, Vreme weekly journalist Katarina Stevanović, who was wearing a yellow vest marked “PRESS,” was forced to the ground by Gendarmerie officers, with her head pressed to the pavement, face down, and hands on her head. In a first-person account published in Vreme, she described the entire incident.

At one point, she and a group of people were cornered against a playground fence. Some identified themselves to the police as members of the first aid service, and the journalist pointed to her vest to show her press status. However, the officers ignored this information. Those cornered were ordered to lie down. Stevanović remained on the ground in that position for about fifteen minutes. During that time, she repeatedly — more than five times — stated that she was a journalist. She asked to contact her newsroom, but the officers told her they did not care that she was a journalist. They threatened her not to film and took her phone to check whether it was recording. Upon confirming it was not, they threw it back at her feet, saying that if she truly was a journalist, her newsroom would be contacted from the police station. As she wrote, the scene was accompanied by “various obscenities” shouted by the officers.

Then, a command came over their radios ordering them to begin identifying and detaining people. The journalist lay there for another five minutes before being told to get up. The officers demanded her ID and asked who she worked for. They told her that if everything checked out, she could leave and continue reporting. Only after taking her documents did they allow her to make a phone call, ask if she was injured, and offer medical assistance. One officer claimed they allegedly had not noticed she was a journalist. After about ten minutes, her documents were returned, and she received an apology for the incident.¹⁴

That same night, Boris Kojčinović, a student at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, who was live-streaming events from the Rectorate on the faculty's Instagram page, had his mobile phone forcibly taken from him. Professors, students, and other citizens were inside the Rectorate amphitheater. According to media reports, police checked their identities and held them inside the building for more than two hours.¹⁵

A video posted on the official page of the Students in Blockade – Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad shows a uniformed officer wearing a mask covering half his face, filming with his own phone, approaching Kojčinović and snatching his phone away. The student told Danas daily that the officer, a member of the Gendarmerie, ordered him to stop recording, claiming that filming was not allowed. Kojčinović asked why it was prohibited, noting that those present were not under arrest and no official actions were being taken against them. He received no explanation — his phone was simply taken. The officer refused to identify himself, despite being asked to do so multiple times.¹⁶

After those inside the Rectorate were released, Kojčinović was allowed to retrieve his phone.¹⁷

Among those detained inside the Rectorate building were almost all members of the editorial team of the student media outlet Blokada INFO. That evening, they were reporting from the campus about the ongoing events. Several members of the editorial team were taken to the police station and released only after giving statements.¹⁸

In an open letter addressed to the Rector of the University of Novi Sad, Dejan Madić, the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) and the Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM) stated that all editorial equipment belonging to Blokada INFO, as well as personal belongings of its members, had been trapped inside the Rectorate. The letter further claimed that the Gendarmerie and officers of the Ministry of Interior entered the Rectorate at the rector's request. The signatories strongly protested against such actions and demanded the immediate return of the confiscated technical equipment and personal items to Blokada INFO.¹⁹

Journalist of that outlet, Iva Galicki, explained in a statement for NUNS that they had been streaming the events live and had taken shelter inside the Rectorate after assessing that the situation was becoming dangerous. Throughout, they were wearing vests marked "press" and carried journalist IDs.²⁰



Gendarmerie cordon intervening in Novi Sad on 05. Sep. 2025. (photo: Gavriilo Andrić)

During the night, while reporting on the police dispersal of demonstrators along the quay, 021.rs portal journalist Emir Kahrimanović was attacked. As described by the newsroom, at one point, a police charge began. Trying to flee, Kahrimanović tripped and fell. While he was lying on the ground, a police officer kicked him. In the video published by the portal, Kahrimanović can be heard repeatedly shouting that he is a journalist before falling down. He stated that he was wearing a press vest and had shown his press card multiple times.²¹

That night, the leader of the movement Love, Faith, Hope (Ljubav, vera, nada), Nemanja Šarović, was reporting for Zrenjanin-based television station KTV. During a live broadcast, a police officer grabbed his microphone and smashed it on the ground. The KTV logo was clearly visible on the microphone, but it did not seem to matter to the officer. He persistently demanded to see Šarović's press card and shoved him twice in the process.²²

The professional public reacted to the numerous attacks on journalists during the protests "Serbia, Can You Hear Us?". Journalistic associations and media organizations demanded the urgent identification and sanctioning of all those responsible for the use of excessive force; the prompt return of confiscated journalistic equipment; an immediate end to all forms of intimidation and unlawful identity checks of journalists; the prevention of restrictions on filming police actions in public spaces; and the consistent observance of the standards of necessity and proportionality in the use of force.²³

