



Analysis of the print media in Serbia
July - September

QUARTERLY MEDIAMETER

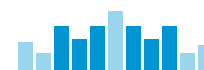
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MEDIAMETER

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PRES

ORAD BRACANOVIĆ

SVETSKA
EKSKLUZIVA
ZASTIČENI SVEDOK
NEBOJŠA JOKSOVIĆ POSLAO
TAJNO PISMO ŠEFU
JOKSA:



dok
Akademik Dr
Vasilje B. Krestić:
Svako vreme
ima svoga
Rajka Daulovića
čkim
grada,
enjem
Acirani u Vranju
kriminalni general
reda iz Beograda
i policije
Spor
regije
ko
vivo se Tudićmanu

Newsweek
PROSTITUCIJA
Madam
Zeljka:
Moj
život...
Užas!
Kao dle sam krsta,
mogla mogu, nika me nije
mogla prestat, nepodan
spov nje bio koji
SUDAR SONJE
BISERKO
NATASE
KANDIĆ
FALSIF
SLIKE
SLIKE
KANDIĆ

Nedeljnik
MAFJA NE UBIJA KAD JE JAKA, VEĆ KAD JE NA IZDARU
Mafja u Srbiji bila je na kolonima kada se dogodilo ubistvo premijera
Dinkića. Kriminalna grupa broj jedan u Srbiji su navijali. Kako su stekli
u policiji i ko je svaki pokušao u Srbiji? Veliki istraživanje u Srbiji
i Riječi gdje su na sve strane navijali svetski kriptinolozi, tužilaštvo
NUNČIĆ, ZOLJA
STEFANOVIĆ, UNK SP
NERSAD
OTMICA
RIC, KLAN
VIJACI, S
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VU
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BITI SAMO JED

VREME
broj
1348
Priče iz šume jajinačke Parcijalno zaključuje
INTERVJU: DRAGAN ŠUTANOVAC
JALITI ŠOU
CENARISTA
IZ VLADE



Introduction

VELIMIR ČURGUS KAZIMIR

INTRODUCTION:

Politics as a matter of fate

Judging from the front pages of our daily papers, nothing is as important as politics. This equally applies to both domestic and world politics. Political actors, coming either from Serbia or abroad, represent about three quarters of all actors featured on the front pages. On one side, this does not come as that of a surprise, since the period from July to April 2016 was a period of intense political talks and post-election combinatorics. The media were competing with announcements of the new Government and new political relations. Politics is anyway the main topic of Serbian press. However, there are no changes in terms of leading domestic political actors. This is still the “threesome”: Aleksandar Vučić, Ivica Dačić and Tomislav Nikolić.

World politics were also very much present. Vladimir Putin remains the most frequently appearing world politician. He appeared on the front pages more than Barack Obama and Angela Merkel together. The media were covering US elections with a similar passion. After Barack Obama, Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump were the most present, of course.

In this trimester, the region was also very present on the front pages of Serbian media in a very negative tone. Events which marked this period are characterised by worsening of relations between Serbia and Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The press reported and commented on this process, often criticizing events from the neighbouring countries. The region is undoubtedly very active in the political discussions in Serbia, too.

Economics and the EU are still not topics attracting much attention, though they are present on the front pages.

On the other hand, topics that are neither abating in importance nor losing their place under the spotlight are the ones from the crime section. Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović still inspires those with a penchant for detective work and launches “investigations” by some editorial staff. Family members of the late Jelena Marjanović are looking at us from the front pages. Closing in on the murderer. This probably satisfies a large number of the readers and becomes the subject of conversation. Triviality and absence of any kind of respect for privacy and sense of decency are becoming a dominant trait of the media culture. We are witnessing a loss of basic ethical and professional postulates of the journalistic profession. In such circumstances, often not even the media’s “coverage” of politics represents support to true and objective informing of the citizens.

As in the previous five trimesters, when analysing of the empirically collected content, the same methodological approach was applied. One text has been taken as a unit of analysis. The analysis itself represents a combination of two research methods: (a) analysing content, which was directed under a “certain theoretical – hypothetical frame...creating an objective and systematic empirical collection of the social communication content, which enables the deriving of relevant conclusions about the social context in which the communication takes part,”¹ and (b) and discourse analysis which enables us to understand various, epistemologically and methodologically immeasurable,² interpreting strategies of authors and editorial policies which reflect perceptions of different, primarily ideological and political discourse realities, by analysing their specific discourse meanings.

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

1 S. Gredelj, *S onu stranu ogledala*, 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

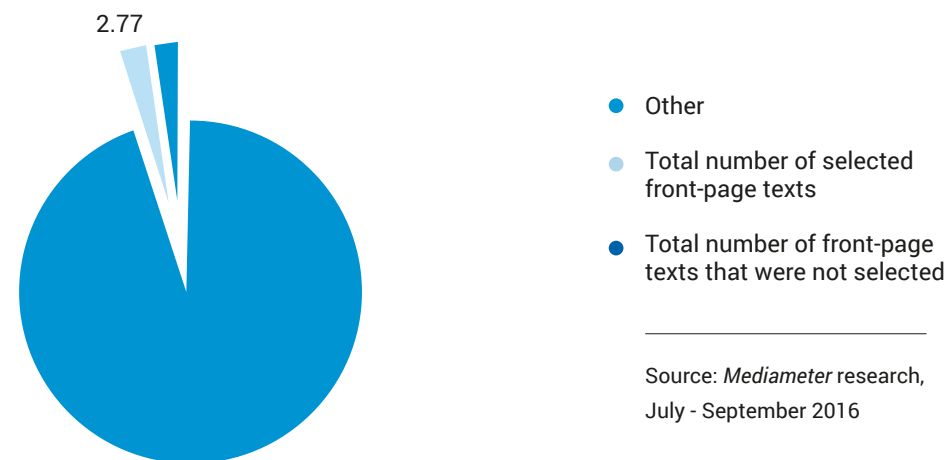
Sample

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 considering two selection criteria – the largest circulation and reputation of the print media. Daily newspaper circulation data were taken from a research done by IPSOS.¹ The front page is the part of the dailies that the readers connect the most with the identity/recognition of a media outlet. It is often responsible for the first impression, our potential affection or repulsion formed about some printed media. The front page comes into contact not only with the readers of that particular paper, but also the people who will perhaps never touch that paper. Through newspaper and TV advertising and shop windows, the front page reaches a wider auditorium than that forming the readers of individual dailies. The front pages, hence form, in a certain way, the public image of the newspaper which symbolizes its editorial policy, evaluative orientation and targeting of certain audiences. On account of the above-mentioned reasons, the front pages of dailies from our sample were in the focus of analysis of the project *Mediameter*.

Texts from front pages reflect best the coordinates of editorial policies of daily print editions. Though this involves a small percentage of texts, editorial identity of a daily can be most easily identified through messages conveyed through front pages. The ratio of the total number of texts in each daily individually and the number of texts from the front pages that were included in the sample of our research are shown in the charts 1-7, for the period from 1st July to 30th September 2016.

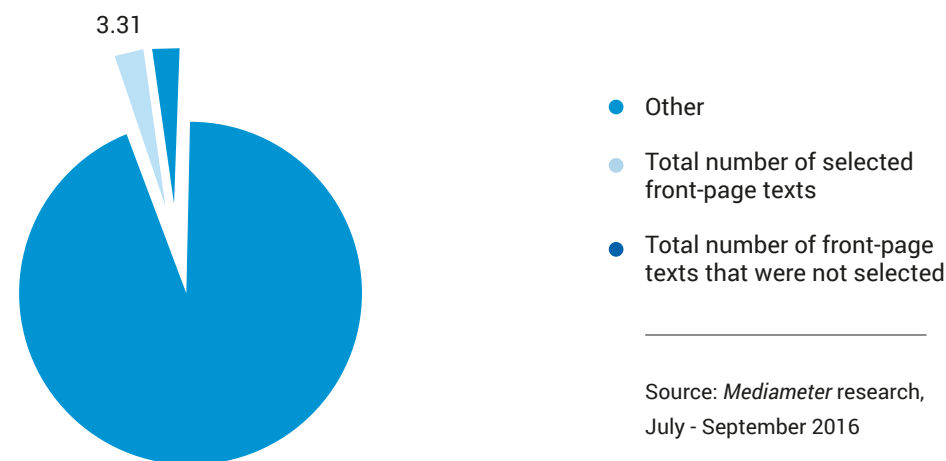
¹ Research of the average scope of the daily print media was done for the period from May 3rd 2016 to June 30th 2016, population: total individuals

Chart 1 – *Večernje novosti*



Source: *Mediameter* research,
July - September 2016

Chart 2 – *Informer*



Source: *Mediameter* research,
July - September 2016

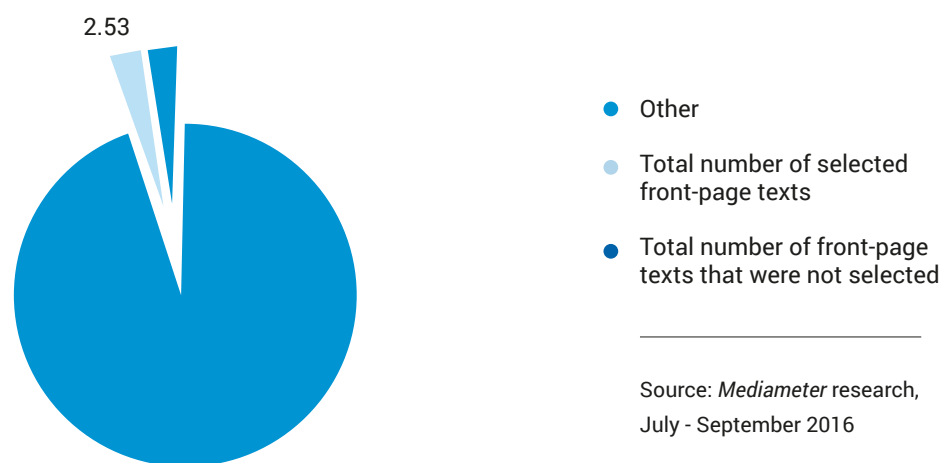
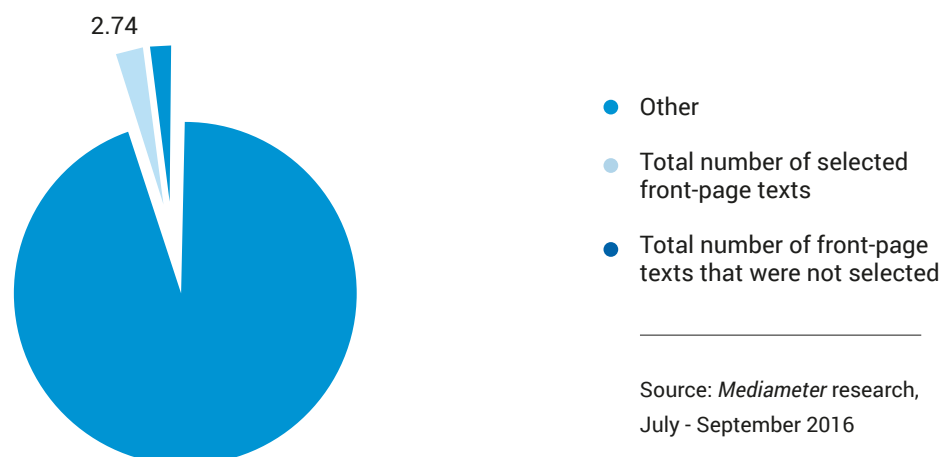
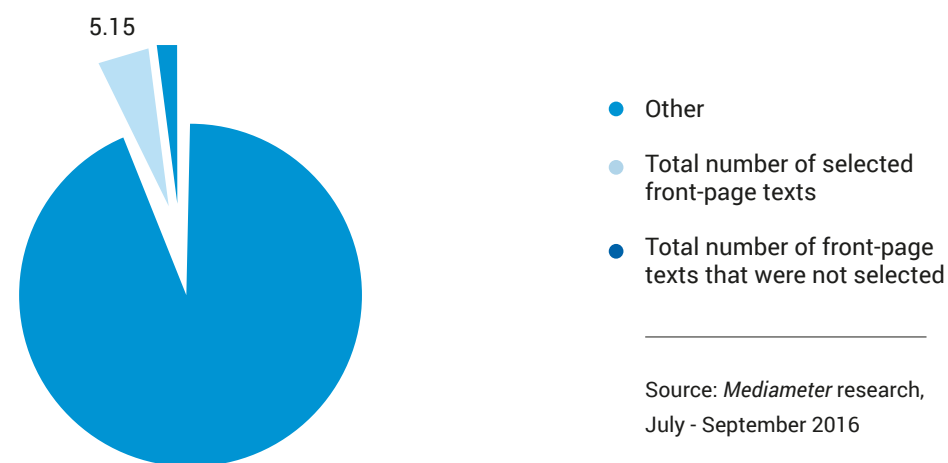
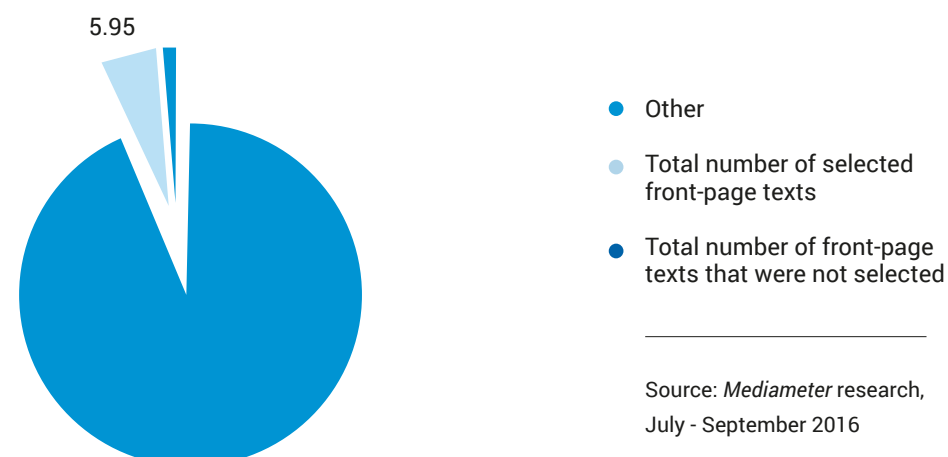
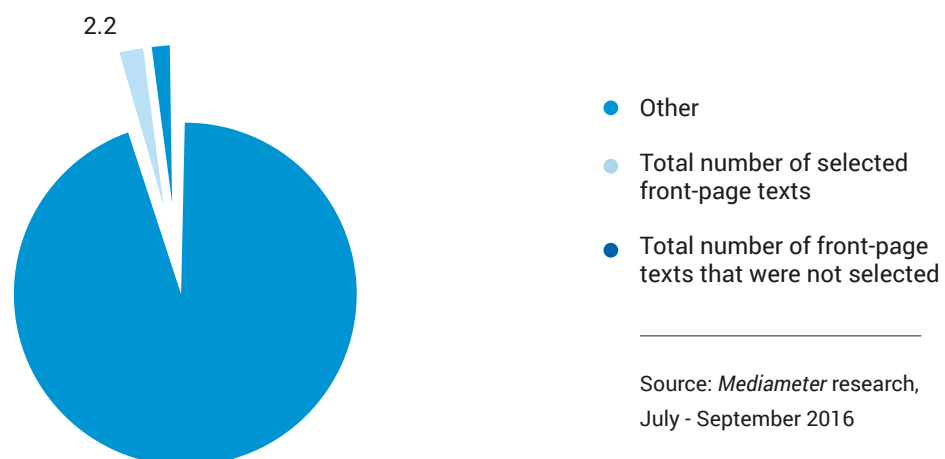
Chart 3 – *Alo!*Chart 4 – *Blic*Chart 5 – *Politika*Chart 6 – *Danas*

Chart 7 – Kurir



Source: Mediameter research,
July - September 2016

The total number of analysed texts considering all seven media that are included in our research sample is 2012 and that number accounts for averagely 60.76% texts from front pages and for 3.45% of the total number of texts.

Table 1 – Večernje novosti

| Media outlet Večernje novosti / section | Total number of front- page texts | Total number of selected front-page texts | Total number of front- page texts that were not selected |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| events | 80 | 25 | 55 |
| society | 86 | 65 | 21 |
| politics | 115 | 115 | 0 |
| economics | 43 | 38 | 5 |
| current affairs | 53 | 28 | 25 |
| reportage | 30 | 5 | 25 |
| culture | 24 | 4 | 20 |
| interview | 11 | 8 | 3 |
| world | 21 | 16 | 5 |
| life plus | 22 | 0 | 22 |
| sport | 30 | 5 | 25 |
| Belgrade News | 12 | 2 | 10 |
| doctor in the house supplement | 18 | 1 | 17 |
| spectacle | 6 | 0 | 6 |
| BGD 011 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Belgrade stories | 10 | 0 | 10 |
| sport plus | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TV news | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| real-life stories | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| region | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| feuilleton | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| action | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| confessions | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| second page | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| event | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| summer | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 566 | 315 | 251 |

Source: Mediameter research, July - September 2016

Table 2 – Informer

| Media outlet: <i>Informer</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 |
|---|----------------------------------|---|---|
| breaking news | 179 | 170 | 9 |
| news | 88 | 31 | 57 |
| showtime | 60 | 5 | 55 |
| entertainment | 7 | 0 | 7 |
| sport | 47 | 4 | 43 |
| TOTAL | 381 | 210 | 171 |

Source: *Mediameter* research, July - September 2016**Table 3 – Alo!**

| Media outlet: <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 | 72 | 66 | 6 |
| news | 151 | 92 | 58 |
| v.i.p | 75 | 9 | 67 |
| sport | 35 | 4 | 31 |
| world | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 333 | 171 | 162 |

Source: *Mediameter* research, July - September 2016**Table 4 – Blic**

| Media outlet: <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 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|
| series | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| interview | 16 | 7 | 9 |
| archive | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Belgrade | 1 | 1 | 0 |

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| dossier | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| society | 78 | 32 | 46 |
| economics | 34 | 24 | 10 |
| phenomenon | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| chronicle | 60 | 17 | 43 |
| culture | 16 | 3 | 13 |
| politics | 79 | 79 | 0 |
| Sport | 51 | 1 | 50 |
| real-life stories | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| world | 13 | 9 | 4 |
| topic of the day | 92 | 84 | 8 |
| topic of the week | 10 | 6 | 4 |
| in the focus | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| time machine | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| entertainment | 45 | 4 | 41 |
| TOTAL | 518 | 276 | 242 |

Source: *Mediameter* research, July - September 2016**Table 5 – Politika**

| Media outlet: <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 | 105 | 95 | 10 |
| society | 111 | 65 | 46 |
| economics | 85 | 78 | 7 |
| politics | 49 | 49 | 0 |
| event of the day | 84 | 81 | 3 |
| culture | 28 | 7 | 21 |
| events | 54 | 40 | 14 |
| daily supplement | 34 | 0 | 34 |
| Belgrade | 7 | 4 | 3 |
| Serbia | 32 | 13 | 19 |
| readers' club | 13 | 0 | 13 |

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| sport | 34 | 2 | 32 |
| topic of the week | 12 | 10 | 2 |
| personalities | 15 | 11 | 4 |
| region | 19 | 19 | 0 |
| front page | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| spectre | 15 | 1 | 14 |
| views | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| TV insert | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| feuilleton | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| consumer | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Belgrade events | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 707 | 483 | 224 |

Source: *Mediameter* research, July - September 2016

Table 6 – Danas

| Media outlet: <i>Danas</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 |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|
| business supplement | 17 | 17 | 0 |
| pecial supplement | 20 | 7 | 13 |
| Danas weekend | 36 | 17 | 19 |
| Event of the day | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| society | 123 | 117 | 6 |
| economics | 56 | 56 | 0 |
| globe | 34 | 22 | 12 |
| culture | 28 | 8 | 20 |
| interview | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| front page | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| health | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| politics | 127 | 127 | 0 |
| periscope | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| legal <i>Danas</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | |
|--------------|------------|------------|------------|
| scene | 6 | 1 | 5 |
| sport | 46 | 7 | 39 |
| topic | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| scales | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 507 | 386 | 121 |

Source: *Mediameter* research, July - September 2016

Table 7 – Kurir

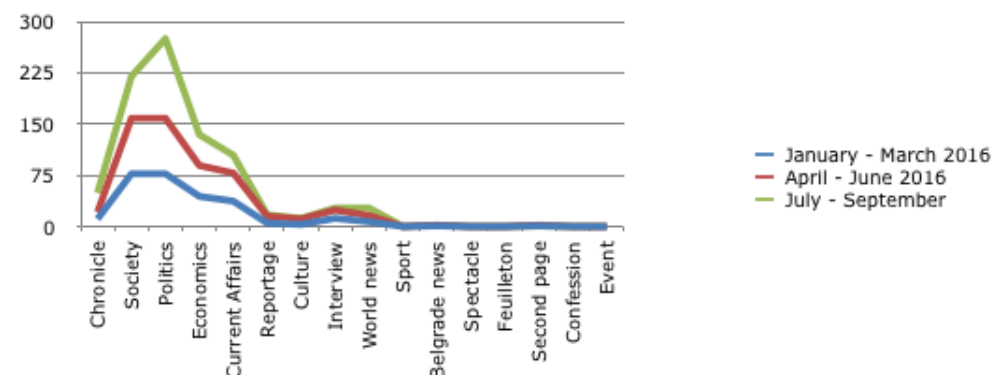
| Media outlet: <i>Kurir</i> / section | Total number of front-page texts | Total number of selected front-page texts | Total number of front-page texts that were not selected |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|
| news | 82 | 74 | 8 |
| chronicle | 58 | 25 | 33 |
| culture | 9 | 1 | 8 |
| planet | 13 | 10 | 3 |
| sport | 12 | 1 | 11 |
| stars | 61 | 4 | 57 |
| topic of the day | 64 | 56 | 8 |
| Total | 299 | 171 | 128 |

Source: *Mediameter* research, July - September 2016

By reviewing the presented tables 1-7, it is still noticeable that the structures of dailies follow two different logics. In other words, *Večernje novosti*, *Politika*, *Danas*, *Blic*, even *Kurir* to some extent, follow the traditional structure of daily newspapers, while *Informer* and *Alo!* deviate from this matrix to a considerable extent, as in previous trimesters. The new development is that, since the middle of last quarter, *Kurir* has joined the ranks of newspapers mentioned above.² In these three publications, *news* are the dominant section, uniting different areas, and special attention is paid to entertaining content, like information about celebrities, then showbiz and sport, which increasingly gain social and political character. Editorial strategies that were established in the previous six editions of Mediameter are entirely visible in the third quarter of 2016. This may be clearly seen in Charts 8-14. If one compares results from the first, second and third trimester of 2016, an identical structure of the sample is still visible, especially the tendency to increase the share of articles published in sections *politics* and *news*, which is noticeable from the first quarter of 2016. This is particularly evident in the daily newspaper *Večernje novosti*, *Informer*, *Blic* and *Kurir*.

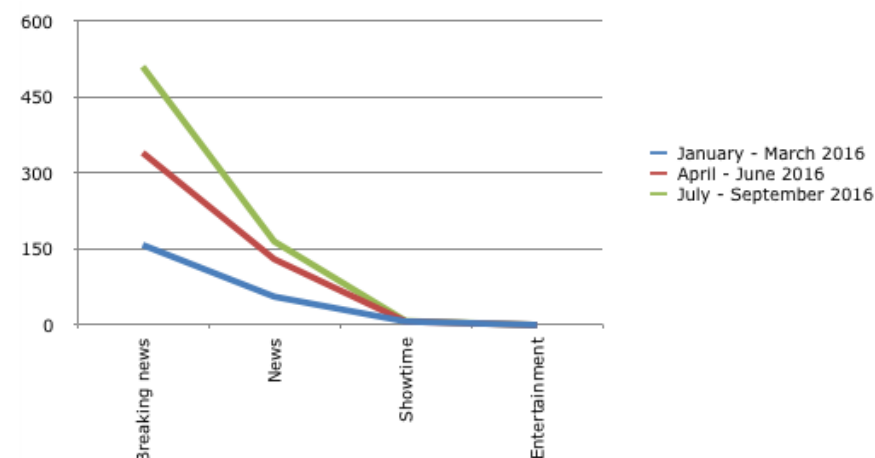
In this content analysis, we “studied actually which ideas and images were expressed, i.e. represented... Studying representation is not aimed at testing the “truthfulness” of statements... It is not limited to commentary about whether a set of expressions accurately corresponds or describes what its alleged aim is. Actually, since the researchers focus on the process of representation, it has become clear that dealing with accuracy is misleading. Studying representation is, literally, studying the representation of production, i.e. construction ...in narrative from.”³

Chart 8 – *Večernje novosti*



Source: Mediameter research, July - September 2016

Chart 9 – *Informer*

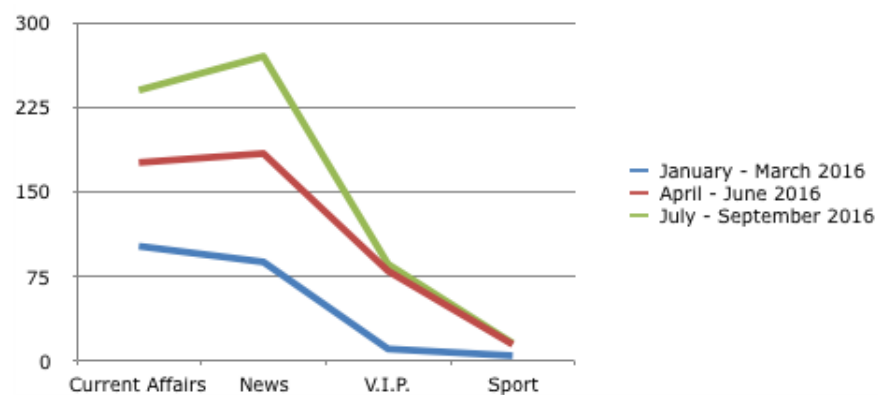


Source: Mediameter research, July - September 2016

² Since May 2016, *Kurir* features a new section titled *news*, which comprises all socio-political and economic issues, i.e. the existing sections *society*, *economy* and *politics* are combined into newly formed section. Although this sections remained visible, *Kurir* nonetheless abstains from clear sectoral division.

