

# MEDIA FREEDOM: EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL BARRIERS

CHRISTIAN SPAHR, KONRAD-ADENAUER-STIFTUNG

WESTERN BALKAN MEDIA DAYS, TIRANA, 9 NOV. 2017



## THE KONRAD-ADENAUER-STIFTUNG (KAS)

- A German political foundation
- A non-profit organization, influenced by Christian democratic values and principles
- Present throughout Germany with 16 regional offices
- Active around the world with offices in 100 countries
- In South East Europe: 11 country offices, two regional programs (Media/Rule of Law)



## MEDIA PROGRAMS OF KAS

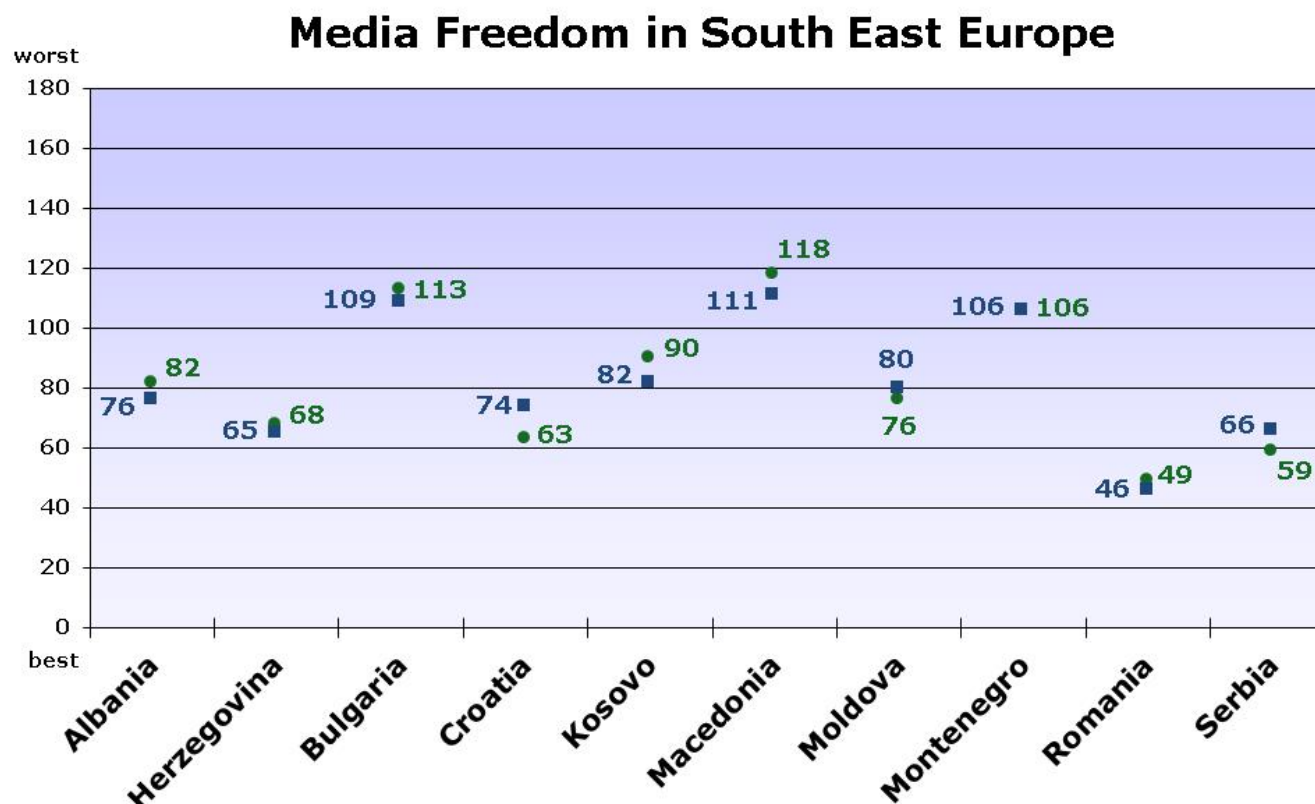


★ KAS Media Program  
South East Europe  
(2007), Sofia, Bulgaria

★ KAS Media Program  
Asia (1996),  
Singapore

★ KAS Media Program  
Sub-Saharan Africa  
(2002), Johannesburg,  
South Africa

# SINCE YEARS NO PROGRESS IN MEDIA FREEDOM



**Source:** Reporters without Borders (RWB),  
April 20th, 2016, Basis: 180 countries  
April 26th, 2017, Basis: 180 countries

