



Analysis of the print media in Serbia  
July - September

# QUARTERLY MEDIAMETER

03|2019

Volume V, Issue 3/2019  
ISSN: 2406-274X

Analysis of the print media in Serbia  
July - September

# QUARTERLY MEDIAMETER

03/2019

QUARTERLY MEDIAMETER  
*Analysis of the print media in Serbia*  
Volume V, Issue 3/2019  
ISSN 2406-274X

*Published by*  
Public Policy Institute Belgrade  
Kneza Miloša 68  
E-mail: office@ijp.rs  
Web: www.ijp.rs

*For publisher*  
Vladimir Popović

*Editors in Chief*  
Vladimir Popović

Velimir Ćurgus Kazimir

*Editorial staff*  
Milana Brisić  
Vladimir Abramović  
Aleksandra Milićević  
Marija Benke

*Cover design and prepress*  
Pavle Farčić

*Print*  
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

# CONTENT

- 1** Isidora Jarić, Danica Laban:  
**INTRODUCTION**
- 2** Isidora Jarić, Danica Laban:  
**SAMPLE**
- 3** Isidora Jarić, Danica Laban:  
**RESEARCH RESULTS**
- 4** Dejan Vuk Stanković:  
**DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**
- 5** **ABOUT AUTHORS**

VESNA  
GOLDSVORTI  
ZASTO  
CRNJANSKI  
NIJE USPEO U  
LONDONU

Srećko Horvat Tri  
tekovine Jugoslavije

ULTIMATIVNI  
POKLON MAGAZIN



# Nedeljnik

199 DINARA

11. JUL 2019.



BEIJAN

11. JUL 2019. / 6P01 3576 / 299 RSD

ОПОЗИЦИЈА  
У СРБИЈИ  
ГДЕ ЈЕ ЗАПЕЛО

ВАСИЛ ХАЏИМАНОВ  
ОВА ЗЕМЉА ЈЕ  
ТЕМПИРАНА БОМБА

ДВЕ ГОДИНЕ ВЛАДЕ  
ДА ЈЕ САМО  
БУТАЛА...



# НИН

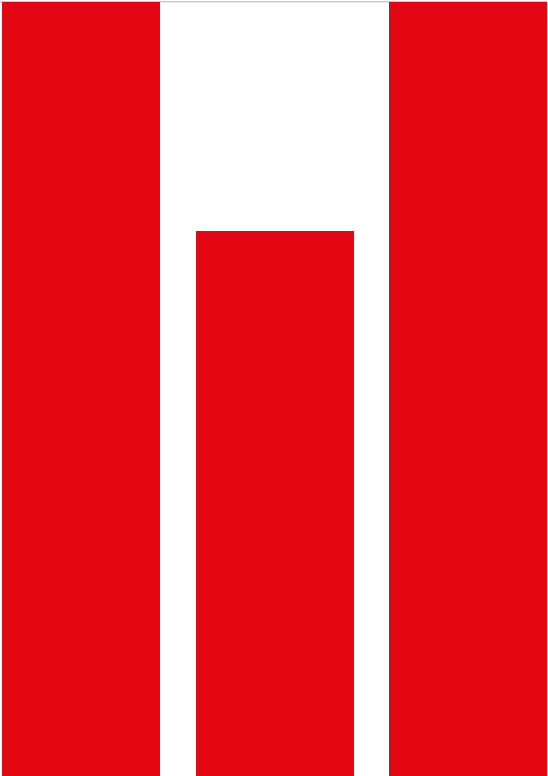
Naprednjačka ekonomija  
**ŠTA SE KRIJE IZA "BEHTELA"**

Istraživanje: Smrt Milovana Ivića  
**MISTERIJA TELA PORED KLUPE**

cena 250 RSD

BUY 4.70€; Russia 2.70€; Macedonia 1.75€; Croatia 2.50€; Slovenia 2.80€; Greece 3.00€; Austria, Germany 4.00€; Switzerland 4.00€

# VRST



# Introduction

ISIDORA JARIĆ, DANICA LABAN

# INTRODUCTION:

## Serbia in focus

Already in the first chapter of the nineteenth issue of the *Quarterly Mediameter*, the obsession of newspapers with Serbia was noticeable. A cursory glance at the front pages of print media from the sample reveals that the newspapers of the various editorial policies use the word **Serbia** the most. Interestingly, this practice is evident in newspapers on the opposite ends of the media and value spectrum, such as *Danas* and *Informer*. More precisely, the first two words according to the representation in the titles in both media are **Serbia** and **Vučić**.

Unfortunately, sensationalism, professional incompetence and a tendency for spin continue to shape much of the media content published by print media in Serbia on its front pages. For example, in the daily newspapers *Alo!* and *Informer* during the third quarter of 2019, most of the titles were sensationalist 77% (in the daily newspaper *Alo!*) and 64% (in *Informer*), while in *Kurir* and *Blic* almost half of the titles were sensationalist - 47% (*Kurir*) and 44% (*Blic*).

In this quarter, too, the media is most concerned with **political life in Serbia**. The novelty is that we have divided this topic into two segments: (a) **internal political** (*political life in Serbia, activities of the President of Serbia, activities of the Government of Serbia and activities of the Prime Minister of Serbia*) and (b) **foreign policy**, which is primarily related to the various diplomatic activities of domestic political actors, which is a consequence of the increased focus on this area of political activity. The attitude of the media towards this topic is also interesting. Foreign policy activities in the media were treated positively in about 27% of texts. On the other hand, from the domain of "domestic activities", the largest number of positively connotated texts was about infrastructure projects, as many as 21 texts out of a total of 48 or 43.75%.

Most of the trends seen in previous editions of *Mediameter* are still present. The texts discussing developments in the surrounding countries remain largely negatively connotated, and Kosovo / Belgrade-Priština relations are again the second topic in terms of representation.

Among foreign politicians on the front pages of dailies, considerable attention has been paid to Donald Trump - 144 texts; he is followed by Macron - 93 and Putin - 82 texts. The level of representation of these actors, as always, speaks to the current media interest in certain foreign policy issues.

In the third quarter of 2019, we have noticed complete dominance of the report, with the share of this news genre again exceeding 80%. The reduction in the participation of articles in favor of reports and interviews speaks to the negative professional practices currently prevalent in the media.

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,"<sup>1</sup> and (b) a discourse analysis which enabled us to understand various, epistemologically and methodologically immeasurable,<sup>2</sup> 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 section devoted to the analysis of titles, the frequencies of previously normalized and lemmatized words from the title were measured, which were then graphically displayed using the "word cloud" package from the R programming language.

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.

2



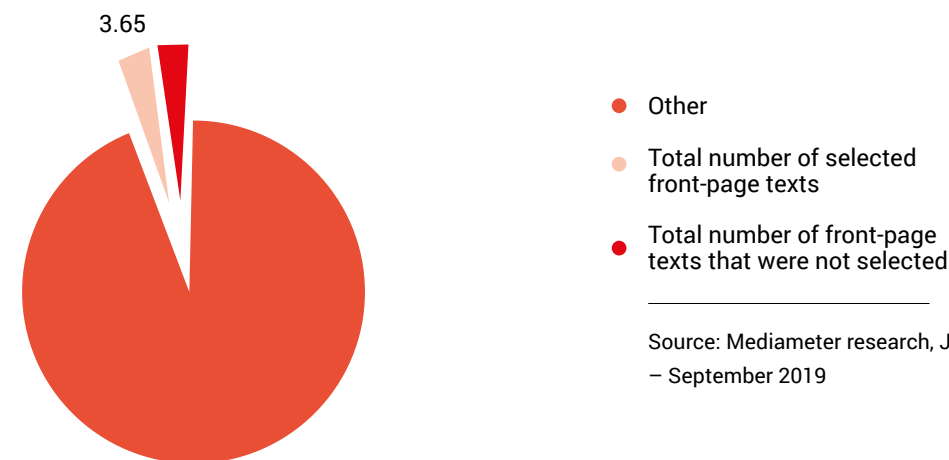
Sample

ISIDORA JARIĆ, DANICA LABAN

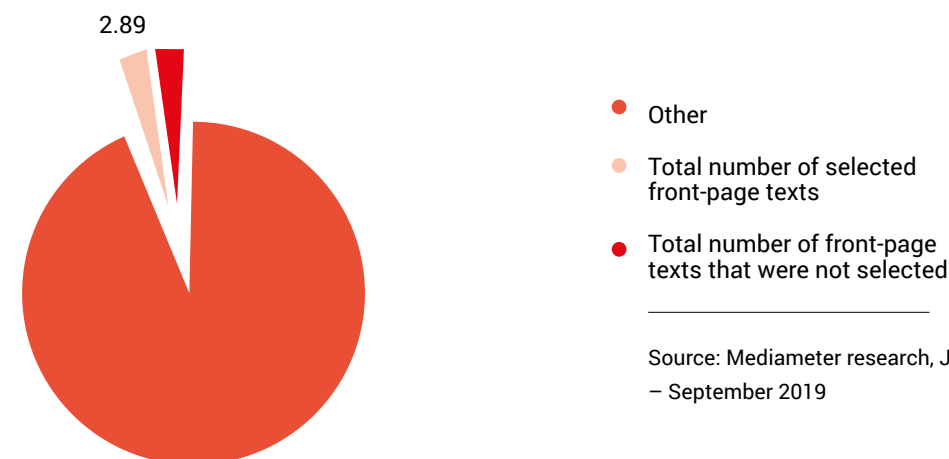
## Sample

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 2019, 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 graphs 1-7, for the period from July 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> 2019.

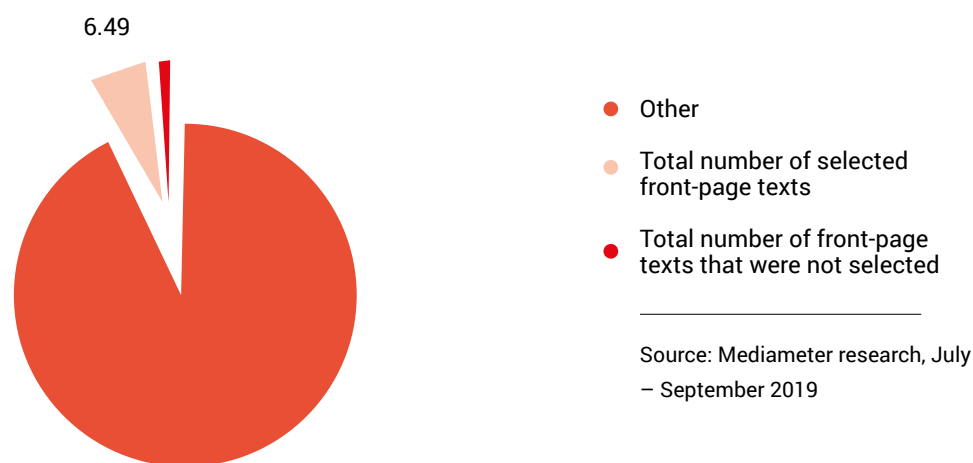
Graph 1. – *Alo!*

Source: Mediameter research, July – September 2019

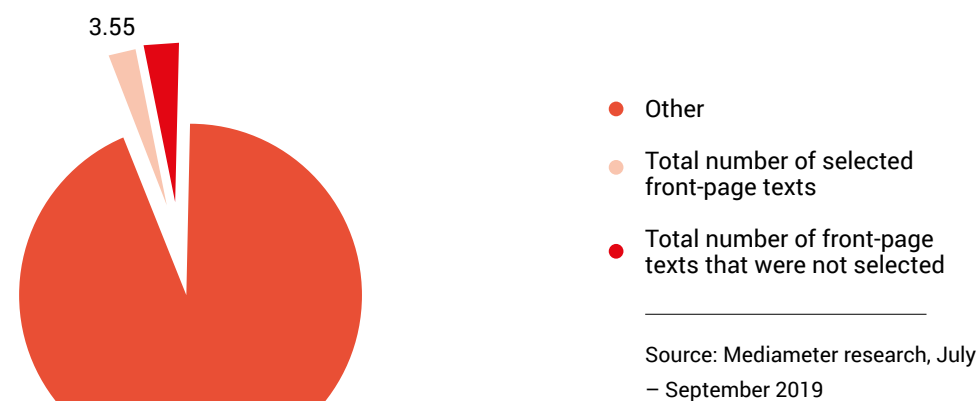
Graph 2. – *Blic*

Source: Mediameter research, July – September 2019

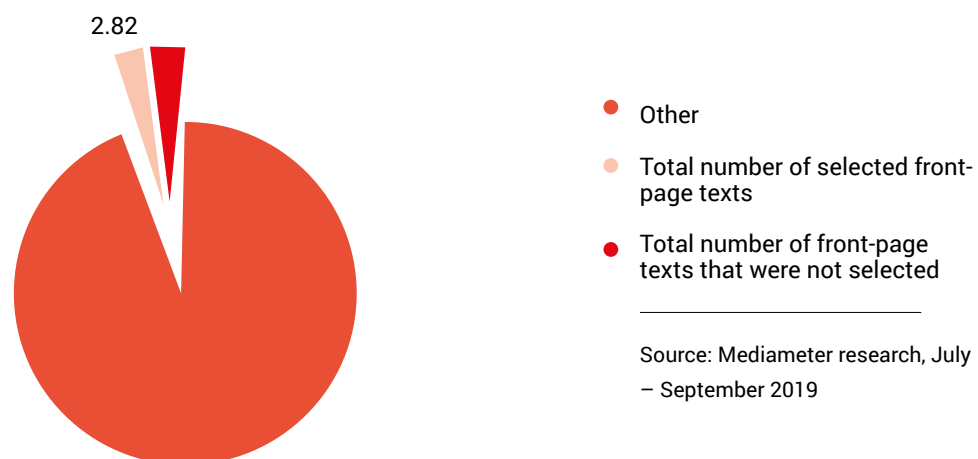
Graph 3. – *Danas*



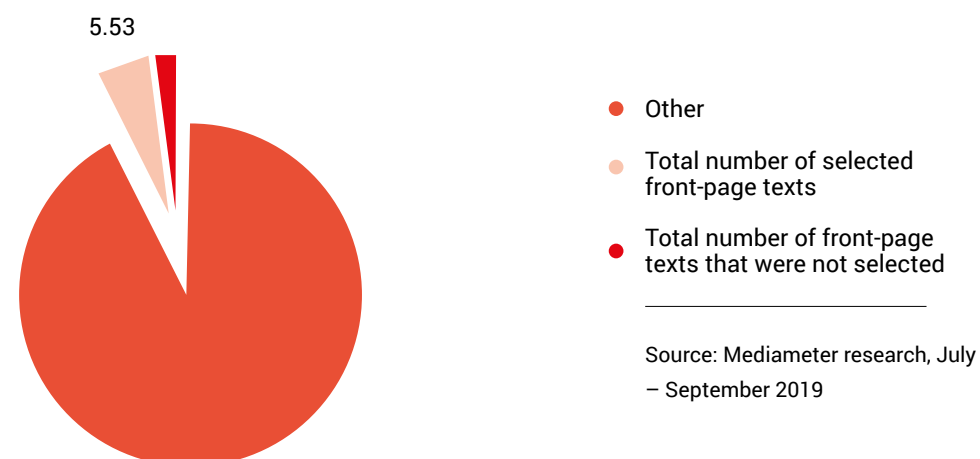
Graph 5. – *Kurir*

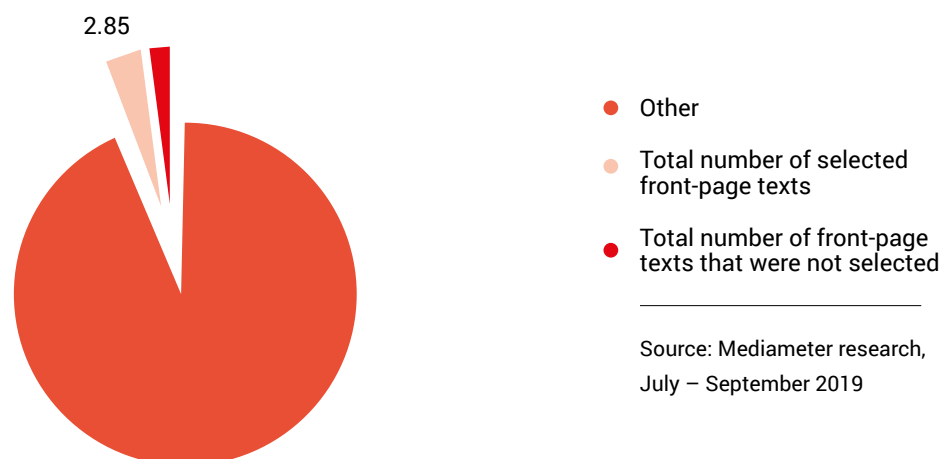


Graph 4. – *Informer*



Graph 6. – *Politika*



**Graph 7. – Večernje novosti**

Source: Mediameter research,  
July – September 2019

The total number of analyzed texts in all seven media included in the sample of our research is 2033, and that number makes up on average 49.77% of cover texts and 3.98% 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	86	85	1
news	18	17	1
politics	70	68	2
society	68	22	46
chronicle	99	16	83
v.i.p.	89	7	82
sport	75	7	68
world	7	2	5
interview/interview of the week	5	4	1
Belgrade	4	2	2
reportage	1	0	1
supplement	25	0	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>317</b>

Source: Mediameter research, July – September 2019

**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	47	47	0
current affairs / interview	7	6	1
topic of the day / issue	77	67	10
society	97	32	65
chronicle	50	11	39
economy	11	7	4
culture	9	2	7
sport	114	3	111
destinies	5	0	5
world/planet	4	3	1
research/dossier	8	5	3

reportage	1	0	1
entertainment	29	2	27
Belgrade	3	0	3
scene	5	0	5
pop & culture	3	0	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>285</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

**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	9	9	0
Danas special supplement	6	2	4
Danas weekend	39	27	12
event / topic of the day	11	10	1
society	114	108	6
economy	52	48	4
Globe / region	25	20	5
culture	40	14	26
interview	2	2	0
front page	23	23	0
politics	131	131	0
Belgrade	1	1	0
sport	44	9	35
dialogue	26	23	3
pomodoro	2	1	1
scales	2	0	2
rule of law	2	2	0
chronicle	1	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>99</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

**Table 4. – Informer**

Informer/ section	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	138	138	0
news	124	28	96
showtime	87	6	81
sport	107	9	98
supplement	50	0	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>325</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

**Table 5. – Kurir**

Kurir/section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
news	390	239	151
planet	1	0	1
society	4	0	4
stars	72	10	62
culture	22	5	17
sport	87	8	79
topic of the day	13	1	12
supplement	15	0	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>341</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

**Table 6. – Politika**

<i>Politika</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
world	64	45	19
society	78	28	50
economy	58	40	18
politics	24	24	0
event of the day	23	22	1
culture	37	2	35
chronicle	35	18	17
daily supplement	56	1	55
Serbia	26	9	17
sport	40	3	37
topic of the week / day	7	2	5
personalities	1	1	0
region	27	23	4
front page	324	249	75
views	9	8	1
consumer	29	6	23
Belgrade / Belgrade chronicle	24	1	23
feuilleton	4	0	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>384</b>

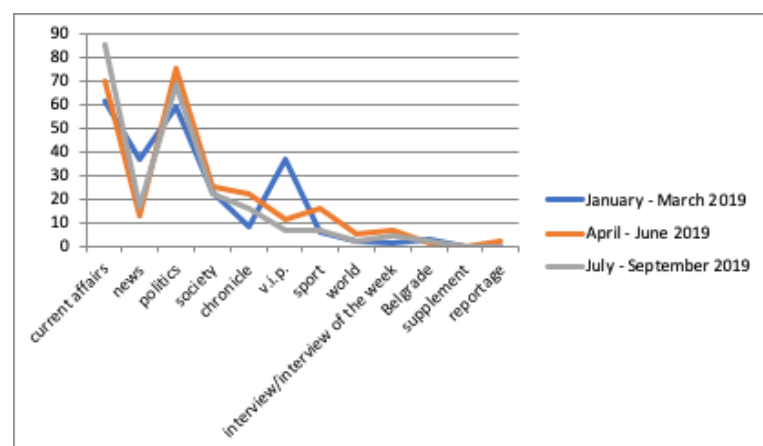
Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019**Table 7. – Večernje novosti**

<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	79	5	74
society	89	54	35
politics	96	96	0
economy	32	16	16
current affairs	58	37	21
reportage	16	5	11
culture	12	4	8
interview	9	7	2
world	9	6	3
sport	75	6	69
Belgrade	7	2	5
topic of the day	4	4	0
neighbours	2	2	0
reflector	3	2	1
events	14	13	1
second page	2	2	0
supplement	54	0	54
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>300</b>

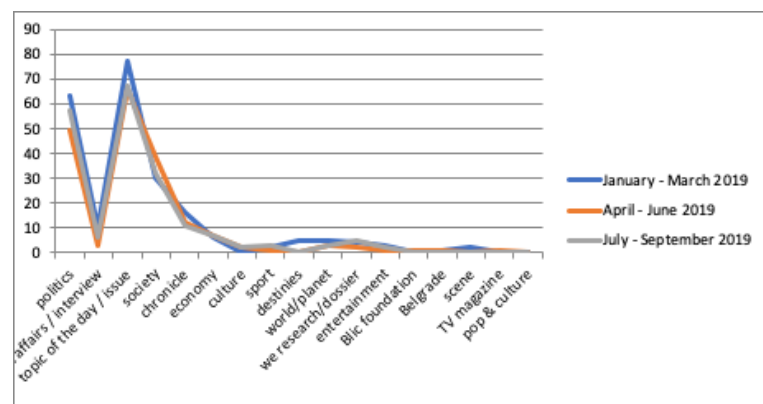
Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Looking at **Tables 1-7**, it is still evident that the structure of the analyzed daily papers follows two different logics. *Večernje novosti*, *Politika*, *Danas*, *Blic* and *Alo!*<sup>1</sup> follow the classic daily newspaper structure. On the other hand, the daily newspapers *Informer* and *Kurir*, with their reduced column structure, deviate significantly from this matrix. **Graphs 11** and **12**, which represent the layout of selected texts according to the headings in these two media, show a significant emphasis on the presence of texts in the *breaking news* / *news* sections, where completely different areas are combined, such as society, economy, the black chronicle or news of the world, with clearly separated information only in the field of *sports* and *entertainment* / *show business*. The editorial strategies identified in the analyzed media during the previous eighteen editions of *Mediameter* were also fully visible in the third quarter of 2019, which can be clearly seen in **Graphs 8 - 14**.

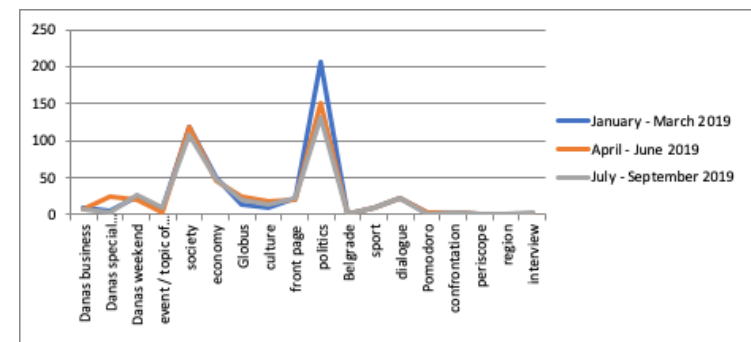
<sup>1</sup> Daily *Alo!* has completely branched out the structure of rubrics in the previous quarters, so that the columns *politics*, *society*, *the black chronicle* or *the world* are now clearly visible.

