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'TRAFFIC LIGHTS REPORT' 2017 **ALBANIA**

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 Framework¹ 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 Albania.

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 synthesized 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:

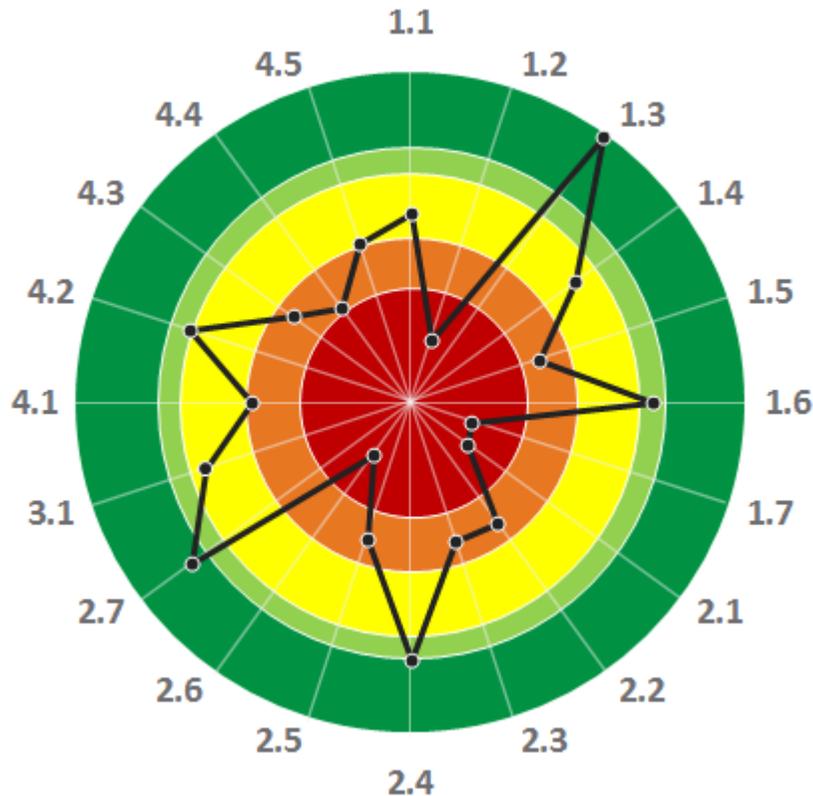
Red		The worst evaluated indicators in the region
Orange		The second worst evaluated indicators in the region
Yellow		The middle of the regional ranking
Light green		The second best evaluated indicators in the region
Green		The best evaluated indicators in the region

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 - Albania



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

Albania's Constitution is in line with Article 10 of ECHR, and freedom of speech and information through media is guaranteed by Albanian law. In practice, application of the law is uneven, given the pressure from strong media owners and politicians and owing to malfunctions in the judicial system.

According to respondents, the 2016 Constitutional Court's nullification of Article 62/3 of the Audiovisual Media Law, which had prohibited any single owner from holding more than 40 percent of a broadcast media's shares, was a move with corrupt background. The consequences for the country's broadcast media sector mean a decrease in freedom of speech in practice, as unlawful occupation of digital frequencies and massive concentration of the two broadcasters already controlling 90% of the market become legal. The lack of competition affects every aspect of the media sector and has a strong negative impact on application of the ECHR Article 10 principles.

State involvement in monitoring the application of the media legal system is non-existent. There are opposing views in Albania on the issue of introducing regulatory frameworks for online and print media. Most respondents believe that legislation in Albania is incomplete in protecting journalists and also in protecting journalists' sources.

The state authorities do not conduct assessments of the state of media freedom.

Audiovisual Media Authority (AMA) prepares reliable reports about the number of audiovisual media outlets, the number and structure of employees that they declare etc. There is progress in transparency of AMA and the regulatory authority has even taken some commendable decisions that were opposed by public institutions. The cooperation between civil society organisations and the media can be rated as good. However, there is a gap in the cooperation with state authorities. Respondents believe that public institutions need to be more open towards the media, more inclusive and more transparent.

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

The Council of Europe has organised training courses for judges to deal with the cases related to media freedom, and the results are evident. The problem is that courts delegate cases to judges randomly or "by a draw," so a case related to media freedom can be assigned to a judge who has never received training. Since the problem of delegating media cases to judges who have undergone training remains unsolved, the effects of such training programs are limited.

