

Once the seventh force, today's slaves

This should be an analytical text on the 'black check' of the so-called 'black' between seventh force, journalists and media, but also political influence on the work of the relevant institutions for monitoring and controlling the working conditions of journalists, although they put themselves in the defence of the disadvantaged and the impoverished, report on social deviations, launch humanitarian actions by saving lives, they are among the most sophisticated and most respected populations. While journalists point to injustice and injustice to others, they fail to defend themselves. Their suffering has become a constant and acceptable state, and the silence is voluntary.

There is no unity among journalists and they accept their position

In claiming rights among journalists, there is no solidarity, coordinated, clear and unified action and organization. There is no state-level journalist union, and this is precisely the biggest problem because individual cases of violation of working-legal status are "blurry" in the public and all it goes into the past.

One such example is journalist RTRS Hana Hadžibegović, who in October of this year reported directly to the program, saying that she and her journalists worked for years on black, signing temporary agency contracts. She challenged a sort of public outrage as if it were not an ubiquitous public secret.

Many journalists report publicly, on social networks, about their status. In some media they work for up to 12 years only on the basis of a copyright contract, they pay by themselves health and retirement insurance. On what basis can the journalist demand to be paid overtime, if he has come to work at the post office at nine o'clock, and is waiting for him to attend an evening event, while he himself is only bound by a contract on temporary jobs or a work of art?

Rejecting, being mutilated and cancelling or leaving and losing such a job today's BH and leading to the existential edge of the issue is the problem of most journalists. But, worse, they still accept their position as it is. Journalists today accept this kind of work, which can surely be called the form of modern slavery. This is the case in most media in BiH.

In addition to the reactions of the Association of Journalists of BiH and representatives of the international community, everything remains old. Regarding the position of journalists, most of them are waiting for the first opportunity to give wind blanks from their editorial offices.

Monitoring this state of affairs, as well as any activity for a better position for journalists, goes "a line of ignorance", because no one wants to disagree with powerful media moguls and editors, the most prolonged political hands they represent in their editorial policies.

Taking such political-economic influence, the ultimate victim are journalists.

There are no laws protecting journalistic autonomy, nor do existing employment contracts contain a clause of conscience that would allow them to refuse a job if it does not comply with their professional principles.

Why are so many journalists produced?

According to the BH Journalists Association, 35 to 40 percent of journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina work without a signed contract and social and health insurance, and even those with valid contracts are not sufficiently protected. By rough calculation, this would mean that almost 1,000 colleagues of journalists are in a state of exhaustion.

However, what is certainly contributing to the bad position of journalists is the hyper-production of a journalist in BiH, which is the consequence of the mismatch between the educational system and the labor market. Namely, BiH receives 400 new journalists or communicologists each year, while real needs are less than half of that number. Why is it still insisting and producing products without a prospect, a cheap, young workforce – no answer.

Who answers that they have disenfranchised politically and economically captured, non-liberated journalists?

According to the data of the journalistic associations from RS and F BiH, which is presented by dr. Radenko Udovičić, president of Media Initiatives and director of the Media Plan Institute in Sarajevo, in his paper on working conditions of journalists in BiH under the title "Journalists in the Spill of Destroyed Media and Legal Uncertainty", the number of journalists in BiH ranges from 2,000 to 3,500, while he is employed 1.574 and 2.755 journalists.

Today, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a country with fewer than 4 million inhabitants, emits 195 electronic media, 148 radio stations and 47 TV stations, eight daily newspapers and 184 different printed editions of magazines, 6 news agencies and hundreds of online portals that take up the lead in placement information, but also contributes to the strengthening of hate speech and the most convenient communication.

This number of media influences the influx of advertising revenue and reduces the "marketing cake", a cake that is financed by most media, which again affects the working rights of journalists as revenue falls from year to year because marketing advertising is increasingly turning to social networks and target groups of consumers.


Main media and journalists themselves

When they say from the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) that it is unacceptable and extremely worrying that attacks on journalists in BiH remain impunity, inviting relevant institutions in BiH to investigate and prosecute attackers, it seems that seeking any rights of journalists would be – too much?!

In the Conclusion of the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH dated 18 July this year, regarding the Report on Freedom of Speech and Status of Media Freedom in BiH, adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH, as a final statement states that

BiH does not apply existing legislation, and that the key media and journalists themselves are to promote journalists rights.

And so we can only go back to the beginning of this text...

The content of this text is the sole responsibility of author and BH Journalists Association and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union. 

Biography:

Journalist of „Dnevni list“ from 2002 to 2007, weekly newspaper „Danas“, „Večernji list BiH“ from 2007 to 2009. The independent news magazine „Republika“ is launching in 2009, which in 2012 completely switches to online edition of Republicinfo.com. She was also a contributor of the „Obični Radio“, and since 2015 she has been a correspondent for „Deutsche Welle“ from BiH.