**Graph 8. – Alo!**

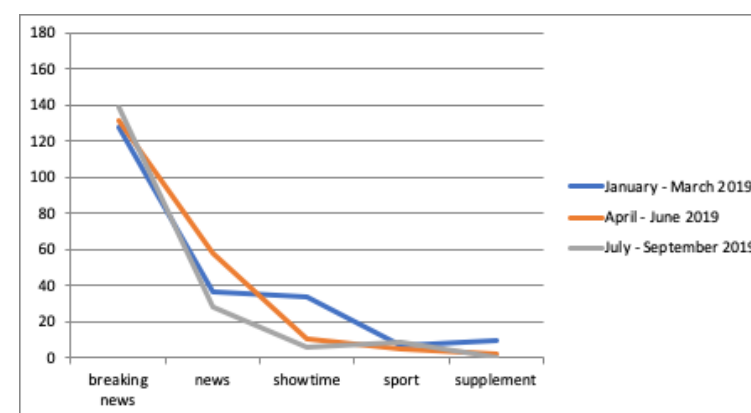
Source: Mediameter research, July – September 2019

**Graph 9. – Blic**

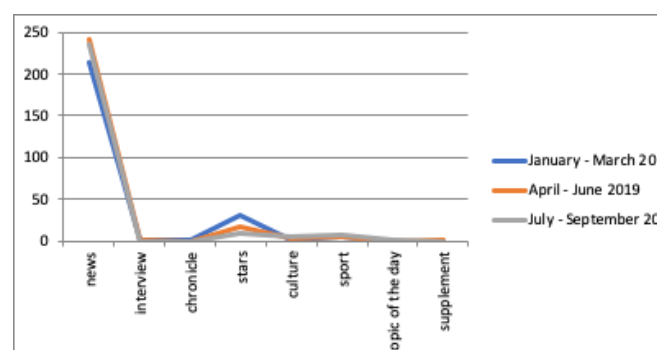
Source: Mediameter research, July – September 2019

**Graph 10. – Danas**

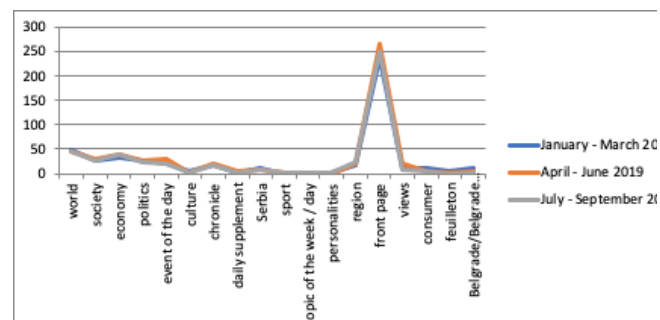
Source: Mediameter research, July – September 2019

**Graph 11. – Informer**

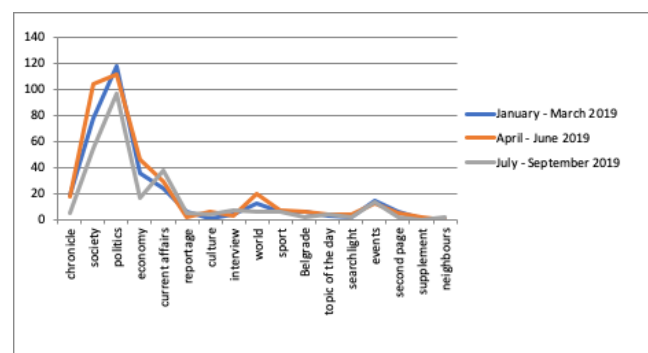
Source: Mediameter research, July – September 2019

**Graph 12. – Kurir**

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

**Graph 13. – Politika**

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

**Graph 14. – Večernje novosti**

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

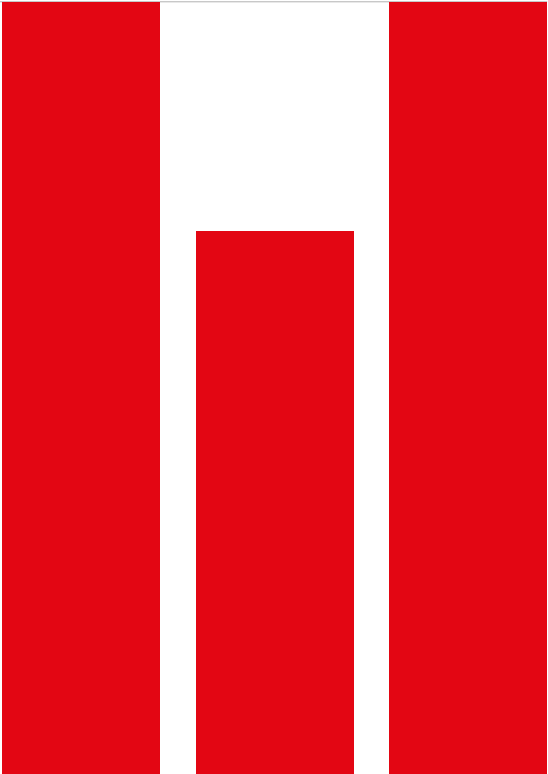
In retrospect, if we compare the number of selected texts during 2015 (7382), 2016 (8293), 2017 (8652) and 2018 (8744), we notice a clear upward trend in the number of analyzed texts (see **Table 8**). Considering that the focus of *Mediameter* is primarily on socio-political events and that it is one of the key criteria for selecting texts, it is precisely in the complexity of socio-political reality, of which the media are a significant part, that a significant increase in the number of articles in the sample can be found, especially in relation to 2015. Therefore, the number of selected texts in the first three quarters of 2019 (6558 in total) was noticeably increased compared to the same periods we observed from 2015 to the present (in 2015 - 5205 texts, in 2016 - 6042, in 2017 - 6485 texts and in 2018 - 6430 texts).

**Table 8. – Number of selected texts by quarter for period 2015 – 2019**

Year/quarter	2015.	2016.	2017.	2018.	2019.
I quarter	1360	1924	2403	2173	2251
II quarter	1673	2106	2091	2009	2274
III quarter	2172	2012	1991	2248	2033
IV quarter	2177	2251	2167	2314	
TOTAL	7382	8293	8652	8744	

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

3



Research  
results

ISIDORA JARIĆ, DANICA LABAN

## RESEARCH RESULTS

### Content and character of the titles of the articles from the sample

Newspaper titles, as well as the front pages themselves, make up the identity of all dailies, and readers are often informed about events only on the basis of the headlines of the text, due to lack of time or a desire for more detailed insight into media content. This fact contributed to the establishment of a new practice in print media - the use of titles / title blocks (headline, title, subtitle) that can be compared with *clickbait* titles in online media. Specifically, in order for readers to choose their news and / or visit the site, online media post interesting / sensationalist titles (*clickbaits*), which very often are not even related to the text.<sup>1</sup> Their purpose is primarily to attract the attention and “trick” readers to click on the text and thus generate revenue for the media, which is certainly a form of unprofessional media practice and follows the spirit of the growing trend of tabloidization. Most print media have portals of the same name where they have been able to test the effectiveness of such headlines for a long period of time, and therefore, through this research, we have examined the extent to which print media take on this form of headline design. Sensationalist headline text in print is a practice that provokes a reader's response, that is, desired attention, that indirectly leads to greater readership.

The research within the *Mediametar* project was aimed at assessing the character of the title, that is, to determine whether the titles were sensational and whether the title itself corresponded to the content of the text. The words that were present in the titles are graphically presented in the form of a “word cloud”, in which the dimensions of the words represent the frequencies of their appearance.

1 Example: the title which announces the arrival of spring, posted on *www.alo.rs*: <https://www.alo.rs/vesti/drustvo/srbija-prolece-beograd-gradani-promena-vremena-prognoza/218195/ves>

### “Word cloud” – content of titles

The language corpus constituting the word cloud comprises titles of the 2033 texts selected for the sample in the third quarter of 2019. The process of creating the word cloud<sup>2</sup> meant refining that language corpus, that is, reducing words to lowercase, removing punctuation and words that are not relevant for research.<sup>3</sup> After that, a list of terms was made using the package “tm” from the programming language R.<sup>4</sup> The selected terms are lemmatized, that is, converted into words - for example, all case changes of one word are reduced to a nominative in the case of nouns, while the verbs are grouped according to their temporal form. In this way, the frequency of words is determined, that is, words that appear more than five times are graphically displayed using the wordcloud package from the programming language R.<sup>5</sup>

The word most frequently mentioned in the seven media in the sample, as in the previous quarter, is *Serbia* - represented in 182 appearances. The word *want* is next, which appears 119 times, followed by the word *Vučić*, which appears 107 times. Among the 10 most represented words in the titles are also words *be* (89), *Kosovo and Serbs* (85 each), *new* (61), *Serbian* (57), *one million* (56) and *because* (54 times used in the titles).

2 Method Text Mining (tm) enables extraction of needed and significant information from a text (in this case headlines). A text is treated as a set of words through the “Bag of words” approach.

3 Words such as “if”, “as” and “without” (so-called *stop-words*), for the most part, are not taken into account. However, some of them are included due to relevance for the research, such as “*zbog*” (*because*), which indicates cause-and-effect character of the title. Therefore, it is included in the graphical representation.

4 Ingo Feinerer, Kurt Hornik, tm: Text Mining Package, R package version 0.7-6, <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=tm>, 2018; Ingo Feinerer, Kurt Hornik, David Meyer, “Text Mining Infrastructure in R,” *Journal of Statistical Software* 25/5 (2008): 1-54. doi: 10.18637/jss.v025.i05

5 Ian Fellows, wordcloud: Word Clouds, R package version 2.6, <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=wordcloud>, 2018.

**Graph 15 – Word cloud, 7 media from the sample<sup>6</sup>**



Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

When observing newspapers individually, we notice that in the daily newspaper *Alo!* the most common words are *Serbs* and *Serbia* (15 appearances each). Next are: *Đilas* and *want* (14 each), followed by *Vučić* and *million* (13 appearances each). *Blic* most often emphasizes the words *Serbia* (24), *Vučić* (12), *want* and *Kosovo* (9 appearances each) and *Haradinaj* (7). The most frequently repeated word in the headlines included in *Danas* is *Serbia* (38 titles). The word *Vučić* is represented 36 times, followed by the following words: *be* (21), *want* (19), *elections* and *government* (17 appearances each). *Informer* this time gives the priority to the words *Serbia* (22), while the second and third words according to representation are *Vučić* (19) and *Kosovo* (18). The words *Đilas* and *want* are mentioned in another 17 and 13 titles respectively. *Want* (26), *Serbia* (22), *million* (17), *Serbs* (17) and *be* (15 appearances) are the most represented words in the titles of selected texts from *Kurir*. *Serbia* (41) is again the most common word in the titles of *Politika*, followed by *new* (28), *be* (26), *want* (22) and *Serbian* (21). *Večernje novosti* mostly used the word *Serbia* (20 texts), while the following words by presence are *want* and *Kosovo* (16 and 15 appearances respectively), followed by *Serbs* (14) and *be* (10 appearances). The representation of words in titles, according to the media, can be seen in **Charts 16 - 22**.

6 Words that are repeated in the titles at least five times are shown.

**Graph 16 – Word cloud – A/o!**



**Graph 17 – Word cloud – *Blic***



**Graph 18 – Word cloud – *Danas***



**Graph 19 – Word cloud – *Informer***



**Graph 20 – Word cloud – Kurir**



**Graph 21 – Word cloud – *Politika***



Graph 22 – Word cloud – *Večernje novosti*

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

### Character of titles

As already noted, sensationalist reporting and tabloidization are increasingly present trends in print media in Serbia. This practice is also evident in the titles, which in almost 37% of texts do not meet the standards of professional reporting. This is, among other things, exemplified by the use of formulations that are inconsistent with the content of the text, unacceptable words, insults and similar practices. The way the headlines are conceived is a true reflection of the editorial policy of each media outlet and provides insight into the intent of journalists and editors – informing the public about topics of public concern or attracting the readership in ways that are clearly not in line with the standards of the journalistic profession.

In order to determine how the media approach the headlines, the titles of the sample are classified into four categories. The first group consists of headlines that are in full compliance with the standards of the journalistic profession and are in line with the text that follows.<sup>7</sup> The next group of titles are those that conform to the standards of the profession but are not in accordance with the content of the text, that is, the facts stated in the title are in no way related to the contents of the text, but are often contradictory.<sup>8</sup> The third group consists of sensationalist headlines that go beyond professional standards but are consistent with the content of the text. These are headlines that seek to elicit a more or less tumultuous reaction from readers and certainly attract attention.<sup>9</sup> The last group of titles are sensationalist, which fall outside the scope of professional standards and do not fit the text. This type of headline, which provokes the most intense reactions of the audience, is mostly about disrespecting basic ethical reporting principles and pointing to bad media practices.<sup>10</sup> The purpose of this research was not to determine the truth of the claims made in the headlines and texts (or the phenomenon of *fake news*), but rather how the media handled the facts presented. More specifically, the idea was to compare the consistency of the claims made with the argumentation outlined in the text.

Sensationalist headlines have been noted in all media, while the vocabulary and the way in which it attracts the attention of readers differs significantly in each of the media. The most sensationalist headlines were recorded in the daily *Alo!* – 178, that is, more than three quarters of the texts selected for the sample from this newspaper had a headline that did not conform to professional standards. About 64% (116) of the titles in *Informer* are written in the same manner. Sensationalist headlines that cannot be linked to the content of the text are the most represented in *Informer* – 26 or 14.36%, while the daily *Politika* has the most headlines that, in isolation, meet the reporting standards, but they do not state the facts that are confirmed in the text – 31 or 6.43%.

<sup>7</sup> "Gradiće se novi ledolamac [A new icebreaker will be built]," *Politika*, 03.01.2019, p. A1

<sup>8</sup> "Putin i Vučić grade hram! [Putin and Vučić are building a temple]" *Alo!*, 17.01.2019, p. 2

<sup>9</sup> "Krvavi scenario za rušenje Dodika! [A bloody scenario for toppling Dodik]" *Alo!*, 05.01.2019, p. 2

<sup>10</sup> "Đilasovka koja radi za Šiptare je vođa protesta [Đilas supporter who works for Šiptars is a protest leader]," *Informer*, 04.01.2019, p. 5

## Character of the title by media

Media/ title	meets stan- dards		meets stan- dards / incon- sistent with content		sensationalist / consistent with content		sensationalist / inconsistent with content		total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Alo!</i>	34	14.78	0	0.00	18	7.83	178	77.39	230	100.00
<i>Blic</i>	103	55.68	0	0.00	1	0.54	81	43.78	185	100.00
<i>Danas</i>	345	80.05	1	0.23	0	0.00	85	19.72	431	100.00
<i>Informer</i>	29	16.02	10	5.52	26	14.36	116	64.09	181	100.00
<i>Kurir</i>	124	47.15	4	1.52	11	4.18	124	47.15	263	100.00
<i>Politika</i>	445	92.32	31	6.43	0	0.00	6	1.24	482	100.00
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	203	77.78	3	1.15	12	4.60	43	16.48	261	100.00
<b>total</b>	<b>1283</b>	<b>63.11</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>2.41</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>31.14</b>	<b>2033</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

## Share of journalistic genres

In the third quarter of 2019, the share of reports in the total number of texts that make up the sample is 80.62% or 1,639 texts, and is almost identical to the previous quarter. The largest share of the report was again observed in *Informer* - 98.34%, while the lowest representation of texts written in this genre is in *Politika* - about 69%. Almost 69% of the texts written in this genre in all media are neutral in connotation,<sup>11</sup> but the share of value-intoned texts differs in relation to the media. The largest share of the value context was recorded in *Informer* (64.61%) and the lowest in *Danas*, 19.22%. The reports are mostly unbalanced,<sup>12</sup> even 83% of them are not complete. The least balanced reports were recorded in *Informer* (1.12%), while the most complete reports were published by the daily *Blic* (33.33%).<sup>13</sup>

The next newspaper form according to participation is the interview - 8.07% of texts were written in

<sup>11</sup> In the analysis we present, we coded the ways of presenting certain topics or actors in individual texts from our sample in three different ways, taking into account both the text and the text equipment (subtitle, title and subtitle). By the *neutral* presentation of particular topics or actors, we have identified those texts in which the authors of the text / journalist do not take a value attitude towards a specific actor or topic, but seek to present in a relatively neutral, measured manner, in accordance with professional standards, certain facts which are the subject of the text. We have interpreted as *positive* those interpretations in which journalists express clear sympathies and positive attitudes towards them by presenting particular topics or actors. As *negative*, we have labeled those interpretations in which journalists express clear antipathy and negative attitude towards them by presenting particular topics or actors.

<sup>12</sup> Balance represents the way a journalist approaches a topic. Balanced text implies a balanced and objective approach to the topic and the interlocutors and the integrity of the information.

<sup>13</sup> Participation of balanced reports in other media: *Kurir* - 6.49%, *Večernje novosti* - 7.73%, *Alo!* - 8.59%, *Politika* (21.92%) and *Danas* (30.94%).

this form (the highest participation was recorded in *Blic* and *Danas* - about 11% each). This is followed by the comment and the article, which make up 4.62% and 4.18% of all texts in the sample respectively. The highest number and participation of comments is recorded in *Danas* (56 or about 13%), *Alo!* and *Informer* published one each, and the daily *Večernje novosti* did not publish any captions in this newspaper genre. A significant number of articles were published only by *Politika* (72 or about 15%). Texts in this form were not recorded in the *Alo!* and *Informer*, while *Blic* and *Kurir* published only one article each. The third quarter of 2019 again brings very little news participation - 1.23%. Reportage and other forms (such as hybrid genres or feuilletons) are present in 1.28% or 26 articles. Compared to the previous quarter, an identical arrangement of genres is noted.

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

Genre	Total number	%
Report	1639	80.62
Interview	164	8.07
Commentary	94	4.62
Article	85	4.18
News story	25	1.23
Other	16	0.79
Reportage	10	0.49
<b>total</b>	<b>2033</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

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	198	159	307	178	231	333	233	1639
interview	16	21	48	0	22	38	19	164
commentary	1	3	56	1	3	30	0	94
article	0	1	8	0	1	72	3	85
news	15	1	1	2	0	5	1	25
other	0	0	10	0	4	1	1	16
reportage	0	0	1	0	2	3	4	10
<b>total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>2033</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

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	86.09	85.95	71.23	98.34	87.83	69.09	89.27	80.62
interview	6.96	11.35	11.14	0.00	8.37	7.88	7.28	8.07
commentary	0.43	1.62	12.99	0.55	1.14	6.22	0.00	4.62
article	0.00	0.54	1.86	0.00	0.38	14.94	1.15	4.18
news	6.52	0.54	0.23	1.10	0.00	1.04	0.38	1.23
other	0.00	0.00	2.32	0.00	1.52	0.21	0.38	0.79
reportage	0.00	0.00	0.23	0.00	0.76	0.62	1.53	0.49
<b>total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Report structure in terms of value context in seven media from the sample

Report/media	Value context in relation to the topic					
	positive		neutral		negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Informer</i>	18	10.11	63	35.39	97	54.49
<i>Alo!</i>	7	3.54	110	55.56	81	40.91
<i>Kurir</i>	24	10.39	161	69.70	46	19.91
<i>Blic</i>	2	1.26	112	70.44	45	28.30
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	25	10.73	177	75.97	31	13.30
<i>Politika</i>	26	7.81	255	76.58	52	15.62
<i>Danas</i>	0	0.00	248	80.78	59	19.22
<b>total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>6.22</b>	<b>1126</b>	<b>68.70</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>25.08</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

## Topics

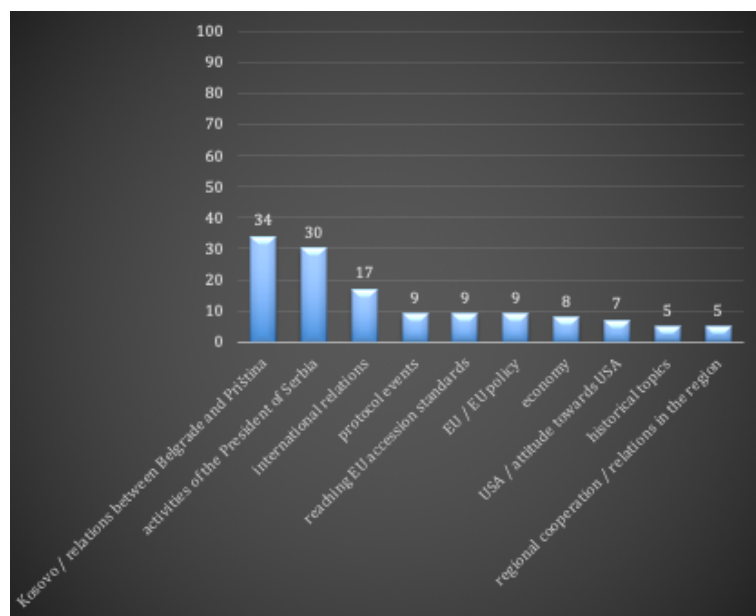
In order to define each text as clearly as possible, the selected texts that make up the sample are classified within only one topic, but other elements are always present in the text. This gave us a clearer insight into the reporting methods and media access to certain topics and in previous issues of *Mediameter*. The texts in the field of chronicle, which have a socio-political character, as well as articles related to the murder of singer Jelena Marjanović, have been reintroduced into the sample, as a kind of paradigm of the situation in Serbian journalism, characterized by different types of disrespect for

ethical reporting principles. The sample also includes texts related to the media-constructed affair, whose lead actor was singer Jelena Karleuša.

## Topic prominence

Political topics within the 19th issue of *Mediameter* are divided into *internal politics* (*political life in Serbia*, *activities of the President of Serbia*, *activities of the Government of Serbia* and *activities of the Prime Minister of Serbia*) and *foreign policy*, which primarily relate to various diplomatic activities of domestic political actors. Enhanced foreign policy activities had to be separated from other political topics in order to make clear this component of political action. This time, the topic of Serbia's foreign policy was also viewed through the elements that were most represented within the topic, which indicated the angle from which the topic was viewed. Each selected text could contain only the basic theme or, with the basic theme, one or more elements. In the third quarter of 2019, *Serbia's foreign policy* was the most talked about from the perspective of Kosovo's challenges (34 texts), as part of the activities of the *President of Serbia* (30 articles) and *international relations* (17). The other elements are shown in **Graph 23**.

In the period July - September 2019, all political topics were present in a total of 630 or about 31% of the sample texts: *political life in Serbia* in 515 or 25.33% of texts (the first topic according to the representation in the texts that made up the sample), *foreign policy of Serbia* (67 or 3.3%), *activities of the President of Serbia* in 1.52% or 31 inscriptions, *activities of the Government of Serbia* 0.69% - 14 and *activities of the Prime Minister of Serbia* 0.15% - 3 texts.

**Graph 23** – Participation of elements by topic *foreign policy of Serbia* - all media in the sample

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

The next topic for participation in the third quarter of 2019 is *Kosovo / Belgrade-Priština relations* (248 or 12.2% of texts), whose presence is reduced compared to the previous quarter (334 or 14.69% of articles). The third theme by representation was *regional cooperation / relations in the region* (150 or 7.38% of texts), about twice as many articles were published as compared to the previous quarter (77 or 3.39%). Economic topics were presented in 102 texts (5.02%), followed, as noted, by *Serbia's foreign policy*. The sixth topic of interest is the *US / relations with the US*, of which 62 or 3.05% of the articles have been published by the media. Between 2% and 3% of the articles are devoted to *international relations* (55 texts), *EU related topics* (52), *issues of religion* (50) and *infrastructure* (48 articles).

If one considers the value context of 2033 selected texts in the third quarter of 2019, the 31.14% of the captions have value connotation - 5.66% positive and 25.48% negative. Most negative texts have traditionally been written on *regional topics* (46%). A negative context was also observed when reporting on topics related to *Kosovo* - about 35% of texts and *political life in Serbia* - 28.54%. Reporters of the analyzed media published about 27% of negatively intoned articles on the *economy*, 24% on issues related to *church and religion*, and 20% on *international relations*. In the third quarter of 2019, there were slightly more positively intoned texts in relation to two topics - *infrastructure* (21 or 43.75%) and *Serbia's foreign policy* (18 or 26.87%)

The media in the third quarter of 2019 again showed no greater interest in topics related to Russia - a total of 36 or 1.77% of articles were published. They were written mostly in neutral tone - 69.44%, there were 30.56% positive texts,<sup>14</sup> while negative ones were not recorded. On the other hand, significantly more articles were published about the EU - 52 or 2.56%. Mostly (88.46%) in neutral value context, with 6 negative connotations<sup>15</sup> and no positives.

