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**Media Programme South East Europe**



## **New media projects on the way towards implementation in South East Europe**

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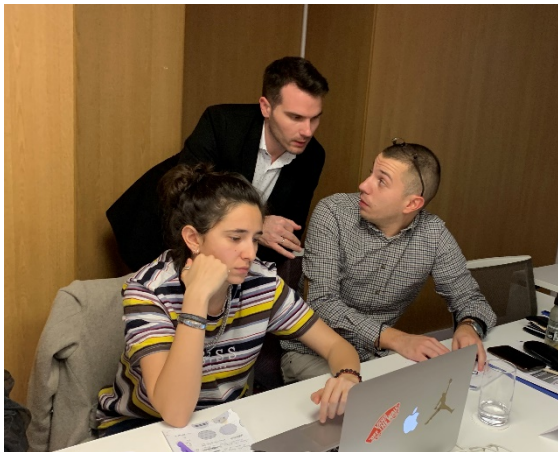
**For the sixth time the Media Programme South East Europe of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) organised a workshop on the topic of "Entrepreneurial Journalism" in Bucharest (Romania) from 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The participants were ten young journalists from Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia who developed ideas for their own online projects.**

*Manuela Zlateva*

More and more journalists in the Balkans go on the path to become self-employed in order to report independently and to determine editorial topics themselves. However, many have difficulties in finding a suitable business model that can be used to finance their own media project. Knowledge about writing for the web and the skills to make journalism projects successful online are often lacking. For this

purpose, the KAS Media Programme offers young journalists from South East Europe training in "Entrepreneurial Journalism".

The trainers **Marko Nedeljković** from the University of Belgrade, **Miloš Petrović** from the online agency MWEB and the Serbian expert **Veroljub Zmijanac** have developed the innovative training together with the KAS Media Programme South East Europe. As a result of this cooperation the handbook „[Entrepreneurial Journalism](#)“ was published in English and Serbian.



*Lead trainer Marko Nedeljković advises the working groups during the practical exercises*

The Head of the KAS Media Programme South East Europe **Hendrik Sittig** opened the workshop. He briefly presented the KAS activities on this year's focus of the Media Programme in the area of public service media in the region and presented the recently published KAS book on the same topic. He emphasised that progress is only possible when there are people who initiate and implement projects with their own innovative and creative ideas. "Wherever established media cannot completely fulfill their role as watchdogs of democracy, independent journalists are needed in order to use their own projects to raise awareness of problems that they discover through their own research," Sittig said. He underlined that in this context the work of independent and courageous journalists is of great importance. For this reason, the KAS Media Programme South East Europe also encourages young journalists to start and implement their project ideas.

## Better writing for the web

Lead trainer Marko Nedeljković taught the basics of online journalism. He explained which techniques are necessary not only to write content for the internet, but also to make it easily findable in search engines. Particular attention was paid to the use of keywords and metadata that are important for the visibility of the online content. The participants had to write their own articles in practical exercises based on the techniques they have learned. The solutions ranged from linking external websites to better visual structuring and formatting of the texts.

Miloš Petrović imparted basic knowledge of marketing and corporate development. He presented tools for marketing and monetising online projects. "To be successful, it is not enough to just master the journalistic tools. You have to develop an entrepreneurial attitude," Petrović said. He stressed that online research is important in order to analyse trends and not to invest resources in projects that do not prove to be successful.

Afterwards Veroljub Zmijanac explained aspects about the definition of stakeholder groups and the creation of prototypes for websites. He said that it is important to develop a well thought strategy and vision for the project that would also convince potential donors.

## Strategically implementation of the ideas

The young entrepreneurs, divided into four working groups, developed ideas for their own online projects. The first concept dealt with a website on security and humanitarian policy in South East Europe. A website for refugees and international non-governmental organisations should be designed to give information about human rights and to offer help to migrants. The articles should explain legal and social aspects and give practical tips. EU funding programmes of the European Parliament and online donation campaigns were selected as potential funding models. The second project proposal was a local news portal on politics, business and culture, which has to secure its existence with monthly subscriptions. In addition, a website with journalistic content on climate

change, environmental protection and renewable energy sources was presented, which is to be financed primarily through advertising. The fourth group developed a concept for a YouTube channel and podcast on investigative topics with crowdfunding as a financial model.

### **Entrepreneurial spirit is increasing in the Balkans**

Many workshop participants said that they are going to launch their own projects next year. For

example, a participant from Moldova presented his website about fake news. Another participant had already started a local online magazine and is now looking for new business models that can help him develop his portal further. All participants were very enthusiastic and highly motivated. They gave the trainers very positive feedback and said that the workshop will help them in their journalism and entrepreneurial work.

#### **Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V.**

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