Few Educators, Many Media and Journalism Programs:

Journalism and Mass Communication Education

in Romania after the Fall of Communism

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Romania's current political situation

Romania is a republic with a multiparty political system. After the fall of Communism in December of 1989, a new Constitution (Constitution of Romania, 1991) was adopted by the Provisional Council of National Unity on December 8, 1991. Article 30 of the Constitution states that freedom of expression, including freedom of the press, is inviolable and that any censorship shall be prohibited.

Between 1990 and 1996, the country was ruled by a succession of governments dominated by a left-wing party, name of which has changed several times, eventually becoming the Social Democrat Party. A coalition consisting of two right-wing parties (the National Liberal Party and the National Peasants' Party), one left-wing party (the Democrat Party) and an ethnic organization (the Democratic Union of the Hungarians of Romania), was in power from 1996-2000. The Social Democrats won the 2000 elections, but they were defeated in 2004 by a new alliance that brought together the Democrats, the Liberals, the Hungarians union and the Conservatives. The elections mostly have been fair and regular, and the power changes have not generated violent incidents.

Romania has been a member of NATO since 2004 and was accepted in the European Union on January 1, 2007.

Due at least in part to the powerful *Securitate*, the Communist secret police, opposition to the totalitarian regime had been weak and isolated. The 1977 miners' strike, the 1987 revolt of industrial plant workers in Brasov, and the protests of some dissidents, such as Doina Cornea, Paul Goma and Dorin Tudoran, were among the few examples of

explicit civic resistance. As a result, the creation of civil society after the fall of communism – defined as a multitude of nongovernmental associations and groups that allow their members to pursue their goals and hold the government and the political entities accountable – in Romania has been a complex process, somehow different in Romania than in other post-Communist countries, such as Poland (Jakubowicz, 2002) and Czechoslovakia, where opposition to the system was coordinated and much stronger (Bernhard, 1993).

The discussion of the role of civil society in Romania has produced a lot of controversy. Of course, scholars have produced a variety of definitions of civil society. Dalpino (2000) lists media as a civil society institution, in addition to religious organizations, advocacy groups, and social service organizations, while Carothers (Carothers & Ottaway, 2000; Carothers, 2004) sees the press as a distinct component of the public sphere. The latter definition seems to be more appropriate for Romania, as some scholars have correlated the decrease in the role of the civil society after 2000 with the growing power that some journalists and media organizations have acquired. According to Brancoveanu (2007), these journalists have gained a more powerful role in interpreting the social events than the leaders of the civil society. This process also has affected the media performance. Many journalists have seen their role as opinion leaders, judges of the society, active participants in the political process or national heroes (Coman, 1994). In the short term, this attitude was beneficial, as it gave an exceptional visibility to some journalists and to the media organizations they represented. In the long term, the credibility of many media has been damaged.

During the communist regime, media were under strong government control in Romania. Representatives of the authorities, at local and central levels, and specialized institutions such as *Directia presei* (Department of the Press) and later *Consiliul culturii* (Council of Culture) were in charge of censorship. In most of the cases, the censorship started at the editors' level, as attempts to publish or produce problematic materials often had serious consequences, such as penalties or even firing. Private ownership was not allowed.

Only three daily national newspapers and one state television existed. In the late eighties, the latter broadcast only two hours per day. During the same period of time, the state national radio reduced its programs from three to two, and the regional state TV and radio studios were closed. The top editors and the broadcast leadership were appointed by the Communist party, based on criteria mostly related to politics and not to professional competence.

Many journalists tried to do an honest job and to serve their audiences. Their performance was negatively affected, however, by the pressure to avoid any critical reporting about important political and social issues.

In the phase of early Communism in Romania, after World War II, many working journalists had no academic degree; party membership, devotion to the Communist values, "healthy" family background (meaning working class or poor rural class) were relevant criteria. The situation gradually changed later and a vast majority of the journalists in the eighties' newsrooms had a Bachelor's degree in a field more or less connected to mass communication.

During the Communist regime, only one school of journalism existed in Romania. It was located in Bucharest, the capital of the country, as a unit of the Academy of Political Sciences "Stefan Gheorghiu." The program was highly ideologized and the students were often selected based on their political background. Less than 30 journalism students graduated every year from the school of journalism in Bucharest in the eighties.

