mass - media

SUMMARY

The New Broadcasting Code:
a Test of Government Sincerity

An obsession with changes

From 2009 to 2016, legislators proposed changes to the 2006 Broadcasting Code 22 times that resulted in 94 amendments affecting 35 of the 68 articles. As a result, the articles that remained intact are a minority of the originals approved by Parliament. While it is true that no law is perfect and that any law may be improved—particularly if those in power pursue improvement—it is equally true that any good law can be turned into a bad one and that a bad law can be made even worse.

The amendments to the code were expected and were promptly proposed. In the spring and summer of 2006 after six national conferences with the participation of international experts were held at the initiative of civil society, the draft code was 80% amended; however, 65 pages of additional amendments and the arguments for them were not accepted by the legislators.

One of the conclusions reached after a review of the Broadcasting Code by the authors in 2008 was that the law, "…is replete with general formulas guaranteeing the independence and the freedom of broadcasters, but it does not establish any clear mechanisms to actually ensure their independence and freedom.[1]" The international organization Article 19 then offered 45 recommendations for improving the code.[2] The government has indeed changed since then, but it has not heeded the recommendations coming from inside or outside the country and has not taken into account the digital age that has burst upon us. Thus, reformers intervened as they could: (i) in Article 2 on the meaning of the terms used with 16 amendments; (ii) in Article 23 on broadcasting licences with 10 amendments; and (iii) with 6 amendments each to Article 38 on penalties, Article 43 on the makeup of the Broadcasting Coordinating Council (BCC), and Article 66 on establishing and operating public broadcasters. From 1 to 4 amendments were made to the rest of the articles that were revised.

Lawmakers did not make any changes to 33 articles, among them Article 12 on protecting the national information space which succinctly states: "The range of terrestrial radio frequencies or electric radio waves is the national patrimony of the State and may only be used under legal provisions." Certainly this courageous article has protected and still protects our national information space from all harm!

Article 21 on conditions for broadcasting advertisements and teleshopping spots was also overlooked as lawmakers appear to have thought that everything is fine in the advertising market. Article 26 on ceding broadcasting licences also did not raise concern among those who wanted to bring order to the broadcasting field. Civil society has repeatedly pointed out that this article permits trade in frequencies: If you are on the good side of the BCC you are awarded several frequencies in an alleged contest and, after a few months, you can start ceding/selling them as if they were items in a marketplace. The following solution was suggested: Do not accept any cessions before the expiration of the first term of validity of a broadcasting licence.

The largest chapter in the code is Chapter VII, Public radio and television service. It consists of 16 articles and has undergone six changes—three in 2009 and three in 2016—all intended to be consistent with new laws and related to issues like gender equality in personnel policies, the powers of the Board of Observers in terms of appointing and dismissing the administration of the national public broadcaster and professional integrity.

In March 2015, a new draft Broadcasting Code signed by 11 deputies under the aegis of the Liberal Party faction was filed in Parliament. The draft was actually developed in May 2011, but what was submitted to Parliament was rather different from the initial version as several essential provisions were truncated. One example is that according to the initial draft, if budgetary shortfalls were identified at the end of the term of the top management of the national public broadcaster (Teleradio Moldova), they were to be covered from the government's reserve fund. The authors' rationale was as follows: The government has the legal obligation and sufficient authority to supervise the management of finances by Teleradio Moldova so as not to allow large deficits. Thus, a mechanism for mutual accountability by the government and the company's management was proposed. The provision under consideration in 2015 was, however, rephrased such that deficits were to be recovered from the company's budget as before. In other words, changes were made without changing anything. In fact, a company president leaving office with huge outstanding debts was "punished" by either being assigned to a diplomatic mission or included in party lists for various elections. It is logical that a new president comes in to manage the company, not to clean up a mess left behind by a predecessor. We consider that the management of public finances by the public broadcaster should be settled conclusively.

The truncated and somewhat outdated draft (European norms do not stand still like Moldovan legislators do) was voted on in the first reading on 1 July 2016. In addition, two draft amendments were proposed after the wave of aggressive foreign propaganda that invaded us following the armed conflict unleashed in neighboring Ukraine. Parliament voted on them in the first reading, but despite the manifestly suspicious haste in presenting them, the drafts were not voted on in the second reading before the vacation.

[1]   Codul audiovizualului al Republicii Moldova: analize şi comentarii (The Broadcasting Code of the Republic of Moldova: analyses and comments), - Ch.: Arc, 2008 (F.E.-P. „Tipografia Centrală"), - p. 66

[2]   idem – p. p. 95-99

The mania for change reappeared when the legislators returned after the holidays. A new draft amending the current code quickly appeared on the initiative of the BCC. The proposal was to supplement Article 2 with a new concept: audio-visual media service on demand. The motivation in the explanatory note was the need to harmonize national legislation with Directive 2010/13/ EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010. We offer two remarks in this regard: a) the concept in question is contained in the new draft Broadcasting Code and b) on 25 May 2016, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a proposal for a "Directive for amending Directive 2010/13/EU on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audio-visual media services in view of changing market realities"[3] which should have been consulted for the sake of genuine, not alleged, harmonization between national and community legislation.

A flurry of empty promises

In 2009 when a new government was installed, respected international organizations still qualified us as a "country without a free press," so the new administration had to undertake swift and firm action which it did judging by the action plans of Filat Government 1, Filat Government 2, the Leancă Government, the Gaburici Government, the Streleț Government and finally, the Filip Government.

An overview of these action plans in the broadcasting field leads to the conclusion that their objectives and action priorities were and still are focused precisely on the pressing issues faced by domestic media.

A major objective in the action plan for 2011, for example, was to adopt the new Broadcasting Code which was not done.

An analysis by civil society in 2013 on how governments since 2009 had honored their commitments to mass media revealed that not more than 20% of them had been achieved.

In 2015, Leancă Government came up with a new program of activities for 2015–2018 that was presented to Parliament on 12 February. Chapter XIII, Mass Media, provides in paragraph 4 for "adopting a new Broadcasting Code."

Parliament voted that government down and a new government led by Chiril Gaburici was quickly established. On 18 February 2015, the government's program was presented at the plenary session of Parliament and voted on. Again in Article XIII, Mass Media, paragraph 4 we find the same commitment to adopting a new broadcasting code.

Less than half a year after its investiture, the Gaburici Government fell and in late July the new Cabinet of Ministers led by Prime Minister Streleț and its program of activities were put to a vote in Parliament. The mass media section was again numbered XIII, but paragraph 4 was longer this time: "Adopting a new Broadcasting

Code in line with the resolutions of the Council of Europe and with EU directives."

Despite its increased length, Prime Minister Streleț's paragraph 4 had a life span of less than half a year.

On 20 January 2016, the current government (nicknamed "nocturnal") was invested and came up with a new/old governance program. Its mass media section is now XV, but paragraph 4 still provides for, "The adoption of a new broadcasting code in accordance with the resolutions of the Council of Europe, European Union directives, European best practices and the recommendations of development partners." This wording is even more pretentious than that of previous governments and adds six words, all of them very promising. Progress is imminent!

Good intentions with bad effects

We appreciate the good intentions of the authorities to put broadcasting outlets at the service of citizens; we deplore, however, their actual effects. The following is just a short list of those effects on the long road to implementing "improved" broadcasting legislation:

- nearly two-thirds of the total of 120 broadcasters are concentrated in the capital city;

- local/regional broadcasters are lacking in a third of districts;

- major television stations are in fact the properties of political parties or are politically affiliated;

- most of the top 15 TV stations are dominated, in terms of content, by broadcasts produced in Russia;

- the level of concentration (audience share and market share) among the top three owners ranges from 44% to 54% in terrestrial TV and, respectively, from 63% to 65% in cable TV and IPTV;

- the national public broadcaster is still underfunded;

- the share of the turnover of all local/regional broadcasters amounts to not more than 3.8% of the total national broadcasters' turnover;

- the transition to digital terrestrial television started when it was expected to end; Multiplex 1 reveals a shortage of educational programs and, consequently, the deficiencies of the policy for managing this process;

- contrary to legal provisions, the composition of the BCC and of the Board of Observers is still determined based on political criteria;

- etc., etc., etc.

A final question: Where does the road paved with good intentions lead?

Ion BUNDUCHI

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[3] http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/?fuseaction=list&coteId=1&year=2016&number=287&version=ALL&language=ro

Demands and Aspirations in terms of Access to Information

The Law of the Republic of Moldova on Access to Information[1] adopted on 11 May.2000 was one of the first in this field in former Soviet Union countries. It was at the time a valuable and much lauded achievement. Meanwhile, our Eastern neighbors have in their turn adopted laws in this area that in many cases are more exigent than ours.

The Law on Access to Information 16 years after entry into force

It is well known that access to information is difficult and that the law is not properly enforced. Journalists often face abusive refusals or evasions when asking for information, or they get standard responses after already generous time limits are exceeded or responses on closing dates, or they are charged a fee for certain categories of information. A telling example is the request for information about tenders conducted from 2014 to 2016 submitted by the Association of Independent Press (API) to the Moldovan Post whose paraphrased response[2] was as follows: "We shall not give you the requested information because: 1) We are not providers of official information; 2) Even if we were, we would not provide you the respective information because it is a trade secret; 3) If it were not a trade secret, we would not provide it to you anyway because it contains personal data." API has since won[3] a lawsuit on this case in the court of first instance.

We must acknowledge that throughout these 16 years, much work has been done to disseminate and secure the enforcement of this law. The judicial system was enriched in 2007 with a judgment by the Supreme Court of Justice concerning lawsuits related to access to official information[4] that in practice has had a positive influence on judges, and again in 2008–2009 with a law on transparency in decision making.[5] The latter currently has a narrow application with respect to its requirement for prior publication on websites but is less narrow with respect to requirements for other ways of involving the population in making appropriate and necessary decisions.

Meanwhile, the world has changed; we live in the information age and our demands have increased. The law, however, has not changed substantially in all these years; the minor changes that have been made have been regressive. Thus, after 16 years in force,

we wonder if the law previously so lauded remains as good and progressive as it was and is not outdated.

Draft amendments to the law

For the sake of progress, civil society is presently promoting a draft amendment[6] to the law that was adopted in the first reading by Parliament on 28 July 2016. The adoption of this draft (i) will facilitate and improve the procedure for filing requests for access to information, (ii) will reduce the time limit for providing information from "not later than 15 working days from the date when the request was filed" (currently stipulated) to a maximum of 10 calendar days and (iii) will toughen the penalties established in the Contravention Code. This draft follows a strategy of taking small steps that are easy to promote and implement; however, we might expect that things will remain as they are even after the adoption and entry into force of the amendment. Currently the law is selectively enforced; the provisions that do not generate any problems are the ones that are respected. Access to information remains a serious problem for investigative journalists though they periodically succeed with help from certain professional organizations in challengiing refusals in court and in initiating strategic litigation. For ordinary citizens, the situation is no better. Their only alternative is to give up as they usually do not have the time or means for any form of fight.

Shortening the maximum time limit of 15 working days to 10 calendar days is in line with the spirit of our times. The example of our eastern neighbor Ukraine that established by law a 5-day time period might be pointed out to those who are against this change.

On the other hand, we cannot overlook the needs of those who are "on the other side of the barricade." When you hold public office and have to execute the tasks inherent in it but instead find yourself writing responses to various requests for information from morning to evening, this is not good either. If public servants change their priorities, it involves public money and is done at the expense of the population. In fact, most countries face an acute problem of abusive requests (massive numbers filed simultaneously) for information, and provisions are established to protect the authorities. In Moldova, the problem of abusive requests has never been discussed, therefore we assume that the authorities have not faced such a challenge yet.

Needs and solutions

All these problems—those of citizens, of journalists, and of public officials busy with their core tasks—can be solved cheaply and successfully by means of online publications. A transparent and accessible system should be set up to this end.

[1] http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=311759

[2] http://www.moldovacurata.md/upload/raspuns_Posta_Moldovei_1.PDF

[3] http://www.moldovacurata.md/upload/hot_fond_1.jpg

[4] http://jurisprudenta.csj.md/search_hot_expl.php?id=92

[5] http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=329849

[6] http://www.parliament.md/ProcesulLegislativ/Proiectedeactelegislative/tabid/61/LegislativId/3118/language/ro-RO/Default.aspx

No doubt the authorities might even now claim that they publish everything on their websites and that e-government is a successful project in Moldova. Indeed, in many cases if you have the link, you can discover that what you were looking for is posted on a website, but trying to find it by yourself is another matter. The information is posted chaotically and laws, drafts, and resolutions are not identified by keywords in their texts but by number and date of adoption. The websites of public institutions in Moldova are in fact useful for themselves in order to promote their images but are unfriendly to enquiring citizens.