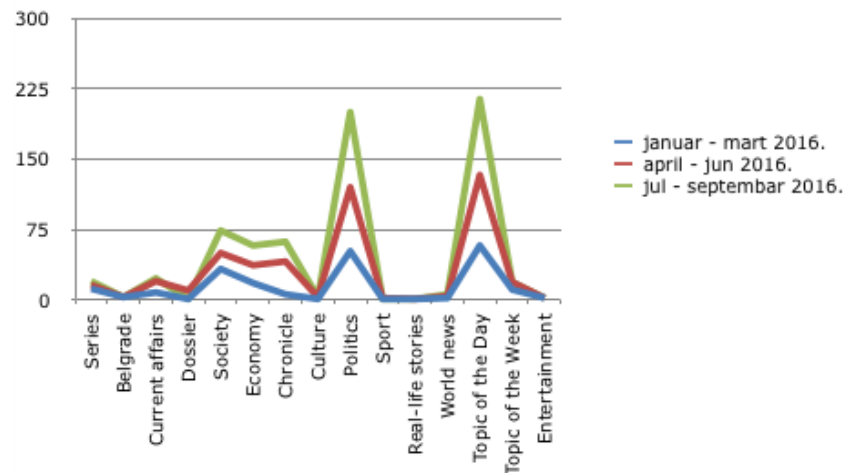
³ L. Rolend, *Masovne komunikacije* [Mass communications], Clio, Beograd, 1998, 258-259

Chart 10 – *Alo!*



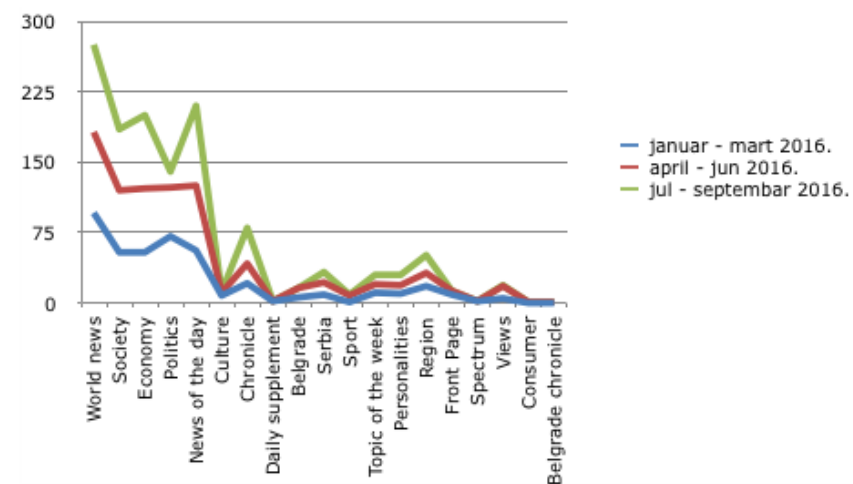
Source: Mediameter research, July - September 2016

Chart 11 – *Blic*



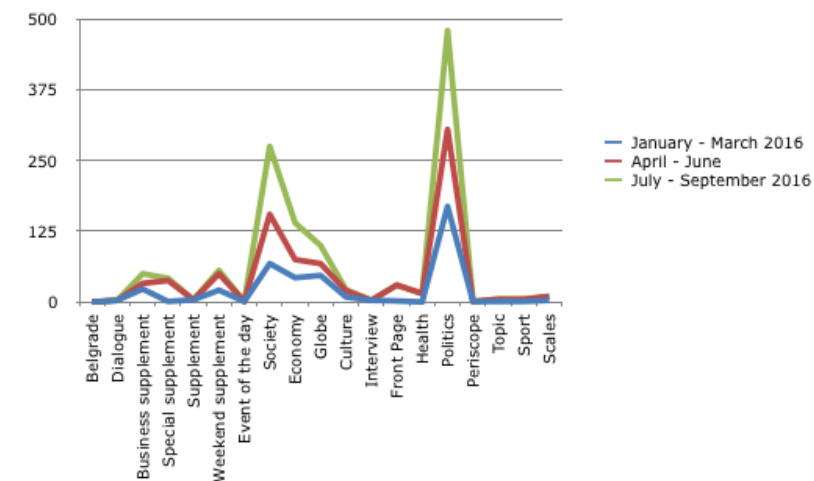
Izvor: Istraživanje Medijametar, jul - septembar 2016

Chart 12 – *Politika*

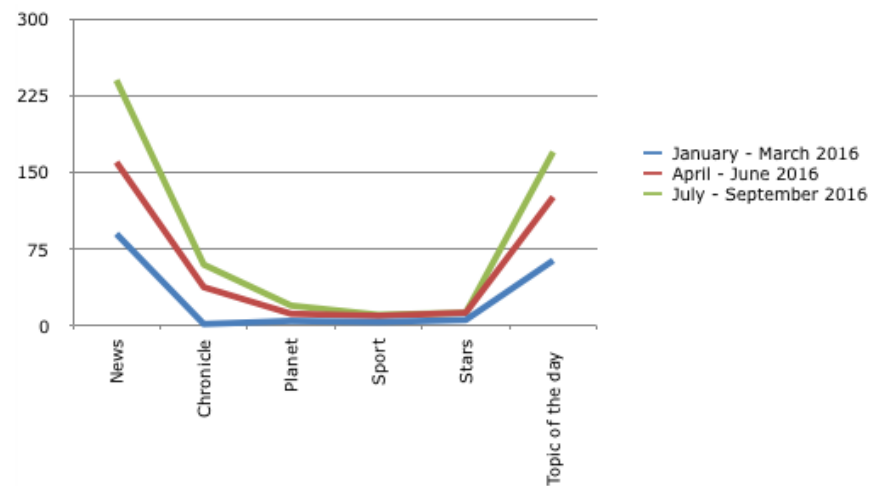


Source: Mediameter research, July - September 2016

Chart 13 – *Danas*



Source: Mediameter research, July - September 2016

Chart 14 – Kurir

Source: *Mediameter* research, July - September 2016

If we compare the number of selected texts in the period January – March (1924) April – June (2106) and July – September (2012) of 2016 with the same period of 2015, we can note an increase of 41.5% in the first quarter of 2016 compared to same period of 2015 (1360), regardless of the same number of non-working days (there was a triple issue printed to cover December 31 2015 and January 1 and 2 2016; double issues were printed for January 6 and 7 and for February 15 and 16 2016 as well); an increase of 25.88% in second quarter compared to the same period of 2015 (1673), and decrease of 7.95% in third trimester in comparison to same period of 2015 (2172). That could be explained by complication of domestic political relations, which is certainly caused by elections, i.e. election activities in the first and second quarter of 2016, as well as the completion of the electoral process, and the formation of the new Serbian government in mid-third quarter.

3



Research
results

ISIDORA JARIĆ, DANICA LABAN

RESEARCH RESULTS

Share of journalistic genres

In the third trimester of 2016, the report was again the journalistic form with the biggest share in the texts from the sample in all seven analysed media. However, the number of reports dropped by about 4.5% compared to the second quarter and it now amounts to 69.18%. The biggest share of reports was traditionally noted in *Informer* - 93.33%, while this time the smallest share of texts of this genre was in *Kurir* – 57.31%. *Kurir* reduced the number of reports by nearly one fifth compared to the previous quarter. The next-ranked form was the article, present in 12.28%, i.e. 3.4% more than in the previous period. The biggest share of articles was recorded in *Kurir*, 33.33%, while the daily *Informer* did not publish a single text in this form. Third ranked genre was the interview (7.46%) which recorded a nearly identical share as in the previous trimester. The biggest share of texts in this form was published by *Danas* (52), while *Informer* ran the fewest (2 or 0.95%). The next genre according to share is commentary ((.31%), the most present is in *Politika* (11.18%), while papers like *Večernje novosti* and *Alo!* did not publish texts in this journalistic form. The share of news on the front pages is still very small, therefore, only 3.23% of analysed texts were written in this form – the biggest number in the daily *Alo!* (9.94%), and the least in *Večernje novosti* (2 or 0.63%). In the analysed dailies, 31 reportages were recorded, so this genre made up for 1.54% of all texts from the sample (see in the tables). Compared to the previous two quarters, the ranking of genres by share in the third trimester is completely the same.

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

| Genre | total number | % share |
|------------|--------------|---------|
| report | 1392 | 69.18 |
| article | 247 | 12.28 |
| interview | 150 | 7.46 |
| commentary | 127 | 6.31 |
| news | 65 | 3.23 |
| reportage | 31 | 1.54 |
| total | 2012 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

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

| Genre | <i>Blic</i> | <i>Kurir</i> | <i>Večernje novosti</i> | <i>Alo!</i> | <i>Informer</i> | <i>Politika</i> | <i>Danas</i> | total |
|------------|-------------|--------------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|-------|
| report | 206 | 98 | 195 | 143 | 196 | 296 | 258 | 1392 |
| article | 3 | 57 | 84 | 4 | 0 | 86 | 13 | 247 |
| interview | 24 | 13 | 22 | 6 | 2 | 31 | 52 | 150 |
| commentary | 30 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 54 | 40 | 127 |
| news | 12 | 2 | 2 | 17 | 10 | 5 | 17 | 65 |
| reportage | 1 | 0 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 11 | 6 | 31 |
| total | 276 | 171 | 315 | 171 | 210 | 483 | 386 | 2012 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Share of journalistic forms in texts from the sample, per media outlet

| Genre | <i>Blic</i> | <i>Kurir</i> | <i>Večernje novosti</i> | <i>Alo!</i> | <i>Informer</i> | <i>Politika</i> | <i>Danas</i> | total |
|------------|-------------|--------------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|--------|
| report | 74.64 | 57.31 | 61.90 | 83.63 | 93.33 | 61.28 | 66.93 | 69.18 |
| article | 1.09 | 33.33 | 26.67 | 2.34 | 0.00 | 17.81 | 3.36 | 12.28 |
| interview | 8.70 | 7.60 | 6.98 | 3.51 | 0.95 | 6.42 | 13.44 | 7.46 |
| commentary | 10.87 | 0.58 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.95 | 11.18 | 10.34 | 6.31 |
| news | 4.35 | 1.17 | 0.63 | 9.94 | 4.76 | 1.04 | 4.39 | 3.23 |
| reportage | 0.36 | 0.00 | 3.81 | 0.58 | 0.00 | 2.28 | 1.55 | 1.54 |
| total | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Topics

In order for each text to be defined as clearly as possible, the selected texts included in the sample were classified as part of only one topic, but we also recorded other elements present in that text. This enabled us to have clear insight into the manners of reporting and approach of the media to certain topics in the previous editions of *Mediameter*. In all the research up to now, we set aside special topics of interest, and in the third quarter of 2016, we followed the end of the election process through the forming of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, i.e. events which we here classified as *elections 2016*. Texts from the crime section which refer to the murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović were again included in the sample, as a somewhat of a paradigm of the state of Serbian journalism, which is characterised by various instances of violating ethical principles of reporting.

However, front pages of the newspapers were filled by other texts which referred to the crime section, but they were not analysed. Still, it is important to mention that as many as 10 front pages¹ were fully dedicated to the murder in Žitište, which resulted in five casualties, and murder of the little girl in a village next to Zaječar.

Share of topics

In the period from July to September 2016, political topics again took up most space on the front pages of the dailies from the sample. Apart from *political life in Serbia*, which is present in 356 or 17.69% of all texts, political topics also include *activities of the Government of Serbia*, *activities of the PM of Serbia* and *activities of the President of Serbia*. These four topics were present in a total of 21.17% texts from the sample. If we add to that the topic *elections 2016*, the share of political topics amounts to 25.25%, which is a drop of about 9% compared to the second quarter of 2016. Abating interest of the media for political topics was expected since the election process was finished and completed with the forming of the Government of Serbia in mid-August. On the other hand, numerous events and conflicts in the region were very present on the front pages of analysed media. This topic was present in as many as 299 texts or 14.86% or nearly three times more texts compared to the previous quarter. The media paid most attention to relations with Croatia, where there was word of blocking accession talks between Serbia and EU by this neighbouring country,² of the cancelling of the verdict against Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac, erecting a monument to Miro Barešić, convicted of murdering the ambassador of SFRY in Sweden Vladimir Rolović, about the anniversary of the military operation Storm, about the statements of the Croatian PM Zoran Milanović and arrest of the „Croatian spy“ Čeda Čolović.³ During September, the focus was somewhat shifted to Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. to the holding of the referendum on the Law on the Day of the Republic Srpska. *Regional cooperation/regional relations* were hence top-ranked or second-ranked topic in all media. Most media showed interest for topics from the area of economy, which is the third-ranked topic in all texts from the sample, with a share of 5.82% (117 texts), this is in line with the previous trimester. The next topic of interest in the seven analysed dailies are international relations, which are present in 5.12% or 103 texts, followed by *elections 2016* and *media/freedom of the media* which are present in 82 (4.08%) and 67 (3.33%) of texts. The justice system and topics about crime were recorded in 63 (3.13%) and 54 (2.68%) texts, while one text less (53 – 2.63%) referred to topics about Kosovo. There are as many as three topics ranked as tenth in terms of presence – *economics*, *EU policy/policy EU* and *Russia/relations towards Russia*. The media wrote about them in 48 texts or 2.39%.

If we look at the evaluative context of all 2012 selected texts in the third quarter of 2016, 38.87% of all texts had evaluative connotations – 34.1% negative and 4.77% positive. Out of all the mentioned topics, the biggest number of negative texts was again written with reference to relations between Belgrade and Priština (64.15%) and regional relations 60.87%, while the media were written about with negative connotations in 50.75% of texts. Just over a third of writing with negative intonation were published about the political life in Serbia and the economy, while 20% to 25% of negative texts were written about

¹ Four front pages of *Kurir*; two of papers *Alo!* and *Informer* and one from *Blic* and *Večernje novosti*

² The media reported about the opening of chapter talks from the angle of reaching standards for EU integrations and from the perspective of regional relations.

³ Media referred to the arrested retired officer of the Armed Forces of Srpska Krajina as a “Croatian agent” or “Croatian spy”: Arrest of Čolović, except from the angle of monitoring the work of the police and justice system, was covered from the angle of regional relations.

the justice system, international relations, EU/EU politics and the economy. Most of the positive texts on an individual topic were written about Russia – 12 or 25%.

Distribution of topics and their evaluative context in the seven media outlets from the sample⁴

| Topic | frequency | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|--|-----------|-------|----------|-------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| political life in Serbia | 356 | 17.69 | 11 | 3.09 | 212 | 59.55 | 133 | 37.36 |
| regional cooperation/ regional relations | 299 | 14.86 | 5 | 1.67 | 112 | 37.46 | 182 | 60.87 |
| economy | 117 | 5.82 | 7 | 5.98 | 69 | 58.97 | 41 | 35.04 |
| international relations | 103 | 5.12 | 2 | 1.94 | 80 | 77.67 | 21 | 20.39 |
| 2016 elections | 82 | 4.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 78 | 95.12 | 4 | 4.88 |
| media/freedom of the media | 67 | 3.33 | 0 | 0.00 | 33 | 49.25 | 34 | 50.75 |
| justice system, activities of the judiciary bodies | 63 | 3.13 | 1 | 1.59 | 48 | 76.19 | 14 | 22.22 |
| crime | 54 | 2.68 | 1 | 1.85 | 42 | 77.78 | 11 | 20.37 |
| Kosovo/ relations between Belgrade and Priština | 53 | 2.63 | 0 | 0.00 | 19 | 35.85 | 34 | 64.15 |
| economics | 48 | 2.39 | 4 | 8.33 | 32 | 66.67 | 12 | 25.00 |
| EU/EU policy | 48 | 2.39 | 6 | 12.50 | 32 | 66.67 | 10 | 20.83 |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 48 | 2.39 | 12 | 25.00 | 29 | 60.42 | 7 | 14.58 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

⁴ All Tables show the top ten topics according to presence.

Evaluative context with reference to all topics and all seven media from the sample

| All the media – evaluative context | number of texts | % |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|--------|
| positive | 96 | 4.77 |
| neutral | 1230 | 61.13 |
| negative | 686 | 34.10 |
| Total | 2012 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

As we already stated, we separately analysed the topic *elections 2016*, which contained *forming of the Government of Serbia*. These texts were proportionally scarce - 75⁵. However, as much as 96% or 72 texts were in neutral context, and only 3 texts (2 in *Danas* and one in *Blic*) were written with negative connotations.

Share and evaluative context for the topic *2016 elections* and element *forming of the Government of Serbia* in the seven media outlets from the sample

| Topic/element: elections 2016/ forming of the Government of Serbia | Evaluative context against topic | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| | total | | positive | | neutral | | negative | |
| Media outlet | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % |
| <i>Večernje novosti</i> | 16 | 21.33 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| <i>Politika</i> | 16 | 21.33 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| <i>Blic</i> | 15 | 20.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 14 | 93.33 | 1 | 6.67 |
| <i>Alo!</i> | 8 | 10.67 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| <i>Danas</i> | 8 | 10.67 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 75.00 | 2 | 25.00 |
| <i>Kurir</i> | 6 | 8.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| <i>Informer</i> | 6 | 8.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 75 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 72 | 96.00 | 3 | 4.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

If we review the attitude of the media towards Serbia's foreign policy, especially in relation to Russia and the European Union, this time we notice a slightly larger presence of positive texts referring to the EU (total of 6, specifically 4 in *Danas* and 2 in *Politika*) and negatively intoned texts towards Russia, though most of these texts were published in the daily *Blic* – 71.43% (5 out of 7), while the remaining 2 negatively intoned texts were published in the paper *Alo!*, the media outlet which belongs to the same publisher as *Blic* (*Ringier Axel Springer*). Other media kept a similar approach as in the previous quarters.

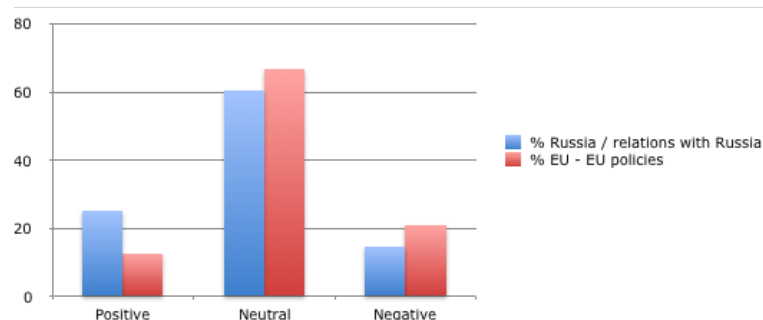
5 Out of 82 texts published on the topic of *Elections 2016*.

Evaluative context and number of texts about *Russia/relations with Russia* and *EU/attitude towards EU*, per media outlet

| Media/topic | Evaluative context with reference to topic | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|--------|
| | total | | positive | | neutral | | negative | |
| | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % |
| <i>Blic</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 8 | 2.90 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 37.50 | 5 | 62.50 |
| EU/EU policy | 1 | 0.36 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| <i>Kurir</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 7 | 4.09 | 2 | 28.57 | 5 | 71.43 | 0 | 0.00 |
| EU/EU policy | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| <i>Večernje novosti</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 15 | 4.76 | 3 | 20.00 | 12 | 80.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| EU/EU policy | 8 | 2.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 62.50 | 3 | 37.50 |
| <i>Alo!</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 3 | 1.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 33.33 | 2 | 66.67 |
| EU/EU policy | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| <i>Informer</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 11 | 5.24 | 7 | 63.64 | 4 | 36.36 | 0 | 0.00 |
| EU/EU policy | 3 | 1.43 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 |
| <i>Politika</i> | | | | | | | | |
| EU/EU policy | 27 | 5.59 | 2 | 7.41 | 21 | 77.78 | 4 | 14.81 |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 2 | 0.41 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| <i>Danas</i> | | | | | | | | |
| EU/EU policy | 9 | 2.33 | 4 | 44.44 | 5 | 55.56 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 2 | 0.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| <i>All media outlets</i> | | | | | | | | |
| EU/EU policy | 48 | 2.39 | 6 | 12.50 | 32 | 66.67 | 10 | 20.83 |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 48 | 2.39 | 12 | 25.00 | 29 | 60.42 | 7 | 14.58 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Evaluative context in all media from the sample according to topics *Russia/relations with Russia* and *EU /EU policy*



Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of topics per media

Blic

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

| <i>Blic</i> | Evaluative context with reference to topic | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| | total | | positive | | neutral | | negative | |
| | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % |
| political life in Serbia | 59 | 21.38 | 1 | 1.69 | 42 | 71.19 | 16 | 27.12 |
| regional cooperation/regional relations | 39 | 14.13 | 0 | 0.00 | 18 | 46.15 | 21 | 53.85 |
| economy | 22 | 7.97 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 72.73 | 6 | 27.27 |
| economics | 17 | 6.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 88.24 | 2 | 11.76 |
| Elections 2016 | 15 | 5.43 | 0 | 0.00 | 14 | 93.33 | 1 | 6.67 |
| activities of the Government of RS | 13 | 4.71 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 76.92 | 3 | 23.08 |
| crime | 12 | 4.35 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| international relations | 12 | 4.35 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 91.67 | 1 | 8.33 |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 8 | 2.90 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 37.50 | 5 | 62.50 |
| meeting requirements/standards for EU integrations | 8 | 2.90 | 2 | 25.00 | 6 | 75.00 | 0 | 0.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Evaluative context with reference to all topics in the paper *Blic*

| <i>Blic</i> – evaluative context | no. of texts | % |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| positive | 4 | 1.45 |
| neutral | 192 | 69.57 |
| negative | 80 | 28.98 |
| Total | 276 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Kurir

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

| <i>Kurir</i> | Evaluative context with reference to the topic | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|--------|
| | total | | positive | | neutral | | negative | |
| | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % |
| political life in Serbia | 71 | 41.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 22 | 30.99 | 49 | 69.01 |
| regional cooperation/regional relations | 21 | 12.28 | 1 | 4.76 | 4 | 19.05 | 16 | 76.19 |
| murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović | 14 | 8.19 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 28.57 | 10 | 71.43 |
| crime | 9 | 5.26 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 33.33 | 6 | 66.67 |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 7 | 4.09 | 2 | 28.57 | 5 | 71.43 | 0 | 0.00 |
| 2016 elections | 7 | 4.09 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| entertainment/showbiz | 6 | 3.51 | 1 | 16.67 | 3 | 50.00 | 2 | 33.33 |
| international relations | 5 | 2.92 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| The Hague/ war crimes | 4 | 2.34 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 25.00 | 3 | 75.00 |
| Kosovo/relations between Belgrade and Priština | 3 | 1.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 |
| meeting requirements/standards for EU integrations | 3 | 1.75 | 1 | 33.33 | 2 | 66.67 | 0 | 0.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Table 37 – Evaluative context with reference to all topics in the paper *Kurir*

| <i>Kurir</i> -evaluative context | no. of texts | % |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| positive | 6 | 3.51 |
| neutral | 66 | 38.60 |
| negative | 99 | 57.89 |
| Total | 171 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

InformerDistribution of topics and their evaluative context in the paper *Informer*

| <i>Informer</i> | Evaluative context with reference to the topic | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|--------|
| | total | | positive | | neutral | | negative | |
| | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % |
| regional cooperation/regional relations | 39 | 18.57 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 15.38 | 33 | 84.62 |
| political life in Serbia | 37 | 17.62 | 10 | 27.03 | 4 | 10.81 | 23 | 62.16 |
| international relations | 14 | 6.67 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 50.00 | 7 | 50.00 |
| media/freedom of the media | 12 | 5.71 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 8.33 | 11 | 91.67 |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 11 | 5.24 | 7 | 63.64 | 4 | 36.36 | 0 | 0.00 |
| crime | 9 | 4.29 | 1 | 11.11 | 6 | 66.67 | 2 | 22.22 |
| murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović | 8 | 3.81 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 75.00 | 2 | 25.00 |
| 2016 elections | 7 | 3.33 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| migrants/refugees | 5 | 2.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 40.00 | 3 | 60.00 |
| The Hague/ war crimes | 5 | 2.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 40.00 | 3 | 60.00 |
| meeting requirements/standards for EU integrations | 5 | 2.38 | 1 | 20.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 80.00 |
| entertainment/showbiz | 5 | 2.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 60.00 | 2 | 40.00 |
| USA/attitude towards USA | 5 | 2.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Evaluative context with reference to all topics in the paper *Informer*

| <i>Informer</i> -evaluative context | no. of texts | % |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| positive | 23 | 10.95 |
| neutral | 65 | 30.95 |
| negative | 122 | 58.10 |
| Total | 210 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Alo!Distribution of topics and their evaluative context in the daily *Alo!*

| <i>Alo!</i> | Evaluative context with reference to the topic | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| | total | | positive | | neutral | | negative | |
| | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % |
| political life in Serbia | 61 | 35.67 | 0 | 0.00 | 42 | 68.85 | 19 | 31.15 |
| regional cooperation/regional relations | 26 | 15.20 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 46.15 | 14 | 53.85 |
| murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović | 15 | 8.77 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 53.33 | 7 | 46.67 |
| crime | 8 | 4.68 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 87.50 | 1 | 12.50 |
| 2016 elections | 8 | 4.68 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| activities of the Government of RS | 5 | 2.92 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 60.00 | 2 | 40.00 |
| terrorism and the Islamic State | 5 | 2.92 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 40.00 | 3 | 60.00 |
| activities of the PM | 4 | 2.34 | 1 | 25.00 | 3 | 75.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| international relations | 4 | 2.34 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| armed forces | 3 | 1.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Kosovo/relations between Belgrade and Priština | 3 | 1.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| The Hague/ war crimes | 3 | 1.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| justice system, activities of the judiciary bodies | 3 | 1.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 3 | 1.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 33.33 | 2 | 66.67 |
| meeting requirements/standards for EU integrations | 3 | 1.75 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 | 0 | 0.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Evaluative context with reference to all topics in the paper *Alo!*

| <i>Alo!</i> -evaluative context | no. of texts | % |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| positive | 4 | 2.34 |
| neutral | 111 | 64.91 |
| negative | 56 | 32.75 |
| Total | 171 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Politika

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

| <i>Politika</i> | Evaluative context with reference to the topic | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------|----------|-------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| | total | | positive | | neutral | | negative | |
| | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % |
| regional coop- eration/regional relations | 60 | 12.42 | 1 | 1.67 | 26 | 43.33 | 33 | 55.00 |
| international rela- tions | 46 | 9.52 | 2 | 4.35 | 34 | 73.91 | 10 | 21.74 |
| economy | 38 | 7.87 | 2 | 5.26 | 17 | 44.74 | 19 | 50.00 |
| justice system, activities of the judiciary bodies | 28 | 5.80 | 1 | 3.57 | 25 | 89.29 | 2 | 7.14 |
| EU/EU policy | 27 | 5.59 | 2 | 7.41 | 21 | 77.78 | 4 | 14.81 |
| Kosovo/relations between Belgrade and Priština | 26 | 5.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 38.46 | 16 | 61.54 |
| political life in Serbia | 23 | 4.76 | 0 | 0.00 | 20 | 86.96 | 3 | 13.04 |
| 2016 elections | 21 | 4.35 | 0 | 0.00 | 20 | 95.24 | 1 | 4.76 |
| science | 16 | 3.31 | 3 | 18.75 | 7 | 43.75 | 6 | 37.50 |
| economics | 15 | 3.11 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 66.67 | 5 | 33.33 |
| media/freedom of the media | 15 | 3.11 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 53.33 | 7 | 46.67 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Evaluative context with reference to all topics in the paper *Politika*

| <i>Politika</i> -evaluative context | no. of texts | % |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| positive | 22 | 4.55 |
| neutral | 327 | 67.70 |
| negative | 134 | 27.74 |
| Total | 483 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Večernje novosti

Evaluative context according to topics in the daily *Večernje novosti*

| <i>Večernje novosti</i> | Evaluative context with reference to the topic | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| | total | | positive | | neutral | | negative | |
| | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % |
| regional coop- eration/regional relations | 74 | 23.49 | 2 | 2.70 | 13 | 17.57 | 59 | 79.73 |
| political life in Serbia | 19 | 6.03 | 0 | 0.00 | 17 | 89.47 | 2 | 10.53 |
| 2016 elections | 16 | 5.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| economy | 15 | 4.76 | 4 | 26.67 | 8 | 53.33 | 3 | 20.00 |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 15 | 4.76 | 3 | 20.00 | 12 | 80.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Kosovo/relations between Belgrade and Priština | 11 | 3.49 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 9.09 | 10 | 90.91 |
| crime | 11 | 3.49 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 81.82 | 2 | 18.18 |
| economics | 10 | 3.17 | 3 | 30.00 | 4 | 40.00 | 3 | 30.00 |
| migrants/refugees | 10 | 3.17 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 70.00 | 3 | 30.00 |
| armed forces | 9 | 2.86 | 4 | 44.44 | 4 | 44.44 | 1 | 11.11 |
| The Hague/ war crimes | 9 | 2.86 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 66.67 | 3 | 33.33 |
| international rela- tions | 9 | 2.86 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 88.89 | 1 | 11.11 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Evaluative context with reference to all topics in the paper *Večernje novosti*

| <i>Večernje novosti</i> -evaluative context | no. of texts | % |
|---|--------------|--------|
| positive | 27 | 8.57 |
| neutral | 175 | 55.56 |
| negative | 113 | 35.87 |
| Total | 315 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Danas

Evaluative context according to topics in the daily *Danas*

| <i>Danas</i> | Evaluative context with reference to the topic | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| | total | | positive | | neutral | | negative | |
| | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % |
| political life in Serbia | 86 | 22.28 | 0 | 0.00 | 65 | 75.58 | 21 | 24.42 |
| regional cooperation/re-regional relations | 40 | 10.36 | 1 | 2.50 | 33 | 82.50 | 6 | 15.00 |
| economy | 39 | 10.10 | 0 | 0.00 | 26 | 66.67 | 13 | 33.33 |
| media/freedom of the media | 28 | 7.25 | 0 | 0.00 | 18 | 64.29 | 10 | 35.71 |
| activities of the Government of RS | 17 | 4.40 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 70.59 | 5 | 29.41 |
| justice system, activities of the judiciary bodies | 16 | 4.15 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 75.00 | 4 | 25.00 |
| international relations | 13 | 3.37 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 84.62 | 2 | 15.38 |
| meeting requirements/standards for EU integrations | 12 | 3.11 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| education | 11 | 2.85 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 90.91 | 1 | 9.09 |
| EU/EU policy | 9 | 2.33 | 4 | 44.44 | 5 | 55.56 | 0 | 0.00 |
| culture | 9 | 2.33 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 88.89 | 1 | 11.11 |
| science | 9 | 2.33 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 77.78 | 2 | 22.22 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Evaluative context with reference to all topics in the paper *Danas*

| <i>Danas</i> –evaluative context | no. of texts | % |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| positive | 10 | 2.59 |
| neutral | 294 | 76.17 |
| negative | 82 | 21.24 |
| Total | 386 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Balance

When we take into account all texts from the sample of the April-June 2016 period, it can be noticed that most of the presented topics were not treated in a comprehensive way, which is a claim confirmed by the fact that balance was present in only 20.43% of all writing. The fewest balanced texts were this time recorded in the paper *Informer* 3.33% or 7 out of 210 texts, and a similar result was observed in *Kurir*, where 5.85% or 10 out of 171 texts were balanced. They are followed by *Alo!* with 85.38%, *Politika* with 77.85% and *Blic* with 77.54% of unbalanced texts. 27.98% of texts in *Danas* are balanced, while *Večernje novosti* ran 29.21% of balanced texts. Also, we noticed the biggest difference compared to the second quarter in these two media. *Danas* had 7.59% more balanced texts, and *Večernje novosti* 5.8% more comprehensive texts.

