

## Questions, questions...

### Is it possible for us to have good media?

**If we have good media, then why are journalists and readers not happy with them? If we don't, what prevents us from making them so? Why in the West this is the "fourth estate" while here it isn't?**

A TV channel such as Moldova 1 (M1), in the current circumstances of Moldova, is probably more than the fourth estate. Given its impact on a certain type of people, who are also the most active voters, our television is rather—due to the disproportional financial support it receives from the communist government as compared to other media—a sort of state super-power.

Does this mean that in the circumstances of unfair competition, any other media outlet, regardless of its efforts and quality, is doomed to a limited impact? Does this mean that regardless of the quality and professionalism of journalists' writing no further development is possible? "Exactly!" a newspaper editor told me as we were discussing the weaknesses of our media and the degree of professionalism of the journalists making them. "Even if the journalists were super-professional, one couldn't do more than the modicum we have managed to achieve in the conditions of Moldova. Let's imagine an impossible situation when we could hire, for a month, for six months or even an entire year Western journalists, say from the BBC, *The Times*, or *Le Figaro*. Let's also suppose that they would produce a newspaper or television as good as their own. Such outlets would immediately reach the situation of our independent media, i.e. they would be understood and accepted by a very small number of readers".

Besides, my fellow journalist went on, we have to take into account another side of our reality. We have bad rightist newspapers, which are able to publish just because they have a funder backing them, we have bad leftist newspapers which are able to publish for the same reason, and we also have bad governmental newspapers, which are in the same situation. The few independent newspapers, some of which are good, do not have a stable funder, have a certain faithful audience and have reached the ceiling of their development. In order to evolve, they would have to make concessions either to a funder or to the reader, but they don't seem to be prepared to do either.

And so we are gradually approaching the monstrous conclusion that producing bad writing or good

writing, bad stories or good stories is almost the same thing in Moldova.

Don't you get the feeling sometimes, the editor went on, that publishing newspapers is something having to do with us, publishers and editors, rather than the people we are addressing? So, we are happy to publish a newspaper that earns us a more or less modest living, which, grants us some fame too.

The thing about this fame is that it looks like a beggar, since it has no coverage; it adds neither moral prestige nor material benefits. The majority of the so-called VIPs and characters who fill newspaper pages and TV screens every day are people living just above subsistence. Well, there are some well-off characters too, but they are in the minority. In Moldova, just like during the Soviet Union, the worker is the one who is celebrated, which shows utter hypocrisy, because it is others who rule life today.

Our media, however, are filled with paupers. Poor journalists, poor heroes. On TV you can see researchers wearing suits they have had since their youth, journalists wearing pullovers from their studentship, artists in threadbare jeans, female teachers whose hair shows traces of curlers their mothers used in their youth.

Or perhaps a yellow newspaper could make it here? Could we produce something like *The Sun* from the UK, *Express Gazeta* from Russia, or *Academia Catavencu* from Romania? Especially given the fact that we are the country in which, they say, the most popular animal is the scapegoat. Do we have characters and VIPs for something like this? It seems so. Do we have a reader who could savor scandals? It seems we do. Journalists able to write scandalous things, because it is easier anyway than making investigations? They seem to be there too. But it just wouldn't work.

Because everything here is "seems". We are the land of SEEMS!

And then there is also the national peculiarity of shy affectation. We are only at the level of discussing rumors among two or three people rather than publicly.

You should see how the female neighbors in my village spit and curse at each other and how the males are gossiping! Every village has its own virtual scandals newspaper, in which eroticism sits well next to pornography, police stories next to the most imaginative curses. The same couldn't happen in Chisinau, because this city is made of four million villages and they all know that it's not a good idea to quarrel in public.

Maybe the prices are to blame? Is it true what they say about them, i.e. that they are inaccessible? I will make an unjustified parallel with theater. Theater managers also say that they can hardly set a ticket price of 10-20 lei, and that's difficult to sell too. And how about, I say to them, the National Theater which sometimes manages to gather full houses 25 shows in a row with tickets at 25-30 lei and recoups the expenses threefold? So, something somewhere does work, doesn't it?

There are two categories of people in Moldova: the rich ones (about 15-20%) and the poor ones (about 80%), true? False! (It is true that foreigners have managed to persuade us that we are not as poor as we like to think, even though sometimes we are much poorer than we let on.) This is extremely approximate. But the devil is in the details. Just like God is. Between the truly rich (who are about 5% of the country's population) and the extremely poor (about 25%) there is a million kinds of non-poor and non-rich.

Our non-rich people can afford an expensive thing once in a while, while our non-poor people fight for a discount of several lei when buying second-hand.

Discounts were very en vogue this winter, like never before. This was very obvious even for somebody like me who never goes shopping. So, the shops saw that even when they make business plans and think very carefully about their customers, they still fail to come and buy. Then they introduced the mechanism from the primitive era of natural exchange, i.e. pushing for discounts. And behold, they started to buy. Some liked the thing with discounts so much that the first thing they did when they opened their brand-new stores was to paint large figures of discounts on their windows.

But there is a limit to discounts. My colleagues from *Jurnal de Chisinau* told me that when their daily was for free, nobody bought it. However, people would buy it from the hustlers who appeared immediately. So, there is some economic leverage which works. And there are customers who can appreciate a few discount lei.

Now, to the economic condition of the media. All editors complain that they don't have money. How

come those in the West have money? Or do they also not have enough? Or do they make money from ads? Somebody told me the other day that he was planning to make a new newspaper, and who do you think he was looking for? A team of good journalists? Good stories? No, he was looking for big shots who would want to pay for advertising.

Questions, questions, questions... Maybe somebody can offer some answers, maybe we should do something else besides opinion polls. Maybe we should take care of ourselves too, not only of the wretched government.

Now I would like to go back to an incident I wrote about before. I was at a party, and there was a doctor who had been in the team helping the victims of the accident that killed actor Grigore Grigoriu. As that was not the best occasion to speak about accidents, I wasn't able to find out, as I had wanted to, more details about the accident. But several things that the doctor told me and which put the accident in a different light than what the media had written about it, made me think once again about how bad journalism can be in Moldova.

The reader's interest for such an event was natural, given the actor involved. I saw him, like many others, the evening before, at the Satiricus Theater, and the dramatic event that followed caught me completely by surprise.

And what a bitter taste was left in me by the stingy information broadcast and published by the media. ProTV Bucharest has more news about accidents every day (even if they sometimes use too much negative information), and we can see their reporters at the spot, interviewing witnesses, the police, relatives of victims. Not to speak about the cases when the victims of accidents are known personalities, when the stories are even more detailed. So, it is about elementary procedures, which are in the journalists' blood and which the audience expects.

Our journalists too, including the print ones (or perhaps especially the print ones as they have more time to collect data), ought to go to the spot, make pictures, collect information, talk to witnesses, doctors, police, relatives. Nobody has ever done it. And so we have to make do with either dry information and obituaries, or all sorts of lachrymose speeches richly illustrated with pictures from the actor's films. This shows a lack of professionalism, but also a sort of fatalism characteristic of the patriarchal man, which probably makes our journalists tell themselves, "If the man is gone, why write about it, it can't be fixed anyway?" From a philosophical point of view this emo-

tiveness can be understood but it has no connection with professional journalism.

Besides, as this accident was reported by hearsay, inaccuracies were plenty.

We still don't know what exactly happened, because events like this one inevitably produce myths begotten by the fact that every link in the chain of verbal recounting adds his or her part of the story. Maybe what the doctor, whom I met, said wasn't very accurate, especially given the fact that he dealt with the victims from the other vehicle, not the one in which Grigoriu was. But he was still closer to the source than the journalists, who either researched by phone or used information from news agencies.

According to the doctor, the actor was not in the back seat, as our newspapers wrote later; he was actually driving the vehicle. The Volga whose driver he was and which was not moving, was hit straight on by the other vehicle. The accident happened because of the high speed of the vehicle and the ice covering the road; newspapers didn't say almost anything about this. Besides, in Grigoriu's Volga there was another person who died and about whom journalists said that he was the driver. They should have explained who the person was, his relation to Grigoriu, but this information was never published. I couldn't find even the name of the man. A picture of the car would also help, as would some information about Grigoriu's Volga—for how long he had had it, etc.

One should not have ignored also the information on the passengers in the other car, who had been four as far as I know, two of whom died immediately. The doctor told me about a disturbing scene in this respect. A man, the relative of one of the victims who was a beautiful young woman of 24, implored the doctor to save the girl's life trying to give to him a 100-dollar note, even though the woman had been dead for half

an hour. My reporter friend, you should have dwelt on this scene, finding a picture of the beautiful woman, finding out some details, being a little of a psychologist and a writer, for you can't be a good journalist without being a little bit of a writer. This is what readers are interested in, and this is what you should have been interested in as a reader too. How come no journalist had a hunch about a good story that could come out of this event? And how many more events of this kind are there? How many major events and cases are crammed into small news stories in a corner of the page and how many worthless political shows take up entire pages! Why are we surprised then that our newspapers are not read? In this respect, how can we not "get emotional" at this weakness of our publications for running entire pages of praise written by readers. Can you imagine *Financial Times* running something like, "Dear FT, our entire family and our entire village reads you. You are the best!"

The papers didn't write anything about the fact that Grigoriu died instantly and was trapped in the metal either, and also that it took special equipment to release his body. Only a few words were published about his surviving family. Who did the man leave behind?

I know, you will say that our papers are poor, they don't have money to send someone to the place of the accident, that journalists receive very little pay and have no incentive to be good. One other "excuse" could be the fact that the accident took place on Saturday morning, and that's a day off for our journalists. Even in these circumstances I am sure one could have written better and more professionally about this accident.

I have to disagree with what the editor told me at the beginning of this article, i.e. no matter how good the story about Grigoriu's death had been, it would have passed unnoticed anyway. I cannot agree with this.

*Constantin CHEIANU*

## The Public Television in Chisinau: A “Watchdog” In the Service of the Power

In a world of media spectacle, in which our broadcasting certainly has a part, the censorship at the national TV of Moldova represents a major destabilizing factor. It is not by accident that the way this TV channel operates has become the object of special international monitoring. The Council of Europe, as well as other pan-European bodies are watching closely the situation at the Moldovan public radio and TV. And this is not because here are the only attempts at manipulating and misinforming on the continent. Unfortunately, in some advanced European democracies, too, the authorities exercise pressure on journalists trying to make them adopt a position favorable to the power. In the West, they even speak of a “berlusconization” of the media. In other words, they speak of attempts by some politicians, in imitation of the Italian prime-minister Silvio Berlusconi, to take over some media. This negative phenomenon, for example, was criticized during the last session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. However, in countries with truly free media censorship is punctual and accidental. In other words, it pops up, intermittently, only in some outlets and does not affect the freedom of expression and the access of citizens to information. In Moldova, on the contrary, censorship is sustained and quasitotal. In other words, it is the result of the partisan editorial policy of some outlets affiliated to the political powers, which are able to completely dominate the media market. This is exactly why the situation with the broadcast media in Moldova is a special one.

### Censorship, a social threat

In the absence of a robust system of competition, which in developed European countries stops the negative effects of political interference into public broadcasting, the censorship at Moldova’s national broadcaster, controlled by the Voronin regime, has degenerated into a true social threat. In the circumstances when the majority of radio listeners and TV viewers have no alternative sources of information, the public broadcaster has become a tool for an abusive distortion of reality and manipulation of the public opinion, which creates frustration and uncertainty in society. The political power, speaking metaphorically, castrates the

society’s watchdog, thus making it bite the one whom it is supposed to protect. It is not by accident that more than a decade after the collapse of the USSR, the Teleradio Moldova Company has turned into an instrument of misinformation and intoxication never before seen in Europe. After the declaration of independence, the broadcast media in Moldova saw a relatively rapid but chaotic growth. However, the trend of overdevelopment and alignment to European standards has lost momentum, and was replaced shortly by inhibition, especially of the TV journalism. Although private radio and TV stations appeared, they either did not have the financial power to expand, or were finally suppressed by the authorities. Thus, there has been no healthy competition that could spur the transformation of the state radio and television into a modern medium. Since 1991, it is true, the state broadcaster has in fact tried to unshackle itself. Several months after independence had been proclaimed, it actually seemed free. Back then I was deputy editor-in-chief at TVM and I can say that although the authorities were trying sometimes to stop the broadcasting of some stories, the management of the News Department was not conforming. In early 1993 the national television broadcast the documentary *Per aspera*, and I was among its authors, along with Alexe Barat and Valeriu Saharneanu. Although the film criticized the weakness shown by Mircea Snegur in front of Russia, the director of the television, Constantin Partac, insisted that the film be broadcast. Gradually, however, the national radio and television turned into a field of useless battles between parties and other interest groups. Various so-called democratic political factions fought fiercely in order to take control over the main radio and TV channel of the country. In these circumstances, the obedience of a considerable part of radio and TV journalists to the authorities, inoculated back in the Evil Empire’s time, erased all democratic reforms. Moreover, the blind submission to the masters of the moment has become stronger. It is this fact that paved the way for political partisanship at the national radio and TV stations.

Things became even more complicated after the Communist party came to power. The Voronin regime obstructed, blackmailed or even repressed the foreign and local investors who tried to start independent radio and TV stations. Thus, three years ago the

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communist authorities forced the authors of the project Stil TV to give up their idea of creating a strong private TV company. At the same time, for three years now Radio Vocea Basarabiei, which has the technical, financial and editorial capacity to grow from a regional to a national channel has been prevented by the communists from expanding.

By subordinating to itself the Broadcasting Coordinating Council too, the governing party checks all radio and TV stations that managed to start operating before Voronin and his supporters won the parliamentary elections in 2001. Today they are pressured, openly or covertly, to obey. This is why, perhaps, ORT Moldova or ProTV Chisinau try to avoid heated political debates or stories that could criticize the government. At the same time, the municipal radio and TV stations, after being for years threatened and terrorized with closure, are now obliged by the authorities to shrink their broadcast area considerably. The owners of cable operations, for example, are forced not to include in their packages the municipal Euro TV. In these circumstances, the private broadcasting fails to become a real competitor to the state radio and television, which claims to have become public. Therefore, Radio Moldova and TV Moldova, in spite of their poor quality, are able to dominate the broadcasting market. This happens because they have the privilege of being practically monopolies set by the government against everyone who does not agree with the official policies.

### **A channel of mass manipulation**

The manipulation and misinformation techniques the officials use at the national broadcaster are most often not very sophisticated. On the contrary. They are as simple as a baseball bat strike on the head of an undesirable journalist. First, the Voronin regime has managed to make taboo some terms, events and topics. Here are just some of them: the words "Romanian" and "Romanian language". The Metropolitan Church of Bessarabia. Stalinist deportations and, generally, any criticism of the Soviet period. Criticism of the current government and communism in general. Criticism of federalization. Criticism of the official policies of Russia. Criticism of primitive Moldovenism. Independence of justice. Liquidation of counties and of local autonomy, etc. Also, some main targets were set for TV and radio propaganda: the democratic opposition for being allegedly extremist; unionism for being allegedly antipatriotic and "fascist"; previous governments for allegedly being

corrupt; the civil society for "binging up" on foreign grants; intellectuals for being Romanophile and Russophobic; independent trade unions for being destructive; anticommunist protests for being illegal, etc. Besides, when the Communist Party took over political power, investigative journalism was banned at Teleradio-Moldova Company. Almost all live shows were taken out of the programming. An issue of the interactive show "Good evening" hosted by Mircea Surdu was not broadcast, although it was supposed to feature representatives from the Council of Europe and OSCE mission in Moldova. It is no surprise that given this editorial policy, TV Moldova 1 failed to cover even the strike of its own journalists who protested against censorship at TV. Not to speak about the anticommunist protests of 2002, organized by the Christian Democratic Popular Party (PPCD). Although the protests went on for almost five months, they were ignored by TV Moldova 1. Only towards the end of the protests a brief, inaccurate and biased news item was broadcast. In February 2002, the management of Teleradio-Moldova Company forbade the broadcasting of any news about the fire at the House of the Romanian Language. In April 2002, a news item about the opening of a museum to the victims of bolshevism was censored. The parts in TV reports referring to the Romanian Ambassador in Chisinau were censored. The opposition did not have access to television for three years. Even the names of some parties, such as Our Moldova and PPCD, could be mentioned only in negative contexts. When the program "The Opposition Hour" did appear, it was conceived in such a manner as to denigrate the adversaries of the communists. The hosts behaved pitifully. They were forced to become advocates of the power and attack violently the participants in the program each time they criticized official policies.

The phenomenon of manipulation of the public opinion is not something new. This is a diversion that has become extremely dangerous in this era of information. No surprise there. Due to radio, television, and online technologies the globe has become a sort of electronic village. Rumors and lies broadcast by modern communication channels have an immediate impact on the audience. The only antidote against this dumbing of information consumers is the freedom of expression and the media. Although, formally, Moldova too is a democratic state, we don't have a vaccine against censorship and misinformation. It has been annihilated by the allegedly public television. It has managed in recent years to raise the manipulation of public opinion to unprecedented heights in a coun-

try that is planning to join the European structures. By creating of fake stars and events, through censorship, misinformation, intoxication and persuasion a distortion of information has obtained, which creates in viewers and listeners feelings of unconditional submission to political power.

### **Persuasion, misinformation, intoxication**

Let's try and classify now the main forms of distortion of truth practiced by TV Moldova 1. The first one is, certainly, persuasion. This is not the most popular, but it is the subtlest method of distorting reality. This is why not everyone could use it. As it does not contain negative intentionality and speaks only of good things, it is used to sing hymns to president Voronin. The advantage of persuasion is that, being based on the journalist's power of argumentation, it creates an illusion of verity. This method was used by Constantin Staris in his show "Rezonans" in order to polish the image of the communist president. As a result, a self-willed, hysterical and blunt leader started to be seen by some as a wise and balanced one. The second form is misinformation by a direct and brutal suppression of reality. This form, unlike the first one, needs not subtlety but rather guts and a violent language, as well as the capacity to lie with a straight face. Ion Gonta used it extensively in order to throw mud at the opposition. The third one is intoxication by filling the communication channel with insinuations and provocations of all sorts. The aim of this is to mislead opinion leaders in order to make them take impulsive and inaccurate decisions. TV Moldova 1

used intoxication either to prepare the public opinion for major blows, or to compromise initiatives proposed by the opposition. It was used mainly by the "Evening News" in order to advocate for the introduction of the compulsory course of Russian language in the second grade at school, to accuse a Romanian diplomat of espionage, to blackmail the leaders of anticommunist protests, to threaten the participants in antigovernmental protests, etc. Finally, manipulation is the fourth form of truncating information and distorting reality. In this case, we have to do with a special form of persuasion which is based on negative intentionality. It was used frequently by Constantin Staris to show, for example, that federalization is the only acceptable solution of the Transnistrian conflict.

The TV screen possesses manipulative powers, which become stronger when they abuse the credibility of the image. What people see with their eyes creates the impression that it is true. The audio message should not be neglected either. People say, it is true because I've heard it. From this point of view, the situation in the so-called public broadcaster of Moldova is not only a problem of the journalists working there and of radio listeners and TV viewers. The censorship of information and distortion of reality deprives citizens of their right to know and, thus, make informed choices. And, hence, to have a good government and a decent life. Therefore, a non-free press is a dangerous vice. And vice-versa. A free press is an indispensable democratic value. This is why the release of the national radio and TV from the chains of censorship must become a major preoccupation of the opposition and the civil society. For it is the first duty of all democratic elements of a society that wants to be open to protect democratic values, isn't it?

*Petru BOGATU*

## Culture and Kitsch on the Radio

In order to start our argument properly, let's agree on the antinomic notions from the heading. Still, defining culture here (in a concise way) would mean slipping down the kitsch slope from the very start. I didn't refer to dictionaries, as they suggest generic terms cast in stone; I will rather cite Professor Marius Jucan, who wrote in his "Introduction Into the Theory of Cultural Models: "Culture is born out of the human praxis . . . it ought to be understood as a living entity, as a fundamental feature, which makes the society in which people live consciously human".

There are enough definitions for the second part of the antinomy too, which compete with the source model: kitsch (Germ.): art ersatz (*ersatz* = "substitute" in German). In his book *The Psychology of Kitsch* (Meridiane, 1980), Abraham Moles writes: "The word 'kitsch' appeared in Munich in 1860; 'kitschen' means doing something superficially, while 'verkitschen' means to degrade, to distort, to trick, i.e. sell to someone something else than he/she asks". The fronts of the buildings in Moldovan towns were, during their time of construction, kitsch elements; today they remind, emblematically, of the claim to ennoblement shown by the newly embourgeoisied. Here is an example applicable to our case. The recordings by Maria Iliut, a singer of authentic Romanian folklore, are examples of unaltered traditional culture. The attempt to perpetuate tradition when dozens of amateur and children's folk bands try to sing the same songs should be essentially welcomed, although this uncontrolled multiplication is kitsch. The songs were gathered in a very particular folk area (Crasna Bucovinei), and when they are multiplied from the north to the south of Moldova, with a reproduction of the slightest inflections and regionalisms, these pearls of the Carpathians become a banalized serialization of folklore, flat copies. Radio and TV become in this case a source, while for Maria Iliut the source was her native village. In a foreseeable future, it might happen that the recordings of these epigones could become sources themselves.

