

Volume IV, Issue 2/2018

ISSN: 2406-274X

Analysis of the print media in Serbia
April - June

QUARTERLY MEDIAMETER

02/2018



MEDIAMETER

QUARTERLY MEDIAMETER

Analysis of the print media in Serbia

Volume IV, Issue 2/2018

ISSN 2406-274X

Published by

Public Policy Institute Belgrade

Kneza Miloša 68

E-mail: office@ijp.rs

Web: www.ijp.rs

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Instant System Belgrade

CIP - Каталогизација у публикацији

Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

659.3

QUARTERLY mediameter : analysis of the print media in Serbia / editors in chief Vladimir Popović, Velimir Ćurgus Kazimir. - Vol. 1, Issue 1 (2015)- . - Belgrade : Public Policy Institute (Belgrade : Instant System). - 24 cm

Tromesečno. - Ima izdanje na drugom jeziku: Kvartalni medijametar = ISSN 2406-2707

ISSN 2406-274X = Quarterly mediameter

COBISS.SR-ID 215100940

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SREBRNI JUBILEJ DEMONSTRACIJA 1992.
STUDENTSKIH PROTESTA KOJE SU
DVOJICA DANAŠNJIH VLADIKA

Srednjinik
100 DOLARA



poziciji,



Prilog za portret: Maja Goljković
Ponovo radi Skupština

Izborni proces i mediji
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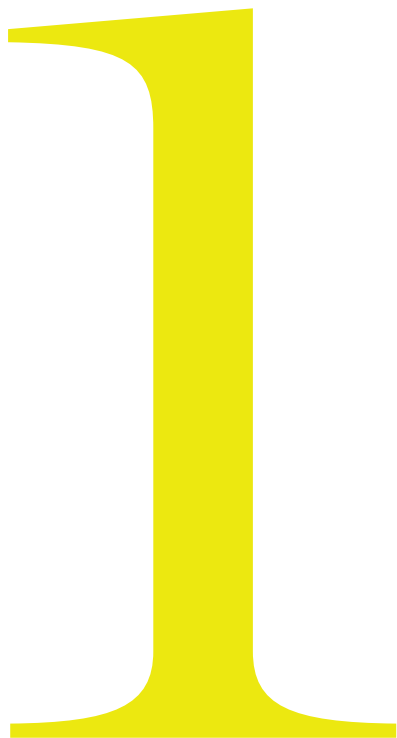
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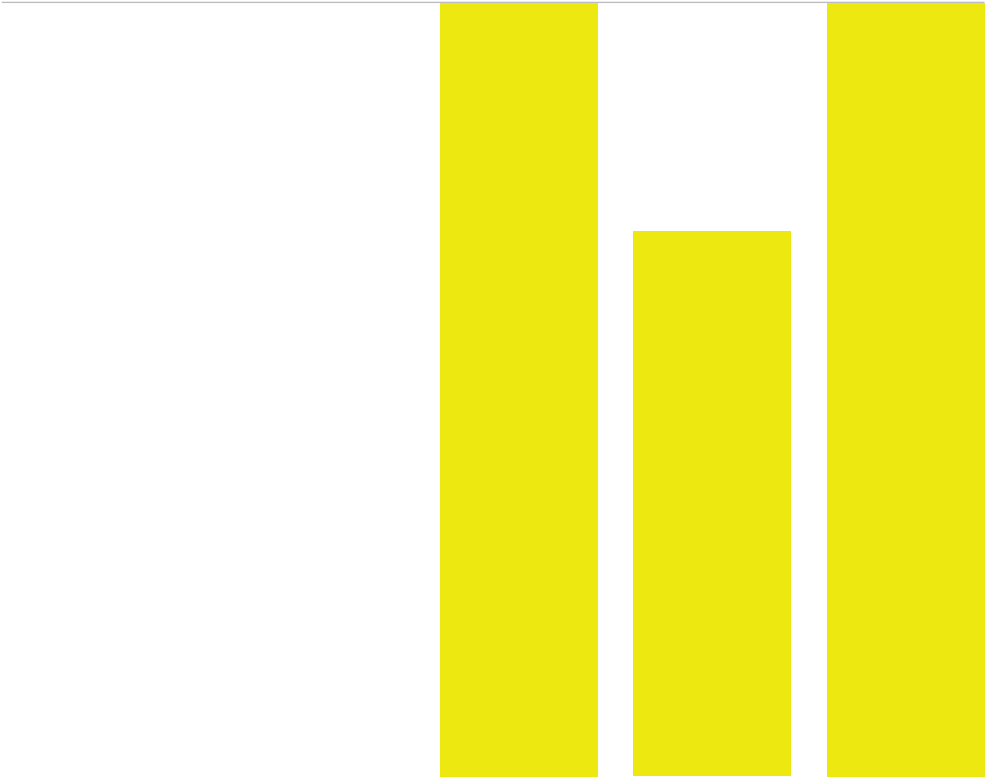


INTERVJU: SAŠA JANKOVIĆ

OVAKO
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Introduction

INTRODUCTION:

Post-election twist

After several exciting trimesters in which we recorded a steady increase in the number of texts inspired by serial election processes at various levels of government and their accompanying developments, the second quarter of 2018 brings surprise in terms of reducing the number of texts that entered the sample. In this quarter, the survey sample amounted to 2009 texts, almost 10% less than in the previous trimester. This is a consequence of the reversal of the focus of the media towards other topics, after the end of Belgrade local elections. In the second quarter, oversaturated with politics, the media are turning to more casual topics, and especially sport, in anticipation of the World Cup in Russia, which began on June 14th.

The passions sparked by the Belgrade elections, which ended in the previous quarter, have exhausted the interest of the readers' auditorium for topics of domestic political life. There is a noticeable increase in the participation of texts in international relations on the cover page. One of the reasons for the large number of texts from this group was the events in Syria.

In this quarter too we have recorded an increased share of the report, which is already dominating the sample. The vast majority of texts in the *Alo!*, *Blic*, *Informer*, *Kurir* and *Večernje novosti* are reports, with few interviews, while a slightly higher variety of genre forms have been recorded only *Danas* and *Politika*.

The selection of topics that are not directly related to politics, in response to post-election saturation with political content, led to the first slight increase in the participation of balanced texts. After a long period of time and several quarters in which there was a noticeable continuing trend in declining text balance, in the second quarter of 2018, for the first time we recorded a discrete increase of the number of balanced texts – 3%.

Nevertheless, many of the disturbing practices of the editorial strategies of print media seen in the previous analyzes of *Mediamater* are still present. The editorial offices continue to create numerous causes, i.e. causes for text creation are not real events. In this quarter, the number of texts devised in the editorial offices was enlarged again. We were following media coverage of the murder of singer Jelena Marjanović in the previous issues of *Mediamater*. Although more than two years have passed since the event, the media continue to report as if it is a matter of current events, inventing potential scenarios of the committed murder, introducing new actors, developing "conspiracy theories", with the continuous monitoring of the investigation procedure conducted against the singer's wife, and all that on the cover pages.

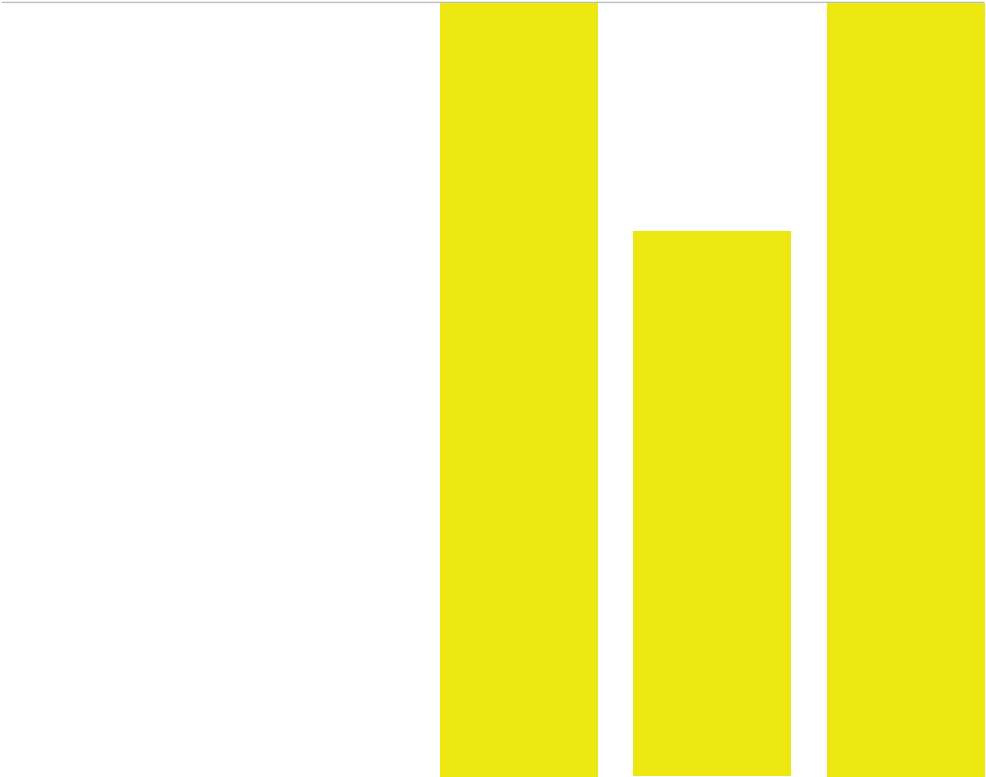
In the latest issue of the *Quarterly Mediameter* empirical material was explored in the same standardized way. A single text was chosen for the subject of analysis. Analysis itself represents the combination of two research methods: (a) content analysis, which was guided by a „specific theoretical and hypothetical frame... creating an objective and systematic empirical collection of the social communication content, which enables the formation of relevant conclusions about the social context in which the communication takes part,”¹ and (b) a discourse analysis which enabled us to understand various, epistemologically and methodologically immeasurable,² authors’ interpretative strategies and editorial policies which reflect perceptions of different, primarily ideological and political, discourse realities, by analyzing their specific discourse meanings.

In the interpretative sense, in order to offer better coherence of the text, the analysis is, as in the previous reports, divided into two wholes which refer to: (a) analysis of quantitative indicators collected using content analysis; and (b) discourse analysis of the qualitative content excerpted from texts which were included in the research sample.

1 S. Gredelj, *S onu stranu ogledala* [On the other side of the mirror], Beograd: Istraživačko-izdavački centar SSO Srbije, 1986, 19

2 G. Couvalis, *The Philosophy of Science*, London, Sage Publications, 1997.





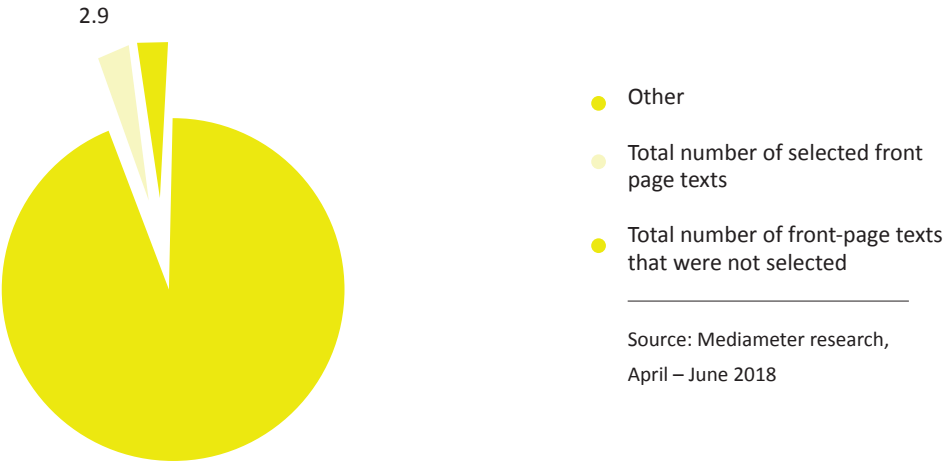
Sample

Sample

As stated in earlier publications, the basic idea of the project *Mediameter* is to try to reconstruct media reality of the dailies in Serbia, the way it can be defined considering the texts that are positioned (wholly or partially) on front pages, as various reflections of current political events and circumstances in both Serbia and the world. A sample of the dailies was composed in 2015 considering two selection criteria – the largest circulation and reputation of the print media. Newspapers *Alo!*, *Blic*, *Danas*, *Informer*, *Kurir*, *Politika* and *Večernje novosti* will compose the *Mediameter* sample in 2018, in order to facilitate parallel study of results. The front page is the part of the dailies that the readers connect the most with the identity/recognition of a media outlet. It is often responsible for the first impression, our potential affection or repulsion formed about some printed media. The front page comes into contact not only with the readers of that particular paper, but also the people who will perhaps never touch that paper. Through newspaper and TV advertising and shop windows, the front page reaches a wider auditorium than that forming the readers of individual dailies. The front pages, hence form, in a certain way, the public image of the newspaper which symbolizes its editorial policy, evaluative orientation and targeting of certain audiences. On account of the above-mentioned reasons, the front pages of dailies from our sample were in the focus of analysis of the project *Mediameter*.

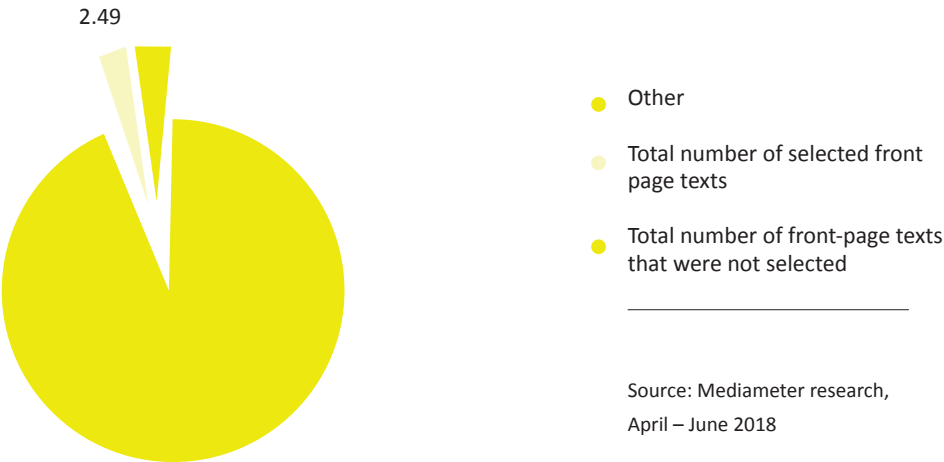
Texts from front pages reflect best the coordinates of editorial policies of daily print editions. Though this involves a small percentage of texts, editorial identity of a daily can be most easily identified through messages conveyed through front pages. The ratio of the total number of texts in each daily individually and the number of texts from the front pages that were included in the sample of our research are shown in the charts 1-7, for the period from April 1st to June 30th 2018.

Graph 1 – *Alo!*



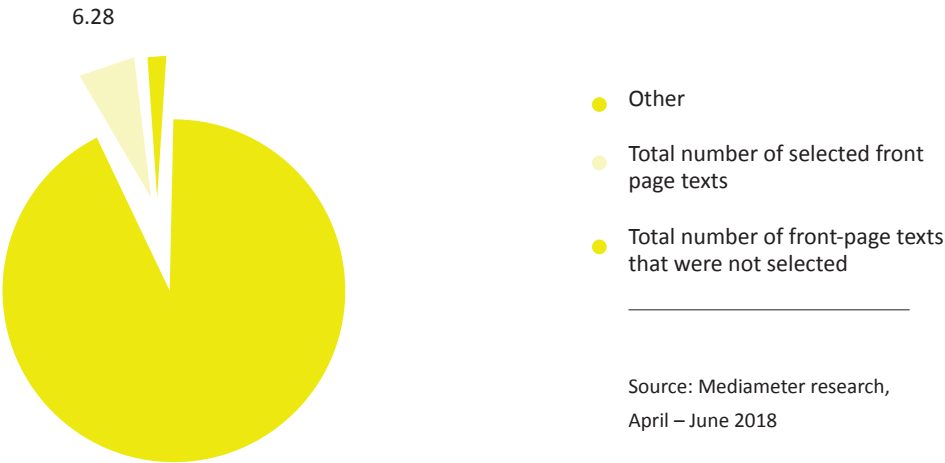
Source: Mediameter research,
April – June 2018

Graph 2 – *Blic*

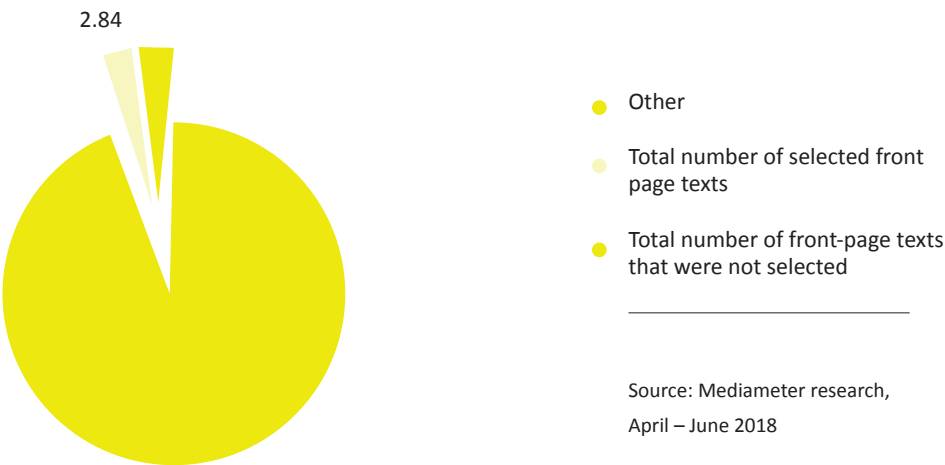


Source: Mediameter research,
April – June 2018

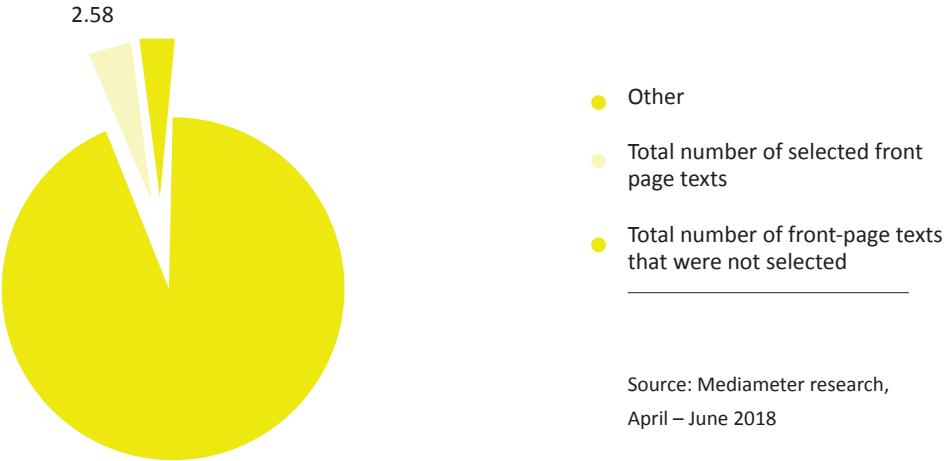
Graph 3 – *Danas*



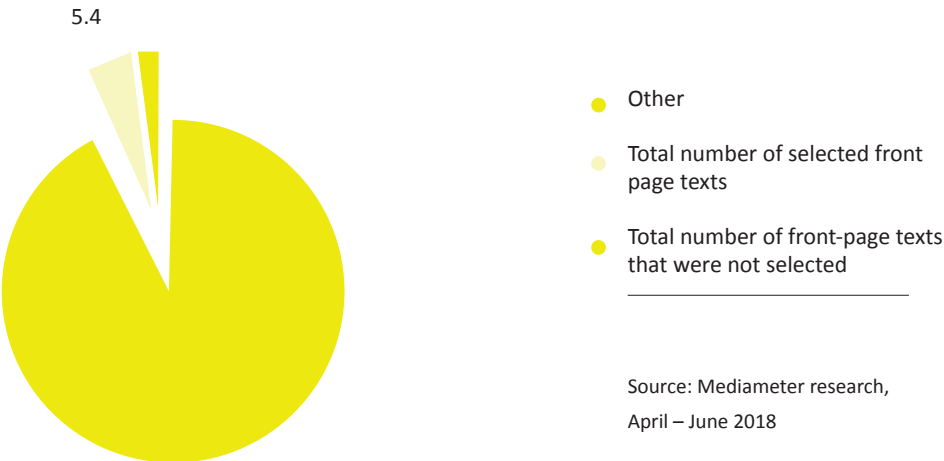
Graph 4 – *Informer*



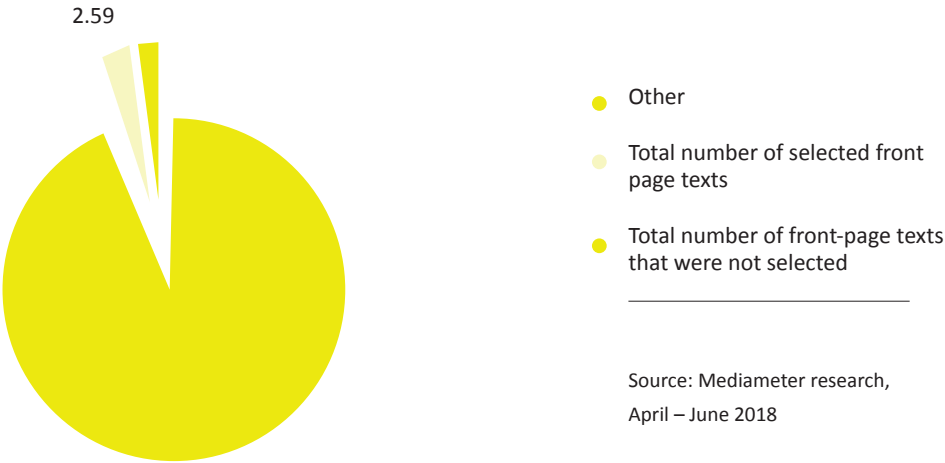
Graph 5 – Kurir



Graph 6 – Politika



Graph 7 – Večernje novosti



The total number of analysed texts considering all seven media that are included in our research sample is 2009 and that number accounts for averagely 57.74% texts from front pages and for 3.55% of the total number of texts.

Table 1 – Alo!