The courts have their own database of court cases, but information on any particular case can only be retrieved by searching case by case. The statistics from the Ministry of Justice do not comply with EU standards, but this could be resolved very easily if the political will existed. Various organisations, like the Legal and Policy Studies Institute, the Albanian Media Institute and the School of Magistrates, have offered some training courses, but it is a common belief that there is insufficient training available for judges and prosecutors in Albania related to freedom of expression and media. Moreover, in Albania, there is lack of legal experts in the field of freedom of expression and media.

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

According to respondents, low professional standards in the media in Albania are a consequence of the concentration in media ownership, which has led to widespread self-censorship and of the fact that public service RTSH is under the influence of the party in power. Therefore, few Albanian media deal with topics that are unpalatable to owners or politicians. The small number of media reports on corruption and organised crime is a consequence of financial and editorial dependence.

According to a study, journalists' responses showed that self-censorship is becoming increasingly common. Most believe that the correlation between censorship and self-censorship is high – that they practically co-exist. Journalists are poorly paid and struggle to survive in an insecure work environment. One specific impulse behind self-censorship in Albania is the lack of editors with professional integrity. They are appointed to assure that the interests of media owners are well served. The editor is there either to censure directly or to send signals to the journalists on how to report. Therefore, according to respondents, there exist two classes of journalists in Albania: those appointed directly by owners and paid very well, and a class of reporters who are paid very poorly and not always on time. This is an important cause of self-censorship.

There is a practice of government institutions sending their own footage about their activities to the media, so that journalists have lost the role of verifying, selecting and interpreting such information or events.

There are still cases of threats and intimidation of journalists, but physical harassment has decreased compared with the previous period. However, there are no cases of sanctions for state officials for harassing a journalist, a fact that tends to explain the spread of self-censorship.

The law on freedom of information has resulted in considerable progress in access to information of public character compared to the previous period. After the law was adopted in 2014, improvement was very dynamic, but it has been losing momentum lately. The Information Commissioner as an appeal body is reacting positively to the appeals submitted by journalists, but the authorities have maintained high degree of non-transparency. Most government bodies, including the Prime Minister's office, do not provide documents or information requested even when those information have no elements to be exempted from free access. The authorities still lack positive attitude towards obligation to provide information, but also there is not yet common understanding among journalists about the right to demand information from the authorities. The training courses have been conducted by investigative journalists to teach local journalists to use the law on freedom of information, and some progress has been recorded in this field. Respondents see the obstacle for efficient implementation of the law on freedom of information in the absence of sanctions imposed for public bodies and authorities who fail to provide information. Such practice with fines never actually charged to such bodies or officials makes them more and more ignorant to the provisions of the law. There have also been cases where the authorities directly threatened the Office of the Information Commissioner. Respondents are afraid that the law "is going to die" if the current practice continues.

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

In Albania, there is an Audiovisual Media Authority (AMA) that has a regulatory function only for audio and audiovisual media. The independence of AMA is compromised by the political parties' influence on the election of members of the governing body. According to the appointment procedure, three candidates for the governing body must have the support of the majority in Parliament, while three must have the support of the opposition, and the seventh member is appointed by consensus. In practice, the government interferes through members selected by the majority in Parliament, and the opposition parties intervene through other members that they have selected. The law formally guarantees the independence of the regulatory authority, but the actual implementation of the bipartisan formula exposes the regulator to political interference. According to the law, members should be appointed by the Parliament based on proposals from a range of civil society organisations, but in practice they are selected based on proposals by the political parties.

The AMA has made some progress towards professionalism and independence. It is carrying out research and monitoring of the broadcast media sector and their reports are improving. As a regulatory body, it could do more to protect media pluralism, particularly political pluralism in the broadcast media during the elections. Respondents mentioned the case of small political parties having no sufficient coverage in the media to present their political program before the elections.

Concerning the protection of public interests and media users, the legal obligations to represent political interests are prevailing over the requirements to represent the public interest.

The regulation of media ownership transparency and concentration is affected by the decision of the Constitutional Court to reject a law on media concentration. Therefore, the AMA is not in charge of media concentration. Respondents emphasized that the need to achieve transparency of funding sources for media owners is more crucial for media freedom and media integrity in Albania than media ownership transparency as such.