Having now readied the tools, let's cut into the topic, but not before clarifying that we will refer to the stations I could receive with the equipment I have. So, what do radio menus have to offer to a seeker of music? Depending on the quality of the receiving device, the location of the building (valley, hill), and even on the materials of which it is built (concrete, stone, clay), the offer can range from Radio China to Radio Israel.

Audience research also shows problems with the availability of certain stations. For example, if someone living in a reinforced-concrete apartment block would like to listen to Radio Bucharest or Radio Iasi, they couldn't do it because these stations are almost impossible to receive in apartment blocks. It is the better transmitters rather than the political or cultural preferences of a station that make our listener bend their ear to Ekho Moskvyy, for instance, which can be heard quite well.

The language of broadcasting (its quality—pronunciation, color, word choice) is an essential cultural (and culturalizing) factor, which is paramount for any radio format, even for the most simplified one. A trained ear (what the hearing misses the subconscious catches) can identify immediately the station heard when the dial moves up and down. But we should not dwell for too long in the area of reflexes, which can be manipulated—sometimes skillfully, sometimes grossly—by radio makers. Let's visit what's in everyone's sight—sorry, what's in everyone's hearing—following the scale from simple to more complex.

Except for two stations—**Radio Moldova** and **Antena C**—no other station has culture shows (nor any other programs, on any topic, limiting their choice to music and news only), if we are to count out interactive programs and music dedications. This is their format: news, music, advertising (the *raison d'être* of FM!). Let's see what exactly they broadcast, looking at short segments (indeed short, for you can lose all patience before you can find a Romanian-language station in the ocean of Russian voices, and finally you give up looking settling for what's heard best). **Russkoe Radio** told me they broadcast four night hours of local music. Maybe, I didn't check. Also, Saturdays and Sundays they broadcast one hour of local music. Besides, every hour, five minutes are set apart for "Top Moldova".

**KISS FM** broadcasts on the frequency of the former **Radio Contact**. **KISS FM** is part of an international network; it is an entertainment station preferred by the above-average Romanian-speaking listener. Out of 24 hours of broadcasting six are hosted in Chisinau, the rest in Bucharest. Save for the newscasts, **KISS FM** has only interactive shows targeting youth. Half of the Chisinau broadcasts are dedications hosted by Nicu Timofte. Every week **KISS FMBucharest** revises its choice of music and broadcasts only hits.

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*Evropa Plus*, a station from St. Petersburg, does the same in terms of editorial policy, save for the fact that it also broadcasts news, including in Romanian. Just like *KISS FM* it has a good reputation as a serious station, playing new and quality Western music. Perhaps we should dwell here on what we understand by “quality music”, as commercial music, too, can be of good quality although it is part of mass culture. It could, at the same time, be quite flimsy, of a doubtful taste but strongly promoted and therefore intoned by many listeners. Here we have to do with the value standard controlled by artists, producers, media, and listeners on the other end. Here we see the difference between high (elite) culture and popular culture. Cultural scientists find an increasingly stronger specialization of high culture and a trend towards homogenization of popular culture dominated by accessibility and entertainment.

Kitsch is a cultural form predigested for the “people”; it is a kind of mass culture whose global success essay writer Boris Paramonov (from *Radio Free Europe*-Russian, which for me is a station offering model cultural programs) explains by its focus on eternal, archetypal values. And since everybody loves, suffers from love, feels getting older and losing control, quarrels with the loved ones, etc., etc., isn't it the same thing if we listen to Britney Spears lamenting over unrequited love or if we sympathize with Violeta from *Traviata*?

*Avtoradio* broadcasts 35% of local programming, exclusively in Russian, and the rest is relayed from Moscow; the audience (ages 25-50) is mainly composed of drivers, according to the producers. The only program playing local music is on Fridays, between 1 and 2 p.m.. This program has featured Ion Suruceanu, Maria Biesu, Mihai Munteanu, Margareta Ivanus, Georgeta Voinovan, Vitalie Dani, Angela Socolov, etc.

A veteran of Romanian-language FM in Chisinau is *Radio Nova*, which is the choice radio for the more or less balanced listener (but not very knowledgeable one), who is somewhere in the middle of the audience spectrum. This listener allows himself to be led by the confident hand and trained taste of a good radio producer, Andrei Corbu, who knows how to combine the well compartmentalized Western music with Romanian “listening” music. The morning waves are raised by host Victor Nichitus, who always has a large audience and who feels on the radio like fish in water. A one-man radio station.

*Serebryanni dozhd* is rebroadcast from Moscow to Chisinau between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m. in the form of news and music dedications. The bent is for '50s-'70s

Western and Russian rock and pop (quality music, the producers say, not “the pop” which they define as the lowest of the low commercial music); they also play Romanian music of the Holograf, Taxi, Stefan Banica type. A slot produced in Moscow, Classical Moments, has an educational aim: a brief piece of information from the biography of a classical composer is presented, and the listeners have to guess who the composer is having heard also a fragment from his work. *Radio 7 (Na 7 Kholmakh)* broadcasts from Chisinau 8 hours out of 24, the rest being relayed from Russia. This station has a project called “Made in Moldova”, where they make live concerts of Moldovan bands broadcast right from the station's studio. The producers are trying to promote live local music.

*The Little Samaritan*—the name says it all—gives to music about 60% of its airtime. The genres break down as follows: classical music—25%, instrumental music—15%, contemporary Christian music—50%. Concerning the language of the programs, all of them being on religious topics, the break-down is as follows: 70% in Romanian, 10% in English, 15% in Russian, 5% in other languages. There are also comments on classical music, made by Ovidiu Hritcu. Perhaps it is due to the station's clear editorial policy that it managed to convert to religion many people in a short period of time.

In stark contrast to the oasis of celestial detachment cultivated by *The Little Samaritan*, there is another, marginal zone built with patience and, paradoxically, credibility (we should remember here Paramonov's idea) by those from *Shanson Vzrosloe Radio*. Everything, from the title of a program of music dedications—KPZ (Russian for “preventive detention room”)—to the flood of words from the Russian prison vocabulary, closes you in a suffocating circle of barbed wire. The urban language of the “compositions” (this is how the host Svetlana Sergheevna, owner of a chronically hoarse voice, calls the songs from criminal folklore), the fates of their military heroes, and themes from the world of crime outline a bleak paradigm of the immortal GULAG. The producers of the station *Shanson* claim that the origin of their idea is in the French *chançonette*, although they base their choice on names of Russian music—Bulat Okudjava, Vladimir Vysotsky, Alexandr Rozenbaum, etc.

With the largest national coverage (reaching even beyond Moldova's borders), *Radio Moldova* gives to culture about 5.5 hours out of 18 hours of air time (6.00-24.00) from Monday to Friday, plus one hour on Sunday. This includes music programs, entertainment, a daily literary program, a weekly program on socio-

cultural issues. On the whole, one can notice a balance in the dosage of various genres of music played on the national radio. There is a review of the music life five times per week. Before 1991, additions to the stock of music used to be made in a centralized way by Moscow, with the aim of promoting Soviet and universal values. This is why to the present day famous non-Russian operas are played in Russian. Before the second national channel (*Lucefarul*) was closed down in June 2003, this music was played quite frequently. The last acquisitions to the stock of music were made in 1992-1996, mostly through the European Radio Union. In 1992, the national radio acquired 12 operas recorded at the Metropolitan Opera. Outside of this, the stock is completed only with recordings of the national radio orchestra and donations from local singers.

The current situation, when there is only one national channel, restricts these opportunities considerably. The playing time of such music was reduced to 15-20 minutes, which no longer has the educational influence of *Lucefarul*. The music is accompanied by texts read out by the two regular presenters of the station, with their voices tired of agricultural news, while in the case of the female voice, it imitates with coquettishness a commentator inspired by her own cleverness, speaking with affectation but understanding little of what she reads. *Radio Moldova* has no program for the education of a taste for classical music. A superb program used to be produced until recently by composer Ghenadie Ciobanu. In 2003 he hosted 23 programs of "practical musicology". He did this without descending down to the level of the street but also without falling into academism; Mr. Ciobanu proved once again that it is possible to find the right voice for a professional but at the same time accessible discussion of good music. An interesting program—a sort of cultural esotericism—is hosted by Rodica Matcovschi.

Concerning the presence of other arts on *Radio Moldova*—history, literature, theater, plastic arts—perhaps only the latter managed to escape the interference of politics. But this area has nonprofessional commentators. This observation is confirmed—besides the negative reactions coming from outside *Radio Moldova* regarding its cultural policy—by a recent monitoring conducted by the German section of Reporters Sans Frontieres, whose spokesperson, Dietrich Schlegel said during his visit to Chisinau that "one can't conceive of this situation when the authorities occupy this radio station, while it is supposed to reflect a clear image of the population and all its social groups". The situation is in fact exactly the op-

posite. Since the communists won the elections, a total overhaul has started at *Radio Moldova* under one single buzzword: the legitimation of Moldovenism as a new foundation for Moldova's statehood. While the Western intellectual society is older than the state, and the state in the West serves society, *Radio Moldova* encourages and promotes a different type of intellectual, through whom the official culture openly promotes its narrow political-cultural policy. Thus, the grudging and exclusivist literary criticism and the return to Stalinist historiography are linked at *Radio Moldova* mainly to two names—Mazilu and Matievschi. The local literature is reflected sporadically and in fragments. Programs about world literature are constantly accompanied by warnings such as this one: "The land of the intellect. The producers are warning you: this program requires an intellectual effort". Radio drama unearths old plays, recorded some 20-40 years ago (or even more), promoting the lisping speeches of "masters" bred in Tiraspol.

*Antena C* airs the largest amount of new local music; this can be explained by the generous night airtime. Concerning its quality—especially the quality of the texts—one should speak separately about it. *Antena C* also plays quality folk music, from the '30s and '40s (Maria Tanase, Zavaidoc, Grigoras Dinicu, etc.). The station has a specialized program, "Etnos", hosted knowledgeably by the singer Maria Mocanu. Conceived concisely and elegantly, the section "A Poem a Day" recites classical and contemporary Romanian poetry (recordings from the Golden Fund of the Romanian Radio and TV). There we can hear the voices of Blaga, Arghezi, Sadoveanu, Voiculescu, Bogza, Sorescu, Toparceanu, Cazimir. *Antena C* has the privilege of having Emilia Ghetu, a known name in Moldova's cultural radio and TV. She hosts, without ideological interference, two weekly programs—"The Life of Books" and "Pro Arte".

"Culture as Necessity" is a program produced by high-school student Alexandru Cozmescu, who is winner of the National Philosophy Contest, and who, indeed, feels culture as a necessity and who acknowledges that he can't live a day without reading 200 pages. When I asked him what audience he makes his program for, he said: "If you don't meet the expectations of at least one part of the audience, then the program has no point; however, if you cover all the needs of all the listeners, then the show is no longer yours as an author, and so why make it?"

Rodica MAHU

## The Troubles of Culture Journalism

Culture journalism has gone through considerable changes in recent decades. The media too have gone through unbelievable mutations since the Soviet times. On the one hand, the state has lost control over the media, except for the governmental ones. On the other hand, a spectacular event can be observed, which is linked to the state's distancing from the media. It happened when the Parliament of Moldova passed a decision on the introduction of self-funding for a number of publications, mainly culture ones, and the Ministry of Finances stopped funding them. A number of publications, such as *Literatura si arta*, *Basarabia*, *Lanterna magica*, *Sud-Est*, *Femeia Moldovei*, *Moldova*, etc. found themselves without subsidies and without a future. Only some of them managed to survive the economic disaster, which was well-planned by the government to hamper the democratic process in our transition society and in the field of culture too. "You wanted freedom of expression, there you go, but now you will have to pay for it, not the state", this is what basically happened in 1995. In essence, the intention of this action was to mutilate the culture press and reduce the production and circulation of culture information in the country.

The culture press was largely replaced by cheap products, the majority of which were brought in from Russia: *Chastnyi detektiv*, *SpeedInfo*, *Semya*, *Karavan*, etc. *Trud* and *Komsomolskaia pravda* were revived, and now they publish supplements in Moldova. Today kiosks are flooded by luxury magazines brought from Russia but whose titles are in the Roman alphabet, such as *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Premiere*, etc. and the content is in Russian. To be fair, magazines published in Romania also appeared on our market: *Story*, *Ioana*, *Acasa*, etc. However, there are no arts and culture publications, whether from Russia or Romania or any other country. Those that do reach us (*Teatrul azi*, *Iskusstvo kino*, *Teatr*, etc.) are of a high standing, both graphically and contentwise, as well as in terms of the diversity of analytical, theoretical articles and reviews, interviews with known personalities, etc.

In Moldova the culture media are represented by *Literatura si arta*, *Contrafort*, *Viata Basarabiei*, *Sud-Est cultural*, *Basarabia*, *Lanterna magica* (Web version). Except for *Literatura si arta* and *Contrafort*, which come out regularly and have a stable readership, others appear sporadically in small print runs and do not have a body of permanent readers, are not spread as widely as they used to be. A natural process stopped—the interaction author-medium-reader.

The transition and democratization period in our society has been fatal for culture. With no money from the state, many media reduced their activity or dropped out of the cultural circuit, and stopped producing cultural-artistic values. I mean here libraries, especially village libraries, cinemas, etc. In villages and in some small towns the younger generation no longer watches movies, or theater plays, doesn't participate in book launches, meetings with the authors of those books. Local films are almost not produced at all. The Telefilm-Chisinau studio stopped all activity, while Moldova-Film hardly produces anything. A few independent studios appeared, one of which, OWH TV Studio, became known through Cronograf, the international festival of documentary films it organizes. Besides, the theaters, headed by a new generation of directors, actors and playwrights, have shown a benefic renewal of expression and orientation to the European culture. Not to speak about painters, the reanimation of the museum of Fine Arts, numerous exhibitions at the Brancusi Center, the new generation of singers and composers. Is this a natural process or just some chaotic explosion? What was the role of the media in the production and circulation of culture information? This is a complex topic to be investigated by a chorus of disciplines, from art history and theory, social psychology, communications and all the way to the mass media. In the absence of serious research that could be referred to by journalists writing about culture, what we have is legends, suppositions, suspicions, allegations addressed to critics. This is what I read in an article, "Theaterscape", by Cristina Porcesco: "I could never understand why theaters are so forlorn. Reviewers pay to them only little attention, local authorities give them practically no support, while the actors who work there feel small and insignificant" (*Moldova suverana*, 27 April 2004).

The cultural life is reflected somewhat chaotically and in relation to shocking events that would be of special interest. *Timpul* (28 May 2004) published in the section "Cultural reviews" several pieces, of which I would like to mention two, referring to local art: "Sandu Vasilache discloses to us 'The Mystery of the Young Ladies School'" (about the cinema debut of the known theater director and actor) and "Moldovan Painters Exhibiting in Cricova". Although the international biennial theater festival "Eugen Ionesco", dedicated this year to Chekhov, had just finished, *Timpul* paid no attention to this artistic event, giving

preference to Alexandru Greco at the expense of Petru Vutcarau, the director of the festival. Which doesn't mean that the Cronos Club session with the artistic director of the Satiricus Theater, which discussed the current situation in Moldovan theater, was not welcome. But readers learned nothing about the events of the day or about other artistic personalities present at the festival. Such stories containing a note of challenge and criticism balance between communication and information and are in fact media provocations, giving preference to personal relations and being clearly oriented to the consumer rather than culture.

If our readers wanted to be up to date with cultural life, with its top as well as current events, they should subscribe to all the publications of Moldova, and they would still not manage to figure out what's happening in the culture space of our country. Why? I will try to answer this question below, making reference to national periodicals, especially to daily and weekly ones.

The recent emergence of high-circulation publications, such as *Saptamana*, *Flux*, *Tineretul Moldovei*, *Democratia*, *Timpul*, *Jurnal de Chisinau*, *Accente*, etc. has created new opportunities for a reflection of cultural life. We expect an expansion of the information space, a diversification of culture writing. The first issues of *Saptamana*, for instance, or *Flux*, were truly shocking. The format and layout were somewhat different, the thematic sections and pages were about stars, recipes, clothing, cosmetics, love mail, children's parliament, crosswords, information, comments, political and economic life, not to speak about the geographical coverage, styles of the authors, which were much more relaxed and free than in the "experienced" publications. Finally, we could read about American, French, British actors, about foreign singers, about films, awards, we could learn about their lives, read about various funny situations, we could see their faces. We didn't even realize how all of a sudden the media were invaded by stories wanted by the readers and which sold well. This came as a counterweight to the party press with its stiff, heavy, narrow stories.

On closer analysis one could see that in the logic of easily digestible information about culture there is a confusion of genres and, which is even sadder, the national culture is easily forgotten, especially if it has its roots in the Soviet past. But it was in this period that theaters, the cinema and the film distribution system, as well as libraries, museums were established. Very little was written about Soviet-time actors and directors, not even about Emil Loteanu or Grigore Grigoriu. The other day a young journalist from the

radio asked me to help her find information about the actress Maria Sagaidac, who was once very well known but today is forgotten. Director Titus Jucov once said: The students who come today to the Arts Academy to study acting don't know the history of theater, have no idea about our actors, directors, painters and composers. However strange it may seem, but even names such as Eugen Doga are today unknown among young people, not to speak of such names as Maria Codreanu and Sofia Rotaru. Britney Spears, yes! Thalia, yes!

To be sure, there is an explanation for this phenomenon, which all transition cultures are experiencing. Our society is going through an extremely difficult period, linked to a change of mentality, the weaning from an authoritarian social system. The cultural products on the market interact with the living space, with the universe that is being built by all "actors", including the media. The culture information, sold through newspapers, magazines must be interesting, must draw one's attention, produce shock. The consequences are there. They produce huge changes both in the life of human communities as well as in the lives of individuals. The massive cultural information that comes from the West sometimes pushes aside the local stars, not to speak about the ones from the past! This is why stories about an actor who was famous in the '60s or '70s are very rare.

In the May 21 issue of *Timpul* I read an essay, called "The Juliet of Our Times", by Nicolae Roibu, which contained fragments from the biography of the theater actress Dina Cocea. The essay was published on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary from the birth of this remarkable actress. Although the author did not analyze her roles, and probably had not read other stories and reviews from the period of glory of this actress, and certainly had not seen the plays *Ciocarlia* or *Pippi Longstocking*, which were the peak of Cocea's work, it is remarkable that *Timpul* did not overlook this event. If I were to refer to the general feel of newspapers, then I could say that 25.1% of the readers aged 45 and more (*Mass Media*, February 2004, p.35) who had the opportunity to see Dina Cocea playing in the '70s and '80s read that essay with great interest.

Such articles are rare in our press and are published only on special occasions. The same is true about a story in the weekly *Literatura si arta* (27 May 2004) titled "Valeriu Cupcea, for ever in our hearts" by Steliana Grama, who is a young poetess and theater reviewer. She was impressed by the flood of memories about the "famous Romanian actor and director", which she heard from several generations of actors

gathered in the Valeriu Cupcea Room at the National Theater in Chisinau in late March on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary from his birth. She wrote with a lot of feeling, basing her story on the words of Viorica Chirca, Ninela Caranfil, Petru Baracci, Vitalie Rusu, Valeriu Matei, Argentina Cupcea Josu, etc.

Where do journalists draw inspiration from when they write about culture events? In most cases, from press conferences, symposia, round tables. The organizers usually produce press releases, agendas, fliers. Especially when the theater season opens, some newspapers "compete" in reproducing the information they hear at press conferences. Some of it is really bizarre and inaccurate. In such cases, which are quite frequent, what happens is a "generalized intertextualization" (Daniela Roventa Frumusani, *Jurnalism&Comunicare*, no. 1, 2003, p.3), when the media send a message prepared beforehand and popular with readers, which emphasizes communication per se rather than information.

The latest cultural event was the International Biennial Theater Festival Eugen Ionesco, "Planet Chekhov", in its 6<sup>th</sup> edition (21-28 May 2004). Of all the publications only *Flux* covered the festival. *Jurnal de Chisinau* published a review of the festival only in June. The weekly *Tineretul Moldovei* didn't write anything that week about the festival nor about any other cultural event. The daily *Moldova Suverana* didn't publish anything at all that week; only in early June it ran a short note on the event. The weekly *Literatura si arta* didn't publish anything either.

As we can see the culture press is not as interested in such events as the socio-political publications are. The culture press focuses on memory. The media discourse discusses issues, thematic hierarchies, speaks today of events from the past. The current information seems to be selected out. The socio-cultural publications do devote some space to current cultural events, although not always in a timely manner.