<i>Alo!</i> / section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
current affairs	59	59	0
news	48	44	4
politics	40	39	1
society	34	13	21
chronicle	69	19	50
v.i.p.	104	4	100
sport	45	9	36
world	2	2	0
interview/interview of the week	8	7	1
Belgrade	7	3	4
reportage	1	0	1
supplement	2	0	2
TOTAL	419	199	220

Source: Mediameter *research*, April – June 2018

Table 2 – Blic

<i>Blic</i> / section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
politics	66	66	0
current affairs / interview	10	6	4
topic of the day / issue	75	62	13
society	79	48	31
chronicle	64	13	51
economy	10	9	1
culture	11	2	9
sport	55	0	55
destinies	12	0	12
world-planet	5	3	2
people	1	0	1
research/dossier	3	2	1

reportage	1	0	1
phenomena	1	0	1
entertainment	53	0	53
Blic Foundation	3	0	3
Belgrade	1	1	0
TOTAL	450	212	238

Source: Mediameter *research, April* – June 2018

Table 3 – Danas

Danas/section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
Danas business	10	10	0
Danas special supplement	18	17	1
Danas weekend	36	21	15
event / topic of the day	9	9	0
society	96	89	7
economy	56	53	3
Globus	27	22	5
culture	30	11	19
interview	4	3	1
front page	46	46	0
politics	117	117	0
Belgrade	5	3	2
sport	22	2	20
last page	11	9	2
dialogue	17	16	1
Pomodoro	3	2	1
confrontation	3	3	0
chronicle	1	1	0
Novi Sad	1	1	0
Periskop	2	2	0
foto-news	1	0	1
scales	2	0	2
TOTAL	517	437	80

Source: Mediameter *research, April* – June 2018

Table 4 – Informer

<i>Informer/ section</i>	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
breaking news	120	119	1
news	149	59	90
showtime	75	0	75
sport	81	3	78
TOTAL	425	181	244

Source: Mediameter *research, April – June 2018***Table 5 – Kurir**

<i>Kurir/section</i>	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
news	4	4	0
interview	7	6	1
Planet	14	10	4
chronicle	74	21	53
society	85	32	53
politics	84	84	0
stars	73	2	71
culture	9	1	8
sport	35	5	30
topic of the day	31	30	1
supplement	11	9	2
business	4	4	0
TOTAL	431	208	223

Source: Mediameter *research, April – June 2018***Table 6 – Politika**

<i>Politika/section</i>	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
world	65	44	21
society	72	24	48
economy	36	32	4
politics	19	19	0
event of the day	25	23	2
culture	35	9	26
chronicle	47	12	35

daily supplement	24	3	21
Serbia	22	14	8
sport	47	1	46
topic of the week / day	33	19	14
personalities	1	1	0
reading room	6	0	6
region	14	14	0
front page	260	259	1
views	11	10	1
consumer	18	11	7
Belgrade / Belgrade chronicle	19	9	10
polygraph	1	1	0
TOTAL	755	505	250

Source: Mediameter *research*, April – June 2018

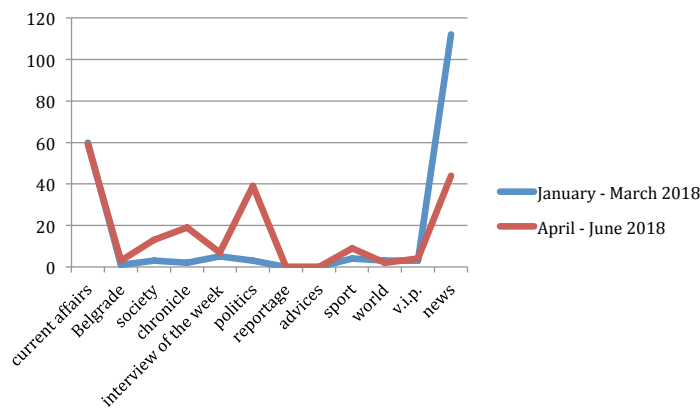
Table 7 – Večernje novosti

<i>Večernje novosti</i> / section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front- page texts that were not selected
chronicle	78	16	62
society	98	75	23
politics	84	84	0
economy	23	18	5
current affairs	27	18	9
reportage	11	4	7
culture	23	5	18
interview	6	4	2
world	18	18	0
sport	66	5	61
Belgrade	3	2	1
topic of the day	4	4	0
reflector	13	0	13
events	9	9	0
daily supplement	10	3	7
second page	2	2	0
TOTAL	475	267	208

Source: Mediameter *research*, April – June 2018

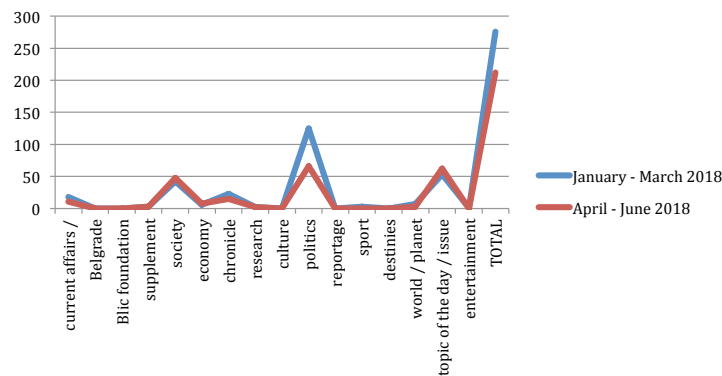
By reviewing the presented tables 1-7, it is still notable that the structure of the analyzed daily newspapers follows two different patterns. *Večernje novosti*, *Politika*, *Danas* and *Blic* follow the classical structure of daily newspapers, but in the previous four quarters, *Kurir* has also adapted to this editorial strategy. It is a novelty that *Alo!* has somehow expanded the structure of the columns in the previous two quarters, but still remains dominantly focused on the contents of a sensational and entertaining character. Only *Informer*, with its reduced structure, deviates significantly from this matrix. The news is the dominant column in *Informer*, which unites various areas,¹ and special attention is given to entertainment content, such as information about famous people, then showbusiness and sports, which increasingly get a socio-political character. The editorial strategies identified in previous editions of *Mediameter* are fully visible in the second quarter of 2018, as can be clearly seen in Graphs 8-14.

Graph 8 – *Alo!*



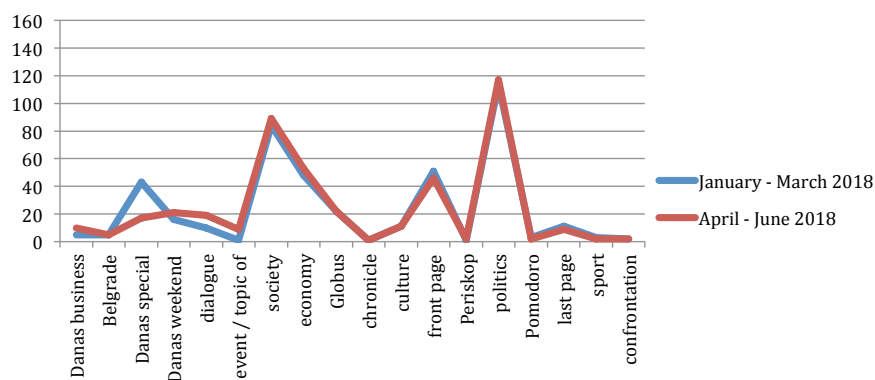
Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2018

Graph 9 – *Blic*

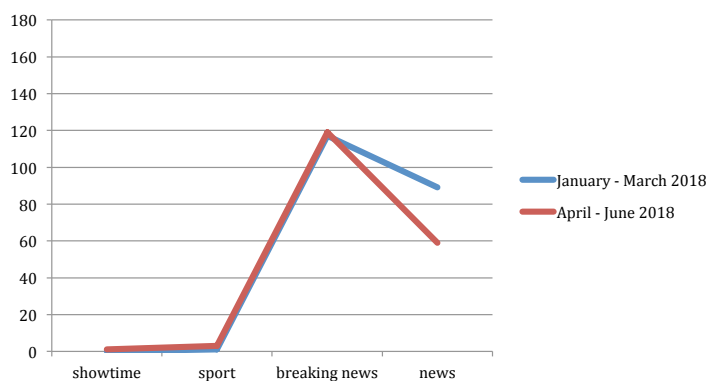


Source: *Mediameter research*, April – June 2018

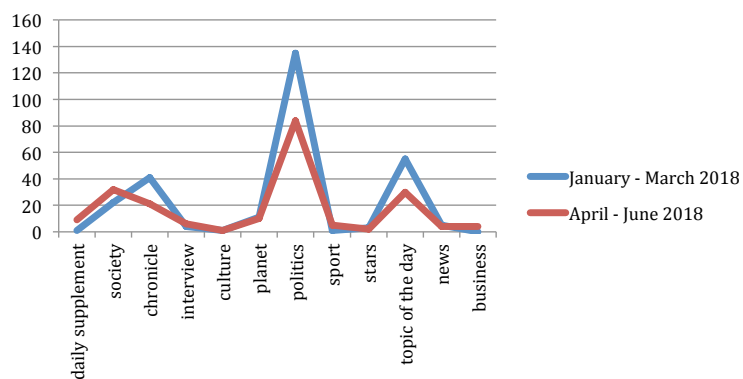
¹ Such as: *society*, *chronicle*, *economy* or *politics*.

Graph 10 – Danas

Source: Mediameter research, April – June 2018

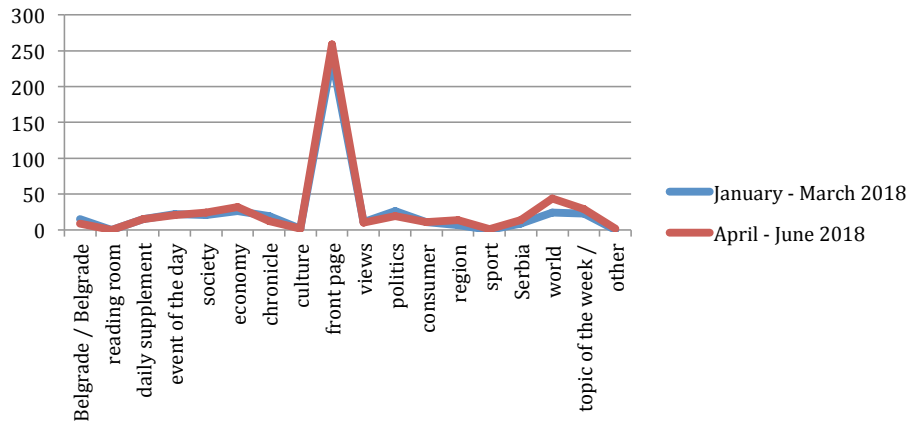
Graph 11 – Informer

Source: Mediameter research, April – June 2018

Grafikon 12. – Kurir

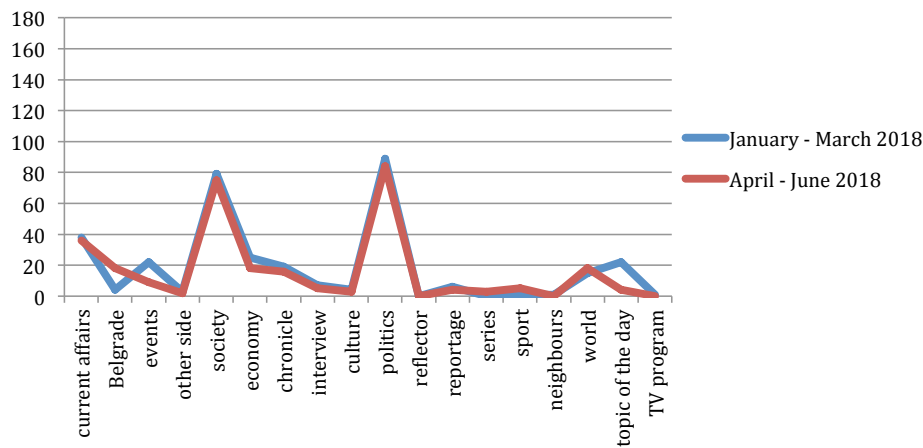
Source: Mediameter research, April – June 2018

Graph 13 – Politika



Source: Mediameter research, April – June 2018

Graph 14 – Večernje novosti



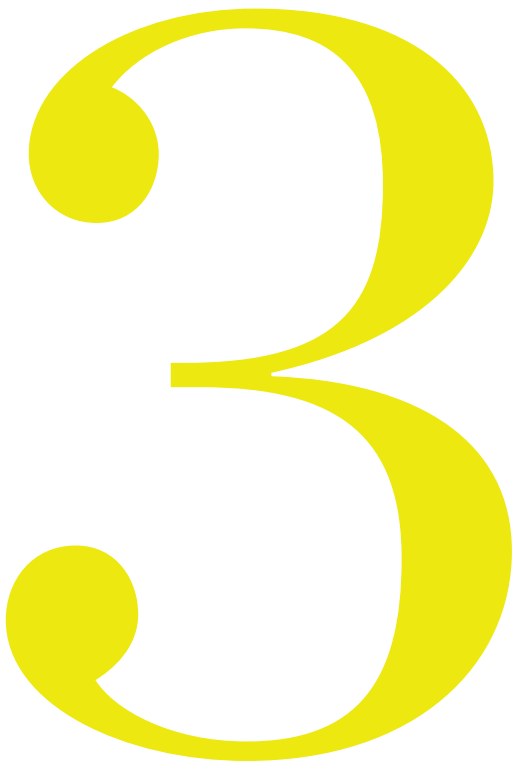
Source: Mediameter research, April – June 2018

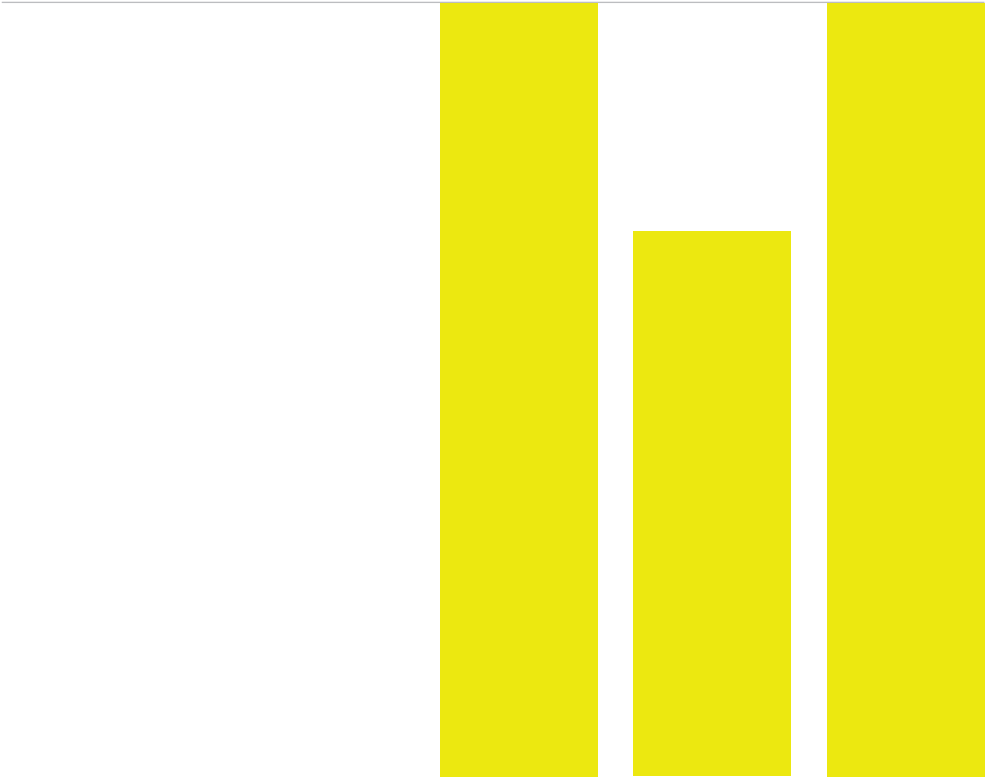
Table 8 shows the number of selected texts in all previous issues of *Mediameter*, where it can be noted that the number of selected texts is significantly reduced compared to the previous quarter, which is certainly due to the completion of the electoral process and the focus of the media towards other subjects that are not the subject of this research, like the field of sports.

In selected articles in the first quarter of 2018, besides political content and Kosovo topics, there was a lot of talk about international relations.

Table 8 – Number of selected texts by quarter for period 2015 – 2018

	2015	2016	2017	2018
First quarter	1360	1924	2403	2173
Second quarter	1673	2106	2091	2009
Third quarter	2172	2012	1991	
Fourth quarter	2177	2251	2167	
TOTAL	7382	8293	8652	





Research results

RESEARCH RESULTS

Share of journalistic genres

In the second quarter of 2018, the share of reports published on the cover pages in the total number of texts that make up the sample is 78.75% or 1582, i.e. it is increased by about 3% compared to the previous quarter. The largest share of the report was again found in *Informer* - 96.13%, while the lowest proportion of texts written in this genre is in *Politika* - 64.55%. The following news forms according to participation are the interview and the article, which make 7.02% and 6.37% of all texts from the sample. Interviews were most frequent in *Danas* and *Blic* (12.59% and 9.91%), while the least number of articles on the front pages were published in this news genre in *Informer* - 2.21% or 4. The highest number and participation of articles is recorded in *Politika* (102 or 20.2%), while *Alo!* and *Kurir* have not publish any texts in this newspaper form. The next genre by representation is commentary - 4.33% (87 texts), while news coverage in this quarter is again less than 2% (34 texts). Reportage and other forms (such as hybrid genres or feuilleton) are present in 1.85% or a total of 37 entries.

Individual share of genres in reporting of seven media from the sample

Genre	Total number	%
Report	1582	78.75
Interview	141	7.02
Article	128	6.37
Commentary	87	4.33
News story	34	1.69
Other (hybrid forms, feuilleton)	22	1.10
Reportage	15	0.75
total	2009	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of journalistic genres in texts from the sample, per media

Genre	<i>Alo!</i>	<i>Blic</i>	<i>Danas</i>	<i>Informer</i>	<i>Kurir</i>	<i>Politika</i>	<i>Večernje novosti</i>	total
report	178	181	307	174	188	326	228	1582
interview	12	21	55	4	8	26	15	141
article	0	2	15	1	0	102	8	128
commentary	3	2	46	1	2	31	2	87
news	6	1	6	1	5	4	11	34
other	0	5	7	0	4	4	2	22
reportage	0	0	1	0	1	12	1	15
total	199	212	437	181	208	505	267	2009

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of journalistic genres in texts from the sample, per media

Genre	<i>Alo!</i>	<i>Blic</i>	<i>Danas</i>	<i>Informer</i>	<i>Kurir</i>	<i>Politika</i>	<i>Večernje novosti</i>	total
report	89.45	85.38	70.25	96.13	90.38	64.55	85.39	78.75
interview	6.03	9.91	12.59	2.21	3.85	5.15	5.62	7.02
article	0.00	0.94	3.43	0.55	0.00	20.20	3.00	6.37
commentary	1.51	0.94	10.53	0.55	0.96	6.14	0.75	4.33
news	3.02	0.47	1.37	0.55	2.40	0.79	4.12	1.69
other	0.00	2.36	1.60	0.00	1.92	0.79	0.75	1.10
reportage	0.00	0.00	0.23	0.00	0.48	2.38	0.37	0.75
total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Topics

In order for each article to be defined as clearly as possible, the selected texts that make up the sample are classified under a single topic, but nevertheless, all relevant elements present in these articles have been accounted for. This gave us a clearer insight into the manner of how the news is provided and also into the manner approach of the media to certain topics in the previous issues of the *Mediameter*. The texts in the field of chronicle, which have socio-political character, as well as the writings relating to the murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović, were again included into the sample, as an example of the paradigm of the state of Serbian journalism, which is marked by various kinds of disrespect for the ethical principles of reporting.

Topic prominence

In the period April-June 2018, all political topics were present in a total of 510 or 25.38% of texts from the sample: *political life in Serbia* in 408 or 20.31% of articles, *activities of the President of Serbia* in 3.38% or 68 articles, *activities of the Government of Serbia* 1.44% 29 and *activities of the President of the Government of Serbia* 0.25% - 5 texts. Compared to the previous quarter, domestic politics are much less present on the covers of seven daily newspapers, which is a consequence of the end of the election period, on the one hand, and the focus of the media on other topics, such as sports¹ and international relations, on the other. The participation of this topic in relation to all the texts from the sample was reduced by about 7%, that is, in absolute terms, there were as many as 202 texts less than in the previous quarter, which dealt about political issues. The second topic according to the representation in the second quarter of 2018 is *Kosovo / Belgrade and Priština relations*. The Kosovo topics again attract attention of the media and it is present in 219 or 10.9% of all texts from the sample, while the *economy* is the third topic that occupied the attention of the media in the second quarter of 2018, represented in 129 or 6.42% of the articles. The same number of articles was devoted to *international relations*, which in the second quarter significantly attracted the interest of the media from the sample. *Regional topics* are present in 103 texts (5.13%), while in 68 articles the media reported on the *activities of the president of Serbia*.

Solving the case of murder of singer Jelena Marjanović is the seventh topic according to the presence, present in 3.04% or 61 texts. The media continue to report on this topic in a sensational manner, and put special emphasis on marking the anniversary of the murder Jelena Marjanović² and the investigative actions that are being carried out in the process against her husband who is suspected of murder. Also, as it has already been pointed out when it comes to causes, more than half of published articles have been designed in editorial offices, without a clear reason for publishing the text.

1 On the cover pages of daily newspapers from the sample, the presence of sports topics has increased considerably. Namely, during the first quarter of 2018, a total of 152 texts from the sports section (selected and not selected) were recorded on the cover pages, while in the second quarter this area was represented in as many as 351 texts, i.e. an increase of about 131% was recorded. This result is certainly the result of the media coverage of the World Cup, which took place in Russia from June 14th to July 15th.

2 Jelena Marjanović was murdered on April 2nd 2016.

Newspapers from the sample focused on media coverage of media / media freedom and judiciary (56 or 2.79% of articles), while the top ten topics include justice topics (56 or 2.79%), economics and social issues / social policy, areas that are represented in 52 or 2.59% of texts.

If the value context of 2009 selected texts is evaluated in the second quarter of 2018, 30.36% of the texts have value connotation - 5.43% are positive and 24.94% are negative, which is almost the same as in the previous quarter. The highest number of negative texts was written on regional themes - 49.51% (51), while between 30% and 40% of negative connotations were published on topics related to Kosovo and the media / media freedom. A quarter of the articles on political life, social policy in Serbia and international relations are also negative. In the second quarter of 2018, more positively connotated texts were recorded - 14 articles were published on the activities of the President of Serbia, and 9 positively intonated texts were recorded when the topics were economy and social policy.

Topics related to the European Union were not in the focus of the media in the second quarter and they represented a backbone of a small number of texts - 32 or 1.59%. The highest percentage of those are neutral ones - 84.38%, with 12.5% negative and 3.13% positively connotated. On the other hand, about 50 texts or 2.49% of the sample was published on Russia. *Informer* (8 articles), *Večernje novosti* (6), *Politika* (4) wrote about this topic in 22 positive texts, while *Kurir* and *Alo!* published 2 positive texts. The only negative text about Russia was recorded in *Politika* (**Graph 15**).

Distribution of topics and their value-orientation in seven sampled newspapers

All media	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	408	20.31	2	0.49	307	75.25	99	24.26
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	219	10.90	0	0.00	134	61.19	85	38.81
Economy	129	6.42	9	6.98	101	78.29	19	14.73
International relations	129	6.42	3	2.33	97	75.19	29	22.48
Regional cooperation /relations in the region	103	5.13	0	0.00	52	50.49	51	49.51
Activities of the President of Serbia	68	3.38	14	20.59	51	75.00	3	4.41
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	61	3.04	0	0.00	48	78.69	13	21.31
Media/freedom of the media	56	2.79	2	3.57	37	66.07	17	30.36
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	56	2.79	1	1.79	49	87.50	6	10.71
Economy	52	2.59	6	11.54	40	76.92	6	11.54
Social issues / social policy	52	2.59	9	17.31	29	55.77	14	26.92

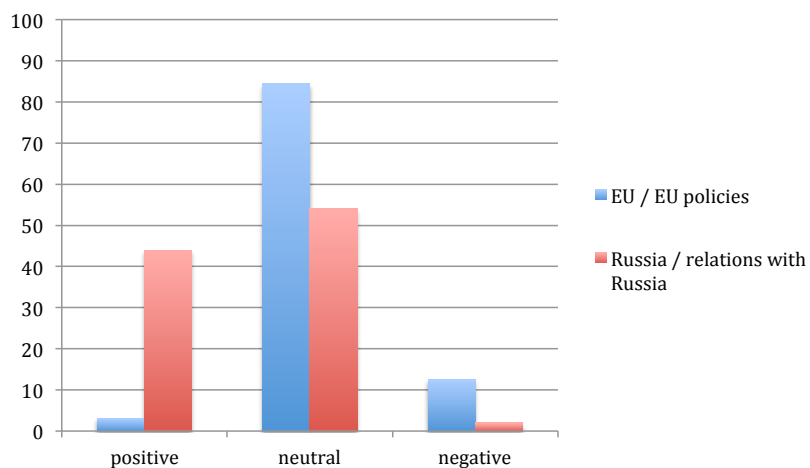
Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Value context in relation to all the topics in all seven media

All media	No.	%
Positive	109	5.43
Neutral	1399	69.64
Negative	501	24.94
total	2009	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Value context in all media in relation to the topic *Russia/ Attitude towards Russia* and *EU /EU policy*



Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of topics according to media

Alo!

Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Alo!*

<i>Alo!</i>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	63	31.66	0	0.00	58	92.06	5	7.94
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	29	14.57	0	0.00	24	82.76	5	17.24
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	18	9.05	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
Economy	10	5.03	0	0.00	8	80.00	2	20.00
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	8	4.02	0	0.00	3	37.50	5	62.50
Activities of the President of Serbia	7	3.52	2	28.57	5	71.43	0	0.00
Russia / attitude towards Russia	6	3.02	2	33.33	4	66.67	0	0.00
Questions of faith, church and religion	6	3.02	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
International relations	5	2.51	0	0.00	3	60.00	2	40.00
USA/ attitude towards USA	5	2.51	0	0.00	3	60.00	2	40.00
Army	5	2.51	1	20.00	4	80.00	0	0.00
Crime	5	2.51	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Alo!*

<i>Alo!</i>	No.	%
Positive	7	3.52
Neutral	161	80.90
Negative	31	15.58
total	199	100

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Blic

Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Blic*

Blic	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	72	33.96	0	0.00	65	90.28	7	9.72
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	23	10.85	0	0.00	21	91.30	2	8.70
Education	13	6.13	0	0.00	10	76.92	3	23.08
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	11	5.19	0	0.00	6	54.55	5	45.45
Economy	9	4.25	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Activities of the Government of Serbia	8	3.77	0	0.00	5	62.50	3	37.50
Crime	7	3.30	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29
Army	7	3.30	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	6	2.83	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
International relations	6	2.83	0	0.00	4	66.67	2	33.33
Activities of the President of Serbia	6	2.83	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Value context in relation to all topics in the paper

Blic	No.	%
Positive	1	0.47
Neutral	181	85.38
Negative	30	14.15
total	212	100

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Danas

Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper

Danas	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Political life in Serbia	114	26.09	0	0.00	90	78.95	24	21.05
Economy	38	8.70	0	0.00	28	73.68	10	26.32
Media/freedom of the media	35	8.01	0	0.00	24	68.57	11	31.43
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	34	7.78	0	0.00	31	91.18	3	8.82
Social issues/social policy	21	4.81	0	0.00	12	57.14	9	42.86
Local government	19	4.35	0	0.00	11	57.89	8	42.11
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	17	3.89	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
International relations	17	3.89	0	0.00	15	88.24	2	11.76
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	13	2.97	0	0.00	11	84.62	2	15.38
Culture	13	2.97	0	0.00	11	84.62	2	15.38

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Tabela 37. – Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Danas*

Danas	No.	%
Positive	2	0.46
Neutral	344	78.72
Negative	91	20.82
total	437	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Informer

Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Informer*

	Value context with reference to the topic							
<i>Informer</i>	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Political life in Serbia	42	23.20	1	2.38	6	14.29	35	83.33
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	31	17.13	0	0.00	5	16.13	26	83.87
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	12	6.63	0	0.00	1	8.33	11	91.67
Russia/attitude towards Russia	10	5.52	8	80.00	2	20.00	0	0.00
NATO/NATO integration	10	5.52	0	0.00	1	10.00	9	90.00
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	8	4.42	0	0.00	5	62.50	3	37.50
Army	8	4.42	6	75.00	2	25.00	0	0.00
USA/ attitude towards USA	7	3.87	0	0.00	0	0.00	7	100.00
International relations	7	3.87	1	14.29	1	14.29	5	71.43
Activities of the President of Serbia	6	3.31	6	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Economy	6	3.31	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Crime	6	3.31	0	0.00	4	66.67	2	33.33

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Informer*

<i>Informer</i>	No.	%
Positive	26	14.36
Neutral	45	24.86
Negative	110	60.77
total	181	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Kurir

Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Kurir*

Kurir	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Political life in Serbia	69	33.17	0	0.00	50	72.46	19	27.54
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	18	8.65	0	0.00	13	72.22	5	27.78
Crime	17	8.17	0	0.00	11	64.71	6	35.29
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	12	5.77	0	0.00	3	25.00	9	75.00
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	11	5.29	0	0.00	4	36.36	7	63.64
Activities of the President of Serbia	8	3.85	2	25.00	6	75.00	0	0.00
International relations	8	3.85	1	12.50	6	75.00	1	12.50
Economy	6	2.88	0	0.00	4	66.67	2	33.33
Traffic	6	2.88	0	0.00	4	66.67	2	33.33
Russia/attitude towards Russia	5	2.40	2	40.00	3	60.00	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Kurir*

Kurir	No	%
Positive	12	5.77
Neutral	131	62.98
Negative	65	31.25
total	208	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Politika

Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Politika*

Politika	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
International relations	71	14.06	1	1.41	55	77.46	15	21.13
Economy	48	9.50	4	8.33	39	81.25	5	10.42
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	44	8.71	0	0.00	23	52.27	21	47.73
Economy	36	7.13	4	11.11	28	77.78	4	11.11
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	33	6.53	0	0.00	19	57.58	14	42.42
Political life in Serbia	26	5.15	0	0.00	22	84.62	4	15.38
Activities of the President of Serbia	19	3.76	2	10.53	17	89.47	0	0.00
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	17	3.37	0	0.00	15	88.24	2	11.76
Education	17	3.37	0	0.00	14	82.35	3	17.65
EU/EU policy	16	3.17	0	0.00	15	93.75	1	6.25
Local government	16	3.17	1	6.25	12	75.00	3	18.75

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Politika*

Politika	No	%
Positive	32	6.34
Neutral	361	71.49
Negative	112	22.18
total	505	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Večernje novosti

Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Večernje novosti*

<i>Večernje novosti</i>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	46	17.23	0	0.00	27	58.70	19	41.30
Political life in Serbia	22	8.24	1	4.55	16	72.73	5	22.73
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	20	7.49	0	0.00	9	45.00	11	55.00
International relations	15	5.62	0	0.00	13	86.67	2	13.33
Activities of the President of Serbia	13	4.87	2	15.38	11	84.62	0	0.00
Economy	12	4.49	5	41.67	7	58.33	0	0.00
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	11	4.12	1	9.09	8	72.73	2	18.18
Russia/attitude towards Russia	9	3.37	6	66.67	3	33.33	0	0.00
Social issues/social policy	9	3.37	2	22.22	6	66.67	1	11.11
NATO/NATO integration	9	3.37	0	0.00	3	33.33	6	66.67

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Večernje novosti*

<i>Večernje novosti</i>	No	%
Positive	29	10.86
Neutral	176	65.92
Negative	62	23.22
total	267	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Balance

When we take into consideration all the texts from the sample for the second period of 2018, it can be noticed that the majority of the presented topics were not treated in a comprehensive manner, as evidenced by the fact that the balance is present in only 22.6% of all texts, which is still about 3.5% more comprehensive texts than in the previous quarter. The least balanced texts were recorded in *Informer* 1.1% or 2 of 179 entries, followed by *Kurir* - 13.46% (about 6% less overall entries than the previous quarter), *Alo!* - 16.08% (about 2% of the balanced texts), *Večernje novosti* - 21.72% (5.5% more), *Danas* - 22.43%, *Blic* - 30.19% and *Politika* - 34.06% (about 13% more).

Although the value context is not expressed in 69.64% of all texts, consideration must be given to the fact that the vast majority of texts from the cover pages we have analyzed are not comprehensive, and that one-sided approach reflects the general situation in the Serbian media. Balanced texts, of course, necessarily show some degree of restraint, which, obviously, does not represent a particularly widespread phenomenon in Serbian journalism. Taking sides, which is sometimes very passionate, attracts the audience but reduces seriousness. It's about the speed of the reaction, not the detailed and rational information required by the research, a larger number of interlocutors and reliable and verifiable data, along with available information sources. In this way, circulation and popularity are gained in a short time, but not a reputation.

The balance in relation to all the topics and all seven media from the sample

All media	Yes		No	
media	%	No.	%	No.
<i>Informer</i>	1.10	2	98.90	179
<i>Kurir</i>	13.46	28	86.54	180
<i>Alo!</i>	16.08	32	83.92	167
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	21.72	58	78.28	209
<i>Danas</i>	22.43	98	77.57	339
<i>Blic</i>	30.19	64	69.81	148
<i>Politika</i>	34.06	172	65.94	333
total	22.60	454	77.40	1555

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Actors

Media in Serbia, at least according to the analysis of the empirical material collected from the covers, mainly deal with political events within Serbia. Individual and collective political actors, who occupy different positions within the political life of Serbia, account for 44.06% of the total number of actors on selected headlines. If we add to this number the texts that speak of foreign political actors,³ the percentage of the participation of political actors in the total number of actors on the headlines rises to 76.02%. The second group by frequency of occurrence is different social actors that make up 13.56% of our sample. Industrial and economic actors are the protagonists of texts on the front page in only 6.82% of cases.

Total distribution of actors appearing in the texts which are a part of sampled research (expressed in absolute numbers)

Actors					
Political actors	8278	Domestic	4798	Individual	3529
				Collective	1269
		Foreign	3480	Individual	2323
				Collective	1157
Economic actors	743	Domestic	662	Individual	209
				Collective	453
		Foreign	81	Individual	18
				Collective	63
Other social actors	1477	Domestic	1457	Individual	1112
				Collective	345
		Foreign	20	Individual	17
				Collective	3
Unnamed sources					391
Total					10889

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

³ In the second quarter of 2018, the participation of foreign political actors was significantly increased in relation to the first quarter, so that they now account for almost 32% of all the protagonists recorded on the cover pages. In the first quarter of 2018, their share was around 24%.

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearance of individual political actors from **the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the President of the Republic of Serbia**

The Government and the President of the Republic of Serbia	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Aleksandar Vučić	564	36.77	21	3.72	529	93.79	14	2.48
Ana Brnabić	165	10.76	2	1.21	159	96.36	4	2.42
Ivica Dačić	134	8.74	0	0.00	131	97.76	3	2.24
Aleksandar Vulin	93	6.06	0	0.00	90	96.77	3	3.23
Zorana Mihajlović	84	5.48	0	0.00	82	97.62	2	2.38
Nebojša Stefanović	78	5.08	0	0.00	77	98.72	1	1.28
Siniša Mali	53	3.46	0	0.00	52	98.11	1	1.89
Rasim Ljajić	36	2.35	0	0.00	36	100.00	0	0.00
Dušan Vujović	35	2.28	2	5.71	33	94.29	0	0.00
Vanja Udovičić	35	2.28	0	0.00	16	45.71	19	54.29
Jadranka Joksimović	35	2.28	0	0.00	35	100.00	0	0.00
Mladen Šarčević	34	2.22	1	2.94	33	97.06	0	0.00
Zoran Đorđević	25	1.63	0	0.00	25	100.00	0	0.00
Nenad Popović	25	1.63	0	0.00	25	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandar Antić	20	1.30	0	0.00	20	100.00	0	0.00
Zlatibor Lončar	18	1.17	1	5.56	16	88.89	1	5.56
Goran Trivan	18	1.17	1	5.56	15	83.33	2	11.11
Nela Kuburović	17	1.11	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
Branislav Nedimović	17	1.11	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
Vladan Vukosavljević	15	0.98	0	0.00	13	86.67	2	13.33
Slavica Đukić Dejanović	14	0.91	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Branko Ružić	11	0.72	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Knežević	6	0.39	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Krkobabić	2	0.13	0	0.00	1	50.00	1	50.00
total	1534	100.00	28	1.83	1453	94.72	53	3.46

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

As in the previous quarter, the most frequent actor on the main pages of daily newspapers in Serbia was Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić, about whom the media in our sample report predominantly neutral (in 93.79% of cases). About 3.72% (21) positive and 2.48% (14) texts with negative connotation were written about him. The President of Serbia, as the protagonist of the texts on the cover, appears 564 times, which is significantly higher than the second ranked actor, Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabić, who is present in 165 articles and Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić, who is present in 134 articles. The highest frequency of the appearance of Aleksandar Vučić, expressed in absolute numbers, is recorded in daily newspapers *Danas* (150), *Politika* (118) and *Večernje novosti* (87). Expressed in the relative numbers of the percentage participation of the texts in which he appears as an actor, and in

relation to the total number of selected texts from the same individual newspapers, we see that he is the most represented in the daily *Danas* (34.32%), and then in the daily newspapers *Večernje novosti* (32.58 %) and *Blic* (30.19%). The lowest participation of the texts in which the player is the president of Serbia is recorded in the newspapers *Kurir* (22.12%) and *Politika* (23.37%).

When it comes to the value context, the largest share, as well as the number of negative texts, are again present in *Danas* (9.33% or 14 texts). The highest number of positive texts were published in *Informer* - 11.11% or 5 texts and *Alo!* - 9.26% (5 texts), and immediately thereafter in *Politika* and *Kurir* - 4 texts each and 3 texts in *Večernje novosti*.

Aleksandar Vučić: Context value with reference to the media

Aleksandar Vučić	Positive		Neutral		Negative		total	
Media	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Alo!</i>	5	9.26	49	90.74	0	0.00	54	100.00
<i>Blic</i>	0	0.00	64	100.00	0	0.00	64	100.00
<i>Danas</i>	0	0.00	136	90.67	14	9.33	150	100.00
<i>Informer</i>	5	11.11	40	88.89	0	0.00	45	100.00
<i>Kurir</i>	4	8.70	42	91.30	0	0.00	46	100.00
<i>Politika</i>	4	3.39	114	96.61	0	0.00	118	100.00
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	3	3.45	84	96.55	0	0.00	87	100.00
total	21	3.72	529	93.79	14	2.48	564	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Number of appearances of Aleksandar Vučić in respect of total numbers of texts in particular daily newspapers

Aleksandar Vučić per media	No. of ap-pearances	Total no. of texts	% share against total no. of texts
<i>Danas</i>	150	437	34.32
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	87	267	32.58
<i>Blic</i>	64	212	30.19
<i>Alo!</i>	54	199	27.14
<i>Informer</i>	45	181	24.86
<i>Politika</i>	118	505	23.37
<i>Kurir</i>	46	208	22.12
total	564	2009	28.07

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Prime Minister Ana Brnabić is the protagonist in 165 (10.76%) analyzed texts and she is the second according to the frequency of appearances among individual political actors from the Serbian political scene. In the second quarter of 2018, 4 negative connotations were written about Ana Brnabić, three in the daily *Danas* and one in *Kurir*. Positively connoted articles on the current prime minister have published only two newspapers: *Alo!* (1 text) and *Politika* (1).

The largest number of articles in which the Serbian prime minister was the actor was published in *Politika* (47) and *Blic* (32). The largest share of texts in relation to the total number of texts in the media was recorded in *Blic* (15.09%) and *Večernje novosti* (9.36%)

Ana Brnabić: Context value with reference to the media

Ana Brnabić	positive		neutral		negative		total	
Media	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Alo!</i>	1	9.09	10	90.91	0	0.00	11	100.00
<i>Blic</i>	0	0.00	32	100.00	0	0.00	32	100.00
<i>Danas</i>	0	0.00	27	90.00	3	10.00	30	100.00
<i>Informer</i>	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00	3	100.00
<i>Kurir</i>	0	0.00	16	94.12	1	5.88	17	100.00
<i>Politika</i>	1	2.13	46	97.87	0	0.00	47	100.00
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	0	0.00	25	100.00	0	0.00	25	100.00
Grand Total	2	1.21	159	96.36	4	2.42	165	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Number of appearances of Ana Brnabić in respect of total numbers of texts in particular dailies

Ana Brnabić per media	No. of appearances	Total no. of texts	% share against total no. of texts
<i>Blic</i>	32	212	15.09
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	25	267	9.36
<i>Politika</i>	47	505	9.31
<i>Kurir</i>	17	208	8.17
<i>Danas</i>	30	437	6.86
<i>Alo!</i>	11	199	5.53
<i>Informer</i>	3	181	1.66
total	165	2009	8.21

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Other actors from this group are in 94.72% of texts presented in a neutral value context. The highest number and participation of negative connotations was recorded with Vanja Udovičić (19 texts, or 54.29%).

In the second quarter of 2018, there was a significant drop in the number of appearances of opposition parties - 844, following a sharp increase in the previous quarter (1781), which was spurred by activities related to the Belgrade elections. In this quarter, the most prominent opposition actor was Vojislav Šešelj with 98 appearances, followed immediately by Dragan Đilas (92 texts) and Vuk Jeremić (76). The most negative texts, expressed in absolute numbers, were written about Vuk Jeremić (20), then Dragan Đilas (13), Vojislav Šešelj and Sasa Janković (after 11). Expressed in relative numbers, the largest percentage participation of negative connotations is present with Sulejman Ugljanin (50%), Vuk Jeremić (26.32%) and Boško Obradović (25%). About the representatives of the opposition in the second quarter of 2018 no positive texts were written.

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearance of individual political actors from **the opposition**

Opposition- individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Vojislav Šešelj	98	11.61	0	0.00	87	88.78	11	11.22
Dragan Đilas	92	10.90	0	0.00	79	85.87	13	14.13
Vuk Jeremić	76	9.00	0	0.00	56	73.68	20	26.32
Saša Janković	61	7.23	0	0.00	50	81.97	11	18.03
Boris Tadić	34	4.03	0	0.00	29	85.29	5	14.71
Čedomir Jovanović	27	3.20	0	0.00	22	81.48	5	18.52
Nenad Čanak	24	2.84	0	0.00	24	100.00	0	0.00
Gordana Čomić	17	2.01	0	0.00	16	94.12	1	5.88
Aleksandra Jerkov	17	2.01	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
Boško Obradović	16	1.90	0	0.00	12	75.00	4	25.00
Zoran Živković	15	1.78	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Borko Stefanović	15	1.78	0	0.00	13	86.67	2	13.33
Dragan Šutanovac	12	1.42	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandar Šapić	11	1.30	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Lutovac	10	1.18	0	0.00	9	90.00	1	10.00
Marko Đurišić	9	1.07	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Radoslav Milojević Kena	9	1.07	0	0.00	8	88.89	1	11.11
Balša Božović	8	0.95	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Miroslav Aleksić	8	0.95	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Branislav Lečić	8	0.95	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Vjerica Radeta	8	0.95	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Ćirić	7	0.83	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Nataša Jovanović	7	0.83	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00

QUARTERLY MEDIAMETER

Saša Radulović	7	0.83	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Rade Veljanovski	6	0.71	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Sanda Rašković Ivić	6	0.71	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Janko Veselinović	6	0.71	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Bojan Pajić	6	0.71	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Nikola Jovanović	5	0.59	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Đorđe Vukadinović	5	0.59	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Marinika Tepić	5	0.59	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Nemanja Šarović	5	0.59	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Bojan Kostreš	5	0.59	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Nebojša Zelenović	4	0.47	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Branislav Mihajlović	4	0.47	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Tatjana Macura	4	0.47	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Velimir Ilić	4	0.47	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Branka Stamenković	4	0.47	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Borivoje Borović	4	0.47	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Radomir Lazović	4	0.47	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Sulejman Ugljanin	4	0.47	0	0.00	2	50.00	2	50.00
Tomislav Žigmanov	3	0.36	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Sreto Malinović	3	0.36	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Janko Baljak	3	0.36	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Filip Stojanović	3	0.36	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	155	18.36	0	0.00	146	94.19	9	5.81
total	844	100.00	0	0.00	759	89.93	85	10.07

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual political actors representing **the position**

Position - individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Darko Glišić	19	5.52	0	0.00	18	94.74	1	5.26
Dragan Marković Palma	18	5.23	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
Irena Vujović	15	4.36	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Radomir Nikolić	14	4.07	0	0.00	6	42.86	8	57.14
Milutin Mrkonjić	13	3.78	0	0.00	10	76.92	3	23.08
Milovan Drecun	13	3.78	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Đukanović	12	3.49	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Milutin Jeličić	11	3.20	0	0.00	3	27.27	8	72.73
Miroslav Lazanski	10	2.91	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Meho Omerović	9	2.62	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Muamer Zukorlić	9	2.62	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Darko Bulatović	9	2.62	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandar Martinović	8	2.33	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Veroljub Arsić	7	2.03	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Vuk Drašković	7	2.03	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Ivica Tončev	6	1.74	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Đorđe Milićević	6	1.74	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Milenko Jovanov	5	1.45	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Marijan Ristićević	5	1.45	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Ivan Tasovac	4	1.16	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Bogoljub Karić	4	1.16	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Šormaz	4	1.16	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
Andrej Vučić	4	1.16	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Orlić	3	0.87	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Marinković	3	0.87	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Vesna Stanojević	3	0.87	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Momo Čolaković	3	0.87	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Predrag Marković	3	0.87	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	117	34.01	0	0.00	104	88.89	13	11.11
total	344	100.00	0	0.00	310	90.12	34	9.88

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual political actors: **representatives of State bodies, agencies and institutions**

State bodies, agencies and institutions - individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Marko Đurić	92	21.96	0	0.00	92	100.00	0	0.00
Maja Gojković	50	11.93	0	0.00	50	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Vesić	47	11.22	0	0.00	46	97.87	1	2.13
Zoran Radojičić	26	6.21	1	3.85	25	96.15	0	0.00
Tomislav Nikolić	20	4.77	0	0.00	17	85.00	3	15.00
Nikola Selaković	15	3.58	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Nikola Nikodijević	10	2.39	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Veljko Odalović	8	1.91	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Jorgovanka Tabaković	6	1.43	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Miloš Vučević	5	1.19	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Bojana Borić Brešković	4	0.95	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Andreja Mladenović	4	0.95	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandar Gajović	3	0.72	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Milutin Folić	3	0.72	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	100.00
others	126	30.07	0	0.00	119	94.44	7	5.56
total	419	100.00	1	0.24	404	96.42	14	3.34

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution and frequency and value context of appearances of individual political actors: **representatives of military and police**

Military and police - individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Ljubiša Diković	22	15.28	0	0.00	19	86.36	3	13.64
Bratislav Gašić	14	9.72	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Rebić	12	8.33	0	0.00	11	91.67	1	8.33
Dijana Hrkalo	3	2.08	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Novica Antić	3	2.08	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	90	62.50	1	1.11	89	98.89	0	0.00
total	144	100.00	1	0.69	139	96.53	4	2.78

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of **other** individual political and social actors

Others	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Slobodan Milošević	56	21.71	0	0.00	52	92.86	4	7.14
Zoran Đinđić	46	17.83	0	0.00	46	100.00	0	0.00
Siniša Jasnić	23	8.91	0	0.00	2	8.70	21	91.30
Vojislav Koštunica	15	5.81	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Nebojša Arsenijević	12	4.65	0	0.00	6	50.00	6	50.00
Mirjana Marković	11	4.26	0	0.00	10	90.91	1	9.09
Svetlana Ceca Ražnatović	11	4.26	0	0.00	10	90.91	1	9.09
Dušan Mihajlović	10	3.88	0	0.00	6	60.00	4	40.00
Dragica Nikolić	9	3.49	0	0.00	6	66.67	3	33.33
CIRSD	8	3.10	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Emir Kusturica	7	2.71	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Mladen Dinkić	6	2.33	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
Slavko Ćuruvija	6	2.33	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Ivan Stambolić	5	1.94	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Mirko Cvetković	4	1.55	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Sonja Biserko	4	1.55	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Jelena Karleuša	4	1.55	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
SANU	3	1.16	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Humanitarian law center	3	1.16	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Slaviša Kokeza	3	1.16	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Jelena Milić	3	1.16	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Igor Jurić	3	1.16	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Dušan Kovačević	3	1.16	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Vesna Pešić	3	1.16	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
total	258	100.00	0	0.00	216	83.72	42	16.28

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of domestic collective political actors:
state bodies and institutions

State bodies, agencies and institutions	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Government of Serbia	148	25.30	2	1.35	144	97.30	2	1.35
Ministry of Interior	60	10.26	1	1.67	57	95.00	2	3.33
Ministry of Defence	26	4.44	0	0.00	25	96.15	1	3.85
National Assembly of Serbia	26	4.44	0	0.00	26	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	24	4.10	0	0.00	24	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	19	3.25	0	0.00	18	94.74	1	5.26
National Bank of Serbia	19	3.25	0	0.00	19	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Health	16	2.74	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Ministarstvo pravde	16	2.74	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy	16	2.74	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Culture and Information	15	2.56	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection	13	2.22	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Finance	13	2.22	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication	12	2.05	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Construction, Traffic and Infrastructure	12	2.05	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Office for Kosovo and Metohija	12	2.05	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
City of Belgrade	8	1.37	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
Tax Administration	8	1.37	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Youth and Sport	8	1.37	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
Business Registers Agency	8	1.37	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Prime Minister's Cabinet	7	1.20	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Republic fund PIO	6	1.03	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Republic Statistical Authority	5	0.85	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
President's Cabinet	5	0.85	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Mining and Energy	4	0.68	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Assembly of the City of Belgrade	3	0.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
RFZO	3	0.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Government of AP Vojvodina	3	0.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
National employment agency	3	0.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	67	11.45	1	1.49	65	97.01	1	1.49
total	585	100.00	4	0.68	572	97.78	9	1.54