Although evaluative context is not present in 63.13% of all texts, when assessing the realistic picture of the media from the sample, it should be taken into account that the texts from the front pages we analysed are not comprehensive and that such, one-sided approach reflects the general state of affairs in Serbian media.

After all, balanced texts necessarily show a certain degree of reservation, which is apparently not a common occurrence in Serbian journalism. Taking sides, sometimes extremely passionately, attracts audiences, but diminishes seriousness. The focus is on the speed of reaction, rather than a detailed presentation of information, which requires research, a number of interviewees and reliable and verifiable information, with available sources of information. That is how circulation and popularity are boosted in a short time, but the same cannot be said about reputation.

Balance in relation to all topics and all seven media from the sample

| Balance | yes | | no | |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| | no. | % | no. | % |
| Media outlet | | | | |
| <i>Informer</i> | 7 | 3.33 | 203 | 96.67 |
| <i>Kurir</i> | 10 | 5.85 | 161 | 94.15 |
| <i>Alo!</i> | 25 | 14.62 | 146 | 85.38 |
| <i>Politika</i> | 107 | 22.15 | 376 | 77.85 |
| <i>Blic</i> | 62 | 22.46 | 214 | 77.54 |
| <i>Danas</i> | 108 | 27.98 | 278 | 72.02 |
| <i>Večernje novosti</i> | 92 | 29.21 | 223 | 70.79 |
| Total | 411 | 20.43 | 1601 | 79.57 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Actors

Based on the analysis of the empirical material collected from the front pages, the media in Serbia are predominantly concerned with the political affairs within Serbia. As much as 47.60% of the total number of actors featured in the selected texts from the front pages were (individual and collective) political actors holding various positions within the political life of Serbia. If we add the texts talking about foreign political actors to this number, the share of political actors in the total number of actors on the front pages rises to 74.56%. The second most frequently mentioned group are various social actors, which make up for 16.40% from our sample. Business and economic actors are featured in only 4.61% cases.

The total distribution of actors featured in the texts used as research samples (in absolute values)

| Actors | | | | | |
|--------------------------|------|----------|------|------------|-------|
| Political actors | 8264 | Domestic | 5276 | Individual | 4111 |
| | | | | Collective | 1165 |
| | | Foreign | 2988 | Individual | 2465 |
| | | | | Collective | 523 |
| Business/economic actors | 512 | Domestic | 467 | Individual | 223 |
| | | | | Collective | 244 |
| | | Foreign | 45 | Individual | 15 |
| | | | | Collective | 30 |
| Other social actors | 1818 | Domestic | 1762 | Individual | 1555 |
| | | | | Collective | 207 |
| | | Foreign | 56 | Individual | 52 |
| | | | | Collective | 4 |
| Unnamed sources | | | | | 489 |
| Total | | | | | 11083 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual political actors from the **Government of Serbia (old and new) and the President of the Republic of Serbia**

| Government of Serbia – old and new | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Aleksandar Vučić | 630 | 31.39 | 19 | 3.02 | 583 | 92.54 | 28 | 4.44 |
| Ivica Dačić | 240 | 11.96 | 0 | 0.00 | 219 | 91.25 | 21 | 8.75 |
| Tomislav Nikolić | 198 | 9.87 | 0 | 0.00 | 181 | 91.41 | 17 | 8.59 |
| Nebojša Stefanović | 103 | 5.13 | 0 | 0.00 | 100 | 97.09 | 3 | 2.91 |
| Aleksandar Vulin | 102 | 5.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 96 | 94.12 | 6 | 5.88 |
| Zorana Mihajlović | 88 | 4.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 73 | 82.95 | 15 | 17.05 |
| Rasim Ljajić | 67 | 3.34 | 0 | 0.00 | 66 | 98.51 | 1 | 1.49 |
| Nikola Selaković | 49 | 2.44 | 0 | 0.00 | 49 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ana Brnabić | 48 | 2.39 | 0 | 0.00 | 48 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Mladen Šarčević | 46 | 2.29 | 2 | 4.35 | 44 | 95.65 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Goran Knežević | 39 | 1.94 | 0 | 0.00 | 37 | 94.87 | 2 | 5.13 |
| Aleksandar Antić | 38 | 1.89 | 0 | 0.00 | 36 | 94.74 | 2 | 5.26 |
| Slavica Đukić Dejanović | 38 | 1.89 | 0 | 0.00 | 37 | 97.37 | 1 | 2.63 |
| Jadranka Joksimović | 37 | 1.84 | 0 | 0.00 | 37 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Branislav Nedimović | 32 | 1.59 | 0 | 0.00 | 32 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vanja Udovičić | 29 | 1.44 | 0 | 0.00 | 29 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Zoran Đorđević | 29 | 1.44 | 0 | 0.00 | 28 | 96.55 | 1 | 3.45 |
| Ivan Tasovac | 28 | 1.40 | 0 | 0.00 | 19 | 67.86 | 9 | 32.14 |
| Dušan Vujović | 24 | 1.20 | 0 | 0.00 | 23 | 95.83 | 1 | 4.17 |
| Vladan Vukosavljević | 24 | 1.20 | 0 | 0.00 | 22 | 91.67 | 2 | 8.33 |
| Kori Udovički | 20 | 1.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 19 | 95.00 | 1 | 5.00 |
| Srdjan Verbić | 19 | 0.95 | 0 | 0.00 | 17 | 89.47 | 2 | 10.53 |
| Zlatibor Lončar | 19 | 0.95 | 0 | 0.00 | 18 | 94.74 | 1 | 5.26 |
| Milan Krkobabić | 19 | 0.95 | 0 | 0.00 | 18 | 94.74 | 1 | 5.26 |
| Željko Sertić | 16 | 0.80 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Velimir Ilić | 16 | 0.80 | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 93.75 | 1 | 6.25 |
| Snežana Bogosavljević Bošković | 9 | 0.45 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 2007 | 100.00 | 21 | 1.05 | 1871 | 93.22 | 115 | 5.73 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Like in the previous quarter, the most present actor on the front pages of daily newspapers in Serbia was Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić, who was mostly mentioned in a neutral context (u 92.54% instances). He was also a topic of additional 3.02% (19) positive and 4.44% (28) texts with negative connotation. The prime minister appeared as an actor of texts on the front pages 630 puta, which is significantly more than the runner-up, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dačić, who was present in 240 texts. The highest frequency of Aleksandar Vučić's appearance, in absolute values, was recorded in *Danas* (141), *Politika* (121) and then in *Večernje novosti* (110). If we look at relative values, as percentages of texts where he appears as an actor in relation to the total number of selected texts from that particular newspaper, we can see that he is the most frequent actor in *Danas* (36.53%), followed by *Blic* (35.51%), *Večernje novosti* (34.92%) and *Kurir* (30.99%). The smallest share of texts in which the PM of Serbia is an actor is recorded in papers *Politika* (25.05%), *Informer* (27.62%) and *Alo!* (28.65%).

When it comes to the evaluative context, the highest percentage, as well as the highest number of negative texts, can again be noticed in *Blic* (14.29% or 14 texts) and *Danas* (9.93% or 14 texts). The most texts with positive connotation were noticed in *Alo!* – 12.24% or 6 texts, followed by *Blic* (5), *Večernje novosti* (3), *Informer* (2) and *Kurir* (2).

Aleksandar Vučić: evaluative context in relation to the media outlet

| Aleksandar Vučić | positive | | neutral | | negative | | total | |
|-------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|------------|---------------|
| Media outlet | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % |
| <i>Blic</i> | 5 | 5.10 | 79 | 80.61 | 14 | 14.29 | 98 | 15.56 |
| <i>Kurir</i> | 2 | 3.77 | 51 | 96.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 53 | 8.41 |
| <i>Večernje novosti</i> | 3 | 2.73 | 107 | 97.27 | 0 | 0.00 | 110 | 17.46 |
| <i>Alo!</i> | 6 | 12.24 | 43 | 87.76 | 0 | 0.00 | 49 | 7.78 |
| <i>Informer</i> | 2 | 3.45 | 56 | 96.55 | 0 | 0.00 | 58 | 9.21 |
| <i>Politika</i> | 1 | 0.83 | 120 | 99.17 | 0 | 0.00 | 121 | 19.21 |
| <i>Danas</i> | 0 | 0.00 | 127 | 90.07 | 14 | 9.93 | 141 | 22.38 |
| Total | 19 | 3.02 | 583 | 92.54 | 28 | 4.44 | 630 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Number of appearances of Aleksandar Vučić in relation to the total number of texts in individual daily newspapers

| Aleksandar Vučić per media outlet | no. of appearances | total number of texts | % share against the total number of texts |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <i>Danas</i> | 141 | 386 | 36.53 |
| <i>Blic</i> | 98 | 276 | 35.51 |
| <i>Večernje novosti</i> | 110 | 315 | 34.92 |
| <i>Kurir</i> | 53 | 171 | 30.99 |
| <i>Alo!</i> | 49 | 171 | 28.65 |
| <i>Informer</i> | 58 | 210 | 27.62 |
| <i>Politika</i> | 121 | 483 | 25.05 |
| Total | 630 | 2012 | 31.31 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

The President of the Republic of Serbia Tomislav Nikolić, who is an actor in 198 (9.87%) of the analysed texts is the third most frequent actor among Serbian politicians.

The highest number of texts featuring the president of Serbia were published by *Večernje novosti* (46), but the highest share in relation to the total number of texts in a particular newspaper was recorded in *Kurir* – 19.88% The most texts about Tomislav Nikolić with negative connotation were published by *Blic* (8) and *Kurir* (4), which is a share of 34.78% (*Blic*), i.e. 11.76% (*Kurir*). In this quarter, there were no positive texts about the Serbian President.

Other actors from this group are presented in a neutral evaluative context in more than 90% of the texts. Apart from the President and the PM, Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić also appears in a bit more negative texts – 21⁶ and Minister for Construction, Traffic and Infrastructure Zorana Mihajlović (15 texts with negative connotations). The biggest share of negative texts in percentage is recorded for the Minister of Culture in the provisional government Ivan Tasovac – 32.14%.

⁶ Compared to 35 negative texts in the previous quarter

Number of appearances of Tomislav Nikolić compared to the total number of texts in certain dailies

| Tomislav Nikolić per media outlet | No. of appearances | Total no. of texts | % share against the total no. of texts |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--|
| <i>Kurir</i> | 34 | 171 | 19.88 |
| <i>Večernje novosti</i> | 46 | 315 | 14.60 |
| <i>Danas</i> | 34 | 386 | 8.81 |
| <i>Blic</i> | 23 | 276 | 8.33 |
| <i>Politika</i> | 36 | 483 | 7.45 |
| <i>Informer</i> | 15 | 210 | 7.14 |
| <i>Alo!</i> | 10 | 171 | 5.85 |
| Total | 198 | 2012 | 9.84 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Tomislav Nikolić: Evaluative context per media outlet

| Tomislav Nikolić | positive | | neutral | | negative | | total | |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|------------|---------------|
| Media outlet | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % |
| <i>Blic</i> | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 65.22 | 8 | 34.78 | 23 | 11.62 |
| <i>Kurir</i> | 0 | 0.00 | 30 | 88.24 | 4 | 11.76 | 34 | 17.17 |
| <i>Večernje novosti</i> | 0 | 0.00 | 46 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 46 | 23.23 |
| <i>Alo!</i> | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 80.00 | 2 | 20.00 | 10 | 5.05 |
| <i>Informer</i> | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 7.58 |
| <i>Politika</i> | 0 | 0.00 | 36 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 36 | 18.18 |
| <i>Danas</i> | 0 | 0.00 | 31 | 91.18 | 3 | 8.82 | 34 | 17.17 |
| Total | 0 | 0.00 | 181 | 91.41 | 17 | 8.59 | 198 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

After the intense election campaign and the elections, in the third quarter of 2016, the number of appearances of actors from the opposition returned to the frequencies recorded during 2015. In comparison to the last quarter of the previous year, number of appearances of actors from the opposition in the first and second trimester of 2016 was two times higher (1428 in the first and 1552 in the second trimester of 2016, against 762 in the last trimester of 2015). In the third quarter of 2016, we recorded 792 of appearances, which is the usual presence of this type of actors on the front pages.

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual political actors from the **opposition**

| Opposition – individual | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Bojan Pajtić | 92 | 11.62 | 0 | 0.00 | 77 | 83.70 | 15 | 16.30 |
| Vojislav Šešelj | 90 | 11.36 | 0 | 0.00 | 74 | 82.22 | 16 | 17.78 |
| Boris Tadić | 74 | 9.34 | 0 | 0.00 | 70 | 94.59 | 4 | 5.41 |
| Čedomir Jovanović | 65 | 8.21 | 0 | 0.00 | 52 | 80.00 | 13 | 20.00 |
| Dragan Šutanovac | 43 | 5.43 | 2 | 4.65 | 37 | 86.05 | 4 | 9.30 |
| Saša Radulović | 34 | 4.29 | 0 | 0.00 | 27 | 79.41 | 7 | 20.59 |
| Sanda Rašković Ivić | 32 | 4.04 | 0 | 0.00 | 28 | 87.50 | 4 | 12.50 |
| Boško Obradović | 32 | 4.04 | 0 | 0.00 | 27 | 84.38 | 5 | 15.63 |
| Nenad Čanak | 24 | 3.03 | 0 | 0.00 | 20 | 83.33 | 4 | 16.67 |
| Zoran Živković | 21 | 2.65 | 1 | 4.76 | 15 | 71.43 | 5 | 23.81 |
| Balša Božović | 16 | 2.02 | 1 | 6.25 | 13 | 81.25 | 2 | 12.50 |
| Zoran Lutovac | 16 | 2.02 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Đorđe Vukadinović | 13 | 1.64 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 84.62 | 2 | 15.38 |
| Radoslav Milojčić Kena | 12 | 1.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 66.67 | 4 | 33.33 |
| Srboljub Antić | 12 | 1.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Sulejman Ugljanin | 12 | 1.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 66.67 | 4 | 33.33 |
| Goran Ješić | 11 | 1.39 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vjerica Radeta | 11 | 1.39 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Amir Bislimi | 9 | 1.14 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 77.78 | 2 | 22.22 |
| Aleksandra Jerkov | 8 | 1.01 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 87.50 | 1 | 12.50 |
| Jelena Balašević | 8 | 1.01 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 75.00 | 2 | 25.00 |
| Dragan Maršićanin | 7 | 0.88 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 71.43 | 2 | 28.57 |
| Marko Đurišić | 7 | 0.88 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Branislav Lečić | 6 | 0.76 | 1 | 16.67 | 5 | 83.33 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dragoljub Mićunović | 6 | 0.76 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Nataša Jovanović | 6 | 0.76 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 50.00 | 3 | 50.00 |
| Borisav Stefanović | 5 | 0.63 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Jovo Ostojić | 5 | 0.63 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Milorad Mirčić | 5 | 0.63 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 80.00 | 1 | 20.00 |
| Petar Jojić | 5 | 0.63 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|--------|---|------|-----|--------|-----|-------|
| Saša Mirković | 5 | 0.63 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Aleksandar Stevanović | 4 | 0.51 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dušan Elezović | 4 | 0.51 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dušan Petrović | 4 | 0.51 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Miroslav Parović | 4 | 0.51 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Nada Kolundžija | 4 | 0.51 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vladimir Pavićević | 4 | 0.51 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Bojan Kostreš | 3 | 0.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Gordana Čomić | 3 | 0.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Igor Salak | 3 | 0.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Jovan Marković | 3 | 0.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Milan Lapčević | 3 | 0.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Nataša Vučković | 3 | 0.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Tamara Tripić | 3 | 0.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vladan Glišić | 3 | 0.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vukosav Tomašević | 3 | 0.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Zoran Krasić | 3 | 0.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| others | 46 | 5.81 | 1 | 2.17 | 42 | 91.30 | 3 | 6.52 |
| Total | 792 | 100.00 | 6 | 0.76 | 682 | 86.11 | 104 | 13.13 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual political actors from the **majority**

| Majority – individual | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|-----------------------|-----|------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Bratislav Gašić | 35 | 7.73 | 1 | 2.86 | 25 | 71.43 | 9 | 25.71 |
| Muamer Zukorlić | 30 | 6.62 | 0 | 0.00 | 28 | 93.33 | 2 | 6.67 |
| Vladimir Đukanović | 25 | 5.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 24 | 96.00 | 1 | 4.00 |
| Nenad Popović | 23 | 5.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 23 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Milutin Mrkonjić | 20 | 4.42 | 0 | 0.00 | 18 | 90.00 | 2 | 10.00 |
| Miroslav Lazanski | 18 | 3.97 | 0 | 0.00 | 17 | 94.44 | 1 | 5.56 |
| Dijana Vukomanović | 17 | 3.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 88.24 | 2 | 11.76 |
| Velimir Ilić | 16 | 3.53 | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 93.75 | 1 | 6.25 |
| Dragan Marković Palma | 16 | 3.53 | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 93.75 | 1 | 6.25 |
| Zoran Babić | 15 | 3.31 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 73.33 | 4 | 26.67 |
| Aleksandar Martinović | 15 | 3.31 | 0 | 0.00 | 13 | 86.67 | 2 | 13.33 |
| Miodrag Linta | 15 | 3.31 | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Novica Tončev | 15 | 3.31 | 0 | 0.00 | 13 | 86.67 | 2 | 13.33 |
| Branko Ružić | 11 | 2.43 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 90.91 | 1 | 9.09 |
| Milovan Drecun | 11 | 2.43 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Milenko Jovanov | 9 | 1.99 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Aleksandar Senić | 8 | 1.77 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 62.50 | 3 | 37.50 |
| Marijan Rističević | 8 | 1.77 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 75.00 | 2 | 25.00 |
| Vuk Drašković | 8 | 1.77 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 87.50 | 1 | 12.50 |
| Bratislav Jugović | 5 | 1.10 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Istvan Pasztor | 5 | 1.10 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-----|--------|---|------|-----|--------|----|-------|
| Nenad Borovčanin | 5 | 1.10 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Veroljub Arsić | 5 | 1.10 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vladanka Malović | 5 | 1.10 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 80.00 | 1 | 20.00 |
| Aleksandra Tomić | 4 | 0.88 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 75.00 | 1 | 25.00 |
| Ivana Petrović | 4 | 0.88 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 25.00 | 3 | 75.00 |
| Ljubiša Stojimirović | 4 | 0.88 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 75.00 | 1 | 25.00 |
| Radoslav Pavlović | 4 | 0.88 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 75.00 | 1 | 25.00 |
| Žarko Obradović | 4 | 0.88 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Aleksandar Jovičić | 3 | 0.66 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Balint Pastor | 3 | 0.66 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Boris Miličević | 3 | 0.66 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Branislav Blažić | 3 | 0.66 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Đorđe Miličević | 3 | 0.66 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dubravka Filipovski | 3 | 0.66 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Laszlo Puškaš | 3 | 0.66 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Marija Obradović | 3 | 0.66 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 33.33 | 2 | 66.67 |
| Meho Omerović | 3 | 0.66 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Petar Petrović | 3 | 0.66 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| others | 63 | 13.91 | 0 | 0.00 | 49 | 77.78 | 14 | 22.22 |
| Total | 453 | 100.00 | 1 | 0.22 | 392 | 86.53 | 60 | 13.25 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual political actors **representatives of state authorities, agencies and institutions**

| State authorities, agencies and institutions – individually | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|---|-----|--------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|--------|
| Siniša Mali | 55 | 19.93 | 0 | 0.00 | 48 | 87.27 | 7 | 12.73 |
| Maja Gojković | 39 | 14.13 | 0 | 0.00 | 35 | 89.74 | 4 | 10.26 |
| Marko Đurić | 22 | 7.97 | 0 | 0.00 | 22 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Tanja Mišćević | 20 | 7.25 | 0 | 0.00 | 20 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Jorgovanka Tabaković | 16 | 5.80 | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 93.75 | 1 | 6.25 |
| Igor Mirović | 9 | 3.26 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Nikola Nikodijević | 8 | 2.90 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Radoš Đurović | 8 | 2.90 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Miloš Vučević | 6 | 2.17 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Danilo Vučetić | 5 | 1.81 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Goran Vesić | 5 | 1.81 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Stanislava Pak | 5 | 1.81 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Suzana Vasiljević | 5 | 1.81 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 80.00 | 1 | 20.00 |
| Veljko Odalović | 5 | 1.81 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 60.00 | 2 | 40.00 |
| Radomir Nikolić | 3 | 1.09 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 33.33 | 2 | 66.67 |
| Ivan Mišković | 3 | 1.09 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Marija Blečić | 3 | 1.09 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 |
| Novak Nedić | 3 | 1.09 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Radomir Ilić | 3 | 1.09 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Zoran Marković | 3 | 1.09 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| others | 50 | 18.12 | 0 | 0.00 | 50 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 276 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 256 | 92.75 | 20 | 7.25 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

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

| Others | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|--------------------|-----|-------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Slobodan Milošević | 81 | 19.95 | 1 | 1.23 | 77 | 95.06 | 3 | 3.70 |
| Zoran Đinđić | 41 | 10.10 | 0 | 0.00 | 39 | 95.12 | 2 | 4.88 |
| Mlađan Dinkić | 24 | 5.91 | 0 | 0.00 | 19 | 79.17 | 5 | 20.83 |
| Čedo Čolović | 24 | 5.91 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 45.83 | 13 | 54.17 |
| Vuk Jeremić | 22 | 5.42 | 1 | 4.55 | 21 | 95.45 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dragan Đilas | 18 | 4.43 | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 83.33 | 3 | 16.67 |
| Vojislav Koštunica | 13 | 3.20 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 84.62 | 2 | 15.38 |
| Vesna Pešić | 13 | 3.20 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 92.31 | 1 | 7.69 |
| Milorad Vučelić | 13 | 3.20 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 92.31 | 1 | 7.69 |
| Mirjana Marković | 10 | 2.46 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 90.00 | 1 | 10.00 |
| Jelena Milić | 10 | 2.46 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 50.00 | 5 | 50.00 |
| Sonja Biserko | 10 | 2.46 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 90.00 | 1 | 10.00 |
| Bogoljub Karić | 9 | 2.22 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 66.67 | 3 | 33.33 |
| Davor Štefanek | 9 | 2.22 | 2 | 22.22 | 7 | 77.78 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Emir Kusturica | 8 | 1.97 | 3 | 37.50 | 5 | 62.50 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Slavko Ćuruvija | 8 | 1.97 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Nataša Kandić | 7 | 1.72 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 85.71 | 1 | 14.29 |
| Filip David | 7 | 1.72 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 85.71 | 1 | 14.29 |
| Andrija Prlainović | 6 | 1.48 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Kokan Mladenović | 6 | 1.48 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Mirko Cvetković | 6 | 1.48 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dragica Nikolić | 6 | 1.48 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 33.33 | 4 | 66.67 |
| Ivana Španović | 6 | 1.48 | 1 | 16.67 | 5 | 83.33 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Jelena Karleuša | 6 | 1.48 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 66.67 | 2 | 33.33 |
| Marko Milošević | 6 | 1.48 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Srbijanka Turajlić | 6 | 1.48 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Branka Prpa | 5 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 80.00 | 1 | 20.00 |
| Đorđe Balašević | 5 | 1.23 | 1 | 20.00 | 1 | 20.00 | 3 | 60.00 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|------------|---------------|----------|-------------|------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Danilo Vučić | 4 | 0.99 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Matija Bećković | 4 | 0.99 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Veran Matić | 4 | 0.99 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 75.00 | 1 | 25.00 |
| Andrej Vučić | 3 | 0.74 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Bojana Maljević | 3 | 0.74 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 33.33 | 2 | 66.67 |
| Branislav Nedić | 3 | 0.74 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Total | 406 | 100.00 | 9 | 2.22 | 341 | 83.99 | 56 | 13.79 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of domestic collective political actors:
state authorities and institutions

| State authorities, institutions and agencies – collective | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|--|-----|-------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Government of Serbia | 171 | 31.61 | 0 | 0.00 | 157 | 91.81 | 14 | 8.19 |
| National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia | 37 | 6.84 | 0 | 0.00 | 32 | 86.49 | 5 | 13.51 |
| Ministry of Interior | 34 | 6.28 | 1 | 2.94 | 29 | 85.29 | 4 | 11.76 |
| Ministry of Finance | 27 | 4.99 | 0 | 0.00 | 27 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| National Bank of Serbia | 26 | 4.81 | 0 | 0.00 | 26 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development | 25 | 4.62 | 0 | 0.00 | 24 | 96.00 | 1 | 4.00 |
| Ministry of Justice | 25 | 4.62 | 0 | 0.00 | 22 | 88.00 | 3 | 12.00 |
| Ministry of Defence | 24 | 4.44 | 0 | 0.00 | 23 | 95.83 | 1 | 4.17 |
| Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 19 | 3.51 | 0 | 0.00 | 14 | 73.68 | 5 | 26.32 |
| Anti-Corruption Agency | 17 | 3.14 | 0 | 0.00 | 17 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ministry of Economy | 17 | 3.14 | 0 | 0.00 | 14 | 82.35 | 3 | 17.65 |
| Tax Administration | 14 | 2.59 | 0 | 0.00 | 13 | 92.86 | 1 | 7.14 |
| Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs | 13 | 2.40 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 84.62 | 2 | 15.38 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|---------------|----------|-------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Ministry of Construction, Traffic and Infrastructure | 12 | 2.22 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 91.67 | 1 | 8.33 |
| Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection | 11 | 2.03 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ministry of Culture and Information | 8 | 1.48 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| “Serbian authorities” | 7 | 1.29 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ministry of Trade, Telecommunication and Tourism | 5 | 0.92 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Business Registers Agency | 4 | 0.74 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| City Institute for Expert Analysis | 4 | 0.74 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 25.00 | 3 | 75.00 |
| Ministry of Health | 4 | 0.74 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Pension and Disability Insurance Fund | 4 | 0.74 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Agency for Privatisation | 3 | 0.55 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Office for Kosovo and Metohija | 3 | 0.55 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government | 3 | 0.55 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 24 | 4.44 | 0 | 0.00 | 20 | 83.33 | 4 | 16.67 |
| Total | 541 | 100.00 | 1 | 0.18 | 492 | 90.94 | 48 | 8.87 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of domestic collective political actors:
majority

| Majority – collective | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|-----------------------|-----|-------|----------|------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| SNS | 152 | 54.68 | 1 | 0.66 | 140 | 92.11 | 11 | 7.24 |
| SPS | 79 | 28.42 | 0 | 0.00 | 71 | 89.87 | 8 | 10.13 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------|---------------|----------|-------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| SNP | 8 | 2.88 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Socialists' Movement | 7 | 2.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| PUPS | 7 | 2.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 85.71 | 1 | 14.29 |
| SVM | 7 | 2.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| SDPS | 6 | 2.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| New Serbia | 6 | 2.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 6 | 2.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 278 | 100.00 | 1 | 0.36 | 257 | 92.45 | 20 | 7.19 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

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

| Opposition – collective | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|-------------------------|------------|---------------|----------|-------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| DS | 82 | 29.50 | 0 | 0.00 | 72 | 87.80 | 10 | 12.20 |
| DJB | 37 | 13.31 | 0 | 0.00 | 36 | 97.30 | 1 | 2.70 |
| SRS | 35 | 12.59 | 0 | 0.00 | 35 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| DSS | 32 | 11.51 | 0 | 0.00 | 31 | 96.88 | 1 | 3.13 |
| LDP | 29 | 10.43 | 0 | 0.00 | 27 | 93.10 | 2 | 6.90 |
| SDP | 22 | 7.91 | 0 | 0.00 | 22 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dveri | 20 | 7.19 | 0 | 0.00 | 19 | 95.00 | 1 | 5.00 |
| LSV | 15 | 5.40 | 0 | 0.00 | 14 | 93.33 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Others | 6 | 2.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 278 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 262 | 94.24 | 16 | 5.76 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

A considerably lower percentage of texts from the front pages discusses foreign (individual and collective) political actors from Kosovo (merely 26.96% out of the total number of actors, but there are about 10% more than in the previous quarter). Actors of these texts are more often individuals (in 82.49% instances) than collective ones (17.50%).

