

# MEDIA PREFERENCES AND PERCEPTIONS

*A Survey Among Students, Ethnic Minorities  
and Politicians in Slovenia*



BRANKICA PETKOVIĆ

MARKO PRPIČ

NEVA NAHTIGAL

SANDRA B. HRVATIN

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PEACE INSTITUTE  
METELKOVA 6  
SI-1000 LJUBLJANA  
E: INFO@MIROVNI-INSTITUT.SI  
<HTTP://WWW.MIROVNI-INSTITUT.SI>

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*authors:* BRANKICA PETKOVIĆ, MARKO PRPIČ, NEVA NAHTIGAL,  
SANDRA B. HRVATIN

*translation:* OLGA VUKOVIĆ, DUŠAN REBOLJ

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BRANKICA PETKOVIĆ, *Peace Institute, Ljubljana*  
e: [brankica.petkovic@mirovni-institut.si](mailto:brankica.petkovic@mirovni-institut.si)

MARKO PRPIČ  
e: [marko@prpic.net](mailto:marko@prpic.net)

NEVA NAHTIGAL  
e: [neva.nahtigal@gmail.com](mailto:neva.nahtigal@gmail.com)

SANDRA B. HRVATIN, *Faculty of Humanities, Koper*  
e: [sandra.hrvatini@guest.arnes.si](mailto:sandra.hrvatini@guest.arnes.si)



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## MEDIA AUDIENCE AND ITS DEMOCRATIC POTENTIAL

Practically everyone involved in the discussion of freedom, quality and diversity of the media in Slovenia – be it media professionals, managers and owners, or politicians, academics and civil society organizations – refers in some way to the media audience. Yet, there is very little systematic insight into how citizens view, understand and value media, and equally little effort to systematically increase the ability of citizens to monitor media in a critical manner, and to »use« media in a way that pursues active citizenship.

One of the instances of systematic research would be the Politbarometer, a longitudinal study carried out periodically since 1995 by the Public Opinion and Mass Communication Research Centre at the Faculty of Social Sciences. Among other questions, the study enquires as to the trust placed in individual institutions in Slovenia, including the media.<sup>1</sup> The research, based on a representative sample of adult residents of Slovenia, reveals the level of trust enjoyed by the media, and the fluctuation thereof, over an extended period of time.<sup>2</sup> Incidentally, the same public opinion study monitors the extent to which residents of Slovenia have been satisfied with democracy since 1995.

The media industry, for its part, measures the preference of media outlets and specific media content among audiences, but these studies are primarily carried out for market purposes. They are meant to ascertain the size of the audience for an individual media outlet or some particular media content, in order to better execute commercial and business functions, and to increase advertising revenue. The most vivid interpretation of the market-oriented media audience measurements says that media count citizens, i.e. their readers, viewers and listeners, to sell them to advertisers. These studies classify audiences according to socio-demographic data, and – in the context of striving for commercial success – consider as “most valuable” to the media those audience segments, whose socio-demographic profiles allow for the largest amounts of spending, or the ability to spend, on various products and services. It is these audiences that advertisers (and, consequently, the media) normally prefer.

<sup>1</sup> Read more on this research at <http://www.cjm.si>.

<sup>2</sup> For example, the Politbarometer reveals that in January 2004, residents of Slovenia ranked the media fifth among institutions they trusted the most. By December 2008, the media had dropped to the tenth position.

### CONSUMERS OR CITIZENS

However, media audience members should not merely be viewed as consumers – they should also be regarded as citizens, as agents in a democratic society. Critical examinations of the market-oriented view of media audiences have contributed to a re-conceptualization of the notion of media audience. Viewed through the lens of democratic participation, rather than merely that of consumerism, media audience is found to have three kinds of interests:

1. an interest in the supply of media publications and content that serve individual interests and preferences; in this context, media audience members may be viewed as customers in a “business” relationship, i.e. as consumers;
2. an interest of audience members as holders of certain rights, as individuals who need their rights protected, and require the ability to personally protect these rights;
3. an interest of audience members as citizens, as agents in a democratic society who need the media to benefit society as a whole (Hasebrink, Herzog & Eilders, 2007: 77–78).

### FREE CHOICE AND STRUCTURALLY DETERMINED SUPPLY

Not only has the development of information technologies demanded a redefinition of the notion of media audience; it has given rise to theses implying that as it contributes to a greater supply of media publications and content, it grants audience members a wider range of choice and autonomy. However, critics of these interpretations – working from traditions of critical political economy – stress that it is always the structurally determined conditions of the media market that dictate what media content and which media outlets are offered to the audience. The conditions in question are the processes of selection of media supply, structurally determined, played out well in advance and far beyond the media audience’s scope of influence. It could therefore be inferred that processes, presented as a contribution to freedom of choice and to individual autonomy in the selection and use of media, not only do not increase the level of the citizens’ freedom, but contribute to “unfreedom” and further the processes, in which politically aware citizens are transformed into consumers of goods (Bauman 1999: 73–78 in: Karppiinen 2007:17).

In the discussions and research conducted under the aegis of the Media Watch program, as well as in the present Media Watch book series, we address the following key questions. Does the relationship between media and citizens foster processes that increase the ability of, and possibilities for, citizens to enter into discussions, confront each other with opinions and ideas, and to make informed decisions, relevant to their lives and to sustained development? As information technologies develop and the functioning of media changes, are structural conditions created at the level of political and media systems, as well as within media companies, that enable citizens, i.e. media audience members, to have real influence over important decisions? Also, certain audience segments are systemically underprivileged in respect of their access to media. Is this inequality maintained and even deepened, adding new dimensions to social exclusion? (Dahlgren, 2008: 160) Media convergence really is opening new possibilities to media audiences, to citizens; but only to those with access and the ability to take advantage of these possibilities (Study on the Current Trends and Approaches to Media Literacy in Europe, 2006: 6).

Is the emergence of the so-called citizen journalism, made possible by digital technology, actually increasing the power and influence of citizens in relation to media and other, particularly political, power centres? The question is posed by sceptics, whether citizen journalism is strengthening democracy at all. It could be weakening it, they claim, implying that the flourishing of citizen journalism, along with the profiling and segmenting of media audiences, is making citizens less interested in political news and social affairs in general (Graber, McQuail, Norris, 2008: 7–8).

#### MEDIA LITERACY AND EXCUSES MADE TO AVOID REGULATION

In an environment of wide-spread disagreement among political players, as well as among media practice and policy analysts, regarding what systemic measures should be taken to protect the rights and interests of citizens as media audience members, some politicians and experts have placed their faith in mechanisms and measures aimed at increasing the citizens' media literacy. Presumably, the efforts made by the European Commission were conceived

with this in mind.<sup>3</sup> One does get the impression, however, that the purpose of all this is to avoid a new regulation of media, which would undertake systemic measures to protect the democratic potential and role of media, and to pass the responsibility of realizing this democratic potential on to the citizens under the banner of “free choice”. All modern media and education policies should aim at and include measures for implementation of critical media literacy and critical media pedagogy, but they should not serve as excuses for media policy and industry players’ inaction at the level of structural issues, e.g. the issues of regulation of media ownership and the mechanisms of media accountability and responsiveness.

In 2006, the Peace Institute, supported by the European Commission, developed the Media for Citizens project, conducted studies of media ownership, of the content of prime time television news programs, and of the patterns of media coverage of minorities in Slovenia. Additionally, we published a manual and organized a workshop on active citizenship in the media field. In 2008, the European Commission granted us their support once more, this time for a project titled Responsibility and Responsiveness of the Media.

#### RESPONSIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS OF THE MEDIA

The project Responsibility and Responsiveness of the Media involves three sets of activities. First, a study into how three different social groups in Slovenia receive and perceive media. The first group we have studied is determined by ethnic affiliation. It includes members of recognised, as well as unrecognised ethnic minorities in Slovenia. Members of the second group are linked by age – they are students studying at universities in Slovenia. The third group consists of professional politicians – Members of the Parliament in Slovenia.

The project Responsibility and Responsiveness of the Media also includes an initiative for three general daily newspapers in Slovenia to set up internal mechanisms for

<sup>3</sup> On December 20, 2008, the European Commission issued a Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, titled “A European approach to media literacy in the digital environment”. Before that, it had issued a study on “Current trends and approaches to media literacy in Europe”. More information on this is available on the European Commission’s website at [http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media\\_literacy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media_literacy/index_en.htm).

handling their readers' complaints and opinions, and for creating reports on how newspaper publishers respond to these complaints and suggestions. Publishers should also report on how they fulfil their social responsibilities and pursue ethical standards. We have worked in cooperation with the British newspaper *Guardian* to encourage such developments in Slovenia.

The third set of activities carried out under the project is aimed at establishing either an informal or formal association of those Slovenian citizens who are interested in greater accountability and responsiveness of media and politics to citizens' initiatives, opinions and interests, particularly in the fields of radio, television and other audiovisual media services. Our efforts to promote self-organization of citizens follow the example of the Voice of the Listener and Viewer organizations active in several European countries. In pursuit of these goals, our partner has been the European Alliance of Listeners' and Viewers' Associations.

The research presented in this book is rooted in the need for greater inclusion of the citizens' perspective in the discussion of media freedom, quality and pluralism in Slovenia; it aims to discover where citizens acquire information on social and political developments, how they value media as sources of information, how they utilize new technologies to acquire information, how they understand certain social phenomena brought to the fore by the political and media apparatus (such as the phenomenon of intercultural dialogue, given prominence by the dedication of a European Year to it in 2008), and to what extent they assume the role of active citizens, as opposed to passive media audience members.

Our research team assembled a structured questionnaire, combining closed and open questions, and partly modified to suit the individual target groups. We took the route of self-polling – minority members and MP's received their questionnaires by mail, while the questionnaires targeted at first-year Slovenian university students were distributed at selected faculties. The student target group yielded the largest polling sample (1,281), ethnic minority members responded in smaller numbers (216), and the parliament members' response was poorest (34). We can consider the sample of university students a representative one, but for two others the sample of respondents is not representative. Still the findings do offer grounds for discussion and examination of the research topic. In addition to the



questionnaire, we conducted a number of interviews with ethnic minority members.

Marko Prpič conducted the research among students, Neva Nahtigal researched the ethnic minority members, while Sandra B. Hrvatin studied the responses of parliament members. Mitja Čepič carried out the statistical analysis of the gathered data.

Let us merely point out a few research findings. The polled MPs see the daily newspaper *Delo* as the most important printed source of information on political developments, while students award this title to *Žurnal24*. POP TV's *24ur* is the television news program watched most frequently by students and by the polled minority members, while MPs turn most frequently to the program *Odmevi on tv Slovenija*. All students use the Internet, only one of the polled MPs does not, and neither do a quarter of the polled minority members. The concept of citizen journalism is associated most frequently with blogs. How much attention do our target groups pay to blogs? The majority of MPs do not follow blogs, the same is true of most students, while blogs are read by less than 3% of the polled minority members.

A little over half of the students create or edit web content, of the polled MPs a third are active online, and the share of the polled ethnic minority members who actively create or edit web content is even smaller.

Further, we should mention that most members of all three target groups estimate the media coverage of political events in Slovenia to be biased or partial. As many as 60% of students believe this, in addition to about an equal proportion of the polled ethnic minority members, while the percentage is even higher among the polled MPs – approximately 85% feel this way.

Most of the MPs polled have complained about something in the media that they found unacceptable, of ethnic minority members more than a third responded in this way to the functioning of media, while only a good tenth of the students have.

Of the different statements concerning media and their significance in society, most students agreed with the statement that media promote consumerism. Most parliament members and ethnic minority members feel that media are a means of furthering political interests, but even with these two target groups the statement that media promote consumerism came in a close second among the statements most agreed with.

This book presents the results with emphases selected by the three researchers who conducted the individual sections of research. We will post a comprehensive overview of the research data on the Peace Institute website at [www.mirovni-institut.si](http://www.mirovni-institut.si).

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# STUDENTS AND THE MEDIA

MARKO PRPIČ

## INTRODUCTION

We live in a world where many types of mass media – both print and broadcast – strive to attract our attention. The consumption of daily and weekly newspapers, radio and television programs, particularly news programs, and the use of contemporary sources of information (the web, teletext, GSM services) are very important for every democratic society, since the media contribute crucially to our perception of the world. Furthermore, they enable citizens to participate in democratic life and culture and to make informed decisions about matters that influence their own lives and those of their fellow citizens.

If we add to domestic information sources the foreign ones, both print sources and those transmitted via satellite, cable and telephone, we can conclude that the media have occupied our everyday lives in an unprecedented manner: television, radio, newspapers and the web are consuming an increasing amount of our time and attention.<sup>1</sup> The omnipresent media change our habits and the ways in which we consume media content. Television viewers' habits began to change in the 1970s, with the increase in European and American television stations' broadcast time and the extension of television programs into morning hours until then reserved for radio. This not only changed viewers' habits but also lengthened the time spent in front of TV screens. The establishment of television as the dominant media and the introduction of special television programs targeted at narrow groups eventually asserted television's superiority over the press. Accordingly, the prime time news program has become an important focus in the everyday life of the one-fourth of the Slovenian population who every evening watch the overview of daily events (prime time evening news edition).

While this trend marked the past two decades both in Slovenia and elsewhere, at the beginning of the new millennium we can conclude that the second big wave of change has come with the web. It takes the public away from the "traditional" media, thanks to a greater range of information it offers, including audio and video content and radio and television programs broadcast on the Internet. Research data increasingly show that the public's demand for information content has been decreasing, which is also

<sup>1</sup> David Croteau in William Hoynes: *The Business of Media: Corporate Media and the Public Interest*, Pine Forge Press/Sage, Thousand Oaks, 2006, 191.

reflected in lower ratings for television news programs and lower circulation figures for daily newspapers. While during the 1990s, this phenomenon was fully attributed to the popularity of the web, today it is becoming increasingly obvious that it is a consequence of deeper shifts within society and that young people in particular, meaning those who show least interest in traditional news media, use the web for other purposes, with political news not necessarily being their prime interest.

The increase in the number of media brings into focus the question of media literacy, which given the active use of the media, including interactive media (interactive television, palmtop computers and mobile phones) and interactive browsers, also presupposes a critical approach to the media as well as the ability to appraise information (its accuracy, verifiability and quality), understand the media economy and, consequently, the ability to understand the influence of media ownership on media pluralism and to critically assess market communications.<sup>2</sup>

Since no regular research on media consumption and media effects has been conducted in Slovenia so far, we had to consult foreign literature, primarily literature from the US, where more research has been done on the use of new technologies and their influence on traditional media. The findings of a 2006 research study commissioned by the American Association of Radio and Television News Program Directors show that people still prefer television programs over other types of media. As many as 65.5% of respondents stated that they obtain most of their information from local television stations, which is twice the percentage of people who seek information in the newspapers (28.4%), and six times the percentage of those who seek information on the web (11.2%). The respondents ranked the web behind the news programs of national television networks (*ABC*, *CBS*, *NBC*), whose ranking was the same as that of newspapers (28.3%), and behind news programs on local radio stations (14.7%), all of which points to the passivity of information seekers.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> A European approach to media literacy in the digital environment, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, p. 4. The document defines media literacy as "the ability to access the media, to understand and to critically evaluate different aspects of the media and media contents and to create communications in a variety of contexts". Ibid., pp. 3. [http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media\\_literacy/docs/com/en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media_literacy/docs/com/en.pdf), accessed on January 31, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> The survey *The Future of News* was commissioned by the Radio–Television News Directors Association & Foundation in 2006. See: <http://www.rtnda.org/resources/>



The American professor and researcher, David T. Z. Mindich, delved into the issue of students' attitude towards daily events after noting the lack of interest on the part of students in daily events at home or abroad. His findings show that only 20% of young Americans read newspapers on a daily basis, compared to 70% of the older population. Since the reading habit is formed either when one is in his/her twenties or never, it is not possible to expect that today's students will change their reading habits in a decade or so, unless they find themselves in an environment where news consumption is of special significance. This information is particularly worrying because young people who do not read newspapers also do not watch television news and do not use news sources on the web.

Data on the average age of television program viewers, and particularly news programs viewers, shows that their average age has been increasing. CNN, the first 24-hour news channel, which will soon celebrate its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, changed its programming concept in the late 1990s in an attempt to attract younger viewers. Its average viewer belongs to the 59–64 year group. While in the early 1990s the average viewer of the large American television networks, ABC, CBS and NBC, was slightly older than 50, now he/she is 60. In other words, an average viewer of television programs is getting older along with television.<sup>4</sup> Robert D. Putnam draws attention to the fact that Americans spend increasing amounts of time in front of television screens. During the early 1950s, an average American family watched television slightly more than 4 and a half hours a day. This figure increased over time, and in 1998 it exceeded 7 hours a day.<sup>5</sup> In Great Britain, and in the majority of European countries, the situation is still slightly different: adults spend 21.6 hours a week watching television. Of this number, 19.4 hours are spent watching programs in real time (when they are broadcast), which translates into 3 hours and 4 minutes a day,

future/index.shtml, Section 1, p. 3. This site was the first where I came across the categorization of a blog as a source of information. Blogs are read on a daily basis by 3.1% of respondents, while 7.1% of them read blogs several times a week. Only 5% of respondents read news on palmtops or mobile phones, and only 10% stated that they would be interested in this method of news consumption.

- 4 David T. Z. Mindich: *Tuned Out: Why Americans Under 40 Don't Follow the News*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2005, pages 2 and 3. The author also writes that the average age of a *New York Times*' reader is 42. See page 76. Mindich frequently refers to the findings of Robert D. Putnam, who thoroughly analyzed various minority groups within American society and published them in the book entitled *Bowling Alone*, Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, New York, 2000. Chapter 13 of this book is entirely dedicated to technology and the mass media. See pp. 216–246.
- 5 Putnam: *Bowling Alone*, pp. 221–222.

and 2.2 hours are spent watching recorded programs later. To this number should be added 3.2 hours spent watching movies on DVD. Around 15% of viewers spend 35 hours a week in front of television screens, which is 5 hours a day. This group comprises primarily older citizens and disabled people, who spend most of their leisure time at home. Although radio requires less attention and can be listened to while doing other things, the average time spent listening to the radio is 15.2 hours a week (8.6 hours at home and 6.6 hours outside home), which adds up to 2 hours and 12 minutes a day.<sup>6</sup>

What is the average viewing time in Slovenia? According to AGB Nielsen, Media Research, Ljubljana, the average viewing time per day in March 2008 was 3 hours and 20 minutes. The viewers of news programs on various television channels belong to the following age groups: viewers of *24ur* news program – 50–54 years, viewers of *24ur zvečer* – 45–49 years, viewers of *Dnevnik* – 55–59 years, viewers of *Odmevi* – 50–54 years, and viewers of *Svet* – 50–54 years.<sup>7</sup>

Thanks to the Internet, an individual can now pursue a broader range of interests, but at the same time, the number of people who do want to obtain a broader perspective and a general overview has decreased. In addition, research shows that young people – with whom the Internet platform has been commonly identified – use the Internet for a variety of purposes but not to read news. A survey about the geographical literacy of young Americans conducted by Gfk Roper in 2006 for the *National Geographic*<sup>8</sup> showed that young people use the Internet as a supplement to traditional media rather than as a replacement for these. As many as 80% of respondents use the Internet, which is a figure much higher than that for 2004, when it was only

6 A finding of the survey entitled Media Literacy Audit: Report on adult media literacy, conducted by the Office of Communications (Ofcom), an independent body responsible for the regulation and competitiveness of the communications industry in Great Britain. Media Literacy Audit: Report on adult media literacy, p. 17 and 33. Published on March 2, 2006, available at [http://www.ofcom.org.uk/advice/media\\_literacy/medlitpub/medlitpubrssi/medialit\\_audit/medialit\\_audit.pdf](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/advice/media_literacy/medlitpub/medlitpubrssi/medialit_audit/medialit_audit.pdf), accessed on December 1, 2008.

7 This figure includes only viewers older than 4. If we take into account only those who in March 2008 watched television at least one minute a day and were older than 4, the average viewing time is much higher and amounts to 4 hours and 46 minutes a day. I want to express my thanks to AGB Nielsen Media Research, Ljubljana for their forwarding of data, and to POP TV, Kanal A and RTV Slovenija for their understanding and permission to publish these data.

8 The survey covered 510 Americans 18 to 24 years old. National Geographic-Roper Public Affairs 2006 Geographic Literacy Study, p. 5 available at <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/roper2006/pdf/FINALReport2006GeogLitsurvey.pdf>, accessed on December 6, 2008.

60%.<sup>9</sup> However, during the same period, the proportion of those who used the Internet to search for news rose from a meager 11% to 27%. This data confirms Mindich's conclusion that young people do not use the Internet primarily to read daily news.

In addition, if we choose our area of interest by ourselves, we reduce the possibility of encountering other, unexpected concepts and aspects of otherness, which are the inevitable components of democracy. To live in a democracy means to accept differences. Or, as Cass Sunstein pointed out, to restrict oneself to opinions and topics that we have chosen ourselves is to listen to the loud echo of our own voice. Confronting other views is the best guard against "*fragmentation and extremism, which are predictable outcomes of any situation in which the like-minded people speak only with themselves*", fencing themselves off from other opinions and views. What is involved is the avoidance of the undesired topics and different views usually offered by general information providers such as daily newspapers and broadcast media, which expose us to information we did not particularly seek but which, once available, may attract our attention. Cass Sunstein thinks that this is one of the basic conditions for the functioning of a democratic society.<sup>10</sup>

The decline of interest in news – Mindich has established that in the US this process is four decades old – has created at least two generations of young adults who have only a superficial knowledge about society and the world in which they live, which is the kind of knowledge they need to make an "informed decision in a voting booth".<sup>11</sup> For Mindich, this is a social problem, and he proposes that it should be tackled through "journalism, education, politics, and government".<sup>12</sup>

9 The survey entitled National Geographic-Roper 2002 Global Geographic Literacy Survey included 3,250 young people in the US, Canada, Mexico, France, Germany, Italy, Great Britain, Japan and Sweden. Respondents in the age group 18–24 most frequently consume television news (82%), 38% of respondents consume newspaper news, 13% of respondents listen to radio news, while 11% of respondents use information sources on the Internet, although it is regularly used by as many as 60% of respondents. This means that all traditional media scored better as information providers than the world wide web. p. 9, <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geosurvey/download/RoperSurvey.pdf>, accessed on December 1, 2008.

10 Cass Sunstein: Republic.com, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2001, pp. 8–9, 35 and 49.

11 David T. Z. Mindich: Tuned Out, p. ix.

12 This is Mindich's comment on the special report of the press industry dealing with the issue of confronting the puzzle posed by young newspaper readers. It was published by the International Newspaper Marketing Association in Dallas in 2002. David T. Z. Mindich: Tuned Out, note 12, p. 144.

The survey on the use of the media among the first-year students at Slovenian universities should reveal which media and content these students seek, which media content they most regularly consume and which they find the most missing in the media. Furthermore, it should provide an insight into their opinions on media independence and their understanding of the media's role in contemporary society.

ON THE SURVEY<sup>13</sup>

The survey questionnaire<sup>14</sup> is to a large extent a result of the joint work of the authors who took part in this research. Several basic questions about media usage were modeled on those used in a similar survey that the author developed for his doctoral dissertation (not yet published).<sup>15</sup> On obtaining approval from individual faculties, we handed these questionnaires to lecturers<sup>16</sup> teaching basic subjects to first-year students. With their help, we gathered 1,281 completed questionnaires, meaning that 7.94% of students who enrolled at Slovenian universities in the academic year 2008/2009 answered our questions.

TABLE 1: THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 2008/2009 AND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THE QUESTIONNAIRE (BY UNIVERSITIES)<sup>17</sup>

UNIVERSITY	ENROLLED	PARTICIPATING
University of Ljubljana	10,317	935
University of Maribor	4,631	235
University of Primorska	1,171	112

The survey was conducted in October and November 2008. Only first-year students were asked to complete the questionnaire, and participation was voluntary. Every questionnaire included a short introductory text explaining the use of the survey findings. Of the 1,281 students participating in the survey, 935 (or 72.9%) are enrolled at the University of Ljubljana, 235 (or 18.3%) at the University of Maribor, and 112 (or 8.7%) at the University of Primorska

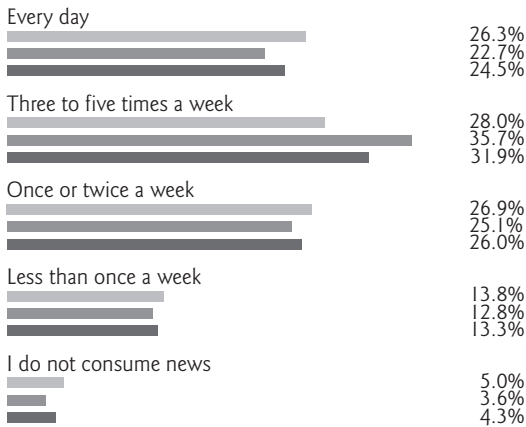
- 13 I would like to express my gratitude to Mitja Čepič for his help in processing data and preparing the charts.
- 14 The survey questionnaire is included on page 68.
- 15 I summarized the findings of this research study for my article published in the *Media Watch* journal. See: Raba medijev med študenti: Raziskava med študentkami in študenti prvih letnikov slovenskih univerz, *Medijska prežna*, No. 31, May 2008, pp. 35-37 or <http://mediawatch.mirovni-institut.si/bilten/seznam/31/recepcija/>.
- 16 Several people assisted in conducting this survey: Blaž Simčič (Faculty of Humanities, University of Primorska, Koper), Doc. Dr. Ksenija Horvat Vidmar (Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana), Prof. Dr. Janez Kranjc (Faculty of Law, University of Ljubljana and the Faculty of Law, University of Maribor), Dr. Suzana Žilič Fišer (Media Communications, FERI, University of Maribor), Dr. Janez Bešter, Dr. Iztok Humar, Dr. Dejan Križaj and Dr. Anton-Rafael Sinigoj (Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Ljubljana and Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Ljubljana - Nova Gorica unit) and Janja Zvonar (Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana). I am grateful to all the people mentioned above, as well as to the individual faculties and students.
- 17 Source: [http://www.vpis.uni-lj.si/podatki/sprejeti\\_prvi\\_rok\\_2008.pdf](http://www.vpis.uni-lj.si/podatki/sprejeti_prvi_rok_2008.pdf), accessed on December 5, 2008.

in Koper. The random sample included 633 female students (or 50.3%) and 625 male students (49.7%). Twenty-four respondents did not specify their gender. The majority of participants were born in 1989, i.e. 768 of them, or 59.9%; 236 of respondents (18.4%) were born in 1988, 80 of them (6.2%) in 1987, and 78 (6.1%) in 1990. In other words, 90.6% of respondents were born within the span of the four years mentioned above, while the number of those born outside this period was negligible. An interesting detail in connection with this is that the oldest student regularly enrolled in the academic year 2008/2009 was born in 1950, and the birth years 1965, 1967 and 1968 were also found in the sample, with one student born in each of these years.

## MEDIA USAGE

1.<sup>18</sup> Slightly less than one-fourth of respondents (24.5%) stated that they consumed news on a daily basis, while 31.9% consume it three to five times a week. Twenty-six percent obtain news once or twice a week, and 13.3% less than once a week. Only 4.3% of respondents do not consume news. Among those who consume news on a daily basis, men slightly prevail (26.3%) over women (22.7%). In the second group, which consumes news three to five times a week, women prevail (35.7% of women compared to 28% of men). Nevertheless, there is no statistically significant difference between genders. This means that slightly more than half the respondents (56.4%) regularly consume news on domestic and foreign events. This figure is a fraction lower than the one obtained in the 2007 survey (58.4%).

CHART 1: NEWS CONSUMPTION (N = 1,281)  
(■ MEN ■ WOMEN ■ ALL)



2. A The new (free) weekly *Žurnal24* tops the list of the print media, as it is read by 36.7 of respondents (38% of women and 35.9% of men).<sup>19</sup> It is followed by *Delo*, read by 18.2% of respondents (20% of women and 16.2% of men); then *Slovenske novice*, read by 12.3% of respondents (13.3% of women and 11.5% of men); *Dnevnik*, read by 11.7% of

<sup>18</sup> The numbers at the beginning of each passage refer to the number of the question from the questionnaire. For the questionnaire, see p. 68.

<sup>19</sup> *Žurnal24* was launched on September 26, 2007, so it was not included in the 2007 survey. The information was provided by Goran Novković, editor-in-chief of the *Žurnal24* daily and the *Žurnal* weekly, and we are thankful for it.

respondents (12.5% of women and 10.9% of men); *Večer*, read by 8.2% of respondents (10.1% of women and 5.9% of men); *Primorske novice*, read by 4.5% of students (5.7% of women and 3% of men), and *Finance*, read by 2.3% of respondents (2.2% of women and 2.6% of men). All other daily newspapers taken together are read by 1.4% of respondents. One-fourth of respondents (25.4%) did not cite any daily newspaper. Female students are more regular readers, and this difference is statistically significant.

A more detailed look shows that *Žurnal24* succeeded in attracting twice as many students as the second ranking *Delo*. A look at the regional distribution shows that *Žurnal24* is read by 40.1% of students studying in Ljubljana, 25.2% of students studying in Maribor, and 33% of students in Koper. *Delo* is read by 20.3% of students in Ljubljana, 20.5% of students in Koper and only 9% of students in Maribor.<sup>20</sup> *Slovenske novice* is the most popular among the students in Koper, given that it is read by 16.1% of students studying there (compared to 13.2% of those studying in Maribor and 11.6% of those studying in Ljubljana). The fourth ranked *Dnevnik* has the largest student readership in Ljubljana (14.4%), followed by that in Maribor (5.1%) and Koper (3.6%). *Večer* is read by 35% of students in Maribor (compared to 2.3% of students in Ljubljana and 1.8% of students in Koper). *Primorske novice* is obviously the most popular in the coastal region, where it is read by one-fourth of students in Koper; in Maribor, it is read by 4.3% of students and in Ljubljana by 2% of students. It is possible to conclude that only *Slovenske novice* is equally read by the three student population groups, while other daily newspapers are conspicuously more widely read in one of the regions, and this difference is statistically significant. It is possible to draw a tentative conclusion that they function as regional dailies.<sup>21</sup>

A comparison of newspaper reading among students in the social sciences and those in the natural sciences is possible only for the universities in Ljubljana and Maribor, with large enough number of students. *Žurnal24* is equally popular among social science students (40.4%) and natural science students (39.7%) in Ljubljana, while in Maribor it finds more readers among students in the social sciences (34.8%) than among those in the natural sciences (12.7%).

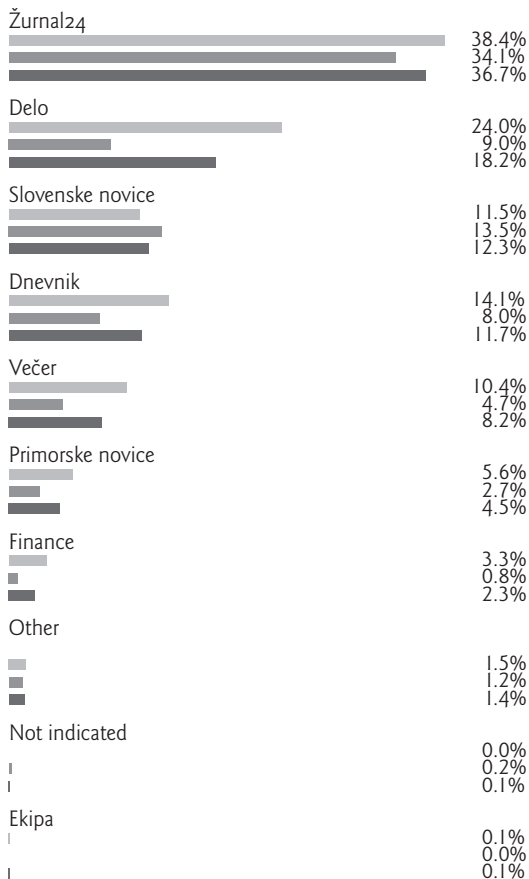
<sup>20</sup> Compared to the results of the 2007 survey, *Delo*'s position has somewhat improved, as it is read by more students in both Koper and Maribor, i.e. 27.2% of respondents in Ljubljana, 3.4% of respondents in Maribor, and 2.0% of respondents in Koper

<sup>21</sup> Other daily newspapers have such a small number of readers that cross-comparisons would be purposeless.