What the culture and socio-political media lack, with rare exceptions, are materials from other cities and cultural centers of the country. What is happening for example in Cahul and Balti, where we have two theaters? What happens in Ceadir-Lunga, where

have the National Gagauz Theater Mihail Ceakir? What is happening in Orhei, Ialoveni, Calarasi, Floresti, Rezina, Comrat? We do learn, but from sources other than the press, that they have premieres there too, they have exhibitions, folk dance festivals. This year, for example, the festival of French films took place in Balti too, not only in Chisinau. But there was nothing in the press about it, except for *Contrafort* (April 2004). A major problem of the socio-political press is a lack of authors trained in culture journalism. Publications having authors specializing in this genre have a richer cultural life, and a wider range of genres: interviews, reviews, analyses (e.g. *Jurnal de Chisinau*). *Jurnal de Chisinau* also had the idea to publish an art inset edited by critic Constantin Cheianu. This inset stopped appearing some time ago, which is regrettable. When it did appear its problem was that it relied on a single author (with rare exceptions).

The new group of young journalists has somehow eliminated the more experienced journalists, who had a certain specialization and deeper knowledge in certain areas. Their opinion is asked only on the occasion of special events, such as festivals and symposia, but otherwise they are marginalized and forgotten by the periodic press.

Where can one find connoisseurs of arts and culture? Press conferences and discussions organized by the Eugen Ionesco Festival showed that they usually turned into public lectures on theater, the subtleties of directing or playwrighting. We could all see that such conferences acquired new meanings, became a school of theater and of verbal essays about theater. This is where theater critics can speak up. The socio-political press unfortunately is not offering them space. Editors often say that the texts written by theater and film critics are complex, very specialized and are not liked by the readers who prefer a more liberal style of writing.

On the other hand, specialists in this field are seen as a sort of "closed cast", people of the elite. Nevertheless, the press needs the presence of authors writing culture criticism. The cultural dialogue between author and reader ought to have credibility and continuity. As it does in other countries.

Larisa UNGUREANU

## Corruption In the Media of Moldova

While the media in Moldova say every day that corruption has penetrated into all the nooks and crannies of society and the state, it would be very arrogant and dishonest on the part of journalists to say that this vice has not touched them.

Some journalists like being corrupt, others are deeply disgusted by this. Some believe there is nothing wrong with making money any way one can, others have to play by the rules set not by themselves and which they wish they could do away with as soon as possible.

This background against which Moldovan media operate is corrupting by itself. Just like Moldovan civil servants and policemen, business people and workers, the Moldovan journalists are also very poor. They work under circumstances of an untransparent corporate system and flawed legislation. All this is fertile soil for corruption.

In Moldova there isn't a single major media business, including the foreign ones, that could establish more or less normal principles of journalism. The country is dominated by the power of state and party media and, besides, many non-party publications are also subject to pressures from the authorities and political parties.

State media and their journalists are corrupt from the very start. They are absolutely dependent on the government, which sees them only as a tool for blunt propaganda. The government gives to these media money, newsprint, printers. It forces all state bodies and governmental institutions to subscribe to governmental publications and advertise with them too. Private structures close to the government are insistently "recommended" to support these media. Such a kind of journalism cannot be free and objective.

The party media are not very different from the state ones. Each party considers it its duty to have its own publications and "friendly" TV and radio stations, which are seen first of all as tools of propaganda, promotion of the party's image and struggle against opponents. Such media, as the state ones, are economically not viable. They are fully dependent on party leaders and their sponsors. They also cannot represent a foundation of free and objective journalism.

In Moldova there isn't a single independent nationwide TV channel. The process of transformation of the state company Teleradio-Moldova into a public one has been delayed without justification and is

accompanied by scandals. The NIT TV channel, which is controlled by a business group close to the ruling communist party, is a "semi-official" channel. Channels TVR1, ORT and PRO TV are rebroadcast from other countries and have only short local news inserts.

The few newspapers which can be called conventionally non-state and non-party, can hardly survive and sometimes are also forced to cross the line separating true journalism from its surrogates.

The journalists of all media in Moldova are under constant pressure from all sides, especially from the economic one. This phenomenon is known to many countries of the region; however, in Moldova, where there are no real foreign investments in the media business, it has acquired exaggerated proportions.

Many media in Moldova are controlled by business people who are closely linked to politics, or by politicians-businessmen. Such TV channels and newspapers are often used to promote the commercial and political goals of their bosses or to spread negative PR on their competitors in politics and business. Many of these media are able to survive only due to subsidies from other types of business.

Moldova is familiar also with a phenomenon called "independent sponsored media". Although sponsorship can represent more than half the budget of such media, the names of the sponsors are not made public, which can be regarded as "covert ownership" of such media.

A different category of media specializes in seeking foreign grants, so that the journalists of such media are nicknamed "Captain Grant's children". When the grants run out, the outlet disappears as this has been its only source of life.

The power corrupts some journalists individually, and they become "extremely close" to the authorities. Recent years have seen in Moldova the formation of a so-called "presidential pool" of state and semi-official media—TV stations, newspapers, agencies, Web sites—whose reporters serve exclusively the head of the state, having special access arrangements and accompanying him on all his trips abroad. One can't expect an objective distance to the power from such privileged journalists.

Another source of media corruption is the personal relations between publishers and journalists, and advertisers and journalists.

Journalists, just like professionals in other areas, seldom have contracts with their employers and some

sort of social guarantees. Journalists don't have their trade union, and the journalist community is divided into several professional organizations. This permits publishers and those behind them to easily manipulate journalists.

Advertisers are also trying to put pressure on the media. The advertising market in Moldova is extremely small. There are only a handful of big advertisers. Their choice of media is often motivated politically. There have been cases when orders came from governmental offices to companies telling them to stop "supporting" a certain paper or, on the contrary, to "support" a certain publication.

Hidden advertising or negative PR are widely spread among Moldovan media. One can't really expect that media corruption will go away of its own

will in the circumstances when all the other walks of life are deeply corrupt. However, something can be done even today.

If at least one major European investor stepped into the Moldovan media market, this would have a colossal positive effect on the situation. But such investors are not coming, so Moldovan journalists have to strive for independence on their own. Improving the laws, closing down the state media and reducing the number of the party media, transparency of ownership, appearance of active trade organizations, introduction of collective labor contracts, adoption of ethics codes, fighting corruption among journalists, monitoring—all these efforts would make Moldovan media more independent, viable, and less corrupt.

*Dmitri CIUBA<sup>a</sup> ENCO*

## Bribe Taking and Journalism

A definition of "bribe" can be found in the dictionary: "Moneys or things given or promised to a person in order to make that person violate his/her professional commitments or carry them out more thoroughly."

Although journalists have an important role to play in fighting corruption, as the mass media have a key part in exposing corrupt practices, there are cases when journalists themselves are accused of taking bribes.

This paper analyzes the extent to which journalism can be linked to bribe taking. ***Can a journalist be held liable for taking bribes?*** In the case of journalists, bribes are usually offered to influence the publication or omission of stories containing information damaging to certain people. Concerning the coverage of trials, the profession of journalism is subject to special restrictions involving the anonymity of the defendant and other information, except for cases when such disclosures "are necessary for an objective trial of the case".<sup>1</sup> However, unlike the cases presented above when the information published concerns an existing court case, a person's rights are violated to a larger extent when there is no case started against such a person. Any publication alleging that the given person is guilty of committing certain offences may be in violation of the presumption of innocence.

The provisions sanctioning bribe taking are stipulated in Chapter XVI of the Criminal Code of Moldova. According to Moldovan legislation, bribe taking entails "a person, who is the manager of a commercial, public or other non-state organization, taking a bribe in the form of money, valuables, other goods or property, accepting services or benefits to which he/she is not entitled, in order to carry out or not, delay or accelerate the fulfillment of an action to the benefit of the person giving the bribe or the person representing him/her, if such action is part of the job obligations of the person bribed" (art.333 CC RM no. 985-XV of 18 April 2002). By the notion of a person managing a commercial, public or other non-state organization one means a person given, permanently or temporarily, in the named organization or in a subdivision thereof, by appointment, election or by virtue of a task, certain rights and obligations with the purpose of carrying out administrative functions or actions.

According to the old criminal law the subject of the bribe could be only a high-ranking person, while in the new criminal code (effective 12 June 2003) the position occupied by the corrupt person may vary from a public

servant to any person managing a commercial, public or other non-state organization.

In recent years in Moldova three cases of bribe taking, involving journalists, were uncovered. One of the cases involved Tudor Rusu, editor-in-chief of the *Faalia* newspaper and Grigore Teslaru, who headed the public relations section of the Tighina county directorate; L. Reabkov, freelance contributor to the *Argumenty i fakty* newspaper; S. Afanasiu, the former director of the *Accente* newspaper and a reporter from the same publication, V. Manea. The latter case was also the most publicized one.

On 9 October 2002 S. Afanasiu and V. Manea were arrested on a charge of taking a bribe of 1500 US dollars from a business person in exchange for omitting an investigative story ready for publication. Manea was not involved in the case; he was simply there when Afanasiu was arrested. The two journalists maintained that they had been trapped by the police for their investigative reporting. According to their lawyer, this case should not be regarded as a case of bribery, but rather as remuneration taken from a business person in exchange for information identifying a person who wanted to publish information damaging to the said business person rather than for not publishing the information. The non-disclosure of the source is a right rather than an obligation, the more so since the disclosure of such information is not criminally liable but is just a violation of ethical principles in journalism. Given all this, the Afanasiu case may be suspected of being an instance of abuse. Moreover, procedural irregularities were committed during the case, as was for example the seizure of the newspaper's assets. The police confiscated *Accente's* computers and data bases, returning them only several weeks later.<sup>2</sup> Can the property of an institution be seized for the deeds of an individual? According to the criminal procedural legislation, a search can be performed only in order to discover the tools used to commit a crime, goods and valuables collected as a result of a crime, as well as other things or documents that may be relevant for a criminal case. In the *Accente* case the seizure could be justified only in the case of the alleged materials containing the information prepared for publication, but not of the equipment — this froze the work of the newspaper and prevented several issues from appearing. Afanasiu was released after 15 days of detention; he was investigated on parole. Afanasiu's colleagues believe that he has been the victim of a setup aiming at weakening *Accente*, famous for its

investigative stories involving high officials from the current administration.<sup>3</sup>

The court of Chisinau's Center District sentenced Afanasiu on 16 February 2004 based on art. 333 of the Criminal Code to a fine of 20,000 lei. Besides the fine, the journalist was prohibited from holding any public position for two years. Manea, who was charged with bribery along with Afanasiu, was acquitted. According to their lawyer, Afanasiu denies the charge and is going to challenge the ruling in the Court of Appeals.<sup>4</sup>

In a different case, Tudor Rusu, editor-in-chief of *Faclia*, and Grigore Teslaru were charged with extorting 1000 US dollars from the chief of the Tax Inspection of the Tighina county in exchange for the promise not to publish compromising materials concerning him.<sup>5</sup> Grigore Teslaru's lawyer believes that the charges brought against him were "a provocation by some people interested in keeping from publication certain materials that could lead to the discovery of some crimes."<sup>6</sup>

The cases are currently under examination; the court has not yet given a final sentence. These cases have been commented in various ways, some comments saying that this was nothing but "a means to reign in the press, which can range from political and economic pressure to banal bullying".<sup>7</sup>

Most of the cases may be suspected of violating art. 10 of the ECHR, and therefore the Belgian senator Vincent van Quickenborne, who was impressed by how things developed with *Accente*, declared that no journalist from European countries can be charged with taking bribes if he/she is selling his/her intellectual property, because journalists are not officials.<sup>8</sup> But in most of the cases when journalists are involved, such journalists work under certain rights and obligations. What are these rights and obligations? Why is this happening to newspapers writing about high officials?

## Uncomfortable journalists become victims of set-ups

The difficulty of studying this area is due to the peculiarity of this activity. First of all, it involves the right to free expression, and the public's right to access information. "The public should have the opportunity to have balanced and impartial access to basic information regarding the mass media in order to be able to develop their own opinion on the value that can be attributed to such information, ideas and opinions disseminated by such media"; this is contained in the CoE Recommendation (94)13. It is the right of

the public opinion to be informed on issues of public interest. This right is matched by an "obligation" on the part of journalists to disseminate information and ideas, thus fulfilling their role "of the watchdog of democracy".

Obviously, the rights of a journalist cannot be unlimited; however, the right to expression of a journalist is seen by European jurisprudence *lato sensu*. This is because, according to the European Court for Human Rights (hereinafter the Court), "the freedom of the press provides to the public opinion one of the best means to learn about and judge the ideas and abilities of political leaders. In more general terms, the freedom of political debate represents the foundation of a democratic society". Hence, "the limits of admissible criticism are wider in relation to a political figure than an ordinary individual; unlike the latter, the political figure is exposed inevitably and in full awareness to a strict control of his/her actions and statements both by journalists and the mass of the citizens. He/she must, therefore, show a higher degree of tolerance".<sup>9</sup> Given all of the above, one ought to recognize the fact that once in government, a person should also become aware of the possibility to be criticized by opponents, the public, and especially by journalists.

When bribery is involved, there has to exist an **interest of the bribed** and of the bribing. The action performed by the person taking the bribe must fall within his/her area of responsibility and authority. When the bribe is given for actions falling outside the authority of the person involved, then such an offence is defined as misconduct or deceit.

Bribe taking should be set apart from passive corruption, whose subject is a person in an official position. Passive corruption represents an action by an official of receiving or requesting money, valuables, other goods and property, or accepting services, privileges or advantages to which he/she is not entitled, in order to perform or not, or in order to delay or accelerate an action falling into his/her authority, or in order to undertake an action against such authority, as well as to receive from authorities distinctions, positions, markets or some favorable decision.<sup>10</sup>

By "official" we mean a person who is given by law, appointment, election or by virtue of a task permanently or temporarily in a state enterprise, institution, organization, or one under the local public administration, or in a subdivision thereof, certain rights and obligations to the end of exercising the functions of a public authority or administrative actions.

When offences are committed by public servants wielding public authority the threat is much higher, since this can affect the work and the reputation of the entire public service. When corruption is perpetrated

## The Letter of the Law

by people managing certain organizations, only the authority and the work of the respective institution are affected, and hence the threat is much lower.<sup>11</sup>

Bribe taking is performed only with clear intention, since the perpetrator realizes that he/she accepts illicitly benefits to which he/she is not entitled, and nevertheless does accept these benefits for performing acts (or not performing certain acts) falling under his/her authority, and understands the threat that his/her actions represent for the work and authority of the public service and desires the occurrence of the threatening consequences.

In order to establish the fact of bribe taking it is necessary to define the actions that represent job obligations of the bribed person. According to art. 8 para.(8) of the Press Law, "the editor (editor-in-chief) of a periodic publication and the director of a news agency manage the newsroom and the editorial board of the periodic publication and the staff of the news agency, representing them in relations with the founder (directors), publisher, authors and other individuals and organizations, as well as in a court of law". Hence, a problem arises concerning the classification of the action when the editor-in-chief has no obligation to publish a story, and the publication of a story is decided by personal conviction and depends on the agency's policy. According to art. 16 of the Press Law, "Every issue of a periodic publication and every item of a news agency can be disseminated only after the editor (editor-in-chief), manager of the news agency or the person having this authority endorses the printing of the issue or dissemination of the information, in respect of the legitimate rights and interests of the authors and founder (co-founders)". If bribe taking did not take place independently of the perpetrator's will, the offence can be seen as having reached the phase of intentionality, which will be sanctioned accordingly.

**Bribe taking** is a formal offence, i.e. it occurs when the subject receives remuneration, should it be even only a part of it, and regardless of the fact whether the subject had the intention of fulfilling the request posed to him/her. If the proposed bribe was not taken, then the actions of the bribe giver can be qualified as attempt at bribery. Bribe taking can take the form of extortion, i.e. taking bribes before certain action is undertaken/not undertaken; in such cases literature speaks of "purchase" bribe, and taking the bribe after the action is performed—"remuneration" bribe.

Taking bribes in the form of accepting one and giving bribes in the form of proposing one occurs when the subject has given to understand that he/she wants to receive a bribe. If the subject, in fact, in his/her capacity will not be able to carry out the promised action, then he/she will be liable for defrauding. When

the subject, e.g. the journalist, who is not a person managing a non-state institution, asks for money in order not to publish a certain information about another person, then the journalist will be liable for blackmail rather than for extortion of a bribe, by virtue of the absence of the subject of the offence. The blackmail in this case will take on the form of dissemination of information defamatory of the victim, which represents a threat to disseminate information that hurts (humiliates) the dignity of a person. The nature of the information has no importance—whether it is true or false. When the person, by virtue of his/her authority, could have published certain information, this would not be blackmail but rather **bribe extortion**.

The term "**to receive**" may indicate a fact of receiving by the subject of a certain advantage to his/her own benefit or the benefit of a different person. In this case intermediaries may be involved.

The receipt of a fee as gratitude for a certain professional behavior in somebody's interest, when the person in question did not expect any fees, is not an offence of bribe taking since in this situation the fee did not determine the professional actions of the person in question and hence could not be an encouragement to the actions undertaken.<sup>12</sup>

The term of "taking" involves the preservation, for at least a period of time, of the gift or benefit in question; the subject who immediately returns the gift or benefit he/she has not solicited is not an offender.

The criminal sanction for bribe taking varies depending on how the crime was committed—a fine from 500 to 3000 conventional units (one conventional unit = 20 lei) or imprisonment of up to 15 years, and in both cases the offender is banned from occupying certain positions or engaging in certain activities for up to 5 years.

When the offence is committed repeatedly, by two or more people, involves extortion of a bribe, in large or extremely large amounts, or in the interest of an organized criminal group the punishment will be more severe since these are aggravating circumstances.

The implicit conclusion of all this is that it is the journalist who can be criminally liable—the person managing the publication, i.e. the editor-in-chief and the manager of the agency (the latter does not have to be a journalist). Hence if a regular journalist (e.g. a reporter) accepts illegal proceeds together with the person managing the agency, the journalist will be liable for complicity. The bribe includes not only moneys but also valuables, services, property advantages (transmission of material values, free use of an apartment or other material values, illegal bonuses, delivery of some free services, etc.).

A benefit not related to property is not seen as a bribe (e.g. publishing a laudatory article in the media).

Courts of law must respect strictly the requirements of the law on individualizing the punishment in order to exclude cases when too light or too heavy punishments are applied to bribe-related offenders.<sup>13</sup>

More training is needed in this area, since law enforcement bodies have few specialists who know thoroughly this area in its criminal aspect.

## International activities on bribery

Corruption occurs regularly and with impunity among journalists in the entire world.

According to a study by the Institute for Public Relations and the International Public Relations Association of the Media Transparency Program, the countries which have the highest potential for corrupt media are Bangladesh, China, Turkey, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam. According to the study, bribe taking affects journalists, news sources, advertising agencies, governments and society. While there is bribery on TV and radio too, most of the cases are concentrated in newspapers. Bribes are usually offered for the publication of stories in daily newspapers. The study shows that Finland, Denmark, New Zealand, Switzerland, Norway, Germany, Ireland and UK are spared such practices. Hence, the higher the level of democracy the lower the level of corruption.

Corruption in South Africa has become "the cancer of the media", which affects radio stations, TV, and the printed press.

The editor-in-chief of a weekly paper in Zimbabwe says that "some journalists have become so corrupt that it is impossible for them to be objective in their work. Some criminals easily get away by associating themselves with journalists. This is unacceptable for a profession which is supposed to be 'the eyes of the people and the ears of society'." Corruption in the media in Zimbabwe takes place in circumstances of social chaos, poverty and political repression.

It is already well known that the staunchest opponents of journalists are the authorities. According to the study "The media and the judiciary in Russia", every fourth conflict between journalists and representatives of power is started by the latter. Just above

70% of the respondents said that journalists do nothing but express the interests of society. Which means that the information published by the media is liked by its addressees and not so liked by some who find it inconvenient. In order to show that the writers are corrupt bribe takings are being staged in the attempt to get rid of inconvenient journalists.

In 1998 the Trade Union of Journalists from Slovakia was involved in six cases in which journalists allegedly took bribes, and more recently the Romanian media too have signaled an increasing number of such cases. Many Romanian journalists were charged with criminal offences. Awkward stagings were made against inconvenient journalists, who touched the image of certain personalities. In Iasi and Baia Mare three journalists were sentenced. Two employees of the *Ora* daily, who has the largest number of libel suits, were arrested for bribe taking. One of them was the editor-in-chief, who was in preventive detention for 30 days. The Craiova prosecution maintains that the journalist asked for 1000 USD not to run a defamatory story about a business person; this paper had announced several weeks earlier exposures of well known business people.<sup>14</sup>

It is worrying that we have to face such cases, when journalists are arrested only for disclosing information involving certain known personalities.