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of individual and collective actors: **Kosovo**

| Kosovo | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|----------------------|------------|---------------|----------|-------------|------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Hashim Thaci | 36 | 29.51 | 0 | 0.00 | 28 | 77.78 | 8 | 22.22 |
| Isa Mustafa | 15 | 12.30 | 0 | 0.00 | 14 | 93.33 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Branimir Stojanović | 13 | 10.66 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 92.31 | 1 | 7.69 |
| Dalibor Jevtić | 6 | 4.92 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Kosovo police | 5 | 4.10 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 80.00 | 1 | 20.00 |
| Kosovo authorities | 4 | 3.28 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 25.00 | 3 | 75.00 |
| KLA | 4 | 3.28 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 25.00 | 3 | 75.00 |
| Edita Tahiri | 3 | 2.46 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Government of Kosovo | 3 | 2.46 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 33 | 27.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 33 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 122 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 105 | 86.07 | 17 | 13.93 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Croatia**

| Croatia | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|--------------------------|-----|-------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| "Croatian authorities" | 59 | 11.11 | 0 | 0.00 | 15 | 25.42 | 44 | 74.58 |
| Zoran Milanović | 59 | 11.11 | 0 | 0.00 | 34 | 57.63 | 25 | 42.37 |
| Kolinda Grabar Kitarović | 57 | 10.73 | 0 | 0.00 | 44 | 77.19 | 13 | 22.81 |
| Miro Kovač | 42 | 7.91 | 0 | 0.00 | 33 | 78.57 | 9 | 21.43 |
| Andrej Plenković | 25 | 4.71 | 0 | 0.00 | 25 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Milorad Pupovac | 23 | 4.33 | 0 | 0.00 | 22 | 95.65 | 1 | 4.35 |
| Branimir Glavaš | 22 | 4.14 | 0 | 0.00 | 13 | 59.09 | 9 | 40.91 |
| Zlatko Hasanbegović | 17 | 3.20 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 52.94 | 8 | 47.06 |
| Marko Perković Thompson | 16 | 3.01 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 18.75 | 13 | 81.25 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|--------|---|-------|-----|--------|-----|-------|
| Ante Pavelić | 14 | 2.64 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 28.57 | 10 | 71.43 |
| Franjo Tuđman | 12 | 2.26 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 66.67 | 4 | 33.33 |
| HDZ | 12 | 2.26 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 91.67 | 1 | 8.33 |
| Miro Barešić | 12 | 2.26 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 50.00 | 6 | 50.00 |
| Tihomir Orešković | 11 | 2.07 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 81.82 | 2 | 18.18 |
| Security Intelligence Agency | 10 | 1.88 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ante Gotovina | 9 | 1.69 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 66.67 | 3 | 33.33 |
| SDP | 8 | 1.51 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia | 7 | 1.32 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 85.71 | 1 | 14.29 |
| Stjepan Mesić | 7 | 1.32 | 1 | 14.29 | 6 | 85.71 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Tomislav Medved | 7 | 1.32 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 85.71 | 1 | 14.29 |
| Vedrana Rudan | 7 | 1.32 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Milan Bandić | 6 | 1.13 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Tomislav Karamarko | 6 | 1.13 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Božo Petrov | 5 | 0.94 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Gordan Markotić | 5 | 0.94 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ivo Josipović | 4 | 0.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ivo Sanader | 4 | 0.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Government of Croatia | 4 | 0.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 75.00 | 1 | 25.00 |
| County Court in Zagreb | 4 | 0.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 25.00 | 3 | 75.00 |
| Croatian Police | 3 | 0.56 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Josip Klem | 3 | 0.56 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vlaho Orepić | 3 | 0.56 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 33.33 | 2 | 66.67 |
| Others | 48 | 9.04 | 1 | 2.08 | 40 | 83.33 | 7 | 14.58 |
| Total | 531 | 100.00 | 2 | 0.38 | 365 | 68.74 | 164 | 30.89 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Montenegro**

| Montenegro | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|----------------|-----|--------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Milo Đukanović | 11 | 27.50 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 81.82 | 2 | 18.18 |
| DPS | 3 | 7.50 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ema Đuhić | 3 | 7.50 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 33.33 | 2 | 66.67 |
| Igor Lukšić | 3 | 7.50 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| others | 20 | 50.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 19 | 95.00 | 1 | 5.00 |
| Total | 40 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 35 | 87.50 | 5 | 12.50 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

| Bosnia and Herzegovina | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|--|-----|-------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Milorad Dodik | 144 | 27.80 | 1 | 0.69 | 133 | 92.36 | 10 | 6.94 |
| Bakir Izetbegović | 76 | 14.67 | 0 | 0.00 | 59 | 77.63 | 17 | 22.37 |
| Mladen Ivanić | 27 | 5.21 | 0 | 0.00 | 27 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Constitutional Court in Bosnia and Herzegovina | 21 | 4.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 21 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Mladen Borić | 17 | 3.28 | 0 | 0.00 | 17 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Sefer Halilović | 17 | 3.28 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 52.94 | 8 | 47.06 |
| Dragan Čović | 16 | 3.09 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Prosecution of BiH | 15 | 2.90 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 80.00 | 3 | 20.00 |
| Željka Cvijanović | 13 | 2.51 | 0 | 0.00 | 13 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Alija Izetbegović | 12 | 2.32 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 66.67 | 4 | 33.33 |
| Čamil Duraković | 12 | 2.32 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 91.67 | 1 | 8.33 |
| National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia | 12 | 2.32 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Council for Peace Implementation in BiH | 9 | 1.74 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Sadik Ahmetović | 8 | 1.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 75.00 | 2 | 25.00 |
| Naser Orić | 7 | 1.35 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 71.43 | 2 | 28.57 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|--------|---|------|-----|--------|----|--------|
| "BiH Authorities" | 7 | 1.35 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 57.14 | 3 | 42.86 |
| Denis Zvizdić | 6 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 83.33 | 1 | 16.67 |
| Dragan Mektić | 5 | 0.97 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Igor Crnadak | 5 | 0.97 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| SDA | 5 | 0.97 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 80.00 | 1 | 20.00 |
| Government of Republika Srpska | 5 | 0.97 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Goran Salihović | 4 | 0.77 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Nedeljko Čubrilo | 4 | 0.77 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Siniša Karan | 4 | 0.77 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Court BiH | 4 | 0.77 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 50.00 | 2 | 50.00 |
| Aleksandar Vranješ | 3 | 0.58 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Almir Merdić | 3 | 0.58 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 |
| Biljana Plavšić | 3 | 0.58 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Branislav Borenović | 3 | 0.58 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dragan Čavić | 3 | 0.58 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ministry of Interior of Republika Srpska | 3 | 0.58 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 45 | 8.69 | 1 | 2.22 | 40 | 88.89 | 4 | 8.89 |
| Total | 518 | 100.00 | 2 | 0.39 | 455 | 87.84 | 61 | 11.78 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual foreign political actors outside the region: **foreign politicians**

| Foreign political actors | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|--------------------------|-----|-------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Francois Hollande | 28 | 10.81 | 0 | 0.00 | 27 | 96.43 | 1 | 3.57 |
| Boris Johnson | 17 | 6.56 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 94.12 | 1 | 5.88 |
| Bashar al-Assad | 16 | 6.18 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Teresa May | 14 | 5.41 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 85.71 | 2 | 14.29 |
| Miroslav Lajčák | 12 | 4.63 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| David Cameron | 11 | 4.25 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Manuel Valls | 11 | 4.25 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Matteo Renzi | 10 | 3.86 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|--------|---|------|-----|--------|----|--------|
| Viktor Orban | 9 | 3.47 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 88.89 | 1 | 11.11 |
| Antonio Guterres | 8 | 3.09 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Petro Poroshenko | 7 | 2.70 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 85.71 | 1 | 14.29 |
| Stefan Löfve | 7 | 2.70 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Tony Blair | 7 | 2.70 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 |
| Nigel Farage | 6 | 2.32 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 66.67 | 2 | 33.33 |
| Sebastian Kurz | 6 | 2.32 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Alexis Tsipras | 5 | 1.93 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| "British Authorities" | 5 | 1.93 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Irina Bokova | 5 | 1.93 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Xi Jinping | 5 | 1.93 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Bernard Cazeneuve | 4 | 1.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Denis Keef | 4 | 1.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Alain Juppe | 3 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dagmar Repčková | 3 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Jeremy Corbyn | 3 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Phillip Hammond | 3 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Franco Frattini | 3 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Hendrik van den Dool | 3 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Michael Gove | 3 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Matthew Rycroft | 3 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Nicolas Sarkozy | 3 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Nursultan Nazarbayev | 3 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Jean-Marc Ayrault | 3 | 1.16 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 29 | 11.20 | 0 | 0.00 | 29 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 259 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 243 | 93.82 | 16 | 6.18 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual and collective foreign actors outside the region: **Germany**

| Germany | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------|-------------|-----------|--------------|----------|-------------|
| Angela Merkel | 47 | 47.96 | 1 | 2.13 | 46 | 97.87 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Axel Dittmann | 10 | 10.20 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Frank Walter Steinmeier | 5 | 5.10 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Josip Juratović | 3 | 3.06 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Michael Rott | 3 | 3.06 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 30 | 30.61 | 0 | 0.00 | 30 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 98 | 100.00 | 1 | 1.02 | 97 | 98.98 | 0 | 0.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

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

| Russia | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|---|-----|-------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Vladimir Putin | 130 | 46.93 | 9 | 6.92 | 111 | 85.38 | 10 | 7.69 |
| Dmitry Medvedev | 20 | 7.22 | 0 | 0.00 | 20 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Aleksandar Čepurin | 16 | 5.78 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dmitry Peskov | 11 | 3.97 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Sergey Shoygu | 8 | 2.89 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Marija Zaharova | 7 | 2.53 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 85.71 | 1 | 14.29 |
| Sergey Lavrov | 7 | 2.53 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| United Russia | 6 | 2.17 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Petar Ivancov | 6 | 2.17 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| “Russian authorities” | 6 | 2.17 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Russian-Arab Humanitarian Centre in Niš | 5 | 1.81 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|---------------|----------|-------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Ministry of Defence of Russia | 4 | 1.44 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Genadij Zjuganov | 3 | 1.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Communist Party | 3 | 1.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Liberal – Democratic Party of Russia | 3 | 1.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia | 3 | 1.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Just Russia | 3 | 1.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Sergey Zeleznjak | 3 | 1.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vitaly Churkin | 3 | 1.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vladimir Žirinovski | 3 | 1.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 27 | 9.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 27 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 277 | 100.00 | 9 | 3.25 | 256 | 92.42 | 12 | 4.33 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual and collective foreign actors outside the region: **USA**⁷

| USA | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|------------------------|-----|--------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Barack Obama | 54 | 13.64 | 0 | 0.00 | 54 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Hilary Clinton | 48 | 12.12 | 1 | 2.08 | 42 | 87.50 | 5 | 10.42 |
| Donald Trump | 40 | 10.10 | 2 | 5.00 | 31 | 77.50 | 7 | 17.50 |
| Joseph Biden | 40 | 10.10 | 0 | 0.00 | 40 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| John Kerry | 28 | 7.07 | 0 | 0.00 | 28 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Kyle Scott | 27 | 6.82 | 0 | 0.00 | 22 | 81.48 | 5 | 18.52 |
| "American authorities" | 22 | 5.56 | 0 | 0.00 | 17 | 77.27 | 5 | 22.73 |
| Victoria Nuland | 17 | 4.29 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 94.12 | 1 | 5.88 |
| CIA | 14 | 3.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 85.71 | 2 | 14.29 |
| Bill Clinton | 12 | 3.03 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| George Soros | 10 | 2.53 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 60.00 | 4 | 40.00 |
| George Bush | 7 | 1.77 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 85.71 | 1 | 14.29 |
| US Embassy in Serbia | 6 | 1.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 83.33 | 1 | 16.67 |
| Bernie Sanders | 6 | 1.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 83.33 | 1 | 16.67 |
| Denis Ibišbegović | 4 | 1.01 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 25.00 | 3 | 75.00 |
| Ashton Carter | 4 | 1.01 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 75.00 | 1 | 25.00 |
| Solomon Blake | 4 | 1.01 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 25.00 | 3 | 75.00 |
| Rudolph Giuliani | 3 | 0.76 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| State Department | 3 | 0.76 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Others | 47 | 11.87 | 0 | 0.00 | 47 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 396 | 100.00 | 3 | 0.76 | 353 | 89.14 | 40 | 10.10 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

⁷ Number of actors from USA increased considerably (396) compared to the previous quarter (222), which is certainly the result of the US Elections held on November 8th.

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual and collective foreign political actors: **representatives of EU institutions and EU institutions**

| EU | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|-----------------------|-----|--------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| European Committee | 41 | 15.77 | 0 | 0.00 | 39 | 95.12 | 2 | 4.88 |
| Federica Mogherini | 29 | 11.15 | 0 | 0.00 | 29 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Johannes Hann | 29 | 11.15 | 0 | 0.00 | 29 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| EU | 27 | 10.38 | 1 | 3.70 | 11 | 40.74 | 15 | 55.56 |
| Jean Claude Juncker | 25 | 9.62 | 0 | 0.00 | 23 | 92.00 | 2 | 8.00 |
| Michael Davenport | 21 | 8.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 18 | 85.71 | 3 | 14.29 |
| Maja Kocijančič | 18 | 6.92 | 0 | 0.00 | 16 | 88.89 | 2 | 11.11 |
| David McAllister | 7 | 2.69 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 85.71 | 1 | 14.29 |
| Donald Tusk | 6 | 2.31 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Tanja Fajon | 6 | 2.31 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Lars-Gunar Vigemark | 5 | 1.92 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Martin Schultz | 5 | 1.92 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dimitris Avramopoulos | 3 | 1.15 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Franz Bogovic | 3 | 1.15 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Suma Chakrabarti | 3 | 1.15 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 32 | 12.31 | 0 | 0.00 | 32 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 260 | 100.00 | 1 | 0.38 | 234 | 90.00 | 25 | 9.62 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual and collective political actors: **representatives of OSCE and Council of Europe**

| OSCE/ Council of Europe | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|--|-----|--------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|------|
| OSCE | 4 | 21.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg | 3 | 15.79 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Maurizio Salustra | 3 | 15.79 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 9 | 47.37 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 19 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 19 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual and collective foreign political actors: **representatives of UN institutions and UN institutions**

| UN | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|------------------------|-----|--------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|------|
| UN Security Council | 11 | 26.19 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| UN | 11 | 26.19 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 90.91 | 1 | 9.09 |
| Ban Ki-moon | 9 | 21.43 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| UNESCO | 3 | 7.14 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 8 | 19.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 87.5 | 1 | 12.5 |
| Total | 42 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 40 | 95.24 | 2 | 4.76 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual and collective foreign actors: **NATO**

| NATO | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|---------------------|-----|-------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| NATO | 61 | 76.25 | 0 | 0.00 | 45 | 73.77 | 16 | 26.23 |
| Jens Stoltenberg | 10 | 12.50 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|----|--------|---|------|----|--------|----|-------|
| Petar Pavel | 7 | 8.75 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 42.86 | 4 | 57.14 |
| Philip Breedlove | 2 | 2.50 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 80 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 60 | 75.00 | 20 | 25.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

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

| The Hague Tribunal | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|-----------------------|-----|--------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| The Hague Tribunal | 37 | 32.74 | 0 | 0.00 | 31 | 83.78 | 6 | 16.22 |
| Radovan Karadžić | 26 | 23.01 | 0 | 0.00 | 24 | 92.31 | 2 | 7.69 |
| Ratko Mladić | 10 | 8.85 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Boris Grubešić | 4 | 3.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dragan Vasiljković | 4 | 3.54 | 1 | 25.00 | 3 | 75.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Goran Hadžić | 3 | 2.65 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Jovica Stanišić | 3 | 2.65 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Serge Brammertz | 3 | 2.65 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 23 | 20.35 | 0 | 0.00 | 22 | 95.65 | 1 | 4.35 |
| Total | 113 | 100.00 | 1 | 0.88 | 103 | 91.15 | 9 | 7.96 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Even at a mere glance, the frequency of appearances of certain actors on the front pages of the selected dailies from our sample, it is clearly visible that media treat matters from the domain of domestic and foreign policy with unequal interest. The fact that foreign actors are present considerably less on the front pages of dailies in Serbia (36.15% compared to 63.84% of frequency of appearance of domestic political actors speaks about the focus of domestic media on the field of internal affairs, which is in the interpretation of certain dailies often shaped like fiction, which is further elaborated in the part of the analysis which deals with the interpretative strategies in the media processing of certain topics.

Reasons for noticeable absence of interest for economic actors and their understanding of social, economic and political situation in Serbia and in the world remain intriguing (merely 4.61% of the total sample of actors is taken up by economic actors). The mystery is further enhanced by the narrative of numerous politicians that economic matters and economic consolidation of the country are key elements of future developmental strategies of the Serbian society.

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of **individual economic actors**

| Economic actors – individual | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|------------------------------|-----|--------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Milan Beko | 31 | 13.90 | 0 | 0.00 | 30 | 96.77 | 1 | 3.23 |
| Miroslav Mišković | 19 | 8.52 | 0 | 0.00 | 18 | 94.74 | 1 | 5.26 |
| Dušan Bajatović | 14 | 6.28 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 57.14 | 6 | 42.86 |
| Nebojša Atanacković | 8 | 3.59 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Petar Matijević | 8 | 3.59 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Peter Kamaraš | 8 | 3.59 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Miroslav Bogičević | 7 | 3.14 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Miodrag Kostić | 6 | 2.69 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Miodrag Salai | 5 | 2.24 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Nikola Petrović | 5 | 2.24 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Zoran Drobnjak | 5 | 2.24 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 80.00 | 1 | 20.00 |
| Branko Kovačević | 4 | 1.79 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Milan Knežević | 4 | 1.79 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Milorad Grčić | 4 | 1.79 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Stanko Subotić | 4 | 1.79 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vojislav Vuletić | 4 | 1.79 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Bojan Bojković | 3 | 1.35 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Lidija Udovički | 3 | 1.35 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Marko Čadež | 3 | 1.35 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Živojin Jovanović | 3 | 1.35 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 75 | 33.63 | 0 | 0.00 | 67 | 89.33 | 8 | 10.67 |
| Total | 223 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 205 | 91.93 | 18 | 8.07 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

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

| Economic actors – collective | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|------------------------------|-----|------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Elektroprivreda Srbije | 23 | 9.43 | 0 | 0.00 | 20 | 86.96 | 3 | 13.04 |
| Telekom Srbija | 13 | 5.33 | 0 | 0.00 | 13 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Steelworks Smederevo | 9 | 3.69 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Hestil | 8 | 3.28 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Srbijagas | 8 | 3.28 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| NALED | 7 | 2.87 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 85.71 | 1 | 14.29 |
| Železnice Srbije | 7 | 2.87 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dunav osiguranje | 5 | 2.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Fiat | 5 | 2.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Galenika | 5 | 2.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| JP Koridori Srbije | 5 | 2.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Jura | 5 | 2.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 40.00 | 3 | 60.00 |
| Airport Nikola Tesla | 4 | 1.64 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Farmakom | 4 | 1.64 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| NIS | 4 | 1.64 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Resavica | 4 | 1.64 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Agrohub | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Delhaize | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Elektromreža Srbije | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Frontier farm – Petrovax | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Geox | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| HPK Inženjering | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| PE Emisiona tehnika i veze | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Cadila Pharmaceuticals | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Komercijalna banka | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|--------|---|------|-----|--------|----|--------|
| Mediolanum invest | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Multicom Group | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| N sport | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 |
| Petrohemija | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| PKB | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Planum GP | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Pošta Srbije | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Privredna banka Beograd | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Ratomir Todorović | 3 | 1.23 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 74 | 30.33 | 0 | 0.00 | 67 | 90.54 | 7 | 9.45 |
| Total | 244 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 224 | 91.80 | 20 | 8.20 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

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

| IMF/World Bank | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|----------------|-----|--------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|------|
| IMF | 18 | 40.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 18 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| World Bank | 12 | 26.67 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 91.67 | 1 | 8.33 |
| Tony Verheijen | 5 | 11.11 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| James Roaf | 3 | 6.67 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Cyril Muller | 3 | 6.67 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 4 | 8.89 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 45 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 44 | 97.78 | 1 | 2.22 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Apart from the already mentioned political and economic actors, protagonists of the front pages are also various other social actors, who depict in different ways the social and political circumstances of the society of Serbia.

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual and collective domestic social actors: **representatives of Serbian Orthodox Church and other religious organisations**⁸

| Religion | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|--|-----|--------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Alojzije Stepinac | 36 | 18.46 | 0 | 0.00 | 17 | 47.22 | 19 | 52.78 |
| Patriarch Irinej | 28 | 14.36 | 0 | 0.00 | 28 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| SPC | 21 | 10.77 | 0 | 0.00 | 21 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Pope Francis | 12 | 6.15 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Amfilohije, Metropolitan of Montenegro and Primorje | 8 | 4.10 | 1 | 12.50 | 7 | 87.50 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Patriarch Pavle | 7 | 3.59 | 4 | 57.14 | 3 | 42.86 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Porfirije, Metropolitan of the Zagreb-Ljubljana region | 4 | 2.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Teodosije, Bishop of Raška and Prizren | 4 | 2.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Bartholomew I (Ecumenical Patriarch) | 4 | 2.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| "Vatican" | 4 | 2.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Irinej, Bishop of Bačka | 3 | 1.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| The Catholic Church | 3 | 1.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Sead Nasufović, reis ul – ulema | 3 | 1.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Others | 58 | 29.74 | 3 | 5.17 | 53 | 91.38 | 2 | 3.45 |
| Total | 195 | 100.00 | 8 | 4.10 | 166 | 85.13 | 21 | 10.77 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

⁸ 133 actors from orthodox churches (Serbian, Russian and other) appeared on the front pages from the media from the sample and 62 actors from other religious communities.

Distribution of frequency of appearances of representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church and other religious communities on the front pages in different media from the research sample

| Media outlet | no. | % |
|-------------------------|-----|--------|
| <i>Večernje novosti</i> | 83 | 42.56 |
| <i>Politika</i> | 58 | 29.74 |
| <i>Danas</i> | 14 | 7.18 |
| <i>Kurir</i> | 13 | 6.67 |
| <i>Blic</i> | 12 | 6.15 |
| <i>Informer</i> | 12 | 6.15 |
| <i>Alo!</i> | 3 | 1.54 |
| Total | 195 | 100.00 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

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

| Media outlet | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|--------------------------|-----|-------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Ljiljana Smajlović | 19 | 16.10 | 11 | 57.89 | 5 | 26.32 | 3 | 15.79 |
| paper Politika | 16 | 13.56 | 10 | 62.50 | 6 | 37.50 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Milomir Marić | 8 | 6.78 | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| NUNS | 8 | 6.78 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 75.00 | 2 | 25.00 |
| Dragan Bujošević | 7 | 5.93 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 28.57 | 5 | 71.43 |
| paper Informer | 6 | 5.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 16.67 | 5 | 83.33 |
| Marko Somborac | 6 | 5.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vukašin Obradović | 6 | 5.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 66.67 | 2 | 33.33 |
| Zoran Kesić | 6 | 5.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Željko Mitrović | 5 | 4.24 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 80.00 | 1 | 20.00 |
| Dragan J. Vučićević | 4 | 3.39 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 75.00 | 1 | 25.00 |
| Dragoljub Draža Petrović | 4 | 3.39 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 75.00 | 1 | 25.00 |
| Aleksandar Rodić | 3 | 2.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Dinko Gruhonjić | 3 | 2.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Dušan Petričić | 3 | 2.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Predrag Koraksić Corax | 3 | 2.54 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------|-----|--------|----|-------|----|-------|----|-------|
| Others | 11 | 9.32 | 0 | 0.00 | 11 | 100 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 118 | 100.00 | 21 | 17.80 | 75 | 63.56 | 22 | 18.64 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

The following table shows all actors from the media sample related to the murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović. These are members of her family, acquaintances, friends, but also personalities who were marked by investigative bodies as potential suspects. These actors were present on the front pages in the second quarter in 968 appearances, almost two times more than foreign politicians or state bodies and institutions, for instance. Though this scandal constructed by the media still remains on the front pages of the analysed dailies in the third quarter, interest for it has significantly dropped, so actors from this group are five times less present.

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual domestic social actors: **“Murder of Jelena Marjanović”**

| Murder of Jelena Marjanović | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|-----------------------------|-----|--------|----------|------|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| Jelena Marjanović | 40 | 24.10 | 0 | 0.00 | 40 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Zoran Marjanović | 36 | 21.69 | 0 | 0.00 | 27 | 75.00 | 9 | 25.00 |
| Zorica Krsmanović | 20 | 12.05 | 0 | 0.00 | 20 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Vladimir Marjanović | 17 | 10.24 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 58.82 | 7 | 41.18 |
| Jana Marjanović | 14 | 8.43 | 0 | 0.00 | 14 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Zorica Marjanović | 10 | 6.02 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 30.00 | 7 | 70.00 |
| Miloš Marjanović | 9 | 5.42 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 33.33 | 6 | 66.67 |
| The Marjanović Family | 9 | 5.42 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 22.22 | 7 | 77.78 |
| Rada Matić | 7 | 4.22 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 71.43 | 2 | 28.57 |
| Others | 4 | 2.41 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 166 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 128 | 77.11 | 38 | 22.89 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Distribution of frequency and evaluative context of appearances of individual domestic social actors:

“Savamala”

| Savamala | no. | % | positive | % | neutral | % | negative | % |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-------|----------|------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| Initiative Let's not drown Belgrade | 20 | 33.89 | 1 | 5.00 | 13 | 65.00 | 6 | 30.00 |
| Dobrica Veselinović | 15 | 25.42 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 66.67 | 5 | 33.33 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|----|--------|---|------|----|-------|----|-------|
| Radomir Lazović | 13 | 22.03 | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 76.92 | 3 | 23.08 |
| Ksenija Radova-nović | 4 | 6.78 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 75.00 | 1 | 25.00 |
| Simon Simonović | 4 | 6.78 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 50.00 | 2 | 50.00 |
| Others | 3 | 5.08 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 66.67 | 1 | 33.33 |
| Total | 59 | 100.00 | 1 | 1.69 | 40 | 67.80 | 18 | 30.51 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

UNNAMED SOURCES

In the selected texts from the front pages from the sampled media, unnamed sources are second-ranked in the third trimester according to share. This time, anonymous sources were mentioned 489 times, which makes 24.3% of texts, and the share of unnamed sources in texts was reduced by 2.67% compared to the previous quarter. This wide use of unnamed sources has been precisely established thanks to the method of quantifying unnamed sources, which we have been applying since the second edition of *Mediameter*, where we take into account not only the sources listed as unnamed by the newspaper in question, but also all those providing information which cannot be verified, regardless of the way it was introduced in the text. Naturally, this share belonging to information obtained from unnamed sources speaks more about the manner in which the seven newspapers from the sample report news than about the real need to protect the identity of the persons providing certain intelligence.