This difference is statistically significant. In Ljubljana, *Delo* is more widely read by students in the social sciences (27.5%), than by those in the natural sciences (10.1%). This difference is also statistically significant. A similar conclusion applies to *Dnevnik*, which is read by 17.7% of social science students and 8.2% of natural science students in Ljubljana. *Večer* is much more popular among students in the social sciences (45.5%) than among students in the natural sciences (21.6%) in Maribor. The difference is statistically significant.

CHART 2: READING OF DAILY NEWSPAPERS, SHARE (N = 1,281)  
(■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)

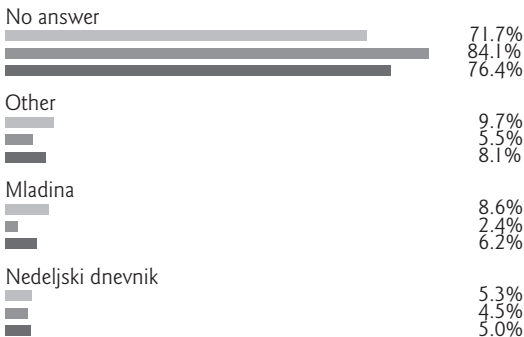




2. B Weekly newspapers are read by considerably fewer respondents than dailies: 76.4% of respondents did not specify any weekly newspaper. This figure is lower than that obtained from the 2007 survey, when 63.2% of respondents did not answer this question. In addition, not one weekly exceeded the 10% threshold. *Mladina* still tops the list, and it is read by 6.2% of respondents, meaning that the number of its readers has halved since last year when this proportion was 12.9%. It is followed by *Nedeljski dnevnik*, cited by 5% of respondents, while all other weeklies have readerships of less than 5% (*Žurnal* 1.6%, *Reporter* 1.3%, *Mag* 0.5%, *Dobro jutro* 0.4%, and *Demokracija* 0.2%). Local weekly newspapers are read by 1.5% of respondents, while 8.1% of respondents cited a variety of other weeklies ranging from *Mandrač* and *Kmečki glas* to *Delo* and *Dnevnik* supplements and foreign weeklies. Female students read weeklies more than male students, and this difference is statistically significant.

*Mladina* is conspicuously more popular among students in the social sciences (8.6%) than among those in the natural sciences (2.4%). This difference is statistically significant. There is no statistically significant difference in this respect between the second ranked *Nedeljski dnevnik* and the third-ranked *Žurnal*.

CHART 3: READING OF WEEKLIES, SHARE (N = 1,281)  
(■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



Žurnal	1.6%
	1.4%
	1.6%
Local weeklies	1.6%
	1.2%
	1.5%
Reporter	1.6%
	0.8%
	1.3%
Not indicated	1.3%
	0.4%
	0.9%
Mag	0.8%
	0.2%
	0.5%
Dobro jutro	0.6%
	0.0%
	0.4%
Demokracija	0.4%
	0.0%
	0.2%

2.c The competition among radio stations is much greater than that among national dailies and weeklies. Since our sample comprised students studying in Ljubljana, Maribor and Koper – the three regions with the greatest number of radio stations – of the total of 62 radio stations cited, as many as 18 were cited by more than 10 respondents.

The greatest number of respondent, 13.8%, chose *Radio 1* (15.7% of women and 12% of men). It is the most popular station among the students in Koper (25%) and Ljubljana (15%), and the least popular among the students in Maribor (3.8%). The newcomer *Radio 1* network began to operate in April 2007<sup>22</sup> and succeeded in beating all the competitors. With its arrival, listening time for all other radio stations decreased, all of them scoring worse in this year's survey than two years ago. *Val 202* occupies the 2<sup>nd</sup> place, as it was chosen by 10.6% of respondents (10.1% of women and 10.9% of men). This program, too, is most listened to by students in Koper (15.2%), followed by Ljubljana (11.3%) and Maribor (5.6%). *Radio City* comes third with

<sup>22</sup> *Radio 1* network went on the air on April 11, 2007 in central Slovenia, Maribor, and the Gorenjska region; one week later in began broadcasting in the Primorska and Dolenjska regions, as well. The stand-alone radio station *Radio 1* went on the air on February 10, 2006 in Maribor. Source: *Radio 1*. We'd like to thank Andrej Vodusek, *Radio 1* programming director, for this information.

8.4% of listeners, and it has the largest student listenership in Maribor (35.5%). The number of listeners in the other two university centers is very small (2.6% in Ljubljana and 0.9% in Koper). *Radio Center* occupies the 4<sup>th</sup> place (7.3%), followed by *Radio Antena* (7%), and *Radio Hit* (5.7%). All other stations received less than 5% of votes.<sup>23</sup> Differences between regions are statistically significant. All the stations are more or less equally listened to by social science students and natural science students, save for *Radio Center*, whose audience is composed of 8.7% of students in the social sciences compared to 4.9% of students in the natural sciences (the difference is statistically significant). In general, more women than men listen to radio programs. The difference is statistically significant.

As many as 38.1% of respondents did not cite any radio station, which leads us to believe that they do not see themselves as regular listeners of any radio station. Among these, there are more men (44.8%) than women (31.4%). Since the survey was conducted among the student population, we should point out that the student radio *Radio Študent* was cited by 1.1% of listeners, while *MARŠ* (a student radio station based in Maribor) was not cited by any respondent.

*Radio 1* listeners most frequently read *Slovenske novice* (21.7%), followed by *Žurnal24* (17.5%), *Dnevnik* (16.7%), *Delo* (9.9%) and *Večer* (only 2.9%).

*Val 202* listeners most frequently read *Delo* (20.7%), followed by *Dnevnik* (19.3%), *Žurnal24* (9.8%), *Večer* (7.6%) and *Slovenske novice* (6.4%).

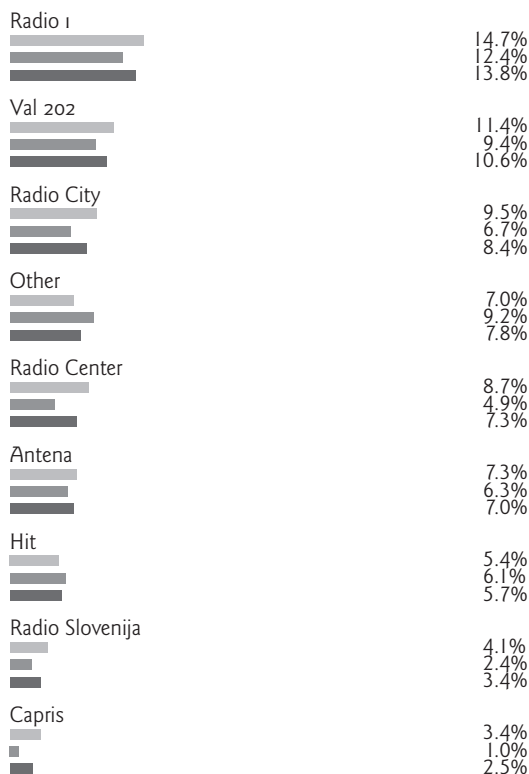
*Radio City* finds most of its listeners among the readers of *Večer* (60%), a daily published in Maribor where *Radio City* has the greatest number of listeners, then *Žurnal24* (8.7%), *Slovenske novice* (8.3%), *Delo* (4.7%) and *Dnevnik* (1.3%).

Other radio stations have small numbers of listeners, so that cross-comparisons would be untenable.

CHART 4: RADIO STATIONS' LISTENERSHIP,  
THE TEN MOST FREQUENTLY CHOSEN ANSWERS (N = 1,281)  
(■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



23 In the previous survey, *Val 202* had 11.2% of listeners, and was followed by *Radio City* (9.2%), *Radio Center* (7.4%), *Radio Antena* (6.4%) and *Radio Hit* (5.9%).



2. D The greatest number of first-year students, i.e. 68.3%, watch POP TV (77.3% of women and 59.4% of men). The second most watched channel is *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1*, with 31% of viewers (31% of women and 31.5% of men), followed by *Kanal A* with 18.3% of viewers (22.4% of women and 14.2% of men) and *Televizija Slovenija Channel 2* with 11.3% of viewers (10.7% of women and 12% of men).<sup>24</sup> Other television programs were chosen by 9.5% of respondents.

TV 3, which was not on the list two years ago, is now at the bottom of the list with 2.7% of viewers among our respondents, along with several cable television providers whose viewership has increased (*CNN* 3.5%, *Discovery* 1.6%, *Info TV* 1.6%, *BBC World* 1.2%).

<sup>24</sup> Viewership of *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1* has reduced in size this year. *Televizija Slovenija Channel 2* viewership increased, but not sufficiently to overtake *Kanal A*'s viewership, which almost doubled (10.4% in the 2007 survey).

A look at the viewership by regions shows that *POP TV* has the greatest number of student viewers in Maribor (76.6%); in Ljubljana, it has 67.1% of viewers and in Koper only 60.7%. *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1* has the greatest number of student viewers in Koper (34.8%); the figure for Ljubljana is 32.6% and for Maribor 23%. *Kanal A* has the greatest number of student viewers in Maribor (26%), the same as *POP TV*, while the percentage for Koper is 21.4% and for Ljubljana only 15.9%. The differences in the size of student viewership by regions are statistically significant for all three stations.

*POP TV*, *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1* and *Channel 2* are more popular with students in the social sciences than with students in the natural sciences, and this difference is statistically significant, while no statistically significant difference in this respect has been observed for *Kanal A*.

Fourteen percent of respondents did not cite any television source, where male students account for 19.4%, meaning twice the percentage of female students (8.4%).

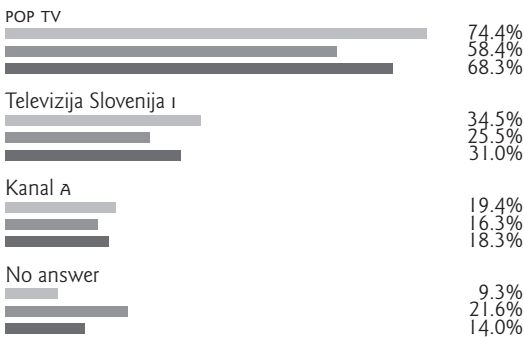
A cross-comparison shows that the viewers of *POP TV* most frequently read the daily *Večer* (83.3%), i.e. in Maribor, where this television has the greatest proportion of student viewers, followed by the daily *Dnevnik* (80.7%), *Slovenske novice* (76.4%), *Žurnal24* (73.4%) and *Delo* (68.2%).

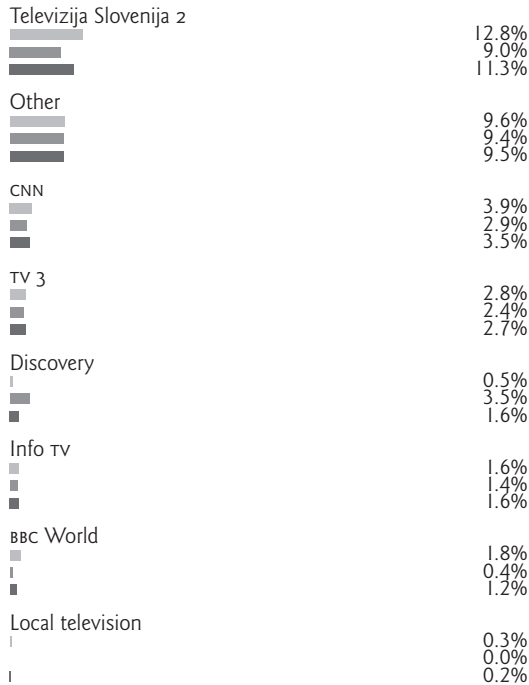
More than half the viewers (51.8%) of *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1* read *Delo*; 42% read *Dnevnik*, 33% read *Žurnal24*, 25.7% read *Večer* and 24.2% read *Slovenske novice*.

The greatest proportion of students who watch *Kanal A* read *Slovenske novice* (29.9%), followed by *Žurnal24* (22.1%), *Večer* (21%), *Dnevnik* (18.7%) and *Delo* (16.3%).

CHART 5: PROPORTIONS OF VIEWERS (N = 1,281)

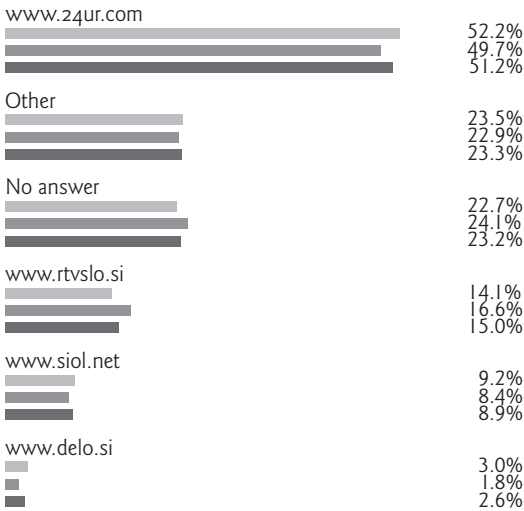
(■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)





2. E The web site at *www.24.com* scored the best with more than half our respondents (51.2%) visiting it (54.4% of women and 48.1% of men). The second most often visited page is *www.rtv slo.si*, chosen by 15% of respondents (11.3% of women and 18.9% of men), followed by *www.siol.net*, with nearly half that share of visitors (8.9%). This web site is also more popular with male students (11.2%) than with female students (6.7%). The web page at *www.delo.si* was chosen by 2.6% of respondents. Male students are more frequent users of all the web pages mentioned than female students. Other web sites were chosen by 23.3% of respondents, and no differences between genders were observed. This question was left unanswered by 23.2% of respondents, which is roughly the same proportion as in the 2007 survey (24.3%).

CHART 6: WEB SITE USERS (N = 1,281)  
 ( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



2. F The use of blogs is more the exception than the rule among first-year students, given that more than nine-tenths of respondents (94.5%) did not cite any blog. This percentage is even higher than in the 2007 survey (90.7%). Only three Slovenian blogs were cited, and they have the same, or lower, shares of visitors as two years ago: *rtv Slovenija* blog (0.6%, the same as last year), *Jonas's blog* (0.5%, compared to 3.8% in the 2007 survey) and *Siol blog* (0.3% compared to 0.8% in the 2007 survey). Only 4% of respondents cited other blogs, but this percentage is negligible. There are no statistically significant differences between genders with respect to blog usage.

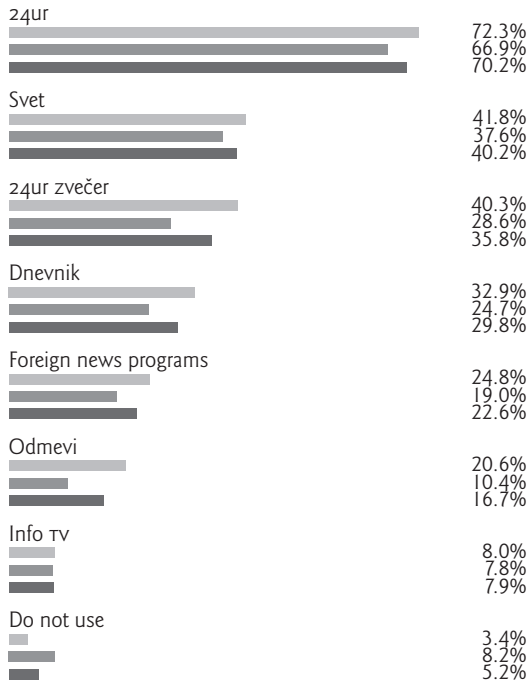
3. The next question was about the consumption of television news. 5.2% of respondents stated that they did not watch any news programs on television; among these 6.8% were male students and 3.8% were female students. The respondents could choose several news programs, and the 1,281 respondents in total chose two news programs, on average. Since they were not asked to sort programs by the frequency of their usage, we could only establish the frequency of choice, and our conclusion is that news programs are more frequently watched by female students than by male students, and by social science students than by



natural science students. The difference is statistically significant in both cases.

The greatest proportion of respondents, 70.2%, watch the *24ur* news program on *POP TV*; 40.2% of students watch *Svet* on *Kanal A*; 35.8% watch *24ur zvečer* on *POP TV*; 29.8% watch *Dnevnik* on *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1*; 22.6% watch foreign news programs; 16.7% watch *Odmevi* on *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1*, and 7.9% watch *Info tv*.<sup>25</sup> The proportion of women among the viewers of all the news programs except *Dnevnik* and *Info tv* is greater than the proportion of men.

CHART 7: PROPORTIONS OF VIEWERS OF TELEVISION NEWS PROGRAMS, (N = 1,281)  
(■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



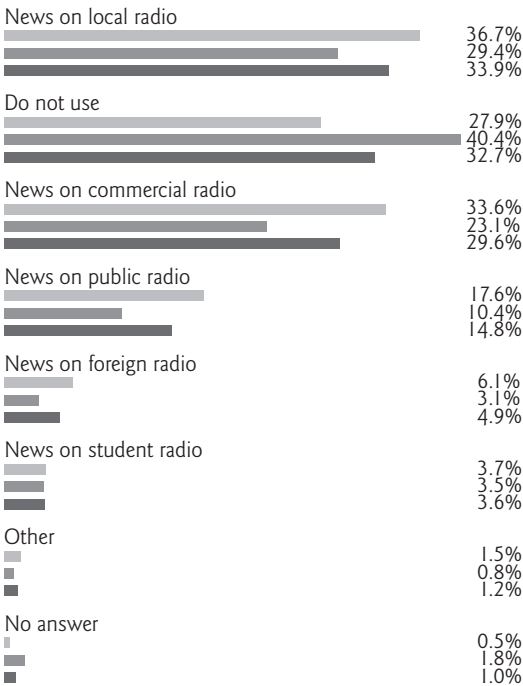
<sup>25</sup> The percentages relating to news programs have radically changed since 2007 when as many as four-fifths of respondents (80%) watched the *24ur* news program; next was *Dnevnik*, which was watched by slightly less than half the respondents (45.4%), followed by *Odmevi* with slightly more than one-fourth of viewers among the respondents (27.0%). As many as one-fifth of respondents watched *Svet*, which was a new broadcast at the time. Foreign news programs were watched by 16.9% of respondents, while 12.7% watched *Info tv* on cable.

Other	4.6%
■	1.2%
■	3.3%

4. As to radio news programs, the greatest proportion of respondents listen to news programs on local radio stations (33.9%); 29.6% of respondents listen to news programs on commercial radio stations (29.6%), 14.8% on *Radio Slovenija*, and 4.9% listen to news programs on foreign radio stations. Only 3.6% of students listen to news programs on student radio stations. As many as 32.7% of respondents do not listen to radio news programs.

CHART 8: PROPORTIONS OF LISTENERS OF RADIO NEWS PROGRAMS (N = 1,281)

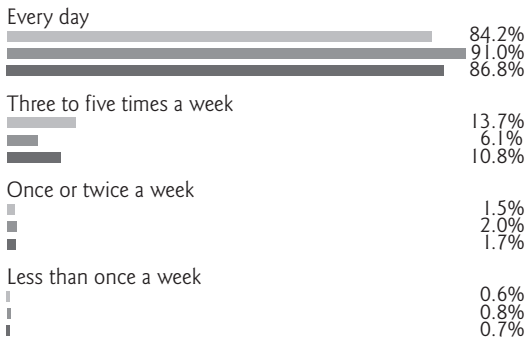
( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



## INTERNET USAGE

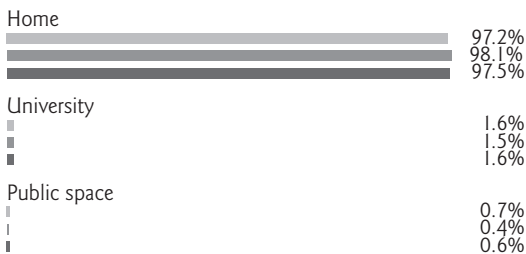
5. Several questions referred to Internet usage. As many as 86.8% of respondents stated that they used the Internet on a daily basis (82.4% of female students and 91.5% of male students). This is a much greater proportion than that obtained the previous survey, when this figure was 74.2%. Not one respondent stated that he/she did not use the Internet. It is used three to five times a week by 10.8% of students, and once or twice a week by 1.7% of them; 0.7% of students use it less than once a week.

CHART 9: THE USE OF THE INTERNET (N = 1,281)  
( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



6. Virtually all respondents (97.5%) access the Internet from home. Use of the Internet outside the home is rare: only 1.6% use it on their faculty's premises, 0.6% use it in public spaces, and 0.3% in libraries.

CHART 10: THE LOCATIONS MOST FREQUENTLY USED TO ACCESS THE INTERNET (N = 1,281)  
( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)

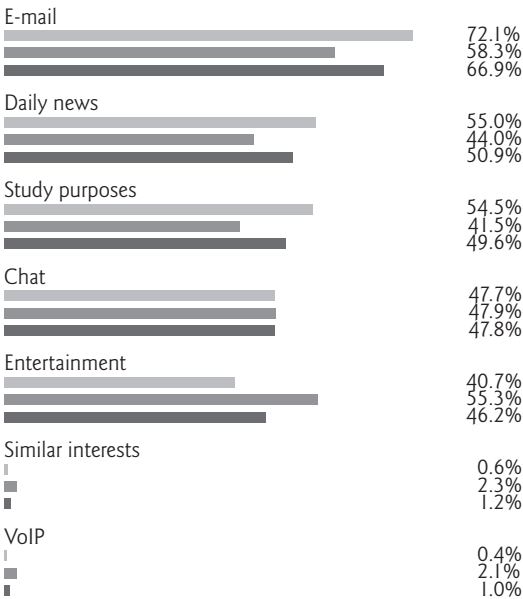


Library	0.5%
	0.0%
	0.3%

7. Every respondent could select the three most frequent types of Internet usage. Two-thirds (66.9%) chose e-mail (77.7% of female students and 55.1% of male students). The web is used to search for daily news by 50.9% of respondents, and there is no significant difference between genders in this case. Half the respondents (49.6%) use the Internet for study purposes, and the difference between genders is considerable: i.e., female students account for 61.1% of respondents using it for study purposes, compared to only 37.7% of male respondents. The next is chat, used by 47.8% of respondents, followed by entertainment (46.2%). The difference between genders in their use of the Internet for entertainment is conspicuous: i.e., 36% of female students compared to 56.2% of male students. Searching for people with similar interests and Internet telephony are at the bottom of the list.

CHART II: INTERNET USAGE (N = 1,281)

( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



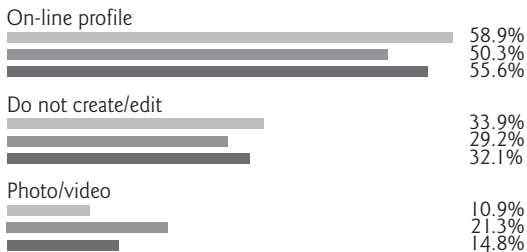
No answer	0,1%
	0,5%
	0,3%

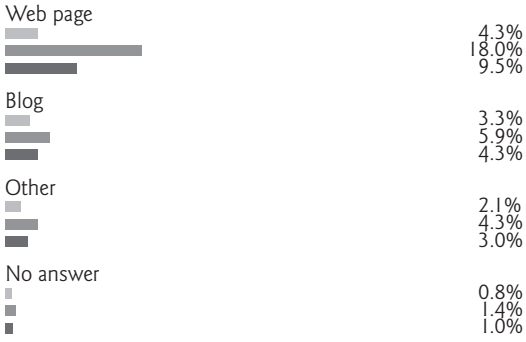
8. As many as 85.9% of respondents stated that they did not read blogs, compared to 14.1% of those who stated that they do read blogs. There are no statistically significant differences between genders in this case, neither by university location (Ljubljana, Maribor, Koper), nor by the type of course (social sciences vs. natural sciences).

9. Those respondents who read blogs were also asked to specify which ones they read. The majority cited blogs by their friends or public figures (e.g. Igor E. Bergant, Iztok Čop, Jure Godler, Jonas Žnidaršič), while several respondents read *siol.blog* or *24ur.com*. No blog stands out among others, which is understandable given the small proportion of students who read them.

10. The web has also stirred students' creative interests. More than half the respondents (55.6%) have on-line profiles (*Facebook*, *MySpace* etc.), among whom the proportion of female students is 62.4%, compared to 48.8% of male students; 14.8% of respondents post photos or video clips on the Internet: i.e., 21% of male students and 8.7% of female students; 9.5% of students have their own web page, and 4.3% write a blog. Only 1% of respondents did not answer this question, while 3% chose the "Other" option. Thirty-two point one percent of respondents stated that they did not create/edit web content.

CHART 12: TYPES OF WEB CONTENT  
CREATED BY THE RESPONDENTS (N = 1,281)  
(■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)





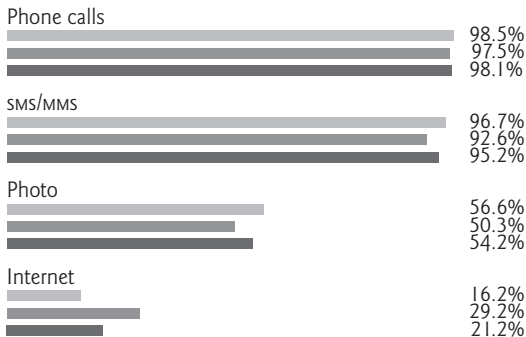
## USAGE OF MOBILE PHONES

11. The range of services offered by mobile phone providers has increased over the past few years. Since mobile phone users can also access information content on the web via mobile phones, this new feature deserves some attention. Mobile phones are so widespread that only 0.3% of respondents stated that they did not use them, and the same proportion of respondents did not answer this question.

Mobile phones are used for calls by 98.1% of respondents, and there is no difference between genders in this respect. Text messaging (SMS/MMS) is used by 95.2% of respondents, or 97.2% of female students and 92.9% of male students. More than half (54.2%) of respondents use mobile phones to take and/or send photos (60% of females and 47.8% of males); 21.2% use mobile phones to access the Internet, with the proportion of male students (29.2%) being twice as high as that of female students (13%). The difference between students in social sciences and students in natural sciences is obvious only with this type of usage. A mobile phone is much less often used to access e-mail, and this service is used by 9.1% of respondents (5.1% of female students and 13.3% of male students). The statistically significant differences between genders were observed in the segments of users of SMS/MMS services, and of respondents who use a mobile phone to take and/or send photos, access the Internet and view/send e-mail.

As to the other types of usage, the most frequently mentioned items were games, music playing, alarm clock, calendar, notes, the GPS device and even recording of lectures.

CHART 13: MOBILE PHONE USAGE (N = 1,281)  
( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



E-mail	6.9%
	12.7%
	9.1%
Other	7.7%
	7.4%
	7.6%
Do not use	0.3%
	0.4%
	0.3%
No answer	0.1%
	0.6%
	0.3%

12. Access to information sources on the web is not very popular with mobile phone users, given that as many as 82.5% of respondents do not use this option (90.6% of female students and 74.2% of male students). This service is used by 17.1% of respondents, and there are more men among the users of this service (25.4%) than women (8.9%). A statistically significant difference between genders was observed in relation to positive and negative answers.



## STUDENTS ON MEDIA CONTENT AND THE MEDIA IN GENERAL

13. The respondents were asked to select the three types of media content to which they devoted the most attention among the 13 topics/types of content listed. Only 0.6% of respondents wrote that they did not consume the listed topics/content types; 4.8% chose too many answers, and these were not taken into account.

The greatest number of respondents (35.1%) chose domestic politics, and among them these were more women (38.1%) than men (31.5%). Sport came in second with 34%, and the difference between genders is conspicuous here (20.7% of female students vs. 47.8% of male students). This is followed by science/technology (30.3%), with the difference between genders being even greater in this case (50.2% of male students vs. 10.3% of female students). Next comes foreign affairs (27.2%), where there is no difference between genders. Local news is consumed by slightly more than one-fourth of respondents (26.3%), and culture and arts by 22.2%; in relation to the latter, the difference between genders is large: i.e., 32.6% of female students vs. 11.8% of male students. Seventeen percent of respondents selected economy-related subjects (12% of female students and 22.2% of male students), and 16.9% selected social issues, which obviously attract more women (24.4%) than their male colleagues (9.3%). Reports on celebrities are consumed by 16.6% of respondents, or one-fourth of women (25.9%) and only 7.4% of men. Next comes the crime section, consumed by 15.8% of respondents (19.3% of the women and 12.3% of the men). Lifestyle subjects are consumed by 11.9% of respondents, 17.6% of the women and 6.1% of the men. Environment and ecology are near the bottom of the list, attracting only one-tenth (10.4%) of respondents, followed by health advice, attracting 6.1% (8.7% of female students compared to 3.2% of male students).

CHART 14: MEDIA CONTENT RECEIVING MOST ATTENTION  
(N = 1,281)

Domestic politics	35.1%
Sport	34.0%
Science/technology	30.3%

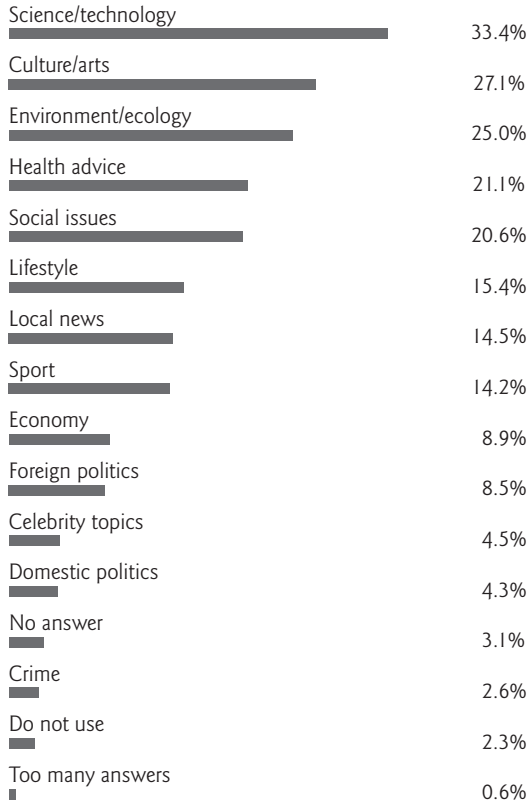
Foreign politics	27.2%
Local news	26.3%
Culture/arts	22.2%
Economy	17.0%
Social issues	16.9%
Celebrity topics	16.6%
Crime	15.8%
Lifestyle	11.9%
Environment/ecology	10.4%
Health advice	6.1%
Too many answers	4.8%
Do not use	0.6%
No answer	0.1%

14. The topics/type of content that our respondents find most neglected by the media are topics on science/technology (33.4%). The difference between genders is large: i.e., more males (47.4%) than females (19.7%) thought that these topics were neglected by the media. Next came culture/arts, chosen by 27.1% of respondents, with the difference between genders being large in this case as well, except that the picture is reversed (34.9% of females compared to 19.2% of males). The environment/ecology is third on the list, chosen by one-fourth of respondents (25% altogether, 28.8% of females and 20.8% of males), followed by health advice, chosen by slightly more than one-fifth of respondents (21.1% altogether, 28.3% of females, and 13.8% of males). Social issues are fifth on the list, chosen by one-fifth of respondents (20.6%), followed by lifestyle topics, chosen by 15.4% of respondents (18.2% of females and 12.8% of males), local news, chosen by 14.5% of respondents and more men (16.2%) than women (12.8%), sport chosen by 14.2% of respondents, among them many more men (22.1%) than women (6.6%). At the bottom of the list are the economy (8.9% of respondents, 6.8% of females and 10.7% of males), foreign politics (8.5%), celebrity

topics (4.5%), domestic political topics (4.3%) and the crime section (2.6%).

The topics listed are not consumed by 2.3% of respondents; 0.6% chose too many answers, while 3.1% did not answer this question.