Journalism presupposes the existence of a high degree of trust by the public. If a journalist takes bribes this destroys the public trust in the news published.

In order to maintain this trust it is paramount for each journalist to reach the highest standards of professionalism.

There are certain specific characteristics of journalism which contribute to the spread of corruption in this profession. One of the most important factors is the low pay that journalists receive. In order to be effective in fighting corruption, journalists must be well-paid and provided with good working conditions so as to prevent them from turning to other sources of income.

Moldova is one of the countries most affected by corruption. People giving bribes are also to be blamed for this, not only the ones taking them.

Poverty, a difficult economic situation have a negative effect on the efforts made to fight this phenomenon. Progress will become more visible when the economic situation in the country improves.

Angela MITROFAN  
Maria MUTU

<sup>1</sup> The ethics code of the journalists of Moldova, adopted on 4 May 1999.

<sup>2</sup> www.accente.com.md

<sup>3</sup> www.basa.md Basa-press 17 February 2004.

<sup>4</sup> www.azi.md Basa-press 17 February 2004.

<sup>5</sup> APFlux, Ana Mutu, 7 June 2002.

<sup>6</sup> *Curier Media*, no. 1, January 2002.

<sup>7</sup> *Curier Media*, 19 October 2002.

<sup>8</sup> *Curier Media*, 19 October 2002.

<sup>9</sup> *Castells v. Spain* (1992)

<sup>10</sup> Law of the Republic of Moldova 985/18.04.2002 Criminal Code, *Monitorul Oficial* 128-129/1012, 13.09.2002, art.324.

<sup>11</sup> V.Gurin, V.Pascaru, S.Ilie, M.Jalencu, L.Carasciuc, A. Rusu, I.Gumenai, V.Paslariuc, L.Negura "Corruption" 2000.

<sup>12</sup> I. Turcanu, "Interpreting signs of the objective side of the offence of bribe taking" // *Scientific annals*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> "timpolis serving the law" no.556 (August 15-18, 1999).

## Law Suits Against Mass Media in 1998-2003

The situation concerning freedom of expression in Moldova continues to trigger many discussions. Increasingly more law suits are started against the media. Most often they concern freedom of expression, and plaintiffs claim compensations that are too large.

Art.16 of the Civil Code provides for the "protection of honor, dignity and professional reputation"; this is the article used to start law suits against journalists and media outlets. Thus, "damage to honor and dignity" is ascertained when false and damaging information is disseminated about a person. The person complaining in court (the plaintiff—alleged victim) has to prove the fact of dissemination, while the person who has disseminated the information (the defendant—alleged offender) has to prove the verity of the information.

The liability in such a case may take the form of a retraction, publication of a reply, compensation for moral and material damages. If the information damaging the honor, dignity and professional reputation is disseminated via a mass medium, the court can mandate it to publish a retraction in the same section, page, in the same program or series of programs within

15 days from the date when the court decision becomes effective.

When a document issued by an organization contains information harmful to the honor, dignity or professional reputation, the court mandates a replacement of the document.<sup>1</sup> In other cases, the court defines how the information damaging the honor, dignity and professional reputation is to be retracted. Also, a new provision was included in art.16, paragraph (7), "the right of the person whose rights and personal interests, protected by law, have been damaged by the publications of a mass medium, to publish a reply in the same mass medium at its expense".<sup>2</sup>

When it is impossible to identify the person who has disseminated the information damaging the honor, dignity and professional reputation of another person, the latter has the right to go to court with a request to the court to declare such information not truthful.

In order to estimate the number of law suits involving freedom of expression examined by courts between 1998-2003, the Independent Journalism Center carried out research on this issue. A total of 235 cases have been identified, involving law suits regarding damages to honor, dignity and professional reputation.

**Law suits examined in Moldova between 1998 and 2003, which involved freedom of expression and damages to honor and dignity**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Center District Court, mun. of Chisinau	18	19	11	13	26	2
Buiucani District Court, mun. of Chisinau	33	14	10	8	9	4
Riscani District Court, mun. Chisinau	5	3	12	12	12	4
Botanica District Court, mun. Chisinau	1	-	-	-	1	-
Soroca	-	-	-	4	-	-
city of Balti	1	3	2	1	1	2
Orhei	-	1	-	-	2	-
Nisporeni	1	-	-	-	-	-

This approximate estimate includes only cases with a final court ruling; running cases have not been included.

The study has shown that out of 235 cases, in 115 the plaintiffs won, and the rest 120 suits were stopped. Of these, 56 were suspended, 3 finished in settlement agreements, 9 were withdrawn by the plaintiffs, and 52 were rejected by the court as unfounded.

A law suit can be closed if the court admits the withdrawal of the plaintiff or endorses the settlement agreement between the parties.

The court can be suspended if:

- a. the suit was started by an incompetent person;
- b. the law suit request was signed or submitted to the court by an unauthorized person;
- c. a litigation between the same parties and regarding the same subject and on the same grounds is being judged in the same court or in a different court;
- d. the parties legally summoned failed to appear in court after the second summons and did not request the examination of the case in their absence;
- e. the plaintiff legally summoned failed to appear in court, to inform the court of the reasons for not appearing or the reasons presented are considered by the court as unfounded, or to request the examination

of the case in his/her absence, and the defendant does not request the judging of the case. This is a very frequent situation in judiciary practice;

f. the court delayed or divided into installments the payment of the state fee, and the plaintiff failed to pay it within the time period set by the court.<sup>1</sup>

The court decision to suspend the case may be appealed. If a case is suspended, then a new case may be started after the circumstances that have led to this situation have been eliminated. If the court decides to reject the request to cancel the suspension, this decision may also be appealed.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to mention the fact that suits involving damages to honor and dignity appear both between public figures and journalists as well as between media professionals.

An analysis of the different cases started against the media between 1998 and 2003 has shown that in 1998-1999 the number of suits against the media increased, while in 1999-2000 this number decreased, only to increase again in 2001-2002.

However, we have been able to identify the lowest and the highest compensations awarded for damaged honor and dignity. The moral damages means compensation for psychological suffering expressed in pecuniary terms.

**Data on the amount of moral damages requested and awarded in 1998-2003 in cases involving damaged honor and dignity**

The lowest moral damage requested	The highest moral damage requested
1800 lei	1,770,000 lei
The lowest moral damage awarded	The highest moral damage awarded
180 lei	5400 lei

Moral damage is compensated, as per the court ruling, by the mass medium as well as by officials and citizens when they are found guilty, in cash and in the amount set by the court.

When the court recognizes that the information is true and is not damaging, then the request that it be retracted and moral damages be paid is rejected.<sup>1</sup>

The findings of the study show that the amount of compensations for moral damages caused by harming the honor and dignity of a person can vary on a case by case basis. Most often the situation changes when the case is in its final stages of examination, and the initial amounts requested by plaintiffs are diminished.

However, there have been cases of claims to extremely large damages, which could bankrupt the newspaper in question. Such an example was the case in which the DAAC-Hermes Company claimed from the *Timpul* weekly damages in amount approaching 2 million USD after the paper published a story about a transaction in which a number of Skoda cars had been bought for the chairpersons of districts and directors of local offices of the State Chancellery. As a result, *Timpul* was mandated by the Buiucani District Court of Chisinau to pay to DAAC-Hermes a compensation of 1 million 350 thousand lei (about 112 thousand USD). *Timpul* said it would appeal the ruling of the Buiucani Court in the Court of Appeals.<sup>2</sup>

While art. 7/1 of the Civil Code of 1964 had a ceiling on the amount of money that could be awarded as compensation, the new Civil Code no longer has such a ceiling; damages will be set depending on the particularities of every case, i.e. depending on the character and severity of the suffering caused to the victim, on the degree of guilt of the offender, on the degree in which such compensation can bring satisfaction to the victim (see art.1423).

According to art. 7/1 of the Civil Code of 1964, the amount of compensation was set by the court between 75 and 200 minimal salaries when the information was disseminated by a legal entity, and between 10 and 100 minimal salaries when the information was disseminated by an individual. The prompt publication, before the court makes a decision, of a retraction and apologies for the false information damaging the honor and dignity of the victim was a reason for the diminution of the amount of the compensation or for exoneration from it.

In practice, in most of the cases only the parties are permitted access to files containing court rulings, while the people who are not parties may have access to the court ruling only upon permission of the chairperson of the court.

Courts have a very complicated and cumbersome system of managing and tracking the circuit of cases. Many times researchers have come across a lack of adequate assistance in their research. This is due to the following factors:

Every court has a chancellery in charge of entering information in case registers. Every case has a record form containing basic information: names of the parties, object of the litigation, number of the file, name of

the judge who received the file, the date when the suit was started, information on appeals (if the ruling was appealed). This information is written in manually, which takes a lot of time. The courts should be equipped with computers, printers and photocopiers, then some promptness will be introduced in the work of the judiciary and in the free access to information. Courts don't have the storage space they need for files; they use the chancellery's space as an archive. Under such circumstances it is very difficult to find a certain file when you need information from it.

The Constitution and legislation guarantee both the right to information as well as the right to the protection of one's honor and dignity.<sup>3</sup> The Code of Civil Procedures guarantees access to court decisions by art. 56: "The Parties in a suit have the right to access the materials in the file, to make excerpts and copies thereof". The Access to Information Law stipulates that the information held by courts of law is open to the public.

However, this right continues to be severely restricted. Violations take the form of refusals to grant access to the materials of a journalist's file even if they are part of the suit. According to the Access to Information Law, the person who believes that any of his/her rights or legitimate interests have been restricted by an information supplier may challenge the supplier's actions both outside of and in court; this includes the unfounded refusal to receive and record the request, to provide free and unconditional access to public records, as well as the unfounded classification of information as state or trade secret or as personal information.

*The study was conducted by Angela Mitrofan, Marcela Cataraga,  
Sergiu Rotaru, Veaceslav Dascal.  
Materials on files were collected in court archives between  
September 2003 and March 2004.*

<sup>1</sup> Laws of the Republic of Moldova 225/30.05.2003 Code of Civil Procedure of Moldova, *Monitorul Oficial* 111-115/451, 12.06.2003. art.267.

<sup>2</sup> Laws of the Republic of Moldova 225/30.05.2003 Code of Civil Procedure of Moldova, *Monitorul Oficial* 111-115/451, 12.06.2003. art.268

<sup>3</sup> Explanatory Decisions of the SCJ Plenum. SCJ Plenum decision of 27.03.1997, no.11, On the enforcement of legislation concerning the protection of honor, dignity, professional reputation of citizens and organizations. Collection of explanatory decisions /105, 2002

<sup>4</sup> Curier Media, no.10, May 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Explanatory Decisions of the SCJ Plenary. SCJ Plenary decision of 19.06.2000, no.18, On the amendment of the Decision of the Supreme Court of Justice Plenary of 27.03.1997, no.11, "On the enforcement of legislation concerning the protection of honor, dignity, professional reputation of citizens and organizations" with amendments introduced by the Plenary Decision of 20 December 1999, no.38.

<sup>6</sup> Art. 16 Civil Code of RM.

<sup>7</sup> Civil Code of RM.

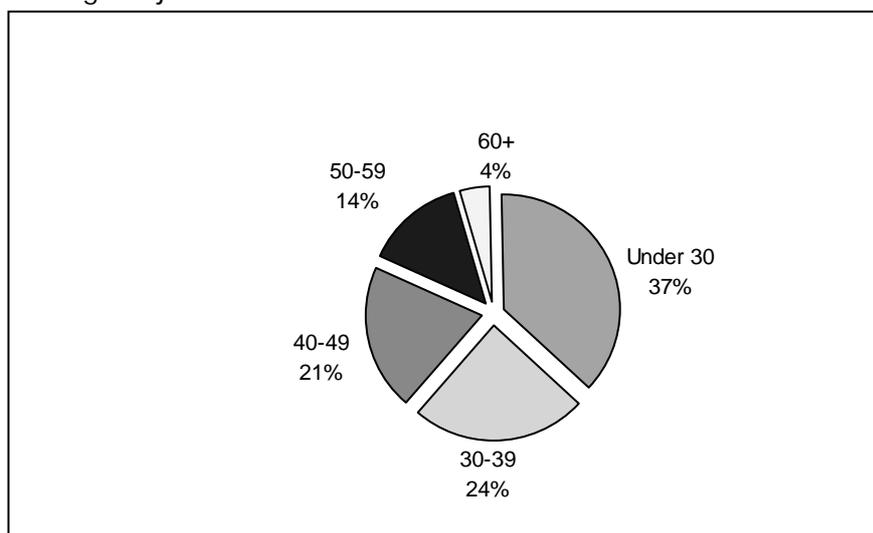
## Journalist Profile: Socio-Demographic Features

The Center for Urban and Rural Sociology (CURS), was commissioned by the Independent Journalism Center to conduct a survey on the Profile of the Journalist in order to describe some of the challenges facing this socio-professional category, as well as to collect other data such as journalists' socio-demographic characteristics or the number of staff at printed and broadcast media. Verifications have been performed by the Marketing and Polling Institute IMAS Inc. Financial support for the project has been provided by Soros Foundation-Moldova.

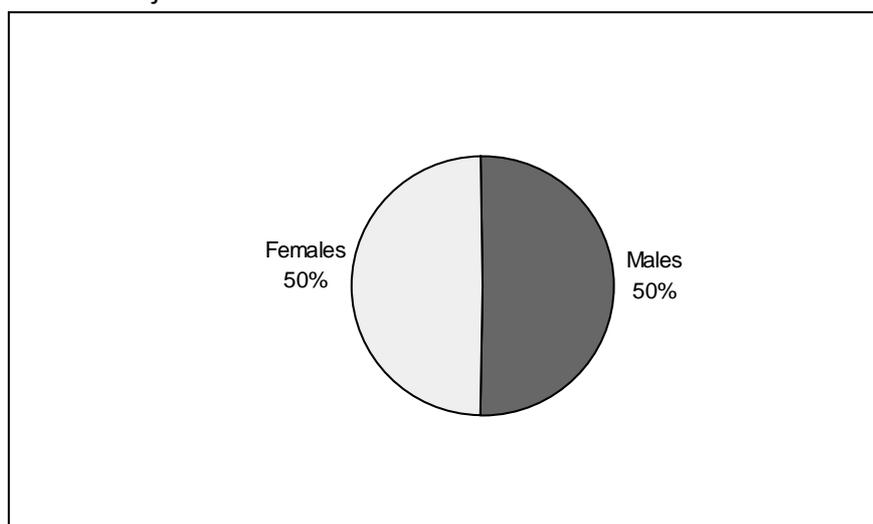
### A. Socio-Demographic Features

There were 1034 journalists working in the 123 outlets of Chisinau who answered the questionnaire. Together with the media outlets that refused to fill out the questionnaire there is a total of 1480 journalists in Chisinau. In reality there could be fewer journalists since some of them work simultaneously for several outlets.

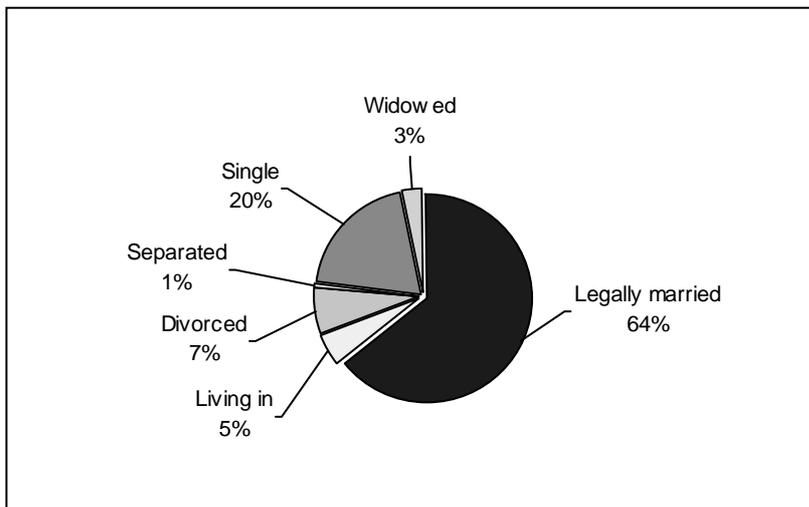
The age of journalists



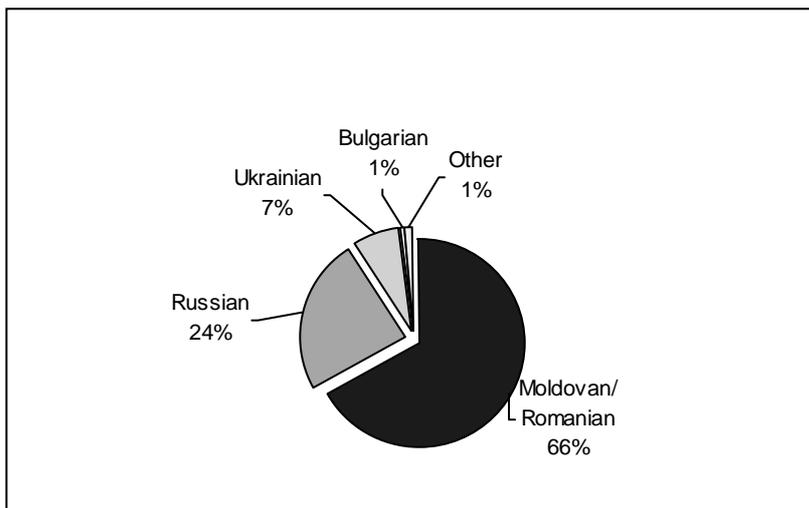
The sex of journalists



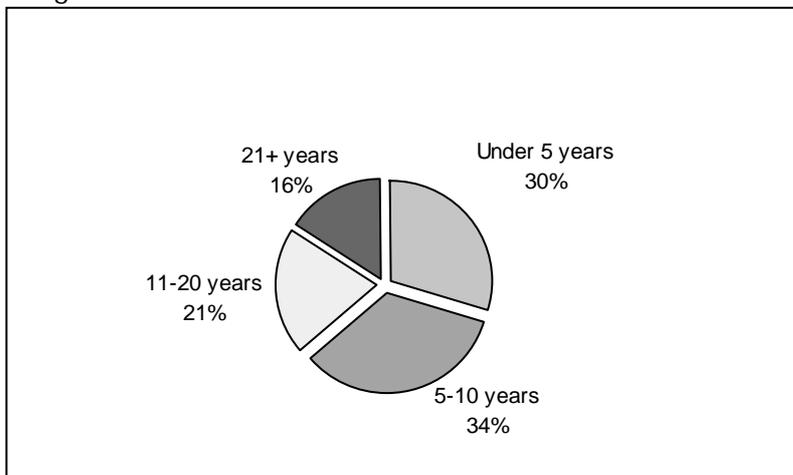
Currently you are ...