Attack on a Beta News Agency Journalist

While reporting from a protest held in Leskovac on September 6, organized in solidarity with citizens of Novi Sad against whom force had been used the previous day, a Beta news agency journalist was nearly run over by an unidentified young man on a bicycle. The journalist avoided serious injury only thanks to her quick reaction. The police identified the young man and removed him from the gathering.²⁴

“Anti-Blockade” Rallies as Rallies Against Journalists

According to the Independent Journalists’ Association of Serbia, Luka Pešić — reporter and student of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, University of Belgrade — was detained on September 28 during an “anti-blockade” rally for filming police officers at work. Pešić had a press ID card, which he showed to the officers during the arrest.²⁵

In a statement given to NUNS, Pešić said that after the protest ended, a group of men in civilian clothes attacked him and his colleagues. Uniformed police soon followed, forcefully knocking him to the ground. The police attempted to seize his phone but failed, as Pešić managed to hand it to his colleagues.²⁶ In footage posted on student social media accounts, the rough police action is clearly visible, and a female voice can be heard shouting that Pešić has a press ID.²⁷

The arrest of student journalist Luka Pešić
(photo: Gavriilo Andrić)



Pešić stated that the police justified his arrest by saying he “started running,” though he believes the real reason was that he had recorded police activity. His camera was temporarily confiscated at the station; officers removed the memory card, reviewed the footage in a separate room out of his sight, and deleted part of it without his consent. He was told that he was not allowed to contact a lawyer during the first four hours of detention.²⁸ He was not formally informed of any charges or reasons for arrest, and police reportedly failed to obtain a prosecutor’s order for the confiscation of his equipment. He was released after the prosecutor determined there were no grounds for criminal prosecution ex officio.²⁹

While Pešić was being held in the police station, a number of citizens gathered in solidarity to express discontent with police actions. Photojournalist Gavriilo Andrić, who was covering the scene, was stopped and asked for identification without being given any specific reason.

The professional public reacted to the detention of Luka Pešić.³⁰

In the database maintained by the SafeJournalists network, the ID check of Gavriilo Andrić was recorded as an act of pressure on media professionals.³¹

TV N1 journalist Tamara Stojanović was physically prevented from reporting from one of the “anti-blockade” rallies. After she asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Marko Đurić, about his reasons for attending the event, an unknown man first pushed away her microphone, then shoved her, and a woman hit her with a fan. The incidents were recorded by the TV N1 camera, as the journalist was broadcasting live.³²

At one of the protests in Belgrade, Jovana Trošić, a journalist with the student info-portal Puls generacije, was denied passage through a police cordon and prevented from reporting from the area designated for journalists.³³

The Journalists’ Association of Serbia reported that members of the Gendarmerie prevented Vojnet production journalist Staša Keneški from moving freely while covering the protests in Novi Sad. The incident took place in the Slana Bara neighborhood. The journalist was told she was not allowed to approach the crowd because she was not wearing a press vest.³⁴ Before the restriction was issued, she said, a Gendarmerie officer grabbed her by the arm, pushed her, and told her she had to obey orders. At the time, Keneški was holding her UNS press card and had identified herself as a journalist. The officer let her go only after she repeated her professional role on site.³⁵

Illegal Parking and Proper Collusion

The KTV news crew was repeatedly obstructed while broadcasting live from the “Protest Against Blockades” rally. At the beginning, the police demanded that they move away from the gathered members and supporters of the Serbian Progressive Party.³⁶ Later, Nemanja Šarović — leader of Love, Faith, Hope and KTV correspondent — was asked to repark a car deemed “illegally parked.” Šarović explained that the vehicle was not his property. Although the officer insisted, Šarović continued reporting.³⁷

After the broadcast ended, KTV owner and director Danijel Radić and Šarović went to the car, where they found a large police presence waiting for them. Filming the scene, Šarović noted that among those present were the head of the traffic police, three inspectors, and nine uniformed officers, with one police van and two patrol cars parked nearby.³⁸

According to Šarović’s statements on social media, the police spent hours attempting to seize Radić’s car. The KTV newsroom reported that the person who had reparked the vehicle was detained for 48 hours on suspicion of committing the criminal offense of “Assault on an Official Performing Official Duties.” Šarović denied the allegations and stated that the police’s main goal was to seize the KTV director’s car. On Instagram, he informed the public that a police patrol had been stationed overnight in front of Radić’s house, where his pregnant wife and ten-month-old baby were at the time.³⁹

The Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM) strongly condemned such police conduct and reminded the public of previous attacks to which KTV journalists had already been exposed.⁴⁰

More about the attacks on KTV and the pressures faced by its newsroom can be found in the Monitoring of the Media Scene in the Republic of Serbia for [March](#) and [April](#) 2025.