CHART 15: CONTENT MOST NEGLECTED BY THE MEDIA (N = 1,281)

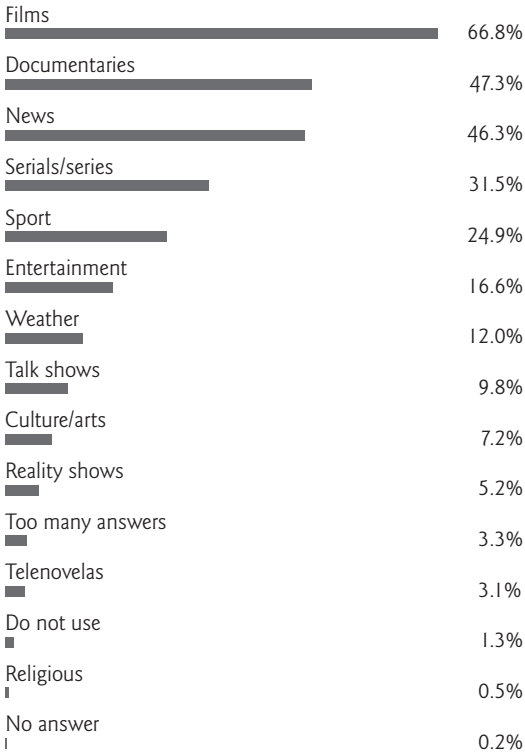


15. The results were similar when the respondents were asked to select television genres. Two-thirds (66.8%) most frequently watch films on television, and there is no difference between genders in this respect. Documentary programs are second on the list, chosen by 47.3% of respondents, and by more males (54.9%) than females (39.2%). News was chosen as the most frequently consumed genre by 46.3% of respondents (52.4% of females and 40% of males), followed by serials and/or series (chosen by 31.5%

of respondents, 38.1% of males and 25.3% of females), sport (24.9% of respondents, or 38.7% of males and 10.9% of females, which is a conspicuous difference), entertainment programs (16.6%), weather forecasts (12%), talk shows, chosen by one-tenth (9.8%) of respondents (13.6% of females and 6.1% of males), and culture and arts (7.2% of respondents, 10.3% of females and 4% of males, which is a conspicuous difference). Reality shows are not popular, given that they were chosen by only 5.2% of respondents, similarly to telenovelas (3.1%) and religious programs (0.5%).

Three point three percent of respondents chose too many answers; 1.3% of respondents did not consume any of the types of genres listed, and 0.2% did not answer this question.

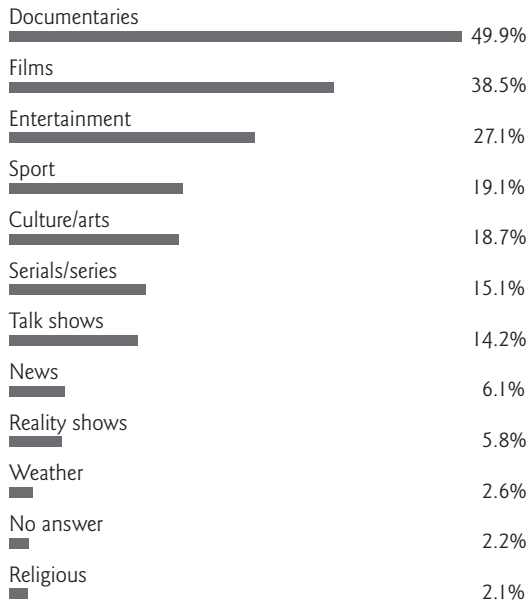
**CHART 16: THE MOST FREQUENTLY CONSUMED TELEVISION GENRES**  
(N = 1,281)



16. The answers show that as many as one-half of respondents (49.9%) find documentaries most under-represented on television schedules, and there is no difference between genders here; 38.5% would like to see more films on television, and the proportion of males is higher (42.1%) than that of females (34.4%). Twenty-seven point one percent of respondents wish for more entertainment programs, and 19.1% for more sport programs. Here the difference between genders is conspicuous (30.1% of males compared to 8.2% of females). Culture and arts programs were chosen by 18.7% of respondents (25.3% of females and 12.5% of males), followed by serials and/or series (15.1%), talk shows (14.2% of respondents, 19.9% of females and 8.8% of males), news (6.1%), reality shows, chosen by 5.8% of respondents, and more women (6.9%) than men (4.9%), weather forecasts (2.6%), religious programs (2.1%) and telenovelas (0.8%).

The genres listed in this question are not consumed by 2% of respondents; 0.5% chose too many answers, and 2.2% did not answer the question.

**CHART 17: TELEVISION GENRES MOST UNDER-REPRESENTED ON TELEVISION SCHEDULES (N = 1,281)**



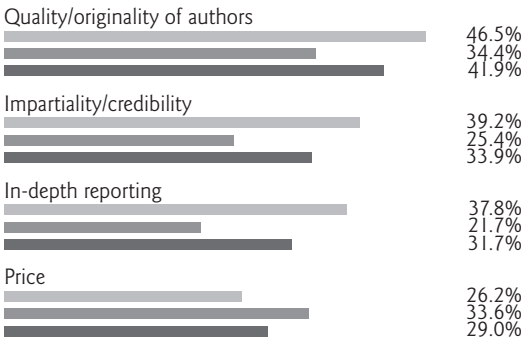
Do not use	2.0%
Telenovelas	0.8%
Too many answers	0.5%

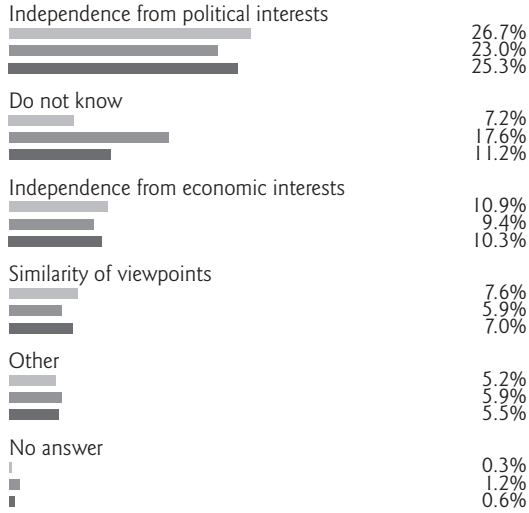
17. Among the criteria used in choosing particular media, the quality/originality of authors stands out by its frequency of choice. This criterion was chosen by more than four-tenths of respondents (41.9%), and by more females (47%) than males (36.3%). Impartiality/credibility was chosen by 33.9% of respondents, with no difference between genders observed. In-depth reporting is the most important criterion for 31.7% of respondents (37.3% of females and 26% of males). The price is important for slightly more than one-fourth of respondents (29% altogether, or 26.4% of the women and 31.1% of the men), and this could be partly responsible for the success of the free journal *Žurnal24*. Independence from political interests was chosen by one-fourth of respondents (25.3% of respondents, 23.3% of the women and 27.8% of the men), followed by independence from economic interests (chosen by one-tenth or 10.3% of respondents, and 13% of the men and 7.9% of the women) and similarity of viewpoints (7% of respondents). Other criteria are important for 5.5% of respondents.

As many as 11.2% of respondents could not state, or did not want to state, the criteria they used in choosing particular media, and 0.6% did not answer this question.

CHART 18: CRITERIA USED IN CHOOSING PARTICULAR MEDIA (N = 1,281)

( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)





18. Only 13.3% answered that they found Slovenian media reporting on political events unbiased, while 61.7% thought that it was biased. One-fourth of respondents (24.9%) could not make up their minds, so they chose the option “I do not know.”

A statistically important difference between the social science students and the natural science students was observed on all answers. Among students of the natural sciences, 17.3% thought that the media in Slovenia were unbiased in reporting political events, compared to 10.9% of students in the social sciences. Among those who did not agree with this statement, 47.6% were natural science students, and as many as 70.4% social science students. This leads us to conclude that social science students are more critical of media reporting than their colleagues studying the natural sciences.

**CHART 19: PERCEIVED NON-BIAS OF SLOVENIAN MEDIA IN REPORTING POLITICAL EVENTS (N = 1,281)**  
 ( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)

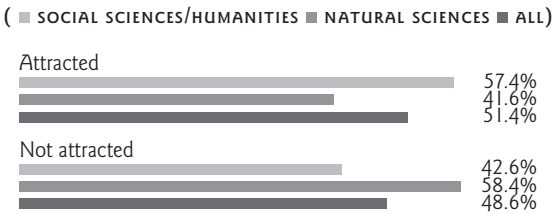




19. As many as one-half of respondents (51.6%) cited some public issue that attracted their attention in 2008. Their answers differed considerably, but the most frequently mentioned issues were the “Patria scandal” (involving alleged bribes in purchasing armored vehicles), the economic and financial crisis, the parliamentary elections, the presidential elections in the US, relations with Croatia, ecology/environment, a new salary system, tycoons and so on.

Forty-eight point four percent of respondents stated that no public issue had attracted their attention. Statistically significant differences were observed in both groups.

CHART 20: DID ANY PUBLIC ISSUE ATTRACT YOUR ATTENTION? (N = 1,281)

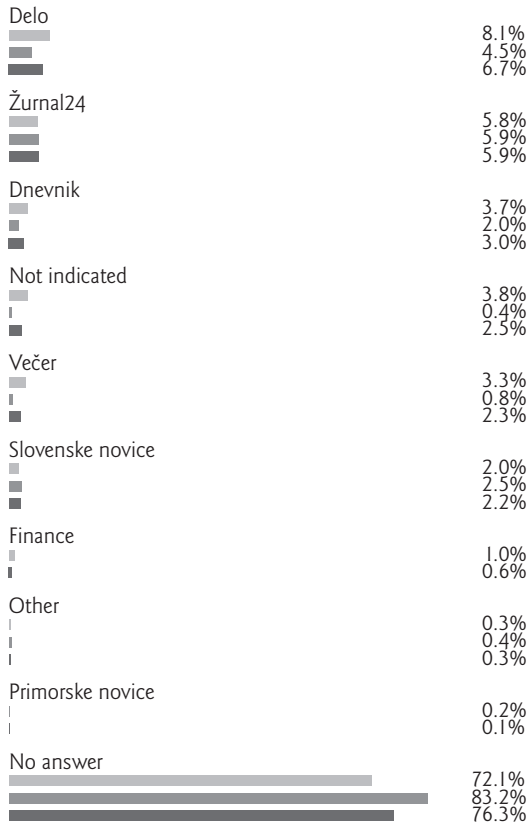




20. We sought to establish which sources were the most informative regarding the topics that attracted our respondents' attention. We divided the media into six groups: daily newspapers, weeklies, radio stations, television stations, web sites, blogs and other. The answers show that television and web sites provided most information.

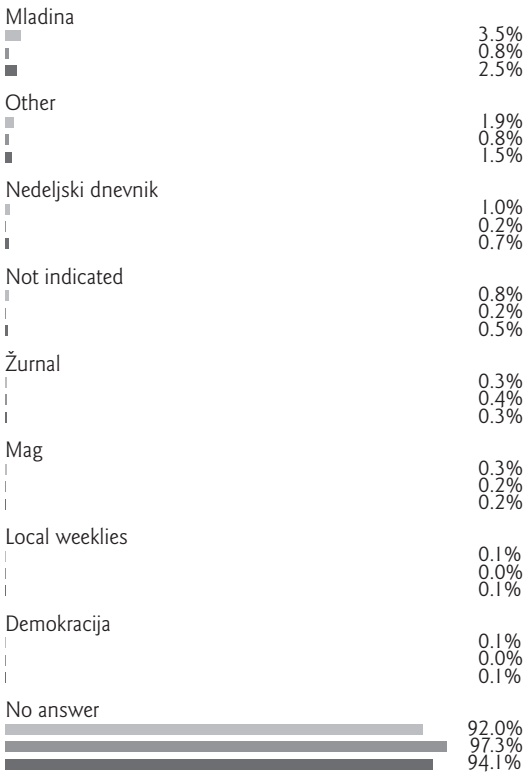
20.A As many as 76.3% of respondents did not cite any daily newspaper. Those who did obviously found most information in *Delo* (6.7%), followed by *Žurnal24* (5.9%), and *Dnevnik* (3%). The chart clearly shows that other newspapers were chosen by a low proportion of the respondents.

CHART 21: THE NEWSPAPERS THAT PROVIDED MOST INFORMATION ON THE TOPIC THAT ATTRACTED RESPONDENTS' ATTENTION (N = 1,281)  
(■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



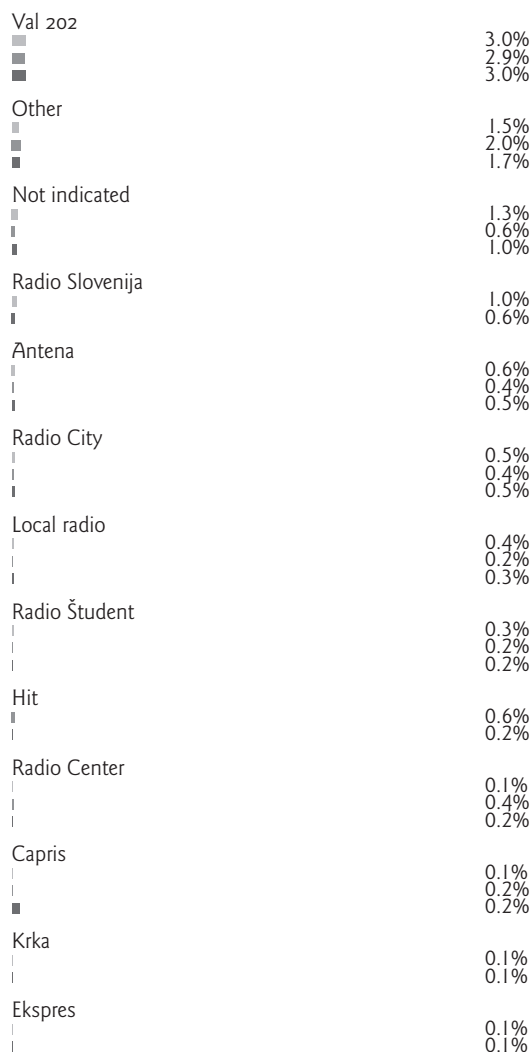
20. B The percentages are much smaller for weeklies, which is understandable given the low interest in weeklies among students. *Mladina* again scored the best (chosen by 2.5% of respondents), while other weeklies were chosen by less than 1% of respondents each. As many as 94.1% of respondents did not answer this question.

CHART 22: THE WEEKLIES THAT PROVIDED MOST INFORMATION ON THE ISSUE THAT ATTRACTED RESPONDENTS' ATTENTION, (N = 1,281)  
( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



20. c Among radio stations, *Val 202* was the most frequently chosen answer (3% of respondents), while other radio stations were chosen by less than 1% of respondents each; 91.3% of respondents did not answer this question.

CHART 23: RADIO STATIONS WHICH PROVIDED MOST INFORMATION ON THE ISSUE THAT ATTRACTED RESPONDENTS' ATTENTION (N = 1,281)  
( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



Belvi	0.2%
	0.1%
No answer	90.9%
▬	91.8%
▬	91.3%

20. D Television turned out to be the leading information provider. POP TV tops the list (chosen by 18.9% of respondents), followed by *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1* (7.4% of respondents). Other television channels did not exceed 1% each; 63.1% of respondents did not answer this question.

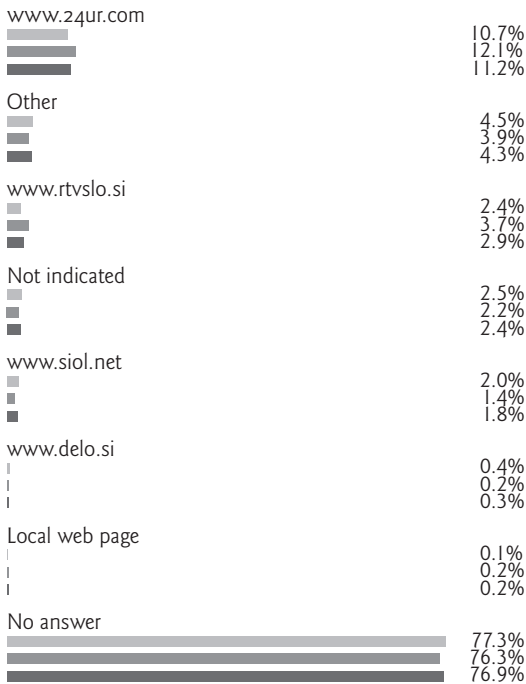
**CHART 24: THE TELEVISION CHANNELS THAT PROVIDED MOST INFORMATION ON THE ISSUE THAT ATTRACTED RESPONDENTS' ATTENTION (N = 1,281)**  
 ( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)

POP TV	22.1%
▬	13.7%
▬	18.9%
Not indicated	9.8%
▬	5.3%
▬	8.1%
Televizija Slovenija 1	8.7%
▬	5.3%
▬	7.4%
Other	0.6%
▬	1.4%
▬	0.9%
CNN	0.8%
▬	0.4%
▬	0.6%
Kanal A	0.3%
▬	0.8%
▬	0.5%
Info TV	0.4%
▬	0.2%
Discovery	0.1%
▬	0.2%
▬	0.2%
Televizija Slovenija 2	0.2%
▬	0.1%
BBC	0.2%
▬	0.1%



20. E The leader among web pages is *www.24ur.com*, chosen by 11.2% of respondents, followed by *www.rtv slo.si* (2.9%) and *www.siol.net* (1.8%); 76.9% of respondents did not answer this question.

CHART 25: THE WEB PAGES THAT PROVIDED MOST INFORMATION ON THE ISSUE THAT ATTRACTED RESPONDENTS' ATTENTION (N = 1,281)  
 (■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



20. F Blogs were rated low as an information source, which is not surprising, given that they are not very popular. As many as 99.2% of respondents did not answer this question. The RTV Slovenija blog was cited by only 0.2% of respondents.

## RESPONSE TO AND COMPLAINTS ABOUT MEDIA CONTENT

21. This question was designed to check whether students were ready to take steps when stirred by media content. Sixty-eight percent of respondents stated that no subject stirred them enough to take steps (66.8% of women and 69.2% of men), while 12.7% did not answer this question.

Those who stated that they had taken steps after identifying controversial content could choose from the ten listed options, or write their own answer. The greatest proportion of respondents (9.9%) had posted their opinion on an online forum; 4% signed a petition, 2.7% chose to boycott a product, service or an event, while 2.3% took part in a round table discussion or a protest. One percent of respondents wrote a reader's letter, another 1% provided the initiative for a round table discussion or a protest, 0.9% protested to an institution (a phone call or a letter), 0.6% called in to a radio or television talk show, and 0.5% chose to send a public letter or a petition to the media or to a wider circle of recipients. The smallest proportion of respondents wrote a letter to a governmental representative.

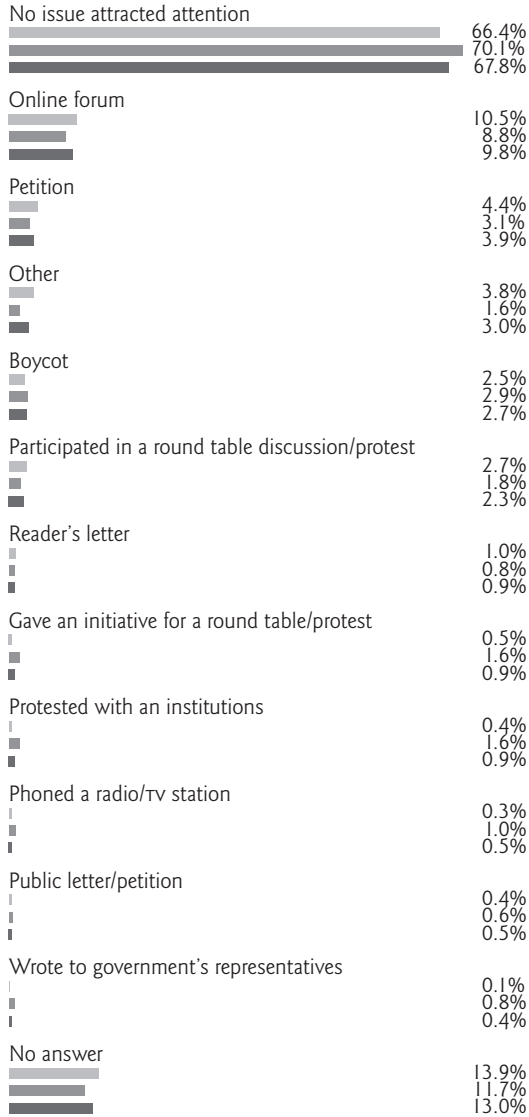
The respondents who have expressed their opinion on an online forum more often read newspapers, which is a statistically significant piece of data, although there are no statistically significant differences with regard to the titles these respondents read. The most widely read newspapers are *Žurnal24*, *Delo*, and *Slovenske novice*. As to television program consumption, there are no statistically significant differences between those who participated in an online forum and those who did not. However, an important piece of information is that they more frequently consume foreign programs and *Info tv*. As to the consumption of daily news programs, there were no statistically significant differences.

The respondents who had expressed their disagreement by signing a petition do not differ in terms of their media consumption (newspaper reading, television program or television news consumption) from their colleagues who had never done so, as no statistically significant differences were observed.

The students who had boycotted a product, a service or an event more frequently watch foreign television programs than those students who had not taken such a step. There were no other statistically significant differences.

The number of those who chose other steps was so small that it did not allow for statistical analysis.

**CHART 26: IF YOU CHOSE TO REACT,  
WHICH STEPS DID YOU TAKE? (N = 1,281)**  
( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



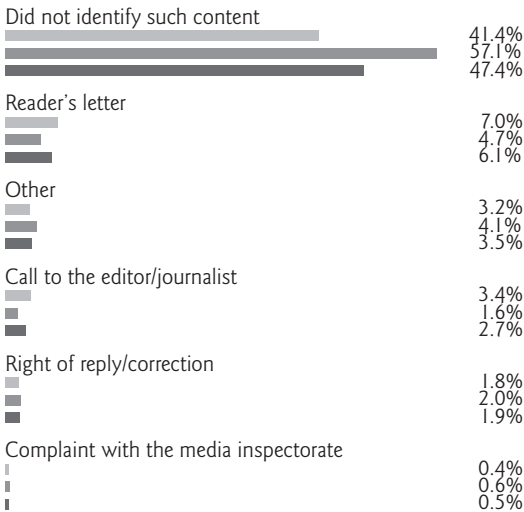
22. All respondents answered the question asking whether they had already complained about something in the media that they found unacceptable. Of the total number, 6.1% wrote that they had never identified such content. More than four-fifths (82.7%) stated that they had never complained, and 11.2% answered that they had.

More social science students than natural science students have already complained, and this difference is statistically significant.

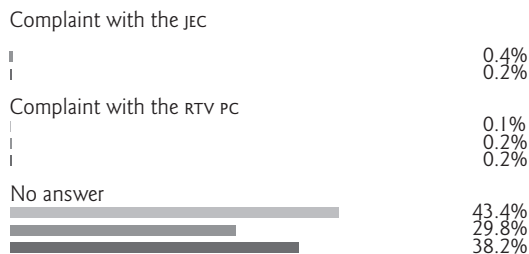
23. The respondents could choose from several methods to complain about media content. The greatest number (or 6.1%) chose readers' letters, while 3.5% of respondents chose a call to the editor or to a journalist; 1.9% of respondents exercised their right of reply and correction; 0.5% filed a complaint with the media inspector, 0.2% turned to the Journalists' Ethics Commission and the same proportion turned to the RTV Slovenija Programming Council.

Nearly half the respondents (47.4%) reported that they had never identified controversial content prompting them to complain, and the proportion of men was higher (53.1%) than that of women (41.9%); 38.2% did not answer this question (45.7% of the women and 30.7% of the men).

CHART 27: COMPLAINTS ABOUT MEDIA CONTENT (1,281)  
( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)







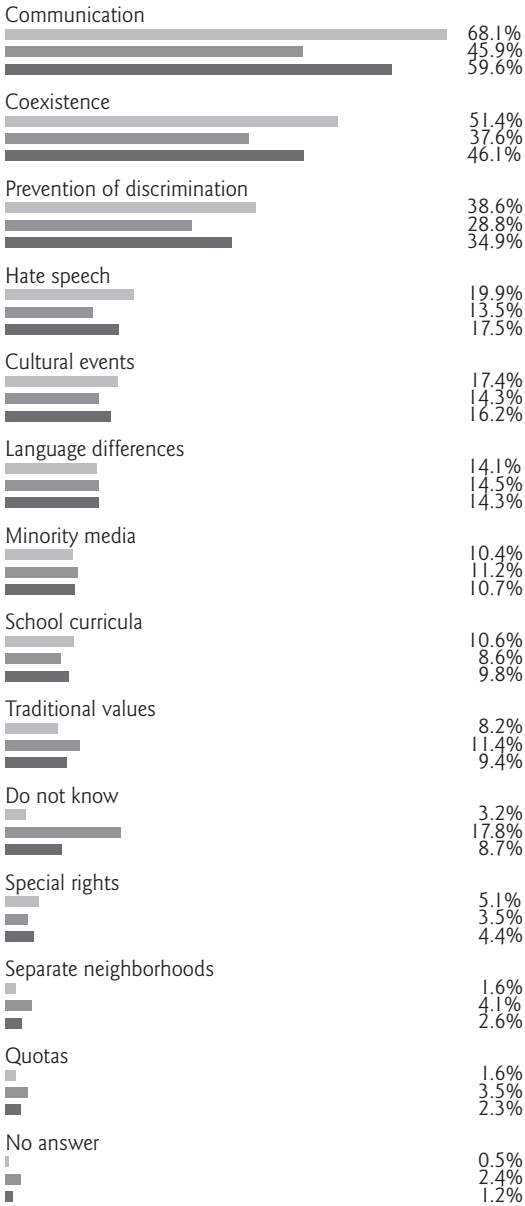
24. With this question, we sought to examine the respondents' understanding of the notion of intercultural dialogue. The respondents could choose up to three answers from the 12 possible answers altogether, or write their own definition. Only 1% of respondents did not answer this question, 0.5% selected too many options, and these were not taken into account, while 8.8% of respondents wrote that they did not know the meaning of intercultural dialogue.

Two-thirds of respondents (59.8%) think that intercultural dialogue represents communication among various minority groups (ethnic, religious and other) (69.7% of females and 49.8% of males). Slightly less than half the respondents (46.1%) think that intercultural dialogue means coexistence, getting familiar with and having respect for different cultures. Slightly more than one-third think that intercultural dialogue involves the prevention of discrimination against members of various minority groups; 17.3% understand it as the prevention of hate speech in the media, 16.5% as cultural events presenting the cultural creativity of various communities, 14.4% as respect for linguistic differences, 10.7% as enabling minority groups to create media content in their own language and establish their media outlets, and 9.9% as inclusion of learning about and accepting different cultures in school curricula.

The other options offered were chosen by less than 10% of respondents each. Nine point five percent of respondents think that intercultural dialogue is the protection of traditional values; 4.5% think that it involves special rights for minority groups, 2.5% that it involves special residential neighborhoods for people belonging to the same minority group, and 2.4% that it means setting aside for minority group members a certain number of jobs and places at universities and on campuses.

CHART 28: HOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE? (N = 1,281)

( ■ SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES ■ NATURAL SCIENCES ■ ALL)



Other	
■	0.8%
■	0.8%
■	0.8%
Too many answers	
■	0.5%
■	0.4%
■	0.5%

25. The last question was intended to check the respondents' understanding of the media's role in society. We offered eight statements to which they could indicate their agreement on a 5 point scale (1 – I do not agree at all, 2 – I do not agree, 3 – I neither agree nor disagree, 4 – I agree, 5 – I fully agree).

The respondents indicated the highest level of agreement with the statement that the media stimulated consumerism, where the mean value of agreement was 4.31 (4.44 among females and 4.18 among males, which is a statistically significant difference between genders), and that the media are a means of promoting political interests, where the mean value was 4.11 (4.14 among females and 4.07 among males).

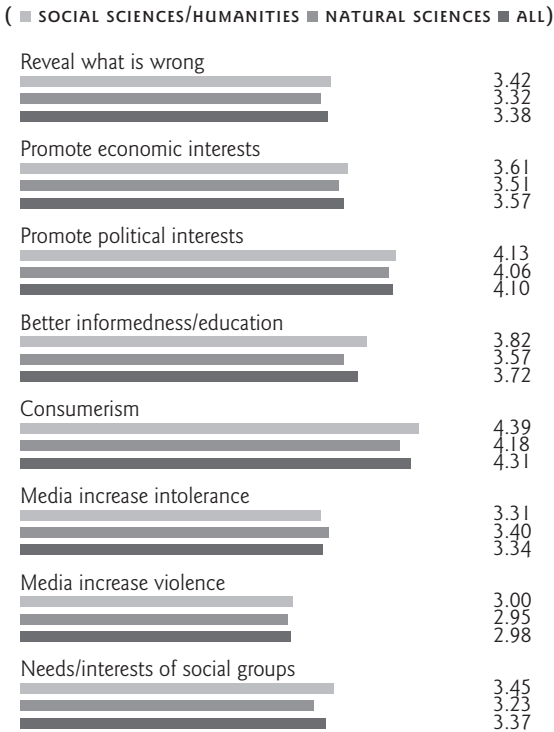
Five statements have mean values between 3 and 4, so it is possible to say that the respondents agreed with them, but to a lesser degree than with the two statements mentioned above.

- 3.72 – Media help people become better informed and educated (3.56 among females, 3.88 among males). The difference between genders is statistically significant.
- 3.57 – Media are a means of promoting economic interests (3.56 among females, and 3.58 among males).
- 3.38 – Media reveal things that are wrong within society (3.27 among females, and 3.49 among males; the difference between genders is statistically significant).
- 3.37 – Media help people become better informed about and better understand the needs and interests of various social groups and communities (3.19 among females, and 3.54 among males; the difference between genders is statistically significant).
- 3.34 – Media contribute to the increase in social intolerance (3.35 among females, and 3.33 among males).

Only the statement that the media contribute to an increase in social violence has a mean value below 3, i.e. 2.98, so it is possible to say that our respondents do not agree with it (2.94 among females, and 3.03 among males).

A more detailed analysis of answers revealed a difference relating to the statement that the media uncover things that are wrong within society. This difference occurs between respondents who watch *POP TV* and those who watch *Kanal A*, between those who watch *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1* and those who watch *Kanal A*, and between those who watch *Televizija Slovenija Channel 2* and those who watch *Kanal A*. Similarly, a statistically significant difference occurs in relation to the statement that the media are a means of promoting political interests, between the viewers of *POP TV* and those of *Televizija Slovenia Channel 1* and 2, and in relation to the statement that the media help people become better informed and educated, between the viewers of *Televizija Slovenia Channel 1* and those of *Kanal A*.

CHART 29: WHAT SOCIAL ROLE DO  
THE MEDIA PLAY IN SOCIETY? (N = 1,281)



## CONCLUSION

The results of the survey show that female students read the print media (both dailies and weeklies) more regularly than male students, and this difference is statistically significant. Over the past year, the daily *Žurnal24* established itself firmly and overtook its competitors, which can be partly attributed to the fact that it is a free daily. *Slovenske novice* has the most even geographical distribution among the student readership, given that it is read evenly across all university centers, in contrast to other dailies which find most readers among students who reside in the towns where they are published. Student readership of weeklies is sadly low, given that 76.4% of respondents did not list any weekly, and that this figure is down by 13.2% compared to the previous survey.

The top ranking of *Radio 1* is surprising, given that it has been on the air for just under one year and in a very competitive environment. The respondents cited as many as 62 radio stations or programs.

Within the television program segment, the greatest leap forward was made by *Kanal A*, whose viewers among the student population have almost doubled in number since 2007 (from 10.4% to 18.3%), meaning that it overtook *Televizija Slovenija Channel 2* and *TV3*, which was added to the list only this year.

The ranking of news programs underwent the greatest changes. The *24ur* news program retained its leading position, although it lost almost 10% of viewers (80% down to 70.2% this year). It is followed by the *Svet* broadcast (on *Kanal A*), whose number of viewers among the student population almost doubled (from 20.2% in 2007 to 40.2% this year). *24ur zvečer* is third on the list (35.8%). The latter two newscasts outstripped the prime time news program *Dnevnik on Televizija Slovenija* (45.4% in 2007, down to 29.8% this year). The *Odmevi* news program on *Televizija Slovenija* slipped to sixth position (27% in 2007, 16.7% this year), and was even outstripped by foreign news programs (16.9% in 2007, 22.6% this year).