● Rank RWB 2016

■ Rank RWB 2017

## OBSTACLES FOR MEDIA FREEDOM & DIVERSITY

- Media owners pursue **political interests** (internal censorship)
- → participation of media in political **campaigns**
- **Monopoly** tendencies in print media
- Non-transparent **ownership** and financial sources of media
- State authorities are the biggest **advertisement clients** of print media
- Partly unequal **access to distribution networks**
- Insufficient **legal guarantees** for freedom of reporting
- Unattractive **working conditions** of journalists (due to economic crisis)
- Weak **self-regulation** and lobbying of media outlets and journalists
- Lack of consensus about **ethical standards** of reporting

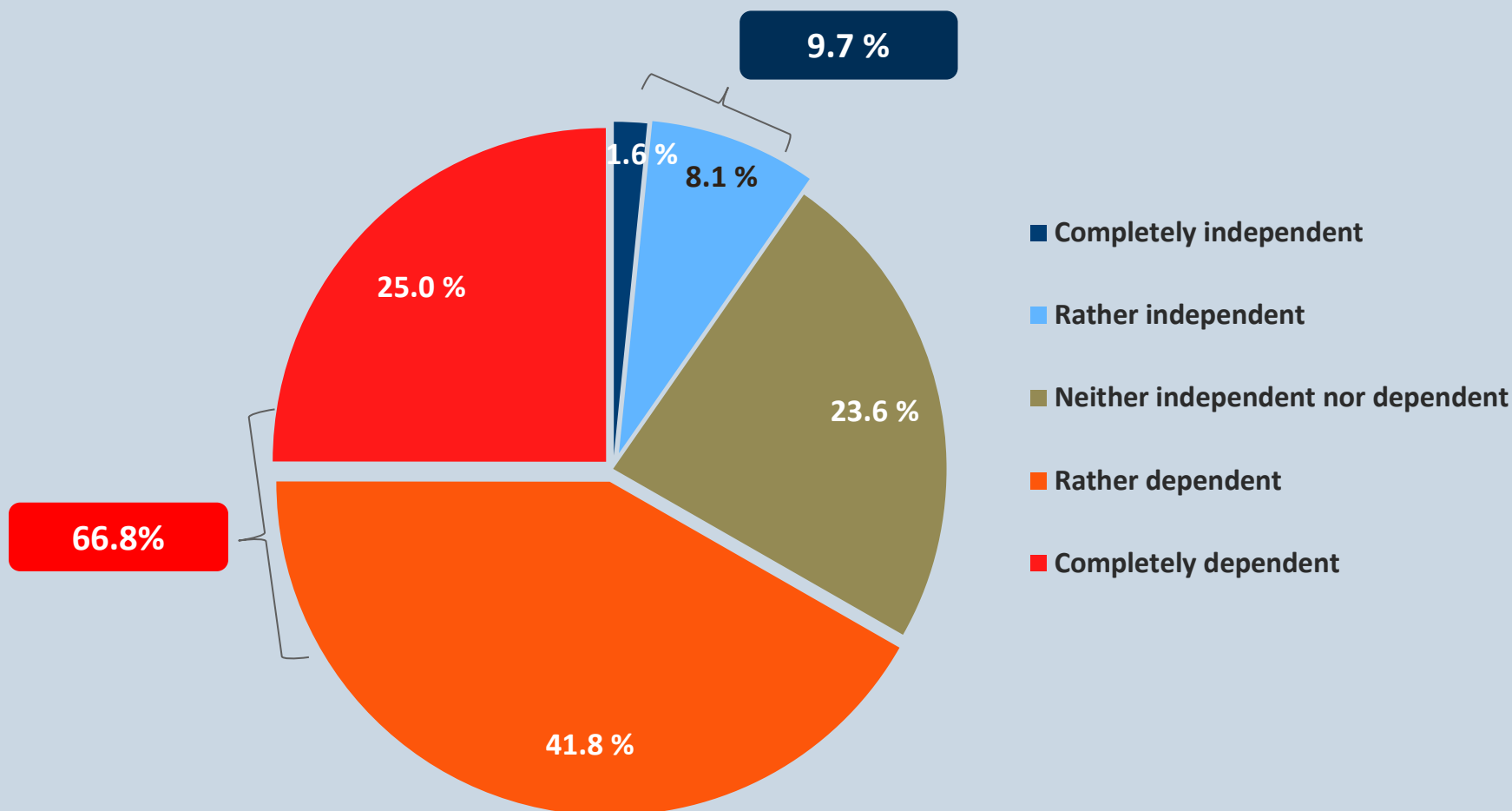
## MEDIA FREEDOM & FAKE NEWS: SURVEY BULGARIA