Confiscation of the Phone of Beta News Agency Reporter Božidar Milovac

While reporting on a forceful police intervention that took place in front of the Faculty of Sport and Physical Education in Novi Sad, during the commemoration of ten months since the collapse of the canopy, Beta agency reporter Božidar Milovac — who was clearly marked as press, wearing a yellow vest — had his phone confiscated. After he recorded a Gendarmerie unit, a police officer approached him and, as Milovac told the portal Cenzolovka, addressed him harshly. Rudely stating that he was not allowed to film, the officer seized his phone. According to Milovac, the incident lasted about one or two minutes, after which the phone was returned.⁴¹

A Zoomer portal journalist managed to record the officer’s exchange with the reporter. According to that outlet, one member of the Gendarmerie asked their reporter and the Beta journalist whether they had press IDs, claiming that “vests mean nothing.”⁴²

The professional public reacted to the incident, stressing that the seizure of a journalist’s phone is unacceptable and that journalists must be guaranteed the conditions necessary for field reporting.⁴³

Confiscation of the Phone of Glas Zaječara Journalist Miljko Stojanović

While filming a physical altercation between city assembly members and private security personnel in the Zaječar City Assembly — an incident that broke out after a smoke bomb was thrown into the hall — Glas Zaječara journalist Miljko Stojanović briefly had his mobile phone seized by security staff. Stojanović reported the incident to the police and to the head of the Zaječar Police Department.⁴⁴

During September, Stojanović also received threatening messages from the Facebook page “Zaječarski blok.” The threats were posted as part of a video filled with offensive and dangerous comments, including one stating that Stojanović should be “caught and quartered in the middle of the square.”

The case was reported to the Special Prosecutor’s Office for High-Tech Crime,⁴⁵ and the professional public promptly reacted to the threats.⁴⁶



Illustration: Ihon Karawan, Unsplash

Attack on Nenad Nešović, Editor-in-Chief of the N2 Portal

The SafeJournalists network database also recorded an attack on journalist Nenad Nešović. He reported to the police that while covering an event in Čačak, he was struck on his left shoulder by Gvozden Nikolić, editor-in-chief and owner of Glas Zapadne Srbije. Nešović told NUNS that the street was closed to traffic and that he was walking down the middle of the road when Nikolić approached and hit him. Afterward, he heard Nikolić's son say: "Is this the one who sued us? I'll remember him."

After finishing his coverage, Nešović went to the police and then to the emergency center, from where he was referred to the orthopedics department, where a contusion of the left shoulder was diagnosed.⁴⁷ Nikolić denied Nešović's claims, saying that he did not know him and had never even met him.⁴⁸

ANEM and NUNS called on the prosecution to act promptly on the report, noting that the journalist had been on duty at the time of the assault.⁴⁹

Threats Directed at the Newsrooms of TV N1 and Vranje News, Journalists and Professors Smiljana Milinkov and Dinko Gruhonjić, and Razglas News Editor-in-Chief Žarko Bogosavljević

The TV N1 newsroom again received a large number of threatening messages during September, in the form of comments posted on their website.

A user identified as "B" repeatedly wrote messages such as: "N1 Ustaše, die."⁵⁰

A user signing as "Petrović Dušan" wrote: "If only the police would storm N1, arrest and severely beat the traitors who work there!!! Let the citizens come with pitchforks."⁵¹

A user signing as "Bojan" wrote: "I'm warning you — if the Expo is canceled, the building where you work will no longer exist, I guarantee it," and, "Tell your admin bots to call the police if they want — you've been warned."⁵² A user signing as "Dragan" wrote: "We'll destroy you, you fascist scum. Ustaše filth, now we'll hunt you down one by one. Ustaše, go to Brussels, Strasbourg. Suck off Western MPs, we'll fuck your whole family. We'll destroy this N1, you Ustaša scum of reporters. If you think you'll block schools and universities, we've prepared a nasty surprise for you — the hunt for Ustaše begins, you'll experience it, you'll see, you trash."⁵³ A user signing as "Đorđe Radojičić" wrote: "Don't form an alliance against Estonia, we'll fuck your Ustaša mothers for everything, you monsters, and the N1 bastards will hang."⁵⁴ A user signing as "Uroš" wrote: "To the editor of this article: you're on the list, write while you still can."⁵⁵

According to TV N1's internal records, from November last year until the second half of September this year, their reporters and TV crews have been targets of physical attacks and threats more than 40 times.⁵⁶

The professional public reacted to the threats addressed to the TV N1 newsroom.⁵⁷ All threats were reported to the Special Prosecutor's Office for High-Tech Crime.