The AMA presents a report in the Parliament that should be approved. The AMA also publishes all the decisions accompanied by the appropriate explanation online. The regulatory authority is more financially autonomous than before, as it has succeeded in collecting the fees from the media. The report including information about fee collection is available to public. This is the biggest progress that the AMA has made recently.

Particular to Albania is the small share of government advertisements in the media market (the advertising market is dominated by large telecommunication companies). Big advertisers are very important for the survival of the media, and they thus exert an influence on editorial policy, as can be seen from the absence of critical reporting on large corporations.

In the Albanian media sector, there were practically no media entities for privatisation. The private media that now exist started from scratch.

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.

There are no programs or measures introduced by the state to stimulate quality journalism, new or online, local and alternative media, or to increase media literacy in Albania. There is not much investment in quality journalism, especially by the large broadcast media that dominate the market. According to respondents, the quality of reporting provided by the main media outlets has been declining.

There is no information on practice of filtering or blocking of internet content in Albania.

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

The relevance and reputation of the Albanian public service media, RTSH, are affected by very low audience share and lack of respect for public interest in the RTSH programming. Two main reasons behind this are strong financial dependence of the public broadcaster on the state budget and political influence resulting from the appointment procedure for the RTSH governing body (Steering Council) and director general.

Despite having multiple sources of income (licence fee collected from households, advertising revenue, revenue from renting premises and equipment), their dependence on the state budget is around 30% (direct state aid from the state budget and projects financed from the state budget). Such funding model makes RTSH deeply dependent on the state, especially in the circumstances with its surplus of employees (estimated at more than 1,000). According to respondents, the quality of RTSH programming is improving modestly, but the viewership of its TV programs remains very low – less than 10%.

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

There are no specific actions or initiatives in state institutions in Albania aimed at promotion of free speech and media diversity.

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

Regarding their obligation to file reports to state institutions, all media outlets have to submit financial data to the tax authority. In addition to that, the audiovisual media outlets are required to report on their program obligations to the Audiovisual Media Authority. Information is publicly available about media ownership structure and a media outlet's balance sheet, but it is difficult to collect the information from various registers and sources. The big problem in the field of media governance is the lack of transparency about the sources of media financing.

There is no systematic data on audience measurement for any type of media in Albania. There are sporadic data provided for TV channels by an opinion poll agency, and data collected by PR and advertising agencies, but none of these data is either transparent or verified.

Governing and performance of online media are particularly non-transparent.

There are no data on market share of the media in Albania.

Several CSOs have carried out various evaluations of media sustainability, trust in media, media freedom, media integrity or coverage of specific topics in the media. For example, BIRN Albania has monitored for three months, three TV channels and three print media concerning the ways that corruption cases are reported. Additionally, the Albanian Media Institute has evaluated how children's rights are enforced in the reporting by different media. According to respondents, the reports provided by CSOs are more credible than those that are prepared by state institutions. The knowledge and actions of civil society organisations promoting good governance can even contribute to legal changes, as happened with the law on freedom of information, which was prepared by a group of civil society organisations.

In Albania, there are no active media industry associations.

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

The Labour Code provisions are not implemented in practice, including the article stipulating “the normal duration of the weekly working time” be no longer than 40 hours. Journalists are obliged to work six days per week and for long hours. This obligation is not specified in contracts, and the contracts do not reflect the real salary. A number of journalists receive minimum wage, to enable the owner to pay the lowest rate for social insurance and taxes. In some cases, journalists receive cash payments or bank transfers, and that is treated as an honorarium and is not included in the employment contract.

Freelancing is almost non-existent in Albania, since most media exploit as much as they can their permanently employed journalists. Although most journalists have long-term contracts, job security is weak, since there are no guarantees against layoffs. The lack of good job contracts and the very poor media market in Albania produce a high demand for any job position. As a consequence, young journalists are particularly likely to accept work for a low salary. There are still journalists who work without contracts. Recently, regulation of this area has been getting harsher, and journalists usually enter into one-year contracts. Nevertheless, according to respondents, around 30% of journalists work on the black market, or do two or three jobs at the same time, and their social contributions are paid by only one of their employers.