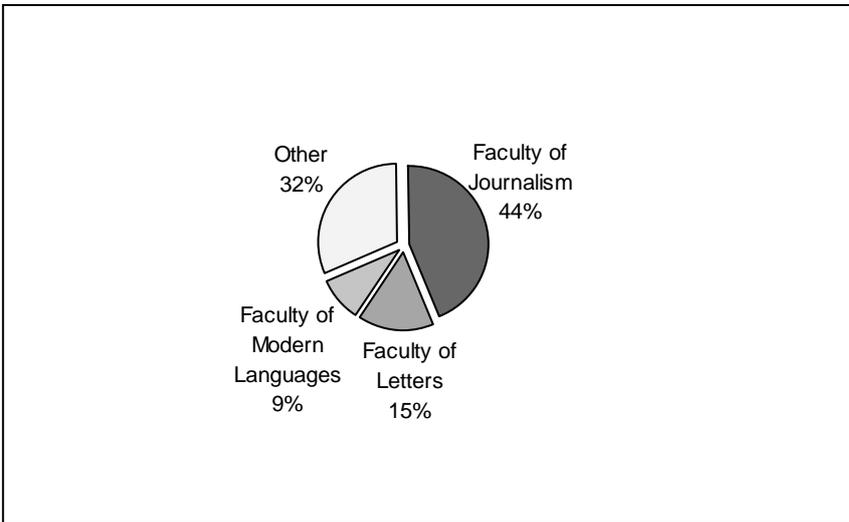
Nationality



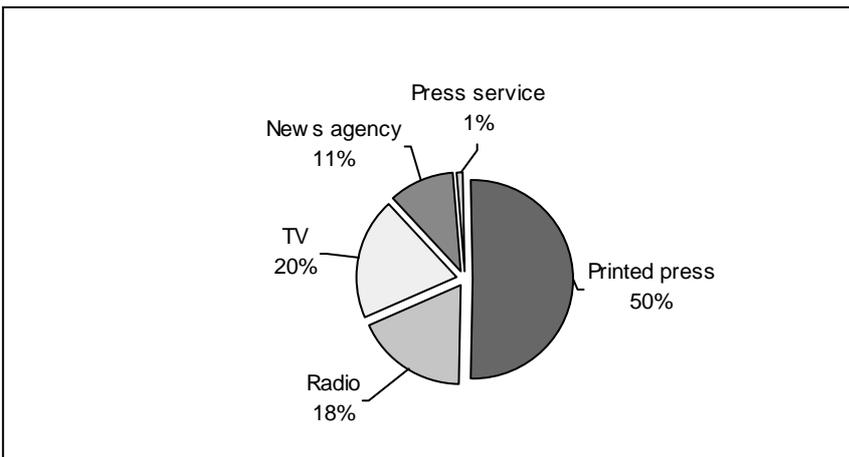
Length of service in the field



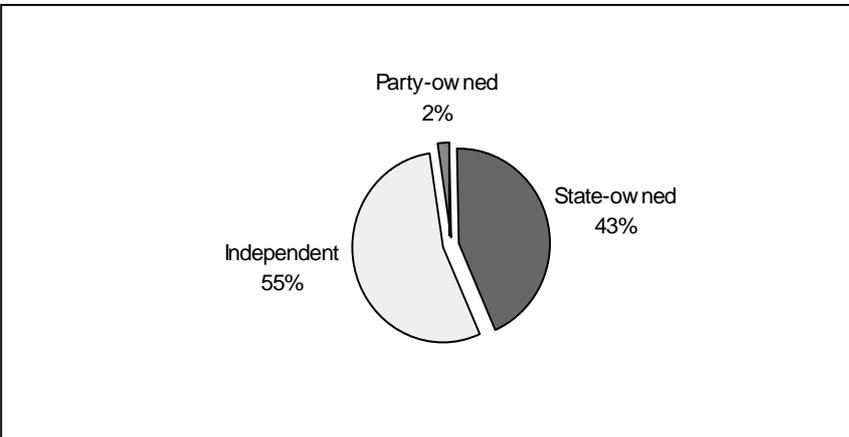
Education



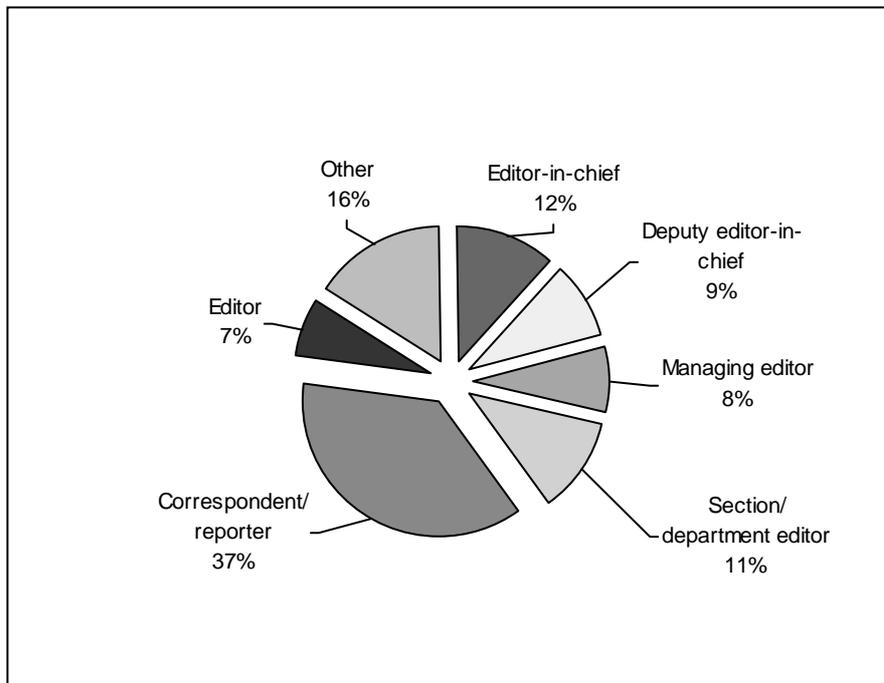
Medium of the outlet (here we included estimated data on the organizations which had refused to participate in the survey)



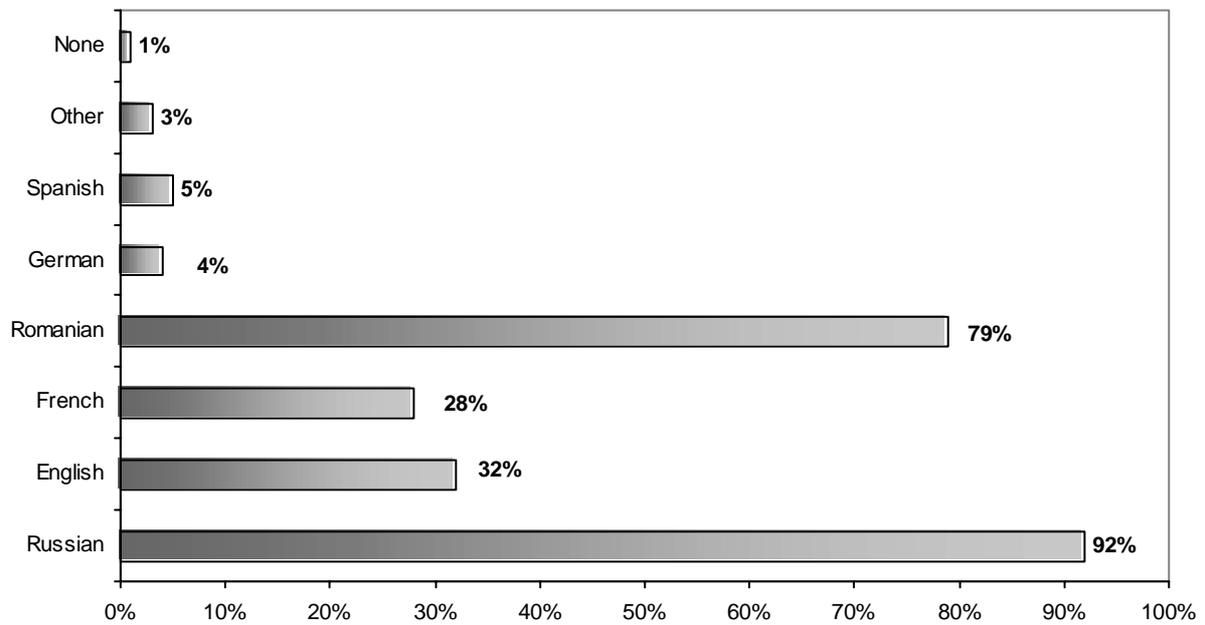
Type of the outlet (here we included estimated data on the organizations which had refused to participate in the survey)



Position



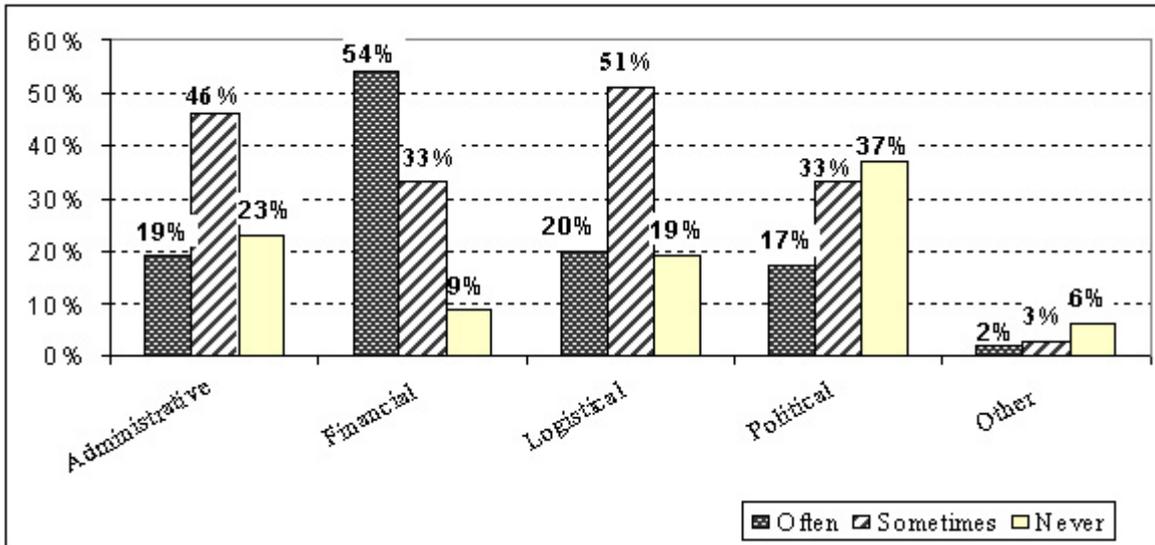
Foreign languages



## B. Professional profiles and working conditions of journalists

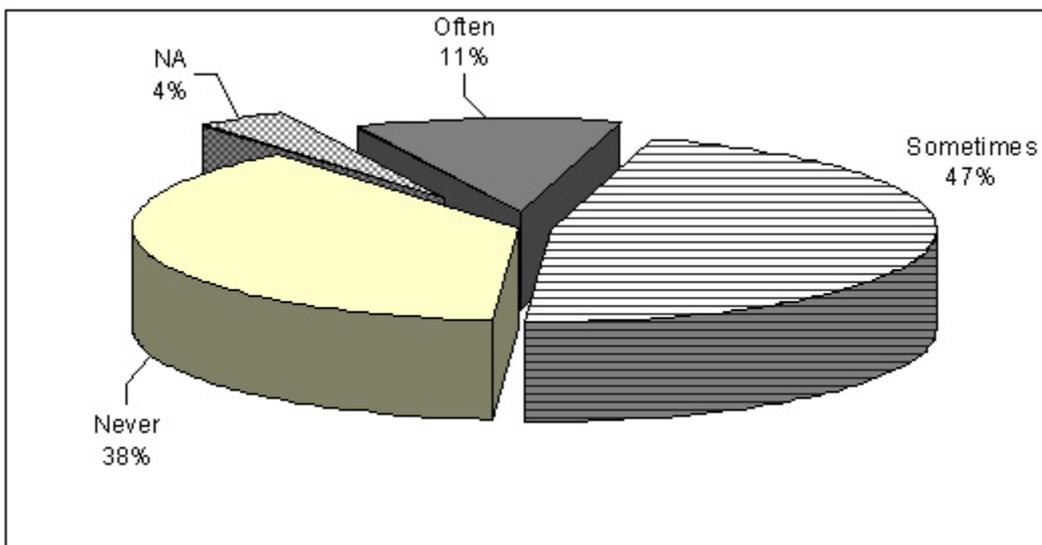
The data below resulted from interviews with 565 journalists. The data were collected in **November and December 2003**.

B1. How often do you face the following challenges:

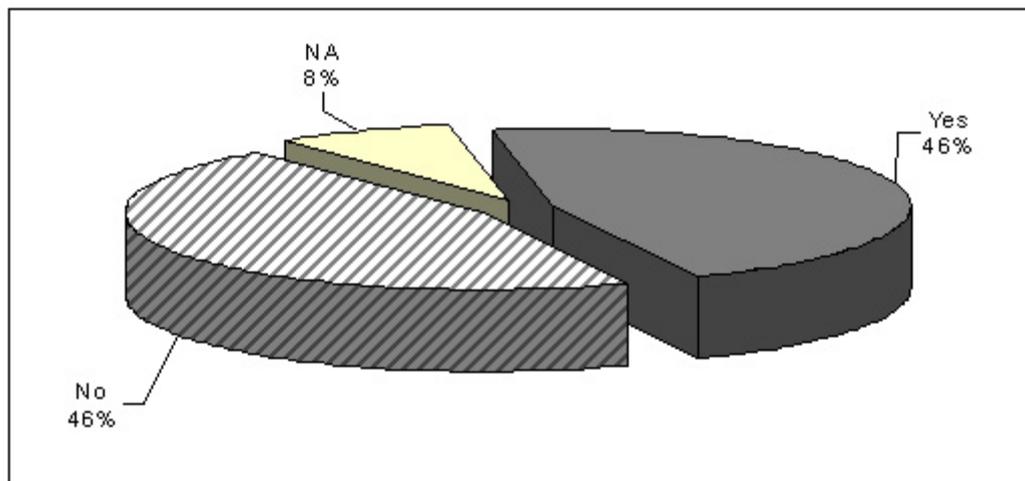


Differences of up to 100% are non-answers

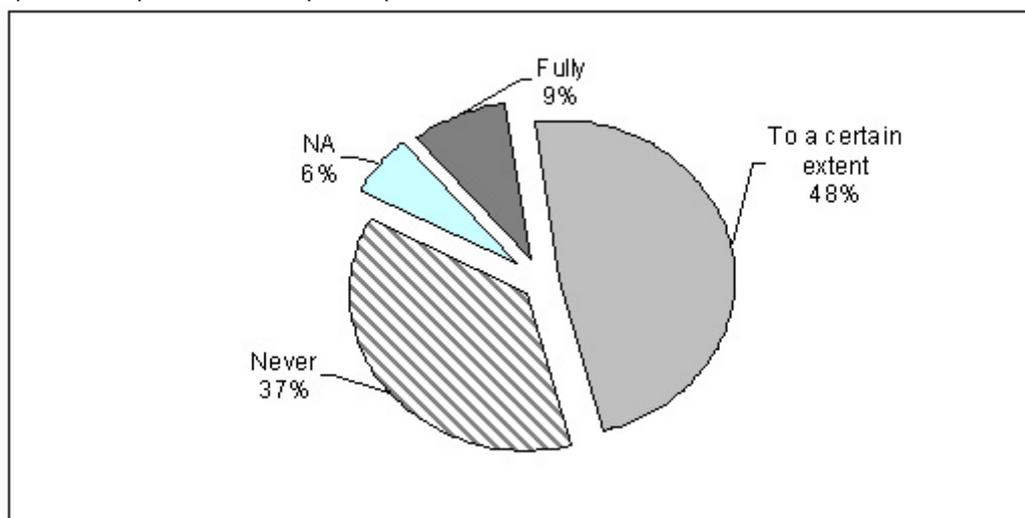
B2. How often is your editorial independence under threat?



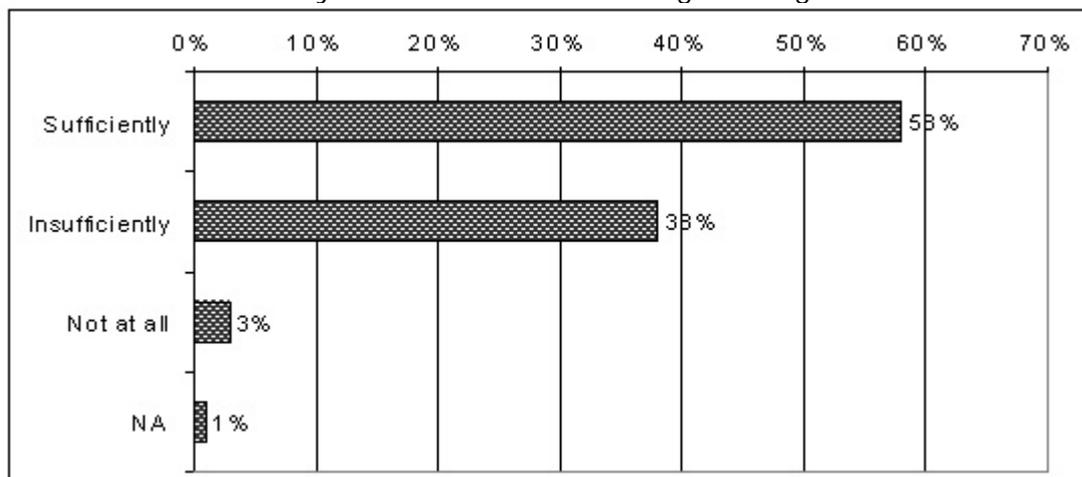
B3. Do you think your outlet runs ordered stories?



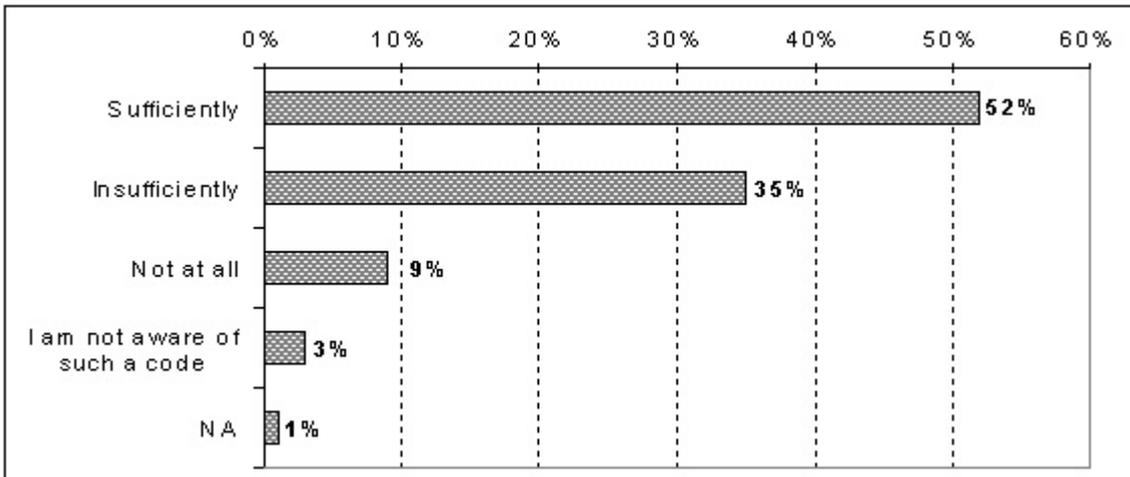
B4. To what extent do you think ordered stories can be justified when they are run at the expense of professional principles?



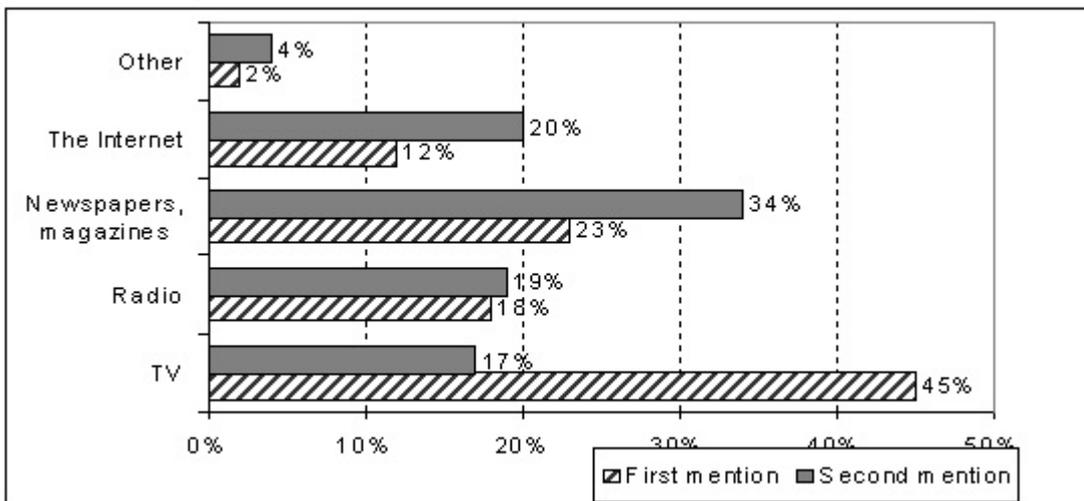
B5. To what extent are you familiar with the laws governing the media in Moldova?



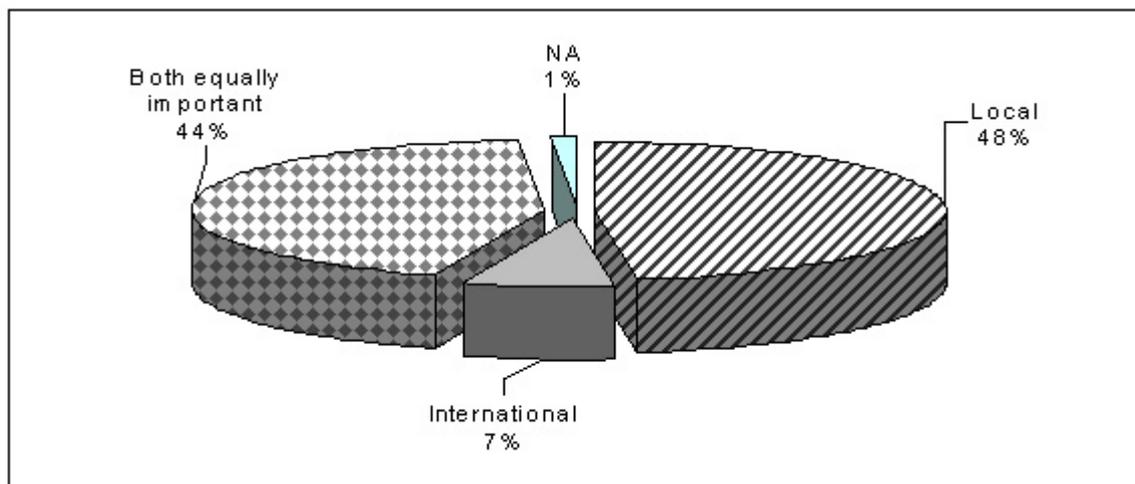
B6. To what extent are you familiar with the code of professional ethics adopted in 1999?