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of domestic collective political actors:
military and police

Military and police	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Serbian Armed Forces	40	37.74	4	10.00	36	90.00	0	0.00
BIA	24	22.64	0	0.00	24	100.00	0	0.00
Criminal Investigations Directorate	9	8.49	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Serbian Military Union	4	3.77	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
SBPOK	3	2.83	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
SAJ	3	2.83	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	23	21.70	0	0.00	23	100.00	0	0.00
total	106	100.00	4	3.77	102	96.23	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of domestic collective political actors:
position

Position	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
SNS	130	65.33	0	0.00	123	94.62	7	5.38
SPS	30	15.08	0	0.00	30	100.00	0	0.00
United Serbia	15	7.54	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
SDPS	8	4.02	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
PUPS	7	3.52	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
SNP	3	1.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Socialists' Movement	3	1.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	3	1.51	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
total	199	100.00	0	0.00	191	95.98	8	4.02

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of domestic collective actors: **opposition**

Opposition- parties	No.	%	positive	%	neutral	%	negative	%
DS	72	19.73	0	0.00	70	97.22	2	2.78
SRS	54	14.79	0	0.00	53	98.15	1	1.85
PSG	39	10.68	0	0.00	38	97.44	1	2.56
People's party	29	7.95	0	0.00	29	100.00	0	0.00
LSV	28	7.67	0	0.00	28	100.00	0	0.00
Dveri	27	7.40	0	0.00	27	100.00	0	0.00
Enough is enough	20	5.48	0	0.00	20	100.00	0	0.00
DSS	18	4.93	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
Serbian Left	15	4.11	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
LDP	14	3.84	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
SDS	12	3.29	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Initiative: Let's not drown Belgrade	11	3.01	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
New party	11	3.01	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Movement for Turnaround	8	2.19	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
others	7	1.92	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
total	365	100.00	0	0.00	361	98.90	4	1.10

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective actors:
Kosovo

Kosovo	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Hashim Thaçi	98	18.05	0	0.00	76	77.55	22	22.45
Ramush Haradinaj	83	15.29	0	0.00	63	75.90	20	24.10
Oliver Ivanović	40	7.37	0	0.00	40	100.00	0	0.00
KLA	33	6.08	0	0.00	24	72.73	9	27.27
KFOR	33	6.08	0	0.00	32	96.97	1	3.03
Serbian list	24	4.42	0	0.00	24	100.00	0	0.00
Euleks	21	3.87	0	0.00	19	90.48	2	9.52
ROSU	12	2.21	0	0.00	8	66.67	4	33.33
Behgjet Pacolli	12	2.21	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Kadri Veseli	11	2.03	0	0.00	7	63.64	4	36.36
Unmik	11	2.03	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Citizen initiative SDP	7	1.29	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Rakić	5	0.92	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Enver Hoxhaj	5	0.92	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Dalibor Jeftić	4	0.74	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00

Daut Haradinaj	4	0.74	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Fatmir Limaj	3	0.55	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Albin Kurti	3	0.55	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Special court for KLA crimes	3	0.55	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Radojičić	3	0.55	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Kosovo police	3	0.55	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
"Kosovo authorities"	3	0.55	0	0.00	1	33.33	2	66.67
others	122	22.47	1	0.82	107	87.70	14	11.48
total	543	100.00	1	0.18	463	85.27	79	14.55

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Croatia**

Croatia	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Andrej Plenković	27	15.08	0	0.00	22	81.48	5	18.52
Kolinda Grabar Kitarović	24	13.41	0	0.00	21	87.50	3	12.50
Franjo Tuđman	9	5.03	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Milorad Pupovac	8	4.47	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Stjepan Mesić	6	3.35	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
HDZ	5	2.79	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Ante Pavelić	4	2.23	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Ante Gotovina	4	2.23	0	0.00	2	50.00	2	50.00
"Croatian authorities"	4	2.23	0	0.00	0	0.00	4	100.00
others	88	49.16	0	0.00	73	82.95	15	17.05
total	179	100.00	0	0.00	149	83.24	30	16.76

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Montenegro**

Montenegro	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Milo Đukanović	14	21.54	0	0.00	11	78.57	3	21.43
DPS	6	9.23	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
SDP	4	6.15	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Duško Marković	4	6.15	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Democratic front	3	4.62	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Filip Vujanović	2	3.08	0	0.00	2	100.00	0	0.00
others	32	49.23	0	0.00	31	96.88	1	3.13
total	65	100.00	0	0.00	61	93.85	4	6.15

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Federation of BiH**

BiH	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Milorad Dodik	57	29.38	0	0.00	55	96.49	2	3.51
Bakir Izetbegović	14	7.22	0	0.00	11	78.57	3	21.43
Denis Zvizdić	9	4.64	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Čović	8	4.12	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
BiH Prosecution	6	3.09	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Mladen Ivanić	6	3.09	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Naser Orić	5	2.58	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Alija Izetbegović	5	2.58	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
BiH Presidency	4	2.06	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
SIPA	4	2.06	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Mektić	4	2.06	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Željka Cvijanović	4	2.06	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Government of RS	3	1.55	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Milorad Kojić	3	1.55	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	62	31.96	0	0.00	59	95.16	3	4.84
total	194	100.00	0	0.00	185	95.36	9	4.64

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Macedonia**

Macedonia	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Zoran Zaev	24	36.92	0	0.00	24	100.00	0	0.00
Đorđe Ivanov	9	13.85	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Nikola Gruevski	4	6.15	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
others	28	43.08	0	0.00	27	96.43	1	3.57
total	65	100.00	0	0.00	64	98.46	1	1.54

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual foreign political actors outside the region - **foreign politicians**

Foreign political actors	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Emmanuel Macron	61	10.80	0	0.00	59	96.72	2	3.28
Recep Tayyip Erdogan	54	9.56	0	0.00	53	98.15	1	1.85
Bashar al Assad	37	6.55	0	0.00	37	100.00	0	0.00
Theresa May	26	4.60	0	0.00	26	100.00	0	0.00
Alexis Tsipras	24	4.25	0	0.00	24	100.00	0	0.00
Benjamin Netanjahu	18	3.19	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
Bojko Borisov	16	2.83	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Kim Jong Un	13	2.30	2	15.38	11	84.62	0	0.00
Xi Jinping	12	2.12	0	0.00	11	91.67	1	8.33
Viktor Orban	10	1.77	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Sebastian Kurz	9	1.59	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Edi Rama	8	1.42	0	0.00	6	75.00	2	25.00
Tonny Blair	7	1.24	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Mariano Rajoy	7	1.24	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Alexander Lukashenko	6	1.06	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Petro Poroshenko	6	1.06	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Al Kaida	5	0.88	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Boris Johnson	5	0.88	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Fethullah Gülen	4	0.71	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Denis Keefe	3	0.53	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Shinzō Abe	3	0.53	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Nicolas Sarkozy	3	0.53	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	228	40.35	0	0.00	215	94.30	13	5.70
total	565	100.00	2	0.35	543	96.11	20	3.54

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual foreign political actors outside the region: **Germany**

Germany	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Angela Merkel	71	57.26	1	1.41	70	98.59	0	0.00
Axel Dittmann	6	4.84	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Gerhard Schröder	4	3.23	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
CDU	3	2.42	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	40	32.26	0	0.00	40	100.00	0	0.00
total	124	100.00	1	0.81	123	99.19	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors outside the region: **Russia**

Russia	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Vladimir Putin ¹	162	40.40	9	5.56	153	94.44	0	0.00
Sergey Lavrov	24	5.99	1	4.17	23	95.83	0	0.00
Alexander Chepurin	14	3.49	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Sergei Skripal	13	3.24	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Dmitry Medvedev	13	3.24	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Maria Zakharova	11	2.74	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Dmitry Peskov	10	2.49	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Russian Ministry of Defence	9	2.24	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Russian armed forces	8	2.00	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Sergey Shoygu	8	2.00	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Russia's Ministry of Foreign affairs	5	1.25	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
"Russian authorities"	4	1.00	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
FSB	3	0.75	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	117	29.18	5	4.27	110	94.02	2	1.71
total	401	100.00	15	3.74	383	95.51	3	0.75

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors outside the region: **USA**

USA	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Donald Trump	128	32.00	0	0.00	107	83.59	21	16.41
Kyle Scott	14	3.50	0	0.00	11	78.57	3	21.43
Barak Obama	14	3.50	0	0.00	13	92.86	1	7.14
Mike Pompeo	11	2.75	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Bill Clinton	10	2.50	0	0.00	9	90.00	1	10.00
Wess Mitchell	9	2.25	0	0.00	7	77.78	2	22.22
"American authorities"	8	2.00	0	0.00	1	12.50	7	87.50
CIA	8	2.00	0	0.00	5	62.50	3	37.50
State Department	7	1.75	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
James Mattis	7	1.75	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Pentagon	6	1.50	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Hillary Clinton	6	1.50	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
George Bush	6	1.50	0	0.00	4	66.67	2	33.33
Matthew Palmer	6	1.50	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
FBI	6	1.50	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Mike Pence	6	1.50	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
John Bolton	5	1.25	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
US army	5	1.25	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
George Soros	5	1.25	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Washington Post	5	1.25	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
James Comey	5	1.25	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
New York Times	5	1.25	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Melania Trump	4	1.00	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Greg Delawie	3	0.75	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	111	27.75	0	0.00	108	97.30	3	2.70
total	400	100.00	0	0.00	355	88.75	45	11.25

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign political actors: **representatives of EU institutions and EU institutions**

EU	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
EU	265	51.36	1	0.38	254	95.85	10	3.77
European Commission	44	8.53	0	0.00	44	100.00	0	0.00
Federica Mogherini	44	8.53	0	0.00	42	95.45	2	4.55
Jean Claude Juncker	20	3.88	0	0.00	18	90.00	2	10.00
Donald Tusk	20	3.88	0	0.00	19	95.00	1	5.00
Johannes Han	16	3.10	0	0.00	15	93.75	1	6.25
European Parliament	15	2.91	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Council of Europe	12	2.33	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Maja Kocijančič	10	1.94	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Sem Fabrizi	7	1.36	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
European Investment Bank	4	0.78	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
David McAlister	4	0.78	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
others	55	10.66	0	0.00	55	100.00	0	0.00
total	516	100.00	1	0.19	499	96.71	16	3.10

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of individual and collective foreign political actors: **representatives of human rights organizations and Council of Europe representatives**

Human Rights	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
OSCE	10	29.41	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
European court for human rights	8	23.53	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
International court of justice in Hague	5	14.71	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Council of Europe	5	14.71	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
others	6	17.65	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
total	34	100.00	0	0.00	34	100.00	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign political actors: **representatives of UN institutions and UN institutions**

UN	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
United Nations	60	45.45	0	0.00	59	98.33	1	1.67
UN Security Council	35	26.52	0	0.00	35	100.00	0	0.00
UNESCO	6	4.55	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
António Guterres	5	3.79	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
UNHCR	3	2.27	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	23	17.42	0	0.00	23	100.00	0	0.00
total	132	100.00	0	0.00	131	99.24	1	0.76

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors: **NATO**

NATO	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
NATO	153	87.43	0	0.00	121	79.08	32	20.92
Jens Stoltenberg	5	2.86	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
others	17	9.71	0	0.00	16	94.12	1	5.88
total	175	100.00	0	0.00	142	81.14	33	18.86

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective actors: **actors related to The Hague Tribunal**

The Hague Tribunal	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Hague tribunal	30	34.48	0	0.00	26	86.67	4	13.33
Ratko Mladić	15	17.24	1	6.67	14	93.33	0	0.00
Jovica Stanišić	5	5.75	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Radovan Karadžić	4	4.60	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Teodor Meron	3	3.45	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Geoffrey Nice	3	3.45	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	27	31.03	0	0.00	27	100.00	0	0.00
total	87	100.00	1	1.15	82	94.25	4	4.60

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Already from this cursory review of the frequency of the appearance of individual actors on the front pages of the selected printed daily newspapers from our sample, it is clearly noticed that the media treat issues from the domain of internal and external politics with unequal interest. However, while foreign political actors are less represented in relation to domestic political actors, this difference has significantly decreased in the second quarter, and they now account for 42.03% compared to 57.96% of the frequency of the appearance of domestic political actors.⁴

The reasons for a noticeable lack of interest for economic actors and their understanding of the social, economic and political situation in Serbia and the world remains enigmatic (only 6.82% of the total sample of actors are economic actors), contrary to the fact that economic issues and economic consolidation of the country are portrayed in the narratives of many politicians as key elements of future development strategies of the Serbian society.

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective **economy/economic actors**

Economic actors - individually	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Miroslav Mišković	16	7.66	0	0.00	13	81.25	3	18.75
Dragan Šolak	10	4.78	0	0.00	8	80.00	2	20.00
Aleksandar Seničić	7	3.35	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Nebojša Atanacković	6	2.87	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Srđan Knežević	5	2.39	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Blagoje Spaskovski	4	1.91	0	0.00	2	50.00	2	50.00
Zoran Drobnjak	4	1.91	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Čadež	4	1.91	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Miodrag Kostić	3	1.44	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	150	71.77	2	1.33	145	96.67	3	2.00
total	209	100.00	2	0.96	197	94.26	10	4.78

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of collective **domestic economic actors**

Economic actors	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Constantine the Great Airport	30	6.62	0	0.00	30	100.00	0	0.00
Vinci airports	15	3.31	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
NIS	10	2.21	0	0.00	9	90.00	1	10.00

⁴ In opposition to 35.09% (foreign) compared to 64.90% (domestic political actors) in the first quarter of 2018.

Nikola Tesla Aeroport	10	2.21	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Fiat	9	1.99	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Electrodistribution of Serbia	8	1.77	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Air Serbia	8	1.77	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
Gazprom neft	8	1.77	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
RTB Bor	7	1.55	1	14.29	6	85.71	0	0.00
Rio Tinto	7	1.55	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Leoni factory	7	1.55	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Roads of Serbia	6	1.32	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
Waterworks	5	1.10	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Commerce Chamber of Serbia	5	1.10	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
SBB	5	1.10	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Telekom Serbia	5	1.10	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Societe general bank	5	1.10	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
KKR	4	0.88	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
Banka Intesa	4	0.88	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Commercial bank	4	0.88	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Merkator S	4	0.88	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
AIK bank	4	0.88	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Jura	3	0.66	1	33.33	2	66.67	0	0.00
Telenor	3	0.66	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Goša	3	0.66	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Zastava weapons	3	0.66	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Delta holding	3	0.66	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Delhaize	3	0.66	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Vojvođanska bank	3	0.66	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	262	57.84	4	1.53	253	96.56	5	1.91
total	453	100.00	6	1.32	438	96.69	9	1.99

Source: Mediameter research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective **foreign economic actors**

IMF/World Bank	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
IMF	43	53.09	0	0.00	43	100.00	0	0.00
World Bank	12	14.81	0	0.00	11	91.67	1	8.33
Christine Lagarde	9	11.11	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
James Ruf	9	11.11	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
others	8	9.88	0	0.00	6	75.00	2	25.00
total	81	100.00	0	0.00	78	96.30	3	3.70

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

In addition to already mentioned political and economic actors, the protagonists are also various other social actors, who in different ways influence the social and political situation within the Serbian society. Based on the collected empirical material, we divided them into:

(a) representatives of independent and independent governmental bodies and institutions, (b) political, social, economic, security and other analysts, (c) representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church and other religious organizations (d) actors from the media, (e) representatives of judicial authorities, (f) lawyers and protagonists of various court proceedings, (h) media affairs protagonists and (i) actors from the past

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective domestic social actors: **representatives of independent bodies**

Independent bodies	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Anti-Corruption Agency	14	22.95	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Fiscal council	10	16.39	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Rodoljub Šabić	6	9.84	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Brankica Janković	5	8.20	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Pašalić	3	4.92	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
REM	3	4.92	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
others	20	32.79	0	0.00	20	100.00	0	0.00
total	61	100.00	0	0.00	60	98.36	1	1.64

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic and social actors:
analysts

Analysts	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Dragomir Anđelković	34	8.72	0	0.00	34	100.00	0	0.00
Božidar Spasić	13	3.33	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Nebojša Krstić	13	3.33	0	0.00	12	92.31	1	7.69
Marko Nicović	12	3.08	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Dušan Janjić	11	2.82	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Milivojević	9	2.31	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Dževad Galijašević	9	2.31	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Dušan Proroković	8	2.05	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Orhan Dragaš	8	2.05	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Ljuban Karan	8	2.05	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Ljubodrag Savić	7	1.79	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Božidar Prelević	7	1.79	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29
Boban Stojanović	7	1.79	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Milojko Arsić	7	1.79	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Božidar Delić	6	1.54	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Dejan Vuk Stanković	6	1.54	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Bojan Klačar	6	1.54	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Damir Okanović	5	1.28	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Dragišić	5	1.28	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Stojiljković	5	1.28	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Vladislav Jovanović	5	1.28	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandar Radić	5	1.28	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Ljubomir Madžar	5	1.28	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Bogdanović	4	1.03	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
Aleksandra Joksimović	4	1.03	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Ivan Nikolić	4	1.03	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Ratko Božović	4	1.03	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Dobrašinović	4	1.03	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Vlade Radulović	4	1.03	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Kovačević	4	1.03	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Branko Radun	4	1.03	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandar Popov	3	0.77	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Prostran	3	0.77	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Antonijević	3	0.77	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Grubišić	3	0.77	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	145	37.18	0	0.00	145	100.00	0	0.00
total	390	100.00	0	0.00	387	99.23	3	0.77

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective domestic social actors: **representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church and religious organizations**

Religion	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Patriarch Irinej	38	21.71	1	2.63	37	97.37	0	0.00
Serbian Orthodox Church	38	21.71	0	0.00	37	97.37	1	2.63
Metropolitan Amfilohije Radović	12	6.86	1	8.33	11	91.67	0	0.00
Alojzije Stepinac	8	4.57	0	0.00	6	75.00	2	25.00
Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus'	5	2.86	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Bishop of Bačka Irinej	5	2.86	0	0.00	3	60.00	2	40.00
Teodosije, bishop	4	2.29	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Pope Francis	4	2.29	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Metropolitan Porfirije	3	1.71	1	33.33	2	66.67	0	0.00
Russian Orthodox Church	3	1.71	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Pahomije, vladika vranjski	3	1.71	0	0.00	1	33.33	2	66.67
Bishop of Eastern America Irinej	3	1.71	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	49	28.00	1	2.04	43	87.76	5	10.20
total	175	100.00	4	2.29	159	90.86	12	6.86

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective social domestic actors from **the media**⁵

Media	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Stefan Cvetković	25	10.00	0	0.00	18	72.00	7	28.00
Željko Mitrović	12	4.80	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
NUNS	11	4.40	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
TV N1	9	3.60	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
TV Pink	9	3.60	0	0.00	8	88.89	1	11.11
UNS	7	2.80	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29
Slaviša Lekić	7	2.80	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
RTS	5	2.00	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Vladimir Radomirović	5	2.00	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Slobodan Georgiev	3	1.20	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
NDNV	3	1.20	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00

⁵ The actors who were the subject of the writing of other media, that is, the media companies that were reported by other media were presented.

Milomir Marić	3	1.20	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Nedim Sejdinović	3	1.20	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Ljiljana Smajlović	3	1.20	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan J. Vučićević	3	1.20	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Informer	3	1.20	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	139	55.60	1	0.72	132	94.96	6	4.32
total	250	100.00	1	0.40	232	92.80	17	6.80

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

During the collection of empirical material, a significant presence of actors in connection with the activities of the judicial and investigative bodies was noted on the cover pages. The actors from this group are shown as representatives of judicial authorities (182), lawyers (59) and other protagonists of current or completed court / investigative proceedings (195).

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of collective domestic social actors: **representatives of judicial bodies**

Judicial system	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Higher Court in Belgrade	25	13.74	0	0.00	25	100.00	0	0.00
Higher Public Prosecutor in Belgrade	21	11.54	0	0.00	21	100.00	0	0.00
Court of Appeals in Belgrade	12	6.59	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Supreme Court of Cassation	7	3.85	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Prosecution for Organized Crime	7	3.85	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Constitutional Court	6	3.30	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
High Council of Judiciary	6	3.30	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
First Primary Court in Belgrade	5	2.75	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
State Attorney	4	2.20	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
State Council of Prosecutors	4	2.20	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Dragana Boljević	3	1.65	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Special Court in Belgrade	3	1.65	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Prosecution for Organized Crime	3	1.65	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
First Basic Public Prosecutor in Belgrade	3	1.65	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	73	40.11	1	1.37	70	95.89	2	2.74
total	182	100.00	1	0.55	179	98.35	2	1.10

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors: **lawyers**⁶

Lawyers	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Toma Fila	8	13.56	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Nebojša Vlajić	5	8.47	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Veljko Delibašić	3	5.08	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	43	72.88	0	0.00	43	100.00	0	0.00
total	59	100.00	0	0.00	59	100.00	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors: **actors of court proceedings and investigations**

Actors of court proceedings and investigations	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Milorad Ulemek Legija	28	14.36	0	0.00	27	96.43	1	3.57
Dušan Spasojević Šiptar	17	8.72	0	0.00	15	88.24	2	11.76
Željko Ražnatović Arkan	14	7.18	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Zvezdan Jovanović	9	4.62	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Dobrosav Gavrić	9	4.62	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Dejan Milenković Bagzi	8	4.10	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
Mile Luković Kum	7	3.59	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Darko Šarić	7	3.59	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Luka Bojović	7	3.59	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Rodoljub Radulović Miša Banana	5	2.56	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Ljubiša Buha Čume	5	2.56	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Sretko Kalinić	4	2.05	0	0.00	1	25.00	3	75.00
Branko Lazarević	3	1.54	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Dragoslav Kosmajac	3	1.54	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	69	35.38	0	0.00	62	89.86	7	10.14
total	195	100.00	0	0.00	180	92.31	15	7.69

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

⁶ Some lawyers in the texts of the media from the sample played the role of analysts, and are therefore shown in that group of actors.

The following table shows all the actors who were linked by the media with the murder of singer Jelena Marjanović, as well as members of her family, acquaintances and friends. In the second quarter of 2018, these actors were present in 210 appearances.

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors: **“The murder of Jelena Marjanović”**

The murder of Jelena Marjanović	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Jelena Marjanović	54	25.71	0	0.00	54	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Marjanović	50	23.81	0	0.00	41	82.00	9	18.00
Jana Marjanović	39	18.57	0	0.00	39	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Marjanović	13	6.19	0	0.00	12	92.31	1	7.69
Teodora Krsmanović	7	3.33	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Uroš Marjanović	5	2.38	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Miloš Marjanović	5	2.38	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Nenad Šipka	4	1.90	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Zorica Marjanović	3	1.43	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Zorica Krsmanović	3	1.43	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	27	12.86	0	0.00	27	100.00	0	0.00
total	210	100.00	0	0.00	200	95.24	10	4.76

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors from the **past**

Past	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Josip Broz Tito	27	58.70	0	0.00	27	100.00	0	0.00
Dragoljub Mihailović	7	15.22	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Nedić	2	4.35	0	0.00	2	100.00	0	0.00
others	10	21.74	0	0.00	8	80.00	2	20.00
total	46	100.00	0	0.00	44	95.65	2	4.35

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

UNNAMED SOURCES

In the selected front page articles from the sampled media, unnamed sources have also been the second most prominent actor. This time there were 391 instances of quoting anonymous sources, or rather 19.46% of texts, which is about the same in comparison to the results from the previous quarter (19.24%).