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

| Genre | total no. of texts | unnamed sources | % |
|------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------|
| report | 1392 | 384 | 27.59 |
| article | 247 | 83 | 33.60 |
| news | 65 | 11 | 16.92 |
| commentary | 127 | 8 | 6.30 |
| reportage | 31 | 3 | 9.68 |
| interview | 150 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 2012 | 489 | 24.30 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Share of “unnamed sources” per analysed media outlets

| Media outlet | total no. of texts | unnamed sources | % |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------|
| <i>Kurir</i> | 171 | 76 | 44.44 |
| <i>Informer</i> | 210 | 89 | 42.38 |
| <i>Alo!</i> | 171 | 58 | 33.92 |
| <i>Blic</i> | 276 | 70 | 25.36 |
| <i>Večernje novosti</i> | 315 | 75 | 23.81 |
| <i>Politika</i> | 483 | 70 | 14.49 |
| <i>Danas</i> | 386 | 51 | 13.21 |
| Total | 2012 | 489 | 24.30 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

Number of texts which contain information obtained from “unnamed sources” per topics, in the seven media from the sample⁹

| Topic | total no. of texts | unnamed sources | % |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|-------|
| political life in Serbia | 356 | 95 | 26.69 |
| regional cooperation/regional relations | 299 | 62 | 20.74 |
| 2016 elections | 82 | 32 | 39.02 |
| international relations | 103 | 30 | 29.13 |
| crime | 54 | 30 | 55.56 |
| murder of the singer Jelene Marjanović | 40 | 28 | 70.00 |
| economy | 117 | 22 | 18.80 |
| justice system, activities of the judiciary bodies | 63 | 21 | 33.33 |
| Russia/relations with Russia | 48 | 20 | 41.67 |
| meeting requirements/standards for EU integrations | 43 | 14 | 32.56 |

Source: Research Mediameter, July - September 2016

⁹ Ten topics with the highest number of unnamed sources are shown.

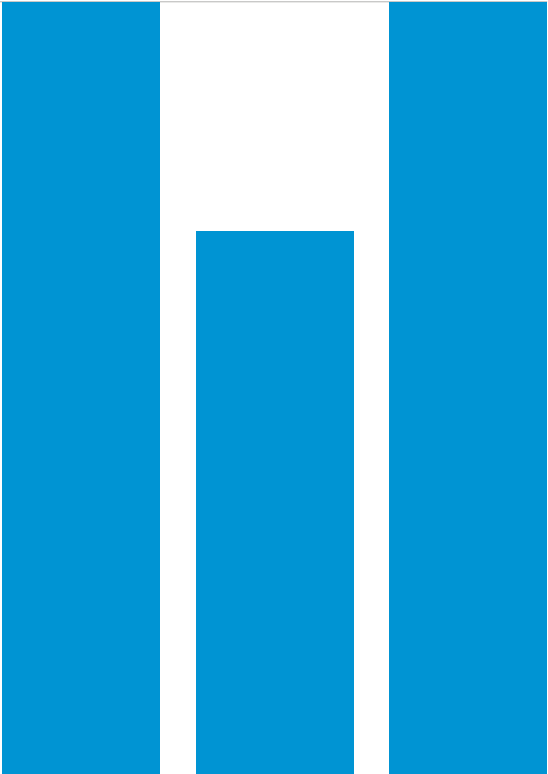
Conclusion

The seventh *Mediameter* largely reflects domination of political and regional topics and actors. One third of all analysed texts deals with the mentioned topics and actors. The period from July to September 2016 was marked by strong political messages, so regional topics served to this end. This was the time of forming new Government, after the April republic and local elections.

Everyday life is not interesting for most of our dailies. At the same time, interest in the “dark” side of life is certainly present. Some newspapers conduct their own investigations regarding the murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović. Crisis in the relations with neighbouring countries is noticeable. Increased number of negatively intoned texts about Croatia is undoubtedly a consequence of events which took place in this country. This kind of motivation for events which bear a certain negative tone is actually similar in the case of Jelena Marjanović’s murder.

Actors from our and world politics represent about three quarters of all actors who appear on the front pages. With such concentration of politics and political topics it can hardly be expected that there will be room for other needs and interests of the readers.

4



Discourse
Analysis

DEJAN VUK STANKOVIĆ

INTRODUCTION

Share of various approaches to the processing of topics and factual existence of mutually opposing evaluative political stands characterise the writing in editorial columns in dailies and that of weeklies. The most influential journalists from dailies and weeklies have confirmed undoubted untethered advocating of personal views regardless of their political and wider social and cultural status. Journalism in weeklies and editorial comments are free on a basic level, regardless of the topics and dilemmas present in the current political and historical and social moment. There are no excluded topics, nor forbidden points of view. Though there is basic freedom of thought and expression, public discourse is sprawling with content and rhetorical exclusivity. Polemics, whether in form of original work or interviews, play the role of the main genre in formulating positions.

In conditions of constant antagonizing, there is little, nearly no, room for public debate, which would be rational and tolerant. Harsh polarization of political and evaluative viewpoints, i.e. writing about domestic political protagonists is presented in the spirit of a continuous election campaign with an extremely negative tone. Spirit of tension, “eternal rivals” and irreconcilable positions has a key effect on the forming of images of political actors.

Images of political actors are reflected in various orders of discourse which are not only rational, but contain strong rhetorical charge. Designing the discourse in this way aims at creating or maintaining a high level of negative identification with the rivalling political actor. The discourse in the print media only slightly leaves the narrow frames of propaganda and switches to reasonable critically intoned and argument-based speech. Images of political actors, forming and voting for the new Government of Serbia in the Assembly, as well as regional relations are key topics of discourse analysis. In the manner of processing, as well as in political evaluative conclusions, there is a clear division among weeklies and editors of dailies. Similar like any democratic country, Serbia also has a clear division on the domestic political plan. Dailies and weeklies are divided into those affiliated with the government and those critical towards the authorities, though it should be emphasized that among the critical ones, we must differentiate between radical and moderate critics. Weeklies are nearly all, without exception, critical towards the current government. If we exclude *Pečat*, which in certain aspects prefers the policies of PM Vučić over the policies of his rivals, other media hold strong critical charge towards the government, challenging it both in general, from the standpoint of its democratically questionable legitimacy, and from the viewpoint of very intense and unequivocal disputing of its specific moves, but also from the standpoint of total media and social atmosphere dominating Serbia.

Apart from the standard division into the pro- and anti-Government print media, which is typical of any democratic order, weeklies can also be divided into pro-European and anti-European. Criteria for the division are foreign policy references which are directly or indirectly promulgated or denied by the weeklies. This division is not always directly visible, but it can be reconstructed according to the manner of

processing a topic, arguments, rhetorical figure present in the text, as well as in conclusions which are directly offered or indirectly suggested. Weeklies like *NIN*, *Vreme*, *Novi magazin* and *Nedeljnik* are completely critical towards the government. There is a difference in intonation of the criticism. And while *Vreme* and to a certain extent *NIN* (especially in the domain of internal policy and economics) offer complete, instanced and harsh criticism of the government, weeklies like *Novi magazin* and *Nedeljnik* emphasize a more moderate tone in their expressing of critical viewpoints. They use accusations and labelling far less than the most influential Serbian weeklies *Vreme* and *NIN*. Partially critical towards the government is the weekly *Pečat*. This weekly quite openly criticizes the Government’s foreign policy oriented towards Europe. Still, this weekly shows strong critical instance towards the moral credibility, axiological orientation and political stands of the post-October-fifth winners.

Similarly, weeklies can be categorised based on their foreign policy orientation. *Vreme*, *NIN*, *Novi magazin* and *Nedeljnik* are mostly pro-European oriented. Contrary to them, weekly *Pečat* is more than clearly positioned against the West and consequentially inclined towards Russia, which is to encourage the nationalistic discourse which is relevantly similar to the dominant discourse of the war-mongering nineties.

In constructing the image of political actors, print media, especially in the segment of weekly journalism and editorial comments, remain true to themselves. Images of political actors are largely negative. In line with the fact that weeklies are dominantly oriented towards the opposition, the act of forming the Government of Serbia was viewed radically critically, including strong dose of criticism towards the atmosphere and operating of the Assembly of Serbia. Regional policy, more specifically the celebration of the anniversary of Operation Storm and the accompanying Serbian – Croatian tension have revealed the spirit of strong polarisation among print weeklies. By covering topics in various ways, they, as expected, sent off different messages.

In the forming of images of political actors, as well as interpreting political events and processes, apart from words, an important role is played by the pictures. Images are developed and maintained thanks to the dynamic unity of picture and word, where the symbolic political message is especially made prominent in caricatures. Pictures often speak “a hundred words.” Also, use of interview as a journalistic genre is also noticeable. The focus is on the position of the interviewee, on the message which is extracted from his interview. It is often depicted as a fighting moral and political slogan, and the bearer of the message is made a kind of media hero from the front page. Straightforward talking in conjunction with the prominent political message often testifies that the print media, especially weeklies, are an active participant in the political and party battles.

As in the previous issues of *Mediameter*, the discourse analysis detected two constants in the media and political field. This refers to the tendency of public intellectuals to take an active role in the party life. Many of them often represent the intellectually political inspiration and somewhat of “engine fuel” for the campaigning of opposition politicians, whether in institutions of the system, or in the always dynamic and politically and media antagonized public. Secondly, a very relevant semantic and rhetorical similarity between the discourse in the print media and the discourse of party leaders has been noted. This overlapping is by no means coincidental, or random, but, in conjunction with coherent evaluative political orientation, it is part of the bigger picture of the media space in Serbia, where room for rational observations of political processes and events has been continuously diminishing.

Image of actors: government – autocratic, populist, questionable democratic legitimacy and capacity, arbitrary, without professional competence, source of permanent instability, exclusively preoccupied with propaganda, without clear political and evaluative landmarks

Image of the government, which can be plausibly reconstructed from an array of pieces in Serbian weeklies in the period from July to September 2016, does not deviate significantly from previous periods. What is more, even at a glance, the writing of the leading Serbian weeklies and columnists in the print media shows that the established image of the government has been incessantly renewed and fortified in the mind of the readers. Critical viewpoint towards the government usually uses the premise of liberal and democratic discourse and (semi-)reflected sensible political intuition, whose aim is to portray the government in as blatantly as possible negative manner. Continuity of such writing, more specifically, permanent renewal of certain political and evaluative messages is aimed at establishing them and fortifying them almost as a kind of prejudice and stereotype of Vučić and SNS government as not democratic, populist, authoritarian, manipulative and crude, in order to strip it of any democratic legitimacy and capacity, both in the field of politics, and on the wider social and cultural plane.

Initial assumption in criticising the government is often criticism of structures and actions of political or judicial institutions. Criticism is strongly personified, more specifically intentionally and brutally directed at the key person from the current government in Serbia – Aleksandar Vučić. Choosing such an approach is not arbitrary. Namely, if we observe the content, key objection to Vučić's government is its high level of authoritarianism and undemocratic nature; therefore, one should start from the main bearer of power, the undoubted leader of the political life in Serbia and question everything that belongs to the corpus of rules and practice of modern democracy, through merciless criticising, and, if possible, politically objectify him, portray him as a reckless, psychologically instable person, in order to make the sense of challenging him more receptive to the readers, but also at the first time, degrade the first man of Serbian politics as much as possible.

Narrative about the endemic undemocratic nature of the government led by SNS is clearly expressed by one of the components of the government itself. This is the Ombudsman Saša Janković, who, in an interview for *Novi magazin*, in a spirit quite similar to that of opposition's politicians, unequivocally claims, "This is a country of autocratic populism. The manner in which political rule is conducted is fatal. Institutions are undermined in the eyes of the citizens with the help of the tabloids and shown as necessary, just for formalities' sake, from the president, parliament, government to the Ombudsman. Conflicts are embedded in our society and it is high time to start using power for building bridges, not war zones. I hope the announcement of a "fighting government" does not mean what many think it means – fighting real diplomats, free journalists, independent officials, independent judges, controlling authorities, civil society, but also market sellers, watermelon sellers, night



Novi magazin, 14th July 2016

guards... At this moment, we are not living in a state of rule and observance of law... I think that this is one transitional phase towards such a state, as it is said in our Constitution and laws, or we will, as Ante Marković put it a long time ago, pay for our misconceptions with poverty, poisoning of the spirit and a position on the outskirts of Europe.”¹

In a similar spirit, with a completely identical message, academician Dušan Teodorović gives his diagnosis of the current government. Similar to Saša Janković, he explicitly and categorically claims, “I think Vučić is acting as a dictator, I think our rule of law has been stolen and I think we have been transformed into one man’s country.”²

Lawyer Slobodan Beljanski shows that the same message needs to be continuously repeated in order to establish Vučić’s image as that of a politician with a proclivity towards dictatorship. In an interview for *Novi magazin*, he associates Vučić’s current “dictatorship practice” with a wider historical and political and social and cultural dimension of the Serbian reality. In such a pattern of interpreting history and politics, Vučić is merely the extension of the deeply rooted authoritarian and basically non-democratic propensity in Serbian politics.

Serbian politics, still, are not nor can they ever be anything else, but anti-liberal and antidemocratic.

In that sense, Vučić is an example confirming a nearly inevitable law of political history of the Serbian people, “If we look at personal power as the need for a charismatic leader, and then as the reach of his uncontrolled power, Serbia is always going to be, to a larger or smaller extent, good terrain for such a government.”³

The whole saga about dictatorship has its historical development, as well. With the aim of degrading current state of things in society as plausible as possible and blaming the government beyond doubt for that, one reaches for historical analogies, more specifically for comparisons which equalise Serbia in 2016 with the first years of Tito’s socialist period. A contribution to the use of the analogical method (always disputable and seldom used in logic – author’s comment) in the assessing of political circumstances in the country was given by the historian Radina Vučetić, “The question of social criticism is a question of that society’s character, i.e. how democratic it is. No one likes criticism, and undemocratic governments like it the least. What is alarming is that today’s government is displaying that it does not tolerate criticism on any level. The Prime Minister is upset with the non-existing opposition, with the press, with artists, with citizens who exercise their right to protest, he is even angry at the social media. Anger, however, cannot help us forget the illegal demolition in Savamala, violence of the municipal police, non-transparent tenders and privatisations, Potemkin’s reconstruction of the city, suppressing freedom of the media, indecisiveness between the West and Russia.”⁴

1 Saša Janković “Zaštitnik građana je savest društva,” [Ombudsman is the conscience of society] interview with Nadežda Gaće and Jelka Jovanović, *Novi magazin*, No. 272, p. 18-19

2 Dušan Teodorović, “Vučić se ponaša kao diktator,” [Vučić is acting like a dictator] interview with Olja Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3424, p. 8

3 Slobodan Beljanski, „Ovde sloboda nije na ceni,” razgovor sa Mijatom Lakićevićem, *Novi magazin*, br. 283, str. 18

4 Radina Vučetić, „Srbija danas podseća na Jugoslaviju iz pedesetih,” razgovor sa Jelenom Jorgačević i Filipom Švarmom, *Vreme*, br. 1332

The spirit and wording of Janković’s and Teodorović’s critique, as well as the observation of the lawyer Slobodan Beljanski, are in line with that of the right-winged MP from DSS Sanda Rašković Ivić, who, apart from the “non-democratic behaviour” openly objects to Vučić’s national treason, especially with reference to Kosovo and with regard to the position on NATO, “Vučić, according to DSS, is betraying Kosovo, leading Serbia to NATO, stealing elections, introducing rule of fear and censorship, though it is trying hard to convince us that there is no censorship, he took the mandate of all institutions, from president to doctor, from lawyer, judge to municipal clerk – and we cannot move past this. hi meddles with everything and then this is not the same – the local elections are not separate, because atmosphere in the country is such that the republic government is personified by the prime minister, the atmosphere is such that Vučić is equalised with institutions in Serbia, and Vučić is equalised with Serbia. And then you make coalitions with SNS, i.e. with Vučić”⁵

Though Sanda Rašković Ivić was giving an interview with reference to forming coalitions on the local level with Vučić’s SNS, her positions clearly indicate a designed matrix in which Aleksandar Vučić is a non-democratic, non-patriotic and extremely populist prime minister. Qualifications “censor and autocrat” indicate his non-democracy and disloyalty to the idea of political freedom, “cooperation with NATO and treason of Kosovo” will confirm the unpatriotic, or more vulgarly said, “treacherous character of Vučić’s policies,” while identifying Vučić with the people will confirm the primal populist character of his political action.

Radicalisation of the critical discourse, going in the direction of fortifying Vučić’s image of a dictator who is fatally incompetent to accept the democratic rules of the game, is especially present in the text of the editor of *NSPM*, and an MP of the right-winged DSS at the time, Đorđe Vukadinović. His thesis, as the many previously mentioned, is problematic in the factual-normative sense, but rhetorically suggestive. Namely, Vukadinović accused Vučić that due to the fact that he was hesitant about forming the new government, he was actually the political “factor of instability” and politician who was striving to accustom Serbia to an irregular state of institutions, promoting the spirit of political voluntarism and autocracy.

This accusation has no rational grounds, bearing in mind that the constitutional deadline of ninety days for constituting the Assembly, which took place on July 1st. However, this was said with the aim of attaching a stigma to Vučić and labelling him as an undemocratic leader for who knows which time in the usual media process. Vukadinović writes in his usual passionate tone, “Aleksandar Vučić is the main generator of permanent political crisis and instability in the country with his character and manner of rule. And this is now becoming almost obvious. There is no doubt that he is the political “factor”, that he has the greatest support (aside from the fact how he acquired it and what he is using to maintain it) and the greatest power in the country. There is no doubt that the government, even when fully assembled, and the ministers have little or no power and make no major decisions. (That is why, among other things, Vučić now cannot find any respectable professionals for the government, because everyone knows they will only sit there like a ficus and they are running away from the offered “honours” as if the devil was chasing them). So, there is no big, or better there is practically no difference between the “regular” and this present “special” and “provisional” state. But here we go back to the question of form

5 Sanda Rašković Ivić, “Fascinacija žrtve dželatoma,” [The victim’s fascination with the executioner] interview with Radmilo Marković, *Vreme*, No. 1335, p. 15-16

and its importance again. He is bracing himself to rule not only factually, but also literally without a government and without parliament. Citizens are growing accustomed to this state of things as regular. People in all (remaining) institutions are starting to perceive this as normal. And this is not at all good, even if one could rule the country in the long run in such an autocratic and non-institutional manner.”⁶

The array of descriptive qualifications and evaluations referring to activities of the Prime Minister of Serbia also included those obsessively dealing with the nature of his addressing the public. Addressing the public in conjunction with policies which are specifically assessed as demagogical and unsuccessful at the same time. Assessment of the performance of Aleksandar Vučić's government did not leave out the reminder of his radical past which is some sort of a moral “sword of Damocles” hovering over his political leadership. The blend of negative evaluation of the present condition goes hand in hand with the campaign of reminding us of his politically “sinful” youth, with the aim of dismissing any possibility of evolution of this political actor and in order to challenge his current political activity. An example of this approach to political actors, events and processes is visible in the position of academician Ljubomir Simović. In his interview for the weekly *NIN*, he pointed to the following “Wishing to use every opportunity to show that he sees all, knows all and can do all, wishing to present himself as in charge of everything, Aleksandar Vučić even turns press conferences into monologues. There is a bit of everything in these monodramas of his, but most of all, make-up and ingratiating and demagoguery, but also sensations. As if we were connected to the “Amnesiator”, we forgot the early works and biographies of our politicians.”⁷

Authoritarian, extremely non-democratic, potentially unpatriotic, demagogically intoned policies logically do not have merits or consistent value basis. Gaping “value void” of Vučić's rule is described by the columnist of *Vreme*, publicist Teofil Pančić, “Vučić's policies since 2012 to this day have been that of strong symbolic gestures which do not cost much, but distract attention from more important and more substantial work which takes place somewhere in the (semi)shadows. When he needed to dismount the “yellow” structure deeply rooted in the country and replace it with his own, which included finishing up some “international toils” (the Brussels Agreement, and similar), Vučić pumped its electorate with the patriotic-conservative policies of cultural-identity (time of the famous pastry chef Braca Petković) as if giving them a pacifier. When on the other hand, he needs to cover up some deep turning in the other direction, it is not bad to accompany it with ultra-liberal make-up, a gay Minister comes in handy. But, why am I claiming that the deep, therefore the “essential” policy is opposite than that surface layer for show? Well, if you look at the artificial heating up of relations in the region, look how the regime-controlled media resemble an anti-European-Putinistic wasteland, look at how strong are those in the ruling party and government in general who do not see Serbia in the West, neither in terms of geopolitics nor values, look at how the already feebly and delicate institutions of democratic society have been additionally undermined and destroyed... No, you cannot charm your way out of all this and cover it up with one LGBT minister. The problem with Vučić, therefore, remains unvarying: when he is advocating for the “wrong” policies, they somehow seem real; when he is advocating for the “right” policies, it is somehow lacking in substance. You cannot trust a man who does not even trust his own words and who does everything opposite from what

6 Đorđe Vukadinović, “Faktor nestabilnosti,” [Factor of instability] *Vreme*, No. 1334, p. 17

7 Ljubomir Simović, “Vučićeve demagoške monodrame,” [Vučić's demagogical dramas] talk with Olja Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3420, p.8



NIN, 14th July 2016

he is formed on, more so by the fact that even his associates and voters do not trust him.”⁸

Regardless of the omnipotence of an authoritarian ruler who disrespects the rule of law and who, as the Ombudsman, Saša Janković and his numerous supporters say, “runs the state with demise and poverty,” his parent political party is not a case in point of what is going on in the state. The logic of deduction is simple, “The country is what its ruling party is.” Echo of socialism in which the state and party were united, and the caricaturist parliamentarism which is practiced in Serbia twenty-six years after its introduction, is blended into the starting point of yet another analysis which needs to politically challenge the policies of the PM of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić. Dragoljub Žarković, Editor in Chief of *Vreme*, writes openly about the authoritarian and undoubtedly politically and morally decadent character of the Serbian Progressive Party, “Populistic parties, and SNS is one of those, with a strong leader, and Vučić is that, fear institutional organisation and are characterised by arrogance which in time corrodes any political ideals, if they ever existed, and replaces them with the will for power and greediness. It seems to me that Vučić and his gang came to this phase, Vučić is interested in power, and the rest are interested in the other thing, though their objectives are not mutually exclusive, and it seems to me that this is where natural regression of what can rightfully be called “Vučić’s regime will start.”⁹

In conjunction with Žarković moralistic observations about the party led in an authoritarian way and ruled by a lust for privileges and various other forms of material and every other gain, the critical discourse directed towards the prime minister Vučić takes on a disqualifying tone which has an insulting and accusing character. This discourse is resting on and continuously developing with the help of insults and slander, harsh words and vulgar expressions. A typical example of this occurrence is the interview of Slobodan Gavrilović, member of the Main Council of the Democratic Party. Former director of the public enterprise “Official Gazette,” writer and publicist, with a penchant for excessively strong words, put forward his contemplations about the current government and state in a comprehensive interview, which was the leading text in the radically opposing and anti-Government weekly *Vreme*.

Gavrilović starts with a difficult political disqualification of current policies, more specifically the political order, equalising it with an “attempted despotism.” An excerpt from the interview literally confirms the previously stated position, “...This state of fear, it corresponds with despotism.”

Vreme: So, you are marking the current political state in Serbia as despotism?

Gavrilović: Well, more as an attempt, I think its main protagonist does not have the calibre to be a despot. He does not have the calibre for anything. We live in a time when everything made by wise people is quickly destroyed by the stupid and arrogant. A certain kind of most refined social demagoguery is at play

8 Teofil Pančić, “Ana s petljom i politika bez supstance,” [Ana with guts, policies without substance] *Vreme*, No. 1336

9 Dragoljub Žarković, “Izabrani iluzionista – Vučić svaki čas vadi golubove iz rukava i zečeve iz šešira i tako zemaljski dani teku od konferencije za novinare do naredne konferencije na kojoj se prikazuju drugi trikovi, a Srbija tapka u mestu,” [Illusionist elect – Vučić keeps pulling pigeons from his sleeves and rabbits from hats and so our time on this Earth passes from one press conference to the next, where new tricks will be shown and Serbia will remain at a standstill] *Vreme*, No. 1331

here, so the arrogant one can easily be a champion. Society is hopeless, the state of things is similar to that of Germany during the thirties of the 20th century: we have social hopelessness which is fertile grounds for demagoguery. This demagoguery then develops a kind of virtual reality in which we are the champions of Europe, first in the region according to GDP growth. As a society we are undergoing a serious crisis of reason.

Vreme: Did this crisis of reason start with Vučić or before him?

Gavrilović: Of course not with him ... I do not want to mention his name because he does not deserve it. What was happening in parliament these last few days is the low point. Peasants in Šumadija say “bottom of the barrel.” That is this residue that is good for nothing and is thrown out. If our institutions were solid, this dude wouldn’t be able to destroy them, but we are today a country with no institutions. That is why he is able to say, “I won’t give up on these ministers because of the helicopter, I won’t let this and that, I am approving the investigations, I read the PhD thesis, it is not plagiarism... So, he is a worker, a scientist and a politician... That is why it is an attempt of despotism. It might turn into something else one day, we do not know what, because the natural state of things for the people in this cabinet is chaos, riots, war and conflict. Peace, harmony, agreement and dialogue are completely unfamiliar concepts for them.”¹⁰

Gavrilović’s description of Serbia as “a country with no institutions, or a normal institutional order appropriate for democracy, a country ruled by constant conflict in society and politically managed according to the whim of the unenlightened leader” boils down to a state of continuous election campaign.

Reporter of *Vreme* Jovana Gligorijević wrote that campaigning is a “way of existence” for Aleksandar Vučić. Hence, it is clear that this characterisation of the current political moment in Serbia needs to create a belief that nothing essentially important is happening in the country and in society, there are no reforms, no progress, not even a real effort to change anything or make it better. All that can be heard and written in that respect is fiction which is generated by the autocracy of Aleksandar Vučić, who is, both in terms of authority and trust placed in him by the citizens, the first man of Serbia, “For Vučić, campaigning is a manner of existence. Whatever the occasion for a press conference over the last four years, it always started with the listing of the results which the citizens of Serbia are about to feel on their skins. When there is no real progress, there are secondary solutions: simulations of a coup, early parliamentary elections, exhibition which publically shames and falsely accuses media that are critical of the government, as well as the good old conflicts with Croatia...Anyway, even Vučić’s description of the new government as a blend of “freshness and experience” sounds like a fabric softener or feminine products commercial, promising “long-lasting feeling of freshness.” All this prompts the conclusion: Aleksandar Vučić is not only campaigning at all times – Aleksandar Vučić is the campaign, the man who made himself into a political project. All this will be fine as long as the citizens don’t remember to ask for the results. However, it is hard to believe that the new-old prime minister used all the tricks he has up his sleeve.”¹¹

10 Slobodan Gavrilović, “Srbijom vladaju ljudi sa dna kace,” [People from the bottom of the barrel rule in Serbia] interview with Jovana Gligorijević, *Vreme*, No. 1337, p. 13

11 Jovana Gligorijević, “Dan Mrmota,” [Groundhog day] *Vreme*, No. 1336, p. 7

Vučić's government not only reflects the usurping of institutions with constant campaigning, as evidenced by his most ardent critics, but it relies on the mechanism of using another important lever which has been known since the nineties. This is Vojislav Šešelj, leader of the right-winged parliament party the Serbian Radicals. Namely, Šešelj serves as a kind of ally to the current prime minister both in the field of domestic politics and media-political showdown with the critically oriented right-wingers, and for constant, often vulgar debate and political bickering with the Euro-reformatory parties. At the same time, by renewing the radical, right-wingers' nationalistic discourse, which uncannily reminds us of the nineties, Vojislav Šešelj indirectly, but suggestively, makes Vučić the desirable option, primarily, in the eyes of the West.