- Target: Population, 18+, Bulgaria
- Method of registration: Face-to-face interview
- Sample design: Nationally representative for urban and rural population
- Sample size: 1,024
- Fieldwork: May 2017
- Conception of questionnaire: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Media Program SEE; Alpha Research
- Fieldwork and data analysis: Alpha Research



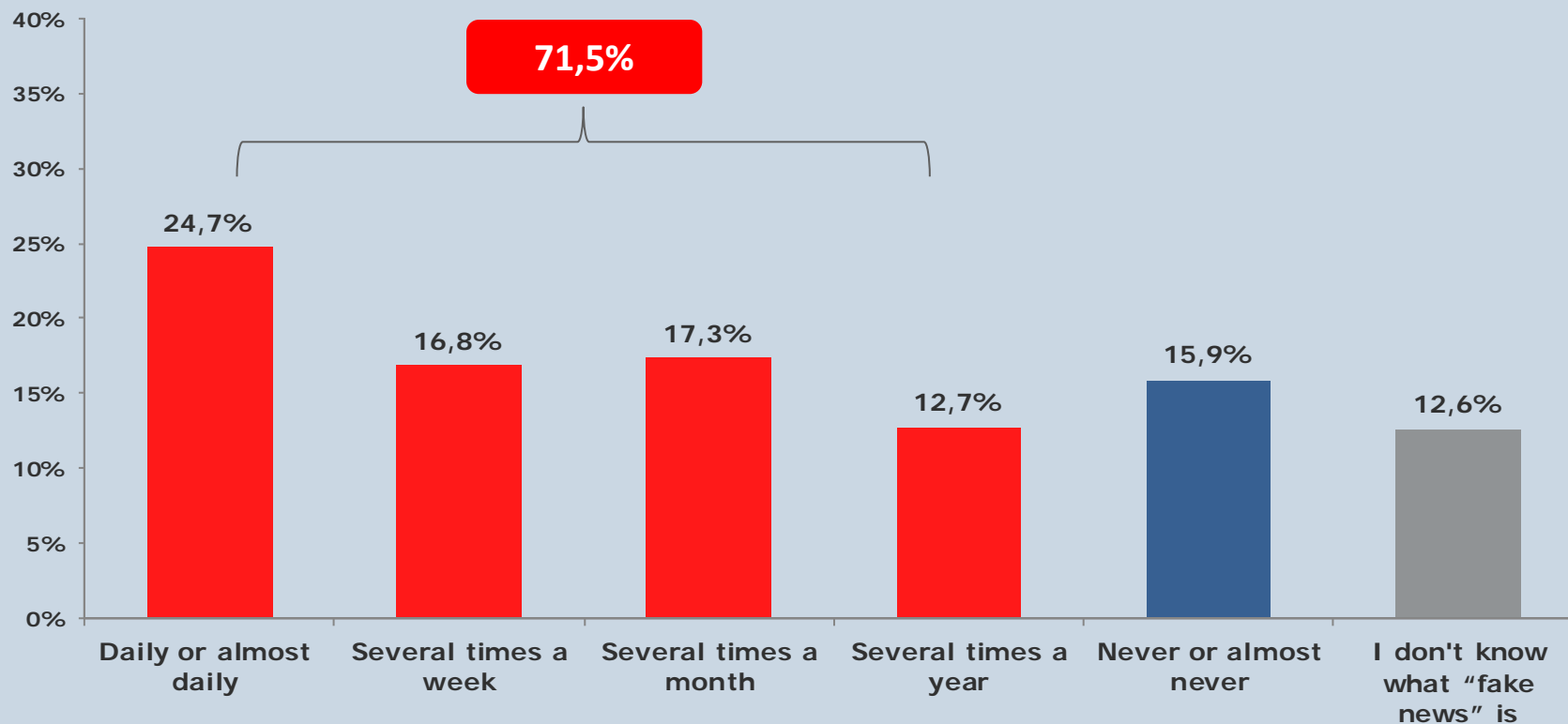
## Only one in ten Bulgarians thinks the media are free

How dependent or independent are the media in Bulgaria?



