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Media Programme South East Europe



More quality journalism in South East Europe with help of mobile reporting

The Media Programme South East Europe of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) organised for the first time a workshop on mobile reporting from 25th to 29th March in Sarajevo. The seminar took place in cooperation with Deutsche Welle (DW).

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With the rapid technological development of smartphones and their increased use in journalism, mobile reporting is gaining in importance and is used worldwide more than ever before. South East Europe as a region is no exception. From a professional point of view, journalists need to keep pace with this trend and get to know how to shoot and edit videos with the help of their smartphone. New forms of quality journalism could support the improvement of the media environment and democracy in the region. This was the reason why the KAS Media Programme South East Europe hosted the training on mobile reporting. The participants were young reporters from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova and Montenegro who learned in three days how to produce and edit good quality videos with their smartphone and as a result presented their first video materials.

The event was opened by **Hendrik Sittig**, Head of the KAS Media Programme South East Europe. He emphasised the advantages of mobile reporting such as the affordability of technical equipment and the concentration of the whole production process in the hands of just one person. "With the small size of the smartphones, journalists can work faster, and also more efficient, for example in cases of investigative stories, when they are working undercover". Sittig talked also about the importance of promoting the understanding among media representatives and editorial teams for mobile reporting, in order to help the integration and implementation of the technology as daily practice. In his point of view, the enormous technological change offers many opportunities to shape the future of journalism in South East Europe.

Trainers of the workshop were **Thomas Donker** from the German public broadcaster Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg (rbb) and the DW correspondent in Thessaloniki **Florian Schmitz**. The mobile reporter in Greece said that the Balkans are a very vibrant region, which is gaining in importance and that he would be very glad to see more cooperation between journalists from

South East Europe and their peers in Germany and other Western European countries. According to him mobile reporting is a great opportunity to strengthen these joint efforts.

Thomas Donker was convinced that the many advantages of mobile reporting could lead to replacement of entire camera teams at the media outlets with mobile reporters. He led, among others, a panel on ethical and legal aspects of video reporting with focus on press code, personal protection and copyright law. The contributions of both trainers were supported by numerous video examples from their daily work, which were a basis for further discussion with the participants and part of their training.

The concept of the workshop had a very practical focus with a lot of interactive exercises including video reporting on the field. In order to complete the workshop, each participant had to shoot and edit his own video. The topic of the exercise was the "Sarajevo roses"- war memorials in the streets of the city, made from scars by mortar shell's explosions which were later filled with red resin. The practical training helped the young journalists to get in touch with the local culture and people and also to get to know more about

the history of Sarajevo as part of regional intercultural exchange and understanding. The participants from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Croatia, Moldova, and Montenegro were very excited to learn more about mobile journalism and to implement the knowledge and skills gained during the workshop in their daily work. The participants were highly motivated and underlined that the workshop was very useful for their future professional development. Merxhan Daci, journalist from the Albanian online portal "Faktoje" said, for example, that he plans to create more journalistic videos

with his smartphone than with his camera in order to produce them faster. The reporter from the Bulgarian National Radio Ivelina Georgieva was also convinced that she can use the learned skills to produce more video content for the social media channels of the public broadcaster. Due to the positive feedback of both trainers and participants, and the growing importance of mobile reporting in the region, the KAS Media Programme South East Europe is going to offer further workshops and activities in this field.

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