

VII CONCLUSION

Instead of the conclusion, we will convey here some details from the Report on the Media Situation in Serbia, compiled based on 27 indicators of the Council of Europe, measuring the freedom of expression and freedom of the media. The results of that Report –a product of the combined efforts of the Civil Rights Defenders, ANEM, NUNS, NDNV and Local Press – were released in the publication “Serbia Media Scene VS European Standards” on May 18. The results of the Report are based on publicly available data and the results of the polls involving 240 editors of in chief editors of news media from 79 towns in Serbia, 69 media owners, 40 political functionaries from 10 towns in Serbia, 50 persons belonging to nine minority ethnic communities, as well as on interviews with the representatives of 26 state, regulatory and self-regulatory bodies with competences in the media sector. According to that study, merely four of the aforementioned 27 European media freedom indicators are realized in Serbia (freedom of access to the journalistic profession, freedom of access to the Internet and international media, separation of the participation in the executive branch from the professional occupation of media activities, as well as the restrictedness of the right of the media to exclusive reporting about events of public importance). As for the majority of other indicators, the legal grounds exist, but these indicators are nonetheless not fully realized or marred with problems. The most drastic deviations from European standards exist in the field of media economy and independence of the media from political influence, as well as in the area of labor and social rights and safety of journalists.

The situation that the new Government (that is yet to be formed) will face is appalling. What that government should definitely do is to put an end to the decay of the media scene by thoroughly analyzing the situation and launching the necessary reforms. Unfortunately, the media professionals are not overly optimistic. In view of the events and situations described herein, it is difficult to disprove their concerns.