The widespread usage of unnamed sources has been precisely determined thanks to the manner of qualifying anonymous sources, which we have been applying since the second *Mediameter* issue, so as to not only classify those sources which the very media has defined as anonymous, but also those who provide information that cannot be verified, no matter the manner in which they have been incorporated into an article. Of course, the presence of information gained from anonymous sources speaks more about the manner of the reporting done by the seven media found in our sample, than about the actual need of protecting the identities of the individual who provide certain information.

As Matt Carlson, in his book “On the Condition of Anonymity” has said: “Journalism is woven into the fabric of our environment, and in turn is based on it, meaning that it can never be an objective observer, as it is claimed...These sorts of questions are better answered through an approach that recognizes the culture of unnamed sources as a *culture*. This view steers an inquiry into unnamed sources away from frequency and implementation, toward issues of meanings that we share and patterns of collective interpretation between journalists, sources and the public. The securing of anonymity is not just a question of technique. It is, actually, a request for a certain type of imagining of relations between these three sides.”⁷

A news form that contains the largest number of information obtained from an unnamed source is a report. Of the 1582 texts written in this form, 373 or 23.58% contains anonymous sources.

⁷ M. Carlson, *On the condition of anonymity*, Urbana, Chicago, Springfield, University of Illinois Press, 2011, 7

Share of “unnamed sources” in all journalistic forms, in seven media from the sample

Genre	Total number of texts	Unnamed sources	%
Report	1582	373	23.58
Article	128	16	12.50
News	34	2	5.88
Interview	141	0	0.00
Commentary	87	0	0.00
Reportage	15	0	0.00
other	22	0	0.00
total	2009	391	19.46

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

Share of unnamed sources per analyzed media

Media	Total number of texts	Unnamed sources	%
<i>Informer</i>	181	66	36.46
<i>Blic</i>	212	71	33.49
<i>Alo!</i>	199	51	25.63
<i>Kurir</i>	208	52	25.00
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	267	55	20.60
<i>Danas</i>	437	63	14.42
<i>Politika</i>	505	33	6.53
total	2009	391	19.46

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

The largest number of texts containing information from anonymous sources (106) was recorded when it comes to *political life in Serbia*, however, the largest share of unnamed sources in relation to the total number of articles published on a topic was observed when it comes to the inscriptions concerning the murder of singer Jelena Marjanović. Of the 61 texts focusing on this subject, as many as 55.74% contain anonymous sources. Greater participation of unlimited sources is also present in the texts that talk about crime 55.56%

Number of texts containing information obtained from “unnamed sources” according to topics in the seven media from the sample

Topic/All media	Total number of texts	Unnamed sources	%
Political life in Serbia	408	106	25.98%
Kosovo/Belgrade and Priština relations	219	55	25.11%
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	61	34	55.74%
Crime	45	25	55.56%
Economy	129	17	13.18%
International relations	129	13	10.08%
Education	49	13	26.53%
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	103	12	11.65%
Army	47	12	25.53%
Russia/attitude towards Russia	50	11	22.00%

Source: *Mediameter* research, April - June 2018

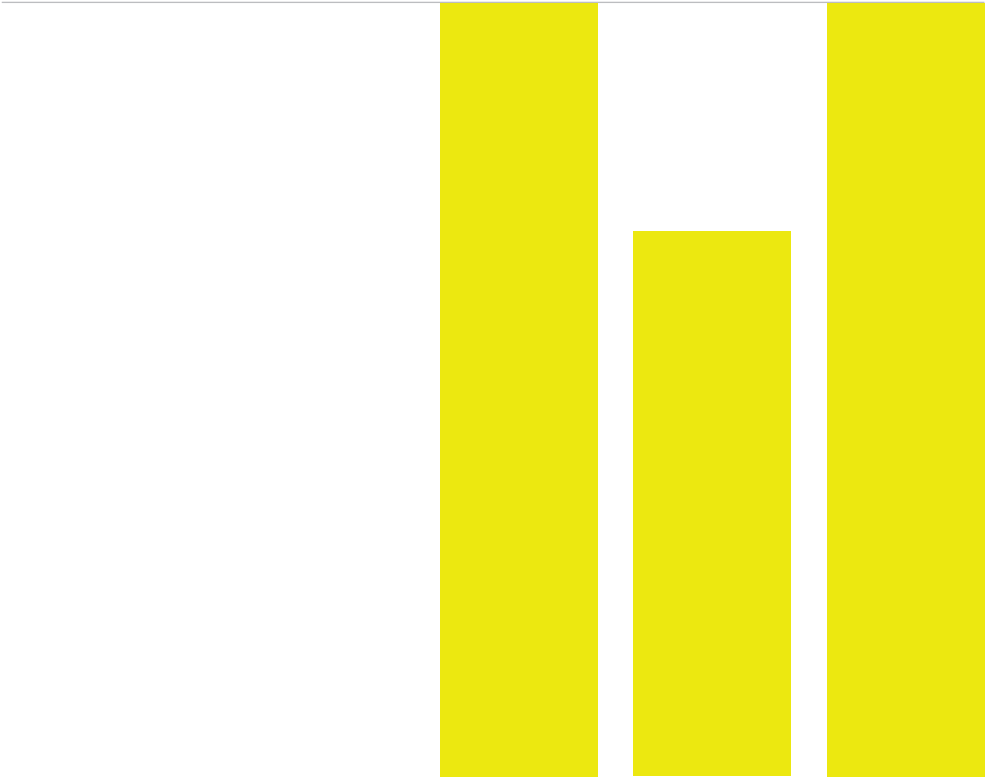
Conclusion

The topics covered by print media on their cover pages during the second quarter of 2018 differed somewhat from the usual matrix. The decline in interest in domestic political topics, the growing interest in foreign ones, and the slight increase in interest regarding economy topics are just some of the coordinates of this new curved matrix, where we note the growth in the number of balanced texts. This “lack of the attitude of journalist / editors / editorial staff” and greater integrity and balance ensures the possibility of restoring ethical standards of the profession to the media everyday life of the Serbian society.

(Footnotes)

1 For the second consecutive quarter, Vladimir Putin is the highest-ranked foreign political actor on the front pages of the seven media from the sample. In the second period of 2018 actors from Russia are also the most represented in relation to other foreign protagonists.

4



Discourse analysis

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Introduction: Continuity of negative portrayals and violent disputes

Recent campaign for Belgrade elections passed in the spirit of fierce political controversy, largely mirrored in the print media, in the period from April to June 2018. Intense and direct confrontation between sharpened and hermetic political stances, infused in the discourse of insults and defamation, showed that the writing of print media is essentially conditioned by the fight for every vote, in a seemingly uncertain race for the parliament of the City of Belgrade.

Writing of the print media, especially weeklies, testifies to the diversity of approaches, attitudes, arguments and figures of speech, but also the frequent drawing of conclusions and adoption of attitudes towards specific issues. After analysing the writing of daily and weekly print editions, and with a number of good reasons, one can draw a conclusion that basic freedom of thought, speech and expression is largely present in a diverse Serbian media landscape. Media are able to publish different types of messages in various forms of expression. In addition, they are able to advocate for different political orientations - from radical right to radical left. In short, neither censorship nor auto-censorship is present in weeklies in Serbia.

This circumstance is important for at least two reasons, which strictly speaking, are not directly political. First, it is possible to legitimize any statement or interpretive model that relates to the events, actors and socio-historical processes in the public domain. Interpretive codes, on the other hand, have the power of continuous expansion over the Internet, and often have a significant incentive for many TV reports or interviews. The outcome of that freedom is a powerful media polarization that overlaps with the lines of division that exist in a democratic society. Division into critical and pro-government media has converged with the division of the political actors who are part of the government and official or unofficial opposition.

Viewed from the perspective of the print media, the Serbian society is like all traditional democracies. It is free and plural at the basic level. On the other hand, the predominance of rhetorical-polemical over rational-argumentative discourse is present in the public arena. In the light of these circumstances, it is clear that the possibility of agreement among the media and entire society is for now a fictitious concept. It is abstract and difficult to maintain. On the other hand, conflict is our reality, with an increased tendency to become a rule. Election campaign in Belgrade only amplified this media-political constellation.

In terms of contents, continuous challenging of political opponents united with easy-made promises and creation of optimism are the main elements of media writing during the recently completed campaign. The matrix of challenging the political opponent and his way of thinking and practice is radical and multi-levelled. Model of radical criticism was developed in detail in order to actively involve the media in the election campaign and to encourage readers to revolt against certain political actors. This rule applies to both so-called 'critical media', and the so-called 'media close to the government'

As a rule, weeklies are characterized by a high level of criticism towards the current government, especially towards its most prominent actor, the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić. Attitudes of the weekly newspapers, as well as the largest number of editorial columns in newspapers, are intoned by the critical pattern that varies depending on the orientation of Editors in Chief. In parallel with sometimes direct and sometimes indirect critical views of Vučić, there is a number of other important media-political stances, such as the challenge of the fight against corruption, economic results of the Serbian government, constant attacks on the project "Belgrade Waterfront" and often severe propaganda against the close associates of President Vučić.

There is a visible tendency to portray the current political moment in the spirit of what could be characterized as negative theodicy. Political -historical and broader social, economic and cultural situation in Serbia is presented as "the worst there is." In this "worst of all possible worlds," the central role is played by the "all-powerful ruler" whose negative traits must be portrayed consistently and in detail. If necessary and by using imagination, some of these traits are frequently "upgraded" and presented to the reader as a categorical message.

In the context of the aforementioned negative obsession with the President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić, two characteristics of weekly press should be mentioned. Firstly, the dominance of the interview as a journalistic genre is easily detected. The interviewees are selected according to the criteria of political values, and almost all of them follow the political values of the editorial board. There is a noticeable and distinct preference of the same interviewees, with the aim of intensifying the effect of the message, in both value and political sense.

This is mostly about a desire to position certain public figures (singers and actors, for example) as role models with their civic stance which is almost in all cases negatively intoned against the government. It is a skilful transfer of social recognition to the domain of politics, a precise example of the fact that propaganda goes "hand in hand" with advocacy journalism. This kind of public sphere modelling turns the public landscape into an endless space of constant disputes and never-ending conflict with high intensity.

Content-wise, majority of messages from the interview (which is, as by rule, conceptually linked to the front page) is repeated according to the already prepared a political-value matrix established by the editorial board of the weekly or daily newspapers. Repetition of the media message is at the core of its control in the public space. This is another important feature of the weekly press. The message has a significant political impact- its outcome is the creation of environment characterized by sharpened divisions. The frequency of repetition of the same message, communicated by various interviewees, creates a pattern of reactions and feelings with the readers who finally form rigid stands. "Fixating" the image of the actor or an event is one of the most common weapons in the political and propaganda war. "Fixating" the image is a process in which, and thanks to whom, one subject remains "frozen" in time despite their potential and actual transformations or the changes in the political, economic, social and historical circumstances.

This rigid pseudo-intellectual matrix operates according to the permanently assigned roles. Actors are portrayed as the "good" or "bad" guys in public space. Morally and politically acceptable "positive" attributes are ascribed to a particular group of political figures and organizations, while negative ones are irrevocably and unquestionably assigned to the opposite side – the permanently "unfit ones". At the heart of the conflict in the public-political field is the Manichean division of the media and political elite. In the spirit of this moral and political division, one can say that all of the weeklies are in fact – biased. In their bias, they are very clear and sharp, and therefore, very irrational.

The conflict of events, processes and actors interpretations is so vivid, that rationality, which is supposed to characterize democratically constituted public, cannot exist neither as a useful illusion nor a regulatory mechanism in the process of written or visual selection of reports. Anyone can be against anyone, and they are allowed to be this for their "own" reasons which are incomparable to the arguments and stands of the 'other'. The spirit of controversy in the Serbian weekly newspapers, especially in columns and interviews, is truly radical, infused with defamation, attack on political opponents and moral intolerance of the highest level.

At the same time, the repetition of one and the same message leads to the rigidity of the editorial policy. From this point, it is easy to form an image about the actor, process or a specific event. Repetition of the message and unhidden tendency to form a concrete image shows the importance of print media as a tool for political communication, more precisely, a weapon in the constant political war among the actors on Serbian political scene. The rigidity of a specific media also shows the intention to skip the debate on certain issues and go straight into the „judgmental“ mode of portraying actors, processes or events.

Secondly, especially in weeklies, front page holds an important place, especially in the weeklies, for its message is constructed both visually and verbally in the form of election poster (most often: an image of the actor with a concise and direct headline from the interview or the image of an actor with a message which should form the reader's opinion). In the weeklies, for example in *NIN*, the cartoon caricature also plays a significant role. Third important characteristic of the headlines in the weeklies and editorial columns is the rhetorical match in the opinions and attitudes of the editorial board and the subjects being interviewed. This tendency shows that print media are most usually a sophisticated tool in the political battle, especially in the sphere of construction and maintenance of the image.

There are two ways to classify the weeklies. According to the criterion of division that is common and usu-

ally present in a democratic society, the classification should entail the ones close to the government and ones that are critical towards it. In Serbia, this criterion cannot be consistently applied since most weeklies only belong to the disapproving category. Weekly *Pečat* falls under the category of partially critical of the authorities, because of its open criticizing of the government's pro-European foreign policy under the Vučić's rule. However, this weekly shows strong critical stance towards moral credibility, axiological orientation and political views of the 5th October winners. On the other hand, weeklies like *NIN*, *Vreme*, *Novi magazin* and *Nedeljnik* fall under the category of completely critical of the government.

There is however a difference in the tone of criticism. While *Vreme* and somewhat *NIN* (especially the domain of domestic politics and economics) are completely, directly and fiercely criticizing the government, weeklies *Novi magazin* and *Nedeljnik* apply a more moderate tone in expressing critical views. Their level of accusing and labelling is far lower than in the cases of *Vreme* and *NIN*.

Another classification that can be applied to the weeklies is their foreign policy orientation. *Vreme*, *NIN*, *Novi magazin* and *Nedeljnik* are more or less pro-European. On the other hand, the weekly *Pečat* clearly emphasizes the anti-Western and pro-Russian stance, intended to support the nationalist discourse, close to the one which was dominant in wars in the 1990s.

Image of the Government – image of Aleksandar Vučić: autocrat, “carrier of hatred”, suspicious patriot, media manipulator, leader of mafia groups, controller of the security services, blackmailer, hooligan, father of a “problematic” son.

We will begin the expose with the image of the government at several positions that fall under the category of the “spirit of the times”, that is, the attitudes aspiring to be “diagnosis of the current situation.” These attitudes include aspects that lead to a clear conclusion that the image of the current political moment corresponds to the idea that Serbia is “the worst of all possible worlds.” However, the essentially metaphysical-logical formulation about “possible worlds” has its own specification. It is a comprehensive experience that relates to the “world of human affairs”, namely the world of people who regulate their own affairs and operate in accordance with their needs, aspirations and values.

Specifically, this is the world formed by politics, economy and culture and therefore, it is a human creation. In creation, maintenance and changing of the “world of human affairs” politics has a key role as an activity that seeks to regulate human society in accordance with the protection and promotion of the interests and values of all community members. Naturally the state of political affairs defines the level of politics in media as well, especially in the sphere of the press, which is specializes in the social affairs. Politics and politicians are assigned a central role.

Serbian (but not only Serbian) specialty is that internal affairs play a major and an inexhaustible subject of weekly newspapers. When presenting the image of political actors and analysis of political situation in general, one should start with the evaluation of the current situation in the country which is created by the participants in public life. In the view of many public figures, the current situation in the society reflects the ‘loose cannon’ method of ruling, vicious and unpredictable, decadent and unimaginable for “normal” society. Thus the director Milos Radivojević gives his review of the current socio-political situation and identifies it with, not more not less, agony and terror: “This agony has been going on for too long. We have no more strength for this. I can see how people have changed, how they lost their expressions, their essence. I can see how this time destroyed all that is human in people, emotions, trust, generosity, all kinds of empathy, all that has remained is just a struggle for survival. I think that the only chance that remains is to leave this place. With Serbia in my heart, but to leave. Because whoever stays here is destined to face this kind of hell, and finally lose the courage to live. I’m extremely unhappy for what I see because our eyes are actually a movie. Visual image is the true picture of things. And all that I see is disaster. But it is not that terrible from the outside, as it is from the inside. I can see an unhappy person from the distance of 50 meters, I can see he walks without the strength to walk, I can see him crossing the street, not looking back. Like he is waiting for something to finally hit him and end his struggles.”¹

1 Miloš Radivojević, „Konačna reč je užas [The final word is terror],“ interview with Olja Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3517, p. 16

In spiritual and political line with the director Radivojević, is the actor Branko Cvejić who describes the current reality as fundamentally abnormal and decadent, so supernatural that it stretches to the level of infinite. Cvejić's oxymoron is intentional; it presents solely one image, a vision of the current situation as a meeting point of the largest number of government critics in Serbia. Political, economic, cultural and wide social reality is fundamentally bad, corrupt, destructive, indecent ... In the spirit of the qualification of the current social moment, Branko Cvejić says: "When I think that we have hit the rock bottom, I see that we can still go deeper. I think, this cannot go on like this, however, it does, it goes further, it works, it functions. Abnormal country! When we understand this, we might make it normal again."²

Reality is composed of abnormality, moral decadence and terror, "an apocalyptic reality" that the director Radivojević and actor Cvejić present, has its counterpart in visual arts that is Surrealism and surrealist vision of reality, from the standpoint of the intensity of the experience, since the content comes in the highest caricatured extent of verbosity. Identifying surrealist artistic metaphysics with the current Serbian political and wider reality is also present with Marko Lovrić, a journalist of the weekly *NIN*. Paraphrasing Andre Breton, the founder of this artistic direction, Lovrić sees Serbia as the epitome of the Surrealist concept both in reality and politics: "Andre Breton has predicted that Surrealism would eventually have its representative in a place of power, a man who will transform the demands of the people in the absurd."³

Connection of the incompatible, the intense suppression everything in the political-historical sense that is different and the establishment of one essentially alienated reality, Lovrić recognizes in the recent events that took place on Serbian political scene. Thus Lovrić places certain events within the afore-prepared ideological cumulative platform of interpretation: "Can you imagine a better example of this absolute reality than the idea that Milutin Mrkonjić had which is to place the monuments to both Milosevic and Djindjic in the center of Belgrade? Milosevic would symbolize a Serbian dream in which they are big shots, Djindjic would symbolize the actual reality in which they are not, and the monument should probably have both of them, maybe joined, one body with two heads on a pedestal, something that the entire society would be proud of like in Breton's Fontaine Street in Paris. If someone's life will be easier after this, there are plenty of arguments to say that the entire political action of SPS after Milosevic is made up of dreams and reality and as such perceived as performative surrealist art. Whenever Dačić triumphantly announces that some fresh Surinam does not recognize Kosovo, we are witnessing a successful "transformation of nation's requirements", which does not want an independent Kosovo, into the absurdly vain political victory."⁴

Of course, the "ghastly" and "surrealistic image of society", which radiates endemic "abnormality" has its roots and defining principle in the political sphere. Sphere of politics is predominantly determined by the structure and functioning of political order led by the President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić. Therefore, the reference to the figure of Aleksandar Vučić in the print media is not only a reflection of the nature of Vučić's government, but also the socio-historical context of today's Serbia. "A surreal, creepy, horrible and abnormal Serbia" arises from and is maintained by Vučić's rule. At the same time, this "excessively long" duration of agony is enhanced by the Vučić rule. Epilogue of such Serbia, ruled by Vučić, is the destruction of humanity and all the institutional values as journalist Olja Bečković aggressively and bitterly observes: "All the values are destroyed, all the institutions, the human tissue is destroyed, but our problem are not institutions but people. Because institutions – are the people. A human tissue is destroyed because everything is reduced to a fight for survival. And people are being told that is nothing wrong with that. Now you don't have an option, you can't seem to have a brighter future with someone else, with whom, against whom are you to be ethical, strong and sturdy, and integrated, who is the point of reference?"⁵

As in previous analyses, the current analysis does not offer anything new in terms of the image of the current government. It is basically identified with Vučić, who "embodies" all aspects of reality. Also, the government is described as autocratic, undemocratic, founded on a wide-ranging system of repression and control of the state and society; Moreover, it has no genuine democratic legitimacy, no economic results, is unable to fight corruption completely steeped in agreement with the mafia, controls the scene over the security services and the media, sells false hope to the citizens, uses manipulation of socio-economic or nationalistic type, and in the domain of external policy is defined by the two circumstances: silent understanding with the West on the "handover" of Kosovo and specific set of circumstances present on the world scene, and which have an impact on Serbia. The "pact" with the

2 Branko Cvejić, „Plašim se sukoba koji tinja [I am afraid of the conflict in shadows],” interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3510, p. 22

3 Marko Lovrić, „Totalno uvrnuta država [Completely twisted state],” *NIN*, No. 3512, p. 23

4 Ibid, p. 24

5 Zora Drčelić, „Šta čeka Srbiju posle Vučića [What will happen to Serbia after Vučić],” *Vreme*, No. 1429, p. 6

West and global political issues are particularly emphasized by the members of the former government, especially the front men of the former regime, although a fair number of radically critical journalists of the anti-government media also follow this mantra. The obvious, semantic and rhetorical overlap between the opposition parties, namely their leaders and public figures can be seen in the characterization of the political system in Serbia. Thus, the new leader of the Democratic Party, Zoran Lutovac describes the current government and says: "He (referring to the President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić) as an authoritarian, creator and executor of autocracy in Serbia, makes all the decisions, and expects that the responsibility is shared with others or that is fully transferred to the people. Thanks to the abuse of law, the abuse of institutions, repression in the sphere of media and the support of the so-called "constructive opposition", *majority* support was created in the parliament, a parliament that is completely devastated and humiliated. The ruling majority behaves as if the opposition is the enemy of the state, and not an important part of the political system. Working with someone who treats you as an enemy is socially and politically harmful."⁶

Attributing to the government that it imposes the friend-enemy discourse is only rhetorical and semantic extension of a unique nature of politics, as seen by the scholar and supporter of the Democratic Party, sociologist Srećko Mihailović, who says: "Balkan, or more precisely, Serbian 'Carl Schmitts' are obsessed with the division of everyone and everything into supporters and friends on one side and the traitors on the other. So, these others are not enemies, they are worse than that, they are traitors. If we leave aside the fact that the Serbs were not very skilled at identifying traitors, let's be rough, starting with the infamous traitor Vuk Branković to Milan Nedić, rehabilitated gracious Serbian mother. And what is there for a normal person to say, maybe what a friend of mine said: I'd also betray, but they all beat me to it! Holistic approach to politics boils down to the fact that politics and politicians are classified on the basis of angels and devils. This schmittian reduction of politics and politicians into friends and enemies, into heaven and hell is absolutely non-political, despite the fact that it can provide some small points in short periods of time. The rule of party that sees enemies in all the other parties, but even worse, sees an enemy in the people that do not applaud to every move it makes - cannot survive long. At least in those countries where there is at least 'd' of democracy."⁷

That there is a need to continuously repeat that there is no democracy in Serbia, we are reminded by the engaged and passionate ideological sociologist Jovo Bakic. In the spirit of Mihailović's phrase that there is 'no d of democracy', Bakic's sees the current government as a system of comprehensive control over all politically important institutions, resources and processes," He (referring to the President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić) wants to monitor everything that happens: from the 'soldiers' (as they proudly call themselves) of his party, the Assembly, the Government, means of mass communication (especially of television with national coverage, and the most read and most respected daily newspapers) to the courts and all other political the parties in power or in opposition and finally, all the important socio-political processes. In other words, Vučić accepts the multi-party system and division of power as long as he controls it to the levels of absurd."⁸

Fully in accordance with attitudes of Lutovac and Jovo Bakić is the already mentioned actor Branko Cvejić that derives his story of the autocratic character of Vučić's power from permanent overstepping of constitutional limits by the President Vučić. With an unbelievable degree of shallowness and superficiality, he states: "It is not the President's job to do all these things that he is doing, this is autocracy. Autocracy is when they say: 'We'll wait for the President to return in order to see which minister will be kicked out of the Government'. It is apparent autocracy. Autocracy is the atmosphere in which if you only know someone who knows him, and you can finish whatever you need to finish."⁹

It is always necessary to find the liability holders for the situation in the country, regardless of near and distant past, the international circumstances and limited resources that Serbia has. In the manner of propaganda speech that carries the tone of the nineties, the former chairman of the Democratic Party, and the current leader of the opposition Alliance for Serbia, says: "The greatest responsibility for the current situation lies in Aleksandar Vučić. By

6 Zoran Lutovac, „Samo udružena opozicija ima šanse [Only united opposition stands a chance],” interview with Vera Didanović, *NIN*, No. 3519, p. 11

7 Srećko Mihailović, „Vlast je od nas napravila lutke mrdalice [The government made puppets out of us],” interview with Olja Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3512, p. 33

8 Jovo Bakić, „Opozicija gospodara Vučića [Opposition of Master Vučić],” *NIN*, No. 3518, p. 16

9 Branko Cvejić, „Plašim se sukoba koji tinja [I am afraid of the conflict in shadows],” interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3510, p. 23

controlling the media and the through the partisan control of the state he actually kidnapped Serbia. He made, or more precisely developed, a system that is slow, incompetent, corrupt and totally criminalized. He is making neither pro-Russian nor pro-European Serbia. He is interested only in pro-Vučić Serbia, even though it is poor, weak, and not integrated into the democratic world. Pro-Vučić Serbia, which trades national interests, destroys the rule of law, violates human rights and freedom of the media. He destroys both the national and civil part of Serbia. His only capital is overwhelming support of voters, still far lower than false research and unfair elections show.¹⁰

After in stricto sensu politicological analysis of the political order and its most important actors comes the psychological-political examination of President Vučić. The leading hypothesis and conclusion revolve around the attempt to merge the political power and fear as integral parts of his life. In the attempt to mock the psychological and political profile of the first man of Serbian politics, Vesna Mališić notes that politically powerful president of Serbia demonstrates high levels of anxiety and vulnerability.

