

V THE DIGITALIZATION PROCESS

Although it was announced as early as in August that RTS would broadcast the Brass Festival in Guca in High Definition (HD), the first live transmission in HD occurred only on September 9th, when the RTS aired the football match between the national teams of Serbia and France from its digital multiplex broadcasting from Avala and Fruska Gora. Nevertheless, the fact remains that such broadcasting by RTS is, at the present time, in absolute contravention of the Broadcasting Law, which stipulates that the RTS will broadcast program on two networks only (the third, experimental digital network is not even mentioned). The broadcasting of the Serbia-France match is also in breach of the Digitalization Strategy adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia, since RTS is not broadcasting in the standard that the Government opted for with the Strategy. Such behavior of RTS has brought into question its obligation to provide for the development of advanced technical and technological standards in the production and broadcasting of television program, as well as to prepare and ultimately realize the plans for switching to new digital technologies. It has also created additional confusion with the viewers with respect to the standard of the format for future digital broadcasting.

VI THE PRIVATIZATION PROCESS

The process of privatization of public media outlets in Serbia has remained blocked for more than a year and a half. In the meantime, the state has created new grounds for avoiding privatization, by adopting the new Law on National Councils of National Minorities. According to the that Law, media outlets may be established by national councils, while the Republic, the autonomous provinces or units of local self-government, as founders of public media that are entirely or predominantly providing information in the minority languages, instead of privatizing such media outlets, may transfer their ownership of the media to the national council. Additional concern was created when the Minister for human and Minority Rights, Svetozar Ciplic, announced amendments to the media legislation in order to facilitate the exercise of national councils' rights from the Law on National Councils of National Minorities. In other words, it could mean the state's giving up on privatization of the remaining public media outlets.

The contradictory message the government is sending through its highest officials, as well as business conditions that are unequal and discriminating against private media, result in many problems for such media, including the ones that have been privatized before this process was stalled.

In one case, the Municipal Court in Negotin has made an inventory of the property of *Radio Television Krajina* because of a debt to employees amounting to almost one million dinars. *RTV Krajina* was privatized in November 2007. The last time the employees received their salary (for November 2008) was in March 2009. The money from the sales of the inventoried equipment was to be allotted for payment of outstanding salaries for eight employees, who have pressed charges with the court against RTV Krajina. These employees have voiced doubts that the sale of the inventoried equipment would produce enough money for them to get paid in full and claimed that they had resorted to legal means in order to stop the agony. The Director of RTV Krajina, Dejan Grujic, said that the owners of that station would find a solution to pay the outstanding salaries to their employees and that the inventoried equipment would not be sold.