This thesis is put forward by various authors of newspaper texts, though it is most prominent in the text published in the weekly *Vreme* under the title "PM Vučić's stunt double," written by Zora Drčelić, "When we speak about Vojislav Šešelj today, we are mostly referring to Aleksandar Vučić, and this is a serious blow to the political career of the youngest PhD in the former Yugoslavia. Second question is whether Šešelj is even aware of this. Coming down to Serbia from The Hague pedestal, not only brought back the Radicals in parliament, but his main achievement is that he became (or remained) a political stunt man. Actually he is a stunt man who is dropped into the political manhole with all the faeces, he dies five hundred times, he beats people up in the doorway and jumps off the third floor, instead of the biggest Serbian start – Aleksandar Vučić... When he was a stunt man during Milošević's reign, he was at least going with the spirit of the time. Everything is different today. Only Šešelj wants to remain the same. His toothless yapping at Western powers, non-government organisations, representatives of the former DOS and other forces of the dark and foolishness, this does not resemble any kind of sensible political strategy but an idealess demonstration of utter political atrophy and roaming the arsenal of his pre-Hague media secretions. That is why Vučić-supporting tabloids are again full of the enraged Šešelj who continues his NGO witch-hunt, he picks up exactly where Željko Mitrović and D.J. Vučićević left off a few weeks ago with their "announcements" of Soros' mercenaries in Serbia. Namely, Šešelj claims that activists of the civil sector - Nataša Kandić, Sonja Biserko, Jelena Milić – are spies of foreign secret services"¹²

Apart for the construction of active participation of Šešelj in Vučić's system of rule, in the period from July to September, the story about the relationship of Aleksandar Vučić and the President of Serbia Tomislav Nikolić was also started. In the processing of this topic, Aleksandar Vučić was awarded the status of the on-call bad guy, i.e. morally disputable political actor. Arguments of those promoting this idea functions in accordance with one, already tested, model. Namely, despite Nikolić's great contribution to the overthrowing of the Democratic Party, which essentially started with his win in the presidential elections, Tomislav Nikolić is constantly labelled in the tabloids, which are nearly on regular basis subjecting him to discrediting campaigns. Former leader of the Democratic Party Bojan Pajtić speaks about this with the aim of politically and morally challenging Vučić and provoking discord within the government, "The regime of Aleksandar Vučić is dragging even Tomislav Nikolić through the mud. The party which was brought into office by Nikolić, those leading that party are doing all in their might to make him a worse candidate in the elections, constantly campaigning against him, they are campaigning against him more than the opposition. The opposition seldom mentions Toma Nikolić, he is not a relevant factor in Serbia, his authority is just on paper."¹³

12 Zora Drčelić, "Dubler premijera Vučića," [PM Vučić's stunt double] *Vreme*, No. 1341

13 Bojan Pajtić, "Majstore, dokaži da sam ukrao sto dinara!" [Hey ace, prove I stole a hundred dinars] interview with Olja

In the construction of Aleksandar Vučić's negative image, a special role is assigned to his confrontations with his own people. These confrontations are radical and nearly fatal, since it is tied to the entire public and political career of the first man in the Government of Serbia. The aim of this media strategy is to show that Vučić is not an authentic representative of the people, that he is essentially using and manipulating the people, and that he loathes them, and that as such he is not a democratically elected representative of the people, but a skilful manipulator and political schemer. Contempt towards the nation has the nature of cultural racism which additionally challenges the rootedness of Vučić both in the democratically expressed will of the citizens, and his estrangement from tradition and habitus of the people he represents is depicted, "If there is a meeting point, connecting the young and feisty general secretary of the Serbian Radical Party and today's mature, cleaned up, pro-European, pro-Nordic Prime Minister of Serbia, then that point is contempt towards the citizens of this country. Just as today we are not honest, hard-working and patient enough, back then we were not sufficiently militant, nationally aware and thirsty of Croatian and Bosnian blood... Aleksandar Vučić, the Prime Minister of Serbia, suffers from racism towards the Balkan nations. This thesis is perhaps a bit too bold, but when the highest-ranking official of the executive authorities says about the citizens of not only his own country, but also that of neighbouring countries, that they do not have a work ethic, that they only want to trick the system, but they also want to get handouts from it, this means that the people of the Balkans, according to Aleksandar Vučić, are lazy, corrupt thieves, scammers and deadbeats."¹⁴

Challenging Vučić's efforts to establish direct communication with the citizens appeared as a motif when the prime minister had the idea to introduce an institution of directly talking to the citizens in various cities and places of Serbia. As many others, this idea was met by mockery among the journalists. Behind the mockery is the undoubted desire for both legitimising depreciatory writing, but also the political intent to vary the motif of Vučić's estrangement from the ordinary man, who is usually at the same time his faithful voter. In the text "Who will be our next Tito," written by Miloš Vasić, published in the paper *Vreme*, 14th July 2016, Vučić is associated with the life-long president of SFRY Josip Broz Tito.

This allusion was aimed at showing how Vučić similarly to his predecessor strives towards building a cult around his personality, which is, of course, a strong symbolic evidence of the autocratic approach to government. The cause is direct communication, which was mocked masterfully in the text of Miloš Vasić, in order to send out an atrocious political message in the spirit of "joke and comedy." The following quote speaks about Vasić's intent, "Aleksandar Vučić decided for the chaotic, but media-wise sweeter, story of receiving his own disciples as if he were Charlemagne. As anachronistic as such, this brought him an array of problems, out of which screwing around in the public is the least of his troubles. When one starts receiving his disciples at five thirty in the morning, he needs to ensure that they show up in sufficient numbers and as reasonable as possible; so, no nut-jobs, eternal righteous ones and usual pains in the ass. That's not the way it is done. Some selection is needed from the very beginning, then you invite and receive people who have something sensible to say and who have a problem big enough to travel to see the PM, and then the PM can respond with

Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3426, p. 17

14 Jovana Gligorijević, "Zašto Vučiću ne valja narod?" [Why Vučić does not like the people] *Vreme*, No. 1342, p. 4-5

something sensible and nice. This chaotic situation is harmful for both Vučić and the citizens: to him because he is non-discriminatory, to them, because there is no one to make the difference between right and wrong. In this way that whole action is reduced to a circus – as per the usual method of our folk.¹⁵

The completely negative image of Aleksandar Vučić and the government led and symbolised by him would not be possible without the specific gesture of “waving support” by the members of the intellectual elite who publically supported him immediately after the fall of the Democrats in 2012. The gesture of “repenting their poor judgment” was conducted in a ritual manner in an interview for the weekly *NIN* given by the playwright and professor at the Faculty of Drama Arts, former MP of the Euro-reforming LDP, Nenad Prokić, “...if you really think that you are the only one important, you are tedious and that is where my support stops...I did not believe that Vučić will bring order to this state and that something biblical was to happen, but I knew he was the only one capable of pushing the Democrats from office, the Democrats who had nothing more to offer, except drag along. That is why Vučić got my support. He did that.

NIN: You encouraged the citizens of Serbia to vote for the coalition SPS-SNS because they “were the only ones who showed readiness and ability to change”? Have they changed?

Nenad Prokić: Does the wolf change upon entering the church? A wolf is a wolf inside and outside the church. I could not say to him that I was supporting him in order to bring down the Democrats, that would be too little for social engagement. I did not believe he could do more than that, but I gave him a chance to try to do more. I would have been happy if he had and in that case he would still have my support.¹⁶

Excursus – Political war between the media and the media saga about an exhibition

One of the most important characteristics of the media scene in the print media is the political war being waged between them and being almost constantly reignited. This tendency continued in the period July – September 2016. The media scene is shown in a state of constant bickering “to the death”, with emphasis on challenging morals and policies, which reduces all of the controversy to a lesser or greater extent to a matter of written political “showdowns”.

In the second half of July, the ruling Serbian Progressive Party organised an exhibition “Uncensored lies” which initiated numerous media and political debates. It especially upset the media and political opponents of the government of Aleksandar Vučić.

15 Miloš Vasić, “Ko će nama da zameni Tita,” [Who will be out next Tito] *Vreme*, No. 1332, p. 4-5

16 Nenad Prokić, “Podržavao sam Vučića, povlačim svoju podršku,” [I supported Vučić, I take back my support] *NIN*, No. 3430, p. 17-18

War of the media is vividly illustrated in the debate between the weekly *Vreme* and the owner of TV Pink, the media mogul, Željko Mitrović. Direct cause for this confrontation of opinions of these two media outlets was the open letter by the owner of Pink to the American billionaire of Hungarian origin George Soros, who has been funding the civil sector and one part of the media in Serbia for years. If we were to sum it up, Mitrović’s thesis would look like this: George Soros invests money in a certain network of NGOs and media not only in order to affect political relations within Serbia, but with the aim of destabilising Serbia internally.

Mitrović’s harsh words sent to the American billionaire and one part of the media and NGOs were met with fierce condemnation. Owner of TV Pink was brutally stigmatised, and his letter, which was published in *Politika*, was interpreted not only as necessary part of the propaganda aimed at maintaining tension in SNS’ electorate, but also as part of a national project, “The last open letter of Mitrović, sent to George Soros, who is according to *Pink* and *Informer* creating chaos in Serbia by financing NGOs and the media – is part of a national project, i.e. official policy. Just as the alleged coup against PM Vučić was a project, a conspiracy to overthrow the Government of Serbia, during the PM’s visit to China... When Željko Mitrović goes after Soros, and his letter about Soros’ “financing of chaos” appears on the pages of *Politika*, that no longer looks like a joke, put bluntly and in a nutshell – that looks like a state matter.”¹⁷

With the aim of refuting Mitrović’s allegations, reporter of *Vreme* Zora Drčelić says his letter is an example of the two-faced policies of the government. Namely, when the state receives donations, then such a gesture is interpreted as help for the state and support to the government on its strategic path towards EU integrations, when such money goes into the non-government sector and the media, financial support is interpreted as an expression of efforts to destabilise Serbia, “So, when NGOs and the media in Serbia get grants for projects from George Soros and other Western financing organisations, they receive it as traitors and mercenaries of the West in order to “destabilise Serbia” and “create chaos.” In four years, four million Euros from Soros, “pocket money” as Mitrović puts it. However, when Aleksandar Vučić says that since 2011 Serbia got from the EU three billion Euros in grants, these are “investments in Serbia” and not money for destabilising Serbia. More specifically, all post-October-fifth governments up to now, their ministries and local authorities who received grants from the EU and the USA over the past 15 years are not mercenaries of the West, traitors and destroyers of Serbia, God forbid!”¹⁸

Gesture of logical refusal of Mitrović’s allegations receives its full development in the sentences in which the business and moral credibility of Željko Mitrović is disputed. Owner of TV Pink is portrayed as a morally problematic person ready to do anything out of interest for any political set, including the current government of Aleksandar Vučić. With the aim of discrediting the owner of Pink, journalist of authentic pro-European *Vreme* quotes a book by Mirjana Marković, wife of the deceased political leader of Serbia from the nineties Slobodan Milošević, “During the four years of Mitrović’s toiling in JUL, his pink turbo-folk empire grew, and Željko,” his former boss writes, “became a completely different person, in terms of wealth, status and profession, he built a large and modern villa in Dedinje for himself and a giant TV building, also in Dedinje.” In short, he knew how to cash in his activism with the Milošević family and with all who had power in Serbia after them. Or, as Mira Marković wrote in the mentioned book, “After

17 Zora Drčelić, “Izađi na crtu,” [Step into the ring] *Vreme*, No. 1338

18 Idem

all these years, it is clear – he will join anyone he can have use from and distance himself from anyone who cannot be of use to him or could be detrimental,” adding that he is said to be, “a great friend of Aleksandar Vučić, Vice-President of the Serbian Progressive Party. This was in 2012, and today, in 2016, Mitrović’s TV Pink became a private public TV to the PM Aleksandar Vučić, head of SNS.”¹⁹

Case of RTS was in the centre of media writing in the end of August, just after the Olympic Games in Rio 2016. The daily *Informer* critically reflected on the great expenses RTS had while reporting from this sports event. Despite the rebuttal and responses which came from RTS, weekly *Vreme* revived the issue of RTS’ status in the media scene of Serbia, using texts in *Informer* as a stepping stone for criticising Aleksandar Vučić and his Government. “Friendly” journalistic defence of RTS became a tool for releasing negative political comments with reference to the treatment of RTS by the government. Debate between the media is, in this case, regarded as a mask for the political battle. Advocating for the objective and unbiased RTS is a façade behind which is the desire to accuse the government of systematic pressure on national television. Journalist of *Vreme* Tamara Skrozza confirmed the specified propensity, “It seems clear that the defence of RTS’ independence has entirely been left upon those who work there, i.e. to those running it – at the same time, those who work there are usually precluded from taking any action except for packing up and leaving, and those who run it are ready to silently overlook anything. Without the financial independence and the independence of regulatory and supervisory bodies, that company is left at the mercy of the Government, i.e. the one who embodies the Government.”²⁰

The fact that the story about RTS’ expenses for reporting from the Olympic Games in Rio 2016 is connected with Vučić can clearly be seen from the following quote in the texts of a reporter from *Vreme*, “This does not mean that RTS is completely innocent or clean and that it is being attacked without grounds by enemies: this means that the real topic are not receipts, or the money spent in Rio, but the discontent of Aleksandar Vučić towards what RTS did. Rio just came in handy as an occasion and weapon.”²¹

That this is solely targeting of Aleksandar Vučić for purposes of political and moralistic criticising on account of his position about the expenses of the National Television RTS is clearly visible in the conclusion of the text by Tamara Skrozza, “For now, direct victims are the people who reported from the Olympic Games, who were not (as the PM and the editorial staff of *Informer* and *Pink* think) there to fill their pockets with money, but who are now marked as public enemies to say the least. Apart from them, the victim is the public broadcaster RTS – there can be no word of its independence and professional dignity after the PM’s rant. Finally, the whole matter has direct consequences on the entire media, even public, scene of Serbia: because if a PM can afford to categorise the entire staff of RTS as scum and political activists, and all at RTS and around it, allow this to go by silently – we are dealing with something that is very close to dictatorship. On one side, citizens do not pay for RTS in order for it to obediently tolerate everything served on its plate and do as instructed from 11 Nemanjina Street, but for it to report objectively and without bias and in the public interest. On the other, far more important side – the PM was neither elected nor paid to scream at reporters, to humiliate the concept of a public broadcaster or to put forward his own personal frustrations and

19 Idem

20 Tamara Skrozza, “Vaše pravo da ćutite,” [Your right to remain silent] *Vreme*, No. 1339

21 Idem

dissatisfaction before the public. All who take it without protest are to blame as much as him for the dark that is inevitably upon us.”²²

Negative obsession with Aleksandar Vučić was made more prominent in the media’s reporting and writing about the exhibition “Uncensored lies” which opened on 18th July 2016 in the Belgrade-based gallery Progress. The mentioned exhibition put on display video content, texts, interviews, editorial comments, caricatures and tweets which are radically critical towards the PM of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, his party and the Governments he chaired.

The exhibition stirred up controversy and easily polarised the public. Weeklies and dailies, if we exclude *Informer*, portrayed the exhibition as an act of abolishing freedom of thought and expression and a threat to the fragile media community which is critically oriented towards PM Vučić and the Government.

With the aim of attaching stigma to Vučić and SNS, two analogies were invoked. One is historical, and the other is current. The exhibition reminded some editors and political events commentators of the Nazi exhibition “Degenerate art” from 1938, while some journalists and intellectuals equalised Vučić’s exhibition with the rule of the Turkish president Recep Taip Erdogan.²³ Characteristic distress and rationally implausible critique of the exhibition, which served as a continuation of the political war of one part of print media and ruling SNS, led by Aleksandar Vučić, are presented in the text of the Editor in Chief of *NIN*, Milan Ćulibrk, “Censored truth and uncensored lies.” In his editorial comment, Ćulibrk writes, “If they had a better advisor, Vučić and SNS would never organise such an exhibition. Which genius came up with the idea to open it now? I have no other explanation but that someone made a huge mistake and confused the opening of the exhibition with the opening of chapters in the talks with EU. And they certainly shouldn’t have done this, by no means. If for nothing else, then for the ominous reminders of 19th July 1937 when the exhibition Degenerate art was opened in Munich. Out of about 5,000 confiscated and forbidden images, sculptures, sketches and books by German Jews, but also world-famous artists such as Chagall, Matisse, Picasso and Van Gogh, the Nazi government selected 650 and put them on display with a very suggestive title. It was opened by the Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels, who explained such an exhibition as the need to show the German public “how the deeply perverse Jewish spirit made its way into Germany’s cultural life.” That exhibition was also a touring one, so after Munich, citizens of 11 more German cities saw it. In four months, a total of two million Germans, three times more than the parallel “Great Exhibition of German Art.” This probably was not the aim, but it was the result.”²⁴

Apart from the propaganda-like equalising of Vučić and the Nazis in terms of freedom of press, intentions of the author Milan Ćulibrk are clear – to challenge any kind of progress in Serbian economics and

22 Idem

23 This equalising shows the solely propaganda-like nature of newspaper texts critically intoned towards the exhibition “Uncensored lies” which was organised by the Serbian Progressive Party. Analogy with the Nazi exhibition “Degenerate art” from 1938 neglects the political and social context of today’s Serbia and Nazi Germany. Today’s Serbia opens chapters in the process of EU integrations, which is a characteristic of a country that has reached a decent level of liberal democratic standard, while Nazi Germany before WWII abolished all traditional liberties and legalised and implemented repressive political practice. Also, Erdogan’s Turkey has been narrowing freedoms in Turkish society for years, openly shutting down the media via bans of not only newspapers, but also electronic media, and also politically undesired communication via social media.

24 Milan Ćulibrk, “Cenzurisana istina i necenzurisane laži,” [Censored truth and uncensored lies] *NIN*, No. 3421, p. 2

politics, which makes it obvious that the exhibition “Uncensored lies”, i.e. its critical reception, is merely a trigger for the continuation of the permanent war which is being waged against the government in one part of the media. This inclination can clearly be seen in the following paragraph, “And while all “Uncensored lies” fit on the ground floor and in the basement of Progress, I do not believe that all the buildings in Belgrade would be sufficient to cover their walls with the “censored truth,” in which the PM and the government boast about the fantastic results, Serbian, European and World records in the previous two years. And especially for records which are yet to be set by Serbia This year, next year or at least in 2018, 2019, 2020... Anyway, life in Serbia is always better in the future. That is why the government warns its citizens not to look back too much. In that case, they may remember the broken promises and this is not very convenient. Especially for the government.”²⁵

The already quoted journalist of *Vreme* Tamara Skrozza offered a special view of SNS’ exhibition. In her text “Editor in Chief of Serbia”, she states that the organising of the exhibition is an attempt to hide the fact that the most dominant person in the media, especially electronic and influential ones, is Vučić through the story about attacks against him. Her critique is coloured with numerous negative personal positions, which are on the other side of the political and media analysis. This is without a doubt moral condemnation which is aimed at challenging Vučić and undermining the plausibility of the depiction of the state of things in the media, “Man, whose media coverage is statistically dominant compared to anyone else on the public stage, and positive depictions outnumber negative ones by far, is constantly unhappy and dissatisfied because of the manner in which the media are presenting him. In order to illustrate the reasons of his frustration, he exhibits texts, statements and caricatures which make him unhappy, and which at the same time, make up for one per mile of the total media content which refers to him.”²⁶

On the other hand, other views of the exhibition also surfaced. They showed first that its content is not problematic, and at the same time questioned the rational basis and media legitimacy of its critics. Radically critical charge towards the exhibition was generated as a consequence of “faith in excellence” of certain part of the media scene and manipulations which are hidden by the fact that there are no forbidden or absolutely excluded viewpoints in the political and public field of Serbia. Criticism, according to this understanding, is a red herring beyond any doubt.

This standpoint is advocated by the Editor in Chief of *Informer* Dragan J. Vučićević, “I absolutely agree with various independent comrades, male and female, who, having heard of the exhibition “Uncensored lies”, immediately thought of Goebbels. As they should, they are his best pupils. Especially that teaching of his which requires “when you lie, lie big and stick to it.” Especially stick to it and do not give up on a lie if you get caught and you look ridiculous. That is why they are so outraged these days. Someone shows nothing else but a bunch of lies published about him, and then those who released these lies, come yelling, “There goes Goebbels! It’s the new Erdogan! Tyrant! Dictator! Privileged disseminators of disinformation, let me ask you why? Because he caught you lying? Because he showed that your lies have no legs? Because you published semi-information, fallacies, slander – from the number of corpses in the floods to the infamous basement in which Vučić himself pays some junkie to tell some tales!?!...”

²⁵ Idem, p. 2

²⁶ Tamara Skrozza, “Glavni urednik Srbije,” [Editor in Chief of Serbia] *Vreme*, No. 1334, p. 5

Because you lied about Kolubara? And Air Serbia? ... That’s the problem, isn’t it? Someone dared to call you out. And all for the account of those who lost the elections, but would like to get into office nonetheless. Well, since you cannot defend yourselves with facts, then you use lies. And cries about Goebbels and Erdogan.”²⁷

An interesting standpoint about censorship in Serbia has been put forward by the editor of the daily *Politika* Ljiljana Smajlović. Even at a time just before the replacement of at one of the most prestigious jobs, not only in Serbia, but in the Balkans, though she considered only Aleksandar Vučić responsible for that act, she claimed that there is no censorship in Serbia:

“*Nedeljnik*: You said yourself that you are proof that there is no censorship in Vučić’s Serbia. What does your replacement prove?

Ljiljana Smajlović: These are my words. And now when we are talking about this, I must give credit to Aleksandar Vučić for something important. He never pressured me. He spoke publically about being unhappy with the editorial policy, but I consider this a fair relationship. I support criticising novelties. I believe in the media criticising one another. It’s the 21st century in journalism. Aleksandar Vučić criticised *Politika* but that never bothered me, nor was it detrimental the reputation of the paper. However, Aleksandar Vučić never tried to push for something to be written or not be written, or in what way to be written. He did not interfere in the editorial work in *Politika* and he did not try to use his enormous political power to pressure me.”²⁸

Completely juxtaposed attitude, similar to that of politicians from the opposition, professional associations of journalists and certain intellectuals from the public life, was presented by the years-long journalist and editor of several dailies Manojlo Manjo Vukotić. Two theses presented by him are worth mentioning as representative in order to understand the complex dynamics in relations between the media and politics. Firstly, irresponsible government implies irresponsible media, as well. Secondly, the media in an order of irresponsible government can only serve its interests, “Read any newspaper today or watch television, it is the same as taking a shower in the sewage. The media are becoming the “Chernobyls.” They are becoming the courtesans of the government. They are becoming self-service shops where everything is bought wrapped into cellophane and sometimes even with a red bow. In the irresponsible society and with irresponsible government, one cannot expect for the newspapers to be good and responsible. This misconception that the newspapers can be a serious corrector of society is still ongoing. It is often the government or leading parties who pick the editors in chief, editors in chief pick obedient editors, editors pick obedient associates. This is unfortunately a vicious circle and for now there is no way out.”²⁹

Debate between the media to a large extent rhetorically and semantically follows the debate of the po-

²⁷ Dragan J. Vučićević, “Zašto se srpskim Gebelsima od Vučića pričinjava Erdogan,” [Why do the Serbian Goebbels imagine seeing Erdogan in Vučić] *Informer*, 25. 07. 2016, p. 5

²⁸ Ljiljana Smajlović, “Ja neću poći u krstaški rat protiv Aleksandra Vučića,” [I am not going on a crusade against Aleksandar Vučić] interviewed by Veljko Lalić, *Nedeljnik*, No. 236/37, p. 23

²⁹ Manojlo Manjo Vukotić, “Mediji su postali kurtizane vlasti,” [The media have become courtesans of the government] *Nedeljnik*, No. 242, p. 26

litical actors in the public life. They are evidence that the media are among other things very influential and above all an active factor of the political process, more precisely of the party life. Categorical nature of the condemning of the government, its moral stigmatization and manipulation with the halo of the “victim of political repression” are a constitutional part of the discourse of the anti-government part of the media. On the other hand, rhetorical “sound and the fury” united with the vocabulary which is from the other side of conventional decency, maintains the positions of the opposing side.

Even in the domain when the media are talking about themselves, Serbia is diluted into a state of an “eternal conflict.” Debate dominates over dialogue, what is more, its mutually condemning tone shuts the window for rational and critical perception of reality.

Image of the opposition – between lack of political and moral legitimacy and constant attempts to return into the zone of political relevancy

Image of the opposition in the weeklies and editorial columns of dailies is far more complex and shown on several planes. In dailies and weeklies who are critical towards the winners of October 5th (*Informer* and *Pečat*), image of the opposition is extremely negative. In the mentioned print media, there are no interviews with the members of the Euro-reforming opposition, and very little space is left for the anti-European opposition to Vučić, made of DSS and Dveri. Šešelj and SRS have the same status, but they are not and can never be favourites of these media outlets. Admittedly, unlike the winners of October 5th, the Radicals are not politically stigmatised. Image of the opposition is extremely negative regarding almost all political issues, including the issue of political and any other credibility of opposition leaders by reminding us of the period when they were in office or through polemics with their positions, open or hidden agendas.

On the other hand, weeklies like *Vreme* and *NIN*, *Novi magazin* and *Nedeljnik* give unequivocal support which does not vary in content, but in intensity. In the radically critical weeklies, intensity of support to the opposition is greater and is not measures only by making room for the positions and interpretations of opposition leaders, but by the force and radical nature of the negative campaign against Aleksandar Vučić and the Serbian Progressive Party. Unlike *Informer* and *Pečat*, opposition leaders are here given huge space for presenting and elaborating their positions, and hence they shut down, politically and through the media, the possibility of influence of arguments and rhetoric of the government, not only with their not so big reading audience of the weeklies, but they primarily narrow the influence over the capillary public. This media and political constellation partially breeds the conflict between Vučić and the “elite.”

Complexity of the image of the opposition is reflected in the versatile approach to the problem of its action and potential. Pro-government print media, primarily *Informer*, and to some extent *Pečat*, dispute the opposition’ actions and potentials. At the same time, opposition weeklies, especially those radically crit-

ical of the government, like *Vreme* and *NIN*, most often state the political powerlessness, i.e. as perceived by the public, but they also develop discourse which shows the Democrats’ deficit of order, viewing its actions as heroic. It is striking that in these detail-prone weeklies, there is nearly no critical reflection at the Euro-reformatory opposition from the time when it was in office, not so long ago. This type of “oblivion” is not random, but wittingly chosen, since critical weeklies are an active factor of party debates, a kind of intellectual supplement in the hard and exhausting fight between the political actors in Serbia.

Special role in attaching a negative evaluative component to the opposition parties is played by *Informer*, both in texts appearing in the daily edition, and in the editorial columns of Dragan J. Vučićević. Vučićević’s columns morally and politically problematize actors on the opposition scene, just as they critically treat opposition media and non-government organisations with a nearly unavoidable reflection on the period when winners of October 5th were in power. Basic thesis could be summed up in the following three interconnected moments which form the approach of the author 1) current opposition has no moral credibility (due to highly corrupt political class it comprises) and no political capacity to lead the country due to the failed transition in Serbia; 2) in the opposition-inclined media, and this means majority of print media, the current Government is being attacked without a serious rational explanation and with only one aim – to overthrow it as soon as possible; 3) in the media which support to the current opposition there is undoubted discrimination of all who are not direct opponents to Vučić’s government.