Distribution of topics and their value context in seven media from the sample<sup>16</sup>

All media	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	515	25.33	3	0.58	365	70.87	147	28.54
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	248	12.20	1	0.40	159	64.11	88	35.48
Regional cooperation /relations in the region	150	7.38	0	0.00	81	54.00	69	46.00
Economy	102	5.02	8	7.84	66	64.71	28	27.45
Foreign policy of Serbia	67	3.30	18	26.87	48	71.64	1	1.49
US/attitude towards US	62	3.05	3	4.84	49	79.03	10	16.13
International relations	55	2.71	1	1.82	43	78.18	11	20.00
EU/EU policy	52	2.56	0	0.00	46	88.46	6	11.54
Issues of faith, church and religion	50	2.46	3	6.00	35	70.00	12	24.00
Infrastructure	48	2.36	21	43.75	22	45.83	5	10.42

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

<sup>14</sup> Five positively connotated texts were published in the daily *Politika*, 3 in *Večernje novosti* and 3 in *Kurir*.

<sup>15</sup> Most in daily newspapers *Politika* - 4, with one in *Večernje novosti* and *Informer*.

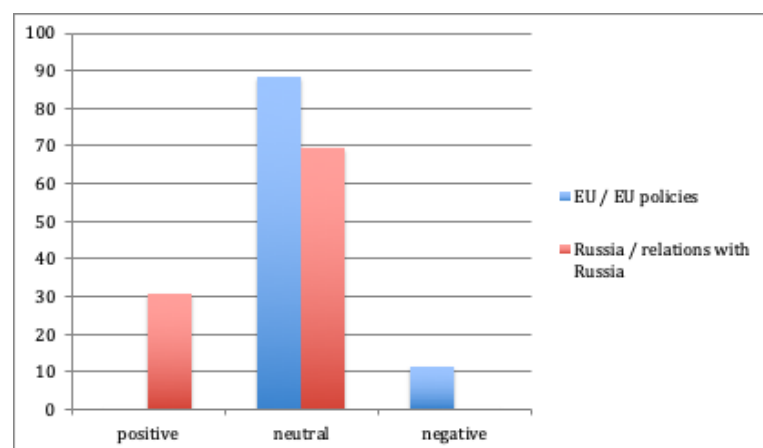
<sup>16</sup> In all tables relating to the third quarter of 2019, the ten most represented topics are shown.

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

Total	No.	%
Positive	115	5.66
Neutral	1400	68.86
Negative	518	25.48
<b>total</b>	<b>2033</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

**Graph 24.** – Value context in all media in relation to the topic *Russia / attitude towards Russia* and *EU / EU policy*



Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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	77	33.48	0	0.00	55	71.43	22	28.57
Kosovo / Relations of Belgrade and Priština	35	15.22	0	0.00	13	37.14	22	62.86
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	19	8.26	0	0.00	4	21.05	15	78.95
Economy	14	6.09	0	0.00	9	64.29	5	35.71
Issues of faith, church and religion	12	5.22	0	0.00	8	66.67	4	33.33
Political life in Montenegro	10	4.35	0	0.00	6	60.00	4	40.00
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	8	3.48	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
Army	6	2.61	3	50.00	3	50.00	0	0.00
Crime	6	2.61	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
Karleuša affair	6	2.61	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

<i>Alo!</i>	No.	%
Positive	7	3.04
Neutral	137	59.57
Negative	86	37.39
<b>total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

<b>Blic</b>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	56	30.27	0	0.00	48	85.71	8	14.29
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	42	22.70	0	0.00	26	61.90	16	38.10
Economy	10	5.41	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	10	5.41	0	0.00	1	10.00	9	90.00
Foreign policy of Serbia	7	3.78	1	14.29	6	85.71	0	0.00
Economy	6	3.24	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Crime	6	3.24	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Infrastructure	5	2.70	1	20.00	4	80.00	0	0.00
Sport	4	2.16	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	4	2.16	0	0.00	2	50.00	2	50.00
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	4	2.16	0	0.00	1	25.00	3	75.00
International relations	4	2.16	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
Political life in Montenegro	4	2.16	0	0.00	1	25.00	3	75.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Blic*

<b>Blic</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Positive	2	1.08
Neutral	135	72.97
Negative	48	25.95
<b>total</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019**Danas**Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Danas*

<b>Danas</b>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	172	39.91	0	0.00	130	75.58	42	24.42
Economy	40	9.28	0	0.00	22	55.00	18	45.00
Kosovo / relations of Belgrade and Priština	26	6.03	0	0.00	23	88.46	3	11.54
Media / freedom of the media	23	5.34	0	0.00	16	69.57	7	30.43
Education	20	4.64	0	0.00	19	95.00	1	5.00
Culture	17	3.94	0	0.00	16	94.12	1	5.88
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	13	3.02	0	0.00	12	92.31	1	7.69
Sport	12	2.78	0	0.00	9	75.00	3	25.00
Issues of faith, church and religion	10	2.32	0	0.00	5	50.00	5	50.00
International relations	10	2.32	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Danas*

<b>Danas</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Positive	0	0.00
Neutral	330	76.57
Negative	101	23.43
<b>total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

<i>Informer</i>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	48	26.52	1	2.08	5	10.42	42	87.50
Kosovo / relations of Belgrade and Priština	32	17.68	0	0.00	17	53.13	15	46.88
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	16	8.84	0	0.00	4	25.00	12	75.00
Foreign policy of Serbia	11	6.08	4	36.36	7	63.64	0	0.00
USA/Relations towards USA	8	4.42	0	0.00	3	37.50	5	62.50
Infrastructure	8	4.42	6	75.00	2	25.00	0	0.00
Sport	7	3.87	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29
Hague / war crimes	6	3.31	0	0.00	3	50.00	3	50.00
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	5	2.76	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Political life in Montenegro	5	2.76	0	0.00	1	20.00	4	80.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Informer*

<i>Informer</i>	No.	%
Positive	18	9.94
Neutral	63	34.81
Negative	100	55.25
<b>total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019**Kurir**Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Kurir*

<i>Kurir</i>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	84	31.94	1	1.19	70	83.33	13	15.48
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	19	7.22	0	0.00	13	68.42	6	31.58
Kosovo / relations of Belgrade and Priština	17	6.46	0	0.00	13	76.47	4	23.53
Foreign policy of Serbia	14	5.32	5	35.71	9	64.29	0	0.00
USA/Relations towards USA	12	4.56	2	16.67	10	83.33	0	0.00
Local government	10	3.80	0	0.00	4	40.00	6	60.00
Economy	9	3.42	1	11.11	5	55.56	3	33.33
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	7	2.66	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Corruption	7	2.66	0	0.00	4	57.14	3	42.86
Sport	6	2.28	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Russia/Relations towards Russia	6	2.28	3	50.00	3	50.00	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Kurir*

<i>Kurir</i>	No.	%
Positive	25	9.51
Neutral	190	72.24
Negative	48	18.25
<b>total</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

<b>Politika</b>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	48	9.96	0	0.00	30	62.50	18	37.50
Kosovo / relations of Belgrade and Priština	48	9.96	0	0.00	23	47.92	25	52.08
Political life in Serbia	47	9.75	1	2.13	26	55.32	20	42.55
EU / EU policy	35	7.26	0	0.00	31	88.57	4	11.43
International relations	24	4.98	0	0.00	18	75.00	6	25.00
Economy	21	4.36	3	14.29	16	76.19	2	9.52
USA/Relations towards USA	17	3.53	0	0.00	15	88.24	2	11.76
Activities of the President of Serbia	17	3.53	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
Infrastructure	16	3.32	7	43.75	9	56.25	0	0.00
Issues of faith, church and religion	16	3.32	3	18.75	13	81.25	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Politika*

<b>Politika</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Positive	36	7.47
Neutral	345	71.58
Negative	101	20.95
<b>total</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019**Večernje novosti**Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Večernje novosti*

<b>Večernje novosti</b>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Kosovo / relations of Belgrade and Priština	48	18.39	1	2.08	44	91.67	3	6.25
Political life in Serbia	31	11.88	0	0.00	31	100.00	0	0.00
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	25	9.58	0	0.00	17	68.00	8	32.00
Foreign policy of Serbia	14	5.36	4	28.57	9	64.29	1	7.14
USA/Relations towards USA	12	4.60	1	8.33	9	75.00	2	16.67
Russia/Relations towards Russia	10	3.83	5	50.00	5	50.00	0	0.00
Hague / war crimes	8	3.07	0	0.00	4	50.00	4	50.00
Infrastructure	8	3.07	5	62.50	3	37.50	0	0.00
International relations	8	3.07	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	7	2.68	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Political life in Montenegro	7	2.68	0	0.00	5	71.43	2	28.57

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Večernje novosti*

<b>Večernje novosti</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Positive	27	10.34
Neutral	200	76.63
Negative	34	13.03
<b>total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Balance

When we consider all the texts from the sample for the third period of 2019, it can be noticed that most of the topics presented were not treated in a comprehensive manner, which is evidenced by the fact that the balance is present in only 14.26% of all articles. The lowest amount of balanced texts was recorded in *Informer* 1.1%, and the highest in *Blic* - 29.73%

Although the value context is not expressed in 69% of all texts, in considering the real picture of the media from the sample, one should certainly take into account the fact that the vast majority of the cover texts we analyzed are not comprehensive and that such a one-sided approach reflects the general situation in the Serbian media. Balanced texts necessarily show a 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 the seriousness. It is about reaction speed, not about detailed and rational information that requires research, more interviewees and reliable and verifiable data, with available sources of information. 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>	5.70	15	94.30	248
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	7.66	20	92.34	241
<i>Alo!</i>	8.26	19	91.74	211
<i>Politika</i>	16.60	80	83.40	402
<i>Danas</i>	22.97	99	77.03	332
<i>Blic</i>	29.73	55	70.27	130
total	14.26	290	85.74	1743

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Actors

Media in Serbia, at least according to the analysis of the empirical material collected from the front pages, mainly deal with political events within Serbia. Individual and collective political actors, who occupy different positions within the political life of Serbia, account for 45.64% of the total number of actors spoken by selected texts from the cover. If we include this number and the texts that speak of foreign political actors, the percentage of the participation of political actors in the total number of actors on the headlines rises to 76.05%. The second group by frequency of occurrence is different social actors that make up 16.04% of our sample. Economic actors are the protagonists of the texts from the cover only in 5.22% of cases.

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

Actors					
Political actors	8627	Domestic	5177	Individual	3855
				Collective	1322
		Foreign	3450	Individual	2858
				Collective	592
Economic actors	593	Domestic	576	Individual	192
				Collective	384
		Foreign	17	Individual	0
				Collective	17
Other social actors	1820	Domestic	1779	Individual	1292
				Collective	487
		Foreign	41	Individual	29
				Collective	12
Unnamed sources					303
Total					11343

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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	708	45.44	14	1.98	661	93.36	33	4.66
Ana Brnabić	160	10.27	0	0.00	156	97.50	4	2.50
Ivica Dačić	159	10.21	0	0.00	157	98.74	2	1.26
Nebojša Stefanović	112	7.19	0	0.00	107	95.54	5	4.46
Aleksandar Vulin	80	5.13	0	0.00	80	100.00	0	0.00
Siniša Mali	78	5.01	1	1.28	76	97.44	1	1.28
Zorana Mihajlović	72	4.62	0	0.00	71	98.61	1	1.39
Rasim Ljajić	22	1.41	0	0.00	22	100.00	0	0.00
Jadranka Joksimović	21	1.35	0	0.00	21	100.00	0	0.00
Mladen Šarčević	21	1.35	0	0.00	20	95.24	1	4.76
Zoran Đorđević	17	1.09	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
Zlatibor Lončar	16	1.03	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Nela Kuburović	13	0.83	0	0.00	12	92.31	1	7.69
Nenad Popović	13	0.83	0	0.00	11	84.62	2	15.38
Branko Ružić	10	0.64	0	0.00	9	90.00	1	10.00
Goran Trivan	9	0.58	0	0.00	8	88.89	1	11.11
Branislav Nedimović	9	0.58	1	11.11	8	88.89	0	0.00
Vanja Udovičić	9	0.58	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Vladan Vukosavljević	9	0.58	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Slavica Đukić Dejanović	8	0.51	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandar Antić	7	0.45	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29
Milan Krkobabić	3	0.19	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Knežević	2	0.13	0	0.00	2	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>1558</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>1489</b>	<b>95.57</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>3.40</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

As in the previous quarter, the most prominent actor on the front pages of daily newspapers in Serbia was President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić, whose media coverage in our sample is mostly neutral (in 93.36% of cases). Also, 1.98% (14) positive<sup>17</sup> and 4.66% (33) negative<sup>18</sup> texts were written about him. The president of Serbia appears 708 times as the protagonist of texts on the covers, which is significantly higher than the first ranked actor, Prime Minister of Serbia Ana Brnabić, who is present in 160 texts and Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić, who is represented in 159 articles. The highest frequency of Aleksandar Vučić's appearances, expressed in absolute numbers, is recorded in the daily newspapers *Danas* (203), *Politika* (129) and *Večernje novosti* (107). Expressed in relative numbers of the percentage of texts in which he appears as an actor, and in relation to the total number of selected texts from the same individual newspapers, we can see that he is the most represented actor in *Danas* (47.1%), *Večernje novosti* (41%) and *Informer* (around 35%). The lowest participation of the articles in which the actor is President of Serbia is recorded in the daily *Alo!* (29.13%) and *Politika* (26.76%)

When it comes to the value context, the largest share, as well as the number of negative texts, are again present in *Danas* (16.26% or 33 articles). This is the only newspaper that has published negative texts about Aleksandar Vučić. The positively connotated texts were published in *Alo!* (6 or 8.96%), *Informer* and *Kurir* (3 each or 4.76% and 3.85% respectively) and *Večernje novosti* and *Politika* (1 each).

Aleksandar Vučić: Value context with reference to the media

Aleksandar Vučić	Positive		Neutral		Negative		total	
Media	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Alo!</i>	6	8.96	61	91.04	0	0.00	67	100.00
<i>Blic</i>	0	0.00	61	100.00	0	0.00	61	100.00
<i>Danas</i>	0	0.00	170	83.74	33	16.26	203	100.00
<i>Informer</i>	3	4.76	60	95.24	0	0.00	63	100.00
<i>Kurir</i>	3	3.85	75	96.15	0	0.00	78	100.00
<i>Politika</i>	1	0.78	128	99.22	0	0.00	129	100.00
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	1	0.93	106	99.07	0	0.00	107	100.00
<b>total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1.98</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>93.36</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>4.66</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

17 Slightly fewer than in the previous quarters when there were: 17 (in the second quarter of 2019), 22 (in the first).

18 More than in previous quarters, in which there were 27 (previous quarter), 21 (first quarter of 2019).

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

Aleksandar Vučić per media	No. of appearances	Total no. of texts	% share against total no. of texts
<i>Danas</i>	203	431	47.10
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	107	261	41.00
<i>Informer</i>	63	181	34.81
<i>Blic</i>	61	185	32.97
<i>Kurir</i>	78	263	29.66
<i>Alo!</i>	67	230	29.13
<i>Politika</i>	129	482	26.76
<b>total</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>2033</b>	<b>34.83</b>

Source: Mediameter research, July – September 2019

Prime Minister Ana Brnabić is the protagonist in 160 (10.27%) of the analyzed texts and she is the second most frequent protagonist among individual political actors from the Serbian political scene. In the third quarter of 2019, four texts with negative connotation were written about Ana Brnabić, all of which were published in the daily *Danas*. Positively connotated texts about the current Prime Minister were not published this quarter.

The largest number of articles in which the Serbian Prime Minister is an actor have been published in the daily newspapers *Danas* (41), *Večernje novosti* (35) and *Politika* (34). The highest share of texts in relation to the total number of texts in the media was recorded in *Večernje novosti* (13.41%) and *Danas* (9.51%).

Ana Brnabić: Value context with reference to the media

Ana Brnabić	positive		neutral		negative		total	
Media	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Alo!</i>	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00	10	100.00
<i>Blic</i>	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00	13	100.00
<i>Danas</i>	0	0.00	37	90.24	4	9.76	41	100.00
<i>Informer</i>	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00	9	100.00
<i>Kurir</i>	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00	18	100.00
<i>Politika</i>	0	0.00	34	100.00	0	0.00	34	100.00
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	0	0.00	35	100.00	0	0.00	35	100.00
<b>total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>97.50</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Mediameter research, July – September 2019

Number of appearances of Ana Brnabić in respect of total numbers of texts in particular daily newspapers

Ana Brnabić per media	No. of appearances	Total no. of texts	% share against total no. of texts
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	35	261	13.41
<i>Danas</i>	41	431	9.51
<i>Politika</i>	34	482	7.05
<i>Blic</i>	13	185	7.03
<i>Kurir</i>	18	263	6.84
<i>Informer</i>	9	181	4.97
<i>Alo!</i>	10	230	4.35
<b>total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>2033</b>	<b>7.87</b>

Source: Mediameter research, July – September 2019

Other actors in the group consisting of the Government and the President of the Republic of Serbia are presented in a neutral value context in 95.57% of the texts. Most of the negative connotations, except for President Aleksandar Vučić, were written about Nebojša Stefanović (5 or 4.46% of the total negative connotations). It is interesting that, except for President Aleksandar Vučić, only a single positive text each was written about Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management Branislav Nedimović and Minister of Finance Siniša Mali.

In the third quarter of 2019, there is a further decline in the number of appearances of opposition actors - 1220, compared to the previous quarter when there were 1287, and the one before it when there were 1511. However, compared to the last two quarters of 2018 - 1030 in the fourth and 932 in the third - the presence of opposition representatives is still noticeable. Again in this quarter, the most present opposition leader was Dragan Đilas with 218 appearances, slightly more than in the previous quarter (200). Boško Obradović (105) and Vuk Jeremić (93) follow. The most negative texts, expressed in absolute numbers, were written about Dragan Đilas (83),<sup>19</sup> followed by Vuk Jeremić (32)<sup>20</sup> and Boško Obradović (29).<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> More than in the previous quarter when there were 75 and less than the first quarter of 2019, when there were 111.

<sup>20</sup> Fewer than in previous quarters of 2019: second (48), first (55).

<sup>21</sup> Fewer than in the previous quarters of 2019: second (63), first (50), and significantly more than in the last two quarters of 2018 - fourth (25) and especially third (only 15).

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

Opposition- individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Dragan Đilas	218	17.87	0	0.00	135	61.93	83	38.07
Boško Obradović	105	8.61	0	0.00	76	72.38	29	27.62
Vuk Jeremić	93	7.62	0	0.00	61	65.59	32	34.41
Boris Tadić	64	5.25	0	0.00	54	84.38	10	15.63
Zoran Lutovac	51	4.18	0	0.00	43	84.31	8	15.69
Sergej Trifunović	51	4.18	1	1.96	39	76.47	11	21.57
Vojislav Šešelj	46	3.77	0	0.00	39	84.78	7	15.22
Čedomir Jovanović	32	2.62	0	0.00	30	93.75	2	6.25
Nebojša Zelenović	24	1.97	0	0.00	24	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Bastać	23	1.89	0	0.00	11	47.83	12	52.17
Zoran Živković	20	1.64	0	0.00	19	95.00	1	5.00
Marinika Tepić	19	1.56	0	0.00	18	94.74	1	5.26
Bojan Pajtić	18	1.48	0	0.00	14	77.78	4	22.22
Aleksandar Šapić	17	1.39	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
Miroslav Aleksić	16	1.31	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Borko Stefanović	16	1.31	0	0.00	15	93.75	1	6.25
Sanda Rašković Ivić	16	1.31	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Miloš Jovanović	15	1.23	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Dušan Teodorović	14	1.15	0	0.00	11	78.57	3	21.43
Nikola Jovanović	11	0.90	0	0.00	10	90.91	1	9.09
Velimir Ilić	11	0.90	0	0.00	7	63.64	4	36.36
Đorđe Vukadinović	10	0.82	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Radoslav Milojević Kena	10	0.82	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Balša Božović	9	0.74	0	0.00	8	88.89	1	11.11
Miša Vacić	9	0.74	0	0.00	7	77.78	2	22.22
Vladimir Gajić	9	0.74	0	0.00	8	88.89	1	11.11
Gordana Čomić	9	0.74	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Janko Veselinović	8	0.66	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Nenad Čanak	7	0.57	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Radomir Lazović	6	0.49	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00

Stefan Stamenkovski	6	0.49	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Šutanovac	6	0.49	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Tatjana Macura	6	0.49	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandra Jerkov	6	0.49	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Vjerica Radeta	6	0.49	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
Dušan Petrović	6	0.49	0	0.00	4	66.67	2	33.33
Saša Mirković	5	0.41	0	0.00	2	40.00	3	60.00
Rade Veljanovski	5	0.41	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Ješić	5	0.41	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Branislav Lečić	5	0.41	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Stamatović	5	0.41	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Saša Paunović	5	0.41	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Sulejman Ugljanin	5	0.41	0	0.00	3	60.00	2	40.00
Vladan Glišić	5	0.41	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Dragoljub Mićunović	4	0.33	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Predrag Marković	4	0.33	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Konstantin Samofalov	4	0.33	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Dobrica Veselinović	4	0.33	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Saša Radulović	3	0.25	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Žika Gojković	3	0.25	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Uroš Marković	3	0.25	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Vesna Rakić Vodinelić	3	0.25	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	159	13.03	0	0.00	149	93.71	10	6.29
<b>total</b>	<b>1220</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.08</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>80.82</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>19.10</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

Position - individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Vladimir Đukanović	43	11.98	0	0.00	43	100.00	0	0.00
Milovan Drecun	18	5.01	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Marković Palma	18	5.01	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
Milenko Jovanov	17	4.74	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Orlić	15	4.18	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Milutin Mrkonjić	15	4.18	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Miroslav Lazanski	14	3.90	1	7.14	13	92.86	0	0.00
Aleksandar Martinović	12	3.34	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Miodrag Linta	11	3.06	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Milutin Jeličić Jutka	10	2.79	0	0.00	4	40.00	6	60.00
Darko Glišić	10	2.79	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Vladanka Malović	9	2.51	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Đorđe Milićević	8	2.23	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Marijan Ristićević	8	2.23	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
Vuk Drašković	7	1.95	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29
Dragan Šormaz	7	1.95	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29
Marija Obradović	5	1.39	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Novica Tončev	5	1.39	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Žarko Obradović	5	1.39	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Nebojša Bakarec	4	1.11	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Miroslav Čučković	3	0.84	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Radomir Nikolić	3	0.84	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Vladimir Marinković	3	0.84	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Muamer Zukorlić	3	0.84	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Dragoljub Simonović	3	0.84	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Dragomir Karić	3	0.84	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Bogoljub Karić	3	0.84	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	97	27.02	0	0.00	87	89.69	10	10.31
<b>total</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.28</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>93.59</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6.13</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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	%
Goran Vesić	64	17.98	0	0.00	59	92.19	5	7.81
Marko Đurić	40	11.24	0	0.00	39	97.50	1	2.50
Maja Gojković	39	10.96	0	0.00	39	100.00	0	0.00
Tomislav Nikolić	37	10.39	0	0.00	32	86.49	5	13.51
Nikola Selaković	14	3.93	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Miloš Vučević	13	3.65	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Milovan Drecun	13	3.65	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Suzana Vasiljević	9	2.53	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Radojčić	8	2.25	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Igor Mirović	6	1.69	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Biljana Popović Ivković	5	1.40	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Veljko Odalović	4	1.12	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Nikola Nikodijević	3	0.84	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	101	28.37	0	0.00	91	90.10	10	9.90
<b>total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>94.10</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5.90</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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	%
Milan Mojsilović	8	12.70	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Rodoljub Milović	6	9.52	0	0.00	3	50.00	3	50.00
Vladimir Rebić	3	4.76	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	46	73.02	2	4.35	43	93.48	1	2.17
<b>total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>90.48</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6.35</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