In the information age, amendments to the Law on Access to Information should primarily have this goal: Everything should be posted on the website and everything should be easy to find using logical structure, keywords, and available search engines. Documents containing information with limited accessibility should be redacted (for example, de-personalized) so they can be made accessible to the public.

In fact, we have a public institution (Center for Electronic Governance) in charge of e-government that has made really great progress in terms of online platforms and services, but we also have other public institutions that should be concerned about access to information, e.g., the National Center for Personal Data Protection and the Ombudsman. The Center for Electronic Governance is concerned only with the technical side of the process while the National Center for the Protection of Personal Data is concerned with preventing the possible dissemination of data and the Ombudsman, empowered with all the rights in this regard, just passes over problems in this field. Either center could be assigned "content" responsibilities to make them really concerned and responsible for the protection of the right to information. The engagement of the Center for Electronic Governance would be appropriate because its purpose is to improve the quality of governance by applying information and communication technologies that in the information age facilitate access to information.

The engagement of the National Center for Personal Data Protection would also be appropriate because at the moment it is mainly concerned with protecting personal data without considering the importance and the weight of access to them. If this center were put in the position of protecting the right to information too, it might have a more balanced perspective.

International standards in terms of access to information: reality and expectations

Since the Republic of Moldova became an independent state, we have endeavored to implement international standards including conventions, treaties, case law and recommendations accepted at the global or European levels. In this way, we have always had benchmarks and clear targets to achieve. In terms of access to official documents, we can only be inspired by the laws of other countries and choose them as models. The Council of Europe

Convention on Access to Official Documents[7] (CETS no. 205) was issued in 2009, 9 years after our law was adopted.

CETS 205 is the first legally binding international instrument that acknowledges the general right of access to documents held by public authorities. The document states that the transparency of public authorities is one of the cornerstones of good governance and one of the aspects that signals the existence or the lack of a truly democratic and pluralistic society. The right of access to official documents is also essential for the development of individuals and the exercise of fundamental human rights, and it reinforces the legitimacy of public authorities. The convention provides for the right of access to public documents and stipulates that restrictions of this right are allowed only insofar as they are intended to protect certain interests like national security, defence or privacy. It sets out the minimum standards for processing requests for access to public documents, the right of appeal and additional measures. It allows for flexibility in national legislation in building on this foundation and providing greater access to public documents.

This convention needs to be ratified by at least 10 states in order to enter into force; by October 2016, it had been ratified by only 9 including the Republic of Moldova.[8] Moldova signed it in 2010 and the ratification law[9] followed in 2013, but the whole process was completed only in September 2016, the date mentioned on the Council of Europe's website.

Taking into account the challenges faced by journalists in Moldova at present, we need at least two clear recommendations from the Council of Europe:

- a recommendation to clearly specify situations in which personal data should be accessible to the public related to the interpretation of the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (1981) and of other related documents to remove any discrepancies between what competent authorities understand and protect and what the population expects in terms of transparency in public funds and fighting corruption, the role of investigative journalism, etc.;

- a recommendation or a model law on access to official documents in the information age including higher standards and requirements in terms of access to official information by virtue of the possibilities provided by new technologies.

Without such guidance, in order to make progress we need to either identify our own bold pattern or to adopt current best international practices.

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[7]   https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/0900001680084826

[8]   https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/205/signatures?p_auth=mpX2YNMQ

[9]   http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=350183

A "Dog-Eat-Dog" War with the Media Consumer Caught in the Middle

The judgement of the Constitutional Court issued on 4 March 2016 restoring the provisions for the direct election of the president not only offered us the opportunity, after 20 years, to elect the president, it also gave the media the opportunity to demonstrate its maturity and professionalism. The fuss generated by the political issue of the year, corroborated by the commitments under the Association Agreement with the European Union, transformed the second half of 2016 into a scene from a TV Show improvised on the spot. The media were among the key actors and were particularly important during the election campaign.

The battle of statements, allegations and one-sided messages with a clear electoral essence began long before the period prescribed by law, particularly on TV stations. Not so numerous and rather subtle at the beginning, campaign messages were intensively and continuously promoted before the start of the electoral period. Later, the program schedule of certain TV stations was supplemented with an "Electorala" (Elections) spot. Under the umbrella of "information campaigns" and/or of "social, charity campaigns" with considerable use of pro-European messages (but also the denigration of the idea of Europeanization) and of the European Union's symbols and values, the largest media owner manifestly started an early election campaign. At the same time, other media outlets belonging to other owners either defended themselves against the allegations/insults of the opposing camp or accused/insulted their political and media opponents in their turn.

Thus, the end of summer found us in a dog-eat-dog media war with the information consumer caught in the middle. In the beginning consumers were confused, then shocked, then disgusted, then placed on the other side of the fence. Instead of calling for unity and explaining who wanted to be our president in the coming four years and what the candidates intended to do (based on true information, judicious investigations and arguments), the press (a substantial part of it) pushed consumers onto one of the barricades built with its considerable contribution. Perhaps the saddest point is that media were responsible to a large degree for creating this polarization. It made us hostile, annihilated our critical spirit and brought into view our frustrations, prejudices and inadequate level of civic and political culture.

Rules for the sake of rules

The official campaign[1] for the presidential election of 30 October started on 31 August, according to the Parliamentary resolution issued on 29 July. On 6 September, the Central Electoral Commission approved the Regulations for the Coverage of the Presidential Election Campaign of 30 October 2016 by the Mass Media of the Republic of Moldova[2] after the Broadcasting Coordinating Council (BCC) had adopted, on 25 August, the Concept for the Coverage of the Campaign for the Presidential Election of 30 October 2016 by Broadcasters in the Republic of Moldova.[3]

The regulations established the rules of conduct for the media during the electoral period and the campaign, and along with the Broadcasting Code, the Electoral Code, the Constitution and other relevant documents, it set guidelines for the accurate coverage of the election. According to the document, broadcasters were compelled to submit to the BCC before 13 September a statement on their editorial policies for the election campaign along with detailed internal regulations. Several statements were approved, others were rejected, requests to modify and supplement some were made and public warnings for failure to submit them were issued.

Finally, the regulatory authority approved 120 internal regulations for media outlets for covering the election . They committed broadcasters to covering the election in a fair, balanced, equitable and responsible way in strict compliance with the law. Many of the documents accepted by the BCC followed a template copied from the legislation and/or from the regulations approved by the Central Electoral Commission; their texts even contained the same grammar and/or vocabulary errors and content inconsistencies (a broadcaster undertook in the statement to organize election debates while the regulations stipulate that no debates would be held; at least two regional broadcasters declared themselves to be national broadcasters; contrary to law the regulations of the regional broadcaster from Gagauzia did not provide free airtime for candidates, at least its text did not clearly stipulate it; a broadcaster who announced in September its intention to hold paid debates changed its mind and announced on 18 October that it would no longer broadcast any such program; and the manager of a TV station announced the non-coverage of elections requesting to be informed in a timely fashion by the BCC about the obligation to submit a statement in a letter, not by phone, as this institution did).[4]

On the other hand, outlets belonging to the same owner submitted identical statements with different prices for political advertising. Very few of them (the undersigned counted 4 or 5 broadcasters) showed real originality and ownership of their own clear editorial

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[1] The period of time since the day when the election date is publicly an-nounced and the day when the final results of the election are confirmed by the competent authorities (Article 1, the Electoral Code);

[2] Available on http://www.cec.md/files/files/regulamentreflectare-alegeriprezideniale_3672529.pdf;

[3] Available on http://www.cca.md/files/D.22-126%20din%2025%20au-gust%202016%20-%20Cu%20privire%20la%20aprobarea%20Concep-tiei%20Campaniei%20Electorale_0.pdf;

[4] Extracts from the statements of the TV and radio stations, approved by the BCC, available on http://cca.md/declara-ii-tv-2, http://cca.md/declara-ii-radio-2;

policies specifying the basic elements precisely and explicitly (e.g., free airtime as distinct from paid airtime, debates, broadcasts on election issues, electoral education spots, explaining how to organize and conduct debates). The fees for advertising, ranging from 250 lei to 3,500 euros, were the only aspect detailed by almost all broadcasters (some indicated only that the sums levied would not be higher than those for ordinary advertising).

While all broadcasters undertook to cover the electoral period in accordance with the legislation, in September we witnessed campaigns in favor of certain candidates, attacks and allegations against other candidates, an imbalance in the presentation of electoral events and advertising hidden in information and/or social campaigns. Potential presidential candidates used the mass media to defend their views or to attack their opponents. A report by the Independent Journalism Center and the Association for Independent Press on the conduct of the media from 15 to 29 September showed that 4 of the 12 TV stations monitored were relatively balanced, but no station with national coverage was among them.[5] The same source pointed out the violations and the multitude of opinions versus the few objective news items on websites and the hidden political advertising in newspapers. In addition, opinion polls remained a favorite topic during the electoral period with the media competing in interpreting and decoding them. A case study annexed to the monitoring report revealed not only inaccuracies in the presentation of survey results publicized at the beginning of the election period but also breaches by television stations of their own commitments in their statements approved by the BCC.[6] The polls were also heavily used with deviations from legal and ethical rules, so citizens found themselves in a dense fog as a result of manipulated figures.

In the service of the owner's interests

The presidential election campaign[7] started in its turn on 30 September. Both the above-mentioned media organizations and the BCC monitored some media outlets, in particular from the perspective of respecting election legislation. In all, 14 TV stations, 12 websites and 4 newspapers were part of the analysis. It is not enough to draw a conclusion about all the mass media in the country,[8] but taking into account that the list includes all the

TV channels with national coverage, the stations with the largest audiences, and both public and private institutions broadcasting in Romanian and Russian, it is enough to indicate general trends. The results of the BCC monitoring were similar to those of civil society and pointed out repeated violations of the electoral legislation, of the regulations for the coverage of the election campaign, of the commitments undertaken by media outlets in terms of conduct in the election, as well as of the Code of the Professional Ethics of Journalists in the Republic of Moldova. An obvious imbalance in the presentation of candidates in an either exclusively positive or exclusively negative context and the lack of the other party's opinion on controversial issues were just a few findings of the monitoring.[9] False news, the transfer of a negative image, lies, statements and images out of context, mixing comments and opinions with news and facts, continuously repeated labelling (usually in a pejorative way), discriminatory news, tendentious headings inconsistent with the text, defamation and harsh attacks on persons and on privacy and many other transgressions were identified during the presidential campaign. The entire arsenal was used openly without taking into account the law, ethics or the public interest.

Election debates were mandatory only for broadcasters with national coverage, but they were poorly organized, broadcast at an inappropriate time and conducted with discrepancies. Generally speaking, there seemed to be many debate programs, but they all looked the same. That revealed the inconsistency and futility of approving statements on editorial policy for the sake of a checkmark. Thus, it might be necessary to have a different approach to the debates and a different attitude toward them. I'm not sure that running from one TV or radio station to another, especially in the second round of the election when only two candidates remained in the race, added or may add value to the discourse of the candidates, to their performance, and to the media. Perhaps, it would be appropriate to study other experiences in this regard (the American one, for example).

An interesting weapon used in the election media battle was quoting posts published on social networks. X wrote on Facebook, Y answered and Z commented on what the two wrote. The comments of the third parties proved to be even more useful than the texts of X and Y as they served to make elections news and were presented as truthful because it was convenient for the owners.

… and just a little in the service of consumer of information

It would be wrong to say that all the media in Moldova displayed inappropriate conduct during the presidential election of 30 October 2016. The above-mentioned monitoring reports as well as the analyses of experts in the field show that some media outlets (several TV and radio stations, newspapers and websites) respected the election legislation as well as the statements for covering the election campaign and the Code of Ethics. For three months we were provided investigative articles and analyses documented by

[5]   The report is available on: http://api.md/upload/Raportul_de_mino-torizare_nr.1_15-29_septembrie_2016_FINAL.pdf;

[6]   BUNDUCHI, I. Sondaje electorale în principalele ediții informative ale televiziunilor (The election polls in the main TV newscasts), available on: http://mediacritica.md/ro/studiu-de-caz-nr-1-sondaje-electorale-principalele-editii-informative-ale-televiziunilor/;

[7]   The period of activities aimed at determining the electors to vote for a certain candidate in the election that starts, for each candidate, when he/she is registered by the Central Electoral Commission of by the constituency's electoral board and ends up on the date when the candidate is excluded from the election or on the election day (Article 1, the Electoral Code);

[8]   On 4 October 2016, the BCC registers listed 136 broadcasting services of which 124 submitted their statements for covering the election campaign to the BCC. Dozens of newspapers and magazines are published although it is difficult to show an exact number as the Ministry of Justice has not updated the list of periodicals since 2008, and we could not find the exact number of news websites.