The editorial office of Vranje News informed the public that an individual—previously blocked from their official social media profile for posting inappropriate comments and spreading hate speech—had threatened them with physical violence over the phone. The person stated that they would seize and destroy the camera of the Vranje News crew at the first opportunity in the field, claiming this would “compensate” for being unable to post comments on their official profile. The newsroom reported that they had warned the caller that such statements constituted a criminal threat and that they would report the incident to the competent authorities, but the individual ignored their warning.⁵⁸

The threats were reported to the Special Prosecutor’s Office for High-Tech Crime, and the Standing Working Group for the Safety of Journalists’ contact points in the prosecution and police were informed.⁵⁹

Journalists’ associations and media organizations demanded that the perpetrator’s identity be urgently established and that they be prosecuted.⁶⁰

Smiljana Milinkov, journalist, professor, and head of the Department of Media Studies at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, received a threat via her official email account. The message read: “The Black Hand has marked you.” Fearing for her safety, Milinkov reported the threat to the police. An official report was drawn up in the form of a complaint, which will be forwarded to the competent prosecutor’s office.⁶¹

The professional public reacted strongly to the threat.⁶²

Dinko Gruhonjić, journalist and professor at the same faculty, received threats both via a text message to his private phone and through a letter sent to the faculty’s address. An unknown individual who had previously called him sent a message saying: “Aleksandar, send us salads, there’ll be meat — we’ll slaughter the CROatians!!! Death to the Gruhonjić family!!!!”⁶³ The letter, signed “Greetings from Ratko Mladić,” described Gruhonjić as “a Ustaša filled with incurable hatred” and read: “And you, Ustaša, stop barking, pack up and go to your Ustaša NDH Croatia—your lovely homeland—and spread your wisdom there. I’ll f*** everything in your house. Do you, Ustaša, realize that the time will soon come for you to pay for all the evil you’ve done to the Serbian people!? So shut your Ustaša mouth before it’s too late!”⁶⁴

The threats were reported to the competent prosecutor’s office, and once again, the professional public reacted sharply.⁶⁵

On his X account, Žarko Bogosavljević [posted](#) threats he had received online: “Your end will come too, Goebbels’ bastards. Tick, tock, tick, tock!” and “...I fought in the war for four years defending my Serbian people... When I find you, I’ll beat you, break every bone in your body, you scum.”

Bogosavljević did not report the threats, stating that he refrains from doing so due to a lack of trust in the institutions.

More on the attacks he has faced can be found in the [Monitoring of the Media Scene in the Republic of Serbia for August 2025](#).



Pressures targeting BIRN journalist Radmilo Marković; Tatjana Lazarević, editor-in-chief of KoSsev; Tamara Radovanović, journalist of Južne vesti; and Filip Švarm, editor-in-chief of the weekly Vreme

During a live broadcast, Informer TV editor-in-chief Dragan J. Vučićević commented on a post made by BIRN journalist Radmilo Marković on X. In a tirade full of insults and hate speech, Vučićević said that he “felt like finding him somewhere and strangling him like a kitten, and then serving the sentence with pleasure.”⁶⁶

The Independent Journalists’ Association of Serbia (NUNS) emphasized that this threat was part of a week-long smear campaign against journalists.⁶⁷

The professional community condemned Vučićević’s behavior, warning that such aggressive and inflammatory speech could endanger journalists’ safety.⁶⁸

Journalists’ associations strongly reacted to the pressure faced by Tatjana Lazarević, editor of KoSsev, and Tamara Radovanović, journalist of Južne vesti.⁶⁹

According to NUNS, Radoica Radomirović, former deputy minister in the Kosovo government and leader of the political group “Novo lice – Narodna pravda,” reacted aggressively to a question posed by Lazarević following an address by Serbian MP Miloš Parandilović in Kosovska Mitrovica. After Lazarević responded via SMS about the pressure her outlet was facing, Radomirović replied with insults and accused her of being “an outpost of the criminal organization SL.”⁷⁰

A day after she reviewed documents obtained from Niš Waterworks under the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance for a story on party-based employment in public companies, journalist Tamara Radovanović was targeted in a Niš TV segment titled “Editor’s Comment.” During the broadcast, it was stated that “very soon, it will be revealed where her close and distant relatives work.”