Other political and social actors	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Slobodan Milošević	72	30.90	0	0.00	70	97.22	2	2.78
Zoran Đinđić	33	14.16	0	0.00	33	100.00	0	0.00
Vojislav Koštunica	18	7.73	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
Josip Broz Tito	16	6.87	0	0.00	15	93.75	1	6.25
Matija Bećković	11	4.72	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Marija Lukić	10	4.29	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Mirjana Marković	7	3.00	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Emir Kusturica	5	2.15	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Vesna Pešić	5	2.15	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Marko Milošević	5	2.15	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Jelena Milić	5	2.15	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Dragoljub Mihailović	5	2.15	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Igor Jurić	5	2.15	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Megatrend Univerzitet	5	2.15	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Filip David	5	2.15	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Slavko Ćuruvija	4	1.72	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Mlađan Dinkić	4	1.72	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Inicijativa mladih za ljudska prava	3	1.29	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Branko Stefanović	3	1.29	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Marina Abramović	3	1.29	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Ivan Tasovac	3	1.29	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Saša Janković	3	1.29	0	0.00	1	33.33	2	66.67
Rodoljub Šabić	3	1.29	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>96.57</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3.43</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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	78	26.35	0	0.00	72	92.31	6	7.69
Ministry of Interior	27	9.12	0	0.00	27	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Defense	17	5.74	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Justice	14	4.73	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Construction, Traffic and Infrastructure	13	4.39	0	0.00	11	84.62	2	15.38
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	13	4.39	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia	12	4.05	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
National Bank of Serbia	11	3.72	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Finance	11	3.72	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Health	10	3.38	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	8	2.70	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy	8	2.70	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Culture and Information	6	2.03	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection	5	1.69	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Republic of Serbia Tax Administration	5	1.69	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00

Ministry of Youth and Sport	4	1.35	0	0.00	2	50.00	2	50.00
Republic fund PIO	4	1.35	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	4	1.35	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
City of Belgrade	4	1.35	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Office of the President of Republic of Serbia	3	1.01	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Ministry of Mining and Energy	3	1.01	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication	3	1.01	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Economy	2	0.68	0	0.00	2	100.00	0	0.00
others	31	10.47	0	0.00	29	93.55	2	6.45
<b>total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>95.27</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4.73</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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	41	53.25	1	2.44	40	97.56	0	0.00
Security Intelligence Agency	23	29.87	0	0.00	23	100.00	0	0.00
ostali	9	11.69	1	11.11	8	88.89	0	0.00
VBA	4	5.19	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2.60</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>97.40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

Position - parties	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
SNS	220	74.32	0	0.00	199	90.45	21	9.55
SPS	46	15.54	0	0.00	42	91.30	4	8.70
PUPS	8	2.70	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
SPO	5	1.69	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Socialists' Movement	5	1.69	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
United Serbia	4	1.35	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Strength of Serbia Movement	3	1.01	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	5	1.69	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>91.55</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>8.45</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

Opposition - parties	No.	%	positive	%	neutral	%	negative	%
Alliance for Serbia	143	22.17	0	0.00	128	89.51	15	10.49
DS	96	14.88	0	0.00	94	97.92	2	2.08
PSG	52	8.06	0	0.00	52	100.00	0	0.00
Dveri	49	7.60	0	0.00	46	93.88	3	6.12
People's party	44	6.82	0	0.00	44	100.00	0	0.00
Freedom and Justice Party	38	5.89	0	0.00	38	100.00	0	0.00
DSS	37	5.74	0	0.00	37	100.00	0	0.00
SRS	31	4.81	0	0.00	30	96.77	1	3.23
LDP	24	3.72	0	0.00	24	100.00	0	0.00
SDS	22	3.41	0	0.00	22	100.00	0	0.00
New party	21	3.26	0	0.00	21	100.00	0	0.00
Initiative: Let's not drown Belgrade	16	2.48	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
LSV	16	2.48	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00

SPAS	12	1.86	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Enough is enough	9	1.40			8	88.89	1	11.11
Together for Serbia	8	1.24	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
New Serbia	3	0.47	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
SDA Sandžak	3	0.47	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	21	3.26	0	0.00	21	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>96.43</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3.57</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

**Kosovo**

Kosovo	broj	%	poziti- van	%	neu- tralan	%	nega- tivan	%
Ramush Haradinaj	150	18.47	0	0.00	94	62.67	56	37.33
Hashim Thaçi	88	10.84	0	0.00	73	82.95	15	17.05
OVK	68	8.37	0	0.00	42	61.76	26	38.24
Oliver Ivanović	49	6.03	0	0.00	49	100.00	0	0.00
Serbian list	40	4.93	0	0.00	40	100.00	0	0.00
Rada Trajković	23	2.83	0	0.00	21	91.30	2	8.70
Milan Radojčić	19	2.34	0	0.00	18	94.74	1	5.26
Kadri Veseli	18	2.22	0	0.00	16	88.89	2	11.11
Daut Haradinaj	18	2.22	0	0.00	10	55.56	8	44.44
Behgjet Pacolli	18	2.22	0	0.00	14	77.78	4	22.22
KFOR	17	2.09	0	0.00	16	94.12	1	5.88
Unmik	15	1.85	0	0.00	14	93.33	1	6.67
Albin Kurti	14	1.72	0	0.00	13	92.86	1	7.14
Special court for KLA crimes	12	1.48	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Isa Mustafa	12	1.48	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Euleks	10	1.23	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Milena Ivanović	9	1.11	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Florim Ejupi	9	1.11	0	0.00	2	22.22	7	77.78
Citizen initiative SDP	6	0.74	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00

Enver Hoxhaj	6	0.74	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
Kosovo government	5	0.62	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Fatmir Limaj	4	0.49	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Kosovo police	4	0.49	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
Goran Rakić	3	0.37	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	195	24.01	0	0.00	174	89.23	21	10.77
<b>total</b>	<b>812</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>81.77</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>18.23</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Croatia**

Croatia	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
Kolinda Grabar Ki- tarović	41	19.62	0	0.00	26	63.41	15	36.59
Andrej Plenković	23	11.00	0	0.00	17	73.91	6	26.09
Marko Perković Tompson	12	5.74	0	0.00	9	75.00	3	25.00
Milorad Pupovac	12	5.74	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Ante Gotovina	10	4.78	0	0.00	9	90.00	1	10.00
Franjo Tuđman	10	4.78	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Milanović	8	3.83	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
HDZ	6	2.87	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Savo Štrbac	6	2.87	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Ante Pavelić	5	2.39	0	0.00	1	20.00	4	80.00
others	76	36.36	0	0.00	53	69.74	23	30.26
<b>total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>74.64</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>25.36</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

Montenegro	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
Milo Đukanović	55	31.07	0	0.00	35	63.64	20	36.36
Andrija Mandić	11	6.21	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Demokratski front	10	5.65	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Momir Bulatović	9	5.08	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
DPS	8	4.52	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Duško Knežević	6	3.39	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
Milivoje Katnić	3	1.69	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Duško Marković	3	1.69	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Svetozar Marović	3	1.69	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	69	38.98	0	0.00	57	82.61	12	17.39
<b>total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>80.79</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>19.21</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

BiH	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
Milorad Dodik	60	39.22	0	0.00	58	96.67	2	3.33
Bakir Izetbegović	11	7.19	0	0.00	9	81.82	2	18.18
SDA	7	4.58	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Alija Izetbegović	7	4.58	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Željko Komšić	6	3.92	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Željka Cvijanović	6	3.92	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Valentin Incko	5	3.27	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Naser Orić	5	3.27	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
others	46	30.07	0	0.00	44	95.65	2	4.35
<b>total</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>96.08</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3.92</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

Macedonia	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
Zoran Zaev	49	37.12	0	0.00	30	61.22	19	38.78
Nikola Gruevski	8	6.06	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
VMRO–DPMNE	5	3.79	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
others	70	53.03	0	0.00	49	70.00	21	30.00
<b>total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>69.70</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30.30</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign political actors

Foreign political actors	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
Emmanuel Macron	93	14.95	2	2.15	91	97.85	0	0.00
Angela Merkel	71	11.41	0	0.00	71	100.00	0	0.00
Boris Johnson	20	3.22	0	0.00	16	80.00	4	20.00
Theresa May	17	2.73	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
Bojko Borisov	14	2.25	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	14	2.25	0	0.00	13	92.86	1	7.14
Miloš Zeman	14	2.25	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Edi Rama	13	2.09	0	0.00	12	92.31	1	7.69
Viktor Orban	13	2.09	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Chén Bő	9	1.45	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Alexis Tsipras	8	1.29	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Xi Jinping	8	1.29	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Volodymyr Zelensky	6	0.96	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Kim Jong-un	5	0.80	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Miroslav Lajčák	5	0.80	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Sebastian Kurz	5	0.80	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Bashar al Assad	5	0.80	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Denis Keefe	4	0.64	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
Jeremy Corbyn	4	0.64	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00

Nigel Farage	4	0.64	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Ilir Meta	4	0.64	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Frank-Walter Steinmeier	4	0.64	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Petro Poroshenko	4	0.64	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Tonny Blair	4	0.64	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Alexander Lukashenko	3	0.48	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer	3	0.48	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Yingluck Shinawatra	3	0.48	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Heiko Maas	3	0.48	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	262	42.12	0	0.00	253	96.56	9	3.44
<b>total</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>96.95</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2.73</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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	82	36.28	7	8.54	74	90.24	1	1.22
Aleksandr Bot-sanKharchenko	37	16.37	0	0.00	37	100.00	0	0.00
Sergey Lavrov	24	10.62	1	4.17	23	95.83	0	0.00
Sergey Shoygu	7	3.10	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Maria Zakharova	7	3.10	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Dmitry Medvedev	6	2.65	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Russian Ministry of Defense	5	2.21	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Russian Armed Forces	5	2.21	3	60.00	2	40.00	0	0.00
Dmitry Peskov	4	1.77	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Russian Ministry of Foreign affairs	3	1.33	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	46	20.35	0	0.00	46	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4.87</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>94.69</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.44</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors outside the region: **USA**<sup>22</sup>

USA	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Donald Trump	144	25.31	3	2.08	139	96.53	2	1.39
Matthew Palmer	57	10.02	1	1.75	55	96.49	1	1.75
Mike Pompeo	38	6.68	0	0.00	38	100.00	0	0.00
John Bolton	32	5.62	1	3.13	30	93.75	1	3.13
Kyle Scott	30	5.27	0	0.00	29	96.67	1	3.33
State Department	20	3.51	0	0.00	20	100.00	0	0.00
CIA	15	2.64	0	0.00	12	80.00	3	20.00
Philip Reeker	14	2.46	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Barack Obama	9	1.58	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Pentagon	9	1.58	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Bill Clinton	9	1.58	0	0.00	8	88.89	1	11.11
US Congress	8	1.41	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Anthony Francis Godfrey	7	1.23	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Hillary Clinton	5	0.88	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Mike Pence	5	0.88	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Nancy Pelosi	4	0.70	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
US Embassy in Priština	4	0.70	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
US Embassy	4	0.70	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Madeleine Albright	4	0.70	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Democratic Party	4	0.70	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Joseph Biden	3	0.53	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
American administration	3	0.53	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Ivanka Trump	3	0.53	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	138	24.25	3	2.17	132	95.65	3	2.17
<b>total</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1.41</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>96.49</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2.11</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

<sup>22</sup> Actors from the US are the most represented foreign political actors, if we look at the countries that we pay attention to. Donald Trump is the most represented foreign political leader in the third quarter of 2019. In the previous quarter, he was only fourth, when the media paid more attention to Emmanuel Macron (127), Angela Merkel (122) and Vladimir Putin (112).

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.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
EU	83	25.23	0	0.00	78	93.98	5	6.02
Federica Mogherini	30	9.12	0	0.00	28	93.33	2	6.67
European Commis- sion	28	8.51	0	0.00	28	100.00	0	0.00
David McAlister	27	8.21	0	0.00	26	96.30	1	3.70
European Parliament	21	6.38	0	0.00	21	100.00	0	0.00
Johannes Hahn	15	4.56	0	0.00	14	93.33	1	6.67
Ursula von der Leyen	13	3.95	0	0.00	12	92.31	1	7.69
Jean Claude Juncker	13	3.95	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Donald Tusk	12	3.65	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Maja Kocijančič	11	3.34	0	0.00	10	90.91	1	9.09
Josep Borrell	9	2.74	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Frans Timmermans	8	2.43	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
European Council	6	1.82	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
European Central Bank	5	1.52	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Sem Fabrizi	5	1.52	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Josep Borrell Fon- telles	4	1.22	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
others	39	11.85	0	0.00	39	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>96.66</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3.34</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

International organi- zations and institu- tions	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
OEBS	19	20.88	0	0.00	19	100.00	0	0.00
MMF	17	18.68	0	0.00	16	94.12	1	5.88
UN	11	12.09	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
António Guterres	11	12.09	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Christine Lagarde	4	4.40	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
UNESCO	3	3.30	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
World Bank	3	3.30	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Sebastian Sosa	3	3.30	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Council of Europe	3	3.30	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
UN Security Council	3	3.30	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	14	15.38	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>98.90</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.10</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

NATO	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
NATO	100	90.91	0	0.00	81	81.00	19	19.00
Jens Stoltenberg	3	2.73	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	7	6.36	0	0.00	5	71.43	2	28.57
<b>total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>80.91</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19.09</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

The Hague Tribunal	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
Hague tribunal	28	27.18	0	0.00	26	92.86	2	7.14
Ratko Mladić	15	14.56	0	0.00	14	93.33	1	6.67
Radovan Karadžić	12	11.65	0	0.00	11	91.67	1	8.33
Vladimir Lazarević	8	7.77	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Veselin Šlivančanin	7	6.80	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Neboša Pavković	6	5.83	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Serge Brammertz	6	5.83	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Carmel Agius	3	2.91	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	18	17.48	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>96.12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3.88</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Already from this brief overview of the frequencies of the appearance of certain actors on the front pages of selected printed daily newspapers in our sample, it is clear that media with unequal interest treat issues in the field of domestic and foreign policy. In the third quarter of 2019, foreign political actors make up 39.90% of all political actors, compared to 60.09% of the incidence of domestic political actors.

The economic actors in the third quarter of 2019 make up 5.07% of the total sample of stakeholders, which, compared to the previous quarter, represents an increase of about 0.64% or, in absolute numbers, 68 occurrences.

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

Economic actors - individually	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
Dragan Šolak	13	6.77	0	0.00	7	53.85	6	46.15
Nebojša Atanacković	11	5.73	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Čadež	7	3.65	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Babić	7	3.65	0	0.00	4	57.14	3	42.86
Miroslav Bogičević	6	3.13	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	100.00
Zoran Drobnjak	6	3.13	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Vojislav Vuletić	3	1.56	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Mišković	3	1.56	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Nikola Petrović	3	1.56	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Miroslav Mišković	3	1.56	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	130	67.71	0	0.00	125	96.15	5	3.85
<b>total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>89.58</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10.42</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

Privredni akteri – kolektivno	broj	%	pozi- tivan	%	neu- tralan	%	nega- tivan	%
Vinci airports	15	3.91	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Roads of Serbia	14	3.65	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Fiat	12	3.13	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Smederevo Iron- works	11	2.86	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Electric Power Indus- try of Serbia	11	2.86	0	0.00	8	72.73	3	27.27
Commercial bank	11	2.86	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Corridors of Serbia	10	2.60	0	0.00	9	90.00	1	10.00
Chamber of com- merce of Serbia	8	2.08	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Air Serbia	7	1.82	0	0.00	4	57.14	3	42.86
RTB Bor	6	1.56	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
SBB	5	1.30	0	0.00	3	60.00	2	40.00

Traffic institute CIP	5	1.30	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
NIS	5	1.30	0	0.00	3	60.00	2	40.00
Nikola Tesla Airport	5	1.30	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Aktor	4	1.04	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Telenor	4	1.04	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Telecom Serbia	4	1.04	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
Gazprom	4	1.04	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Raiffeisen bank	4	1.04	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Azotara Pančevo	3	0.78	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Srbijagas	3	0.78	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
AIK bank	3	0.78	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Volkswagen	3	0.78	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Belgrade Waterfront	3	0.78	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Krušik Valjevo	3	0.78	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Morava Airport	3	0.78	0	0.00	1	33.33	2	66.67
Zijin	3	0.78	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	215	55.99	0	0.00	201	93.49	14	6.51
<b>total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>92.45</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>7.55</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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 autonomous 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) protagonists of civil protests

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

Independent bodies and institutions of national importance	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
REM	26	20.00	0	0.00	25	96.15	1	3.85
Ivanka Popović	21	16.15	0	0.00	21	100.00	0	0.00
University of Belgrade	16	12.31	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Anti-Corruption Agency	14	10.77	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Fiscal council	9	6.92	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
SANU	7	5.38	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Brankica Janković	5	3.85	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Marinović	3	2.31	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Olivera Zekić	3	2.31	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	26	20.00	0	0.00	20	76.92	6	23.08
<b>total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>94.62</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5.38</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Analysts (experts) have special role in the texts on the front pages of the media from the sample, and the media treat them in a neutral context in all of the texts. During the entire third quarter of 2019, the analyzed daily newspapers significantly promoted the views of these experts, so their opinion was represented 633<sup>23</sup> times. The largest share and the number of analysts represented was recorded in *Informer* (157).

<sup>23</sup> In this quarter, analysts' presence on front pages is up again from previous quarters when 590 (second quarter of 2019) and 563 (first quarter of 2019) appearances of analysts were recorded. This quarter saw the largest analyst presence since the beginning of the *Mediameter* project. It is higher in this quarter than the highest number recorded in the fourth quarter of 2018 – when there were 601 occurrences.

Distribution of the frequency of the appearance of analysts on the covers in different media from the survey sample

Media / Analyst	No.	%
<i>Informer</i>	157	24.80
<i>Danas</i>	129	20.38
<i>Kurir</i>	107	16.90
<i>Politika</i>	98	15.48
<i>Blic</i>	62	9.79
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	41	6.48
<i>Alo!</i>	39	6.16
<b>total</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

Analysts	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neutral	%	Nega- tive	%
Dejan Vuk Stanković	24	3.79	0	0.00	24	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Milivojević	23	3.63	0	0.00	23	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Antonijević	22	3.48	0	0.00	22	100.00	0	0.00
Jelena Vukoičić	19	3.00	0	0.00	19	100.00	0	0.00
Bojan Klačar	18	2.84	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
Branko Radun	15	2.37	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Dragomir Anđelković	15	2.37	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Božidar Spasić	12	1.90	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Boban Stojanović	11	1.74	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Toma Fila	11	1.74	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Mario Spasić	11	1.74	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Nicović	11	1.74	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Ljubodrag Savić	10	1.58	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Stevica Deđanski	10	1.58	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Kovačević	10	1.58	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Vladislav Jovanović	10	1.58	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Pejić	10	1.58	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Orhan Dragaš	10	1.58	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Ljuban Karan	9	1.42	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00

Živadin Jovanović	9	1.42	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Milisav Paić	9	1.42	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Vlade Radulović	8	1.26	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Milojko Arsić	7	1.11	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Nemanja Nenadić	6	0.95	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Nebojša Krstić	6	0.95	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Dušan Janjić	6	0.95	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandar Radić	6	0.95	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandar Popov	6	0.95	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Dževad Galijašević	6	0.95	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Dragišić	6	0.95	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Božidar Delić	5	0.79	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Ljubomir Madžar	5	0.79	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Matić	5	0.79	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Ivan Ninić	4	0.63	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Dragovan Miličević	4	0.63	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Prostran	4	0.63	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Svetozar Vujačić	4	0.63	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Dobrašinović	4	0.63	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Stojiljković	4	0.63	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Ivan Nikolić	4	0.63	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Srećko Đukić	4	0.63	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Rodić	4	0.63	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Petrić	4	0.63	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Darko Trifunović	3	0.47	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Đukanović	3	0.47	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Boško Jakšić	3	0.47	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Mahmud Bušatlija	3	0.47	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Ratko Božović	3	0.47	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Uljarević	3	0.47	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Stefan Surlić	3	0.47	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Damir Okanović	3	0.47	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Božidar Prelević	3	0.47	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	215	33.97	0	0.00	215	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Distribution of frequency of SOC representatives and other religious communities on the covers in different media from the survey sample

Media/religion	No.	%
<i>Politika</i>	97	32.01
<i>Danas</i>	53	17.49
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	52	17.16
<i>Alo!</i>	46	15.18
<i>Blic</i>	21	6.93
<i>Kurir</i>	20	6.60
<i>Informer</i>	14	4.62
<b>total</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
SOC	61	20.13	0	0.00	61	100.00	0	0.00
Patriarch Irinej	46	15.18	0	0.00	45	97.83	1	2.17
Amfilohije, Metropol- itan of Montenegro and the Littoral	25	8.25	0	0.00	23	92.00	2	8.00
Maksim, bishop of the Diocese of West- ern America	11	3.63	0	0.00	9	81.82	2	18.18
Pope Francis	11	3.63	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Miraš Dedeić	9	2.97	0	0.00	5	55.56	4	44.44
Alojzije Stepinac	9	2.97	0	0.00	6	66.67	3	33.33
Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral	8	2.64	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Grigorije, bishop of Düsseldorf and Ger- many	8	2.64	0	0.00	5	62.50	3	37.50
Montenegrin Ortho- dox Church	7	2.31	0	0.00	5	71.43	2	28.57
Irinej, bishop of Bačka	6	1.98	0	0.00	3	50.00	3	50.00
Patriarch Pavle	5	1.65	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00

Atanasije, bishop of Mileševa	5	1.65	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Irinej, bishop of the Diocese of Eastern America	5	1.65	0	0.00	3	60.00	2	40.00
Roman Catholic Church	5	1.65	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Teodosije, bishop	4	1.32	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Porfirije, Metropol- itan of Zagreb-Lju- bljana	4	1.32	0	0.00	1	25.00	3	75.00
others	74	24.42	1	1.35	67	90.54	6	8.11
<b>total</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.33</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>89.44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>10.23</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective social domestic actors from **the media**<sup>24</sup>

Media	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
RTS	34	12.78	0	0.00	34	100.00	0	0.00
NUNS	11	4.14	0	0.00	9	81.82	2	18.18
TV N1	10	3.76	0	0.00	5	50.00	5	50.00
Dragan J. Vučićević	9	3.38	0	0.00	8	88.89	1	11.11
Informer	8	3.01	0	0.00	4	50.00	4	50.00
Dragan Bujošević	8	3.01	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
UNS	8	3.01	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Milorad Vučelić	7	2.63	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
TV Pink	7	2.63	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29
Maja Pavlović	6	2.26	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Jugoslav Ćosić	6	2.26	0	0.00	3	50.00	3	50.00
Alo	5	1.88	0	0.00	3	60.00	2	40.00
KRIK	5	1.88	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Dušan Petričić	5	1.88	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Vukašin Obradović	5	1.88	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Večernje novosti	4	1.50	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00

<sup>24</sup> Actors who were the subject of writing by other media are presented, i.e. media outlets about which other media reported on.

NDNV	4	1.50	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
Željko Bodrožić	4	1.50	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Stevan Dojčinović	4	1.50	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Politika	4	1.50	1	25.00	2	50.00	1	25.00
Slobodan Georgiev	3	1.13	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Slaviša Lekić	3	1.13	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Ćulibrk	3	1.13	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Danas	3	1.13	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Željko Mitrović	3	1.13	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Milomir Marić	3	1.13	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
TV Prva	3	1.13	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Jovanović	3	1.13	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	88	33.08	0	0.00	74	84.09	14	15.91
<b>total</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>86.09</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>13.53</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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 (98), lawyers (86) and other protagonists of current or completed court / investigative proceedings (59).

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

Judicial system	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
Court of Appeals in Belgrade	13	13.27	0	0.00	9	69.23	4	30.77
Vladimir Vukčević	6	6.12	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Prosecution For Organized Crime	5	5.10	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
State Council of Prosecutors	4	4.08	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Prosecution for War Crimes	4	4.08	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Higher Public Prosecutor in Belgrade	4	4.08	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Higher Court in Belgrade	4	4.08	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00

First Basic Court in Belgrade	3	3.06	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Vida Petrović Škero	3	3.06	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	52	53.06	0	0.00	48	92.31	4	7.69
<b>total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>91.84</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8.16</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors: **lawyers**<sup>25</sup>

Lawyers	No.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
Borivoje Borović	7	8.14	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Branislav Tapušević	6	6.98	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Petronijević	5	5.81	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Veljko Delibašić	4	4.65	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Zora Dobričanin Nikodinović	3	3.49	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	61	70.93	0	0.00	61	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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.	%	Posi- tive	%	Neu- tral	%	Nega- tive	%
Ljubiša Buha Čume	8	13.56	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
Milorad Ulemek Legija	6	10.17	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Dušan Spasojević Šiptar	4	6.78	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Zvezdan Jovanović	4	6.78			4	100.00	0	0.00
Dejan Milenković Bagzi	4	6.78			4	100.00	0	0.00

<sup>25</sup> Some attorneys played the role of analysts in the sample media texts and were therefore featured in this group of actors.