This analysis aims to portray Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić as psychologically and politically immature for the job he was assigned. In this context, the deputy Editor-in-Chief of *NIN* says: "The superior support and universal consensus on impeccable authority boasted about by our meticulous and one-of-a-kind President, incomparable to anyone, somehow does not go along with extreme nervousness and feeling of being endangered from all directions. One would say, you're a giant dreading a mouse. Especially considering the fact that in past few years the authorities tailor-made the country according to their own needs."¹¹

The whole aim is to send a political message about an extremely negative side of the government through free political metaphors. At the same time, such a strong message destroys any possibility to recognize even the minimum of democracy that the government has, even though it won in a series of elections in which other political factors in Serbia were free to participate. Despite this important fact of our political life, it is left out of majority of analysis, apparently for a reason.

In addition to the endemic lack of democracy, critics repeatedly remind the public of the psychological characteristics of the President of Serbia. The package also includes a biased message on the suspicious rational sustainability which is easily accepted by the already dissatisfied and critically-inclined citizens of Serbia.

Musician and opposition activist, Marko Selic Marcelo, uses this context when he says: "I refuse to be taught universal human values by a nationalist from the 1990's, a man who is a walking-talking embodiment of non-democracy, and one whose ideal social system resembles the Smurfs' Village where everyone thinks and looks the same, while Papa Smurf is the smartest, owns all the books, enjoys a lifelong rule, and everyone kisses his hands. People often deny his accusations that conflicts are interpersonal. However, I fail to understand since when has an ideology seized to represent personal attitude, because in my opinion, it does. That man is on the other side of the fence from everything I have ever fought for. Whenever I see any of his public appearances, I get frightened of the amount of hatred he radiates and his inability to conceal it. I think the most dangerous thing about this man is that the seeds of hate, which he sows so omnipresent, penetrating everything and everyone."¹²

Selic's interpretation of president Vučić's politics bears a striking resemblance to the political discourse used on many occasions as a reminder of the 1990's. This type of discourse was at the very core of political narratives during the first decade of the 21st century, and it continues until today. Remembering Vučić from the 1990's, a journalist at the weekly informative newspaper *NIN* Sandra Petrušić writes: "Vučić existed before Vučić and, whether he likes it or not, he already went down in history. Hardly ever will one fountain cover up the fact that he supported the concept 'Karlovac, Karlobag, Virovitica', or that he carried the image of a convicted war criminal in his heart and on his chest for years. Some still remember him greeting Trump by kissing three times on the cheek, or cheek-to-cheek kissing with Erdogan every time they met (the Turkish president did not reciprocate). However, the emotional outpourings will not erase the fact that he was the first and the greatest censor in modern-day democracy; therefore, the story about the minister of information during and after the bombing of Serbia will remain in the annals. In spite of having multitude advantages, he may not have had anything better to offer for a ticket into the history course books, except splashing concrete over Belgrade and installing the Progressive Party's vision of Dubai on the

10 Dragan Dilas, „Ako se ne dogovorimo Vučić može da radi šta hoće [If we don't agree on something, Vučić will be able to do as he pleases],” *NIN*, No. 3513, p. 10

11 Vesna Mališić, „Makete stvarnosti [Mock ups of reality],” *NIN*, No. 3511, p. 3

12 Marko Šelić Marcelo, „Vodi nas klionoša mržnje [We are led by the creator of hatred],” interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3515, p. 22



Novi magazin, 28th June 2018

local rivers. That is at least visible; better yet, nothing else will soon be visible because of that.”¹³

Besides asserting complete control over media, an important aspect of Vučić's methods of governing the country is the ability to manipulate the media. In that respect, an important, if not the most important method refers to the socio-economic issues. Such “manipulation” was observed by the editor-in-chief of *Vreme*, during the visit of the IMF to Belgrade and discussions about the increase of salaries and pensions in Serbia. Dragoljub Žarković reported that Vučić, while skilfully projecting envy and intolerance to the rich, acted as the defender of the poor and created an impression of being fundamentally opposed to unpopular measures of the government, which were introduced as per recommendation of the IMF: ‘IMF supports abolition of the Law on Temporary Reduction of Pensions introduced in 2014, because of the decrease in gross pension expenditures from 13.8% to 11% GDP, and an apparent budget deficit promoted by the officials. Negative reaction from president Vučić and Prime Minister Ana Brnabić followed. Vučić stated that the IMF is asking for a ‘dramatic increase in pensions higher than 50,000 dinars, yet no increase for people who receive less than 25,000 dinars, who constitute 61% of the retired population, and a minimum increase to those who receive 30,000 dinars’. He calculated that 75-76% pensioners would not benefit from the announced increase, and added that he always opts for protection of the poorest. Prime Minister Ana Brnabić's calculations even show that 81% of the retired population would receive reduced pensions after the abolition of the Law on Reduction. ‘Omnipresident’ Aleksandar Vučić took on the role of ‘Mother Theresa’, while the Prime Minister only added some spice to that dismal soup of pandering intended to feed the voting majority.’¹⁴ Dragoljub Žarković thus gave his contribution to the trend of psycho analysis of President Vučić's moves, through a telepathic insight into Vučić's and Prime Minister's real intentions which, as interpreted, always stem from disgraceful motives.

Political manipulations and fuelling media with information occurred during the controversial case of the missing reporter Stefan Cvetković which stirred public opinion in June. When Cvetković was pronounced missing, anti-Vučić's media and political coalition started a hysterical campaign in order to point out to the repressive nature of Vučić's regime, taking it so far to claim that any disappearance of a reporter could lead to fatality and death. Cvetković was found in the meantime thanks to a swift reaction of the police forces and security agencies. Despite that, the proponents of government repression against journalists continued with their effort to prove the case had been orchestrated by the government in order to discredit anyone who dares to criticize it, from the perspective of journalism ethics. Cvetković's “abduction”, fundamentally a frivolous and unreasonable notion, served to cover up future repressions against journalists. This particular case, as Georgijev writes, is also a message that all anti regime reporters lack credibility, just like the dubious Srđan Cvetković: “The whole event was organized by the government in an attempt to compromise journalism as a profession, which is already on the brink of destruction. A different, more favourable version claims that the government cunningly took advantage of the exhibitionism of a man who liked to be perky and openly say to those in power that he was not afraid of them, and that he would crush them.”¹⁵

The media “manipulator” Aleksandar Vučić is a politician without any political or general ideological belief. To prove that theory, a journalist at the weekly news magazine *Vreme*, Zora Drčelić, tried to (mis)use the term Taqiya (Kitman) from the politically engaged literature, mentioned by the Nobel Prize winner Czesław Miłosz in his book “The Captive Mind”. Guided by superficial understanding of this complex psychological and sociological term, she refers to the president of Serbia as the Taqiya, inviting a political action of society's intellectuals, similar to the one carried out in 1990's. Her intentions are indicated in the headline “Intellectuals, where are you? Mephisto is here”. She refers to Vučić as Taqiya in a concise and direct way, stating ironically and boldly: “Aleksandar Vučić is a Kitman. He created the same country. Kitmania. To begin with, he concealed his heresy from the Serbian radicals until he felt powerful enough to proclaim it. Secondly, in order to stay in power, he had to renounce and even repent his two-decade belief in the radical religion, rather than remaining silent about it, as a prerequisite to get the political support from his western partners. Most importantly, to provide political protection for himself and, of course, all Serbian radicals, he has long succeeded in projecting an image of a true ‘orthodox radical’ with a temporary ‘European mask’. Moreover, if an opportunity presents itself, the masks will fall, ‘true faith’ shall prevail and national interests will be preserved, for his ‘love and devotion for Serbia’ are all that matters and lasts.”¹⁶

13 Sandra Petrušić, „Kandidat za ulazak u istoriju [Candidate for history books],” *NIN*, No. 3522, p. 13

14 Dragoljub Žarković, „Sirotinjska majka: Nemojte da brinete, dragi moji građani. Dolazi zlatno doba [Mother of the poor: don't worry dear citizens. Golden age is coming],” *Vreme*, No. 1429, p. 4

15 Slobodan Georgijev, „Sluđivanje naroda [Deluding of people],” *Vreme*, No. 1433, p. 8

16 Zora Drčelić, „Gde ste, intelektualci, stigao Mefisto [Intellectuals, where are you? Here comes Mephisto],” *Vreme*, No. 1430, p. 5

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NIN, 31st May 2018

Besides the pronounced tendency to manipulate the media, and his political conversions, Serbian president Aleksandar Vučić is also a politician who lacks stable political credibility. Namely, his undeniable popularity, both statistically and politically speaking, still is without a fundamental political substructure, as he consistently breaks promises made to the Serbian citizens.

This is caused by Vučić's inability to "take himself seriously", according to the poignant, direct, and piercing view of Vera Didanović, a journalist at the weekly informative newspaper *NIN*: "It is indeed dangerous that the president displays an apparent inability to take himself seriously, otherwise he would not make absolutely meaningless promises on so many occasions, in so many aspects, and before numerous witnesses; of 133 promises of future actions, 97 were not kept within the set timeframe; to be precise, 95 are considered unfulfilled, while the remaining two offer a slightly better prospect ('actions not initiated'). Vučić surely does not hold the copyright on the lightly-made promises or the 'plausible speed of their unravelling'. Similar phenomena have and will occur again on the political scene, along with an absence of punishment for such behaviour. The problem is, however, that the current president's habit is so extreme that his vows are now interpreted as a sure sign of an opposite outcome; therefore, when Vučić's public statement that early elections are unlikely to be held brings us to the conclusion it is time to prepare for elections, and when the actual events support such a conclusion, how can one not question whether the president is in fact preparing for the official recognition of Kosovo independence, when this notion is so frequently publicly dismissed?"¹⁷

In addition to the evaluation of the Serbian president's political and psychological profile, carrying either negative or extremely negative connotation, journalist of *NIN* magazine did not miss the chance to portray the current Serbian president as patriotically questionable. In this context, Vučić is presented as one who "could recognize Kosovo independence, although he refuses the possibility of doing so". Such political and media provocation was planned and stated to undermine the loyalty of Vučić's supporters, most of who seem to be against the idea of an independent Kosovo. The notion of an independent Kosovo is also not a political taboo for the editorial of *NIN* magazine, as their political opinion seems to be much closer to accepting Kosovo independence than one of Vučić and his supporters. Regardless of this politically relevant situation, it appears as though negative obsession by president Vučić is more important and stronger than any journalist or editor, value or political opinion.

The solution to the problem of Kosovo and Metohija served as a solid basis for fierce attacks on the Serbian president's politics. In this case too, Vučić was supposed to be portrayed as morally questionable. The patriotically questionable president is also viewed as a person deprived of the basic negotiation skills or inclination to the democratic political practice suitable for governing a democratic country. The morally questionable, politically and patriotically problematic dimension of Vučić's foreign policy is especially emphasized by the former Serbian president, Boris Tadić, who claims categorically: "Regarding how the problem of Kosovo is solved, the key difference between this government, compared to all the previous governments is that, before 2012, concessions were made in exchange for preservation of what had not been lost in the war, whereas since 2012, protecting national interests has been replaced with the aim to protect personal interests of people seeking to remain in a position of power as their only politics and ideology. The Progressive Party's campaign in 2012 included the promise to annul all the previously made agreements with Priština, but failed to point out that negotiations would be replaced with cheap trade, covered up by even cheaper sketches in the media."¹⁸

In his "neverending" campaign of remembrance, Tadić openly claims: "Kosovo was ultimately given independence in the Kumanovo Agreement, signed in 1999, during the first mandate of Vučić, Dačić, and Nikolić. Serbia explicitly and officially accepted the requirements stated in Kumanovo and Brussels Agreement, including Serbian retreat from Kosovo, during the government of the false patriots: SPS, SRS and SNS, when the agreements were signed. According to the Kumanovo Agreement, Serbian army and police forces retreated from Kosovo and Serbian institutions seized to exist at the entire territory of Kosovo, except in the northern part. The false patriots completed their mission by signing the Brussels Agreement and accepting the idea of independence in the northern part of Kosovo through final discontinuation of our institutions."¹⁹

17 Vera Didanović, „Pedeset neispunjenih obećanja Aleksandra Vučića [50 unfulfilled promises of Aleksandar Vučić],” *NIN*, No. 3510, p. 5

18 Boris Tadić, „Bio bih na vlasti da sam prihvatio ono što je prihvatio Vučić [I would still be in power if I accepted what Vučić did],” interview with Dragana Pejović, *NIN*, No. 3511, p. 10

19 Ibid, p. 10

Critical review of the current government politics led by the president of Serbia consistently include disparaging remarks about the positive steps made from 2012 to 2018 in order to protect Serbian national interests. In line with this orientation and approach to the Kosovo problem, Tadić states: "Now they are trying to represent the Alliance of Serbian Municipalities (ZSO) as an incredible success while keeping its merely municipal authorities away from the public eye. The excuse of signing the Brussels Agreement because it had been technically negotiated within our mandate is nothing but a Machiavellian attack, similar to the one when they accused the opposition of setting-up target locators in 1999. The person who becomes a political villain stays one until the end of his days. One who agitates against his political opponents will continue doing so simply to remain in power. One who starts using fake patriotism to become rich will do so forever."²⁰

Similar approach, premises, conclusions and estimations are given by the former head of foreign affairs and leader of the People's Party, when he describes the negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina; he states that Aleksandar Vučić is ready to recognize Kosovo independence and membership in the UN in exchange for a part of Kosovo territory and a "gift" to the Albanian side by placing Preševo Valley under the jurisdiction of Priština: "Vučić's idea was to divide Kosovo, and take jurisdiction over the northern part of the province, which is what Thaci refused. At the meetings held in Paris and New York, Vučić went one step further, offering an exchange of territory and, besides UN membership, added municipalities at the south of Serbia to the Kosovo package. That was what Thaci accepted."²¹

Jeremić disputes both the democratic legitimacy and professional competence of Aleksandar Vučić in comprehensive processes of negotiation and agreement-making. Denying the competence to the political opponent assumes personal animosity and thereby robs such criticism of any possible rationality. The non-democratic element of Vučić's politics is reflected in its "blindness" to the political democratic institutions and untransparency of the decision-making procedures: "Based on his experience, Vučić intuitively senses he should give an affirmative response to a request, knowing it releases the possible pressure. That is why he makes promises easily and without a prepared strategy, the act which is quite unclear in terms of its objective. To be more precise, Vučić did not make a public statement of his offer on the territorial exchange, did not ask for parliamentary opinion and get the support for his decision. That is the difference. The secretive diplomacy he uses to deal with secret interests is unacceptable."²²

"Generally, the methodology of attracting foreign sympathy or support for something defined as the public interest is not, in my opinion, a mortal sin. As you said, there are countless similar examples in history. However, we are not aware of Vučić's intentions because he never reveals them. If he did, I would probably be a little less harsh in my criticism. Vučić tries to effectuate his ideas so inexpertly because he lacks fundamental knowledge on how the world works."²³

Besides the non-democratic behaviour, Vučić's capability to understand global trends and adequately communicate with foreign leaders is questionable. This is where Jeremić's criticism loses its political approach and transforms into the observed personal animosity towards Vučić. Such animosity binds Jeremić's complex of higher value, based on having studied at eminent foreign universities such as Cambridge and Harvard, and his frustration due to the obvious defeat in presidential elections: "Vučić tries to effectuate his ideas so inexpertly because he lacks fundamental knowledge on how the world works, while language barrier also gives him serious problems. However paradoxical it may seem, he never appoints an interpreter so nobody knows what he is saying or if he is being properly understood. When you go unaccompanied to an important international meeting with poor knowledge of diplomatic customs or the language (Vučić always attempts to communicate in English) misapprehension can likely occur, with a high price to be paid; therefore, my sincere recommendation for him is to be accompanied by both an interpreter and a diplomatic counsellor, someone other than Marko Djurić, who could alert or correct him in case he uses a term which has a completely different meaning from what he wants to say."²⁴

A significant overlap between the attitudes of opposition leaders, journalists and politically engaged public figures on the relationship of the current government with the Western countries, Kosovo, as well as government attitude towards general national issues is presented in the texts of Nemanja Rujević and playwright Siniša Kovačević. The

20 Ibid, p. 12

21 Vuk Jeremić, „Šta su dogovorili Vučić i Tači [What Vučić and Thaci agreed on],” *Vreme*, 26.04.2018, p. 19

22 Ibid

23 Ibid, p. 21

24 Ibid, p. 21

journalist at magazine *Vreme* and the member of the Serbian editorial of *Radio Deutsche Welle* accentuates his opinion of Vučić saying that he is acceptable both to the EU and Germany for his cooperativity regarding Kosovo and generosity in granting subsidies to German companies.

A “reward” for this kind of compromise is the inviolable right given to Vučić to destroy democratic institutions and practices in Serbia for the sake of preserving power: “Aleksandar Vučić is a welcomed guest in Berlin. Of course in Germany, we never see him shouting at government ministers and reporters, but speaking calmly with his fingers pressed together and excessively thanking Angela Merkel for everything. However, their relationship boils down to one thing - Kosovo. The main estimation of Vučić, as stated by the German press reporters and diplomats is ‘Vučić liefert.’ Vučić delivers. He performs the work and the rest is merely a matter of style. The diplomatic and journalistic circles in Belgrade rumour about an agreement made between Vučić, Berlin and Brussels, affectionately called the ‘McAllister Protocol’ named after the European Parliament’s rapporteur on Serbia. According to the alleged agreement, Vučić’s authoritarian style will be overlooked as long as it resembles the one of Orbán rather than Erdoğan. Arrests of reporters and political opponents, security squads in the streets, or blockage of social networks are out of the question, but a more subtle style is acceptable. Leading a country as though it is your dowry seems to be so appalling when Brussels bureaucracy reports euphemistically term it as ‘strengthening the rule of law and progress in the fight against corruption’. Vučić has yet another forte in his relationship with Germany; he pampers German investors.”²⁵

In the same vein, though thanks to the contribution of supernatural powers of predicting future events, playwright Sinisa Kovačević reveals his radically critical attitude on Kosovo and the government’s relationship with the West. He seems to believe that Vučić is “suspicious” in terms of his patriotism even when Kosovo is at stake. Moreover, Vučić is willing to betray Kosovo in order to remain in power. At the same time, the democratic West is silent about his non-democratic governing practice. One of the cornerstones of Vučić’s government critics’ propaganda is that Western countries consider geopolitical interests more important than the fundamental values of democracy and political freedom. From the perspective of playwright Sinisa Kovačević, Vučić’s role is not only “tied” to the recognition of Kosovo independence, but it stretches further. Namely, Serbian president is required to accept the “eradication of Russophilia” and “Serbian NATO integration”. Kovačević summarizes his angst of Vučić’s suspicious patriotism in the statement “If the task of this government is to boil the frog and alienate Kosovo, and it seems so, naturally no freedom of speech, media, or different opinion is allowed until this process is over. But after the process has ended, we can anticipate a new five-year plan which would keep the West silent about the repression of this government on their people exclusively for the sake of staying in power. ‘Here are 5-7 more years to create the unitary Bosnia!’, ‘Give me three more years to reverse the mental structure of people, guide them into the state of oblivion and utter confusion, and we will become the proud members of NATO!’ And as a bonus, in two more years they will be freed from Rusophillia for good.”²⁶

The special dimension of portraying the image of Serbian president is in the constant effort to criminalize his associates, as well as his persona, either directly or indirectly. Direct political indictment refers to his alleged engagement in criminal activity, whereas the indirect accusations stem from an open suspicion of his closest circle - his associates - claiming their participation in criminal activities. In her text “What will happen to Serbia after Vučić” published in the weekly *Vreme*, Zora Drčelić, refers to the sociologist Jovo Bakić when she says that the political innovation of Aleksandar Vučić is cohesion of the state and the mafia: “According to Bakić, Vučić’s worrying innovation is ‘cohesion of the state and the mafia’. To be precise, mafia has taken over the state, and it would not be driven away by the ballots. He is convinced that, once the Progressive Party loses the support of voters, the question will remain: ‘Has the arrangement with mafia been made to perpetuate the mafia system or bloodshed with uncertain outcome will occur?’ Because we witnessed the similar situation in 2000, when such an arrangement ultimately took the life of the person who made it when he attempted to establish the country; that was an accident which prevented at least 100 deaths in Belgrade on 5th October 2000. The outcome is still questionable. There is no hope for a change as long as the mafia connected to both Red Star and Partizan clubs – the management, so-called supporters, drug dealers - concludes business deals with the state and wins all the tenders as owners of companies which made them rich during the last three - four years. Unless the problem is solved, and if those people serve the next government as they did on 5 October 2000, our society can simply sign its death verdict as there is absolutely nothing else to hope for. Because these people are true mafia and they will refuse to go to prison voluntarily.”²⁷

25 Nemanja Rujević, „Kancelarkin najbolji đak [Chancellor’s best student],” *Vreme*, No. 1423, p. 6

26 Siniša Kovačević, „Čauši su gori od sultana [Tchaoushs are worse than Sultan],” interview with Olja Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3519, p. 18
27 Zora Drčelić, „Šta Srbiju čeka posle Vučića [What will happen to Serbia after Vučić],” *Vreme*, No. 1429

The most striking example of media tendency to criminalize president Vučić and his associates is stated in the text published in the weekly *Vreme*, written by Radmilo Marković, who recommends the current minister of finances Siniša Mali as the cooperative witness after the “liberation of Serbia”. Marković’s “appointment” of Siniša Mali as “cooperative witness” implies connections of the current government with organized crime. The connection is insinuated in each and every analysis, underlined without evidence to support such claims which is a clear breach of the basic principles of the law. Such unproven allegations used in order to stigmatize the government carry a socially harmful potential due to the heated nature of this topic. In the spirit of using assumptions and implications for propaganda, Radmilo Marković writes: “All what was written serves to support this theory. But when the country is finally liberated and exits the state of captivity, it will need ‘insiders’ to provide detailed description of connections to the organized crime and corruption. As someone who actively participated in all highly-corruptive businesses of the Progressive Party government, our new minister of finances would be the perfect insider or a cooperative witness.”²⁸