## 7 out of 10 Bulgarians see fake news about politics

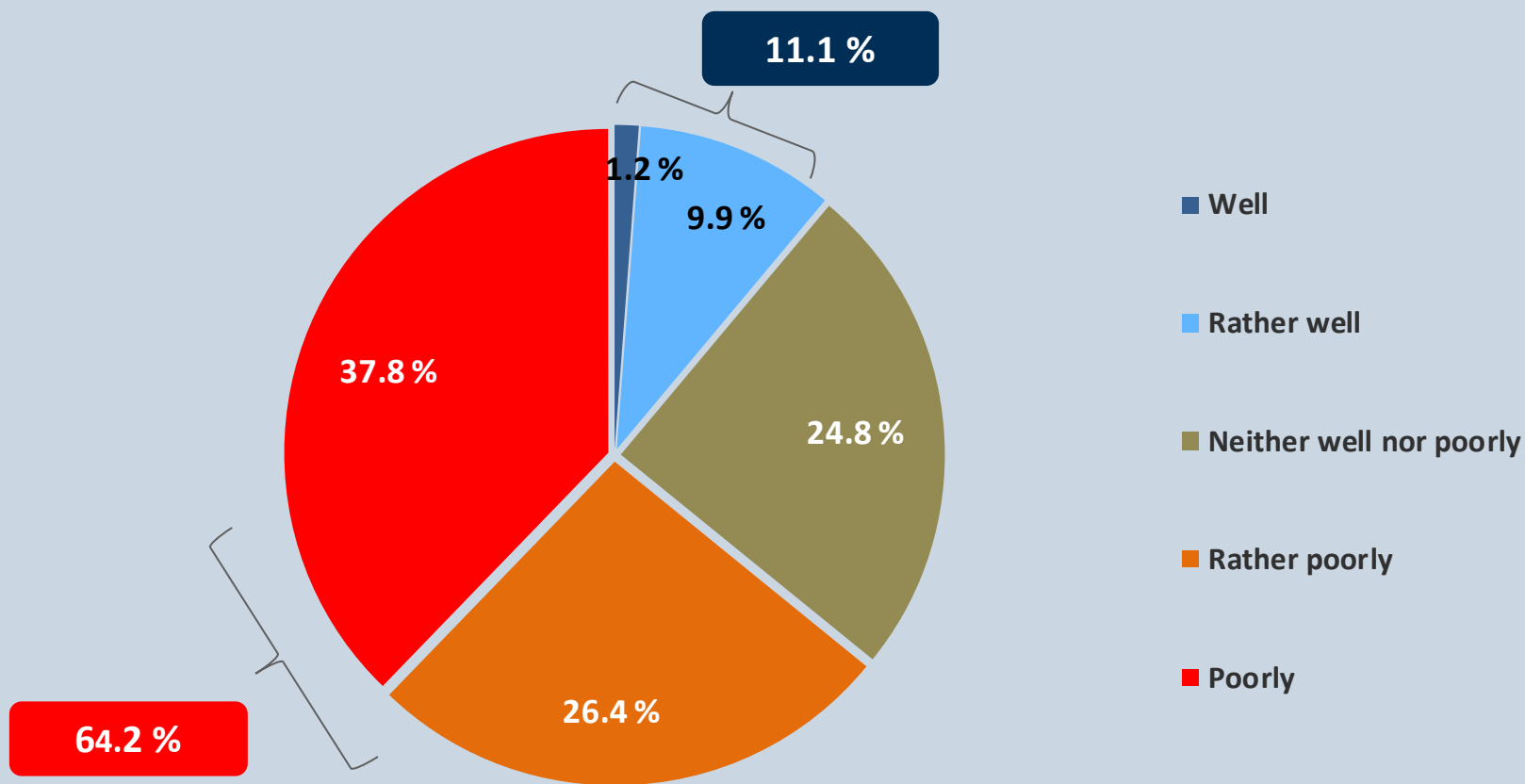
How often do you see news that contains false facts connected with political topics ("fake news")?





## Low trust in political communication

How are Bulgarian politicians informing citizens about the decisions they make?