Jovica Stanišić	3	5.08			3	100.00	0	0.00
Radomir Marković	3	5.08	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Željko Ražnatović Arkan	3	5.08	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	24	40.68	0	0.00	23	95.83	1	4.17
<b>total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>96.61</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.39</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

The following table shows all protagonists associated with the show business. These are, first and foremost, the actors involved in the media-constructed affair, whose lead actor was singer *Jelena Karleuša* and the protagonists that media wrote about as part of the the topic *murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović*.

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors:  
**show business**

Other domestic actors – show business	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Jelena Marjanović	30	28.30	0	0.00	30	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Marjanović	27	25.47	0	0.00	23	85.19	4	14.81
Jelena Karleuša	17	16.04	0	0.00	3	17.65	14	82.35
Ognjen Vranješ	12	11.32	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Svetlana Ceca Ražnatović	7	6.60	2	28.57	5	71.43	0	0.00
Duško Tošić	6	5.66	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Nenad Jezdić	4	3.77	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Vlado Georgijev	3	2.83	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.89</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>81.13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16.98</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

Sport	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
FC Red Star	27	25.96	0	0.00	26	96.30	1	3.70
Novak Đoković	19	18.27	0	0.00	19	100.00	0	0.00
Zvezdan Terzić	10	9.62	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Slaviša Kokeza	8	7.69	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
FC Partizan	7	6.73	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
others	33	31.73	1	3.03	28	84.85	4	12.12
<b>total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>94.23</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.81</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors: **“One in five million” civil protests**

“One in five million” civil protests	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Jovo Bakić	11	31.43	0	0.00	9	81.82	2	18.18
Srđan Marković	9	25.71	0	0.00	8	88.89	1	11.11
Nikola Kojo	4	11.43	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
others	11	31.43	0	0.00	10	90.91	1	9.09
<b>total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>88.57</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11.43</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

## 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 303 instances of quoting anonymous sources, or rather 14.9% of texts, which represents a decrease of about 1% in comparison to the results from the previous quarter.

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."<sup>26</sup>

A news form that contains the largest number of information obtained from an unnamed source is a report. Of the 1639 texts written in this form, 293 or 17.88% contains anonymous sources.

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

Genre	Total number of texts	Unnamed sources	%
Report	1639	293	17.88
Article	85	7	8.24
News	25	2	8.00
other	16	1	6.25
Interview	164	0	0.00
Commentary	94	0	0.00
Reportage	10	0	0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>2033</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>14.90</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

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

The largest number, as well as the participation of texts containing information obtained from unnamed sources, in relation to the total number of published articles, is recorded in *Blic* (34% or 63 texts), while the least amount of such practice is noted in *Večernje novosti* (around 5% – 14 texts).

Share of unnamed sources per analyzed media

Media	Total number of texts	Unnamed sources	%
<i>Blic</i>	185	63	34.05
<i>Informer</i>	181	49	27.07
<i>Alo!</i>	230	50	21.74
<i>Kurir</i>	263	52	19.77
<i>Politika</i>	482	46	9.54
<i>Danas</i>	431	29	6.73
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	261	14	5.36
<b>total</b>	<b>2033</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>14.90</b>

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

The majority of texts containing information from anonymous sources (93) were recorded when the topic of the text was related to *political life in Serbia*, however the largest share of unnamed sources in relation to the total number of texts published on a topic was again noted when it came to articles that talk about the media-constructed Karleuša-Vranješ affair - around 67%

Number of texts containing information obtained from "unnamed sources" according to topics in seven media from the sample<sup>27</sup>

Topic/All media	Total number of texts	Unnamed sources	%
Political life in Serbia	93	18.06	515
Kosovo / Belgrade and Priština relations	59	23.79	248
Issues of faith, church and religion	19	38.00	50
Regional cooperation / Relations in the region	15	10.00	150
Economy	14	13.73	102
Foreign policy of Serbia	10	14.93	67

27 Prikazano je deset tema sa najvećim brojem neimenovanih izvora

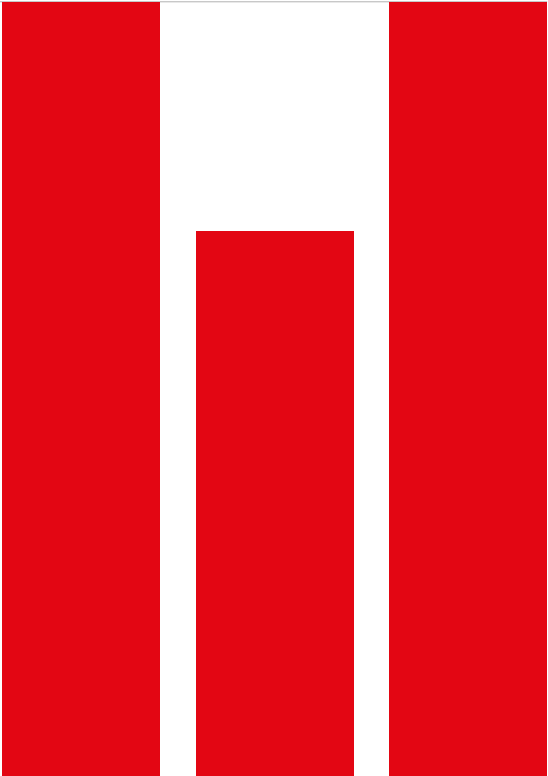
Political life in Montenegro	10	24.39	41
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	9	32.14	28
crime	9	45.00	20
Karleuša affair	8	66.67	12

Source: *Mediameter* research, July – September 2019

## Conclusion

The topics covered by the print media in the analyzed texts published on the front pages during the third quarter of 2019 are mostly in the range of issues of domestic and foreign policy of Serbia. Kosovo is constantly in focus, but dealing with this topic is somewhat shifting into the field of foreign policy activities of actors from the political scene of Serbia. The indicator regarding the balance of texts is lower than ever, and the sensationalist approach to equipping texts and interpreting a topic is highly represented. The media is becoming more and more clear in their political and ethical choices, and the norms and values along the way are disappearing. The degree of journalistic skill, along with respect for ethical norms, loses the battle with cheap sensationalism and unprofessionalism, bringing the journalistic profession, which is already in crisis due to technological and social changes, into a situation from which it will be difficult to recover.

4



Discourse  
Analysis

DEJAN VUK STANKOVIĆ

## DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

### Fierce controversies and severe disputes in the political-media field filled with deep political conflicts- the image of the daily press

Strong rhetorical quarrels, high level of political and every other form of confrontation, constant lack of manners, ease of labeling different opinions, controversy at or below the limits of decency, inability to establish any rational agreement on social or political issues, continuity of fierce contestation and conflicts - in short: deep divisions within the society are the main, and one might say, universal features of weekly and daily newspapers in Serbia between July and September 2019.

Similar to the previous analysis, we can start with a series of standard print media evaluations, especially the editorial columns and weekly newspapers. In the field of print journalism, especially among the weekly newspapers, there were no "forbidden" and "untouchable" topics and points of view. All major topics were written about, in many different, often sharply conflicting ways and with entirely opposed points of view. The outcome of this kind of journalistic writing is the vibrant presence of many different angles about one topic, regardless of actors or political, economic and wider social events.

Visible presence of political and personal values' pluralism of is a testament to the existence of freedom of thought and speech as well as the freedom of expression in this particular, professionally and socio-politically relevant, form of journalism. More specifically, it is possible to publish or draw a caricature of whichever phenomena, and thus send a variety of different messages. In addition, various political orientations are represented, ranging from the radical right to the left. In short, in the relevant analyzed weekly newspapers, neither censorship nor self-censorship was present. This circumstance is important primarily for two reasons that, strictly speaking, are not from the sphere of politics. Firstly, in Serbia it is possible to legitimately express any kind of opinion on the events, actors and socio-historical processes. Interpretative codes, on the other hand, tend to have the power of continuous multiplication on the Internet, and as a consequence, are often the basis and significant inspiration for numerous television broadcasts and interviews.

The outcome of this pluralism of journalistic genres is a predominantly negative portrayal of actors. Reporting on the topic is deeply determined by the viewpoint of the author, or generally speaking, the political orientation of the author or the editorial board he or she belongs to. Most weekly newspapers are dominated by a negative obsession with the personality of the President of the Republic of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, while the other group of weeklies continuously challenges the opposition's activity, its moral credibility and political legitimacy. The formation of a negative image of actors and diametrical opposition of interpretations when it comes to political and economic events or wider socio-historical processes occurs as an outcome of journalistic writing or as a conclusion of abun-

dant number of interviews with relevant or less relevant interviewees in numerous Serbian weekly newspapers.

When it comes to the topics, the focus is on daily political issues, especially the affairs, such as the "Krušik" affair, the dubious reconstruction project of the main Belgrade Square, the "plagiarized doctoral thesis by Minister Siniša Mali" and "wiretapping from the times of the Democratic Party." The "Krušik" affair was dominant among these. The aim was to discredit the Minister of the Police, Nebojša Stefanović, by discrediting his father Branko who was involved with the in the business of exporting weaponry.

Focus on Stefanović was not only aimed at clarifying the state's business in the sphere of trade in highly profitable and important sector for the country. The aforementioned focus was strongly emphasized in the context of showing and proving that the government is drowning in nepotism and systemic corruption.

If the "Savamala" case was used in the media and political opposition circles as an obvious example of "lawlessness", then the "Krušik" affair is another name for the corrupt activities of top government representatives, more precisely, the abuse of position by the Minister of Police followed by nepotism and privileged position of Nebojša Stefanović's family members.

The addition to this research period was the view of Serbia as a country with no perspective, a country with no hope, a place from which everyone, professionally and morally, must escape in order to find freedom and prosperity in some other more developed and fair part of the world.

Another interesting phenomena in the weeklies was the tendency towards a positive evaluation of the government led by Mirko Cvetković, a government from the period of Boris Tadić's almighty presidency and the Democratic Party's rule with its instant coalition partners, namely the Socialist Party of Serbia and the United Regions of Serbia which was at the time led by now forgotten economist Mlađan Dinkić.

Along with the actual attempts to criminalize it, the narrative of essential 'undemocratic nature' of the government continues, intensified by the apologetic thesis on the necessity to boycott the upcoming parliamentary and local elections. Critical discourse is a conglomeration of attacks that not only come from the political and legal spheres, but are complemented by elements of pseudo-psychological, economic, and cultural aspects. At the epicenter of these anti-government attacks in the weekly press is naturally the Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić as a key political figure in the country.

On the other hand, the media that are inclined to support the current government justify its actions and mercilessly criticize the opposition parties. It is more than obvious that the opposition's activities are way more disputed than the governments. The image of the opposition in the pro-government media is extremely negative. So negative that it's hard to imagine a worse media image of a political actor. Of course, the opposite is also true. It is almost inconceivable to have a more negative image of the government than the one which can be seen on the pages of the Serbian weeklies. The composition of the government's negative image is simple and obviously very effective in the opinion polls.

However, there is a number of elements that make up the negative image of the opposition in the media which openly support the authorities.

Lack of popular support, weak or no political potential, burden of poor management of the society, personal wealth-gain of the opposition leaders while in power, rejection of elections and affirmation of the street rallies as a crucial tool for exercising politics, along with the proverbial lack patriotism among the opposition leaders – are main features of opposition leaders in the media which support the government.

Anti-opposition discourse is characterized by a strong negative charge reflected in a personalized form and described by idioms that are, as a rule, beyond the rhetorical rules of decency in public sphere. Thematically speaking, the anti-opposition discourse has largely “fed on” the story of endemic moral imperfection of opposition leaders, their violent and intolerant nature, their tendency to betray national and state interests, and the their lack of competencies manifested during time when they were in power.

The interviewees are selected according to the political-value criteria which correspond to the orientation of the members of the editorial board. There is a noticeable and distinct tendency of repetition of interviewees with the aim of intensifying the effect of the message, both in value and political sense. By repeating the media message, one tends to impose a certain opinion on the readers. This is another important feature of the weekly press.

The interview message has a significant effect – it results with the creation of environment filled with sharp divisions. The repetition frequency of one and the same message, communicated by different interviewees, continuously repeated, creates a certain pattern of opinions and reactions in the readers, forming a relatively firm, almost unquestioned, belief system.

“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. After analysing the print media in Serbia, and 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 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 opening up the space for rational social debate. Thus, anyone can be against anyone, motivated by „their own” reasons which are seldom detectable in the in-depth analysis, and where the arguments of the „other side” rarely serve any purpose.

The spirit of argumentation in the Serbian weeklies, especially the columns and interviews, is characterized by radicalism, political defamation of the opponent and first-class moral exclusivity. 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 condemnatory mode of depicting actors, processes or events.

The front page especially holds an important place for weeklies, for its message is constructed both visually and verbally in the form of an 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. This dynamic unity of a drawing and words serves a strong political-propaganda message. Another important feature of headlines in 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 usually 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 a visible difference also in the intonation of the criticism.

While there is a complete, concrete and fierce criticism of the government in *Vreme* and somewhat *NIN* (especially in the domain of domestic politics and economy), weekly newspapers such as *Novi Magazin* and *Nedeljnik* are characterized by a more moderate tone in expressing critical views. These weeklies also engage less in the rhetoric of accusation and labeling unlike the very influential Serbian weeklies *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.

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.

A special place in the classification and profiling of the weeklies holds the weekly *Ekspres*. It is a weekly newspaper that often rationalizes, clarifies, and ultimately establishes the views of the government structures in a journalistic manner. Unlike the rest of the opposition papers, *Ekspres* does not incline to over-expression of passion nor political exclusivity, which is a strong characteristic of other opposition papers. In terms of foreign policy, *Ekspres* is not strictly anti-European, but it is also not uncritical about Serbia's European path. *Ekspres* also focuses on some important social topics, foreign policy events and political-historical processes from the recent past.

**The image of government - the image of Aleksandar Vučić: authoritarian ruler without liberal-democratic foundation; a politician without democratic and liberal habitus; problematic personality; an extremely amoral and violent imposter, a "seller of national economic resources"; Vučić's rule is fascist, criminal, clientelistic, falsely patriotic.**

The image of Aleksandar Vučić in the vast majority of weekly newspapers is extremely negative. The first man of the Serbian Progressive Party is portrayed with a series of negative labels that are repeated week after week, either reconfirming or adding to the original narrative. The premise for challenging Vučić is the liberal-democratic discourse or, more rarely, the nationalist discourse that dominated the public and political scene in its full capacity over the last decade of the previous century.

The motivation for critical writing about Aleksandar Vučić is dual - personal and political. Politically speaking, all journalists of the opposition media are his angry political opponents, but their political orientation is based on a negative personal obsession with his figure as a first person of Serbian politics.

The following scheme is present in the creation of the negative image of Aleksandar Vučić: 1) a negative, almost miserable characterization of the current historical moment, 2) a distinctly negative assessment of the way in which the state is organized and governed, 3) specified criticism directed at a series of negative social phenomena, most often the affairs which surround the current government representatives. Goran Marković, director and engaged intellectual, gave a deeply miserable, strikingly depressing and mainly nihilistic description of the current situation in the country. In an interview for *Vreme*, he says: "You know, I could have guessed everything, I saw a lot of things throughout my life after all, but that I would live in a country absolutely controlled by a gang of criminals, from which anyone who wants to live normally must leave, in a country of moral freaks, being surrounded

by pornography in everyday life and complete absence of civility – that I could not have guessed. Sometimes I wonder what happened to my homeland, in which I believed, which I loved? Who moved it from here in an unknown direction? How is it possible that prostitutes, primal instincts and greed have become the only things we can see in the landscape before us? Who abolished honesty, honor and empathy and brought in this disgusting creation that now impersonates Serbia? ... The crooks in power are completing their big project - evicting anyone who thinks. It is about one hundred thousand souls a year, this is how much their apparatus can handle."<sup>1</sup>

Marković's exaggeration and nihilism is complemented by bizarre analogies between present-day Serbia, the concentration camps and the communist prison for the dissidents. "I suppose that at the headquarters of that apparatus they carefully study the experiences of the Holocaust, the Soviet gulags and Goli Otok ... For such a small country and its fragile culture, one hundred thousand expelled annually qualifies as success. The goal of keeping only lobotomized slaves in the country is already underway. Then the villains will not only be able to abuse and humiliate the remaining population, but also to finally feel what they were aiming for all along - respect and love. Because, no matter how much they feed themselves on the lobotomized and lost masses who give them support for a piece of bread, they are well aware that they are despised and hated by the free people."<sup>2</sup>

Syntagma on divided reality is one of the favorite messages that portrays the whole of social, political and media life. The frequent repetition of that festive phrase about Serbia in 2019 is one of the common places of radically oppositional discourse. Attorney Ognjen Rašuo strongly emphasizes the dual character of this reality in an open letter to the President of Serbia.

At the core of his depiction is a black and white image of reality, with the emphasis on the two opposing realities which mutually exclude each other: "We live divided between two parallel realities. One is the reality of the never-faster development of the country, the greatest GDP growth in the region, magnificent successes, new highways, airports and factories, renovated streets and squares. In another reality, the institutions of a democratic state either don't exist or have been seized and abused by the authorities; we are falling more and more behind the modern world, which, at least formally, we strive for; asphalt on highways cracks a few weeks after it opens, no airplanes depart from the airport, renovated streets and squares crumble as soon as cameras of pro-government media leave, workers in new factories work in poor conditions for miserable wages, eternally employed under temporary employment contracts, while waste from those same factories poisons their children."<sup>3</sup>

Unlike Rašuo, who links his Manichean image of Serbia to the media, columnist of weekly *Nedeljnik* Zoran Panović emphasizes the dual character of the public sphere in Serbia. His thesis is that Vučić's Serbia represents the vision of Vojislav Šešelj, a leader of the Serbian Radical Party, a political figure who was a close associate of the current president, highly controversial and known for use of vocabulary that substantially violates elementary boundaries of common decency. This mentioning of Šešelj, or more precisely this identification of Vučić and Šešelj, fundamentally questions the modern

<sup>1</sup> Goran Marković, „Puca se na sve što mrda [Everything that moves is being fired upon]," *Vreme*, No. 1487, p. 8

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 9

<sup>3</sup> Ognjen Rašuo, „Oluja u ružičastoj sapunici [Storm in a pink soap-opera]," *Vreme*, No. 1492, p. 14

orientation and European potential of Vučić's rule, reducing it to a copy of Šešelj's model, especially when it comes his addressing of the people and rhetoric that dominated the war years of the 1990s: "Intolerance in Serbian society is such that, ideally, it would be optimal for us to introduce some kind of 'parallel system' that used to exist in Kosovo - that every part of Serbia – Vučić's and Anti-Vučić's – has its own media, its own universities and perhaps its own clinical centers, theaters, cafes, and other public institutions. More and more we can hear that frustration and disgust of anti- Vučić part of the society is so big that they can no longer be in the same room with the 'Progressives'. The regime reaffirmed the tyranny of illusion. After being called out by Vučić, 'pseudo-elite' must become avant-garde in order to be 'true'. Serbia is close to the 'divided corridor' situation that used to exist in Priština. Only without Albanians."<sup>4</sup>

One of Vučić's critics' favorite hypotheses is the anti-intellectualism and intrinsic unworthiness of the president of Serbia to fulfill his state responsibilities, and more precisely the inability of the first man to obey to the Constitution and law. The reasons for his behavior are often sought in the sphere of politics, but analytical "horizons" are also placed in the sphere of psychology and morals. An obvious example of this tendency to create a negative psychological narrative is the article of journalist Tamara Skrozza. The topic of the article is inspired by Vučić's confrontation with two critically-minded professors of the Faculty of Philosophy, Ognjen Radonjić and Jovo Bakić. Related to this conflict, Skrozza unambiguously sides with the professors, denying the right to the first man of the state to even address his critics or reply to their criticism.

Skrozza's supposed asymmetry in the use of freedom of expression also has a hidden political-psychological implication. Vučić is an abuser of President's Office and a violator of Constitution who leads high-level public disputes... "Professors Bakić and Radonjić may have any kind of political views that they wish to have, the president may feel whatever he wants about those views in the privacy of his home, but according to the Constitution, he cannot step in front of the entire nation and say that he despises them or anyone else for that matter. This is unacceptable, unconstitutional, and - if any institutions were functioning in Serbia - should provoke serious debate about the actions of the holders of the highest state power."<sup>5</sup>

In order to convince the people that the main actor of Serbian politics is psychologically and morally unworthy of this function, a comparison is made with the former president Slobodan Milošević, who in the eyes of "civil" Serbia embodies moral and political evil: "Milošević would not dream of addressing his frustration personally to any professor, actor, journalist, analyst or activist. Whatever he was and whatever he did, he was dealing with other issues, among them, war - which at least made him indifferent to individuals. Vučić cannot and does not resist, not just because of circumstances. His ego simply breaks in confrontation with every word of criticism, especially if it comes from someone more knowledgeable and smarter than he is. His need to be the best at everything, even indirectly, especially in the areas where his most vocal critics come from, is overwhelming. His eagerness to

4 Zoran Panović, „Rešeljizacija naprednjaka i javnog prostora [Re-Šešeljization of Progressives and public space],“ *Nedeljnik*, No. 393/394, p. 24

5 Tamara Skrozza, „Njegov ego iznad Ustava i pristojnosti [His ego above Constitution and decency],“ *Vreme*, No. 1487, p. 5

belittle, offend and verbally destroy, is probably stronger than himself.”<sup>6</sup>

It is clear from Skrozza's statements that the problem with Aleksandar Vučić is not political, but deeply psychological. This journalist of *Vreme* placed herself in a privileged position of a political commentator and “psychoanalyst” who unambiguously and categorically challenges the president of Serbia.