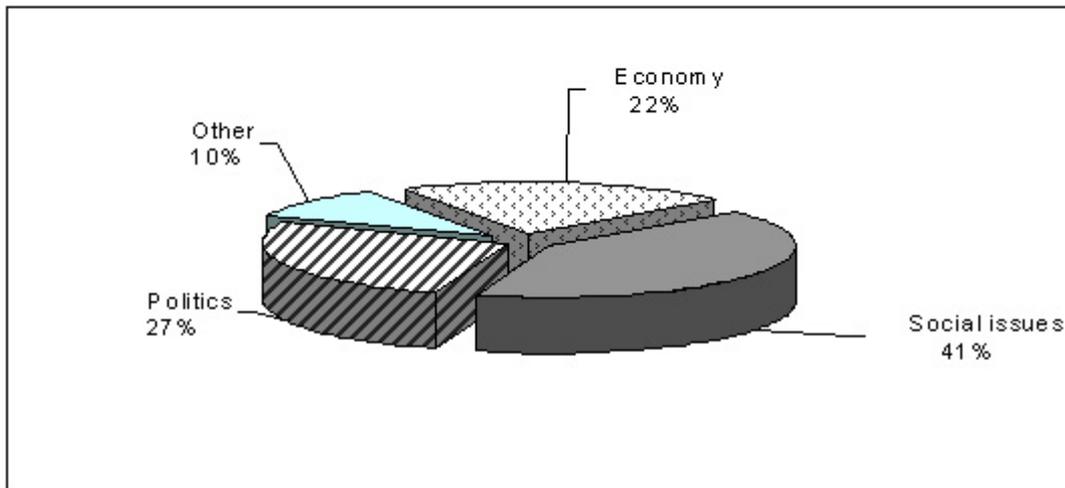
B7. What are your preferred sources of information?



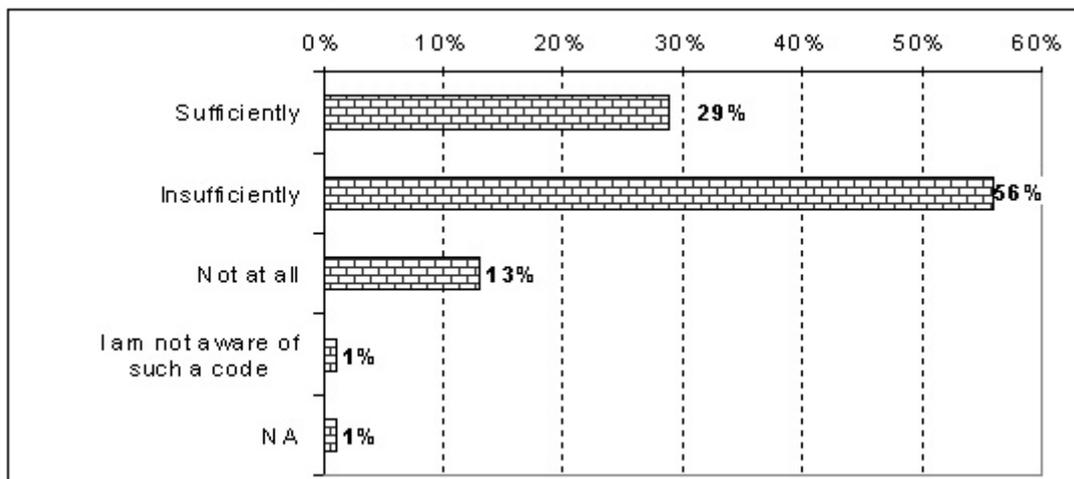
B8. Which type of information is most important for your work: local or international?



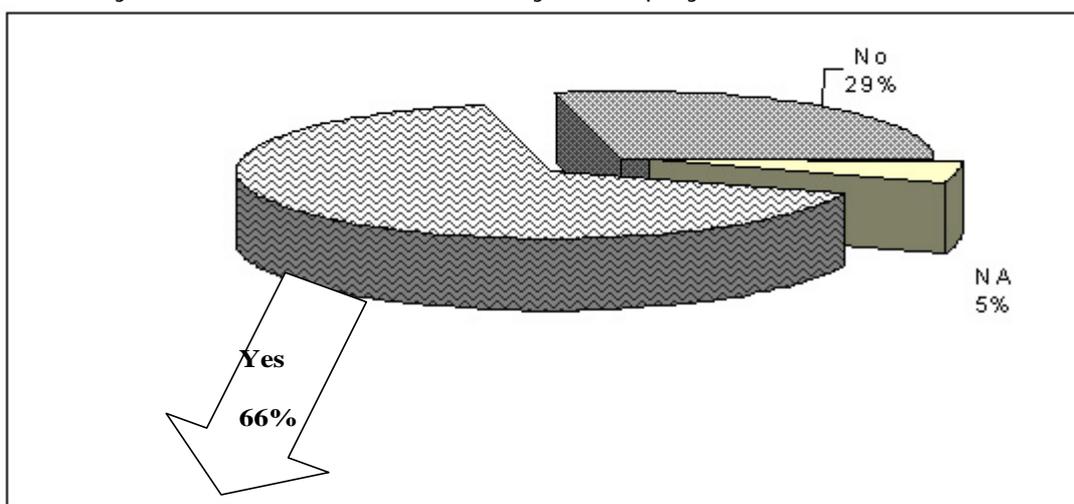
B9. In what area?



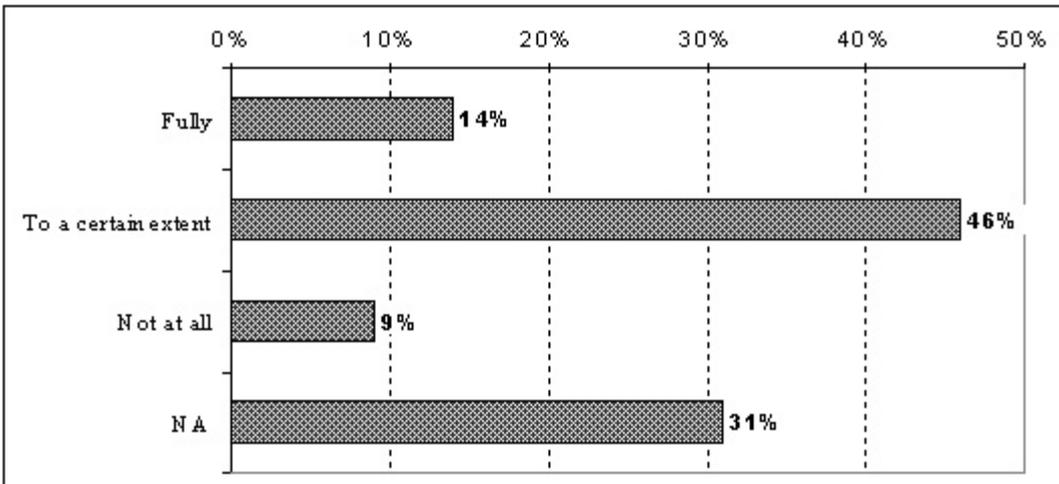
C1. To what extent are you familiar with the new Labor Code?



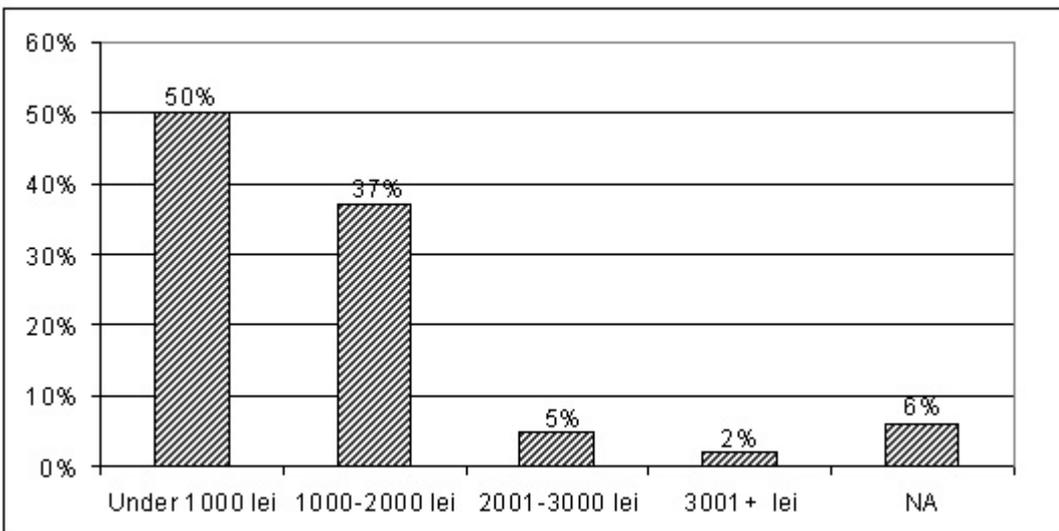
C2. Do you have a work contract with your employer?



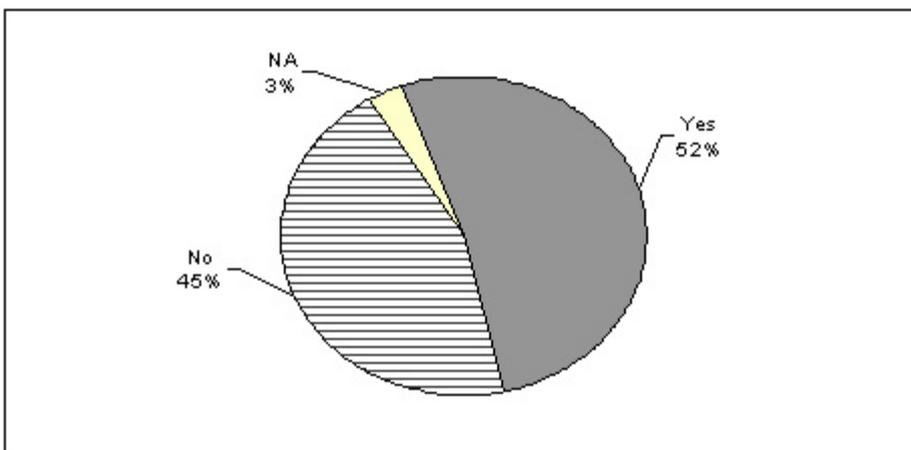
C3. To what extent are you satisfied with the provisions in your labor contract?



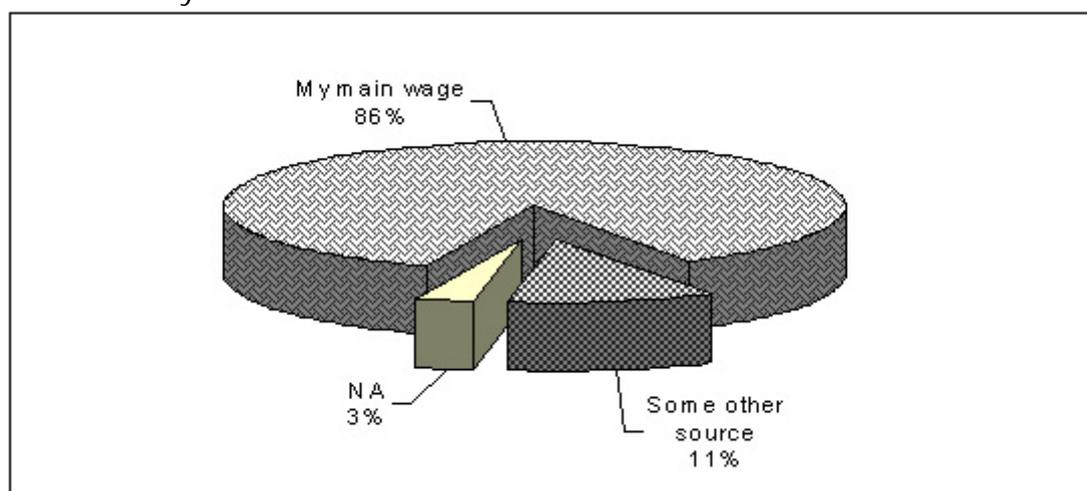
C4. What is your monthly wage?



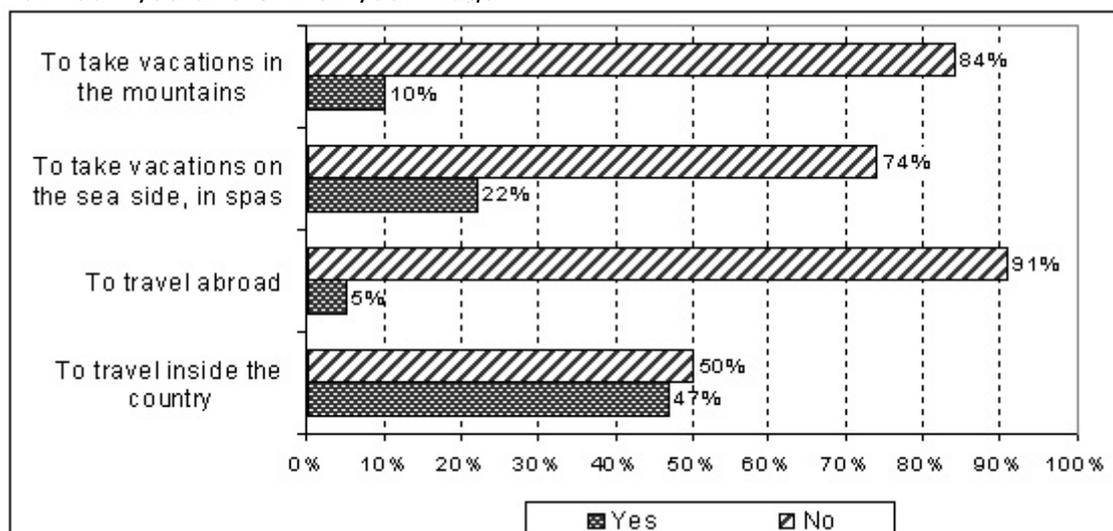
C5. Do you work other jobs in order to enhance your income?



C6. What is your main source of income?

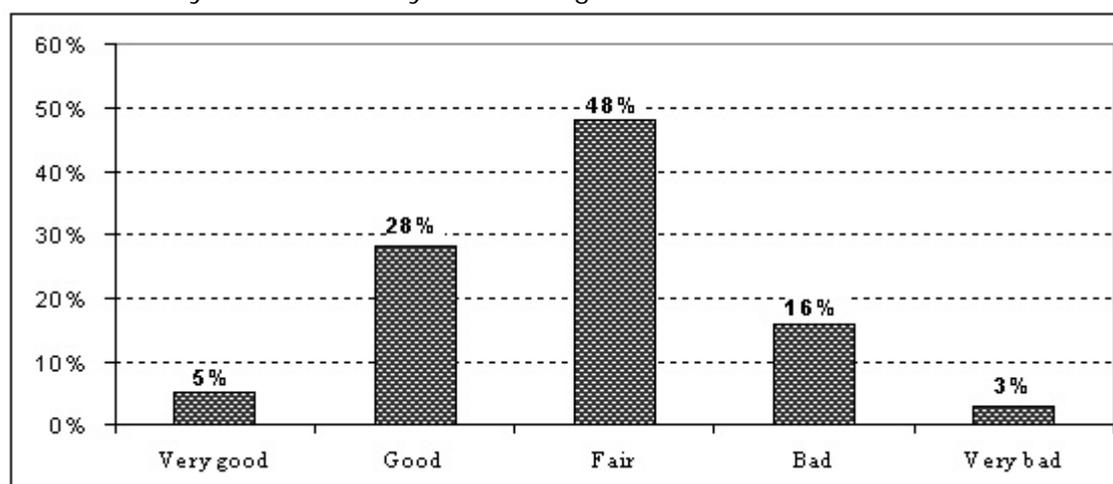


C7. Can you afford with your wage...

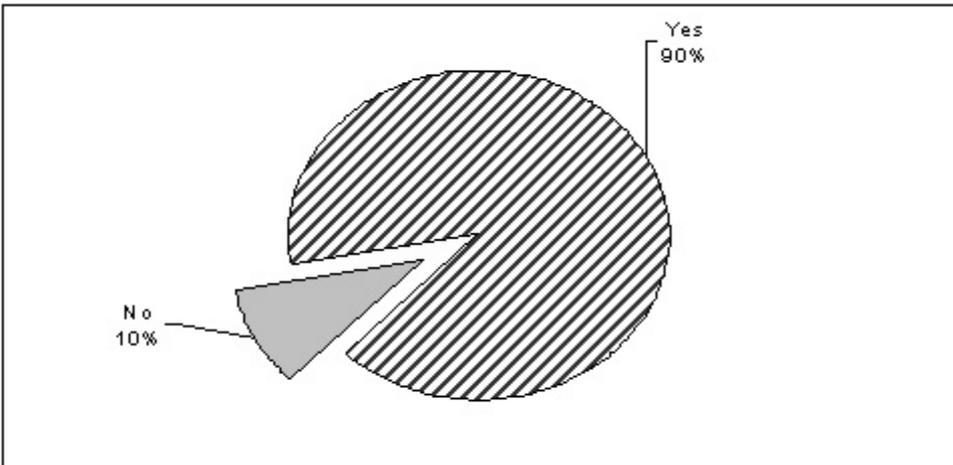


Differences of up to 100% represent non-answers

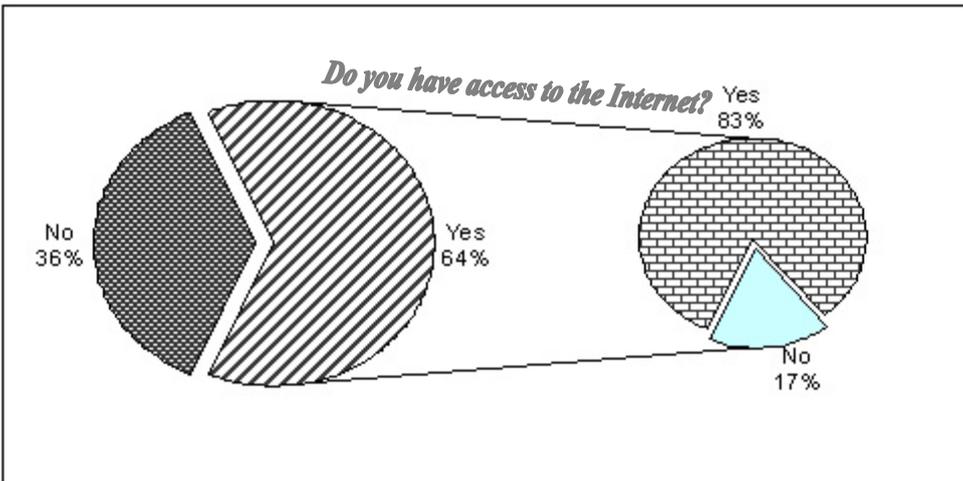
C8. What do you think about your working conditions?



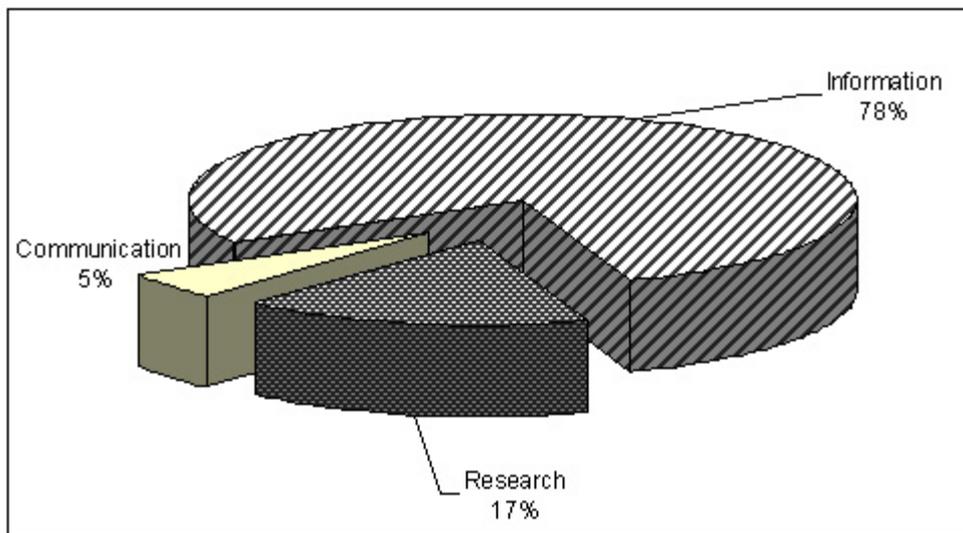
C9. Do you have your own desk?