The reach of Internet among the surveyed population is nearly 100%, which is a very positive development. Mobile phones continue to have two primary functions: calls and text messaging.

The overview of media content showed an interesting picture, given that a relatively large proportion of students look for more demanding content and genres in the print media and on television. Accordingly, both newspaper and television editors should pay heed to their needs, since this gives them an opportunity to attract and retain more demanding readers and viewers. This is also confirmed by the range of factors taken into account by students when choosing media, where quality/originality of authors, impartiality/credibility and in-depth reporting lead the list.

The level of trust in the media is not very high, as 61.7% of respondents thought that the media were not unbiased in reporting political issues. Students in the social sciences and the humanities were more critical of media reports than students in natural sciences.

The results of the survey clearly show that students react when media content agitates them. Being members of the new generation, they most frequently voice their disagreement on online forums (9.8%), but they also make use of other methods which require more personal engagement.

As regards the perception of the role the media play in society, the negative impact produced by the media is emphasized – the highest level of agreement was expressed with the statement that the media encourage consumerism. It should be added here that female students were more optimistic than males regarding the supervisory and educational role of the media, as well as their role in encouraging understanding among different communities.

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## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

1 HOW OFTEN DO YOU FOLLOW NEWS ON DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLITICAL EVENTS (*circle*)?

- a Less than once a week
- b Once or twice a week
- c Three to five times a week
- d Every day
- e Never

2 WHICH SOURCES OF INFORMATION DO YOU USE MOST FREQUENTLY?

- a Daily newspaper (*title*).....
- b Weekly newspaper (*title*).....
- c Radio station (*name*).....
- d Television station (*name*).....
- e Web site (*name*).....
- f Blog (*name*).....
- g Other (*name*).....
- h I do not use any

3 WHICH TELEVISION NEWS PROGRAMS DO YOU WATCH? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a 24 ur
- b 24 ur zvečer
- c TV Dnevnik
- d Odmevi
- e Info TV
- f Svet
- g Foreign news programs
- h Other (*name*).....
- i I do not watch any

4 TO WHICH RADIO NEWS PROGRAMS DO YOU LISTEN? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a News programs on Radio Slovenija
- b News programs on a local or regional radio station
- c News programs on a commercial radio station
- d News programs on a student radio station
- e Foreign radio news programs

- f Other (name).....
- g I do not listen to any

5 HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THE INTERNET? (*circle*)

- a Less than once a week
- b Once or twice a week
- c Three to five times a week
- d Ever day
- e Never

6 WHERE DO YOU USUALLY USE THE INTERNET?  
(*circle*)

- a At home
- b At the university
- c At a library
- d In public places (*Internet cafés, WiFi hotspots etc.*)
- e I do not use it

7 WHAT DO YOU MOST FREQUENTLY USE THE INTERNET FOR? (*circle three answers*)

- a To send/receive e-mail
- b To search for daily news
- c To chat
- d To study
- e For Internet telephony
- f To seek out people with similar interests
- g For entertainment
- h To edit my web page/blog/profile etc.
- i To take part in online forums/comments etc.
- j I do not use it

8 DO YOU READ BLOGS?

- a Yes
- b No

9 IF YOU READ BLOGS, PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH BLOGS YOU READ.

.....

I 0 WHICH OF THE LISTED WEB CONTENT DO YOU CREATE/EDIT?

- a Blog
- b Web page
- c Profile (*Facebook, Myspace etc.*)
- d I post photos and/or video clips (*e.g. on YouTube*)
- e Other (*list*) .....
- f I do not create/edit web content

I 1 FOR WHAT PURPOSES DO YOU USE A MOBILE PHONE? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a To make calls
- b To send SMS/MMS
- c To take and/or send photos
- d To access the Internet
- e To access my e-mail
- f Other (*name*).....
- g I do not use it

I 2 DO YOU USE A MOBILE PHONE TO ACCESS MEDIA CONTENT (*e.g. information portals, web sites of media companies etc.*)?

- a Yes
- b No
- c I do not use a mobile phone

I 3 TO WHICH TOPICS OR MEDIA CONTENT DO YOU DEVOTE MOST ATTENTION? (*circle up to three answers*)

- a Domestic politics
- b Foreign politics
- c Social issues
- d Environment/ecology
- e Local news
- f Culture/arts
- g Science/technology
- h Economy/finance/stock exchange
- i Crime
- j Sport
- k Celebrity topics
- l Health advice
- m Lifestyle
- n None of these

I 4 WHICH TOPICS OR CONTENT DO YOU FIND MISSING IN THE MEDIA OR WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE EXTENSIVELY COVERED? (*circle up to three answers*)

- a Domestic politics
- b Foreign politics
- c Social issues
- d Environment/ecology
- e Local news
- f Culture/arts
- g Science/technology
- h Economy/finance/stock exchange
- i Crime
- j Sport
- k Celebrity topics
- l Health advice
- m Lifestyle
- n None of these

I 5 WHICH TELEVISION GENRES DO YOU WATCH MOST FREQUENTLY? (*circle up to three answers*)

- a News
- b Cultural/arts programs
- c Documentaries
- d Talk shows
- e Serials and/or series
- f Telenovelas
- g Films
- h Religious programs
- i Entertainment shows
- j Reality shows
- k Sport
- l Weather
- m None of these

I 6 WHICH TELEVISION GENRES DO YOU FIND UNDER-REPRESENTED ON TELEVISION SCHEDULES OR WISH TO SEE MORE OF? (*circle up to three answers*)

- a News
- b Cultural and/or arts programs
- c Documentaries
- d Talk shows
- e Serials and/or series

- f Telenovelas
- g Films
- h Religious programs
- i Entertainment shows
- j Reality shows
- k Sport
- l Weather
- m None of these

I 7 WHICH ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CRITERIA YOU OBSERVE IN CHOOSING PARTICULAR MEDIA AS AN INFORMATION SOURCE (*a newspaper, a radio station, a television station or a web site*)? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a Impartiality and credibility
- b Independence from political interests
- c Independence from economic interests
- d In-depth reporting on selected topics
- e Price or access fee
- f Quality and originality of individual authors (*journalists, commentators etc.*)
- g Similarity of particular outlet's political viewpoints to my viewpoints
- h Other (*specify*).....
- i I do not know

I 8 DO YOU THINK THAT SLOVENIAN MEDIA REPORTING OF POLITICAL EVENTS IS UNBIASED?

- a Yes
- b No
- c I do not know

I 9 WHICH PUBLIC ISSUE HAS ATTRACTED YOUR ATTENTION DURING THIS YEAR (*not necessarily an issue covered by the media, but an issue you think is of local, national or global importance*)?

- a Specify the issue.....
- b No public issue attracted my attention

20 IN WHICH MEDIA DID YOU FIND MOST INFORMATION ON THAT ISSUE?

- a Daily newspaper (*title*).....
- b Weekly newspaper (*title*).....
- c Radio station (*name*).....
- d Television station (*name*).....
- e Web site (*name*).....
- f Blog (*name*).....
- g Other (*name*).....
- h I could not find information on that issue in the media

21 IF THE ISSUE THAT ATTRACTED YOUR ATTENTION PROMPTED YOU TO ACT, WHAT DID YOU DO? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a I made a call/wrote a letter to a relevant institution and voiced my opinion or protest
- b I sent a public letter or a petition to a relevant institution, dispatched it to various media and/or a larger number of recipients concerned with that public area
- c I expressed my opinion on that issue in an online forum
- d I wrote a letter for the "readers' letters" section
- e I made a call to a radio or television program
- f I initiated a round table discussion or a protest
- g I took part in a round table discussion or a protest (*rally, demonstration etc.*)
- h I wrote a letter regarding the issue to a local or national governmental representative
- i I boycotted a product/service/event
- j I signed a petition
- k Other (*specify what*).....
- l No issue prompted me to act

22 HAVE YOU EVER FILED A COMPLAINT ABOUT MEDIA CONTENT THAT YOU FOUND UNACCEPTABLE?

- a Yes
- b No
- c I have not identified such content in the media

23 HOW DID YOU COMPLAIN AGAINST MEDIA CONTENT?

- a The right of correction and reply
- b Reader's letter
- c A call and/or a letter to the editor and/or a journalist
- d Complaint filed to the RTV Slovenija Programming Council
- e Complaint filed to the Journalists' Ethics Commission
- f Complaint to the media inspectorate
- g Other (*specify*).....
- h I have not identified such content in the media

24 WHAT IN YOUR OPINION DOES THE TERM "INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE" MEAN? (*circle up to three answers which in your opinion define this notion*)

- a Coexistence, getting familiar with and having respect for other cultures
- b Communication among the members of various communities (*ethnic, religious, and others*)
- c Cultural events presenting cultural creativity of various communities
- d Respect for language differences
- e School curricula promoting knowledge about various cultures and their acceptance
- f Ensuring possibilities for minority groups to create media content and have media outlets in their own language
- g Prevention of discrimination against members of various communities
- h Ensuring special rights for the members of minority communities
- i Protection of traditional values
- j Setting up of separate residential neighborhoods for individual communities
- k Ensuring a certain number of job positions and places at universities and campuses (quotas) for members of minority communities
- l Prevention of hate speech in the media targeted at members of various communities
- m Other (*specify*) .....
- n I do not know

25 TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH THE STATEMENTS BELOW? Indicate your agreement by the numbers 1 to 5, as follows: 1 – I do not agree at all, 2 – I do not agree, 3 – I neither agree nor disagree, 4 – I agree, 5 – I fully agree.

- a Media reveal things that are wrong within society  
1            2            3            4            5
- b Media are a means of promoting economic interests  
1            2            3            4            5
- c Media are a means of promoting political interests  
1            2            3            4            5
- d Media help people become better informed and educated  
1            2            3            4            5
- e Media stimulate consumerism  
1            2            3            4            5
- f Media contribute to the increase of intolerance in society  
1            2            3            4            5
- g Media contribute to the increase of violence in society  
1            2            3            4            5
- h Media enhance knowledge about and understanding of the needs and interests of various social groups and communities  
1            2            3            4            5

GENDER (circle):    F            M  
 YEAR OF BIRTH: .....





# ETHNIC MINORITIES AND THE MEDIA

NEVA NAHTIGAL

## INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this part of the study is to stimulate further discussion of the important and topical issue of minorities' communication rights. The MediaWatch series, published by the Peace Institute, has so far concentrated on the issues of reporting on minorities and inclusion of minorities in the media system in Slovenia. On this occasion, we look into media usage and media perception among minorities. In this research study, and within the given possibilities, when defining minorities we concentrated on ethnicity, primarily ethnicity as a means of communicating one's cultural identity.<sup>1</sup> In treating this subject, we started from deliberation on multiculturalism, social inclusion and exclusion and the role of the media in a multicultural society.<sup>2</sup>

One of the most renowned theorists of multiculturalism, Will Kymlicka, analyzes the situation and special rights of minority national and ethnic communities in multicultural societies by dividing these rights into the right to self-government, special (political) representation, and polyethnic rights (Kymlicka 1995: 29-32). The last mentioned rights are usually intended to facilitate the integration of minorities into a wider society, in order to, "*help ethnic groups and religious minorities express their cultural particularity and pride without hampering their success in the economic and political institutions of the dominant society*" (Kymlicka 1995, 31). Husband (2000: 204) mentions state support for media policies and funding of projects addressing the interests of minority ethnic groups in the media field as a special expression of polyethnic rights. In Husband's words (2000: 212), this

- 1 The notions of ethnicity, nationality, culture, majority, minority and the like are by no means monosemic and an entire essay could be dedicated to their interpretations, but this would be beyond the scope of this study. Although we are assuming a very generalized definition of ethnicity in this context, one particular problem associated with any approach to a study of ethnic communities needs to be highlighted: "The term ethnic community can enclose or delimit a group of people to which it refers within its ethnicity, and in this way conceal its multiple identities and its liberty/right to self-determination." (Medved 2003: 457) That this could be a problem and that ethnicity is primarily a matter of self-determination was proved during the distribution of our questionnaire. Several addressees called us on the phone to protest because we referred to them as members of ethnic minority groups. One individual whom we contacted in writing through a cultural association of a minority group, asked: "And when can I expect to be able to say that I'm a Slovene?"
- 2 The questionnaire on which this study was based did not define the term "media" and did not restrict it to the meaning found in Article 2 of the Mass Media Act. When we asked about the minority media, it is possible that in giving their answers our respondents also had in mind the bulletins published by minority associations not covered by the Mass Media Act. Apart from that, our questions about media consumption also referred to blogs, meaning that we went beyond the legislative framework. In this report, too, we use the notion of media that is wider than covered by law.

support involves the reduction or elimination of economic, professional and political restrictions on media usage as the main road to participation in the public sphere. Although good in itself, writes Husband, it is not sufficient for a multi-ethnic public sphere. Husband also emphasizes public service radio and television as necessary complementary elements of media landscapes.

A (functional) multi-ethnic or multi-cultural media sphere would be one in which cultural minorities have comprehensive access to the media, and there are several indicators that can be used to monitor this (see Petković, 2002).<sup>3</sup> Such an environment would make it possible to establish, at least through the media, an active intercultural dialogue, which is a prerequisite for the cohesion of multi-cultural societies and a policy of multiculturalism. Precisely during the period in which we conducted our survey, this subject received more attention than usual because of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008).<sup>4</sup> The international relevance of these issues is also confirmed by the UNESCO's Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression,<sup>5</sup> which came into effect in March 2007. Article 2 defines "cultural rights" as freedom of expression, information and communication and the ability of individuals to choose cultural expressions. Among the basic conditions for cultural diversity defined by this convention is free access to the media, which is also a condition for the maintenance of intercultural dialogue.<sup>6</sup>

3 In referring to indicators that can be used in monitoring the protection of minorities' rights in the media field, Petković (2002) lists minorities' access to the mainstream media (both public and privately owned), the operation of minority media and media reporting on minority-related topics. When analyzing these indicators, Petković (ibid.) first mentions establishing of the extent of programs and sections in the mainstream media which deal with topics that are significant for minorities, are intended for minorities and created by members of minority groups. What is important in this process is that minorities have access not only to the print media but also to radio and television programs. Other issues include who creates programs for minorities within the main broadcasting media companies and content for minorities in general, i.e. to what extent minority journalists are included in the production process, and the participation of minority representatives in decision-making processes.

4 See, e.g., [http://www.mk.gov.si/si/evropsko\\_letno\\_medkulturnega\\_dialoga\\_2008/](http://www.mk.gov.si/si/evropsko_letno_medkulturnega_dialoga_2008/).

5 See [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=11281&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11281&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).

6 In 2008, the European Commission sponsored a study on the unfolding and understanding of intercultural dialogue in Europe. The following is the definition from that study: "Intercultural dialogue is a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange or interaction between individuals, groups and organisations with different cultural backgrounds or world views. Among its aims are: to develop a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and practices; to increase participation and the freedom and ability to make choices; to foster equality; and to enhance creative processes." (ERICarts 2008: xiii) Intercultural dialogue should exceed mere "tolerance of the other" and can involve creative abilities that convert challenges and insights into innovation processes and new forms of expression. Media are part of "shared spaces" in which such processes may take place (ibid.).

Even as theories on functional and cohesive multiculturalism are formulated, “(r)esearch on underprivileged groups reports that a number of cultural attributes can serve as an exclusion factor, while some cultural identities are clear exclusion factors in all societies, including race and ethnicity, whose ‘popularity’ is heavily dependent on a specific social context” (Zavratnik Zimic, 2000: 834). Researchers of the situation of minorities in Slovenia have also identified “a very reserved, often even negative attitude of the majority population towards expressions of ethnic diversity in public” (Žagar et al 2006: 10). One of the latest studies in this field is the Eurobarometer survey that investigated discrimination within the EU. Of the 27 countries included, only three countries are behind Slovenia in terms of the proportion of people who think that people of a different ethnic origin than the rest of the population living in the country enrich the national culture.<sup>7</sup>

It seems that the conclusion to which researchers arrived in 2003, that the perception of Slovenian society as a multi-ethnic formation has not yet found its place among ethnic Slovenes (Komac 2005a: 233), is still valid. Analyzing concrete media reporting, Ksenija H. Vidmar (2006: 581) writes: “Multiculturalism is not a question of good will. It requires the transformation of the knowledge-power apparatus: institutions, schools, media. The media play a key role in disseminating multicultural views and discourses, as well as in shaping and educating multicultural awareness.” Our survey presented in this publication attempts to shed some light on the portrait of Slovenian media.

So far, no wider research on media usage and perception among minorities has been carried out in Slovenia. The survey presented here was conducted within the limited

<sup>7</sup> Forty-eight percent of Slovenian respondents in the Eurobarometer survey agreed with the statement that people of other-than-Slovenian ethnic backgrounds enrich Slovenian culture. Lower proportions of those agreeing with this statement were found in Austria, Cyprus and Malta. In all other 23 countries participating in this research, the proportion of those who agreed with a similar statement about their country exceeded 50%. This proportion was the highest in Sweden, where 86% of respondents agreed with the statement. The EU average was 65%. (See [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_263\\_sum\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_263_sum_en.pdf)). To turn to the ethnic variety within the Slovenian population, we can cite the 2002 census: of the 1,766,982 citizens altogether who specified their nationality, 1,631,363 self-declared as Slovenes (the total number of the population was 1,964,036) (source: The Statistical Office of the RS). Members of non-Slovene ethnic groups can be divided into two main groups (although this is an impoverished picture of the ethnic structure of the population!): “the historical national minorities (referred to as autochthonous national communities in the Constitution, without an explanation of the adjective autochthonous), and ‘new’ national communities. The historical national minorities group comprises the Italian, Hungarian and Romany national communities. The ‘new’ national minorities comprise members of former Yugoslav nations who migrated to Slovenia throughout its entire history, with this migration being especially intense since the mid 1960s and primarily driven by economic motives.” (Komac, Medvešek 2005: i)

scope of options available to the non-governmental sector. In Great Britain, for example, the approach to this issue is quite different. There, the main media regulator, Ofcom, focuses on this issue systematically and has at its disposal all the resources necessary. Minorities' media usage was part of their research on media literacy. They focused on the four largest minority ethnic groups, using the representative sample that reflected the age structure and geographical distribution in accordance with the 2001 census. Towards the end of 2007, they conducted 1,200 interviews with members of minority communities and presented their media usage in a report published in 2008. Their general conclusion is that ethnic minorities differ greatly in their media usage; on the whole, they make less use of the traditional media than other populations in Great Britain (for example, they read newspapers less), but use the Internet more than others. This is partly explained by the younger age structure of ethnic minorities. An important detail that framed Ofcom's research study is their understanding of access to the media which, rather than defining it as mere availability or take-up of the platforms, focuses on users' "interest, awareness, usage and competence." (Ofcom 2008: 12)

As already mentioned, neither the past research studies in Slovenia nor the current one can provide data comparable to those obtained in Great Britain. One research study that did look into media usage to a limited extent was the study conducted by the Institute for Ethnic Studies in 2003 among members of "new minorities" in Slovenia.<sup>8</sup> Television usage was found to be most widespread, followed by radio and print media usage, with the latter being modest across all ethnic groups and regardless of other social characteristics (place of birth, age, education) (Komac 2005: 385-9). The results also showed that "*the number of those who use (read regularly or occasionally) the print media published by national minorities is extremely small, except among the respondents who self-declared as Muslims and/or Bosniaks.*" (ibid.: 396) Komac attributes this to the fact that this group is relatively best self-organized in this respect, which makes their access to minority media easier, and to the mainstream media's "aver-

<sup>8</sup> The sample used in the study of the Perception of Slovenian Integration Politics was created using the method of simple random sampling based on the database of applications for Slovenian citizenship. The plan was to include 4000 persons in the sample, but the sampling framework was largely obsolete. After cleaning the sample the researchers also had to cope with many difficulties during the implementation of the study, so the ultimate analysis was done on 1163 completed and usable questionnaires. (see Komac, Medvešek 2005: 3-10)

sion” to Muslim/Bosniak issues, “*which forces members of this group to turn to their own ethnic or media circles in order to obtain information*” (ibid.). On the other hand, members of the most “stigmatized” ethnic groups, i.e. Bosniaks (Muslims) and Serbs, were also those who most emphasized their wish to enter the Slovenian media space via public service television, among them particularly people up to 30, with university education and born in Slovenia (ibid.:392).

## RESEARCH APPROACH

The basic tool in this survey was a questionnaire on media usage and attitudes towards the media, which was, with few exceptions, the same for all the three groups included in this research.<sup>9</sup> The questionnaire for national and ethnic majorities included additional questions concerning minority media, minority-oriented content in the mainstream media, and their perception of information provision on the part of the majority media.<sup>10</sup> The questionnaire was dispatched to the addresses of minority organizations and individual members of minorities stored in our own databases and provided by the Ministry of Culture and individual minority organizations. We contacted them in writing and by phone, asking for their assistance in distributing the questionnaire. Accordingly, the questionnaire reached the participants in the survey mainly by the snowball method, through minority members who were willing to support this survey.<sup>11</sup> Our approach to data gathering, which was the only one possible within the given framework, has a number of methodological deficiencies, and the sampling method does not allow for the generalization of findings to minority groups in general.

Since after extensive consultations within the project team we decided not to include the question on ethnic or national affiliation (and, on the whole, the questionnaire was anonymous), we do not know to which minorities our respondents belong, and consequently, we did not treat separately the recognized and the non-recognized minorities, i.e. the constitutionally collectively protected minorities as opposed to the non-protected minorities. The difference between them with respect to collective rights is great, with access to the media being just one among the many fields where this difference is manifested.<sup>12</sup> Differences in the

9 This project also included research among first-year university students in Slovenia and among MPs in the National Assembly of Slovenia.

10 The questionnaire is given in the appendix.

11 We began with the distribution of questionnaires on July 1, 2008, and concluded it on August 20. Each questionnaire was accompanied by an explanation of the purpose and process of the research study, plus a stamped envelope addressed to the Peace Institute for completed questionnaires.

12 The Slovenian system of legal protection of minorities is three-dimensional: (1) a relatively complete legal protection of the Italian and Hungarian national minorities, including individual and collective protection; in addition to constitutional provisions, there exist around 80 laws and regulations referring to these two minorities. The legislation ensures, among other things, bilinguality in nationally mixed regions, self-governance for both minorities, and special political representation on the local level and in Parliament; (2) as regards the Roma community, there is a special constitutional provision stipulating that the status of this community should



status of individual minority groups that were not obvious from their written answers transpired later, during in-depth interviews held with individuals after the initial processing of survey results.<sup>13</sup>

The quality of data would undoubtedly be better had we used structured personal interviews instead of written questionnaires, given that many questions remained unanswered, or the participants did not closely observe the instructions, for example, on the limited number of possible answers. Although in the part summarizing the results we do not point out the type of individual questions, let us mention that the majority of questions were of the closed-ended type (with possible answers provided).

This report contains only selected highlights of the survey findings, that is to say, it focuses on the questions that in the questionnaire for minorities differed from those in the questionnaire for the other two groups included in this research study.

The final sample consisted of 216 respondents (approximately one-third of all the questionnaires distributed were completed); of these, 121 respondents were males and

be regulated by law; for more than one and a half decades, the status of this community was partially regulated by sectoral legislation, while the umbrella law on the Roma community was passed in 2007; (3) as to all other communities, there exists only a rudimentary model protecting ethnic and cultural identity on the individual level and based on universal, constitutionally provided ethnic and cultural individual rights defined in Article 61 and 62 of the Constitution (adapted after Komac, Medvešek 2005: i-ii and Žagar et al. 2006: 20). Article 61 of the Slovenian Constitution stipulates: "Everyone has the right to freely express affiliation with his nation or national community, to foster and give expression to his culture, and to use his language and script." Article 62 stipulates: "Everyone has the right to use his language and script in a manner provided by law in the exercise of his rights and duties and in procedures before state and other authorities performing a public function." The outlined basic legal regulation has been transposed onto the media landscape. Media activities of recognized national minorities, i.e. the Italian and Hungarian minorities, are legally regulated so their regular funding from the state budget is ensured. The situation of the Roma community in this respect has been improving over the past decade although in a piecemeal fashion (see, e.g., Petković 2005). New minorities are protected only on the individual level, and state institutions reject requests for funding their media activities referring to the absence of legal basis. An exception is a special department within the Ministry of Culture, which provides limited funding for programming activities of cultural associations, including those of national minorities not mentioned in the Constitutions, and of immigrants. (Kržišnik Bukič 2003: 32) For more on disproportional funding of various minorities' media activities see, e.g., Petković 2005: 30.

<sup>13</sup> In-depth interviews were mainly conducted in person during November 2008; some were conducted by phone (and recorded). All the interviews adhered to the same basic structure, with identical questions prepared beforehand. Each respondent was asked several additional questions depending on his/her function or role within a minority community or wider. The respondents were between 30 and 66 years old, and all were quite active media users. For example, they consume news on political events on a daily basis. Most of them also use the Internet regularly. In addition, we conducted several shorter informative conversations by phone and on the occasion of various public events.

93 females.<sup>14</sup> The average age was 47.4 years. The greatest number of participants, 57, were born between 1948 and 1957.<sup>15</sup>

The analyses of media content indicate that media reports dealing with minorities rarely use members of minority groups as sources of information (see, e.g., Kuhar 2006, Makarovič, Rončević 2006, Erjavec, Bašić Hrvatinić, Kelbl 2000). Despite this, nearly one-fourth (52) of participants in our survey stated that they had already talked to journalists in the past or had been their sources of information.<sup>16</sup> This finding may be related to the method we used to disseminate the questionnaires. We assume that a large part of those who filled the questionnaire were active, some of them leading, members of minority cultural organizations, and hence more exposed and more easily identified by journalists as relevant sources of information.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, more than one-fifth (45) of participants had already been involved in the media as authors of media content. We did not seek to establish the type of mass media to which they had contributed content (e.g. a periodical published by a minority organization or broadcasts on national radio or television), nor whether their contribution was a one-off event or a regular practice. What we do know, however, is that our invitation to participate in the survey went to several minority media editorial boards, and that some took a collective decision to take part.

Our restrictions meant that the circle of our interviewees was also narrower than would be one suitably representing all minority groups in Slovenia. Nevertheless, the obtained answers can be useful as an insight into the opinion of a group of individuals who identify within themselves a different cultural identity, or identify themselves with a cultural identity that is different from that of the majority of other citizens, and who take an active approach to minority

14 Two respondents did not specify their gender.

15 We did not seek to establish other demographics, but it might be better to take a different approach in the future, since expanded demographics enable a better insight and a greater comparability with other research studies, which usually point to differences depending on participants' education and frequently on their place of residence (urban, rural etc.) and other details.

16 Our question was: "Have you ever spoken about the situation of national/ethnic communities in Slovenia to a media outlet or journalist?" Fifty-two (24.1%) respondents gave an affirmative answer.

17 Research on the perception of Slovenian integration policy dating from 2003 showed that the level of participation in the activities of these associations was actually rather low. Only 3.2% of respondents stated that they were active members of cultural associations, while 42% indicated that they were not interested at all in the activities of cultural associations of ethnic/national minorities (taken from Žagar et al. 2006: 47).

issues. The group of interviewees included several editors and regular contributors collaborating with minority media and/or RTV Slovenia.<sup>18</sup>

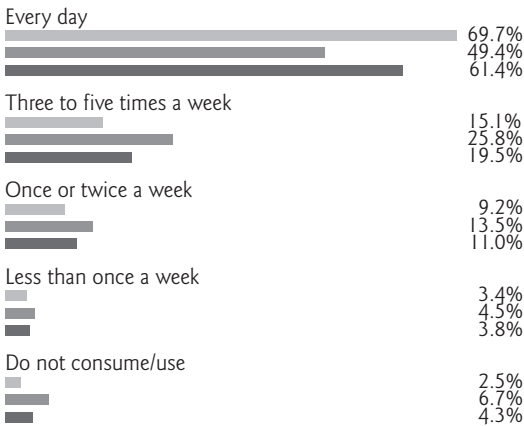
<sup>18</sup> We also relied on many other sources. We went through the documents of international organizations, resolutions, reports and similar texts by Slovenian state institutions, results of public opinion surveys in Europe, scholarly and numerous other written sources. It is not possible to mention all of them in this report, but it should be noted that these sources were of great help in designing the questionnaire and in analyzing and interpreting the results, together with the responses from our interviewees.

## MEDIA USAGE AND GENERAL VIEWPOINTS

Before we proceed to specific questions related to minorities, let us describe briefly the structure of participants with regard to their media usage and general viewpoints on the media.

The majority consume information about domestic and foreign political issues on a daily basis (Chart 1). This response was selected by the predominant proportion of both men and women, although the proportion of men was much higher (the differences are statistically significant). The proportion of male respondents who consume news every day is 69.7%, compared to 49.4% of women. The second most frequently chosen answer (by nearly one-fifth of all participants) was that they consumed news three to five times a week (approximately one-fourth of women and 15% of men). Nine of the 216 total participants answered that they did not consume news.

CHART 1: DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLITICAL NEWS CONSUMPTION  
BY GENDER (N=216)  
( ■ MEN ■ WOMEN ■ ALL)

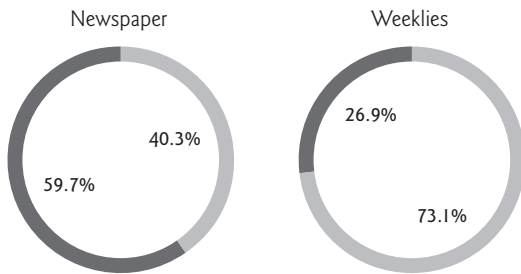


We asked the respondents to indicate the concrete sources of information they most frequently used. Since one of the answers offered was “I do not use the media,” it is possible to conclude with much certainty that not providing an answer in relation to a particular type of media means that the respondent does not normally use that type of media as

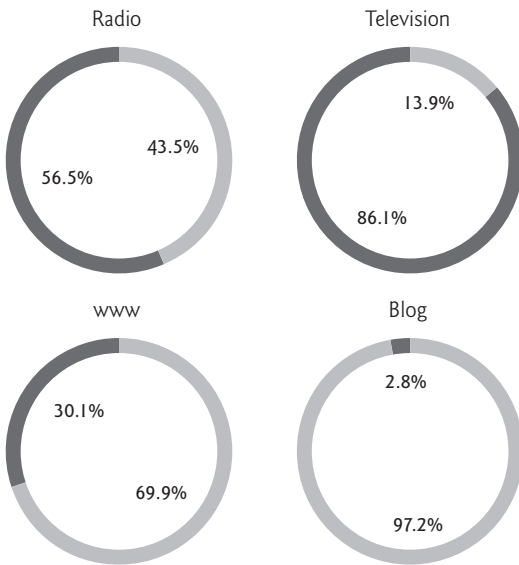
a source of information. If we start from this interpretation of the absence of certain answers, it is possible to conclude that 40% of respondents do not read daily newspapers (the proportion of women non-users is greater, i.e. 47.3% compared to 34.7% of men); nearly three-quarters (73.1% or 158 altogether) of respondents do not read weeklies, and 94 participants (43.5%) did not cite any radio stations as the most frequently used source of information. Television programs are the most frequently used source of information - not cited as such by only 30 respondents (13.9%). The *least frequently* used sources of information are online sources – 151 respondents, or slightly less than 70%, do not use web sites, and only six of the 216 total respondents cited blogs as the source of information they most frequently use.

Differences with regard to the age of media users are noticeable. The proportions of regular media users in the youngest age group (up to 29) are as a rule lower than proportions of older users. The only exception are users of various web sites, where the proportion of younger respondents is much higher. In the age group over 60, the web is used as a source of information by only three (6.4% of all) respondents, but even in the youngest age group less than one half of respondents use the web (48.7%).<sup>19</sup>

CHART 2: THE PROPORTIONS OF USERS AND NON-USERS OF SPECIFIC MEDIA (N=216)  
(■ DO NOT USE ■ USE)



<sup>19</sup> One-fourth (54 of 216 respondents) indeed stated that they never used the Internet. In general, female respondents in our survey use the Internet more than men. Those who do use it mainly seek daily news or send e-mails (45.4% of all respondents use it for both purposes mentioned), followed by entertainment (21.3%). Another question was about the active use of the Internet, i.e. creation of web content. The majority of respondents (62.5%) answered that they did not create web content, while others mainly edited web pages (28 respondents or 13.0%), created personal profiles on Facebook, MySpace and the like (such profiles are maintained by 20 respondents, or 9.3%); 16 respondents published photos or video clips on the web (e.g. on YouTube).