Literacy levels & preferred media

In 1989, the last year of the Communist regime in Romania, the literacy level - defined as people age 15 and over who can read and write - was 100 percent. In 2006, the percentage dropped to 98.4. (CIA Factbook, 2006). Romanian's total population is approximately 22 million.

In the months following the fall of Communism, most of the state-owned newspapers were privatized, and new private media were created. At the same time, more than 80 political parties were established (Bucharest Court, 2007), and most of them decided to publish newspapers that would reflect their ideologies. As a result, about half of the Romanian print media in 1990-1993 were explicitly politically affiliated, the rest being "quasi-commercial, quasi-independent newspapers," (Gross, 2002) with looser connections to politicians or interest groups. Thousands of new jobs were available in the newsrooms of all these newly established media organizations, and they had to be filled quickly.

Some patterns in the newsroom structure were identifiable during that period of time:

Senior management: Established journalists, literary authors, individuals with an authentic or faked dissidence history, ambitious dilettantes, and individuals with strong party connections.

Lower level management: Younger journalists or individuals with some media experience, holders of Bachelor's degrees (many of them in a technical field), individuals promoted by parties.

Reporters: Young Bachelor's degree holders, college students, high school graduates.

Some of the promising new journalists quickly advanced in the hierarchy of their newspapers. (It was not unusual for the new academic journalism and mass communication programs established in 1992-1994 to have, among their students, people who held positions of editors or news directors in their media organizations.)

For this first post-communism generation of journalists, education in their field was almost entirely unavailable. In-house training was the only option. In many cases, they were assigned to "mentors" and received a brief set of verbal rules or instructions. The critique of their work also was crucial to their formation. Though this training was received at the beginning of the journalists' career, the process was not so different from the "midcareer" training programs that are common in the media industry in the United States and other Western countries.

In recent studies, researchers have argued that contemporary high-speed work environment demands two key competencies of workers, identity growth and increased adaptability. The former competency involves self-reflection. The latter involves an openness to change. Douglas Hall and Philip Mirvis (Hall & Mirvis, 1995), for example,

speak of a career as a protean career, in contrast with an organizational career. The protean career is managed by the individual, not the organization. It consists of the individual's varied experience in education, training, work across organizations, and changes in occupational fields. As a result, it is not unusual to find U.S. journalists with less than five years experience in their occupation participating in "midcareer" training programs (Becker & Vlad, 2003).

Many of these Western training programs have been at least in part compatible with the needs of the media in the East and Central Europe. As a result, they were "transferred" to this new market, either through projects administered by foreign institutions (such as the International Research and Exchange Board, BBC, the Thomson Foundation, the Knight Foundation or the International Center for Journalism in Washington, D.C.) or through new organizations designed to facilitate the journalism and mass communication training, such as the centers for independent journalism located in capitals of East and Central European countries or the local bureaus of the Soros Foundation. At least 70 organizations in 25 donor countries outside the United States have been involved in funding media assistance projects around the world since the end of the 1980's, with East and Central European countries as major recipients (Becker & Vlad, 2005). In the U.S., the number of donors is more than 50 (Hume, 2004). Donors are units of governments, nongovernmental organizations, including foundations, and multinational organizations. Spending is distributed around the world, with East and Central Europe and African countries having been major recipients since the end of the 1980s.

The Center for Independent Journalism in Bucharest started its operation in 1994 with funding from and under the supervision of The Independent Journalism Foundation (IJF) of New York. Since then, hundreds of journalists have participated in training programs hosted by the Center. Most of the trainers have been journalists from the United States and Romania. Many of the U.S. participants were Knight International Fellows coming from organizations such as The New York Times Group, ABC, CNN, NBC, NPR, and Philadelphia Inquirer. The Center has become a free standing organization, totally locally run and self-supported as of May 1, 2007.

This type of in-house journalism instruction, in the early nineties, combined with the communist period newsroom culture that did not include formal journalism education, initially determined a negative attitude of many journalists toward the new journalism and mass communication academic programs. The most common assertion was that one cannot learn how to report and write in the classroom. A similar theory - stating that real life experiences, contacts with a variety of people and good people skills are the most valuable sources of good journalism – had been popular in U.S. newsroom between the two world wars.

Media landscape (ownership, technology)

In the first two years following the fall of communism, 1,500-2,000 newspapers and other periodicals were established in Romania (Dragan & Lafrance, 1994). Like in the other East and Central European former communist countries, it is impossible to get a very accurate estimate of the total number of print media for that period of time, due to the extreme fluidity of the market and to the absence of records. (For example,

researchers found that 1,000-4,000 publications were in circulation in Poland by 1993 (Gross, 2002).)