A strong and personal negative obsession with the President of Serbia reproduces itself at different levels of critical discourse. An important element of criticism is a strong moral challenge that appears either implicitly or explicitly as one of the motives. The already quoted Ognjen Rašuo, a lawyer and a refugee from Croatia, emphasizes the immoral, more precisely the immoral dimension of Vučić's political habitus. In his text, which takes the form of an open letter, he insists on a complete negation of moral values and sentiments in Vučić's political activities: “My reason for not liking Vučić is not of a vengeful nature, it has nothing to do with a lost homeland or ideology. He believes that power is the whole meaning of politics, I believe that the meaning of politics is to improve the state and its institutions. He believes that it is ok to violate laws and morals in political argumentation, that there are no moral or ethical boundaries, while I believe that it does exist and that it should not be broken for the sake of everyone, and that the higher the office of the person, the higher is their responsibility for the common good. And that's why I don't believe in his soap opera.”<sup>7</sup>

Moral and psychological assumptions of Vučić's inability to perform the presidential function and accept the rule of law and democratic values, the construction of negative narrative about his persona moved to the political and legal terrain. As a part of legal-political analysis of Vučić's government structure and manner of functioning, the positioning of an authoritarian order is reactivated. Thus, sociologist Jovo Bakić thinks that the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, has concentrated all the power in the country in his own hands and is doing whatever he wants. The anti-constitutional and extremely voluntarist system of government that President of Serbia institutionalized is most clearly seen in Bakić's following quote: “We live in a country where the President is absolutely unaware of his constitutional powers, that is, restrictions. Because the Constitution is the constitution of government ... He is everything - both the Prime Minister and the President of the Assembly and the President of the Supreme Court. Basically wherever there are characterless people, he represents them. He is the one who, when necessary, calls out the prosecution for not doing its job, judges when he believes that they have been 'installed by the yellow thieves'. This is something that the president of a country should not do. If we were governed by the principles of a rule of law, the Constitutional Court would hold him accountable, because this is the duty of the Constitutional Court when an executive or legislative authority abuses its power. That court determines when a government violates the Constitution. However, things are deeply disturbing in our country.”<sup>8</sup>

6 Ibid

7 Ognjen Rašuo, „Oluja u ružičastoj sapunici [Storm in a pink soap-opera],“ *Vreme*, No. 1492, p.14

8 Jovo Bakić, „Možda sam ja za njih opasan čovek [Maybe they see me as a dangerous man],“ interview with Radoslav Čebić, *Vreme*, No. 1489, p. 15

Government's decision to suspend the courts is the same as to deem the Parliament pointless, as observed by Nedim Sejdinović. He remarks with contempt that chaos in the Serbian Parliament stems from the moral and psychological profiles of SNS members of the Parliament: "Discrediting the Parliament is among the most important mechanisms used by the government to usurp power and establish absolute domination over its people. Serbian Parliament as it is – a.k.a. a reality show, run by caricatures - goes beyond the wildest dreams of any government, and it holds the secret to why the SNS chose to appoint Maja, Đuka, and Martinović as their MPs; compared to them, even Ana Brnabić leaves an impression of a serious political figure. As it turns out, MPs of the governing majority might not have been assigned to dismantle the Parliament, per se; they could have been told just to act naturally."<sup>9</sup>

Besides the autocratic style of government, another of Aleksandar Vučić's characteristics is an undisguised machiavelism and complete devotion to the preservation and accumulation of power in all its forms: "Vučić neither has a political programme, nor does he respect any value, person or thing; his ultimate goal is to obtain unlimited personal power, with no sanctions to follow. Vučić thus changes his attitudes perpetually; he lies, manipulates, denounces institutions, and the lives of many. His political agenda relies only on the daily research of public opinion polls and the group focus, using it as a means to manipulate the public opinion. Therefore, if research indicates the need for false promises, he makes them; if it asks for a statement against the USA or EU, he appoints his associates or tabloids to do the work; when the public image of friendship with Russia seems productive, he uses all his sources to glorify Vladimir Putin; confronted with the increased ratings for opposition parties, he calls them fascists and traitors; when research asks for a profile of a political opponent able to win the fair elections, he organizes media slander of the selected candidate; when the group focus indicates increased public discontent due to corruption, he stage-manages arrests."<sup>10</sup>

Zelenović's radical nihilist perspective on the current government is closely followed by the attitude of a politically engaged director Stevan Filipović, who claims that the current government run by Aleksandar Vučić is no more than a link between the political elite and criminal groups. „Authoritarian societies are traditionally marked by weak political opposition. Local variations of authoritarianism have been defined as the 'post-communist mafia states' by sociologist Balint Magyar, who refers to them as 'the state in which the leader and his clan assume control over all available state resources for personal gain and profit'. Putin's Russia or Orban's Hungary are good examples. The answer to the first question therefore lies in the nature of Vučić's regime, actually a private business-mafia endeavour, inside a pyramid composed of all members of the SNS (over 700,000, or 1/10 of our population); the pyramid involves their distant and close relatives, going all the way up to the top and the man sitting on it. To ensure the survival of such an economy model, and secure that the whole pyramid is fed, one needs to grab every possible asset within the public sector and, preferably, eliminate all witnesses in the process. The very idea of parliamentarism, government control and strong political opposition are in direct confrontation with the nature of the SNS's business endeavours."<sup>11</sup>

9 Nedim Sejdinović, „Čemu ovo služi, a uz to i ne radi? [What does this do, and it doesn't even work?]” *Vreme*, No. 1489, p. 21

10 Nebojša Zelenović, „Tehnologija Vučićeve vladavine [The technology of Vučić's reign],” *NIN*, No. 3582, p. 9

11 Stefan Filipović, „Gde je zapelo [What's the problem],” conversation with Vesna Mališić, *NIN*, No. 3576, p. 19



NIN, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019

While Filipović engages in outspoken criminalization of the government, deeming it a morally evil political plague, politicologist Filip Balunović stigmatizes the president of Serbia, connecting the current government style to the fascist political thought and pattern. His rhetorical elaboration seeks rational support in the concept of fascism developed by Umberto Eco, which is used as a mere supplement, a bedrock in the support of his attitude, a certain rhetorical “accessory” to the authority which approves a politically-inspired propaganda. Moralistic stance of the ambitious politicologist finds additional support in an open public letter to the president of Serbia, so characteristic of the “petitionist”, liberal opposition style, observed in the era of the communist regime and the regime of Slobodan Milošević: “Mr. President, fascism is the ideology in the core of which lies ‘contempt for the weak’, often in the form of chauvinism, or contempt for a ‘weaker nation’. Listing the properties of fascist ideology, Umberto Eco remarks the all-encompassing intrinsic phenomenon of fascism, encouraging all to despise their underlings and thereby create an overall sense of popular elitism. I have to say that many properties of fascism are recognizable in our government. However, they are not embodied in one man, or even a group of people, but built deeply into the roots of our society; it is a paranoid society, prone to conspiracy theories, occupied in re-inventing our tradition, where any disagreement with the dominant interpretation of the past or present is automatically viewed as treason. Furthermore, it is a noticeably macho society, built on the postulates of a ‘newspeech’, defined by Eco as promotion of using ‘an impoverished vocabulary and basic syntax in order to limit critical reasoning’. Nevertheless, I fear that the bulk of fascist properties found in the segments of our society have been laid down far earlier than the time when they were first exhibited by our president. They were established at the time when he sought comfort in nationalism, counted blood cells, and drew maps of a country which belongs to the ‘superior Serbian people’.”<sup>12</sup>

The citation shows that Vučić’s characteristic conduct to the political persons and the media is based on a crude sense of nationalism. The thesis about nationalism as the background of Vučić’s psychological, moral, and communicative understanding of politics questions in essence any effort made by the president of Serbia to accept the process of modernization and Europeanisation of our society. Modernised European concept of Vučić’s politics is merely a facade concealing fascist ideology and its corresponding practice.

The exact same “repressive potential” of Vučić’s government style is also noted by the historian Dubravka Stojanović. Her attitudes are similar to Balunović’s, inasmuch as SNS and Vučić are observed as proponents of the right-wing populist ideology embodied in their charismatic leader, Aleksandar Vučić.

Non-tolerance is shown to political opponents: “The fundamental aim is to humiliate, scrutinize, and destroy any competition, demolish pluralism and, finally, create only one voice, the voice of the people. A political opponent can only be regarded as an enemy in this system, and this is what keeps the society constantly on the verge of civil war, creates enormous insecurity and prevents stabilisation.”<sup>13</sup>

12 Filip Balunović, „Odgovor na predsednikovo pismo [The answer to the President’s letter],“ *Vreme*, No. 1489, p. 17

13 Dubravka Stojanović, „Vlast gura društvo u sukob [The government drives the society into conflict],“ interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3575, p. 8

Populist political and cultural pattern is carved into the dominant trends of Serbian political tradition. SNS is a logical historical and political extension of the People’s Radical Party, established by Nikola Pašić, a spiritual and political relative of the modern anti-liberal national-populist leaders, such as Donald Trump, the president of the USA, or Viktor Orbán, the president of Hungary. “I usually refer to Serbia as an avantgarde of populism, since from the moment when the People’s Radical Party won supremacy over the political life, a populist discourse has been established so as to ‘egg on’ people on the elite. It is a typical form of political speech, as we would refer to it today, used against the establishment by everyone – from Trump to Orbán, or Erdoğan to Putin. The speech is fake, however, as everything else in populism is, because the moment a populist government takes the reign, populism transforms into establishment; it seizes power, devours institutions, terminates procedures, and stifles the state to suit its own needs. For this reason Vučić ‘rails against’ elite, assuming the role of the representative of ‘the voice of the people’, the interpreter of the popular will, which is one of the hallmarks of populism.”<sup>14</sup>

Dubravka Stojanović’s retrospect of the historical foundation of the SNS has been adorned by the analysis of broader spiritual tendencies immanent to the Serbian culture, as spoken of by the lawyer Slobodan Beljanski: “We are a squalid society; steered clear of by the renaissance and the age of rationalism, we touched the age of enlightenment from afar. Democracy has always been a programme rather than political reality, with pseudoromantism prevailing over our collective consciousness, not as the source of freedom but slavery to myths and emotions, much like the fall of freedom under the reigns of bigotry... To an intellectual who naturally seeks independence, this society resembles forced exile. Spinoza considered that everyone has an inalienable right over his thoughts. The stance was followed by Popper, who concluded that freedom of thought cannot exist unless it is critical, while critical thinking can only be established in dialogue. Left to himself, man cannot think critically as he cannot check himself. Confrontation of opinions does not exist in our society; if expressed, different opinions are ridiculed. Anyone who publicly expresses criticism risks public scrutiny and slander. In this society, almost no critical thinking develops through public dialogue; this in turn indicates there is no freedom.”<sup>15</sup> The deep, allegedly spiritual reasons, and liberal-democratic deficit, lead to idealisation of the governments of different political groups that emerged from the anti-Milošević’s coalition DOS.

Nostalgia for the ‘Fifth of October Republic’ is the political response to the current situation; it indirectly suggests that the change is feasible and necessary. Affirmation of nostalgia for the Serbia from 2001-2012 is clearly the subtext of the article written by the journalist of the weekly *Vreme*, Teofil Pančić: “...Serbian ‘Fifth of October Republic’, which existed in 2000-2012, could have been a historical incident or a one-time exception, an experiment that the local voting body carried out at a specific moment of desperation, only to be intimidated by its own courage and seek swift termination shortly after. This may well be why the post-October government was constantly probed into and harshly criticised for their smallest mistakes, while the other type of government has been let to torment and

14 Ibid, p. 9

15 Slobodan Beljanski, „Poslednji dani odbrane pred najezdom zla [The last days of defense against the onslaught of evil],“ interview with Nedim Sejdinović, *Vreme*, No. 1497

harrow, kill and loot its own people without limits, and almost without an end.”<sup>16</sup>

While many critics accuse president Aleksandar Vučić of “scolding” and “insulting” political figures and public intellectuals by his rigid political stance, thereby blocking any social dialogue, director Igor Vuk Torbica insists that the dialogue between the government and the opposition, as well as political opponents in general, is unnecessary; the democratic forces need to employ a suitable, to use the adequate polemic term, but effective political activism in order to bring the untouchable government positions under scrutiny: “No dialogue is needed or possible at this moment, only mechanisms to completely disengage from the story told by Vučić. For this to happen, people familiar with the concept of telling stories should be consulted, because only a different, better story can lead to the disposal of the previous one, and make people turn from one content to the other.

The beginning would be to unleash the language, because it is within the language that the key parts of this battle are fought, which is exactly what professor Bakic has done. Discarding the adorning adjectives, he focuses and adds a joke or two to a dose of reality. He has started using real terms, not in a creative, but in the crude, basic level, and he has become dangerous. One man can be more dangerous than a crowd breaking into RTS. If we are serious in our call for change, we should start applying the exact same system with no display of any verbal acrobatic skills – we should call an impostor ‘an impostor’, scum ‘a scum’, mafia ‘mafia’; we should label their politics monstrous, and repeat it constantly.”<sup>17</sup>

Torbica transforms his own astoundment and discomfort to a discourse that justifies the hate speech used in abundance by the radically-inclined government critics with nihilistic aspirations. Torbica’s “liberation” of language rhetorically and semantically complies with radically political verbal violence of the former provincial prime minister and leader of the Democratic Party, Bojan Pajtić. The former DS leader keeps repeating the stereotype about Vučić as the president who made a deal with the West and traded Kosovo for the establishment and maintenance of power, including the possibility of a voluntary governing style.

Pajtić’s interpretation of the political dynamics in the relations between Serbia and the West is noted in his ritual interview for the weekly *Vreme*, given every two to three months, in which he pours out political advice to the current government: “To the foreign political establishment, as well as the foreign investors in Serbia, Vučić is an ideal ‘executor’. Having been blackmailed due to his war-provoking political past and the criminal present, he is an ideal candidate to the Western political establishment. The tragedy of Serbia is that, during difficult times in its history, it has been led by a blackmailed man. Vučić is an ideal man to pull out the logistics and return the assets taken out of the country by the regime in 90’s, in the form of ‘foreign capital’. Who would protect them better than the person who was the minister during that political establishment?”<sup>18</sup>

16 Teofil Pančić, „Siriza i pouke za Srbiju [Siriza and the lessons for Serbia],“ *Vreme*, No. 1488, p. 19

17 Igor Vuk Torbica, „Preko nas trenutno prelazi galopirajući voz [We are being hit by a high-speed train],“ interview with Dragan Jovičević, *NIN*, No. 3575, p. 20

18 Bojan Pajtić, „Srbijom vlada ucenjen čovek [Serbia is led by a blackmailed man],“ *Vreme*, No. 1495, p. 13



Vreme, 29<sup>th</sup> August 2019

The president has been blackmailed for these reasons. He pays his redemption by turning in Kosovo and Serbian resources to foreigners, regardless of being identified with Šešelj by the Western politicians. Although such identification has never been mentioned, Pajtić is not concerned about the facts, but develops his political narrative unrestrained by scruples and reason, holding onto his main inspiration - the negative obsession with the president of Serbia. The core of his attitudes is pronouncedly negative and it resides in a perpetual campaign of remembrance. Pajtić denies Vučić's euro-reformative potential and highlights his war-period nationalist activity. Mentally and politically conserved, the former leader of the democrats portrays an extremely negative image: "Vučić has been blackmailed for his warmongering past and due to his important role in spreading multiethnic hatred and inciting the war. He could have ended up in The Hague just like Šešelj did. The sins of Aleksandar Vučić are no less severe than those of Šešelj. On the contrary, it was not Šešelj who said that a hundred Muslims should be executed in place of one Serb. Based on his political activity in the 90's, Vučić could have become the resident of The Hague as well, but it was estimated that, as a blackmailed leader he could offer far more concessions than Boris Tadić, a pro-European politician whose political past was not problematic."<sup>19</sup>

After the ideological and pseudo-scientific disqualifications shared in an apparently clear though a very loud manner, the critical discourse keeps developing in a continuous stigmatization founded on the criminalization of government individuals, as well as the entire political, legal, social, and economic system of Serbia.

Unconcealed criticism and contribution to fierce antagonization of the public opinion was given by Dragan Đilas, leader of the opposition Party of Freedom and Justice. Consciously exaggerating, Đilas literally claims that every criminal in Serbia serves President Aleksandar Vučić: "There is not a criminal in Serbia who does not perform some work for the government; even parts of the Serbian Police supported one drug cartel against another. Under the circumstances of a violent atmosphere created by the current government, anything is possible, even to regard our liquidation as a service to the country. The one creating such atmosphere is responsible for the outcome."<sup>20</sup>

Construction of the negative image through criminalization went from the general to the specific level. The typical example of criminalization tied to the state politics is corruption, and the most explicit example, as viewed by the opposition press, occurred in July – September 2019, in the form of the well-known affair "Krušik".

Krušik Holding Corporation, with the headquarters in Valjevo, is a Serbian state-owned company for the production of defense and civil-related equipment, operating in Serbia and abroad. The company received media attention due to affairs over export of mortar shells into Saudi Arabia by the private company "GIM", from Belgrade. The shells in question were transferred from Saudi Arabia to Yemen, where civil war between the divided military fractions is underway. According to the findings of Serbian, Bulgarian, and American reporters, the Serbian-produced shells ended in the hands of Islamic

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 13

<sup>20</sup> Dragan Đilas, „U atmosferi linča moguća su i ubistva [In the atmosphere of lynch, murders are possible],“ interview with Vera Didanović, *NIN*, No. 3578, p. 10

fundamentalists. Serbian weapons in the hands of Islamic extremists project a negative image to the world, one which undermines an already fragile credibility that Serbia established in international relations. Broader international perspective of the disastrous affair "Krušik" was spoken of by the former Chief of the General Staff and the current deputy of the opposition People's Party, founded by Vuk Jeremić: "Involvement of Serbian companies in international arms trade, while the weapons in question ended in the regions stricken by the civil war, in the hands of extreme Islamic military groups, creates the whole new dimension and does colossal damage to the Serbian international reputation. There is no need for detailed elaboration as to why the great forces of the world, when supporting one of the opposing sides at war, take great precautions not to leave visible traces in their weapon supply. Yet it was none other than Vučić's regime that chose to involve Serbia in a dirty affair conducted for another country's sake and Vučić's own interest, as it is clear that Serbian interests were not taken into account. They were also not important when Serbian passport was issued to Yingluck Shinawatra, the former prime-minister of Thailand, for whom an international arrest warrant had been issued."<sup>21</sup>

Several accounts are questionable in the entire story about the mortar ammunition trade, first and foremost the amount of profit gained by "GIM" as a result of difference in price between the three business partners. In fact, "GIM" had purchased the weapon from "Krušik" for a very low price. Secondly, "GIM" sold the cheap goods for a significantly higher price to their Saudi Arabian partner. The story would not have been remotely interesting had it not had a potentially dangerous and morally scandalous epilogue and context. Namely, the circulating accusations include trading in influence, nepotism, destruction of the state-owned company, and profit gained by the private company closely connected to the minister Nebojša Stefanović, an important person in the governing system of president Vučić, an influential SNS member, and current minister of internal affairs.

An 'eye-poking' circumstance, according to the spokesmen engaged in public promotion of the affair, is the increase in profit of the private company "GIM", as well as the role that Branko Stefanović, father of the minister of internal affairs Nebojša Stefanović had in the affair. The notion of father and son both engaged in a state-business affair is disputable, as the license to export products of the defense industry to private companies had been personally approved by the minister Nebojša Stefanović. The son had therefore given approval and enabled participation in a highly profitable business deal to the company that employed his father as the business advisor; as a result of this and other transactions, loss of the state defense industry inevitably follows. Interestingly, the task of "focusing attention" in the media to the rise in profits by the private company "GIM" was assigned to the former chief of the Military Security Agency and an SNS member, Momir Stojanović. Stojanović accused his former political comrades in the radically anti-government weekly *NIN*. Momir Stojanović regards the rise in profits of "GIM" not only as personal gain, but financial aid to the SNS: "From the modest beginnings as a paint shop, GIM has become one of the leading exporters of arms. Arms and military equipment sales in Serbia are a non-transparent trade, almost completely under control of the SNS. This has been confirmed in the most recent case, one involving Branko Stefanović, father of the minister of the

<sup>21</sup> Zdravko Ponoš, „Otac, sin i kum sveti u trgovini oružjem [Father, son and the holy godfather in weapon trade],“ interview with Davor Lukač, *Vreme*, No. 1499, p. 10

police; so, according to experts doubts exist that the money in question is used to finance the party.”<sup>22</sup>

The minister’s role in the affair was directly, if not aggressively spoken of by Milan Ćulibrk, whose tone and style of reporting indicate the absence of even an overall journalist observation, but instead offers a tailor-made answer aimed at discrediting the Stefanović family, Serbian government, and the whole political establishment in power.

Ćulibrk serves as an example of an “engaged journalist”: “How large is the government’s responsibility for having Branko Stefanović reveal his sense of business right before retirement? Why does the minister of the police deny his fathers ownership of an arm trading company although *NIN* discovered that United BG, founded by Stefanović senior, owns the license to export arms? Is it a conflict of interest if a father requests such permission from his son? Did the latest affair involve corruption, influence peddling, or another criminal offense? How did the Telekom employee negotiate an arm trade deal? For whom do the Serbian state officials work – private companies or the state-run company Yugoimport? Why did the profit of GIM increase by 3.146 times in the past three years, while export of Yugoimport has been cut in half? Is it GIM who owns exclusive rights to trade arms and military equipment without payment in advance? Does the arm trade require family and political relations?”<sup>23</sup>

The aim of the text is understandable – to discredit the government by posing a seemingly sensible set of questions, accompanied by ideology and daily politics. The primary “target” was the Stefanović family, and private companies that exported the weapons, but they were not the only ones. The true “target” is Aleksandar Vučić. The demonstrated strategy is an attack at Vučić; it was conducted by stirring a negative campaign, aimed at the people in close proximity to the president.

Portrayal of the government of Aleksandar Vučić – who seized all power, regardless of constitutional and legal permissions – as the autocracy of a psychologically and morally questionable man was accompanied by devaluation of the economic results achieved by the government of Serbia.

Destructive rhetoric has been used to bring into question the official state narrative about the Serbian economic progress. The government of the SNS led by Vučić sells away Serbian economic resources to foreigners, while the establishment of a legal framework to support Serbian investors has been inadequate. Likewise, economic growth is not based on stable national economic potentials, but positive trends, also insufficiently utilized, of the international economy. Besides the devaluation of economic results, reaffirmation of economic policies from the era 2008-2012 is underway. Truth be told, media reaffirmation of former prime-minister Cvetković aims to relativize the fact of utter failure of his government during the global economy crisis, rather than glorify its accomplishments and results.

Economic “treason” of Serbia carried out by Aleksandar Vučić reflects in expensive and irrational business arrangements that the government closes with foreign companies, but also an extreme level of migration of the active highly-educated population to the countries of Western Europe. A certain

22 Vuk Cvijić, „Oružje u rukama stranačkih vojnika [Weapon in the hands of party soldiers],” conversation with Momir Stojanović and Aleksandar Radić, *NIN*, No. 3587, p. 14

23 Milan Ćulibrk, „Kako su Stefanovići minirali državu [How the Stefanović’s mined the country],” *NIN*, No. 3587, p. 8

“reward” to Aleksandar Vučić are “open doors” to all European capitals, and a possibility to present himself as the statesman who establishes and maintains friendly relations with all leaders in Europe and the world.

This segment of our economic reality is directly referred to by Dragan Đilas, leader of the opposition Party of Freedom and Justice: “Vučić has a good foreign policy and he is welcome everywhere because he sells Serbia away. He takes a 3.5-billion loan from the Chinese, makes business contracts without tenders and gives Bor as a present. He gave the railway to the Russians without tender process. American Behtel was contracted for the construction of the highway, which not only is unnecessary, but the deal was closed for an unrealistic price of 800 million euros. The French got the airport, while their company Suez signed one of the most catastrophic contracts for this country. The Belgrade waste incinerator was financed with 1.5 billion euros. At the same time, Vučić and his government maintain salary levels ridiculously low, so knowledgeable people leave and go to Europe, where they are welcomed with open arms. Did you know that the Germans educate only a third of the required medical staff annually, because they import the remaining two thirds? Observed from that perspective, it becomes clear why Vučić is so suitable for many.”<sup>24</sup>

Contracts devastating to the country, but lucrative for foreign companies, low price of labour for the citizens of Serbia, along with high profit and subsidies for foreign investors but an absence of equal treatment for local investors, are the very image of the current Serbian economic policy. Opposition claims, continuously replicated for the past seven years, aim to question the narrative and disturb the image of an economically prosperous Serbia.

Further development of the “critical attitude” to the current government is closely connected to the position of our country in the global economy game; however, opposition parties have always been sceptical to the prospect of establishing a salubrious industrial climate in Serbia. The inability to attract Serbian investors has been depicted in the text written by journalist of *Novi magazin*, Mijat Lakićević, who regards the absence of a legal framework as an obstacle to the development of Serbian industry, meanwhile indirectly criticizing the policy of granting subsidies to foreign investors: “This government has been well-known for not abiding by the law; however, such an unrestrained contempt for legality has not been shown in a long time. Serbian people recognize that, of course. So, can Vučić’s (and Ana’s?) government use enormous subsidies and other privileges to bribe foreigners into investing in Serbia? It can also take loans and invest on its own, or impose high taxes to collect the money from the citizens and the industry, and then share it through investments, or salaries and pensions. However, Vučić’s government keeps failing to motivate Serbian investors, and it is for this reason that total investment rate is low and economy growth rate has barely exceeded 2% in the past two years. Moreover, IMF predicts an increase in GDP by only 3.5 % in the next five-year period, which is far below the rate promised by Vučić.”<sup>25</sup>

24 Dragan Đilas, „Bojkot, zato što pod ovakvim terorom ne možemo da smenimo vlast [Boycott, because government cannot be replaced under this terror],” *Novi magazin*, No. 430, p. 12

25 Mijat Lakićević, „Novi investicioni cirkus [The new investment circus],” *Novi magazin*, No. 427, p. 11



Novi magazin, 22nd August 2019

Lakićević's analysis has put forward a claim that the growth rates promised by the Serbian president are not realistic, thus no dynamic and intensive growth can occur. Radically doubting the prospect of economic growth and achieved results, the current media research also included the idea of Mirko Cvetković's government reaffirmation.