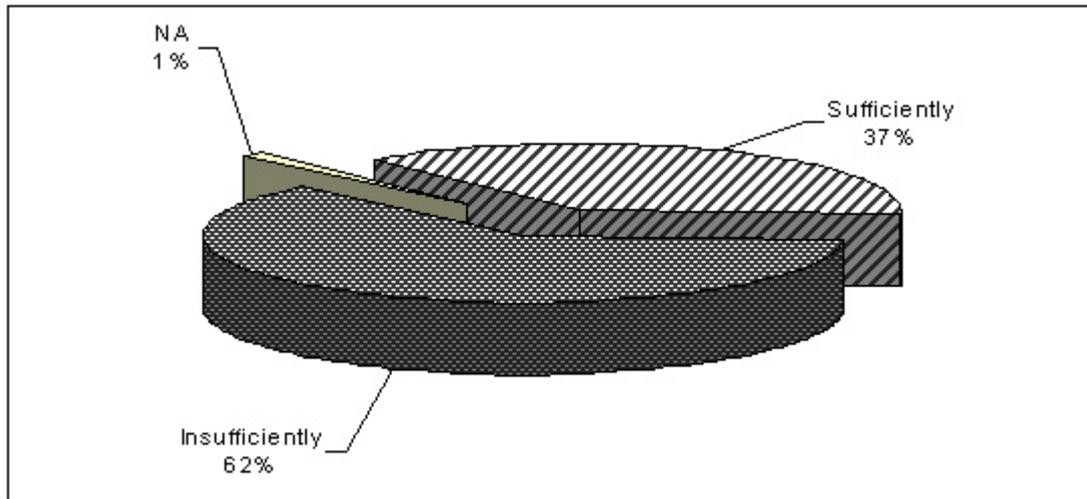
C10. Do you have a computer?



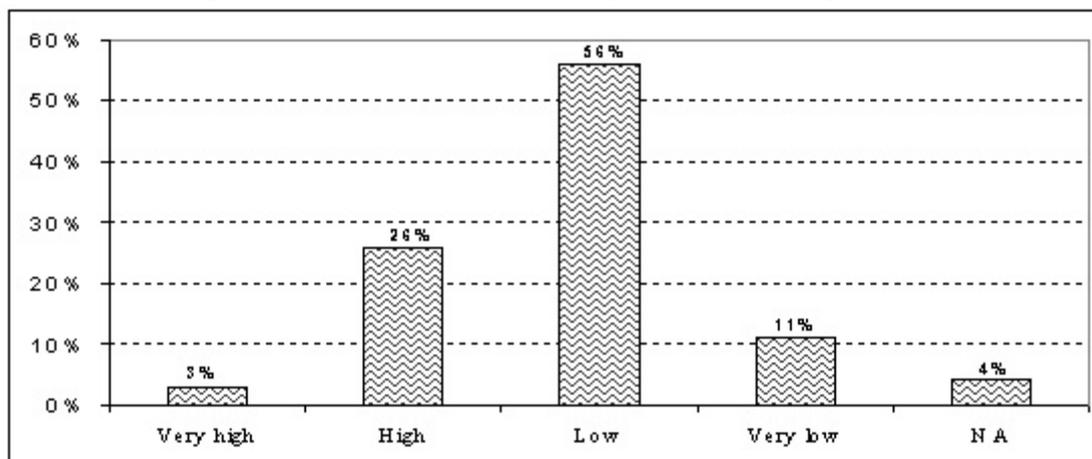
C11. What do you use the Internet mostly for?



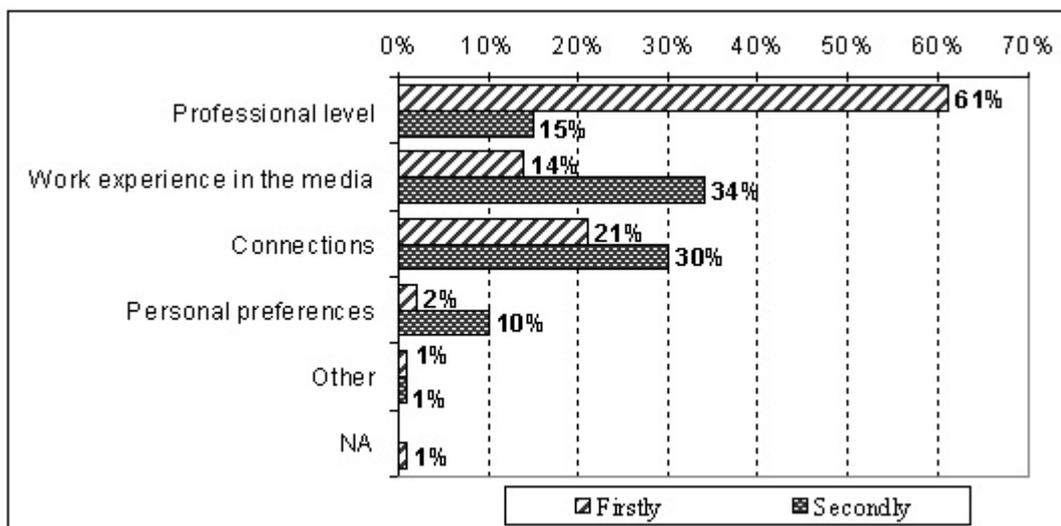
C12. How well do you think you are equipped technically?



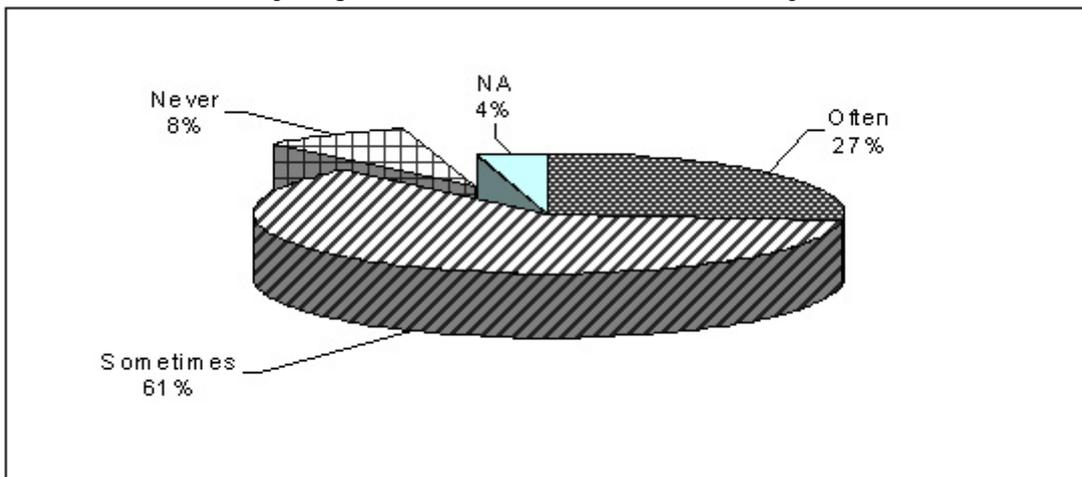
C13. What do you think are the chances of a journalist finding a job in the media?



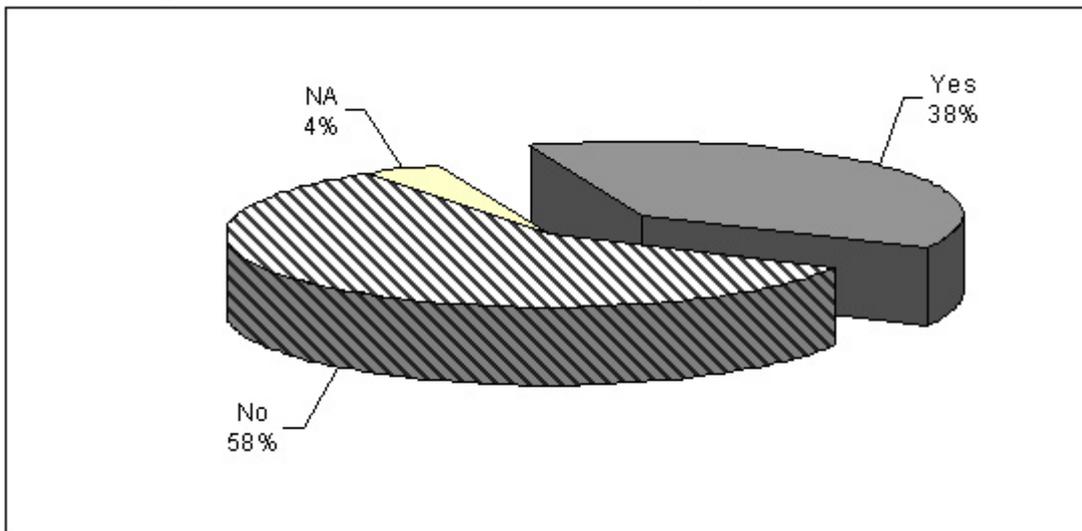
C14. Do you think the chances of a journalist finding a job in the media depend mainly on...?



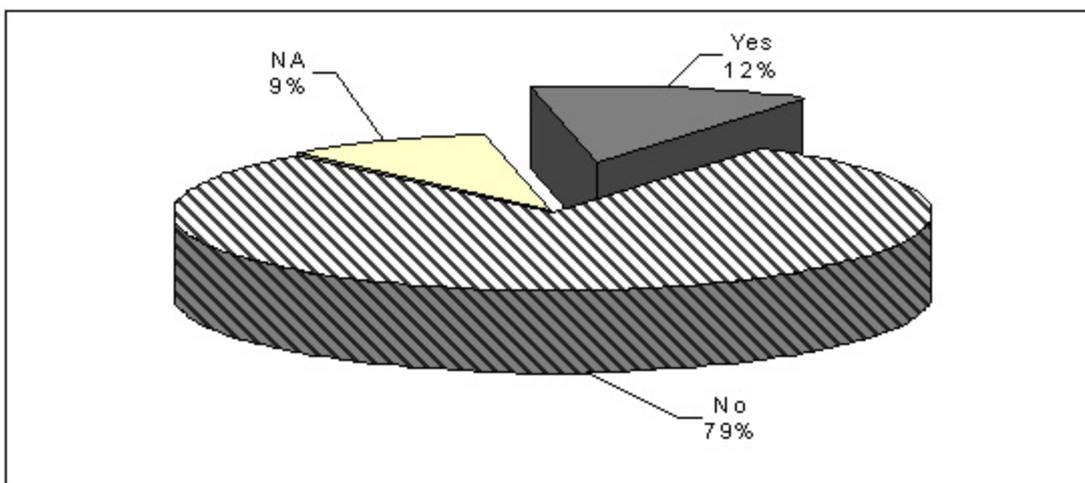
C15. How often do you get feedback from the institutions you write about?



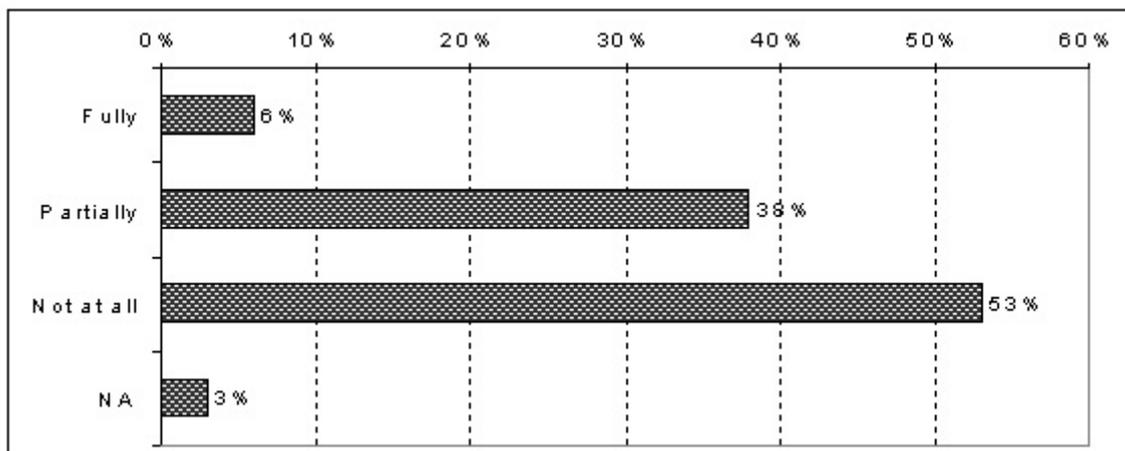
C16. Have you ever received threats as a result of your work?



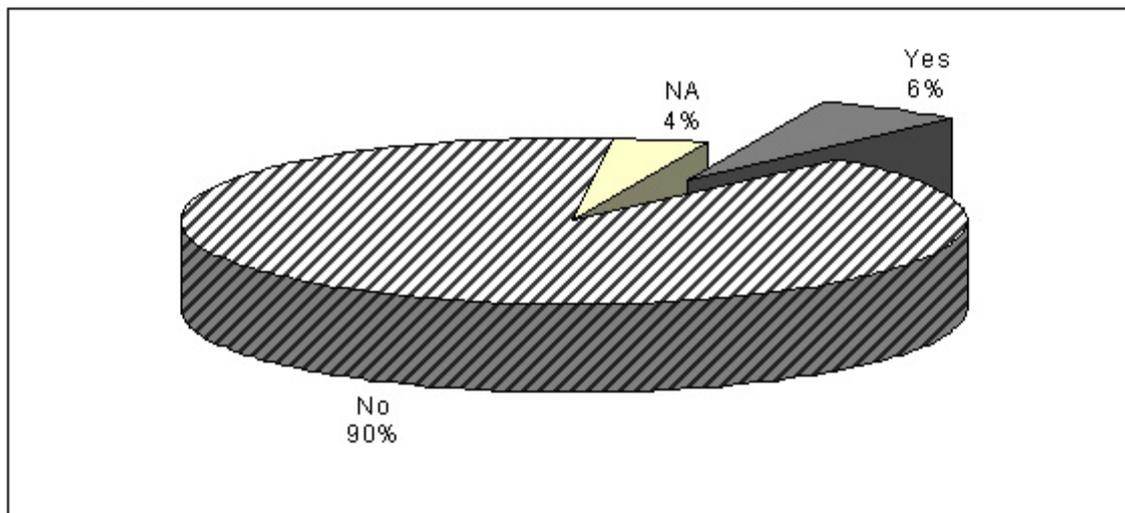
C17. Have you ever been harassed as a result of your work?



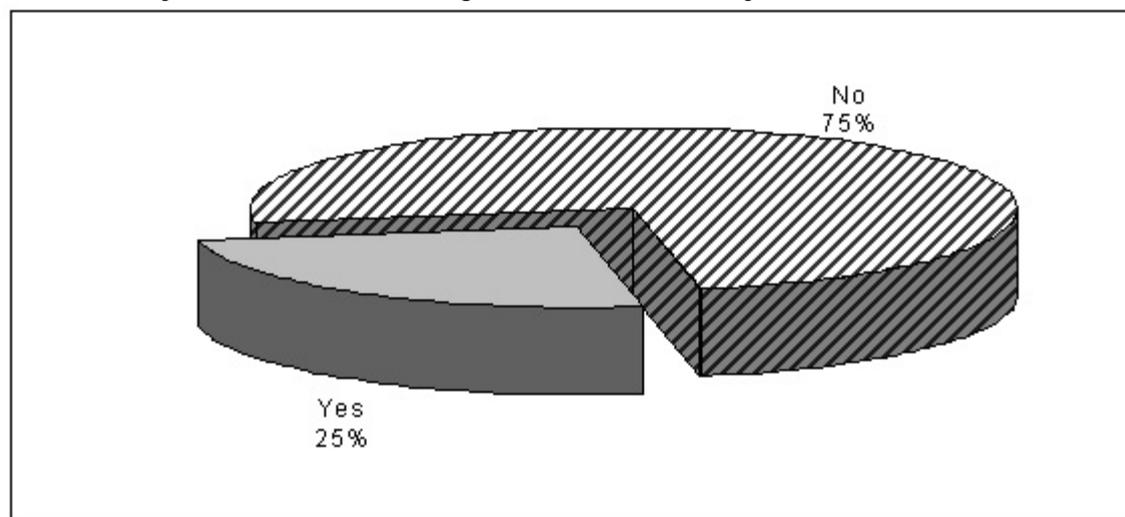
C18. To what extent do you think you are protected against harassment, threats or pressure as a result of your work?



C19. Do you think there is discrimination based on sex in your news room?

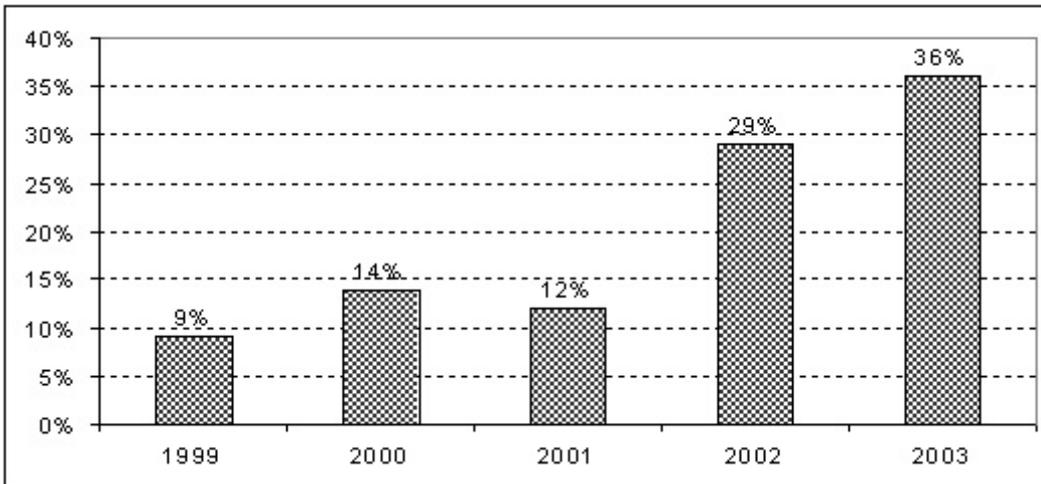


C20. Have you attended a training course in the last 5 years?

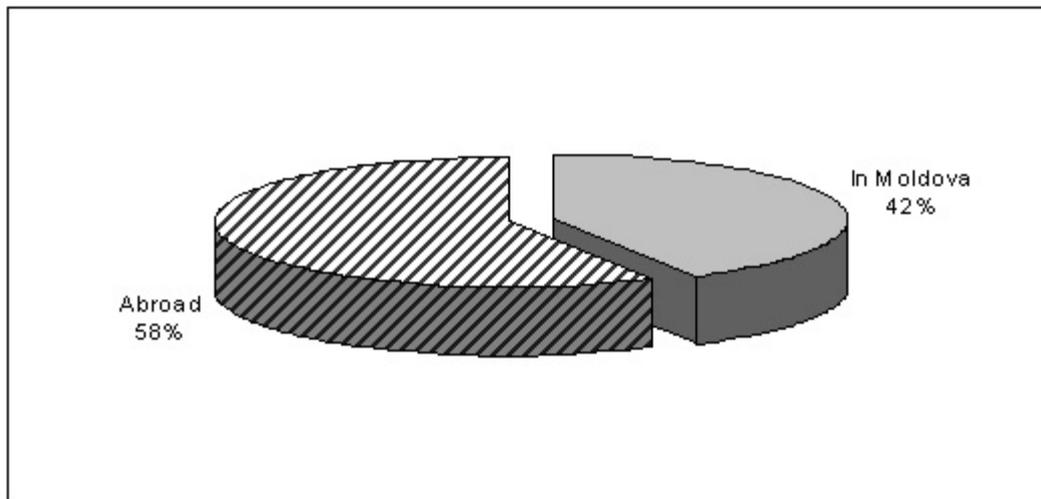


Survey

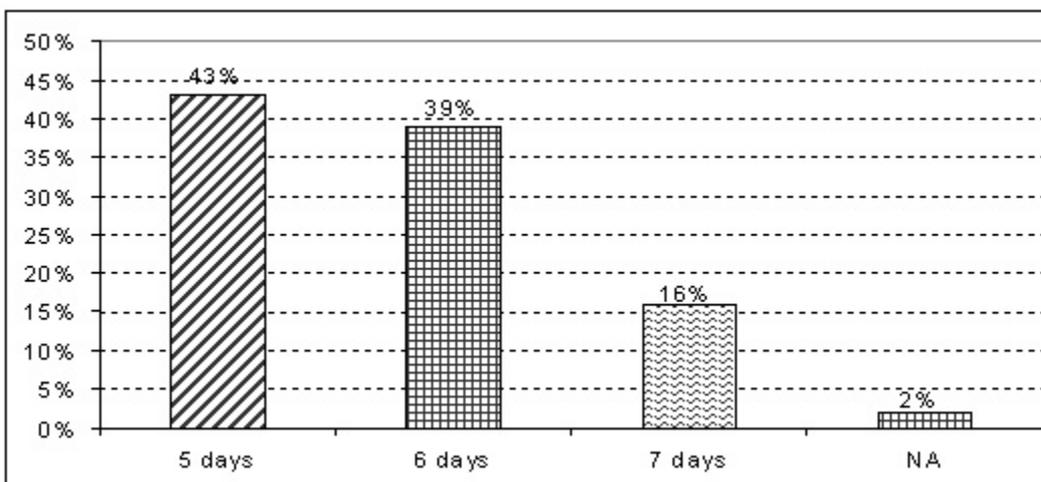
C21. When did you attend a training course?