However, criminalization as means of creating a negative image of Aleksandar Vučić is not the only manoeuvre used in the media. The negative evaluative assessment of Serbian president’s personality has been decorated with psychological and socio-cultural titbits. Joined in projecting this negative image, the media characterize the psychological and cultural profile of Aleksandar Vučić as one of a hooligan. Such political, cultural, and socio-psychological qualification of Vučić’s personality was offered by Dragoljub Žarković, journalist at weekly newspaper *Vreme*, known for his ironic, mocking, snide remarks about the Serbian government. The motive of Žarković’s (dis)qualification of president Vučić was the president’s message to the Serbian football team that the World Football Championship was won by Switzerland whose team is made up of players from Kosovo. In the motivational speech of the Serbian leader, the reporter at *Vreme* managed to observe Vučić’s unconscious connection to his youth, when he was the fierce supporter of “Red Star”. Žarković’s insight into the “meanders of Vučić’s unconscious mind” was introduced in the following lines: “In an attempt to propose his own cultural model, Vučić got carried away during his speech to the football team and the public, high-flown by the mentality of a football fan which stirs his blood, reminiscent of the days of hooliganism and unrestrained freedom to break someone’s head (or have your own head broken). More than Vučić’s politics that comes and probably goes, it is that cultural model I personally fear, because it is incorporated into human sub consciousness and deeply determines human character.”²⁹

Culmination of the negative obsession with Aleksandar Vučić did not happen when he was accused of being a dictator, media censor, manipulator of security agencies, populist, or hooligan by nature; the peak was reached after an accusation that his son was brought up by a criminogenic personality, therefore he must also have a criminal inclination. The accusation led by the belief “like father, like son” was made by Slobodan Georgiev, journalist at *Vreme* and editor of the *Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN)*, motivated by the World Football Championship and the published photograph of the president’s son on the stadium platform at the moment of celebrating the goal during the match between Serbia and Costa Rica. In the company of president’s son Danilo, the photo captured several people suspected of criminal behaviour, according to the allegations of *Crime and Corruption Reporting Network (KRIK)* and *Insider*. This group, as stated in the text of Slobodan Georgiev, earned the status of “privileged criminals”. The people in question, apparently due to their lucrative businesses, do not prevent celebration of the Pride Parade in Belgrade and refrain from violence at stadiums: “What makes this photo different is that it captured Aleksandar Vučić’s son, in an apparently intimate company of young men who are members of the group of narco dealer Aleksandar Stanković aka Sale Mutavi, killed in a mafia set up in October 2016 under unresolved circumstances. Serbian police has to explain why were these people, described in detail in the reports of *KRIK* and *Insider*, able to go to Russia because it collides with the proclaimed fight against hooliganism, unless they belong to some sort of ‘authorized officials’ - criminals recruited by BIA or the police who are formally employed in the security sector, but were prosecuted in certain cases by mistake. Serbia has been fighting against hooliganism and trying to stave off criminals from the stadiums for more than a decade, but the truth is their positions have become firmly established in recent years. Those ready to obey ‘our government’ are apparently allowed to do anything in this country as means to ‘pay’ for their passiveness over Kosovo and Pride Parade; those who are not have been left to the street and we see a dead ‘supporter’ in the streets of Belgrade almost every week getting killed in clashes of drug or other gangs.”³⁰

28 Radmilo Marković, „Kandidat za svedoka saradnika [Candidate for protected witness],” *Vreme*, No. 1430

29 Dragoljub Žarković, „Ko ne skače, on je Šiptar – kad se uzburkava navijačka krv Aleksandra Vučića i sposobnost prepoznavanja pravog protivnika [Who doesn’t jump - he is a Shqiptar. When Vučić’s cheering blood starts boiling and ability to recognize the enemy],” *Vreme*, No. 1431, p. 4

30 Slobodan Georgiev, „Predsednikov sin među ‘Janičarima’ [President’s son among the Jannisaries],” *Vreme*, No. 1433, p. 6

The key to understanding this text is not only the allegation of privileged “criminals” or “business deal between hooligans and the state”, but the opinion that the police is obliged to adopt “research insights” of *KRIK* and *Insider* as essential to exposing criminal groups in Belgrade and Serbia. According to their opinion, the fact that their “findings” i.e. “journalistic para-spy exclusive” were not recognized by state authorities closely relates to the disqualification of the president’s son; it is an indirect, sinister and prosecutorial criminalisation, placed into the wider context of “cohesion of the state and mafia”: “If these questions remain unanswered, rumours about affairs and activities of the president’s son, a mature adult, will continue to circulate in an effort to uncover the life of this young man, his friends, relationships, whereabouts, social circle, safety, and similar issues of public importance.”³¹

Truth be told, criminalization of Danilo Vučić is not their final objective; it is clearly an intention to discredit the political opponent of the editorial of *Vreme* - president of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić. Slobodan Georgiev attempts to oppose the Serbian president who, on several occasions, publicly asked for the “exemption” of his family during political and media attacks on him and the government. Firstly, the reporter at *BIRN* provided taxonomy of appearances of the Vučić family members in the pre-election campaign, treating the gesture of SNS leader as a serious moral violation of public representation. At the moment of writing the article, Georgijev deliberately “forgot” that public appearances of family members in a presidential campaign were an American invention, not the Serbian. The allegations of Georgijev, an informed, so-called independent journalist, are not fueled by naivety and ignorance but as an overture to portraying Aleksandar Vučić as a highly-manipulative Macchiavelist, who shies away from nothing if it brings him political points or votes: “Vučić, a political Terminator, uses everything in his power to increase public ratings, including the members of his family whose public appearance he attempts to control. Nonetheless, the attempt is futile because a stream of rumours and allegations circulate about his brother Andrej’s influence and the affairs he runs for the whole family, his father’s influence in the banking sector, and now about Danilo, who was never a good student but manages to save money for an economy-class ticket to the World Football Championship in Russia. Vučić tried to spin a story about people who earn billions, while his son did not steal anything; it was all in vain as we live in a country where a high school student can expect to be offered a labourer job for no more than 250 euros per month, and only dream of seeing the Silver Lake, let alone the golden domes of Kremlin.”³²

The whirlpool of remarks to the government included many more topics. Radical criticism of the legal system in Serbia has become a regular column in Serbian weeklies, including the denial of political legitimacy to the prime minister of Serbia Ana Brnabić. Ana Brnabić has been perceived as only a pale reflection of Aleksandar Vučić, some sort of political and media “ficus”, or a mere puppet handled by the president of Serbia, but her status has lately evolved to the one of “Vučić’s copy”, an avatar of the true leader of the Serbian government.

Direct and sharp observation of Ana Brnabić as Vučić’s copy was offered by a journalist at *Vreme*, Tamara Skrozza: “Brnabić finds it increasingly difficult to conceal the same intolerance to different and varied critical thinking, an obvious trait of Aleksandar Vučić. Two of them have the same stands on workers in strike, on media, on opposition, on pensions, on poverty, on any negative constitution on their work. The two have the same manner of referring to workers at strike, the media, the opposition, pensions, poverty, or any other negative aspect of the society, the prime minister using a little less harsh tone in her speeches. Had he dreamed about and ‘sketched’ a person to inherit his prime minister seat, Aleksandar Vučić would hardly envision someone more apt to do the job than Ana Brnabić. As during her prime minister’s mandate, she successfully proved herself to be more than a ‘ficus’, but an active, remarkable participant in Vučić’s theatre of absurdity, deceits and spins, a perfect addition to his political and propaganda equation. All topics – from the economy to the freedom of press – were covered by Brnabić parroting the president’s statements, following his moves, explaining what he could not be bothered to explain, with the idea to stress the bravura of the leading actor.”³³

However, some economic issues have taken a special place in recent public speeches, with a clear reason - the need for constituting a negative narrative about economic policy, as a counterweight to the official, optimistic pro-government narratives which arguably point to positive trends and results in the Serbian economy in recent years. Criticisms included specific economic solutions, such as policies to stimulate foreign investors, as well as fiscal consolidation measures, economic growth rates, average salary and comparisons with the region, labour rights and trade union powerlessness.

31 Ibid, p. 7

32 Ibid, p. 9

33 Tamara Skrozza, „Kako joj on kaže [As he tells her],” *Vreme*, No. 1428, p. 18

Among the issues under scrutiny was also an incentive given to foreign investors, namely the subsidy to the German producer of tires "Continental", at the moment when, in addition to the production capacity, the company decided to establish research centers in order to assist the development and improvement of production process in Serbia. Previous critical reviews of foreign investors spoke about the low complexity of jobs established in Serbia. Subsidies to "Continental" were not criticized for its type of production, but for the fact that the government helped a foreign company establish the business which had already been successfully run by Serbian companies. Instead of the type of production, it was the transparency of industry dealing with the foreign investors that became an object of scrutiny, while economic patriotism became the focal point of critical narratives in the media like *NIN*, promoter of mandatory establishment of capitalism and the inclusion of Serbia into the global neoliberal economy.

Political motivation of the critics has always gone beyond ideological consistency, which transforms reporters' texts into raw pieces of propaganda aimed at provoking strong opposition to the government decision in this particular case: "Instead of promoting Serbia as a country where the best software solutions are made, the government uses state resources to support Continental, global giant attempting to take over employees of local companies. Presentation is clearly more powerful than anything. It is an absurdity that she, who is knowledgeable beyond all knowledge, grants the subsidy of 9.5 million euros to the German giant Continental, one of the largest global producers of tires, to set up a research center in Novi Sad and employ IT engineers? Strangely enough, the Know-It-All has been appointed to transform the subsidy policy into an absurdity, the policy applied for more than a decade, but resilient enough to sustain all criticism and poor results, or to transform bad economic judgment made by 'archenemies' of the current government into a higher state of being, where government subsidies are granted for job openings in a developed town, to support the industry with no vacancies in the labour market, while using factories and jobs opened in the south of Serbia with a huge unemployment rate to support her decision. The situation becomes completely absurd when Serbia uses the money of Serbian citizens to take over the tax-paying employees from the Serbian IT sector, or import IT experts from abroad using our money to pay for their salaries? Subsidy of 19,000 euros per job, a record ever made in Serbia."³⁴

After having scrutinized the subsidy to "Continental", weekly *NIN* denies the current subsidy policy using lack of regulation in the country as an argument. Examples of well-organized countries were Great Britain and Switzerland, two old European democracies with firmly-established market mechanisms. Serbia is thus compared to the countries with a different economic, legal, and political background, and thereby a different current state of their economy. Compared to the two countries, the majority of much wealthier and better-organized countries than Serbia, or its surrounding region, would seem poor and underdeveloped. This notorious fact, known to both professionals and ordinary citizens, was not in any way taken into account in the mentioned analysis. Moreover, the attitude on Serbia as a disorganised country belongs to Miodrag Zec, the professor of economy who constantly uses his scientific authority to slander current economic policies by drawing rationally and factually questionable analogies.

"There is no better subsidy than an organized country. Switzerland and Great Britain do not grant subsidies and attracts all capital. It is a means to compensate for the non-existent legal system in Serbia. The ultimate nonsense is to grant subsidy to the industry with no vacancies on the market, the company whose revenue is higher than Serbian GDP. Breaking news in Serbia is that a subsidy has been granted for taking over a spinning mill to a company importing Japanese machines and Turkish material, and then we ask ourselves who the black sheep in the family is. The government is announcing support to increase natality, but the health system, reducing labour rights, makes it quite impossible to work and have children at the same time."³⁵

In his usual manner, Professor Zec referred to the policy of fiscal consolidation as almost senseless, although it regulated public finances and saved the country from bankruptcy, despite the difficult economic and political decisions. Although the politically sensitive professor was aware of the daunting prospect of state bankruptcy in 2014, he took the opportunity to criticize government's austerity policies using the "best impossible solution", while referring to the government as a factor of economic and social instability. Economic necessity of enforcing austerity policies was put into an ideal context and used as means to create a negative image of overall economic policy. Politically and socially incendiary topics such as wages and pensions, supported by the appropriate rhetoric and arguments, were triggered with the intention to make a convincing argument and turn the reader against the government. Rationality of such arguments stems from the political interests of the speaker and the anti-government weekly newspaper.

34 Petrica Đaković, „Za koga radi srpska vlada [Who does Serbian Government work for],” *NIN*, No. 3510, p. 32

35 Miodrag Zec, „Svaka vlast ima svoje bogataše i robijaše [Every Government has its rich men and prisoners],” Interview with Milan Čulibrk, *NIN*, No. 3511, p. 36

With the incentive to the German “Continental” questioned, the political weekly *NIN* disputed the current subsidy policy with the notion of a lack of a regulated state. Noted as examples of regulated states were Great Britain and Switzerland, two old European democracies that have had clearly established mechanisms of market functioning for centuries. So, Serbia is compared with countries of completely different economical, legal and political histories, as well as current situations. The comparison with these countries makes at least 99 per cent of the world’s countries seem unregulated and poor, even though most of them are vastly richer and more regulated than Serbia and the surrounding region. This notorious fact bore no meaning. In fact, this notion of an unregulated Serbia was first conceived by economy professor, Miodrag Zec, who, as countless times before, has used his scientific authority for propaganda and the defamation of the current economy politics, via rationally and factually disputable analogies. The following quote from an interview with Miodrag Zec confirms the aforementioned rhetoric: “It’s easy to stabilize them that way. They’d stabilize them even better if they abolished pensions completely! The leaders have retroactively violated the legal order. They could have decreased future pensions, but laws cannot be retroactively enforced. And now you have this senseless situation where someone receives a 100.000 RSD pension rescript, but is paid 80.000 RSD? It’s absurd for you to pay a pension and health insurance levy, when you know that your pension will be lower than the one you’re supposed to receive and that if you get sick, you will have to pay for an examination at a private practice.”³⁶

The authors and journalists of the weekly *NIN* were hired to seek all and any circumstances which could contribute to the dispute of the positive commercial investment trend of the last several years. In that context, attracting new investments is seen through the lens of an alleged low level of labour rights and wages. More precisely, the aim is to create a picture of low wages and salaries, lack of labour rights and large state incentives as being the only reason for Serbia to attract investors. The positive circumstances regarding Serbia’s economy, such as the improvement on the ‘doing-business’ list or the fiscal consolidation, were often relativized and, more often than not, simply disregarded. An example of the insistence on low cost work and insufficient labour rights is apparent in the following quote: “The leading party which has until recently boasted with cheap workforce and whose president complains for being sabotaged by ‘spoiled’ labourers in the attempt to bring as many investors to Serbia as possible, conceals how deprived of their rights the labourers really are.”³⁷

The politically propagandist use of statistics is a special invention of the weekly *NIN*. In an attempt to contextualize Serbia’s economy on a regional margin, it has created ten separate parameters for the its measuring. After a rough and hard analysis based on a mechanical and rationalizing comparison of numbers, the weekly *NIN*’s conclusion is radically pessimistic.

Serbia has been at the lower end of the economic scale and without prospects of leaving the notorious position any time soon. In the light of a general picture of Serbian economy seen this way, the purpose of citing numbers is to further serve the biased conclusion: “However low for our condition, the 3% inflation is the highest in the region, salaries are lower only in FYR Macedonia, with only Bosnia and Herzegovina investing less GDP, on which future growth crucially depends on, as well as Serbia’s chances of leaving the bottom.”³⁸

A similar decontextualizing tendency followed by the misuse of statistics, motivated entirely by propagandist responses to the president of Serbia, is present in the following text by *NIN* head director Milan Čulibrk: “In terms of average wages, we are slowly getting ahead of other countries one by one. By the end of the year, we will precede even some of the EU countries, like we have preceded Bulgaria with higher salaries and pensions! Ever since president Vučić uttered these words last week, I have not been able to decipher whether someone had served him wrong data or if the whole story of how we are slowly, but steadily preceding all our neighbouring countries was his original idea, expecting that it wouldn’t even occur to anyone to check it anyway. As the vast majority is already prepared to accept that Wednesday is actually Saturday and Monday is Friday, as long as somebody in power announces it authoritatively enough. For days now, neither has anyone asked him, nor has he deemed it necessary to explain that he has come up with a mathematical formula to attest that 415€ (average salary 422€ in January, 404€ in February and 418€ in March) is in fact more than 457€? And is there anyone, except perhaps the members of the leading SNS party’s head board members, who would have second thoughts if they were to choose between the Serbian and the Bulgarian average? To make matters worse, since January, our eastern neighbours have had a guaranteed minimum wage of 261€, which is approximately 30,800 RSD! How many Serbian labourers would be more than happy with the Bulgarian minimum wage? On average, that’s not even what some employees receive in

36 Ibid, p. 37

37 Petrica Đaković, „I robovi i roba“ [Slaves and goods], *NIN*, No. 3515, p. 31

38 Milan Čulibrk, Dragana Pejović, „Sramota kako nam dobro ide“ [Doing so well, it’s embarrassing], *NIN*, no. 3513, p. 33

some commercial branches in Serbia – those who prepare and serve food and beverages or fix computers or other items for personal use. This is also what our official statistics show.”³⁹

After the always radically negative economic analysis of the Government’s output, follows a well-known matrix of disputing the “Belgrade Waterfront”, one of the leading SNS party’s key projects. Along with the opposition politicians, numerous celebrities are also engaged in the mission of undermining this urbanizing project, especially professionals. One of the loudest “guild” critics of the “Belgrade Waterfront” is architect Dragoljub Bakić, who almost ritually declares his view of this project in some of the critical opposing media every month. His perspective is radically negative and can be recognized in the following excerpts from an interview in the weekly *Vreme*: “Our leaders have been entranced with this story of 3.5 billion euro in the “Belgrade Waterfront” and in turned out to be a scam. They were then convinced they would hire a construction operative. Only, we don’t have a construction operative – it’s all been destroyed. Trudbenik, Rad, Komgrap and other construction companies, where are they? What’s left is Energoprojekt, now also taken by private investors. And then they say: ‘We will develop our construction industry’. Well, we don’t have that industry. What are we producing? We don’t have enough to make windows, doors, glass, and all that’s now on those two monstrous buildings. There’s nothing ours there, only the concrete is local, everything else is imported. There is no development of a construction industry or operative. It’s all a scam.”⁴⁰

After the all too familiar and often present casual professional-political analysis of the “Belgrade Waterfront” project, followed the famous conclusion about a “pending doom” that’s coming with this urbanizing project. In that light, Dragoljub Bakić says: “I have no business showing up there, because it’s all a disgrace over there. Everything is wrong and senseless. Everything going on in the Sava Amphitheater and in Belgrade in general is urban tyranny.”⁴¹

Along with the “urban tyranny” narrative, there is also one about the aesthetic degradation carried out by the current Belgrade authorities. This is an attempt to show the current Belgrade authorities as absolutely inept for arranging this urban area. This viewpoint is a part of a greater picture of the SNS party as a culturally inferior, single-minded group, incompetent to meet the complex requirements of running the capital city of Serbia. Aesthetic judgment with implicit or explicit culture-racist grounds, is seen in a quote by art historian Irina Subotić, who makes the following statement regarding the monument arrangement: “The same things happening with the construction like the Belgrade waterfront are now happening with a number of new monuments.

This means that the city is attacked by a clash of narrow-minded traditionalism and neoliberal economy. Who decides where and to whom a monument is erected? The president. Just like with the monument for Zoran Đinđić, or Stefan Nemanja, the decision is made unanimously – by a single, undisputed vote. It is interesting that the boards, if there are at all boards for erecting monuments, decide what sort of monument is to be erected – an actual one for Đinđić, and a figurative one for Stefan Nemanja. This all show an utter voluntarism, a display of power and a lack of awareness of the values of today, which should be our legacy for the future. The first prize for Stefan Nemanja was given to some Russian sculptor, second to a Chinese one, don’t ask me about criteria. To me, this all looks like a huge misunderstanding – a misunderstanding that we are in the second decade of the 21st century and that small-town distaste, primitivism and ignorance that proclaims trash as art are in power. I hope that monument is never erected.”⁴²

In summary, the picture of the authorities portrayed in these weeklies bares a distinctively negative tension. It also stems greatly from the animosity towards Aleksandar Vučić. Journalists, opposing politicians, non-government organization representatives and the public are all contributing to the creation intensively. In their vision of our reality, Vučić is an autocrat, often a traitor, media manipulator and a politician that abuses security services and enables a merging of the state with the mafia. On a radically political level, this critique violates the realm of privacy, as is the case with a pretentious, superficial and obscure analysis of Vučić’s son Danilo. From this malicious analysis, an attack is construed on president Vučić himself, who is often portrayed by the aforementioned media as a person of a hooligan mind-set, who is enabling his brother to get rich. The system he is running is therefore a combination of clientelism and total control, devoid of notable results in the economic, internal and external affairs

39 Milan Ćilibrik, „Ko to kaže, ko to laže” [Liar, Liar],” *NIN*, no. 3521, p. 3

40 Dragoljub Bakić, „Tiranija Beograda na vodi [Tyranny of the Belgrade Waterfront],” interview with Radoslav Čebić, *Vreme*, no. 1430, p. 18

41 Same, p. 19

42 Irina Subotić, „Beograd nije zaslužio da ga pretvore u Las Vegas [Belgrade doesn’t deserve to be turned into Las Vegas],” interview with Sonja Ćirić, *Vreme*, br. 1425-1426, p. 6

political agenda. He maintains power through media manipulation and fear, but also via the “Disgraceful political agreement with the West” on the “surrender” of Kosovo by the end of 2018. With literal interpretations of these media’s allegations, a picture is created of life under Vučić being the worst in the world. This propagandic agenda is the drive fuel and the maximum reach of “critical discourse” and an intellectual basis for an alternative political authority.

A picture of the opposition in printed media – no moral credibility and democratic legitimacy, faced with constant challenges for survival on the political scene and the appearance of new actors and forms of political actions.

Unlike the current authorities, the picture of the opposition in weeklies and editorial columns is made in a more complex manner. On the one hand, in a certain number of media sources tied with the authorities, the opposition is valued negatively, politically and morally judged, apparently with a strong dose of euphoria and harsh, categorical and disqualifying judgment. ON the other hand, other accordingly critical media leaves room for explication and articulation of opposing views, while directly or indirectly giving them support in the fierce political fight against the current authority.

In printed media, mostly weeklies critical of the authorities, there is a debate on the possibility of strengthening the opposition. Moreover, there is also a noticeable tendency to glorify civil initiatives as a form of political action, which could question the position of current authorities. Regardless of the complex of the opposition’s picture in weekly press, a general impression is that the opposition’s picture is negative. Negative connotations appear at two levels: 1) in value and 2) a negative portrayal of the opposition’s potential to jeopardize the authorities. The former issue arises in printed media in favour of the current authorities, while the latter is characteristic of weeklies radically critically oriented towards the authorities.

The paper *Informer* has a specific role in adding a negative value component to the opposing parties, whether with regards to the texts in journals, or editorial columns by Dragan J. Vučićević. Vučićević’s columns, in a moral-political sense, problematize the opposition and also critically approach the opposition media and non-government organisations with virtually constant reflexions on ruling period of the 5th October revolution winners. The basic characteristics of these could be summed into the following three mutually related issues, which this author’s approach stems from: 1) The current opposition has no moral credibility (due to the highly corrupted politicians it is comprised of, 2) In the media that support the opposition, mostly in the press, the current government is attacked without a serious and rational elaboration and with the overthrowing of the current government being the sole purpose, 3) In the media in support of the current opposition, there is undoubtedly a discrimination of everyone who isn’t a direct opponent of Vučić’s authority.

Vučićević’s critique of the opposition in Serbia is equally focused on the opposition as a participant of the political scene, but also towards the media critical of the current authorities. His critique is always based on the *ad hominem* judgement, highly personalised, in an attempt to be convincing. With a frequent stigmatisation of certain persons, a moral psychological profile is drawn, which makes that person unworthy and inept for any role in the public life. For a better understanding of the media and political scene in Serbia, the writings of *Informer*’s chief editor are relevant for three causally connected reasons. Firstly, the writing style and the message content conveyed in his texts is such that it reflects an interest in politics among less educated citizens who mostly buy and read tabloids and are loyal voters in the election process. Secondly, the *Informer* is important for the current government, as it questions, on a daily and weekly basis, negative attitudes towards it, as well as the media-political pictures of it continually produced by the critically inclined media. Lastly, the *Informer* is a leader in the daily press realm in making negative value image of the current opposition as a political entity.