For all types of media except television, the majority of media users in our survey named just one title (program/channel, site) as the most frequent source of information. As regards television, the proportions of those who named one source and those who named two sources were almost the same (26.8% and 27.1%). This category also included the highest proportion of respondents who used regularly four sources or more.<sup>20</sup>

We further asked the respondents to circle the television news programs which they watched regularly, and they could choose several answers. It turned out that the great majority (168 respondents or 79.2%) watched regularly more than one news program, and this was frequently a combination of newscasts on the national and a commercial television channel, even if occupying the same time slots. The prime time news program on a commercial channel is watched by more respondents than prime time news on national television. Foreign news programs are also watched rather extensively, by nearly one-third of participants.

Nearly one-third of respondents listen to national public radio (*Radio Slovenija*) programs, with the proportion of listeners in the oldest group being much higher than the

<sup>20</sup> While with other types of media this proportion ranges between 0.5% and slightly more than 2%, 16.0% of respondents cited four or more television programs.

proportion of listeners in the youngest group (42.6% compared to 23.1%); in the case of commercial radio station, this ratio is inversed. The news programs on *Radio Slovenja* have the largest listenership among our respondents, 101 of them, followed by the news programs on local radio stations; 17.4% of participants do not listen to radio news.

One question referred to the most important criteria used in choosing particular media (Chart 3). Impartiality and credibility was the most frequently chosen criterion (96 or 46.4% of respondents), followed by independence from political interests (42% or 87 respondents), in-depth reporting (75 or 36.2% of respondents), the quality and originality of individual authors (68 or 32.9% of respondents), and finally, focus on topics that are important for minorities (48 or 23.2% of respondents).

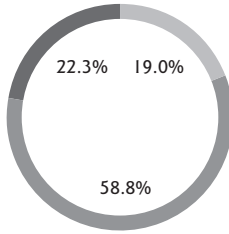
CHART 3: CRITERIA USED IN CHOOSING PARTICULAR MEDIA  
(N=216)

Impartiality/credibility	46.4%
Independence from political interests	42.0%
In-depth reporting	36.2%
Quality/originality of authors	32.9%
Minority-oriented topics	23.2%
Independence from economic interests	16.9%
Price	13.0%
Do not know	10.6%
Similarity of viewpoints	10.1%
Other	1.4%

Given the importance attached to impartiality and credibility, it is interesting to see how our respondents answered the question asking whether media reporting on political events was unbiased (Chart 4). The majority gave a negative answer – 124 respondents (58.8%) said that these reports were not unbiased, i.e. more than threefold the number of those who had the opposite opinion, i.e. that the media *are* unbiased (40 respondents or 19%). More than one-fifth of

respondents (47 of 216) said that they did not know whether or not the reporting was biased.

**CHART 4: ARE THE MEDIA UNBIASED? (N=216)**  
( ■ YES ■ NO ■ DO NOT KNOW)



The predominantly negative opinion on the bias of the media in reporting political events was confirmed when our respondents were asked to assess various statements about the media. One statement was that the media were a means of promoting political interests. The respondents indicated their level of agreement on a 5-point scale (1- do not agree, 5- fully agree). The highest level of agreement was expressed with the statement that the media were a means of promoting political interests. The average assessment was 3.99, as is clear from Chart 5.

**CHART 5: AVERAGE ASSESSMENTS OF STATEMENTS ABOUT THE MEDIA (QUESTION 31A-H) (N=216)**

Media reveal things that are wrong within society	3.46
Media are a means of promoting economic interests	3.59
Media are a means of promoting political interests	3.99
Media help people become better informed and educated	3.53
Media stimulate consumerism	3.84
Media contribute to the increase of intolerance in society	3.34
Media contribute to the increase of violence in society	3.14
Media enhance knowledge about various social groups and communities	3.01

In this case, an expected (and statistically significant) correlation emerged: those who thought that the media



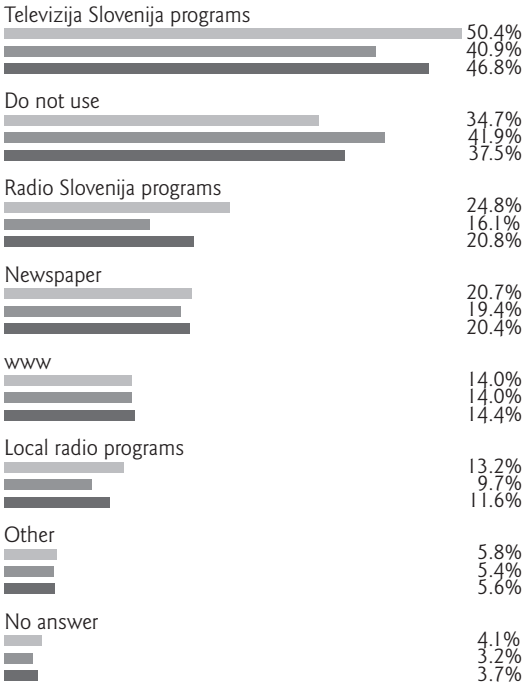
reporting political developments were unbiased demonstrated a lower level of agreement with the statement that the media were a means of promoting political interests. On the other hand, they showed a higher level of agreement with the statement that the media reveal things that are wrong within a society and that they enhance understanding of the needs and interests of various social groups and communities. The last mentioned statement had the lowest average rating (3.01).

We also checked whether the age of respondents was an influencing factor in assessing the statements. A statistically significant difference occurred with the statement that the media were partly responsible for the increase in social intolerance: younger people demonstrated a higher level of agreement with this statement than older people (average assessment: 3.76 among respondents in the age group up to 19, 3.31 in the age group 30-59, and 2.97 in the group of respondents over 60).

## MINORITIES IN THE MEDIA

Using more or less direct questions we tried to establish to what extent the minorities felt (or were willing to express) the need for information related to, or important for, minority communities, and how they assessed the current provision of such information and content.

CHART 6: USAGE OF MINORITY-RELATED CONTENT  
BY GENDER (N=216)  
( ■ MEN ■ WOMEN ■ ALL)



We sought to establish to what extent our respondents consumed media editions/content for minorities (Chart 6). Eighty respondents (37.5%) responded that they did not consume this type of content. Among those who did consume it, the majority circled two of the options offered. The greatest number of respondents, 101 of them, watch *Televizija Slovenija* programs. Of those, nearly 40% also listen to minority-related broadcasts on *Radio Slovenija*, which on the whole have 45 listeners among our respondents, or

slightly more than one-fifth of all respondents. Twenty-five respondents indicated that they listened to minority-related programs on local radio stations.

In the opinion of a Roma community member we interviewed, the importance of minority-related content in the main media lay in *“getting familiar with the different, with the Roma community itself, and in the overcoming of prejudices and stimulation of tolerance, primarily between the majority population and a minority.”* An interviewee belonging to the Bosniak minority thought that, apart from informing the wider public, minority-oriented content in the mainstream media had a symbolic meaning – the presence of such content, for example a television broadcast on a national channel, is a recognition of the presence of that community and of its right to cultivate its culture, language and the like. Another interviewee said that content related to the Croatian community in Slovenia is more frequently present in the Croatian media than in the Slovenian media: *“Since we cannot penetrate the more important media that are read, viewed or listened to, almost every organization has its own publication and attempts to communicate something through it.”* Yet, the majority of interviewees emphasized that this did not suffice. In the words of one of them: *“Our newspaper is published only a few times a year and cannot be up to date. I’d certainly like to see more information in the media about the developments within the minority groups or about things important for them. Access to this type of information would be important for the majority community, the broader public as well.”*

#### USAGE OF MINORITY MEDIA

Possible choices in answering the question about the consumption of minority-related content included various types of minority media. One-fifth of respondents read newspapers or journals published by minority communities, while slightly less than 15% read internet portals maintained by minority groups’ organizations. The respondents could also add their own answers, and the most frequently mentioned media outlet (listed four times), was *Radio Romica*; broadcasts by *TV Koper-Capodistria* and an unspecified radio station were mentioned once each, while eight respondents cited media outlets based in other parts of former Yugoslavia.

We asked whether the minority groups to which the individual respondents belonged had any type of media outlet. Of the 216 respondents altogether, 59 answered that they

did not know, 87 gave the affirmative answer (40.3%), and 64 respondents (30%) answered that their minority group did not have its own media outlet.<sup>21</sup>

In further analysis, we divided the respondents into two groups: those who indicated that they knew whether their minority group had a media outlet and those who answered that they did not know. A statistically significant difference between women and men was established – women were less informed about the media activities of their minority than men (80% of men compared to 60% of women). We tried to interpret this result taking into account a relatively higher general interest reported by women in content related to national and ethnic groups (this question related to the mainstream media or media in general, rather than focusing on minority media; more on this later in the text). One possible interpretation is that women have higher expectations than men with regard to the mainstream media, meaning higher expectations regarding the inclusion of minority-oriented content in the mainstream media. Further examination would be needed to establish whether or not this is true, and why it is so.

We asked our interviewees to explain the role of minority media. A member of a (constitutionally unrecognized) minority, who herself occasionally writes for that minority group's publication and is professionally concerned with minority issues, said that in minority media outlets she looks for *"a space where a minority group, or its members, can have freedom of speech which is not provided within the wider Slovenian public sphere."* Those outlets also provide an opportunity for the exchange of information within the community. The most general role of minority media, in her opinion, is *"the development of cultural identity in the widest sense of the word, so that members of minority communities do not become assimilated into the majority. The goal is to enable identity to develop and persist, and not only on the margin, or in a reduced form – à la folklore or similar, as it frequently happens – but enable it to develop within higher spheres as high culture."* This interviewee also said that the state's approach of not allowing minority cultures to develop beyond "ordinary

21 Data on media activities of the Italian, Hungarian and Roma minorities are published as part of general information on individual communities on the web page of the Office for National Minorities (see [www.unv.gov.si](http://www.unv.gov.si)). Information on media activities of other minority communities is only fragmentary, for example, it can be found in financial reports of the Ministry of Culture (see [www.mk.gov.si/podatki/porocila](http://www.mk.gov.si/podatki/porocila)), which co-funds the papers of minority associations, their web pages and various publications (see Čurin Radovič 2008).

folklorization” is reflected in the fact that although this type of culture is more typical of rural areas in the mother countries, it is here reproduced by urban dwellers.

Another member of a “new minority” thought that the primary role of minority media was to “*inform and encourage and preserve cultural identity. Stimulation of awareness about cultural identity, or everything moves towards assimilation.*” In his opinion, minority media are important so that one can be “*aware of oneself, that you are a member of that nation, from where you originate, that you’re not ashamed of this affiliation, language, customs, literature, that you’re proud of what you are.*”

Another interviewee who regularly consumes minority media because of her journalistic work for RTV Slovenija, expects the minority media to primarily provide information relating to the community and help it enhance its situation; apart from that, she sees their primary role in the preservation of language and culture. At the same time, she is skeptical about the actual reach of minority media and believes that many people are not aware that they exist, or that awareness about their existence is to a large extent dependent on personal links, as is active engagement with minorities’ cultural organizations.

#### GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

We have already mentioned that the topics of special importance for minorities were listed as one of the possible criteria for choosing a specific media outlet, and that slightly over one-fifth of respondents circled this answer. In this connection one conspicuous detail is that those who circled this option were statistically significantly older – by 11 years on average (55.9 compared to 45). A statistically significant difference in age was also observed in the segment where the respondents were asked to assess media reporting on minority-related topics (presented later in the text), where older respondents were more critical of media reporting on the operation and leaders of minority organizations than younger ones.

We discussed these age-related differences with interviewees. The majority (primarily members of “new minorities” who migrated to Slovenia at the time when it was a part of Yugoslavia) thought that they were related to the experience of living in another country, which older people remember more intensely while the youngest do not have

a memory of it. The second most frequent explanation was that young people were not interested in politics at all, that they did not consume media and were not engaged in civil society activities, because they had *“other interests and probably other problems, too, because they study, have to find a job and so on,”* as one interviewee said.

Two prognoses could be heard. Some are convinced that over time the young people of today will begin to show more interest in issues related to minorities, especially when they settle down and confront difficulties that are present in the “real world,” for example, how to assert their right to bilinguality in ethnically mixed regions. A member of the Roma community said: *“Probably it is so that the older you are the more you return to the issue of what you are, who you are ... And, you begin to be interested in everything related to it. Young people do not have time for that.”*

Others think that members of the younger generation are being assimilated and permanently alienated from their families’ cultural identity, frequently even not knowing their mother tongue. This opinion is particularly widespread among members of unrecognized minorities: *“This assimilation is functioning, young people do not see that. I know many children ... When I ask him what he is, he says: I’m a Slovene. The father is a Serb, the mother a Croat, and he is a Slovene! Born here, we speak Slovene to him and he feels a Slovene. Many change their names and surnames, drop their mother tongue ... People erase their cultural identity.”*<sup>22</sup>

22 The research study entitled Perception of Slovenian Integration Policy also showed that members of minority communities resort to “concealment of ethnic signs,” which is primarily a consequence of ethnic distance or intolerance among various communities (Komac, Medvešek 2005: 370). Ethnic distance towards the Roma is especially strong, closely followed by that towards new minorities. The Serb, Bosniak and Muslim ethnic communities experience greater intolerance than other groups, and at the level of individuals, more intolerance is experienced by the younger and the more educated. Researchers have also confirmed the hypothesis about new forms of ethnic intolerance, which the respondents described as being indirect and concealed rather than referring to it as “obvious intolerance and hatred” (ibid.: 371). Concealment of ethnic identity, which is used as a “survival strategy,” has been identified with many members of new minorities. Research data show that men more frequently resort to this strategy than women, and young people more frequently than older people (ibid.: 370).

INTEREST IN MINORITY-RELATED  
TOPICS AND CONTENT

We further examined interest in minority-related content by asking our respondents to which topics they devoted most attention (Chart 7). The most frequent answer was domestic politics (87 or 40.3% of respondents), followed by social issues among female, and foreign affairs among male respondents (foreign affairs occupied the third place among women). The third most frequent answer among men was sports, circled by 35 male respondents (and seven females).<sup>23</sup> Only one-tenth of respondents (26 or 12%) devoted close attention to information that is especially important for their national or ethnic community (of these, 17 women and 8 men; the greater interest among women is statistically significant). But at the same time, by far the greatest number of respondents (101 or 46.8%), regardless of age, thought that minority-related issues were most lacking from the media, or they wished to see them more extensively covered (Chart 8).<sup>24</sup> On the one hand, the relatively low proportion of those who devote most attention to information about minorities could be interpreted as a weak interest, which would in turn mean that there is no need for such information to be present in the media. However, if considered along with the fourfold more frequently expressed interest in seeing more minority-related issues in the media, the same data can also be interpreted in another way, i.e. that our respondents did not mention this type of content among the most frequently consumed because it is not sufficiently present in the media to be consumed in the first place.

That this interpretation could be correct is confirmed by a similar ratio of answers relating to television content. The respondents again stated that broadcasts for national and ethnic minorities were most lacking from the media, or should be available in greater number. This was the answer given by 89 or 41.2% respondents.<sup>25</sup> Consumption of news programs prevails over the consumption of other television content (126 participants), followed by documentaries

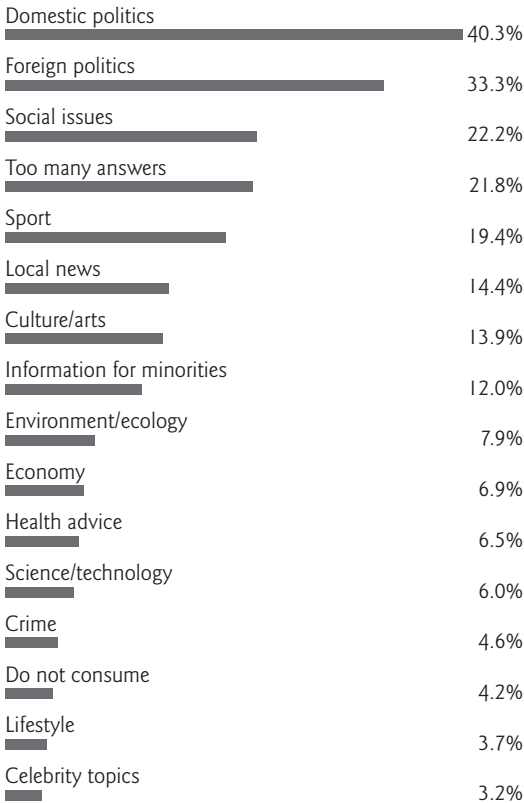
23 More than one-fifth of respondents circled more than three answers, which was a pre-set upper limit with this question. These respondents were not included in the proportions calculated for this report (only three answers as prescribed were taken into account).

24 Next come social issues (29.2%), environment/ecology and culture/arts (16.2% each).

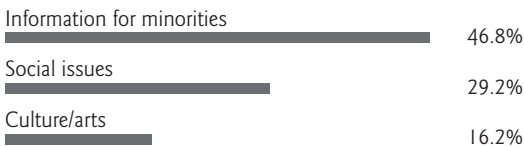
25 Next come documentaries (77 respondents or 35.6%) and entertainment programs (45 respondents or 20.8%).

and sport. Broadcasts for national and ethnic groups occupy fifth place. Thirty-four participants (15.7%) listed it as one of the three types of content they most frequently consume, which is a relatively low proportion compared to the significantly higher interest expressed in seeing more of such content.

**CHART 7: TOPICS TO WHICH THE RESPONDENTS DEVOTE MOST ATTENTION (N=216)**



**CHART 8: TOPICS MOST MISSING IN THE MEDIA (N=216)**





Environment/ecology	16.2%
Health advice	13.4%
Too many answers	10.6%
Science/technology	9.7%
Local news	9.3%
Sport	7.9%
Domestic politics	7.4%
Foreign politics	6.5%
Economy	5.6%
Lifestyle	5.1%
Celebrity topics	5.1%
Do not consume	3.7%
No answer	3.2%
Crime	0.9%

Returning to the beginning of this chapter and to those respondents who stated that they knew whether their minority group had a media outlet, there was a significantly higher proportion of users of minority-related broadcasts among them than among those who were not familiar with the existence or non-existence of the media published by their minority groups (one-fifth of the former as compared to only one-twentieth of the latter group circled minority-oriented broadcasts among the three types of TV content that they consume most frequently).

Knowledge about the existence of minority media also proved to be an important factor in choosing the topics that in the opinion of our respondents received insufficient media coverage. As mentioned earlier, the topics most frequently mentioned as lacking from the media were those that were of special importance for national or ethnic minorities. Here, the proportion of respondents who knew whether their minority had a media outlet was much higher – 53.6% compared to 33.9% among those who did not know whether or not their minority group had any me-

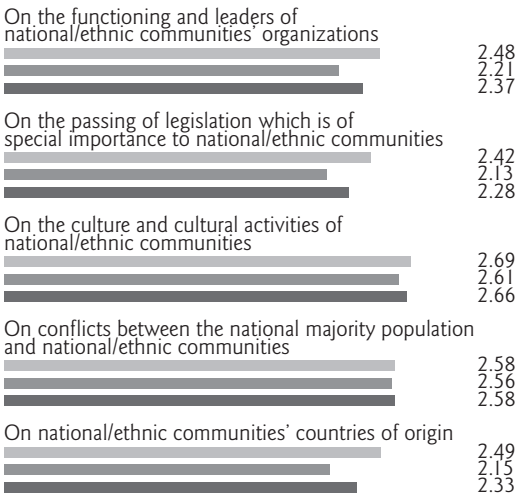
dia outlet (the difference is statistically significant). This suggests that the interest in topics related to national and ethnic groups is consistent or, if there is such interest, it is demonstrated in various areas.

#### SATISFACTION WITH REPORTING

Taking into account the findings of previous research studies, including those conducted as part of the Media-Watch project, we expected that our respondents would not be satisfied with the reporting on minority-related topics, and their ratings confirmed our assumption.

Our questionnaire asked how satisfactory the respondents found the mainstream media's provision of information and presentation of viewpoints on five more or less frequently treated topics. These topics are listed in Chart 9 clearly, showing that the average ratings of reporting on these topics are low. On the 5-point scale (1=completely unsatisfactorily, 5=very thoroughly), reporting on minority cultures and cultural activities received the highest average rating – 2.66. Women's ratings in all segments were lower than those of men, yet this difference is statistically significant only in relation to reporting on mother countries.

CHART 9: AVERAGE RATINGS OF MEDIA COVERAGE OF PARTICULAR TOPICS (QUESTIONS 24A-E BY GENDER) (N=216)  
( ■ MEN ■ WOMEN ■ ALL)



The cross-analysis showed that those who consumed news more frequently were more critical of media coverage of specified topics. Respondents who consumed news less frequently gave higher average ratings than those who consumed them more frequently. Statistically significant differences were observed in the ratings of the reporting on the culture and cultural activities of national/ethnic groups, conflicts in relations between the majority population and national/ethnic groups, and mother countries of national/ethnic groups. On the other hand, there were no statistically significant correlations between these ratings and the existence or non-existence of minority media outlets.

#### REACTING TO MEDIA CONTENT

In the introductory part we emphasized the protection of minorities' rights in terms of access to the media, which can be monitored by way of several indicators. Indirectly, the possibility for media users to provide feedback on published media content could be interpreted as access to the media as well, although in this case the formulation media accessibility might be more appropriate. Media can be more or less open to their users/consumers, and this can be assessed by monitoring the existence and functioning of the mechanisms of media self-regulation, which enable the surpassing of unilateral communication (flowing only from the media towards media consumers). The responsiveness of media users depends, among other things, on their knowledge of the mechanisms that enable user feedback or the systems of media accountability (their promotion by the media themselves also plays a part), and on how useful media users find such mechanisms. If users think that their feedback cannot change anything in media operation, or that reactions will be negative and their effort would not be worth it, then the probability that the established systems of media self-regulation would be effective and utilized by media users is very low.<sup>26</sup>

Thirty-five (16.2%) of our respondents had already filed a complaint against one thing or another that they found unacceptable in the media; only 16 of 216 respondents altogether had never identified unacceptable content. In other words, the majority of respondents (165 or 76.4%) had

<sup>26</sup> For more on the systems of media accountability in Slovenia and wider, see, e.g. the texts on self-regulation and accountability of journalists in the *Media Watch journal* (*Medijska preža*), No. 16 (March 2003).

already identified content that was unacceptable in their opinion, but did not complain. Phone calls and/or letters to the editors or journalists were the predominant methods of complaint, used by 18 out of 216 participants (here we did not restrict the choice to the mechanisms of media *self*-regulation, but also listed methods that arise from media regulation). Eleven respondents wrote a letter for the readers' letters' section, ten exercised their right of correction and reply, four complained to the RTV Slovenija Programming Council, three filed complaints with the media inspectorate, and two with the Journalists' Ethics Commission.

In our questionnaire, the methods of complaint were listed for respondents to choose from, whereas the interviewees were asked to enumerate the methods available to media consumers to respond to media content. The majority mentioned readers' letters, phone calls and written (including electronic) messages to editorial desks; some respondents mentioned the right of correction, and two mentioned the human rights ombudsman. We were going to ask about the response on the part of media to the request or complaint, but none among our interviewees had ever reacted to media content. Since none of them stated that he/she had never identified unacceptable content either, we wanted to know why they did not react. Below are some of the answers:

"Perhaps because I did not have enough time. On the other hand, it is also ... Well, we could ask for a correction and all that, but at that point harm had already been done."

"At that moment I didn't think it could be effective. That would be a Don-Quixote-fighting-windmills relationship, it has no effect and I don't see the point in trying to convince someone. I can only be angry, but there's no point in responding. I can comment, write something, for example a post on the web or write to an editor, a journalist, but it's a drop in the ocean. Ninety percent of such texts remain unanswered or they say that editorial policy is such as it is."

"It is precisely where the problem lies: there are just too many such situations and because of that you don't feel like reacting, because you don't know when to react and when not to react – if you always reacted, then you'd have to do it all the time ... So you find yourself in that passive, fatalistic position, because there is so much work you'd have to do."

“I should have responded, but I didn’t, because I think that what follows is just a futile debate which could only provoke even more serious disputes. There were many situations when I almost sat down to write something, but then I didn’t do it. I don’t want to expose myself, because then you have to be prepared for offenses, labeling, I don’t need that.”

These answers suggest that the level of trust in the existing systems of media accountability and their efficiency is low, and they also indicate the low level of information about the existence of both self-regulation mechanisms and those that arise from regulation.

## MINORITY LANGUAGES

In addition to the indicators of minority groups' access to the media that were mentioned earlier, interviewees also pointed to access to the media, primarily broadcast media, based in the countries of origin of minority groups. These media were referred to both in the introductory part of interviews, when we checked general use of the media on the part of our respondents and many spontaneously cited the media based in other countries, as well as on other occasions. The survey showed that a large proportion of respondents, nearly one-third of them, watch foreign news programs. It is not possible to say that all respondents had in mind programs broadcast by the media based in their countries of origin, but other answers in the questionnaire indicate that a large proportion of respondents view foreign-based media broadcasting in their native language.

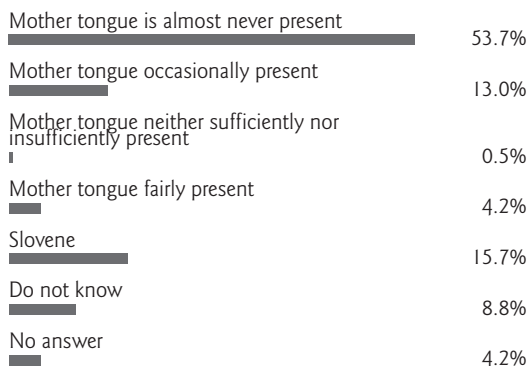
Preservation, cultivation and development of minority languages is the focus of minority groups' activists, because "*(l)anguage plays an important role, frequently a crucial one, in the processes that shape and preserve ethnic communities.*" (Roter, 2004: 237) A research study on "new" minorities originating from the territories of former Yugoslavia showed that "*all ethnic groups attach great importance to language, while at the same time they perceive the language issue as one of the most important factors (or markers) in determining their ethnicity.*" (Roter, 2004: 238) This was also emphasized by our respondents, not only those belonging to "new" minorities but also those belonging to the constitutionally protected minority groups. The difference between the two in the sense of language protection is considerable.

The Italian and Hungarian minorities in Slovenia have a legally established right to bilinguality in ethnically mixed regions, as well as to content within the framework of public radio and television in Italian and Hungarian. The Roma community is in a special situation, because Romany is not codified and standardized, which serves as a convenient response to the warnings that a language that is marginalized and not used in public life loses its vitality, so it should be more included in the media. The situation has slightly improved over the recent years, given that various Romany dialects are at least occasionally present in radio and television broadcasts by *RTV Slovenija*, and thanks to the project concerned with the standardization of Romany. However,

the unrecognized minorities and their languages are fully neglected in this respect.<sup>27</sup> (Nahtigal, 2008)

A Slovenian citizen of Bosniak background whom we interviewed said that her mother tongue “was not present in the Slovenian media, or only in fragments, if a speaker is a foreigner.” In her words: “That is not representation! I’m not satisfied and my evaluation of the situation is very low. The majority of us are bilingual, which should be seen as an advantage and richness for Slovenian society, but instead we consciously throw away many gains, which I find very undemocratic and uncivilized. A higher level of civilized conduct would include a high evaluation of cultural richness, to which linguistic diversity also belongs.” Another minority member who regards Slovene as her mother tongue emphasized that for “the preservation of community and individual identity the language is undoubtedly very important,” wondering if “you can belong to a certain community if you don’t speak its language.” Other interviewees contemplated along the same lines, asking themselves what actually defined one’s belonging to a certain community. A member of the Roma community said: “For me, the Roma language is the most important. The Roma language was essential for my becoming aware of everything around me. If you lose your language, you also lose nationality. Everything is related to language, at least for minorities.”

CHART 10: THE PRESENCE OF MINORITY LANGUAGES  
IN THE MEDIA (N=216)



<sup>27</sup> This has already earned Slovenia criticism on the part of European Council experts, who monitor the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (effective since March 1, 1998). See, for example, the latest report available at [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/minlang/report/EvaluationReports/SloveniaECRML2\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/minlang/report/EvaluationReports/SloveniaECRML2_en.pdf) (accessed on June 30, 2007).

Our respondents in the survey were asked how extensively their minority language was represented in the media (Chart 10). Thirty-four respondents (15.7%) stated that their mother tongue was Slovene. The majority of other respondents (116 or 53.7%) answered (based on the possible answers listed) that their mother tongue was almost never present in the mainstream media. The next most frequent answer was that their mother tongue was occasionally present in the media (as stated by 28 or 13% of respondents). One respondent answered that it was neither sufficiently nor insufficiently present. Nine respondents (4.3%) stated that their language was fairly represented, but they wished for more of it. None of the respondents who stated that their mother tongue was not Slovene thought that the representation of their mother tongue in the media was fully satisfactory.



## INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

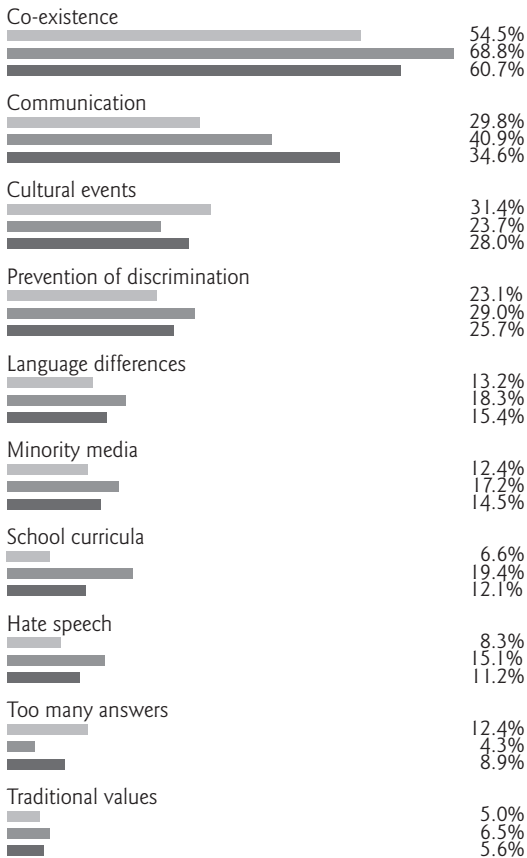
In the introductory part, we placed our research and minorities' communication rights in the wider context of multi-culturalism and intercultural dialogue, and we preserved the questions that are most directly related to these issues for this concluding part. We will now see how our respondents understand intercultural dialogue and what they think about the role of the media in establishing it.

The question about the definition of intercultural dialogue included twelve possible answers, of which three could be chosen (Chart 11).

CHART 11: HOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE?

(N=216)

( ■ MEN ■ WOMEN ■ ALL)



Do not know	8.3%
	4.3%
	6.5%
Special rights	2.5%
	1.1%
	1.9%
Quotas	5.8%
	2.2%
	4.2%
No answer	2.5%
	1.4%
Other	0.8%
	0.5%
Separate neighborhoods	0.8%
	0.5%

The majority of respondents perceive intercultural dialogue as comprising coexistence, becoming familiar with and having respect for different cultures. Communication among members of various ethnic, religious and other communities comes next, followed by cultural events presenting culture and creativity of various communities. The most frequent other answers include prevention of discrimination against members of various communities, respect for language differences and opportunities for minorities to create their own media content and have media in their own language. More than one tenth of respondents also thought that an intercultural dialogue meant becoming familiar with and accepting different cultures within school curricula, and prevention of hate speech in the media aimed at various minority groups.

When conducting interviews with members of minority groups, we did not offer any specific answer to the question about the significance of intercultural dialogue, but asked our respondents to provide their own definition. The excerpts below represent an illustrative sample of their viewpoints.