Due to the political bias, to the lack of professionalism in the newsrooms and to the weakness of the advertising market, many of these publications disappeared by 1993. In 2006, the Romanian Audit Bureau of Circulations listed 407 periodicals. According to data provided by the World Association of Newspapers (WAN, 2007), quality dailies readership is continuously decreasing, and television has strengthened its position as the most popular medium.

For several years, the broadcast media market was dominated by the Romanian television (TVR) and radio public service. In a market that was completely unregulated from a legal point of view, however, cable television became an emerging alternative in a short period of time.

Since 1994, the number of private broadcast media has increased significantly: 48 television broadcast stations existed in 1995, while 40 AM, 202 FM, and three shortwave radio stations functioned in 1998 (CIA Factobook, 2007).

By the end of 2006, the number of radio licenses has reached 629, with 77% of them being active (National Broadcast Council, CNA, 2007). The number of television licenses was 261 in October of 2006 (CNA, 2007).

In Romania, 2006 was a year of consolidation of major media groups, which bought or strengthened additional media outlets (WAN, 2007). Sorin Ovidiu Vantu, owner of Realitatea TV and Monney Channel, purchased Catavencu Group, publisher of the national daily *Cotidianul*, weekly *Academia Catavencu*, and several other niche magazines. MediaPro Group bought the print division of national daily *Gandul*. During

the same year, the businessman Dinu Patriciu announced the acquisition of the main part of national daily *Adevarul*. Adevarul Holding plans to launch a tabloid that would compete with Libertatea, the Romanian tabloid with the largest circulation, owned by Ringier. A German group, EMI Deutschland, part of Arbomedia, has bought several local publications. Intact, one of the most successful Romanian media companies, has launched a new TV national channel, Antena 3. It is difficult to anticipate how this consolidation and expansion will affect the status of the journalists.

Journalism education currently provided

During the 1990-1993 period, many state universities established journalism programs in response to the job market demand. They were followed by private academic units, which were created based on the Law of Private Corporations. With the exception of the College of Journalism and Communication Sciences in Bucharest, all the other journalism programs were departments located in a variety of schools, such as literature, political sciences or philosophy.

The lack of a tradition of journalism education and of textbooks negatively affected the quality of the programs in the early years. Most of the professors came from other schools (sociology, literature, political sciences, history, etc.) or from the industry. The curricula of the programs were based on Western or U.S. models, but in many cases the titles of the courses did not reflect their content but the educator's expertise.

The quality of journalism and mass communication professors has gradually increased, due to participation in international programs, to translations of text books and other educational materials, and to contacts with visiting professors. This progress has not

matched, however, the growth in number of journalism academic programs and of students.

The Romanian Ministry of Education and Research in 1993 created the National Committee for Academic Evaluation and Accreditation, which was designed to supervise and sanction the higher education standards and to penalize schools that do not meet the criteria required by the ministry. The organization had limited impact on enforcing those criteria because of the legal void, of the continuous establishment of new academic units, and of corruption. As a result, the committee was replaced in 2006 by a new institution, the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS, 2007), the goals of which are to develop the methodology and the accreditation standards for different types of programs and higher education providers, to assess and to propose the authorization or the accreditation of the higher education providers and of their academic programs.

As a participant in the Bologna Treaty – whose major objective is to increase the mobility and employability of European higher education graduates, thus ensuring competitiveness of European higher education on the world's scale – Romania will have to make significant changes in its academic programs. The academic year 2005-2006 has been the beginning of this process in Romania. As relatively new fields of study and having curricula that have gone through changes every year since their implementation, journalism and mass communication programs should be prepared for quick improvements.

According to data provided by the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth (Ministry of Education, 2007), currently in Romania there are:

- 56 state accredited higher education institutions (49 civilian state higher education institutions and 7 military universities),
- 29 private accredited higher education institutions,
- 28 private accredited higher education institutions authorized to function provisory,
- 6 postuniversity academic schools.

A combination of the ministry listing and of the web sites of the universities and colleges suggests that there are 27 units that have a journalism and/or mass communication area of concentration, located in 24 universities. Out of those universities, 15 are state universities and nine are private.