Dr. Miloško Arsić, professor at the Faculty of Economics in Belgrade and advisor to the former prime-minister Mirko Cvetković, opines that the narrative about Cvetković's government, which deems it highly controversial and utterly incompetent, does not take into sufficient account the circumstances surrounding the global economy crisis, nor the results of the former government. Meanwhile, he points to the structural barriers faced by Serbia in the process of economic growth. The barriers are political or, to be precise, closely tied to foreign and internal policies.

On the one hand, unresolved issues exist concerning state borders, as well as the unambiguous orientation to the EU displayed by the government's foreign policy. On the other, the "development obstacle" has been erected due to the domination of politics over state-run companies, incapable of becoming an important resource in the industrial recovery due to inefficient management.

"I believe that the key problem of this political system lies in the inopportune international position of our country. Industrial and economic policies have been developed according to the political processes, so their characteristics depend on the prevailing political system. Inequity in the political system reflects on the industry. Much like inequity found between the political parties in political processes, companies also have an unequal position in the industry. One-party system formed in the political processes has been very inefficient and it is accompanied by a high level of corruption. Additional complication stems from the disadvantageous position of Serbia in international relations, but it has been faced with by all the Serbian governments during the past several decades. Unsympathetic view of Serbia is largely due to the question of Kosovo and Metohia, unresolved issues with the neighbouring countries, slow process of EU integration, and a complicated geostrategic position; therefore, modification of the political system and improvement of Serbian international reputation is the prerequisite for long-term prosperity of its industry."<sup>26</sup>

Arsić gives a comprehensive overview of the figures representing the degree of fall in different European economies, with special focus on the rates of economic decrease in the former socialist countries. From the perspective of decrease in GDP, during the government of Mirko Cvetković Serbia had a lower decrease rate compared to the former socialist republic average, and European average in general, according to Eurostat. On the other hand, the period 2012–2018 was marked by more favourable trends in European economy, which were insufficiently used by the Serbian economy for growth purposes. For example, decrease in GDP by 2.7% was recorded in 2009, symbolizing the downfall of Cvetković's government. However, at the time the average decrease of GDP was 4.8% in Europe and 7% in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In 2009, data on GDP growth recorded by Eurostat in 37 countries, revealed GDP growth in only 9 countries. Even Western European countries recorded decrease by about 5%, while the Baltic countries had a 14-15% lower GDP. In the whole period 2008-2012, in spite of many obstacles, the government had an annual decrease in economic activity of

26 Miloško Arsić, „Mirko je bio bolji [Mirko was better],“ conversation with Miloško Arsić, *Novi magazin*, No. 428, p. 18

0.2%, which is less than the average 0.4% in Central and Eastern Europe. In 2012-2018 global economic climate had significantly improved compared to the period of crisis – interest rates are now at their historical minimum, plenty of cheap capital is on offer, and as the European economies grow stronger, so does the demand for our products.”<sup>27</sup>

Review of economic policy was also made by Boris Tadić, the former president of Serbia. “Vučić relies on the byproducts of positive trends in the international economy, using them to conceal complete financial incompetence and the failure of his government. Global economy trends are at their peak observing the last two decades; if under these circumstances Serbia is the lowest-positioned country in the region, considering almost every economic parameter, imagine what our reality would be if Vučić had governed the country during my mandate, at the time of the largest world economy crisis.”<sup>28</sup>

Tadić supports his theses by throwing into question the quality of foreign and domestic investments in Serbia. Instead of sophisticated investments into high-tech businesses, investments are nowadays made into industries which are not particularly technologically advanced, and thus enable employment of low-priced labour force represented by the poorly educated population: “The key precondition to the development of Serbia is attracting high-tech investments, because they secure the component of know-how in the price of the final product. Since 2012, we have not had the investments as we used to during my mandate when Serbia was among the top three countries in the region according to all economic parameters, under unprecedented global economic circumstances.”<sup>29</sup>

Tadić concludes the negative narrative of the current government’s economic policies, with the statement that Serbia utilizes favourable international financial situation so poorly that the rate of economic growth is too low, considering not only the very potentials of the country, but also the countries in the region. The performance of this government, despite the pompous state propaganda, has been more than unremarkable, as stated by the former president of Serbia: “Under current perfect conditions, Serbia is still at the bottom. Only the notorious political coward and a populist liar such as Vučić can compare one year of GDP decrease, occurring at the time of the largest world economy crisis, with the years when pathetic increase was achieved in time of ideal economic circumstances.”<sup>30</sup>

The citations taken from the interviews with Arsić and Tadić, as well as the stance taken by the columnist Mijat Lakićević, encapsulate all criticism of government economic policies. Slow development of the rule of law, widespread corruption, weak incentives for domestic entrepreneurs, subsidies to foreign companies, the quality of foreign investments, and substantial dependence on economic trends of the European and world economy are the key objections to government policies. These remarks are in sharp contrast to the official progressivist economic narrative that dominates the media with national coverage and pro-government daily newspapers.

27 Ibid, p. 19

28 Boris Tadić, „Današnja Srbija je ostvarenje Šešeljevog sna [Serbia today is Šešelj’s dream come true],” interview with Veljko Lalić, *Nedeljnik*, No. 400, p. 26

29 Ibid, p. 27

30 Ibid, p. 27

One of the cornerstones of media representation and political legitimization is the general opinion that the government of SNS and Aleksandar Vučić is supported by the majority of Serbian citizens. Proved on numerous occasions during elections and included in numerous research studies, the democratic legitimization of the governing political party and their leader is regarded as indisputable.

Within the scope of a perpetual intention of political propaganda to challenge unconditionally all that represents or holds legitimate power, survey of the public opinion has been conducted by the journal *Nova srpska politička misao* (*New Serbian Political Thought*). Editor-in-chief of the journal and an opposition Parliament member Đorđe Vukadinović ever so often presents himself as a political analyst for the purpose of lending reasonable media plausibility to his attitudes. Parliament member of the opposition a.k.a. political analyst “objectively” interprets public opinion polls able to register specific trends in the public opinion. The trends are never in favour of the opposition, considering that all survey variants, including the research carried out by the journal *Nova srpska politička misao*, reveal unambiguous voting supremacy of the government led by the SNS and Vučić.

Authenticity of support to Vučić by the majority of the politically determined Serbian voters should be questioned, firstly by relativisation and undermining the significance of the figures in favour of his support, and absence of support to the political actors. In an attempt to relativise the obvious SNS supremacy in the public eye, an allegation has been made about the “shallow” support of SNS, which Aleksandar Vučić is deeply aware of.

Vukadinović makes this confusing and uncheckable pseudo-maneuver, packed in a superficial and yet intense, cheap political malice, in the following outline of his text: “No matter how glorious or politically and statistically sovereign SNS might seem, in essence, it is no more than a papier-mâché tiger, a gigantic ‘genetically modified’ organism incapable of independent political existence. Vučić understands this better than anyone else. Besides, he is aware of his dependence on the foreign, above all Western support, regardless of taking cautious steps in trying to limit this dependence. He remembers clearly the swift and easy destruction of Tadić’s political fortress which also seemed powerful and undefeatable at the time. Therefore, notwithstanding the public and parliamentary heroism of his vedettas, or the verbal and ideological revision of the elements constituting the fifth-October political upturn, Vučić otherwise refrains from an open challenge of the global centres of power, often showing them exaggerated and almost irritating condescension.”<sup>31</sup>

In order to further discredit SNS and Vučić, Vukadinović makes an intellectually demanding endeavour to map a set of reasons in favour of choosing this political option. The “cocktail” made of fear, hope and ideological orthodoxy, basically opts for Vučić and SNS. According to Vukadinović, in spite of undeniable results achieved by president Vučić and the Serbian government, the conglomerat of interests and political fanaticism are the sole motivation and grounds for decisionmaking for the people of Serbia. Therefore, just as officials, members and supporters are a part of the political phalanx, the voters are uninformed and indoctrinated mercenaries or intimidated little people concerned only for their bare survival. Vukadinović’s exegesis of the public opinion fits into the stereotype about SNS as a leadership-oriented, authoritarian and populist party, which uses social and national demagoguery and

31 Đorđe Vukadinović, „U raljama nemoći [Inside the jaws of impotence],” *Vreme*, No. 1491, p. 17

draws their popularity from the symbiotic relationship with their charismatic leader and control of the media and other politically relevant resources: “Support for the governing party (aka Vučić) has long not been the matter of rational political choice, but a flammable cocktail made of fear, hope, a cult-like ‘orthodoxy’ and, most of all, the belief that there is no other candidate, or that all other political options and candidates are ‘far worse’, so it comes as no surprise that even after seven years, across the media and in the Parliament, the government still vilifies the opposition as ‘responsible for what is happening’, rather than, for example, promoting their own positive results.”<sup>32</sup>

In addition to the mentioned set of reasons, the decision to opt for SNS and Vučić results from the “double jeopardy” played by this party and their leader in the public and political sphere. On the one hand, the pro-government media, above all the tabloids, insist on pro-Russian and prominently Serbian patriotic narrative. On the other hand, the real Serbian policy aims to bring Serbia closer to the EU: “There is serious pro-Russian narrative in the tabloids, completely in contrast to the official policy of the state. In other words, Vučić does not speak about it openly, but does so indirectly, through media. I believe that it is meant to attract former Serbian Radical Party voters, who are openly against the West. Vučić uses his position – moving towards the EU as slowly as possible – to cooperate in resolving the issue of Kosovo, with the support of all the Western countries; at the same time, he maintains excellent relations with Russia and the media makes this narrative appealing to the pro-Russian voters. I would not say that he balances, but that he uses advantages of both sides.”<sup>33</sup>

By controlling the media, the president of Serbia has managed to impose as the leader supporting both the pro-European and pro-Russian path, although Russia and the West have been strongly antagonized on a global level, reminiscent of the days of the Cold War. Transformations from the pro-European to the pro-Russian leader, back and forth, and casual remarks at the expense of one or the other major world power, have not managed to inflict serious damage to either Vučić’s personal popularity or the ratings of his party. Tight coupling of ratings and SNS media domination has been observed by Dragoljub Žarković: “According to the survey of the public opinion, the inconsistency and prudery have not been detrimental to the ratings of Aleksandar Vučić; it will likely remain so, as long as he holds power over Serbian media, and an ability to fabricate emergency situations on a daily basis, constructed to mask the essence or divert attention from past events if they no longer suit Vučić’s interests.”<sup>34</sup>

The monopoly over the media stirs intensive and dynamic propaganda, with the aim to denounce political opponents. Deliberately exaggerating, certain reporters regard the harsh, direct propaganda, conducted by the SNS and Aleksandar Vučić, as a special war. The term has been used on purpose, to present the polemic between the opposing parties as warfare between enemies.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 18

<sup>33</sup> Boban Stojanović, „Vučić nije više u istoj poziciji [Vučić is no longer in the same position],” interview with Radmilo Marković, *Vreme*, No. 1491, p. 16

<sup>34</sup> Dragoljub Žarković, „Ušao majmun u tenak – Artiljerijska priprema za jesenji obračun političkih aktera je počela, uz sasluženje Dejvida Mekalistera i optužbe da je namešten tender za izgradnju Moravskog koridora [The monkey entered the tank - Artillery preparation for an autumn political showdown began with the concelebration of David McAllister and charges that the tender for the Morava corridor construction was fake],” *Vreme*, No. 1495, p. 5

The projected image of the public that is overburdened by polemics with high political intensity, so similar to war, intends to accuse the government of creating a deeply divided society. Only one side exists, one pole of the political spectrum that attacks, insults, disparages, accuses, erodes the moral code, and hinders politically-inspired debates. Both the opposition and critical journalists are mere victims of the government-ruled media, the politicians from the governing party, and capillary public which supports Vučić’s campaign. Slobodan Georgiev, journalist of the weekly *Vreme* and head of *BIRN* puts forward the thesis about a “special war”, led by the government against the opposition and the critical media. His political onesidedness and ideological exclusivity is observed in the following lines: „Serbia is in some sort of a special war, led by the regime against all opponents who think, speak or act differently than Vučić and his crew. As described and witnessed on so many occasions, the media play a vital role in this war. False news, false media, false reporters, and false analysts have overtaken Serbian informative media space. According to the paradigm of the former KOS (Counter-intelligence service), the sole purpose of the media is to serve as a propaganda weapon in the hands of those in power.”<sup>35</sup>

Vučić’s propaganda is not only aggressive and harsh, but ideologically baffling, logically inconsistent, semantically dubious, politically incoherent. According to academician Vladica Cvetković, the political, moral and public “obscurity” of Vučić’s propaganda is such that one wonders how an average Serbian media consumer survives the interaction with the most important Serbian media. Academician Cvetković reveals his lapidary observation in the next lines: “I personally find the media aspect of Vučić’s government the worst... What I see clearly, without any prompting from the opposition, is a socio-psychologically destructive mechanism Vučić has been using for years. Such a degree of overindulging his supporters and humiliation on both his and their part, with such mixture of lies and the truth, absence of elementary logic, and contradiction even between the neighbouring sentences, accompanied by theatrical opinionating on all possible topics and an occasional whine, as though he were the most disadvantaged participant of political life in Serbia; all of it would seem impossible and even intolerable, had it not been the exact thing we had seen and endured before.”<sup>36</sup>

Cvetković summarizes the opposition narrative of the media. The Serbian media are the “kingdom of lies, deceit and illusion”. Their destructive potential is huge. They demonize and stigmatize on behalf of one man and his reign.

One of the primary motives for the construction of negative image of Serbia in 2019, and creation of the essentially negative image of the government is migration of the highly-educated younger population. “Serbia is a country with no potential, a destination which should be deserted”, is the syntagm that describes the state of the country so clearly and unambiguously, and elicits the government to take responsibility for the economic and demographic process occurring in the whole region. Economic reasons are treated with equal importance as the political and moral ones, achieving thus the propaganda effect of the first degree. The story of the imminent departure is the semantic and rhetorical counterpoint to the idea of Serbian progress, which is in the essence of official propaganda the past

<sup>35</sup> Slobodan Georgiev, „Kako je pukovnik Karan pobedio u specijalnom ratu protiv Srbije [How colonel Karan won the special war against Serbia],” *Vreme*, No. 1491, p. 8

<sup>36</sup> Vladica Cvetković, „Šangajska lista u zemlji plagijata i kupljenih diploma [Shanghai list in the land of plagiarism and purchased diplomas],” interview with Jelena Jorgačević, *Vreme*, No. 1496

few years after abolition of fiscal consolidation measures and the increase of salaries and pensions.

The case of Miodrag Stojković, MD, the famous geneticist and supporter of the Democratic Party, shows that, besides financial and professional, there are moral, socio-psychological and political reasons to leave Serbia, deeply rooted in the everyday-life experiences described by Stojković: "We have spent years trying to understand why the system hates those who think differently, or prove that it is the forgers of university diplomas who should be denounced and punished, and not those who blow the whistle. Finally, under such circumstances, it is no wonder that a small group of people considers political rule as the demonstration of power, threat and intimidation, which became quite normal, even in the street. People who had referred to each other as friends began to turn their heads and avoid encounters, all in fear of the local powerholders. Add to that the most important thing - the desire to conduct scientific research – and you will find that departure was inevitable."<sup>37</sup>

Outside the context of the current statistical records, and without comparison with the countries in the region or Central Europe, Veljko Lalić, editor-in-chief of the weekly *Nedeljnik* also speaks of the prevailing desire to leave Serbia which results from the absence of a respectful social climate and a long-term pessimistic social environment. Lalić aims to show that not only the economy or politics are the reasons to abandon Serbia, but also a sense of existential despair and depression among both the young and the middle-aged generation belonging to the middle class: "Leaving the country has become the most recurrent topic, while Serbia, the divided country, is split to those who stay and those who leave. The border is in Surčin, at the airport 'Nikola Tesla'. While economic reasons were the most important reasons for departure in the 1990s, many leave now 'because nothing will ever change here'. The polls show a number of young and educated people wish to leave the country, while suitcases are packed by the people over forty years of age, with their families, regardless of steady jobs and more or less average earnings."<sup>38</sup>

Government image is extremely negative in all periods of public research, as expected. The negative image is generated by the negative obsession with president Vučić by the public interested in politics. The president of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić has been denied any democratic potential or solid political grounds, in spite of indisputable election victories. Vučić's style of government is explicitly authoritarian, with a high level of manipulation of the mass media and constant announcements of repression towards his political opponents. In essence, according to Vučić and the party he leads, political opponents are enemies who should be satanized, humiliated, existentially intimidated either in the media or by means of any repressive apparatus. Economic indicators, viewed by the opposition and their supportive media, are far from the optimistic trend portrayed in the official statistics. Economic development is unstable and overwhelmingly dependent on external factors, such as global financial trends and foreign investment inflow. The lack of domestic private incentives hampers the progress of a self-sustainable and dynamic national economy, while systemic corruption obstructs the development of stable and secure business environment, one which could invite constant inflow of foreign investment capital. The media are dominated by private propaganda devoid of fundamental rational-

37 Miodrag Stojković, „Zašto sam ponovo otišao iz Srbije [Why I left Serbia again],“ interview with Ana Mitić, *Nedeljnik*, No. 397, p. 18

38 Ana Mitić, „A sad adio [Adios now],“ *Nedeljnik*, No. 398, p. 22



Nedeljnik, 26th September 2019

ity, and reduced to cracking down on opponents through media. Serbia is, according to the critics, a country which must be deserted, not only for financial and insecurity or lack of business opportunity, but the deficit of minimum social morality as the core of civilized existence.

#### Image of the opposition – election challenge and the shadow of a political and moral stigma and denial

Image of the opposition in weeklies and editorial columns of daily newspaper has been far more complex and presented from several different perspectives. In daily newspapers and weeklies critical to the so-called fifth-October winners, such as *Informer* or *Pečat*, opposition has been depicted as extremely negative. Also, these daily newspapers fail to publish interviews with the members of the Euro-reformative opposition, while narrow (almost no) space is left for representatives of the anti-European opposition, such as DSS or Dveri.

Moreover, media status of Šešelj and SRS notably differs from the other opposition parties (including the absence of direct criticism), although they are certainly far from being “favoured” by the media. In fact, unlike the fifth-October winners, Serbian radicals have not been stigmatized in the media. Also, the texts about the opposition have been written using an extremely negative connotation in all political issues, including questioning of the political or any other credibility of the opposition leaders. It is carried out using remembrance about the period when some of the current opposition leaders were at power, and often through polemic about their attitudes, views, straightforward or concealed intentions, and political practice.

On the other hand, weeklies *Vreme*, *NIN*, *Novi magazin* or *Nedeljnik*, give undeniable support to the opposition candidates, with different intensity but essentially the same. In that respect, radically critical weeklies increase the intensity of their support, making it visible not only through media space provided for opposition leaders and expression of their attitudes and thoughts, but the intensity and radicality of the negative campaign against Aleksandar Vučić and Serbian Progressive Party (SNS).

Unlike *Informer* or *Pečat*, the opposition leaders had substantial space for display and elaboration of their positions, allowing the explication of views and opinions as opposed to government’s argumentation and rhetoric. This influence undoubtedly influences the respective weekly readers, as well as on the capillary public. The current media-political constellation is partly “responsible” for the smoldering conflict between Vučić and the “elite”.

The complexity of the opposition image is reflected in a different approach to the issue of their performance and potential. The pro-government media - above all, the daily *Informer* and, to some extent, *Pečat* - consider the performance, as well as potential of opposition, disputable. At the same time, opposition weeklies, especially those radically critical of the government, such as *Vreme* and *NIN*, usually take into account the public or political weaknesses, using a discourse that indicates dem-

ocratic deficit of the order, along with conscious heroization of the opposition endeavours. In these weekly newspapers, despite the detailed and meticulous analysis, a critical review of the functioning of the euro-reformist opposition during their government is absent or present only in fragments. This kind of “forgetfulness” is not accidental, but consciously chosen, because the critical weeklies are an active factor in party polemics, or pretend to be a sort of an “intellectual supplement” in a tough and grueling fight between the political figures in Serbia.

Journal *Informer* plays the special role in giving negative-value connotation to the opposition parties, both in the daily editions and the editorial columns written by Dragan J. Vučićević. Vučićević’s columns problematize the opposition, primarily in moral and political terms, critically treating both the opposition media and non-governmental organizations, with an almost constant reflection of the post-October period.

The main theses could be summarized in the following statements: 1) The current opposition has no moral credibility (because of highly corrupt political class in their membership) or political capacity to lead the country, because of the failure of transition in Serbia, 2) in the opposition-supportive media, including the majority of prints, the current government is under serious attacks without a rational explanation and only one goal - to cause uprising against it, and 3) the media who support the current opposition, definite discrimination of all those who are not direct opponents of Vučić’s government.

Vučićević’s criticism of the Serbian opposition scene is equally focused on the opposition, as a factor of political life, and the media highly critical of the government. His criticism is always *ad hominem*, on a highly personalized level, aimed at achieving greater persuasiveness. Certain people are therefore stigmatized, their moral and psychological profile highlighted, which often causes a particular person to appear unworthy of any public positions.

In order to understand the media-political scene in Serbia, writing of the editor-in-chief of the weekly *Informer* is relevant for at least three interconnected reasons. Firstly, the writing style and content of messages in texts written by the editor-in-chief of *Informer* are chosen so as to maintain the interest in politics of the socially lower strata of society, who are assumed to read the tabloids and considered loyal voters in the electoral process.

Furthermore, *Informer* is important to the current government, because it examines on a weekly or daily basis the negative attitudes and media-political image of the government created and continuously reproduced by the critical media. Finally, *Informer* is the leading daily newspaper in the creation of the negative image of current opposition as a political figure in Serbia.

The initial assumption of Vučićević’s writing is an understanding of the political opposition, not conceptually limited to the political parties who vote against the government’s policy decisions, laws, and other initiatives or proposals in the Parliament. It is a broader concept which, from this point of view, is a network of mutually different organizations and public figures. It is, therefore, the parties, and the representatives of the NGO sector, the media and public intellectuals the writing refers to. Moreover, Vučićević often attributes specific understanding of the politics to the opposition leaders and their political and media allies. Politics is for the opposition leaders, according to Vučićević, an

instrument for the enrichment of the former political elite. Under the conditions of high poverty and objectively scarce opportunities for a better lifestyle, this understanding of the opposition fuels the campaign of the current government and its supportive media.

The campaigns provoke feelings of anger, disappointment or even indifference in the opposition voters, with an undoubted power to influence the citizens who support the current government to prevent restoration of the so-called corrupt political elite made up of the post-October election winners.

The next assumption made in Vučićević's interpretation of the opposition as political figures is its patriotism deficit, anti-Russian stance, and an unquestioning loyalty to the Western countries. In an effort to obtain power and express loyalty to the western countries, according to the editor-in-chief of *Informer*, opposition parties are ready to make any necessary moves in a particular political moment, from the initiation of various media campaigns to the adoption of certain legal acts and facilitate further destabilization of Serbia.

Editor-in-chief of *Informer* harshly criticizes of the idea of election boycotting, creating a truly negative image of the opposition leaders and their policies. Undermining the idea of elections boycott is rhetorically evocative and layered. Firstly, the boycott is considered to be the sole and exclusive problem of those who advocate and promote it. It is interesting to note that Vučićević refers to his political opponents using additional names as aliases that carry negative political and moral connotation. "Boško Ljotić Obradović" is an expanded personal name of Boško Obradović, whose adjoined surname comes from the leader of the clero-fascist organization Dimitrije Ljotić, who was an associate of the German Nazi occupiers during World War II. Vuk Jeremić has been added surname Pozderac, a direct reference to the relatives from his mother's side. Family Pozderac is of Muslim origin, communist in its political orientation. Hakija and Hamdija Pozderac were important communist officials, who remained "notorious" during their rule, especially among Serbs.

Highlighting Jeremić's communist and Muslim roots, and stigmatizing the members of the opposition, Vučićević addresses the strong core of numerous anti-communist voters. Finally, referring to the leader of the opposition Party for Freedom and Justice as "Dragan Tycoon Đilas," alleging his illegally acquired wealth, evokes negative associations and identifications in the ears of a large number of insufficiently rich or poor people. Perpetual "naming and shaming" of such propaganda causes political tensions and increases fanaticism.

