

## Entrepreneurial spirit among young Balkan journalists

THE KAS MEDIA PROGRAM SOUTH EAST EUROPE ORGANISED THE SEMINAR "ENTREPRENEURIAL JOURNALISM" FOR THE THIRD TIME IN BELGRADE

**More and more journalists in South East Europe are looking for new ways to work as freelancers, not depending on big media companies. Being self-employed as an online journalist is quite an attractive alternative for many. However, lots of freelance journalists experience difficulties to find suitable topics for an online project. Thus, the KAS Media Program offers young journalists from South East Europe workshops in "Entrepreneurial Journalism".**

For the third time the workshop took place from 7 to 9 October 2015 in Belgrade. In collaboration with the KAS Media Program South East Europe, the trainers Marko Nedeljković from the University Belgrade, Miloš Petrović from the online agency MWEB and Veroljub Zmijanac from the project GIZ BOSS developed the concept for the innovative training in 2013. As a result the handbook „[Entrepreneurial Journalism](#)“ was published in English and Serbian language. This year the seminar was internationally organised with 18 young journalists from Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Christian Spahr, Head of KAS Media Program South East Europe stressed at the opening of the seminar that the work of online freelance journalists plays an essential role for media diversity and thereby contributes to the consolidation of democracy. He underlined that a great number of media in the region doesn't automatically coincide with a higher diversity of opinion. For this reason,

independent and critical voices are indispensable. In order to achieve this goal the KAS Media Program South East Europe is committed to train young professionals and let them become acquainted with the specifics of online journalism.

### The online journalist as entrepreneur

Lead trainer Marko Nedeljković outlined the fundamentals of online journalism. He explained which techniques are necessary not only for publishing content on the internet, but also how to use different types of multimedia. Nedeljković underlined the importance to provide information of high quality, for example with the help of pictures and videos. Special attention was drawn to the use of keywords and metadata as they are of importance for the visibility of online articles. During practical exercises the participants analysed their own online articles and learned how to optimise them. The solutions ranged from embedded links or external websites to the improvement of the structure and visualization of the texts.

On the second day of the workshop Miloš Petrović presented aspects of marketing and business development. He conveyed basic marketing knowledge as well as analyses of successful paid-content-strategies. In order to become successful it is not enough to have only journalistic know-how, as he pointed out. It is necessary to constantly develop one's own entrepreneurial spirit. Furthermore, Petrović highlighted that not quantity but quality of the content is

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decisive for the success of online freelance journalists.

Following that, Veroljub Zmijanac introduced strategic aspects for the development of online platforms. He explained important milestones, for example the definition of long-term objectives and stakeholders as well as the production of website prototypes.

#### **From first ideas to a website**

In four working groups, the young online entrepreneurs developed project ideas. The first concept covered the topic of migration and security. The idea was to develop a multilingual website for immigrants and citizens in Serbia in order to spread information for and about refugees. The articles should summarize legal and societal aspects, and give practical tips. As potential funding model, EU programs and online commercials were envisaged. The second group came up with a YouTube channel of investigative content about food safety in Albania and Croatia. The third project was about a news portal covering politics, education, sports and culture in the Bulgarian city of Vratsa. Besides that, the idea for a website with journalistic contents about tourism in South East Europe was presented. Such a platform could be financed with advertisement.



#### **Imprint**

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#### **First success story is on hand**

A highlight of the workshop was a presentation by Violeta Peštanac who participated in last years' [seminar](#). She presented the news portal "[Moj Kraj](#)" for the Serbian City of Pančevo. The former radio journalist shared her experiences as a freelancer and encouraged the participants to follow her example. They seemed to be enthusiastic about it and mentioned that they gained lots of ideas which are useful for their own professional career.

With this positive feedback in mind the KAS Media Program South East Europe is planning to organise a similar workshop in 2016 as well.

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