According to the Association of Professional Journalists in Albania, several journalists have been dismissed from their jobs for publishing violations of the law by state officials. Those cases have been made public.

Such social conditions and working environment for journalists in Albania have an influence on self-censorship.

In media outlets, internal statutes have not been adopted.

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

The Code of Ethics of Albanian Media was prepared by the Albanian Media Institute in 2006, but for a number of reasons, compliance with the Code is low. An update to the Code is underway, to address the growing challenges for media ethics influenced by information technology development.

The regulatory authority has a functioning Council of Complaints.

However, in most media, “ethics has perished, because it’s profitable being unethical, very unethical.” Victims’ names, the names of molested children, stories with unnecessary pictures of homicides and crimes are commonly presented in the media.

No media outlet has adopted internal code of ethics or developed mechanisms to deal with their audience’s complaints. The failure to establish a self-regulatory system in individual media outlets has primarily been a consequence of resistance from media owners, but also of the lack of organised action by journalists themselves. However, the Albanian Media Council, established by a group of journalists from print, television, radio and online media outlets and by lawyers, aims to improve implementation of the Code of Ethics of Albanian Media.

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.

According to the recent study on journalism curricula in South East Europe, “journalism education in Albania can be obtained at five universities, three of them state and two private. All of them observe the ECTS system, based on the principle of three-year graduate degree and two-year postgraduate degree programs, but only three of the faculties (two state and one private) offer postgraduate degrees.”

At the University of Tirana as a state university, the program is designed as Journalism Studies, while the private universities mostly turned previous journalism programs into Communication and Public Relations programs. At Beder University, a private university, journalism studies can be taken, but according to the study mentioned above, “the curriculum of the three-year graduate program maintains a balance between general education and communication courses at the expense of journalistic courses.”

All university programs with journalism education incorporate courses on Media Ethics. None of them is teaching practical knowledge, except within the postgraduate courses.

Informal journalism education is provided through short-term training courses by the Albanian Media Institute and other civil society organisations with the financial support of international donor organisations. Some internal training of journalists is done in the public service media RTSH. On generally, the training courses are fewer than in previous periods. The staffing limitations and excessive workloads keep many journalists away from training programs, but there is also little demand for educated and ethical journalists.

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

In Albania, a number of journalists have not studied journalism. Moreover, even those who graduated from journalism studies are not prepared for the fieldwork.

Media outlets in Albania do not organise training courses of their own, with the exception of public service media RTSH. Media outlets are not interested in the education of their employees and sometimes even forbid journalists to attend the training courses organised by other actors. According to respondents, media owners and media managements do not understand the importance of professional training and do not seek for educated journalists with integrity, finding them less obedient.

Short-term journalism courses have been organised by the media centers (civil society organisations), but they attract limited number of journalists, and almost all training sessions take place only in Tirana.

The Albanian Media Institute organises approximately 30 training courses and capacity building events per year, in different formats. There is a need for more courses on “fact checking,” “data journalism” and “internet ethics” and more funds for such training programs are needed.

Short term benefits of training courses are limited: they improve capacities of participants, but without immediate and direct impact on quality of reporting and media freedom, which is deeply affected by censorship and self-censorship. However, from the experience of the Albanian Media Institute it can be concluded that the journalists trained by the institute over the last 20, 15 or 5 years are among the Albanian journalists who apply better professional standards.

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

There is no functional and organised media market in Albania and no transparency of media market indicators. Therefore, media management is rarely based on business plans, standards and parameters.

Media outlets lack proper human resources departments, and staff development is not done in a systematic way. There are no internal statutes to define rules and relations between media owners, management and journalists, including those related to working conditions or possibility to receive training.

2.7. Regaining audience confidence

The general population survey report shows that trust in the media in Albania is well above the regional average. As much as 64% of the population have trust or mainly have trust in the media, putting Albania in the first place in the region. That freedom of speech as a fundamental human right should be strictly protected is believed by 75% of respondents, that freedom of the media is a precondition for a free democratic society is believed by 78%, and 16% 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 the last three years, investigative journalism production in Albania has advanced considerably as a result of the support programs. The quality of investigative reporting has improved, and the application of rules and procedures in journalistic investigations has begun to provide credible reports.