No.	University	School	Specialty	Type of Education
1.	UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST - state	School of Journalism and Communication Studies	Journalism	Regular+Distance Learning
2.	UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST - state	School of Journalism and Communication Studies	Communication and Public Relations	Regular+Distance Learning
3.	UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST - state	School of Journalism and Communication Studies	Advertising	Regular+Distance Learning
4.	UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST - state	School of Literature	Communication and Public Relations	Regular+Distance Learning
5.	NATIONAL SCHOOL OF POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES, Bucharest - state	School of Communication and Public Relations	Communication and Public Relations	Regular+Distance Learning
6.	"AUREL VLAICU" UNIVERSITY, Arad -state	School of Humanities and Social Sciences	Journalism	Regular
7.	NORTHERN UNIVERSITY, Baia-Mare - state	School of Literature	Philosophy – Journalism	Regular
8.	"BABES-BOLYAI" UNIVERSITY, Cluj-	School of History and Philosophy	Philosophy – Communication	Regular

			and Public Relations	
9.	"BABES-BOLYAI" UNIVERSITY, Cluj-Napoca - state	School of Political and Administrative Studies	Communication and Public Relations	Regular
10.	"BABES-BOLYAI" UNIVERSITY, Cluj-Napoca - state	School of Political and Administrative Studies	Journalism	Regular+Distance Learning
11.	"OVIDIUS" UNIVERSITY, Constanta – state	School of Literature	Journalism	Regular
12.	UNIVERSITY OF CRAIOVA - state	School of Literature	Communication and Public Relations	Regular
13.	"DUNĂREA DE JOS" UNIVERSITY, Galati- state	School of Literature and Theology	Journalism – Foreign Language	Regular
14.	"AL. I. CUZA" UNIVERSITY, Iasi - state	School of Philosophy	Communication and Public Relations	Regular+Distance Learning
15.	"AL. I. CUZA" UNIVERSITY, Iasi - state	School of Literature	Journalism	Regular
16.	UNIVERSITY OF ORADEA - state	School of Political and Communication Sciences	Journalism	Regular
17.	UNIVERSITY OF PITESTI - state	School of History, Philosophy and Journalism	Journalism	Regular
18.	"LUCIAN BLAGA" UNIVERSITY, Sibiu - state	School of journalism	Journalism	Regular+Distance Learning
19.	"LUCIAN BLAGA" UNIVERSITY, Sibiu - state	School of Journalism	Communication and Public Relations	Regular+Distance Learning
20.	"VALAHIA" UNIVERSITY, Targoviste - state	School of Law Juridice	Journalism	Regular
21.	WESTERN	School of Political	Journalism –	Regular

	UNIVERSITY, Timisoara - state	Sciences, Philosophy and Communication Sciences	Foreign Language	
22.	WESTERN UNIVERSITY, Timisoara - state	School of Political Sciences, Philosophy and Communication Sciences	Communication and Public Relations	Regular
23.	NATIONAL INFORMATION ACADEMY, Bucharest - state	School of Information	Communication and Public Relations - Information	Regular
24.	"VASILE GOLDIS" UNIVERSITY, Arad - private	School of Humanities, Political and Administrative Studies	Journalism	Regular
25.	"HYPERION" UNIVERSITY, Bucharest - private	School of Journalism	Journalism	Regular+Distance Learning
26.	"SPIRU HARET" UNIVERSITY, Bucharest - private	School of Philosophy and Journalism	Philosophy - Journalism	Regular+Distance Learning
27.	ECOLOGY UIVERSITY, Bucharest - private	School of Communication Studies	Communication and Public Relations	Regular
28.	"ANDREI SAGUNA" UNIVERSITY, Constanta - private	School of Communication and Political Sciences	Journalism	Regular
29.	"PETRE ANDREI" UNIVERSITY, Iasi - private	School of Communication Sciences	Journalism, Communication and Public relations	Regular
30.	"C-TIN BRANCOVEANU" UNIVERSITY, Pitesti - private	School of Administrative and Communication Sciences	Journalism	
31.	"TIBISCUS" UNIVERSITY, Timisoara - private	School of Journalism	Journalism	Regular
32.	"TIBISCUS" UNIVERSITY,	School of Journalism	Communication and Public	Regular

	Timisoara - private		Relations	
33.	"DANUBIUS" UNIVERSITY, Galati - private	School of Communication Sciences	Communication and Public Relations	Regular

In terms of funding and type of education, three main categories of students exist in these programs: 1. those who have state scholarships and attend classes on a daily basis; 2. those who pay for their education and attend classes on a daily basis; and 3. those who pay for their distance learning education.