[9]   JIC/API reports, available on http://api.md/page/ro-monitorizar-ea-mass-media-n-campania-electoral-pentru-alegerile-prezideni-ale-2016-301; BCC reports, available on http://cca.md/reports/8;

several sources and with an appropriate degree of objectivity. Thus, objective and professional media which should be the norm are rather the exception in our country, unfortunately, including and particularly during election campaigns. The exceptions, however, reach fewer consumers of information as they are in the shadow of institutions with broader coverage and audiences that defy the laws and ethical standards. Thus, ordinary people who use the Internet mostly to see their children on Skype would rather believe the priest on a TV station available and accessible nationwide who portends an apocalypse if a particular candidate wins the election than the investigation about the impressive fortune of the same priest published on a website or in a newspaper issued in Chişinău. It happens not just because "they said it on TV" but because, as I pointed out above, Moldovans have prejudices, frustrations and lapses in terms of civic and political education, and the owners of television stations are aware of them.

The dogs bark, but the caravan moves on

The broadcasting regulatory authority showed disrespect for the public interest that it officially defends although it conducted its own monitoring and had at its disposal relevant alternative evidence or analyses made by experts in the field. The BCC delayed the presentation of the monitoring results until one week after the end of the monitoring periods so had no official reaction to violations identified before and in the first part of the electoral period. Only www.mediacritica.md published at least 10 articles that clearly revealed breaches of the legislation and of the rules by a number of media outlets during this period. The BCC did not punish the TV stations that committed serious infringements and instead just "took note" of such "phenomena." It applied delayed and vague sanctions (the same broadcasters were repeatedly penalized with the same kind of penalty while the law requires gradual increases) and confined itself to endless discussions about the "flagrant defiance of all the provisions and rules of the game," discussions that all had the same outcome. The BCC has

its hands tied and knows who binds its hand so tightly, so tightly that neither public reprobation nor calls to resign coming from a number of media NGOs will probably untie the knot around the institution's hands.

The ingredients for better performance by the media

It is clear: The media as a whole earned an unsatisfactory score for its performance in the presidential election campaign. In other words, they failed the test and the most frequently voiced assessment is, "the most dirty and disgusting campaign so far." The next test will be in two years when a parliamentary election will be held; however, judging by the conduct of most media outlets in the second half of 2016, I think it will not be long before a media election campaign starts. If nothing is done in the meantime, it will be necessary to seek even harsher Romanian adjectives to describe media performance.

For things to change in Moldova, three elements that are in fact valid not only for the media are, in my opinion, necessary. They are: 1) good, well thought out, unambiguous laws that clearly establish both the rules of the game and the sanctions for breaches (proportionate to the gravity of the infringement); 2) functional, independent and autonomous institutions (in our case the BCC, the Competition Council, etc.) to enforce the law, not just to pay lip service to it or to seek ways to bypass it; and 3) educated citizens (politically and civically in terms of media) able to distinguish the wheat from the chaff, to ask questions about things they are not sure of and to tax the media when they lie or manipulate. If these elements are operational de facto, even the most monopolistic and politically compromised media will be forced to join the exceptions and slowly to achieve journalistic norms. This should be true both during election campaigns and beyond them. If the conditions required for good journalism are the norm, exceptions will be rejected.

Aneta GONŢA

Trolls in the Service of Politicians

Freedom of expression has brought other kinds of "benefits" in addition to those recognized and generally accepted. These "benefits" have transformed public space (including the Internet) into a kind of arena in which anonymous contributors (trolls) quarrel with those who wish to unmask them. Some of the former lack any sense of responsibility for their statements while some of the latter lack the tools for their exposure and conversion. An answer to all of them was given hundreds of years ago by John Stuart Mill, the father of utilitarianism, who said that, "One man's freedom ends where another man›s freedom begins."

Brief history

According to Norse mythology, trolls were pesky beings living in mountains or in forests who embodied evil forces of nature and were not very advanced intellectually. The concept of troll in its current meaning was first used in the 1980s; however, it was first underlined mentioned and investigated in 1992 by Judith Donath who considered trolling as an aggressive tactic for asking naïve questions and/or disseminating false information. At least, that was how people who intentionally disrupted an online community were identified. Over the course of time, the concept and the process underwent several iterations; while early trolling manifested itself as a relatively harmless phenomenon, it later took an aggressive turn and is currently characterized as totally antisocial behavior.

Trolling is based on three essential elements:

A. Trolls exist exclusively in an online/virtual environment.

B. They rely on specific mechanisms aimed at catalyzing aggression and social conflict that spread quickly in online/virtual communities.

C. Potential victims do not have physical or visual contact with the initiators of the conflict, just virtual contact.

Categories of trolls

There are different categories of trolls. Russian sociologist Roman Vnebratchinyh divided them into commentators, provokers, heroes and advisors. The NATO Center for Strategic Communication in Riga (Latvia) also classified trolls (referring in particular to those in the pay of the Kremlin) as "conspiracy," "bikini," "aggressive," "Wikipedia" and "attachment." Blogger Vali Petcu made one of the most exhaustive categorizations and also identified four categories:

A. *Stars.* They usually do not stay anonymous. We sometimes can see them on TV, listen to them on radio or read about them in newspapers and online platforms. Most of them are good at everything.

B. *Commentators.* Those who post content thought up by someone else (or at least in coordination with that "someone"). Their tactic is: "click, post and disappear."

C. *News website contributers* (the only category that also has a positive aspect). They are in most cases anonymous users who comment on the news on online information platforms.

D. *Menacing (or provocative) contributors.* They do nothing but pollute online space (media). Usually, the BLOCK or IGNORE tactic is appropriate for them.

Trolling in Moldova: brief considerations

In the Republic of Moldova, trolling has very close connections with politics; therefore, most trolls in our country are "employees" of media magnates or of political parties. They are either anonymous—the largest share—or are bloggers, analysts/commentators of political parties.

Efforts/Ideas to fight them. Trolless application. This program, once installed, can identify a fake profile on social networks (e.g., Facebook). Its goal is to detect those trying to misinform and to manipulate. Doubtful profiles are entered into a database and analyzed according to an algorithm, then a conclusion is made as to whether they are trolls. If yes, they are reported to Facebook in order to be blocked. This is a way to fight trolling, but it is confined to the technical aspects of information technology. The fight against this phenomenon should be conducted at several levels. Online media education could be another tool.

Political trolling

Paraphrasing Lenin's words, we can say that political trolls are the "useful idiots" of politicians or of political parties. In most cases, they are people paid to have discussions and to engage in online debates supporting the cause of those who pay to them. For example, in the Russian Federation there are companies that pay armies of trolls to post online comments. The publication The Atlantic reported a case when a person in the Russian Federation was employed by a company in Saint Petersburg to post 100 comments per day on certain online platforms for an honorarium of 1180 roubles ($36.50) and a free lunch.

Another example is from China. A group of researchers from Harvard University (USA) developed a survey (How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, not Engaged Argument) showing that over the past five years, the Chinese government has invested a lot of resources, both human and financial, in online propaganda, especially through social networks. The report mentions that the Chinese government "employs" about 2 million people to produce almost half a billion posts per year. The purpose is to distract attention from the real problems of the country and/or to redirect criticism of official institutions.

The Republic of Moldova. Many political parties and politicians employ people for this "mission." The goals of these trolls are to polish the image and the performance of the "employer" and to discredit political opponents. A lot of examples may be found

when accessing and reading comments to posts on the official Facebook pages of political parties and of politicians.

Trolling and propaganda

Trolling is also a way—a very aggressive way—to make propaganda,. The Russian Federation currently puts considerable effort into and invests enormously in external propaganda and in developing a whole army of trolls. For example, statistics reveal that starting in the second half of 2014, there was a real boom in new accounts on different social networks in the Russian Federation.

The case of Johan Backman. Johan Backman, a Finish "activist" and supporter and promoter of the Kremlin's ideas, is an example of propagandistic troll. His goal is to launch ideas formulated by the Kremlin's ideologists that are subsequently taken over and disseminated by an army of paid trolls.

Follow this rule: Do not feed trolls!

What could the solution to this problem be?

1. **Disable comments.** This might be a solution for (certain) blogs, websites or online personal pages (particularly those that have relatively high popularity). A number of publications including Reuters, Recode, Chicago Sun-Times or The Huffington Post applied that strategy by turning off the comment option. None of these online platforms has backtracked. Other publications disabled the comment option for a certain period of time (The Verge).

2. **Filter comments.** The editors of online versions of certain newspapers, for example, filter comments and decide what comments written by users to answer. The drawback to this solution is that a lot of time is spent filtering, approving and responding.

3. **Pre-moderation procedures.** This occurs when the comments require prior approval by moderators of platforms and social networks. Post-moderation occurs when the contents are modified after publication. In both situations, the problem of censorship emerges.

4. **No online anonymity!** Facebook, Google and Gizmodo have requested and continue to advocate for the elimination of online anonymity; however, this measure would be a solution in only democratic societies where freedom of speech is secured and online space is really free and regulated. The major question is whether this solution is applicable in countries with authoritarian or totalitarian regimes where opposition forces must express themselves anonymously.

5. **Develop and adopt legal and regulatory amendments.** To counter (certain) harmful elements of trolling in Great Britain, for example, according to section 127 of the Communications Act 2003, it is an offence to send messages that are "grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character."

Conclusion. Rule 14 of the Internet stipulates: "Do not argue with trolls: It means that they win." Even Jason Fortuny, a "famous" troll, said that, "Trolling will stop only when its audience stops taking trolls seriously." So, do not feed trolls.

Trolling at the limits of the law

Important! Trolling (for the time being) is not considered a crime. No country in the world has included the concept of trolling in its legislation (directly); however, it could soon be done in Great Britain particularly as a response to cases of online abuse/ _cyberbullying_. Such a model will perhaps become more important throughout Europe. It is probably the only shield against trolls for children and for people who lack solid online education.

On the other hand, ascribing all evil to trolls and to anonymous contributors could affect the freedom of expression on the Internet especially in authoritarian/totalitarian countries where anonymity is the only means for expressing one's opinion. Organizations like Anonymous or projects like Wikileaks might disappear as a result.

Brief guidelines for "fighting" trolls

1. As long as they do not use censored words, let trolls manifest themselves. There is a _BLOCK_ button for those who exceed the limits and give free rein to licentious speech.

2. Try to specify from the beginning that arguing is accepted only if accurate/verifiable facts, arguments and information are used (it usually does not work, but it depends only on you).

3. As long as their comments are within the limits of common sense, there is no need to reword them.

4. The safest tested method: Ignore them! Lack of attention hurts the most, especially where trolls are concerned because they feed on recognition. As a rule, when no attention is paid to them, trolls ... "die."

_P.S.:_ Yes, and as all of us are (potential) trolls, it is important to use common sense and to be aware of limits.

Victor GOTIȘAN

Dimensions of Research in Domestic Journalism

There is a tacit rivalry between journalists and media researchers. The former often disregard research, suspecting it sometimes with reason and sometimes groundlessly of exaggerated theorizing or of ignoring the real problems in print and electronic media. Media researchers, in their turn, resent journalists' obstinate attitudes toward research as well as their pretence to be "all-knowing." We consider that both sides are right and wrong, but their rivalry is counterproductive and disadvantageous. Both the journalist and the media researcher work creatively and are communication vessels: The journalist is the "historian of the moment" (Albert Camus), while the researcher, by virtue of communicating practice, analyses the way the history of the moment is presented, develops "useful models" and makes prognoses for the media. Therefore, they can and should be partners working together for a common cause.

Contemporary media is somewhat chaotic in that it implies developments following an ascending, innovative line and lately also convergent lines as well as contradictory and (or) intermittent evolution/involution. In other words, contemporary journalism fully complies with the definitions given to it by the Romanian dictionary: "animated, passionate, intense, abundant and rich, but also replete with agitation, noisy, tumultuous, whirling and seething." It is like a mountain river that encompasses social strength and passions but also the tranquility and the resignation of its estuary. Research thus has the mission to analyze journalism in its diversity of expression, to synthesize best practices, and to propose benchmarks and paradigms for future developments in order to confer efficiency and social responsibility.

At present, media research roughly speaking provides an incomplete, fragmented and discontinuous X-ray of domestic journalism. In order to give it thematic coherence, sustainability and the expected impact, it is necessary in our opinion to review the strategy and its implementation in the coming two or three decades. It should focus on developing an overview of appropriate models for mass media development and operation in a democratic society with a market economy that protects freedom of expression and access to information. Relevant research should have a place in journalism handbooks (no comprehensive, long-range handbook has been published in our country so far!) and should be supported by a set of guidelines on best international and local practices addressing various issues, particularly thorny ones.