Along with the personal stigma, the editor-in-chief of *Informer* claims that no one other than the mentioned party leaders would suffer any negative consequences because of his decision. In order to demonstrate the soundness of his statements, Vučićević uses the metaphor so as to bring his statement closer to the ordinary reader to convince him of its groundedness: "When Boško Ljotić Obradović, Dragan Tycoon Đilas and Vuk Pozderac Jeremić threaten to boycott the elections, it is the same as when little John is angry at the village and threatens to chop off his private parts on a wooden block. Little John is the only one to suffer. So, just go ahead, cut away, Bole! Geld away, Đilas! Pull up the pink tights, Jeremić! Just don't blame anyone else for getting screwed."<sup>39</sup>

39 Dragan J. Vučićević, „Bojkot [Boycott],“ *Informer*, 17.08.2019, p. 6

The second stage of rendering the idea of a boycott senseless is the introduction of performance and activity criteria. Since the strict rules that define the success or failure of a boycott have no spatial limitations, he can fulfill them with any credible assertion. Thus Vučićević connects the measurement of success or failure to the percentage of the voting body. His position is clear - if more than fifty percent of the citizens vote in the elections, the boycott essentially fails: "Therefore, if Tycoon, Ljotić, Pozderac, and the rest of the so-called leaders of the so-called Alliance of Serbia decide to boycott the parliamentary elections in the spring of 2020, measurement of their success will be the voting turnout. It is simple mathematics. Take voter turnout from the last parliamentary elections in 2016 as the starting point, compare the results with the turnout in 2020, and the boycott succeeds if the next election turnout is 50% lower than the previous one, but if the result is higher, the boycott fails."<sup>40</sup>

After establishing the criteria for boycott success, Vučićević minimizes the political, primarily mobilization potential of the Alliance of Serbia, arguing that their influence on the voting body regarding the boycott is miniscule. Vučićević also claims that the boycott is more than a protest as a political gesture. Boycott is a prelude to full political destabilization of Serbia, namely blockade of the institutions, destruction of civil peace and introduction of the street as the key factor in the political turmoil: "The problem here is, of course, the the potential boycott of Đilas's supporters may affect voting turnout somewhere on the level of a statistical error, not more. They, in fact, do not opt for a boycott, because it is the means rather than the goal. To conclude, the story of a boycott aims for radicalization of the extreme opposition in order to incite violence which would again provoke unrestrained government reaction. Tycoon, Ljotić, Pozderac and the others need an urgent conflict, as blood in the streets is their only chance for political survival. They have no other policy except the policy of demolition and inciting chaos and conflict."<sup>41</sup>

At the same time, the idea of boycott is the evidence that the leaders of the Alliance for Serbia do not want and do not consider themselves obliged to respect the adopted constitutional, legal, and democratic political practices and values. Alliance for Serbia is only interested in power. However, power is not the final goal, but a means, a basis for further enrichment. Pondering over the idea of election boycott, Vučićević shows self-perception of the opposition as such that it sees and interprets itself as the political and historical avantgarde, a "special" group with the right to rule regardless of the voice of the people. "Tycoon Đilas and his little servants will not have any rule applied to them; they will not abide by any law. They want the government because they so want, they should be given power because they so choose. "How? Like so. Why? Because." There is nothing to talk about, no explanation. No democracy. No voting. Hell, not any more! Give us the power! It belongs to us, it is our God given right to carry the silver spoons, because we are blond, beautiful and rich; because we stole 619.688.269 euros; because our hidden bank accounts are stacked with hundreds of thousands of euros from the Embassy of Qatar, and nobody knows why; because we made deals and arrangements with notorious thieves convicted by the USA..."<sup>42</sup>

Leaders of the Alliance for Serbia not only perceive politics as a means for quick and profuse enrich-

40 Ibid, p. 6

41 Ibid, p. 6

42 Dragan J. Vučićević, „Bojkot mozga [Boycott of the brain],“ *Informer*, 21.09.2019, p. 6

ment, but believe that power belongs to them by right of moral and cultural preference in respect to the lower social and educational strata. The weft of the euro-reformist opposition policy is cultural racism. In their minds, there is a deeply anti-democratic and alienated division into “higher” and “lower” social strata, on the basis of which the right to rule is constituted. The Manichean division has been carved. The representatives of civil and euro-reformist opposition are the “elite,” “smart,” “enlightened,” “culturally advanced”, while the members of the lower social strata are “stupid,” “sandwich-eaters”, and “bots”. This division is political by its motivation and outcome. It is based on the need to push the story on how the enlightened political and social elite should, at any price, destroy the morally reprehensible, politically ignorant, crude government. The proposal made by the sociologist Jovo Bakić should be viewed in this context, as he proposes that “long guns” should be used to address the issue of RTS and the government of Serbia.

Interestingly, Vučićević refers to the opposition leader Dragan Đilas as the “Yellow Führer”, identifying him with the Nazi leader Adolf Hitler, whose “road to the conquest of power” was also full of various forms of political provocation and acts of violence: “Yes, I publicly admit, it is all true. We are stupid, and they are smart. We work, employ people, pay taxes, we fought for who we are and what we have, yet we are toothless dummies, sandwich eaters, bots and mercenaries. Then there are others; those who hate, who did nothing else but loot the country, make criminal deals and arrangements, who became rich while Serbia suffered in financial agony; they are the elite, the only God-given intellectuals, and the only ones authorized to opine, judge and adjudicate. So, naturally, it is not the elections we need but long guns, on recommendation of Jovo Bakić, pointed at the head of the chief of RTS who will, on one gorgeous revolutionary night, announce how the power from the stupid and the toothless was seized by the enlightened elite, led by the Yellow Führer.”<sup>43</sup>

In creating a negative image of the opposition, Dragan J. Vučićević is direct, specific, and, without a doubt, writes outside the border of political correctness or the everyday moral conventions. His intentions are to inspire negative emotions in readers in relation to particular political figures, political decisions, or a complex socio-historical process. The style of his writing is personified negative criticism – the criticism that challenges politicians, points to their psychological, moral, or social imperfections, signaling their dishonest approach to performing the entrusted political duties.

The epicenter of Vučićević’s personal negative criticism is Dragan Đilas, leader of the Alliance of Serbia. Đilas’s enormous enrichment is morally and politically controversial, especially the exponential growth of the flow and revenue of his company during the time he held the post of minister, mayor of Belgrade and leader of the Democratic Party. To make matters concerning Đilas’s wealth clear to the readers, as well as award Đilas a few negative political points, Vučićević specifies the figures that show revenue and profit; over six million in turnover and over 100 million in company earnings, which sounds shocking and confusing to the ordinary man who usually earns no more than a few hundred euros in the economically underdeveloped Serbia. “Encouraging contempt for the rich who, in addition to wealth, desire political power just to become richer” is the formula which, in most cases, generates contempt and causes rejection of anyone classified as a “tycoon-politician”. According to

43 Dragan J. Vučićević, „Glupi krezavi Srbi i žuta elita [Stupid toothless Serbs and the yellow elite],“ *Informer*, 13.07.2019, p. 6

Vučićević, Dragan Đilas deserves the top position in this socially dangerous group. Assigning negative-value connotations to Dragan Đilas, Vučićević strongly denounces journalists and public figures who fiercely criticize the government for the alleged corruption, but do not respond to allegations of Đilas’s enormous enrichment at the time his government.

Their silence in the case of Đilas is loud. It speaks about their political passions and depicts them as devoid of credibility whenever they address the issue of corruption: “Hey, man, 619.6 million! 105.6 million! Euros, not dinars! And what? What happened, Serbian opposition? What happened, great experts and trustees? Where are you, heroic fighters against crime and corruption?! Where are you now, Čeda Čupić? Why are you silent, Milan Ćulibrk? How is this not hot stuff, Draža Petrović? Is this journalism when you must not say a word about Đilas, Jugoslav Ćosić?! Is that your democracy? Is that your plan and program for Serbia? But, all right, carry on. Good thing that the Serbs, at least the vast majority of us, we know you and we will never again put the fate of our children into your hands.”<sup>44</sup>

To sum up, Dragan J. Vučićević is a keen, sharp-tongued writer; he is someone who deliberately writes for a particular group of the voting body. His intention is to cause repulsion of his political and media opponents by directness and sharpness of his journalistic style. Political algorithm leads his moral and political views. The opposition is undemocratic (rejects elections and both the constitutional and legal constraints in a political struggle), immoral (politics is considered as a means of gaining wealth), exclusive and negative towards the government, and the opposition is inclined to divisions of “higher “and” lower” social groups according to their cultural and intellectual background.

The weekly *NIN* exhibited a profound involvement in daily politics and support to the “opposition” matter, by organizing panel discussions with the working title “The opposition – what’s the problem?” Participants were the proven anti-regime public intellectuals. This opposition self-reflection, accompanied by suggestions of what should be done in the fierce and intense political struggle, pointed to the many weaknesses of the opposition.

Writer Filip David thinks that the problem lies in the members and the ideological profile of the opposition. In David’s view, the key problem is the issue of Kosovo. A propos Kosovo, according to the writer, the opposition should remain at a safe distance from the nationalist discourse and practice and, in drawing the balance of Yugoslavia breakup, recognize the self-proclaimed independence of the southern Serbian province.

Overcoming the problem of Kosovo keeps pace with the acceptance of the EU as a key political and economic orientation. David has no doubt in terms of the foreign policy orientation: “Part of the problem is the people who constitute the opposition and the choices they made. The key choice was to compete in nationalism and populism with the SNS, which is a game that was initially lost – if thrown in the mud, Vučić always wins. I primarily refer to SZS as the flagship of the opposition. We cannot fight against the regime tabloids by publishing ‘our’ tabloids, but by strong, independent journalism. It is not purposeful to twitterize the polarization ‘whether you are for us, or you are Vučić’s’. You cannot get the support from our main strategic partner - the EU, if we go directly against the policy pursued

44 Dragan J. Vučićević, „Ko si, bre ti, Đilase [Who the hell are you, Đilas],“ *Informer*, 14.09.2019, p. 6

by the EU. We have Dveri, but they have Šešelj and hundreds of similar state security service rats who are supported from the public funds and gathered around hundreds of different groups, such as *Zavetnici (Oath takers)*, *1389, Fans of Dogs and Cats*, and so on. Well, can Vuk Jeremić swear on Mother Russia better than Vučić's lickspittles and coalition partners, who are literally on the payroll of the Kremlin? Hardly."<sup>45</sup>

Filipović notices, much like Filip David, that the opposition needs a realistic program for the Kosovo issue. His idea is that the opposition has to put the issue of Kosovo directly in the context of eurointegration, modernization and reject of the nationalist concept of defending the state interests.

So much so, the opposition accusations of treason of Kosovo, directed to Vučić, seems unacceptable and politically disputable: "Most importantly, the accusation to Vučić of betraying Kosovo is too stupid and hypocritical. Kosovo myth needs deconstruction, Serbian society needs to deal with the mistakes of the past and the people who live in Kosovo are in need of the truth. And the truth is that Slobodan Milošević and Serbian nationalists, both politically and militarily, lost Kosovo because of the disastrous politics pursued since the 1980s (of course, in perfect conjunction with the Albanian separatism and nationalism). SZS leaders have no intention of turning the truth into a political platform; on the contrary, they decided to talk of Dveri, nationalism, the myth of Kosovo, Jeremić..."<sup>46</sup>

Besides the lack of a plan for Kosovo, Filipović criticizes and advises the opposition to create a plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and gather around a group of professionals, morally credible people, who will intellectually and morally be superior to the current unprofessional and immoral government. "Bad plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I think that Vučić and SNS can only win with what they are not, do not and will never have - the expertise, knowledge, polite approach, clearly and precisely articulated policies, understanding of the past and a view to the future. Anti-fascism. Feminism. I hope that the newly-formed Civic Front (Let's not drown Belgrade, Local Kraljevo Front, etc.) will understand this, and take a distance from the anti-politics (because the game, sooner or later, will be played in the political arena), and engage capable people with a carrier in politics to bring them the know-how they lack."<sup>47</sup>

Filipović's objections to the opposition and verbal "drawing a photo-robot" of an opposition party that can credibly confront the government, was complemented by a range of other observations about the future and the strength of Serbian opposition. A participant in the debate about the opposition, which could be best described by the Lenin's question: "What to do?", was a former politician and a fierce anti-regime tribune, a lawyer and a diplomat, Milan St. Protić.

His criticism of the opposition is very sharp and has a rational foundation. The former politician Protić criticizes the opposition for their lack of ideas, lack of credibility, and lack of work: "There is absence of ideas. The views of the opposition parties, without exception, have already been heard many times and repeated over the last twenty years. There is nothing new. No originality, uncompromising stance, or essence, because it all comes down to trite phrases and familiar stereotypes,

45 Stefan Filipović, „Gde je zapelo [What's the problem],“ conversation with Vesna Mališić, *NIN*, No. 3576, p. 17

46 Ibid, p. 18

47 Ibid, p. 18

mostly incomprehensible and uninteresting to the majority of the Serbian voting body. Then there is distrust. No opposition leader inspires trust in the citizens, no one whose word and actions are respected and trustworthy. While they were in power, they did fare well, because of poor realization of what they had promised. The fact that they embellish their government today is not only of no use, but raises additional public suspicion. The disunity of the opposition is of second-rate importance at the moment. Lack of work. The fight against the media blockade leads to an everyday field campaign, from village to village, from town to town, from city to city; at the markets, squares, streets; in the stands, in meetings, in conversations with different people. Firmness and authority. Boycotting the sessions of the Parliament is not enough. The right move would be to resign and return parliamentary mandates; waiver of status, privileges, and authority, in the name of higher principles of democracy. Consistency, above all."<sup>48</sup>

Unlike Filip David, Stevan Filipović and Milan St. Protić, who express very precise and politically relevant remarks about the opposition in Serbia, politicalologist Boban Stojanović believes that the opposition, despite its many weaknesses, has a political asset in the long and relentless political struggle with the government. The first "trump card" of the opposition is the inability of the president of Serbia and leader of the Serbian Progressive Party, Aleksandar Vučić, to call early elections. From this "impossibility", Stojanović "deduces" the claim that Vučić is no longer in the same position: "Aleksandar Vučić is not in the position he has been in for the past six years - to call elections whenever he sees an opportunity to benefit from them. In 2014, 2016, and 2017, we knew what the results of the election would be."<sup>49</sup>

Stojanović's expectations from the boycott are prospective. He does not believe in concrete and immediate effects, but believes in the future course of events which work in favour of the opposition, while not offering any rational justifications for such an opinion: "The boycott, so as to change the future. I am often annoyed by the question 'What happens the day after the boycott?' Nothing will change in 2020, probably not even in 2021. But the boycott may lead to a correction of all the electoral conditions and the media, election day, the electoral bureaucracy until 2022."<sup>50</sup>

Stojanović insists that active participation of the opposition in the elections and in the Parliament is of vital importance to Aleksandar Vučić to get full legitimacy of his politics. Vučić's need is in the groundwork of the opposition request for redefinition of electoral conditions: „Does Aleksandar Vučić want the opposition in the elections? Of course he does, because he will win and form the government. They will provide him legitimacy, just as they did in 2016 and 2017. Then he can relax and calmly create domestic and foreign policies legitimately, with the SNS majority in the Parliament. To win the right to protest and ask for fair elections, or more space in the media, you have to boycott the elections. What effect does that have on Vučić? We have not seen elections this year. What has happened to European institutions since the opposition is out of the Parliament?“.

48 Milan St. Protić, „Gde je zapelo [What's the problem],“ *NIN*, No. 2576, p. 19

49 Boban Stojanović, „Vučić nije u istoj poziciji kao pre [Vučić is no longer in the same position],“ interview with Radmilo Marković, *Vreme*, No. 1491, p. 14

50 Ibid, p. 16

Unlike the “boycott front”, some opposition parties, such as the party of Aleksandar Šapić and Miloš Jovanović, SPAS and DSS, found their chance in case of boycott by SZS. However, analyst Boban Stojanović believes that an effective “boycott campaign” would keep these parties under the electoral census: “SPAS and DSS see their chance in the boycott as a way to enter the Parliament. But I think if the boycott happens, and if there is an active campaign of the boycott, none of these small parties will exceed the election census. Not even in the case of boycott, or in the case of a coalition. LDP and LSV in any coalitions cannot cross the census; it is even questionable whether SPAS and DSS can.”<sup>51</sup>

At the same time, Stojanović transfers the focus of his speculations to the possible election result of the Serbian Radical Party, believing that radicals can enter the Parliament and that such circumstance does not constitute a politically desirable development for the public in Serbia or for the European Union: “The only question is whether SRS can cross the census. I think they’re the only one who can, because a large number of SNS voters are closest to the radicals as a second option. From the perspective of international political figures, the parliament seated by only the SNS government and the radicals, with no one from the pro-Western and pro-EU oriented opposition, is not a desirable outcome.”<sup>52</sup>

Unlike Boban Stojanović, who fervently advocates the idea of a boycott, opposition MP, a fierce critic of the policies of Aleksandar Vučić, and political analyst Đorđe Vukadinović shows real constraints of the practical realization of the boycott, weaknesses of the arguments in favour of the boycott, and its real-political implications in the elections.

His main thesis is “Boycott is a fig leaf”. The metaphor shows that the fiery advocacy of the idea of boycott conceals the weaknesses of the opposition and, at the same time, opens up space for the complete dominance of government in all aspects of political and social life. “In fact, almost all the arguments cited in favour of boycott of the elections are either factually problematic, defeatist, or daredevil – or reflect a pernicious and quasiradical ‘anti-political’ stance, which loaded on our doors the current political monstrosity through ‘white papers’. I do not doubt the goodwill and intentions of the majority who speak and write in favour of the boycott, as the only real solution for the tired and resigned opposition voters. Basically, this psychological argument is the only really sensible - although not sufficient - reason in favour of the boycott. But, I fear that the consequences can be very similar to those we had seen before 2012.”<sup>53</sup>

Stating the factual impotence of protests is one in a series of legitimate reasons against the policy of boycott. Vukadinović observes the limitations of the opposition struggle with mathematical precision, and suggests participation in the elections with all the risks that such an undertaking carries: “Everything we saw in the streets of Belgrade last winter and this spring leaves little doubt about the (non) existence of revolutionary capacity and will. But, of course, it is possible (in fact, quite likely) that, if they finally and definitely abstain from the electoral process, opposition leaders will play energetically on this revolutionary card - because they will be left with none other. The only remaining dilemma is whether and to what extent the opposition voters will follow. As without the mutual sincere

51 Ibid, p. 17

52 Ibid, p. 16

53 Đorđe Vukadinović, „Bojkot kao smokvin list [Boycott as a fig leaf],“ *NIN*, No. 3582, p. 22

willingness for radicalization and personal sacrifice, the story to boycott the elections is just another discouragement and surrender without a fight. Not to say - a fig leaf and a bluff that attempts to conceal the real weakness and the responsibility of opposition parties and leaders for all that is not done or incorrectly done in the previous months and years.”<sup>54</sup>

Since the boycott is the game of “all or nothing”, and there is no abundance of politically relevant resources or a plan to end boycott in political success, its confrontation with its realistic, politically harmful consequences is inevitable. Epilogue of the boycott is likely Serbia without institutional opposition, Serbia which resembles a true authoritarian and repressive political order, effective in Kazakhstan or North Korea: “It is more than obvious that the risk is too great, and chances are too small. In fact, it is not your risk, or mine, or any of the individuals involved, but the real risk of literal ‘grassing’ the entire opposition scene, complete quenching of political pluralism, and turning Serbia into a political formation similar to the one in North Korea, Belarus, or Kazakhstan.”<sup>55</sup>

Finally, as an argumentative “icing on the cake”, Vukadinović evokes the memory of the Serbian president’s expression, after learning that four opposition lists barely managed to cross the census and join the Parliament membership. “Sour” expression of the SNS leader is proof that the participation in the elections is justified. Negative obsession with Vučić’s personality received its paradoxical confirmation in a claim challenged by the majority of the euro-reformist opposition: “After all, no matter how reasonably we have been dissatisfied with the opposition performance so far, we should always remember Vučić’s frown after the previous parliamentary elections, when he realized that all four opposition groups (DS, DJB DSS, Dveri, and SDS-LSV-LDP) would enter the Parliament with 5% or 6 % support from the voting body, whereas he had designed - and came very close – the scenario for none to join; he tried to correct that “mistake” in the electoral overtime and lengthy engineering with the RIK (and the opposition caucuses). It would be absurd and tragicomical if now, four years later, the opposition singlehandedly helped Vučić reach his goal.”<sup>56</sup>

Image of the opposition in the printed media is more complicated than the image of the government. While the government has been given an ambiguous political depiction, the image of the opposition has been understood in more detail and portrayed less one-sidedly. Opposition image oscillates between the negative stereotypes, continuously and intensely repeated in the daily *Informer*, and the contemplation about how to improve the opposition chances in the political struggle. According to *Informer*, and other printed media close to the government, the opposition has no moral credibility, political competence, or democratic legitimacy, as it promotes violence and has a deficit of patriotism.

On the other hand, the opposition, according to the radically critical media, is not only an alternative, but the only political and social force able to save Serbia from the doom and gloom brought on by the regime of Aleksandar Vučić and the SNS. If politics is observed through the prism of how political figures are portrayed in the printed media, it could be interpreted as an infinite and fatal conflict between two contradictory images of the two key political figures.

54 Ibid, p. 22

55 Ibid, p. 23

56 Ibid, p. 23

5



ABOUT  
AUTHORS

## ABOUT AUTHORS

**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.

**Velimir Ćurgus Kazimir** was born in Novi Sad in 1948. Since 2002, he is the director of the Ebart Media Archive, the unique media documentation center in Serbia. He was a journalist and editor of the cultural section of *Politika* newspapers from 1988 to 1996. He is one of the founders of the Independent Association of Journalists of Serbia. He authored several books of prose and essays on culture and cultural policy. His works have been translated into English, French, German, Spanish, Polish and Japanese. He has won the International Prize for essay of the journal *Lettre Internationale* in Weimar in 2000. He's member of the Serbian PEN Center since 1987. He has edited several books on the relationship between politics and the media. He is author of several projects in the field of research, media and culture. He conducted studies of the media scene in Serbia and the influence of media on the political and social reality in particular.

**Isidora Jarić, PhD.** Born in Belgrade, Serbia in 1970. Graduated and earned PhD at The Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Sociology, University of Belgrade. Assistant Professor at Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Sociology, University of Belgrade. Associate of The Institute of Sociology and Social Research, engaged in researching and examining global characteristics and transformations within Serbian society. Editor of two proceedings: *Bologna reform of higher education in Serbia: Problems, doubts, fears and expectations of the teaching staff at the University of Belgrade* (Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory Filip Višnjić and IP, Belgrade, 2010) and *Politics of Parenthood* (Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade, 2015).

**Danica Laban.** Born in Belgrade, Serbia in 1976. She is media analyst, journalist and communicologist. She has obtained MA in journalism at the Faculty of political sciences in Belgrade. Worked on numerous projects, which had represented visibility, training and research as its media components. She has collaborated with national and international organizations and institutions such as the Council of Europe (CAR project 2011 - 2012), UN Women (projects in the field of social – economic empowerment of women, 2012), the Office for Human and Minority Rights, NGO Praxis/ERT, HINT, NELI. She also worked on the evaluation of media for Strategic Marketing/IPSOS, for the purpose of the BBC Trust. In 2006 she founded Jigsaw Communication Agency, under which she operates today. During her career she was also a journalist and editor in RTS, BK TV and TV Politika.

**Dejan Vuk Stanković, PhD.** Born in Belgrade, Serbia in 1973. Graduated and earned PhD at The Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. Currently, he teaches philosophy, ethics and philosophy of education at The Teachers Training Faculty, University of Belgrade. From 2000 to 2003 he was scholar at the The Institute for Philosophy and Social studies. From 2004 to 2006, he worked for Marten Board International, a Serbian private company specialized for the market research and public polls. He was agency main pollster and political analyst. From 2006 until today, Dejan Vuk Stanković is an independent political analyst, comments political and social life in Serbia and region of Western Balkans for various TV and radio stations, as well as for print media.

### Data entry and processing:

**Predrag Bajić**, PhD candidate, Faculty of Political Science

**Milica Oros**, graduated journalist, Faculty of Political Science

**Katarina Vukajlović**, graduated journalist, Faculty of Political Science

**Veljko Gluščević**, PhD candidate, Faculty of Philosophy