## SOCIAL MEDIA – MORE AND MORE POLITICAL

### Citizens who follow debates on social media

Bulgaria



EU 28



Germany 55%



Croatia

52%



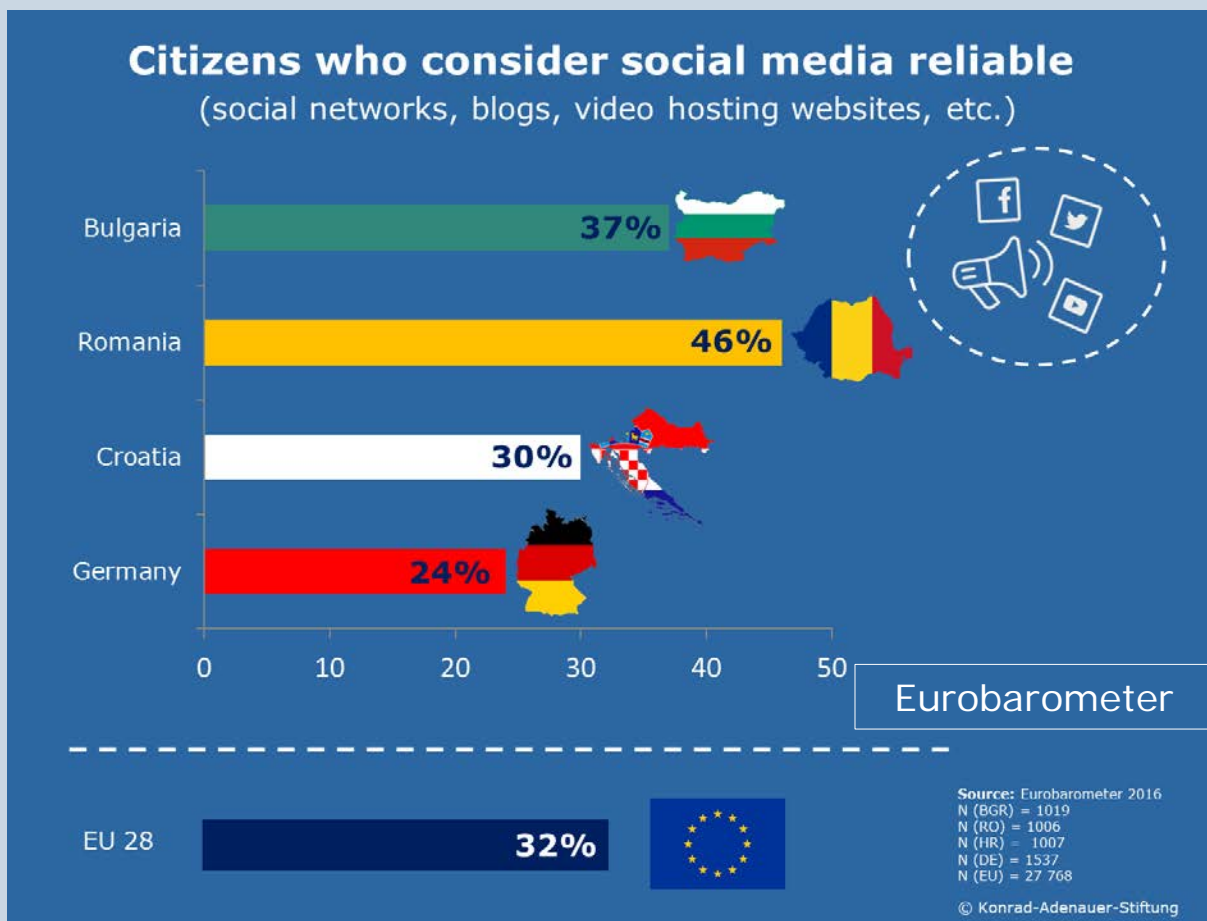
39% Romania



Eurobarometer

Source: Eurobarometer 2016  
N (BGR) = 1019  
N (RO) = 1006  
N (HR) = 1007  
N (DE) = 1537  
N (EU) = 27 768  
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## SOCIAL MEDIA – BLIND TRUST?



Comparison:  
 10 % of Bulgarians and 28 % of Romanians believe in independence of professional media (KAS polls 2017/2015)

## ALTERNATIVES TO OLD STRUCTURES

- **Online news portals** often report more independently and need less seed money – but also have quality issues
- Foundation of **independent editorial offices**, research associations and media NGOs
- **Investigative journalism** (facilitation through further education, grants, contests/awards ...)
- **Social media** (limited): taboo topics and protests are spread via Facebook, blogs and Twitter – but cannot replace quality journalism
- **International broadcasters** of Western countries (Deutsche Welle, Radio Free Europe, Radio France Internationale, etc.)