Doctorate with 15% efficiency

A large share of research carried out in the past and at present is the fruit of doctoral studies. In Soviet times, such studies were considered to be post-university education (aspirantura), and there were two pathways for research—philological and historical—which meant that journalism was investigated mainly either from the perspective of an act of creation or from the perspective of an

historical approach. At present, according to the new Education Code doctoral studies are the third cycle of university education; enrolment is contingent upon the completion of the first two cycles, i.e., undergraduate and master's degree studies. Before 2013, doctoral research was conducted both on philological and historical pathways and on political and sociological ones as well. Taking into account international practice and the content of the new university journalism curriculum and based on repeated requests by the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Sciences of the State University of Moldova, in March 2013 the nomenclature of research specializations in Moldova was modified and a new scientific branch was instituted: branch 57, *Media and Communication*. Research profile 571, *Journalism and Communication*, which in turn incorporated research specialization 571.1, *Journalism and media processes,* was part of it. As a result of this measure, alignment with the *International Standard Classification of Education* (ISCED), worldwide promoted by UNESCO was achieved. The authors of doctoral theses in the above-mentioned specialization aspire to a PhD in Communication Sciences.

The only institution currently entitled to conduct doctoral studies in journalism is the State University of Moldova. Over the past 15 years, 42 students have enrolled in doctor's degree studies; for the past two years, those enrolled have studied at the Doctoral School of Social Sciences. The thematic spectrum of their dissertations is diverse: the application of European media standards in the Republic of Moldova; participatory journalism in the age of new media; televisual violence; the phenomenon of arts journalism in print media; and digital journalism trends, among others. While the list of doctoral research subjects demonstrates their topicality and applicability, it should be noted that the efficiency of the studies is, unfortunately, minimal. From 2002 to 2012, 34 students enrolled in doctoral studies in journalism, but only 5 of them completed their research and defended their dissertations which represents about 15% of the total or one PhD thesis every 3 years.

In 2016, three PhD journalism students completed their studies, but the defence of their dissertations has been delayed. In coming years, five more PhD students will complete their doctoral studies. Journalism thus ranks among the lowest in completion rates as from 2014 to 2016, 30 dissertations were defended in *Economy and Management,* 25 in *General Theory of Education,* 23 in *Criminal Law and Law on Execution of Criminal Sanctions,* 22 in *Physical Education, Sport, Physical Therapy and Recreation* and 17 in *Constitutional Law.*

Based on a competition, in 2017 the Ministry of Education allocated two scholarships for the research specialization Journalism and Media Processes. Not more than one application was submitted in the first round of admissions and another applicant was barely identified in the second round. These data conclusively show that doctoral studies in journalism are not attractive to young researchers. Consequently, the journalism faculty risks a shortage

of teaching staff in the near future. According to articles 132 (3) and 155 of the Code of Education, starting in 2018 an ISCED level 8 qualification—doctoral or equivalent level—will be required to hold a teaching-research position in a higher education institution. In addition, research advisers will no longer be appointed for research conducted in this field. The low number and deteriorating quality of theses defended will further significantly reduce the number of PhD journalism researchers and their impact on media education and on the national media market.

This state of affairs has basically been determined by a number of causes that derive from one another. One is the low social status of researchers in general and that of journalists in particular. Underutilizing or ignoring research in media and the subsequent exit of researchers from the "ivory tower" do not enhance the prestige of research work either. The marginalization of journalism researchers and uncertain prospects for scientific degree holders are also among the causes of the decline of interest in journalistic research (i.e., there is no national contest for best researcher in journalism). Lack of interest is also the result economic difficulties that have generated and still generate the large scale abandonment of doctoral studies. Another reason for the reduced wish to devote oneself to research is upheaval in the system as a result of establishing confusing rules for the defense of dissertations and their frequent modification.

Obviously, other reasons might also be invoked:
academic (poor performance on master's degree studies as a nursery for future researchers, non-involvement of research advisers in shaping the researcher's academic character);
institutional (the lack of a regulatory and of a logistical framework favorable for research, limited access to academic mobility and to the regional and international research environment);
personal (lack of intellectual motivation and of professional experience required for a doctoral student in journalism).
Overcoming these and other drawbacks will no doubt tilt the balance in favor of enhancing the attractiveness of research in journalism. The first steps could be (i) establishing an inter-university doctoral school for communication sciences (or media and communication) that would work in a consortium with similar schools abroad and (ii) combining the efforts of academia and of the labor market toward setting strategic research priorities and identifying incentives for research.

Media monitoring without any impact on research

Various civil society entities have lately been involved in research on contemporary media carried out by teams of media researchers and journalists (a good practice that might be expanded), and the results of their investigations are presented in the form of studies, monitoring reports, and articles.

Studies on various topical professional issues conducted by the associative sector, although limited in number, may be considered as relevant contributions to research in journalism. In 2014, the Association of Independent Press (API), the Independent Journalism Center (IJC) and the Association of Electronic Press (APEL) developed a study entitled Mass Media Reforms: between Promises and Achievements. The research reviewed media reforms practiced from 2009 to 2013. In 2014, APEL conducted a

study titled The Internal Pluralism of Mass Media in the Republic of Moldova: Opportunities and Reality and in 2015 presented a study titled Methodologies for Evaluating Mass Media Pluralism in the Republic of Moldova.

Another platform for the dissemination of research results is the semi-annual magazine Mass Media in Moldova—the only Moldovan periodical in the field. Founded in 1995 by the IJC, it is issued in Romanian, English and Russian and has published over 400 articles on Moldovan print and electronic media so far. Although the articles do not comply with all the requirements for scientific papers, they present timely and useful expert reactions to the evolution of the national media market. In our opinion, the publication needs to strengthen its status by claiming the right to be included in the national register of scientific specialized journals, by publishing more frequently and by diversifying the list of contributors.

Reports on monitoring print media, TV, radio and new media are another form for presenting research conducted by the associative sector. Such papers are usually developed during election campaigns; for example, in 2016 IJC and API evaluated editorial policies for covering the presidential election campaign. Alternatively they focus on specific topics; for example in 2013, API launched a self-evaluation of media outlets from the perspective of gender and in 2014 monitored media respect for children's rights, trends in information manipulation and the coverage of regional development issues.

Case studies investigate developments in the media field and usually focus on single issues. In this context, it is worth recalling analyses of objectivity and of the use of multiple and opposing sources in newscasts included in the Videomonitor conducted by APEL in 2009. Mediacritica which focuses on identifying false and tendentious media information also includes cases studies in the section <u>STOP FALS</u> (STOP FALSE!)! These analyses were conducted in the framework of a project launched in November 2015 by API, IJC and the VIP Association of Independent TV Journalists of Moldova (ATVJI) that divided case studies into five categories: *filter information!, actions, the media in the viewfinder, the observer, and the ABCs of the press.*

Aside from studies and articles published in *Mass Media in Moldova* that supplement the range of domestic scientific publications and serve as sources for both in-depth research and for advanced studies in journalism and media literacy, other types of research, as current practice shows, are less timely. They usually appear during monitoring periods but afterwards lose their topicality and are stored in the archives. Researchers rarely review monitoring reports, case studies or in-depth interviews (in 2016, the last were launched under the columns *Mediaforum* and *Mediaring*), although they contain an exceptional amount of empirical data illustrating developmental trends in national media. In conclusion, we opt for placing monitoring reports, case studies and in-depth interviews in the scientific circuit which might bring them extra profitability and sustainability. If treated in such a way, they could serve as a prelude or an introduction to further fundamental research or for developing textbooks and would thus preserve the contribution of the associative sector to academic endeavors aimed at media research.

Researchers and journalists make common cause in joint media research projects

Research on domestic journalism, although it already has an established history and certain achievements, requires strategic rethinking and appropriate alignment with the current needs of Moldovan journalism. It should aim to develop "useful models" in line with the traditions of European journalism with the further purpose of boosting the domestic media market. To this end, researchers and private and public media entities should make common cause to develop and implement joint research projects. In addition to the ones mentioned in this article, among them could be the establishment of joint teams in charge of investigating issues with a scientific and practical impact and publishing scientific papers useful both for university education and for practical work to supplement the online library set up by Soros Foundation Moldova containing the work of researchers and journalists, graduate students, master's degree and doctor's degree students. Certainly, this list of joint projects is not exhaustive. What matters is that both the academic community and media professionals perceive research in journalism as both a priority and an opportunity.

Constantin MARIN

Local Media Dependent on Foreign Projects and Funds

Some time ago, a prosperous businessman came into Expresul looking for an advertising contract. After talking about different things, he asked if we were value-added tax (VAT) payers. A little later, I found out that this detail was not relevant for his bookkeeping; instead, he just wanted to know how "serious" we were. That businessman is also an elected district councillor from the list of one of the ruling parties. When I said to him that we were not VAT payers, he smiled. A bit of disdain and perhaps some pity could be read into that smile. Although he did not say it openly, he seemed to be wondering what kind of newspaper we had, how we stayed in business and could anyone buy us at anytime.

For my part, I thought that most local publications were in the same situation. With a few exceptions, they are not VAT payers which means that their annual income is quite low. And the question: "How do you stay in business?" is logical and natural in such cases. The number of subscribers, again with very few exceptions, ranges between 2500 and 4500; advertisements are relatively limited. Still, local media stubbornly keep publishing and developing. On 1 November 2016, Expresul celebrated its ninth anniversary in the media market. It is a relatively short period, but we can still sum up the newspaper's achievements.

We have never stood out because of large circulation—the number of subscribers from year to year and from month to month has ranged between 2500 and 3500—but we have stood out due to the fact that we have continuously developed. We expanded the area of distribution from a single district (Ungheni) to three districts that were once part of Ungheni county: Călăraşi, Nisporeni, and Ungheni. We also built up the website Expresul.com that has come to be among the leaders, Chişinău aside, in terms of number of visitors and views. We have purchased modern equipment, and now each employee has his/her own laptop, camera, and recorder. We also managed to purchase a car that makes our work much easier. We intend to establish a TV studio. Obviously, all this required money, a lot of money, and the question: "Where does the money come from?" should not surprise us.

Where does money come from?

Since the very beginning, we have focused on raising external funds. We learned how to write project proposals, to prioritize, and to persuade potential funders that we need money. It is not easy. It would be wrong to think that every project proposal we developed and submitted was accepted for funding—not even close. The point is that we learned not to give up.

How did it start? It was 2007 when we decided to publish Expresul. We started with the documents required for registering a publication. The key question was then: Should we register it as a publication at the Ministry of Justice or should we set up a company (LLC) carrying out various types of activities, including publishing newspapers and magazines? We finally chose the second option and quickly realized that we had made the right choice.

In 2008, the District Council of Ungheni established a fund to support small and medium-sized enterprises and launched a competition for small grants ranging from 15,000 to 25,000 lei.

At the time, we had separated ourselves from the idea of being a periodical aspiring to be independent from the authorities and had focused instead on the fact that we were a small business needing to develop. Why not apply as a limited liability company we asked ourselves. We drafted a project proposal formulating our problems, goals, needs, etc. We submitted it to the competition board and won a grant of 22,000 lei and used it to purchase the equipment required for an editorial office.

Another far more ambitious project followed. We decided to expand the area of distribution of Expresul especially as there was no source of local information, periodicals, radio or TV, in the District of Calarasi at the time. The District of Nisporeni did not have abundant sources of information either. Thanks to a grant provided by the East Europe Foundation, we succeeded in achieving our objective. The work we did was hard, and without that grant, we would have given up. Thus, due to the fact that the project in which we committed ourselves to do concrete things was accepted for funding, we were inspired to go forward, to be tenacious, and finally, to achieve what we wanted. Once we managed to turn a local newspaper distributed in a single district into a regional one, we enjoyed the initial benefits. First, the number of subscriptions significantly increased. Secondly, we started to have more advertising, including from Chişinău. Thirdly, we were heard and hence better known.

Once you "get a taste" for successful projects, it is hard to stop. The ideas come one after another. Moreover, you are invited to be a partner in various projects as occurred for Expresul. Thus in addition to publishing articles we started to produce radio and video spots, brochures, leaflets, photo reports and even photo exhibitions. At present, Expresul is a partner in two projects: Using European Experience to Fight Soil Erosion, a trilateral Romanian-Moldovan-Ukrainian implemented by the Agency for Regional Development and European Integration in Ungheni, and Preventing Local Corruption in Partnership with Local Government, Civil Society and Local Media implemented by the Vademecum Association of Teachers, Students, and Pupils of Călăraşi in the framework of a project of the Contact Center. Both projects are funded by the European Union.