A member of the Main Board of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), Siniša Vučinić, published a series of insults and slander against journalist Filip Švarm on Instagram, calling him “a proven Ustaša and pedophile” and urging the public to “resist the blockers and pro-NATO opposition,” labeling them as “traitors to the Serbian people, potential killers, Ustaše, and terrorists.” Vučinić also branded media outlets N1, Nova, Danas, and Vreme as “terrorist and fascist,” accusing them of “promoting and inciting evil.”⁷¹ A few days earlier, during a live broadcast on Informer TV, he claimed to have information that “the blockers” were planning the assassination of student Pavle Cicvarić.

The professional public harshly condemned Vučinić’s statements.⁷²

Targets: “Mental Gymnastics” and “The Good, the Bad, the Evil”

Due to security concerns, authors of the satirical show *Mentalno razgibavanje* (Mental Gymnastics), Marko Stepanović and Srđan Jovanović, have relocated to Ljubljana, from where the new season will be broadcast.⁷³

Marko Vidojković and Nenad Kulačin, hosts of the show *Dobar, loš, zao* (The Good, the Bad, the Evil), had their YouTube channel “Ućutati nećemo” and PayPal account for donations hacked and taken over. According to Vidojković and Kulačin, within a short time, several gaming-hack tutorial videos were uploaded to their channel, and much of their published content was deleted. Since no ransom was demanded, the authors concluded that the attack was motivated by their journalistic work.⁷⁴

The case was reported to the Special Prosecutor’s Office for High-Tech Crime.

Dismissed Criminal Complaint by Miljko Stojanović, Journalist of Glas Zaječara

The Basic Public Prosecutor’s Office in Zaječar dismissed the criminal complaint filed by journalist Miljko Stojanović concerning the incident in May 2025 in Jelašnica, during an SNS campaign event, when reporters from TV N1 and Glas Zaječara were physically prevented from reporting on the visit of President Aleksandar Vučić. On that occasion, Stojanović’s mobile phone was seized.⁷⁵ (See more in the [Media Scene Monitoring for May 2025](#).)

The prosecutor’s office determined that the reported act could not be treated as a criminal offense subject to public prosecution, informing Stojanović that he could pursue the case through a private lawsuit. He was entitled to file an objection to the decision.⁷⁶

According to the ruling, the man named in the complaint—who served as a steward at the event—claimed that he had “asked” Stojanović to leave, had taken his phone only because the journalist was “recording directly into his face, near his eyes,” and that he had informed him that the phone would be returned. Police officers present stated that they had not observed anyone seizing the journalist’s phone or otherwise obstructing him.⁷⁷ Stojanović described the conduct of the authorities as “a disgrace,” adding that he unfortunately expected such an outcome.⁷⁸

Dismissed Criminal Complaint in the Case of the Attack on Insajder Journalist Stefan Miljuš

Public Prosecutor Aleksandar Gavrić of the First Basic Public Prosecutor's Office informed journalist Stefan Miljuš that his criminal complaint regarding the attack he suffered during the May 1, 2025 protest had been dismissed. The journalist was advised that he had the right to file an objection.⁷⁹

(More on the attack in the Monitoring of the [Media Scene in the Republic of Serbia for May 2025](#).)

Threats Made Through the SOS Hotline

Veran Matić, member of the Permanent Working Group for the Safety of Journalists and coordinator of ANEM's SOS hotline for reporting harassment and attacks on media workers, filed a criminal complaint against an unidentified person who had repeatedly called the hotline over the past several years to make threats. The prosecution identified and interviewed the individual, who claimed to have called because he believed the hotline was intended for "anyone with a problem." It was confirmed that he is receiving psychiatric treatment, and the prosecution determined that there was no criminal offense subject to public prosecution.



III MONITORING OF THE PROCESS OF ADOPTING NEW LAWS

A large number of civil society organizations⁸⁰ published a joint [document](#) regarding the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, and the Law on Juvenile Offenders and Criminal-Legal Protection of Juveniles. These organizations pointed out that, in the context of a deep political and social crisis, the Government of the Republic of Serbia lacks the legitimacy to undertake comprehensive changes to key criminal laws — especially not within a minimum period of 20 days and through a non-transparent consultation process.