Due to the space constraints that almost all the universities in Romania are facing, distance learning has been an important means to generate additional funds. The quality of this education, however, has been at least doubtful. For similar financial reasons, the number of regular students also has increased every year. Attendance is not mandatory to a majority of the courses and, if it were, most of the teaching facilities would not be able to accommodate all the students enrolled in the larger classes. As a result, both the quality of the education and the professors' and students' expectations are somewhat low. Some programs are regarded as institutions that - in exchange for fees, light attendance and a minimal intellectual effort – will provide an individual with a degree that will have minor relevance to the job market.

It is difficult to estimate the total number of students enrolled in journalism and mass communication academic units in Romania. A number of approximately 5,000 students enrolled last year in these programs. (As a comparison, about 40,000 freshmen were enrolled in the 458 similar programs in the United States in 2005-2006 (Becker, Vlad, Tucker & Pelton, 2005).)

There is variation from one curriculum to another: the schools where journalism is the only or main area of study seem to be more skills-oriented than the journalism departments that are parts of bigger colleges, which either have a more theoretical approach or tend to include courses from other units in their school. A common vision of teaching journalism, which had not existed in Romania ten years ago, is nonetheless identifiable. As an example, most of the programs offer media ethics courses. They focus more on management and on advertising. Foreign languages also are common requirements.

National and regional conferences of journalism and mass communication educators are not frequent events in Romania, so there are few premises for systematic discussion of what and how courses in this area should be taught. The more likely explanations for the common approach are the national accreditation requirements, the relatively small number of textbooks, and the pressure coming from the students and from the industry. The public relations, advertising and management courses clearly have been stimulated by the latter factor.

In the spring of 2007, a new organization was established, the Association of Journalism and Communication Educators/Trainers (Asociatia Formatorilor din Jurnalism si Comunicare, 2007). Members are journalism and communication professors, researchers and trainers. The goals of the associations are to improve the quality of journalism and communication education and training, to foster dialog between media industry, communication education and research and civil society, and to promote journalism and communication research.

The degree to which the actual media situation influences the teaching

Mihai Coman, former dean of the School of Journalism and Communication Sciences in Bucharest, argued that several stereotypes have dominated the media industry's attitude regarding journalism education: an anti-academic discourse, which states that this form of education is useless; the emphasis on "natural" journalism values, such as talent, aggressiveness or inspiration; the lack of interest of the industry in supporting or funding journalism education; and the lack of interest of established journalists in teaching in journalism schools (Coman, 2003). This was certainly true for the beginning of journalism education following the fall of communism. More recently, the willingness of some media outlets (some of them foreign owned) to recruit from these programs seems to have changed this relationship at least in part. According to Gross (2002), young journalists who have been exposed to Western journalism, whether directly or through education, have a chance to develop a professional culture strong enough to counterbalance the political and economic forces that control the society.

Socialization process

Today many journalists' organizations in Romania, as in other East European countries, lack solidarity, are divided along political lines, and do not produce or enforce ethics codes.

Due to the lack of the structural elements that enable the development of a professional culture (legal framework, strong professional associations, and existence and respect of a code of ethics), conferences and workshops that debate the status of the Romanian journalist are among the few events that create a framework for the

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socialization process. The Center for Independent Journalism, the Association for Promotion and Protection of the Freedom of Speech (APPLE), and the Agency for Media Monitoring have been active in organizing meeting of Romanian media associations. During the first meeting in May of 2001, about 50 such associations were identified. At the December 2002 meeting, 25 of these associations have created the Convention of Media Organizations (COM). Currently COM has 45 members. These initial meeting were funded by USAID through the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX).

In May of 2003, COM representatives have decided to implement an ethics code that would clarify the Romanian journalists' status. In the fall of 2003, COM organized a workshop on corruption in Romanian media. The discussion focused on how the ownership and the advertising market have impact on editorial independence. The program was funded by the World Bank, by Media Network Division - Open Society Institute, and by Media Task Force of the Stability Pact. In December 2003, COM organized a program that examined media coverage of elections and the relationship between media organizations and political parties. The workshop was funded by Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Romanian-Swiss Foundation "Columna."