“Communication between the majority and minority nations, and also a mutual, more tolerant attitude, that can harmonize the members of both communities, that can provide some peaceful coexistence, so that they learn from each other and get to know each other.”

“Intercultural dialogue is very important for the territories with a mixture of cultures. It means that cultures within some such territory cooperate, get to know each other, respect each other. It is not always so.”

“It’s really a platitude ... I don’t know, I cannot imagine what it could mean, because it is so self-evident that there should be a dialogue among cultures, but then we have to ask what cultures are ... Such dialogue would be a sort of interactive communication among individuals as members of various cultures, on the level of individuals, of institutions of such groups and so on. However, EU politics is always concentrated on nation-state communities. As if they were 19<sup>th</sup> century nation-states. And they imagine an intercultural dialogue as a dialogue among nations, and not related to multicultural richness inside individual countries. As if it did not exist. Not to mention reflecting it on the level of the EU!”

“Definitely, just one year dedicated to it is too little. I don’t even know what it looked like. Some events that lasted for two hours and that’s it? How it is implemented in practice, I have no idea... That everyone has the right to speak in their own language, to tell without fear or shame what and who they are...”

We asked our respondents about their opinion on whether and how the media help to strengthen intercultural dialogue.

“At the moment they do not help. They do not communicate with minorities, none are ever invited – here I speak about our minorities (*not enjoying constitutional collective protection*, N.N.) and not about the Italian or Hungarian minority. The difference is huge.”

“They may contribute but this is not a rule, they could also operate so that the effect is precisely the opposite, if they use hate speech, incite and the like. In the case of the Strojani family, I’d be hard pressed to say that the media encouraged an intercultural dialogue, it was only later, following negative responses, that one could read well-grounded professional articles.”

“They can contribute by not encouraging the differences, that is to say, stereotypes. Perhaps I was not so attentive in other

cases, perhaps I'll do someone wrong, but in the case of the Roma community it is always stressed, for example: 'The two Roma men stole ...' You never hear that two members of the Hungarian minority did something, if some negative example is given. It is also more present in the case of nations of former Yugoslavia."

How, in the opinion of our respondents, could media contribute more to intercultural dialogue? Several respondents suggested the introduction of regular sections that would address individual national and ethnic communities in particular. Many interviewees mentioned sensationalism as one of the biggest obstacles to achieving a more positive contribution on the part of the media.

"They should be objective. Even if they report on bad things, reports can be correct. There is no need to emphasize one's affiliations. That is strongly emphasized in cases of disputes, if something goes wrong it is a big story."

"The crucial thing, the first step, is visibility – that minority community members are present among journalists, within editorial policies, that their presence there is visible. The participation of ethno-cultural, linguistic groups should be ensured, more media content that would cover the activities of these communities, and of course, content in minority languages, too."

"First of all, the media should be a bit more sensitive. They could communicate more with the representatives of minority communities regarding the topics that affect these communities, they could hold consultations with them, seek to obtain the other side of the story, let the minorities know that they are taken into account and listened to. That would truly earn them more trust among these communities. In such a case, their members would probably not have a feeling that they are shoved aside, unimportant, invisible..."

## CONCLUSION

The use and perception of the media among the ethnic minorities in Slovenia have not yet been researched systematically. Although the results we obtained cannot be generalized, they do provide at least a solid basis for future systematic research and deliberation on inclusive media policy, by which we do not mean policy in the sense of regulation only, but of editorial policy and self-regulation of the media as well.

In the introductory part, we placed this research study in the context of cultural rights and multiculturalism, where intercultural dialogue has a central place. Taking into account the low level of agreement on the part of our respondents with the statement that the media help enhance familiarity with and understanding of the needs and interests of various social groups and communities, and the overall low rating of the quality of media reporting on minority-related topics, it is possible to conclude that the respondents in our survey do not think that media's contribution to the intercultural dialogue is particularly constructive at the moment. The members of minority communities we interviewed indeed expressed reservations or unfavorable views regarding media's current contribution to the intercultural dialogue. In their opinion, opportunities for a more positive contribution lie within media's greater openness towards the views of minority communities, more frequent and a more comprehensive reporting on minority-related topics, the introduction of new content intended for minorities, and elimination of sensationalism in the media.

Undoubtedly, minorities differ in their perspectives on and uses of the media, and one reason is their different starting positions with regard to media availability (this is related to the general system of the legal protection of minorities in Slovenia), as mentioned by all minority members we interviewed. All of them, meaning members of constitutionally protected minorities as well as new minorities, agreed that a systemic regulation of the funding of media activities of all minorities was needed, not only of the communities currently enjoying collective protection. Apart from noting down the differences that transpired during interviews, we did not seek to establish differences among the ethnic groups participating in our study, but rather concentrated on the "minority status" as such. For commercial media, it primarily means that a group is (too) small for the market

to justify their separate addressing of them as minority group members, although in many cases affiliation with a minority group is an essential part of their self-image. Accordingly, the crucial role in this area is played by public radio and television services which should also provide content that is less commercial in nature. The role of public service media, and television in particular, was also emphasized by our interviewees.

As regards media usage, television tops the list among our respondents, followed by daily newspapers and radio. The use of the Internet as a source of information is limited, but in general it is used more by younger participants, which is in line with general trends.

Many minority cultural associations have established web pages, and even informative web portals, for example, *www.bosnjak.si*. For our respondents, who in general see the Internet as having a considerable potential, that is a platform through which they attempt to provide information for minority members that is currently almost absent from the mainstream media. Another advantage of such web pages is the possibility of communicating in minority languages. Our participants said that minority languages were present in the mainstream media only rarely, which is not surprising given that Slovene is the official language used in public with only few exceptions relating to constitutionally protected minorities.

In the view of our respondents, one of the fundamental roles of minority media is precisely the preservation and development of minority languages. These media are an indispensable component of a culturally plural media space, but they cannot survive without external financial support, because (owing to the same logic underlying the commercial media business) they cannot ensure sufficient income from advertising to survive on the market. In Slovenia, the range of minority media is wide, from regular print media and radio stations (for constitutionally protected minorities) to bulletins published occasionally by cultural associations of new minorities. The latter are not even covered by media legislation, but for certain minorities these are the only available channels of communication with other community members.

Even the most developed minority media outlets cope with financial problems, while minorities not enjoying collective protection, which receive only sporadic and low levels of financial support for their cultural and media

activities, practically have no opportunities for any serious media activities. Our respondents emphasized this lack of funding particularly in connection with the lack of professionals. The publishing of minority media is to a great extent dependent on the personal engagement of individuals who take care of every aspect of publishing, from content to sponsorships to the collection of other financial contributions, while their work is in many cases not paid at all. In addition to the lack of knowledge, our respondents thought that the main problems that plagued minority media were the lack of equipment, irregular appearance (related to irregular funding), the resulting obsolete content, and difficulties with distribution, i.e. informing minority members of the existence of a minority media outlet. A large proportion of our respondents did not know whether or not the minority group to which they belonged had a media outlet.

As regards the use of traditional, or mainstream media, the question that imposes itself is whether their use would not be more widespread and intense if the media better reflected the cultural diversity of Slovene society. Focusing on topics that are especially significant for minorities is not one of the main criteria in choosing a media outlet among our respondents, but certain other data indicate that media better reflecting ethnic diversity would attract more readers/listeners/viewers among minorities. One type of data indicating this possibility is a high level of interest among the participants in more minority-related topics, and a low level of satisfaction with the current media coverage of such topics. As we already mentioned, when discussing access to the media and their ethnic diversity and multiculturalism, it is not only reporting *on* minorities or content *for* minorities that are important, but also the inclusion of minority members in editorial boards and decision-making bodies within media companies. Several respondents emphasized the importance of minority members becoming authors and journalists, among other things also in order to enable minority members to speak to a journalist in their native tongue.

The responses show that the interest in minority-related topics and content is present, although the extent of the current consumption of minority-related content does not suggest this. One reason could be the fact that this type of content is insufficiently present in the media, so our respondents could not choose it as the type of content they most frequently consume. Another possible reason is

that only content addressing other ethnic minority groups is present (other than those that individual respondents belong to) but it could not attract all of our respondents, or they are less attracted to it than they would be if it addressed their own ethnic group. This raises further questions of how to develop the mainstream media with regard to ethnic minorities so that they operate in the direction of multiculturalism and enable the expression of various cultural identities. Do we need specialist content for individual minorities? Or, do we need common sections in the print media and broadcasts for various minorities? Or both? Even such a combination coupled with minority groups' own media production would be only a partial solution. Media content designated as "minority content" cannot replace ethnically sensitive and diverse general content addressing the broadest public.



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## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MEMBERS OF NATIONAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

1 HOW OFTEN DO YOU FOLLOW NEWS ON DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLITICAL EVENTS (*circle*)?

- a Less than once a week
- b Once or twice a week
- c Three to five times a week
- d Every day
- e Never

2 WHICH SOURCES OF INFORMATION DO YOU USE MOST FREQUENTLY?

- a Daily newspaper (*title*).....
- b Weekly newspaper (*title*).....
- c Radio station (*name*).....
- d Television station (*name*).....
- e Web site (*name*).....
- f Blog (*name*).....
- g Other (*name*).....
- h I don't use any

3 DOES YOUR NATIONAL/ETHNIC COMMUNITY OPERATE A MEDIA OUTLET?

- a Yes (*if yes, enter name/title*).....
- b No
- c I do not know

4 WHICH MINORITY-ORIENTED MEDIA CONTENT DO YOU FOLLOW? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a Programs on TV Slovenija
- b Programs on Radio Slovenija
- c Minority programming on local radio station(s)
- d Minority-oriented newspapers/magazines
- e Minority community web portals
- f Other (*name*).....
- g I do not follow minority-oriented media content

5 WHICH TELEVISION NEWS PROGRAMS DO YOU WATCH? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a 24ur
- b 24ur zvečer
- c TV Dnevnik
- d Odmevi
- e Info TV
- f Svet
- g Foreign news programs
- h Other (*name*).....
- i I do not watch any

6 TO WHICH RADIO NEWS PROGRAMS DO YOU LISTEN? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a News programs on Radio Slovenija
- b News programs on a local or regional radio station
- c News programs on a commercial radio station
- d News programs on a student radio station
- e Foreign radio news programs
- f Other (*name*).....
- g I do not listen to any

7 HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THE INTERNET? (*circle*)

- a Less than once a week
- b Once or twice a week
- c Three to five times a week
- d Ever day
- e Never

8 WHERE DO YOU USUALLY USE THE INTERNET? (*circle*)

- a At home
- b At the university
- c At a library
- d In public places (*Internet cafés, WiFi hotspots etc.*)
- e I do not use it



9 WHAT DO YOU MOST FREQUENTLY USE THE INTERNET FOR? (*circle three answers*)

- a To send/receive e-mail
- b To search for daily news
- c To chat
- d To study
- e For Internet telephony
- f To seek out people with similar interests
- g For entertainment
- h To edit my own web page/blog/profile etc.
- i To take part in online forums/comments
- j I do not use it

10 DO YOU READ BLOGS?

- a Yes
- b No

11 IF YOU READ BLOGS, PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH BLOGS YOU READ.

.....

12 WHICH OF THE LISTED WEB CONTENT DO YOU CREATE/EDIT?

- a Blog
- b Web page
- c Profile (*Facebook, Myspace etc.*)
- d I post photos and/or video clips (*e.g. on YouTube*)
- e Other (*list*) .....
- f I do not create/edit web content

13 FOR WHAT PURPOSES DO YOU USE A MOBILE PHONE? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a To make calls
- b To send SMS/MMS
- c To take and/or send photos
- d To access the Internet
- e To access my e-mail
- f Other (*name*) .....
- g I do not use it

I 4 DO YOU USE A MOBILE PHONE TO ACCESS MEDIA CONTENT (e.g. information portals, web sites of media companies etc.)?

- a Yes
- b No
- c I do not use a mobile phone

I 5 TO WHICH TOPICS OR MEDIA CONTENT DO YOU DEVOTE MOST ATTENTION? (circle up to three answers)

- a Domestic politics
- b Foreign politics
- c Social issues
- d Environment/ecology
- e Local news
- f Information of special importance for my national/ethnic community
- g Culture/arts
- h Science/technology
- i Economy/finance/stock exchange
- j Crime
- k Sport
- l Celebrity topics
- m Health advice
- n Lifestyle
- o None of these

I 6 WHICH TOPICS OR CONTENT DO YOU FIND MISSING IN THE MEDIA OR WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE EXTENSIVELY COVERED? (circle up to three answers)

- a Domestic politics
- b Foreign politics
- c Social issues
- d Environment/ecology
- e Local news
- f Information of special importance for my national/ethnic community
- g Culture/arts
- h Science/technology
- i Economy/finance/stock exchange
- j Crime
- k Sport
- l Celebrity topics
- m Health advice
- n Lifestyle
- o None of these

17 WHICH TELEVISION GENRES DO YOU WATCH MOST FREQUENTLY? (*circle up to three answers*)

- a News
- b Cultural and/or arts programs
- c Documentaries
- d Talk shows
- e Programs aimed at national/ethnic communities
- f Serials and/or series
- g Telenovelas
- h Films
- i Religious programs
- j Entertainment shows
- k Reality shows
- l Sport
- m Weather
- n None of these

18 WHICH TELEVISION GENRES DO YOU FIND UNDER-REPRESENTED ON TELEVISION SCHEDULES OR WISH TO SEE MORE OF? (*circle up to three answers*)

- a News
- b Cultural and/or arts programs
- c Documentaries
- d Talk shows
- e Programs aimed at national/ethnic communities
- f Serials and/or series
- g Telenovelas
- h Films
- i Religious programs
- j Entertainment shows
- k Reality shows
- l Sport
- m Weather
- n None of these

19 WHICH ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CRITERIA YOU OBSERVE IN CHOOSING PARTICULAR MEDIA AS AN INFORMATION SOURCE (*a newspaper, a radio station, a television station or a web site*)? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a Impartiality and credibility
- b Independence from political interests

- c Independence from economic interests
- d In-depth reporting on selected topics
- e Reporting on topics relevant to my national/ethnic community
- f Price or access fee
- g Quality and originality of individual authors (*journalists, commentators etc.*)
- h Similarity of particular outlet's political viewpoints to my viewpoints
- i Other (*specify*) .....
- j I do not know

20 DO YOU THINK THAT SLOVENIAN MEDIA REPORTING OF POLITICAL EVENTS IS UNBIASED?

- a Yes
- b No
- c I do not know

21 WHICH PUBLIC ISSUE HAS ATTRACTED YOUR ATTENTION DURING THIS YEAR (*not necessarily an issue covered by the media, but an issue you think is of local, national or global importance*)?

- a Specify the issue:.....
- b No public issue attracted my attention

22 IN WHICH MEDIA DID YOU FIND MOST INFORMATION ON THAT ISSUE?

- a Daily newspaper (*title*) .....
- b Weekly newspaper (*title*).....
- c Radio station (*name*).....
- d Television station (*name*).....
- e Web site (*name*).....
- f Blog (*name*).....
- g Other (*name*).....
- h I could not find information on that issue in the media

23 IF THE ISSUE THAT ATTRACTED YOUR ATTENTION PROMPTED YOU TO ACT, WHAT DID YOU DO? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a I made a call/wrote a letter to a relevant institution and voiced my opinion or protest
- b I sent a public letter or a petition to a relevant institution, dispatched it to various media and/or a larger number of recipients concerned with that public area

- c I expressed my opinion on that issue in an online forum.
- d I wrote a letter for the "readers' letters" section
- e I made a call to a radio or a television program
- f I initiated a round table discussion or a protest
- g I took part in a round table discussion or protest (*rally, demonstration etc.*)
- h I wrote a letter regarding the issue to a local or national governmental representative
- i I boycotted a product/service/event
- j I signed a petition.
- k Other (*specify what*):.....
- l No issue prompted me to act

24 IN YOUR OPINION, HOW SATISFACTORILY DO MEDIA PROVIDE INFORMATION AND PRESENT VIEWS AND OPINIONS ON THE ISSUES BELOW? *Please, grade from 1 to 5, as follows: 1 – completely unsatisfactorily, 2 – not thoroughly enough, 3 – neither satisfactorily nor unsatisfactorily, 4 – satisfactorily, 5 – very thoroughly.*

- a Functioning and leaders of national/ethnic community organizations  

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
- b Passing of legislation of special importance to national/ethnic communities  

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
- c Culture and cultural activities of national/ethnic communities  

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
- d Conflicts between the national majority and national/ethnic minorities  

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
- e National/ethnic communities' countries of origin  

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

25 HAVE YOU EVER SPOKEN ABOUT THE SITUATION OF NATIONAL/ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN SLOVENIA TO A MEDIA OUTLET OR JOURNALIST?

- a Yes
- b No

26 HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN PART IN CREATING MEDIA CONTENT AS AN AUTHOR?

- a Yes
- b No

27 HAVE YOU EVER FILED A COMPLAINT ABOUT MEDIA CONTENT THAT YOU FOUND UNACCEPTABLE?

- a Yes
- b No
- c I have not identified such content in the media

28 HOW DID YOU COMPLAIN AGAINST MEDIA CONTENT?

- a The right of correction and reply
- b Reader's letter
- c A call and/or a letter to the editor and/or a journalist
- d Complaint filed to the RTV Slovenija Programming Council
- e Complaint filed to the Journalists' Ethics Commission
- f Complaint to the media inspectorate
- g Other (*specify*): .....
- h I have not identified such content in the media

29 WHAT IN YOUR OPINION DOES THE TERM "INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE" MEAN? (*circle up to three answers which in your opinion define this notion*)

- a Coexistence, getting familiar with and having respect for other cultures
- b Communication among the members of various communities (*ethnic, religious, and others*)
- c Cultural events presenting cultural creativity of various communities
- d Respect for language differences
- e School curricula promoting knowledge about various cultures and their acceptance
- f Ensuring possibilities for minority groups to create media content and have media outlets in their own language
- g Prevention of discrimination against members of various communities
- h Ensuring special rights for the members of minority communities
- i Protection of traditional values
- j Setting up of separate residential neighborhoods for individual communities

- k Ensuring a certain number of job positions and places at universities and campuses (quotas) for members of minority communities
- l Prevention of hate speech in the media targeted at members of various communities
- m Other (*specify*):.....
- n I do not know

30 IN YOUR ESTIMATION, HOW PRESENT IS YOUR MOTHER TONGUE IN MAINSTREAM MEDIA?

- a My mother tongue is Slovene
- b My mother tongue (*which is not Slovene*) is almost never present in mainstream media
- c My mother tongue (*which is not Slovene*) is occasionally present in mainstream media
- d My mother tongue is neither sufficiently nor insufficiently present in mainstream media
- e My mother tongue (*which is not Slovene*) is fairly present in mainstream media, but I wish there were more of it
- f The presence/use of my mother tongue (*which is not Slovene*) in mainstream media is completely satisfactory
- g I do not know

31 TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH THE STATEMENTS BELOW? *Indicate your agreement by the numbers 1 to 5, as follows: 1 – I do not agree at all, 2 – I do not agree, 3 – I neither agree nor disagree, 4 – I agree, 5 – I fully agree.*

- a Media reveal things that are wrong within society  
1            2            3            4            5
- b Media are a means of promoting economic interests  
1            2            3            4            5
- c Media are a means of promoting political interests  
1            2            3            4            5
- d Media help people become better informed and educated  
1            2            3            4            5
- e Media stimulate consumerism  
1            2            3            4            5
- f Media contribute to the increase of intolerance in society  
1            2            3            4            5
- g Media contribute to the increase of violence in society  
1            2            3            4            5
- h Media enhance knowledge about and understanding of the needs and interests of various social groups and communities  
1            2            3            4            5

32 WOULD YOU LIKE TO IMPROVE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE USE AND FUNCTIONING OF MEDIA?

- a Yes
- b No

33 IN WHAT FIELD WOULD YOU LIKE TO IMPROVE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF MEDIA? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a Creating web pages
- b Editing photos and video
- c Journalistic skills
- d Creating community radio or television programming
- e Information on how media are financed in Slovenia
- f Information on the legal framework for media functioning
- g Information on how news content and information programming is created
- h Information on how entertainment programming is created
- i Creating security systems and filters for the Internet and television
- j Setting up parent control systems on mobile phones
- k Other (*specify*):.....
- l I do not wish to improve my knowledge of media

GENDER (*circle*):    F            M  
YEAR OF BIRTH: .....





# POLITICIANS AND THE MEDIA

SANDRA B. HRVATIN

In the revolutionary winter of 1918/19, Max Weber delivered a lecture to the students of Munich University on politics as a vocation. “*There are two ways of making politics one’s vocation: Either one lives ‘for’ politics or one lives ‘off’ politics,*” said Weber (1946). In his view, the basic characteristics a professional politician should possess are passion, a feeling of responsibility and a sense of proportion.

“This means passion in the sense of matter-of-factness, of passionate devotion to a ‘cause,’ to the god or demon who is its overlord. It is not passion in the sense of that inner bearing which my late friend, Georg Simmel, used to designate as ‘sterile excitation,’ and which was peculiar especially to a certain type of Russian intellectual (by no means all of them!). It is an excitation that plays so great a part with our intellectuals in this carnival we decorate with the proud name of ‘revolution.’ It is a ‘romanticism of the intellectually interesting,’ running into emptiness devoid of all feeling of objective responsibility.

To be sure, mere passion, however genuinely felt, is not enough. It does not make a politician, unless passion as devotion to a ‘cause’ also makes responsibility to this cause the guiding star of action. And for this, a sense of proportion is needed. This is the decisive psychological quality of the politician: his ability to let realities work upon him with inner concentration and calmness. Hence his distance to things and men. ‘Lack of distance’ per se is one of the deadly sins of every politician. It is one of those qualities the breeding of which will condemn the progeny of our intellectuals to political incapacity. For the problem is simply how can warm passion and a cool sense of proportion be forged together in one and the same soul? Politics is made with the head, not with other parts of the body or soul. And yet devotion to politics, if it is not to be frivolous intellectual play but rather genuinely human conduct, can be born and nourished from passion alone. However, that firm taming of the soul, which distinguishes the passionate politician and differentiates him from the ‘sterilely excited’ and mere political dilettante, is possible only through habituation to detachment in every sense of the word. The ‘strength’ of a political ‘personality’ means, in the first place, the possession of these qualities of passion, responsibility, and proportion. (Weber, 1946)

When speaking about politics (and politicians), Weber also touches upon the role of modern political journalism

(journalists). In his opinion, “*the journalist career remains under all circumstances one of the most important avenues of professional political activity*” (Weber, 1946). Therefore, the conclusion that “*politics is made with the head,*” and that the ability to maintain distance (“*distance to things and men*”) is the quality that distinguishes a professional journalist from an “*excited dilettante*” also applies to journalists as “professional politicians.” Viewed in the context of Weber’s lecture dating from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a journalist, as a “*paid professional politician*” and a media company as a “*continuous political organization*” are important levers of political work (as are parliamentary sessions, in Weber’s nomenclature).

However, if the media (or journalism) and politics eventually form an “incestuous relationship” (Halimi 2003: 19)<sup>1</sup> and both lose distance and begin to make politics with “*other parts of the body or soul,*” then we have inadequate politics and inadequate media. When politics turns into “mere passion”, which mainly “feeds on” media attention and presence (management of the publics), the media, too, become a “sterilely excited” conduit of attention maintaining no distance towards their own work and towards those about whom they write.

The purpose of this research was to establish and assess media consumption among politicians, in this case, MPs in the National Assembly of Slovenia. We sought to establish which media they consumed, which were their principal sources of information, how they assessed the work of various media in Slovenia, how they used the media and how they responded to important public issues. When establishing media consumption among politicians, it is necessary to take into account that their exposure to media content is both direct and indirect. Put differently, apart from having personal preferences when choosing media and media content to consume, they are also exposed to “aggregated and processed” content prepared by professional services catering for parliamentary groups, or PR services within the Parliament. These services have become important “gatekeepers and originators” of media content intended for politicians’ consumption (Lomax Cook et al, 1983:22).

<sup>1</sup> “After all, France is a state where the idea that head of state is interviewed by two journalists who are also ministers’ wives is not considered extravagant. The world abroad, to which we always turn when voraciously searching for the latest philippics against our social ‘archaisms,’ expressed its wonder at this slightly feudal practice, which undoubtedly clearly illustrated the reality of incestuous relationship between the media and the government,” says Halimi in his book *The New Watchdogs (Les nouveaux chiens de garde)* (2003:19).

Our study has accordingly concentrated on establishing the extent of MPs' media consumption, their attitude towards the media, and the extent to which their approach is pro-active, i.e. the extent of their personal engagement regarding important public issues and involvement in the creation of the public sphere ("public engagement" and "public connection", as Couldry et al. have called it). We also tried to establish to what extent political activity has become the management of public matters and the continual work of paid experts whose task is to ensure effective management of various publics (presentation of politics to the public) rather than to make political activity public.

Publicity work is aimed at strengthening the prestige of one's own position (...) The aura of personally represented authority returns as an aspect of publicity; to this extent modern publicity indeed has affinity with feudal publicity. Public relations do not genuinely concern public opinion but opinion in the sense of reputation. The public sphere becomes the court *before* whose public prestige can be displayed – rather than in which public critical debate is carried on (...) The very phrase "publicity work" betrays that a public sphere which at one time was entailed by the position of the carriers of representation and was also safeguarded in its continuity through a firm traditional symbolism, must first be brought about deliberately and from case to case. (...) (t)he public sphere has to be 'made' it is not 'there' anymore. Altmann calls this appropriately enough the act of 'communification'". (Habermas, 1989: 200–201)

For the public, politics is stylized as a show. Publicity has been losing its critical function (control over the government) to representative publicity. However, representative publicity does not rest on the exchange of arguments but on a conflict of symbols to which it is no longer possible to respond with argument but with a staged display (Habermas, 1989: 206). If, in advocating for publicity (the public's control), Jeremy Bentham (Bentham, 2008) cited as the first reason the enforcement of the members of assembly to fulfill their duties before the public, then the characteristic of representative publicity today is "presentation with concealment".

We will first present the work of the National Assembly of Slovenia, and the existing indirect ways of obtaining information and media consumption.

## THE SURVEY AMONG SLOVENIAN MPS

The National Assembly of Slovenia (in this essay abbreviated to NA or referred to as Parliament) is the highest representative institution whose main functions are the legislative, electoral and supervisory functions. As the provider of the legal framework (constitutional, legislative and similar), the NA passes and amends the Constitution, laws and general legal acts, and its rules of procedure; it provides authentic interpretations of laws, and consolidated texts of laws, approves the national budget, the revised budget and the annual financial statement of the national budget; finally, it ratifies international agreements and calls referendums. As part of its electoral function, it votes, appoints and dismisses the Prime Minister and other ministers, the President and Vice-Presidents of the National Assembly, judges of the Constitutional Court and other courts, the Human Rights Ombudsman, the governor of the central bank and members of the Court of Audit. As part of its supervisory function, it orders parliamentary investigations, decides on confidence and no-confidence votes, decides on indictments of heads of state, Prime Minister and ministers before the Constitutional Court; one way of exercising supervision involves questions raised by MPs. Apart from these main functions, the NA also declares war and a state of emergency, and decides on the use of military force. The NA further confirms MPs' appointments, decides on their immunity and the immunity of Constitutional Court judges and other judges.

The National Assembly of Slovenia has 90 MPs elected in 8 electoral units. Eighty-eight MPs are elected directly, according to the proportional electoral system; the Italian and Hungarian minorities elect one MP each. MPs are the representatives of all citizens and are not bound by any instructions. MPs are elected for a term of 4 years, unless by-elections are called. The language of the NA is Slovene. The MPs representing the Italian and Hungarian national minorities have the right to speak and submit written proposals, initiatives, questions and the like in Italian and Hungarian, respectively. Their speeches and texts submitted in writing are translated into Slovene.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> On the basis of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, the National Assembly began to operate after the second democratic elections in 1992. It was constituted at its first session held on December 23, 1991. The latest, fifth parliamentary elections were held on September 21, 2008. The National Assembly is now in its fifth term. The mission and the functions of the National Assembly are accessible at

Our survey<sup>3</sup> among the Slovenian MPs was conducted in June 2008<sup>4</sup>. We sent survey questionnaires and a description of our research study to parliamentary groups, the MPs representing the Italian and Hungarian minorities, and one unaffiliated MP. Thirty-four MPs completed the questionnaires. Since we sought to establish media consumption among MPs as a group and their perception of the media (other groups in this study were students and minorities), we did not ask about their political party affiliation.

MEDIA CONSUMPTION – WHICH MEDIA DO  
SLOVENIAN MPS READ/LISTEN TO/VIEW?

As already pointed out, MPs are also exposed indirectly to media content, in accordance with the *Resolution on the distribution of publications to MPs*.<sup>5</sup> The President and Vice-Presidents of the NA and leaders of parliamentary groups receive a set of the print media, comprising all Slovenian daily newspapers, selected weeklies, and one regional newspaper. The chairpersons of working bodies (committees and commissions) receive two newspapers, and they are free to choose the dailies, weeklies, monthlies and journals they need for their work. For the purpose of parliamentary groups' operation, the secretaries of parliamentary groups receive a set of all the print media and up to five regional newspapers

[www.dz-rs.si/index.php?id=67](http://www.dz-rs.si/index.php?id=67). MPs are introduced at [www.dz-rs.si/index.php?id=92](http://www.dz-rs.si/index.php?id=92). A brief presentation of the National Assembly is also available at [http://sl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dr%C5%BEavni\\_zbor\\_Republike\\_Slovenije](http://sl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dr%C5%BEavni_zbor_Republike_Slovenije) (the article is one in the series entitled *Politika in uprava Slovenije/Politics And Administration of Slovenia*). For more on the National Assembly, see Cerar, M. et al. (2007) and *Državni zbor 1992-2007/The National Assembly 1992-2007* (2007).

<sup>3</sup> For the survey questionnaire, see page 173.

<sup>4</sup> The survey was conducted among the MPs who served during the NA's fourth term (October 22, 2004–October 15, 2008). The 90 seats in the National Assembly were distributed among seven parliamentary groups, while two seats are reserved for the representatives of the Italian and Hungarian national minorities. At the beginning of the term, 29 MPs came from the SDS party, 23 from the LDS party, 10 from the ZLSD party (in April 2005, the party was renamed the Social Democrats – SD), 9 from the NSi, 7 from the SLS, 6 from the SNS and 4 from the Desus. In February and March 2007, 12 MPs left the biggest opposition party, LDS. Seven of those MPs then founded a new parliamentary group, Zares (the new political party Zares was founded in October 2007; it won 9.3% of votes in the 2008 elections and entered the Parliament), four MPs joined the SD party, and one member remained an independent MP until the end of the term. Of the six SNS MPs altogether, three MPs founded a new parliamentary group, Lipa, which, as a political party, ran in the 2008 elections but did not enter Parliament. The governing coalition during the 4<sup>th</sup> term of the National Assembly was composed of the SDS, NSi, SLS and Desus parties, while the LDS, SD and the SNS were opposition parties.

<sup>5</sup> *Sklep o razporeditvi publikacij poslankam in poslancem/Resolution on the distribution of publications among MPs*, 2002. The Resolution was sent to us by Tatjana Krašovec, Head of the Research and Documentation Division of the National Assembly.

of the group's choice, depending on the number of MPs.<sup>6</sup> Every committee and commission may receive up to 5 professional journals, depending on their area of work.

The second important source of information for the MPs is the Research and Documentation Division of the National Assembly. The MPs and parliamentary groups can request it to conduct a research project needed for their work.<sup>7</sup> This is "accurate and politically unbiased information and data in a written form, satisfying the information needs that arise in the National Assembly, while implementing its main tasks" (Instructions 2008, Article 1). A research project can be requested by the National Assembly, its working bodies, parliamentary groups, individual MPs, and the Secretary General of the National Assembly (Instructions 2008, Article 5). In cases of an increased workload, requests by opposition MPs have priority, whereby the set deadlines, the topicality of the subject or MPs' wider interests, regardless of the deadline, are taken into account (Instructions 2008, Article 10).