In addition to supplementary funds that can be raised thanks to such partnerships, reporters also have the opportunity to learn new things, so the diversity of issues tackled by the newspaper thus significantly increases. Due to the projects in which we have been involved over the years, we have started to write more about

the civic activism of the population, for example, about emergency medicine, about involvement in decision making, about youth problems and about the modernization of agriculture.

Raising external funds for different projects can, however, also generate some problems. Implementing the required activities and achieving the goals is the easiest part; bureaucratic requirements for reporting on achievements and for documenting expenses may prove more difficult. Last year, for example, we had to submit more than 200 copies of various documents to a donor who had granted us 4500 euros. In the first stage the documents were scanned and emailed. Then paper copies of everything had to be made and sent by post.

Another example is the fuel used for trips to communities involved in a different project. We had to submit copies not only of invoices and checks but also of the contract with the petrol station, of the credit card, of the contract with the driver, of his identity card, of the driving licence and so on.

The excessive bureaucracy of certain funders is likely to discourage project applications. What is good and what is not? Based on our experience, we have identified good and not-so-good aspects of project implementation, i.e. we made a SWOT analysis.

So, what are the strengths?

- greater diversity of topics covered by the publication;

- extra revenue for the newspaper;

- ability to purchase modern equipment;

- new experiences for the editorial team;

- new skills in terms of setting priorities and objectives;

- discipline for the team, making it more united as projects set deadlines for activities and you can succeed only if you work as a team, everyone knowing his/her tasks.

What are the weaknesses? Many tasks may need to be performed in a short time which has a negative impact on the work of the editorial board itself.

Also, too many projects can make your organization lazier. For two years, I was a member of the Soros Foundation jury in charge of selecting media projects for funding. The newspapers that most often benefited from the most funding disappeared when the funds were exhausted. In other words, they were unable to manage their businesses when external funding ceased.

External funding is a lifeline for the regional press, but before writing a project proposal, it is necessary to thoroughly analyze your objectives and activities and assess if you are able to cope with all the inherent challenges. Certainly, you also need some experience in proposal writing, but experience comes with practice so to speak.

Lucia BACALU-JARDAN

Models for the Development of Independent, Financially Sustainable Media

The Moldovan media market has about 500 participants, many representing combinations of traditional media (print, TV or radio) and online versions. In order to understand better how this market operates, the Independent Journalism Center (IJC) in partnership with the Independent Association of Broadcasters of Ukraine conducted a mapping survey of domestic mass media outlets in the framework of the project Strengthening the Financial Stability of the Mass Media in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia Using the Experience of V4[1] Countries. The data were collected and analysed by iData.

The effect of the structure of mass media outlets on the market

The digitalization of media content is a general trend that determines the development of the media in Moldova.

At present, one may distinguish several types of media outlets that, in turn, can be divided into smaller categories.

Print media – the number of newspapers and magazines in print is in continuous decline as is the number of readers. About 33% of the adult population considered newspapers and magazines to be one of their most important sources of information in 2006 according to the Barometer of Public Opinion, but in 2016 the indicator had fallen below 9%, and compared to 2007 when the IJC conducted a similar study, about half the newspapers and magazines issued at the time had closed and the number of new publications was very low. At present, there is no daily newspaper in Romanian, and the one published in Russian—Komsomolskaya Pravda—is financed from abroad.

Radio and TV – in many cases, particularly outside Chișinău, radio and TV stations coexist within the same company. The number of radio listeners is decreasing, but a large share of adults still listens to the radio for music, news or various thematic interests. Certain radio stations are also available on the Internet and can be received anywhere if there is connectivity to the global network while others are exclusively broadcast on the Internet. Standard business models apply for radio broadcasting: Income is obtained primarily from advertising; the focus is on having a schedule of programs attractive to as many listeners as possible in order to attract advertisers. A number of radio stations broadcast in parallel with a TV station so that they can share business models.

As far as TV stations are concerned, the ones with very large audiences are developing due to advertising. The niche channels specializing in music, sports, business, agriculture, regional

news, etc. try to identify loyal viewers interested in their content; however, none of these stations has yet managed to attract a large audience, so their funding model greatly depends on advertising. It is more difficult for small stations to get large sums of money because their fees for advertising are much lower.

Online. The number of online websites is growing as is their market share, both from the perspective of the number of readers and of advertisement sales. Digital media outlets are very diverse, and they are continuously evolving. There are both mainstream news websites and specialized sites for women, youth, business, sports, etc. The traditional press has largely gone online either exclusively or partially as have radio and TV stations many of which have rich online content and have even developed niche websites. A successful business model is the one used by the website Privesc. eu that has become a highly visited site due to its live streaming of a large number of important events. It has now at least two important sources of income: streaming events for payment and providing paid access to some streams. As a result, the company updates its equipment, hires new camera operators and has expanded into Romania. Many online companies have developed by disseminating quality, timely and attractive content that brings a large number of viewers and implicitly the possibility to charge them. On the other hand, the life cycle of websites is shorter than that of newspapers or magazines: Many are created artificially and are financed by outside resources that may disappear overnight.

Ways to financially develop mass media sources

In this section, we discuss models for financially developing mass media organizations because many companies have multiple outlets so frameworks can be applied both at the company level and at the level of each source. We examine financial development possibilities by category.

- *The regional press.* The first way to increase funding, already implemented by some newspapers, is to cover a larger area thus increasing the number of readers. At the local level the press cannot exist on subscriptions, but at the same time, a large number of subscriptions means a large number of readers which makes the publication more attractive to local advertisers. Thus, regional collaboration among usually small media companies could provide more revenue from advertising. Another source of funding could be the diaspora that might subscribe to an electronic version of the publication and might support some projects. Any method that helps the publication remain close to the people of the region and to cover accurately the events that are a matter of their concern will enhance its popularity and its attractiveness to advertisers.

- *National newspapers.* As interest in them declines, they must either find a model for covering costs through

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[1]   an alliance of Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia for the purposes of furthering their European integration as well as for advancing military, economic and energy cooperation with one another

advertising or produce as much content as possible online where the public of Chișinău is more present. Daily newspapers are no longer popular since the population in the capital city is informed more immediately about the latest news via social networks and online media. This trend is now expanding to the rest of the country. The only solution for newspapers is to offer something more than the printed version, for example, a subscription to an online version that is frequently updated. They can also conduct promotions and sell other products in the papers such as books, collectibles, etc. Newspapers can thus develop if they become more than a media source.

- *Magazines.* The number of monthly magazines is very small, and they are niche publications: business, society, children, women, fashion, etc. Their business model consists in focusing on their niche markets knowing well who their readers are via direct or indirect communication with them to find out their expectations and to provide relevant advertising and information. Providing other products or services (for example, theatre/concert tickets) and conducting events might also bring financial stability.

- *Online media.* The major problem in terms of developing online platforms is direct competition for advertisements from social networks and foreign companies (for example, Facebook, Google). At the same time, as a result of the popularity of smartphones, significantly more advertising can be delivered to the consumer with the news. At present, there is competition among media outlets for each niche audience because the online advertisement market is small. Online media could capitalize by providing better content and topical news and by finding innovative ways to cover events and present information. The consumer will always choose information sources that are timely, credible and informative (more than a headline and a standard sentence). Integrating video content, in particular, along with online broadcasts has obvious advantages. In addition, many websites can develop by focusing on a target audience and by being leaders in their respective areas.

- *Regional TV and radio stations.* As is true of regional print media, these media sources are not sustainable in the long term; they exist largely due to grants. Collaboration with local businesses might be a way for them to grow. The production of multimedia products might reduce costs and increase efficiency because it would allow the dissemination of the same news through various means—TV, radio and online—to different segments of the audience.

General recommendations:

- In order to achieve sustainable financial development, a mass media company needs to be directed by a good manager, not by a journalist. One of the problems faced by most Moldovan media companies derives from the fact that they are run by people with no special management education.

- Many media sources do not know their audiences. If there were more efficient communication between an outlet and its audience, the former might develop more effectively by providing products tailored to consumers.

- Given the declining public interest in the media in general, mass media sources must provide more than content,e.g., public services and access to events.

- Closer collaboration with civil society and with small businesses might bring the media source closer to the community or to the target audience.

- Cooperation with larger companies might also foster financial sustainability.

- Media companies should develop by following a clearly stated business plan that defines the audience, its needs and problems, how the media company can address those needs and problems or meet its own needs, what products and services the media source may propose to the audience, the company's production costs and what revenue can be obtained.

Mihai BOLOGAN

Websites for Women:
How Can We Overcome Stereotypes?

Mass media can either reinforce or can play an important role in changing certain perceptions or stereotypes in society. With the change in women's roles in community life, the representation of their roles in mass media has also changed. We review the image of the Moldavan woman promoted by three popular websites for women: ea.md, unica.md and perfecte.md.

Our perceptions about the world are developed, adjusted or supplemented in a certain cultural environment, and media products play an important role in this process. By media, we mean TV broadcasts, news, advertising, movies, magazines or newspapers, videos or even comics.

Over the course of time, ideas about women's beauty, appropriate weight, prime of life, or ideals have changed in the media just as they have changed in society. At some point, either journalists got ahead, or society did, or politics did.

For example, between the world wars, mass media in the USA promoted the idea of a happy modern woman, ready to pursue her own life. Women were independent and valued their careers. After the Second World War, however, the media promoted a new image: that of a housewife whose role was to support her husband and his career. A lot of advertisements from those times taught women how to maintain harmony in the family and how to make their husbands happy (the TV series "Mad Men" is a perfect illustration).

Things gradually changed, however. In 1964, Helen Gurley Brown took over Cosmopolitan, and the magazine started to present an image of women as the ones who would go to university and, in general, would have many more expectations from life than raising a family.

A survey conducted in 1970 revealed that advertisements placed in women's magazines in Great Britain implied that:

- a woman's role is to take care of the house;
- women do not make important decisions;
- women are dependent on men and need their protection;
- men are interested in women as sexual objects; they are not interested in them as humans.[1]

After a great deal of criticism, both advertising companies and the magazines that placed ads became more sensitive to gender issues so that by the late 1980s, women were less often presented as housewives who stayed at home. All this, however, happened in the West.

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[1] Angharat V. Valdivia, A Companion to Media Studies (Blackwell Publishing, 2003), p.249

The Republic of Moldova: beauty, family and no career

Let us see what has happened in the XXI century in the Republic of Moldova. For one week, I followed three women's sites: ea.md, unica.md and perfecte.md. All of them identify themselves as websites for women and all are popular. Throughout the same period, for comparison I also followed *Cosmopolitan*, *Vanity Fair* (although it is a mainstream magazine, 75% of its readers are women) and *Elle*.

With regard to the three domestic sites, the first common thread I noticed was that in such columns as You and Him and Sports, Diet and Health, the Moldovan woman is interested in fashion and style, beauty, family or mother and child issues. There was no section about careers on any of the three sites nor was there one about culture, society, art or politics.

Ea.md – a website about the family life of stars and perfect housewives

The front page of *ea.md* presented information about how stars look after childbirth and reproduced their Facebook posts. Among their own articles was an interview about a Christmas tree party and an article announcing a performance about domestic violence. The fashion column offered advice about how to match clothes and also contained articles about how the stars dress. The column Relationship and Sex spoke only about famous couples and their relationships or about how Blake Lively organized her husband's birthday party. The column *Mothers and Children* dealt again with famous women, pointing out whether or not they had children, and the *House and Family* column spoke about the families of celebrities. The Diet and Sports column offered ideas about the values through which a woman is perceived today: "She looks splendid even after delivering two chilren"; "What sport does the model Adriana Lima practise to have a perfect body" or "She looks sensational at 47! Mihaela Radulescu surprised her fans with her sparkling appearance." In the column *Leisure*, we found out that the singer Adrian Ursu has a very good wife and that Timka Plahotniuc, the son of the politician Vlad Plahotniuc, took a private jet to Chişinău.

Unica.md – orthodox feasts style and much sport

The gossip column is not very surprising, but a surprise awaits us in the column *Style* where we found out what to do and what not to do at the feast of saints Michael and Gabriel. Then we read about how sensitive men can sometimes be. The health column informed us that Russian President Vladimir Putin has Romanian origins and that a man killed his child. An article reprinted from the E.sanătate.md website told the story of a mother whose child suffered from cystic fibrosis, and this was in fact one of the few articles addressing the fears and feelings of mothers. The column

You and Him told the story of a waitress and also contained an interview about handmade jewelry.

Perfecte.md – between perfect shapes and "she looks auful!"