Vučićević’s critique of the Serbian opposition is equally directed towards the opposition as a factor in the political life, but also to the media outlets that are extremely critical towards the government. His criticising always follows the *ad hominem* principle, strictly personalised, in order to be convincing. That is why a person is stigmatised, his/her moral and psychological profile is sketched in order to make that person unworthy of any function in the public life.

For understanding the media and political scene in Serbia, writing of the Editor in Chief of *Informer* is relevant for three interconnected reasons. Firstly, the style of writing and content of the messages from his texts is such that it corresponds to the interest in politics of the less educated layers who mostly buy and read tabloids and represent very loyal voters in the election process. Secondly, *Informer* is important because, week in and week out, it questions negative attitudes and media and political images which are continuously reproduced by the critical media. And finally, *Informer* is a leader among dailies in the creating of evaluatively negative image of the current opposition as a political actor.

One of the starting assumptions of Vučićević’s writing is that the notion of political opposition is not strictly associated with the political parties which vote against the Government’s political decisions, laws and other types of initiatives and proposals in Parliament, but the opposition is a network of various connected organisations and public persons. This is a council of parties, NGO sector, media, public intellectuals. The second assumption is the specific understanding of politics which Vučićević ascribes to opposition leaders and their political and media allies. For opposition leaders, politics, as seen by Vučićević, are just an instrument for the former political elite to get rich. In conditions of high level of poverty and objectively poor chances for a decent living, this kind of understanding of the opposition represents the fuel of the campaign of the current government and the media affiliated with it. Precisely these campaigns incite anger, disappointment or indifference with the voters of the opposition, and they may motivate the voters of the government to prevent the restoring of the corrupt political elite made of

the winners of October 5th. Third assumption of Vučićević's interpretation of the opposition as a political actor is the deficit of its patriotism, anti-Russian attitude and submissive loyalty to Western powers. In the name of coming into office and showing loyalty to Western countries, according to the Editor in Chief of *Informer*, opposition parties are ready to do everything necessary in the given political moment – from starting different media campaigns to acts going in the direction of destabilising Serbia.

As part of the Western loyalty saga, two mutually connected moments vary: absence of any coherent nationally responsible policy and distance from Russia, which acts as an ally to Serbia in every sense. Several examples from texts published in *Informer* may show all of the listed characteristics of the anti-opposition discourse. Extensive interpreting of the notion of the opposition and its contextualisation, party battle, regardless of whether it is about parties or other real or potential rivals of the authorities, creating policies as an instrument for personal gain, harsh accusations from the other side of conventional decency, exclusive tone in moral condemning, personal moralistic questioning of ever opposition actor, all of these elements of discourse are composed into a strong whole, which aims at remaining deeply planted in the minds of the readers, who constantly need to be forced to choose political sides.

In terms of the opposition, that choice should initiate a deep and irreparable distance and aversion and opting for the other side. The reason is clear: the opposition is generally and in detail, politically and morally, wrong. Direct portrayal of Vučićević's discourse and his internal plots and suggested conclusions may be clearly seen from an array of the following quotes, "Big, if not the biggest, benefit of the April early elections is that everyone got into Parliament of Serbia...so we were able to see during the three-day constituting of the Government that a pale shadow of the from-time-to-time witty Šešelj is all that is left from the great policies of the Radicals; that once powerful and ruling DSS was sacrificed in the interest of Đorđe Vlach Vukadinović, who fulfilled his greatest life desire of becoming an MP and eating for free in the Parliament restaurant; that the program of Boško Obradović and Dveri is no different than the program of the late Nikola Šećerovski, that Čeda is a sad little man, seriously scared that he will finally have to answer for stealing state wheat and other shady deals; that Tadić's supporters have really no other policy except the policy "Vučić, you, fag;" that in the MP group of the "elite" and "intellectual" DS there is no one smarter and more eloquent than the wasteful Radoslav Milojević Kene, the same guy who paid for 343 beers with municipal money in one evening; but also that Saša Radulović is really a stuffed turkey, expert in stuffing bankruptcy cash in his pocket and tax fraud worth millions in USA... Therefore, there are no more lies, no more tricks. No more mystery and great talk of some sort of opposition's saviours who have ready-made fixes. We see now in parliament. Entering the Assembly of all options, what the yellow leaders and their strategists announced and expected anxiously as their greatest shot has turned into their biggest problem. Because they are their biggest problem. In this state, without ideas, elementary lack of talent, extremely lazy and competent only for the bro-tycoon combinations, condemned for complete political failure."³⁰

Mapping the professionally, politically and morally unacceptable media outlets is clearly seen in the following quote "this second Serbia's, essentially criminal discourse would not be so much of a problem if it was not dominant in RTS, as well. So, on the public broadcaster's program paid by all citizens. By defi-

30 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Najveća korist od vanrednih izbora," [The biggest benefit from the early elections] *Informer*, 13. 08. 2016, p. 5

nition and the law, RTS should firstly take care of national and state interest. But it has been kidnapped by the Yellow Bujke and other similar non-national mediocrities. The public broadcaster is becoming a machine for grinding Serbian brains, more and more"³¹

The thesis about the unscrupulousness of the opposition, in this case of the citizen's initiative "Let's not drown Belgrade", is presented by Dragan J. Vučićević through the incident between the Mayor of Belgrade Siniša Mali and the activists of the initiative in the streets of Belgrade during the summer of 2016. An important detail in the account of this aspect in comprehending the opposition's actions is the teaming up of the opposition, more specifically the critical citizens and countries from the West, "Siniša Mali, are you with me, is a member of this lower Second-Serbian race and that is why he can be beaten a vista. Because, imagine what would happen if someone tried to lynch Pajtić, Tadić, or, God forbid, Čeda?! Would that be interpreted as "democracy"? Would all those "human-righters", paid big bucks from the West, remain silent or would there be a fuss all the way to the Council of Europe, to say the least? But since Siniša Mali is a member of this Second Serbia, his head is used today to legalise and legitimise what they intended for all of us who do not agree with them, back in early autumn. So, a bat in the head. Maybe this sounds exaggerated, but that's probably how it sounded when about a month and a half ago *Informer* published the correspondence of the organisers of the "yellow duck" and the Embassies of USA and EU where they develop plans for radicalising the protest in full detail. You read it, now you can see it. Or does anyone serious think that it is possible that some Lazarević and Simonović decided all on their own to attack the Mayor in the middle of Belgrade, before all those TV cameras?! Let's not lie to ourselves, they are just pawns, physical workers. They are just "useful fools" ready to do the dirty work against their country and their people for a slave's portion of cracklings. The real players are hiding in embassies and in the offices of Brussels and Washington."³²

In creating the negative image of the opposition, different motifs were used. These are the ones that are distinguishable – lack of scruples in political battle, moderate, nearly non-existing moral credibility, political incompetence, lack of patriotism, extremely loyalty to the West, primarily USA and EU. Unlike the radical criticism put forward by Dragan J. Vučićević in his columns, a view of the opposition is different in other print media, primarily weeklies. Critical sizing-up is present in terms of the potential to stand up to Vučić's SNS, while critical reflection which would refer to both the current state, but also immediate history, when primarily the current Euro-reformatory opposition was in office. In a certain sense, there is a tendency towards making them into heroes. This tendency primarily refers to the actions of Saša Janković and Rodoljub Šabić, as well as the civil initiative "Let's not drown Belgrade". The media's preferences of Janković and Šabić got a dose of their self-reflection which is situated in the context of live political and media battle. Hence, for example, Saša Janković identifies his role literally with the conscience of society, "The ombudsman is an institutional conscience of the Republic of Serbia, not a slave driver." A similar political self-confidence is shown by the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance, Rodoljub Šabić. He sees himself as the more credible social actor than the official opposition. Šabić's policy of self-glorification is visible in the following clipping from an interview from the weekly *Nedeljnik*:

31 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Sami sebi najveći problem," [They are their own biggest problem] *Informer*, 3. 09. 2016, p. 5

32 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Kreće nasilje u Srbiji," [Violence starting in Serbia] *Informer*, 23. 07. 2016, p. 5

“*Nedeljnik*: Do you have the impression as if the ardent opponents of this government today trust you or Saša Janković more than opposition parties? And why is that like that?

Šabić: I do and I am not alone. This is an impression that is not deceiving. This is an expression of the need of many citizens to protect institutions they believe in and to live by the law, and not by provisional rules which are more or less created by the interests of political parties. For a long time, too long, over two decades, we have been living in a reduced democracy, reduced to partocracy, with all the inevitable consequences. A great description or anticipation of that was given by Slobodan Jovanović when he said, “If parties become more important than anything else, it is more likely for them to lose all beliefs and principles. In the lack of beliefs and principles, they strive towards success for the sake of success, they try to get into office as soon as possible and to stay there as long as possible. They are becoming enterprises for exploiting the government and, as all groups led by egotistical desires, they are spreading corruption around themselves.”³³

Significant room for its depicting positions about the government, opposition, itself, protests and project Belgrade Waterfront was given to the initiative “Let’s not drown Belgrade.” The critically oriented weeklies invested their surplus of trust and affection with the aim of briefly, quickly and efficiently creating a political and media relevant organisation ready to become a serious competitor to the government.

Though strictly speaking, the civil movement “Let’s not drown Belgrade” was created because of the “Savamala” scandal, self-reflection of the representatives of the initiative show their much wider, admittedly very confusing, political and media intentions, “Our fight is the fight for bringing back dignity to the political arena, because politics have become something decent folk avoid. It is not our objective and aim to oppose the government. But since the opposition is not doing their job, then we did it. Twenty or thirty thousand people in the streets has certain weight, and this can no longer be ignored, neither by the government nor the public, nor the media. This is important because it is becoming a precedent and a new weapon in the citizens fight for a better and different city. Not as the political battle for power which wins in the elections, our fight does not care who is in office.”³⁴

Special attention was paid to the Assembly of the Democratic Party, held in late September of 2016. After the stagnating and basically weak result in the April elections, DS decided to ask the question of leadership in the party as well as to change some program choices. In the columns and weeklies, it was noted that there was word about wider media perception for the Democratic Party, which was assessed as extremely unfavourable, given the manner in which this party has been delegitimised. The de-legitimation pattern is evidence of the “plight” of the local public with democracy, which has, as Veljko Lalić states, its historical roots, “When Željko Cvijanović launches the term “yellow scum elite”, he is actually showing that he hates the Democrats more than Hitler. And this is not the problem, but it is a problem that he is delegitimising them in this way. If you cannot accept a Serb to rule over you, then the only way is to say he is a traitor and thief. This is a classic in acceptance of the majority. Remains of DS, born pre-

33 Rodoljub Šabić, “Protivnici ove vlasti više veruju meni i Jankoviću nego opoziciji,” [Opponents of this government trust me and Janković more than the opposition] interview with Nenad Čaluković, *Nedeljnik*, No. 240, p. 25

34 Members of the initiative „Let’s not drown Belgrade”, „Mi nismo protiv ove vlasti nego protiv ovakve vlasti,” [We are not against this government, but against such a government] interview with Ana Mitić and Veljko Miladinović, *Nedeljnik*, No. 234, p. 25-26.

cisely on October 5th in that incest with DSS, have reduced their own policies to proving patriotism to the retired Koštunica. Both sides, both minorities, think that they have a deed on Serbian politics which was stolen from them, unbelievable. And so what can you expect, but Toma and Šešelj in the same round.”³⁵

At the same time, commentators like Dragoljub Žarković realistically show the difficult political state of DS, but express optimism in terms of its future, if the party remains united after the upcoming Assembly, “A party which has been actively creating political history of Serbia is, to use football talk, fighting to stay in the first league and party’s survival will be to the future president, who will be elected directly this time, about 20,000 voters are expected. Whoever wins, he/she will have more work and obligations than honours...They barely made it past the threshold in the previous elections. Latest polls are placing their result a few percent points below the threshold. Some ignorant person would say that the media campaign around these internal party elections looks like much ado about nothing, but if they survive the results of the vote as a whole, they have good chances of appearing as an important factor on the Serbian political stage.”³⁶

Weekly *Nedeljnik* dedicated considerable attention to the elections in DS offering them quite a bit of space to each of the candidates for the leader to DS. This concept of monitoring one party’s assembly is not often seen in Serbian weeklies. This points, or more specifically implies, and maybe confirms, that there is significant proximity in the political and evaluative positions between the editorial staff of *Vreme* and the Democratic Party.

Unlike the weekly *Vreme*, weekly *NIN* gave space only to Bojan Pajtić, probably according to the choice of the reporter Olja Bečković. This choice of candidate is also not random. The former leader of the Democratic Party Bojan Pajtić follows the course of the editorial policy, while it considerably contributes to the promulgating of his political viewpoints. Self-glorification of Pajtić’s role in DS and his position both about the Assembly and the party’s program is psychologically indicative, “Not only will I run, but I will win, too. But it is very good that there are several candidates, this will be a historic step for the political scene in Serbia, no other party had this kind of process of internal elections and internal debates.”³⁷

Pleading for the membership of Serbia in NATO and legalisation of same-sex marriages, Pajtić made, according to his own perception, a political and ideological breakthrough, “The idea with asking such questions is for DS to learn to deal with policy and policy matters. This is no longer a beauty pageant, no longer who is prettier, who has prettier eyes, who is taller, but political issues are what matters.”³⁸

Compared to the image of the government in the weeklies and editorial columns, image of the opposition is more complex, more specifically it is more differentiated. Apart from the negative sign, which is undoubtedly present in the daily *Informer*, other print media, more specifically weeklies, either favour “healthy forces” of the opposition, such as Saša Janković or Rodoljub Šabić or NGOs, like “Let’s not drown Belgrade.” At the same time, those weeklies who are assiduously critical towards the government, view the opposition DS with a dose of affection and understanding, wishing for its return into office.

35 Veljko Lalić, “Demokratsko pitanje Srbije,” [The democratic issue of Serbia] *Nedeljnik*, No. 245, p. 5

36 Dragoljub Žarković, “Derbi začelja,” [Bottom of the table derby] *Vreme*, No. 1341, p. 4

37 Bojan Pajtić, “Majstore, dokaži da sam ukrao sto dinara!” [Hey ace, prove I stole a hundred dinars] interview with Olja Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3426, p. 17

38 Idem, p. 19



Nedeljnik, 7th July 2016

Compared to the image of the government in weeklies and editorial columns, the image of the opposition is much more complex, to put it more precisely – it is more differentiated. Apart from undoubtedly negative references in the daily *Informer*, other print media, weeklies in particular, favour either “rational forces” of the opposition, such as Saša Janković and Rodoljub Šabić or non-governmental organizations, such as “Don’t Drown Belgrade”. Simultaneously, highly critical towards authorities down to the last detail, they look at opposition-oriented Democratic Party with a sort of benevolence and understanding, wishing to see it back to authority positions.

Forming of the new Serbian Government – journalistic “aggressive” criticisms continues

New Serbian Government was an important topic for Serbian weeklies and editorial columns in the dailies. This topic can be perceived from two aspects: 1) the process of forming the Government and 2) the very act of forming the Government at the Assembly. Both moments are crucial when considering this topic.

It appears that all matrixes prepared in advance for the interpretation of political figures, their steps and political processes can be activated easily and efficiently. The sophisticatedly created negative image of the currently ruling coalition, and its leader Aleksandar Vučić in particular, was principally reflected in new Serbian Government.

Disregard for the legal obligation to form the Government within twenty days since the constitution of the Assembly on July 1, 2016 proves the extent to which this was just propaganda. Despite these circumstances and the fact that Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić announced the forming of the Government earlier, texts about the very process of its formation showed distinctively how strongly deep-rooted the propaganda approach is regarding the interpretation of political figures, processes and events.

In the manner of Vukadinović’s analysis of Aleksandar Vučić’s alleged hesitation to form the new Serbian Government, Jovana Gligorijević of the weekly *Vreme* says this is about a sort of media play by means of which the new-old prime minister is demonstrating that he is only and utterly interested in an ongoing election campaign: “What is the crucial difference between Aleksandar Vučić’s previous cabinet and this one? Who are the winners and who are the losers? Why were the “unjust and unprovoked” elections held in April and why did we have to wait for more than one hundred days for the prime minister-designate to compile a list of ministers and to write the keynote address “on graph paper”? Did Vučić encounter problems with finding the sufficient number of people willing to pretend to play ministerial roles and to tolerate the prime minister’s yelling at them as if they were schoolchildren? Is anyone smarter after all?... Vučić made a three-months long drama around the new government though nothing was changed at all. Government members are almost the same, and the partners are the same too (the Socialist Party of Serbia – SPS, the United Pensioners of Serbia Party – PUPS and the Socialist Movement), so once again we have a strong party-oriented rather than expert-oriented government...”³⁹

39 Jovana Gligorijević, “Dan Mirmota,” [Groundhog day] *Vreme*, No. 1336, p. 7

In addition to the refusal to recognize PM Vučić, i.e. after perceiving all relevant events with regard to the new Serbian Government from the aspect of the already known media matrixes which follow the pattern of personified negative campaigns, refusals to recognize ministers came next, especially regarding new ministers who after the prime minister's political assessment replaced the old ones. For the purpose of defaming the current Serbian Government, ministers of the previous cabinet were perceived as better, or to put it more precisely – more competent and proficient. Not to mention the fact that the previous government, which was also headed by Aleksandar Vučić, was always and at all times attacked openly and brutally by the newspaper *Vreme*. Ana Brnabić, the Minister of State Administration and Local Self-Government, and also a member of the LGBT community and the Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of NALED, an expert group committed to reform of public administration, was criticized first: "Moreover, everything except Ana Brnabić's sexual orientation is weird and obscure. Her name appeared in public for the first time following an affair about eavesdropping of the Democratic Party's President Bojan Pajtić and Lidija Udovički, former minister Kori Udovički's sister and a representative of Continental Wind Company, which wants to build wind farms in Serbia. Lidija Udovički allegedly complained to Pajtić that Elektromreža Srbije Director Nikola Petrović asked for a bribe in the amount of EUR 2 million. At that time Ana Brnabić was a director at the Continental Wind Company and parallel to that she was engaged within Vučić's "delivery unit" project which was devised by the former British Prime Minister during his brief career as Serbian Government's advisor.

Brnabić denied publicly that bribe was requested from Continental Wind Company and that Lidija Udovički was no longer employed by this company at the time she talked to Pajtić. Only a day after this public statement, Ana Brnabić resigned from the position of Continental Winds Director. Ten months later, she succeeded Kori Udovički at the position of the minister of state administration and local self-government.

This is not the end, however. Ana Brnabić is also the Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of NALED (National Alliance for Local Economic Development). A draft of the new Law on Financing Local Self-Governments will be submitted for parliament procedure soon. NALED not only objected to some parts of this law, but also in January this year it requested withdrawal of the draft wholly from the procedure, and even the IMF was willing to hear their opinion. One of the real problems of the new government and new ministers is how this new minister will reconcile the interests of the government and interests of the organization whose Board of Directors is chaired by her.⁴⁰

In her observation of Minister Ana Brnabić, "suspicious" and "analytical" Jovana Gligorijević obediently follows Bojan Pajtić, the former leader of the DS. Namely, in an interview, he identified Ana Brnabić's appointment with her protective position towards Elektromreža Srbije Director and PM Vučić's best man Nikola Petrović, "Ana Brnabić is a Government member neither because she is professional, which is beyond any doubt, nor because she is a member of a community – she is a Government member because she protected Aleksandar Vučić's best man! On the other hand, Kori Udovički is no longer a member of the Government because she did not protect Aleksandar Vučić's best man! Ana Brnabić was not a message to Serbian or European public in terms of accepting the LGBT population. Ana is a message that one must respect the leader more than the truth or one's own sister! Kori Udovički, a PhD with huge international experience and reputation, preceded her but she is not a minister anymore. Why? Because of

40 Jovana Gligorijević, "Dan Mrmota," [Groundhog day]*Vreme*, No. 1336, p.7



Vreme, 11th August 2016

the best man, and that's the point."⁴¹

Two new ministers – Minister of Education Mladen Šarčević and Minister of Culture Vladan Vukosavljević were handled in the same manner once subjected to Jovana Gligorijević's "investigative magnifying glass," "Other ministerial solutions are pretty dull. Bazaar of Culture is quite upset because they know nothing about new Minister of Culture Vladan Vukosavljević. This is not much of an argument because everybody was familiar with his predecessor Ivan Tasovac who was even warmly welcomed by many, but they did not feel any progress. Probably the only expert within his scope of jurisdiction, the former Minister of Education and Science Srđan Verbić, has been left out in this new allocation of duties. He has been replaced by Mladen Šarčević. One needs not be too smart to see why it is so: Competence is less important when it comes to participation in authority in this society. Political skills are more significant with worst possible implication of those words, and Verbić proved to be an absolute amateur in that area. To be honest, there is no minister of either education or culture who could get the stamp of approval from the professional and broader public as long as budget allocations for these two sectors are as low as possible while there is a huge number of interest groups, lobbies and "powers at war".⁴²

Negative image of Aleksandar Vučić's new cabinet also implied two more issues of importance – proclaimed program goals of the new Serbian Government and atmosphere in the Assembly during the vote on its election. Challenging of the Government's program is based on observation of promised-done balance. Mijat Lakičević, the journalist of *Novi magazin*, was the first to apply this seemingly common sense optics in observing Serbian Government's program.

His message could be summarized as follows: "The previous government fulfilled little of what it had promised and there is no reason for us to believe that the new one would do anything at all." Scepticism and political nihilism coupled together against authorities elected by democratic methods can be recognized in the following lines of his text: "Of all promises that Vučić made two years ago, he has fulfilled only one – though, beyond any doubt, of great importance – the one concerning fiscal consolidation, namely the decrease in the state budget deficit. This should take into account a 10 percent decrease in salaries in public sector while the decrease in pensions, let me remind you of it, was fulfilled despite the fact that it had not been promised. However, one must not lose sight of one thing: when boasting around, just like he has been boasting around these days, that deficit has been cut in two years by one quarter, i.e. from eight to two percent of gross domestic product, Vučić forgets that he himself was in power at the time of this extreme budget deficit. A list of unfulfilled promises, let me return to the beginning, is much longer. In addition to the already mentioned finalization of privatization, there is a series of huge, "structural", as economists prefer to say, changes of almost entire public sector: public enterprises, state administration, local self-government, health care, education, etc. However, while lots of things have been done concerning privatization, though it is not complete yet, practically nothing has been accomplished, barely scratching the surface, in mentioned areas. Judiciary could be also added to this list though, compared to other sectors, one cannot say that nothing has been done here. On the contrary, a lot has been done, but mostly with respect to submitting judiciary to executive authority and to further

41 Bojan Pajtić, "Majstore, dokaži da sam ukrao sto dinara!" [Hey ace, prove that I stole a hundre dinars] interview with Olja Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3426, p.18

42 Jovana Gligorijević, "Dan Mrmota," [Groundhog day] *Vreme*, No. 1336, p.8

undermining of its independence. So, there are seven tasks before Vučić. Not any of them is a piece of cake; each is requiring time, and knowledge, and perseverance. However, none of them is new either."⁴³

Semantically identical and partly rhetorically modified message of negative connotation on account of the prime minister's credibility and sustainability of his Government's program was offered by Zora Drčelić, a journalist of *Vreme*: "In his new keynote address he quotes Heraclitus, an ancient philosopher, who said that no man ever steps in the same river twice. However, his keynote address of 2016 was a river of promises just like the previous one of 2014. And this is not a problem because the keynote addresses are nothing but a list of good wishes and promises. However, when the time comes to answer to the citizens about what has been accomplished, Vučić calls for new elections and – makes even more promises, the only difference being in their scope, i.e. the number of pages. Still, the Government of 2014 was formed within record short period of time, in less than 40 days since elections, while it took him 100 days for this one."⁴⁴

In order to delegitimize Vučić's new Government at its start, it is neither enough to point out to his authoritarianism and manipulation of the media, nor is it decisive even to point out to discrepancies of new government's program while enticing nihilist-sceptical tones, and it will not end by revealing disputable competences of new ministers but it rather requires something else. It is necessary to make a caricature of the Assembly electing new Government and the prime minister as well through fierce and humiliating irony to devalue them even more in both political and psychological terms. The already mentioned Đorđe Vukadinović took upon himself to firstly politically delegitimize the Assembly trying, after Prime Minister Vučić's keynote address at Serbian Assembly, to show that it was almost impossible for opposition to speak, playing quasi-ironically and quasi-politically with the book of rules applicable at the Serbian Assembly, "The keynote address lasted for almost six hours. Entire discussion on it will last the total of five hours of which at least three quarters will be consumed by representatives of the ruling coalition. Moreover, the prime minister-designate is entitled to speak whenever he wants and how much he wants. Just in case – and despite the PM-elect's boldness and swearing that he was available and that he would be glad to reply to all objections – parliamentary majority flatly refused the submitted proposal to double the time for debate. The book of rules under which this session of the National Assembly was (also) scheduled and held was adopted – guess when – during the ruling of the Democratic Party."⁴⁵

Sarcastic writing about the keynote address which is amateurishly represented in the form of satirical and rational criticism allegedly demystifying the prime minister's personality is typical of Dragoljub Žarković's editorial columns. Writing about representation of the new program of Serbian Government, Žarković depicted Vučić's keynote address in a cartoon-like manner as one more victory that he has won – a victory lasting as long as his speech at the Assembly. "Vučić is a winner indeed in the extensive keynote address discipline and he defeated them all, but I hope sincerely that he will not be surpassed, not even by himself should he have opportunity to submit it to the parliament and to the public again. It is not suitable, but I can hardly resist telling one probably made-up anecdote. When Alija Sirotanović, a miner, a shock-worker, a prominent worker, a record-breaker in tons of dug coal, was allegedly supposed to receive

43 Mijat Lakičević, "Vučić i sedam mačića," [Vučić and seven kittens] *Novi magazin*, No. 276, p. 7

44 Zora Drčelić, "Kastro iz našeg sokaka," [Castro from our hood] *Vreme*, No. 1336

45 Đorđe Vukadinović, "Izveštaj iz skupštinske klupe," [Report from the parliemnt] *Vreme*, No. 1336

an award for hard labour from Tito, he asked for an even bigger shovel. The story has a sad end: one drunk night he was beaten by other miners because he established higher labour productivity standard.⁴⁶

Significantly more moderate and, to say so, more responsible analytical approach to the process of forming the Government and the act of electing it, was that of the journalists of the weekly *Pečat*. In view of the difficulties regarding the formation of the new Serbian Government, the journalist of the weekly *Pečat* Nikola Vrzić dismisses the idea that the awaiting of the new Serbian Government has anything to do with the alleged caprice of the Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić to keep associates within the party, potential coalition partners and public in a state of uncertainty. Vrzić believes there are two reasons for this – difficulties to settle the interests of coalition partners and pressures from the outside, from either the East or the West, “Whatever, as far as we can see, there are two possible reasons, if any, for postponement. On one hand, politics in Serbia are such that nobody who knows them – the politicians – a little at least, must not dismiss the possibility of difficulties arising when settling all (grown, in the course of nature) appetites of party fellows and potential coalition partners, moreover because SNS itself has only 93 seats in this parliament and for that reason it is apparently forced to depend on others. However, there is quite sufficient number of “others” so as to make them dispensable, thus reducing instantly their blackmailing capacity, making it far more benign than it could possibly be and the way it used to be whenever it could, in 2012 for example, when Ivica Dačić assumed the position of Serbia’s prime minister. After all, possible explanation that has remained is the existence of pressures from the outside that they talked about so much. Motives for something like this are apparent – battle for influence in Serbia, and in the Balkans as well – and we already have a (too) rich experience with such kind of quasi-political activity, which means that this explanation must not be dismissed a priori as impossible.