During the decade 1998–2008, the Research and Documentation Division completed 718 research projects, of these 144 during the 1996–2000 term (i.e. beginning in 1998, when the service was launched), 335 during the 2000–2004 term, and 239 during the 2004–2008 term. The years that saw the greatest number of research projects were 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2007 (Research Activity Within the National Assembly, 2008:10).

A review of research activity by project commissioners shows that the greatest number of projects was requested by the opposition (29.9%), followed by the Secretary General (25.6%) and the governing coalition (19.1%). A large number of research projects were self-initiated, and 6% were requested by the working bodies. The National Assembly as a whole did not request any research project during the ten year period mentioned.

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> government's term in office (2000–2004), the opposition requested 105 research projects, compared to 71 requested by the governing coalition. During the 4<sup>th</sup> government's term in office (2004–2008), the opposition

6 Up to 20 domestic newspapers and professional journals (number of copies according to the following criteria: 1–8 MPs – 1 copy, 9–16 MPs – 2 copies, 17–24 MPs – 3 copies, 25–32 MPs – 4 copies, 33–40 MPs – 5 copies), up to five foreign newspapers and journals and a set of the Slovenian print media for the representative of the parliamentary group (a group of more than 8 MPs).

7 *Navodilo za naročanje raziskovalnih nalog in obdelavo naročil/Instructions for ordering research tasks and for the processing of these orders (Uradni list RS, 32/2008, April 18, 2008)* (hereafter, Instructions, 2008).



ordered 61 research projects, compared to 47 ordered by the governing coalition. In July 2002, shortly before the Assembly's summer recess, the research department received 17 requests from a single opposition parliamentary group within the span of just two days (Research Activity Within the National Assembly, 2008:11–12).

In terms of content, the greatest number of research projects (37.6%) related to the work of the National Assembly and MPs, and elections; 21.5% research tasks related to the political and legal systems, 15.7% to the economy and finance, 15.5% to social issues, 3.1% to environmental protection, and 1.7% to international subjects. Five percent of projects involved subjects outside the areas mentioned above. A surprising detail in this context is the small number of projects relating to environmental protection (Research Activity Within the National Assembly, 2008: 12).

In the words of Tatjana Krašovec, Head of the Research and Documentation Division,<sup>8</sup> from 1998 to 2004 the opposition used research services much more frequently than during the 2004–2008 term. In Krašovec's opinion, the MPs in the NA would need additional training to increase the efficiency of their work, particularly within parliamentary commissions and committees.

We will now look at how the MPs who participated in our survey assessed their media consumption. Although they have access to the media via their work in the National Assembly, their choice of media is nevertheless a reflection of their own preferences.

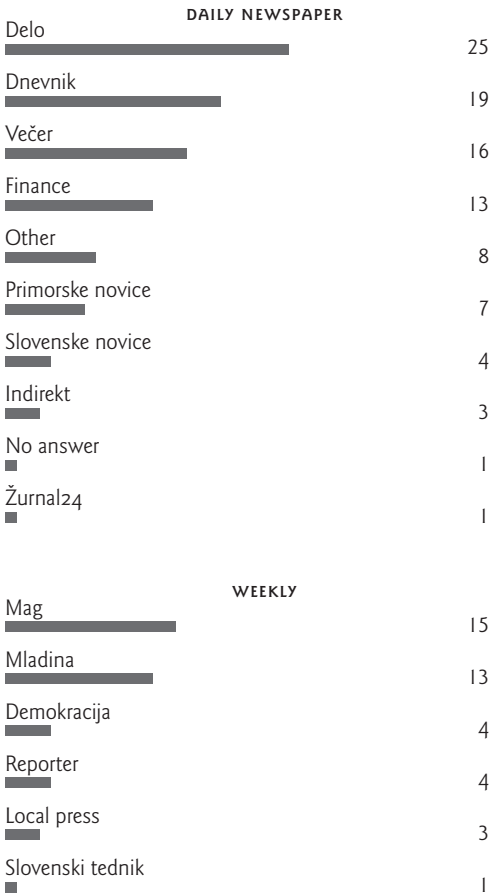
Answering the question on how often they consumed news about domestic and foreign political events, 32 MPs stated that they consumed it every day, and 2 answered three to five times a week.

The most widely read daily newspapers are *Delo* (25 respondents), *Dnevnik* (19), *Večer* (16) and *Finance* (13). The most widely read weeklies are *Mag* (15) and *Mladina* (13). The weeklies *Demokracija* and *Reporter* were reported by 4 MPs as their most important sources of information. The public radio *Radio Slovenija*, cited by 21 MPs, ranked number one as the most frequently used source of information about domestic and foreign political events. *Val 202* ranked number two (cited by 17 MPs), followed by local radio stations (8), and *Radio Ognjišče* (6). The most frequently cited television stations were *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1*

<sup>8</sup> The interview was held on November 7, 2008. The author is grateful to Tatjana Korošec for her assistance in gathering the material on the work of the National Assembly.

(32), POP TV (25), *Televizija Slovenija Channel 2* (18), *Kanal A* (7), *Info TV* (4), local television (3) and TV3 (2)<sup>9</sup>. Only a small number of MPs gave accurate information on the web sites they used as a source of information. The web sites at *www.24ur.com* (4), *www.delo.si* (4), *www.rtvslo.si* (3) and *www.siol.net* (1) were cited most frequently. The answers provided under the “Other” option were varied, for example, “whatever comes by”, “political parties,” “web pages,” and “DZ RS network.”

CHART 1: INFORMATION SOURCES (QUESTION 2) (N=34)



<sup>9</sup> On reviewing the TV schedule of the commercial television TV3, we concluded that their program did not include any newscasts. (see [www.tv3.si](http://www.tv3.si))

Other		10
No answer		9
	<b>RADIO</b>	
Radio Slovenija		21
Val 202		17
Other		9
Local radio		8
Radio Ognjišče		6
Radio Študent		2
Hit		1
No answer		3
	<b>TV</b>	
Televizija Slovenija 1		32
POP TV		25
Televizija Slovenija 2		18
Kanal A		7
Info TV		4
Local TV		3
TV3		2
Other		10
	<b>WEB SITE</b>	
www.24ur.com		4
www.delo.si		4
www.rtv slo.si		3
www.siol.net		1
Other		32
No answer		13

The most frequently cited news programs were *Odmevi*<sup>10</sup> (chosen by 33 respondents), *Dnevnik*<sup>11</sup> (31) and *24ur*<sup>12</sup> (29). These were followed by *Info TV*<sup>13</sup> (chosen by 15 respondents), *24ur zvečer*<sup>14</sup> (11), *Svet*<sup>15</sup> (11), and foreign news programs (9).

As regards radio news programs, the greatest number of respondents listens to news programs on public *Radio Slovenija* (34), local or regional radio stations (21), on a commercial channel (7), on a student radio station (5), and on foreign radio stations (5).

Twenty-six MPs use the Internet on a daily basis; 4 use it three to five times a week, 2 less than once a week, 1 uses it once or twice a week, while 1 MP never uses the Internet. The majority of respondents, 26, use it to send or receive e-mail, 16 use it to search for daily news, and 7 to search for information related to the activity of a political party to which they belong. Three MPs take part in online forums (comment), two maintain their own web page, write a blog, or have an online profile, one uses the Internet for chat, one for telephony and one for entertainment.

The majority of respondents (27) do not read blogs. Those who do read them gave various answers. Only a few MPs gave accurate information about the blogs they read, while the majority referred to the web sites of major Slovenian media companies.

The majority of MPs (16) do not contribute to online content (do not write/edit content). Of those who do contribute, the majority (6) create/edit their own web page, three have online profiles, two publish photos or video clips, and one writes his/her own blog.<sup>16</sup>

All MPs surveyed use a mobile phone. The majority use it for phone calls (34) and text messaging (33). Ten MPs also use it to take and/or send photos, 7 to access the Internet, and 6 to access e-mail. The majority (28) do not use a mobile phone to access information sources on the web (e.g. web portals, web pages of media companies etc.).

10 The late night news program on *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1*.

11 The prime time news program on *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1*.

12 The prime time news program on *POP TV*.

13 Subject-oriented program.

14 The late-night news program on *POP TV*.

15 The prime time news program on *Kanal A*.

16 There are disparities between answers to the question What do you most frequently use the Internet for? and Which of the listed web content do you create/edit? When answering the former question, 2 MPs said that they created or edited their own web page/blog/profile. When answering the latter, nine said that they created or edited their web page, and 3 said that they had on-line profiles.

Despite the lack of data on Slovenian MPs' media consumption, we have found information on their response to electronic communication in the two surveys conducted by the Institute for Civilization and Culture (ICK, Research Report 2003 and Research Report 2006). The survey entitled *A Post-Transition State vs. Civil Society* sought to establish, among other things, how effectively and rapidly MPs responded to e-mails sent by citizens via the web site of the National Assembly. MPs were asked two questions: "Do citizens often turn to you with their questions and suggestions through electronic mail (how many e-mails on average – give an approximate number – do you receive a month) and are you able to respond to those e-mails in an accurate and quality fashion?" "What, in your opinion, are the advantages of direct on-line communication with citizens?" (ICK, Research Report 2003: 101–2).

Twenty-two MPs responded to a simple question within the short term set by researchers (September 10 – September 12, 2003) for the first test. The second test required somewhat longer answers and had a one-week deadline (September 6 – September 12, 2003). Forty-one MPs responded. The majority said that they received several tens of messages a month and thought that this number was not too high to prevent them from responding in an accurate and quality fashion.

TABLE 1: MPS' RESPONSIVENESS TO E-MAIL

NO. OF E-MAILS PER MONTH	PROPORTION OF RESPONDES
100 or more	17,1
50	7,3
several tens	41,5
less than 10	34,1

Source: ICK, Research Report 2003: 103. A test of MPs' responsiveness to e-mail.

Qualitative results of the responsiveness test showed that the number of e-mails was closely related to current events and subjects discussed in the National Assembly. MPs received more opinions, remarks and questions during the periods when the National Assembly dealt with proposals that received wide publicity (ICK, Research Report 2003: 103–105).

MPs' responsiveness to electronic mail was also checked in 2006 in the survey entitled *Public Relations of the National*

*Assembly* (ICK, Research Report, 2006: 95–99). In January 2006 (on Sunday), all MPs received a message asking about the number of e-mails per month they received and whether they were able to respond to these in an accurate and quality fashion. Only 11 MPs answered; of these, three messages came from parliamentary groups (SDS, SD, and NS) – two were sent by their PR representatives, and one by the head of a parliamentary group office. The other 8 answers were sent by MPs themselves (three LDS members, two SDS members, including the President of the National Assembly at the time, two SD members, and one NSi member). Of those MPs who responded, 5 reported a very small number of e-mails per month, up to 5, with one MP stating “very few” rather than giving the number, while one MP stated that he had received 9 e-mails since the web page had been redesigned in 2005. Owing to the limited amount of quantitative data, meaningful comparison with the data obtained in the 2003 survey was not possible, yet researchers found worrying the fact that in the 2003 survey (ICK, Research Report 2003), 17% of MPs said that they received 100 or more e-mails a month, while the figures obtained in the 2006 survey were very low: the highest number of e-mails reported was 40, while the total of 100 e-mails was reached only by the SNS parliamentary group as a whole. As the researchers stated in their report, if they had to draw a conclusion, they would have to say “that the electronic communication channel partly closed down” (ICK, Research Report, 2006: 99).

#### WHO ARE THE VIEWERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY TELEVISION CHANNEL?

During the 2004–2008 term, one of the main issues related to the amendments of media legislation was the introduction of live broadcasts of NA sessions. The new RTV Slovenia Act<sup>17</sup> added a special national television program to the existing public radio and television programs, dedicated to the live coverage of sessions held by the NA and its working bodies, and to recorded broadcasts of these sessions when live broadcast was not possible (ZRTVS-1, Article 3). Despite objections from the professional public that the depleted frequency spectrum did not allow for the

<sup>17</sup> The Radiotelevizija Slovenija Act (ZRTVS-1) was passed in October 2005. *Uradni list RS*, št. 95, October 28, 2005 (9945–9954).

introduction of a third national channel, the then ruling coalition insisted on its launching.<sup>18</sup>

In 2007, *Televizija Slovenija* provided 388 hours, 22 minutes and 31 seconds of live coverage of NA sessions; it covered 61 regular sessions, 10 extraordinary sessions and two solemn sessions. In addition, the program included 77 recorded broadcasts of NA sessions.<sup>19</sup>

TABLE 2: LIVE COVERAGE OF NATION ASSEMBLY SESSIONS

NA SESSIONS	NO.	MINUTES	AVERAGE		
			RATING	VIEWERSHIP	SHARE
regular session	61	350:03:03	1.20%	23.019	11%
extraordinary session	9	37:23:35	1.30%	25.016	10%
solemn session	2	0:55:53	5.60%	106.510	24%
recorded broadcast of session	77	89:39:23	0.20%	4.413	6%

Source: A Report on Live Coverage From the National Assembly of the rs in 2007.

A comparison with the data obtained in 2006 shows that *Televizija Slovenija* increased the number of broadcasts (up from 59 in 2006) and dedicated significantly more time to the work of the National Assembly (233 hours and 47 minutes in 2006). At the same time, the audience share for live broadcasts fell, given that in 2006 regular and extraordinary sessions had a 12.0% audience share.

A conspicuous difference is noticeable in the ratings for broadcasts of solemn sessions. This can be explained by the fact that in 2006 these sessions were broadcast on *Televizija Slovenija Channel 2*, while the solemn session on June 24, 2007 was broadcast on *Televizija Slovenija Channel 1*. This broadcast was viewed by 9.1% of viewers (174,579), and it reached as much as 40% of all viewers who were in front of TV screens.

Of the regular sessions covered live, the session held on November 19, 2007<sup>20</sup> attracted the biggest viewership; it had

<sup>18</sup> Since May 21, viewers can watch *Televizija Slovenija Channel 3* via satellite, cable and the Internet (IP), regardless of the type of the television set. Since November 2008, *Televizija Slovenija Channel 3* can be watched through RTV Slovenija's web site at [www.rtvsllo.si/play](http://www.rtvsllo.si/play). The program cannot be received via the analogue signal. ([www.rtvsllo.si/files/novice\\_zavoda/sprejem-tvs3\\_.pdf](http://www.rtvsllo.si/files/novice_zavoda/sprejem-tvs3_.pdf)) The total costs of the introduction of this program are not publicly known.

<sup>19</sup> *Poročilo o prenosih iz Državnega zbora RS v letu 2007* (The Report on the Coverage From the National Assembly in 2007) (February 1, 2008). In February 2008, the report was submitted to the NA, but we do not have information on whether the NA discussed this report.

<sup>20</sup> This was the 33<sup>rd</sup> regular session of the NA, at which the MPs discussed the request for confidence vote.

a 12.2% audience share (234,416 viewers) and 32.9% of all viewers who were in front of TV sets at the time. The extraordinary (budget) session with the largest viewership was the one held on November 26, 2007. This broadcast had a 2.5% rating (48,628 viewers) and an 11.0% audience share.<sup>21</sup>

To return to our survey, the same number of MPs (17) said that they did and did not watch the parliamentary channel (the question was “*Do you watch the parliamentary channel (Televizija Slovenija Channel 3)?*”) The introduction and operation of the parliamentary channel (*Televizija Slovenija Channel 3*) was frequently mentioned in the NA as an important lever that could help increase trust in the work of the NA. The survey entitled *The Factors Contributing To the Trust In (Distrust of) the NA* (hereafter, Research Report 2002), conducted by the Research Team of the Faculty of Social Sciences between 2000 and 2003, which included interviews with long-time MPs, ex- and new MPs, sought to establish how they assessed the level of trust in (or distrust of) the NA’s work.<sup>22</sup> All interviewees answered 8 questions. Relevant for our survey are the answers to question number 3 (*What, in your opinion, most influences the level of distrust of the NA? What are the reasons for it? Please state what you consider to be the three main reasons*), and question number 4 (*What, in your opinion, should the NA, as an institution, do to increase trust in it, i.e. to reduce distrust of it?*).

All four long-time MPs mentioned media reporting as the main reasons for the high level of distrust. In their opinion, the media reporting was improper and placed emphasis on conflicts or specific events within the NA. Three MPs said that changes in public relations in the sense of more intense communication of better quality should be among the measures taken by the NA (Research Report 2002:12).

21 For the needs of this survey, we sent a request to the Programme Controlling of RTV Slovenia, asking for the data on *Televizija Slovenija Channel 3* ratings during the period October 2007–October 2008. The report sent by Barbara Zemljič says that audience measurements for this program began “only in October 2008, so the viewing data refer only to the broadcasts of NA session on *Televizija Slovenija Channel 2*. According to AGB Nielsen Media Research, which rated the broadcasts, the average rating for the broadcasts of NA sessions was 1.4%, which is equal to 25,400 viewers older than 10; its share of audience was 14% (e-mail on November 25, 2008).

22 In the initial phase of the survey, the research team anticipated the use of the delphi technique in surveying parliamentary experts in Slovenia. Owing to the small number of these experts, the circle of experts was expanded to include those who are frequently in contact with the work of the NA through their work, those who are opinion setters regarding the work of the NA or political activity inside particular social groups, and long-time, new and former MPs and former presidents of the NA. As a result, nine groups of interviewees were formed. These included long-time MPs (serving a second term at least), new MPs, former MPs, a former president of the NA, lobbyists, political scientists, philosophers and legal experts. Altogether, there were 33 interviewees (Research Report, 2002:7–8).



New MPs went along with their colleagues with longer experience in saying that the media and their reporting were one important reason for the high level of distrust of the NA. In the MPs' opinion, the media did not differentiate between a report and a commentary, and they presented primarily partial information or provocative parts of MPs' speeches. New MPs thought that more active, intensive and profound contacts between MPs and voters, particularly in their electoral districts, should be among the measures taken by the NA (Research Report, 2002:16).

In the opinion of former MPs, the reasons for the high level of distrust were varied, including distorted or unfairly edited media reporting on the work of the NA (2 MPs), people's insufficient knowledge or even ignorance about parliamentarism, leading to a negative perception of the conflicts that are an essential part of Parliament's work (2 MPs), MPs' unregulated status which influences the choice of quality candidates and MPs' behavior (2 MPs), the NA's considerable openness towards journalists, particularly when compared to that of the government (2 MPs), and the fact that parliaments in other countries do not enjoy a high level of trust either (2 MPs). Similarly varied were their suggestions of measures towards reducing the level of distrust. Two MPs suggested live coverage of the NA's plenary sessions, so that voters could autonomously form an impression about the work of MPs (Research Report, 2002:20).

As a rule, all respondents in the survey (33 altogether) specified more than three reasons for the high level of distrust, yet more than half the respondents (19) emphasized media reporting or operation as the main reason. This was one of the reasons that led some respondents to give an affirmative answer to the explicit question about live coverage of plenary sessions. In the opinion of the majority of respondents, it would provide an opportunity for viewers to form their own picture about the operation of the NA without intermediaries. Only a small number of respondents thought that live coverage of plenary sessions would even increase the level of distrust. We should add that several interviewees emphasized that the NA's manner of work was a reason for distrust. They actually thought that the NA's work was "too public" and "too open," particularly compared to the government's work, i.e. its openness to the public (Research Report, 2002:47).

Therefore, Slovenian MPs see improper media reporting as the reason for their distrust of NA work. MPs think that

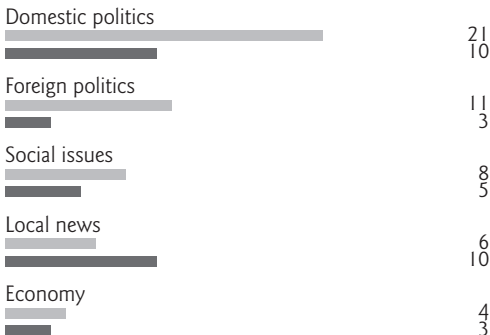
the only correct (trustworthy) reporting on the work of the NA is one excluding intermediaries (journalists). Knowing this, it is not surprising that the MPs saw (and still see) the “obscuring” of their operation and reliance on professional communicators, whose work is based on building relations that are in the interest of the commissioner, i.e. the National Assembly, as the crucial mechanisms for “communicating” the public (which is not a given thing, but must be created continually).

The political public sphere of the social welfare state is characterized by a peculiar weakening of its critical functions. At one time the process of making proceedings public (Publizität) was intended to subject persons or affairs to public reason, and to make political decisions subject to appeal before the court of public opinion. But often enough today the process of making public simply serves the arcane policies of special interests; in the form of “publicity” it wins public prestige for people or affairs, thus making them worthy of acclamation in a climate of non-public opinion. ... Even the central relationship of the public, the parties and the parliament is affected by this change in function. (Habermas, 1974: 55)

#### TO WHICH TOPICS DO MPS DEVOTE MOST ATTENTION?

Slovenian MPs devote most attention to domestic (21) and foreign (11) political affairs. Asked about the topics/content they missed in the media, they most often emphasized local news (10) and domestic politics (10).

CHART 2: TOPICS OF FOCUS (QUESTIONS 13 AND 14) (N=34)  
( ■ EXISTING FOCUS ■ EXPECTED FOCUS)



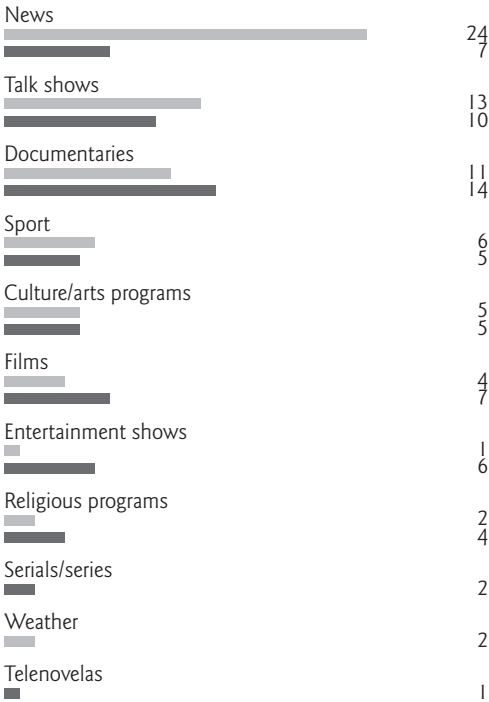
Culture/arts	3
Environment/ecology	8
Science/technology	8
Sport	5
Health advise	3
No answer	5

The table above reveals the lack of “distance” (Weber) on the part of respondents to their own work (profession). The MPs devote most attention to politics (domestic and foreign), meaning their own area of work, and conversely, the topics they thought were most neglected in the media were those relating to their own area of work. Politicians search the media for references to their own work, while the media see in them an important source of information. The circling of politics through the media and of the media through politics is precisely the type of “dilettantism” to which Weber drew attention. The lack of vision (“passion and distance”) among the MPs is most obviously demonstrated by the low level of attention they pay (and expect to be paid) to topics relating to the economy, environment/ecology, science/technology, and culture/arts. The media habits of MPs might be best described with the characteristics of the readership of 18<sup>th</sup> century moral weeklies. Discussions held in Parliament (among MPs) are transposed to another platform (newspaper, radio, television) only to be returned, via reading, listening and viewing, to the original platform (a discussion in Parliament). MPs as an audience read and converse mainly about content in which they see themselves as the subject of reporting (Habermas, 1989: 43).

The ratio between current and expected focus with regard to television content is similar.

The most often consumed types of television program are news (24), talk shows (13) and documentary programs (11). The types of television programs thought to be most neglected by the media, or those of which the respondents would like to see more, are documentary programs (14), talk shows (10), films (7) and news (7).

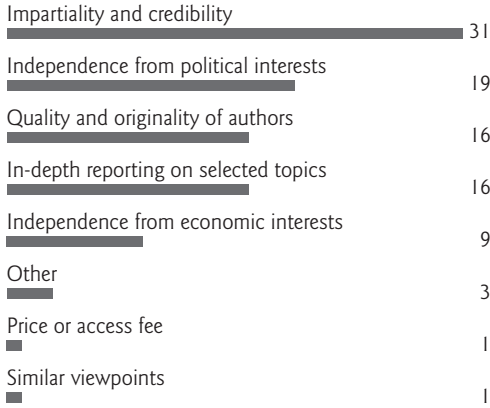
CHART 3: AREAS OF FOCUS ON TELEVISION  
(QUESTIONS 15 AND 16)  
( ■ EXISTING FOCUS ■ EXPECTED FOCUS)



WHY DO THEY CHOOSE PARTICULAR MEDIA?

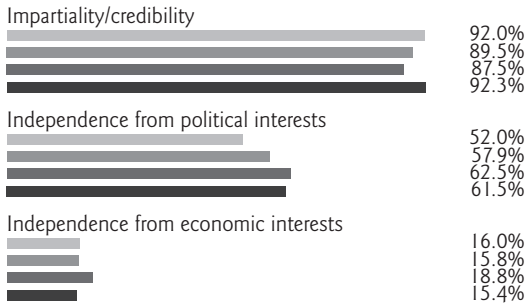
The majority of MPs in our survey (31) selected impartiality and credibility as the main criteria for choosing particular media (a newspaper, radio or television station, or a web page). The next most frequently chosen criteria were independence from political interests (19), quality and originality of individual authors, i.e. journalists, columnists etc. (16), in-depth reporting (16) and independence from economic interests (9).

**CHART 4: CRITERIA USED IN CHOOSING PARTICULAR MEDIA  
(QUESTION 17)**



Owing to the small number of respondents, it was not possible to perform an in-depth statistical analysis.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, we attempted to establish whether statistically significant correlations existed among individual answers. We tried to establish to what extent the use of particular media<sup>24</sup> influences the criteria MPs use in choosing particular media.<sup>25</sup>

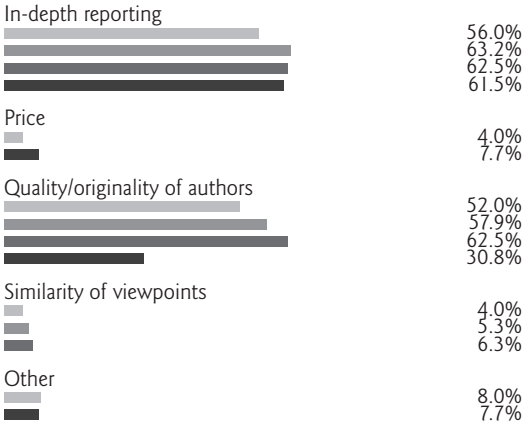
**CHART 5: CRITERIA USED IN CHOOSING PARTICULAR MEDIA -  
NEWSPAPERS  
( ■ DELO ■ DNEVNIK ■ VEČER ■ FINANCE)**



23 I am grateful to Mitja Čepič for his assistance and advice in processing data and compiling charts.

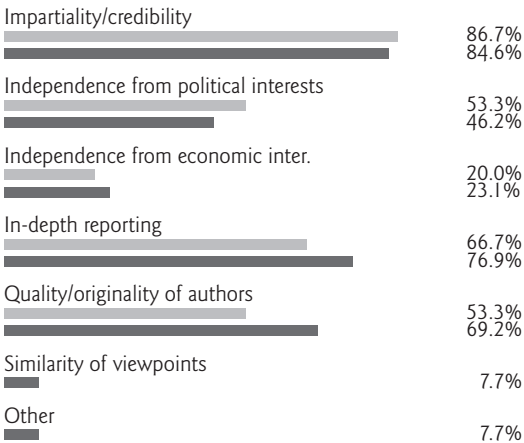
24 Answers to question 2, which was: *Which sources of information do you use most frequently.*

25 Answers to question 17, which was: *Which are the most important criteria in choosing particular media as an information source (a newspaper, a radio station, a television station or a web site)? (circle multiple answers if necessary)*



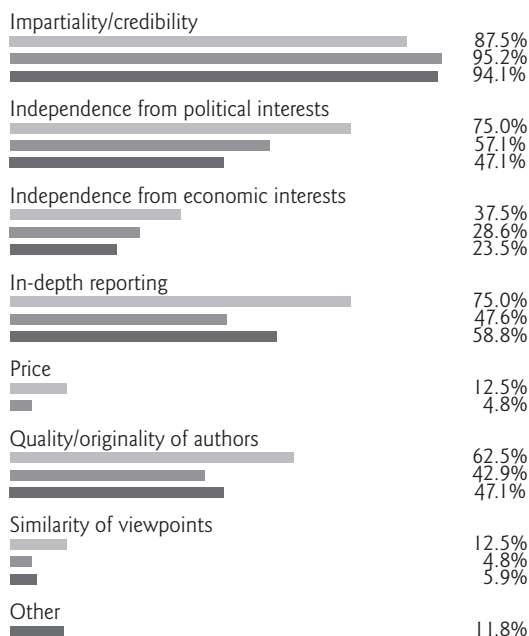
\* The percentages show the share of users of particular media who selected a specific option as their criteria for choosing particular newspapers or media (e.g. of the 25 MPs who read *Delo*, 23 selected impartiality/credibility, meaning 92%). The titles not included in this table were reported by an insufficient number of respondents.

**CHART 6: CRITERIA USED IN CHOOSING PARTICULAR MEDIA – WEEKLIES**  
( ■ MAG ■ MLADINA)



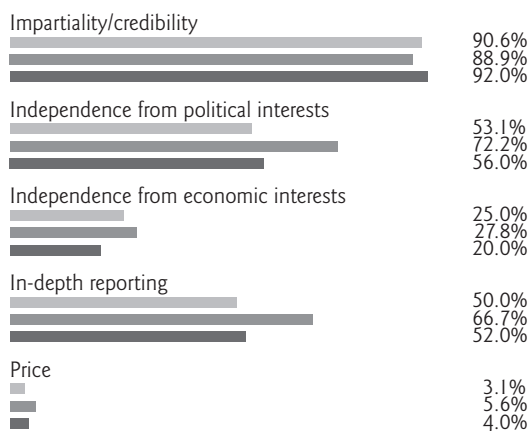
**CHART 7: CRITERIA USED IN CHOOSING PARTICULAR MEDIA –  
RADIO STATIONS**

( ■ LOCAL RADIO ■ RADIO SLOVENIJA ■ VAL 202)



**CHART 8: CRITERIA USED IN CHOOSING PARTICULAR MEDIA –  
TELEVISION PROGRAMS**

( ■ TELEVIZIJA SLOVENIJA 1 ■ TELEVIZIJA SLOVENIJA 2 ■ POP TV)





A look at Charts 5–8 reveals that MPs selected impartiality and credibility as the most important criterion for choosing particular media (newspapers, radio and television programs, or web pages), followed by independence from political interests, in-depth reporting and quality and originality of authors (only the *Finance* daily stands out in this respect, with a lower share of the quality and originality criterion) (Chart 5). The weeklies *Mladina* and *Mag* were chosen for their non-bias and credibility. Additionally, *Mladina* was chosen for its in-depth reporting (2<sup>nd</sup> choice) and quality and originality of authors (3<sup>rd</sup> choice), while *Mag* was chosen for in-depth reporting (2<sup>nd</sup> choice) and independence from political interests (3<sup>rd</sup> choice) (Chart 6). As to radio stations, the first choice was impartiality and credibility (of all information-providing media, *Radio Slovenija* and *Val 202* were chosen by the greatest number of respondents). Interestingly, the respondents thought that a local radio station as an information source was a “better choice than both public service programs” in terms of independence from political interests, in-depth reporting and quality and originality of authors (Chart 7). Impartiality and credibility were the most important criteria used in choosing television programs, as well. Independence from political interests and in-depth reporting earned public service *Televizija Slovenija Channel 2* a much higher proportion of votes than were accorded to *Channel 1* of the public service television *Televizija Slovenija* or the commercial channel *POP TV*. The majority of respondents (29), however, thought that Slovenian media reporting was not unbiased.