Perfecte.md followed the same trend as the other two websites, that is, it suggested tips for healthy food and exercises for a wasp waist and offered gossip. The column *Family* did not address the challenges of modern families but instead *copy-pasted* stories about the families of famous people. Perfecte.md was the only site that had a special, not-prudish, column about sex, but it focused more on *copy-paste* articles than on real experiences. The website confirmed another stereotype: Women should spend money and time on shopping as the column *Shopping* suggested.

In Moldova, this kind of website traditionally focuses on a woman's appearance. Her success is measured in terms of how well she looks after childbirth or how young she looks after 40. Even an article about a lawyer featured her voluptuous shape, and the public opinions are not lacking: "She looks awful! She ought to look in the mirror."

Shall we comply with the statistics or shall we break the patterns?

For comparison, during the same period *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* had their main subjects in the foreground—beauty, style, health and beauty standards—but at the same time *Cosmopolitan* had columns on Politics and Career. The *Parenting* column spoke about how to cope with pregnancy loss or how to educate a child correctly. The articles were not about perfect women or about super moms. *Elle* contained articles about the frustrations of mothers who have to go back to work before the expiration of their maternity leaves. These magazines told sincere human stories. In addition to offering "10 sex tips to drive him crazy," they also dealt with sexless marriages, the lack of attraction in couples, the drama of losing a child and how to grow old naturally.

The Moldovan sites for women confined themselves to promoting the image of a perfect housewife, a super mom interested in shopping and gossip and not that of a career woman. Real problems were overlooked and real challenges were ignored. Such an approach reinforces prejudices regarding women's roles in society although those roles are actually many and diverse.

A study entitled *Men and Gender Equality in the Republic of Moldova* carried out by the Women's Law Center in 2015 revealed that most men believe that child care is a woman's task; only a quarter of men stated they would take over those responsibilities. According to the same study, only 18% of men attended their children's birth, and 60.8% of them believed that working women encroached on men's job opportunities. An overwhelming majority—90.5% of men and 81.5% of women—thought that the most important thing for a woman was to take care of her home and to cook for her family. Over 95% of men thought that changing diapers and washing and feeding children were exclusively female responsibilities. These stereotypes will probably not change in Moldova as long as women's magazines mainly promote a woman's image as a housewife, gossiper, and someone crazy about shopping.

Because of a lack of space, we did not tackle mainstream newspapers or advertisements that are another source of perpetuating stereotypes, nor did we address magazines for men that in turn focus on men's financial success and promote pseudo standards like men never cry. Here again, women are assigned the role of weak, almost asocial human beings.

Given that women in the Republic of Moldova have become more and more active (there was even a female presidential candidate who won nearly half the votes!), that there are so many businesswomen, and that there are a lot of problems that directly concern women such as domestic violence or sexual harassment at work, we think that the media should search for new approaches. There is no doubt that the press could write about Moldovan women outside the context of shopping, beauty and style.

There is enough media space for magazines or columns to address a broader range of topics related to women in an open and courageous way. Women's real problems and profiles could then be put on the agenda for public discussion replacing idealized images. Let's remain optimistic.

Vlada CIOBANU

Journalism in the Age of New Technologies

New technologies have freely invaded our universe and have conquered and taken possession of the ever-increasing cyberspace. The father of the Internet was Tim Berners-Lee, an English programmer who in March 1989 with two colleagues from the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN) launched a proposal to communicate via a network. At Christmas in 1990, they achieved the first HTTP communication between a client and a server via a network thus starting the World Wide Web. Currently, Tim Berners-Lee is the Director of the World Wide Web trade union that deals with the observance of Internet standards. Thanks to his epic discovery, we daily experience the pleasant realization that we can find almost any information we seek, that we can talk via the global network with loved ones on any meridian and that distances are no longer the insuperable problem they once were.

The availability and use of this magnificent means of communication has lulled us until recently into a perpetual state of fulfilment and security without taking into account the human mind. We have, however, gradually started to realize that we have become subject to a kind of colonialism as every day we become more and more addicted to computers, smartphones, navigators and the like accepting willy-nilly our slavery to them and the domination of these devices over humans. The need for new theoretical support for humans in their relationship with machines not only implies the influence of machines but also the awareness of humans about their imminence and indispensability for personal growth/fulfilment in particular and the development of society in general.

The new technologies, rightly considered to be the fastest and most effective type of communication, are a variety/complex of increasingly efficient and sophisticated means of communication: chain information; simultaneously moving pictures; and the instantaneous intercalation of texts, pictures, and sounds that users can decode and develop at all levels of penetration. While email and chat were until recently the primary methods for online interaction among individuals, now web 2.0—the interactive web—has changed our relationship with the computer. The individual, in his/her dual position of creator and recipient of web content, is at the center of online communication.

The media versus major technological challenges

The track record of new technologies in public communication is fraught with serious accusations of abuse, misinformation, manipulation and other grave sins given its noble mission as part of the *fourth estate*. Numerous examples were discussed at an international colloquium titled Journalism in the Age of new Technologies held in Chişinău on 30 September 2016 under the aegis of the international organization La Francophonie.

The threat of disseminating misinformation and manipulating the media through new technologies evident in the recent campaign for president of the Republic of Moldova makes us believe that these issues require more than a theoretical approach and discussions in seminars. The credibility of the media is going to suffer because users more and more frequently encounter cheating, untruths, and phishing. An uninterrupted avalanche of information and pictures that can be purely true but that are increasingly interpreted as something plotted or unreal—purely dirty, as the classic writer I. L. Caragiale used to say—consumes all our time and affects us every day.

The aforementioned colloquium, organized by the Moldovan section of the International Francophone Press Union (UPF) in collaboration with the Swiss UPF, also addressed the ethical dimension of media in the age of new technologies. The as yet unspecified consequences of misinforming today's consumers were debated by researchers Cecille Vrain (Journalism School of Sorbonne 2 University, Paris, France), Zara Nazarian (French University in Armenia), Aneta Gonţa (Moldova State University, Faculty of Journalism and Communication Sciences), and Jean Kouchner (High School of Journalism, Lille, France). In his position as Secretary General of UPF, Jean Kouchner stated that francophone media, the one he knows best, face the same risks of information fraud. In training communication professionals, there is a need to strengthen the ethical dimension, thus avoiding a dangerous dependence on networks to the detriment of on-site journalism and preventing the new disease of our century: robots drafting texts.

Cecille Vrain proposed a debate on an uncomfortable issue for contemporary journalism: the new phenomenon of office journalism that is becoming more popular than traditional active, on-site journalism. New technologies play a decisive role in the development of this trend.

Daniela Coman, journalist at Radio România Actualităţi and lecturer in the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Sciences at the University of Bucharest, stated that new media technologies—websites, social networks, blogs—are favored over the press because they are so immediate and often do not have to respect strict traditional regulations and or take any social responsibility. Minor stories or those lacking minimal decency launched on blogs and networks are immediately taken up by the media and make the front pages, dominating newscasts and triggering media campaigns. The main virtue of this media is to be the first to announce the news, to post the information before others. Taking advantage of the ability to publish information immediately often without verifying its authenticity or indicating the source and without respecting the elementary rules of ethics is now in fashion.

A case in point is the story about violating the rules for the use of disinfectants in hospitals in Romania posted anonymously on social networks. It dominated Romanian media for more than two months. Once posted, the information was taken up by all media, both traditional and new, and it had a snowball effect occupying all public space. In the view of Ms. Coman, it is difficult to estimate the real extent of the risks that such attitudes

and trends imply. Warnings and training are not sufficient. On the contrary, unhealthy competition and the neglect of ethical norms will increase. Different strategies are required to counter misinformation in the media.

The fear that new technologies are the devoted allies and drivers of the current manipulation of the media emerges from a survey made by Aneta Gonța that focused on concrete examples in domestic media. In the spring of 2016 after the terrorist attacks in Belgium, a number of domestic news websites reprinted misleading or false information announcing, e.g., that dubious bags had been found in trolleybuses in Brussels even though the Belgian capital does not have that kind of public transport. Other errors in the news broadcast by domestic media were related to the location of subway stations near the European Commission and were intended to excite an unhealthy public interest. In her speech, Ms. Gonța recalled the threat to the collective knowledge of society from new technologies foreseen long ago by the author of the theory of relativity, the great Einstein. The certainty that such a threat is growing in the media today also emerged in speeches from other representatives of journalism schools who attended the colloquium in Chișinău.

Presentations also dealt with modern techniques and methods in journalism education that provided viable examples from various European schools that were worthy of adoption. Marc-André Jobin, Director of the Center for Journalism Training and Media (CFJM) in Lausanne, Switzerland presented their 50 years of experience and their ongoing observations of how media is adapting to the challenges presented by the new technologies by providing training and monitoring this interaction.

Professionals from different countries discussed and established benchmarks for protecting mass media from numerous ethical deviations and violations. Strict rules were not tackled, but there were discussions about training methods currently used in journalism and about how to enhance the relevance of new technologies for media. For more details, please consult the collection of papers from the colloquium (Chișinău: *Promo-Profit,* 2016).

The coexistence of man and technology: a new communication order

As the pressure exerted on us by new technologies becomes stronger, the progressively intense technicization of human society is the subject of research conducted in many fields and also the cornerstone of new scientific concepts, for example, the *Actor-Network Theory* (ANT) which has become increasingly relevant. It assumes that all components of social, organizational, scientific and technological structures and of processes and events, be they human or non-human, make up a network of relationships that can be identified and described on an equal footing using the

same terminology or language. The global scientific community is targeted in all fields of research and technology. Thus, technicization is no longer considered as an issue at the limits of social theory but has to be included in the center of the social landscape. As noted by ANT researchers Andrea Belliger (sociologist Lucerne, Switzerland) and David J. Krieger (sociologist, University of Chicago, USA), however, we assess the impact and the influence of technology on society as progress, as risk, or as a consequence of the inherent dynamics of technical development or of economic and political decisions. The omnipresence of technology becomes an unavoidable condition of society and of its theoretical perception. Whether we want them or not, technology and the new technologies in particular have become an inseparable part of human life. They accompany, support, form, and enable many activities, every profession, and many areas of life related either to work or to leisure, and dramatically change perceptions, thoughts and actions. As humans and technology become increasingly intertwined, a theory like ANT that spotlights their coexistence and fusion becomes critical.

Networking between the latest technologies and humans is explored by Bruno Latour, one of the founders and promoters of ANT, in his work Pandora's Hope. In 1999, the author spoke for the first time about a "group" of human and nonhuman actors: networks of artefacts, objects, people, signs, rules, organizations, texts and many others that, being "involved" in action programs, become hybrid actors who interact, corroborate and develop at the confluence of nature and culture and of subject and object, turning into a form of, "…*communicative order,* not so much elucidated theoretically so far, whose research requires new conceptual models and a radical change of the methodological perspective in sociology" (Michel Callon and John Law, sociologists, ANT co-founders). The example of the interaction between people and their ideas with computers within a bank is the well-known model of the network. Altogether, these components form a single network involving everyone. Editorial boards both in print media and broadcasting also work based on networks.

In fact, all institutions now base their activities on internal communication networks and on social networks. Blogs, social networks (Hi5, MySpace, Facebook), YouTube, file sharing, bookmarking websites (Del.icio.us, Digg) etc. are the best examples from this perspective. Web 2.0—the interactive web— opens the door to a new generation of Internet applications whose attributes are interactivity and the possibility to create web content. The information posted on websites is no longer provided to visitors only by companies, governments, or media outlets but also by ordinary people who actively contribute to the coverage of various phenomena and events.

Other threats and risks derived from this ability are primarily related to a lack of filters to protect the public, i.e. the consumer.

Silvia GROSSU

Vitalie Eșanu: Privesc.eu, the most frequently used web resource in Moldova

Media Azi: *Mr. Esanu, privesc.eu has been in the media market for seven years. What did those seven years mean for you personally and for the team?*

Vitalie Eșanu: Only two founders from the original team remain to pursue the cause, but new people who believe in our ideals have joined us meanwhile. As an entrepreneur, I learned a lot about how to assess business risks and to seek new ideas for development. The team grew visibly and learned how to cope with extreme situations, for example, when there is no Internet connection or how to behave during social riots.

M.A.: *Let's go back in time to the year 2009 when privesc.eu was established. How did you come up with the idea; why did you choose this name; what did you intend to achieve by the means of this project and, in general, what did you want to tell the audience?*

V.E.: The idea came from the need to cover the events that occurred after 7 April 2009. At first, I attempted to do it live, but I was not ready yet. Afterwards, we discussed that idea with the community of bloggers. Moldova was technologically ready to do it. I posted an announcement on the blogs, inviting people to meet in Ștefan cel Mare park and talk. Quite a lot of people came, but just a few remained and became the founders of privesc.eu. That historic meeting was broadcast live. It is still available on ustream.tv.