His major weakness is in absolute lack of objective evidence of any pressures at all so strong so as to enforce the postponing of the formation of our new government. One must be honest, however, and admit that we will be able to arrive at possible proof only if Wikileaks or a similar organization releases a new bulk of documents such as widely-known official letters of the US diplomacy.⁴⁷

Simultaneously, right after the forming of the Serbian Government, with Europe-oriented PM Aleksandar Vučić at its helm, the weekly *Pečat* highlighted the policy of openness to cooperation with Russia and China as an advantage of that Government, wishing, both implicitly and explicitly, for a turn in terms of quitting integrations with the EU and accepting closer alliance with Russia. This point was undoubtedly presented in a comment of the journalist Filip Rodić who summed up the opinion of his editorial in a text titled, “Six hours of quality program.” “When right after parliamentary elections Aleksandar Vučić suddenly appeared in Moscow at the meeting with Vladimir Putin, supporters of the Atlantic alliance among us reacted immediately saying that Vučić visited the tsar to receive directions from him. Constitution of the new Serbian Government and Vučić’s keynote address are telling us, however, that there is no such thing as being Russia’s faithful slaves. Aleksandar Vučić is apparently planning to continue the same old policy of neutrality and balancing between the East and the West and of strengthening economic

46 Dragoljub Žarković, “Udarnički: Sirotanović u političkom rudniku,” [Hard-working: Sirotanović in the political mine] *Vreme*, No. 1336, str.6

47 Nikola Vrzić, “Čuvari Vlade u letnjem periodu,” [Guardians of the Government during the summer period] *Pečat*, No. 431, p.9

stability in the country.”⁴⁸ Simultaneously, Rodić is trying to prove that Russian position with respect to compiling of the Serbian Government is not something that official Moscow should interfere with the way the West does it.

According to Rodić’s interpretation, Russia respects Serbia’s sovereignty and has not assumed a blackmailing position towards Serbia. Glorification of Russian foreign policy treatment of Serbia is visible in the following sentences, “The first one is that Moscow, unlike the West, has never interfered with interior affairs of a sovereign country. Not even when it comes to issues which are more important than ministerial positions. And this is a principle that they respect greatly. Regardless of whether the Atlantic alliance supporters wanted to admit this or not. Furthermore, none of the countries in the world, as far as we know, has a minister in charge of cooperation with another country. It is true that Serbia has a minister without portfolio in charge of EU integrations, but regardless of whether we agree with that policy or not, strategic goal is Serbia’s association with the EU rather than with the Russian Federation. Moreover, existence of such a position showed how much something like that is unnecessary after all. With a “Europe-oriented person” in the Government, Serbia’s public opinion is growingly farther away from the EU and it is less and less supportive of its country’s membership in this block, while even without a “Russia-oriented person” in the Government, Serbia is on path of significant intensification of cooperation not only with Russia, to which, as the West prefers to say, we are “emotionally attached”, but with China as well towards which we have developed mutual interests rather than such emotions. The third thing is that Russia, unlike the West, has never conditioned its assistance to a country through political engagement of its own personnel. Current relations with Turkey are an excellent example of that. No matter who is in power in Ankara, Moscow has been either operating with this country or not. And it has not depended on an individual but rather on that country’s policy towards Russia. Because of this all, it is clear that Vučić does not need a “Russia-oriented person” at the Government and he should better not have them. It would be even better if there had not been any “USA-oriented person” either, but unfortunately a person as such possibly exists.”⁴⁹

Regional relations – reality of ethnic-national stereotypes and policy of distance

Regional relations are an important topic in print media and they are well represented in weekly and daily newspapers, since print media are mainly focused on domestic policy topics and dilemmas, and only occasionally on global events. Unlike last year, when the focus was on concrete events, whose meaning and messages were interpreted in different ways, this year’s events, such as the anniversary of the events in Srebrenica and the celebration of “Operation Storm” military campaign in Croatia, were more like a topic for writing about the complex, controversial and somewhat stomach-churning topic of regional relations.

48 Filip Rodić, “Šest sati kvalitetnog programa,” [Six hours of quality program] *Pečat*, No. 432, p. 6

49 Idem, p. 7

The weeklies in Serbia view the regional relations in two mutually exclusive interpretation models. The first interpretation model is focused on the facts that describe the reality, immediate history with a sensible and evaluative attitude towards overcoming the bad past, by putting between brackets all political, social and cultural trends that keep the regional relations in a state of perpetual virtual or real conflicts. It is this discourse that results in the policy of ethnic-national distance and perpetuate state of conflict between nations.

The other interpretation model encompasses the understanding of regional relations strictly from the Serbian viewpoint. This is a reproduction of a model of viewing regional relations that bears great resemblance to the one from the war-torn nineties. Occasionally, the way some media write, especially when using incendiary phrases and national oaths and curses, bears great resemblance to war propaganda.

A collision between these two interpretation models inevitably reveals the division among the weeklies and their deep confrontation of ideologies and values. The commemoration of the anniversary of the massacre in Srebrenica was not attended by an official delegation from Serbia. The reason is understandable. Last year, prime minister Vučić survived an assassination attempt. A year later, there is still no epilogue in terms of investigation or court proceedings because of this scandalous act of physical assault on a statesperson from a neighbouring country, who was in Srebrenica on a mission of repentance and peace.

Still, Srebrenica was a topic. Some people from the public and political life in Serbia reminded us again that we should abandon interpreting the events in Srebrenica as any form of genocide of the Muslim population performed by the Serbian forces. The attitude towards the genocide should be problematized and rejected by pointing out that it serves as a kind of a religious dogma. A democratic and nationally-responsible policy, it is presumed, should be free from such dogmas.

This viewpoint is clearly and precisely defined by Ratko Dmitrović, in his column in the daily newspaper *Večernje novosti*, "Today's dogma on the territory from Lake Dojran to the Alps is called Srebrenica. An initiative is currently in progress to pass a law that would be valid in Bosnia and abroad, in the republics of former Tito's Yugoslavia for sure, which would punish every attempt to question the premise – the genocide committed in Srebrenica. Any contest of the premise would lead directly to prison. To be honest, I don't think this will pass, but... we were sure some other stupidities would not happen, yet they did. A possible reference to some verdicts of The Hague Tribunal, where the crimes in Srebrenica are treated as genocide, make neither sense, nor impact here, since it was this tribunal that set Naser Orić (not to mention others), a proven murderer from Srebrenica, free. That tribunal lost its credibility a long time ago... There was no genocide in Srebrenica. There was crime, first against the Serbs in the region of Srebrenica, and then against the Bosnians, as a form of retaliation (which isn't and can't be a valid justification), but there was no genocide. If we want to go to extremes, there are so many more elements to support a claim that there was a genocide against the Serbs. The troops led by Naser Orić literary eradicated and buried the Serbs around Srebrenica – women, children, the elderly. To be quite honest, that didn't happen to the other side."⁵⁰ A revision of the attitude towards the events in Srebrenica and accepting the logic from the nineties when it comes to treating war crimes either spurs or rationalises a

policy of distance in the region, i.e. from the Bosnians and getting further away from Euro-integrations. A controversial topic from recent past is an alibi for the return of a policy similar to those of Slobodan Milošević. So, it becomes clear that its inevitable consequence is a call for rejecting the possibility that Serbia becomes a member of EU. The explanation is clear and expected. It features national reasons and malevolence on behalf of Europe towards Serbia and the Serbs. "We might as well give up. Official Belgrade may recognise Kosovo as independent tomorrow, but they will ask for Vojvodina to become a republic next. Once we agree to that, they will require the highest level of autonomy for the Raška district, followed by the right of the Albanians from Bujanovac and Preševo to organise a referendum to join "the state of Kosovo". This will be followed by a decision to annul the special relations with the Republic of Srpska, which will get Dodik overthrown. Then, the Serbian Orthodox Church will recognise the Pope as the supreme ruler, while the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences (SANU) would have to change its name... There is no end to this. The rationale behind these actions can be looked for in the interest of superpowers, the fact that might is right, the benefits for the obedient and punishments for the disobedient... but we will always reach the same conclusion following our exchange of arguments: we just can't get a lucky break."⁵¹

Other columnists writing between July and September 2016 also point out a significant convergence between the road to EU and support to nationalism in Croatia. In order to be objective, it should be emphasised that, according to an unwritten rule, extraordinarily controversial things happened in this turbulent summer period in the west Balkans, primarily in Croatia, and that they initiated reactivation of propaganda matrices from the late eighties and early nineties, "Rehabilitation of Alojzije Stepinac, erecting a monument of Ustasha terrorist Miro Barešić, rampage at the celebration of "Operation Storm" (traditionally, but still remarkably, this gains momentum despite the passage of time and the fact that the Croats have in the meantime realised their wet dreams of becoming members of both the European Union and NATO), madness of former prime minister Zoran Milanović, who refers to the Serbs as "the wretched" and does not miss an opportunity to try to provoke us, either by bringing out requests related to Chapter 23, demanding that we change our law on war crimes and threatening to arrest some Serbs for the alleged crimes in Kosovo, to mention just a few... Let's stop here and note a fact: if we don't take into account victories of our basketball and water-polo players at the Olympics in Rio, none of the conflicts so far have been provoked, either by words or deeds, by the Serbs, but it has always been the other way round."⁵² So, the nationalistic euphoria in Croatia has provoked a similar response from the other side, according to the law of communicating vessels.

However, the critical writing about Croatia and stigmatisation of their political and cultural protagonists did not fail to make reference to EU, which has been proclaimed co-responsible for the expansion of Croatian nationalism, "What is new is the unconditional support of the European Union and western powers to the resurrected pro-Ustasha politics! For, when Zoran Milanović calls for new mass murders of the Serbs from the top of his voice, when in his discussion with the "defenders" (Milanović himself admits to knowing that the conversation was recorded!?) he announces that he'll give Serbia a blow when it's the most vulnerable, when he refers to the Serbs as "the wretched" who want to rule the Balkans, when he openly calls for Bosnia to be divided, it just speaks volumes about him and the official state policy of Croatia,

51 Ratko Dmitrović, "Nema tu kraja," [There's no end to it] *Večernje novosti*, 02. 07. 2016, p. 2

52 Nikola Vrzić, "Kontrola haosa," [Chaos control] *Pečat*, No. 435, p. 6

50 Ratko Dmitrović, "Srebrenica kao religija," [Srebrenica as religion] *Večernje novosti*, 09. 07. 2016, p. 5

which is basically pro-Ustasha. However, when Brussels, Washington and Berlin remain silent to all that, it represents a Euro-Atlantic support to the most horrifying form of Nazism, which the Ustasha movement most certainly is! Those who don't believe it should only ask themselves how not even the ambassador of EU to Serbia Michael Davenport – the one who uses every opportunity to teach us a lesson on media freedom, corruption, human rights and Kosovo, the one whose biggest problem is “Savamala” – wants to say a word about terrifying threats from the Ustashas, not only to Serbia, but to the whole region?!”⁵³

While this propaganda, which at the same time stimulates anti-European sentiments and a repulsive attitude towards Croatia, was building up, a thesis about a historical continuity of anti-Serbian policy in Croatia was developed, as well as one about a consensus among Croatian political elite. They are characterised by absolute and undivided anti-Serbian position, regardless of their ideological beliefs: “Zoran Milanović is neither crazy, nor a fool. With no constraints regarding what he can say, because he didn't stand in front of cameras, on a public place, he was just being honest. His gross rhetoric about the Serbs, Serbia, Bosnia, the Ustasha movement, geopolitics... is not original. Nothing is that scandalous statement made by this man is authentic. Milanović is a perfect representative of something called Croatian left. Croatian left (like any other) has a social and political component. The social one is a common place, but the political one is identical to the one of Croatian right, the Ustasha movement... The basic difference between Croatian left- and right-wingers is that the former knew that a Croatian state could not be established by exterminating the Serbs, but rather by using them.”⁵⁴

Even more suggestive than Dmitrović, the already quoted Dragan J. Vučićević claims, with a strongly negative tone: “Not all Croats are the Ustashas. But a large majority of them are. Each Serb who claims otherwise is either stupid or has a great interest to play dumb.”⁵⁵ The most prominent element in this short quote is not just the many times repeated thesis about the Croats as the “Ustashas”, but the moral obligation of the Serbs to unite in recognising the enemy, to be enlightened in becoming aware of the danger, rejecting any opportunity for honest and meaningful cooperation with archenemies.

Even though the dominant discourse in the media oscillated between strong outbursts of loathing and condemnation of Croatian nationalism, certain media made room for critical analysis of both the current historical moment and distant past. Some light was shed on the problematic national-political matrix that generates the state of tension and continuously reproduces conflicts by historian Vjekoslav Perica, PhD, American-Croatian historian who does not hide his pro-Yugoslav orientation, “Serbian and Croatian nationalists created new collective identities, opposing each other and opposing other neighbouring nations, where the other identity is negative, strange and distant, of course and they also created a new identity in relation to former SFRY, which has to be opposite of everything that country was. Such creations are a twenty-year-long nightmare of overall collapse and frustration in the new states.”⁵⁶ These creations can be boiled down to three notions – nation, tribe, clan. It is a policy founded on these three

social-political and cultural-historic notions that leads towards a policy that raises tensions and promotes distance: “Both Croats and Serbs have their “national” churches with the tribal names in them. The tribe is the main deity in the Balkans, worshipped by all: nation, tribe, clan – the Balkans.”⁵⁷

From the point of view of the quoted historian, the basic spiritual battle is the battle for a historical science, which will critically overcome the construction of national identity, which results in maintaining antagonism which supports ethnic-national stereotypes and creates opportunities for political conflicts of high intensity: “The battle for history today is the key to the future in this region. History is the most important for nationalism, which, according to its shortest definition, is a glorious and difficult, yet spotless past, while hell is reserved for the others. If the forces of reason manage to persuade the present day Croats, Serbs and Bosnians that their national identities are not just glorious and spotless pasts, that religions are not the most important for their national identities, that their neighbours are not their enemies and that there are better versions of being a Croat, a Serb or a Bosnian, deprived of the recently created myths, state religions and mutual hatred, then there is a future.”⁵⁸

The nationalistic hysteria in Croatia has opened up some space for renewing the discourse and rhetoric that do not only take us back to the time of wars in the nineties, but also create a diversion from current unpleasant political topics. This trend in the world of politics and media in Serbia is noticed by Dragoljub Žarković, editor of *Vreme*: “It would be a good idea for Vučić to make up his mind: either there is no country in the world that doesn't mean (or speak) well to us or only a handful of countries would not support a stable Serbia. From this manipulation with human fear of the worst, and that is a fear of war, grows political power of trading with influence and money, public ignorance when it comes to social matters. You ask me about Savamala, while Serbia is on fire. It's symptomatic that some media, which are undoubtedly under Vučić's control, keep constant “military standby,” adding fuel to the idea of certain and imminent war at our threshold, while seemingly taking great pleasure from a prospect that Serbia might be the battlefield where Putin would fight the rest of the world. The chances that the grand finale in the conflict between global superpowers would take place in our backyard are even slimmer than those that a Champions' League match would be played here, but many people profit from that kind of tension. The rattle of guns can be entertainment for the poor as well, not only a privilege of great powers. This is an opportunity for them to prove that “all Croats are the same” for the purpose of domestic politics, and that they were absolutely right back in the nineties. Things will keep developing in this direction – just like their partners in Zagreb, they too, from their own experience, learnt long time ago that raising national tensions is the best way to compensate for one's own incompetence, to divert the attention of citizens from real problems and to further secure their position in power.”⁵⁹

A similar attitude when it comes to regional issues and their reflexion on domestic state of affairs in countries established after the disintegration of former Yugoslavia was expressed by a journalist

53 Dragan J. Vučićević, “Ustaše, Evropa i NATO protiv Srba,” [Ustasha, Europe and NATO against the Serbs] *Informer*, 27. 08. 2016, p. 5

54 Ratko Dmitrović, “Milanoviću, hvala!” [Milanović, thank you] *Večernje novosti*, 27. 08. 2016, p. 2

55 Dragan Vučićević, “Nisu svi Hrvati ustaše, ali jesu svi Hrvati ustaše,” [Not all Croats are Ustasha, but all Croats are Ustasha] *Informer*, 06. 08. 2016, p. 5

56 Vjekoslav Perica, “Narod, pleme, klan-Balkan,” [People, tribe, clan - Balkans] interview with Đorđe Matić, *Vreme*, No. 1335, p. 4

57 Idem, p. 6

58 Idem, p. 6

59 Dragoljub Žarković, “Šaketanje jada – Greše oni koji misle da je zaoštravanje odnosa posledica izborne pragmatičnosti. Pre će biti da sukobi izviru iz kapilarne strukture tih društava formirane na dugoj tradiciji uzajamne nepodnošljivosti,” [Duel of the pain – Those who think that the heating up of relations is a consequence of pragmatism for the elections are wrong. It is more likely that conflicts are coming from the capillary structure of these societies formed on long tradition of mutual intolerance], *Vreme*, No. 1339, p. 4

from *NIN* weekly, Zoran Preradović: “A quarter of a century after the bloody conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia and many, as it turns out, forced statements about good relations with neighbours, fake smiles and mild handshakes, one-sided apologetic statements and selective justice applied by the Hague Tribunal, things today look like a mere repetition of history. A common trait of all Balkan elites, and they are the only ones who have no obstacles in their cooperation, is that use the same level of zeal to defend their state’s interests and to empty their state’s resources. We are talking about a carefully raised breed, hands deep in national justice and good life. On the other hand, there are people who are trying to figure out their own misery, not realising that a bit more bread would also mean a bit more freedom. And then, most probably, we wouldn’t be looking at all those who used the chaos caused by usurping common wealth to claim the rights on history.”⁶⁰

A special kind of political-media turmoil was caused by the referendum held in the Republic of Srpska on 25th September 2016, on commemorating the Day of the Republic of Srpska. The Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina had previously contested the legality of the Day of RS and asked for it to be abolished. The Bosnian side supported the court’s decision, along with two influential countries in international politics – the United States of America and Great Britain. Despite the united stand among the authorities and the opposition regarding the referendum, 56 percent of the citizens voted and they showed almost unanimous support to celebrating the Day of the Republic of Srpska.

The media discourse contained two different interpretations of this event, which were mutually exclusive, but which also pointed at various moments that define the political flow of events leading to and after the referendum on the Day of the Statehood of the Republic of Srpska, ninth of January.

When asked why the Republic of Srpska was organising a referendum with such a predictable outcome, president of RS Milorad Dodik, in his interview for *NIN* weekly from Belgrade, replied, “Why the referendum? This is a matter of presentation of will that has to be known, not presumed.”⁶¹

At the same time, facing a possibility that the body in charge of the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement might dispute the organisation of the referendum, Dodik replied in the familiar tone of degrading international institutions that have practical impact on the political decisions of the people in RS and Bosnia and Herzegovina, “That PIC, as an informal authority which doesn’t exist in the Dayton Agreement, is used as a political cover for the torture of the High Representative, that’s what we’ve been saying for ten years. For ten years we’ve had a problem with an international factor that wishes to impose laws, replace officials... Now they say they are protecting the Dayton Agreement! What are they protecting?! They’ve taken away financial sovereignty from the Republic of Srpska, they’ve taken away our army, they’ve established unconstitutional and not-envisioned-by-the-Dayton-Agreement court and prosecutor’s office! None of it is mentioned in the Dayton Agreement! There is a moment when you just can’t take it anymore! Of course I’m aware that the Constitutional Court was established pursuant to the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, they even included a provision that there is a criminal liability for all those who don’t respect their decisions, which is unprecedented! From the very beginning, they

60 Zoran Preradović, “Balkanska pravila,” [Balkan rules] *NIN*, No. 3425, p. 15

61 Milorad Dodik, “Hapse već deset godina, a ja ko ptica slobodan,” [They have been arresting people for ten years, but I am as free as a bird] interview with Olja Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3428, p. 9

have been creating a situation where there’s a threat of a prison sentence if you don’t obey their decisions, even if they are unjust and unconstitutional.”⁶²

The success of the referendum led to various comments and geo-strategic speculations, hoping for a change in the configuration of power, both regionally and globally. Serbia out of reach of influence from the West, in conflict with it, relying on Russia, redefining the balance of power in the world, persisting in confrontation with the world, all the moments that are the core of the interpretation model that favours Milorad Dodik’s national orientation and a U-turn in Serbian politics, i.e. rejection of European integrations as a strategic aim of the state, “The referendum in the Republic of Srpska was a victory over fear, overcoming a sense of helplessness and inferiority, and a demonstration that a tyrannical system is not omnipotent, that it has its weak points that can be attacked, that you can beat it... By taking over and using, mostly intuitively and unwarily, but with the same political effect, the tactics of their enemy, the people of the Republic of Srpska turned the subversive weapons of their enemies against them and gave them a severe blow.”⁶³

The introduction of Russian influence as the key for the dynamics and outcomes of political and geo-strategic decisions in the Balkans is shown in an interview given by Ognjen Pantović, MP from the Serbian Progressive Party, which explicitly showed the specific nature of the relations between Russia and the Republic of Srpska, “This was a majestic demonstration of the maturity of the majority Serbian people and an emphasis of their determination to defend the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Srpska. The Serbian people used the referendum to defend the sovereignty, dignity and national unity of the Republic of Srpska in the most democratic way. Powerful Russia again confirmed it was the greatest friend and ally of the Serbian people by supporting the referendum.”⁶⁴

The political-media “heroisation” of Milorad Dodik was of great proportions. For example, journalist from *Pečat*, Nikola Vrzić, compares Milorad Dodik with none other than a regional version of Nelson Mandela, “No matter how hard you try and use the power of imagination, it’s difficult to imagine Milorad Dodik, president of the Republic of Srpska, as Serbian Nelson Mandela, but it now seems that Dodik is now more likely to become Mandela thanks to the Bosnian member of the Presidency of the Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bakir Izetbegović, than to meet the fate that Alija Izetbegović’s son publicly wished for him, which is the fate of Muammar el Gaddafi, Saddam Hussein and Slobodan Milošević.”⁶⁵

This “place of honour” was deserved by Milorad Dodik because of his standing up to America, “This time, the leader of the Republic of Srpska has gone too far to be able to retreat, without such a retreat being interpreted as a serious defeat of himself and the Republic of Srpska. On the other hand, the victory is closer than it has been for a long time. And it will mark the beginning of a new era in the Balkans, the beginning of the end of American almightiness.”⁶⁶

62 Idem, p. 9

63 Stefan Karganović, “Demontaža blefa,” [Dismantling of the bluff] *Pečat*, No. 439, p. 12

64 Ognjen Pantović, “Zajednička pobjeda srpskog naroda i Rusije,” [Joint victory of the Serbian people and Russia] interview with Zorana Cvetanović, *Pečat*, No. 439, p. 14

65 Nikola Vrzić, “Dani Republike,” [Days of the Republic] *Pečat*, No. 439, p. 9

66 Nikola Vrzić, “Bitka za Republiku Srpsku,” [Battle for Republic Srpska] *Pečat*, No. 433

This columnist believes that the fact that western countries can't accept the referendum is a consequence of several interconnected moments: The Serbian people make a decision about their own destiny, the referendum is a precedent that might occur again. At the same time, there is indirect, yet unquestionable Russian support and support from the Republic of Serbia, while the power and, to some extent, the monolithic nature of western political protagonists diminishes. Such political constellation is what anti-European and pro-Russian newspapers wish for, and one of them is undoubtedly *Pečat* weekly, which is obvious in the following quotes: "It was important for them to prevent the referendum in RS, because the referendum was setting a dangerous precedent that the fate of the Serbs in RS was decided by the Serbs from RS, and not Sarajevo, Washington and, to much lesser extent, Brussels... It also turned out that the inner unity in the Republic of Srpska, the unity between the authorities and the opposition, no matter how insincere and caused by how the events unfolded, has strengthened the position of Srpska so much, that it made it capable of doing everything that its survival instinct told it to do, regardless of the efforts of Sarajevo and Washington to deprive it of this ability. It also turned out that Serbia was strong enough to resist the pressure from the west to put additional pressure on Srpska, which is not a bad starting position for even more substantial support to this Serbian state on the other side of the Drina river in the forthcoming period. Last but not least, the open support of Russia to the Republic of Srpska, which is encouraging not only because it helped make the referendum possible, nor because it definitely confirmed that we can count on Russian support, but also, in combination with a noticeable influence of our ally on the electoral campaign in Montenegro, because it shows that Russia is coming back to the Balkans with great ambitions. It is up to us to use the opportunity we have been waiting for 25 years."⁶⁷

Unlike the nationalistic euphoria and the discourse of expectation of the end of American-European almightiness in the region, other commentators showed another side of the politics in RS and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The result of the referendum is a proof of a decade-long stumbling of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a threat to its survival, but also a clear warning to the political elite in RS, who enjoy support, but to a questionable degree.

This last issue is tackled by analyst from RS, Tanja Topić: "Milorad Dodik celebrates having written yet another page of the "glorious history" of the Republic of Srpska. Threats are coming from Sarajevo that charges will be pressed because of the "unconstitutional" organisation of referendum. The West is considering introducing sanctions against RS and its president, who in turn announces "new referendums", at the same time preparing a retreat and hoping that the referendum problems will soon be forgotten. In the meantime, the citizens completely unexpectedly sent a message to both the authorities and the opposition that they were tired of them all and that the national glue was less likely to stick to them."⁶⁸

A bad scenario for Bosnia and Herzegovina and evidence that this country is slowly and irreversibly disappearing from the political-historical maps are dealt with by Branislav Božić in *NIN*, saying that, "The country as it is will, most likely, cause more trouble for the region than the region's ability to influence this country. Here, the processes of national bickering are taking dramatic proportions. Two decades later, Bosnia and Herzegovina is economically at the bottom of the European list, democracy has been

⁶⁷ Isto, str. 9-10

⁶⁸ Tanja Topić, "Referendumske igrarije," [Referendum song and dance] *Vreme*, No. 1343



Pečat, 26th August 2016

reduced to international bickering, while international relations are almost as cold as they were before the war. That is why Bosnia and Herzegovina probably remains the most neuralgic place in this part of Europe and the neighbours, willing or not, are yet to suffer with this spinning wheel of real and deliberately created troubles.”⁶⁹

An even more radical attitude towards the referendum in the Republic of Srpska was expressed by Miodrag Živanović, who pointed out its meaninglessness that stems from the tensions between Dodik and Izetbegović, “This referendum is meaningless; Mr. Izetbegović is among rare state leaders who is making moves in order to destabilise his own country and burden it with any kind of internal tensions. Also, calling a referendum by the authorities of the Republic of Srpska to ask the people whether they are for and against a public holiday is the lowest form of cynicism.”⁷⁰

The case of the referendum in RS demonstrated the variety of approaches and viewpoints related to an event which is important from the point of view of regional politics – the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia’s relation with it. It is interesting to notice, though a bit paradoxical, that the media critical of Aleksandra Vučić’s government are far less nationally-charged, but are more realistic and dedicated to the idea of good neighbourly relations, which is also the proclaimed policy of the present government. However, they do not miss an opportunity to interpret some intensive propaganda attitudes of certain ministers in the spirit of critique which problematizes and disputes the consistency in the efforts of prime minister Vučić to realise the European *dictum* on the need for good neighbourly cooperation. On the other hand, the print media that show some degree of both support and understanding for the government in terms of domestic policy are continuously and very intensively revitalising the evaluation matrices and conclusions that were typical of Serbia in the early nineties. Restoration of this kind of discourse is not a small issue when pro-European policy is implemented, although an excuse is found in the irresponsible behaviour of the political elites in Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo, as well as in the pressure from the western powers on Serbia to accept some extremely unfavourable solutions in the efforts to find the final solution of the open ethnic-national political disputes. Furthermore, there are explanations, which are not completely inaccurate, that it was a tactical media coverage of the patriotic electorate of SPP, who are used to the spirit and the letter of war propaganda. All in all, even though in some aspects it can be justified, or even necessary, such rhetoric eventually doesn’t create an opportunity to overcome the bad past of Serbia and the region. The bad past from the nineties and its evil spirits in the second decade of this century loom like a political-media, as well as a wide social sword of Damocles over the region which is running late with modernisation and acceptance of progressive values of the civilised world.

69 Branislav Božić, “Hladni rat usijanih glava” [Cold war of hotheads], *NIN*, No. 3424, p. 21-22

70 Miodrag Živanović, “Saga o referendumima,” [Saga of the referendum] *Novi magazin*, No. 282

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

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

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