Aside from the participants in the political life, Vučićević also analyses the media scene with negative value judgments of the radically critically inclined media and the opposition scene on social networks. In addition, he has also been actively spreading an anti-European sentiment in the public life, undermining the already fragile foundations of regional relations and especially affirmed the support for Russia and its political leader Vladimir Putin.

This behaviour of Editor in Chief Dragan J. Vučićević is exactly the sort of political-value orientation that shows a limited identification with the current government’s politics, given that it sees itself as an active participant in the process of European integrations and an advocate for regional peace and political stability. In this sense, an attitude towards the current government’s opposition is openly critical with discrediting aims, while a conclusion, that is a value judgment that logically follows is one derived from an extensive description of the political circumstances.

The basic premise that has hovered through Dragan Vučićević's columns could be summed as follows: "The Euro-reform opposition lacks any political principality and moral credibility." This premise is put in the wider context of an anti-western perspective on the history and politics of this region. The central idea is that Serbia is subjected to constant pressure from the West to give up the territory of Kosovo, agree to reduce Dayton privileges and impose sanctions on the Russian federation. The *Informer* chief editor shows this view of the West in the following statements in his weekly column: "What exactly does the West want from us Serbs? What exactly are USA, EU and NATO's plans for Serbia? Is there any chance in the near future for our country to be an equal and respected partner of the western forces? Let's not kid ourselves – they want to make us recognize the false state of Kosovo, but also to agree to abolish the Republika Srpska. And there is no certainty that that would be enough for them! It is more and more obvious that, even if we Serbs were to go crazy and give up Kosovo and RS, the West wouldn't stop at that. They would continue to command us. It wouldn't be long before they opened the crises in Sandžak and Vojvodina."⁴³

The best example of Vučić's stigmatizing rhetoric, which radically questions the morality and political convictions of politicians, is recognizable in his writings on Vuk Jeremić, leader of the opposing National Bank. In addition to pointing out the lack of a clear political orientation and questionable moral credibility, *Informer's* Editor in Chief also disputes Jeremić by analyzing his family biography, which was hinted in the text to be "nationally and politically questionable".

So in a politically-ethnic profile, Jeremić is also a communist and an anti-Serb, also morally corrupt. He has been described as "A person that has no place in politics", except to be an object of national hatred and rejection. The talk of Jeremić in Vučić's text is a reproduction of a conservative populist discourse that suspends all norms of liberal political correctness.

Dragan Vučićević is subversive, he writes from a deep personal conviction of harmfulness of Jeremić and other political participants in the opposition. In his texts, they have no "exemption". He does not miss a chance to dispute them in every way, very explicitly and categorically, beyond conventional decency, to which the following quote can attest: "Vuk Pozderac Buljubašić Jeremić (thus implying his ethnically and ideologically questionable ancestry), God bless him, is the best and most concrete guarantee that this yellow, kleptomaniac, DOS-like opposition will never again rise to power in Serbia. The grandson of titoistic criminals Šerif Buljubašić and Hamdija Pozderac, son of Mihajlo Miško Jeremić, the lobbyist accomplice in the robbing of NIS, Vuk is, someone malicious would say, genetically predisposed to be a grand thief and a world-class shady business expert. It was to be expected from such a fraudulent little man to reach the heights of world mafia. Šerif's and Hamdia's grandson, Mihajlo's kid also used the position of 'World president' (falsely self-proclaimed) to lie, cheat and make millions. He took millions from Serbia's budget to pay for the most expensive suites and limos in New York for himself and his wife Nataša, where he worked only for himself and his butt."⁴⁴

With the familial and political defamation, a picture is created of Vuk Jeremić as a morally suspicious person, involved in various financial malversations on an international level. The main idea is to create an impressions that Vuk Jeremić allegedly used his privileged position of minister of foreign affairs and the prestigious place in the UN for his personal financial gain: "This is now quite obvious – Jeremić's 'business partners' from that time, Patrick Ho and Cheikh Gadio were arrested in the USA, Ye Jianming was busted in China, and Vuk's 'brother' Emilio Lozano was indicted in Mexico. And they are all prosecuted for laundering millions, bribery, systemic corruption and they all paid a lot of money to Vuk Jeremić's quasi-institute and make-believe consulting agency, for which the proven amount so far is 5.3 million euro! And? Now we're all supposed to believe that Jeremić has nothing to do with money laundering and corruption? Now we're all witless enough to believe that Jeremić is an honest consultant and an oh so wise analytic, whose advice and analyses are worth millions of dollars and euros?!"⁴⁵

Vučićević's belief is that the pro Euro-reform opposition, an heir of the 5th October, despite a declarative support of democracy, is evoking a state of mass civil disobedience and institutional blockade, all with the aim of rising to power. The cause for creating this media-political picture was the "Cvetković" affair, an alleged kidnap of a local journalist which served to the critical public as an example of government oppression, which by analogy, with journalist

43 Dragan J. Vučićević, „EU neće Srbe“ [The EU doesn't want Serbs], *Informer*, 20. 05. 2018, p. 5

44 Dragan J. Vučićević, „Pokvareni čovečuljak [The corrupted little man],“ *Informer*, 09. 06. 2018, p. 5

45 Ibid, p. 5

murder cases in Slovenia, was supposed to lead to a political overthrow. Given that the Cvetković affair turned out to have been staged, Vučićević critically demystified the oppositional discourse arisen from this, by revealing his 'true' intentions: "Media-political operation intended to bring as much chaos as possible and for Serbia's government to be overthrown as soon as possible. That there is what is happening today before our eyes. Janković, Jeremić, Đilas and Obradović are just the contractors of this dirty field work. Their superiors sit in Washington, Brussels, London and they are the ones that decided to politically destroy Vučić, so as to soon after break Serbia's spine, abolish it as a serious and independent country and turn it into another vassal, NATO territory on the Balkans. This, of course, never happened. None of this is incidental and non of it spontaneous. At a time when Serbia as to be made recognize Kosovo at all costs, when Serbs should be convinced how it's best for them that the Republic of Srpska ceases to exist, Vučić and his leading party is the biggest hindrance. And so, as they wouldn't win the election in the next 20 years, western rulers have decided to use the yellow-scum elite to corner the government. They assume that, pressured with countless fabricated affairs and everyday bombardment of lies, Vučić will at some point give up, resign and give the power to the yellow criminals."⁴⁶

Having revealed the "true intentions" of the opposition leaders and their foreign and local media helpers, Vučićević cast light on an event, the meaning of which can logically be linked to a number of previous descriptions of intentions of the opposition representatives, critical media and some circles in the international community: "The fake abduction of the fake journalist Stefan Cvetković was just another rehearsal, another step in setting the stage for the media-political chaos, which is to make Macedonia out of Serbia this summer and fall. Just as the false news of the poisoned water was an in-vivo experiment that was supposed to test the limits of a future special war. Do you follow? He who thought of staging the fake abduction using long compromised and untrustworthy Cvetković, the man who 'rose to fame' with the stupidest lies, is the same person, during the course of just one afternoon, drove Serbs mad with the idiotic story of the water grids in Belgrade, Novi Sad and other big cities of Serbia being poisoned by pouring methane in the pipes."⁴⁷

Along with raising the panic level and moral hysteria in the public, there is a chevy on president Vučić's family, which isn't just a matter of oppositional media and politicians, but also has firm grounds in the legal-political system that is working against the democratically elected government. With regards to this, Vučićević openly calls for caution and an involvement of the authorities in defending the president. Every attempt of undermining the government should be demystified so that its supporters are always aware of the dangers it brings. Public support is not only needed during the elections. It should be regained always and everywhere so as to avoid the recurrence of Serbia after the fifth October changes. These texts can serve as an explanation of the continual support to the current government. The subtext of these writings is clear.

The voting body is to be kept at constant alertness and served a consistent story about the government, opposition, Serbia, democracy, the Serbian nation, the dangers, threats... "Does it sound familiar? Have you recently heard the news on social networks and hater media about Vučić's son Danilo, who is spending time on the World cup with dangerous criminals? Have you heard the yellow Court of Appeal's verdict that Vučić's brother Andrej is guilty for beating police batons with his spine and kidneys?! So, it's about the system. The system that's supposed to prove by force that Aleksandar Vučić is the worst, and that the DOS party crooks and tycoons are the best – A system that is to convince us that there is no bigger problem than Danilo Vučić, who is routing for Serbia in Russia, while also, get this – taking pictures with the supporters! It is a system that imposes the premise that the only solution are those who, in the 12 years of DOS-ism, have turned this country into a temporary non-state on the verge of bankruptcy. Impossible and ridiculous as it may seem, you better take this seriously."⁴⁸

Defaming the opposition is followed by defending the government. In Vučić's writing, there is a balance between the affirmation of one political side, and the negation of the other. That sort of writing is politically biased and ideologically categorizing. The issue here is the obviously involved journalism, in favour of one, and against the other side. A rational consideration of the opposing party's mistakes, their organization, media representation, personnel and political activity was given by sociologist Srećko Mihailović. Unlike Vučićević's, Mihailović's analysis is one of descriptive-explanatory nature. This experienced researcher describes and clarifies the situation, at which, despite the attempt to conceal it, he is evidently of anti-regime conviction. According to him, there are four issues with the opposition scene: "Among the biggest issues with the vast majority of today's both the opposition parties and the ruling party, I would point out the following four: Strategic errors, tactical

46 Dragan J. Vučićević, „Politika likvidacije [Politics of liquidation],” *Informer*, 16. 06. 2018, p. 5

47 Ibid, p.5

48 Dragan J. Vučićević, „Sluđivanje nacije [Deluding the nation],” *Informer*, 25. 06. 2018, p. 5

errors, distancing from the software and the characteristic philosophizing of the parties and the messiah delusions of party leaders.”⁴⁹

Unlike many of the anti-Vučić intellectuals, Srećko Mihailović is aware of the opposition’s limits, as well as that of journalists, especially the hysterically negative obsessions with Vučić and his politics. In the following excerpt from an interview, he clearly states his view, saying: „It is one of those situations where the opposition parties vote against, even if they have a favorable opinion of a proposal, just because it was brought by Aleksandar Vučić. Good-bye brains, good morning Serbia! We are drowning, Aleksandar Vučić reaches a helping hand, we refuse it because it’s his hand?! Let’s be clear, I do not agree with a vast number of political decisions of Serbia’s leader, I basically disagree with his politics in its many aspects, however I don’t see him as an enemy, urbi et orbi.”⁵⁰

Along with the bad communication with the public, communication with membership, sympathizers and potential voters is also problematic: “I am talking about inarticulate communication with the membership, sympathizers, voters and citizens in general”. This weakness leads to parties losing their role in social life, membership becoming passive and party life becoming a process of recycling the used up personnel which doesn’t earn trust with the membership nor the citizens any more.

There is a trend within the opposition to reject the most capable people, which leads to the parties becoming inconsistent political and value-wise, insufficiently reasonable and finally unconvincing to voters.

“Distance towards the soft deintellectualization of the party, taking away of the intellectual substance within the party. Intellectuals are distancing themselves more and more due to the starchy and castrating reality reflection within the party. They find mandatory babbling and retelling the vague attitudes of the head of the party uncomfortable, ‘party platitudes’ repetitive and tiring and discipline that demands trashing party ‘enemies’ and praising every nonsense coming from ‘friends’ of the party – repulsive. On the other hand, heads of the parties feel jeopardised by the ones who think, especially if the opinion differs from theirs. Therefore, the party politics is being lead more according to the ‘feeling’ than ‘thinking’ and the consequences are very visible. Certainly some intellectuals made a deal with the head of the party, and some are active in this party life, but it seems that both sides find this somewhat enjoying.”⁵¹

According to Mihajlović, the fourth weakness is reflected in the auto-perception of political leaders. Party leaders take over the Messiah role which causes a barrier to their significant political activism. Removing the barrier is not an easy step since it is structured into a general political pattern which dominates in Serbia. “The greatest weak spots of our politicians are self-delusions about their knowledge, political interference, greatness and intelligence.”⁵² Messianic leadership means lack of critical self-reflection and practical-political auto correction. Messianism leads the opposition leaders towards mistakes which multiply defeats that finally lead to nonsense of the opposition role.

A group of parties led by Dragan Đilas, founded an “Alliance for Serbia” initiative in order to overcome the mentioned deficiencies, reaffirm and strengthen the role of the opposition in the political society with a goal to unify the opposition and prepare it for new political temptations. It is envisioned as a comprehensive, politically and ideologically heterogenic coalition which reminds of the coalition association campaign from the 90’s against Slobodan Milošević regime. Đilas stated his idea as a form of vital political responsibility and historical necessity: “The greatest responsibility for the collapse of Serbia lies in Aleksandar Vučić’s regime. However, part of the responsibility is held by the opposition. The solution is not only to take down Vučić from power, but to change the whole system. By not forming the Alliance, we give power to Vučić to do whatever he has his mind set on. Therefore, sacrificing the whole country for one man only because we couldn’t reach an agreement is nonsense. ‘Alliance for Serbia’ will be formed. Its members will sooner or later be the ones who put Serbia above their personal and party interests and the ones who understand the severity of the situation. People say we have reached the bottom. We have reached it, but we haven’t stopped falling. Precipitous fall continues.”⁵³

49 Srećko Mihailović, „Vlast je od nas napravila lutke mrdalice [The government made puppets out of us],” interview with sa Olja Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3512, p. 33

50 Ibid, p.33

51 Ibid, p.34

52 Ibid, p.34

53 Dragan Đilas, „Ako se ne dogovorimo Vučić može da radi šta hoće [If we don’t agree on something, Vučić will be able to do as he pleases],” *NIN*, No. 3513, p. 10

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NIN, 26th April 2018

Even though characterized as “historical moral evil”, Zoran Lutovac, newly elected president of the Democratic Party (DS), supports Đilas’s vision of the united opposition against the Government and states for the weekly *NIN* that he will direct all of his political power towards search for unity among opposition leaders and parties: “I will communicate with Đilas and Janković about the general well-being. If there is something positive for our society, it is positive for the Democratic Party (DS) also. We have to awaken the hope that changes are possible and the first step towards that is to act united and synchronised. We can’t fight using regular parliamentary democratic resources. It doesn’t make sense fighting repression by official statements and legal propositions. We have to fight with activism.”⁵⁴

The announcement of the united opposition idea is followed by the glorification of non-party civil action against Aleksandra Vučić’s regime. In comparison to the disappointment in political parties and its’ leaders, the appearance of the civil initiatives and movements seems like a sanative organisational-action formula. The spirit of 96/97 protest and the memory of “Otpor” are only a casual encouraging “flashes” which should give a breath of life to the new opposition idea and practice. That being said, radically critical weeklies *NIN* and *Nedeljnik* carefully followed actions and activities of civil initiatives, promoting them into the new politically relevant actors: “We also need to fight this idea that unless we cooperate with the rest of the political establishment calling themselves the opposition, we automatically support Vučić”. The problems we have are of greater depth, the processes which brought Vučić to power are long term and impossible to terminate using existing mechanisms and in short time. Everyone has the right to be in politics, even Đilas, however his and our goals do not meet. I’m not speculating when I say that all political elites alienated other citizens. That’s why the Government finds it easy to treat citizens as the obedient soldiers without rights to express their opinion. The only political actor with strong infrastructure is the Government which is using public funds that is against constitution. Our focus is to inform and include citizens and form society resistant to blackmail on local and republic level.”⁵⁵

Further elaboration was developed by sociologist Đokica Jovanović who said: “If the war is too serious of a matter only for the generals to deal with, politics is also too important be dealt by politicians only. Especially if by introducing the multi-party system in Serbia and the Balkans, they have deepened the crisis making the country an investment dowry. What are the possible political actions in a situation like this? It goes without saying- protests, networking with like-minded people, public debating... but does the Civil Front plan on voting? The single initiative that has experience in counselling benches is the Local Front which organised a few protest walks in Kraljevo in 2015 in the name of disempowered, unemployed, failed investments- based on principles of de-corruption and public office transparency. The following year, they made an impossible possible by winning five counselling benches and leaving ‘New Serbia’ and ‘Democratic Party’ (DS) below the census. Since then, one of their members was arrested for ripping Aleksandar Vučić posters, one was attacked and as Predrag Vošćinić says, people from the Local Front should be addressed as a part of the initiative as much as the ones sitting in the City Council, especially having recognized the capacity for at least riot if not a change.”⁵⁶

Huge publicity was simultaneously given to the activities of the initiative such as the protest for the Republic of Serbia overtaking “*Konstantin Veliki*” Airport. The city of Niš citizen protest was a first class political event, even though ineffective and short. However, anti-Government weeklies such as *Vreme*, exaggerated this local “citizen gathering”. The result of exaggeration paradigm is in the article written by Slobodan Georgijev, *Vreme* journalist and Editor in Chief of *BIRN*.

In his article on Niš protests, he says: “The system has been exposed with the protests in Niš, because of the City Council’s decision to give the Public Corporation Airport Niš to the Serbian Government: all decisions are made in one place and the citizens are supposed to be satisfied with the decisions the wise management makes. In this case, public property was given to the Republic which couldn’t even manage the main state airport in Belgrade. As a result Niš started NGOs which united with the citizens to show the City Council that public property cannot just be given away. What irritated citizens the most is the fact that a few days before the City Council gave the airport to the Government, the airport management stated that the airport will be able to maintain itself in a few years without subsidies provided by the City Council.”⁵⁷

After evoking the opposition memories from the 90s, “out of nowhere” was concluded that raising the Niš Airport

54 Zoran Lutovac, „Samo udružena opozicija ima šanse [Only united opposition stands a chance],” *NIN*, No. 3519, p. 10

55 Stefan Slavković, „Nova politička snaga u Srbiji [New political force in Serbia],” *NIN*, No. 3514, p. 9

56 Ibid, p.10

57 Slobodan Georgijev, „Francuska veza, niška pobuna [French connection, Niš rebellion],” *Vreme*, No. 1422, p. 6



Vreme, 5th April 2018

topic to a high media-political level was actually a way to open Kosovo concessions. About this strange switch of public topic, Slobodan Gerogijev says: "In this high tension atmosphere because of Kosovo and Metohija, the Government seems to be taking advantage to smuggle something huge that would confuse us later on. However, the public spoils these plans no matter how marginalised or torn apart: journalists, protesting citizens... eventually we might find out what is the agenda on air traffic in Serbia."⁵⁸

Protest evoking was a product of media ethics with daily politics aroma. Culmination of advocacy journalism and open support to one of the sides in the political process, comes to light not only directly or indirectly and through interpretation of a certain actor, event or process, the politization of journalists appears as a call to action, a specific plea to mobilize, initiate a political action or even a larger activity, all with the aim of „tearing down“ the „awful“ regime of „the dictator“ Aleksandar Vučić.

Within the context, with a high level of anger and personal passion, Radmilo Marković from *Vreme* notes: "In the end, there is only one more question: why the protests now? Why not after numerous affairs and this Government's screw ups such as aflatoxin from 2013 to people who drowned, helicopters that crashed, false PhDs and diplomas, salary and pension reductions, catastrophic state of media, the Parliament, jurisdiction, education, health... and why this way? One of the answers could be that the society doesn't react as a whole but individually after being punished financially by the Government. Therefore, there is no interest in preserving public institutions but only individual."⁵⁹

In the spirit of Marković's writing, Vučić's politics represents an alibi for an extreme shape of citizen disobedience which jeopardised daily life in Belgrade and Serbia and initiated high level of panic, confusion and uncertainty with majority of citizens in Serbia. In order to fight Vučić's regime, all means are welcome and that's why Marković approves "political basic instincts" of organisers and participants in protests invoking more fierce and radical political encounters: "Since Aleksandar Vučić excluded opposition and media with national frequency leaving brutal, tireless and above all illegal propaganda and periodical direct communication with citizens using media as a megaphone, the citizens have no other option but to react directly in order to show their dissatisfaction."⁶⁰

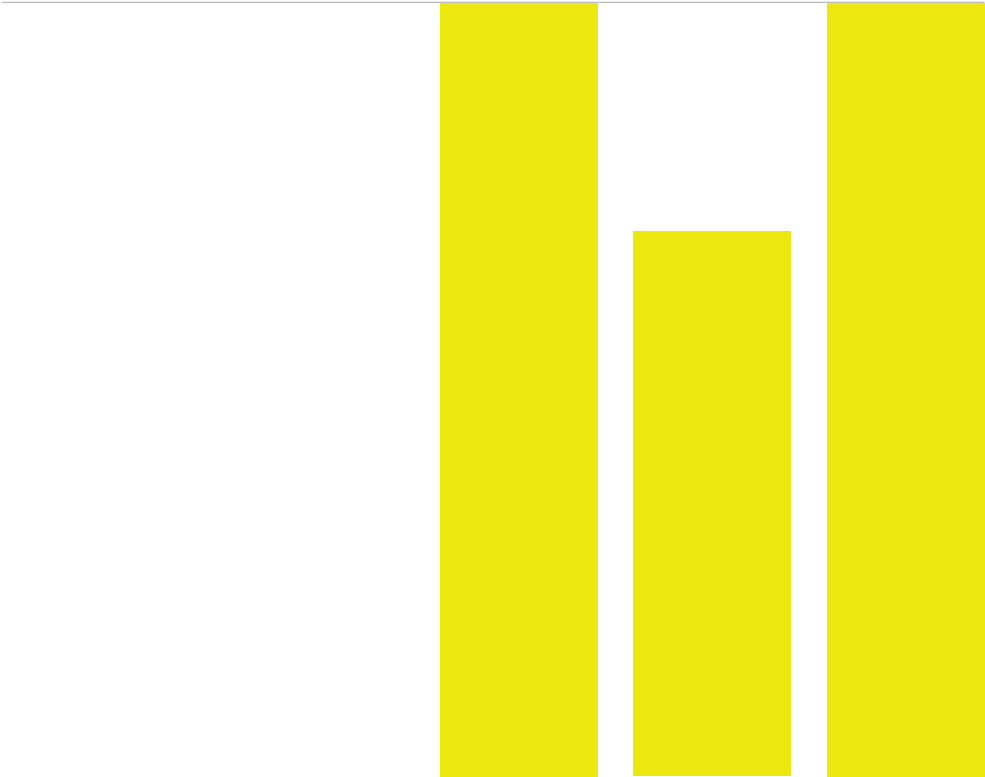
The Civil initiative gained complete support from critical print media, especially weeklies, because they represent a new life and practice of united opposition. The tone of the articles written on this topic show that the authors were and are taking sides with the Civil Initiative and weak opposition. While the opposition finds hope in these writings, hoping to become a counterpart to the ruling party, the authors of radically critical weeklies seek reward and comfort with the political actors for their engaged and strongly biased writing.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p.7

⁵⁹ Radmilo Marković, „Rezervoar pun gneva [Reservoir filled with anger],“ *Vreme*, No. 1432, p. 7

⁶⁰ Ibid, p.9





About
authors

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Public Policy Institute is a regional think-tank organization that operates in the Western Balkans region through the work of its branch offices in Belgrade, Podgorica and Ljubljana. By promoting public dialogue and constructive solutions, Public Policy Institute contributes to the efforts of the Western Balkan countries to become equal, reliable and progressive partners in the process of European integrations and mutual relationships. After the initial research and analysis of social and media context in the countries of the Western Balkans, the Institute has developed and implemented a series of media related projects, including: Role of the media in the process of securitisation in the Western Balkans, Civil Response to Clientelism in the media - MEDIA CIRCLE, NATO Reach Out - media monitoring and Role of the media in monitoring of R1325 in Montenegro.

EBART Media Archive is privately owned company established in 2000. Its main activity is archiving print media data in e-format. The print media archive consists of up-to-date material dating back to 2003, and more than 3 million print media reports from sources with national coverage. EBART is also specialized for media analysis, basic quantitative and qualitative analyses, comparing media treatment of specific keywords, as well as complex content analyses according to BBC methodology. EBART Media Archive is unmatched in the region with its unique media reports database, and 12 years of media research experience. This media database allows for the overall study of long-term media presence.

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