The mass media publish investigative reports produced by investigative journalism centers such as BIRN, but considering the dominant tabloid format of media in Albania, these stories are squeezed in among copious trash items. Investigative journalism centers have their own publications, mostly online, as well as monthly newsletters for disseminating findings openly to the public.

The impact of investigative journalism is high especially compared with the impact of other types of journalism. Several investigative journalism stories have succeeded in raising charges against officials and judges, many tenders have been cancelled, and some stories have resulted in lawsuits against ministers or in the suspension of senior officials.

However, investigative journalism production is dependent on donor support, but often it has to be integrated into other types of media development projects to gain such financial support. Such an approach forces investigative journalists to spend considerable time on fund-raising and other project activities, in order to earn the chance to do what they want to do: journalistic investigation.

The EU investigative journalism award, organised in 2015, 2016 and 2017, has contributed to the increased quality and visibility of investigative journalism in Albania.

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

In Albania, there are no active media industry associations and no organised communication between journalists and media owners or managers.

Professional journalists' associations have limited scope without sufficient funds for operations and relying on work done on a voluntary basis. The funds available for activities of journalists' associations are occasional and limited to the projects funded by the EU or other external actors. Membership fees are not applicable. Their activities have been mainly concerned with defending journalists exposed to harassment.

It cannot be said that a productive dialogue of the journalists' associations with the authorities has been established in Albania.

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

There are no evidences of regular dialogue within the media community.

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

Association of Professional Journalists follows legal and internal procedures for reporting on own work. It also submits report to donors in case of donor-supported projects.

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

Since 2015, there has been a self-regulatory initiative set up to promote professional standards and ethics: the Albanian Media Council. It has been established with support of the Council of Europe by group of journalists from print, television, radio and online media, together with law experts. There were seven founding members and about 30 other media professionals who signed the act of founding.

The aim of the Council is to improve respect for ethical standards and implementation of the Code of Ethics of Albanian Media. Media owners have refused to take part in the Council activities.

4.5. Labour standards developed and adhered to.

There are no collective agreements in the media sector in Albania. The media companies are not applying the country's Labour Code. Many journalists and editors work without employment contracts and receive salaries with delay.

Formally, there are no obstacles to freedom of association among journalists, but associations have no any significant impact in this field. Even more, journalists themselves do not report inadequate working contracts because they risk losing their jobs.

Unionisation is discouraged in Albanian media. One respondent quoted a public invitation for foreign investors: "Come and invest in Albania: we have no unions."

4. General population survey on the perception of media freedom and media integrity²

News consumption: Even 73% of citizens in Albania follow the news on daily basis, which is the highest level in the region³. On the other hand, only 2% don't follow news at all.

Trust in the media in general: Almost two thirds of citizens trust the media in Albania, compared to 34% of those who don't. On average, 53% of citizens in the region express trust in the media and Albania is the country with the strongest trust.

Access to information through the media: Similarly, 57% of citizens in Albania state that information about relevant issues is completely accessible or accessible to a large degree through the media in their country, which is significantly higher in comparison to the regional average.

Freedom of media to report critically and express their view: Almost one half of citizens believe that journalists and media outlets in their country are free to express their views and report critically about relevant news, which is again higher compared to the regional average.

Current state of media freedom - pressure on journalists and media reporting: One fifth of people in Albania believe that there is high pressure on journalist/media reporting in their country, which is lower in comparison to the regional level. However, bigger share of them, almost 60%, believe that pressure is present to some degree.

Self-censorship: Less than one fifth of citizens believe that public officials in Albania tend to give statements which might influence journalists and/or media not to publish their information.

Importance of freedom of speech and media freedom: More than 70% of people in Albania agree that freedom of speech, as the fundamental human right, should be strictly protected, as well as that freedom of media is a precondition for a free democratic society. On the other hand, 16% state that the government should be allowed to restrict media freedom.

Awareness of investigative journalism: Almost 60% note that the media in Albania do engage in investigative reporting, at least to some extent. One fourth believe that the media engage in investigative reporting to a sufficient extent, and this percentage is among the highest in the region. 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 improves the situation in the media and helps journalists in their country – this opinion is shared by 37% of citizens in Albania.