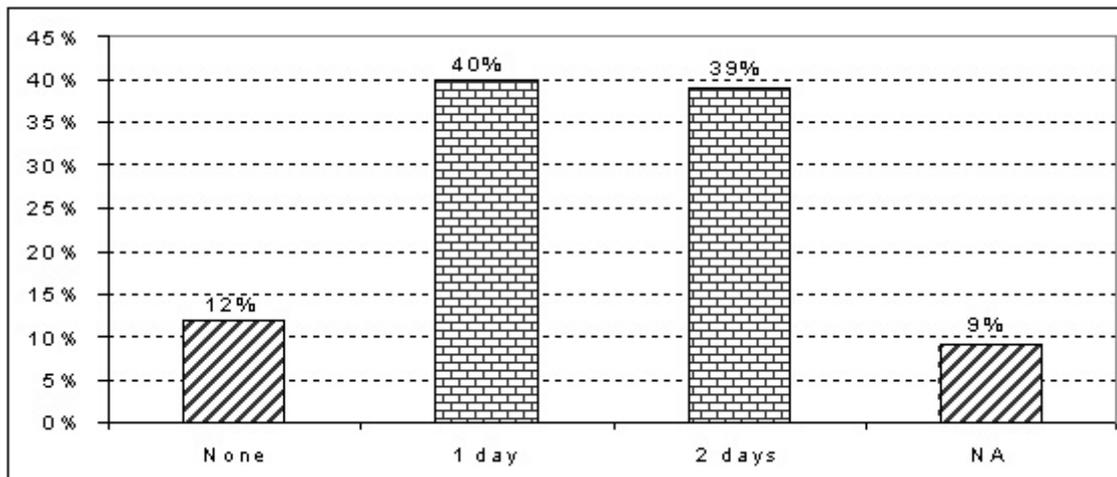
C22. Where?



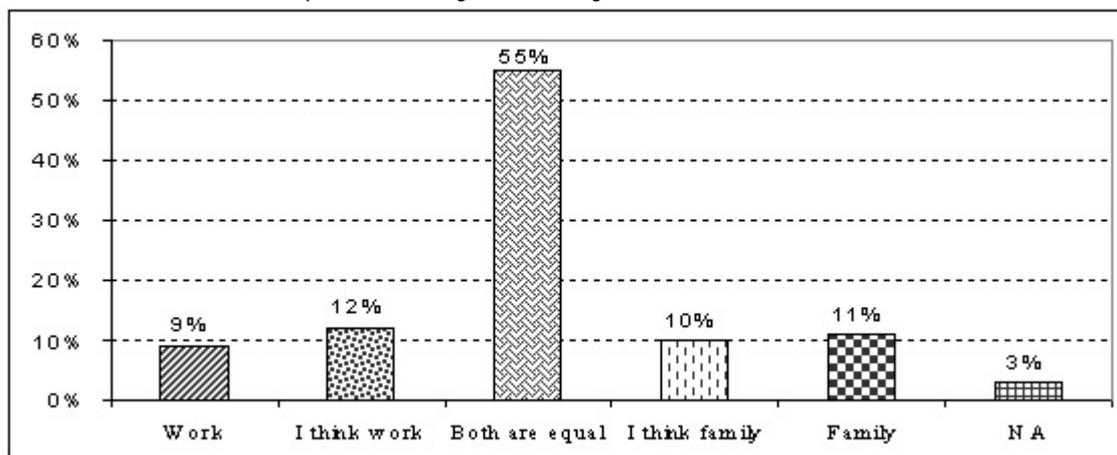
C23. How many days a week do you work?



C24. How many days a week do you spend with your family?

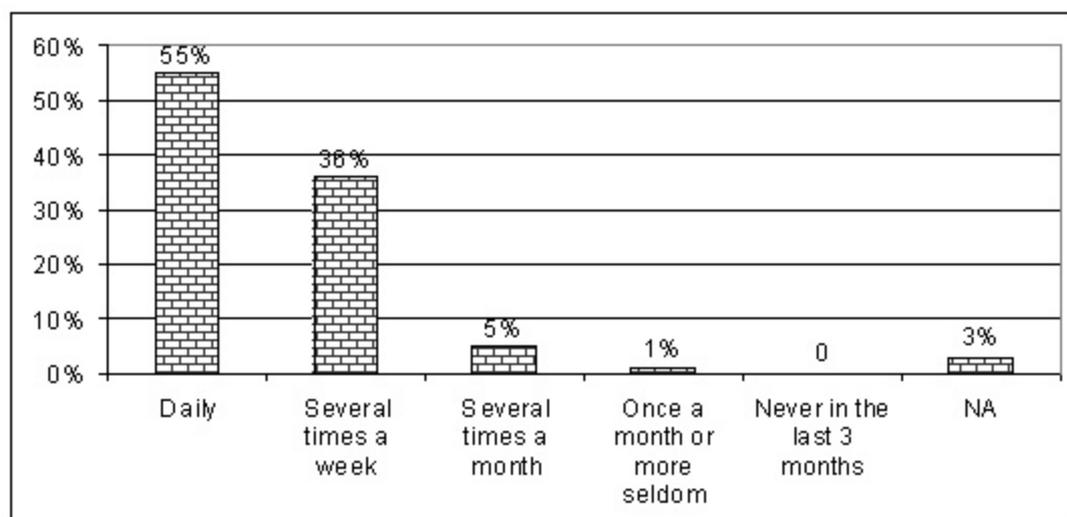


C25. What is more important for you: family or work?



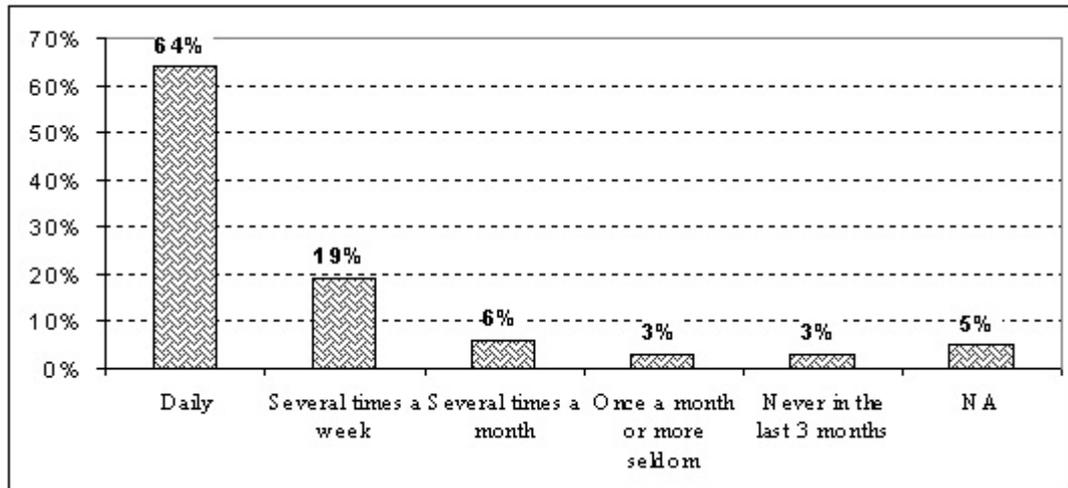
C26. How often ... ?

...do you read newspapers

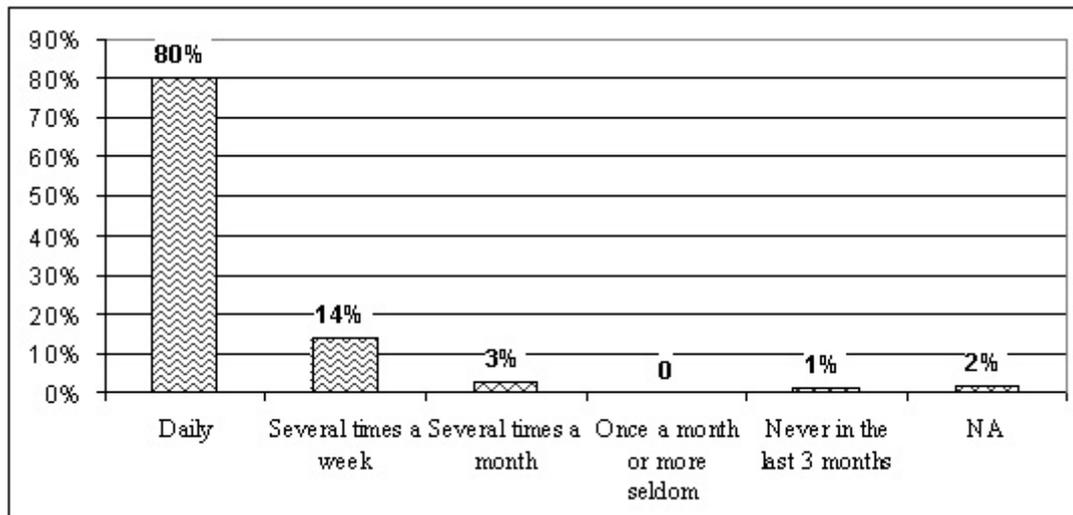


Survey

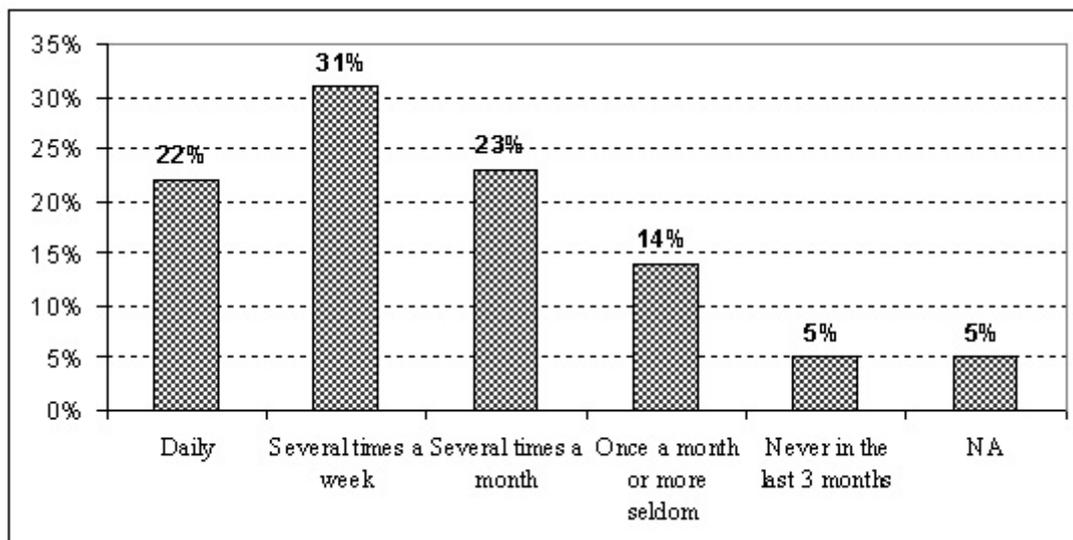
...do you listen to radio



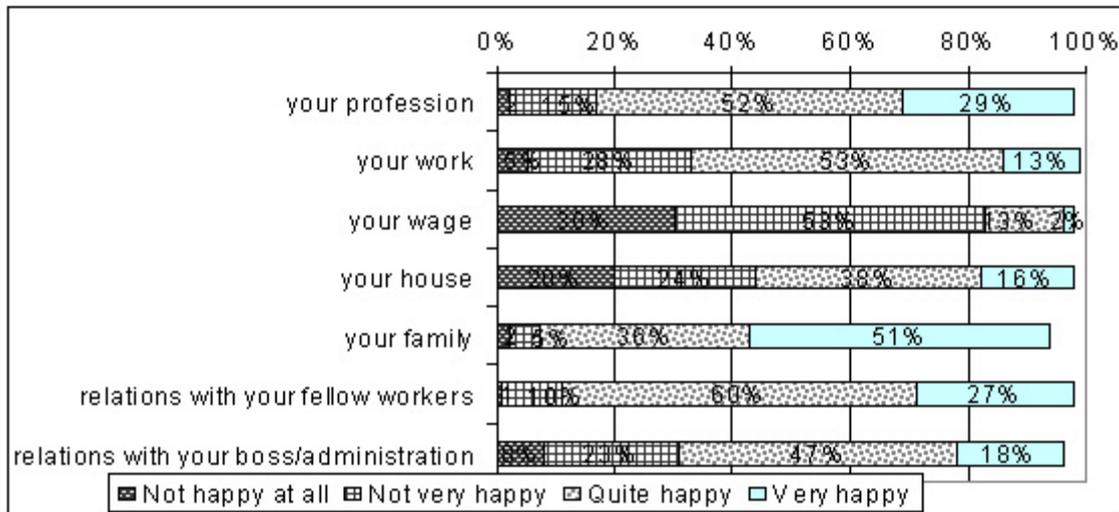
...do you watch TV



...do you read books

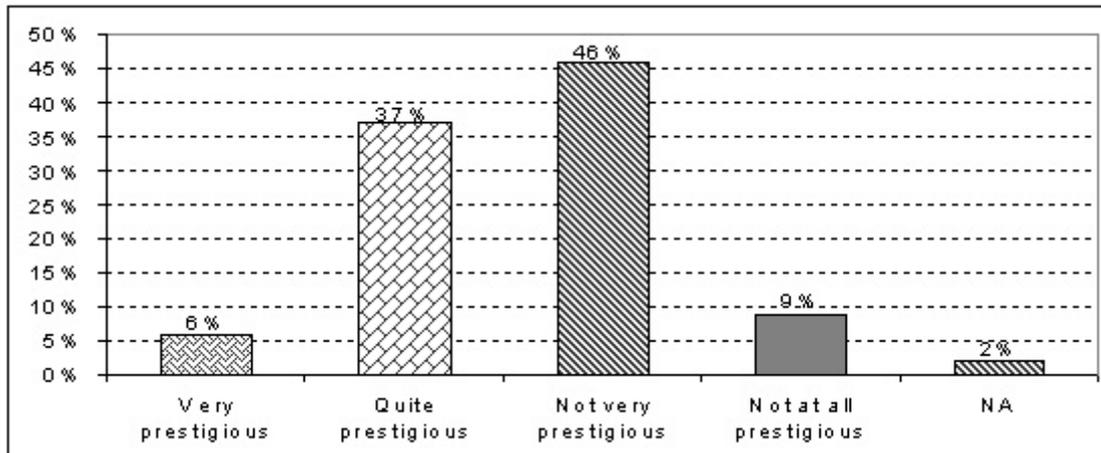


C27. How happy are you with ...?

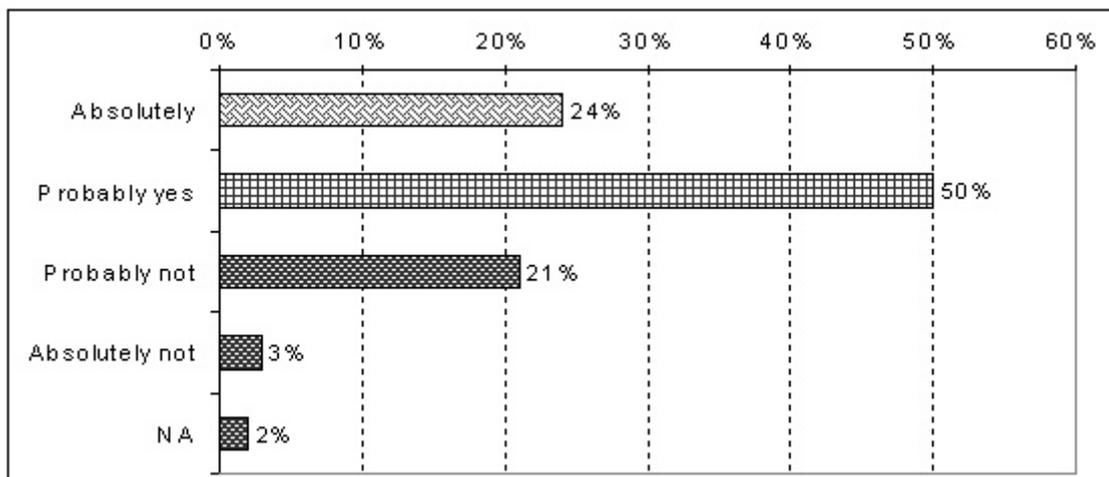


Differences of up to 100% represent non-answers

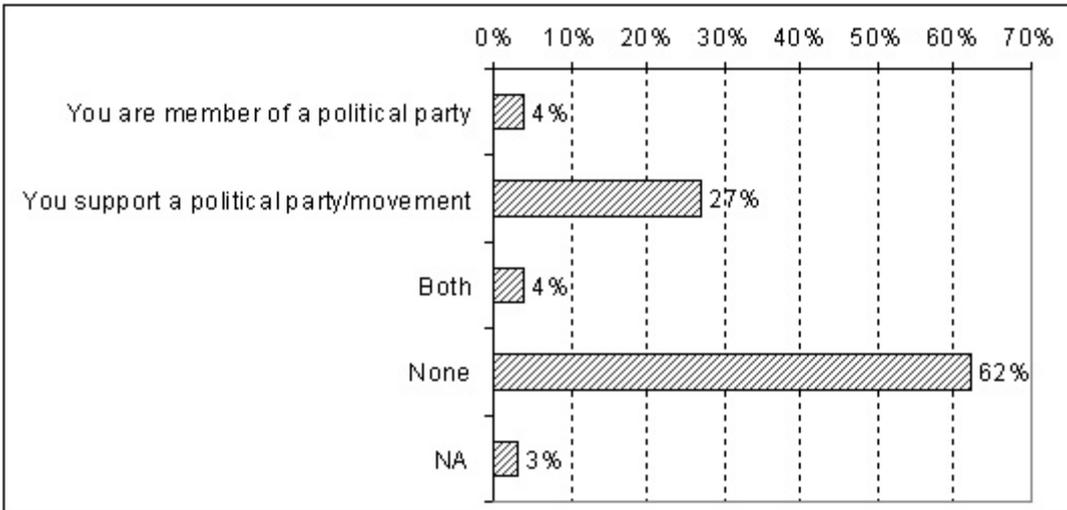
C28. How prestigious do you think is the profession of journalism in our society?



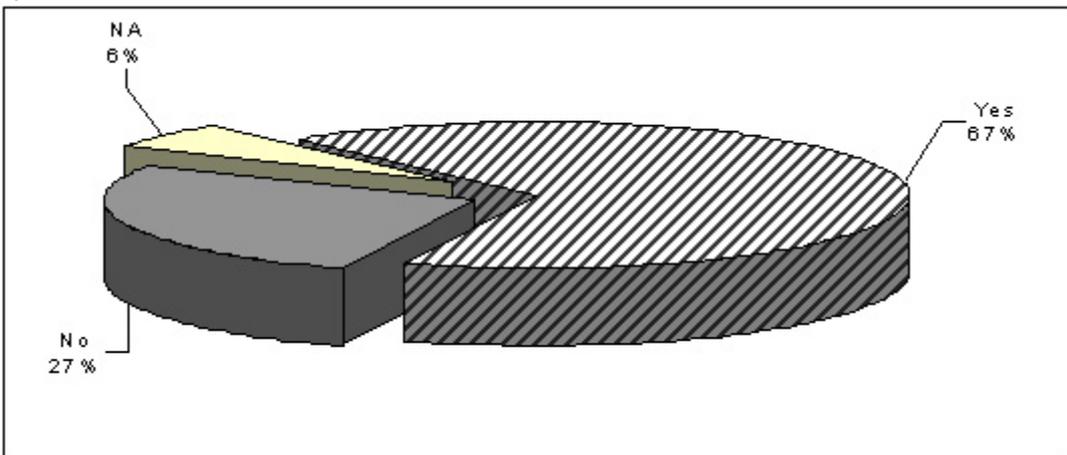
C29. If you could choose your profession today, would you choose to be a journalist?



D1. What is your political affiliation?



D2. Do you think political affiliation can be an impediment to the exercise of journalism as a profession?



D3. Do you accept the idea that a journalist can engage in political partisanship?