PUBLIC CONNECTION<sup>26</sup>

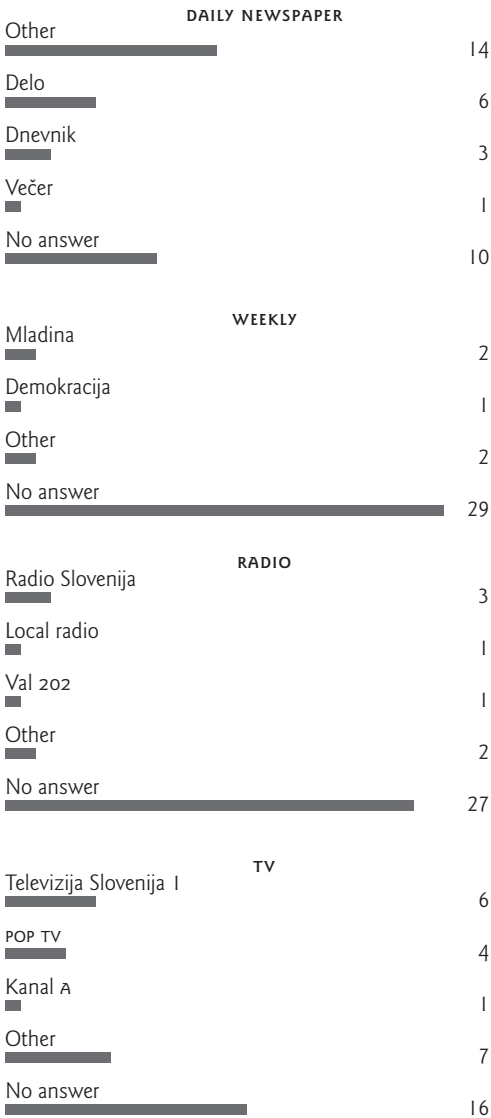
Six MPs said that no public issues stirred their interest in 2008 when answering the question *Which public issue has attracted your attention this year (not necessarily an issue covered by the media, but an issue you think is of local, national or a global importance)?*. Those respondents whose interest was stirred by a particular topics reported the Patria affair (involving bribes allegedly received by high government officials to push through the purchase of armored vehicles), regions and regional legislation, environmental issues (“global warming,” “genetically modified organisms”), corruption (“tycoons’ manipulation of the notion of tycoon,” “the non-transparent sale of state property”), media censorship (“credibility – sovereignty of journalism”), social issues (“getting rich,” “why such poverty in Slovenia,” “wages comparable with those in Europe”), the penal code, the EU presidency, violence against women and within the family, and the continuing Slovenia-Croatia issue.

As is clear from their answers, the majority of issues that attracted their interest were those which they themselves “produced.” Apart from a few purely public issues (e.g. violence against women and within the family), MPs eyed the public sphere seeking confirmation that the subjects of their political debates had become public issues. This means that the NA has changed from a “debating to staged body” which needs the mediated presence of the public for confirmation (proof) of its own functioning (Habermas, 1989: 237).

We further sought to establish which media provided most information on the issue in which they were interested. The respondents were asked to give the names of daily newspapers, weeklies, radio stations, television programs, web sites, and blogs. None of MPs cited a blog, and none said that information they sought was absent from the media.

<sup>26</sup> The notion of *public connection* is borrowed from Couldry et al. (2007). It involves the repoliticization of the public sphere and the creation of conditions for the operation of the political public. The privatization of public spaces and of politics transformed the principle of publicity into the principle of directing attention. As a result, politics has become just one type of consumer content, where consumers must be provided with a choice of content only at the time of an act of political consumption (elections).

**CHART 9: MEDIA CHOSEN TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON  
A SPECIFIC PUBLIC ISSUE (QUESTION 20)**



PRO-ACTIVE APPROACH – HOW DOES  
AN MP'S PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LOOK?

A separate set of questions was designed to establish the engagement of MPs in dealing with public issues. We sought to find out whether they took certain steps (or did something else) when a particular issue attracted their interest. The majority of MPs in our survey raised a question in the NA (12), or called a press conference alerting the public to their viewpoints (11), or took part in a panel discussion/a protest (rally, demonstrations) relating to that issue (9).

CHART 10: PRO-ACTIVE APPROACH

Raised a question in the NA	12
Called a press conference	11
Took part in a round table discussion/protest	9
Took the initiative for a round table discussion/protest	7
Expressed opinion on an on-line forum	5
Signed a petition	5
Wrote a public letter/petition	4
Wrote to a government representative	4
Boycotted a product/service/event	3
Wrote a reader's letter	2
No issue attracted my attention	2
Other	5
No answer	6

The majority of MPs in our survey (18) have already complained about media content that they found unacceptable. Only one MP had not yet identified unacceptable media content.

As to the channels of complaint, the majority (16) chose to exercise their right of reply and right of correction, 9 made a phone call to an editor or a journalist, and 9 wrote a reader's letter. Only one MP filed a complaint with the

Journalists' Ethics Commission. None of the respondents complained to the *RTV Slovenija* Programming Council, or filed a complaint with the media inspectorate. Given that when answering the previous question 15 MPs said that they had never complained, and one had never identified unacceptable content, it is obvious that even some among them must already have used certain complaint mechanisms.

Our check of the ratio between the extent of media usage and MPs pro-activity indicated certain links, but this difference is not statistically significant. On average, MPs who use a greater number of media titles also make use of a greater number of varied complaint mechanisms (2.57 vs. 1.44, on average).

TABLE 3: THE RATIO BETWEEN THE EXTENT OF MPS' MEDIA USAGE AND THEIR PRO-ACTIVITY<sup>27</sup>

NO. OF CITED MEDIA TITLES	N	AVERAGE NO. OF MEASURES
up to 10	18	1,44
more than 10	14	2,57
no answer/no	2	2,50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1,97</b>

#### WHAT IS INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE?

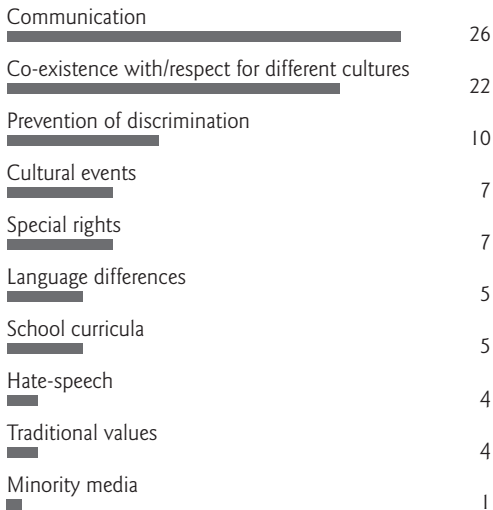
The year 2008 was the year of intercultural dialogue, to which Slovenia devoted close attention during its EU presidency. We sought to discover how MPs defined intercultural dialogue. The majority (26) thought that intercultural dialogue implied communication among members of various communities (ethnic, religious and the like) and their co-existence; 22 thought that it involved getting familiar with and having respect for other cultures; 10 said that intercultural dialogue meant the prevention of discrimination against members of various communities; 7 said that it involved cultural events presenting the culture of other communities, and a further 7 that it meant ensuring special rights for members of minority communities.

<sup>27</sup> In conducting this cross-analysis, we counted the number of media titles, regardless of the type of media which the MPs listed when answering the second question. Then we made two groups, one comprising up to ten titles, and the other more than ten titles. Finally, we counted the number of answers to question 21 (measures). This indicates the diversity of measures used by the MPs, but we cannot draw conclusions about how often they used these measures.

Based on these answers, it is obvious that the majority of MPs adhere to the official “definition” of the notion of intercultural dialogue, according to which it is a process of open communication between “us” and “them,” while not problematizing the “us” (“we”) position of the majority population.<sup>28</sup>

To a limited extent, the MPs identified intercultural dialogue with an active policy of “strengthening” the communicative, political and economic power of minority groups and their active inclusion in the processes of political decision-making. This is a “folklore-style” understanding of intercultural dialogue as contact between cultures, or cultural consumption of minorities’ habits and customs (whose form is usually defined by the majority culture), which enter the public sphere as “frozen images” of cultural practices staged by minorities for the gaze of the majority.

CHART II: HOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE  
(QUESTION 24)



<sup>28</sup> The web pages of the Ministry of Culture include the “official” definition of intercultural dialogue, according to which it is a dialogue among various cultures, the creation of a more complex cultural environment, a process of creating awareness about the importance of EU citizenship and of emphasizing the contribution of various cultures in member states. The activities mainly involve events and initiatives, information and promotional campaigns, and research (see [www.mk.gov.si/si/evropsko\\_letno\\_medkulturnega\\_dialoga\\_2008/](http://www.mk.gov.si/si/evropsko_letno_medkulturnega_dialoga_2008/)).

## THE MEDIA ARE BIASED!

The majority of MPs (29) were of the opinion that the Slovenian media's reporting on political events was biased (only 3 MPs thought that the media were not biased).

MP's convictions that the media were biased and that they could be "bypassed" with the help of efficient public relations seem to be persistent. In the 2003 survey *A Post-transition State vs. Civil Society* conducted by the ICK (ICK, Research Report 2003), Slovenian MPs who served during the 2000–2004 term<sup>29</sup> were asked about their attitude towards the media. The questionnaire, which was sent to them by e-mail, included the questions: *In what way do you cooperate with the media? Do you think that the media can serve as an information source about the needs and demands of citizens?* and *Do you use media as a tool for communicating with citizens?* (ICK, Research Report 2003:70).

Twenty-eight MPs filled in the questionnaire. Regardless of their political affiliation, all MPs confirmed the importance of the media in a democratic and plural society. The majority highlighted the importance of local media, and saw them, along with the national media, as the main tool for communicating with citizens and vice versa – for citizens' communication with governmental institutions. Many thought that information should flow in both directions, and that the media were a source of information, particularly on citizens' viewpoints. The MPs stated that they communicated with the media through press conferences and public statements, and that they answered journalists' concrete questions. However, the answers also revealed almost diametrically opposite views from the governing coalition and opposition MPs<sup>30</sup> when they were asked to assess how appropriately the Slovenian media were fulfilling their role. As a rule, the MPs of the governing coalition (save for few) did not find media reporting in Slovenia problematic, while the opposition MPs heavily criticized the media, raising doubts about the plurality, honesty and credibility of the Slovenian media, particularly national media. Similarly, they were convinced that they did not enjoy opportunities equal to those of the governing coalition for expressing their viewpoints and proposals. The answers of opposition MPs revealed

29 The NA's third term lasted from October 27, 2000 to October 22, 2004.

30 In 2003, the governing coalition was composed of the following political parties: the LDS, the SLS (until April 2004), the ZLSD (now SD), the Desus and the SMS; the opposition parties were the SDS, the NSI and the SNS.

profound doubts about the correctness of media reports and comments (ICK, Research Report 2003:74–75).

Although the results of the 2003 survey and our survey cannot be directly compared, we can identify certain characteristic attitudes of MPs towards the media. In simple terms, in 2003, the MPs of the governing coalition assessed the work of the media as correct, and the opposition MPs assessed the same work as biased and lacking credibility. The majority of political parties that in 2003 were part of the parliamentary opposition were part of the governing coalition in June of 2008 when our survey was conducted. The majority of respondents in our survey (29) assessed the work of the media as biased. Half the respondents said that they did not watch the parliamentary channel. If we add to this the fact that 9 MPs thought that calling a journalist/an editor was a legitimate instrument of complaint, and that 16 exercised the right of reply and the right of correction, ensuring direct access to the media according to current legislation, then all the characteristics of the “orchestrated publicity” of parliamentary work, meaning publicity achieved by steering media reporting, become obvious (this public character of parliament’s work involves continual and painful building of relations and negotiations aimed at achieving “correct interpretations”).

Research on the media’s (journalists’) assessment of politicians’ (MPs’) work is practically non-existent. A rough picture of the situation can be obtained from the results of the survey entitled *Public Relations in the NA* conducted by ICK in 2006. The chapter dealing with the analysis of reporting and working conditions of journalists in the NA (ICK, Research Report 2006:150–167) sought to establish the relations between the PR services in the NA and journalists. Journalists who reported on the work of the NA gave negative assessments of its PR services, primarily complaining of long response times. PR services took a conspicuously long time to answer journalists’ questions, and in many cases provided answers only to selected questions. Journalists further emphasized that a serious problem was the lack of knowledge about media operation on the part of PR service employees, meaning that they did not take into account the specific traits of journalistic work or particular media. In short, journalists objected to PR division employees not behaving like journalists. The main goal of the employees of PR divisions is to ensure control over the information given to the media (which constitute one of its publics) about the work

of the NA and MPs. The communication channels through which the parliament communicates with the wider environment primarily serve to legitimize its political activity. The raising of important public issues or initiating public debates is in no way their intention. The parliament communicates the public rather than communicating with it (ICK, Research Report 2006:153–4).

The fact that media companies are willing to dedicate a great deal of time and space to political content originating in state institutions is a consequence of successful political relationships established with various types of the public, and primarily of successive governments' and state institutions' success in controlling the media and information. As ICK's survey in 2006 showed, in Slovenia, journalists who come in contact with the NA are mainly not concerned about advancing the concept of state relationships with various publics. They are at best concerned about the manner in which PR departments "serve" information to the media, which, in their opinion, is not provided as fast as possible, and is not as accessible as it could be (ICK, Research Report 2006:166).

A kind of symbiosis has developed between journalists and politicians. In searching for stories, and having limited access to sources of information, journalists increasingly implant in their stories political solutions for resolving certain public issues. On the other hand, politicians, struggling for recognition and public approval, "court" the media to ensure themselves a vital space under the media spotlight. This symbiotic relationship inevitably leads to an ever greater exclusion of the public from political processes (Lomax Cook et al., 1983: 32).<sup>31</sup>

*"In general, people don't like to be turned into objects or objectified, and journalists least of all" says Bourdieu (2001: 14). "But 'the journalist' is an abstract entity that doesn't exist. What exists are journalists who differ by sex, age, level of education, affiliation, and 'medium.' The journalistic world is a divided one, full of conflict, competition, and rivalries" (Bourdieu, 2001:20). Despite this, journalistic texts are increasingly*

<sup>31</sup> This process has still another dimension of which both politicians and journalists are aware. This is precisely what has become a "currency" used in exchanges between the media and political spheres. As Iyengar (1991:2) has concluded, the subjects and questions reiterated in television news are becoming the priority subjects in the viewers' understanding of politics. And vice versa, the questions and events dealt with in television news are becoming a very influential criterion for assessing the performance of politicians. Edwards and Wood (1999: 327–344), on the other hand, pointed to the symbiotic relationship between the political and media attention devoted to selected political issues.



alike and homogeneous. Every discourse (including political discourse), every event, and every public operation must submit to the process of journalistic selection if it wants to become a subject of public debate – it must attract journalists' attention and stir their interest (Bourdieu, 2001: 42). Politicians (and economists) devote most of their political effort to attracting media attention. To be able to achieve this and gain control over the uncontrollable managers of public opinion, they need experts in the field, people who have specialist knowledge (about media operation).

The predominant opinion that the media are biased in reporting political events was also confirmed when the MPs were asked to rate statements about the media on a 5 - point scale (1 – I do not agree at all, 5 – I fully agree). The statements that the media were a means of promoting political interests and that they stimulated consumerism scored the highest level of agreement.

CHART 12: AVERAGE RATINGS OF STATEMENTS  
ABOUT THE MEDIA (QUESTION 25)

Media reveal things that are wrong within society	3.35
Media are a means of promoting economic interests	3.44
Media are a means of promoting political interests	4.03
Media help people become better informed and educated	3.47
Media stimulate consumerism	3.88
Media contribute to the increase of intolerance in society	3.25
Media contribute to the increase of violence in society	3.12
Media enhance knowledge about and understanding of the needs and interests of various social groups and communities	3.53

We tried to establish whether there was a link between the criteria used in choosing particular media (question 17) and the level of agreement with particular statements about media (question 25).

TABLE 4: THE CHOICE OF THE MEDIA VS. THE LEVEL OF AGREEMENT

CRITERIA (CODE)*	25A	25B	25C	25D	25E	25F	25G	25H
1 – Impartiality/ credibility.	3.42	3.42	4.00	3.58	3.84	3.24	3.03	3.55
2 – Independence from political interests	3.37	3.58	4.00	3.68	4.05	3.33	3.00	3.47
4 – In-depth reporting.	3.50	3.13	4.07	3.69	3.87	3.53	3.27	3.50
6 – Quality/ originality	3.56	3.50	3.94	3.94	3.81	3.27	3.07	3.50

\* We grouped answers to question 25 a–h based on the four criteria (or reasons for choosing a medium) selected with question 17, i.e. impartiality and credibility (code 1), independence from political interests (code 2), in-depth reporting on selected topics (code 4), and quality and originality of individual authors (code 6). These criteria were chosen by more than 10 MPs. The table shows mean values of answers to question 25a–h by groups so formed.

A look at the table reveals that differences between mean values are not pronounced; at first glance, the greatest difference relates to question 25b (*the media are a means of promoting economic interests*), but neither this nor other differences are statistically significant (t-test).

We also checked whether the diversity of media consumption influenced our respondents' viewpoints on the media (level of agreement with the statements). We counted the titles (all media) listed in answering question 2. We then divided the respondents into two groups, those who cited up to 10 media titles, and those who cited more than 10 titles.<sup>32</sup>

TABLE 5: DIVERSE MEDIA CONSUMPTION VS. VIEWPOINTS ON THE MEDIA

	FREQUENCY	%
up to 10	18	52,9
more than 10	14	41,2
missing	2	5,9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Table 5 presents the mean values of answers to question 25 (statements a–h) for both groups. None of the differences

<sup>32</sup> Eighteen MPs gave up to 10 titles, and 14 more than 10 titles.

are statistically significant. The plurality of media consumption does not influence viewpoints on the media.

**TABLE 6: DIVERSE MEDIA CONSUMPTION VS. VIEWPOINTS ON THE MEDIA**

	25A	25B	25C	25D	25E	25F	25G	25H
up to 10	3.39	3.56	4.00	3.56	4.06	3.12	3.22	3.61
more than 10	3.43	3.21	4.00	3.64	3.64	3.23	2.92	3.64

We further checked if there existed a link between the manner of complaint against media content and viewpoints on the media. We first divided our respondents into two groups: those who had already complained, and those who had not. Then we checked the answers of both groups to question 25. Mean values are presented in the table below.

**TABLE 7: THE USE OF COMPLAINT MECHANISMS VS. VIEWPOINTS ON THE MEDIA**

COMPLAINT	25A	25B	25C	25D	25E	25F	25G	25H
did complain	3.38	3.48	4.10	3.43	4.00	3.05	2.95	3.43
did not complain	3.31	3.38	3.92	3.54	3.69	3.58	3.38	3.69

Once again, none of the differences in mean values is statistically significant (Table 7).

If mean values for question 25 are cross-compared with the actual manner of complaint (question 23), the values are as follows:

**TABLE 8: MANNER OF COMPLAINT VS. VIEWPOINTS ON THE MEDIA**

COMPLAINT	25A	25B	25C	25D	25E	25F	25G	25H
correction	3.50	3.38	3.93	3.63	3.94	2.80	2.73	3.44
reader's letter	3.11	3.89	3.89	3.44	4.11	3.11	2.89	3.00
call to a journalist	3.56	3.22	4.38	3.56	4.33	3.44	3.22	3.67
no complaint	3.25	3.33	3.92	3.50	3.67	3.64	3.50	3.67

There were statistically significant differences with regard to the statement that media contributed to the increase in social intolerance (25f) between MPs who had already exercised the right of correction and those who had never

used a complaint mechanism. The former expressed a lesser degree of agreement with this statement. The same holds true of the statement that the media contributed to the increase in social violence (25g). Other differences were not statistically significant. The highest level of agreement with statement 25c (*The media are a means of promoting political interests*) was expressed by those who had already called a journalist or an editor to complain. The difference between others is not statistically significant.

In summary, the small sample renders impossible statistical confirmation of certain differences indicated here (e.g. an expected relation between the extent of media usage and a pro-active approach). Similarly, the relation between the manner of complaint about media reporting and MPs' viewpoints on the media is indicated but not statistically reliable. Our analysis showed that no link could be identified between the criteria used in choosing particular media (question 17) and actual media usage. MPs are exposed to media even when they do not consume them in reality, and it is precisely indirect media usage that allows for the conclusion that their media usage is independent from MPs' own value judgments about particular media.

POLITICIANS AND THE MEDIA,  
POLITICIANS ABOUT THE MEDIA

"Politics is a strong and slow boring of hard boards. It takes both passion and perspective. (...) Only he has the calling for politics who is sure that he shall not crumble when the world from his point of view is too stupid or too base for what he wants to offer. Only he who in the face of all this can say 'In spite of all!' has the calling for politics." (Weber, 1946)

"*Passion and a distance*" are, as Max Weber said in his famous lecture, the basic characteristics of political activity and political journalism. The founder of *Le Monde*, Hubert Beuve-Méry, has also long since said that "journalism is a contact and a distance." Only the contact has remained, says Serge Halimi in his sharp, shrewd critique of the French media (2003: 19). The journalistic and political agendas converged to such an extent that crossing over between the two fields (journalistic and political) has become common practice. *Pantouflage* between the media and politicians has become the issue of "synergy" – it offers to both politics and

the media greater efficiency and better recognition (Bickerton, 2007: 150-1).

In his book *On Television* (2001), Pierre Bourdieu also discusses this distance. The political field as such has a certain degree of autonomy, says Bourdieu. In this area, television has similar effects as in other areas, and the legal area in particular. It calls into question the right to autonomy. Journalists sometimes act as firefighters, fighting fires they ignited themselves, because they do not maintain a distance (Bourdieu, 2001: 56-57).

This survey sought to establish the media usage and perception of the media among Slovenian MPs. Our conclusion is that Slovenian MPs are exposed to media content even when they do not consume it directly (indirect exposure), and that their perception of their own work and media operation indicates a lack of distance. In using the media, the MPs look for, and find lacking, information and interpretation of their own deeds. Politics has thus become both producer and product of media content. As their answers clearly show, MPs only rarely raise important social issues. In doing their work they mainly follow the topics discussed by the media. At the time of our survey, only a few MPs stated that economic topics, or topics relating to science and technology attracted their interest or that these were topics they thought were neglected by the media (“in spite of all,” as Weber says, and despite media ignorance).

In choosing media, MPs observe the criteria of impartiality and credibility, yet they nevertheless think that the media are biased in their reporting of political events, as 29 MPs of the 34 altogether who responded to our questionnaire stated. Nine MPs stated that calling a journalist or an editor was a “legitimate” (and, obviously, taken-for-granted) instrument of complaint about unacceptable media content. When indicating their level of agreement with statements about the media, our respondents expressed the highest agreement with the statement that the media were a means of promoting political interests, and that they stimulated consumerism. Although the introduction of the national television channel dedicated to live coverage of NA sessions (*Televizija Slovenija Channel 3*) was a political decision, half the MPs surveyed do not watch it. For almost one decade, MPs demanded this channel, maintaining that the existing media were biased.

In this research study, we also touched indirectly on the relationship of politics and the media. Politics tries to appropriate the media and privatize public debate. Public relations services channel/control the openness of Parliament and its accessibility to the critical public. Their objective is not only to protect information and place limitations on sources, but also to monitor the media, promote their viewpoints (16 MP exercised their right of reply and of correction), use the media space and access to voters. Various types of power “influence the media not only through the economic pressure that they bring to bear but also through their monopoly on legitimate information—government sources are the most obvious example. First of all, this monopoly provides governmental authorities (juridical, scientific, and other authorities as much as the police) with weapons for manipulating the news or those in charge of transmitting it. For its part, the press attempts to manipulate these “sources” in order to get a news exclusive” (Bourdieu, 2001:63).

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## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE MPS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

I HOW OFTEN DO YOU FOLLOW NEWS ON DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLITICAL EVENTS? (*circle*)

- a Less than once a week
- b Once or twice a week
- c Three to five times a week
- d Every day
- e Never

2 WHICH SOURCES OF INFORMATION DO YOU USE MOST FREQUENTLY?

- a Daily newspaper (*title*).....
- b Weekly newspaper (*title*).....
- c Radio station (*name*).....
- d Television station (*name*).....
- e Web site (*name*).....
- f Blog (*name*).....
- g Other (*name*).....
- h I do not use any

3 WHICH TELEVISION NEWS PROGRAMS DO YOU WATCH? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a 24ur
- b 24ur zvečer
- c tv Dnevnik
- d Odmevi
- e Info tv
- f Svet
- g Foreign news programs
- h Other (*name*).....
- i I do not watch any

4 TO WHICH RADIO NEWS PROGRAMS DO YOU LISTEN? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a News programs on Radio Slovenija
- b News programs on a local or regional radio station
- c News programs on a commercial radio station
- d News programs on a student radio station

- e Foreign radio news programs
- f Other (name) .....
- g I do not listen to any

5 HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THE INTERNET? (*circle*)

- a Less than once a week
- b Once or twice a week
- c Three to five times a week
- d Every day
- e Never

6 WHAT DO YOU MOST FREQUENTLY USE THE INTERNET FOR? (*circle three answers*)

- a To send/receive e-mail
- b To search for daily news
- c To chat
- d To search for information related to work in the National Assembly
- e To search for information related to the activity of my political party
- f For Internet telephony
- g For entertainment
- h To edit my own web page, blog, profile etc.
- i To take part in online forums/comments
- j I do not use it

7 DO YOU READ BLOGS?

- a Yes
- b No

8 IF YOU READ BLOGS, PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH BLOGS YOU READ.

.....

9 WHICH OF THE LISTED WEB CONTENT DO YOU CREATE/EDIT?

- a Blog
- b Web page
- c Profile (*Facebook, Myspace, etc.*)
- d I post photos and/or video clips (*e.g. on YouTube*)
- e Other (*list*) .....
- f I do not create/edit web content

I 0 FOR WHAT PURPOSES DO YOU USE A MOBILE PHONE? (circle multiple answers if necessary)

- a To make calls
- b To send sms/mms
- c To take and/or send photos
- d To access the Internet
- e To access my e-mail
- f Other (name) .....
- g I do not use it

I 1 DO YOU USE A MOBILE PHONE TO ACCESS MEDIA CONTENT (e.g. information portals, web sites of media companies etc)?

- a Yes
- b No
- c I do not use a mobile phone

I 2 DO YOU WATCH THE PARLIAMENTARY CHANNEL (TV SLO 3)?

- a Yes
- b No

I 3 TO WHICH TOPICS OR MEDIA CONTENT DO YOU DEVOTE MOST ATTENTION? (circle up to three answers)

- a Domestic politics
- b Foreign politics
- c Social issues
- d Environment/ecology
- e Local news
- f Culture/arts
- g Science/technology
- h Economy/finance/stock exchange
- i Crime
- j Sport
- k Celebrity topics
- l Health advice
- m Lifestyle
- n None of these

I 4 WHICH TOPICS OR CONTENT DO YOU FIND MISSING IN THE MEDIA OR WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE EXTENSIVELY COVERED? (*circle up to three answers*)

- a Domestic politics
- b Foreign politics
- c Social issues
- d Environment/ecology
- e Local news
- f Culture/arts
- g Science/technology
- h Economy/finance/stock exchange
- i Crime
- j Sport
- k Celebrity topics
- l Health advice
- m Lifestyle
- n None of these

I 5 WHICH TELEVISION GENRES DO YOU WATCH MOST FREQUENTLY? (*circle up to three answers*)

- a News
- b Cultural and/or arts programs
- c Documentaries
- d Talk shows
- e Serials and/or series
- f Telenovelas
- g Films
- h Religious programs
- i Entertainment shows
- j Reality shows
- k Sport
- l Weather
- m None of these

I 6 WHICH TELEVISION GENRES DO YOU FIND UNDER-REPRESENTED ON TELEVISION SCHEDULES OR WISH TO SEE MORE OF? (*circle up to three answers*)

- a News
- b Cultural and/or art programs
- c Documentaries
- d Talk shows
- e Serials and/or series
- f Telenovelas

- g Films
- h Religious programs
- i Entertainment shows
- j Reality shows
- k Sport
- l Weather
- m None of these

17 WHICH ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CRITERIA YOU OBSERVE IN CHOOSING PARTICULAR MEDIA AS AN INFORMATION SOURCE (*a newspaper, a radio station, a television station or a web site*)? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a Impartiality and credibility
- b Independence from political interests
- c Independence from economic interests
- d In-depth reporting on selected topics
- e Price or access fee
- f Quality and originality of individual authors (*journalists, commentators etc.*)
- g Similarity of particular outlet's political viewpoints to my viewpoints
- h Other (*specify*).....
- i I do not know

18 DO YOU THINK THAT SLOVENIAN MEDIA REPORTING OF POLITICAL EVENTS IS UNBIASED?

- a Yes
- b No
- c I do not know

19 WHICH PUBLIC ISSUE HAS ATTRACTED YOUR ATTENTION DURING THIS YEAR (*not necessarily an issue covered by the media, but an issue you think is of local, national or global importance*)?

- a Specify the issue:.....
- b No public issue attracted my attention

20 IN WHICH MEDIA DID YOU FIND MOST INFORMATION ON THAT ISSUE?

- a Daily newspaper (*title*).....
- b Weekly newspaper (*title*).....
- c Radio station (*name*).....

- d Television station (*name*).....
- e Web site (*name*).....
- f Blog (*name*).....
- g Other (*name*).....
- h I could not find information on that issue in the media

21 IF THE ISSUE THAT ATTRACTED YOUR ATTENTION PROMPTED YOU TO ACT, WHAT DID YOU DO? (*circle multiple answers if necessary*)

- a I called a press conference and alerted the public to my viewpoints
- b I raised a question in Parliament
- c I sent a public letter or a petition to a relevant institution, dispatched it to various media and/or a larger number of recipients concerned with that public area
- d I expressed my opinion on that issue in an online forum
- e I wrote a letter for the "readers' letters" section
- f I initiated a round table discussion or a protest
- g I took part in a round table discussion or a protest (*rally, demonstration etc.*)
- h I wrote a letter regarding the issue to a local or national governmental representative
- i I boycotted a product/service/event
- j I signed a petition
- k Other (*specify what*):.....
- l No issue prompted me to act

22 HAVE YOU EVER FILED A COMPLAINT ABOUT MEDIA CONTENT THAT YOU FOUND UNACCEPTABLE?

- a Yes
- b No
- c I have not identified such content in the media

23 HOW (*using which mechanism*) DID YOU COMPLAIN AGAINST MEDIA CONTENT?

- a The right of correction and reply
- b Reader's letter
- c A call and/or a letter to the editor and/or a journalist
- d Complaint filed to the RTV Slovenija Programming Council
- e Complaint filed to the Journalists' Ethics Commission
- f Complaint to the media inspectorate
- g Other (*specify*):.....
- h I have not identified such content in the media

24 WHAT IN YOUR OPINION DOES THE TERM “INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE” MEAN? (circle up to three answers which in your opinion define this notion)

- a Coexistence, getting familiar with and having respect for other cultures
- b Communication among the members of various communities (ethnic, religious, and others)
- c Cultural events presenting cultural creativity of various communities
- d Respect for language differences
- e School curricula promoting knowledge about various cultures and their acceptance
- f Ensuring possibilities for minority groups to create media content and have media outlets in their own language
- g Prevention of discrimination against members of various communities
- h Ensuring special rights for the members of minority communities
- i Protection of traditional values
- j Setting up of separate residential neighborhoods for individual communities
- k Ensuring a certain number of job positions and places at universities and campuses (quotas) for members of minority communities
- l Prevention of hate speech in the media targeted at members of various communities
- m Other (specify).....
- n I do not know

25 TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH THE STATEMENTS BELOW? Indicate your agreement by the numbers 1 to 5, as follows: 1 – I do not agree at all, 2 – I do not agree, 3 – I neither agree nor disagree, 4 – I agree, 5 – I fully agree.

- a Media reveal things that are wrong within society  
1            2            3            4            5
- b Media are a means of promoting economic interests  
1            2            3            4            5
- c Media are a means of promoting political interests  
1            2            3            4            5
- d Media help people become better informed and educated  
1            2            3            4            5
- e Media stimulate consumerism  
1            2            3            4            5
- f Media contribute to the increase of intolerance in society  
1            2            3            4            5
- g Media contribute to the increase of violence in society  
1            2            3            4            5



- h Media enhance knowledge about and understanding of the needs and interests of various social groups and communities
- 1            2            3            4            5

GENDER (*circle*):    F            M

YEAR OF BIRTH: .....