Most of the journalists in Romania are underpaid, while hypercompetition is a characteristic of the media market. Studies have shown that - in media markets in emerging democracies - contrary to classical economic theory, there is evidence that more competition may not always improve consumer welfare if consumer welfare includes the effects of news products (Jacobsson, Jacobsson, Hollifield, Vlad & Becker, 2006). The review suggests that a combination of supply-side competition for resources and demand-side vertical and horizontal product differentiation strategies may result in

excessive sameness of low-cost, low-quality content that either focuses on celebrity and sensationalism or slants news to appeal to the audiences' ethnic, political, or religious biases. As competition among news providers becomes extreme, the organization's financial commitment to quality news is expected to decline as will the market performance of the organization. The quality and diversity of news content should fall, as will journalists' wages, the size and quality of the editorial staff, and the numbers of bureaus and subscriptions to wire services and other external sources of content. Journalists and the media organizations that employ them are expected to become more subject to capture by outside actors, and the organization is expected to pursue low-cost product differentiation strategies.

Conclusion

After the fall of communism in 1989, media have been one of the most dynamic social and economic phenomena in Romania. Hundreds of new media organizations have been established and consequently thousands of new jobs. Western-funded media assistance programs were implemented with the assumption that development of free, independent Romanian media staffed by trained journalists would lead to–or at least contribute to–the development of democracy in the country.

There is little doubt that media have had impact on the process of democratization in Romania. How strong the impact has been and how has it been correlated with other political and economic factors, is yet to be determined.

It is also difficult to assess the degree of independence that the Romanian media have reached. For Price (2002), the main requirement for media freedom is that

government does not have a monopoly on information. Romania has certainly moved beyond that phase. Rozumilowicz (2002) also argued that the question of who controls the media is critical to consideration of whether it is free and independent. She noted that there must be a diffusion of control and access supported by a nation's legal, institutional, economic and social-cultural systems. The recent consolidation of the major media groups in the country does not seem to serve this purpose.

There are several organizations that systematically assess media freedom internationally.

Probably the best known of the press freedom indicators is that of Freedom House. In 1980, Freedom House began conducting its media freedom survey–*Freedom of the Press: A Global Survey of Media Independence*–which in 2003 covered the same 192 countries.

Since 1978, Freedom House has published a global survey of freedom, known as *Freedom in the World,* now covering 192 countries and 18 related or disputed territories.

Reporters sans frontiers also publishes, on an annual basis, comprehensive regional and country reports that assess political, economic, and legal environments for media freedom. In 2002, RSF released its first Worldwide Press Freedom (RSF, 2002) report and ranking of individual nations.

Another nongovernmental organization, International Research and Exchange Board (IREX), prepared in 2001, in cooperation with USAID, its first Media Sustainability Index (MSI) to evaluate the global development of independent media (IREX, 2001). The report rated independent media sustainability in 20 states in four regions: Southeast Europe, Russia and Western Eurasia, Caucasus, and Central Asia.

IREX has continued these annual evaluations, and, in 2005, added 18 countries in North Africa and the Middle East.

Romania has been ranked by each of these three organizations. In 2006, the country's ranking was 90 out of 195 in the *Freedom of the Press 2007* (Freedom House, 2007), and 58 out of 169countries in the Annual Worldwide Press Freedom Index. In the IREX 2006/07 Media Sustainability Index, Romanian media were on the third place after Bulgaria and Bosnia & Herzegovina, with an average score of 2.78. In each of these three indices, Romania has made progress from the previous year.

Local journalists and media researchers in many countries have sometimes expressed doubts about the accuracy of these measurements. The empirical analysis of the numerical ratings of these organizations–Reporters sans frontieres, Freedom House, and IREX –shows, however, that they largely come to the same conclusions about the media. The correlation of the IREX measures with those of Reporters sans frontieres and Freedom House is surprising, given that IREX tried to create a distinct concept, namely media sustainability. The RSF and Freedom House ratings for 2002 were correlated .81(Pearson Product Moment), while the figure in 2003 was .84. This suggests that, though these two organizations (one American and the other French based) have different agendas and use different instruments, their findings are reliable (Becker, Vlad, & Nusser, 2007).

Journalism and mass communication education can contribute significantly to elevate the quality of Romanian media. The number of programs and of students enrolled has responded in recent years to the demands of the job market. The improvement in the

curricula and in the quality of teaching, in addition to higher standards in the selection

and testing of the students are the next steps.

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