## FURTHER APPROACHES

- In-depth **dialogue with politicians** in candidate countries during accession process (by EU institutions, governments, NGOs)
- **EU subsidies and Schengen** as leverage?
- Advancement of **public debate**: relations of media and politics; reforms in journalism education, media legislation and self-regulation
- **Education**: media ethics & media literacy
- **Debunking disinformation**
- Promotion of **professional and ethical communication** in politics (→ SEECOM)
- New **info platforms** for experts and citizens



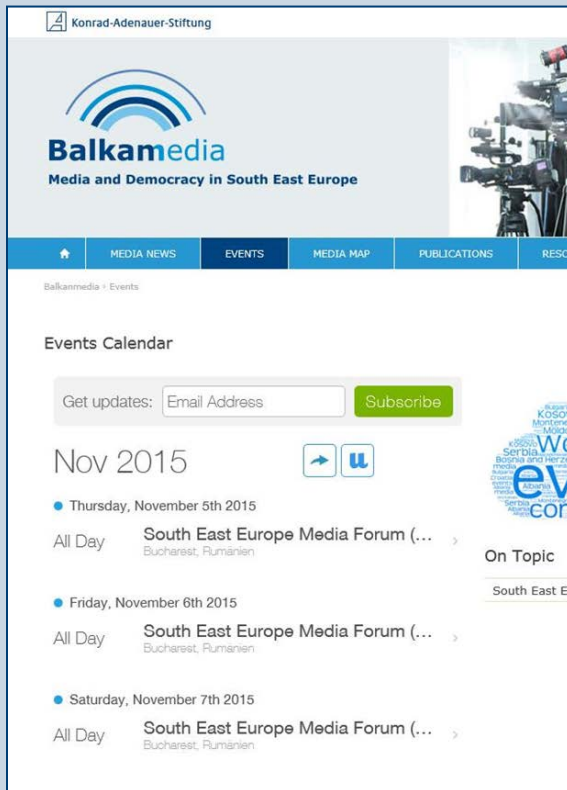
## MEDIA, COMMUNICATION AND POLITICS: KEY INSTRUMENTS

- **Public fora:** SEEMF, Sofia, 27-29 Nov. 2017
- **Workshops:** Stratcom (anti-fake news) training for government spokespersons, 12/2017
- **Seminars:** Entrepreneurial Journalism, 02/2018
- **Conferences:** Multi-stakeholder conference (04/2018) & SEECOM Conference (09/2018)
- **Summer schools:** Political Communication (06/2018) & Investigative Journalism (08/2018)
- **Partnerships:** European Commission, Club of Venice, universities, media NGOs, DW & others
- **Opinion polls, monitoring & evaluation**



SEEMF 2016 in Belgrade

# BALKANMEDIA



Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

**Balkamedia**  
Media and Democracy in South East Europe

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Balkanmedia > Events

Events Calendar

Get updates:

Nov 2015

- Thursday, November 5th 2015  
All Day **South East Europe Media Forum (...)**  
Bucharest, Rumänien
- Friday, November 6th 2015  
All Day **South East Europe Media Forum (...)**  
Bucharest, Rumänien
- Saturday, November 7th 2015  
All Day **South East Europe Media Forum (...)**  
Bucharest, Rumänien

On Topic: South East Europe



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Balkanmedia > Media Map > Serbia

## Serbia

**Media Situation:**

Although after the democratic changes in 2000 it was expected that the Serbian media will quickly develop and gradually reach the European standards, some of the key problems have still remained unsolved even 14 years later. Non-transparent ownership, endangered independence of the media, unfinished media reform and increasingly difficult financial situation are the biggest problems that Serbian media are facing with. [More](#)

**Media Freedom:**

Serbia's European course is no longer a matter of internal debate – all major political factions have committed to the project. Now that accession talks with the European Union have officially been launched, the country's task to implement the necessary and already initiated reforms in one of the key areas – media freedom – seems ever more urgent. Not outright attacks against journalists but lingering soft-censorship is the most pressing obstacle for media freedom in the Balkan country. [More](#)

**Media Outlets:**

Despite the fact that the Serbian media market is characterized by a large number of public and private broadcasters, as well as print and online media, media pluralism still isn't satisfactory. The independence of journalists and editors is limited by direct or indirect impact of political parties and the private sector, which is particularly evident in the situation when the minimum number of media is profitable and doesn't depend on government assistance or powerful advertisers. Therefore, self-censorship in the Serbian media becomes more

Media Situation
Media Freedom
Media Outlets
Media Usage
Links



 Official name	Republic of Serbia
 Capital	Belgrade
 Population	7.2 million
 Government form	Parliamentary republic

<http://balkanmedia.org>  
<http://www.kas.de/wf/en/71.12814>

# THANK YOU

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