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 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 until 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 centers, 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 (ECtHR case law) in the last year? (not included due to small number of answers)*

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

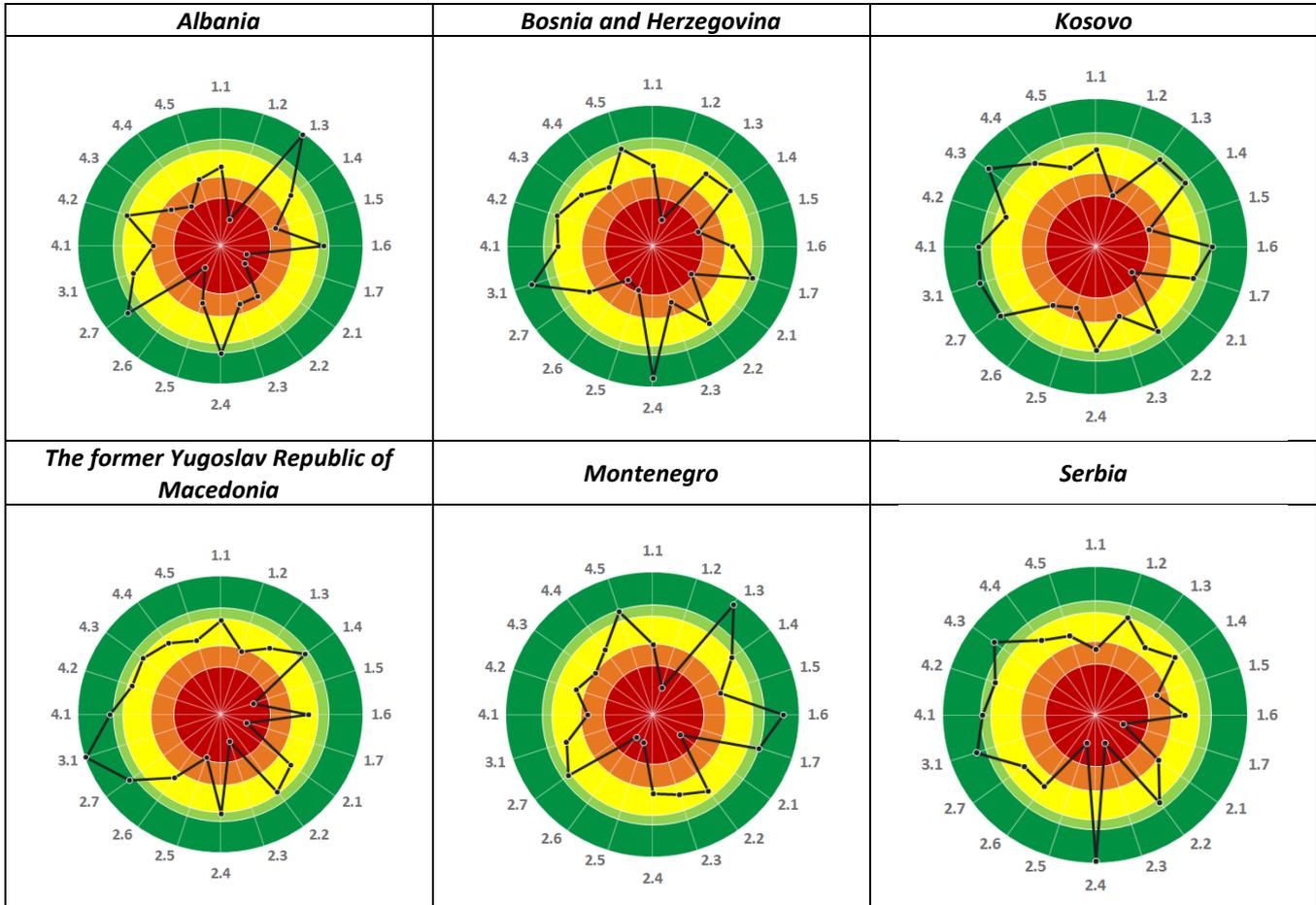
1. Have self-regulatory bodies been established in your country?
2. Do these self-regulatory bodies have relevant representation from the media community regarding the number of media outlets that have joined the self-regulatory body and submitted to its rules and procedures?
3. Do these self-regulatory 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



- 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