Accordingly, they demanded: the urgent withdrawal of the draft laws from the legislative procedure; the organization of a genuine public debate and public presentation with sufficient time for review; the inclusion of professional experts as well as other interested communities and individuals; the preparation of a report following the conclusion of the public debate (in line with EU standards and practices); consideration of the views of the National Convention on the EU; and the rejection of provisions that could pave the way for repression, undermine victim protection, or erode legal certainty.⁸¹

The National Convention on the European Union warned that the proposed amendments would not improve criminal legislation but would instead lower the current level of guaranteed rights. It therefore called on the Ministry of Justice to suspend the amendment process until the existing crisis and social polarization subside and a minimum level of mutual trust among relevant stakeholders is restored.⁸²

Regarding freedom of expression, the most problematic proposed changes were identified in relation to the following criminal offences: Unauthorized Eavesdropping and Recording of Conversations, Disclosure of Personal or Family Circumstances, and Endangering Traffic by Dangerous Conduct or Means, as well as the introduction of new offences such as Disclosure of Classified Information, Publication of Material Advocating the Commission of a Criminal Offence, and Approval, Denial or Minimization of a Criminal Offence.

The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) emphasized that the 20-day deadline was inappropriately short and called for a public debate that would include both experts and the broader interested public. The association submitted comments to the Ministry of Justice on the Draft Law on Amendments to the Criminal Code, stressing that some of the proposed provisions lower the existing level of human rights protection.⁸³

IV IMPLEMENTATION OF EXISTING REGULATIONS

Project Co-Financing

Journalist associations and media organizations (ANEM, UNS, NUNS, PU Lokal Pres, and the Media Association) responded to the Call for Registration in the Register of Candidates for Commission Members through the Unified Information System (JIS), published by the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications on September 8, 2025.⁸⁴

In a joint statement, the associations noted that on August 25 they had requested a number of changes in the evaluation criteria, but that the only modification introduced into the JIS concerned a clarification regarding the category of published scientific and professional papers and participation in conferences.

The associations reminded the Ministry that their earlier proposal had included, among other things: differentiated scoring for master's and doctoral degrees; more refined segmentation of work experience scoring; elimination of scoring for professional papers and conferences, which had been subject to abuse and manipulation in previous processes; reduction in the number of points awarded for scientific papers and participation in academic conferences; exclusion from scoring of participation in project writing or implementation, as such activities are impossible to verify; and exclusion from scoring of previous participation in project evaluation commissions.

Based on its analysis of data from the Unified Information System (JIS) of the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications, the Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM) determined that, out of 174 public calls for co-financing media content in Serbia, eight local self-governments had still not allocated funds designated for media, while in Surdulica, no public call had been announced, as the 2024 process was still ongoing.⁸⁵

V SLAPP LAWSUITS TARGETING JOURNALISTS AND MEDIA

The Commercial Court in Belgrade issued a first-instance judgment rejecting the lawsuit filed by the publisher of the daily newspaper Kurir, which sought to compel the publishers of the KRIK portal and the daily Danas to pay compensation for alleged damages resulting from the publication of analyses by the Raskrikavanje portal, titled “Nearly 1,200 Manipulations and Disinformation on the Front Pages of Five Newspapers Last Year” ([„Na naslovnicama pet novina skoro 1.200 manipulacija i dezinformacija prošle godine”](#)) and “More Than 800,000 Euros from the Budget Last Year for Media That Spread Disinformation” ([„Više od 800 hiljada evra iz budžeta prošle godine za medije koji nas dezinformišu”](#)). In its lawsuit and throughout the proceedings, the plaintiff claimed that the defendants were competitors and that, by publishing the aforementioned analyses about Kurir’s reporting practices, they had engaged in unfair market competition. The lawsuit sought non-material damages of 11,000,000 RSD. The publisher of Kurir filed an appeal against the court’s decision.

The same publisher had previously initiated proceedings against several other entities: the Network for Investigating Crime and Corruption (KRIK), the Slavko Ćuruvija Foundation, the Cenzolovka portal, the company Dan Graf d.o.o. Belgrade (publisher of Danas), and the Center for Intercultural Communication. More information on these proceedings can be found in the [Monitoring of the Media Scene in the Republic of Serbia for May 2025](#) and [August 2025](#).

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