M.A.: *How has privesc.eu evolved in terms of technology?*

V.E.: It has evolved significantly. I would say that privesc.eu is the most technological website in Moldova. We use mobile technologies, cloud computing, automatic scaling, speech recognition, transcription, video, photo, and live streaming via P2P technologies. On election night, privesc.eu usually is the most requested web resource in the country; its traffic equals the traffic of all news websites combined. Even cec.md (the most visited website on election night) benefits from our services. Our live streams were distributed on our website privesc.eu and via our mobile applications to all news websites in the country, to Facebook and to Odnoklassniki, but we started privesc.eu as a wordpress blog with an optimised video theme.

M.A.: *Let us come into your creative workshop for a few moments. What events do you give priority to? What criteria do you apply when deciding to cover or to ignore a certain event?*

V.E.: In general, we try to live stream as many events as possible. We first give priority to customers who have contracts with privesc.eu. Most political parties, NGOs, and event organizers already have such contracts. Secondly, we give priority to public events, those organized by Parliament, by the government, or by local governments. Then, there are unpaid events. Finally, we cover the events conducted by organizers who have benefited from free

broadcasts in the past. We definitely do not live stream religious services and LGBT events (because of trouble in the past).

M.A.: *Tell us more about privesc.eu. Who are the team members; how did you establish it; what are its characteristics as a creative team?*

V.E.: The largest share of the team is made up of camera operators. We prefer them to be young because their work involves a lot of running around. We do not necessarily hire camera operators with special education in this field because one can learn simple camera tricks in one week. The team generally builds itself up: the ones who do not hold up leave and the most dedicated remain.

M.A.: *At present, privesc.eu is accessed monthly by about 2 million unique visitors. How do you manage to remain the first among competitors, given that you are not the only site to broadcast live?*

V.E.:, It is very difficult to have a start-up like privesc.eu because it has two types of markets that need to be built up in parallel and balanced. On one hand, there are the organizers who wish to have an audience, and on the other hand are the users who want events. To build our audience, at the beginning we broadcast a lot of events free for several years to create content for journalists who, in their

turn, helped us by including our site on their websites. In this way, we built our audience. Actually, privesc.eu is not just a website: It is a network of sites. It has a mobile application, a Facebook page with over 111,000 fans and a monthly audience of over 6 million on the homepage of privesc.eu. In order to keep being first, every day we think about applying growth technologies. For example, video quotations, live re-streaming on Facebook from privesc. eu, real-time alerts to organizers about the conduct of events and others are very good growth tactics.

M.A.: *Privesc.eu has expanded to Romania. What is the purpose of this expansion? Do you envisage privesc.eu as an international project in the future?*

V.E.: Yes, we do envisage it as an international project. We started with Romania because there was no need to translate the website and because it is closer to us as a culture. We are also keeping an eye on Bulgaria. We see privesc.eu replicated as a different site in each country rather than as one site for all countries.

M.A.: *You personally have developed applications for Apple. Is it difficult to collaborate with a leading company? Do you have any other collaborations you would like to share with the public? What are you working on now as a programmer?*

V.E.: I am a kind of early adopter: I try out all the new technologies and if they persuade me that they have a future, I start to learn

them nonstop. The first time I saw an iPhone, I immediately realized that this is the future of mobile phones and started to learn how to develop programs for it. It is not difficult to become an accredited programmer at Apple. You just pay $99 per year and have to follow strict rules for application development. Do not think that all my applications were approved by Apple. I have also faced some refusals. Now, although I am always busy with privesc. eu, I do my best to find time for learning and following everything pertaining to Bitcoin.

M.A.: *As a teacher, what can you say about the young people who come to study information technology?*

V.E.: I have not been teaching at the Technical University for some time, but I teach programming lessons to several children aged 10 to 14 who are eager to study. I am a volunteer mentor in the framework of the project CoderDojo, a programming club for children.

M.A.: *What is the path to a successful IT project?*

V.E.: It depends. At the professional level, you need to learn the algorithms, languages, frameworks. At the entrepreneurship level, in addition to the above-mentioned you need to realize to what extent people are ready to use your application or to learn to think like a user. You need to be smart and to be able to get things done.

Mareea neagră: limba română sub asediu (Oil spill: the Romanian language under siege) by Dumitru Borțun
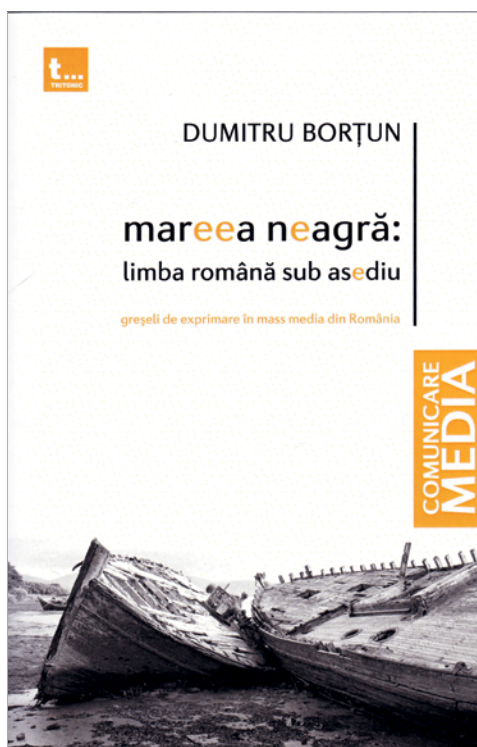
Have you ever wondered what would happen if the journalist Vasile Botnaru wrote a book about our everyday language? I have, and at least in terms of present public discourse in the Republic of Moldova, the answer apparently would be a lot like the book by Dumitru Borțun Mareea neagră: limba română sub asediu (Oil spill: the Romanian language under siege) (Triton Publishing House, Bucharest, 2015).

Though not so well known by the public in Moldova, in Romania, university Professor Dumitru Borțun is a reference in the field of communication and public relations with over 20 years of experience and a large number of publications. I do not think I exaggerate if I say that when I first met him during a short study visit to the National School of Political Science and Public Administration where he spoke to the students of the School of Advanced Journalism Studies about the media and current communication standards, Professor Borțun was his own literary agent. His confidence in terms of mastery of a vast range of sociological, linguistic and psychological arguments along with his kindly openness to the requests of future journalists to clarify certain issues incited my interest in his work even more.

The book confirmed my first impression: the author is really an expert in the field who bases his knowledge and skills on a solid multidisciplinary bibliography and is always concerned with accuracy, elegance of expression and good taste. At the same time, he does not deny his vocation, and his expertise takes into account the adequacy of the form and content of the message from the perspective of a specific audience, a specific communication channel and the purpose of the communication.

The book is divided into four parts: (I) Introduction, (II) Grammar, semantic, syntactic and stylistic errors in the Romanian language press (2006–2014), (III) Errors made by public personalities in their published speeches and (IV) Epilogue. This publication is not voluminous (179 pages); the subject is approached from a mostly utilitarian and philosophy of knowledge perspective without the abundance of grammatical theory that usually scares off non-philologist readers.

The introduction provides a preview of the issue, a mixture of concrete examples, an analysis of the causes and of the implications of various errors, as well as individual solutions and a good dose of motivation for all Romanian-language speakers and of inspiration for those involved in teaching an audience that is rather sick and tired of too much theory. In fact, I read the first part so attentively and was so aware of the particularities of the format in which the author unreservedly constructs a vivid, personal speech with a sparkling (self-) critical sense that I might have preferred the entire book to be presented exactly in the same way. References to Juergen Habermas, Wilhelm von Humboldt and Howard Gardner with dashes of Jakobson or Chomsky provided a real intellectual feast.

I consider as particularly important the motivational *inserts* built around the case studies culminating with the example of the poet Lucian Blaga whom I would have never suspected of grammatical sins and who, as the author reveals, managed to compensate for this deficiency. Moreover, Professor Borțun reiterates throughout the book that no condemnation of those who committed errors can be made.

Poor language performance may mean both a poor education, as often occurs, and a deficit of linguistic intelligence. We cannot put someone to the wall just because of insufficient linguistic intelligence as we cannot punish someone for a lack of talent in drawing. Moreover, a person's value is not limited to the way he/she speaks or writes.

All this just predisposes us to be more receptive to upcoming observations.

And there are indeed a lot of them. Professor Borțun capitalizes on his status as university professor noting rigorously the abundant errors in the journalistic texts and speeches of politicians, from the absence of the preposition *"pe"* in the phrase pe care („lucru *care* l-au cerut fanii", „temă *care* vreau s-o analizăm") or the uninspired avoidance of cacophony by the means of „și" or a comma after *ca* ("profesori foarte buni, păstrați *ca și* colaboratori la catedră... ", *"ca și* calitate"), to his extremely convincing plea against the use of the plural of *"a trebui"* when used as an impersonal verb ("procurorii *vor trebui* să dea un răspuns"). In this case, the author knowingly questions the linguistic rule in force established by the Romanian Academy, building his argument on the need for a distinct form

for the second meaning of "a trebui" and bringing into question the model of German grammar that gave rise to the philosophical categories Sein (being) and Sollen (ought to be).

The author's perseverance in illustrating the most common types of errors can, at certain moments, induce in the reader a slight state of exasperation (are there really so many ?!), but we do not find any superiority or complacency in the intonation of his remarks. A didactic tone does not intervene as often as it does in work by Ioana Pârvulescu who similarly builds a typology of mentality in conjunction with the typology of speech (Țara Miticilor), but whose status of teacher leaves its mark on his writing.

Of course, the author also made some errors. They were either typographical ("alocuțiune adverbială" instead of "locuțiune adverbială") that I certainly considered as transgressions but that made me smile (*nul n'est parfait*) or were errors derived from a lack of in-depth knowledge of the theoretical aspects of grammar. For instance, the alleged pleonastic comparative phrase "la fel ca și" is justified if the phrase "la fel" is immediately followed by the connective "ca" (the examples evoked by the author, such as "la fel ca și Polonia" instead of "la fel ca Polonia" or "la fel ca și înainte" when it should be "la fel ca înainte" are absolutely relevant). At the same time, as far as equal comparative constructions ("la fel de rapid ca și") are concerned, I am inclined to concede the speaker's freedom to reiterate the comparison since some of them may be quite long. Moreover, Gramatica Limbii Române (The Grammar of the Romanian Language) clearly allows such comparatives (la fel de... ca și, tot așa de... cum e și).

In another case, Professor Borțun gave examples of disagreements between articles and the nouns they determined (for example, "afaceri în domeniul construcțiilor, a energiei și a asfaltărilor de drumuri"), including an erroneous example when the long-suffering "a" is not an article, but a preposition ("în schimbul celor 3000 de euro și a vacanței"). Such omissions are, however, few and excusable because the author acknowledges his limitations from the beginning ("These errors were unsystematically identified over eight years") and reiterates that he is not infallible ("I am not a graduate from the Faculty of Letters. I am not a teacher of Romanian language... [...] I am simply a Romanian language speaker who loves his maternal language and respects the official language of the State whose citizen he is").

More than a review of Romanian language errors made or perpetrated by journalists, Mareea Neagră is a synopsis of the weaknesses of Romanian public speech that the author subscribes to the national ethos of satisfaction with half-measures commonly known as "let it go as it does."

Therefore, I would recommend it for reading not only as a spelling handbook, which it does not claim to be, but as a handbook on intellectual posture that is really necessary here in the Republic of Moldova. It is actually what the author says in the epilogue: "I think that preserving the logical structure of the language in which we think and express ourselves, cognize and communicate is an obligation of all Romanian speakers".

I shall stop here in order to avoid quoting the entire work of Professor Dumitru Borțun and to give potential readers the opportunity and the pleasure to discover it by themselves.

Cristina LEVA-MOGÂLDEA

Assessment of the Legal Framework Regulating Advertising in the Republic of Moldova and Recommendations for its Optimization

(A fragment of the IJC study produced by Ion Bunduchi and Eugeniu Ribca)

10.1 Advertising in the Republic of Moldova: overview

In their annual reports, national authorities such as the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the CC or the BCC do not present comprehensive data regarding advertising separately. This is not justifiable since the field represents 0.3% of annual GDP and media advertising (radio/TV, print and online press) represents 0.23%, an indicator comparable to that in the Baltic States (Estonia – 0.45%, Latvia – 0.32%, Lithuania – 0.27%).[1] The NBS, for example, includes in the *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Moldova* the chapter Culture; Sport[2], but it is limited only to data on the circulation of books, magazines, and newspapers. In its activity report for 2015, the CC included Chapter 3.3, Unfair competition and advertising. The chapter, however, states:

During the reporting period, 18 cases of unfair competition were investigated; 12 cases were completed of which in 4 no violations were found and in 8 decisions of the Competition Council on violations of the competition law were issued. At the same time, 35 cases on violations of the legislation on advertising were found.[3]

Although there were several relevant advertising cases, there is no answer to the key question: What does the advertising market consist of in general? Without having the answer to this question we cannot have answers to questions derived from it: How big or small is the advertising market?; What structure does it have?; Who are the main actors in the market and what market shares do they have?; Are there dominant positions?; Are there abuses of dominant positions? Let's remember that the Competition Law (in force from 14 September 2012) in Article 1 (Object and scope of this law) states:

This law establishes the legal framework for the protection of competition, including preventing and counteracting anticompetitive practices and unfair competition for economic concentrations in the market, establishes the legal framework on the activities and the competence of the Competition Council and the liability for infringing the legislation on the competition.

Obviously, without accurate and complete data on the advertising market, the authority in charge of competition cannot achieve its tasks in full.

The BCC's activity report for 2015 also contains chapter 5.7 on advertising, Compliance with the conditions of advertising placement,[4] but as in the case of the CC, the chapter does not contain complex data on the audiovisual advertising market but instead establishes the BCC's decisions adopted in public meetings, either after monitoring the placement of advertising by broadcasters or as a result of referrals. The BCC could easily analyse the audiovisual advertising market since it has data on the annual turnovers of each broadcaster. In the absence of a presentation and, subsequently, of an analysis of the advertising market, the level of concentration of ownership and/or control in this sector cannot be measured, and furthermore it cannot be prevented. On the contrary, para. (3) of Article 66 of the Broadcasting Code generates concentration of ownership and control in the field that in turn also generates or may generate advertising concentration or the occurrence of dominant market positions. This is also possible since the legislation does not provide specific limits for media outlets.

The BCC can and does collaborate with the CC. An agreement in this sense was signed on 4 July 2014, but it is rather a formal agreement as concrete results have not as yet materialised. This state of affairs is probably also due to the lack of a legal provision whereby the BCC would be obliged to request the opinion or intervention of the CC (and vice versa) before granting frequencies/licenses to broadcasters already in the market to ensure that no abusive or dominant positions are generated. In other words, the Broadcasting Code and the Competition Law grant powers to their respective authorities but not the mechanisms for using those powers, so they are not implemented effectively.

For example:
Article 7, the Broadcasting Code provides in (5) that, "The concentration of ownership in the audiovisual field is limited to dimensions ensuring economic efficiency, and it shall not generate dominant positions in the formation of public opinion in order to protect pluralism and political, social and cultural diversity."

Article 23 states in (3) "The Broadcasting Coordinating Council shall issue a broadcasting licence under the following conditions: b) issuing a broadcasting licence is deemed to meet the principles of ensuring pluralism in the audiovisual field, precluding the creation of any potential conditions for a monopolistic ownership and media concentration in the audiovisual sector particularly and in mass media on the whole, taking into account the degree

[1]   http://sovetreklama.org/2016/05/estoniya-operezhaet-latviyu-i-litvu-po-reklamnym-investiciyam-na-odnogo-zhitelya/

[2]   http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=263&id=2193

[3]   http://www.competition.md/public/files/RaportactivitateCons-Con-cur2015323f6.pdf

[4]   http://cca.md/files/RAPORT%20BCC%202015.pdf

of compliance with this requirement of the broadcasters already issued with a license."

Regarding the revocation of a broadcasting license, *Article 27* states: (1) "The Broadcasting Coordinating Council may revoke a broadcasting license if: f) the standards on audiovisual ownership regime are violated."

Article 38 on sanctions states that (2) "According to this Code there are the following contraventions: k) failure to observe the provisions regarding the judicial system of ownership in the audiovisual field."

Although the Broadcasting Code gives importance to media ownership in the licensing process, these provisions are declaratory and ineffective. Neither the CC nor the BCC controls or detects violations of the rules for protecting audiovisual competition. In this situation, it is neither easy nor possible to establish the "failure to observe the provisions regarding the judicial system of ownership in the audiovisual field" in Article 38 to eventually impose sanctions. Specifically, the BCC and CC are not concerned with issues related to the concentration of ownership and control in broadcasting and, respectively, to concentrations in advertising.

Most of the advertising market belongs to television. Advertising reaches television stations either via advertising agencies (local or international), media sellers or sales departments of TV channels. TV sales departments manage to access about 15% of the advertising volume. As a rule, small economic entities work directly with TV stations, sporadically and in the absence of an advertising strategy. Local media get little advertising for two main reasons: a) advertising is concentrated excessively in the capital and b) audience measurements, which are increasingly requested by advertisers, are designed for large radio and TV stations that can pay for these services.[5]

Advertising agencies in fact work with all media but more actively with television and online media as they are the most transparent and the most in demand by advertising providers. The share of advertising revenues is very different in different media outlets. Central radio and TV channels are used all the time for advertising placement as allowed by the legislation. Locally, however, the space for advertising is used at a rate of 5–7%, and often consists of social advertising broadcast free of charge.

In the Republic of Moldova, the government and local public authorities are not important advertising providers. At the same time, there is no monitoring to clarify how state money is spent on advertising. This requires both monitoring the situation and developing a regulatory framework that would impose rules for the strict and fair selection of media to broadcast advertising coming from the state.

Moldova has several hundred advertising agencies,[6] but the number of functioning ones is much smaller.Globally, advertising agencies are divided into two types: media agencies and advertising

agencies. Media agencies determine on what media outlets and what volume advertising will be proposed for broadcasting while an advertising agency deals mainly with creating ads starting with concepts and ending with promos, logos, and spots. It should be mentioned that an advertising provider wants to be served by an agency with a good name in the market; however, the good name can be determined also by an independent company with a recognised reputation. At the international level, Regma is a company that determines an agency's rating based on several indicators including cumulative budget of advertising providers (customers) served; quality of management and how it influences customers and number, quality and satisfaction of agency staff among others. Since Regma does not operate in Moldova, there is no 100% credible rating for advertising agencies. An estimate can be made based on data provided by AGB Moldova (insufficiently credible): the amount of time for advertising placement after which its cost is estimated depending on the radio/TV channel used, potential discounts and placement periods. Finally, it would be possible to determine only a very approximate rating for an advertising agent since there is no way to refer to all advertising in all media: TV, radio, written and online press, outdoor. Here we share the Vivaki agency's opinion:

At the current stage of development of the advertising market of Moldova, its growth can be possible only due to the further development of services for measuring and monitoring media channels, even in today's context of economic crisis. At the moment, we are doing well with regard to television, but we do not have data for the rest. Big advertising agencies and Vivaki particularly are trying of course to estimate the potential and efficiency of all media outlets, investing in their own analysis tools or acquiring tools that have been recommended on a global level, but without precise measurement and the independent monitoring of local media channels, big and transnational customers will be careful in taking decisions to invest in the advertising market in the Republic of Moldova, and the market will continue to show uneven results.[7]

Conclusions:

1. The national legal framework regulating advertising that directly impacts media activities is incomplete and needs to be substantially supplemented and improved in order to meet European requirements.

2. The national legislation does not contain provisions that limit the access of media, especially of audiovisual media, to the advertising market and that thus prevent abusive dominant positions in the market.

3. The national legislation contains inaccurate terms and definitions and vague provisions.

4. The national legislation continues using the term "social advertising," a term invented in Soviet times and that is not found in the legislation of democratic countries. The inaccurate definition and improper use of the terms "advertising" and "social advertising" generates confusion.

[5]   AGB Nielsen Media Research is the company that monthly measures the audience of 15 television channels and 6 radio channels.

[6]   http://totul.md/ro/company/Reklamnye-i-marketing/page-15.htm

[7]   http://vivaki.md/ro/multimedia/publicitate-moldova-situatia-actua-la-2015/

5. The national legislation is not explicit with regard to indicating sponsors in messages in the public interest (including volume/duration/space).

6. The Law on Advertising and the Tax Code define social advertising in a manner that does not allow wide promotion of messages in the public interest. The definition exhaustively lists only five fields deemed to be of interest to society and the state.

7. The national legislation provides no effective tax incentives for producers and broadcasters of social advertising. The Tax Code expressly provides for a single payment exemption with reference to the broadcasting of social advertising.

8. The Law on Advertising defines advertising (providers, producers, broadcasters) agents in such a way that social advertising is not their concern. According to the national legislation, social advertising is non-profit and pursues charitable and socially important objectives. Despite these provisions, social advertising is regulated by the same law as commercial advertising.

9. The Broadcasting Code states that announcements broadcast in the public interest free of charge are not advertising but neither creates an obligation to be broadcast free of charge nor clarifies the situation in which announcements in the public interest are broadcast in return for payment.

10. The national legislation does not operate with unified terms and definitions; it does not provide for a mandatory minimum of social advertising; it does not expressly stipulate whether social advertising must be accounted for in the 20% allowed in an hour of airtime for commercial advertising and 15% in a broadcast day.

11. The national legislation has not favoured the development of the media market and of the advertising market on the principles of fair competition.

12. In the Republic of Moldova, there are only estimates referring to the volume and structure of the advertising market that do not come from authorized state authorities but rather from self-regulatory organisations.

13. According to estimates, the advertising market is excessive in the capital region and insignificant in rural areas.

14. There is insufficient transparency in the activities of advertising agents in the Republic of Moldova.

15. The advertising market is not able to contribute to the economic independence of media outlets; on the contrary, it requires them to seek other sources of funding likely to erode their economic independence and, hence, their editorial independence as well.

16. The Republic of Moldova has no regulatory or self-regulatory authority whose tasks are to identify and classify the nature of public interest and of social messages.

17. In the Republic of Moldova, there are elements of self-regulating bodies, but they need to be fortified.

Recommendations:

1. In accordance with European legislation, develop and adopt amendments and additions to the Competition Law in order to ensure the adequate development of the advertising market without adversely affecting media pluralism.

2. In accordance with European legislation, develop and adopt amendments and additions to the Broadcasting Code in order to protect media pluralism. These amendments and additions are to create a viable mechanism to implement the provisions of Article 7, para. (5) and Article 68, para. (3) of the Broadcasting Code.

3. Following the implementation of the first recommendation, detailed regulations on the concentration of media ownership shall be developed and adopted by the CC.

4. Develop and adopt amendments to the national legislation to ensure the full transparency of the activities of advertising agents.

5. The CC shall annually assess ex officio the advertising market and the concentration of media ownership, and the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova shall examine that assessment in the context of the debate on the CC's annual report.

6. In its annual activity report, the BCC shall evaluate the ownership of broadcasting outlets and the audiovisual advertising market.

7. Review the terms and definitions of the terms "advertising" and "social advertising" in the national legislation. Replace the phrase "social advertising" with the phrase "message of public interest." The phrase "public interest" is defined in the Law on Freedom of Expression, and the phrase "public service announcement" is enshrined in public relations literature.

8. To establish a national authority, preferably a self-regulatory one, whose task would be examining messages/calls claiming to be in the public interest.

9. The national legislation shall include clear provisions for the production, distribution and broadcasting of social advertising in which the advertising provider is the state.

10. The national legislation shall set out clear rules for sponsors of messages/calls of public interest referring to tax incentives, benefits, appearances in messages/calls.

11. Increase the number of fields currently considered in the legislation as being of interest to society and the state. If "preventing and counteracting social epidemics" were added to Article 21 of the Law on Advertising and Article 288, para. (9) of the Tax Code, this would broaden the opportunities for promoting messages of public interest.

12. Supplement the legislation with provisions that would provide sufficient tax incentives, especially to businesses, to establish clear and differentiated rules for providers and broadcasters of messages/calls of public interest according

to their status: state bodies; non-commercial organisations; commercial organisations.

13. Since messages/calls of public interest differ essentially from commercial advertising, a separate law is appropriate which would define relevant terms; would establish the object and subjects of messages of public interest; would list their duties and responsibilities; would establish the relationships between providers and broadcasters of messages of public interest; would provide tax privileges and incentives for all categories of providers/broadcasters of social messages; would indicate the manner of keeping

records of social messages and measuring their impact on society.

14. The BCC shall develop additional regulatory acts, mandatory for broadcasters, that would fill certain gaps in the legislation including the minimum daily broadcasting space given for messages of public interest; the procedure for granting that space of time and an accounting and reporting method.

15. Study foreign experience in order to take over practices and rules that can function in the Republic of Moldova.